



Deborah Bigeleisen

Having been captivated by nature since childhood, and with the subject of flowers impacting both my former career in textile design and my second career as a fine art painter, I continually push the boundaries of my vision of a single image of a flower. I am awed by flowers - their mystery, their complexity, and their beauty. Echoing the personal philosophy of Rembrandt, who “loved what he painted and only painted what he loved,” I continue to follow my passion.

I credit the serendipitous discovery of fractals for having a major impact on the direction of my work. Fractals transformed my vision from creating portraits of flowers to a much more abstracted view, which also gave rise to a new energy and voice in my work as a whole. Fractals [the self-similar properties found within a single object of nature when viewed hundreds of times at different magnifications] have taken my vision to depths beyond what the naked eye can see, to the point of pure abstraction. Never having considered myself an abstract thinker, I would say that my vision is in sublime chaos.

As my vision became more abstracted, there was a major shift in my brush work because I was working with much larger spaces with far less information. I had to find a way to make the paintings more interesting. The outcome was a totally new expression in my brushwork, which had a significant effect not only the more conceptual work but the realism as well. Consistent throughout all my paintings is the use of richly layered transparencies, often upwards of 20 coats at different viscosities. In the hyper-realism paintings and the work with analogous tonalities, I deliberately play warm hues against cool hues to achieve astonishing richness and depth in the darkest areas and vibrant luminosity in the highlights. I apply the same principles to the colorful abstract work but the contrasts are more striking. With my shift to the abstract work, I literally turned my studio upside down - learning how to apply and manipulate acrylic paints after working in oils for 16 years, learning the use of new mediums, working with bigger brushes, and painting on a flat surface after 16 years of painting on an easel. Whether creating evocative representational images or bold abstracts, I work with a very limited palette of up to eight colors - a practice started early in my career with the implementation of the techniques of the Dutch master artists.

I do not subscribe to rules, although I do adhere to a few classic principles for establishing the forms. Though I have a general vision at the onset of every new painting, I have had so many unexpected occurrences during the process that have taken the finished work somewhere that I never foresaw initially. Just as my senses are challenged, I look to seduce the viewer into the myriad of complexities and stimulate their imagination and emotions. Every painting is a fresh beginning and a new journey; and I cherish the unpredictability.

I continue to push my vision to new depths and to create work that feeds my spirit; work that is engaging and provocative with the complexity to withstand the test of time - especially in today's culture where trends are in and out in a nano-second. I want to disrupt the status quo. In this short attention span, instant gratification, digitally driven culture that we live in I am asking viewers to put their devices down, to take the time to pause and really look at what is in front of them, look at what is around them, and to see and question more than meets the eye.