

ARTNEWS

Art Basel Festivities Begin With Liste, the Town's Young Fair

by Nate Freeman
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Greg Parma Smith at David Lewis.

Upon arriving in Basel after a weekend of gallery-going in Zurich, I saw an image on the Messeplatz that reminded me of the vibe at Liste, the satellite fair here that focuses on smaller galleries showing mostly up-and-coming artists. The vision on the Messeplatz wasn't a *work*, really: on the side of a truck full of Feldschlössen, a Rhineland beer, it was an image of three Swiss dudes grilling out beside a lake, bratwurst sizzling on the fire, beers in hand, looking youthful, content, and utterly immune from the problems in the world.

That was pretty much the scene here at the opening of Liste, which for more than two decades has taken over a former schoolhouse that towers up five floors, booths stuffed into the odd nooks where children once were brought up in the Swiss tradition. The kids have now grown up, but just a little: Beers flowed before noon, and there were indeed sausages on the grill as you entered through a courtyard streamed through with cigarette smoke.

There were also 70 galleries with work by 140 artists, all for sale at price tags far more modest than those set to be affixed to work at Art Basel starting tomorrow. Sales were slim in the opening minutes, but none were too concerned—there's a long week ahead, plenty of time to sell out a booth and then some. The David Lewis booth had new work by Greg Parma Smith, including *Sulphur-crested Cockatoo with Radiance* (2017), which is indeed a radiant cockatoo crested with plastic trinkets.

"It's sort of a cosmic circle around it—it's very earnest," Lewis said.