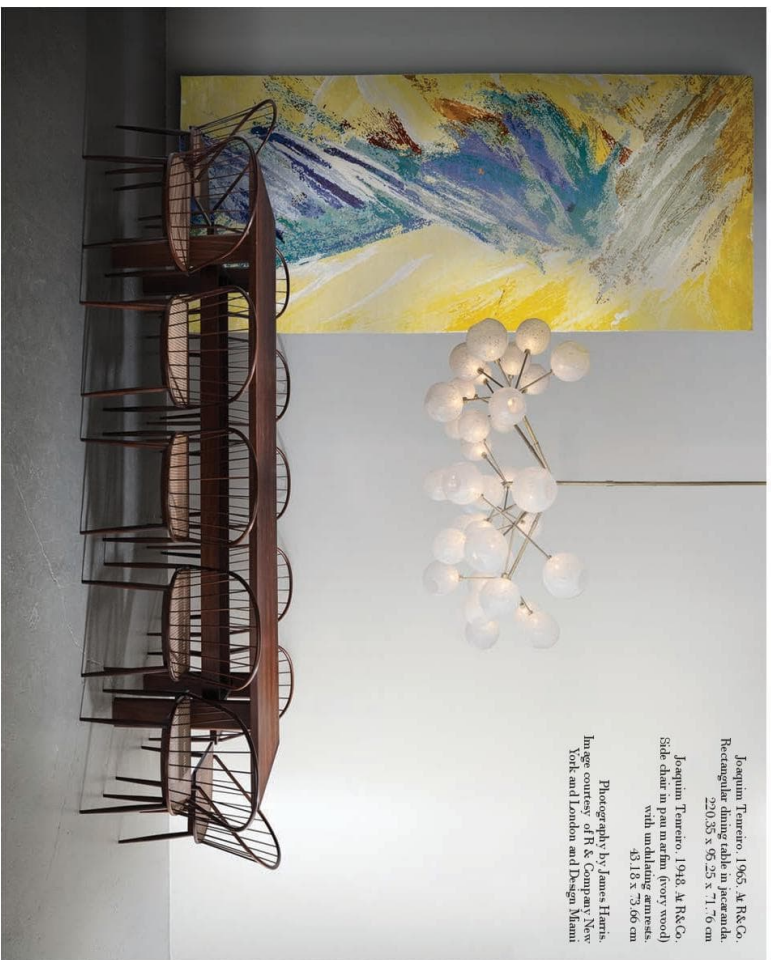


BEST OF BASEL

Art collectors must have been especially tempted to make a European tour this summer, with the Venice Biennale, documenta in Athens and now Kassel, Skulptur Projekte Münster and Art Basel plus Design Miami in Basel, all there for the taking. Here, we zero in on Basel's two mega-fairs in art and design with exclusive reviews by two industry experts, **Matthew Collings** and **Caroline Roux**.



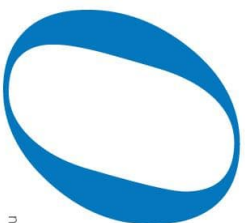
Joaquim Tenreiro, 1965, *A.R.&Co.*
 Rectangular dining table in jacaranda,
 220.55 x 95.25 x 11.70 cm
 Joaquim Tenreiro, 1948, *A.R.&Co.*
 Side chair in pin material (grey, rose),
 with upholstery, 75 x 65 x 95 cm
 83.18 x 73.66 cm
 Photography by James Harris
 Image courtesy of R & Company New
 York and London and Design Miami



Left: Studio Job, *Sinking Ship*, 2016,
 at Chamber gallery, Ghelidala, hand
 painted, polished bronze, 65 x 58.9 x
 94 cm. Image courtesy of Chamber NYC
 and Design Miami
 Below: Margjn van Abbel, *Cyanometer*,
 2011, Swarovski Designers of the Future
 Photography by Mark Godwin. Image
 courtesy of Design Miami

