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# In conversation with VISIONAIRE LONDON®

Written by **Kooness**

People



**Since its inception, VISIONAIRE LONDON® has promoted contemporary art within a line that goes from modern figuration to the purest abstract. Today we had the chance to have a talk with the founder and director, Bettina Newbery, who has herself been on a “Journey into Abstraction”**

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***Dear Bettina Newbery, thank you for taking the time for this interview. Kooness is excited to exhibit your artists and your works! Would you like to tell us more about your story and about how you began your project back in 2012?***

VISIONAIRE LONDON® is an independent Boutique Art Gallery for original colourful, intricate and fashion-inspired artwork. VISIONAIRE LONDON® focus on presenting “A World full of colour”.

British artist Bettina Newbery has been painting fine oil portraits inspired by fashion and popular culture since 2010.

2019 saw the first creation of works rich in geometric evolutions – portraying modern women, telling new stories and establishing an immediate connection with the viewer.

Since 2020, portraits became more abstracted and blended with floral patterns, leading to either an exuberant blend of surreal feminine portraits and floral structures or completely abstracted BLOOMS paintings.

***In your 2019 A KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOURS series: what do you think it is about your portrait paintings that establish an immediate connection with the viewer?***

The ladies in my paintings are elegant and confident - the glamour of designer fashion is an expression of desire, and they are stealing the show. As such, they appeal to the viewer's moods and emotions - they grab you, they look at you and they draw you in.

***What is the significance of your 2020 ART IN BLOOM series within your artistic development and exploration?***

The portraits in the 2020 ART IN BLOOM series show a new blend of florals and faces that is both elegant and vibrant for the new wave of cosmopolitans.

These original artworks were revolutionary as they conjoin realistic figurative portraiture with abstract geometrical backgrounds inspired by flowers. Here I explored the use of colour and shape further than any of my previous portraits.



Bettina Newbery, Art in Bloom, 2020. Courtesy VISIONAIRE LONDON

***How does the specific use of colour, tone and shape inform each portrait?  
Does working in oil help to facilitate this?***

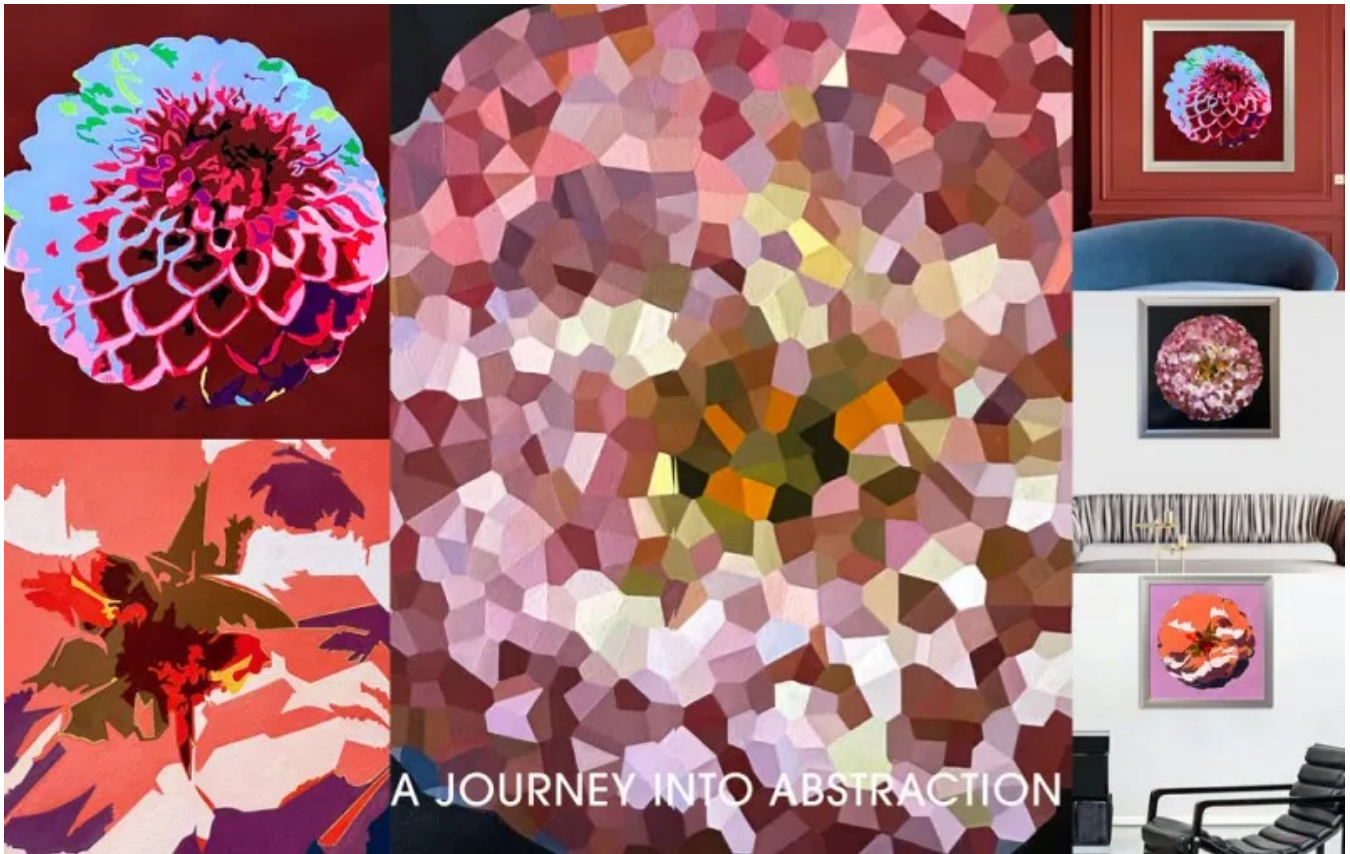
Christian Dior is often called the designer of dreams – I tell human stories of beauty, vulnerability and excitement. Regardless of the technique, whether oil, silk or monoprints, you can achieve the same powerful effect or narrative.

