Mark Owen attended The Tibetan Aid Project's annual benefit evening on behalf of Tibet House US on June 1st.

I had the good fortune to attend the benefit dinner for the Tibetan Aid Project at the swanky Arader Gallery on Madison Avenue.

Mr. Arader's son, Walter learned about the good work of the Tibetan Aid Project when he was traveling in India, witnessing thousands of Tibetans come to Bodh Gaya, some of whom had traveled from other regions of India and from Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, and Sikkim, to receive free sacred texts at the World Peace Ceremony. Supporting his son's commitment to the work of the Tibetan Aid Project, his father kindly donated his Madison Avenue brownstone gallery space for this very special evening.

And what an evening it was. It began in the downstairs space, a warm neoclassic room with walls filled with John James Audubon's amazing wildlife prints.

Espumante Esporao Brut 2008, white wine and sparkling water were passed along with a stellar selection of canapes: Wild Mushroom Tartlet with Fontina and Truffle Oil; Pissaladière with Niçoise Olives; Millefeuille of Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheese; Tarte Flambee of Fromage Blanc, Onion and Bacon; Crispy Parmesan Basket with Soft Goat Cheese and Fresh Herbs; Duck Confit with Duck Prosciutto on Toast

Every thing was beautifully presented and delicious, though my favorite was the duck confit wrapped in duck prosciutto, the unctuous confit juxtaposed with the salty chewy prosciutto was amazing.

While nibbling and sipping, guests were also able to view the impressive selection of silent auction items and make a bid.

When it was time for dinner we moved upstairs where tables had been stunningly set.

The food was created by a coterie of celebrated chefs:

The first course, created by Missy Robbins of A Voce, was a lovely Crudo of Wild Salmon, with ramp pesto, grilled pickled ramps, lemon, and extra virgin olive oil – it was probably the most seasonal of all the dishes making the most of local ramps.

House-Cured Bacalao, with 24 hour cooked tomato, coconut curry and lime followed from George Mendes of Aldea. It provided a lively contrast with it's creamy coconut curry and wonderful citrus finish.

The main course was by Gavin Kaysen of Cafe Boulud: a wonderfully French Caper Crusted Lamb Loin, with carrot, pommes dauphine, zucchini and mint jus.

Finishing things off was the highlight of the meal (yes, I have a very large sweet tooth): a brilliant Lime Parfait Avocado puree, with crispy meringue and grapefruit sorbet by Chef Michael Laiskonis of Le Bernardin. Grapefruit and avocado are a classic pairing, but not one you think of for dessert. Yet here they were in perfect conjunction with the disk of sweet lime mousse and finished off with a crispy thin wafer of meringue. I have to admit I had two!

The first three courses where paired beautifully with three excellent wines (in order): Peju Province Sauvignon Blanc 2009, Napa Valley, California; Esporao Reserva White DOC 2009, Portugal; and an amazing Heitz Cellar Cabernet Sauvignon 2005, Napa Valley, California

This was a spectacular dinner created by some of the best chefs in New York who gave their talents so that the Tibetan Aid Project could raise money to continue to do their vital work, primarily providing sacred texts to monks, nuns, monasteries and all Tibetans ensuring that the Tibetan Diaspora is able to continue to grow, learn and thrive. An amazing evening or an amazing cause. Read more about the Tibetan Aid Project here: www.tibetanaidproject.org and I hope next year I will see you at the benefit!