



Marilynn Sue Garrett kibitzes over Tom Paxton's shoulder as he places a final touch to his evil moustache.

# the play's the thing

PHOTOGRAPHS by FRANK GARNER

ASK ANY ACTOR about that unhappy happiness called summer stock and probably you will hear about the exciting new friendships, the tense glow of an opening curtain, the tragic sounds of falling props and muffled lines, the joy of vibrant applause, and the drained, jubilant feeling of an extra bow.

Certainly there will be a Tallulah-smile, and undoubtedly you will hear a pun about the play's the thing.

When 12 talented young people followed O.U. graduate Bill Beebe, '57fa, to Lake Murray Lodge this summer they intended to play and to work on plays—and to give Oklahoma top-notch summer stock. Bill, who directs the Ardmore Little Theater

while studying for his master degree at O.U., gathered up his wife, his courage, and his savings, and moved into the ballroom of the Lodge with some copies of light comedy and old-time melodrama tucked under his arm.

There were plenty of doubts and the size of opening night audiences seemed to verify them. But the villain hissed on, the heroine cooed unremittingly, the hero never failed to defend her honor—and the crowds kept growing until the ballroom filled and became a theater.

It was as much work as play, but throughout the summer the play was the thing.

## Each Player to His Part

What were the ingredients of this work-and-play summer that promises to be the beginning of new dimensions for summer theater in Oklahoma?

First take a guy with an idea, a will to see a dream become tangible.

Then mix well with a talented group from O. U.: Marilyn Sue Garrett, Virginia Leopold, Joanne Hunt, Bob Jerkins, all of Oklahoma City; Tom Paxton, Bristow; Georgia Glenn, Eufaula; Joan Snowden, Stuart; and John Horton, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Add equal portions of hard work and play. Season with relaxation to conserve the vital energy that projects across the footlights.

And you've got summer stock . . . almost.

Any actor will tell you that you've got to have a receiver, that crazy, wonderful mass of faces that can toss back a bouquet or a tomato, but, either way, is the one thing you can't do without—the audience.

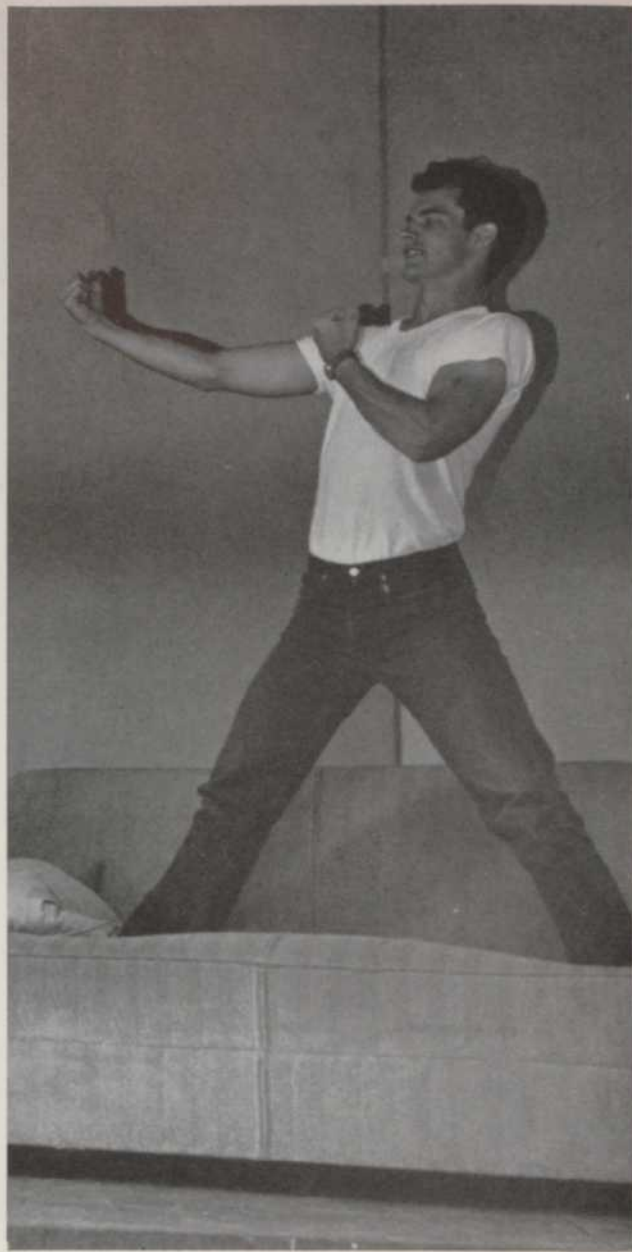
And what did the audiences in a makeshift theater at Lake Murray Lodge think of Bill's summer stock?

