

EARTHLY SOLACE

Eton Choirbook Reconstructions II

crd

Selene
Daniel Gilchrist *Conductor*



Emma Pauncefort writes...

On 2 May 2025, the day of the global album release of *Heavenly Light*, the first volume of Eton Choirbook reconstructions and the debut album of the Selene Consort, I sat in a packed Magdalen College Chapel in Oxford. I became one of many privileged witnesses to an extraordinary performance of works which hadn't been heard for hundreds of years, now resurrected thanks to the work of Russell Blacker. I found myself reaching for superlatives, none of which could do the experience of being transported to some ordinarily untouchable celestial place through the intricate tapestry of chant and polyphony justice. To think that over 500 years previous Richard Davy, one of the composers on that album and included in the programme, had walked through the same nave and cloisters, and that his *Gaude Flore Virginali* had perhaps reverberated around the same walls before be-

ing lost during the upheaval of the Reformation.

My only *solace* from the regretted ephemerality of the live performance was that the vocal virtuosity of the singers and haunting word settings had been captured and were now available for anyone beyond the chapel to enjoy; such is the wonder of recorded music.

Privy to the recording sessions for this album, I feel a similar sense of relief; that we have avoided both perpetuating the tragedy of lost works and denying anyone anywhere the opportunity to enjoy this repertoire in the nuanced performances from Selene. Here, the listener is invited to be transported again. Only, this time, we keep rooted in *earthly* concerns by honing in on how music might be the salve we yearn for in times of such tumult and uncertainty.

Emma Pauncefort [Director](#)
Tom Pauncefort [Director](#)

From the conductor: Daniel Gilchrist writes...

I'm delighted to be bringing this second part of our Eton Choirbook recording project into the world, to follow the first instalment, *Heavenly Light*. The second album moves away from the work of Wylkynson and consists of pieces by seven other composers, five in reconstructions by Russell Blacker, and two – Banester's *O Maria et Elizabeth* and Browne's *Stabat iuxta Christi Crucem* – which are preserved complete in the manuscript. It is these two pieces which frame the album and inspired its title, *Earthly Solace* – in contrast to the purely celestial focus of the rest of the texts, they both have a very direct relation to events happening in the English royal family at the time of their composition, and bookend specifically the life of Arthur, ill-fated elder brother of the future Henry VIII.

The *earthly* relevance and purpose of the Medieval divine office, including the polyphony that adorned it was, according to a common view, one way of creating here below a pale echo of the splendour of heaven, and many devotional texts describe a vision which has never been completely achieved in the world of the living. A significant section of the Eton Choirbook is devoted to settings of the *Magnificat*, which was a text in daily use in the liturgy of English Cathedrals, Chapels and Churches – and still is today. John Sygar's reconstructed four-part setting is the centrepiece of this disc. Singing or conducting the *Magnificat* myself in the weeks around the time of writing, I find the Virgin Mary's most radical, hopeful vision of the filling of the hungry and levelling of rich and poor, mighty and humble, to be in painfully stark contrast to the state of the world. It's not always easy to share in her spiritual exultation.

Despite the world's bleakness, there is endless comfort in music, and I hope the listener can find some *solace* in our offering here. I am particularly fond of Brygeman's *Salve Regina*. It's a text that I've loved since being introduced to neumes and plainsong through its famous solemn tone chant in Year 7 at school; a state school – take note naysayers, it can be done! As polyphonic settings of it go, I find the Brygeman/Blacker version to be unsurpassed.

Daniel Gilchrist, Hatfield, August 2025

From the reconstructor: *Russell Blacker writes...*

In May 2025, *Heavenly Light*, the first of two albums featuring reconstructions of music from the Eton Choirbook, delighted listeners and was dubbed 'incredibly special' by BBC Radio 3. This, the second album, has a double focus.

Firstly, it presents the remaining incomplete but reconstructable works in 'Eton' and features the only known works by two outstanding composers – John Sygar and William Brygeman – alongside two 'new' and glorious six-part works by William Cornyshe and Walter Lambe. (Descriptions of the process of reconstruction are given in the accompanying booklet to *Heavenly Light*.)

This album also presents two Royal commissions to celebrate the life – and death – of Prince Arthur, the son and heir of King Henry

VII and Elizabeth of York: Gilbert Banester's *O Maria et Elizabeth*, which is thought to have been written to celebrate the birth of the prince in 1486, and John Browne's astonishing *Stabat Iuxta Christi Crucem*, which mourns his death in 1502. These two works bookend his life and also the time period when most of the works in the Eton Choirbook were composed.

