

Rochdale's weekly Midday Music

Toad Lane Concerts at St Mary in the Baum Church in July 2026

A bumper variety month in this weekly music series [Nos 1,192 to 1,196]

July 01 Sam Rodwell classical guitar - graduated first class and completed a master's with distinction at the RNCM under Craig Ogden and was made an 'Associate Guitar Teacher'. Simple folk song, modern jazz or epic Romanticism, Sam's accomplished playing was framed by confident and engaging introductions to the instrument and the music. A Cambridge researcher of



the church's architect, Sir Ninian Comper, who was examining the building during rehearsal, hopefully, went away with memories of a guitar ringing true in the huge but energising acoustic which certainly deserves a Grade One listing itself, as much as the building.

June 08 Leda Mileto violin & Kanako Mizuno piano: Leda is an award winning violinist and Dalcroze practitioner who graduated from Rome



Conservatoire before gaining a master's and postgraduate diploma RNCM and now teaches at the JRNCM. Japanese pianist Kanako graduated in Tokyo before the RNCM (winning the Gold Medal 2019) and also the Royal Academy of Music. A stunning duo with Dvořák, Mozart and Prokofiev sonatas, and Estrellita by Ponce in another memorable recital.

June 15 Tim Kennedy tenor & Carol Kwater piano: Tim began his musical career singing for the late Queen Elizabeth II, as a treble at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, before Winchester College, Truro Cathedral and Cambridge. He has a varied freelance career as tenor soloist in recitals and oratorio, piano



accompanist, organist and vocal coach; he is a staff accompanist at the RNCM. Carol is an experienced organist and pianist and also contributed piano solo 'hydration breaks' to a beautiful selection of British song with soupçons of France, Italy and Broadway. All we needed was iced tea (or Pimm's) and cucumber sandwiches without the crusts.

June 22 Rascallity Harp Duo: First-rate musicians, **Kathryn Mason** (pictured left) gained a first-class BMus and a master's



from the RNCM. **Alice Roberts** (pictured right) graduated first-class from the joint course of Manchester University and the RNCM (the first harpist to win the Gold Medal, 2020). Folk music and Satie arrangements for the duo along with solos, Hindemith Sonata (Alice) and 'Fantasy on a theme by Haydn' by Grandjany (Kathryn) made a glorious eclectic mix. The sound of one harp is heavenly - and of two, divine.

June 29 Voci Voices Trio with piano: Usually an award-winning quartet but today we had three experienced vocal 'busk-it-eers' - Elizabeth Ambrose soprano, Eric Cymbir tenor and Mackenzie Paget baritone, with their one-man orchestral backing, Jonathan Ellis at the piano. Trios, duets and solos from 1600 with Monteverdi to modern times and opera and musicals made a joyful songfest of varied styles. Their concluding set of popular numbers perfectly matched the summer weather; whilst the



demanding encore, 'You Raise Me Up' matched the mood of the audience admirably – suitably uplifted.

Dr Joe Dawson