***Where do you see the importance of the 2021 BLOOM IMAGINED series?***

The 2021 *BLOOMS IMAGINED* series followed the idea that nothing in nature ever clashes. In those floral paintings, I experimented with shapes, and vibrant colours resulting in velvety and sumptuous blooms and flamboyant yet delicate pastel-coloured single blooms.

Finely drawn and coloured in a way that each painting may seem simple at first glimpse, but with each new glance, you enter a new colour sensation. They are *BLOOMS* as they have not been imagined before.





Bettina Newbery, Blooms Imagined, 2021. Courtesy VISIONAIRE LONDON

### ***What's in the pipeline for 2022 / 23?***

The 2022 *ART CANDY* series sees the continuation of the BLOOMS theme.

By exaggerating and inverting the colours, I am ramping up the contrast, colours and combinations to create a slightly surreal and other worldly aesthetic. Later in the year, by re-introducing striking feminine figures, the paintings become supremely colourful, almost unreal flower arrangements that would be hard to top in terms of sheer opulence.

### ***Thinking about your inspirations, why do you use flowers?***

Flowers have long held a place in culture, influencing fashion, design and literature through their beauty and symbolic weight. And for centuries, artists have turned to flora for inspiration.

Flowers' visual and tactile qualities associate with love, femininity and the natural world - inspiring contemporary artists such as myself, to harness the visual and conceptual power of flowers in fresh and unexpected ways.



Bettina Newbery, Art Candy, 2022. Courtesy VISIONAIRE LONDON

***What are your next projects within and without the gallery Visionaire London?  
Can you anticipate anything?***

Inspired by the luminosity and the colour spectra of the stars, the very latest artworks explore abstraction even further – it's a series called *STAR DUST*.

The paintings comprise fine oil graphic abstracts, arranged in intricate kaleidoscopic patterns seemingly in perfect symmetry, yet an illusion.



Bettina Newbery, Star Dust, 2022. Courtesy VISIONAIRE LONDON

Stars are huge celestial bodies made mostly of hydrogen and helium that produce light and heat from the churning nuclear forges inside their cores. Aside from our sun, the dots of light we see in the sky are all light-years from Earth. They are the building blocks of galaxies, of which there are billions in the universe. It's estimated that in our Milky Way galaxy alone, there are about 300 billion.

Some stars shine more brightly than others. Their brightness is a factor of how much energy they put out—known as luminosity – some appear white or blue, others have orange or red hues. Each STARDUST painting is a hand painted one-off creation that add atmosphere with colour and contrast to any room.

***How do you think the role of painting will develop in today's digital landscape?***

Painting and real-world artwork remain significant both from a decorative and a cultural point of view. The eclectic use of pattern and innovative colour combinations distinguish my work in today's world of portrait painting and still-life. This is my way of storytelling, developing a new perspective and enhancing the underlying narrative.

Exploring graphic elements taken from nature, simple shapes that surround us, I am having fun with many more colours. Whether it is portraits or abstracts, it is colour that brings the gift of magic to my paintings.

**The last couple of years have been busy for you!**

Yes – a selection of my portrait paintings were well received during group exhibitions in New York since lockdowns were lifted.

The next upcoming major exhibition will take place in 2023 in ARTIFACT Gallery, Manhattan, April 5 – 23 which will showcase my journey into abstraction.

Cover image: Bettina Newbery, *A Kaleidoscope of Colours*, 2019. Courtesy VISIONAIRE LONDON

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