

GLORIA LEE

Every great artist has a story. Gloria Lee's story is similar to many children of the 1940s born to immigrant parents. Her mother was from Holland, Netherlands and her father was from Shanghai, China. They met at Cornell University in upstate New York where they fell in love. This union of two cultures was not celebrated and they struggled to find a minister to marry them. Eventually they were wed and went on to start a family. Gloria, the middle child was born in 1946. Soon after the Lee family moved to the west coast in hope to find a more liberal acceptance of interracial families.



Having grown up in San Francisco in the 1960s, Gloria Lee experienced the pivotal beginnings of Modern Art. This artistic movement—almost a backlash of the American Impressionist movement—started in the Bay Area with artists like Wayne Thiebaud and Richard Diebenkorn. For Lee, it was only natural to begin painting in a modern style. Gloria, always the artist, experimented with many mediums to include painting, sculpture, leather works, fashion design and modern dance which she explored throughout the decades. After 40 years of artistic exploration, Lee developed a working knowledge of color application and balance.

Gloria's passionate roots combine her love for modern art with a more traditional style. The execution of each composition begins by throwing paint, a style inspired by artist Jackson Pollock. After the background dries the flowers are carefully applied with pallet knife creating a beautiful marriage of abstract meets classical. “How I paint is not nearly as important as how the viewer feels about what they see. If they are not uplifted or inspired, the art is worthless in my opinion”.



Her works are as unique as herself—a blending of east meets west. As an artist she embraces her heritage as flowers are an important part of both her Dutch and Chinese lineage. Holland has a particularly long flower painting tradition. From realistic art bouquets created in the 19th century to the colorful untamed sunflowers by Van Gogh, some of the most famous and most loved flower paintings come from the “land of tulips”. Painting flowers has also had a long and rich tradition in China, having evolved out of the classic bird-and-flower style to become its own distinct genre of painting.

In Lee's paintings her flowers are like ambassadors of beauty, greeting viewers with their myriad forms and colors. Her art moves the hearts of people everywhere.