

Art & Photography / Feature

Three art experts critique Britney Spears' \$10,000 painting

'It wouldn't get into my fairs'

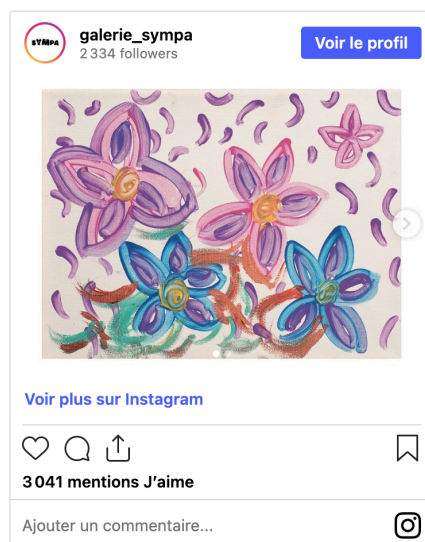
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Text Daisy Schofield

This week, the Internet was sent into a frenzy when it was announced that [Britney Spears](#) would be holding [her first ever solo exhibition at a gallery in France](#). In the end, we were left with no choice but to cancel our Eurostar tickets when it turned out that any official [show was](#) being denied by Spears' people. Are Galerie Sympa just playing with our hearts, and have we got lost in the game (*Oh baby, baby, how were we supposed to know*)?

Although Spears may not be quite ready to take the lead on a solo exhibition, she's working on her new artistic outlet: back in 2017, she [sold her first painting for an impressive \\$10,000](#) (£7,708) at an auction, with all the proceeds going to charity. The painting itself couldn't be more [on-brand for Britney's IG](#), emblematic of her unashamedly *live-laugh-love-don't-let-anyone-steal-your-shine* feed that gives us life in the darkest of times.

So while we're left feeling a little deprived of the chance to behold Spears' full oeuvre, we asked three experts – an art therapist, a history of art professor, and an art collector – to give their analysis of an anonymous artist's painting (disclaimer: it's Britney, bitch). Scratching below that bubblegum pop surface and delving deep inside Spears' mind, we discovered there was a lot to unpack.

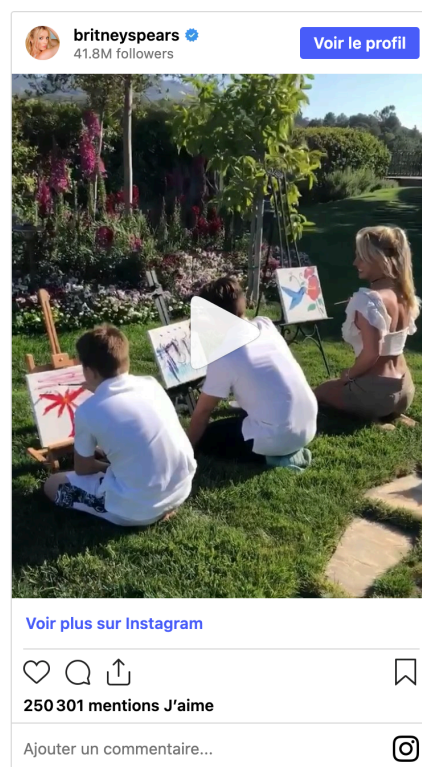


DRAMY TOBIN, HISTORY OF ART LECTURER AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

"To me, it looks like playing with expressive brush strokes and the limits of abstraction. Motif wise, you could connect it to Andy Warhol or feminism in terms of content and also in the feeling of movement. I could imagine it being postmodern and a kind of ironic commentary on the status of the image. On the other hand it could be very sincere, by an artist who sits outside of the canon, as obviously it doesn't have the kind of rendering of most celebrated painters' work.

The feminism aspect of it could be in terms of a relationship to anti-high art, a sense of trying to redefine what a visual art practice might look like that might challenge what we think of as good, or would historically have been considered good at least. It could be playing with the language of feminine painterly practice.

