

Creativity and commerce: highlights from Design Miami/ Basel

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Returning to the Herzog & de Meuron-designed fairgrounds, Design Miami/ Basel presents its 11th edition, combining the world's best collectible design by the most illustrious galleries with an ongoing programme of creative installations and commissions. Presented in collaboration with participating galleries, these collateral projects give depth to the fair's scope, merging its commercial focus with a more innovative stance on design.

Giving space to 46 international galleries, the fair also hosts the second instalment of Swarovski Designers of the Future initiative, offering a glimpse into the ideas that are shaping the future of design, and the Curio project,

which presents eight 'cabinets of curiosities' dotted throughout the fair. These include the Crafts Council's Nature Lab, the tactile Soft/Hard collection by Soft Baroque hosted by Copenhagen gallery Etage Projects and Formafantasma's poetic Delta collection at Galleria O, in collaboration with Fonderia Artistica Battaglia, amongst others.

Visitors were greeted by the large-scale structures of the Martina Mondadori-curated Design at Large project, focusing on how designers and architects approach the outdoors. The late Zaha Hadid's most recent furniture works were on display at the show's entrance too, including her Marble Collection for Italian company Citco, and her 'Mew' table for furniture brand Sawaya & Moroni. Shown together, these pieces demonstrated the architect's fluid approach to space, and how her unique aesthetic could be adapted from large-scale structures to the portable realm.

In the fair, galleries' booths created presentations that combined the commercial nature of their presence with a more creative output. Gallery Fumi's – structured like a house – featured an outdoors space with two collections by Max Lamb. Visitors looked through a window into the Fumi home, which included two new tables; one in marble by architect/artist duo Brooksbank & Collins, another in glass with wood grain print by Study-O-Portable.

Galerie Kreo presented a monumental oak table by Barber & Osgerby next to a large-scale curtain from Hella Jongerius' UN North Delegates' Lounge, concealing an extraordinary Maarten van Severen Bibliotheque. Milanese gallery Erastudio Apartment-Gallery had a blacked-out booth, where the dark mood enhanced the colourful nature of Ettore Sottsass and Nanda Vigo pieces charmingly displayed within.

A Design Miami/ newcomer, Brussels-based Maniera was one of the most interesting additions to the fair. Specialising in furniture by international architects, the Belgian gallery displayed a new collection by Studio Mumbai's Bijoy Jain as well as projects by Richard Venlet, architects' group De Vylder Vinck Taillieu and Anne Holtrop. Each practice explored different materials and media to bring their aesthetic flair to life through extraordinary furniture collectibles.

London gallerist Louisa Guinness' stand had a fresh new attitude to the traditional jewellery displays within the fair: her artists' jewellery was sophisticatedly displayed at the front of her booth, while the back presented an installation titled 'The Museum of Artists' Jewellery; an Introduction'. Pieces ran the gamut from the 1935 to the present, featuring ornaments by Man Ray, Alexander Calder, Ron Arad, Tim Noble and Sue Webster were displayed within an immersive back-room installation, a completely new context that challenged the design of traditional jewellery stands.

Another surprise was offered by New York gallery Demisch Danant: alongside a display of rare Pierre Paulin pieces, the booth featured an impressive collection from French lighting company Verre Lumiere. With lighting pieces from the 1970s and 1980s, the display identified the quintessentially French aesthetic of the time, with sinuous designs by the likes of Etienne Fermigier, Ronald Cecil and Sabine Charoy.

As the fair opened, two projects seemed to immediately gather the most attention: visiting collectors and design enthusiasts incessantly talked about Diego Giacometti's wall bookcase and Studio Job's delightful Banana Lamp. The Giacometti, presented by Galerie Jacques Lacoste, is an exceptional one-off creation that the Swiss artist made for Marc Barbezat, Jean Genet's publisher, in 1967. A large and intricate corner bookshelf in brass, the 'Chambre à Livres' was made to measure for Barbezat's Parisian apartment to hold his rare book collection. Radically different in scale and scope, Studio Job's lamp is a faithful reproduction of the exotic fruit, featuring polished and hand-painted bronze with mouth blown glass.

Rumour has it, both pieces were snapped up almost immediately, clearly proving that commerce and creativity are alive and well here.