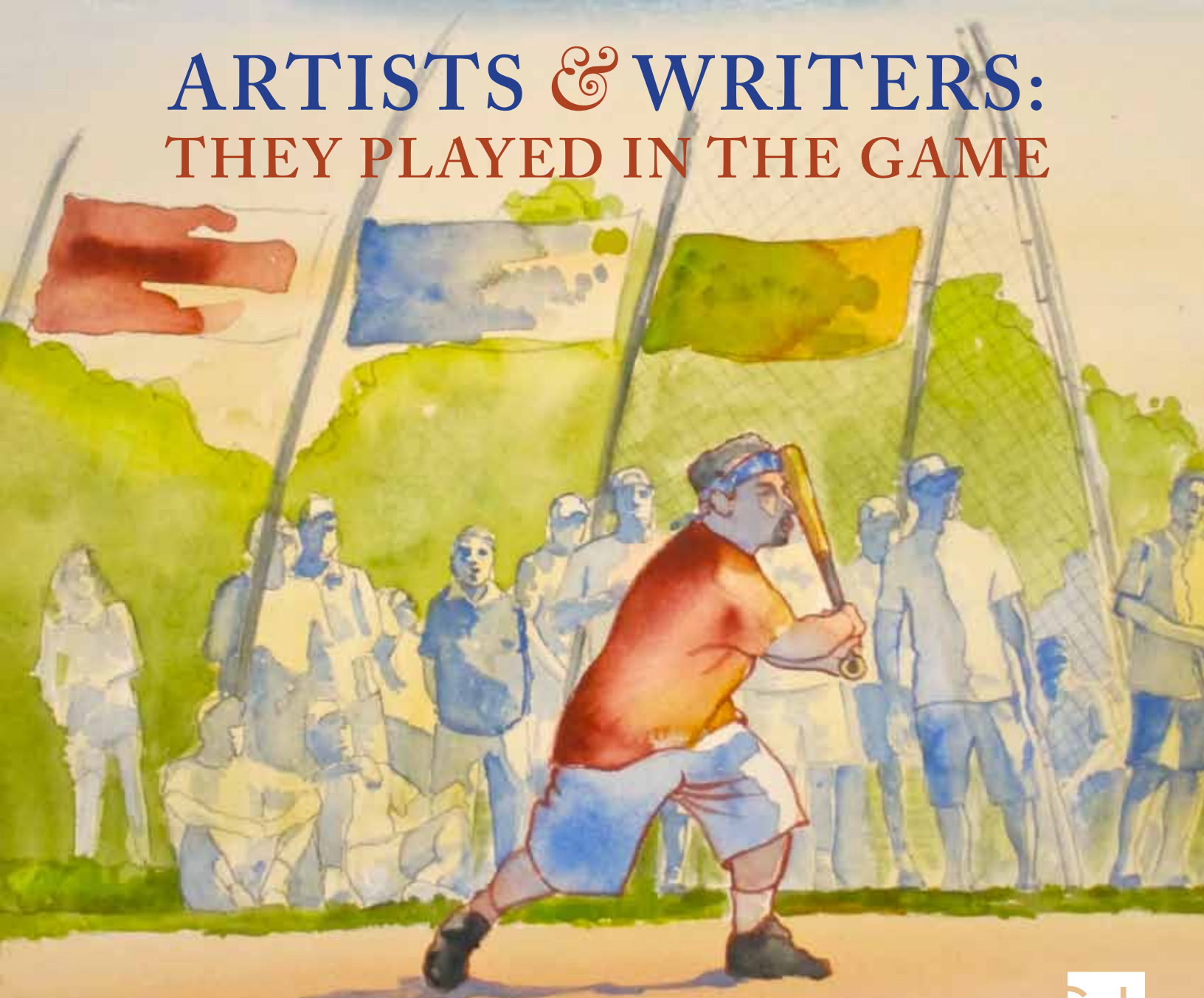




# ARTISTS & WRITERS: THEY PLAYED IN THE GAME



Guild Hall Museum • June 15–July 28, 2013



EXHIBITION ARTISTS:

