

New theatre company to emphasize Canadian plays

By Robert Crew Toronto Star

The new Canadian Stage Company will "put Canadian work at the centre of its repertoire," co-artistic director Guy Sprung says.

"The thrust of the new company," he told a news conference at City Hall yesterday, "is first and foremost to develop, support, produce, promote and market the work of Canadian playwrights to as broad and as large an audience as possible, on a scale that has not been seen in this city before."

Formed by a merger of Centre-Stage and Toronto Free theatres, Canadian Stage will have "the financial capability and creative strengths and the dedication to give Canadian plays and artists the stature they deserve."

The inaugural 1988-89 season will contain seven Canadian works, four of them world premieres. Two of the classical plays will have new translations by Canadian writers, said producing artistic director Bill Glasco.

The new plays include works by

David French, Joanna Glass and Susan Cox. Among the actors announced are Patricia Hamilton and top Canadian farceur Heath Lambert. Directors include the controversial Derek Goldby and John Hirsch, former artistic director of the Stratford Festival.

The new company will have an annual operating budget of almost \$6 million. Both CentreStage and Toronto Free have been losing subscribers the past few seasons and now have a combined total of 15,000.

The new company had an accumulated deficit of \$1.25 million as of June 30 last year, general manager Edgar Dobie told The Star. But it also has a \$1.3 million endowment fund.

The company will have four stages: the rented St. Lawrence Centre's Bluma Appel Theatre, the renamed Free Theatre Upstairs and the Free Theatre Downstairs at 26 Berkeley St., and the High Park site, where Willy Russell's musical *Blood Brothers* will be staged this summer.

Lily Munro, Ontario's culture and communications minister, appeared to endorse the company's proposal for a fifth space when she said yesterday that a new, 600-to-800-seat theatre will be built at Berkeley St.

Next season's six productions at the Bluma Appel will be:

□ *1949*, a new play by David French, set in Toronto days before Newfoundland joins Confederation. It is a large-scale comedy with a cast of 14. Starring Hamilton and directed by Glasco, it

opens Oct. 20.

□ Moliere's *The Bourgeois Gentleman*, starring Lamberts, with a new translation by Canadian Maureen LaBonte. Originally created in 1987 at Quebec's Theatre de Trident, the show features 14 dancers from Dance Partout. It opens Nov. 24.

□ *Yesteryear*, by Glass. The world premiere, set in a Saskatchewan town, will be directed

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La nuit belongs to Un Zoo

Montreal movie chalks up a record 13 Genie awards

By Peter Goddard Toronto Star

It was just like a hockey game — Montreal thumped Toronto last night at the ninth annual Genie Awards.

Un Zoo La Nuit, the savage and sentimental story of Montreal's underworld, grabbed 13 of 14 possible record-setting awards — including best picture of the year.

It was an unprecedented sweep, topping the tallies of eight awards each which went to past winners in Genie's eight-year history: *The Decline Of The American Empire*, *Les Bons Debarras* and *The Changing*.

Named best director, Jean-Claude Lauzon's success with *Un Zoo* completely overshadowed *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing*, the sunnily lyrical movie set in Toronto.

Besides Lauzon winning the best director category, *Un Zoo's* Roger le Bel won as best actor, Jean Corriveau won for best musical score and Jean Baptiste Tard won for best art direction.

Appropriately, the men won for the decidedly masculine Montreal movie while women were named for the feminist *Mermaids*.

Sheila McCarthy, the quirkily perky star of *Mermaids*, was named as best actress and Paule Baillargeon, McCarthy's nemesis, was named as best supporting actress.

None of the other "best picture" entries — William MacGillivray's *Life Classes*, Atom Egoyan's *Family Viewing* or John N. Smith's *Train Of Dreams* rated a mention, although all were talked about in the bevy of pre-Genie parties held all over town the past few days.

