



di Rosa

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Frances McCormack, The Needle's Eye, 1993, oil on canvas. Collection of Beth Changstrom, Penngrove, CA. Courtesy of di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art, Napa.

Painter Frances McCormack Encourages Us to Remain Rooted in Wonder

Major exhibition surveying the artist's 40-year career comes to Napa's di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art.

Napa, CA (February 20, 2025) – di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art presents [Frances McCormack: Rooted in Wonder](#) in the light-filled Gallery 1. The expansive 40-year survey of painting and collage by Bay Area artist Frances McCormack will be on view March 29 – June 29, 2025, with an opening reception Saturday, March 29, 5 – 7 p.m.



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Originally from Boston, Massachusetts, McCormack relocated to the Bay Area in the late 1970s, completing her fine arts education at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley. Her abstract compositions, featuring tube or tendril like forms, fields and bands of color, and painterly layering and effects, quickly earned her praise, with art critic Kenneth Baker writing: "her paintings strive for a kind of material poetic statement possible only in painting."

"I have always admired McCormack's ability to create visual interpretations of flora and fauna that are energetic, compelling, and introspective," said Kate Eilertsen, Executive Director and Chief Curator at di Rosa. "Her painterly style and use of color reflect her engagement with Northern California's natural and artistic ecosystems."

In her lush paintings, McCormack explores personal themes with the garden as a guiding metaphor. Drawing on the concept of the garden as an enclosure, she populates the field of the painting with botanical references and images in earthy and vegetative hues. Pushing against compositional limits, these forms and color fields describe the nature of growth, energy, and even human struggle.

"I have found...that in both viewing and making art, what occurs and is so seductive is a temporary fading of the pressures and expectations of daily existence," writes McCormack, in an essay included in the 160-page monograph, *Frances McCormack – Rooted in Wonder: Paintings, 1984 – 2024*, published in conjunction with the exhibition. "Time and reality are transformed by attention and condensation. This is the experience I want for the viewer. Wonder and curiosity. The arts — painting, music, film, performance — can serve as artifacts of reflection. They also inspire us to renegotiate our often-harsh contract with life and open ourselves to the unexpected."

di Rosa welcomes guests to an [Opening Reception](#) for *Frances McCormack: Rooted in Wonder* on Saturday, March 29, 2025. di Rosa Patrons and Members are invited for a special Member's Hour, 5 – 6 p.m., with a welcome from Kate Eilertsen, Executive Director and Chief Curator at 5:30 p.m., followed by remarks from the artist. The public is invited 6 – 7 p.m. to enjoy refreshments. General admission for the public reception is \$10; di Rosa Patrons and Members are free.

McCormack will be joined by painter and fine arts educator Chester Arnold for an [Artist's Talk](#) on Saturday, April 12, at 1:30 – 3 p.m. McCormack will share thoughts on painting and the influences of the garden and her experience as an arts educator on her practice. Admission is \$25 for the general public, and free for di Rosa Members, and includes gallery admission.

Frances McCormack: Rooted in Wonder is on view March 29 – June 29, 2025, open Thursday – Sunday, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. A full-color exhibition catalog, *Frances McCormack – Rooted in Wonder: Paintings, 1984 – 2024*, published by Fine Arts Press, is available from the publisher and di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art.



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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Frances McCormack was born in 1952 in Boston, MA, and lives in Sonoma, CA. She has exhibited her work in over 100 museum and gallery exhibitions since 1984. After receiving her BA in English from the University of Massachusetts in 1978, she completed her MA degree in Fine Art from San Francisco State University in 1985 and MFA from the University of California at Berkeley in 1986. A respected San Francisco Bay Area teacher, she taught studio art at San Francisco State University, Sonoma State University, and California College of the Arts (Oakland and San Francisco campuses). At the former San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) she was a tenured professor for 28 years. Upon retirement, she was designated Professor Emerita. Among other numerous honors, she was the first affiliated SFAI Faculty Residency Fellow at the American Academy in Rome in July 2000.

ABOUT DI ROSA CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

di Rosa is a non-profit art center and nature preserve specializing in the art of Northern California. Located at 5200 Sonoma Highway, on 217 acres in the Carneros region of Napa, di Rosa includes two large art galleries, a beautiful lake, abundant birding, walking trails with vineyard views, outdoor sculptures, and picnic grounds.

di Rosa presents contemporary exhibitions by Bay Area-based artists in addition to maintaining a permanent collection of notable works by artists with ties to the Bay Area from the mid-twentieth century to the early 2000s.

di Rosa offers an array of public programs and events for all ages to inspire creativity and curiosity. di Rosa is open to the public without reservations Thursday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and by appointment Tuesday through Wednesday. Visitors are encouraged to bring picnics. For more information visit www.dirosaart.org.

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