

Accommodating the Arts

**A group of young Oklahoma artists
found refuge and a welcome
in OU's fine arts facilities.**

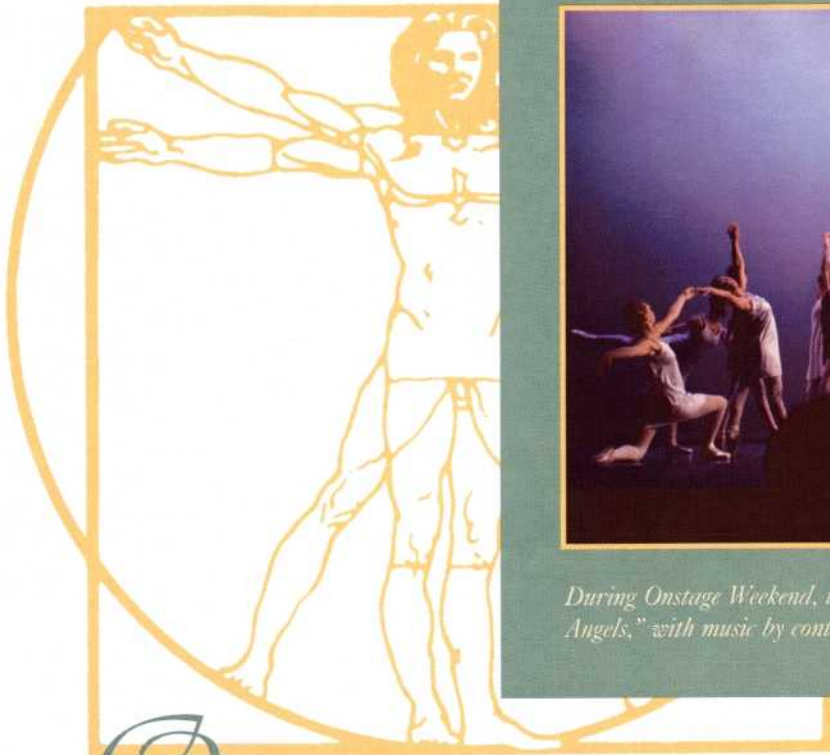
The honor of being the first to use the new addition to the University of Oklahoma's new Catlett Music Center fell to 245 young Oklahomans attending the two-week 1998 Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute in June.

The invitation to the 14-to-18-year-olds and their distinguished faculty to use the University's fine arts facilities, including Catlett, was in response to the 1995 fire that destroyed the institute's quarters at Quartz Mountain Lodge. The summer program will return to OU in 1999 while a new 750-seat performance hall and an Arts and Conference Center are under construction at Quartz Mountain, near Lone Wolf.

In journeying to Norman, the institute came full circle. At the urging of parents seeking inspirational arts training for their children, the statewide summer program was launched 21 years ago by then Governor David Boren, now OU's president, and the State Arts Council of Oklahoma. They sponsored a three-day pilot session at Camp Egan, near Tahlequah, with Conductor Judith Somogi, Ballerina Maria Tallchief, Poet Donald Hall, Actor Bud Beyer and OU art faculty member Dan Kiacz.

Continued

**BY CAROL J. BURR
PHOTOS BY G. JILL EVANS**



During Onstage Weekend, the ballet class taught by Donald Dadey performs "Exultation of Angels," with music by contemporary composer Arvo Part.

operating as an independent non-profit organization administered by the Oklahoma Arts Institute in cooperation with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, the State Arts Council and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the institute opened at Quartz Mountain in 1978. A number of OU faculty members and graduates in art, music and drama have participated since that time, augmenting a staff comprised of nationally prominent performing and teaching professionals. This year the University was represented by sculptor Paul Moore, choral conductor Steven Curtis, violinist Felicia Moye and OU graduate Derrick Minter, a member of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre in New York.

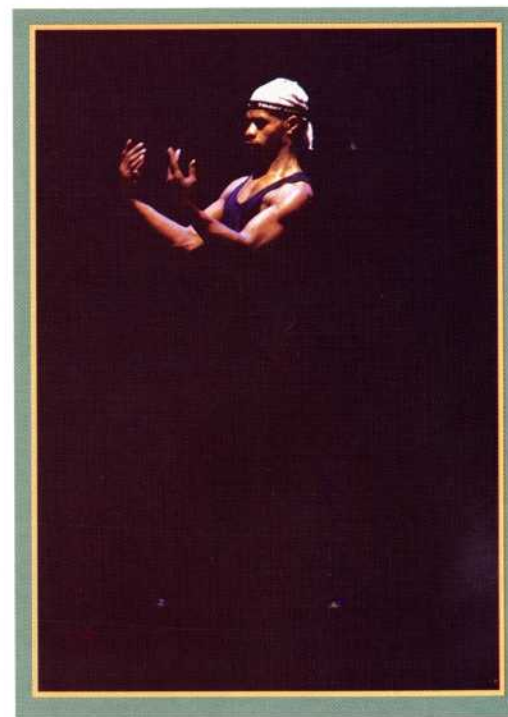
The summer program seeks to create an atmosphere of artistic immersion for its students to heighten awareness of their own talents and abilities through a mentorship situation with professional artists. Training is offered in orchestra, acting, ballet, choral music, modern dance, photography, drawing and painting, sculpture and creative writing. Some students may use their newfound artistic commitment and skills as leaders in their schools or as participants in commu-

nity cultural life. Others, however, may be motivated by the summer's instruction and encouragement to pursue careers in the arts.

