

The Lady Organist

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Five questions for...Anne Page



Born in Perth, Australia, [Anne Page](#) studied with Marie Claire-Alain in France, and with Peter Hurford in Cambridge – teaching as his deputy at the Royal Academy of Music for several years. She made her London debut at the Royal Festival Hall playing 20th century masterpieces, and an international recital career followed. She is now based in Cambridge, where during 2011/12 she performed the complete organ works of Bach on 14 instruments in 11 chapels and churches. (I was too late for the series, but caught the final concert – *Bach Requests*, on the wonderful 1976 Metzler organ in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge, which included an enchanting performance of the Trio Sonata No.5.) In 2017 Anne performed Bach's *Art of Fugue* at the Royal Festival Hall, the first performance of the entire work in a single evening in the RFH. Since then she's played Bach's crowning masterpiece, in whole or in part, in Souvigny (France), Gothenburg (Sweden), Cornell University (USA) and in Cambridge at Trinity College and Pembroke College.

I'm looking forward to Anne's next London appearance, when she gives the Ede & Ravenscroft recital at the [RCO Conferment Ceremony](#), at Southwark Cathedral on Saturday 7th March 2020.

My five questions for Anne:

Which piece of music are you studying at the moment and why?

'Le Combat de la mort et de la vie' as I want to add 'Les Corps glorieux' to the Messiaen cycles I already play. Next to Bach comes Messiaen in my pantheon of organ heroes.

What has been your best experience as an organist?

Playing the 1821 H.C. Lincoln organ in Thaxted to a full church, to aid the appeal for its restoration – which is now fully funded and in progress. This is the organ played by Charles Wesley (brother of Samuel) and beloved of Holst. It is the most complete surviving English organ from the early 19th century and yet nearly didn't make it through our own time.

What has been your worst experience as an organist?

Seeing the Thaxted Lincoln organ for the first time in a sad state of total neglect – keys covered in mouse droppings and general grime, much of it not working and several stops lost.

What's the best piece of advice you were given by an organ teacher?

To study with Marie-Claire Alain, advice given by my wonderful teacher in Perth, Annette Goerke (who had herself been a student in Paris). That advice shaped my future.

What would be your own best piece of advice for student organists?

Play other instruments as well as the organ. If you want to play Romantic and modern music get a good piano technique. Keep on practising!

Anne is closely involved with the [Historic Organ Sound Archive](#), having performed over 10 hours of recordings for the project. She is also at the forefront of a revival of that much neglected instrument of the Romantic period – the harmonium. [Read more on Anne's website.](#)

[More about the Thaxted Lincoln Organ here](#)

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