




SUSAN KNIGHT :  
CORE SAMPLING MAGIC

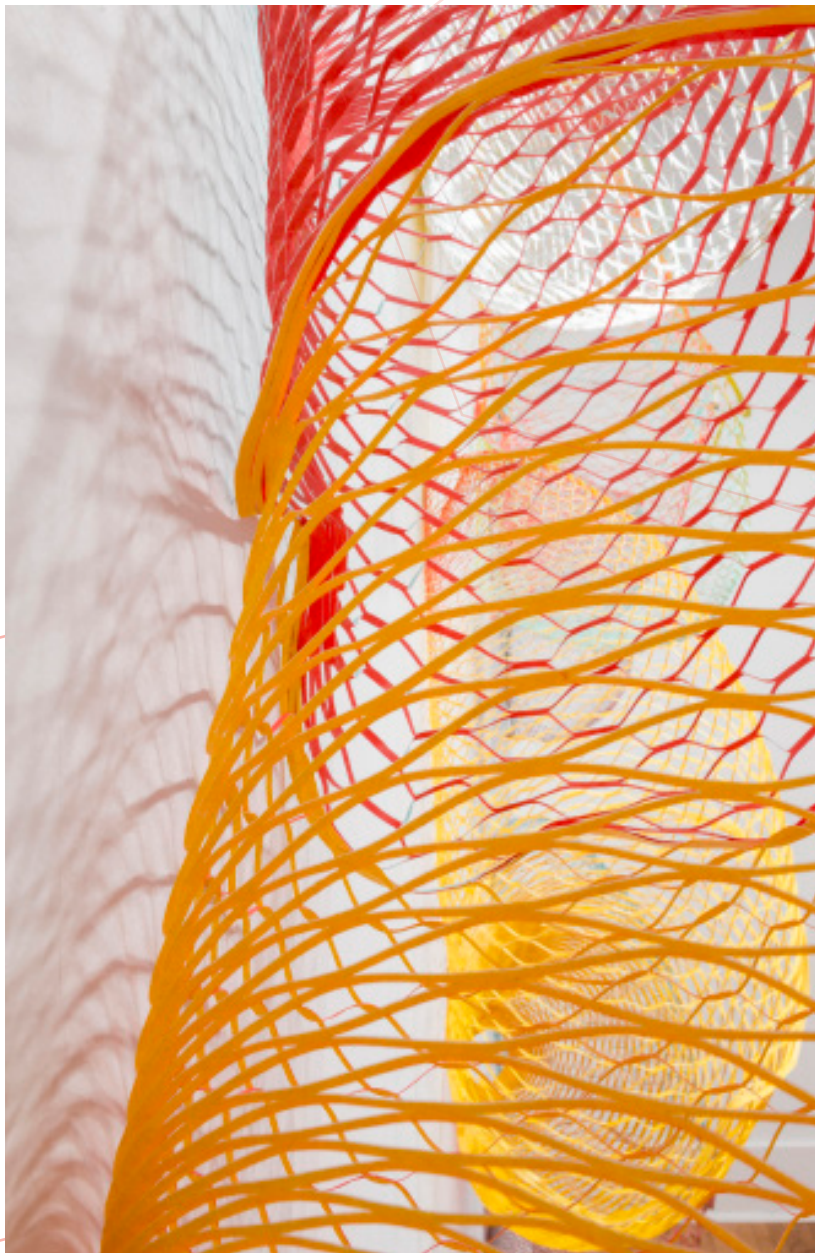


Inspired by water's physical and metaphysical powers to unite, circulate, and sustain, Omaha-based artist Susan Knight visually translates water issues into two and three dimensions. Knight worked for years as a figurative painter using photographs for reference to capture realistic detail in her work. In 2002 she participated in an exhibition about rivers. "I had no interest in painting a landscape," she said, "but I knew I could cut a map of the river I grew up on." Inspired by a display of architectural origami she had seen Knight was impressed with what could be done by simply cutting paper.

Knight's site-specific installation *Core Sampling Magic* currently on view at MONA, is comprised of eighty components. Developed over the last four years, Knight uses a laborious hand cutting technique to create individual elements painting them in red, yellow, gray and green, colors used by hydro geologists to color code soil samples of clay, gravel, sand and silt. Using this concept, Knight has learned several things about herself and her method of working. "I'm not only cutting," she explained, "I'm engineering the paper" employing her mind, body and spirit in the work.

Knight's work has evolved to abstract compositions based on science, pulling from ongoing scientific investigations involving water and the land that holds it. Her artistic vision is akin to a scientific discovery process, collecting data, and experimenting with how to reconstruct it in interesting, alluring ways.

*\*Tyvek is a brand of flash spun polyethylene fibers made by DuPont. It is often used as a house wrap and personal protective equipment.*



Core Sampling Magic - Water Pod Element  
suspended hand cut Tyvek on paper, acrylic ink; 2021  
Collection of the Artist





Omaha-based painter, paper and installation artist, Susan Knight is a native of Michigan. Her work has been exhibited in solo and group shows and installations nationally, and internationally. She has been featured in *Sci Art in America* Online Magazine. Her work appears in *Illuminations Poems Inspired by Science* by Robert Louis Chianese and in 2016 was reviewed by *Sculpture Magazine* and *Smithsonian Online Magazine*.

Knight worked for years as a figurative painter using photographs for reference and attempting to capture

realistic detail in her work. In 2002 an art show about rivers was accepting submissions. "I had no interest in painting a landscape," she said, "but I knew I could cut a map of the river I grew up on."

She was inspired by a display of architectural origami she had seen. Knight was impressed with what could be done by simply cutting paper.

Using this concept, Knight took a map of the river and created pop-up features to symbolize trees and other elements of the watershed.

As Knight continued to explore cut paper, she learned several things about herself and her method of working.

"I'm not only cutting," she explained, "I'm engineering the paper" employing her mind, body and spirit in the work.



In preparation for Susan's first show about groundwater in 2012, she accompanied a hydrologist and other technicians with the Nebraska Resource District near Norfolk, Nebraska into the field to test groundwater wells. Above are soil samples that were collected from that effort. After looking at the samples through a microscope Knight began to understand the relationship between water, soil and life, serving as the inspiration in creating her super-sized soil samples.



## MUSEUM OF NEBRASKA ART

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