

Tex Lecor (1933-2017)

A Brother to All

"The true artist is one who has a sense of life, who enjoys everything, who readily obeys inspiration and who loves all forms of beauty without categorizing," – George Sand (1846).

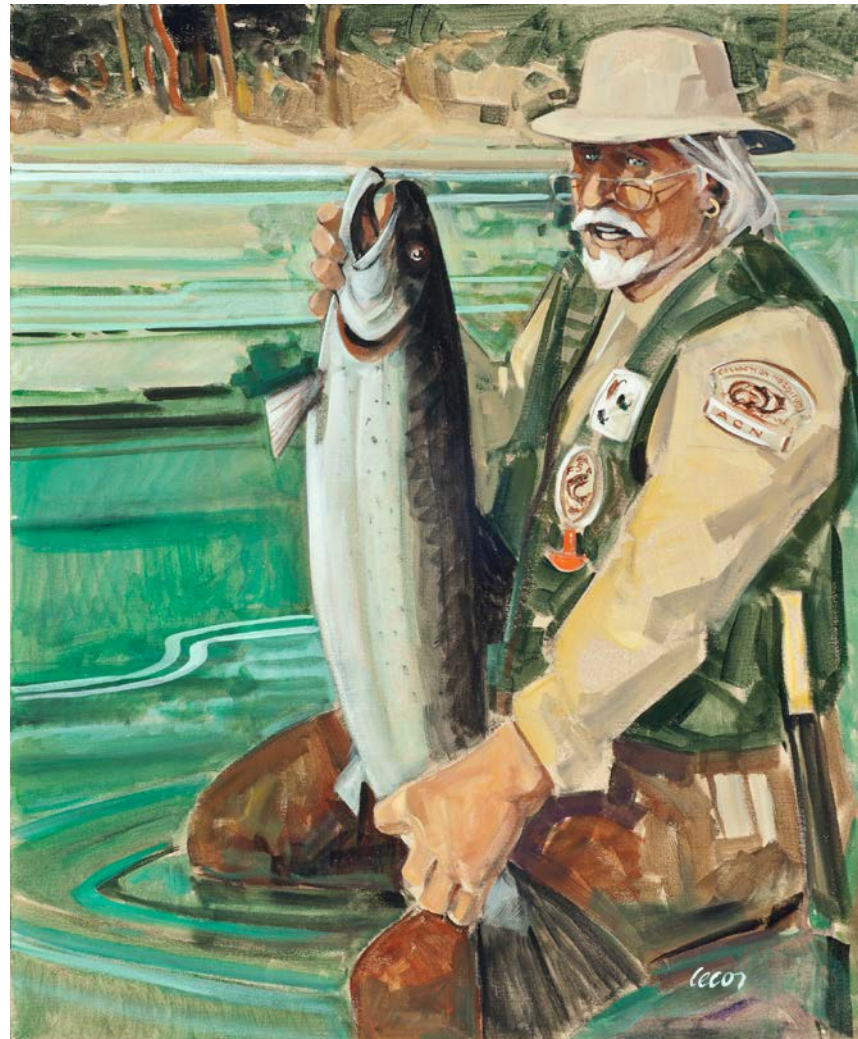
Exceptional painter of great humanity, radio and television host, humorist and singer Tex Lecor, whose real name was Henri-Paul-Cyrille Lecorre, was born on June 10th 1933, in Saint-Michel-de-Wentworth, in Québec's Laurentian region. He was the eldest of a family of three children. The multitalented artist passed-away on September 9th 2017, at the age of 84. With his 'coureur des bois' and 'lumberjack' persona, he enjoyed great popularity among a very broad audience through his songs as well as his hosting a very popular TV show for many years. Tex also headlined a humoristic radio show that then revolutionized Montréal's airwaves. But he was a painter first and foremost, who appreciated being able to live a carefree life as a visual artist thanks to the success of his parallel career in TV and radio. Where did Tex come from? The legend is that when he worked in logging camps, he wore a belt with the word Texas on it, hence the affectionate nickname appropriately dubbed by his coworkers.

Our paths cross...

I had the immense pleasure and privilege of meeting this artistic and soulful giant in his Terrebonne studio in the fall of 2010. I was greatly impressed and received a memorable welcome. The dog, Marguerite, first calmly greeted me. Then I heard the words: "Hello my little brother. I like you already. Just looking at you, I know who you are..." Add to this, the sublime works dancing on the walls and the smell of oil paint. Then this giant taking hold of my hand in his own huge hand, extended to mark the beginning of an unforgettable encounter. An assignment I had been given by Jacques Latulippe, my late boss, who has allowed me to meet so many of the greats, on so many occasions.

