

Arsht Magazine

Spring 2021
arshtcenter.org



ANAÏS MITCHELL and the road to HADESTOWN

Miami women
make arts history

Up close with Miles,
Ella and other jazz icons

Field trips in the virtual age



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OPENING NOTE

Thank you for reading this second issue of *Arsht Magazine*, the Adrienne Arsht Center's quarterly look at artistic events taking place in our community and at the people making them happen. This edition bows during Women's History Month, when we recognize the enormous contributions made by women to the advancement of equality, justice, science, culture and, of course, the arts.

Our cover story includes an interview with Anaïs Mitchell, the singer-songwriter turned Tony-winning creator of *Hadestown*, the hit Broadway musical that is part of the Arsht Center's 2021-2022 Broadway in Miami season. Like all of us, Mitchell is eager to get back to the theater and experience the "community ritual" of live performing arts. "People have been so hungry for it, and it's going to feel so meaningful," she says.

The arts leaders featured in our story "The Historymakers" are determined to make Miami's return to live performances as safe and as rewarding as possible. Each of them sees opportunity in renewal. "The arts as we know it will expand," Adrienne Arsht herself tells us, as she looks to the future along with Florida Grand Opera's Susan T. Danis, Miami City Ballet's Lourdes Lopez, Diaspora Vibe's Rosie Gordon-Wallace and others.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find stories on an exciting collection of jazz photography, looks at the Arsht Center's volunteer and apprenticeship programs, and even a springtime cocktail recipe from our contributing mixologist.

For the past few months, we have been able to present safe, live, in-person performances (music, dance and theater) on our campus, and we are reminded how we all need to gather socially. Until we again can be together in larger numbers, we hope you enjoy this issue of *Arsht Magazine* as much as we enjoyed creating it for you.

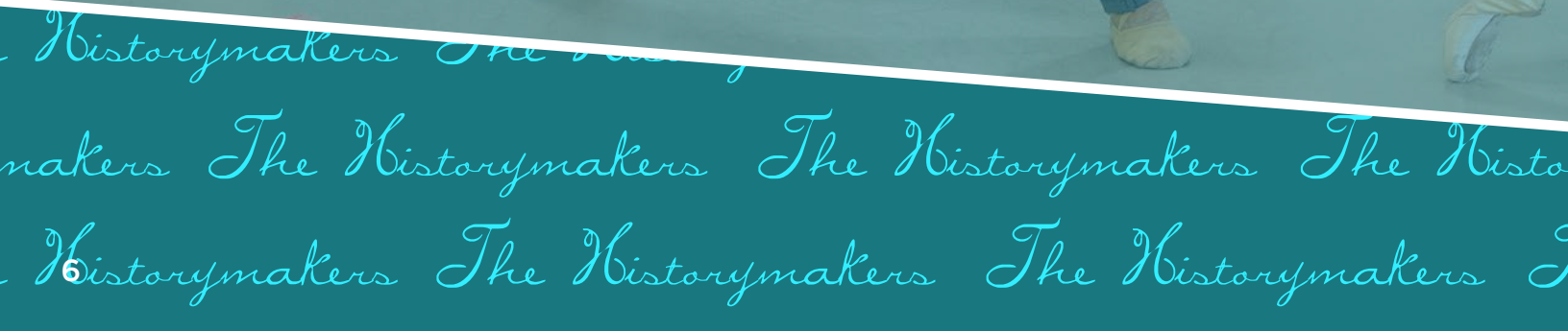


Johann Zietsman
President and CEO, Adrienne Arsht Center



The historymakers

Adrienne Arsht, Lourdes Lopez, Rosie Gordon-Wallace and other Miami arts leaders reflect on the events of the past year and offer their visions of the future.



The Historymakers The Historymakers The Historymakers



In 1987, the United States Congress passed a joint resolution that designated March as Women’s History Month. “American women of every race, class and ethnic background have made historical contributions to the growth and strength of the Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways,” the resolution reads. The same, of course, is true of women’s contributions to the performing arts, especially in Miami, the only major city in America to have been founded by a woman (Julia Tuttle).

In celebration of Women’s History Month, *Arsht Magazine* interviewed seven women who have helped to make Miami one of the greatest arts cities in the world. Their leadership in the fields of dance, music, visual arts, philanthropy, government and education has never been more necessary, as the coronavirus pandemic has challenged not only the health and well-being of our community, but also the very future of the arts in Miami-Dade County. No doubt, those challenges will remain with us for some time. But as these women make clear, there is much cause for optimism, and plenty of great Miami art to be created on the road ahead.

The following interviews were conducted by *Arsht Magazine* editor Jake Cline and have been edited for length and clarity.

The Historymakers The Historymakers The Historymakers



ADRIENNE ARSHT

Adrienne Arsht is a business leader and impact philanthropist. She has taken a leading role in promoting artistic, business and civic growth in the three cities she calls home: Washington, D.C., Miami and New York. Her \$30 million contribution to Miami's performing arts center in 2008 secured its financial footing. In her honor, the Center was renamed the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County. She is the founding chairman of the Adrienne Arsht Center Foundation.

What role do you believe the arts and the Arsht Center can play in helping our community recover from the pandemic?

The arts define a civilization and connect people in profound ways. During this unique time, the Arsht Center has been devoted to keeping artists engaged and employed and uplifting our spirits with beautiful performances on-line and safely in person. When Broadway in Miami returns this fall, it promises to be an especially joyous moment.

What do you think the performing arts will look like on the other side of the pandemic?

Nothing we have will go away, but there are now many more means to experience the arts. The arts as we know it will expand. Great art emerges from crises, and so many new productions and works of art will be inspired by the dark times we have been through.

Last year, you created the Adrienne@Home digital-performance series for Arsht@Home. What has this experience been like for you, and what do you want viewers to take away from these performances?

I would like the audience to feel the excitement and joy I felt being a part of bringing performances into homes in Miami and beyond.

What aspect of live performance have you missed the most during the past year?

