

**LINNEA VEDDER***If nothing lasts forever, will you be my nothing?*

October 7, 2017–November 19, 2017

Reception: Saturday October 7, 6–9pm

Birth

Linnea Vedder's recent paintings depict pregnancy, engaging the longstanding analogy between birth and creative genesis (see, for instance, Courbet's *L'Origine du monde*). Vedder takes up art's classical themes, engaging layering as both process and historical or conceptual content: gravid bodies are overlaid with semi-sheer floral patterns—signifying growth as well as interior decoration—or ensnared in an grid of broad, dark brushstrokes.

Sex

There's a dark femme energy to the paintings—bright and drippy pinks, rich purples. Solid

brushstrokes form the loose outlines of a pregnant woman's body as if to forcibly delimit her from an environment that might otherwise merge with or absorb her. This woman—these women, cumulatively, with one appearing in each painting in the show—lounges, kneels, spreads her legs wide, leans with the weight of her fecundity; she looks back over her body with an expression of astonishment. Vulvas are exposed, yet rendered as simplified, abstract forms: entrance, exit, chasm. The works themselves stage a tension between transparency and opacity, abstraction and figuration, with paint that seeps into an absorbent silk surface.

Death

As much as they express a sense of awe at the regenerative capacity of life, these paintings brim with the ghost energy of Pompeii, where Vedder spent time while she was seven months pregnant. In *My Secret (Smiling Skeleton)* (2017), a small cartoonish skeleton crouches beneath the open legs of a nude woman, who looks on in surprise at the death she has just birthed. In *Sunny Hours* (2017), the torso and legs of another nude woman—swollen belly and nipples glowing reddish-pink—are juxtaposed with an ominous pile of human bones; a sundial in the foreground features the ironic phrase I ONLY COUNT SUNNY HOURS. Which hours are the sunny ones—those of the living, we assume? And who's counting?

– Dana Kopel

Linnea Vedder lives and works in New York City. Her work has been shown recently in solo or two person shows at The Boom Boom Room, Brooklyn (2017), and Jackie Klempay Gallery, Brooklyn (2012). She has also shown in groups shows including at Hal Bromm Gallery, New York (2013), The Brucennial, New York (2012), and Exit Art, New York (2008). She has helped organize exhibitions at The Boom Boom Room, a gallery in Brooklyn, of which she is a co-founder. Her work has been featured in *The World is Your Oracle* (2017), *Perfect Wave Magazine* (2011), and *Revolve:R* (2013). Her music was released on Drag City Records under the name Lights (2008, 2009, 2011).