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The Great Metro Experiment Still Works

[Observations by T. V. Kelly, co-author of *Transit For the 70's*, special report by the Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies]

The city of Montreal has three million people, a mean winter temperature of 26°, an average annual snow fall of 120 inches and a Metro.

It has been called the "First 20th Century City in North America," a phrase that is in one sense too flattering. It suggests that Montreal and its citizens have solved the many-faceted problems which were planted when cities took modern form in the 19th century. Montreal has many urban problems, some in grievous form, but the Metro and its associated structures have offered solutions for some and at least hope that others can be solved. The core problem of the cities is, of course, the fact that their downtowns are decaying. Montreal was decaying. It is no longer.

It is possible now to move around downtown Montreal swiftly and comfortably and safely and to do so in a constantly pleasant environment. The Metro and the building complexes which rise from its principal stations make it possible to use the downtown part of the city as easily in February as in August. They have made it an underground metropolis where it is possible to live in the middle of a major city without ever feeling the cold wind or fearing the onslaught of a robber. It reflects, in the phrase of a visitor, Michael Harris of the San Francisco Chronicle, "a city in love with itself." The city paid for the Metro, and it continues to pay when there is an operating deficit, and it continues to benefit from its own munificence. The first flood of tax income from the new developments which have flourished as the Metro has grown made it possible for Montreal to finance a major part of the Metro.

The remaking of Montreal began largely when Donald Gordon, President of Canadian National Railways decided to do something constructive about twenty-two acres of ugly, open, elevated tracks coming into the heart of the city.

He invited New York developer William Zeckendorf to construct a building complex over the tracks. (Zeckendorf later lost the project to his English partners because of a personal financial debacle.)

Zeckendorf hired Vincent Ponte, of Boston, who in turn hired such architectural giants as I. M. Pei and Mies van der Rohe and "Corny" Cobb. The result, ingenious and beautiful, now covers a great connected block of downtown Montreal; and it has created a multi-leveled city, a concept new in fact if somewhat older in theory. Ponte points out that Leonardo da Vinci drew a plan 480 years ago for putting pedestrians and wagons on different levels.

The dimensions of the planning are illustrated by the $70 million Place Bonaventure, one of several complexes but the one which deals directly with Mr. Gordon's problem.

First there were the elevated tracks.

Now there are three levels below the tracks. On the bottom the Metro. Above that is a shopping arcade. The shopping arcade has five acres of shops, a small handsome movie house, food, flowers, and the casual necessities of life such as razor blades. Above the arcade is a huge exhibit hall in which a reception for 12,000 can be held without crowding.

Above the exhibit hall are the Canadian Na-

tional's tracks and platforms, spruced up.

Above the tracks is the merchandize mart.

Above the mart is the 400-room Bonaventure Hotel, a luxurious inn with, among other things, an outdoor swimming pool, entered in winter as well as in summer, through a water-level swinging glass door. The water is eighty-five degrees, with rising clouds of steam, while at poolside the snow is high and the temperature is very low indeed.

The Bonaventure is at one end of the No. Two Metro line, the longest one, which travels 8.6 miles to Henri Bourassa St. at the northern edge of town. On Henri Bourassa, on a rather shabby commercial street, is the Chez Bardet which is easily one of the best restaurants in North America, a clear illustration of the manner in which the Metro has tied together the city — a guest at the Bonaventure can get to the Chez Bardet with ease in less than a half an hour, from door to door.

Construction of the Metro began May 23, 1962.

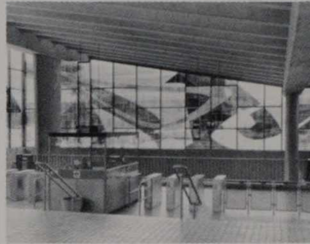
It now has three major lines all coming together at a common center at Berri-de Montigny station which is downtown, a few blocks from the St. Lawrence River.

Line No. One runs 4.33 miles parallel to the River and has ten stations. On this line, ten minutes or so from the Bonaventure station, is the Place des Arts, the city-owned complex of theatres.

Line No. Four, the shortest, crosses the St. Lawrence to St. Helen's Island, the Ile Notre Dame, and to Longueil; and it was this line which hauled the millions of visitors to Expo 67 and to Expo's permanent, annual successor, "Man and His World."

The most striking things about the Metro are not the statistics. It is not the largest or most impressive underground railway on the continent and as a thoroughly modern subway is it not unique even in Canada. Toronto has an excellent one. The Metro's cars move with no great speed, the maximum being fifty miles an hour, with the regular speeds varying between twenty and thirty-two. It is a relatively short subway, not designed to bring commuters from the far suburbs but simply to permit commuters and everyone else to move about the inner city with speed and comfort. The commuters are served, however, by an excellent system of connecting bus lines and short haul cabs. The Metro operates within its designed limits with great success. Rush-hour trains are only three minutes apart. Non rush-hour cars come every four minutes on Lines One and Two, every 6.6 minutes on Line Four. (The times are computer controlled.)

