



Cultivating the Dutch Tradition in The 21st Century

Jane Jones' Hyperrealist Floral Paintings

Perfect conditions for a new and important form of painting aligned in the 17th century in the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Amsterdam had become the financial center of Europe with the continent's highest income per capita. Global expansion of the Dutch East and West Trading Companies brought new goods with every shipment, including exotic botanical specimens. Secular acceptance of Scientific Method had begun to free scientific inquiry from religion and myth, while the big science of the day—exploration—manifest itself in collections of natural history specimens amassed by affluent collectors, who also collected art. Demand for floral art was supplied by painters who possessed scientific understanding and skill which they had honed as scientific illustrators. Collectively, this was the nexus of The Golden Age of Dutch Floral Painting.



Clockwise from top left: *Gentle Embrace*, 61 x 56, 2018, Oil on Canvas • *Hello Again*, 28 x 18, 2016, Oil on Board
Special Occasion, 35 x 32, 2018, Oil on Canvas • *Survivors*, 74 x 47, 2016, Oil on Canvas

The genre lives on today, but contextualized by modernity. In the paintings of Jane Jones, flowers are icons, but not merely of beauty or taxonomy. Her paintings embody a 21st-century sensibility of concern yet hope about destructive forces that puts nature in peril, and this layer has the transformative effect of elevating her paintings into prayers . . . reverent prayers for the botanical health of the world. Jane Jones explores flowers in exquisite detail. She also explores their fragility and their metaphysics. Her paintings celebrate beauty, but they also reveal the necessity to protect flowers.

While Jane Jones has been a life-long student of 17th-century Dutch floral painting, she takes a contemporary stylistic approach to her own work through spare composition that excludes extraneous details of the external world in order to focus on a moment of elegance, harmony, and dignity. Consequently, her paintings seem to meditate on nature.

Though natural light was not important to 17th-century Dutch floral painters, natural light is of the utmost importance to Jane Jones. Judicious use of light enables her to invest her floral subjects with the kind of energy that makes art come alive. Throughout the process of painting a floral still life, Jane Jones consciously and continually explores the interaction of light with flowers in order to invest the experience of the moment in each and every painting she creates.

While reference material proliferated in the United Provinces of the Netherlands in the 17th, access for artists then, was nothing like access available to botanical artists today. As the gardener of most of the flowers she paints, Jane Jones has the luxury of access to flowers from around the world from florists and garden stores. Gardening has made her exceptionally aware of the transitory lives of flowers: “One of the things that gardening has taught me is to pay attention in the moment.” Thanks to technology, moments of beauty and light are easily captured in high resolution photographs, in a fraction of the time it took artists of the past to capture exacting detail through sketches and paintings.

The use of symbolism in 16th- and 17th-century floral paintings reflected Protestant values generally understood and respected as part of the lexicon of Dutch culture. Though Dutch masters gradually moved away from creating vanitas paintings, every painting that Jane Jones creates is a vanitas or meditation on the momentary nature of life. For the gardener in Jane Jones, the seasons instill a sense of urgency to capture those moments when flowers are most compelling.

Since symbolism in the 21st century is mostly used as a shortcut in social media, the language of floral painting has largely been forgotten. When Jane Jones wants to invest objects in her paintings with a higher level of meaning she capitalizes on this void in the same sense as the cliché, necessity is the mother of invention. For example, rocks—solid and inorganic—represent earth and serve as a counterweight to the ephemeral qualities of flowers and other

Jane Jones has an admirable gift for banishing extraneous details in order to focus on the elegance of flowers, juxtaposing their organic forms with the geometric rigidity of their vases, and the stones she sometimes includes, and even of the square or rectangular canvas itself. Her still life paintings highlight what Jones calls the “everyday triumphs of nature” and the “power, beauty, and fragility of life,” none of which should ever be taken for granted.

Peter Trippi, Editor-in-Chief, *Fine Art Connoisseur*, New York

From Genesis 2:8-9 where God 'planted a garden eastwards in Eden' to 17th century Jan Van Kessel the Elder's exquisitely detailed portrayal of Vertumnus—guardian of gardens, to early 20th century works like Odilon Redon's *Flowers in a Turquoise Vase* (1905), human aesthetic rapture has found its myriad safe havens and perennial longing in botany. Jane Jones, like few contemporary American painters, has invented a most elegant way of communicating the rapture and metaphysics of a flower. She does so with a technically photorealistic honesty and fluency that is poignant and astonishing. Jones' work is both stark and lush; a vivid wake-up call. It declares the innocence, vulnerability and gorgeous allure of the more than 370,000 flowering plant species on Earth. Her work will stand as a unique rallying cry, an open and perfumed invitation to be re-enchanted by all that grows and co-evolves with us.

Michael Charles Tobias, President, Dancing Star Foundation, Los Angeles

organic materials. Stacked rocks, which appear in her paintings form cairns that point the way on a journey, either physically or spiritually. Colored glass appears in some of her paintings to evoke a sense of sacred space. In others she uses images of tissue paper and cellophane which is widely used to protect flowers in the cut flower trade.

Having earned degrees in biology and chemistry, Jane Jones says, “The most important things I took away from my science education were a deep respect for living systems and ecology, their inherent homeostasis, and the importance of precision when observing nature.” She also possesses knowledge and understanding gained from a Masters of Arts degree in Art History, and teaching. “Years of teaching art history allowed me to dive deeply into the historical and social context of the lives of the great artists of past centuries, and to incorporate some of their techniques and ideas into my own artwork.”



Clockwise from top left: *Rose Duet*, 35 x 32, 2018, Oil on Canvas • *Transformations*, 53 x 35, 2016, Oil on Canvas • *Handle with Care*, 27 x 28, 2016, Oil on Canvas
Cover Clockwise: *Three Graces*, 32 x 66, 2018, Oil on Canvas • *Party of Two*, 59 x 78, 2019, Oil on Canvas • *Circle of Light*, 24 x 24, 2019, Oil on Canvas

Today, there is growing concern about climate change and the overpowering footprint of Homo sapiens on the health of the planet. While Jane Jones possesses a deep and un-abiding concern about the disruption of the balance of nature, she maintains a sense of hope from the everyday triumphs and beauty in nature.

Jane Jones' work is exhibited nationally in museums and galleries. Her paintings have won numerous national awards including the Award of Excellence in *Blossoms ~ Art of Flowers* which premiered at the Naples Museum of Art in 2011 and the Floral Award in the Annual Exhibition of the International Guild of Realism in 2013 and 2018. She is the author of *Classic Still Life Painting* and is represented by galleries in Boston, Denver, Santa Fe, and Scottsdale.

EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

CONTENTS: 25 Floral Paintings in Oil on Canvas and Board

COST: Mid-range exhibition fee plus shipping and in-house and in-transit insurance

AVAILABILITY: Available for duration of eight weeks or longer

SUPPORT: Exhibition DVD for registration, retail merchandise, press

EDUCATION: Lecture, gallery walk, docent training possible pending scheduling

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

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