



Performers rehearse play called "Gluttony" for the Canada Games National Artist Program. The artists are Nunavut Theatre's Orla Osborne (left to right), 18, Alberta Theatre's Karyn Mott, 19, B.C. Theatre's Alana Howley, 20, Quebec pianist Jean-Frederic Henault-Rondeau, 20, New Brunswick Theatre's Zoe Fitch, 17, Nova Scotia Theatre's Erica Ochenbach, 19, and Ontario visual arts' Lisa Spinelli, 18.

ROY ANTAL/Leader-Post

NATIONAL PROGRAM

Artists working on productions

By ERIN MORRISON
Leader-Post

The Canada Games National Artist Program has now been simmering at the University of Regina for nearly a week, and the controlled insanity there is producing a see-it-to-believe-it melting pot of art.

Four artists from each province and territory — everything from actors to break dancers to sculptors — joined their provincial team, but have now been split into seven groups, each one representing one of the seven deadly sins.

Never having met, they entered the studio, and will construct a 10-minute piece per group, which will be strung together into one performance next week, and shown at the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts on Aug. 19.

A theatre group, with one very talented Quebecois pianist, occupies a room in the Education Building. Six actresses surround the piano and move, speak and emote in slow motion while their professional mentor, Daniel MacDonald, observes. The artists created

their portion of the show, their own interpretation of "gluttony," and now MacDonald just advises them on little points. "Turn like this," he instructs, and the actors listen intently while the piano tinkles on with professional precision.

Down the hall, the mood is totally different in the "pride" room. These artists have chosen to digitize their portion of the show, using cameras, computers, mini-disc recorders, oil pastels, markers and guitars, among other things, to create a multi-media event. The group consists of everything from a break dancer to a sculptor, and they chose their confounding video and soundscape because "we can essentially use more of our talents this way," reports visual artist Melanie Colosimo from New Brunswick.

Just down the hall, two technically skilled modern dancers get a visual artist ready to join them on stage in a modern dance piece that incorporates everything from a physical, modern duet, to giant wings made of a bamboo skeleton, silky sheathes and paper lanterns

The girls will perform with two musicians to an original piece of music, the tenor of which has helped the girls and mentor Elaine Hanson design a piece that will lead off the show by describing "sloth."

Despite the think-tank that is bubbling on campus, the artists have come to feel like part of their provincial athletic teams.

"I feel my team is more excited about the art program than they are about the athletes," said Colosimo, who added that the competitors in the athletes' village with her check in every day to see how her "event" is going.

I got to meet people from across Canada that share the same passion," said Christian Gallant, a 23-year-old musician from Prince Edward Island.

A guitarist quietly sits alongside the "pride" group while they brainstorm ideas, and a soap stone sculptor rounds off the edges of an exquisite bear while they pass ideas back and forth for their dramatic portion of the show.

"Not a lot of people get to live this," an appreciative Gallant said as he