

# REFINERY29

ART & CULTURE April 11, 2012

## 10 Rising Miami Artists To Start Collecting Now

By Leila Brillson

Maybe it's because we perpetually play gateway to the **Spanish-speaking world**. Or because of the international presence of **Art Basel**. Perhaps it's the well-heeled cool of the **Design District**. Whatever the reason—or *reasons*—may be, Miami dwellers cannot deny: Our fair city is a total hotbed for cutting-edge creativity.

While we have venerable collectors and MOCA in our midst, what really keeps the 305's scene so fiery is the abundance of **up-and-comers who're making like Haulover Beach and creating some major waves**. So, instead of hanging out daily in Wynwood to scoop the Next Big Thing, we asked **David Castillo**, a true Miami insider to give us his rundown on emerging artists to know. Not only did he highlight a handful of his own rising stars from his **namesake gallery**, but the internationally renowned dealer pointed out some young guns **whose ascent he is closely watching**. From performance artists who play dress up to a video-inspired sister-act, Castillo's picks are a Who's Who of Miami's creative ingenues.

**David Castillo** *David Castillo Gallery, 2234 NW 2nd Avenue; 305-573-8110.*





## Antonia Wright

**David says:** "[Antonia Wright's](#) multifaceted performance and photography work investigates many sub-cultural phenomena in ways that make you laugh and think. She has a sense of humor about her identity and those around her. She is currently spending time in a women's shelter as part performance, part experience."

*Antonia can be seen at the [Frieze Projects](#) in New York from May 4 to 7.*

*Photo: Courtesy of the artist; "Every Day is a Beautiful Day," Courtesy of the artist.*



## Carlos Rigau

**David Says:** "Questioning the role of perception, [Carlos Rigau's](#) work intends to disrupt commonly understood Western doctrines and their normality. He chooses media comprised of static images, moving images, and sculpture. These forms are used to convey a singular and independent meaning, as well as a larger collective expression. His process forces — through exposure and experimentation — a readjustment to generally held perceptions as a way to culturally biased notions."

*Carlos was at [Dorsch Gallery](#) until March 31st, but you can check out his works online.*

*Photo: Courtesy of the artist.*



**Cristina Lei-Rodriguez, [Fredric Snitzer Gallery](#)**

**David Says:** "No Miami artist list would be complete without the young [Cristina Lei-Rodriguez](#), who is one of the best known talents to emerge from Miami currently. Her sculptures take the fake and plastic into the realm of intense color and formal sculpture."

*Cristina can be seen in an upcoming solo show "Restore" for Brand New Gallery in Milan, starting May 31.*

*Photo by Federico Nessi; "Decadence," Courtesy of the artist.*



**Felice Grodin, [Diana Lowenstein Gallery](#)**

**David Says:** "A trained architect, [Felice Grodin's](#) work engages materials that appear to always float in space. Her work appears to seamlessly work with the notion of structured monuments from materials the wind might sweep away."

Felice can be seen in "Impermanence" at the [Miami Beach Urban Studios Gallery](#) until May 4.

*Photo: Courtesy of the artist; "Networked," Courtesy of the artist.*



## Harumi Abe

**David Says:** "**Harumi Abe** (pronounced Ah-Bey) is a painter who takes cues from traditional work, such as Bierdstadt, but breathes new life into them. She demonstrates that landscape painting specifically is also not dead and artists still have much to say on the theme of space and place."

*Harumi can be seen at the Broward College South Campus gallery in March of 2013.*

*Photo: Courtesy of the artist; "134 days and 21 hours," Courtesy of the artist.*



## Jillian Mayer, **David Castillo Gallery**

**David Says:** "**Jillian Mayer** steepes her artistic practice in the verisimilitude of a generation that came of age in the '80s. Mayer calls upon drawing, photography, video, installation, and performance to enact scenarios of apathy, dysfunction, and disillusionment. Indoctrinated into expecting upward mobility, instant gratification, and the succinct finesse of a television sitcom, Mayer critiques the dissonance between her childhood optimism and the state of contemporary culture with an erudite playfulness."

*Jillian can be seen at "Eraseypage" at **Bass Museum of Art** until August 2012.*

*Photo: Courtesy of the artist; "H.I.L.M.D.A.," Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery.*





### Pepe Mar, [David Castillo Gallery](#)

**David Says:** "Pepe Mar's work in collage and sculpture engages new ideas and unusual materials to create works of bold consumerist critique. Mar excavates rituals inherent in secondhand stores, science fiction, celebrity, commercial design, and social media to create abstract and anthropomorphic barometers of contemporary culture. His rich, experiential process recalls the history of assemblage and painting. Mar heeds the call of Roland Barthes' universal signifiers and answers with icons that are both appropriated and original."

*Pepe can be seen at Discrepant Modernism at [The Frost Art Museum](#) until April 18.*

*Photo: Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery; "Cruising Totem," Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery.*



### TM Sisters, [David Castillo Gallery](#)

**David Says:** "These native Miamians, who are also actual sisters, put on amazing performance pieces that embrace a do-it-yourself aesthetic. The TM Sisters collaborate in video, performance, large-scale installation, and two-dimensional works to break the walls of time, tense, and consciousness."

*TM Sisters were seen at the Miami Made Festival at [The Arsht Center](#) in early March.*

*Photo: Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery; "You Can See" still, Courtesy of David Castillo Gallery.*



## Tom Scicluna

**David Says:** "By far, Tom Scicluna is one of my absolute favorite artists in Miami. I think Tom has impressive and large ideas when working with the ready-made. His thinking on subjects as banal as dirt or tires are intelligent, but also visually stimulating in the way they relate to their resulting installations."

Tom can be seen in "Impermanence" at the [Miami Beach Urban Studios Gallery](#) until May 4.

Photo: Courtesy of the artist; "Scaffold," Courtesy of the artist.



## Zack Balber, [Fredric Snitzer Gallery](#)

**David Says:** "For me, photography is one of those very tough mediums. [Zack Balber](#) gives his portraiture a new personal infusion that is refreshing for photography. He's not looking from the outside, but with a sense of Miami-infused realism."

Zack's work can be seen [on his webpage](#).

Photo: Courtesy of the artist, (Clockwise from top) "Meko," "Efraim," "Balber," and "Joshua," Courtesy of the artist.