

## Asia America Symphony's Han enhances er-hu sound

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### **Abstract** (Document Summary)

In its first concert in the 2006 season Saturday night at the Harlyne J. Norris Pavilion in Rolling Hills Estates, the Asia America Symphony certainly lived up to its mission: expanding the musical boundaries between East and West. With Chinese er-hu virtuoso Karen Han playing Czardas as well as a piece by Mozart on her classical Chinese instrument and American music director David Benoit presenting his latest composition, "Suite for Er-hu," Asian and Western sounds fused.

It was finally time for world-renowned er-hu soloist Karen Han to take center stage with "Bird Singing in the Empty Mountain," which opens with recorded sounds of thunder, rain and chirping birds. However, the taped sounds of nature were soon supplanted by Han's er-hu. What fun to watch Han's nimble fingers slide up and down the slim "finger board," making the instrument sing, wail, and twitter!

After the Mozart piece, Han did, however, follow up with Czardas, showing the versatility of the humble er-hu. The juxtaposition of slow and rapid movements in the flashy dance seemed especially well suited to the nature of the er-hu, and Han showed tremendous technical ability in the furiously fast movements..