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SEE HIGHLIGHTS FROM ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH'S NEW 'MERIDIANS' SECTION, WHERE THE FAIR'S BIGGEST (AND BEST) ARTWORKS SHINE

by Sarah Cascone



Woody De Othello, Cool Composition (2019) at Art Basel Miami Beach Meridians. Photo by Sarah Cascone.

Ahead of today's VIP opening of Art Basel Miami Beach, the fair unveiled its highly anticipated Meridians sector, featuring 34 large-scale artworks in the convention center's second floor ballroom. Curated by Magalí Arriola, the director of Mexico City's Museo Tamayo, Meridians gives galleries the chance to showcase works that might overwhelm a typical fair booth, including a number of historical pieces, some of which haven't been shown in years.

Similar in concept to the crowd-pleasing Unlimited sector in Art Basel in Switzerland, albeit smaller in scale, Meridians is being introduced one year after the fair phased out Art Basel Public. The free outdoor exhibition of large-scale sculpture had been held in Collins Park outside the Bass Museum since 2011. (This year, the park is home to the group show "Art Basel Cities: Buenos Aires.")

At Meridians, the 60,000-square-foot exhibition space is sprawling, but manageable, compared to the labyrinthine layout of the main show. Completed last year after three years of convention center renovations, the ballroom staged a performance art piece by Abraham Cruzvillegas during the 2018 fair.