

## Paintings inspire music

Composer Harry Freedman was inspired by the paintings of three Canadian artists to create *Images*, a work in three movements.

The musical composition was performed on March 4 at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa by the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Brian Law. During the performance, the hall was darkened and a screen lowered above and behind the orchestra to allow slides of the paintings that inspired the composer to be shown as the music was performed.

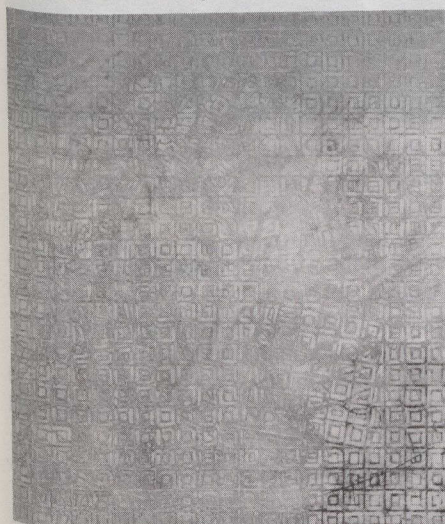
To enhance the presentation of *Images*, the National Gallery of Canada exhibited



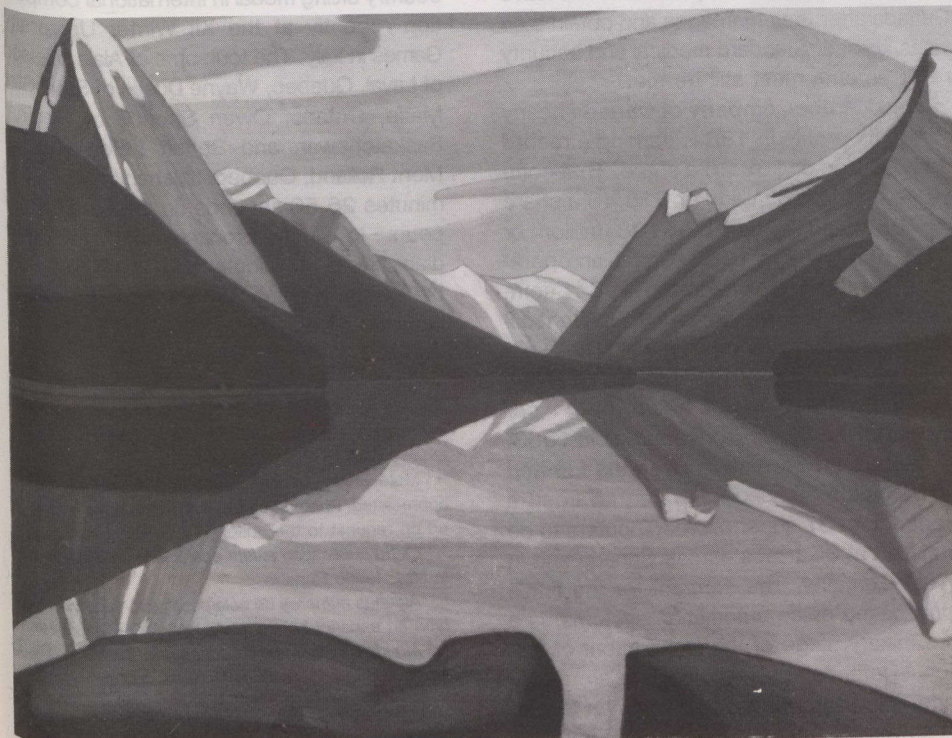
*The Wheel II*, oil on canvas by Jean-Paul Riopelle, 1956.

works of art by the three artists who inspired the work. The three paintings selected by the gallery — *Maligne Lake, Jasper Park* (1924) by Lawrence Harris, *The Wheel II* (1956) by Jean-Paul Riopelle, and *Square Infinity* (1964) by Kazuo Kakamura — were very similar to those translated into musical form by Mr. Freedman.

Harry Freedman, who trained as an artist in his youth, often uses the visual arts for inspiration and for the enjoyment of exploring two art forms simultaneously. Other examples of the Canadian composer's musical illustrations of visual images include scores influenced by the paintings of Cornelius Krieghoff and Emily Carr.



*Square Infinity*, oil on canvas by Kazuo Nakamura, 1964.



*Maligne Lake, Jasper Park*, oil on canvas by Lawren Harris, 1924.

## Arts briefs

**Canadian playwright** George Ryga's searing, jubilant drama *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* recently made its New York premiere. The presentation was made through the collaboration of the Americas Society and the American Indian Community House which is the only organization in New York City that specifically serves the social, economic, cultural and educational needs of the 14 000 native Americans living in the metropolitan area. The play deals with the growing migration of American Indians to large cities. It takes a serious look at unsolved problems as well as celebrating traditional values and mores. It was first presented in French in Quebec in 1969 and made its US debut (in English) in Washington in 1973.

**Acadian folksinger Edith Butler** was greeted warmly by audiences and critics during her recent concerts in France. In six concerts at the showcase Olympia Theatre in Paris, audiences sang along, clapped in time and brought her back for as many as five encores. The newspaper *Le Monde* praised Ms. Butler for her "vitality and joie de vivre" while *France-Soir* called her "supercharged and terrific".

**Nova Scotia's Mermaid Theatre** has been invited by the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, D.C. to appear at its young people's Discovery Theatre for five weeks beginning in May. The Theatre will present 50 performances of Kipling's *Just So Stories*, adapted for the stage by Graham Whitehead. *Just So Stories* will also be presented in Baltimore before the company returns to Nova Scotia.

**Ra, Murray Schafer's** 11-hour opera which was originally presented by Comus Music Theatre at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto in May 1983, will be produced at the Holland Festival this June. Mr. Schafer and director Thom Sokoloski will present *Ra* in the town of Lieden, 40 kilometres southwest of Amsterdam. The production will involve the town's cathedral, forest and museum as audiences follow *Ra*, the ancient Egyptian sun god, on his protracted journey through the netherworld.

**Don Messer's Jubilee**, John Gray's musical tribute to the down-east music that was Canada's most popular Canadian Broadcasting Corporation television show in the 1960s, was a complete sell-out at its world-premiere run at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and the theatre says it now is considering taking the production on a national tour. John Gray has written a number of hit plays including *Billy Bishop Goes to War*, *Sixteen Wheels* and *Rock and Roll*.