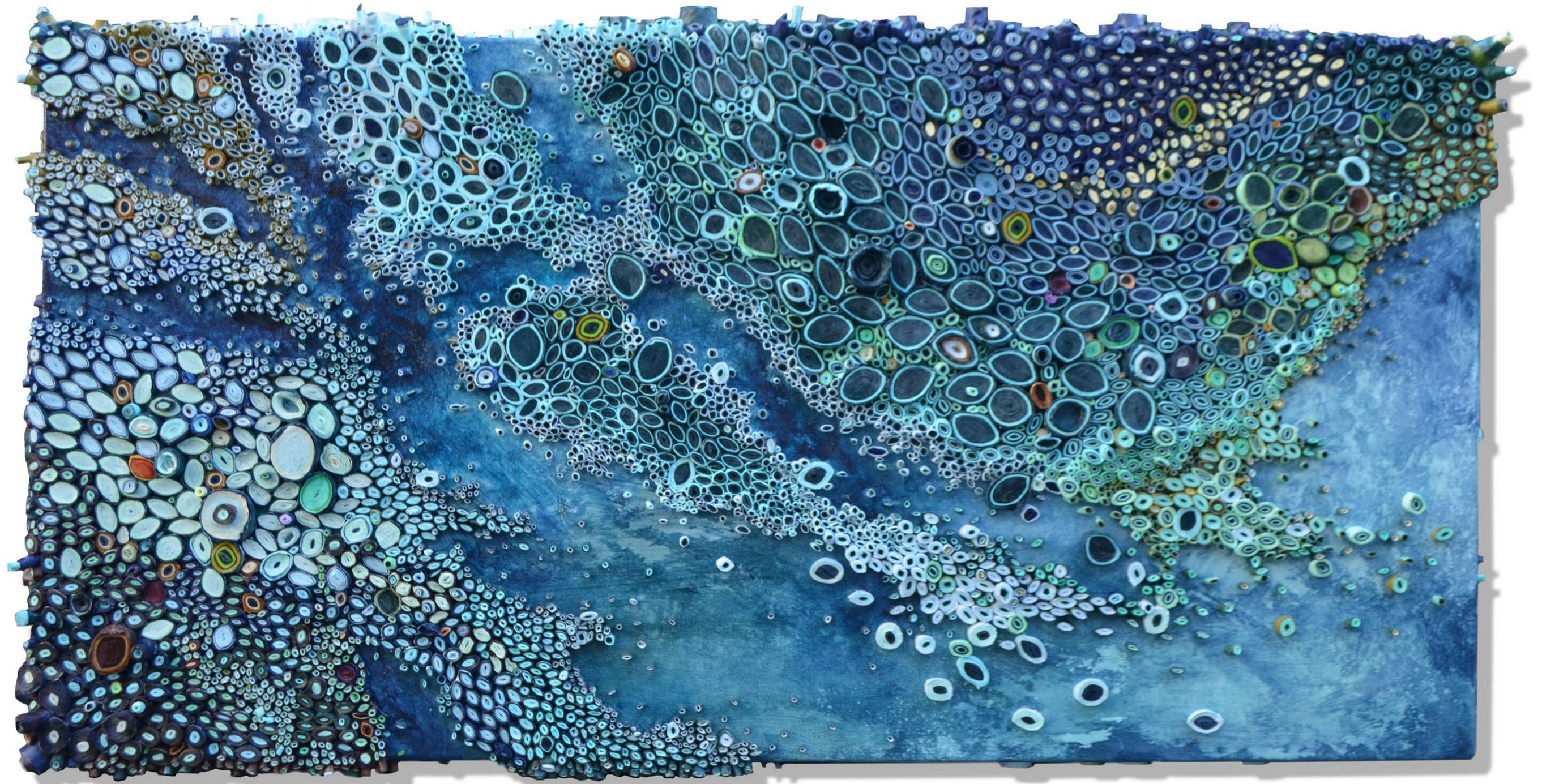
