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## Art Basel: Big deal for all galleries, including new entries

- by Maria Adelaide Marchesoni

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Gypsum Gallery - Cairo, Maha Maamoun, *The Subduer*, 2017- Pink wall, Inkjet print (200 x 266 cm), 15,000 euros

The 48th edition of [Art Basel](#) closed with a public audience of 95,000 visitors during the seven opening days, the first of which was reserved for collectors and museum directors, and exceptional sales. The most important fair in the world exhibited works of art, for an insured value of about 3 billion euros according to the insurance group [Axa Art](#) . The atmosphere has been positive and the mega-gallerists have described this Art Basel edition with great satisfaction as "best ever" and "record". Dozens of works have been sold in the seven-digit range and gallery owners were happy to declare the deals that were concluded. Among the [Millennium Sales](#)

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[Mnuchin Gallery](#) in New York sold "Smear" by Mark Bradford, a \$ 5 million mixed media and collage on \$ 5 million, Untitled # 9, 1988 by Agnes Martin for \$ 5 Million, Christopher Wool's Untitled, \$ 3.5 Million, and \$ 3.5 Million Bruce Nauman 's wax sculpture , "Andrew Head / Julie Head / Rinde Head" (1990) for \$ 3.6 million. The list of ultra-high-end sales was led by American and European collectors, and for some galleries, Asian buyers were fewer. However, as with most fairs, most sales to top collectors take weeks ahead of the fair when galleries send customers what will be offered at the fair.

New entry. Not just mega galleries with millionaire business volumes, Art Basel has hosted 17 new galleries this year, some of which have already participated in the editions of other Art Basel, Miami Beach or Hong Kong trade fairs. They come from around the world, Auckland, Beijing, and Cairo, although most (five) come from New York.

Most of these galleries were founded in 2010 or a few years later, the youngest is a gallery of the Los Angeles [Parrasch Heijnen Gallery](#) , inaugurated in January 2016, and the [Leila Heller Gallery](#) of New York since 1982 is presented at the fair with an Arman installation. Five works entitled "Les Poubelles des Artistes: New York" (1970-1973) that represent part of the ten collaborations between the artist and his contemporaries in the early 1970s in New York, including Robert Rauschenberg, Sol LeWitt, Jim Dine, Bernar Venet, Joseph Kosuth, Roy Lichtenstein, Peter Hutchinson and Christo . The price of the installations ranged from \$ 250,000 to \$ 300,000.

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Parrasch Heijnen Gallery presented the work of American artist Tony DeLap (1927), which focuses on the issues of perception and the nature of transformation through design studies of modular aluminum sketches and sculptures. DeLap comes from a generation of American minimalists including Donald Judd, Dan Flavin and Sol LeWitt. Sales for Los Angeles's Los Angeles galleries went well and prices ranged between \$ 15,000 and \$ 50,000.

Among the 18 galleries in the Statement section, eight exhibited for the first time in Basel and among them from Vienna, [Galerie Emanuel Layr](#) (Vienna and Rome) in 2016 to [Liste](#) , presented a video installation by Cecile B. Evans , "Amos' World: Episode One," 2017, which was on display, joining one of the six small private environments built in a concrete structure of Brutalist style specially built for the fair. The 5th edition video was on sale at £ 65,000.

From Warsaw, [Galeria Dawid Radziszewski](#) , who for his debut presented a performance by Polish artist Joanna Piotrowska who works with this media for the first time (usually uses photography and video). The performance referred to self-defense manuals by amateur artists. "It transports daily gestures and conventional movement practices, such as defending self-defense, into new scenarios," says Radziszewski, "and the resulting photograph serves as a performance document rather than a documentary image." For the performance video of 3 + 1 «Untitled», 2017 (1:56 lopped), the asking price was 15,000 euros.

Debut in Basel in the Feature section for [Kalfayan Galleries](#), which took part in the editions of Miami and Hong Kong, and last year at Art Unlimited with a project by

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Greek artist Viassis Caniaris(1928-2011) whose work participated in [Documenta 14](#) in Athens. The work "Echo of History" provides a vision of the artist's practice and his attention to socio-political issues that relate to current economic and socio-political situations. "What's North, What's South (Children and Testimony)" was introduced at the [Venice Biennale](#) in 1988 and sold for 290,000, reserved for a cultural institution. On the first opening day of the fair, it was sold for 80 thousand euros to an American collector, the Wall opera, 1961.

