

Aperçu du film sur l'art au Canada A Survey on Films on Art in Canada

René Rozon

Volume 21, Number 83, Summer 1976

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/55004ac>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

La Société La Vie des Arts

ISSN

0042-5435 (print)

1923-3183 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Rozon, R. (1976). Aperçu du film sur l'art au Canada / A Survey on Films on Art in Canada. *Vie des Arts*, 21(83), 53–94.

Aperçu du

FILM SUR L'ART

au Canada

Prémises? L'éruption d'un art autochtone. Coup d'envoi? *Le Groupe des Sept* (1913-1931) qui s'affranchit des influences étrangères et formule une peinture de style et contenu canadiens. Contrecoup? *Paysages canadiens* (Graham McInnes, 1941), premier film sur l'art canadien, qui traite du peintre A. Y. Jackson, chef de file du Groupe. Commandé par John Grierson, fondateur et commissaire de l'Office National du Canada, ce film inaugurerait une série, *Les Artistes canadiens*. A l'époque, le film statique de style *carte postale*, pour désigner l'enregistrement monotone d'œuvres d'art par une simple succession de plans fixes, était pratique courante. Rien de tel au Canada. Dès le début, on tourne des *portraits* dynamiques d'artistes captés sur le vif, dont les œuvres alternent avec le milieu qui les ont inspirées. Suivent une dizaine de films au cours des deux prochaines décennies portant sur des peintres canadiens réputés, notamment deux autres membres du Groupe des Sept, *Lismer* et *Varley* (Allan Wargon, 1952 et 1953 respectivement), l'automatiste *Paul-Émile Borduas* (Jacques Godbout, 1963) et le surréaliste Alfred Pellan (*Voir Pellan*, Louis Portugais, 1968). En sculpture, cette même méthode de tournage conciliant la présence de l'artiste, son œuvre et son univers ambiant est appliquée, comme le confirment les films de David Millar (*Vaillancourt, sculpteur*, 1964), Julius Kohanyi (*Henry Moore*, 1968), et Pierre Moretti (*Bronze*, 1969, d'après l'œuvre de Charles Daudelin).

Au profil d'artiste à tendance biographique, certains cinéastes préfèrent l'évocation poétique. Images harmonieuses, rythme solennel et commentaire lyrique les distinguent. Sources d'inspiration: justesse et limpidité des paysages, portraits et natures mortes d'Ozias Leduc (*Correlieu*, Jean Palardy, 1959); onirisme mythique et légendaire des gravures de *Kénouak*, artiste esquimau (John Feeney, 1964); ou encore mutisme énigmatique des figures hiératiques du peintre Jean-Paul Lemieux (*Tel qu'en Lemieux*, Guy Robert, 1973). En se retranchant de tout contexte, ce dernier exemple chevauche une autre approche où l'œuvre d'art en soi constitue l'unique objet du film. En

témoignent trois études de peintres: *Québec en silence* (Gilles Gascon, 1969), autre film sondant l'œuvre de Lemieux; *L'Auberge Jolifou* (Colin Low, 1955), suite de scènes de genre de Cornélius Krieghoff; et *Paul Kane chez les Amérindiens* (Gerald Budner, 1972), auteur d'images anecdotiques et romantiques de grandes tribus du pays.

