

FAIR GAME

Design Miami highlights, as discovered by Southern Guild Director Lezanne van Heerden.

Text Tracy Lynn Chemaly

Every December, the world's most prestigious design galleries converge in Miami for the year's most anticipated fair, Design Miami. Southern Guild, the only African gallery ever to have shown at this five-day event, returned last month for the sixth time, presenting furniture, ceramics, sculpture and lighting by our country's most esteemed designers. Southern Guild Director Lezanne van Heerden took an inspiring stroll around the fair. Here, she shares some of her favourite finds. www.designmiami.com

TRENDING



'Deer Lamp'
by Atelier Van Lieshout

Dutch sculptor Joep van Lieshout's bronze light refers to the origin of human beings. Resembling a cave painting, Deer Lamp conjures up ideas of hunting, eating, survival and worship. "I love its understated simplicity," says Van Heerden. "I find it fascinating that a few lines can render the complete impression of an animal." www.carpentersworkshopgallery.com

IMAGE CARPENTERS WORKSHOP GALLERY



IMAGE FRIEDMAN BENDA

'Seduction, Pair 01' by Najla El Zein

"Najla El Zein's work is imbued with meditative simplicity. There's something so sensuous about it," says Van Heerden, who sees these overlapping sculpted sandstone forms as two bodies intertwining. El Zein, a Lebanese designer who will open her first solo show with New York's Friedman Benda next month (February 28), explores a range of human states with this series – from introversion to desire.

<http://www.friedmanbenda.com>



IMAGE R & COMPANY

Southern Guild 'Leng-Kapa-Leng' (Anytime) and 'Yang-Kapa-Yang' (Anyhow)
by Atang Tshikare

"I adore the zoomorphic characteristics of these bronze stools," says Van Heerden, director of the gallery representing Tshikare. "They're alive with texture and personality. My favourite thing about them is that their surface pattern was created by Atang's finger strokes, and I enjoy running my fingers along the lines where his have run." These stools are inspired by the rocky outcrops of the sacred Modimolle Mountain in Limpopo, an ode to Tshikare's love of local mythology.

'Cardboard'
by David Bielander

Van Heerden has been a fan of Swiss jewellery designer David Bielander's work for some time, finding its skeuomorphic nature most intriguing. "It's incredible that his technical facility allows him to make everyday materials and objects, such as cardboard and paper bags, look precious and collectable." Bielander's pieces are completely handmade in 18k gold. Even the staple is white gold! www.ornamentumgallery.com



IMAGE ORNAMENTUM

'Fertility Form' by Rogan Gregory

"This was one of the first things that caught my eye," says Van Heerden of US fashion designer/functional artist Rogan Gregory's illuminated sculpture. "I love the use of positive and negative space to create perfect harmony and a sense of movement. There's something innately natural about it that reminds me of the symbol for infinity." Gregory's interest in ecological systems and evolutionary biology are evident in this light, designed to represent the egg attaching to the womb. <http://www.r-and-company.com>



IMAGE SOUTHERNGUILD

'Caviar Sconces'
by Chen Chen and Kai Williams

"I found these lights completely arresting," says Van Heerden. "The surface is alive and evocative with its intricate caviar-like texture, studded with fool's gold and gemstones. The magnifying globe with LED sphere pulls you into a hidden universe of detail." These sconces, made from steel-shot sanding material mixed with epoxy, continue the New York design studio's mission to work with industrial supplies, giving materials alternative purposes. www.thefutureperfect.com

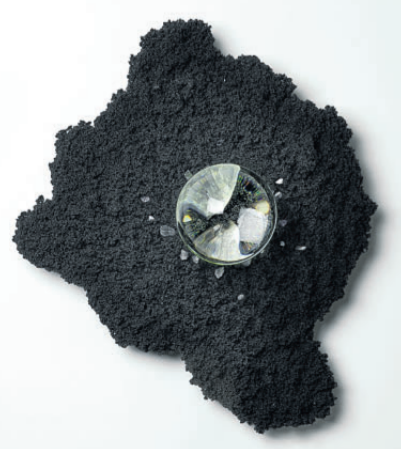


IMAGE THE FUTURE PERFECT



'The Shadow Partner'
by Beth Cavener

This clay sculpture stopped Van Heerden in her tracks. "Its other-worldly quality is mesmerising and its strangeness somehow soothing," she explains. Cavener's works of animals in unexpected forms are likened to psychological portraits for their disturbing nature. The artist works in an unusual manner, first sculpting the entire piece, then slicing it and hollowing out each section before piecing the 'outline' back together to be fired. www.jasonjacques.com