

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2024-2025





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Interns and Work Study

The Museum of Art and Design at Miami Dade College offered internship and MDC student work-study opportunities to introduce students to multiple career paths within the non-profit arts and culture sector. Each intern and work-study student were empowered to assist with projects in various areas within the department, including art-making workshops, research, student engagement, and developing programs for the Museum of Art and Design and the Freedom Tower.

MOAD's interns and work-study students were offered experiences in cross-departmental collaboration and a broader perspective of Miami Dade College and our arts community. From July 1st, 2024, to June 30th, 2025, the museum had three interns and one MDC work-study student. Daniel Ramos, our Humanities Edge intern, helped with engagement strategies for our *Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights* exhibition. Our MDC work-study student, Emmanuel Ramirez, excelled at art education research and program assistance with MOAD Makes and GOGO MOAD programs.

MOAD was also pleased to promote last year's intern, Gisselle Mestre Delgado, to Research Assistant, where she's serving as an integral part of the team.



Emmanuel Ramirez, Daniel Ramos, and Gisselle Mestre Delgado

Oral History Project

In honor of the Freedom Tower's centennial, MOAD launched the Freedom Tower Archive, a growing collection of oral histories by Miami residents connected to the Freedom Tower's legacy.

Focused on the Cuban exile experience, MOAD spoke with individuals who received services and were processed at the Freedom Tower when it functioned as the Cuban Refugee Center, as well as with Bay of Pigs veterans, individuals who came through Operation Pedro Pan, and more recent arrivals from Cuba.

Furthermore, MOAD widened its outreach and interviewed people born in Haiti, Colombia, Venezuela, Jamaica, and Ukraine. The archive also includes the perspectives of Miami natives who shared their stories of hope, freedom, and opportunity.

Miami-based artist Clara Toro created black-and-white portraits of each participant, an initiative aimed to enhance Miami Dade College's efforts to document, record, and memorialize this essential chapter of Miami's history. To date, Toro has made more than **300** portraits.



"The Freedom Tower is iconic. Not only because it's a beautiful building—the structure's important, the historical essence of the architecture around it... But the Freedom Tower, what it means to the community, is exactly what the name calls for—freedom. It calls for opportunity, aspirations. And it is a symbol of everything that makes and has made Miami a great city." Jorge Mas

"When I see someone walking on the street and they look lost or forlorn or nervous, I have so much compassion because I remember being a first-time immigrant in this big, big country, and as small as we may think Miami is, those of us that are coming from the global south, Miami is a big space for us to navigate. How much is that? 40 something years later? I look back with a lot of compassion and patience when I meet someone who's here for the first time." Rosie Gordon Wallace



Exhibitions

Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: *From the Heights*

The Museum of Art and Design (MOAD) at Miami Dade College (MDC), in partnership with the Women Artists Archive Miami (WAAM), presented *Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights*. This marked the first-ever solo show in Miami of Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo's work. *From the Heights* was on view from December 2, 2024 through March 15, 2025.



MOAD hosted an opening reception for *From the Heights* during Miami Art Week. Approximately 112 people joined the festive celebration.

The scholarly panel, *Time and Place: Multitudes of Black Experience in Miami*, held on February 19, featured panelists Dr. Valerie Patterson, Dr. Donette Francis, and Dr. Simeon Richardson. Led by moderator Lauryn Lawrence, this talk incorporated Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo's association with creatives in Miami. Bowens-Saffo touched on multiple Miami neighborhoods including Coconut Grove and Richmond Heights.

The Artist as Educator panel, which took place on March 6, examined how the presentation of *Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights* conveys the power of educational legacy and cultural connection. Bowens-Saffo's parents were teachers, and she has worked as a artist and educator. Bowens-Saffo, along with Director of Women Studies of FIU, Alex Cornelius, PhD, and Founder of Women Artists Archive Miami, Anita Sharma.



Celia Cruz: *Work*

The Museum of Art and Design (MOAD) at Miami Dade College (MDC), in partnership with MDC's Hialeah Campus and the Celia Cruz Foundation, presented *Celia Cruz: Work*, a special exhibition celebrating one hundred years with Cuba's "Queen of Salsa." The exhibition was on view from January 15 through February 15, 2025.