Calvin Albert  
John Alexander  
Carlos Basaldua  
Walter Bernard  
Ross Bleckner  
Russell Blue  
Norman Bluhm  
Fred Brandes  
Warren Brandt  
James Brooks  
Victor Caglioti  
Ralph Carpenter  
Lawrence Castagna  
John Chamberlain  
Herman Cherry  
Dan Christensen  
Paul Davis  
Elaine deKooning  
Willem deKooning  
Jim Dine  
Peter Dohanos  
Jack Dowd  
Bill Durham  
Eric Ernst  
Jimmy Ernst  
Eric Fischl  
Audrey Flack  
Dan Flavin  
Connie Fox  
David Geiser  
Adolph Gottlieb  
Balcomb Greene  
Elaine Grove  
Robert Gwathmey  
Bill Hoffman  
Leif Hope  
Ed Hollander  
Howard Kanovitz  
Bill King  
Franz Kline  
Boris Kroll  
Marvin Kuhn  
Ibram Lassaw  
Dennis Lawrence  
Conrad Marca-Relli  
Lynn Matsuoka  
Eddie McCarthy  
James McMullan  
Jeffrey Meizlik  
Joan Mitchell  
Kyle Morris  
Dr. Ron Noy  
Ray Parker  
Philip Pavia  
Joel Perlmans  
Jackson Pollock  
Ray Prohaska  
Peter Reginato  
Ronnelle Riley  
Larry Rivers  
Dan Rizzie  
James Rosenquist  
Randall Rosenthal  
Bernard "Tony" Rosenthal  
Ludwig "Lutz" Sander  
Louis Schanker  
Lori Singer  
David Slivka  
Mike Solomon  
Syd Solomon  
Joe Sopiak  
Billy Strong  
Michelle Suna  
Tim Tibus  
Lou Trakis  
Esteban Vicente  
Joan Ward  
Dan Weiden  
Joe Wilder  
Lew Zacks  
Wilfrid Zogbaum

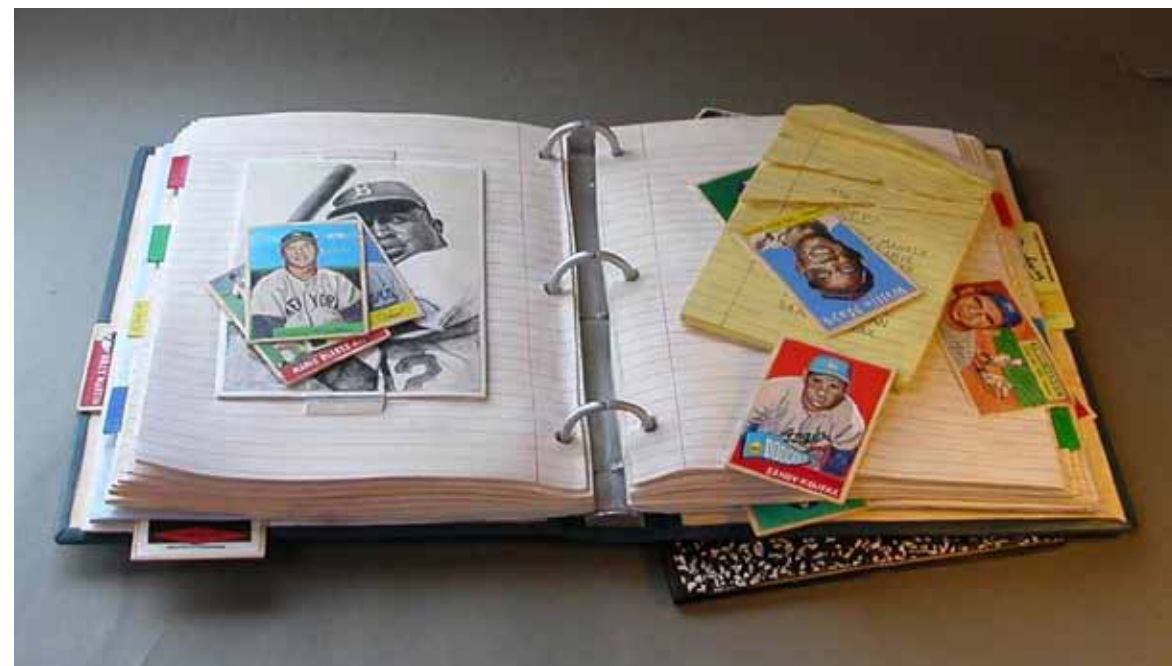
ON THE COVER:

Franz Kline, Howard Kanovitz and Willem de Kooning at an early Artists & Writers game. Courtesy of Howard Kanovitz Foundation. Illustration by Walter Bernard.

