The conference on Art and its Social Responsibilities held in Montreal last February at Sir George Williams University and the Saidye Bronfman Centre was too glamorous to be really significant; the supremely moderating element, the New York critic, Harold Rosenberg, reaffirmed his concern about the separation of the North American artist from social realities; this constitutes — according to him — a serious threat to the survival of painting as a serious activity: "In the face of the mounting pace of social and political upheavals, the program of shadowing political fact in art has resulted in increasing frustration. Artists stirred by social indignation have found themselves locked in a medium that has lost its voice. Politics among artists has consisted of accepting a package of ready-made issues — peace, civil rights — while renouncing the ability to contribute to an imaginative grasp of the epoch. Artists have protested, but not their art; a matter of signing the attendance record but being present in name only. Both in the United States and abroad, art has been denounced as part of the system for preserving the status quo... Painting has, of course, other interests than politics, but a too long immersion in itself has infected art with ennui. Painting needs to purge itself of all systems that place so-called interests of art above the interests of the artist's mind. Abstract Expressionism liberated painting from the social-consciousness dogma of the thirties; it is time now to liberate it from the ban on social consciousness."

Thus at a time of a far-seeing warning signal that should be remembered, and of a troubled period when art cannot venture to be sterile while finding its way with regards to fashion rather than life, we learned that Sweden, on the other hand, and due to a good number of artists who are between thirty and forty, is experiencing a successful new phase, and explosion in all the tendencies. In this part of the world there is a new slant to social consciousness and more of reality. Having art accepted into the reality of life by means of the image is again becoming "an instrument of truth". H. G. Pontus Hulten, director of the Contemporary Art Museum in Stockholm, an unrivalled animator, who is responsible for his museum growing to reach Europe and the international scene, as well as for the publicizing and acceptance of contemporary Swedish artists abroad, recognizes the difficulty of handling the image, but, he is convinced that it does not have its equal in reality. He adds, to prevent any misunderstanding, that "this reasoning applies to the image that is representative as well as to the one that is not".

The presentation in Paris by Animation-Recherche-Confrontation, in February 1971, of an exhibition of eight young Swedish artists allows for some interesting observations. The exhibition was the idea of the director of the A.R.C., Pierre Gaudhiert, who is himself very aware and open to the research and teaching of contemporary art. He went to Sweden and after examining and studying Swedish art for one month made a selection about which he notes the absence or the lack-lustre vitality (beginning of 1970, date of the selection) of the "minimal", "poor" and "conceptual" currents. On the other hand, beside a constructivism which is affirmed, there is the image that reflects political commentary, at times brutal and satirical, at times more enigmatic, more secret, more hunted by a necessity to define human and social relationships, and finally there is the new figuration that completely utilizes all techniques of assemblage, of setting, to translate under the cloak of modernity, a Nordic reality made up of myths, dreams, contacts with nature and age-old nostalgia.

On the other hand, the evolution of Swedish art is bound to an artistic policy whose merits lie in creating a balance between the private and public sectors, and in making good use of education, an indispensable support, which our cultural policies are now seeking to establish, not without some difficulty, so hostile is our consumer society to creation.

In Canada the responsibility of cultural policies falls on the federal, provincial, and increasingly on the municipal governments. When the policies are not the stakes of purely political wrangles that finally harm the planning of the artistic and cultural development of this country, they represent one of the most important initiatives attempted up to this point in North America with a view to creating a climate favourable to artistic creations and diffusion. It is sufficient to recall a few important milestones established within less than thirty years. The creation of Arts Councils on three levels of government, of a department of Cultural Affairs in Quebec, which has contributed to the rise of the interpretative arts, the plastic arts and literature; the development of the Radio-Canada Society, the national and provincial film boards, the quite recent creation of Information Canada, so many organizations indispensable to diffusion; finally the studies that are known, which the Inquiry Commission into the teaching of art in Quebec (Rioix Commission) whose mandate consisted in preparing a complete reform of the teaching of art in Quebec, a real foundation stone that will determine the cultural needs of coming generations. Unfortunately, the limited distribution of the report, the fact that it has not yet been translated, despite the manifest interest of English-speaking people, the absence of a serious follow-up of the recommendations, indefinitely delay its implementation and demonstrate once more our tendency towards non-utilization.

Moreover, the rather recent intervention of the Secretariat of State into the field of cultural policies allows us to hope for new support. A truly realistic policy of museums and publishing is being prepared; it is at once complementary and indispensable to the progress that will eventually be made in all levels of education. It dictates concern the protection of the national heritage, its diffusion and the use of publishing on a very large scale as a cultural means.

In the course of Consultation 1: Museums 70, on Tuesday, February 16, in Ottawa, Secretary of State, Gérard Pelletier, defined certain new areas of priorities which should lead to specific programmes. They appear important to us and we shall return to the analysis of a few of them in the July issue that will be devoted to the Museums of Quebec; but it seems important to quote it in detail for the reader who is interested in forthcoming policy:

1) The establishment of an overall plan governing the use of the National Museums collections and covering such matters as presentations in Ottawa, travelling exhibitions, and long-term loans of items from the national collections to museums that are able to provide the necessary security and make effective use of them; a list would also be prepared of items that should normally remain permanently at the Museums because of their fragility, size or irrereplaceability;

2) the establishment of a list of museums — which could be called "affiliated museums" — based on population distribution in Canada. We could thus have about twenty affiliated museums covering the whole country and providing the communities they serve with access to those items in our collections which do not, for some reason, have to remain in one place;

3) the drafting of the conditions on which museums could be given "affiliated status", and receive capital and operating grants to enable them to provide the necessary qualified staff and physical environment to ensure full and safe utilization of items loaned to them;

4) a study of the additional needs of the National Museums in terms of the acquisitions necessary to bring the collections up to the standards of quality and quantity required by this expansion of their use;
Richard Lacroix and The Guilde Graphique

By Shirley RAPHAEL.

