

## 'The Consul' Brings Back College Opera

In 1955 the revival of opera came to the University of Nebraska campus with the production of Gian-Carlo Menotti's "The Consul," a contemporary opera depicting the struggle waged by men and women who seek to break through the maze of red tape and official papers which keeps freedom forever beyond their reach. This production, the first performance of the drama by a university cast, was presented in the new Howell Memorial Theater. Dr. David Foltz, Chairman of the Department of Music, acted as musical director and conductor; and the dramatics director was Dallas Williams of the Speech Department.

The opera takes place somewhere in Europe, probably in an Iron Curtain country. The scenes are alternately in the shabby flat of a workman and the reception room of the consulate, obviously that of a free country. The workman, John Sorel and his wife, Magda, are the subject of espionage and are hounded by fear. Sorel manages to escape to a neutral country, to wait for his wife and baby. Hoping to join him, Magda calls daily at the consulate in an effort to get the visa which will permit her to leave the country for freedom and a peaceful life with her husband.

Magda's attempts to get her papers are thwarted at every turn, and she begins even to doubt the existence of the "consul" until she catches a brief glimpse of him through the door to his office — through which walks a member of the secret police. Life takes on a hopeless aspect for Magda; her baby dies, her mother cannot bear the strain of such life, and she herself is entangled in ever-increasing red tape and endless papers which are soon filed and forgotten. In her daily trips to the consulate, Magda gains the sympathy of others waiting there. Torn with anxiety, her husband returns, only to be captured by the secret police. Magda commits suicide, seeing in her gas-filled room her last attempt to join her husband, her mother and all the tortured people in another and freer world.

Menotti, hailed by Newsweek magazine as "... possibly the greatest living American opera composer," was born in Italy and came to America for the most important phase of his education. He has written several other contemporary operas, including "Amahl and the Night Visitors," which has become an annual Christmas television presentation, and "The Saint of Bleeker Street," which was produced in January of 1955. Dr. Foltz received a telegram on opening night from Mr. Menotti expressing regret that he would be unable to attend the performance. Dr. Foltz said that the opera was perhaps one of the finest works given by University people.

The cast, made up of both graduate and undergraduate students, was headed by Nancy Norman of Shenandoah, Ia., as Magda, and John Poutre of Wymore, as John Sorel. Mrs. Marilee Admanson of Omaha played the part of the mother, and Shirley Alpuerto of Lincoln was seen in the part of the secretary of the consulate. The University orchestra, under the direction of Emanuel Wishnow, provided accompaniment. Weeks of preparation went into the production of "The Consul," which is unusual in that it has no chorus parts. The music is both unusual and difficult, and, according to Dr. Foltz, quite above college caliber. The combined efforts of the Departments of Speech and Music will continue in the production of another opera next year, in hopes of continuing the tradition of opera for many years.



PRACTICE for the contemporary opera, The Consul, is under way here. Dr. David Foltz directed the music and Dallas Williams directed the dramatics.

## Vocal Music Groups Present NU Concerts

Two of the busiest musical groups on the campus are the University Singers and the University Madrigal Singers, whose high performing caliber is known throughout Nebraska and sections of the United States. The University Singers, under the direction of Dr. Arthur Westbrook, have presented concerts on the campus as well as in towns over the state. The Madrigal Singers, a special project of Dr. David Foltz, have been heard over national broadcasting systems and throughout the state. Each group is composed of both music majors and non-music majors, singers being a group of approximately 90 voices, and Madrigal numbering 31.

During the past season, the Madrigal Singers presented two concerts for the campus, one at Christmastime, the other in the spring. The spring concert climaxed a tour which included Aurora and Central City. On Christmas Day, the Madrigal was heard over the Columbia Broadcasting System on a coast to coast broadcast.

Civic organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Altrusa Club, as well as the Ne-

braska Music Educators Association and the State Music Masters convention were entertained by Dr. Foltz and his group. Several years ago the group sang for a music teachers association in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For the 1955-56 season, Dr. Foltz plans a tour of neighboring states. Excellence of performance and practiced informality are the keynotes of this musical group, which stems from the old English tradition of madrigal singing, wherein members of several families would get together for a dinner which would be followed by informal singing. True to this custom, the Madrigal Singers always perform seated at tables.

Well known to University students is the Christmas carol concert presented each December by the University Singers. During Easter season, the Singers present a program of religious music, in which several soloists are featured. Last year, Singers journeyed to Grand Island for a concert in the public schools. This part of the University Choral Union which participates in the production of the "Messiah" and the spring oratorio.



DELTA GAMMAS present "Fued on First" for Coed Follies, 1955.

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## Rhythm 'n Blues

# University Band Has Three Units

Two musical aggregations, which are an important part of the University are the renowned Cornhusker Band and the University Symphony Orchestra. These organizations perform at a variety of campus functions and also for various community activities.

The Cornhusker Band, composed of over 100 musicians, is actually divided into three separate organizations. The ROTC Marching Band, which performs at football games, parades and ROTC retreats, is made up solely of male musicians. National acclaim went to the marching band on New Years Day when it gave an "outstanding performance" at the Orange Bowl game in Miami, Florida. The Symphonic Band, which includes both spring concert at the Coliseum, makes a concert tour of various

Nebraska towns, and plays for such events as Ivy Day and Commencement. Donald Lentz conducts the two bands. The third band, directed by Jack Snider, performs during concert season at Ivy Day and presents its own spring concert.

Under the direction of Emanuel Wishnow, the University Symphony assists with many productions of the School of Fine Arts, as well as performing in several concerts during the year. During the last year, the orchestra furnished accompaniment for the Messiah and the Elijah, the opera "The Consul," and for the seniors elected as soloists by their class and Music School faculty. It also played concerts in Lincoln, Beatrice — with Sigurd Rascher, noted saxophonist, Omaha, and Norfolk.

## LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS

by Dick Bibler



## Annual Coed Follies Presented by AWS

Every year in the spring the women of the University present the Coed Follies show under the supervision of the Associated Women Students organization.

Organized houses on campus prepare an idea for a skit and present it to AWS. If the idea is approved, practice for the try-outs begins.

At the try-outs skits are judged on originality, suitability to the theme chosen for the annual show, audience appeal, participation, and so on. Several large skits are selected along with some "curtain acts" of smaller, shorter skits, and some "traveling acts" of individual or small group talent.

Another feature of Coed Follies is the presentation of the 12 finalists for Cornhusker Beauty Queens. And at this show the results of the Typical Nebraska Coed are announced and the new TNC is presented.

Sell-out audiences attend the two-night show at the Nebraska Theater. Until two years ago only women were admitted, but male attendance is now allowed since so many of them sneaked in anyway.

The acts are judged by a com-

mittee of faculty members. Long hours of work, planning, and practicing go into every production, and costumes and stage sets are colorful.

The theme chosen by AWS for this year's Coed Follies was "Main Street, USA." Pi Beta Phi and Delta Gamma sororities tied for first place honors.

The Delta Gamma skit, "Feud on First," concerned two feuding groups who decided to settle their differences by singing and dancing. Lynn Holland and Carole Unterseher were featured in the production.

"Fifi's Mane on Main Street" was the title of the winning Pi Phi act. The part of Fifi was played by Ceclia TeSelle. In a French beauty salon, she prevailed upon the Pi Phis to adopt the pony-tail hair-do.

Winners of the curtain acts, the Delta Delta Delta group presented "Red Shoes," which concerned a congressional investigation of the wearing of red shoes on campus.

Doing a record pantomime, Joyce Stratton was the winner of the traveling acts. Joyce pantomimed a Betty Hutton record,