

# Dutch painter Liseth Visser on what motivates and inspires her

By [Adrian Peel](#)

Veghel- This talented lady from the southern Netherlands is renowned for her beautiful, thought-provoking and deeply striking portraits. She agreed to answer some questions put to her by Digital Journal.



Also known as 'Elizabeth V,' this dedicated artist and teacher paints in a classic, realistic and warmly reassuring style. Once a facility manager at [Mars](#), who just happen to own a huge chocolate factory in her hometown, the former student at the Royal Academy Of Fine Arts in Belgium quit her job a few years ago to concentrate on her painting.

"I loved my job," she remembers. "I started in the customer service department a few decades ago and was given the opportunity to learn and grow via the management training program. I really liked my colleagues, the global effectiveness team I was part of, the projects, the freedom and the opportunities they gave me. Do I ever miss it? No chance..."

## **What have you been doing recently?**

"Over the last five months I've been painting almost constantly since I've sold almost everything I had in stock last year. Not that I'm complaining... I love working in my studio and feel very fortunate that people like my paintings so much that they purchase them to decorate their homes with."

## **How often do you paint? What inspires you? How many paintings are you working on at the present time?**

"Except for the summer, I'm in my studio all day, every day. Every other week I happily spend two days of my time passing on old portrait painting techniques to my students. I love sharing knowledge and take pride in helping to preserve old school methods within the art community. I was fortunate enough to work under a wonderful traditional painter and like to pay off my debt this way."

"What inspires me in life is love. Love for and between people, love for life, for beauty, for pretty fabrics and craftsmanship, for nature, for new beginnings, spring, etc. I've just completed two of my smallest portraits playing around with gold leaf, a material that was new to me until recently.

"I'm in the process of finishing up a medium-sized one entitled 'Four o'clock.' It shows a pretty, dark-skinned woman dressed in lace, offering a cup of tea to the viewer. I'm excited about starting two new very large-sized paintings. I enjoy new beginnings and really like both the designs currently dancing around my head. I can't wait to start working on them."



'Redhead' Liseth Visser

**Your portraits are very vivid and seem to celebrate traditional depictions of beauty. Is that a conscious decision on your part? Are you a bit of a traditionalist at heart?**

"Yes it is and I am. I've always loved traditional portrait painting. I admire the beauty of the old master paintings and strongly believe in the good and in surrounding yourself with positive relationships, things and ideas. Of course we must address the ugliness of life, but focusing on the positive is key to me in all cases.

"I'm a real fan of good craftsmanship and like the idea of recycling beautiful things from the past. Together with my husband I restore old painting frames as best as we can and use them to display and sell my works in. It adds a traditional element and that appeals to me.

"Although I appreciate colour in life, I do not use bright colours in my paintings. My mentor taught me to work with a limited colour palette and I find myself aiming for great harmony on my canvasses, which are wooden panels by the way...

"I start each painting with great precision, but the further I get the wider my brushes become. I glaze innumerable layers upon an almost finished portrait to lose excessive contrasts and merge it into a whole to receive the picturesqueness I'm looking for."

**Where do you find your models? Where do you get their clothes from?**

"Finding models is not hard at all. My three children are all grown up now and they turned out to be wonderfully beautiful people. They have equally lovely friends who donate their time to me and I'm really appreciative of their support.

"The clothes they wear are usually mine. When I organise a photoshoot I move my wardrobe to the studio, empty my 50-cent jewellery box and my flowery hair accessories drawer. I ask them to come to me without makeup on and to allow me to mess with their hair. I love these photoshoots."



Self-Portrait - 'A Portrait of Peace' Liseth Visser

**Please tell me about your self-portrait, your "Portrait of Peace."**

"As a realistic dreamer, I am a true fan of John Lennon's "Imagine". Last year I came across a saying; "I am a post-war-child and I would like to keep it that way." I read this while seated in my comfortable chair in a house full of love, in a placid street, in a peaceful country, in a world at war. And it hit me.

Totally aware of the fact that I'm not going to make a difference I looked for small contributions and found them in volunteering for the Dutch Council for Refugees by simply talking to refugees to enable them to learn the language of the country they are going to live in, at least for a while.

And in painting a life size triple self-portrait titled WAR.

