

Artists with a pedigree

Sculpture by members of Phipps, Guest families coming to Ann Norton

BY KELLY MERRITT

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“I saw the angel in the marble and I carved until I set him free.”

So said Michelangelo.

The Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens is a place where those who appreciate this most physical of the visual arts can meander and contemplate.

And from March 9 through May 15, visitors will be able to relish in sculptures by a distinguished lineage of artists.

An exhibition called “Art in the Family Tree” will feature pieces by members of the Phipps and Guest families. Contributing artists include Susie Phipps Cochran, Rafe Cochran, Hubert Phipps, Michael Phipps and Diana Guest. The installation will honor the family’s many ties to Palm Beach. Sculptures, illustrations, drawings and paintings are among the items on view. In nearly a century of history of investment and philanthropy in the region, the families’ involvement dates back to the early 20th century.

“The Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens is pleased to showcase the breadth of artistic talent from four generations of the Phipps family,” said Karen Steele, interim executive director at the museum and gardens. “The beautiful pieces will show the family members’ distinctive styles, while their passion and talent as artists remain a common thread.”

Attendees also can learn from Gallery Talks by art historian and curator Marie Scripture at 11 a.m. Wednesdays and noon Sundays. The talks will include a tour, information about the art and an account of the artists’ backgrounds. Each artist has a rich and stories history.

British-born sculptor Diana Guest was raised in England, the United States and Kenya, which explains the lushness of her works in granite, marble, alabaster and bronze that conjure images of animals and plants. Long Island native Susan Phipps Cochran sculpts in bronze, creating giant ants, earwigs, scratching dogs and African stick fighters. Virginia native Hubert Phipps had dual citizenship in America and Britain — he sprinted from a career as a professional automobile race driver right into the art studio.

“That is what fascinates me about abstract art, the mystery of it — I yearn to discover new worlds, otherworldly types that are lurking in the deeper recesses of the mind,” he has said. “I glimpse these worlds from time to time; it may come in the middle of the night, a vision, unidentifiable yet lovely shapes appear and I don’t have a clue what they are. I feel compelled to flesh them out and capture them on paper, on canvas or as a three-dimensional object.” ■




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in the know

“Art in the Family Tree”

- >> **When:** Exhibit open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. from March 9 through May 15
- >> **Where:** Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens, 2051 S. Flagler Drive, West Palm Beach.
- >> **Cost:** \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors (age 65 and older), \$5 for children ages 5 and older. Free admission for children under five and Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens members.
- >> **Info:** 561-832-5328; ansg.org.