The exhilaration from music when you hear it live. The immediacy of seeing the vehicle from which music is produced — whether through instruments or voice.

If you could safely see any artist or show onstage right now, who or what would it be and why?

I'd like to see all of my Broadway friends belting it out, because the lyrics of the songs are so inspirational and I admire artists, and their talent, so much.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MAYOR DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA

In November 2020, Daniella Levine Cava was elected the first female mayor of Miami-Dade County.

What role do you believe the arts can play in helping Miami-Dade County recover from the pandemic?

The arts provide a vital channel to tell our story as a community. Over the last year, we've experienced what has felt like one historic event after another. The arts offer reflection, contemplation and catharsis that help us navigate through the most challenging of times — whether participating or observing — and provide a way for us to process and communicate these experiences now and to future generations.

What do you think the performing arts in Miami-Dade will look like on the other side of the pandemic?

We have already seen the performing arts adapt and transform this year, with artists and arts organizations imagining extraordinary new ways to continue performing and safely engaging our community despite unprecedented challenges. We have also seen our community come together to support the arts, including programs to allocate millions of dollars in federal CARES Act funding to artists and arts organizations — recognizing that they are an essential part of our social fabric and need special investment to get through this moment. I believe this investment and renewed commitment will extend into the future, as the work of artists continues to help people across our community better connect to their own experiences and bring us joy and beauty

What artist or work of art has helped you get through the pandemic?

There are so many different ways that the arts have lifted me up during these strange and isolated times. I was delighted to visit Bass Museum of Art when it reopened with social distancing, and enjoyed the permanent and special exhibits. This week, I visited Vizcaya Museum and Gardens for a stunning original installation of art through lighting on glorious historic wallscapes, inspired by stained glass and utilizing archival materials.



If you could safely see any show onstage right now, what would it be and why?

I saw *Hamilton* online when it was opened to the public, but I would love to see it in person. The staging was so dynamic, and I was not able to take it all in on this virtual platform.

What is your most memorable performing-arts experience?

I have greatly enjoyed online music events, where many isolated musicians manage to harmonize soaring sounds across the Zoom platform. Recently, I was delighted to attend a virtual Guitars Over Guns performance with young people singing, playing and inspiring. Music grounds and inspires me to feel we are connected despite the physical barriers.



AILEEN UGALDE

Aileen Ugalde is chair of the Adrienne Arsht Center Trust Board of Directors. She is also senior vice president and general counsel of the University of Miami, where she earned her law degree after graduating magna cum laude from Harvard College.

This clearly was not how you expected your first year as chair of the Adrienne Arsht Center Trust Board of Directors to go. What has the experience been like for you?

I got elected, and it was just a few weeks later that we canceled *Hamilton*. And then, it slowly became obvious that this wasn't just a momentary thing. I remember being one of the holdouts and thinking that everyone was overreacting: "Of course we're not going to cancel our fundraisers and our gala just yet." And I was proven very wrong.

I think when we look back, we'll see that this was a really critical year and an important one that will have served a purpose long-term. But I would be lying if I told you it was fun to live through it.

In what ways do you think the pandemic has changed the performing arts?

I believe it has accelerated the pace of a great deal of change that was already in the making in a number of industries, including the arts, and the legacy of those changes I hope will stay with us. This change of making us really adapt to the digital platform has had perhaps the unintended consequence of making the product, the arts, so much more widely accessible to huge swaths of people, people whose schedules may not lend themselves to attending shows.

In some ways, as isolating as this has felt, there has also been an extraordinary effort, and I think a successful one, at connectivity in nontraditional ways. I think, and I'm hoping, that that will stay.

I think in the new iteration of how we enjoy arts in Miami, it will be much more textured. It will be amplified so that it won't be either you're at home consuming another product or going to the Arsht to consume arts. You'll have it at home and at the Arsht. It will just be two different experiences, but elevating our enjoyment of it.

What artist or work of art has helped you get through the past year?

I've been listening to a lot of Billie Holiday. I don't know if that's made me feel better or sadder. But I will tell you that a lot of that very soulful angst that her voice captures feels very appropriate for this time. I've found myself turning to her more than almost anything else in this past year. It just feels appropriate for me.

ROSIE GORDON-WALLACE

Rosie Gordon-Wallace is founder and curator of Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator, which develops and exhibits the work of emerging visual artists from the Latin and Caribbean Diasporas.

What effect has the pandemic had on the visual arts?

The sustaining of artists has to be a new focus. Meaning, I check on you as an artist to see how you're doing, and if there is a need, we have to pull the community together to move you to the next level. And then, we're doing it in the time when systemic racism has been called out, and called out in bold letters. The Black Lives Matter movement, which is not going away, is mainstream. I'm a Black woman in this Black body from the Caribbean. I've had to deal with these issues forever. So the issues are not new to me. What has happened with me is I am emboldened in saying to someone now, "What do you mean when you say I don't have any white artists in my show? What are you calling out now? What is your real intention? Where are you coming from with that?"



Are you optimistic?

I am really hopeful. My sense of imagination is on fire. The young people that I work with, they are like butterflies. They're nervous, but they are excited at the same time. I think that we have an opportunity to get it right for the first time in a long time. We have an opportunity to look at some of the underlying social contradictions that we have worked with. And those of us that are conscious, regardless of how you voted, will say it's a personal commitment for me to make a change in this world. And I've never felt like this before in America. I'm an immigrant, and I've never felt like this before. Not even when Obama was president.

Sometimes, when someone throws dirt on your wall, and you have to peel the wall to paint it, what you see under the paint is really what you need to see.

What artist or work of art has called out to you the most this past year?

I've been listening to this music called "Send Down the Rain" by Majek Fashek. It was a time when Nigeria had been in drought for over 10 years. He recorded this song, and the same weekend that the song came out, monsoon rains came. They have not been in drought since. The music and the words just inspire me.



MADELINE PUMARIEGA

In November 2020, Madeline Pumariega became the first female president of Miami Dade College, where she was once a student. She is a former chancellor of the Florida College System and was the first woman and Hispanic person appointed to that position.

