



875 N Michigan Ave, Ste 3800 Chicago, IL 60611 +1 312 642 8877

1018 Madison Ave, 2nd Fl New York, NY 10075 +1 212 472 8787

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Judy Ledgerwood: Twilight in the Wilderness

Sep 10 - Nov 1, 2025 Opening Reception: Sep 10, 6-8 PM GRAY New York | 1018 Madison Avenue

I try to prolong the interaction between painting and viewer by creating paintings that perform. – Judy Ledgerwood

(CHICAGO/NEW YORK - August 11, 2025) - GRAY is pleased to announce *Judy Ledgerwood: Twilight in the Wilderness*, the gallery's first solo exhibition with the artist. Opening at GRAY New York on September 10, 2025, *Twilight in the Wilderness* debuts four large-scale canvases that continue Ledgerwood's careerlong exploration of radiant color and architectural scale through a feminist reworking of the painterly grid.

For over forty years, Judy Ledgerwood has pushed the boundaries of abstraction. Her chromatic language subverts and reimagines historically male-dominated traditions of Color Field painting and Minimalism, transforming visual pleasure into a critical investigation of beauty and representation. Her large scale paintings often appear like textiles, pinned from the top and painted edge-to-edge, and feature repeating quatrefoil patterns rendered with intentional irregularity. These immersive, optically charged compositions envelop the viewer, turning the act of looking into a fully embodied experience of beauty, color, and space. "For me," Ledgerwood states, "the painting happens between the painting and the viewer."

Titled after Frederic Edwin Church's 1863 painting of a sunset, *Twilight in the Wilderness* presents four new paintings inspired by the drama and color of refracted light just before nightfall. Monumental in scale, these works blaze with hot pinks, golden yellows, burnt oranges, teals, and vivid greens—colors that heighten the works' radiance and emotional intensity. Of the largest canvas, *Vitamin C*, art historian and curator Helen Molesworth writes: "A riot of tangled paint strokes, a filigreed layer of beachfront-hotel seafoam on top of an Orange Julius® ground? Whatever grid once held the substrate together has gone all akimbo."

This new body of work, presented in her first New York exhibition with GRAY, both continues and deepens Ledgerwood's lifelong pursuit of expanding the possibilities of painting—inviting viewers into an immersive chromatic encounter that is at once disarming and dazzling.



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FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION:

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue designed by HOUR, featuring an essay by art historian Helen Molesworth and an introduction by the artist.

ABOUT JUDY LEDGERWOOD:

Since the 1980s, Judy Ledgerwood has confronted and expanded the history of abstract painting by decentering perceptions of its neutrality and prioritizing visual engagement and pleasure. Drawing upon rich and diverse sources from the realms of both fine art and popular culture, Ledgerwood's optically bold, large-scale canvases engage viewers in active looking and challenge conventional notions of beauty and taste. Early in her career, she embraced traditionally feminine colors like pastels, pinks, and fluorescent hues to undermine the male-dominated milieu of abstract painting, and she continues to explore light, color, and structure with great specificity. Through repetitive circular shapes and her signature quatrefoil pattern, Ledgerwood bends and relaxes the grid, bringing influences from the Pattern and Decoration movement, quilting, and textiles into the arena of her paintings. Ledgerwood's work includes an exploration of architectural spaces through her creation of monumental wall paintings and environmental installations at the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and a Paris Metro station, among other venues.

Judy Ledgerwood (b. 1959, Brazil, Indiana) has presented solo exhibitions at numerous venues, including the Graham Foundation, Smart Museum of Art, Art Institute of Chicago, Renaissance Society, and Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago, and at Häusler Contemporary in Zurich, Switzerland; Munich, Germany; and Lustenau, Austria. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana; University of Kentucky Art Museum, Lexington, Kentucky; and Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY. She has received awards from the Driehaus Foundation, Artadia, Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and Illinois Arts Council. Ledgerwood holds a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and is Professor Emeritus at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where she served as Chair of the Department of Art Theory and Practice. She lives and works between Chicago and Sawyer, Michigan.

Pictured: Judy Ledgerwood, Vitamin C, 2025. © Judy Ledgerwood

Press inquiries: press@richardgraygallery.com

Sales inquiries: inquiries@richardgraygallery.com