

[Download as a Word doc](#)

KEN COWAN **Biography**

Regarded as one of North America's finest concert organists and praised for his dazzling artistry, impeccable technique, and imaginative programming by audiences and critics alike, Ken Cowan maintains a rigorous performing schedule that takes him to major concert venues in America, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

Recent feature performances have included appearances at Princeton University Chapel, The Wanamaker Organ in Philadelphia PA, San Francisco CA for the American Guild of Organists national convention, Baltimore MD for the Organ Historical Society's national convention, Maison Symphonique in Montreal Canada, and St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

Upcoming performances include recitals in Groton MA, Birmingham AL, Bethesda MD, Chestertown MD, Atlanta GA, Brevard NC, Fort Worth TX, and a performance for the Elgar Society's gathering in Northeast Ohio.

Numerous critically acclaimed compact disc recordings by Mr. Cowan are available. Most recent, with Mr. Cowan serving as organ accompanist, is *Maurice Duruflé: Complete Choral Works* (Signum Records), recorded with Robert Simpson and the Houston Chamber Choir, for which the Houston Chamber Choir was awarded a GRAMMY award in 2020 for Best Choral Recording. Also available is *Dynamic Duo*, (Pro Organo), featuring Mr. Cowan and Bradley Hunter Welch in a program of original works and transcriptions for duo organists performed on the monumental Casavant organ at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, TX. Other recordings include *Ken Cowan plays The Great Organ* (Pro Organo), recorded on the newly-restored organ at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City; *Works of Franz Liszt* (JAV), recorded on the Michael Quimby organ at First Baptist church in Jackson

Mississippi; and *Ken Cowan Plays Romantic Masterworks* (Raven), recorded on the 110-rank Schoenstein organ at First Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. Mr. Cowan also joined organist Justin Bischof in the 1999 world-premiere recording of American composer Aaron Miller's *Double Concerto* for organ, recorded with the Zurich Symphony Orchestra on the Kleuker organ in the Tonhalle, Zurich, Switzerland (Ethereal Recordings). Many of Mr. Cowan's recordings and live performances have been regularly featured on the nationally distributed radio program PIPEDREAMS from American Public Media.

A native of Thorold, Ontario, Canada, Mr. Cowan received the Master's degree and Artist Diploma from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, studying organ with Thomas Murray. Prior to attending Yale, he graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he studied with John Weaver. Following initial studies with his father, David, his principal teacher during his high school years was James Bigham, Music Director at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, in Buffalo, NY.

In 2012 Mr. Cowan joined the keyboard faculty of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, where he continues to serve as Professor of Organ and head of the organ program. He is additionally Organist and Artist-in-Residence at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church in Houston, TX. Previous positions have included Associate Professor of Organ at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ, where he was awarded the 2008 Rider University Distinguished Teaching Award, and Associate Organist and Artist in Residence at Saint Bartholomew's Church in New York City.

Revised November 2024