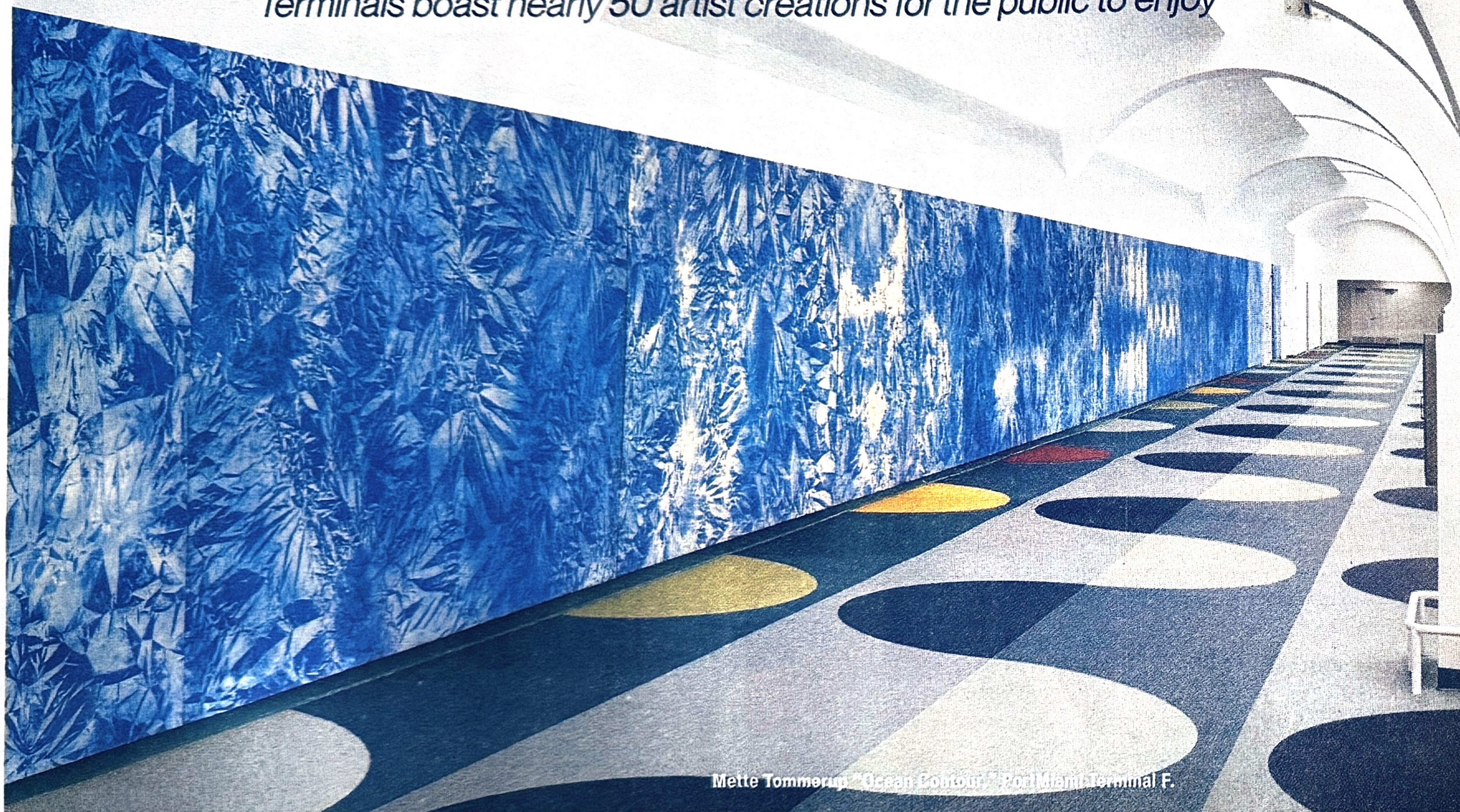


Extraordinary Everyday Art at PortMiami

Terminals boast nearly 50 artist creations for the public to enjoy



Mette Tommerup "Ocean Contour" PortMiami Terminal F.

