



MAIRA REINBERGS



## DESTIG TOP ARTIST 2018

### **Tell us about yourself and background.**

I was born in Riga, Latvia. As a small girl I loved to dance (I still do) and did piles and piles of drawings. Summers I spent in the country at my grandfather's. There I was given total freedom to roam the beautiful meadows, fields of rye, the apple orchard, the river bank. Maybe that is why I became an artist - being so much by myself, immersed in the beauty of nature. During WWII my family had to flee and we left our homeland and the people we loved. We sought refuge in Germany - there we lived in 8 different camps for "Displaced Persons". In 1951 we emigrated to the United States and settled in Boston. After receiving a BFA from Massachusetts College and I began working as commercial artist, did freelance illustrations and painted as much as I could. Due to my husband's job, we relocated four times: from sunny California, (where our daughter was born) to a rural area of Massachusetts, to wintry Lake Placid, NY. Since 1980 we live in Attleboro, MA.

### **Tell us about your work.**

My paintings are explorations of colour and line. I strive to capture their illusiveness, subtleties and mysteries. Often music influences my work; lines and colour variations express movement, continuity. My life had had its share of turbulence and sadness - maybe that is why I want my paintings to express harmony, beauty, serenity.

### **What makes your work and approach unique?**

I do not follow trends in art, but stay with my own soothing vision. The art critic for the Lake Placid News put it very succinctly: "if there is purpose to her work, it is to wash away with a stroke of her brush all that is ugly, cacophonous and strident, and all that would anger the soul. She succeeds admirably"  
In the past I worked with oils, watercolours, fabric dyes, hot paraffin. In 2005 I developed my present technique, which I think is quite unique. I handprint

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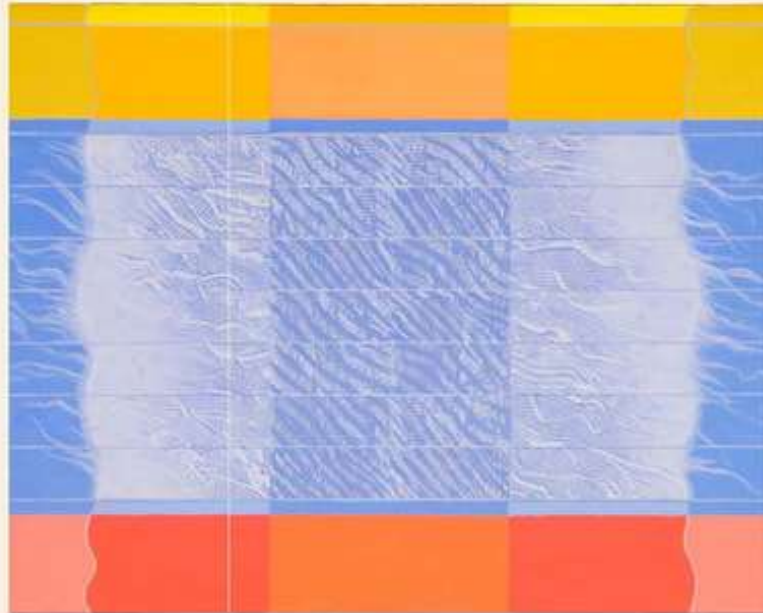
or paint on muslin. Then I cut out the interesting pieces, arrange them in a way that pleases me and adhere them to canvas or panel. This technique allows me to create effects that I could not achieve otherwise, and it also introduces a chance element. It is a time consuming process, but I love it.

## **Why is your work a good investment?**

The purchase of one of my paintings is an investment in beauty and serenity. Many of my collectors have told me that they look at my paintings frequently, sometimes even daily, and every time it lifts their spirits. Years ago I took part in a National Exhibition called "Images that Heal". Indeed, beauty heals.

## **Tell us about some of your achievements.**

My creative process happens slowly and deliberately. Therefore each completed painting is an achievement and pleasure. Also, I have juggled my artistic career with family responsibilities and other very long interruptions. Nevertheless I always come back.



I just have to paint. I love living with my works, and the people who own my paintings also love them.

## **What are your sources of inspiration?**

Colour, lines, music.

I notice lines everywhere on sidewalks, streets, tree branches, reeds in ponds etc.

Music - medieval religious music, baroque composers, ethnic music, opera, Latvian folk songs. The right music puts me in another world.

