

the painted ladies

brooklyn painter jocelyn hobbie wants you to make your own mind up about her mysterious subjects.

What do you do? I'm a painter based in New York. I work in oil paint.

Who are the women that appear in these paintings on paper? Sometimes the women in my paintings are based on someone I know, but more often than not, they are invented using various references. I think of them as more archetypal representations of women, rather than a focus on the particulars of a specific person.

Your artworks are filled with vibrantly patterned fabrics and backgrounds. Could we find similar patterns in your own wardrobe and home? Actually, the way I dress and even my home are fairly minimal – except for my studio, which is covered in my oil sketches for pattern ideas and swatches of colours.

You've been painting hyperrealist female figures for decades. What draws you to the human form? I don't think of my women as hyperreal. They aren't meant to be a depiction of some ideal of flawlessness. It's just the way I paint – I like the surface of the painting to be very polished and rich. And I love saturated colour, so that smoothness and vibrancy shows up in the women as well as in the flowers or patterns. I think of the figure as the architecture or starting point of the painting. I suppose my choice to depict women has to do with identity, and I like the human connection.

How has your artistic style evolved over the years? Right after art school I moved to New York City where I had several lousy day jobs and was living in a tiny apartment. I loved medieval art and taught myself how to use egg tempera (a paint made from pigment and egg yolk). I was doing miniature, autobiographical tempera paintings. But after a while I developed bad headaches from the way I was working. Eventually I changed to oil paint, which allowed me to work at a larger scale, and I began focusing on women as my subject.

I did a lot of paintings of women crying in bed. I was going through a bad time. While I still paint women, the paintings have evolved. I felt that I wanted to look at beautiful things – things that are a pleasure, because that makes me feel better. I'd love to create things that give that feeling.

What are the women in this series thinking about? I definitely don't want to prescribe what the women are thinking about – that's up to the viewer to decide. And I'm curious about what others bring to a painting – what someone else's interpretation is.

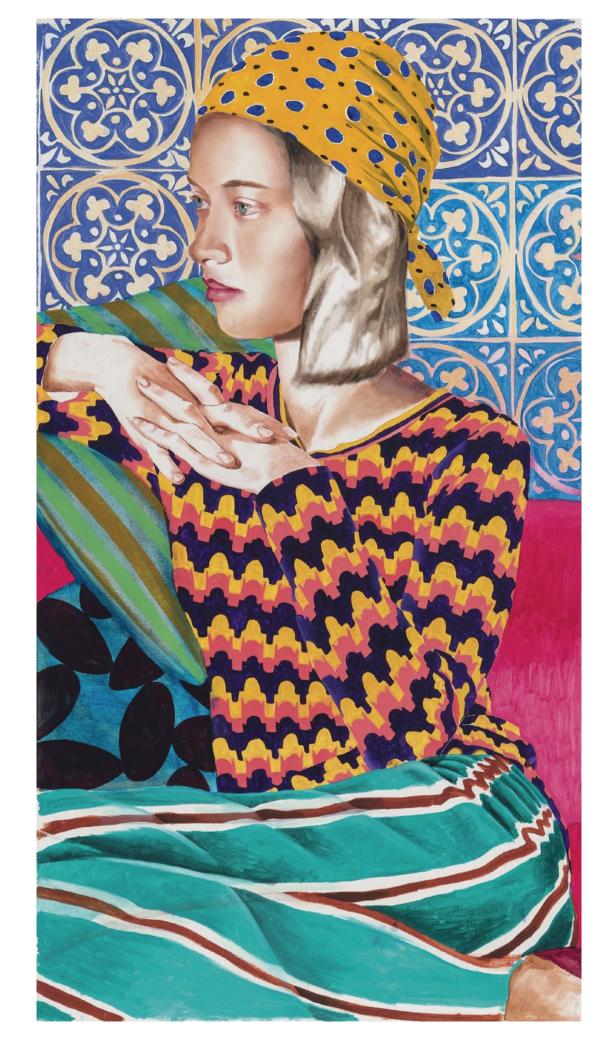
When do you feel the most creative? I paint every day, even if I'm not feeling inspired. I find that sometimes the best way to push through an artist block is to just keep doing something – just experimenting. Sometimes I have to ruin a painting or sand areas down to discover the solution.