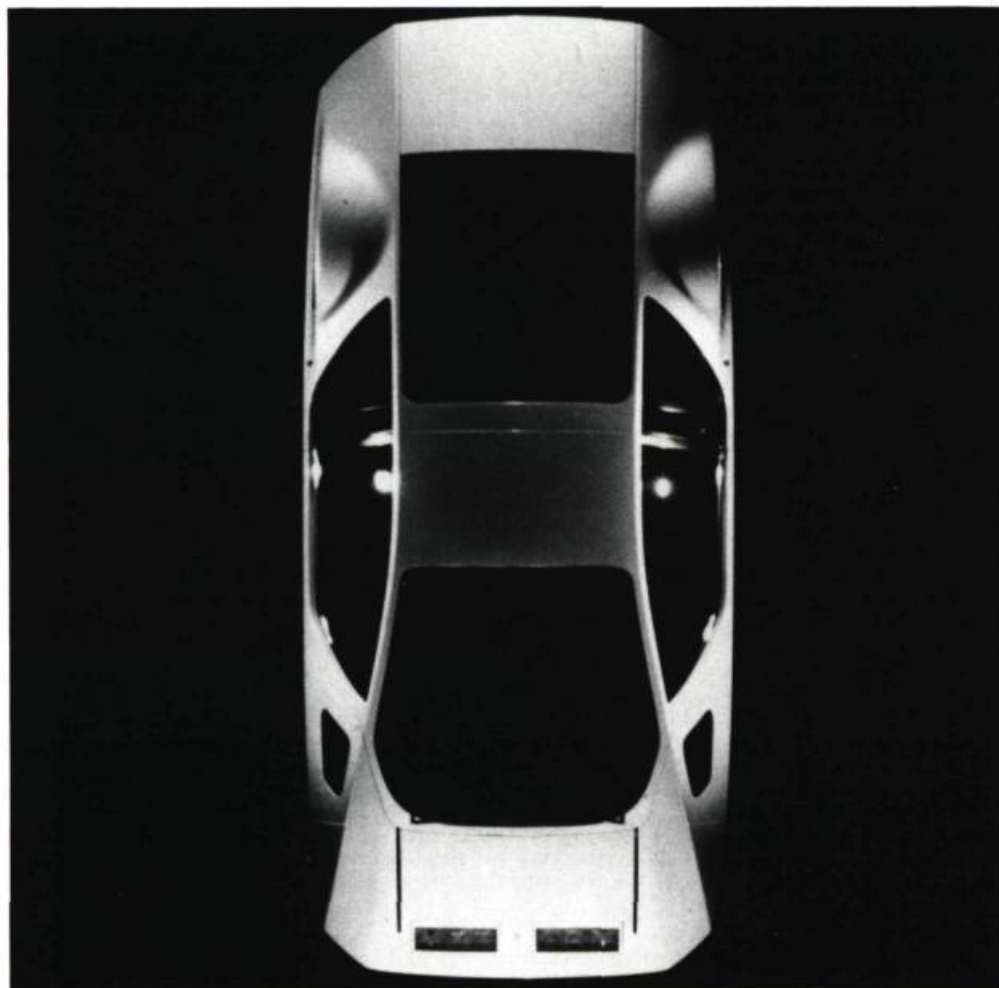
Pas de règle sans exception, au risque même d'empiéter sur le cinéma d'animation. Deux raisons, technique filmique et affinités avec la peinture dont nous avons déjà parlé en ces pages (Vol. XVIII, N° 78, p. 50-51), motivent la place qu'occupe ici Norman McLaren. Car peindre directement sur pellicule, n'est-ce pas faire du film sur l'art avant la lettre? Démarche qu'il poursuivra pendant bon nombre d'années, depuis *V for Victory* (1941) jusqu'à *Short and Suite* (1959). Sans oublier sa seule incursion dans l'univers pictural d'un autre artiste: *A Little Phantasy on a 19th-Century Painting* (1947), version déridée de *l'Île de la mort*, tableau d'Arnold Böcklin. Humour, rythme enjoué et intelligence du propos par la métamorphose des formes caractérisent ce cinéaste inégalé.

Certaines productions se proposent d'enregistrer des expositions importantes. Invoquons deux symposiums internationaux de sculpture, l'un à Montréal, en 1964, le premier du genre en Amérique du Nord (*La Forme des choses*, Jacques Giraldeau, 1965), l'autre, à Québec, en 1966 (*Une forêt de symboles*, Louis Daviault et Guy Robert, 1972). Alors que *Sananguagat: Inuit Masterworks* (Derek May, 1974) filme en cours d'exposition des pièces de choix rassemblées de collection privées et publiques, en alternance avec des séquences nous ramenant à leur source, cette tribu esquimaude des Territoires du Nord-Ouest. D'autres films s'intéressent aux institutions mêmes qui véhiculent les expositions. *Gallery, A View of Time* (Don Owen, 1969) explore l'Albright-Knox Gallery de Buffalo, New-York; *Le Musée d'Art Contemporain du Québec*, à Montréal (Jacques Gagné, 1973), sert de point de départ à une véritable interrogation sur le rôle du musée dans la société; et *Why a Museum?* (Lynn Smith), film d'animation en cours de production, est un

plaidoyer en faveur de la démocratisation des musées. Ce ne sont certes pas les problèmes en art qui font défaut de nos jours, et la caméra en relève un certain nombre. *L'Inauguration* (Bertrand Letourneur, 1971) confronte le dévoilement d'une sculpture sur place publique avec la réaction des citadins. *Bozarts* (1969) et *La Fougère et la rouille — Collage 2* (1974) de Jacques Giraldeau, deux tentatives de rapprochement entre l'artiste et le public, s'attaquent à la démythification de l'art.

