

News of the arts

Stratford festival sponsors refugees

Stratford Festival employees have established a co-operative organization to sponsor Southeast Asian refugees.

Funds for the project will come from pledges and from a benefit performance of *Love's Labour Lost* on September 14, in the Festival Theatre. A committee is being formed to co-operate with government agencies and local authorities involved in settling Asian families in Canada.

National Ballet receives warm welcome at Covent Garden

Ten curtain calls and a special round of applause from Princess Margaret greeted the National Ballet of Canada recently, when it opened a one-week season at Covent Garden in London. It was the first time a Canadian company had been invited to perform at the Royal Opera House in London.

The company performed Erik Bruhn's

choreographed by Ann Ditchburn.

Secretary of State for External Affairs Flora MacDonald stopped over in London after the close of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Lusaka, Africa to attend the National Ballet's final performance on August 11. It was her first visit to the United Kingdom as Secretary of State for External Affairs. Miss MacDonald saw a performance of *Mad Shadows*, which had its première at Covent Garden on August 7.

Following the closing performance, the External Affairs minister met the dancers and staff of the company at a special reception sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada and hosted by Mr. Martin and the Agents General of Canadian provinces represented in London. The National Ballet's Covent Garden season has received assistance from the Department of External Affairs and Canada House in London.

The National Ballet of Canada returned to North America to open the season for Artpack, a summer festival in Lewiston, New York. The company's program opened August 21 with *Giselle*, a romantic ballet, featuring Veronica Tennant in the title role and Frank Augustyn as Albrecht.

An evening of one-act ballets will be presented: the famous Fokine classic, *Les Sylphides*, staged by Celia Franca and Erik Bruhn; James Kudeld's Victorian drama, *Washington Square*, and Kenneth MacMillan's ragtime ballet, *Elite Syncopations*, set to the music of Scott Joplin and others. Three performances of *Coppelia*, choreographed by Erik Bruhn complete the six-day program on August 25.

Toronto producers land major novel for film

Two Toronto producers have bought the movie rights to one of the most popular novels on the bookstands — *The Matarese Circle* by Robert Ludlum.

After 17 weeks on one North American best-seller list — the last 15 as number one — Mr. Ludlum's espionage thriller has been sold to Mediavision Inc. of Toronto for \$650,000 plus a percentage of revenue, beating out production firms such as Warner Bros. and EMI.

The sale was made to Mediavision president Mark Frostad, and vice-president Mike Miville, who had never negotiated a feature film sale before.

Mr. Ludlum's book is about the top two agents in the Central Intelligence Agency and the Soviet Union's KGB who team up to shatter a sinister Corsican group known as the Matarese Circle.

It has sold more than 500,000 copies in hardcover, and goes into an initial paperback printing of two million in January.

Since the novel was purchased, the producers have signed Canadian director Bob Clark (director of *Black Christmas* and *Murder by Decree*) and American scriptwriter Darryl Ponicsan, who wrote *The Last Detail* and the film version of *Cinderella Liberty*.

The producers said they are prepared to spend an additional \$10 million to \$12 million on production costs.

All interior scenes for the film will be shot in Toronto. The rest will be filmed in the locations in the novel — sites extending from Massachusetts to Rome.

Mediavision, one of the largest independent television producers in Canada and known primarily for syndicated documentaries, recently decided to branch into feature film production.



Princess Margaret and Paul Martin, Canadian High Commissioner in London at the royal gala.

version of *Swan Lake* in front of a sell-out audience at the royal gala, August 6. Karen Kain and Frank Augustyn danced the principal roles.

"This is the greatest single cultural event from Canada in the five years I've been here," said Canadian High Commissioner Paul Martin, who shared the royal box with Princess Margaret opening night. The princess later sent a message to the company saying she "thought the performance quite splendid and thoroughly enjoyed it". She also wished the company a "happy and successful week in London".

The royal gala performance, sponsored by Northern Telecom, raised more than \$10,000 for the Royal Opera House Development Appeal.

During their week-long season the National Ballet also performed Sir Frederick Ashton's *La fille mal gardée* and three one-act ballets comprising the classic *Bayaderka*, Gerald Arpino's lively *Kettentanz* and *Mad Shadows*, a Canadian work composed by André Gagnon and

France/Canada film

Phantastica, a movie musical starring Quebec actress Carole Laure and French singer Serge Reggiani, began filming in mid-July in Shawinigan, 120 kilometres northeast of Montreal. The movie will be a \$2.5-million, France-Canada co-production, a spokesman for the Montreal film production company, Les Productions du Verseau, said recently.

Directed by Quebec's Gilles Carles, with music and lyrics by Lewis Furey, the musical will deal with the adventures of a group of travelling actors and musicians.