

## Award-winning films

Eight films from among 47 entries have won awards in the second annual Canadian Independent Short Film Showcase competition, which is organized by the Canada Council and the Academy of Canadian Cinema.

Each winning filmmaker received a cash award of \$3 000 and a 35-millimetre print of the film.

The winners were: *Brushstrokes* by Sylvie Fefer of Burnaby, British Columbia; *La Cage Ronde* by Claude Lavoie of Montreal, Quebec; *Suit of Many Crayons* by Kevin McCracken of Vancouver, British Columbia; *Kelekis* by Barry Lank of Winnipeg, Manitoba; *Butterfly* by Dieter Mueller of Vancouver, British Columbia; *Oh Sean* by Heidi Blomkvist, Genni Selby, Jay Cestnik and General Paquette of Toronto, Ontario; *Hawkesville to Wallenstien* by Richard Kerr of Toronto, Ontario; and *Bay St. Tap* by John Barclay and Tony Sloan of Toronto, Ontario;

The winning films will be blown up to 35 millimetre, multiple prints will be made and will be released to commercial theatres across Canada.

## Photographic exhibition provides inner vision of Canadian life



The national photography collection of the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa is presenting an exhibition of photographs, entitled *Inner Visions*. The 25 photographs, taken during the period 1907-1913, represent the interiors of businesses such as a hatmaker's workshop, a restaurant, a bank and bowling alley. Although the negatives have deteriorated over time the Archives have taken the necessary conservation measures to preserve these documents for posterity.

Public Archives of Canada

## Edmonton dinner theatre proves a delight to children

Every second Saturday the Stage West dinner theatre in Edmonton undergoes a transformation, reports Gwen Dambrosky of the *Canadian Press*.

The subdued lobby, which nightly brims with couples in evening gowns and suits, becomes overrun with as many as 300 children.

Waitresses normally dressed in tasteful black uniforms don frog and clown costumes. The buffet, which traditionally boasts artfully-displayed arrangements of seafood and salads, becomes a mind-boggling conglomeration of peanut-butter salads, hamburgers, hot dogs and pizza.

On the stage the scenery of the theatrical production is covered by a plain white drop — in front of which sits a single performer strumming a simple folk song to the noisy accompaniment of his enthusiastic young audience.

### Experimental theatre

This is the scene at the Stage West Children's Dinner Theatre, an experimental project launched last October in Edmonton and Calgary.

The Edmonton-based chain, which also has an outlet in Winnipeg, has for years enjoyed great success with its adult dinner theatre formula — light comedies featuring television performers such as Jamie Farr and Pat Paulsen, combined with a buffet with food for every taste.

Michael Sulyma, children's theatre producer-director, said the chain decided to determine if there would be equal success in a similar format for children. "Children recognize high-profile performers," Sulyma said.

To call it a dinner theatre is actually something of a misnomer. Although theatrical groups are represented on the playbill, the performers also include singers Fred Penner and Toronto recordings artist Eric Nagler, as well as magicians such as Everitt Andrews.

Regardless of the fare, the combination of entertainment and cuisine has so far proved irresistible to the young patrons — every show but one has been sold out.

While the format is similar to the tried-and-true adult version of Stage West,

Sulyma points out there are noteworthy differences.

"It's two different types of theatre," he said. "Stage West is a stereotyped dinner theatre, which is popular across North America. But here we're trying something new. At Stage West all the supporting actors are Canadian — we're trying to make all the stars Canadian."

The theatre has been helped in that regard by the fact the Canadian children's entertainment industry is booming, thanks to the extraordinary concert and recording successes of such children's performers as Raffi and Sharon, Lois and Bram.

The children's dinner theatre also has a somewhat more cultural bent than its adult counterpart, Sulyma said.

"We want to offer all types of performance, whether it be a recording artist, a magician, a theatre company or the Edmonton Opera doing *Hansel and Gretel* — it's from one spectrum of educational experience right up to a cultural experience."

He said if, after a year, the financial picture looks sufficiently encouraging, the project will be expanded to include Winnipeg.