

Judith Linhares

*Banshee Sunrise*

April 29 - May 28, 2022



P·P·O·W is pleased to present *Banshee Sunrise*, Judith Linhares' second solo exhibition with the gallery. Known for her lush scenes of uninhibited women communing with nature and reveling in their independence, her animated still lifes and intimate portraits of animals, Linhares draws from childhood memories of California, literature, poetry, and dreams to create her unique and iridescent worlds that fuse paint and psychedelic figuration into a covert bond. In *Banshee Sunrise*, Linhares presents a new body of paintings which express the collective anxiety of America's current moment and depict resilience in the face of death, age, trauma, and change.

In Irish lore, the banshee is a fierce female spirit whose nocturnal wailings warn of an impending death in a family. A kind of professional mourner, the banshee disappears at dawn after acknowledging death and profound change on behalf of the community so they can rise to a new morning in celebration of life and survival. With nearly a million COVID-19 deaths in the United States, Linhares engages with the banshee lore to question how our society, now so quick to move on and ignore, can face this harsh reality together.

Examining the civil turmoil in America, *Banshee Sunrise* addresses how political and religious experiences in this country are uniquely intertwined within a mythology called democracy. In new floral (un)still lifes such as *Lincoln Bouquet*, 2022, Linhares paints her own version of a moralizing vanitas with the flowers themselves standing in for a biblical figure, accompanied by a creased portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Quoting Lincoln's famous line, "Every man over forty is responsible for his face," Linhares describes the painting as a contemplative portrait about accepting failings, shortcomings, and taking responsibility for our limitations.

Drawing inspiration from William Butler Yeats' post-World War I poem *The Second Coming*, from which Joan Didion's *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* takes its title, Linhares' *Falcon*, 2022, features a central female figure gloriously standing with her staff against a tumultuous sky as it transitions from dusk to dawn. In *The Second Coming*, Yeats writes, "Turning and turning in the widening gyre/The falcon cannot hear the falconer." Within the cyclone of profound change, Linhares' determined falconer overcomes verbal and physical barriers to ultimately convey her message to the falcon. Through this triumphant image, Linhares celebrates humankind's deep connection to wild nature and affirms that boldly accepting darkness is the only way to see the sunshine.

*Banshee Sunrise* will be accompanied by a catalogue featuring a poem by Brenda Shaughnessy and essay by author Susan Morgan.

Judith Linhares (b. 1940) was born and raised in Pasadena, CA. She earned her BFA and MFA degrees from California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, CA. She was included in the influential *Bad Painting* exhibition at the New Museum, organized by legendary curator Marcia Tucker and has participated in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and multiple grants from the National Endowments

for the Arts. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, PA; the de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, among others. Her work was recently on view at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in *Contemporary Art: Five Propositions*; the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in *Sea Change: Highlights from PAFA's Collection of 20th-century Art*; and Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles in *All of Them Witches*, organized by Dan Nadel and Laurie Simmons. A solo exhibition of her work, *Judith Linhares: Artist as Curator* is currently on view at the Sarasota Art Museum, FL.