

A celebration the poetry of life by cheryl osborne

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“ A Celebration”. “ The Poetry of life”, by Cheryl Osborne

Cheryl Osborne, born in 1956, is a unique artist and presently is the Director of Art at Melbourne Girl’s Grammar. She was educated at Firkbank Monash University, Caulfield from 1977- 1983, and procured her Masters of Visual Arts. The artist had a peculiar passion for cats that became a major part not only of her life but in her art. Cats became a major focus in her life and the first cat to feature in her painting was Giselle, a beautiful white cat that had golden eyes. Her very first painting of a cat was a cute cat in an exotic and vibrantly colored garden, which sat under a sunshade. All of Osborne’s paintings were exquisitely narrative and highly symbolic.

Having been always brought up with cats, the artist was always attracted to them from a very young age. All through her life she had many encounters with different cats that greatly impacted on her life. In short, cats became an indelible part of the artist’s life and she used the same in most of her art works and has exhibited them far and wide both locally as well as internationally.

The Director of Monash Gippsland, Rodney Forbes, describes the artist’s paintings as ‘ visionary’ and makes use of mythology to investigate personal identity by her ‘ representations of animals and nature.’ (Gallery arc Yinnar 24 March 2012.) Osborne makes use of sentient beings passionately in addition to a lot of symbolism and metaphors to get her message across. Osborne’s ‘ A Celebration’, ‘ The Poetry of life’ makes a true exploration of her own spirituality and transformation through the depiction of the female figure, animals and nature in her art work that is well correlated with the artist’s own personal life and the psychological journey she traversed from

childhood until the present times.

Some of her well known paintings include - ' Floating Out', ' Sunset' ' Dancing in a Wave', ' Moment' and many other paintings of nature on the waves and sky. Julie Adams, the Arts Director of Latrobe states that the artist's dreams and experiences is what gave her inspiration, in addition to her keen interest in the fields of psychology and Science. The chief idea behind her art work was to convey or spread the message of peace and harmony across the world. One of the main techniques used by the artist is layering with broad demonstrative strokes.

' One of Osborne's well known paintings, is an acrylic on canvas titled ' Dancing in a Wave' (2011) which belongs to the series of ' A Celebration. The Poetry of life'. The painting was on paper, done with acrylic and other mixed media. The colors used in this painting are blue, black and white mostly but also has a dash of yellow and green in the middle of turbulent broad strokes. ' Floating Out' also comprised of broad strokes using black, white, blue and grey with smudges of brown to highlight the content. It depicted the idea of something floating. ' Moment was another painting using oil on canvas done in fluid strokes of black and white, while Wave Tondo I, II and III comprised on small circular paintings that made use of oil pastels and water colors in blue and green done on circular bits of canvas. The ' Legs and Waves' painting was an acrylic on canvas showing pink colored legs among waves that were colored in different shades of blue with strokes of white and black to highlight the scene. The next was ' Wind Horse' which was an acrylic and oil on canvas painting that depicted a pink colored horse surrounded by circular shaped objects with floating clouds of grey above it. The painting

also had the figure of the rider who seemed to be in trouble.

'Sunset' (2012) is an acrylic and oil on canvas painting by Osborne which depicted the setting of the sun at dusk with birds flying to their nests for shelter. The background of the painting was made up of splashes of pinks, reds and orange, with birds painted in white. In the center was the sun depicted on the lines of modern art with geometrical shapes that were painted mostly in white and black. This painting seemed quite bold in its presentation. The next was called 'Inside the Wave' which had an overall dark presentation of acrylic on canvas. Most of the painting was in black with small dabs of white, blue and red giving it an ominous look.

The 'Sky Study I, II, III, IV, V and VI series were all small sized paintings of oil on canvas that depicted the sky in various settings. The paintings showed clouds using broad strokes of whites, grays, browns and blacks giving each a different mood. Next was 'Shell Boat' which comprised of an oil on canvas painting showing a shell which was boat shaped floating in dark waters that looked dangerous as it was painted mostly in black with strokes of blue and white which highlighted the scene making it look dangerous. This was followed by 'Flying with Swan' which was an acrylic on paper painting of black and white showing great turbulence in the air. This painting I suppose was symbolic of the confused or difficult times of the artist. Next was 'Bird Tondo II,' which was an acrylic on canvas painting of black and white done on a circular canvas showing a bird flying. Next was an interesting painting called 'The Sea Dragon Dance', an oil on canvas painting that showed a sea dragon with a sad face that seemed to be getting washed by the waves, mostly done in black and white broad flowing strokes with just a hint of

orange here and there. The final painting was titled ' Feathers' which was done with mixed media on paper depicting a confused scattering of feathers, mostly done in black and white with small splashes of dull blue.

Out of all the twenty one paintings, the one I liked best was ' The Sunset' because of its aesthetic coloring and somewhat modern depiction of the sun at dusk. The living elements of the birds in the picture gave it a more personal touch. On the whole Osborne has a unique style of her own especially when considering that her paintings were all her depiction of her journey of life that she traveled.

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