
Blake and Music, 2018

BY JASON WHITTAKER

JASON WHITTAKER (jwhittaker@lincoln.ac.uk) is head of the School of English and Journalism at the University of Lincoln. He is the author of several works on William Blake, including *William Blake and the Myths of Britain* (Palgrave, 1999), *Radical Blake: Influence and Afterlife from 1827* (with Shirley Dent, Palgrave, 2002), and *Blake 2.0: William Blake in Twentieth-Century Art, Music and Culture* (with Steve Clark and Tristanne Connolly, Palgrave, 2012). His main research interests deal with the reception of Blake, and he is currently working on two projects related to the artist: *Jerusalem: Blake, Parry and the Fight for Englishness* and *Divine Images: The Life and Works of William Blake*.

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- 1 **L**AST year's listing of settings of William Blake to music was relatively extensive. This was because of the addition of a considerable number of popular music settings that had been overlooked by Donald Fitch in his *Blake Set to Music: A Bibliography of Musical Settings of the Poems and Prose of William Blake* and the later "Blake Set to Music: Supplement 2001" in *Blake* 35.2 (fall 2001), and by Ashanka Kumari in "Adding to *Blake Set to Music*" in *Blake* 49.4 (spring 2016). This year's list adds settings that I had missed from the one drawn up for 2017—the majority, both popular and classical, were published or recorded from 2010 onwards—and of course includes settings that were released in 2018. As before, it avoids songs that mention Blake only tangentially or provide short quotations, but it does incorporate those, such as Michael Price's *Tender Symmetry*, that draw heavily on Blake's art and poetry.
- 2 Wherever possible, the originating country of the artist(s) is listed, as well as the work's instrumentation, duration, publisher, copyright date, genre, and format. Each entry also includes at least one link to a recording, usually *Amazon*, *Apple*, *Spotify*, or *YouTube*.

Bell, Larry — USA

From *Vocal Music*; for voices with orchestral accompaniment.

01:05:00. Albany Records, © 2005. Classical. CD.

Contents: 13. Songs of Innocence: Introduction; 14. Songs of Innocence: The Lamb; 15. Songs of Innocence: Nurse's Song; 16. Songs of Innocence: Infant Joy; 17. Songs of Innocence: Spring; 18. Songs of Experience: Introduction; 19. Songs of Experience: The Garden of Love; 20. Songs of Experience: The Sick Rose; 21. Songs of Experience: The Tyger; 22. Songs of Experience: The Voice of the Ancient Bard.

Links: *AllMusic*, *Amazon*, *Apple*, *Spotify*.

Clausen, René — USA

From *Life and Breath: Choral Works by René Clausen*; for voices.

01:02:20. Chandos, © 2012. Choral. CD.

Contents: 3. The Tyger; 4. The Lamb.

Notes: The two settings of Blake were originally composed in 2009.

Links: *Amazon*, *Apple*, *Spotify*.

Colvin, Shawn — USA

From *The Starlighter*; for voice, guitar, strings.

00:39:04. SLCRecordings, © 2018. Folk/country. CD.

Contents: 14. Cradle Song.¹

Notes: The album is based on the children's book *Lullabies and Night Songs*.

Links: *AllMusic*, *Amazon*.

Cowan, Jude — UK

From *Lamb & Tyger*; for voice, organ.

00:36:08. Ah! Sunflower, © 2011. Folk/country. CD.

Contents: 1. The Lamb; 2. London; 3. The Sick Rose; 4. A Cradle Song; 5. The Garden of Love; 6. The Little Vagabond; 7. The Divine Image; 8. The Fly; 9. The Echoing Green; 10. Infant Sorrow; 11. The Human Abstract; 12. Ah! Sunflower; 13. The Little Black Boy; 14. The Blossom; 15. The Clod & the Pebble; 16. Holy Thursday; 17. The Shepherd; 18. The Tyger.

Links: *Amazon*, *Apple*, *Spotify*.

