

Choir of the West

The annual Christmas Festival Concert, performed in Tacoma, Seattle and Portland, and featuring Christmas cantatas by Respighi and R. Vaughan Williams, was the culmination of Choir of the West's first semester work. But the best was yet to come--tour.

Sunrises, airports, DC-9's, concert halls, and yellow ribbons characterised the Choir of the West's national tour in January. The choir performed 19 concerts, some in the nation's most prestigious concert halls, during its 23-day trip.

The 50-voice choir and accompanying chamber orchestra performed works by Vivaldi, Lidholm, and Vaughan Williams, in churches and concert halls from Los Angeles to New York, and from Deefield Beach, Florida, to Minneapolis Minnesota.

Dr. Maurice Skones, the group's director, reported that he was pleased with the choir's continued growth in performance.

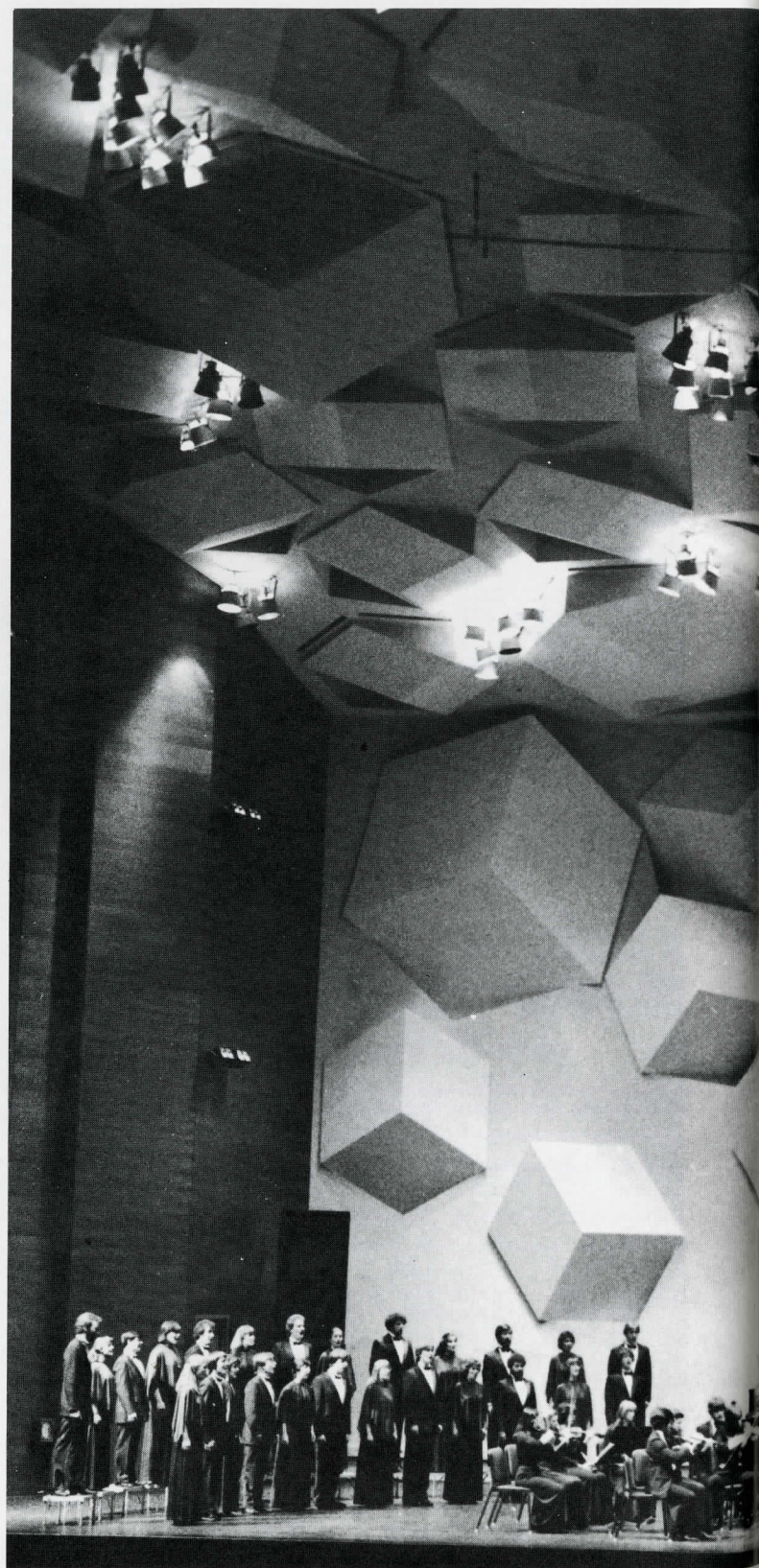
The choir travelled across country on Eastern Airlines, the airlines that claims to fly the most non-stop flights to Atlanta Georgia. After over 25 layovers at the Atlanta airport in the last three tours, 9 this year alone, the members of the choir believe in truth in advertizing.

