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NY HEARD & SCENE

Gallivanting at the Hamptons' Parrish Museum

Performance Artists in Strange Costumes Greet
Guests at Water Mill Museum

By MARSHALL HEYMAN

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WATER MILL—For the first time at its annual midsummer benefit, the Parrish Museum, which opened its new, gorgeous building here in 2012, went a little bit out there. Performance artists, as directed by Richard Move, greeted guests as they walked in, and could be seen gallivanting on the back lawn. There were strange costumes, there were repetitious movements, and, yes, there were bare nipples.



A performance artist at the annual midsummer benefit for the Parrish Museum *Billy Farrell Agency*

It was clear this was a page out of the Robert Wilson handbook, something that caused a few guests at Saturday's Parrish party to simultaneously smirk and roll their eyes. Mr. Wilson has turned his annual Watermill Center benefit—which this year will take place on July 26 with the theme "One Thousand Nights and One Night: Sleepless Nights of Sheherazade"—into an eccentric spectacle, meant to shock, titillate and amuse. (Mr. Wilson was also in attendance at the Parrish benefit.)

Lisa Anastos, who chairs the Contemporary Council at the Watermill Center and is a member of the board of advisers at the Parrish, said she noticed some similarities. "But I'm a big supporter of performance art," Ms. Anastos explained.

"At least they like it," said Bonnie Comley, the wife of theater producer Stewart Lane, of how the Parrish apparently views the Watermill Center. "And it sells tickets."

"Did you see the dancers?" asked the philanthropist Jean Shafiroff, who does a lot of fundraising for the Southampton Hospital. "I think the hospital could use more of that."



Amanda Smith *Billy Farrell Agency*
[Enlarge Image](#)



Katharina and Nick Otto-Bernstein with Inga Maren Otto *Patrick McMullan*
[Enlarge Image](#)



Carol and Michael Weisman *Billy Farrell Agency*

Terrie Sultan, the director of the Parrish, said her goal with Mr. Move's performance work was to "keep adding elements to make it an exciting evening and the best party in the entire world." Another plus, she added, that helped attract the 600 attendees, "a great mix of new friends and old," is dinner on the terrace of the Herzog & de Meuron building. "Nobody else can do that."

This year, dinner overlooked a few Porsches that no doubt some plus ones found more interesting than some of the artwork in the museum's permanent collection.

The evening honored philanthropist Inga Maren Otto and the

author and filmmaker Katharina Otto-Bernstein. Indeed, there was a nice mix of Parrish staples and newcomers. At least some of them paid \$1,500 for dinner tickets, and that was on the low end.

Among the attendees were Beth Rudin DeWoody; designers Tony Ingrao and Randy Kemper; various Nederlanders; Lisa Perry; Robin and Frederic Seegal; Kelly Behun and Jay Sugarman; Mark Mullett and Keith Bloomfield; Karen Marta and Frederic Tuten; the writer Patty Marx; Jamee and Peter Gregory; Dorothy Lichtenstein; Sandra Lee; Avis and Bruce Richards; Helen and Tim Schifter; Hilary Geary and Wilbur Ross; Nicole Miller and Kim Taipale; Jane and David Walentas; Carol and Michael Weisman; Adam Dell; and Janna, Eugenia and Zoe Bullock.

Julio Gaggia, a fashion photographer, was one of the gala newbies. He described the crowd as an "insider" one, "almost like a who's who in the art world." Inside the galleries, he wore large Mykita gold glasses with intense blue frames—perhaps better to observe those insiders with, not to mention the installations by the artist Maya Lin, who had been inspired by superstorm Sandy.

Ms. Lin has spent a lot of time at the museum in the last year. She wasn't sure if the space encouraged visitors to experience her and other's art differently, but "the proximity to the water might change the perception of what you're looking at," Ms. Lin said. "You think about literally what's outside. It almost got me to want to flood the whole floor."

Ms. Lin didn't flood the whole floor, but the Parrish could think about doing that for next year's gala, just to amp excitement up even further.

"Last year we were the debutante," said Debbie Bancroft, a Parrish board member. "I think we've got our groove on."

Corrections & Amplifications

An earlier version of this article incorrectly said the Parrish Museum opened its new building in 2013.