

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

Another richly varied month in this eclectic weekly music series.

October 01: Students from Chetham's School of Music - (photos and surnames precluded by the school's safeguarding policy). Their mentor today was award-winning RNCM graduate Simon Passmore, an accompanist and piano tutor at Chetham's and currently Director of Music at St Ann's Church, Manchester. He provided guidance, encouragement and superb accompaniments for his charges today: violinist Anderson playing a concerto by Riedings and a riotous Hoedown by Clebenoff beyond his years; exquisite playing by Lydia of Mendlessohn's violin concerto; and cellist Austin played Debussy's sonata and Shostakovich superbly. This recital went beyond exams and technical preparation and was music making of a high calibre from young players who are clearly rising stars.



October 08: Telemann Baroque Ensemble has become virtually the 'house band' of the concert series as they appear four times a year. The ensemble today sported Alastair Roberts flute, Elaine da Costa & Sarah Snape violins, John Goodstadt viola, Roger Bisby cello, & Peter Collier harpsichord. All are highly qualified and experienced freelance soloists and orchestral players and brought to life music by Telemann, Handel, and Corelli.



October 15: Lewis Kingsley Peart - a Chetham's School of Music alumnus and graduate of London's Trinity Laban Conservatoire, enjoyed his fourth annual visit to Rochdale delivering magic moments and serendipity. With his engaging and confident introductions, he quickly establishes himself as a gifted guide to the world of the piano. He opened with three of Schubert's 'Moment Musicaux' or musical moments; then more unusual miniatures from Sibelius, and finishing with Grieg's Wedding Day at Troldhaugen, which never fails to excite, and the audience become revelling villagers for a few moments.



October 22: Oldham Community Choir made their annual visit to St Mary's and gave an enjoyable and entertaining concert in their ruby Anniversary year; after forty years of song. The mixed voices worked well together under Jonathan Gibson's direction, who also proved to be an amicable compere. The part-singing throughout required a lot of concentration and gave them their particular sound. The choir's enthusiasm and conviviality with varied repertoire from serious pieces to songs from the shows were infectious. Edward Rigg accompanied splendidly throughout and played a charming solo interlude.



October 29: John Powell baritone Carole Kwater piano
This was an exemplary recital from two experienced and engaging performers. John has enjoyed an extensive career as a singer and as a distinguished choral director. Carol is an experienced organist, accompanist and music teacher. It was great to see the noble tradition of the song recital continuing – and including first (and second) performances, especially with composer Martin Lessons being present. From the celestial to the unashamedly Romantic, with songs by Chausson and Hahn before we came crashing to earth with Britten's sardonic arrangement of 'Lord! I married me a wife'. Indeed, it brought the house down.

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