

# News of the arts

## National book festival in May

The National Book Festival is sponsoring more than 200 projects in 150 different communities across Canada from May 2-11.

The festival started in Eastern Canada, where a group of high school students in Sackville, New Brunswick, will select their favorite Canadian children's books to be buried in a time capsule. In Quebec, Monique Khouman is bringing her *Théâtre des livres vivants* (Theatre of Living Books) to various libraries in Montreal.

Harbourfront in Toronto housed the World's Greatest Autographing party from May 2-4, with 125 writers in attendance. Manitoba held its second annual Book Fair in Winnipeg from May 2-4 at the University of Manitoba. The Calgary Independent Booksellers are holding a *première* of *Novelist in Hiding*, a film about W.O. Mitchell, at the Convention Centre. In Vancouver, a group of writers are presenting on stage *The Face of British Columbia in Poetry and Prose*. And in Yellowknife, two native writers are touring libraries and schools in the area during the festival.

## Best in broadcasting honoured

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) documentary drama *They're Drying up the Streets* was named Canadian television's best program, taking the top honour at the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) awards presentation to members of the broadcasting industry.

The program also won the Earle Grey award for veteran actor Don Francks as best leading performer and brought the du Maurier award for best new TV performer to Sarah Torgov, for her disturbing portrayal of a drunk.

Seventeen "Nellies", as the awards are known, were presented by ACTRA, the Canadian broadcasters' union, during a nationally-televised awards-and-variety program.

Burton Cummings was acclaimed the best TV variety performer for his work in the CBC Superspecial, *Burton Cummings, Portage and Main*. The award for best children's television program went to *Intergalactic Thanksgiving*, made by Nelvana Films and aired on the CBC.



Don Francks hugs daughter Cree after ACTRA win as best television actor.

Brian Linehan was named the best television interviewer, while Paul Harding won the best supporting actor award for his role in *A Man Called Intrepid*, shown on CTV.

In radio broadcasting, *Aftermath of Jonestown*, heard on CBC's *Sunday Morning*, was deemed the best program of the year; Barbara Frum and Alan Maitland the best interviewers for the *As It Happens* phone-out show; and Kate Reid the best acting performer for her part in Festival Theatre's *Grasshopper Hill*.

The John Drainie Award for distinguished contribution to broadcasting went to producer/director Norman Campbell.

The other winners were:

- Ricki Katz and Susan Millican, the Gordon Sinclair Award for outspoken opinions and integrity in broadcasting;
- Dave Hodge, the Foster Hewitt Award for excellence in sportcasting;
- Barbara Young, best TV documentary writer for *Penny Kitchen* on CBC's *Newsday*;
- Terence McKenna, best radio documentary writer for *Aftermath of Jonestown*;
- Ralph Thomas and Roy MacGregor, best TV dramatic writers for *Every Person is Guilty*, part of CBC's *For the Record* series;
- Betty Lambert, best radio dramatic writer for her play, *Grasshopper Hill*;
- Johnny Wayne, Frank Shuster, Kate Lonsdale, Ted Lonsdale, best TV variety writers for *The Wayne and Shuster Show*.

## Toronto dance company toasted

The Toronto-based Danny Grossman dance company, on its first British tour, has become the toast of admiring London critics.

"If this is Canadian contemporary dance, let us have more of it," suggests *Financial Times* critic Clement Crisp, one of Britain's most respected critical voices. "In wit, skill and sensitivity, it puts most local exponents absolutely in the shade."

Every review cautions Londoners not to miss Grossman, one-time member of the Paul Taylor Company, and his ensemble.

"Now with his own troupe of very gifted artists," says Crisp, "he (Grossman) is also revealed as a choreographer of notable originality and wit, owing something still to Taylor but very much his own man."

## Major theatre festival planned

Toronto will be the host of a major international theatre festival starting in May 1981.

On Stage '81 will mount 12 to 16 major productions in up to eight theatres. The three-week event will feature new plays from Toronto, from Canadian theatres outside Toronto and from international companies — in about equal proportion.

It will also feature workshops of new plays, seminars, exhibits and a trade forum for the theatre industry. The trade forum, which is a new idea for a theatre festival, has attracted interest from theatre manufacturers and suppliers around the world. It will assure the festival a strong market and commercial as well as artistic orientation.

On Stage will "attract to live theatre the entrepreneurial energies needed for the next stage in the development of this industry in Canada," said film producer Garth Drabinsky, the project's chairman of the board. The commercial success of plays like *Billy Bishop* and *Jitters*, both slated for Broadway, indicates that Canadian theatre has "come of age, internationally speaking".

A forum where international critics, producers and agents can sample new work will encourage film, television and foreign theatre productions as profitable spin-offs, he added.