

***Miami Stories* to Feature One-Act Plays
Penned by Bonnie Clearwater, Don Slesnick,
Sanford and Dolores Ziff**

April 18th Dinner/Theatre Gala Benefits Coral Gables' New Theatre

The 3rd annual *Miami Stories 2008* featuring a series of three one-act plays penned by local personalities, promises to be another smashing sensation. The dinner/theatre production is a benefit for the award-winning New Theatre and takes place on **Friday, April 18th** at the Miami Science Museum.

Three local personalities – MAM director Bonnie Clearwater, Coral Gables Mayor Don Slesnick and philanthropists Sanford & Dolores Ziff -- have each written a ten-minute play on a subject of their choice, and the plays will be professionally cast and directed by Ricky J. Martinez, New Theatre's Artistic Director. The evening also includes a cocktail reception, three-course gourmet dinner, silent auction and music by Marc Berner and Peter Betan. "Mr. Miami Beach" Michael Aller will emcee.

Miami Stories replicates the trendsetting *Chicago Stories*, which has been a hit for 19 consecutive seasons in Chicago and inspired similar fundraisers for theaters in San Francisco and Seattle. Arts Supporter **Harvey J. Burstein**, a Chicago native who makes Miami Beach his home, originally presented the concept to the New Theatre, spearheading its 2006 debut presentation for the Miami market.

Miami Stories is perfectly tailored to New Theatre's mission of producing new works. The Coral Gables-based theatre focuses on producing new plays by early- and mid-career playwrights. Since its inception in 1986, the theatre has world premiered more than 30 plays including *Anna in the Tropics*, winner of a Pulitzer Prize for Drama. *Miami Stories* hopes to raise substantial funds for New Theatre in support of its mission, and the proceeds will be earmarked to support the theater's continued growth and stature as an award-winning venue for world-class productions.

The committee spearheading the event includes New Theatre board members Harvey Burstein, Nancy Cooper, Meg Daly, Arlene Drexler, Marilyn Holzberg, Paula Levine, and Jules Oaklander.

Generous sponsors and underwriters of the event include Northern Trust, Bacardi, Marc Berner & Peter Betan, CorpLogoWare, Orvieto's Trophies and More.

Miami Stories takes place on Friday, April 18 at 6:30 PM at the Miami Science Museum, 3280 South Miami Ave, Miami, FL 33129. Purchase \$250 per person event tickets or tables of 10 (\$2500-\$5,000 by April 1st. We welcome program advertising placement and silent auction donations made by March 20th .

For Miami Stories tickets or further event information, please call Meg Daly 305-439-1199. For more on what's playing now at New Theatre visit www.new-theatre.org.

Sanford & Dolores Ziff

Dr. Sanford L. Ziff is an optometrist, contact lens researcher, and Founder, Chairman and C.E.O. of Sunglass Hut of America. As a humanitarian and philanthropist, Dr. Ziff is the recipient of countless honors. He is currently part of Strategic Corporate Relations with Ladenburg Thalmann Financial Services, Inc, with Dr. Philip Frost as Chairman of the Board. Mrs. Ziff has been involved with the film industry, most notably with the first James Bond movie, "Dr. No". She has been a long time board member of the Vizcayans and served at the board level of many local and international organizations. As a couple, the Ziffs have served the Miami community by financially embracing the homeless crisis, educational issues, religious projects and local artistic endeavors. They have received numerous philanthropic and humanitarian awards and are Ambassadors for WLRN radio.

Bonnie Clearwater

Bonnie Clearwater has been Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, since 1997. She is the former Curator of The Mark Rothko Foundation in New York and the Leonard and Evelyn Lauder Collection also in New York. She served as an advisor to the 2002 Whitney Biennial and was the 2003 recipient of the American Red Cross Spectrum Award for Women, Cultural Award.

Ms. Clearwater has written extensively on modern and contemporary art. She received an M.A. in art history from Columbia University and a B.A. in art history from New York University.

Don Slesnick

Don Slesnick is serving his fourth term as Mayor of the City of Coral Gables while continuing as the managing partner for the law firm of Slesnick & Casey. He is also on the Board of Directors of the newly established Great Florida Bank.

A 55-year resident of Dade County, Slesnick received his B.A. from the University of Virginia, a J.D. from the University of Florida and an M.P.A. from Florida International University. Don is active in numerous civic and business organizations. He has received a number of leadership awards and has been named one of the 50 most influential persons in South Florida.