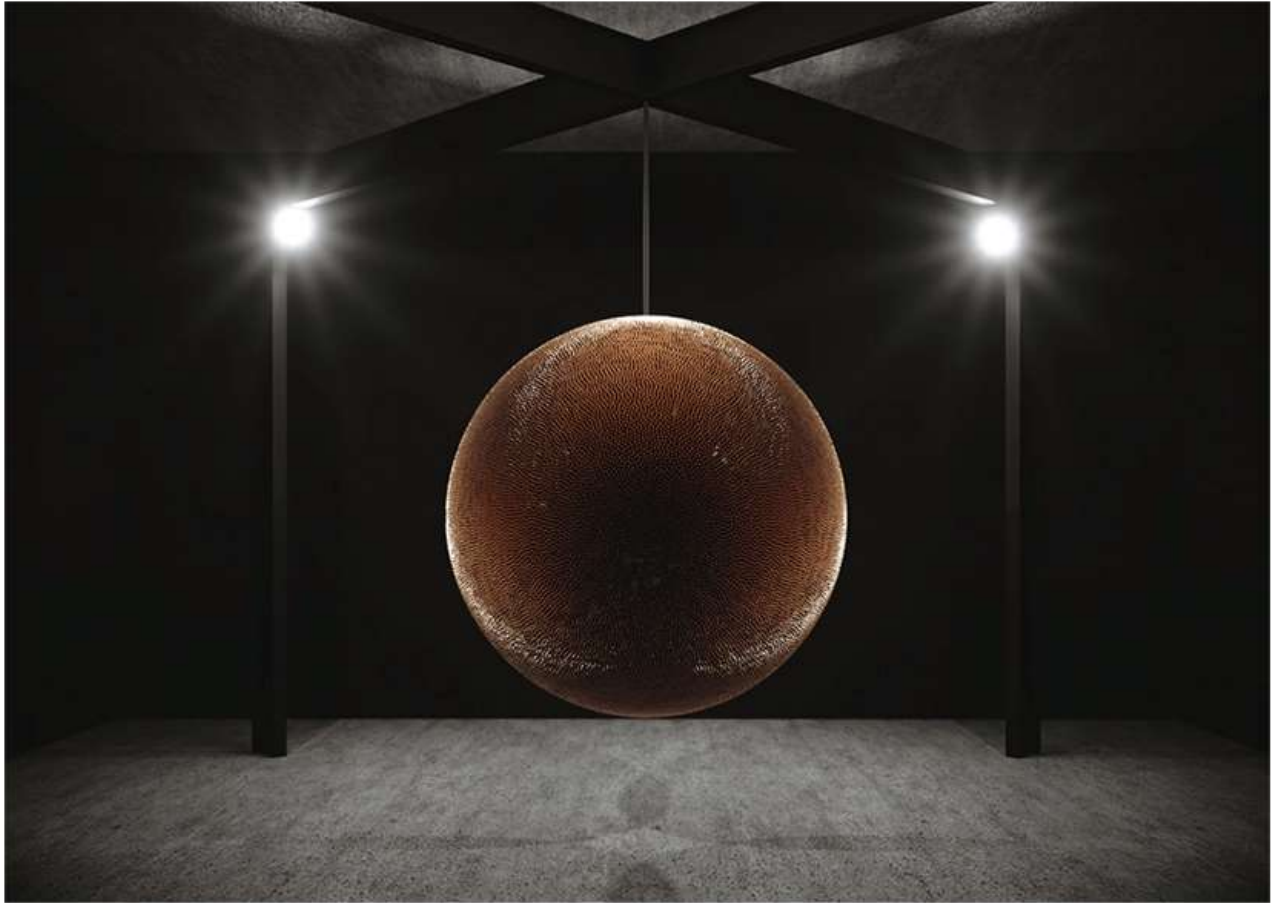


# The New York Times

## An All-Too-Brief Guide to Art Basel

By Anita Gates  
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Robert Longo's "Death Star II" will be at the Metro Pictures booth at Art Basel. It is studded with 40,000 full-metal-jacket bullets, representing victims of gun violence. Courtesy of Robert Longo and Metro Pictures

Gagosian and Acquavella are there, of course, along with Marian Goodman, Matthew Marks and Paula Cooper, but so are galleries of all sizes from 35 countries. Art Basel in Switzerland is, as Fodor's travel guides once called it, "the big cheese." When the 49th edition opens to the public at Messe Basel on June 14, there may be an embarrassment of riches.

