



Posted on Mon, Dec. 03, 2012

Knight Foundation announces 34 winners of Knight Arts Challenge

By Hannah Sampson

hsampson@MiamiHerald.com

South Florida residents could find themselves face-to-face with music at the airport, theater in a shipping container and a cultural center in Hialeah thanks to grants awarded Monday night by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

At an event at the New World Center in Miami Beach, the foundation named 34 winners of the 2012 Knight Arts Challenge Miami.

The awards, which must be matched, total \$2.28 million. They range from \$10,000 for a Hip-Hop Symphony to \$225,000 for ArtWorks, a project from Arts for Learning/Miami to give high schools paid art internships and apprenticeships.

Grants were given to individuals, organizations or others from a wide geographic spread — South Dade to Delray Beach — and across art forms, including film, dance, theater, music and storytelling.

“One of the most exciting things this year is that the ideas are coming from a wider distribution of neighborhoods: You have winners from Opa-locka, you have winners from Hialeah, you have winners from deep South Dade at the new cultural center, you have Indian dance in Broward County,” said Dennis Scholl, Knight Foundation’s vice president for arts. “I think it just took us awhile for people to understand that we were serious about wanting the best idea and we didn’t care where it came from.”

Other awards include:

- \$75,000 to Business for the Arts of Broward to establish the crowdsourcing site power2give.org.
- \$150,000 to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden for musical performances.
- \$25,000 to Ranjana Warier to present Indian dance through Western fairy tales.

The Arts Garage Jazz Project in Delray Beach, which won a \$30,000 grant, received another \$20,000 as winner of the challenge’s first people’s choice award.

A full list of winners is online at KnightArts.org.

The challenge has been around since 2008; 143 projects have received almost \$20 million. It was initially funded for five years, but the foundation announced \$9 million to

continue the contest for three more years on Monday. Knight also announced \$14 million in grants to seven institutions.

With that new \$23 million, the foundation's total gift to the art in South Florida reached \$86 million.

Scholl said the foundation has received many questions about future plans for the challenge.

"Frankly, that enthusiasm had a lot to do with us deciding to extend the challenge, but also if you look at the fact that we're beginning to get over 1,200 inquiries a year and we believe the quality of inquiries was high," he said.

Michael Spring, director of Miami-Dade's Department of Cultural Affairs, said the cultural community and the Knight Foundation have evolved since the challenge started, with arts groups becoming more aware of the opportunity and the foundation diversifying its awards.

"They're still looking for great ideas and that's still first and foremost at the heart of the competition," said Spring, whose department won a \$45,000 grant Monday to present a series at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Center featuring artists from South Florida. "But they're also looking for ideas that have an enormous amount of promise in a lot of places that might not have risen to the surface."

© 2012 Miami Herald Media Company. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miamiherald.com>