

July 2006

Julie Heffernan: Everything That Rises

On view at the University Art Museum
August 30 through November 12, 2006

Artist Reception: September 19, 2006, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Art & Culture Talks: Lecture by Julie Heffernan, October 10, 2006, 8 p.m. Free and open to the public

ALBANY, NEW YORK ---The University at Albany is pleased to present *Julie Heffernan: Everything That Rises*, an exhibition that spans the career of one of contemporary painting's most skilled and visionary practitioners. Using traditional motifs borrowed from a range of art historical references including Flemish landscapes, 17th-century portraiture, and Rococo interiors, Heffernan's paintings evoke the skill of the old masters, yet belong completely to this moment. Her unpredictable and highly imaginative imagery speaks to her abiding interest in issues of gender, class structure, personal narrative, and art historical convention. It is a body of work that continues to engage, delight and confound, filling even the most sophisticated viewer with a sense of wonder.

Everything That Rises includes fifteen monumental canvases that skillfully merge the traditional genres of still life, portraiture and landscape. Representative of her earliest works is *Self-Portrait as Great Scout Leader* (1998), which depicts a small nude boy sporting a Jan Van Eyck red turban holding in each of his outstretched hands delicate leashes attached to miniature animals. Heffernan's solitary standing female figures, exemplified by *Self-Portrait as Stone Woman* (2003), explore sexual identity and gender, along with a complex weaving of art historical references and personal narrative. In later works Heffernan moves her complex dramas indoors where she defies the literal definitions of the self-portrait even further. In the Baroque interior *Self-Portrait as Netherworld* (2004), a flock of birds and a smoldering ring of fire occupy the painting's foreground; the artist's presence is represented only as spectral evidence. Her most recent works, among them *Self-Portrait as Holes in My Head* (2005), abandon the motif of the dominant figure for the gloriously abundant depiction of flora and fauna, long part of her visual vocabulary and serving here as a portal to diminutive and intricate scenes of love or mayhem. Lavishly painted and undeniably beautiful, Heffernan's work lures us to worlds where nothing is simple, and where the overripe lushness of a single piece of fruit holds the promise of meaning beyond rational thought.

Julie Heffernan was born in Peoria, Illinois in 1956. She received her MFA in 1985 from Yale University. In 1996 she received a New York Foundation for the Arts award, in 1995 a National

Endowment for the Arts grant, and in 1986 a Fulbright-Hayes Grant. She has shown in numerous one-person and group exhibitions nationally since 1985. Heffernan lives in Brooklyn, New York.

This exhibition was organized by the University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York and the Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Greensboro. A fully illustrated 68-page exhibition catalogue features an introduction by the exhibition curator, University at Albany Art Museum Director Janet Riker, and essays by novelist A.S. Byatt, and artist/writer David Humphrey. The exhibition catalogue was supported by the Penny McCall Foundation Publishing Prize.

Exhibition Schedule:

Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, North Carolina
January 22 – April 16, 2006

The Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, South Carolina
May 25 – July 30, 2006

University Art Museum, University at Albany, Albany, New York
August 30 – November 12, 2006

For further information or visual materials, please call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at [www. albany.edu/museum](http://www.albany.edu/museum).

MUSEUM HOURS: Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.