

VOGUE

5 of the Most Fascinating Objets d'Art From Design Miami

BY ELISE TAYLOR



Design Miami, like so many things this year, is a pared-back version of its usual self. There's no labyrinthine layout in a cavernous convention center on 19th street, no eager Instagrammers swarming the latest Kaws debut, no dinner parties sponsored by buzzy brands. And while, yes, such cultural beachside bacchanalia is surely missed, 2020

allows us to completely refocus on what made Design Miami such a *thing* in the first place: the work itself.

In this extraordinary year, the fair made a poignant choice to return the Moore Building, where they first debuted in 2005. You could still see the art in person, as long as you purchased a ticket (with an assigned time slot) in advance. But they also made it accessible far beyond South Florida: talks were streamed online, art was uploaded into galleries, and a new e-commerce shop meant furniture collectors could browse from the safety of their own homes.

Below, the most fascinating objets d'art from Design Miami 2020.

1. Roberto Lugo, Kamala Harris Teapot (Wexler Gallery)



Kamala Harris Teapot by Roberto Lugo, 2020, Wexler Gallery

Roberto Lugo, the classically trained ceramicist whose vessels serve as odes to Black and Latinx icons, expands his collection of porcelain portraits for Design Miami's Podium America(s) exhibition, which examines what, exactly, it means to be American. The standout? This Kamala Harris teapot—with an AOC urn as a close second.

2. OrtaMiklos, Surfing USA Chair (Friedman Benda)



Surfing USA Chair by OrtaMiklos, Friedman Benda, 2020.

Photo: Courtesy of Friedman Benda/By Kris Tamburello

The OrtaMiklos Surfing USA Chair is an ode to the idealized age of 1960s California dreamin': when Hollywood was the promised land and The Beach Boys served as a soundtrack to the West Coast lifestyle. The Design Miami fair awarded it as one of the best contemporary pieces in this year's show.

3. Power to the People, a Collection of 10 Walking Sticks



"Power to the People": a Collection of Ten Walking Sticks with Clenched Fists from the 19th and 20th

Century ©Olde Hope

These canes aren't avant garde, contemporary, or even of this century—according to Design Miami, they date back to the 1800s. Yet their decorative toppers poignantly resonate with the times: tiny clenched fists, carved in all skin tones. Design Miami positions this collection (also part of the Podium America(s) exhibition) in front of our country's flag, showing how this one symbol has signified status, power, strength, and so much for so many throughout history.

4. Katie Stout, Paper Pulp Shelf (R & Company)



Paper Pulp Shelf by Katie Stout, 2020, R & Company

Photo: Courtesy of R& Company/By Kris Tamburello

Katie Stout aims to take some of the seriousness out of design, which is perhaps why her most famous works are lamps with colorful, Gumby-like nude women as their base. This year, she presents a pulp paper shelf: multicolored, twisted, and just barely functional, her gallery, R& Company, calls it “deranged.”

5. Virgil Abloh c/o Vitra: US Edition



Virgil Abloh x Vitra Chair.

Photo: Courtesy of Vitra/By Marc Eggimann

Virgil Abloh, at this point, is a staple at the world’s design weeks: last year, he had an installation at Paseo Point in Miami, a few months after he had displayed a separate installation at the Venice Biennale. For 2020, he collaborated with Vitra on a three piece pop-up collection called “Virgil Abloh c/o Vitra: US Edition.” It’s comprised of a ceramic

block, a lamp, and reimaged armchair originally designed by Jean Prouvé, all adorned in a baby blue hue. Although not technically part of the official fair—they're all on display in Miami's Design District—it's gathering a ton of buzz this week. You can also shop the [collection on Basic Space](#).