DESIGN FOR ITS OWN SAKE

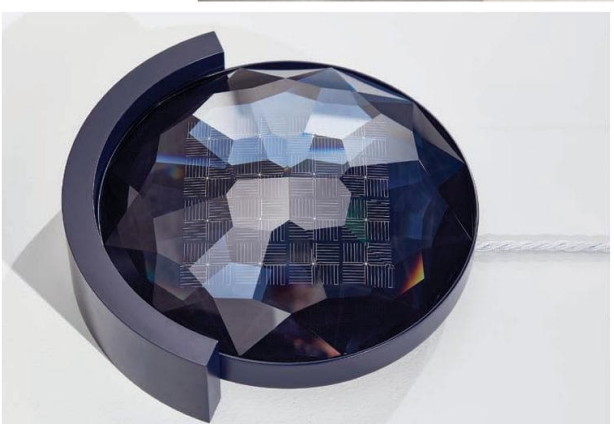
At the Design Miami fair that comes to Basel each June, “collectible” can mean a lot more than just something that deserves love, admiration and house room. **Caroline Roux** checks out the latest edition for *Carvas*.

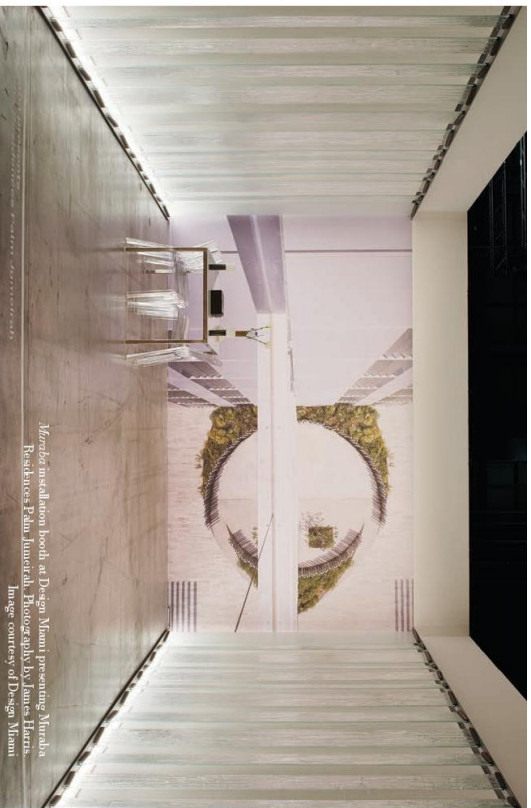


In the stand of the chic Paris-based gallerist Maria Wettergren at Design Miami, there’s a 4.3-metre-long bronze table by Mathias Bengtsson sitting on a base that appears to be made of tangled bronze branches. It is the near twin of a titanium version which has just been acquired for the permanent collection of the Pompidou Centre in Paris. A painted bronze side table at Chamber gallery from New York, with a bubbling top and a ship breaking up in its swirling blue base (*Sinking Ship* by Antwerp duo Studio Job), has been sold in the first hour to a world-class museum. And a unique cabinet by Ettore Sottsass, a star of 20th-century Italian design, at the Rome-based Giustini /

Shagetti, was really just there for show. It had already been snapped up by a private collector who agreed to lend it to the Met in New York for a major retrospective of Sottsass’s work that opens there in July.

In its 12 years at Basel, Design Miami has expanded to feature 47 galleries (it started with 12) and rather than diluting the standard, the level has risen steadily every year. This is where collectors come to find the best of the best in 20th-century pieces, like the flawless jacaranda dining table and chairs by Joaquim Tenreiro at the New York- and London-based design studio R&Co. The Brazilian designer’s finale output (he stopped designing aged 60, and painted for the rest of his life), coupled with the ease with

