



PROVIDENCE, RI
March 2015

The BankRI Galleries present:
BankRI Pitman Street Gallery: "Imagined Breakwalls: Paintings by
Maggie Siegel"

MEET THE ARTIST – MAGGIE SIEGEL

Providence painter Maggie Siegel grew up in a rural wonderland where imagination was key and popular culture could barely be heard over the rustling of cornstalks. Insulated by the hills and snow, Cuba, New York was about as far removed from the city as an eastern girl could be.

Siegel lived on a lake, a waterway constantly enshrouded in a mystical fog. As a child, her parents would take her on long walks through the wild grasses or through the open fields. The young Siegel was deeply impressed by the sheer scope of beauty, the mystery and impermanence of it all. This was not the green of a manicured lawn or a garden planted by design. This was a place where if a car or a boat or a house were abandoned, the landscape would claim it, covering the unwanted with vines, grass and small trees.

Siegel is no longer a child living in rural New York. She is a 40-year old woman, a veteran of Manhattan who for many years made her living painting commercial art. Although she loved her hometown, she left for college and to pursue creative opportunities. Although she loved Manhattan, she left to find a better path to her personal painting. Through multiple career changes and several relocations, she came to Providence, a place a friend always told her she belonged.

She has taken a job with White Electric, the popular coffee shop on

Westminster Street. “I felt the career rush had completely distracted me and ate up all my time,” Siegel explains. “Now I really do what I want to do and live quite simply.”

What Siegel wants to do is paint and what she wants to paint is the afterimage of her childhood home. “The world in my mind has become a fantasy world,” Siegel says. “It’s more a state of being than an actual place.”

Siegel’s paintings seem at first to be simple bucolic landscapes with lush green fields and wild flowers. A closer look reveals a different story. Diamond shaped particles and small spheres tumble through her landscapes, moving to make a shape and then disassembling to form another. Flower petals do a similar waltz. A view looking down at the lake, takes on a Goya-esque quality as the shadow of the painter’s head and shoulders become apparent.

“I’m interested in the idea of chaos,” Siegel says. “All the thoughts, all the emotions and all the busy-ness of life that comes together. These are the places I carry with me and these are the places that speak to me.”

The BankRI Galleries are curated by Paula Martiesian, a Providence-based artist and arts advocate.