



The Old Southendian Organ Society (OSOS)



SCHOOL ORGANIST VICTORIOUS IN ESSEX ORGANIST COMPETITION

We are delighted to report that Keenan Ngo, this year's School Organist, took on a strong line-up of organists and was selected as the winner in the Intermediate section of the Essex Organists' Association Organ Competition in March. Many congratulations Keenan! A report from Keenan on his experience follows:



After joining the Sixth Form at Southend High School for Boys in September 2015, I took immediate interest in learning the organ. After all, the music department and the organ itself were two of many reasons why I was so excited to study at SHSB. Under Mr Symes' guidance in the Organ Society (meeting every week at lunch time), I began to develop my techniques slowly on the organ. As a pianist, I did find making the transition from the piano to the organ extremely difficult, especially with the new pedal work and making sure the left hand and feet were

working independently! I was delighted and extremely privileged to have been selected as School Organist from September 2016 onwards. The role has improved my ability and confidence immensely as an organist, and with the aid of the Organ Scholar role at St. Laurence Parish Church, Upminster, I was able to expand my organ repertoire and knowledge of church music further.

Under the guidance and teaching of Mr Symes, I entered the Essex Organists' Association Organ Competition 2017, which was held at St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Brentwood, on 18th March 2017. The competition was adjudicated by David Pickthall MBE and the two pieces I performed were:

"Humoresque", Pietro A Yon
"Fanfare", William Mathias

The nerves were always with me, especially being the first to perform on the day! However, I entered solely to improve my confidence and ability as an organist, and to experience music from a whole new perspective; I had never entered any form of competition on the organ previously and it had only been my second time performing publicly on the organ!

All of the other competitors were excellent performers and showed knowledge in their choice of repertoire and technique, and so I was overwhelmed to have won the competition by a fine margin. David gave me very helpful and constructive comments on my performance, which I will definitely take on board for future competitions and performances. The competition has opened a whole new world of music to me, and I am grateful for the experience that I have gained from entering. I have to thank Mr Symes for being my organ teacher and helping me progress so far into my organ studies!

