

Summaries of the Articles

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S U M M A R I E S O F T H E A R T I C L E S

Translation by BILL TRENT

Delacroix

by HENRI JONES

Eugene Delacroix, the 19th century historical painter who revolted against academic instruction to lead the romantic movement in French painting, emerges now less as the leader of a movement than as an eclectic painter drawing his strength from a variety of sources.

Delacroix, who was born in 1798 and who died in 1863, studied under Guerin and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and is the focal point of a good many legends about his birth, his loves and his liberalism which he continuously flaunted before the nobility. His life and work were liberally sprinkled with a variety of hot debates.

Delacroix is represented in Canada by a number of arresting works, among them one called *Lady Macbeth* which is in the Howard W. Pillow collection. It is an excellent sample of his work as a portraitist. His *Fanatiques de Tanger* in the Toronto Museum is a work on a grandiose scale in which the artist's analytical spirit is brought into play.

The artist is also an animalist and in the Toronto Museum is a magnificent lithography called *Tigre au Repos*. And in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is a chalk work entitled *Lion Endormi*. But it is perhaps in the National Gallery at Ottawa that is housed the most important work of all. This is a sketch Delacroix made when he was 22 years old for *La Barque de Dante*, the work which gave him his first taste of real fame. The sketch is done with pen and pencil and gives an insight into the romantic influence which was to affect his later work.

Tapestry Renaissance

by FREDERIC MÉGRET

The art of tapestry-making, which flourished in medieval times with such outstanding works as the Apocalypse series (in France's Chateau d'Angers) is going through a vital new renaissance, the effects of which are expected to be felt around the world. Already the old art, a combination of artistic creativeness and artisan know-how, is firing the imagination of leaders of France's new school of aesthetics.

One of the proofs of the widespread international interest in the art is the fact that a collection of some 30 tapestries is being shown in Montreal's Place des Arts and at l'Institut des Arts Appliqués. It is generally conceded that 20 years ago, a display of tapestries would have attracted little or no attention at all.

There is no doubt that the influence of the art is widespread but I was surprised when I visited the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Quebec last summer and discovered such a large number of tapestries, many of them of excellent quality. They were signed by such people as Pellán, Lacroix, Corriveau, Gagnon, Lebel, Roux, Blouin and others. I heard, too, about Jean Bastien's work at the Gobelins in Paris and how his emulator Jeanne d'Arc Corriveau had been enthused. It is an enthusiasm which she is now passing on to her young pupils.

Applied Arts

Preface by JACQUES LASSAIGNE

In organizing its industrial exhibition at Montreal's Show Mart, the foreign exhibits committee of the French Government has added still another dimension to its panorama of fine and applied arts, on view to the Canadian public.

The industrial show complements the important salon of French painting at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the exhibition at the Provincial Institute of Applied Arts and the showing of contemporary tapestry at the recently-opened Place des Arts.

Applied Arts

by JEAN-MARIE GAUVREAU

There is little doubt that the French influence has always been a profound one in Canada. In the field of fine art, as well as in the applied arts, however, it has been a marked one. There is hardly an artist today, whatever his field, whose work is not influenced in one way or another by the great French universities and schools.

French Cultural Affairs Minister Andre Malraux, who was a visitor to Quebec, and the French ambassador to Canada and his assistants insisted that exhibitions held here reflect not only the technical and commercial aspects but also the aesthetic. The result was a true artistic panorama in which the best of the artists were represented. The artists represented just about every field of aesthetic endeavor.

The exhibitions provided ample proof once again of the spirit and savoir-faire of the French. In the fields of tapestry-making, ceramics, weaving, enamelling, glass and engraving, there was little doubt that France was again leading the way. Canadians have made good progress in the arts in recent years and it is generally conceded that they are on the right track. The French shows should arouse enthusiastic response from Canadian students anxious to learn more about the artists they have so long admired from a distance.

Painters of Paris

by ROBERT ÉLIE

I always remember the elation I felt at an exhibition of the works of 16 of the best United States painters at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Most of the works were dynamic examples of a school that refuses to be limited by space. For the American painter, it would seem that the canvas is never quite large enough to contain his thoughts.

