

Louise Kirouac

Born in 1939 in Brownsburg, in Argenteuil country, this artist comes from a family of painters going back three generations, starting with her grandfather from Brittany and including herself and her brothers, Paul “Tex” Lecor and Jean-Claude Le Corre, all of Quebec. Her father, Henri-Paul, born in Brittany and an artist by profession, taught her drawing and painting outdoors. She began by painting portraits and interior scenes, then, in the early 1970s, applied her talent to landscapes, especially of Charlevoix. The sumptuous colours of autumn fascinated her. Since her first one-woman exhibition at the Centre culturel de Lachute in 1975, Louise Kirouac has never ceased crusading for the protection of the environment through her painting. She holds regular exhibitions throughout the province of paintings which reflect her deep attachment to her Quebec heritage. Member of l’Institut des Arts Figuratifs.

Louise Kirouac’s vision of an enchanted world is presented at the same time on a human scale and on a grander world scale. She instinctively seeks to transmit these two facets to her canvas, not from the fortuitous glimpse of a particular scene but from her desire to be a witness to the passage of time. In this she joins the great figurative artists of the past, those painters who wanted to introduce the human presence into their work without it being intrusive.

Qu’il est beau, mon pays! Is this artist’s true manifesto as she renders the quiet majesty of the low mountains which border the valley below. She introduces immediately into the scene, not the wagon which is only an accessory, but a road which, emerging from the right, invites us to follow the man toward a village bathed in a transitory and discreet light, endowing the surrounding landscape with a symbolic value. The volume of the mountains, skillfully emphasized by tones ranging from light to dark, permits a diagonal perspective which is very dynamic. The somewhat overcast sky adds a dramatic note to the whole.

Petite-rivière-Saint-François offers a more direct image of the human settlement in this region: the classical representation of the village and its church, bathed in an afternoon sun which is both warm and serene. The horizontal spread of houses in the middle distance is truly an achievement through her use of strict geometric lines which contrast with the modulated and gentle lines of the mountains and of the foreground in which the tones—lighter at the top and darker at the bottom—offer a subtle counterpoint of balance and tension in the forms and colours. The blue in the sky permits an escape from this world which is perhaps a little too turned in upon itself.

Charlevoix en peinture, De Roussan