The greatest excellence is in the beauty of everything which meets the eye. The cars, designed by Jacques Gillon are of a deep blue enamel. They are spotless and the air within is clean and pleasant. The cars are linked in nine-car trains, they have clean and simple lines and big rubber tired wheels which make the ride smooth and silent. Each station was designed by a different architect. At Peel Station a local artist, Mousson, created brilliantly colored abstract murals; at Bonaventure the high-vaulted walls give the sequence of vast domed chambers a cathedral quality. A multi-colored ceramic bas-relief "The Poet in the Universe" is at the Crémazie Station.



Above the Metro, and above and below the ground, are the building complexes and the promenades.

Place Ville Marie: The first of the complexes — seven acres. A forty-eight-story cruciform tower, off-center next to a four acre plaza. The tower has 1.5 million square feet of office space. Below are four more levels with 1.2 million square feet. Promenades laid in part through sunken courts give access to the subterranean shops and below the promenades are two levels of parking. Trucks come into the Place Ville Marie through the underground roadways without interference at any level with parking or pedestrians. The Place Ville Marie network is tied into adjacent buildings so that pedestrians can move under cover through the downtown.

Place Victoria: A sleek, forty-seven-story concrete and glass tower by Moretti and Nervi, with tapering corner columns, which houses the Stock Exchange. The complex is tied into Place Bonaventure.

Place Bonaventure: The fifteen-story rough concrete structure which houses the Hotel Bonaventure and the rest of the complex (described above) contains 3.1 million square feet of space and it is tied to the whole subsurface system.

Place du Canada: Two dissimilar buildings, the first the Hotel Chateau Champlain, thirty-eight stories with 640 rooms, designed by D'Astous & Pothier. The second is twenty-eight stories of precast concrete and houses offices. Under the paved plaza is a five-level podium housing a bank, shopping promenades, a movie theatre and other facilities. The entire complex is tied by a pedestrian bridge to Dominion Square to the north.

Rides on the Metro cost thirty cents.

Drug Use In Canada

[A REVIEW OF A SERIES OF REPORTS, AND HOW TO GET THEM IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE]

In May, 1969 the Canadian government thought it was time it seized itself of all there is to know about non-medical drug use and appointed the Commission of Inquiry on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs (also called the LeDain Commission for Gerald LeDain, its chairman).

It had a huge assignment, being charged with:
— "Compiling the present fund of knowledge" concerning the medical and non-medical use of sedative, stimulant, tranquilizing, hallucinogenic and other psychotropic drugs and substances, and
— reporting on why people use drugs non-medically, the social, economic, educational and philosophical factors involved, and the extent of the phenomenon, and,
— recommending how the federal government, alone or cooperating with other levels of government, can alleviate the problems involved.

The job lent itself to glib answers, but the Commission undertook the task with sensitivity. So far it has put out three reports, causing a good deal of stir in Canada, and in the near future will issue its final report and recommendations for legislation.*

The first was called Interim Report, published in April, 1970 — a 335-page paperback which paid careful attention to the subtleties of definitions, statistics, and scientific methodology, or the lack of it.

Drawing on scientific, street, legal and historical information and opinion gathered in hearings all over Canada and from analyses of virtually every significant medical report on drug use, the Commission reviewed the major drug classifications in terms of their medical use, what happens to them in the body as far as is known, their psychological and physiological effects, tolerance and dependence, and their reactions with other drugs. The report also went into the distribution patterns of drugs and Canadian law on it. A person experienced in drug use could say it was a reasonable compilation.

As far as making recommendations, the Interim Report was tenderfooted. It pointed out that "the identification of the problem does not necessarily indicate what the wise social response should be. . . . The responses are themselves problems in some cases."

On balance, the Commission felt that the non-medical use of drugs should be controlled. And it called for more research with federal government support, including a suggestion that the federal government make available standard preparations of cannabis (the plant from which marijuana and hashish come).

THE SECOND REPORT, published in January, 1972, dealt with treatment of some of the most difficult drug areas: speed, opiates, and alcohol. And it noted that there are at least five ways of defining sickness:

1. When structural or chemical alterations tend to reduce life expectancy, such as inflammations, atrophy or poisoning (called the biomedical model).
2. When there are deviations from the general population, such as high blood pressure, myopia, grossly distorted moods — for example, feelings of exaggerated well-being (the actuarial model).
3. A disturbance of function, such as loss of memory, sexual potency, or muscular power (the functional model).
4. Suffering without obvious causes, such as neurotic anxiety, depression, hypochondria (the experiential model).
5. Anti-social behavior — the most controversial since one society's sickness may be another society's health (the social model).

