

PRESS RELEASE  
Providence, RI January 2022

For additional information and images, please contact Paula Martiesian at 401-521-7634 or at [artsong5354@gmail.com](mailto:artsong5354@gmail.com). Attached images: *City Park*, a collage by Mara Metcalf and the artist in her studio.

*PLEASE NOTE: Covid-19 protocols are in place at all BankRI locations. Please do not visit the bank if you are feeling ill.*

**The BankRI Galleries present:**

BankRI Pitman Street Gallery: “Almost Anywhere: Collages by Mara Metcalf” January 6 through March 2, 2022 at 137 Pitman Street in Providence. Exhibit hours are Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

For more information, check out [www.bankri.com](http://www.bankri.com), <https://www.facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland/> or call the branch at 401 294-7737.



**MEET THE ARTIST – MARA METCALF**

There are few urban neighborhoods less accessible than the Reservoir Triangle. Located on the Cranston/Providence line, it is Rhode Island’s version of the Bermuda Triangle – hard to pinpoint and easy to lose your way. Artist and educator Mara Metcalf lives and works in a two-story home located deep in the middle of the triangle.

Metcalf is a familiar Rhode Island name, but this Metcalf originated not in Providence, but in Portland, Oregon. While attending the University of Oregon, a Greyhound Bicentennial special caught her eye. A mere \$50 bought a ticket anywhere in the United States. At the time, Metcalf was attempting to pursue a sensible career studying anthropology and biology, but she had always wanted to be an artist.

As a child Metcalf was “constantly, obsessively drawing.” Finally unable to deny her deep desire to draw and paint, Metcalf took a dorm mate’s suggestion – “You should apply to RISD. It’s the best school in the country!” Metcalf applied and was accepted. She purchased a \$50 ticket and boarded a Greyhound bus to the east coast. In 1977, she started her sophomore year at RISD, the beginning of her long career as an artist and arts educator. Today Metcalf teaches drawing and painting at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts (SMFA) and at RISD. She exhibits regularly both in solo and group exhibitions.

Metcalf's studio is full of works on paper, part drawing part painting part collage. The surface of the work is enticing, etched with stitching, pattern and a palpable sense of space. Slender lines, delicate, but focused, delineate and define. Other lines, almost crude in their making, contrast the fragility.

Metcalf walks through Roger Williams Park several times a week. The park and the ideas of urban green space play heavily in Metcalf's artwork. She combines elements of both nature and city, drawn to the duality they present. Imagery of chain link fences keep company with tree trunks, electric wires and swatches of color. Metcalf explains, "Often the fencing marks a porous border where artificial meets organic. I am drawn to this duality; for me it's a shifting and dynamic zone where re-invention and change are both possible *and* are actually happening."

Metcalf continues," The process of collaging enables me to think with my hands and use overlapping shapes and shared lines to reconfigure a new natural world. The **act** of assembling the piece allows for parts to be salvaged and places restored. It is my metaphor for growth and even healing. For me this is a way to embody the complexity of life's journey, where edges aren't always smooth and borders don't necessarily meet."

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

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