

COLIN WALSH (ORGAN)
St Andrew's Church, Plymouth
07/05/08

Laureate well deserves his title

Lincoln Cathedral should consider itself extremely fortunate in having Colin Walsh as its Organist Laureate. Not only is he a superb technician, but he also must bring a great deal of dry humour to what could easily be an otherwise stuffy institution. This is evident not only in his vocal deliveries between numbers, but more so in his ability to play such a diverse range of music with equal success on the somewhat intractable church organ.

Elgar's Imperial March, with all its bombast, proved just as effective as his Salut d'amour, significantly enhanced by some subtle registration changes. Albinoni's Adagio and Dupré's sprightly arrangement of Bach's Sinfonia to Cantata 29 brought out further colours and sonorities from the ever-impressive St Andrew's instrument, as did Mozart's Adagio and Allegro, where the closing section was particularly neatly articulated.

Jessel's Parade of the Tin Soldiers almost succeeded in emulating the sounds of the Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer, before Flor Peeters's Aria, and an exciting rendition of Vierne's Final from his First Symphony officially closed a most enjoyable recital. As if almost embarrassed by the shortness of his programme, Colin Walsh added two contrasting encores, Lefébure-Wély's Sortie in E flat, and Yon's delightfully airy Toccata for Flutes. If only there had been a short interval to allow like-minded organ buffs to compare notes, and possibly to give Colin a well-deserved breather!

REVIEW by PHILIP R BUTTALL
