



Art Basel Miami's 10 Best Parties

By Alexandra Peers
December, 2010

10. The Sagamore Brunch by Alexandra Peers
The Sagamore has been doing its swanky, sunny fresh-fruit and French-crepe brunch for VIPs since Art Basel Miami Beach began. Several events were booked for the same time but we were loyal to art collectors and hosts Cricket and Marty Taplin, who were there before all these other arrivistes. Of course, the (literally) 2,000 mimosas they served helped. Celebs here included the museum-director set: Bonnie Clearwater of MoCA Miami; Marion Boulton Stroud of Philadelphia's trail-blazing Fabric Workshop & Museum and George Lindemann of the Bass.



9. The Madonna Club
Strip club, black light, art by Ryan McGinnis, and a thoughtfully convenient opening time of 11 p.m. Need we say more?



8. Isabella at the Wolfsonian Isabella Rossellini was probably the loveliest of a line of boldface-names—Adrian Brody, Steve Martin, Ben Stiller, Danny Glover, Julian Lennon, George Hamilton, Jay-Z and, inexplicably, Alex Rodriguez—who made the scene. She was in town plugging her Seduce Me series of short films about animal mating on view at the Wolfsonian.



7. The Hello Kitty Party Miami's Wynwood neighborhood had a lot of offerings but this Hello Kitty pop-up store by Sanrio was one of the ones most worth the off-island trip. It offered free tattoos of the cult cat, adorable-ness galore and an art show including work by street-art powerhouse Shepard Fairey. It was co-curated by the guy also co-curating the LA MoCA upcoming show on street art, Roger Gastman.



6. The Artist's Brunch at the SoHo Beach House Where were the artists? We ultimately didn't care that the expected painters were no-shows (did they all have hangovers?). This multi-course family-style meal with friendly curator Francesca Gavin was as lush and tasty as any we had all week, and the club's new space is good-looking. She spoke about how they had been able to put together an impressive collection of works by major artists—John Baldessari!—almost overnight, by paying the artists in bar tabs.



5. (tie) La Mer at the Webster; Adobe Museum of Digital Media at Nobu The two classiest events in a largely classless week. At the Webster, art people who usually skip fashion events made an exception for the La Mer party, which was star-studded. Meanwhile, at Nobu, the Adobe Museum of Digital Media offered Mariko Mori, Melissa Chiu of the Asia Society, art-world ethical watchdog Tom Eccles and copious sushi. Shown: Cay Sophie Rabinowitz, Michael Stipe, Massimo Torrigiani.



4. The Art Basel Miami Beach Fair Okay, not a party, but something better. The art fair, though it's sometimes forgotten, remains at the heart of everything that goes on around it in Miami the first week of December. This year, the wares that dealers brought were particularly elegant, involving and of good-quality (if perhaps not as radical as we might have wished). A spacious new design made the experience of wandering ABMB's halls, somewhat frustrating in the past, downright pleasant. Even addictive. Shown: George Hamilton.



3. The "Nude is Muse" party at the StandardPlayboy and Neville Wakefield brought us this party that featured a gentleman with a persistent erection, dyed-blue glitter rock horror queen Kembra Phaler and Vanessa Beecroft's 14 naked pseudo-mermaids rising out of the Standard's glistening, glamorous pool. One of the more beautiful artworks, and events, of the fair week.



2. Julian Schnabel/Maybach dinner and benefit for Haiti Amid all the free-spending and free eating, this was one of the very few events that paused to bring together people for a cause beyond their own pleasure. Sean Penn spoke eloquently about the cholera epidemic going on in Miami's island neighbor, and bidders ponied up to help. The #2 party slot is really a three-tie with the dinner hosted by Aby Rosen, that party-hosting Hercules of Art Basel, and the P.S. 1/Interview fete (synchronized swimming!), which were held simultaneously. But since Interview publisher Peter Brant opted to spend the shank of his evening at this one, so did we. Shown: Julian Schnabel, ever the fashionista, and Sean Penn.



1. Le Baron This Paris nightclub, operating out of the Delano's Florida Room for four precious nights, made up for all those times you struggled to get past a velvet rope and walked into a nightclub to find...nothing at all interesting. The late-night wild party somehow meshed masked revelers, Swiss folk tunes, vintage R&B and big-band standards to create a feverishly packed Charleston-dancing mosh pit. What went on would have been actionable under any other circumstances. Interestingly, by and large Le Baron featured neither art nor celebrities. So how are we so sure it was the hottest party? The number of people now claiming to have been there last week exceeds the capacity of South Beach. .