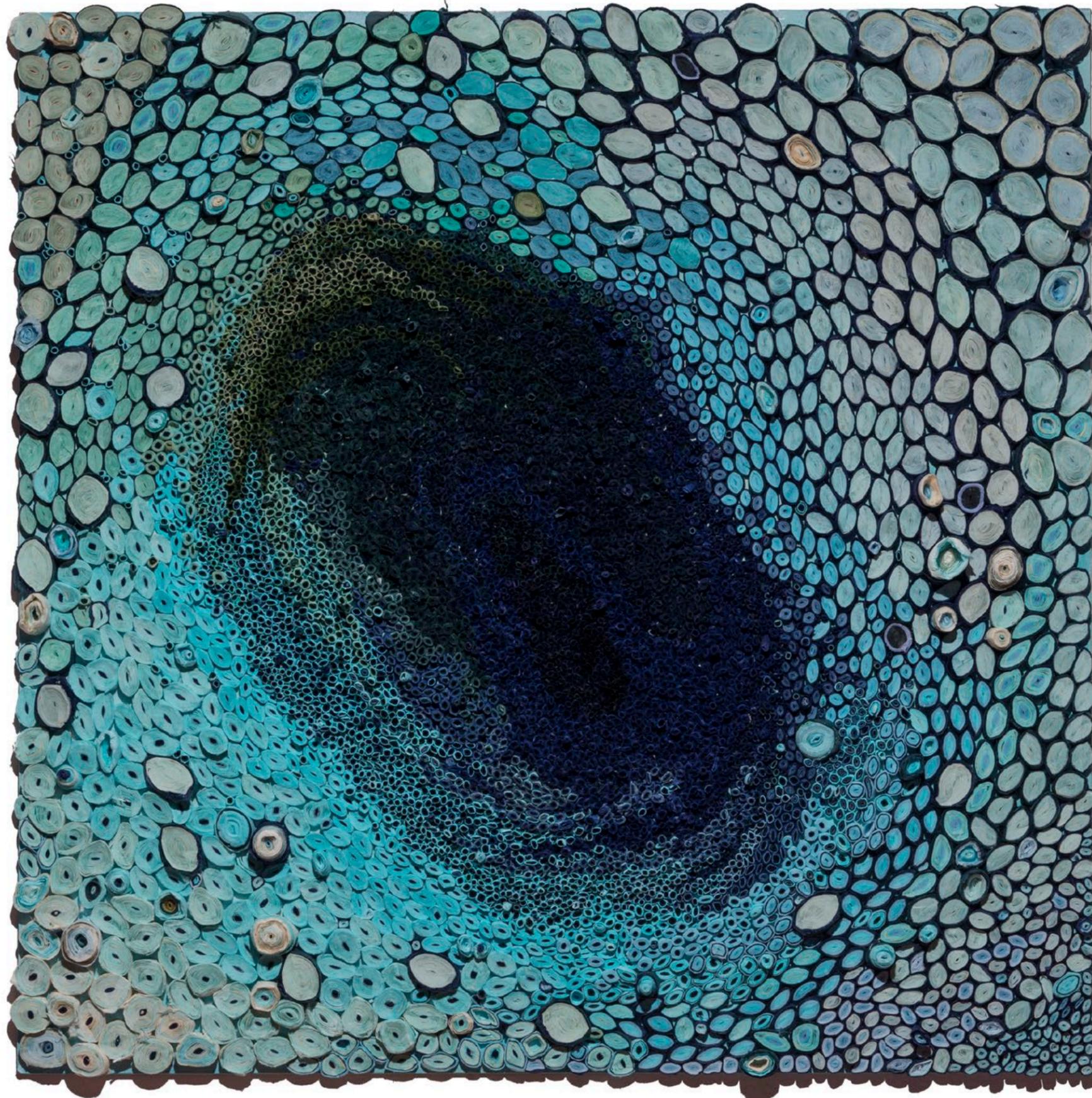


