

Extract from
Montreal Star, Canada

18 SEP 1967

Montrealer wins prize in Paris show

John Max 31-year-old Montreal photographer, one of Canada's four artists selected for the 5th Biennial Exhibition in Paris, has been awarded a 1000 Franc scholarship by the exhibition committee. It is one of six equal prizes given to the participants in each of the sections of sculpture, painting, photography, prints, experimental films, architecture, group works, medals, music, and theatre set design.

The works of the Canadian artists in the 5th Biennial were shown at the National Gallery last April in the exhibition "Canada at Paris".

Canada

Extract from
Montreal Star, Canada

12 OCT 1967

Photographer wins Paris award

PARIS, Oct. 12 — (AP) — John Max of Montreal has won a 1,000-franc (\$216) scholarship for his entry in the photography division of the Paris International Biennial for Young Artists.

Max was one of six to win the scholarships in the same category, including Yukata Takanashi of Japan, who won the biennial medal.

About 50 prizes were distributed to foreigners in the competition which drew 1,435 entries from 53 countries.

Extract from
Montreal Gazette, Quebec, Canada

18 NOV 1967

THE LIVELY ARTS

THE GAZETTE, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1967

39

The Biennale de Paris des Jeunes Artistes An Exciting International Event

PARIS — The month-long Biennale de Paris, now drawing to a close, has brought the city samples of the most exciting work being done in a variety of media throughout the world.

Officially entitled La Manifestation Biennale et Internationale des Jeunes Artistes, the program invites artists, writers, musicians, film-makers under 35 to submit their work to Paris audiences.

This 1967 edition has been almost unanimously termed the most successful since Biennales began in 1959. Youthful, exciting, amusing, lively, insightful are words

being used to describe the event.

The focus of the program is the exhibition of painting, sculpture and related arts at the Museum of Modern Art, the largest part of the Biennale activity. In all 56 nations are represented, 452 artists and 1,182 works.

The feeling that jolts the visitor to the museum is the force and drive with which young artists are attempting to come to terms with rapidly transforming worlds, and the varied ways in which each seeks to impinge an order on his experience and to demand

attention from the viewing public.

These attempts range from the bold, seemingly "engineered" forms that come from highly industrialized nations, such as Canadian Henry Saxe's vinyl and aluminium constructions or the molded plexiglass industrial forms of U.S. sculptor Craig Kauffman; to the boldly-stated studies of perspective, hard-line abstraction, intense primary color and new materials from the young Japanese artists; to ambitious and knowing leaps to catch up to the West — without imitating — on the part of Eastern Eu-

ropean artists, and the flowing together of modern influences and ancient cultural traditions in the work of artists in the so-called emerging nations.

The dominant theme, if so formal a term is even appropriate to such an anti-formal show, or the dominant tendency is the nearly complete disappearance of traditional terms of reference, of distinctions among media. Even such now-weary terms as "op" or "pop" are out of place.

In general the most exciting works are those that, for lack of any other term, fall into the category of sculpture. Such a term, however, must be stretched so broadly as to include on one hand the formed and padded canvases that, framed and hung like paintings, derive their greatest impact from their three-dimensional form, and on another to take in the walk-in "environments" created by small groups, especially French and Italian artists, and on a third to include "machine sculptures" that light up, agitate, vibrate, hum, sing in their attempts to ensnare the viewer's attention.

Of the Canadian contributors, Mr. Saxe seems to stand out more impressively against

By BRUCE G. DUNNING

the international competition than do Pierre Hébert (graphics and film-making) and John Max (photography) in their respective categories. These three, of Canada's four contributors, are Montreal natives, the sole exception being Al Sens, born in Vancouver, whose color movie *The See, Hear, Talk, Think, Dream and Act Film* has aroused interest among the cineastes showing here.

Mr. Saxe's strongly colored constructions — of folded and hinged hexagonal modules — crawl up the walls, sprawl about the floor or dangle from the ceiling. The ways in which the hexagonal modules are assembled create patterns that arrest the eye and interest of the viewer.

Mr. Max's photography is handsome and well-executed, but these close-ups of faces and figures, in heavily contrasting shadow and light, have been done so often that they pale before the more imaginative work, both of realists like Japanese prize-winner Yutaka Takanashi and of surrealists like France's Francois Cherrier or Czechoslovakia's Ladislav Borodac, who are experimenting, not always successfully, with multiple exposures, broken film, micro-photography, texture and refraction.

The United States' contribution is rather disappointing despite the fact that painter Lyn Foulkes' large reproductions of sepia postal cards won one of the show's major awards.

The two U.S. painters and

two sculptors are Western-born and are now all residents of Southern California, an area that is growing rapidly in artistic importance — as this work shows — but an area nonetheless that is far from the sum of U.S. artistic activity. The selection has an unfortunate uniformity that is misleading in the light of the many directions currently being followed in the United States.

Absorbing merely the painting, sculpture, graphics and photography requires several visits to the gaunt museum overlooking the Seine, without even touching on the daily recitals of original music, film showings, lectures and theatrical events that have taken place throughout Paris. These too, like the exhibition, show the wide range and intriguing directions of young artists in many media.