

Spiritual desert theme for LSE's new Faith Centre window



A stained glass window commissioned for LSE's new Faith Centre and designed by the President of the Royal Academy, Christopher Le Brun, will be formally dedicated by the Bishop of London on Monday 12 May.

The Rt Rev & Rt Hon Richard Chartes DD KCVO will dedicate the window, which takes as its theme the ancient tradition of the desert as a symbol of spiritual significance in the World Religions.

'The Desert' installation was made possible by a £25,000 gift from the parents of an alumnus, Mburu Kiereini, who died in August 2010. A substantial grant was also received from the LSE Annual Fund along with a range of individual donations.

LSE Chaplain, the Revd Dr James Walters, said: "The stained glass window reflects the image of the desert as a place of profound religious intensity, from the ancient Hindu traditions to the origins of the Judeo-Christian faith at Sinai."

"The desert has been a place of inter-religious encounter, not least through commerce along trade routes," Dr Walters said. "So this window represents how the LSE Faith Centre is a place of stillness for all people, where different religious groups can 'set up camp' for a while, but also a place to encounter people of other faiths, to hear their stories and to share hospitality."

The window's creator, Christopher Le Brun, is a renowned painter, sculptor and printmaker, who studied at the Slade School of Art and Chelsea School of Art, and has taught and lectured extensively in art schools around the country. He has been President of the Royal Academy since 2011.

He said: "The lonely and desolate regions of the desert are characterised by extremes of light and temperature through the cold of the night and heat of the day. I have reflected on this by means of colour and light alone. The medium of glass is able to present these qualities in an unusually pure and vivid form."

The window was manufactured in Germany by Glasmalerei Peters and overseen by glass specialist Andrew Moor.

"Spiritual desert theme for LSE's new Faith Center window." *The London School of Economics and Political Science*, May 12, 2014.