Cuartz, Yaq — USA

From *Tyger! Tyger!*; for voice, guitars, percussion.

00:02:24. Jacob Curtis, © 2010. Rock/pop. Streaming.

1. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (9 June 2018).



Songs of Innocence and of Experience copy C, plate 2. Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress. Image courtesy of the *William Blake Archive*.

Contents: 1. Tyger! Tyger!
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Gazelle Twin — UK

From *Pastoral*; for voice, synthesizers, percussion.
00:37:24. Anti-Ghost Moon Ray, © 2018. Electronic/dance.
CD.

Contents: 11. Dance of the Peddlers.
Notes: “Dance of the Peddlers” draws upon “The Tyger” for its lyrics. Two other tracks on the album, “Little Lambs” and “Jerusalem,” almost certainly take their titles from Blake but do not use his poetry.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Glaza, Johanna — Lithuania/UK

From *Albion*; for voice, keyboards, percussion.
00:15:36. Inspired All Kinds Records, © 2018.
Avant-garde. Cassette, streaming.
Contents: 1. Albion.²
Notes: The title track sets part of Blake’s *Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion* to music.
Links: *Apple, Spotify, YouTube*.

Greif, Olivier — France

From *Lettres de Westerbork—Chants de l’âme*; for voice, piano.
1:00:59. Disques Triton, © 1999. Classical. CD.
Contents: 4. Chants de l’âme: I. The Tyger.
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Iqbal, Nabihah — UK

From *Weighing of the Heart*; for voice, keyboards, percussion.
00:39:24. Ninja Tune, © 2017. Electronic/dance. CD.
Contents: 6. Zone 1 to 6000.
Notes: “Zone 1 to 6000” takes its inspiration from the poem “London” and echoes its structure, as in the lines “In every class, in every school / At every desk where time’s well spent”
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify, YouTube*.

Jóhannsson, Jóhann — Iceland

From *Englabörn & Variations*; for voices.
01:34:43. Deutsche Grammophon, © 2018. Classical. CD.
Contents: B5. Holy Thursday (Ég heyrði allt án þess að

hlusta) (Theatre of Voices version).³
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Martin, Phil — UK

From *Before We Go to Paradise*; for voice, guitars, percussion.
00:34:13. Brentford Records, © 2012. Rock/pop. CD.
Contents: 6. Tyger, Tyger.
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Miller, Andrew — USA

From *The Lamb, for Divisi Mixed Voices a cappella*; for voices.
00:04:25. Pavane Publishing, © 2015. Choral. Score.
Contents: The Lamb.
Link: *YouTube*.

Miller, Andrew — USA

From *The Tyger, for Divisi Mixed Voices a cappella*; for voices.
00:04:29. Pavane Publishing, © 2015. Choral. Score.
Contents: The Tyger.
Link: *YouTube*.

Mitchell, Brent — USA

From *Brent Mitchell*; for voice, guitar.
00:47:48. Dog Trot, © 2005. Folk/country. CD.
Contents: 13. Tyger, Tyger.
Links: *AllMusic, Apple, Spotify*.

Mortifee, Ann — Canada

From *Journey to Kairos*; for voice and piano with orchestral accompaniment.
00:45:51. Jabula Records, © 1980. Musical. Vinyl.
Contents: A4. Tyger! Tyger!
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Myers, Tokio, and Jazmin Sawyers — UK

From *Jerusalem (The Official Anthem of Commonwealth Games, Team England, 2018)*; for voices with orchestral accompaniment.
00:02:34. Simco Limited, © 2018. Rock/pop. Streaming.
Contents: 1. Jerusalem.
Notes: A new arrangement of Parry’s hymn for the Gold

2. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (24 February 2019).

3. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (9 June 2018).

Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify, YouTube*.