*“I feel sometimes an American artist must feel like a baseball player or something—a member of a team writing American history. . .”*

*—Willem de Kooning (1969)*

Excerpt from an interview with David Sylvester from *Content Is A Glimpse* by Thomas B. Hess



Randall Rosenthal, *Sweet Memories*, 2009. Vermont white pine, acrylic and ink. Photo by Gary Mamay.

*A Note from the Curators*

GUILD HALL HAS BEEN A PART OF OUR COMMUNITY FOR 82 YEARS, Opening its doors to all those eager to celebrate the arts. This summer the Artists & Writers Softball Game on August 17 will celebrate its 65th annual game. To commemorate this milestone the Museum at Guild Hall wishes to honor all the artists and writers who have participated in this friendly rivalry. The idea for the exhibition was the brainchild of artist Leif Hope, who is also the driving force behind the competition, which raises funds that help local charities.

The Artists and Writers Game, rich in nostalgic history and anecdotes but occasionally devoid of athletic ability, could probably happen nowhere else in the country. The Hamptons might represent the highest concentration of creative talent per capita anywhere in the United States. Our artists and writers and the game they love are a living tribute to the Hamptons legacy as a significant artist colony.

*Elena Prohaska Glinn and Christina Mossaides Strassfeld, Co-Curators*



Willem de Kooning, *Untitled*, 1974. Oil on paper mounted on canvas. Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.



Robert Gwathmey, *Still Life*, 1973. Oil on canvas. Gift of the Tyson Foundation supplemented by the Guild Hall Purchase Fund. Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.



Eric Fischl, *Untitled (2 figures)*, 2006. Solar etching. Gift of the artist, Guild Hall Permanent Collection.

REFLECTIONS OF THE GAME

*Eric Ernst, Artist*

MOST PEOPLE DEFINE THE passage of time through their birthdays or anniversaries but not me. I view the passing of the years through the prism of the Artists & Writers softball game, an event that has been the highlight of my calendar year since I was a child watching my father and the other artists getting the stuffing knocked out of them by the writers—year after numbing year. Not that literary lions like George Plimpton, Saul Bellow, Murray Kempton, or Neil Simon were such poor sports as to run up the score, as much as the fact that the writers were simply better ballplayers than the artists. Much better ballplayers!

Among the examples I recall that reflect the artists' conceptual competence in those years was the time Bill de Kooning, in a game in the early 1960's, reverted to the soccer habits of his youth in Holland—rather than field a ground ball while playing second base, he chose to kick the ball in the general direction of the first baseman. Then there was the activist Abbie Hoffman whose only interest was in self-promotion and loudmouthed buffoonery but who, after being kicked off the writers team, nevertheless convinced the artist manager, Elaine Benson, to let him play the whole game despite the complete absence of any apparent skill or understanding of the sport. Or Esteban Vicente, who loved to pitch and had a rather elegant wind-up, but who steadfastly refused to try to catch the ball if it were hit to him: "The ball may not respect that I work with my hands," he once explained to me in his elegant Spanish accent.

As for my father, Jimmy Ernst, he would usually play a few innings before insisting that I replace him as a designated ringer. As he once said to me, "Why should I stand out there in the hot sun watching some screenwriter I've never heard of hit line drives past me."

