

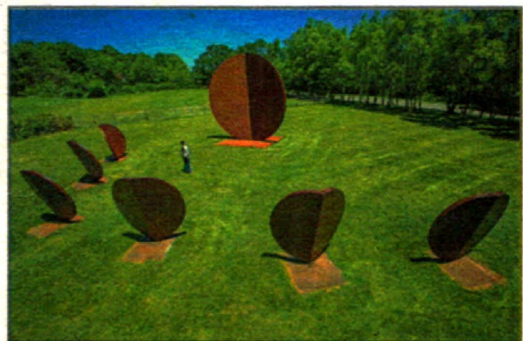
Nova's Ark Project Opens Its Doors to the Public

BY ELLEN DIOGUARDI

“*I want to create sculptures that represent the eternal dreams of humans and that explore the sacred relation between man and cosmos... works of art that lead us to places where we are reminded of our greatness, places where we perceive again our majesty.*” – Mihai Popa, “Nova”

You've probably noticed Nova's Ark even if you didn't realize it—it's the elliptical house that looks like a face that you see when driving on Scuttlehole Road. What many do not realize is that, behind the buildings, there is a magical space. Natural and man-made objects converge, and the effect is at once stirring, powerful and unexpected—and ultimately wondrous.

I can't fully explain why Nova's Ark Project, dotted with large sculptures, horses and the occasional sheep, fills me with such joy and awe—but it does. As my car crests the top of its driveway I feel almost tingly and there's a quick catch in my breath. Then, as the full field comes into view, I get a lump in my throat and a smile spreads across my face. I'm happy, moved and always surprised as I catch that first glimpse of what, other than the ever-present ocean, is the only place on the East End that really feels sacred to me.



Embrace of the Sun

Thierry Van Biesen

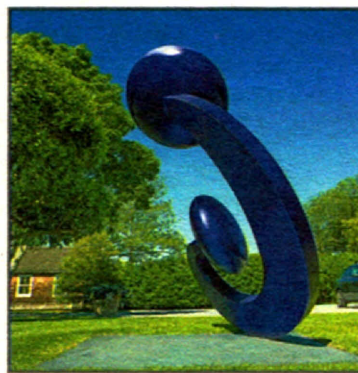
We all have our “secret spots” on the East End. They're not really secret, they just feel like personal discoveries. By shining a light on Nova's Ark, I risk having it become overrun—but I also believe it deserves the attention.

Now is a good time to call some attention to Nova's Ark, as it is beginning to open more regularly to the public. The public is invited to come take Twilight Tours on Thursdays (5 to 8 p.m.) and Afternoon Ambles on Sundays (1 to 4 p.m.). These programs begin on Sunday, August 17, and will run through Thursday, September 25. And there are already plans to do more public programming in 2015.

Art lovers, equestrians and Super Saturday shoppers already know the wonder that is Nova's Art Project. This 95-acre sculpture park, which is loaded with rustic charm, was the brainchild of the talented and inspired “integral artist” Mihai Popa (quoted above), who was professionally known as “Nova.” Nova passed away five years ago, leaving Nova's Ark an intriguing work-in-progress. Nova's legacy and work continue to flourish and inspire, and a number of Nova's apprentices have gone on to become fine artists and teachers. The work at Nova's Ark continues through the efforts

of Nova's devoted partners Tundra Wolf and Luna Shanaman, who oversee initiatives with the help of a dedicated group of Nova's friends, colleagues and art apprentices.

During the summer, Nova's Ark Project becomes a venue for fundraising events (Ovarian Cancer Research Fund's Super Saturday and Empire Pride's Hamptons Tea Dance currently make the sculpture park their event base) and for the past few years Nova's Ark has provided a site for



Blue Aurora

Thierry Van Biesen

ArtHampton. It's also a horse-boarding facility.

As the public use and access to Nova's Ark Project expands and develops, we will all benefit from the vision that Nova began to build here almost 30 years ago. I urge anyone who loves art or nature to take part in the open hours at this “secret spot.” Nova was, in my estimation, a true visionary. 🐾

*Nova's Art Project,
30 Millstone Road, Water Mill.*

More info at thearkproject.com or 631-537-0061.