



Let There Be Light—And Plenty of It The best of the best at Design Miami.

Camera. Action. Lights! As if on a cue, the participating galleries at [Design Miami 2015](#) put the spotlight on, well, lights—in all its iridescent facets, from the whimsical to the stellar. Never has the Design Miami tent shined brighter.

One particular stunner is the French artist [Mathieu Lehanneur](#)'s S.M.O.K.E. ONYX (PINK) at the Carpenter's Workshop Gallery booth. It comes in a limited edition of eight (with four artist proofs). "It is a mixture of what could be smoke, or bubbles of soap," explains the artist while sucking in the smoke of his e-cigarette—this is America, after all. He flew in for the opening night

Chevron, Doris. "Let There Be Light—And Plenty of It," *W Magazine*, December 3, 2015.

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and had to turn right back around less than 24 hours later to attend the climate conference in his hometown, for which he designed a new type of solar street light.

The glass for the S.M.O.K.E. lamp is blown into a stainless steel net. “To enhance the effect of lightness, we gradually influence the process from white to totally transparent glass,” he explains. “You feel the movement of smoke for sure, but also of life.”

Underlining the object’s fragility, the precious airhead sits on an onyx pedestal of the palest pink. “It is very pale, very beautiful, next to the couch, bed, or in a living room landscape,” says Lehanneur who is also working on giant chandeliers where tubes of light weave in and out the ceiling like kettle stitch gone AWOL. All you need to do is to invest in a fake ceiling.

So what creates the obvious trend in lighting? “Light has been neglected since the 60s when it was used much more,” says Linus Adolfsson, one of the partners in L.A.’s Gallery Seomi International, which is staging *A Case Study in Light*, with works by seven contemporary Korean artists. “It is very interesting to bridge lighting and sculpture – both in you home and you office.”

It’s also commercially viable, according to the New York gallerist Mark Benda of Friedman Benda, who brought the work of the Dutch artist Joris Laarman to Miami Beach. “Lighting is something you can always use in a home,” he says. “And then, historically, lighting has been a very strong subject with the Italian and French mid-century designers. In recent years, the discipline has been a bit neglected.” Benda, who calls the German designer Ingo Maurer the torchbearer of light, says that lighting design has raised a new generation to prominence. “I wanted to surprise collectors. In a contemporary home, lights are an accent to an interior or even an afterthought. I want my pieces to add a sculptural dialogue with the interior.”

Meanwhile, the Brussels gallery Victor Hunt is showcasing gorgeous sconces by the Austrian design duo Mischer Traxler in its all sculpture/lighting exhibition. “They want to draw attention to species at the verge of extinction, even if we appreciate them a little less,” says gallery owner Alexis Ryngart of the duo’s *RealLimited* series, which focuses on a rare species of moth. Unlike the real species, *Catocala Conversa*, the moths in the Mischer Traxler creations surround the light, but they will neither flame out or fly away. And better yet, they won’t gobble your cashmeres.

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