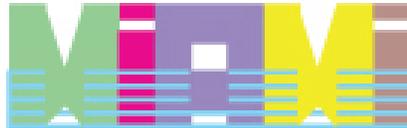


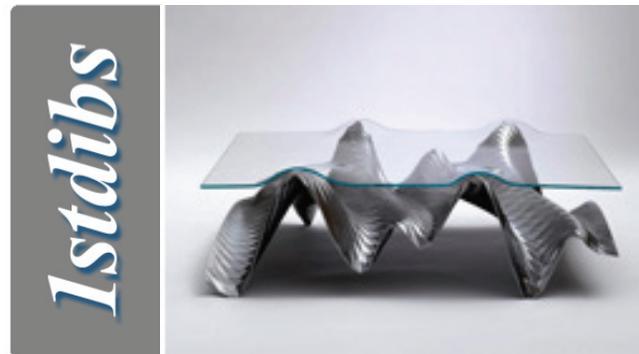
DESIGN



Miami, December 3-6, 2008

By Maureen Footer

Exhibitors select in part from their commitment to furthering contemporary designers and design discourse, but many new commissions are generating excitement at Design Miami.



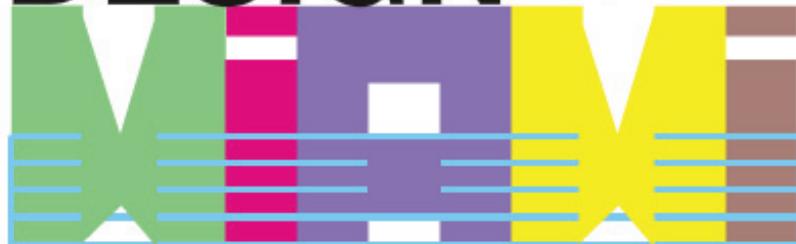
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ONLOCATION

By Maureen Footer



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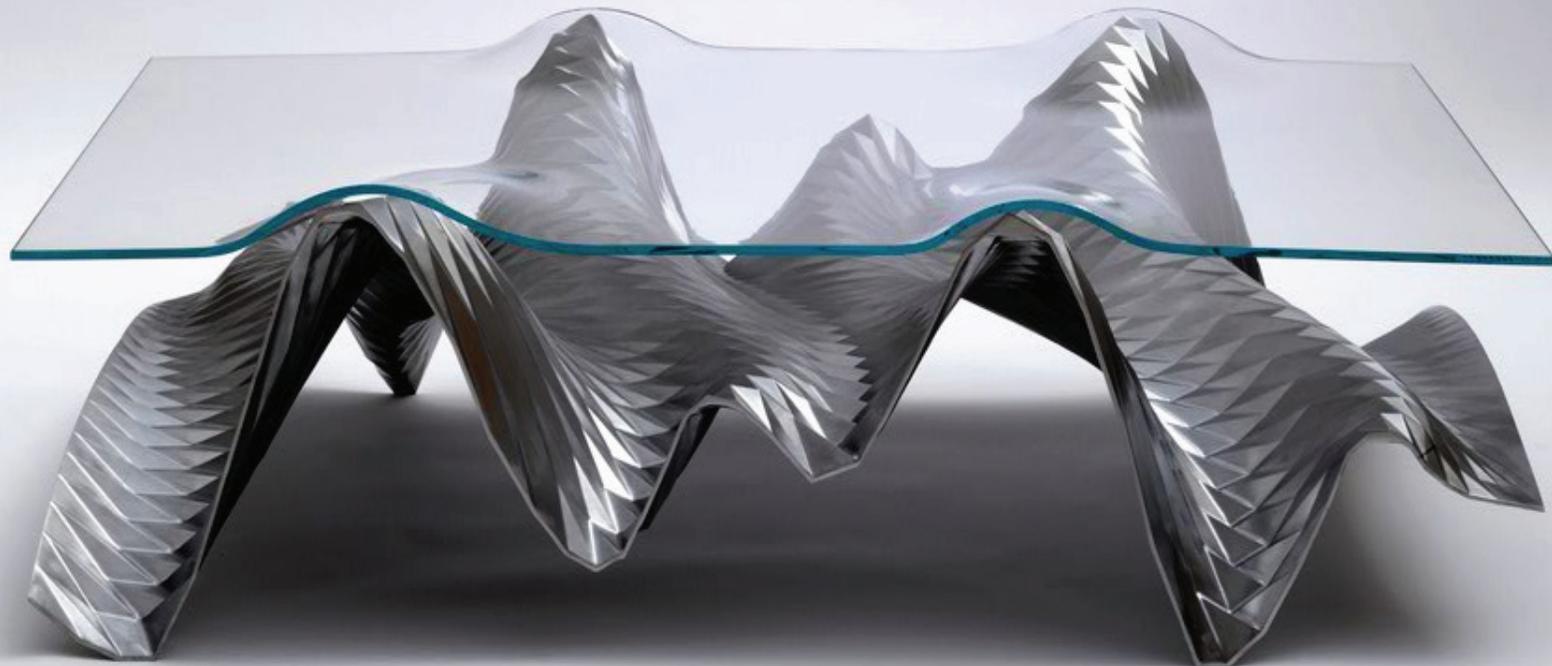
Reminiscent of the recent Chanel handbag alighting in Central Park, contemporary design flamboyantly arrives in Miami this week (December 3rd through the 6th) via a structure by New York design team Aranda/Lasch. Like the Zaha Hadid structure for Karl Lagerfeld, Aranda/Lasch, the molecularly-inspired architectural firm created for Design Miami 2008, a display space that can be packed, stored, reassembled and reused. The luminous towering tent of 43,000 square feet showcases a pre-eminent international forum for design and architecture – the design complement to the fine art offered this week at the Miami Basel art fair.