Amy Genser



P O R T F O L I O

Blue Abyss by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 36 x 36 x 1.5 inches



Text edited by Gunild Symes
All artworks and photos courtesy of Amy Genser

American artist Amy Genser works wonders with paper, transforming it into vibrant liquid images and cellular studies reminiscent of forms found in coral reef colonies and aquatic environments. A Connecticut native, Genser grew up by the sea, which greatly inspired and influenced her works of art. We caught up with the artist to gain an insight into her mesmerizing, textural pieces.

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

AG: I'm a mixed-media artist and mom of three sons (ages nine, eight and five) from West Hartford, Connecticut. I'm obsessed with paper and paint, color, patterns and texture. If I don't keep my hands busy working, I feel my whole system gets kinked up. I have energy that I am somehow only able to release through my work. I found my way to my paper medium while studying for my master of fine arts degree at the Rhode Island School of Design.

My plan was to become a graphic design professor, but I took a detour after taking a paper-making class. After graduation, I kept playing around with paper and making all kinds of sculptural forms.

I wasn't able to make my own paper anymore, but found lots of options available from all over the world. When I discovered the layered, circular form, I loved how I could use this one simple module to create worlds of compositions.

I created a body of work and gave

myself two years to try to make a go of it in the fine art world. That was 14 years ago.

My studio is on the third floor of home. I work about five hours a day while my kids are in school. It is a juggling act. Because my studio is in my home, it's sometimes hard not to get "mess-tracted" as I call it (starting to do laundry, clean dishes, etc) but having the studio on another floor helps.

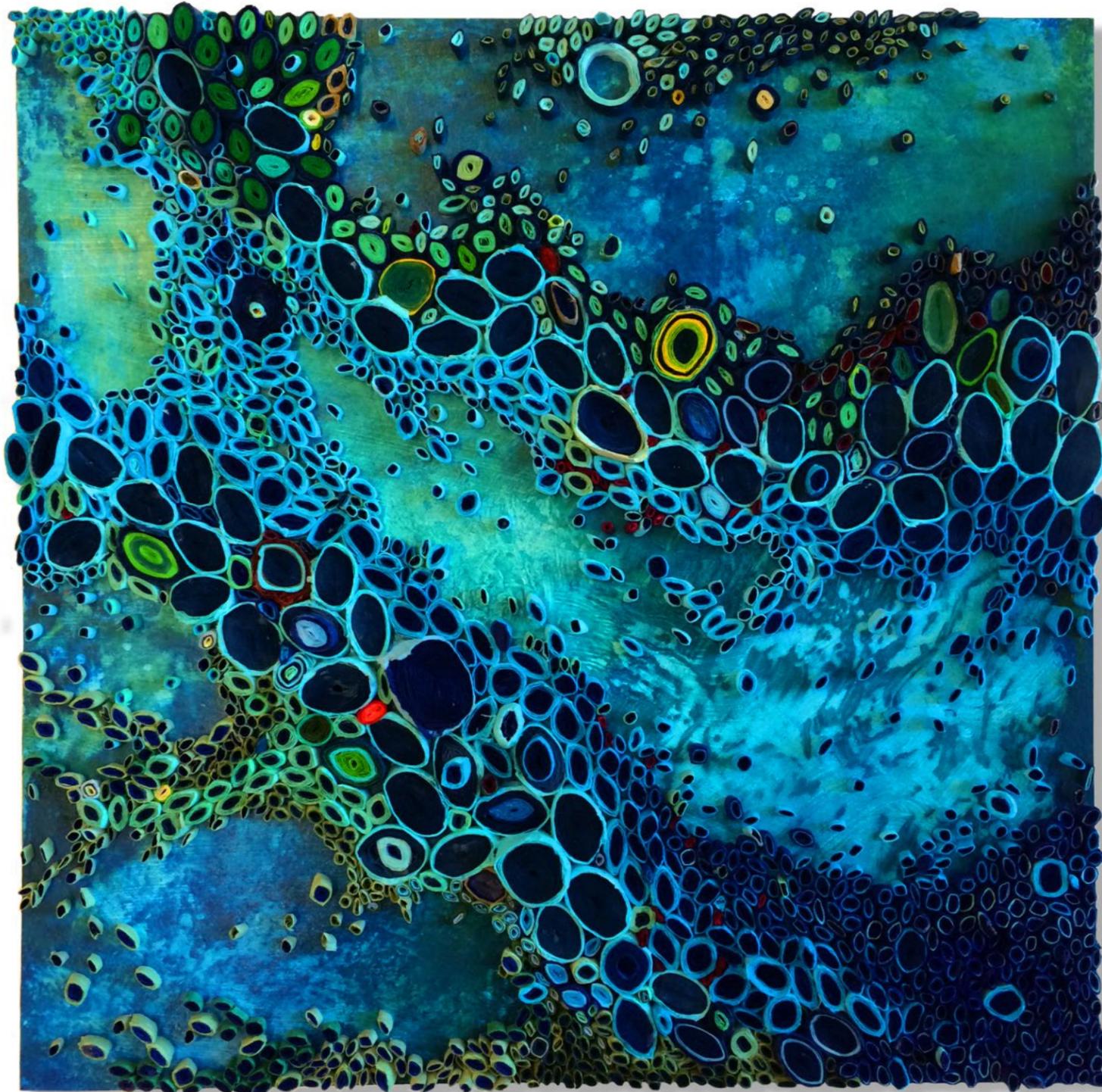
Going up the stairs is like crossing a threshold. I also listen to books on tape while I work. Time flies when I'm working on a piece and into a great story, but when I see the bus coming down my street at 3:45 PM, my work day is over.

