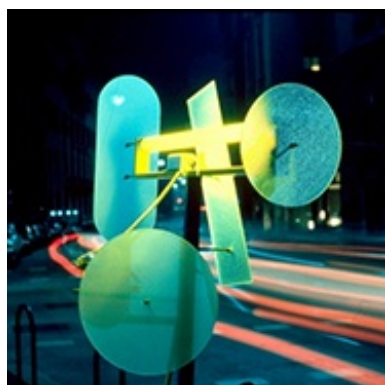


EVENTS

Audi, Swarovski pioneer designs with Design Miami/Basel collaborations

June 17, 2014



Light Tree by Nanda Vigo, 1983

By JOE MCCARTHY

Art enthusiasts are making their way to Design Miami/Basel in Switzerland June 17-22 to check out the nearly 50 galleries displaying work from established and emerging designers.

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Like other high-profile shows, Design Miami/Basel's conference-like atmosphere attracts visitors eager to learn about the latest trends from luminaries in the design world. German automaker Audi and precision cut-crystal maker Swarovski collaborated with prominent designers to further align themselves with the affluent audience and innovation.

"Design Miami and Art Basel are the intersection between art, design and wealth," said Chris Ramey, president of **Affluent Insights**, Miami, FL. "Every luxury brand should be there."

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Audi or Swarovski, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Audi and Swarovski were unable to comment by press deadline.

The right audience

Design Miami/Basel is part of the prominent art and design series that includes Design Miami, Art Basel and Art Basel: Miami Beach. While Design Miami/Basel takes place June 17-22, Design Miami occurs Dec. 3-7.

According to Design Miami, the themes at this year's fair are "Ancient Materials," "Exchange between East and West," "Between Sculpture and Design" and "Extraordinary Provenance."



Dining Table 'Liquid Glacial' by Zaha Hadid

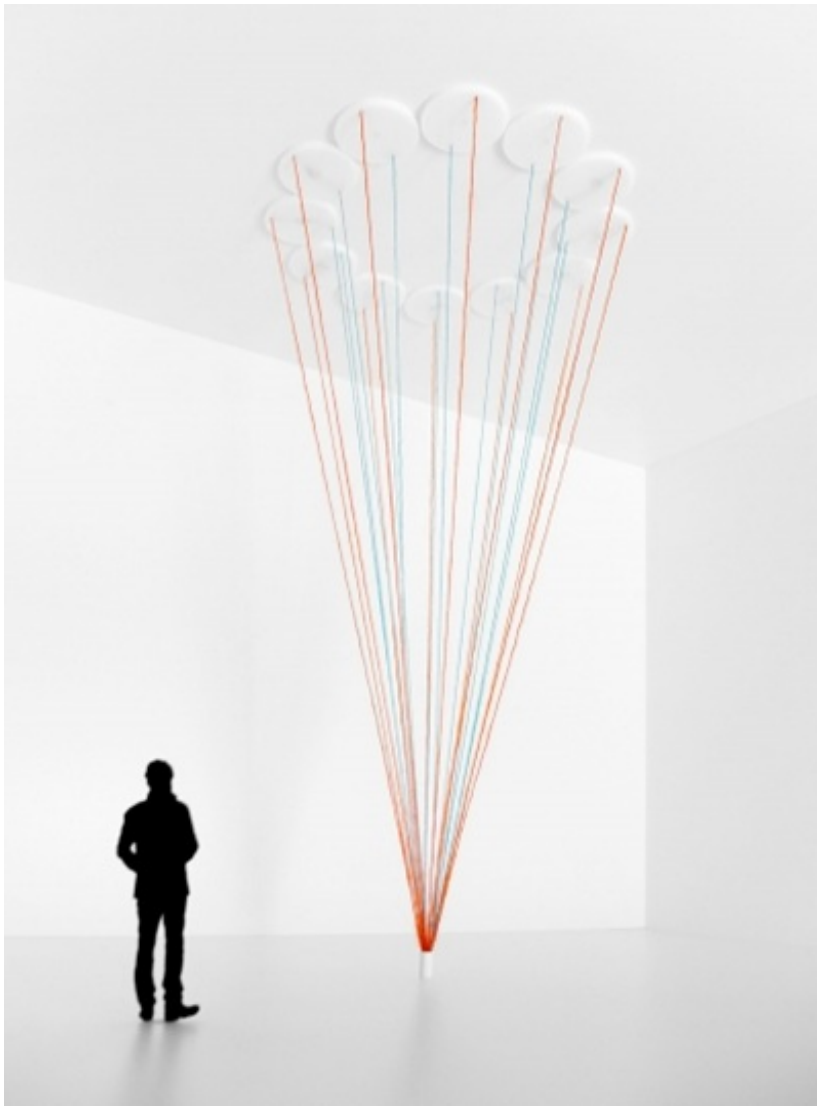
Galleries attending the fair come primarily from major European cities such as Paris, Brussels, London and Milan. New York is also represented by nine galleries.

