



The Place of Fine Arts In a University

By
Dean Lewis Salter

SCHOOLS devoted to the fine arts are essential parts of any university designed to cover the arts, the sciences and the professions for which students may desire to fit themselves; and in addition, they make an important contribution to the general life of the university as a whole.

Besides providing training for those who wish to do professional work in art, drama, and music, either as creative or executive artists, or as teachers, the College of Fine Arts affords opportunity for students to major in the branch of art in which they are most interested for avocational or cultural reasons. Students from other schools and colleges of the University may elect courses in the history and appreciation of fine arts and this they are doing in increasing numbers. Some of them enrol for practical courses in music (lessons in voice, piano, or some other instrument) and for practical courses in art. Many students from outside the College of Fine Arts participate in musical organizations, the glee clubs, the bands, and the University Symphony Orchestra, and take roles in the dramatic productions sponsored by the School of Drama. For example, only one member of this year's Sooner Male Quartet is a fine arts student.

Students in the University who do not actually participate in any of the activities of the College of Fine Arts as outlined above have a chance to develop an appreciation of the fine arts by viewing the various art exhibitions on display in the Art Building, of which there were twenty-five this year, or in the Union Building, where three exhibitions were held; by viewing the mural paintings about the campus, some forty of which have been painted by students of the School of Art; by attending the recitals and concerts given by the School of Music, some thirty or forty of which are given free of charge each season; and by attending the series of five Playhouse plays which are given each season.

The work in the fine arts is made as practical as possible and students are given abundant opportunity to demonstrate publicly their talent and the results of the training they are receiving. Art students are decorating and beautifying the buildings of the campus with mural paintings and pieces of sculpture. Student exhibitions are held on the campus and fine work is sent away to shows in this and other states. The reputation and standing of the Art School is constantly being advanced by the recognition and honors won by its graduates and students. In the All-State Art Exhibit held in Tulsa last November five students won prizes in competition with mature professional artists and three faculty members won honors. Tom Simms, in a national competition, has won a scholarship for advanced work in sculpture at the Art Students League in New York City. The New York School of Fine and Applied Art has awarded a

scholarship to Robert W. Tomberlin, '38 art, for study in its ateliers in Paris.

The work of the School of Drama affords its students practical training and experience in every phase of the theatre: playwriting, producing, acting, scene and costume design, stage lighting, etc. The Playhouse produces annually four modern plays and one original play for which all sets are made and painted in the playhouse carpenter and paint shops located under the West Stadium. A prize of \$50 is offered annually for the best original play and the winning author sometimes has the privilege of directing his own play. This competition affords a strong stimulus for regional drama. The members of the producing class present, each semester, a series of one-act plays which have been selected, cast, directed, and staged entirely by them. Playhouse productions approach professional standards in stagecraft and as a whole will compare favorably with those of any university in the country. William N. Robson, director of the Columbia Broadcasting System, New York City, witnessed the production of "High Tor" during the recent Southwest Theatre Conference and compared it favorably with the New York performance. The School of Drama has been judged by several competent critics, who have inspected it, as the most outstanding dramatic school of the Southwest. This growing interest in the drama is spontaneous. Although no particular effort has been made to get students, they have come to us from all over the Southwest and a few even from the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

THE students of the School of Music appear as soloists and accompanists in recitals and concerts, and get ensemble training and experience in the University Symphony Orchestra, the Concert Band, the men's or women's glee clubs, and the various quartets and smaller ensemble groups. Concert tours for these organizations are arranged and managed by the Extension Division of the University. Valuable concert experience is also gained by students in appearances before civic clubs and other organizations in Norman and nearby towns. The University Symphony Orchestra endeavors to acquaint its players with as large a body of standard symphonic literature as possible. Its work has been so outstanding that its director, Professor Paul S. Carpenter, was invited to collect and display representative programs from all the college symphony orchestras of the country at the National Music Educators' Conference in St. Louis. The University Concert Band, directed by Professor William R. Wehrend, won a triumph in its recent home concert. Its light, mellow body of tone, free from the blare and blast usually associated with bands, was delightful and in this respect, at least, it was undoubtedly superior to the United States Navy Band which played here last

fall. Equally outstanding are the choral groups directed by Professor R. H. Richards and Miss Jessie Lone Clarkson.

