John A. Knudsen (American, 1938 - 2014)
Untitled (Cityscape), 2002
Oil and sand on canvas board
14 x 18 inches
Signed with initials and dated J.K. '02 upper right.
#9428

John A. Knudsen

John A. Knudsen was born in 1937 in Brooklyn, MI raised in Chicago, IL. The son of a Lutheran minister, Knudsen's family frequently moved to different locales, providing Knudsen with life experiences in both urban and rural settings. These varied venues provided inspiration for his drawing and painting.

Knudsen won a scholarship to The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, but he decided to attend Luther College in Decorah, IA to study liberal arts. He also studied at the The University of Iowa, earning his BFA there in 1963. Knudsen developed a passionate interest in the process of engraving. He felt that though printmaking, the process informed his creative direction in painting.

Knudsen was ultimately inspired toward a teaching career. His first teaching position was as an art teacher at an elementary school. He became an adjunct faculty member at Silvermine College of Art in New Canaan, CT and then returned to the Chicago area to teach art at Mount Prospect High School, Mount Prospect, IL.

In 1967, Knudsen became the very first professor hired for the newly built Harper College in Palatine, IL. Knudsen was instrumental in developing the fine arts department, The National Juried Exhibition and the Foundation Art Collection. In 1974, Knudsen was a awarded a sabbatical to study with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17 in Paris. He had a profound impact on his students during his 31 years at the college. He retired in 1998.

After his retirement, he continued his painting, etching and woodcut mediums at his own studio, The John A. Knudsen Workshop/Gallery in Union Pier, MI, until his death in 2014.

In 2015, Harper College honored Knudsen with a retrospective of his work. He died in Stevensville, MI in 2014.