

St. Michael's at Six – A Schubertiad Review

In a change from the advertised concert, the first of the new series of *St. Michael's at Six* took the form of a programme of Schubert, inspired by the music of the nineteenth century *salon*.

Setting the tone for the evening, the concert started with *Grande Marche no.3 in B minor* for piano four hands by husband and wife duo, Simon Coverdale and Margaret Wakeford. Their playing was delicate and spirited and managed to produce admirable contrast in the imitative and sometimes repetitive melodies.

Soprano Irene Drummond joined Margaret Wakeford to sing a selection of lieder, her pure, powerful voice and naturally wide expressive range (aided perhaps by Schubert's sometimes unashamed word-painting) captivating the audience. Piano and voice worked well together at all times, but particularly in the last song, *Liebhaber in allen Gestalten*, with its light-hearted, conversation-style writing between the two. The central item of the concert was Simon Coverdale's sensitive and understanding interpretation of *Sonata in B major D575* (which combines early-Romantic harmonic language with Schubert's love of dance tunes). Especially sublime was the elegant slow movement.

The rhythmic *Marche Characteristique* closed the evening's entertainment and was, again, a fine example of precision duet playing.

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