



FINALIST
MARTIN BLANCHET, Quebec, Canada, Chute de Plaisance,
oil, 40 x 30" (101 x 76cm)

CONTACT DETAILS

Martin Blanchet is represented by Imagin'Art agency and his works can be found at the following galleries:

www.balcondart.com

www.lharmattan.com

www.canadianfinearts.com

www.liseleclerc.com

www.chrysalisgallery.com

www.mastersgalleryltd.com

www.galeriesolangelebel.com

www.townsquaregallery.com

www.galeriemichelbigue.com

www.32finearts.com

MY INSPIRATION

These falls, situated 5 kilometres from the town of Plaisance, Quebec, Canada are an exceptional site near my home. It is in springtime when the water level of our lakes and rivers is at its peak; also a time of rebirth after our long Canadian winter. The energy released here, at this particular time of the year, is phenomenal. The sound, the odour and the light on this day were moving. The vibration of the colossal amounts of water crashing at full speed shook my whole being. The Plaisance Falls are multi-leveled and this particular spot, in my opinion, is breathtaking at this time of the day. I am fond of this site for its sources of inspiration are endless and it brings about a respect for nature. On many occasions, from several angles and at different times of the year, I have painted these falls. Being a sport fisherman is one more reason to love this location, for in the summer when the water level and flow permits, you can catch humongous fish!

MY DESIGN STRATEGY

The contrasts in this scene are crucial. The effect of the light through the water vapours, which softens the wild and dramatic side of this force of nature, is the key in creating this muffled atmosphere. The boulders and the shore help balance the painting and thus enhance the different shades of the water, leaving us with the impression of reflected sunlight. By their stability, these masses of stone add to the sensation of the current's movement.

For composition's sake I reworked the perspective, removing part of the rocky area. I must admit I had a blast playing with the effects of the mist, which permits us to enter and exit the scene. The play between abstraction and figuration was enabled by the light. The spontaneity of my brushstrokes required to carry out this subject, maintained me in a state of invigorating energy.

MY WORKING PROCESS

Before the canvas sits on the easel, I must without fail visualise the painting, clearly scrolling through my mind, if only for an instant. Starting with a thin grey-brown background followed by a few strokes, I positioned the rocks and shore, and then from a focal point I expanded outward in a circle, while establishing colour values, which were for this painting, the blues, browns and ochres. Using the mirror technique, I correct myself as I go along.

Usually, when the painting is sufficiently advanced, I set it aside for a few days and work out the details, which reveal themselves only with hindsight. Exceptionally, this time I retained my drive and executed it in one fell swoop! Was it because of the strength and energy of the subject? Whatever it was, I seemed to have managed to interpret the initial emotion, allowing the spectator to experience the intoxicating sensation this gem creates.