

## Private art collection featured in exhibition

A recent major exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, *Selected View: The Longstaffe Collection 1959-1984*, was mounted to pay tribute to J. Ronald Longstaffe, one of Canada's leading collectors and private benefactors.

The exhibition was composed of about one quarter of the more than 1 000 works of art including paintings, sculpture, drawings, watercolours and graphics collected by Mr. Longstaffe between 1959 and 1984.



Le Bucheron, in oil by Alfred Pellán, 1947.

One hundred and eight artists of national and international distinction were represented in the 243 works of art.

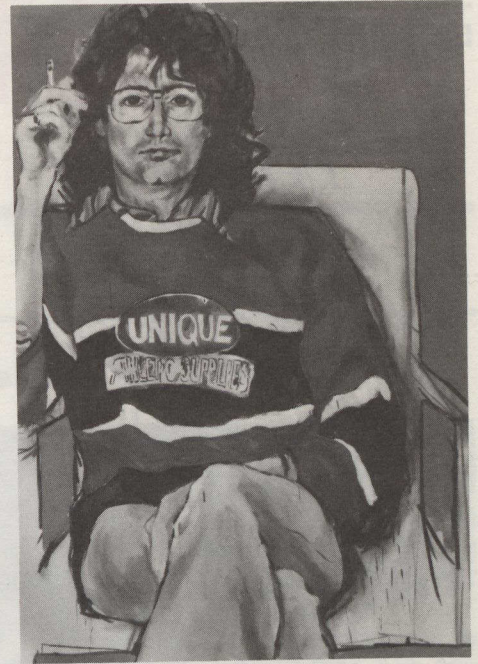
Several pieces by contemporary Canadian, American and European artists, such as Picasso, Magritte, Rouault, Rauschenberg, Stella, Jasper Johns, William Kurelek, David Milne, Mary Pratt and Paterson Ewen, were on view for the first time.

### Long-term collector

Mr. Longstaffe is a past president of the Vancouver Art Gallery Association, a former board member of the National Museums Corporation of Canada and executive vice-president and director of Canfor Corporation. He has been collecting art for more than 25 years and his gifts to the Vancouver Gallery's permanent collection are valued at more than \$1 million and are considered a milestone in the Vancouver Art Gallery's history and development.

In addition to the art works he has donated outright, Mr. Longstaffe has put some of his private holdings on extended loan to the Vancouver Art Gallery. They are considered as part of the gallery's national and international collection and are an important resource for mounting exhibitions of contemporary art.

When Mr. Longstaffe began to collect art, he decided to concentrate on contemporary Canadian art. He admits there was no systematic approach to the development of his collection, apart from his personal commitment



Unique Athletic Supplies (Eric Gamble), acrylic, charcoal on canvas by Lynn Donoghue, 1979.

to support Canadian artists. Financial manageability and access to the works were the only restrictive factors for what many regard as a collection of national importance.

The exhibition was funded by the government of British Columbia through the BC Cultural Fund and the BC Lottery Fund.

An illustrated catalogue was produced for the exhibition with an essay by Vancouver Art Gallery curator Lorna Farrell-Ward, who organized the exhibition. It includes Mr. Longstaffe's personal experiences and reminiscences as a collector, as well as a list of works and artists' biographies.

## Travelling alligator pie

Theatre Passe Muraille's adaptation of Dennis Lee's best selling book *Alligator Pie* is currently enjoying a very successful national tour.

The book, *Alligator Pie* was first published in 1974 to rave reviews by adults and children and it was voted the most popular children's book by librarians across Canada. The same year, Theatre Passe Muraille presented a stage version that completely sold out its extended run in Toronto.

Between 1974 and 1977, Mr. Lee published two more books, *Garbage Delight* and *Nicholas Knock*. Together, with *Alligator Pie*, they sold a total of 250 000 copies. In 1982, Theatre Passe Muraille revived the show using material from all three books and the show enjoyed a highly successful tour in southern Ontario in 1983-84.



J. Ronald Longstaffe with guest at the opening of *Selected View: The Longstaffe Collection 1959-1984* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, January 12, 1985. They are in front of Claude Tousignant's *Accelérateur dramatique* (1968).

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