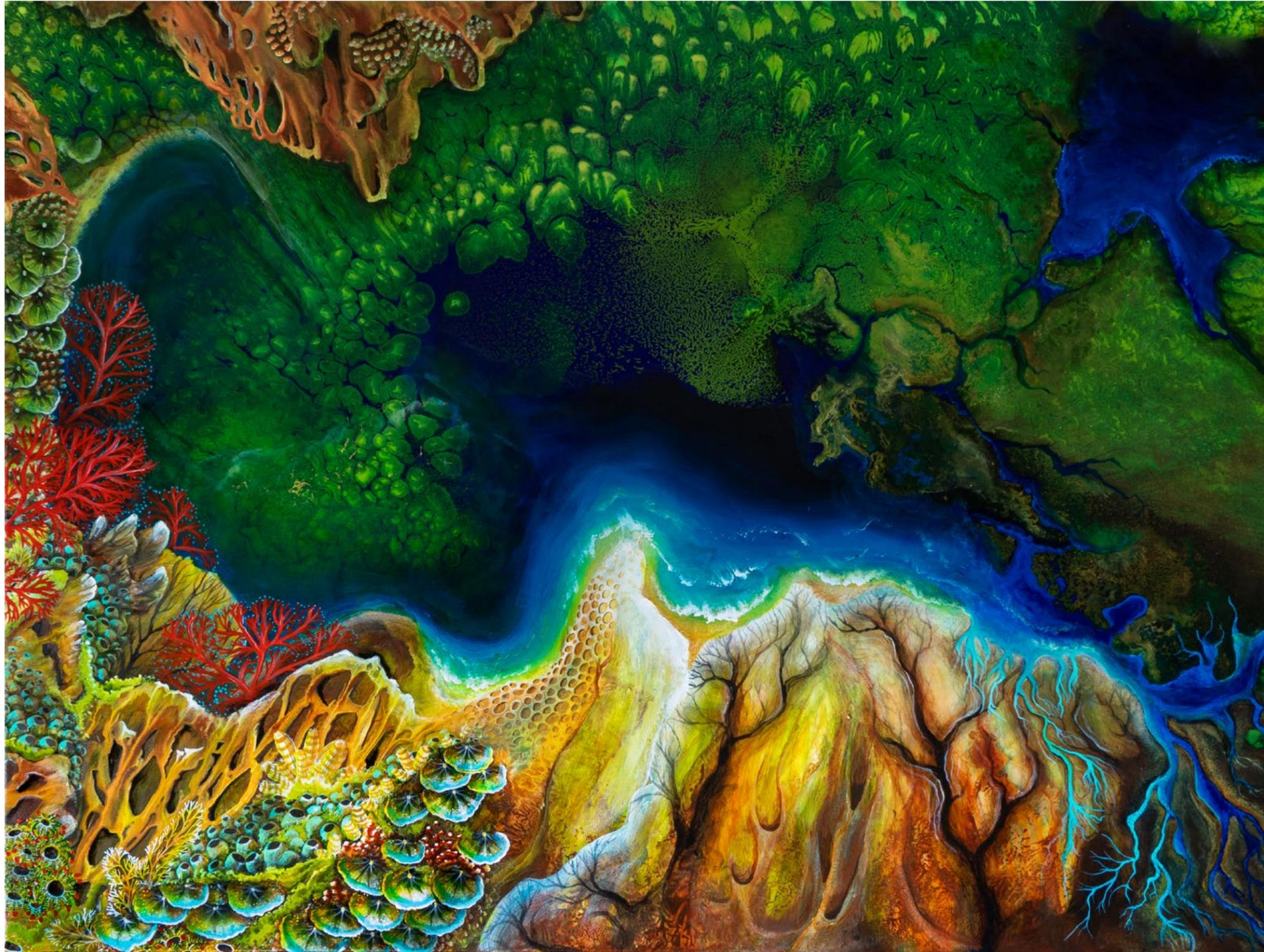


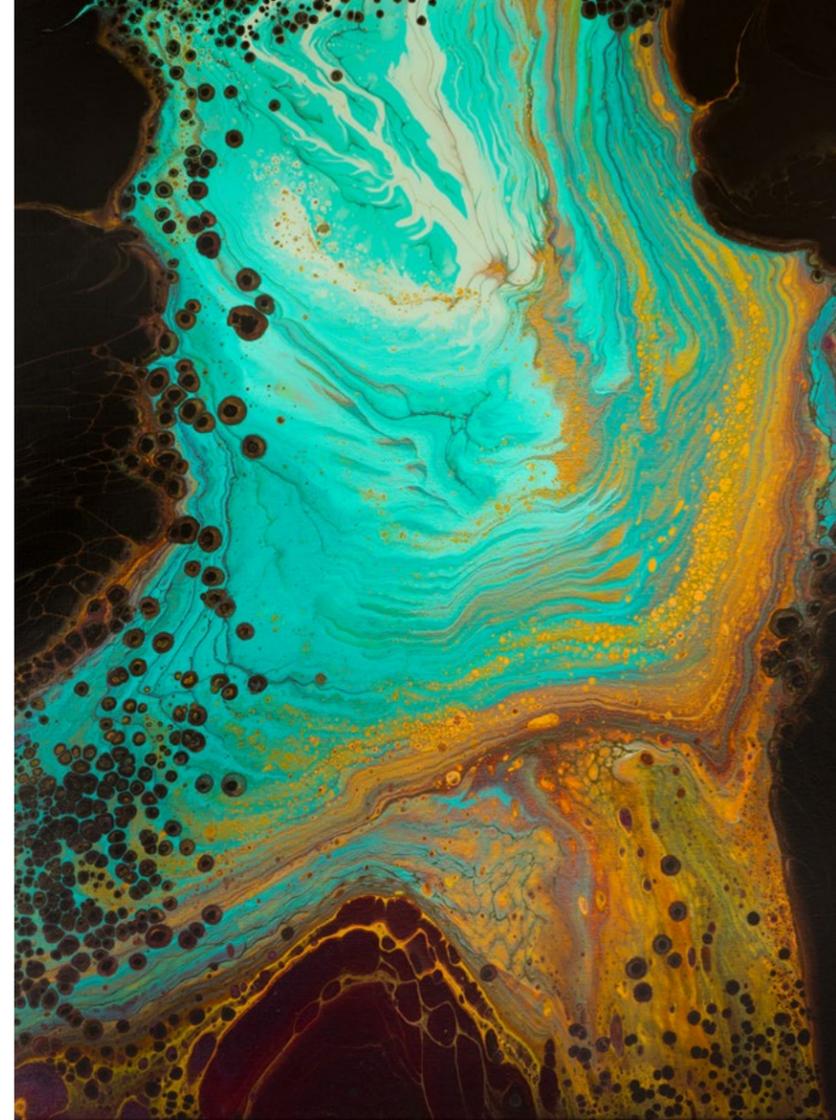
Elyse Fournier



P O R T F O L I O

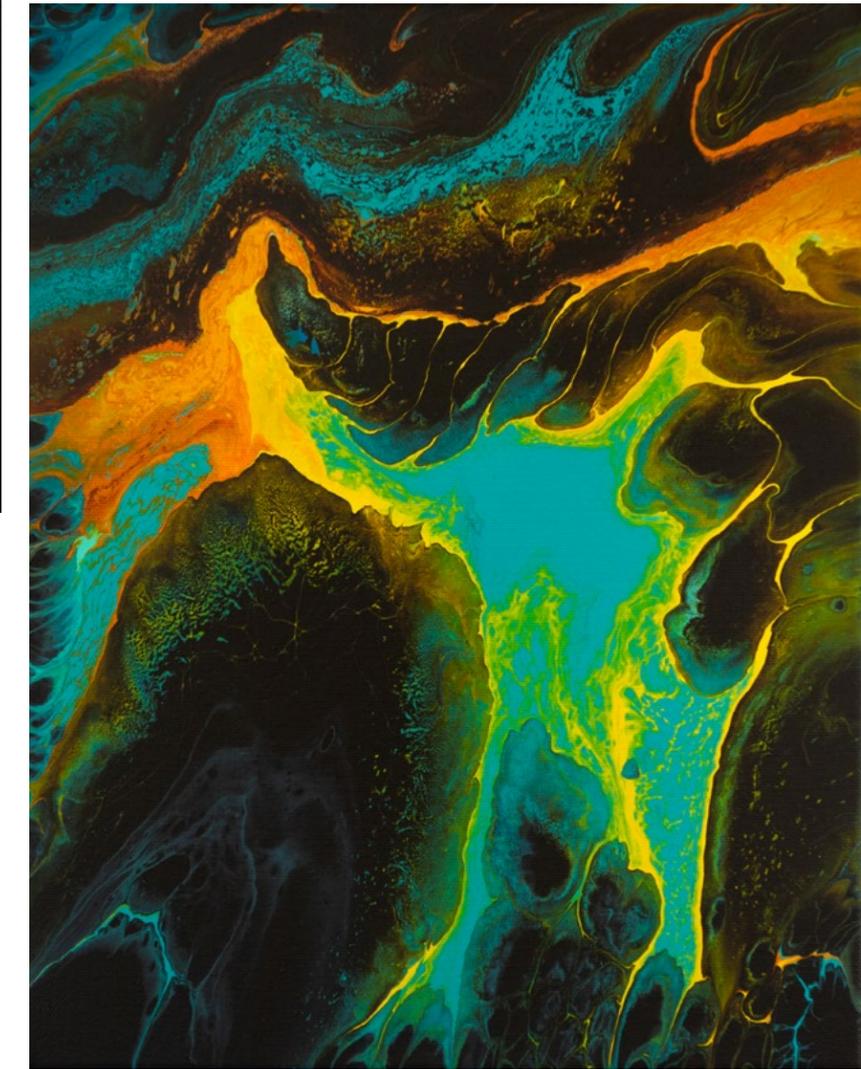


Deep Sea Coral Reef, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 20 x 16in



Deep Sea Exploration, from the *Into the Abyss* series by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 18in (left). The series is inspired by the mysterious and unknown areas of the planet. In this painting, writes the artist, "you can imagine to finally be able to see the light during the ascent to the surface after a voyage of discovery in the dark depths."

Bioluminescence 2, from the *Into the Abyss* series by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 14 x 11in (below). The artist writes, in this painting, "one can imagine the incredible colors of a bioluminescent microorganism of the depths, from a macro point of view."



Text edited by G. Symes
All artwork by and photos courtesy of Elyse Fournier

