

Kaletski Comes "Out of the Box" at Dillon Gallery

by Joan Mahon

Like a breath of fresh air, Alexander Kaletski has filled the Dillon Gallery of Oyster Bay, with imaginative, funny and humorous "cardboard people" made from recycled boxes using painting and collage. An opening reception was held for the artist at the gallery on Saturday evening, May 11th for art lovers and collectors from New York City, Connecticut and the North Shore.

The charismatic Alexander Kaletski, 56, who was a film star in his native Russia, met with guests and exuded his enthusiasm for the show. "Valerie Dillon is my most serious and consistent dealer," said Kaletski, commending Dillon for selling out most of his work from past exhibitions. This is his 17th solo exhibition, his 8th with Dillon Gallery. "It's already clear that people in Oyster Bay like my work. I am very excited," exclaimed Kaletski.

"I want people to have joy out of art - to smile," explained Kaletski. He went on to say, "Most artists think to shock your senses is good. It's not really difficult to shock people with a negative image. It is much harder to surprise people with a positive image - much more difficult."

For his piece entitled, "Captain," 64 x 46 inches, Kaletski described the creative process, "This thing was a cardboard drawer, on one side striped, the other side blue. I played with it. Finally I put one side of the box up, it looked like the sea. The other side I used for his jacket. The buttons are the handles to the drawer. I painted a sailor, but made him a captain by taking a napkin I found on the street as a handkerchief. I never throw anything away - to me it is a treasure. The leftover cardboard is his hat. I try not to force the image, but find the spirit of the box which comes out of the box when I create. I am a Russian who came out of a Russian Communist box and I feel great in America freeing my imaginary people." Kaletski has lived in New York for 27 years.

Guests described Kaletski's art work



Alexander Kaletski

as "fascinating" and the Dillon Gallery as "an art scene with a New York City spin." Gallery owner Valerie Dillon said, "The mainstay of my clients are still in New York, London and other international cities, but we are starting to build a clientele here. The local community realizes that we are a transplanted gallery bringing world class art to Oyster Bay." Dana and Kevin Risen, collectors from NYC said about Kaletski's work, "We own eight or nine of them, two from this show. They are so much fun to look at every day." Prices range from \$2,850 to \$8,300, which includes framing.

"Out of the Box" will be available for viewing at the Dillon Gallery, 15 East Main Street, Oyster Bay through Wednesday, May 22nd, 10 AM to 6 PM daily (closed Mondays) or by special appointment.

The exhibition may also be viewed at www.dillongallery.com. For more information, call (516) 922-1050.