



The work of Mervin Labas, part-time painter and metal sculptor, is influenced by his early years in Yugoslavia.

Painter recreates homeland with influence of Van Gogh

Marvin Labas of Mallbridge Crescent in Malton, a milling machine operator at Douglas Aircraft, is a painter and metal sculptor who believes in following his own instincts to create.

True to his sun sign, Leo, he favors vivid autumn golds and vibrant oranges in his painting. In his metal wall hangings the sun is always prominent.

Leos are supposedly endowed with the ability to create via extrasensory perception, says his wife, Carole, who is his greatest fan.

ESP or not, his imagination is always at work to create something unusual. "I always wished to become something," he says, "to show the world what I can do."

"A lot of people are capable of much more — but they're afraid to try. Things created out of your own mind give you more value as a person — more respect. I have doubled

my work output since I've been married and hope to triple it. I will never stop," he says.

"I think towards achievement always."

Labas, who was born in the farmlands of Croatia, Yugoslavia, was leading painting groups in isometric colors using temperas when he was in Grade 5.

Many of his paintings today portray village homes and farm workers laboring in the fields — all recreated from memory. The dabbled skies and the faces of the field workers heavily painted in emotional colors betray the influence of Vincent Van Gogh, his favorite painter.

Labas likes to paint on the scene, from real life. One of his favorite paintings is a scene of High Park where he met his wife who is also from Yugoslavia.

He enjoys painting while his wife does needlepoint to ex-

press her own love of color. "It's a great pleasure to have us both involved in something. If people are busy, they don't have time for troubles — you're more complete as a person and time goes faster," says Labas.

Labas has won awards for art at the Douglas Aircraft Dacan Art shows and will be appearing on Channel 79 to discuss a Croatian art. He will display his paintings and sculptured wall hangings at Valhalla Inn Jan. 30-Feb. 28.

One of his copper and stainless steel wall hangings, fashioned with an acetylene torch and melted silver solder depicts the sun rising over waves of water with sea horses emanating from the sun's rays. Other works depict technology, which he says is speeding so fast man can't keep up with it, while others display the solar system with the sun again the centre of the universe.

He would like to incorporate the game of chess into his next painting. It is one of the world's most fascinating and strategic games, he says.

Someday he would like to do a mural for a hotel lobby and if labor bears its just rewards, he probably will.