The whole report is a valuable document both for those in health and legal fields as well as anyone seeking a broader understanding of the phenomenon and the bafflement it causes. A wide variety of experiences are summarized, but no miracle cures were discovered.

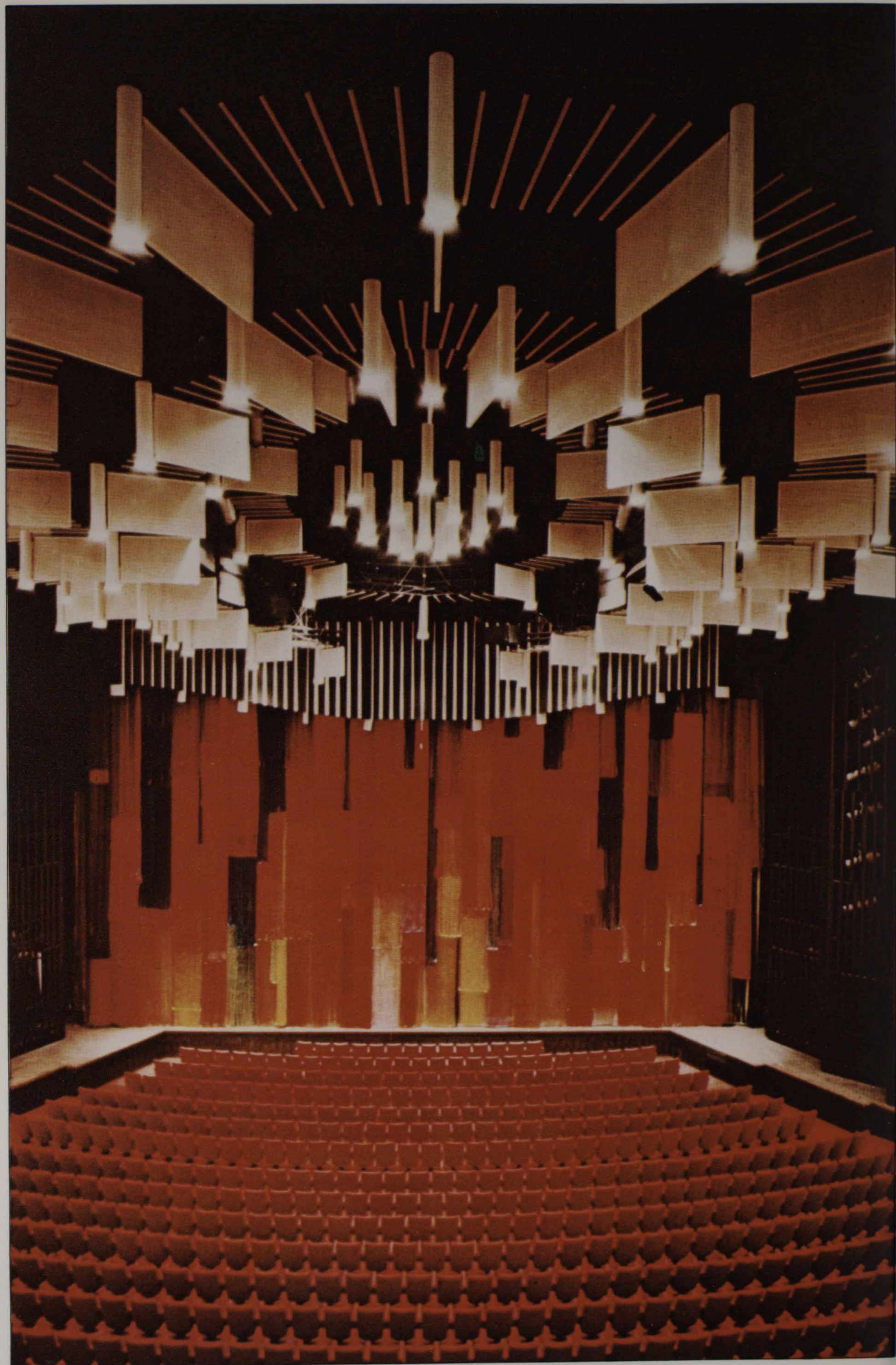
THE MOST RECENT REPORT (released May, 1972) is on cannabis. It considers distribution, use, the law, and the excesses of prohibition.

Any number of studies are summarized in which marijuana and hashish users make baskets, drive cars, look at bright lights and so on.

In their conclusions and recommendations, three of the Commissioners (two dissented) said that in the short term cannabis doesn't seem as harmful as alcohol, and not enough is known about long-term use to justify conclusions. They said the most serious medical and cultural problem is in its use by adolescents — in the twelve

Continued on page twelve

* As with all federal commissions, the recommendations will not be binding, and the government can act on them entirely, partly, or not at all. In Canada, however, governments seldom appoint commissions without taking some action on their recommendations.