An exhibition of Parisian painters, such as the one presented by Jacques Lassaigue at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, on the other hand, does not leave that same immediate impression of freedom. The Parisian artist seems rather to work within the confines of a more defined area. But artists like Jacques Villon manage to find the greatest freedom within their more limited areas.

During and after the war, Parisian artists explored the same artistic terrain as did the painters of New York and Montreal. But I believe they translated the exaltation of contemporary art less garishly, though with certainly quite as much intensity. It is interesting to me to compare their experiences with those of the Canadians who learned young to read from the words of Montaigne and Rimbaud. The Canadians were able to work with the spirit of the French painter and, at the same time, benefit from the American's lack of space limitation.

Codex Canadiensis

by ROBERT HOLLIER

In some remote corner of a museum, or perhaps hidden away in a private collection somewhere, lies one of the earliest ethnological reports on Quebec, a book compiled by a Canadian soldier at the turn of the 18th century who observed the life of the times and recorded it in a series of drawings with explanatory notes.

The book is the work of a young militiaman named Charles Becard de Grandville, the Quebec-born son of Pierre Becard, a Frenchman who came to New France with the Regiment de Carignan. The young Becard, born in 1675 (he died at 28), turned out some mediocre drawings but the importance of his work lies in his detailed information about people and things.

In a sense, Becard's work amounted to a sort of illustrated news. Among other things, he described Indian equipment of the time, providing information that might never have been known except for him. He was meticulous in detail, even giving such information as the length of the Indian pipes and tatoo designs among the tribes.

Becard finally presented his book to King Louis XIV who placed it in the royal library. But during the French revolution the book went missing. Did someone borrow and not return it, or did someone steal it? No one knows.

But about 150 years later in 1930, it was spotted in Paris by Charles de la Ronciere of the Bibliotheque Nationale. He called the book the *Codex Canadiensis*. De la Ronciere would have bought the book for the library but did not have the necessary funds. But before it was sold, he had some facsimiles made.

What happened to the original is a mystery. It was thought at one time to have been in the Quebec Archives but this turned out to be a copy. De la Ronciere's daughter, a curator at the Bibliotheque Nationale, is certain the original is somewhere in the United States.

Industrial aesthetics in France - 1963

by JACQUES DUMOND

During the first half of this century, France seems to have been content to dwell on the glory of an aesthetic past and despite the fact that a number of influences were at work to introduce art into industrial production (even as early as the late 19th century), the country seemed slow to recognize contemporary development in this field.

There were interesting developments, such as the formation of the Union des Artistes Modernes, set up in 1930 by a group of people who broke away from the earlier Societe des Artistes Decorateurs and which included such notables as Le Corbusier, Francis Jourdain, Mallet-Stevens, Pierre Chareau, Lurcat, Peignot, Charlotte Perriand and others.

But it was not until the end of the last war that a radical change took place, largely due to such people as Jacques Vioen who saw an excitement in the association of art and industry and decided to promote industrial aesthetics as a concept.

The reaction was immediately encouraging and in 1951, he created the Institut d'Esthetique Industrielle, a 300-member organization headed by G. Combet as president, and J. Dumond as vice-president. Other groups were subsequently formed. A recent international exhibition organized by the Institut d'Esthetique Industrielle at the Musee des Arts Decoratifs provided ample proof of the good things now being done, proof that there is an exciting vitality and a wide range of interest in the new French school.

A staircase from LA FLECHE

by ARMOUR LANDRY

A staircase from the 12th century priory of St. Thomas de la Fleche in the French province of Anjou (now the department of Sarthe) has been donated to the city of Montreal as a gesture of goodwill to a city with which the people of the Loir river region have felt a bond for more than three centuries.

The sculptured oak staircase, dating back to the 16th century, is a classical example of Anjou workmanship and is considered valuable both from a historical and artistic point of view. There are a number of these still to be seen in the old chateaux of the period.

This gift is of particular interest to us because it was in the old priory of St. Thomas that Jerome Le Royer de la Dauversiere established, in 1936, the Hotel Dieu which was to administer the new congregation of the nursing sisters of St. Joseph which, in turn, was to set up a mission in New France. The Hotel Dieu de la Fleche paved the way for the founding of the community of Ville Marie.