The School of Music is proud of the fine careers and growing success of its graduates and former students in the fields of opera, concert, motion pictures, composition, radio, professional band and orchestra, and music teaching. Among those who could be mentioned are Joseph Benton (Bentonelli), in opera and concert; Ernest Sharpe (Erick Rhodes) in the movies (there are indications that he will be allowed to show more of his fine talent as a singer); Rene (Robert) Stone in pictures and radio; Emily Stephenson, Lucile Hudiberg and Virginia George in concert, radio and theater in New York City; Ruth Alexander Young and Genevieve Douglas Taliaferro in opera, concert and radio; Tessie Mobley (Princess Lushanya) in opera and concert; Wesley Robertson (Ish-Tio-Pi) in concert and radio; Maurice (Larry) Cotton and Aubrey Popejoy in radio; Merl Freeland and Zane Mentzer in concert as accompanists; Albert Kirkpatrick in concert and music criticism; Ivan Lehrer, Cecil Meadors, George Lee-man and Claude Kennedy in dance orchestras and arranging; Spencer Norton and Jack Looney (John Lowell) in composition.

More than thirty graduates and former students of the School of Music have university and college teaching positions. Among them are Lewis S. Salter, Spencer Norton, Wilda Griffin and Jessie Lone Clarkson at O.U.; John Lowell and Anna Mae Sharpe at the University of Arizona; Thamazin Hutchins, Oklahoma A. and M. College, Stillwater; Forrest West, Central State Teachers College, Edmond; Henri Minsky and Tessie Rudell at Northeastern Teachers College, Tahlequah; Merle Campbell Montgomery, Virginia Fesler, Roger Fenn, and Vera Sears at Southwestern State Teachers College, Weatherford; Dorothy Tulloss, Helen Col-lar, and Elias T. Novikow, Oklahoma College for Women, Chickasha; Lucile Leftwich Watkins, Don Garlick, Louis Ronchetto, and Rooney Coffey, Oklahoma City University; Donald L. McCollum, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee; Ruth Lang, Bethany-Peniel College, Bethany; Homer B. Courtright, Murray State School of Agriculture, Tishomingo; Howard Way and Pansy Robertson, Cameron State School of Agriculture, Lawton; E. J. Kieth, Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College, Miami; Folsom D. Jackson, Pan-handle A. and M. College, Goodwell.

Two hundred and fifty music teachers in the public schools of Oklahoma are graduates or former students of the University, according to records of the State Board of Education. Texas, Arkansas, Kansas and surrounding states have called on us for many music teachers. Every year we have more calls for vocal and instrumental supervisors and directors than we can fill.



Dean Lewis Salter, '12

The most important development in the College of Fine Arts in recent years is the addition of graduate courses leading to the master's degree. Heretofore students wishing to major in music or art for advanced degrees have been forced to go to other states to do so. Last June the first Master of Music and the first Master of Music Education degrees were granted. Another Master of Music Education degree was granted at the close of the summer session. More than forty graduate students are now working in the field of music. There are six candidates for the Master of Fine Arts degree, with a major in art and a number of Master of Education candidates with a minor in art. As soon as funds are available for additional teachers it is planned to offer work leading to the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Drama.

THE enrolment in the College of Fine Arts has shown a steady growth from 420 in 1927 to 560 in 1938. A more rapid expansion has been and is prevented by physical limitations, lack of room in which to expand and lack of money for equipment and for salaries of teachers that would be needed if we had more students. As one sample of the condition which exists let me cite the organ department. There are twelve students enrolled in organ this semester and we do not dare allow this number to increase for the reason that the University has only two organs on which the students can practice. If we had the money to buy an additional practice organ so that more pupils could be taken, we would have no place in Holmberg Hall to put it. When the building was built in 1918 there were thirty practice rooms in it. As the faculty grew, the larger practice rooms had to be taken for studios and by last fall there were only nineteen practice rooms left. By sub-dividing six of these

we have increased the number to twenty-five but we should have twice that number to accommodate the students who are taking applied music.

The most pressing needs of the College of Fine Arts, in my opinion, are a University Playhouse and an Art Museum. The University Playhouse would house the School of Drama, which would allow the music school to expand and to occupy exclusively Holmberg Hall. The construction of a modern theater with a wagon stage and with a seating capacity of about five hundred would enable the Playhouse directors to produce plays which under present conditions are either difficult or impossible. An Art Museum would permit adequate display of the great collections of paintings and Oriental art which are now in the custody of the Art School and would allow some expansion in that school. At the present time the major portion of these collections (worth approximately \$400,000) is in storage, packed up in boxes and occupying needed space in classrooms and studios in the Art Building—absolutely unavailable to the students or public.

SINCE it is impossible to accommodate many more students because of the lack of sufficient classrooms and equipment, the School of Art is centering its efforts on improvement of the quality of work done rather than on increasing the enrolment. Nevertheless, the attendance is increasing to such an extent that it is difficult to know how to solve the problem. During the first semester of this year, there were 860 class enrolment cards, and 375 individuals pursuing some kind of art work. At present there are 181 students majoring in Art.

