

NEWS OF THE ART WORLD

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Masterpieces, Up-and-coming Artists and Super Sales at Art Basel 2016

by Judith Souriau | Jun 21, 2016 | Art market, Home - highlight, News |



Galleries in Paris and London have experienced faltering sales since January and, in May, the results at Frieze New York were up and down, indicating that American collectors were holding

off till the elections in November. It was a very different story at Art Basel. The superb 2016 edition opened for First Choice and VIP guests on Tuesday, 14 June. The tone was set by the exceptionally high standard of works presented on Monday night at the preview of the Art Unlimited section. Sales were made for works by featured artists, from Indian artist Mithu Sen, whose curiosity box sold to a private Swiss collection (his drawings were represented by Chemould Prescott Road, Nathalie Obadia and Krinzing in the main section), to Kounellis, whose works were rediscovered by collectors at Sprovieri, Continua and Almine Rech, and Paul McCarthy, whose *Tomato Head* installation (1994) was purchased by a private American collector. Khalil Joseph's film entitled *m.A.A.d* (2014), with music by Kendrick Lamar, is a major revelation of Unlimited, and the young Californian director has already been approached by artistic directors in the fashion and luxury sector.

In the dense and varied aisles of the Galleries section (König, Kikje, Gagosian, Cheim & Read, etc.) of the main fair, on Tuesday and Wednesday, many stands were selling well. Kamel Mennour replaced Camille Henrot, who sold out, with a new series by Mohammed Bourouissa and the beautiful installation of Huang Yong Ping (part of his current Monumenta exhibition) was reserved by a private foundation. The come-back with the abstract violet works of neo-expressionist Julian Schabel at PACE left some sceptical, but he clearly has fans since three of the six paintings in the series had already sold at \$375,000 a piece by Tuesday afternoon. We preferred the powerful, enigmatic *La Licorne*, whose three editions were unsurprisingly snapped up from the Xavier Hufkens stand, or the sculptures of Mark Manders and Tomas Saraceno at Zeno X and Tanya Bonakdar. Anish Kapoor's new marble and Lalique crystal sculptures at Massimo Minini were not sold by Tuesday evening, but we expect they will be just as successful as the mirror globes as soon as wealthy collectors become used to seeing them. However, it is not always the easiest works that sell (fortunately) since a painting by Lee Lozano (1962) and the last series by Zoe Leonard sold by Hauser&Wirth to private collectors, according to [Artnet News](#).



David Altmejd, *La licorne* (2016), courtesy Xavier Hufkens

In the Statements section, which featured heavily curated solo shows from young galleries and artists, the strange – and ironic – Im by Mary Reid Kelley entitled *This is Offal* (2016) was acquired by the Baloise group for the Mudam museum in Luxembourg, while a private foundation purchased the Grey Noise (Dubai) stand, which featured a single installation by the Chinese artist on anonymity in international transit areas. The Feature section's offering was refreshing, but almost too limited with only 18 galleries participating. This section offered some real revelations at the end of the main aisles. You had to be really curious to make it down to the stand of Frank Elbaz about three cross-referenced names of the Beat Generation or the mysterious *Portrait of Mr S.* by Anna Opperman at Barbara Thum.



Art Basel 2016

Mary Reid Kelley, *This Is Offal* (2016), Im. Image courtesy Arratia Beer (Berlin)

The rather positive results of this 47th edition of Art Basel show that despite the tense climate, quality attracts serious collectors, which is somewhat reassuring, given the speed with which fairs and fashion trends seem to be multiplying of late.



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