## Strung out from coast to coast

There are many Canadian musicians whose talents are largely unknown to the public. Stringband, now with two albums, is a group whose abilities have gone relatively unappreciated. National Melodies, the second album by Stringband, is a unique experience for the Canadian listener. Without being jingoes, Stringband are able to mention John and Olive Diefenbaker. P.E. Trudeau, Ross Thatcher, and Elwood Glover; conjure up images of wide-open prairies, rural Saskatchewan, the big Western city, Jutra-like scenes of Northern Quebec, and hearty Canadian narrow-mindedness. all within two sides of a record.

The core of Stringband consists of Marie-Lynn Hammond, who sings and plays guitar, banjo, tambourine, and hand drum, and Bob Bossin, who sings and plays guitar, banjo, and banjolino. On *National Melodies*. Marie-lynn and Bob are joined by Ben Mink on fiddle, mandolin, viola, and electric guitar. All three musicians are versatile and accomplished, and together they become creators and artisans.

Stringband draw most of their repertoire from the British

and French influenced Canadian folk music, rather than the American-styled country-folk, which is so much in the vogue. This element is, to understate the matter, a pleasant change. One of the songs, "Le Prisonnier De Londres," is a French version of the English ballad, "Lord Bateman", while another, "Waissailing", (which they draw from the British folk-singing Watersons) is a variation of the popular "Gower Wassail". All of the traditionally-styled tunes on National Melodies are wellplayed, especially the jigs, which are lively but much too short.

However, it is with their original compositions the Stringband really prove their might. Marie-Lynn demonstrates her songwriting ability with "Ways of the Heart", on which she also provides stunning vocals. Bob Bossin's "Lunenburg Concerto", is a song whose sensitivity and simplistic charm exceed the compositions of most American folk artists.

More light-hearted numbers such as "Intruders", "Show Us The Length", (somewhat irreverant, but not at all irrelevant, that one), and "Dief Will Be the Chief Again" are all superb. "Intruders" is a satirical tune, (I hope), about an Albertan's view of Easterners who bases his opinions on the validity of the film "Billy Jack".

Without discounting the rest of the songs on National Melodies, the tune deserving most attention is "Mrs. Murphy", written by both Marie-Lynn and Bob. "Mrs. Murphy" concerns itself with an elderly widow who maintains her "fine quarter-section" somewhere in Saskatchewan. Her children "Have gone to the city, where they dress up so smart and they talk so pretty. Traded the land for a catalogue vision of modern apartments right out of their dreams."

Ms. Hammond establishes herself as a leading folk singer in Canada. (in my opinion) with her handling of this song. She manages to convey through her voice a subtle but important tinge of despair, similar to Joni Mitchell's achievement with "The Last Time I Saw Richard". Along with tasteful instrumentation, Marie-Lynn's sensitive vocals do justive to the poetic lyrics of this song.

Despite all the fun Stringband has on this album, despite the jokes and heckling from the backup "choir", perhaps the raison d'etre of the group can be extracted from a verse in Murphy":

"There's a fancy new outfit got 2000 acres where highway and the Grand cross. It's them gets them when the rain doesn't fall they write off their profiloss, 'Cause Thatcher is fra with the boss."

Stringband will be an ing at the Hovel on Nove 21. If you're planning onbieither or both of the String albums they will cost you one to three bucks less a Hovel than at Kelly's or Sa *Gordon* 1

### Le Sex Shop only one attraction

This Friday the Varscona Theatre begins a film festival of a sort never before presented in Edmonton. *The Festival of International Film 1975* features a film a day November 7 through November 13, with matinee presentations Saturday, Sunday, and Tuesday.

The Little Theatre of Jean Renoir, directed and written by Jean Renoir, opens the festival Friday. It would be hard to ask of a movie much more than is given here: songs, laughter, a bit of heartbreak and melancholy, a mellow spirit and some gentle insight. This is followed by La Grande Bouffe Saturday afternoon, and Le Sex Shop Saturday evening. In the first, four men and nymphomanic school teacher spend a weekend eating themselves to death. The second concerns a bookshop owner who runs a franchise in hard-core magazines and sadomasochistic gear. This is a cute portrayal of the people in the film, their perversions, their jokes, and the whores.

Sunday sees *Second Gun* (an American documentary on the assassination of Robert F.

Kennedy) and *Love and An* (a Lina Wertmuller Neap gothic romance).

Other films in the series: H and Minds directed by F Davis (Monday); Les Violon Bal directed by Michel D (Tuesday matinee); Ar Rubinstein-Love of Life dire by Francois Reichenback(T day evening; Les Or directed by Mic Brault(Wednesday); and Now My Love directed Claude Lelouch (Thursday) Matinees are at 2:00

evening performances at 8

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# ALAN BATES in KING OF HEART

In an isolated surreal pocket of World War I, the British send Alan Bates into a highly sinikely, tiny French town to discover a bomb. The townspeople have fled and the inmates of the local asylum have taken their place. The resulting interaction gives us some of the most enchanting sequences on film. When the reality of the statening armies breaks the bubble and the inmates have returned to the asylum, we can really share Bates solution about which people are really insane. In our opinion, KING OF HEARTS is a rare treat; funny and sad at the same time.

This wacky, crazy, beautiful film has awakened, become a giant, and turned the movie weight upside down. Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people are cheering the Kingein a few selected cities.

There is one reason for this phenomenon: people love the King After 3½ years in Cambridge, Mass\_stal going strong!