JOSIE GULLICKSEN

Biscayne Times Contributor

Next time you walk through a terminal at PortMiami as you prepare to sail away on a cruise, take a long look around. You will be happy you did, otherwise you might miss the nearly 50 public art installations on display.

"The pieces are in plain sight and blend into the landscape, but they are truly monumental feats of architectural design collaborations," said Amanda Sanfilippo, curator and artist manager of Art in Public Places and director of the South Florida Cultural Consortium Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs.

Oftentimes, the installations become the artists' largest career project, which helps them expand their practice. The artworks are permanent, which is vital to creating the artist's legacy.

Several years after the Art in Public Places program was established in 1973, the program was expanded to the port in the 1980s.

"They started generating dollars, so it is a parallel story the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County's growth and development," said Sanfilippo.

Art in Public Places is all about site specificity where the artwork can unfold in both its physicality and its meaning, which is important when commissioning the work. The process includes several layers including physical properties, the piece's history, and the geographic location.

"Prior to creating the open call to artists, we meet with key stakeholders in the project, development and client partners, bring them in and they make their recommendations," said Sanfilippo. "We also have an arts advisory board, a professional advisory committee comprised of non-county employees that work in museums and are curators."

There are now long-term leases from the specific cruise lines for their terminals allowing Art in Public Places to work at the same pace as the private sector. MSC Cruises, which is set to be the largest terminal in North America, is one such example.

Patricia Romeu, Chief Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs Art in Public Places Program, stresses the importance of the MSC Cruises project where six international artists have been commissioned to create monumental artworks budgeted at \$3.8 million.

"The commissions are in collaboration with MSC and their design build firm Fincantieri Infrastructure of Florida," Romeu said. "We are working very closely with them

for integration of the artworks."

"MSC is one project we have been working on for years, and where we have identified ways to incorporate integrated artwork like terrazzo floors," said Sanfilippo.

Awareness of the surroundings is key at Port Miami, because the installations are meant to blend into the landscape.

For example, the colorful bollards along Cruise Boulevard by artist Jim Drain which are a required element at PortMiami, are a commissioned piece.

"With that commissioning, we thought bigger, as more of a master plan for the Port to create a certain identity," said Sanfilippo. "The installations feature color combinations and geometries that are based on nautical flags."

Artist Erwin Redl's piece at the Royal Caribbean Terminal A titled "Volume Miami" made of 650 white, cylindrical light fixtures, can also be experienced at night while traveling MacArthur Causeway/I-395.


A recent 2022 commission at Carnival Cruise Line Terminal F is the installation "Ocean Contour" by local artist Mette Tommerup, a massive 185-foot-wide piece.

"It took about 18 months from it being accepted to seeing it come to life on the wall of the terminal," said Tommerup. "Oftentimes these big scale projects can be delayed for a number of reasons,"

Commissions on the scale of Tommerup's "see a lot of moving parts, including a large team in attendance at the proposal who are laser focused on how a project of this scale will be done and closely examining if it can even be done," she said.

"When I commit to a public piece of art, I want to deliver and not have to worry about maintenance over the years," said Tommerup. "I was prepared because I've been behind the scenes when other artists like my husband Robert Chambers, created large-scale public installations so I have first-hand knowledge of what these projects require."

The Art in Public Places program's goal has been to commission work that artists would never be able to do on their own. The program includes paintings, mosaics, light-based works, sculptures, and glass-based art, all intricately woven into the terminals surrounding cruise passengers a walk-through gallery/museum.

"We are setting the artists up for success. We are proud to be their launching pad in a whole new direction in the practice," said Romeu. "I have been with the program since 2016 and am proud of what we have been able to accomplish." 



► Patricia Romeu Chief Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs Art in Public Places Program and Amanada Sanfillippo curator and artist manager of Art in Public Places leading a tour.

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