



INTERNATIONAL EDITION

# THE ART NEWSPAPER

UMBERTO ALLEMANDI &amp; CO. PUBLISHING

LONDON NEW YORK TURIN VENICE MILAN ROME

ART BASEL DAILY EDITION 15 JUNE 2010

Art Unlimited opening

## It's big but it's not brash

Galleries bring large-scale works inspired by the Arte Povera spirit of the cheap and the free

Ambitious art is back on the agenda again at Art Unlimited, Art Basel's exhibition of large-scale installations and videos. In another sign of returning market confidence—following strong results at the New York auctions last month—galleries have been making a splash and using the cavernous spaces in Hall 1 to make bold statements.

Now in its 11th year, Art Unlimited, which opened to VIPs yesterday afternoon, presents 56 projects, six of them larger than 200 sq. m—in sharp contrast to the slimmed-down offerings in the section last year. The fair organisers also report a 20% increase in the number of applications to Art Unlimited (151) compared with 2009.

While big is back, this year's displays show little signs of returning to the glitz of the boom years, typified by Carsten Höller's fairground ride *Mirror Carousel*, 2005, shown at Art Unlimited by Gagosian in 2006 or Takashi Murakami's eight-tonne, platinum-leaved *Oval Buddha*, 2007, which Blum & Poe sold for \$8m in 2008.

Instead, galleries are eschewing spectacle and have brought more cerebral works. There is also an emphasis on pieces made from cheap, disposable materials or found objects. At the heart of the exhibition, Galleria Continua of San Gimignano and Beijing is showing Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Labirinto e grande pozzo*, a maze constructed from rolls of cardboard that was first made by the artist in 1969. The work, priced at €650,000,



Michelangelo Pistoletto's massive maze, first made in 1969, sets the tone

exemplifies the desire "to return to a more sober" reality, said gallery director Lorenzo Fiaschi. "Artists are speaking *sottovoce* this year to communicate strong sentiments." At the adjacent stand, David Zwirner is showing another work from 1969, a curved fluorescent installation by Dan Flavin, *Three Sets of Tangented Arcs in Daylight and Cool White (to Jenny and Ira Licht)* priced at \$4m (U42). The gallery announced its representation of the Flavin Estate last autumn, and chose Basel to unveil the piece that has only been shown once before, at the National Gallery of Canada, in

the year it was made. "It is one of the best years of Art Unlimited," said the gallery's Ales Ortuzar. "The works are much more committed and large-scale. People are taking risks again, and are prepared to invest in bold statements that they hope will pay off."

Like Flavin, Andrew Dudson, a 30-year-old from Canada, uses fluorescent lights as his materials. *Black Painted Light*, 2010, is a series of office lights painted black by the artist. They are on offer for €33,000 with the Turinese gallery Franco Noero (U24). The use of inexpensive materials continues in *Couscous*

*Ka'aba*, an installation priced at €70,000 by the French-Algerian artist Kader Attia (U30) who is represented by Christian Nagel of Berlin and Galerie Krinzinger of Vienna. Attia has placed an axonometric drawing of the Ka'aba at the centre of a circle of couscous, a material he likes

because it is a "3,000-year-old symbol of North Africa".

"We like to work with artists who use materials that, in themselves, have no value," says Nagel. Another artist represented by Nagel, Michael Beutler, has created a vast landscape of crimped tubes, *Pipeline Field*, 2010, €45,000, made out of rolls of white Tetra Pak paper (U6). "We wanted to do this last year but felt we should postpone because it wasn't such an interesting market and things were a little tighter," says Nagel.