In a letter to Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau, Prefect Pierre Marcel Wiltzer, speaking on behalf of the Council-General of Sarthe, said the gift was eminent proof of the ties that exist between the people of Anjou and those of Montreal.

Gaston Petit

by HENRI CLARENS

Rev. Gaston Petit, a native of Trois Rivières who took up residence in Japan three years ago, is an artist who paints with a delicate and elegant lyricism. Some of his lacquer sketches on colored paper and some examples of his work in the traditional field of *sumi-e* are being shown in a Montreal gallery.

Father Petit has been a busy man in the Far East. As soon as he arrived in Japan he began a study of the language, combining it with a study of calligraphy. Then he did research work in the art of the Orient, opened a workshop and did some work in ceramics and enamels.

It was under the guidance of a Japanese teacher named Furihata that he studied the *sumi-e*, the traditional art form of the country. *Sumi* means ink (usually Chinese ink in a stick which is rubbed against a wet stone), and *e* means drawing, a word that is synonymous with painting in Japan. This technique of painting with black ink on white paper is the result of the Zen Buddhist philosophy, an influence which inspired the Chinese masters of the Sung dynasty (960-1279). It's an art whose basic objective is telling the story of nature. The *sumi-e* tells the story of a reed in the wind, it points up the delicate bloom of the cherry tree, it depicts the strength of rock.

The artist adheres to some strict academic and artistic disciplines which do not conform ideologically with his concepts, neither as a Christian nor as an occidental. But Father Petit's Japanese teachers have taught him to look into nature and interpret its meaning in a very basic way.

Antique Dealers

by GILLES CORBEIL

One of the highly successful special events at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts this year was the Antique Dealers Fair, combined with a flower show. The antique event included items from some 20 exhibitors. Except for one New Yorker and one Torontonians, all the exhibitors were from the local area. Three large rooms were set aside for the show, providing ample display space for all.

Mount Athos

by CLAUDE BEAULIEU

For Mount Athos and its monastery of St. Laura of Athanasius, now known as the Lavra, 1963 marks the completion of 1,000 years of faith and history.

It was under the impetus of the Byzantine emperor, Nicephorus Phocas, caught between a desire for conquest and a desire for the monastic life, that his close friend, Athanasius, undertook the construction of the monastery in the year 963 A.D. Nicephorus finally died a horrible death, assassinated by his friend of fortune, John Tzimisce, at the instigation of the Empress Theophano whom he married as a means of ascending to the throne.

The Lavra, situated at the dividing line between Orient and Occident, has a history of Christian devotion dating back 1,000 years but the story of Mount Athos itself goes much farther back into history. The people of ancient times, for example, considered it as the most sacred of all meeting places of the gods, its setting being well above the clouds.

It is a matter of historical record that here at a point of land called Cape St. George, the fleet of Xerxes, the king of Persia, was shattered during an expedition against Greece in the year 480 B.C. Hermits settled on the peninsula in the ninth century and, according to legend, the monastery of Xeropotamou was founded by St. Irene in the year 924. The rites of the sacred mountain were consecrated by an imperial bull in 980, and over the years a number of monasteries were founded.

Today, Mount Athos has 20 monasteries, administered largely under rules laid down by Athanasius and Nicephorus, to which are affiliated a variety of vassal cells and hermitages, some of them virtually inaccessible. The entire community is today in a state of delapidation and an original population of some 40,000 monks have dwindled to not more than 3,000, most of whom seem to be out to prove the old rule — that "the humility of the monk should show in his appearance: he should be dirty and dishevelled."

Banfer Gallery

by ANDRÉE PARADIS

The Banfer Gallery, an elegant New York gallery operated by two young collectors named Richard Bannet and Thomas Ferdinand, frequently exhibits the works of Canadian painters. In February, a showing was held of the works of Alex Colville and all but one of the canvasses was sold. In September, the gallery held a Pictures of Canada show, with works by Glenn Adams, D. P. Brown, William Kurelek, Robert Markle, Willis Romanow, Roger Savage and Kenneth Tolmie.

