



John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
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NEWS RELEASE

Knight Foundation Announces New Gifts Totaling \$23 Million for Miami Arts

*Support for established institutions and grassroots organizations
brings Knight's investment in South Florida cultural community to
\$86 million*

MIAMI, Dec. 3, 2012—The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has announced \$23 million in new funding for the arts in South Florida. The support brings Knight Foundation's total investment in South Florida's diverse and dynamic cultural community to \$86 million in six years.

Knights initiative supports both established institutions and grassroots organizations as a way to engage South Floridians and weave culture into people's everyday lives. It includes funding for key arts institutions, and for the continuation of the [Knight Arts Challenge](#), a contest open to the entire South Florida community that for five years has allowed artists to experiment and innovate even through a weak economy.

"The arts not only inspire and challenge, they help create the shared experiences that connect people to one another and the places they live," said Alberto Ibarguen, president of Knight Foundation. "The success of our earlier initiative in Miami has encouraged us to expand to Philadelphia and Detroit and, now, to take it to the next level in Miami."

The Miami announcement follows a recent, \$19.25 million Knight Foundation investment in the Detroit arts scene, backing the cultural initiatives that are helping shape the future of that city.

In South Florida, the investment includes:

Support for leading cultural institutions (\$14 million). Funding will engage and inspire audiences in new ways:

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Miami City Ballet (\$5 million): In its 28 years, the ballet has earned a national reputation. New funding will help the ballet increase its outreach and add new works to its repertoire, including new commissions.

The Wolfsonian-FIU (\$5 million): The museum holds one of the most important collections of art and design objects from the modern era. With this new funding, The Wolfsonian will develop dynamic programming to engage South Florida residents and build greater access to its online collection.

Cleveland Orchestra (\$2 million): The organization that has become Miami's winter symphony expands its subscription season to four weekends of concerts and significantly increases its educational outreach programs to students.

Arts education (\$1 million): Miami artists often begin their careers at one of two schools, the Design and Architecture High School and the New World School of the Arts. To expand the horizons of the next generation, new funding will send students on cultural field trips to New York City and Europe.

Borscht Film Festival (\$500,000): The homegrown festival has put Miami into the national conversation on independent filmmaking, with works shown at 40 international film festivals. New support will help the festival expand its efforts and create more "only in Miami" stories.

Miami International Film Festival (\$500,000): The festival helps make the city a destination for first-class cinematic creations. Knight Foundation will further the expansion of Ibero-American film through awards at this annual event.

Continuing the Knight Arts Challenge contest (\$9 million) – Each year, the challenge asks everyone in South Florida for ideas to enhance the South Florida arts. The contest has just three rules: Projects must be about the arts; take place in or benefit South Florida and match Knight's funding.

The best ideas receive Knight Foundation funds. Anyone can apply: the challenge purposefully seeks out nontraditional grantees. In fact, 6,601 ideas have been received over the past five years. More than half of these ideas came from individuals, businesses, and small organizations that don't have 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

With Knight Foundation's new commitment, the contest will offer funding to organizations of all sizes – from businesses to individual artists – through 2015.

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Knight Foundation is extending the contest because of its success: A [new, independent evaluation](#) of Knight Foundation’s impact found that the challenge has helped fuel Miami’s cultural scene. In particular, the challenge has helped small projects with an entrepreneurial spirit take shape. For example:

- A newly created art-book publishing house, [NAME] Publications, has sold books about Miami artists nationally.
- An internationally recognized visual artist, Naomi Fisher, is hosting Weird Miami Bus Tours that take visitors to little-known local haunts.
- The Borscht Film Festival’s shorts have been shown at SXSW in Austin (four short films in 2012 alone) and the Sundance Film Festival.
- Additionally, prior funding has brought cutting-edge exhibitions to North Miami’s Museum of Contemporary Art, supported a new media program that includes the signature “Wallcasts” at the acclaimed New World Symphony campus, and will bring every Miami-Dade third grader annually to the soon-to-open Perez Art Museum Miami on the downtown waterfront.

“Miami’s creativity is limitless, Knight Foundation’s arts initiative and its Knight Arts Challenge have acted as its conduit – pulling the best ideas out of the city’s most creative thinkers, and helping them flourish. In a truly creative town like Miami, everybody should be able to participate, to dream and to ultimately see their passions through to reality,” said Dennis Scholl, Knight Foundation’s vice president for arts.

For more information about Knight Foundation’s arts program, visit KnightArts.org.

About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more, visit knightfoundation.org.

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