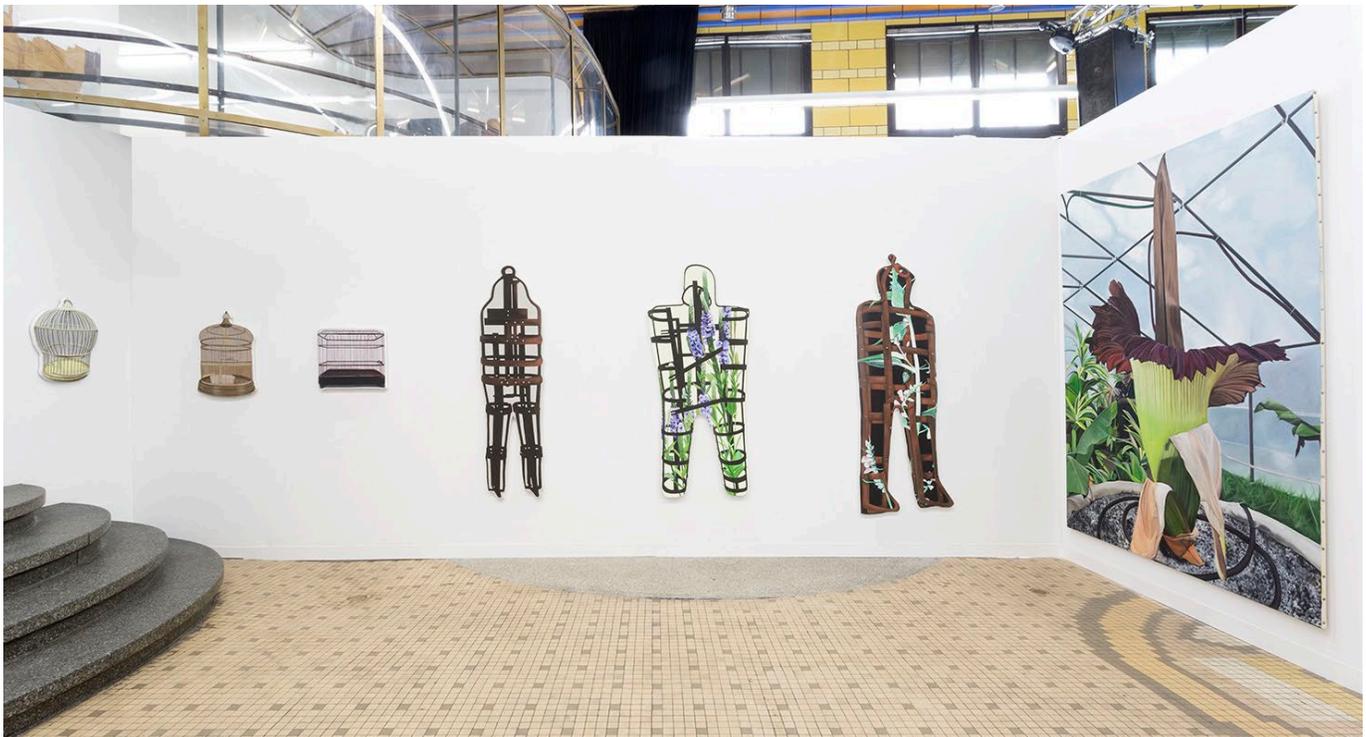


ART OBSERVED

AO On-Site – Basel: LISTE Art Fair at Warteck through June 17th, 2018

June 13, 2017



Megan Marrin at David Lewis, via Art Observed

Offering a fitting counterpoint to the expanses of the Messe Basel, Liste Art Fair has returned to Warteck, a former schoolhouse on the banks of the Rhine now serving as an exhibition and performance space, for another year of exhibitions showcasing adventurous and exploratory projects from a range of galleries around the globe. Liste continues to build on its position as one of the central hubs for the week of Art Basel, priding itself on a careful curation of young galleries, dynamic, forward-thinking works, and a roster of performances that remains one of the week's main draws.

The fair's layout and environs are decidedly more casual than the stark rows and rigid floor plan of the Messe Basel, allowing a meandering, casual engagement with the works on view. The Warteck building's multiple floors and outdoor space encourages mingling between attendees that gives the fair a decidedly fraternal atmosphere. Attendees milled about the open doors and stairwells both inside and outside the space, as gallerists and artists took smoke breaks that filled the entrances with a thin haze of smoke that felt distinctly anathema to the hard lines and rows upon rows of gallery booths. Yet initial appearances did little to define the quality or caliber of the art on view, and the fair's reputation for first-rate curation continued this year.

The fair, which fit each booth into more nuanced, creative spaces, from expansive atriums to narrow hallways and

angled rooms, made for a more unique, exploratory pathway through the fair, gallery booths popping up around unexpected corners or stretching down long hallways. David Lewis, for instance, had installed a series of works by artist Megan Marrin, presenting her unique mix of surrealist imagery and careful detailing running down the tiled ground floor, a striking arrangement of works in space that seemed to complement her subject matter. Elsewhere, Warsaw's Stereo had exhibited a series of works by Jakub Czysczon that wound around a series of corners, welcoming visitors to wander around the space and encounter each piece on its own terms.

By contrast, other booths took full advantage of a more traditional space, like Romanian Gallery Sabot, which placed works by a group of artists imagining "self-portraits as shoes," lined up against the wallpapered booth. Another booth from San Francisco's Altman Siegel brought together pieces by Sara VanDerBeek, K.R.M. Mooney and Jessica Dickinson that seemed to fit as a particularly staid reminder of the fair format, while managing to work in tandem with the works nearby.

It's this sense of space and collaboration that defines the spirit and content of the fair, a presentation of works that seems to both toy with and reify the fair format in equal measure. Showcasing a range of voices and perspectives that look to move beyond easy readings of the fair as selling event, this perspective makes the fair a consistent staple of the week.