



MARISSA BRIDGE  
P.O. Box 1434, East Quogue, NY 11942  
155 West 29th Street, NY, NY 10001 Cell: 212-945-8733  
[www.marissabridge.com](http://www.marissabridge.com) e-mail: [marissabridge@gmail.com](mailto:marissabridge@gmail.com) Instagram: @marissabridge



*Large Paper Centers #1, Mixed Media on panel*

It is with great pleasure that the Fat Canary Journal celebrates April with the ever-evolving work of Marissa Bridge. Spiritual and philosophical in nature, Marissa sheds light on the natural inspirations

for this complex body of work, which poetically embraces the organic cycle of life, death, and Mother Nature.

#### UPCOMING EXHIBITS

*Elements of Surprise* at the White Room Gallery, 2415 Main Street, Bridgehampton NY 11932  
Exhibit runs April 13-29, 2018, Opening Reception on Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 pm.



Seed Pod, Mixed Media on panel

Marissa Bridge is an artist whose work has always been inspired by nature, as a study in spirit, form, and pattern. She works in series, as a method of investigation and as a meditative process. In addition to painting in oil and acrylic, she creates 3-D mixed media pieces out of

recycled paper using papier mache techniques, modeling paste, plaster, and other re-purposed materials such as fabric, thread, nails, pins, beads, seeds and stones.



*Present*, oil on panel

are all part of one idea, and look well hung in groups.

Her current work explores the structure of flowers and plants in relation to their function in the ongoing process of renewal. Marissa's artwork evokes the meaning inherent in the structure of plant life; the distinctive color and form of each piece give the viewer an awareness of the means and spirit through which life continues. It is hoped that these constructions give the viewer a sense of wonder at nature's cleverness and variety.

Each of the multi-media artworks called Centers is a unique design, based on a real flower, but transformed into something new. They are related to mandalas and other spiritual art forms. Each one exists as a single artwork and represents an individual, but they

The Mummings series of paintings embody Bridge's ideas on community, relationship, and time. Each of these artworks is distinctive in its overall patterning, whether on a canvas, sculpture, or paper. These artworks show how various states of being come together as a unified whole, with some buds just forming, some blossoms beginning to open, others hanging low in preparation for death. Certain life forms relate well to those near them, while others are more isolated.

Bridge's body of work represents an ongoing artistic investigation, with the flower as metaphor being central to her practice for many years. In developing these ideas further, she has explored both her personal history as an artist and as a female, as well as the broader tradition of women's work, art, crafts, sewing, and all other women's work that's been done since time immemorial. Using her memories, following her curiosity, and keeping open to the art being made today, is what gives Bridge the insight and energy to create new ideas for art projects attuned to our current times.

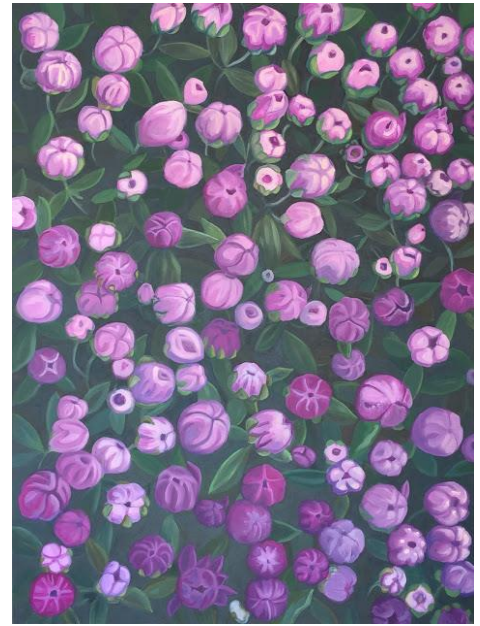


Ms. Bridge has been an exhibiting artist for three decades, and has show in museums and galleries. Her work is in collections in the U.S., the Caribbean, and Europe. She is an environmental activist, and spends most of her time practicing art and organic gardening at her home in the Hampton's area of Long Island, NY. She also maintains an art studio in New York City.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