Originally from Quebec, Canadian self-taught multidisciplinary artist and horticulturist Elyse Fournier creates fantastic worlds within worlds, using a combination of techniques from painting by brush to fluid acrylic pouring on canvas, bringing to life surreal and abstract underwater scenes mixing vivid color and wandering imagination. *X-Ray Mag* interviewed the artist to learn more about her creative process and perspectives on art and nature.

X-RAY MAG: Tell us about yourself, your background and how you became an artist.

EF: I am an independent, relatively solitary, self-taught artist from

Quebec, Canada. I felt the need to create early in my life as my mind has always been wondering with imagination. Whatever the medium available, my hands needed to get to work to release that creative pressure

building inside of me.

My second passion being the world of plants, I studied three years to get a horticulturist technician diploma that would eventually lead me to work for Mosaïcultures Internationales

Elyse Fournier

portfolio

in Montreal in 2003 for the entire exhibition. I then began sharing my artistic side with the world by designing 3D mosaïcultures for the city of Dorval, using plants, moss, bark, driftwood and

metal. After working ten years as a horticulturist for the city, I came to the decision to follow my own artistic path. This eventually led to creating a successful YouTube channel (with more

than 38,000 subscribers) in which I demonstrate my methodology and creative process.

X-RAY MAG: Why reef life and underwater themes? How did you come to these themes and how did you develop your style of painting?

EF: I have this attraction to underwater worlds, without really knowing where it comes from. I have always been intrigued by the complex forms of life living within our oceans. I like to imagine parallel worlds where nature cannot be disturbed or damaged by humans. Having had these thoughts for many years, I decided to put my ideas on paper to create intricate and detailed abstract drawings by using inks and watercolors as a medium. Needing more intense colors, I then started experimenting with acrylics.

X-RAY MAG: Who or what has inspired you and your artwork and why?

