

Willem Kerseboom

Willem Kerseboom had no intention of living in Bali when he first visited six years ago. Bali, however, is an intriguing, multi dimensional world. He became seduced by the distinctive qualities of the island, it's culture, and the beauty of the local people. "I fully understand what the painters Bonnet, Hofker and Spies appreciated about Bali. Only here can these influences be absorbed," Kerseboom said.

"At first I didn't pay much attention to the landscape – it grew on me."

Born 1948 in the Netherlands, from an early age Kerseboom loved to sketch and doodle, experimenting with colour and form. During his teenage years he developed a passion for oil painting. He studied Dentistry from 1968 – 1975 at Utrecht University and then engaged in his own professional practice for the next seventeen years. In 1992 Kerseboom became an art dealer and the founder/director of the AFA art fair in Den Bosch until 2008. He studied art at AIS (Amsterdam Institut voor de Schilderkunst) 2000 – 2004, and then philosophy at UVA Amsterdam from 2004 – 20007.

The deeper insights into philosophy helped Kerseboom understand the metaphysics of art, the aesthetics and the processes of going beyond thought. "It's been very helpful to study the pioneers of the abstract movement in order to have a greater understanding of their exploratory processes into new ground."

Rarely, if ever did Kerseboom paint landscapes, he focussed on portraiture, and during the 70's was fascinated with abstract minimalism art. Later on at art collage he was influenced by the collective "After Nature" who had broke with the conventions of the time in Holland and reverted back to Van Gogh's style.

"I could only consider myself as a painter, or a non-painter," Kerseboom said. "Working as a dentist for 17 years allowed few opportunities, however while on holiday, when I felt free I did some strong expressive works."

"Despite considering myself a non-painter, my desire to paint was alive and well inside."

In 2014 Kerseboom's wish was to create a series of Bali paintings for an exhibition in Ubud. It would be the first serious, large body of work he had put together for many years. His initial approach to interpreting his subject, the tropical landscape, was in a very Dutch way. His secret however, was in the process of allowing himself to become free, and in tune with his natural surroundings.

"I never work on location, always in my studio in North Bali where I find the peace to be open to pure potential. My creative process begins with no real image in mind. I apply some colour, and then things seem to materialize in front of my eyes. A simple brush stroke is sufficed to create a suggestive form, and in the case of a palm leave this is easily achieved. I am addicted to the colours that I see in Bali. They are not the natural of course, yet colours that are exaggerated."

"My desire is to capture a certain beauty."

When we focus upon Bali's tropical landscape we may decipher a wealth of colour, texture and form. Yet Kerseboom has no interest in portraying this detailed reality. His imaginary, abstract snapshots are omnipotent with suggestion, and evocative of illusory worlds.

Bright yellows contrast with blues, while reds collide with verdant greens, purple confronts orange. Shimmering and vibrating, an orgy of colour performs before our eyes. Kerseboom's use of darker blues and greens, however add conflict, triggering emotional responses. His brushstrokes are mix of the subtle, along with the bold.

Tall palms and trunks stand upright and powerful. Delicate flowers, at times in soft colours may appear floating, somehow in auras of grace. The vegetation, often backlit by flaming red and yellow sunsets, may be depicted in mere dots, dabs and strokes. His compositions can be oceans of movement, or a fusion of polarities, in which order succumbs to the chaos.

Kerseboom's daring Bali landscapes seem to melt and dance, bathed in delicious light. The aesthetic experience can be both exciting and dramatic, or soothing and calm, while wonderful, powerful, healing colours saturate our subconscious mind. This body of work is a milestone; being some of the best he has ever produced.

"I feel a great sense of freedom since I have simplified my life."

While engaged in his creative process a mix of elements come into play, including confidence, detachment and trust. Yet Kerseboom admits that there is also some tension inside. "It's important that I have 50 years experience working in this medium. Oil is unforgiving."

"It's essential my intuition be channelled in the one fluid and spontaneous flow."

The Bali landscape is an infinite source of inspiration. Labelled as "like no other", countless foreign painters have ventured to the island in search of the unique qualities of light, and potent creative experiences.

Following in a long line of Dutch painters who have graced Bali from the 1930's onward, (Bonnet, Hofker, and Smit to name a few), decades later comes Willem Kerseboom, the "non painter" with a gift for capturing Bali's vibrant landscape.

"I would like to be appreciated as a painter of maturity and skill. I believe this is revealed in my work."

"Bali Landscapes" showcases the talent of Willem Kerseboom at the TiTian Art Space, Ubud open 28 October continuing through until 28 December 2016.





