

into

the

flow.

*A mid-career transition and a flood in Italy led Katherine Glover to craft memorable works in paper.*

**STORY BY**  
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Overleaf: Glover holds a work in progress. Her dog, Chui, is a favorite companion; though blind, he continues to expand his repertoire of tricks.

Above: The flow of water and other recurring patterns in nature have inspired much of Glover's work.

IF YOU COULD TAKE A GIANT SPOON AND stir the air into a whirlpool of swirling currents, then solidify that fluid motion in color and bas-relief highlighted with glints of gold, you'd have something like what Katherine Glover creates. But the stop-action flow in Glover's striking panels involves handmade *khadi* paper from India and hours of painstaking work. And the "spoon" she often uses to stir up design concepts is a computer program for calculating the mathematics of flow.

The 65-year-old artist has been exploring the aesthetics and limits of materials in a window-lined studio in her Cambridge, Massachusetts, home for more than a decade. At first Glover created handmade paper, which morphed into sculptural books.

Then she adorned shirts she created from mulberry fiber paper, fiberglass window screening, and bubble-wrap with flowing horsehair and glass beads. On the way, many of these same materials, along with feathers, encaustic, and packing tape, took shape as vessels. Through it all, her studio has been a place of intensive work – but also play.

Imagine the roots of this endlessly inventive spirit, and it's no surprise that her unconventional childhood was a place where boundaries were often transparent and creativity ran high. Glover's parents – her father was a Harvard Business School professor and her mother an accomplished pianist and painter – were part of a group of like-minded professional couples who moved to a wooded area outside Boston

to create an intentional neighborhood for their families. Glover grew up in a glass-walled modernist house that felt like "floating in the midst of the natural world," she relates. "My parents' aesthetic appreciation for how they wanted to live was very formative." She and her sisters were free to wander and play anywhere within earshot of a large train bell her father owned, whose sound carried almost a mile.

"All the adults were knowledgeable about wildlife and the ebb and flow of the natural world," she recalls. "To this day I have an acute ability to scan the environment and see what's unusual. Things catch my eye."

What catches Glover's eye in particular are recurring patterns in nature: spirals, branches, waves, the flow of water, the



Each paper strip – soaked, cut, torn, and painted – has one straight edge and one deckled edge.



*As her first marriage was ending, Glover made a striking career shift – leaving behind 25 years as a business consultant.*



Horus and Scylla photos: Dean Powell

Left: **Horus Heist**, 2007 cast encaustic, encaustic on silk organza, horsehair, digital image 15 x 13 in. dia.

Right: **Scylla**, 2006 encaustic on pleated and sewn silk organza 10 x 10 in. dia.





grace of feathers and leaves. These forms have inspired much of her artistic exploration since the late 1990s, when she walked away from a 25-year business consulting career, and her marriage of more than 20 years ended. It was a time of complete upheaval, a turning point, and she turned to art, something she had loved as a child and studied extensively as an undergraduate at Brown University. Beginning in 1998, Glover immersed herself again in the world of artmaking, studying at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, Maine, and in Boston at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

**Talisman**, 2011  
handmade Indian khadi paper, acrylic, gold leaf, birch plywood panel  
2.3 x 3.2 x .25 ft.



**The Watched Pot**, 2009  
handmade Indian khadi paper, fluid acrylic, metal leaf; 8 x 14 x 8 in.

*Talisman, Pot, and Fire* photos: Dean Powell

While Glover continues to create vessels and other mixed-media objects, much of her focus these days is on those panels of swirling designs made with paper. The archival khadi paper, made of cotton scraps from jersey manufacturers, is so strong and hide-like it must be softened by soaking before the artist can cut and tear it into wide strips. She paints the strips with heavily pigmented

acrylics and attaches them on edge to birch plywood in tightly packed lines. "I've never seen anyone use paper like this, in such an organic way, turning it on edge and using the deckled edge," says Jane Sauer, owner of Jane Sauer Gallery in Santa Fe.

The inspiration for Glover's approach came from photos of Renaissance-era books ruined by the devastating 1966 Arno River

flood in Italy. The pictures of sodden, twisted, irreplaceable books were heart-breaking; to the artist, however, the lines and forms were also beautiful, especially when she viewed the edges of the pages from above. Today she gathers design ideas by playing with software her mathematician/physicist husband uses to calculate fluid dynamics. The artworks that result



