

## Alexis Arts Inspired by the Classics



NATURE MORTE/STILL LIFE, 1999, 90 x 28 in.

Landscapist Alexis Arts' appreciation and devotion to the arts was developed in him as a young child growing up in Nijmegen, Holland in a family that was centred around culture. His mother was an author, his brother a pianist. His father Duras was a renowned Dutch painter, but had to struggle to support his family of seven children.

After listening to the glowing stories of life in North America from soldiers during the war, the family decided to emigrate to Canada in 1955, when Alexis was just 15 years old.

After arriving in Montreal, Arts studied at the School of Fine Arts of Montreal for five years. After the death of his father in 1961, he started to sell his artwork at the Eaton's Gallery and the Gemst Gallery. In 1963 Arts had his first exhibition in the Eaton's Gallery.

The artist is inspired by classical music and paints while listening to the works of Beethoven, Bach, and Chopin. "While I am listening to the works of Debussy, I see completely the landscapes the composer had in his mind and I paint them. The communication is instant."

Arts' father once told him that his

best teacher is Nature herself. Arts adds, "Spring in 1904 is the Spring of the year 2000. It is always Spring. I paint everything that has to do with Nature."

The artist doesn't work in public, preferring instead to paint in his studio from photos and sketches. In contrast, however, he loved to teach at Concordia. At the beginning of each semester he would tell his students that they were going to relearn how to see.

After nine years, however, he stopped teaching to return to painting his own works full time.

154 Arts believes that studying the techniques of painting is fundamental in creating great art that expresses what you have to say. "If you don't know how to construct a house, don't try to build one," he says. "It will only fall down."

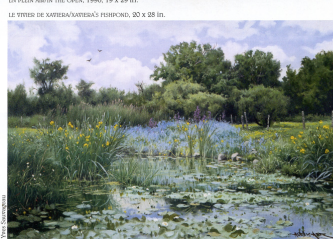
By the time Arts was 30 years old he had found his own rhythm for living, and doesn't let the rampant materialism and lack of communication in this generation bother him. "I know who I am and I know why I am here on Earth," he says. "My canvases reflect this peaceful state of my soul. As a result, I never let a canvas leave my workshop unless I am completely satisfied," he says. "I dread empty spaces. I use a lot of sky in my landscapes and rarely include people."

Arts paints 35 to 40 canvases a year, and is his own agent. "My works is not a business, but a labour of love. My canvases are my children."

Jean-Guy Thibault



EN PLEIN AIR/IN THE OPEN, 1996, 19 x 20 in.



LE TROIS DE SAINT-BASILE/ST. BASILE'S FISHING, 20 x 28 in.

Arts works are exhibited in the Michel-Ange Gallery in Montreal and the Château Frontenac Gallery in Quebec City. He is listed in the *Biennial Guide to Canadian Artists in Galleries* published by MUGLIZIUM.



MONT-RASPAIL/DAILY MONTREAL, 24 x 48 in.

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