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YEARS
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Samek
MUSIC
CLARINET &
SAXOPHONE
CLASSICS

DUO AUROUS

Joshua Heaney, saxophone
Benjamin Nylander, piano

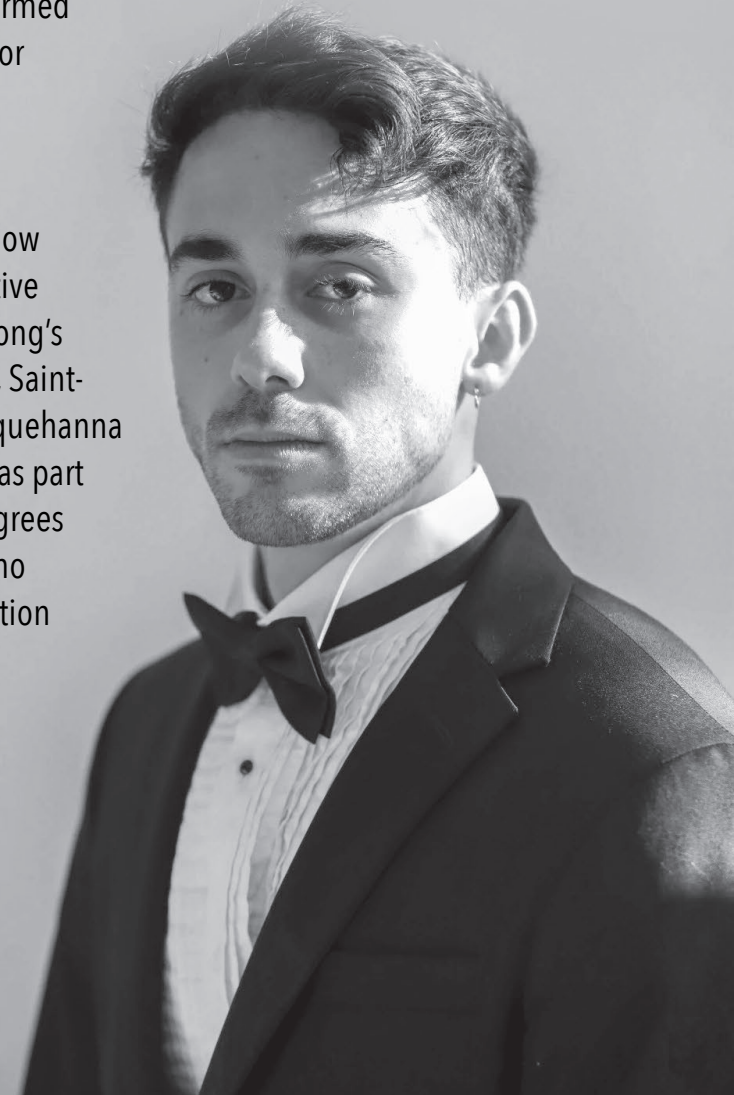
ALCHEMY

New music for saxophone and piano

Described as “extremely sensitive dynamically, with a beautiful sound” by renowned British conductor Timothy Reynish, **Joshua Heaney** is an award-winning concert saxophonist seeking novel expression, storytelling, and human connection through contemporary music. Joshua has collaborated with, commissioned, and premiered over 40 works by distinguished and emerging composers such as Augusta Read Thomas, John Luther Adams, Marilyn Shrude, Marc Mellits, Michael Schelle, Evan Ziporyn, Viet Cuong, Matthew Kennedy, and many others. He has performed throughout the United States at regional and national engagements, including the Bowling Green New Music Festival, Indiana State University Contemporary Music Festival, Society for Minimalist Music International Conference, SoundNOW, Navy Band Saxophone Symposium, and North American Saxophone Alliance Conferences. Joshua has also been heard on various music series and radio programs, including ArtsX, EAR|EYE at Toledo Museum of Art, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts’ Composer Playlist, WABE Atlanta Music Scene, and WGTE Live from FM 91. Currently, Joshua Heaney teaches saxophone, clarinet, and chamber music at Heidelberg University. He holds music degrees from Susquehanna University (BME), Georgia State University (MM/AD), and is completing the Doctor of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University. His saxophone studies are with Gail B. Levinsky, Jan Berry Baker, John Sampen, and Frederick L. Hemke. Joshua Heaney is a Conn-Selmer Artist Clinician and performs on Selmer Paris saxophones and mouthpieces exclusively.



