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Shaolin Monks Perform a Showcase of Martial Artistry

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA -- In a display of dazzling martial artistry, 24 Shaolin monks demonstrate mind-boggling feats of strength, discipline, and endurance when the Shaolin Warriors perform at the Christopher Cohan Center on Tuesday, October 7, 2003 at 7 p.m.

Cal Poly Arts presents the dramatically-choreographed theatrical production, which heralds the start of the new 2003/04 Cal Poly Arts performing arts season.

For thousands of years, Buddhist monks in central China - the birthplace of Kung Fu - have practiced martial arts as a way to achieve harmony between body, mind, and spirit.

In ancient times, recognizing the need to protect themselves in a battle-torn feudal China, the early Shaolin monks embarked on a long process to develop a system of defense by meditating on the attack and defense movements of animals that lived near their monastery.

The Shaolin monks called their system of fighting "wushu," and after a few centuries of practice, their order was famous for being a brand of Buddhists that one would be unwise to provoke. However, even with all of their remarkable fighting abilities, the Shaolin monk's skills are never put to aggressive use.

Today, the Shaolin monks train in martial arts for several hours every day, perfecting the art of hand-to-hand and weapons combat. However, it is the daily practice of seated meditation which enables the individual monk to sustain a demanding physical regimen.

Each monk is required to achieve an extraordinarily high level of proficiency in each of the Temple's 18 traditional weapons and to become a master of one. Types of weapons include the common axe, cudgel, spear, halberd, sword, and broadsword.

Following their successful Fall 2000 and Winter 2002 tours, the Shaolin Warriors return to North America for the 2003/2004 season. In a schedule of more than 30 performances in over 25 cities, the monks will appear once again at New York City's Beacon Theater, as well as travel to Fort Worth, Denver, Boston, Washington DC, Chicago, and Toronto, among other major stops.

Tickets for the performance range from $26 - $38, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office. Summer hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call (805) 756-2787; to order by fax: (805) 756-6088.
This performance is sponsored by Quality Suites.

For audio and video samples of Cal Poly Arts events, visit www.calpolyarts.org.

- 30 -