



CINTAS Foundation President to Retire after More Than 35 Years

Miami, December 6, 2016 - At the 2016-2017 annual Fellowships Ceremony, the CINTAS Foundation announced the retirement of its president, **Hortensia E. Sampedro**, after more than three decades of service.

Tapped by then Chairman of the Board of the Chase Manhattan Bank David Rockefeller, Hortensia began her service as assistant treasurer, was elected as a director, then member, and served on the Visual Arts Committee and as treasurer of CINTAS. Hortensia was eventually elected as the CINTAS Foundation's fourth president since its founding in 1963.

Over her span of service, the Foundation has been the sole organization granting fellowships for Cuban arts and the humanities outside Cuba. In the early 1980s, the strategic decision was made to evolve the Foundation as a collecting entity as well as the premiere fellowship granting entity. This was followed by the decision to bring the fledgling collection out of storage and partner with a major institution of higher learning to regularly exhibit the works of the Fellows. Subsequently, a strong program of bi-annual exhibitions was developed around the CINTAS Fellows. In 1988 a program to recognize Lifetime Achievements of living Cubans was inaugurated, honoring internationally recognized Cubans in the arts and the humanities who are credited with changing their world and inspiring others to do the same.

Soon another program of annual exhibitions was organized around the CINTAS Finalists, initially in partnership with the FIU Frost Museum of Art and more recently with the Miami Dade College Museum of Art + Design. The CINTAS Fellows Collection is on long-term loan to the Museum and housed on a rotating exhibit basis at the Freedom Tower. Today, the Fellows Collection comprises over 280 works and 37 objects from over 300 Fellows. The works are posted on the CINTAS Foundation's website with each artist's history and background.

Hortensia credits committee chairs Margarita Cano, Manuel Gonzalez, Ileana Oroza, Roberto de Alba, Rafael Miyar, and Nancy Reisman with leading the formative decisions of the CINTAS over the last 35+ years. "Through their dedication to supporting the work of the Fellows, our directors faithfully carried out the wishes of Oscar B. Cintas, creating the unique legacy of the last 54 years". She also credits Dahlia Morgan of the then The Art Museum at FIU with the initial vision of exhibiting the Fellows' works and Jeremy Mikolajczak of MDC Museum of Art + Design of capturing their accomplishments in: *Impact and Legacy: 50 Years of the CINTAS Foundation*. "Most recently, Dr. Eduardo Padron, president of Miami Dade College, had the vision to house the collection at the Freedom Tower, and Alberto Ibarguen, president and CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, has supported broadened support for

the annual work of the Fellows. Through their leadership, these extraordinary leaders have given voice to the Cuban fellows". The CINTAS Fellowship Collection has grown into a unique narrative of the Cuban diaspora through its arts and humanities for over 50 years.

Known as the "quiet Pulitzer prize of Cuban arts and the humanities", the CINTAS Fellowships have recognized a who's who of accomplished Cuban artists, architects, writers and composers for over half a century. The CINTAS Competition has been lauded for its integrity and the vision of its juries.

The Board of Directors presented Hortensia with a commemorative Tiffany crystal vase at the ceremony. Elected to succeed her is Victor Deupi, vice president of the CINTAS Foundation.

About the CINTAS Fellowship Program

The CINTAS Fellowship Program encourages creative development in architecture, literature, music composition and the visual arts. The Foundation was established with funds from the estate of Oscar B. Cintas (1887-1957), former Cuban ambassador to the United States, a prominent industrialist and patron of the arts. In June 2011, the CINTAS Foundation entered into an extended loan to MDC's Museum of Art + Design of the CINTAS Fellows Collection. It is comprised of nearly 300 pieces by artists of Cuban descent living outside Cuba who have received prestigious CINTAS Fellowships, awarded since 1963. www.cintasfoundation.org

About MDC Museum of Art and Design

MDC Museum of Art and Design is dedicated to the presentation of visual art and design exhibitions. Housed at the National Historic Landmark Freedom Tower at Miami Dade College in downtown Miami, its mission is to promote the appreciation and understanding of art through direct engagement with original works.

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For more information about the CINTAS program at MDC Museum of Art + Design, please contact Laurie Escobar, CINTAS Administrator, 305-237-7901, lescobar@mdc.edu.