

HOW GREAT THOU ART FESTIVAL

Introducing the newly installed



Keith Ainsworth
Organ

Friday 9th October 2015

PROGRAMME

Suite Gothique Op 25 – Léon Boëllmann

Introduction-Chorale; Menuet gothique; Prière à Notre-Dame; Toccata

Boëllmann (1862 – 1897) was a writer in the French “symphonic” style. He produced a great deal of music in a short life – mainly works for piano, voice and chamber ensembles. His popular *Suite Gothique* from 1895 is his most performed work. Each movement is in a different style and the whole piece has been described as “a gothic cathedral in sound”.

Psalm Prelude – Set 1, No 2 – Herbert Howells (1893-1983)

The Psalm Preludes are musical reflections/meditations on the words of psalms and are among Howells’s earliest pieces for the organ, written in 1915/16. No 2 is a gentle meditation taken from Psalm 37, v11 - “But the meek-spirited shall possess the earth: and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace”.

Nun Danket alle Gott (Marche Triomphale) – Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

Karg-Elert was a German composer of considerable fame in the early 20th Century, whose impressionist/romantic style fell into disfavour during the rise of the Nazis. His music, mainly for organ and harmonium, has become much more popular in the late 1970’s and is now regularly played in organ recitals. Written in 1909 as part of a set of chorale improvisations, Nun Danket is probably Karg-Elert’s most famous work, based upon the tune for “Now thank we all our God”.

1st Movement from Sonata in G – Allegro Maestoso – Edward Elgar

The Sonata in G is one of only two works written by Elgar for solo organ. It was composed for the 4-manual Hill organ in Worcester Cathedral in 1895 so that the cathedral’s organist could demonstrate it to a convention of American organists meeting in Worcester. The first movement is in sonata form with a boldly assertive first theme and a second theme that trickles gently along. It is in classic Elgar style with the upward leaps, descending sequences and tension-building ascending trills that are typical of his instrumental works.

Fanfare-Rondeau – Jean-Joseph Mouret (1682-1738)

Mouret’s dramatic works made him one of France’s leading baroque composers. He had a very successful career, but eventually sank into poverty and died in a charitable asylum. Even though most of his works are rarely heard today, Mouret’s name survives because of the popularity of his Fanfare-Rondeau from his First Suite of Symphonies. I prepared tonight’s arrangement for my wedding when I discovered that it was impossible to obtain an organ arrangement neither for love nor money!

Toccata and Fugue in D Minor – J S Bach

Bach probably composed this piece in around 1703 – 07, but no-one is sure of the exact date. It is probably the most well-known baroque music ever written, and certainly the most famous piece written for the organ. The Toccata is dramatic, like an improvisation, and is unlike other organ music of its time – some scholars think that it may not even have been written by Bach. The fugue is also unusual, finishing with a bravura coda after the fugue has actually ended.

Adagio – from Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C Major – J S Bach

The insertion of a middle slow movement in an organ work was unusual for Bach, although traces of this idea occur in other works from the same early period of his work. It has two sections, one marked Adagio and the other, Grave. The Adagio is a melody made of short phrases, characteristic of early Bach, over a pedal bass motif. Its style is similar to that of Italian orchestral concertos of the time. The Adagio flows into the short Grave section, which, through Italian-style chromatic progressions and suspensions, leads back to C major.

Toccata – Théodore Dubois

Dubois (1837 – 1924) won France's most prestigious composition prize, the Prix de Rome in 1861. He composed operas, oratorios and three symphonies. His *Toccata* in G Major is from his first set of 12 Pieces written in 1889, and is probably the most cheerful of all the French symphonic toccatas. The middle section, in the key of B major is highly lyrical and he then interjects some of the opening material before he builds up to a restatement of the opening music. This structure shows effortless imagination and mastery of technique.

The Organ at All Souls

The original organ at All Souls was built just before World War II to a very poor design as an attempt to “mass produce” a standard instrument. By 2010 it was becoming almost unserviceable, the console and many of the moving parts were wearing out, the wiring was becoming a hazard, and there was significant damage to pipework.

In 2011 a decision was made to replace it with a very fine quality organ, originally built by Nelsons of Durham and salvaged from a Derbyshire School whose hall, where it was housed, had to be demolished. The original organ would not have been entirely suitable for All Souls, but suitable matching pipework and parts of the relevant period were donated to the parish from churches whose organs had been condemned as being unrepairable or were being replaced.

M C Thompson & Co Ltd of Burton-on-Trent were engaged to carry out the rebuild, incorporating the most useful pipework and the casework from the original All Souls organ, all of which has been refurbished. I worked at home on preparing new carvings for the casework and carrying out the decorative gilding on the case and display pipes.

Phase 1 of the organ was finished on Tuesday of this week. Phase 2, the completion of the third manual division, will take place when funds are available. We already have all the pipes we need for this – mainly donated from St Wilfred's Parish, Cotton.

For the full story of our organ please visit its website at www.allsoulsorgan.com.



Keith Ainsworth

Keith Ainsworth has been the organist at All Souls since Advent 2012. He is an adviser to the Archdiocese of Birmingham on organ care, conservation and building, and was consultant adviser on the organ project since it began in 2010. He studied with Walter Lowe, Robert Weddle of Coventry Cathedral and George Miles at the Birmingham Conservatoire, and is a trustee of the Society of Saint Gregory, the national society for Catholic music and liturgy.

The Specification of the All Souls Organ

Great

Bourdon 16
Open Diapason 8
Stopped Diapason 8
Octave 4
Concert Flute 4
Twelfth 2 $\frac{2}{3}$
Fifteenth 2
Tierce 1 $\frac{3}{5}$
Trumpet 8
Clarion 4

Great to Pedal
Great to Choir
Gt and Ped couplers
combined

Swell

Violin Diapason 8
Lieblich Gedackt 8
Viol d'Orchestre 8
Voix Celeste 8
Gemshorn 4
Fifteenth 2
Mixture III (19:22:26)
Bassoon 16
Cornopean 8
Tremulant
Octave Coupler

Swell to Pedal
Swell to Great
Swell to Choir

Choir

Gedackt 8
Principal 4
Block Flute 2
Larigot 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ E
Octavin 1
Clarinet 8
Tromba 8

Choir to Great
Choir to Pedal

(Stops in italics
not yet fitted)

Pedal

Sub Bass 16
Echo Bourdon 16
Octave 8
Bass Flute 8
Fifteenth 4
Trombone 16
Bassoon 16
Trumpet 8

Registration: 30 Channel Memory and capture system with 6 thumb pistons to each manual, 6 toe pistons for the Pedal, 6 duplicate toe pistons for the Swell and 8 general thumb pistons and reversible coupler pistons.

Originally built by Nelsons of Durham in 1915, rebuilt by M C Thompson & Co, Burton on Trent 2015