

News of the arts

Rare books to be preserved

The Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproduction, a new, independent, non-profit organization, has been awarded a \$2-million grant by the Canada Council to preserve and make available an important part of the Canadian heritage.

The grant, awarded for five years, will enable the institute to seek out all Canadian works published before 1900 which are rare or scarce in Canada or that are known to be in other countries, and to preserve and catalogue the material in microreproduction. Books, pamphlets and broadsheets in all subjects relating to Canada will be copied and made available to interested individuals, libraries and other institutions.

Librarians and specialists in Canadian studies are concerned about the major weakness in library holdings of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century printed materials by Canadians or about Canada or Canadians. Not only is it difficult to obtain access to such material, they say, but the books that are available are rapidly deteriorating through heavy use. As Canadian studies assume a more important role in the curricula and research programs at Canadian universities, colleges and schools, the urgency of dealing with this problem increases.

Chamber music prize

An annual prize to encourage composers to write chamber music and to foster the performance of Canadian works by chamber music groups has been created by Governor-General Jules Léger. A panel of distinguished Canadian musicians will judge the entries.

The first competition will be held soon, the winner to receive a trophy, sculpted by Montreal artist Louis Archambault, following a concert at the Governor General's residence. The performance, to be given by a leading ensemble, will be broadcast nationally.

Eligible competitors for the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music will be Canadians and landed immigrants with at least one year's residence.

National treasures spared

Grants totalling \$687,000 have been made available to various cultural institutions through the Cultural Properties Import and Export Act this year. The act creates a period of delay when export permit applications have been received for collections and cultural objects considered part of the national heritage, al-

lowing Canadian institutions to consider the purchase of these items. Grants to assist in such purchases also are available through the act.

As a result of these grants the following have remained in the country: a nineteenth-century collection of rare Bella Bella masks (purchased by the British Columbia Provincial Museum); a Fifties collection of Inuit carvings and a rare set of four early nineteenth-century chairs made by Micmac Indians (purchased by the National Museum of Man in Ottawa); 130 gravure and cyanotype field prints of North West Coast Indians by Edward Curtis (purchased by the Edmonton Art Gallery); four Canadian scene photographs by Paul Strand; an 1823 Peter Rindisbacher watercolour; a Courbet still-life from the Sir William Van Horne Collection, and an Aelbert Cuyp landscape, originally from the James Ross collection (purchased by the National Gallery).

Other government-assisted purchases include two eighteenth-century oil paintings of an Eskimo man and woman, which are among the earliest representations of Inuit clothing, by the Public Archives of Canada, and rare books by the Ralph Pickard Bell Library of Mount Allison University, the Memorial University Library in St. John's, Newfoundland and the Nova Scotia Museum.

Museum's collection of native art enhanced with important new acquisition



The National Museum of Man recently acquired a painting by Daphne Odjig — well-known Odawa artist — for its collection of contemporary works by Canadian Indians.

The painting, called *The Indian in Transition*, illustrates the history of North American native people as seen by a contemporary Canadian Indian artist. The left panel of the mural depicts Indian culture before the coming of the Europeans. The second section depicts the arrival of Europeans with their priests, flag and promise of friendship and kindness. The third echoes the cultural deprivation the Indian has experienced, symbolized by an empty whiskey bottle, a fallen cross, wrecked cars, slums and broken drums. The final portion shows the Indians escaping from their cultural prison. The sun has reappeared. The drum is once more intact. *The Indian in Transition* joins 40 works on paper by Alex Janvier, as well as the early works of Norval Morrisseau.