

Arts and Ideas

Alternative schools frowned upon

In our hard and shiny world of artifice, schools play a paramount part. Without our educational work of schools we would lack the know-how to keep our technological civilization going. We rarely think how dependent we have become on centralized sources of energy, for instance, to warm our houses, or on fast communications to make decisions of all sorts, until something goes wrong.

Suddenly we sit in the cold in the middle of winter, and have to guess what might have caused the breakdown. In that situation of utter dependency we realize that most of us could not go on without the support systems of modern life.

From this follows - besides knowledge - unity and co-operation are the needed tools that keep us going.

Right now we are talking about unity a lot, because the dismemberment of Canada has become a grim possibility. I use the word grim here, since it looks as if the separate Canadian entities of the future might not even manage to be friends. We, who are neither of English nor French descent, watch with horror how these cursed two founding nations talk themselves into an ever increasing hostility.

By now Canada is sheltering a bewildering assortment of people from vastly different backgrounds. If we do not want to add to the French-English bickering we must down-play our differences.

Which returns me to schools. In this case, separate schools, or alternative education.

Our government funded unitary school system is of great benefit to all of us. Obviously, in a democracy, there will always be people who want their own private schools, where they can pass on to their children their own beliefs and prejudices.



Ideas and The Arts
by John Sommer

Nobody can, nor should want to do anything about that, as long as they pay for these schools themselves.

However, for the sake of peace, our governments must not, under any circumstances, encourage people in their desire to be apart from the mainstream.

Religions and customs are private matters. In a country like Canada they belong in the home, or church, or temple. They must not be a part of the publicly funded school system. The rule should be: In government-funded schools, even in partially government-funded schools, the majority must have control over what is taught.

I recently had the privilege of again being part of a team that interviewed bright teenagers for awards the Optimist Club of Georgetown is bestowing on deserving young girls and boys during "Youth Appreciation Week."

This year, "Youth Appreciation Week" has been proclaimed by our mayor to be the week from November 25 to November 30, with a dinner taking place at the Optimists Hall on November 26 in the evening, to honor the award winners and their parents.

It was a great joy to talk with the applicants. Most of them were fully informed about the tremendous responsibility they

will have one day to keep this planet healthy and our technological support system functioning. I was also struck by the sense of toleration and curiosity we found in a majority of them.

It is so easy to be intolerant. Just block your mind against diversity. To become tolerant, by comparison, one has to perform a leap of the imagination, one has to take an active Apollonian position against the chaotic forces of darkness. We Optimists have our work cut out for us if we want to preserve Canada as a country where reason has a chance to prevail.

Wildlife art, as every other art, has its hierarchy of stars. In Canada, none are greater than George McLean and Robert Bateman. Even internationally, not many come close to these two.

Carl Brenders comes close, and, maybe, John Seerey-Lester, in his best works.

Art Effects Gallery and Framing Centre here in Georgetown has been selling reproductions of paintings by these and other artists for more than two years. This Saturday, November 23, John Seerey-Lester will be at Art Effects Gallery from 7 to 9:30 p.m. on a promotional tour of a coffee table book of his paintings called "Face to Face with Nature." You will also have a chance to see some of his original paintings, which should be an eye-opener.

An animated Christmas special with the title "The Soulmates," created by Dominic and Gabrielle Vetro, a husband and wife team living in our region, will be shown on CBC Television on Wednesday, November 27, at 7:30 p.m. I was told that it is very good. Put the date down on your calendar.



Judging jewellery

Esther Malone (left) and Margaret Tost (right) judge how each other looks in some of the uniquely designed jewellery up for sale at the Credit Valley Artisans Christmas Sale Saturday at Cedarvale Cot-

tage Ms. Malone and Ms. Tost are both members of CVA but were intrigued by the variety of items for sale including pottery bowls, trinkets and glass plates. (Herald Photo)

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