Composer and pianist **Benjamin T. Nylander** draws inspiration from a background in traditional western performance and a variety of art forms including film, literature, theatre, and visual art. In his work, Nylander frequently embraces themes of a deep reverence of nature and human connection. He works toward an art form that transcends ideas of innovation and consumerism and strives for vitality and truth above all. Nylander has enjoyed many recent premieres of his works, including the chamber opera *Nuclear* performed and recorded by the Bowling Green State University Opera studio, *Camp* for chamber orchestra premiered by the Bowling Green State University New Music Ensemble, *Portrait of a Dreamer* read and recorded by the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, and *Tripwire 16* read and recorded by the Rhythm Methods String Quartet. Nylander has received artist residencies at the Snow Pond Music Festival in Sidney, Maine and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts in Amherst, Virginia. Recent significant performances include Viet Cuong's *Sanctuary* at the 2021 Bowling Green State University New Music Festival, Saint-Saëns' *Piano Concerto no. 2 in G minor, I. Andante sostenuto* with the Susquehanna University Orchestra, and a chamber recital at Niigata University in Japan as part of Susquehanna University's GO Program. Benjamin T. Nylander holds degrees in Music Composition (MM) from Bowling Green State University and Piano Performance (BM) from Susquehanna University. He has studied composition with Marilyn Shrude, Christopher Dietz, Mikel Kuehn, and Patrick Long in addition to piano with Solungga Liu, Naomi Niskala, and Marcos Krieger.





Distances Within Me has been established as a staple of the saxophone-piano duo repertoire since its composition. Commissioned and premiered by James Forger on June 28, 1979, at the 6th World Saxophone Congress at Northwestern University, this work explores a range of colors and affects through a lens of introspection. Rhythmic complexity is a defining quality of this piece and fosters an impression of explored spontaneity contrasted with delicate lyricism. The composer writes, "As a teenager in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960s I heard the new wave of rock, pop, rhythm and blues and jazz groups. Many bands, from Tower of Power, the Sons of Champlin and Chicago to the Count Basie Orchestra, had the saxophone in the wind section and gave it extensive solos. The alto caught the attention of my ear; its power, the vocal quality, the facility with lines and the unique coloration it has that can blend or stand out. It is an ideal solo instrument. With the piano I followed a different creative path. When I moved to Mill Valley in 1961, I took piano lessons from Mrs. Cipollina who lived nearby. Rather than devote my time to classical lessons, I liked to improvise sounds using big gestures, changing registers, chromatic harmonies, and extended melodies all with no thought about meter. A few years later, I learned how to notate these ideas I was hearing with the saxophone and the piano. In hindsight, *Distances Within Me* came from these early experiences and explorations. The title refers to a range of emotions and reflects the instinctive way the piece was composed. Several recurring themes, or motives, give a sense of a rondo form to the work, although it is actually through-composed. I have attempted to arrange the pace at which the emotions shift by creating areas of changing intensity, in essence, degrees of chromaticism and density. This allows the piece to express different sentiments evocative to the individual listener." – John Anthony Lennon

Lacrimosa was commissioned by Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity for their 44th National Convention in Orlando, Florida. The work was premiered by John Sampen and Marilyn Shrude on July 29, 2006, and is published by C.F. Peters as part of the Inter-American Music Awards Series, a joint project of SAI International Music Fraternity, SAI Philanthropies, Inc., and C.F. Peters Corporation. *Lacrimosa* explores contrasting stark and lush scenes with influences drawing from Gregorian chant, Luciano Berio, and Olivier Messiaen. "I was in residence at the Moscow Conservatory in April 2006 and was working on the commission, when I received word

that two alumni of Bowling Green State University, Robert Samels and Chris Carducci, had been killed in a plane crash along with three other music students from Indiana University. Needless to say, this was a tremendous shock. Robert was a composition student of mine—an incredibly talented musician. I made an instant decision to recast the piece (which at that time was more overt and lively) into something somber and introspective. The title, *Lacrimosa*, is Latin for 'tears' or 'weeping' and reflects the many moods such an event might evoke. The work starts quietly with fragments from the chant 'Subvenite'. As it unfolds, tension increases and conflicting emotions are portrayed. At the climax, pounding chords played repeatedly at the extreme registers of the piano convey exceptional anger and frustration. This dissolves and a sense of peace and resolution is attained as the chant is restated more simply." – Marilyn Shrude

