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Singer to bolster music education



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Singer, songwriter and composer Christy Crowl was the featured guest at the opening ceremony for the United Nations Peace Festival — called the Fete d'Excellence's Festival of Lights — in Geneva, Switzerland; Aug. 3.

Crowl also participated in a United Nations roundtable discussion on "The Art of Human Rights."

The 28-year-old researched the effects of music on children for her presentation. "Music builds your brain. . . . I have seen the firsthand effects of music on young kids. Music improves discipline, test scores and behavior," she said.

Wilda Spalding, founder of the event and president of World Wins Corp., its sponsor, invited Crowl to perform and speak. Crowl said she was the only American invited to the Geneva event.

A classical pianist, the Studio City resident is also the pianist for the Warner Bros. National Bugs Bunny Tour and an advocate of the arts. She believes music programs have been seriously neglected in the Los Angeles public school system.

"Between projects, I perform in music shows called 'Stories Come Alive' for kids in the Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, Riverside and Coachella county school districts. We get such a wonderful response from the kids to our shows, but it is in the Los Angeles County schools that I am most surprised at the condition of the auditoriums. Teachers are putting their desks on stages, some of the auditori-

ums are partitioned off, desks are added and the area is made into a classroom. It is sad," she said.

"There are no music programs, and the instruments at the schools haven't been kept up. Sometimes I have to bring my own keyboard," she said.

Crowl also feels the field is being depleted of quality teachers.

"I have friends who get doctorates and go into fields without music, because there are few programs in which to teach," she said.

Currently earning her music doctorate at the University of Southern California, Crowl has orchestrated and produced a new solo compact disc titled "Christy Crowl."

"With some of the proceeds from my CD, I hope to start a foundation to give grants to music teachers so students might be able to have programs in their schools," she said.

Born and raised in Hagerstown, Md., where her parents Vaughn and Cheryl Crowl still reside, the musician is married to professional singer and actor Scott Dicken. Both are involved in the music program at St. Vincent's Church in West Hollywood. Crowl is the assistant music director and Dicken is a soloist.

Crowl is also the music director at Temple Shalom for the Arts which meets at the Wilshire Theatre in Beverly Hills.

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