

Joyce Ozier: Bold Strokes



Bold gestural strokes, strong vivid colors, and wild scribbles express joy and raw energy as Joyce Ozier attempts to reach the viewer on a visceral level. And she does it—with the potent reaction “I love it, I want it,” from collector Lulu Leathley.

Joyce Ozier is a creative powerhouse whose visual arts career has spawned five separate incarnations. Her academic training in art and theatrical design, including a Masters Degree from the University of British Columbia, launched her trajectory through the arts. She directed an experimental theatre group, managed several dance companies, and acted as the first Executive Director of the ScotiaBank Dance Centre—Wow! But the gifted yet soft-spoken dynamo then traveled to Europe, only to apply her theatrical

expertise to an instructional stint in Zurich. Subsequently, she reinvented herself as an award-winning entrepreneur upon founding Wow Windows Display and Design Ltd, a visual merchandising firm catering to a myriad of retail clients in the Pacific Northwest.

Fast forward seven years, and Joyce is now happily engaged in her gorgeous Beaumont studio, equipped with abundant natural light and amenable neighbours. She has taken a bold leap into abstract expressionism. The spirited painter currently works on large-scale panels—typically a sequence of four—measuring approximately six by two feet each. “I love the scale. I find it very freeing—I work very gesturally. It’s almost like dancing in front of the canvas.”



CLOUDS IN TRANSIT

And her paintings dance in tandem. Take *Clouds in Transit*, for example. Subtle variations in hue reveal three-dimensional cloud formations as they bustle through a rainbow sky of bright colour bursts. The dynamic flow of each vivacious pigment guides the viewer’s eye on a spiraling tour up, down, and around the artist’s ode to joy. “Joyous—that’s always the feedback I get from people,” says Ozier.

The sheer size of the work demands the attention and involvement of the participant. Spanning six by twenty-some feet, this ten-panel sequence invites the viewer to contemplate and explore the artist’s inner world. “Large works draw you into the painting physically. You are essentially pulled into the environment and I find it very satisfying to evoke such a powerful effect,” says Joyce.

But how does Ozier do it? Her process is an improvisational journey into the core of her being. Guided by pure intuition, the artist selects her palette and lays the panels against the wall. Then she tunes into classical music and picks up a huge bristle brush. “I start with very large brushes to get a direction going and come up with a basic composition,” she explains. Once an initial structure has been established,

Joyce playfully shuffles and flips the rectangles into an entirely new configuration. “Then all of a sudden, I have a totally different composition and I work with that to create an aesthetic balance,” she says. The inspired painter repeatedly manipulates the order and orientation of the canvases sweeping them with layer upon layer of colourful acrylics and marking them with vigorous pastel accents until the painting hums in satisfaction. “The painting will always tell you when it’s finished,” she muses.

The painting may be complete, but Joyce doesn’t stop there. This wellspring of creativity launches yet another enterprise and a unique product—*OZIER*panels©. These giclée prints of individual panels are sold to interior designers who can mix and match them to suit a particular space. “The response has been fantastic,” says Joyce. And no wonder with such an original concept and clever tagline: Huge wall...small elevator...big impact!

What’s next for this inventive artist? Picture this—a quaint Moroccan village where everything is painted a different shade of blue. That is precisely what Joyce has been doing for the past year. In fact, she has created eight paneled abstracts that narrate the poignant tale of just how this scenic village came to be. Why not drop by Fazakas Gallery this November to uncover the mystery?

The exhibit entitled *Blue Refuge* runs from November 26 through the end of December with an opening reception on Thursday evening, November 26th. The Fazakas Gallery is conveniently located on 145 West 6th Avenue between Cambie and Main.