



# Backstage



Emerald Photo

Whether an international ensemble or a group of summer music campers, the sounds of music constantly reverberate through Beall Hall in the music school.

## Beall Hall Fills diverse music needs

The silence of the awaiting crowd is broken when the full resonance of the string quartet fills the concert hall.

A German-made concert organ with 2,500 pipes reaching up to the ceiling stands behind the four musicians, who are now playing as if they were one finely-tuned instrument.

On another day there is a lone musician in the hall, performing in front of a professor at a degree recital.

And last summer, the strained notes of young, beginning musicians struggling to play "Mary Had a Little Lamb" could be heard in the hall.

There always seems to be some kind of music being played in Beall Hall in the music school building, whether it is international ensembles or a group of summer music campers.

But the hall is probably best known for its Chamber Music Series, which draws chamber music groups from New York to Hungary.

The Concord String Quartet from Dartmouth College is the first ensemble to perform in the series this year, which begins Oct. 15.

The quartet drew high praise from New York Time's music critic Harold Schonberg, who said, "Everything was there — tone, balance, technique, a surging line, flawless intonation. Surely this is one of the best American string quartets."

The quality of the the 547-seat hall, however, has also been raved over by the musicians who perform there, says Steve Stone, manager of the series and assistant to the music school dean.

"It's (Beall Hall) considered by chamber musicians to be the best hall in its realm," Stone says.

That reputation is the result of an overhaul done 15 years ago which dramatically improved the acoustics of the hall.

The acoustical remodeling, along with the con-

cert organ, was made possible by a donation from alumnus Robert Vinton Beall (pronounced Bell), who attended the University in the 1890s.

The walls of the hall and stage were reshaped and an overhead reflective canopy was installed during the remodeling, but a much more complex system was needed for the organ.

To make the organ compatible to the hall, an arrangement of 12 condenser microphones, 26 loudspeakers, amplifiers and mixers, a reverberation chamber and a sound-delay line were installed.

The organ itself, although made in a shop outside a small village in northwest Germany, was constructed with many materials from Oregon.

The chests and many inner parts are made of Oregon pine and Oregon fir. Some of the cabinetry is Oregon western red cedar. Some of the pipes are made of Oregon Port Orford cedar. Even some of the electronic equipment used in the shop for acoustical analysis is from Tektronix in Beaverton.

The black keys of the organ were crafted from North German oak which toppled into peat bogs thousands of years ago. The buried aging makes the wood a rich jet black.

When the Chamber Music Series begins in October, it will be in its fifteenth year. Stone says the series has done well because of its regular patrons.

"It's a very specific audience. There have always been enough people attending the series to support it," he says.

There are over 250 performances in Beall Hall every year, including concerts for children, student recitals, the Faculty Artist Series and the chamber music concerts.

A calendar of these events can be picked up at the music school.

Kraig Bohot

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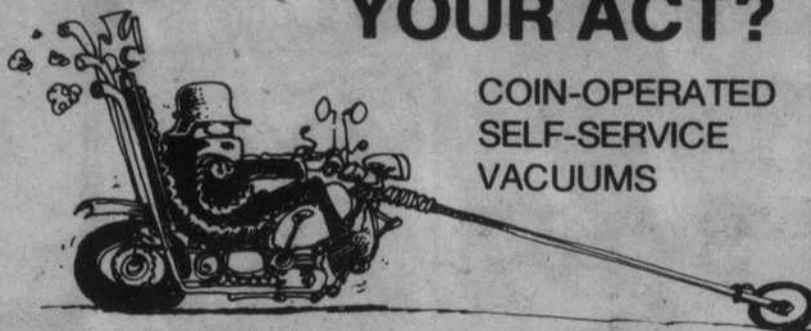


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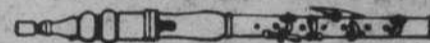
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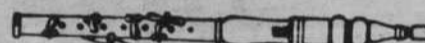


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