



MTA Arts & Design

Beach 44 Street **JILL PARISI** ***Coom Baroom, 2011*** Glass block

At the Beach 44 Street station, artist Jill Parisi used the scale allowed by walls of glass block to create imaginary sea creatures. In resplendent colors and intricate patterns they appear to float on the glass. These hybrid species are inspired by an unusual marine anomaly nearby, where the Gulf Stream carries various tropical fish to the region. Parisi referenced botanical cross-sections, jellyfish, sting rays, and triggerfish, in order to create the original works on paper that were later translated into the glass medium. These over-scaled and overlapping shapes and the play of sunlight on the glass create the sensation that you are looking underwater.

The subject matter is appropriate for a station that is situated in front of the ocean, in an area discussed as a future marine preserve. The strong sunlight that reaches the southbound mezzanine fills the station as light is refracted through the glass blocks, causing the entire wall to glow. In the evening the wall is illuminated from within, providing an outdoor view of the artwork.

Parisi titled the work after a passage from William Carlos Williams' prose poem, *Spring and All*, which contains many playful singsong lines including 'coom barroom-', which mimics the sound of crashing waves.

Parisi works mostly with handmade paper, using drawing and printmaking to create large-scale installations and small sculptures. Many of her prints and drawings are delicate hand painted works inspired by organic forms. In commenting on the experience of creating this work, she said, "I am very interested in creating a feeling of lightness and beauty for the viewer. I have also wanted to work in a more permanent medium for some time, and as a result of this project I have realized that glass is very fitting for my work. It interacts beautifully with architecture and nature."

