

News of the arts

Tribute to Harold Town

Harold Town, one of Toronto's best-known artists, will be given a panoramic retrospective by the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) in two years. To be organized by David Burnett, curator of contemporary Canadian art at the AGO, the exhibition will open in May 1986 and continue through June.

"Town has been a major figure on the Toronto scene for many years but the work has not been seen in substantial amounts," said Mr. Burnett. He added that the survey will contain between 150 and 200 paintings and works on paper drawn from all periods of the artist's career.

Gift opera salutes the Met

Rinaldo, an opera first created and presented at Ottawa's National Arts Centre during "Festival Ottawa" in July 1982, opened in New York on January 19 as Canada's contribution to the one-hundredth anniversary season of the Metropolitan Opera.

National Arts Centre director general Donald MacSween says that the production, the first Handel opera ever presented at the Met, "is a centennial gift from the National Arts Centre, on behalf of the people of Canada, in appreciation of the many years during which Canadians have enjoyed opera from the Met — on tour, on radio and in New York". The gift is the loan of costumes, sets and props, as originally created for the National Arts Centre, to be used for the duration of the Met's 1984 season. Besides the 18 performances at the Met, they will also be used on tour, as well as at the Toronto International Festival in June 1984.

The Metropolitan Opera will remount the production with many of the original principal performers including Marilyn Horne, Benita Valente and Samuel Ramey. It will be conducted by Canada's Mario Bernardi, directed by Frank Corsaro, with set and costume design by Mark Negin and lighting by Gil Wechsler. Mario Bernardi makes his Metropolitan Opera debut with this presentation of



Mario Bernardi

Malak

Rinaldo. He was artistic director of Festival Ottawa and founding principal conductor and director of music of the National Arts Centre orchestra for 13 seasons. He also conducted *Rinaldo's* Ottawa premiere. Canadian designer Mark Negin and director Frank Corsaro are also making their debuts at the Metropolitan Opera with this production.

New Quebec dictionary

Two linguists at Laval University in Quebec City are at work on a dictionary of French words used in Quebec either exclusively or with meanings that have been lost elsewhere. Words whose use and meaning are common to Quebec and other French-speaking parts of the world will not be included.

The dictionary will give the history and derivation of an estimated 100 000 words with a distinct meaning in Quebec. A first volume is expected to appear this year but the entire work may require up to ten volumes and several years to complete.

The authors, Marcel Juneau and Claude Poirier, have been at work for some years on what they call the *Trésor de la langue française au Québec (Treasury of the French language in Quebec)*. They head a team of 15 including Lionel Boisvert and Claude Verreault who are close collaborators.

The undertaking is financed by the Quebec education ministry and by a branch of the Canada Council.

Linguists Juneau and Poirier have traced the origin of some Quebec words back to thirteenth century use in France and even earlier. A few Quebec French words exist nowhere else. There are others derived from English and some thought to be of English origin but prove to be French from which the English was taken.

The interest of the Laval researchers in the Quebec language began in 1972 when they published the account book of a Quebec miller active at the end of the seventeenth century.

They have gone on since then to their present project studying the vocabulary used in documents in archives, testaments, inventories of goods, the account books of religious communities, diaries of missionaries and early travellers, old issues of newspapers, early and contemporary writing of all kinds, recorded folk tales and songs and any kind of account in which a distinctive item of language may be found.

(Article from Canadian Scene.)

Stratford's hit "The Mikado" opens at London's Old Vic

The highly-successful production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, produced for Canada's Stratford Festival, will be presented at the Old Vic theatre in London, England for six weeks beginning February 29.

Directed and choreographed by Brian Macdonald with musical direction by Berthold Carrière, the London engagement is made possible by donations from the Department of External Affairs, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, and sponsorship by British divisions of several Canadian companies.



Robert C. Ragsdale

Eric Donkin as Ko-ko in the Stratford Festival production of *The Mikado*.

The Mikado features Marie Baron, Eric Donkin and Richard McMillan. The production was first presented at Stratford's Avon Theatre in Stratford, Ontario during the 1982 season where it played to 96.4 per cent capacity. It was repeated the following summer with an equally popular reception and travelled across Canada for a successful eight-week tour.

Arts briefs

A National Film Board film *The War Story* directed by Ann Wheeler has won one of the top three prizes at the tenth International Film Festival in Flanders, Belgium. The prize was awarded for the best documentary on the subject of war.

Toronto composer Jim Pirie, 44, was among the award winners when the news and documentary Emmys were presented in New York recently. His winning score was for the ABC documentary, *Alaska: Story at the Top of the World*.