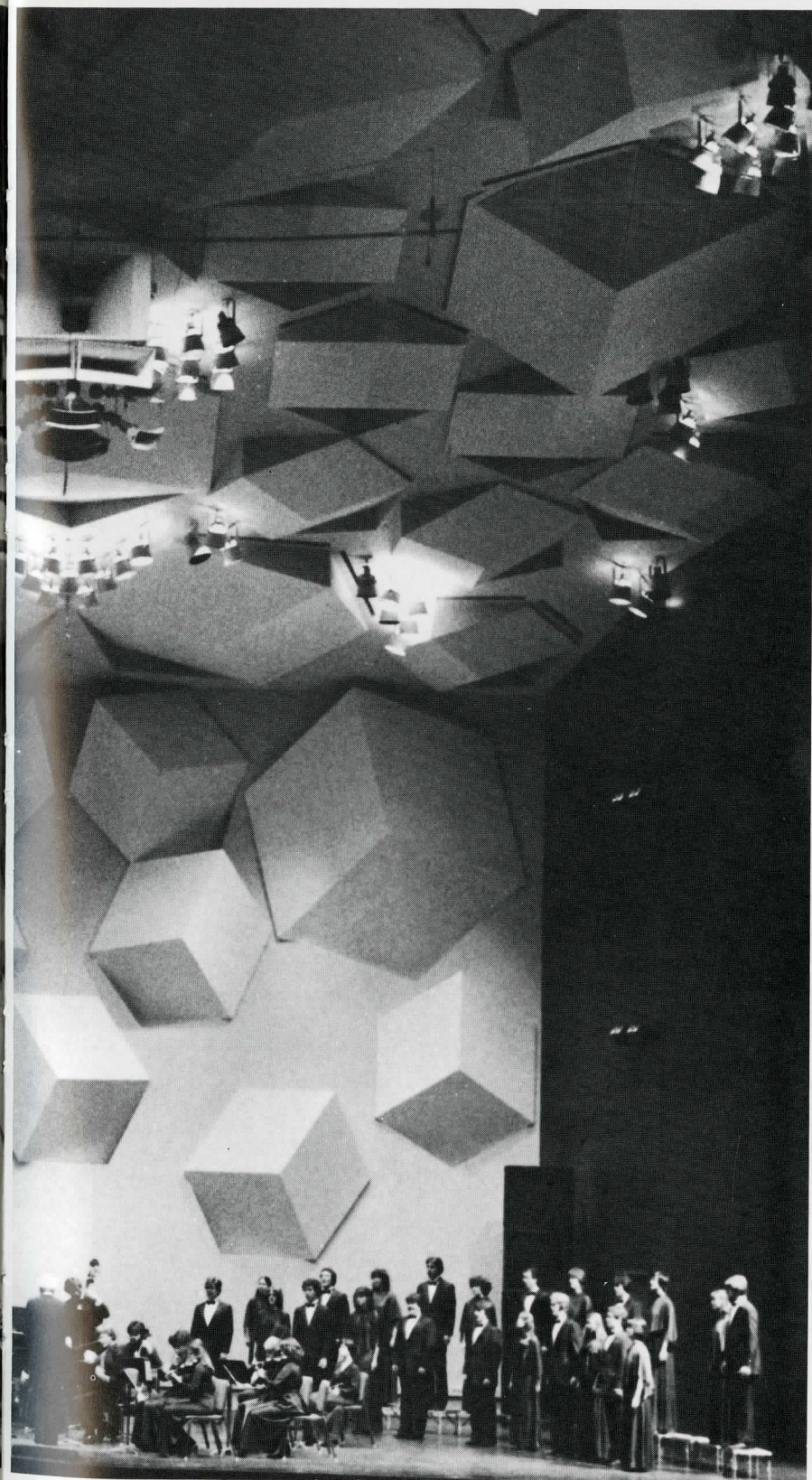
The choir's resilient sense of humor and seemingly endless energy sustained it through the tour which allowed very little free time and not enough sleep. Airport waiting rooms, the wings of concert halls and sanctuaries of churches were transformed from sterile empty spaced to a confusion of luggage and sleeping bodies. But despite catnaps, injuries and illness were common.

The trip allowed the choir not only to sing in halls like Dorthy Chandler, Kennedy Center and Carnegie but also to meet new people and see different lifestyles.

A feeling of gracious hospitatlity was found by the choir throughout the nation, as was a renewed sense of patriotism. Withe the climax of the Iranian hostage crises coming, choir members witnessed reaction of a large cross section of the country. Yellow ribbons were festooned joyously in Ft. Collins, Colorado and Minneapolis as well as in New York and Washington D.C.

The last performance of the tour was given in Meany Hall at the University of Washington. The spring Choir of the West performance calendar concluded with Rossini's Petite Messe Sollenelle, March 22 and a May performance of Verdi's Requiem.





Choir of the West performs in Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis
Photo by Mark Pederson.

In hell there is no music--
an agonizing night that never ends
as songless as a shattered violin.
--Singer