

# beth kennedy

## *Framed By Flowers*

June 22 – July 6 2024

“Understanding... that life - and art - can be framed by flowers” Georgina Reid (Cressida Campbell catalogue essay)



The olive greens, greys, muted pinks and big blue skies of Scotland have weaved their way through these paintings and flowed across the canvas. To see such vast beauty was hugely inspiring. Wending our way through York, little English villages like Hathersage and then onto the Cotswolds and Cornwall was pure delight and has fuelled my painting since returning from our trip. That feeling like you're on the pages of a storybook has reignited my love of fairy tales and beautiful book illustrations like those by Arthur Rackham. Seeing things through the eyes of my daughters (twelve and nine at the time) and enjoying their absorption in the world of Harry Potter as we travelled was also a lovely component of this time.

“The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords.”

JRR Tolkien

With these paintings I continue my obsession with the works of Edouard Vuillard - especially 'Vaquez Decoration: Library and Desk, and The Salon (The Reader)' 1896. These works epitomise my love of the flattening of the picture plane and the incorporation of pattern and colour to create densely intricate and beautiful artworks. The works of Cressida Campbell also resonate as they are not only incredibly beautiful to look at but are very process driven. Rick Rubin in his book 'The Creative Act' talks about “finding comfort in the process of making” which rings true for me.

To seek beauty is not to be ignorant of the pain in the world but to actively seek to concentrate hope, “...That simplification and exaggeration can reveal valuable insights that are lost or watered down in ordinary experience...Strategic exaggerations of what is good can perform the critical function of distilling and concentrating the hope we need to chart a path through the difficulties of life” (Alain de Botton, 'Art As Therapy', pg 22.)

BETH KENNEDY