

form & concept

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jacks McNamara**

*The Poetics of Growth*

September 27 - November 30, 2024

OPENING RECEPTION

Friday, September 27, 5-7 PM



*Ancestor Dreams*, ink on birch circle. 24 x 24 x 1/2 in

**(Santa Fe, NM) Artist Jacks McNamara conjures up the geological past with abstracted landscape paintings on wood at an undisclosed location in the sprawling suburbs of Santa Fe, NM.**

(September 2024) **Some 250 million years ago, Santa Fe was underwater**; Now, the city is a mix of suburban sprawl and preserved historic buildings. This dramatic juxtaposition illustrates the incessant, sometimes inconspicuous, character of change that is the subject of McNamara's latest work. In McNamara's forthcoming exhibition, *The Poetics of Growth*, familiar landscape scenery meets precise linework to launch an investigation into the structure, form, and discourse of change. **The exhibition opens with a reception at form & concept on September 27th from 5 to 7 PM.**

There are no discrete places depicted in McNamara's latest ink-wash and line paintings, only assemblages of topographical elements evocative of forms one might find in a landscape painting. **Running rivers, tree lines, peninsulas, and other familiar topographical features sit on—and sometimes slip between—a harmonious union of translucent washes.** McNamara embellishes these works with patterns that call to mind maps, scientific diagrams, or architectural blueprints.

**“This show of unique ink paintings on raw wood evolves a pattern of language ranging in scale from the cellular to the cosmic that explores the seasonal turnings and sheer wonder of being alive,”** says McNamara.

On a broad conceptual level, ***The Poetics of Growth* suggests that growth happens in between the extremes of change, an idea embedded in the artist's choice of medium and combination of techniques.** McNamara's gestural ink washes, which soak into the petrified vascular system of their wood canvases, illustrate supplication to and acceptance of nature's universal order. In contrast, McNamara's mechanical repetition of geometric forms illustrates a desire to control or limit change in an iterative process. McNamara's finished artworks only come to be, or figuratively grow, by unifying these dichotomous conceptions of change in varying proportions.

“There is a level of semiotic scrutiny happening in McNamara's work that elevates it from abstract painting to philosophical inquiry, perhaps even spiritual inquiry,” says Spencer Linford, communications director of form & concept. **“The places McNamara depicts aren't real in the physical sense, but they evoke universal signifiers that make the paintings real insofar that they evoke thoughts, memories, or experiences of real things and places.”**

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For press, image, or video inquiries, please contact Spencer Linford at [spencer@formandconcept.center](mailto:spencer@formandconcept.center).

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## Biography

Jacks McNamara is a queer, trans, neurodivergent artist, writer, healer, organizer and educator who works at the intersection of healing and social justice. Their visual art is informed by their practice as a poet, and is deeply shaped by their experiences of synesthesia, their passion for plants, their astonishment at New Mexico landscapes, and their investigations of pre-Christian spirituality in ancestral European homelands.

Based on the Tewa land of O'ga Po'geh, known colonially as Santa Fe, NM, Jacks is a Lambda Literary Fellow with a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. They studied painting at the Aegean School for the Fine Arts in Paros, Greece. Their work has been shown across the US and Canada, in venues ranging from Vancouver's Gallery Gachet to New York's Fountain Gallery.

McNamara is the co-founder of The Icarus Project, a participatory adventure in radical mental health and mutual aid now known as The Fireweed Collective. They are the co-author of *Navigating the Space Between Brilliance and Madness* and the creator of many zines and a collection of poetry, *Inbetweenland*, which was released by Deviant Type Press in 2013. McNamara's advocacy and art are the subject of the poetic documentary *Crooked Beauty*. McNamara also teaches The Big Queer Poetry Class, writes regular columns for the *Santa Fe Reporter*, and hosts the podcast *So Many Wings*.

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