

About the Artist: Dr. Richard Webb

Dr. Richard Webb is Professor and Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, having served previously as Dean of the College and Chief Academic Officer at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey as well as Professor and Chair of the Departments of Music at San Francisco State University and East Tennessee State University. He holds the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honors College) and Master of Fine Arts degrees from Ohio University, whose School of Music Society of Alumni and Friends honored him with its 1990 Achievement in Music Award, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Musicology from the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati. He has studied organ with Wilbur Royer, Jerald Hamilton, Eugene Wickstrom and Gerre Hancock, organ literature with Roberta Gary and performance practice with Carol McClintock.

A well-known recitalist, teacher, clinician/adjudicator and administrator, Dr. Webb has performed solo concerts and appeared as guest artist with orchestras and ensembles throughout the United States, England and Spain. Major appearances have included the Inaugural Recital for the 50th Anniversary Season of the Central New Jersey AGO Chapter, a joint concert with the Echo Ringers of Japan by invitation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights and the Inaugural Series for the largest concert hall organ in North America at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco.

Dr. Webb's imaginative programming interests have led him to premiere the works of such noted contemporary composers as Daniel Lentz, Lewis Songer, Meyer Kupfermann, John Haussermann, Jan Hanus, Gertrude Martin Rohrer, Robert Copeland, Alvin Batiste, James Hanna, Dennis Johnson, Dinos Constantinides and Charles Lloyd, Jr., whose art song settings of traditional spirituals have been popularized by sopranos Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman. He has presented thematic recitals and workshops on the organ music of America, Asia, Russia and Spain (including a New York recital for the Quincentenary of Christopher Columbus at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue), the organ music of Sigfrid Karg-Elert and the organ and choral works of Siegfried Reda.

His "Planned Spontaneity" sessions in service playing have been popular with American Guild of Organists Chapters and his practical master classes in various performance practices have been particularly well received as a complement to his appearances at colleges and universities. Active as a planner and instructor in leadership training programs for musicians working in small parishes, he offers consultations and mini-residencies to individual churches, groups and professional associations.

Recognized as a facile and highly sensitive accompanist on all keyboard instruments, he is in significant demand as a collaborative partner for singers and instrumentalists. He was guest artist with the Southeastern Louisiana University Concert Choir on its tour of England in May, 1998 and in January, 2000 with the Southern University Choir on its tour of Jamaica.

As Organist and Music Associate at the First United Methodist Church of Baton Rouge, Dr. Webb serves a congregation of over 4,000 with a weekly television and radio ministry. He is a past Dean of the San Francisco, Franklin and Baton Rouge Chapters of the American Guild of Organists, as well as a past President of the University Music Administrators of California, the Baton Rouge Opera, the Louisiana Association of Deans of Arts, Sciences and Humanities and the Board of Governors of the Baton Rouge Little Theater. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Baton Rouge Symphony and as President of the Board of Directors for EMBER, the Baton Rouge Early Music Ensemble.

In 2003, Dr. Webb was named to the Louisiana Artist Roster, a list of artists whose qualifications are reviewed by the Director and Staff of the Louisiana Division of the Arts and who are recommended to prospective presenters and directors of arts education programs as outstanding representatives of their artistic disciplines. The appointment is for a five-year renewable period. Dr. Webb also was a 2003-2004 recipient of a Louisiana Division of the Arts Artist Mini-Grant to further his research and performance of original organ works by Louisiana composers. In 2004, he was awarded a coveted Louisiana Artist Fellowship for excellence in the arts. In 2005, he was named organ principal of the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra.