

A SHOW CALLED "UP" at the Frank Bette Center by Karen Braun Malpas

After a period of restorative suspension, the beloved yellow Victorian art center is back on the upswing. Its creative energy is once again on the upturn and plans are in full swing for a full roster of interesting, uplifting shows and events.

The theme of the current show which hangs Oct. 7-Dec.24 is "Up". Work on the walls carries our gaze above eye level to the sky, which occupies its luxuriant blue half of Deborah Medvick's nearly-bisected-on-a-diagonal composition. In that aerial realm, Barbara James captures colorful hot air balloons and fireworks while Karen Allen caught a sunset over Alameda, the kind that regularly spoils residents.

David Savellano interpreted "up" laterally rather than vertically and shows 2 competent watercolors of urban vistas "Up California St." and Up Castro St." while Patricia Edith found exquisite, decorative iconography in the ornate ceilings and elevators at 450 Sutter St.

B Z Meyers photo of little girls on a swing shows us the double entendre of kids captured in a moment of joyously elevated spirits as they are simultaneously caught on the upward beat of the swings' back and forth. Ron Miller shows a trio of intriguing photos where people are caught leaping out of their own shadow, standing on their own handlebars or wearing a garment pleated in a way that suggests wings capable of bearing them aloft.

For those of us at sea level, "up" can mean an altitude climb to the mountains. Susan Matthews and others showed us what it's like up there with the aspens and pines in the thinner air.

The show in the back room features Chris Adamson and Mark Monsarrat who were awarded the opportunity to record the seasons of Alleghany, Ca., a gold mining town in the Sierra foothills. Adamson, a photographer, has a keen sense of design and control of mood which works well in contrapposto to the warm, folksy paintings of Monserrat which almost look like cousin pieces to those of Frank Bette himself. The opening reception for this show is October 14, 7-9 pm. It will hang until October 30.