



PETER D. GERAKARIS *COSMIC BRIDGE* ARTWORK DESCRIPTION PS101K BROOKLYN, NY



Lobby entrance panorama. All artwork ©2019. Peter D. Gerakaris. a.r.r. | Photo: Mark Lennihan

COSMIC BRIDGE - A NYC Percent for Art Program commission by Peter D. Gerakaris, this hand-painted mural installation with acrylic on modular dibond panel is a site-specific artwork for [PS101K Brooklyn \(New York\)](#) measuring approximately 116 ft long x variable height.

Collection of the [NYC Department of Education](#), Public Art for Public Schools

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P + K
S + B



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

“Cosmic Bridge” is an immersive, honeycomb-shaped mural installation that transforms the lobby and cafeteria of PS101K (Brooklyn, New York). Also known as “The Verazzano School” — referring to the Florentine Italian explorer for whom the nearby iconic bridge is named — “Cosmic Bridge” invites students to link future and past.

Sprawling more than 116ft in length and painted entirely by hand with acrylic on modular Dibond panel, the honeycomb clusters respond specifically to the architecture. Having extensively researched the school’s history and surrounding ecology, the artist was inspired to include vibrant symbolism native to this place.

Verazzano foresaw the potential of this wondrous frontier: later developing into a luxurious maritime escape known as “Bensonhurst By The Sea”, the current population includes a diversity of immigrants from around the world. With alumni such as Carl Sagan, children enjoy an education steeped in science and tech. To bridge these rich strands, the artist has paid homage to everything from Sagan’s “Cosmos”, vis-à-vis the galactic spiral, to its aquatic counterpart — the nautilus shell. Historic elements such as the nautilus nod to the area’s history as a maritime hub, including the “Nautilus Boat Club” of 1883. Depictions of oysters and feathers also call to mind the region’s original ecosystem with which the indigenous Lenape people once symbiotically lived.

Upon entering, “Cosmic Bridge” offers two experiential narratives: one driven by color, the other through visual symbols. Visitors are immediately immersed in a “temperate climate zone” evoked by cool hues of blue, green, and stardust. As one moves further into the space, with imagery penetrating the glass partition, the color experience heats up: cool tones morph into hues of red, magenta, and orange signifying a change in climate. Furthermore, ChromaDepth Glasses – which “push and pull” colors to and from the surface – are available as an optional viewing experience to inspire students to connect art and science in this educational setting.

Visitors are invited to explore two coexisting frontiers: the cosmic and aquatic (e.g. macro and micro). When entering the lobby, all vignettes on the left walls consist of flowing galactic imagery, whereas all vignettes on the right side represent vibrant nautical environments. In addition to referencing the creative potential of the bee, the honeycomb represents notions of science, community, and the power of education to nurture independent thinking in youth as children eventually form the future of our collective society.

Encouraging a connection with and awareness of Nature, specific flora and fauna of symbolic importance to Brooklyn and New York State are whimsically interpreted throughout the painting. Iconic flowers include the Forsythia (official flower of Brooklyn), Rose (official flower of NY State), Rosebuds (emergence of children in the world) and the Cosmos flower, in addition to the Oyster and Striped Sea Bass (official saltwater fish of NY State). Ultimately, this work seeks to nurture a meaningful connection to place for continuing generations of students.