

Julie Heffernan

Heaven and Hell



February 16 - March 18, 2006 • Opening: Thursday, February 16th, 6 - 8 pm

P.P.O.W Gallery is delighted to announce **Julie Heffernan's** forthcoming exhibition **Heaven and Hell**. In her new series of paintings, Heffernan expands her complex painted cosmologies to landscapes of sensuous gardens and winding jungles.

Heaven and Hell marks a change in Julie Heffernan's paintings. In these new self-portraits, she has replaced her dominant central figure with corporeal cornucopia-like bushes, vines, and bouquets; all intertwined with multi-vignettes and visions. In the painting, *Self-Portrait with Holes in my Head*, Heffernan wraps a lattice-like structure of intoxicatingly beautiful flowers stretching from the center to the periphery of the canvas. The central structure holds and hides lizards on the hunt and snakes wrapped through vines, vignettes of fiery war scenes, saints aglow with aura, and a cavern revealing an orgy scene resembling Ingres' *Turkish Bath*. Each one of these scenes expands upon the painting as being a 'self portrait'. The accumulated vignettes act like entries in a journal, telling and retelling dreamlike narratives through her own symbolism. Heffernan's feminine miasma echoes that of surrealists like Leonora Carrington, creating new histories and narratives through her own personal ingrained iconographies.

Heffernan's new paintings are involved with identifying and carving out the feminine space. Each of her subjects seems to be born out of a flat backdrop, much like a tapestry or modernized wallpaper. The paintings are at play with flatness and perspective, foreground and background. Heffernan tackles a painting problem much more akin with that of abstraction than representation. She then lets the viewer peak through the over grown jungle and the flat graphics, into portholes of private parties and power battles built between the beautiful and grotesque.

Julie Heffernan was born in 1956 and received her MFA from Yale University. She has had numerous one-person exhibitions around the country including a traveling exhibition *Everything that Rises* that will open at the Weatherspoon Museum of Art and will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalog containing essays by David Humphrey and A.S. Byatt in February. She has received a Lila Acheson Wallace award, NY Foundation for the Arts award, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Fullbright-Hayes Grant.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS: Dinh Q. Lê, March 24 - April 22, 2006.

Above:

Self-portrait as Holes In My Head, 2005, oil on canvas, 67 x 57 inches

Self-portrait as Dead Meat, 2005, oil on canvas, 82 x 81 inches

Self-portrait as Arms and the Men, 2006, oil on canvas, 82 x 60 inches