# COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Living

December 11, 2025



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COVER PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

### **COMPASS**

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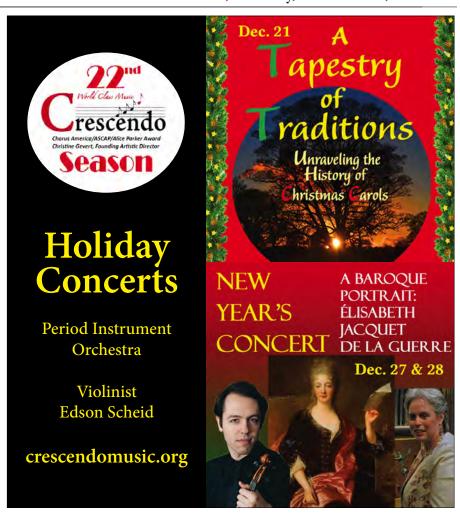
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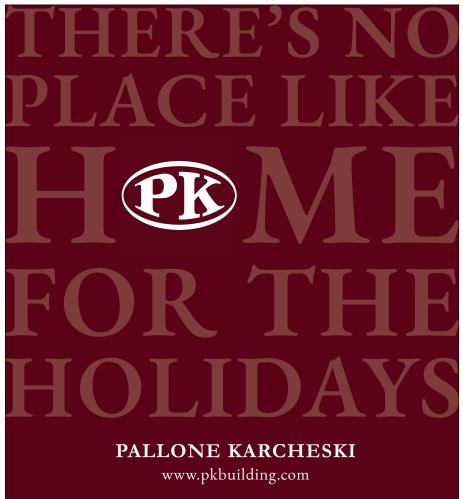
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#### **ART: NATALIA ZUKERMAN**

### At Mad Rose Gallery, two exhibits invite a new way of seeing

ad Rose Gallery in Millerton recently invited visitors to experience both of its current exhibits, "Ebb & Flow" and "The Female Gaze" with many of the artists in attendance.

The tour began with "Ebb & Flow," an installation of glass works by Steven Weinberg, Lisa Sacco, Eric Hilton and Natalie Tyler. In the late-afternoon sun, the room became a kaleidoscope of bending, fracturing, flickering light. Color slid across the walls; reflections dissolved into shadow. It was a subtly instructive prelude to "The Female Gaze" next door as the glass didn't just glow — it shifted the

angle of attention, teaching the eye to notice differently.

The term "the female gaze" is attributed to feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey, who, in her 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," named what Hollywood had long taken for granted: the camera — and by extension, the viewer — was aligned with a masculine subjectivity. Women existed on-screen largely as objects, not agents.

In the decades since, the "female gaze" has evolved into something more expansive. It signals authorship, yes, but also empathy, subjectivity, and the refusal to flatten lived

experience into familiar tropes. It is not simply the opposite of the male gaze; it is another way of seeing altogether.

Mad Rose's eight featured photographers explore this premise across mediums, histories and sensibilities using diverse approaches to challenge conventional narratives. The response has been so positive that the exhibit has been extended through Dec. 28.

The tour began with Ava Pellor, whose large black-and-white portraits of bodies in nature rely on trust. She explained that she photographs with a tripod or a Rolleiflex so she "never breaks the connection with the subject." The goal isn't voyeurism, she said, but agency.

"What really shocks me is when people say, 'I've never been photographed by a woman before,' and then they thank me for letting them be who they are," she explained. "That's why I photograph the nude, to almost desexualize the female body, or the human body in general."

The work explores the symbiotic, inseparable relationship between bodies and the natural world. "To

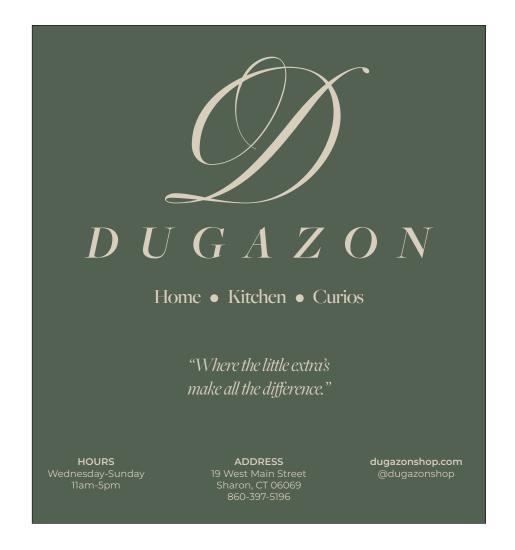
live symbolically is to remember we are not apart from nature, but a continuation of it," said Pellor.