Why?

Because I am a dreamer, a mother, a grandmother, wife, daughter, woman and humanist and I stand respectfully behind John & Paul and ask you to do the same... All we need is love."

**When did you start painting and how old were you when you realised you had a particular flair for it?**

"Unfortunately I took up painting late in life. I very much enjoyed my pre-art years, though, so no real regrets there other than I would have liked to have come across this wonderful

imaginative world sooner. One day I just took up portrait painting. I must have been about 40 years old...

"I joined a small but excellent cultural institute in my hometown and enjoyed it as a hobby for a couple of years. I was totally blessed to meet [Cornelis le Mair](#) a couple of years later. He is an internationally renowned traditional portrait and still-life painter who is considered a maestro, a grand master.

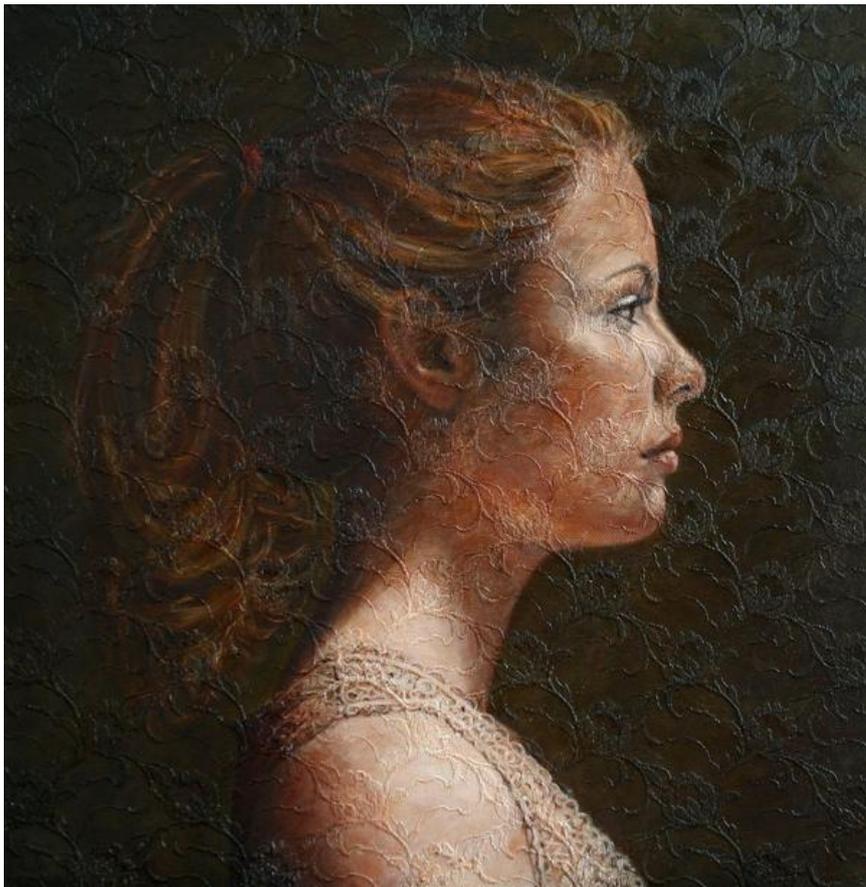
"He has lived and breathed classical art for many years now and I am very thankful for the way he inspired me to go for beauty and pleasantness, no matter what art fashion dictates.

"He knows I'm very appreciative of his mentorship, masterclasses and advice that I should study traditional oil painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgium. When he and my teacher at the cultural institute both suggested I study art, I felt there must be something interesting in what I do."

### **Which other artists do you most admire? Who are your favourite painters from the Netherlands**

"Naming artists I admire is easy: William Adolphe Bouguereau for his delicacy, John William Waterhouse for the romance and storytelling in his work, Michelangelo Caravaggio for his dramatic use of lighting...

"I admire the Dutch painters, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema for his use of the perspective (which I find very hard to master), Johannes Vermeer and Rembrandt van Rijn, of course, all being masters of the past. Luckily we have great portrait painters in this day and age too: Jacob Collins, Martha Erlebacher and many more."



