

**Art 43 Basel: Extraordinary quality translates into strong sales; attracts more than 65,000 visitors**



Donald Young Gallery, Chicago.

**BASEL.-** The 43rd edition of [Art Basel](#) in Switzerland closed on Sunday, June 17, 2012. This year, the annual reunion of the international artworld again attracted 65,000 artists, collectors, curators, and art lovers from around the globe. Collectors from all over the world confirmed that excellent material and booth presentations spurred great demand, creating strong sales throughout the week and across all levels of the market.

A great many artists attended the event, including Marina Abramović, Phyllida Barlow, Nina Beier, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Tracy Emin, Theaster Gates, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Douglas Gordon, Jitish Kallat, Jannis Kounellis, Heinz Mack, Mike Nelson, Damian Ortega, Richard Phillips, Otto Piene, Gavin Turk, Richard Wentworth, Adrian Wong and Gilberto Zorio. Over 70 museum and institution groups, representing almost all the world's major museums visited Art 43 Basel, as did major private collectors from North and South America, all of Europe and the emerging markets of the artworld. An increase in collectors from Asia, especially Hong Kong and China, was noticeable.

At Art 43 Basel, whose main sponsor is UBS, more than 300 galleries from 36 countries on six continents exhibited works by over 2,500 artists. Many stands featured thematic exhibitions and one-person shows, presenting the highest quality of historical material and contemporary works. Sculptures featured heavily in the Art Galleries sector, and were shown alongside paintings, works on paper, and photography, all mediums which continued to be strongly represented.

The introduction of a second preview day and the shift of the Vernissage from Tuesday to Wednesday was welcomed by the majority of exhibitors, who reported excellent results, more in-depth conversations and valuable new contacts for the future of their program. Many gallerists offered positive reports on Art 43 Basel, including:

Iwan Wirth, Hauser & Wirth, Zurich, London, New York: 'It was another record year for the gallery and this great success, made for a truly incomparable experience. We sold works from over 20 of our artists – masterpieces by Louise Bourgeois, Philip Guston and Paul McCarthy all sold on the first day. We also sold both Phyllida Barlow and David Claerbout's Art Unlimited projects, while our third Art Unlimited project, Richard Jackson's 'Big Pig', is on hold. There's no fair quite like Art Basel.'

Marc Glimcher, Pace Gallery, New York: 'The fair took another step up this year. The level of art and the level of conversation were at an all-time high. As a dealer, the caliber of art that one feels comfortable bringing is rapidly ascending beyond anything we ever thought an art fair could handle.'

Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers, Sprüth Magers Berlin London: 'Once again, the fair has been a great success for us and we have been impressed by the caliber of collectors visiting from all around the world. We have sold works by a diverse range of our gallery artists including Alighiero Boetti, George Condo, Thomas Demand, Cyprien Gaillard, Andreas Gursky, Jenny Holzer, Sterling Ruby, Ed Ruscha, Andreas Schulze, Cindy Sherman and Rosemarie Trockel.'

Art Unlimited, curated for the first time by Gianni Jetzer, Director of the Swiss Institute in New York, spotlighted 61 ambitious works by artists representing a cross-section of the leading figures from several generations of today's international art scene. Highlights included major works by established artists Chris Burden, Jeremy Deller, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Hamish Fulton, Gilbert & George, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Douglas Gordon, Anthony McCall, Bruce Nauman, Mike Nelson, Olaf Nicolai, Walid Raad, Ugo Rondinone and Franz West, joined by pieces from younger and emerging stars such as Tristan Bera, Valentin Carron, Nikolas Gambarof, Alicja Kwade, Ryan McGinley, Sterling Ruby and Michael Sailstorfer.

This year's Art Statements featured strong single-artist presentations from young galleries and artists. Selected by the Art Basel Committee from more than 300 applications, the participating artists come from 19 different countries. The Baloise Art Prize (CHF 30,000 per artist) was this year awarded to Simon Denny (Michael Lett, Auckland) and Karsten Födinger (RaebervonStenglin, Zurich). The Baloise Group also acquired works by both artists and donated them to Hamburger Kunsthalle and MUMOK, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Wien, which will also hold solo shows for the artists.

The third edition of Art Feature spotlighted precise projects in highly focused stands and offered 20 gallery presentations drawn from South America, China, Europe, South Africa, and the United States. The sector's dynamic selection ensured a fresh mix of galleries, continuing as a space for the discovery of new talent, including strong solo presentations and compelling juxtapositions by artists representing different cultural backgrounds, generations, and artistic approaches.

Art lovers crossed the Rhine to experience Art Parcours, where site-specific artworks and performances by the artists Pawel Althamer, Eduardo Basualdo, Los Carpinteros, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Simon Dybbroe Møller, Rodney Graham, Henrik Håkansson, Allan Kaprow / Mateo Tannatt, Claude Lévêque, Aleksandra Mir, Maria Nordman, Pedro Reyes and Dieter Roth transformed a variety of locations throughout the St. Johann neighborhood of Basel, including Druckerei Ackermannshof, Dieter Roth's former studio, Predigerkirche (Preacher's Church), the Renaissance dining rooms at the Philosophicum, and the Restaurant zur Mägd. Art Parcours attracted a record of 9,000 visitors and was for the third time curated by Jens Hoffmann, Director of the CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco. A highlight of the week was Art Parcours Night, when Los Angeles based artist Kathryn Andrews transformed the banks of the Rhine with performances by clowns, acrobats, musicians, jugglers and various Vaudevillian acts. Art Parcours Night was attended by 2,000 people.

The Art Basel Conversations series again brought together prominent members of the international art scene, including Heinz Mack, Otto Piene, Monique Burger, Dr. Oei Hong Djen, Budi Tek, Rakhi Sarkar, Claire Hsu, Lars Nittve, Roger Mandle, Juan Ignacio Vidarte, András Szántó, Yael Bartana, Theaster Gates, Huda Lutfi, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Jannis Kounellis, Santiago Sierra, Gilberto Zorio and Germano Celant. Art Basel Conversations is presented by Absolut Art Bureau, responsible for The Absolut Company's international art initiatives. Videos are now available at [artbasel.com/conversations](http://artbasel.com/conversations) and from Wednesday, June 20 will be available in high quality video on [www.absolutartbureau.com](http://www.absolutartbureau.com).

Additionally, a daily program of artist conversations and discussion forums took place in the Art Salon format every afternoon, offering a total of 20 presentations, including themes such as 'The Arab Spring and Its Impact on Artists' and Hong Kong's next generation of artists.

Screened at the Stadtkino Basel, the Art Film program featured outstanding films. Curator Marc Glöde's thematic program presented short films by artists as well as the feature-length films 'The Host and the Cloud' by Pierre Huyghe, and 'Divided Selves' by Luke Fowler. Film connoisseur This Brunner selected the Marina Abramović documentary 'The Artist Is Present' by Matthew Akers and the Swiss premiere of 'Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry' by Alison Klayman.

Shortly before the show, visitors could download the Art Basel Smartphone app. Using an iPad, iPhone,

Blackberry or other smartphone, Art Basel's galleries, artists and exhibition sectors can still be accessed after the show closed. The app's interactive 3D-map allows for virtual navigation through the halls, access to information and images of artworks that galleries brought to the show, organizing them as favourites, and forwarding them to friends and colleagues.

Additionally, Theater Basel presented three sold-out performances of 'The Life and Death of Marina Abramović', a Manchester International Festival and Teatro Real Madrid production with Theater Basel and the Holland Festival, whose Swiss performances were presented in co-operation with Art Basel. Further information is available at [www.theater-basel.ch](http://www.theater-basel.ch).