

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, LINDA ARNOLD'S PAINTINGS HAVE EDGED AWAY FROM THE REPRESENTATIONAL TO THE ABSTRACT.

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THE EVOLUTION OF
AN ARTIST



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THE EVOLUTION OF AN ARTIST

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SHANNON PADGETT

Coastal Tempo, oil on canvas, 4 ft. x 5 ft. Artist Linda Arnold is shown in front of her abstract seascape at the Artists' Reception at the Meghan Candler Gallery.

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MAGAZINE

Linda Arnold, a member of the Windsor community for 13 years, has been painting luminous landscapes and

shimmering seascapes for some 40 years. During that time, she has received numerous major awards and recognition.

A highly educated woman, she obtained undergraduate and graduate degrees, then turned her attention to art. Linda studied at the Art



Indian River Sunset, oil on canvas, 3 ft. x 3 ft. An earlier representational work shows palm trees silhouetted against a glowing sunset. The palms, reflected in the water, seem to dance across the canvas.



Reflection, oil on canvas, 2 ft. 6 in. x 2 ft. 6 in. In this transitional work, vivid shades of color define the shoreline and reflection.

Students League and at the National Academy of Design School of Fine Art, both in New York City. Then she studied with giants from the art world: Robert Brackman, Serge Hollerbach, Wolf Kahn and Sharon Sprung.

In 2008 the National Academy Museum and School of Fine Arts in New York honored Linda. In 2011 she was chosen as the Andy Warhol Artist in Residence in Montauk, N.Y. She will have a solo exhibition of 60 paintings at the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art in Ligonier Valley, Pa. in the spring of 2016.

For a number of years, she participated in the Plein Air Painters of America workshops. In a 2008



Afternoon Clouds, oil on canvas, 2 ft. x 3 ft. A more representational work illustrates the exquisite skies for which the artist is well known.



Luminance, oil on canvas, 2 ft. 6 in. x 3 ft. 4 in. A band of pink captures the end of the day as dusk falls on the Indian River in this transitional painting.

interview, Linda described herself as a “plein air painter in the Impressionistic tradition,” as reflected in her paintings of the glowing sunsets, pristine beaches, and glistening waterways of Long Island, New England, Europe, Mexico, South America and Vero Beach.

Each year since 2002, Linda has exhibited her paintings at the Meghan Candler Gallery in Vero Beach. Legions of loyal fans gather to view and buy her works. Her paintings grace the walls of dozens of homes in the Vero Beach area. Her work is also held in many private and

corporate collections in the United States, Canada and Europe.

For the past several years, Linda has been edging away from her previous style toward the realm of the abstract. Gallery owner Meghan Candler describes Linda’s painting odyssey. “Initially Linda’s work was entirely representational, and over the years the landscapes and seascapes she is known for became increasingly simplified – and effective. She now moves so comfortably between this representational style and a newer,

more abstract one, with some transitional works in between that share the qualities of both styles. She is fearless and never afraid to take risks. Her exquisite color sense is the common denominator that visually ties all the work together.”

Asked about this bold move from the purely representational into the world of abstract art, Linda says, “It was both an intellectual and artistic choice. With this play between the representational and abstraction in my work, I feel I can capture the unique dynamic – the tension – between the two styles. As an artist,



Peaceful Moment, oil on canvas, 3 ft. x 4 ft. In this transitional depiction of radiant sky and water, both representational and abstract styles gracefully combine in one work.

I wanted to grow, I wanted to turn the next corner; therefore, changes in my painting style became inevitable. I am now a different painter, with a different vision of the world.”

Linda says she doesn’t see an object like a tree as a tree any longer. Now the tree is rendered into shapes of color. The world, as Linda sees it, is filled with geometric shapes, enhanced colors and nuances. She says, “My landscapes and seascapes can be read as either a perspective on the natural world or as a uniting of abstract forms.”

From its inception, a consistent

feature of Linda’s work has been a strong sense of color. Her new paintings burst with vibrant color. Another consistent element in her paintings is the presence of a horizontal line. In some paintings, it is a bold, obvious line. In the more abstract ones, the line is broken at times or weaves in and out, but it can be discerned with a careful eye. The artist says the horizontal line “insinuates” itself into her abstract compositions.

Strong drawing skills are present in Linda’s work. She calls this the armature supporting and delineating her abstract compositions. Early on in

her art education, she was grounded in sound drawing skills.

Two years ago, Linda relocated her work to a painting studio in Long Island City, Queens, a 20-minute subway ride from New York City’s Upper East Side. The studio building, formerly a manufacturing plant boasting 20-foot-high ceilings, is flooded with natural light most of the day. With access to ample space, Linda has finally been able to experiment with large, square canvases instead of being confined to rectangular canvases. This change has invigorated her. She also benefits



Moonlight Serenade, oil on canvas, 3 ft. x 3 ft.

from the energy of the group of young, international artists working in the building.

