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OU provost's music performed at international guitar festival

James Lentini, OU's provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, was among hundreds of professional musicians and music enthusiasts from around the world who turned out for the 27th annual Morelia International Guitar Festival in Morelia, Mexico.

Lentini, an award-winning guitarist and composer, attended the festival's closing ceremony, during which Cuban guitarist Iliana Matos performed Lentini's *Concerto for Guitar and Strings* with the Michoacán Symphony Orchestra.

The three-movement composition, which premiered in 1993, is a virtuosic showcase for the classical guitar and string orchestra, written in a musical style that has captured attention from audiences and top international guitarists.

Lentini, who is also a professor of music at OU, said the festival was a memorable experience.

"Having a great international guitarist like Iliana Matos choose to perform my concerto at a festival that has welcomed the top names in the guitar world for 27 years is a tremendous honor," Lentini said.

"I was really pleased with the superb quality of the Michoacán Symphony Orchestra under the direction of conductor Miguel Ángel García, and the festival director, Raúl Olmos, did a wonderful job of organizing the event. The closing concert where my concerto was performed was sold out."

The four-day music festival featured live music concerts from both local and internationally acclaimed artists. The city of Morelia, located about 200 miles west of Mexico City in central Mexico, is regarded as one of Mexico's cultural hubs. The city was built in the 16th century and has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



James Lentini, OU's provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs (left), pictured with Miguel Ángel García, conductor of the Michoacán Symphony Orchestra.



Guitarist Iliana Matos (left foreground) performs Lentini's *Concerto for Guitar and Strings* with the Michoacán Symphony Orchestra.



Matos and Lentini

During his 30-year career, Lentini has earned numerous awards, including first prize in the Choral Composition Contest at Bluffton College, Andrés Segovia International Composition Award, a Visiting Artist Residency Composition at the American Academy in Rome, and the AS Standard Panel Award from 1991-2017.

Since coming to Oakland, he has performed and composed for campus audiences and beyond. In 2014, he performed with guitarist Celir Romero as part of the Chamber Music Society of Detroit at Oakland University series and also composed the piece “Ulysses’ Sail” for the dedication of Oakland’s 49-bell carillon tower.

For more on Lentini’s work, visit jameslentini.net. Listen to his music at soundcloud.com.