



# MUSIC AT LSE

Music is alive and kicking at LSE. Alongside one of the best public lecture programmes in the country, the School offers a music programme of weekly lunchtime and evening concerts by outstanding musicians, including some top international artists.

Nigel Rogers is manager of the Centre for Economic Performance, a classical pianist in his own right and also organiser of the concerts programme. He describes how these famous lunchtime events in the Shaw Library were invigorated last year with the arrival of a new piano: 'It was getting embarrassing to ask musicians to come and perform on the piano, which had served LSE so well for 25 years but which was becoming increasingly difficult to play and sounded – frankly – ghastly. Pianos simply don't improve with age! The Arts Committee and LSE Annual Fund were marvellous in seeing the argument for sustaining a healthy music programme for the School, so carefully and expertly nurtured by Alan Lowson before his retirement, and the need to purchase a replacement piano. They contributed generously. A friend of the School, the concert pianist Martino Tirimo, and I scoured the country for a decent instrument, and after six months he found a wonderful Steinway concert grand at a music festival in the depths of Cork which he persuaded the hire firm to sell to LSE.

'Getting half a ton of piano up the side of the Old Building into the Shaw Library required an 80 ton crane, and involved a lot of nail biting and premature hair loss as I watched it dangle in the air inches from the Senior Common Room roof, whilst the crane driver, involved in a lively mobile phone conversation, nonchalantly fiddled with the controls with his free hand.'

With such a fine instrument in place the School has been able to attract artists of the highest quality – young prize winners from the Royal

Academy and Guildhall School of Music, as well as international names such as Natalie Clein, Libor Nováček, Bengt Forsberg, Anna Polonsky, Jennifer Pike, Martino Tirimo, Hakan Vramsmo, Llyr Williams and Carlos Bonnell. With professional concert management and excellent publicity, courtesy of the Conferences Office, we have a full house for each concert of students, staff and the public.

Nigel comments: 'We've even managed to get the audience out of the habit of reading the FT or typing their essays during concerts – the soft chairs that many went to sleep in have been moved to the back and we now have capacity audiences rapt in concentration. With the new piano in place, London concert agents ring us to put on international artists they want to audition or who want to try out a big programme before a London performance or recording. The new piano has given us an opportunity to capitalise on this and the intention is to run more concerts in the evening, perhaps with artists paying us to perform here – after all with a fine Steinway the Shaw Library is now a wonderful concert venue and it comes complete with a keen ready made audience!'

But the lunchtime and evening concerts are only half the story. A major feature of School music, the LSE orchestra and choir, continue to thrive under their dedicated and distinguished composer/conductors Matthew Taylor and Andrew Campling. Meeting weekly, members prepare for concerts given to packed audiences in St Clement Danes Church on the Strand. Alex Barros-Curtis, Music Society president, pianist and violinist, said: 'There's a great feeling of the School community coming together when working on and performing large scale musical works. And everyone benefits from taking a musical break from the heavy academic workload that all students at LSE tend to be saddled with. At this year's Mozart Requiem concert the packed audience was visibly moved. Events like this really help to round out the LSE experience.' Although in his final year as a law graduate, Alex has worked extremely hard to bolster the profile of student music in the School by putting on more informal chamber concerts, getting extra facilities for practising, instruments repaired and musical groups together more often. He even helped see through three performances of Sondheim's *A Walk in the Woods* with the student drama and dance societies. An exchange with the university choir of St Gallen, largely engineered by the LSE



choir's director, will kick off with a concert by both choirs in St Clement Danes on 1 December. He hopes that more money can be raised to support orchestra section tuition and instrument repair.

LSE gives other opportunities for the display of 'home grown' talent in the informal termly chamber concerts organised by the Music Society and in the lunchtime talent concerts. This year saw the second of these with a fine performance of Beethoven's Waldstein by a second year economist; performances of original compositions by Dionisis, an expert in anti-money laundering; cabaret songs by the manager of the Sociology department; moving Handel arias; a Mozart violin and piano sonata from members of the Centre for Economic Performance and an exciting performance of the first Mendelssohn piano trio by an econometrician, a lawyer and a student of comparative politics. A lunchtime concert was also devoted to a performance by a master's student (pictured above) in anthropology who just happened to be China's leading exponent of the zheng – a 21 string zither – she appeared with a leading Scottish composer and flautist, Eddie McGuire, astonishing the audience in demonstrating the similarities between Chinese and Scottish folk music. A research fellow in STICERD gave a superb recital of Indian classical and folk song, whilst a feature of the Michaelmas Term was a concert of songs including music composed by LSE's much loved Geoffrey Stern, a fine composer and an inspirational teacher in the International Relations Department for 41 years who sadly died in 2005.

