

News of the arts

John Hall: paintings and auxiliary works 1969-1978

While the Sixties introduced paintings of flamboyant, over-sized, vividly coloured images of the ephemera of popular culture: pop bottles, plastic roses, kewpie dolls and tire ads, the Seventies' interpretation can be seen in an exhibit entitled, *John Hall: Paintings and Auxiliary Works 1969-1978* on view at the National Gallery in Ottawa until December.

John Hall works very much like a still life painter. He first constructs an assemblage of everyday items — trinkets, wire, ribbons, cloth, flowers. This maquette — itself a finished work — then becomes a model for a much larger painting, executed in "hyper-realist" style. As with most contemporary figurative painting based on a literal subject, Hall's work is "frontal, photographic", and highly coloured. His craftsmanship is evident in both the construction of the maquettes and their transition into paintings.

The artist's originality comes in the transformation of these banal objects into



Two panels of John Hall's, acrylic on canvas entitled, Doll.

gigantic *tableaux*. In these large detailed canvases, which are raked by painted "studio" light, the image is considered to transcend the model, acquiring a meaning larger than its material existence. "I believe that the artist projects himself, reveals himself not through subject matter or form, but through surface. It is the

touch, the caressing of the surface by the artist that results in meaning...the other aspects are simply conduits," says Mr. Hall.

In the exhibition, maquettes for many of the 24 large paintings included will be shown with the finished canvases and related sketches.

French films in Boston

Recent consolidations in Canada's film program in the United States have resulted in the transfer of a major collection of French-language films to the film library at the Canadian Consulate in Boston, U.S. Added to the existing number of over 350 French films, this move has created a major resource for the Franco-American community and French-language teachers in New England.

The latest additions bring the total collection size up to about 1,500 prints, making it the largest of the eight Consulate film libraries maintained by the Canadian Government in the United States.

Of the approximate 100 film libraries in over 80 countries maintained by the Department of External Affairs, Boston ranks third in size behind the High Commission in New Delhi, and the Embassy in Bonn.

Sixty years of film

The Canadian Government was one of the first groups involved in film-making. In 1914, the Department of Trade and Commerce set up a film unit to promote tourism and investment, depositing such

titles as *Where The Moose Run Loose*, in embassies and trade missions abroad.

By the 1920s, these activities had been centralized in the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, which soon became the most visible government film unit during the silent film era. The reputation of the Motion Picture Bureau declined during the 1930s, however, as a depression budget restricted its activities and lack of sound-film equipment led to the gradual obsolescence of its production.

NFB born

Following a study of film in Canada by John Grierson, the National Film Board of Canada was created on May 2, 1939. This institution, which absorbed the Motion Picture Bureau in 1941, remains what is believed to be the largest government film studio in the world.

Today, of the titles found in the free-loan Consulate collections throughout the world, most deal with Canada, its history, resources, and people. Other films deal with subjects of universal concern such as the sciences, human behaviour, the environment, and world affairs. Still others, from producers other than the Film

Board, have no Canadian content at all, but have been included because of artistic quality or technical excellence.

A catalogue of films from the Canadian Consulate in Boston will be provided on request to the Film Librarian, Canadian Consulate General Film Library, 500 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116, U.S.

Arts briefs

Mezzo-soprano Irene Welhasch of Winnipeg has been named the outstanding performer at the National Competitive Music Festival. Ms. Welhasch won a \$1,000 scholarship.

Forty-nine musicians have won awards totalling \$430,000 in the Canada Council's recent competition for musical performances. The awards, worth up to \$10,000 plus travel allowance if necessary, may be used in Canada or abroad. Applicants must have at least completed basic training.

Astral Bellevue-Pathé, Canada's largest motion picture organization, will complete five feature films this year and start pre-production on another four. The