They loved it!



PAXTON: You must pay the rent!

GARRETT: But I can't pay the rent!



HORTON: I'll save you!

ALL (TOGETHER): Till Death do us part!





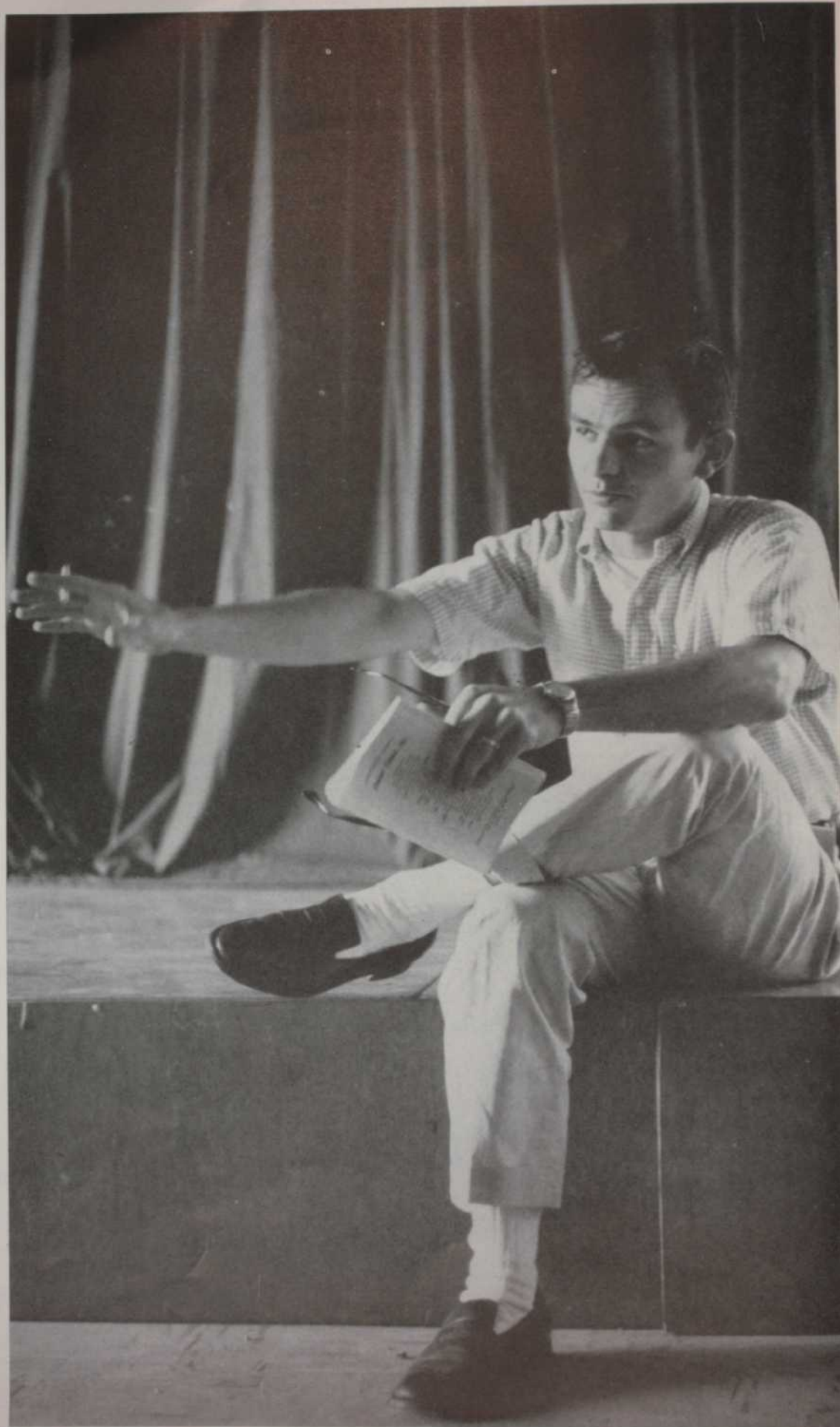


ALL (TOGETHER): What'll we do now?

GLENN and PAXTON: Let's dance!



GARRETT: Let's go boating!



Businessman, director, producer, actor—graduate Bill Beebe is a sort of Lake Murray Jose Ferrer. Here he practices a fifth function—being his toughest critic.