To hear these works brought back to life for the first time after 500 years has been a thrilling experience. For the listener, it opens another door onto the highly colourful pre-Reformation world where churches were emblazoned with frescoes, painted screens, stained glass, statuary, embroidery, metalwork, illuminated manuscripts, organs and liturgy – almost all of which has been lost.

I am enormously grateful to the singers of Selene and their intelligent and sensitive direction under Daniel Gilchrist for bringing

these reconstructions to the light of day.

Performance note

The recording was a collaborative project with some decisions concerning tempo, interpretation and *ficta* being left to Daniel and the singers.



Anon. Crown Prince, Arthur of Wales, c 1500

The Programme

The *Gaude Flori Virginali – secunda pars* was probably written by **William Cornyshe senior** about whom nothing is known except that he was instructor of the choristers at Westminster Abbey in 1479. Half of what remains of this work has been reconstructed: the treble, contratenor 1, and tenor lines. The original *cantus firmus* is unknown but *Ave gloriosa* (from *Ave Regina Caelorum* for the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) slips very comfortably into the texture. Cornyshe clearly had a fondness for harmonic richness, and it was possible to include one of his favoured diminished fourths in the 'Amen'.

Robert Fayrfax is the most famous composer of the early Tudor period. He came from a well-to-do family in Deeping Gate in Lincolnshire – his father

owned 1200 acres of land and a substantial house and, at one point, was sheriff of Northamptonshire. Robert was born in 1464, one of fourteen children. The family enjoyed connections with Margaret Beauchamp of Maxey Castle, the St John family of Thorpe Hall, and the Brownes of Stamford. It is already known that the composer enjoyed the patronage of Lady Margaret, the King's mother, later in life, but research by Nicholas Sandon has revealed that this patronage probably began when Robert was a child.

By December 1497, he had become a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal – the same year in which he received a number of benefices. Fayrfax gained a Mus.B from Cambridge in 1501 and a Mus.D in 1504. In 1509, King Henry VIII granted him the annuity of a farm in Hampshire and later made him a 'Poor Knight of Windsor'. In 1520, he headed up the Chapel Royal at the Field of the

Cloth of Gold. He died the following year and is buried in the chancel of St Alban's Abbey; this has previously been assumed because he had musical connections and/or had written music for the choir, but it may also have reflected his social status.

Fayrfax was old enough to contribute six pieces to the Eton Choirbook, three of which are lost. However, his contributions straddle the stylistic change that was about to occur: his *Salve Regina* is in the florid style typical of the earlier 'Eton' repertoire; contrastingly, by the time of *Ave Lumen Gratiae*, which was added later, he had advanced towards a simpler style which employed much imitation. The tenor and bass parts have been reconstructed. Although there are indications in the manuscript for both reduced and full scoring, Daniel and Selene chose to sing this work one to a part.

Robert Fayrfax, Engraving from tomb
St Alban's Abbey



William Brygeman was a lay clerk at Eton for just three terms (1503–1504), but he had spent some years previously at King's College, Cambridge. After leaving Eton, he moved to new employment as parish clerk at All Saints' Church, Bristol. He seems to have returned to King's between 1513 and 1515, but he was back in Bristol by the time of his death in c.1524 when he bequeathed a large quantity of polyphonic music to the church – all of it, sadly, now lost.

His five-part *Salve Regina* is the only work of his to have survived. It employs the *cantus firmus Omnes electi* (the fifth psalm antiphon after first vespers on All Saints).

The middle section is lost but we are fortunate, nonetheless, to have 187 bars remaining of extraordinary music of which half has been reconstructed: the mean 2 and bass in the first half, and the mean 1 and contratenor in the second half.

The compass of 19 notes and vocal ranges suggest that this piece may have been intended for two means plus tenor, contratenor and bass. Selene have chosen to sing it transposed up a minor third with a treble on the top line.

This work was one of the hardest to reconstruct because what remains is full of oddities – unexpected harmonic sequences and sudden bursts of extremely rhythmic figurations. Weaving new counterpoint around these sections and rendering them in a coherent and musically satisfying whole took many rewrites. However, to the singers' surprise, the work turned out to be beautiful. Listeners will note that Brygeman introduces intense harmonies for sections where there was opportunity for word painting e.g. '*Et pro nobis flagellato, Spinis puncto, felle potato*' ('And for our sake whipped, Pierced with thorns, made to drink bile'). One can only lament that this is the sole

surviving work from what appears to have been a very talented composer.