If, when writing an article about Richard Lacroix you start to write it using "hip" New York art jargon, then we can call Richard Lacroix a "superstar".

In Canada he is the equivalent of the Americans like Andy Warhol, or any of the other current favours that make news in art magazines and newspapers the most often.

Richard Lacroix is one of the best examples of a Quebec artist, who stayed in Montreal, who hasn't lost his French Canadian identity, but at the same time, by being himself, and doing work that is himself and no one else, he has managed to exhibit his work in international art circles as well as being written up in major art publications and winning international awards.

Walk into any top gallery in New York such as the Martha Jackson, Richard Feigen or any other of 25 galleries or more across Canadian and the United States. You will find the prints of Richard Lacroix and The Guilde Graphique on display in all of them.

What counts and what is most important to note is that Richard Lacroix is smart enough to have travelled and studied the art market and the competition, so that when he came back to work in Montreal he realized what he had to do. He knew that the only way to have his work included in the top places was to produce work that was professionally as good or better than what was being offered.

For this he deserves much credit — he is a very realistic and sensible young man.

He is a "superstar" because he is a creative artist in many different mediums. Painter, printmaker, sculptor, designer, film maker — such as the 6-minute film made in 1967 shown at Expo "Les Mécaniques" a 10-sculptural/kinetic/musical instruments film that was for the active participation of the spectators. He also made a 3-minute film "Fusion des Arts" a kinetic/light & sound plastic sculpture.

During the month of December 1970, Lacroix and The Guilde Graphique held an open house at the studio at 4677 St. Denis St. For those who didn't have a chance to see what is being done there, you can visit the place any Monday or Tuesday.

Richard Lacroix and The Guilde Graphique are like no other graphic group in the whole of Canada. It is completely professional and operates like a business — they have salesmen on the road who call on the different galleries, they send work off to have shows of The Guilde Graphique and there is an office and files set up that is organized and ready to receive all inquiries, museum officials or people who want to buy prints at any time.

When I interviewed him in December for this article he had just finished illustrating the poems of Alain Granbois, one of Quebec’s most important poets. The rich etchings he did to go with the poems were truly jewels. Rich texture, intense colour, simple, yet dazzling in their texture and so suitable to the text. There are two versions issued by the publisher, Fides, Two original hand-signed editions of which there are 50 and 75 copies, and the commercial one of 700 copies.

He also created a series of small prints which show a panorama of seven years of his artistic work. These are hand signed copies that sell at a very low price and highlight his most important themes during this time. You can see the gradual development of his work from seven years ago to what he is doing today.

Even though he was born in 1939, look at all he has accomplished.

He had a Canada Council scholarship in 1951-1962 to study at the various print workshops in Europe. He spent most of his time at Atelier 17 of S. W. Hayter in Paris. He returned to Canada in 1963 with two antique printing presses that he found in France and a set of gelatin rollers. He set up a studio above a garage on St. Christophe Street. For the next two years he concentrated on printing his own plates.

In 1964 he founded the Atelier Libre de Recherches Graphiques with assistance from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in Quebec and the Canada Council.

He invited other printmakers to work in the atelier and they did come and work to the tune of over 150 artists. The atelier (at this writing) might have to close unless grants come through from the government. This "open workshop" which is stimulating because of the printmakers around was where the idea for The Graphic Guild was born.

In 1966 he founded The Graphic Guild (La Guilde Graphique) dedicated to the publishing of original Canadian prints on a cooperative basis, with assistance from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in Quebec and the Canada Council. The government helped start this private enterprise; now it is a flourishing business that is self-supporting.

Editions are printed of the work of Robert Savoie, Tobie Steinheim, Kittle Brueeau, Molinari, Tousignant, Hurtubise, Barry Wainwright and other prominent artists.

This thoroughly professional venture is similar to the publishing houses elsewhere in the world. By establishing The Graphic Guild Lacroix forced other Canadian printmakers to work and think more professionally and in a way strive to get into the international market. Each print that comes out of The Guilde Graphique (the prints are printed by professional printers, the artists just do the design) bears the "chop" or stamp of The Guilde Graphique. A "chop" is an identifying mark on the bottom of a print to either say who published the print or who printed it. It is usually stamped so that it comes out as an embossed seal.

He has made slides of the different graphic media and has lectured with these slides to the guides at the Montreal Museum and to groups at the Saidye Bronfman Centre. He has also printed an illustrated folder explaining the difference between etching, silkscreen and lithography and these are available to those who write to him.

As Lacroix himself says, "I want to create fields of color and energy. I want the color to be intense and alive." His work is similar to what he himself is like; alive, intense and colorful.

The Canadian artistic world could use more Richard Lacroix's... more artists who have drive and ambition and know exactly where they are going.
It is indeed a rare pleasure to present an architecture that is beyond the formalism of fashion and is yet a present-day architecture, and to contemplate intense simplicity, in an era devoted to mediocre neo-baroqueism. The Civil Service Alliance of Canada had this building constructed to house its headquarters. The latter occupies the three top stories. Half of the ground floor serves as a conference centre. On the other stories there are offices. In the basement, a garage and a cafeteria.

The lot is long and narrow. In order to emphasize the importance of the building, it was decided that it should be set near the busiest street. As the city of Ottawa is to make a park on the other side of Gilmour street, the architects thought other than the traditional rectangle was in order. The zoning rules requiring a long and narrow building, the elliptical form was retained. Thus, the curve of the side walls softens the mass of the building and integrates it perfectly with the charm of the future environment.

The circular form occurs again in the window arches, in the bricks with rounded patterns, and in the fibreglass panels. The mass is unified by the dark colour of the brownish-purple brick, whose surface slightly gleams. The fibreglass ornamentation in a bronze colour that covers the tympanum beams, the glass and aluminum frames which are also this colour, all this adds to the effect of unity.

