

Spirit of the Hills Member Profile

Remarkable Realism Artist Doug Andrews



Left: Quiet Anticipation
Below: Girven's Meadow
Both oil on canvas

Portraiture has also interested him. His exploration of the human form is extraordinary. Even so, Doug talks of his dissatisfaction with painting people he knows well; there is so much within a person to capture. Lately, Doug has been fascinated with

water in creeks and streams, including reflections.

Light is an important element in Doug's work. He has been interested in achieving what he calls "That inner light that will give it life." He is precise about the light in his landscapes, allowing viewers to not



by Michele Fairfield
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At quick first glance, Doug Andrews' Indian Summer seems like a photograph, not artificial perfection, just real. It evokes the senses, draws you in. While looking at the painting, you can experience one moment in a September day on the Indian River. It is realism arising from Doug's life-long study of his natural surroundings. As a child, Doug recalls, he frustrated many teachers by drawing where he should have been filling in answers, doing homework.

"All my life I've been striving to make things look like I saw them," says Doug. "Not how I know them to be, but what I actually saw."

This passion led to studies at the Ontario College of Art. After two years in Toronto, however, Doug returned to his family's farm in Dummer Township north of Norwood. Being a "farm boy", he says, influenced his art; he drew and painted what he knew best – animals on the farm and the land around him. He had planned to pursue more formal education, but after his application to Georgian College was lost in the mail that summer, he stayed on with his family, taking up carpentry after his father. Now Doug credits that decision with the development of his own style. For over 30 years, he has been pursuing images that engage the viewer while faithfully presenting what he sees. He works in oils, watercolours and pastels.

"I've always painted

my own way – as realistically as possible," he says. For Doug, this means having an intimate knowledge of his subject.

"The majority of landscapes are from little nooks and crannies around here," smiles Doug.

The nooks and crannies in Doug's world include the area north of Norwood, and Ander-Vale Farm near Cottesloe on which he lives with partner John Good. Animals in their barnyard and plants in their extensive country gardens inspire Doug, serving both as subjects and as creative atmosphere. In fact, Doug situated his studio at the edge of the gardens. To Doug, gardening and art go hand in hand.

"Gardening is creating an environment you can live with; an artist has to feel comfortable in his surroundings to create," comments Doug. He cites his mother as a major influence. A painter herself, she passed along her love of both art and gardening.

Doug's painting has not been limited to nature themes, however.

only identify with the time of year, but with the time of day as well. We are there.

As art juror Keith Connell commented on his painting "Ouse River Morning" in 1999, "While his style is remarkable in its realism, he does not encumber the viewer with useless detail. He entangles us in the bush and lets us find the way through it as we follow the river."

Doug Andrews is a member of the Federation of Canadian Artists, East Central Ontario Arts Association, Kawartha Artists Gallery and Spirit of the Hills. He has participated in numerous exhibitions and juried competitions including the 1999 "Aim for the Arts" International Exhibition in Vancouver, Art & Healing '98 and the ECOAA 2000 juried exhibition.

A sampling of his work is on display in the Art Gallery in his home. The gallery along with the garden is open Sunday afternoons from the end of June until the end of September. Visitors are welcome by appointment the rest of the year.