



**Peter St. John Stokes** was born in Yorkshire in 1944. He started playing the organ at school, and from the age of sixteen had lessons with Dr. Francis Jackson, at York Minster. At Trinity College of Music, London, he studied organ, singing and orchestral conducting as well as composition with Dr. Arnold Cooke. He also has a degree in French and a PhD from Birkbeck College, London University, and a MMus in Historical Musicology from Kings College, London. He also studied improvisation with Naji Hakim, Messiaen's successor at La Trinité, Paris.

He taught, first in London, and then for twenty-one years as Director of Music at Loreto College, St. Albans. This state school had, under his direction, fine choral singing which included oratorio performance, recordings, continental tours and concerts. The Loreto Cantores also sang services in cathedrals including Westminster and of course St Albans. During this time he continued to play the organ and to be involved in choral conducting, having given many concerts both in this country and abroad. Previous organist positions include St. Giles-the-Fields, London and Dunstable Priory. From 1992 to 2013 he was organist of both St. Silas and Holy Trinity churches in Kentish Town.

Peter's particular musical enthusiasm is for improvisation and especially its importance to the creative activity of composers, many of whom played the organ at some point in their lives. As a result of this he has worked to take his own improvisation beyond contemporary styles. He also composes and writes about music.