

THE NEW YORKER

May 2008



INSPIRED BY MIAMI

With its Art Deco hotels and homes, never-ending beaches, warm breezes, vivid palette, and divergent cultures, the greater Miami area has long been a playground for the fashionably stylish. It is known to be a magnet for internationally recognized architects, designers, and chefs, but also, increasingly, for visual artists. A variety of major museums call the Miami area home, from the Miami Art Museum to the Wolfsonian to the Lowe and the Vizcaya Museum & Garden. Add to that the more than seventy art galleries, spaces, and studios, the burgeoning Wynwood Art District, and the international art fair Art Basel Miami Beach, and it is obvious: Miami is a city for the arts.

Rising artists such as the Mexican-born Pepe Mar take their inspiration directly from the vibrant local scene. A transplant to the area, Mar found Miami to be instantly welcoming and familiar. His three-dimensional collages of child-size monsters are made from found objects, magazine images, and natural materials. Sometimes his spiky-haired creatures seem to be crawling along the branches of Florida's magical spreading banyan trees, or standing on their own, staring at the viewer.

David Le Batard, whose work appears under the name LEBO, got his start in the lively Miami art scene, painting murals. His bright, bold colors and stylized black lines are reminiscent of bebop-era album art, classic cartoons, and graffiti. His subject matter ranges from jazz musicians to the local people Le Batard met throughout his Miami childhood.

Other rising artists, such as Friends With You, a collaborative founded by Sam Borkson and Arturo Sandoval III, produce public art installations, oddly beautiful sculptured toys, animated short films, and even playgrounds.

The Haitian-born artist Adler Guerrier wanders the streets of Miami capturing images of its urban spaces and verdant private backyards. Most recently, he completed an installation for the Whitney Biennial in New York City that portrays the works of a fictional 1968 Miami artists' collaborative. Other locally based artists with international résumés include Jen Stark, Jason Hedges, and Frances Trombly.

Perhaps all of these artists are attracted to Miami in the same way as its visitors, who, once they look beyond the appealing sun and surf, find themselves further inspired by the area's friendly sense of openness and its invitation to all to boldly experiment with their own creativity.

SUMMER SAMPLER

Zo's Summer Groove

July 9th–13th

Organized by basketball stars Alonzo Mourning and Dwyane Wade, this annual event includes a block party, a concert, comedy, a youth summit, and basketball clinics.

Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Miami Swim

July 18th–22nd

Top designers unveil the latest swimsuit designs.

Miami Art Museum, Sean Duffy

July 18th–October 12th

Duffy, an installation artist, is noted for his use of multiple phonographs and DJs playing hundreds of LPs that reveal an artistic wall of sound.

The Armory Art Show

August 28th–September 26th

This fair of contemporary art associated with the Armory Shows of New York City and Los Angeles will be exhibiting the best new works by artists from all over the world.