

Psychiatry's Group Projects Artistic

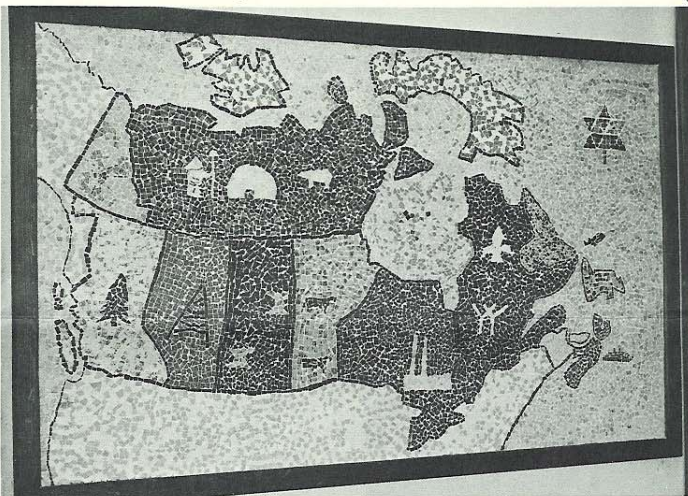
Psychiatric patients are among the Hospital's most prolific artists. Not only do they produce their own monthly newspaper, the *4-East Bulletin*, on a group basis, they also prepare refreshments for special occasions, and design and make murals.

"Group projects have played an elemental role in the treatment of psychiatric patients since the Department was founded," says Dr. Henry Kravitz, the newly appointed psychiatrist-in-chief. "They give patients an opportunity to work together and to share ideas and working tools. As all our patients are encouraged to participate in these projects, they provide each with the chance to express himself." Group occupational therapy sessions are held one afternoon a week.

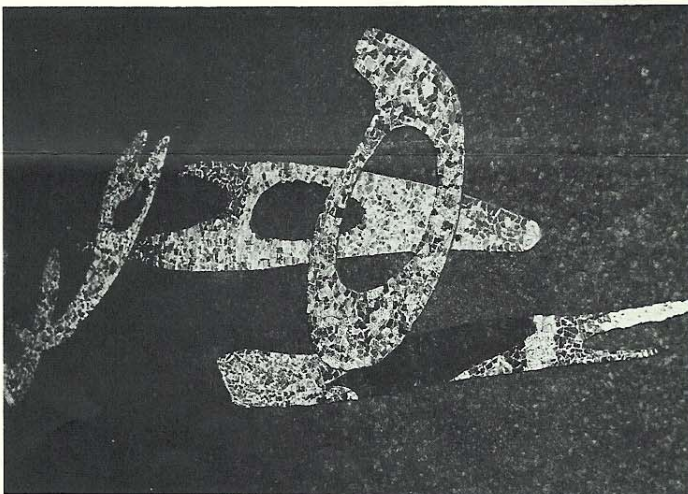
The professional looking tile map of Canada illustrated here is the group's centennial project. "Functioning democratically," says Mrs. Sonia Zaritsky, one of the Department's three occupational therapists, "patients designed the mural, decided what symbols and colours to use in it, and drew the outline." Using coloured commercial tiles, some patients washed them, some selected colours, and still others cut them, glued them down and sanded the mural's frame. "All we (staff members) did was support them to help them keep going," adds Mrs. Zaritsky. The mural was completed in four months.

"We're even prouder of the abstract mural, though," continues Mrs. Zaritsky, "because every tile in it was hand-made here." Patients designed the mural and then, wanting a rough textured surface, pounded rice, corn flakes and coffee grounds into clay slabs, and fired them in the Department's own kiln. "In two months, they did everything but build the wooden board on which the mural was mounted. A Hospital carpenter did that."

Psychiatry patients also made a lively circus scene tile mural a few years ago, and gave it to the children's ward. Rumours are that they're planning to make another mural this fall, but details aren't available yet.



The Hospital's psychiatry patients designed and made this 5'4" by 3'4" tile map of Canada. Completed last spring, it hangs in the Psychiatry Department. The symbols used were: in the Yukon - gold, Northwest Territories - eskimo with spear, igloo and bear, British Columbia - tree, Alberta - oil well, Saskatchewan - wheat, Manitoba - buffalo, Ontario - factory with smoke stacks, Quebec - fleur de lis and Expo mandala, Maritimes - steamship, Newfoundland - fish.



This 8'7" by 4'6" abstract, too, was designed and completed by the Hospital's psychiatric patients. Each tile in this mural was hand-made and fired in the Department's own kiln.