Trois aspects de l'architecture ont été portés à l'écran. Les bâtiments anciens sont l'objet tantôt d'études précises, telles *La Cathédrale d'Exeter* (Gerald Budner, 1972) et *Saint-Urbain de Troyes* (Yves Leduc, 1972), deux églises médiévales du 13^e siècle, tantôt d'études plus vastes, comme *Mon père a fait bâtir maison* (René Avon, 1972) qui dégage les origines françaises, normande et bretonne, de la maison québécoise des 17^e et 18^e siècles. Quant à l'architecture moderne, elle fait partie intégrante de grandes séries, variant entre six et quinze films, consacrées à l'urbanisme et à l'environnement, notamment *La Cité idéale, d'après Lewis Mumford* (1963) de Léonard Forest, et *Urbanose* (1972) et *Urba 2000* (1974) de Michel Rénier. Tandis que la grande ville moderne et son avenir préoccupent certains cinéastes, d'autres sont davantage soucieux des vestiges du passé et de leur préservation. *Louisbourg* (Albert Kish, 1972), forteresse du 18^e siècle de l'Île du Cap-Breton, et *La Place royale* à Québec (Clovis Durand, 1972), érigée au 17^e siècle, traitent de la restauration de deux ensembles architecturaux de grande valeur.

Arts et traditions populaires sont un thème de prédilection. Au cours des années 40, plusieurs films, en particulier ceux de Laura Boulton, enregistrent l'artisanat, parfois même les chants et danses folkloriques, des Québécois, des Esquimaux, des Amérindiens et des Néocanadiens. Enthousiasme débordant nos frontières car, ironie du sort, le premier film sur l'art indépendant traite non pas de Canadiens, mais d'*Artistes primitifs d'Haïti* (Réal Benoit et Jacques de Tonnancour, 1949). Intérêt marqué et soutenu pour les arts populaires sous toutes

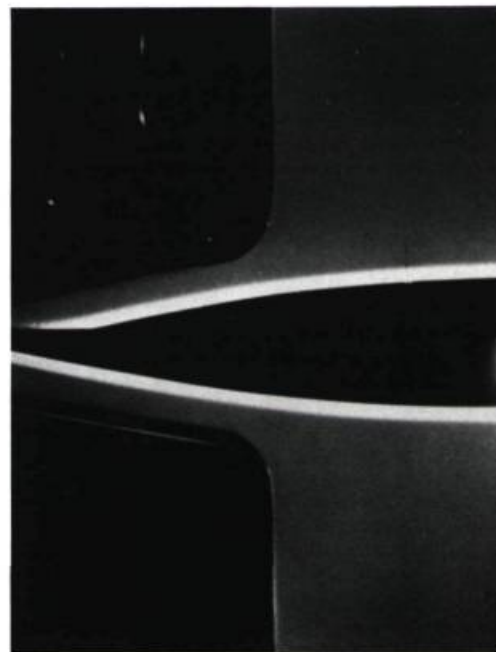


ses formes: fabrication de guitares (*Alegria*, Jacques Leduc, 1973); conception de bannières, en l'occurrence celles de Normand Laliberté (*Bannerfilm*, Donald Winkler, 1972); construction d'un canot selon les véritables techniques ancestrales, en voie de disparition (*César et son canot d'écorce*, Bernard Gosselin, 1971) ou illustration d'une légende à l'aide de masques cérémoniaux indiens (*Le Collier magique*, Redford Crawley, 1950). Bref, fascination sans bornes pour les métiers d'art dont *Hommage aux mains* (Donald Winkler, 1974), en retraçant à travers les continents la relation main-objet dans ses manifestations artisanales les plus éloquentes, marque l'apogée.

Contraint par des restrictions d'espace, nous nous limiterons à signaler au passage quelques-unes des nombreuses productions issues de domaines corollaires aux films sur l'art. Notons en cinéma: *Grierson* (Roger Blais, 1973) et *Avec Buster Keaton* (John Spotton, 1965); photographie: *Le Québec vu par Cartier-Bresson* (Claude Jutra et Wolf Koenig, 1969); danse: *Ballet Adagio* (1971) et *Pas de deux* (1967) de Norman McLaren; musique: *Félix Leclerc, troubadour* (Claude Jutra, 1958) et *Stravinsky* (Roman Kroitor et Wolf Koenig, 1965); décoration: *H-abitat paysa-G* (Pierre Savard, 1971); et esthétique industrielle: *Modulo: variations sur un design* (Pierre Moretti, 1973).

