

# Art Activity

## Sue Fuller-inspired Ice Sculpture

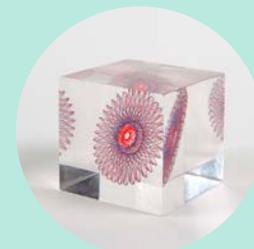
### Floating String

Sue Fuller (1914-2006) is one of the most well-represented women sculptors in the McNay's collection. From the monumental *String Composition #W-253* that hangs in the Tobin Library to her palm-sized lucite sculptures, Fuller created amazingly precise arrangements of string. Sue Fuller worked with materials from outside the art world, experimenting with newly invented plastics some of which she patented herself.

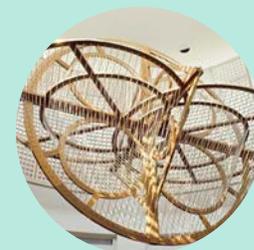
Sculpting with delicate materials, Fuller was aware of the environmental threats to her art. Thread attracts dust and is difficult to clean without loosening the strings. She framed her string compositions so that dirt, dust, and curious fingers could not reach her sculptures. She also encased her small string arrangements in lucite, a type of clear plastic that resembles glass. The colorful arrangements appear to float weightlessly. The faceted surface refracts the light, making the string arrangement multiply and morph. In this project, replicate Fuller's lucite sculptures with thread and ice.



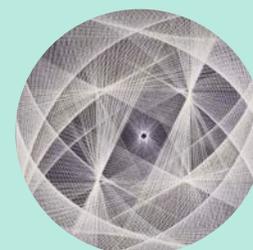
*Sue Fuller, String Embedment, 1968. Nylon and lucite. Gift of Friends of the McNay, Collection of the McNay Art Museum.*



**McNay Connection**  
*Sue Fuller, Red and Blue String, 1966.*



**McNay Connection**  
*Sue Fuller, String Composition #W-253, 1984.*



**McNay Connection**  
*Sue Fuller, String Composition #T-220 1965.*

1

LOOK

Examine Sue Fuller's intricate sculptures made of string.

2

CREATE

Follow steps to make your own floating string sculpture.

3

ENJOY

Enjoy your creation and share with others.

## Suggested materials:

- Plastic cup (glass will break in the freezer)
- Bottled water or boiled water that has been cooled
- Ice cube tray or silicone molds (typically used for shaped ice or candy making)
- Thread
- Scissors
- Freezer

## Instructions:

1. Make ice in cubes or other shapes using molds. Ice from the fridge ice maker works, too. Tap water is OK for this step.
2. Working quickly, wrap thread around the ice shape. Hold the end of the thread with your thumb to keep the thread from sliding. It will be slippery! As more thread accumulates on the ice, it will stay in place more easily.
3. Cut the end of the thread and put the wrapped ice back in the freezer.
4. Carefully place a plastic cup filled with 1-2 inches of bottled or boiled water in the freezer

and set a timer for 20 minutes. For this step, it is essential to use the bottled/boiled water to make clear ice. Using tap water results in cloudy ice, which makes it more difficult to see your sculpture.

5. When 20 minutes is up, place the thread-wrapped ice in the cup of water and let freeze completely (around four hours).
6. Once the water has frozen, pour more bottled/boiled water on top and allow to freeze (another four hours or overnight).
7. Remove the cup from the freezer and run water over the sides of the cups to slightly defrost. Turn the cup upside down and gently shake the ice loose from the cup.
8. Admire your sculpture! Look closely to observe what has happened in the freezing process. Were any air bubbles trapped in the ice? Any dramatic cracks? How does your string arrangement look? Does it seem magnified?

For more information about the artist Sue Fuller, visit [mcnayart.org/spotlight](http://mcnayart.org/spotlight).