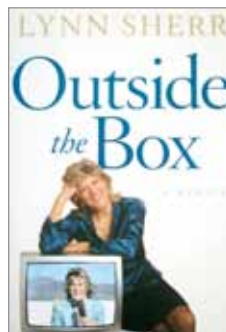
So for me it was never really about the actual contest. Certainly not in those early



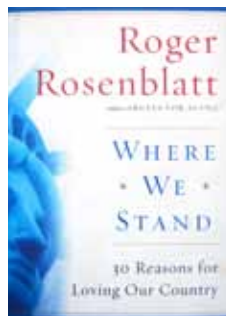
George Plimpton



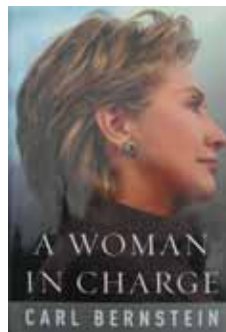
James Lipton



Lynn Sherr



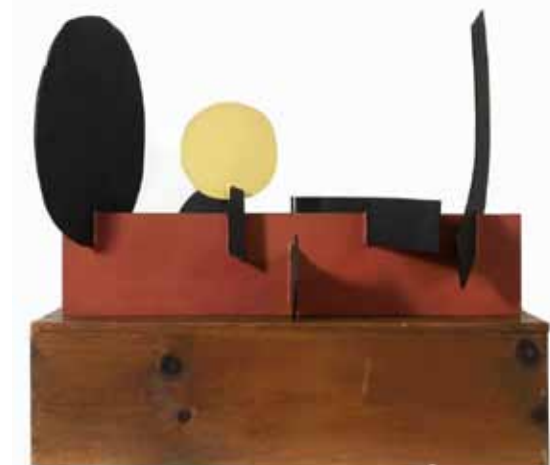
Roger Rosenblatt



Carl Bernstein



Jackson Pollock, *Untitled*, 1951. Black ink on Howell paper. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Valentine E. Macy, Jr., Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.



Adolph Gottlieb, *Wall*, 1968. Painted aluminum. Gift of Ronnie Chalif in memory of Adolph and Esther Gottlieb, in honor of Enez Whipple, Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.



Ross Bleckner, *Untitled*, 1991. Oil on canvas. Gift of the artist, Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.

years when the final tally read more like lopsided football than baseball scores. It was more about the exuberance and the sense of community and never really about the end result (which was almost always eminently predictable anyway). To use a Mae West quote completely out of context, "The score never interested me, only the game."

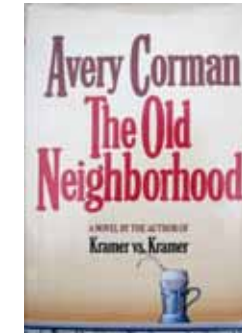
*Eric Ernst is an artist and writer who lives in Sag Harbor. Having begun playing in the Artist & Writers game as an acknowledged 'ringer' at the age of 12, he strenuously continues to deny the scurrilous rumors (which some say he started) that he became an artist simply to continue his involvement in the game as an adult.*

*Richard Reeves, Writer*

THE LAST TIME HE WENT TO BAT, George Plimpton hit a sharp line drive. "Well," he said to me, "That makes my day." "It'd make my year," I said. He laughed and said, "You're right. Damn that was good." So, there we were, two not-so-young-anymore writers, guys who did pretty well, talking about the best Saturday of every year.

There is some argument about when the game began, was it 1948 or '49? Or some other year when George and I were kids. But there is no doubt about where it stood with us, right up there with Pulitzer Prizes and the *New York Times* best-seller list. Players in the game, have included politicians, including one President, Bill Clinton, and more than a couple of candidates, including Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern and Rudy Giuliani. The game was originally all artists, casual weekend affairs in the Springs. The players were or became legends, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Philip Pavia, Franz Kline, Howard Kanovitz, Wifred Zogbaum, Syd Solomon and Joan Mitchell. Some good ballplayers (Pavia), some hopeless (de Kooning). The first pitcher was Harold Rosenberg, the art critic of *The New Yorker*.