Les réseaux de télévision, producteurs de films dans d'autres domaines, importent, plutôt que de réaliser eux-mêmes, des séries de films sur l'art d'envergure comme *L'Art et son secret* ou *Civilisation*, animés par René Huyghe et Kenneth Clark respectivement. Certes, on diffuse à l'occasion des films sur l'art étrangers et des magazines artistiques font leur apparition sporadiquement au petit écran, mais aucune série suivie et systématique sur film, de l'ampleur des importations, n'a été entreprise jusqu'ici.

La plus importante collection au pays demeure celle du Centre Canadien du Film sur l'Art (CCFA), situé à Ottawa et créé, en 1964, par Dorothy Macpherson, qui en assume la direction. Le catalogue renferme aujourd'hui 1500 titres, y compris le dépôt de la Galerie Nationa-



le du Canada, distribués par l'Institut Canadien du Film. La clientèle comprend musées, collèges et universités, ciné-clubs et sociétés savantes répartis à travers le pays. Un projet du Centenaire canadien en 1967 a permis au Centre de promouvoir l'instauration d'embryons de collections de films sur l'art dans les dix provinces.

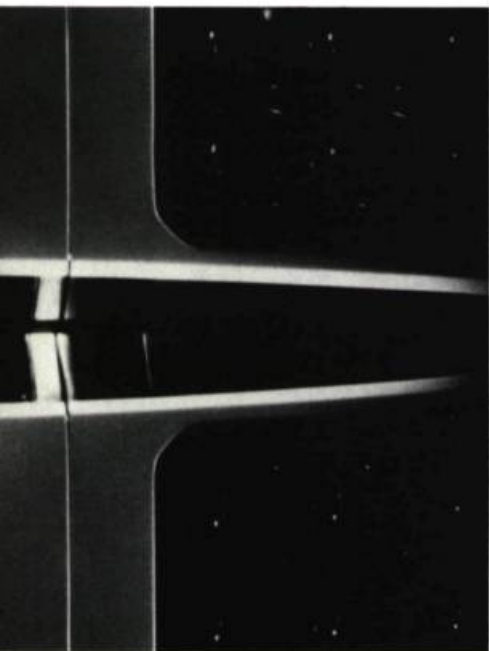
Perspectives d'avenir? Plutôt sombres. En période de récession économique, le film sur l'art au Canada est durement atteint. Le CCFA vivote, sans budget d'acquisition. Et si, à quelques exceptions près, la plupart des films cités proviennent de l'Office National du Film (ONF) et de l'Office du Film du Québec (OFQ), la production de films sur l'art à l'intérieur des deux maisons les plus favorables au genre est à la baisse. Pour l'année en cours, l'achèvement d'un seul film — *Instants privilégiés* de Paul Vézina, où Marcel Barbeau peint aux rythmes du percussionniste Vincent Dionne — est prévu à l'OFQ. Tandis que des accords conclus entre l'ONF et les Musées Nationaux du Canada, seuls trois films en cours de production, tous motivés par des expositions et dont les titres de travail sont *James B. Spencer* (James Littleton), *Peinture des années 30* (Derek May) et *Images de pierre* (Jack Long et Don Woroby), verront le jour. A brève échéance donc, faute de crédits, c'est la sclérose culturelle. Et nous qui croyions que l'éducation artistique des masses par le film n'avait pas de prix!

English Translation, p. 93



1. Métiers d'art: *Hommage aux mains* (Donald WINKLER, 1974).
Le maître de la poterie japonaise, Arakawa Toyozo.
2 et 3. Esthétique industrielle: *Modulo: Variations sur un design* (Pierre MORETTI, 1973).
Automobile futuriste créée par Pininfarina, Italie.
(Photos Office National du Film)

3



5

4. Peinture: *Paysages canadiens* (Graham McINNES, 1941).
Premier film sur l'art au Canada.
Sujet: A. Y. Jackson, chef de file du Groupe des Sept.

5. Sculpture: *La Forme des choses* (Jacques GIRALDEAU, 1965).
A Montréal, premier symposium international de sculpture en Amérique du Nord.
Oeuvre de Krishna Reddy, Inde.

