



SOCIAL SCENE: Southampton Arts Center's SummerFest Raises \$450,000

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by Pat Rogers

Southampton Arts Center's drew the local Hamptons community together on August 31, 2017 to celebrate its fifth season and raised \$450,000 in the most successful benefit to date, announced the organization. SummerFest doubles as a Culinary Arts Festival, drawing an array of top restaurants and chefs to offer food and libations to benefit [Southampton Arts Center](#) (SAC), located in Southampton Village on Jobs Lane.

SAC offers a diverse slate of cultural programming including film, live performances, talks, art exhibitions, family programming and workshops. Their mission is to restore, renovate and preserve the historic landmark anchoring Jobs Lane and to serve as a hub to strengthen arts and culture for the entire community, according to its [website](#).

Funds raised at SummerFest support year-round exhibitions and programming offered by the cultural organization, many which are free to the public.

This year's benefit honored SAC's benefit co-chair Simone Levinson with the Champion of the Arts Award. Levinson and her husband David are part of the original Founders Circle and she has served as a Founding Board Co-Chair for the past seven years.

Additionally, former Southampton Village Mayor Mark Epley received a special tribute for his unending support at SummerFest.

This year's event chairs were Anke Beck-Friedrich and Juergen Friedrich, Tiffany and Claus Moller and Connie Tarrant.

Guests were greeted with the performance art piece *cats sleep anywhere* by [Brian O'Mahoney](#), an artist based in New Jersey who explores the ways anxieties infect daily life. His art draws upon humor and absurdity, making use of everyday materials, to connect cause and effects between individual and society anxieties and their repercussions, according to his artist statement.

cats sleep anywhere at SummerFest featured the artist trying to "nap" atop 80 white pillows while guests walked by on the way to attend the benefit. The piece reveals the not-so-task of finding a moment of rest, [according to the artist statement](#).

The performance art piece premiered at Watermill Center's [2016 Summer Benefit](#) and was repeated at Discover Watermill Center open house a few weeks later. The Watermill Center performance featured a trio wrestling with an attempt at rest that appeared mostly elusive. The SummerFest performance was co-presented by [Watermill Center](#), a regular programming partner of

SAC.



"cats sleep anywhere" by Brian O'Mahoney. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Watermill Center.

Attendees strolled through the galleries enjoying drinks and hors d'oeuvres while viewing the portrait exhibition "[ABOUT FACE](#)," presented by New York Academy of Art and curated by musician/artist Scott Avett and Academy President David Kratz. The benefit added a twist to the show with Academy Alumni sketching live models in The Studio at SAC.



NY Academy of Art Alum in Studio at Southampton Arts Center. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Figure Model in Studio at Southampton Arts Center. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.

The event continued outdoors with tastings from restaurants and chefs across the East End including EMP Summer House, Topping Rose House, Tutto il Giorno, Sant Ambroeus, RedBar & Little Red, Union Cantina, Le Charlot, Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet, Citarella and others.

A rosé bar, hosted by Bottle Hampton, joined a large illuminated full bar and strolling servers with cocktail backpacks filled with vodka and tequila concoctions made with Juice Press Watermelon and GLO juices.

The festive décor was executed by Frank Alexander, enhanced by staffing and additional catering from Tastings.

Attending SummerFest were Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and his wife Hillary, Jenny and John Paulson, Bob Colacello, Lisa Dennison, Marigay McKee and Bill Ford, Edwina von Gal, Holly Peterson and Henry Buhl. Also, Jean Shafiroff, Diana and Joe DiMenna, Kara Ross, Dorothy Lichtenstein, Lise Evans, Steven Gambrel, Marjorie and Josh Harris, Dayssi and Paul Kanovos, Renee Harbers Liddell and Chris Liddell and newly elected Southampton Village Mayor Michael Irving and his wife Ellen.

Continue scrolling to see some of the people who attended and made the benefit a fun and successful one.



David Levinson and Lise Evans. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com.
Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Brittney, Marissa, Chris and Amanda Epley. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy
of Southampton Arts Center.



Nancy McGann and Tim Bishop. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com.
Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Greg Unis, David Kratz, Bernardo Siciliano. Photo: Zach
Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Edwina von Gal and Irene Tully. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com.
Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Michael Halsband, Claude Grunitzky. Photo: Zach
Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



At SummerFest 2017. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Former Southampton Village Mayor and Honoree Mark Epley. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Event Chairs Connie Tarrant, Tiffany Moller, Anke Beck Friedrich. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Ellen Irving and Southampton Village Mayor Michael Irving. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.



Dancing at SummerFest. Photo: Zach Hilty/BFA.com. Courtesy of Southampton Arts Center.

BASIC FACTS: Southampton Arts Center is located at 25 Jobs Lane, Southampton, NY 11968. The art gallery is open Thursday through Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. "ABOUT FACE" continues on view through September 17, 2017. For programming and information, visit www.southamptonartscenter.org.

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