What role do you see the college's arts and cultural institutions playing in the county's recovery from the pandemic?

The same [as before]. I really believe in the importance of culture in a world-class city and the importance of the creative sector in Miami Dade County as an economic driver. So just as we would say tech is an economic driver and entrepreneurship is an economic driver and all these drivers, I believe that the creative sector also has an important role in terms of our economic footprint and will play a role in our economic recovery, as well.

People sometimes think, and I don't know why, that the creative sector doesn't have an economic impact. It absolutely has an economic impact. It's made up of micro firms, little nonprofits, creative professionals. They make up this whole economic ecosystem, and it certainly helps drive our tourism and what makes Miami special.

The college feels privileged to be able to be a player in that ecosystem and hopefully have a place where continued innovation for the performing arts and live music and festivals and all of that continues.

How have MDC's arts institutions and programs — the Miami Film Festival, Miami Book Fair, the Museum of Art and Design, etc. — adapted to reach their audiences?

When you look at the Miami Book Fair, we launched a virtual Book Fair. I think there's an opportunity to reset. Maybe as we reimagine the Book Fair for the next 30 years, it's a blended approach. It might be where we're back on the streets [of the college's Wolfson Campus], and we're back presenting authors, but we may always now have virtual programming where anybody can see it. I think the team is reimagining the possibility. Already, they are hard at work for 2021.

We are on the eve of the Miami Film Festival [March 5-14], which was abruptly finished last year in the middle of the pandemic. About day five or six, the closing came. It speaks to the resilience of the creative sector that here we are on the eve of presenting the 2021 Film Festival.

SUSAN T. DANIS

Susan T. Danis is general director and CEO of Florida Grand Opera, an Arsht Center resident company. With roots stretching back to 1941, FGO is the state's oldest performing arts organization.

What can Florida Grand Opera audiences expect when the company returns to the stage in a post-COVID world?

Part of our doing these smaller productions is trying to gauge the audience's comfort level in coming back into a quote close-spaced theater. But when we are able to do our full-fledged, mainstage performances, it will be the same level of quality. It will be everything that our audience expects. We're going to try to get back to our mix of rep that our patrons love and could see again and again, balanced with some new things and neglected masterpieces. We're just trying to take our time and not jump off into the water too soon, so that when we do, it is safe for everyone and works for us economically.



What kind of feedback have you received about FGO's recent, socially distanced concerts?

The only complaint that I've had so far is that we didn't have any champagne for people to buy at the bars at one of the events. [laughs] I thought that was kind of telling of our audience. I think we've gone to the extreme of thinking through everything, how people get into a theater, over-socially distancing, kind of going beyond what the experts will say. The people who are ready to come back are ready to come back. I hear people who say I can't live a life without live music or art or theater.

What role do you see online programming having in FGO's future?

I don't really think we're going to become [focused] on virtual programming. ... The goal of the company always has been and always will be to offer live performance, because that's what we are — we're a performing-arts company, not a film company. Our goal isn't to create a whole line of products virtually. And I may be very much in the minority in our industry saying that, because I know a lot of people say this is the new paradigm shift. But I, for one, and FGO are very much looking forward to going back to what I believe we do best.

What aspect of live performance have you missed the most during the past year?

The audience. There are so many patrons that I know and love, and I just don't get to see them. Without performances, I can't even begin to keep up with them. I can't keep up with them the way I can when I can walk the lobby or walk up and down the aisles, and so I definitely miss those people. I think the biggest piece I miss is staying in touch with our audience.



LOURDES LOPEZ

Since 2012, Lourdes Lopez has been the artistic director of Miami City Ballet, an ArshT Center resident company. She is a former soloist and principal dancer with New York City Ballet.

What has the experience of creating dance performances online been like for you and Miami City Ballet during the pandemic?

I feel that we are going to come out of this a stronger organization than we were before COVID. And by that, I mean it has forced us to look at ourselves, really, truly look at ourselves, look at our mission and figure out different ways of doing it that frankly I think we probably should have been doing 10 years ago. It was kind of an abrupt shift. We were learning in real time. We were learning as we went. But it was exciting. If you really believe that dance matters, like we do, if you really believe that a community needs dance and that there's joy and beauty that we're responsible to bring to our citizens and to our audience, then there's a responsibility to figure it out. Digital just gave us that outlet.

I think the digital space is an art form in and of itself. It's not just, "I'm going to film these two dancers onstage or in the studio and then send the link out and expect people at home to be invested in it." I am going to film these two dancers, or I'm going to choreograph, understanding that this will be on a screen and therefore it has to be a different product than what we put on a proscenium stage. That's what COVID has taught me, as someone who is involved in ballet and dance.

I think because of where technology is right now, it's much simpler. It's much cheaper. It's much better. Because dance is so visual and the artists around it are so visual, and obviously the medium is visual, that once we really understand how to do it and we get the funding, we're going to get ahead of everybody else.

What ballets or other dance works are responding to the pandemic?

My belief has always been that artists need some time to experience the experience, and then the creation will start. You can't create, I don't think, in the instant, when it's something this huge, like 9/11 or COVID. You have to understand as a human being how it changed you or how it affected you. And then, sometime after, you start to see the artist respond to what had been going on. That's what I think will happen, and that's what I'm actually excited about, to see what comes out of this period. Not necessarily in the period, but a few months past, when they've digested it and they've understood it.

What artist or work has helped you to get through this past year?

There are certain quotes by Maya Angelou and Emily Dickinson that I have in the back of my head in terms of hope and courage: "Without courage, you can't practice any other virtue."

Photo credits: Photo on pages 6 - 7: Lourdes Lopez, Chase Swatosh and Hannah Fischer in rehearsals for *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*® in the Park. Choreography by George Balanchine. © George Balanchine Trust. Photo courtesy Alexander Izileav.

