

The Light and Dark of Life

Sara Spohnheimer

Second Floor Gallery

July 18 – Sept 12, 2026

Exhibit Statement:



The representational paintings of my maturity began with an idyllic/bright view of the land to my family's seventh generation Iowa homeplace, and followed me as I walked in the night through European cities and back. I learned the beauty of the interplay of light and dark as an observer and on canvas, then in the reality of so-called real life. Maturation is an ongoing process, and our archetypes and stories contribute and support us, providing helpful context that we may remain open and gain in character rather than lose ourselves in self-absorption, defensiveness, bitterness, or resentment. Embracing and feeling both the dark and light of life in their fullness is the rounded experience of being embodied as human beings on earth. My work reflects the beauty around me and my exploration and recovery of indigenous European values through a contextual study of folk tales and customs via herbalism, history, language, anthropology, and the arts.

Bio:

Sara Spohnheimer has been an artist ever since she could pick up a pencil. Born in Ames, Iowa and raised in Hamilton County, Sara earned her Fine Art degree in Drawing, Painting, and Printmaking from Iowa State University in 1998. She took a heavy course load each semester, spending many hours in classes pertaining to her other areas of interest: History, Anthropology, and Foreign Languages.

Artist Statement:

Primarily an oil painter, Sara has become known for her luminous, award-winning, nighttime architectural scenes featuring Europe and Iowa. As an antidote to these works demanding rigorous attention, Sara paints more expressionistic mythological/archetypal imagery, watercolors, and fun vignettes from everyday life. When not painting, she spends time in her garden, takes photographs, reads, or writes poems in German calligraphy.