

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Luxury brands arrive in Miami for Art Basel

December 6, 2018



Prada Mode is an immersive experience coinciding with Art Basel. Image credit: Prada

By SARAH RAMIREZ

With Art Basel Miami Beach underway, luxury brands across industries have descended on the city for the opportunity to engage with thousands of festival attendees.

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Brands including Prada, Douglas Elliman and Lexus will be hosting events, exhibitions and other creative efforts at Art Basel, which runs through Dec. 9, and the concurrent Design Miami fair. The worlds of luxury and art often converge at large-scale art events such as Art Basel.

"The attendees at Art Basel/Art Week Miami range dramatically from students to very wealthy individuals," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of **Miller & Company**, New York. "This gives luxury brands a meaningful opportunity to expose, educate and engage with them by providing experiential moments allowing them to ultimately sell to these customers."

"Art, by its very nature, was and is intended to be enjoyed and appreciated by all," she said. "Any activity that creates interest, desire and elicits movement for an individual or corporation to take action is a marketer's dream time and money well spent."

Magic City marketing

From exhibits to pop-ups, luxury brands are turning to art and the city of Miami as inspiration for their initiatives.

Italian fashion label Prada launched its inaugural event platform, Prada Mode, at the Freehand Miami through Dec. 6. The entire hotel and associated restaurants were refurnished to reflect a Prada club aesthetic and host cultural events during Art Basel.

For the third year, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus will be in Miami for Art & Design Week as an official automotive partner. The automaker will be exhibiting its LF-1 Limitless Future Concept Vehicle in a mixed reality installation.

Lexus and *Whitewall Magazine* hosted a panel entitled "Supporting Emerging Design For a Better Tomorrow." As part of Design Miami's official programming, art and design leaders discussed issues surrounding innovation and sustainability.

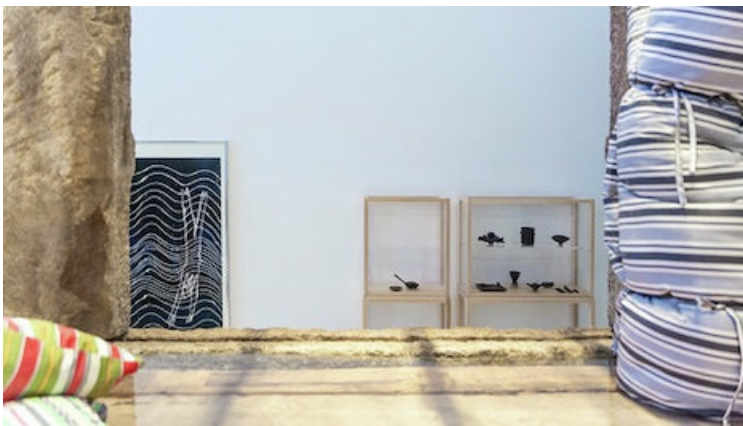


*Lexus will be hosting an exhibit called *The Future is Limitless*.*

Italian fashion house Emilio Pucci is hosting an installation at its Design District boutique, featuring the 2019 resort collection alongside modern updates of famous Nicholas French hairstyles.

Fashion label Fendi has an exhibit of 10 fountains, "The Shapes of Water," to celebrate 10 years of its Peekaboo bag, as well as 10 years of its involvement with Design Miami. Creative director of menswear and accessories Silvia Venturini Fendi designed a 10th anniversary edition of the Peekaboo bag that will be sold at Fendi's Miami store.

Spanish fashion house Loewe launched its fourth installment of its "Close Encounters" series. The exhibit spotlights ceramics, hand-woven textiles, woodcut printing and other "outmoded" items and will run at the brand's Design District store through Feb. 1.



Loewe is hosting an exhibit at its Miami store to coincide with Art Basel. Image courtesy of Loewe

French home furnishings brand Roche Bobois hosted Art Basel Miami Beach's kickoff event, The Art of the Party, along with Galleria Ca' d'Oro and *Art Basel* and *Ocean Drive* magazines.

Another publishing title taking advantage of the influx of affluents in the area is *Elliman Magazine*. Produced by real estate brokerage Douglas Elliman, the magazine's third annual art issue was launched at Art Basel.

A longtime sponsor of Art Basel events, Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet is supporting a large-scale art project with artist and environmental activist Toms Saraceno. "Albedo" harnesses solar energy for a floating sculpture on the shores of Miami Beach.

"While this have little or nothing to do with a fine timepiece, it does resonate with Audemars' philosophy [of craftsmanship and design]," Ms. Miller said.

Art and innovation

Art Basel hosts festivals across the globe, and all have become destinations for luxury brands.

German automaker BMW committed to sponsoring the arts by continuing its longstanding partnership with Art Basel Switzerland this year.

BMW offered on-site shuttle services for VIP guests. Additionally, BMW will sponsor many of the artistic exhibitions as part of its BMW Art Journey campaign.

At Art Basel, the automaker announced Zac Langdon-Pole as the latest recipient of its Art Journey. The artist will be

exploring the flight paths of birds to help better understand humans' place in the world ([see story](#)).

Trade shows and design weeks have only grown in importance as they have become prime opportunities for luxury fashion labels to launch new collaborative projects, including in the home decor space.

Last year, Loewe premiered its first home furnishings collection, which spans furniture and decor with a focus on craft. Following a debut during Milan's Salone del Mobile home fair, Loewe's "This Is Home" collection traveled to department store Liberty London for a three-week pop-up.

Although luxury fashion brands have been dominating the furniture scene, premium automakers are also making special appearances at design weeks, including Rolls-Royce and Bentley ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands understand they have the opportunity to be in front of a captive global audience consisting of a very wide range of age and income [at Art Basel and other design events]," Ms. Miller said. "This opens up a plethora of opportunity for products still in concept phase, new product introductions, to line extensions and or service offerings."

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