

Audiences at Con Hall concerts no longer restricted to old bats

Well, it was another Sunday night concert in Con Hall, and it was back to the old audience—all twenty of us and the bats who live in the organ.

The most unfortunate thing about the poor attendance at the Department of Music concerts is that the real losers do not even know it! Most of the concerts are presented as a requirement for some course or degree, and the musicians are already professional enough to know that when they perform, it really does not change things if the hall is not packed.

While applause is rewarding, it is not the main objective of the serious music students on this campus. Inherent in the musical medium is some emotional initiative, but the dedication with which most of the students approach their work is probably limited to music and the other fine arts schools. Where else on campus could you find a whole school of people working Monday to Friday, and probably most of the weekend, if you removed the financial incentive? And no one can call classical musicians in western Canada money mad!

One of the most common criticisms of the mod-

ern educational system, and of many of the patterns at this university, is that they are too narrow, too restricted. To the University community as a whole the value of having a Music Department on campus is that it offers an opportunity to the student body to enlarge this scope and to hear classical music played by contemporary students.

It seems rather a shame that all the people on campus who could learn to enjoy chamber and solo music with very little effort probably never will. They continue to ignore the best opportunity they will ever have to hear live music, often, conveniently, and free.

The concerts presented in Convocation Hall of the Arts Building are informal, and offer an excellent opportunity to relax into this emotional medium. It always strikes me as rather strange how classical music, which is probably one of the most varied and creative areas of expression, can continue to be ignored as increased freedom of expression becomes more popular.

Music students at this university have the benefit of coaching and teaching by some of the best

musicians in Edmonton. The audience not only has the advantage of this superior musicianship, wherever it comes from, but can also appreciate the original musical interpretations that are part of the spontaneity of the young. There is something extremely gratifying and exciting about hearing a talented young performer, who is as yet *undiscovered*, and knowing that he is going somewhere.

Most of the classically trained musicians that I know can appreciate the contemporary music of Blood Sweat and Tears and Deep Purple, and furthermore know why they like it. *They* are getting the best of both worlds; what are you getting?

This Sunday night in Convocation Hall there is a vocal concert featuring mezzo-soprano Merla Aikman, and next Friday, February 27th, the St. Cecilia Chamber Orchestra will present another concert. There are other concerts during the week, as usual, and information is available on the Arts Bulletin boards in the Green pamphlet marked *A CONCERT SERIES*.

—Irene Harvie

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Friday, February 27

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