

明淨的畫中世界  
 用古老的技法繪製出溫暖寧靜的世界  
 在 Colin Fraser 的畫作中  
 明媚的陽光、柔和的清風是那樣細膩真切  
 彷彿照耀和吹拂過了心靈



**Above:** Contemporary egg tempera painter Colin Fraser. His works have been exhibited internationally in London, New York, and Glasgow. In Toronto, he is represented by the Mira Goddard Gallery. **Opposite:** Fraser's painting *Westerly*, presented at the 2022 Exhibition at Catto Gallery in London, England. 上圖：當代蛋彩畫家 Colin Fraser。他在世界各地如倫敦、紐約、蘇格蘭格拉斯哥都舉辦過畫展。他的作品可以在多倫多 Mira Goddard 畫廊找到。對頁：Colin 2022 年在倫敦 Catto 畫廊展出的畫作《西風》。

## The Illuminating Art of Egg Tempera

How Scottish painter Colin Fraser revived this ancient art

English text by J.H. White  
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 Paintings by Colin Fraser



「藝術的意義不在於有形的東西，  
而是超越於此，在情感和精  
神層面去打動人心。」

——Colin Fraser

在西方，蛋彩畫是一種古老的繪畫技法，盛行於十四至十六世紀的文藝復興時期。畫家需用蛋黃或蛋清來調和顏料，然後繪製在表面敷有石膏的畫板上。到十六世紀之後，蛋彩畫逐漸被油畫取代，如今由波提切利、喬托、達芬奇、提香等當年的藝術大師繪製的蛋彩畫，往往被視為最珍貴的藝術品，珍藏在全球最著名的博物館中。

大約四十年前，一位蘇格蘭教師移居到了瑞典，也許是那不同於英倫的原始蒼涼的北歐風光激發了這位教師潛藏已久的想當畫家的心願，他選擇辭去工作，開始專心進行蛋彩繪畫創作。如今他的名字Colin Fraser已經廣為人知，尤其是他繪製的蛋彩靜物和風景作品，細膩清透，有著一股獨特的當代繪畫少有的令人內心安寧下來的力量。

### 永恆的瞬間

Colin如今依然記得自己第一次被一幅畫作的美所打動的時刻。那次他前往荷蘭阿姆斯特丹的國家博物館參觀，在一面高度差不多有25米的牆壁上，只掛著一幅一呎半見方的小畫，那是維米爾的《擠奶女工》。「它似乎只能單獨被掛在那裏，因為任何其它作品和它放在一起，都會變得像不存在一樣，這太不可思議了。」Colin介紹說，其實維米爾同時代的畫家大多數都是類似的風格和技法，但維米爾就是做到了讓自己的作品從中脫穎而出。

「維米爾的畫在表達真正的優雅與美上達到了一個完全不同的層面，他使用顏料的方式也與其他人完全不同。當時看到那幅畫證實了許多我已經在思考的問題。」儘管當代藝術家們中仍然有一些掌握著高超繪畫技巧，並願意準確塑造景物的寫

實派，但他們的作品卻未必擁有文藝復興時期作品那種觸動人心的深度和力量。「許多寫實繪畫，你從中看到的只是技法，像是畫家在炫耀說：『你看我畫的毫無破綻吧！簡直跟照片一樣。』但問題在於那其中沒有生命和靈魂，他們只是關注於技法，把東西畫出來，卻是死氣沉沉，毫無內涵的表達。」

相比之下，Colin的畫非常不同，他的畫面不僅準確表現出了某個特定瞬間裏那些景物的色澤、質感、狀態等細節，更令人感覺那似乎是過往與未來無數時間點的疊加，直至永恆。以他的畫作《西風》（Westerly）為例，風吹起椅子上的襯衫，畫面似乎是靜止的，但當你望著畫中那件被風吹起的襯衫，卻感覺它在飄動著，隨之而來的還有陽光照射在皮膚上的溫暖，風拂過髮梢時的溫柔，仿佛正在一個美好的週末開心地野餐，或是悠閒地漫步於午後的花園中。那些過往經歷的美好愜意，對未來的希冀期盼都會湧上心頭，再化作一抹會心的微笑。

