

MYTHS AND DREAMS

Exploring the Cultural Legacies of Florida and the Caribbean

EXHIBITION GUIDE

JAY I. KISLAK FOUNDATION, INC.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA, *Miami*

■■■■ November 1999–January 2000

MUSEUM OF FLORIDA HISTORY, *Tallahassee*

■■■■■ February–June 2000

MEL FISHER MARITIME HERITAGE MUSEUM, *Key West*

■■■■■■ June 2000–January 2001

MUSEUM OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, *Daytona Beach*

■■■■■■■ February–July 2001

FLORIDA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, *Gainesville*

■■■■■■■■■ Fall 2001

TAMPA BAY HISTORY CENTER, *Tampa*

■■■■■■■■■■ Spring 2002

Myths and Dreams: Exploring the Cultural Legacies of Florida and the Caribbean is a millennium project organized by the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, in collaboration with the Historical Museum of Southern Florida.

This program is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Katherine Harris, Secretary of State, Division of Historical Resources, and the Historic Preservation Advisory Council.

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Front cover: "Ladies with Bundles on Head," watercolor, Lila King Venables. *Watercolor Album Of Views in the Bahamas*. Nassau, 1865–70. Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc., 93.22.0.9. (checklist 218).

Inside front cover flap: Christopher Columbus, *De Insulis Nuper In mari Indico in Carolus Verardus, In laudem Serenissimi Ferdinandi Hispaniarum regnum...* Basil: J.B. (Johann Bergman de Olpe), 1494. Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc. (checklist 16).

Inside back cover flap: Examples of Art Déco-era and large letter postcards. Clockwise from top left: Ponce, Puerto Rico (1994-202-14); Park Central Hotel, Ocean Drive at 7th Street (Park Central); Florida (1979-11-186); Havana, Cuba (1994-202-15); and Colony Hotel, 736 Ocean Drive (1997-381-6). Historical Museum of Southern Florida.

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Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc.
7900 Miami Lakes Drive West
Miami Lakes, Florida 33016-5897

ARTHUR DUNKELMAN, *Director*
CAROL DAMIAN, *Exhibit Curator*
KATHY PARRY, *Assistant Curator*

PHYLLIS SHAPIRO, *Editor*
LISA LARSEN, *Assistant Editor*
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LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Bacardi Museum
Miami, Florida

Carnival Cruise Lines
Miami, Florida

Alfred Carrada
Miami Beach, Florida

Coconut Grove Cemetery Association
Miami, Florida

Vincent E. Damian, Jr.
Coral Gables, Florida

Carole Demesmin
Miami, Florida

Edouard Duval-Carrié
Miami Beach, Florida

Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research
Tallahassee, Florida

Florida Museum of Natural History
Gainesville, Florida

Irwin Gordon
Miami, Florida

Graves Museum of Archaeology
and Natural History
Dania, Florida

Historical Museum of Southern Florida
Miami, Florida

Mr. and Mrs. Jay I. Kislak and
the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc.
Miami Lakes, Florida

Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society
Key West, Florida

Lowe Art Museum
Coral Gables, Florida

Laurence Miller
Miami, Florida

Bill Morgenstern Collection
Miami, Florida

Museum of Florida History
Tallahassee, Florida

Charo Oquet
Miami, Florida

Frank Stoutamire
Tallahassee, Florida

Tallahassee Museum of History
and Natural Science
Tallahassee, Florida

Marcilene K. Wittmer
Miami, Florida

Sanford L. Ziff Jewish Museum
Miami Beach, Florida

PREFACE

Florida's rich cultural history has been shaped by the unique mix of people who have come here over the past five hundred years and more. Drawn by dreams of health, wealth and opportunity, immigrants have created the magnificent tapestry of experience, art and science that defines our state's culture today.

As we look ahead to the new millennium, it is an appropriate time for us to look back and see from whence we have come—from the urbanization of the twentieth century, the explorations of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, venturing back even before the time of Columbus, when the earliest residents of Florida lived a style of life much different from our own.

As we explore the lives and achievements of the people who came before us, we gain a greater understanding of the diverse cultural influences that define Florida's contemporary character. We will better understand the causes and results of the many conflicts that have occurred throughout our history, and we will begin to see more clearly how seemingly different peoples often have common dreams and aspirations.

