



Worth Abbey

ORGAN MUSIC 2021

Saturday October 16: Parish Mass - 5pm

Communion **Rosace ('Rose Window') - from 'Ésquisses Byzantines': Henri Mulet (1878-1967)**

Recessional **Carillon: Herbert Murrill (1909-1952)**

A Londoner, Murrill was a student at the Royal Academy of Music and then an organ scholar at Worcester College, Oxford, after which he returned and stayed in London. From 1933 until his death he was Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy; he was also Organist of Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, and St Thomas', Regent Street. In 1936 he began working for the BBC and became Head of Music in 1950. More unusual perhaps for a musician was his stint during World War II working for the intelligence corps (1942 to 1946) which included a stint at Bletchley Park. His many works include a 'jazz' opera, concertos and chamber music, film scores and incidental music.

His Carillon (1949) is music of festive energy, with flourishes and fanfares very much in the English tradition of people such as Walton, Coates, Bliss etc. Dedicated to Arnold Richardson, a celebrated virtuoso of the era, it is unusual in that its final chord does not include any pedal notes...

Sunday October 17: Abbey Mass - 9.30am

Communion **Rosace ('Rose Window') - from 'Ésquisses Byzantines': Henri Mulet (1878-1967)**

Recessional **War March of the Priests: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) - arranged by W. T. Best (1826-1897)**

Mendelssohn loved the theatre and wrote incidental orchestral music for several plays, the most well-known being his music for Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. In 1843-45 he wrote a score to accompany Racine's final tragedy, Athalie: although only rarely performed, many (such as Voltaire and Flaubert) considered it Racine's masterpiece. Mendelssohn wrote War March of the Priests to go between Acts IV & V: the righteous priests have barricaded the temple and are on the war-path against profanity. A particular favourite with the righteous Victorian concert audiences - George Bernard Shaw was among those who praised the music - it is known today primarily via several transcriptions as a war-horse for organists.

The tradition of transcription was so important in the history of Victorian music. In a time when orchestras didn't - and couldn't - travel as they do today, people in the provinces, and in the North particularly, often became acquainted with the great and the latest orchestral works through the transcriptions made and performed on the great organs in their town halls. The doyen of Victorian organists, W. T. Best (for many years organist of St George's Hall, Liverpool) published many volumes of such transcriptions; being particular that none of the vital original material was lost in the transcribing process, most make enormous demands on the player. It was Best who inaugurated the great organ of the Royal Albert Hall in front of Queen Victoria.



D'Arcy Trinkwon
Abbey Organist