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ARTIST UPDATE

"Mardi Gras" by artist Rocky Seprino

Artist Rocky Seprino Exhibits with "World's Youngest Drummer" at Sherrus Gallery

NORTHVILLE, MI—Sherrus Gallery of Fine Art hosted an extraordinary First Friday Art Walk Event that premiered an exhibit of never-before-displayed works by multimedia artist Rocky Seprino. The exciting one-man show received extra wattage with two electrifying performances by 4-year-old Julian Pavone, "The World's Youngest Drummer!"®

During the opening reception, the public witnessed an exhilarating display of talent and showmanship as Seprino shared the spotlight with Pavone in a remarkable fusion of music, video and live painting.

Seprino is best known in the Detroit production community for his film and video work. Behind the scenes, he has worked to develop a unique brand of pop art that is now ready for center stage. A large collection of the artist's work is featured in this solo show, which also showcases a series of paintings inspired by the young drummer, with whom Seprino forged a bond while creating the television pilot "Finding Julian's Band." The vibrant colors, energetic brushstrokes and broad iconic content of Seprino's art are evidence of the artist's love for the pop culture of the baby-boomer generation.



An image of Julian Pavone taken by photographer Daniel Lippit



"I wanted to make art more than

something you quietly stand and stare at," Seprino says. "Getting my little buddy Julian involved should make it fun for the whole family!"

The young drummer has made headlines around the world, appearing on 29 TV shows, including "Good Morning America," "Martha Stewart" and "The Oprah Winfrey Show."



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For information on being part of the SOLO Artists Section, contact Debbie Kuhn at 216.750.0358

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Artist Pete Tillack auctioned "Elouera Marked" for charity at this year's Waterman's Ball.

Pete Tillack Auctions Piece for Waterman's Ball

DANA POINT, CA—Artist Pete Tillack auctioned a new piece of original art for the 2008 Waterman's Ball. Tillack, who has expanded into adding abstract elements to his work, created the unique oil-on-wood piece "Elouera Marked." According to the artist, this new piece captures the legend of the sport of surfing and this year's Waterman of the Year Mark Occhilupo. The two surfers, who share the same Australian hometown, established an immediate connection, which further inspired Tillack's artwork.

The 2008 Waterman's Ball fundraiser honored Tillack's hometown surf legend, Occhilupo, as Waterman of the Year due to the immense impact he has made on the sport of surfing. Because Tillack modeled his surfing on the style Occhilupo, he thought it was fitting to create a piece that portrayed the surfer's trademark power turns.

The 5 1/2 -x-3 1/2-foot piece was created to span more than two dimensions. After painting the original work, it was then cut up, reorganized and built on different levels of depth to achieve a 3-D quality.

The final bid for "Elouera Marked" reached \$19,000 and was won by Occhilupo himself. All proceeds from the sale were donated to a select group of environmental funds to protect the waters and coastlines that are so dear to the artist's heart.

For more information, visit www.petetillack.com. ABN



Philadelphia artist Zenos Frudakis is shown with clay models to be cast in bronze. The sculptures of golf legend and course designer Jack Nicklaus with Valhalla Golf Club owner Dwight Gahm were unveiled in September.

Philadelphia Artist Creates Sculptures for Valhalla Golf Club

LOUISVILLE, KY—Internationally known artist Zenos Frudakis was commissioned to create larger-than-life-size sculptures of Valhalla Golf Club owner Dwight Gahm and golf legend Jack Nicklaus. The pieces were unveiled at the club in Louisville, Ky., in September.

Soon after receiving the commission, Frudakis had the opportunity to visit Gahm in Kentucky to interview him and take measurements. "I met with him for a few hours and asked him to sit for me so that I could sculpt his likeness in clay," the artist recalls. "It truly helps to get to know the person I am sculpting. It helps to put a sense of life in the piece."

In May, Frudakis traveled to Ohio to meet Nicklaus and to take photographs that were used to guide the sculpture process. "It was important for Mr.

Nicklaus to pose for the portrait part of the statue so as to accurately portray the living character and personality of the man," Frudakis explains.

