

# An Appreciation of Mary Lincé (1915-2014)

Mary Lincé was by far the longest-standing audience member and supporter of our concerts. Chamber music was an important part of her life, just as she and her husband, Martin, played an important role in the history of our concerts. It is unlikely that anyone else can claim a span of 90 years as an audience member, over 60 of which were as an active participant on the Concerts Committee. She had a delightful disposition and was universally liked, and highly regarded for her contribution to the concerts and her knowledge of music.



Mary first attended the chamber concerts with her parents at the age of nine, at their original location in South Place in Finsbury. From there, the concerts moved temporarily to the Great Hall of the City of London School in 1927 before moving to the newly built Conway Hall in Red Lion Square, Holborn, in 1929. She joined the Concerts Committee in 1938 and remained an active member until 2000, after which she continued as a regular attendee through the move to Kings Place until the end of last year. Of the many who have attended these concerts over the years, Mary was the only one to have done so at each venue since their inception. Quite remarkable!

Mary (née Seeley) was born in Wembley in 1915. Her mother played cello in the Wembley Amateur Orchestra and her father was its secretary. Mary was encouraged to learn the piano and she progressed well, gaining her Grade 5 by the age of nine. Her teacher in later years was Maurice Jacobson. When leaving or arriving at the Jacobson house, Mary would occasionally cross paths with the notable contralto, Kathleen Ferrier.

At the onset of the Second World War, Mary became a volunteer nurse as well as taking a job in censorship. Her work took her to various locations around Britain. One evening in May 1943, when she was stationed at an airfield in Lincolnshire, she witnessed a squadron of planes taking off. It was only later that she discovered that they had been deployed as part of Operation Chastise, otherwise known as the Dambusters raid.

In 1945, Mary married her lifelong friend, Martin Lincé. She had first met Martin at the age of five or six, when they were near neighbours, both of whose parents were keen amateur musicians.

After the war, Mary and Martin lived in Redcar, where Martin had taken up a teaching post. However, Mary was keen to return to London, so in 1947, Martin took a position at Wandsworth School and they moved to Southfields, which has since remained the family home. In the early 1960s, Mary took up some part-time teaching in the remedial department at Wandsworth School and a few years later, became secretary to the music department.

One of Mary's greatest passions was chamber music. She and Martin hosted monthly gatherings at home, to play chamber music with friends. She and Martin particularly enjoyed participating in Music Camp, at Pigotts in Buckinghamshire, until they were well into their 80s. Although instrumental music featured strongly throughout Mary's life, she enjoyed some of her most rewarding and moving experiences through choral music. Both Mary and Martin were closely involved with the Wandsworth School Choir, which achieved international

recognition under its Director of Music, Russell Burgess. She was often allowed to sing alto as the only female member of an all-male choir!

Mary derived great pleasure from a range of performances and recordings of the works of Benjamin Britten and appearances at the Aldeburgh Festival, as well as a variety of film sessions. As time went on, she joined both the London Philharmonic and Philharmonia choruses and had the opportunity to sing many of the great choral works, such as Verdi's *Requiem*, Mahler's 8th Symphony, Elgar's 'The Dream of Gerontius', and many performances of Beethoven's 9th Symphony under world-renowned conductors.

She subsequently spent several highly enjoyable years with Morley College Chamber Choir, later re-formed as the Borough Chamber Choir, under Bob Hanson. More recently, Mary spent a few terms singing with Morley College's Meridian Choir until some months after her 98th birthday!

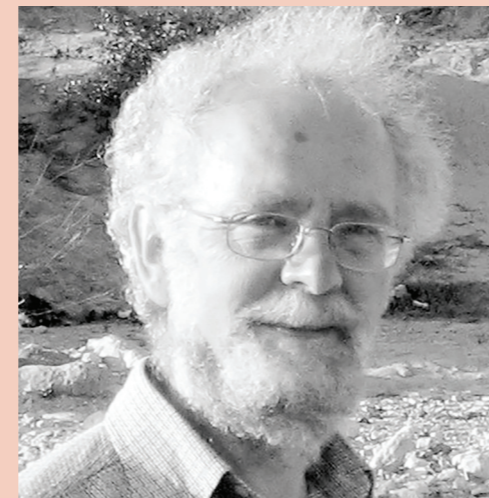
Mary had a long and interesting life and maintained her many interests in art, music, politics and current affairs. She was kind and helpful, and took an interest in everything around her. An excellent listener, she was a pleasure to converse with. Lively, active, and strongly independent, wishing never to be a burden to others, even to the extent of travelling to and from our concerts by public transport right up to almost her last year!

