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Office of Communications & Marketing

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Photo 1 Lead photo by Meghann Bledsoe

For immediate release

Dr. Lei Cai inducted into the Steinway & Sons Teacher Hall of Fame

By Addie Woods

December 8, 2023

For more information, contact Ouachita’s Office of Communications & Marketing at comm-mark@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. — Dr. Lei Cai, professor of piano in the Division of Music in Ouachita Baptist University’s School of Performing Arts, has been inducted into the Steinway & Sons Teacher Hall of Fame. He was recognized during a ceremony held at the historic Steinway piano factory in New York City in October.

“We were absolutely thrilled, but not the least bit surprised, to hear that Dr. Cai was selected for this incredible honor,” said Dr. Caroline Taylor, professor and dean of the School of Performing Arts. “To have a pianist of his caliber on our faculty is truly a blessing.”



Photo 2 Dr. Lei Cai at the 2023 Steinway & Sons Teacher Hall of Fame induction ceremony in New York City.

Cai was among 68 inductees from the United States and Canada chosen because of their outstanding instruction and work in acoustic piano education and their dedication to teaching the next generation of pianists.

"I felt very honored to be included in the ceremony because I met some of the famous piano professors in the nation from well-known music schools," said Cai. "To have my name permanently beside some of the biggest names in the industry is an honor."

Born in Shanghai, China, Cai was 6 when he began training at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, where he received the Shanghai Conservatory Scholarship Award for five consecutive years. He earned a Master of Music in piano performance from the University of Tennessee and a Doctor of Music in piano performance from Florida State University.

"I started playing piano at the age of five and soon after entered the Shanghai Conservatory of Music to receive professional training for almost 12 years there," he said, "which gave me a very solid background and helped me to further develop my skills."

Cai won the Music Teachers National Association Southern Division Collegiate Artist Piano Competition, the Young Chang Artist Competition and the Oak Ridge Symphony Young Artist Competition; he also earned the Tallahassee Music Guild Award and the Liberace Scholarship Award for Performing Arts.

He has presented recitals internationally, performing at the Sydney Opera House and the Schumann-Haus in Leipzig, Germany, and has collaborated with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra to record a CD. Cai has judged national competitions, presented lecture recitals at the Florida State Music Teachers Association convention and performed as the featured artist at the National Federation of Music Clubs convention.

He joined the Ouachita music faculty in 2001.

For more information about the School of Performing Arts at Ouachita, contact Dr. Caroline Taylor at taylorc@obu.edu or (870) 245-5139.