

# News of the arts

## Novelist wins award

The Banff School of Fine Arts has announced that novelist W.O. Mitchell has won the school's first annual award. The award recognizes a substantial and continuing contribution to the arts in Canada.

A native of Saskatchewan, Mitchell attended the universities of Manitoba and Alberta. During his early career, he worked in radio production, journalism, editing and school teaching, but soon established himself as a novelist, playwright, short story writer and scriptwriter for films, radio and television. He was fiction editor of *Maclean's* from 1948 to 1952. He has also won awards for humour, fiction and playwriting.

The Banff award consists of a gold medal, a cash award of \$5,000 and a residency at the Banff Centre School.

## Youth theatre groups unite

Representatives from Canada's major theatre companies for young audiences have formally launched an organization to speak on their behalf both nationally and internationally.

At a meeting held recently at the National Theatre School in Montreal, ASSITEJ/Canada members approved a charter and by-laws which will govern a formal association representing the interests of professional companies from coast to coast. Founded in 1964 under a UNESCO charter, ASSITEJ (Association International du Théâtre pour l'Enfance de la Jeunesse — the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) has member centres in 33 countries. Informal meetings have been held in Canada since the early Sixties, with the organization meeting until 1975 as a committee of the Canadian Child and Youth Drama Association, and subsequently taking the first steps towards independence. Assistance from the Canada Council and the Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs has enabled ASSITEJ/Canada to engage a bilingual executive director and to maintain central headquarters in Montreal.

In addition to promoting and encouraging the development of high calibre theatre for young audiences within Canada, ASSITEJ/Canada has played an active role in the governing of international ASSITEJ.

## National Arts Centre Orchestra plays at United Nations

The National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, at the invitation of United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, gave the United Nations Day concert in the United Nations General Assembly Hall in New York, October 24.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau attended the concert which has traditionally marked United Nations Day since 1954.

For its appearance before the members of the General Assembly and their guests, the orchestra, under conductor Mario Bernardi, performed compositions by Bach, Gluck, Rossini and Mozart. The program consisted of Bach's *Suite No. 3 in D*, three arias from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, sung by American mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, and the *Prague Symphony* by Mozart. Miss Horne also sang one of the arias, *Mura Felice*, from Rossini's opera *La Donna del Lago*.

Two days later the orchestra performed at Carnegie Hall at the invitation of the Carnegie Corporation. The orchestra performed Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* for its fourth appearance in the hall. Marilyn Horne headed the cast, which included Canadian sopranos Linda Zoghby and Nancy Hermiston, and the Cantata Singers of Ottawa.

Two major New York daily newspaper critics praised Mr. Bernardi and the orchestra for their performance. Critic Peter Davis of *The New York Times* said of the performance: "The crisp attacks,



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buoyant rhythms, crystalline textures and many exquisitely turned woodwind solos were all wonderfully controlled and elegantly shaped by Mr. Bernardi. *Orfeo* can seem static, slow-moving and ponderous, but on this occasion all the opera's innate vitality and emotional power came vibrantly to life."

Bill Zakariasen of *The New York News* wrote that *Orfeo* received its first reputable performance in New York in a decade. "In general, it was a fine performance which more than once reached the inspired," he said.

## Educational television network's costs rise

The Ontario government will provide \$22 million this year to keep TVOntario, the province's educational network, on the air, up from \$19.9 million in the 1979-80 fiscal year.

TVOntario's total estimated budget for the year ending March 31, 1981, is \$27.3 million. Grants from the Ministries of Culture and Recreation, Education, and Colleges and Universities will cover about 80 per cent of the budget requirements, while program sales and other revenue amounting to about \$5 million will make up the difference.

The agency's sales of programs and print materials outside Ontario should total about \$1.7 million this year, with the U.S. market accounting for more than

half that amount. Other revenue is earned from co-production ventures, corporate underwriting, and project financing from other provincial ministries and federal government departments.

TVOntario expects to be earning at least one-third of its revenues by 1985, according to Beverley Roberts, the network's director of information. Corporate funding for special programs, which the agency pursued for the first time last year, is becoming a major source of revenue.

TVOntario broadcasts over nine transmitters located in the province, and its signal is also carried by 111 cable companies. Recently, its service was extended to 42 remote communities by satellite.