

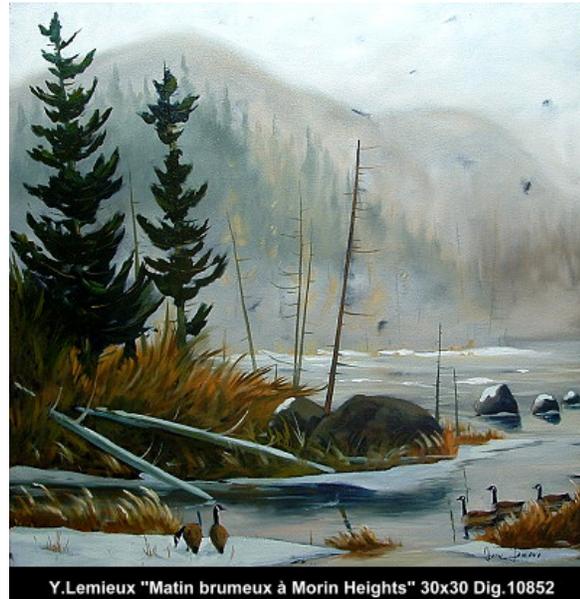
## Yvon Lemieux, I.A.F.

Une brassée de couleurs sur une cordée de tableaux

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Lise Goulet

Québec's Yvon Lemieux, known in his neighbourhood as the "painter with a hat", explores the alleys of the Old Town. Outfitted only with easel and paintbox, Yvon hunts down hidden treasures for people who "do not know the face of Québec City and are surprised to discover it in my paintings."

Of course Lemieux had to gain the neighbours confidence. "In the beginning, folks were a bit leary, but they got used to seeing me paint the surroundings and when it got cook outside, they would take pity on me and bring our coffee and cookies. Talk about being spoilt!"



Yvon Lemieux is a friendly man, the kind you would like to meet under a shady oak tree while he took a coffee break and spent hours telling you all about his characters, his favourite subjects. Yvon's characters are the ordinary men, women and children whose lives innocently show through in the size and colours of the underwear and outerwear floating on the clothesline to the nonchalant rhythm of a summer breeze.

Yes, he paints the humble clothesline. "Clotheslines tell a lot about people's lives" Yvon points out. "Not too long ago, and maybe even still today, mothers use to tell their children that the neighbourhood can see if a household is well maintained by the clothesline. This everyday object often reveals the personalities living together under the same roof. You can guess who is young, old, little, big, thin, methodical, sentimental. Etc."

The artist knows his subjects. "Sometimes when I choose to paint a particular house, the owner comes out to meet me and tell me his/her story. I take notes while listening. That's why some of my paintings come with a short piece or a poem I wrote."

Some would call Yvon Lemieux a self-taught artist, despite the fact that he earned his living and learned his art by related jobs, like a window dresser and illustrator for a billboard company which enabled him to master the basics, especially drawing people. Born in 1949, Yvon began painting at age 17, but he has devoted himself full-time to art for only the past six years. In 1988, he founded his own painting school and when not teaching oils and acrylics, he wanders the streets of the Old (Lower) Town. Wearing what he calls his "Clean rags" he hunts down the next subject.