



Veronica Esposito

Fri 6 Dec 2024 12.50 EST

## 'I'm challenging the narrative': what to expect at this year's Art Basel Miami

The annual gathering of artists and those within the art world takes place at a precarious time politically

**A**rt has a very inconstant relationship with politics - ask an artist if they want to make a political statement and they are likely to bristle. Yet, look beneath the surface of any interesting piece, and you'll almost certainly find definite connections to larger social structures and conversations that are in fact very, very political.

Scanning the offerings of [Art Basel Miami](#) Beach this week, one finds much art that is political in precisely this way - not so much so on the tip of the iceberg, but very much in the intellectual and artistic inspiration beneath. Take, for instance, the gorgeous bronze floral mask exhibited by the mixed media artist Allison Janae Hamilton - at first it comes off as a stunningly beautiful piece of layered flower blooms, but look deeper into the origins of this piece and a different story surfaces.



📷 Bonnie Lucas - Spoiled, 1986. Photograph: Courtesy the artist and ILY2, Portland

Now in her 70s, the artist Bonnie Lucas sees herself as having gone her own artistic way for 50 years. Briefly a member of the in-your-face, feminist art collective the Guerrilla Girls, she found herself not fitting in to their aesthetic - or any particular aesthetic at all. According to her, she has always created art based on a love of very feminine things, and that has put her on the outs of the New York art world. She recalls being mocked at one art opening for daring to wear a pretty floral dress, and another time she was chided for declaring: “I create feminine monsters.”

Lucas reveals another side of political art, that of the outsider artist whose disinterest in engaging with trends or favored discourses - or simply opting out of the sexist art world of the 1970s and 80s - is a statement in and of itself. This year her booth is simply a testament to her creative staying power, displaying work from across the decades of her artistic output. “I am appalled and upset by the ways women have been excluded from the art world,” she told me. “My art is about storytelling from my own point of view. My work is not in praise of women but about being alive as a girl.”