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See These 5 Show-Stopping Works at Art Basel Unlimited 2018

To join the conversation around curator Gianni Jetzer's latest edition of Art Basel Unlimited, add these works to your must-see list.

by Tim Schneider
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In a city, country, and even a larger event defined by elegant restraint, Art Basel Unlimited feels decidedly American in its bigger-is-better ethos. The monumentality of the offerings also makes this sector of the fair perhaps the only one where the best metric to judge an exhibitor's success is whether or not their installation attracts crowds and conversations, not whether or not it generates sales. Call it the "moth-to-a-flame index."

With that criterion in mind, *artnet News*'s Tim Schneider ventured to the unveiling of Art Basel Unlimited, which has been curated once again by Gianni Jetzer, to round up the pieces that will drive the cocktail party chatter and social-media story of the fair in 2018. Here are the five works you need to know to join the narrative.

Barbara Bloom
The Tip of the Iceberg (1991)
Galerie Gisela Capitain, Galleria Raffaella Cortese, and David Lewis



Photo by Tim Schneider.

Ocean-blue wall (and floor and ceiling) paint aside, what makes Bloom's 1991 installation so magnetic is that it holds such a sizable space with so little material. But as gallerist David Lewis points out, the artist achieves this feat partly due to the fact that the story she leverages here is so huge. At the center of the booth stands a glass table stacked with porcelain dinnerware bearing the name of the RMS Titanic on its facing surfaces—and, if you mind the reflections shown in the circular mirror below them, images of the ship's eventual disaster on its undersides. Above this composition hovers a circular ceiling frieze depicting objects documented as lost in space by NASA, either thanks to minor astronaut accidents (like losing your grip on a flashlight during a spacewalk) or catastrophic satellite wrecks. Lewis notes that, true to her practice, Bloom inverts these prototypically "macho" stories about shipwrecks and space exploration by re-centering them as meditations on absence. There's also an air of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* about the installation, in the way that it sings from the depths of the air to the vast mystery of the cosmos. *The Tip of the Iceberg* was still available at \$270,000 yesterday afternoon.



Barbara Bloom, detail of *The Tip of the Iceberg* (1991). Photo by Tim Schneider.