



## **GEORGE KOZMON** | Artist Statement

My personal fascination with mountains grew out of my formative years in the dramatic landscape of Switzerland, and has continued to evolve and deepen through immersive research/hiking/climbing trips. The awe and humility these experiences generate is paid homage in my large-scale works, intimate studies, digital experiments, and collection of geological samples.

Recent work focuses on the primal alpine landscape as a metaphor, geological time and place beyond personal or general human scale. Revisiting landmarks and geologic features from my childhood evokes a romanticized nostalgia, contrasting with my use of digital tools to manifest images.

New landscapes also beckon; land finds form and evolves in various ways, and is ultimately modified by water. Simultaneously a catalyst for erosion and a source of life, water is compelling and primal, soothing, and powerful, and offers a new pattern both in content and composition.

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I'm interested in how we perceive, how scale changes that perception, how images and objects can be understood in various ways, how a sense of place can be expressed.

Topographic maps define geography, the features of landforms. Symbolic and abstract reasoning enables us to see depiction as a representation of ideas; Alfred Korzybski's assertion: "the map is not the territory," and René Magritte's "This is Not a Pipe" have prompted similar thoughts in my use of manipulated topographical/geological maps to underscore perceiving a thing in different forms of depiction.

Landscapes affect us physically, chemically, and psychologically; they resonate with genetically encoded instincts of which we are not conscious. Most of us in the developed world have transferred direct immersion in the power of landscape into abstract environmental concerns and digital experience. We have distanced ourselves.