

**MULTI
_PLO**



Judith Linhares

Judith Linhares

(b. 1940, Los Angeles, CA) grew up cavorting among the beach towns and mountainsides of Southern California and studied art in Oakland, California during the political and social revolution of the 1960s. Her paintings, comprised of loose-limbed, unabashed women who climb, dig, ride naked on horseback and delight in drunken revelry, transpired out of an era of liberating changes catapulted by feminism, conceptual art and performance as practiced by Terry Fox and Linda Montano and the transgressive sentiments shared by underground cartoonists, Robert Crumb and S. Clay Wilson in the 1970s. Fueled by the permissive, psychedelic atmosphere of the decade, Linhares began to investigate the relationship between the conscious and unconscious and would continue to record her own dreams in journals for the next 50 years. For Linhares, the elemental narratives of dreams, myths and fairy tales continue to provide inspiration for kaleidoscopic compositions that teeter between fantasy and reality. Her dream journals were recently acquired by the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

Linhares has been based in New York since 1979, following her inclusion in the seminal Bad Painting exhibition, curated by Marcia Tucker at the New Museum, alongside fellow painters Charles Garabedian, Joan Brown and Ed Carrillo. Linhares' works have been acquired by numerous public collections including the Whitney Museum, New York, NY; The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; The de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; The New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, CT; and The Berkeley Museum of Art, Berkeley, CA. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and multiple grants from the National Endowments for the Arts, Linhares most recently won the prestigious 2017 Artist Award from the Artists' Legacy Foundation. Linhares is represented by Anglim Gilbert Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, CA / Seoul, KR; and P.P.O.W. Gallery, New York, NY.

Fire Side

Silkscreen print, 29.1 x 34.5 in. (74 x 87.7 cm)
Produced in Canson 320 g 100% cotton paper



We are proud to present our first screen print in collaboration with the amazing artist Judith Linhares and Various Small Fires (Los Angeles, CA). In *Fire Side* a couple calmly enjoy the nightly landscape around them, while they cook dinner. Naked bodies indulge in the ordinary pleasure of contemplation. A young deer visits the scene and watches the viewer. What happened before and what will happen after? Linhares' narrative structure is shown in a spontaneous and possible universe.

The extraordinary use of color, space and light, articulates a vibrant approach between the dreamlike and the real.

The visual narrative in first instance is passive, after which the composition invites to look deeper. This image celebrates the fleeting moment of ordinary pleasures. An alternative world, whose iconography gives relevance to everyday life, territory, coexistence and utopia.

Fire Side, is a limited edition of 55. Is a 45 color screen print on 320 g 100 % cotton Canson paper, which guarantees optimal preservation and excellent texture. Each one signed and numbered by the artist.





Observed in life and reinvented in paint – an interview with Judith Linhares

by Sandino Scheidegger

You've now lived in New York for exactly as long as you lived in California. Forty years. How has Bay Area culture from the '60s and '70s influenced your paintings up to now?

I think we are all far more informed by the times we live in and the reactions and signals we receive from the people around us than we care to realize or admit.

Growing up, I was aware of how my California relatives defined themselves. "We are not like those East Coast people," they would say, meaning the kinds of people who are exclusively concerned with credentials. The story went that in the West, you had the freedom from history and tradition as well as the physical space to be your own person.

Early on, coming of age in Los Angeles in the '50s, the notion of what it was to be "modern" was in full view. There was very little sentimentality about the past or about keeping things the way they were. I saw a lot of great modern art at the L.A. county museum, the abstract expressionists already being a well-established and well-represented school of painting at the time. People were coming to the West Coast from all parts of the country, to reinvent themselves and fulfill their dreams of becoming something else. Which is quite different from New York, where people would move in search of rigorous thinking and validation.

How is culture viewed differently in New York than in California?

New York is an older city with world-class museums and many connections to Europe. It is easy to meet other artists in New York. They are all prepared to talk and have opinions about what art is and what it needs to be doing. There is an urgency about ideas and the importance of culture in New York.

Artists in California, on the other hand, are less involved with having a conversation with history. California offers solitude and freedom from the march of history, freedom to invent yourself.

Shortly before moving to New York, you were included in the influential “Bad” Painting show at the New Museum, curated by Marcia Tucker. The show’s ironic title was also the name given to a trend in American figurative painting that broke with traditional approaches in favor of a more personal style of figuration. Was there ever any kind of cohesion between the figurative painters of the time (as with the American abstract movement), or was it a more loosely-bound group? How did you relate to your contemporaries and fellow artists in the show?