The new five-year program of work in Art for Industry is arousing wide interest. The first year's work follows the general plan of the other curricula in the Art School. The remaining four years of the curriculum are designed to train students for positions in the commercial world. They include, among other things, two years of Fashion Drawing under Miss Mahier, four years of Lettering, Lay-out Advertising and Industrial Art under Professor Smith and Lithography under Miss Kritser, two years of Industrial Modeling under Professor Taylor, two years of Pictorial Composition including photography under Professor Good, special work in Scenic Design offered by the School of Drama and a study of Textiles, etc. In connection with the launching of this department a survey of industries in the state is being conducted. We hope to be able to place our graduates in desirable positions with manufacturing and other firms.

Director Oscar B. Jacobson has acted on the jury of selection and awards for the Texas Art Exhibition at the Texas Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and he also was on the jury of awards at the All-

(PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 34)

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

Southern States Art League Exhibition held in Alabama in April. Professor Jacobson has lectured during the past two seasons at the universities of Notre Dame, Colorado, Louisiana, and Minnesota; at the Texas College for Women, Denton; Northwest Missouri State Teachers College, Maryville; Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Philadelphia; Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa; Washburn College, Topeka, Kansas; Bacone College, Muskogee, Oklahoma; Joslyn Museum of Art, Omaha, Nebraska; Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, Kansas; Museum of Art, Houston, Texas; Brooks Memorial Gallery, Memphis, Tennessee; Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and the Southern States Art League, Montgomery, Alabama.

Miss Edith Mahier, associate professor of art, has recently been listed in the volume, *American Women*, and also in *Who's Who in American Art*. Last year she won the Theta Sigma Phi Award.

Professor Joseph Taylor of the department of sculpture has exhibited during the year at the All-State Art Exhibition at Tulsa, the Mid-Western Exhibition in Kansas City, the Pennsylvania Academy of Design in Philadelphia, and the Architect's League Show in New York City.

Professor Leonard Good studied photography at Clarence White's School in New York City during the summer of 1937. He exhibited "Herald the Season" at the Second National Exhibition of American Art in New York City in 1937. He exhibited "Farmer of Jacauro," a Mexican landscape, at the Springfield (Illinois) Art League, 1937. Mr. Good won the George Sneed purchase prize in water color at the Tulsa Art League, December 1937, with "Taos Ruins." Last year Mr. Good painted murals at the Taft Junior High School in Oklahoma City.

Professor Harold Smith held a one-man show in the Seattle Art Museum in 1935 and in 1934 he won second place in "oils" at the Northwestern Annual Art Exhibition in Seattle.

Miss Harriet Kritser, assistant professor of art, has held one-man shows in Amarillo, Texas, and at the Elizabeth Ney Museum in Austin, Texas. She exhibited this year with the Rio Grande Painters at the Witte Museum in San Antonio, Texas. She is a member of the Texas Fine Arts Association and the Oklahoma Art Association.

Miss Dorothy Kirk, assistant professor in art, is listed in *Who's Who in American Art*. She held a one-man show in the Junior League Room in Tulsa and exhibited at the Kansas City Art Institute.

Roger D. Corsaw, our ceramics instructor, won first prize at the National Ce-

ramic Exhibition in Syracuse, New York, last fall.

John O'Neil won a scholarship to the Colorado Springs Fine Art Center last summer. He received honorable mention in "oils" at the All-State Art Exhibition in Tulsa last year. Mr. O'Neil is librarian of the School of Art.

Miss Margaret Roberts, assistant in art, is listed in *Who's Who in American Art*. She studied landscape at Chouinard before becoming a member of our teaching staff. Miss Roberts is in charge of the department of Art Education and does half-time work as art supervisor in the College of Education.

Professors Jacobson, Good, and Taylor were selected to represent Oklahoma at the All-American Show at Rockefeller Center, New York City, this year.

Olive Nuhfer, '34art, has just completed a mural painting entitled "The Daily Mail" for the Post Office at Westerville, Ohio. Mrs. Nuhfer is now one of the well known artists of the younger set at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She recently won a \$100 prize there offered by the society, "Friends of Art."

Stephen Mopope, '28ex, assisted by James Auchiah and Spencer Asah, also former students in the School of Art, completed a series of thirteen mural paintings for the Federal Building at Anadarko last November. These murals are considered as among the most important in the state.

Martha Lingsley, a graduate of the Art School, has a job drawing for the Silly Symphonies in Hollywood.

James Roth is stage designer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Don Nabers is working as designer for an English company in Hollywood.

Bartlett Ward, a senior in the Art School, has accepted a position as instructor in art at Oklahoma City University.

THE enrolment in the School of Drama has increased in the last seven years from 74 to 110. Another teacher is urgently needed to allow sectioning of classes which are too large and crowded to enable us to offer the graduate work for which there is a constant demand.

A modification of the professional curriculum leading to the B.F.A. degree has been made to allow the student who is interested in radio to prepare for work in that field. Courses in radio acting, radio script writing and program production have been worked out in cooperation with Homer Heck, who is in charge of the University radio station, WNAD.

