

Date: March 16, 2016

To: Members, Cultural Affairs Council

From: Michael Spring, Director

Subject: Facilities Updates: African Heritage Cultural Arts Center

Joseph Caleb Auditorium Miami-Dade County Auditorium

South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center

As a result of Mayor Gimenez' re-organization of County government and beginning in 2012, the Department of Cultural Affairs has been responsible for managing the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, Joseph Caleb Auditorium, and Miami-Dade County Auditorium. The Department managed the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center through design and construction and has programmed and operated the Center since its opening in 2011.

The management and operation of these cultural facilities supports the overall mission of the Department, specifically to:

- 1) Strengthen and advance the work of our local non-profit cultural organizations and artists; and
- 2) Increase audience participation in the arts.

Assessment of the Facilities Capital Needs

Since taking on the responsibility of managing the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, Joseph Caleb Auditorium, and Miami-Dade County Auditorium, the Department has focused on assessing the capital needs of each facility and launching new mission-driven programming initiatives. These three facilities need significant work to repair and/or replace basic functional building systems, upgrade theater and sound and communications equipment, and modernize its architecture, including building signage, facades and audience and performer accommodations. To this end, the Department worked with the Internal Services Department to implement a competitive process to select a team of architects, engineers (A/E) and specialty consultants to conduct a comprehensive assessment of these items and to prioritize and cost the recommendations to improve each facility. While this work is expected to take some time to accomplish, modest upgrades and routine maintenance are being performed with the goal of improving the staff, user, and patron experience.

The competitive selection process concluded in the hiring of Rodriguez and Quiroga Architects Chartered, who have now completed their findings for the first phase of the work including the assessment of each facility and an order of magnitude cost estimate for the improvements. The Department has provided comments and has prioritized the list of work. Life safety issues and major building systems such as HVAC, roofing, and electrical systems are being prioritized. The scope of work is being further refined to align with current facility needs, budget limitations, and potential grant opportunities. The A/E team has made a submittal for the design development phase and the Department has provided comments. Further refinements of the design and alignment with the available funds is necessary before beginning the construction documents phase.

It should be noted that each facility has Building Better Communities General Obligation Bond (BBC-GOB) funds available to begin this work, but costs for the planned improvements exceed the BBC-GOB funds currently allocated. Improvements will be phased while additional funding is sought. The Department has been awarded a \$500,000 grant for the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center for the FY 15-16 grant cycle of the

State Cultural Facilities Grant Program, and has submitted an application for \$500,000 for Miami-Dade County Auditorium for the FY 16-17 grant cycle which has been approved by the legislature.

African Heritage Cultural Arts Center: \$1.0 million + \$500,000 State Cultural Facilities Grant

Joseph Caleb Auditorium: \$1.4 million (balance remaining)

Miami-Dade County Auditorium:
 \$4.0 million

African Heritage Cultural Arts Center

The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center (AHCAC) complex includes a black box theater, a music building with a concert hall, piano lab and several practice rooms, a dance studio that is accessible to individuals with disabilities, an art gallery, several studio spaces, a print shop and classrooms. It has a distinguished history of providing instruction in the arts in all artistic disciplines to youth through after school, school break academies and summer school programs. Its work continues to develop the next generation of artists and arts supporters. In addition, the Center serves as an incubator for supporting and developing the work of African-American arts groups and artists through its black-box theater, rehearsal spaces and art gallery. The Center also serves as a welcoming place to the surrounding community, hosting evening classes and civic meetings.

The following is a summary of activity at the AHCAC:

	FY 2015-2016 to-date	January	<u>Febuary</u>
Total number of students registered:	153	6	16
Number of arts production rentals:	75	17	11
Number of community rentals:	90	21	16
Number of arts groups using the Center	er: 80	16	17
Number of civic meetings:	96	22	20
Number of tours and outreach:	26	4	9

Program highlights for January and February included:

- The Center continues to provide the fundamentals of the various arts disciplines and foster the growth of students' abilities through the Afterschool Arts Program and the Saturday Arts Workshop.
- In January, the Center partnered with Dr. Nancy Thomas, president of the Oscar Thomas Foundation. In honor of her late husband, the renowned muralist and prominent painter Oscar Thomas, three inner city schools were selected to showcase student talent in the visual arts, literary arts and the performing arts. Students from Miami Booker T. Washington Senior High School, Miami Jackson Senior High, and Miami Northwestern Senior High School presented art reflecting the mission of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All participants received a \$25 stipend while each of the first, second, and third place winners in each category was awarded \$300, \$200, or \$100, respectively. At a program attended by Miami-Dade School Board Member Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, the students were provided with entertainment, a lecture, and a question-and-answer session with international and AHCAC alumni "hoofer" (tap dancer) Marshall Davis Jr.
- Robert Battle, the artistic director of Alvin Ailey and alumni of the AHCAC, visited the Center for an interview with WLRN. The interviewer, Nadege Green, also happens to be a former student of the Center. The discussion focused on Mr. Battle's life journey, beginning with his introduction to dance at the Center.
- For Black History month, the AHCAC partnered with Social Change and Miami Children's Initiative
 to present Actor Taye Diggs and illustrator Shane W. Evens promoting their books, Mixed Me!
 and Chocolate Me! Mr. Diggs read both stories to a crowd of approximately 70 parents and their

