

## About Sophia's Geode sculptures

"While much of my work appears abstract, I draw on references of both external physical landscapes as well as internal, emotional landscapes. Often fragments of stories, experiences or physical observations serve as the catalysts of my work.

The physical creation of the Geode sculptures is both process-oriented and intuitive. I start by creating paper pulp using a blender, water and torn pieces of recycled paper materials found around our home, which include (but are not limited to) my old drawings, my child's homework and school papers, junk mail and worn-out books that cannot be donated. After I drain the pulp and separate it into groupings, I choose my colors and start mixing them into the pulp.

I form the shapes with my hands, gradually adding layers of various colored pulp over the previous layer. The wet pulp continues to be piled, pushed, poked and prodded together. Sometimes I wrap the wet layers with thread. I mix a concoction of acrylic paint and fluid gel medium and pour this over the form and between the layers. More layers of this media combination are added or subtracted. As the piece dries the shape shifts, shrinks and changes. Once the work has completely dried, I use a handheld hacksaw to cut it open. The process of making these is very physical, and this is reflected in the visceral quality of the work.

Part of the impetus for making the geodes came out of grappling with discord in interpersonal, familial relationships. The complexities and emotional residue that we carry tends to settle within us over the years. When I initially started making these works, I had not intended them to be cut open so that the layers would remain hidden. But the decision was made to do so as I was about to discard a work that seemed to me, at the time, unsuccessful. On a whim, I cut it open and was quite excited to see what it revealed."

– Sophia Allison