Ayotte, janitor and mentor

In his adolescence, Tex is schooled by the Clercs de Saint-Viateur, where the janitor is none other than prestigious painter Léo Ayotte. Without really knowing how or why, Lecor is taken full force with Ayotte's personality. He confided that his fascination had led him to secretly visit Ayotte's studio in order to watch him paint. As an



Mon saumon, rivière Grande-Cascapédia, 24 x 20 in



Tex, Louise et Jean-Claude, 24 x 36

aside, when I once wrote an article about Ayotte where I called him a “great master”, Tex Lecor called me to express his joy at finally reading what he had never before read nor heard said about Ayotte, adding that he believed the title had long been deserved. That is, succinctly, what Tex Lecor was about: a wholesome sensitive man, lover of life and able to express it through art. A man who, notwithstanding his modest roots, had never forgotten and was very grateful towards those who had helped him develop his full potential, at a time when he played at being ‘detestable’ through hilarious hijinks that pushed the limits of social credibility of the then right-thinking people, even to the extent of unsettling the values of society and of his life.

In 1951, Tex moves to Montréal to study at the School of Fine Arts. He is 18 years old and has had enough of menial jobs. He is ready to live the artistic experience, which he says is the only thing he knows how to do. His teachers, Jacques de Tonnacour, Jean Simard and Cosgrove, were able to pass on to him their passion for painting. But, Tex will experience a period of lean years, where he will be living in a state of financial insecurity and have a bohemian lifestyle. He frequently draws for tourists. Then comes an opportunity to work on small coastal vessels in Gaspésie, which has helped shape the painter’s singular imagery of the time.

His unforgettable art

He paints scenes of daily life and of landscapes he has crossed. He is a lover of people, of everything that brings the spectator back to the land. All that touches and impresses him, in fact, becomes a pretext to be expressed on canvas. His greatest quality as an artist is his ability to find the very soul of his subjects. A knowhow he had already started refining at eleven years of age alongside Marcel Lanctôt, caricaturist for *La Presse*, who spent his vacation time up North with the Lecorre family. He knows how to capture the essential in order to compose a gallery of wonderful characters encountered along the roads. Everything is real in Lecor’s paintings, with some added charm and poetry. The painter’s idea of happiness is depicted with warmth, humanity, vibrancy of colour and filled with savory and generous details.

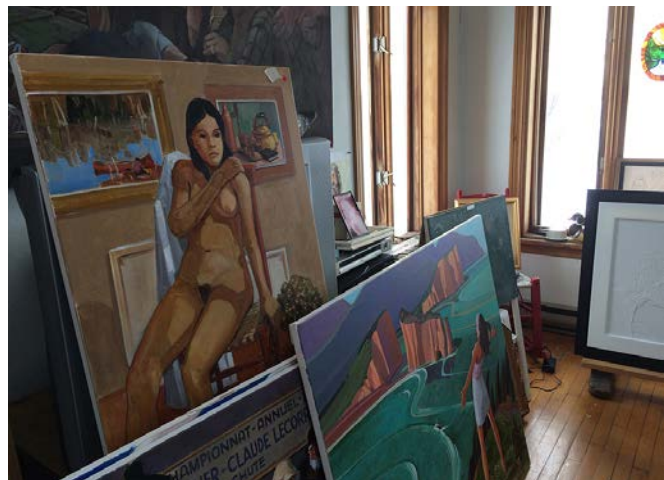
“From Gaspésie to the Magdalen Islands and from the Maritimes to the Great North, I enjoy expressing the immensity of water, earth and nature. I love people who work manually. I love painting older people who have so much to say and so wisely. This is why my figures have such large hands; hands that have known the labor of survival,” confided Tex Lecor. Son of an Amerindian mother and a father of Breton origin, Paul-Tex Lecor will have shown us the richness of an uncharted nature and of people he enjoins us to better understand and love as if they were part of our own family. Thank-you for everything my brother! Mission accomplished!

Michel Bois



The artist's studio

Photo : D Giguère



Some paintings

Photo : D Giguère



Noël au camp, 30 x 40 in



Ma femme Loulou dans son jardin, 24 x 30 in