The exterior is lighted by white globes, set up on each brick pillar. This ring of lights emphasizes the curves of the building. The two vertical sections in the front and rear of the building are identical. The brick pillars alternatingly contain concrete columns and air registers. The side walls contain the fire escapes.

The frame of the building is reinforced concrete. All the floors, including that of the garage are slabs of concrete.

The rounded lateral walls and the central core contribute to the structural rigidity, necessary to withstand eventual earth tremors in the Ottawa region.

The building is completely air-conditioned with an interior and perimetric control. The machine room covers two thirds of the top floor. Above, hidden by a wooden oval screen, painted in a dark colour, is the machinery of the elevators and the refrigeration units of the air conditioning system. Each storey is lighted by recessed fluorescent lights in a ceiling of acoustical tiles. The building is also equipped with a smoke and fire detection system. Three conference rooms on the ground floor can accommodate 40, 50, and 90 people. The moveable partitions permit these three rooms to be transformed into only one. The rest-rooms and cloak-rooms are adjacent to the foyer, near the main entrance. In the basement are the duplicating, postal, and printing services, the parking areas and the cafeteria which can serve 150 people at specific time.

The total usable floor space is 136,900 square feet, with 10,400 square feet per storey. The building cost $3,170,000 including landscaping. The cost per square foot, except for the underground parking and the moveable partitions in the offices is set at $19, which makes this architecture an example of economic beauty too.

Only a few small criticisms could be made (we thing especially of the two service entrances made in the oval walls). The implantation of the building, its design, its perfect inclusion, and its relationship with the parking and access ramp in the basement, everything combines in a cautious lyricism and shows a lack of self-satisfaction that is to be seen in few buildings in Ottawa. This is a spirit to retain and to repeat.

(Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson)

Creation : Operation “Why not?”

by Bernard LÉVY

The idea of uniting art and efficiency, artists and technicians, is not new; it is rather an entire state of mind that must be renewed. To do this, the groupe Création simply proposes an original way of utilizing present day means. It is still only a plan which combines ideas with varied ramifications, and outlines that would be worth completing.

We met Marcelle Ferron (painter) and Gérard Beaulieu (professor) who undertook to plan in a rational and systematic way the development of the group to which they belong. Through their statements we shall present the objectives that they set for themselves and the main stages through which they intend to pass to make Création a centre whose presence and necessity is incontestable.

Création: the group and its intentions are little-known. Création is the name of the movement that Marcelle Ferron and Yves Trudeau began two years ago in Montreal. This organization essentially sought to be a meeting place for Quebec artists of every discipline and technologists. In this respect, it has not changed its orientation. Since then, other objectives have been added to the initial project. As for financial resources, they have not changed: they remain about nil. On the other hand, technical resources today seem less scarce and, at any rate, more promising than in the beginning. And yet, let there be no mistake, Création is still only at the outline stage and does not even have a secretariat.

The inventory

The fundamental objective for Création is to become a centre of information on the arts to be used not only by artists and creators, but also by technicians and especially by the whole of the Quebec community. Marcelle Ferron explains “that there is no question of setting up a federation, an association or a group of artists. These already exist (Association of Professional Artists, Association of Sculptors, etc.) with a specific role: to protect the arts and the interests of those who have chosen to make art their profession”. In fact, the groupe Création could be defined as both an instrument of communication and a catalytic agent, since by simplifying exchanges and putting information in common that is easily available to all, it will stimulate research and creation. The ivory tower is no more.

“An inventory must immediately be made of university and industrial research centres, to be used for artistic and cultural purposes. It is necessary to know the people who are working in these centres and ask them to collaborate in creative experiments. We must scrutinize the environment in which we are living and distinguish its real or potential dynamics”, Marcelle Ferron has thus, in three very and decisive sentences, outlined the main aim of the first step: the inventory.

For the time being everything rests on a simple compilation of our assets, a fastidious task which is seldom thought of
already the first meetings have had favourable results:chem-
useful to the development of their own industry or the advan-
advantage of all the initiatives, to convince the directors of
artists enthusiastically accepted the idea of an interrelation of
ists, electronics technicians, designers, architects, and musi-
cians. Thus cren

To index the existing
ences, etc.) that can enlighten him; he will be introduced

tions; he will be shown what industrial company could best

to another artist grappling with similar difficulties; he will be

task only to tackle real difficulties. We should be able to or-

organize competitions on themes like the environment of a

An exchange bank

When a great volume of information will not stop coming
in and will by systematically catalogued, indexed, filed, and
analyzed in a database. This is to say, when the first phase will have taken
sufficient volume, a simple telephone call to the Création
The committee was composed of advisors: Marcel Rioux (sociologist), Pierre Champagne (jurist), Jean Zalloni (technical advisor), and Luc Durand (architect). About sixty other persons select, support, and even
orient certain initiatives.

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orient certain initiatives.
The Fernand Leduc Retrospective
By Laurent LAMY

At the Musée d’Art Contemporain at the end of 1970, one hundred paintings made up a coherent, enduring, and dynamic retrospective — an evaluation of twenty seven years of work.

Fernand Leduc calls to mind the beginnings of modern art here. A friend of Borduas, he belonged to the group of Automatists and in 1948 signed the Refus global with Perron, Morin, Tousignant, Barbeau, and others. With Molinari, Tousignant, and Juneau he founded the group of Plasticians. It follows that if we go back to the origin of the two most notable movements in the evolution of painting in Quebec, we find that both times Fernand Leduc was an important element in the formation of the group.

From the Surrealism of the beginning of the 40’s, he soon went on to Automatism where gesture is all important and where the accidental is primordial. In these canvases, the traditional criteria of perspective and depth are still applicable since objects float in a three-dimensional space. These are abstract landscapes with dark, thick tones which gradually, towards 1950, begin to close. The touch becomes heavier, more constructed; then, massive, it eliminates the possibility of being guided by a perspective.