John Sygar was based at King's College, Cambridge between 1499 and 1501, and 1508 and 1514. He graduated as a Doctor of Music in 1501, just a few years before Fayrfax did so. His assured setting of the *Magnificat* for four voices is notable for its taut counterpoint and much use of imitation. This is Sygar's only surviving work: there was another *Magnificat* by him in 'Eton', but this is lost. Half of the current work has been reconstructed: the mean and tenor voices in the first half, and the contratenor and bass voices in the second half. Selene chose to sing the chants in *faburden*, which was common practice at the time and adds a richness to the performance.

Walter Lambe, originally from Salisbury, was elected to a scholarship at Eton in July 1467 at fifteen years of age. He left Eton in

1477 to take up a post at Arundel College before moving back, in 1479, to St George's, Windsor. He is one of the most impressive composers in 'Eton'; not only did he contribute twelve works to the collection, but the quality of his writing places him alongside the great John Browne. In his six-part *O Regina Caelestis Glorae*, of which only the first half survives, Lambe displays his technical prowess by employing two *cantus firmi* simultaneously – the chants for Epiphany: *Hodie in Jordane* and *Magi videntes stellam*. Half of this work had to be reconstructed – the quaterble, mean and bass. The reconstruction with two overlapping trebles acquires a brilliance and sonority typical of Lambe at the height of his powers. It is another stunningly beautiful work from a master of the late medieval period which would otherwise have remained unknown.

Gilbert Banester worked at the Royal Court, being appointed to the Chapel Royal by Edward IV in 1469 and later becoming Master of the Choristers in 1478. His five-part *O Maria et Elizabeth* is a serene work believed to have been written in 1486 either to celebrate the birth of Prince Arthur, the heir to the throne, or the churching of his mother a month later. Banester chose as his *cantus firmus* *Regnum mundi Eructavit cor meum*, which contains an allusion to a royal wedding. In the manuscript, there is an illuminated capital for the treble part which shows two infants clasping hands; Catherine Hocking has suggested this refers to a dance performed by Jesus and John the Baptist at the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. This raises the following question: if this was an occasional work for 1486, what is it doing in a collection of antiphons collated 20 years later? The likelihood is that it was retained for use following subsequent royal births such as that of Henry VIII in

1491 and the other five children born to Henry and Elizabeth. The name of the king is deliberately left blank in the manuscript (we have used the three-syllable '*Henricum*') so the work could be adapted for celebrating subsequent royal births. The text, which is lengthy, may have been written by Banester himself – he was the author of several poems, produced the English translation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and wrote pageants for the Royal Court. Apart from one secular piece by him in the Fayrfax manuscript, this *O Maria* is his only surviving religious work. It must also have been one of his last since he died the following year (1487).

As Banester's work celebrates the birth of Prince Arthur, so the other work in our programme mourns his death, in April 1502, at Ludlow Castle. It is known that the boy's parents were distraught and **John Browne**'s setting of *Stabat luxta Christi Crucem* is one of the most

moving – and extraordinary – works in the Choirbook. Written for six-part men's voices (two tenors, two baritones, and two basses, all occupying a range of only 14 notes), it draws parallels between the parents' grief and that of the Virgin Mary at the foot of the Cross.

More poignantly still, Browne chooses as his *cantus firmus* a song written just six months earlier by fellow composer, Edmund Turges, which invoked God's protection on Arthur as he travelled west: '*From stormy winds and grievous weather*'. (Interestingly, Browne used another secular work by Turges as his *cantus firmus* for his famous *Stabat Mater*, suggesting that these two works may have formed a pair; both are intense in their portrayal of grief through the use of dark and affecting harmonies). There is a richness to *Stabat luxta* with much imitation between the voices, alternations between major and minor which add poignancy to the

text, and the work ends with three deliberate major/minor clashes which convey the pangs of grief.

Browne is recognised as the most gifted composer in 'Eton'. Magnus Williamson has proposed that he was the John Browne who came from Coventry and was elected King's Scholar at Eton in 1467 at the age of fourteen, making he and Walter Lambe exact contemporaries. However, he then disappears from view and nothing more is known about him, including where he worked subsequently; a royal commission for *Stabat luxta* argues for a London base. Hopefully, more evidence will turn up in due course, although it is unlikely that any further music will emerge since 'Eton' is the sole surviving source for his magnificent music.

