

Julie Heffernan *Sky is Falling*

Full color illustrated catalogue available with essay by
Rebecca Solnit

October 17 – November 16, 2013
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 17, 6-8pm



P·P·O·W is pleased to announce *Sky is Falling*, our seventh solo exhibition of work by Julie Heffernan. Heffernan's new paintings explore various levels of societal chaos, environmental catastrophes and humankind's role as nature's keeper. The figures are heroically determined to gather and collect elements of a world that is falling apart leaving only time to answer if, and when, the bag will drop.

Writer Rebecca Solnit in her essay "Dandelion Clocks and Time Bombs" further explains that Heffernan's "paintings are her testimony in a language more immediate than words to the fires, to the falling, to the disorder, to the anxious mix of fear and hope, and to our stance as complicit witness." However, the figure in the painting *Self Portrait as Catastrophic Failure* is anything but complicit as she perches high in a canopy, battling flames that are engulfing a city which has been contained in a net bag. Her hands are full, one with a hose and the other with a set of scissors, like weights in a scale, contemplating whether it is best to cut the burning city loose or fight the fire. Simultaneously, the woman's eyes are fixed on an icy dwelling, situated on a branch above her that appears to be melting. Within this painting, Heffernan reveals the delicate nature of what humankind can save and what is already lost.

In *Sky is Falling*, Heffernan presents what Solnit describes as a "new kind of history painting" which extends beyond the known traditions of landscape paintings. All of these works remark on the nature of human society, the cycles of life and the possibilities of renewal through preservation of iconic treasures, traditions and cultures. Her new paintings carry heavy histories of the past as they try to valiantly reshape the future.

Julie Heffernan was born in Peoria, Illinois. She was raised in Northern California and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She received a BFA at the University of California, Santa Cruz and a MFA from Yale School of Art in 1985. She is currently a professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey.

Heffernan's work is included in many national and international collections and has been exhibited continuously over the last three decades. She has received numerous prestigious recognitions including fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Fulbright-Hayes and residencies at MacDowell Colony and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She was inducted into the National Academy Museum and was highlighted as the Guest Artist for the Brooklyn Academy of Music; she was the Commencement Speaker for the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (2010) and was included in an American Academy of Arts & Letters Annual Exhibition. Her work is in the collections of The Mint Museum, NC; the Weatherspoon Art Gallery, NC; The Progressive Corporation, OH; the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, VA; the Zabludowicz Art Trust, London; the Olbricht Collection, Berlin and Damien Hirst's MurderMe, London. Her work has been included in the Kwangju Biennial, Korea and in exhibitions at the Tampa Museum Of Art, FL; Knoxville Museum Of Art, TN; Columbia Museum Of Art, SC; Milwaukee Art Museum, WI; The New Museum, NY; The Norton Museum, FL; Kohler Arts Center, WI; The Palmer Museum Of Art, PA; McNay Art Museum, TX; Herter Art Gallery, MA and the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, OK.

A traveling retrospective of her work, accompanied by the eponymous catalogue *Everything that Rises*, was organized by the University Art Museum, University of Albany (Albany, New York) in 2006. A traveling show entitled *Sky is Falling* is currently at the Palo Alto Art Center and later in the year will travel to The Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA. Her work has garnered critical attention in numerous publications including *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *ARTnews*, and *The New York Times*.

Upcoming Exhibition: Dotty Attie, *The Lone Ranger*, November 21– December 21, 2013