

**MINUTES OF THE
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

November 14, 2018

A meeting of the Miami-Dade County Cultural Affairs Council was held at the 6th Floor Conference Room, Stephen P. Clark Government Center, and 111 N.W. 1st Street, Miami, Florida.

Members Present

Xavier Cortada, Chairman
Mireille Chancy-Gonzalez
Sandra Curbelo
Adolfo Henriques
Janá Sigars-Malina
Rosa Sugrañes
Monty Trainer
Justin Trieger

Members Not Present

Alejandro Aguirre
Mitchell Bierman
Denise Gerson
Susana Ibargüen
Phyllis Simpkins

Others Present:

Larry Fields
Shirley Richardson
Patricia Williams

Staff

Michael Spring, Director
Marialaura Leslie, Deputy Director
Kelly Allocco
Francine Andersen
Roxana Barba
Stefania Barigelli
Christina Beauvoir
Sue Camp
Tania Centeno
Mary-Margaret Dale
Marshall Davis
Eric Fliss
Liliana Hernandez-Constenla

Staff (continued)

Regla Lee
Cheryl Mizell
Gilda Mooney
Alex Peraza
Adriana Perez
Dana Pezoldt
Katherine Revell
Patricia Romeu
Amanda Sanfilippo
Lisa Thompson
Graham Winick

Chairman Xavier Cortada called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Larry Fields, Executive Artistic Director at the Fantasy Theatre Factory presented an update on the activity at the Sandrell Rivers Theatre. Mr. Fields reported that the partnership between the Fantasy Theatre Factory and The M Ensemble is working well. Attendance is growing and there is cross-pollination with The M Ensemble performances. They had 207 productions and events with 12,478 persons attending in the 2017-18 season, reflecting 28% growth. New programs were launched, including Summer Play Reading Series, Summer Camp and Film Series.

Mr. Spring added that Miami-Dade County owns and built the Sandrell Rivers Theater with Building Better Communities bond funds. It is comprised of a Black Box 200-seat theater, with activity, rehearsal and administrative spaces. Miami-Dade County has a long-term operating agreement with both companies, Fantasy Theatre Factory and The M Ensemble. He noted they operate and program the theater on the Department's behalf. It is the eastern-most anchor for an arts district corridor along NW 62 Street / Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

Ms. Patricia Williams and Ms. Shirley Richardson from The M Ensemble presented the company's activities. As the longest-running African American professional theater company in the Southeastern US, they have reached new milestones, including sweeping at the 42nd Annual Carbonell Awards with their acclaimed 2016-2017 productions: *Kings of Harlem*, *Flyin' West* and *Brothers of the Dust*. For the 2017-2018 season they presented the fun *Sassy Mamas* and attracted many first-time theater goers.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Requests for Excused Absences for November 14, 2018

Requests for excused absences for Alejandro Aguirre, Mitchell Bierman, Denise Gerson, Susana Ibarguen and Phyllis Simpkins were approved unanimously. (Motion by Mr. Henriques; seconded by Ms. Sagrañes)

Approval of October 17, 2018 Minutes

The minutes of the October 17, 2018 Council meeting were approved unanimously. (Motion by Ms. Sigars-Malina; seconded by Mr. Trainer)

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Update on FY 2018-2019 County Budget

Mr. Michael Spring reported that the Department is actively implementing the budget which was approved at the final budget hearing on September 20, 2018. The Department is receiving positive feedback from cultural groups and organizations on the increase to the grants budget and their grant awards. The grants budget increased by about \$2 million for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Given the fact that the State arts budget was diminished, the Miami-Dade County grant increase is particularly meaningful and helpful this year.

Update on the FY 2018-2019 State Arts Budget

Mr. Spring reported that the Division of Cultural Affairs at the state level has completed its review of grant applications and recommended 664 grant applications for a total of \$61 million. Miami-Dade County submitted 140 of those applications for almost \$10 million in the form of grant recommendations. The Florida Cultural Alliance, the state advocacy group, will request that the Governor and state legislature fully fund the \$61 million of recommendations. It is important to note that the incoming Speaker of the House, Jose Oliva, is from Miami-Dade County.

Culture Shock Miami - Discount Tickets for Youth Program

Ms. Christina Beauvoir reported that the program is partnering with the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center (SMDCAC) to sponsor Dance Theatre of Harlem in January 2019, *Legally Blonde* in March 2019 and *RENT* in April 2019. The program partnered with the All Kids Included initiative and the Miami-Dade County Auditorium to present the *A New Definition of Dance featuring Ill-Abilities*, an international B-Boy dance crew. The Culture Shock Student Council was actively involved and participated in Miami Book Fair 2018. Students moderated an author panel and were active at the booth promoting the program. Ms. Beauvoir added that staff member Mary-Margaret Dale represented the program and Department at the South Arts' Performing Arts Exchange Conference in Orlando to identify and initiate discussions with artist representatives for the 2019-2020 season. In October 2018, a total of 1,249 tickets were sold.

