

of Canada's Atlantic provinces).

The example of Stratford and the advent of the Canada Council helped spur the growth of theatre in English Canada. People like Leon Major (founder of the Neptune Theatre in Halifax) and John Hirsch (founder of the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg) set the pattern for a network of regional theatres across the country. These provided a stage and an audience for the mythic work of James Reaney and others. Since the Sixties, experimental and native Canadian theatre has flourished, characterized by the irreverence, flamboyance and anarchism of playwrights like David Freeman and David French.

#### **The state and the arts**

The state is an important patron of the arts in Canada. Because the country's small population is dispersed so thinly over such a vast expanse, Canadian society collectively has assumed a role played  
100 elsewhere by private patrons of the arts. Growing