



Tackling Two Art Fair Openings In One Night

July 13, 2013

by Sandra Hale Schulman

Bridgehampton was the center of the Hamptons art universe on Thursday night with the twin planets of ArtHamptons and artMRKT Hamptons orbiting each other with stellar openings. Hitting both fairs in the same night took planning, multiple parking decisions and flat - but stylish - shoes.

Since ArtHamptons at Nova's Ark Project opened earlier, I decided that this was the place to start. By 5:30 p.m., the traffic had backed up on Scuttle Hole Road long before the roundabout, clearly annoying the sheep in the sculpture fields and eventually attracting the police to ease the congestion. But after parking, it was a quite an eyeful, with the huge 50,000 square foot tent rising out of the misty grounds, surrounded by a painted bus, blowup balloons of hands, and the shapely legs of Larry Rivers "Legs" sculpture scissoring over the entrance.



Larry River's Legs at ArtHamptons.



"The Palm Authority Project" by Esmeralda Kosmatopoulous at ArtHamptons.

Due to the traffic, I missed most of the music performance by GABI, the band project of composer/vocalist Gabrielle Herbst. Born at the Watermill Center, the musical project "explores the hot and cold spaces within nature and fantasy." I wish they had done an encore.



GABI performs ArtHamptons.

The openness of the entrance, the soft clear light and the 12 foot ceiling height lived up to the fair's promise of a "more museum-like" feel. Walking under the Rivers "Legs" is a rare and inspired set up. A special exhibit of his work, "40 Feet of Fashion", featuring his multimedia works of women held court in the front corner of the Pavilion.

The roomy aisles showcased work that is big, bright. According to several dealers, the art selected was tailored to the grand scale of homes in the East End with their white walls and high ceilings.



Colorful work at ArtHamptons.

Eric Fischl was signing copies of his new book and posing for pictures. Affable and eloquent, Fischl is everywhere this summer.



Eric Fischl book signing.

While sipping a tangy Caipirinha and loading up on stacks of art magazines in the back lounge, I noticed an unusual number of dogs in attendance. A Bulldog, three Chihuahuas, and a fuzzy little white Maltese color coordinated to the owners outfit made for a pack of VIP pooches. A dog to a VIP event? Really?



Lounge at ArtHamptons.



Sculpture field at ArtHamptons.

It's 8 p.m. and time to head out the door, past the Tesla car display and the painted Gratitude bus. I ran into celeb photog Patrick McMullan doing his grin-and-snap thing. If you see this guy, it's the

place to be.

More traffic and another difficult parking situation awaited in downtown Bridgehampton. By now, it was dark and harder to see the cardboard parking lot signs tacked into the ground. After a complete circle around town, I found a parking spot at the other end of Bridgehampton by Almond's restaurant.

A wild scene waited just inside the doors as a cool blue and red neon bar was positioned next to the ticket window. The Brooklyn duo Live Footage were elevated above the crowd on a platform, playing their mesmerizing electric cello and drum muzak that incorporates live loops and a handful of electronics with no pre-recorded samples.



artMRKT neon entry with Live Footage band.

artMRKT Hamptons is emphasizing emerging, contemporary art and galleries, with a few first time East End exhibitors including Glenn Horowitz Bookseller of East Hampton, Tripoli Gallery of Southampton and Neoteric Fine Art in Amagansett. Lots of people were buzzing over Steve Miller's snake x-ray art (exhibited with Grenning Gallery) and the full-sized newsstand made from denim at Red Truck Gallery.



Life-size denim news stand.

Vered of East Hampton had an eye-catching booth, flanked with life-size anime figures.



Life-size figure at Vered.

Bartenders in drag, some hard-core blue haired punks, and lots of gals in summer black painted this crowd as younger and edgier. An outdoor lounge with designer furniture and lighting beckoned. A quad of gourmet food trucks had long lines for dumplings, pizza, tacos and ice cream to balance vodka filled hands and stomachs.



Bartenders pour it on.



LUXE VIP Lounge at artMRKT Hamptons

At 10 p.m., the band began winding down to thunderous applause. The bartenders moved into the crowd—bottles in hand—topping off drinks. My foot dogs are barking: it's time to go.

While having two fairs open on the same night may not be the best idea, the fairs were a copious display of the unbelievable abundance of space, chutzpah, creativity and wealth in this area. If the faceoff is establishment versus youth, old money versus new art kids on the block, the real winners are the Parrish Art Museum, Guild Hall and LongHouse Reserve, each being the recipients of fundraising events held at the two fairs. So are the rest of us.

BASIC FACTS: **ArtHamptons** will remain open through July 14, 2013 at [Nova's Ark Project](#), 60 Millstone Rd at Scuttle Hole Rd, Bridgehampton, NY 11932. Tickets range from \$25 to \$250. For details, visit www.arthamptons.com.

ArtMRKT Hamptons will be open through July 14, 2013 on the grounds of The [Bridgehampton Historical Society](#), 2368 Montauk Hwy, Bridgehampton, NY 11932. Parking is free. www.art-mrkt.com/hamptons. Tickets are \$20 to \$50 and can be purchased by clicking [here](#).

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