

Death inspires OU composer

By ROSEMARY HOAGLAND

The first public performance of a work by Oakland University's composer-in-residence, Stanley Hollingsworth, was given at the university's Varner Hall last month.

The four-minute work, "Death, Be Not Proud," was set to music by Hollingsworth in 1978 after he was commissioned to write the piece for the Kirk in the Hills Composer Series. The text is from one of poet John Donne's Holy Sonnets.

"Death, Be Not Proud" was performed by the Oakland University Singers under the direction of John Dornas as a part of the group's annual holiday concert.

HOLLINGSWORTH SAID that at the time he was commissioned to write the piece, a close friend and colleague had just died.

"His death was on my mind and I suppose it influenced my writing," he said.

Although he didn't intend to make a statement about his personal beliefs on death, Hollingsworth said he realized that by writing the music he had taken a position. The mood of the work is one of joy and acceptance and depicts the fulfillment of the transfiguration in the powerful climax.

Also on the evening's program were

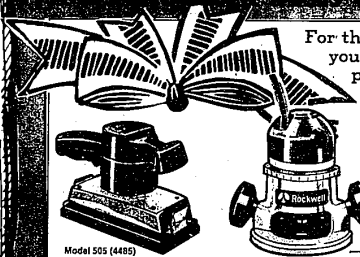
selections by Durufle, Haydn and Barber as well as some traditional Christmas selections. The singers seemed to think and respond as one under Dornas' direction. The 20-voice ensemble showed great polish and control, and the music with its dynamic contrasts provided an excellent showcase for the group's special sound.

ACCOMPANIST JILL Simmons gave a solo performance of the first movement of J.S. Bach's Italian Concerto. Although she said she prefers accompanying to solo work, she showed great skill and polish in her mastery of Bach's very intricate fingering. Ms. Simmons is a music major at the university.

Another in the solo spotlight was sophomore music major, Christina Goforth. "The Blue Madonnas" by John Jacob Niles and a Christmas selection, "Voices of the Sky," by Alexander Matthews showed Ms. Goforth's vocal flexibility and control. Her clear rich tone in both upper and lower registers was evidence of a promising future.

The Oakland University Chorus and the Pontiac Oakland Symphony Orchestra, directed by Dornas, will give a concert at 8 p.m. Dec. 6 when they will perform Benjamin Britten's St. Nicolas Cantata and the Schubert Unfinished Symphony.

For ticket information, call 377-2630.



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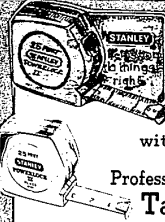
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