

The Miami Herald

Posted on Fri, Apr. 10, 2009

Knight Foundation names 45 finalists for Arts Challenge

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Art museums, galleries, the opera, an independent music store, two TV stations and a Miami-Dade government agency all are finalists to win a share of \$4 million in matching grants for their art proposals from the Miami-based John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

The 45 finalists for the experimental contest, Knight Arts Challenge, were announced Thursday. They emerged from a field of more than 1,500 applicants vying for the initiative's second year of funding.

The next step in the application process will be for the finalists to submit full proposals, which will include budgets, said Marc Fest, vice president of communications for Knight.

Through the Arts Challenge, Knight Foundation will award \$20 million in matching grant money over five years to fund ideas for arts projects in South Florida.

The Knight Foundation also invested an additional \$20 million in endowment and program grants with three South Florida arts institutions: the Miami Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami and the New World Symphony.

The Arts Challenge has only three rules: the ideas must be about art, the project must take place in or benefit South Florida and the project must find funding to match Knight's investment.

The Knight Arts Challenge 2009 finalists:

VISUAL ARTS

- **3D Miami/Fredric Snitzer**, to further position South Florida as a cultural destination by exhibiting the contemporary sculpture of 90 artists throughout Miami-Dade County.
- **Available Space**, to enrich community life by creating temporary, interactive displays of public art in empty storefronts and vacant lots in underserved neighborhoods.
- **BELIART/Bernice Steinbaum**, to spark interest in the arts among schoolchildren by producing an interactive, educational DVD set that focuses on great works.
- **Christy Gast**, to provide free materials for nonprofits, schools and artists by creating a clearinghouse for donated art supplies and surplus goods.
- **Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO)**, to cultivate progressive architecture by commissioning young, local architects to create an outdoor urban refuge using green materials.
- **COOPER**, to provide access to expensive tools by creating a communal facility where artists can use heavy machinery and metal casting equipment to produce works.

- **Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden**, to expose new audiences to contemporary art by exhibiting the sculpture of Barry Flanagan and Tom Otterness on Fairchild's grounds.
- **Friends of the Bass Museum**, to promote imaginative thinking among schoolchildren through a curriculum-based art program.
- **Girls' Club**, to nurture the career of a South Florida artist by supporting an exhibit at an alternative gallery space dedicated to contemporary female artists.
- **Goldman Properties**, to create a hub for creative activity in Wynwood by opening a multidisciplinary office, performance and gallery space for a diverse group of arts organizations.
- **Greater Miami Convention and Visitor's Bureau**, to raise museums' profiles by designating May as Miami Museum Month, when residents can join one of 18 museums and visit another for free.
- **Jerome Soimaud**, to artistically explore Miami's African-American neighborhoods by producing a free art exhibition titled "Black in Miami."
- **Locust Projects**, to promote experimental art by commissioning three site-specific projects to be exhibited outside the traditional gallery setting.
- **Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs**, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and goods by creating a "Cultural Craigslist" where artists and groups can post openings and workshops and can buy, sell or donate materials.
- **The Nature Conservancy**, to highlight the importance of conservation by funding the Miami exhibition of "Design for a Living World," a series of works by leading artists using sustainable materials.
- **Sculpture Key West**, to promote contemporary art in a unique, historic setting by producing and documenting an annual sculpture exhibition at Key West's two Civil War-era forts.
- **Vizcaya Museum and Gardens**, to highlight Vizcaya's historic and artistic importance by commissioning site-specific artworks inspired by this National Historic Landmark.
- **Eli Webberman**, to provide a cultural destination in Wynwood where artists can live, exhibit their work and mingle with potential customers, tourists and other artists.
- **Wolfsonian-FIU**, to expand the reach of the museum by turning its exterior walls into a public art display.

PERFORMING ARTS

- **Actors' Playhouse Productions**, to celebrate South Florida's diversity by producing the first musical in Spanglish on the Cuban migration to the United States.
- **Miami Mayor's Office of Film & Cultural Affairs**, to enrich Downtown Miami by presenting weekly performances during lunchtime.
- **Florida Grand Opera**, to attract a younger audience to opera with a student matinee performance that features sets using projected and animated images.

- **Miami City Ballet**, to celebrate the ballet's 25th anniversary by producing five company premieres by choreographers who have shaped the group's artistic identity.

Miami-Dade Parks, to increase community cultural offerings by expanding a free concert series at neighborhood parks to include both traditional American and Latin music.

- **The Olympia Theater at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts**, to expand the offerings at the historic theater -- and ensure its sustainability -- by creating an endowment fund.

Performing Arts Center Trust, to foster an understanding of the performing arts by bringing every Miami-Dade fifth-grader to a production at the Arsht Center.

- **Mario Ernesto Sanchez/Teatro Avante**, to support and enhance an award-winning Hispanic theater festival by adding a comprehensive Latin American theater conference.

MUSIC

- **Alliance for Musical Arts, Theater and Tutoring**, to cultivate community pride by creating a drum line for 50 elementary school kids who will learn percussion skills and perform at local events.

- **Amy Rosenberg**, to explore and celebrate Overtown's rich music history by presenting an outdoor event featuring local musicians while historic neighborhood images are projected.

- **Chopin Foundation**, to increase access to free performances by expanding the "Chopin for All" concert series, adding events in Palm Beach County and engaging local schools.

- **Florida Grand Opera**, to cultivate a new audience for opera by holding a drawing for 2,000 free tickets to a performance of *Carmen*.

- **Miami-Dade Public Schools**, to further develop local musicians by creating a mentoring program where professionals give guidance through master classes and collaborative performances.

- **Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired**, to increase opportunities for blind and sighted artists by expanding the center's unique music inclusion program.

- **New World Symphony**, to attract new and younger audiences by commissioning local artists to produce videos to accompany the music during select performances.

- **Performing Arts Center Trust**, to broaden appreciation for South Florida's gospel tradition by expanding Free Gospel Sundays at the Arsht Center.

- **Sweat Records**, to strengthen a local resource by expanding community programming and creating an online site exclusively for buying local music and art.

- **United Negro College Fund**, to expand knowledge of a culturally significant musical instrument by supporting the Florida Memorial University Steel Band program.

FILM

- **Broward County Film Society**, to celebrate cultures from around the world through a free film and community discussion series.

- **Miami International Film Festival**, to strengthen the reputation of South Florida's film industry by

launching a marketplace where filmmakers and industry professionals can buy and sell film rights.

- **Plum TV**, to increase the visibility of the visual arts community by producing a documentary TV series that follows key players as they prepare for Art Basel Miami Beach.

LITERARY ARTS

- **Hannah Kahn Poetry Foundation**, to foster a literary dialogue through an author reading series.
- **Kathleen Hudspeth**, to promote traditional print media and artists' books by creating a communal print shop serving the arts community.

OTHER

- **BankAtlantic Foundation**, to increase exposure to the arts by expanding a program that partners arts nonprofits with local elementary schools.
- **Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs**, to ensure a thriving future for the arts by developing a plan to secure dedicated public funding sources for the arts in Miami-Dade County.
- **WPBT**, to help local artists gain exposure by creating a regional arts news service to provide free stories and electronic press kits for broadcast.

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