

At Design Miami, Big Ideas Are Made Beautiful

MIAMI — Design Miami/ is a bit like heaven for interior designers. It's a massive white tent, housing hundreds of masterworks from the world's best designers. That it happens to be located in the middle of a swelteringly humid, gridlocked Miami Beach is beside the point. Only cool, clean air surrounds the art within. And it's all for sale — at market prices. Curators and collectors are already spending millions on *objets d'art* at this fair, which opened to the public on Thursday and runs through Sunday. This, after all, is where art meets commerce.

But none of the designers here actually want to talk about sales. They want to talk about their passion. They want to talk about their art. Most of all, they want the meaning of their work to be understood.

"As designers, we are ambassadors of power. Power needs beauty, beauty needs power," said Dutch designer Marcel Wanders, standing before his gold-coated "Moose Head" sculpture (which is going for \$28,000.) It is beautiful, to be sure. *Why* it's beautiful comes next: "I'm working against industrialization, where everything is the same. I'm trying to make something unique — something intimate," he said. Playing with clay with his daughter is how "Moose Head" came about. To our left, a distorted, curved mirror hangs on the wall. Part of a brand new series called "Portraits," it reflects Wanders's theories of self-perception. "When we look in the mirror, we deform reality. Whether it's conscious or unconscious, we all invent what we see."

If there is a theme at this fair, it is invention. Everywhere you turn, a new object challenges its viewer to consider a new idea. That they are so widely varied is a credit to Design Miami/'s new executive director Rodman Primack, who corralled galleries from five different continents to participate in this week's event.

Parker, Jennifer. "At Design Miami, Big Ideas Are Made Beautiful," *Blouin Art Info*, December 4, 2015.

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At Design Miami, designer Marcel Wanders stands before his gold coated "Moose Head" artwork, a limited edition work for \$28,000.



This abstract mirror by Marcel Wanders is making its US debut at Design Miami. It is part of a series of three mirrors called "Portraits," which will each be unveiled at New York's Friedman Benda gallery in February 2016.

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Marcel Wanders said of his *Moose Head* sculptural piece – “I was playing with clay with my daughter, trying to make something unique, individual. I call them ‘one minute sculptures.’ Every so often, one becomes bigger. The lucky one. This is the lucky one.”

Here are the highlight works, and the ideas behind them:

Wendell Castle (America)

Though the celebrated designer Wendell Castle Unique is known for his furniture, he’s really an ideas man. His large-scale furniture creations — made using handcraftsmanship, 3D modeling, and a massive robot — begin as an “impossible” image in Castle’s mind. Then he goes about turning what he originally conceived of as a physical impossibility into a reality. At Design Miami/, several examples are on view, including the hand-sculpted, lyrical “Music Stand” in walnut wood from 1977. Or the unlikely “Wall Mirror” made with stack-laminated cherry wood in 1974.

Castle himself explains it best: “I’ve made fairly outrageous pieces. In a sense, I never focused my career in terms of making things sellable. I’ve almost done the opposite.”

Ironically, his furniture is among the most expensive items here.

Design Miami/ 2015 runs through December 6.



Music stand in hand-sculpted walnut by Wendell Castle, Rochester, New York, 1977. Signed and dated, "WC 77."

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