Headshots: Adrienne ArshT courtesy Daniel Schwartz; Daniella Levine Cava courtesy Miami-Dade County; Aileen Ugalde courtesy Marlene Quaroni; Rosie Gordon-Wallace courtesy Rosie Gordon-Wallace; Madeline Pumariiega courtesy Madeline Pumariiega; Susan T. Danis courtesy Susan T. Danis; Lourdes Lopez courtesy Albert Oviedo.



NEXT STOP: HADESTOWN

Anais Mitchell, the songwriter behind the hit Broadway musical, discusses her show's long-awaited return.

Photo courtesy Jay Sansone.

Nine years before it opened on Broadway, *Hadestown* was a concept album released by singer-songwriter Anais Mitchell on Righteous Babe Records, the independent label created by folk star Ani DiFranco. Before that, it was a folk opera Mitchell and a few friends staged in Vermont, traveling from town to town in, as Mitchell describes it, “a silver school bus full of sets and props.” And before that, of course, *Hadestown* was the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, the ancient Greek story in which a man literally goes to hell to rescue the woman he loves.

Mitchell travels the long and winding road the show took from DIY theater project to Tony Award-winning musical in her recently published book *Working on a Song: The Lyrics of Hadestown*. In great detail, Mitchell recounts the many rewrites and revisions her songs underwent over the years. The book offers an illuminating look inside the mind of an artist and a welcome reminder of the importance of collaboration to the creative process. It also serves as an enticing introduction to Mitchell's show, which will make its Miami debut as part of the Arsht Center's Broadway in Miami series.

Mitchell recently spoke to *Arsht Magazine* by phone from her home in Vermont, where she has been living with her husband and two young daughters during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What is it going to be like for you when *Hadestown* returns to the stage and embarks on its first national tour?

What a joyful vision to think about it. It's a show that really is about resilience in a lot of ways. You know there's a line that recurs in the show, "Spring will come again." And we're gonna sing it again no matter what happens. There's a resilient spirit in the show, and I'm so excited for that kind of springing back to life that will happen when the performing arts can be happening again and especially when this show comes back to life.

People have been so hungry for it, and it's going to feel so meaningful, really in a deeper way than entertainment. It will feel like a ritual, a community ritual.

Last year, you published *Working on a Song*, which chronicles the many revisions you made to the show's lyrics over the years. Was it difficult to revisit what at times could be an arduous process?

I was excited to publish the words on the page as sort of poetry, but what I really wanted to do was publish all these other drafts of things alongside of what is happening on Broadway. It was a sort of therapy for me. And once I got into it, I started to think this can be helpful for other writers or other people that are interested in what goes into making a show. But especially for other writers who are in the trenches. For me, the thing that came out of it, which I return to now when I'm working on songs, is when you're in it and you're banging your head against the wall and you're like, "This is wrong. This feels futile," suddenly the writing happens. And this book really was a process of realizing that the wrong things are not wrong. They might not end up in the final draft of the thing, sure, but that doesn't mean that they're wrong. The right thing couldn't exist without them. There's value in that process, and it has given me a bit more patience with the writing process.

Given your propensity for rewriting and revising, can you watch *Hadestown* now without thinking of further changes you'd like to make?

You've heard it said that a musical is never finished, it's only abandoned? There is a way in which it was, "Pencils down!" at a certain moment, and



Reeve Carney and Eva Noblezada starred in the original Broadway cast of *Hadestown*. Photo courtesy Matthew Murphy.

it was like "OK, pencils down." But I also have this feeling about the show that it was finished multiple times. You know when we made that studio record in 2010, that felt like a complete statement. And when we did the show off-Broadway, that also felt like a complete statement, although it left a lot more to the imagination of the audience than the Broadway version of the show.

It has felt sort of healing to put the show up and now be working on other stuff. I got so one-track-minded about *Hadestown* for years of my life. But who knows? It crosses my mind to make a film adaptation at some point, and I would totally rewrite that stuff.

What was opening night on Broadway like for you?

I have found that those moments of sort of symbolic fruition and attention are never what you think they're going to be. It's not what you do it for. I was obviously so thrilled and so proud of our company and all of the collaborators who made the show happen, but I was like a deer in the headlights. I remember that I got onstage with Rachel (Chavkin, director) at the end of the show to take a bow with our company, and somebody gave me a big bouquet of flowers. That's a thing that happens in the theater. And I just didn't know what to do with them. So I just sort of put them on the ground. Have you seen *Breaking Bad*? I was like [Walter White] in a fugue state.

But for me, the moments you do it for are always less visible than that. It's a realization that happens in the room. It's a great lyric that comes in the middle of the night. Or it's a beer at Hurley's bar across the street from the Walter Kerr Theatre with the cast, and someone starts playing a song and everyone sings along. That's it for me. Those are the moments.

Have you been able to write during the pandemic?

I made a record! I haven't told anyone that. I don't know when it will come out. It was really thrilling to return to just writing songs without the kind of assignment basis of it. Just to follow my bliss. It was really fun, and I hope to do more.

What was exciting about getting to record was I've never had the experience of recording music that was brand-new and that I hadn't been playing out. Usually, I'd be touring for a certain portion of the year, and any new song would get played a bunch of times before I was in the studio. And there's a way in which it sort of hardens, like if you're working with clay. And then, you get to the studio and you're like, "This is what this song is." But with this record it was more like, "Here's all of this soft clay." And that felt amazing.

You recently wrote to President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris asking them to create a cabinet-level agency for the arts. What did your letter say?

I was joining a campaign in which a lot of playwrights came together to

write letters in support of this. Partly it was a sense that the artistic community — which is responsible for such a huge portion of the economy, a very real part of the economy — is thought of as this froufrou thing. It's been hard for arts workers to get federal aid and to be recognized as a valid part of the economy that is really suffering during the COVID era.

