

**Nottingham
Contemporary**

Sarah Cunningham

Midnight Sun

Easy Read Guide



How to use this Guide



In this guide, hard to understand words are underlined. We explain what these words mean after they have been used.

The guide starts with an introduction about the exhibition.

After the introduction, there is a section of the guide telling you about different themes in the exhibition.

You can use the contents page to find out which page of the guide information on each theme is found at.

The contents page is on the next page and tells you what page number to turn to for each section.

The page numbers are written at the bottom of each page.

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Introduction



This exhibition is a display of artworks by an artist called Sarah Cunningham.



We are showing works by Sarah at Nottingham Contemporary from 9 October 2026 to 10 January 2027.



Sarah was an artist from Nottingham.



The exhibition shows lots of paintings that Sarah made.

About Sarah



Sarah lived from 1993 to 2024.



She grew up near Wollaton Park in Nottingham where there are lots of beautiful trees. Sarah spent a lot of time amongst the trees at Wollaton and made paintings when she was at the park.



Sarah was very interested in nature like trees and animals. She thought that humans and nature shouldn't be seen as separate. She believed we are connected to the world around us.



Sarah left Nottingham to study art at Loughborough University, and later at the Royal College of Art in London.



Sarah became known as one of the most exciting painters in the UK.



Sarah moved back to Nottingham in 2020 and spent time painting at Wollaton Park again. This was during the COVID lockdown. This was a time when people were asked to stay at home to stop an illness called COVID spreading and making more people unwell.



This is Sarah's first show of her works on their own in a big art gallery.



This exhibition is extra special because it is in the city where Sarah grew up, and Sarah worked at Nottingham Contemporary so she knew this gallery very well.

Sarah's Inspirations



Inspirations are things that give us ideas. Sarah was inspired by lots of things and this gave her ideas for making new paintings.



Sarah was inspired by poetry. She read lots of poetry and wrote some poems too.



Sarah was inspired by science fiction books. These are made-up stories that mix real or made-up science with big ideas about the future.



Sarah was inspired by nature, like the trees in Wollaton Park.



In 2018, Sarah went to stay in Panama with a group of people called the Kuna community. They shared their ways of living amongst trees with her and Sarah found this very inspiring.



In 2019, Sarah spent a lot of time with artworks by an artist called Daniel Steegman Mangrané who had an exhibition at Nottingham Contemporary where Sarah worked. She was very inspired by Daniel's work which was about plants, nature and forests.



Sarah was inspired by lots of ideas about nature and different ways of living with the world around us.

How Sarah made her work



Sarah dreamt of new landscapes when she painted. Her paintings aren't of real places. Her paintings show things that are in real landscapes like mountains or forests and plants, but they're all mixed together with things Sarah made up or dreamed of.



Some people feel like they're travelling into a new world or a dream when they look at Sarah's paintings.



Sarah made most of her paintings at night-time.



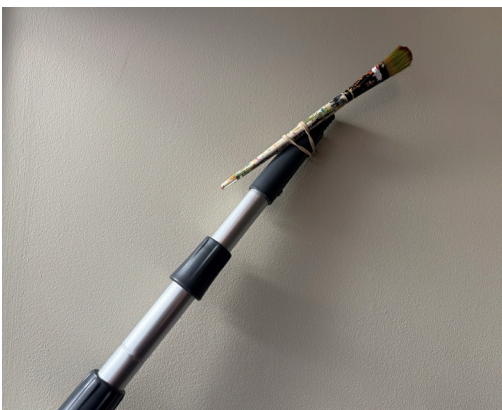
Sarah painted onto very big canvases. Canvases are special pieces of fabric for painting onto.



Sarah painted with a very thick paint called oil paint. She would paint lots of layers of paint on top of each other.



Sarah used her whole body to paint. She often put her paintings on the floor and stood on top of them to work on them. She moved around a lot while she painted, almost like dancing.



