

### Works of art loaned to exhibition in the United States

Two master works by the fifteenth century Venetian painter Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) are on loan from the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts to "Gray is the Color," a four-month exhibition at the Institute for the Arts, Rice University, Houston, Texas, that ends this month.

*Dido* and its companion, *Judith*, both measuring 25¾ by 12¼ inches, are inspired by the antique. They juxtapose two heroines, one classical, one biblical. The works are spiritual and symbolic, sensuously detailed and realistic in perspective.

*Dido*, Queen of Carthage, best known for her love of Aeneas, took her life by jumping on a flaming pyre, which Mantegna shows unlit in the background. *Judith*, in the Old Testament, went to the enemy's camp to save her people and decapitated their leader, the great Holofernes.

Both monochromes have been shown extensively in exhibitions at Mantua, New York, San Francisco, Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal. They were purchased by the Montreal Museum in 1920.

About half the works in the show at Houston came from museums in France, including the Louvre.



*Dido* (left) and *Judith*, works by Italian artist Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506)



loaned by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts to an exhibition in Houston, Texas.

### Expansion of health care to Alberta senior citizens

The terms of an extended health-care program to assist Alberta's 127,000 senior citizens in dealing with the rising cost of living were announced recently.

The extended health-care program is designed to meet requirements for many services not previously covered. It is believed that many senior citizens elect to do without rather than face the cost of some services.

Services provided by dentists, dental mechanics, hearing-aid dealers, optometrists, ophthalmic dispensers and druggists supplying surgical and medical appliances and equipment are covered. The program is estimated to cost more than \$3 million annually.

Recipients will be normally allowed one pair of glasses in any three-year period and one set of dentures in any five-year period. The program will cover the cost of relining dentures

once every two years. A beneficiary will be limited to total dental services of \$1,000 for a consecutive two-year period.

Hearing-aid dealers in the province have entered into an agreement with the government that provides for full cost of fitting and selecting hearing aids and the fabrication of an ear mould, plus servicing for 12 months following a 30-day trial.

Major equipment provided will be other than that normally supplied by a hospital or nursing home and will meet long-term requirements. Wheelchairs will be made available only after the beneficiary has produced a prescription or statement from a physician or other appropriate person. Ownership will remain with the government and will be provided to the beneficiary on an extended loan basis. Devices such as supports are also covered.

### New record for housing-starts

The final count of 268,529 housing starts in 1973 represented a gain of 18,615 over the previous record of 249,914 set in 1972 and established the third successive record of annual starts.

Housing completions also climbed to an unprecedented 246,581 in 1973 and, for the first time, dwellings under construction at the end of a year exceeded 200,000.

The 7.4 per cent increase in the volume of starts from 1972 reflected higher levels of activity in all provinces except Alberta and Manitoba, which experienced decreases of 6.8 and 4.5 per cent respectively.

Starts on single-detached houses last year climbed to 131,552, an increase of 14 per cent from the 1972 figure of 115,570, while starts on multiple units showed a gain of 2 per cent to 136,977 from 134,344.