Ockham's Razor — USA

From *Wolves in the Walls*; for voice, guitars, percussion.
00:59:18. Ockham's Razor, © 2010. Rock/pop. CD.
Contents: 9. Part Three, The Tiger: The Tyger.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Panufnik, Roxanna — UK

From *Celestial Bird*; for voices, piano.
00:56:27. Signum Classics, © 2018. Classical. CD.
Contents: 8. A Cradle Song.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Parker, Bo, and Paul Parker — USA

From *Cheshire Moon*; for voice, guitars, percussion.
00:49:54. New Weave Records, © 2004. Rock/pop. CD.
Contents: 2. Tyger Tyger.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Pearson, Guy — UK

From *Glad Day*; for voice and piano with orchestral accompaniment.
00:55:37. Issimo, © 2010. Classical. CD.
Contents: 1. Glad Day (Introduction); 2. A Dream; 3. An Island in the Moon; 4. The Angel; 5. A Mundane Shell; 6. Newton; 7. Ah! Sun-flower; 8. Glad Day (reprise); 9. Nurse's Song; 10. Infant Joy, Infant Sorrow; 11. The Tyger; 12. The Four Zoas; 13. Songs of Experience (Introduction); 14. Lux Nova [instrumental]; 15. Night; 16. London; 17. The Ecchoing Green; 18. Finale of the Flowers ["The Lily" and "Ah! Sun-Flower"].⁴
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Price, Michael — UK

From *Tender Symmetry*; for voices, strings, electronics.
00:46:27. Erased Tapes, © 2018. Classical. Vinyl.
Contents: 2. Speke ["The Garden of Love"]; 3. Willow Road ["Ah! Sun-Flower"]; 5. Fan Bay ["Holy Thursday"]; 6. Fountains ["The Lily"]; 7. Shade of Dreams ["A Cradle Song"].⁵
Notes: This album, recorded in various National Trust locations, does not offer direct settings of Blake's poems to music, but rather draws on them as inspiration for

4. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (20 March 2011).

5. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (18 April 2019).

ambient pieces.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Raman, Susheela — UK

From *Ghost Gamelan*; for voices, keyboards, percussion.
00:40:30. Naïve, © 2018. Avant-garde. CD.
Contents: 8. Rose (featuring Samuel Mills, Gondrong Gunarto).⁶
Notes: The album includes an original setting of Blake's "The Sick Rose."
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Rutter, John — UK

From *Mass of the Children*; for voices with orchestral accompaniment.
01:06:37. Collegium Records, © 2003. Classical. CD.
Contents: 4. Agnus Dei ["The Lamb"].
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Sora — Finland

From *Fade to What*; for voice, flute, double bass.
00:40:25. Cymbidium Records, © 2007. Jazz/blues. CD.
Contents: 4. Tyger.
Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Stubbs, Harriet — UK

From *Heaven & Hell: The Doors of Perception*; for voice, piano.
01:04:53. Suite 28 Records, © 2018. Classical. CD.
Contents: 1. Phrygian Gates (John Adams, featuring Marianne Faithfull).⁷
Notes: This debut album by classical pianist Harriet Stubbs is a curated collection of performances of artists such as Dmitry Shostakovich, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Johannes Brahms, arranged to reflect themes selected from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The opening track is an arrangement of Adams's *Phrygian Gates* with excerpts from Blake's *Marriage* read by Marianne Faithfull.
Links: *AllMusic, Amazon, Apple, Spotify*.

Warblade — USA

From *Seize the Fire*; for voice, guitars, percussion.
00:42:00. Warblade, © 2010. Heavy metal. CD.

6. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (18 April 2019).

7. For a review, see Whittaker, *Zoamorphosis* (20 December 2018); see also the interview with Stubbs on the podcast *William Blake: The Man and the Music*.

Contents: 2. The Tyger.

Links: *Amazon, Apple, Spotify.*

Williams, Chris — Australia

From *A Golden String*; for solo and mixed voices.

00:05:45. Australian Music Centre, © 2012. Choral. Score.

Contents: 1. A Golden String.

Notes: Winner of the 2012 Blake Society Tithe Grant, this was also performed by Sansara at the unveiling of Blake's new gravestone in 2018.

Link: *Vimeo.*