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AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR



*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*

ANDREA KONCH



WENDY HIGGINS

Glowing simplicity

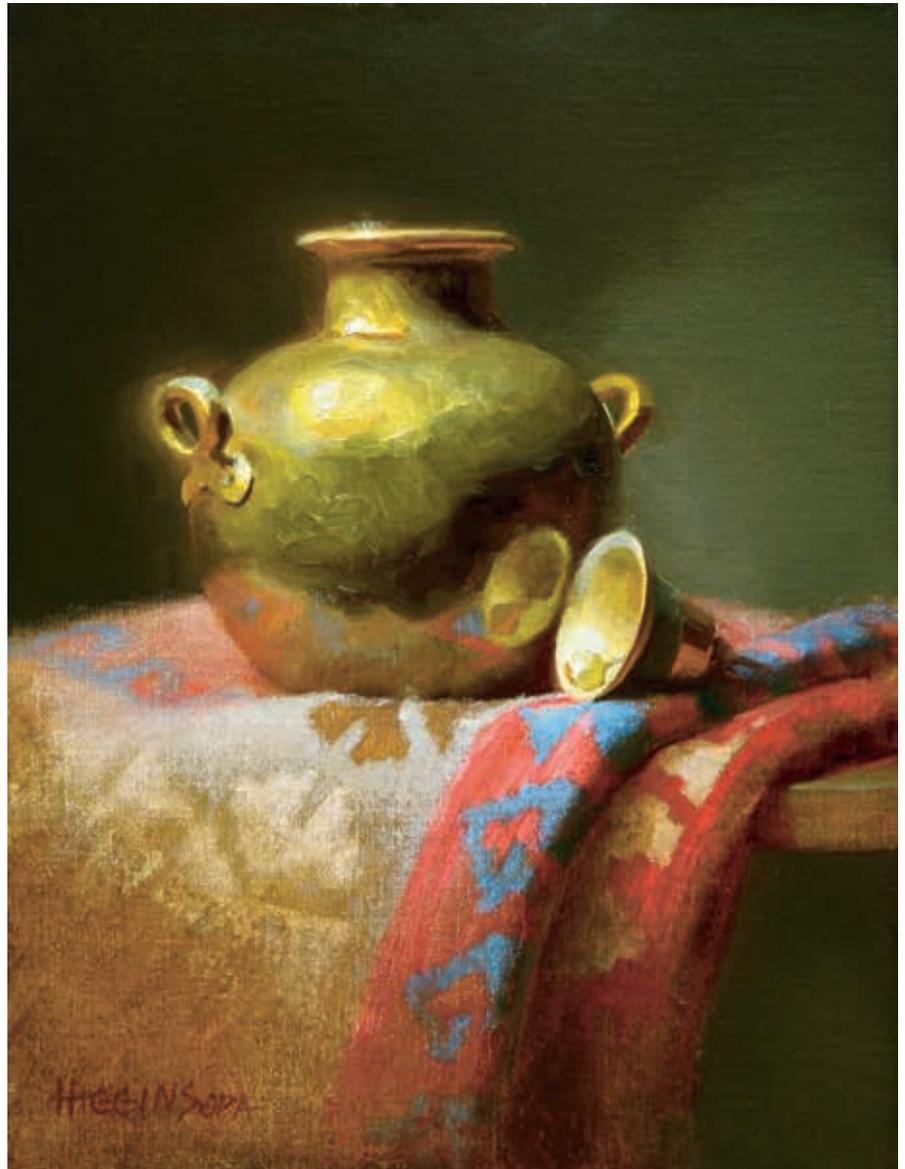
Wendy Higgins has a very special relationship with flowers. The Santa Fe, New Mexico, painter grew up with many generations of naturalist gardeners, as her grandparents were experts in rose gardens, and her father gardened at their Virginia home. Higgins spent about 20 years professionally gardening in one form or another, including large-scale agriculture production of vegetables. Today, she captures flowers, the subject she affectionately calls her “nemesis”—the most challenging, alluring, difficult object for her to paint—in her still life works. Her new exhibition of nearly 20 paintings at Santa Fe’s Greenberg Fine Art, called *Glowing Simplicity*, features myriad blossom still lifes that perfectly reflect the title.

“Painting flowers is always a challenge for me because they’re a subject matter that, to say they are dear to my heart, is cutting it short,” says Higgins, a professional painter for about the past 15 years. “I keep painting flowers, yet I seldom feel I have successfully represented the nature, beauty and subtlety of the flower, so I’m constantly going back to them.”

Continuing to foster her own garden complete with beehives and vegetables, she aims to feature flowers she grows in her works as much as her high desert surroundings allow. While she remains critical of her depiction of them in her works, she says although her paintings are not perfect copies of the flowers, they “say” flower: delicate, ethereal, lovely.

Higgins bathes the natural beauties in gentle light, juxtaposing cool and warm tones using rays from her studio window and candlelight radiance. Higgins says she paints light, not objects, and is attracted to capturing a captivating luminescence in her work. It’s a quality that keeps visitors to the gallery, which has represented Higgins for the past four years, enthralled by her work.

“Wendy’s work captures the mysterious allure of familiar objects with a subtlety



that begs viewers to look longer,” says Greenberg Fine Art director Bella Gaspich. “I watch people every day entranced by the beauty of the most sumptuous arrangements of velvet-soft petals or frosted grapes. The carefully balanced colors and delicately draped

light make Wendy’s work absolutely timeless.”

While flowers dominate Higgins’ works and allow her to explore the feminine aspect of nature, she also seeks out unique treasures at yard and estate sales and flea markets to balance her androgynous



2



4



3

1
The Ring of Brass,
oil on linen on
board, 16 x 12"

2
Tangerine Glow, oil
on board, 20 x 16"

3
The Glad Song, oil
on linen on board,
30 x 20"

4
The Scent of Rose,
oil on board,
11 x 14"

affinities. Her oil on board *Tangerine Glow* features a pink handblown glass vase she invested in at a market, while her oil on linen *The Ring of Brass* includes a jug and bell that offered plenty of opportunity to play with light and texture.

No matter what she's painting, it's clear to Higgin's collectors—who say they admire the beauty, cleanness and elegance of her compositions—that she injects her essence into her works.

"Every time I walk into a room with a Wendy Higgins painting, I still am stunned by its beauty," says her collector Steven Winn. "I literally stop breathing in complete awe of the beauty she creates. And it doesn't stop over time. They have a celestial beauty that simply continues to open up our hearts to more gratitude and beauty. It's as if she pours her soul into these paintings."

Higgins says her goal is to bring viewers to a simple, silent place when they see her work, to cause them to pause long enough that there is the possibility of something profound opening up deep within them.

"We as painters can tell a story or fill someone's head with more ideas or stimulation, or we can ask them to pause, and in that pausing, feel something deeper," Higgins says. "In that quiet, maybe some peace or joy or self-understanding comes up." ●