

# SURFACE

## Design Miami/'s Aric Chen Name Checks His Five Favorite Things

*BY RYAN WADDOUPS December 03, 2019*

As soon as Aric Chen was appointed Design Miami's first-ever curatorial director, a post introduced to give the fair a more global perspective, the renowned design scholar began to consider the most urgent issues of our time. For the Basel, Switzerland, edition this past June, Chen called into question the havoc humans wreak on the environment—and the role designers can play in changing that course. His theme for the fair in Miami, taking place December 3–8, is Elements: Water, an all-too-timely exploration as rising sea levels threaten the city's future.

The Shanghai-based curator, 45, has an appetite for challenge: Until August 2018, he was the lead curator for design and architecture at Hong Kong's forthcoming M+, the city's highly anticipated new art museum, set to open in 2020-2021 (he remains involved as curator at large). Chen, former creative director of Beijing Design Week, had been hired to build the M+ 20th-century collection of global design and architecture from an Asian point of view. One of his early co-curated shows for the new M+ will be the first large-scale exhibition devoted to the work of late Chinese architect I.M. Pei. Here, the globally curious creative downloads his latest finds.



## **Roberto Lugo**

*I first saw Roberto Lugo's work earlier this year at Atlanta's High Museum of Art. The Philadelphia artist calls himself the "ghetto potter" and reinterprets historical ceramics and decorative arts through the lenses of hip-hop, African-American history, and activism to become the "love child of Kehinde Wiley and Grayson Perry," as his gallerist, Lewis Wexler of Wexler Gallery, aptly told me.*