EF: I have always been captivated by the beauty of our planet. Since I am mostly inspired by nature, David Attenborough's *Planet Earth* and *Blue Planet* documentaries hold a special place of inspiration in my art. But I want to stay true to myself and would rather not be influenced by any specific artist or artistic movement. This is important to me,



Forgotten Depths, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 14 x 12in

Life, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on black gallery wrapped canvas, 36 x 24in





Sea Dragon, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 16 x 16in

Elyse Fournier

at a time, adding details and new ideas as I paint.

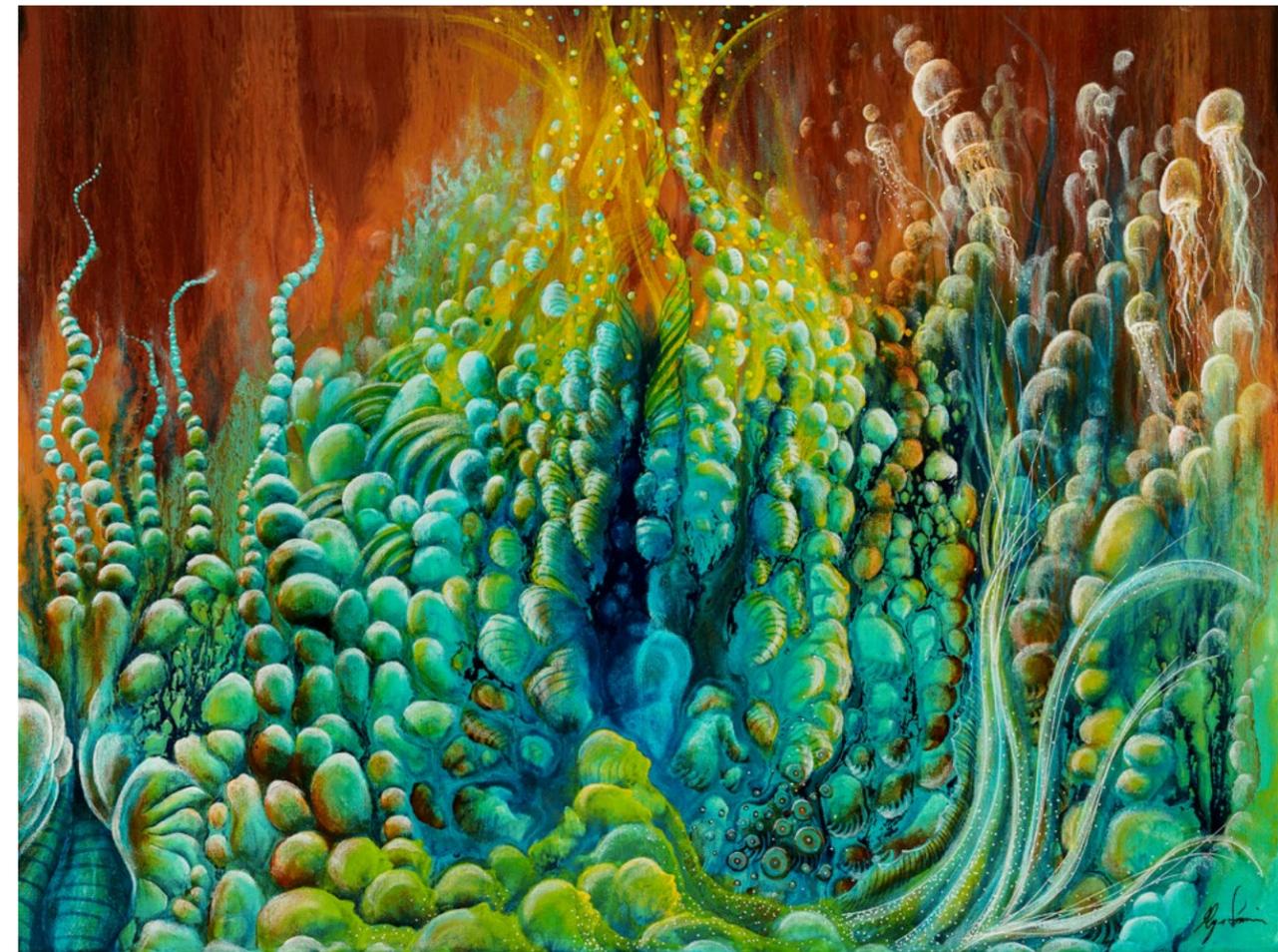
For my fluid acrylic paintings [ed.— abstract liquid art created through acrylic pouring], I begin by choosing a specific color palette, depending on the ambience I want to create. Next, I play with paint densities and brands to produce reactions that lead to a variety of different textures and patterns. When I am satisfied with the dried results, I leave the painting as it is, but most of the time, I use it as an inspiring background for a more complex hand-painted artwork. (See Elyse's video of acrylic pouring

