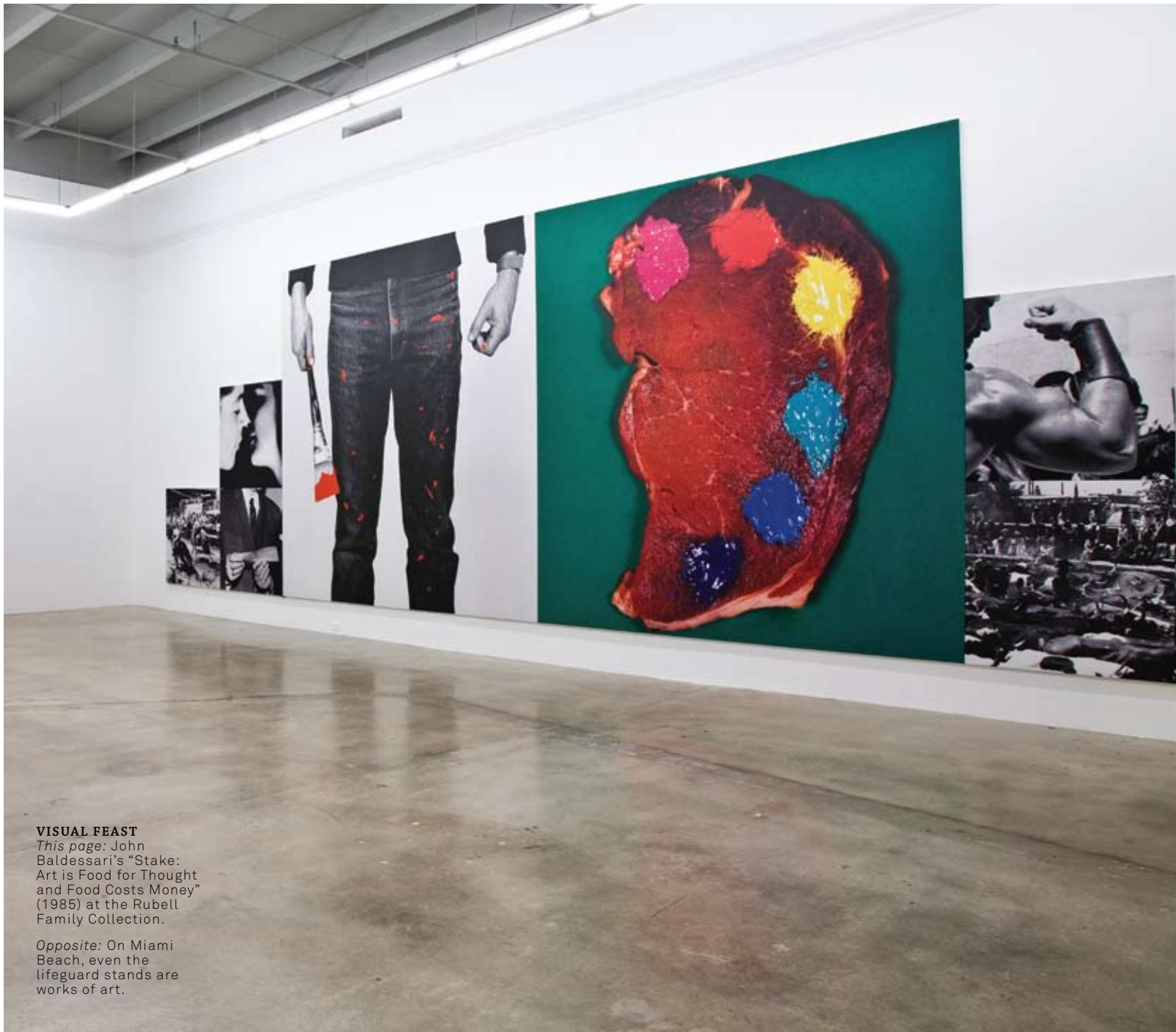


MIAMI HEAT



Miami's art scene is growing so quickly the city can hardly keep up. Lindsay Van Gelder dives in



VISUAL FEAST

This page: John Baldessari's "Stake: Art is Food for Thought and Food Costs Money" (1985) at the Rubell Family Collection.

Opposite: On Miami Beach, even the lifeguard stands are works of art.

LEFT: JON HICKS/CORBIS. RIGHT: MICHAEL F. MCELROY

SEE AND BE SEEN

From left: Kenneth Treister's wall mural, "Confetti" (2007), at Miami Art Space in the Wynwood Arts District; evening art-goers at Art Basel Miami Beach in 2009; children enjoy the statuary in Vizcaya Museum and Gardens; a 1929 window grill from the Norris Theatre in Norristown, Penn., greets visitors to the lobby of The Wolfsonian—Florida International University design museum.



