

Up With People songs imply all is well with world

By Michael Wiest

Building bridges of communication and understanding among all nations, cultures and people—the expressed purpose of the entertainment group Up With People—is a noble and ambitious goal. It is also an abstract goal, as abstract as the words used to state it.

Under the circumstances, one can only look at the facts to determine the reality.

review

According to Pat Murphy, a representative of Up With People, the organization is a non-profit educational program, financially independent, with no political or religious affiliations.

Murphy said that Up With People is an international group, representing 21 different countries, and traveling around the world. The group stays with host families

when it performs on the road.

Up With People consists of five casts of 100, all performing in different parts of the world. The organization is based in Tuscon, Ariz., and uses the University of Arizona for five weeks of intense rehearsal before touring begins.

ALTHOUGH UP WITH PEOPLE is an international group, more than half its members are from the United States. Most of the cast is white and most are Christian. Nearly all the countries traveled to and represented are United States allies.

Although the students in the Up With People program are from different economic backgrounds, all must pay a \$4,800 annual tuition. Sometimes this money comes from scholarships, Murphy said and sometimes it is raised by students from members of their communities.

Of the 7,000 annual applicants to the program, 500 are accepted. Most applicants are interviewed after performances. Murphy said that "you really don't have to sing or dance" to be accepted in the program, but she believes the number of accepted cast members who perform reflects the type of people most likely to try out.

She said they don't like to exclude anyone.

Murphy said interviewers talk to the applicants to "find out what they like." She said they look for students who are "willing to work, willing to get involved and people who like people."

ABOUT HALF the funding for the financially independent group comes from performance royalties. Private corporations such as Dewitt Wallace Reader's Digest corporation and the Lily Corporation endowment fund donate 21 percent. Two of the corporations who hire Up With People are Scott Paper and the 3M Company.

The performance Friday evening at Pershing Auditorium consisted of group musical and dance numbers reminiscent in spirit of the routines used to fill space in the Miss America pageant or the Coca Cola commercial "I'd Like To Teach the World to Sing."

It was good family entertainment, although slightly disturbing in its implied premise that these young people represent the world and their performance proves that everything is working out.

In a flyer containing facts about Up With People, it is written that the purpose of the group's performance is "to celebrate the brotherhood of man and to instill a sense of hope among the audience." This it did. Everyone on stage was talented, everyone looked healthy and happy. No one appeared to be starving. Racial strife was non-existent, there were no disillusioned Native Americans. The world should be such a happy place.

Violinist Stern shows musical flair

By Penelope Smith

What can you say about Isaac Stern? Since his 1934 debut at the age of 14, he has become recognized as one of the greatest violinists of our time and perhaps any other.

review

Saturday night at Kimball Music Hall, the lights dimmed and a gruff little man in a cummerbund and tails walked on stage with a violin tucked under his arm. With his pianists David Golub, whom Stern allowed to be a pianist, rather than an accompanist, Stern created a very special evening.

The selections were well rounded. They ranged from Beethoven's "Sonata No. I in D Major, Opus 12," to Bartok's "Sonata No. I," and Cesar Auguste Franck's "Sonata in A Major."

The Beethoven piece possessed a majesty that Stern interpreted with flare and pomp. Stern's startling flexibility was apparent in the Bartok work, a piece of immense complexity that demanded concentration and precision to an awe-inspiring degree. The result was a high angular purity reminiscent of a Graham dance.

With his final piece by Franck, Stern touched his audience and gave his utmost. The piece was a romantic composition that flowed through Stern like a sad melodious river of music. He smiled throughout the piece and, rather than the concentration of an expert musician which he had exhibited earlier, he radiated joy in his music as if to say that was what made his life worthwhile. The audience was greatly affected after the eerie uneasiness of Bartok, and the applause was enormous.

Stern's was a performance to be enjoyed on many levels. His playing possesses a complex and varied richness that pleases all, from the music student listening to how he handles his E-string to the old woman who closes her eyes and dreams. He can be a pleasure or a puzzle to be analyzed for technique and ultimate human error. But Stern is, above all else, an exquisite pleasure.

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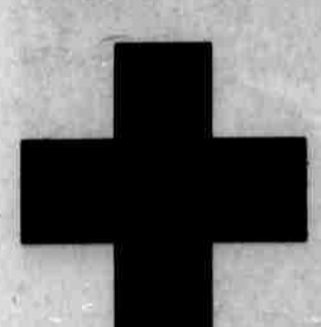
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