

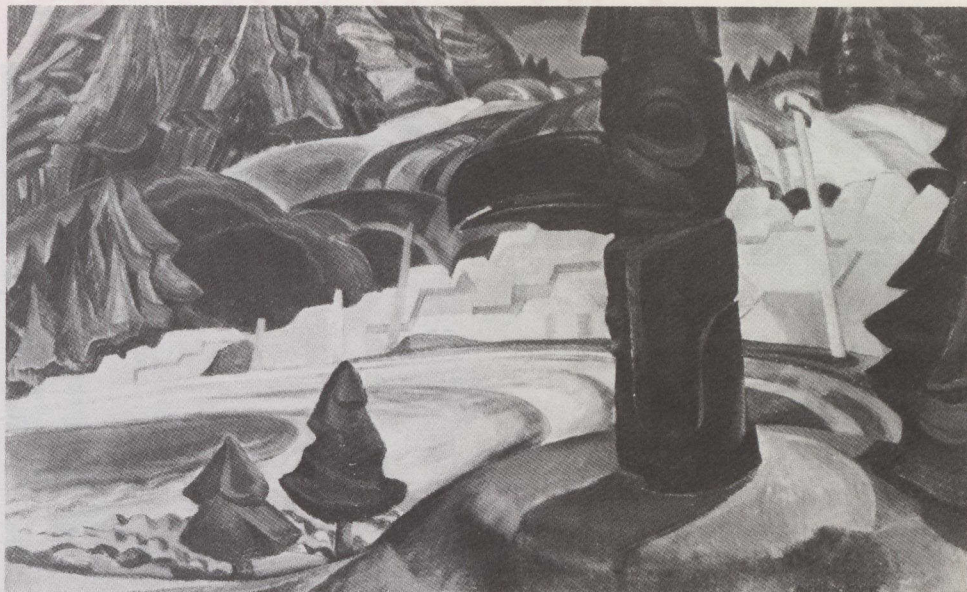
## Winnipeg hosts Canada Packers exhibit

An exhibition including sixty-one works from the Canada Packers Collection opened recently in the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Few corporate collections have been as influential in the development of Canadian art as that associated with Canada Packers. Initiated by the company's founder and first president, J. S. McLean in 1927, the collection reflects artistic developments from a vital quarter-century of Canada's history.

At the time Mr. McLean began to collect, the common practice was to acquire European old masters. However, he decided to follow the example of Vincent Massey who had disposed of his inherited European masters and replaced them with the works of contemporary Canadian artists. In the late 1920s, the contemporary Canadian art world centred around the Group of Seven and so these were the artists whose work Mr. McLean resolved to collect.

His home soon became too small for his growing collection and he decided to use the walls of his offices in Toronto as additional hanging space. At first the staff was sceptical about the idea, but scepticism soon evolved into avid interest and appreciation of the works. Within a short time the project expanded to in-



Skidegate, by Emily Carr is among paintings exhibited at Winnipeg Art Gallery.

clude offices in other Canada Packers' plants across Canada.

During the 1940s, the Canada Packers company itself began to acquire paintings under the direction of Mr. McLean. At the time of Mr. McLean's death in 1954 the company was, according to his wishes, able to acquire 192 works from the almost 300 that he had collected over a 25-year period. He felt the collection had become such an integral part of the company that he wanted some of the works to remain with it. Of them, 138 are housed in the Toronto offices

and 54 were distributed to offices across the country in Edmonton, Winnipeg, St. John's and Vancouver.

The exhibition in Winnipeg contains 61 works selected from the approximately 240 now in the collection. They date from the 1910s to the 1950s and include both oil paintings and works on paper. Most of the important artists from this period are represented. As well as works by the Group of Seven, artists who were their contemporaries and others who became well known in the 1930s and 40s are also included.

## National Ballet announces 1984-85 Toronto Season

Erik Bruhn's production of *Coppélia* will open the National Ballet of Canada's three-week November 1984 engagement at O'Keefe Centre, in the first of three groups of Toronto performances next season.

*Coppélia* will be followed by a tribute to the late choreographer George Balanchine (*Four Temperaments, Symphony in C and Serenade*), and a twin-bill of John McFall's *Components* and *La Sylphide*, with guest artist Evelyn Hart of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

After the company's Christmas run of *The Nutcracker*, the National Ballet returns to O'Keefe Centre for two weeks in February 1985, for Peter Schaufuss' version of the Bournonville classic *Napoli* and two Canadian works: Constantin Patsalas' *Canciones* and a world première by Toronto's Robert Desrosiers.

The final two-week segment of the National Ballet's 1984-85 season, opening at the end of April, will include *Romeo and Juliet*, with guest artist Carla Fracci, the company's première of act three of *Raymonda*, staged by Terry Westmoreland, and the world première of a work by David Earle, co-founder of the Toronto Dance Theatre.

## Arts briefs

A ten-day Theatre Festival of the Americas will be held in Montreal in May 1985. It will give theatre artists, audiences and members of the press a chance to meet, discover differences and similarities and to develop long-term professional contacts. Its program will include more than 50 productions, several workshops, panel discussions, demonstrations, video documents, films and publications.

A collection of African art valued at \$1.8-million has been donated to the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, Ontario. Assembled by Montreal collectors Justin and Elizabeth Lang over the past 40 years, the gift includes 574 statues, masks, ritual objects and implements. It has been the largest private collection of African art in Canada. Centre director Robert Swain said it would make the institution, which is associated with Queen's University, "a national centre for the study and exhibition of African art." Selections from the gift will be displayed in Kingston in early 1985.

Acadian singer-composer Edith Butler has won a performance prize from the Charles Cros Academy in Paris for her latest record album, *De Paquetville à Paris*. The record is being sold in France under the title *Je m'appelle Edith*. Previous winners of the award include Robert Charlebois, Jean-Pierre Ferland and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.