

# Exclusive Interview: The Emotional Artistry of Frédérique Samama



by **Evangeline Tereshkova** — June 19, 2025



Frédérique Samama

**Frédérique Samama** is a contemporary artist whose evocative paintings probe the depths of human emotion and subtle gestures. Born and raised in **Paris**, her work straddles the worlds of rigorous formal training and spontaneous expression, often focusing on faces and hands as terrains of feeling and silent connection. Drawing inspiration from expressionist masters while forging her own distinctive path, Samama delves into the fleeting, the silent, and the innately human in each piece.

In the following interview, she shares insights into her creative journey, emotional language, and what truly moves her to paint.

**Your artistic journey is deeply rooted in the exploration of human emotions and intimate interactions. How do you approach translating these fleeting moments and inner impressions into your visual language, and what role do faces and hands play in this process?**

It is precisely these fleeting moments, these micro-gestures, these suspended gazes or outstretched hands that captivate me. My work seeks to slow them down, to anchor them in the material before they vanish. Faces and hands are powerful emotional landscapes—they reveal what remains unspoken, what is held back or spills out in spite of oneself. Through expressive, gestural painting, I strive to make the inner world of my subjects vibrate, to give form to the

invisible. It is a language of tension, of silence, sometimes of stifled cries, always imbued with the memory of the body.

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**Expressionism and the works of artists like Egon Schiele, Bernard Buffet, Lucian Freud, and Pablo Picasso have notably influenced you. Can you share how encountering the work of these masters has shaped your own style and artistic philosophy?**

Egon Schiele and Bernard Buffet taught me to embrace the strength of the line, even when it disturbs or unsettles. Lucian Freud passed on to me this fascination for flesh, for the imprint of time on bodies. Picasso, for his part, gave me the freedom to deconstruct without ever losing the essential: emotion. They all share a formal audacity in the service of an inner truth. Their work allowed me to accept intensity, imperfection, and ambivalence. My own style draws on this lineage: a tense, visceral expressionism that seeks less to represent than to embody.



**Authentic emotional connection is described as the guiding thread of your work. How do you strive for authenticity in your art, and are there any particular techniques or rituals you use to connect deeply with your subject matter before beginning a piece?**

For me, authenticity is born from silence. Before painting, I observe for a long time, I soak it up. It can be a memory, a gesture encountered in the street, or a model that I watch in their withdrawal, without posing. I don't sketch much: I prefer direct impulse, the vivid trace. Black chalk, oil or acrylic then become extensions of my breath. Nothing is premeditated, everything is embodied.

*"What sets me apart, I believe, is this constant tension between raw emotion and formal demands."*

**Your background in applied arts and your Parisian upbringing likely offered a rich cultural foundation. How have your education and environment in Paris impacted your creativity, and what distinguishes your perspective from other contemporary artists?**

Growing up and creating in Paris means being immersed in a unique cultural density, but it also means learning to forge a unique path within it. My training in applied arts gave me a taste for rigor and construction, which I now confront with the spontaneity of gesture. Living in Paris means rubbing shoulders with art history on a daily basis, while remaining confronted with its contemporary challenges. This back-and-forth between heritage and rupture nourishes my approach. What sets me apart, I believe, is this constant tension between raw emotion and formal demands.



**Many of your works focus on the subtle language of emotion visible in everyday gestures. What do you hope viewers experience or reflect upon when seeing your paintings, and are there specific reactions or interpretations that resonate most with you as an artist?**

Through my paintings, I seek to reveal what escapes appearances: a raw emotion, a fragment of existence, a buried mystery, silences laden with meaning. I do not seek to guide the gaze or impose a reading. The line remains deliberately open, unfinished, inviting the viewer to appropriate the image, to complete what escapes them, to project their own reading. What I hope is that the viewer stops, feels, lets themselves be moved without necessarily knowing why. What touches me deeply are the moved silences, the lingering glances, the simple words: "I don't know why, but it speaks to me." This is where art becomes sharing.

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Through the interplay of intuitive gesture and studied form, **Frédérique Samama** offers viewers a powerful invitation to pause and feel, beyond boundaries of language or logic. Her work reminds us that the heart of art lies in the emotional space it creates—a space where artist and viewer meet in silent, authentic resonance.

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