



The cast and creatives of the October 2016 *Kitty Hawk* workshop at the Arsht Center, along with representatives from The Boeing Company, with President and CEO John Richard, center, and House Theatre of Chicago Artistic Director Nathan Allen, second from right.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Adrienne Arsht Center. This month, the spectacular *Death and Harry Houdini*, described by the *Chicago Tribune* as “Magic of the very highest order,” makes a much-anticipated return to our Theater Up Close season, April 26 – May 21, following a sold-out, critically acclaimed run in 2012. Magic of the highest order is what happens whenever our good friends from House Theatre of Chicago take up residence in their Miami home, the Carnival Studio Theater. Commencing with *The Sparrow* in 2011, followed by *Houdini*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Rose and the Rime*, *The Magnificents*, and last year’s epic *The Hammer Trinity*, House Artistic Director Nathan Allen and his company of superlative artists have treated South Florida theater-lovers to incredible stories that are at once tumultuous and captivating, surprising in their innovation, transformative in their vision of humanity – and guaranteed to keep us on the edge of our seats.

Which is why I am thrilled that Nathan Allen will be in the pilot’s seat when he directs the premiere this fall of *Kitty Hawk*, our newly commissioned musical production about Wilbur and Orville Wright’s historic first flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903. *Kitty Hawk* is the latest installment of the Learning Through the Arts partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools. One of the first STEAM-focused musicals for seventh graders in the country, *Kitty Hawk* will reach 27,000 seventh-grade students annually with a live performance here at the Arsht Center, an arts-integrated curriculum that extends learning into classrooms and workshops that encourage teens to create and innovate.

The project is already well on its way. Last fall, Allen directed a workshop of the new work, joined by playwright Tom Bryan, composer Erik Della Penna, House Theatre performers, curriculum specialists, Arsht Center staff and a group of Miami seventh graders who gave the creators invaluable feedback on the initial script, plot and a portion of the original score.

Although still in an initial creative phase, *Kitty Hawk* is fueled by the overwhelming success of the *Rock Odyssey* musical and curriculum that has educated and entertained nearly 200,000 of the County’s fifth graders each year since 2009 with more performances scheduled this May. The Adrienne Arsht Center hopes to further expand Learning Through the Arts with the goal of ultimately reaching 100% of the County’s fifth, seventh and ninth graders. This would provide arts-integrated learning for more than 75,000 young people each year, enriching their studies, enhancing their exposure to the arts and cultivating their creativity.

On behalf of the Arsht Center and our Learning Through the Arts partner, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, I profoundly thank The Boeing Company, which has generously supported script development for *Kitty Hawk*, marking Boeing’s first philanthropic investment in South Florida. Thank you also to Alicia Celorio on behalf of Do Unto Others Trust, The Miller Family Foundation, Peacock Foundation, Miami-Dade County, and Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, for providing additional support to help *Kitty Hawk* take flight next school year.

Thank you for joining us today. I look forward to seeing your smiling faces.

Sincerely,

M. John Richard
President & CEO

Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County