



President Patricia Parkes
Conductor Michael Cayton

with Bethany Halliday, The Will Todd Trio
& Mim Etchells

Blues at The Muse

A concert of music by Will Todd

Saturday 29 March 2014, 7.30 pm
The Clarendon Muse, Watford

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Welcome from the Chair

We are delighted to be back in the Clarendon Muse for this concert of jazz-inspired music by Will Todd and, more importantly, to be singing a whole concert of Will's music. This has been a new venture for most of us in the choir, but we have thoroughly enjoyed rehearsing the wide range of different styles that call on all of our skills as a choir, from the popular *Mass in Blue* to what is the first performance in this country of all three of the *Songs of Love*.

It is a great treat for the choir – and for you the audience – that we will be singing this evening with Will Todd and his trio, together with soprano Bethany Halliday, and we look forward to their solo numbers. We also extend a warm welcome to Mim Etchells, who joins us once again on saxophone.

We hope to see you at our next concert, which will be on Saturday 5th July at Christ Church, Chorleywood. We will be singing a programme of music by Vaughan Williams and John Rutter, following a weekend in France where we are performing the same programme in Dardilly.

Do please get in touch with us if you would like to become a patron of the choir or if you would like to sing with us. We are, as ever, particularly keen to hear from potential tenors and basses.

We hope you enjoy our concert tonight.

Gillian Pugh Chair, Chiltern Choir 01923 285505



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This Evening's Programme

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Songs of Love

words by Nils Peterson (1933 –)

1. I Love You

from a poem by the Greek female poet Myrtiotissa

I love you,
I can say nothing more simple, nothing more deep.
I offer you my heart as a pillow for your head,
and when you tire, for your bed.
My Love, I offer all of me,
all of me, my Love.

2. A Kiss

from an anonymous Greek lyric

I kissed a red lip and my own lip turned red,
Wiped my lip upon my sleeve and my sleeve turned red. Ah.
Washed my shirt in the river and the river turned red,
and the edge of the shore, and red out even to the middle of the sea.
An eagle flew down to drink water and his wings turned red.
He flew up and lo! half of the sun red,
and the whole of the moon red, Ah.
I kissed a red lip.

3. I Sing Because...

from a poem by Greek poet Maria Polydouri

I sing because you loved me once,
I sing when the sun shines,
when it rains and when it snows.
Because you held me in your arms one night.
I am as beautiful as the wide-open lily.
Because you looked at me once
your soul was in your look
I fix my hair and wear perfume
Because you admired me walking by
I saw my slender shadow move,
Because you loved me once,
I was born into this world because you loved me.

Now you are gone.
Because you loved me once
I too can sweetly die.

The Will Todd Trio

The Call of Wisdom

words based on biblical texts from Proverbs 8, set by Michael Hampel
(1967 –)

Lord of wisdom, Lord of truth, Lord of justice, Lord of mercy;
walk beside us down the years till we see you in your glory.

Striving to attain the heights, turning in a new direction,
entering a lonely place, welcoming a friend or stranger.

I am here, I am with you. I have called: do you hear me?

Silver is of passing worth, gold is not of constant value,
jewels sparkle for a while; what you long for is not lasting.

Rulers govern under me with my insight and my wisdom.
Those who know me know my love, those who seek me find
their answer.

God the Father and the Son, Holy Spirit coeternal.
Glory be ascribed to you, now and to the end of ages.

The Will Todd Trio

Amazing Grace

words by John Newton (1725 –1807)

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

continued...

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home

The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who call'd me here below,
Will be for ever mine.

Interval

during which refreshments will be provided

Mass in Blue

- 1. *Kyrie*** - Lord, have mercy
- 2. *Gloria*** - Glory to God in the highest
- 3. *Credo*** - I believe in one God
- 4. *Sanctus*** - Holy, holy Lord
- 5. *Benedictus*** - Blessed is he
- 6. *Agnus Dei*** - O Lamb of God
& ***Credo*** reprise

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Programme Notes

We are delighted this evening to present to you a selection of pieces by the British composer, Will Todd. We are thrilled to have Will himself along with Bethany Haliday, Gareth Huw-Davies and Jim Fleeman. It is also a delight to be once again be working the saxophonist Mim Etchells.