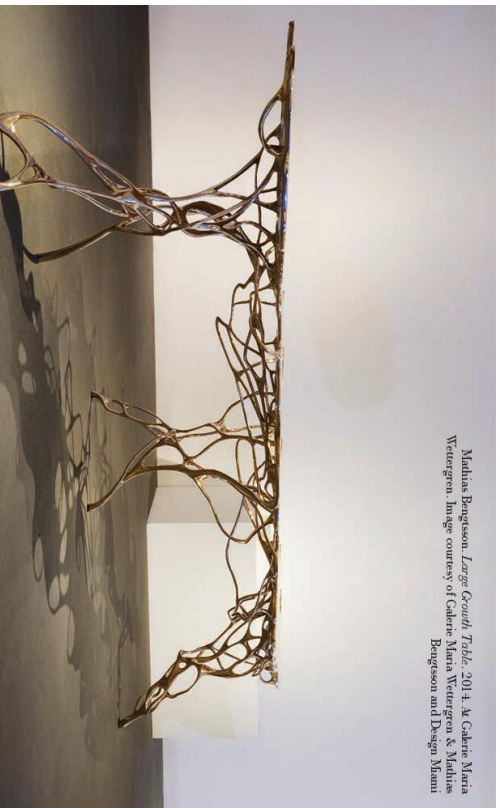




Murata installation booth at Design Miami presenting Murata Residences Palm Jumeirah. Photographs by James Harris. Image courtesy of Design Miami



Mathias Bengtsson, *Large Growth Table*, 2014. M. Cabrer, Maria Westergren. Image courtesy of Colarte, Maria Westergren & Mathias Bengtsson and Design Miami



Margaret Greiss + James Mason, *Let's Stick Together*. At Chamber gallery. Image courtesy of Chamber NYC and Design Miami

which his fluid modernist pieces slip into contemporary interiors, has made his work especially valuable. And if hardwood furniture doesn't appeal, at Siegelson, the New York jewellery specialists, there was a barely polished silver cape clasp which had once belonged to Nelson Rockefeller.

Of course, what gives Design Miami, in both its original American edition and its Basel offshoot, a real buzz is the meeting of old and new. Those with the time could dwell on the connection between that dazzling Mathias Bengtsson table and the exceptional pieces from the 1950s by the Italian architecture firm BBPR at Chicago's Casati gallery; Bengtsson's table was created using the very latest technology – he “grows” his complex designs from a digital “seed”. But once the computer has 3D-printed the piece as an object, a mould is made in wax, and molten bronze is poured into it – one of the oldest techniques for working metal that goes back to 4000 BC. The final bronze piece is polished painstakingly by hand.

When BBPR designed a series of furniture for the Revelli family in Milan, they too chose to work with high-end materials such as walnut, suede and brass, plus a considerable amount of traditional craft – the pieces needed to find their place among the family's extensive collection of antiques. But the designs, with their clearly expressed, rationalist structure, demonstrated just why these architects were considered to be the most progressive of their time.

At Copenhagen's Galleri Feldt, which specialises in modern Scandinavian pieces, the fetishisation of venerable design objects was taken up a notch. A palm chest, created by the Danish designer Poul Kjaerholm in 1955 for the Copenhagen's Architecture Academy (its side

bears an insignia from the institution, which would make a fine tattoo design for the 21st century), had been made even more unique and desirable with the addition of hand-drawn artwork by the artist Danh Vo hidden away in each of its nine drawers. Poor, if any were needed, that the working life of many pieces on sale here was well and truly over.

Closer to home, 2017 Pritzker Prize laureates RCR Architects collaborated with UAE developer Muraiba, in their first exhibit at the fair. Inspired by the Spanish firm's ideas and sketches, the designers created a smaller-scale evocation of the minimalist Muraiba Residences (at Palm Jumeirah), weaving in elements of luminosity, space and their distinctive glass panels, which look like shimmering vertical streams from afar.

Among the more contemporary pieces, function was, from the off, sometimes less of a priority than fancifulness. The *Let's Stick Together* cabinet at Chamber by the Amsterdam-based Lucas Masssen was perhaps the most challenging piece in the fair. With two cabinets lashed together by a Japanese bondage expert, it looked like Araki had run wild in IKEA. “I think,” conceded Chamber's founder Juan Garcia Mosqueda, “it's going to be quite a hard sell!”

At Svarovski, though, things were definitely looking ahead. Its *Designers of the Future* – from LA, Tokyo and Belgium – had found ways to embed sub-standard crystals into terrazzo, to knit vases from crystals, and to create a solar-powered chandelier. The last, by Marjan van Aubbe, was a ring of opaque blue crystals that was a perfect exercise in the art of reduction, and contemporary design at its subtle best. 