Besides any lack of drama because of *Un Zoo's* dominance, the

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Genie winners

The following is a list of last night's 1988 Genie Award winners:

Best Picture: *Un Zoo La Nuit* (Night Zoo)
Best Director: Jean-Claude Lauzon
Best Actor: Roger le Bel, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Actress: Sheila McCarthy, *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing*
Best Supporting Actor: Germain Houde, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Supporting Actress: Paule Baillargeon, *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing*
Best Director: Jean-Claude Lauzon, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Screenplay: Jean-Claude Lauzon, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Cinematography: Guy Dufaux, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Art Direction: Jean-Baptiste Tard, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Costume Design: Andree Morin, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Film Editing: Michel Arcand, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Music Score: Jean Corriveau, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Original Song: Robert Stanley, Jean Corriveau, Daniel de Shalmes, Jean-Pierre Bonin, "Lost In A Hurricane" from *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Documentary: *God Rides A Harley*, Andreas Enfi, Stavros C. Stavrides
Best Short Film: *George And Rosemary*, David Fine, Alison Snowden
Best Sound Editing: Marcel Pothier, Diane Boucher, Viateur Paiement, *Un Zoo La Nuit*
Best Overall Sound: Yvon Benoit, Hans-Peter Strobl, Adrian Croll, *Un Zoo La Nuit*



RICK EGLINTON/TORONTO STAR

Runaway winner: Montreal director Jean-Claude Lauzon last night had 13 reasons to laugh when *Un Zoo La Nuit* swept the Genie Awards. He thanked the people of Toronto for its success.



RICK EGLINTON/TORONTO STAR

And baby makes two: New mother Sheila McCarthy picked up a Genie as best actress for *Mermaids*, plus a baby Genie for her daughter, Mackenzie Grace, born just one week ago.

'Poor' Telefilm can still party

CAMP GENIE — Day two of party hearty.

All the glad rags were out in force for Telefilm's cocktail party yesterday at Stop 33 in Sutton Place Hotel. How was it that most of the party people looked none the worse for wear from Monday night's revelry? It must be done with mirrors.

The nibbles were fine — finger-lickin'-good finger food like smoked salmon, satayed chicken and beef — all washed down with champagne. There was some grumbling that the quantity was down from last year, but Telefilm hasn't exactly had the best year of its life financially.

The female contingent of the Pinent clan — daughter Leah and mom Charmion King — chatted with Barbara Hamilton and Murray Westgate. Dad Gordon was rehearsing for his role as genial Genies co-host.

Hamilton wore an eye-popping gold coat of many metallics, Leah a strapless lacy French frock of pewter gray set off by dangling rhinestone earrings.

"It's supposedly an original," she



RITA ZEKAS
Star gazing

laughed. "I'll tell you if I see someone else in it."

The fair Leah is just back from three months in South Africa, where she shot the movie *Kid McCoy*. "He was a boxer — that's where the term the real McCoy comes from. I play the love interest, a ballerina."

Broadcaster Ann Medina was a standout in a silver lame suit but there was no question that The Most Photogenic Award went to Donald Sutherland, who refused to discuss the contentious *Bethune* movie.

That dashing couple standing away from the noise and congestion was *Un Zoo La Nuit's* producer, Roger Frappier, with his gorgeous wife of 12 years, Micheline Pelletier.

"Yes," Frappier conceded, "it

probably would be a *Zoo* night. But I think we'll have a lot of surprises."

The only surprise was that *Un Zoo* didn't pick up all 14 awards it was nominated for. There are going to be lots of statues on the Turbo to Montreal tomorrow.

The elusive Jean-Claude Lauzon, who picked up two Genies for best direction and screenplay, was downright effusive backstage at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. He was even funny.

"I want to thank the people from Toronto and English Canada. Lots of people in Quebec said 'Don't go to Toronto, they'll tear you apart.' People thought we'd have a strong backlash because of what happened last year (*The Decline Of The American Empire* cleaning up at the Genies)."

He picked up a tape recorder in front of him, put it to his ear and cracked, "Hey, who likes reggae."

He's not working on another movie, just shooting commercials. "I don't have a reason to make a film. I had a reason to make *Un Zoo*, it was personal."

How personal? "Wanna see my

scar? he asked, joking. Every woman in the room did.

New mother Sheila McCarthy picked up a Genie as best actress for *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing*, plus a baby Genie for her daughter, Mackenzie Grace, born just one week ago.

"They were planning to bring the cameras to Stratford (where she lives). I was worried because when they did that for Judy Garland she lost to Grace Kelly."

Director Norman Jewison, acknowledging his special achievement award, fielded questions about the Americanization of Canadian movies.

