

**PERROTIN**

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*Forbes,*

*Highlights From Art Basel 2023*

*June 2023*

Forbes

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## Highlights From Art Basel 2023

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*I write about conscious luxury, focusing on travel, well-being & art.*

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Jun 16, 2023, 12:44pm EDT

Once again, Art Basel brings together the international art world around a plethora of galleries and both emerging and established artists to its hometown, Basel Switzerland. For its 2023 edition, 284 leading international galleries (21 first-timers) from 36 countries take part.

Summer and sunshine are here and the energy is palpable as visitors, art aficionados and art collectors navigate the fair, exchanging ideas, purchasing art works and forming meaningful connections. Here are some highlights from the fair.

### Doug Aitken, 303 Gallery New York

Doug Aitken's artwork "I Feel the Earth Move, 2023" is a captivating exploration of the dynamic relationship between humans and the environment. Created with his signature multimedia approach, the installation immerses viewers in a 3D experience. Through a mirrored sculpture, Aitken invites us to reflect on the profound impact of our actions on the Earth's ecosystems. "I Feel the Earth Move" prompts a deep introspection, urging us to reconsider our role as custodians of the planet. Aitken's evocative and thought-provoking work serves as a poignant reminder of the urgent need for environmental awareness and stewardship in an ever-changing world.



Doug Aitken, 303 NEL-OLIVIA WAGA

## Agnes Scherer, Sans titre

For its first participation in Art Basel, Sans titre presents the work of German artist Agnes Scherer (1985). Created specifically for the fair, the work - a monumental painted sculpture representing a giant laptop computer - is a continuation of a series the artist conceived for her solo exhibition *The Notebook Simulations*, curated by Eva Birkenstock at the The Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2021). Agnes Scherer's work develops unique forms of presentation which bring together paintings and handmade artifacts, generating large-scale and holistic installations. Scherer thus creates complex pictorial work that resists immediate objectification and commodification, instead demanding from viewers a heightened level of focus and engagement. Using anachronisms and representation of universally known symbols, her work often illustrates the uncanny ways in which historical systems, economies, and societal roles are reflected in the present. Presented at Sans titre's booth at Art Basel 2023, the flat screen of Scherer's oversized laptop sculpture becomes a theatre stage, on which computer windows resembling paintings are pushed around by angels. As in other works by Scherer, the angels act as inscrutable cosmic controllers of fate, turning humans and their concerns into objects in a volatile puppet show. A painting of the artist catching a shooting star is cleared from the stage. A painted jpeg on the right echoes a famous Renaissance woodcut depicting a mysterious cosmic event over the city of Basel - the apocryphal "stars of Basel." This latter laptop painting, like those that preceded it, combines elements of "contemporary folklore," which often originates in a digital space, with historical and timeless myths.



NEL-OLIVIA WAGA

Among other things, Scherer's notebook series playfully references the 16th-century gouache collection of the Augsburg *Wunderzeichenbuch* (The Book of Miracles), in which natural phenomena are depicted as omens or premonitions. Here, Scherer likens miraculous occurrences like will-o'-the-wisps and inexplicable cosmic phenomena with error messages that appear out of nowhere from the Windows operating system. The formal playfulness of Scherer's diptych-like monumental laptop belies the gravity of the questions it raises about the oracular role the computer plays in the lives of its users, becoming a singular locus of hope and desire for redemption.

## Claudia Comte, UBS Lounge

A standout feature of the fair is the UBS Lounge, themed around "Reimagining: New Perspectives". Featuring artworks by female artists, recently acquired by the UBS Art Collection, it explores themes from identity and perception to the environment and social change. It is a pleasure to return to Lounge and witness the Collection evolve, spotlighting talented artists who tackle today's most significant concerns.



A Large Tabular Iceberg Floating in Antarctica (hahaha painting), 2022 Direct digital print and acrylic on canvas 244 x 163 cm (96 1/16 x 64 1/6 in) UBS Art Collection Courtesy of the artist and KÖNIG GALERIE Berlin | Seoul CLAUDIA COMTE

Sustainability is a key theme at the UBS Lounge, notably in Claudia Comte's (1983) artwork, *Large Tabular Iceberg Floating in Antarctica (hahaha painting)* (2022). The Swiss artist employs various materials to craft works that often relate to the natural world and the environment. In this piece, she layers a large "HAHAHA" phrase, borrowed from comics, over an image of icebergs in Antarctica breaking away. The stark contrast between the comic laughter and the scene of destruction delivers a thought-provoking, chilling message.

