The Department of Music

Connie Cole*
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Abstract

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“DON’T bother packing my sheet music,” I told mother, “After all, I’m going to Iowa State and I’ll probably be so busy with math and chemistry and three-hour labs I won’t have time for music. Why, they probably don’t even have a Music Department. Since I’ve settled on a technical school, music will just have to wait. I may even have to give up singing in the shower. . . .”

I was SO wrong! Walking to and from classes, being serenaded every morning and noon by the carillon in the campanile, music was the first pleasant impression I had of Iowa State. Few universities can boast a campanile equal to ours, or an artist like Professor Ira Schroeder to play.

I had only to hear one concert to realize that the Iowa State College Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Professor Alvin Edgar, compares favorably with any collegiate symphony in the country, featuring full instrumentation and conducting extensive tours throughout the mid-west.

Football season introduced me to the snappy Iowa State Marching Band when they staged their colorful half-time maneuvers. Next, I discovered the Concert Band, also under the direction of Professor Alvin Edgar, and learned that it, too, is scheduled for a four-day tour, appearing at the Joslin Memorial Auditorium in Omaha and at the KRNT Theater in Des Moines.
Vocal talent finds recognition in one of the Glee Club ensembles or in the Festival Choir. The Men's Glee Club, under the direction of Professor William Clendenin, makes two concert appearances in Chicago while the Girl's Glee Club, directed by Eugene Hillagoss, appears on tour this quarter in many Iowa cities, including Sioux City and Spencer. As for the Festival Choir, which thrilled thousands at Christmas time with performances of the Messiah, that fine choral group—delighted an even larger audience with Hiawatha's Wedding Feast, presented in February under the direction of Professor Talbert MacRae, head of the Department of Music.

Day or night, everybody sings at Iowa State! Fraternities and men's residence houses stage impromptu serenades, made all the more enjoyable through the men's Sinfonia, and Men's Intramural Sing, sponsored by Phi Mu Alpha, national musical fraternity.

In addition, every year, the Music Council brings four artists direct from the concert, operatic, or theatrical world to this campus. The series this year includes Morton Gould, Artur Rubinstein, the Minneapolis Symphony, and Blanche Thebom.

"I wish there were courses offered," I said to my counselor, "which would help me to understand music."

"Oh, but there are! Fundamentals of Music, to improve sight reading, and Music Appreciation, records and lectures."

Do you know about the Carnegie Music room in the Union, where hundreds of classical and semi-classical recordings await your playing? Have you attended any of the noon-hour organ recitals in the Union? No, you can't get a major in music at Iowa State, but if music is of major importance to you, you shouldn't be unhappy here!