



CLAUDE LEBLANC

BIOGRAPHY

Born on July 24 1951 in Montreal, Claude Le Blanc explored many media and techniques before specializing in the use of oil and spatula. After studying at Collège du Vieux Montréal in Fine Arts, he continued to observe a liberty of style and a personal way of expression.

After a first period of time spent in Europe, he discovered in Beaubourg a vibrant and self assured practice of the arts. The conviction of wanting to become an artist was already inscribed in his DNA—his grandfather Léopold Le Blanc having practiced the trade of jeweler for more than fifty years for Birks in Montreal and his father Jacques having completed his studies in Fine arts under the apprenticeship of brother Jérôme and Paul Émile Borduas. (two very influent Canadian Artist for the Canadian history of art)

In 1976 at the age of 26, LeBlanc opened his gallery-boutique under the name of *Après l'Éden* in a space on Saint Denis which remained an important trend setter in craft and design until its closing in 1990. Benefiting from a few sabbatical years, Le Blanc explored every medium and technique that he felt would enable him to make his technique progress. 1996 is a year of "Photoshop-shock" for the artist. Everything was now possible. It is with great enthusiasm that he undertakes creation with the assistance of computers, bearing in mind the motivation that no image will ever be able to fool him.

In the year 2000, a profound need of introspection pushes him to exile himself for six months on the west coast on the island of Victoria. He executes a series of twenty canvases that are thereafter exhibited at the Sooke Harbour House.

Back in Montreal, he shares a studio on Bordeaux street and on Saint-Laurent Boulevard in an immense loft above designer Georges Lévesques' "Scandal" boutique. He dedicates himself exclusively to the execution of screen-type large format canvases.

Attracted by the north coast and having the opportunity to have a seaside studio there, the artist exiles himself for five years, which will symbolize a period of intense creation. A few exhibitions and a grant will encourage his production during those years. The need for market exposure finally becomes more concrete with a move back to Montreal and his occupation of a studio in the Belgo building. A prolific period coupled with the success of a solo exhibition signified the need for more space. The latter being impossible at the Belgo, the artist moved to the Chat des Artistes on Parthenais street, which now houses LeBlanc's workspace.

ARTIST STATEMENT

"My approach enables the viewer to feel what consists of his or her own experience of solitude. I paint portraits of fictional boats, imaged from cultural references in order to be submerged within the vulnerability of peaceful moments. I am an experimental painter. I undertake my work starting with abstraction, and I proceed intuitively, entering the surface with text. The impulsive nature of gesture and even sounds emitted from the spatula in the surface determine the work's execution. My interest for landscapes come from my time spent on the North Coast. Vast forests seemed to go on forever with birch trees spread out here and there. The latter are transformed with every stroke of spatula combining balanced subtleties between realism and abstraction. The process remains intuitive with eternal changes until the work escapes from the studio. The intimate aspect of the painted surface become noticeable and entire spaces are reduced to rich layers of paint that are brushed and even scraped and profoundly marked with inscribed traces on the wooden material."

KOYMAN GALLERIES

Ottawa, Ontario
koymangalleries.com

