

Nancy Genn: Architecture from Within

Curated by Francesca Valente

May 24 – August 7 2018

Palazzo Ferro Fini, San Marco 2322, Venice

For the first time in Venice, Nancy Genn's powerful paintings, sculptures, handmade paper works and prints will be on display in a solo show entitled *Nancy Genn: Architecture from Within*. Curated by Francesca Valente, the show will be housed at the Palazzo Ferro Fini, one of Venice's most significant historic palaces, today the home of the Regional Council of Venice.

Nancy Genn is a multifaceted, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural California artist who has been a major contributor to the history of post-war American art in the fields of gestural abstraction and abstract expressionism. Her career has spanned several generations, revealing her to be equally gifted in drawing, painting, sculpting, paper- and printmaking. An indefatigable traveler who continuously explores new techniques, Nancy Genn successfully melds western Modernism and Asian aesthetics into a personal and public synthesis.

Many of her paintings on handmade paper are inspired by the water, fog, and ever-changing atmosphere of San Francisco, where she was born and raised, and which Genn continues to call home. There is no better place to display an oeuvre so closely associated with the Bay than a palazzo overlooking Venice's Grand Canal.

Coinciding with the 16th Venice Biennale of Architecture, this display of selected works by Genn configures an interior architecture which propels the viewer into a rarefied, continually changing dimension, leaving us with an archaic sense of wonder. As curator Francesca Valente notes, "Genn's work –regardless of medium– radiates a strong meditative force which, almost like the sacred reiteration of a mantra, springs from within and manifests a unique inner light triggering a myriad of synesthetic experiences."

This exhibition will also celebrate the publication of the most complete catalogue to date of this remarkable artist's life and work entitled *Nancy Genn: Architecture from Within*, published by Skira. This bilingual publication, edited by Francesca Valente, offers a selection of exploratory essays on the multifaceted aspects of Nancy Genn's oeuvre, as well as high-resolution reproductions of approximately 100 works, among them bronze sculptures, drawings, mixed media works, prints, etchings and vitreographs held by important public and private collections. They include abstract landscapes of Rome and exotic places like Taiz, Samarkand and Patagonia which shaped different stages of her creativity.

ABOUT NANCY GENN

Born in San Francisco, California, Nancy Genn lives and works in Berkeley where she continues to produce vital and ever-changing work.

She studied at the California School of Fine Arts (now The San Francisco Art Institute) and the University of California, Berkeley (1947 - 1949), gaining international recognition in the 1970's for her experiments with hand made paper. Using what is now known as the "Genn method", she created three-dimensional abstract works, revitalizing an ancient Japanese art form as well as the medium of paper itself. This work unites not only East and West, but the artist's own experience as painter and sculptor as well. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the New York Public Library and the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum; the University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley; the San Francisco Museum of Art; the Library of Congress, the National Museum of American Art and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Auckland Museum, New Zealand, and Italy's International Center for Aesthetic Research, among many others.

About Francesca Valente

Francesca Valente is a cultural mediator, curator and translator who, for over thirty years, was the director of several Italian Cultural Institutes in North America, from Toronto-Vancouver to San Francisco, and from Chicago to Los Angeles. After a long career with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she was invited by the Italian government to coordinate the 89 Italian Cultural Institutes throughout the world for the 2011 *Padiglione Italia*, 54th Biennale Arte, Venice. 89 videos were produced focusing on Italian artists living outside of Italy, and were on view at the Arsenale in Venice (with original music composed for the occasion by Ennio Morricone) while 89 exhibitions by these artists were taking place worldwide. Valente recently curated an exhibition of 220 artists from Central and Eastern Canada for *Imago Mundi*, Luciano Benetton Foundation, which was featured at Palazzo Loredan, Venice (29 August-31 October 2017) and will be on display at the Ontario College of Arts and Design University, Toronto (24 October – November 2018).

INFORMATION:

May 24 – August 7 2018

Sala degli Stemmi

Palazzo Ferro Fini, San Marco 2322, Venice

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Free Entrance, identification must be provided at the door

OPENING EVENTS:

Press Conference

Skira Book presentation

May 22 12:30pm

Sala degli Stemmi

Palazzo Ferro Fini, San Marco 2322, Venice

Followed by a buffet lunch in Sala Canova

Meet the artist Nancy Genn and curator Francesca Valente

May 23 4:00pm

Sala degli Stemmi

Palazzo Ferro Fini, San Marco 2322, Venice

By invitation

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