No stranger to immortalizing golf's greats in bronze, Frudakis' sculpture of Payne Stewart stands on the grounds of the Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina. Additionally, he created bronzes of Arnold Palmer and Bobby Jones for the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame in Augusta.

For more information, call **215-884-9433** ; visit www.zenosfrudakis.com.
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Artist Ashton Howard has lent his artistic abilities to help create a surf-inspired restaurant called The Surf Shack.

Artist Ashton Howard Signs Exclusive Licensing Deal With The Surf Shack Bar and Grill

TOMBALL, TX—Artist Ashton Howard has teamed up with some of his most avid collectors to create a surf-themed restaurant called The Surf Shack. After meeting collectors Wesley Coats and Terry Boylan at Oh My Goddard gallery in Houston, Texas, in 2005, Howard developed a relationship with the two because of their mutual love of diving, oceans and the environment. The artist stayed in touch through numerous art shows throughout the Houston area.

Three years later, Boylan called Howard to tell him to get his brushes ready for a major project. After hopping on a plane to meet Boylan and Coats, Howard was presented with a new restaurant space and 2,200 square feet of blank canvas.

“My art speaks truly of who I am as a surfer, ocean-lover and waterman,” Howard says. “Surfing and the ocean environment is a very big trend these days to newcomers, and having a fun and entertaining environment where you can eat good food and drink cheap beer is a perfect way to promote it.”

An interior wall of the new Surf Shack Bar and Grill painted by artist Ashton Howard



Howard hand painted more than 2,200 square feet of massive waves, desolate beaches, shipwrecks, swaying palms, waterfalls and environmental slogans. In addition, he has been commissioned to design the Surf Shack logo, menu, interior accessories and gift-store merchandise.

Franchise opportunities are available. For more information, call **832-559-7446** ; e-mail Tboylan@aol.com; visit www.ashtonhoward.com. ABN

ABN Pays Tribute to Artist Michael Gerry



ROCKFORD, IL—Artist Michael Gerry, 56, died of a stroke in his home in Rockford, Ill., on July 23. Gerry was best known for his large paintings of photorealistic flowers. He worked closely with The Studio of Long Grove and Hilligoss Galleries in Chicago and was also represented by Galleria di Sorrento in Las Vegas and Images Fine Art in Maui.

Tom Hilligoss, owner of the Chicago area galleries, met Gerry in 1991, shortly after the opening of the Studio of Long Grove.

“Artists come into the galleries every

Artist Michael Gerry is remembered for his innovative use of color and light.

day, but when this affable but very unassuming artist showed me his work one day in Long Grove, I wasn't prepared for the dramatic impact of his larger-than-life flowers," Hilligoss says. "Michael was always open to

suggestions, and over the next year or so, his work became so stunning in the use of color and light that he was soon one of our bestselling artists. He very soon became a close friend, too, and we've maintained that friendship, as well as the working relationship, all these years. He will be sorely missed."

In 1995 Susan Williams began working with Gerry through Studio Publishing, a company Hilligoss founded to represent Gerry's work through other galleries and to publish limited-edition prints of his paintings. "There was such a broad interest in Michael's work that it made sense to make it available to a larger market," Hilligoss says.

Williams worked closely with Gerry for the next 13 years and came to regard him as family. "Michael had a simplicity and decency in the way he chose to live his life," Williams says. "He was a thoughtful person who enjoyed reading, bird-watching and classical music in addition to painting. Although he lived alone, he was close to his family and spoke of them often. And although he had a quirky, goofy side to his personality, he was also a very spiritual person. I'll very much miss our frequent discussions of philosophy and politics."

Despite the reservations of the gallery staff, Gerry would occasionally be found teaching an interested child to paint a dewdrop using only three brushstrokes on one of his original canvases. At his workshops and gallery shows, and in his personal relationships, he constantly encouraged other artists and critiqued and praised their work, offering moral support in the difficult business of making a living as an artist.

For more information, contact Tom Hilligoss at **847-634-4244** . ABN

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