Woodwind Ensemble plays in Shanghai Festival

By Swathy Prithivi  
Focus Editor

Tech’s numerous international efforts, ranging from campuses abroad to collaborations with foreign governments, have culminated in a new opportunity for a group of students. The latest globetrotting adventure comes from the Tech band, which traveled to China to perform in the Shanghai International Arts Festival and other places in a weeklong musical tour.

Students from the Woodwind Ensemble traveled to Shanghai and Beijing during Fall Break to participate in several collaborative performances at the Beijing Sino-Canadian Concord College, Shanghai Music Conservatory and the Children’s Palace in Shanghai.

The group included four different musical instruments, the saxophone, flute, oboe and clarinet.

“We were ‘music ambassadors’ sounding an image of Georgia Tech through our musical performance,” said Andrea Strauss, an assistant professor in Architecture and the head of the Tech band, who also led the trip to China.

“The entire experience was unforgettable. Our students were able to experience how another culture performs their musical language,” she said.

“Representing Georgia Tech overseas was an honor,” said Michael Abraham, a third-year Aerospace Engineering major who traveled to China.

“The Institute’s reputation is impressive, and I was proud to be an example of our school. I think a lot of students here take that sort of thing for granted,” he said.

“Singing Ramblin’ Wreck for a group of people who have never heard it before was awesome.”

Their musical performances were well recibed by their Chinese audience.

“An American band is quite an attraction overseas. Of course, the Chinese music students were the most receptive, but the crowds in Shanghai were thrilled with our performances as well,” Abraham said.

“Even being the followup act for an Icelandic rock group did not deter the band’s ardent listeners.

“We even had a few older Chinese citizens dancing in the street...literally,” Abraham said.

“At the Shanghai International Arts Festival on Nanjing Road there were hundreds of people attending the event,” Strauss said.

“I wasn’t sure anyone would want to hear us. But they turned out to like us. It was great to see that everyone stayed to hear us,” said Jarret Lafleur, a fourth-year Aerospace Engineering major who plays the flute in the Ensemble.

“We all definitely experienced some ‘culture shock.’ The cultural differences were, at times, very evident and very surprising,” Abraham said.

“I was surprised at how much English they spoke and how much of the Western culture was apparent in China,” Lafleur said.

In addition to their multiple performances, the band also had the opportunity to hear Chinese student performers at the Shanghai Music Conservatory.

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Two students hold unique jobs while taking classes

**BILL SHILLITO**

Major: Second-year Mathematics

Job: Digital music composer

Byron-Inn Chen  
Senior Staff Writer

Bill Shillito is a music composer. He also goes to Tech and is a second-year Discrete Mathematics major. So in true Tech fashion he composes music, not with score paper or an instrument in hand, but in front of his computer as part of a growing group of artists who write electronic music.

He uses a program called FruitLoops Studio and releases his music online.

**On electronic music:**

“You can literally create whatever sound you want and use it however you want...and that kind of freedom is amazing.”

Recently, his music has become very widespread and popular online and has been posted on sites in Israel, Norway, Japan, China and other countries,” he said.

Shillito started writing music, and now he is a digital music composer.

**CHRIS DORN**

Major: Fourth-year International Affairs

Job: Security trainer and expert

By Emily Tate  
Contributing Writer

Picture someone who has authored and co-authored several books on security, visited at least 27 states in the U.S., lectured international conventions on security, been featured on several cable T.V. programs, and even been shown in a major box-office hit movie.

For most people, this picture would not bring up a 21-year-old Tech student, but believe it or not, this is the case.

Chris Dorn, a fourth-year International Affairs major at Tech, has been performing demonstrations applicable to school safety and terrorism since he was in eighth grade.

Chris started out working as a part of his father’s lessons on ways to keep schools safe by demonstrating how a student can conceal weapons underneath baggy clothing.

“When I was in eighth grade, I saw my dad practicing for his presentation, and I thought I could do the same thing, so...”

On concealed weapon demonstrations:

“In a dry field we have something, [the hidden weapons demonstration] that is a little bit more interesting.”

See Security, page 12
amazing,” he said.

“I feel like you have a lot of freedom with electronic music. Because you don’t necessarily have with instrumental music, because you can literally create whatever sound you want and use it however you want...and that kind of freedom is amazing,” he said.

While writing music is mostly something he does in his spare time, the money he gets from these projects is helping him pay for college.

“It doesn’t take away from my schoolwork because it happens so randomly...I just get an inspiration and I’ll spend some time on it and then go right back to my schoolwork.”

“It’s like my free time...it doesn’t feel like work to me,” Shillito said.

