



81% of businesses see arts as major economic contributors

By CAMILA CEPERO

Three-quarters of over 500 companies that responded support Miami-Dade's arts community, with most of them revealing that they see it as an investment, an Arts & Business Survey conducted by the Beacon Council in conjunction with the Arts & Business Council of Miami and the Miami-Dade Department of Cultural Affairs found.

The survey, conducted through online survey development website SurveyMonkey, received the responses from a cross section of industry sectors including finance, manufacturing, construction, hospitality and retail.

The intent was to "survey the impact and involvement of the private sector on the arts," said Pamela Fuentes, vice president of International Economic Development at the Beacon Council.

Responses came from companies of

all sizes, ranging from major corporations to small businesses.

Results showed that 75% of businesses surveyed supported the arts, with 48% of them supporting one to three groups, 35% supporting four to nine groups and 13% supporting 10 or more groups.

Roughly 77% of businesses surveyed said they support the arts for business development and networking, 44% said their support of arts increases brand awareness and visibility to new clients, 70% do it because it provides a valuable tool for community relations and 44% do it for employee engagement and volunteer opportunities.

Though there are many ways to support the arts, 77% of businesses surveyed do it by offering money or sponsorship, 44% do in-kind donations, 41% have professionals serving on arts boards, 40% buy tickets for clients or employees and 31% have employees

volunteer in the arts.

Of those 25% of businesses surveyed that do not support the arts, 35% said they don't because they have never been asked, 21% said senior management is not interested in the arts and 13% said the arts do not align with their strategic objectives.

"For us at the Beacon Council, it's all about promoting Miami-Dade County as an international business community with a cultural hub," said Ms. Fuentes, who is staff liaison for the council's Creative Design Initiative.

"We know now that in the corporate community, arts play a critical role in developing their work force."

Roughly 81% of businesses surveyed agreed that the arts are a major contributor to the economy and quality of life and 61% agreed that arts are an important economic engine. Additionally, 81% said that arts contribute to the quality of life in the county, while 54%

said it enhances diversity and 44% said it fosters connectivity between communities.

Finally, 74% of businesses surveyed said that being involved in the arts helps to recruit and retain executives and employees, 68% said it stimulates creative thinking, 52% said it fosters professional development and leadership skill building and 48% said it offers unique and innovative employee benefits.

"I think that [businesses] do absolutely use [the survey] as a recruitment tool," Ms. Fuentes said. "And I really think that when companies relocate or expand, they are taking a look at every facet — not just economic, not just international connectivity. Companies care about where their employees are going to live."

"Companies invest in art because they see the value," she said. "They know that the arts attract business."

Pérez Art Museum sees attendance, memberships soaring

By CAMILA CEPERO

Officials at the Pérez Art Museum Miami have been working all year, acquiring hundreds of new pieces for the carefully crafted and sometimes endearingly local permanent collection, showcasing art exhibitions that transcend visitors' ideas of what it means to spend a day at a museum, and have seen their hard work pay off by way of what they say are soaring visitor numbers.

Higher visitor numbers has translated into higher membership numbers, too, said Franklin Sirmans, director of the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM).

"They have been up, up, up, which is awesome, we're really happy about that," Mr. Sirmans said. "All numbers have been increasing, which is fantastic."

Though the museum did not reveal exact figures, at least some of the success, Mr. Sirmans said, can be attributed to the museum's visitor services team, who have been very involved with collecting and listening to visitor feedback.

An exhibit titled "Basquiat: The Unknown Notebooks" has called the museum home since Aug. 12.

According to the museum, the exhibition showcases Jean-Michel Basquiat's rarely seen notebooks, filled with poetry fragments, wordplay, sketches and personal observations. It features 160 notebook pages, related objects, works on paper and large-scale paintings.

But, Mr. Sirmans said, the museum didn't stop there.

Complementing the exhibition, PAMM has added works from Miami including collaborative paintings made by Basquiat and Andy Warhol.



The bayfront Pérez Art Museum Miami has been adding to its collection with a number of permanent gifts, said Director Franklin Sirmans.

"It was one thing to see [the notebook pages] show," Mr. Sirmans said, "but we added work from collectors here in Miami, some other great paintings in there from board members, then drawings from as far away as Los Angeles."

"In addition to those works, we also created a big room with benches and tables for people to come down and make their own sketchbooks and listen to playlists," he said. "We turned it into a big space."

The museum hopes to be able to follow the success of the visitor engagement it's accomplished during the Basquiat show, which sees its last visitor Oct. 16, though not always on such a large-scale.

Museums of the 21st century are drastically different than those of the past, Mr. Sirmans said.



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Franklin Sirmans

"You can't just go and look at museums and look at paintings and stand there," he said. "We want people to have an experience. PAMM is about galleries,

exhibitions, the education department, having an experience while looking out at the bay, shops that feature beautiful works of art... it's the whole thing."

In May, the museum announced more than 100 new acquisitions including works by artists including Carmen Herrera, Mark Bradford, Taryn Simon, Stan Douglas, Yto Barrada, Nari Ward and Theaster Gates.

The pieces joining the museum's permanent installation include 100 works from PAMM trustee Craig Robins, a film installation by Stan Douglas, sculptures by Ernesto Neto and Pablo Atchugarry, 14 prints by Mark Bradford, an installation by Hew Locke and several works from PAMM's temporary exhibitions.

One of the most exciting acquisitions, Mr. Sirmans said, is

that of works by Cuban-born Carmen Herrera, purchased by the PAMM Collectors Council.

"Carmen Herrera is an amazing woman whose work people didn't begin to look at until the last decade," he said. "We need to be able to show the best of artists from Latin America and the Caribbean."

Already in the permanent collection for some time are works by Miami-born artist Teresita Fernández.

"We want people to see how we are sharing their story," Mr. Sirmans said. "We're a people's museum."

Mr. Sirmans said he's excited about upcoming events at the museum such as the ninth annual Corporate Luncheon on Sept. 28 and the April 2017 Art of the Party gala, but especially the convening of the Collectors Council this October.