

# News of the arts

## Canada Council book program

The Canada Council will distribute 85,000 books by Canadian authors to school libraries in remote areas, hospitals, cultural centres, prisons and other institutions that could not otherwise afford them.

Kits of books will be distributed free and it is a condition of the program that the books be made available to readers in the community. Some kits will be distributed to universities and cultural centres in other countries by the Department of External Affairs.

This year, applicants may choose from three types of book kits in either French or English: children's literature; fiction, poetry and drama; and non-fiction.

Since the book donation program started in 1972, more than 3,800 Canadian book kits have been distributed. The cost of this year's purchase exceeds \$600,000. Two selection committees, composed of booksellers, literary critics, librarians and writers, chose books from the catalogues of 103 English-language and 51 French-language publishers.

## Montreal playwright lauded

Montreal playwright David Fennario has won the first prize in the 1979 Chalmers Canadian Play Awards. He received the \$5,000 award for *Balconville*, his bilingual portrait of tenement life, which was produced in Toronto last fall by the Centaur Theatre.

Inaugurated in 1972, the Chalmers Awards are given annually to "Canadian playwrights for outstanding plays produced in the Toronto reviewing area". The Toronto Drama Bench, an organization of local theatre critics, acts as the jury and this year made its selections from 33 plays. Also honoured, and awarded \$750 each, were John Murrell for *Waiting for the Parade*, Antonine Maillet for *La Sagouine*, John Gray for *Billy Bishop Goes to War* and David French for *Jitters*.

Gratien Gelinas, former head of the Canadian Film Development Corporation, whose theatre career has spanned four decades of contribution as a playwright, a director and an actor, was presented with the Drama Bench's special award "for distinguished contribution to Canadian theatre".

## Documentary film on Chinese commune



James B. De Domville, chairman of the National Film Board (second from left) presents the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Wang Tung (centre) with a copy of the NFB's new film entitled *North China Commune*. Boyce Richardson (right) and Tony Ianzelo (second from right) co-producers of the film look on along with Kenneth Williamson (left) director-general, bureau of information, Department of External Affairs. A Canadian film crew spent a month on the agricultural commune of Wuxing, 240 kilometres south of Peking, filming the residents' way of life. The print of the film will be sent to the Peoples' Republic of China for public showing and an additional print will be on deposit at the Canadian Embassy in Peking for borrowing by Chinese educational institutions and community groups.

## Craftsmen exhibit in Paris

*Métiers d'Art/3*, a collection of the works of ten Canadian craftsmen, recently ended a three-month showing at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris.

The three-month exhibition of over 125 works is the third in a series organized by the Department of External Affairs over the past ten years to give Canadian craftsmen international exposure. *Métiers d'Art/1* and *Métiers d'Art/2*, assembled in 1969 and 1976 respectively, were exhibited extensively throughout Europe. *Métiers d'Art/3*, seen by over 5,100 people at the Canadian Cultural Centre, was well received by the French critics.

The ten artists were: Lois Etherington Betteridge, goldsmith and silversmith from Ottawa; Roger Bujold, sculptor from Saint-Quentin, New Brunswick; Léo Gervais, sculptor from Laval, Quebec; Harlan House, ceramist from Marysville, Ontario; Marcel Marois, tapestry-designer

from Quebec City; Pierre Ouvrard, book-binder from Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix, Quebec; Setsuko Piroche, fibre sculptor from British Columbia; Jack Sures, ceramist from Regina, Saskatchewan; Ione Thorkelsson, glass-blower from Carman, Manitoba; and Paul Williams, leather sculptor from Bethany, Ontario.

None of the artists had ever shown in Europe before; they were chosen for the simple quality of their work, their love of creating, of their tools, and the materials they use, and for their creative power, intellect and sense of humour.

As a result of their showing at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, three have been invited to exhibit their work in French galleries.

*Métiers d'Art/3* was exhibited at the Palais du Rhin in Strasbourg and is scheduled to be exhibited in England at the Gates Head Gallery near London from January 19 to March 9, and at the Canada House Gallery from March 26 to April 23 after which it will travel to Brussels.