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design decorative arts architecture

In Miami: International Arrivals



VIVE LA FRANCE—EN MIAMI

THE FRENCH INTERIOR DESIGNER and photographer Emmanuelle Bernard moved to Miami only to discover that many of the furniture and design brands she knew and loved were simply not available there, or in many cases, anywhere in North America. She determined to remedy that by opening L'appartement—which is part gallery, part furniture showroom, part home goods shop—in the city's Wynwood Arts District. She set it up like an apartment, thus the name, with a front hall, kitchen, living and dining rooms, and bedrooms for both adults and children.

L'appartement made its debut during Maison & Objet Americas in May with a well-received booth in the show, and in Wynwood with an inaugural exhibition by the quirky French design company iBride, just one of the hard-to-find brands in its line-up. Among the designers showcased at L'appartement are Constance Guisset (whose oversized Vertigo hanging lamps are the most dramatic in a space that is largely devoted to far subtler pieces), François Azambourg, Alain Gilles, Nathalie Du Pasquier, and Noé Duchaufour-Laurance (whose recent work for Bernhardt Design caused a splash in New York in May at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair).

The “rooms” at L'appartement are intentionally usable, right down to dishtowels in the “kitchen” and baby toys in the kids’ room. Thus, unlike many galleries and showrooms, a certain danger lurks: impulse shopping. lappartementstore.com

— Beth Dunlop

FLYING DOWN TO MIAMI

THE BRAZILIAN DESIGN GALLERY ESPASSO, which is based in New York, made a slow but noteworthy entrance into Miami. First, as seems to happen in Miami, there was a splashy party during Art Basel. Then Espasso took the top floor of the Shore Club Hotel, which is being converted into a condo-hotel by the HFZ Capital Group, to showcase the important Brazilian furniture that would be used throughout in the course of the renovation.

Now Espasso has its own permanent home in Miami's up-and-coming Ironside complex—renovated warehouse buildings along the tracks of the Florida East Coast Railroad—where the lofty and modern spaces have attracted an array of architects, designers, galleries, and showrooms. The manager of Miami's Espasso is Gaspar Saldanha, a former fashion designer who comes with his own Brazilian art-world pedigree: his grandfather Paulo Werneck was a renowned modernist mosaic artist.

Espasso shows and sells a combination of important vintage pieces and furniture still in production (but made to order). On the roster are Sergio Rodrigues, Jorge Zalzupin, Guiseppe Scapinelli, Zanini de Zanine, Oscar Niemeyer, Claudia Moreira Salles, and many other shining stars in the Brazilian design and architecture firmament.

Saldanha says he “curated the showroom so that the icons are primarily upstairs” in a loft that overlooks the ground-floor space. “I’m very excited about this venture,” he adds. “I know that Miami is the perfect niche for us.” espasso.com

— Beth Dunlop



ELISEU CAVALCANTE PHOTO
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