

# WILLIE NELSON

Locals recall good times with star's songs

By APRIL TOWERY  
 THE BATTALION

After reciting poetry at church picnics, working as a disc jockey, selling Bibles and recording 31 albums, "red-headed stranger" Willie Nelson is on the road again, and his next stop is Bryan's Texas Hall of Fame.

Mae Eyre, a College Station waitress, grew up listening to Nelson's music and has seen him perform twice. The most recent performance she attended was at the Summit in Houston six months ago.

"I was up in the front, but I didn't have the nerve to go up onstage," Eyre said. "I was just sitting there drooling. He just floats my boat."

The 63-year-old Nelson performed his first show at age 5, when he recited an original poem at a church picnic. His first singing appearance was at age 10 in a polka band.

Nelson worked odd jobs before releasing his "breakthrough album," Shotgun Willie, in 1973.

Nelson is known for his relaxed appearances, including a performance at the White House for former President Jimmy Carter. Nelson was dressed in faded blue jeans, a T-shirt and running shoes.

Tim Kelly, an afternoon air personality at KORA and a senior journalism major, said one of his favorite things about Nelson

is his laid-back style.

"He plays with a guitar that's had a hole kicked in it forever," Kelly said. "He still plays with cat gut strings. People say, 'Willie, you have money. Why don't you buy a new guitar?' They offer to donate money or buy him a new one, but he tells them it doesn't sound the same. He's been telling people that for years."

Kelly remembers his parents listening to Nelson's music when he was 3 years old.

"I've got most of his albums," Kelly said. "I was around when they were still albums. Then we moved to eight-tracks."

Kelly said it is interesting how Nelson's music appeals to both him and his parents.

"A lot of people don't understand — they think since people are young, they don't like old country," he said. "These kids go into The Chicken and sing along to the old country songs, and they're 18 or 19 years old. That's the roots of country."

Nelson's struggles with money took a toll on his musical career in the late '50s, when he had to sell his rights to two songs he had written. He sold "Family Bible" for \$50 to buy his family groceries.

"Night Life," which was later recorded by over 70 artists, was sold for \$150, with which Nelson bought a Buick and drove to Nashville.

Despite early financial struggles, Nelson has recorded seven gold albums and six platinum albums. He has won five Grammys, eight Country Music Association awards, four Academy of Country Music awards and three Nashville Songwriters Association International awards.

Eyre said she prefers Nelson's earlier music to his recent releases.

"I like his old songs on the Stardust album," she said. "But I guess I like his new stuff, too. It's all good."

Kelly said his favorite song is "City of New Orleans," from the 1984 album with the same title.

"It's got a laid-back beat, one of those songs you want to be sitting around playing dominoes to," he said.

Nelson's show begins at 7 p.m., and will undoubtedly entertain the audience for hours, Kelly said.

"He won't stop playing once he starts," he said. "He puts on a great show. They're probably going to have to kick him off the stage so they can close."



Brad Graeber, THE BATTALION

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Willie Nelson is playing tonight at 7 at Texas Hall of Fame

# A flood of memory and myth

Exhibit tells ancient stories of life through a menagerie of art forms

By SHEA WIGGINS  
 THE BATTALION

A new exhibit that combines poetry, sculpture and music in one room at the MSC Visual Arts Gallery is not about art. Sculptor Terisa J. Mabrey said it is about memory.

"Items in the room are placed in a specific pattern to help memory," she said. "Each piece reminds me of a story. I see the piece and many ideas come to mind."

The memory theatre was first used by the Greeks to help memorize ideas and events by placing items in a specific pattern.

"Floodstage at the Memory Theatre" uses physical, verbal and musical stimulation to help visitors remember a world when ancient myths explained the cycles of life.

The exhibit contains mythic stories of floods from many parts of the world.

Slides of poetry on the walls, unique sculptures (including a pond with living goldfish), and continuous music mesh together to display the ancient myths about the heavens and earth.

Poet John Campion said ancient peoples perceived the constellations and planets to be "drowning in the waters of the sky."

"Part of what this exhibit is about, to me, is to see how people in the past found a balance and way for living, and how we might learn from them," he said.

Mabrey, who has worked in Asia, Egypt and Italy, said she and Campion share basic philosophies.

"I am not a word person," she said. "He has to put into words what I try to say in stone."

Mabrey said individuals need to know about the universe and the human place in history to be well-rounded.

"The reason we keep the room visually simple is because, philosophically, it is very complex," she said.

Edmund J. Campion, a composer who received his doctorate in music and studied at the National Conservatory in Paris, composed the music that is played in the exhibit.

"It is continual, cyclical music, like the cycles of the seasons and the years," he said.

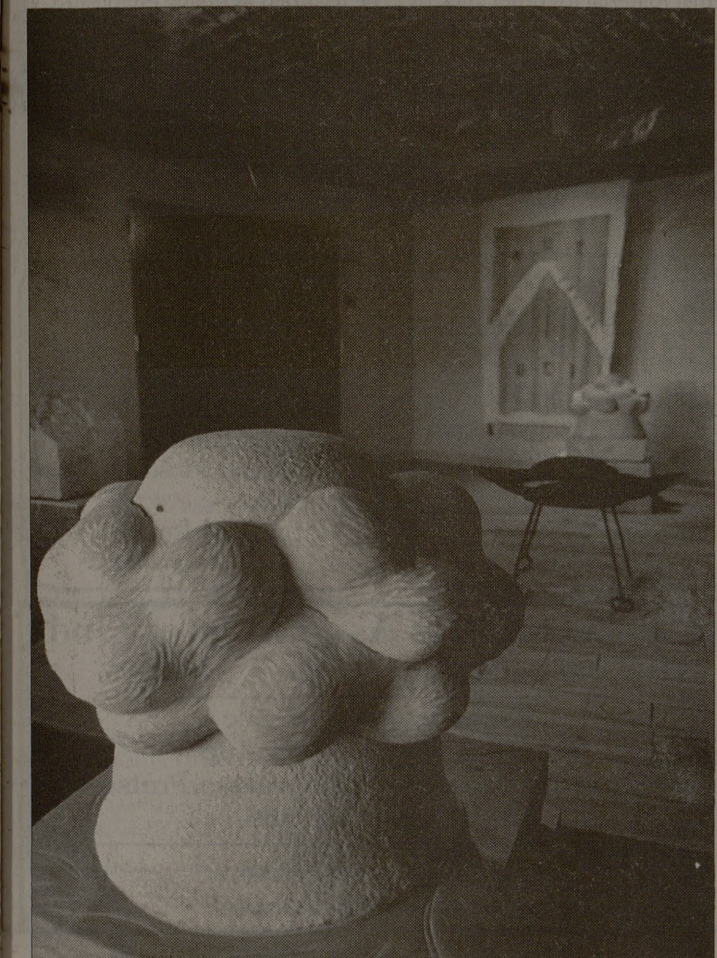
He said the music unifies the space "like a vine, growing to mirror all the themes and concepts of the show."

Angelica Davila, exhibit director and a senior business analysis major, said the exhibit uses symbols to explain the ancient myths.



Sculptures, music, poetry and other art transform the MSC Visual Arts Gallery into an explanation of life's cycles.

photos by Rogge Heflin



### Floodstage at the Memory Theatre

where  
 MSC Visual Arts Gallery

when  
 now through  
 April 12

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