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The New Sound of Music

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The new sound of music



Vivian A. Bull was the 18th president of Linfield College and a patron of the arts. She served as Linfield's president for 13 years (1992-2005) during a period of unprecedented change. Under her leadership, the college's visibility and stature grew along with the campus, which more than doubled in size. Some 14 new buildings were added to campus, including new facilities for art, theatre and the library. She was and is a patron of the arts and attended countless concerts, plays and exhibits during her tenure at Linfield.

Life will never be perfectly square in the new Vivian A. Bull Music Center and that's exactly how it should be.

"Where music is made and music is taught, life is not square," said Richard Bourassa with a smile as he showed visitors through the new music center. With few square corners and many walls slightly angled or curved, the new center is designed to enhance the acoustics of the faculty studios, rehearsal spaces and the recital hall. Bourassa should know the intricacies of the design. He is a professor of music, and as department chair for 10 years, he was instrumental in planning the new center.

The excitement was almost palpable among faculty and students alike when the center opened this fall. The new 14,000-square-foot building, opposite the Miller Fine Arts Center, houses faculty offices and studios, practice rooms, a music library, a seminar room, a band rehearsal room and a recital space with seating for 98. It updates instructional and practice facilities for the entire music program and provides much-needed centralized space for faculty and students as well as a new venue for smaller recitals.

It not only looks like a music building, but it feels like a music building, said Faun Tiedge, current chair of the Linfield music program.

Faculty studios are all on one level, and practice rooms and performance and rehearsal spaces are available in the building, which was not the case in Renshaw Hall, she said. Students didn't have much space to gather in Renshaw, but that changes with the new center.

"When students come into our central lobby, they have more opportunity to exchange ideas with faculty and other students," Tiedge said. "There's a vitality that we didn't experience because we were more fragmented."

The new facility is rekindling an excitement to connect with the liber-

al arts and to find the meaning of music in a liberal arts institution, she said.

Having rehearsal, teaching and performance spaces in one building will enhance the students' education, Tiedge noted, by encouraging more interaction among students and more collaboration between students and faculty.

The new facility will also provide more flexibility for the department. Supplementing the newly renovated Richard and Lucille Ice Auditorium (formerly Melrose Auditorium), the new building's Delkin Recital Hall provides an intimate space for special recitals, small concerts and lectures or programs from visiting artists. The Woolley Rehearsal Room provides more space for both band and choir rehearsals and may allow more outreach by the music department into the schools and local community.

"Delkin (recital hall) is a very exciting space, where we can bridge the gap between audience and performer," Tiedge added. "We might have open rehearsals and invite community members in where they can see our students at work with our directors."

The opening of the Bull Center completes the Arts Quadrangle on the Keck Campus which should enhance collaboration among the arts, Tiedge said.

"The proximity to the Arts Quad and the library, coupled with the new performance spaces, has raised the level of plans for music making," she said, adding that both she and Bourassa have a strong interest in creating new music which is interdisciplinary in nature.

"So much of what we do is improvisatory and impromptu," she said. "Now we can tap into an artist right outside our building. Arts faculty and students will be much more accessible to us."

— Mardi Mileham



Faun Tiedge, chair of the Music Department, teaches in the Delkin Recital Hall, which will be used for classes, rehearsals and small concerts and recitals.