



Local artist Leonardo Lopez, shown here with his watercolor titled, *Early Morning Mist*, is exhibiting 22 of his works at the Valhalla Inn this month. The exhibition marks the first one-man show for the Philippine-born artist.

Local artist takes a 'light' approach

By STEPHANIE INNES
Staff Reporter

An education in architecture and a romantic view of nature are evident in the watercolor works of Leonardo Lopez, on display at the Valhalla Inn this month.

The exhibition of 22 watercolors marks the first one-man show for Lopez, a Philippine-born artist who now lives on Confederation Pkwy. with his wife and three children.

Prior to his present job as an industrial designer for The Anchor Cap and Closure Corporation in Toronto, Lopez was educated and worked as an architect.

"I have always known how to draw, and art just became a hobby of mine," he said.

Lopez says he began painting because he enjoyed, "less structured," drawing as a break from architecture. He began in oil and two years ago switched over to watercolor.

"In watercolor the spontaneity is there," he said. "There is something in watercolor that I just can't get in oil. In watercolor it's like my subjects are alive."

According to Lopez, the most important element in his realist paintings is light.

"If I don't have light there's no feeling in the work," he said. "Without light the painting is dead."

Light in yellows, pinks, oranges and reds is highlighted in Lopez'

works that depict scenes from around his home in Mississauga, including several such as *Rushing Water* and *Anglers Catch* that represent various views of the Credit River.

"I take a picture, then I draw and paint it, but I also use my imagination," said Lopez. "The landscape always comes first, though," he said.

Examples of Lopez' imaginative flair are evident in *Early Morning Mist*, which is based on a picture he took of the Credit River. Added into the landscape of marshland is a canoeist, which Lopez says he included for interest.

SI In another painting titled *Lonesome Goose*, Lopez says he painted the goose as an afterthought to his original intent of painting a serene river.

"The wildlife, the figures, they all come later. My painting is really about light. Most of my accents are in sunlight, sunsets and sunrise," he said.

Lopez, whose work is also currently on exhibit at the Artisan Centre in Mississauga, says he plans to keep painting as an after-work hobby.

"It will always be a hobby for me. It is something I do to satisfy myself, and in fact I have no other hobbies. Whether I sell my works or not, I will always paint," he said.

Lopez' paintings range in price from \$400 - \$895. His Valhalla Inn exhibit will continue through April 5, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. daily. For information call 822-8101.