

Toccatas Tuesdays – The Last Word

The fourth and last of the recitals of popular organ music (Toccatas Tuesdays) by Dr Simon Lindley, in support of Doncaster Choral Society, was in the glorious church of All Saints, Arksey and was as enjoyable and as popular, audience-wise and in repertoire, as its predecessors.

The programme again included popular items from the well-trodden organ repertoire – Bach's D minor Toccata and Fugue, ironically perhaps not originally for organ, Widor's Toccata and Boëllmann's Suite Gothique, in four short movements, each distinctively characterised. For the rest we heard tuneful miniatures, often in transcription: John Ireland's jaunty Marcia Popolare and (originally for piano) The Holy Boy; more Bach, Sheep may safely graze; Thalben-Ball's Tune in E in the style of John Stanley, a high-class pastiche; Beethoven Variations for mandolin, the delicacy of the arrangement and registration reflecting that of the original instrument; a selection of hits from Bizet's Carmen; and a jolly piece Chelsea Fayre by Reginald Goss-Custard. The most modern pieces were two by Yorkshire organist and journalist Robert Cockcroft, Prelude on Anima Christi and Soliloquy, both approachable.

The recital, indeed all four, illustrated Dr Lindley's impressive versatility in performance, and vast knowledge of repertoire, known and less known, and what was suitable for the instrument he played. Above all his evident enjoyment in exploring the repertoire shone through. They have been memorable recitals and I look forward to a repeat series in 2012.

Orpheus