

For the first time in America's history, Montréal next year will host an international horticultural exhibition approved by two world bodies. It will also be the first time that the horticultural traditions of the main continents compete side by side in America.

Called Les Floralties internationales de Montréal 1980, the exhibition, which will spread over a 3½-month period in the Spring and Summer, is expected to have major tourist, cultural, educational, ecological, and economic impacts.

Floralities marks the second time in 13 years that Montréal is the site of an exhibition recognized by the Paris-based International Bureau of Exhibitions--the organization which authorized the presentation of the world-acclaimed Expo 67. Floralities has been granted IBE recognition as a special-category world exposition.

The second endorsement of Floralities came from the Association Internationale des Producteurs de l'Horticulture, made up of representatives of 19 countries.

The two endorsements are also firsts for North America.

"Floralies will be a place of communion between man and nature--a place where the visitor will find flowers and greenery, silence and sound, light and spectacle, fresh air and water," says Commissioner-General André Boily, who was appointed to the post by the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada on the recommendation of the Ministère des Affaires intergouvernementales du Québec.

"In fact, Floralies not only will protect but even will magnify nature."

Floralies also will be a tour de force in a metropolis noted for the severity of its winters.

To present Floralies, a partnership has been entered into between the gouvernement du Québec, which is financing the exposition, and the Ville de Montréal, which is organizing the event. The exhibition is under the general authority of the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada.

Two sites will be used for the exposition-- a 6,000-square-meter area in the Vélodrome of Parc olympique for the indoor Floralties from May 17 to 29, and the 40-hectare Ile Notre-Dame for the outdoor Floralties from May 31 to Sept. 1.

It will be the fifth time the man-made island has figured in an international event--Expo 67, the 1976 Summer Olympics, where it served for the rowing events, and the 1978 and 1979 Formula I Grand Prix races.

The last Floralties to be recognized by the IBE took place in Vienna in 1974.

The exposition will give Montréal one of the largest gardens in North America--not only in 1980 but permanently. In discussions between the gouvernement du Québec and Montréal authorities, it was agreed the garden would become a recreational park dedicated to mass ecological education and culture.

Mayor Jean Drapeau, of Montréal, believes Floralties will constitute "a landmark of immeasurable impact", and, in its wake, "a permanent exposition of great social significance and delicate beauty.

"Every Summer, our fellow-citizens and friends will be able to enjoy still another place to go strolling, a place as interesting as it will be new and fascinating. In this way, Montrealers once again will give evidence of the importance they attach to the quality of life."

Floralties is also expected to produce considerable repercussions on the beautification of cities and villages throughout Québec and the whole of Canada.

In economic terms, it is anticipated that Floralties will give a major shot in the arm to the emerging horticultural industry in Québec and Canada through the stimulation of nurserymen, landscape gardeners, greenhouse producers, and florists as the result of contact with foreign technology.

"For more than three months," says Québec Agriculture Minister Jean Garon, "we will have the elite of international horticulture in our territory, not only in terms of production but also of research and teaching, and this inevitably will have a beneficial effect on the horticultural industry in Québec."

From a tourism viewpoint, Floralties will accentuate Montréal's vocation as a centre of tourism, adding a major new dimension to the unique Man and His World complex.

Québec is responsible for the organization of Floralties but it entrusted implementation to the Ville de Montréal which in turn assigned it to the Association montréalaise d'action récréative et culturelle (AMARC), already responsible for the management and operation of Man and His World. AMARC called upon the Jardin botanique de Montréal, third greatest such garden in the world after those of London and Berlin, to coordinate the horticultural content.

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As the city's mandatary, AMARC is:

--seeking public and private financial assistance and managing funds collected for the purpose of preparing and ensuring the operation of the exposition;

--supervising the planning and concluding agreements regarding use of the grounds as well as the development and construction of the exhibition;

--entering into participation contracts with official participants and private exhibitors with respect to their site locations;

--determining rentals, admission fees, concession rates, and any and all other dues and conditions for operation, as well as conditions for the procurement of essential services;

--establishing appropriate special regulations;
and

--exercising the normal and essential activities involved in general management, including control, communications, commercial development, layout work, and operations.

