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DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL GALLERY TO RETIRE

Dr. Charles F. Comfort, Director of the National Gallery of Canada, is relinquishing his appointment in July, superannuation from the Civil Service of Canada being mandatory at the age of 65.

Dr. Comfort has had a lifetime of association with the arts in Canada. Trained primarily as an artist but also in art history, he has achieved distinction as an eclectic modern painter, an art educator and a consultant in art-gallery and museum problems. Before coming to the National Gallery in 1960, he had been for 22 years on the teaching faculty of the University of Toronto in the department of art and archaeology, first as lecturer, then as assistant professor, and finally as associate professor. In this capacity, he gave courses in the history of the material techniques of painting to both graduate and undergraduate students.

RECORD AT GALLERY

During Dr. Comfort's directorship, which dates from the opening of the National Gallery in its new premises in downtown Ottawa, the Gallery has witnessed a phenomenal increase in public interest. From an average annual attendance of 75,000, the number of annual visits has grown to 400,000 - this in a community of under 300,000. A corresponding increase in activities generally, and an imaginative programme of exhibitions at home and abroad, bear witness to the Gallery's fine achievement in the vital role it performs in the artistic life of the Canadian community. Its staff has increased substantially and, through Dr. Comfort's effort, members of the curatorial, extension and conservation branches have been granted professional status in the Civil

Service. The National Conservation Research Laboratory, under the direction of Dr. Nathan Stolow, has been brought into being. In the past year, Dr. Comfort has been instrumental in the founding of the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization, which is now successfully established and contributing significantly to the development of programmes of Art Galleries and Museums across Canada.

IMPORTANT ACQUISITIONS

Among the important works added to the Gallery's growing collections are: "The Virgin and Child" by the Master of the Marble Madonnas (c.1450); "The Holy Family in a Landscape" by Vincenzo Catena (1479?-1531); the first complete altar to enter the national collection by Jacopo di Cione (c.1331-c.1395); "Pavane" by Jean Paul Riopelle; "3+4+1" by Paul Emile Borduas (1905-1960); "Tyranny of the Corner (Sachay Set)" by Harold Town; "Coast Edge in Air" by Ralph Allen; "Portrait of George Luks" by Robert Henri (1865-1929); and, in May of this year, the outstanding acquisitions made from the Northwick Park Collection - "An Allegory of the Education of a Young Prince" by Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678), "Lot and His Daughters" by Orazio Gentileschi (1562-1647), and "Christ and the Woman of Samaria" by Guercino (1591-1666).

OUTSTANDING EXHIBITIONS

Many distinguished displays have been brought to Canada and sent abroad during Dr. Comfort's direction of the Gallery. Those coming to Ottawa have included: "Vincent van Gogh"; "Heritage de France"; "The Controversial Century 1850-1950"; "Lawren

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