In addition to his major, he is pursuing a minor in Japanese and a certificate in linguistics. He speaks Spanish and Japanese and has also studied Latin, Ancient Egyptian, Chinese, Hebrew, and Arabic.

He wants to use his expertise in linguistics and math to develop better algorithms for translating between languages and work for Google one day.

“I just want to keep writing [music] and keep getting on more projects...just to see where it takes me,” he said when of his musical future.

He says that any person can pursue writing, though talent and having a musical background helps. He himself has played piano since he was two and viola since sixth grade.

His advice for aspiring artists is to “experiment a lot...literally look at everything and think, ‘What does this do?’ and, ‘What will happen if I change this?’”

“I also, don’t give up...people are going to criticize you...but if you take that criticism well and try to improve...you will succeed.”

I started helping him out,” Dorn said.

Still uses this demonstration today when he lectures at national conventions on safety throughout the country and admits that one of his favorite things about speaking in front of an audience is seeing their shock firsthand when they gasp out loud.

In a dry field, we have something [the hidden weapons demonstration] that is a little bit more interesting,” Dorn said.

Dorn even has a record going as to how many weapons he can store inside his clothes, ranging in all shapes and sizes, from shot guns that are almost three feet long, to packets of razor blades, all different in size, however equal in the potential for causing harm.

His trademark demonstration was shown in Michael Moore’s controversially successful film, Bowling for Columbine (without Dorn’s permission).

In the training video clip featured in the movie, Dorn concealed 12 weapons, most of them automatic guns, which, despite not being the maximum he can hold, is still a staggering amount.

The clip was originally taken for a security training video released through the state of Georgia, free of charge to police, school administrators and Department of Education representatives.

Technically, the instructional video was free to anyone who called and asked for it, so Michael Moore took advantage of this rule without consulting the distributors or telling them how he was intending to use the video.

The organization also helps schools prepare for natural disasters such as gas leaks, hurricanes and tornados.

“New event is any more important than another because they all are possibilities...[though]...some things you can prevent more than others,” he said.

In February 2005, Dorn and with his father, Michael Dorn released their book, Innocent Targets: When Terrorism comes to School. The book covers the distinct possibility of terrorist activity around schools as Americans would see it, as well as topics such as bullying, weapon violence among students, and ways that schools can work to create a safer environment where their children go to school.

The book has captured great press from those familiar with international and community security.

In one of his varied accomplishments, Dorn does not take school lightly.

Even Dorn, who is renowned for his knowledge, experience and research in the field of terrorism, has to take an International Affairs class on...terrorism.

“My experience in security now has been with smaller communitie, and that the classes I take in international affairs will help me understand security and terrorism on a much larger scale, and help my career,” he said.
Alum Cham chronicles grad student life in comic

By Trevor Stittleburg  Contributing Writer

The structural integrity of the Tennenbaum Auditorium was challenged Tuesday night when the walls totally shook from the booming laughter of over 100 graduate students who were there to listen to cartoonist Jorge Cham give a talk entitled ‘The Power of Procrastination.’

Cham, a Tech alumnus and author of the popular comic strip Piled Higher and Deeper, is known by graduate students everywhere.

His cartoon pokes fun at the infamous difficulties of getting through grad school and his talk focused on a central message that, despite its criticism, procrastination is okay.

“Procrastination just gets confused with laziness. They really aren’t the same thing. Laziness means you don’t want to do your work. Procrastination doesn’t mean you don’t want to do it, it just means you don’t want to do it right now,” Cham said.

Over the past few years, Piled Higher and Deeper has become an incredibly popular comic strip on the web and is read by overworked, incredibly popular comic strip on the web and is read by overworked students all over the world and from every discipline, according to the statistics collected on the website.

People have asked me why they don’t get into grad school because it’s the only way I can get a job. I just learned over time; it’s amazing what you can do with just practice.

The helpless protagonist of the comic strip is never named, and a student at the talk wondered why Cham chose to keep the character this way so long.

“People have asked me why they main character doesn’t have a name and if I based it off myself. I guess it’s because when you’re in grad school you usually have to tell your advisor who you are or five or four times before they remember.”

The comic is read by graduate students all over the world and from every discipline, according to the statistics collected on the website.

“The international student and Scholar Services office was really helpful; they gave me a lot of orientation and a few scholarships,” as an international student hailing from Panama.

Cham also received awards for his comic.

“I think at Tech, students have an intense pride about being engineers that you don’t get at other schools.”

Jorge Cham
Tech alum, comic strip author

Cham graduated from Tech in 1997 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and went on to grad school at Stanford, where he did research in robotics and earned an M.S. and Ph.D., also in Mechanical Engineering. He is now an instructor at CalTech and draws the PhD comic strip on the side.

