

Design Miami/Paris makes its debut inside an ornate Saint-Germain-des-Prés mansion

This week, Design Miami/Paris held its inaugural edition (until 22 October 2023) at L'Hôtel des Maisons while also announcing its acquisition by online marketplace Basic.Space



Design Miami/Paris at L'Hôtel des Maisons. Left, Salon 94. Right, Galerie Lebreton
(Image credit: Courtesy Design Miami/)

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What does a 1980s coffee table inspired by a tank tread look like in an 18th-century interior? What does a 20-year-old design fair look like on a next-generation e-commerce site? Design Miami/Paris raised both questions this week, holding its inaugural edition while also announcing its acquisition by online marketplace Basic.Space.

Design Miami/Paris at L'Hôtel des Maisons



(Image credit: Courtesy Design Miami/)

Design Miami was originally slated to make its debut in Paris last year, in a tent on Place de la Concorde, but the fair was cancelled because of security concerns due to yellow vest protests. Jennifer Roberts, Design Miami CEO, says that her team subsequently studied 48 potential locations for 2023, yet found nothing. Then in late February or early March, she heard from a broker in Paris. 'He called out of the blue, saying "I might have a solution for you." So I asked a representative in Paris to walk through the house. And they said: "Run, do not walk."'



Jean Prouvé 6x6 demountable house presented by Galerie Patrick Seguin
(Image credit: Courtesy Design Miami/)

The site was L'Hôtel des Maisons, an ornate mansion in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, formerly home to Karl Lagerfeld and several generations of the Pozzo di Borgo family. Normally, the design fair occupies temporary tents in Basel and Miami; this would be a totally different, and very Parisian, vibe.

Once the location was found, the Design Miami team put the fair together in record time. So did the galleries, who divided the rooms amongst themselves and were not allowed to modify the house's interiors.



Galerie Desprez-Breheret
(Image credit: James Harris)

Galerie Desprez-Breheret, a first-time exhibitor, only learned about the fair in August, and was given Lagerfeld's former dressing room. 'This was a tricky space,' said Benjamin Desprez, pointing out a round chest of drawers, now repurposed as a display table for carved wooden objects by Jean Touret and Odile Noll. But the gallery did a masterful job, with a dimpled wood Touret dining table sharing the space with a pair of blocky wood chairs by contemporary woodsman-turned-artist Dan Pollock.

Highlights from Design Miami/Paris 2023



François-Xavier Lalanne's life-size "Ane Attelé", presented by Galerie Mitterrand
(Image credit: Courtesy Design Miami/)

The fair starts in the courtyard, with François-Xavier Lalanne's life-size "Ane Attelé" (1989), a delightful bronze donkey pulling a cart, presented by Galerie Mitterrand. It continues behind the house, in the extraordinary garden, with oversized, sculptural pieces such as a Jean Prouvé 6x6 demountable house presented by Galerie Patrick Seguin (and immediately sold to a collector in the United States).