



# Montague – CTE Scholar Kathryn Woodard (2007-2008) College of Liberal Arts



**SONIC CROSSROADS:** Funding from the Montague - CTE Scholars Program allowed me to involve students in unique ways during the inaugural year of my new music initiative in the Department of Performance Studies, called Sonic Crossroads.

I conceived the initiative as a multi-faceted program incorporating performance, scholarship, and arts management into the music curriculum with a specific focus on processes of musical exchange. For its inaugural year I planned two concerts involving students, faculty and guest artists, and with the funding from the Montague CTE Scholars Program I was able to take four students to the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) Conference in New York City in January 2008.

From the successes of the first year of Sonic Crossroads - outlined here - I learned how better to address the needs of music students as they look to graduate programs and careers that will not be focused on a single area, such as performance, but will undoubtedly call for multiple skills and areas of expertise.

**PIANO STUDIO:** One of the most immediate ways to involve students in Sonic Crossroads was to introduce them to repertoire that explores the idea of musical exchange. Piano students in **MUSC 250 (Individual Performance: Piano)** performed the following pieces in the 2007-2008 student recitals:

**Poem No. 3 by Kosaku Yamada**

- Performed by Sarah DeGroat (music major)
- Armenian Folk Dance by Alan Hovanhess
- Performed by Sean Stephenson (music major)
- Dance on a Bulgarian Rhythm by Bela Bartok
- Performed by Claire Thompson (music minor)
- Alborada del grazioso by Maurice Ravel
- Toccata by Aram Khachaturian
- Performed by Juhee Choi (music minor)
- Macedonian Mountain Dance by Alan Hovanhess
- Performed by Amy Su (music minor)

From experiences teaching this repertoire I learned that increasing students' exposure to improvisational skills improved their ability to learn and interpret unfamiliar musical styles.



Brochure for the New York APAP conference showcase "Between Tides," a Sonic Crossroads concert also performed at Texas A&M.

Musicians of the "Between Tides" concert at the Crow Collection of Asian Art in Dallas: Ariane Lallemand, cello; Marty Regan, shakuhachi (TAMU faculty); Kathryn Woodard, piano; Theresa Salomon, violin

As a result of the APAP showcase, a version of the "Between Tides" concert was booked at the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C. for October 2, 2008.

**APAP CONFERENCE:** An integral aspect of Sonic Crossroads is its dual role as a vehicle for my performance-research as a pianist and as a means to teach students about creative processes in music and concert production. As such, one of the concerts last year was both an on-campus event, introducing students to new music of Japan, and a showcase concert at the APAP conference that select students attended. The latter event conveyed the process of promoting one's work among many, many other offerings at the conference, all competing for future bookings.

Students did, in fact, attend multiple showcases at the conference, including a mega-event sponsored by the World Music Institute, featuring artists from Korea, Hungary, Brazil, France, Senegal, and the Dominican Republic.

Music major **Njewka Beasnael** took a particular interest in seeking out artists to bring to campus. His proposal to invite Bernard Woma, Ghanaian xylophone master, whom Njekwa heard at APAP, was accepted for the 2008-2009 season. The residency and concert featuring Mr. Woma is scheduled for October 22-23, 2008 in Rudder Theatre.

Music major **Cullan Lucas** also attended numerous showcases and is working with the Aggie Bands to incorporate more guest artists within the Band Program's offerings.

From the students' keen interest in bringing guest artists to campus I learned that addressing aspects of music curation and concert promotion would be an excellent addition to the music curriculum. Prior to designing a full-fledged course, I am incorporating these subjects into my class, **MUSC 324: Music in World Cultures**, for the fall and spring of 2008-2009.



APAP attendee Hayley McCamey - on a break from the conference - at Strawberry Fields in Central Park

Following the APAP conference **Hayley McCamey**, marketing major and music minor, pursued her goal of obtaining a summer internship in arts management. She received an appointment at her top choice, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She was assigned as a marketing intern with the recording label Smithsonian Folkways, in order to assist with its marketing efforts during the Folklife Festival held every summer on the mall of the nation's capital. This summer's festival featured music, food and more from the Asian country of Bhutan and ... the state of Texas!

**Smithsonian Folklife Festival:**

Reflecting on the internship's meaning for her, Hayley said: "After this experience I now have a better idea of what career options are out there and what I need to do to pursue them. It's an exciting time!"



One of Hayley's favorite events at the Folklife Festival: the procession to the Bhutanese temple.

**CONCLUSION:** As my descriptions of the year's activities have shown, the Montague - CTE Scholars program provided me with the opportunity to reflect broadly on the nature of music education in a liberal arts program and to identify the specific needs and aspirations of students at Texas A&M. My goals for teaching and learning will continue to focus on curriculum development in order to build a degree program that provides students with a broad, interdisciplinary approach to music studies. My hope is that Sonic Crossroads as it continues to grow will become a centerpiece of that curriculum.

