

ART 36 BASEL

THE ART NEWSPAPER

ART BASEL DAILY NEWSPAPER • WEEKEND EDITION 18,19,20 JUNE 2005

Today's suggestions: nothing more than €5,000

The Art Newspaper gives an entirely subjective and uncomprehensive selection

L3 Richard Serra, Venice notebook 2001, #18, 2003, colour etching, Gemini, €1,790
A gutsy, graphic Serra that would look wonderful in just about any setting.

S2 Destiny Deacon, Untitled, edition of 15, Oxygè, €2,500
This Aboriginal photographer was shown at the last Documenta. She mainly photographs her family and is very interested in blackness, both of skin and of the pieces she includes in her compositions.

D1 Christine Rebel, various drawings, 2005, watercolour on paper, Menour, €900
This artist's fresh, naive drawings have been selling like hotcakes, but there were still a few left yesterday.

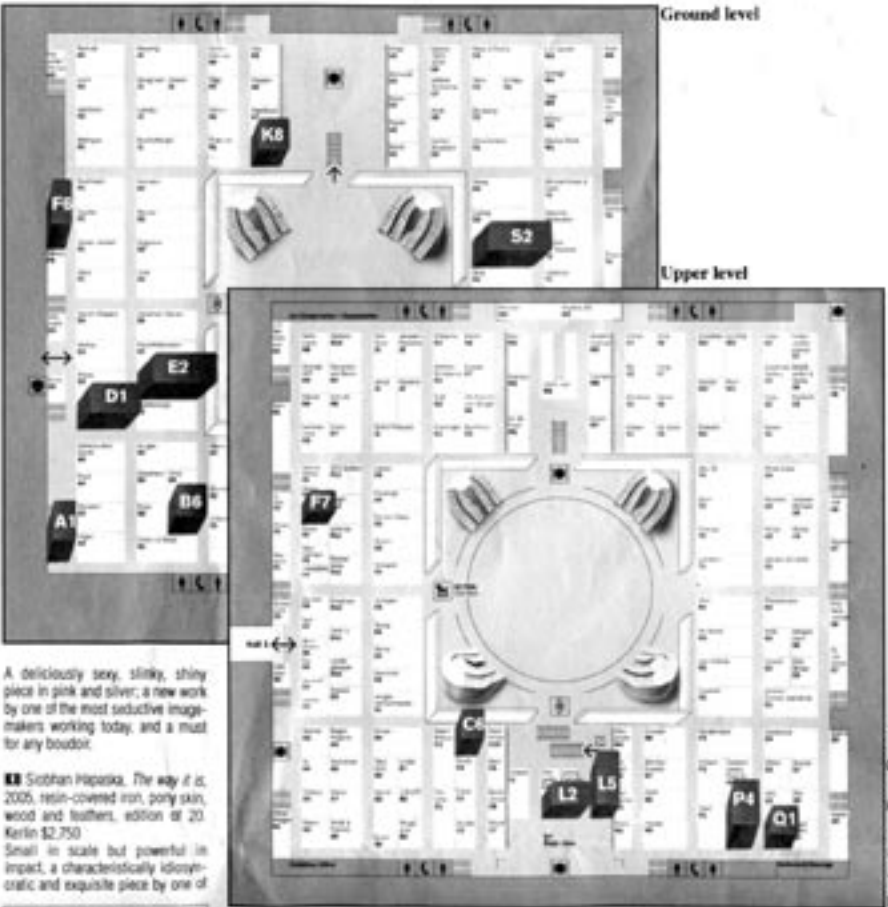
F6 Tinguly, La camélette pour Larry, 1978, Piccadilly, €5,800
The quirkiness of the kinetic artist is well conveyed in this charming drawing.

B6 Yeandoo Jung, Wonderland series, ongoing project, edition of five, Kukje, \$2,500
This artist was featured in the Korean pavilion in Venice. In this ongoing project she photographs ordinary people, gets them to recount their aspirations, and then rephotographs them in their dreamworlds.

O1 Annette Messager, Le bonheur illustré, 1975, watercolour on paper, Mayer, €5,000
France won the best pavilion prize at Venice with an installation by Messager who, as three early works on show at Mayer demonstrate, is also an excellent watercolourist. The other two have already been sold.

P4 Seung-Ae Lee, Münster, 2005, pencil on paper, Hyundai, €5,000
A beautifully detailed drawing of a monster on the unfolding support of a long paper scroll.