We look back at Mary's long and substantial contribution to our concerts, her hospitality and rapport with the artists, her high standards, her knowledge of music and understanding of performance, and her valued observations. She was a delightful lady whom we will remember with much appreciation and affection.

*[Sincere thanks to Janet and Hugh, Mary's daughter and son, and to Nicola and Chris, her granddaughter and grandson, for their eulogies, from which much of her life history and musical experience was taken.]*

David Morris

## Members' Voices Impressions of a New Member



As for so many others, music (sadly, listened to rather than played) has been central to my life. Indeed, my earliest memories are of sitting in front of a radiogram on which were piled several 78s that cascaded onto the turntable to reveal another wonder. They were mostly recordings of operatic arias by the likes of Caruso. As an adolescent, I was naturally drawn to the angst of a Tchaikovsky, drowning in an embrace of melancholy, and it took me a little time to appreciate the subtleties of Lieder and the wonders of the string quartet. Haiku and sonnets rather than epic poetry, their pared-down form was a revelation. Not to say they cannot be complex and monumental. My first

encounter with the late Beethoven quartets remains one of the most intense experiences of my life.

And speaking of intense experiences, I am greatly looking forward to the 11 May raga concert. Since I heard my first raga many years ago – in a small, sparse room in Kerala, South India – my sense of wonder at this music has never left me. The initial piece was over an hour long: varied, dramatic, intense, sensitive, rhythmic. The musician returned to the central line over and over again as with improvised jazz, but in a so-much-more artful and subtle manner. The experience was like first hearing 'Tristan and Isolde'. Such God-like music.

Living in London is wonderful for a lover of music and theatre. Where on earth is there so much and of such quality? Some might say there is no room for yet another venue. But this is not a zero-sum game with Kings Place undermining the Wigmore Hall.

My wife and I attended some of the "taster" sessions at Kings Place when it first opened. We knew a little about its founder and his inspiring vision of creating a new arts centre, combining high-quality performance with a sense of responsibility to serve the local community. We were not disappointed, being treated to a cornucopia of music in an arresting modern building. The quality of the acoustic in the main hall and generous open spaces in which to relax seemed to us without parallel in London.

Since then we have returned for various events, but it was only a few months ago that we began to attend the Sunday evening chamber concerts. These have been a revelation. We have simply booked without looking at the programme. As with the Proms we enjoy hearing our much-loved

favourites – Death and the Maiden, etc. etc – but, more important, we wish to hear and be surprised by what we don't know. And this is what we have most appreciated, in addition to the skill of both established and relatively newly formed ensembles. Unknown Haydn, Fasch, pieces for two pianos, heart-rendering Shostakovich, Walton, percussive Bartok – what a treat.

We find the 6.30 start extremely helpful, as it does not mean a late night before the horrors of the week are upon us. And we have also found the concerts, located close to a transport hub, an excellent way to keep up with friends, meeting up beforehand for a chat and coffee.

As to what is missing. Listening to music in mainland Europe, we are often struck by the youthfulness of the audience. This is especially true in the Baltic States, where my wife and I feel antediluvian interlopers. Sadly, that does not appear to be true in the UK. I often think this must be because of the high prices compared with other countries. In Dresden you can go to the opera at a fraction of the price. Even the Met in New York is cheaper. But these concerts are amazingly – crazily? – cheap. £8.50 a time if you sign up and book in advance. So why are there not proportionately more young people in the Kings Place audience?

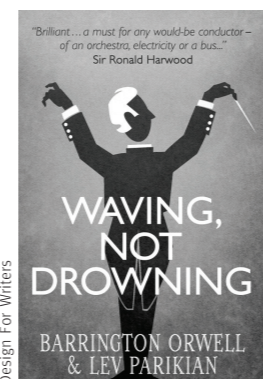
No doubt this is forever being considered. But would it be possible to commission new pieces? Maybe LCMS members could be encouraged to underwrite these?