Miami cares what things look like. That means beach bodies and pink neon, of course — but what the city's heart really belongs to is the visual arts. There is art everywhere you turn: retro-futuristic lifeguard stands done by '80s art star Kenny Scharf dot the beachfront, and Brazilian pop painter Romero Britto has his own store at the airport. There is even art planned for the future Marlins baseball stadium: a 60-foot sculpture of multicolored laser-light fish that will leap and flash for home runs, commissioned by team owner (and art collector) Jeffrey Loria and designed by multimedia artist Red Grooms.

This love affair reaches its fullest expression with the annual Art Basel Miami Beach (Dec. 2–5 in 2010), the tropical edition of the European art fair that expanded here in 2002. The regionwide arts-apalooza revolves around parties, special events at museums and galleries, and more parties. For serious collectors, the long weekend is visual and logistical catnip, notes prominent local collector Mera Rubell: "It's the clan coming together, from China to Warsaw to South Africa, and if you're serious about the international art world, you can't miss it."

Miami may host one of the most important art fairs on the planet, but its own art scene only started percolating on a global scale in the 1980s, when Cuban artists like José Bedia settled here and Christo and Jeanne-Claude outfitted 11 Biscayne Bay islands in enormous pink polypropylene tutus. "No one's been here long enough to say, 'We've never done it that way,'" says Bonnie Clearwater, director and chief curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami.

This still-in-flux attitude makes the city an incubator for young talent, who are drawn by cheap rents, the beach and the grants doled out by local foundations. "There's room to change things and help the city grow — you feel like what you're doing has resonance," says 25-year-old Nina Johnson, who came home to Miami after several years in New York.

FROM LEFT: CHARLY KURZ/LAIF/REDUX; COURTESY ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH



FROM TOP RIGHT: BILL SUMNER (VIZCAYA); SILVIA ROS (WOLFSONIAN); ILLUSTRATION BY WARD SCHUMAKER

Today she owns the cutting-edge Gallery Diet, which shows work by both national up-and-comers and locals like Christy Gast and Daniel Milewski.

There is much to see, but first-time visitors needn't be overwhelmed: our recommended art tour, featuring three of the city's six art museums, plus forays into the two most gallery-packed neighborhoods, is ample introduction. (Miami-Dade County is bigger than Rhode Island; a car is essential for most destinations.)

The Wolfsonian-Florida International University museum, in a converted storage warehouse in South Beach's Art Deco District, is dedicated to the history of graphic design, from war propaganda posters to movie-theater interiors. On view from Sept. 17 will be "Speed Limits," a retrospective of Italian Futurism that celebrates the avant-garde movement's love affair with speed a century ago, and how it has played out since. Among the 200 works on display are clocks, automotive ads and sequence photographs showing the rapid construction of the Eiffel Tower.

There's good, cheap Cuban food to be had at nearby Puerto Sagua, whose walls are a minimuseum of their own: three-dimensional kitsch paintings of Havana by the late Scull Sisters, a pair of Cuban-Chinese identical twins who, well into their 60s, were fixtures on the art circuit, invariably dressed in identical eye-popping outfits.



NOTES FROM THE CONCIERGE

A PERFECT DAY IN MIAMI

Embark on a picturesque journey along café-lined streets by biking through **Coconut Grove** and down Main Highway to **Kampong**, a lush botanical garden that features tropical fruits, slender palms and flowering trees. Or opt for a trip to Miami Beach, and stop at the gorgeous **Vizcaya Museum and Gardens**. The 70-room Renaissance-style villa is filled with art and furnishings from 15th through 19th centuries.

The afternoon is all about indulging. First, enjoy an alfresco lunch at **Bizcaya** — named one of Miami's best restaurants by Gourmet magazine — at The Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove, Miami. Then, pamper yourself at **The Boutique Spa** with the signature Tandem Experience, where two therapists provide a synchronized pedicure and facial, massaging head, neck and shoulders.

AATIFA JAMAL
GUEST RELATIONS SUPERVISOR
THE RITZ-CARLTON COCONUT GROVE, MIAMI



NOTES FROM THE CONCIERGE
A PERFECT DAY IN MIAMI

From The Ritz-Carlton, South Beach, walk to fashionable **Lincoln Road**, a 10-block Morris Lapidus-designed pedestrian mall featuring specialty stores and a bustling ambiance. Enjoy a taste of Miami's Latin culture by visiting **David's Café**, where you will find authentic Cuban *café con leche*, *pastelitos* (pastries), sandwiches and croquettes.

