

LISSON

SARAH CUNNINGHAM



BIOGRAPHY

Sarah Cunningham sought out the essential and the alive through her imaginary wildernesses and fluid forestscapes. She constructed kaleidoscopic environments and imagined forest clearings from multiple layers of radiating bursts of light, line and colour. Cunningham built up complex spatial structures through gestural marks, in a process of continual obliteration and overpainting, until hidden worlds and pastures appeared. Part abstract experimentation, part spiritual journey, every painting at some level represents the intuitive and unspoken connection between nature and humankind, with the artist having acted as a conduit for our continuing coexistence and paying homage to the ancient practices dedicated to this mutual understanding. The resulting works exist forever in the act of making and becoming, as if in constant flux, with the canopied compositions seemingly being pulled or carved from each canvas in front of the viewer. Cunningham drew from a multitude of literary, art historical and personal references, adopting and dissolving these situations through vivid, expressionistic mark making. An improvisatory approach to materials also influences every expressionistic sweep and crystalline composition she made, whether using cloth to drag and remove paint or by adding branches and other wooden extensions to brushes as a means to extend or alter her arm's length. Her unusual, nocturnal practice of working through the night further estranged her limbs and thoughts from any systematic, painterly movements, resulting in works that briefly dwell in darkness only to culminate in the arrival of the dawn chorus.

Cunningham (1993 - 2024) was born in Nottingham in 1993 and lived in London. She received an MA in Painting from Royal College of Art

in 2022. Her work has been included in numerous exhibitions in Aspen, Berlin, Los Angeles, New York and Vancouver at Almine Rech, Max Hetzler and the CICA Vancouver among others. She is the recipient of the Ali H. Alkazzi Scholarship Award (2019) and the Djanogly Art Award (2019).