



Field by Aakash Nihalani, 2013, at Tripoli Gallery.



From "4 Women," a June 2013 show at Ille Arts, work by Monica Banks (PIECES ON TABLE AND WIRE MESH WALL ART), Suzanne Golderberg (WATERCOLORS ON WALL), and Janet Nolan (WALL SCULPTURES).

FREE ARTS

Across the Hamptons—from Southampton to Amagansett—galleries will participate in the annual Thanksgiving ArtWalk. BY JEAN NAYAR

Anyone who lives in the Hamptons has a lot to be thankful for. But Hamptons' residents and visitors alike have an extra reason to feel grateful this month. The third annual ArtWalk Hamptons will take place on the Saturday following Thanksgiving, and offers a quieter, more personal way for Hamptonsites and their guests to appreciate the local arts scene.

It's unlike ArtMRKT Hamptons, Art Southampton, and ArtHamptons, the competing fairs that cater to the collector community and

beach crowd. The frenzied summer season, when New Yorkers and international art aficionados descend upon the East End, was always intended to be an opportunity to mingle, sell, and purchase art. ArtWalk Hamptons, on the other hand, was instigated as a more community-focused counterpoint, with gallery owners in the South Fork participating in self-guided or artist-led tours through their galleries in East Hampton, Sag Harbor, Amagansett, Water Mill, Bridgehampton, and Southampton. "I envisioned

it as a kind of bookend to the season, which begins in May and runs through the holidays," says ArtWalk's founder and director, Kathy Zeigler.

In an earlier incarnation, Zeigler worked in New York City with a nonprofit group called nolongerempty.org, which aimed to animate vacant real estate by transforming empty buildings into settings for temporary, site-specific installations and inspiring the surrounding communities to become comfortable with experimenting with art. Seeing an opportunity

THIS PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF AAKASH NIHALANI/TRIPOLI GALLERY (FIELD); COURTESY OF ILLE ARTS ('4 WOMEN'); OPPOSITE PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF NICK WEBER/TRIPOLI GALLERY (MODEL AND PAINTER); COURTESY OF ADAM HANDLER/VERED ART GALLERY (KISS-KISS)



Kiss, kiss by Adam Handler, 2011, at Vered Gallery.
 LEFT: *Model and Painter* by Nick Weber, 2013, at Tripoli Gallery.

to apply this experience during the Hamptons off-season, Zeigler loosely banded together a string of galleries in East Hampton to launch the daylong ArtWalk Hamptons in 2011.

Inspired by the Chelsea and Brooklyn Art Walks, which are popular not only with galleries, but also with restaurants, bars, and retailers along their routes, “The idea with this ArtWalk,” Zeigler explains, “was to make art accessible to everyone and encourage an appreciation of art on a whole new level.”

She also sees it as a way to bring the Hamptons’ long-standing arts heritage into the future. “Great painters of the recent past like Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock as well as contemporary masters like Eric Fischl, April Gornik, Richard Serra, and Larry Rivers, are a few of the rock stars of the art world with roots here,” she says. “But there are other lesser-known, incredibly gifted artists with that level of achievement whose work is shown in these galleries, and New Yorkers can see that here.” Another plus, says Zeigler, is that the works of these artists are also within reach of less-seasoned or would-be collectors with shallower pockets than those who

attend the larger in-season art fairs.

The owners and managers of the galleries participating in the event support Zeigler’s position. “The event is great in that it helps the next generation of artists here in the Hamptons,” says Damien Roman, director of contemporary art at Vered Gallery (68 Park Pl., East Hampton, 324-3303; veredart.com). “And with social calendars

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—KATHY ZEIGLER

opening up after being inundated with events like tennis matches, garden shows, and fundraisers, it’s the perfect time for art lovers to see great things at their own pace.”

Vered, which is known for its provocative exhibitions (including the 2008 opening night of celebrity photographer Steven Klein’s

exhibition, when police arrested gallery owner Ruth Vered for serving drinks without a license), has traditionally focused on American and European modern art from the secondary market, including works by de Kooning, Milton Avery, Marsden Hartley, David Hockney, and George Bellows, among others. During the ArtWalk, the gallery will feature a Collector’s Choice exhibition, including works from these and other artists based on requests from some of its best clients. “We’re known for exhibiting work with bold statements—pieces that are arresting, edgy, exciting, and sometimes controversial,” says Roman. “Not everyone wants another image of the ocean, and when Vered and co-owner Janet Lehr opened the gallery, they realized there was a niche that was not being filled.”

