



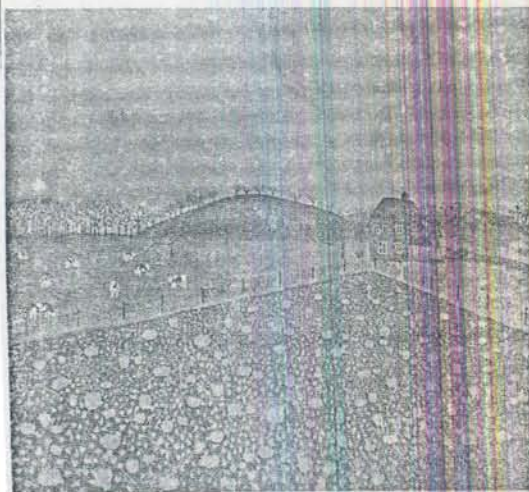
Sunset at Westmeath, 1980.

## The Magical World of Lynda Lapeer

by Joan Murray

The growing interest in contemporary folk paintings is a tribute to the simplicity of their execution and the inherent charm of the scenes depicted. Subject matter is generally the rural landscape and the people and animals associated with it. Colour is boldly used, and the works have a freshness and cheerfulness that reaches out with relevance to an audience. One artist working in this manner whose appealing paintings are being acquired by a delighted public is Lynda Lapeer of Gore's Landing.

Lynda's small, patiently painted landscapes reveal their magic slowly. They respond to close study: the subjects are quietly charming, the surfaces lovingly detailed. Lynda would be called a primitive painter, a naive painter, a painter without formal training—she doesn't use perspective or shadows and doesn't try to convey a realistic view of the subject. But she has a story to tell about the life and surroundings of her home village.



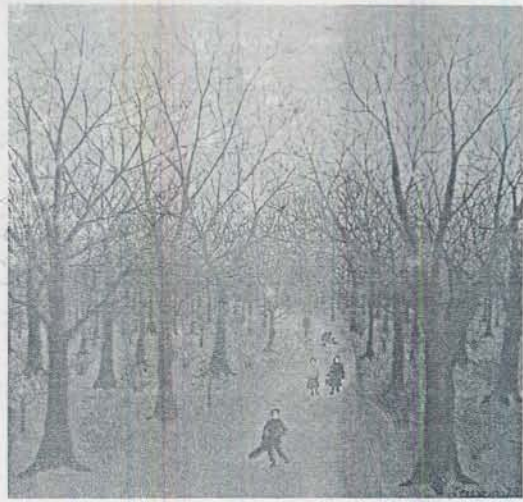
Pumpkins in the Fall, 1978.

Source: Canada Century Home  
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Gore's Landing for Lynda is Shangri-La and she's a magician who evokes a gentle spell of innocence and warmth. Her world is full of fantasy and delight. Her paintings of the changing seasons, grey days, grazing horses and black and white cows in surrounding meadows have an eerie, buoyant lightness. A field is a secret garden, an idyllic vision, protected in the background and foreground by delicately outlined trees.

Lynda's secluded village hamlet has that "lovely old feeling". It's a place where you can take scenic walks, pick watercress at natural springs, enjoy beds of wild violets and forget-me-nots in the spring, skate on the lake in the winter and watch fields of fireflies dance on summer



*November Morning, 1979.*



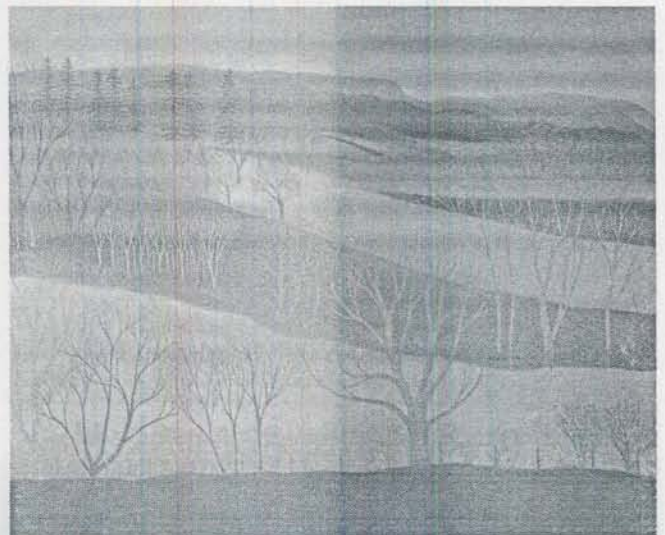
*RIGHT: Laundry Day, 1982.*

evenings. From the hill on which she lives in her hundred year old frame house, Lynda can see a panorama of water and islands. It's like looking into another time, another place. "I always expect to see a pterodactyl swoop across the islands," she says.

