

# Marie Montiel

## Between Modesty and Admission

*"Painting someone's portrait always becomes a self-portrait of the artist who lends to it the virtues he wishes to see in the mirror."*  
– Patrick Deville

Softness and sensitivity, plays of light and shadows reminiscent of Renaissance masterpieces: painter Marie Montiel's creativity is a glorious gift to us all. A body of work full of grace and poetry! A little night music for the eyes! A vision of the human experience expressed with restraint and modesty! Without sentimentality! Without artifice! Marie Montiel is one of those painters blessed with monumental culture. Here is a fresh and acute talent that delights us with deliciously intimate canvases that speak to the soul. To achieve this goal, Marie Montiel carefully selects her models, most often among her group of friends: actors, singers and painters, like her.

### The background

A native of France, Marie Montiel spent her childhood living "uncomfortably" in a castle, more precisely in a modest liveable part of it that rested on the solidity of a medieval tower. Creatively, Rafaël and William Bouguereau were the subjects she explored under the rigorous supervision of Irina Korosec. She also attended courses in drawing portraits in charcoal and conté crayon, dispensed by Marina Dieul, as well as courses on drawings and techniques



*Liberté*, oil on canvas, 40 x 40 in



*La Roussette I*, oil on canvas, 12 x 10 in



Chats Sauvages (Diptyque), oil on canvas, 12 x 20 in

of the Great Masters with Ljubomir Ivankovic. Finally, she participated in drawing séances with live models at the prestigious Studio Escalier in Paris. This was followed by a desire to work on high-wrap looms and, most importantly, to explore the colour of words and writing. It's in Québec, however, that she gives free reigns to this desire to write, becoming a journalist and columnist.

#### **Complicity of thought, knowledge and spirit**

The art of portrait painting is probably the most ingrate practice of visual art there is. Rigorous technical ability is required to be able to adequately depict the underlying emotions in the subject's expression. Marie Montiel's paintings reach towards infinity while offering themselves as a balm for the soul's vertiginous fears. The painter has found the means to celebrate the very essence of her subjects, the unseen. Before anything else, her art reflects the human condition. Her creative expression captures the singular evanescent quality emanating from each of her models and affirms that their presence is alive and well, and definitely human.

Marie Montiel is modest; she has the sensitive nature of the strong spirited refusing to shout to rather induce in the spectator a sentiment of quiet but profound vision. Whether she paints portraits, still-lifes or landscapes, her works share a magnetic quality comparable to a song rising to the heavens.

Clearly, this painter's style rests on acquired technical virtuosity, but at the same time transcends academic knowledge so that the signature imagery may be in accordance with her vision "of her inner being", to put it in her words. Where colour is concerned, Marie Montiel subtly redefines conventional boundaries to obtain symbolic light effects that in turn yield an affective range of colour that is her own.

"My wish is to testify in my own way, to communicate and transmit the sentiment and spiritual state of our era," explains the artist. "Painting represents for me the act of acquiring knowledge, a study of life and of beings. In my paintings I only show what's essential to drive the spectator towards introspection, to force him to stop and complete the image through his own sensitive fibre and interiority."

"Painting is the arc; drawing is the arrow," said Louis Pons. A savant amalgam of colour and line, Marie Montiel's body of work is undeniable proof that this powerful and personal creation is inhabited by poetic alchemy and fully merits our admiration.

#### **Michel Bois**

The works of Marie Montiel are available at Galerie d'art Le Vieil Art in Alma, Québec, at Galerie du Lac Brome in Knowlton, Québec, and at Galerie d'Art Courtemanche in Magog, Québec.



Les mendiants, oil on canvas, 28 x 20 in