[Russell Blacker, Cornwall, July 2025](#)

Texts

Accepted translations amended where appropriate by Russell Blacker

O Maria et Elizabeth

O Maria et Elizabeth, O fecunde cognate omnium matres Matrum felices ex quibus deus novum commercium prolis educandi natura mirante specialiter operatus est. Tu Maria velut rubus Moysi igne haud concupiscencie combusta eundem filium et non alium quem pater ab eterno genuit Jhesum ex tempore mater et virgo peperisti.

Et tu Elizabeth ut arida virgo aaron miro ordine florida cunctis sanctiorem prophetis procreasti sterilis Johannem. Sic ambarum ubera de celo plena sed Maria superplena de cuius plenitudine demones conculcantur homines salvantur angeli reintegrantur et

quiquid partus Elizabeth boni habet ex donis gracie filii Marie est.

O viscera celi rore onusta quarum obsequiis devote salutando humilitatis invicem prestitis; Eve peccamina veteris abolita precomia Trinitatis audita et nostre redempcionis primordia declarantur. Ac obtrusis ventre creatorem servus regem salvatorem cognovit et more tripudii mutuo filii congaudebant. Matres quidem gratam societate floridum aspectum ac colloquia celica cum dulcibus ad invicem osculis ad libitum habuerunt.

Suscipe igitur piissima mater has preces nostras et ad solium defer filii tui ubi iuxta se te ipsam posuit. Nam nephas est alibi te esse quam ubi est id quod a te genitum est. Protege quesumus tibi devotum athletam regem nostrum [Henricum] gratiam dans huberem qua clemens cum iustitia diu regnet.

Da virtutem illi in armis triumphantem hostesque rabidos iugo premat iusto et prosperitatem nobis confirmet et post felices grandevi patris annos succedant liberi regno in paterno et avito virtute antiquos exsuperrantes celibratos.

Ac ecclesiam et regnum et fidem et pacem habeat populus, amore timeat deum regem et legem, et nobis peccatoribus det veniam et gratiam immortalis deus tuus filius gloriosus. Amen.

O Mary and Elizabeth, O fruitful kin of all mothers, blessed mothers, from whom God, by the wondrous work of nature, specially wrought a new work of raising offspring. You, Mary, like the bush of Moses which was not consumed by fire, both mother and virgin and not consumed by lust – you gave birth to the son whom the Father begot from eternity – Jesus.

And you, Elizabeth, although barren,

like the budding rod of Aaron gave birth to John, holier than all the prophets. Thus the wombs of both are filled from heaven, but Mary's is overflowing from whose fullness demons are trampled down, men are saved, and angels are reinstated, and whatever was good in Elizabeth's birth is from the gift of grace, the son of Mary.

O wombs of heaven, laden with dew, with whose services you devoutly greet one another in humility, here the sins of Eve are abolished, the proclamations of the Trinity are heard, and the beginnings of our redemption are declared.

And with their bellies pressed together, the servant (John) recognized the Creator, the King, the Saviour, and in the manner of mutual rejoicing the children rejoiced. The mothers had a pleasant flowery look in their company together, and celestial conversations with sweet kisses to each other at will.

Therefore, most pious mother, accept these prayers of ours, for it is unseemly for you to be anywhere other than where he is that was born of you. We beg you to protect our devoted champion King [Henry], granting him the grace to reign long, mercifully and justly.

Give him the strength to triumph in arms and to crush his furious enemies with a just yoke and to grant prosperity for us. And after the happy years of the father's greatness, may his children succeed to the kingdom, surpassing their forebears in their father's and ancestral virtue. And may the people inherit a church and a kingdom of faith and peace, may they fear God the king and the Law with love, and may your glorious immortal son God grant us sinners pardon and grace. Amen.

Gaude Flore Virginali — *secunda pars*

Gaude mater miserorum
Quia pater saeculorum
Dabit te colentibus
Congruentem hic mercedem
Et felicem poli sedem
Regnis in celestibus.
Gaude virgo mater Christi
Quia sola meruisti,
O virgo piissima,
Esse tantae dignitatis
Quod sis sanctae trinitatis
Sessioni proxima.

Gaude virgo mater pura
Certa manens et secura
Quod haec septem gaudia
Non cessabunt, nec decrescent,
Sed durabunt, et florescent
Per aeterna secula. Amen.

Rejoice, mother of mercy, for the father of the ages will give those who worship you appropriate reward here and the blessed throne of the world to rulers in the heavens.

