

Dance drama *Mulan* returns to hometown

By Geng Yuan



The dance drama *Mulan* performing at the Qintai Grand Theater Photo by Ren Yong

Following its premier at the National Center for the Performing Arts on May 17, the dance drama *Mulan*, jointly created by the China National Opera House and the People's Government of Huangpi District, returned to Wuhan and was performed at the Qintai Grand Theater on June 5.

A bronze mirror symbolizing the ancient Jing-Chu culture appeared in the performance several times. It is an endearing part of the plot, especially to the Wuhan audience. Dazzling

dancing skills, live music accompaniment, and epic choreography impressed all who were in the audience. Zhou Liya, producer and director-in-chief from the China Oriental Performing Arts Group Co., Ltd., summarized the creation and rehearsal principle as "people first." "Hua Mulan is a rare female icon in Chinese culture who can audaciously decide her own fate. The dance drama must make every effort to give full play to her character." This drama preserves

the basic storyline of Hua Mulan and adds two characters, General Wei and war orphan Rou'er, who work to enrich Mulan's image and make the story more dramatic.

After the performance in Wuhan, this dance drama will go on tour nationally. At the end of this year, the China National Tourism Administration will bring it to Denmark as part of the closing ceremony of the China-Denmark Tourism Festival.

Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra's 7th International Piano Festival kicks off

By Huang Lijuan

The 7th International Piano Festival by the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra raised the curtain at the Qintai Music Hall on June 10.

This festival, comprised of eight concerts at the Qintai Music Hall, has invited eight pianists from Ireland, Cuba, Belarus, Poland, Italy, and other countries to perform more than 10 piano concertos. In cooperation with Wuhan

Philharmonic Orchestra, two pianists from Cuba and Ireland presented musical works from Gershwin and Bartok to music lovers in the opening concert. The famous Chinese pianist Chen Sa will perform on June 30 and July 1 as the finale of the festival.

Zhang Shouzhong, head of the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra, said that in the previous festivals, the orchestra

had invited many renowned pianists to Wuhan. This annual music event has cultivated many music fans.

Musicians spoke highly of the performance in Wuhan, which has helped build a positive reputation of the city among the world's classical music community. More and more musicians are now willing to accept the invitation to perform in Wuhan.

Chime bells travel to Germany via China-Europe freight train

By Ju Di

The freight train X8017/8 departed from Wujiashan Station of the Wuhan Railway Bureau on June 2, heading for Hamburg, Germany. This is the 60th China-Europe freight train setting out from this station. On the train are garments, daily necessities, and mechanical and electrical products produced in Wuhan and other areas of China. Among the cargo on the train is a special one — a set of chime bells.

According to Li Wei, Deputy Director of Wujiashan Station who is in charge of freight shipment, this train is made up of 50 carriages. To meet the needs of the Hubei Opera House (HOH), which will perform with the chime bells in late June in Berlin, a 40-inch container was arranged for the HOH to transport their performing tools such as chime bells, costumes, and stage props, 867 items in all, on the train. This is the first time that chime bells have been transported by the China-Europe freight train.

Leaf painting exhibition from masters and disabled students

By Ouyang Chunyan



Photo by Xie Yue & Chen Jing

A special exhibition was held at the Wuhan No.1 School for the Deaf on June 5. It showcased hundreds of excellent leaf paintings by teachers and students from the Liu Yiqiao Leaf Painting Inheritance Training Center.

The center was established inside the school last year by Liu Yiqiao, a leaf painting master, with the purpose of helping deaf and mute children to pick up a skill to support themselves. Those students receive instructions from two leaf painting masters, Liu Yiqiao and Shen Xianyong every Thursday. Some of the children did reasonably well and have even entered a national competition with their creations.