But these are minor cavils. Thank you, LCMS. We look forward to many more treats.

Edward Hurst

## Books

**'Waving, Not Drowning'** by Barrington Orwell & Lev Parikian. <http://wavingnotdrowningbook.wordpress.com>



Design For Writers

Music may be noise and conducting merely wielding a stick but who has not hummed or sung along with a favourite melody (trying to improve it? or perhaps urging the radio version to match our own CD version?), secretly waving our arms around as well.

This hilarious book will certainly give you some insights into conductors and conducting, and give food for thought next time you sit in an audience for an orchestral concert and wonder what all those gestures are about. Both candid and tongue-in-cheek, Messrs Orwell and Parikian have had a lot of fun analysing all aspects of this specialised field and have produced something of a musical cartoon. I was constantly picturing the characters together with speech bubbles and/or captions and, as the book is not illustrated, this says a lot about the striking, evocative style of the text.

'Waving, Not Drowning' (nodding towards Stevie Smith's 'Not Waving but Drowning') compares the conductor variously to a traffic cop, a genius, a charlatan and a trained monkey, but always with great affection and humour and pointing out the huge minefield of possible misinterpretation. Dress, choreography, baton and gesture are investigated – even the tics of the "man at the helm."

The book acknowledges that women are conductors, too, and describes them as often having "confidence, chutzpah, charisma..." but apart from a short chapter all the conducting characters are male, though the author points out that he/him does include she/her. Indeed, his examples of the female "Power Dresser", "Walter" and "Pocket Rocket" could well also apply to men. I would have preferred more inclusive reference in the main text, but at least the small band of female conductors was recognised!

The conductor is the focus of interest in an orchestral concert, in spite of having his back to us, the audience. Will he use two hands? or one? a stick? or none? Gestures will probably be unique to the individual but

"it's generally acknowledged that the process should involve some form of arm movement." Will he be in charge of the orchestra or the orchestra in charge of him? He can thrash about or be motionless, rock to and fro, or be a "one-man Mexican wave."

There was recently an interactive screen installation at the South Bank where the public could 'conduct' an orchestra. Having laughed at others doing it, I had a go myself – oh dear, I couldn't start or stop the music and the loud bits went dramatically faster, the quiet parts slowed down with great feeling, and I, the total amateur, was left being the one laughed at! I thought of this when reading the description of the conductor taking a rehearsal in shorts and t-shirt, lounging in a green armchair; yet he, the competent professional, knew exactly what to do, with skill and aplomb, and produced a wonderful performance.

The book could be just a witty self-help tract or merely a jocular dig in the ribs of budding maestros, but many of the tips/advice could be applied to other spheres of life: 'be memorable; never be boring, (anything but); look to the future; study your body language and use it to maximum effect; imply that you're always busy. It seems that orchestra and audience alike form an opinion of the conductor within seconds, as we all do with acquaintances in social and work situations – indeed, advice manuals are written on 'first impressions' and 'initial impact' – but the conductor certainly has a unique gathering to perform for. This amusing book temptingly leads us to laugh at the conductor's role, but by the end I think you realise that conducting is truly not for "people who find learning an instrument too hard!"

Shackleton apparently wrote that "loneliness is the penalty of leadership", and I thought of this while laughing at the life and aspirations of the conductor. It might be a hard ride before you get that third or fourth curtain call.

A lovely holiday read for the summer.

Chris Bradshaw



Cire Barata

# CHAMBER MUSIC NOTES

ISSUE 10 2014/2015

# The LCMS Newsletter

## Welcome!

**"I think his (Peter Fribbins') programming this season was first rate, a balanced mix of traditional bread and butter favourites and innovation, and exposure to some new artists. Artistically, it was an excellent season."**



I was very pleased recently to receive the above message from a long-time LCMS member praising our programming – just one example of the wide support we have for our artistic work. New members have also been enthusiastic supporters – see 'Members' Voices' in this issue. The 2014-2015 season looks more than likely to maintain the high standard our audiences have come to expect.