Department Facilities Updates

Coconut Grove Playhouse

Ms. Spring reported the funded County, FIU and State-approved plan to bring theater back to Coconut Grove continues to move forward. He reported that upon the Department's second appearance on November 7, 2018 before the City of Miami's Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board (PZAB), the project's zoning application for the Coconut Grove Playhouse was approved. The PZAB voted to approve the item with an 8-3 supermajority of the members present, as required by code. As previously presented during the September 5, 2018 PZAB meeting, City staff strongly recommended the approval of the straightforward zoning exceptions requested in the application as being well within the parameters of Miami 21 code requirements. Mr. Spring reported the project has now completed three of the four required regulatory steps from the City of Miami. The last step is appearing before the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB) and the team is currently working with City of Miami staff to schedule the hearing.

Mr. Spring reported that Miami-Dade County is awaiting the circuit court decision regarding the appeal of the City of Miami's Commission actions, which overturned its own City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB). The appeal was heard October 25, 2018. Miami-Dade County also strongly disagrees with the State's letter and contention that the Coconut Grove Playhouse project is in violation of its lease regarding the timetable for the project. The project will be completed before the lease's deadline of 2022, which is the only date required by the lease. The County team will respond before the end of 2018.

Construction documents for the project are almost completed, and the team should be ready to issue a bid package for the project in early 2019. Historic elements will be incorporated elegantly, including the double proscenium arch from the existing Playhouse.

Westchester Cultural Arts Center

Mr. Spring reported the project went out for construction bid and is currently under the Miami-Dade County Cone of Silence. He noted that the Center, which will be located at the Bird Road entrance to Tropical Park, has received several bids which are under review.

Art in Public Places

Ms. Amanda Sanfilippo thanked Chairman Cortada for offering opening remarks and setting the tone at the Creative Time Summit. It was a great gathering of artists and activists from around the world, with 150 scholarships benefiting Miami-Dade artists. Ms. Sanfilippo reported that the Art in Public Places division is opening the monumental artwork by Argentine artist Tomas Saraceno. The commission, located at the new Royal Caribbean Cruise Line terminal at PortMiami, is Saraceno's first major public art installation in the US. It is an extension of the artist's widely-known "Cloud" series. The team will offer an inaugural public tour during Art Basel.

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

- Mr. Spring reported that Cultural Affairs staff is currently representing the Department and assisting the Miami-Dade Elections Department with the state-wide recount. Staff members Pamela Valles, William Campbell, Christine Jefferson, Dorianmy Campbell and Steven Padilla are all participating. Mr. Spring also commended staff members Alex Peraza, Steven Padilla, Cheryl Mizell and Graham Winick for their work on election day at the precincts.
- Marialaura Leslie, Lili Hernandez, Nicole Ugarriza and Graham Winick attended the 2018 National Arts Marketing Project conference in Seattle to promote the conference that will be held in Miami-Dade County in 2019. The team, joined forces with John Copeland from the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau and Laura Bruney from the Arts and Business Council of Miami to host a "305 Cafecito Hour" serving authentic Cuban coffee to conference attendees and promote the 2019 conference.
- The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County has appointed Johann Zeitsman as the new CEO and President. Mr. Zeitsman will succeed John Richard, who will step down at the end of the year. Mr. Zeitsman has a distinguished career in the arts.
- Mr. Spring reported that the Department is reviving the Councilor assignments and liaisons program. Staff members will serve as liaison and will reach out to Councilors with information and fact sheets that can be utilized to communicate with Commissioners.
- He reminded Councilors that sexual harassment training has upcoming sessions and should be completed. Currently six Councilors have completed the training.
- Chris Demos Brown, an alumnus of the Playwright Development Program run by staff member Adriana Perez, has recently opened the play *American Son* on Broadway. It is playing at the Booth Theatre and has received a glowing review.

COUNCILOR REPORTS

- Mr. Xavier Cortada reported that he was delighted to attend and see our local artists and venues shine at the Creative Time Summit. He commended Amanda Sanfilippo who wrote an op-ed piece that appeared in the Miami Herald that talked about the importance of hosting the summit.
- Mr. Cortada also reminded Councilors to please get to know their State legislators and begin conversations to advocate for the state arts budget, as the arts is not a partisan issue.
- Mr. Cortada congratulated Director Spring for receiving the Frost Museum's Art Transforms Benefactor Impact award at the museum's 10th anniversary gala for his leadership.

- Ms. Mireille Chancy-Gonzalez represented the Council at the Frost Museum's Gala. She also invited Council members to enjoy Ebony G. Patterson exhibit at PAMM.
- Ms. Curbelo attended a great performance of *Havana Music Hall* at Actors' Playhouse. She also commended Chairman Cortada for his work addressing climate change.
- Mr. Henriques reminded Councilors that Give Miami Day will be November 15, 2018, and it is a great opportunity to get involved and have gifts matched.
- Mr. Trieger also reminded Councilors about the importance of Give Miami Day. He commended an MDC Live Arts performance, Penny Arcade.
- Mr. Trainer reported New World School of the Arts has new seating and the school has a "select a seat" program. He invited Council to join him for the Dade Days kick-off.
- Ms. Sigars-Malina invited the Council to participate in the Steps for Healing 5K Zoo Run/Walk to benefit the Children's Bereavement Center. The Fairchild Ramble at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden will be held on November 9-11, 2018.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Liliana Hernandez-Constenla". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Liliana Hernandez-Constenla