



My path to Selby...

Extract from DVD insert programme notes

At the time when my ideas for this programme began to take shape, I became aware of the shades of two towering giants of the organ: Italy's Fernando Germani (1906-1998) and England's George Thalben-Ball (1896-1987) (GTB).

Germani's own recordings made at Selby (mostly, now, thankfully reissued on CD) were something I'd known since my earliest years of fascination in organ music, and three of the organists I have most admired and been inspired by – Rosalinde Haas, Nicolas Kynaston, and my teacher Odile Pierre – were all devoted pupils of the great Italian Maestro. How many times during my lessons did Mme. Pierre make frequent references to his artistry? How often did she speak and discuss his teaching – which had been a such liberating force not only to her but to so many – and of his wish to allow the music to live, to dance and to be alive - without trying to just wrestle control it as did so many of his contemporaries. She and others always spoke of his great humanity and joyous personality – which shone through whatever he played. Sitting in Selby preparing my own efforts, I hoped he might somewhere be smiling and enjoying what I was trying to do.

The specific programme itself – which evolved as something of a musical 'pot-pourri' – included a number of pieces associated with GTB (the Stanley, Festing, Cook...) and in its conception seemed to reflect something of the programmes of his that I had seen and discovered during my early years of researching bygone concert programmes of the greats: a wide variety of works both colourful and musical – but with an approachable aspect all might enjoy and find made the organ more easily approachable.

(And then I smiled at the delightful tales of those two great musicians together, and the sparkling humour and fun that was always part of their paths crossing. Of course seriousness is required when at work, but what is life without fun and humour when not?)

Specifically I wanted the programme to do a number of things: primarily to appeal to as wide an audience as possible because the DVD has been made to support - and give wider exposure to - the Abbey's organ restoration project. And because it is a DVD, I also wanted to create a programme that was visually varied, this allowing people less familiar with what actually happens at the organ console to see all kinds of different, and differing, instrumental and musical techniques. And – as always – I wanted it to allow me to show off as much colour and 'personality' of the instrument – and the building - as was musically appropriate and possible: something which always motivates me at each and every organ. Here, I was well-served by the Viscount - which even allowed for some extra, more unusual sounds... and then the programme fell into three distinct, different parts... Finally, it had to be a celebration.....

I would like to record my thanks to everyone at Selby Abbey and involved with the production of this endeavour; whatever I might have achieved could not have been possible without their efforts and expertise – it has been a joint process. We also had great fun in the process. Thank you!

D'Arcy Trinkwon # May 2015