Across from Pellor hang glossy and colorful images by internationally renowned fashion and costume designer, Han Feng. Co-founder of Mad Rose Neal Rosenthal spoke of her work saying, "I find her work exceptionally expressive and beautiful."

Next was Jan Meissner, a writer who discovered the camera could tell stories she couldn't write. Her early-2000s street photographs were taken in Soho. "I've never staged a photograph in my life," she said. Revisiting the images now was strange, she admitted, depictions of a city that no longer exists." I don't think I could make these photographs anymore. The terrain has changed and I have changed. It was a moment in time, and I thank Mad Rose for sending me back there."

An abstract photographer and longtime human rights lawyer, Pamela Takiff brings a different kind of witnessing. Her work begins with overlooked textures — broken glass,

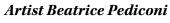
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PHOTOS BY NATALIA ZUKERMAN





Artist Ava Pellor



Artist Barbara Woike



Gallery director and artist Natalie Tyler



PHOTO BY NATALIA ZUKERMAN

Artist Jan Meissner



### ... Mad Rose Gallery

Continued from page 4

peeling paint —then pares away context so the viewer's imagination takes over.

A Guggenheim Fellow and recent Cleveland Arts Prize Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Barbara Bosworth's black-and-white images were made with her 8x10 camera. "I began looking for light in the darkness," she wrote of the work, which circles family, land, and the thin veil between presence and memory.

Beatrice Pediconi's work spans drawing, photography, painting and video, all organized around her investigations of water as medium. She describes the pieces on view, created between 2009 and 2016, as explorations of "the fragility of all life, highlighting its ephemeral condition."

Barbara Woike, who spent 33 years as a news photo editor with the Associated Press, offered both history and perspective as she guided visitors through her nearly 50-year-old portraits. "All of these photographs were shot almost 50 years ago," she said. All pre-digital, all grounded in the subject itself. "Back in the day, photography was more about realism. Even if an abstract picture was shot, it was still shot from something very real — a leaf, a pepper, a naked body twisted so that you'd pause and ask, 'What is this?' before realizing it was a body."

Woike's career, she explained, grew from that foundation. When digital photography arrived, she witnessed its shift firsthand but stayed true to the ethos of capturing the moment. "Even though photography went digital, there was no alteration of images. I could have been fired for moving a Coca-Cola can out of a picture."

Her work, she emphasized, has al-

ways been about the subject, not the photographer. "The work was about subject matter, not about me. Back then, people still argued whether photography was art at all. Someone might look at these pictures," she said, gesturing to Beatrice Pediconi's abstractions across the gallery, "and ask, 'Is it photography?' It's about light, and what light can put into an image."

Many of Woike's subjects are no longer alive. "Some I never followed, others I knew until the day they died. That's the power of portraiture — it lets people stay alive."

One image holds particular weight: a portrait of Katherine "Sissy" Wells, the first trans person Woike met. When Woike posted the photograph on Facebook to mark what would have been Wells' 108th birthday, hundreds of people responded with memories. In capturing Wells, Woike did more than preserve a face — she reframed perception, reminding viewers that the story beneath the image, like light through glass, is what makes it real.

The tour ended with Rosenthal speaking about his partner and gallery co-founder, Kerry Madigan's work. Madigan, who has been making photographs since the 1970s, is experiencing aphasia due to cognitive impairment. Her images, preserved memories, form what Rosenthal described as "a bit of a travelogue of our experiences together traveling all over the world."

Guests were then invited upstairs for the Mad Rose Winter Salon, featuring the work of local artists at various stages of their careers. Once again, viewers were reminded that perspective is never fixed. It shifts depending on where you stand, what you know, and who is doing the seeing.