During the entire Automatist period, the almost austere rigour which is a fundamental trait of Leduc is displayed only in the choice of rather leaden colours.

But the dull colour soon lightens. The evolution of Leduc during the years 1946 to 1955 appears completely natural in the retrospective, it proceeds from canvas to canvas. The construction, the touch, the colour, everything falls into place. This same inspiration leads to really geometric canvases in 1955. With a Meadys precursor, less plastic surfaces tend to occupy all the space, leaving fewer and fewer openings. The subject and the accidental have completely disappeared in canvases like Porte d’Orient (1955). The gestural treatment has been gradually replaced by “pavings” (to use Leduc’s own words) which block up the canvas, eliminate depth and give the canvas back its original two-dimensional quality.

At that time the personal itinerary of Leduc took a very clear direction towards geometrisation. He definitively broke with Automatism in 1956, with his own words, “a technician, and he is thinking of a study project in various glassworks in Europe.

(Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson)
Luc BENOIT

Suzanne Duquet: Between electronics and the easel
By Luc BENOIT

Suzanne Duquet had not had an exhibition for several years. Then, suddenly last fall, fourteen of her paintings were shown at the gallery of L'Atelier Pédagogique de Reliure d'Art Artis­male, in Old Montreal; the exhibition was somewhat upset by the October disorders.

The reproductions herein will give us a very concise idea of her pictorial work; I do not intend to deal with this subject, even if the exhibition which was mentioned earlier was the starting point for my article.

Visiting Suzanne Duquet, I found her to be a committed woman, positive and involved, in her research, as well as in politics or in teaching.

She is a professor at the University of Quebec in Montreal. Now that art studies have become a department, she teaches in the Department of two-dimensional plastic arts.

After studies at the former École des Beaux-Arts, Suzanne Duquet decided to teach and then worked for Radio-Canada. While she taught, she did some animation and television scripts for children. In 1960 she gave it all up and returned to painting. "Until '66 I really had to struggle to be able to do some work. It is pointless to give courses in painting if one does not paint oneself."

She then returned to painting. Then, in the spring of 1970, she received a grant from the Ministry of Telecommunications to a conference at York University in Toronto: Telecommunications and the arts, and its influence on the environment.

"There were scientists, technicians and artists from across the country present. It seemed to me that most of the artists gathered there had a few reservations about these new toys. They said: 'The machine is wonderful for reproduction or use in an art library' or still, 'that it was necessary to let the unity of the whole."

"It was there I realized how slow the artist sometimes is, more often than facing a new world of expression, have we forgotten the skills of the engineer? Musicians have responded to electronics in a positive way. The electronic synthesizer — this machine that creates sounds — has progressed beyond the stage of experiments. Today musicians are engaged in pure research and in improving the machine.

"It was at the same conference that Suzanne Duquet met Dr. John F. Hart, director of the Computer Science Department of the University of Western Ontario in London who invited her to do some graphic experiments with the help of a computer."

"I was up against the unknown. I had to find a simple language to make an animated drawing by computer. It was no longer a question of becoming an engineer. Besides, engineers did not see why I felt the need to review basic mathematics. In fact, all that was needed was to receive certain data on the central unity of the computer, to review some arithmetic, to learn the language of the computer, the layout, the telescript language and coding operations for graphism on the cathode screen."'

"I was even more surprised to see how much I could retain, understand and assimilate, given my complete ignorance of cybernetics in general, and the computer in particular. These experiments, as brief as they were, because they were properly conducted, showed me all the possibilities that the artist can explore with such an instrument. While the computer is not easy to handle, is fixed in its requirements, it can produce extraordinary and rich results and solutions."

"Cybernetic graphism has been possible for almost ten years. It has not been widely used, and in general it has been used without much imagination: artists were often content to copy or reproduce works. This shows a lack of boldness on the part of inventors."

Suzanne Duquet also notes that it would be unwise, indeed rash, to leave the field entirely to engineers, mathematicians, physicists, technologists and computer programmers.

"Nothing has really been done. We need artist-teachers ready to undertake studies and experiments in cybernetic graphism. Then we should prepare students who would prepare other students..."

"We have to let the computers go wild and cybernetic graphism offers researchers exciting prospects."

Yet for all that, Suzanne Duquet is giving up neither her painting nor her teaching. On the contrary, the machine provides a positive contribution, an exchange, as it were, between man and itself.

The possibilities of electronics are infinite; and the graphism that can be discovered using electronics is as varied as it is inexhaustible.

This summer Suzanne Duquet is returning to London for four months to pursue her adventure. "I do not say that I will succeed completely with what I hope to do; but in so far as I succeed in spreading the idea here... Well, there are many other machines..."
Some forty miles from Ottawa, a short distance from the tiny village of Rupert, stands an old farm where John Eaton, a young artist of exceptional talent, lives. It may appear unusual that such a young artist who has spent several years in New York and travelled all over Europe should choose to retire to the seclusion of this particular farm, somewhat lost in the Gatineau Hills. However, there is nothing monastic about his way of life. Although reluctant to admit that it had any influence on his recent work, it becomes obvious when one looks at his output of the past three years that the serenity and calm of this newly found milieu have contributed significantly to his art. His work has progressed rapidly and to the point where it is highly meaningful, his depth and shows a great deal of self-confidence which was lacking to some degree five or six years ago. It is clear that he is moving forward with a sense of freedom which the bustle and distractions of city life such as New York presents could have curtailed. This does not mean that Eaton would not have achieved the same goals, but his progress would probably have been slower and less positive.