Marcia Tucker was a visionary curator who set out to explore American art in the '70s. She was egalitarian in her thinking and wanted to explore a wide range of ideas about what art could be. Marcia thought American museums could be more inclusive and more responsive to ideas germinating in the present.

The “Bad” Painting exhibition very consciously set out to include people from every part of America. Places like Chicago, Los Angeles, Texas, and San Francisco all had unique art scenes, all of which were considered provincial by New York standards. Each of these areas was represented in her show, as well as a wide range of ages and approaches to materials and processes.

I knew many of the artists in the show. I was in conversation with people like Jim Albertson from having lived in the Bay Area. Some artists I met as a result of the show, like Charles Garabedian, who later became a friend.

Your work is full of wonder and depicts a world all its own, painted with lush colors and dreamlike landscapes. Is the viewer diving into “Judith’s world,” one that echoes or represents something inside of you? Is it an imagined world carefully painted out of fantasy?

The imagery in my work arrives through the process of painting. I imagine figures or animals in specific environments like the sea, the forest, the desert, the mountains, performing tasks like digging, sweeping, swimming, sleeping, eating, or showing agency and appetite.

I am interested in the curative power of narratives. I am inspired by mythology and fairy tales because they tell of conflicts that are common to everyone. Things like needing to prove yourself before you can move on, needing to be released from a witch or mad king that has cast a bad spell on you, and so on.

In these stories, the protagonist often faces their task alone, with no other allies apart from ambassadors from nature like ants, birds, frogs, or spirits. My paintings represent a heightened narrative moment before a conflict is resolved.

Your paintings often depict strong women, playful animals, and bouquets. Are these protagonists taken straight from your own life? Where does your lifelong fascination for them come from?

The women, animals, and flowers are inventions, but they have parallels in real life to my mother and aunt, who were both independent and athletic women that followed their own paths and could change a tire if the occasion arose. Many of the details in my paintings like patterned blankets and textiles are observed in life and reinvented in paint.

My motivation comes from the desire to immerse myself in the process of painting, to feel the power of invention and concoct a coherent and believable form using space and light.

You are about to release a silkscreen print with Multiplo, produced by the master printmaker Arturo Negrete Cuellar in Mexico City. How do you compare the practice of printmaking to painting, and what motivated you to explore it?

Making art more affordable has been an interest of mine from the beginning.

I remember when I was a poor art student in San Francisco, I would go to a local book store where they sold art prints. I bought an Albrecht Dürer print of Adam and Eve, which I kept for years and always remained important to me as an artist.

I am very enthusiastic about participating in Multiplo’s project. It echoes my concern that art should be more available to more people. I have worked with many great printers and I always learn from collaborative situations like these.

Thank you Judith for the interview!

"My motivation comes from the desire to immerse myself in the process of painting, to feel the power of invention and concoct a coherent and believable form using space and light. "

JUDITH LINHARES

Press

2/14/2019

“Judith Linhares, “Hearts on Fire,” at P.P.O.W.,
New York”
by Clayton Press

Forbes

“I feel like my unconscious was colonized really early by Disney.”
Judith Linhares, The Vermont Studio Center, March 25, 2014.

Fairy tales—*conte de fées*—were a fashionable, new literary genre in 17th century France. Sophisticated, daresay ironic, noble women launched more than half of the one hundred and twelve tales published between 1690 to 1709. *Enchanted Eloquence: Fairy Tales by Seventeenth-Century French Women Writers* introduces the fairy tales of the most prominent women authors, including the doyenne, Marie-Catherine Le Jumel de Barneville, Baroness d’Aulnoy. Many of her works were classical fairy tales, whimsical, yet moralistic, suggesting the ideals of behavior in a fictionalized world. Nature—forests and idyllic gardens—served as the backdrop for the characters, including princes and princesses metamorphosed into animals.

Like her 17th century literary forebears, Judith Linhares is a raconteuse. She draws from mythology and fairy tales—especially fairy tales—but she rarely uses themes that, as she says, “are actually known . . . It’s really important for me to make everything up.” For Linhares, “Fairy tales describe a psychological anatomy and have a universal quality.” Her paintings are bold, individualistic concoctions inhabited primarily by women and animals in nature. *Hearts on Fire*, the exhibition’s title, refers to a complexly cut commercial diamond, which per P.P.O.W.’s press release “describes a fantastical universe in which men are [nearly] all removed from the pictorial landscape.” Men have not exactly been expelled from “the garden,” but the matriarchy clearly reigns.