The National Arts Centre

God placed world capitals on this earth in the twilight of the sixth day, apparently, for some of them seem to lack the pizzaz of other creations. Dear old Ottawa, for example — rather removed from the urban excitement of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, needed great effort to make it an exciting place to live. One such effort, which has paid off in more pleasure than almost anyone expected, is the three-year-old National Arts Centre, a large culture complex which practically transformed the city into a mecca for the arts.

Its three theatres are packed every night, and, compared to similar centres in North America, it almost *pays* for itself.

The Centre's inventive spirit and hefty budget, a combination which generally works best in the abstract, has surprised many in the theatrical world who had expected more of the same financial troubles that plague the centres in Washington, D.C., New York and Los Angeles. It has served as something of a model to Canada's regional cultural showcases.

It has even surprised N.A.C. personnel, including Hamilton Southam, the Centre's director general, and Bruce Corder, its operations director.

Ticket sales at the Centre average seventy-five per cent of capacity, but this figure is deceptive: attendance for experimental music or innovationist theatre, which the Centre conscientiously supplies liberally, is low, but attendance at "straight" theatrical events runs up to ninety-five per cent of capacity. French theatre — and in the Ottawa area French can be heard on the streets almost as often as English — sells sixty-eight per cent of its tickets by subscription alone. The Centre's music presentations are ninety per cent filled by subscription, leaving only 230 seats for box office sale. Attendance for the two orchestra series consistently ranges from eighty to one hundred per cent.

The Centre houses the three theatres and an intimate salon in an interlocking series of stark concrete hexagons. The Centre's construction was financed by a federal grant of $46.5 million. Its first operating budget, in 1969, was $2.9 million for the year, and this has increased to almost six million for 1972-73. Today, one-third of the budget is self-generated, with ticket sales amounting to $1.5 million, while another half-million is brought in from rentals of the halls, the boutique spaces downstairs and the catering. The Canada Council gives a half-million dollar subsidy to the orchestra and the theatre, and the balance needed comes directly from the Federal Government.

The Centre is located in the heart of the city just below Parliament Hill. Twelve bus lines converge here, and it is a transfer point between Ottawa and the largely French-speaking city of Hull across the Ottawa River in Quebec. Parking is available for enough cars to take care of the heavy attendance at night, and by day the Centre's boutiques make it a magnet for shoppers, revitalizing Ottawa's uptown area.

The architecture of the building is austere and controversial — a combination of pebbled concrete and monumental bronze doors. Inside, the angularity is moderated by five spiral chandeliers (the biggest sixty feet high and twelve hundred pounds) of hand-chipped squares of glass, which hang in the wells of curving staircases. The National Gallery, across Elgin Street, lends changing exhibits of tapestries and sculptures, which are scattered through the three levels of the Centre.

The biggest of the theatres is the Opera, which has been called the most acoustically perfect hall in the world. When the apron is elevated, it is the second largest stage in North America. Between the acts the stage is masked by a curtain of tufted wool so delicate it must be hoisted straight up — not rolled — and so vivid and shimmering, with its splashes of color against background threads of gold, that it in itself drew a standing ovation on opening night.

The Opera seats 2300 in its three levels of balconies and orchestra, where rows are widely spaced in continental style, without any center aisles. Every three rows have their own exit to the foyer to avoid congestion at the back of the theatre.

The Opera is the hall used for major attractions from overseas, from the U.S. and Canada, and in particular, is the home of the National Arts Centre's own symphony orchestra. Organized and conducted by Mario Bernardi, three-fourths of the orchestra's forty-four members are Canadians, many of whom like Bernardi, returned to Canada from positions abroad to join

Lower center, the National Arts Centre.

it. It has received such consistent praise that RCA (Canada) is already about to release its second Red Seal record. The first, "Five Songs for Dark Voice," featuring Canadian composer Harry Somers and Canadian contralto Maureen Forrester was a strong seller.

Among other engagements outside of Canada the orchestra played in New York last February, to a capacity house. "Beautiful," "front-rank," and "marvelous" said the New York Times.

The N.A.C. Theatre, seating nine hundred, has the proscenium stage of Shakespeare, with some removable seats for an enlarged stage, and is the setting for a series called Theatre from Coast to Coast, in which the best of the regional theatres is invited to perform.

Next year Jean Roberts, directress of the Centre's resident theatre company, will put on two shows in the theatre — one for an English-speaking audience and one for a French one — as part of its subscription series. Experimental plays are performed in the Studio, with actors under contract by the show, rather than by the season.

This small, hexagonal theatre, with one of the most versatile stages in the world, can change the size of its stage and can have its actors perform in the round or even have the audience in the round and the actors in the ring. The audience usually sits on chairs or pillows on the encircling bleachers, all of which, including the bleachers, can be removed. Actors can enter from the wings or from movable stairs which can be shifted along any one of the six sides of the narrow balcony.