Video works this year include Doug Aitken's *Frontier*, 2009 (U31), in which fellow artist Ed Ruscha swaggers across a six-channel installation that forms the second part in the trilogy begun with *Migration*, 2008. The work is priced at \$450,000, with one of the edition in Rome's Macro collection. The last silent movie by Susan Hiller is a recording of 24 nearly extinct dialects from around the world priced at £75,000 (U52). One version has recently been sold by the Timothy Taylor Gallery (F6) to Frac Bourgoigne. But not everyone is subscribing to this year's rustic look. Yayoi Kusama's *Affirmation of Obliteration of Eternity*, 2008

### Statement art



Art Statements, presenting young artists in solo displays, takes place alongside Art Unlimited. This year 26 galleries have been chosen to take part. Although the quality is uneven, a few galleries stand out, including Aratanuano (S17) from Tokyo, with work by Takahiro Iwasaki (above). Meanwhile, the British-Japanese artist Simon Fujiwara, showing with Neue Alte Brücke (S20), has recreated the bar his parents used to run in Spain under the dictator Franco but with subtle alterations. The stand was awarded the Baloise Art Prize yesterday and the installation sold to a private European foundation for €90,000. A performance by the artist takes place on the stand every day at 5pm.

(U56), on sale for €500,000, had long queues yesterday as visitors waited for their moment inside the mirrored box with its jewel-like LED lights reflected to infinity.

Cristina Ruiz, Charlotte Burns and Georgina Adam

### Zurich galleries

## Mixed feelings about makeover

One of Zurich's main gallery districts has fallen prey to gentrification, temporarily scattering a cluster of dealers, private and non-profit museums that pioneered the once gritty area along the Limmatstrasse, north-west of the city's centre. A renovation and expansion of the 1898 red-brick former Löwenbräu brewery will begin in September with completion scheduled for 2012.

The current tenants include dealers such as Eva Presenhuber and Hauser & Wirth, private museums—the Migros Museum for Contemporary Art and Daros Foundation—and the non-profit Kunsthalle Zurich. "It's a cleaning phase for the future on all levels," says Beatrix Ruf, director of the Kunsthalle Zurich. She said the development will result in a permanent future for the organisations in a space that was always somewhat temporary.

The building is owned by PSP Swiss Property, a real estate investment company that owns Swfr 5.2bn worth of property. In addition to renovating and expanding the art spaces within the historic brewery, PSP plans to develop a 20-storey condominium tower and a new building with office space.

The renovated space will be a marked improvement for the Kunsthalle, which currently lacks offices, storage space and an archive. The plan is for a new floor to be added to increase the square footage.

But the dealers have mixed feelings about the plans. "Of course we need a renovation. We need better facilities," says dealer Bob van Orsouw, a tenant since 1998. "It's a pity that we have to move out for two years." Iwan Wirth, co-founder of Hauser & Wirth, who moved into the space in 1996, appreci-

ates the "low key and modest" ambience. "I would have loved to keep the status quo here," says Wirth who nonetheless expects the renovated complex will be positive. Hauser director Florian Bertold said the new expansion will make space available for younger dealers.

During the renovations the Migros Museum, Hauser & Wirth, and Galerie Bob van Orsouw will relocate to the Hubertus Exhibitions space located two miles from the city centre. The Kunsthalle plans to mount programmes and shows at venues across Zurich. These groups have announced their intentions to return to the Löwenbräu.

Galerie Eva Presenhuber and Galerie Peter Kilchmann are set to move permanently in April 2011 to new spaces in the nearby Maag-Areal area. Lindsay Pollock

### Springtime will bloom in New York

Giant roses will flower in Manhattan next spring. Artist William Ryman is to install 38 plants up to 25ft high on Park Avenue from 57th to 67th Street. The works will be unveiled in January and will remain in place for five months (impression, right). Ryman had hoped to scatter giant discarded bottle caps, crushed cans and bubblegum wrappers at the base of the roses but says Mayor Bloomberg is "doing an anti-litter campaign" and would not allow it. The \$1m installation has been commissioned by the Park Avenue Sculpture Committee and approved by the New York City Parks Department. Meanwhile at Art Basel, Ryman, son of the minimalist painter Robert, is showing four new works at the Marlborough stand (D15). These, which are as colourful as his blooms, are priced at \$50,000 and \$60,000. C.R.



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