

## Traditional Inuit music on North American tour



Print by Tucassie Echaluq of Inoucdjouak, Quebec shows Inuit throat singers, two women in vocal competition imitating natural sounds from their environment.

Francisco, Philadelphia, New York and Brunswick, Maine; and Peterborough, Ontario. The Department of External Affairs and the Canada Council are major sponsors.

### Singing competition

Throat singing is a style of vocal chanting now practised only by women in the eastern and central Arctic. At one time it was a game — a competition of stamina and inventiveness between two women.

The sounds produced by the women through voice manipulation and breathing techniques, are intricate weavings of guttural and melodic patterns, unlike those heard anywhere else. The songs may contain nonsense syllables as well as imitate natural sounds in the women's environment. Anything from the sound of a baby crying, to the sound of a bubbling, boiling pot, to the sounds of the wind and the seashore may be included.

### Experiences reflected in dance

The drum dance performances of Donald Suluk and his wife Alice, who are both in their sixties, also reflect personal experiences. Donald plays a large drum covered with a young caribou skin stretched onto the frame before each performance. It is sometimes moistened to give it the desired rumbling resonance.

The Pisiit songs performed by the couple are in parallel seconds and fourths with the

drum accompaniment. The songs, which are ancient records of life and survival in the Canadian Arctic, range in theme from celebrations of hunting, fishing and other exploits, to sentimental and philosophic themes, magical incantations or satire.

Traditionally, the art of drum dancing was practised on social and festive occasions, such as the arrival of visitors or after successful hunting expeditions. A large, circular snowhouse was built and festive dress was worn. The audience joined in the swinging movement, while the performer was transported into an exalted, joyous state.



Alice and Donald Suluk from Eskimo Point, Northwest Territories are performers of Pisiit songs and drum dances.

Two members of the Povungnituk Throat Singers group in Northern Quebec and drum dancers Donald and Alice Suluk from Eskimo Point, Northwest Territories, are currently on tour giving the first North American multi-city presentation of their traditional Inuit music.

The two-month, 21-concert tour, which opened on January 20 at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, includes stops in Niagara Falls, New York; Vancouver, British Columbia; the US cities of Seattle, San

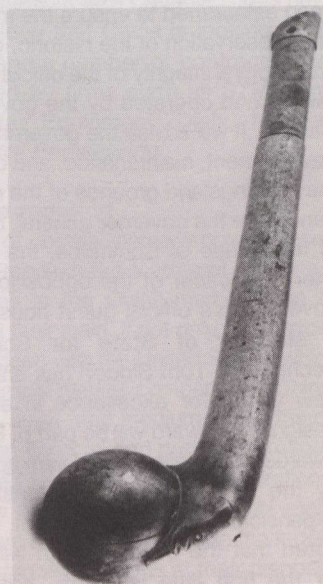
## Collection reflects diversity in early Indian art

*Patterns of Power* on view at the McCord Museum in Montreal until March 10, features the collection of Jasper Grant and Great Lakes Indian art of the early nineteenth century.

The exhibition, organized by the McMichael Canadian Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario, contains very rare examples of Indian clothing including shirts, leggings, moccasins, arm bands and pouches, as well as utensils and ornaments. The 90 artifacts on display are enriched with images and designs, the "pattern of power", illustrating the forces which, according to Indian belief, pervade the natural world.

Colonel Jasper Grant served in the British militia in Upper Canada from 1799 to 1809 when he returned to Ireland. His large and well-documented collection of Indian artifacts, donated to the National Museum of Ireland in 1902, reflects the diversity of the tribal art traditions of the Great Lakes region as well as new materials and stylistic influences introduced by Europeans.

The importance of the collection is enhanced by a large number of letters written by Colonel Grant during his stay in Canada.



Eastern Ojibwa wood and metal club made before 1880.

The National Museum of Ireland, the National Library of Ireland, the National Museum of Man, the Royal Ontario Museum, the McCord Museum and a private collector contributed to the exhibition. Funding was provided by the National Museums of Canada, le ministère des Affaires culturelles du Québec, and le Conseil des arts de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal.

## Art brief

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the National Ballet School was marked in Toronto by a special week from November 19 to 25 when the public was invited to the school for tours and demonstrations. The highlight of the week was a celebration performance when graduates of the School, now dancing in major companies in Canada and abroad, participated in an evening of classical excerpts and specially created new works.