

## MUSIC IN SASKATCHEWAN

In the province of Saskatchewan, a quarter of a million square miles of prairie and wooded lake country, considerable human effort is daily being expended to develop a musical culture based on our own values and expressed by our own residents. Two aspects of this development should be mentioned--the rapid expansion of amateur activity and the growing number of professional performances. The schools have come to play a central role in both of these aspects and the University is especially to be commended for attracting and supporting a growing number of professional teacher-performers to the province.

The early years of Saskatchewan can be characterized as a period of rapid growth accompanied by a spirit of musical optimism. By 1912 the city of Saskatoon, for example, could boast of four good bands, two good orchestras, a Conservatory of Music, and a Philharmonic Society. This society was established by a large and energetic group of music teachers, including Blanche St. John-Baker, Sydney Hogarth, Florence Reaney, Helen Davies Sherry, and Florence Hanson, and their students.

Through the years enthusiastic audiences welcomed such travelling musical companies as the Sheehan English Opera Company and such well-known performers as Nellie Melba, Jan Kubelik, John McCormack, Gabriel Ysaye, Clara Butt, Gerald Moore, Marcel Dupre, and Percy Grainger.

An event of lasting significance was the establishment at the University in 1931 of a Chair of Music with Arthur Collingwood as Dean. Dean Collingwood soon gathered together the local instrumentalists to form the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra. Also in 1931, Dr. Gustin, a man inextricably bound up with music in Saskatchewan, organized a series of music appreciation programs for the Saskatoon public schools. Dr. Gustin also founded the Musical Art Club and the Young Artists Series, and was one of the Founders of the Saskatchewan Registered Music Teachers' Association.

In 1959, another Saskatchewan man of music, Dr. Murray Adaskin, assembled a distinguished roster of performers from across Canada and the United States for a summer festival of music. He established the Sunday Evening Recital Series at the University, bringing to Saskatoon audiences an array of outstanding professional performers.

There are two established community orchestras in Saskatchewan, located in Saskatoon and Regina (Regina had the first orchestra, established in 1908 by Frank Laubach). Both orchestras have existed for several decades; both are primarily amateur with a few professional musicians in each city taking part.

In addition to these two orchestras, there has existed on an occasional basis the Saskatchewan Symphony, the membership of which

is drawn from among the best of the two community groups. Also deserving of mention are the Provincial Youth Orchestra, the Provincial Youth Band, and the Saskatchewan Youth Chorus.

In Saskatchewan music education has had a strong role in promoting both amateur and professional musical activity. It is especially the University which is in a position to most directly influence musical development in a province like Saskatchewan by attracting and supporting professional artists-teachers. These individuals, through their public performances as well as their contact with students and potential music teachers, are of utmost importance.

In conclusion, let me say that there is a great deal of musical activity in Saskatchewan. It is predominantly amateur, in the sense that it is carried out by non-professionals. Within the last decade, however, there has been a dramatic increase in both quantity and quality of professional performance originating from within the Province. We look forward to continued growth and achievement in music in Saskatchewan.

Synopsis of Professor Robert  
Solem's paper by Merwin Lewis