

# Palm Beach Daily News

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## New Shade of Green

### Environmental initiatives take root on the island

By William Kelly  
Daily News Staff Writer

Green is a color long associated with Palm Beach, whether for its lush landscaping or vast wealth.

Now you can paint the town green for another reason: its expanding environmental conscience and growing interest in eco-friendly practices.

Environmental awareness has been on the upswing in recent years. Beach clean-ups regularly spotlight the tons of trash that wash onto the town's shore each year. A Palm Beach Civic Association campaign has been asking businesses and shoppers to end their addiction to single-use plastic bags, which hurt marine life and the environment.

The spiraling whitefly epidemic has forced the town to reconsider its dependence on pesticides and herbicides that are toxic to wildlife, people and pets. Blue-green algae blooms, meanwhile, have illustrated how the fertilizers placed on our lawns can end up blighting our lagoons and waterways while killing fish.

See GREEN, A10



### BUSINESS

Lively events, innovative marketing helped retail sector thrive

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### ARTS

Upgrades to cultural institutions sparked a renaissance; plus the critics' top picks

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### SOCIETY

See who made the list with the return of Shannon Donnelly's SHINY Awards

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Debuting Our Newest Gem: *PolkaDot*

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# Arts

## Setting their 'sites' on the future

### Cultural groups flourish with round of improvements

By Jan Sjostrom  
Daily News Arts Editor

The 2018-19 season was a milestone for many cultural organizations with projects and plans that

will shape their futures for years to come. The Norton Museum led the way with its bold \$100 million expansion, a project far more ambitious than any the institution had embarked on before. The Society of the Four Arts, Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens and the Kravis Center also focused

on improvements designed to keep pace with changing times and community needs. Here's a rundown.

#### Norton Museum of Art

Elliot Bostwick Davis, the Norton Museum's new director, has been basking in paeans to the museum's

Foster + Partners-designed expansion she's heard since its unveiling in February from everyone from young families to museum board chairmen.

Attendance has soared, totaling 67,000 in February and March, more than double the 30,000 for February and March

2015, the last full year the museum was open before construction.

But where does the institution go from here?

"We must keep our programming at a high level," Davis said. "We've raised the bar here."

See ARTS, B8

# CHOICE PROGRAMS

Our critics name their favorite shows and exhibitions from the 2018-19 season

Vintage, one-of-a-kind jewelry, an array of exhibitions celebrating the possibilities opened up by the Norton Museum's expansion, Mozart's Don Giovanni re-imagined through a film noir lens and theater that gripped the heart and mind - the 2018-19 season offered many peak cultural experiences. • Our critics make a case for their favorites.



Stage director Kristine McIntyre conceived her black-and-white film noir-inspired version of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Don Giovanni for the Lyric Opera of Kansas City's 2015-16 season. [PHOTO BY CORY WEAVER FOR LYRIC OPERA OF KANSAS CITY]

#### PALM BEACH OPERA: MOZART'S DON GIOVANNI | FEB. 22, KRAVIS CENTER

A new take on the greatest opera ever written: Director Kristine McIntyre rethought the work as a 1940s Hollywood film noir. It was pretty presumptuous, but it worked surprisingly well. Think George Raft or Humphrey Bogart in the title part, Ida Lupino or Lauren Bacall among the women and you'll get the idea.

McIntyre and conductor David Stern trimmed out about 30 minutes of the score, including two solo arias and the entire moralizing epilogue, resulting in a fast-moving, cinematic show that had particular relevance for the way women are still being treated in the 21st century. Things haven't changed as much as we'd like to think.

Depicting the last day in the life of history's legendary womanizer, McIntyre emphasized the rape of Donna Anna (Caitlin Lynch), the abandonment of the unstable Donna Elvira (Danielle Pastin) and the almost-but-not-quite willing seduction of the gullible Zerlina (Danielle MacMillan) by a gangster-type macho man who got his retribution here by means of a pistol shot, rather than the traditional descent to Hell. Andrei Bondarenko was not the most charismatic seducer, but Joshua Bloom almost stole the show as the Don's sidekick Leporello, and the quality of the singing was excellent right down the roster.

Robert Croan

#### X MARKS THE SPOT | NOV. 16-FEB. 2, CULTURAL COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY



CHNK's Everything Looks Better in a Frame featured a small removable painting embedded in the mural. He was one of 16 artists who participated in X Marks the Spot at the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. [COURTESY OF THE CULTURAL COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY]

Beyond a doubt this was the most adventuresome show the cultural council has mounted in the seven years it has operated a gallery at its Lake Worth headquarters.

Temporary murals sprawled across the walls. Smaller works ranged from PhD's homage to the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes to CHNK's removable painting embedded in a mural that wrapped a smiling figure and an exploding house in a blue ribbon. Wild as the work was, the 16 contributors are also serious artists, a point the exhibition set out to make.

Jan Sjostrom



Dani Marcus, left, portrayed Rifkele and Kathleen Wise played Manke in Palm Beach Dramaworks' production of Indecent. [PHOTO BY SAMANTHA MIGHDOLL]

#### INDECENT | OCT. 19-NOV. 11, PALM BEACH DRAMAWORKS

Paula Vogel's play recounting the story of Yiddish writer Sholem Asch's 1907 play God of Vengeance unfolds on a bare stage with minimal props. Dramaworks'

production spun its magic with lighting, a trio of on-stage musicians and performances that were both real and ethereal. The play follows God of Vengeance's parallel

journeys as an inspiration to Jews in a Polish ghetto during the Holocaust and an offense to censors in the United States.

