

installations. "But I could only take wool so far. I also wanted to work with a medium where I could incorporate another interest of mine — Asian calligraphy."

This desire drew PJ to her current groundbreaking sculptural artwork in the ancient process of "Joomchi" — rolling and fusing *hanji* paper (made from the bark of the mulberry tree) while it's wet. In 2015, PJ travelled to the Arrowmont School in Tennessee to work with Korean handmade mulberry paper. This experience was another leap forward. "Yes, others make art from mulberry paper, but I don't know of anyone else doing it quite the way I am."

An independent thinker and self-starter, PJ believes that keeping visual reminders reinforces her energy and creativity. "Years ago I found the four words most important to me and glued them to the shelves in my studio: *Inspiration, Vision, Innovation, and Distinction*. I look at these words every day. And I believe in *Chi*, the Chinese word meaning aliveness, life force, or life breath. My studio is my sanctuary. Not only is it the place where I work, I also find nourishment there, which allows me to give life to the pieces I work on."

PJ starts with a concept, plays with colors, then moves to layout. "Once I get started, there's a certain amount of precision. I have a vision — even though it may appear to be

random. It's more a sixth sense of what I want to achieve. I keep pushing myself for that remarkable combination of complementary colors, textures, and surfaces." And if a color scheme doesn't work, she tries another just to challenge herself.

"My focus is intense. I'm only finished when I can say, 'Wow that looks great!' I even get on a ladder to see the work from a different perspective. Hours can go by without realization. By the end of the day I'm exhausted! I feel like I've run a marathon. Yet, it

is very satisfying to stand back and look at what I have accomplished: colors placed strategically here, shapes overlapping at certain points there. Even then, I might let it sit a while until I'm sure."

"From my travels to China and Japan, I bring Asian influences that began in my early years when I was making art to wear as clothing." The late

American pop artist Keith Haring, whose pop art and graffiti-like work grew out of the New York City street culture of the 1980s, made a big impression. "His geometric shapes and designs speak to me. Keith created a universal language through his drawings and paintings that needs no translation. It was this experience, through the viewer's eyes, that sparked my imagination, and let invention and interpretation begin in my own artistic career."