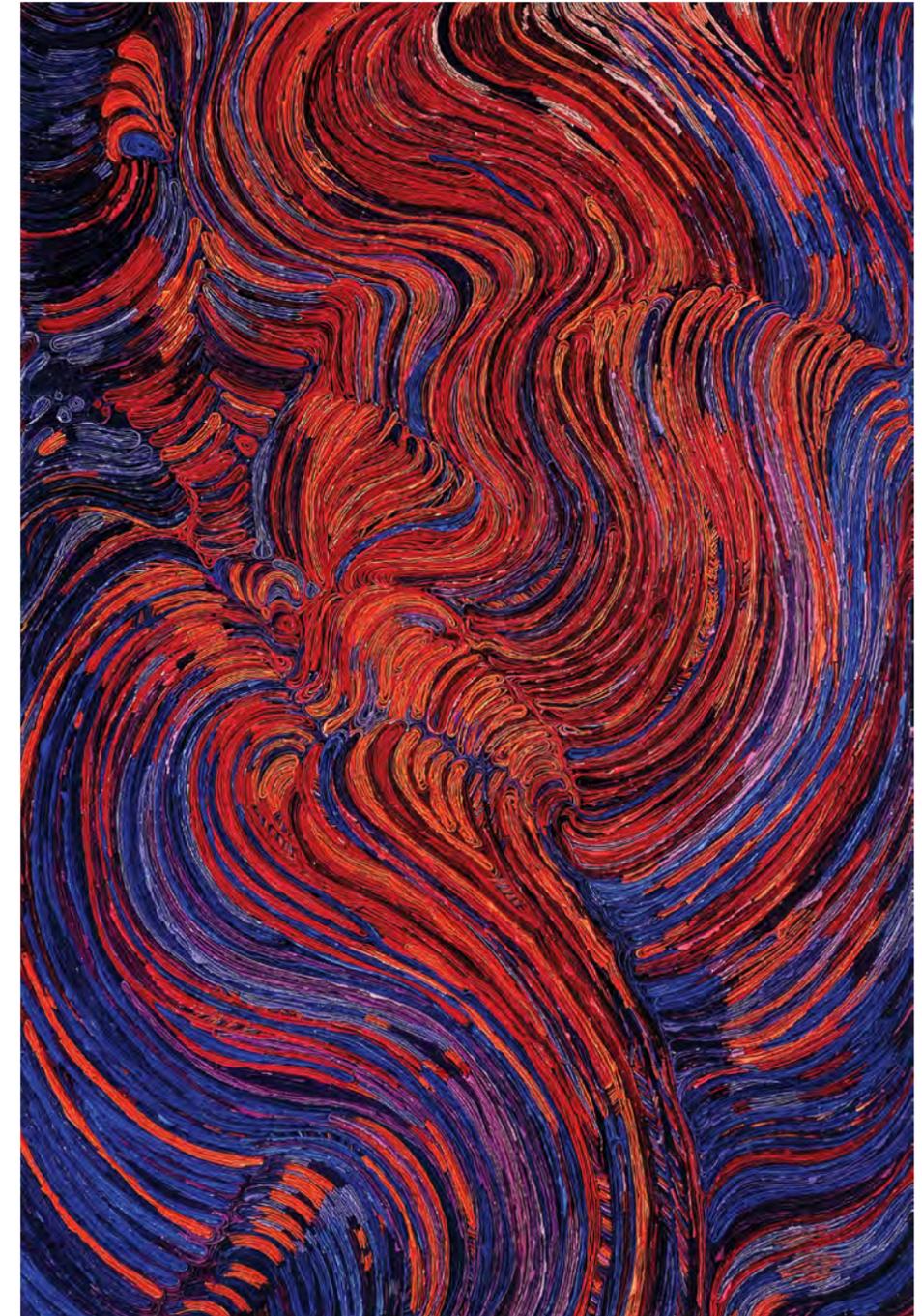
Glover found inspiration for her current body of work in photographs of soaked Renaissance-era books from the 1966 flood in Florence, Italy.