The Intimate Salon, a comfortable room seating 150, is used for ethnic folk dancing, chamber music, small experimental works or, on occasion, as a rental space at $60 for receptions, from bridal to political. This fall another small area, a "mini-ciné," is expected to be opened as a film center.

As high as attendance at regular events has been, it has been surpassed by attendance at the student matinées which are held for English and French theatre and for opera and the dance. In the Centre's first year six matinée concerts drew 17,000 students.

Every month each school in the metropolitan area is called to pick up its sack at a side door — a big brown bag of posters of the next attractions and the rates at which they're offered. Students, as well as the elderly, can buy a series of five matinée concert tickets for $5 and students usually make up the bulk of any stand-by crowd in the evening. And it takes a good thing to make one stand by on a winter's evening in Ottawa.

The Canada Council

During the 1950's Canada became increasingly aware that the Continent was getting ever more homogeneous.

Coincidentally Isaak Walton Killam and Sir James Dunn, both men of extraordinary riches, died and left the treasury more than $100 million in death duties. This enabled Parliament to carry out the recommendations of the 1951 Massey Report on the arts and sciences to help the country develop a stronger national culture.

Fifty million was set aside for a university building program and another $50 million went into an endowment for the arts, humanities and social sciences. (The value has since more than doubled.) Parliament organized the Canada Council to administer this endowment and disburse its interest, giving money to artists — literary, visual and performing — and social scientists and to the organizations through which they operate.

After five years the government decided this revenue — which now amounts to $5 million — was unrealistic for a country that wanted to keep its talent at home. Since then the subsidy has been increased every year until today it is $38.8 million for 1972-73.

The government actually underwrites every aspect of art, not only through the Council, but through the National Film Board and the Canadian Film Development Corp.; the Canadian Radio-Television Commission and the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.; and the National Museums and their close affiliate, the National Library and Archives.

The Council, however, covers the whole range.

The humanities and social sciences now receive two-thirds of the Council budget. In the 1971-72 budget, twenty of the full $35 million budget went to the humanities, with most of it going directly to scholars. Individual artists received about two million of the $12 million budgeted for the arts, and the rest of it went to organizations that hire artists.

For four years the Council spent $10,000 to $20,000 a year on art, building up its own collection, which was shown throughout Canada and last year sold at a profit to the Department of External Affairs for exhibit in their embassies around the world.

Individual artists and scholars are chosen each year by two unpaid juries — the first doing preliminary screening, the second taking the final choice. For some art forms, the juries go across Canada, to New York or even to Europe to judge the contenders. Established artists receive awards of up to $7000 for a year's sustenance, while younger ones are given bursaries as high as $4000.

Although the arts receive the bulk of the nation's attention, the bulk of the money goes to social sciences and humanities.

To the occasional, spirited dismay of some members of Parliament, the grants have gone not only to probe more deeply into Canadiana, but to study such diffuse subjects as Buddhist scripture, small farming in the Carribean, new religion in Gabon and the bibliography of neo-Latin literature in 17th century France. Nevertheless, the Council continues to fund such subjects, on the basis that the scholars themselves are Canadians or Canadian immigrants and that scholarship, in any case, has no national limits.

Most Council-supported efforts, though, are definitely national. The Council has become the catalyst for Canadian culture, its friends say, and the grants it gives have strengthened the concept of the country itself and the new nationalism growing in Canada today. Emerging artists winning only small grants ten years ago are recognized producers today and fledgling repertory companies have transformed shaky experimental shows into viable and generally still experimental shows today.

Perhaps the Council's most important contributions to the arts have been its development of regional theatres, most of them built in the last decade with federal and provincial monies. Although the city of Montreal and the province of Saskatchewan had their own councils before 1957, there is now government money channeled to the arts in every border province and most of the major cities.

Road tours enliven many of the remote areas, with the best of the crop going to the big cities. They go to the stylistically dramatic new National Arts Centre in Ottawa, which averages an extraordinary sixty-eight percent subscription sale; to the huge O'Keefe Theatre in Toronto — after the Kennedy Center the second biggest theatre in North America — and to the Place des Arts in Montreal, where the majority of the productions are in French.

The Council has its critics, too.

Some say the Council gives too much to uncertain ventures. Others say it only supports "safe" bets, leaning to the more established, less

experimental, Eastern institutions.

It has been said that the almost intuitive reaction to artistic needs that made the Council an international model, has become boggled by bureaucracy. This has created a new barrier of formality — at times a militancy — between the Council and the recipients.

Some artists have formed the Canadian Artists Representation, which is asking for rental fees from the public galleries which exhibit their works, and dramatists have established the Playwrights Circle. The Circle has demanded production, by January 1, 1973, of one Canadian play out of every two put on in any of the forty-five Council-funded theatres — a ratio based on the recent radio-television quotas of the CRTC designed to curb U.S. influence in Canada.

