

## 1001SOUL BETWEEN BEACH AND ART: MIAMI, FLORIDA.

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*Peacocks are Kings in the Sunshine State ...*

*... Palms are Florida's Queens*

\* **Miami.** The first colourful marvel that greets us is male, looks proudly down from a wall, ruffles his feathers and shows what he has. A plumage in the most beautiful shades, from ocean blue to emerald green to golden, brown, yellow. A peacock. As someone living in the "middle west", you rarely see peacocks outside zoos. In the quarter where we will be living for the next days, however, the magnificent birds always show up in the dozen. Peacocks in the garden, Peacocks on the sidewalk, Peacocks on the street.

Miami is stereotypically associated with the sweet colours of the sky and architecture, soft tones, baby blue, pale pink, apricot. Miami is located in Sunshine State Florida, on the southeast coast of the USA. Cuba is only an hour away. Sun all year round.

Miami is a lot. Miami is beach, it is huge, sophisticated, socially diverse, decadent, also badly built, known for its drug trafficking in earlier years, artistic and a bit Prenzlauer Berg, venue of the world famous art fair **Art Basel Miami**, is **Miami Vice**, **Ocean Drive** and **Wynwood**. It is warmer than in **L.A.** (and than in **Chicago** anyway). But we quickly get used to the strong sunbeams and get up early to get as much out of the day as possible.

Where do we set up our canvas? Which place of these many in candy or shade do we choose for 1001SOUL?

\* As usual, we first stroll through the area, explore the neighbourhoods, follow the recommendations of the locals. Where do you like to be? Which sites in this city are special to you? Where do you like to breathe the air of the city, which corners do you avoid?

**Ocean Drive**, the legendary hotspot of the 1980s and 1990s near **Miami Beach**, seems a bit bedraggled; the facades of the beautiful Art Deco hotels and restaurants seem a bit more gaudy than at that time. A friend takes us to an open-air concert at a "Buena Vista Social Club Tribute Night" with the Combo Cortadito. In the Lummus Park, on a meadow under palm trees, people of all ages gather, sit in grass or dance on the small dance floor. Hips swing in Salsa Cubana and L.A. style. Small food and drink stalls surround this beautiful area. Everyone looks relaxed and happy. Being immersed into this world class setting and atmosphere we ask ourselves why there must be so much suffering and wars in the world when an evening like this shows how peaceful living together can be... People here are connected through music, dance, shared passions and humanity. Dancing Souls they are – 1001 of them and more. We yield hope.



*Legendary Ocean Drive, flavoured with the Vibes of Buena Vista Social Club Music.*

\* In the next days we explore the city a bit further. **Design District**, Suburbs and **Wynwood**. The latter is all about street art and art. Countless galleries line the avenues, fashion and decoration shops, bits and pieces in the brightest colours, everything here screams for artistic diversity and freedom – and also for the marketing of creativity, one should add. In the afternoon, the main street with its pavements turns into a stage. Skaters and motorbikes fly past, cross machines take off, lowriders, limousines pumped with hydraulics, lift themselves left and right, front



and back, the cars are "dancing" at snail's pace to low-speed basses. A rickshaw driver drives his gigantic snake for a walk. There is hardly any passer-by who does not walk on and off in a conspicuously dressed manner. If you want a Wynwood cinema, all you have to do is stop and marvel. Guaranteed no boredom here. Given the scenery, we decide to roll out the 1001SOUL screen made in the USA here, between the walls of the **Wynwood Walls**. Street artists from all over the world play on the walls in this spacious area. We roll out our art on the floor in one of the courtyards.



*1001SOUL painting made in the U.S. displayed in one of the courtyards of the Wynwood Walls Area, Miami.  
Street Art meets Soul Art.*

\* For painting the **Miami-Soul Painting**, we choose a place of contrast: the **Miami Beach Botanical Garden**. It is located directly opposite the Miami Convention Center, where the art fair **Art Basel Miami** is held every year in December. In clear size, this lush green garden with its subtropical trees, plants, animals, ponds and small bridges

is an oasis. Visitors stroll in spicy air, women sit in yoga clothes in a small café. To paint surrounded by green in the grass – how wonderful! If it weren't for the unexpected rain... The weather app predicts it for the coming hours. And now what? We wait a little and then decide to roll out the canvas under a canopy. Here hardly any rain comes through, and the small terrace quickly becomes a shelter for the visitors. We make the acquaintance of a family from Boston, originally from Bosnia-Herzegovina, with their two pre-school daughters and chat for a while. Then Reza rolls out the canvas and prepares the colours.



*Soul Painting in Miami Beach Botanical Garden. Reza with Kids, meditating & painting*

