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## Preview: Mid-Century Classics at Design Miami/ Basel 2015

BY JANA PERKOVIC | MAY 25, 2015



Jacques Biny: Appliqué 163.  
(Courtesy of Galerie Pascal Cuisinier)

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The upcoming edition of [Design Miami/](#)

(<http://basel2015.designmiami.com/>) in Basel, running from June 16-21, will be an opportunity to see mid-century design classics in furniture, glass, lighting, and ceramics. Top design galleries will be showing retrospective exhibitions of some of the key 20th century designers.

[Galerie Pascal Cuisinier](#)

(<http://www.galeriepascalcuisinier.com/>) will present a carefully staged exhibition of designs by French lighting designer Jacques Biny. The French lighting design of mid-century modernism is considered one of the most innovative and remarkable, but also one of the least well-known. Considerable research into lighting of the late 1940s engendered rapid scientific progress, and a whole

generation of designers (many electrical engineers by training) experimented with the latest technology, revolutionizing the market for household light fittings.



designs, Galerie Pascal Cuisinier will present Biny's lights in a theatrical set inspired by American avant-garde theater director Robert Wilson.

Design Miami/ Basel will also offer the opportunity to see a selection of important [Venini](#)

At the time, Jacques Biny's slender light fittings were most appreciated for their practicality and simplicity: they have no decorative flourishes, but feature extremely simple, functional lines.

Today, they are seen as an aesthetic achievement of industrial Modernism, demonstrating a sophisticated restraint. The exhibits will include his best-known works, such as the wall lamp Applique 163, and the Applique B206 (so-called Conche), works he produced under the brand Luminalite in the 1950s. To accentuate the visual aspect of his

(<http://www.venini.com/>) (Murano) glass designed by Fulvio Bianconi between the 1949 and 1957. Paolo Venini was one of the leading figures in Murano glass, whose workshop produced some of the most important contributions to the twentieth century design. Bianconi, a graphic designer and illustrator for top Italian publishers, established a successful artistic collaboration with Venoni in the late 1940s. Through a creative research into new workmanship techniques, and a revision of the age-old traditions of glass making, Bianconi and Venini produced important series based on Commedia dell'Arte, the Fazzoletto by Tiepolo, and others. Bianconi's Venini glass works will be presented by [Marc Heiremans](http://www.marcheiremans.com/) (<http://www.marcheiremans.com/>) gallery.

[Galerie Eric Philippe](http://www.ericphilippe.com/) (<http://www.ericphilippe.com/>) is showing a selection of very rare American, Danish, Finnish, and French pieces of 20th century furniture. Among them, a free form set composed of one sofa and two seats by Finnish designer Ilmari Tapiovaara. The set was designed in 1951 for a student-housing complex in Otaniemi, Espoo, itself designed by Alvar Aalto, and is reminiscent of Tapiovaara's earlier student housing project in Helsinki's Domus Academia.

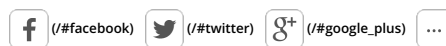
Also included in the exhibition will be extremely rare lamps in brass and leather, designed circa 1950 by Paavo Tynell. Tynell was a collaborator of Aalto and one of the key lighting designers of the modern era in Finland. His designs for appliance producer Taito O are today sought after as collectors' items, while his lighting designs can be seen in Eliel Saarinen's red brick railway station, and in the office of the Secretary General in the United Nations building.

[Galerie Eric Philippe](http://www.ericphilippe.com/) (<http://www.ericphilippe.com/>) will also show French designer André Cazenave's remarkable Resin Desk. Made entirely of polyester resin and marble powder, this imposing piece was designed in 1973 especially for Doctor Gagey's cabinet in Paris.

[Galleria O. Roma](http://www.galleriao.net/) (<http://www.galleriao.net/>) specializes in research on the Italian design of the twentieth century, covering the period between the 1920s and the 1970s, with primary focus on Gio Ponti, Italian architect and industrial designer active in the first half of the twentieth century. One of the leaders in developing modern Italian architectural and design thought, Ponti's illustrious career includes founding the respected Domus magazine in 1928. Ponti's furniture and lighting designs for Fontana Arte — a leading producer of Italian industrial design of the time, founded by Ponti and Pietro Chiesa in 1932 — are the particular focus of research for Galleria O. Roma. At Design Miami/ Basel, this Rome-based gallery will exhibit a selection of Ponti's pieces produced in the mid-1960s, as well as lighting designs from the 1970s by Angelo Lelli for Arredoluce.

Larger in scale, but in the same thematic vein, [Galerie Patrick Seguin](http://www.patrickseguin.com/) (<http://www.patrickseguin.com/>) will be presenting a classic example of prefabricated architectural design: Jean Prouvé's Total Filling Station. Designed in 1969 for Total oil and gas company, it is part of the Design at Large program.

*Design Miami/ Basel will take place from June 16-21 in Basel, Switzerland.*



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