



Véronique Besançon, between words and colors the research on the human being of a world citizen

The fascination exercised by travelling, discovering and getting to know faraway places has often been an essential cue for that group of artists who could not stay within the confines of the known world, the one in which they were born and which could constitute a limit to the need to explore and come into contact with cultures that are different and therefore full of inspiration. In today's era, moving and shifting has become an imperative to knowledge and discovery of oneself or of the mixture of origins that have been generated precisely by virtue of the great displacements of the last century. Today's protagonist not only explores her own descendants by discovering a strong instinctive, and expressive, connection with it, but also infuses her artworks with all the sensations and listening skills she has learnt during her many travels.

When the reality observed and the academic artistic style began to be too tied to aesthetics, to perfection of form and to relevance to what the eye saw in front of it, marginalizing all that inner world that was instead part not only of the human being but also of the artist's perceptions, a revolutionary movement burst into the art world, destined to leave an indelible mark on those later generations who felt the need to speak a different language that could connect more deeply with their feelings. The **Fauves** were the first to theorize a completely subversive approach to painting compared to previous rules, where strong and intense chromaticity had to prevail over aesthetic harmony and where perspective was flattened, lacking depth, in order to imbue artworks with the totally emotional sense that had to take priority over any other

principle. **André Derain** and **Henri Matisse** also showed how essential the graphic line was in defining and containing the bestial vivacity, as it was called in derogatory terms by the cultural circles of the early 20th century, of the intense and decontextualized color range they used. But those early days of the century also marked an unprecedented ease of travel that allowed artists to go and discover faraway and exotic places that they could then narrate with that new style, **Expressionism**, which took on different characteristics based on the emotionality of each artist. Thus, in France, the most intense strokes and range of colors close to the **Fauves** were essential to the description of the Polynesian landscapes of **Paul Gauguin** considered to be a forerunner of the movement, as much as softer and more delicate tones matched the romantic settings and escape from reality of **Marc Chagall**, a Jew born in Russia who fled to France during the war, while in Northern Europe the style manifested itself with a greater distortion of images, with a desire to bring out the distance between the hypocrisy of bourgeois society as opposed to the spontaneity and lawlessness of the distant countries visited, evident in the works of the German **Ernest Ludwig Kirchner** and the Dane **Emil Nolde**, whose chromatic range was intense and almost aggressive because it was akin to their desire to highlight the limitations of the everyday reality of the time.

Travelling, whether by discovery or escape, was therefore a common denominator for these artistic pioneers of the 20th century, and it was thanks to their curiosity that they were able to carry out in-depth research into the customs and traditions of hitherto unknown countries, confronting them with all the faults of so-called civilized society. Heir to this approach to art, **Véronique Besançon**, naturalized Canadian but of French, Russian and Hungarian origin and born in Morocco, feels within herself that mixture of roots that allow her to have a completely open, empathetic approach to the world, and above all to absorb like a sponge the traditions, colors and sensations that her inevitably eclectic upbringing has left her.



1 - Je conjugue l'infini – acrylic and pastel on canvas, 107x107cm

Not only that, family relocations and her curious nature, interested in every facet of the beauty of the world and different realities in which to live, induced her over time to move frequently, first to France and then to Canada, to Quebec, where she chose to live, or perhaps it would be better to say to return between trips.



2 - Ma force de vivre – acrylic and pastel on canvas, 135x89cm

Through her capacity of observation and strong perceptive sensitivity, when she chose a career as a professional artist, in spite of her self-taught training that could have been a limitation, she blended within her painting style all the characteristics of her family origins, choosing the warm colors of the Mediterranean area, where she was born and raised, and the intense colors of Eastern Europe, her maternal inheritance, through which she tries to interpret, understand and allow the emotional characteristics of the human being to emerge, of its capacity for interaction regardless of the divisions that rulers often wish to be, of the beauty of interculturality, of the spontaneity of looking at oneself with the eyes of the human being and not with those of skin color, religion or customs.



3 - La grand mère – acrylic and pastel on wood, 30x30cm

From a stylistic point of view, **Véronique Besançon** approaches **Expressionism** but goes beyond it and modifies it by approaching an abstractionist type of gestuality, both in the layering of the painting and in the indefiniteness with which she envelops her characters, thus highlighting their inner differences, of feeling, but not their outer ones; however, the graphic line with which she defines the outlines of the protagonists of the artworks and the interaction with words, small and brief hints that are at times more evident and at others hidden by the painting, make her rightfully part of a strongly contemporary expressionist style enriched by the concepts and messages that the artist wishes to leave behind.. As indefinable is her complex and multifaceted cultural background from the influences of her origins, as is her artistic style, the result of a personalisation necessary to allow her to express her approach to life and, consequently, to painting in a strong and intense manner.



4 - Entre vents et marées – acrylic and pastel on canvas, 100x100cm

In *Entre vents et marées*, the outline drawing is very present and clearly defines the protagonist figures, a symbol of resilience, of the need to resist external events that are inevitably part of existence, and to which one cannot but comply, modifying expectations, generating new goals and adapting to changes. The image of the two people instils in the observer a sense of strength, as if despite the tides and winds evoked by the title, the latter fading on the left side of the canvas as if to generate an echo, their determination to remain standing was far more powerful than the possibility of circumstances to bring them down; it is a metaphor of contemporary man this painting, an examination of the unconscious adaptability that belongs to human nature.



5 - Je cultive le bonheur – acrylic and pastel on canvas, 122x76cm

Véronique Besançon shows how much awareness can only be acquired through confrontation with the outside world, how confidence in one's own abilities can make all the difference in the evolution of circumstances, because positive energy cannot fail to generate favorable results, the succession of those causes and effects that lead the individual towards the best path for oneself, if one is able to accept even the sudden deviations. Cultivating good humor means maintaining high energy vibrations that modify reality to the point of transforming it into that dream that is too often, and erroneously, seen as an unattainable chimera. The multitude in this canvas is united, compact, almost as if **Besançon** wanted to emphasize how important it is to maintain connections between people, in a world that would instead often have them immersed in their individualism and hyper-connected through computer and mobile phone screens, but in fact alone.



6 - Je suis l'instant présent – acrylic and pastel on canvas, 80x80cm

The artwork *Je suis l'instant présent*, on the other hand, tends more towards **Abstractionism** as if the artist wanted to emphasize the fleeting nature of the concept of time, that elusive fascinating element of existence within which many people lull themselves, forgetting instead the importance of the urgency of seizing opportunities, of taking what one wants before it is no longer possible to do so. Living the present is therefore the only way not to regret it when it is too late, and the words that emerge from the canvas, hidden by the color, seem to be a reminder of those occasions when one has stood still, seeing the unique opportunity to get what one wanted slip away; the undefined image may represent the inconsistency of a life in which the human being has let himself be overcome by the fear of taking risks, or the speed with which he has learnt to move and act after past mistakes.



7 - Autoportrait regardée par Jacques -- acrylic and pastel on wood, 30x30cm

Véronique Besançon, who documents her artistic journey in collections combining paintings and poems, has numerous solo and group exhibitions to her credit in **Canada** and in **Italy, Austria, United States, Morocco, Spain, China, Brazil** and **France**, and her artworks are part of private and public collections in **Canada, United States, North Africa and Europe**.

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