Discussing the size and shape of

a canvas, she says, “As funny as it may sound, the shape of a canvas is very influential to the composition of a painting.” According to Linda,

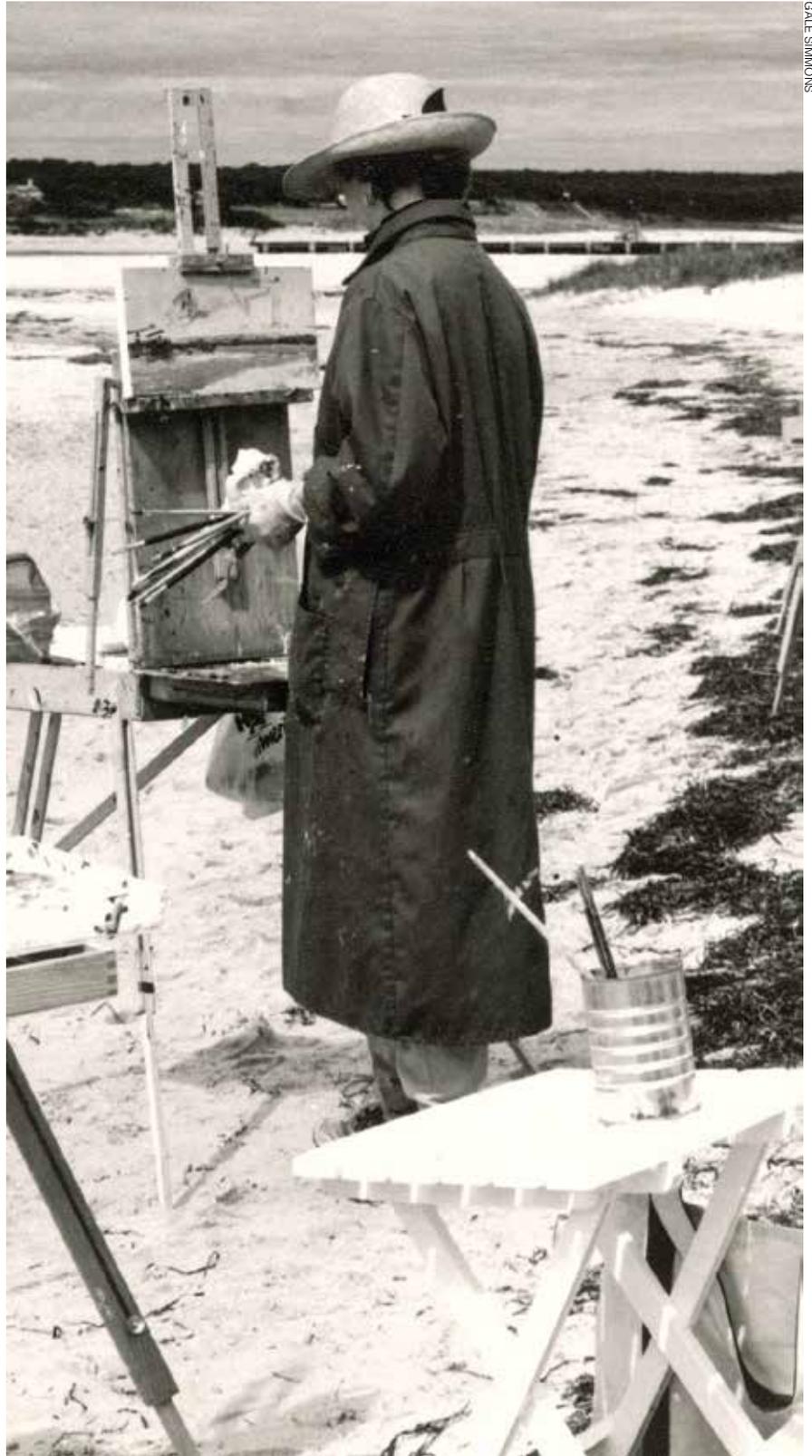
the rectangular canvas lends itself to more traditional landscapes or seascapes. A square canvas gives more freedom, enabling an artist to

approach a subject in a new way. A square canvas allows the eye to move differently. "With a square canvas, I think differently and this leads to more color exploration. The change in canvas shape was like learning a new language. It's been an exciting artistic challenge for me," she notes.

Every winter Linda returns to Vero Beach to paint familiar scenes once again. She says, "I love to paint the beach scenes at Windsor and sunsets in Vero." She returns to Long Island each July to paint the fields and beaches there. She continues, "I have always loved painting a place many times. It allows the artist to get to know a place in the same way we get to know another person. The artist is fully immersed in the experience and almost becomes part of the landscape."

Linda is a committed, hard worker. When in New York, she goes to her studio every weekday, arriving around 9:30 a.m. and painting until the natural light fades. When she is engaged in a new project, she often paints seven days a week. At the start of each day, she reads two quotes on her easel without fail. One from a trusted teacher says, "It is a privilege to be an artist and be in the creative world." The other is a Zen quote: "When the tides change, be fearless."

Discussing them, Linda says, "The first quote reminds me how fortunate I am to be on this journey, and the second reminds me to be bold and take chances as I continue to grow as an artist." ❀



GALE SIMMONS

Wearing typical artist's attire, Linda Arnold is pictured painting en plein air on the beach.