

Rochdale's weekly Midday Music
Toad Lane Concerts at St Mary in the Baum Church in September
Instrumental and vocal solos and ensembles galore

Rochdale's year as Greater Manchester Town of Culture 2025-26. This grand title, awarded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority celebrates the town's rich history, creativity, talent and diverse arts scene - musical examples of which are found here every week!

September 03: Rodwell Howard Duo - In the hands of award guitarist **Sam Rodwell** the cathedral-like acoustics worked with the intimate instrument rather than against it. **Emily Howard's** sensitive and expressive violin blended beautifully and added expansive melodic qualities. Amazing how these apparently minimal instruments can create such a wealth of music. No amplification for these players. Ideally matched in musicianship and interpretation, glorious South American music, Paganini, Elgar, de Falla, Ravel and Robert Beaser.

September 10: Duncan Reid violin & Jonathan Ellis piano Both freelancers and postgraduates of the joint course of Manchester University and the RNCM. Beethoven's 'Spring' Sonata full of optimism, energy and freshness. Symbiotic interpretation. Bruch's Violin Concert No 1 in G minor, superb virtuoso solo with masterful orchestral backing from the piano. A memorable performance worthy of any concert platform. Sensational.

September 17: Tricola Trio - a dynamic and versatile troupe of soloists and ensemble of postgraduates of RNCM. **Johanna Leung** (clarinet) solo Finzi 5 Bagatelles; **Alvin Wong** (saxophones) solo Bozza Aria; and **Anna Chiu** piano. Baroque arrangements by Alvin of [1] Vivaldi two flutes concerto to clarinet and soprano sax, and [2] JS Bach double concerto BWV 1060 to Clarinet and Alto Sax. Fine playing made most of superb adaptations, of which I am sure the great masters would have approved. NB - 12 GCSE students present from Heywood.

September 24: Anne Butterworth soprano and flute, **Stephen Taylor** baritone and sax & **Elaine Marsden** piano - Eclectic mix of solos and duets from G&S and standards. Versatility seen in instrumental interlude from all - sax, flute and piano solo and duets. Their final set of songs had more delightful numbers from stage and screen, Steve having the last word with Mr Cellophane from Cabaret. An entertaining 'eclectic mix' indeed from three popular multi-talented performers who continue to serve their community well.

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

