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### DeCordova Studio & Gallery Holds Holiday Show To Benefit Maureen's Haven

By Joan Baum



"Edges of Light" by Marilyn Church

Appropriately named "Give a Gift, Get a Gift," and in time for the holidays, the new exhibit at the DeCordova Gallery in Greenport is hoping to repeat the success of its first collaboration last year with Maureen's Haven, looking to donate 30 percent of sales to this unique Eastern Suffolk program for the homeless. The association between the gallery and Maureen's Haven (MH) owes its origin to a suggestion by Joyce DeCordova, a former social work intern at MH, that the Gallery sponsor a special art show each November that would help fund social services at MH, among them providing homeless men and women with transportation to safe, clean places to sleep - typically houses of worship, where they also receive hot meals throughout the winter and feel a sense of dignity.

On hand for the "Give a Gift, Get a Gift" opening were Kathy Dunlap, Office Manager/Events Coordinator at MH and her husband, Larry Dunlap, Minister at the United Methodist Church in East Quogue, one of several churches that makes 'room in the inn'. Both Dunlaps stressed the humanity of MH, where the homeless are treated like "guests." Tables in the dining room have silverware and china and flower centerpieces, and it's not unusual for the Minister to join his guests for a meal.

Clearly, to judge from the extensive high-quality art on display, "Give a Gift, Get a Gift" was off to a good start even before the show officially opened: two paintings had already been sold. They included a lovely, sure-touch, delicately paint-speckled watercolor by Hector DeCordova and Marilyn Church's striking semi-abstract of a woman of the demimonde, her back to the viewer, strong brush strokes marking the subject's determination, if not the artist's lighter palette these days.

The DeCordova Gallery, housed in a lovely yellow Victorian on Main Street, uses its series of intimate rooms to advantage. The exhibit features multiple works by a score of artists, emerging and established. Artists include the whimsical sculptor Kristian Iglesias with his witty, elegant pigmented cement, bronze and steel birds, but also showing an oil on paper (a chicken with pubic hair?). New to the gallery are a couple of photographers - Bob Lefferts, with a gorgeous tree "Reflections" series in color (hello, Monet), and Harvey Hellering, showing the beautiful charcoal-like moody "Fog on the Hills" and the pun-titled "Morning Cast," an image of two figures in the mist, fishing on a wide stretch of rippling water. Both artists inevitably reference painting and pastels as well as evidence expertise in their own medium.



"Reflections 11" by Bob Lefferts

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Throughout, pieces are grouped by artist, though in several instances, additional works by the same painter can be found in other rooms, prompting occasional shuffling back and forth, but perhaps also serving as a memory test of an artist's subject matter and style. In some cases, the second look presents a delightful surprise, as in Michael Butler's "The Edges of Civilization," a tall, joyous pastel-colored acrylic of minuscule houses set in hills that tower from sea to sky (other work is less detailed and looser). With some artists, however, even a first look may startle. For example, Sal Gulla's acrylic collages, whose swirls and raised surfaces seem unlike his larger vertical line compositions, or printmaker Bill Negron's "Juanita," with its sweep of curved black lines over a pale pink surface.



"RIO" by Ruth Nasca

There's no mistaking Emily Barnett's technically superb and aesthetically pleasing "Bird Nest" etchings, with their delicate, textural, subtly tinted branches that cluster serenely on white. Kathleen Bifulco's spare mixed-media "Symbols" (another new direction?) as well as attractive compositions of metal netting and string on felt. Tom Wasik's mixed-media "Flower" compositions have odd but judiciously placed rectangles of white cut-out figure shapes. Jemal Kukhalashvili's oils, "Sunday in the Park" and "The Wedding" are distinctive in their rosy beige and grey tones and black-outline faces, figures and animals. Michael Carolan's decorative black and white wood block prints (he calls them "line carvings") garnered extra attention. And of course, Hector DeCordova's sparkling landscape watercolors, with their strategically placed accent daubs, were eye catching.

A room away, Bernard Springsteel's more opaque watercolor "Overgrown in Riverhead," with its slightly off-angle house, commands attention. It was a nice move to put Chris Hanson and Linda Capello in the same room - both fine artists who can draw. Hanson is represented by portraits and figures, showing off his different technique, while Capello's nude torsos in pencil and rust-colored conte yield surprising and satisfying sculpted three-dimensional effects.

Alas, space does not permit more notice of other art on exhibit, but it includes: Linda Butti's watercolors with white acrylic, Guillermo Espinasse's perfect mixed medias, Adrienne Fierman's eye-catching raku ceramics, Helen Giaquinto's selling-out watercolors, Bryan Landsberg's small red and gold abstract, a wall of wonderful Bob Markells, Ruth Nasca's oil pastels on movie posters, Regina Stark's solarplates, and Felicitas Wetter's monoprints.

It should also be noted that the DeCordova opening was graced by the duo of Herb Levine on classical guitar (he's also the organist at Larry Dunlap's church) and Harry Katz on recorder - heavenly sounds, classical and Renaissance. The prices are right, by the way, so "Give a Gift, Get a Gift." The show runs through Dec. 23. DeCordova Gallery is located at 538 Main Street, Greenport. [www.decordovagallery.com](http://www.decordovagallery.com).

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