

PENLAND GALLERY

AMY PUTANSU

Waynesville, NC

TEXTILES | Technical weaving

Penland Affiliation | Penland instructor 2006, 2007, 2011, 2014, 1017

Artist Information | Studio artist and educator; education: BFA Rhode Island School of Design; teaching: Haywood Community College (NC), Penland School (NC), Eastern Carolina University (NC), Arrowmont School of Art and Craft (TN), John C. Campbell Folk School (NC), Maiwa School of Textiles (Vancouver BC), Peters Valley School of Craft (NJ); exhibitions: Blue Spiral Gallery (NC), Sager | Braudis Gallery (MO), Southern Highlands Craft Guild (NC); award and grants: Icelandic Textile Center Residency, NC Regional Artist Project grant, Haywood Community College Excellence in Teaching Award

Artist Bio | Amy Putansu (b. 1973) was born and raised in a coastal north Atlantic fishing village in Maine. Her family is deeply rooted in that region for many generations. Amy earned her BFA at Rhode Island School of Design in 1995. Permanent collections include the Renwick and the China National Silk Museum in Hangzhou. Amy was a fellowship nominee for US Artists (2016) and American Craft Council Rare Craft Fellowship (2016). She has contributed to a technical publication *Ondulé Weaving: Creating Curves with a Fan Reed* (Schiffer, 2017).

Amy draws from the visual vocabulary of sea and shore, fishing, and navigating. Her first exposure to fiber work as a child was her father knitting heads for lobster traps. Amy's work examines the melancholic romance of the ocean and man's relationship with it as a method of reconciling the largest of existential questions and exploring spirituality. The vastness and the power of the sea are essentially beyond human's scope of control. Yet it presents us with elements crucial to life, sustenance, and even the origins of all living organisms.

The rare hand-weaving technique Amy uses is called *ondulé*, which produces an undulating, waving surface of curving threads. The *ondulé* weave is unique because, unlike the strict grid of typical woven interlacement, specialized tools, and equipment are used on the handloom to gently manipulate threads into a curving path throughout the textile. Amy has mastered this technique and is one of the few weavers that create *ondulé* and one of the only teachers on the subject. She finds that the nature of this cloth becomes the perfect substrate to express moods, ideas, or moments in time particularly related to water and the sea. Visual elements are informed by ocean-centric language and practices such as nautical charts, fishing tools, and navigational methods.

Penland School of Craft | Penland Gallery & Visitors Center
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