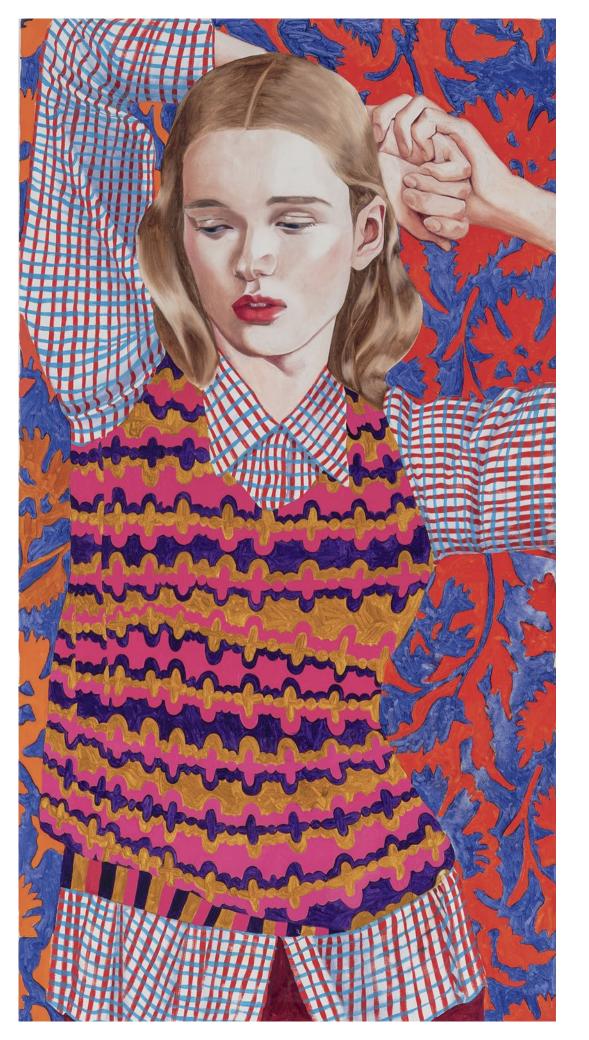
Did you always want to be an artist, or did you dream of being something totally different as a kid? I grew up in a creative environment and was always drawing, painting and sewing. As a kid I'd make toys and dolls and clothes for myself. Once I made a pair of shoes.

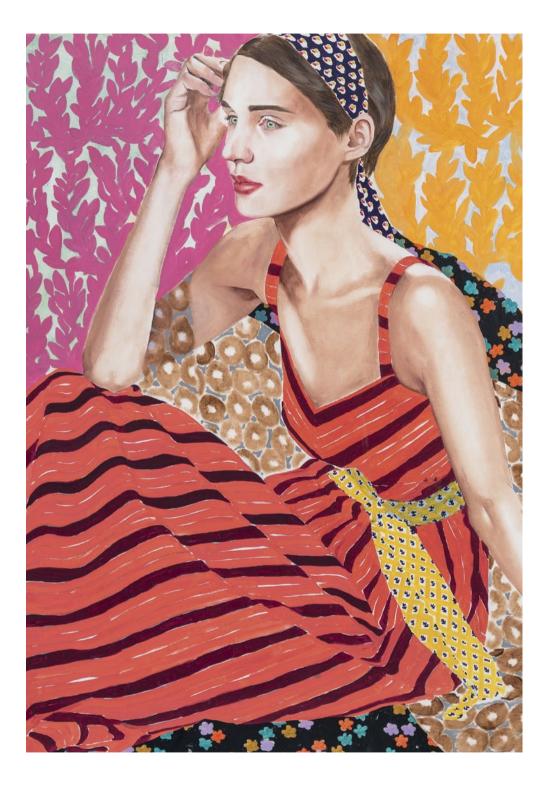
Where can we see more of your work? On Instagram at @jocelynhobbie or my website at jocelynhobbie.com. I'm represented by Fredericks & Freiser Gallery in New York City at fredericksfreisergallery.com and I have a show coming up in March 2024 at the Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, California. *



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