The LSE Jazz Band often provides background music and mellow jazz at LSE events, including the Law Ball and parties for the music and swing societies. Daryl Li, head of the jazz band said: 'In a fast paced and academic environment such as LSE, it is hard to find time to just relax. The LSE Jazz Band aims to entertain a wide audience. During practices, the band explores different areas of musicianship, finding songs that are rarely played in the performance arena in order to expand its repertoire and challenge the musicians. With new talent looking strong and plans to perform at the Christian Union society jazz night and other events, it is set to be a fruitful year.'

Now that musical interests are well represented on the School's new Arts Committee and a new arts coordinator, Richard Hilton, has been appointed, the future for music as well as art is assured. LSE can offer a balanced cultural diet alongside the rich social science menu of intellectual debate – Bernard Shaw, one of our founding fathers and a penetrating (sometimes ruthless) music critic in his own right, is certainly bound to have approved!

LSE Shaw Library Concerts  
every Thursday 1.05 pm from  
10 January to 13 March 2008

**10 January** to be announced

**17 January**

Sarah Williamson, award winning clarinettist

**24 January**

Guitar and cello recital. Morgan Szymanski and Gemma Rosefield

**31 January**

Olivier Ensemble, programme of piano trios including Bartok Contrasts and Brahms Trio

**7 February**

Gemma Rosefield, cello, programme includes the Elgar Cello Concerto arranged for piano and cello by the composer

**14 February**

Ji-Yeoun You, Beethoven piano sonatas

**21 February**

Badke String Quartet, Haydn and Debussy

**28 February**

Marina Nadiradze, piano. Scarlatti, Haydn and Ravel's Gaspard de la Nuit

**6 March**

LSE Student and Staff Talent Concert

**13 March**

Greenwich Trio, piano trios by Beethoven and Shostakovich

To suggest artists for the series, or to sponsor a concert, please email [n.rogers@lse.ac.uk](mailto:n.rogers@lse.ac.uk)

Full details of concerts may be found at: [www.lse.ac.uk/collections/artsAndMusic](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/artsAndMusic)



The  
Campaign  
for LSE

## Record success for LSE's Annual Fund

This year has been the Annual Fund's most successful to date, raising £600,000 through the collective support of the School's alumni, governors, parents and friends. These charitable donations from annual donors have made a collective contribution of almost £3 million since the launch of the Campaign.

The Campaign for LSE has seen a tremendous growth in the strength and depth of the collective support of our alumni and friends. Our innovative annual giving programmes have grown to the extent that over four per cent of our global community now support the Annual Fund, a leading participation rate among UK universities.

The generosity of our annual donors is felt across the whole LSE community. These unrestricted donations to the Annual Fund support a diverse range of projects on campus each year, improving campus facilities, student resources, research and hardship funding. In addition to continuing to support music at LSE, this year, our donors made a difference to the lives of:

- students who were able to complete their studies thanks to a hardship award
- young researchers who received a grant to explore cutting edge social science questions
- students in need of somewhere to take a break from studies in the refurbished Quad café
- sports enthusiasts who can now play at our Berrylands sports field late into the night, thanks to floodlighting
- audiences of LSE events who were invited to think critically about the direction of the UN through an Annual Fund sponsored lecture series
- prospective students who will be taught, debate and address the social issues of the future in our New Academic Building, due to open in October 2008
- budding journalists and production directors who can now stream PuLSE radio and LooSE TV online

Supporting the Annual Fund not only makes a difference to this year's staff and students, but this collective vision and generosity of alumni and friends will continue to be vital in enabling the School to fund innovative projects and provide students with a memorable and transformative experience at LSE.

**Thank you to everyone who supports the Annual Fund.**

**To find out more, please go to:**  
[www.lse.ac.uk/annualfund](http://www.lse.ac.uk/annualfund)

This page, below from left to right:  
The Steinway concert grand piano being lifted  
into the Shaw Library; Martino Tirimo

Opposite page, clockwise from the top:  
Geoffrey Stern; Yi Dong; Jennifer Pike;  
Libor Nováček

