

News of the arts

Governor General's literary awards

The Governor General's Literary Awards for 1979 worth \$5,000 were presented recently in Vancouver.

The winners were: Jack Hodgins for *The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne*; Marie-Claire Blais for *Le sourd dans la ville (The Deaf Man in the City)*; Maria Tippett for *Emily Carr: A Biography*; Dominique Clift and Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos for *Le fait anglais au Québec (The English Fact in Quebec)*; Michael Ondaatje for *There's a Trick with a Knife I'm Learning to Do*; and Robert Mélançon for *Peinture aveugle (Blind Painting)*.

About the winners

Jack Hodgins — The locale of most of Jack Hodgins' stories and novels is Vancouver Island, where he was born in 1938. Currently a resident of Lantzville, British Columbia, he teaches English to high school students in Nanaimo and conducts creative writing courses for student writers from all over the island. *The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne* is set on Vancouver Island, in the mythical "Pulp Capital of the Western World". Populated by rambunctious eccentrics, while slowly sliding into the ocean, Port Annie is suddenly upset by the arrival of a stunningly beautiful woman and the death and mysterious rebirth of Bourne, an aged castaway. The fantastical events that ensue confirm Jack Hodgins' position as an inventive, comic novelist.

Maria Tippett — Born in Victoria, British Columbia in 1944 she now lives in Vancouver, where she lectures in cultural history at Simon Fraser University. The result of five years of extensive research and writing, *Emily Carr: A Biography* is the first full-scale study of Emily Carr's life. It supplements the many studies, including the painter's own autobiographies, which describe aspects of that life. Drawing on all available material, Emily Carr traces in close detail the artist's eventful and often disturbed history, the emergence of her unconventional artistic vision, and the social and artistic milieu in which she lived.

Michael Ondaatje — Born in Ceylon in 1943, Michael Ondaatje lived in England for several years before moving to Canada in 1962. He received a master's degree from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and now divides his time between a farm north of Kingston and Toronto,



Marie-Claire Blais

where he teaches English at York University. He is best known as a poet, but has also made documentary films and written literary criticism. His *Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, a poetry-prose sequence, won a Governor General's literary award for 1970 and was later adapted for theatre by the writer. *There's a Trick with a Knife I'm Learning to Do* is composed of poems written between 1963 and 1978.

Marie-Claire Blais — Born in Quebec City in 1939, Marie-Claire Blais has already had a distinguished literary career. Recipient of a Governor General's literary award in 1967, she also received the Prix Médicis in 1966 for *Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel (A Season in the Life of Emmanuel)*. Most of her novels are now available in English translations. She cur-



Michael Ondaatje

rently lives in Montreal. A novelist and poet, Marie-Claire Blais has taken as her domain the lives of characters embarked on perilous spiritual voyages, tempted by death and suffering. *Le sourd dans la ville (The Deaf Man in the City)* pursues the voyage again.

Dominique Clift and Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos — *Le fait anglais au Québec (The English Fact in Quebec)* is a collaborative work by the two Montrealers. An historical and socio-political study of anglophones in Quebec, it concludes that the English presence is as essential an element in the identity of the French in Quebec as is "the French fact" for the English.

Dominique Clift has been a journalist for the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star* and the *Montreal Star*. In 1963, he received the grand prize in journalism from the Union canadienne des journalistes de langue française.

Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos was a journalist for the *Montreal Star* for ten years. In 1968, she won a National Newspaper Award and in 1975 the Media Club Award.

Robert Mélançon — Born in Montreal in 1947, where he now lives. After studying literature at the universities of Montreal and Tours (in France), he began to teach French literature at the University of Montreal. He is also literary critic for *Le Devoir*. *Peinture aveugle (Blind Painting)* is the second collection of Robert Mélançon's poetry. Its 76 poems, in classical as well as free verse form, depict a largely serene world, in which the changing seasons and the alternation of day and night, light and dark, predominate.

CBC wins broadcasting award

The *Longest Journey*, a radio documentary on childbirth, has won the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) its first ever George Foster Peabody Award.

An international competition, the Peabody Awards are presented annually to honour distinguished public service broadcasting on television and radio. The winning program, which traces our "first and longest journey" from conception to birth, was written by Dr. Elizabeth Grove-White of Toronto and produced by Eithne Black. First heard last autumn on CBC Radio's *Open Circuit* series, the show will be rebroadcast July 20.

Archives

Le Droit