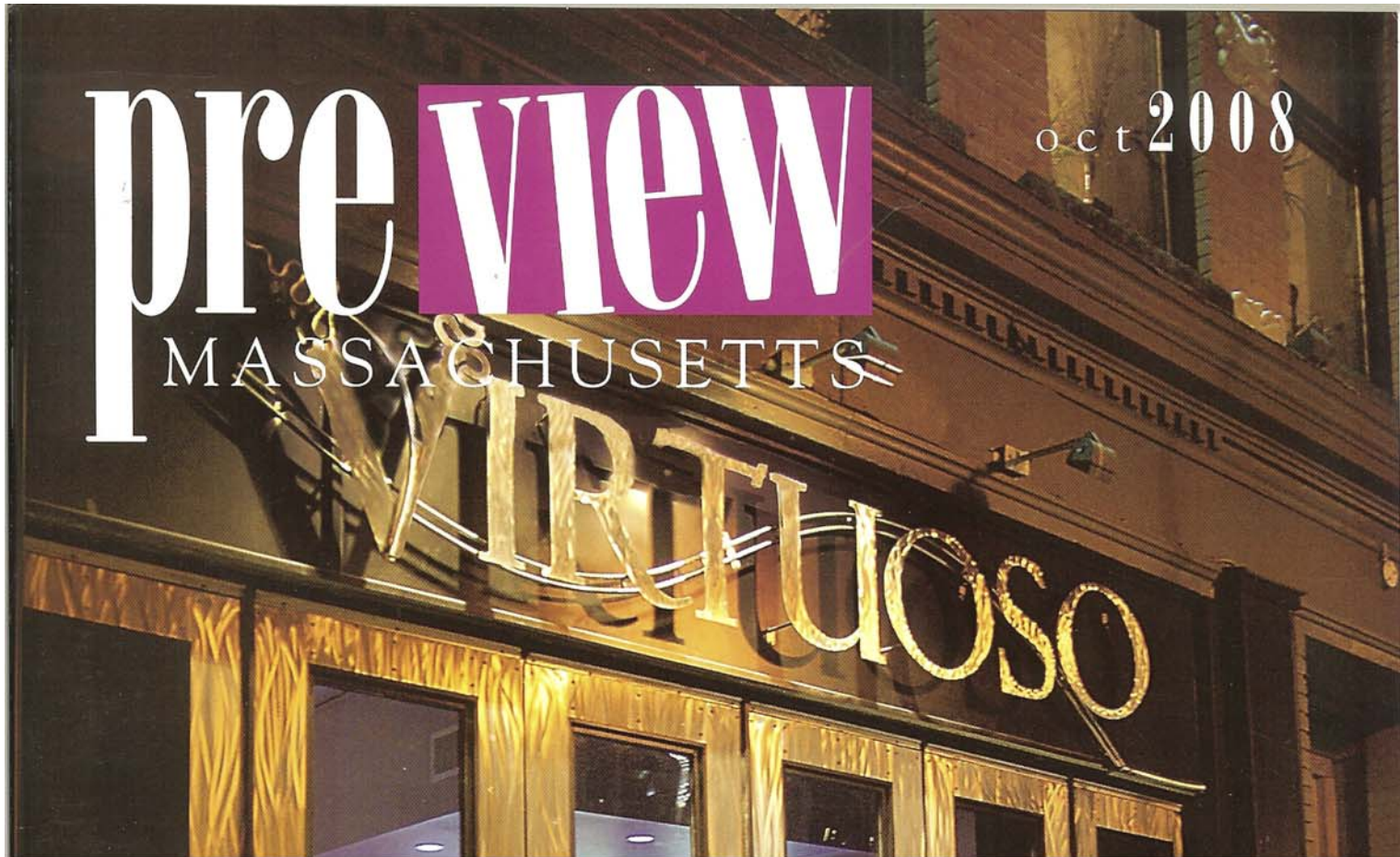


pre **VIEW**

MASSACHUSETTS

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Art Through Nov. 14

Seemingly obsessed with the tumbling human form in air or water, Linda Post captures a fantastic feeling of flight and whimsy in her paintings and drawings. She uses the reflections the sun makes on water and skin to incorporate subtle layers of unusual color into her compositions. A collection of her paintings, pastels and monotypes hang at R. Michelson Gallery. Among the eclectic body of work already on display at the old bank building (which is worth visiting for the marbled staircases and old vault doors alone), Post's images are an intriguing addition. Through Nov. 14, 132 Main St., Northampton, (413) 586-3964, www.rmichelson.com.

LINDA POST IMAGE



peopleview

Linda Post

Talks arts and adolescence

BY SARAH WERTHAN BUTTENWIESER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY COLLEEN LENNON

Improbable: a girl soaring over a river. Linda Post, best known as founding director of Paradise City Arts Festival, has made it happen. Sure, the girl hovering above water does so in an oil painting entitled “Learning to Fly,” in Post’s solo show, *Balancing Acts*, at R. Michelson Gallery (opening reception, 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, October 11). *Preview* spoke with Post about her career as an artist.

Sarah Werthan Buttenwieser: How do you balance being an artist and running a thriving arts festival?

LP: It’s very hard to do. I haven’t had time to put a show together for a long time. The show’s title, *Balancing Acts*, definitely came from my life. Not only balancing making art and running arts festivals, but also thinking about how I was a shy kid growing up, and how, these days, I do most of the public speaking for Paradise City. It’s taken me a really long time to get comfortable talking in front of other people.

SWB: Can you work in short snatches or do you need whole days?

LP: As an artist, you do need enough consistent time to grow. I’m not a fast painter. For a long time I focused on pastels, in part because pastels are easier to pick up and work on for a couple of hours than oils. You don’t have to worry about paint drying in funny ways. Pastels were a perfect medium. Now, although certain periods get really busy, I am able to claim some full days.

SWB: Do you work from life? Photographs? Videos?

LP: Still photography is my base. I take lots of different shots. To get an image, I used to put all these images on the floor in a collage technique. It’s much more efficient to do that on a computer. I do a drawing from that picture onto a panel.

SWB: Do you ever get lonely in the studio?

LP: Look at all these people! (She points to the painting on her easel of teens and children by a riverbank, and to other, well populated paintings.) I do think everyone needs to return to that quiet place in him or herself. I feel very

centered when I’m in the studio. Even on a tough day, my studio always feels like the right place to be.

SWB: I’m curious about your subject matter for this show, these summer scenes.

LP: For one thing, I grew up in Fall River and what you did in summer was go to the beach. I had been thinking a lot about how adolescence is a bridge time between childhood and adulthood. You’re figuring out where you’ve been. You don’t know where your body or your life is going. I was interested in the relationship between the girls—so uneasy about being children or adults—and the serenity of the beautiful setting. I added elements to the landscape, like those cabanas you find on the Chappaquiddick beach, because they are so pretty to the eye, so whimsical. Over twenty-five years, my work has made a kind of natural progression from interiors through windows, then outside to involve landscape. I moved to more surreal scenes in which people flew over bodies of water—the Connecticut River, the Quabbin Reservoir—and then over farmland. For the most part, this series is less obviously surreal in terms of scene, but in terms of time in life, well, adolescence is surreal. P

