

Serge Brunoni

A force of nature

Over the last 30 years Serge Brunoni has gained an impressive reputation as an artist. His paintings are sold through reputable galleries and prized in permanent collections across Canada. Brunoni was courteous and friendly during our interview at his studio. It is decorated with the souvenirs and awards of his working life. As he described the progress of his artistic career he proved himself a born raconteur. Brunoni speaks with a clarity and transparency that mirrors his attitude towards life and art, an approach that stems from sincerity and simplicity. If anyone feels bewitched when they look at his work, it is because his work is enchanting.

Brunoni was born in Ligny-en-Barrois in France in 1938. His father was Italian. If his youth was scarred by the war, his leanings towards an artistic career were already being expressed through an aptitude for drawing. Brunoni also has a taste for adventure. When he was twenty he enlisted in the French colonial infantry. Originally stationed in the south of France he was soon posted to Africa where he spent three years as a soldier. When he was demobilized, he stayed in Africa, doing railroad surveying for a line being built in the middle of the Congo. In the jungle he discovered the beauty of a country and its people whom he describes as "being straight out of Eden".

"There are certain ways in which Québec is similar to Africa. The forest is like the jungle, both are powerful influences. Both landscapes are immense. Sand is often found under the topsoil in both places, the summer heat is intense in both places and both types of mosquitoes are fierce" said Brunoni.

Drawn to the vast spaces of Québec as he was to Africa, Brunoni emigrated to Trois-Rivières in 1963. In 1967 he married and started a family. Brunoni began painting in 1970 and by 1972 he had become entirely dedicated to it. While lessons helped in the beginning it was Brunoni's sense of inspiration and a dedication to research and working at his art that helped him create his style, a style that is by conviction figurative and based on nature. "I use acrylics because the medium favors a spontaneity that I want in my paintings".

In his studio Brunoni paints scenes that reflect the beauty of nature. Figures are often present but they aren't just dropped in as a static architectural element. They are an integral part of the composition in harmony with the environment. His rendering of urban life usually shows people in action, the hustle and bustle of big city life. His city scenes are balanced by his forest, mountain and river themes where the figurative subjects commune with nature.



S. Brunoni "Comme un défi" 16x8 Dig. 10205



Brunoni's working style is impressive and a delight to watch. He rapidly outlines his subjects, the points of departure for a new adventure, a new voyage of discovery. His brush strokes are controlled, alive and alert, putting just the right amount of movement in a figure, revealing the details of a building, car or natural element, while at the same time leaving the viewers plenty of room to make their own interpretation based on what the painting evokes in them.

Despite the room to move on an interpretative level, Brunoni's canvasses are well structured and dynamic compositions which offer multiple ways of seeing and interpreting his subjects.

The harmony of ochres, multi-hued grays, blues and bronze colored earth tones are punctuated by attention drawing details bursting out his plants, animals or figures. Taken as a whole his style provides a synthesized visual experience, bringing to the onlookers the ability to re-experience their own past, based on their reaction to the canvas. At the same time intense and ethereal, the overall atmosphere created by Brunoni and the titles which he gives his works evoke a sense of reflection or the beginning of a trip. This mastering of a working spontaneity brings the viewer into direct contact with the subject, its life force and the strength of its veracity.

"In my painting I want to provide the time that people often don't have to reflect. Too much civilization has a tendency to spoil humanity", states Brunoni, for whom nature remains essential. He likes to paint winter because the snow creates interesting patterns. "The magic of winter creates an immense symbol of the vastness of space, seen in the poetry of fences covered by snow, showing what's behind a bare tree and the range of colours created on icy snow".

Brunoni has widely exhibited in different venues and galleries and from time to time his shows have taken on the form of homage. In 2001 he mounted a show in Trois-Rivières at the Pierre-Boucher Museum called Si Trois-Rivières m'était contée. The large scale works were designed to thank the public which has supported him during his formative years and many of the works showed Trois-Rivières in a rich palette of colors from different points of view.

His paintings are hung in reputable galleries across the land and in the following permanent collections : the Louis Hémon Museum in Peribonka, the Pierre-Boucher Museum in Trois-Rivières, Meloche Monnex, Canada Steamship Line, Kansas City Railroad, Power Corporation, Québecor, Bank of Montreal, CAE, Ivaco Steel, Glaxo, Hygrade, Via Rail

Canada, Hull Insurance, Samson Bélair, Stone Consolidated, Bombardier, Saputo, Greenberg's, Honda Canada, Lévesque Beaubien Geoffrion, RBC Dominion, Heenan Blaikie Trois-Rivières and Insightful Travelers, Boston. Brunoni's next exhibitions will take place at Balcon d'Art in St-Lambert during the spring and at Masters Gallery in Calgary, starting December 12th. The Masters exhibition will showcase 25 paintings and be held simultaneously on the following internet site : www.mastersgalleryltd.com / website / exhibitions.cfm.

Brunoni sums up his artistic credo by saying, "The truth of a painting lies in a dialogue, it's a quest to meet fellow travelers and to share emotions.

