

Witness series eyes Third World

The second portion of CBC-TV's Witness series is far different from the first - three documentaries that aired earlier this year.

The Witness series looks at recent events in a number of Third World countries. The first three documentaries, by various independent producers, leaned heavily to the left. The current four, all from Stornoway Productions, are much better balanced, concentrating on facts, rather than emotions.

Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, which aired Aug. 21, was a compelling indictment of the Ethiopian government.

The other three documentaries in this second segment air over the next three Tuesdays.

The Shattered Dream, (Aug. 28), looks at Cuba under Castro and at Miami's Cuban community. The producers report cash-starved Cuba has been selling Cubans to their Cuban-American relatives.

Angola, (Sept. 4), offers a behind-the-battlelines' view of the 25-year-old war in Angola, a country in which rival factions have been used like chess pieces by the



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Soviet Union, Cuba, the U.S. and South Africa. Cuba sent 60,000 troops to bolster the Soviet-backed government - a government that will likely fall when the Cubans, under a UN plan, complete their withdrawal.

The fourth documentary, Witnesses: What Happened in Afghanistan (Sept. 11), looks at the long, bloody war between Afghan rebels and the invading Soviets through the eyes of outsiders, including doctors, who went to Afghanistan to help, rather than fight, Afghans.

Among the new series this fall on YTV is The Adventures of the Black Stallion, based on Walter Farley's 1941 best-selling novel about a 15-year-old boy and his Arabian racehorse.

There have been various books, comics and movies since then, all evolving from Farley's heartwarming story.

This TV series is a Canada-France (Alliance Entertainment and Atlantique Productions) co-production.

The first episode airs Sept. 10.

Buena Vista Home Video has released a two-volume video set of highlights of Elvis Presley's career. Elvis: The Great Performances, includes clips from live performances and from movies and TV, as well as his first Hollywood screen test and his first audio recording.

The videos include 27 of what the producers call his greatest hits. It must have been hard to choose - 114 of his songs hit Billboard Magazines Top 10.

John Hillerman, the butler/estate manager on Magnum, P.I., joins the cast of The Hogan Family this fall. He plays Lloyd Hogan, the father of Michael and Sandy.

In Canada, The Hogan Family airs on CTV.

Jean Auel's impatient fans will finally be able to read a new Earth's Children novel in October.

That's when The Plains of Passage, the fourth novel in her highly popular series, will be released by Crown/Bantam. It has been five years since The Mammoth Hunters, the third in the series, was published.

Stratford lineup is impressive

David William, Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival, announced an exceptional 1991 playbill. It will include four of Shakespeare's masterworks, two Canadian plays: one, by a widely respected Canadian playwright, the other, a new work; a new adaption of a wonderful adventure story by Robert Louis Stevenson, a work by France's greatest satirist, the production of an American classic by Thornton Wilder, a play by the great 19th century playwright Henrik Ibsen, a contemporary Italian classic, plus an outstanding Broadway musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

On the world-renowned Festival Theatre stage, the 1991 season will open with Much Ado About Nothing, Shakespeare's comedy featuring Beatrice and Benedick engaged in a battle of wits. This will be joined by Shakespeare's most famous tragedy, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, and Carousel, Rodgers and Hammerstein's romantic musical, based on Ferenc Molnar's fantasy play 'Liliom'. Opening mid-season will be a classic adventure story for the whole family, Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island.

The 1991 season at the Avon Theatre will open with Thornton Wilder's exquisite story of a small

community, Our Town, followed by Twelfth Night, Shakespeare's lyrical comedy of romance and reconciliation, and Michel Tremblay's caustic tale about winning a million trading stamps, Les Belles Soeurs (in English). School Four Wives, by Moliere, a witty satire of a man's absurd plan to prevent his future wife's infidelity, will open mid-season, and later in the season, Henrik Ibsen's timely drama of the consequences - personal as well as social - of industrial pollution in a small resort town, An Enemy of the People, will also be presented.

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