

VOGUE

CULTURE & LIVING

Vogue's essential guide to Art Basel Miami Beach 2019

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From Art Basel Miami Beach to the Design District's most fashionable events and blockbuster shows opening at international institutions, here are 11 things that shouldn't be missed during the Floridian capital of culture's annual art week

Put on your best chunky trainers: it's that time of the year when international gallerinas, collectors and tastemakers descend on to Miami's pastel-tinted streets for a week of champagne-fueled cultural extravaganza. Now in its 18th edition, Art Basel Miami Beach—the beating heart of the festivities—welcomes more than 200 of the world's best international modern and contemporary art galleries, displaying artworks by some 4,000 artists across disciplines.



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Here's your Vogue guide to Art Basel Miami Beach 2019, from climate change-inspired sand sculptures to the rarely seen works of a local cult artist-turned-drag queen

1. Mickalene Thomas turns the Bass Museum into a domestic 1970s soirée

It's no secret that American artist Mickalene Thomas considers her late mother to be her greatest muse. Sandra Bush, a former model, has made multiple appearances in the artist's iconic rhinestone-encrusted paintings and intimate photographs, which address femininity, sexuality and the black experience. This time, Thomas has transformed Miami's Bass Museum into one of her mother's 1970s parties, which provided a safe space for her queer friends. *Better Nights* incorporates work by Thomas and artists of colour, such as Nina Chanel Abney, John Edmonds and Brontez Purnell, with DJ sets and performances. "It's a space where people can unveil themselves, engage in conversation and listen to music while enjoying collective memories," Thomas tells *Vogue*.

Better Nights is at the Bass Museum from December 1, 2019 to September 27, 2020

2. Elmgreen & Dragset find a new home at the Miami Beach Convention Center

The swimming pool isn't a new motif for Elmgreen & Dragset; think of the diving board comically sticking out of a window at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in 1997. This time though, the Scandi art-duo return with *Bent Pool*, a permanent installation outside Miami Beach Convention Center. "What [swimming pools] represent is actually something in danger of becoming frivolous, rather than remaining iconic," Elmgreen & Dragset tell *Vogue* of their work: a six-metre, 20ft-high sculpture that pays homage to the city's architecture while commenting on the climate crisis.

Bent Pool is on view permanently at Pride Park, Miami Beach Convention Center

3. Artist-turned-fashion designer Sterling

Ruby finally gets his museum survey

Art-world darling Sterling Ruby has dabbled in the fashion industry for years as a longtime collaborator with Raf Simons and launching his own collection, S.R. Studio. LA. CA., as a special guest at Pitti Uomo in 2019. Now, the American-Dutch artist returns with his first comprehensive museum survey at the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami (ICA). *Sterling Ruby* features more than 100 works spanning two decades, including ceramics, textiles and paintings, which explore traditions from Amish quilt-making to California's radical earthenware.

Sterling Ruby is at ICA Miami from November 7, 2019 to February 2, 2020

4. Art Basel Miami Beach spotlights young, global artists at its Positions sector

This year, Art Basel Miami Beach will put a spotlight on emerging talents by giving solo presentations to 14 individual gallerists. Chicago gallery, Document, brings the sensual portraiture of American photographer Paul Mpagi Sepuya, known for his intimate exploration of race and the tradition of the nude. Meanwhile, Toronto-based gallery Cooper Cole presents the mesmerising hand-sewn sculptures of Canadian self-taught artist Tau Lewis, and Madrid gallerist Sabrina Amrani shows the mixed-media sculptural work of Manal AlDowayan, who examines issues related to women's rights in her native Saudi Arabia.

Positions sector at Art Basel Miami Beach is open from December 5 to December 8, 2019

5. Pepe Mar remembers cult painter-cum-drag queen Craig 'Varla' Coleman

Artist Craig Coleman left New York in 1989 for sunny Miami Beach, then one of America's liveliest LGBTQ+ hubs. There, he became involved with its buoyant drag scene, performing under the name Varla and turning his studio into a camp TV-set where he would host and film art gatherings. Now, honouring the 25th anniversary of Coleman's premature death from AIDS-related complications, Miami-based Mexican artist Pepe Mar pays homage to Coleman with an installation titled *Varla TV*. "She [Varla] was part of South Beach's renaissance," Mar tells *Vogue*.