At the same time, Vered will also be showcasing photography, sculpture, and paintings from a curated selection of contemporary emerging to mid-career artists, “whose work we feel will be trading upward,” says Roman, who produced the first Art on the Edge, an annual exhibition created to discover and showcase new artists. The exhibition was conceived in

BELOW: Paintings by Kamilla Talbot and photographs by Jonathan Smith from a July 2013 show, "Landscapes: Parallel Visual Journals," at Ille Arts, the latest gallery to open in Amagansett. OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP: *Until Our Most Fantastic Demands Are Met, Fantasy Will Be at War With Society* by Elektra KB, 2013, at Vered Gallery; *Napeague Meadow Road* by Grant Haffner, 2013, at Vered Gallery; *Bus* by Dean West, 2012, at Vered Gallery.



response to feedback from events he planned, attended by the Young Collectors Council of the Guggenheim, the Junior Associates of MoMA, and the Whitney Contemporaries. "Seventy percent of sales from the Art on the Edge event are purchased by clientele who have never bought art from Vered before," he says. Among the work gallerygoers will see from this collection of emerging artists are abstract paintings by Adam Handler, fashion photography from Steven Klein, pop surrealist pieces from Ray Caesar, and stitched and printed fabric works by Ukrainian artist Elektra KB; works start around \$1,800.

The work of other emerging local talent will be showcased at the Tripoli Gallery (30A Jobs Lane, Southampton, 377-3715; tripoli-gallery.com), which will host its ninth annual Thanksgiving Collective exhibition during the Walk. "Each year the theme changes, which allows me to introduce new artists as well as ones whose work I've shown in the past," says owner Tripoli Patterson, who began his Thanksgiving exhibitions when he was working as a freelance curator in 2005. This year's exhibition, called "The Worlds We Create," presents a series of images that depict the "worlds inside the artists' heads," says Patterson. One of his favorite new artists is Jonathan Beer, who recently graduated from the New York Academy of Art and just earned a fellowship from the school. "He's not bound yet, not restricted, not stuck. I see the potential for growth in his work and his dedication allows me to be dedicated to him."

For his part, Beer, a transplant to Brooklyn from Upstate New York, welcomes the opportunity to find his place among the firmament of art

stars with ties to the Hamptons. "I am thrilled at the prospect of exhibiting in an area so steeped in art," says the artist. "I view art history as an ever-expanding conversation, and having my work be shown in the same environment that has supported de Kooning (someone I feel I have an artistic kinship with) is very special." Beer works with found wood, Plexiglas, enamel, spray paint, and oil paint to create his novel works, which, he says, explore "the nature of identity, in particular American identity, because as a first-generation American I am painfully aware that I don't really know what that is."

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—JONATHAN BEER

Emblematic of this exploration are two works on display at Tripoli Gallery, *East/West II*. "The works came together very spontaneously for me; they were all play," Beer says. "I have been looking a lot at Japanese woodblock prints, in particular those by Hiroshige, and fell in love with the serialized, emblemlike snippets of the ideal Japanese landscape. I wanted these works to operate in a similar way, but about the quintessential American landscape—the West."

Owners of other galleries also appreciate the opportunity the ArtWalk affords to reinforce the Hamptons' artistic heritage. "There's such an abundance of internationally acclaimed

artists—like Chuck Close, Mary Heilmann, Alice Aycock—who have worked in the Hamptons," says Sara De Luca, owner and director of two-year-old Ille Arts (216a Main St., Amagansett, 905-9894; illearts.com). "It's wonderful to be able to celebrate both past and future artists of importance." Her gallery will feature a salon show with contemporary local artists, including Eva Faye, Don Christiansen, and Rick Liss, exhibiting one of their favorite pieces not selected for the current "Artists Choose Artists" exhibition at the Parrish Art Museum.

In addition to the support it offers to local artists, galleries that are open year-round also value the ArtWalk for the boost it brings to their businesses at the holidays. Although the ArtWalk "is not part of their business model," according to Zeigler, she's encouraged about the support and enthusiasm of the galleries that participate and the buzz that's emerging around it through word of mouth. "It's helpful for those of us who stay local, rather than go global to other fairs out of season," says De Luca. Zeigler is hoping the fledgling Walk, which has expanded from a handful of galleries in East Hampton the first year to dozens of galleries in six villages this year, will gain the support of the local governments, and a perhaps a sponsor or two, to take it to the next level in the years ahead.

She is also heartened by the galleries' and communities' backing of its underlying philosophy. "We try to show work with a mixed bag of prices," says De Luca. "Fine art should not be accessible only to the privileged few—everyone should be able to become a collector." With so much high-quality, and often affordable, work on display this month, plenty of locals—and visitors, too—are bound to agree. **H**



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