



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 21, 2022
Contact: Office of Communications
Phone: (601) 359-5701, 359-5289
E-mail: MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us

String quartet inspires prison inmates with classical music during performance

JACKSON – Many sounds can be heard in a state prison but one might not expect to enjoy the classical work of Mozart or Bach in such a setting. A small group of inmates heard that and more during a recent private concert at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility.

The String Quartet from First Baptist Church of Jackson performed 30 arrangements of music for 68 inmates in the prison chapel. The program included the classical works of Beethoven in addition to Bach and Mozart but there was some traditional gospel hymns and pop culture music performed, including movie scores from John Williams, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Alan Menken, and Hammerstein & Rodgers among other composers.

Dr. Beth Masters, director of the Women’s Prison Seminary, pulled the program together for inmates choosing to attend and have the opportunity to hear music they may not normally have access. “I wanted to uplift them and give them some classical inspiration with a little bit of the free world,” Masters said.

Cellist Sara Beth Mullen said music is a universal language that anyone can appreciate and she was happy to help provide the experience for the inmates. “Music is a language that anyone from any country, any system, anyone can understand because it’s the beauty that God gave us,” Mullen said. She was joined by Noelani Perry, first violin; Zakary Joyner, second violin; and Rebecca Franklin, viola.

That inspiration was well received by the inmates, including Torri Sanders. “Just because of sitting there and having that music poured into us, everything you put in is what’s going to come out, and it’s nothing but good,” Sanders said.

Inmate Duman Crocker has become a new fan of classical music as a result of this performance. “When I first entered prison, I had to find something that would take my mind off things, you know, help calm me down and classical music does it,” Crocker said.

The performance’s program ran the spectrum from hymns including “Rock of Ages” and “Amazing Grace” to classical “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” with “Air in G Major” and “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik” to the movies with “Jurassic Park” and “Raiders of the Lost Ark” with “The Lion King” to musicals “The Sound of Music” featuring “Edelweiss.”

CUTLINE FOR ATTACHED PHOTOS

Members of the String Quartet of the First Baptist Church of Jackson recently performed 30 arrangements of music for 68 inmates at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Pearl. The musicians included, from left in first photo, Noelani Perry, first violinist; Zakary Joyner, second violinist; Rebecca Franklin, viola; and Sarah Beth Mullen, cello.



Media note:

<https://www.facebook.com/MississippiDepartmentOfCorrections/>

https://twitter.com/MS_MDOC