*I have been painting aspects of the natural world all my life, nature provides the inspiration, and I follow it. All of my work is done in series, as a way to study a subject in depth. I am interested in reducing images into their most iconic forms, and repetition is one way to achieve this outcome.*

*When I returned to making art with a commitment, in 2008, after several years of only making art sporadically, I began with very austere, detailed paintings of individual flowers. I consider them portraits, and the works have a studied feeling. These paintings were created using traditional oil painting techniques, sketched in oil directly onto the canvas, the layers of color built up with glaze. My practice was to paint from life, soak up as much as I could from the actual flower, then augment my experience by*



*Mummers Buds, oil on panel*

*photographing it for later reference, if needed.*

*From there I moved on to a series of 36 paintings of one phalaenopsis orchid, from the beginning of its budding process to the end of its life. Titled, "Silent Journey", it represented a watershed moment for me, when I began to come to terms with life and its different phases, from birth to death.*

*As the Silent Journey series came to a close, I felt a renewed sense of confidence in myself and my abilities. Completing a 36-piece series was quite*



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*Silent Journey Orchid, Series #20, oil on canvas*

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*an achievement for me, and I felt strong as a woman and an artist*

*The next work I made was a series of daylily paintings called the Lilith Series.*

*The Lilith Series is about the visual power of the centered flower, in this case, a daylily. Open flowers suggest the sensual, yielding nature of the female, their beauty an enticement to the bees that pollinate them and the humans who cultivate them.*

*The biblical term "Lilith" translates into "night creature", and is said to have been Adam's first wife, before Eve, who was created by God at the same time as Adam, not from his rib. Lilith refused to be subservient to Adam, and fled the Garden of Eden for darker realms\*. Her name embodies the "wild feminine"\*, and I felt her eternal presence arise in these paintings, created from the transient beauty seen in this short-lived flower. The dark background is in contrast to the daylily's bright, bold colors, and symbolizes the light in the darkness of so much strife. These paintings are full of hope, strength and beauty, in the face of the reality that, "Life is short and then we die". Maybe so, but let's live wondrously!*



*Big L'il, Lilith Number Two, oil on canvas*

*My interest in the shape of flowers continued with an awareness of the geometry involved in their design. Grid paintings, especially those by Agnes Martin and Kes Zapkus, have entranced me, and I wanted to paint the experience of seeing lots of flowers at once, relating to and communicating with each other. My vision was inspired by the crowded mum blossoms one sees in the autumn, and I call this series, "Mummers".*

*Working with an organic grid design made me long for an actual, sculptural experience. I had a basic understanding of materials, so I started some new pieces as a combination of two and 3 dimensions. The idea is to create a unique design, based on a real flower, but transform it into something new, by interpreting and emphasizing its reproductive area. By making the center of the flower stand proud, then painting the flower petals flat on the panel surrounding it, the configuration of desire is made prominent.*

*This exploration of creating art from repurposed materials coincided with my renewed interest and appreciation of traditional women's work, childhood play, crafts, sewing, all handwork that women have done from time immemorial. There is evidence in my work of a collective history - the story of women's work that goes back to the beginning of time. We are makers, whether we have given birth to children or not. Women are tireless creators. Our history does not hang in the walls of museums, with a few brilliant exceptions. We embody our history in our hearts, minds, and hands.*



*Sunflower #2, Mixed Media on panel*

*However much I enjoyed making these, and still do, I wanted to challenge myself further by making the flower centers and petals entirely in three dimensions. The paper scraps I cut and used for me of the centers gave me a direction to go in, and I began to make pieces in which the centers were made out of various materials, and the petals were made entirely out of cut and rolled paper. Quickly, I realized that these pieces were evocative in ways I did not expect.*