S1 Sothban Hapaska, The way it is, 2005, resin-covered iron, pony skin, wood and feathers, edition of 20, Kerlin, \$2,750
Small in scale but powerful in impact, a characteristically idiosyncratic and exquisite piece by one of



A deliciously sexy, stinky, shiny piece in pink and silver; a new work by one of the most seductive image-makers working today, and a must for any boudoir.

L2 L5
P4 Q1

Illustrations: Yara Russo

The launch of 'Art Basel Conversations' artworld-loftiness was an evening event for invited guests with music by English artist and Turner Prize winner Martin Creed and his band. [Creed you will remember won the Turner Prize a few years ago with a work consisting of a light switching itself on and off in a cavernous empty gallery, complemented by a small piece of bluetak on the wall complete with fingerprint. I have no idea what his music is like.]

The *New York Times* has labelled *Art Basel* the "Olympics of the Art World", the Paris daily *Le Monde* similarly—"Art Basel... la meilleure foire du monde" and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*—"Die beste Kunst ist gerade gut genug". I think you get the drift. *Art Basel* is at the obscure end of the art-money spectrum and its related human activity—"meet the insiders and stars of the art scene"—an appropriate epitaph for its bacchanalian and orgiastic excesses.

According to *The Art Newspaper.com International Edition* website masthead, London's Tate Gallery Director, Sir Nicholas Serota, is quoted as having said *The Art Newspaper* is "invaluable intelligence on international developments in the artworld". *The Art Newspaper, Art Basel Daily Newspaper, Weekend Edition 18–20, June 2005*, under the heading of "Gossip", gave us the following intelligence—*Possibly too candid a camera at Art Basel: If you were planning a spot of bad behaviour in Basel this year, or if you have already been playing away at the Venice Biennale then reader, beware. Not only are the eyes and ears of The Art Newspaper all around, but there's also the risk of being caught in the viewfinder of top-notch snapper Todd Eberle. The Vanity Fair fashion photographer has already taken over 3,000 pictures of the art world in action [and passion] along the Venice Biennale-Art Basel trail, and plans to publish a book of his findings under the [still tentative] title of 'Art World Kisses'. However, Mr Eberle may find it considerably more lucrative to invite cash inducements to publish what he has seen.*

Murder on the dance floor: The fair organisers may have pulled out all the stops for last night's Art/Party at Kaserne Basel, but for the English contingent the major social event of Art Basel is always the party thrown by Brit exile Gavin Brown, which did not disappoint this year, packing out the Swiss Hotel basement bar until 5am

ALAN CRUICKSHANK

The websites and newspapers said it all. At the time of the event *Art Basel's* website described itself as "the" international art show, welcoming "art lovers from all over the world for the 36th year, from June 15 to 20, 2005." This year *Art Basel* featured over two hundred and seventy of the—*most exciting modern and contemporary art galleries from around the world. Art Basel is the world's premier fair for twentieth and twenty-first century art. Works by two thousand artists will be on display while over 50,000 art collectors, art dealers, artists, curators, journalists and art lovers take part in the annual family reunion of the art world. They come to see the most rigorously juried selection of what the international art market has to offer and to meet the insiders and stars of the art scene. Art Basel is unique for the high quality and unparalleled variety of works on display.* www.artbasel.com

Art 36 Basel additionally hosted 'Art Unlimited', 'Art Basel Conversations', 'Artists' Books', 'Professional Day', 'Art Lobby', 'Art Statements' and parallel programs 'Youth Art Fair', 'Liste' and a number of exhibitions city museums. Hall 1 had two floors of circa one hundred and sixty dealer galleries, the majority staffed by the ubiquitous designer suit avec striped shirt sans tie, designer stubble, mobile phone attached to the head, a blonde haired, blue eyed amazon shadow, five languages of course, *Moët* on the table all times of the day. The single Australian dealer—Roslyn Oxley9—sans all of that stuff—stood amongst all this excess with a striking presentation of Destiny Deacon, Jacqueline Fraser, Bill Henson, Yayoi Kusama, Tracey Moffatt, Michael Parekwhai and Patricia Piccinini. In the adjacent Hall 2, 'Art Unlimited' presented artists from the dealers showing in Hall 1, a canny marketing exercise masquerading as a supposedly 'edgy' exhibition.

