

Canada House opens new cultural centre in London



Sidney Harris Limited

Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother (right), presents an autographed photograph to Canadian High Commissioner Jean Casselman Wadds (left), to commemorate the opening of the new cultural centre at Canada House, London.

The Canadian High Commission in London, England recently opened a new cultural centre providing a platform for visiting artists and performers to test their talents in one of the most competitive cultural markets in the world.

One London art critic responded to the opening by suggesting that other countries should also install cultural centres at their embassies and high commission in Britain's capital city.

Canada House, located in Trafalgar Square in the heart of London's West End, has been staging visual and performing art shows for many years. However,

an extensive facelift to the interior of the 160-year-old building has allowed Canada House to include one of the finest cultural centres in the city.

Opened by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, in February, the centre includes two art galleries, an auditorium, and a cinema. The first exhibition at the new centre, *Canadian Art in Britain*, also opened by the Queen Mother, was well received by London critics. It included works from private and public collections in Britain.

The new centre allows the development of a regular and wide-ranging pat-

tern of Canadian cultural activity. In addition to the visual art exhibitions, there are regular concerts, play readings, poetry readings, cinema programs and Canadian study lectures.

With good reception facilities, the centre is being used increasingly by commercial, tourism and other programs in the high commission.

Arts briefs

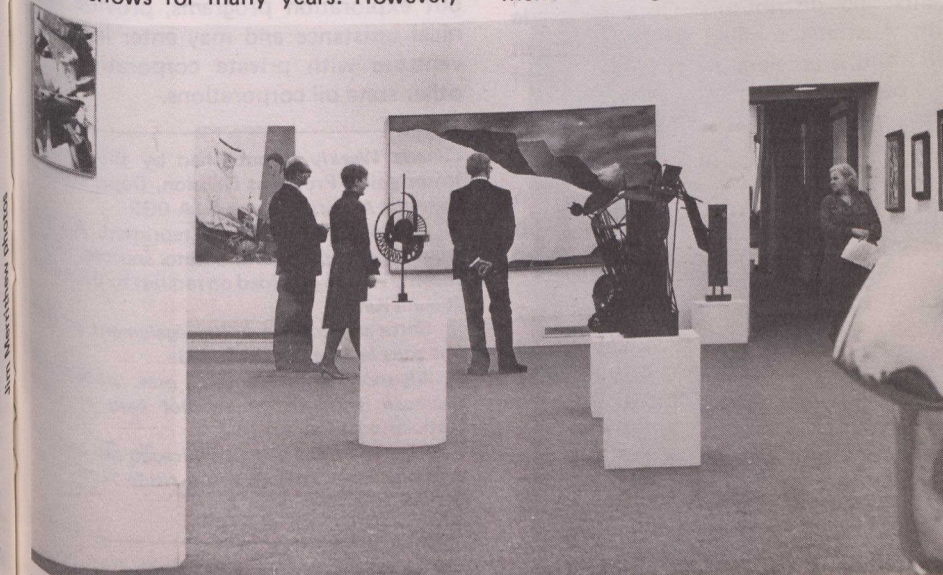
Canadian Images, the country's annual salute to Canadian film, was held recently in Peterborough, Ontario. It is the largest and most comprehensive single screening of Canadian films anywhere and the only festival which attempts to provide a total view of film-making in Canada. *Images '82* featured 250 Canadian feature-length, short, animated, documentary and experimental films from across the country which covered a broad range and reflected Canadian culture and society.

The Sweater, a National Film Board production directed by Sheldon Cohen and produced by Marrin Canell and David Verrall, won first prize for animation recently at the British Academy Awards in London, England. The ten-minute film, based on a short story by Roch Carrier of Quebec, recalls Carrier's boyhood in rural Quebec in the late 1940s, his passion for hockey and idolization of Montreal Canadiens' Maurice (Rocket) Richard. Carrier narrates both the English and French versions of the film, which have been released as shorts in Canadian theatres.

Arnold Spohr, the artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet for the past 34 years, has become the first Canadian to receive a *Dance Magazine* award at the annual presentation in New York. *Dance Magazine*, the largest and most widely distributed dance magazine, has presented four achievement awards annually for the past 27 years.

Joy Kogawa of Toronto, Ontario won the Books in Canada First Novel Award over four other finalists, for the best English-language first novel published in 1981. She received \$1 000 for *Obasan*, a sensitive portrayal of the internment of Japanese Canadians in British Columbia during the Second World War.

Author Hugh MacLennan of Montreal received a Toastmasters International award at the twenty-fifth annual Spring Conference of Toastmasters in Ottawa recently. His most recent book is *Voices in Time*.



The new art gallery at Canada House is a prestigious showcase for Canadian culture.