

# Guild Hall

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## GUILD HALL'S ANNUAL SUMMER GALA WAS HELD IN EAST HAMPTON ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2023 HONORING TRUSTEE KEN WYSE

Emceed by Jordan Roth and featuring exhibiting artists Leo Villareal and Renée Cox,  
the Benefit Event Raised Over \$1,100,000 for the Art Center



Yvonne Force Villareal & Leo Villareal. Photo: PMc/Getty Images; Ken Wyse, Renée Cox, Jordan Roth. Photos: Jessica Dalene

### WHERE

Guild Hall and Mulford Farm  
158 Main Street and 10 James Lane, East Hampton, NY

### WHEN

Friday, August 4, 2023

### WHAT

**EAST HAMPTON, NY (August 8, 2023)**—On Friday, August 4 at Mulford Farm in East Hampton, over 350 dinner guests settled in for an evening celebrating Guild Hall and 2023 Summer Gala honoree, Trustee **Ken Wyse**. Mr. Wyse was recognized for his outstanding leadership and enduring commitment to Guild Hall. Rejoicing the creative process and the people who champion it, the annual benefit raised over **\$1.1 million** in support of the institution's year-round interdisciplinary programs.

The lavish event was attended by an eclectic mix of Guild Hall supporters, including **Marty & Michele Cohen, Myrna Daniels, Florence Fabricant, Gina Gibney, Kim Heirston, Ed Hollander, Peter Pennoyer, Lisa Perry, Daryl Roth**, emcee **Jordan Roth & Richie Jackson, Cynthia Rowley, Jeffrey Seller, Patsy & Jeff Tarr, Barbara Tober, Alex Vinash**, and honoree **Ken Wyse**, and artists **Ross Bleckner, Philippe Cheng, Renée Cox, Jeremy Dennis, Ralph Gibson, Alice Hope, Bryan Hunt, Arcmanoro Niles, Toni Ross, Bastienne Schmidt, Julian Schnabel, Leo Villareal & Yvonne Force Villareal, Andrina Wekontash Smith, Robert Wilson, Lucy Winton**, and **Lisa Yuskavage**.

"Guild Hall is artist and community-driven, and this evening celebrating art champion Ken Wyse and experiencing the artworks of Leo Villareal and Renée Cox reinforced this core tenet of the institution: Artists Lead Us," said Executive Director, Andrea Grover.

The evening began at Guild Hall with a special preview of Leo Villareal's *Celestial Garden* (2023), a monumental light sculpture over ten feet high and twenty-eight feet wide, composed of an array of LEDs diffused through a vinyl membrane. The work utilizes custom software to orchestrate compositions of perpetually evolving abstract forms inspired by the intricate patterns found in nature, and the mural-size work references the history of painting and mark-making. Guests were able to enjoy the widely celebrated exhibition *Renee Cox: A Proof of Being*, which is also on view. Attendees also had the opportunity to stroll through the newly renovated building and grounds, admiring the work of Peter Pennoyer Architects and Hollander Design Landscape Architects.

Guests then made their way to Mulford Farm for cocktails featuring the widely popular Aperol Spritz as the featured libation, and hors d'oeuvres including Jumbo Lump Crab Cakes, Steamed Lobster Dumplings, Mini "Bagel & Lox" Cones, Angel Hair Noodle Cakes, Caprese Salad Kebabs, Rice Paper Summer Rolls, Spring Pea & Feta Fritters, Short Rib Potstickers, and Retro Beef Hot Dogs in Blankets.

Bells chimed to close out the cocktail reception, and guests made their way to an open-air tent with dramatic, oversized orbs and all shades of blue, designed by Anthony Taccetta Events, and theatrical lighting by Bentley Meeker. The program began with a short video featuring Guild Hall's summer programs, and then the evening's emcee, theater producer and fashion icon, **Jordan Roth**, took the stage to kick off the festivities, setting a humorous and warm tone to the evening. Remarks were then made by Guild Hall Board Chairman **Marty Cohen** and Executive Director **Andrea Grover**. Guild Hall & Bel Canto Boot Camp resident artists Siskelelwe Mngenela, Elizabeth Novella, Anne Marie Stanley, Derrek Stark, Michael Leyte-Vidal, and David Wolfe closed out the first portion of the presentation with a medley of operatic drinking songs featuring excerpts from Verdi's *La Traviata*, *Macbeth*, and *Otello*; Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*; and the French setting of *Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas, accompanied by BCBC's Derrick Goff. The residents will be performing alongside acclaimed soprano Lisette Oropesa on Saturday, August 12 at St. Luke's Hoie Hall.

After dinner, the program continued with a special video featuring honoree Ken Wyse, followed by Barbara and Rick Lane presenting a Tiffany & Co. crystal award to Wyse, including moving speeches by the presenters and the honoree. Jordan Roth returned to the podium to lead a rousing call for guests to "Take a Seat" by joining the seat-naming campaign for the John Drew Theater, set to reopen in early 2024. **For \$5,000 per seat, over 40 attendees raised their hands to be part of the capital campaign, all of which were matched by a gift from trustee Hilarie Morgan and her husband, Mitchell Morgan.** In addition to the seat-naming campaign, guests had the opportunity to be the first to bid on Leo Villareal's *Bloom Nebula* (2023), a sequenced light sculpture incorporating LEDs, electronics, and custom code, exemplifying Villareal's latest inquiries into natural and synthetic systems. [Bidding](#) closes on September 4, 2023.

The seated dinner featured a fresh seasonal menu beginning with "Alice's Corn Souffle," a tribute to late Guild Hall trustee Alice Netter, Roasted Black Cod with Asparagus Bundles, Quinoa Pilaf, and Stuffed Baby Eggplant, and a dessert sampler of Dark chocolate Mint Pot au Crème Sake Cups, Lemon Tarts, and Fresh Fruit and Berry Kebabs, plus passed sweets including Sorbet Push Pops, Cracked Sugar Caramel Tarts, and Miniature Gelato Cones. Catering was by Laurence Craig, and wines were courtesy of Amagansett Wine & Spirits.

As dessert was served, Jordan Roth invited guests to make their way to the Guild Hall-branded floor, where dancing to tunes by **DJ MICK** continued into the night.

#### HOST COMMITTEE

Toni Bernstein	Susan Jacobson
Mary Jane Brock	Barbara Lane
Marty Cohen	Galia Meiri-Stawski
Florence Fabricant	Pamela Pantzer
Christina Isaly Liceaga	Laurie Sprayregen

#### MEDIA PARTNER

HAMPTONS

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## **ABOUT GUILD HALL**

Guild Hall is the cultural heart of the East End: a museum, performing arts, and education center, founded in 1931. We invite everyone to experience the endless possibilities of the arts: to open minds to what art can be; inspire creativity and conversation; and have fun.

Guild Hall has served four generations and introduced audiences to the most storied artists and performers of our time. Now as we approach our centennial, we have embarked on a state-of-the-art renovation to match the caliber of our artistry for twenty-first-century audiences. The facility-wide Capital Improvements Project & Campaign includes top-of-the-line physical and technological enhancements to better deliver on our mission as an artist-driven, interdisciplinary institution.

For more information about Guild Hall, please visit [GuildHall.org](http://GuildHall.org).  
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