

INDIAN ARTS DISPLAYED IN MONTREAL



George Manuel, President of the National Indian Brotherhood and Miss Laverna McMaster, Indian Princess 1970, open the exhibition of Indian arts and crafts.

The first national exhibition of the arts and crafts of the Canadian Indian took place from November 10 to 22 at Place Bonaventure in Montreal. The display, which was sponsored by the Canadian Guild of Crafts in collaboration with the National Indian Brotherhood of Canada, was opened by the President of the Brotherhood, George Manuel, a Shuswap from Chase, British Columbia.

Painters, craftsmen, canoe-builders, dancers, singers and writers – all of native heritage – participated in this important cultural event. About 30 paintings, the work of five artists, were chosen to illustrate the different styles of Indian art in Canada.

One of the artists is Alan Sapp, a Cree from the Red Pheasant Reserve in Saskatchewan, whose subtly evocative landscapes depicting life on the Prairies have been shown in several other countries. Norval Morrisseau, an Objibway from the Red Rock Reserve in Ontario, has displayed his paintings in France and the United States as well as Canada. In stylized design and flat colours, he portrays the legends of his people. Arthur Shilling of the Ram Reserve, Ontario, and Alex Javier, who lives in Edmonton, Alberta, are both the product of art schools. Sarain Stump, who was originally from Wyoming and now lives in Alberta, was represented at Place Bonaventure by ink and wash sketches. A volume of poems entitled *There is my People Sleeping*, written and illustrated by this artist, was published recently.

Frank Meawasige, a young Objibway living in Toronto, displayed a collection of original suede and leather fashions inspired by traditional Indian dress.

One of the stars of the exhibition was Josée

Noël (*Ilnikoue-O*), a Huron-Montagnais who is an interpreter, composer and journalist and sings in eight languages. Francis Kagige, well-known painter and writer, was also represented. Dan Sarazin, an Algonquin from Ontario's Golden Lake Reserve, an expert canoe-maker, gave a demonstration of this ancient skill by building a canoe to be sold at the end of the exhibition.

The arts and crafts show provided a backdrop for the festival of dances and music, participants of which included the Ninth Cloud, a group of three young Indian musicians from Maniwaki, Quebec, and the Canadian Indian Prairie Dancers, who had just returned from a successful tour in Europe. Miss Laverna McMaster of the Blackfoot tribe in Cluney, Alberta, who was recently crowned 1970 Indian Princess of Canada, recited legends of her people. Alanis O'Bomsawin from the Abenaki reserve at Odanak, Quebec, chanted Indian legends and songs to the rhythmic beat of a small hand-drum.

The National Film Board of Canada provided films illustrating the various forms of art (*Haida Carver*), legends (*The Loon's Necklace*), the native way of life (*Circle of the Sun* and *The People at Dipper*), the tragedy that befell many tribes during the last century (*The Ballad of Crowfoot*), and the skill of the Indians who build skyscrapers (*High Steel*).

The festival included a competition for native artists and craftsmen. The Guild put up \$2,000 in prize money and 85 per cent of the items entered in the contest were sold. Mrs. Kate Henry of the Yukon Territory was awarded \$400 for a woven rabbit-skin blanket, adjudged the best craft in the exhibition.