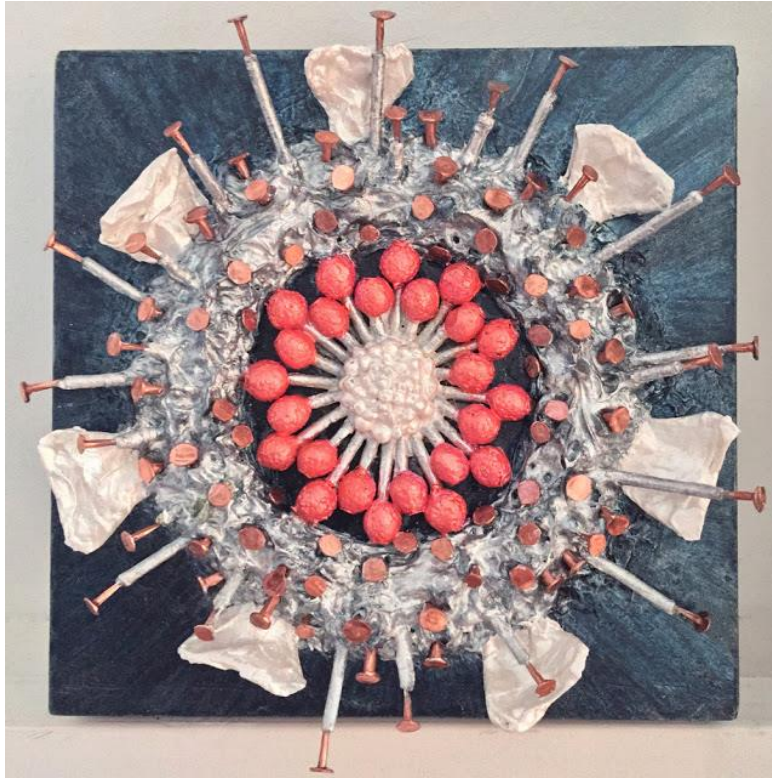
*There is a structural integrity that evokes the cellular structure of plants, although it is not literal. And somehow decades of living in NYC come through, as the rolled pieces of paper evoke the skyscrapers of my beloved city, in the way the different heights of paper fill the space.*



*Large Paper Centers #3, Mixed Media on panel*

*The newest work is another step into a new area, and it is strongly connected to the earlier work. These pieces evolved from William Blake's words,*

*"To see a world in a grain of sand, and heaven in a wild flower  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour."*



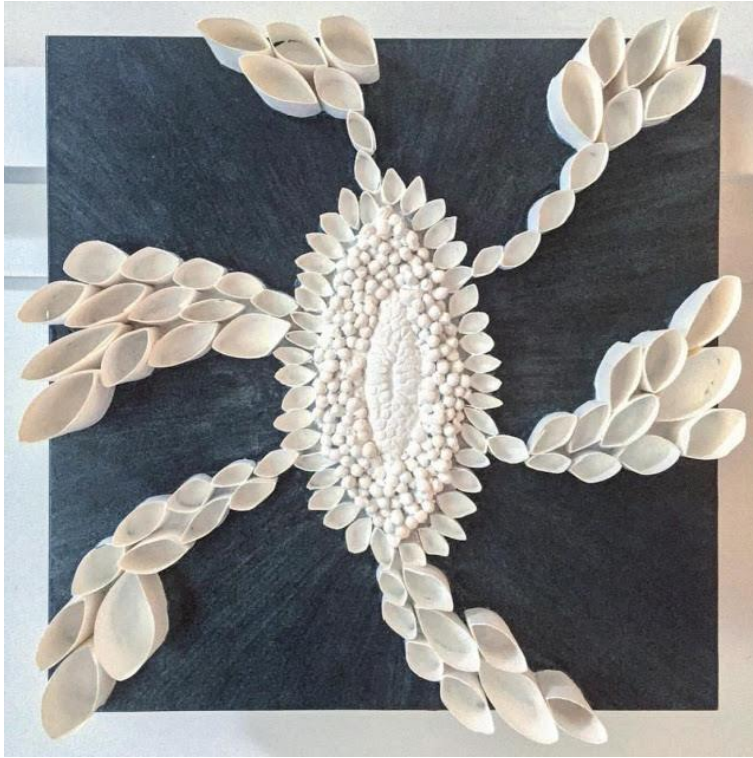
*Center Series 2017 #2, Mixed Media on panel*