Simple Song was composed in 2019 after the sudden passing of virtuoso saxophonist and cherished teacher, Dr. Frederick L. Hemke. In a gesture to memorialize Dr. Hemke's generosity, Mischa Zupko freely distributed the score of *Simple Song* to saxophonists around the world. "As an icon of the classical saxophone world Fred was revered by all, but what made him so special was that he had as much love and respect for those he mentored and inspired as those folks did for him. For me personally, Fred was a great champion. As a piano student at Northwestern, he inspired me weekly when I would play for his students and as a composer, he commissioned my work and was instrumental in making my saxophone music known throughout the world. He gave without ever expecting anything because he was already full; full of light, life, and so much music, abundant to share with all those he encountered. *Simple Song* was a simple gift where I could express the fullness of my gratitude in a way my words never could. As for the piece itself, there is little to explain other than the fact that I was responding to Fred's intense love for pure, unadulterated melody. The piece embraces this until near the very end where there is a quotation of Debussy's "Voiles" ("Sails). I'm not absolutely certain why this music came to me in that particular moment, but it may have had something to do with remembering Fred's image on the cover of "Simple Gifts" where he is pictured on Lake Michigan, his constant backdrop, and imagining him sailing into a mysterious eternity, full of love and never ending." –Mischa Zupko





Body of Water is a “true collaboration” between Joshua Heaney and Benjamin Nylander, in which alignment relies upon an instinctive and intuitive musicality rather than an entirely pre-decided form. Written for *Duo Aurous* in 2022, this recording represents the work’s world premiere performance. “It is my demand for an authentic musical unity (short of improvisation) that is rarely found in the classical repertoire and is the thesis of *Duo Aurous*’ work. Time flows somewhat freely in *Body of Water*. Semi-improvisation, heavy rubato, and aleatory is balanced with strict alignment and meter. This discrepancy, and the resulting misalignment and its reconciliation, is the piece’s formative element. At the smallest level of structure, multiple layers of voices (often in the same instrument, akin to solo Bach) contain the same melodic material, offset from each other in imitative counterpoint. This displacement creates an echo effect—sometimes an extension of the piano’s damper pedal, an oceanic reverb at the extreme low register of the piano, but more so a sonic geometry that infers a sense of physical space, of distance between two moments in time. Resonance, freedom, timelessness... all are impressions of the immensity and ambivalence of a body of water, *the* body of water—the self—the depths of which are as infinite as an ocean.”

—Benjamin Nylander

Sanctuary was commissioned in 2020 by a consortium of 42 saxophonists led by Joshua Heaney and Benjamin Nylander. Broad in scope, the consortium was intended to connect saxophonists of diverse persuasions and backgrounds during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sanctuary* was premiered by Joshua Heaney and Benjamin Nylander on April 17, 2021, at Bowling Green State University. This challenging work explores variations upon a soaring repeated melodic line intertwined with echoing textures between the saxophone and piano. “*Sanctuary* honors a few simple chord progressions that have provided me solace throughout my life. Over the years, these progressions have formed a sort of personal, sonic refuge that I can reliably visit in lonely or uncertain times. During this particular year of great loss, the comfort these chords provide is keenly felt. In *Sanctuary* I hope to share this sense of comfort by placing the listener and performers in a reverberant atmosphere where these harmonies continually swirl and echo around each other. It’s essentially my attempt at writing a musical hug.” — Viet Cuong

Program liner notes: Joshua Heaney and Benjamin Nylander, with comments provided by the composers

Acknowledgements

Co-Producers: Robert Dunham, Joshua Heaney, and Benjamin Nylander

Recording Engineering and Editing: Robert Dunham. Mastering: Willowhayne Records

Program liner notes: Joshua Heaney and Benjamin Nylander, with comments provided by the composers

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and audience throughout the realization of this project.