Celia Cruz: Work featured video footage, posters, wigs and dresses, and recognized Cruz's labor and her tireless commitment to her audiences who she loved to make "dance until dawn." In 2025, we honored Cruz as well as the centennial of Hialeah and the Freedom Tower. In doing so, we celebrated our collective history and an extraordinary performer whose music plays a pivotal role in the soundtrack of Miami, the Caribbean, and countries around the world.

Its opening reception began with a tour led by MOAD's Executive Director and Chief Curator, Dr. Amy Galpin and special guest Dr. Jenesis Ramirez, FIU Teaching Professor in the Women and Gender Studies Center. After the exclusive tour, the exhibition opened to press and the public in conjunction with a celebration featuring button making, selfie stations, a buffet lunch, and ice cream courtesy of Azucar.

Several private tours, events, and class visits were held for Miami Dade College students and small groups during the run of the exhibition, resulting in **657** attendees.



Artist Residencies

This season, MOAD launched a brand-new initiative hosting artist residencies across Miami Dade College campuses.

Working artists used the campus's art galleries as spaces to make new work and engage with students throughout the semester, while hosting class visits, open studio hours, hands-on artmaking workshops, and more.

During the 2024/2025 season, MOAD hosted three incredibly talented artists:



Loni Johnson Altar Making Workshop, November 14, 2024. Photo by Alberto Garip.

Loni Johnson: a multi-disciplinary visual artist born and raised in Miami, FL. As an artist, educator, mother, and activist, Johnson's work is rooted in family history and spiritual traditions.



Ema Ri, courtesy of World Red Eye.

Ema Ri: a noted mixed media artist, whose work is informed by languages of abstraction and explorations of materiality. Influenced by personal experiences, Ema Ri examines themes of displacement and deconstruction.



Gonzalo Hernandez. Photo by Jacob Edenfield, courtesy of the artist.

Gonzalo Hernandez: an artist, father, and teacher, Hernandez's practice reveals personal narratives, institutional tensions, and broader ideas about belonging and place.

MOAD is proud to offer artists resources, support, and space to create in Miami. These residencies also invited the public to step into the studio and observe and interact with the artist at work.

Programs and Engagement

The Museum of Art and Design served over **5,000** attendees with our programs from July 1st, 2024, to June 30th, 2025, with approximately half of those attendees being MDC students and faculty. New program highlights include the introduction of 16mm screenings, open studios with artists in residence at MDC campuses, and exhibition panel discussions. Our presence at the Miami Book Fair, Little Haiti Book Festival, *GeoVanna Gonzalez: Flowing Pathways*, and more resulted in over **20,000** visitors total.

We continued our series of MOAD and Kislak Talks, hosting a variety of esteemed guests, including diaspora scholar Dr. Miguel Valerio and gallerist David Castillo while collaborating with the Kislak Center at UM and the Miami Book Fair respectively.

We also continued running our GOGO MOAD family-friendly, hands-on arts education program, which takes place at locations around Miami-Dade County. This season, we participated in Picnic de Libros in Little Havana, Surfside Summer Sundays, Little Haiti Book Festival, and more.

In addition, our MOAD Makes program, which launched last season, continued to gain momentum with its more advanced artmaking activities. MOAD works with influential artists such as Carolina Cueva and Polo Ramirez to lead attendees in a variety of thought-provoking classes.

Over
5,000
program attendees

Over
20,000
total visitors



"Very informative and creative workshop! Carolina took her time explaining and providing examples of how to manipulate the clay. Definitely learned a new skill today!" - Stephanie



"Born and raised in Miami and I've always had a love-hate relationship with it. Events like this make me love it all over again. Thank you!" - Danielle



"I'm grateful for these spaces that foster connection and enrichment, especially on the subjects of art and history." - Janea

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration



On Thursday, October 3, 2024, MOAD and Ema Ri hosted a community celebration in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month at MDC's Padrón Campus in the heart of Little Havana. The evening featured a reception with live music by guitarist Alberto Puerto, craft beer courtesy of The Tank Brewing Co., and an interactive and expressive artmaking activity led by Ema Ri. The event honored and recognized the innumerable achievements of communities with Hispanic heritage.

