

St. Michael's at Six – Christopher Lee Guild
Review by Lewis Forbes

The first *Six* concert after the summer break was given by young pianist Christopher Lee Guild, and comprised a highly demanding programme of 19th and 20th century music.



The opening item was Beethoven's great *Appassionata* Sonata. The introduction was suitably brooding and unsettling, and with the sudden fiery outbursts, Christopher really made the most of the typically dramatic Beethovenian dynamics. In the central *Andante*, he slipped effortlessly between a wonderfully veiled sound and bright shimmering textures. Christopher stressed the *agitato* characteristics of the final movement, particularly through the bass melodies, and the drawn out coda was very exciting indeed.

Fauré's *Barcarolle in F# major* provided a total change of mood – some calmness after the stormy Beethoven. Christopher brought out the swirling colours of the harmony, and emphasised the contrast between the high descending scalic melodies with the lower, more enigmatic, sections.

In the following Leighton *Adagio*, Christopher created a wonderful air of stillness and timelessness. Leighton's signature mix of biting clusters and beautiful consonance, combined with the way Christopher managed the dazzling raindrop-like textures, made it a highlight of the concert for me.

The evening concluded with three Debussy *Preludes*. Christopher really characterised each uniquely and, as always, his technique was impeccable – floating, rippling or bouncing playfully.

Lewis Forbes, Edinburgh University
August 2007