Checking out all 290 galleries showing the modern and contemporary work of more than 4,000 artists could be daunting. Even if you're spending all four days there, that's more than 70 galleries a day.

### AN ART OF COLLECTING SPECIAL REPORT

A look at the artists, the exhibitors and more from Art Basel, the 49th edition of what is perhaps the world's most prestigious art fair.

Professionals may know the secret. Gianni Jetzer, curator of the Unlimited sector, says that when he visits other parts of the fair, he makes no plans; he tries "just to go with my eyes." That means "not reading and not being influenced by the name of the artist and just to choose by visual impact."

Here are some highlights, by sector.

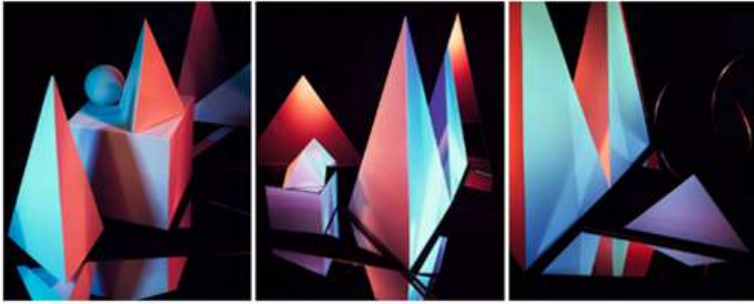
### Galleries

At the Galleria Tega booth, it's 1958. Looking back at the Venice Biennale of that year, this Milan exhibitor is concentrating on two of its stars, Lucio Fontana and Osvaldo Licini, and the climate of that time, as the art world moved away from the figurative. Expect at least one example of Fontana's "Crocifisso," the weird and wonderful ceramic crucifixes he did long before the word "psychedelic" came along to describe them.



Lucio Fontana's "Crocifisso."  
Courtesy Galleria Tega

Barbara Kasten is the headliner at Kadel Willborn (Düsseldorf, Germany). Ms. Kasten, Chicago-based (and Chicago-born, in 1936) and Bauhaus-influenced, has done three new works for this presentation. Her Fujiflex Crystal Archive prints, Moritz Willborn explains, are a mix of photography, sculpture, architecture and painting. The installations are “made of architectural ‘props’ such as glass, mirrors or wood constructions in front of the camera,” which are “restaged with colored light.”



Barbara Kasten's "Triptych I." Courtesy Kadel Willborn

## Unlimited

“Death Star II” at the Metro Pictures booth has no connection with a galaxy far, far away. Robert Longo’s enormous steel-armature globe, studded with 40,000 full-metal-jacket bullets, is “about the mass shootings,” said Mr. Jetzer, the curator. The bullets represent “all the people who were killed by gun violence.” The first “Death Star” (1993) by Mr. Longo, who is American, used about half as many bullets. Mr. Jetzer describes Candice Breitz’s video in which sex workers talk about their jobs as “kind of like a rock opera.” Ms. Breitz, 42 and South African, is sponsored by Goodman Gallery, Kaufmann Repetto and KOW.

## Statements

If one Doreen Garner installation in the JTT booth looks like a meat rack with human-looking forms hanging by hooks, that is assertively intentional. “Red Rack of Those Ravaged and Unconsenting,” an approximately 5-foot-by-10-foot enclosure, is just one of the Philadelphia-born Ms. Garner’s comments on brutal medical experiments performed — without anesthesia — on women of color in the 19th century and beyond. Her materials include silicone, fiberglass insulation, foam and beads. Wall works and a page from the journal of the notorious Dr. J. Marion Sims is also part of this New York exhibitor’s presentation. Garner, 32, has underlined the names of the patients Sims mentioned, Lucy and Anarcha, Jasmin T. Tsou of JTT says.

Christine Sun Kim, deaf since birth (1980, California), thinks a lot about “sound etiquette” and turns it into art. White Space Beijing is presenting her work (a typical title: “Suggested Amount of Music in Background While Interneting in the Morning”), which uses musical notation, graphic notation and American Sign Language.

## Film

Movie fans will find 16 choices at Stadtkino Basel. On Thursday, Tilda Swinton glides through manor houses (and time?) in diaphanous gowns and 19th-century ringlets. She stars in “Conceiving Ada,” a fantasy about Ada Lovelace, who aside from

being Lord Byron’s daughter is said to have written the first computer program. In the film, from Lynn Hershman Leeson, Ada is contacted by a 1990s computer and DNA expert who may save her life.