For me, I think of friends that I have in other countries, in Canada or in Europe, where there is a lot more recognition of and support for the arts. We can do that here, and we should. I guess there was a two-way street I was thinking about. One was the arts need to be recognized by the government. And the other was artists should be at the table of government at some level — what is required right now in terms of "Build Back Better." Or let's continue the quote from *Hadestown*: Let's move toward the world that we can dream of, that we can imagine and not just the world that is. How can we move toward that vision? It just feels that to have creative people at the table for that conversation can only be a good thing for the nation.

— Jake Cline

Hadestown opened on Broadway on April 17, 2019. Photo courtesy Broadway Across America.





SPRING AWAKENING

A Bacardí mixologist offers a cocktail to toast the season of new beginnings.

Tamara Orendain is the host of *Bacardí Mixology*, a weekly video series on the Arsht Center's Arsht@Home website in which the Bacardí rum aficionado teaches viewers how to prepare classic and contemporary cocktails. For this issue of *Arsht Magazine*, Orendain shares the recipe for a fresh and fruity spring cocktail.

Spring Has Sprung

- 1 ounce Bacardí Añejo Cuatro
- ½ ounce St-Germain
- 2 ounces rosé
- 1 ounce coconut water
- ¼ ounce lime juice
- ¼ ounce hibiscus syrup

Garnish with fresh fruit such as apples, strawberries, lime and lemon wheels. Add the ingredients together and stir gently with ice.

Watch Tamara Orendain mix a new cocktail every week on *Bacardí Mixology*, only at arshtcenter.org/arshtathome.



Students at William Chapman Elementary watch *The Hip Hop Nutcracker* as part of the Miami Arts Education Collective's outreach program. Photo courtesy Lakeisha Frith.

Miami-Dade students experience the performing arts without leaving the classroom.

The Arsht Center recently joined forces with local arts organizations to bring arts experiences to more than 61,000 Miami-Dade students. The newly formed Miami-Dade Arts Education Collective also includes Miami Theater Center, South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center and Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs' Culture Shock Miami program. The Collective is committed to providing diverse and high-quality arts programming to students across all grade levels throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

"Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students have not been able to attend in-person field trips to live arts performances," says Lakeisha Frith, education

manager for the Arsht Center. "While virtual performances cannot replace the magic of live theater, we're proud to have reached more than 61,000 students by making arts performances available and accessible via online/virtual offerings instead of the traditional, in-person field trip. The Arsht Center typically reaches 60,000 students through our live arts education programming each year. So to reach this number in three months is a huge success."

The Collective provides virtual content to teachers and students at no charge through a collaboration with Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Cultural Passport Program and private, charter and home schools. The 2020-2021 season includes eight virtual



Ayiti – Stories and Songs From Haiti, featuring Inez Barlatier and her Family Band (above and below), was recorded in January at the Miami Theater Center. The performance will be shown May 1-31 to elementary-school students as part of the Miami-Dade Arts Education Collective program. Photos courtesy WorldRedEye.com.

performances. The first, *A Kids Play About Racism*, was created with elementary students in mind. It started on October 19 and will continue through May. So far, 53 teachers have presented the play, reaching more than 3,000 students.

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom ran from October 26 through November 13 and had 28 participating teachers, reaching about 3,500 students. *The Hip Hop Nutcracker* started in October and has reached more than 30,000 students, and *AirPlay* has reached more than 3,000 students. Encompassing the fourth largest school system in the nation and the largest county in the state, the Collective has the potential to reach well over 400 schools and upward of 400,000 students.

— Alexandra Medina



A photograph of Lakeisha Frith, a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark blue shirt, speaking to a group of students in a library. The students are looking towards her. The background shows bookshelves filled with books. The text 'THE ARTS TEACHER' is overlaid in large, white and blue letters.

THE ARTS TEACHER

Lakeisha Frith works with students at Young Men's Preparatory Academy in Miami. Photo courtesy WorldRedEye.com.

Arsht Center education manager Lakeisha Frith inspires others to experience the power of the arts.

A few years ago, Lakeisha Frith won tickets on Instagram to a Jazz Roots concert at the Arsht Center. The show featured music from the movies of director Spike Lee performed by such greats as Dee Dee Bridgewater and Terence Blanchard. Not far from where Frith was sitting, a group of students were attending the show on a field trip. When the kids had to leave early to catch their bus, Frith asked their chaperone why they were attending that particular show and was told about the Jazz Roots: Sound Check program. Within a year, Frith was working on that same program as the Arsht Center's new education manager.

Frith's passion for sharing the arts with younger generations started in high school, when she got a part-time job at a local music store giving private lessons to students of all ages. An avid violinist, Frith volunteered at the Greater Miami Youth Symphony while in college, and eventually worked there as a teacher and office administrator for 10 years before joining the Arsht Center.

The eldest child of Jamaican immigrants, Frith recalls the frustration of being one of only four Black students in the music department at Southwood Middle School. "Those years were very stressful for me," she says. "I realized just how competitive violin students were. Most had been taking private classes for years."

Her music teacher recognized Frith's effort and nominated her for a scholarship to receive private lessons. She studied with that teacher throughout high school.

"So many people reached out to help me, and so many doors have been opened to me that others never had," she says. "Most of the time, I'm the only Black person in the room. But with that comes a great deal of responsibility."



Lakeisha Frith oversees Arsht Center education programs such as *Kitty Hawk* and Learning Through the Arts. Photo courtesy WorldRedEye.com.

In her role as the Arsht Center's education manager, Frith oversees the Center's arts education programs, including *Kitty Hawk*, *Rock Odyssey*, Learning Through the Arts and, most recently, the Miami-Dade Arts Education Collective. Frith says she particularly enjoys collaborating with local presenters such as musician Nicole Yarling and radio host Tracy Fields, as well as seeing young students experience the power of the arts. Of course, Jazz Roots: Sound Check is of special importance to her. "It ties my love of music with my passion for bringing as many kids to the arts as I can," she says.

Ultimately, Frith says, representing women of color in the arts is rewarding. "My life has been impacted for the better by being in this field," she says. "And it's important for kids to see me and know that it's possible — and it's a good life."