This issue of *Chamber Music Notes* goes behind the scenes to present some of the people who will contribute to the season's delights. Roxanna Panufnik, the daughter of the famous composer Sir Andrzej Panufnik and an accomplished musician and composer in her own right, is planning an exciting and ambitious Panufnik Centenary Day on 30 November 2014 at Kings Place, culminating in a performance of both her father's and her compositions in the LCMS concert series. She shared with Leon Levy the twists and turns of her life and career so far.

Walter Rudeloff evoked illuminating responses to his questions from the noted composer Anthony Payne, whose 'Piano Quartet' will be given its London premiere by the Primrose Piano Quartet at the LCMS concert on 15 February 2015. I look forward to listening in then to what Anthony describes as the "intimate colloquy" of chamber music.

Piano quartets usually in fact involve five people, the page turner being the fifth. Andrea Shum, who started turning pages at LCMS concerts in 2013, has shared some of her experiences in this vital role in an amusing and interesting way.

Sadly, the LCMS member of longest duration, Mary Lincé, died in March this year at the age of 99. She was an outstanding person, and a great supporter of our Sunday evening concerts. David Morris has written a moving tribute to her for this issue. We shall miss her.

At the same time that we are delighted with our audiences' positive feedback, we are hopeful that some of you who are in a position to support us financially will consider making a donation to LCMS so that we can continue to bring you 'first-rate' programming.

Neil Johnson  
Executive Chairman

# LONDON CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY



Sacconi Quartet. Photo: Emilie Bailey

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## Behind the Notes

Welcome to another season of London Chamber Music Society concerts at Kings Place. Our last season finished with one of the most unusual concerts I have arranged so far for the LCMS: an East-West fusion with sarod maestro and composer Wajahat Khan and the Allegri Quartet. I am very pleased that it all worked so well, and that it was as fascinating and musically satisfying as I had hoped. The day of the concert was actually Wajahat's birthday, so no doubt the auspicious resonances helped!

I hope the new season is a worthy successor to our last: we have our usual array of wonderful chamber ensembles. October and November events include three fabulous string quartets: the Sacconi, the Allegri (in their 60th-anniversary concert), and the Brodsky in a celebration of the music of the Polish 20th-century master, Andrzej Panufnik. The latter has particular personal meaning for me, since Roxanna Panufnik and I were students together at the Royal Academy of Music, and that meant I was lucky enough to meet her father Andrzej a number of times. I remember seeing him for the last time just a few months before he died in 1991. I asked him about his recent visit to Poland for the first time since his dramatic escape in 1954, and about hearing some of his music performed there again, after it had effectively been banned by the Soviets for almost 40 years. He had always such positive energy and was a true gentleman: it is a privilege to be involved in his centenary celebrations.

As well as quartets, there are also three piano trios, beginning with the 'period performance' Trio Goya, with violist James Boyd, who will present a selection of Viennese classics by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. The wonderful Rosamunde Trio, with Martino Tirimo, Ben Sayevich and Daniel Veiss, will begin an intriguing series of concerts exploring the relationship between Mozart, classicism and French music. The famous Gould Trio are bringing us a diverse programme that includes the important London premiere of a new work by the Scottish composer James MacMillan.

Our other autumn concerts include two distinguished duos: the Russian violin and piano duo Yuri Zhislin and Sergei Podobedov in October with a programme of pieces ranging from Bach to a new work by David Braid; and our old friends, the

famous cello and piano duo Raphael Wallfisch and John York, in November, whose programme features two mighty sonatas – by Rachmaninov and Beethoven (his 'Kreutzer' sonata).

November 16 sees the last of the LCMS's contributions to the prestigious 50 Top Chamber Classics Unwrapped series in conjunction with the BBC Music Magazine: one of Mozart's most sublime masterpieces – the Divertimento for String Trio – and Brahms's epic C minor Piano Quartet, with members of the Chilingirian Quartet and pianist Alasdair Beatson.

Our last two concerts before Christmas feature the Fibonacci Sequence in their 20th-anniversary concert, and the colourful 'Red Priest' in a baroque extravaganza. Concerts in early 2015 include the Dante, Fitzwilliam, Martino, and Chilingirian quartets and three more distinguished duos – Jamie Walton and Clare Hammond (cello and piano), Lorraine MacAslan & Victor Sangiorgio (violin and piano), and Vicky Yannoula & George Lazaridis (two pianos). There are also more wonderful trios, both with LCMS debuts – the Busch Ensemble and TrioVanBeethoven from Vienna -- and we will host the excellent Ensemble MidVest from Denmark, in a concert to mark Carl Nielsen's 150th birthday. I look forward to seeing you at our concerts.