because otherwise I would feel like I am following someone else's path and not my own. Improving my acrylic painting techniques is also not the most important thing to me. Rather, my goal is to better and more clearly create a vision or snapshot of my world and share it with the world.

X-RAY MAG: What is your artistic method or creative process?

EF: For my hand-painted artworks [ed.— painting by brush], the inspiration comes first. It can come from anywhere: a color, a texture, a pattern, a mood... Then, I begin instinctively painting on a canvas. There is no preparation, plan or sketch, because this can create an unnecessary pressure that restricts me. I then let my mind guide me to spawn a new world, one element

Lost in My Own World, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 24in



The Goddess of the Ocean, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 18 x 24in



Blue Mind, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 14 x 18in

Elyse Fournier

work relate to these issues?

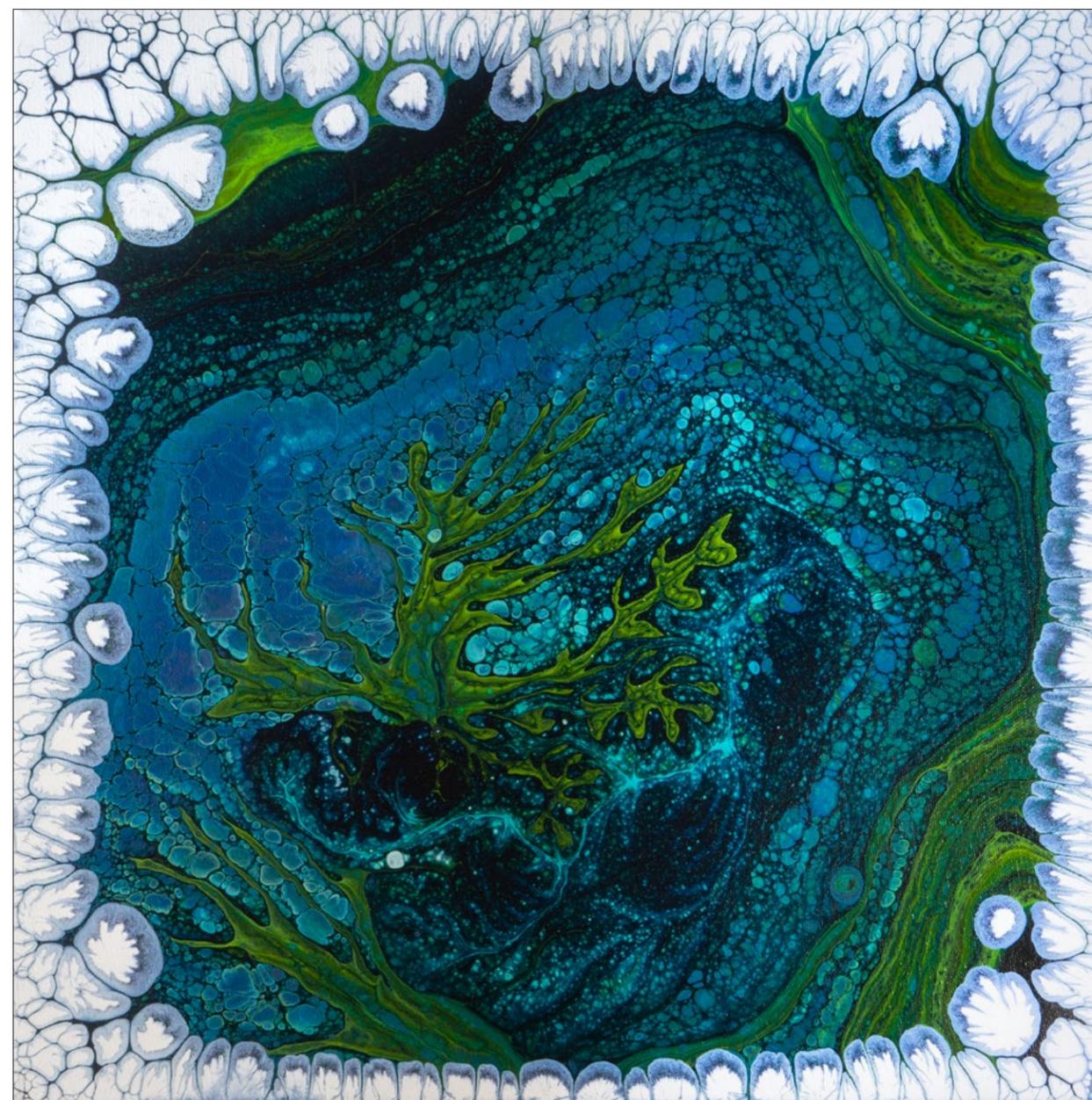
EF: I am not alone in believing in the importance of ocean conservation. It is imperative that we do our utmost to resolve so many of these issues that have resulted in massive losses of life underwater. I am bringing my passion for the ocean into each and every underwater painting in the hopes of raising awareness of coral reef fragility.

