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## Another opening, another show

[In My Humble Opinion](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

February 3, 2016 —

Those very words reverberated as I checked my calendar last week, noting that another art installation was about to open at the Catskill Art Society (CAS) on Main Street ([www.catskillartsociety.org](http://www.catskillartsociety.org) <sup>[2]</sup>) in Livingston Manor, featuring the work of Daniel Angeli and Candy Spilner. Angeli's name was unknown to me, while Spilner's was familiar, as I've seen a variety of her large, colorful three-dimensional paintings over the last few years. Hearing that Candy ([candyspilner.com](http://candyspilner.com)) had been abroad recently, I wondered whether the new gallery show would reflect that and made a note to ask, since she was scheduled to speak at the opening reception.

Prior to that, I placed a call to film studio manager James Karpowicz ([www.beaverkillstudio.com](http://www.beaverkillstudio.com) <sup>[3]</sup>), who had turned to social media seeking locals interested in participating as extras in a new film ([www.nickandnickythemovie.com](http://www.nickandnickythemovie.com) <sup>[4]</sup>) scheduled to shoot some scenes at The Villa Roma in Callicoon. When asked if I had any interest in appearing on film, I assured Karpowicz that I did not, but suggested that the Wonder Dog was a natural beauty and available. Laughing, James implied that anything was possible and recommended that I swing by the location to check out the scene. Having toured the Parksville, NY facility a few months back, I was already impressed, since head honcho R.J. Baker has created an amazing space in which to create. So it was no surprise to find professional actors, set dressers, makeup artists and a slew of other folks, including local extras excited to be a part of the scene, milling about the nightclub set at the Villa, preparing to make movie magic.

While the crew made some last minute adjustments, I grabbed the opportunity to chat briefly with screenwriter Patrick Askin, and discussed the project, which Askin is also starring in. "I love old movies," Askin enthused, "particularly the screwball comedies that were so prevalent in the 1930s and '40s. First and foremost, I'm an actor. But I was propelled into writing this film because I wanted to see a project like this come to fruition and nobody was writing scripts like this. So I decided to do it myself."

Inspired by the William Powell/Myrna Loy "Thin Man" series of films that ruled the box office during their reign, Askin believes in his project and hopes that "Nick" can achieve the popularity of those films, which capitalized on the chemistry of the two stars, the comic banter, physical comedy and (as I pointed out to director Marcus Slabine) a dog. Since the plot is based on a gay

couple who find themselves embroiled in a mystery, Askin believes that the story is timely. “This movie is not targeted for a gay audience, per se,” he said. “The script goes beyond that and has a universal appeal that we hope will lead into a series of its own. I’m really impressed with Beaverkill Studios, and we’re planning to return for some additional filming in the near future.”

What I’m impressed with is the Upper Delaware River region once again becoming a destination for a new generation of filmmakers discovering the opportunities for shooting their movies in the Catskills. Making my way to the aforementioned art show, I reflected on the projects that Askin and his fellow movie-makers are in the process of creating. I look forward to tracking the progress of our beautiful region serving as inspiration for a new wave of writers and directors seeking to make their mark on the silver screen.

The conversation between artist and observer was already in progress when I arrived at CAS, and as I took my seat, I admired the large scale multi-layered paintings adorning the walls of the gallery. Sure enough, Spilner acknowledged that her travels to Bali serve as inspiration for the color she employs and that the forms of the pieces themselves are drawn from driftwood that she pulls out of the water.

“The Hindu temples we visited are extraordinary,” she shared with the large crowd, “and the exuberance of color is astounding.” Spilner went on to explain her use of gold leaf, how the pieces are constructed and her growing desire to create even larger pieces. “I keep wanting to make them bigger and bigger” she laughed, while assuring the audience that the process has evolved over the years. Since artist Angeli was not on hand to discuss his work, I concentrated on Spilner’s, making a note to inspect the other at a later date. I found myself really drawn to Candy’s work, noting that it was not just “another opening” nor simply “another show,” since I learned a great deal about how she works; the vast amount of talent, determination and creativity that go into creating these one-of-a-kind masterpieces; and the artist herself. Both Spilner’s work and that of David Angeli are on display at CAS through February 28th and (IMHO) well worth a visit.

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