

Introduction to Dennis Scholl. 2:26 min. Music: Carmen Cicero. Videography, Photo & Design: Raymond Elman.

# Dennis Scholl:

## Making a Difference

By Raymond Elman

In 2017, seasoned arts executive and entrepreneur Dennis Scholl became the President and CEO of ArtCenter/South Florida.

Scholl, a change agent known for his ability to scale cultural efforts and enterprises, is focused on creating a holistic environment for Miami’s artists.

In the spring of 1984, ArtCenter celebrated its grand opening on Lincoln Road in Miami Beach as an organization addressing visual artists’ workspace and community needs. With Community Development Block Grant funds from the City of Miami Beach, ArtCenter artists took up residence in 21 storefronts on a then nearly abandoned and severely dilapidated Lincoln Road. ArtCenter was one of the catalysts in the renaissance of Lincoln Road, which was a key part of the revitalization of Miami Beach.

In 2015, ArtCenter sold its landmark Lincoln Road building, providing the organization with an \$88 million endowment to expand its role in serving the city’s growing cultural community.

From 2009 to 2015, Scholl was the vice president for arts at Knight Foundation. He launched the foundation’s arts program, leading it to national acclaim and overseeing close to \$200 million in grants. At the Knight Foundation, he also developed and scaled unique national offerings including the Knight Arts Challenge and Random Acts of Culture, whose pop-up performances have been received enthusiastically and replicated across the country.

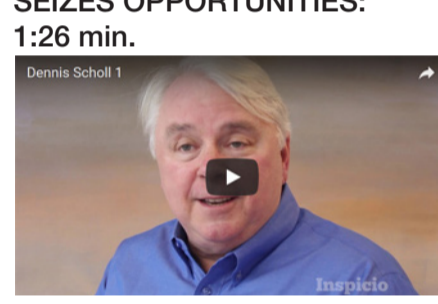
“Dennis’ entrepreneurial vision shaped Knight Foundation’s Arts program. He has an eye for what’s original, what’s interesting, what’s challenging, and he runs with it – to great success. I’m looking forward to watching him transform ArtCenter and provide a new lift to the arts in South Florida,” said Alberto Ibarquien, president, Knight Foundation.

Over the last 20 years, Scholl has created a series of initiatives dedicated to building the contemporary art collections of museums, including the Guggenheim, the Tate Modern and the Pérez Art Museum Miami, which have resulted in hundreds of patron-funded art acquisitions for these institutions. He has served on the boards and executive committees of ArtPlace; the Aspen Art Museum; Detroit Institute of Arts; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; the Pérez Art Museum Miami; and the Linda Pace Foundation. He has been named three times to the annual WESTAF list of the Most Powerful and Influential Leaders in the Nonprofit Arts, and along with his wife, Debra, received the National Service in the Arts Award from the Anderson Ranch Art Center.

Scholl is also a filmmaker, and has received 11 regional Emmys for his cultural documentaries, including films about Tracey Emin, Theaster Gates, Wynton Marsalis and Frank Gehry. A former Harvard University Advanced Leadership Fellow and a Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab Visiting Scholar, Scholl is the co-founder of Betts & Scholl and Mother Tongue Shiraz, which produce award-winning wines in Australia and France.

The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds and 4 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

### SEIZES OPPORTUNITIES: 1:26 min.



*Describe how your diverse experiences in the arts have prepared you for your current position at ArtCenter/South Florida.*

### STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 0:49 sec.



*How were you approached to take the job at ArtCenter/South Florida?*

### CRITICAL THINKING: 3:18 min.



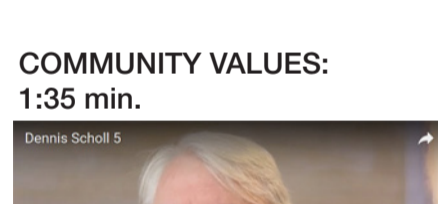
*Although at this early stage of your involvement, the goals and mission of the ArtCenter must be evolving, can you talk about your primary goals as of this moment?*

### INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 4:03 min.



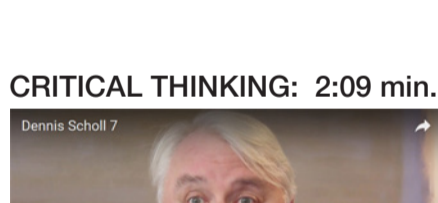
*How will the huge financial windfall of selling part of the ArtCenter property change the ArtCenter?*

### COMMUNITY VALUES: 1:35 min.



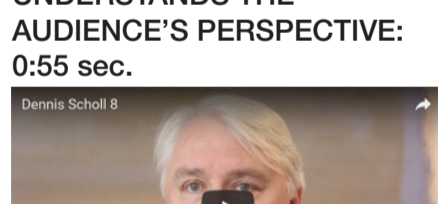
*The way you described the impact of the early days of the ArtCenter sounds like concepts advocated by Richard Florida. Is Florida part of your team?*

### CRITICAL THINKING: 2:09 min.



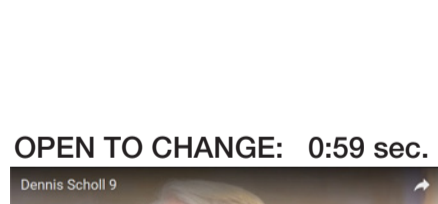
*How can publications like “Inspicio” help the ArtsCenter realize its goals?*

### UNDERSTANDS THE AUDIENCE’S PERSPECTIVE: 0:55 sec.



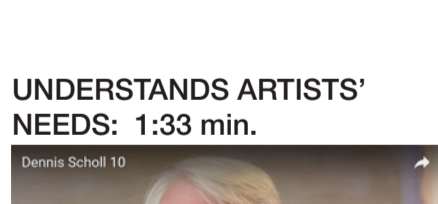
*I’ve heard people complain that e-Blasts containing an image and 1-3 sentences per story require too much reading.*

### OPEN TO CHANGE: 0:59 sec.



*What is an appropriate format for art criticism in 2018?*

### UNDERSTANDS ARTISTS’ NEEDS: 1:33 min.



*Which other art organizations do you look at to find approaches worth emulating?*

### VALUES FIRST-RATE EDUCATION: 1:37 min.



*Is the ArtCenter planning to work with South Florida universities to advance the quality of their fine arts programs?*

### OPEN TO CHANGE: 1:01 min.



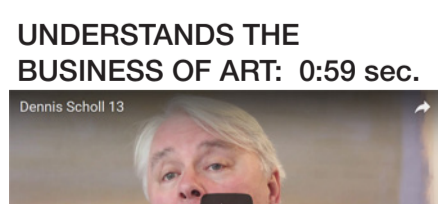
*You are a major art collector and a filmmaker — are those activities going to take a back seat to your work at the ArtCenter?*

### UNDERSTANDS THE BUSINESS OF ART: 0:59 sec.



*You know all of the major art collectors in South Florida. How do you see them supporting the ArtCenter?*

### STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 1:33 min.



*If all of your dreams for the ArtCenter come true, what will be the impact on Miami?*