

The savage side of life

Ironically, one of the main themes in Marianne Wiggins' new novel, *John Dollar*, is that violence lurks beneath civilization's thin veneer.

Just before she was to set out on a publicity tour to promote her book, that thin veneer cracked. Wiggins and her husband went into hiding.

Her husband is Salman Rushdie, whose novel, *The Satanic Verses*, has sparked riots in several Islamic countries and death threats against the author. Last month, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini put a \$6-million bounty on Rushdie's head and urged Muslims to kill the "blasphemer."

When Wiggins wrote *John Dollar*, a novel about the dark, savage side of human beings, she was living peacefully in London with her husband.

In an interview with *The New York Times Book Review* before the ayatollah ordered her husband's execution, she explained she got the idea for *John Dollar* while re-reading William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, which revolves around the beastly behavior of boys marooned on an island. Her novel, set in 1918, is about girls marooned on the Andaman Islands, off the coast of Burma.

A *Times* reviewer called it one of the most disturbing novels he'd read in years.

Wiggins - or Rushdie - could now write a much more disturbing tale without having to resort to fiction.

The 10th annual Genie Awards, honoring excellence in Canadian filmmaking, will be televised live by CBC-TV on March 22.

Acton/comedian Dave Thomas is the host.

The contenders for best motion picture of the year include: *Dead Ringers*, *Les Portes Tovinantes*, *A Winter Tan*, *A Corps Perdu*, *Comrades Don't Cry* and *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick*.

American children, in growing numbers, are following yet another Canadian-based *Pied Piper*.

A number of Canadian entertainers - from Raffi to Sharon, Lois and Bram - have built large followings among the small fry in North America. Now, Bob Schneider, already well established in Canada (among his awards is a Juno for children's album of the year), is gaining recognition in the US.

Schneider, a 42-year-old New York native who moved to Toronto 10 years ago, has been entertaining children through his recordings and TV and concert appearances.



Entertainment

Bob Spence
Thomson News Service

The singer, who offers original, up-beat, family-oriented folk music, recently returned from a US tour - a string of performances that drew praise from various publications, from newspapers to parent magazines.

"Schneider is more than an award-winning artist," said the *Christian Science Monitor*. "Behind his shows - which lure kids three to 12 years old - lies an implicit message of tolerance and self-confidence that has leaped over ethnic barriers and turned handicapped audiences into eager show-and-sing choruses."

A one-hour special, *Rock Along with Bob Schneider and the Rainbow Kids*, airs May 25 on CHCH-TV in Hamilton, Ont. That production is being offered to TV stations across Canada and in other countries.

"With Bob's higher profile in the US, we hope American stations will be interested in buying it," said Hallary Dworet, Schneider's manager.

From a horse's mouth and Richard Adams' fertile mind comes a novel about the American Civil War.

Traveller (Hutchinson Publishers) is an ironic, revisionist view of the war - as recalled by Gen. Robert E. Lee's horse.

Returning to an animal protagonist for the first time in 10 years, Adams, author of *Watership Down*, has the horse, *Traveller*, deliver a series of monologues to an amicable tomcat. *Traveller* tells of battles, retreats and casualties in this blend of history and fable.

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Entertainment

Male choir performs

The Canadian Male Orpheus Choir, an all-male choir of about 120 voices will be performing in Beth-El Christian Reformed Church, on Highway 7 just east of Acton, on March 25, beginning at 8 p.m. The choir of international quality, will bring along about 80 members to the performance.

The well-known choir has performed domestically and overseas. Established in 1977 the choir has toured to The Royal Albert Hall in London, Hamilton Place on several occasions and recently with the Canadian Armed Forces Band. It recently performed to standing ovations in Roy Thomson Hall.

The choir consists of 25 first tenors, 29 second tenors, 30

baritones and 32 bass voices. Members meet at least twice a week and the choir is comprised mainly of those whose fulltime occupations are outside of music. The choir is their labor of love, donated to non-profit charitable works. Voices which can be heard includes those of doctors, lawyers, steel workers and others.

On March 25, the choir will make available some of their recordings. Choir members, while not regularly mobbed by crowds of adoring fans, may give out autographs to their fans after the performance.

Tickets to hear the choir may be obtained at several locations in the Acton and Georgetown area or by calling 519-853-3090.



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