



The English conductor, organist, harpsichordist, pianist, Ian Watson, had won many prizes for organ playing at the Royal Academy of Music in London, before he completed his studies with Flor Peeters in Belgium. He then held a number of prestigious posts in London, including ten years as Organist of St Margaret's, Westminster (the Parish Church of the House of Commons) to which he was appointed at the age of 19, and, for five years, as Director of Music at St James's, Piccadilly.

Ian Watson has played with most of the leading British orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony, BBC Welsh, BBC Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music, English Baroque Soloists, and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. He has made many recordings and toured world-wide with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, most recently to Germany with the American violinist Pamela Frank playing all six Brandenburg Concerti (BWV 1046-1051). He has now made three recordings of Brandenburg Concerti (BWV 1046-1051), most notably with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe for Deutsche Grammophon. In addition to appearing on nearly 200 broadcasts and recordings, including as solo pianist on a recent award-winning CD with Renée Fleming and the English Chamber Orchestra, he is featured on many film soundtracks including Amadeus, Casper, Polanski's Death and the Maiden, Mr. Holland's Opus, Restoration, Cry the Beloved Country and Hidden Voices. He has made cameo appearances in the Oscar-winning Madness of King George and John Osbourne's England My England.

In 2000, the 250th anniversary of J.S. Bach's death, Ian Watson was invited to be Sir John Eliot Gardiner's assistant conductor for the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage, a world-wide tour of the complete Bach Cantatas performed on the correct liturgical day and particularly in places where J.S. Bach lived and worked. In the same year, he conducted the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Orchestra and Chorus in J.S. Bach's B minor Mass (BWV 232) as the final concert of the Rheingau Festival in Germany. In the last three months of 2001, he undertook a 47-concert tour of the British Isles both playing and directing Mozart Piano Concertos as well as conducting the Dalarna Sinfonietta in Sweden and taking part in recordings of Haydn Masses with Collegium Musicum 90 and Britten's Albert Herring with Richard Hickox. In 2003, he conducted more concerts in Sweden and toured to Salzburg and Vienna with Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists as well as inaugurating the first highly successful St Paul's Music Festival at St Paul's Cathedral in Worcester, MA, where he currently holds the position of music director. In March 2004 he took part in the Monteverdi Choir's 40th Birthday Celebration, culminating in a performance of Monteverdi's Vespers in St. Mark's, Venice.

In 2003 Ian Watson was appointed as the new Artistic Director of Arcadia Players. He will be performing in a series of special intimate "House Concerts" hosted by Arcadia Players Board members and friends in May, June, and July 2004.