

And why an Art Bank, anyway?

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This event, with many others to come, is an outstanding first (but definitely not last) opportunity for the general public to see art, in an informal manner, which really belongs to THEM ... the taxpayers. Just what is 'Art Bank'? In 1972 the Federal Government allocated \$5 million to form a valuable collection of contemporary Canadian painting, sculpture and graphics (prints) for public distribution. This is a kind of 'bank' of art ... to be drawn upon and to be placed, not in art galleries, but in public places where the general public might see more easily just



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what kind of cultural image is being fostered by our vigorous granting system.

Too often films, music, plays and visual art is produced by very creative talent in Canada and never reaches the commercial market. The pity of it is that therefore it rarely, if ever, reaches the "man on the street."

No wonder that he knows little of the growing force of cultural imagery being produced around him.

He knows more about hockey, and hockey players, because the fine art of hockey playing is fed to him daily in large doses through the media — fed to him often by highly trained and skilled observers. No wonder then that the aver-

age Canadian is almost a connoisseur in matters about hockey and can discuss on an international level the finer points of the game.

If the average Canadian were to be fed a daily dose of well-informed news or visual reality in art, opera and theatre, then he or she might be as ardent opera lovers as the Italians or as discriminating a theatre goer as the Londoner.

It takes a long time and lots of exposure at all levels of performance, and especially top performance, to become a truly cultivated society.

The French, for instance, are cultivated in culinary arts, and the general interest in good cooking stems from the lowliest peasant in the fields to

the patron of haute cuisine. The French as a people have earned their right to being called a superior food culture.

Canadians are fast becoming a 'hamburger society' with a 'haute cuisine' of Ken tucky Fried Chicken ... God forbid our taste in art become similarly depraved.

Enlightened government policy has given Canadians a choice. Sponsoring art production at all levels, including the highest "highbrow" forms, is wise.

Canadians have the choice of following the 'game' of art from its finer and more difficult points of performance. We must appreciate Olympic performances in arts as well as in sport.

Some cooking is an acquired taste. Not all dishes appeal, but appreciation of standards can be formed within the field of like or dislike. So it is with art ... without subjecting oneself to all forms of art, no appreciation can develop. To know 'what one likes' is to limit oneself to 'liking what one knows.'

With these thoughts in mind, the new art programmes of the Harbourfront Gallery will attempt to expose the public to all forms of art and food experiences, multicultural and Canadian contemporary imagery in a "park" atmosphere, for casual and thoughtful enjoyment.

The Art Bank is one of many exhibitions planned to excite, perhaps disturb, maybe please ... but above all create awareness in our growing cultural machinery and what it is doing. THE ART BANKS IS YOURS ... There will be several other exhibitions drawn from the 'vaults' in Ottawa and placed on view, with information, lectures and directions about how you too can be instrumental in placing works you see and like in places of your own public environment.

Remember — the Art Bank will be open all day, Tuesday through Sunday (closed Mondays) from October 9 to November 7 — the grand opening is on Saturday, October 9 at 3:00 p.m.

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