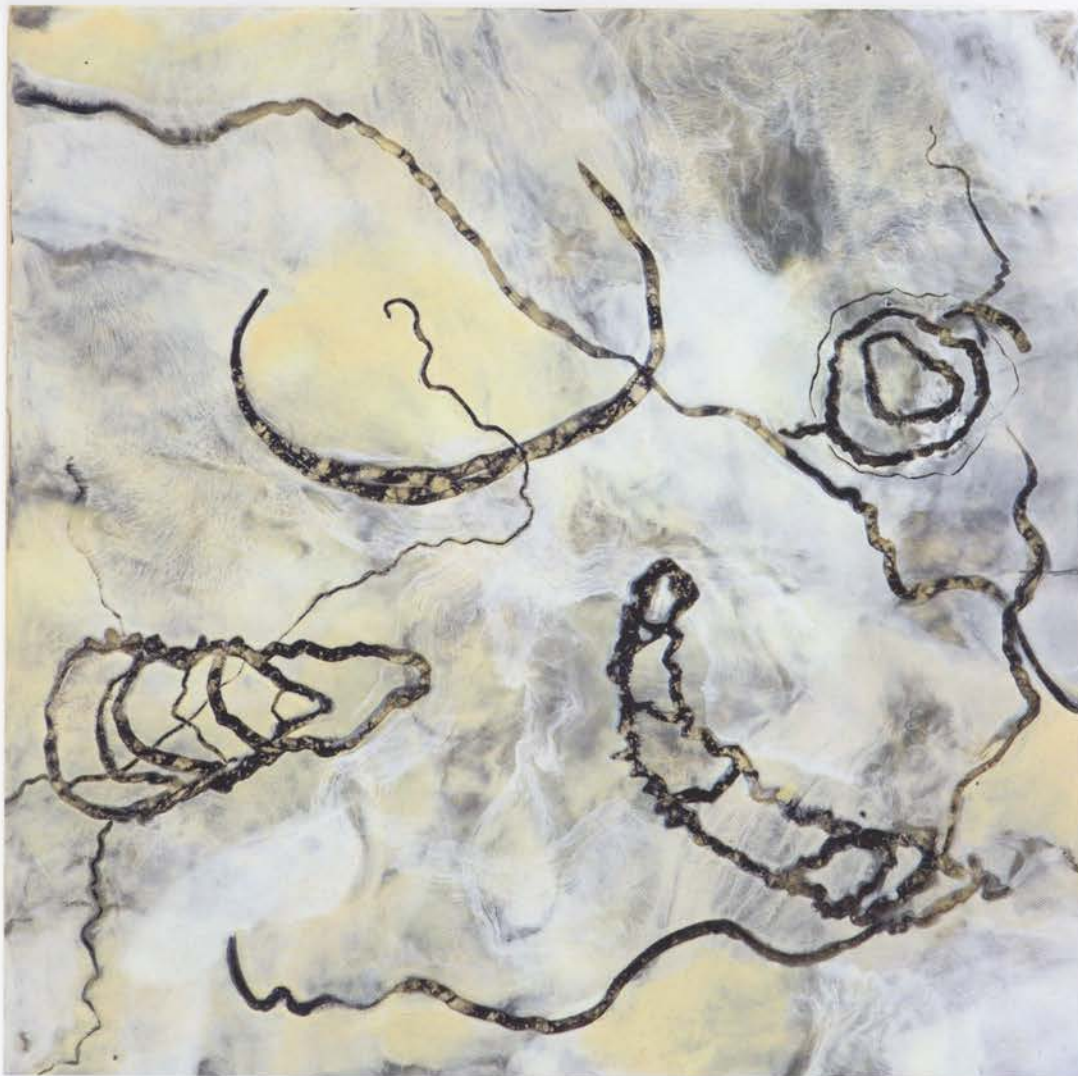


# BARBARA CONE



*Barbara Cone is a visual artist and instructor. She's also a curator who's overseen exhibitions at Bowdoin College and the Grossman Gallery at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She splits her time between Massachusetts and Spruce Head.*

*White Series No. 1, encaustic on panel, 18" x 18"*

## **Q. TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.**

**A.** I've been an artist for a really long time. I've worked in a lot of different media, including video and installation. I teach, and I also have a sideline curating exhibitions in Boston and down on the Cape. I see things from everybody's side: the maker's side and the exhibitionist's side and the teaching side. Each one of those things brings something to me as an artist. It draws on my skills. It challenges me, and it makes me learn things I might not otherwise have a chance to learn if I were always just in the studio.

## **Q. YOU'VE BEEN WORKING IN ENCAUSTIC. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE MEDIUM?**

**A.** It's a fascinating medium. It's several thousand years old. It's a combination of beeswax, pigment, and pine resin. The resin allows the beeswax to be a little harder when it dries. I think the extraordinary thing about it and why contemporary artists are going nuts over encaustic is because you can use it for sculpture,

printmaking, painting, or mixed media, and even ceramic artists have discovered it and are combining ceramics with it. Artists are all so experimental, it's kind of where I think art is going. The possibilities are so endless that you just keep moving along with it, and figuring out new things to do with it.

## **Q. WHAT'S YOUR PROCESS LIKE?**

**A.** What really interests me right now is combining printmaking, pen-and-ink drawing, and encaustic—essentially mounting pen-and-ink drawings or encaustic prints on birch panels as my first layer. Then I reveal or hide certain portions under a layer of encaustic, carving down through so you can see what's underneath in certain places, or you can look through the encaustic and see that there's something underneath but you're not quite sure what. That's the push and pull of it, and that's what really interests me. The mystery of what remains hidden and what is easily seen is something that I explore a lot in my work.