When Lynda came to Gore's Landing she was not a painter but her husband, Michael Behnan, composed folk songs and painted. This had its impact on Lynda.

In 1977 they took a trip to South America and in Guatemala Lynda contacted a rare disease which paralyzed her for over a year. During her hospitalization, she read a book about an American primitive painter, Ralph Fasanella. "I was inspired by the story", Lynda recalls, "inspired to paint". During her convalescence Michael encouraged her to explore painting as a means of self-expression. Her first paintings were rough but gradually her muscle control grew stronger.

Response to her work was immediate. Within two years she exhibited in Cobourg, Oshawa, Kingston and Toronto.



# A.R.T

Lynda's work today is more skillful than when she began, but she retains the quality she had as a painter from the beginning: authentic feeling. She loves what she sees—rolling hills and lush vegetation. But it's the mood she paints which counts. She tries to capture it to the fullest, often concentrating on weather. "Weather is a big factor because that determines the intensity of the colour", she says. With rain, the colour of everything gets more intense.

Lynda is a meticulous worker and paints only a dozen or so canvases in a year. Recently she has painted a view along the county road, showing layers of trees and fields in different textures and colours, fading into various hues of blue and grey in the distance. There's a feeling of storm clouds moving in.

The painting has taken a long time, not just because she works slowly, but because she has suffered further tragedy in her personal life with Michael's death last year after a long illness.

Engaging and full of potential, Lynda Lapeer's paintings tell their story. They are a reflection of the gentle life of a small village captured with simple, charming vision. □

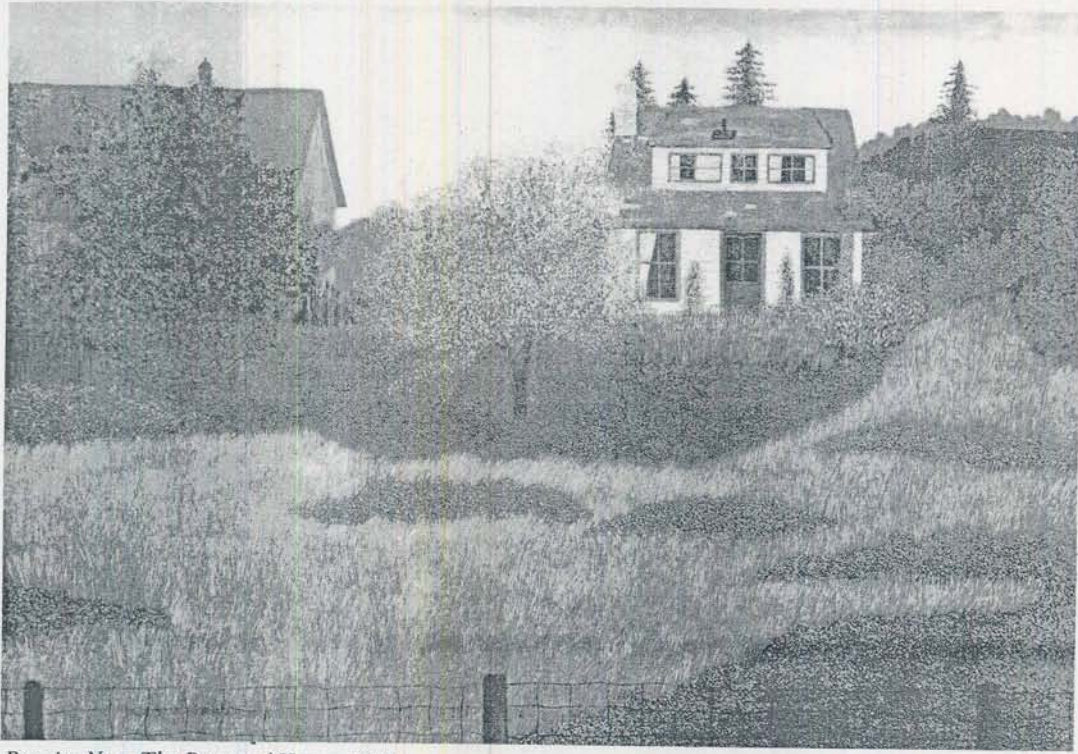
*Joan Murray is Director of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario.*

*LYNDA LAPEER WILL NEXT EXHIBIT AT THE LINDSAY, ONTARIO ART GALLERY AUGUST 26th THRU SEPT. 17th*



*Michael In The Bathtub, 1976.*

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*Poppies Near The Deserted House, 1981.*

*Nellie's House, 1983.*

