

## EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome back to *Inspicio* e-Magazine, which is one part of the arts publication platform sponsored by Florida International University's College of Communication, Architecture + The Arts (CARTA).

*Inspicio* is currently offered as a website (<http://inspicio.fiu.edu>), where we continuously publish content about all art disciplines; as a periodic e-Magazine that can be read on iPads and iPhones and can be installed through the Apple APP Store; and accessible online through FIU's Digital Commons, an open access publishing and archival platform supported by FIU Libraries.

Contributors to *Inspicio* (FIU students, faculty, and talented people of interest) are focused on arts activities outside of the immediate FIU community.

*Inspicio* supports CARTA's mission by providing a platform and process for FIU students to critically examine and comment upon the art communities and activities of South Florida, and have the opportunity to publish their work alongside professional writers who are regularly published in the world's best publications like *The New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times*. In addition, *Inspicio* aspires to be a sophisticated enabler of the arts that is a "Must-See" resource for a global audience interested in the Miami-South Florida art scene.

**THE CURRENT EDITION OF INSPICIO** features a video interview with cover person **Michele Oka Doner**. Oka Doner, the daughter of former Miami Beach Mayor Kenneth Oka, grew up in the South Florida tropics with an acute awareness of the flora and fauna around her. The life-long deep impact of the natural world is evident in all of her artwork, which ranges from jewelry to monumental installations. Oka Doner is perhaps best known for *A Walk on the Beach* at Miami International Airport (1995-2010), which features nine thousand unique bronze sculptures inlaid over a mile-and-a-quarter long concourse of terrazzo and mother-of-pearl, one of the largest public artworks in the world. Oka Doner's numerous other permanent installations can be found in federal courthouses, public libraries, hospitals, universities, other transportation centers, and public parks. Though Oka Doner is elegant and stately in appearance, our video interview captured her warm humor and down-to-earth appeal.

In addition, we are pleased to re-publish an article about Oka Doner written by **Elisa Turner** for the *Miami Herald* in 1990, where Turner served as primary art critic from 1995 to 2007. The article describes Oka Doner's experimentation with "growing" living underwater sculptures in Key Largo using accreted coral. The sculptures were transferred to an above water park in Santa Monica after a three-year process.

One of my favorite *Inspicio* experiences was conducting a video interview with Pulitzer Prize recipient **Art Spiegelman**, who is best known for his extraordinary "co-mix" *Maus*, his masterful Holocaust narrative which portrays Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus* has been exhibited in museums world-wide, and I was fortunate to see an impactful exhibition of *Maus* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver's museum of contemporary art. In addition, during our video interview, Spiegelman describes a more recent project, his inventive biography in words and images of the not-well-known artist **Si Lewen**, who had an extraordinary life and career in between bouts of depression. To present the range of Lewen's art, Spiegelman created an "accordion" book that tells a different part of Lewen's story on each side.

South Florida is VERY lucky to have **Bonnie Clearwater** in our midst. Clearwater has been presenting outstanding major exhibitions in South Florida since 1985 – first at the Lannan Museum in Lake Worth, then as director of the Museum of Contemporary Art Miami (1997-2013), and now as the director of the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale. Over the years she has organized extraordinary exhibits of major artists like Helen Frankenthaler, Roy Lichtenstein, Bill Viola, David Smith, Richard Artschwager, Malcolm Morley, and Jack Pierson; and in the last couple of years she has challenged us with major exhibitions by Julian Schnabel, Anselm Kiefer, and an ambitious exhibition of Frank Stella's, which will take over the entire museum, and runs from November 12, 2017 to July 8, 2018. In addition, she has been an astute discoverer and supporter of new talent in South Florida. Clearwater discusses all of the above and much more in our video interview.

**Alfredo Garcia**, who recently received a Ph.D. from Princeton University, offers his third article for *Inspicio*, *Finding Purvis Young*. **Purvis Young**, a self-taught African-American artist, was befriended (beginning in 1976) by Barbara Young and Helen Kohen, the co-founders of the Vasari Project, an archive of the Miami area arts community from 1945 onward, which is housed at the main branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library, in partnership with the Miami-Dade Department of Cultural Affairs. Garcia poured through the Purvis Young archives to document how Young's art practice was nurtured and matured despite chaotic life circumstances.

