

Opening of the Ledbury Poetry festival on 5th July 2013

Written by Steve Glennie-Smith

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A flash-back to the opening of the Ledbury Poetry festival on 5th July 2013....

The intention was to play Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture on an 1895 Gavioli Fairground Organ that was positioned opposite the Market House, synchronising with the parish church bells for the final part. However, it didn't work out properly - it seemed the ringers weren't ready at the critical point - a frantic phone call was received and the organ stopped, as this video by MalvernFlyingWhale shows....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WE0Lg-9iJW0>

Then the bells could be heard, but were immediately drowned out in the High Street when, eventually, the organ resumed.

Fortunately the minidisc recorder had enough space to keep running through the long gap, so I could get the whole Overture. Then, up to the church to record the bells...

Back home with the computer, I was able to stitch together the organ part. Good thing, this audio editing program - the bells, though nominally in the same key as the Tchaikovsky piece (E-flat), were slightly sharp, but could be brought down to the correct pitch and dubbed in where they were intended.

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I've finally got my act together to share this [MP3 version](#) with you - have a good midwinter festival.