LAWREN PHILLIPS HARRIS: 40 YEARS OF PAINTING

By Ghislain CLERMONT

Lawren Phillips Harris has just ended a professorship of thirty years at Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B. He arrived there in 1946, at the time when a pictorial revolution was beginning in Montreal which then had few supporters in the Maritime Provinces. In 1941 Mount Allison University was the first in Canada to award a degree in fine arts¹. *The School of Fine and Applied Arts* of the time² experienced an important impetus under L. P. Harris' direction. It is still the only one of the three schools of art in the Atlantic Provinces to have former students whose works enjoy a solidly established reputation³.

The advanced study of the living model was compulsory at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston where Lawren P. Harris studied from 1929 to 1931. There he became acquainted with something other than the Group of Seven's landscapes that were more familiar to him, and the few works that remain from his first period (1936-1939) show a taste for shapes which stand out clearly, solid masses and the objective treatment of space. His landscapes in warm colours and pure forms prove better than his finicky, rigid portraits. Transferring to canvas his sketches made in the open air, Harris proceeded to a beneficent simplification⁴, by stylizing trees, hills and barns and by emphasizing their structures and their masses.

As a war artist (from December 1943 to June 1946), Harris was bound by the realism that was demanded of painter-reporters. He fell prey neither to anecdote nor to moralizing heroism. Troop movements and skeletal ruins fascinated him. The dash of armoured cars raising dust (*Tank Advance, Italy*, and *The Hitler Line Barage*) recalls the dynamism, almost murderous, that the Italian Futurists attributed to modern machines. These war pictures are all executed with much care, and their delicacy makes them attractive, but an atmosphere emanates from them that reveals the uselessness of these turmoils and destructions.

Discharged from the army, Lawren P. Harris settled in Sackville and henceforth divided his time between teaching and painting. During this third period, fifteen years long (1947-1962), Harris developed a style that succeeded in freeing itself wholly from figuration, resorting to the exclusive use of the square, the triangle, a few bands, three or four colours, ... His talents as a draftsman made him a valued portraitist. Between 1946 and 1967 he received commissions for about thirty different portraits.

No sooner arrived in the Maritimes, the former war artist for whom fidelity to the subject was of prime importance changed into a follower of modern European trends. At first he was influenced by Kandinsky (*Project*, 1947), by the cubism of the Golden Number (*Figure Composition*, 1951) and, a little later, by Ben Nicholson. But it was Mondrian's asceticism that convinced him to restrict his palette, to simplify his compositions, to refine further the natural forms that served him as ultimate link with tangible reality (rocks, algae, sails, buildings, ...) For a time figurative subjects (*Immigrants*, 1951; *Monument*, 1955) and non-figurative subjects (*Vertical Variations*, 1955; *Summer Festival*, 1958) intermingled. In 1959 the possibility of producing five decorative murals for Mount Allison University prompted him to

use only simple sets of forms balanced in space. He reached a point where he did entirely without nature, satisfied himself with elementary geometric forms and with a palette limited in the extreme. He passed determinedly to abstraction and continued his research by producing, between 1960 and 1964, some twelve pictures mounted on panels, fruits of his experiments as a muralist. Taking extreme care to balance supports, geometric elements and colours⁵, the artist obtained a remarkable unity of ensemble, and these miniature murals strengthened his sense of composition.

Lawren Phillips Harris' last period (1963-1976) is characterized by a total adherence to neo-plasticism. At the beginning of the 60's, the artist had overcome his need to refer to forms still linked to nature. Stripped of any non-conceptual element, his panels had become austere, almost hermetic. After a decade devoted to research and experiment, Harris returned to the warm colours of his first landscapes. The formats became larger, latex and acrylic replaced oil, the use of the roller assured uniform application of colours. Rectilinear bands, broken, pleated, carved a plain background and created a space that varied according to their nearness or their remoteness. Some works, more aggressive, generated optical effects, while others emphasized only the subtle variations of the colours.

Around 1970 Harris reached a remarkable level of excellence. Better constructed more simplified and more airy than those of the preceding period, his large compositions appeared more dynamic, often musical (*Suspended Verticals*, 1970; *Zig-Zag*, 1971; *Theme and variations*, 1975). The play of grounds and spaces, of bands and stripes, squares and rectangles, warm and restrained colours gave rise to as many variations as the artist's intellectual investigation allowed. These last years, Harris has somewhat expanded certain colour contrasts, and his works often reveal an emotivity once forbidden. He has succeeded, by determined research in composition, forms and colours, in creating a non-objective painting which interests equally the logic of the mind and the sensitivity of the eye⁶. In 1969, Harris began to make silk-screens. Very closely related to his paintings, they consist of arrangements of bands, squares and triangles. Their forms are just as clearly defined, the play of the colours just as dynamic.

