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Abstract Expressionism: Arshile Gorky (1904 – 1948)

Arshile Gorky was part of an exclusive group of Abstract Expressionists called "The Irascibles." This group, which included Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, was a very influential part of the movement. Gorky achieved the pinnacle of his career in the 1940s, and his exhibitions have tended to be large and comprehensive in nature. His largest and most important presentation was in 1981, a retrospective at the Guggenheim, which included nearly 250 works. Gorky's paintings of the early 1940s reflect his fascination of Kandinsky's early paintings and watercolors, in which explosive colors and lines denote an emotional response to nature rather than direct observation.



In 1948, Gorky had the last one-person show of his lifetime at the Julien Levy Gallery. The show was a select survey of Gorky's career. There was a review of the show in a publication which stated "What is new about these paintings is the unproblematic voluptuousness with which they celebrate and display the process of painting for their own sake."

In that year, Gorky was in a car accident. His neck was broken and his painting arm was paralyzed. Three weeks later he and his wife separated and their children went with her. These events proved too much for Gorky to overcome. He committed suicide in his studio at the age of 44. He wrote "Goodbye my beloveds" in white chalk on a painting crate.

Featured Artist: Annette Labedzki, Vancouver, BC

Annette is yet another artist I met on Facebook. I saw her colorful and fresh paintings and looked into her art further. Her art has an almost childlike quality in its freedom; it expresses no limitations.

Born in Vancouver, B.C., Annette moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, where she spent her childhood and early adulthood. Her work was first recognized first during 10th grade, when the superintendent of the Winnipeg School Board purchased one of her paintings. The artist spent a year studying human anatomy, figurative & nature drawing, and painting, before she went to study at The Emily Carr University of Art and Design and received her BFA degree.



Labeledzki finds that abstract art offers immense scope for creative expression and allows her to experiment with great force. She has an excellent sense for design & color and plays around with new techniques on a consistent basis. From choosing the medium from a wide variety of papers, pastels, acrylics, and oils to the production of the final piece, her work is simply an impromptu elaborate artistry.

You can visit her web site at <http://www.labeledzki-art.com/index.php>.

What I've Been Up to Lately:

Absolutely nothing. I am delaying my painting until we make the move to Myrtle Beach and I have my new paints. I am going to buy my favorite kind, Golden. The prices are a little costly, but the variety and quality of colors are unmatched. The consistency is butter-like, workable but still dries quickly. I have about 61 colors in mind. I am looking forward to the warmer weather, painting in the garage (back to the 2-car this time – I am too cramped otherwise) with the door open. Good times.

Poem of the Month:

I was a canyon
Filled with soot
Rock
And fire

You came to me
torn
First together, then apart

My skin was removed
I was burning
Upper layers
Inner layers
Outer layers
Laid out for you

You were a hand
Soft and warm
Cold and hard
Distant and so close

Pummeling me

Soothing me
Forever changing me

Like seasons
Like rain

Like a stranger who never forgets
The last town they abandoned
The last stop they made

Standing at the door
Watching the light fade
Watching it change colors
Seeing it go

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celeste@cjabstracts.com
www.cjabstracts.com