SHARON KAGAN
Artist Statement

On first glance, my drawings appear to be photographs. From a distance, the work is ambiguous suggesting the body, weather systems, or patterns of organic growth. When the viewer gets up close to a piece, it becomes completely abstract, a sea of small shapes.

The drawings begin with a digital photograph of intricate details of fibrous forms that I knit in hemp string or rope. Shooting in low light results in out-of-focus photographs; enlarging the images exaggerates their blurriness. Using a Rapidograph pen, the pixelated shapes that emerge from the enlargement and printing of the photograph are then outlined in ink. One of the intentions of this work is to reveal the unreliability of photographic images in mediating our perception.

Recently color has become part of the work. They begin with a small section of a larger drawing, which is enlarged, printed, and then gridded. By working with color and the grid, patterns within patterns emerge, with a faceted, jewel-like effect. The goal is to make the eyes dance.

The work is concerned with making the knowledge of physicists and mystics tangible, that all matter is composed of rapidly moving energy. Nothing is solid and nothing is separate. Everything is vibrating.

The black and white drawings are epic and theatrical, suggesting a mythological domain. Color takes the work in a different direction, as though the viewer has come to the other side of an inner journey. Color changes everything, allowing the work to become evocative and poetic.