Sponsorships and Collaborations

MOAD continued to expand its Miami footprint this season, not only expanding on partnerships with Miami Dade College campuses and the Miami Book Fair, but with the Kislak Center at the University of Miami and new sponsor, the Tank Brewing Co.



We worked with the Women Artists Archive Miami for the first time, a collaboration for the development of the exhibition *Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights*, which featured programs sponsored by the Women and Gender Studies Center at Florida International University.



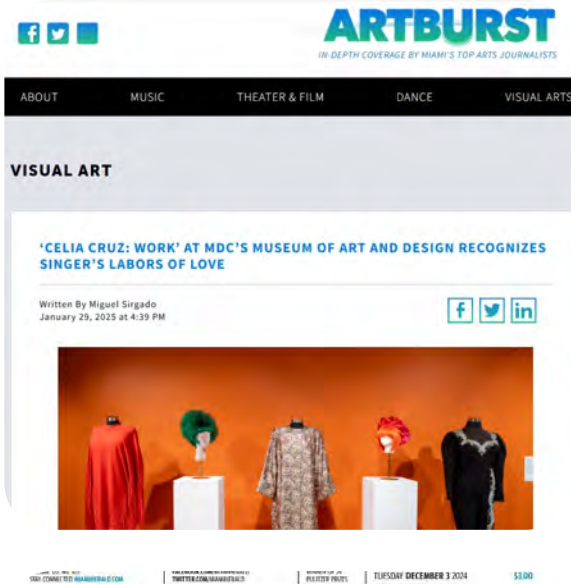
Topo Chico, Smartwater, and Pura Vida provided in-kind donations to our Miami Art Week reception for the first time, serving **200** attendees, with Topo Chico and Smartwater returning later in the season to support us during Open House Miami.

Press

During the 2024-2025 season, MOAD was honored to receive a bounty of accolades from the press; a true testament to the artists we worked with and the people we honored this year.

Miami New Times voted Germane Barnes's pavilion, *Ukhamba*, Best Public Art, GeoVanna Gonzalez's pavilion, *Flowing Pathways*, was included in **Forbes** magazine's Miami Art Week roundup, Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo's exhibition, *From the Heights* was featured on the cover of the **Miami Herald**, in **El Nuevo Herald**, and on Page 6 of the **New York Post**, and *Celia Cruz: Work*, an exhibition featuring clothes, shoes, wigs, and more belonging to the iconic songstress made headlines everywhere from the **New York Times** and **Artbust Miami** to features on **Deco Drive**, and **Univision**.

MOAD's new Executive Director and Chief Curator, Dr. Amy Galpin, also garnered her fair share of press in **Artburst** and **Lifestyles South Florida**, among others.



The Kislak Center

The Kislak Center at the Freedom Tower opened to the public in 2018. Made possible by a generous donation by the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, the Kislak Center includes some of the most significant original source materials related to the history of the early Americas.

The gallery showcases objects, including books, maps, manuscripts, Pre-Hispanic artifacts, and other historical materials that offer perspectives on civilizations that shaped the modern world. A permanent exhibition space on the first floor of the Freedom Tower realizes the vision of Jay I. Kislak (1922–2018) to establish a program in Miami devoted to the history and cultures of the early Americas. The Kislak Collection, containing **214** objects, is recognized as one of the most important collections of its kind in the world.