'Infinity' Liseth Visser

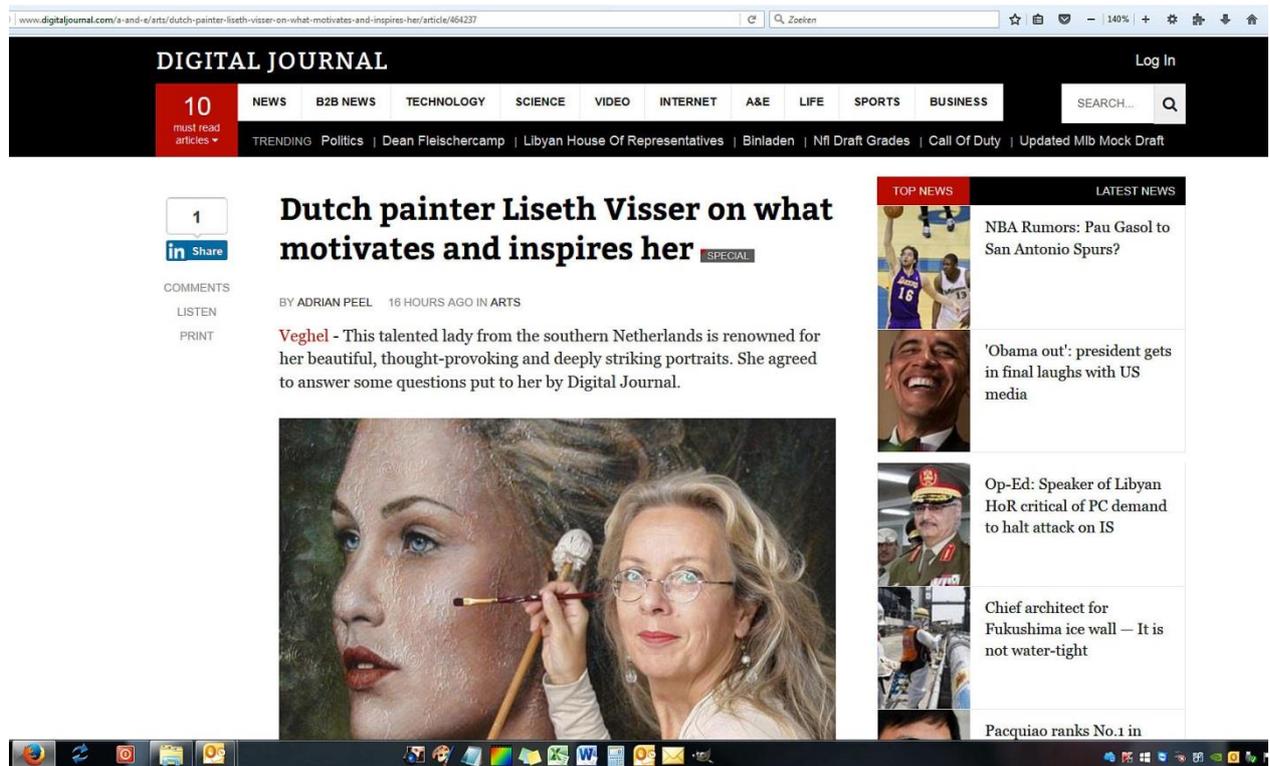
**On your website it says you live in a "traditional English ambience." What do you mean by that?**

"My husband and I fell in love with the English ambience at a very young age. I was 13 years old when we met and at the age of 16 we took our first trip to England. We crossed the south of the county on our tandem and since then have visited this part of the world many times. "I can say that our home displays more traditional English items than many UK households do. My husband collects and takes pride in repairing everything to such an extent that it works as well as it did before. We make use of a lot of these items in our daily lives and this particular environment, filled with items from the past that have outlived so many people, is very inspiring to me."

To learn more about Ms. Visser and her wonderful works of art, visit her [official website](#).

Voor de Nederlandse versie, klik [hier](#).

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/a-and-e/arts/dutch-painter-liseth-visser-on-what-motivates-and-inspires-her/article/464237>



Digital Journal is a global digital media network with thousands of members and content creators in 200 countries around the world. Reaching an audience of millions of monthly visitors. They're based in Canada. Journalist Adrian Peel is based in East Grinstead, United Kingdom.