

ANA TZAREV

exposed

18 May – 16 June 2012



From 17 May 2012, internationally acclaimed artist Ana Tzarev will present an array of her vibrant, large-scale canvases at the Saatchi Gallery. This will be the artist's debut exhibition in London and will feature works dedicated to the form, colour and symbolic meaning of flowers, a subject which has greatly influenced her career as an artist.

Born in 1937 in Croatia, Tzarev has always been inspired by the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage of her home country. 'My devotion to flowers began in my childhood by tending my grandmother's garden' says Tzarev, who has since made detailed studies in horticulture and designed gardens the world over. Inspired by sources as diverse as the indigenous plants of Africa, the exotic tropical flowers of Hawaii, the bustling flower markets of Asia and the imperial gardens of Russia, Tzarev captures blooms from across the globe in evocative large scale paintings which draw the viewer in through their vivid colours. Incorporating her passion for flowers into her art, Tzarev shares her personal perspectives on nature, be it wild or cultivated scenes.

In addition to the aesthetic of the work, each painting holds symbolic significance, outlying Tzarev's association between flowers and the communities and cultures from which they are found. Tzarev has observed that 'flowers clothe this world with beauty' and in her pursuit of various species she has travelled widely observing their meaning in different environments. Through her studies of foreign cultures, Tzarev has found the hibiscus to be a sign of respect in Hawaii and the lotus a symbol of reincarnation in Vietnam.

The influences on Tzarev's work are diverse and range from the Old Masters to Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters who, like Tzarev, have been captivated by the symbolism and fragility of flowers. Her still life depiction of sunflowers in a vase is an ode to Vincent Van Gogh while her riotous blue and purple compositions pay homage to Claude Monet's *Water Lilies*. Holding to a disciplined schedule of daily painting, Tzarev's impasto technique lends her subject matter an immediacy which suggests they are protruding from the canvas. By directly applying paint, using a palette knife, brushes and even her fingers to achieve a slow build-up on the canvas, the image begins to take on a three dimensional, sculptural quality. Her combination of this technique, with a warm palette and familiar subject matter has helped Tzarev

achieve a 'universal language', which has been recognised on an international level through exhibitions and public commissions.

Esteemed art critic Edward Lucie-Smith describes the meaning behind Tzarev's work as an evocation of her own connection with nature which she communicates powerfully through her art. "The central characteristics of Tzarev's art are the generosity of its response to new experiences, its hunger for visual stimulation, its glorious colour, and its accessibility. Her paintings pour out in an almost continuous stream. But they are not, simply, even the flower paintings, a response to what she encounters in the external world. They are also about what she discovers, on each occasion, within herself."

The exhibition has been made possible through the generous support of the J.P. Morgan Private Bank. Commenting on the sponsorship, Olivier de Givenchy, Head of J.P. Morgan's Private Bank in the UK, said: "We are very excited to be supporting Ana Tzarev's vivid 'Exposed: A Secret Garden' exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery. J.P. Morgan Private Bank is committed to encouraging engagement with the arts in the UK and we are thrilled to play a part in supporting such a dynamic international artist as her exhibition comes to London."

Notes to Editors

About Ana Tzarev

Ana Tzarev was born in Croatia in 1937 surrounded by the inspiring presence of Renaissance art and the heritage of centuries of deeply rooted culture, but also with the hardships imposed on the region during the Second World War. Her work reveals her formal, classical education and a natural empathy for the dispossessed but her early struggles have been subjugated to her passion for life, her strength of character and the joy of painting. Tzarev's work is widely recognized for its remarkable vibrancy of colour and abundant use of texture. She has taken a new approach to painting, bringing a freshness and vitality to her canvasses seldom seen in the art world today. Her unique new style builds lush sculptural surfaces that give the total experience of the artist being in the moment, fused with the subject. Solo exhibitions by the artist include the Vietnam Fine Arts Museum, Hanoi, State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, the Gildo Pastor Centre in Monaco, Santralistanbul Museum of Contemporary Art in Istanbul, and opening April 2012 at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.

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