

# St. Cecelia leaves best for last

**The St. Cecelia Orchestra  
Convocation Hall  
Sunday, Feb. 3**

by John Charles

The St. Cecelia Orchestra saved the best for last in their Con Hall concert Sunday evening.

They played Frank Bridge's *The Sea*, a vivid, colorful British impressionistic tone poem written in 1911. Bridge is an intriguing composer who died in 1941, and whose richest music, stemming from his last 15 years, was cruelly neglected because it was too modern for then-prevailing musical fashions in England. Only since the 1960s has his whole career been seen for the markable development it was, and early works like the once-popular *Sea* have been revived along with his final, more thorny masterpieces.

Bridge was Benjamin Britten's teacher, and it's hard to believe Britten wasn't influenced by the potent pictorial details of this music when he wrote his opera *Peter Grimes* in 1945, which also evokes the manace and beauty of the sea.

The full orchestra of 60 was on stage, and conductor Malcolm Forsyth led them into the waves with confidence. The frequent tricky rhythms were handled well, and the images Bridge seeks to evoke were irresistible.

ble. The third section, *Moonlight*, offered a particularly haunting flute melody over harp arpeggios, which was then taken up by the violins, who provided some of their most secure playing of the evening.

The last section, *Storm*, had both passionate conviction and accuracy, and the lovely English horn solo, as the storm subsides, was followed by the opening theme surging back in affirmation of nature's eternal cycle.

It was a great way to end an imaginative concert — imaginative because it combined two well-known works by Schubert and Poulenc with uncommon ones by Reinecke and Bridge, and featured two contrasting concertos which gave U of A musicians a chance to play large-scaled solo works.

The first concerto was Reinecke's *Flute Concerto, op. 283*. This German composer's birthdate — 1824 — and the usual attributions of Schumann's and Mendelssohn's influence on his music doesn't prepare you for the rapturously soaring first theme a la Richard Strauss. but when you notice it was written in 1908 it makes sense.

The whole work is expertly tailored, with lots of colorful solos for orchestral players, and a bluffly hearty tune from the brass, which gave flutist Lisa Nelsen yet another opportunity to sprinkle cascades of notes over orchestra and audience like Tinker Bell.

Nelsen's accuracy was a delight, as was her cleanly focused and steady tone.

The nocturne-like slow movement provided a duet for flute and cello that was well played. And the Finale contained neatly-turned-out horn solos, lots of filigree from Nelsen, and even a brief huff-and-puff orchestral fugue in the best teutonic style. It was an engaging performance of an engaging piece.

Francis Poulenc's *Organ Concerto* (with strings and tympani) of 1938 presented severe technical problems, since Con Hall's organ is in the rear of the auditorium, and faces away from the stage. Organist Marnie Giesbrecht Segger had to watch Forsyth on closed-circuit TV, and that isolation increased the tension of this already theatrical work.

Segger's playing was sometimes a bit stiff but otherwise impressive, and she handled Poulenc's elaborate flourishes with skill. Poulenc wittily draws upon all the associations of

organ music, so the work is often majestic in a baroque manner, other times contemplative and spiritual, and finally melodramatically exciting as if evoking *The Phantom of the Opera*.

The strings were under lots of pressure, since the work changes tempo abruptly, and an organ solo may be followed by an immediate string entrance. Sometimes they played roughly, missed entrances, and scrambled for notes. But the total separation of sound surrounding the audience, who sat between orchestra and soloist, provided an entertaining and fascinating experience in itself.

