

# Memorandum



**Date:** June 13, 2011

RCA  
Agenda Item No. 7(A)

**To:** Honorable Javier D. Souto and Members  
Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee

**From:** Alina T. Hudak  
County Manager

**Subject:** South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center  
Status Report

The Department of Cultural Affairs has prepared this report to provide the Committee with a monthly update on the progress with constructing and opening the new South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center. We are pleased to report that the Center is nearing completion and that the quality standards set for the construction of the buildings are being achieved and/or exceeded.

## CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION / CONTRACT CLOSE-OUT

The Tower Group (TTG) obtained a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center's (SMDCAC) Theater Building on April 8, 2011. The CO for the Activities Building had been obtained on February 18, 2011. TTG is currently working on punch list items, including all close-out documents and Owner training on the various building systems as required by Contract. The documents, trainings, and punch list items are projected to be completed by mid-June.

The Department Director and the President of OHL USA (Spain-based OHL purchased The Tower Group in 2007), along with their respective legal counsel, have engaged in two mediation sessions in order to reach an amicable agreement to close-out the project. The main issues being addressed are:

- The more than \$5.3 million in delay damages that the County has assessed against the project contingency and against the Contractor due to the project's being delivered 1080 calendar days beyond the contractual substantial completion date of April 23, 2008, and
- The Contractor's claims for approximately \$2.8 million and additional contract time extensions (6 compensable days and 850 non-compensable days).

## OPERATIONS

The plan to operate the Center is based on presenting a number of "soft opening" events designed to test building systems and train operational staff and volunteers. These initial performances will be followed by an official "grand opening" of the Center in October 2011 and the first full season in 2011-2012. In each case, the Center's presentations are being guided by the complementary goals of offering activities of artistic excellence and ensuring that all activities are accompanied by outreach into the South Miami-Dade community.

On April 22, 24 and 25, 2011 the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual All Kids Included (AKI) Festival. The Festival attracted more than 3,000 families and kids to experience activities that demonstrated that kids and families with and without disabilities can experience the arts. These events provided the South Miami-Dade community with a first look at the Center,

activated all areas of the Center and initiated the process of evaluation for the operations of the Center.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, Diavolo Dance Theater provided the first formal presentation at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center. More than 1,000 audience members attended this dynamic performance as well as more than 600 Miami-Dade County Public School students for a special Friday matinee. While in Miami, Diavolo offered a master class for dancers at the Center's Black Box Theater, provided performances for AKI school field trips and performed during the Saturday Family Festival.

May 9-14, 2011 brought the Doug Varone and Dancers to the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center for a week of community outreach activities and an evening performance. The company provided filled to capacity workshops and master classes for the Dance Academy in Palmetto Bay, Mays Middle School, Coral Reef Senior High Dance Department as well as a master class for advanced dance students and professionals at the Center's Lab Theater. Doug Varone and Dancers also performed a Tuesday night in studio "Stripped" performance at INKUB8 in Wynwood. INKUB8 is a performance studio run by local choreographer Heather Maloney providing access to local artists in need of rehearsal space. The educational component concluded with a three-day workshop at the MacArthur Young Men's Academy in South Dade. This workshop lead by Doug Varone brought together students with guidance councilors, school psychologists and senior administrators working together in a safe environment that broke down the authority relationship and created an even playing field for all participants. The final Saturday performance included the Coral Reef Senior High Orchestra and Chorus accompanying Doug Varone and Dancers in an Arvo Pärt score. More than 500 parents, teachers and dance lovers attended Saturday night's performance to standing ovations. Newspaper coverage in *The Miami Herald*, *El Nuevo Herald*, *Artburst* and *The Miami New Times* highlighted the outreach activities of the company while in Miami.

This initial offering of activities concluded with the Asolo Repertory Theater's production of *Las Meninas*, May 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, including a matinee performance on Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup> attended by a group of local high school students from Palmer Trinity Senior High. These students were provided with a question and answer session with Asolo Theater Artistic Director, Michael Edwards, followed by a backstage tour of the Center and introduction to the cast and crew of *Las Meninas*.

These "soft opening" performances have provided invaluable information on operations of the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center as we continue to address and develop policies in order to best meet the needs of our audience and artists.

