

# York magazines: flourishing literary journals

York University is something of a publishing, hot-bed. Besides Excalibur, various college newspapers and internal newsletters, a sizeable number of magazines are published at this university.

This week, Excalibur looks at four campus magazines. The four are literary magazines ranging from one published by Founders College undergraduates to another edited by York professor and noted poet, Irving Layton.

By PAT TAKEDA

## Exile

Perhaps the most sophisticated literary journal affiliated with York, Exile is clearly not being exiled from North American writing circles although it may be increasingly estranged from the campus community.

According to publisher/editor, Barry Callaghan, (son of writer, Morley), "The founding grant came from Atkinson College and we are currently housed there but that is our main association with the university."

Added Callaghan, "For some reasons, I don't know of, sales are higher in the University of Toronto bookstore than in York's."

If students are the guilty party, they are in select company. Callaghan also expressed disappointment that York faculty are not subscribing to and purchasing the magazine.

His hurt is a valid one — Exile, the 'darling' of critics and literature lovers was created in the belief "that York could publish and edit a literary quarterly that would be as good and as important as any literary quarterly in the world."

It's philosophy is a somewhat unique one. To quote Callaghan's editorial introduction, it is simply this:

"...It is the day of the information deluge. What sorts it all out? The imaginative writer, who can rely only on his own eyes, his own heart and sensibility for his information, is, in a sense in exile now. There ought to be a small haven somewhere for such exiles where the imaginative writer will not be led in by a scholarly praetorian guard. he will be on his own."

Exiled contributors to the

journal are some of Canada's finest — Joyce Carol Oates, Marie Claire Blais, Irving Layton and Morley Callaghan to name a few. New talent, however, is not being ignored. To date, six unpublished Canadian writers and poets have appeared in Exile. Among them is former York student, Mary Melfi, who has published her poetry in two of the volumes.

Though not originally sold in the York bookstore, Exile is now available at a cost of \$2.00 per volume, \$4.00 for a double issue.

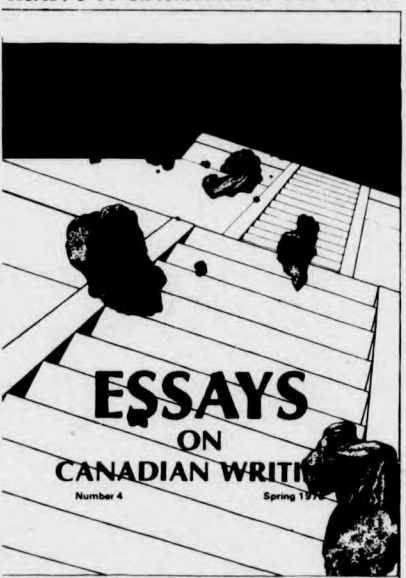
All editorial correspondence should be sent to Box 546, Downsview, Ontario, together with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

## Essays on Canadian Writing

Jack David's baby, Essays On Canadian Writing was born in the winter of 1974, and fed by the Senate Ad Hoc Committee, the Graduate Development Fund, Ontario Arts Council and York University.

It is a tri-annual periodical devoted to articles and reviews on Canadian literature as well as interviews with the mighty minds behind the works. York's own Eli Mandel heads the notable list of current writers interviewed to date.

According to Ken McLean, associate editor, Essays On Canadian Writing, is an alternative to established Canadian



journals. We give people, who might otherwise have a waiting period of up to two years in some areas before getting published in other journals, a chance to have their works in print."

Added McLean, "In our first issue, now completely sold out, York students were the major contributors."

If sales are any indication of popularity, Essays On Canadian Writing is no wallflower. There are only a few copies left of issues two and three, while four is completely sold out.

Initially solicited by highschools and bookstores, 50 per cent of the marketing is now done through subscription.

Submissions are invited on any period or genre of Canadian writing. All material submitted is read and considered by the editorial staff.

Correspondence to Essays On Canadian Writing should

be accompanied with a self-addressed envelope and mailed to S765 Ross Building, York University, Downsview, Ontario. M3J 1P3.

Single copies of the periodical are \$1.50 and can be purchased in the York bookstore.

## Direction

What one first notices about Direction is the graphic that clothes every issue. It reads like a Margaret Atwood poem: "if you look long enough, eventually you will be able to see me." from The Circle Game, 1966.

The 'me' in this case is the 'eye' of David H. Jorgenson and the 'gut' of Gary Gilbert-Gray, collectively the sensual thermometer behind this magazine.



Spring 1975

Founded in the fall of 1975 through funding from Founders College Student Council, CYSF and private sources, Direction is a bi-annual literary and graphic arts journal. Although mainly comprised of poetry and graphics, evident from time to time are prose, short stories and plays as well as non-review essays.

According to editor, Gary Gilbert-Gray, Direction was conceived to give York students, who might otherwise be intimidated in submitting material to established outlets such as Waves, a forum to display their works. We are a student-run organization and do not book known artists."

Unfortunately, the original philosophy has been modified somewhat and the journal now solicits beyond the campus - financing is the justification.