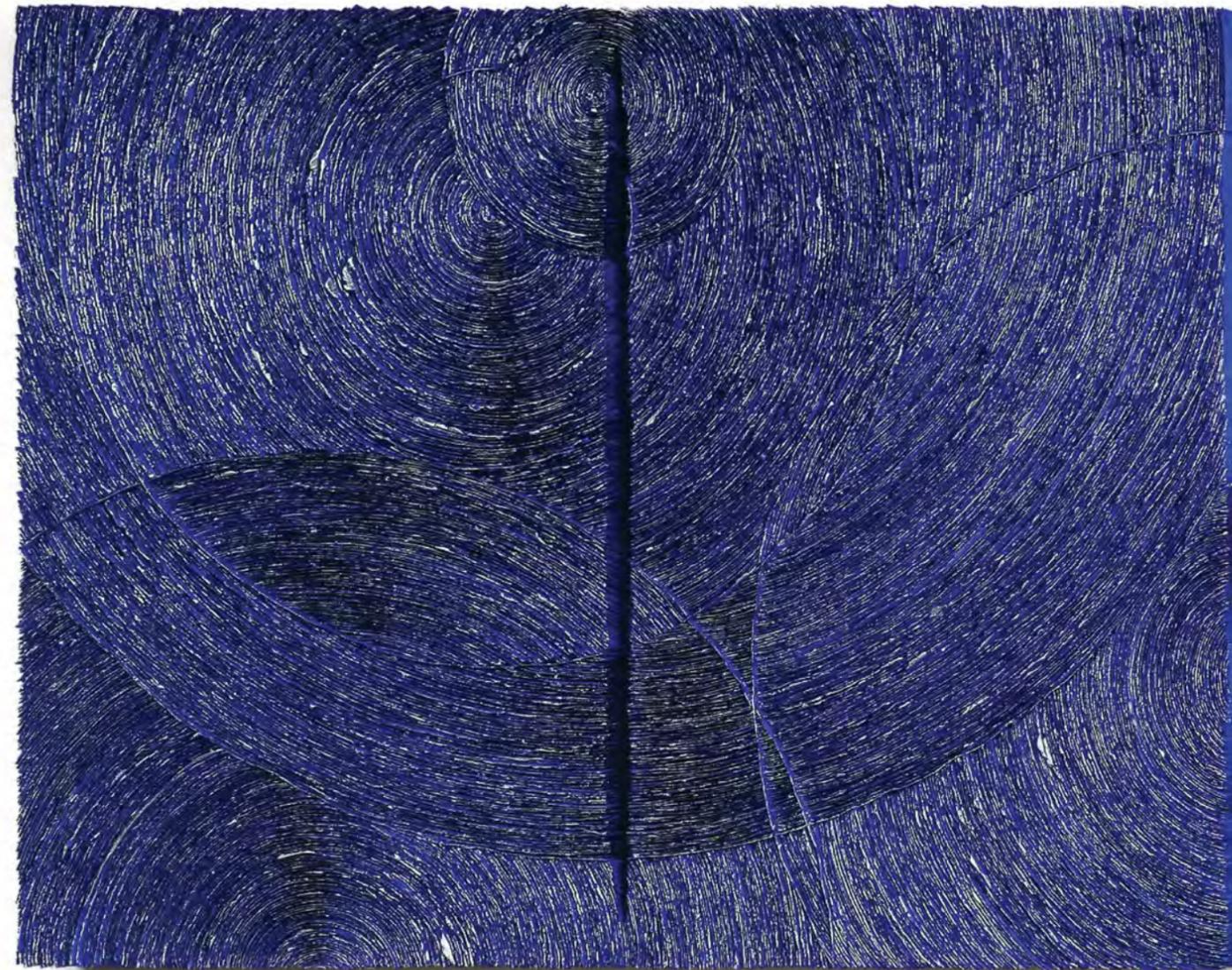
*"I've never seen anyone use paper like this, in such an organic way."*

JANE SAUER  
Jane Sauer Gallery

Florence photo: Giorgio Lotti / Contrasto / Redux

**Fire in the Lake**, 2011  
handmade Indian khadi paper, acrylic, birch plywood panel  
5 x 3.3 x .25 ft.





are visually kinetic without moving parts, drawing the eye around the image in a tide of color and light.

"Katherine really pushes it," Sauer says. "Her work keeps rewarding you for passing it again and again, and for getting up close."

Glover's art has been exhibited at SOFA New York and SOFA Chicago, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and Fuller Craft Museum. Her "vessels reminiscent of teapots," as she calls them, are represented in what has been called the largest collection of artistic teapots, the Kamm Teapot Collection. Still, she considers herself a new kid on the block; her rapid emergence

in the world of fine craft began little more than a decade ago.

These days her creative journey appears headed in more three-dimensional directions again, on paths yet to be discovered, she says. "It's like going on a trip but not knowing where I'm going. I like not knowing what will come."

✦ [katherineglover.com](http://katherineglover.com)

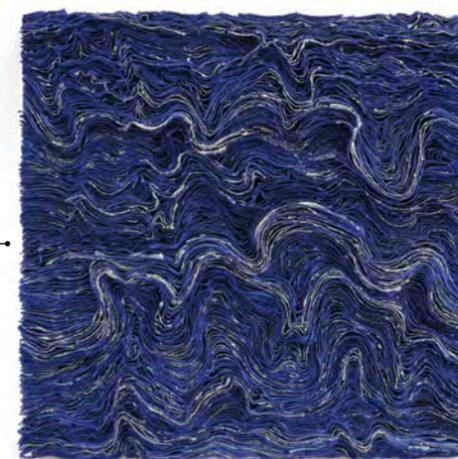
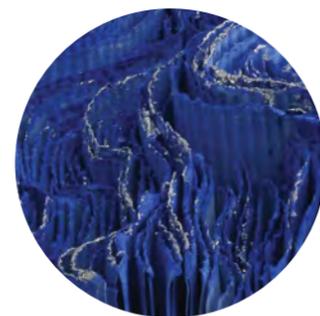
*Gussie Fauntleroy is a Colorado-based writer who contributes regularly to national and regional publications on art, architecture, and design. She is the author of three books on visual artists.*



**White Night**, 2003  
bubble-wrap, glass beads, horsehair

Above:  
**Arise** (detail, right), 2010; handmade Indian khadi paper, acrylic, gold leaf, cradled birch panel  
3.3 x 12 x .25 ft.

Right photo: Bruce Strong / Arise photo: Jane Sauer / Ocean, Torrent, and Arise detail photos: Dean Powell



Above:  
**Perpetual Ocean**, 2012  
handmade Indian khadi paper, acrylic, silver leaf, birch plywood panel  
3 x 4 x .25 ft.

Left:  
**Torrent** (detail, left), 2008; handmade Indian khadi paper, acrylic, silver leaf, birch plywood panel; 2 x 2 x .4 ft.