

# News of the arts

## War of 1812 — rare collection at ROM

A unique exhibition opened at the Canadiana Galleries of the Royal Ontario Museum in September, comprising paintings, drawings, aquatints, lithographs, engravings and etchings, based on eye-witness sketches done by officers and men of both sides in the War of 1812.

The show, which will close on December 4, also includes an extraordinary copy of the Declaration of War made by the British in response to the American Declaration of War, a hand-written letter by, and miniature painting of General Brock, military memorabilia and contemporary military maps showing the disposition of troops. The pictures belong to the permanent collection of the Canadiana Galleries of the Royal Ontario Museum.

How did young Canada, with its half million people strung out sparsely along the border from the Maritimes to Lake Superior, become the battleground of an international war?

The Americans knew that the British were building ships along the east coast of Canada and along the lakes. In fact, the biggest ship was located on the waterfront of Toronto, then York. It was a natural target for the Americans who hoped, in capturing York, to cripple British ship-building in Canada and to establish themselves in a British colony.



The Americans did in fact take York, though with considerable bloodshed. Then, unaccountably, they sailed away, leaving the Parliament Buildings in flames.

For the artist, the war presented many romantic and violent vistas: magnificent sailing ships locked in mortal combat, large and small military encounters (often with the gentry watching from a convenient vantage point, complete with opera glasses, benches and refreshments),

and scenes of the bloody hand-to-hand combat.

One of the greatest heroes of the war was the Indian Shawnee chief, Tecumseh, who conceived of a great Indian confederacy to stem the tide of American settlement in the West. The exhibition of paintings and etchings includes some splendid evocations of Tecumseh and his band standing ground even after the British had given way in retreat.

## Yorkton film awards

Canada's first international film festival, which originated in Yorkton, Saskatchewan 27 years ago, held its fourteenth biennial competition recently, bestowing seven top awards to the National Film Board, including the Golden Sheaf for best film in all classes.

The Golden Sheaf was awarded to directors Torben Schioler and Tony Ianzelo for *High Grass Circus*. The NFB documentary *Los Canadienses* by Albert Kish was named the best documentary. *Mindscape* by Jacques Drouin was the winner in the animation category.

More than 200 documentary films from many countries were entered at Yorkton and the finalists were chosen by a pre-selection committee. The winners were chosen by a panel of three judges — André Melançon of Montreal, Don Owen of Toronto, and *Toronto Sun* film

critic George Anthony.

The NFB also garnered two double winners. *I'll Go Again*, directed and edited by Paul Cowan, placed first in the sports and recreation category and also won for best film editing. The film *Blackwood* by Andy Thomson and Tony Ianzelo was first in the arts class and also won the best sound-editing honours for John Knight.

## Arts briefs

Stratford's annual Tyrone Guthrie Awards have been presented this year to Peter Donaldson, Alicia Jeffery, William Merton Malmo, Jack Wetherall, John White, Joy Allan, Ruth Hossie, Melba Bingeman, Janice Norman, Clayton Shields and Michael Wood. The Jean A. Chalmers Apprentice Award was shared

by actors Christopher Blake and Stewart Arnott. John Pennoyer, a designer-in-training, received the Tom Patterson Award (in honour of the founder of the festival) and Bryan Grimes, of the publicity department, accepted the Artistic Director's Award, established by Robin Phillips.

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, who celebrate their twentieth anniversary this year, will be performing the world premiere of Fernand Nault's new ballet, *La Scouine*, on their November tour of New York, Montreal, Ottawa and Kingston. Based on the novel *La Scouine*, by Albert Laberge, the ballet tells the story of a mid-nineteenth century farmer's daughter living in a small village in Quebec.

Ann Ditchburn, dancer and choreographer with the National Ballet, has been chosen to star opposite actor Paul Sorvino in *Slow Dancing in the Big City*. The film will be shot on location in New York.