



PRESS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

Summer Exhibitions at the Palo Alto Art Center open on June 22, on view through September 1: : Exhibitions explore diverse themes through painting and ceramics

**Sky Is Falling: Paintings by Julie Heffernan
June 22-September 1, 2013**

This mid-career survey of nationally recognized painter Julie Heffernan features lush figurative and landscape paintings, richly surfaced and bursting with intricate details from the natural world. The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue, featuring an essay by acclaimed San Francisco author Rebecca Solnit, which will be available for purchase in the Art Center's Gallery Shop.

A deep love and understanding of art history informs all of Julie Heffernan's artwork. Landscapes, figures, and still lifes from throughout the history of art find expression in her contemporary paintings. Topical references to current events and contemporary issues also figure prominently in these works. Heffernan listens to National Public Radio in her studio as she paints, the current events contributing to the auditory background as well as the subject matter of many of her works. Deeply concerned with environmental issues, she frequently contemplates the state of the planet that her children will inherit. Rather than cynical, Heffernan's outlook is uniquely hopeful, as she views her paintings as both expressions and calls to action, "both cries in the wilderness and my attempt to do something."

Karen Kienzle, Director of the Palo Alto Art Center shares, "The Palo Alto Art Center is honored to present and organize this exhibition and tour of Julie Heffernan's work. In Julie's paintings, we find echoes of our past and warnings about our future. Art historical references from throughout the history of painting coexist in these works with allusions to our current fascination with consumption and the role it plays in our environment's devastation. The ability to convey incisive environmental messages in a richly engaging format is at the very heart of Julie's unique talent. We look forward to sharing her powerful vision with our entire community."

"I'm very excited to be having my first traveling museum show so close to where I grew up," Julie Heffernan says. "The Hayward Hills were my escape valve as a youth, and taught me to keep moving to the next hill beyond. This show at the Palo Alto Art Center is about imagining ways we might deal with future hurdles, coming on fast."

Raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Julie Heffernan now lives and works in New York. Her work is included in numerous national and international collections, including the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in Philadelphia, and the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach. Heffernan's paintings have been featured in solo exhibitions at institutions such as the Lux Art Institute in Encinitas, California, the John Michael Kohler Art Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, North Carolina. Her work has been featured in numerous publications, including *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Artnews*, and *The New York Times*.

Julie Heffernan is represented by P.P.O.W. in New York, Mark Moore Gallery in Los Angeles, and Catharine Clark Gallery in San Francisco.

After its premiere at the Palo Alto Art Center, the exhibition will travel to the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento from October 20, 2013 to January 26, 2014.

Opening Lecture and Celebration
Friday, June 21, 6-9 p.m.

Palo Alto Art Center
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303

6-7 p.m. Members-only walkthrough and wine reception with artist Julie Heffernan
7 p.m. Conversation with Julie Heffernan and Rebecca Solnit (open to the public)
8-9 p.m. Public reception

Lecture: Reflections on the Many Facets of Julie Heffernan's Art
Tuesday, July 9, 7-8:30 p.m.

Palo Alto Art Center
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Join Brigid Barton, Professor Emerita at Santa Clara University, for an engaging talk in which she draws connections between Julie Heffernan's work, her life, and her use of the art of the past.

Community Heirloom Project
By Shenny Cruces
June 22-September 1, 2013

Bay Area artist Shenny Cruces explores the power of objects in our lives by collecting personally significant trinkets and treasures, and casting them in porcelain to create assemblage sculptures. For her installation at the Palo Alto Art Center, Cruces invited community members to donate objects to cast. She received figurines, dolls, toys, eye glasses, jewelry, and a piggy bank shaped like a pineapple, all rich in narrative history and personal meaning.

“My work is always about collecting,” Shenny says. “This was an opportunity for me to work with the Palo Alto community and for them to share with me the objects they love, they collect, and that are of importance to them. I want to bring the art world closer to the community at large, so for me, the art represents them as well.”

Karen Kienzle, Director of the Palo Alto Art Center shares, “In a remarkable collaboration with the community, Shenny Cruces infuses new life into seasoned, once-loved objects. The *Community Heirloom Project* showcases the power of objects to recall stories, elicit memories, and shape our identities.”

Shenny Phillips Cruces received a BA in Ceramics from Illinois State University in 2008 and a Masters of Fine Arts in Ceramics from San Francisco State University in 2011. Her work has appeared in juried shows throughout California and the United States, including NCECA National Juried Student Exhibition, Ink and Clay 35, Visions in Clay 2011, California Clay Competition, 2013 NCECA Biennial, among others. Her work has received numerous awards with most recent being Murphy Cadogan Fellowship, and a Kiln God Award Residency at Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts in Maine. Shenny is currently the Ceramics Manager for the Richmond Art Center.

Closing Talk and Celebration
Friday, August 30, 6-9 p.m.

Palo Alto Art Center
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303

6-7 p.m. Members-only walkthrough and wine reception with artist Shenny Cruces

7 p.m. Artist talk and demonstration with artist Shenny Cruces (open to public)

8-9 p.m. Public reception