**Peter Fribbins**  
Artistic Director

*Peter Fribbins's Violin Concerto was completed in summer 2014, after nearly two years' work. It will be premiered by the violinist Philippe Graffin and the English Chamber Orchestra at the Cadogan Hall, London, on Tuesday, 17th February 2015.*

# A Musical Colloquy: Anthony Payne



photo: © Jane Manning

Anthony Payne's 'Piano Quartet' will be given its London premiere by the Primrose Piano Quartet at the LCMS concert on 15 February 2015. Here he responds to questions about his work from LCMS trustee, Walter Rudeloff.

**Walter Rudeloff** How do you approach chamber music? Does it involve the same methods and attitude as orchestral music? Does it have a special meaning for you?

**Anthony Payne** Chamber music was originally conceived for the satisfaction of its performers rather than its audience. A musical colloquy was intended which would be focused inwardly between the players, and a party of friends and acquaintances would be permitted to, so to speak, overhear their conversations, statements and arguments. The intimacy, even privacy of this process has, I think, always been at the heart of the genre, and it certainly is for me – very different from the public statements of symphonic orchestral music, which are designed to catch the attention of a crowded auditorium.

I love both types of expression and relish attempting to fill the spatial grandeur of the Albert Hall with the broad 'brush-strokes' of orchestral sonority as much as I do designing the intimate details of a chamber piece for an appropriately reduced concert space.

**WR** Do you have a special place for composing?

**AP** No, is the simple answer to this. I proved it to myself when I was struggling to write my 'First String Quartet' back in 1978. I had to accompany my wife, Jane Manning, on a tour of Australia, with the work far from complete, and found a different room to work in at every venue without cramping my thought processes!

**WR** Does your new 'Piano Quartet' have a literary inspiration? Can you give us a structural guide?

**AP** As far as literary inspiration is concerned, again the answer is no, and I find it quite difficult to describe in words, which is perhaps no bad thing! A few of my chamber pieces do have programmatic content, but this one is, I think, music pure and simple. I can only liken it to a process in nature. It consists of a single movement in which shapes emerge and grow and sometimes give birth to new ideas, never recapitulating in the traditional way. By the time we get to the final pages I like to think that we've made it to another world, which is perhaps way in the future, or even in the past.

**WR** Is the 'Piano Quartet' specially tailored for the Primrose?

**AP** The first time anyone saw the music was when I posted the finished score to Susanne [Susanne Stanzeleit – the violinist of the Primrose]. I've known Susanne for some time, as she is also the violinist in Jane's and my ensemble, 'Jane's Minstrels'. So I knew all about her splendid playing and breadth of musicality. I've also heard the Primrose on a number of occasions, and felt instinctively that they would be in tune with whatever I might create.

**WR** What do you consider to be the highpoints in your career?

**AP** Highpoints must include the first performance in a BBC broadcast of my Opus 1, 'Phoenix Mass', and its subsequent tour and recording in the 1970s with the BBC Singers and Philip Jones Brass. Then, the first piece I wrote for my Jane, 'The World's Winter', which was premiered at the Cheltenham Festival in 1976. My first big

orchestral 'Prom' at the Albert Hall in 1984, 'The Spirit's Harvest', was also an unforgettable experience, as was the premiere of my completion of Elgar's Third Symphony at the Royal Festival Hall with Sir Andrew Davis and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

**WR** You have engaged in so many other activities – writing, broadcasting, criticism, teaching, etc. What influence if any have they had on your composing?

**AP** My many other activities – analytical writing, lecturing, criticism, etc. – did not directly feed into my composing. But they caused me to be hyper-conscious of the historical and aesthetic contexts behind my creative activities. Certainly, my critical journalism allowed me to keep up with all aspects of contemporary music.

**WR** What influence does your work with your wife, Jane Manning, have on your composing?

**AP** Forty-eight years of marriage to Jane has definitely made me very aware of the performer's problems, and she has also given advice on numerous occasions about my vocal writing. Chiefly, however, she has been a source of emotional support and security.

