

Debbie Tuma

Hamptonsview.com

Summer is a big time for art openings, as international artists and tourists flock to the Hamptons to check out this scene. Six-foot, colorfully painted apples were all the rage this week, both in the Hamptons and in Manhattan, as the city gets ready for "Applefest 2004." Remember when artists painted the famous big cow sculptures which were placed all over the city a few years ago? Now it will be giant, friendly apples, created by many different artists, and one of them showed off his apple sculpture first in Southampton's new Fondrisi Gallery, which just opened a month ago on Windmill Lane.

Last Saturday night, the artist Marco held an opening of his bold, neon-colored graffiti-like paintings, and also some of his wildly adorned sculptures, including his Big Apple and his giant, three-foot Swatch Watch. Marco credited his father, noted designer and photographer Phil Marco, who owns a vineyard on the North Fork, for encouraging his creative talent growing up.

A crowd of people packed the Fondrisi Gallery all night, including lawyer Barry Slotnick, who purchased two of Marco's paintings and a three dimensional mannequin for his Hamptons home. Liz Derringer, Southampton public relations maven for such artists as Peter Max and others, was also on hand, as well as Ivan Wilzig, owner of the famous "Castle" party house in Water Mill, who rolled up in his chauffeur-driven limo, with his new girlfriend Mei Sze, his deejay, Lee Kalt, and his brother Evan. Gallery owner John Fondrisi said he was excited to have Marco exhibit his new apple, one of 300 to be displayed in Manhattan this month, previewing at his new gallery.

"I'm happy to be joining the Southampton art community, and I hope to bring some color and excitement to this town," said Fondrisi.

Last Tuesday night, Marco's apple traveled to Gotham Hall in Manhattan, a new space for big events, which was formerly a bank near Times Square. About a thousand people came to "Applefest," the unveiling of several of these apples by New York City and Company, which has replaced the Convention & Visitors Bureau. These apples will hit the streets of New York August 15, and run through October 12, and will be seen by visitors from all over the world. Proceeds from the sale of these sculptures will go toward three charities--City Harvest, for food for the hungry, the Police Athletic League, and New York City & Company Foundation. Co-hosts of last night's party were actor Tony Danza, who grew up in Long Island, and Deborah Cox, who is starring in "Aida" on Broadway. Danza is about to star in his own morning talk show, which begins in mid-September. Also on hand was NYC Parks Commissioner Jill Mainelli and handbag designer sensation Debbie Brooks, who was showing off her

latest design of a Times Square, Broadway show bag which she gave out at a recent Tony Awards presentation. Brooks was also giving away her bags for AIDS charity at a Body Positive benefit at Jerry Della Femina's East Hampton home earlier this year.

RVS Gallery in Southampton was also packed with people last Saturday night, further up the road on Jobs Lane. Artist Kevin Berlin, of Southampton and Florence, Italy, was showing his 10th annual exhibition in this gallery, which is celebrating its 25th year. Each year, Berlin exhibits a new show inspired by his travels, such as the ballerinas one year he painted while wintering in St. Petersburg, and this year his show, "Wine and Chocolate," was done in Italy.

"Living in Florence, not a day goes by without a chocolate kiss, which we call, "Bacio," he said. "This is the most common type of chocolate in Italy, and it also include a love poem wrapped inside." At this event, guests snacked on wine, champagne, and white chocolate truffles as well as food catered by the unique Mazzu of Water Mill.

Roberta Von Schlossberg, owner of RVS Gallery, said, "Kevin's shows always draw lots of curious people, because they're fun and different. Last year, he did one on tomatoes, inspired also by living in Italy during the winter.

Last Saturday night, was also the biggest benefit of the year for Southampton Hospital, held in a huge "Enchanted Garden" tent nearby on Wickabogue Road. The tent was lavishly decorated with orange trees, plants, elegant bird cages, and low lights, with soft music playing. About 1100 people attended this gala party, including their new board chairman Peter Larsen and his wife Nancy, writer Kristi Witker and husband Dick, designer Vera Wang, Congressman Tim Bishop and his wife Kathy, James Lipton, Marty Richards, Suffolk County Legislator Jay Schneiderman, David and Julia Koch, and Ambassador and Mrs. Enriquillo del Rosario. Tickets to this party were \$450 apiece.

Proceeds of \$1.4 million, from this event, exceeded the hospital's goal, and they will be used for the hospital's Department of Emergency Medicine.

On a glorious, sunny afternoon last Sunday, crowds came from all over the East End to attend an outdoor concert by Reggae great Jimmy Cliff, who performed in the fields of the Martha Clara Vineyard in Jamesport. This concert, put on by the vineyard and Central Suffolk Hospital, a recipient of the proceeds, drew about 1200 people, who sat on hay bales and blankets in the hot sun. In the VIP tent, which featured a Jamaican buffet, were Jackie Entenmann who owns Martha Clara Vineyard with her father, Bob Entenmann, Riverhead Supervisor Phil Cardinale, Greenport Mayor Dave Kapell, artist Max Moran, and Terry Noyes, of Sysco Foods. A day of fun in the sun is what summer on the East End is all about!