

Catlett Music Center

Julian White, post 1

As a music education major, I am very familiar with the Catlett Music Center building, located on the corner of Boyd and Elm Street. Music students affectionately call it "Catlett High" because its musical community-fostering environment makes it feel like a high school. Plus, it has lockers.



Finished in 1998, it was designed by Kaighn Associates Architects, Inc. and Bauer Stark and Lashbrook, Inc. in a joint venture partnership. It has characteristics of the campus-wide Cherokee gothic style, but it has a unique way of showing it.

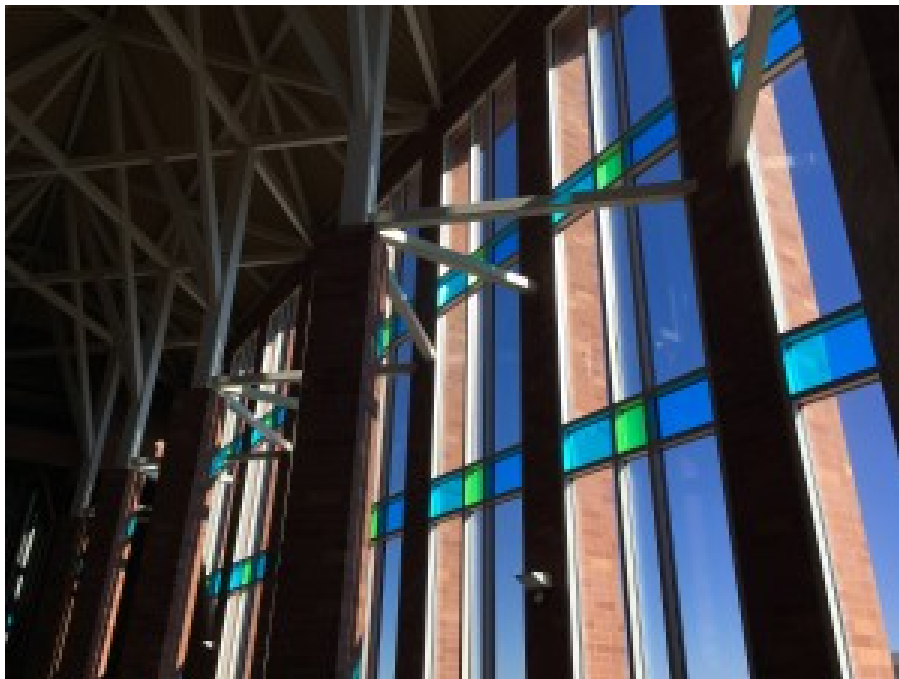
The exterior of the building is a long and tall shape with jagged triangles and turrets forming the walls. The copper roof is dark and ridged, and rainwater runoff dyes the concrete green. The building has a partial second floor and partial basement. (There is also a secret office on what would be the third floor.) The classrooms form a grid around two outdoor courtyards concealed within the walls of the building.

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The main entrance leads to Gothic Hall (above photo), which lives up to its name. It looks like a gothic cathedral, complete with a sky high ceiling, stained glass, and a huge organ that was built especially for the hall. It can be Halloween every day when you visit Gothic Hall and hear an organist practicing at midnight.



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The stained glass in the large window panes is simple, but still attractive. A fun pastime is to take selfies when the sun casts the blue and green colors at face level. In this photo, you can also see the web-like support for the tall ceiling.

Aside from Gothic Hall, which can be used as a performance venue for organ and chamber music, there is the Paul F. Sharp Concert Hall and the Pitman Recital Hall. There are also three large rehearsal spaces for choir, band, and orchestra. At the bottom of the ramp coming from Gothic Hall is the Fine Arts Library. My favorite place to work in the library is underneath the slanted window ceiling towards Boyd Street.

When people speak about OU, my mind goes to this building by default because I have had most of my classes here since freshman year. When I visit music facilities at other colleges, they feel boring and depressing by comparison. I feel that some of my collegiate identity lies with this unique building, and it helps me take ownership of my education.