

CANADA COUNCIL MOLSON PRIZES

The winners of the \$15,000 Molson Prizes of the Canada Council for 1971 are the contralto Maureen Forrester, the poet Rina Lasnier and the film-maker Norman McLaren. According to a recent Canada Council announcement, the prizes are given annually to recognize and encourage outstanding contribution to the arts, humanities or social sciences, or to national unity. The award-winners will be honoured at a ceremony to be held in Ottawa in March at the Council's next meeting.

One of Canada's highest tokens of recognition for cultural achievement, the Molson Prizes are financed from the interest on an \$800,000-gift to the Canada Council from the Molson Foundation.

The prizes were first given in 1963, and last year's prize-winners were the literary scholar, Northrop Frye the Toronto *Star* cartoonist Duncan Macpherson and the writer Yves Thériault.

MAUREEN FORRESTER

In Maureen Forrester the Canada Council honours one of the most acclaimed concert artists of our time.

Born in Montreal on July 25, 1930, Miss Forrester made her formal recital début in that city in 1953. Soon after she was engaged by the conductor Otto Klemperer as soloist in Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, and since then she has performed for many of the world's eminent conductors and has appeared throughout North America and Europe, and in Israel, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Many recordings have been made of her voice, and she is known for her work on behalf of younger artists.

In addition to receiving a continual string of superlatives from critics across the world, Miss Forrester has received several formal honours. She was on the first List of the Order of Canada, in July 1967, and she received an honorary LL.D. from Sir George Williams University, Montreal, in 1969. She is married to the Canadian violinist and conductor Eugene Kash, and has five children.

RINA LASNIER

In awarding the Molson Prize to Rina Lasnier, the Canada Council recognizes an author whose body of work has been called "one of the most important in Quebec poetry and at the same time perhaps one of the least known".

Born in 1915 in the small community of St. Grégoire, southeast of Montreal, Rina Lasnier studied in England and at the University of Montreal. She has worked as a journalist and at various other occupations. She is a member of the Académie canadienne-française, a past recipient of the Prix Duvernay, and in 1962 was appointed to the Province of Quebec's arts council.

The poet and critic Jean-Guy Pilon called Rina Lasnier's most recent collection of poems, *La salle des rêves* (1971), a "very great and very beautiful book". Other collections include *Images et proses*

(1941), *Madones canadiennes* (1944), *Le chant de la montée* (1947), *Escapes* (1950), *Présence de l'absence* (1956), *Mémoire sans jour* (1960), *Les Gisants* (1963), *L'arbre blanc* (1966), and *La part du feu* (1970). Between 1939 and 1947 she wrote five plays based on the religious history of Canada. In 1969, a volume of Rina Lasnier appeared in *Poètes d'aujourd'hui*, published in Paris by Pierre Seghers.

NORMAN McLAREN

In Norman McLaren the Council gives second recognition to an artist whose films have won more than 500 awards and mentions in festivals round the world. Mr. McLaren received the Canada Council Medal in 1966.

Norman McLaren was born in Scotland in 1914. From 1937 to 1939 he worked with the pioneering film unit of the British Post Office, and in 1939 moved to New York, where he created a number of abstract colour films. Since 1941 he has been with the National Film Board of Canada, where he has developed the techniques of film animation that have made him world famous.

After two years of creating animated films to publicize various government programs, Mr. McLaren was assigned to establish an animation unit for the Board and has been influential in the development of many young film-makers. Among his earlier works was a series based on French-Canadian folk songs: *Alouette*, *C'est l'aviron*, and *Fiddle De Dee*. In *Neighbours* (1952) and *A Chairy Tale* (1957) he used live actors in stop motion, and in *Pen Point Percussion* (1950) he drew the sound track directly on film stock. His best known innovation, however, is camera-less animation, in which the images are drawn directly on film.

Among his more recent works, *Pas de deux* (1958) received recognition at 15 international festivals, and *Synchromy* (1971) has already won an award at Barcelona. A retrospective of his films was held in 1969 at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, and earlier this year he received an honorary degree from the University of Montreal and the Outstanding Achievement Award of the Public Service of Canada.

NUCLEAR TEST RADIOACTIVITY

The Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. John Munro, recently announced that increased radioactivity levels in the atmosphere had been observed in Canada. His Department's scientists attributed this increase, he stated, to the recent atmospheric nuclear test conducted by China on November 18 last.

The Radiation Protection Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare, which conducts regular monitoring of air samples in its fallout surveillance program, gave special attention to these samples following the Chinese test.