X-RAY MAG: Why coral, ocean and underwater themes? How did you come to these themes and how did you develop your artwork with paper over time?

AG: It's the place where I feel the most at peace and is a tremendously rich visual source. I love everything about the ocean. It is perfectly imperfect—the colors, patterns, layers, light, sounds,

PREVIOUS PAGE: *We Are Water 2*, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 25 x 49 x 3 inches

Red Tide, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 18 x 18 x 2 inches



Mineral Lemon Lime, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 18 x 18 x 1.5 inches



compositions, changes, life and energy. We spend a lot of our summers on the beach in Rhode Island. I love watching the water, the rocks and the light. Our beach has giant rocks with these really

neat barnacles and seaweed. Their colors are always changing. Sometimes there's a lot of it, and sometimes just a little. It's neat to watch the progression. One day when the seaweed was

purple, brown, yellow and green, my husband made the awesome observation that nature never clashes. I love that.

X-RAY MAG: What is your artistic method or creative process? How do you create your artworks?

AG: I primarily work with mulberry paper

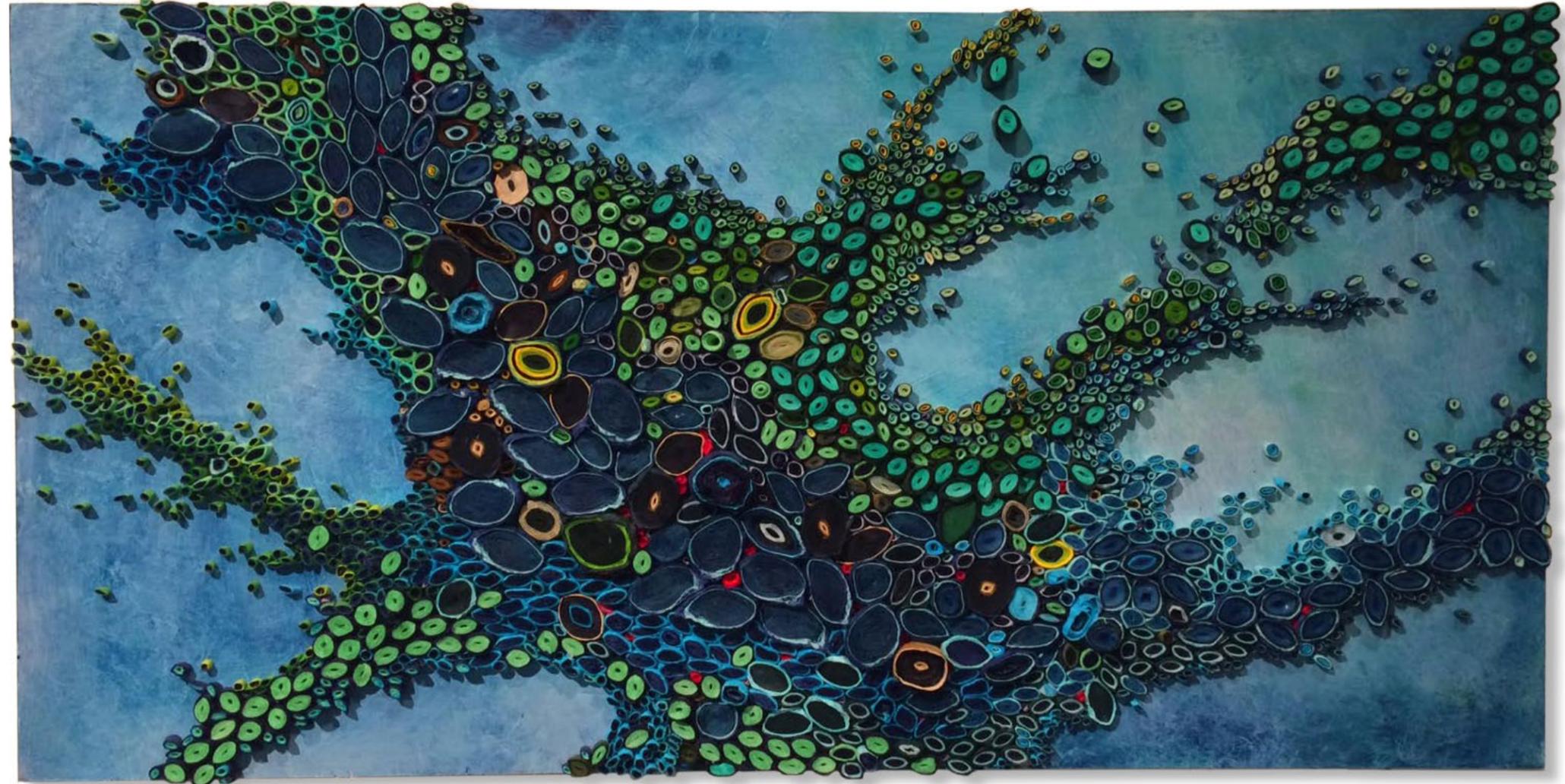
from Thailand, but I have hundreds of papers in my studio from all around the world. I treat the paper almost as a pigment, layering colors one on top of the other to create different colors.