The marketing spiel surrounding *Art 36 Basel* couldn't have been better illustrated than by the media blurb for 'Art Basel Conversations'—*By facilitating direct exchanges with leading lights of the international art scene, 'Art Basel Conversations' permits privileged access to first-hand information on matters relating to all aspects of collecting and exhibiting art. 'Art Basel Conversations' is a forum which encourages the exchange of ideas through platform discussions and personal contact with speakers and other guests. Famous artists, art collectors, museum directors, Biennale curators and architects take part in this event. Speakers not only present their ongoing and upcoming projects, but also report on their experiences and on the challenges they face, in so doing revealing an insider's view of the art scene. 'Art Basel Conversations' is an open platform for dynamic and inspiring dialog.* www.artdaily.com/section/news/index.

on Friday morning. Established English dealers from the main fair—including the ever immaculate Maureen Paley—rubbed up against relative newcomers from Liste such as Kate McGarry and Basel virgins such as Store's Niru Ratnam and Counter's Carl Freedman, both showing for the first time at Volta. The miraculously indefatigable Sam Keller was also seen strutting his stuff, as was a rhythmic contingent from Luhring Augustine and a rather weary-looking Martin Creed, who came over after his *al fresco* gig at the Kunsthalle bar. A deliciously debauched and sweaty time was had by all. "It's murder on the dance floor" declared one energetic hooper, throwing another vodka down her throat and bopping on down. All of which meant that, on yesterday's 'professional' day, a great many participants felt anything but.

Billionaire boy behaving badly: Brandon Davis, son of the US billionaire oil magnate Marvin Davis and former boyfriend of hot young actress Mischa Barton of 'The OC' fame has been squirmed around Venice and Basel by art consultant Sandy Heller—no easy task. At the Kunsthalle bar on Thursday night, Mr David lurched towards a group of women, proffering a tequila high ball and told one woman of a certain age, "this will make your tits stand up." Heller forced his charge to apologise but the best the boy billionaire could manage was: "I don't remember what I just said." Could this be the same Heller client who reportedly delayed a flight from Venice to Basel because he was wearing a t-shirt that said 'Go fuck yourself', which so offended the stewardess in first class that she made him turn it inside out?

On and on, like the Rhine River that flows through Basel, *The Art Newspaper*, *Art Basel Daily Newspaper* continued with a very clear picture of why "art collectors, art dealers, artists, curators, journalists and art lovers" were there.

Then there was the money. *Nahmad's Picasso carries top price tag:* Art Newspaper spies whisper that the most expensive item at this year's Art Basel is the exquisite 1923/24 Picasso *Pierrot* at Helly Nahmad [gallery], which is rumoured to carry a price tag of \$80 million. Mr Nahmad insists that the work is not for sale but simply on display to enhance his museum-quality stand, in response to which, an undoubtedly jealous rival was heard to hiss "everything in that gallery is for sale."

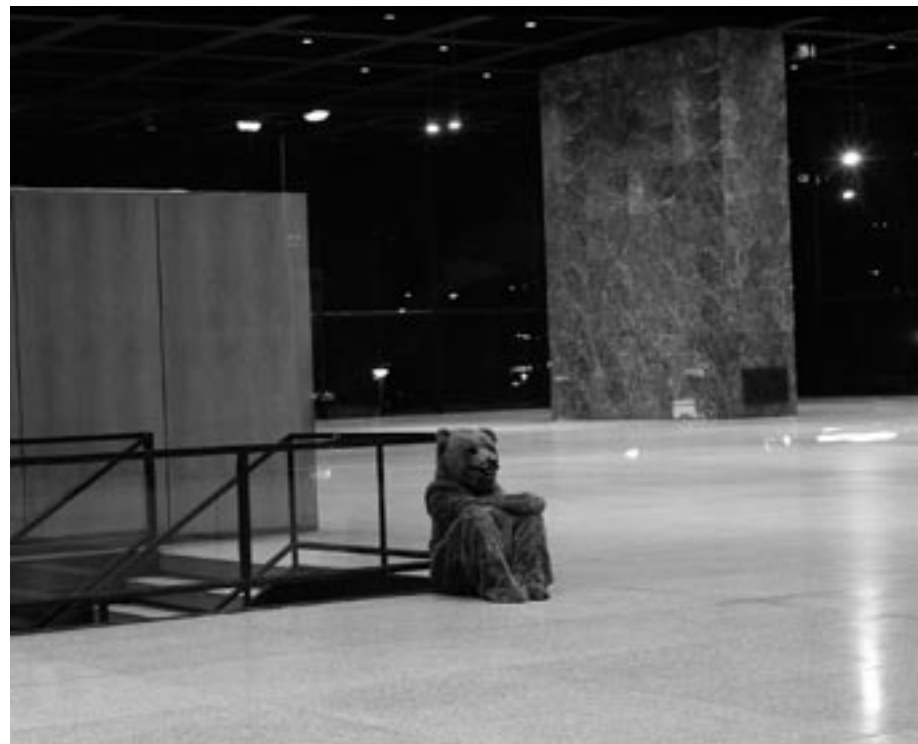
The Telegraph, 20 June, articulated the 'money thing' quite clearly—Basel... is unquestionably about money, but aspires more and more to be about culture and education, to be like a biennale. Its

curated exhibitions, critical forums, artists' talks, performances and public art projects all lend a tactical veneer of disinterest in money, while underwriting the notion that the art for sale is of museum quality.

