

# Winter Olympics posters feature Canadian artists

By Christopher Hume  
Toronto Star

Starting today, art has come to selected Toronto billboards.

Thanks to the Olympic Arts Festival, works by three Canadian artists — Alex Colville, Arnaud Maggs and Barbara Astman — will appear on billboards in four Metro locations: Carlton east of Yonge, the Gardiner Expressway west of York, Yonge south of Bloor, and at Davenport and Bay.

The posters were officially unveiled yesterday at a reception in Roy Thomson Hall attended by the three artists.

Although each poster includes the Olympic logo, there are no other direct references to the winter games set for Calgary in February 1988.

The \$400,000 project ultimately will include works by three other Canadian artists — Christopher Pratt, David Bolduc and Medrie MacPhee — and two foreign artists still to be named.

"We didn't want to do anything that had been done before," said Karyn Allen Keenan, visual arts supervisor of the Calgary Winter Olympics organizing committee.

## Local artist

The six participants responded to the invitation in different ways. Colville, for example, submitted a 1980 painting titled *Seven Crows*. Maggs, a highly respected Toronto photographer, and Astman, a well-known local artist, both did new works.

But only Maggs, who contributed a photograph of former Olympic skier Ken Read, provided a piece that reflects the sports connection. "They told me I could do anything I wanted," Maggs said. "At first I didn't think of a skier. I thought I'd do an athlete."

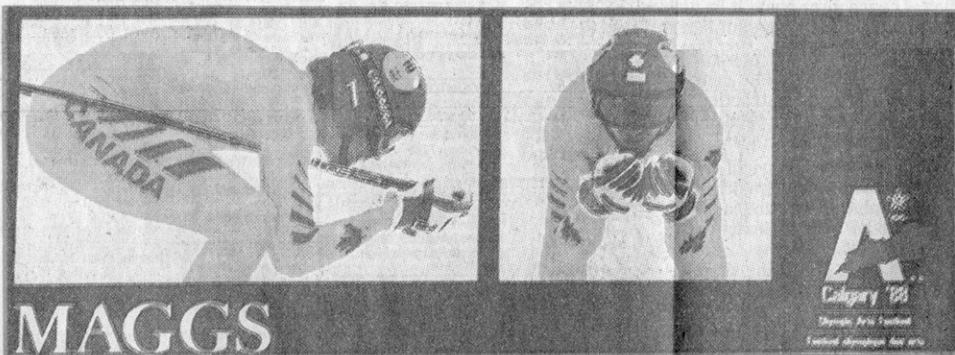
Colville made his selection for more practical reasons. "I chose *Seven Crows* partly because of the format (the piece had to be twice as long as it is high) and because I knew it wouldn't offend anyone; it doesn't contain guns, nude women or sex."

Like all artists involved, Colville was delighted that hundreds of thousands of people will now have a chance to see his painting.

Astman, whose Ektacolor mural depicts the constellations, has tried "to convey the spirit of the event." Her offering, which will probably be the best poster of the three, reflects her notion that "the Olympics are a great big circus."



Barbara Astman's mural depicts the constellations



Arnaud Maggs' photo is of former Olympic skier Ken Read



Alex Colville submitted a 1980 painting, *Seven Crows*