

Canadian guest of honor at 16th edition of 'Meet In Beijing'

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“Meet In Beijing,” one of the biggest arts festivals in the Chinese capital, is back. This year’s event features Canada as Guest Country of Honor. The opening concert at Beijing’s National Center for the Performing Arts showcased some top Canadian talent.



Mark Roswell hosts the press conference of the 16th "Meet in Beijing Arts Festival". He is better known as "Dashan" - or "Big Mountain" - among Chinese audiences

The opening concert, titled “Spring in China and Canada,” featured Canadian and Chinese performers.

Hosting was well-known Canadian scholar and TV host, Mark Roswell, better known as “Dashan” or “Big Mountain” among Chinese audiences. He is the Image Ambassador for this year’s festival.

In the role of artistic director was renowned Chinese conductor Zhang Guoyong, who led the Qingdao Symphony Orchestra.

“The festival provides a platform for artists from different countries to communicate and promote friendship,” Zhang said.

“The goal is to present world culture to Chinese audiences as well as to show Chinese art to the world. So the opening concert’s program features a range of artforms.”

Also in the line-up was the world premiere of “Wing Away,” the latest creation of Vancouver-based Goh Ballet. The piece is inspired by the indigenous culture of the northwest coast of Canada.

The Ensemble Caprice Baroque Orchestra, who perform on period instruments, followed up with a Bach motet, as well as a Canadian folk song called “Red River Valley.”

“We didn’t know what to expect since this is our first time working with Chinese musicians. They are wonderful musicians, they are very welcoming,” said Matthias Maute, founder, Ensemble Caprice Baroque Orchestra.

“We had great pleasure working with them. It’s a wonderful thing that this festival here manage to get different cultures together.”

Among the audience packing the music hall at the NCPA was Sheila Copps, former deputy prime minister of Canada. She believes China and Canada have much in common and appreciates the recognition the festival is giving her country.

“This festival is a great launching pad for Canadian artists in China and also hopefully in future for Chinese artists to visit Canada,” she said.

“Most Canadians probably need more exposure to Chinese artists and the Chinese cultural community. And I think the opportunity of meeting here in Beijing is a good stepping stone.”

Now in its 16th year, the Meet In Beijing Arts Festival will bring together nearly 400 Chinese artists and more than 400 international artists from 25 countries. There are more than 100 theater performances and outdoor shows as well as two major exhibitions showing across the city.

Free workshops and masterclasses in ballet, piano, and drama will be held across the city to cater to young children and students during the festival.