Classic cars power up VIP reception at Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens

By Jan Stojstrom
Daily News Staff Writer

M ore than 1,000 people made their way to the Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens on Nov. 16 to see the nearly 20 classic cars on display during the third edition of the gardens’ annual Sculpture in Motion – The Art of Pre and Post-War Automobiles. But as night fell and the crowd departed, each small group of VIP guests gathered for the Vintage Cars & Classic Cocktails reception. They admired the two-acre garden, inspected the cars and talked to the owners, including many Palm Beach collectors.

In addition to hors d’oeuvres and other refreshments, fine bourbon and chocolate trifles were served by Board chairwoman Frances Fisher, whose husband, Jeffrey, is an avid car collector, welcomed the guests and introduced Grand Marshall Donald Osborne, the classic car star of CNBC Primetime’s ‘Lev Lane’s Getaway.”

Osborne, who trained as an opera singer, surprised the guests with a performance of Cesar Antonio Baker’s ‘La Scala’ and Bruckner Symphony. Then came the moment everyone was waiting for. John Bursig, honorary chairman and lead curator of the event, announced the award-winning cars. They were: Most Artistic, the 1933 Bugatti Type 51 Grand Prix; Most Elegant, the 1912 Stevens-Douglas Model H Liliom Dual Cowl Phaeton; and Young Commissario, the 1929 Fiat 1200 Vignale “Wonderful.” The 1975 Citroen H Panel Truck and the 1957 Mercedes Benz 100 SL Roadster tied for People’s Choice.

Among those admiring the cars were Garden and Nancy Tork, Helene and Matthew Lorentzen, Tiffany and Simon Isaacs, Christina and Benjamin MacFarland, Martin and Audrey Gross, Sam and Lisa Lehrman, Christine and Bill Ayward, and David and Jillian Gilmour.

“Love this season’s offerings; we look forward to what guests want and working hard to provide that,” Bursig said. “But everything is the result of listening to what guests want and working hard to provide that this season.”

Ha’i House plans to open daily for dinner, including on Christmas Day, when it will serve a four-course menu for $65 ($25 for children). The restaurant also plans to feature a daily 4 to 6 p.m. happy hour with half-price dim sum and small plates, plus two-for-one cocktails. For more information, call the restaurant at 561-437-4424 or visit www.haihousepb.com.

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DISH
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Management, which marinated and leaves space at The Espagne, said in an e-mail. “We have been included in the development and tastings and believe resi-
dents and visitors will love this season’s offer-
ings (at Hai House).”

Ha’i House debuted last December in the space formerly occupied by Costa Palm Beach, a Mediterranean restaur-
tant that closed in April after 15 months in business. Early on, Hai Ha House responded to an initially small crowd, including diners hungry for Chinese-American cuisine, which is native to one of the four pan-Asian restaurants on the island.

For one reservation, Hai House launched a takeout/delivery busi-
ness and an adjacent Chinese-American bistro concept. Those are not scheduled to reopen Thursday.

In the spring, the restaurant’s first chef, James Strine, formerly of Grato in West Palm Beach and Café Boulud in Palm Beach, departed for another opportu-
nity. Hai House then partnered with South Florida Asian-cuisine chef Sunny Tang and announced a pivot to pan-Asian cuisine. That idea was tabled later; Tang no longer is affiliated with Hai House.

The restaurant closed in August after putting its summer hours to week-
ends only. Its status is uncertain.

Ha’i House’s new menu includes soups, such as wonton noodle drop; dim sum, rang-
ting from spring rolls to dumplings and pot stick-
ers; salads, including one crispy duck; and small plates, “classic” entrées and specialty dishes. Among the small plates: char siu spareribs and salt-and-pepper squid. Entrees include tea-smoked crispy snapper.

“The menu has clas-
ses and also specialty items, where we can take some liberties,” Bursig said, “but everything is the result of listening to what guests want and working hard to provide that this season.”

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