

“Watersong” by Christian Wallace

On Thursday, March 6, 2008, nineteen students from the Juilliard School and several Texas State performers led an audience that filled Evans Auditorium to maximum capacity on an exciting, eclectic journey through an artistic interpretation of water.

For the second year in a row, the much-hyped event delivered upon the guarantee to exhibit the talent of the New York conservatory. With a slew of dancers, musicians, and actors taking the stage one after the other, the diversity and level of skill uncommon to the collegiate level was put on full display. The culmination of the performers efforts, “Watersong: Juilliard Rejoins Texas State for a Celebration of the Arts,” was a dazzling showcase of ability that completely encompassed the canvas of fine arts.

Drifting from works of classical music to beach themed skits into avant-garde compositions and streaming into intense dance choreography with percussion accompaniment, the show transitioned from one form of art to another as naturally as a river flows over rocks. Overall, the night included music by Iannis Xenakis, Maurice Ravel, Toru Takamitsu, Arnold Schoenberg, and George Crumb, as well as spoken excerpts from works by Edward Albee, N. Richard Nash, Steinn Steinarr, Norman Maclean and August Wilson.

Dr. Jeffrey Gordon, who supplied the audience with quick anecdotes about the upcoming pieces in between constant stage transitions, kept the night educational, humorous, and full of energy. An unexpected addition to the evening was the display of Dutch artist Wim Van Egmond’s groundbreaking stereo photo micrography work. Microorganisms from ponds captured by the artist’s camera microscope were shown on a screen while live music floated through the hall.

The highlight of the night was the much anticipated world premier of *Watersong*. The piece, written for violin, piano, harp, vibraphone, marimba and string orchestra, was composed by Texas State alumnus, Wayne Oquin (Music ’99). In addition to his contribution as composer, Oquin also served as the director of the event, all while obtaining his doctorate from the Juilliard School. Amongst the many honors that have been bestowed upon the Texas State graduate, Oquin will become a full-time faculty member at Juilliard next year.

Though the event was constantly shifting different forms of artistic expression or unabashedly combining avant-garde with the classic, “Watersong” managed to make the drastic transitions and blend the myriad of pieces with a comfortable gait. Allowing this diverse mixture to mesh was the core of each piece’s inspiration: water. Each component of the show linked in some way to water. The presentation was the culminating artistic exhibition in a series of events that have taken place on campus over the past year, all which have used water as their focal point.

After another successful integration of Juilliard and Texas State, one can only anticipate and hope that this will not be the last.