

## CHINA 31 Years Later

Having just returned from performing in two Jazz Clubs in Beijing and then on to Shijizhuang, the Capitol of Hebei Province, to teach a Masters Class in Performing Arts at Hebei Normal University, I am reflecting on my new friendships with the Musicians, teachers and students I met. My students and their enthusiasm in learning something about American Music and then cheering me on as I sang some Chinese songs during my final concert at the University are unforgettable moments. The video I have tells the full story in photos and happenings from Beijing, where I sang and interviewed the Jazz club owners and other musicians there, to the workshops at Hebei Normal University. There is nothing like being an Ambassador of the arts through music. After several private banquets where my cousin and I were honored and toasted, by City leaders and University Professors, I can honestly say that I received much more through the Chinese gift of friendship than I gave in my workshops. Having been in China 31 years ago when I shared my singing talents, I remember how I was treated then, with the same utmost respect and warmth. The landscape and politics of China may be changing but my friendships in China are steadfast and growing.