

## Design Miami/ Basel's 2014 edition broadens in scope and ambition

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Curated by Barneys creative director Dennis Freedman, the Design at Large programme is wide-ranging and eclectic. Pictured is Anton Alvarez's Thread Wrapped Architecture 290414, presented by London-based gallerist Libby Sellers

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### INFORMATION

[Design Miami/ Basel](#) runs until 22 June 2014

### ADDRESS

Hall 1 Süd  
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Basel's annual art fair might be the Swiss city's superstar event but its concurrent edition of [Design Miami/](#) has grown into an equally sophisticated younger sibling. This year, former Phillips de Pury chairman Rodman Primack has stepped in to take the helm of both the design fair's US and Swiss shows, following the departure of director Marianne Goebel. And visitors to the [Messe Basel halls](#) are in for a treat, thanks to a stellar line-up of participating galleries, as well as an impressive series of installations.

A key new initiative is Design at Large, an ambitious series of installations presented by participating galleries and curated by Barneys creative director Dennis Freedman, an avid collector of post-war experimental design. Focusing on an 'exploration of conceptual ideas and materials', Freedman has created an immersive program of works by the likes of Anton Alvarez and Sheila Hicks, as well as past masterpieces, including [Jean Maneval's 1968 futuristic Bubble House](#). 'I'd like to see more ambitious collectors that think beyond traditional parameters,' declared Freedman, pointing to the eclecticism and scale of the offerings.

Elsewhere at the fair, Jamie Zigelbaum's Triangular Series is another standout work, greeting visitors at the entrance to the halls. The American artist-cum-designer drew inspiration from his lifelong observations of mathematical patterns and harmonious forms that shape our lives and world, creating an installation of shard-like tetrahedral lights suspended from the ceiling. Responding to people's movements below with changes in light intensity, it offers fairgoers quite a welcome.

Designer Konstantin Grcic is also stopping visitors in their tracks with his pavilion for Audi, built from parts of the new TT Coupé. The easy-to-dismantle structure combines futuristic design with a nod to the nostalgic, echoing midcentury icons of prefab architecture also on display in the fair, such as the [F 8x8 BCC House by Jean Prouvé and Pierre Jeanneret](#), as well as Maneval's Bubble House. The result is a lively dialogue between old and new within Messe Basel.

Amid the galleries' offerings, we noted a strong focus on materials, with designers developing projects that point attention to the raw material. Ymer et Malta is presenting a collection that plays with marquetry and different types of wood. Inspired by French carpentry traditions, the Parisian gallery commissioned five designers to produce pieces that reinvent the technique in a contemporary way.

Meanwhile, Studio Job worked with Swiss manufacturer StonetouCH to present 'Detour,' a series of objects using marble as a starting point for research on material and colour. Street cones and bricks are made from marble, instead of their classically more humble materials, in a characteristically witty Studio Job twist. 'Design can be anything,' say the designers, commenting on this body of work and their approach. "'Anything' is the hardest part.'

Off-site, Vitra campus is proving a major hub for the fair's visitors - both with its current offer of the [Konstantin Grcic Panorama exhibition](#) and the recent unveiling of the [loft installation by Ilse Crawford](#) (W\* 184) that unites the Swiss company with its recently acquired Artek. New on campus is [a large-scale work by Carsten Höller](#): a viewing deck and spiralling slide, which joins a roster of buildings and pavilions by big-name architects and creatives.

With its wide-ranging focus, Design Miami/ Basel is a testament to its director's mission: 'To think beyond the everyday to what we can do next; this is what design is about.'