

Chinese masterpieces for museum

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has been presented with four rare and beautiful examples of Chinese decorative arts dating from about 200 B.C. to 1560 A.D. by four Toronto collectors.

The decorative arts department expects that the works will be on display in the Oriental art gallery within a year.

The gifts to the gallery include: a four-foot long funerary tile from the Han dynasty (circa 200 B.C.-200 A.D.); a rare Chinese imperial blue and white jar made in Jiangxi province during the reign of the Ming emperor Jiajing (1522-1566), bearing his imperial mark on its base; a gilded bronze statue of a Bodhisattva or meditating Buddha, dated in the early Ming period about 1535; and a very rare Yuan dynasty table from thirteenth-century China.

Award for historical novel

Hélène Brodeur of Ottawa recently won the Prix Champlain for her first book, *La Quête d'Alexandre*. The novel written in French is an historic saga depicting pioneer life in northern Ontario.

The Prix Champlain which includes \$1 000, is an important award presented by the Conseil de la vie Française en Amérique, a Quebec body promoting French culture outside Quebec.

Trilogy

La Quête d'Alexandre is the first part of a trilogy chronicling the life of two young people set in the harsh days of the gold rush in northern Ontario, coupled with railroad work that would eventually link the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways between North Bay and Cochrane. The novel relates the Madison fire of July 1916, which killed 232 people as it swept through small northern towns.

Hélène Brodeur spent her childhood in the small northern Ontario town of Val Gagné near Timmins. She returned to the area and spent two years interviewing townspeople and researching old newspaper clippings to document the novel authentically.

Soon after she completed *La Quête d'Alexandre*, she began rewriting the entire novel in English. It is expected to be available under the title *Alexander* in bookstores around Christmas time.

Canadian revue to be screened on British television



Eric Peterson in the musical of Billy Bishop Goes to War.

Billy Bishop Goes to War, a Canadian revue by John Gray will be screened by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in Britain this December.

The musical about Canada's First World War flying ace, Billy Bishop, was produced by the Vancouver East Cultural Centre and presented at the 1980 Edinburgh festival, where BBC producer Norman McCandlish recorded it for television.

Eric Peterson starred in the revue in 18 different roles and John Gray provided the on-stage piano accompaniment. "The revue, and the TV version, reveals a *tour de force* by actor Peterson and by its director," said head of television at the BBC in Scotland James Hunter.

Negotiations are also currently under way with representatives of a West German television station in Hamburg to produce a German version.

National library acquires carillon music memorabilia

The National Library of Canada has acquired a large collection of books, papers and artifacts from Percival Price, renowned authority on campanology and, from 1927 to 1939, first Dominion carillonner.

The purchase, subsidized by a grant from the Department of Communications, brings one of the world's three largest collections on campanology to the National Library and establishes it as a basic research centre in this specialized musical field.

In 1921 Percival Price, a native of Toronto, became the first carillonner appointed to such a post in North America. He accumulated the materials in this collection during his long and varied career. As a recitalist, Price has performed on more than 100 carillons around the world. As composer, arranger and researcher, he has contributed substantially to the musical literature for his instrument, and as a consultant he has influenced modern carillon design. For the largest part of his

career (from 1939 to 1972) he was university carillonner at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where he remains active as professor emeritus.

In his travels, Price has collected photographs, slides, drawings and design plans of bells and bell towers around the world, as well as sound recordings, recital programs, posters, maps, charts and artifacts, such as brass rubbings and plaster casts. The collection features some two dozen small bells, including a rare early Japanese temple bell and several examples of Chinese wooden bells. Among the materials purchased are books, periodicals, research files and manuscript copies of his own lectures, articles and monographs. About one-third of the collection is directly related to Canadian carillons and carillonners.

More than half the music composed and arranged by Percival Price originated during the years when he was in charge of the Peace Tower carillon.