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A 12-man Organizing Committee has been established for Floralties, headed by Commissioner-General Boily and including six representatives of the gouvernement du Québec and six of the Ville de Montréal.

The indoor Floralties at the Vélodrome will consist of cut flowers, flowering plants, tropical and subtropical plants, cacti, trees, ornamental shrubs, presentations of floral art, bonsai, dried flowers, floral arrangements, etc. It is estimated a visit will take about 2½ hours.

The outdoor Floralties at Ile Notre-Dame will give birth to a veritable museum of the gardens of the world. At a glance, the visitor will be able to see horticultural landscapes representing the principal horticultural traditions of the world. At least five visits will be required to the site during the summer to gain full advantage of the various periods of blossoming.

Four pavilions have been demolished: those known at Expo as the Atlantic Provinces as well as those of Greece, Israel, Trinidad Tobago, and a theme pavilion.

Seven Expo pavilions have been partially or totally restored: those of France, Britain, Québec, and Jamaica, as well as those of the United Nations, and the Christian, and Indians of Canada pavilions.

At Floralties, the former Christian pavilion will serve as an horticultural information centre; the former United Nations pavilion, a centre where one may rest and buy refreshments; the former Indians of Canada pavilion, a children's centre for the interpretation of nature; the former Jamaica pavilion, a sidewalk café; the former France pavilion, an exhibition centre for commercial and institutional participants as well as a seminar centre; the former Québec pavilion, an animation centre; and the former Britain pavilion, a storage centre for participants.

Demolition and restoration work on the pavilions is at the expense of Man and His World.

Admission to Floralties will be by "Passport", as was the case at Expo. In the advance sale period, an adult season Passport valid for both the indoor and outdoor Floralties costs \$12.50, while the regular cost will be \$15. One-day Passports during the season vary in price from \$3 to \$5 for adults, depending on the day. Lower prices have been set for youth, students and senior citizens.

On-site concerts, theatre presentations, fine arts exhibitions, as well as other presentations, including conferences, seminars, etc., related to the general Floralties program are planned for the exposition on Ile Notre-Dame.

Restaurants, snack bars, and rest and picnic areas will be among the general facilities available.

A series of prizes in cash, trophies and objets d'art will be awarded for the best exhibits, to be determined by international juries.

Designed to clarify relationships between man's socio-cultural activities and his physical environment, Floralties will:

--encourage the development of ornamental horticulture in all its forms;

--illustrate the progress achieved by international and national horticulture;

--make known Québec flora;

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--stimulate research in the fields of horticultural education and culture; and

--make the public aware of the ecological balance and the importance for man to live in a healthy, natural environment.

Space sites will be provided free of charge to national participants represented by a commissioner-general of section, as was the case at Expo. Private horticultural companies also will be able to set up exhibits on Ile Notre-Dame upon payment of a site rental fee.

Exhibitors will include:

--producers and organizations of producers of horticultural goods from various parts of the world;

--foreign and Canadian organizations principally involved in horticulture, nursery gardening, landscaping architecture, ecology, the environment, and the protection of nature;

--scientific institutes and public or private research centres in the fields of horticulture, silviculture, and arboriculture;

--botanical gardens, horticultural and phytological teaching institutions, and municipal services responsible for urbanism and green areas;

--persons, associations, industries, and foreign and Canadian establishments involved in cultivating, treating, improving, or commercializing horticultural products; and

--persons, industries, and foreign and Canadian business involved in the manufacture and/or marketing of machines, tools, accessories, etc., designed for horticultural use.

At the Vélodrome, 1,000 square meters have been earmarked for a commercial exhibition of equipment and materials used in horticulture. A similar exhibit, covering 2,000 square meters, is to be staged on Ile Notre-Dame in the former pavilion of France.