

MARTIN SETCHELL

BIOGRAPHY 2023

'playing of the highest rank ... all that one could desire' (UK *Organists' Review*)

Martin Setchell is an international concert organist who believes in promoting entertaining music to a wide audience. From China to Canada, Scotland to Australia, England to Singapore, and New Zealand to Germany, he has delighted audiences the world over with his spirited playing, lively personality, and entertaining repertoire.

Born in Blackpool, Lancashire, Martin holds Honours degrees in both French and Music from the University of Exeter and was awarded both the Limpus and Shinn prizes when he received his Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists in London. Subsequently he undertook advanced studies in Classical organ technique with Pierre Cochereau (then titular organist of Notre Dame in Paris), Marie-Claire Alain, Piet Kee, and Peter Hurford.

He emigrated to New Zealand in 1974 on his appointment to the University of Canterbury School of Music where he taught for 40 years and became Associate Professor of Music. In 2014 he resigned his University position in order to devote himself full time to his work as a professional freelance musician, performing, writing, speaking, editing and teaching. Since 1997, when he was appointed curator of the Rieger pipe organ in the Christchurch Town Hall, he has devoted himself to promoting the organ as a concert instrument internationally.

His solo concert tours outside New Zealand regularly take him to Australia, America, Europe and the Far East. Highlights include the Spreckels organ in Balboa Park, San Diego, the Mormon Tabernacle Organ in Salt Lake City USA, the famous Hill organ in Sydney Town Hall, Australia, Oliwa Cathedral in Poland as part of the Gdansk International Organ Festival, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, the Oriental Arts Centre in Shanghai, China, the Esplanade Concert Hall in Singapore, Musashino Civic Cultural Hall in Tokyo, Japan, Birmingham Town Hall, St Paul's Cathedral, London, St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, Scotland, the historic Gabler organ in Weingarten Abbey, Regensburg Cathedral, Germany and the Bergen festival in Norway.

His CDs include *A Taste of Shropshire, (Quantum)* recorded at Ludlow Parish church in England, the highly successful *Bonbons for Organ* series and *Pink and White*, an anthology of New Zealand organ music (Atoll), *Great Australasian Organs VII* featuring the Rieger organ of Christchurch Town Hall (Priory 1031, UK). and *Cardboard Cathedral Organ Capers* recorded on the Rodgers Infinity organ of the Transitional Anglican Cathedral, Christchurch. His most recent recording is *Resounding Aftershocks*, recorded in 2019 to mark the reopening of the Christchurch Town Hall organ after the earthquakes.

As a composer, Martin Setchell concentrates on writing tuneful and accessible organ and choral music. His humorous *Wedding March extraordinaire* is recently published by Butz MusikVerlag in Bonn. He is also known for his volumes of transcriptions for organ. Music by Fauré and Bizet and the Sousa marches are published by Kevin Mayhew Music and his arrangements of Saint-Saens, Purcell, Bach and Verdi are published by OUP in their *Oxford Organ Series*.

Martin's other activities include conducting (especially choral works and chamber operas), writing and public speaking.

In 2008 he was honoured by the City of Christchurch, receiving a Civic Award for services to music in the community and the Town Hall organ in particular. In 2022 he received a special commendation to mark his 25 years of service.

Website: www.organist.co.nz