It was due to his strength of conviction and his articulate character that Lawren Phillips Harris was able to develop a style which, having as its point of departure landscape art and the portrait, reached non-objectivity. Living in a region long resistant to abstract art, he nevertheless remained faithful to the internal evolution of his work, a disciplined work, to regular and progressive development, a true laboratory effort.

1. *Arts in New Brunswick*. Fredericton, Brunswick Press, 1967, p. 157.

2. In 1961 the School was integrated into the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and became the Fine Arts Department.

3. The three realists, Colville, Forrestall and Pratt are former Mount Allison students.

4. See Luke Rombout, *Lawren Harris, Profile of a Painter*, in *Atlantic Advocate* 55 (December 1964), pp. 55-61.

5. The artist explains the evolution of his work in a manuscript he wrote between 1962 and 1973.

6. See Ernest W. Smith, *Lawren P. Harris 37/72*. Halifax, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 1972.

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

A SURVEY ON FILMS ON ART IN CANADA

By René ROZON

Premises? The eruption of an indigenous art. The kick-off? The Group of Seven (1913-1931) that broke free of foreign influences and formulated painting Canadian in style and content. Consequence? *Canadian Landscape* (Graham McInnes, 1941), the first film on Canadian art, which deals with painter A. Y. Jackson, leading member of the Group. Commissioned by John Grierson, founder and commissioner of the National Film Board, and financed by the National Gallery of Canada, this film inaugurated a series, *Canadian Artists*. At that time, the static film in *post card* style, to designate the monotonous recording of works of art by a simple succession of stills, was current practice. There was nothing of this sort in Canada. From the beginning, they filmed dynamic *portraits* of artists taken live whose works took turns with the milieu that inspired them. There would follow some ten films during the course of the next two decades, on famous Canadian painters, in particular on two other members of the Group of Seven, *Lismor* and *Varley* (Allan Wargon, 1952 and 1953, respectively, the automatist *Paul-Émile Borduas* (Jacques Godbout, 1963), and the surrealist Alfred Pellán (*About Pellán*, Louis Portugais, 1968). In sculpture this same method of shooting reconciling the presence of the artist, his work and his ambient universe was applied, as confirmed by David Millar's films (*Vaillancourt*, 1964), Julius Kohanyni's (*Henry Moore*, 1968), and Pierre Moretti's (*Bronze*, 1969) from Charles Daudelin's work.

Some film producers prefer the poetic evocation to the artist's profile with a biographical slant. Harmonious images, solemn rhythm and lyrical commentary distinguish them. These are their sources of inspiration: accuracy and clarity of Oziás Leduc's landscapes, portraits and still lifes (*Correlieu*, Jean Palardy, 1959); the mythical and legendary dream-like quality of the engravings of *Eskimo Artist Kenojuak*, (John Feeney, 1964); or again the enigmatic mutism of the hieratic figures of painter Jean-Paul Lemieux (*Tel qu'en Lemieux*, Guy Robert, 1973). While cutting itself off from any context, this last example overlaps another approach where the work of art itself constitutes the sole object of the film. Witness three studies on painters: *Quebec in Silence* (Gilles Gascon, 1969), another film delving deep into Lemieux's work; *The Jolifou Inn* (Colin Low, 1955), a suite of genre scenes by Cornelius Krieghoff; and *Paul Kane Goes West* (Gerald Budner, 1972), author of anecdotal and romantic pictures of the great Indian tribes of the country.

There is no rule without an exception, even at the risk of infringing on animated film cinema. Two reasons, filming technique and affinities with painting, of which we previously spoke in this magazine (Vol. XIX, No. 78, pp. 50-51), justify the place occupied by Norman McLaren. Isn't painting directly on film also making film on art before the fact? A development he would continue for a good many years from *V for Victory* (1941), to *Short and Suite* (1959). We must not ignore his only venture into the pictorial universe of another artist: *A little Phantasy on a 19th Century Painting* (1947), a cheerful version of *Isle of the Dead*, a picture by Arnold Böcklin. Humour, sprightly rhythm and comprehension of the subject through the transformation of forms characterize this peerless film producer.