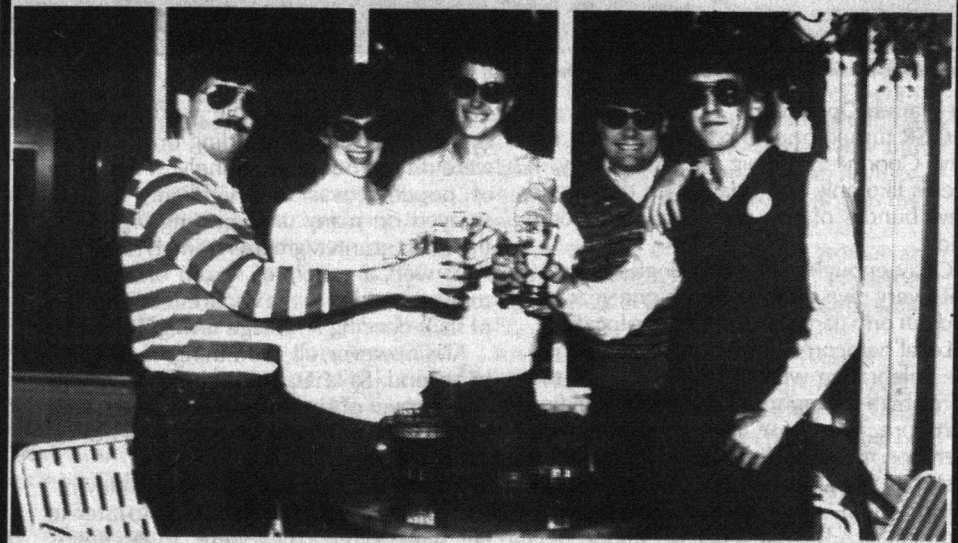
The concert's opener, two ballet movements from Schubert's *Rosamunde* had jaunty tunes, and woodwind phrasing was tidy throughout. But the strings sometimes lacked firmness, and their tone became watery, while the second movement needed more lift in Forsyth's direction to keep from becoming stodgy.



The St. Cecelia Orchestra performed the third in a series of four concerts last Sunday night at Convocation Hall. The final concert is scheduled for March 24.

Photo Bill St. John

## THE SKIP SLATE



**Chip** VP FINANCE    **Muffy** VP ACADEMIC    **Skip** PRESIDENT    **Biff** VP EXTERNAL    **Cliff** VP INTERNAL

## POLL LOCATIONS

BUILDING	AREA	HOURS	
		THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Agriculture/Forestry	Student Lounge - Main Floor	10:00 - 15:00 hr	10:00 - 15:00 hr
Biological Sciences	Near Passageway to Physics	09:00 - 15:00 hr	09:00 - 15:00 hr
CAB North East #1	North-East Corner	09:00 - 18:00 hr	09:00 - 18:00 hr
CAB North East #2	North-East Corner	09:00 - 15:00 hr	09:00 - 15:00 hr
CAB South	Pedway to Engineering	09:00 - 16:00 hr	09:00 - 16:00 hr
Chemical/Mineral Engineering	Main Entrance	10:00 - 15:00 hr	10:00 - 15:00 hr
Civil-Electrical Engineering	by First Floor Elevators	10:00 - 15:00 hr	10:00 - 15:00 hr
Clinical Sciences	Second Floor by Escalators	11:00 - 14:00 hr	11:00 - 14:00 hr
College St. Jean	Salon des Etudiants	10:00 - 15:00 hr	10:00 - 15:00 hr
Corbett Hall	Second Floor Main Foyer	10:00 - 14:00 hr	10:00 - 14:00 hr
Education	Lounge Area (North) near E.S.A. Offices	09:00 - 21:00 hr	09:00 - 17:00 hr
Fine Arts	Second Floor by HUB walkway	10:00 - 15:00 hr	09:00 - 15:00 hr
H.M. Tory/Business	By Stairs to Tory	09:00 - 09:00 hr	09:00 - 16:00 hr
HUB Mall	By HUB Humanities Walkway	09:00 - 21:00 hr	09:00 - 17:00 hr
Law	North-East Entrance	10:00 - 14:00 hr	10:00 - 14:00 hr
Lister Hall	Outside Cafeteria	11:00 - 18:00 hr	11:00 - 18:00 hr
Medical Sciences	Second Floor Near Vending Area	10:00 - 14:00 hr	10:00 - 14:00 hr
Rutherford Library	Upper Concourse	09:00 - 16:00 hr	09:00 - 16:00 hr
SUB	Main Floor (East)	09:00 - 17:00 hr	09:00 - 18:00 hr
V-Wing	Vending Area	09:00 - 16:00 hr	09:00 - 16:00 hr
Advance Poll	SUB, Main Floor(East)	Wednesday only	09:00 - 09:00 hr
Physical Education	By Campus Recreation Offices	10:00 - 15:00 hr	10:00 - 15:00 hr