**Rinus Van de Velde, Galerie Max Hetzler**

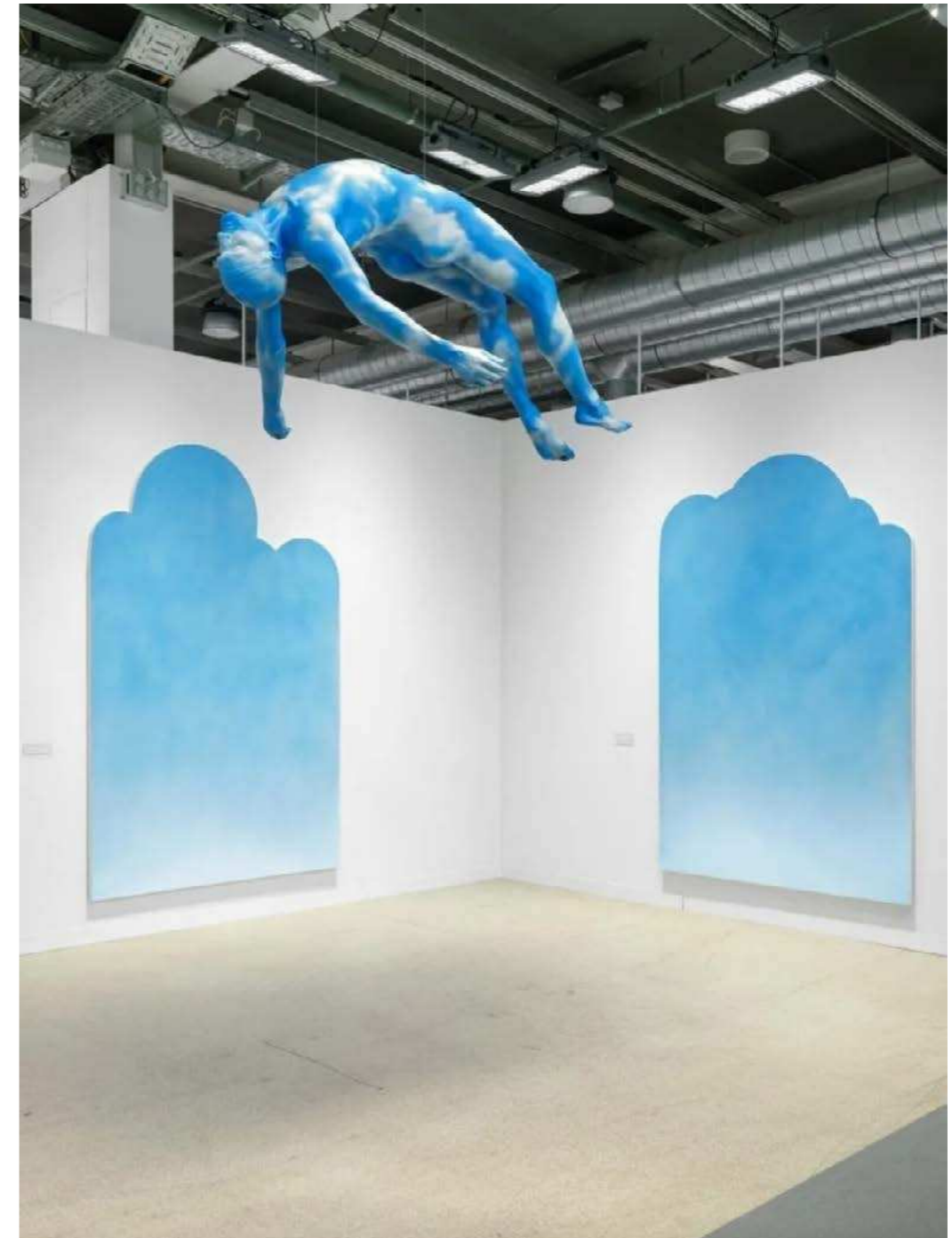
Rinus Van de Velde's "Do You Think Joan Can Hear Us, Albert..., 2023" is a captivating oil pastel on paper work that showcases the artist's distinct style. The painting features trees as its central subjects, rendered with vibrant colors and bold strokes. Van de Velde's mastery of texture and composition brings the trees to life, evoking a sense of presence and significance. The enigmatic title adds an intriguing layer to the artwork, inviting viewers to ponder the connection between Joan, Albert, Bill and Alice. It is a thought-provoking piece that sparks curiosity and invites personal interpretation.



