

Floral Interpretation
Chrissy Nickerson

June 2016- February 2017

Last spring, I was inspired by a large floral painting hung at the White Museum. The artist's use of oil, wet into wet, excited me. I was finishing up a body of Landscape work at the time and the idea of studying flowers "for fun" got me going.

A group of artists got together to paint flowers for a weekend. I created two paintings which are showing here. I call them *In the Beginning*, and *An Arrangement*. These two paintings have a beauty to them the others lack. They are calm and peaceful, as most classic floral paintings are; easy to look at.

In July, my husband informed me that he was filing for divorce. We had separated many times, this being our third. Time went by. I had no desire to paint. I saw no beauty, no inspiration. In September, I bought myself some lilies, a flower I had vowed never to paint again, after a commission went badly, many years ago. The flowers were gorgeous. I was listening to depressing, heart-breaking, country music. I started to paint. I was so angry. I painted *Going Through Hell* and a new body of work was started.

I found similarities between temporary bouquets of beauty and fleeting relationships. I saw death and decay in flowers that were mirrored in my marriage. I saw stress and pain in the wilting of the stems, leaves and blooms, akin to that happening in my family. I am grieving the loss of my family. The loss of the perfect arrangement. I am (getting a) Divorce(d).

When I was in college, I painted a tall dead tree standing alone in Point Pleasant Park, Halifax. I was taught that painting trees a lot would eventually lead to finding one's own language and style of representation. This Fall I painted *Up Rooted*. This is how I feel. This tree is a self-portrait of my current state in life: not dead, not done, but up rooted. I am in waiting, so to speak.

The paintings in this show are representational of my life in Separation and Divorce. It has been hard for me to talk publicly about my separation. I can be very emotional. I will not be ashamed, or shamed, by this life event-- I will share it. I do not like it, but I am working through it.

In The Beginning60 x 36" oil on wood panel, framed
An Arrangement14 x 36.5" oil on wood panel, framed
Going Through Hell.....48 x 42"
Hung Out To Dry.....24 x 48"
He loves me, He loves me not. 1 18 x 24"
He loves me, He loves me not. 2.....32 x 24"

Up Rooted 1..... 36 x 76"
Up Rooted 2, broken hearted.....30 x 84", framed
Still Fresh.....48 x 43"
Peace Lily.....30 x 50"
Predictable (noxious weed).....30 x 60"
PJM2017.....33 x53"
On The Side Lines (Do you think I'm pretty?).....56 x 20"
Day by Day 1.....48 x 48"
Day by Day 2.....36 X 76"