

News of the arts

Art from the West

"Our daily journeys commenced with the early morn — a compass our only guide — and ended where a sufficient supply of wood and water could be obtained to prepare our frugal meal — a tent our only covering!"

Lt. H.J. Warre — 1845



Game of Al-kol-lock, oil on canvas by Paul Kane.

Royal Ontario Museum

Overland journeys to Canada's Pacific coast before the days of settlement were arduous, tedious and dangerous. The exhibition *The Canadian West: The Land and the People* re-creates these lonely nineteenth-century travels with a series of oil paintings, watercolours, sketches and prints. The display, which runs from September 15 to January 21 at the Royal

Ontario Museum (ROM) Toronto, contains about 70 works by such well-known frontier travellers as Kane, Rindisbacher, Armstrong, Warre, and Napier, as well as some lesser known artists.

The Canadian West portrays an exciting journey from Fort William, Ontario, through forests, swamps, and rapid-filled rivers, to the Red River settlement and the Hudson's Bay Company's forts. Sketches of Fort Garry are included, as well as six prints that show the Governor performing his duties or enjoying the winter sports.

Indian encampments and fur-trading posts are prominent in the Western landscapes and would have been welcome landmarks for the weary traveller in need of provisions and fresh horses. Also recorded were such colourful events as hazardous river fordings, horse races and buffalo hunts. The journey winds through isolated passes of the Rocky Mountains and reaches the Pacific Ocean's agricultural settlements.

The artists, soldiers, surveyors and engineers have left a valuable record of their impressions of the Canadian West as it once was.

Crawley film on Japan

Ontario Business News reports that Crawley Films Limited has been awarded a contract by the Government of Japan to produce a film on that country for Canadian viewing.

The film, to be produced in two versions, English and French, will be distributed to Canadian television and to key community and business groups.

Both the director and writer for the film will be Canadian while a Japanese film crew will be used on location, thanks to Crawley Film's association with the International Quorum of Motion Picture Producers (IQ). (IQ is a network of 100 film companies which provide footage, crews, equipment and counselling around the world.)

Internationally renowned Canadian geneticist Dr. David Suzuki will narrate and appear in the film.

Crawley Films has produced more than 3,500 films over the past 40 years and specializes in international production. Included in the company's 234 national and international awards is an Academy Award for the documentary feature *The Man Who Skied Down Everest*.

Arts briefs

The National Film Board of Canada production, *Fields of Endless Day*, a one-hour "docu-drama" uncovering the "roots" of Canada's black population, was telecast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on October 18. The film traces the presence of black people in Canada from the seventeenth century, when the first explorers arrived on the shores of the Bay of Fundy, to the present day. Wartime participation and activist groups, such as Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, form part of the recent events featured.

One of Ontario's year-round tourist attractions is the McMichael Canadian Collection, in Kleinburg, Ontario, a complex of hand-hewn timbers and native stone that houses the works of some of Canada's foremost painters, as well as superb Indian and Inuit sketches and carvings. A display called *The Best of Tom Thomson* is among the 1,500 works arranged in the 30 spacious rooms. Thomson, whose art style had a profound influence on Canada's famed Group of Seven, died in a mysterious canoeing mishap in Algonquin Provincial Park. His

old studio shack, moved from Toronto to Kleinburg, is of particular interest to visitors.

The University of Calgary has engaged in an aggressive campaign to collect manuscripts, letters, notes and other material concerning such writers as Hugh MacLennan, Brian Moore, W.O. Mitchell, Earle Birney, Mordecai Richler and, most recently, the Quebec poet Claude Pelouquin. The University hopes to become a major centre of Canadian literature studies.

The Finnish Organization of Canada has assembled a display portraying the substantial contributions that Finnish immigrants have made to Canada. This collection, including photographs, manuscripts, letters, newspaper clippings and historical documents, has been presented to the National Archives of Canada. It will go on a nation-wide tour later.

Among the attractions scheduled for the 1978-1979 winter season of the Shaw Festival, at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, are the Canadian Opera Company, National Ballet of Canada, Hamilton Philharmonic, Orford Quartet, Canadian Brass, the Huggett Family and the Anna Wyman Dance Company.