



ENTERTAINMENT

Sault Symphony/Sultans of String deliver thrilling performance

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Photo by KEVIN McSHEFFREY/THE STANDARD The Sultans of String, coupled with the Sault Symphony, made a fantastic sound come out of the ELSS gymnasium on April 24.

The seemingly symbiotic relationship between the 42-member Sault Symphony Orchestra and the three members of the Sultans of String for the concert was thrilling to the audience of 335 on April 24.

The Sault Symphony Orchestra and the Sultans of String performed a matinee concert in the Elliot Lake Secondary School gymnasium for the final Elliot Lake Entertainment Series performance of the 2015-2016 season.

The Sault Symphony blended their classical style with the Sultans of String's varied styles that ranges from Cuban, Arabic, Asian, Spanish flamenco, Gypsy jazz and down East.

When the Sault Symphony and the Sultans of String performed, one could feel the music.

They also encouraged the audience to join in by clapping their hands on several numbers.

The Sault Symphony played a couple of solo numbers following the intermission, such as 'Dance of the Young Maidens' and 'Sabre Dance.'

Chris McKhool, of the Sultans of String, explained some of the stories behind a few of the songs they have written over the years.

Luna is almost a magical number about a killer whale that got separated from its pod in the Pacific Ocean. Closing your eyes, one could also see the killer whale through the music, breaking the surface of the ocean.

Another song they performed was 'Will You Marry Me,' which McKhool wrote 10 years ago when he proposed to his wife Catherine.

"That was the actual wedding proposal song," says McKhool. "We went for a long walk by the beach, and I told her to have a seat. I ran back to the car, got the guitar that was hidden in the trunk, and a tux. I put that on quickly, grabbed a bottle of champagne and went back to the water's edge. Then, I sang her that song..., and she said 'yes.'"

McKhool is a board member of Arts Can Circle. The organization sends teams of artists to remote Indigenous communities to conduct interactive music and arts workshops with the youth. They also collect new and used musical instruments to sent up to lending libraries in those communities.

He says on one such trip he made to a far northern Indigenous community, he met an Ojibwa Elder named Josee and had lunch with her daily. Each spring, she would take children into the bush and teach them how to fish, hunt, trap and even set up tents in the middle of the night.

"I thought that was pretty amazing, until the last day I was there, then I learned that Josee was completely blind. I had no clue all week. She really blew me away."

As a tribute they wrote a song dedicated to her.

On Monday morning, the grade 11-12 students at ELSS were treated to a free concert by the Sultans of String in the school's gym.

Elliot Lake Entertainment Series

Kate Matuszewski, Elliot Lake's arts and culture coordinator, said they had great feedback from the public regarding the show.

"It was a spectacular afternoon. It was a great way to end the season for the Elliot Lake Entertainment Series."

She added that with the success of the show, they hope to get the Sault Symphony and the Sultans of String back in the future.

"A lot of people said the music was very emotional for them."

Peter Shipman, a member of the Elliot Lake Entertainment Series board, said this season they had a record number of soldout shows.

They also announced the 2016/2017 Elliot Lake Entertainment Series lineup, which will have five shows.

The lineup includes: Oct. 14, Liza Brokop with the Patsy Cline Project; Nov. 16, Collabro, winners of Britain's Got Talent 2014; Jan. 28, the Second City 'Fully Loaded'; March 3, Classic Albums Live: The Eagles, Hotel California; and April 21, Union Duke, a bluegrass band from Toronto.