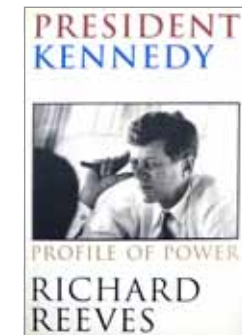
Writers began to appear more. Terry Southern and Arthur Blaustein were among the first. Older artists grumble that the writers took it more seriously. With faces often



Avery Corman



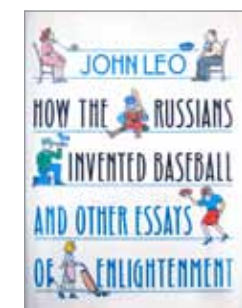
Bill Clinton



Richard Reeves



Ben Bradlee



John Leo

**EXHIBIT WRITERS:**

Alan Alda  
 Shana Alexander  
 Robert Sam Anson  
 Eliot Asinof  
 Ken Auletta  
 David Baer  
 Bob Balaban  
 Stephen Baldwin  
 Alec Baldwin  
 Saul Bellow  
 Elaine Benson  
 Carl Bernstein  
 David Bernstein  
 Yogi Berra  
 Ed Bleier  
 Ben Bradlee  
 Stephen Breyer  
 Dick Cavett  
 Bill Clinton  
 Johnathan Coleman  
 Bill Collage  
 Avery Corman  
 Jerry DellaFemina  
 EL Doctorow  
 Richard Dreyfus  
 Mark Feuerstein  
 Linda Bird Francke  
 Betty Freidan  
 Rod Gilbert  
 Rudy Giuliani  
 Jack Graves  
 Mark Green  
 Adolf Green  
 Zach O'Malley Greenberg  
 Gael Greene  
 Joan Hamburg  
 Skip Hamburg  
 Peter Hamill  
 Joseph Heller  
 Sherrye Henry  
 Abbie Hoffman  
 Edmund Hollander  
 Carl Icahn  
 Clifford Irving  
 John Irving  
 Walter Isaacson  
 Peter Jennings  
 James Jones  
 John Leo  
 Jackie Leo  
 Rick Leventhal  
 Jim Leyritz  
 Ann Liguori  
 Eugene Linden  
 Hugo Lindgren  
 James Lipton  
 Mike Lupica  
 Peter Maas  
 David Margolick  
 Bonnie McEaney  
 Jay McInerney  
 Leslie Morgan Steiner  
 Willie Morris  
 Lawrence O'Donnell  
 Juliet Papa  
 Pelé  
 George Plimpton  
 Dan Rattiner  
 Richard Reeves  
 Ronnette Riley  
 Roger Rosenblatt  
 Barney Rosset  
 Michael Safir  
 Wilfrid Sheed  
 Gail Sheehy  
 Lynn Sherr  
 Neil Simon  
 Paul Simon  
 Lori Singer  
 B. Smith  
 Peter Stone  
 Silvia Tennenbaum  
 Ed Tivnan  
 Kurt Vonnegut  
 Eli Wallach  
 Mark Weinstein  
 Richard Wiese  
 Tom Wolfe  
 Mort Zuckerman

*Reeves Reflection Continued*

pale from too much time spent alone at a keyboard, they were there to win. The “savages” included Saul Bellow, Joe Heller, Pete Hamill, Peter Maas, Willie Morris, Peter Matthiessen, James Jones, Ed Doctorow, Irwin Shaw, Wilfrid Sheed, Avery Corman, John Leo, Carl Bernstein, Walter Isaacson, Mike Lupica, Neil Simon, Kurt Vonnegut, John Irving and Tom Wolfe. The formal dividing of the game into Artists vs. Writers was when the fun began—or perhaps ended. It depends on whom you ask.

In 1976, after years of Artists’ defeats, Leif Hope hired two professional women softball players. Soon enough, ringers became part of the game. Hope recruited former NY Jets Wesley Walker and Marty Lyons, players bigger than Baldwin, Rod Gilbert and even Pelé. Some players were real athletes, actors, singers and politicians, even Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer once called balls and strikes. Spectators were watching the Baldwins, Christopher Reeve and Paul Simon—along with above-the-title celebrities including Lauren Bacall, Woody Allen, Dustin Hoffman, Alan Alda, Matthew Broderick, Roy Scheider, Chevy Chase, Regis Philbin, Tony Randall and Eli Wallach. Among the more than 400 who played in the game to date were other stars: Lori Singer is a regular in both the Artists & Writers Game and the 38-year old Sag Harbor Game and Christie Brinkley who was allowed 6 strikes and still didn’t hit the damn ball often plays. Bob Balaban, Peter Boyle, Lorraine Bracco, Ben Bradlee, James Brady and Josh Charles, good ones, James Brooks, Ed Burns, another good one, Dick Cavett, Eartha Kitt, who sang the National Anthem, Norman Lear, James Lipton, Mark Feuerstien and Dr. Ruth. Ex-convicts were also part of the mix: Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, and Clifford Irving. Hoffman and Irving, by the way, were also pretty good.

