



**Betty Goodwin, *Deux Gilets*, 1972, Eau-forte au vernis mou, 3/10, 96,5 x 113 cm. Dépôt de la collection Marc Bellemare**

His passion for the arts manifests itself in many different ways. A

closet musician, he strums his guitars and piano. He has been a member of the Opera de Québec for more than fifteen years, as well as the Club musical de Québec. He goes to see performances as often as possible, and not only shows of a single genre. For example, this autumn he went to see Aerosmith, Alice Cooper, and Edgar Winter, as well as many operas and concerts performed by the Quebec Symphonic Orchestra. Marc Bellemare is also literally open to the world. Throughout the course of the past 18 years, he has traveled abroad seven times, including four trips to France. He is also passionate about the visual arts. He possesses the most important private collection of works by Betty Goodwin in Quebec. Goodwin is one of his favorite artists, not only out of personal taste, but also because she was a woman who made no compromises; she was an artist to her very core, someone who never hesitated to confront herself or the world around her. Goodwin's work, without trying to reduce it to a single dimension, is very much about the human state of being and the suffering of humans as a whole. Her work attempts to seek out and convey the meaning of life through the exploration of personal and collective tragedies. Goodwin's entire oeuvre is a lesson in life; you need only see it to understand it. "I like artists who are real", explains Marc Bellemare. "My rapport with artists is based on respect and confidence. One day, I asked Marcelle Ferron if she would make me a sculpture. She accepted, and for the weeks that followed she sent me models, asking me which ones I preferred. I would always send them back to her, explaining that it was not up to me to decide, that she had free reign over her creative expression, and that I would gratefully accept whatever part of her creativity she was ready to share with me. The only freedom that I allow myself it to chose whether I keep the piece or not. I am not in a position to interfere with an artist's creative process". "If I understand correctly, you are mostly interested in artists of a certain standing?" "No, for me a collection

is much more than a trophy. I see its implications. I have major

works by Marcelle Ferron, including *La veuve*, a painting which is remarkable in its intensity. I have important works by Betty Goodwin, Jean-Paul Riopelle, notably *La montagne*, Fernand Leduc, Borduas, McEwen, and many others. I also have a collection of works by younger artists such as Jean Gaudreau, Lyse Marsan, Jean-Pierre Lafrance, and Martin Boudreau. But the works that I believe are the most important to my collection are those which are passed around. I always have about a dozen works which circulate in museum exhibitions. For example, at the moment I have some major works in Toronto and Washington, and about 10 of my Betty Goodwins are part of the major exhibition *Des silences en échos : un hommage à Betty Goodwin*, on at the National Museum of Fine arts in Quebec City until March 27th 2005. In this way, my works are part of a greater whole. They are not closed up within the confines of my own personal space".

"How do you choose your pieces?" "I consult and listen to people who are professionals within the art world. I also read a lot and regularly go to museums and galleries. But even if one takes their time, consults third parties, and listens to their gut, there is always the risk of making a bad decision". "According to you, what defines a bad decision?" "It is when you realize that you have lost interest in a particular piece, that it does not move you anymore. For me, the most important aspect of art is that it allows us to dream and to enter a more spiritual realm".

"Will Marc Bellemare be a candidate for City Hall?" "I am still reflecting on that question. Let's say that for the moment, things are moving in that direction. As you know, Mayor Lallier has occupied this position for sixteen years now and has accomplished a great deal for the arts in Quebec. This mission deserves to live on through the candidate which will succeed him in 2005. As for me, I have always been socially implicated, and I have no intention to stop doing so. As for the position of mayor of Quebec, we'll see..." ●