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THE EDUCATION ISSUE

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*Five passionate educators
paving new paths to learning*

INSIDER

By Skye Sherman



NICKOLAS SARGENT, SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

Restored to GLORY

After 19 months of careful restoration work, the **Gioconda and Joseph King Library** has been recast with a nod to the past and a focus on the future. The library, designed by prominent Palm Beach architect Maurice Fatio to house The Society of the Four Arts, first opened its doors in 1938. Additions in 1956 and 1979 did not make efficient use of the building's limited footprint for the purposes of today and tomorrow, and thus were demolished and reconceived during the recent reconstruction.

The King Library makeover brought an overall update to the building, with aims such as increasing the library's usable space; addressing

accessibility concerns; installing proper climate control, especially for the rare-book room; and reinstating the intended character of the main reading room. The challenge of making these necessary improvements while honoring the original construction was assigned to Jupiter-based Kirchhoff & Associates Architects.

"We are recognized for our historic preservation work in the Town of Palm Beach," says principal Thomas Kirchhoff. "We have won the Ballinger Award numerous times and have worked on other Fatio designs."

Turn the page to learn more about the new King Library.





NICKOLAS SARGENT, SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

THE RESTORED KING LIBRARY FEATURES A NEW ENTRANCE THAT OPENS INTO THE MAIN READING ROOM (LEFT). IT ALSO HOUSES A SECOND-FLOOR DISCUSSION FORUM (ABOVE).

Restored to *GLORY* (Continued)

One of the most notable changes to the King Library is that patrons again enter the main reading room through the center of the loggia, as was originally intended. From this grand entry point, the view is drawn through the reading room to the Philip Hulitar Sculpture Garden beyond, which will naturally continue to evolve and flourish over time. “The reading room embodies the spirit of the Four Arts,” Kirchhoff adds. “It maintains the character of the original space while meeting the needs of the library.”

The murals adorning the walls of the entry

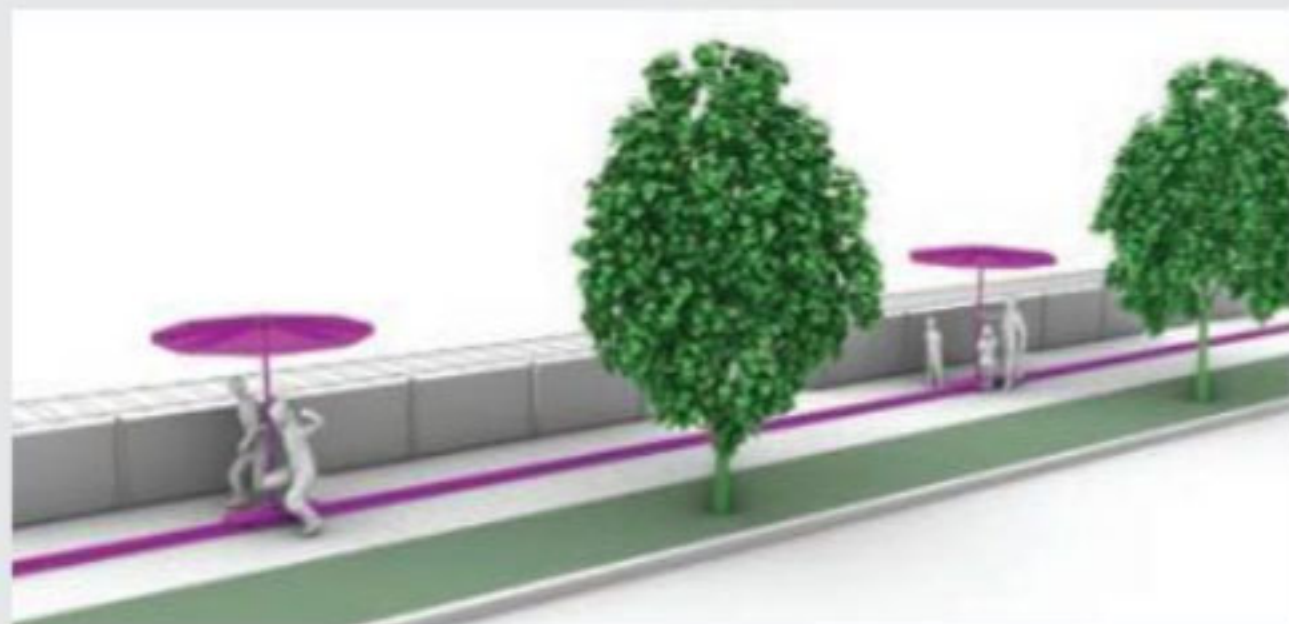
loggia—painted by Albert Herter in 1939 and restored in 1987 by Barney Lamar—were also refreshed in accordance with extensive documentation of the originals, this time using new materials and technology that will augment their longevity. The murals depict the four arts: art, music, literature, and drama.

Wherever possible, the original furnishings were preserved, further repackaging the library’s history to benefit the future. Reclaimed cypress removed from the building was repurposed to manufacture the circulation desk, ceiling, and bookcases around

the perimeter of the reading room. The three chandeliers illuminating the reading room and circulation desk are refurbished originals, and existing furniture was refinished and reused when practical.

While the second-floor discussion forum remains in the same location, it was optimized for present-day use. In the initial floor plans, the area was intended for artistic performances; today, it is reserved for literary events and library programming, and now reflects that evolution. The original exposed heavy timbers are again revealed, and the raised performance area was lowered. “It honors that space by allowing them to use [it] in a very functional way,” explains Betsy Rossin, associate architect.

Glowing with restored luster, the King Library’s successful revitalization—the direct result of community support, as funds for the project were raised privately from residents who enjoy the building and want to keep the tradition alive for succeeding generations—will remain a source of pride for Palm Beach. (fourarts.org; kirchhoffarchitects.com)



BOTH PRACTICAL AND ARTISTIC, THE SHADE PARADE INSTALLATION WILL PREMIERE THIS FALL.

a series of oversized gliding parasols that pedestrians can tote with them as they stroll along the west side of Quadrille. This functional art is intended as a creative improvement to an uninteresting but oft-trodden path in the city. (wpb.org)

NEW & NOW

UNDER MY UMBRELLA

Another collaboration with Daily tous les jours—the futuristic design studio responsible for blessing Clematis Street with a musical swing set in 2016—will soon enliven a ho-hum stretch of Quadrille Boulevard in West Palm Beach. **Shade Parade**, anticipated to debut in early fall, is envisioned as an interactive and moveable structure that will both enhance the connectivity of downtown and offer a break from the sun. Concept renderings depict

RENDERING COURTESY OF DAILY TOUS LES JOURS (TLJ)