Rejoice, virgin mother of Christ, for you alone were worthy, O most holy virgin, to be of such worthiness that you may be to the holy trinity seated nearest.

Rejoice, pure virgin mother, and of this be certain and secure, that these seven joys will neither end nor decrease but will last and flourish through eternal ages. Amen.

Ave Lumen Gratiae — *secunda pars*

Ave ros dulcedinis,
mater pulchritudinis.
Rosa sine spina,
Via rectitudinis,
turre fortitudinis,
vitae medicina.

Ave spes fidelium,
castitatis lilium,
victoriae palma
Caelesti sacrarium,
dulce refrigerium,

Dei mater alma

Eia me visita,
atque sursum visita,
dulcis mater Dei.
Pietatis solita
pro me Christum rogit,
semper memmor mei

Ut meis reatibus
tuis parcat precibus
auctor pietatis
ac mundanis sordibus,
et mihi cum civibus
vivere beatis. Amen.

Hail, dew of sweetness, mother of beauty. Rose without thorn, Way of righteousness, Tower of strength, medicine of life. Hail, speed of the faithful, lily of chastity, palm of victory, Heavenly sanctuary, sweet refreshment, Mother of God.

Therefore, come to me and raise me up, sweet mother of God; with your accustomed piety, petition Christ for me. May my misdeeds be overlooked

*through your prayers, author of piety;
and once my sins are washed away,
may I live among the saints. Amen.*

Salve Regina

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae:
Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evae.
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et
flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, Advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos ad
nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum
ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exilium ostende.
[missing section]

Funde preces tuo nato,
Crucifixo, vulnerato,
Et pro nobis flagellato,
Spinis puncto, felle potato.
O dulcis Maria, salve.

*Hail, O Queen, Mother of mercy;
our life, sweetness and hope, Hail!
To you we cry, exiled children of Eve,
to you we sigh, moaning and weeping
in this valley of tears.*

*Therefore look! our advocate, turn
your most merciful eyes toward us.
And reveal to us Jesus, blessed fruit
of your womb, after this exile [missing
section]*

*Pour prayers on your son, Crucified,
wounded,
And for our sake whipped, Pierced
with thorns, made to drink bile.
O sweet Mary, Hail.*

Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum
et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo,
salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae
suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me
dicent omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens

est, et sanctum nomen eius,
et misericordia eius a progenie in
progenies timentibus eum.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo,
dispersit superbos mente cordis
sui.
Deposuit potentes de sede et
exaltavit humiles;
esurientes implevit bonis et divites
dimisit inanes.
Suscepit Israel puerum suum
recordatus misericordiae suae,
sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui
Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et
semper, et in saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

*My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my
Saviour:
For he hath regarded: the lowliness
of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth: all
generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified*

*me: and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear
him: throughout all generations.
He hath showed strength with his
arm: he hath scattered the proud in
the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from
their seat: and hath exalted the
humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good
things: and the rich he hath sent
empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath
holpen his servant Israel: as he
promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed, for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the
Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.*

Stabat Iuxta Christi Crucem

Stabat iuxta Christi crucem Videns
pati veram lucem Mater regis
omnium. Vidit caput coronatum,

Spinis, latus perforatum, Vidit mori filium. Vidit corpus flagellari, Manus, pedes perforari, Mitis a crudelibus. Vidit caput inclinatum, Totum corpus cruentatum Pastoris pro ovibus. In dolore tunc fuisti, Virgo pia, cum vidisti Mori tuum filium. Dolor ingens, dolor ille Dicunt sancti plus quam mille Praecellit martyrium. Virgo mitis, virgo pia, Spes reorum, vitis via, Virgo plena gratia, lube natum et implora Servis tuis sine mora Nobis donet gaudia.

Beside the cross of Christ she stood, watching the true light suffer, the mother of the king of all. She saw his head crowned with thorns, his side pierced. She saw her son die. She saw his body scourged, his hands, his feet transfixed, that tender one, by cruel men. She saw his head bowed low, all his body stained with blood, the shepherd for his sheep. Yours then the anguish, holy virgin, when you saw your son perish. Great sorrow it was, that sorrow the countless saints

declare surpasses martyrdom. Gentle virgin, virgin holy, hope of sinners, way of the vine, virgin full of grace, bid your son, implore him that even now he may grant joy to us who are your servants.

