



Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

For Immediate Release

Feb. 15, 2024

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Celebrated International musician to perform with Woodstock High students

A world-renowned Chinese musician, composer and educator will perform with Woodstock High School orchestra and choir students at a concert event open to the public at 7 p.m. March 4 in the high school auditorium.

Gao Hong, a graduate of Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, has performed on the pipa at Carnegie Hall and at festivals at Lincoln Center, San Francisco, Paris, Milan and Perth among many other cities around the world.

The pipa is a traditional Chinese stringed instrument similar to a lute.

Gao has won countless awards as a performer and composer in China and the United States where she now resides, including Gold Medals from the Global Music Awards.

Lyndra Bastian, WHS choir director, said she was able to connect with Gao after Bastian was nominated for a Grammy Award as a music educator.

"We had Gao come perform and talk to our WHS music students last year via Google Meet and really enjoyed learning from her. We found out that she is also a composer and has written many works for orchestra/pipa and choir/pipa," she said.

Bastian was able to convince Hong to visit Woodstock to work with her students in person during the school day prior to the evening concert.

WHS Choir Director Brian Jozwiak said choir students have learned Gao's composition "Coming of Spring," and that students are eager to perform other selections with her.

"I am most excited that our students will have gained a rich, first-hand exposure to music of a different culture. Gao is a master at sharing her talents on the pipa and we are grateful she is collaborating with us," he said.

Bastian said the piece the orchestra students will play is very difficult and unique.

"It's led to many great classes diving into the counting and different sound effects we will be playing. We are really enjoying the challenge and excited for a concert focused on Chinese music and the pipa," she said.

Tickets for the March 4 concert are \$5 and will be available at the door.

