

# News of the arts

## Art by disabled tours Europe

As part of the International Year of Disabled Persons, a Canadian exhibition entitled, *Art and the Handicapped*, is currently on tour in Europe.

The exhibition, organized by Montreal's Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre, opened in February in the Maison de la culture in Ajaccio, Corsica. It consists of 40 works done by physically and mentally handicapped persons participating in the art therapy workshop of the Lethbridge Centre. A slide show on the workshop and a film, *Shadows and Light*, produced by the art and communications students of Montreal's Concordia University, is being presented along with the exhibition.

The workshop was set up nine years ago by Maurice Brault, who uses drawing to get his students to express themselves and tell about their development in picture form. "The purpose of art therapy is first and foremost to help the patient express the inner image of the dream, in developing a creative action more or less paralyzed by physical constraints or psychological fixations. This means of exploration can also be a diagnostic instrument for psychiatrists and psychologists," explained Brault. He became aware of the widespread interest



*An oil pastel by a 63-year-old woman who suffered brain-damage in an accident.*

in his method at symposiums and seminars organized during the Canadian tour of the exhibition. Art students, for example, see in it a new avenue of study, and rehabilitation specialists view it as a means of following their clients' development.

Brault said that his approach, using drawing, painting, puppets and potter's

clay, can be used by anyone to express himself. "It is important not to confuse a means of expression with the use of arts and crafts or recreational projects," he said.

Three Canadian universities, Concordia University, the University of Toronto and the University of Victoria, are already training therapists to use this technique.

After its stop in Ajaccio, the exhibition travelled to the Cultural Centre of Marseille in March, and is currently in Aix-en-Provence. The exhibition will continue onto Lausanne, Switzerland in May, the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris in June and Arc-et-Senans, France in July and August. The exhibition is also expected to be present in July at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization headquarters in Paris. The tour is receiving financial assistance from the National Museum of Canada and the Department of External Affairs.

Governor-General Edward Schreyer recently opened the exhibition, *Treasures of Ancient Nigeria: Legacy of 2,000 Years*, at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. Nigerian High Commissioner to Canada Oladele Akadiri also officiated at the opening of the exhibition, which comprises 100 objects including bronze plaques from the royal courts of Benin and the earliest West African art discovered by recent archaeology.



*The City, a work done in feltpen by a 29-year-old psychotic.*