

locustprojects

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Locust Projects' INFINITY Annual Benefit Dinner Honors The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Celebrates Iconic Food and Art Pioneer Miralda



(Miami — February 11, 2022) — This past Thursday, February 10, **Locust Projects** — Miami's leading alternative art space — hosted its **Annual Benefit Dinner** honoring the **Knight Foundation's** transformative impact on the arts in Miami and celebrating internationally renowned food and art pioneer **Antoni Miralda** at the **Rubell Museum East Wing**.

The INFINITY Annual Benefit Dinner was an unforgettable art and culinary experience commemorating the Knight Foundation – their transformative impact on the arts in Miami and specifically, their support of experimental art and ideas at Locust Projects – and celebrating iconic food and art pioneer, Antoni Miralda, an artist with longstanding ties to Miami.

“With our distinct mission to support the creation of cutting-edge new work by local, national, and international artists at all career stages, there’s no more fitting artist for Locust Projects to honor than Miralda, an internationally-renowned experimental artist for more than sixty-years who has made Miami their part-time base since 1982,” says Lorie Mertes, Locust Projects’ Executive Director.

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“Guests enjoyed a taste of Miralda’s vision in a unique, immersive dining experience envisioned by the artist. At its center, was the concept of infinity—in both the shape of the table and in the convivial exchange around it.” Mertes continues, “Each guest was an essential ingredient, seasoning our joyful time together.”



The 120-person sold-out event held in the Rubell Museum event space featured a 150-ft long, custom-made infinity-shaped table and centerpieces referencing Miralda’s past works from his global *Honeymoon Project* from the 1990s and the Statue of Liberty’s torch in a bowl of dried “*moros y cristianos*” representing the marriage of old and new worlds in to airplane-style trays recalling past feasts from the 1970s. The experience included a dramatic curtain reveal, pea-flower colored “InfiniTEA” offering drinks, magenta colored light infusing the space, a choreographed performative placing of chairs by waiters in headlamps, and lighted food carts for each course—all choreographed to a series of wall-sized video projections tracing Miralda’s work from the 1970s to the present. The creative multi-course menu by Le Basque Catering was created in collaboration with Miralda and his longtime partner and chef, Montse Guillén to reference Miami’s cultural and culinary influences. At every table was a small pot of locust (projects) powder to season each dish as a nod to the 24-year old arts organization.

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The event was co-chaired by **Richard and Susan Arregui, Debra Scholl, and Munisha Underhill**, with major sponsorship from **Richard and Susan Arregui, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Diane and Alan Lieberman, and Craig Robins.**

A full list of sponsors listed in the [event program here.](#)

The convivial gathering included artists, Locust Projects board members and a wide array of Miami's art collectors and patrons, including **Miralda and Montse Guillén, Micky Wolfson** – who, in 1982, supported Miralda's first of many projects in Miami – **Richard and Susan Arregui, Mario Cader Frech and Robert Wennett, Marvin Ross Friedman and Adrienne bon Haes, Diane and Alan Lieberman, George Lindemann, Dede Moss, Ariel Penzer and Jeremy Milgroom, Mera and Don Rubell, Jason and Michelle Rubell, Debra Scholl, Rosa Sugrañes, Munisha Underhill and Rosie Gordon-Wallace,** and artists **Robert Chambers and Mette Tommerup, George Sánchez-Calderón, Antonia Wright,** and Locust co-founding artist, **Westen Charles,** to name a few.



(Above left to right, top to bottom): Micky Wolfson and Miralda; Robert Wennett, Mario Cader Frech, Adrienne bon Haes and Marvin Ross Friedman; George Lindemann, Josh Krens, Ariel Penzer and Jeremy Milgroom; Munisha Underhill, Debra Scholl, Miralda, Lorie Mertes, Richard and Susan Arregui.

