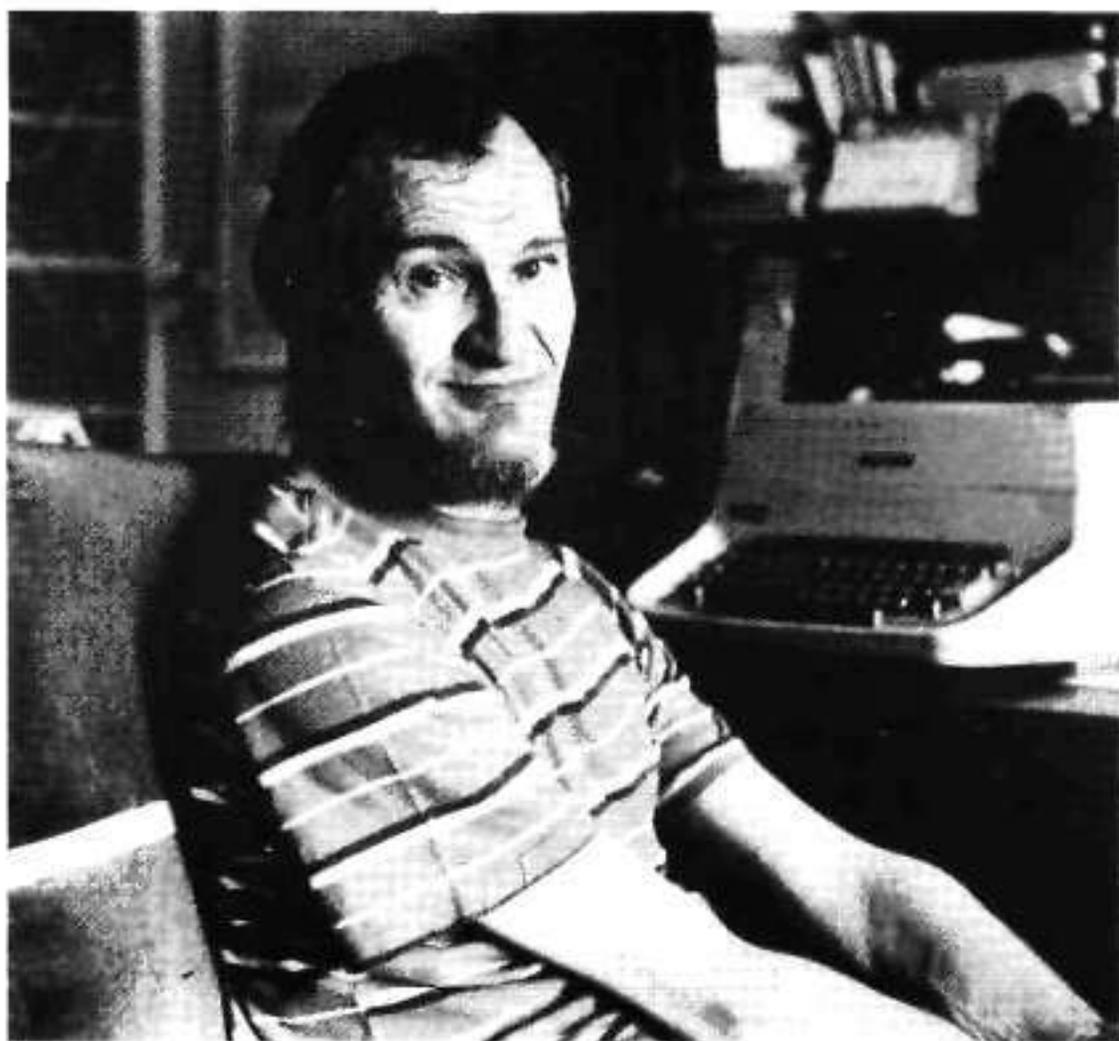


Publication of this February issue of Sash magazine has been delayed due to the last-minute withdrawal of an article entitled FROM SHAKESPEARE HOUSE TO THE LAAGER



Lionel Abrahams

Photo: Ingrid Hudson

THIS ARTICLE by poet and author LIONEL ABRAHAMS tells the story of his association with PEN between its revival in 1978 and dissolution two-and-a-half years later in 1981.

It was the story of the conflict between 'relevance' and ordinary artistic standards in literature, which, together with the demands of black consciousness, made it necessary for relevance to displace the idea of art implicit in the original PEN.

The article would have been of interest to our readers because the pressures which broke PEN revealed the dilemmas of all of us who are caught in a process of polarisation.

At the time of the break-up of PEN, Nadine Gordimer said that the move should not be interpreted as reflecting a desire on the part of the black members to dissociate from whites. It came about rather because this was the 'wrong historical moment for non-racial collaboration.'

The article was withdrawn at the request of the author after Mike Kirkwood (a prominent member of PEN, editor of Staffrider and director of Ravan Press) had strenuously objected to it because, inter alia, he felt it could be misinterpreted. He and the author agreed that it would be better if Mike Kirkwood's viewpoint was published simultaneously; but there was not time for this to be done.

When finally these articles are published elsewhere, they will make riveting reading — especially as they will represent the conflicting viewpoints of two dedicated, historically important and remarkable men.

PEN — Poets, Playrights, Essayists, Novelists — is an international writers' guild with branches in many countries.



Mike Kirkwood Photo: Ingrid Hudson