

An abstract painting featuring a vibrant, multi-colored background with swirling, organic shapes in shades of teal, blue, and green. The composition is dominated by large, stylized, starburst-like shapes in bright yellow, orange, and red, which appear to be exploding or radiating from the center. A small, detailed bird is perched on one of the starburst shapes. The overall style is dynamic and expressive, with a mix of bold colors and intricate details.

Featured Artist Kara Maria

Paintings

Abstract Wildlife and Endangered Animal Paintings by Kara Maria

Artist Kara Maria highlights endangered and other species within her bold abstract paintings. Learn more by visiting her [website](#).



"Heed the Mauve of Twilight (California Tiger Salamander)" Acrylic on Canvas, 26" x 26"

I make paintings, drawings, and prints that may appear to be completely abstract at first glance—filled with bright colors, cartoon shapes and paint marks that stain and drip over the canvas. Upon closer observation, small, realistically rendered details emerge from the cacophony.



"Trump's Bee (Rusty Patched Bumble Bee)" Acrylic on Canvas, 26" x 26"

These have included images such as surveillance cameras, fragments of bodies, the wreckage left behind after disasters, military aircraft and birds in flight. In my recent work, detailed portraits of endangered animals exist within the abstract environments, directing attention towards the alarming rate of species extinction now occurring on our planet.



"Yellow-Shouldered Blackbird" Acrylic and Watercolor on Paper, 22" x 30"



"Sumatran Tiger" Acrylic and Ink on Paper, 22" x 30"

As my idea was sparked by reading Elizabeth Kolbert's 2014 book *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (where she asserts that we are now witnessing the largest mass extinction since the annihilation of the dinosaurs about sixty-six million years ago), I made a painting depicting a Panamanian golden frog, one of the animals whose stories she discusses at length.

Some paintings include well-known endangered animals such as the polar bear and monarch butterfly. Other paintings focus on endangered local animals—those from the United States, and especially those from California. I recently completed paintings that include a California Condor, a northern spotted owl and a Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog.



"Earth-Shattering (Monarch Butterfly)" Acrylic on Canvas, 84" x 72"

I am also interested in animals that are not endangered per se, but dwell in the wildland-urban interface, and have conflicting relationships with the people living around them such as mountain lions, bears and coyotes among others.

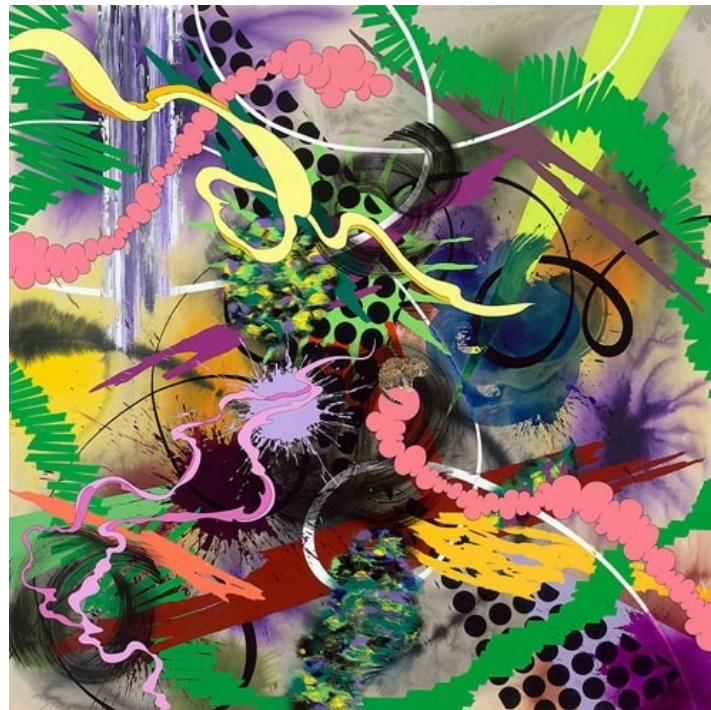


"Innumerable Infinite Songs (California Condor)" Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 60"



"She Will Hang the Night With Stars (Northern Spotted Owl)" Acrylic on Canvas, 26" x 26"

From 2014 to 2015, I was an artist-in-residence at Recology (the San Francisco dump). My project there was to use canvases I found in the trash and over-paint them with recycled acrylic paint. The abstract portions of the paintings speak to the environment of the Recology facility, a constantly churning and tumultuous place. For the representational elements, I included the creatures that live and work at the site.



"So Solve the Mystic Sun (Ocelot)" Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 60"



"Into the Blue (Whale Shark)" Acrylic on Canvas, 26" x 26"

Detailed images of seagulls, raccoons, hawks and other animals reveal themselves within the paintings. These animals are far from endangered; in fact they are thriving on our trash. My experience during the residency underlined for me the interconnected lives of humans and animals, and the impact our trash and desire to consume has on the natural environment. It also piqued my interest in the flip side of species loss: overly prolific and invasive species that are contributing to our biodiversity crisis.

According to the Center for Biological Diversity, dozens of species are going extinct every day. *"Because the rate of change in our biosphere is increasing, and because every species' extinction potentially leads to the extinction of others bound to that species in a complex ecological web, numbers of extinctions are likely to snowball in the coming decades as ecosystems unravel."* They predict that thirty to fifty percent of all species will be heading toward extinction by mid-century.



"Head Over Heels (Black Rhinoceros)" Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 48"

I acknowledge these animals in my work, and depict how our increasingly chaotic environment is becoming inhospitable to life.



Artist Kara Maria at work on a painting

Artist Kara Maria invites you to follow her on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).