**THEATER: MATTHEW KRETA** 

### The Sharon Playhouse YouthStage to present original adaptation of 'Peter Pan'

he Sharon Playhouse Youth-Stage is presenting an original adaptation of "Peter Pan" by directors Andrus Nichols and Drew Ledbette, set to open Dec. 17. The show will take place in the Bok Theater at the Sharon Playhouse and close Dec. 21.

This is the world premiere of this adaptation of "Peter Pan," which entered the public domain in 2024. Nichols and Ledbette are returning for their third year with Sharon Playhouse Youth after directing "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" in 2023 and "A Christmas Carol" in 2024. This is their first original adaptation with the Playhouse.

"The YouthStage is a great place to bring new work," said Education and Community Director Michael Baldwin. He said the production is part of an effort to bring original material to local youth who hope to pursue theater in the future. Baldwin also said the production is an opportunity for collaborative theater between the Playhouse team and the youth performers. Rehearsals began in October, allowing time to shape the show as a collaborative whole.

The main cast consists of Ivan
Howe as Peter Pan, Wild Handel as
Wendy, Callan Scott as John, Philippa
Cavalier as Michael, and Alex Wilbur
as Hook. The ensemble includes Lyra
Wilder as Slightly, Gilvey BarnettZunino as Tootles, Kate Drury as
Nibs, Wolf Donner as Curly, Sam
Norbet as First Twin, Kellan Lockton as Second Twin, Sienna Rose
Lyons as Starlights, Mullins, and
Lily Starr, Richie Crane as Nana and
Smee, Mollie Leonard as Cecco, Bill



PHOTO BY MICHAEL KEVIN BALDWIN

Front row, left to right, Sarah Cuoco, Kellan Lockton, Sam Norbet, Kate Drury, Savannah Stevenson. Middle row, left to right, Callan Scott, Philippa Cavalier, Wild Handel, Ivan Howe, Lyra Wilder, Gilvey Barnett-Zunino. Back row, left to right, Wolf Donner, Drew Ledbetter, Sienna Rose Lyons, Mollie Leonard, Richie Crane, Alex Wilbur, C.C. Stevenson, Andrus Nichols, Caroline Lapinski.

Jukes, Cookson, and Catastrophe June, and C.C. Stevenson as Starky and Noodler. These 15 cast members also serve as crew and were chosen through a competitive audition process.

"Peter Pan" will be the final show at the Playhouse this year. "On Wednesday, Jan. 14, we will unveil the MainStage and YouthStage titles for the Sharon Playhouse 2026 season. Be sure to check our digital channels for the exciting reveals," Baldwin said. Registration for Summer YouthStage productions will be open from Jan. 27 to Feb. 5, 2026, and classes will be available at the Playhouse in January for people of all ages.

"The Sharon Playhouse is a real

gem in our community, and I hope community members will attend as many shows as they can, take as many classes as they can, and support the Playhouse so it can thrive for years to come," Baldwin said.

For more information about "Peter Pan" and next year at the Sharon Playhouse, visit sharonplayhouse. org.



PHOTO BY JOSHUA SIMPSON

The "Monuments to Motherhood" sculpture by artist Molly Gochman outside of Wassaic Project.

**COMMUNITY: ALY MORRISSEY** 

### Wassaic Project snags top tourism prize, rolls out Winter Wonderland

or nearly two decades, the Wassaic Project has served as a vibrant beacon in Dutchess County, creating a space for emerging artists to hone their craft and explore social change. And while a seven story, 8,000-square-foot former grain elevator may not seem like a likely home for an arts space, the nonprofit is receiving countywide recognition for its unforgettable events.

Last month, the Wassaic Project was named the winner of the 2025 Events Tourism Award of Distinction at Destination Dutchess' annual Tourism Awards of Distinction breakfast. Held Nov. 13 at Locust Grove Estate in Poughkeepsie, the honor places the arts organization alongside some of the region's most celebrated tourism partners and highlights its impact on the upstate New York cultural landscape.

"Our Tourism Awards of Distinction allow us to pause and celebrate the people and businesses that make Dutchess County shine," said Melanie Rottkamp, president and CEO of Destination Dutchess, in a press release. "Our team is extremely proud to help travelers discover Dutchess, inspiring them to visit and spend their travel dollars in our communities."

