

San Francisco Chronicle

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2006

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The Serge Sorokko Gallery is showing the paintings of New York artist **Stephen Sumner**, and last week's official opening was a cocktail-dress-and-silk-necktie kind of affair. **Tatiana Sorokko**, wife of the gallery owner, is a contributing editor at Harper's Bazaar, and the painter's wife, **Glenda Bailey**, is editor in chief, so there are several ties between the couples. On Saturday, the Sorokkos hosted a dinner for Sumner and Bailey chez **Gordon and Ann Getty**.

When the talk turned to art openings, I mentioned to Sumner that most art lovers at First Thursday openings are far less spiffed up than the Sorokkos' natty gang, which could have stepped straight from a **Bill Hamilton** cartoon.

"I don't wear a suit that often," he said, thereafter telling a tale to illustrate that although his garb wasn't paint-splattered, his heart was in the right (artist's) place: His first visit to San Francisco was in June 1996, he said, "and the first thing we did was go to City Lights." They bought a book, and **Lawrence Ferlinghetti** was behind the counter, "but we were way too shy to say something" to him. But it was known that Ferlinghetti had pithy phrases printed on City Lights' cash register receipts, so they studied the one that was handed to them. "It said 'smooth and chunky,'" recalled Sumner. "I still have the receipt."