

GASTON REBRY
(1933-2007)

by Tamara Pasztor

On January 5, 2007 Canada had sadly lost to pneumonia Gaston Rebry, a well-established landscape artist. He was noted for his patience and respect for nature which reflects like a mirror onto his canvas. Rebry made painstaking attempts to reproduce authentic outdoor scenes in the Mauricie, Quebec region. Every colour, light, shape, and as well as the wind whistling through the tops of ancient trees was given new life with a stroke of his brush.



Vent Violent
Oil on canvas
18" x 24"

Photo credit: Rufus Gallery, Oakville Ontario

Born in 1933 at Wevelgem, Belgium, Gaston Rebry undertook artistic training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Menen during the early 1940s. Through the school, he quickly became immersed into a creative world where Dutch painting was strongly influenced by fauvism, realism, cubism, and expressionism.



Colour Splendour
Oil on canvas
60" x 48"

Photo credit: La piece d'Art, Blainville, Quebec

His father was a Belgian former champion road racing cyclist between 1928 and 1935. In 1934, he became the third of nine riders to win both the Ronde van Vlaanderen and Paris-Roubaix as well as the Paris-Nice. Gaston not only took pleasure in fine art, but he soon developed a competitive nature. He, too, became a successful road racing cyclist during the 1950s.

Although Rebry pursued his athletic activity, he nonetheless, was far more devoted to painting. Art permitted young Gaston to communicate his emotions and capture the spirit of nature.

In 1954, his father suddenly passed away and Gaston found himself alone in an empty house filled with memories of the past. He decided to visit his sister in Montreal, Quebec and within a few months Rebry left Wevelgem.

Once he had settled himself in Montreal, Gaston Rebry enrolled at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and studied with Jean-Gerald Bertrand. While he painted, Gaston earned his living as a travelling salesman. In 1955, he graduated from the school; however, life as an artist is never a smooth road. It was not until ten years later that Gaston Rebry was able to dedicate himself to full-time painting and gain recognition.

During this period, Gaston married and relocated to Saint Boniface. Saint Boniface is a town of 4,000 people, situated in Maskinonge, Quebec.

In the early part of his career, Rebry depicted houses, villages, and sometimes portraits. His art underwent a transformation--landscape. Nature gave Gaston the opportunity to experiment with light and colour.

He walked the countryside hours upon hours sketching, but would quickly dash back to his studio. He preferred his own personal space in order to acquire the



Saison de Couleur
Oil on canvas
12" x 16"

Photo credit: Multi-Art, St.Lambert, Quebec



Spectacle d'un soir
Oil on canvas
20" x 16"

Photo credit: Multi-Art, St.Lambert, Quebec

proper inspiration. Insects and inclement weather were barriers to his muse.

Gaston Rebry's landscape paintings are mainly set in Mauricie, an area that he explored regularly throughout his life and seen through the eyes of an artist with a deep understanding of the natural world.

Rebry's work is found throughout Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Quebec, and British Columbia.

I would like to give special thanks to Gallery Rufus, La Piece d'art, and Multi-Art for their collaboration in preparation of this article.