



CLIVE DRISKILL-SMITH

Concert Organist

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“For sheer colour and finesse in every facet of organ playing, Driskill-Smith will be hard to beat, his mastery of the mechanics of the instrument the best of all of the competitors (in the Calgary International Organ Competition).
Elegant and suave in everything he played...” (*Calgary Herald*)

British organist Clive Driskill-Smith has taken the classical music world by storm, enthraling audiences from Beijing to Boston to Budapest with his extraordinary playing and fearless programming. Critics have praised his “blazing technique and unbelievable virtuosity” (*Chiff Chat*, American Guild of Organists) and described his performances as “intensely moving and truly breathtaking” (*Organo Pleno*, Australia). His solo recitals, and duo performances with Grammy Award-winning percussionist Joseph Gramley, bring audiences to their feet across the world.

Mr. Driskill-Smith is the Organist and Choirmaster at All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas, a post that he combines with an international concert career. During the last few years, he has performed at the National Cathedral in Washington DC, Melbourne Town Hall, Westminster Abbey, the Grand Philharmonic Hall in Perm (Russia), and the National Performing Arts Center in Taipei. He has played at Festivals – such as the BBC Proms, the East Texas Pipe Organ Festival, and National Conventions of the American Guild of Organists – and he has worked with numerous conductors, including Dr. Stephen Darlington, Klaus Tennstedt, and Sir Colin Davis.

In 2004, Clive Driskill-Smith and Joseph Gramley (multi-percussionist and founding member of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silkroad Ensemble) formed the duo *Organized Rhythm*. They play mesmerizing arrangements of orchestral classics, commission new works, record music videos, and captivate audiences with their explosion of energy, sound and musicality.

Mr. Driskill-Smith’s performances have been broadcast on the BBC (UK), NHK (Japan), *Pipedreams* (USA), and on radio and television throughout the world. His CDs have received critical acclaim (“a master performer in a range of musical styles ... his playing is immaculate” *Organists’ Review*; “the technique is brilliant, the interpretation faultless ... a first-class recording” *The Organ*), and he has recorded albums with Peter Gabriel on Virgin Records, and with Howard Goodall on EMI Classics.

Mr. Driskill-Smith was educated at Eton College, where he was an Oppidan Scholar (an academic award) and a Music Scholar; founded by King Henry VI in 1440, Eton is a school for boys aged thirteen to eighteen, and its alumni include twenty British prime ministers, as well as Princes William and Harry. After Eton, he read Music at Christ Church, Oxford, graduating in 1999 with a Double First (First Class Honors in both examinations), and with the MPhil (Master of Philosophy) degree in 2001; Christ Church is one of Oxford University’s thirty-nine colleges, and is famous for its connection with Alice in Wonderland and Harry Potter.

Before learning the organ, Mr. Driskill-Smith played the piano and the bassoon. During his teens, he performed piano concertos by Rachmaninov, Mozart, Shostakovich, and Beethoven, and in 1996 he was awarded the ARCM (Associate of the Royal College of Music) diploma in Piano Performance. He also played the bassoon in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and in the National Youth Chamber Orchestra.

In earlier years, it was easier to get into Oxford if you applied for an organ scholarship, so he started learning the organ at the age of 15, and was fortunate to be awarded the Christopher Tatton Organ Scholarship at Christ Church. He studied principally with David Sanger, who encouraged him to travel throughout Europe in order to play historic organs and take classes with Marie-Claire Alain, Guy Bovet, Thierry Escaich, Hans Fagius, Andrea Marcon, Luigi Tagliavini, Thomas Trotter, and Harald Vogel. He was awarded the FRCO (Fellow of the Royal College of Organists) diploma in 1998, and went on to win several international competitions, including the *Performer of the Year* competition in 2000 and the Calgary International Organ Competition in 2002.

From 2001 to 2018, Mr. Driskill-Smith was the organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, England. He lived in Auden Cottage – once home of the poet W. H. Auden – and worked closely with Dr. Stephen Darlington, director of the world-famous choir. He played for the daily services in the twelfth-century Cathedral and for the choir's many concerts, award-winning recordings, media broadcasts, and tours to China, Japan, Brazil, Jamaica, Bermuda, the USA, France, Germany and Portugal. He conducted the choir during Dr. Darlington's sabbaticals, and he directed performances of Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Bach's *Johannes-Passion*, and Britten's *Curlew River*.

Alongside his work in Oxford, Mr. Driskill-Smith was a Trustee of the Royal College of Organists, and of the Eric Thompson Charitable Trust for Organists and Organ Music. He was also Professor of Organ at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and a Tutor for the Royal College of Organists, and for Oundle for Organists. He has given lectures and masterclasses around the world, most recently at the Juilliard School in New York City, Yonsei University in Seoul, and the University of Pretoria in South Africa.

Mr. Driskill-Smith is a member of the Fort Worth Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and, earlier this year, was a member of the jury for the Hong Kong Chapter's Young Organist Competition. He is also on the planning committee for the Association of Anglican Musicians' 2023 Convention in Dallas. Back in England, he is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, one of the ancient Livery Companies which evolved from London's medieval guilds. The Company awarded him the Silver Medal in 1998, and the W. T. Best Scholarship in 2002. As a Liveryman and a Freeman of the City of London, he is allowed to take sheep across London Bridge – a right he has not yet exercised!

Clive Driskill-Smith is represented in North America exclusively by Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists, LLC.

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