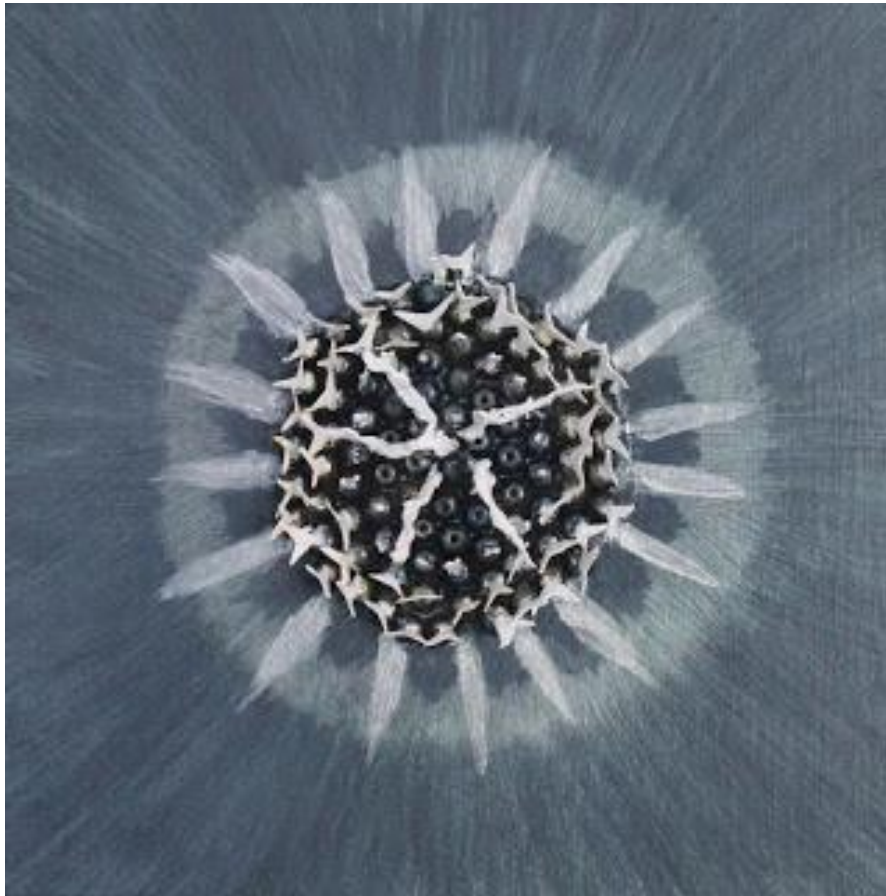
*Cosmic Splotch, Mixed Media on panel*

*Somehow, by continuing to use the dark indigo as a base for my work, I can see the pieces as celestial. There are similarities between flowers and stars, they both share a round center that has elements radiating out from it. And I find that there is much to explore in this new realm.*





*This is What I Heard, Mixed Media on panel*



*Centers Series 2016, #4, Mixed Media on panel*

*My work has evolved in the last 18 months, and more changes are coming in the near future. I have always believed that art is a journey, a pathway towards enlightenment. Making anything can be done as a spiritual practice, whether food, clothing, shelter, or art, if the intention is pure. The act of creating something where there was nothing is how growth happens.*



Center Series 2016, Number One, Mixed Media on panel

## GALLERY REPRESENTATION

Zeiger Arts, 917-239-0493. [www.ZeigerArts.com](http://www.ZeigerArts.com)

William Ris Gallery, 1291 Main Road, Jamesport, NY 11947

\*Lilith, Healing the Wild, by Tom Jacobs, 2014

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## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

January 9-February 7, 2016. "Bridge in Conversation", curated by Kathy Zeiger, Kathryn Markel Gallery, 2418 Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton, NY

April 12-June 16, 2015. "Silent Journey", curated by Kathy Zeiger, Dodds and Eder HOME, 11 Bridge Street, Sag Harbor, NY 11963

December 8, 1991-February 23, 1992. "Underseascapes and the Figure Underwater", Hammond Museum, North Salem, NY

October 27 - November 25, 1990. "Underseascapes", Cleaver Callahan Gallery, New York, NY

