

# News of the arts

## Bicentennial gift first to win top international book prize

*Between Friends/Entre Amis*, Canada's bicentennial gift to the United States, has won top honours at the International Book Exhibition hosted by the German Democratic Republic in Leipzig. The competition, which was inaugurated this year, will not be held again until 1983.

The award, a gold medal given "in honour of extraordinary achievement in the art of book-creating", was presented by Norbert Reemer of the Embassy of the German Democratic Republic in Washington, at the National Film Board Photo Gallery in Ottawa on November 9. Present were: André Lamy, Government Film Commissioner, who is chairman of the NFB; Robert Monteith, director of Ottawa Services, and Lorraine Monk, the executive producer of NFB's Still Photography Division, who is the art director and editor of the award-winning book.

The gold medal is the crowning achievement for the book that has reaped recognition since its release in May last year. Within three days, it had joined the best-seller lists, where it remained for

## Canadian artist dies

Well-known Canadian artist, William Kurelek, died of cancer on November 3 at the age of 50. Born in Whitford, Alberta during the depression, Kurelek was a painter with little formal training whose simple portrayals of farm life and series of narrative scenes recalling his arduous summers in lumber camps illustrate his desire to be thought of as a people's painter.

The artist, who cherished the camaraderie of camp life, often suffered long periods of depression and isolation — evident in paintings entitled *The Maze*, *I Spit on Life*, and *Help Me Please Help Me*. After seeking psychiatric help and converting to Catholicism, Kurelek turned his attention to religious paintings and moral narratives. In 1964 he completed an illustration of the Passion of Christ on 160 panels.

Kurelek staged many one-man exhibitions and was the author of ten books, including the immensely popular *A Prairie Boy's Winter*.

over 40 weeks. It won an award of excellence from the *Communication Arts Magazine* and took the "Best of Show" at the International Gallery of Superb Printing competition in 1976. Design Canada gave the publication its "Look of Books" prize and the American Institute of Graphic Arts awarded *Between Friends/Entre Amis* nine certificates of excellence, one in each category of competition.

The book is published and distributed in Canada by McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, and distributed in the United States by the J.B. Lippincott Company of Philadelphia. It was printed by Ashton-Potter Limited, Toronto with colour separations by Herzig Sommerville Limited and Graphic Litho-Plate Limited.

## Pantomime a Christmas favourite

Traditional British pantomime, at the O'Keefe Centre from December 7 to 18, will feature Lionel Blair, as Dick Whittington in the famous tale of the orphan boy who becomes Lord Mayor of London.

In pantomime, a combination of revue, extravaganza and fairy-tale fantasy, the performers not only talk, but sing, dance, juggle and engage in all types of jokes and gags.

Audiences will be invited to cheer the hero, hiss at the villain (played by Leon Green), and respond to the antics of the Lionel Blair Dancers, the Gladys Forrester Babes, the many comedians, and Dick's faithful companion, his cat.

## Ottawa's first dance company

A grant of \$32,000 has been made to Le Groupe de la Place Royale to help establish it as Ottawa's first resident professional dance company. Founded in Montreal in 1966, the company comprises seven dancers who also teach, do their own choreography and design their sets and costumes. The grant, provided under the Grants for Performing Arts program of the Department of the Secretary of State, matches another \$32,000 put up by the Ontario government and private sources. The \$64,000 will be used to convert two floors of an Ottawa building into dance studios.



Manitoba Party (above) was painted by William Kurelek in 1964.