Sign up for a two-hour tour of Miami Beach's iconic **Art Deco District**, which begins at the Art Deco Welcome Center on Ocean Drive. Local architects and historians guide you along a unique and colorful lineup of well-preserved buildings built from the 1920s through the 1940s. Afterward, take a self-guided tour of the impressive art collection at The Ritz-Carlton, South Beach, which has earned the property the moniker of "art hotel."

NOEL LANZAS
 LOBBY CONCIERGE
 THE RITZ-CARLTON, SOUTH BEACH

The city's appetite for art is so great that the Miami Art Museum (MAM) is about to start construction on a glitzy bay-front campus designed by the Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron, with three times the space of the present museum. (The instant-landmark building boom is becoming an art-world rite of passage, starting four years ago with César Pelli's nearby Arsht Center, a gleaming white space station that incorporates the Deco tower of a long-gone Sears, Roebuck and Co. store and is now home to operas, concerts and dance.) MAM has a show of new works by 35 local artists running through Oct. 17. "Susan Rothenberg: Moving in Place," an exhibition of the paintings of Susan Rothenberg that opened last year at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, travels here Nov. 7. The reclusive artist's first show in more than a decade, it includes Rothenberg's strange, luminous horse paintings from the 1970s and her more recent depictions of fragmented human body parts.

While you're downtown, visit Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, the opulent 1916 estate of Miami pioneer and agricultural machinery magnate James Deering. The mansion looks like a Palladian palazzo improbably set down in tropical vegetation, including a maze and an orchidarium. Afterward, take the adjacent Rickenbacker Causeway to Virginia Key and have beer and smoked fish (there isn't much else) at Jimbo's, a waterside shack at the end of a

FROM TOP: © HERZOG & DE MEURON; VISUALIZATION BY ARTEFACTORYLAB; JOSE RODRIGUEZ (MOCA); ILLUSTRATION BY WARD SCHUMAKER



PARADISE FOUND

From left: The new Miami Art Museum at Museum Park by the architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron; Jack Pierson's "Paradise Lights" (1995), at the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; the Fountain Garden at Vizcaya; the Scull Sisters in characteristic matching outfits during Art Deco Weekend.



dirt road with chickens running wild and brightly painted broken-down cars strewn about. Naturally, it's a favorite spot for fashion shoots.

Ten miles north of downtown, in North Miami, is the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), which is also on the cusp of doubling its square footage to help sate the city's art hunger. The first major American solo museum show of the German multimedia artist Jonathan Meese opens Nov. 30, kicking off MOCA's Art Basel party. The show highlights sculpture and painting on themes ranging from celebrity to family, as well as dioramas of Meese-designed opera sets.

"Little Haiti," photographs of Miami's Haitian neighborhood by the fashion photographer Bruce Weber (he lives in Golden Beach), goes on view Nov. 18. Weber has been shooting in the district for years, and most of the photographs have never been seen before. The earthquake in Port-au-Prince occurred as the show was being curated, and Weber added documentation of its impact on the beleaguered Miami Haitian community. The exhibit also contrasts this work with Weber's photography for *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* (including Weber's fashion shoots in Miami's poorer neighborhoods) and, according to curator Bonnie Clearwater, "looks at the issue of whether art can raise awareness and help bring about change."

Located between MAM and MOCA are the gentrified Design District (north of 36th Street, east of Miami Avenue)

and Wynwood, the funkier, warehouse-y region to the south and west. Within the two neighborhoods are dozens of galleries, as well as a whole new art category pioneered by Miami: the private foundation or family collection that is open to the public. The Rubell Family Collection was one of the first; in the early 1990s, Mera and Don Rubell bought a 30,000-square-foot former Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) warehouse "for about what we would have paid for a one-bedroom apartment in New York," says Mera Rubell, and filled it with art. There is also much contemporary art to be found at the Cisernos Fontanals Art Foundation and the Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, both in Wynwood, and the de la Cruz Collection Contemporary Art Space, in the Design District.

Most galleries in both neighborhoods stay open late for the Second Saturday Art Walk every month. It's an excellent overview and a major party with a lot of pedestrian traffic, although a daytime visit is necessary for serious browsing. Among the most interesting galleries are Frederic Snitzer, Dorsch, David Castillo, Locust Projects, Gallery Diet and the Bas Fisher Invitational, which at least through late September (and possibly beyond) is offering artist-led magical mystery bus tours through odd corners of the city as part of its "Weird Miami" show.

And when you've sated yourself on art? You've still got the beach bodies and pink neon.

LEFT, FROM MIDDLE: BILL SUMNER; TONY ARRUZA/CORBIS