On March 4 and 5 the Southwest Theatre Conference was held here. More than one hundred guests from all the surrounding states attended. Professor E. C. Mabie, director of dramatics at the University of Iowa, led the discussions in the theatre group. William N. Robson, Director of the Columbia Workshop of the Columbia Broadcasting System, New York, led the discussions in the radio group. He is work-

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ing on plans to make WNAD a try-out station for the Columbia Workshop.

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A large outside stage door has been built on the west side of Holmberg Hall. This enables the truck to back up and unload scenery directly onto the stage instead of bringing it in at the front door and carrying it over the seats in the auditorium as was formerly necessary.

One of the serious drawbacks of the auditorium is the lack of space backstage. Some additional room was gained this year by eliminating the small room on the right side of the stage.

Room 312 in Holmberg Hall has been completely redecorated. It no longer resembles a classroom. The colorful walls and drapery make the surroundings more pleasant. The one-arm chairs have been taken from the room and replaced by bent wood chairs and tables, around which the students and faculty gather to discuss their work. The purpose has been to get away from rows of seats with students lined up against the instructor. The results have been very satisfactory.

Last fall Charles Elson was appointed assistant professor of drama to replace Merwin Elwell, '36B.F.A. in Drama, who resigned to study for a master's degree at Yale. Mr. Elson studied at the University of Illinois and the University of Chicago where he received the degree of Ph.B. in 1932. He has a Master of Fine Arts degree, 1935, from the Department of Drama, Yale University. The subject for his thesis was "Design Project for Rimsky-Korsakow's SADKO." Mr. Elson was art director for "The Forty Niners," Chase Playhouse, summer theatre at Whitefield, N. H., in 1934 and 1935; art and technical director for the ice carnivals and ballets featuring Sonja Henie and Carl Schaefer at the national skating championship, New Haven, Connecticut in 1934 and 1935; art director in Department of Drama and instructor in speech at the University of Iowa, 1935 and 1936; art and technical director of the world premiere of "Within These Walls," Columbia College, Dubuque, Iowa, December, 1935; and art director and coordinator for approximately forty productions of the Federal Theatre Project, Los Angeles, 1936 and 1937.

Rupel J. Jones, director of the School of Drama, has been elected to the Associate Editorial Board for the Tributary Theatre issue of *Theatre Arts monthly*.

William Cope, '34B.F.A. in Drama, appeared last fall in the New York production of "Right This Way." He is now in Miami Beach, Florida, playing in "The Drunkard."

Joe Calloway, a former student in the School of Drama who has been on the professional stage for the last four years is now directing and appearing in "The Drunkard" at Miami Beach, Florida. He

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will return this summer to Marquette, Michigan, as director of the summer theatre there.

Professor John W. Dunn is director of the Federal Theatre Project in Oklahoma. One of the outstanding developments of the Federal Theatre of Oklahoma is a research and play bureau of the Southwest which has for its prime purpose the development of regional drama. The Vagabond Puppeteers is the production unit of the project in puppets. This unit has played to more than thirty thousand people in the last eight months. Mr. Dunn is also doing professional radio work in writing, production, and acting over commercial radio stations of the state.

The enrolment in the School of Music reached 200 majors this year. More than half of them are majoring in vocal and instrumental music-education for the reason, doubtless, that school music teaching offers a fairly sure method of making a living. As has already been stated, the University has been unable to supply the demand for teachers in this field.

Several changes in the faculty have been made in the past two years due to death and resignation. Barre Hill, noted baritone of opera and concert, became the head of the voice department in September, 1936, filling the vacancy caused by the death of Professor William G. Schmidt. Professor Hill has proved himself a very successful teacher as well as concert artist. He has given 34 concerts in Oklahoma this season and is scheduled for a concert tour of New Zealand and Australia during the summer vacation. This fall Herman Larson, tenor, and Arthur T. Meyer, cellist, joined our faculty, replacing Earl VirDen and Milton Dieterich, who resigned to accept other positions. Both men have proved to be valuable acquisitions. Mr. Larson is a pupil of Theodore Harrison of Chicago and has a wide reputation in the Chicago area as oratorio, concert and radio singer.

The School of Music has been fortunate in being able to add three new faculty members in the last two years. Miss Jessie Lone Clarkson, '27fa, was added to the vocal music-education faculty year before last and has had outstanding success as director of the University Women's Choral Club, the Ladies Quartet, and the Ladies Trio. Last fall George Anson was appointed associate professor of piano. Mr. Anson, who has a master's degree in music, taught at Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, before coming here.

He has demonstrated his great talent as concert pianist in his faculty recital here, in his appearance as soloist with the University Symphony Orchestra and in two solo appearances in other towns in the state. Bertram N. Haigh, new instructor in brass instruments and instrumental music-education this year, resigned from the faculty in April.

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