

ARTNEWS

Site Seeing: Miami Locals Recommend Gems to Visit Beyond the Fairs

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Grab a car—or a Brightline train or a bicycle—and hit the road.
ANDREW RUSSETH/ARTNEWS

Site Seeing is a column that asks museum directors, curators, and other art types to highlight places—and artworks on view—in the cities they call home.

Art Basel Miami Beach opens to select guests on Wednesday, December 5, and runs through Sunday, with an overflow of treasures both new and (somewhat) old. Throughout the area, no fewer than a dozen fairs have set up shop, and museums and galleries are rolling out their red carpets. There's a lot to see. But after a while, even the most gallant attendees experience fair fatigue. And when that happens, it's time to head out into the world and savor some of the places that make Miami special—like its buildings, plazas, and prehistoric sites. A handful of locals—dealer David Castillo, artist Jim Drain, and two museum directors, Silvia Karman Cubiñá and Bonnie Clearwater, of the Bass and NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale, respectively—were kind enough to provide tips for cultural gems that some Art Basel visitors may not know about. Their contributions follow below. —*The Editors*

Silvia Karman Cubiñá, director of the Bass

At the Bass, exhibitions by Odalis Valdivieso, Paola Pivi, and Aaron Curry, as well as recent acquisitions, are currently on view.

Do not miss Franz Ackermann's *About Sand* (2018), a hand-painted monumental mural on the southeast corner of the new Miami Beach Convention Center.

Ackermann is the first of six international artists, commissioned by the City of Miami Beach, to create site-specific works for the reimagined Convention Center.

David Castillo, owner of David Castillo Gallery, Miami Beach

"The Strangeness Will Wear Off," a group show with work by Melissa Brown, Natalie Frank, Wendy White, and more, is on view at Castillo through January 31, 2019. A reception will be held Saturday, December 8, from 7 to 10 p.m.

One city block in downtown Miami exposes any art and culture lover to four titans—Claes Oldenburg & Coosje van Bruggen, Edward Ruscha, and Philip Johnson. Now known as the Miami-Dade Cultural Center, Johnson's plaza is considered by some a major work by the architect. Completed in 1983, I made my first trip there in 1987, which besides housing the main downtown public library also housed what was then the Center for the Fine Arts, completed in 1984, and the first museum I ever visited (later Miami Art Museum, today PAMM). In the same complex is Ruscha's first public art commission (that's right, in Miami) in which he incorporated text from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the library's rotunda and later added moon-shaped paintings across the building's two floors. Just a short walk to the north across the street and down some steps from the Johnson plaza, you encounter *Dropped Bowl with Scattered Slices and Peels*, a monumental sculpture by Oldenburg & van Bruggen, commissioned in 1984 and installed in 1989 in the Metro-Dade Open Space Park. In this one small, unassuming city block of downtown Miami, you have public access to some major late-20th-century art and architecture.

Bonnie Clearwater, director of the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale

"Remember to React: 60 Years of Collecting" and "William J. Glackens and Pierre-Auguste Renoir: Affinities and Distinctions" are currently on view at the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale.

NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale is a must-see icon. Designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes in 1986, the 83,000-square-foot building's swooping walls and open floor-plan was a prototype for contemporary museum architecture. Located downtown, near the new Brightline station, the museum is celebrating its 60th anniversary with "Remember to React," the first comprehensive exhibition of its in-depth collection, including iconic work by Sam Gilliam, Philip Guston, Mona Hatoum, Frida Kahlo, Mimmo Rotella, Mickalene Thomas, Andy Warhol, Cobra artists, and such newcomers as Zanele Muholi and Serge Nitegeka, whose commissioned 121-foot mural is making its debut.

Jim Drain, artist

“Zapf DingBat,” a solo show by Drain, is on view at Nina Johnson in Miami through January 5, 2019

Tuesdays at 6 p.m. Catherine Hummingbird Ramirez performs a ceremony at the Miami Circle, a site that could be easily overlooked among the condos that tower all around. The Miami Circle is one of the most significant prehistoric sites on the East Coast. Ms. Hummingbird Ramirez, a Native American spiritualist and Carib Tribal Queen, fought to preserve the 2,000-year-old site that almost was lost to development. “This site is so profound. You come here and you feel renewed because there’s so much positive energy here,” she told the *Miami Herald* in 2016. “This is the birthplace of Miami.”

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