Some productions are intended to record important exhibitions. Let us consider two international symposiums on sculpture, one at Montreal in 1964, the first of its kind in North America (*The Shape of Things*, Jacques Giraldeau, 1965), the other at Quebec in 1966 (*Une forêt de symboles*, Louis Daviault and Guy Robert, 1972). And *Sananguagat: Inuit Masterworks* (Derek, May 1974) was filmed during an exhibition of choice pieces gathered from private and public collections, alternating with sequences leading back to their source, this Eskimo tribe of the Northwest Territories. Other films are involved with the very institutions that circulate the exhibitions. *Gallery, A View of Time* (Don Owen, 1969) explores the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York; *Le Musée d'Art Contemporain of Quebec in Montreal* (Jacques Gagné, 1973) serves as point of departure toward a veritable interrogation on the rôle of the museum in society; and *Why a Museum?* (Lynn Smith), an animated film in production, is a plea in favour of the democratization of museums. Certainly, problems in art are not lacking nowadays and the camera points out a number of them. *L'Inauguration* (Bertrand Letourneur, 1971) contrasts the unveiling of a sculpture on a public square with the reaction of the people. *We are all . . . Picasso!* (1969) and *La Fougère et la rouille — Collage 2* (1974) by Jacques Giraldeau, two attempts at rapprochement between the artist and the public, tackle the demystification of art.

Three aspects of architecture have been portrayed on the screen. Old buildings are the subject now of precise studies, such as *Exeter* (Gerald Budner, 1972) and *Saint-Urbain in Troyes* (Yves Leduc, 1972), two medieval churches of the 13th century, now of vaster studies like *Mon père a fait bâtir maison* (René Avon, 1972), which brings out the French, Norman and Breton origins of the Quebec house of the 17th and 18th centuries. As for modern architecture, it forms an integral part of big series, varying between six and fifteen films, dedicated to city planning and the environment, among others *Lewis Mumford on the city* (1963) by Léonard Forest, and *Urbanose* (1972) and *Urba 2000* (1974) by Michel Régner. While the big modern city and its future preoccupy some film producers, others are more concerned with the vestiges of the past and with their preservation. *Louisbourg* (Albert Kish, 1972), the 18th century fortress on Cape Breton Isle, and *La Place royale à Québec* (Clovis Durand, 1972), built in the 17th century, deal with the restoration of two very valuable architectural ensembles.

Popular arts and traditions are a favorite theme. During the forties, several films, particularly Laura Bolton's, recorded folk art, sometimes even folk songs and dances, of Quebecers, Eskimos, Amerindians and Neo-Canadians. An enthusiasm overflowing beyond our borders since, and this is an irony of fate, the first film on independent art deals not with Canadians but with *Primitive Artists of Haiti* (Réal Benoit and Jacques de Tonnancour, 1949). A strong, sustained interest in popular art in all the forms; the making of guitars (*Alegria*, Jacques Leduc, 1973); the designing of banners, among which are those by Norman Laliberté (*Bannerfilm*, Donald Winkler, 1972); the construction of a canoe according to genuine ancestral techniques, fast disappearing, (*César's Bark Canoe*, Bernard Gosselin, 1971); or the illustration of a legend by means of Indian ceremonial masks (*The Loon's Necklace*, Redford Crawley, 1950). In short, boundless fascination with crafts whose apogee is noted

in *In Praise of Hands* (Donald Winkler, 1974), as it retraces across the continents the hand-object relationship in its most eloquent craft manifestations.

Space being limited, we shall confine ourselves to mentioning in passing a few of the numerous productions arising from realms corollary to films on art. In cinema let us take note of: *Grierson* (Roger Blais, 1973) and *Buster Keaton Rides Again* (John Spotton, 1965); in photography: *Le Québec as Seen by Cartier-Bresson* (Claude Jutra and Wolf Koenig, 1969); in the dance: *Ballet Adagio* (1971) and *Pas de deux* (1967) by Norman McLaren; in music: *Félix Leclerc, troubadour* (Claude Jutra, 1958) and *Stravinsky* (Roman Kroitor and Wolf Koenig, 1965); in decoration: *H-abitat paysa-G* (Pierre Savard, 1971); and in industrial aesthetics: *Modulo: Variations on a Design* (Pierre Moretti, 1973).

The television networks, producers of films in other domains, import, rather than producing themselves, series of wide-ranging films on art, like *L'Art et son secret* or *Civilization* animated by René Huyghe and Kenneth Clark respectively. Certainly, occasionally they broadcast foreign films on art, and artistic magazines make their appearance sporadically on the little screen, but no sustained and systematic series on film, as great as the number imported, has been undertaken until now.

