

# PHAIDON

## Watch out for this guy (and his limo) at Art Basel

A hippy commune, Warhol's dirty drawings and imaginary modernist sculpture also on the menu at this year's fair



Pope.L, "The Problem, Unlimited, Art Basel," 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York. © Pope.L.  
Photo: Christopher Burke Studio

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Pay peanuts and you get monkeys, the old idiom goes. Yet a new great-ape performance at this year's [Art Basel](#) seems to suggest hard cash remains a motivating factor among some primates. The Chicago performance artist Pope.L will stage his new performance, *The Problem*, to open the Unlimited section of Art Basel, which takes place in the Swiss city 16 – 19 June. Here's how his gallery, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, describes the piece.

"A white gorilla emerges from a white stretch limo at the entrance of the fair. Spilling white

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plantains onto the ground, the gorilla enters Unlimited, and wanders through the convention centre, looking for something. The beast drops more white things as it wanders. Eventually, the entity finds what it is looking for: an exhibition space containing a set of paintings called Circa by the famous negro artist Pope.L. The gorilla ignores the paintings and searches behind them, finally extracting five fat stacks of currency. The creature exits, leaving behind a garden gnome painted completely white except for a black-faced nose.”



Rendering of Oscar Tuazon's Zome Alloy at Art Basel 2016. Image courtesy of Art Basel

Perhaps this money-mad gorilla could find safe sanctuary elsewhere in Basel? Say, for example, in the strange shelter outside the fairgrounds? In the late 1960s the US inventor Steve Baer built his first Zome Houses in remote sites in New Mexico. The buildings, slightly more domesticated versions of the geodesic dome fashioned from the roofs of old cars, were the kind of communal dwellings that once seemed like the housing of the future, but now seem more like a strange relic of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

However, at this year's Art Basel, taking place in the Swiss city 16 – 19 June, Baer's Zome will rise again, courtesy of Californian artist Oscar Tuazon, whose Zome Alloy tribute will be installed on Messeplatz in Basel beside the fair's ground.

Tuazon began his career assisting Vito Acconci, and has long taken an interest in avant-garde pioneers. Does this central installation suggest that Art Basel is feeling its way around the legacy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? Well, that applies quite literally in the Gagosian gallery's case.

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Davide Balula, *Mimed Sculptures*, (Henry Moore, *Moon Head*, 1964), 2016, 22 13/16 × 17 3/8 × 10 inches (57.8 × 44.1 × 25.4 cm). Courtesy the artist, galerie frank elbaz, Paris. Photo by Davide Balula

Gagosian artist Davide Balula will present his *Mimed Sculptures* exhibition at the fair. Above empty plinths, a group of Balula's mimes will shape the air with their hands, rebuilding iconic modernist sculptures by [Louise Bourgeois](#), Alberto Giacometti, Barbara Hepworth, [David Smith](#), and Henry Moore.

“Recalling the shallow objects of virtual reality, these invisible sculptures are perceptible only when their contours are being exposed and touched,” explains the gallery. “Each fragment disappears once the mime's hand moves, challenging the viewer's visual memory to make out the form as a whole.”

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More concrete offerings will be on display at David Zwirner's booth, which will show works by Francis Alÿs, Marlene Dumas, On Kawara, Yayoi Kusama, Gordon Matta-Clark, Bruce Nauman, Raymond Pettibon, Franz West and others.



Gum Display Stand, No. 64 CONS H. 8 1/4" W. 24" D. 16 1/2" (2014) by Sara Cwynar, from Flat Death

Victoria Miro will present art by Alice Neel, Chantal Joffe and Grayson Perry among others; the Malborough gallery will show pieces by Francis Bacon, Frank Auerbach and Robert Motherwell, among others; and Hauser and Wirth will have Roni Horn and Rashid Johnson works among others; Metro Pictures will have Cindy Sherman's new series of self portraits, based on 1920s publicity stills; while newcomer Foxy Production will show Sara Cwynar's photographs.

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Untitled (2016) by Cindy Sherman. Image courtesy of Metro Pictures

The German gallery Daniel Blau has prepared a themed presentation, Dirty Pictures, which includes some early, nude [Andy Warhol](#) drawings, as well as a series of flower Polaroids by [Nobuyoshi Araki](#).



Reconstructed History (1989) by Mike Kelley

Over in the Unlimited Section, dedicated to large-scale shows, Skarstedt has a some big canvases by [Mike Kelley](#); David Zwirner, in conjunction with Victoria Miro, is screening [Stan Douglas's Luanda-Kinshasa film](#); while Zwirner is also presenting a [Wolfgang Tillmans](#) installation. A contemporary utopia? Certainly sounds like it. And if you don't like today's best possible world, then you can always try yesterday's utopia, in the plaza outside the fair.

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New York Installation PCR, 525, 2015 by Wolfgang Tillmans. Image courtesy of David Zwirner