— Alexandra Medina



As a member of the Technical Theater Apprenticeship Program, Ayana Vail has worked on high-profile events at the Arsht Center. Photo courtesy Eyeworks Production.

Arsht Center program aims to create new paths to arts careers and promote greater diversity in the industry.

Launched in 2018 as the first federally registered apprenticeship of its kind in the state of Florida, the **Arsht Center's Technical Theater Apprenticeship Program** is designed to introduce residents of Miami-Dade County, ages 18 to 24 and from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented communities, to a professional career in technical theater. The apprenticeship is a paid, three-year program, running annually.

Despite the limitations caused by COVID-19, the program has continued to safely provide essential hands-on experience and learning opportunities to aspiring students eager to learn and launch a career in technical theater. "I feel so fortunate to be in an environment that both facilitates technical-theater education and offers great support," apprentice Ayana Vail says.

A new grant from the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Family Foundation is bolstering the continuity and longevity of the Technical Theater Apprenticeship Program, honoring Lynn Wolfson's

legacy of supporting the arts and the Arsht Center. Thanks in part to inaugural support from the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation, during the first few months of the pandemic, when the Center was fully closed, apprentices earned a wage while attending virtual workshops, training with Arsht staffers on theatrical rigging and computer-aided design, and taking personal-development classes such as financial management. The stability provided by the Wolfson grant ensures their work can continue as the Center reemerges to host newly imagined, socially distanced events.

This past fall, the apprentices were able to resume working on high-profile events at the Arsht Center, including preparations for the 2020 Presidential Debate (which was ultimately canceled); the launch of a new Live on the Plaza outdoor concert series; and the swearing-in ceremony of Miami-Dade's first female mayor, Daniella Levine Cava. The apprentices, and the Arsht Center staffers from whom they are learning on the job, adhere to strict health

and safety precautions, including temperature checks, handwashing and mask-wearing at all times.

“The world of live entertainment seemed very foreign until I started the apprenticeship,” program participant Andre Best says. “Now, I have the opportunity to work in events that I’ve wanted to be around my whole life.”

Aside from training the next generation of theater-production specialists, the program is designed to create new paths to arts careers and promote greater diversity in the industry. Black professionals make up less than 1 percent of the theatrical workforce, according to the Black Theatre Coalition. In 2020, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), the industry’s leading labor union, acknowledged a lack of diversity in its 2020 “Ground We Stand On” statement. The Arsht Center’s Technical Theater Apprenticeship Program helps to address this industry-wide disparity.

“The cycle of inequitable access to sustainable wages can be broken with greater access

to training and lucrative careers,” says Curtis Hodge, the Arsht Center’s director of production. “Our Technical Theater Apprenticeship Program provides classroom and on-the-job experience needed to propel these young professionals toward a career in entertainment, but also gives them the necessary life skills to thrive in today’s world.”

Once an appropriate level of training has been completed, apprentices join performance crews alongside IATSE stagehands, exposing the apprentices to local and international artists, technicians and companies. In addition to technical training, apprentices attend life-skills workshops focusing on financial literacy, health, résumé-building and more. Since the beginning of the program, apprentices have participated in many significant Arsht Center productions, including NBC’s 2019 Democratic Presidential Primary Debates, the NFL Honors broadcast on Fox, several galas and play premieres, and Broadway musicals such as *Hamilton*.

Arsht Center director of production Curtis Hodge (second from right) offers technical-theater training to apprentices Ayana Vail, Khamari Rhodriguez and Andre Best. Photo courtesy Eyeworks Production.



TRAINING THEIR WAY TO A **WARMER** WELCOME FOR ALL

How volunteers are making the Arsht Center
a more-inclusive place.



continued on next page →



ArshT Center volunteers recently took an online class in American Sign Language. Nicole Smith, manager of volunteer services, is pictured at the center of the top row. Photo courtesy Nicole Smith.

Since March 2020, ArshT Center volunteers have spent nearly 2,000 hours training to offer the Center’s culture-loving guests a more-inclusive, disability-friendly welcome back. Dozens of ArshT volunteers have learned theater sign language and have taken courses on best practices for communicating with the blind, guests with autism and those with service animals. Even while the Center was closed due to COVID, training for a better guest experience continued via virtual presentations, lectures and weekly online classes.

At the heart of this initiative are ArshT Center staffers Nicole Smith, manager of volunteer services; Matt Ashley, house manager; and Jeffrey Gardner, theater manager and certified ADA coordinator. As ADA coordinator, Gardner is trained and responsible for ensuring that the ArshT Center meets or exceeds all requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

“The ArshT Center took the opportunity, while things were quieter onsite, to keep our volunteers engaged and expand their knowledge

through these specialized sessions,” says Smith, who spearheaded the idea and manages the Center’s 300-plus team year-round. “The training provides the wonderful people who are our ArshT ambassadors the tools to help them provide an even warmer, more inclusive welcome back to our guests with disabilities.”

Inspired by their first experience at the national Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) conference in 2019, Smith and Gardner worked together with Ashley to create adaptable training modules that give front-of-house staff and volunteers the tools to recognize and address the special needs of ArshT Center guests.

Almost all the training sessions have been virtual – and interactive. Gardner says it’s the open conversations that are part of most trainings that often lead to the best learning moments. While there are more than a dozen training modules, Gardner and Smith agree that their work has only just begun. A session on basic theater sign language has now become a week-

ly class where volunteers learn to sign words such as “seat,” “row,” “elevator” and the essential “restroom.” To serve Miami’s international community, the team has offered basic theater Spanish for English speakers, a class that is now led by a bilingual volunteer for eight to 10 other volunteers weekly.

“It’s all about empowering our team to find the way to yes, and to ensure each guest feels connected, valued and comfortable at the Arsht Center,” Gardner says.

– *Suzette Espinosa Fuentes*

Children from Miami Lighthouse for the Blind visited the Arsht Center for a “touch tour” of props from Broadway musical *Wicked*. Photo courtesy WorldRedEye.com.