Some producers disapprove of this or any government intervention — because it infringes on their creative license or because they doubt that the body of Canadian plays is big enough yet to support this ratio. Advocates point out that the attendance records at Canadian plays — bolstered by such successes as "The Ecstasy of Rita Joe" and "La Guerre, Yes Sir" — is higher than non-Canadian plays.

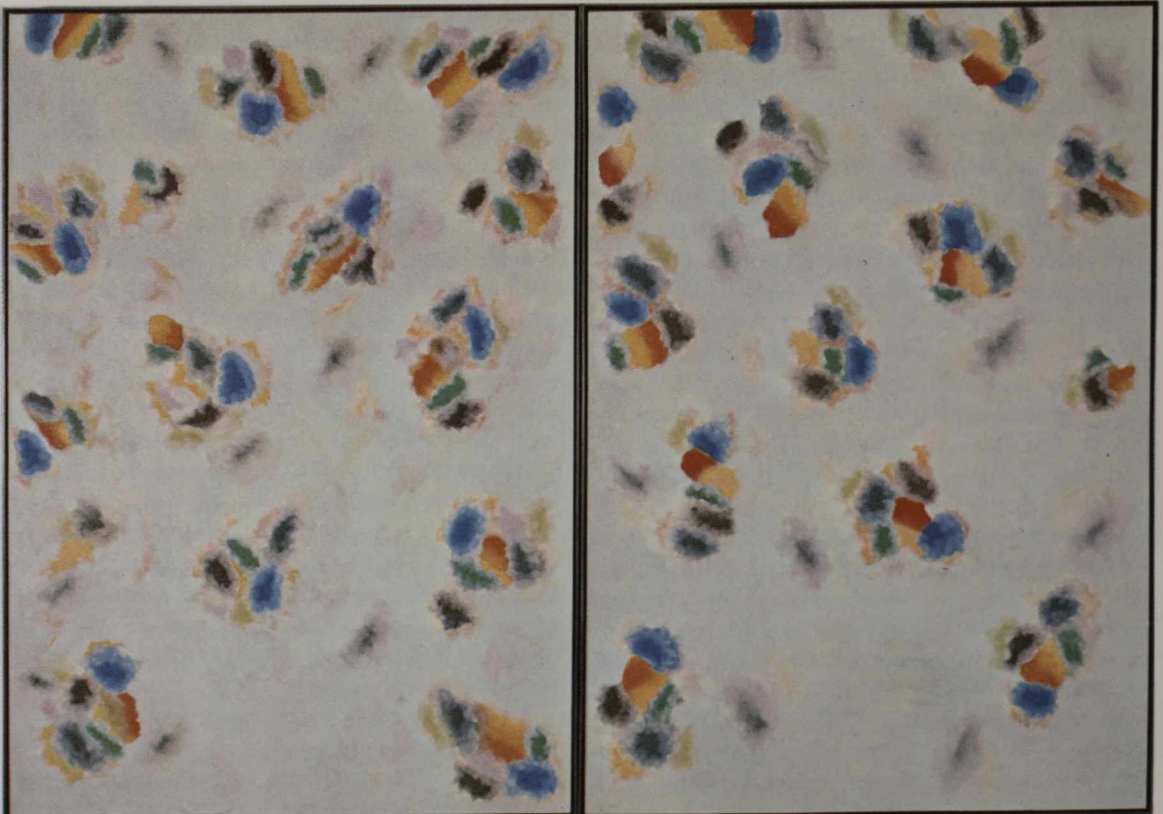
In this, David Gardner, theatre arts officer of the Council, is walking the knife edge, but the situation will probably be solved without any quota system at all. Most producers under the pressure of publicity already are planning to put on more Canadian plays. In a questionnaire the Council sent to thirty-six companies, Mr. Gardner said that six replied that their content is one hundred percent Canadian, eight said it was fifty percent, and the remaining twenty-six claimed "some" Canadian production.

Any influence Eastern cities might have is expected to diminish rapidly since Gérard Pelletier, Secretary of State and the Cabinet Minister in charge of the Council budget, has made his views of the necessity of regionalization clear.

Meanwhile the Council continues, with money enough to approve between twenty and thirty percent of the artists' applications — a point which could account for any tendency there may be to subsidize "safer," less controversial artists.

As usual, something of what everybody says is true, including the observations that the Council is no dummy. One of its assorted auxiliary tasks is to select winners for the world-known Molson Prizes to outstanding Canadians and to finance the Governor General's Literary Awards. The Council discreetly points out, in its reports, how many of these major winners have earlier Council grants to their credit.