An aspect of the fair called Design On/Site showcases the work of four designers and studios. The London gallery Elisabetta Cipriani invited designer Rebecca Horn to create pieces for its Jewelry by Contemporary Artists series.



Medusa by Rebecca Horn

"Satellite" exhibitions by three institutions aim to offer visitors an educational experience. For example, an exhibition by the University of Art and Design Lausanne ECAL in Switzerland helps guests to see the importance of wool in our everyday lives.



"In Wool We Trust" by ECAL

From June 17-19, guests can attend multiple talks such as "Fear of Missing Identity: Design, Innovation and the Politics of Information" and "Collecting a Radical Design: a Spirit for the unconventional."

Swarovski is returning as the main sponsor of the event, adding to its extensive design credentials.

Beginning in 2002, Swarovski Crystal Palace has commissioned designers, architects and artists to reinterpret how crystal can be used.

For 2012, Swarovski commissioned Brazil's Mr. Torres to "create an installation inspired by water conservation and stewardship." The 2013 prompt draws inspiration from the Swarovski Waterschool, a program that teaches water conservation to school children.



Mangrove Groove installation at Design Miami

Mr. Torres' exhibition was inspired by the Brazilian mangrove forests and the Voronoi diagram to explore the connections between nature and science. The mangrove tree is at the center of Mr. Torres' design due to the species importance in protecting the aquatic ecosystems of Brazil ([see story](#)).

For Design Miami/Basel 2014, the brand has teamed up with the London-based design duo Fredrikson Stallard, composed of Patrik Fredrikson and Ian Stallard.



Fredrikson Stallard in dialogue with Nadja Swarovski and Jana Scholze June 17

The team created a circular metal form standing 13 feet that holds over 8,000 golden Swarovski crystal droplets within its frame, "mimicking the iconography of the sun and shimmering as it constantly reflects and refracts light."

Audi has been the exclusive automotive partner of both Design Miami fairs since 2006 and has used the event as a launch pad for innovative concepts.

For instance, Audi of America showcased its new electric car and charging station at the Design Miami sustainability forum in 2010 to market itself as an eco-friendly brand ([see story](#)).

The automaker tapped German designer Konstantin Grcic to create an architectural installation that incorporates the Audi TT model.

According to Design Miami, "The installation uses real elements of the Audi TT, such as the rear hatch, and is designed to be assembled and dismantled as required. Mounted on stilts, it could be situated in an urban landscape as well as in a natural outdoor

environment."

Connections galore

The intersection of contemporary art and luxury has always been hectic with shout-outs and an atmosphere of grandeur, but when the two fields merge through collaborations, can tangible value be gleaned?

Brands are able to highlight their devotion to craft and innovation by borrowing an artist's aesthetic, but such maneuvers can have the unintentional consequence of downplaying the quality of that brand's own hard-earned aesthetic. Also, commercialization of venerated artists may jeopardize the aura of ultra-exclusivity that has driven art sales at both auctions and fairs to all-time highs ([see story](#)).

"The affluent are shifting their passions from luxury to art," Mr. Ramey said. "It's the natural order as most luxury brands forget the pillars that got them there."

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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