

# RACHEL MAXI

Seattle, WA

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## **About the painting, Divine Mind**

*For me, Divine Mind means being in tune with nature, and all that is. It is to be one with the life force - we are all part of the cycle of all that is. I believe in an all pervasive spirit, a field of energy. All of us are part of the same organism.*

*Deepak Chopra said it this way, "Underlying the infinite diversity of life is the unity of one all-pervasive spirit. There is no separation between you and this field of energy."*

*And for Emerson: "There is a soul at the [center] of nature and over the will of every man."*

## **About Me**

*I am a painter, sculptor and assemblage artist. I have been residing in Seattle since 1990. My main interest has involved landscape and built environments, interiors and exteriors. I explored representational landscape and still life oil painting from approximately 1998 to 2015. A combination of experiences led me to my current body of work. The first one, around 2011, was taking ceramics classes where I made cups and bowls. I liked the meditative work process, and it got me thinking more about abstraction and sculpture. The second one, a bit of a road to Damascus event, occurred in 2015, when I was struck by a car while crossing the street in St. Louis. I spent two weeks in the hospital there, then came home and slowly began my recovery, and my current body of work evolved in that process. I was wanting to develop a new language with my art and studio practice that addressed something more personal and spiritual. In 2018, I undertook a one month artist residency in Morocco, and came away from that experience with new imagery and a desire to make sculpture. From 2020 through 2022, I did several more residencies in the American West. Playa at Summer Lake, Oregon; Joshua Tree, California; Willapa Bay, Lopez Island, and last fall, Banner Wyoming.*

*I had a solo show at i.e. Gallery in Edison, WA in 2020 and then again in July of 2022 showcasing much of the work completed or begun during those residencies. I have included Margy Lavelle's (owner and director of i.e.) lovely writings and observations here:*

*"i.e. is pleased to present Rachel Maxi's newest body of work in a solo exhibit. As a long time art observer, I am always impressed when an artist jumps the track. Especially when he or she leaves a style of work that is critically successful to venture into the unknown. That is what Maxi did after 20 years as a realist painter. For the past 5 years she has been making work that crosses borders from flat to 3 dimensional, and back again, with paintings that often look like sculpture and sculpture with beautifully painted surfaces. But they are all of one piece. Elements are broken down and put back together again. We see it in a new way. Maxi gives us a fresh and playful look at constructivism - one with texture and depth and gorgeous color."*

*"i.e. is pleased to welcome back Rachel Maxi for her second solo exhibit with us. Maxi crosses over the boundaries between flatwork, painting, sculpture, assemblage and now wearable art with dynamism, ease and power. Her strong sense of color and surface detail transport us into her totemic, ancient world. With added touches of 24 carat gold and selenite crystals we reside in a place of both the exotic and the deeply known. A 6 week solo residency in Joshua Tree in the middle of winter this past year allowed her to explore the desert terrain; its other worldly rock formations and twisted trees. Maxi finds great inspiration in such places. And we are invited to witness the experience through her work."*



Artist in Residence, Joshua Tree, California, 2021  
Photo credit: Mimi Payne

## **Artist Statement**

*I am a former realist painter now doing abstract work. This gradual shift started several years ago. While my representational work reflected a very abstract compositional quality, it was within the framework of a landscape or a familiar subject. I still am inspired by many of the same things I see in the world: nature, seasonal color and light, urban landscapes, stucco and concrete painted walls, the quality of light on architecture and trees, walls with patches of painted-over graffiti, rusty old vehicles parked on the street and urban decay.*

*I often draw on these themes for ideas about color, composition and form to incorporate into my painting or palette later. I work intuitively: when I am in the studio, I start tapping into a work rhythm, letting the line, brush or shape go without looking at anything, just letting my hand guide that line, a sort of meditative automatic drawing. The same with sculpture and collage - pulling things together or apart - carving, and building. I am loving the puzzle of balancing the various elements in a sculpture or a painting, harmonious and dissonant, dark and light, illusions and real form. I generally don't sketch out a plan or blueprint to work from, except maybe loosely for a large painting, but it always changes and evolves in the act of painting it. And the same with sculpture, I let the material tell me how it wants to go, selecting pieces, holding them next to each other and feeling for the natural physical logic of things.*

*In general, my thoughts are often about existential stuff, people, animals, our relationship with our natural and built environments historically, culturally and spiritually.*

*I suppose my newer work sprung from a trauma that occurred in 2015, the subsequent recovery, and the complicated joy of pressing on through darkness. For me, it expresses a different measure of time, open and nonlinear. Moving in waves, on all fronts, slow and persistent.*



*Oracle of the Mollusk, Oil and gold leaf on canvas, 60" x 48", 2022*

## CV Highlights

### EDUCATION

Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH 1988

Exhibition History

### RECENT SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 i.e. Gallery, Edison, WA

2020 i.e. Gallery, Edison, WA

2019 Art X Agent, Waitburg, WA

2018 Imogen Gallery, Astoria, OR

### RECENT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 The En, Seattle WA

2022 Orcas Paley, Seattle, WA

2018 Studio e, Seattle, WA

2016 Seattle Painting Now Survey, Seattle, WA

### RECENT RESIDENCIES, AWARDS, AND PUBLICATIONS

2022 Jentel Foundation; 1 month artist in residence Banner, Wyoming

2021 Willapa Bay AIR; 1 month artist in residence Willapa Bay, WA

2021 Joshua Tree Highlands; 6 week solo Artist in Residence, Joshua Tree, CA

2020 PLAYA: 1 month artist in residence, Summer Lake, OR

2018 Green Olive Arts; 1 month artist in residence, Tetouan, Morocco