

CENTER OF ATTENTION



STAFF PHOTO BY KIMBERLI DIMARE

Cuban artist Carlos Luna, 40, of Miami, proudly shows off one of his colorful paintings, "El gallito bum bum/The Little Cock, Boom," during the debut of the Miramar Cultural Center's new art gallery.

Art gallery featuring Picasso works opens at Miramar center

By Chris Guanche
STAFF WRITER

One of the last pieces in building the Miramar Cultural Center fell into place with the recent opening of an art gallery featuring the work of Pablo Picasso.

Fourteen of Picasso's ceramic pieces were paired with paintings from Cuban

artist Carlos Luna for the unveiling of the Ansin Family Art Gallery. The gallery is the latest facility to bear the Ansin name, following the February opening of the Ansin Sports Complex. The Ansin, developers of the Miramar Park of Commerce, donated \$1 million to the cultural center through two of its foundations for the nam-

ing rights to the gallery.

Opening the gallery is part of the mission to bring culture to the city, said Mayor Lori Moseley.

"We know that a city needed more than bricks and mortar," Moseley said.

The "Shared Passions, Shared Themes" exhibit, which runs through September, was created in partner-

ship with the Museum of Art | Fort Lauderdale. The Miramar exhibit features works from a larger exhibit at the museum. That exhibit will be hitting the road soon for a showing in Puebla, Mexico, said Irv Lippman, the museum's executive director.

Lippman said the works of Picasso and Luna were joined together for the exhibit because they share some

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common themes.

"You realize that though there's a couple of generations in between, there's a communication between these artists," Lippman said. "There's a relationship between the two that I thought was really beautiful."

The similarity isn't lost on Luna, who said Picasso was an inspiration for everyone. Luna, who left Cuba for political reasons, spent more than a decade in Mexico before coming to the U.S.

Luna's work has been featured at galleries in California and Washington, D.C. Luna said it was difficult to work in Cuba because artists would get government backing depending on what the message of their art was.

But having worked in three countries, Luna said art transcends bor-

ders.

"Art is universal, so the medium and the country are irrelevant," Luna said in Spanish.

With his art reaching a new audience, Luna said he wants gallery visitors to enjoy viewing the work as much as he enjoyed painting it.

In working with the cultural center, Lippman said the museum would be pushing educational opportunities. That effort is made easier since the Miramar Town Center's library features a campus for Nova Southeastern University, which merged with the museum in 2008. The cultural center's proximity to area schools will also create new opportunities, Lippman said.

"We want to open the doors to educational programs with schools and

make it a center for learning," he said.

Educational art will have its role when an upstairs art gallery opens later in the year, said Camasha Cevieux, the cultural center's assistant director.

The gallery will feature art from Miramar schoolchildren and will feature a juried exhibit in November.

The "Shared Passions, Shared Themes" exhibit will be replaced in September with a new exhibit of African art. The gallery is open to the public weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cultural center is at 2400 Civic Center Place.

For more information, visit www.miramarculturalcenter.org.

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