

News of the arts

NFB still attracting awards

The Chicago International Film Festival has honoured four National Film Board productions with top awards in various documentary categories.

A Silver Hugo award went to *Rose's House*, a feature documentary by Clay Boris about a rooming house in Toronto. Another Hugo was given to Ishu Patel's, *Afterlife* for best animation.

Silver Plaques in the short films category were awarded to *L'Affaire Bronswik* by Robert Awad and André Leduc, and *I Wasn't Scared* by Giles Walker. The latter film, which deals with the dangers of explosives to children, won in the educational category.

At other recent festivals, the Oscar-winner *Sand Castle* won first prizes at Linz, Austria and at Adelaide, Australia. *L'Affaire Bronswik* was given a special prize at Linz for the most humorous film.

The Mannheim Festival in Germany gave top place to Mike Rubbo's *Where Have All the Maoists Gone* in the international evangelical film awards.

Opera proves popular

The Canadian Opera Company's 1978 autumn season at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre drew record-breaking audiences to the 26 opera performances, September 13 to November 4, and netted the company more than \$1 million in sales revenues, a net increase of 12 per cent over the previous year's \$898,810.

General director Lotfi Mansouri recently presented a complete breakdown of attendance figures for the season as well. The six performances of Tchaikovsky's *Joan of Arc (Maid of Orleans)* drew 79 per cent total capacity houses, and *Rigoletto* was presented seven times with an average attendance of 90 per cent, including two sellout performances. The six performances of *Der Rosenkavalier* averaged 96 per cent with four performances exceeding the 100 percent figure with standing room only. *Don Giovanni*, presented seven times, averaged 87 per cent attendance, including two sellouts. The average attendance for the 26 fall season performances was 88 per cent, an increase of 5 per cent from last year's average of 82.3 per cent for 25 performances.

Sales of subscriptions increased 19 per cent last year — 12,150 subscriptions worth \$607,450 were sold, compared to 10,253 in 1977.

The company is now preparing for its spring season at the Royal Alexandra Theatre. Mail order requests are expected after January 15, and box office sales can be made after March 15.

"With the success of our 1978 fall season behind us, we anticipate an exciting and equally popular 1979 spring season at the Royal Alexandra," said Mr. Mansouri.

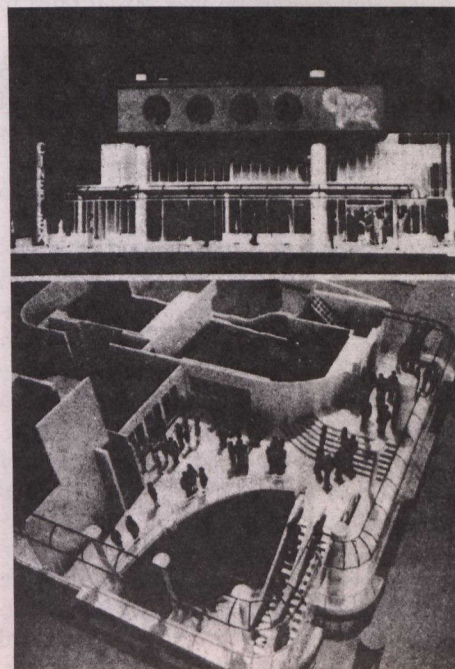
Feast for film fans

This spring, Toronto's Eaton Centre will open an extravagant complex of 18 movie houses, each seating from 50 to 120 persons, a 300-seat restaurant theatre called Le Cabaret, and a "common room" whose walls will be used as gallery space.

Cineplex, as it will be called, will offer many programs not available elsewhere in Toronto, including foreign films, "ethnic" pictures (chosen for their appeal to the many cultures represented in the city), U.S. films with limited distribution, and retrospectives.

A slide show on an outdoor marquee will advertise the features inside, and a computerized machine will issue tickets for the films ahead of time, eliminating long lineups.

President of the complex, N.A. Taylor, and his associates H.S. Mandell and Garth



H. Drabinsky (producer of *The Silent Partner*), say the enterprise is unique; in fact, Taylor makes another claim: "Moviegoers in recent years have become accustomed to multiple cinemas," he says. "My associates and I opened the first dual theatre in the world, the Elgin in Ottawa, in 1948; it took almost 20 years for the motion picture world to get wise to this."

Arts briefs

The Manitoba Theatre Centre recently commissioned and produced a new Canadian translation (by John Lingard) of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll House*, in preparation of the hundredth anniversary of the first production of the play (at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen in 1879). This year is also the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the playwright's birth. Mr. Lingard translated the Stratford production of *Ghosts* two years ago, which was directed by Arif Hasnain, artistic director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre.

Lois Etherington Betteridge, an Ottawa silversmith, has been awarded the 1978 Saidye Bronfman Award for excellence in the crafts. The \$15,000-prize, set up in 1977 in honour of Mrs. Bronfman's eightieth birthday, will be given for ten years.

A Canadian Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, fashioned after the American body which oversees the Oscars, has been organized in Toronto. The board of directors includes director Alan King, actor Al Waxman, producer Henk Van der Kolk, John Hunter, Karen Bromley, Richard Leiterman, George Appleby, Paul Hoffert and Paul Coombe. A working committee is studying the possibility of a permanent academy. There had been disappointment with the present system of organizing the awards (called Etrogs), leading to the withdrawal from the Canadian Film Awards by the Canadian Association of Motion Picture Producers (CAMPP). The new system, if accepted, will allow technical personnel to nominate films for awards in specific areas — directors would name directors, for example. The awards would be based on votes from the general academy membership.

An exhibition of 94 black and white photographs by photographers living in Canada was shown recently at Canada House in London, England. *Canadians, a photography show about people* will soon tour Canada for two years.