

Memorandum



Date: April 20, 2016

To: Members, Cultural Affairs Council

From: Michael Spring, Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Spring", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

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.

- 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 + \$500,000 State Cultural Facilities Grant

The Department has actively pursued and continues to apply for additional funding from the State Cultural Facilities Grant Program through the following applications:

- FY 15-16 \$500,000 for the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center (awarded);
- FY 16-17 \$500,000 for Miami-Dade County Auditorium (awarded);
- FY 17-18 \$500,000 for Caleb Auditorium (application to be submitted).

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	March
Total number of students registered:	177	24
Number of arts production rentals:	86	11
Number of community rentals:	105	15
Number of arts groups using the Center:	94	14
Number of civic meetings:	128	32
Number of tours and outreach:	34	5

Program highlights for March included:

- The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center’s After School Arts Program held its 3rd session student showcase. Each showcase serves as a means for the students to develop their confidence and to demonstrate to the parents and to the community their competency in the various arts.
- The Spring Arts Workshop was held during the week-long public school recess period. This multi-arts workshop engaged students in six art classes per day. Students aged five to ten years old were given a prescribed course of classes to introduce and/or re-enforce their artistic talent. Students eleven years of age and over selected their classes based on their individual interest or skill level. This year’s theme for the Spring Arts Workshop was “Legends,” focusing on noted artistic styles and individuals who were at the forefront of various innovations in the arts.
- The exhibition featuring the work of Purvis “Pervis” Young continued through the month of March as did the noted production of *Simply Simone*. During the play’s intermission, audiences were invited to view the Purvis Young exhibition. *Simply Simone* received outstanding reviews and was distinguished as the pick of the week as well as being recommended for Carbonell Award nominations. This production may be nominated in several categories: performances by Sarah Grace Anderson, Ja’Nia Harden, Toddra Brunson and Deana Butler Rahming; musical direction by Isis Roberts and John Harden; direction by Teddy Harold; creative set design by Michael Miles; and lighting design and execution by Eric Quinn. *Simply Simone* was a wonderful production aptly timed to celebrate black history month (February) and national women’s history month (March).
- Maestro Powell, community relations director of Cox Media Corporation of Miami, visited the Center and committed to supporting the Center’s programs by providing public service

announcements for *Simply Simone*, the Spring Arts Workshop, and other initiatives. As part of the new collaboration, the Center was visited by radio personalities from the nationally syndicated program “The Ricky Smiley Show” featured on Cox’s Radio 99 Jamz station, and staff members were guests on the Hot 105 James T morning/noon radio program.

- The Center partnered with Culture Shock Miami at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center for a show featuring Savion Glover and jazz drummer Jack DeJohnette. The show also featured AHCAC alumnus Marshall Davis Jr.
- The Sankofa Spring Jazz Fest was held on April 2, 2016 throughout the Center’s grounds and featured Jazz pianist Bobby Floyd, Mr. John Harden, the band Jenny Love Music, Jazz saxophonist Melton R. Mustafa, and alumni Courtney Mickens and Ja’Nia Harden.

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.

Joseph Caleb Auditorium attendance for fiscal year 2015-2016, to date, is 26,455.

Performances for the month of March:

- March 4, 2016 – Arts Power Touring Company presented *Are You My Mother?*
- March 29, 2016 – Miami Dade College Live Arts presented *Companhia Urbana de Dança*

Upcoming summer shows:

- June 14, 2016 – Fantasy Theatre Factory’s *Whales, Magic & Cheese...Oh My!*
- June 24, 2016 – Fantasy Theatre Factory’s *Fantasy Stew*
- July 12, 2016 – Page Turner Adventure’s *Steam Trunk Circus*
- July 26, 2016 – Page Turner Adventure’s *Mixed Up Fairy Tale*

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
3. 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	March
Number of Events:	82	16
Attendance:	50,405	5,710

Program highlights and rentals for March:

