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Photo by Shu-Shing Chen
Members of the Oregon Wind Ensemble practice for upcoming performances. The ensemble is just one of many groups that perform in Beall Hall during the year.

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Beall Hall showcases performances by more than 20 student ensembles

By Karen Engels
Of the Emerald

Beall Hall is continually alive with music.

"Concerts run the gamut from 14th century music to Jelly Roll Morton jazz to Spanish Choirs," said Bernard Dobroski, dean of the School of Music. "You can sit in Beall Hall and listen to the centuries passing. The variety is incredible."

Nearly 200 performances are given each year in the University music school concert hall by performing student groups, faculty artists and guest performers.

"This is one of the finest schools of music in the United States," Dobroski said. "The variety and quality rivals the top conservatories in America."

Gary Martin, associate dean of the school, said people do not realize the quality of the performances.

Martin, who also teaches music literature courses, said he emphasizes the importance of concert attendance to his students. "What other time in

life than in college do you have the chance to be exposed to this much quality music?" he asks.

A large percentage of the concerts are free to students and are held right on campus.

Quality, diversity and availability are the noteworthy characteristics of the concerts each month, said Steve Stone, community relations director for the school. "A lot of people know it's a good music school, but aren't aware completely. It's our responsibility to let them know."

More than 20 student performance groups make up a large number of the Beall Hall concerts each year. These groups include the Oregon Wind Ensemble, the University Symphony Orchestra, the University Singers/Chamber Choir, Jazz Labs, Symphonic Band, Sinfonietta, Men's and Women's Choruses, the University Percussion Ensemble and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble.

These groups and solo performers compete well with students at any comparable

school, Martin said. The variety and quality are enormous, from ancient music to jazz, gospel and modern styles, Martin said.

Compositions by music school students also are sometimes performed.

"Part of the education of the students takes place in the concert hall," Stone said. "Performance is the outgrowth of their education."

The Percussion Ensemble, led by Charles Dowd, associate music professor, is one of these groups that show the variety the school offers. "People come away from their concerts very impressed. They use dozens, sometimes hundreds of instruments in a performance," Martin said.

These performance groups are also open to non-music majors, although some require auditions. Many outstanding performers from campus who are not music majors are regular performers in these groups, Stone said.

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