

Winners & Losers Written by Anne Tschida December Issue, 2009

After a decade in the spotlight, Miami's art scene has produced some Winners & Losers

The first decade of this new century was, for Miami, all about the visual arts. The past ten years changed the way the world viewed us, and perhaps more important, they way we viewed ourselves. A place formerly known for Scarface and scandals, Miami Vice and South Beach nightclubs, gained a more substantial reputation as an exciting center for contemporary art.

The 2002 arrival of the prestigious art fair from Switzerland, Art Basel, put Miami on the international map. Art Basel's directors chose Miami for their American debut because they saw something extraordinary here: a vibrant and burgeoning homegrown art scene in which talented individuals who once might have moved to New York instead decided to stay put, to make art and to teach. They attracted other talented artists, who moved to Miami to join them.

Our institutions -- the museums and schools that in some cases barely existed in the previous century -- progressed with surprising speed in quality, competence, and reputation.

Miami gained a firm footing in the cultural landscape, with a number of true winners to show for it. But along the way, some of the quirky and charming artistic joie de vivre that had made it special was forfeited.

As 2009 comes to a close, it would seem an appropriate time to look back at what has been won and what was lost, what was established and what was forgotten during Miami's art decade.

WINNERS



Dina Mitrani Gallery Art Photography

The genre has always struggled to get some respect, often considered a not-so "fine" form of the arts. But Miami has given it some real cred, with several of our local collectors having amassed important compilations. In addition, last year Dina Mitrani opened a gallery devoted entirely to contemporary art photography. For the fourth year in a row "photo MIAMI" will be one of the major satellite fairs in Midtown during Art Basel.