Sourcing materials is often a contradic-

tory action. I am fully aware acrylic paint is not ecologically friendly; however, I have yet to find suitable alternatives that are sustainable. In the meantime, I use best practices to handle and dispose of acrylic paints to minimize environmental impact.

X-RAY MAG: What is the message or experience you want viewers of your artwork to have or understand?

EF: I want viewers to dream and travel



Seaweed, by Elyse Fournier. Acrylic on canvas, 16 x 16in

in her artwork *Seaweed* on this page at: [youtube.com/watch?v=FWtsssNceE4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWtsssNceE4))

X-RAY MAG: What is your relationship to the underwater world and coral reefs? Are you a scuba diver or a snorkeler and how have your experiences underwater influenced your art? In your relationship with reefs and the sea, where have you had your favorite experiences?

EF: One of my dreams is actually to dive in a kelp forest. There is something so magical about it. I experienced snor-

keling only once, in a beautiful lake in Quebec when I was younger. While I was fishing there, I could not see any fish around the boat, so I got curious of their whereabouts and decided to take a closer look. I had by chance brought my mom's old snorkeling kit at the time. I used a fishing rod that I modified to be able to attract the fish while snorkeling.

The moment I dived in, I was filled by this amazing feeling of freedom. This hidden world was offering its beauty to me for free because I dared to look. I was soon surrounded by many curious

fish and completely lost any intentions I had of fishing. I could not get out of the water for a whole hour after that.

Contemplating the waves from the shore is impressive, but actually taking the time and effort to look below the water's surface changes you forever. That is a big reason why most of my work has an underwater theme. I was marked by this experience.

X-RAY MAG: What are your thoughts on ocean conservation and coral reef management and how does your art-

with me to these parallel worlds, untouched by the madness of humans and show them nature's reciprocity to help them realize all the damage we are inflicting on our own planet.

