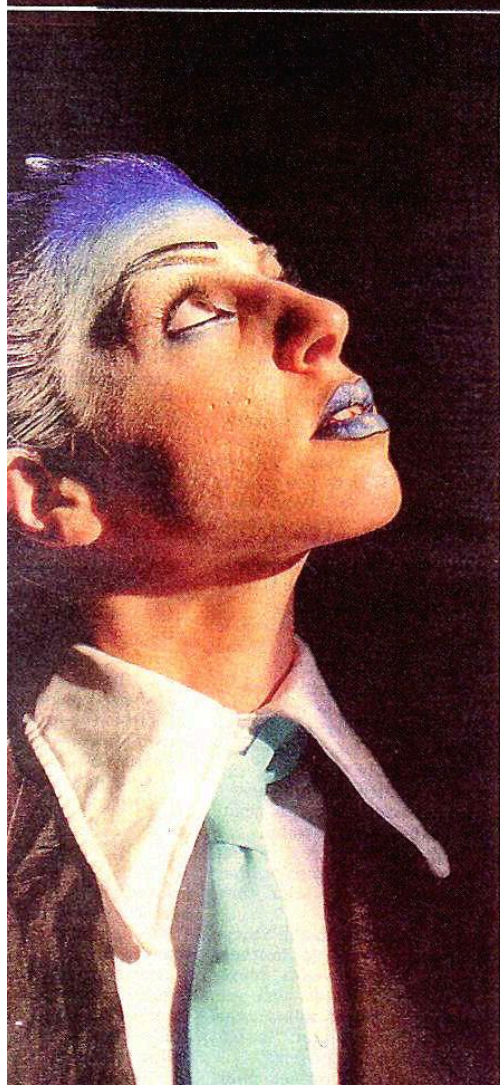


the next big thing



EMILY HARRIS/FOR THE MIAMI HER

HERE AND NOW PUTS EMERGING ARTISTS AT CENTER STAGE

BY BRETT O'BOURKE
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Let us, for a moment, consider the so-called struggling or starving artist. They typically hold down undesirable day jobs and complain they haven't enough time for their "real" work. They max out credit cards to pay for supplies or production, while toiling in an occasionally epic but usually obscure attempt to get their work out into the world.

Poor saps.

Fortunately for a handful of artists, local arts presenter Miami Light Project has been commissioning work by South Florida artists for more than a decade to show in its annual Here & Now Festival (the latest installment of which gets underway on Thursday).

"We think the best way for artists to create new work is to put money in the hands of the artists who need it," says Miami Light Project director Beth Boone.

Clever idea.

Boone says after coming to the organization in 1999, she raised the level of investment and commitment to take Here & Now from a kind of summer honorarium to an annual commission and

*TURN TO NEW ARTISTS, 5M



MIAMI LIGHT PRO

FINGERS ARE CROSSED: Artists hoping to click in the Here & Now festival include Helena Thevenot, above, (*Some Assembly Required*), and Natasha Tsakos, left and at top, (*UpWake Par*). Both are dance pieces.