

Rochdale's weekly Midday Music Toad Lane Concerts at St Mary in the Baum Church in November

Another richly varied month in this eclectic weekly music series, solo pianists, woodwind trio, and choir

November 05: Madeleine Brown piano: Prize-winning graduate of Cambridge (where she won the University Concerto competition) and the RNCM (where she won the Gold Medal), she captivated the audience with a marvellous piano recital. Haydn Variations in F minor; Janacek's Sonata; Three preludes by Debussy; Franck's monumental Prelude, Chorale and Fugue were all managed superbly and totally from memory. Madeleine was brilliant at taking risks on the instrument to explore variations in technique and dynamics. Rarely do we hear such exquisite soft playing, which in turn added greater power to the crescendos and climaxes ... and all of this on an unfamiliar heritage piano that she only had minutes to engage with before the concert. A stunning and inspirational recital.



November 12: Liana Storey piano another masters-graduate at the RNCM, the Japanese British pianist stood in at two days' notice. Born in the US she moved to Glasgow's Junior Royal Conservatoire, winning awards such as Young Pianist of the North and recently the RNCM Concerto competition. Scarlatti's Sonata in F sharp was a glittering start. This was followed by the three vividly contrasted movements of Pour le Piano by Debussy; an intelligent and passionate Beethoven's Sonata in E, Op. 109; and two of Rachmaninoff's Moments Musicaux Op 16 - the profoundly sombre No 3 and insanely brilliant and bravura No 4. Not for the first time in this recital this appeared like a concerto

minus the orchestra. Another glorious recital from a gifted and engaging performer.

November 19: The Kell Wind Trio has been a welcome visiting ensemble for several years. **Alastair Roberts** is the principal flute of several orchestras and chamber groups in the North West; similarly **Geoffrey Smith** on clarinet, now concentrating on chamber music. **Alex Kane** was principal bassoonist at the Royal Military School of Music before police service and in 2012 a freelance bassoonist and teacher. The trilling trio presented a wide variety of music, Mozart, Shostakovich, Chabrier, Arnold, and Parry Jones carefully adapted for this combination. The trio's stamina and virtuosity throughout were impressive. We look forward to what has become an annual event next November.



November 26: Notability choir is based in North Manchester although its members come from all over the region to share their love of singing. It was formed in 1993. *Sing Gently* by Eric Whitacre set the mood beautifully in the cathedral-like acoustic of St Mary in the Baum by this popular singing troupe. Neatly balanced part singing arises from one of their democratic

principles - that without a conductor, they have to listen to each other! Beautifully performed arrangements, sacred, serious traditional, popular standards, with or without piano - a choir that is Notable indeed.

The Queen's Award-winning Toad Lane Concerts are every Wednesday at 12.30 pm at St Mary in the Baum, Toad Lane, Rochdale, OL16 1DZ. Entrance fee is £6. Contact 01706 648872 for further information.

Dr Joe Dawson