On behalf of the Florida Department of State, the Historic Preservation Advisory Council, and the Division of Historical Resources, I am honored to introduce this project to our state's residents and visitors. *Myths and Dreams: Exploring the Cultural Legacies of Florida and the Caribbean* offers a fascinating look at the issues, ideas and changes which have shaped the course of our history. I hope you share my enthusiasm for our shared cultural heritage.

KATHERINE HARRIS
SECRETARY OF STATE
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project began with a discussion at the 1996 Florida Association of Museums conference about an appropriate way to mark the new millennium. The conversation centered on the richly diverse cultural history of Florida and the Caribbean, from indigenous populations and the early European experience in the Americas to more recent immigrations of people from all over the globe. Gradually, what emerged was the idea of a traveling exhibit and related World Wide Web site that would present our heritage and explore the legacies we leave for future generations.

Deciding to be the arbiter and interpreter of history, especially cultural history, is a daunting task. With partial funding from the Florida Division of Historical Resources, we assembled the project team who created the exhibition: curator Carol Damian, assistant curator Kathy Parry and catalog editor Phyllis Shapiro. The quality of their work will be apparent to anyone seeing the exhibit or this catalog. We commissioned 15 original essays by eminent scholars in the fields of culture and history. Four are included in this publication; the others are available on the project Web site, which was designed by Ernie Marc of Ancient Ways Publishing. Lisa Larsen was its editor and selected the illustrations that accompany the essays. We acknowledge the outstanding contributions of these scholars: Denise Andrews, Miguel Bretos, Tina Bucuvalas, Madeleine Burnside, Carol Damian, Dot Downs, Michael Gannon, Paul George, Wiley Housewright, Sherry Johnson, Eugene Lyon, John Mason, Jerald Milanich, Susan Parker, Sara Sanchez and Diana Kirby. (Please see page 53 for a list of the essays.)

The exhibition was brought to life by the staff of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida under the leadership of Randy Nimnicht and Andy Brian. We thank Becky Smith, Noelle Shuey, George Chillag, Stacey de la Grana and the entire staff of the Historical Museum for their professionalism and patience during the long process of creation. We are grateful for the enthusiastic response of other Florida collectors, museums and cultural institutions for lending a rich array of art works and objects for the exhibition. And we thank Scott Deems of Basement Light Design Team for designing this exhibition guide.

As the project began to take shape, we decided it should have another dimension, one did not lend itself to display—some thoughtful discussion of the daily issues we face living in such a culturally diverse community. With the support of the Florida Humanities Council, we are pleased to present “Making Florida Home: Contemporary Issues in Cultural Diversity,” a series of panel discussions in each of the exhibition’s host cities. While this dialogue is inspired by the themes of the exhibit, we hope it will continue long after the exhibit has ended.

This project has been an interesting exploration of our cultural heritage. We hope you will enjoy and learn from the exhibition, catalog, Web site and our community discussion events. We encourage you to contact us through our Web site: www.millennium-exhibit.org

ARTHUR DUNKELMAN, DIRECTOR
JAY I. KISLAK FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

America is as much an idea as a place. The origins of that idea—the myths, dreams and legacies of the people who shaped New World culture—are the theme of a three-year project designed to celebrate the art, artifacts and history of Florida and the Caribbean over the past millennium with the people who live and visit there today.

The project has been developed by the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, a Miami-based nonprofit cultural institution which has assembled and conserved internationally-significant collections of pre-Columbian art and rare books, manuscripts and maps of the New World. In creating the exhibition and related millennium project, the Kislak Foundation has been joined by the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, first venue in the exhibition's six-museum tour.

In addition to the museum exhibition and this book, the project has a companion web site (www.millennium-exhibit.org) with extensive information including essays on a wide range of related historical topics by noted Florida historians and scholars, as well as many images of art works, artifacts, historic documents, maps and other visual materials. A youth education program based on exhibit themes is available, providing resources for students and teachers. In conjunction with the exhibition's scheduled tour of Florida communities, the millennium project also includes a series of public forums in which leading humanities scholars probe the legacies of multiculturalism, identity and diversity in Florida and the Caribbean.