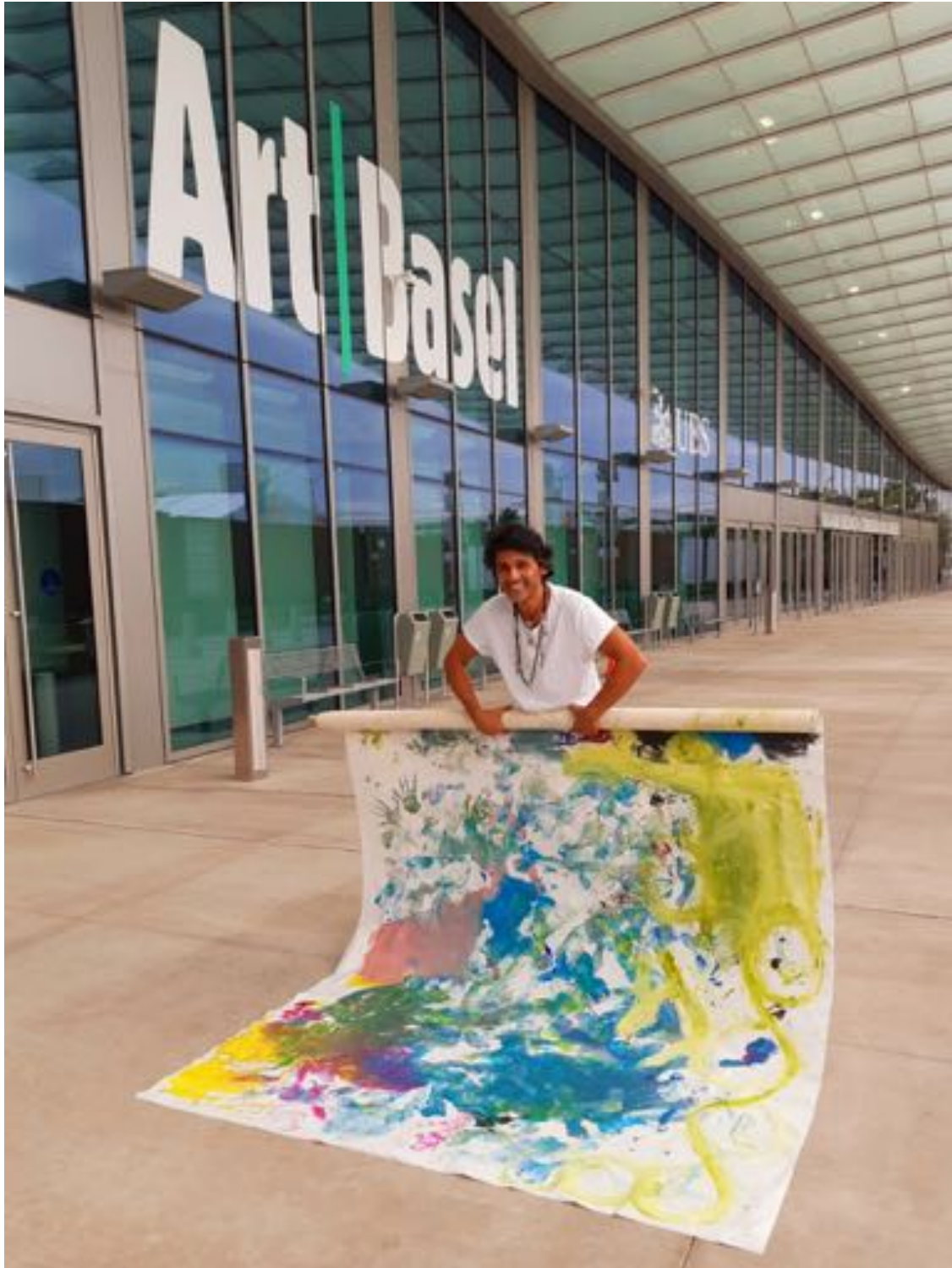
The little girls want to join in, and of course they are more than welcome to do so! A little meditation tunes in the three artists and then the live painting starts. The children paint with their hands and especially with their feet, in the most beautiful colours Miami has to offer. Without reservations they follow their inclinations and create the most beautiful ornaments. Because they want it, they become an organic part of the picture and of our project, which is open to everyone in its philosophy. What is art? Who is an artist? Who says what is relevant?

The rain is pouring, but everyone is caught up in the maelstrom of the soul painting. The stranded park visitors sit around the unexpected painting action; Nic explains our project and the project of 1001SOUL. A woman cries with emotion, she sees what we are doing, what 1001SOUL intends to achieve. "This scene, here, with the children, painting, the colours, the people here – this is by far the most perfect thing I have experienced in a long time", she cries and embraces us. How beautiful it is. By now, this is by far one of the most moving moments on our trip to the USA, because it is clear that this we are doing is the right thing and that we need to keep on going. A key moment from and for 1001SOUL.

The picture is quickly painted by the three artists. An employee of the Botanical Garden shows up and wants to ban the action. He pretends to be a manager on Sunday duty and points out the park rules and that we need permission to do something here. Where there is a feeling of solidarity and freedom, there is also a law



enforcement officer around the corner. We already know this procedure from **Los Angeles**. Alas! Meanwhile, the rain clouds have dissipated, hence we pack our utensils, grateful and happy. And we decide to use the closeness to the area of Art Basel Miami to spread our canvas completely, in panorama view. The paint still has to dry anyway, so why not let it dry in front of the gates of the cathedrals of the world art market!



*Reza rolls out the Miami Soul Painting in front of the Miami Beach Convention Center where the art fair Art Basel Miami is taking place every year in early December.*

One could say that 1001SOUL opened Art Basel Miami 2019.  
We colourfully connect the world - through art.

Miami is a lot. And now also part of 1001SOUL.  
For now, North America is over.

**Next stop:** back to winterly Germany, backstage work for our project and preparation for the coming months. Where are we heading next?

You will be the first to know here. Stay tuned, **like us, follow us, support us** and spread the word.

**But first and foremost: Be good to yourselves!**

\*For their support, help, advice and good talks in Miami we would like to thank the following people and friends in particular: Kamran, Mehdi, Ray, Fary, Zari, the children in the Botanical Garden, as well as all interested visitors of our events. You have become a part of 1001SOUL, that's awesome!)



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