**WR** Do you have any interest in composing an opera?

**AP** I have never had a burning desire to write one, although Elizabeth Maconchy, a composer I much admired, once broached the subject and said she thought there was a dramatic element in some of my concert pieces. Perhaps if I'd been approached I might have discovered a suitable subject, but at 78 I think I've left it too late!

**WR** What are your future plans?

**AP** I've just started on one of the most demanding commissions of recent years, a choral/orchestral work for the 2016 Proms – my 80th birthday year! I hope I'll be able to do my best, and have the usual first-page anxieties!

## Leon Levy Meets Roxanna Panufnik

To South London once again (or more precisely, South West London – the 'West' is important) and the leafy suburbs of Barnes to see Roxanna Panufnik, whose career has covered opera, ballet, music theatre, choral, orchestral and chamber works, film and television.

For an accomplished musician and established composer, Roxanna's early life is a little surprising. Although her father was a famous composer, she was not pushed into a musical career. She started and gave up on several instruments, and initially had her eye on a career in medicine. However, at the age of three she was already trying her hand at composing, and aged 12 she met Oliver Knussen, who advised her to start writing her compositions down.

At Bedales School, she was heavily influenced by the head of music, Jonathan Wilcox, and wrote pieces for the musicians at the school. She went on to the Royal Academy of Music, where she studied music and the harp. She did not get on well and her compositions were criticised as being naive (i.e., tuneful), although she was considered to be good at writing melodies. This was a time when experimental music was very much in fashion at the RAM, so she left.

The next step in her career was television production. She became a researcher at the BBC, notably working on the Young Musician of the Year project in 1989. This proved to be her entrée into the professional-music world, and she was still being asked to compose for performers at the RAM. Eventually, she was faced with the choice between a career in the technical world of film and television or composition.

No profile of Roxanna would be complete without mention of her father, Sir Andrzej Panufnik, who had a tremendous influence on her. He grew up in Warsaw and witnessed much suffering, including the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto. He later composed at some peril under the socialist-realism regime of communist Poland and the Soviet Union. His music was often savagely criticised, and it even put his freedom in danger. He contrived a colourful escape to the West via Switzerland, and finally managed to settle in the UK in 1954. His first post was music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, but he soon gave up performing in favour of composition.

He died in 1991, and it was his death and her deep grief that made Roxanna realise that life was short and that she had to get on with what she really wanted to do, which was to choose composition. She now combines this career with teaching and workshops, and works regularly with young children.

It is well known that the life of an international performer involves much travel, which often poses difficulties when families are concerned. Even as a composer and teacher Roxanna is subject to this way of life, attending premieres,



photo: © Paul Marc Mitchell

**Lisa Diveny**  
Visitor Services Assistant, KPMS



photo: © Faye Thomas

Lisa, who joined the Kings Place team in 2012, can usually be found behind the Welcome Desk or working Front of House. After growing up listening to Buddy Holly, Meatloaf and ABC, Lisa's education in classical music began by her working at the Royal Albert Hall. It was through friends at the Royal Albert Hall that Lisa learned of Kings Place. Though not a classical-music buff, she is attracted to the music of Debussy and Korngold. LCMS events are the first exposure Lisa has had to chamber music.

Even though Lisa is of Welsh/Irish origin, she insists she has no musical ability whatsoever, having attempted to play the recorder, violin, piano, guitar and mandolin and having had numerous singing lessons. She was not allowed to join the choir at her comprehensive school despite the fact that they were desperate for singers. She was permitted to sing in one musical at Sixth Form, where she played Miranda in 'The Return to the Forbidden Planet'.

Aside from her customer-service skills Lisa also works as an actress. She trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has since appeared in a variety of theatre, film, television and radio productions, as well as serving a very short stint as a magician's assistant. Highlights for Lisa have included playing Julia Masterson in 'Call the Midwife' and Bridget in Pinter's 'Moonlight' at the Donmar Warehouse, as well as getting to play a young Enid Blyton in 'Enid'. In May, Lisa appeared in the critically acclaimed 'Donkey Heart' by Moses Raine, directed by Nina Raine, at the Old Red Lion. She could also be seen attempting to jump off the hospital roof in 'Casualty' in June.

