



8 EXHIBITIONS THAT SURPRISED AND DELIGHTED US AT MIAMI ART WEEK

From Carnival-themed rocking chairs to a kids-only showcase, these displays were the best of the best.

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Robin Hill

Each year, art and design commingle during Miami Art Week with exciting new contemporary furniture debuting at **Design Miami** and radical contemporary and modern art overwhelming the senses at **Art Basel**. But it's not just the fairs that delight; it's the programming that takes place throughout the coastal city—from activations in the glitzy Miami design district to gallery openings in the tiny neighborhood of Little Haiti. There's so much to see in every category, it's impossible to cover it all, so we did the work for you! Read on for the best of the best this week in Miami and beyond.

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LEENA SIMILU AT THE FUTURE PERFECT



Joseph Kramm

The **Future Perfect** reliably brings a dose of high whimsy to Design Miami with a solid roster of artists and designers working across mediums. This year their booth is graced with large-scale ceramic works by Los Angeles-based artist **Leena Similu**. Similu, whose Cameroonian heritage and role as a mother is central to her practice, creates vessels in the form of faces. But don't confuse the work with the face jug tradition of the Deep South; with the Keepers series, Similu mines the mask-making traditions of her home country and a reverence for female parentage. "In the Bamileke region in Cameroon, which is where my family is from, when a woman gives birth, she is surrounded by her entire family," says the artist. "I was drawn to this superior sense of allegiance and solidarity, and many of my works are, in part, a composite of my matriarchal lineage."

The three Keepers on view in this year's booth are calming presences, albeit with a mischievous twinkle in their abstract eyes. The sculptures, which are usually hand built, look almost as if they've been squeezed from a womb. The visual suggestion may not be intentional, but remains fitting as Similu's maternal grandmother was a midwife for much of her life in Cameroon. The work is a pensive, playful interrogation of life and what it means to carry it. Similu herself shines with the beauty only mothers seem to emit. Her work is a very welcome and vital addition to the Future Perfect's program.