O Regina Caelestis Glorae – *prima pars*

O regina caelestis gloriae
Dignitatis et excellentiae
Per te nobis O mater venie
Remitatur pondus nequitiae
Gemma sidus splendoris nimii
Luna fulgens immensi radii
Desolatis spes plena gaudii
Portus sis nobis refrigeri.
O regina decus caelestium
Miserorum spes et refugium.
O adiutrix te deprecantium
Tuum pro nobis ora filium.
Stella micans plena fulgoribus
Vitam praebens te intuentibus
Emundatos culparum sordibus
Nos catervis iunge caelestibus

Virgo manens et mater regina
Te beatam fatentur omnia
Meritorum privilegia
Explicare nequit ecclesia.

Queen of heavenly glory, through you may the yoke of sin be lifted from us. Jewel, most splendid star, lambent moon, be the access to our restoration.

Queen, hope and refuge of sinners, convey our entreaties to your son. Glittering star, filled with life-giving radiance to those who behold you, Unite us with the heavenly host after our sins have been purged. Royal virgin mother, the church cannot exhaust the privileges of your merits. Hail, heavenly radiance set above the highest orders; guide us wayfarers.

Selene

Soprano

Áine Smith
Ailsa Campbell
Margaret Lingas

Alto

Joy Sutcliffe
Ellie Stamp
Will Prior

Tenor

Archie Inns
Jack Granby
Joseph Hancock
James Robinson

Baritone

Jon Stainsby
Ben Watkins
Simon Grant
Ben Gilchrist (Browne *Stabat luxta* only)

Bass

Tom Lowen
Jonathan Pratt
Piers Kennedy
Rob Macdonald (Browne *Stabat luxta* only)



© Hubert Cecil

Selene (*suh-LEE-knee*) was conceived in January 2022 by Daniel Gilchrist, Joy Sutcliffe and Sebastian Hill, and gave its first concert in Magdalen College chapel the following month, featuring Tallis' *Lamentations*. The twin foci in terms of repertoire were initially sacred choral music of the late C16th and early C21st, and the aim to sing these mostly one to a part in concert in a manner which engaged the audience in the drama of the music with such ferocity as to leave no hope of escape.

The group has since gone from strength to strength, expanding its roster of singers and its repertoire. A recent performance at the Three Choirs Festival of a wonderful passion setting by Stölzel, a contemporary of Bach, was favourably reviewed. Following an encounter with Cornwall-based polymath Russell Blacker in 2023, Selene has developed a significant focus on the music of the Eton

Choirbook, and has been engaged in a long-term project to record and perform reconstructions by Dr Blacker of incomplete pieces from it. These are presented in the two commercial releases, *Heavenly Light* (released May 2025) and the current album *Earthly Solace*.

Conductor

Daniel Gilchrist (b. 1999) is a conductor and tenor based in London, England. A first-study cellist as a teenager, his musical home shifted to the arena of vocal music while studying at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge between 2017 and 2020. Since then, he has enjoyed a varied career at home and abroad singing music from the C12th to the C21st. He co-founded the group Selene in 2022 whilst working as a Lay Clerk at New College, Oxford, and is its musical director. He is also the Director of Music at St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood.



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Scores of all the reconstructions by Dr Russell Blacker are available.
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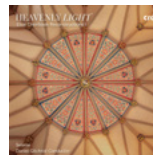
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1	Gilbert Banester	<i>O Maria et Elizabeth a5 prima pars</i>	5:13
2	William Cornyshe	<i>Gaude Flori Virginali a6 secunda pars</i>	5:13
3	Robert Fayrfax	<i>Ave Lumen Gratiae a4 secunda pars</i>	4:45
4	Gilbert Banester	<i>O Maria et Elizabeth a5 secunda pars</i>	2:48
5	William Brygeman	<i>Salve Regina a5</i>	9:54
6	John Sygar	<i>Magnificat a4</i>	12:54
7	Gilbert Banester	<i>O Maria et Elizabeth a4 tertia pars</i>	5:02
8	John Browne	<i>Stabat iuxta Christi Crucem a6</i>	10:27
9	Walter Lambe	<i>O Regina Caelestis Gloriae a6 prima pars</i>	6:01
Total Time			1:01:51

Front image Wells Cathedral Chapter House, Somerset, UK, Photo, David Iliff

Recorded 16-18 January 2025
St Martin's, East Woodhay, England, UK

Executive Producers Emma Pauncefort,
Tom Pauncefort
Producer Adrian Hunter
Sound Engineer Adrian Hunter
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