

News of the arts

Troupe tours Britain and Ireland

Theatre Passe Muraille of Toronto will tour Britain and Ireland from April 23 to June 24, under the auspices of the Department of External Affairs. The nine-week tour will include over 60 performances in more than 25 communities in England, Scotland and Wales.

The company will present two of its most successful collective creations: *The Farm Show*, a lively examination of agricultural life in southwestern Ontario, and *1837*, a play which chronicles an armed uprising by English, Scottish and Irish immigrant farmers and craftsmen in Ontario for independence from the British Empire.

Passe Muraille develops its dramatic material by living in and working with a community, whose acceptance of the play that emerges determines the show's success. On the tour, the company members will live with the local people, who, in turn, will influence the two productions.

"On this tour, we are attempting to connect these two plays with the specific interests of an audience, just as we do in Canada," explained Artistic Director Paul



Scene from 1837.

Thompson. "Therefore, *The Farm Show* will be performed in several agricultural regions such as Devon, Herefordshire and Wales, while *1837* will tour Scotland and Ireland." As in Canada, many of the performances will be presented in unconventional locations. For example, the tour will open in a barn near Beaford, a small farming community in Devon.

\$20-million program to help book publishers

The Federal Government will provide almost \$20 million over three years to establish a new and extensive Canadian Book Publishing Development Program, Secretary of State John Roberts announced recently.

Mr. Roberts said, "The key element of the program will provide \$3 million in development-cost assistance during 1979-80 to stimulate increased spending by eligible Canadian-controlled book publishing firms on editorial, design, typesetting, and other pre-publication costs incurred in the development of Canadian-authored books. This parallels a wide range of existing income tax measures and direct assistance programs in other industries whose objectives are to expand research and development.

"\$1.5 million will be available to publishers during 1979-80 to support the production of original Canadian textbooks and related learning materials which could not be published on a commercial basis.

"The rest of the funds will be used to help improve the management of Canadian companies and the distribution of

Canadian books; for a program to improve the professional skills of the industry; and for continued support for the foreign marketing of books by Canadian authors," he said.

Funding for the program, which is expected to reach \$6.8 million in 1980-81, will for the third year be conditional upon effectiveness of the program during its first two years of operation.

Participation will be open to companies that are 75 percent Canadian-owned and effectively controlled by Canadians. However, all Canadian-based companies, regardless of their nationality of ownership and control, will be eligible for assistance in improving professional skills and foreign marketing.

The Canada Council, whose ongoing support of the industry will be complemented by the new program, will provide \$3.85 million in 1979-80 to finance translation grants, promotion assistance, publication subsidies for Canadian-authored books of cultural value, and for the purchase and distribution of Canadian books to institutions.

Canadian play now a film

Paper Wheat, a feature documentary film about the stage play created by players of the 25th Street House Theatre in Saskatoon, had its *première* in Sintaluta, Saskatchewan, February 21. The settlement, near Regina, was the home of E.A. Partridge, a pioneer of co-operative grain marketing and a hero in the play about the wheat pool movement.

The stage show, which has played to capacity houses in major Canadian cities as well as the rural areas of the prairies, is a lively and humorous re-creation, in word and music, of the settlement of the province and the tribulations of grain marketing.

The film will be offered to television networks in Canada and abroad, and prints will later be available from film libraries.

Arts briefs

A cantata lost for nearly 250 years will have its first modern performance at McGill University, Montreal, this autumn. The unique manuscript of the *Cantate pour le jour de la Saint-Louis*, by eighteenth-century French composer Philippe Rameau, was discovered by Professor Mary Cyr of McGill's Faculty of Music when she came across a letter written in 1777 by Rameau's son, while she was in Paris last summer. It described the work well enough to enable her to find it among the anonymous eighteenth-century manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

The National Museum of Man purchased at a Christie's auction in London, England a few months ago, \$139,160-worth of "ethno-graphical" art that has been out of the country for more than 150 years. Among the collection of rare items is a Naskapi painted skin coat dated 1770 (\$28,840) and an early eighteenth-century Great Lakes Indians quilled head-dress (\$43,260). The purchases were made with a special grant from the Secretary of State on the recommendation of the Canadian Cultural Property Import and Export Review Board.

Anne-Claire Poirier's film for the National Film Board, *Mourir a Tue-Tete*, has been officially selected for this year's Cannes Film Festival.