

Out & About—Salon des Arts, One Mallord Street, Chelsea

Lucy Crowe and Friends at One Mallord Street

By Simon Mundy

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One Mallord Street is the perfect place to listen to chamber music, a high long room backed by a magnificent window, the walls lined with exhibitions of excellent contemporary art (this month by Consuelo Child-Villiers), and when the music is as gloriously sung as it was by soprano Lucy Crowe the experience is little short of astonishing. She is surely one of the finest singers to emerge this century. Her command of Handel's coloratura demands is

faultless, her diction immaculate. She can flirt through the delicious frippery of Delibes or find the heart of a simple unaccompanied folk song. But two extraordinary performances, of Vaughan Williams' *Silent Noon* and Dunhill's *The Cloths of Heav'n*, showed the tenderness with which she can temper her bravura power. All of which was supported elegantly and sensitively by pianist Anna Tillbrook, an accompanist so at one with the singer that it is

sometimes difficult to distinguish the note sung from the note played.

The event itself was in aid of the Muktangan School for Mumbai slum children, a cause close to the heart of Lucy Crowe and her husband. It provides the hope through education based on music and the language skills that can lift the children out of destitution. A documentary showing it's work is due to be screened on Channel 4 on Christmas day.