

News of the arts

Memorial to a Canadian artist nears completion

Facing the sea, at Masset on the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia, a remarkable structure is now almost completely constructed, reports *Conservation Canada*, Summer 1979. One of the wooden walls is completely covered with a brightly coloured mural, which is of Amerindian origin.

It is, however, more than a house; it's a school for traditional native wood carvers. It is also a monument of great significance for the people of the area because it commemorates the work and life of one of the great Canadian sculptors, Tahayren (Charlie Edenshaw). It was Robert Davidson, the great grandson of Tahayren who carved the facade of the wood sculpture school, erected in honour of his famous ancestor.

A commemorative plaque in English, French, and the Haida dialect of the Masset area summarizes the life and work of the sculptor:

"Charlie Edenshaw was the foremost of the Haida carvers at the time when their art first achieved international recognition. Born as Skidegate, he acquired the traditional carving skills from his uncle and translated them into brilliant artistry. His works, executed in a personal, modern style, in argillite and

silver, extended the traditional range of Haida art. Edenshaw acted as a consultant and illustrator for many anthropological publications, including the work of J.R. Swanton. His work is represented in museums in North America and Europe."

Tahayren knew illness and poverty in his youth. At an early age he perfected his skills as a goldsmith and a worker in silver jewellery. His artistic individuality grew slowly with maturity and he became a skilled sculptor in wood, argillite and silver.

He was one of the rare nineteenth century Amerindians who obtained financial independence through art as an occupation. Anthropologists such as Marius Barbeau have chronicled his life and his work. His many museum pieces can still be seen in Canadian, American, and European museums. His Indian name Tahayren means "Noise-in-the-House".

Quebec music industry awards

The Quebec recorded music industry will hold an awards gala similar to the Grammy Awards in the U.S. and the Canadian industry's Juno Awards held annually in Toronto.

The event, organized by the Association du Disque et de l'Industrie du Spectacle Que., a group of Quebec record producers, agents, publicists and distributors, will take place in Montreal, September 23 at the Expo Theatre and will be televised by Radio Canada, the CBC's French-language service.

A spokesman for the association said the reason for the awards gala was the constant growth of Quebec's recorded music industry and the absence to date of a major event celebrating the vitality of the Quebec scene.

Unlike the Juno Awards, said the spokesman, the Quebec awards will honour the quality and cultural relevance of a record as opposed to its popularity.

Awards in 26 categories including record-of-the-year, arranger-of-the-year, and best western record of the year will be presented.

The awards have yet to be named, but organizers are considering calling them either Lauriers or Felixes.



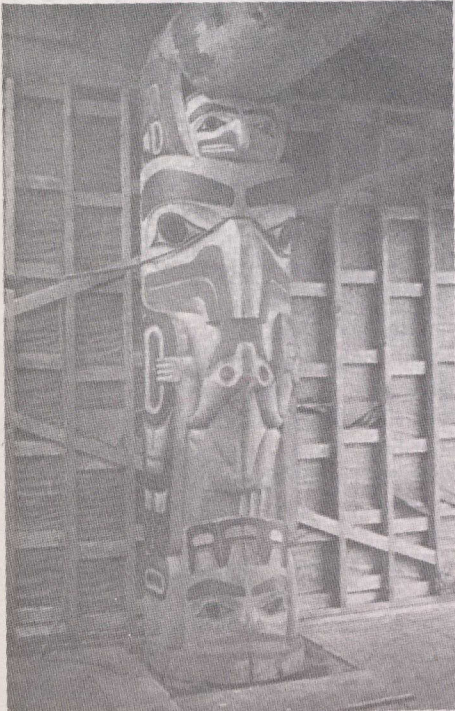
Traditional Haida mask carved by Tahayren of British Columbia.

Arts briefs

The Choir of Saint John's College, Cambridge, England, which performed in Montreal recently, is probably the oldest choir in the world. It has been in existence since 1511, when the college received its charter as part of Cambridge University. The choir's repertoire reflects its history, in that it also stretches from the fifteenth century to the present. It was the choir's only appearance in Canada during its 1979 North American tour.

The Shaw Festival has announced the formation of an Actors Studio beginning this season. The purpose is to provide members of the acting company with an opportunity to further their training, and experiment in the various aspects of theatre. Michael Franks, with the Festival administration for the past three years, has been appointed director of the Studio, Iris McGregor will conduct voice classes, and former prima ballerina of the Netherlands Opera Ballet School, Mascha Stom, will give the classes in movement.

The Burning Book, the story of the man who translated the Bible into English in the 1500s (and was burned to death for his efforts) will become a major Canadian film this autumn under director Paul Almond. Expected to cost more



Interior of carving house showing Robert Davidson's modern totem in Haida style.