Songs of Love is a choral setting of three Greek poems. The beautiful words are free translations of the original poems by Nils Peterson, the renowned American poet who served a two-year term as Santa Clara County's first poet laureate. *Songs of Love* was commissioned by the Symphony Silicon Valley Chorale (in which Nils Peterson sang) and received its first public performance in June 2012 in San Jose. This evening the Chiltern Choir sing the first performance in the UK of the work in its entirety.

The first of the set, *I love you*, opens with the repeated phrase; "I love you", sometimes with dissonance, sometimes with consonance, but always leading to a deep, rich, warm texture in the harmonies. The second, *A kiss*, is a fast jazz waltz where the word "red" is used to describe the passion of love. In number three, *I sing because*, the music calms down again to deep, lush, rich close harmonies which are relatively consonant.

The Call of Wisdom was commissioned by St. Paul's Cathedral for the Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving service on 5th June 2012 with texts drawn from the book of Proverbs set by Michael Hampel.

Amazing Grace is simply one of the most beautiful settings of John Newton's famous poem.

Finally, the *Mass in Blue*. It is uncompromising in its use of improvisation, syncopation and harmonies. The choir is used in many different guises, sometimes to provide a rich solo line or a big band feel. At times the choir acts like a jazz soloist and at other times it provides backing vocals for the soprano soloist. It is a challenging piece for all performers as they are required to sing in a wide range of styles - quietly and beautifully to raunchy and bluesy. It is tremendous fun to sing, and we hope you will enjoy our 'Blues at the Muse'.

Notes by Michael Cayton

The Chiltern Choir, Patrons and Honorary Members

If you have enjoyed this evening's concert and would like to have a closer involvement with us, then you might like to consider becoming a Patron.

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The following people have been made honorary members in recognition of their extended service to the choir:

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This Evening's Performers

Will Todd (b. 1970), *Composer and pianist...*



Will Todd's flagship work is the jazz mass setting *Mass in Blue*, which has been performed more than a hundred times around the world since its 2003 premiere; on most occasions with the Will Todd Trio and Will at the piano. The larger Will Todd Ensemble has also recorded *Mass in Blue* with the Vasari Singers for Signum Records. His anthem *The Call of Wisdom* was commissioned by St Paul's Cathedral for the Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving Service where it was performed by the Diamond Choir.

Other notable works include opera *The Blackened Man* which won second prize in the International Verdi Opera Competition, and was subsequently staged at the Buxton Festival; oratorio *Saint Cuthbert* which has been performed many times and recorded by the Hallé Orchestra; music theatre work *The Screams of Kitty Genovese*, produced most recently by Tête á Tête Opera in London and Edinburgh; and a cantata about the Jarrow March - *The Burning Road*.

Recent projects include a setting of Keat's *Ode to a Nightingale* for Hertfordshire Chorus; a new opera *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* for Opera Holland Park; and



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the CD *The Call of Wisdom*, featuring award-winning choir Tenebrae. Current plans include major new commissions for Crouch End Festival Chorus, Salisbury Community Choir and Guildford High School; a new CD of jazz Christmas carols with the Choir of St Martin in the Fields; and singing workshops around the UK.

For more information see www.willtodd.com

Bethany Halliday, Soprano...



Bethany Halliday is best known for her recording of Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* for Signum Classics. Described as 'An addictive listen' by the Daily Express, Bethany premiered *Mass in Blue* in 2003 and continues to perform the work frequently. Venues have included St Martin in the Fields, The Barbican, The Sage Gateshead, Snape Maltings, and cathedrals around the UK. She has appeared on Radio 3 performing live excerpts on In Tune and live on Radio 4 for their 2009 Ascension Day Service.

Bethany has been involved in numerous premieres in recent years. In 2002 she premiered both Will Todd's *Elders'* Oratorio for ENO at Southwark Cathedral and Simon McEnery's *Three Sacred Pieces*. She has subsequently premiered Will Todd's oratorio *Gala and Gloria* in Durham Cathedral; Janet Wheeler's *Cantata On the Breath of the Sky*; Will Todd's *Requiem* in Cambridge and London; and Will Todd's *Te Deum* at Guildford Cathedral to a standing ovation and local critical acclaim.