- children. Copies of the books were provided to all the children in attendance. Taye Diggs is featured in movies such as *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, *Best Man*, *The Best Man Holiday*, *Chicago* and *Brown Sugar*, among others.
- Cheryl Mizell joined the AHCAC staff as the marketing and community relations manager. A voiceover artist for national commercials, Cheryl has been a well-known voice on Cox Radio. Additionally, she's been involved with children from her early teens in support of her mother's private school. Cheryl has over 12,000 social media followers on her sites as well as a stellar reputation in South Florida.
- On Friday, January 29th, the Center partnered with Michelle Murray in an open dialogue entitled Black Arts Talks.

Sankofa Celebrations in honor of Black History Month:

- **Purvis Young Exhibition**: The exhibition was entitled a *Bike Ride with Purvis Young* featuring the work of the internationally renowned artist as well as portraits of Young by three noted South Florida artists: Ramiro Collazo More, Rodney Jackson and Joe Chirichigno. Other components of the exhibition included renderings by students from the Center's After School Arts Program, completed in the style of the late artist, as well as a documentary on his views and life experiences. Mr. Young's brother was in attendance, speaking about his brother's life as an urban artist and confirmed that his birth name was "Pervis," instead of the commonly used "Purvis."
- Simply Simone: A musical revue based on the turbulent life and rich legacy of Nina Simone, an American musical icon who was a singer, pianist, arranger, civil rights activist, and more. Her music career spanned nearly 50 years and she worked in a broad range of musical styles. The score to Simply Simone crosses genres from gospel to blues to Broadway to Rock and Roll, and features such definitive Simone classics as "I Love You Porgy," "The Look of Love," "My Baby Just Cares for Me," "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black," and "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood." The AHCAC presented this production in celebration of both Black History Month and National Women's Month to great reviews and has been recommended for a Carbonell nomination. The captivating performance featured Sarah Gracel-Anderson, Toddra Brunson-Soloman, Deana Butler-Rahming and AHCAC alumnus, Ja'Nia Harden. AHCAC members and alumni involved in the production include Teddy Harrell (director), Isis Roberts (musical director), John Hardin (band member and director), Eric Quinn (lighting designer), James Mungins, II (sound engineer), Lucius King (former staff member; contributed to the construction of the set and the set-up of the room). The fabulous set was designed and constructed by Michael Miles.

Upcoming Events

- April 2 Spring Jazz Festival throughout the AHCAC grounds
- April 7 May 19 Oscar Thomas Art Exhibition at the gallery

Maintenance Issues

- Training on the security system's capabilities and features is being provided to the Center's staff.
- AHCAC staff periodically provides input on the planned improvements to the Center.

For more information on the Center's events and offerings, please visit the Center's website at www.ahcacmiami.org

Joseph Caleb Auditorium

The Joseph Caleb Auditorium is a 962-seat theater that has been the gathering place in the Liberty City community for the performing arts for more than 36 years. The Auditorium has featured concerts, community forums, movie screenings and productions by community arts organizations throughout the year. The parking lot serving the Auditorium and the adjoining Caleb Center office complex is closed for construction of a new parking garage. The public art funds generated by the parking garage project will be used to have an artist design a prominent and attractive "connection" between the new garage and the Auditorium.

With the loss of parking resulting from the ongoing construction of the parking garage for the Caleb Center, the Department has launched a plan that converts the Caleb Auditorium into a venue for school field trip performances. This has the benefits of: 1) providing more students with opportunities to experience the arts; 2) offering opportunities for local arts organizations to develop and present programs designed for children; and 3) introducing arts organizations and artists to the Caleb Auditorium so that when the parking situation is resolved, they can use the theater for evening performances. Ultimately, the goal for the Joseph Caleb Auditorium is to continue the field trip program and also to program the theater proactively with prominent arts groups and artists to re-establish its reputation for artistic excellence, diversity and community outreach.

