

meet the artist

# T.J. Bridge



T.J. Bridge was born in Miami, Florida in 1972, the son of two amateur painters. In this environment, Bridge began to experiment with watercolor and oil painting as early as 10 years of age. His first inspiration was the natural world around him, and he was particularly impressed with the extreme, opposite forms that this world can embody. He therefore concentrated on the peaceful oceans of the Florida coast, while also painting lofty mountains, barren deserts, and floral, fertile pastures – relishing these different settings.

Along with this reverence for nature, Bridge holds a deep respect for Southern culture, and specifically for its self-taught artistic tradition. These two passions – for the natural world and Southern traditions – not only inspired Bridge to paint breathtaking natural scenes, but to do so with a firm confidence that the self-taught artist's work is just as valid and potent as schooled, developed artwork.

Bridge moved with his family to Atlanta in the late 1980s, where he continued to research self-taught art, and improve on his own skills. He soon attended the University of Georgia at Athens, where he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting and drawing. While greatly improving his craft as a painter, Bridge nonetheless felt slightly unfulfilled by the removed and overly academic nature of the university setting. With this mindset, Bridge decided to take the better part of a year to travel the country, painting fast and instinctive renditions of the myriad landscapes around the United States. During these travels, Bridge reconnected with the extremes and complexities of nature that had first inspired him, mixing the simple forms and lines of nature with its complicated content.

Today, Bridge works out of his private studios in both Atlanta and Athens, continuing to explore the diverse complexities of the natural landscape.

