

May 2007

Leading contemporary artists Judith Linhares and James Siena featured at the University Art Museum, University at Albany

July 12 through September 30, 2007

Guest Curator: Geoffrey Young

The artists and curator will be present for an opening reception on Thursday, July 12, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Free and open to the public

ALBANY, NY--- The University Art Museum is pleased to present the work of two influential contemporary artists, **Judith Linhares** and **James Siena**. The museum's first floor will feature 10 never-before shown drawings alongside more recent work by James Siena. The large-scale drawings were made eleven years ago to accompany *Pockets of Wheat*, a selection of short poems by Geoffrey Young. They were bought soon after the book's publication in 1996, by collector A. G. Rosen, and have not been shown previously. Painted with India ink, these drawings employ many of the ideas for which Siena has come to be celebrated. The museum's second floor will feature 14 paintings by Judith Linhares. These oils and gouaches—all completed within the last seven years—bare her signature brush strokes, lush color, and dream-like narrative style. Both exhibitions are guest curated by **Geoffrey Young**, poet, critic, and founder of Geoffrey Young Gallery in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

Although Judith Linhares and James Siena are markedly different in their approach to painting, both artists are considered pioneers in their respective genres: figuration and abstraction. Linhares is heralded as a painterly painter whose deliberately crude style has inspired a generation of younger figurative artists. Known for bright color and confident narrative visions, she is on familiar terms with animals, flowers, invented structures, fairy tales, and dream logic. Curator Geoffrey Young says, "Her candor is all in the wrist." In *Fence* (2000), Linhares paints a fence fragment in the middle distance of a barren expanse. Of this, Young writes, "Bathed in light, her fence is just there, like a fact, its simple content made strange and beautiful by painterly sophistication."

James Siena is one of today's brightest exponents of abstraction. His contained and absorbing modest-sized works offer a pointed response to the expansive nature of Abstract Expressionism. Inspired by a range of disparate sources—patterns, algorithms, puzzle-like geometries—Siena's paintings and drawings are constructed almost entirely by hand-drawn line. Each embodies the sustained attention and formal intelligence of an artist determined to release the seemingly limitless potential contained within the parameters of rule-based picture-making.

Born in Pasadena, California, in 1940, **Judith Linhares** lives and works in New York City. She earned her BFA and MFA from California College of Arts & Crafts in Oakland. Her work has been featured in over 30 solo exhibitions and 75 group exhibitions, including the seminal *Bad Painting* exhibition curated by Marcia Tucker at the New Museum in 1978. The recipient of multiple honors and awards, Linhares has been awarded a Civitella Ranieri Residency Grant; an Anonymous Was a Woman grant; a Guggenheim Fellowship; and three National Endowment for the Arts grants. Her work can be found in the public collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, Connecticut; and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York among others.

Born in Oceanside, California, in 1957, **James Siena** lives and works in New York City. He received his BFA from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. His work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions and over 55 group exhibitions, including the 2004 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial. He is the recipient of an Award in Art from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Competition Award; and The New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Painting. His work can be found in the public collections of the Des Moines Art Center in Iowa; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University in Ithaca, New York; Museum of Fine Art in Boston; and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York among others.

For further information or visual materials on Judith Linhares and James Siena, please call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at www.albany.edu/museum.

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