Jan Sjostrom

SEE MORE CRITICS' PICKS, B2, B4 AND B5

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Visitors streamed in the new main entrance Feb. 9 during the grand re-opening of the Norton Museum's Foster + Partners-designed expansion. [PHOTO BY JACEK PHOTO]

## ARTS

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The Norton's \$100 million overhaul should make that easier. The project boosted exhibition space to 50,000 square feet (a 35 percent increase), established coherent connections between galleries, added a sculpture colonnade and garden, created inviting community spaces, bathed the museum in natural light and established a dramatic new entrance on Dixie Highway framed by an 80-year-old banyan tree and Claes Oldenburg's and Coosje van Bruggen's 19-foot "Typewriter Eraser."

The project has been covered by publications ranging from London's The Times, which named it one of the top 10 buildings of 2019, to the Vancouver Sun, which called it a "stunning" transformation.

"I think people will take us more seriously as a repository for their collections and we can make a great case with our space as a place to host future projects," Davis said.

Two exhibitions focusing on Latin American art are planned for next season to lure the region's burgeoning Hispanic population.

The transformation also has made the museum more inviting, with spaces such as the Great Hall, with its comfortable seating and coffee bar, which can be accessed without paying admission.

"We're giving Starbucks a run for their money," photography curator Tim Wride said. "It's because it's a wonderful place to hang."

### The Society of the Four Arts

The Gioconda and Joseph King Library, long a fixture of Palm Beach communal life, reopened in December after a top-to-bottom renovation that brought it into the 21st century while retaining its vintage warmth.

The \$13.1 million project spearheaded by architect Thomas Kirchhoff restored the 1938 Maurice Fatio-designed building, replaced old additions with a more serviceable addition and made the facility compliant with the American With Disabilities Act.

The entrance resumed the central position it had in Fatio's design, opening up a vista to the gardens. On the west loggia,

Albert Herter's murals of allegorical figures representing drama, literature, music and visual art, which had deteriorated too much to be restored, were re-created by Zenon Toczek.

Original pecky cypress was rehoned and replaced in the first-floor reading room and exposed in second-floor ceiling beams that had been covered by a drop ceiling.

"Everyone walks in and says 'What did you do? There's so much more light in here,'" said Rachel Schipper, director of libraries. "It's a happy thought."

The library gained a more up-to-date program space with the second-floor Mary Hulitar Programming Center, which seats up to 80 and features a flat-screen TV, new sound system, and chairs and tables on casters that can be reconfigured as needed.

That's enabled the library to accommodate guests more comfortably and offer classes such as its free series on digital library services.

The library now welcomes more than 6,500 people a month, about twice the number of visitors it had before the expansion, Schipper said.

### Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens

Strides this year include building an outdoor classroom, adding a waterfall, upgrading the Reflection and Meditation pools, revitalizing the rare palm and plant collection and making pathways more wheelchair, walker and stroller-friendly.

Two of founder Ann Norton's nine monumental sculptures were restored, bringing the total conserved during the past two seasons to six.

Thanks to a grant from the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, the Art & Healthy Hearts in the Gardens program served 750 students from Title One schools, triple the number reached last season.

Annual attendance jumped to 26,500, nearly a 77 percent increase over last season, and memberships have soared.

The late Ann Norton was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame, and the gardens joined the Historic Artists' Homes and Studios network. Both should boost the gardens' visibility while the network will introduce ideas that could increase revenues and donations, said Frances

Fisher, chairwoman of the sculpture gardens board.

The organization also participated in a year-long capital campaign strategies training led by the DeVos Institute of Arts Management and underwritten by the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County.

Next comes a strategic plan, which the board plans to complete by October.

"The strategic plan will provide a basis for capital projects by articulating a vision and needs for the future," Fisher said.

That will pave the way for yet more improvements, such as adding indoor program space and restoring Norton's house, studio and archives, she said.

### Kravis Center for the Performing Arts

If all goes according to plan by this time next year the Kravis Center will have a new valet parking garage, a bigger lobby in Dreyfoos Hall, a pedestrian-friendly plaza opening onto Okeechobee Boulevard, and faster access to the existing garage's fourth and fifth floors, courtesy of a new entrance ramp from Okeechobee Boulevard.

That's on top of technology upgrades to improve security, customer communications and traffic flow.

Construction got under way in April.

"This is a very fast track schedule for a project like this," Chief Executive Officer Judy Mitchell said. Especially considering that work had to stop during matinees so as not to disturb audiences.

Dreyfoos Hall and the Okeechobee Boulevard entrance will be closed from May 20 to Nov. 4 to accommodate construction.

The center has raised about \$18.5 million of its \$50 million goal, \$40 million of which is earmarked for the project and the rest set aside for future improvements.

Meanwhile, the Kravis has had a very good season. It's already hit its \$6 million annual fundraising target with two months to go in the fiscal year.

"On Your Feet! The Emilio & Gioia Estefan Broadway Musical" smashed box-office records for a Broadway series show. All eight performances were sold out. Overall, the center's ticket sales were "really good," Mitchell said.

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179 Bradley Place  
Palm Beach, Florida 33480

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