

There are many types of art, and many reasons why we may love a piece of art. It may be the story it's trying to tell, or how curious it makes us feel. The colours, the view or the imagery might change how we are feeling each time we look at it – they might calm us or make us happier.

# All We Need Is Love!

The art of Internationally acclaimed artist and child prodigy ANNA BEREZOVSKAYA always tells a story – and it draws us in and makes us question more. Returning to REDSEA Gallery for her latest exhibition, *Refractions of Love*, Anna will explore the multifaceted nature of love through her iconic art style. Here, we chat get some deeper insights into her latest body of work and her career to date.

**Welcome back to Singapore, Anna! How are you feeling returning for your seventh solo exhibition with REDSEA Gallery?**

Singapore feels like a second home to me. It's a place I return to with joy. I'm deeply grateful to this city and its people for their warm welcome, and I can't wait to share my newest series of paintings.

**Tell us about *Refractions of Love*. What was your inspiration for it, and how did the idea of love become the central thread?**

The idea of eternity – and what subject fits that better than love? This series explores love in its many forms: love for another person, for home, for one's work, for travel and new discoveries... It's a timeless theme that continues to stir the hearts of poets, writers, filmmakers, and mine as an artist.



**Which piece in the collection holds the most meaning for you, and what's the story behind it?**

Perhaps the piece with the apple tree. In it, two figures lean against the tree, listening through it to each other's heartbeat. I can't even remember where I read it; it was long ago, but there was a piece of advice: "If you feel lonely, hug a tree." That simple phrase stayed with me and eventually inspired this painting about love.

**Some of the scenes in your artworks feel like they come from a parallel world. How do these stories come to you?**

These stories don't come to me right away or by intention. It's not like I sit down and decide, "Now I'm going to come up with something unusual." It's more like something quiet, barely perceptible. They are born from fragments of phrases, from watching life unfold, from casual conversations.

Sometimes an image comes first, and the words slowly gather around it. Other times, it's a single word, strange, almost accidental that arrives first, and I follow it like a thread. I don't think these scenes exist somewhere far away in a parallel reality. I simply reveal a part of our own world that we don't always notice, a new perspective, the artist's gaze from a different angle.

**How do you decide when a piece is finished or when the story is fully told?**

I simply feel that the time has come. But I should say that before I ever touch the canvas, there's a long preparatory process that no one sees – dozens, sometimes even hundreds of sketches on paper. It's a search for form, for the posture of the character. From all of that, one version is chosen. Then I create a detailed pencil drawing, followed by a colour study, sometimes several. Only after that do I begin working on the final canvas.

It's a bit like making a film: first comes the screenplay, defining what the film is about, then comes the cinematography, direction and so on. As for when I know a piece is finished, it's when the large painting looks the way I envisioned it in the detailed sketch – though I do allow for some improvisation and spontaneity along the way.

**Symbolism is integral in your work. Are there particular motifs you continue to return to, and have any taken on new meanings over time?**

Symbolism, metaphor and allegory often intertwine in my work, and sometimes even I can't say exactly where one ends and the other begins. I try to use universally recognisable symbols, but I also welcome the idea that each viewer will bring their own interpretation, and that's perfectly natural.

Kings, knights and ladies often appear in my paintings. They represent wealth, power, strength and



romance. In this new series, one of the characters is a young seamstress, who for me symbolises diligence and meticulous craftsmanship. In another piece, Adam and Eve appear as symbols of beginnings, of the origin of everything.

I would say that the theme of love and human connection runs through all of my series. After all, isn't that what ultimately speaks to us the most?



**You often draw from literature, folklore and the human condition. Was there a particular story, poem or personal moment that resonated with you during the making of this series?**

Looking at the world around us, I feel a strong desire to remind people of love, which we often seem to lack. But I find it more compelling to speak about love not directly, but through metaphors and allegories. That's why my stories often resemble fairy tales, like those of Lewis Carroll or Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. They feel like fables, and yet they're real... a reflection of life's truth.

**Have your own experiences of love shaped this series in any unexpected ways?**

It's more the result of observing life and human stories, filtered through my own perception. But there's a little bit of me in every character, too. And of course, I find it far more interesting to depict expressions of love without resorting to the cliché of a kiss. I hope I've managed to do that.

**You've been exhibiting with REDSEA Gallery for 14 years. How do you feel your work has evolved since your first solo show here?**

Perhaps the audience can see it better from the outside, so I'd like to pose the question back to them. With that being said, I do hope that my narratives have grown to be more engaging and layered, and that I've grown technically as well. Singapore and its culture have inspired me deeply and influenced the themes in my work. And over the years, REDSEA Gallery has supported me fully, giving me the freedom to choose my subjects and never placing time constraints. We've learned to listen to each other, and that's exactly the kind of relationship an artist and gallery should have.



**Showing your work in Singapore, especially in a setting like Dempsey Hill, brings your it into a unique context. How has this location shaped your experience of connecting with audiences?**

I consider it a great fortune to exhibit in a place like this. It's an oasis within the metropolis, a piece of history. And, just between us, it's a magical place that draws in and brings together kindred spirits.

**You've said in the past that every viewer sees a different story in your work. With this exhibition, what emotion or reflection do you most hope lingers in someone after they walk away?**

That's an answer I hope to hear from my collectors and audiences who I'll be meeting during the exhibition. Sometimes their response mirrors my own thoughts completely; other times, it's something entirely new and unexpected. And that's what makes it all the more interesting – the different perceptions of each individual towards a singular painting. *a*

Register your interest to the exhibition here:  
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