- MDCA collaborated with dancer/choreographer Pioneer Winter to present the world premiere of *HOST* at the On.Stage Black Box.
- MDCA and Arca Images presented *Farhad: 3 Inner Monologues Made Public* written by Nilo Cruz. The pieces were directed by Nilo Cruz and Andy Señor and received a rave review in the *Miami Herald*.
- The Overtown Youth Center presented an encore performance of their production of *Lion King*.
- MDCA and Fundarte collaborated in presenting *Companhia Urbana de Danca* from Brazil. In addition to the public performance, the group also performed for Miami-Dade County Public School students and offered a Master Class.

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:

	<u>FY 2015-2016 to date</u>	<u>March</u>
SMDCAC Presents:	115	12
Number of rentals:	67	4
Attendance:	32,345	3,433

Events presented by the Center for the month of March included:

- Ron Feingold with opening act James Yon, The Comedy Zone (March 5)
- Black Creek Nights (March 11)
- Broadway's Next H!T Musical (March 11)
 - School Show (March 11)
- Globalfest on the Road, Creole Carnival (March 12)
 - Lecture with Emeline Michel (March 12)
- A Night of Big Band Music with the Frost School of Music (March 18)
- Indie Flicks: The Trails of Muhammad Ali (March 18)
- Saturday Night Fever (March 19)
 - Perrine Cutler Bay Rotary Club pre-show event (March 19)
- Fiesta Mexico Americana featuring Los Lobos and Ballet Folklorico Mexicano, including a pre-show *Fiesta en la Plaza* hosted by the Mexican American Council (March 20)
 - Ballet Folklorico lecture demonstration (March 20)
- SMDCAC Dance Classes:
 - Beginning Ballet – ages 5 to 9 years, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:00 PM;
 - Intermediate Ballet – Ages 10 to 14 years, Thursdays at 5:00 PM and Saturdays at 12:30 PM;
 - Jazz/Contemporary Dance – ages 8 to 14 years, Tuesdays at 5:00 PM and Saturdays at 1:30 PM
- Pridelines Meeting – every Tuesday

Rentals for the month of March included:

- Savion Glover and Jack Dejohnette presented by *Culture Shock Miami* and the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center (March 5)
 - Master Dance Class with Savion Glover (March 5)
- Actors' Playhouse *Young Talent Big Dreams* (March 13)
- Carnival of the Animals presented by Miami Youth Ballet (March 15-17)
- The Three Tenors That Can't Sing (March 25)

April highlights include:

- Semi Toned presented by Culture Shock Miami (April 1)
- Cecile McLorin Salvant (April 2)
- Broadway: The Big Band Years (April 9)
- Seraphic Fire: *The German Requiem* (April 10)
- *Roof* presented by New Theatre (April 9-16)
- Roy Assaf Trio (April 15)
- BODYTRAFFIC (April 16)
- The Comedy Zone featuring Kier (April 29)
- Sultans of String (April 30)

The Center had a marketing booth at the Deering Seafood Festival (March 20) and at the Zoo Safari event (March 26-27).

Artists from Globalfest Creole Carnival participated in radio interviews on WSRF, WDNA and WZAB.

For the season that began on October 1, 2015, the Center's volunteer program has saved the County \$36,425 to date.

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

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.

Cost: \$20.

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



MORE PERFORMING ARTS



Spring Camp Showcase (March 24)



Arts Power Touring Company's *Are You My Mother?* (March 4)



Companhia Urbana de Dança (March 29)



Farhad: 3 Inner Monologues Made Public by Nilo Cruz (March 17-20)



Overtown Youth Center's production of *The Lion King* (March 23)



Companhia Urbana de Dança's *Nego* (March 26)



Fiesta en La Plaza (March 20) before Fiesta Mexico Americana concert with Los Lobos and Ballet Folklórico Mexicano



Nedege Green of WLRN with artist Emeline Michel during a pre performance talk (March 12)