「藝術的意義不在於有形的東西，而是超越於此，在情感和精  
神層面去打動人心。」雖然蛋彩是一種古老的、正在逐漸被遺忘、又難以掌握的繪畫技巧，但Colin發現這種被大多數當代畫家摒棄的技法恰好是最適合他的，也是表達他內心藝術追求的最好媒介。這種用蛋液調配出的半透明顏料，需要用細小的筆觸點點重疊、交織暈染、繁複繪製，這給予了創作者用更沉浸、更深入的方式去表達畫作深層意義和美感的機會，去用心感受所描繪對象的美，它們的故事，從而將那些情感和美好以更富有層次和深度的方式表現出來。

Colin為我們講述了一個故事，曾經有一個早晨，他在畫展上遇到了一對來自瑞典的夫妻，「他們就那麼站在我繪製的



Opposite: *The Milkmaid* by Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer impressed Fraser with its beauty when he first saw it in Amsterdam. Above: Fraser's painting *Imprint*, 2012, egg tempera. 上圖：Colin 2012年蛋彩畫作《印記》。對頁：荷蘭畫家維米爾的名作《擠奶女工》。



Top: Fraser's painting *Netherlands*, 2021, egg tempera. Bottom: His painting *Buccaneer*, 2015, egg tempera.  
 上圖：Colin 2021年蛋彩畫作《荷蘭》。下圖：2015年畫作《牡丹》。

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"Critics and curators want to educate people, but art is not about educating people, it's about touching them at an emotional level."

—Colin Fraser

Acclaimed Scottish egg tempera painter Colin Fraser moved to his Swedish home by the sea many years ago, but it was only recently that he decided to paint it.

"However beautiful something is; it has to mean something to me," Fraser says.

When looking at the finished painting, he realized that he had represented himself in the landscape—his journey of moving to Sweden, getting married, and making his home there.

"Those feelings were in that landscape, and it clearly came across to people," Fraser says.

One morning, a local couple noticed his painting at the art gallery where it was being exhibited.

"They were standing in front of the landscape, both in tears. They just told me what this place had meant to them," Fraser says. The couple then bought the painting.

### An endless moment

Fraser fondly remembers the first time he was struck by the beauty of a painting. He was at the National Museum in Amsterdam and saw Vermeer's work *The Milkmaid*.

"It hung on a wall more or less on its own for the simple reason that you couldn't hang anything else anywhere near it. It blew everything else away. It was just incredible," Fraser says.

Fraser says that Vermeer's contemporaries, who painted in a similar style and genre, were churning out technical works, focusing on surface beauty and accuracy.

"Vermeer's painting took it to a completely different level of expression, grace, and beauty by using paint differently," he says.

These days, Fraser feels that contemporary trends are steering people down a limited road of artistic expression.

On the one hand, there are those who believe that art should provoke a jarring intellectual response in people. "Critics and curators want to educate people, but art is not about educating people," he says. "It's about touching them at an emotional level."

On the other hand are artists who produce photorealistic paintings that pursue superficial accuracy but lack meaning. "The problem is that there's no life in it. They're so concerned with the process that the painting is stone-dead. There's no expression," Fraser says.

His paintings, however, don't try to be photographic snapshots of a fleeting moment. Instead, they lock the viewer in a moment that never ends.

It's easy to see this in Fraser's painting, *Westerly*. The wind gives life to the shirt blowing on the chair; you can feel the sun's warmth and feel the breeze on your skin. A hint of loneliness or longing freezes you and keeps you where you are. The experience only stops when you look away.

"The whole point of art is that it's not concrete. It touches people in one way or another on an emotional level," Fraser says.

### A tough egg to crack

In the early 80s, Fraser worked extensively in oils and watercolour and had showings at the Royal Watercolour Society in London and the Royal Academy summer exhibition. But he found watercolour to be very limited in its expression. After three washes—or layers of paint—the colours lost their freshness.

"I just needed something that gave me more depth," Fraser says.

He then read that the most difficult technique to work in was egg tempera, which dated back to ancient Egypt. Without any

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—Colin Fraser

contemporary literature on the medium, Fraser dove in and taught himself. Since no one used the technique anymore, he couldn’t go to a store and buy the materials. He had to make them all himself.

