



Deborah Bigeleisen

Artist Statement

Having started my career by painting Rembrandt-like portraits of luminous white roses, I credit my discovery of fractals for transforming my artistic vision, and changing the direction and force of my work. Always working with a single image of a flower, or a component thereof, I have stripped away the mask of the exterior form and magnified the interior thousands of times to depths beyond what is visible to the naked eye. My subject is no longer simply a flower; it is a dynamical system existing in a chaotic universe filled with energy, turbulence, mystery and beauty. Additionally, I have discovered that the system repeats itself through multiple phenomena. This is where I have taken the literal definition of fractals, and put my own voice to the principles. Though the non-representational work may suggest a natural likeness - a wing, a wave, a shell, or even a human form - my vision invites a fresh dialogue between aesthetics and science.

Whether creating evocative representational images or boldly deceptive non-objective work, my focus is always on the choreography of the movement, the organization of the space, the subtlety in the tonal transitions, and the intricacy of the brushwork. Exclusively painting in oils, and using mediums at different viscosities, my technique is rooted in the labor intensive practices of the Dutch master painters. I apply upwards of 20 layered transparencies to create richly saturated darks and vibrant luminous highlights that dance off the surface of the canvas. Never using more than an 8 color palette, I constantly contrast warm hues against cool hues to play with the reflective light, and to seduce the view into the myriad of complexities.

I do not subscribe to rules. Though I have a general vision at the onset of a new painting, I have had so many serendipitous discoveries during the painting process that have often taken the finished work somewhere that I never foresaw initially. Every painting is a fresh beginning and a new journey; and I cherish the unpredictability. Just as my senses are challenged with every new painting, I want to stimulate the viewer's imagination and emotions. Because color is so subjective, I have chosen to paint many of the non-objective works in neutral analogous tones to provoke a discourse with the viewer.

Though my representational work is often referenced alongside Georgia O'keeffe, the similarity starts and ends with the fact that we are both identified with painting flowers. My work probes the bridge between beauty and science, order and chaos. As one art journalist said: "It brings a unique vision to the genre of floral painting to embody a contemporary world." A world where change occurs at lightning speed, where one rarely looks beneath the surface, where the meaning of beauty is continually being redefined, and where chaos is the order of the day.