At first glance, the drawings of John Eaton may appear somewhat Raphael-esque and in the purest tradition of the Renaissance until one takes a closer look. They pick up where the great draughtsman of that period left off and at a time when drawings became generally lifeless and highly static with the exception of a very few. Eaton goes on, but with renewed energy thus making his work more dynamic and at times overflowing with vigour and movement. Some of his works reflect a degree of violence and even brutality rarely seen today except in certain abstract works where this may have been accidental as was perhaps the case in certain works that César and Mathieu did in recent years. His work is never chaotic but a great deal of turbulence is always present. This is accomplished not without the awareness of the artist, if only subconsciously, although I suspect that this is achieved willingly.

As a follower of certain theories expressed by the disciples of the esoteric movement created by Rudolf Steiner and which is called "anthroposophy", John Eaton expresses himself in terms of masses, of energy and of related movements. Everything becomes what it should be in terms of qualitative and quantitative densities arranged in many varied ways resulting in elements, animated or inanimate, physically and functionally different from one another. In his abstract work, Eaton asks several questions which remain without an answer either because we are afraid to delve into them or because they are too disturbing and fall in areas where we have little or no knowledge. A remarkable thing about Eaton's work is that whether or not we fully understand what he is desperately trying to tell us, we seem to fall under a certain spell which forms a bond, a return and a gathering of a kind. Eaton, who is not yet thirty years of age, will have a great deal to tell us in the next few years. From what he has already accomplished, he leaves us with little choice but to follow him attentively. The potential is very much there, massive, powerful and highly promising. Although success and recognition are rapidly moving his way, there is no indication that they will spoil this determined man in any way.

(Translation by Pierre-E. Chassé)

Criteria: An exhibition of Lise Brunet and Richard Mill at the Galerie Jolliet in Quebec City.

By Michel PARENT

Excerpt from the invitation to this exhibition, also a sort of little manifesto: "Criteria indicates that every thought comes from an acceptance, from a rule. Obviously the acceptance and the rule chosen here are starkness and order. These are the characteristics which make these canvases startling at first, as for some time we have been used to more violence and noise, to more shocks or movements. There is nothing new in the use of technological folklore. There is, on the contrary, an invitation to a withdrawn reflection, almost monastic, perhaps oriental. This is a universe defined by all violence, aspiring to some improbable, utopian essential with precision of meaning, introverted character of the subject, and fulfillment in the treatment. Quickly, according to what he wishes, the viewer will be able to pick out on these rectilinear fields his horizons or his dreams.

Lise Brunet. First the visualization of white light, the play of the variable proximity of the geometric planes, which are also white and symmetrically arranged, then fine, sharp verticals, even more luminous, designating imaginary spaces.
Albrecht Dürer, a Renaissance man

By Irene HEYWOOD

Albrecht Dürer was a Renaissance man from Nuremberg in Germany and this year the world celebrates his 500th birthday. It was celebrated in Ottawa early in the year with an exhibition of his woodcuts and engravings and a few other works, at the National Gallery. Although the exhibition included such great works as his Melancholia I, and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and other main prints, from this important period of his life, it gave only a limited view of him as a man of his time and place.

Dürer is an old hero of mine, one of my first, perhaps because he could draw so well, so the idea of giving a fuller portrait of him during his year is a welcome one. It is also a chance to compare the great excitement of the Renaissance in Europe with the turmoil and change of our world today; there are many similarities and differences.

He was an activist. Although he never left the church in Rome, he fought its "establishment" during this period of the Reformation. He was a humanist, one of the new breed of men who helped to uncover individuality in man. One of the first painters to use himself as a model, his self-portraits are no mere representations but dig deep into his own personality to show us what sort of man he was, how he felt and what he wanted. The first of them, a drawing made when he was 13 years old, gives little more than an indication of his future powers as a draughtsman, but even here, there is a feeling of a separate human being.

The Louvre in Paris has a great example. Painted when he was 22 his carrot-red hair touches his shoulders, the flamboyance of the dress of the time of course exceeds that of our time but in his hand he carries a sprig of Eryngium, a plant associated with love in the symbology of flowers, we are told. The self-portrait was painted before his first trip to Italy and shows him a thoughtful searching individual, so that we know that he had already begun his investigation into man's individuality before he met the great Italians.

At the Prado in Madrid is a later self-portrait painted after his first visit to Italy. Here we can see that he has developed as a painter, away from the graphic training of his early life: we can see too the influence of the Renaissance painters of Italy. At 26 he is now sophisticated and sure of his ability and the portrait shows a young man capable of a cool assessment of what life has to suggest to him.

Considerations such as these can seem mundane enough to us today until we remember that Dürer and his Italian contemporaries were the first to show us the emerging human personality, the individual man who separated himself from the group by insisting on his own right to develop his ideas apart from the fetters of established custom.

Today we reverse the Renaissance challenge. We seem too willing to lose ourselves in group movements; we have finished with it. Perhaps in our lifetime we will see a new Renaissance yet, something solid, as Cézanne described his own ambition, good enough to last even in a museum.

La région de Charlevoix — photographiée par Gabor Szilasi

par Geoffrey JAMES

Marcel Duchamp, la père de la machine optique est aussi celui de l'idée que les tableaux ont la vie brève car, selon lui, il se dégage des œuvres d'art une sorte de parfum, d'émanation esthétique . . . qui s'évapore en quelques décennies.

Ainsi en 1913, le Nu descendant l'escalier soulevait l'enthousiasme, mais c'est maintenant une peinture sans vie, sans odeur. Elle a vieilli. En photographie, c'est généralement le contraire qui se produit.
The poets driven from Plato's ideal city met again twenty three centuries later in Montreal, specifically during the night of March 27 to 28, 1970. They were about fifty strong, French speaking and Quebecers. There, for more than two hours, they spoke, yelled, yapped, sang, murmured, and grew silent one after the other. It was in the salle Géru, in front of — with — five thousand people. In front of — with — five thousand poets, if it is true that we are all poets, or if it is true that that pot makes poets. For a lot of pot was smoked that night and, it was a lot of fun.