For egg tempera, the artist paints on gesso ground, a mixture of chalk, white pigment, and rabbit-skin glue cooked to specific temperatures. The gesso is applied in multiple layers to the ground—the surface the artist paints on—which is then sanded down to a very smooth surface.

“It’s a very labourious technique,” Fraser says.

The binding, or what glues the paint pigment to the surface, is egg yolk, a delicate organic, semi-transparent substance. Due to its see-through nature, artists can’t hide their mistakes. This is different from oil painting, where artists can keep painting over something until they get their desired result. However, the egg yolk’s translucence gives it a spark of life, unlike any other medium.

“Rays of light hit the surface of the painting, penetrate it, and bounce back off the gesso ground. That egg gives you a very brilliant surface to work on, but it also brings a glass-like smooth quality to the surface as well,” Fraser says.

“The payback is this incredible luminosity. You can’t compare it to a watercolour or an oil painting. It’s like looking at a picture

on a computer screen that’s lit from behind.”

The second major difficulty of this technique is how quickly the egg tempera paint dries. It took Fraser ten years to master its basics.

But his breakthrough with egg tempera was as much philosophical as it was technical. With oil, artists can work with wet paint, move it around the canvas, or layer over anything they don’t like. With egg tempera, they need to have a clear idea of what they’ll do since the tempera dries fast, and they can’t hide anything.

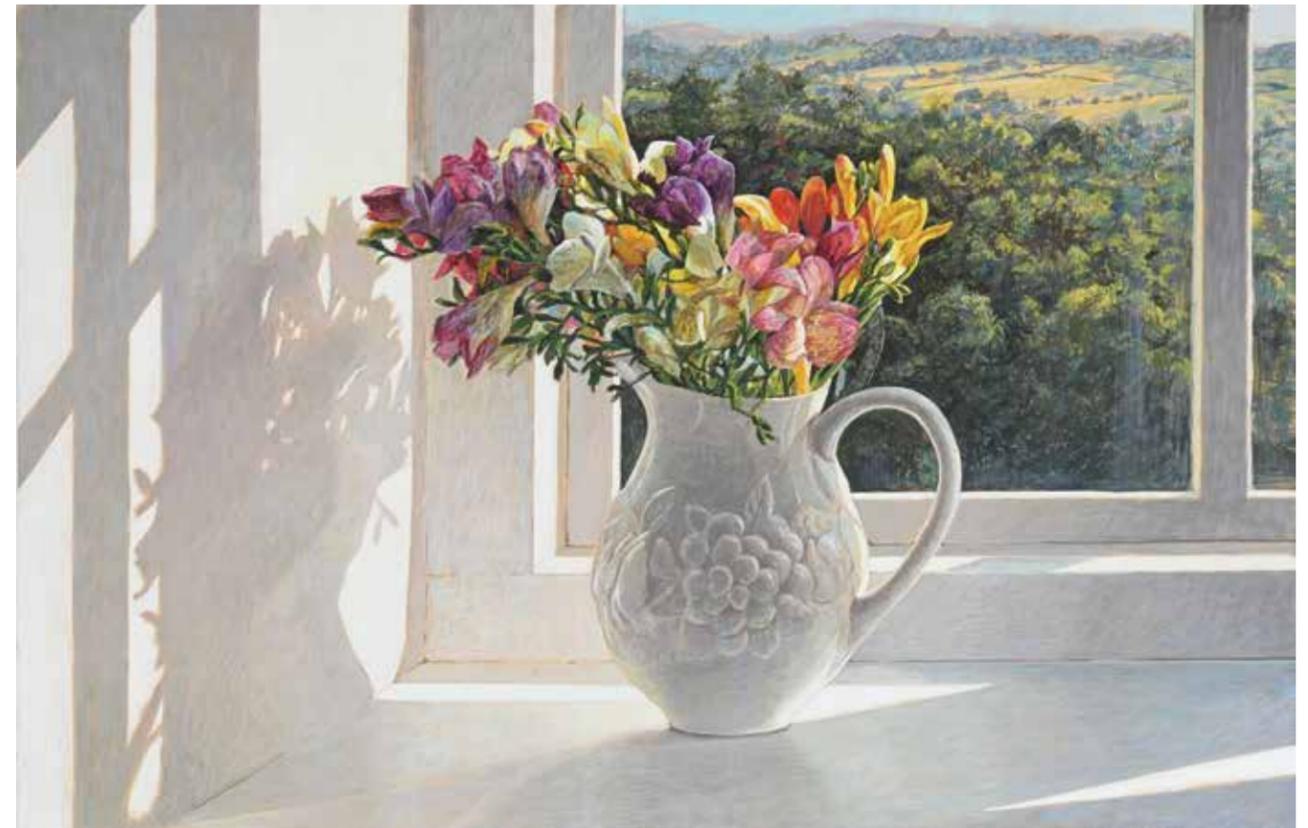
“That creates a paradox of which way to go,” Fraser says.