The 1998 program was intense, giving most participants a first taste of the dedication required for success in the arts. Each student spent at least six hours in class, followed by informal "Conversations with the Artists." The evenings were consumed by free public performances—most in Catlett's new Paul F. Sharp Concert Hall—and "Arts Talk," electives designed to diversify participation into arts forms other than the area of concentration.

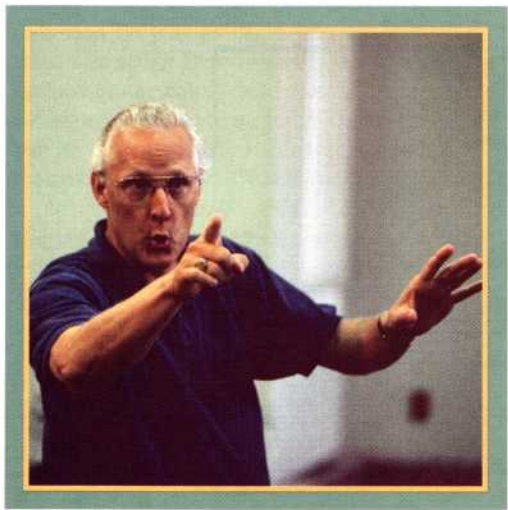
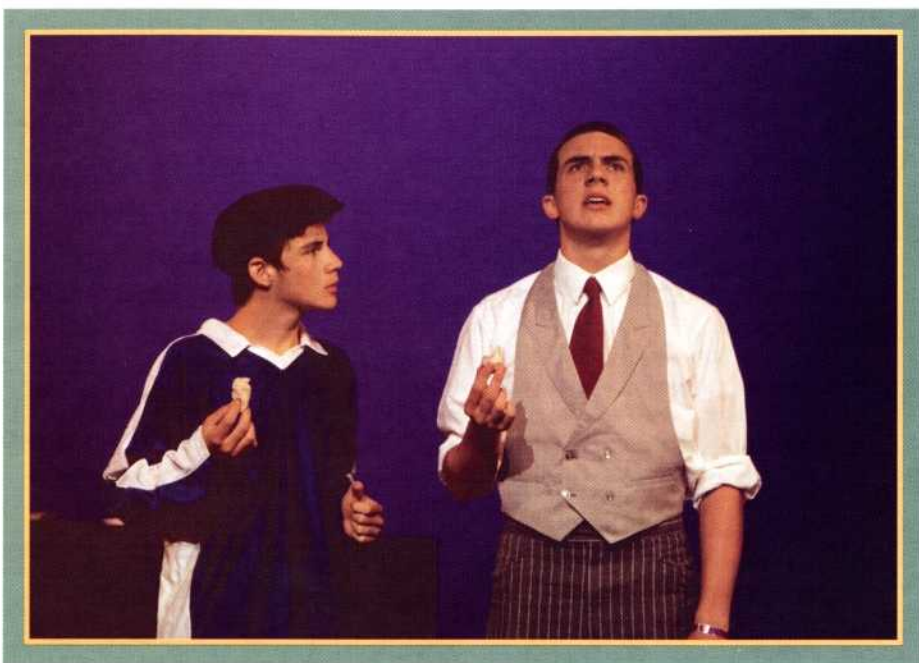
Since the finishing touches still were being applied to the new Catlett when the institute opened, professionals and students alike learned to adapt. Institute officials reported that the encounter was completely amiable, with the construction crews much more concerned about inconveniencing the young artists than in having their own work disrupted.

While eagerly awaiting their return to Quartz Mountain, institute participants settled quite comfortably into campus accommodations, where they will return next summer. From the University's viewpoint, they could not have been better guests.



Now a member of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre in New York, OU graduate Derrick Minter returned to Norman to conduct an OSAI modern dance class not normally taught in public high schools. During his student days, Minter was featured on the Spring 1988 cover of Sooner Magazine.

The OSAI acting class, which staged William Saroyan's "The Time of Your Life," was directed by professional theater veteran Craig Belknap, who directed the workshop production of the original "Jack" at OU in 1995.



OU choral conductor Steven Curtis prepares the OSAI chorus for their final performance of the two-week summer institute.



At left: During Donors Weekend, first-week choral conductor Weston Noble and the OSAI chorus treated visitors, family members and fellow classmates to a special outdoor performance on Parrington Oval in front of Holmberg Hall.



Felicia Moye, left, OU violin professor and Oklahoma City Philharmonic concertmaster, was a summer institute guest artist, appearing with the OSAI orchestra and first-week conductor Thomas Sleeper, right.

Below: OSAI students and faculty alike were thrilled to be the first to test the highly touted acoustics in the Paul F. Sharp Concert Hall in the new wing of Catlett Music Center, which they pronounced a magnificent facility.

