

More Growing Pains

Written by Anne Tschida, BT Arts Editor
May 2018

The Haitian Cultural Arts Alliance faces a fight as it expands its reach



or many, Little Haiti existed for years as a neighborhood to drive through if you had to. It wasn't touted as a tourist destination like Little Havana, it wasn't an arts center, and it certainly wasn't glamorous. But it was always a vibrant, mostly working-class community, as those who paused to stop by discovered.

Those already there didn't need to discover their roots, but they did want to promote Haiti and bring their culture to a wider world. Back in 1994, the Haitian Cultural Arts Alliance (or Alyans Atizay Ayisyen, its Haitian name) opened as a non-profit, with the aim to highlight the arts and culture not just from Haiti, but the Afro-Caribbean world and its diaspora. The HCAA, as the Alliance was known, was headed up by businesswoman Mireille Chancy Gonzalez, the popular bookseller Jan Mapou, and well-known artist Edouard Duval-Carrié.

It wasn't easy to raise funds in and for a fairly disadvantaged community when the Alliance didn't even have a real home. But in 1995, the HCAA pulled together its first exhibit, "Contemporary Expressions of Haitian Art," presented at what was then the South Florida Art Center (now ArtCenter/South Florida) on Lincoln Road.

That was followed in 1996 by an exhibit of antiquarian maps of Haiti from Duval-Carrié's collection at what is now called HistoryMiami. The HCAA would then collaborate with the Bass Museum and other groups.

More Growing Pains

Written by Anne Tschida, BT Arts Editor
May 2018



More Growing Pains

Written by Anne Tschida, BT Arts Editor
May 2018



letters@biscaynetimes.com