There seems to be some kind of idea behind it, the brush strokes are very considered and bold. In some way it seems an ironic play with abstract expressionism. There are lots of painters that work in that mode, like American painter Laura Owens. It is interesting to puzzle through what this might be because it does feel a very ironic work, that might be more about the artist than the thing itself."

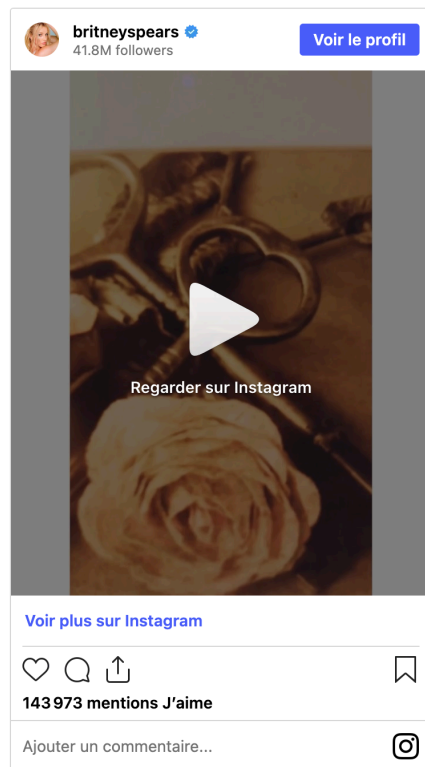


AMANDA WRIGHT, ART THERAPIST

"This person isn't depressed in my view and seems quite energised. There are four flowers, so there's some sort of relationship going on, perhaps a family. There's a little, fifth flower outside, which is a mystery, it's unformed, as though something is coming in and the other flowers don't seem aware of it. Whatever's coming in is not on the earth, it's perhaps just a concept or a thought, but it's not rooted. It could be a new idea, a new project, that is not in place yet – or the other group of flowers could be rejecting whatever that little flower means, throwing it out.

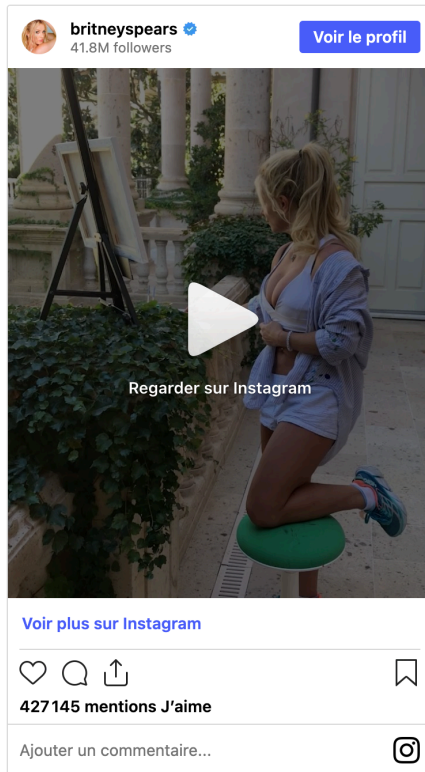
The middle of the flowers are orange, not yellow, it's sort of a joyful, sunny disposition, but the fifth flower hasn't got a middle – it's outside the group, so it's intriguing what that little flower represents. There's no horizon, it's very in the foreground, so I'd have thought the artist is not exactly visionary, they live in the day-to-day.

Looking at the colours, the pink denotes feeling, femininity, and the mauve purple colour can mean creativity. It looks as though the flowers at the top are sort of dominating the flowers underneath – it's maybe a powerful person, but also an emotional, feeling person, incorporating a bit of wisdom with the purple."



ROBERT SANDELSON, ART COLLECTOR AND OWNER OF THE BRITISH ART FAIR

"Looking at some of the shapes, they've got that childlike quality of Jeff Koons, who does the flower things – daffodils they've been called, or a bunch of anuses. So there's that sort of vibe going on, but it's not an artistic thing, it's more a childlike doodle. It wouldn't get into my fairs, there's no artistic mind behind it. There's a difference between price and value – it might have gotten a high price, but it's got no value. It's not by a good artist because a good artist wouldn't riff on children's pictures, which is what this is."



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