Now these poets by profession or circumstance did not suspect, or only half suspected, that they were caught in one of the most formidable traps that the cinema has ever set for literature. Jean-Claude Labrecque and Jean-Pierre Masse were not satisfied, however, with filming the most important poetry recital ever held in Quebec: they had organized it themselves in a Machiavellian fashion. This is a rare example of a cinema of actuality which creates the actuality that it intends to capture. It is the border line where documentary cinema joins the cinema of fiction. And I do not know why I wrote "in a Machiavellian way", for the intention of the two cineasts was pure and praiseworthy: it was a matter of committing to memory on film, forever if possible, for a long time, at any rate, the face of Quebec poetry of 1970. They succeeded in that, for, with a very few people absent — Grandbois too elderly, Brault, too discreet, Paul-Marie Lapointe, Fernand Ouellette, Jacques Godbout; a few young "Telquelliens" (1) — all the present day poets were there. They even succeeded beyond their desires, since these eleven hours of public poetry, condensed to two hours in a film which still seems too short, appear in retrospect, highly significant, not only of the poetry, but of the entire new Quebec. By that I mean two things: the first the film by Labrecque and Masse is a document on the intellectual atmosphere of the year 1970, which for all sorts of reasons which we can imagine will prove to be a capital year in the history of Quebec. Then, La Nuit de la poésie (2) (The Poetry Night) is the first meeting of the two intellectual forces that have been most operative in the growing awareness by Quebecers of their national particularity. As though through the intermediary of Labrecque and Masse, first time, Perrault, Brault, Jutra, Lefebvre or Gilles Groulx, who have all contributed to giving Quebecers a new image of themselves, saluted those before them and alongside them who have not ceased through their words, in telling of the will of an entire people to survive and to be free.

I said before that it was the cineasts who had created the event. In this we recognize a kind of Quebec specialty (let us think of Saint-Jérôme by Fernand Dansereau or of Normétal, or still of Pour la suite du monde by Brault and Perrault). Does that mean that the presence of the cameras played an active role in the unfolding of the recital, in short can we speak of a cinematographic happening? In one sense, yes: for the eagerness with which many poets responded to the invitation that was made to them and exhibited themselves is revealing. On one hand, and this was already known, for about fifteen years Quebec poetry in large part has been a poetry of the spoken word — like the French poetry of the Resistance, like the new black poetry in the United States, like the poetry of Africa or Martinique, like the poetry of all ethnic groups struggling for their freedom. Most Quebec poems (this is particularly evident in the work of Michele Lalonde) call for the microphone and the stage and impassioned applause. To the extent that the dividing line between poetry and song has always been finer in Quebec than elsewhere (the presence of Pauline Julien or of Georges Dor at this poetry recital reminds us of it).

But on the other hand, nothing obliging (in March, 1970, I specify) Quebec poetry to be sobre or clandestine, since Quebec society belonged, for all that, to the group of societies of abundance and was still at that time in one of its periods of greatest freedom, the temptation became great and almost irresistible to make poetry no more than an entertainment (3). La Nuit de la poésie shows that few resisted this temptation: through the Pierrot, the Grappes of the Infime, the apple green garage mechanic's suit (with a pink heart) of Paul Chamberland, gaudy ties even on the chest of the prudent Préfontaine, in short this exaggerated use of all kinds of turbelows and flounces, where a charming spontaneity joins with a delicious child-like taste for disguise (I also had a friend in college who wore a butterfly bow to signify that he was a poet), the transformation after the hippie fashion of Baudelairean dandyism and assuredly the influence of pop music singers. To which we must add the traces of a nostalgia that was semi-flower-power (the distribution of balloons for La Barre du jour) and semi-neronian (for lack of bits of guitars, Georges Dor generously scattered his unsold copies among the public) which attempted to change the spectacular into a celebration. Bread and circuses. But that night the bread was poetry and the gladiators carried only plastic revolvers.

It would have been easy for Labrecque and Masse to abet this slight exhibitionism (which the presence of their cameras evidently reinforced) and to film La Nuit de la Poésie as a spectacular. On the contrary, they filmed it as a living an-
thology of Quebec poetry. Anthology: that is to say they made a choice among the fifty or so poets who followed one another on the Gévaud stage in such a way as to give a fairly complete idea of the different aspects of this poetry, going so far as to refilm later poets who had badly "turned out" on March 27th, but whose importance (Gaston Miron) or particularity (Nicole Brossard) justified a retake. Because of the film it is thus possible almost at first sight to spot the three or four poets, whom he lets speak, whom he listens to with discretion and fervour, without seeking to capture idiosyncrasies or picturesque detail, in brief with humility. With the humility of talent.

We must hope that this film will play to a wide audience, everywhere, but especially in Paris, Nice, Brussels, Luxembourg, Lasanne, Dakar, or Pointe-à-Pitre, everywhere where people speak French, to tell them that Quebec poetry exists, that it is in 1970, one of the most dynamic that exists, and that its dynamism is identical with that of a people who perhaps on day will verify the remark by Marx: namely that in the sphere of the arts there is no country.

N.B. — The beginning of the year 1971 has definitely been auspicious for Quebec cinema: besides La Nuit de la poésie we were able to see in Montreal—perhaps there were too few shows of a film about the public—Claude Jutra and Jean-Pierre Lefebvre have each produced a full length film: Silent Night (which became alas, Mon oeil, and the first full-length films of Roger Frappier (Le Grand film ordinaire), by André Théberge (Question de vie), by Yvan Patry (Ainsi soient-ils), by Michel Audy (Jean-François-Xavier de) and especially by Jean Chabot (Mon enfant à Montréal), who, in spite of a final aesthetic misinterpretation which breaks the unity of the film, directly reveals himself to be a very talented cineast from whom much may be expected. On the other hand, Claude Jutra and Jean-Pierre Lefebvre have each produced a full length film: Silent Night (which became alas, Mon Oncle Aniolou) by Jutra and Les Maudits Sauvages by Lefebvre. We shall take it up again.