Varla TV is on view at Meridians from December 5 to December 8, 2019

6. Balenciaga and Crosby Studios reimagine the 21st-century sofa

For the 15th edition of Design Miami, Balenciaga has teamed up with Crosby Studios to

spread the message of sustainability through collectible furniture made from unused and damaged clothing. “I love to reimagine outdated shapes that people might consider ugly, and give them new meaning,” Crosby Studios founder Harry Nuriev tells *Vogue* of the resulting *Balenciaga Sofa*, which was inspired by an overstuffed recliner and made with discarded Balenciaga garments and scrap materials. “There’s something tender about how beautifully grotesque yet playful the piece becomes.”

Design Miami is open from December 3 to December 8, 2019

7. Former Turner Prize-nominee Hilary Lloyd in dialogue with British ceramicist Ewen Henderson

Now in its 5th edition, Loewe Foundation’s acclaimed exhibition series, *Chance Encounters*, returns. The display takes place amidst Loewe’s Miami store, where British contemporary artist Hilary Lloyd’s textile, sound and video installation enters into an unlikely conversation with the late Ewen Henderson’s sculptures. “Hilary Lloyd’s work is perfectly attuned to the contemporary moment and the way in which we engage with the visual world around us,” said Jonathan Anderson, Loewe creative director and exhibition curator. “It will stage a striking dialogue with Ewen Henderson’s bold materially-rich work.”

Loewe Presents Chance Encounters V runs from December 4 to December 8, 2019

8. The Rubell Family Collection gets a revamp by Selldorf Architects

A Miami institution since opening its permanent space in the Wynwood district in 1993, the Rubell Family Collection is finally getting its much-anticipated upgrade. Renamed the Rubell Museum, the private collection—which counts 7,200 works of modern and contemporary art by some 1,000 artists—has found a new home in the neighbouring Allapattah district. Remodelled by renowned New-York firm Selldorf Architects, it features 40 galleries, a museum store, research library, and a restaurant. The museum’s inaugural exhibition will house artwork from the past 50 years, from Keith Haring and Cindy Sherman to Isa Genzken and Oscar Murillo.

The Rubell Museum exhibition is open from December 4, 2019 to November 30, 2020

9. Illusory master Leandro Erlich recasts the 21st-century traffic jam

You might remember Argentinian artist Leandro Erlich from his surrealist swimming pool at the 49th Venice Biennial in 2001. Now, Erlich takes to Miami’s beachfront with *Order of Importance*, a monumental sand sculpture consisting of 66 life-sized replicas of cars and trucks, commissioned by the City of Miami Beach. “The climate crisis has

become an objective problem that requires immediate solutions,” he says about his work, a recast of the 21st-century traffic jam.

Order of Importance is on view along the beachfront at Lincoln Road from December 1 to December 15, 2019

10. Iconic French artist-duo Les Lalanne receive tribute at The Raleigh Gardens

Celebrating the legacy of late French duo François-Xavier Lalanne and Claude Lalanne, real-estate developer Michael Shvo has created a temporary sculpture garden in collaboration with architect Peter Marino and landscape designer Raymond Jungles. Les Lalanne, as they were known, were emblematic figures in postwar Paris, courted by the surrealists and celebrities alike, including Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent. This Miami tribute will see 39 of the couple’s fantastical sculptures animating the Gardens of The Raleigh Hotel, one of Miami Beach’s most celebrated art-deco properties.

Les Lalanne at The Raleigh Gardens in Miami Beach is open from November 22, 2019 to February 29, 2020

11. Thom Browne debuts his art career in Miami’s Design District

Designer Thom Browne is known for his artistic stagecraft. This year, in Miami’s Design District, the famed American designer goes one step further and introduces his debut art installation *Palm Tree I*, a 21 ft tall palm tree constructed from yellow, green, and pink seersucker, pincord, and gingham oxford. Speaking of designers-turned-artists, Virgil Abloh launches his own mixed-media sculpture, *Dollar a Gallon*, a sinking gas-station sign. And don’t miss Versace’s exhibition of maximalist furniture, in collaboration with designer Sasha Bikoff.

Palm Tree I is on view at Moore Building from December 3, 2019 to December 8, 2019. Dollar a Gallon is on view at Paseo Ponti until December 2020. Versace X Sasha Bikoff is on view at Versace from December 6 to December 8, 2019