Guy Robert

by JACQUES FOLCH

The fact that Guy Robert is a friend and a contributor to *Vie des Arts* makes it difficult to judge his recent exhibition at the Galerie Libre in Montreal in an impartial way. It may be justly said, however, that his works are full of promise. They are the products of an honesty of approach and research in which the artist tries to express himself in an often-diffuse space. We would like to see more of his work.

Stanley House

by JACQUES FOLCH

A superb old house in New Richmond in the Baie des Chaleurs area of the Gaspé peninsula is being operated by the Canada Council as a study centre for Canadian artists, notably those of Quebec. The first session at Stanley House were held this year under the direction of hosts Mr. and Mrs. Simard and already a successful future for the enterprise seems assured. Conferences on the plastic arts this year were held under the guidance of the young artist, Koenig, who came here from France specially for the study courses.

Quebec and Ottawa

by GUY ROBERT

The works of many young Canadian painters were shown this summer both at the Provincial Museum in Quebec and the National Gallery at Ottawa. Two large rooms in the Quebec museum were set aside for this particular showing and works included engraving by Pichet, Dumouchel, Bellefleur, Ferron and Jasmin. Canvasses included those of many artists, among them Letendre, Jerome, Borduas, Dallaire, Riopelle, Belzile, Monique Voyer, Boudreau, Ewen, Morisset, Parent, Haworth, Jean Paul Lemieux and Pellan.

An Avowal

by JACQUES GODBOUT

It took Claude Jutra two years of work and every bit of money that he could borrow to produce a film called *A Tout Prendre*, show as part of the Montreal Film Festival. The film, reportedly a cinema autobiography in the cine-verite tradition, is acted by a cast made up entirely of French-Canadians. The film tells the story of Jutra and his world — his friends, his fears, his city — but more than that, *A Tout Prendre* is the story of youth generally. It symbolizes a generation confounded by a lack of communication.

Kenneth Gilbert

by PAUL MARTIN-DUBOST

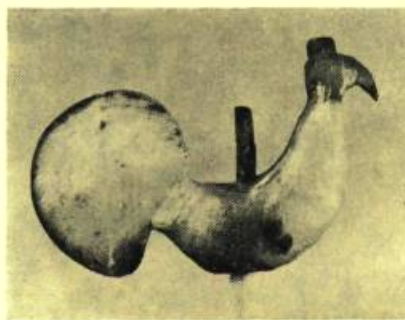
The second long-play record by Kenneth Gilbert has just been released on the Canadian Baroque label. This time, the young harpsichordist offers some little-known compositions, many of them recorded on a world-wide basis for the first time. There are concertos for harpsichord alone, compositions of J. S. Bach from works of his contemporaries. Kenneth Gilbert was born in Montreal in 1931. He did his preliminary studies at the Conservatory here and then later went to France and Italy.

La bourse des Arts

À vendre : gravures françaises d'artistes contemporains — Lithographies, eaux-fortes, pointes-sèches : Bardone, Bierge, Charon, Dayez, Leonore Fini, Hayden, Hilaire, Humblot, Jansem, Krishna Reddy, Lars Bo, Rémy Lejeune, Springer, Uboda et autres. S'adresser à VIE DES ARTS, Boîte Postale 606, Place d'Armes, Montréal.

Particulier cherche à acquérir des tableaux d'artistes polonais anciens ou modernes. Prière de s'adresser à VIE DES ARTS, Boîte Postale 606, Place d'Armes, Montréal.

Le Musée du Québec recherche des coqs de clocher ou des girouettes, en bois ou en métal des dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècles. Prière de communiquer avec Claude Picher, conservateur-adjoint, Musée du Québec, Parcs des Champs de Bataille, Québec, P.Q.



À vendre : Commode bombée en noyer tendre. XVIIIe siècle canadien. Trouvée à l'Île-aux-Noix sur le Richelieu. Un meuble de qualité exceptionnelle. S'adresser à VIE DES ARTS, Boîte Postale 606, Place d'Armes, Montréal.

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