

Toys displayed in special seasonal exhibitions

Two Canadian art galleries, The Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto and The Winnipeg Art Gallery, are presenting Christmas toy exhibitions designed to appeal to children of all ages.

One exhibition features folk toys collected by humorist Walter Trier; the other features toys from the turn of the century.

Folk toys inspire art

Walter Trier: A Celebration of Toys at the Art Gallery of Ontario from December 13 to January 25, was organized from the gallery's extensive collection of Walter Trier's folk toys, illustrations for children's books, and humorous and satirical drawings.

Walter Trier was born in Prague in 1890 and died in Collingwood, Ontario in 1951. He was an avid collector of folk toys which were an important inspiration for his art.

The exhibition includes watercolour illustrations for a book documenting the folk art of Saxony, along with the toys that inspired them. Among the toys are wooden figures of a buttermaid, a shepherd, a horse and rider, and characters of everyday rural life in the Erzgebirge region of Saxony.

Other toys reflect such Christmas themes as the Nativity with the Magi and angels. There is also a large carved Christmas chandelier.

Toys of the past

The Toy Shoppe, a Christmas exhibition at The Winnipeg Art Gallery from December 14 to January 12, features a display

arranged within a shop setting, with toys in the windows and on shelves around the shop. A Christmas tree stands in one corner, decorated with small toys and handmade gifts according to Victorian custom and decked with strings of threaded cranberries and popcorn.

There are no plastic objects in the shop, although some toys are made from celluloid. Dolls were sometimes made of celluloid, but more fashionable dolls had porcelain heads with delicately moulded features and eyes that not only closed but were also able to look from side to side.

Toys of the Victorian and Edwardian era were often miniatures of adult possessions. Furniture in doll houses followed the prevailing designs of the period and dolls were dressed in fashionable clothes of the period.

Emphasis was placed on the educational aspect of toys. An abacus, a counting frame of beads strung on metal rods, was used to teach the first steps in arithmetic, while wooden blocks, covered with paper printed with objects illustrating the alphabet, became a lesson in rudimentary spelling. Other blocks, when assembled correctly, formed a picture and from these evolved the jigsaw puzzle.

One of the most traditional of all toys was the Noah's Ark, with its folding roof and carved wooden animals. It was often the only toy a Victorian child was allowed to play with on a Sunday.

Prime minister's greeting



Season's Greetings

Bonne et Heureuse

Année

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and his wife Mila with their children Mark, Benedict, Caroline and Nicolas in the portrait appearing on their 1985 Christmas card.

Post Office features familiar floats in yuletide parade of stamps



The Santa Claus parade, a tradition which annually heralds the arrival of the yuletide season in Canada, is featured on three Christmas stamps that were issued on October 23.

René J. Marin, chairman of the Board of Canada Post Corporation, said that "the stamp designs, depicting colour-



ful floats, reflect the high interest Canadians of all ages have for the Santa Claus parades".

Paintings reproduced

The stamps' designs were reproduced from three paintings by Toronto artist Barbara Carroll. They depict an on lookers



view of the parade.

Santa Claus is featured on the first class domestic stamp and two other views are used for the 39-cent, first class stamp for mail to the United States and its territories and the 68-cent first class stamp for mail to international destinations other than the US.