Hair: Lucas Burnett • Model: Kim- MSA Model Management

A Look Into the World of Artist,

# Beatrice Coron

By Felix Quinonez Jr. • Photos by Ash Fox

The studio lights shone brightly on the dreamy art adorning the pristine white walls. A French song set the mood and if it weren't for the two cluttered workstations, this could have passed for a gallery exhibition. But this was the Manhattan studio of French-born artist Beatrice Coron, who specializes in making engaging artwork inhabiting a world between dreams and reality. And in that reality, she stands in the kitchen preparing a cup of tea.

"What flavor would you like?" she asked.

I'm more of a coffee person myself, so I quickly averted a disaster and continued examining the art. About a minute later, as Beatrice walked out of the kitchen with a cup of tea, proceeded to give me a private tour of her studio. Along the way she explained some of her process, inspiration her journey as an artist.

These days her work can be seen in museums, in subways, on t-shirts, cups and other merchandise. She has published art books and exhibited her work all around the world. And, of course, dresses. Like the rest of her art, these dresses are multilayered and narrate a distinct story. She refers to these stories as "artist books."

She describes them as "a surface to write what's important to you or the moment you're living. Some of them are more wearable sculptures than dresses."

Just earlier in the day, her dresses were involved with a photo shoot. "I can't believe she was out in the cold in those dresses," Beatrice said sounding genuinely concerned with the health of the model.

I try to convince her it's part of the job and that we all make sacrifices for the things we are passionate about. And passion is something she understands very well. At a time when most children were preoccupied with toys, Beatrice had already begun pursuing her interest in art.

"I began drawing with pencils at a very young age," she explained.

As an only child, Beatrice had to come up with her own adventures. But even though she was a bit of a loner, she received plenty of support from her parents.

"I had encouragement to do whatever I wanted to do," Beatrice said as she took a sip of tea.

And although it's hard to picture this kind woman as anything other than warm and generous it wasn't always that way.

"I was a bit of a rebel…a contrarian," Beatrice admits with a sly smile.

And when she was a teenager she began to explore different approaches to making art when she started working in ink. Later, Beatrice briefly studied art and mandarin Chinese at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Lyon, but her pursuit of higher education was short lived.

"I went to school of art for four or five months but it was too formal. I stopped drawing after that for a while and did other kinds of jobs," she explained.

And it was this assortment of odd jobs—which included shepherdess, truck driver, factory worker, cleaning lady and tour guide—that helped her experience life away from the classroom. During this time she lived in various places around the world including Egypt, Mexico and China. She absorbed different cultures and was slowly drawn back into the world of arts.

"When you're an artist it's like you're a sponge and absorb everything. Filtering whatever you see and putting it back into your visual words," she recalled.

> **I often dig into my dreams for my work. I love reading The Interpretation of Dreams by Freud.**

During this time she didn't produce a lot but after spending enough time away from art, she moved to New York, dedicating herself to becoming a full-time artist and make a living by doing so.

As anyone who has pursued a career in any creative field can attest, starting out can often be the hardest part.

"When I decided I wanted to become a full-time artist, I set my mind to produce as much material as possible," she explained.

However, aside from producing the work, getting it displayed is another great challenge every artist has to face. This problem was tackled straight on by visiting and submitting to any place displaying art.

Although Beatrice has worked in many different mediums, she has been primarily focusing on paper cutting for the last 15 years. Like most artists, Beatrice draws from her own experiences and her inspirations are as eclectic as her work.

"I often dig into my dreams for my work. I love reading *The Interpretation of Dreams* by Freud," she said.

In this way, her work can be seen as a bridge connecting two opposite worlds, telling stories and inventing situations, and it is up to the viewer or wearer to decide what to take away from her works of fantasy.

"I put different elements in my stories but the viewers read it their way. I invite the viewer to make their own stories," she explained.

The importance of storytelling unites us all. After all, we all have a story to tell.

"Storytelling is a very strong tool; it is a way of giving purpose to what you're going through. She said, and by having purpose, you're bringing hope and can lift your burdens."