Petah Coyne

**MEDIUM**  Sculpture, installation  
**NATIONALITY**  American  
**LIFE DATES**  Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 1953 -

Petah Coyne is known for her sculpture and installations involving large and often suspended organic forms. Born in Oklahoma City in 1953, Coyne grew up in a tightly-knit, peripatetic Catholic military family that traveled widely before settling in Ohio. It was there that she studied with an influential, non-traditional high school art teacher who spurred her interest in making art. After attending Kent State University, she entered the Art Academy of Cincinnati with the intention of pursuing a career as an artist, majoring in photography and printmaking.

She moved to New York City in the late 1970s, where she began a series of outdoor art installations. She would continue to work with organic material to create pendulous, bulbous, vaguely anthropomorphic forms out of sticks, mud, and plant detritus; later, these forms would be created with materials such as chicken wire, cement, tar, hay, hair, statuary, wax, ribbons, and taxidermied animals.

The attitude she has developed towards objects and her work is largely symbolic, ceremonial, and allegorical; the diverse range of materials she uses to illustrate certain personal concerns has changed, but the subject matter continues to regard human themes of fragility, death, beauty, and decay.