Everlasting Urchin, by Amy Genser

Paper and acrylic on masonite, 18 x 36 x 1.5 inches

Gulf Coasting, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 18 x 36 x 2 inches



My pieces are about a foot wide. Then I roll one layer on top of the other in all different thicknesses. I seal the roll with acid-free, archival glue stick, and then cut the long piece into sections with scissors or pruning shears. I have pruning shears of all different sizes to accommodate different widths.

The rolling and cutting process is actually pretty quick. At this point I can pretty much do it in my sleep. It's the composition/editing process that usually takes the longest.

I paint my surface, either canvas or masonite board, with acrylic and a lot of gel medium. Then I place my paper pieces

on top and manipulate them until I have a satisfactory composition.

It's like putting a puzzle together, only I don't know the final picture until I see it. I roll my pieces accordingly as I develop and build the piece.

It's a back-and-forth process. The paper and the piece lay on different tables in my studio. I attach the paper onto the canvas with PVA once I have the pieces where I want them.

X-RAY MAG: What is your relationship to the underwater world and coral reefs? Are you a



Shallow End, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite,
18 x 18 x 1.5 inches

Amy Genser



Sea Kelp #1, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on
masonite, 25 x 25 x 2.5 inches



Sea Kelp #2, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on
masonite, 25 x 25 x 2.5 inches

AG: Because every viewer brings their own experiences to my artwork, they appreciate it on their own terms. I do have a lot of scuba fans. I hope my work brings an awareness of the beauty of water.

X-RAY MAG: What are the challenges and/or benefits of being an artist in the world today?

AG: My biggest challenge as an artist is to maintain my self-motivation, stay focused and inspired. I'm lucky that there is a demand for my work and my

schedule is steady.

I am also thrilled by the notion that I never know what project will be coming down the pipes next. I also get to work with great clients, galleries and art consultants.

X-RAY MAG: How do people respond to your works? What feedback or insights have you gained from the process of showing your work to various audiences?

AG: People are curious about my work and intrigued by the materiality and process. They are

scuba diver or snorkeler and how has this influenced your art? In your relationship with reefs and the sea, where have you had your favorite experiences?

AG: I have snorkeled since I was a kid. I love being in another world. I think it's about time I take the plunge and try scuba myself! I have spent time in the Caribbean and Hawaii.

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

your artwork relate to these issues?

AG: My work indirectly relates to these issues. I seek to highlight the absolute beauty of the ocean. My thoughts on ocean conservation are that we should do everything in our power to protect the balance throughout our whole environment. But I do have a soft spot for our oceans and marine life.

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

Sea Kelp #3, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on
masonite, 25 x 25 x 2.5 inches

Sea Kelp #4, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on
masonite, 25 x 25 x 2.5 inches



Installation by Amy Genser at
Nemour's Alfred I Dupont Hospital for
Children in Wilmington, Delaware,
45 x 9 feet

Amy Genser



Detail
view of
installation
(left inset)

drawn to the
bold colors and
compositions and
then become
involved with
the fact that it

is created from paper. A lot of people are surprised. They think it is clay or fabric.

I love hearing people react to my work. Everyone sees something different, yet there are many similarities. Children love my work because it is colorful and bold.

I recently created a very large installation at a children's hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. I know that children at the hospital will be wowed by the colors and ocean-like feel.

