

Design Miami Is Understated, but Its Offerings Certainly Aren't



Blotches of paint cover an 83-inch foam sofa by the South Korean artist Sang Hoon Kim. Mr. Kim's family owned a foam manufacturing company for three generations. Cristina Grajales Gallery

By Anita Gates

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Imagine the horror. Some Art Basel Miami Beach visitors find the David Hockney or Roy Lichtenstein of their dreams and then realize they don't have the right sofa or table to hang it over — or just the right home accessory to accent that room. Luckily, [Design Miami](#), like the art fair, runs through Sunday, and it's right across the street from the convention center.

"We're sort of the quiet, understated market in a lot of ways," Jennifer Roberts, the chief executive of Design Miami, said in a telephone interview from Florida. Art Basel is limited to fine arts; Design Miami limits itself to collectible art and architecture.

Sometimes that means home furnishings that are neither quiet nor understated. This year, visitors will find work from nearly 35 galleries, including a six-sided table designed by Charlotte Perriand in 1949, from François Laffanour's Galerie Downtown in Paris; a collection of the Spanish-born designer Oscar Hagerman's chairs, shown by Kurimanzutto, the Mexico City gallery; and a whole suite of stainless steel Michael Young furniture from Gallery ALL in Los Angeles. Not to mention these six intriguing pieces.

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A moonscape? That's how some people see [Sang Hoon Kim](#)'s 83-inch memory-foam-seat sofa, shown by the Cristina Grajales Gallery of New York. For others, it may seem more like a priceless [Jackson Pollock](#) painting that escaped its frame and shape-shifted, with every Abstract Expressionist drip intact. Mr. Kim, a South Korean designer whose family owned a foam manufacturing company for three generations, knows his material. "He treats it as if he's painting on canvas or modeling with clay," Ms. Roberts said. Organizers call it, among other things, "playful yet cerebral," like much of [his furniture](#) design.