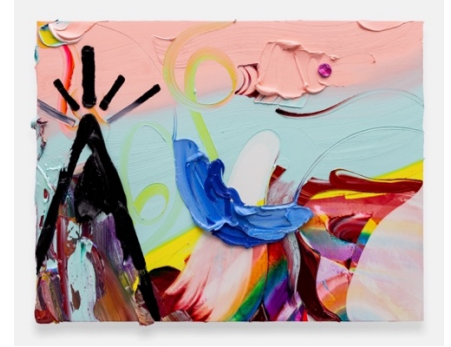


## Erin Loree

### *A Place to Go*



April 7 – May 21, 2022

Morgan Lehman Gallery is pleased to present *A Place to Go*, an exhibition of recent paintings by Erin Loree. This marks the artist's first exhibition with the gallery.

Each piece in this show was born out of a different chapter in the artist's life, but all contain a fundamental theme: the desire to reconnect with a childlike sense of wonder. Loree's paintings speak to the value and necessity of fleeting dreamlike states, and celebrate the places we can go in our minds to escape outer chaos and crippling uncertainty. It can be harder to access the magical dimensions of life during times of inner and worldly tumult, but moments like these also provide necessary pauses that rejuvenate and soothe the soul – a respite from the heaviness of our burdens. These are places where we can reflect on our past and contemplate better futures and versions of ourselves.

Foregoing a specific plan or reference, Loree embraces uncertainty in her painting process, allowing the image and meaning to reveal itself as she works with her materials. The artist is interested in the delicate balance between intention and chance, transformation and inversion. Starting with slick panel surfaces that allow the paint to sit prominently on top, Loree applies impasto oils in dense globs, scraping, shifting, and nudging them into their final locations as the dualities of shadow and light, lightness and weight, pushing and pulling, reveal playful paradoxes and complexities. Through this, a sort of metamorphosis takes place, as if the painting has come into being all at once, in accordance with its own inner logic.

Loree's earlier work was deeply rooted in figuration, while the more recent paintings focus almost exclusively on landscape, and the conceptual framework that it offers. Environmental motifs such as mountains, portals, suns, and moons appear often in the work as ambiguous painterly forms, hinting at the transience of natural phenomena and of our ephemeral inner states of being. These landscape references become psychologically charged, both mirroring human emotional states and highlighting the grounding power of the natural world. Loree thinks of each painting as a continuation of the one before, each a step along the journey and a reflection back to ourselves and our constant transformation.

The artist explains, "It's often in nature that we find ourselves getting lost in reveries or daydreams. If we dare to pause, we'll find that the flowers still yawn, blades of grass still shimmer, and mountains will always sway softly to kiss the clouds." The virtuosic works in Loree's exhibition look effortlessly made, and allude to those rare carefree moments during which we might temporarily suspend the weight of the world in favor of a space where time can stand still, and our imaginations can wander freely.

**Erin Loree** is a Canadian artist, based in Tulsa, OK. She completed her BFA at OCAD University in 2012 and received a Certificate of Advanced Visual Studies from OCAD's Florence Program. She has exhibited nationally and internationally in Toronto, Montreal, New York, Boston, San Francisco, and the UK, with a recent museum solo exhibition at the Tom Thomson Art Gallery in Owen Sound, Ontario. She has work in a number of collections including Toronto Dominion Bank, Holt Renfrew, and Imago Mundi. Loree was awarded the William and Isabel Pope NSCAD Painting Residency at NSCAD University in Halifax, and has participated in residencies at Artscape Youngplace in Toronto, and Sachaqa Centro de Arte in the Peruvian Amazon Rainforest. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including the 2012 Drawing and Painting Medal from OCAD University, as well as an Ontario Arts Council grant. Loree's work has been featured in YNGSPC.ca, MOMUS.ca, CBC Arts, the Toronto Star, Beautiful Decay, Booooooom, and Huffington Post.

Erin Loree, *Swing*, 2019, Oil on canvas over panel, 35h x 45w in (88.90h x 114.30w cm)