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BEACH PATROL

The people who make Miami

RICHARD BOPRAE

Wynwood Pioneer

Apparently Richard Boprae never read F. Scott Fitzgerald's assertion that there are no second acts in American lives. This strikingly handsome 34-year-old Montebell native (well, it's North America) already has a successful modeling career under his belt. It propelled him around the globe and culminated with a six-year stint in Japan, where he nurtured his fascination for art and architecture and absorbed Asian influences, the most important of which he describes as "serenity, dedication and simplicity of lines."

These would serve him well in Act Two, which began in 1999 when Boprae moved to Miami to comfort an ailing friend, and continues as he creates uniquely textured paintings and sculptures, accomplished by applying a thin layer of cement to the base (he claims to have come up with this unusual process "through trial and error—mostly error"). Second-act highlights include acclaimed exhibits ("Healing" at Murano Grande and continuing displays at Las Olas Fine Art gallery), commissioned public artwork (*Beach Ball* in the Miami Beach Botanical Gardens) and, in conjunction with a team of architects, the lobby installation at the Majestic Properties building at Jefferson and 17th in South Beach, where his twin passions of art and architecture finally united. As Boprae explains it, such a collaboration "strengthens the original concept, and eliminates the necessity of adding foreign elements to the design later on."

Richard is currently designing interiors for the enormous new *Kens & Y* restaurant/lounge, set to premiere in the former Ice Palace. You can see him working on the project during Art Basel, when he'll be opening his studio in the Wynwood Art District to host an exhibit of his "architecture in progress" (boprae.com). Boprae has become a key player in Miami's rapidly burgeoning art scene, which leads us to believe that Fitzgerald was flat out wrong—and that Act Three ought to be a doozy. —Richard Carlson

JUST THE FACTS

A fire in your home and you can grab only one thing?: "My photographs—not of me, but those that can bring back memories of my life."

Favorite midnight snack: Cafe 190's French fries.

Why do you live where you do?: "Miami is the upcoming capital of the arts. The pioneers of Wynwood are making history, like SoHo in the '70s and other such art movements. I feel very privileged to be a part of it."

Favorite city: "Barcelona. I lived there for a while, six years ago. I'd like to get a studio there again—that might be my next move."