“I don’t know. I don’t really have any plans for the future. I am still thinking about it,” he said on being a cartoonist full-time. “I think I blacked out a lot of [my experience here at Tech],” he said. I worked very hard like everyone else, he said.

“The International Student and Scholar Services office was really helpful; they gave me a lot of orientation and a few scholarships,” as an international student hailing from Panama.

Cham started the comic with little experience cartooning and no artistic training at the beginning of his graduate school career back in 1997.

“I always used to doodle on all my papers,” he said.

“I saw this ad in the Stanford paper for a cartoonist and I decided to try it. So I started drawing this for the paper based on my own experiences in graduate school, and it soon became apparent that a strip just about me would be pretty boring. I guess most artists start out with their own lives. So I invented these characters, [Cecil, Mike and Taje].” Cham said.

“I didn’t have any formal training. You may have noticed some of the earlier comics are kind of bad. I just learned over time; it’s amazing what you can do with just practice.”

“The helpless protagonist of the comic strip is never named, and a student at the talk wondered why Cham chose to keep the character this way so long.

“People have asked me why they main character doesn’t have a name and if I based it off myself. I guess it’s because when you’re in grad school you usually have to tell your advisor who you are or five or four times before they remember.”

The comic is read by graduate students all over the world and from every discipline, according to the statistics collected on the website.

“It was nice to find out that the comic is read by graduate students all over the world and from every discipline, according to the statistics collected on the website.

“I think at Tech, students have an intense pride about being engineers that you don’t get at other schools.”

Jorge Cham, a Tech alum who graduated in Mechanical Engineering, authors the PhD comic strip about disgruntled graduate students.

Cham chose to keep the character this way so long.

“[My video] represents my experience in grad school. And [I show it] because it’s the only way I can get anyone to look at my research.”

The event was a huge success, attracting over a hundred students and at least one faculty member (“Alright, who let him in here!” Cham asked).

Outside the auditorium, PhD books were sold, and following the talk Cham took some time to sign books were sold, and following the talk Cham took some time to sign books.
Some Chinese bands played instruments like the piano and the cello while some others played native Chinese instruments. “Students from the Shanghai Music Conservatory ranging from 12 to 14 years old performed their solo repertoire flawlessly with expert musicianship,” Strauss said. “Awe and amazement were some of the emotions I felt when this one kid...played the cello. As he was playing he went into a trance—it was beautiful,” Lafleur said.

Strauss began planning the nine-day trip this summer and also scheduled the band to play at the Nino-U.S. Logistics Summit in Shanghai, which was eventually cancelled. “We played for the Chinese people and got to hear some of them play, but it would have been nice to talk to them to get feedback, see what they thought about our performance and of [our] music,” Lafleur said.

The whirlwind tour, conducted in a week, tried to include some sightseeing as well. “We toured Beijing, saw the Great Wall of China and in the last two days we were in Shanghai,” Lafleur said. “We tried to see and do as much as possible in just one week and that really wore us out,” Abraham said.

The other international performances being planned for the band include a May 2007 tour of Australia or a return to China, Strauss said. Both Abraham and Lafleur agreed that the trip was completely worth missing three days of classes. “The most rewarding aspect of my performance was knowing that I was bridging a huge cultural gap through music,” Abraham said. “Even though I was completely incapable of having a conversation with some of the people I met, I’m certain that they understood my passion for music.”

“The opportunity to experience such a vastly different culture is completely invaluable,” he said. “It wasn’t just the music but also the people [who came along] on the trip,” Lafleur said. “I couldn’t have asked for a better group of people I couldn’t have asked for a better group of people to spend 7 days on the other side of the world with,” he said.

Strauss seemed to be of the same opinion and said, “the best part of the trip was building relationships with other musicians from another culture.”

“We tried to see and do as much as possible in just one week and that really wore us out,” Abraham said. “I'm certain that they understood my passion for music.”

The competition involves each team, consisting of three people, being given one computer and five hours to try and solve 11 problems, which vary in difficulty. “The judges are pretty vague, and just tell you whether the solution works or the broad type of error it produces. You should basically be able to test the code yourself. While we are allowed to use C, C++ or Java, the problems are a test of your general programming skills and essentially language independent,” Reiss said.

“You are given a different colored balloon for each question you solve correctly. If you want to see where you stand, just look at the balloons around the room,” he said.

While Tech fielded three teams, the winning team consisted of Charles Reiss, James Robinson, and Chris Sidi, coached by David Van Brackle, the Director of Engineering for the of ISX Corporation, a software research company. “I was involved with this contest during my college days. I love teaching, and this gives me the opportunity to work in a field I know so well. Being a learning atmosphere and watching the students grasp concepts and get better is a great experience,” Brackle said.

