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NY Culture

## Butterflies, Birds and Black Streaks at Hunt Slonem's Chelsea Studio

### L'Oreal Paris Hosts a Cocktail Party to Launch a New Mascara Collection

By Mike Vilensky



Jane Larkworthy

"Champagne?" asked a waiter in the elevator.

We were on our way up to Hunt Slonem's Chelsea studio, where the beauty brand L'Oreal Paris was hosting a cocktail party to launch a new mascara collection that is apparently inspired by butterflies. At least, it is called Voluminous Butterfly Mascara.



Billy B.

Dr. Gervaise Gerstner

To get to the event, guests stepped off the street and into a shaftway decorated with a red carpet and a chaise lounge, leaving the overcast day behind. Tomato canapés and drinks were offered during the quick ride from the ground floor to the third. "Cute," one guest remarked on the way up.

Mr. Slonem is a painter and sculptor known for his images of tropical birds. Those birds are not just present in his work but were also there at his studio—all 80 of them, squawking and stealing the spotlight from the makeup.

"I just came back from Louisiana yesterday," Mr. Slonem said, while mingling with guests. "I have two plantations down there and go back-n-forth."



Maggie Sajak and Lesly Sajak

Kim Paquet, Lisa Petrella and Patricia Acciavatti

The artist said he opened up his spacious studio, filled with Amazonian parrots (in cages) and with massive paintings and sculptures, because his own work often involves butterflies, too.

Alison Brod, the public relations honcho who put together the event, owns one of Mr. Slonem's butterfly paintings, the artist said.

A presentation was held to explain the details of the mascara, and mini-steaks were passed around.

But, again, the parrots captured the room's attention.



Hunt Slonem

Emmy Brooks

How—and why—did the artist amass his collection of winged animals? "Some people like dogs," Mr. Slonem said. "I'm kind of a sucker [for birds]. I am fascinated with the shapes of nature, and I like anything exotica."

The party spilled into the evening; booze, canapés and birds abounded.

"I saw a butterfly in a coffee plantation growing up," Mr. Slonem added. "I never got over the experience."