Rinus Van de Velde's "Do You Think Joan Can Hear Us, Albert..., 2023" NEL-OLIVIA WAGA

**Ugo Rondinone x Roger Federer, Galerie Eve Presenhuber**

At this year's Art Basel, the gallery presents Ugo Rondinone's sculpture *humanskysix* (2022), which is revealed to have been cast from the body of Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer. This unique sculpture is on view at booth P5 in Hall 2.1. The Basel-born Federer collaborated with fellow Swiss Ugo Rondinone on his ambitious installation *human clouds*, which is the third part of the trilogy *burn shine fly* – an exhibition celebrating life and its seasons, rhythms, and natural elements.



Eva Presenhuber Booth at Art Basel 2023 EVA PRESENHUBER

## Ed Clark, Hauser & Wirth

Ed Clark's "Untitled, 2011" shows one of his latest works that immediately brings harmony and lightheartedness to the viewer. The late artist (1926-2019) was an abstract painter whose work has drawn accolades nationally and internationally. He is the first painter credited with working on a shaped canvas, an innovation that influenced contemporary art through the 1950s and 1960s. He is also known for his powerful brush stroke, large-scale canvases, and especially, his use of color.



Ed Clark, Untitled 2011 at Hauser & Wirth, Art Basel 2023 NEL-OLIVIA WAGA

## Julian Charrière, Sean Kelly Gallery

Sean Kelly's display features a striking work by French-Swiss artist Julian Charrière (1987). His film "Controlled Burn (2022)", presented as part of Art Basel Parcours, brings sustainability to the fore, by delving into the dark vitality of materials used for fuel: coal, petroleum, palm oil, and solar energy. Filmed with drones, this artwork invites viewers on a journey through time and into a future marred by modernity's excesses: a visually gripping and alarming spectacle. Raising questions such as humanity's influence on fire, and plants' potential in shaping Earth's future, this piece presents a visually gripping and alarming spectacle.



4K film, 16:10 aspect ratio, 3D ambisonic soundscape, continuous video loop, 32 minutes. Art Basel, Parcours, Kunstmuseum Basel Parcours. Public Dates: June 12 – 18, 2023. Parcours Night: Saturday, June 17, 6 - 11pm JULIAN CHARRIÈRE, SEAN KELLY

The work is part of at Art Basel, Parcours, Kunstmuseum Basel Parcours and can be viewed on public dates: June 12 – 18, 2023. Parcours Night: Saturday, June 17, 6 - 11pm

## Sky Glabush, Stephen Friedman Gallery

Sky Glabush is a renowned contemporary artist, who mesmerizes viewers with his artwork "Star and Coronal and Bell" created in 2023 at this year's Art Basel, represented through Stephen Friedman Gallery. This masterpiece exemplifies Glabush's signature style, combining elements of abstraction and symbolism. The painting's vibrant colors evoke a celestial atmosphere, immersing the viewer in a cosmic journey. "Star and Coronal and Bell" captures the ethereal beauty of the sky, with its interplay of stars and celestial bodies. Glabush's delicate brushwork and meticulous attention to detail bring depth and texture through oil and sand to the canvas, inviting contemplation of the infinite wonders of the universe. This artwork stands as a testament to Glabush's artistic brilliance and his ability to ignite the imagination through his extraordinary creations.



NEL-OLIVIA WAGA

Arcual's new feature, the Digital Dossier, is brought to life at their booth through a unique sculptural commission by British Artist Phoebe Cummings. The Digital Dossier allows artists to add sketches, designs, photos, condition reports, and maintenance and presentation guidelines to the records of their works. Visitors can witness Cummings complete the artwork on site, as well as her documentation of her creative process for her Digital Dossier.

Arcual is also hosting a series of "*Reflections*" talks at their booth, exploring themes ranging from innovative curation and collecting practices, to blockchain and A.I in the art sector. It is also partnering with a range of galleries at the fair, including Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Mai 36, NILS STÆRK, Greta Meert, Von Bartha and Petzel.

## Arcual

For art-tech enthusiasts, the Arcual booth embodies the transformative role of modern tools in rectifying imbalances in the art market and promoting greater fairness and transparency. This tech start-up creates digital and blockchain products for the art community, built with the backing and expertise of art world leaders including the LUMA Foundation, MCH Group (the parent company of Art Basel) and BCG X. Its products streamline processes and makes the buying and selling of physical art seamless for galleries, collectors, and artists, as well as providing support for artists throughout their careers.



Phoebe Cummings photographed in her Studio by Alun Callender. Copyright © 2023 Alun Callender ALUN CALLENDER