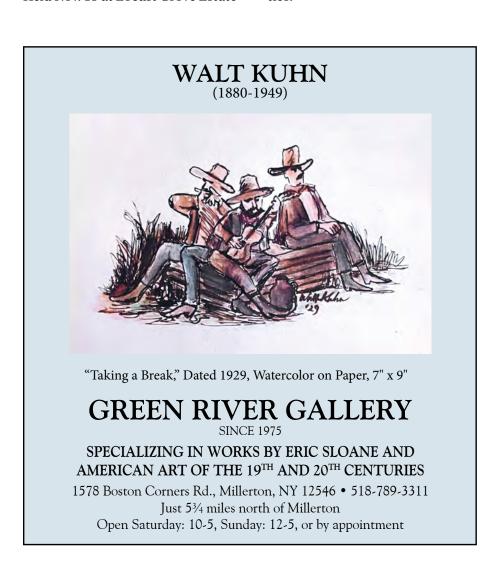
The Wassaic Project earned the award over other finalists, including Beatrix Farrand Garden Association and Innisfree Garden.

Wassaic Project Co-Executive
Directors Eve Biddle, Bowie Zunino
and Jeff Barnett-Winsby said, "We
are just thrilled about this honor.
We have worked with the Dutchess
County Tourism office for more than
a decade on promoting the beauty of
the region. They are wonderful and
supportive partners. We live in such
a special place!"

The award arrives as the Wassaic Project prepares to welcome visitors to Maxon Mills for one of its most beloved seasonal traditions: The Winter Wonderland Market, running Dec. 6 to 7 and Dec. 13 to 14 from noon to 5 p.m. each day. The festive market invites the community to shop from Wassaic artist alumni and local makers, with offers ranging from playful art kits and stocking stuffers to limited-edition prints curated by Zunino.

The 2026 Winter Exhibition, "This Must Be The Place" also opens Dec. 6, and features work by 11 artists.

The Wassaic Project is located at Maxon Mills, 37 Furnace Bank Road, Wassaic. For more info, visit: wassaicproject.org





#### **BUSINESS: RICHARD FEINER AND ANNETTE STOVER**

### Lakeville Books & Stationery opens a new chapter in Great Barrington

resh off the successful opening of Lakeville Books & Stationery in April 2025, Lakeville residents Darryl and Anne Peck have expanded their business by opening their second store in the former Bookloft space at 63 State St. (Route 7) in Great Barrington.

"We have been part of the community since 1990," said Darryl Peck.
"The addition of Great Barrington, a town I have been visiting since I was a kid, is special. And obviously we are thrilled to ensure that Great Barrington once again has a new bookstore."

The second Lakeville Books & Stationery is slightly larger than the first store. It offers more than 10,000 books and follows the same model: a general-interest store with a curated mix of current bestsellers, children's and young readers' sections; and robust collections for adults ranging from arts and architecture, cooking and gardening, and home design to literature and memoirs. Anne reads more than 150 new titles every year (as many as a Booker Prize judge) and is a great resource to help customers find the perfect pick.

A real-time inventory system



PHOTO PROVIDED

Exterior of Lakeville Books & Stationery in Great Barrington.

helps the store track what's on hand, and staff can order items that aren't currently available. There is also a selection of writing and paper goods, including notecards, journals, pens and notebooks, as well as art supplies, board games, jigsaw puzzles and more. The owners scour the stationery trade shows twice a year and, Darryl says, "like to tailor what we offer to suit the interest of our customers in each market."

The Pecks know what it takes to run a successful local enterprise. Darryl has a 53-year background in retail and has launched several successful businesses. He and Anne owned and operated a bookstore on St. Simons Island, Georgia, from 2019 to 2025. They are tapping into their local roots with both stores. They raised their family in Sharon, and their daughter Alice, a native of the Northwest Corner, manages the Lakeville store.

The family values the role that a retail store plays as a supporting partner in the community, and they prioritize great management in both locations, hiring and training talent from local communities. Their 10 team members across both stores

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#### Interior of Lakeville Books & Stationery.

are from the area, and two of the Great Barrington employees previously worked at Bookloft.

Darryl and Anne's attention to customer service is everywhere apparent and adds to the enjoyable and irreplaceable in-store shopping experience. The books are in pristine condition, eliminating the risk of damage that sometimes occurs during shipping. This is especially important for books that will live on people's shelves and coffee tables for years.