The most important collection in the country remains the one at the Canadian Centre for Films on Art (CCFA), located in Ottawa, and created in 1964 by Dorothy MacPherson, who has assumed the direction of it. The catalogue contains 1500 titles to-day, including the deposit of the National Gallery of Canada, distributed by the Canadian Film Institute. The clientele consists of museums, colleges and universities throughout the country. A Canadian Centenary project in 1967 gave the Centre the opportunity of promoting the founding of embryo collections of films on art in the ten provinces.

What is the outlook for the future? Rather discouraging. In a period of economic recession, film on art in Canada is hard hit. The CCFA lives sparingly, without a definite acquisition budget. And if, with a few exceptions, most of the films mentioned originate in the National Film Board (NFB) and in the Quebec Film Board (QFB), the production of films on art inside the two companies most interested in the genre is on the wane. For the current year, the completion of a single film — *Instants privilégiés* by Paul Vézina, in which Marcel Barbeau paints to percussionist Vincent Dionne's rhythms — is planned at the QFB. And from agreements reached between the National Film Board and the National Museums of Canada, only three films in production will see the light of day; all of them motivated by exhibitions, with the working titles of *James B. Spencer* (James Littleton), *Painting of the 30's* (Derek May) and *Images of Stone* (Jack Long and Don Woroby). In short, then, for lack of credits, this is cultural sclerosis. And here we believed that the artistic education of the masses by means of the film was beyond price!

(Translation by Mildred Grand)

DELEZENNE, RANVOYZÉ'S MASTER

By Robert DEROME

Little is known of François Ranvoyzé's activ-

ity before his marriage in 1771¹. Thirty-one years of age, he brought to the community as his marriage portion the considerable sum of 1500 livres "in hard money (. . .) earned by his work and industry (. . .) as well as his silversmith's shop" which he kept as his personal property. And present at this wedding was Mr. Ignace François Delezenne, merchant silversmith of that city (Quebec), living there on St. Joseph St., his friend who served him as witness in place of his father².

These brief facts lead us to imagine a great deal concerning the preceding years. Does the expression "his friend who served him as witness in place of his father" mean that Delezenne³, the adoptive father, lodged young Ranvoyzé placed in his home as an apprentice by his widowed mother who could no longer supply the needs of her family in a time of crisis? Did Madame Ranvoyzé not place her son Louis with a locksmith during the same period?⁴ Did the Ranvoyzés not live on Mountain Hill, not far from Delezenne's workshop?⁵ Was the family home not destroyed at the same time as the others during the siege of Quebec in 1759?⁶ And, what is more, Ranvoyzé's professional establishment took place at the same time as his personal emancipation⁷. As for the lack of earlier information, it can be due only to commitments undertaken under private agreement. Would the engaging of Dominique-François Mentor in 1756 be known to us if this apprentice of Delezenne's had not deposited with a notary a copy of the private contract?⁸

Accepting the fact that Ranvoyzé was placed in apprenticeship with Delezenne at about fifteen years of age would bring us back to 1755. That was the beginning of Delezenne's rise, the period when he needed many apprentices to fill intendant Bigot's very important orders for Indian trade silver. The decorative vocabulary acquired through the fashioning of these jewelry and trinkets would explain the repeated use Ranvoyzé made of it in his first works⁹. Twenty years of age in 1759, the usual apprenticeship term, Ranvoyzé would not have dared to set up in business for himself because the crisis of the Conquest was not a propitious time for it. Not anticipating getting married immediately, it probably seemed less of a risk to him to remain with his master as companion or associate. Delezenne was well known and had a steady clientele and a heavy volume of business.

Shortly after the Treaty of Paris an era of reconstruction began. A rush of orders came from fabrics and religious communities. Ranvoyzé, remaining with Delezenne, would orientate himself toward religious silverwork, destined to become his speciality. This helps us to explain the revival of mentions of payments to Delezenne in diverse parishes. In spite of Ranvoyzé's marriage, the two silversmiths would still continue their friendship. In 1772 Delezenne became the godfather of Ranvoyzé's first child, a son named François-Ignace in his honour. Meanwhile, Ranvoyzé moved to St. John St.¹⁰ a few steps from Delezenne's home and workshop situated on St. Joseph St. The American invasion and some family problems would force Delezenne to settle in the Saint-Maurice Forges toward the end of 1775. At the time of these troubles Ranvoyzé, politically a conservative, would remain faithful to the British Crown, and would also be recompensed for his military service during the blockade of 1775. Delezenne and his son Joseph, republicans, would support the Rebels in their fight for colonial independence. In spite of this difference of political opinion, Delezenne no less continued his ties of friendship with Ranvoyzé. Moreover,