

Nature paintings by Bateman form travelling exhibit

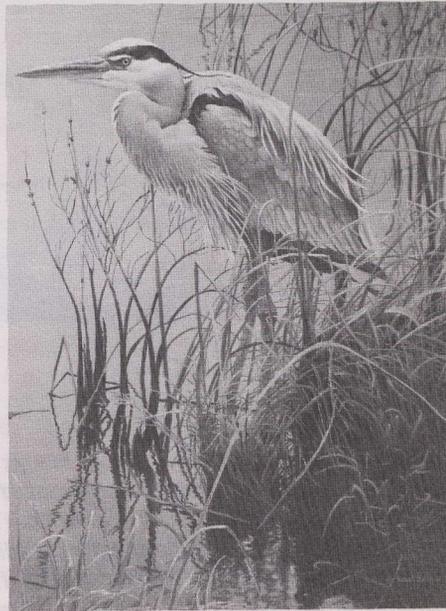
The work of naturalist painter Robert Bateman is the subject of a travelling exhibition mounted by the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa.

Entitled, *Images of the Wild*, the exhibition of 73 paintings is currently being presented at the Vancouver Centennial Museum.

Robert Bateman's designation as Artist of the Year 1980 is only one of the most recent in a long line of awards given to him. He has had one-man shows in London, New York and Toronto. Bateman appeals not only to the broadest range of nature and wildlife lovers, but also to art lovers, for his work invites comparison with the famous realist painters of our era, notably Andrew Wyeth in the United States and Alex Colville and Ken Danby in Canada.

Started career young

Bateman began his career at the age of 12 as a junior naturalist at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. That curiosity about wildlife and its world continues today with his qualifications as a wildlife biologist, zoologist and environmentalist. Bateman's experiences in the field have been varied and many: in his Twenties as a field guide in Algonquin Park in Ontario, researching the bird census; mapping ore in Ungava; travel by land rover in Africa, India, the eastern Himalayas, Thailand, Malaysia and Australia; two years in



A partial view of the Great Blue Heron.

Nigeria teaching geography; study of wildlife in the Galapagos Islands; and exploration in the Florida Everglades. Since 1978, he has been a safari leader in Kenya and has lectured aboard the *MC Lindblad Explorer* on the Antarctic.

The fundamental characteristic of Bateman's painting has been defined by Roger Tory Peterson who has written a book on him called, *The Art of Robert Bateman*. "He establishes a basic feeling of abstraction as he works things out,"



Wily and Wary, a painting of a red fox done by Bateman in 1979.

writes Peterson, "until his finished painting is highly detailed and yet no life is lost in the process, rather he is able to gain life by digging into subtleties...."

Easy-going style

When Robert Bateman paints, the mood is almost festive. As he applies his acrylic paints to canvas, he will usually be found alternately fielding long-distance telephone calls, listening to music or talking to friends and family. Bateman comments: "First I began painting like Van Gogh and Gauguin, then a period of abstract painting followed and while I was never completely satisfied making paintings without recognizable subjects, I did learn a great deal." Bateman made the shift from painting abstract images to realistic ones after he viewed the exhibition of Andrew Wyeth's paintings in 1963. A section of *The Images of the Wild* exhibition focuses on the different stages of Robert Bateman's career as a painter.

The National Film Board of Canada is producing a film on Bateman and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is planning a one-hour documentary on him for national television.

Former prisoner's book to be movie

An autobiographical book written by an ex-convict who spent almost 25 years in Canadian prisons will become the basis for one of Canada's most expensive films.

Roger Caron, an armed robber once known as "Mad Dog" won the Governor-General's literary award in 1979 for the book *Go Boy*, which he finished writing in 1978.

Ralph Ellis, producer of the \$10-million movie, said filming of *Go Boy* will begin in early 1982. Filming sites will be in some of the prisons where Caron served his sentences: in Kingston and Guelph, Ontario; Saint John, New Brunswick and Laval, Quebec.

The English and French-language networks of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation are expected to buy the television rights for the movie, but its target market is the movie theatres of North America, said Ellis.

The English version of *Go Boy* has already sold 300,000 copies in Canada, the United States and Britain. About 13,000 copies of the French translation have been sold. Caron said he has sold the rights to a second book, called *Bingo*, which recounts the 1971 Kingston Penitentiary riot.