

Winter Anthropology

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Childhood winters are slightly different
in cities and villages.

In cities, moms and dads construct backyard arenas,
hope to lure unambitious Stojkos and Wickenheisers
from electronic cocoons within newly-amalgamated home offices.
Anything for a break to return to work,
earn enough to flood and light their lawns next season.

In villages, desperate moms and dads hire
heavy machinery, excavate ovals of rocky woodland
down to water table, prepare for the season
without temperate outdoor activities. Spare no expense.
Get wild sibling multiples outside, blow their stink off.

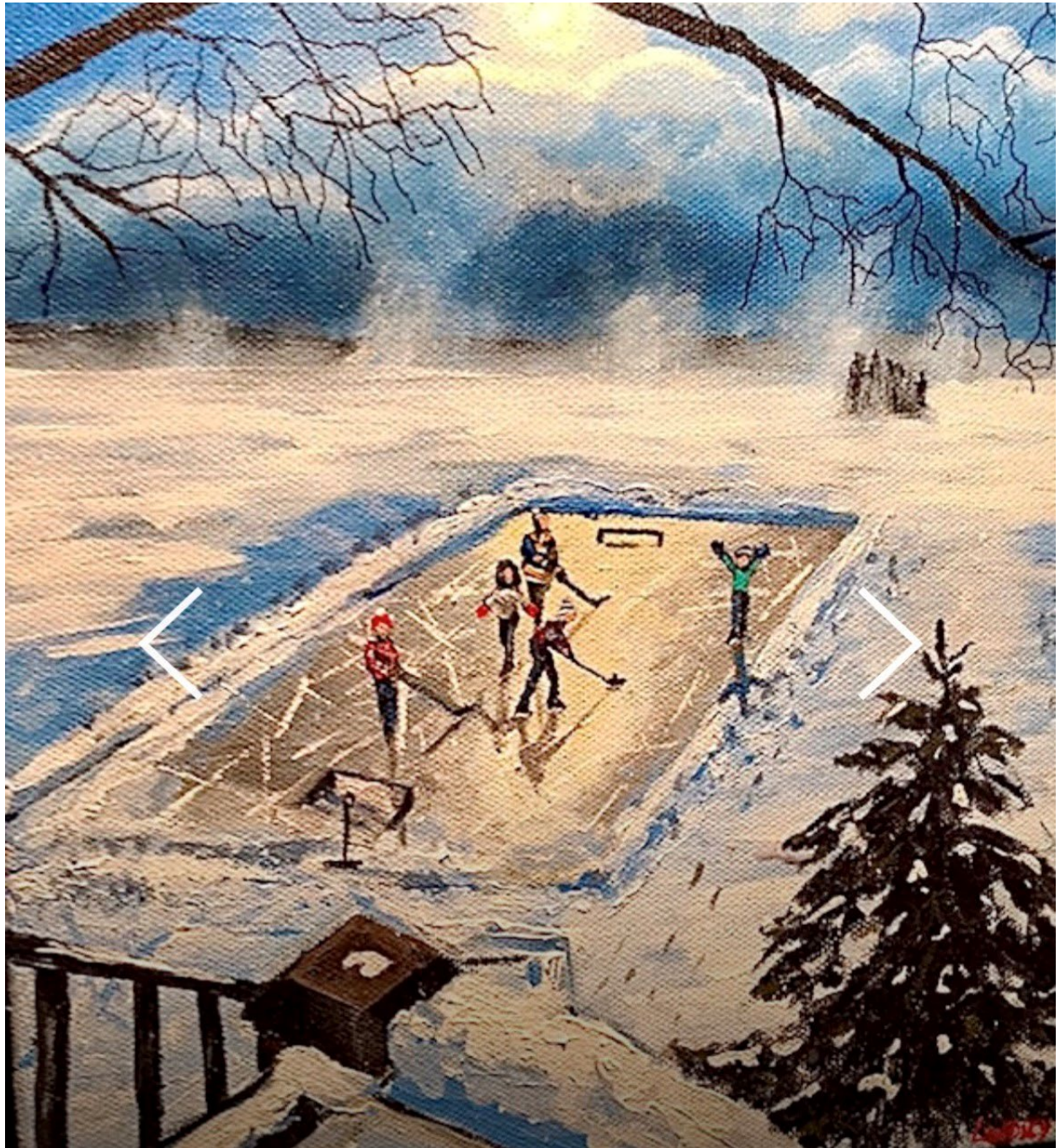
In cities, parents add Zamboni duty
to their list of surfaces requiring after-snowstorm scraping.
Calamity, should pre-teen pros pull precocious hamstrings.
Dad Dreams of arena roars now rest
upon uninterested shoulders of E-Sport enthusiasts.

In villages, parents purchase shovels and scoops.
When snow stops, they inform offspring—
ice doesn't clear itself once driveway is uncovered.
Hockey on lumps, and shell ice, as terrible as it sounds.

In cities, boys and girls rush inside
when rosy cheeks and tender feet begin to chafe,
as fingers get uncomfortably cold. Soothe
with hot chocolate and Internet.

In villages, kids stomp inside after dark
for any combination of the following reasons:
soaked in stew of sweat and melting snow,
concussion, or seeking first aid
to staunch a bleeding frenemy's wound.

Childhood winters, urban and rural,
each a little different, yet one thing is similar—
the family recreation budget keeps clans
together by providing time apart.



Winter Lake Skate, acrylic on canvas, 2020, Lindsey MacKay Art, Fredericton, NB
<https://www.lindseymackayvisualartist.com/>