

Art | Basel

Hong Kong

PRESS RELEASE
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Art Basel debuts first hybrid show in Hong Kong, with enthusiastic on-site and digital participation resulting in vigorous sales

- **Art Basel's first in-person show since 2019 came to a close in Hong Kong today, amid reports of strong sales across all levels of the market and throughout the duration of the fair.**
- **This edition saw the launch of Art Basel Live: Hong Kong, Art Basel's digital initiative amplifying participating galleries, artists, and city-wide cultural programming to a broad global audience.**
- **The fair, whose Lead Partner is UBS, presented a unique overview of the diverse art scenes throughout Asia and across the globe, featuring both historical work and emerging artists and galleries.**

The highly anticipated 9th edition of Art Basel Hong Kong closed on Sunday, May 23, 2021, amid reports of consistently strong sales across all sectors and market segments, both to collectors present in the halls and those connecting with galleries digitally. Running in parallel to the physical show, 'Art Basel Live: Hong Kong' brought the experience of the fair to audiences around the world through a rich digital program featuring Online Viewing Rooms, public and VIP walkthroughs live-streamed from the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, as well as daily broadcasts and virtual experiences.

The fair's many virtual walk-throughs were attended by private collectors from over 30 countries and territories, notably Mainland China, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States, and Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as representatives from leading international museums and institutions, including the Museum MACAN, Jakarta; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo (GAMEC), Bergamo; and the Belvedere, Vienna. Patrons from all major Hong Kong institutions participated in the onsite program, including M+, Para Site, Asia Society, 1a Space, Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong Art Centre, and Hong Kong Museum of Art.

The 2021 edition of the fair featured a strong line-up of 104 galleries from across Hong Kong and overseas, many of which opted to participate with a satellite booth, a new concept introduced to support gallerists whose physical attendance in Hong Kong was not possible due to current regulations. Exhibitors amplified their onsite participations with complementary presentations in the Online Viewing Rooms, connecting with patrons and audiences worldwide.

Adeline Ooi, Director Asia, Art Basel, commented: 'It has been truly moving to return to the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center after what has been an extraordinary and challenging year. I am proud and honored that Art Basel has continued to fulfill its role as the leading international art platform in Asia, rising to the current challenges with new models and approaches. We are deeply grateful to our participating galleries for their commitment to our show here in Hong Kong this year, and the city's institutions and non-profits for offering their full support by putting together a range of programs and events alongside Art Basel Hong Kong.'

Marc Spiegler, Global Director, Art Basel, said: 'The past year has brought forth the art world's astonishing resilience and capacity for innovation and experimentation, and this year's edition of Art Basel Hong Kong is a real testament to that. We are delighted to have been able to share the excitement and vibrancy in the exhibition halls with our audiences around the world through our digital initiative Art Basel Live: Hong Kong, which is part of our long-term commitment to developing the fairs of the future. And we look forward to reuniting physically next year in Hong Kong.'

Galleries that participated in the show spoke highly of their experiences and participation:

'We have been astonished by our results at this year's fair. Art Basel Hong Kong is back'.
Nick Simunovic, Managing Director, Gagosian, Hong Kong, Paris, Athens, Rome, Basel, Geneva, London, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco

'There is an electric atmosphere in Hong Kong as people embrace real life along with the global community tapping into the energy via the OVR. We've seen an incredible response to our presentation at Art Basel Hong Kong. 90% of our first day sales of works by our artists have been placed in truly superlative collections across the region which shows that the art market in Asia is on a high.'

Iwan Wirth, President, Hauser & Wirth, Hong Kong, Gstaad, Saint Moritz, Zurich, London, Somerset, Los Angeles, New York

'We were delighted to be back at Art Basel Hong Kong and were thrilled by the presence of many serious collectors in the show halls. We met many collectors over the week and it's been great to see how they have become even more open-minded due to additional time over the past year for deeper research. There have also been a number of younger collectors who have become increasingly confident in their tastes and buying. It has been yet another successful show with good sales made.'

