

Miami's Newest Museum Offers Some Serious Art Therapy

By **Ciara LaVelle** Tue., Dec. 2 2014 at 5:07 PM

Categories: **Art Basel Miami Beach**



Courtesy of the artist

Pedro Reyes, installation view of a sculptural work in Sanatorium

Are you feeling sad? Lonely? Has Art Basel got you down? You're not alone -- and the Institute of Contemporary Art is here to help.

"I mean, who doesn't need free therapy?" laughs Tommy Pace, associate director of the new museum setting up shop in the Design District's Moore Building. "Especially during Miami Art Week."

Just as last year's Art Basel was enlivened by the opening of the new Pérez Art Museum Miami, ICA Miami, the newest player in town, promises to spice up the week with two new exhibits, one of which is an immersive installation that aims to offer psychological relief to visitors. Sanatorium, created by Mexican artist Pedro Reyes, will turn the second floor of the Moore Building into a live clinic run by more than 30 local volunteers who serve as receptionists and "therapists" trained by Reyes himself. The artist has staged Sanatorium in cities around the world, and "it's dramatically different in each iteration, because it responds to the city, the context involved, the space it occupies," Pace explains.

See also: [Art Basel Satellite Fairs: Banksy, Pinta, Art Miami, and More Hit the Mainland](#)

ICA's board of directors are likely in need of some light therapy themselves. The board formerly ran North Miami's Museum of Contemporary Art and has spent the past year locked in a bitter and widely publicized dispute with the City of North Miami. Last month, the two sides finally formalized their split. Now, says interim director Suzanne Weaver, ICA is focused on the future.

"I was a huge fan of MOCA... I admired what groundbreaking exhibitions they did," she says. "I think it's a really exciting moment in the history of contemporary art in Miami. You can feel the energy. It's palpable."

You could say the same about the work of Andra Ursuta, who's featured in the other inaugural exhibit at ICA. The New York-based artist creates sculpture and installations that address "the body and politics and memory and history," Weaver describes. "They're very charged psychologically... but they're also visually very compelling, very strong."

Two of Ursuta's works, *Soft Power 1* and *Soft Power 2*, are giant inflatable fists made out of patchwork quilts. The work references political unrest in Ursuta's homeland of Romania, Weaver says, but its themes are universal. "I think that many people on many levels can gain access and experience it," she says.

In fact, part of ICA's mission is to increase access to the arts throughout Miami, and not just for your typical gallery browsers. In the middle of the moneyed celebration that is Basel week in Miami, admission to ICA is free to all. And the institute has also forged partnerships with organizations like South Florida CARES Mentoring Movement and the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition.

"[We have] the ability to remove any economic barriers between the public and experiencing the best in contemporary art," Pace says, noting that during Art Basel week, the museum will bring students from Booker T. Washington High School in before the museum opens to the public so they can see the work first. "We are focused on using contemporary art to develop critical thinking in students of all ages." ICA Miami's free admission is made possible by [Akerman](#). (Institute of Contemporary Art, 4040 NE Second Ave., Miami. Opens December 2 with a celebration from 7 to 9 p.m. Regular hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission is free. Call 305-901-5272, or visit [icamiami.org](#).)

Back in North Miami, the new leadership at MOCA is celebrating Art Week with "Shifting the Paradigm: The Art of George Edozie." The Nigerian artist references his homeland throughout his work, both in the colorful, patchwork-esque paintings of cocked-headed subjects and in his fabric-formed installations, such as Lagos Business School Logo, in which the acronym "LBS" is spelled out in hanging buttoned-down shirts. (Museum of Contemporary Art, 770 NE 125th St., North Miami. "Shifting the Paradigm: The Art of George Edozie" opens December 2 with a reception from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission costs \$25. Regular hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission costs \$3 to \$5. Call 305-893-6211, or visit [mymoca.org](#).)

Pérez Art Museum Miami, celebrates its first birthday this year with the opening of "R.R. and the Expansion of the Tropics," a Project Gallery exhibit by Mexico's Mario Garcia Torres. Through photos, film, and music, the installation will remix topics like climate change, Florida, and Robert Rauschenberg (hence the "R.R."). The museum will also host a book signing by Beatriz Milhazes, whose large-scale explorations of color and shape illuminate two of PAMM's biggest exhibition

spaces; as well as a VIP party featuring music by DJ collective Future Brown. (Pérez Art Museum Miami, 1103 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. "R.R. and the Expansion of the Tropics" opens December 2. Beatriz Milhazes' book signing is December 4 from 10 a.m. to noon. PAMM Presents Future Brown Featuring Kelela December 4 at 8 p.m., by invitation only.

Regular hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; the museum will also be open Monday, December 1, for Miami Art Week. Admission costs \$12 to \$16. Call 305-375-3000, or visit pamm.org.)

If there's one guy who's having a great time at Art Week this year, it's Peter Marino. The architect will receive the inaugural Design Visionary award at the Design Miami art fair across from the Miami Beach Convention Center, and just a short walk away, Marino is also the subject of the Bass Museum's Basel-time offering "One Way." Marino's a renowned art collector and has lent selections from his personal collection to the Bass Museum for the exhibit, which will be installed in settings Marino designed.

Also on view: five site-specific installations by artists Gregor Hildebrandt, Guy Limone, Farhad Moshiri, Jean-Michel Othoniel, and Erwin Wurm -- many of whom were inspired by Marino. (Bass Museum, 2100 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. "One Way: Peter Marino" opens December 3 with a member and VIP reception from 7 to 11 p.m. The exhibit runs through May 3. Regular hours are Wednesday to Sunday noon. to 5 p.m. and Friday noon to 9 p.m. Admission costs \$6 to \$8. Call 305-673-7530, or visit bassmuseum.org.)

At the Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, Chinese artist Wang Qingsong has taken over the venue's entire third floor with his massive photographs that use staged scenes to comment on cultural changes in his homeland.

Juxtaposing historical details like traditional dress with more recent developments like the introduction of McDonald's, Qingsong both charts and provokes reflection on the country's cultural trajectory. Meanwhile, "A Global Exchange: Geometric Abstraction Since 1950" brings 30 works by geometric artists from all over the world, including Richard Anuszkiewicz and Cristina Ghetti, to Miami from their original home at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Buenos Aires. (Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Art, 10975 SW 17th St., Miami. "Adinfinitum" runs through January 18; "A Global Exchange" runs through January 4. Regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free. Call 305-348-2890, or visit thefrost.fiu.edu.)

It's been six years since the Beijing Olympics, but if you watched the opening ceremonies back in 2008, you probably still remember the light drums, flashing acrobats, and little girl flying through the air "suspended" by a kite. Those spectacles came from the mind of Shen Wei, who opens his first solo museum exhibition, "In Black, White, and Grey," at the Freedom Tower's Museum of Art + Design this week.

According to the museum, Wei's 11 paintings "explore movement, physicality of paint, and the objective landscape" -- unsurprising subjects for an artist who works so much in the worlds of dance and performance. Baselites can get a glimpse of Wei's choreography too, with five public performances based on the paintings scheduled for Friday, December 5. (Museum of Art + Design, 600 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. "In Black, White, and Grey" opens December 4 with a VIP reception. The

exhibit runs through February 1. Regular hours are Wednesday to Sunday, noon to 5 p.m., and the first Friday of every month noon to 8 p.m. Admission is free. Call 305-237-7700, or visit mdcmoad.org.)

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