

Sara Genn *Everything Will Be Okay*

October 1 – November 25, 2020



"There is nothing you can see that is not a flower; there is nothing you can think that is not the moon."

-Matsuo Basho, 17th Century Japanese Edo poet

Morgan Lehman Gallery is thrilled to present *Sara Genn: Everything Will Be Okay*, which marks the artist's first exhibition at the gallery and Morgan Lehman's inaugural show in its new gallery space.

In Sara Genn's view, one misconception about design is that it's merely about how things look. Really, it's about how things *function*. We may understand such a notion in the context of machines and technology, but the idea of functionality could actually be applied to many arenas, including (if not especially), art. Paintings are made to engage, incite and connect people, but they also have the ability to quietly *work* within the balance of their own material limits and their own systems of visual organization. Genn believes that design principles may be freely applied to paintings, and her work unwaveringly affirms this sentiment.

The Japanese aesthetic philosophy of *wabi-sabi* states that objects and experiences are most beautiful when they evoke a feeling of spiritual longing. Stemming from her Japanese maternal heritage, Sara Genn's interest in *wabi-sabi* has influenced her painting methodology well as the visual themes present in her work. Genn's paintings strive to simultaneously offer a place of shelter and tension for the viewer; they provide a place for us to rest but also ask us to consider our own longing. As much as these works exude a visual weightlessness, they assert themselves as objects in space with varied tactile and material properties. Acrylic paint and unprimed canvas planes push against one another, edges meticulously created freehand without mechanical aids, highlighting the poetry of the imperfect within idealized design structures.

Having recently set up a secondary studio in a 1960 Mid-Century house in Palm Springs, California at the edge of the wilderness of Joshua Tree, Genn found herself struck by the power of her environment to radicalize the basic principles that have always driven her practice: asymmetry, asperity (the roughness or irregularity of things,) simplicity, austerity and intimacy. These new paintings reaffirm the artist's core artistic philosophy. They are generous of spirit through restraint, everything inspired by a new sense of place.

Sara Genn is a Canadian-born artist, composer, and independent recording artist. She graduated with a BFA from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario in 1994. After spending 15 years in New York City, Genn relocated to Palm Springs, California. Genn's work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *House Beautiful*, *Create!*, *House and Home*, *NYLON Japan*, *Town and Country*, *W*, *Domino*, *American Art Collector*, *New York Magazine*, *LONY*, and *Tatler*, as well as in the Rizzoli publication *New York Parties: Private Views*. The artist lives and works in Palm Springs, California.