

## ARTIST BOBBIE BURGERS

Magical thinking.

Writer **Stephanie Matchung**



Becoming an artist was never a question for Bobbie Burgers. Over her 20-year career, Burgers has captured the beauty of flowers and natural landscapes in her expressive paintings. “It’s something that you just do. There was no other option for me, really,” she says. Burgers cites her impatience, fondness for solitude, lack of precision, and artistic upbringing with architect parents as factors in her path to art. “From a very young age, the continual talk about aesthetics, artistic pursuits, mediums, and projects greatly influenced me.”

Her latest exhibition, *The Lure of Magical Thinking*, is on display at the **Bau-Xi Gallery** in Vancouver until December 24, and is a creative departure for the self-taught artist. Aesthetically, the exhibition was inspired by the artistic fearlessness of her children. “Only children truly, authentically work in a completely abstract way, where the process of creating art is just about mark making and whatever colour they picked up,” she says. Her resulting body of work includes new elements of abstraction, multimedia collage pieces, and sculpture.

The walls of the Bau-Xi are lined with large canvases coated in thick, colourful acrylic. “I like painting big,” says Burgers. “I like to stand, I like to use my arms. A bigger canvas allows me to be extremely gestural and have things occur naturally that are not necessarily planned.” Textured bundles of wilting flowers are scaled up to an extreme, and evoke a feeling of sweet decay. “The work in this show really speaks to natural progression. I find roses and peonies, in particular, become more beautiful on their decline.” At the centre of the gallery, a series of bronze long-stemmed roses are a first for Burgers. “I really wanted to sculpt roses and arrange them like pick-up sticks, but the formation wasn’t structurally sound enough to do in ceramic. I wanted to get a balance of suspension and a gravity-defying quality. I like the contradiction—freezing the last moments before their descent with the permanence of bronze.”

Moving forward, Burgers is eager to continue experimenting with sculpture and other three-dimensional elements as she prepares to exhibit at Bau-Xi Gallery in Toronto, along with Campton Gallery in New York, and Galerie de Bellefeuille in Montreal. She also has a keen interest in creating work for a public arena. “The floodgates are open and the possibilities seem endless,” she says. “You work so long to get all the tools in your toolbox as an artist, and now that I’ve got them I feel like I can play infinitely.”