



Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts

PRESS RELEASE
November 21, 2014

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RANDOLPH ACADEMY TO DEVELOP TRIPLE THREAT® ARTS PROGRAM FOR SHANGHAI SCHOOL SYSTEM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Toronto, ON - Toronto's own Randolph Academy will be an integral part of the burgeoning growth of musical theatre in China. Randolph Academy Founder and President George Randolph travelled to China recently as the sole arts representative in Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne's delegation on her first-ever international Economic and Trade Development mission to China. While in China, Randolph met with representatives of the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission to explore the development of a musical theatre-based arts education program for elementary school students in Shanghai. Subsequently, a letter of intent was signed October 28 between George Randolph and Yijie Yin, Dean, Technology and Art Department, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission.

Randolph already has tested out the international market for an arts education program, Four years ago, Randolph launched a successful partnership with Amman, Jordan's Stardust Academy, that country's first-ever performing arts school.

"There is a huge musical theatre following in China, particularly among young people," says Randolph. "The Chinese government recently became interested in training young people and developing their own infrastructure, not only onstage but backstage. In fact, performing arts are now a required credit in all elementary schools.

"The idea for a China-Canada children's musical theatre course largely originated with Yunqi Hu, Founder and Artistic Director, The Shanghai Performing Arts Academy," says Randolph. "What's most exciting to me is the challenge to not just import-some might say impose-one culture on another, but rather to find a way to integrate western-style musical theatre practices with Chinese traditions to create something truly unique-a true cultural exchange. Ultimately, we aim to share stories, find a common history, and broaden horizons, all in an idiom that for audiences transcends race, language, age, and ability."

Famous Broadway and West End shows performed in English have toured China since 2002, but more recently, Mandarin-language productions have been created, notably of Mamma Mia!, Cats, Avenue Q, and soon Into the Woods. A new musical production centre is being built in Beijing to develop musicals for nationwide runs, as well as to promote the theatre industry.