

carlos junqueira

Principal
Espasso

In the past decade or so, Brazilian design—a mix of contemporary style and a midcentury look—has regained relevancy. And Carlos Junqueira can be thanked for helping the movement find a global following.

In 2001, after a chat with an artist friend, he launched Espasso, a company that curates the best of modern Brazilian design. “We came to the conclusion that there was an opportunity for Brazilian furniture, which at the time was not at all explored in the international market,” he says. He opened a New York showroom a year later, now one of four stores globally (there are others in Los Angeles, London, and Miami).

Junqueira’s mission is to preserve iconic figures and products of the past with vintage collections and re-editions by the likes of Oscar Niemeyer, Joaquim Tenreiro, and Sergio Rodrigues, authorized by the designers, their families, or those responsible for their estates. As a “magnet for upcoming talent,” Junqueira explains, Espasso’s role is also about discovering new designers to carry the torch from those founding fathers.

Junqueira looks for ingenuity and creativity, of course, but also for designers who think about the future by linking the past and present. Most



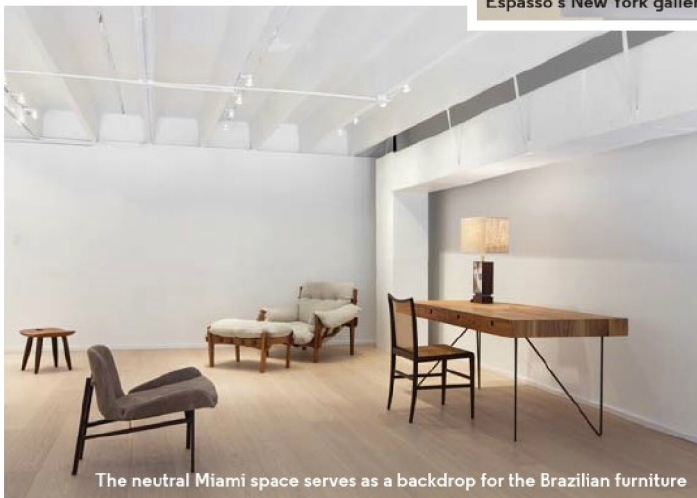
recently, the New York showroom featured Claudia Moreira Salles’ lighting collection at her solo *Fine Tuning* exhibition; Arthur Casas’ *Made in America* range, produced entirely in Brooklyn; and new pieces by Carlos Motta, one of the company’s longtime designers.

Brazil’s diversity lends itself to the ideal 21st-century model. Both unique to the country—much of the design features indigenous materials—and global (a strong European influence pervades), the pieces Junqueira selects evoke the warmth, vibrancy, and resourcefulness of the culture with an international footprint. An important part of the work, he says, is to “have past and present side by side, educating consumers on the rich history of the products.”

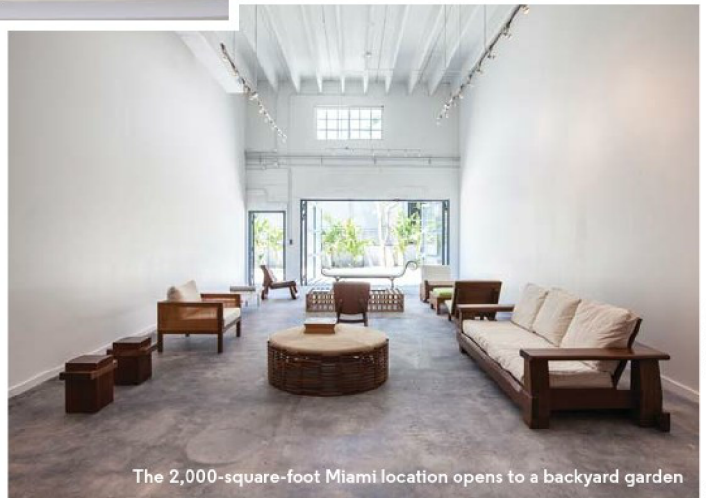
With the opening of the new 2,000-square-foot Miami outpost this year in the city’s up and coming Ironside urban art and design district, the melding is even more apparent, as the city “is a necessary link between Brazil and the U.S.,” Junqueira explains. The repurposed space’s high ceilings, brushed concrete floors, and clean white walls “allow pieces to stand out,” he says—though that’s surely something the alluring works need little help with.



Espasso's New York gallery



The neutral Miami space serves as a backdrop for the Brazilian furniture



The 2,000-square-foot Miami location opens to a backyard garden

Photos courtesy of ESPASSO