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ADRIENNE ARSHT CENTER CELEBRATES 20th ANNIVERSARY GALA

Arsht Impact education and community education programs inspire more than \$2 million in philanthropic support as 300 community leaders toast an unforgettable evening featuring Gregory Porter in concert, an original poem by Richard Blanco and a surprise performance by Broadway's Wesley Wray

Miami, FL – April 17, 2026 – On Saturday, April 11, 2026, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County (@arshtcenter) celebrated two decades of shaping Miami's cultural landscape with a spectacular 20th Anniversary Paint the Arsht Red Gala. The unforgettable evening featured Grammy Award-winning jazz vocalist Gregory Porter, an original poem by Miami-Dade County's first poet laureate, Richard Blanco, honoring the Adrienne Arsht Center's transformative impact, and the presentation of the prestigious Arsht Awards. The celebration concluded with a surprise appearance by Broadway star Wesley Wray – a Miami native and alumnus of the Arsht's AileyCamp Miami - who performed selections from *Buena Vista Social Club – The Musical*, in which he is currently starring on Broadway.

Following a public concert and program for more than 1,000 in the Dorothea Green Theater of the Ziff Ballet Opera House, the Adrienne Arsht Center's marquee philanthropic event united 300 philanthropists and community leaders on the Lynn Wolfson Stage in support of mission-driven [Arsht Impact](#) education and community engagement programs, which serve 100,000 annually. The event, and the Arsht's education and community engagement programs, inspired more than \$2 million in gifts dedicated to creating access to the arts for more young people and the Miami community, including surprise gifts inspired by Wray's performance. Notable gifts included the successful match of the Green Family Foundation Trust's \$500,000 challenge for education, securing an additional \$500,000 gift, and a \$250,000 commitment from Lucille Zanghi and James Dow.

"The success of this fundraising evening is proof that Miami truly believes in the power of young people and the arts. Together, we are funding transformational Arsht Impact education and community engagement programs and, most importantly, sparking bright futures," said Adrienne Arsht Center Foundation Board Chairman Eric G. Johnson.

"My experience as a student at the Arsht's AileyCamp Miami gave me the confidence to dream bigger than I ever thought possible—and those first moments on that stage ultimately led me all the way to a starring role on Broadway," said Wray.



The third annual Arsht Awards ceremony, which took place during the gala, recognized a family foundation and two individuals who have made significant contributions to the Arsht and the Miami cultural community at large. The honorees were Shelly Berg, dean of the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami and artistic advisor for the Arsht's Jazz Roots concert series, receiving the Arsht Education Champion Award; Arsht founding donor and former Vice President of the Adrienne Arsht Center Foundation Rhoda Levitt, recognized with the Parker Thomson Legacy Award; and the Green Family Foundation Trust, which was honored with the Arsht Angel Award for the Green family's years of dedication supporting innovative arts access and education programs. Bios can be found [here](#). In addition, two arts leaders were recognized with special awards for their impact on Miami's arts ecosystem. Mario Ernesto Sanchez, founder of the International Hispanic Theatre Festival of Miami and Teatro Avante, was honored posthumously for his extensive commitment to international cultural exchange. Beth Boone, artistic and executive director of Miami Light Project, was recognized for her leadership of Arts Action Miami, a cultural coalition of Miami's arts organizations that has successfully advocated to ensure public funding for local arts groups.

The Gala Co-Chairs were Eric G. Johnson, Chairman, Adrienne Arsht Center Foundation Board, and Holly Johnson; and Hillit Meidar-Alfi, Chair, Adrienne Arsht Center Trust Board and Eyal Alfi. Adrienne Arsht, Founding Chairman of the Adrienne Arsht Center Foundation, served as the Gala's Honorary Chair.

Joining them on the Gala Host Committee were Michelle and Rodney C. Adkins, Snjeza and Sebastian Barrack/Citadel, Trish and Dan Bell, Dr. Kimberly Green, Melissa and D. Nicholas Miceli/TD Bank, Marion and David Rocker, Nichole D. Scott, Yoly and Eugene Schaefer/Bank of America, Brian Vaske and Lucille Zanghi and James Dow.

The evening was generously supported by such leading supporters as Eric G. Johnson and Holly Johnson; The Paul J. DiMare Foundation; Kenneth C. Griffin, Sebastian and Snjeza Barrack and Citadel; Rhoda Levitt; Lucille Zanghi and James Dow; Y. David and Cheryl Scharf; Greenberg Traurig; Melanie and Martin Kirschner; Ruby M. Bacardi; Trish and Dan Bell; Gerald and Jennifer Grant; Rodney and Michelle Adkins; Akerman; Adrienne Arsht; Robert Barlick Jr. and Goldman Sachs & Co.; Miami-Dade County Commissioner Keon Hardemon and Adia Kamaria; Janet Goldman; Knight Foundation; D. Nicholas and Melissa Miceli/TD Bank; Miami Herald; Orange Barrel Media; David and Marian Rocker; Eugene and Yoly Schaefer/Bank of America; Nichole D. Scott; Brian Vaske; and University of Miami, among others.

Institutional sponsors Miami-Dade County, Pepsi and Steinway Piano Gallery, and media sponsor WorldRedEye.com also contributed to the benefit's success.

The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is made possible by the public support of the Miami-Dade County Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Tourist Development Council and the City of Miami Omni Community Redevelopment Agency. The Adrienne Arsht Center also receives generous support from individuals, corporations and local, state and national foundations.

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[About the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County](#)



Since opening in 2006 in the heart of downtown, the Arsht proudly serves as the cultural pulse of Miami – the heart of magical live arts experiences that spark the imagination and connect people to one another. Whether on our stages or in your neighborhood, the Arsht is alive year-round with international artists, innovative programming from [resident companies](#) and local arts partners, free community events that reflect Miami’s unique identity and more than 100 culturally diverse and impactful learning experiences for 80,000 children every year.

The Arsht, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has been recognized as a leader in the Miami’s cultural transformation, producing more than 400 annual events that generate 11,500 local jobs and \$125 million in economic impact. The Arsht is home to a robust series of touring Broadway musicals, star-studded jazz and classical music concerts curated for South Florida, an award-winning Miami-based theater program and numerous historic and televised events. Free annual Arsht events, such as Gospel Fest Miami, Art + Mind Day, Heritage Fest and our LGBTQ+ Pride celebration bring together people from all corners of our community. For more information, visit ArshtCenter.org.