

ART

Walk Into A Fantastical World Of Dr. Seuss

By **Jane Law**
jlaw@longislandergroup.com

Step into the creative mind of the infamous Dr. Seuss at LaMantia Fine Art Gallery in Northport, where limited edition artworks from "The Art of Dr. Seuss Collection" are on display.

The exhibit, "If I Ran The Zoo," features the artist's "three-dimensional unorthodox taxidermy." It's the first time all 17 sculptures have been presented together in an exhibit dedicated to Dr. Seuss's sculptural heritage.

"This show only goes to 19 galleries around the country," James LaMantia, owner of the gallery, said. "For it to come to Long Island doesn't just speak to the success of the gallery, but it also speaks to the art lovers on Long Island."

This is the fourth year the gallery has collaborated with the Dr. Seuss estate, but LaMantia said it is the first time they are displaying Seuss's taxidermy sculptures.

Known as the "Collection of Unorthodox Taxidermy," the Seussian animals were constructed from real animal beaks, antlers, horns, lion's teeth, rabbit ears, and turtle shells.

Long Islander News photos/Jane Law



James LaMantia, owner of LaMantia Fine Art Gallery in Northport Village, standing in front the Dr. Seuss collection of three-dimensional unorthodox taxidermy, featured in the galleries "If I Ran The Zoo" exhibit.

LaMantia said that while Seuss was living in New York as an ad man, his father, who was a superintendent of zoos in Springfield, Massachusetts, would send him a body part of an animal that met its natural demise.

"Seuss would actually put it in a box under his bed and imagine how it would be reincarnated," LaMantia said. "Then, he would create these characters out of clay and papier-mâché with the actual body part."

For instance, sculptures such as

the "Sea-Going Dilemma Fish" features caribou antlers; the "Mulberry Street Unicorn" features a rhinoceros's horn; the "Goo-Goo-Eyed Tasmanian Wolghast" features rams horns; and the "Turtle-Necked Sea Turtle" features a tortoise shell.

In addition, the exhibition also features classic illustrations from Dr. Seuss's children's books and works from "The Secret Art of Dr. Seuss Collection," an assortment of decades of artwork created for his own enjoyment.

LaMantia said visitors to the gallery have been amazed by the display.

"You cannot walk into this gallery and not smile," LaMantia said. "When you walk in here, it's almost like a little bit of a vacation. People



As students Village Pre-School at Northport moved down the line of Dr. Seuss's collection of unorthodox taxidermy, many pointed in awe at the artwork.

disappear into the artwork."

Each of the estate-authorized limited editions are for sale and have been adapted and reproduced from Dr. Seuss's original drawings, paintings, or sculptures.

The "If I Ran The Zoo" exhibit can be viewed for a limited time and will be on display at 127 Main St. in Northport Village until Nov. 27.



Students from Village Pre-School at Northport visited LaMantia Fine Art Gallery to see the "If I Ran The Zoo" exhibit, that features the artwork of Dr. Seuss.