The ultimate art show is in Venice, Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte. It opened late this spring, and among the paintings and sculptures from the world at large were a few from Canada including Seasons No. 1, *oil on canvas, owned by the National Gallery and painted by Gershon Iskowitz. 100 x 140 in.*



Ottawa Has Middle Age Spread

Canada, which missed the Middle Ages, borrowed some of its best results this spring. Arts and The Courts, L'Art et La Cour — France and England from 1259 to 1328 — showed at Ottawa's National Gallery from April to July. The pieces came from all over, Amiens to Worcester. The exhibit arose from a desire to explore the past of Canada's two founding cultures, English and French. The period chosen was one when the two nations were finding their own identities but when they shared cultural patterns and exchanged cultural products. Professor Peter Brieger, of the University of Toronto and Professor Philippe Verdier, of the University of Montreal, put it all together. It involved an almost unprecedented achievement in systematic borrowing from museums, churches, and libraries throughout Europe and America, particularly from Great Britain and France.

The art of the Middle Ages focused, as did its people, on the religious past and life after death. There are rich, everlasting colors, intricate design and homey details: illuminated manuscripts with book covers of gold, precious stones, cameos and pearls; statues from the churches — The Virgin and Child, with a hundred human faces, all real, Christ in alabaster being arrested by a half dozen soldiers, one with a sword, all with worried expressions. The art was in the tools of ceremony — the cantors' staves, the relics, the bishops' crosiers, the Chrismatories, chalices and ewers, caskets, patens and plates. There was occasionally a more secular treasure, a belt for a lady's dress in silk, silver and translucent enamels, a crown for a king, chessmen in ivory. There was humor and great sophistication of technique. The exhibit closed July 2, after being viewed by some 129,000 people. The treasures, carefully packed and escorted, are being returned to their permanent homes.

Reliquary Crown from the Abbey of the Paraclet, Paris or Northern France, early 14th century.

Stratford's 20th Anniversary Program

[A Report by an American Shakespearian Scholar Who Has Just Returned from Stratford and Who Wishes to be Anonymous]

A fanfare on silver trumpets. The crowd in the gardens and the modern theatre lobby begins to stir. A troop of Girl Scouts from Waterloo mixes with levi-clad college students from Ann Arbor and Toronto and neatly labeled Rotarians from Vancouver. In the evening, levis and street dresses mingle with evening gowns and tuxedos, red velvet bow ties and ruffled shirts, and the family jewels.

A second, more urgent trumpet.

A teen-ager downs the watery dregs of her coke and a freshly-scrubbed banker casts a glance toward the bar. Conversation dwindles. An air of expectancy as the crowd moves through the entrances and enters the space around the stage.

This is the 20th anniversary of the annual Stratford Ontario Shakespeare Festival. The Festival began in 1952 as the inspiration of Tom Patterson of Canada and Sir Tyrone Guthrie of England. The Festival has grown from two plays performed in a tent before 68,000 people in 1953 to ten plays, to be performed in three permanent theatres before an audience estimated at 400,000, in 1972. It is one of the outstanding success stories of the modern English theatre. The unique stage design, intended for maximum contact between players and audience, was realized by Tanya Moiseiwitsch from Guthrie's concepts. Among the directors have been Guthrie himself, who supervised the Festival's first season, and Jean Gascon, a French-Canadian who brings a special touch of romanticism to the productions and who is currently senior artistic director. Although Stratford productions are in repertory and avoid the star system, the role call of players includes names like Sir Alec Guiness, James Mason, Christopher Plummer, Irene Worth and Kate Reid.

Today the festival company numbers over 680 employees in its various departments. It operates on a budget of some 3.25 million dollars, partly from ticket sales and partly from generous subsidies from the Canada Council and from numerous individuals and corporations. Its international status has been recognized by performances in England, Europe, and the United States. A full-scale European tour is in the works for 1973.

But in the theatre the play's the thing. The three plays currently offered in the festival theatre (Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* will be added beginning July 24) are *King Lear*,

As You Like It and *Lorenzaccio* by Alfred de Musset.

Regan, Lear, Cornwall, and Kent.

Charles Lamb once wrote that *King Lear* is impossible to stage. He preferred the production he staged in his imagination to any real production. He may have had a point. The play is enormously difficult. It is a story of treachery, madness and sadistic cruelty. It begins with a ritualistic scene in which the old King divides his kingdom between two of his daughters and banishes the third, most loving daughter because she refuses to indulge in the unctious flattery he demands. It involves two of the most surrealistic characters that Shakespeare ever created — Lear's court fool and Mad Tom of Bedlam. These characters join their voices to the raving of the mad King during the storm which dominates the play's central action. The Earl of Gloucester has his eyes gouged out on stage. Later he is tricked into believing that he has lept from a cliff when, in fact, he has simply fallen flat on his face. At the end, the most sympathetic character in the play, Lear's good daughter Cordelia, is murdered. Lear dies. Kent's remark summarizes the grim view of life that the play seems to express: "He hates him that would upon the rack of this tough world stretch him out longer."