Awards

The Joseph Caleb Auditorium received the 2015 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for its program titled "Caleb Cultural Passport Program." The award received was for Best of Category in Arts and Historic Preservation, which honors innovative programs that enhance services for the residents.

Joseph Caleb Auditorium attendance for fiscal year 2015-2016, to date, is 20,562.

Performances for the months of January and February:

- January 11, 2016 Dance Performance by Miami City Ballet
- January 12, 2016 Chicken Dance presented by Arts Power Touring Company
- January 22, 2016 Moon Mouse presented by Kids Entertainment Light Wire Theatre
- January 28, 2016 Seussical presented by Theatreworks USA
- February 19, 2016 Miami Dade College Live Arts at Miami-Dade County Auditorium

Miami-Dade County Auditorium

Miami-Dade County Auditorium (MDCA) offers three dynamic presentation styles:

- 1. A 2,372-seat theatre that can host major dance, theatre and music performances:
- 2. A "Mid-Stage" theatre which can accommodate up to 450 patrons is well-suited for small concerts, dance and theatre presentations, giving mid-sized organizations an ideal setting to showcase their work; and
- A 250-seat "On.Stage Black Box" theatre in which both the audience and performers share the stage of the Auditorium which is adapted into an innovative studio theatre for more intimate and often, cutting edge shows.

Since the theatre opened its doors in 1951, it has served as the center for showcasing the diversity of our cultural life and most recently, as a hub for celebrating the Hispanic arts community.

The Department has launched a program to establish co-presenting partnerships with non-profit cultural organizations that can present performances on the main stage, mid-stage and in the black box configuration and begin to establish an artistic reputation for the theatre which will encourage more use

and presentations of higher artistic quality. Partner organizations include Fundarte, the Rhythm Foundation, Tigertail, the Performing Arts Series presented by Miami Dade College and Teatro Avante. This program also has the benefit of helping to develop Hispanic audiences for some of our community's premiere cultural organizations. In addition, the Auditorium has restructured its staff and policies in order to attract more uses of the facility.

The following is a summary of activity at MDCA:

	FY 2015-2016	January/February
Number of Events:	66	23
Attendance:	44,695	8,685

Program highlights and rentals for January and February:

- MDCA hosted a discussion with Nina Ozlu, Executive Director of Americans for the Arts Action Fund, about advancing the role of the arts and education in the 2016 Presidential election. The event was organized by the Department.
- MDCA collaborated for the first time with Centro Cultural Español de Miami (CCE Miami) to co-present Nadie te Conoce Como Yo by Spanish playwright Roger Peña Curulla. The play was featured during two weekends and the sold-out performances were well received by critics and audiences.
- The Miami Marlins once again held the final audition for 2016 Energy Team at MDCA.
- MDCA hosted this year's State of the County address by Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez.
- In celebration of Valentine's Day, Spanish legend Paloma San Basilio held a sold-out performance with a 50 piece orchestra.
- MDCA and Miami Dade College Live presented Camille A. Brown and dancers for two performances.
 On Friday, the program was presented to children from the Miami-Dade Public School's Cultural Program. On Saturday, Camille had a nearly sold-out performance on the Mid-Stage Theatre configuration.
- Peruvian singer Gian Marco completed the North American portion of his #LIBRE tour at MDCA before starting the European portion of the tour.

For more information on MDCA's events and offerings, please visit the website at: www.MiamiDadeCountyAuditorium.org

South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center

The South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center (SMDCAC) is a multidisciplinary arts center designed by Arquitectonica International, Inc. to showcase the performing arts. The Center's 961-seat state-of-the-art Theater Building includes a fly tower, orchestra pit, front of house spaces (box office, lobby, restrooms, concessions, etc.), back of house support spaces (dressing rooms, storage and work areas, administrative offices, etc.) and a multi-purpose rehearsal space. The separate Activities Building houses an informal performance space, and smaller multi-purpose spaces for lectures, classes, or community gatherings. The Center's two buildings are joined by an outdoor promenade leading to a gently-sloping lawn for outdoor concerts and festivals along the Black Creek Canal.

Through Miami-Dade County's Art in Public Places Program, the Center has major public art works created by Miami artist Robert Chambers. An innovative light piece illuminates the translucent inner lobby wall with changing light designs created by computer-programmed LED fixtures. In addition, the lobby features two marble sculptures also created by Robert Chambers.

