

News of the arts

Canada/Belgium literary award

Jacques Godbout of Montreal recently won the Canada-Belgium Literary Prize for 1978. The \$2,500-award is given annually to French-language writers, alternating each year to Canadian or Belgian authors. An author's total contribution to literature is assessed, rather than one particular work. The prize, financed on the Canadian side by the Cultural Affairs Division of the Department of External Affairs, is administered by the Canada Council.

Laureates are chosen by a jury appointed in Belgium by the Belgian Ministry of French Culture and in Canada by the Canada Council. In explaining its unanimous choice, this year's Belgian jury declared: "As much by its highly personalized style as by the breadth of its spirit, its rejection of all convention, its disdain for all forms of dogmatism, its inventiveness and a joyfulness which does not deny a sense of the tragic nor dilute the strength of his ideas, the author's work impresses and convinces."

Jacques Godbout, born in 1933, is both poet and novelist, journalist and film-maker. He was awarded the France-Canada Literary Prize in 1962 for his novel *L'Aquarium*, the Governor General's Prize in 1967 for *Salut Galarneau!*, the Prix Dupau of the Académie française in 1973 for *D'Amour P.Q.* and the Duvernay Prize for his contribution to literature in general. Mr. Gobout is also president of the Union des Écrivains québécois.

Previous winners of the award are Belgian poet Geo Norge, who received the inaugural prize in 1971; Canadian poet Gaston Miron in 1972; Belgian writer Suzanne Lilar in 1973; Canadian novelist Réjean Ducharme in 1974; Pierre Mertens of Belgium in 1975; Marie-Claire Blais in 1976; and, last year, Belgian novelist Marcel Moreau.

Commonwealth Games film rolling

A National Film Board crew has begun to take footage for the official film of the Commonwealth Games that will be held in Edmonton next August.

Director-cameraman Paul Cowan and his assistants will start in Tanzania by filming Filbert Bayi, the runner who holds the world record for 1,500 metres. Since the much-anticipated race between

Bayi and the chief contender for his title, John Walker of New Zealand, did not take place at the Montreal Olympics owing to the withdrawal of several African nations, the Games in Edmonton will provide the first opportunity in four years for the two athletes to run in the same race.

From Tanzania, the NFB crew will go to Nairobi to film the sprinter Ruth Waithera, who is also a corporal in Kenya's armed forces. Some shooting is also scheduled in Zanzibar before the unit moves on to cover other athletes with whom negotiations should be completed by that time.

Celebrated conductor dies

The international music community is mourning the death of Fred Karam, a founder of the music department of the University of Ottawa and a celebrated conductor, arranger and composer, who died on March 27.

Karam, who would have been 52 tomorrow, studied in Toronto under Healey Willan and Gerald Bales and was an organist at a Syrian Orthodox church in that city. Bales, a close friend, now teaches at the University of Ottawa, where Karam taught until sickness forced him to give it up a year ago.

He was conductor of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation studio orchestra, before the National Arts Centre orchestra was established, and he also conducted the Ottawa Choral Society. Karam was choirmaster at St. Elijah's Orthodox Church in Ottawa.

Karam was well-known in many countries, particularly the United States, for his choral, orchestral, piano and organ compositions. Some of his best-known pieces included *Poem of Strings*, *Modal Trumpet* and *Gigue for Organ*, which Bales recorded in Westminster Abbey in London in 1957.

He is survived by his wife, Jennie, children by a former marriage and a brother, Ed Karam, who composes for film in California, U.S.A.

Canada Council citizenship rules

The Canada Council has approved a set of working regulations on citizenship requirements applicable to individual artists and arts organizations seeking Council

assistance.

The new rules provide that landed immigrants may receive one grant in their first three years, after which they will become ineligible unless they have applied for Canadian citizenship. The requirement, which applies to all Council grants to individuals in the arts and to the Explorations program, may be waived in the case of applicants who have made an exceptional contribution. In the past, most programs in the arts were open without restriction to persons who had had landed immigrant status for 12 months. The Explorations program was formerly restricted to Canadian citizens or persons who had had landed immigrant status for three years.

Another requirement will restrict Council Art Bank purchases to works by Canadian citizens. Arts organizations funded by the Council are to be encouraged to make maximum use of Canadian talent. The only specific requirement, which reaffirms established Council policy, ensures that symphony orchestras perform one Canadian work out of ten, and hire one Canadian soloist out of five, and that choirs perform at least one work each season by a Canadian composer.

Arts briefs

Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Verdi's *La Traviata*, and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* were recently announced as the three spring productions of the Canadian Opera Company, to be performed at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Toronto, from April 3-29.

An all-Canadian series of concerts — ranging from opera and classical guitar through jazz, folk and pop — will be presented at the Stratford Festival this summer, artistic director Robin Phillips announced recently. Bruce Cockburn, Oscar Peterson, Dan Hill and Liona Boyd will be featured in July. Louis and Gino Quilico will present the final concert of the series on August 28. All concerts will take place in the Festival Theatre.

Craig Russell of Toronto, Canada's best-known female impersonator, won the best actor award at the twenty-eighth Berlin film festival recently for his role in *Outrageous* as a homosexual hairdresser. Twenty-six films from 23 countries were entered in the ten-day festival, Europe's second-largest after Cannes and the first of the new season.