MORGAN LEHMAN
526 West 26th Street, 4th Floor, New York, New York 10001

# Kysa Johnson

## *Imperishable Change That Renovates the World*

September 10 - October 17, 2026

Morgan Lehman Gallery presents *Imperishable Change That Renovates the World*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Kysa Johnson. Borrowing its title from Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Queen Mab*, the exhibition considers transformation as a fundamental condition of existence. More than a century later, physicist Werner Heisenberg invoked Shelley's phrase in *Physics and Philosophy* while reflecting on Heraclitus' vision of a universe defined by flux, relation, and becoming. Johnson's paintings use the language of physics to weave the microscopic, cosmic, and ecological into a single field of suspended attention.

The exhibition continues Johnson's *Ghosts In Common—Flora* series, in which flowers and plant forms emerge from an alphabet of subatomic decay patterns—the infinitesimal pathways traced by unstable particles as they transform into more stable forms. Recorded within particle detectors, these eleven patterns provide the underlying vocabulary of every mark in the paintings. The same invisible processes that govern matter at its smallest scale become the language through which visible living systems are depicted. Two large paintings anchor the exhibition as opposite poles of a shared cycle: one places the viewer in a field of flowers beneath the Milky Way; the other immerses the viewer among flowers beneath the sun. Between them, plants and flowers at varying stages of their seasonal cycles of decay and regeneration, flowering and dormancy, move through their own concentric cycle of the larger rhythms of the sun and galaxy.

**Kysa Johnson,** *Ghosts In Common - Imperishable Change - Subatomic Decay Patterns and the Importance of Waves in the Efficiency of Photosynthesis with Cross Country Flowers*, 2026, ink, watercolor and acrylic on linen, 78 x 66 x 1 1/2 in, 198.1 x 167.6 x 3.8 cm (KJ_296)

Where earlier bodies of work have relied on imagery that is visually removed from everyday life through scale or time, starting on the outer edges of the cosmic, microscopic, or historical to reflect back in on the systems that unite us, the imagery that populates these paintings draws our attention to a subject that embodies these universal cycles right in front of us. They embody the radial and interconnected processes through which energy and matter are constantly transformed and networked across scales. The emergence of plants on earth gave us the atmosphere containing the air we now breathe; their processing of the sun gives us the energy we consume to live each day. Their existence is part of the long unfolding that makes human existence possible.

For Johnson, science is a way of recognizing the strange, beautiful, and interwoven reality of which we are a part, while painting becomes a means of collapsing the boundaries between the subatomic and the cosmic, nature and culture, and the microscopic and the immediate. In a moment of profound upheaval, these paintings look at the larger transformations and monumental feedback loops contained within a flower, a seed, a season. The works ask us to notice that the small things are the big things, that what is immediately in front of us is connected to forces unfolding across scales of time and space. Everything is made and remade by the same imperishable change.