Darryl says, "People love the instore discovery — you find books you didn't know existed, which is very difficult to do on a website. Also, many customers depend on our recommendations when visiting. There is a saying about bookstores versus online ordering: We

may not have exactly what you were looking for, but we have what you want."

Lakeville Books & Stationery's Great Barrington store is open 7 days a week, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Parking is available in the lot behind the building and in the parking lot behind the firehouse. The entrance to the store is accessible from the store parking lot.

For more information, go to lakevillebooks.com., and sign-up for the Lakeville Books newsletter.

Richard Feiner and Annette Stover have worked and taught in the arts, communications, and philanthropy in Berlin, Paris, Tokyo and New York. Passionate supporters of the arts, they live in Salisbury and Greenwich Village.





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WRITER'S NOTEBOOK: JENNIFER ALMQUIST

### Our visit to Hancock Shaker Village

y husband Tom, our friend Jim Jasper and I spent the day at Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. A cold, blustery wind shook the limbs of an ancient apple tree still clinging to golden fruit. Spitting sleet drove us inside for warmth, and the lusty smells of manure from the goats, sheep, pigs and chickens in the Stone Round Barn filled our senses. We traveled back in time down sparse hallways lined with endless peg racks. The winter light was slightly crooked through

the panes of old glass. The quiet life of the Shakers is preserved simply.

Originally founded in England, the Shakers brought their communal religious society to the New World 250 years ago. They sought the perfection of heaven on earth through their values of equality and pacifism. They followed strict protocols of behavior and belief. They were celibate and never married, yet they loved singing and ecstatic dancing, or "shaking," and

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PHOTOS BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

A Shaker chair.





PHOTOS BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Shakers referred to their farm as the City of Peace.



Blacksmith Peter Kergaravat at work.



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### ... Hancock Shaker Village

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often adopted orphans. To achieve their millennialist goal of transcendental rapture, we learned, even their bedclothes had to conform: One must sleep in a bed painted deep green with blue and white coverings.

Shakers believed in gender and racial equality and anointed their visionary founding leader, Mother Ann Lee, an illiterate yet wise woman, as the Second Coming. They embraced sustainability and created practical designs of great utility and beauty, such as the mail-order seed packet, the wood stove, the circular saw, the metal pen, the flat broom and wooden clothespins.

Burning coal smelled acrid as the blacksmith fired up his stove to heat the metal rod he was transforming into a hook. Hammer on anvil is an ancient sound. My husband has blacksmithing skills and once made the strap hinges and thumb latches for a friend's home.

Shaker chairs and rockers are still made today in the woodworker's shop. They are well made and functional, with woven cloth or rush seats. In the communal living space, or Brick Dwelling, chairs hang from the Shaker pegs that run the length of the hallways, which once housed more than 100 Shakers.

In 1826, the 95-foot Round Stone Barn was built of limestone quarried from the land of the 3,000-acre Hancock Shaker Village. Its unique design allowed a continuous workflow. Fifty cows could stand in a circle facing one another and be fed more easily. Manure could be shoveled into a pit below and removed by wagon and there was more light and better ventilation.

Shakers called us the "people of the world" and referred to their farm as the City of Peace. We take lessons away with us, yearning somehow for their simplicity and close relationship to nature. One Shaker said, "There's as much reverence in pulling an onion as there is in singing hallelujah." A sense of calm came over me as I looked across the fields to the hills in the distance. A woman like me once stood between these long rows of herbs — summer savory, sage, sweet marjoram and thyme — leaned on her shovel brushing her hair back from her eyes, watching gray snow clouds roll down the Berkshires.

More information at hancockshakervillage.org



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

The Shakers embraced practical designs of great utility and beauty.



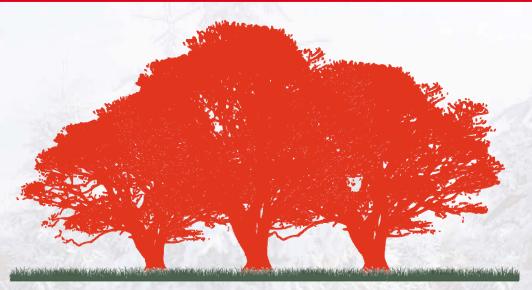






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