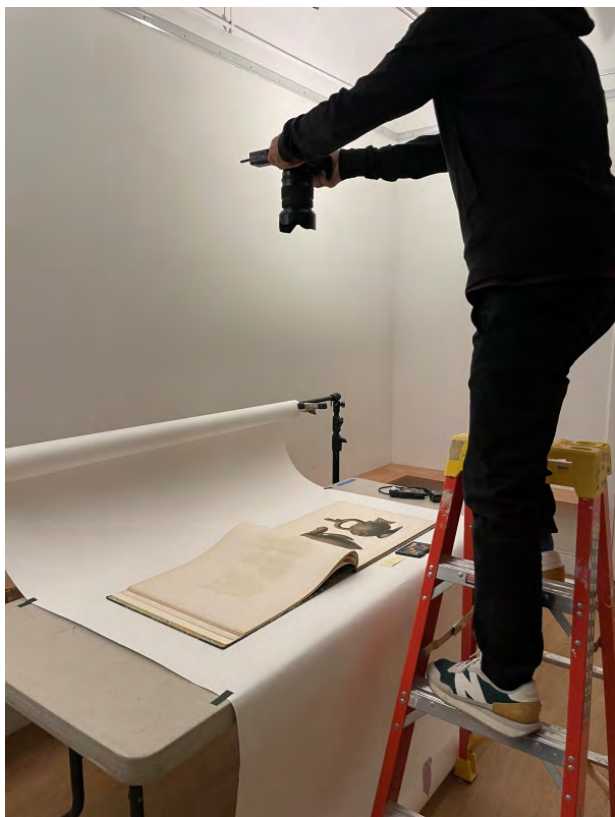
During the 2024-2025 season, MOAD not only hosted hands-on ceramic making programs and a panel discussion tied to the Kislak Collection but also embarked on a project creating 3D images of objects found in the collection, lending accessibility to children and the visually impaired.

On Wednesday, April 9, MOAD presented *Kislak Talks with Dr. Miguel Valerio* in partnership with the Kislak Center at the University of Miami. Visitors had the opportunity to browse a selection of works from the University of Miami's Special Collections related to the African Diaspora in Latin America before listening to a talk between Dr. Miguel Valerio, renowned author and scholar of the African diaspora in the Iberian World, and Daniel Arbino, Jay I. Kislak Chair and Curator. Valerio and Arbino talk about Valerio's latest work, focused on Black lay Catholic brotherhoods and Afro-Creole festival practices in colonial Latin America before taking questions from the audience.



To prepare for the new installation at the Freedom Tower, several experts were engaged, including Dr. Delia Cosentino and Dr. Carol Damian as well as Monica Flores and Shana Inofuentes of the Quechua Project. New research, improved texts, and dynamic interactives will be featured in the reinstallation.

In addition, important behind-the-scenes work continued, and this season we were able to digitize several objects and painstakingly restore eight objects in the collection via conservation work.



Kislak Collection Digitization Project, March 2025.



John L. Stephens

Incidents of Travel in Yucatan, volume II, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1843

Books, 9 x 5 1/2 x 1 5/8 inches (22.9 x 14 x 4.1 cm) and 9 x 5 3/4 x 1 5/8 inches (22.9 x 14.6 x 4.1 cm)

Jay I. Kislak Collection of the Early Americas, Exploration and Navigation, MDC PC 2020.3.5.2

Gifts of Artwork FY 2024-2025

This fiscal year MOAD was fortunate to acquire **14** works into the permanent collection, including 5 paintings, 3 drawings, 1 installation, 1 sculpture, 1 print, and 2 video works.

Arturo Rodriguez

Arcimboldo's Ghost

Oil on canvas, 2018

Gift of Demi Rodriguez

MDC PC 2024.1

Shinique Smith

Where My Heart Grows

Ink, acrylic, fabric, collage and objects on canvas over wood panel, 2016

Gift of David Castillo, in honor of Amy Galpin, PhD.

MDC PC 2024.2

Kate Gilmore

Star Bright, Star Might

Digital video, 2007

Gift of Cota Cohen-Knobloch

MDC PC 2024.3.1

Susan Lee-Chun

Suzercise (Mirrored Symmetry #1)

Mixed media installation, 2009

Gift of Cota Cohen-Knobloch

MDC PC 2024.3.2

Susan Lee-Chun

Let's Suzer-cise Chicago-style!

Single-channel looping video, 2009

Gift of Cota Cohen-Knobloch

MDC PC 2024.3.3

Jennifer Basile

Congaree

Relief print on Japanese rice paper, 2016

Gift of the private collection of Michael Joseph Netsky

MDC PC 2024.4.1

Timothy Buwalda

Henry

Oil on canvas, 2013

Gift of the private collection of Michael Joseph Netsky

MDC PC 2024.4.2

William Osorio

Ambiguity of the Fact

Oil on canvas, 2017

Gift of the private collection of Michael Joseph Netsky

MDC PC 2024.4.3

Marianela de la Hoz

Alicia en el país del espectáculo a través de la pantalla y sus imágenes

[Alice in the World of the Spectacle through the Screen and its Images]

