

# S N Y D E R M A N - W O R K S G A L L E R I E S

## **Marilyn Pappas**

Statement 2015: The Life of Color Series

My recent stitched drawings in *The Life of Color* series have evolved from my continuing interest in ancient Greek and Roman sculptures of women. Drawn from memories of my travels through Mediterranean countries where I first became enamored of classical sculptures, my early interpretations of these larger than life goddesses were stitched with monochromatic threads on linen. Scarred and broken by the ravages of time, there is a peculiar beauty, vulnerability and dignity in these fragmented personifications of idealism. A central focus for me is a concern for how time has altered classical sculptures, their presentation and preservation, and the ways we view, interpret, question and learn from the mysteries of antiquity. I think we relate to and find comfort from icons that have survived over time. Although damaged, these sculptures express a poetry of imperfection that remains poignantly human and relevant today.

After seeing the exhibition, *The Gods in Color* at the Harvard Museum Sackler Museum several years ago, I began to explore ways of introducing color into the stitched figures. Loving and missing color in my work, I had already begun to add brightly colored stitched flowers into some of my pieces. For me these colored flowers represented a life force that these ancient sculptures still express. Although I knew that the figures we now see as white marble were originally painted in bright colors, I had no idea that the colors were so vivid, even garish, and so intricately patterned, until I saw the reproduction sculptures in the Sackler exhibit. Not wanting to just show what these painted surfaces originally looked like, I began to imagine how the erosion of color and pattern may have looked over the centuries and how the broken, bleached out statues that we see today may have experienced an ever changing life of color and beauty. My early stitched assemblages from the 1960s and 1970s were extremely colorful and I have delighted in incorporating color and pattern into my work again.