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Proceeds from the event support Locust Projects' mission to CREATE opportunities for visual artists at all career stages; INVITE risk-taking and experimentation; ACTIVATE conversations around new art and ideas; and ADVOCATE for artists and creative practices.



[Click here to view event photos](#) by Alejandro Chavarria of World Red Eye

Locust Projects' Infinity Annual Benefit Dinner was made possible thanks to the in-kind support of: Jacober Creative, Rubell Museum, Miami Herald, Tito's Handmade Vodka, CDR Maguire, and Le Basque Catering. Additional thanks to SoFlo Studios and DJ Peoples. Event support from Josep Maria Civit (Lighting design); Ferran Martín (Construction); and Coralí Mercader (Video archivist/editor).

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ABOUT ANTONI MIRALDA

For nearly six decades, Antoni Miralda has harnessed the power of food through participatory performances. From feasts and rituals to processions and parades, Miralda has explored connections between art and food culture in exhibitions, biennales, festivals, world fairs, and other public events across the globe.

Born in Terrassa (Barcelona) in 1942, Miralda moved to New York in 1971 and in 1979 he was a fellow of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT. With chef Montse Guillén, he created El Internacional Tapas Bar & Restaurant, an artistic project and social experiment in the Tribeca neighborhood of Manhattan from 1984 to 1986. His projects have engaged international art

audiences in Documenta VI, at the XVII São Paulo Bienal, at the Venice Biennale in 1990, and in his design of the Food Pavilion at the World Expo in Hanover in 2000. His street events in New York, Kansas City, Las Vegas and Aspen, and his exhibitions in Houston, Philadelphia and Miami, among others, have introduced Miralda's work to the general public across North America, including the Honeymoon Project (1986/1992), a multi-site international art project of the symbolic Old World/New World wedding of New York's Statue of Liberty with the Columbus Monument in Barcelona. He has had major retrospective exhibitions organized by the Caixa de Barcelona and Valencia's IVAM (1995), and the Reina Sofia in Madrid (2010), and MACBA in Barcelona (2016). He splits his time between Miami and Barcelona.

MIRALDA IN MIAMI

Miami became an important and productive base of operations for the artist in 1981 when he was invited to be the guest artist of the New World Festival of the Arts by then Center for the Fine Arts Director Jan Van der Marck and festival benefactor, Micky Wolfson. Miralda conceived activations for cultural facilities across the city including Coral Castle, Vizcaya, the Bass Museum, and the Lowe Art Museum, among others. In 1992, the artist and his partner chef Montse Guillén were invited by Craig Robins to move to Española Way, which became the base for the artist to create numerous projects across Miami over the years, including opening the popular Big Fish Mayaimi restaurant on the Miami River (1996-1999) and later TransEAT on North Miami Avenue near Locust Projects' original Wynwood location. Among Miralda's many activations in Miami over the years are: *Santa Comida/Holy Food* at Miami Dade Community College, South Campus Art Gallery (1985), also traveled to El Museo del Barrio in NY and *Magiciens de la terre*, Centre Pompidou in Paris; *Honeymoon Project* at Miami-Dade Community College (1988); *Grandma's Recipes* at Miami Art Museum (1998); *Home Tender Home* at The Wolfsonian, Florida International University, Miami Beach (2002); *The Last Ingredients* as part of *Tide by Side: Opening Processional Performance* at Faena Art, Miami Beach (2016); and most recently *The Magic Banquet* organized by the Museum of Art and Design at Miami Dade College (2018) in

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collaboration with Chef Jose Casals and students from the Miami Culinary Institute at MDC and EXILE Books.

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2021-2022 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; Susan and Richard Arregui; Hillsdale Fund; the Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; VIA Art Fund | Wagner Foundation Incubator Grant; Diane and Robert Moss; Elizabeth Bailey; Cowles Charitable Trust; Diane and Werner Grob; Kirk Foundation; Diane and Alan Lieberman; Artis; and the Incubator Fund Supporting Sponsors and Friends.

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