The bravest men on the field for the last 30 years are Leif Hope, the Artists’ coach and Ken Auletta, the Writers’ boss. Their problem, year after year, is balancing enough talented players to have a chance of winning, with enough big names to keep the crowd



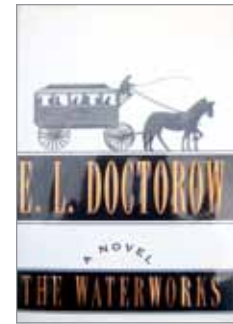
Bill Strong, *UMP*, 2012. Created using equipment from Artists & Writers players. Auctioned for the Artists & Writers charities.



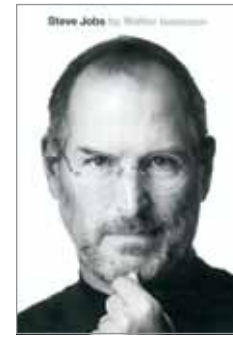
Leif Hope, *Untitled, Date*. Oil on Canvas.



Dan Rizzie, *Opium Poppy*, 2002. Flashe on birch panel.



E.L. Doctorow



Walter Isaacson



Wilfrid Sheed

*Reeves Reflection Continued*

happy—and stroke the fair vanities of all. The first move toward charity was in 1970, when the game raised money for Bob Gwathmey. He had been arrested after he sewed a peace symbol over the field of stars on the American flag. But these are 1st amendment guys, so Rudy Giuliani, Tom Wolfe, John Leo, Jerry Della Femina and other conservatives were welcomed. Even Bill O’Reilly turned up one year, claiming he was a journalist. Hell, even Canadians are allowed in, meaning Peter Jennings and Mort Zuckerman, who denies that he bought *The Atlantic* magazine to get into the Sag Harbor Game. Mort, a pitcher most years, won his MVP in 1987.

The four recipients for the money raised in 2012: The East Hampton Day Care Learning Center, the East End Hospice, the Long Island Phoenix Houses, and The Retreat.

Oh, the score! In what we call “Modern Times” the Writers have won 28 games, the artists 16 and there has been one tie. No one remembers the scores of the other 20 games. Leif Hope likes to emphasize that the Artists have won 11 of the last 23 games.

*Richard Reeves is a best-selling author of three presidential biographies: Kennedy, Nixon, and Reagan. He is also a syndicated columnist and Senior Lecturer at USC.*



Franz Kline, *Untitled*, 1953. Oil on paper mounted on board. Courtesy of Beth Rudin DeWoody.



Eric Ernst, *The Sleeping Geisha*, 2002. Mixed media acrylic on canvas. Anonymous Gift, Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection.

**ARTISTS & WRITERS SOFTBALL GAME**

August 17 at 2PM Herrick Field, East Hampton

**GUILD HALL MUSEUM**

158 Main Street, East Hampton, NY 11937

[GuildHall.org](http://GuildHall.org)

Christina Mossaides Strassfield, Museum Director/

Chief Curator

Michelle Klein, Assistant Curator/Registrar

Ruth Appelhof, Executive Director

Curators: Elena Prohaska Glinn and

Christina Mossaides Strassfield

Deb McEaney, President of Artists & Writers

Board/Content Curator

Design by Walter Bernard and Cayla Merrill

Special thanks to: Leif Hope, Sherrye Henry,

and David Brandman



Commemorative Quilt 2013, created and quilted by Lynne Corwith Fraas with shirts and hats designed by Walter Bernard.

**MUSEUM HOURS:**

From Labor Day through July 3:

Fri & Sat 11am-5pm

and Sun noon-5pm

July 4th through Labor Day: Mon, Wed, Thurs,

Fri, Sat 11am-5pm

and Sun noon-5pm (Closed Tues)



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