

News of the arts

Daniel Fowler exhibition

A major collection by one of Canada's early landscape painters, Daniel Fowler, is on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario until November 11.



Hollyhocks, by Daniel Fowler.

The circulating *Daniel Fowler of Amherst Island 1810-1894* exhibition is the first comprehensive survey of Fowler's art. It comprises 85 watercolours and drawings by this British-born artist, including six works from the National Gallery's permanent collection and others on loan from the Douglas Library, Queen's University, Kingston, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Yale Centre for British Art and many private collectors.

Upon his arrival in Canada in 1843, Fowler settled on picturesque Amherst Island, near Kingston, Ontario. After farming for some years, he started painting again in 1857, having studied as a watercolour painter in England and sketched extensively during his travels in Europe.

Fowler's famous still-life paintings of dead game are represented by six works done between 1869 and 1889. His flower still-lives are equally famous for their richness of spirit and colour. The painting *Hollyhocks* 1876, from the National Gallery's permanent collection, won him a bronze medal and diploma at the International Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. This was the only medal awarded

to a Canadian and the first time a Canadian artist had been honoured with an international award.

However, Fowler's landscape paintings are considered to be his greatest contribution to nineteenth century Canadian painting. This exhibition includes landscape sketches and paintings executed in England and Europe as well as in Canada. The Canadian landscapes are primarily of Amherst Island, where he would paint *en plein air* in a manner wholly innovative for his time and place. While other Canadian landscape painters were still painting with Victorian restraint, Daniel Fowler was using free calligraphic brushstrokes.

Inuit art exhibited

An exhibition of contemporary Inuit art, organized in conjunction with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, was recently on display at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Inuit Art of the 1970's is composed of 83 prints, drawings and sculptures from public and private collections across Canada, which have been selected to present the activities of Canadian Inuit artists during the last nine years.

The exhibition is travelling to Fredericton, Calgary, Victoria and Windsor.



Inuit sculpture Pangnirtung (*Drummer*) by Davie (Teevee) Atchealak.

Museums attendance up

Attendance at Canada's art museums and galleries increased last year by 1.2 million over 1977 attendance, when 9.8 million visited 28 public galleries, 13 public museums and 12 university art galleries surveyed by the Council of Business and the Arts in Canada.

The council said in its survey that total operating revenue for public art galleries this year was \$24.5 million, of which \$2.9 million was spent on acquisitions.

Museums, whose attendance accounted for more than half the total at 6.81 million persons, had a total operating revenue of \$31.5 million.

Provincial governments provided the greatest source of income for public museums at 55 per cent of the total. Federal sources appeared to provide the greatest amount of income to public art galleries at \$10.2 million.

Support for the public art galleries from the public almost equalled the income generated by the galleries themselves through entrance fees, memberships and other means.

Museums, however, generated four times as much as that donated by the private sector. In both cases, government grants made up more than 85 per cent of the total income.

World premières at Stratford

The Stratford Festival will present two world *première* productions as part of its 1980 season. Artistic Director Robin Phillips has announced. They are *Virginia* by Edna O'Brien, and *Foxfire* by Susan Cooper and Hume Cronyn.

Virginia is a play based on the life of English novelist and essayist Virginia Woolf, whose extraordinary life and writings have made her a legend in this century. A centrepiece of the group of writers, artists and intellectuals who flourished in the early years of the twentieth century and came to be known as the Bloomsbury Group, Virginia Woolf remained a major figure in the world of letters until her death by suicide in 1941.

Foxfire deals with life in Appalachia, the isolated mountainous region of the southern United States, which has given rise to a way of life remote from mainstream influences and sheltered from sudden change.