

# An Evening of Music and Art in the Gardens



**W**ithin the lush, tropical setting of Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens (ANSG), more than 200 guests gathered for the annual *An Evening of Music and Art in the Gardens*. During the 12th annual **Gardens Conservancy** event, longtime Gardens supporters **Julie and Peter Cummings** were honored with the *2026 Ann Norton Award for Philanthropy*, presented annually to individuals who advance the mission of ANSG and embrace Ann Norton's vision for her legacy to our community.

Co-Chairs for the evening included Gardens Conservancy Co-Founder and Board Vice Chair **Frances Fisher** and her husband **Jeff**, and Gardens Conservancy Co-Founder and longtime Trustee **Susan Wright** and her husband **Bob**. Honorary Chairs were **The Honorable Nancy G. Brinker**, **James "Chip" DiPaula**, **Laurie Silvers** and **Mitchell Rubenstein**, and **Lori and Bruce Gendelman**.

"As we look forward to presenting the *Ann Norton Award for Philanthropy* to Julie and Peter Cummings, whom many of you know are my parents, this evening holds a special place in my heart," said **Caroline Rafferty**, Board Chair for Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens. "Their remarkable compassion, leadership and dedication to empowering others have profoundly shaped my life. Their philanthropy and service are driven by a genuine commitment to creating a better and more just world. It has been a privilege to witness and learn from them, and we are grateful for the journey we continue to share in service at Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens."

Mrs. Fisher and Mrs. Wright addressed guests underscoring the philanthropic leadership that earned the Cummings the evening's honor. Their pivotal investment through *The Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation Arts and Culture Fund* at the **Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties** established the *Art, Music, and Healthy Hearts Program* — now central to ANSG's education efforts — doubling capacity for Title 1 students and strengthening partnerships, including with **Palm Health Foundation**, to support **Indian Ridge School**. Their support has also advanced professional development for staff, ensuring long-term sustainability, and played a key role in the *Protecting a Legacy Campaign*, restoring the **Artist Studio Garden and Terrace**.

**FIRST ROW:** Peter and Julie Cummings; Frances Fisher and Caroline Rafferty; **SECOND ROW:** Susan Wright and Chip DiPaula; Christina and Ben Macfarland; **THIRD ROW:** Laurie Silvers and Mitchell Rubenstein; Gina Sabeau and Sara Griffen; **FOURTH ROW:** Pamela Cohen and Nick Korniloff; Sarah and Tim Benitz. PHOTOS: CAPEHART



The evening featured a sunset cabaret performance by Miami-based singer/songwriter **Leesa Richards**, whose soulful blend of rock and R&B filled the two-acre garden. Guests also met 2026 Artist in Residence **Kevin Barrett** and viewed his exhibition, *Organic Abstraction: Contemporary Sculpture*, alongside **Sylvia Schuster's Pathos** in the Norton House Gallery.

"Peter and I are deeply moved to be standing here tonight in a place that means so much to our family and to so many in this community," said Mrs. Cummings. "This garden is an extraordinary place. Not only because of its beauty, but because of the intention behind it. Ann Norton believed that art and nature together could do something that neither can do alone. They have the power to inspire, to heal and connect us to one another into something larger than ourselves. The fact that her vision is not only preserved but expanding is a testament to all of you here tonight. When Peter and I think of the Gardens, we think of Frances Fisher, who gave 11 years to this place with a level of commitment that is both rare and deeply inspiring. What she has built here is not just a restored garden, she has literally and figurately planted the seeds and laid the foundation that will hold this institution for years to come."

The Host Committee included Chairmen **Christina and Ben Macfarland**, **Christine and Bill Aylward**, **Sarah and Tim Benitz**, **Danita DeHaney**, **Ken Endelson**, **Margie and Roy Furman**, **Whitney and Jonathan Cameron-Hayes**, **Christine Koehn**, **Jeff Koons**, **Pamela Cohen and Nick Korniloff**, **Cheryl Krongard**, **Karyn Lamb**, **Sara and Jim McCann**, **Ana and Patrick McNamara**, **Gabrielle and Luke McGee**, **Rick Pollock**, **Caroline and Nick Rafferty**, **Alissandra Aronow and JR Rakolta**, **The Honorable John Rakolta, Jr. and Terry Rakolta**, **Sally and Bill Soter** and **David Miller and Ray Wakefield**.

**CIBC Private Wealth** was the Presenting Sponsor for the event.

The Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens is a nonprofit foundation established in 1977 by resident sculptor **Ann Weaver Norton (1905-1982)**. A two-acre urban sanctuary and internationally recognized arboretum, the compound comprises the historic Norton House and Artist Studio, Art and Nature Conservatory, exhibition galleries, monumental sculptures, Pollinator Garden, historic Orchid House Plaza and tropical gardens of more than 250 species of rare palms and cypresses.

For more information on ANSG or to become a Gardens Conservancy member, visit [ansg.org](http://ansg.org) or call 561.832.5328.

**FIRST ROW:** Steven Green and Cindy Sulzberger; Karyn Lamb and Rick Pollock; **SECOND ROW:** Matt and Helene Lorentzen; Kevin Barrett and Jane Manus; **THIRD ROW:** Patty Winterton, Valerie Balint and Wanda Corn; Donald Osborne, Jill Shibles and Frank Garofalo; **FOURTH ROW:** Peter and Julie Cummings with Caroline and Nick Rafferty; Harrison, Frances and Jeff Fisher. PHOTOS: CAPEHART

