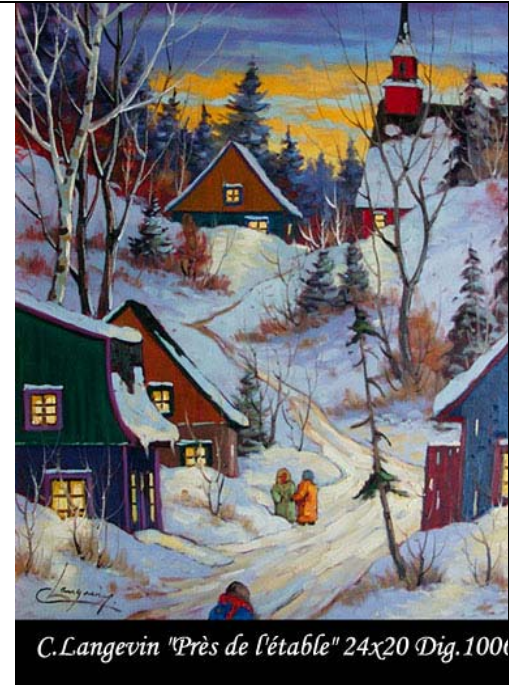


## Claude Langevin Painter of the North

There is definitely a Canadian school of landscape painting with a specific view that has been stated, clarified and simplified over the years. The resulting style could be called Nordic, influenced by the climate, impressionism, and trends in the teaching of the fine arts (influenced by the French academies, such as the Barbizon and English landscape artists from Constable to Crome). The origins of this Canadian school go back to Joseph Légaré (1795-1855), but let's discuss the formative years when the genre took an almost definitive form at the beginning of this century with the Group of Seven and Clarence Gagnon.

Historical baggage in tow, I visited the studio of Claude Langevin, landscape painter in Sainte-Adèle. The artist expresses admiration for Tom Thomson and Clarence Gagnon.

Like Fecteau, Reby, Proulx and many other contemporaries, Langevin gives nature an image according to our own feelings and convictions. It is not laziness or luck that causes Langevin and his confreres to paint the same elements, which enable one to recognize a national art form.



C. Langevin "Près de l'étable" 24x20 Dig. 1000



C. Langevin "La visite du docteur" 20 X 24  
Dig. 152

In this sense, Langevin attacks subjects that would repulse most foreigners. In fact Langevin admitted his preference for winter and mountains in an interview.

"Winter offers painters a wider selection of colors than summer does, even warm, bright tones; you just have to look for them!" He then described mountains as friendly.

Langevin's oil paintings, e.g. *Journée de printemps*, display seeming brutal technique. His stroke is vigorous. Clearly defined patterns abound on the canvas. The contrasts are many and well marked. It seems the artist knows what he wants, but this spontaneity is illusory. Each scene is carefully composed and drawn. An atmosphere thriving on warm tones prevails. Langevin manages to put his personal style into a very traditional school.

A Montréal doctor's son who attempted to follow in his father's footsteps, he found out at age 21 that he could not. Instead the young man scoured the Laurentians, Charelvoix, Gaspé and Côte Nord, braved the inclement climate and eventually became a professional artist.

Langevin's work is exhibited throughout Canada and in major corporate collections (Air Canada, Bell Canada, Great Western Life, etc.)