Michael Cayton, Conductor...



After training at Kneller Hall, Michael served with the Grenadier Guards as a trumpeter before studying piano at the Royal College of Music, where he gained his BMus, ARCM and won the Hilda Anderson Deane prize for conducting and improvisation. While completing postgraduate répétiteur studies he was appointed the first Organ Scholar at the Royal Hospital in Chelsea. Since his debut as an organist at the Royal Festival Hall in 1988, Michael has been in demand as a recitalist and accompanist and has appeared all over the country and in Europe, with notable London appearances at St Martin-in-the-Fields and Westminster Abbey.

Since 2003 he has simultaneously held the posts of Director of Music at St John's Wood Church, organist at Belsize Square Synagogue and conductor of the Chiltern Choir. He has worked with many leading choruses including Vasari Singers and Goldsmiths Choral Union. He recently was invited to be guest conductor for Watford Philharmonic's performance of Britten's *War Requiem* and in September he will be taking up the appointment as the society's new conductor.

Michael has given many radio broadcasts for the BBC, most recently he was the organist for a live broadcast from St Martin in the Fields following the death of Nelson Mandela. He has also appeared on BBC's Songs of praise. His church music is published by Redemptorist Publications, the responsorial psalms now a staple of parish churches up and down the country. With broad musical tastes, a hunger to learn new styles and a particular talent for improvisation, he may often be found performing jazz, German cabaret and Judeo-Spanish Ladino music as well as fusion and funk.

The Will Todd Trio

Will Todd – piano

Gareth Huw-Davies – bass

Jim Fleeman - drums

The Will Todd Trio was formed in 1999 and has performed at festivals and venues around the UK and abroad.



Over the past ten years, the Trio has performed Will Todd's version of his *Mass in Blue* for choir and jazz trio many times in venues ranging from small churches to large cathedrals and concert halls. They have appeared at the Putney Jazz on the River Festival, and venues including Snape Maltings and Exeter's Barnfield Theatre. Recent performances have included St Martin in the Fields Jazz in the Crypt series, Guildford Spring Festival. Pizza Express Jazz Club Soho and many performances of *Mass in Blue* around the country.

The Will Todd Trio feature on a number of CD recordings: as the basis of the larger Will Todd Ensemble on 'Mass in Blue' for Signum Records; on 'Evensong in Blue' with the Choir of St Martin in the Fields; on 'The Glittering Plain' with saxophonist Lara James; and on their own new release 'Sounds of Freedom', with featured vocalist Bethany Halliday and trumpeter Graeme Flowers.

Mim Etchells, Saxophonist...



Mim studied music to masters level at the University of Nottingham from 2007, gaining a broad knowledge of music history and theory but excelling in saxophone performance under the tuition of Alistair Parnell.

During her time in Nottingham she performed with numerous ensembles, including leading a successful saxophone quartet that performed across England. She also played with the University's student-run jazz band and award-winning wind orchestra, as well as running the University's Music Society as President in her penultimate year.

As part of her degree, Mim performed at least two solo recitals each year, and although she primarily performed on the alto saxophone, in her final year she began to focus on the soprano as well. It was with these two instruments that she passed her LRSM exam with distinction last June and was awarded distinction for her final postgraduate performance two months later.

Since leaving university, Mim has regularly performed with South London-based Kew Wind Orchestra and has taken part in training courses with the Corps of Army Music. Now living in London, she continues to seek out playing opportunities to fit around her busy career in events.

Having made her professional debut in November 2012 playing James Whitbourn's Son of God Mass with the Chiltern Choir, Mim is delighted to be returning to perform with the choir tonight.

The Chiltern Choir - Members Singing This Evening

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Altos:

Cathy Amos, Sue Canderton, Roy Cottrell, Ana De'Ath, Liz Dobson, Rita Fryer, Philippa Goss, Helen Heenan, Anne Keyworth, Charlotte Kohnhorst, Fiona Lean, Liz Pendered, Gillian Pugh, Maggie Shrive, Marian Wax, Jenny West, Beryl Whittaker.

Tenors:

Simon Allard, Mick Currey, Andy Etchells, Paul Jenkins, Colin Parkes, Isabel Walker.

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Programme compiled and designed by Jill Haslam

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