

## **Artist Statement**

### **Melissa Lea Simmons**

Melissa Lea is an American artist recognized for her expressive abstract paintings.

Intuition leads her artistic decisions, as she manipulates layers of mixed media, color, line, and shape to create space, motion, and sentiment.

Quite often Melissa's original paintings have identifiable representations, such as floral bouquets, figures, or landscapes, and relatable subjects of joy, love, life, family, whimsy, and common bonds of humanity.

"I'm an abstract thinker and an expressive painter.  
I don't paint flowers; I paint flower shapes."

She conveys moments of self-reflection, experiences of life, and love for neighbor, through her use of strokes, imagery, media, and substrate. She intends to cause pause, curiosity, connection, and levity of spirit.



## **Biography**

### **Melissa Lea Simmons**

Melissa Lea Simmons (b.1967) is a lifelong New Hampshire, USA resident. She attended public schools in Manchester, NH, and earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Education with NH State Certification from Southern NH University in 2005.

After a 25-year career serving her community through businesses and education, she took a 15-year hiatus to heal from a debilitating chronic disease. During that time of recovery, she learned how to cook healthy meals, grow and preserve food, and enjoy a simpler life.

In 2019, Melissa and her husband, Rick (m.1999) moved into a new home in the same town where they've lived for over 30 years, Barrington NH. This was a 2-year new construction project where Melissa acted as designer and general manager. In January 2021, while painting their basement walls, Melissa didn't want to stop painting, so she added giant colorful murals around the basement. The basement walls "Kissy Fish Aquarium" became the spark that started her professional art career. She registered her business with New Hampshire in April 2021.

As a self-taught fine artist, Melissa Lea has created a body of work and has exhibited her art in galleries locally, regionally, and internationally online. She has received awards, has her work published, and is a member of several professional art associations. Her joyful energy and zest for the goodness of life are evident in all that she creates.