The South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center recently was notified that it is the award recipient of two separate grants from South Arts to support programming for the 2011-12 season. The first award is a Regional Touring grant to support the engagement of Garth Fagan Dance Company for the public performance(s) and educational component during the fall of 2011. The second award is a Regional-Block Book grant to support the engagement of Evidence, A Dance Company for the public performance(s) and educational component scheduled for February 2012.

## **BACKGROUND**

The South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center is located on S.W. 211 Street in Cutler Bay and is being developed to serve as a multidisciplinary arts center to showcase the performing arts. The design team includes an architectural and engineering team led by Arquitectonica International, Inc, and

which also includes: theater consultant Fisher Dachs Associates, Inc.; acoustical and sound and communications consultant Artec Consultants, Inc.; and arts management consultant AMS Planning & Research Corp.

The Center's 966-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 of the Center 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 the 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 will illuminate 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.

A contract with The Tower Group, Inc. (TTG) for the construction of the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center was approved in July 2005 and the Department of Cultural Affairs issued the Notice to Proceed to the Contractor on December 29, 2005. The Department managed the construction of the Center and is now operating the facilities.

#### Attachments

  
Assistant County Manager

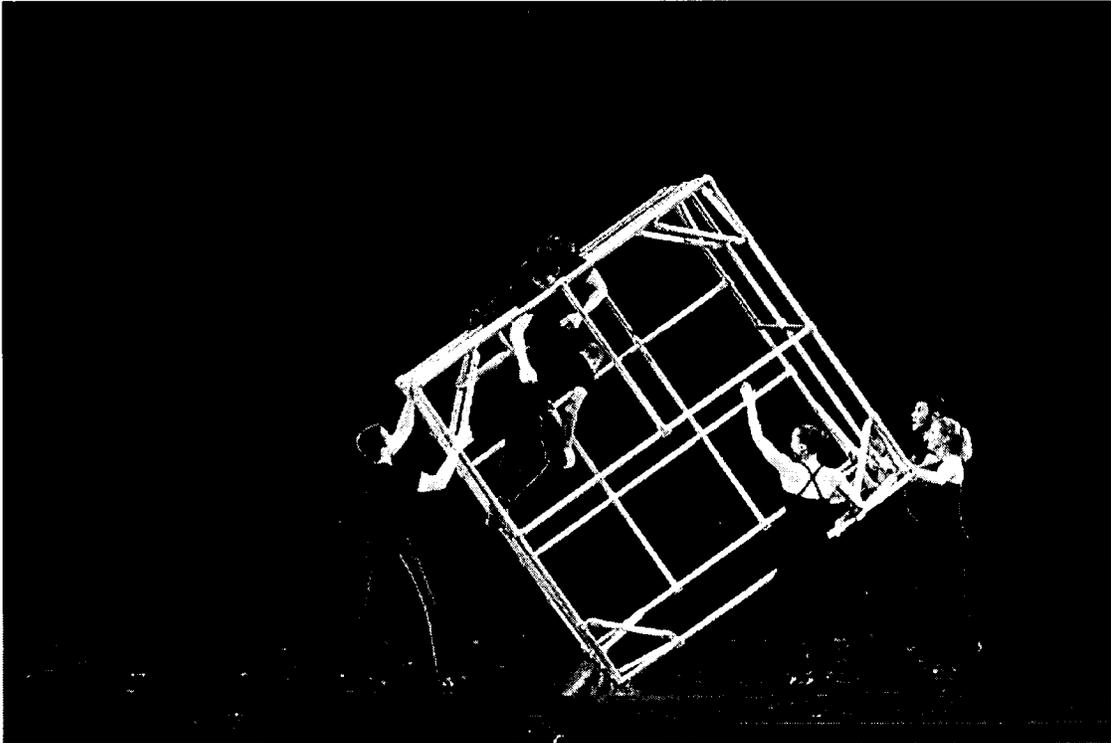


Coral Reef Senior High Chorus and Orchestra accompany Doug Varone and Dancers at SMDCAC





Coral Reef Senior High Orchestra plays in the orchestra pit



Diavolo Dance Theater performs at the SMDCAC