

News of the arts

Toronto's "Tut mania" includes invitation to President Sadat

Although the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibit is not scheduled to open at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) until November 1, Toronto is already preparing for the show that has caused a cultural sensation across North America.

Officials at the gallery have invited Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to open the exhibition of artifacts which British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered in 1922. The display contains 55 objects from the tomb of King Tutankhamun, a teen-aged pharaoh who ruled Egypt some 3,000 years ago.

The exhibition has already travelled to New York, Los Angeles and New Orleans and is currently drawing huge crowds in Seattle.

The AGO has asked for 1,500 volunteers to help during the exhibit, which runs to December 31.

Toronto hotels are setting aside blocks of rooms to accommodate package deals that travel operators are putting together for out-of-town-viewers.

Restaurants are researching Egyptian recipes and a Toronto designer has created a wedding gown inspired by the Tutankhamun period.

Jewellery stores are busy acquiring copies of the necklaces, brooches and rings found in the tomb.

The art gallery, in conjunction with the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, is organizing lectures to acquaint the public with the Tutankhamun period (from 1361 to 1343 B.C.).

The \$7-million invisible painting

The world's smallest painting, one-eighty-fifth of an inch in diameter, is worth \$7 million, claims its creator, Dimitri Farkavec of Winnipeg.

Our Beautiful Canada was painted with a single hair and the aid of a microscope. To the naked eye, the work is smaller than a pinhead. "Its secret," says Farkavec, "unfolds only when you have equipped yourself (with a microscope)."

The artist is now negotiating for the sale of the work (which is unlikely to command the asking price) to the Guinness Museum of World Records in Niagara Falls.

Season of firsts for Canadian Opera Company

Six grand operas including five company *premières* will highlight the Canadian Opera Company's (COC) eight-month opera season from September 1979 to May 1980.

The COC will present its first productions of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* in Italian; Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* in German; Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Italian; Massenet's *Werther* in French; Britten's *Peter Grimes* in English and a new production of one of the company's most popular operas, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in Italian.

The company's extended season is the fulfilment of long-awaited ambition of artistic director Lotfi Mansouri to present a year-round program of major opera productions in Toronto.

Music for animals highlights children's cause



Members of the chamber music ensemble *Camerata* recently visited Toronto's Metro Zoo, whose furry residents helped to publicize a concert series celebrating the International Year of the Child. The concerts, co-sponsored by the Young People's Theatre Centre, featured works about animals, including Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, *Saint-Saens' Carnival of the Animals*, and *Rimsky-Korsakov's Flight of the Bumble Bee*.

Award for film on mountaineering

The Quebec Mountain Federation has awarded film-maker Marc Hébert a medal of honour, in recognition of his promotion of mountaineering activities, at the federation's tenth anniversary congress, following a preview of Mr. Hébert's new film, *Le Pilier de cristal*.

The film (shot by photographer and mountaineer Roger Rochat) depicts a mid-winter climb up the natural ice formations flanking Montmorency Falls near Quebec City.

Marc Hébert's first film on mountaineering in Quebec, *Les Rochassiers (Sheer Sport)*, has received a number of awards since its production in 1970: the Selection Committee Cup at the International Mountain Festival in Allos, Haute Provence, France in 1970, the Diable d'or (documentary category) at the International Alpine Film Festival in Les Diablerets, Switzerland in 1970, the Prix scultura "Tederfo" at the International Festival of Sports Films in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy in 1971 and an honourable mention at the International Mountain Film Festival in Trento, Italy in 1971. Both *Les Rochassiers* and *Le Pilier de cristal* are productions of the National Film Board of Canada.

Master engraver honoured

The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts medal for the year 1978 has been awarded posthumously to engraver and painter Albert Dumouchel (1916-1971) in recognition of his professional contribution to the graphic arts in Canada.

Mr. Dumouchel, who taught at the School of Graphic Arts in Montreal and was director of graphics at the School of Fine Arts of the University of Quebec at Montreal, earned Quebec engraving an international reputation when he represented Canada at several exhibitions abroad. He trained most of Quebec's internationally-renowned engravers.

The medal is awarded from time to time as a tribute to those who have made an outstanding contribution to artistic life in Canada. Among interpreters of the plastic and graphic arts, the only previous recipients have been the members of the Group of Seven and sculptor Henry Moore.