

Remember ION VINCENT DANU – A romanian artist in Canada Van Gogh and I

I've started my visual artist "career" as an art high school student, in **Sibiu** (the most happy 4 years of my life!) . I also studied photography for one year with one of Romania's best art photographer, **Gheorghe Lazaroiu**, EFIAP. Unfortunately, I couldn't be among the 5-6 students admitted every year at one of the 3 Art Universities in communist Romania... I studied, instead, History (and some Art History, of course) and English at the **Sibiu University**. Nobody could force me to stop sketching during the most boring classes and I did a few paintings too... usually presents for my mother's anniversary (her being the one who always encouraged me the most to follow my artistic vocation). The usual followed: family, work (teaching for 8-9 years in different village schools), etc.

After the **1989 revolution** (*I took part in it as a photo-reporter*) I 've started a new career as a **journalist and photo journalist**.

Children grew up and, for them as well as for myself, we decided to immigrate to Canada. Almost 17 years ago. Here, in Québec, since it was hard for me to find a job, I've started – well, you can say, I've RE-STARTED – my visual artist career. In fact, that was **my secret wish**, the most intense one and everything in my life, until then, was ment (**I really believe that!**) to bring me there – well, HERE. I've studied painting, drawing, etching and photography at **Bishop's University** (no degree, too expensive and too old for that...) and completed a **Certificate in Visual Arts**, at the **Sherbrooke University**, working in a factory to support myself. It was hard but I did it.

Since **April 2002** I'm a full time visual artist. I've earned my living teaching "*artistic expression*" in a private institution and I draw, I paint... I do some writing too, but that's a "secret" for now... My portfolio has more than 3000 images now (reproductions of my drawings and paintings) and my intention is – health and time permitting – **to post the best of them here**, more or less, **in chronological order**... Since I'm not a native English speaker, please, be indulgent with my many mistakes...

Since november 2013 (which was really a very bad year for me: I've lost my mother, my jobs, my credit and my car...still have my passion for art) I've got my diagnostic: a rare form of appendiceal cancer, I've developped while taking care of my father, 85, after my mother's demise, in Romania. The stress of all those events was the trigger. But now I'm back in Quebec, with my family (my father is also my family but...) and I've started again to draw and to paint. **I don't need the cancer anymore**. With this art 'treatment', with a vegetarian (semi, for now) diet, meditation, prayer and exercise, I do hope to survive some more years, to finish my work as a painter and to help, as much as I can, my family, to see my grandsons growing up...So far, so good... (I do heal my cancer with "life style" treatment; if I

would have accepted the HIPEC major surgery they offered me, and continued with the one tour of chemo, I would be probably dead by now...or dying...or totally disabled...)

Of course, as the title of my blog suggest, my mentor is Vincent Van Gogh and, in a way, everything I write here is also about him. Because he was – still is! – in many way, the quintessence of what *an artist* mean. We can define ourselves (and I try to do just that) either in contrast or in harmony with him...

Here is how I looked (this photo of me and Polly is from May, 2010)



What I would like – and should! – paint would be large canvases ... grim but colorful, weird, surreal compositions, in the genre of my beloved Pieter Brueghel the Ancient or Bosch, or, at least, medium expressionist landscapes in Vincent's

style, or great portraits, like Géricault, but here I am, kind of prostituting myself... The place is Le Marche de la Gare, in Sherbrooke, where I've drawn caricatures/portraits of the people who were brave enough to pose for me...and I had less difficulties in finding models than Vincent...

Relative prostitution

What I would like – and should! – paint would be large canvases ... grim but colorful, weird, surreal compositions, in the genre of my beloved Pieter Brueghel the Ancient or Bosch, or, at least, medium expressionist landscapes in Vincent's style, or great portraits, like Géricault, but here I am, kind of prostituting myself...



I painted 2 small watercolor, landscapes of the Beauvoir sanctuary, landscapes I really like and whom have even a chance to be bought by pilgrims who visit this nice place, on a hill. Oh, well... life has its own imperatives, like food and car payments... The large compositions, the expressionist landscapes and the great portraits in the Géricault line would have to wait a bit... until I win the lottery...



Spring at the Beauvoir Sanctuary





This was my friend Ion Danu. A delicate, cultured man, a huge talent and a soul dedicated to his art. He struggled with the life and misery of an emigrant in a foreign language, hostile to outsiders. I appreciated his immense culture in the fine arts and the diversity of subjects from portraiture to nudes, to symbolism and avant-garde. Feeling his end, he sent me CDs of his work asking me to promote it. This is one of my tributes to Danu.

RIP!

Adrian Grauenfels

SAGA PUBLISHING

