

News of the arts

Alabama salutes Canada

Alabama's official state arts festival — the Birmingham Festival of Arts — saluted Canada at its twenty-ninth annual event March 29 through April 8. Every year, the city features the arts and culture of another country.

Birmingham, a blossoming cultural centre, hosted a ten-day celebration of Canada's dual culture with music, exhibits, seminars, lectures, films, sports events and a "Maple-Leaf Fair". Canadian guest artists in Birmingham for the cultural celebration were The Canadian Brass...harpist Kenneth Gilbert...basso Don McManus...the Edmonton Youth Orchestra...Canadian writers and lecturers...the Orford Quartet...and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

There was also a "book and author luncheon"; a Canadian cooking school; an art of communication symposium; Canadian visual arts and a Canadian film bank.

Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Peter Towe, Mrs. Towe and officials from the Washington Embassy, as well as from the Canadian Consulates in Atlanta and New Orleans, were guests for

the four-day closing weekend. Mr. Towe, who has been Ambassador in Washington almost two years, addressed the Committee on Foreign Relations — an organization of Birmingham business people and civic leaders — and attended many of the events including a special dinner "Canadian-style" given for over 500 guests.

Ambassador and Mrs. Towe joined festival president Molton Williams with Mrs. Williams, festival chairman Jane Head with Mr. Head and other festival officials for the Birmingham Civic Opera performance of *The Return of Ulysses* at the Birmingham Civic Center Theatre on April 7. Heading the cast was Canada's Don McManus in the role of Neptune.

Two area churches saluted Canada with special programs of music by Canadian composers the following day.

The 1979 Birmingham Festival of Arts closed with a formal ceremony at Highlands United Methodist Church. Flag bearers carrying U.S. and Canadian flags led the choir processional into the sanctuary. Singing of the two national anthems preceded a varied program, including works by Canadian composer Healey Willan. A final address by festival president Williams marked a successful ten-day salute to Canada.

History of blacks in Canada screened at Milan festival

Preselected for screening at the International Public Television Festival (INPUT), held in Milan from April 1 to 7, was *Fields of Endless Day*, a co-production of the National Film Board of Canada's Ontario Regional Studios and the Ontario Education Communications Association.

The one-hour film traces the history of Canada's black community from its inception in the early seventeenth century to the beginnings of the large West Indian immigration in the mid-twentieth century. Through the use of documentary material, interviews and dramatic re-enactments, director/producer Terry McCartney-Filgate explores the history of slavery in French and English Canada until its end in 1834.

In spite of difficulties created by racist immigration policies, many members of free black communities in Nova Scotia, Ontario and western Canada made great contributions to Canadian society — William Hall won the Victoria Cross at the Relief of Lucknow; Mary Ann Shadd became the first woman newspaper editor in North America; John Ware pioneered longhorn cattle ranching in Alberta; and William Hubbard was alderman and acting mayor of Toronto in the early 1900s.

Literary prize for former diplomat

Charles Ritchie of Ottawa, former Canadian diplomat and retired special adviser to the Privy Council, has won first prize in the memoir category of the CBC Literary Competition.

Mr. Ritchie, former Ambassador to Germany and the United States, permanent Canadian representative at the United Nations and Canadian representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, won the award for *My Cousin Gerald*.

He also is the author of *The Siren Years* and *An Appetite for Life*, based on diaries of his years as Canadian High Commissioner in London.

Franz Kramer, director of music for Toronto Arts Productions since 1971, has accepted the position of music officer with the Canada Council in Ottawa.



MusicCanada

One of the highlights of the 1979 Birmingham Festival of Arts was the appearance of The Canadian Brass, a quintet of trumpets, trombone, French horn and tuba. The quintet possesses a unique comedic talent along with its brilliant virtuosity. Its special style and performance excellence have resulted in concerts throughout Canada, in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, in Paris, London, Venice, Bonn, in the Soviet Union, and in the People's Republic of China. (From left to right): Graeme Page, Ronald Romm, Charles Daellenbach, Frederick Mills and Eugene Watt pose on the Great Wall of China during a recent tour.