Henrietta Tsui-Leung, Founder, Ora-Ora, Hong Kong

'Art fairs play a pivotal role in the art ecosystem in Hong Kong. We are therefore very excited to see the return of Art Basel to the city. At the fair we felt visitors' enthusiasm to meet their industry friends and collectors again, having undergone a year of non-physical contact and art viewing. Positive sales reflect a continued pursuit of art despite the pandemic. Buying art in person is still a format preferred by collectors in Hong Kong, who possess strong purchasing power. Going forward, we hope that Art Basel as a world-class fair will help continue Hong Kong's position as an art trading hub in Asia, as the pandemic eases and M+ museum opens later this year.'

Uli Zhiheng Huang, Director of Perrotin, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, New York

'The Fair has provided a positive and important opportunity for us to see the recovering and emerging changes of the art market in the second year of the pandemic, and we have been pleased to place works from our artists with significant Asian museum collections. In spite of the difficulty of overseas travel, we have had the pleasure of engaging with the collective emergence and strength of Hong Kong's collectors and patrons, in addition to maintaining valuable connections with international collectors online. At Art Basel Hong Kong this year, we are excited to herald a new trend in the future—the deep mining of localization.'

Leo Xu, Senior Director, David Zwirner, Paris, Hong Kong, London, New York

'We are so pleased to have participated in Art Basel Hong Kong even though we couldn't personally attend. We found the support of the fair and the collecting community to be robust, and we are so pleased that we decided to have a presence at the fair. The help on the ground—from the install team to the VIP program—made the effort feel seamless. If this can become a model for future opportunities, it would definitely help our carbon footprint!'

Wendy Olsoff, Co-Founder, P.P.O.W, New York

'Art Basel Hong Kong is back! With an impressive opening day exceptionally well-attended, including a surprising number of vibrant, research-driven new young collectors. The smaller version of the fair this year didn't deter the enthusiasm of the visitors, anxious to once again see great art in person and to be able to converse with friends and gallerists face to face...or, actually, mask to mask.'

Fred Scholle, Founder and Chairman of Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong

'After a very successful Hong Kong Spotlight by Art Basel, we couldn't be happier to be back at Art Basel Hong Kong! There is something really special about seeing the art and our community in real life—all under one roof. We're all here embracing the disruption brought on by the past year, which has accelerated much-needed digital innovations to the fair experience. In a way, this marks a huge step forward for the future of art fairs.'

Shasha Tittmann, Director, Lehmann Maupin, Hong Kong, Seoul, London, New York

'Our Art Basel Hong Kong booth is a satellite presentation of works by the New York-based painter Scott Kahn, his first solo showing in Asia. The response was very strong and the five works in the booth were placed on the first day. Our team in Los Angeles and New York was available throughout the opening hours to engage with visitors remotely. Interest in Kahn's work came from across the map, not only from in-person visitors, who were mostly based in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong in particular, but also from the online portal bringing interest from across the United States, Europe, and South America.'

Belen Piñeiro, Director, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles

'Our satellite booth has been a great success in connecting us to the energy and experience of an in-person art fair. Working with our booth assistant in local Hong Kong time, we communicated with clients visiting our stand and had the conversations around art that we all miss dearly. All credit to Art Basel for the inventive concept which truly is the next best thing to being there.'

Valerie Carberry, Partner and Principal, Gray, Chicago, New York

'It's been fantastic to have Art Basel this time. Collectors and art lovers feel so excited, and they appear to enjoy the opportunity to see art, which is a therapy in this current depressed happening. We are very happy with the sales results.'

Catherine Kwai, Founder, Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery, Hong Kong

'We are delighted with our first participation at Art Basel Hong Kong. Despite the current situation and the fact that we could not make it there personally, our presentation has been a full-on success. The response was overwhelmingly positive—we are very happy with the sales and are most grateful to our onsite representative and our satellite booth assistant. The satellite option Art Basel offered has been a great solution and we are looking forward to coming back next year.'

Polina Stroganova, Director and Senior Partner, Proyectos Monclova, Mexico City

'Our experience of the fair has been very positive. There has been a great response from the audience that was obviously craving for such a live event. Our collaboration with Silverlens gallery from Manila has been extremely well received: we both made numerous sales and mostly to new clients. In addition, the Italian joint booth has also attracted strong interest.'

Fabio Rossi, Founder and Director, Rossi & Rossi, London, Hong Kong

'This year's edition of Art Basel Hong Kong has been highly anticipated more so than any other year, and it certainly reflects in the strong interest both among collectors in Hong Kong and remotely. We have had solid sales results throughout the fair.'

