

MUSIC COMES TO THE WASTELAND



by Mary Voboril

A cultural wasteland.

That's the way some people describe Nebraska. But a look at what UNL musical fine arts groups have to offer this semester indicates the situation is not all that bleak.

"Through the years UNL has done very well in elevating the cultural arts," according to John Moran, director of the Cultural Affairs Committee, established last summer.

"But in a sense, we've only just begun. We're only now beginning to

attract well-known, quality performers on the professional level," Moran said.

He said the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, scheduled to stay at UNL April 27-19, in residence, will be the first major symphony to perform on this campus since 1948.

"In residence" means the symphony will meet informally with students in classrooms and living units giving short lectures and providing students with an opportunity for personal contact, Moran said.

The symphony will be on campus for

the annual Weekend With Music. Designed to help celebrate the dedication of Kimball Recital Hall three years ago, Weekend With Music now is a regular spring event.

Moran said Kimball also will host the Guthrie Theater, a nationally known company that will perform a stage version of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The group is booked for March 14 and 15.

Any UNL student wishing to attend the Guthrie Theater performance will be given a \$1.50 fee reduction in ticket cost, according to Moran.

"This discount should be a major step forward in improving student attitudes concerning culture," Moran said. "The student will know someone at UNL thinks cultural arts are important."

Another group pushing cultural consciousness is the Lincoln Friends of Chamber Music. Although it has no official affiliation with UNL almost all its members are in some way connected with the University according to its president, Nelson Potter.

In conjunction with Sheldon Art Gallery, Friends of Chamber Music brings about five chamber music groups to campus for one-night engagements.

"This year we attracted three name performers," Potter said. Two of the three groups will appear within the next two months. The Julliard Quartet, scheduled to perform Feb. 24, is "perhaps the best-known and most admired group of chamber players in the world today," Potter said.

Potter said the Beaux Arts Trio, booked for March 16, is not so well-known as the Julliard Quartet but "is equally admired by knowledgeable audiences."

The chamber music friends, now planning next year's agenda, also are searching for a group to perform at a special concert sometime in April.

A quartet scheduled to perform Dec. 1 was unable to meet its engagement because one of its members became ill.

Thus far the organization has not found a replacement group, but Potter said when it starts contacting players for next year's series it will ask if arrangements could be made for a concert yet this year.

Potter said the chamber music group is non-profit and self-sustaining. It supports itself through the sale of season tickets, which cost \$15 for five concerts.

Chamber concerts are held in the Sheldon Auditorium, which has a seating capacity of 300. Potter said that occasionally a few individual tickets are sold, but season tickets generally account for sell-out crowds.

"And since chamber music is not a mass appeal sort of thing, we can get the world's best chamber music groups for a relatively low cost," he added.

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