
BARRY NOVIS : ARTIST

Paintings by British/Australian artist BARRY NOVIS hang in the homes and offices of celebrity and corporate collectors all over the world.

Following a former lifetime in marketing and corporate finance where he channelled his creative energy into innovative business projects, a midlife crisis in the late 1990s led Barry to a focused sculpture course at Bath College in the UK. After sculpting only his second works, he was commissioned to create an edition of 12 bronzes commemorating the benefit year of English Rugby star Victor Ubogu.

Just 18 months later, Novis shifted his attention to the easel, developing the style which would eventually lead him to the auction houses of London and deliver his art to collectors such as Coldplay, Joanna Lumley, Phil Collins' Hit & Run Music, HMV Music and the National Trust, and also see his art sell in the secondary market at Christie's and Bonhams.

Barry Novis hit his stride in the art world with bold in-your-face portraits of music and sporting legends. His first-ever rock legends painting, George Harrison, fetched £8,000 GBP at a music industry auction in London. One of his John Lennon portraits sold at auction to the band Coldplay for £23,000 GBP. Later, the National Trust commissioned Novis to paint David Beckham as a modern-day god for "The Pantheon" at their heritage estate Stourhead in Wiltshire. Jimena Page commissioned Novis to paint her then-husband, Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, to raise funds for their charity supporting Brazil's street children. UK business tycoon David Cowham commissioned a series of 12 Novis paintings entitled "It's Great Britain" for his London restaurant, The Clarendon. Cowham became Barry's most prolific collector, at one time owning more than 50 Novis paintings and funding the creation of a Novis-illustrated version of Kahlil Gibran's classic, *The Prophet*.

Born in Brighton, England, in February 1944, Barry Novis grew up in less-than-comfortable circumstances with which he now credits his determination and identification with the subjects of his "legends" portraits, many of whom succeeded brilliantly despite economically deprived childhoods.

Living in 'swinging' London during the 1960s and '70s, the heyday of modern pop culture, imprinted upon Novis a passion for music, sport and art - for colour, vibrancy and individualistic expression. From the start, Novis paintings were always larger-than-life, featuring bold strokes or multiple dots in acrylic or oil on canvas. These days, he includes abstract in his repertoire with a salute to masters such as Pollock and Richter, as well as his own subliminal style inspired by dreams, meditations and travel recollections.

Novis moved between the UK and Australia from 1974, obtained Australian citizenship in 1992, and relocated permanently in 2006. Almost a decade later he interrupted his art career to travel the country and explore his adopted land. During that time, whilst on the road, he painted spasmodically on commission, an experience he recalls with wry amusement and huge gratitude to the generous strangers who loaned him their sheds, spare rooms, club houses and studios with nary a question, one even organising packing and delivery of a finished piece to its new home in the UK while he travelled on.

Several years ago, Novis settled near Noosa on Australia's Sunshine Coast. Settling has afforded him the time, space and opportunity to paint again, reworking previously explored concepts and investigating new themes and techniques.

One of Novis's favourite quotes is borrowed from John Lennon, whom he has painted many times: "Life is what happens to you while you're making other plans." It's a notion to which he relates in no small measure.

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