I simply cannot paint without music. Music is in all my paintings. Colour, mostly from nature - I absorb colour with my whole being. My studio is surrounded by

nature, and I get to experience all the seasons through my windows. I do not paint nature directly, I observe and then paint the essence, sometimes much later.

## **What are you passionate about?**

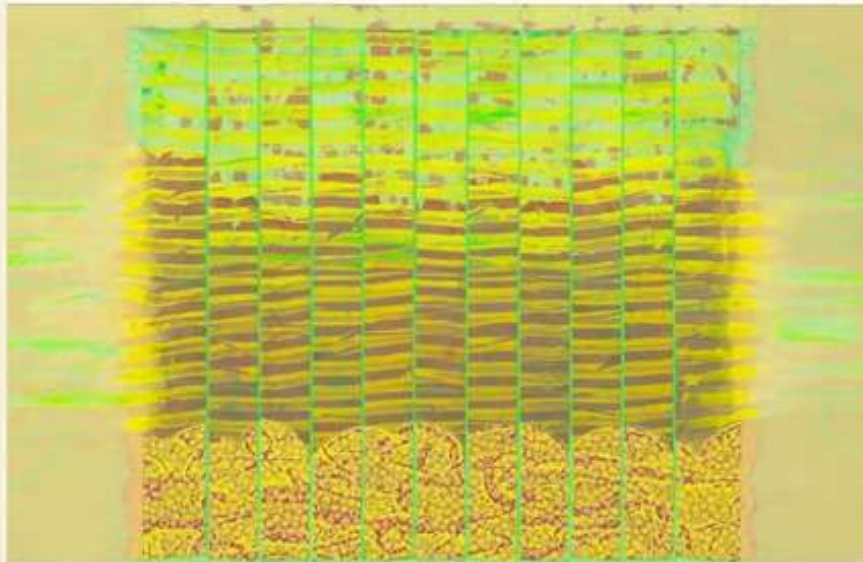
The sea - after a trip to the Greek islands, which to me were spectacular, I did some sketches of the sea. I still think of them as my "little masterpieces".

Dancing - Greek dancing, belly dancing and many others.

## **Tell us the back-story of some of your projects.**

I used to create stage sets for plays and Latvian events, such as poetry readings etc. The stage

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sets allowed me to explore large formats. Sometimes I would incorporate my large paintings into them, or my small ones were projected onto the screen.

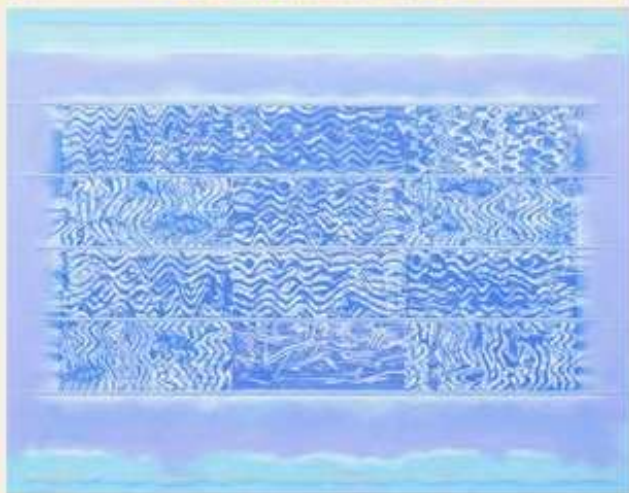
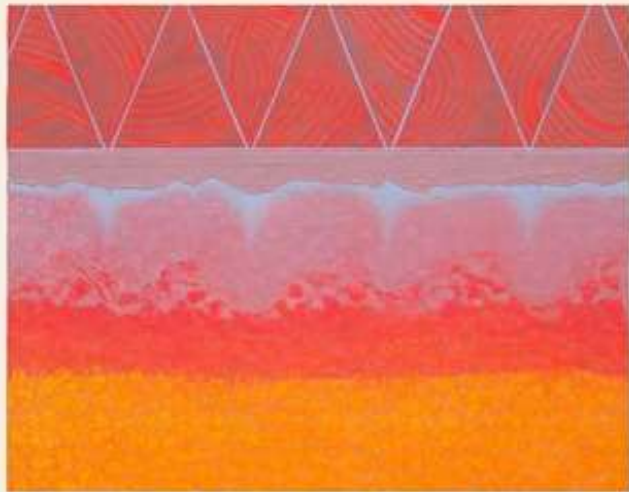
I avoid shows with themes. The one exception is a painting I did for an exhibit with a theme "Possessions, Prized and Otherwise". I decided to paint my grandfather of whom I have very beautiful and painful memories. Painful because he chose to stay behind when we left Latvia. I incorporated a photograph of him in the painting, surrounded by sunlit meadows, waterlilies in the river, basically my childhood. It was a very difficult and cathartic process for me. This painting won a significant prize.

