

Elaine Mercier

From dark to light

The urge to reproduce reality, to transpose and transform it crept into artist Elaine Mercier's soul at an early age. In fact, she cannot remember a time when the smell of a fresh box of Prismacolor colouring pencils, oil paints, and images of landscapes and people waiting to be painted were not a part of her childhood.

Moved by these early experiences and memories, Mercier followed what seemed like a natural progression and studied the techniques of creating art. Her first exhibition was made up entirely of water colours which she learned under the tutelage of colourist St-Gilles in the late 70's. Mercier became very close to St-Gilles and today has her atelier not far from his in the Old Port in Québec City where she can easily receive advice and encouragement.

After working with watercolours for several years, the artist learned the secrets of working with oils from Pierre Pivot in 1989. Working with Pivot she also found answers to certain approaches to light, colours and interior scenes and was intrigued by his experimentation with Cubism.

Mercier was pragmatic about her career, however, and also received an education in graphic and technical design that led to a salaried career developing projects such as designing a network of aqueducts.



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É.Mercier "L'air du temps" 24x30 Dig.8889

In 1996 Mercier gave it all up to use her solid education and experiences in both art and design to paint full time. Her work is influenced by the Renaissance era, in part because it is a blend of the art forms of sculpture and painting, and because of the dramatic marriage of music and design used to create the architecture. Mercier also adores the work of post-impressionist artists, such as Van Gogh, the forerunner of Expressionism whose talented

and tormented works thrilled and tormented her. She is also inspired by Chagall's colours, and particularly delighted by the design of the Parisian music hall scenes and entertainment spots.

Today Mercier is passionately involved in her art. She paints six days a week. Recent involvements in astrological studies she believes have helped her develop her use of dark and light, sombre masses and light touches. She has left the watercolours behind and is completely dedicated to oils. She creates and sells over 100 canvases annually.

In spite of all this success, however, the artist still believes her painting is in a state of transformation. This past year, she says, she represents less and less, and interprets more and more. She continues to carry her sketch-book wherever she goes, rain or shine, in case she meets an inviting scene waiting to be interpreted.