While

the portability of the purpose-built custom space also references MoMA's hit summer show on prefabricated structure, the comparison ends with the fine craftsmanship of the design on display at Design Miami. Whereas the MoMA show pointed to the broad application of industrial design, the objects on display at Design Miami tend towards the equivalent of a one-off couture gown. The emphasis is unequivocally on unique design coupled with meticulous craftsmanship. At Moss, the Soho taste arbiter long equated with industrial design, Dutch design team Studio Job offers up limited edition furniture executed with elaborate marquetry. Exquisite, labor-intensive technique is especially refined at Cristina Grajales, the gallery that showcases Colombian textile designer Jorge Lizarazo of Hechizoo. He begins with his spinning of the yarn, and then employs traditional Colombian hand weaving techniques to produce subtle, sensual carpets and textiles of unimaginably rich texture.

Metali Crasset, *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend 2 – Cheval Mirror*
(Courtesy of Meta, A Mallet Company)



Like the

unveiling of Paris collections, Miami will be abuzz with talk about modern designs displayed for the first time. Of course there are plenty of classic mid-century offerings. But as exhibitors are selected in part on their commitment to furthering contemporary designers and design discourse, new commissions generate much excitement at the fair. The Johnson Trading Company, known as much for fostering new talent as for curating vintage furniture, presents new pieces from British designer Max Lamb's Bluestone Project, a series of monolithic furniture of contrasting rough hewn and highly polished stone surfaces. New work is also prominently shown by Perimeter Editions of Paris, Priveekollektie from the Netherlands, and Contrasts Gallery of Shanghai and Beijing.

Hani Rahid and Lise Anne Couture, *Asumptote* (Courtesy of Meta, A Mallett Company)



From

the crystalline patterning of Aranda/Lasch to the breathtakingly beautiful flora-influenced porcelain of David Wiseman at R 20th Century there is a trend towards not just the luxurious but the elegant. This tendency is fully apparent in the special Satellite Exhibitions, which highlight centuries-old craftsmanship applied to contemporary design. Corning Glass, maker of legendary Steuben Glass, pairs master glassmakers with contemporary designers under the aegis of GlassLab. At Banners of Persuasion, artist Kara Walker departs from her usual technique of silhouette to explore her provocative themes via tapestry. Takashi Murakami, the artist indelibly linked with Louis Vuitton, displays the product of his art and design collective, Kaikai Kiki. Al Sabah Art & Design Collection from Dubai marries the craftsmanship of the Middle East—such as mother-of-pearl furniture inlay—with design, offered up amidst a profusion of Middle Eastern hospitality of cardamom-flavored Berber coffee and exotic sweets.

The ultimate in elegance is Meta furniture, developed by esteemed London antique house Mallett. Glimpsed to much acclaim at the Milan Furniture Fair in 2008, Meta makes its formal debut at Design Miami 2008. A partner at Mallett, Henry Neville, dreamed of imbuing avant-garde creativity with 18th-century craftsmanship when he noticed clients seeking contemporary work of the same impeccable quality and craftsmanship as in his fine antiques. The dazzling result is the Meta line of lighting and furniture (I personally crave the “Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend” lantern of paktong and hand-blown glass) which proudly and stylishly stands tall among prestigious 18th-century furniture.

Matali Crasset, Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend 1 – Lantern (Courtesy of Meta, A Mallett Company)



For

the first time, Design Miami includes a curated exhibition, "Beyond Organic: Design in the State of Nature" which underscores both the fair's larger cultural agenda and the current interest in the complex, hand-crafted element of modern design that derives inspiration from nature. When exhausted by art, design, and endless parties – a visitor to Miami can drop in on a series of design performances and talks supported by Fendi which explore the creative process. For those without a plane ticket to Miami, all talks will broadcast on the Internet.

DESIGN MIAMI 2008
December 3rd - 6th, 2008.

Studio Job, Bavarian Screen (Courtesy of Moss Gallery)