

Eugene de Leastar is an uncommonly clear-sighted artist with an uncompromising commitment to his vocation. His paintings are concerned with the experience of the isolated individual and with the lifeline that connects the individual to the world of human contacts.

In representational and symbolist works, de Leastar patiently explores the inner life of isolated figures whose strength is in their unflinching awareness of their predicament. But he does not assume the impossibility of human relationship. His paintings of couples are alive with the tension of relationship, the internal states of the figures mirrored with great precision in the orderly, almost geometric arrangement of facets and planes of colour.

In portraits especially, there is a sense of peeling away of skin after skin until some essential and hitherto unsuspected element of the model is laid bare. But this revelation is not in any sense a violation; the artistic consciousness is sad, sympathetic, and discreet, as though to balance the immediacy of the treatment and the controlled balance of colour. Eugene de Leastar is quietly revealing important truths about the isolated self and the fragile promise of human relationships

Pierce Butler