

## The Earth Sanctuary Compressed Cube Tensegrity Sculpture

Earth Sanctuary's Compressed Cube Tensegrity Sculpture is the culmination of Chuck Pettis' musings on Kenneth Snelson's tensegrity artworks and his early studies with Buckminster Fuller.

Pettis got his master's degree in design from Southern Illinois University at Buckminster Fuller's design school. There he met Anthony Pugh, author of *an introduction to tensegrity*, who introduced him to the principles of tensegrity. Playing with different structural ideas, the seeds of the Earth Sanctuary sculpture were planted back in the days of building domes and playing Buckminster Fuller's World Game. Models were built and sculpture was thought about as principles of compressed and expanded space in relationship to human consciousness.

Tensegrity? It is best described as the principle of tension, in this case cables, and compression, the aluminum tubes forming the rigid structure. The sculpture appears to be floating in space at the same time it is locked into form. This presents a moment of stasis, electrifying.

Tim Leonard and his talented crew of Heavy Metal Works was the needed expertise to fabricate the forms: wires, tubes, screws. Adjustments with Pettis guiding compression of the form revealed itself over several trials and balances. The work was folded into the present shape.

The four 12-foot-long tubes are locked into form by 1/8" cables. It is a puzzle of form floating apart and at the same time in perfect balance. Race car red powder coating was the icing to further electrify the tensegrity forces.