In 1984-85, **Jay McInerney** joined the rarified company of authors like Norman Mailer (*The Naked and the Dead*), Harper Lee (*To Kill a Mockingbird*), Joseph Heller (*Catch 22*), and Sebastian Junger (*The Perfect Storm*), when his first novel, *Bright Lights, Big City*, was published and became a number one best-seller. Since then he has published eight novels and much more. In our video conversation, we talk about what it feels like to be "set-for-life," as well as his most recent novel, *Bright, Precious Days*.

With this issue of *Inspicio* we introduce a new **Arts Leadership** section featuring video interviews with **Dr. Mark B. Rosenberg**, the 5th President of Florida International University; **Alberto Carvalho**, the Superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, who said that an education without arts education is "education malpractice;" and visionary **Craig Robins**, who was deeply involved with the transformation of the South Beach Art Deco District, and who invented the Design District. All three of these men are deeply committed to the importance of the arts in society, and in particular to the diverse communities that make up the Miami area.

As Bernardo Fort-Brescia, the founding architect of Arquitectonica said in Volume 2, Number 2 of *Inspicio*, "Every architect wants to build something in Miami." This is mainly because Miami is an international tropical gateway city with an eclectic style. In this issue, we explore and review the newly constructed / reconstructed Surf Club, one of Miami's oldest private clubs, which in 2017 re-opened as a Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences at The Surf Club, while restoring and exceeding the 1930s elegance of the original building. Architect and FIU professor **Gray Read** met with the developers of the Surf Club and the mayor of Surfside, and thoroughly explored the new structure to bring us an in-depth review. The complex was initially conceived by Miami-based architect **Kobi Karp**, who was later joined by architect **Richard Meier**, interior designer **Joseph Dirand**, and landscape architect **Fernando Wong**. We also did a wide-ranging video interview with the Israeli-born Karp, who has built major structures around the world, from Abu Dhabi to Moscow to Miami. In addition, we interviewed the oldest living member of the original Surf Club, whose father was one of the founders.

Our other featured architecture story, *Zero Net Energy*, was written by architect and FIU professor **David Rifkind**, who provides the recipe for creating a beautiful Net Zero home. "Zero Net Energy buildings, or Net Zero, produce at least as much power as they consume over the course of a year. Through a combination of energy efficiency and renewable energy generation, Net Zero buildings minimize their environmental impact by eliminating direct and indirect carbon emissions," said Rifkind.

One of the most beautiful concert halls in the world, the New World Center (NWC), designed by world-renowned architect **Frank Gehry**, is also the most technologically advanced concert hall on the planet. Working with New World Symphony's artistic director and a forward-looking group of staff and trustees, **Howard Herring**, NWS president and CEO, was part of the team that invented the program that, in turn, inspired Gehry to design a 21st century musical meeting house. In an in-depth video discussion, Herring describes his roots as a musician and performer, and the path he followed to make the current version of the NWS and NWC possible.

We were lucky to sit down for a video interview with **Jane Alexander**, a true Renaissance human. Alexander is an author, actress, and former director of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). She has received a Tony Award, two Emmy Awards and been nominated for four Academy Awards. She is also a naturalist and conservationist. When Alexander was director of the NEA (1993-97), she had to do battle with Newt Gingrich, the newly installed Speaker of the House, who was gleefully seeking to defund and crush the NEA. How could a "mere actress" withstand the onslaught of a seasoned politician? There is fine mettle and a solid education in her New England bones. And now she is bringing awareness to the plight of at-risk animals in her recent book, *Wild Things, Wild Places* (2016).

Finally, we are once again pleased to present the cartoons of **Alex Rocky Ferrer**, a young Miami-based cartoonist with an elegant hand and style. Many moons ago I saw a greeting card titled "Jackson Pollock's Mother," which depicted a little Jackson in the kitchen, looking up at this mother, whose apron was splattered with spaghetti sauce and other culinary mothers. For this issue of *Inspicio*, we asked Ferrer to imagine the colors of other notable artists. We think you will enjoy the results.

I hope what you read, hear, and see in *Inspicio* adds value to your appreciation of the arts in Miami and South Florida.

– Raymond Elman