

Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

11 EAST ANAPAMU STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101
(805) 730-1460

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2023



SUSAN MCDONNELL RADIANT REALM

SEPTEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 2, 2023

OPENING RECEPTION:

1ST THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5TH | FROM 5-8 pm

SANTA BARBARA, CA – Sullivan Goss is delighted to announce **an exhibition of marvelous new paintings by SUSAN MCDONNELL**. The exhibition will include paintings in both oil and watercolor as well as a suite of abstract cellular compositions formed in ink and watercolor.

Radiant Realm showcases what McDonnell does best - creating magical worlds by combining meticulous realism with elements from her imagination. A mist of magic

moves through both the spotlight still life works and her portraits of animals, evoking moments of natural wonder. Throughout this exhibition, McDonnell captures her awe at the beauty of the flora and fauna in the natural world. The scenes traverse between the real and the surreal as an owl locks its gaze on the viewer, or as a white-crowned sparrow poses perfectly for its portrait. An entire meadow of barnyard animals gaze placidly at the viewer radiating the sense of a peaceable kingdom. McDonnell is interested in the connection between humans and nature and the silent moments that can summon that awareness in the blink of an eye. To quote the artist, "We live in paradise. As far as we know, no other planet has what we have. These paintings are meditations on moments when the light causes us to pause and simply look at the wonder of it all."

Six of the paintings in the show were inspired by **Apricot Lane Farms** - the subject of the documentary, *The Biggest Little Farm*. McDonnell spent time on the grounds and with the animals in 2022. She says, "The film follows Molly and John Chester, John is the filmmaker, as they transform a dilapidated citrus farm with essentially dead soil into a thriving Elysian Fields. They do this by aligning with the wisdom of nature and following systems that have been present on Earth for thousands if not millions of years. The work in this show reflects and embraces the spirit of nature when we quietly listen to what she has to say. Apricot Lane Farms is an inspiration and a testament to what can flourish when we do just that."

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For images or other information requests, contact Nathan Vonk at 805.730.1460 or nathan@sullivangoss.com

Many will find McDonnell's meticulous accuracy reminiscent of early 17th century Dutch paintings - especially her still life paintings. Her work echoes the old masters' though her compositions and colors are distinctly contemporary. For the first time, this exhibition will present eight intimate, meditative drawings comprised of tiny circles in ink over nebulous watercolor that contrast with the uncanny realism in McDonnell's oil and watercolor paintings. These drawings are a daily practice that allow the artist to loosen up and move intuitively and creatively in the abstract world before returning to the precise rendering in her other work.

SUSAN McDONNELL received both her B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, where she later taught for many years. She has been exhibited extensively in L.A. and in Santa Fe, but began being represented by Sullivan Goss in 2014. A Californian for many years, Susan now spends the majority of her time in Minnesota.