Among the new entries, the [P420](#) gallery also [featured](#) an Italian [feature](#) that always featured in the Feature section of a project by Goran Trbuljak(Zagreb, 1948) showing his works exhibited in the first four personal exhibitions in institutions from 1971 to 1981. "An extreme, ironic and acute project, a reflection on the role of institutions and the art system," tells us Alessandro Pasotti, and the artist's statement in 1971 was significant: "I do not want to put anything new and original," concludes Pasotti. In the stand, the exhibited works are 4 posters destined for an institution (100 thousand euros) while for the collectors the works for sale are two poster at a price of 18 thousand each, printers in some specimens.

At Unlimited, the Bologna gallery presented two projects along with other galleries. The re-enactment of the staff at the gallery of Cavallino in 1977 by the artist Goran Trbuljak, along with the gallery of Berlin [Gallery Gregor Podgnar](#) (350 thousand euros, reserved for a museum). The other project with the Galleria Massimo Minini of Brescia by Paolo Icaro (Turin, 1936) with its installation, never before exposed, made

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in his New York studio in 1967, "Metallica Foresta", its first Space Shape (500 thousand euros).

After joining Liste last year, Gypsum Gallery (Cairo) landed at Art Basel with a photographic work by Egyptian artist Maha Maamoun. "The Subduer" is a work that originates from a trip to one of the many public notary offices in Egypt. Using his cell phone, Maamoun secretly recorded images of prayers found in various notarial offices, written on "a set of dirty and aged paper" and "sticking or informally glued to the walls." Photographic installation is accompanied by a publication that reflects on the prayers and their context. The title "The Subduer" is a reference to one of the "99 Most Beautiful Names of Allah" in the Islamic tradition. (The prices of the photographs ranged from 3,000 to 15,000 euros).

After many years in Lists, [Hopkinson Mossman](#), Auckland's gallery, made his debut at Art Basel, Basel in the Statement section with the young Berlin artist Oscar Enberg, who presented a film and sculpture examining the Australian mining city of Coober Pedy (the price for the video in the edition of 3 is 12,000 euros while the sculpture - sold - presented a price of 20,000 euros).

Interestingly, the proposal of [Deborah Schamoni](#)'s gallery in Munich, which presented three works by the French-Argentine artist Lea Lublin(1929-1999) - each represents a different decade of the artist's practice - who began his career as a painter in Buenos Aires in the 1960s and radically changed the way he expressed his creativity. The installations at the stand had an average price of 200 thousand euros.

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From Beijing, [Magician Space](#) , founded in 2008 by artist Qu Kejie , with Pan Baohui works with emerging and experimental artists in China, providing a platform for more recent artists like Li Ran, Liu Yefu and Yao Qingmei , but also highlights artists who have contributed significantly to the historical development of contemporary art in China, as Liu Chuang, Li Jinghu and Liang Wei . The gallery, which has been participating in [Art Basel in Hong Kong](#) since 2013 , is also committed to introducing new critical positions in China by cultivating a dialogue with international artists and professionals such as Keren Cytter, James Richards and Timur Si-Qin . For the Art Basel debut in the Statement section, Magician Space has presented a new series of sculptures and paintings by the young artist of Beijing Wang Shang , who is also a certified gemologist with prices ranging from \$ 15,000 to \$ 30,000.

[Space Antenna](#) from Shanghai has presented a new installation of Guan Xiao 's 'Air Freshener, Spray'(1983), which is part of the ongoing exploration of the artist of atmospheric conditions (\$ 48,000). [Chapter NY](#) founded in 2013 in the Statement section with a new work by Sam Anderson , "Antarctica" , 2017, an installation of figures on a series of semicircular circles (5,000 - 15,000 dollars) and always from New York Real Fine Art with 13 new works on paper by Sam Pulitzer (1984), which refer to the dominant cultural symbols and the imagination of today's society (\$ 7,000 for single opera and 150,000 for installation). Finally, Kate MacGarry (London) presented a multimedia exhibition of short "psycho- graphic " films by Samson Kambalu(1975), born in Malawi, inspired by American folklore and movie prototypes. The films are sold individually (£ 8,000), set of three films (£ 20,000) and set of seven films (£ 45,000).

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