

Ongoing liaison with the BIE was also carried out to maintain Canada's high profile in world expositions. The Division attended semi-annual general assembly meetings and commission meetings to present Canada's views at this forum. Documents put before the BIE by nations wishing to hold an exposition were examined, and the Division also monitored the progress of

the implementation of the revision to the BIE convention.

In addition, the Division studied future international exposition activities, providing advice to Canadian concerns interested in hosting international expositions in Canada, and assessed the feasibility and desirability of Canadian participation in BIE-registered expositions to be held abroad.

E. INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

Arts Promotion

The objective of the Arts Promotion Division is to raise the awareness and understanding of Canada abroad through highly visible artistic activities that manifest the excellence, the national character and the identity of the country. Thus, Canadian artists and companies expose their talents to wider international audiences while contributing to the recognition of Canada as a dynamic, sophisticated and contemporary society.

The Department gives support to professional artists and groups who have proven talent and administrative ability. Priority is given to projects with box-office appeal, which have substantial sponsorship from provincial governments or private sources and which respond to the political,

commercial and geographic priorities of the Department.

More than half of the performing arts grants budget is devoted each year to help institutions, such as the Montreal and Toronto symphony orchestras, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Le Cirque du soleil, perform on the international stage.

During the year under review, funding of visual arts also allowed contemporary artists to exhibit abroad and professional galleries to take part in the most prestigious arts fairs in the world.

The Department provided increased funds to authors and publishers to promote better knowledge of Canadian literature abroad.