

News of the arts

Manitoulin Island's native art

The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto is presenting an exhibition of contemporary art by the native people of Manitoulin Island until September 30.

Manitoulin Island, at the mouth of Georgian Bay, is considered to be the largest freshwater island in the world and one of the most scenic areas of Canada. Recent evidence suggests that man has inhabited this island for 4,000 years.

The name "Manitoulin" is a derivation of an Algonkian word meaning "Den of Manitou". "Manitou", a great spirit of power, made his home on the "Island of



Nannabush and the Peace Pipe Ceremony
(Mel Madahbee)

the Inland Sea" (Lake Huron). According to legend the island is "a place of spiritual rebirth — a place where there is power and strength necessary for the rekindling of fires".

Manitoulin Island also appears to be a centre for the modern native art movement of the 1970s. Over 50 recent paintings are on display at the ROM, the majority for the first time. The 14 native artists, most of whom are in their Twenties, explore myths, customs and the evolving native consciousness. Several have already won international recognition and a place in permanent public collections.

The exhibition includes works by James Simon, Randy Trudeau, Blake De-



Pine Tree Whips the Proud Birch with his Branches (Francis Kagige)

bassige, Francis Kagige, Daphne Odjig Beavon, Martin Panamick, John Laford, Leland Bell, Don Ense, Angus Trudeau, Melvin Madahbee, Lloyd Caibaosai, Eleanor Kanasawe and Shirley Chechoo Debassige.

Traditional quill work on birchbark or beading on hide are on display, as well as floral and animal motifs and archaic, geometric patterns applied to birchbark boxes.

The content, style and design developed by the master craftsmen are being explored and altered by the young



Talking Bird (Blake Debassige)

painters whose activity marks a renaissance in native art. The latest show in the ROM Ethnology Department's series "Contemporary Native Art of Canada" is an exciting survey of artistic development on Manitoulin Island.



Mother and Child (Daphne Odjig Beavon)

Dance companies gather

The Toronto Workshop Theatre will stage a dance festival from September 19 to 22, with 14 companies: Toronto Dance Theatre, Danny Grossman, Les Ballets Jazz, Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers, Le Groupe Nouvel Aire, Paula Ross Dance Company, Entre Six, Judy Jarvis Dance Company, Dancemakers, Regina Modern Dance, Le Groupe de la Place Royale, Ballet Ys, Anna Wyman, and Halifax Dance Co-Op. Also featured will be David Earle, Margo Dragu, The Paul Mime Company, Fulcrum Contact Improvisation, and the National Tap Dance Company.

A Montreal show, entitled *Octobre en Danse*, will take place at the Centaur Theatre and the Piano Nobile of Place des Arts from October 11 to 21. In addition to several artists from the Toronto festival will be soloists from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, Les Grands Ballets canadiens, Murray Louis, Dina Davida, Iro Tembeck, Christina Coleman, Danse Partout, Vincent Dionne, Linda Rabin, Judy Marcuse, and Marcel Barbeau.