

CHRISTIAN FORSHAW AND GRACE DAVIDSON EXPLORE NEW NARRATIVE FOR RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE FAVOURITES IN UPCOMING ALBUM *HISTORICAL FICTION*

The pair's fourth recording together, to be released on 17 September 2021, features arrangements of works in Forshaw's signature instrumentation of voice, saxophone and organ

The single 'The Silver Swan' is out today, 15 April



Composer and saxophonist Christian Forshaw and soprano Grace Davidson announce *Historical Fiction*, their fourth album together, due to be released by Integra Records on 17 September. The album presents well-known Renaissance and Baroque works arranged and modernised for soprano, saxophone and organ in Christian's signature 'contemporary ecclesiastical' style. In putting together these works, Christian was inspired by the process used by authors of the literary historical fiction genre, who embellish context and facts of a historical period to produce a story for modern audiences. Using the frameworks of original text, melodies and outline harmony, Christian and Grace have imagined a new setting for works by composers including G.F. Handel, Orlando Gibbons, Henry Purcell, John Dowland and Marin Marais.

The pair used last summer's UK lockdown as an opportunity amidst performance cancellations to explore how these established classics could be remodelled, experimenting with multiple keys and arrangements before producing the final recordings in St John the Baptist church in Cockayne Hatley, Cambridgeshire, accompanied by organist Alexander Mason. Linking each piece through reconstructed fragments of the original works, Christian and Grace have created the opportunity to listen to these pieces bound together in new ways while still staying true to style, phrasing and expression of the works' original eras.

Grace Davidson said: *"We're delighted to have worked together again on this upcoming album. The works we chose are not only loved by so many but hold special significance to us as works we have known for many years and often performed."*

Christian Forshaw said: *"We had a lot of fun choosing pieces for an imagined state occasion as we peered in through the west doors of Westminster Abbey, with various dignitaries arriving and departing to their own musical backdrop. Amongst the many losses of lockdown, the advantage of having the luxury of time to experiment and create was something I greatly appreciated."*

The centrepiece and original inspiration for this recording is George Frideric Handel's *Eternal Source of Light Divine*, the alternative title for the secular cantata *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*. While Grace's personal connection to this piece comes from a performance at her own wedding in 2009, its recent notable public performance came on 19 May 2018 when it was played as the bridal entry music for the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. This track will be released as a single three years later on 19 May 2021. The other single, released on 15 April, is 'The Silver Swan' based on Orlando Gibbons' hugely popular madrigal from 1612.

Other works from the album have been taken from Christian and Grace's extensive repertoire built from their careers. Grace has performed many in their original settings, both solo and with ensembles such as Collegium Vocale, the Academy of Ancient Music and the Monteverdi Choir, while Christian has been influenced by previous contemporary settings; Michael Nyman reworked Purcell's *So! When the glitt'ring Queen of the Night* in his score for *The Draughtsman's Contract* and Steve Martland used *Sonneries de St Geneviève* in his piece *Re-mix*.

This recording is the fourth in a series of album collaborations between Christian and Grace. Following the chart success of Christian's first solo album *Sanctuary*, which first experimented with the combination of saxophone, voices and organ (as well as percussion), Grace appeared as a soloist for Dowland's 'None But Me' on his second album, *Renouncement*, in 2005. Since then, they have continued performing and recording together, combining the complimentary sounds of Grace's specialist Baroque voice and Christian's saxophone playing and compositional style, greatly influenced by the ecclesiastical soundworld he knew as a chorister.

The launch concert for the album is planned to take place at Temple Church, London on 28th September 2021.

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-ENDS-

For audio files of the singles, single covers and press photos, click [here](#).

For further album or press information, or to request a physical copy of the album, please contact Premier Comms

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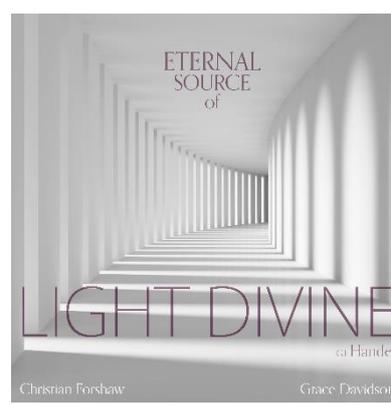
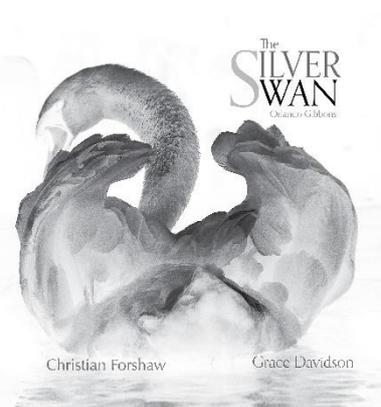
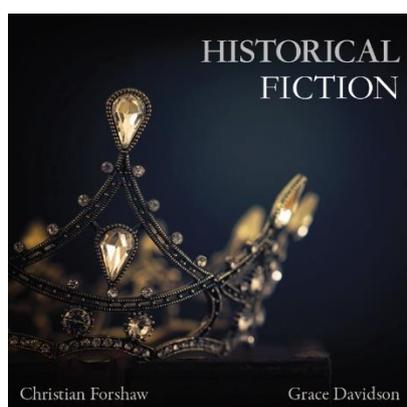
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Notes to Editor