Where *King Lear* is concerned, perhaps there are no unqualified successes, only different degrees of failure. Stratford's *Lear* is as good a production as is likely to be staged for some time. Edgar and Edmund have been miscast, but otherwise the roles vary from strong to superb. William Hutt is a fine Lear though less so during the storm scenes when he has to shout for sustained periods over the thunderous storm created by the sound effects department. Pat Galloway as Goneril is entirely convincing. Edward Atienza as the Fool turns in a performance of outstanding brilliance.

Rosalind and Orlando.

As You Like It fully lives up to its title. It is a lively performance staged with 18th-century costumes which bring out the pretty artificiality of themes like the court versus the county, the sophisticated versus the simple life, and the happy agonies of young lovers. Edward Atienza is superb as Touchstone the clown — surely he is the most exciting newcomer to the Stratford Festival in several years. But there are really no false notes. It will be a rare and sour Jacques of a theatre-goer who does not join in the standing ovation that follows Rosalind's closing speech:

> If I were a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleas'd me, as complexions that lik'd me, and breaths that I defied not; and I am sure, as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet breaths, will for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

A murky exploration of villainy and assassination in the wicked old days of Renaissance Florence, *Lorenzaccio* was written in the 19th century by the French poet Alfred de Musset. Sara Bernhardt was the first Lorenzaccio, and women have been playing the role since then.

Lorenzaccio, Gionio, and Alessandro.

Stratford's Lorenzaccio is Pat Galloway who thoroughly redeems two rather mediocre performances last year as Lady Macbeth and the Duchess of Malfi.

Lorenzaccio both hates and loves Alessandro, the bastard ruler of Florence. Alessandro has corrupted Lorenzaccio's youthful idealism by showing him what a vile lot his fellow Florentines really are. At the same time Alessandro is a man of action in a world of talkers. Before Lorenzaccio finally dispatches Alessandro and is, in turn, assassinated, de Musset rings the changes on romanticism — Byronism, lust, the evils of the Church, the futility of revolution and the baseness of human motives — they are all there. The play is done in renaissance costume. Perhaps surprisingly, it is a great deal of fun. If it is melodrama, it is also good (if not profound) theatre.

Visitors to Stratford this season will enjoy not only the plays, films, and concerts that are regular features of the festival. They can also visit the 20th anniversary exhibition in the Stratford town hall, not to mention the shops, private galleries and tourist attractions that have grown up around the Festival.

Brochures giving play schedules and information on accommodations are available from the Festival Box Office, P.O. Box 520, Stratford. But hurry. With 400,000 anticipated attendances, many performances are already sold out.

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and thirteen-year-old range — in that perception changing experiences may upset the maturing process.

Changing the law, it has been argued, may upset the public's perception of the law and may be misinterpreted as meaning cannabis is not to be treated seriously at all. The Commissioners said:

"Within certain limits we do not believe that a change in the law need have an adverse effect on a proper appreciation of the caution with which we believe cannabis should be treated. To begin with, the present legal characterization of cannabis is simply not believed. People are not misled by the inclusion of cannabis in the Narcotic Control Act into believing that its effects are as harmful as those of heroin. The thoroughly mistaken nature of this characterization is now well and generally understood."

The majority of the Commission made nine recommendations for changes in the law, including repealing the prohibition against simple possession of cannabis. Trafficking or possession for the purpose of trafficking would still be against the law, but penalties would be lower — a maximum term of five years, or eighteen months upon summary conviction. Trafficking would not include giving enough dope to use on a single occasion. If charged with possession with the intent of selling, the accused would only have to raise a reasonable doubt — not prove that he or she was not going to sell it.

Growing cannabis for one's personal use would be legal, but the police would have the power to sieze cannabis wherever they found it, legal or not.

Two Commissioners dissented from this majority position.

Ian L. Campbell felt possession should remain a crime. "It seems to me to be an unassailable proposition that the majority may properly prohibit through the law conduct that is manifestly offensive or disturbing to them whether or not that conduct inflicts an injury on any particular person beyond the actor," he said.

Marie-Andrée Bertrand argued for complete legalization, including government controlled standardization and marketing of marijuana similar to alcohol controls. "The probable consequences of legalization (including the possibility of more people using it) seem to me to be less harmful than the evils of prohibition, which, among other things, put 1.5 million Canadians outside the law," she said.

Copies of the reports are available from Information Canada, 171 Slater Street, Ottawa.

1. *Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs.* 335 pages. $2.00.

2. *Treatment. A Report of the Commission into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs.* 125 pages. $1.75.

3. *Cannabis. A Report of the Commission into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs.* 426 pages. $3.00.

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