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Michael French
Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator
College of Performing and Visual Arts
Southern Utah University
Office: 435-865-8667
michaelfrench@suu.edu

SUU MUSIC FACULTY AND STUDENTS IMPRESS AUDIENCES ON CHINA TOUR

Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah: Performing a series of concerts that featured an original concerto, gifted faculty and student musicians from SUU's Department of Music recently travelled to China where they drew large audiences at each event. Led by Dean Shauna Mendini, College of Performing and Visual Arts, who was accompanied by Dr. Keith Bradshaw, Music Chair, Dr. Xun Sun, Director of Orchestral Activities, Dr. Lynn Vartan, Associate Professor, and a quartet of outstanding percussion students, the SUU musicians performed three major concerts with acclaimed Chinese symphony and university orchestras.

Departing from Cedar City via Las Vegas and Los Angeles, the SUU party arrived in Wuhan and promptly began rehearsals with the Hubei Symphony Orchestra for a performance of "Canyon Concerto, for Percussion and Orchestra," which was composed by Dr. Bradshaw for soloist Dr. Vartan. The concerto had its world premiere with the Orchestra of Southern Utah in November 2013. For the Chinese concerts, SUU percussion students Darin Hunsinger, Austin Julian, Marshall Miller and Tylor Williams performed the extensive orchestral percussion parts under the direction of Dr. Sun. The concerto made its Chinese debut at a performance in Wuhan's Qintai Concert Hall on May 10th. In addition to the concert, the SUU percussion students gave their own outreach concert at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, performing a variety of western music.

The SUU group then journeyed to Changsha City for a joint performance with the Hunan Normal University Orchestra as well as outreach programs with the American Studies Center of Changsha. Then it was on to Beijing for a series of performances. At Beijing University (Peking University). In conjunction with the Peking University Chinese Music Institute, there was a joint concert with Peking University and Southern Utah University that was part of the Yuanpei Festival and was entitled "Music and Joy for Yuanpei." The performance was a rousing success.

According to Dean Mendini, “the performances further cemented Southern Utah University’s strong ties with numerous Chinese universities and cultural institutions. As for our students who performed, their genuine artistry and professionalism broke down language and cultural barriers and demonstrated that music bridges all differences as it engages and enlightens. I look forward to more creative partnerships and performances in the future throughout China.”

Though the Dean and faculty have travelled to China previously, the music students had not. Yet even with a full and crowded itinerary they managed to do some sight-seeing of some of the major attractions as well as sample exquisite Chinese cuisine throughout their stay abroad.

Returning to Cedar City, the travelers were exhausted yet exhilarated by their remarkably successful performance tour.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

The **Southern Utah University College of Performing and Visual Arts** is comprised of nationally accredited departments of Art and Design, Music, Theatre Arts and Dance, as well as a graduate program in Arts Administration and the new Center for Shakespeare Studies. The College offers 16 different degree areas, including liberal arts Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees; professional Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Fine Arts in art and theatre degrees; and a Master of Fine Arts in Arts Administration degree. More than 60 full- and part-time faculty and staff are engaged in teaching and mentoring over 550 majors in the College. Over 1100 students enroll each year in over 195 arts classes on the SUU campus. The College presents 100 performances, lectures, presentations, and exhibitions each year. The College’s affiliate organizations include the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery, Utah Shakespeare Festival and the SUU Ballroom Dance Company. For more information about the College of Performing and Visual Arts, contact the Office of the Dean at (435) 865-8561, or by e-mail at cpvamktg@suu.edu.