"York students participated 100 per cent in Direction 1 but in the subsequent three issues, the majority of pieces came from off-campus, consequently our sales are higher there," said Gray.

Direction can be found in 17 bookstores across Canada at \$1.50 per copy. Circulation and distribution is currently done on a consignment basis but should funding permit, Gray would like to experiment with trial subscriptions.

All material submitted to Direction is initially judged from a quality standpoint. Accepted works are massed together and 'threaded' to form a complete entity. The end product is a polished, homogeneous journal.

Upon request, and should time allow, the editors will

give constructive criticism on material.

Those interested in making submissions to Direction should forward their works together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Room 006, Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario. M3G 2R3.

## New holes in the wall

Craft, wisdom and delight. These are the words Irving Layton embraces when discussing good poetry and, more specifically, the many lyrics in New Holes In The Wall, an anthology of his 1975 workshop.

Since coming to York University, Layton has been the mentor behind four workshop collections, this being his most recent.

Stated Layton, "When I have good students, and all this is a matter of faith, providence and whatnot, but if I have good students and they pile up a quantity of poems during the year that strike me as being publishable, I like to bring out a workshop collection such as this one."

"I think it's a good idea because for one thing, it helps to give the students a sort of professional status. It gets their work known. It gratifies students because they see their poems in print," he said.

Often heralded as the Messiah of Canadian poetry, Layton has delivered copies of workshop productions to poetry lovers across the country who are concerned with contemporary trends in poetry. The students have been responsible for distribution among bookstores and libraries in Canada and the United States.

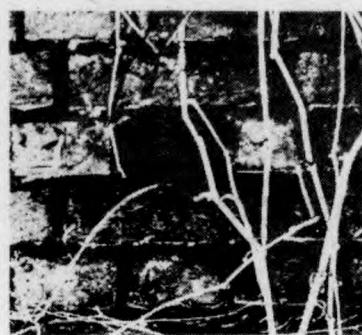
When asked the prerequisites for enrollment in his workshop, Layton replied, "If you are a third year student and I judge your talent when I see a manuscript, you become a member of the workshop and learn something about the forms and techniques of writing poetry."

Perhaps the most celebrated member of the 1975 workshop, Nancy Gay-Rotstein has gone on to publish a book of her own *Though The Eyes Of A Woman* (Griffin House, \$3.95).

On a final note - aspiring poets, this is Layton's advice to you: "Live in the world very fully, read as widely as possible, have as many experiences as you can, keep your eyes and ears wide open, make sure your senses never get dulled through familiarity and always be aware of the magical words because poets are magicians. What it boils down to is remaining fresh, innocent, responsive and learning the craft of putting words together."

"A poem is a verbal artifact that you have to work at constantly before you achieve the kind of excellence that will make it endure for a long, long time. If your poems are still being read 25, 50, 100 years af-

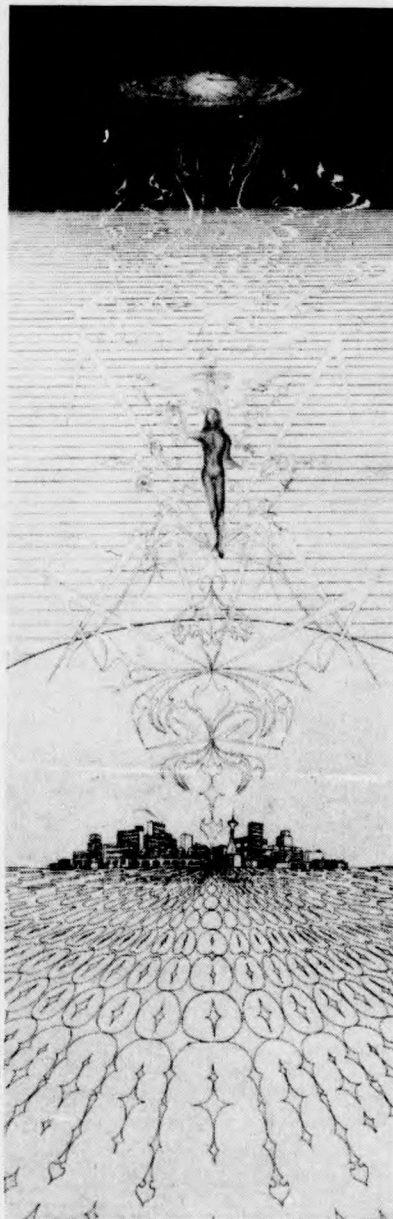
## new holes in the wall



Toronto, Canada 1975

ter your corpse has been mouldering in the grain, then you are a poet."

New Holes In The Wall was financed by Arts Dean Eisen and Founders, McLaughlin, Stong and Winters Colleges. It can be purchased in the York bookstore at a cost of \$2.00.



From Directions

Next week:

Excalibur  
looks at  
Breakthrough,  
Waves  
and  
Canadian  
Theatre  
Review

DOUBLE  
ISSUE  
\$4.00

EXILE

A Journal of Canadian and  
International Writing

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