

ARTS SECTION

Art and architectural aspiration



By ANGELA LAWRENCE

Although London, Ontario cannot be considered one of Canada's largest cities today, back in the 1800's Victorian London was a thriving, affluent community comparable in size and growth to Toronto. The Art Gallery of York University (AGYU) has revived that era of growth in the *Symbols of Aspiration* exhibition on display until October 3rd.

The work of a prominent architectural firm in London—Robinson, Durand and Moore—is showcased using past and present photos of buildings and interiors, design drawings, and landscape paintings designed by the firm. Architectural artifacts add to the display, and include a cement cornerstone, and large weather vane (the AGYU door had to be removed in order to get it inside the gallery) designed by William Robinson. A wooden chair and surprisingly modern stained glass window by George Durand, and firm ledgers and diaries dating back to the late 1800's are also exhibited.

Informative descriptions of exhibit pieces and biographies of the architects are displayed in chronological order, making *Symbols of Aspiration* an easily accessible show for those who attend. The show is a unique opportunity for studying the design continuity of a single architectural firm during the Victorian period.

Founded in the 1850's by an Irish immigrant, William Robinson, the firm combined Tudor, Gothic, Italianate and other Victorian



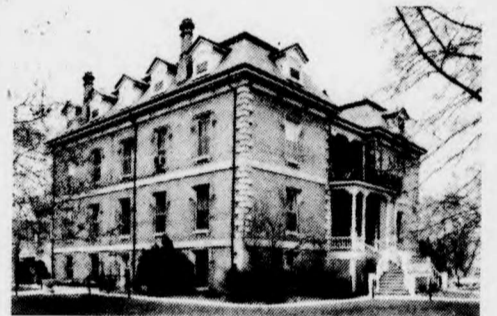
architectural modes to create distinctive and original local architecture, ranging from ornate palatial homes to county prisons.

Robinson's designs reveal his preference for the symmetry of classical design over the extravagance of High Victorian architecture. George Durand's use of the "Queen Anne" style is seen in the moulded chimney of "Engiang"—the London residence of John Labatt designed by Durand—and the first Upper Canada College building in Toronto is a prime example of Durand's Romanesque work.

The Main Building at the University of Western Ontario designed by John Moore still stands as a tribute to the innovative Victorian architecture that the Robinson firm made indigenous to the Southwestern region of Ontario.

The *Symbols of Aspiration* exhibition precedes a book of the same title written by Curators Lynn Di Stefano and Nancy Tausky who will lecture on September 25th at the Nat Taylor Cinema from 6-7 p.m.

THE BISHOP'S PALACE: Now called St. Peter's Rectory, seen from external and internal vertigo-inducing vantage points. Both photos are included in the AGYU exhibit *Symbols of Aspiration*, running until October 3.



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11 THU	2:00 8:00 BOYS (M)	HAMLET (S) ROS & G (16)	3 FRI	2:00 8:00 CYMBELINE (S) BOYS (M)	HAMLET (S) ROS & G (R)
16 TUE	2:00 8:00 BOYS (S)	HAMLET (16)	7 TUE	2:00 8:00 PERICLES (S)	MAN (16)
17 WED	2:00 8:00 WINTER (S) BOYS (M)	HENRY (S) MAN (16)	8 WED	2:00 8:00 CYMBELINE (S) BOYS (M)	HAMLET (S) ROS & G (16)
18 THU	2:00 8:00 CYMBELINE (S) PERICLES (16)	HAMLET (S) HENRY (16)	9 THU	8:00 PERICLES (16)	HENRY (16)
23 TUE	2:00 8:00 PERICLES (S)	MAN (16)	14 TUE	2:00 8:00 WINTER (S)	HAMLET (16)
24 WED	2:00 8:00 CYMBELINE (S) WINTER (16)	HAMLET (S) R & G (16)	15 WED	2:00 8:00 CYMBELINE (S) PERICLES (16)	HAMLET (S) MAN (16)
25 THU	8:00 BOYS (M)	HENRY (16)	16 THU	8:00 BOYS (M)	HENRY (16)
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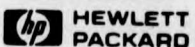
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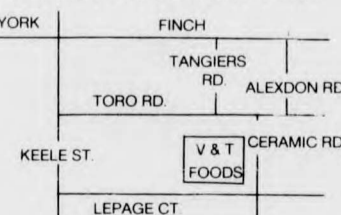
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