Egg tempera on board, 2021

Museum Purchase

MDC PC 2024.5

Sheldon Lurie

The Sound of One Hand Clapping

Five panel graphite drawing, 1998

Gift of Peter P. Menéndez

MDC PC 2024.6

Gonzalo Fuenmayor

Freedom Tower

Charcoal drawing, 2024

Gift of Gonzalo Fuenmayor

MDC PC 2024.7

Lynne Golob Gelfman

Thru Sparky's Diner

Acrylic and fabric on canvas, 2017

Gift of the Gelfman Family in memory of Lynne Golob Gelfman

MDC PC 2025.1

Xaviera Simmons

Nightingales

Acrylic on stacked wood panels, 2018

72 x 72 inches

MDC PC 2025.3

Gift of Evanne and Edward Gargiulo



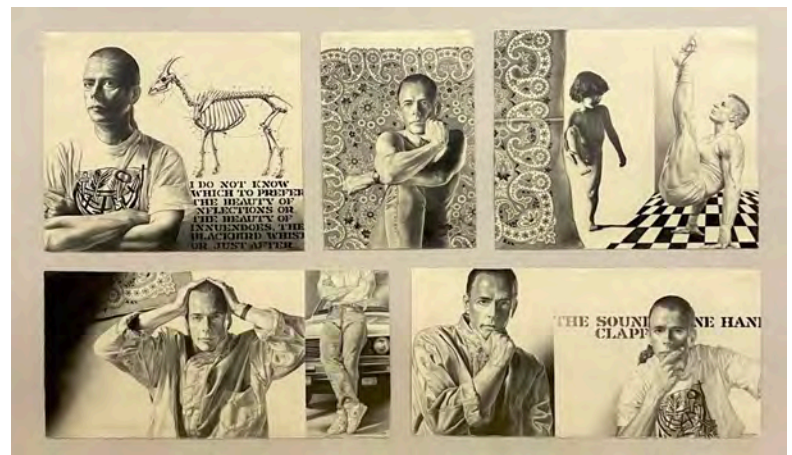
Kate Gilmore
Star Bright, Star Might, 2007



Shinique Smith
Where My Heart Grows, 2016



Marianela de la Hoz
Alicia en el país del espectáculo a través de la pantalla y sus imágenes, 2021



Sheldon Lurie
The Sound of One Hand Clapping, 1988

Grants

From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, the Museum of Art and Design (MOAD) at Miami Dade College had **\$1.6 million** in operational support from Miami Dade College. Dedicated Kislak Foundation funds elevated a series of public Kislak Center forums and new exhibition development.

MOAD's general program support and project-based grants were awarded by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs for the museum's season of activities and an accessibility project for the new Freedom Tower Oral History Archive.

Innovating funding partnerships were established that represented first-time relationships with the Florida Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Art Bridges Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation for American Art, and the Shepard Broad Foundation. This group of new funders supported arts education initiatives, exhibition and collections development, collections-on-loan, stakeholder focus groups, and humanities presentations that benefited the public.

Additionally, a Miami Dade College Cultural Affairs collaborative grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation supported MOAD in digital transformation. Two Capital Projects underway for Freedom Tower include the FY 2023-2025 Florida Department of State Division of Arts and Culture (FLDOS) Cultural Facilities, and the FY 2023-2025 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Infrastructure and Capacity Building. Capital projects were matched through **\$25 million**, 2023 State of Florida Governor's appropriation of dollars for the Freedom Tower.



Partners and Funders

Partners:

Miami Dade College Foundation

Miami Dade College Communications Department

MDC TV

Bloomberg Connects

Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald

The Kislak Foundation

The Kislak Center, University of Miami

FIFA Museum

Funders:

Institute of Museum and Library Services

National Endowment for the Humanities

Florida Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture Grant

Florida Humanities Council

Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Art Bridges Foundation

Henry Luce Foundation for American Art

Shepard Broad Foundation

THANK YOU!



MOAD's programs are made possible with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor, and Board of County Commissioners. They are sponsored in part by the State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture, and with generous support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The Miami Herald is a media sponsor of MOAD's programming.