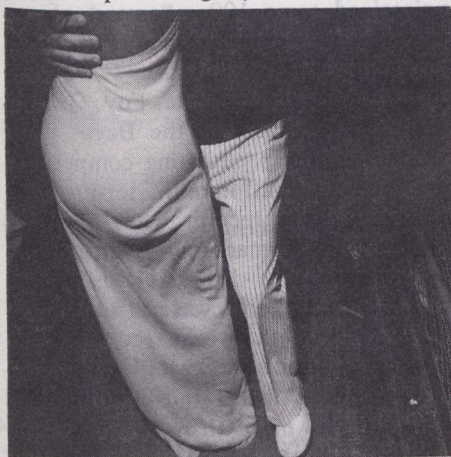


News of the arts

Nightlife photos focus on essentials

Nightlife: Photographs by Michael Mitchell, which opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario January 13, explores one artist's vision of night-time. The 24 large photographs show that when darkness surrounds a subject, the eye pares away the unessential and highlights the important; the focus is more specific.

For the past three years, Michael Mitchell has been making pictures about being alone and about searching for companionship. The tightly structured *Night-*



Two untitled photos from Michael Mitchell's *Nightlife* exhibition.



life exhibit groups the pictures into four distinct sections: Ground, which introduces the theme in four photographs; Solitude and Companionship, which are the core of the show and work together to state the problem; and Home, which presents an answer.

Mitchell, who was born in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1943, has a background in fine arts, anthropology, archaeology and film-making as well as photography. According to Allan Porter, editor of *Camera*

magazine, Lucerne, Switzerland, who wrote the introduction to the exhibition's catalogue, Mitchell is part of a new generation of technically expert and provocative photographers. "The ideas presented in his imagery are things we could never see without his masterful visualizations.... He translates his imagery into an idiom which supersedes reality and confronts the viewer with visions he himself can see in imagination but is incapable of expressing. These exposures are acts of contemplation: photographer to photograph and photograph to public."

Mitchell himself has remarked, "I want photographs that deal with important matters and not only with the pleasures of form. The significant matters are those that deal with living. I want photography that talks about life in an emotionally approachable way. Failure to do so seems to short-change its potential. Making good pictures is asking, in the company of others, how to live."

British series filmed in Toronto

Joanna Lumley (*Purdy*) of the popular British TV series, *The New Avengers*, pauses during the filming of one of four episodes completed recently in Toronto, Ontario. Screening of the Canadian-made episodes began last autumn on Thames Television and included spectacular views of Toronto landmarks like the CN-Tower (just visible in background), the Toronto Islands, waterfront and downtown areas. The production company, *Avengers (Films and TV) Enterprises Ltd.*, plans a return to Toronto in the spring to make three more episodes.



Canada/Australia literary winner

The Department of External Affairs, the Canada Council and the Australian Council have announced that the winner of the Canada/Australia Literary Prize for 1977 is Canadian writer Alice Munro. The prize, valued at \$2,500 Canadian, is intended to help make better known in Australia and Canada the work of each other's writers. This is the second year that the prize has been awarded. In 1976, Australian playwright John Romeril received an inaugural award. The Canada/Australia Literary Prize, established to honour English language authors, is similar to the Canada/Belgium Literary Prize which, since 1971, has been awarded to French-language writers. Each year an Australian or Canadian writer is chosen by judges from the other country.

Alice Munro has already received two major prizes for her work. Her collection of short stories, *Dance of the Happy Shades*, won the Governor-General's Award in 1968 and her novel *Lives of Girls and Women* won the Canadian Bookseller's Award in 1972. *Something I've been Meaning to Tell You*, a second collection of short stories, was published in 1974. Her works have appeared in many Canadian periodicals and two stories were included in the 1977 issues of *The New Yorker*. One of the most widely anthologized writers in Canada, Miss Munro has had four stories in *Personal Fictions*, published recently by Oxford University Press. Most recently, she wrote the script for *1847*, a documentary drama about the Irish immigration to Canada, the third program in a series of films called *The Newcomers* produced for the CBC television network.

Her stories, often set in small towns in rural Ontario, are compassionate studies of women, written in a style of grace and detail which has made her one of the most popular writers of fiction in Canada.

Arts brief

Memoir, "a delicate comedy", featuring Irish actress Siobhan McKenna as the legendary Sarah Bernhardt, which was written by Canadian playwright John Murrell, is drawing praise from England's theatre critics. First seen at the Guelph Spring Festival in Ontario last May, the play moved to Dublin before appearing at London's Ambassador Theatre.