Rochdale's weekly Midday Music
Toad Lane Concerts at St Mary in the Baum Church in October 2026
A bumper variety month in this weekly music series [Nos 1,206 to 1,209]

October 07 Seren String Quartet: in a first for this recital series, scintillating principal string players Pip Clarke and Sarah Snape (violins), Cathrine Perkins (viola) and Cathie Bunting (cello) played Puccini's Minuet and Trio superbly as a curtain raiser to the main work, Schubert's Rosamunde Quartet, always a favourite of players and listeners. The collective sound of such accomplished string players was glorious in the marvellous acoustic of St Mary's and the appreciative audience applause demanded that this first string quartet appearance would not be the last.





October 14 Oldham Community Choir: under conductor Jonathan Gibson and accompanied by J Edward Rigg the choir enjoyed its annual airing in Rochdale. From curtain up with sprightly numbers 'Another Opening, another show' and 'Comedy Tonight', before contrasted serious anthems, and more show songs we were soon at the end for 'Stepping Out … putting on the Ritz' with a final sizzling 'All That Jazz'. Clearly, much care had been taken to learn singing parts and the male contingent made a fine foundation. There was a tune for everyone in this joyful, varied programme. No wonder that modern medicine recommends singing in a choir to beat the blues and maintain youthful vigour.



October 21 Lewis Kingsley Peart piano: Chetham's alumnus and graduate of London's Trinity Laban Conservatoire, a popular returning artiste, Lewis is a busy working musician. With a strong background in theatre, he can always be relied upon to bring interesting programmes and deliver them with passion and fine playing. Today was no exception … with a cunning plan in his programme. He investigated pairings of pieces by Schubert and Chopin and went on to juxtapose Erik Satie and Debussy. These vivid contrasts served to throw fresh insights on each other's identities. Clever stuff but even more fascinating as a vehicle for Lewis's fresh and enthusiastic interpretation and fine playing.

October 28 John Powell baritone & Carol Kwater piano: distinguished baritone John studied at Cambridge and has lived and worked in Manchester ever since. BBC Northern Singers and and founding the Britten Singers, radio and TV and major festivals, Choral director extraordinaire, at Chetham's and others . He now teaches privately and conducts several leading choirs, societies and events. Carol is an organist, accompanist, music teacher and musical director.



Elegant professionalism throughout on the theme 'A flock of birds' - various settings of English Art songs, German lieder, French songs, ending with A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square, all well sung and accompanied. Carol played solos by Daquin, Tchaikowsky and Satie. A great contribution to the survival of a great tradition of solo recitals.

Dr Joe Dawson