

Will Tang

Everything Changes

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Will Tang, singer songwriter and harmonica maestro from Rochdale, took the long way round to get into the British music scene, making a name for himself first in Hong Kong before returning to Manchester to launch his UK debut album 'Everything Changes'.

When Will left his home in the North West to travel the world he never expected that his ticket to adventure would be the harmonica he carried with him in his pocket. His curiosity to discover more about his roots lead him half-way round the world to Hong Kong. Although not a place renowned for its music, Will managed to find a late-night underground blues and jazz scene which he increasingly found himself becoming a part of.



His talents were soon recognised by the local musicians and his lucky break came when he was asked to play harmonica on a record that became a chart hit. Will created quite a stir with a sound and style unheard of on the scene, and this opened the door for him as a session musician; playing for the likes of **Jackie Chan** and **Andy Lau** among many others. He soon secured a record deal for himself (making him the first blues harp player to be signed in Hong Kong) and released his first album - which includes tracks with renowned guitarist **Tommy Emmanuel**.

Will went from jamming in bars to playing 10,000 seater concert halls alongside local pop stars, he also gigged relentlessly with his own band throughout Asia, refining himself as a performer and honing his skills on a number of instruments. In developing his style, Will was particularly at home with improvisational music such as blues, jazz and rock, attracted by its spontaneity and freedom of expression.

After releasing four more albums Will decided it was time to expand his career outside Hong Kong and return home to the UK.

“Will Tang? He’s a singer, harmonica player and songwriter who wails like Robert Plant and plays harmonica like only blues cats can.” - HK Magazine

Once back, he wasted no time in exploring the UK music scene, joining several bands and then forming his own trio. Playing venues and festivals both in the UK and in Europe, Will built up his name enough to seal a deal with **Zen Music** - the UK’s first ISP sponsored record label - and attract the attention of Manchester DJ and producer **Andy Votel** (Elbow, Badly Drawn Boy) who helped produce his first UK single **‘Love Bites (Remix)’**. The release, which received some great reviews, also made playlists at **XFM**, **Ministry of Sound** and **MTV** for the video.

“Tang’s trademark whiskey-soaked riffs receive the Votel treatment, complete with some of the toughest breaks ever committed to vinyl!” 247

Will is now preparing for his UK debut album release **‘Everything Changes’**. A self-produced collection of songs penned from both sides of the world, it reflects his thoughts and experiences throughout this unusual journey, and demonstrates his versatility as an accomplished musician. *“It’s a mix of new and old material that kind of sums up where I’m at right now. I wanted to keep it sounding fresh so we recorded old-school, you know, mostly live. It’s just the best when you’re all playing together and you can capture that moment when you know you’ve got something going on”* says Will. Citing influences from legendary bands like **Muddy Waters**, **Jimi Hendrix**, **Bob Dylan**, and **Led Zeppelin**, to modern artist like **The White Stripes**, **Ray LaMontagne** and **Jack Johnson**, Will shows he’s equally at home with both roots and modern styles and despite this eclecticism he still paints a cohesive picture with ease.

Will’s route to the UK may have been the long way round but judging by initial reactions to previews of his new album, including requests from **BBC Radio Manchester**, a play on **Radio 2’s Bob Harris Show** and a review in **Blues Matters**, it seems that this time Will Tang is here to stay.

Album in Review

The album presents the many colourful shades of this troubadour's rich life experience; the optimistic pop opener **Everything Changes**, inspired by a Buddhist philosophy of life's change, the gentle contemplativeness of **Drifting** and the thought-provoking **Stories**, are contrasted by aggressive Zeppelin-esque rock on **The Other Side**, a protest about war, and the be-bop tinged blues of **Time of Day**. Toning down a bit, the album version of **Love Bites** adds a touch of funk with a John Lee Hooker type guitar riff, and the comforting acoustic ballad **On My Way**, a song about lovers' separation, has a Damien Rice feel. The album's epic track is surely **Red City Blues**, a song about a young Indian brave who leaves his home and heads for the big city seeking his fortune: Here, reggae rhythms blend with rock guitars and a searing Hammond - think somewhere in the ball-park of Sting meets the Doors. Not complete without a little humour, **Something Special** is a song which Will wrote after a telephone conversation with his daughter, its uplifting Paul Simon vs. Buena Vista Social Club world flavour is surely a winner for many parents! **Troubles Down** is also guaranteed to raise a smile with its easy come, easy go attitude and sunny day, cruising with the top down, country style. Closing the album (the much acclaimed Andy Votel remixes are also included) is a solo harmonica piece called **Sundown**, just perfect for the end credits and riding off into the sunset!

Live Schedule: UK Tour 2007

Following heavily-tipped appearances at **London's City Showcase** and **The Cobden Club**, and **Manchester's In The City Showcase, Night & Day** and **Dpercussion**, a short tour is now planned to coincide with the album release in November starting with the launch event at **Manchester's Chicago Rock Café** (8th Nov) and followed by a string of dates in Academy venues in **Liverpool, Birmingham** and **London**, and a few supports with big name blues acts, **Alvin Youngblood Hart** and **Nine Below Zero**.

Contacts

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