(1) Allusion to the Parisian review Tel Quel.
(2) N.B., 1970.
(3) The events quickly proved that perhaps that was hasty.

I mean: a premature euphoria, giving some reason to those who, like Michel Van Schendel, refused to play this game on March 27th.

(Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson)

Behind the Rideau Vert between two boulevards:
"The return" ... to the theatre
By Yves-Gabriel BRUNET
From the theatre to the public
and from the public to the theatre

The Rideau Vert. We know the story. Known for a long time to Montreal theatre-poets, the "boulevard" of Saint-Denis street is recognized by its patrons, its subscribers, and its critics as the cénacle of light comedy. From boulevard to boulevard, a specialized theatre has been made of it... in its manner. A constant factor in the history of the Rideau Vert has been the desire to please the majority, to deny the fact that in Montreal theatre is in a constant state of crisis. The measure taken was to attract a public at all costs, by all possible means. Present a theatre that is not too upsetting to weak stomachs, faint hearts, asthmatic spirits; a theatre that does not bespatter white nylon shirts and leaves intact the newest — fashion — chic — reduced — outfits. A repertory of light comedies proves to be right for cresting and keeping such a public. So much for the adult public. Moreover, by including in the programme a regular repertory of children's plays, a completely new public is thereby initiated going to the theatre and to liking the theatre... a public that will eventually be adult. The Rideau Vert is the only theatre in Montreal that has been regularly including children's plays in its programme, and it has for many years: it is a remarkably positive initiative. Light comedies and children's theatre, up to this point, such were synonymous with Rideau Vert.
I say such were, because for two or three years, the policy of the group has been somewhat changed, probably at the express request of a certain well-informed public. In fact, the new policy requires that 50% of the plays be dramatic or Quebec works. Already, three years ago, Les Belles Soeurs by Michel Tremblay had almost made the theatre walls break out in a sweat. Then, at the rate of one or two a year, the Quebec creations (in the present day sense of the word) began to take over the stage. There is nothing surprising or even a dramatic about that; sooner or later we had to dare to confront our reality. Even at the Rideau Vert. By agreeing to present Les Belles Soeurs by Tremblay, the Rideau Vert had just taken that necessary step that brought Quebec theatre a new vitality. Whether or not it was in keeping with its own decision. Finally with the inclusion of dramatic plays, the scope is widened, the public digests less easily and becomes more critical. We had to reach this point, to make the choice of plays more universal. If the Rideau Vert had restricted itself to its first specialization, it certainly would have ended by saturating the spectator while accelerating in him an already latent disease: facility.

I have nothing in particular against the theatre of the Boulevard St. Laurent. It is nice, it is real, it never seems more than a lap dog that serves at once as a decoration and a diversion. And exactly, the essential goal of the theatre is not to caress, but to arouse the viewer. Jouvet said somewhere in this connection, that the theatre is not a diversion, but a warning. In other words, the theatre is not essentially a place to escape oneself, but indeed, on the contrary, a place to confront oneself, a place for revelation. I consider the theatre to be a kind of surgery, where the surgeon-performer operates on the spectator's psyche, baffled by everyday banality, a very delicate shock operation that finally makes him aware of reality, of his reality, while purging his mind. That is what plays that "alert" us can particularly contribute.

A well-supported proof: "The Return" by H. Pinter

Pinter's universe, authentically English, smacks of the furniture, the "shut in", the static, the memory. It is the home in all its majesty that maintains the characters in their schizophrenia, their dreams, even in their most morbid memories. A family drama where none faces the others and where each one has all the trouble in the world facing himself.

Pinter's reputation is already well-established. One of the most authentic authors, he is known for his psychological dramas of high tension where, in the soul of each character, passion holds back the gentleman and the gentleman holds back passion. There is no happiness there at all. The central theme, that of the mother, acts as a link and is present at each instant of the play. She is the very centre of dreams, of memories from which no one, not even the son and the mother, and also Uncle Sam, will be able to be freed before death. Besides, at the very end, the mother will get the upper hand.

The staging by Paul Blouin does justice to Pinter's thought. The apparent and exterior inactivity of each character incites the viewer more to explore his psychological drama. When a character speaks, it is very evident that the viewer cannot but see him in an inner close-up. In this respect, everything agrees so as not to disperse the spectator's attention.

On the other hand, the performance of the actors seems to me sometimes rather weak. Some seem to feel ill at ease with themselves; we felt that some gestures, certain words did not fit the characters. This weakness can be easily enough explained considering the fact that these actors have been used to exploiting their talents in comic characters. Apart from this small weakness, and there is never one without two, I especially noticed that the translation did not always do justice to verbal French expression. Finally, let us not attach more importance to that than is necessary. In short The Return proves to be a very interesting play in itself and I trust that the Rideau Vert will be able to include in its repertory other plays of the genre. It is a good choice that could further stimulate the regular public of the Rideau Vert to call for more dramatic plays in the seasons ahead.

(Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson)

The Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec

Maryvonne Kendergi, vice-president and organizer of the SMCQ, informs us of an important, new aspect of our cultural life.

As told to René ROZON

Q. — Along with Jean Papineau-Couture, Wilfrid Pelletier, Serge Garant and Hugh Davidson, you are one of the founding members of the SMCQ whose first concert was held in December, 1966. In what way were the goals which your organization proposes reconcilable with those of societies already in existence?