For the legion of hungry collectors however, any sense of decorum can quickly evaporate. Particularly noticeable this year was the feeling of urgency about capturing works by promising young artists while prices are low. As the doors opened, there was an unseemly stampede as collectors made a dash for their targeted prey... At Victoria Miro's stand, thirteen paintings by the young Miami artist Hernan Bas were sold within fifteen minutes, priced at \$US20,000 each they were snapped up by established collectors such as Charles Saatchi... New York stockbroker Adam Sender and French luxury goods magnate Bernard Arnault... Also noticeable were the number of dealers taking the opportunity to show works by artists represented at the Venice Biennale. A popular exhibit in Venice... was *Sleeper*, a video of Mark Wallinger's performance in Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie last year in which Wallinger wandered round the empty galleries at night dressed as a bear. The video, priced at £100,000, is being held back for a museum collection. But Wallinger's dealer, Anthony Reynolds, has produced an image from the video in the form of a large light box. Priced at £30,000, it sold within minutes of the opening. To cater for expected demand, two hundred small photographic prints of the same image were also made, priced at £250 each.

Continuing the money theme, *The Art Newspaper*, *Art Basel Daily Newspaper*, in its "End of Week Report: Newest art sells fastest", stated—As the fair settled down after the first hectic days of trading, many dealers were beaming with satisfaction. Sales, particularly for the galleries with emerging artists, were reported as excellent, with many dealers rehanging their booths more than once... Inevitably, the more expensive items sell more slowly and deals are often concluded after the fair has ended. Nevertheless, some of the grandest dealers on the ground floor were watching the upstairs speed-buying slightly wistfully. "There is a hard instinct; everyone wants the youngest art now", said one of them... "An art fair creates the same sense of urgency as the auctions", said Howard Read of Cheim & Read, and today's ultra pumped-up market for contemporary art is certainly contributing to the frenzy... "Collectors are frightened of 'losing out' by not getting to the works in time", said another dealer... The 'Venice effect' also worked its magic on sales. Fresh from winning the prize for the best artist at the [Venice] Biennale, the [German] artist

Opposite page: *The Arts Newspaper's* floorplan of 160 dealers in Hall 1 for Art 36 Basel
Below: Mark Wallinger, *Sleeper* [video still], 2004
Photo courtesy the artist and Anthony Reynolds Gallery, London



Thomas Schütte saw his 2005 *Untitled* [trois personages] sell "five minutes after the fair opened" to the French luxury-goods mogul François Pinault... [for] 410,000 euros.

Perhaps the oddest piece of work at Art Basel is a bar of soap, displayed on a square of black velvet, purportedly made from Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's fat, removed during liposuction. Gianni Monti's work called *Clean Hands*—the title is a play on the name of an anti-Mafia group—sold in less than an hour for 15,000 euros [\$US18,000] to a private Swiss collector... www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/europe/06/18/art.basel.reut/

And the postmortems? *A Record Year for Art 36 Basel. Outstanding works of art, excellent sales, high-caliber visitors from all over the world... The cognoscenti present at the show agreed that the quality and variety of works on exhibit at Art 36 Basel were unparalleled in the world.* [www.artbasel.com/ca/cc/ss/Art 36 Basel Closing report.](http://www.artbasel.com/ca/cc/ss/Art%2036%20Basel%20Closing%20report)

The Art Newspaper, *Art Basel Daily Newspaper Weekend Edition* 18–20 June, 2005, again—*Lurie picks up his paintbrush:* John Lurie, the lofty leader of post punk jazzers *The Lounge Lizards* is living proof

that, despite the lamentable efforts of the likes of David Bowie and Ronnie Wood, it isn't impossible for rockers to make good art. He recently had his second show at Daniel Blau Gallery in Munich and the mordant humour of his small paintings—which have a similar spirit of gentle subversion to that of British artist David Shrigley upstairs at Stephen Friedman—have been snapped up by collectors beyond the Lounge Lizard cognoscenti. Perhaps next year Mr Lurie will step into the shoes of Martin Creed as the fair's anointed artistic troubador.

The Art Basel website is currently selling *Art37 Basel*—*Art 36 Basel* exists no longer. I loved the perversity of it—and I do know the music of John Lurie.