



BRING ME SUNSHINE
VANESSA COOPER



IF YOU don't read this and instead jump straight to the paintings, that is understandable. This is a special exhibition. Bring Me Sunshine really says it all; each of these lovingly composed pictures lights up a room. Whether it's flowers in bloom or cheeky dogs scoffing chocolates on a bed, there is charm and happiness throughout the show.

"The flowers are pure joy," explains Vanessa. "They are about the natural world and connecting to nature. Even on a dark day I can look outside and see beautiful flowers and they give me hope and joy." The title, *Garden Angel*, for example, speaks of more than just a vase of flowers.

The animal pictures, on the other hand, are often long in the making. An idea, a story, or a title comes to mind but there can then follow a period of contemplation and research. Vanessa's sketchbook is full of notes and loose drawings. These are often allegories for family situations, such as sibling rivalry in *Cat Walk* or early motherhood in the cover image *Going For a Dip*.

Vanessa has deep affinity for her animal subjects. "Dogs mirror their owners," she says. "They pick up on us, it's so fascinating. But while a dog would die for you, I'm not sure a cat would! Cats are sometimes the baddies in my paintings - they're so expressive and nonchalant. Although I should say I have a much-loved cat, Stanley, who appears in the paintings."

Then there's her Jack Russell, the *enfant terrible* of the family who features in *Rosemary's Baby* (a play on the title of the 1968 Mia Farrow supernatural thriller). "That's Moses, my naughty little dog, he's bitten the electrician, the postman, he's a terror."

While the showstopper, *Flea Circus*, is an idea which she mulled over for years and features a chaotic menagerie under the big top while a scratching crowd look on. "It is based on a visit to a live animal circus in Spain, says Vanessa, "It horrified me. The animals looked so sad and bored. This is their revenge on the human audience."

It's funny and detailed. The animals and crowd have quirky individual expressions which bring to mind the primitive style and wit of Fred Yates or, another Plymouth artist, Ben Hartley. Vanessa also employs a bold, saturated palette as they did and an uncomplicated, direct approach. It's refreshing and uplifting. We hope you enjoy the paintings as much as we do.

Jolyon White



BRING ME SUNSHINE

VANESSA COOPER

12-26 OCTOBER 2019

whitespaceart.com

1 (cover)
Going For a Dip
oil on board
32 x 41 cms

2 (left)
Bring Me Sunshine
oil on board
61 x 42 cms



3

Food Chain
oil on board
50 x 50cms



4

You Shall Have a Fishy
oil on board
42 x 61 cms



5
Munchies Cafe
oil on board
40 x 40cms



6
Cat's Cradle
oil on board
40 x 40cms



7
Strawberry Thieves
oil on board
30 x 30cms



8
Jellied Eels
oil on board
32 x 35cms



9

Pots of Joy
oil on board
60 x 60cms



10

Let It Grow
oil on board
41 x 61 cms



11

Rosemary's Baby
oil on board
30 x 30cms

12

Flea Circus
oil on board
46 x 82cms







13

Everything's Rosie

oil on board

40 x 43cms



14

Garden Angel
oil on board
42 x 60cms



15
Jackdaw Cake
oil on board
40 x 40cms



16
Caught in the Act
oil on board
38 x 42cms



17

Feeding the Five Thousand

oil on board

43 x 50cms

18
A Day to Remember
oil on board
60 x 50cms





19

September Altar
oil on board
50 x 60cms



20 (above)
Magic Carpet Journey
oil on board
32 x 45cms

21 (right)
Cat Walk
oil on board
32 x 45cms



Vanessa Cooper has built a reputation as a bold, imaginative artist with a deep love of colour, since first exhibiting her paintings in her teens in the late eighties. This is her ninth solo show. She has exhibited in many group exhibitions and at leading art fairs.

Vanessa happily accepts commissions. Please contact the gallery to discuss a special painting of your favourite pet or pets.



22 *Nose to Tail Eating* oil on board 61 x 122cms

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