**Joshua Dowling**

**Performance Information**

**Joshua Dowling *The Song of Achilles***

Three movement song cycle for baritone and chamber ensemble Duration 7’14”

*I. Burial II. Our Joy III. Memories*

**Samuel Jackson** baritone, **Northern Film Orchestra** clarinet / bass clarinet, horn, marimba / crotales, vibraphone, harp, piano, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass, **Melvin Tay** conductor

Recorded at Stoller Hall, Manchester

**Text**

Excerpts from *The Song of Achilles*

***I. Burial***

Perhaps it is The greatest grief To be left on earth When another is gone.

I could recognise him By touch alone; by smell I would know him in death, At the end of the world.

When he died, All things soft and beautiful Would be buried with him.

***II. Our Joy***

In the darkness Two shadows Reaching through, Helpless heavy dusk.

Their hands meet And light spills In a flood, Like a hundred thousand golden urns, Pouring out the sun.

We were like gods At the dawning of the world, And our joy was so bright We could see nothing else But the other.

***III. Memories***

I will never leave him, It will always be this For as long as he Will let me.

You are half my soul As the poets say, You gave me peace In a lifetime of war.

I am made of memories, I am air and thought, I can do nothing. He smiled and his face was like the sun.

*Madeline Miller*

**Programme Note**

*The Song of Achilles* is a song cycle composed for baritone and chamber ensemble which sets excerpts of text from Madeline Miller’s novel of the same name. The three songs: I. Burial, II. Our Joy, and III. Memories are sung from the perspective of Achilles grieving over the death of his beloved and companion, Patroclus, who was killed in battle during the Trojan War.

**Biography**

In 2020, Joshua Dowling graduated with a first class honours degree from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire where he studied Music Technology with Ben Markland as well as Composition with Fumiko Miyachi and Andrew Toovey. For Joshua’s final year project, he produced an album of original compositions titled *Sounds of Architecture* for string ensemble, performed by the Bloomsbury Quartet, double bassist Richard English, and members of the Northern Film Orchestra.

The works featured on the album drew inspiration from the 21st century architecture style known as Parametricism and were workshopped on the 2020 Midwinter CoMA String Composition Course held at St. Hilda’s, Oxford under the tutelage of Alasdair Nicolson. The works were also accompanied by visualisations illustrating the parametric influence that were designed by three student architects Kedar Undale, Oana Taut, and Prima Abdullah.

This project led to Joshua being presented with the 2020 BCU ADM Graduate Award, a generous bursary of over £1,000 given to a promising student to fund their next artistic project following graduation. Joshua’s Philip Bates Prize competition entry this year *The Song of Achilles* is a recording that was partially funded by this awardand took place socially distanced due to COVID-19 at Stoller Hall, Manchester with Samuel Jackson (baritone), Melvin Tay (conductor), and Northern Film Orchestra