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## **MIAMI CITY BALLET AWARDED \$3 MILLION IN SUPPORT FROM KNIGHT FOUNDATION**

### *Funding is Part of \$37 Million Investment in Miami's Arts and Culture Ecosystem*

MIAMI BEACH, FL. — [Miami City Ballet](#) has been awarded \$3 million in support from the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#). The grant is part of a \$37 million Knight Foundation investment announced Monday to further strengthen Miami art and culture organizations that fill out the city's arts ecosystem, bringing Knight's total investment in the sector to \$165 million since 2005.

This transformational support — \$3 million over five years — will be used to further strengthen the Miami City Ballet's cultural relevance in Miami by supporting a new administrative and leadership infrastructure emphasizing experimentation, diversity, equity, and inclusion. It will support the institution's strategic vision to expand audience and community engagement to serve a large, diverse and inclusive population; to increase Miami City Ballet School programs with a focus on inclusivity, accessibility and diversity; to grow audiences through enhanced marketing efforts including data insights and digital initiatives; and to increase the development of partnerships and collaborations with schools, neighborhoods and other arts organizations.

"This is an exciting time for the arts and culture community of Miami. Our vibrant city has been transformed by the steadfast investment in arts and culture during Alberto Ibarguen's tenure as CEO of Knight Foundation," said Miami City Ballet Board Chair Kristi Jernigan. "I am thrilled to have their endorsement of us as an anchor arts institution — we will steward their investment toward a measurable return in our diverse and dynamic city."

At the center of Miami City Ballet's leadership infrastructure is the recently-appointed [Executive Director Tania Castroverde Moskalenko](#) as well as [Artistic Director Lourdes Lopez](#). Miami City Ballet is one of the few arts organizations, globally, boasting not only an all-female leadership team, but also having two women of Hispanic origin — Castroverde Moskalenko and Lopez are both of Cuban descent.

"We are deeply grateful to Knight Foundation for this remarkable gift that re-affirms what we do," said Castroverde Moskalenko. "Knight Foundation's support will allow us to strengthen our institution with new administrative and leadership infrastructure emphasizing innovation and inclusion, both onstage and off."

"Alberto Ibarguen's wish for art all over Miami has come true. His vision for Miami has illustrated the importance of arts for a city, for a community and for its citizens. We are proud to have Miami City Ballet at the epicenter of this transformation," said Lopez. "As the only Latina Artistic Director of a

major ballet company in the U.S., I am deeply indebted to Knight Foundation for what this will allow us to become, be part of and contribute to — a strong social fabric profoundly connected to the arts.”

“Miami City Ballet has played an important part in creating a thriving arts community in our city. In this next phase, we look forward to seeing them build on their extraordinary history, as well as the artistry and diversity of their dancers and staff,” said Knight Foundation Vice President for Arts Victoria Rogers. “Through these efforts, they will capture the imagination of expanding audiences and convey the relevance of this amazing art form locally and globally.”

Miami City Ballet is one of the country’s premier ballet companies. Led by Castroverde Moskalenko and Lopez, Miami City Ballet performs for more than 100,000 patrons each year in Miami and locations throughout South Florida. The organization also has one of the most respected ballet training schools in the country with more than 1,000 students participating in its programs. The grant will allow the Company leadership to expand these programs and reach even more arts lovers, allowing South Floridians the opportunity to experience Miami City Ballet.

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#### **ABOUT MIAMI CITY BALLET**

Miami City Ballet — now in its 33rd season — was founded in 1985 by Miami philanthropist Toby Lerner Ansin and Founding Artistic Director Edward Villella. The Company has 52 dancers and a repertoire of more than 100 ballets. The Company performs for nearly 100,000 patrons annually during its South Florida home season in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and Naples, and tours to top theaters domestically and internationally, including recent visits to New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles. An upcoming performance at Washington D.C.’s Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts will take place in spring 2019.

Miami City Ballet School, the official school of Miami City Ballet, is one of the most respected ballet training academies in America. The School’s renowned faculty, challenging syllabus, and affiliation with Miami City Ballet make it a place where all students — from children to adults — can receive comprehensive dance training. The School trains approximately 400 students, ages 3-18, in its year-round program and 400 students during its summer programs, granting nearly \$500,000 in scholarships annually. More than 500 adults participate in a vibrant community division.

The Company is lead by Executive Director Tania Castroverde Moskalenko and Artistic Director Lourdes Lopez. Lopez was recently awarded a prestigious *Dance Magazine* Award in 2018 and is on The Ford Foundation Board of Trustees. Miami City Ballet is headquartered in Miami Beach, Fla., at the Ophelia & Juan Js. Roca Center, a facility designed by renowned architectural firm, Arquitectonica.

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#### **MIAMI CITY BALLET MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Julii Oh, Miami City Ballet

[Julii.Oh@miamicityballet.org](mailto:Julii.Oh@miamicityballet.org) | 305.929.7000, ext. 1600

Melissa A.E. Sanders, Tadpole Communications

[Melissa@TadpoleComm.net](mailto:Melissa@TadpoleComm.net) | 404.909.6726

Kim Speece, Tadpole Communications  
[Kim@TadpoleComm.net](mailto:Kim@TadpoleComm.net) | 404.402.6579