**Share with us your upcoming projects.**

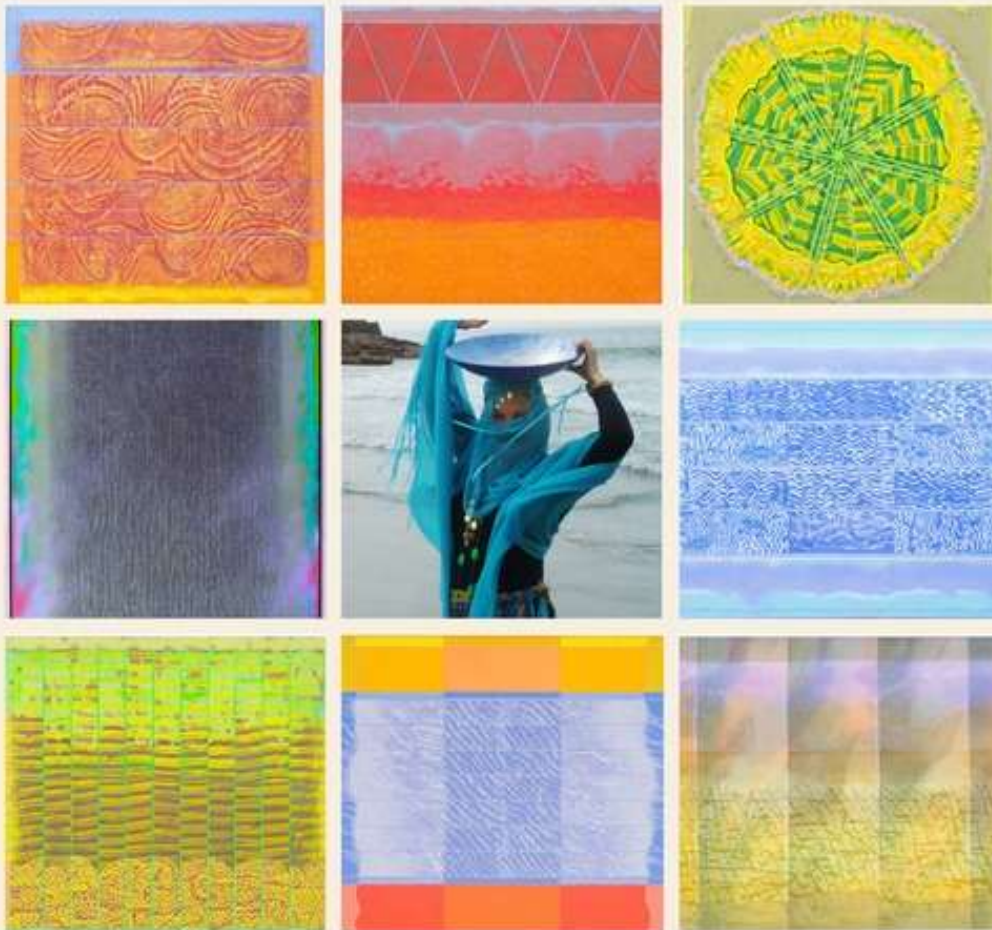
I will be exhibiting three paintings at the Baltic Centennial Celebrations in Boston. Besides that I will be continuing my autumn series with "Ode to Autumn #5" and many more. I feel that my best work is still to come.

**Tell us about where you are based.**

I live in Attleboro, Massachusetts. It is partway between two vibrant arts communities: Providence, Rhode Island, 30 minutes away and Boston, Massachusetts, which takes an hour to reach. Attleboro itself is a quiet residential town, a very convenient place to live, safe place to ride my bicycle. I do this summer evenings to enjoy the sunset - the many coloured clouds. We will probably stay here because my daughter, son in law and granddaughter live only an hour away and because here is my studio which my husband built for me.



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