

East Hampton Star

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Written by Isabel Carmichael

A building in Springs that once housed an auto repair shop and then a plumbing and heating workshop that belonged to the late Richard Talmage has been converted to an art gallery, The Fireplace Project. Mr. Talmage's family decided to honor his memory and his interest in art by renting the building, which had not been used since 1992, to Edsel Williams.

He opened the gallery, which is a few hundred yards down the road from the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center, on Saturday, with a show of paintings by David Ryan, and two sculptures, one by Martin Oppel and one by Wayne White. Almost 300 people turned up throughout the evening.

Mr. Williams left the bigger exhibit space, of 1,200 square feet, almost as it had been in the building's former incarnations: It has a concrete floor, wooden beams, and long, skinny fluorescent tubes on the ceiling. The 800 square-foot attic, which has an aroma of wood, was turned into an office with wall space for more artwork.

Mr. Williams began to meet painters when he was a professional ballet dancer in New York. After moving to South Fork year round in 1994, he worked for Glenn Horowitz Bookseller and the Green Barn gallery in Sagaponack, but always wanted his own place.

David Ryan's misty blue and gray landscapes will be on view through June 27. On July 1 a show of 12 artists, curated by John Connelly of Manhattan, will open; it will run through July 29, after which a group curated by Michael Steinberg will be up. Mr. Williams will curate a show of Pamela Hanson's photographs that will be on view through Aug. 26, and on Sept. 2, he will curate a show of Martin Oppel's paintings and sculpture. Every other year he will curate a show of local artists only.