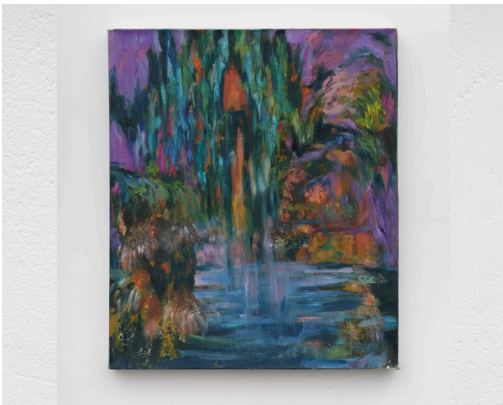
Sometimes Sarah would tie paintbrushes to branches from trees or long sticks so that she could reach further and get paint right into the top corners of her canvases.



The people who decide which paintings to include in an exhibition and where the paintings should be in the gallery space are called curators.



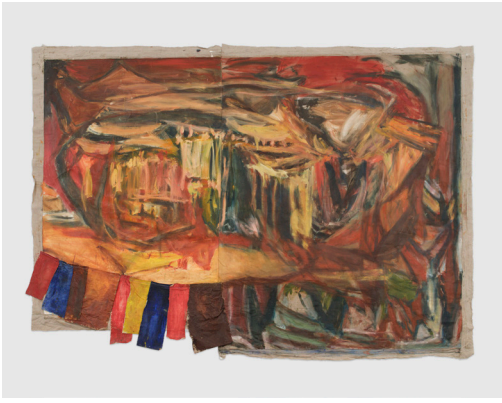
The curators of Sarah's exhibition have chosen three paintings which they want to act as guides on people's journey through the gallery. Guides are people or things that helps show you the way.



The first painting they have chosen is called *The World It Softly Lulls*. This is painting of a dark forest at night-time. This painting shows how Sarah was very good at dreaming of new places.



The second painting the curators have chosen is called *Via Lucis* which means Way of Light in a language called Latin. This painting shows the way night turns into day. The painting shows how Sarah created light and movement within her paintings.



The final painting the curators have chosen as a guide is called *Starshine and Clay*. This work is very colourful and bright like an incredible sunrise in the morning. They chose this painting because it shows Sarah's energy and power.

For More Information



You can find out more about what we do by looking at our website here:

nottinghamcontemporary.org



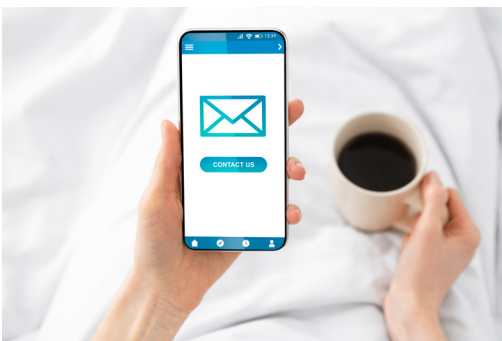
If you would like to help us show more artworks in the future, please think about giving us some money.

We suggest £5 as a good amount.



If you need more information please contact us by:

**Post : Nottingham Contemporary
Weekday Cross Nottingham
NG1 2GB**



Phone: 0115 948 9750

**Email:
info@nottinghamcontemporary.org**

Image Credits

Image credits tell us who took a photograph. The image credits for the photographs you have seen in this easy read guide are shown below.

We have to write these in the way they are written below because of special rules. You don't need to read this part of the guide unless you want to. This part of the guide doesn't tell you anything more about the artworks in the exhibition.

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1. Sarah Cunningham, *Via Lucis*, 2023. © Sarah Cunningham; courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

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Page 4

1. Sarah Cunningham. Photo by George Darrell, courtesy Lisson Gallery

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4. Sarah Cunningham, *I Will Look Into the Earth*, 2023. © Sarah Cunningham; courtesy of Lisson Gallery. Courtesy Lisson Gallery

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2. Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, *Living Thoughts*, 2019. Installation view of Nottingham Contemporary. Photo: Stuart Whipps.

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3. Sarah Cunningham, *The World it Softly Lulls*, 2021. © Sarah Cunningham; courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

4. Sarah Cunningham, *Via Lucis*, 2023. © Sarah Cunningham; courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

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1. Sarah Cunningham, *Starshine and Clay*, 2022. © Sarah Cunningham; courtesy of Lisson Gallery. Courtesy Lisson Gallery

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