

DADE COUNTY CULTURAL CENTER

Miami, Florida

PHILIP JOHNSON • ALAN RITCHIE
A R C H I T E C T S



Client: Dade County Cultural Center

Completion Date: 1985

Area: 310,000 square feet

Associate Architects: Connell, Metcalf, & Eddy

Detailed in the Mediterranean style, the Cultural Center recognizes both the Spanish heritage and climate of South Florida and the brilliant 1920s eclectic architect, Addison Mizner. The exterior walls are primarily a cream colored stucco with Texas Cordova shell limestone bases and trim details. The roofs of all buildings are covered in Spanish terracotta barrel tile.

Festivals, as well as informal gatherings, take place in the plaza whose design lends itself to this use. The buildings house portable stages and other furniture available for special occasions. The general organization of the plaza with its surrounding buildings provides the once desolate western end of downtown Miami, with an inviting urban square. A broad, covered walkway is set next to steps of cascading water that entices people towards the plaza.

As part of the thirty-nine acre Government Center in downtown Miami, the 3.3-acre Cultural Center consists of three buildings: the Main Library, the Center for the Fine Arts, and a Natural History Museum. Visitors enter the buildings from a raised plaza after ascending from various points around the site, or crossing one of the bridges. The three buildings are organized around a 33,000 square foot, sun-drenched, plaza that is paved with tan and terracotta quarry tile. Due to the high water table of the city of Miami, which precludes building underground, basement functions are provided at grade.

