

Artists Making Their Mark

LISA BRESLOW (b. 1957) is in a New York state of mind again. Raised by an artist on Long Island and trained at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts and Art Students League, Breslow turned her back on the city to become a painter of deeply mysterious, densely layered landscapes. Coastal Long Island, Scottish moors, and Minnesota fields were her subjects for many years. Painted in oils on thick wooden boards, these paintings have heft and gravitas, and a wildly romantic sense of place. "I need to spend significant time in a certain place to get a sense of what it's all about," Breslow notes. It is this depth of experience that gives her pictures their compelling beauty.

For the past several years, however, landscape has yielded to cityscape. Breslow is intrigued by the complex relationship between the built and natural environments, by the interactions of buildings and light, trees, and reflections. Her recent oils and monotypes focus on such sites as the High Line, West Village, Long Island City, Chelsea, and, above all, Central Park. The park's juxtaposition of urban and rural is a source of endless inspiration, in all seasons, at all hours. Sometimes her paintings of its bridges and lakes are misty and impressionistic enough to evoke Whistler's nocturnes, while other scenes are more crisp, linear, and defined.

Breslow's dealer, Kathryn Markel, says, "Even Lisa's cityscapes are actually landscapes. They are full of light and filled with air; they are all about how nature co-exists and interacts with the urban environment." Markel feels that the artist's brushwork is constantly evolving. While still complex and layered, it has become sharper and more crystalline: "For me, this is the joy of working with living artists — having the opportunity to watch their work change."

Breslow says none of this is conscious or deliberate. For one thing, it's about process; she takes special delight, for example, in making monotypes, enjoying the element of never knowing exactly where the print is going until it has been pulled. And it's also about her inner experience of place, about being open to changes in perspective and ways of seeing familiar sites. "Painting cityscapes has expanded and challenged how I see the world," Breslow says. Yet nature is always there, embedded in her consciousness — and in her art.



Lisa Breslow (b. 1957)

High Line

2012, Oil and pencil on panel, 24 x 24 in.

Kathryn Markel Fine Arts (New York City and Bridgehampton, NY)

Breslow is represented by Kathryn Markel Fine Arts (New York City and Bridgehampton, NY).

Text by arts journalist Sara C. Evans