

The songs of the Canadian Indian constitute both the oldest and the most divergent repertory of Canadian folk-music. They are interesting not only because of their mythical and linguistic content but also because of their unusual musical idioms.

Financing of the Arts

Possibly the greatest problem facing the performing arts in Canada is that of financing. Financial insolvency is a constant threat to the survival of companies that have achieved high artistic reputations and constitute cultural assets of immense value. Given the consensus that these assets should be an integral part of Canada's culture and should therefore be available to all persons, regardless of their financial position, operating costs cannot be obtained entirely through box-office revenue. Now, however, it is almost universally accepted that the provision of opportunities of pleasure in the best practice in music, theatre and the other arts is a justifiable part of the activity of a modern state. The first example of Federal Government subsidy for the arts in Canada was the formation of the Canada Council.

An awareness that the Canadian people felt that it was necessary to restore the balance between the attention paid to material achievements and the rather less tangible, but more enduring, parts of Canada's civilization, and that this could not be accomplished without effort, inspired the creation, in 1949, of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. In 1951, the Commission submitted a report recommending the foundation of a council to encourage these activities. A direct outcome of the recommendation was the establishment by Act of Parliament on March 28, 1957, of the Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The purpose of the Council was to "foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts, humanities and social sciences".

In providing assistance to the performing arts, the Canada Council has looked both to the individual artist and to those organizations that provide him with a living. The main strategy of the forces deployed by the Council is "directed to the end that artists in Canada should live and work in such dignity and ease as it may be their wish and ability to command in society, and that increasingly the society in which they live and work should by constant exposure and involvement come to value them for the grace they lend to our existence and for the healthy irritants they provide to our complacencies".

The Council's approach is on three fronts, and the first is directed towards the welfare of the individual with potential talent. Individual artists are thus assisted in pursuing their studies or in establishing themselves in their chosen field at home or abroad.

The second concern of the Council is to ensure as far as possible the artist's means of communication with the public. To this end, subsidies are provided for orchestras, theatres, dance troupes, opera companies and other deserving organizations. It has been the Council's policy, in