John Coltrane



Miles Davis



Thelonious Monk

Jazz Giants COME HOME

Nearly 100 photos of iconic musicians in Europe have been donated to the Arsht Center.

Outside an airport in Milan, John Coltrane is ignoring the teenage boy with the camera. Something out of view has commanded the musician's attention, but not so much that he's forgotten about the lit cigar angled downward from his lips. He's waiting to depart, whether for home in the United States or somewhere else in Italy is unclear. But in this little-seen December 1962 photograph, the jazz saxophonist appears every bit the cool, intense genius who created *Giant Steps* and recorded *Kind of Blue* with Miles Davis.

That wasn't the only photo Roberto Polillo took of Coltrane that week. The 16-year-old was at the Teatro Dell'Arte on Dec. 2 when the musician performed with his quartet (bassist Jimmy Garrison, pianist McCoy Tyner and drummer Elvin Jones). There, he captured Coltrane in full flight, a stage light reflecting off his alto and tenor saxophones. And it was at this theater that Polillo over the next several years photographed even more jazz greats: Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus, Sonny Rollins, Duke Ellington, among them.

The son of a prominent Italian concert promoter and magazine editor, Polillo was "just kind of tagging along" when he took these photos and others, says Leonor Anthony, a Cuban-born, Miami-based artist and collaborator with Polillo on the 2019 art book *Sounds of Freedom*. "He was not the main photographer,

but when the photographs started coming out like they did, his father started putting them in his magazine."

Polillo didn't think much of his photography skills, Anthony says, and he put down the camera to focus on a career in computer science and physics. The images sat in a closet until 2019, when Polillo invited Anthony to look through them, a moment she describes as life-changing.

"I wanted to bring them home," Anthony recalls. "These photographs had never been seen in the U.S. They had never been seen period, except for a few people in Italy. And yet these are our greatest musicians, who are really at the vanguard of this music genre that the whole world loves. And it's so American. And we had not seen these photographs."

For this reason, Anthony has donated 95 prints of Polillo's photos to the Arsht Center, where they will eventually go on display to the public. "I just felt that the photos are so inspiring," she says. "I wanted everyone in our community to see them. To be able to admire them and to be a part of it. Right now, we're at such an important moment. We need to educate ourselves. We need to regroup and see the greatness that's been part of our history."



Ella Fitzgerald



Charles Mingus

Sarah Vaughan



The collection includes photos by the aforementioned artists, as well as Nina Simone, Ella Fitzgerald, Art Blakey, Sarah Vaughan and other jazz pioneers performing in the 1960s and early '70s throughout Italy and elsewhere in Europe. Anthony says Polillo, who returned to photography in 2004, initially was reluctant to share his jazz images with the world. But after learning of the photos' historical significance, given that they documented Black American artists abroad as the civil rights era was underway back home, Polillo was eager to introduce them to the United States.

"While we had the civil rights movement going on here," Anthony says, "these guys were going to Europe to play, to be able to be free over there, to not have to come in through the back door, through the kitchen door.' That became the impetus for me, the civil rights part."

Anthony admits that when Polillo first showed his photographs to her, she knew little about jazz and didn't recognize the musicians in them. "I told him I have no idea who I'm even looking at," she says.

Today, however, sharing these photos and the stories behind them has become her life's work. "They're bigger than Roberto," she says. "They're certainly bigger than me."

— Jake Cline



Sonny Rollins



Duke Ellington



Art Blakey

STEP into the LIGHT

Using 3D technology, *Lasting Impressions* allows viewers to immerse themselves in impressionist paintings.



"Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies" by Claude Monet.

Ed Kasses' obsession with French impressionism began with a trip to America's national parks. In 2019, Kasses' production company released *America's Wonders*, a 3D LED film that features footage from 26 national parks and some of the country's major cities set to original orchestral music and arrangements of popular songs such as "New York, New York" and "Viva Las Vegas." The show opened in Cincinnati and then in Salt Lake City, with the intention of visiting more cities before the pandemic hit.

With the tour on hold, Kasses began to consider other productions that could



"The Dance Class" by Edgar Degas.

incorporate the immersive technology used in *America's Wonders*. "I kept thinking about what a great idea it would be to be able to do the same thing with impressionist art that we did with the national parks," he says, "and that's to allow the paintings to come alive onscreen."

As Kasses describes it, 3D LED allows viewers to feel as if they are standing within the images onscreen. "There's two ways of doing 3D," he says. "It can come

out at you and surround you, or you can look into the picture the same way the artist would look as they were painting it. We created *Lasting Impressions* to do both.”

Appearing May 19 to June 16 at the Arsht Center’s Ziff Ballet Opera House, *Lasting Impressions*, the new show from Kasses’ Princeton Entertainment Group, will offer an immersive look at more than 100 paintings by impressionist artists such as Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne, Camille Pissarro and Vincent Van Gogh. In the hour-long show, the images will appear on three screens in four rooms constructed on the Ziff Ballet Opera House’s Lynn Wolfson Stage. Music by French composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, along with songs by Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour and Nana Mouskouri, will play through headphones as the paintings come alive onscreen and project onto the floor.

Kasses says he wants the show’s attendees to view each painting and its subjects from the artist’s perspective. “Degas did a whole series of paintings about dancers. Before he would do the paintings, he’d go to the dance studio. He would sketch the dancers one by one and go back to his studio and paint the painting,” Kasses explains. “When you walk onto the stage at the Opera House, you stand there and the individual drawings of the dancers come off the screen and are standing next to you. You actually feel like you’re in the studio with the dancers.”

To create *Lasting Impressions*, Kasses collaborated with Canadian-based Northern Gateway Films and the

Los Angeles company 3D Live. The holographic effect used in the show “is the closest thing to virtual reality without the headset,” says Nathaniel Huber, CEO of 3D Live, whose work has been seen at the Burning Man festival, Super Bowl LI and in concerts by Big Gigantic, Flying Lotus and other musical acts.