A. — The very aims of the SMCQ justified its creation and its existence with the other Montreal societies. In keeping with its statutes, the SMCQ intends to disseminate or propagate the knowledge of contemporary music, international as well as Canadian, and that of Quebec as well as the other provinces. Its main objective derives from these premises: to form a group of interpreters who devote themselves to a repertoire of the most recent, if not innovating music. Could that not have been done by someone else you ask? First of all, it was not being done. For not only were the already established societies not making modern music known, but they gave the short end of the stick to contemporary music. Certainly there were some exceptions, but without restrictions. We shall get back to this. The artistic circles in Montreal were thus suffering from a serious lack. We like to think that the efforts of the SMCQ had some part in filling it.

Q. — It must be acknowledged that an organization like yours is not created over night. In fact, what are the factors that favoured the expansion of the SMCQ?

A. — Indeed, the founding of the SMCQ is the result of a process of cultural evolution marked by meetings, conversations, events and assiduous efforts supported by many musical personalities. I shall restrict myself to the most significant elements, to those that contributed to initiating and forming an undeveloped public. First, on the audio-visual level there were programmes devoted to contemporary music, due to the initiative of government networks: on L'Heure du Concert that Pierre Mercure produced for television, modern works were included as early as 1955; there was Festiva euroculte, a programme I myself produced for seven years, that was broadcast on the radio from 1956 to 1963. Besides the programmes there were what I would call the events, mentioning only the three most notable ones. The first referred to the visit in December 1958, at my request, of Karlheinz Stockhausen who gave a conference at the University of Montreal and presented his Klavierstück II, one of the pillars of present day musical composition. Then there was the Modern Music Week organized by Pierre Mercure in August, 1961, which led to the visit to Montreal of David Tudor and John Cage, as well as the playing of several unfamiliar works including Atlas Eclipticalis by Cage, Transicion by Mauricio Kagel, the first performance of Anemone by Serge Garant, which had been waiting on the shelf for years to be played, and finally Structures métalliques, combining an electronic pattern by Mercure himself with the sonorities of elements sculpted by Armand Vavlanou. The third and last event to be emphasized, was the second visit to Montreal of Stockhausen in 1964; two performances had been planned, but a third was added, this time by public demand. This time Stockhausen chose Kontakte, a relatively recent work (1968). You will imagine that these events called everything even by serious critics, profoundly upset the listening habits of the public.

Q. — But in a parallel direction with these actions that contributed to creating progressively a climate favourable to the expansion of contemporary music in Montreal, there were musical societies before you that were also working towards this end?

A. — I was just getting to that. Yes, throughout the years, various groups had been formed, but we should specify, their
consider important, more than the chronological criteria, is aesthetics, the nature of the musical piece. Now, from this point of view, we would rather choose works that have made an impact, or that have upset the musical language, including innovating works; or still, works that the SMQ will judge within its province to introduce, works which other groups cannot make known because they have neither the musical canons nor the privileges they possess. It happens, whether they be the interpreters or members of the committee, or finally the sums that we invest in it. Having said this, Zeitmasse by Stockhausen, Différences by Boulez, Structures I by Xenakis, Déserts by Varèse, Offrande I by Serge Garant, and many other original works; it would almost be necessary to make a complete list of our programmes — were presented by the SMQ.

Q. — Repertory whose works are sometimes unpleasing, sometimes impossible to understand as well as to interpret. Does the choice of the interpreters not pose serious problems even when we consider that they have a particularly classical training?

A. — If this choice sets us problems at the beginning, it poses fewer and fewer today. It is a problem that is not particular to the SMQ, or particular to Quebec, or to Canada. Everywhere, there are thus periods of initiation for a repertory that is new. We do not think, for example, of regretting having put in hand the group Music of Our Time. A group, alas, which had an ephemeral existence of two years — that happened. There is a group that was formed of three young composers: a main group of instrumentalists which is joined occasionally, and as the work to be performed dictates, by soloists like the soprano Phyllis Mayling or the tenor Manny or Takahashi, to men­

Q. — How is the SMQ different from other similar societies in Canada as well as abroad?

A. — There are no similar societies in Canada. In Toronto today, if we are speaking of 1970-1971, Ten Centuries Concerts is a group which occasionally interprets modern music, but let us not forget its repertory ranges, as its name indicates, over ten centuries. Also in Toronto, there is the Lyric Arts Trio. Ten Centuries Concerts, its second offspring, is later supported by the Société de Musique Canadienne, had the advantage of making Canadian works known to Montreal, but the disadvantage of limiting itself to that. In a parallel direction to all that, many people, notably Henry Hétu, Jean-François Vallerand were thinking of a society devoted to contemporary music. So that in the spring of 1965, Wilfrid Pelletier, then Director of the Service of Music for the Government of Quebec, took me to task in order to inquire into the outlines of a society of this kind. In March, 1966, he invited the four persons whom you mentioned at the beginning of our talk to take up the task. The first concert of the SMQ was held on December 15, 1966. In short, if the SMQ came to be, it was because it was in keeping with the wish that had only been expressed by several personalities of the musical scene in the rest of Canada and particularly in Quebec I should say.

Q. — Well, before we finish, this is the time to tell us of your immediate projects.

A. — The most immediate of our projects consists in sustaining in number and in quality what we have accomplished up to this point. As is the case with any activity that is new, to attract and retain the public, and to maintain our place in the musical life of Canada, we are not short of plans —

Q. — To what point does the SMQ reflect present day tendencies?

A. — The particular spirit that prevails at the SMQ is naturally orientated towards the selection of works representative of present day tendencies. I shall explain. That a composer is writing in the XXth century is not enough for us. Poulsen, or some other member of the Group of Six, would not be played by us even if he had done so already. We, the SMQ, do not hesitate to give us a subsidy when we were in our third year. But the Department of Cultural Affairs in Quebec in 1966 ventured into the unknown, its only guarantee was the promise of those who were in charge of this society. And I think that this is a fact worth noting in the history of our socio-cultural life and disseminating on the international level.

(Translation by Yvonne Kirbyson)