

Hadwen: Sculpture through Oct. 9



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*— James Russell
NHA executive director*

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For some time the NHA trustees have been trying to figure out the best way to exhibit their properties. Showcasing the shuttered Hadwen House was at the top of that list. For the last 12 years it has been largely closed to the public.

The Greek Revival-style mansion was built in 1846 at the height of the whaling era by Nantucketer Frederick Brown Coleman for whaling merchant and silver retailer William Hadwen. He designed his house to boast his wealth and prominence to the rest of the island. Acquired by the NHA in 1964, it is one of the finest examples of Greek Revival architecture on-island and the only one open to the public.

While the sculpture exhibit was originally slated for the property surrounding the NHA's Oldest House on Sunset Hill, curators quickly turned their eyes to the 19th century Victorian-style garden behind the Hadwen



Photo by Peter Sutters

“The Kiss,” a sculpture in bronze by island artist John Evans, is on display in the gardens of the Hadwen House at the corner of Main and Pleasant streets.

House. The garden seemed like a no-brainer since the show's overall objective is to encourage visitors to examine how art and nature can work in harmony regardless of process, material or subject, Russell said.

“The juxtaposition of new on old, of hard metal on soft wood, of American contemporary set on Greek Revival, forces people to ask questions about their own artistic tastes and preferences. Art is subjective, and for me, the garden is activated in new and interesting ways as a result. I guarantee you that you'll never look at a rose bed in the same way again,” he said.

The show at the Hadwen House is yet another example of public art islanders have recently been exposed to. In recent years the roundabout

on Sparks Avenue has been used as a rotating exhibition space. To many, like island sculptor Sherry, public art is important. While there is no shortage of art galleries on-island, public art is an enriching experience, he said.

“Art is good to be exposed to, it's creative expression. The more we expose people to it, the more it creates an open dialogue. Some of my favorite moments are hearing kids talk to their folks about what they think the piece means.”

The NHA is planning to host an artist's forum open to the public at the Hadwen House garden in early August, to discuss the work on display as well as the artists' process.

The Hadwen House is open to the public daily, May 25-Dec. 31, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.



Photo by Nicole Harnishfeger

MJ Dickson's contribution to “Juxtapositions,” installed under the rose garden at the Hadwen House, is titled **“Like Sea Glass: A Handful of Light, Unity.”**



Photo by Nicole Harnishfeger

The Nantucket Historical Association's “Juxtapositions,” a contemporary outdoor sculpture exhibition in partnership with Artists Association Nantucket is open through October at the Hadwen House Garden at 96 Main St., above. It features work by local artists Billy Sherry, John Evans, the late David Hostetler, MJ Levy Dickson, New York-based Kevin Barrett and Karen Petersen from Vermont.