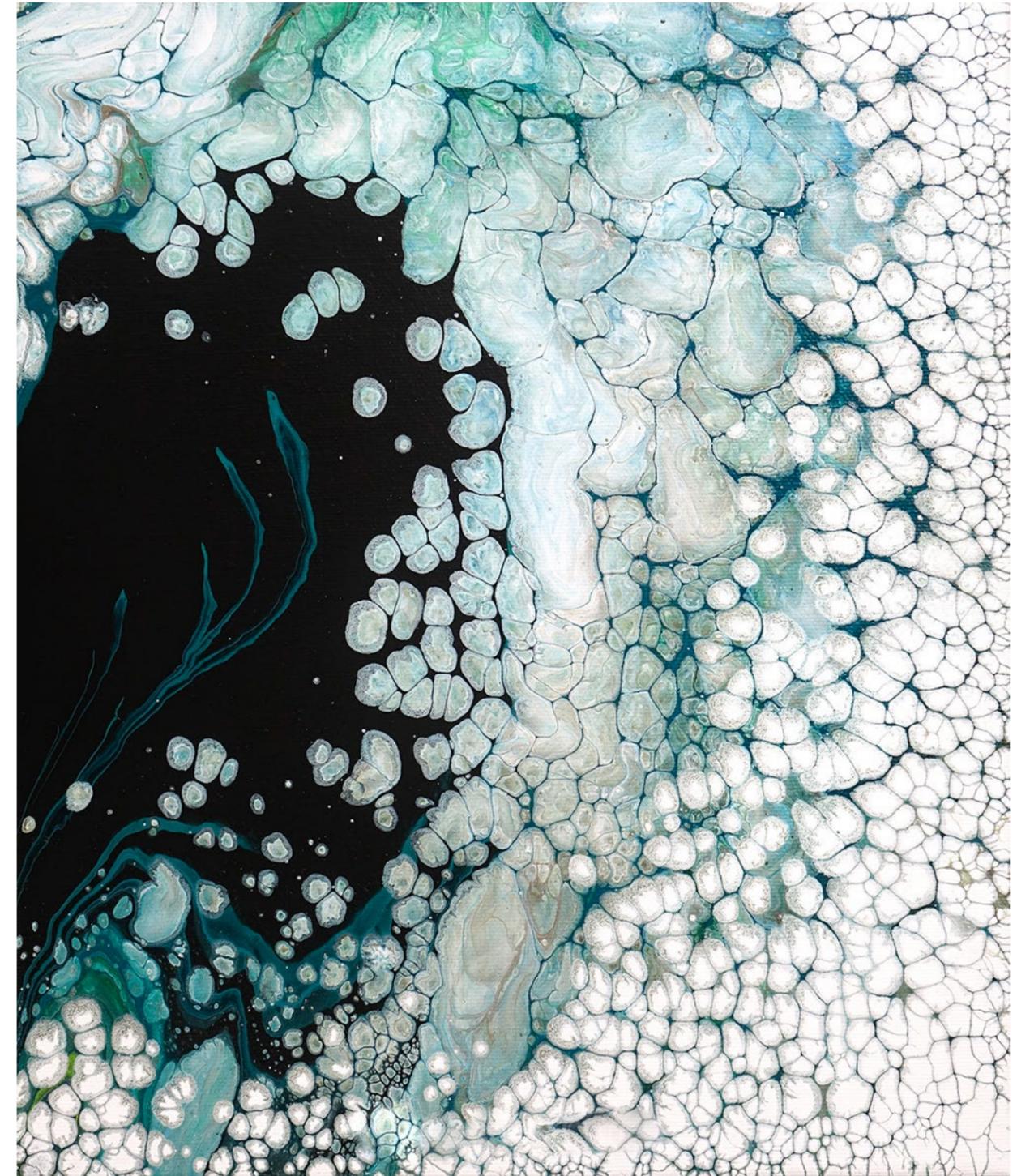
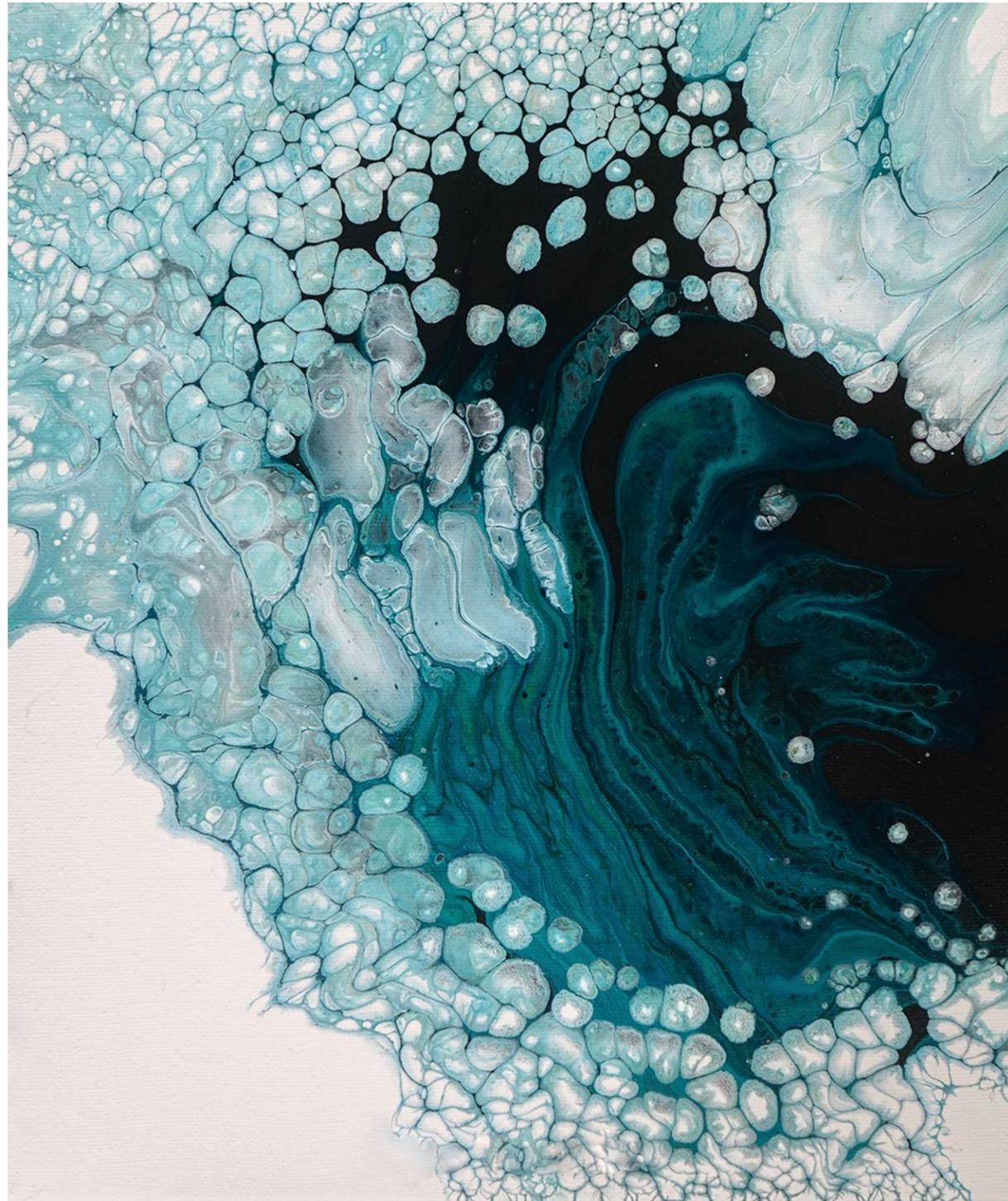
X-RAY MAG: *What are the challenges or benefits of being an artist in the world today? Any thoughts or advice for aspiring artists in ocean arts?*