“T h e t r i c k i s t o u s e a s m u c h b r a in p o w e r a s p o s s i b l e w i t h o u t h o g g i n g c o m p u t e r t i m e , ” R o b i n s o n s a i d. 

Students from top schools in the South- east, they are now set to compete with other teams from across the globe in the world finals, to be held next year in San Antonio, Texas.

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“We feel that this contest moves participants towards being better problem solvers.”

Topraj Gurung, Graduate student, CS

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Contest from page 14

“IBM has a large and substantial commitment to the contest, both financially and in terms of computing resources,” said Doug Heintzman, Director of Technical Strategy, IBM Software, and Sponsorship Executive of the ICPC.

“The contest teaches you to attack a problem in an efficient manner. You are only given five hours here, so it’s important to be very disciplined and stay focused. Also, there’s no partial credit...it’s all or nothing,” Robinson said.

“Whether you usually have an idea of the various algorithms and techniques needed, the coaching process teaches you a few important programming tricks. You should know when solutions will work without actually needing to run them,” he said.

The training involved marathon seven-hour sessions on Sundays for five weeks, which also simulated mock competitions.

The team as a whole has fond memories of the experience.

“It was a very new and different experience. While we solved some interesting problems...going out with the entire contingent was a lot of fun”, Reiss said.

“This helped me not just with my algorithmic skills, but taught me how to attack a problem in a clear and logical manner, which was useful both during an interview and my internship,” Robinson said.

“You learn a lot about team strategy and working in teams. Since this is a group effort, it’s important to really understand each other, and the skills each person possesses,” he said.

The local ACM chapter is always looking for people to get involved, and one does need to be a Computer Science major to join.

Van Brackle points to a less than optimal turnout among Tech students due to the time consuming nature of the contest.

“Stretching yourself and pushing your own limits is a great way to realize one’s potential. As a prospective employer, I always look a little harder at a resume that mentions programming contests,” he said.

Further information can also be found at the ACM website, www.gtacm.org.

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Disability and Diversity Days is designed to promote heightened awareness, acceptance, and understanding of persons with diverse backgrounds and persons with disabilities within the Georgia Tech community.

Monday, November 7
Technology Fair 11-1, Piedmont Room, Student Center Commons

The Plainsmen: A Native American Dance Troupe and Drum Experience the beauty and mystery of American Indian culture through dances and songs from many tribes. 11 AM, Student Center Commons Stage

Tuesday, November 8
“When Diversity and National Security Collide” – Anthony Purcell, Deputy Chief of the Georgia Tech Police. 11 AM, Student Center, Room 320

Wednesday, November 9
Movie “Murderball,” 7 PM Student Center Theatre – FREE, Stars Georgia Tech graduate, Mark Zupan, ’99 Civil Engineering. This amazing documentary chronicles the lives of rough and tumble rugby players, who also happen to be wheelchair users, on their quest for Olympic gold. We follow the hard-hitting action on the court where players smash each other with reinforced wheelchairs on and off the court. These amazing men will make you think differently about the word “disabled.” Co-sponsored by the Student Center Programs Council

Thursday, November 10
Attention Deficit Disorder & Learning Disorders: Fact or Fiction?, Dr. Ruperto Perez- Director, GT Counseling Center & Tameeka Hunter, Disability Services Specialist, Office of the Dean of Students
11:00 AM, Student Services, Room 217A
Are you a student who has difficulty remembering what you’ve read or paying attention in class? Do you wonder if ADD & LD are legitimate “disabilities”? Come and find out more about these hidden disabilities.

Movie – “Paper Clips,” Co-sponsored by the Student Center Programs Board - Ideas and Issues Committee and Jewish Student Union – Hillel
This compelling documentary tells the story of a rural Tennessee middle school class that goes on a quest to collect six million paperclips to represent each Jewish person killed in the Holocaust. 7 PM, Student Center Ballroom, FREE

Friday, November 11
Safe Space Training
12 Noon, Student Center Commons, Crescent Room
Individuals will receive information to be able to provide support and learn about resources for Georgia Tech’s GLBTQ population. Please RSVP.

“How to Work More Effectively with Asian Students,” Are you dealing with native speakers of Chinese, Korean, Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, Farsi or Urdu? How can we help them navigate Georgia Tech? There is information that can help you work more effectively with this population. 3-5PM, Student Services, Room 117

For more information call (404) 894-2563
Co-sponsored by Diversity Programs, the ADAPTS Office and CATEA