

## Carol Kapuscinsky – Shades of Yellow

Upon viewing the paintings by Carol Kapuscinsky, you are drawn in to the canvas, and feel part of the landscape. You can hear the gentle breezes, smell the fresh earth, feel the heat of the sun on your skin, see the clouds rolling by and have a sense of well-being. This is exactly what Kapuscinsky wants to do, pull the viewer in to the painting. “I want the viewer to come into the painting and stay there.”

Kapuscinsky is a pure landscape artist who has a real love affair with the land, painting scenes from across Canada or wherever her travels take her. She started painting as a child but was not encouraged to pursue art as a career. In the late 1980's that changed, when she graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD) to fulfill the dream that had always lived in her heart.

Born to Canadian parents in Peru, Kapuscinsky later moved as a young girl to Winnipeg, Manitoba. She remembers the brightness of colour in Peru, especially the yellows. Then came the yellow fields of wheat and mustard in Manitoba. “The colour yellow has been an influence in my life since childhood. I find the colour invigorating, giving a happy positive feeling, a sense of excitement.” After the mustard fields in Manitoba, she had not seen that vibrant a yellow until she came across the canola fields north of Oshawa in the Scugog Region. “The fields were loaded with undulating yellow which took my breath away.” These new found canola fields eventually led to the title for this exhibition, “Shades of Yellow”.

Kapuscinsky's earliest influence was the impressionist and post-impressionist movement. She was attracted to the light and vibrant colours used by these painters. Canadian artist, Paterson Ewen, was also an important influence especially the work from his *Earthly Weathers and Heavenly Skies* series. “Once a month I would go on gallery tours to look at new works. I started thinking in series, not just one painting. Themes flow from one series to another, and then new themes appear.”

Her early works were figurative and flowers using watercolour, oil and lithographs. Eventually her work evolved into landscape painting with her first solo landscape exhibition “Where Land meets Water and Sky.”

Kapuscinsky will not paint anything she has not seen with her own eyes. An accomplished photographer she documents all her subject matter. Before she photographs, she experiences the location and sees the composition, even occasionally trespassing to go right into a field that strikes her imagination. “I'm in love with the land as subject matter and I'm sure that won't change. I have become a landscape painter.” She uses all her senses: listens to all the sounds, remembers the atmosphere, the ambiance, the weather be it warm or cool. She will only paint what she herself has photographed and simplifies the photos to paint only the information you need as a spectator.

In the painting '*View through a Canola Field*', the viewer is drawn in to the far yellow field where the wind gently blows the canola crop. The eye is focused on the rolling hills in the background and one wonders where the fields end. Compared to her photograph, the foreground in the painting has been stripped of detail, putting the focus on the yellow fields

which is where the artist wants you to be.

Kapuscinsky's painting technique is very involved. At OCAD she studied the old masters and their use of layering the paint. She prepares all her canvases, which includes a ground glaze of colour before the first layer of oil paint is applied. She prefers not to paint on a white canvas and has experimented with this method for years. Utilizing a layering technique, she applies thin paint, up to approximately five transparent layers giving the paintings a rich depth and a vibrant glow.

Her style is contemporary realism. In her paintings, Kapuscinsky gives you a place to go. The foreground is not as detailed as the background so it feels as though you are there, passing through the landscape, not looking at it from a distance. She also loves to paint skies, which is very evident in all her work as the sky tends to take up about half of the canvas. In the painting *'On Our Way to Cavendish, P.E.I.'* the sky has a moody overcast feel to it. The field pulls the viewer into the painting but the sky is what captures your attention.

Another painting, *'Canola Concerto, Looking South on Howden'*, the viewer's eye is drawn instantly in to the vibrant yellow canola fields. A sense of anticipation awaits as you wonder what lies beyond the far tree line and rolling hills where the land meets the sky. The foreground is again without detail so as not to distract from the view of the horizon. In this work, as in all her paintings, the sky is very prominent and dramatic. The drama unfolds in each viewer's mind with different interpretations from the same theme.

Kapuscinsky has always loved nature and now the environment has taken on a new importance in her life. "This is a beautiful world. Let's take care of it. Nature lives in harmony, why can't we as humans do the same?" It more or less reflects her own philosophy of life which is as a peacemaker and encourager, a spiritual person with a strong sense of hope.

Kapuscinsky's paintings have a sense of anticipation where the landscape has a heartbeat. "Nature teaches us to enjoy our senses." As you view these wonderful, vibrant paintings, and step into a peaceful serene landscape, you know that Kapuscinsky has captured exactly what she has set out to do, to stimulate our senses.

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