Think of a visual brew of James Ensor, Vincent van Gogh, Philip Guston, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Willem de Kooning, Edvard Munch, Alice Neel, Henri Rousseau and . . . everyday Sunday painters, infused with radiant Southern California color, sometimes mixed with the gloom of Northern California fog. Plus, as described by Shannon Egan, an art historian at Gettysburg College, Linhares “manages to merge abstraction and figuration, the recognizable and the uncanny, the historical and the contemporary, the conventional and the avant-garde.” Linhares’ ability to mix and match strains of art history is expert. Her expressive painting is never derivative. Her color palette is a beautiful-ugly blend that requires exceptional talent to pull off. She challenges all the expectations and norms of modern painting. The works in this exhibition are luminous paintings of animals, female nudes, still lifes and, for good measure, a truly demonic, yet comedic, elfin being.

The animal portraits—wolf, tiger and frog—wear cartoon-like faces. Take Frog (2014). It could refer to Hequet, the Egyptian frog-goddess of life, creation, childbirth and fertility. With the sun rising or setting on the horizon, lighting up the sky with a myriad of colors, the frog sits upright, exuding both personality and strength. It is a big small painting. The floral still lifes manifest real life. These paintings of table top flower arrangements—each measuring about 2-foot square—have an immediate, fresh paint (straight from the tube) vibrancy. There is a comforting, familiar homey-ness about the work. They are the essence of joy.

Devoid of males, Linhares’ landscapes with figures are visually compact and rich. Her reclining or seated nude women—nearly life size—are not 21st century odalisques. They are not posing. There is a happy, almost intoxicating, confidence in their faces, whether they are at play or work, and it is often the latter. The artist says, “I don’t know why . . . The women in my paintings are usually, have some kind of job, and carrying buckets is part of, often the job, Jill minus Jack.”



In *Revel* (2017), Linhares' woman sits open-legged, holding a bottle, while two empty bottles and a plate of food lie at her feet. She is surrounded by star-like flowers, some rooted, others floating. In *Saturday Morning* (2017), one member of a female duo relaxes, her legs outstretched on a near-geodesic log cabin, the other carries two buckets of water. The background of sky in *High Desert* (2018) is like a deconstructed Sol LeWitt wall drawing. In the midground, standing on an outcropping of stone, a lion watches over a nude who gazes at the crepuscular sky, while reclining on a crocheted, patchwork afghan blanket.

Linhares' confesses to a penchant for kitsch and tchotchkes. The elfin being, titled *Mother II* (2010), is like a painting of a troll doll, second-hand shop effigy. It is a dream, if not a nightmare—a near genderless Pinocchio-esque figure with a fully erect (!) nose, devilish red eyes and an uplifted skirt.

Linhares has always been about the feminine and feminism. These topics have been at the core of her works—always representational—since the 1970s. “Charged, gestural brushstrokes reveal a struggle between painterliness and heroic modeling,” Egan opined. Struggle may be overstating it, because the works are so physical and, even, sensuous in a non-sexual way. Linhares wants us to succumb, or as she puts it, to “see a painting with your body.”

Linhares seems to come from a far distant planet: California in the 1960s and 70s. The arts—literature, theatre, music and visual arts—spoke to each other. Latin culture was as present there as North American. Linhares grew up in East LA, attended art school locally, before migrating north to experience the Beat Generation era of San Francisco. There the underground comix culture easily coexisted with “high” art. She also spent three or four months in Guanajuato, Mexico, even contemplating relocation to central Mexico. When she returned to the States, she brought “into play her familiarity with Outsider Art, retablos, Mexican artists such as Diego Rivera, and the tradition of strong women Surrealist artists in Mexico (such as Remedios Varo and Leonora Carrington).”

Linhares' work was included in Marcia Tucker's 1978 'Bad' Painting exhibition at the then new New Museum. Tucker's definition of “bad” was “that which opposes conventions [emphasis added] of the avant-garde.” It was not that the work was bad, exposing failure or primitiveness, but rather that the artists were (and remain) iconoclasts. Rightfully, Linhares has been called a pioneer, and her deep-seated and persistent interest in the fantastic, the spontaneous, the marvelous, the enigmatic and the dreamlike is a gift. Each of these interests could be associated with the work of Judith Linhares. Yet, she cannot be pigeonholed.

