

Eric Christmas to present special concert- "Christmas With Strings Attached" in UCSD Theatre

April 26, 1974

About a year ago Eric Christmas, Theatre Director at the University of California, San Diego, heard a remarkable musical group playing a concert that he found electrifying. To him it was one of the most exciting ensembles of professional calibre to be heard in Southern California and one that should be shared with the UCSD community.

Consequently, a special concert - "Christmas--With Strings Attached" - will be presented at 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 2, in the UCSD Theatre with Eric Christmas, in a light-hearted vein, serving as master of ceremonies.

The group being presented is made up of young people ranging in age from 4 to 14 under the tutelage of Mr. Margarito Ramirez. Ramirez has achieved remarkable results with students of string instruments by use of the Suzuki violin method. This technique, which its originator calls the "Mother Tongue" method, relies heavily upon the young child's ability to absorb differences in sounds.

Traditional teaching methods are based primarily upon a mastery of physical techniques and note reading. The Suzuki method is based upon the concept that young, discriminating ears will find their way musically as they do with the spoken language. It is only after a period of training the ears that the students begin to read music and to interpret what they see on a printed page similar to the way in which children first learn to speak by imitation and later learn to read the printed word.

One of the thrilling aspects of the ensemble is the very positive, optimistic nature the students exude. Because they have learned to hear the differences between tones, they also learn to play with very precise intonation, and because they are not primarily concerned with the physical obstacles of the instrument, they learn to play musically in spite of those difficulties. (more)

Ramirez is one of 10 children in a family whose father, a minister, taught his children music. Upon leaving his home in Tampico, Mexico, Ramirez attended and graduated from the National Conservatory in Mexico City. He received a bachelor's degree from Friend's University in Kansas and a master's degree from the University of Kansas.

The majority of students in the ensemble have had their entire musical education under his tutelage.

For ticket information, call the UCSD Drama Department at 453-2000, extension 2491.

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