



CADE TOMPKINS PROJECTS

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**RI Artist Bianco Receives First Public Art Commission in NY - Inside Art with Michael Rose**

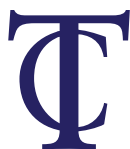
Wednesday, October 19, 2022

*Michael Rose, Art Contributor*



*Artist Allison Bianco PHOTO: Brandon Smith Photography*

Allison Bianco is one of Rhode Island's most accomplished printmakers. With artworks owned by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, RISD Museum, Yale University Art Gallery and others, Bianco has established herself as a highly sought after and collectible artist. In her latest project, Bianco has completed her first-ever public art commission, a tile mural for Public School 958 in Brooklyn, NY. Titled *Curious Tide*, this special installation is bringing Bianco's vision to new audiences beyond her home state.



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Bianco has spent her life in Rhode Island and continues to make her home and studio here. Represented by Providence's Cade Tompkins Projects, Bianco earned her BA from Mount Holyoke College and her MFA from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. In addition to maintaining her own studio practice, she has served as a visiting artist at a number of schools and universities throughout New England and beyond and has taught at a number of institutions.

Speaking of the role her home state has played in her artmaking, Bianco says, "Being a lifelong Rhode Islander, I have an affinity for our little state, the diversity of our landscape and the richness of the artist community that resides here. Most of my work creates a visual history of Rhode Island and includes oceanscapes. I'm interested in the ways that the space between water and land can change slowly over time, or drastically with the onset of huge storms, and how the physical changes can cause a shift in our remembrance of those places."

Primarily a printmaker, Bianco has shared her works on paper in numerous exhibitions across the country and internationally. Her new public art project in Brooklyn is a departure in medium but carries with it many of her recognizable themes.







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*ALL INSTALLATION PHOTOS: Samuel Morgan Photography*

Describing the public art program and explaining the process behind her latest work, Bianco says, “Curious Tide is my first public art commission for P.S. 958 Brooklyn, through the New York City School Construction

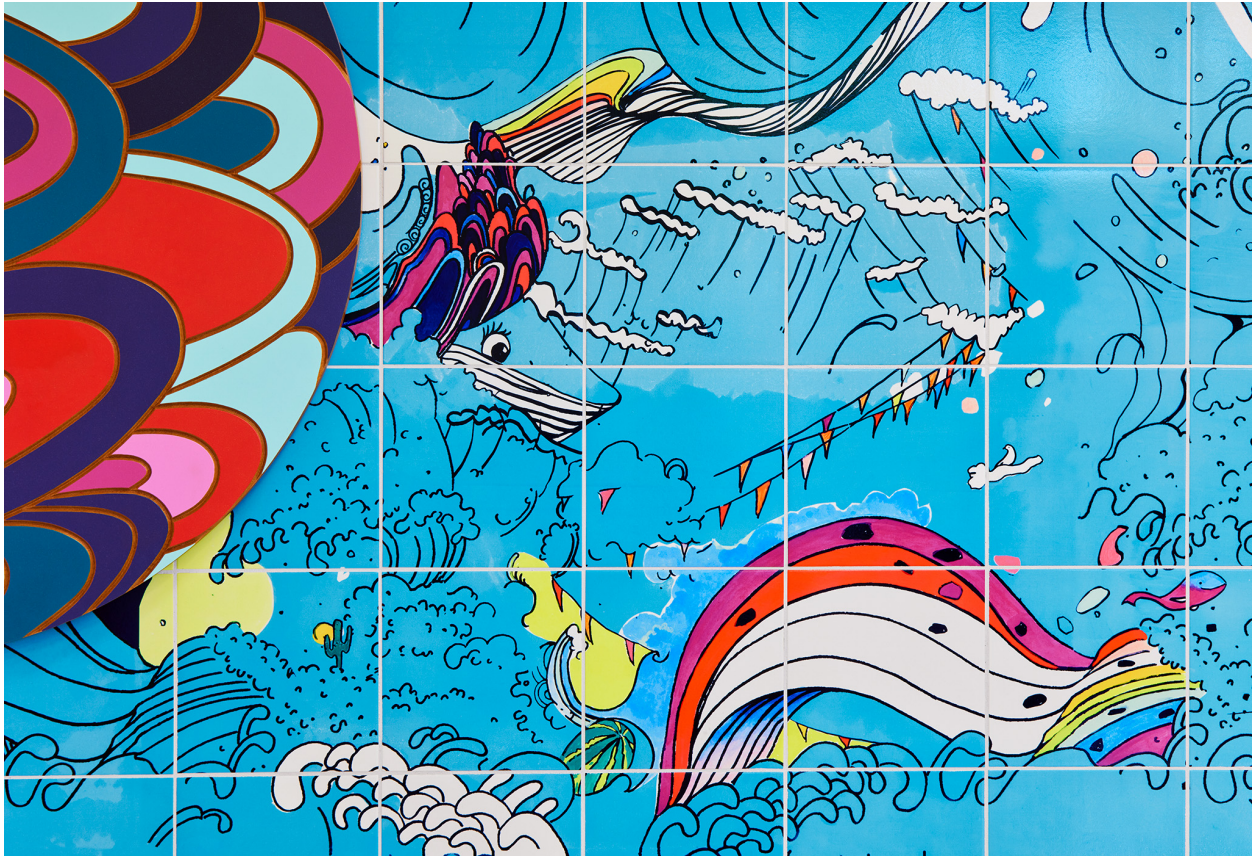
Authority, Public Art for Public Schools program. The program is great for artists who haven't previously worked on a larger scale because there is support from the program, via panels, directors and a project manager who can guide the translation of a medium like printmaking into new materials. For this project, my original screen prints were digitized locally at io Labs, and then printed onto porcelain at a tile company in Missouri. The mahogany suns were fabricated in the studio of local artist Ben Watkins.”

The resulting installation features Bianco's aesthetic in a new format permanently installed in a public education space in Brooklyn. With this work now in the Collection of the NYC Department of Education Public Art for Public Schools program, it can be counted alongside other artworks by the likes of Faith Ringgold and Romare Bearden that also appear in New York City Schools.





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Reflecting on what excites her most about her commission in Brooklyn, Bianco is considerate of her own experience. She states, “In a way, it is like realizing a dream. For me, elementary school was the time when art making became important and exciting. I remember feeling so proud when my work was shown in the display case in the lobby of Old County Road School in Smithfield. To have the entire lobby of a new public elementary school in Brooklyn filled with my creation in a permanent way is beyond rewarding. I hope the kids love it.”

Her project in Brooklyn has deeply impacted Bianco’s process and she has begun to see her own printmaking process in new ways. She says, “The development of Curious Tide has moved my printmaking into a more sculptural and installation-based place, and I am interested in developing ways that print media on paper can be site-specific and how the frames themselves can bend around corners or along hallways to become sculptural conduits for viewing the prints. I am currently researching some of the large storms and hurricanes that have impacted our state. I’m hopeful that viewing these prints within the context of the space outside, what that landscape looked like then and what it looks like now, can evoke conversations about our future.”



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Bianco is one of Rhode Island's most visionary artists and it is exciting to see her work featured in a distinguished public art program in New York. It will be still more exciting to see what exciting projects next come to life from her local studio.