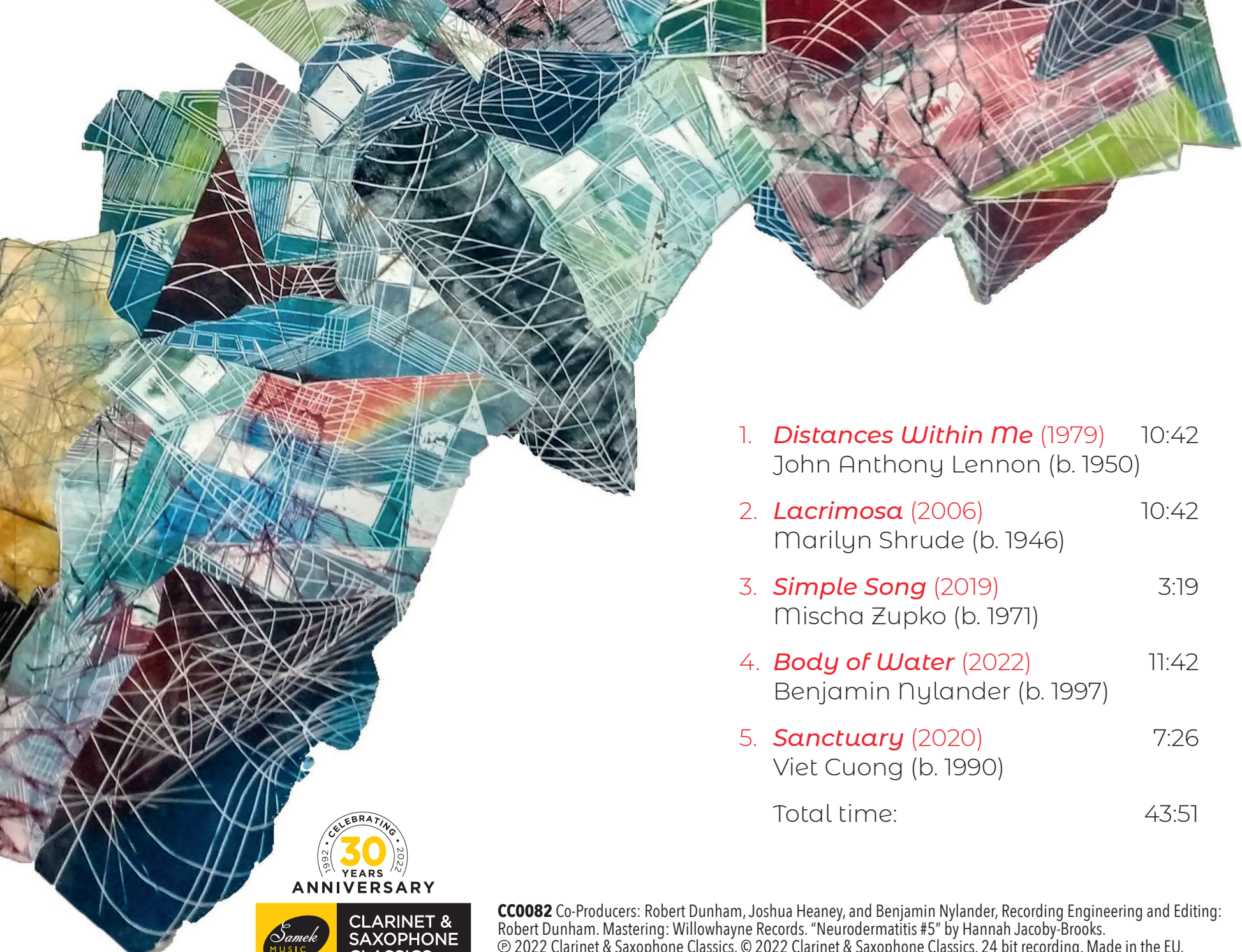
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The music was performed on a Selmer Paris SA80 Series III soprano saxophone with Selmer Paris Concept
mouthpiece and Légère European Cut 3.25 reeds, a Selmer Paris SA80 Series III alto saxophone with Selmer Paris S90
190 mouthpiece and Légère Signature 3.25 reeds, and a Steinway Model D-274 concert grand piano.

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1. *Distances Within Me* (1979) 10:42
John Anthony Lennon (b. 1950)
 2. *Lacrimosa* (2006) 10:42
Marilyn Shrude (b. 1946)
 3. *Simple Song* (2019) 3:19
Mischa Zupko (b. 1971)
 4. *Body of Water* (2022) 11:42
Benjamin Nylander (b. 1997)
 5. *Sanctuary* (2020) 7:26
Viet Cuong (b. 1990)
- Total time: 43:51

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CC0082 Co-Producers: Robert Dunham, Joshua Heaney, and Benjamin Nylander, Recording Engineering and Editing: Robert Dunham. Mastering: Willowhayne Records. "Neurodermatitis #5" by Hannah Jacoby-Brooks.
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