By David Vanderwende

Showing balance and precision, the Concert Band presented an excellent concert in Kresge Auditorium last Friday night.

For several years, the band has been unable to bring all sections to full strength. This performance must have meant that the musicians in short sections have had to strain to make up the difference in sound, and this has inevitably affected the total sound of the group.

This year the band seems to have the problem solved. Not only is the numerical balance greatly improved (for example, they now have a full complement of percussion), but the balance in sound even in soft passages (usually the most obviously bad spots) was very good overall. The smooth flow of dynamics, of precise attacks, and of controlled sound as a whole indicated that this was a group controlled by the director, not a number of individuals following the same beat.

The final point of balance was in the program. The band this year seems to have shifted to a somewhat lighter repertoire, a more dance-like mood and a more delicate tone. The music, while still difficult, is now directed towards music the band can play with enthusiasm, and that the band did.

Opening the concert was Felix Mendelssohn's 'Overture Fuer Hannnoniemusik, Opus 94.' The production is heavy and dark, but sounds into a light, cheerful, flowing theme which makes up the main body and conclusion. The band was perhaps at its worst on this number, but this turned in a good rendition.

The second number, Vittorio Giannini's 'Fantasia for Band,' is a sharp contrast to its third symphony, which the band performed here two years ago. The third symphony is light and flowing. This work is discordant and heavy. Development of the theme is almost 'jazzy.'

This was the only time when the band's balance left something to be desired. The first part of the fantasia was written as a discant, unison section, but not to the extent it was played. While the band could handle normal balance well, a deliberate imbalance appeared to be more than they could control.

The final selection before intermission was William Schuman's 'George Washington Bridge.' Schuman has created a vivid picture with this work. Even for one who has never seen the bridge in person, the music conjured up visions of bridges in general.

The band was balanced and in tune throughout. Where sharpness and precision were needed, they were obtained. Where a more expressionistic sound was needed, it was unobtrusive by individual demands.

Lending off the second half of the program was Edward Miller's 'Three Pieces for Band.' The band played this short (four and one-half minute), twelve-tone piece twice, since it is Miller's work. John Corley felt that there is so much

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Photo by Phillip Dennis
John Corley, director of the Concert Band, cues in the bass section in last Friday's concert in Kresge Auditorium. The band played works by Mendelssohn, Giannini, Schuman, Miller, Dello Joio, and Gould. 