



Art | Basel Miami Beach

DECEMBER 2025

ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

THE REEFLINE INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHTS A SHORELINE PROJECT THAT FUSES ECOLOGICAL INNOVATION WITH ART, FEATURING WORKS LIKE CARLOS BETANCOURT'S 'MIAMI REEF STAR' AND LEANDRO ERLICH'S 'CONCRETE CORAL'.
BY SAM OZER

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exhibition of Joyce Pensato
unleashes her chaotic,
cartoon-fueled vision of
pop culture's dark side.

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The ReefLine initiative
highlights a shoreline
project that fuses ecological
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Reef Star' and Leandro
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g and regenerating a corridor of the Florida Reef Tract, third-largest barrier reef, which has been in steep decline by the artistic direction of Ximena Caminos and the leadership of marine biologist Colin Poord, artists are designing sculptures that can contribute to restoring damaged habitats, spur new marine ecosystems and inspire the public to engage directly with marine life.

Offshore from Ocean Drive at Fourth Street, 'Reef Star' is within swimming distance of the coast and viewable from the water. Welcome arrival to those landing in Miami. Betancourt and Caminos, who are Miami residents and direct their eponymous foundation aimed at supporting artists in the city and the region, are keenly attuned to the city's cultural landscape and Miami's role as a hub for art and business. The team behind The Reef Star hopes Miami can also make a mark as a city for ecotourism and inspire a greater protection for shorelines farther afield.



Clockwise from top-left: Artist Petroc Sesti; architect Alberto Latorre; video producer and photographer Steve Krimm; artist Carlos Betancourt. Opposite page: *Reef Star*, 2025. 'Concrete Coral'.

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Clockwise from top left: Artist Petroc Sesti; architect Alberto Latorre; video producer and photographer Steve Kehayias; artist Carlos Betancourt. Opposite page: Leandro Erlich, 'Concrete Coral'.

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Over 2,000 coral are being cultivated at The ReefLine, Miami Marine Coral Lab as part of a goal to plant 7 million corals along the coast of The ReefLine's development. The team is also spearheading collaborations with other research, like coral ecological and comparing to parasitic the hybrid reef. Reef Star is being developed with companies such as Madsen3D, a leading company in robotic concrete extrusion. While coral will attach itself to these hard materials, from concrete to metals, ReefLine works with materials such as CarbonXinc, a sustainable concrete blend that produces fewer carbon emissions. They are also integrating Coral Labs into their devices, which are added to the concrete sculptures to instigate further coral reef regeneration.

Shohei Shigematsu of OMA has been tasked with designing the master plan, which will be built in Phase II alongside 'Reef Star'. This development will consist of a series of scalable, geometric modular units that can be stacked to follow the seabed's topography. They will serve as a network connecting future sculptures—the backbone of a constellation of art hybrids.

The first sculpture to "break water" will be an adapted version of Leandro Erlich's *Order of Importance*, 2019, a to-scale traffic jam of concrete cars for sea life to inhabit. Leandro shares that "the structure of these human-made vehicles, once symbols of emissions that threaten our planet, becomes new agents of environmental change. Concrete Coral's stone sculptures stand silent and engineless, cultivating new life in our shared waters. In these challenging times, what could be more important?" Caminos shares that "born from a need to reconnect with what truly matters, our first milestone, Leandro Erlich's 'Concrete Coral', is a reminder that art can not only tell the story of loss but actively build resilience." While Erlich's vision flips the script on our petro relationships and reimagines cars as a home to protect wildlife in the oceans, Petroc Sesti, whose work will be installed in later stages, imagines returning natural elements taken from the sea. Sesti's *Heart of Oceanos*, depicting a whale heart, channels the story of a blue whale whose body washed ashore in Rocky Harbour in 2014 after being trapped in ice. While scientists spent years preserving the heart, Sesti offers interpretation as a gift back to the ocean, highlighting the poetic nature of The ReefLine project.

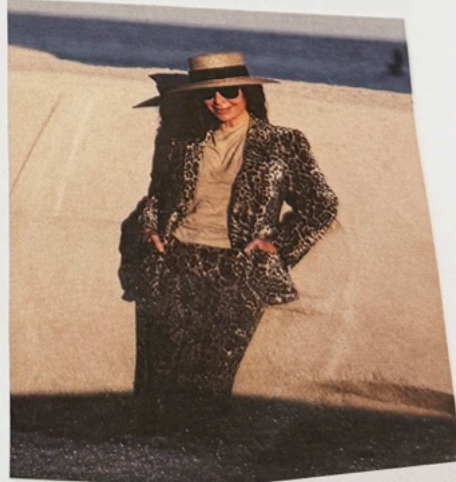
executive director,



Colin Foord, director of science,
The ReefLine



Ximena Caminos, founder,
The ReefLine



COLOGICAL DESIGN

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Very soon, Miami residents and visitors can see the stars beyond gazing into the sky—they can rather dive down into the ocean. ‘Miami Reef Star’, a 90-foot star-shaped sculpture composed of more than 40 eco-concrete star modules by artist Carlos Betancourt and architect Alberto Latorre, which had its above-ground debut at Art Basel Miami Beach last year, will soon be installed underwater off the Miami Beach coastline. ‘Reef Star’ will be the centerpiece of The ReefLine, a 7-mile underwater public sculpture park, snorkel trail and hybrid reef stretching down South Beach. The project combines scientific innovation and artistic ingenuity to protect ocean systems, focusing on conserving and regenerating a corridor of the Florida Reef Tract, the world’s third-largest barrier reef, which has been in steep decline. Guided by the artistic direction of Ximena Caminos and the scientific leadership of marine biologist Colin Foord, artists are invited to design sculptures that can contribute to restoring damaged natural reef habitats, spur new marine ecosystems and inspire the public to engage directly with marine life.

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Over 2,000 corals are being cultivated at The ReefLine's Miami Native Coral Lab as part of a goal to plant 1 million corals over the course of The ReefLine's development. The team is also spearheading collaborations with other research labs and technology companies to prototype the hybrid reefs. 'Reef Star' is being developed with companies such as Madco3d, a leading company in robotic concrete extrusion. While coral will attach itself to most hard materials, from concrete to metals, ReefLine works with materials such as CarbonXinc, a sustainable concrete blend that produces fewer carbon emissions. They are also integrating Coral Loks into their devices, which are added to the concrete sculptures to instigate further coral reef regeneration.

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Rendering of Petroc Sesti's
Heart of Okeanos



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