

# News of the arts

## Photography exhibition

In a photography exhibition entitled *Avenir*, at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto artist Gar Smith expresses his concern about "the complexity of Man, his great individual and collective beauty." The exhibition, which comprises over 250 photographs of faces, opened on February 19.



Art Gallery of Ontario

Seeking aspects of culture that seemed doomed to disappear, Smith embarked on a two-year photographic journey, from 1971 to 1973, through Europe, Africa and India. He chose portraiture to document what he describes as a dying way of life. "I think [the photographs] show the truth of the image of the human face," continues Smith "as the most comprehensive and true record of the life experience of that person and his or her immediate social system."

The strength of Smith's work lies in a sentimental, almost romantic light that permeates these slightly larger than life-size images.

His portraits are also unusual technically, in that he shot the images in 16mm ciné-film, instead of a more conventional, larger 35mm still-film format. The main advantage Smith found was that the movie film gives 24 separate frames a second providing in effect a continuous record of the changing expression of the subject, who is able to move freely and naturally. Then, Smith chose a single frame from 100 to 200 frames, which he felt was the most representative and expressive.

Gar Smith, who is 31, was born in Toronto and has been exhibiting in Canada, the United States and France

since the late 1960s. He is a recognized sculptor also and is represented in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Canada Council, the Vancouver Art Gallery and private collections.

*Avenir*, which has been exhibited at Vehicule Art Inc., in Montreal, the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and at the Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris, France, will continue until March 27 at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

## Baritone wins French award

Quebec baritone Bruno Laplante recently received an award from the French record academy for a collection of three records featuring French music.

The award, *Le Grand Prix du Disque* 1977, melody section, was initiated in 1931 by Maurice Ravel. President Valery Giscard d'Estaing is honorary president of the academy.

Laplante, accompanied by pianist Louis-Philippe Pelletier, sings works by Reynaldo Hann, Jules Massenet and Charles Gounod on the records.

The Canadian baritone, who was born in St. Hilaire, Quebec, accepted the award at the City Hall in Paris in a ceremony attended by representatives of the French Department of Cultural Affairs.

He plans to record about 20 albums of French classical music.

A reception for the 38-year-old musician at the residence of Gerard Pelletier, Canadian Ambassador to France, followed the ceremony.

## Academy award nominations for Canadian films

Three films by the National Film Board of Canada have received Academy Award nominations: For best achievement in documentary film, in the features category, the production *Volcano: An inquiry into the life and death of Malcolm Lowry*, Donald Brittain and Robert Duncan, producers; in the short-subjects category, *Blackwood*, Tony Ianzelo and Andy Thompson producers; and for best achievement in short film, in the animated category, *The Street*, Caroline Leaf and Guy Glover, producers.

## British trust named after NFB pioneer

A new trust, established in Britain to help finance British short film productions, has been named the Grierson Memorial Trust after the founder of Canada's National Film Board. John Grierson, who was born in Perthshire, Scotland, headed the NFB in Canada from 1939 to 1945.

Speaking at a lunch held in London by Canadian High Commissioner Paul Martin, former British Prime Minister Sir Harold Wilson said that British filmmakers had much to learn from the success of the film board created by Grierson who died in 1972 at the age of 73. He is credited with coining the word "documentary", a medium he developed in Britain and Canada.

Mr. Martin, who knew Grierson well during the war years in Ottawa, said the Canadian Film Board owed much of its international reputation to the work of its founder and first chief executive.



Keystone Press, London.

Canadian High Commissioner Paul Martin welcomes former British Prime Minister Sir Harold Wilson to Canada House, London, England, February 10, when a special lunch was held to honour the late John Grierson, founder of the National Film Board of Canada. More than 130 guests, mostly from the film world and industry, attended the lunch which was part of a full day's program of activities, organized by the newly-formed Grierson Memorial Trust.