**Thomas Jeyes**  
Lighting Technician, KPMS



Tom joined Kings Place when the building was barely a year old. Having no previous experience as a lighting technician he was taught and trained on the job and felt at home straight away in the Kings Place Technical Team. He regularly designs the lighting for the LCMS concerts and always enjoys the performance. Tom likes to create a subtle, delicate lighting state to match the beautiful music being played on stage. The aim is to enhance the listeners' experience of the music without distracting them from it.

Tom lights a huge variety of shows for many wonderful artists. One week he might be lighting stand-up comedy and a folk band, and another week he could be lighting a business conference and an opera. Many of these shows are at Kings Place and are a testament to its diverse range of programming. Every show requires a different approach, which could involve keeping to a strict script for a play or feeling the music and "busking" it on the night for a rock band.

Outside of lighting Tom is a self-taught guitarist and loves being on the stage as well as lighting it. He plays in the indie rock band 'The Last Bugles' and regularly gigs in and around London. He has an eclectic taste in music that ranges through pop, rock, soul and of course classical. Tom lives in Highbury – only a short bike ride away from the concert hall. He likes pottering in his small but well-kept garden and has a passion for cooking and trying out any new, exciting recipes he can find, some being more successful than others!

# Turning Pages

A very important contributor to the LCMS concerts when we have piano ensembles is the page turner, whose quick, quiet and subtle movements are often scarcely noticeable. Until pianists can get reliable music notation on screen (10, 20 years?), the page turner will continue to be vital to the performance. We are lucky to have an excellent person doing the job, and to have her share some of her experiences with us here.

Starting off, let me introduce myself. Andrea Shum is my name. I am a pianist, currently studying at Middlesex University, majoring in performance. I still remember the first day (24 September 2013) I set foot in Heathrow, London, from Malaysia and started orientation week. I had my first, pleasant conversation with Dr. Peter Fribbins, Director of Music at Middlesex and Artistic Director of LCMS, and two weeks later received an email from him about an opportunity to become the page turner for Kings Place.

The memory of my first day working for Kings Place is also still fresh inside. Nervousness and anxiety ran through my veins. The first question that I always ask when I meet up with the pianist is "How/When do you want me to turn the pages?" I will ask for instructions as different pianists have different requirements.

Personally, I love being a page turner. Being a page turner has been a great experience for me. It has exposed me to all types of musical genres from different periods. There are times when the music is so mesmerising that I tend to forget to turn the pages. I still remember my experience with John York. I was admiring what he was playing until I totally lost the sense of time. He had to look at me several times to remind me that I had to turn the pages. It was definitely an embarrassing moment.

I love looking at the pianist's hands when he/she plays. There is a lot to learn and take notice of as it can be applied and help me in my own playing and performance. Being a page turner has trained my patience, concentration, listening and sight reading. Turning pages for music of the classical period is simple, as the music is predictable and familiar to me. The challenge arises when it comes to 20th- and 21st-century music. This is where the fun part appears. Facing unfamiliar music and lots of chromatic progressions and variety of rhythms, I really have to be super alert and concentrate on every single note that the pianist plays.

The first time sitting on the stage together with the pianist really sends shivers down my spine. It's so stressful because I'm afraid that I'll make a mistake and it will all be my fault. Usually I'll look at the pianist whenever I want to flip the page so that I turn at the right time. Sometimes, I'll look at the audience and just realise how focused and attentive their facial



photo: © Cindy Tan

expressions are. I admit that at such times I'm not focusing enough on the music, but it is fun to look at the audience.

So far most of the pianists that I have had the opportunity to work with have been amazing and professional. I love working with them as they will guide and give me some advice when the concert is over. My future plan after I complete my BA Music at Middlesex University is to try to find a job that relates to music while I continue to pursue my Masters in event or finance managing. To be honest, I really am a purely classical human. I don't like electronic things except for my phone because all of them give me a headache. My favorite composers are all dead. Bach, Mozart and Tchaikovsky have influenced me the most.

**Andrea Shum**

We need volunteers with skills in marketing and fund-raising to help the trustees take LCMS forward. Can you help? Please contact **Richard Gold** at **ragoldlaw@aol.com**