The approach that Fraser has adopted is almost sage-like. He stays present during the creation process and lets the painting take on a life of its own. By giving up control, he can control it, or at least become a channel for a piece of art that’s full of spirit and meaning.

“True beauty isn’t perfect. It has to have imperfections. When you’re making a painting, it has to be alive first and foremost,” Fraser says.

“I realized that the only way that I was going to be able to do something meaningful with tempera was to find acceptance of who I am and what I paint instead of trying to change.”

Perhaps that’s why viewers are so touched by his paintings.



Fraser's painting *Reverie*, 2021, egg tempera on board. Colin 2021年蛋彩畫作《遐思》。

那幅我瑞典老宅的風景畫前，然後流下了眼淚。他們告訴我，畫中的那個地方對他們來說有著怎樣的意義，然後就買下了它。如果只是用了一些取巧的技法，我認為是無法令那對夫婦如此感動的，他們一定是從其中找到了屬於他們的記憶。」

### 破解蛋彩

Colin從上世紀八十年代開始進行油畫和水彩畫的創作，曾在倫敦皇家水彩畫協會和皇家學院夏季展上展出過作品。但他逐漸發現在繪製水彩畫時，如果經過多次的水洗和罩染，顏色會變得灰暗。「我需要一些能創造更多深度的東西。」Colin開始去查閱一些相關資料，發現文藝復興時期盛行的蛋彩畫是最難的繪畫技法之一，其歷史甚至可以追溯到古埃及。但當代已經沒有關於蛋彩畫的系統教程，甚至美術用品商店裏都買不到相關的材料，Colin只能自己去摸索。

他甚至從畫板開始鑽研，當年的蛋彩畫多繪製在塗了石膏的表面上。但僅用石膏粉，表面的性質並不够穩定，石膏吸水的特性也不適合使用水溶性的蛋彩顏料。Colin幾經試驗，終於找到了一種將白堊、白色顏料和兔皮膠放在特定溫度下混合，再塗抹在畫板表面，用砂紙打磨光滑的方法，「這個過程

也很費時費力。」但是到這一步，對蛋彩畫的創作來說，才只是開始，接下來就需要開始準備顏料了。

蛋彩畫，顧名思義，需要用蛋清、蛋黃來調和顏料，一般多用蛋黃，因為畫完之後會更快地乾燥。調好的顏料會呈半透明狀，正是這種透明度為蛋彩畫帶來了獨特的質感，「光線照射到蛋彩畫的表面，會穿透它，再被石膏反射回來。這種透亮的感覺與水彩畫和油畫的感覺完全不同，感覺就像是在一個發亮的電腦屏幕上畫畫一樣。」

正因為蛋彩畫的顏料如此清透，所以無法像油畫顏料那樣，可以用油溶解去除，或者用新一層顏料將之前畫下的東西覆蓋掉，那畫家畫下的每一筆都變得至關重要，不能有任何錯誤。好在Colin找到了一套應對這些困難的方法。「我不可能為了不出錯，就把之前要畫的每一筆都提前計劃好，那樣繪畫就變成了一座監獄，把人鎖了起來。」Colin解釋說：「真正的美不是完美的，它會有缺陷。」但往往正是這種缺陷讓一幅作品有了生命。「生活不是從程式中來的，而是存在於那些有著特別意義的事物中。而對我來說，用蛋彩畫將這些事物描繪下來的唯一方法，就是學著去接受我自己和我的作品，而不是總是嘗試著去改變它們。」