

## SERENA BOCCHINO

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Serena Bocchino. *Soar*. 2015. Enamel and mirrors on canvas. 28 x 34 inches.

Serena Bocchino continues to take any viewer on a lyrical journey that is imbued with the motifs of music, the rhythm of poetry and the consistency of prose. In her paintings and drawings, the artist throws the gestural line across each composition, marking both an investment in and reflection of physical movement. Of course this aspect has not been lost on anyone since her art is currently featured in 36 public collections across the country. Bocchino renders a trace that moves throughout time, across different surfaces and with an array of optimistically light colors.

2015 was a defining year for the artist. After two decades of solo exhibitions, public commissions and awards, Serena Bocchino stepped back to bring her entire career together in a catalogue titled *Serena Bocchino: The Artist* that opens with an insightful essay by curator Kathleen Goncharov. The Art Mora Gallery in New York City hosted a solo exhibition of the artist's paintings from April to May 2015. From November 2015 to January 2016, the J. Cacciola Gallery continued a presentation of the artist's most recent work with Gallery W in an exhibition titled *Harnessing the Universe: Selected*

*Works 2000 – 2015 by Serena Bocchino.*

Throughout the catalogue that accompanied both exhibitions art writers Lisa Banner, Jonathan Goodman and Lily Zhang revive the placement of the artist within the 1980s East Village while identifying the multi-cultural outreach inherent within her work. Much of Bocchino's art made during the 1980s focused on the figure and what she observed in front of her, as seen in *Portrait of a Man* (1979) and *After John Singer Sargeant*. (1980) However by the mid-1980s the East Village art scene had been heavily effected by the suffering and losses brought about by AIDS.

At that time Serena Bocchino painted stand-alone instruments such as drums, saxophones, violins and bells. Each subject appeared in the distance, shrouded with either dark or light oil color while suggesting the absence of musicians. If one sees these paintings as statements, each one is soft-spoken, monosyllabic and seemingly incomplete. But that was clearly the point since Bocchino soon moved on toward more abstract backgrounds, punctuated with surrealist motifs as seen in *Calling All Angels*. (1989)

By the early 1990s, the artist moved entirely away from literal, figurative painting and pursued planes of pure color. In doing so, Bocchino realized the manifestation of her own emotions through layers of intensity. By 2000 the smears and drips became colorful circles and lines that were intersected with additional cursive curves made of graphite. As soon as the artist begins to suggest familiar shapes, such as the helix, Bocchino's form folds, moves backward and expands forth into a constellation that is equally defined by a series of juxtaposing marks and lines. Serena Bocchino achieves outstanding quality in *The Word Series* (2010), *The Conversations in White Series* (2011) and *The Fever Series* (2012) before culminating into large-scale paintings such as *Early Yellow* (2015) and *Orange Crossing Blue* (2015).

*Serena Bocchino: The Artist* is available through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

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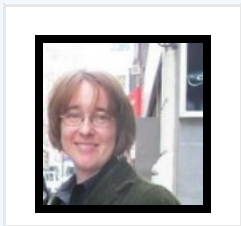
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Jill Conner is New York Editor for Whitehot Magazine and is a Contributor to Afterimage, Art in America, ArtUS, Art Papers, Interview and Sculpture. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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