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Dec. 2, 2017-January 15, 2018, "Ille Arts Holiday Show", Ille Arts, 171 Main St. Amagansett, NY

December 9<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, "Small Works", William Ris Gallery, 1291 Main Road, Jamesport, NY

December 9<sup>th</sup>-December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, "Artful Holiday Show and Sale", pop-up gallery, 155 West 29<sup>th</sup> St, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Floor, NY, NY

Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>-Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, "Me, My Selfie and I" Contemporary Self-Portraits, Hudson Guild, 441 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street, NY, NY

Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>-Oct, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, "Drawing Set", Little Underground Gallery, Jefferson Market Library, NY, NY

April 22-May 22, 2017, "Open Garden" artwork with floral motifs, Sara Nightingale Gallery, Sag Harbor

February 10-12, 2017, "Love Mart". Popup Gallery hosted by Shwick, 79 Greene Street, New York, NY

November 25-January 15, 2017, "Holiday Invitational", Romany Kramoris Gallery, 41 Main Street, Sag Harbor, NY 11963

November 11-December 30, 2016, "Spaces, Places and Faces", The Gallery at Eisenbergs, 174 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10010

June 11-July 9, 2016. "Print Parade Exhibition", Dan Welden Studio, 1649 Millstone Rd, Sag Harbor, NY

March 29, 2016, "No Longer Empty" Benefit Auction. Live auction on Paddle8 from March 17-March 29, 2016

April 12-September 22, 2015. Installation of flower paintings in salon of Dodds and Eder HOME, 11 Bridge Street, Sag Harbor, NY 11963



March 2-March 31, 2015. "Between the Bridges-Works by Quogue and East Quogue Artists", Quogue Library, Quogue, NY

Sept. 9-Oct. 4, 2014 Group Exhibition, Southampton Cultural Center, Southampton, NY 11968

July, 2012-August, 2014 Mark Humphrey Gallery, 95 Main Street, Southampton, NY

May 29-June 19, 2013 "Less is More", Mitchell Museum, St. John's College, Annapolis, MD

April 21 - May 27, 2012. "Spring Fling", Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY

May 1-May 28, 2010. "Of A Botanical Nature", curated by Wendy Hollender, Smithtown Township Arts Council, Mills Pond House Gallery, St. James, NY

June 2008 - September, 2010. Belongings Design Showroom, Nantucket, MA. Continuing exhibition of Underseascapes paintings in oil on 23-carat gold leaf panels and botanical prints

December 2005 - June, 2008. Belongings Interior Design Showroom, Providenciales, Turks and Caicos, BWI. Continuing exhibition of Underseascapes paintings in oil on 23-carat gold leaf panels

January - April 1997 Group exhibition, Lucky Street Gallery, Key West Florida

June 25 -July 25,1993. "Art of Nature", North Museum of Natural History, Lancaster, PA

October 3 - December 15, 1992. Waterside Art Studios, Stamford, CT

December 12, 1990 - February 2, 1991. "Landscape: A Group Show", Cleaver Callahan Gallery, New York, NY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Local Artist Takes Gallery Goers on a Self-Exploration of East End Inspired Works", Hamptons.com, by Nicole Barylski, January 8, 2016.

"Marissa Bridge Interprets Flowers at Kathryn Markel Fine Arts", Dan's Papers, January, 3, 2016

"Kathy Meets Kathryn at Markel", Easthampton Star, by Jennifer Landes, January 7, 2016,

"The Flutter and the Bang", <http://newyorknatives.com/frequency> by Stephanie Urdang Jan. 2015

"Art on Nature Joins Summer Arts", Lancaster New Era, June 24, 1993

"Portfolio" section, Scuba Diving Magazine, March/April 1993.

"Marine Art", Underwater U.S.A., March, 1992 "An Artist Explores Underwater Landscapes", The Weekly Star/Town Times/The Newtown Bee, January 18, 1992

Betse Humphrey, "Artist Records Marine World With Palette, Brush", Underwater U.S.A., June, 1991

EDUCATION

Parsons School of Design, BFA Degree

SVA, Study of Lithography with Judith Solodkin



*Large Paper Centers #2, Mixed Media on panel*