Northern Gateway co-founder Andrew Scholotiuk says the process involved dissecting the paintings and reassembling them in 3D. The brush strokes and other details, he says, are the artists’ original work and not studio re-creations. “We are working with incredible works of art painted by masters,” he says. “We wanted to approach this project with incredible accuracy as well as a light touch to ensure the technology is transparent to the audience. I have a background in film as well as performing arts, and I learned from a young age that you never upstage the performer with the tech. The technicians are there to support the performer, but it should never be the focus. So I used that to help guide us and ensure we are respecting and supporting the original artwork.”

In a way, Kasses says, *Lasting Impressions* is an attempt to return these paintings to the time and place in which they were created. “The impressionists were not into trying to create a 3-dimensional effect in their paintings,” he says. “They painted what they saw, and it became two-dimensional.”

For more on *Lasting Impressions*, go to arshtcenter.org.

— Jake Cline

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Note: All shows are in-person performances at the Arsht Center unless otherwise noted. All dates are subject to change. For tickets, updates and other information, go to arshtcenter.org.



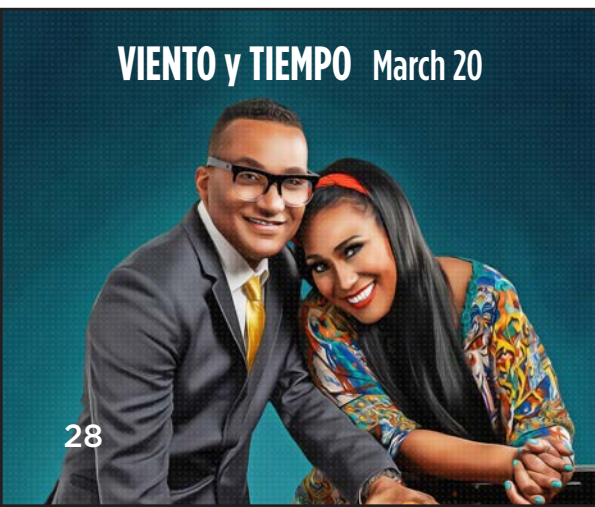
ART HEIST EXPERIENCE

March 16 - April 4



XPERIMENTO

March 19



VIENTO y TIEMPO

March 20

MARCH

Jazz Roots on the Plaza: Frost Studio Jazz Band directed by Steve Guerra

March 12

Pour Your Art Out : Angela Bolanos

March 13

Arsht on the Road

(Lincoln Road Mall)

March 13

Arsht on the Road

(MUCE in Little Haiti)

March 13

Art Heist Experience

March 16 - April 4

The Heritage Project: Songs of Freedom The Remix

March 17 • online

Arsht on the Road

(West Kendall Baptist Hospital)

March 17

Live on the Plaza: Xperimento

March 19

Viento y Tiempo featuring Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Aymée Nuviola

March 20

Arsht on the Road

(The Underline)

March 24

Live on the Plaza: Jaialai

March 26

Zoetic Schmoetic

March 27

Arsht on the Road

(Street Stages at Olympia Theater)

March 27

Camp Broadway Miami – Spring

March 29 - April 2 • online



ZOETIC SCHMOETIC

March 27

JUke
April 2



BRANDON GOLDBERG TRIO
April 16



APRIL

A Very Special Evening With Sharon Stone

April 1 • online

Arsht Performances @ Bal Harbour Shops

(5-8 p.m. every Thursday)

April 1

Live on the Plaza: JUke

April 2

Family Fest: Virtual Magic Academy with The Amazing Max

April 3 • online

City Theatre's Shorts Outside the Box

April 8

Live on the Plaza: Cortadito

April 9

Pour Your Art Out: Tree of Life

April 10

Ballet Hispanico

April 12 - 23 • online

Jazz Roots on the Plaza: Brandon Goldberg Trio

April 16

Siudy Flamenco

April 17

ARTiculation at Arsht: An Evening of Spoken Word

April 23

Pour Your Art Out: The Art of Tribal Mask

April 24

Zoetic Schmoetic

April 24

Family Fest: City of Trash

April 24 • online

Live on the Plaza: artist TBA

April 30

SHORTS OUTSIDE THE BOX

April 8



CORTADITO

April 9



MAY

Live on the Plaza: Siempre Flamenco

May 1

Inez Barlatier

May 1 • online

Live on the Plaza: artist TBA

May 7

City Theatre's Shorts Outside the Box

May 13

Lasting Impressions

May 19 - June 16

THE ART OF TRIBAL MASK

April 24



JUNE

Summer Shorts 25

June 3 - July 3

SIUDY FLAMENCO

April 17



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UKG
USI Insurance Services, LLC
Vranken Pommery America
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World Fuel
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GOVERNMENT & FOUNDATION

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Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners
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The Batchelor Foundation
The Boeing Company
Caring Friends Foundation
Carnival Foundation
The Charlesmead Foundation
The Children's Trust
Cindy and Robert Friezo Foundation
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Florida Blue Foundation
Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs
The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation
Funding Arts Network
The Garner Foundation
Genesis Inspiration Foundation
Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund
The Graham Companies
Green Family Foundation
Himan Brown Charitable Trust
The Israel, Rose, Henry & Robert Wiener Charitable Foundation
The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation
The Kirk Foundation
Knight Foundation
Miami Downtown Development Authority
The Miami Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
Ocean Reef Community Foundation
Peacock Foundation
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* Deceased.

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ENCORE!

Another look at the Arsht Center and its community.

Grammy-winning Cuban artist Aymée Nuviola kicked off the Arsht Center's Live on the Plaza series on November 20, 2020. The beloved "Sonera del Mundo" helped us welcome back live-music lovers to our campus after nine months of being shut down due to the pandemic. Audiences enjoyed a lively, socially distanced concert under the stars as Nuviola lit up the stage with her renowned timba sound. We look forward to welcoming her back on March 20 for *Viento y Tiempo*, a concert with virtuoso pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba.

Photo courtesy WorldRedEye.com.