"A stage is a stage," he said. "Film takes you into a world of fantasy — they have had Mounties riding down Hollywood Blvd. When we were shooting *Moonstruck* in New York City, we rented a bakery. Cher was behind the counter, the cameras were rolling, and a man walked in demanding his two usual loaves of bread. I said, 'Hey, we're shooting a movie here.' He said, 'I don't care. I want my two loaves of bread.'"

"We made \$8.50."

Delay of bill angers artists

Canadian artists from different disciplines are angry that the Senate has delayed passage of Bill C-60, the new Copyright Act. At a news conference yesterday, singer/songwriters Dan Hill, Tom Cochrane and Alfie Zappacosta joined artists Joyce Wieland and Charles Pachter, novelists Heather Robertson and M. T. Kelly and others to protest changes to the legislation recommended by a Senate committee.

"With this bill we'll merely be getting paid for what we create," Kelly said. The bill, which amends the 64-year old Copyright Act, would extend copyright protection to computer software and strengthen the control artists have over the use of their work. It would also create a Copyright Board to oversee fee collection and introduce a system in which all artists would be able to negotiate licenses with users.

Joni Mitchell fields the silliest questions with humor

Joni Mitchell held court and sparked the fancy of media onlookers yesterday at a rambling, hour-long press conference in the Hot Stove Club at Maple Leaf Gardens.

In town to promote her 15th album, *Chalk Mark In A Rain Storm*, Mitchell wore a black hat and long gold earrings and smoked cigarettes.

Famous for her disdain of dumb questions about her life and music, the 44-year-old songwriter seemed in a more forgiving mood, fielding even the silliest inquiries with grace and good humor.

One reporter suggested that *Chalk Mark* — an album that includes performances by an all-star cast including Billy Idol, Tom Petty, Peter Gabriel, Willie Nelson and Don Henley — was a thematic rant against the upwardly mobile:



CRAIG MACINNIS
Pop

"You seem to be down on yuppies." "That's your interpretation," Mitchell responded. "I think if you look at (the lyrics), it's very neutral reporting. It's not passing judgment..."

Produced by Mitchell and her husband, bassist Larry Klein, *Chalk Mark* was recorded at nine different studios, including Peter Gabriel's Ashcombe House in Bath.

She added that the U.S. bombing mission on Libya was launched from an airstrip just over the next

ridge, a fact which led to the writing of "The Beat Of Black Wings", one of the best of the new songs.

"At night we could see the orange glow from the landing strip," she recalled. "During that period, all of our thinking turned to war..."

This, in turn, led to another glib dig about whether Mitchell felt she was "doing enough" by just being an artist and not lending a hand to more practical causes.

"I work very hard already... this is a full-time job," she asserted with a smile.

Later, someone else wanted to know if she felt any bond with Anne Murray, another Canadian "icon" who has done well away from home.

"I've been pitted together with so many odd bedfellows," Mitchell groaned. From her confessional debut

album in 1968 on through to her jazz-inflected experiments on *The Hissing Of Summer Lawns* and *Hejira* in the mid '70s, Mitchell has been a wordsmith whose words have often been taken the wrong way.

"People don't listen very well, as a rule," she explained. "My songs have a lot of 'He said/She said', and if you miss a 'He said' then you're liable to misunderstand the content..."

Another fellow, overcome with awe, told her she was a "major contributor" to the culture of the second half of the 20th century, or something like that.

"Ohmigawd," she laughed, lighting a cigarette and doing her diplomatic best to deflect the ridiculous glow of admiration that radiated toward her.

The best moments were quick

shots, short reminiscences of her early days as a young Toronto singer, just blown in from her home on the Prairies and soon headed for fame and fortune in the States.

"It was tough getting started here," she said of Toronto. "I didn't have enough money to get in the musicians' union. There was one scab club that I played on Avenue Rd."

On the drug culture: "Crosby, Stills and Nash were going to call their first album *The Frozen Noses*. I didn't know what that meant!"

On songwriting: "I still start pretty much the same way. I sit down with a guitar and then I flesh it out on the keyboard."

On regrets: "I don't think I'll be remembered from the best of my material." ("Raised On Robbery" and "Big Yellow Taxi," she feels, aren't two of her better songs).



Joni Mitchell: In town to promote her 15th album, *Chalk Mark In A Rain Storm*.

Watching Television/B3

Making dance again/B4

Kathleen Battle recital/B4