

The Western Wind to perform here

By IFAN PAYNE
Music Critic

The Western Wind is a small vocal ensemble that produces a distinctive and impressive sound. Once heard, the purity and accuracy of their singing is difficult to forget, as is their sensitivity to the music itself.

The ensemble was formed, in 1969, to specialize in the literature of a *capella* songs. The Western Wind is perhaps best known for its singing of music of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but the group has also performed widely the music of the Baroque period and has ventured forward into the music of early America and contemporary vocal music, much of it composed especially for these talented singers.

The ensemble consists of six singers, two sopranos, two tenors, a baritone and a countertenor. Steven Urkowitz has been the dramatic advisor since 1971 when he joined The Western Wind for its production of Vecchi's *L'Amfiparnaso*.

For its concert at All Faiths Auditorium on Friday evening at 8, The Western Wind will be performing a program devoted almost entirely to thirteenth and fourteenth century English and French settings of medieval poetry. The music will be both religious and secular with the best known composer represented on the program being Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300-1377).

Two contemporary works composed especially for The Western Wind will also be performed, one by Robert Dennis — who amongst other things

collaborated on the score to *Oh! Calcutta!* — and the other by Charlie Morrow, who recently orchestrated the moving *Toot and Blink* performance at the 1982 New Music America Festival in Chicago.

Several recordings of The Western Wind have been issued, including a reissue this month of *Christmas in the New World* — on Musical Heritage Society label — a beautifully performed selection of eclectic music for which the ensemble was joined by a small group of instrumentalists.