EF: It has never been easier to share your art and message all around the world, by way of the Internet. This, however, can be a double-edged sword, as you really have to stand out from the crowd and get noticed. The very best advice I can give is to stay true to yourself. The key is to be original and to let your passion guide you. I believe it is important to use your art as a medium of communication and to free yourself internally.

X-RAY MAG: *How do people respond to your works?*

EF: People are usually amazed by how viewing my paintings takes them on a journey through my dreamlands. They imagine a whole personal story about each painting. I once got a comment on one of my YouTube videos from a woman telling me that watching my creative process actually made her cry because she could feel how this new world grew and evolved to be what it was in the final painting. I was really touched by this comment and it made me want to create even more.

X-RAY MAG: *What are your upcoming projects, art courses or events?*



Ice Cave, by Elyse Fournier. Two 12 x 10in acrylic paintings on canvas. See Elyse's video of acrylic pouring in the creation of this artwork at: youtube.com/watch?v=xEB_kKINMn8

EF: One of my goals is to have a solo exhibition incorporating my acrylic paintings, sculptures and mixed media artworks within the next five years. In the meantime, I will continue with my acrylic paintings but would like to incorporate

3D sculptures into them. I have so many unique projects in mind...

X-RAY MAG: *Lastly, is there anything else you would like to tell our readers about yourself and your artwork?*

EF: I would like to invite anyone who is interested in knowing more about my artworld and creative process to take a look at my YouTube channel where I take the viewer on a journey to discover how many of my underwater fantasy worlds

are brought to life. Please visit: youtube.com/c/ElyseFournier. ■

For more information and to purchase original artworks, please visit the artist's website at: elysefournier.net