

The Arts and Cultural Alliance (ACA) of Newport County will feature Ronald Lee Fleming's Nymphaeum vision in a special two-part 'Arts Behind the Scenes.' The first part will focus on the buildup of the Nymphaeum, as well as the Library, indoor theater, outdoor pool, and Cascade of Years of Living Dangerously (CYLD). The second part will feature the completed project later in the fall. The Nymphaeum is an homage to the original Greco-Roman environments consecrated to the nymphs, typically built on natural springs. Nymphs were mythological spirits of nature imagined as beautiful maidens inhabiting rivers, woods, and grottos.

Mr. Fleming conceived the library more than a decade ago to house his six thousand books on architecture, gardens, and the history of cities and towns. As planning progressed he added the Nymphaeum to demonstrate the evolution of classical architecture in modern times. Mr. Fleming says, "classical architecture and its influence should not be considered dead and unchanging. The classical language should be seen as a dynamic part of contemporary design. I wanted to bring that influence forward in this special place. The classical influence is not just in the Nymphaeum, but also captured in the Library, the small theater space, the Cascade, and the emeralds pool. The project team included the noted Providence architect JP Couture, and the builder Glenn Parker Construction Co as well as twenty-six artists and artisans. Fleming notes: "that construction phase is now

more than three years and we expect completion in the late summer of 2018. It has been a personal Vietnam, escalating cost and some unexpected outcomes.”

Mr. Fleming is the founder and president of the Townscape Institute, a not-for-profit public interest planning organization. Locally he is known for his beautiful Bellevue House and Gardens which are frequently offered for not-for-profit arts organizations to support performance and charity events. He has received multiple awards and a Newport “citizen of the year” proclamation. He is a recognized authority on the role of art in creating vibrant, livable places. He hopes to add luster to Newport’s worldwide reputation as a showcase for art and architecture. As Mr. Fleming says, “I’m trying to practice what I preach by creating my own place of family memory and cultural identity”. One of his most noticeable local support projects is the Newport Daffodil Days Festival, where he has been instrumental in sponsoring the planting of the daffodils throughout the city. Working with his friend and colleague John Hirschboeck, they are nearing the culmination this fall in the planting of a millionth bulb (a daffodillion), with stunning impacts on the spring landscape in Newport. Mr. Fleming is also planning to establish a foundation to enable the continued use of the Library, nearby guest houses, and the Nymphaeum with special access to the public, as well as APA supported conferences of historic towns and planners in residence.

Mr. Fleming has agreed to host an Arts Behind the Scenes event to discuss his vision and show the building details in progress from a unique perspective. While under construction, he will reveal the design and constraints associated with this project. There will be a second Arts Behind the Scenes event in the fall to feature and further discuss upon the completion of the library and nymphaeum as an operational entity.

The ACA Arts Behind the Scenes event at the Nymphaeum will be on Sunday, July 15th from 1-2pm. It will be by reservation only with tickets (\$15 for ACA members; \$20 for non-members) available at the ACA Website (<http://www.newportarts.org/events/arts-behind-the-scenes/>), attendance is limited. All proceeds provided will enable the ACA to further its artistic community support operations.

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