

News of the arts

Canada and France sponsor exhibition

The National Gallery of Canada, in Ottawa, and the Réunion des Musées Nationaux of France recently organized an exhibition of the works of Puvis de Chavannes which ended last month in Paris and begins in Ottawa March 26.

A selection of 106 paintings, 112 drawings and ten prints was made from both private and public collections for display audiences in France and Canada.

Called "a major retrospective exhibition of the work of Puvis de Chavannes", the exhibition includes preliminary drawings, sketches and replicas which depict the artist's development of each composition.

The National Gallery

The gallery sponsors a national program designed to promote a sense of cultural identity and greater circulation in museums throughout the country of the gallery's permanent collection, as well as to exhibit works owned by other museums in Ottawa.

The program, now in its sixty-second year, was one of the first art extension services in the world.

From modest beginnings in a two-room workshop on Parliament Hill, the National Gallery has expanded into an eight-storey complex with plans for future growth. Construction on a new building is expected to be completed by 1980, the year of the gallery's centenary.

Established in 1880, by the Marquess of Lorne, then Governor General of Canada, the gallery has since weathered three moves to its present location at the corner of Elgin and Slater Streets.

Its collection now numbers over 13,000 works of art while the reference library contains more than 50,000 books and periodicals on the history of art and related subjects. All exhibitions are supplemented by films, background literature, lectures and talks.

Among the less well-known features of the National Gallery are its restoration and conservation laboratories on the seventh floor. The labs, the oldest in Canada, are closed to the general public except on Open House days. They are considered among the best in North America.

Junk food donations for Theatre London (Ontario) production

Generous donations of potato chips and other "munchies" were received recently by Theatre London, a professional company in London, Ontario, for a production of Michel Tremblay's Les Belles Soeurs, being performed there this month.

Some 288 bags of peanuts, 4,800 bottles of cola, 22 pizzas and 350 bags of potato chips, which the cast will munch through during the course of 18 performances, were given by the merchants of London as their contribution to the production.

The story involves 15 ladies who have assembled in a kitchen to paste trading stamps into books. (Trading stamps, for those unfamiliar with this curious enterprise, are a publicity gimmick given out by certain food stores usually in the form of one stamp for every dollar spent. The consumer collects them, pastes them into small books and then trades the collections for household goods.) In the play, the stamp-licking party is sustained by vast quantities of soft drinks and "junk



food". Some 1.5 million trading stamps were provided by a Montreal firm — the stamp books filled by the cast will not, however, be negotiable.

Theatre London is under the artistic direction of William Hutt. Les Belles Soeurs is directed by Bernard Hopkins.

Canadian music encyclopedia

The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada Inc. has received a \$157,875 Wintario grant for manuscript preparation of the first encyclopedia of music in Canada.

If all goes well, the encyclopedia should be available by autumn 1978. But so far, the task has proved to be enormous. The project was first conceived in 1969, when Floyd Chalmers, formerly president of MacLean Hunter and now president of the Chalmers Foundation, read an article by composer John Beckwith in *Musicanada*. Chalmers agreed with Beckwith, who had pointed out that the material on Canadian music appearing in European and American reference books was inadequate.

Chalmers set up a series of meetings with musicologists, administrators, and musicians. A national board was established, with the Chalmers Foundation providing \$100,000 of the necessary capital and the Canada Council awarding a matching grant.

Work began in 1973, and it has been a painstaking task. The biggest problem has been in the area of research, which shows the tremendous need that exists for a work of this nature. Mabel Laine, the assignment editor, explains that because of "the reticence of Canadians to put things down...we're involved in an enormous amount of original research." If anyone has material which might be of interest to the research staff at EMC, they are encouraged to send it to Helmut Kallman, Music Division, National Library of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa K1A 0N4.

Playwrights share award for best play

The 1976 Chalmers Award for best Canadian play has, for the first time, been split in two and awarded to Larry Fineberg for his play *Eve*, performed at the Stratford Festival and W.O. Mitchell for *Back to Beulah*, presented by Theatre Calgary at the Tarragon Theatre. They each receive \$2,500.