

# FRAME

0.0092  
BP 817109664411451



Issue 52

The Great Indoors

May / Jun 2013

Subscribe and save 10%  
Register products with a QR code

# Zoom In

ALL EYES ON SÃO PAULO'S DESIGN SOUL, PAULA HAYES' MIKI BOTANIC GARDENS, AND NEW BRANDED RETAIL IN PARIS, ZÜRICH AND BARCELONA

FRAME 100 | 600 | 1000 | 10000 | 100000 | 1000000 | 10000000 | 100000000 | 1000000000 | 10000000000

# Miami Nice

Words **Shonquis Moreno**  
Photos **Michael Stavaridis**

The follow-up to its light-saturated forerunner five floors above, architect Rene Gonzalez's second Alchemist boutique forms an opaque counterpoint to the original. Where the first – walled with glazing and mirrors – generated a featherweight interior scheme thanks to its exterior (streets below, sky all round), the 232-m<sup>2</sup> sequel, anchored at street level in the Miami Beach Herzog & de Meuron parking structure, doesn't expose customers to the empyrean; it protects them from it. With soft, windowless, melamine foam-wrapped walls and pebbled floors and dados, this new Alchemist cocoons visitors, unplugging them from the noise of cars on the ramps and the city's sultry heat.

The footprint of the space favoured a sawtooth layout, which hems the two long walls and finds an echo in zigzagging seating and diagonal drop-ceiling panels. Visible from the front are niches containing curated display windows and from the back lines of hanging racks. The cool kerb-facing plasticity warms up in the rear with abstracted references to nature that envelop the fitting rooms: mirrored surfaces, wooden floors and exposed trellis-like beams. Here, a video screen is the store's sole 'window', looping with dreamy tropical imagery by artist Paris Kain.

Like its predecessor, the store is filled with the spirit of Miami. The foam walls, Gonzalez explains, reference Styrofoam beach coolers. He used resin-encased 'chattahoochee' pebbles dating to 1950s development in Florida to suggest sand. The trellis recalls cabanas and driftwood, and LED lights peek from the walls to re-create night-time reflections of the Miami skyline on Biscayne Bay.

[rengonzalezarchitect.com](http://rengonzalezarchitect.com)



Rippling lines and a material palette of foam, wood and resin-encased pebbles reference beach life in the ground-floor store.

**Rene Gonzalez's second Alchemist store for Herzog & de Meuron's Miami Beach car-park complex is an ode to the tropical city.**

FRAME MAY / JUNE 2013