Ms. Leeson, the San Francisco-based artist who has been discovered in her 70s, is also part of a double-feature tribute to “Vertigo,” Alfred Hitchcock’s 1958 thriller about deceit, dizziness and doppelgängers. Her 14-minute “VertiGhost” concentrates on the museum scene in which Kim Novak seems mesmerized by a woman’s portrait and James Stewart seems worried. Douglas Gordon’s 75-minute “Feature Film” examines the Hitchcock movie’s Bernard Herrmann score.

## Feature

Before his minimalist fashion photos dazzled readers of *Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar*, Irving Penn (1917-2009) shot far more ordinary subjects like “Kosher Butcher, New York, 1939” and “Shoe Repair Shop Window, American South, 1941.” Hamiltons is showing 26 prints from Penn’s Signs series, said Tim Jefferies, the London gallery’s principal.



Helen Chadwick's "Wreath to Pleasure No 5," a Cibachrome photograph. Estate of Helen Chadwick, courtesy of Richard Saltoun Gallery

Another London exhibitor, Richard Saltoun, is presenting 13 Cibachrome prints by Helen Chadwick (1953-96), whom Mr. Saltoun calls “the most important woman artist in the U.K.” during the 1980s, one who “opened the door for the Y.B.A. generation.” (That’s Young British Artists.) Ms. Chadwick made statements about gender, using her own nude image (and her bodily fluids) in her work.

Kunstkompass has named Gerhard Richter, 86, “the most important artist in contemporary art worldwide” seven years in a row. “We totally agree,” said Dietmar Löhrl, of Galerie Löhrl, in Mönchengladbach, Germany, near Düsseldorf, Mr. Richter’s base. Löhrl is hanging about 30 of his works, including “9 Dez. 1999,” an oil on color photograph showing a Florentine landscape.

## Parcours

The big party is on Saturday night. All the sector's art, special one-night-only attractions and an army of food trucks converge on or near Münsterplatz, the city's square on the Rhine. Organizers describe Parcours as "sculptures, interventions and performances." Simon Denny, the New Zealand artist whose work incorporates board games, intervenes by introducing his own pieces into an attic of the late-18th-century Haus zum Kirschgarten, already filled with "old historical dollhouses, board games, chess games" and the like, said Samuel Leuenberger, the sector's curator. Something similar is planned at a local store that sells games.

In a series of performances by the Israeli artist Keren Cytter, it's not always clear whether the actors are acting or revealing their own lives. Mr. Leuenberger calls it "very existential."

One of his favorite sculptures at the fair, he said, is Pierre Huyghe's "Exomind (Deep Water)," a human figure that may be peeking out of the bushes with its unusual head: a live beehive.

## Edition

Lelong Editions has a solo show. "Etel Adnan paints the rhythms of the world," said Jean Frémon, a co-founder of Galerie Lelong in Paris and New York, calling this Beirut-born painter-poet's use of color "music for the eyes." "Voyage vers la Lune" is one of more than two dozen of her very first etchings, alongside two tapestries.



Etel Adnan's "Wool Tapestry." Etel Adnan, courtesy Galerie Lelong

Prints and multiples are this sector's focus. Two Palms (New York) is showing seven versions of "Gazing Ball" by Jeff Koons. Mr. Koons plops a big, reflective cobalt blue sphere onto canvases based on art masterpieces. You can see yourself and think about "your relationship with this image," he suggests.

The Susan Sheehan Gallery (New York) has an all-star lineup. Its "historic post-war American masters of printmaking" presentation includes a 1960 Willem de Kooning lithograph, a 1996 Cy Twombly monoprint and an emphasis on works by, among others, Jasper Johns, Bruce Nauman, Ellsworth Kelly and Edward Ruscha.

The golden age of American printmaking began in the 1960s, says Kyle Harris of Sheehan, partly because of artists' reaction to "wider changes in American culture" and "particularly innovative and collaborative print workshops" on both coasts.

## Conversations

Sometimes, even visual types need to talk. This sector offers almost two dozen talks and panels, including (unrelated) Wednesday discussions about sexism in the art world and the rise of the single-artist museum. Later, a practical subject — "How to Buy Art" — will be considered by an artist and two collection founders.