

# VICTORIA CANTONS

## *NOTHING IS ABSOLUTE*

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Flowers Gallery is delighted to announce a solo exhibition by London-based artist Victoria Cantons, her second exhibition with the gallery.

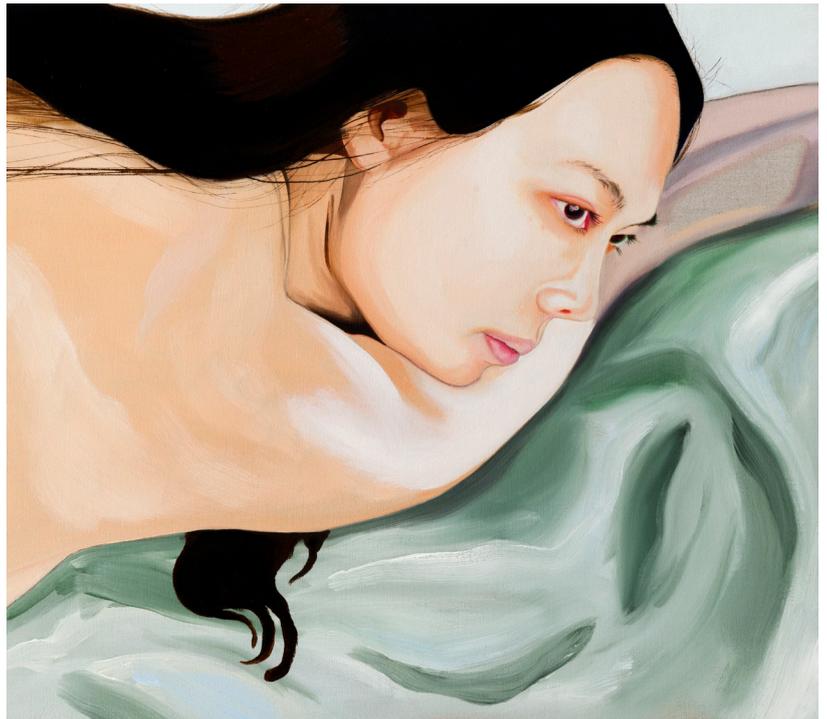
The exhibition title refers to a shifting relationship between the self and the perception of the surrounding world, which Cantons describes as a constant revisioning and adjustment of the concepts of truth and understanding. As Cantons says, "Nothing is fixed. Everything is in flux, and anything can change it."

In these recent works, ideas of transience are explored in figurative and floral paintings, in which the shimmering saturation of colour and fluid brushwork appear to allude to moments of ripening at the turning point of decay. Many of the floral works were painted on residency in Italy during the summer of 2022, resulting in an abundance of light emanating from the paintings, which became repeated in the form of memory in later works on her return to London.

The recurring floral motifs reflect both a personal symbolism, and a contemporizing of the art historical genre of 17th century Vanitas painting. Frequently featuring roses, often associated with romance, Cantons' paintings simultaneously reflect earthly sensuousness and a record of time passing, embodying the entangled notion of what she describes as "everything and nothing." Cantons says, "It is only in something or someone passing, that we understand its value and temporariness. And it feels bittersweet. Because our nature is 'to resist'. The paintings are a resistance to the idea that nothing is absolute."

The titles of many of the paintings relay a sense of nostalgic desire, such as *A Moment Perpetually of the Past* and the *Present and When it Becomes a Memory... May I Consume it With Pleasure*. This theme continues in figurative paintings such as *We Need to Watch it Over and Over for the Light That is Here*, which Cantons describes as being concerned with "being present in the moment"; while *Subjective Ideas During Wartime* considers how intimate human connections may still flourish during the destruction of conflict in all its forms.

Much of Cantons' work is rooted in language, finding expression through evocative titles, or incorporated as text in the works themselves. The painting *Untitled (An Urge to Hide the Minute Beneath the Light)* introduces

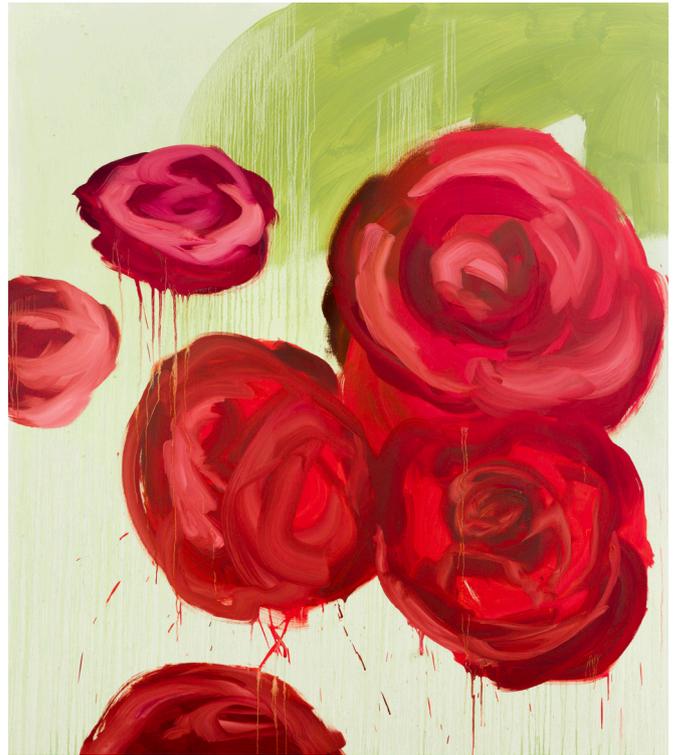


*We Need to Watch it Over and Over for the Light That is Here, 2022,*  
oil on linen, 45 x 50 cm

word-play, which she describes as celebrating the "openness of language," where the word 'minute' invites alternate readings relating to a preservation of the precious and fleeting.

The self-portrait *Good fortune or An October Flush*, a continuation from the *Transgender Woman* series (2019-present), captures the first stages of recovery from facial surgery. The artist here reflects on the "good fortune" of transformative surgery, while the blooming scars and bruises reflect a visceral awareness of the fragility of mortality. Reflecting on the nature of trust required in the process, Cantons says: "It's about seizing the moment; a leap of faith."

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Left to right: *Good Fortune or an October flush*, 2022, oil on linen 170 x 150 cm; *How the dizziness slips away like a wisp of a cloud on the wind*, 2022, oil on linen, 160 x 140 cm

## ABOUT VICTORIA CANTONS

Victoria Cantons (b.1969, British), lives and works in London. She studied Fine Art Painting at Wimbledon College of Arts, UAL; followed by the Painters Studio Programme, Turps Art School, London; and graduated with an MFA in Painting from Slade School of Fine Art, UCL, in 2021. She is a recipient of the Felix Slade Scholarship, Slade School of Fine Art, UCL, and was shortlisted for the Chadwell Award in 2021. Recent group exhibitions include *Tomorrow: London*, White Cube, (online); *Summer Exhibition*, Royal Academy, London, *PAPA RAGAZZE*, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles, *Like there is hope and I can dream of another world*, Hospital Rooms, London and (*It's My Party*) *I Can Cry If I Want To*, Guts Gallery, London. Cantons curated the Slade Rooms as part of *LONDON GRADS NOW 2020* and *2021*, Saatchi Gallery, London. Cantons first exhibited at Flowers as part of the 24th Edition of *Artist of the Day* in 2018, and had her first solo exhibition with the gallery, *People Trust People Who Look Like Them*, in 2022.

Exhibition Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11am - 6pm

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