The following is a summary of activity at SMDCAC:

	FY 2015-2016 to date	January/February 2016
SMDCAC Presents:	103	37
Number of rentals:	63	32
Attendance:	28,912	7,912

Events presented by the Center for the month of January/February included:

- Jump Start Your Resolution (January 5-9)
- Burlesque Magnifique (January 8 and 9)
- John Pizzarelli Quartet (January 16)
- Arlo Guthrie (January 17)
- Comedy Zone (January 22)
- Sammy Figueroa Latin Jazz Band (January 23)
- Black Creek Nights, It's a Girl Thing (January 29)
- Lindsey Blair Quartet (February 5)
- Three Little Birds (February 6)
 - Three Little Birds Outreach Event at Miami-Dade County Libraries
- International Guitar Night (February 6)
- Che Malambo (February 6)
 - o Che Malambo Community Dance Class (February 6)
- Just the Funny (February 12)
- Step Afrika (February 13)
 - School Field Trip Show with Step Afrika (February 12)
 - Step Afrika Community Dance Class (February 13)
- Storm Large (February 13)
- Seraphic Fire, Mozart Requiem (February 14)
- Indie Flicks, Almost There (February 19)
- The Kinsey Sicks (February 19)
- The Big Picture featuring David Krakauer (February 20)
 - David Krakauer lecture demonstration at The Palace Senior Living (February 20)
- Black Creek Nights, Carnaval (February 26)
- Theater Etiquette day with Zelda Glazer School 6-12 (February 24)
- Ladysmith Black Mambazo (February 26)
 - o School Field Trip Show with Ladysmith Black Mambazo (February 26)
- Lisa Fischer and Grand Baton (February 27)
- Family Day with Florida Grand Opera (February 27)

Rentals for the month of January/February included:

- Relativity School auditions (January 10)
- Florida Department of Health Employee Conference (January 22)
- Dade Association of Dance Educators (February 17)
- Gospelfest presented by Miami Dade County Black Affairs Advisory Board (February 21)
- New Theatre presents Franz and Albert and Footprints (January 31-February 27)

March Highlights include:

- Savion Glover and Jack Dejohnette presented by Culture Shock and African Heritage Cultural Arts Center (March 5)
- Ron Feingold with opening act James Yon, The Comedy Zone (March 5)

- Broadway's Next H!T Musical (March 11)
- Globalfest on the Road, Creole Carnival (March 12)
- Saturday Night Fever (March 19)
- A Night of Big Band Music with the Frost School of Music (March 18)
- Fiesta Mexico Americana featuring Los Lobos and Ballet Folklorico Mexicano including a preshow Fiesta en la Plaza hosted by the Mexican American Council (March 20)

South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center has been awarded a Southern Circuit Grant from South Arts for the continuation of its independent film program.

For the season that began on October 1, 2015, the Center's volunteer program has saved the County \$30,055 to date.

For a complete listing of upcoming shows and events, please visit the Center's website, www.smdcac.org.





Simply Simone-The Music of Nina Simone

An electric new revue based on the turbulent life and rich legacy of this American music icon, opening on Friday February 19, 2016. Singer, Pianist, Arranger and Civil Rights Activist, Nina Simone was all of these things, and more. Simone's music career spanned nearly 50 years and worked in a broad range of musical styles. The score to Simply Simone crosses genres from gospel to blues to Broadway to rock and roll, and features such definitive Simone classics as "I Love You Porgy", "The Look of Love", "My Baby Just Cares for Me", "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black" and "Don't Let Me Be Misunder-

Tickets can be purchased through Ticketmaster or the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center box office . Group rates and discounts are available. Please call 305-638-6771 for more details.

SHOW DATES & TIMES

ALL PERFORMANCES WILL BE STAGED AT: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AFRICAN HERITAGE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER 6361 NW 22ND AVENUE, MIAMI, FL 33342 FOUR WEEKS (WEEKENDS ONLY)

PREVIEW SHOWS FEBRUARY 17 - 18, 2016 AT 7:30PM (\$15 ADMISSION)

OPENING NIGHT FRI. FEB. 19, 2016 AT 7:30PM (\$20 ADMISSION) RECEPTION NIGHT SAT, FEB. 20, 2016 AT 7:30 PM (\$30 ADMISSION) MATINEE SUN, FEB. 21, 2016 AT 4:00 PM (\$20 ADMISSION)

FRIDAY FEB. 26, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SATURDAY FEB. 27, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SUNDAY FEB. 28, 2016 (\$20 GENERAL ADMISSION)

FRIDAY MAR. 4, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SATURDAY MAR. 5, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SUNDAY MAR. 6, 2016 AT 4:00 PM (\$20 GENERAL ADMISSION)

FRIDAY MAR. 11, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SATURDAY MAR. 12, 2016 AT 7:30 PM SUNDAY MAR. 13, AT 4:00 PM (\$20 GENERAL ADMISSION)

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PERFORMING ARTS MARCH 2, 2016 9:06 AM

Review: 'Simply Simone' at the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center

HIGHLIGHTS

Impressive revue features the music of Nina Simone

Four women portray the singer at different parts of her life

Runs through March 13





BY CHRISTINE DOLEN

ArtburstMiami.com

Singer, pianist and activist Nina Simone was a prodigiously talented, complex woman whose peripatetic life journey led her from her small North Carolina hometown to self-imposed exile in Barbados, Liberia and finally France.

Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon — she took her stage name from "Niña," a boyfriend's nickname for her, and the first name of actress Simone Signoret — the singer seemed to live many lives before her 2003 death in France at 70 from cancer.

The multiple aspects of Simone are powerfully captured in Simply Simone: The Music of Nina Simone, an impressive, intense and sometimes thrilling biographical revue running through March 13 at Miami's African Heritage Cultural Arts Center. Created by David Grapes II, Robert Neblett and Vince di Mura, the show contains 32 numbers sung by four women portraying Simone at different ages, though that concept is fluid enough to allow the performers to sing solos as well as songs involving all of them. And what sheer vocal beauty this quartet brings to the stage of the center's Wendell Narcisse Performing Arts Theater.

Nina 1, Sarah Gracel-Anderson, is the young North Carolina piano prodigy whose Methodist minister mother supported her ambitions to study at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, which crushingly rejected her.

Nina 2, Ja'Nia Harden, is the woman who took a stage name to keep her family from learning she had taken up performing "the devil's music" in bars and clubs.

Nina 3, Toddra Brunson-Soloman, is the fierce activist whose scorching *Mississippi Goddam*, a sort of musical Black Lives Matter protest of its day, is a roar of pain at the murders of civil rights leader Medgar Evers and the four young girls killed in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church.

Nina 4, Deana Butler-Rahming, is the mature artist, a singer with a honeyed soulfulness still battling many of the emotional demons that drove her into exile.

Directed by Theodore "Teddy" Harrell Jr., with vocal direction and choreography by Isis Roberts and musical direction by pianist John Harden II (who provides live accompaniment along with guitarist Delano West, bassist Ryan Reid and drummer Jason Kent), the production is simple but visually striking. Set designer Michael Miles has created upstage "curtains" out of symbolic chains, and lighting designer Eric Quinn projects images of Simone and others onto them. Costumers Jacqueline Hodge and Karla Cohen dress the Ninas in era-appropriate styles for the first act, gowns and elegant African head wraps for the second.

What makes Simply Simone so worth seeking out, though, are the cast's haunting, moving renditions of songs associated with Simone. You'll hear her first hit, the aching I Loves You Porgy from Porgy and Bess. The uplifting anthem, To Be Young, Gifted and Black, suggested by the title of her friend Lorraine Hansberry's unfinished play, is there. The mournful, disturbing Strange Fruit, sung most famously by Billie Holiday, is part of the show. Butler-Rahming sings a gorgeous version of Jacques Brel's Ne Me Quitte Pas. You'll hear Sinner Man, The Look of Love, Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood, Here Comes the Sun - and so many more.

Simply Simone is enlightening entertainment that serves as a reminder of several things: a powerful artist's travails and triumphs; the distressingly enduring nature of racial conflict; and the ability of a theater company with relatively modest means to create work that impresses and matters.

ArtburstMiami.com is a nonprofit source of theater, dance, music, film and performing arts news.

IF YOU GO

What: 'Simply Simone: The Music of Nina Simone' by David Grapes and Robert Neblett.

Where: African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, 6161 NW 22nd Ave., Miami.

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 4 p.m. Sunday, through March 13.

Information: 305-638-6771, hartheo@miamidade.gov or www.ahcacmiami.org.







MORE PERFORMING ARTS



Miami City Ballet
(January 11)



Chicken Dance presented by Arts Power Touring Company
(January 12)



Moon Mouse presented by Kids Entertainment Light Wire Theatre
(January 22)



Seussical presented by Theatreworks USA (January 28)



Nadie Te Conoce Como Yo by Roger Peña Curulla presented in collaboration with Centro Cultural Español de Miami (Jan.14-17 and 22-23)



Mud by Maria Irene Fornes and directed by Nilo Cruz (part of the Open Theatre Reading Series)
(February 10)



Camille A. Brown and Dancers

Black Girl: Linguistic Play

(February 19-20)



Gian Marco closed the North American leg of his #LIBRE tour at MDCA (February 21)





Students and teachers from schools across Miami-Dade County enjoyed dancing and singing with world renowned Grammy winning artists Ladysmith Black Mambazo