Track listing

1. With Distinguished Glory – **Christian Forshaw**
2. Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne, “Eternal Source of Light Divine” – **George Frideric Handel arr. Christian Forshaw**
3. Dazzling Beams – **Christian Forshaw**
4. So When the Glitt’ring Queen of Night, The Yorkshire Feast Song Z.333 – **Henry Purcell arr. Christian Forshaw**
5. More Fools Than Wise – **Christian Forshaw**
6. The Silver Swan – **Orlando Gibbons, arr. Christian Forshaw**
7. Majesty – **Christian Forshaw**
8. Caprice de St. Geneviève – **Christian Forshaw**
9. Sonnerie de Sainte-Geneviève du Mont de Paris – **Marin Marais**
10. The Cyprian Grove – **Christian Forshaw**
11. Fairest Isle – **Henry Purcell, arr. Christian Forshaw**
12. Ombra Mai Fu – **George Frideric Handel, arr. Christian Forshaw**
13. Come, Heavy Sleep – **John Dowland, arr. Christian Forshaw**
14. Funeral Sentences for the Death of Queen Mary – **Henry Purcell, arr. Christian Forshaw**

Smart URL: <https://christianforshaw.com/thesilverswansingle.html>



Christian Forshaw

Christian spent his childhood in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire. He moved to London when he was 19 to study at the Guildhall School.

In his late teens he had the privilege of working with Moondog, aka Louis Hardin. This experience had a profound effect on Christian’s understanding of the way contemporary music could work, without boundaries or preconceptions. He later went on to work with Michael Nyman, performing with the Michael Nyman Band and also working as part of the production team on a number of his film scores.

In his late twenties Christian was appointed Professor of Saxophone at the Guildhall School. Around the same time he released his debut album *Sanctuary* which received an unprecedented amount of air play on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM, reaching No.1 positions in the classical charts.

To date he has recorded six solo albums which explore his compositions, arrangements and distinctive playing. Christian’s music has been featured in a number of films, TV and radio scores, most recently for Ridley Scott’s film *The Last Duel* for 20th Century Fox.

In 2012 he was approached by Decca to compose, arrange and perform a number of tracks for Voces8 on their critically acclaimed albums *Eventide* and *Lux*.

More recently Christian's sound has been heavily featured on a number of releases on the Village Green label, working with composer Angèle David-Guillou and the electronic group Snow Palms. Christian has toured, recorded and performed with artists as diverse as Brian Eno, Damon Albarn, Hugh Jackman as well as the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the majority of British orchestras. He is currently working on a project with Tenebrae directed by Nigel Short, to be launched later in 2021.

Grace Davidson

Grace Davidson is a British soprano who specialises first and foremost in the performance and recording of Baroque music.

Grace grew up in a house whose hallway was entirely filled by a grand piano which was being stored for a friend of the family – music was physically unavoidable. She learned the piano and the violin but it was singing that she loved best. Taken to 'Cats' when she was three years old she sang along throughout or, rather, whenever her mother's hand wasn't clamped over her mouth. And it was her singing that won her a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music where she won the Early Music prize.

Since then she has worked as a soloist with leading Baroque ensembles, under the batons of Sir John Eliot Gardner, Paul McCreesh, Philippe Herreweghe and Harry Christophers.

Her discography includes a decade of recordings with The Sixteen, many of which feature her as soloist – Handel's *Jeptha* (as Angel), *Dixit Dominus*, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, *Pianto della Madonna*, *Acis and Galatea* (as Galatea) and the Lutheran Masses of Bach. On Radio Three's 'Building a Library', her singing in Fauré's *Requiem* (with the London Symphony Orchestra and Tenebrae, Nigel Short conducting) was reviewed by Richard Morrison quite simply: "Grace Davidson's *Pie Jesu* is matchless".

Grace's purity of tone has attracted many of the leading contemporary composers to write for her, most notably Max Richter, who chose her as the solo singer for many of his works, such as *Sleep*. This piece – lasting all night – has now been performed all over the world, including a performance in 2019 on the Great Wall of China.

Recent solo recordings for Signum Records are Vivaldi & Handel, a disc of sacred solo cantatas with the Academy of Ancient Music and John Dowland: *First Booke of Songes Or Ayres* with lutenist David Miller.