Wendy Xu, Gallery Director, White Cube, Hong Kong, London

Galleries

The main sector of the show featured 86 of the world's leading galleries presenting the highest quality of painting, sculpture, drawings, installation, photography, video and digital works, ranging from contemporary positions such as **Philippe Parreno's** 'Speech Bubbles,' at Gladstone Gallery, **Danh Võ** presented by Take Ninagawa, and historical presentations ranging from Spanish Filipino pioneer of abstraction **Fernando Zóbel** at Mayoral, to a deep-dive into the early experimental artists of 1970s Korea with **Arario Gallery**. For the full gallery list for Galleries, please visit artbasel.com/hongkong/galleries.

Insights

Bringing together 10 galleries this year, Insights illustrated the modern art history of Asia and the Asia-Pacific through curated presentation of works by important artists from the region. Highlights included a series of new works by Korean photographer **Heeseung Chung** at Gallery Baton; Leo Gallery's presentation with **Lin Yan**, whose work interprets ink and Chinese rice paper in a contemporary way; first-time participant Shibunkaku's booth of works by post-war Japanese artist **Morita Shiryū**, a pivotal figure in contemporary calligraphy in Asia; and Axel Vervoordt Gallery's presentation of 'Encounter – A Mirror Woman' by Korean artist **Kimsooja**. For the full gallery list for Insights, please visit artbasel.com/hongkong/insights.

Discoveries

Focused on solo shows by emerging artists, Discoveries this year featured 8 galleries, including first-time participant Anat Ebgi, showcasing new paintings by **Greg Ito**. Other highlights included High Art's presentation of paintings by **Hun Kyu Kim** that take inspiration from the tradition of Korean silk painting technique, and Shanghai-based conceptual artist **Liu Ren** presented by Don Gallery. Capsule Shanghai presented Hong Kong-based artist **Leelee Chan**, while Vanguard Gallery showcased a multi-media installation by Shandong-born artist **Zhu Changquan**. For the full gallery list for Discoveries, please visit artbasel.com/hongkong/discoveries.

BMW Art Journey shortlist

Launched in 2015, the BMW Art Journey is a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. Since 2020, the circle of eligible artists has broadened and includes not only emerging and mid-career artists from the Discoveries sector, but also artists represented by galleries founded no more than ten years ago at Art Basel's show in Hong Kong. The three shortlisted artists for the eighth BMW Art Journey are **Julien Creuzet** represented by High Art, **Kelvin Kyung Kun Park** represented by Vanguard Gallery, and **Alice Wang**, represented by Capsule Shanghai. The shortlisted artists are now invited to develop the proposal for their ideal journey, with the winner to be announced in summer 2021.

Film

For its seventh iteration, multi-media artist and film producer **Li Zhenhua** curated a program of 11 film and video works inspired by the current sociopolitical climate, which were screened at the Louis Koo Cinema, Hong Kong Art Centre, free to the public.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Art Basel

Founded in 1970 by gallerists from Basel, Art Basel today stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary art, sited in Basel, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong. Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition. Art Basel's engagement

has expanded beyond art fairs through new digital platforms and a number of new initiatives such as the Art Basel and UBS Global Art Market Report and the BMW Art Journey. Art Basel's Global Media Partner is The Financial Times. For further information, please visit artbasel.com.

Partners

UBS & Contemporary Art

Global Lead Partner of Art Basel, UBS has a long history of supporting contemporary art and artists. The firm has one of the world's most important corporate art collections and seeks to advance the international conversation about the art market through its global lead partnership with Art Basel and as co-publisher of the Art Basel and UBS Global Art Market Report. UBS also has partnerships with fine art institutions including the Fondation Beyeler in Switzerland, the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Russia, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Australia. UBS provides its clients with insight into the art market, collecting, and legacy planning through its UBS Collectors Circle and UBS Art Advisory. For more information about UBS's commitment to contemporary art, visit ubs.com/art.

Art Basel's **Associate Partner** is Audemars Piguet, which, with its in-house art programme Audemars Piguet Contemporary, is currently presenting the 5th edition of the Audemars Piguet Art Commission in Hong Kong. Art Basel is also supported globally by BMW, which has co-developed with Art Basel the BMW Art Journey, and La Prairie.

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