



Architect's model of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, showing (right) the \$6-million extension to be completed by 1975.

### A new face and more space for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada's oldest art institution

Groundbreaking for a \$6-million extension of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts took place on June 29 in the gardens of Hickson House, immediately behind the Museum.

The Museum's expansion has been made possible by a \$3-million grant from the Federal Government, a \$1.5-million grant from the provincial government of Quebec, a \$1-million anonymous donation, and \$500,000-donation from Robert and Jack Cummings to mark the seventy-fifth

birthday of their father, Maxwell Cummings, a former Museum board member.

The exposed concrete extension which will more than double gallery space, will allow for many facilities now lacking.

The addition will not attempt to extend the neo-classical marble appearance of the original building, erected in 1912, but instead will seek to enhance the old structure through modern architectural expression.

The Stable, housing studios, the Junior Committee gallery, the Café du Musée, Hickson House and the administrative building, behind the Museum, will be demolished. A new wing will provide 59,100 square feet of additional space as well as three terraces and a court for sculptures.

Eight galleries will be available in the new wing, and four will be added to the old building, increasing space from 24,350 to 51,200 square feet. A gallery for prints and drawings as

#### The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts: past and present

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada's oldest art institution is also one of the oldest in North America.

The first permanent gallery was opened in 1879. The next year, its first full year of operation, 7,000 persons visited the gallery. The present building, one of Montreal's finest examples of neo-classic architecture, was opened in 1912. A new wing was added in 1939. Today, annual attendance is over 300,000.

#### Chief donors

Benaiah Gibb, a merchant, made the first bequest to the Museum in 1879 — a number of paintings and bronzes as well as \$8,000. Since then, major donors have been John D. Tempest, William and Agnes Learmont, Lord Strathcona, R.B. Angus, Sir William van Horne, F.J. Shepherd, Robert Lindsay, Harriet J. Macdonnell,

Horsley and Annie Townsend, A. Sidney Dawes, William Gilman Cheney, the family of James Wilson Morrice, F. Cleveland Morgan, Olive Hosmer, Mabel Molson, David W. Parker, Harry A. Norton, Lady Davis, Senator L.J. Forget, Dr. J.W.A. Hickson, Mrs. Howard Pillow, Mr. and Mrs. A Murray Vaughan, John McDonnell, and Saidye and Samuel Bronfman.

The Montreal Museum is the only major museum in Canada combining the fine and the decorative arts. The permanent collection features works by the Old Masters and decorative arts dating back to 3000 B.C. There is no admission fee. Viewers can see works by such masters as Delacroix, Corot, Daumier, Courbet, Renoir, Sisley, Pissarro, Cézanne, Rouault, Matisse, Dufy, Picasso, Giovanni del Biondo, Gaddi, Botticelli, Mantegna, Tintoretto, Guardi, Tiepolo, Canaletto,

Neri de Bicci, Rembrandt, Membling, Ruysdael, de Witte, Rubens, El Greco, Velasquez, Ribera, Goya, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Hopner, Constable and many others.

The Museum's collection of Canadian art is one of the largest and most comprehensive anywhere, schools and periods being represented, with emphasis on such masters as Krieghoff, Morrice, Borduas, Riopelle and Pellan.

In decorative arts, the Museum's collection of glass from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 400, including items from Greece, Egypt, Syria, Persia and Chaldea is particularly noteworthy.

The unique achievements of the great Indian civilizations of Mexico, Central and South America, as well as of Indians of the Canadian West Coast and the native peoples of Africa and Australia are also represented.