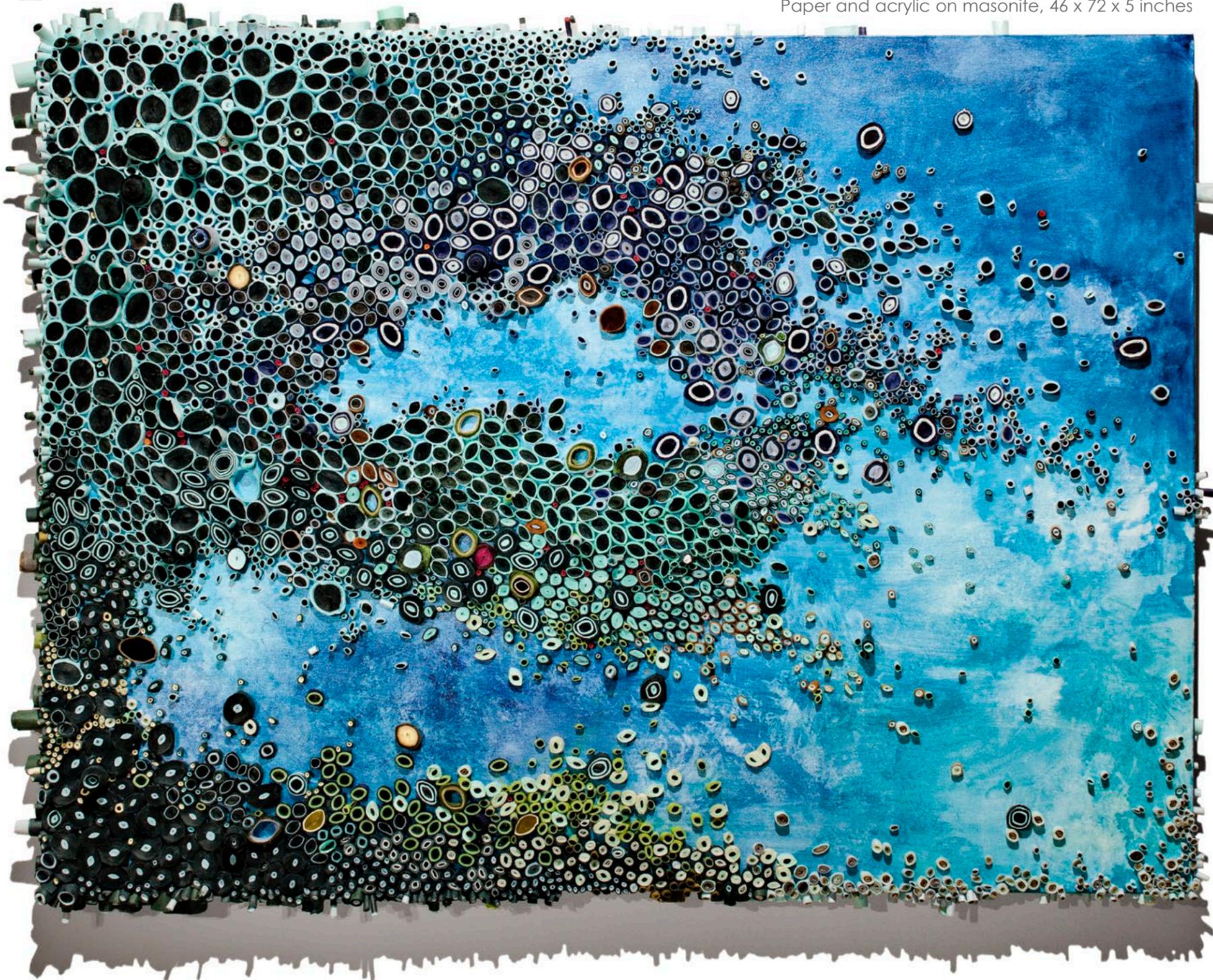
Children always find things in my work I didn't plan. They will see shapes and even letters.

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

Sea Glass Three
by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic
on masonite,
24 x 32 x 1.5
inches each



Float, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 46 x 72 x 5 inches



AG: I am working on a number of residential commissions at the moment. I have a few shows in New York City in March and will be exhibiting throughout Europe with one of my galleries over the year. Please see my website for specifics or to be added to my mailing list.

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

AG: Hopefully the visuals will speak to you! I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. If anyone wants to sponsor my visit to a specific area to

create a body of work... that would be my dream come true. ■

For more information, visit the artist's website at: www.amygenser.com.
Or go to her Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/amygenserstudio



Swish, by Amy Genser
Paper and acrylic on masonite, 36 x 54 x 3.5 inches