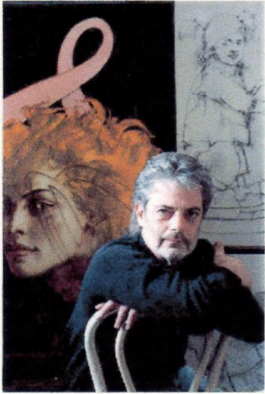


# Remembering Ray

by Kristine Bruneau  
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## *Nothing Gold Can Stay*

- Robert Frost

*Nature's first green is gold,*

*Her hardest hue to hold.*

*Her early leafs a flower;*

*But only so an hour.*

*Then leaf subsides to leaf.*

*So Eden sank to grief,*

*So dawn goes down to day.*

*Nothing gold can stay.*



*Life is a great big canvas,*

*and you should throw all the*

*paint on it you can.*

- Danny Kaye

***My uncle died today.*** Today, I cried, although I said my good-byes over time. His death was not sudden, yet somehow I am still unprepared for living life without him near. My grief comes and goes like the ebb and flow of the tide. At times, it overwhelms me; death seems so unfair.

***My uncle died today.*** Cancer seized his lungs and slithered through his body; leaving him racked with pain, struggling for air. He fought with all the strength he had. But in the end, it wasn't enough. The enemy won; took his life. I tell myself, he's in a better place – one that doesn't hurt. I hope I am right.

***My uncle died today.*** He was a husband, a son, a brother, a nephew, a friend, a mentor, a teacher, a hero – so many things to so many people, loved by all. Ray would not want us to mourn his death. He would wish us to go on living happily. For loving him does not mean having him around, forever... remember him the way he would want to be remembered. Memories never fade.

***My uncle died today.*** He was an artist who did not seek the spotlight, but it often found him. Although, he may have felt uncomfortable with it, he handled himself with grace and sincerity. He unselfishly shared beautiful images from his world with the rest of us. And no one and no thing can ever take that away. For this incredible talent, I am grateful.

***My uncle died today.*** He was a puzzle. Pieces of him I will never know. I saw what he wanted me to see. I saw what I wanted to see. He lived in the moment with an intensity and passion for life – wasting no time. He traveled. He gambled. He smoked. He drank. He read wonderful books and poems. He listened to classical music while painting. He gave pieces of himself willingly to strangers, friends and family. He touched so many with his gift and discriminated against no one.

***My uncle died today.*** He was 58 years young.

***My uncle died today.*** December 16, 2001. It will feel like today for a long, long time.

***My uncle died today.*** He completed life's greatest canvas. And he's working on the next.