

Robert Smith, organist and pianist

Robert Smith is currently the Assistant Organist at St. Paul's Bloor Street, the largest Anglican church in Toronto, where he regularly accompanies the church choir. Previously the organ scholar of Somerville College, Oxford, he accompanied and occasionally directed the choir of that college for their regular services and concerts.

He began musical life aged 5 on the piano, then took up the organ aged 13 and received lessons from Henry Fairs at the Birmingham Conservatoire for five years. During this time he played regularly for his parish church in Bournville, and took part in masterclasses at Lincoln's Inn and St. Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham. Upon reaching Oxford Robert was taught by Stephen Farr and achieved his ARCO diploma, for which he also won the Sowerbutts Prize and Durrant Prize.

He has had the pleasure of participating in numerous choir concerts and tours, notably at Blackburn Cathedral, Lancaster Priory, Birmingham Cathedral, Ampleforth Abbey, Coventry Cathedral and three times at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Robert regularly performs recitals as well as participating in masterclasses led by David Goode, Guy Bovet, Thomas Trotter and William Whitehead. He has been a finalist in the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition three times. Recently, he collaborated with conductor Nicholas Cleobury for a concert recorded by the BBC. Summer 2014 saw Robert take part in a choir tour of America, where he accompanied a service at Washington National Cathedral and performed a solo recital at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston. This was followed by an extensive recital tour of Germany, playing a famous Silbermann organ in Freiberg as well as romantic instruments in Berlin and Weimar. His first commercial solo CD will be released by the German record label Jubal next year.

Robert also pursues piano studies with Margaret Newman, achieving a DipABRSM aged 16, winning numerous prizes in music competitions, both for his solo playing and as part of a piano trio.

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