1/20/2018

“Review: Judith Linhares paints the joys of life,
on her own terms”
by Sharon Mizota



Judith Linhares, *Joy*, 2017 (Image courtesy
of the artist and Various Small Fires, Los Angeles)

Los Angeles Times

If joy can be expressed in painting, then Judith Linhares has captured it in a small bottle of Joy dishwashing liquid.

The bright yellow bottle is sunny and happy and solid, flanked by equally plump and self-satisfied fruit. The only potential cloud is a small gray drawing of a skeleton, pinned on the cheery, green-and-blue gridded wallpaper nearby. But even that can't spoil the vibe. The painting fairly shines with the confidence of a woman who has been painting for five decades. The shadow of death be damned.

Linhares created “Joy” in 2017, but her exhibition at Various Small Fires largely spans the last decade, in one case reaching as far back as 1990. The show is dominated by fantastical tableaux of nude women, picnicking or communing with wild cats. They express a similar joy, a languid ease with the female body in a landscape without men. The most resonant reference is Edouard Manet's 1862 painting, “Luncheon on the Grass.” It's famous for its purposeful awkwardness, juxtaposing a naked woman, gazing frankly out at the viewer, with two fully clothed 19th century men. At the time, the painting poked fun at popular mythological and historical paintings in which nude women frolicked unselfconsciously in the woods.

Linhares' picnics imagine what happens when the men are removed from the picture. The nude is joined by friends who are also awkward, posing upside down with their legs against a tree, bent in half on a picnic blanket, or sitting with their legs splayed. Rendered in great, confident slashes of paint, these poses suggest sexual availability but aren't really sexy. Like Manet's painting, they invoke a tradition only to shut it down.

Yet Linhares also has her own fantasies. These long-limbed, pale-skinned women are surrounded by food and drink and live in landscapes that pulse with color or are perhaps even extraterrestrial. In “Cove,” from 2010, there might be two or three suns above the rocky outcropping on which the figures recline. This world might be a matriarchal society, or an alternative myth from a time before (or after) men.

In recent paintings, the women are more active. The aforementioned images of women interacting with wild cats are from 2016. In “Dig,” from last year, a woman stands astride a shallow pit, holding a shovel. Her head, positioned at an awkward, backward-leaning angle, is looking down. It is perhaps another meditation on mortality, although an empowered, self-directed one: a powerful woman, digging in on her own terms.



Judith Linhares, *Lunch*, 2012 (Image courtesy of the artist and Various Small Fires, Los Angeles)

08 / 29 / 2017

“Judith Linhares Receives \$25,000 Artists’
Legacy Foundation Artist Award”



Judith Linhares, *Revel*, 2017, Oil on linen, 59 x 40 in,
image courtesy of the artist

ARTFORUM

Painter Judith Linhares is the recipient of the \$25,000 Artist Award for 2017 from the Artists’ Legacy Foundation. The prize, launched ten years ago, is given to a sculptor or painter “who has maintained sustained contributions to their field and where evidence of the hand is a significant factor in making art,” according to the organization’s website. The jurors for this year’s prize were art critic and curator David Pagel; sculptor Linda Fleming; and associate director and chief curator of the Crocker Art Museum, Scott A. Shields. Asked to comment on the significance of the hand in her oeuvre, Linhares said, “The hand is under siege. But the process of drawing is a negotiation between the mind, the eye, and the hand. Drawing is placing something on a two-dimensional surface in relation to something else; it is putting a line in space.”

“Her broad, faux-naïf brushstrokes and juxtaposition of richly hued luxe, calme et volupté with a purposeful sense of awkwardness and unease align her with several younger artists, from Dana Schutz to George Condo,” said critic Michael Wilson in a February 2011 artforum.com Critics’ Pick of Linhares’s show at Edward Thorp Gallery in New York. “Attracting us with a sensual concentration on sex, food, and the great outdoors, and lulling us into a false sense of security via their lush, likable style, these are pictures with surprising bite.”

The artist will use a portion of her unrestricted winnings to archive her vast body of work.

**MULTI
_PLO**

 @multi_plo

www.multiploeditions.com