



Art

Art review

Julie Heffernan, “Boy, O Boy”

Heffernan again goes for Baroque, but this time, her nudes are male.

By Paul Laster
[P.P.O.W Gallery](#), through June 5

Mixing still life, portraiture and landscape, Julie Heffernan creates opulent oil paintings that recall Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo masterpieces, while imaginatively addressing contemporary concerns. Renowned for her symbolic female nudes in elaborate, dreamlike settings, Heffernan switches gears by making a young man—entangled with allegorical elements—the focal point of most of these canvases.

Great Scout Leader III depicts the nearly naked lad traversing an undulating terrain, while wearing a tool belt and a massive woven basket on his back; the former is laden with books, weapons and keys, and the latter with animals, vegetables and assorted artifacts. *Budding Boy* portrays the same youth in a tree overlooking a river valley; this time, he’s strapped to a sumptuous ball of fruits and birds. Surrounded by pruned branches and ladders, the young man stands poised at his sensual peak.

Other paintings run to darker themes. In *Self Portrait Moving Out*, for example, Heffernan depicts a mountain path filled with obstacles. Two women can be seen dragging their possessions over a collapsing bridge as another one of the artist’s male models pulls treasure uphill in a boat. Suggesting the trials, tribulations and potential joys of life, Heffernan’s works evoke a haunting confluence of past, present and future.

Time Out New York / Issue 764 : May 20–26, 2010

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