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Lisa Grossman

River Work

September 18 - October 28, 2015

Opening Reception - Friday, September 18, 5 - 9 PM

You cannot see the great sweeping bends of the Kansas River from the ground.

For years it was only an intriguing blur as I drove over one of the bridges that span it. When I moved to Lawrence from Kansas City in 1996, I began exploring the river's edges - riparian trails and the few riverside painting sites that afforded a long view.

In 2002, after catching an unforgettable glimpse of the Kansas River - or Kaw - on a flight back to Kansas City, I began flying the 171 mile length of the Kaw River Valley with a pilot to document it using photography and video. A little elevation revealed the Kaw's stunning beauty, its wide arcs stretching across the horizon. I flew at dusk and dawn to capture the contrasts of the dark land with the river's reflected light.



For over twenty years, my primary work has been prairie-based, primarily plein air, and I see it as a sustained meditation on open spaces. I yearn for the horizon and lean sunward, with keen attentiveness to shifts in light, color, and weather. The prairie river paintings, studio works using my aerial footage, continue those investigations with an emphasis on flux and flow. I seek to convey the ceaseless sweep and thrust of carving river currents through sand, the turnings of day and season, and even the movement of the plane circling and crossing over, tracing the meanderings of the river.

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This river challenges me to engage deeply with place in a visceral and personal way. Experiencing it from shoreline, sandbar, the air, and kayak, the Kaw's windings continually lure me into a process of discovery.

River Work, for me, represents my river explorations and investigations; long stretches paddled, hours of flights crisscrossing the river valley, and certainly, the many miles of river I've painted. Work suggests a certain amount of effort, sometimes arduous, but always full of discovery, beauty, and great reward—an adventure and an accomplishment.

Gallery Hours: 9-5 Tuesday through Friday, 12-5 Saturday

Press Contact

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