

Canada Joins in the Celebration

Canada is participating in celebrations that mark the bicentennial of the French Revolution through a number of events staged in Paris and Montreal.

A bilingual exhibition celebrating English and French as the two languages of freedom will be presented at the Bibliothèque Publique d'Information (BPI) du Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris from June 7 to September 4.

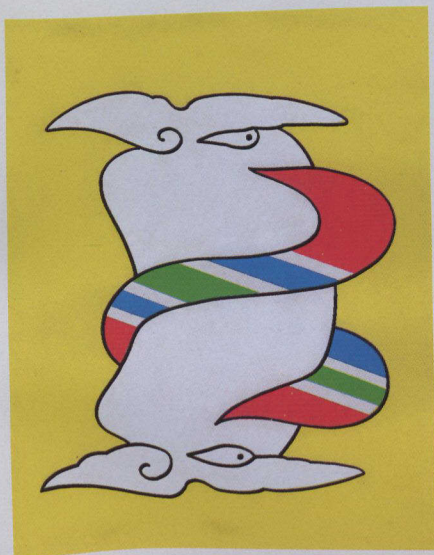
The exhibition consists of more than 30 triptychs and presents the joint history of the English and French languages in a way that underscores their complementary role in developing democratic institutions and spreading human rights worldwide.

The bilingual show is the result of a team effort involving the Language Watch, the Bibliothèque du Centre Georges Pompidou, the

Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT), Canada's departments of External Affairs and Secretary of State and its Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. It is expected that the exhibition will circulate in France, Canada and elsewhere in Europe after being shown in Paris.

A number of activities will take place in Canada to commemorate the bicentennial. One of the most interesting will be on July 14 at the Old Port of Montreal, where there will be a commemorative spectacle of the revolutionary events of 1789 with film presentations, laser projections, a symphony composed by J. Hêtu, dancing, and fireworks.

Poster by Vittorio for the "Languages of Human Rights — French and English: Languages of Liberty" exhibit.

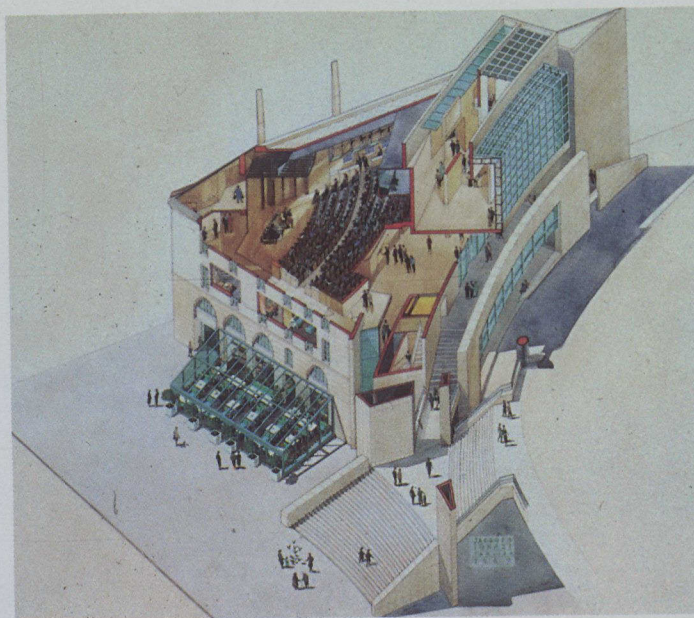


Erratum

In the winter 1988-89 issue, the person in the photo for the Cross Canada Currents' article "Northern Rights"

is William Erasmus and not George Erasmus as incorrectly stated in the caption.

Canadian-Designed Opera Takes Paris by Storm



On July 14, 1789, French revolutionaries stormed the notorious prison fortress of the Bastille in Paris and razed it.

On July 1, 1989, exactly two centuries later, a new building will be inaugurated in the Place de la Bastille — the first opera house to be built in Paris in more than a century and designed by Canadian architect Carlos Ott.

In February 1983, the French government launched an open international competition for the design of a new opera house. A jury, including members from Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Argentina, and the United Kingdom, met in June of that year to examine the 787 entries. The six finalists were sent to President François Mitterrand for review. Carlos Ott's design won the day.

Ott's building is a sharp contrast to Charles Garnier's 1875 Opéra de Paris, which reflected the grandeur and opulence of the Third Republic and catered to a small and distinctive élite. Since that time, opera audiences have grown so much that Garnier's building has been unable to cope with the demand. Carlos

Artist's rendition of the studio of the Tour d'Argent building of the Opéra de la Bastille in Paris, which will have seating capacity for 280.

Ott's opera house boasts a larger auditorium with a seating capacity of 2 700. In addition, there is a small studio theatre and a 500-seat amphitheatre underneath the main auditorium for concerts, recitals and exhibitions.

Ott has ensured that the new building blends in with its surroundings. Its semicircular façade, for instance, is designed to soften its impact and to add character to the historic buildings in the vicinity. The walls are predominantly beige stone and glass while the roof is green oxidized copper. The strict geometric proportions produce an overall effect of homogeneity and balance.

It remains to be seen whether Ott's opera house will become a Parisian landmark, in the same way that Garnier's did. But there is no doubt that the Opéra de la Bastille will attract opera lovers from near and far thanks to its combination of architectural flair and functional excellence.