

The Vinson view

Inside man and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



01

MALL TOGETHER NOW

Miami needs to keep its Design District unique

Four years ago I wrote a piece on Tomas Maier's then new store in Miami's Design District. For Craig Robins of Dacra, the real estate company behind the area, Maier's opening was key to his plan to inject fashion into the area. Last December during Art Basel/Design Miami, the muscle of the fashion brands was hard to miss. Hermès Éditeur presented its Sugimoto scarves in a space soon after converted into a temporary store; Dior Homme screened a film by Bruce Weber in its brand new store; Louis Vuitton launched its Objets Nomades design line in a Retna graffiti-fronted pop-up; and Prada unveiled its new unit, joining Céline, Cartier, Christian Louboutin and Maison Martin Margiela. The fashion pack now jostles for space with the district's more traditional design doors, such as Ligne Roset and Bisazza, as well as Stateside names like Holly Hunt and the multi-brand Luminaire.

This new influx is impressive enough, but my jaw dropped when I saw what Dacra has planned. Most of the new arrivals are temporary, as the area's transformation has a couple of years to run. That includes an underground car park crowned with Buckminster Fuller's Fly's Eye Dome serving as its entrance; buildings and façades by the likes of Aranda\Lasch & Sou Fujimoto; a new plaza flanked by Cartier, Dior, Vuitton

and Hermès units; and an A-list of luxury labels for the rest. Hermès has commissioned RDAI to build three storeys, something the brand and their architects usually only get to do in Japan or Korea, and if it's anything like that (a visit to RDAI confirms it is) then that alone is worth an architour to Miami.

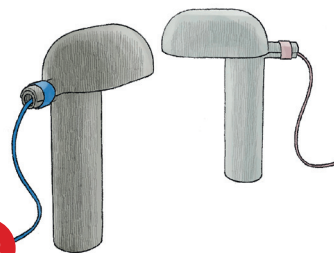
Robins' dreams have come true. Hats off to him and to L Real Estate, the private equity fund specialising in mixed-use real estate whose investors include LVMH, which has bought into Dacra. Many brands are defecting from Bal Harbour though, which is a real shame as that was once my gold standard for mall design.

A word of warning. The food offerings need serious help (Crumbs is good enough, but is in an ugly spot). Maier was a real catch and it's a shame he's migrated to Palm Beach. His inspired edit of his own collections, homeware, photography and design books was unique. The big players need to build such spaces and offer curated edits. The baby steps Vuitton took to fit out its temporary store in a less corporate way was refreshing. It went further with its Kusama pop-ups last year and its collaborative Comme des Garçons unit in Tokyo a few years ago, but this has to be the way to go. Design Miami was born in the Design District, design is in the area's DNA. It needs to keep some of the grit and strive to be unique and different.

02

KEEP IT TOGETHER

The matt slip-cast ceramic used for this new 'Container' lamp by Benjamin Hubert for Ligne Roset has a concrete-like look and touch. The shade is attached to the base with a silicone band allowing directional movement of the light. It's low-tech, charming and was a highlight of January's Maison & Objet fair. £690, www.ligne-roset.com



03

FROM MY ADDRESS BOOK

Rambert Rigaud, Fleuriste en Herbe

Rambert Rigaud, most recently studio director at Yves Saint Laurent, swapped blousons for blooms when he opened his Fleuriste en Herbe flower shop in Paris' 7e arrondissement. Expect to find seasonal French flowers, foliage and branches mixed together with a natural spirit.

2 rue de l'Université, Paris 7e, tel: 33.1 77 32 98 61

FAIR GAME

The rest of the best from January's Maison & Objet fair in Paris

The furs and homeware by Rick Owens

'Rallye' tableware by Benoit-Pierre Emery and Damian O'Sullivan for Hermès

Mischer Traxler's 'Reversed Volumes' bowls for PCM Design

The stand – and everything on it – by Danish brand Hay, but especially the Scholten & Baijings pieces

Jeff Koon's suitably named 'Banality Series' of tableware for Bernardaud

Ron Gilad's cabinets by Fujisato Woodcraft for Japan Creative

04

WORLD'S YOUR OYSTER

During my recent trip around New Zealand, one place that really stood out was a three-room locale with a fantastic restaurant and shop on Waiheke Island. Furniture by Another Country, amenities by Aesop, food by Cristian Hossack and a retro Volkswagen van to pick you up from the ferry. The air in Waiheke is sweet as nectar, the beaches empty and the Oyster Inn's breakfast is the best ever. www.theoysterinn.co.nz

