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DIARY

MITCHELL ANDERSON REPORTS FROM ZURICH ART WEEKEND 2026

"God knows who all those people were, but I hope they collect."

By Mitchell Anderson

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Artists Adam Cruces, Louisa Gagliardi and Mónica Mays with dealer Simon Leibenson at Cruces's exhibition at Blue Velvet, Zurich. All photos: the author.

UNDERNEATH ITS PERFECTION, Switzerland has fault lines. In addition to the actual tectonics shifting beneath its alpine bones, there's the constant friction of four languages and their attendant cultures as well as all that performative neutrality. So, seismically, it makes total sense that a week before the big one hits in Basel, Zurich sends out its own quieter foreshocks with Zurich Art Weekend, now in its ninth edition.

Depending on access and invites, those tremors began either Friday morning or a few days prior (or, if you're Eva Presenhuber, you opened a phenomenal survey of twenty years of Valentin Carron's works back in February). At the second edition of Gallery House, an upstart communal fair hosted in suns.works' cavernous gallery space, one could run into locals Pier Stuker of Blue Velvet or Philémon Otth of Sentiment, who, in addition to participating in the fair, somehow concurrently opened new shows (of Adam Cruces and Angélique Heidler, respectively) in their Zurich-based spaces and installed multiple presentations in Basel, all within a few days. Rock on!



Kenny Schachter and curator Daniel Baumann outside Tasoni's summer party.



Artist Gowoon Lee, dealer Felix Rodder and curator Olivia Edwards at Tasoni's summer party.

Friday night saw packed opening celebrations in the Löwenbräu art complex (Migros Museum, Kunsthalle Zürich, Luma Foundation), but, just like last year, the local and international well-heeled instead attended the annual summer party of Tasoni, a decade-old art-adjacent fashion boutique, which this year collaborated with Zurich Art Weekend to produce official merch with artists including Alexandra Bachzetsis and Gowoon Lee. There, I spotted Banks Violette and Daniele Milvio skipping part of their own openings at Bernheim Gallery and Galerie Oskar Weiss. Who could blame them when everyone was in the Tasoni store courtyard? Later, one had the choice of finally heading over toward the Löwenbräu for either Migros's afterparty celebrating Mohamed Bourouissa's show, or Galerie Gregor Staiger's soiree at the nearby Kunsthaus Bar, marking Raphaela Vogel's new solo outing at the gallery.



Dealer Gregor Staiger, artist Raphaela Vogel and curator Ann-Kathrin Eickhoff outside Kunsthaus bar.

Saturday was all about running around trading tips on what not to miss, including the final VALIE EXPORT show planned during her lifetime, at Karma International; Carmen D'Apollonio's surrealist forms at Tobias Mueller; and Ronit Porat's history collages at Sommer Salon. New York's Reena Spaulings opted out of Art Basel this year, instead descending on Zurich to collaborate with Niels Olsen and Fredi Fischli on a group show installed at W26, a project space run by Olsen's cousin Max Gisel. At the barbecue celebration on Saturday afternoon was an international mob of the talented, cool, or young cramming into W26's villa and overgrown garden. That was a lot more chill than the official Zurich Art Weekend dinner, which took place in the cavernous Chipperfield hall of the Kunsthaus. God knows who all those people were, but I hope they collect.

If the hangovers didn't get you by Sunday, you could see the shows you missed or the sunshine smile of Ida Ekblad at the afternoon cocktail hour celebrating her presentation of monumental sculptures in the park of the Baur au Lac hotel. While I was prepping for the following week by drinking, chatting, and chasing things around, everyone in the park seemed satisfied with enjoying a perfect summer day against the crisp background of the towering Alps. Ninety kilometers away, Basel was already quaking, announcing the end of Zurich's time in the sun.



Artists Billy Davis and Swetlana Heger at the Zurich University of the Arts Diploma exhibition.



Dealer Tobias Mueller and artists Carmen D'Apollonio and Annamarie Ho in D'Apollonio's exhibition at Tobias Mueller.



Julie Braendli, Pamela Kort, Arturo Sutter and Dennis Rubner outside Tobias Mueller's Carmen D'Apollonio opening.



Artists Marc Bauer and Sandra Vásquez de la Horra outside her exhibition at Galerie Haas.



Dealer Merle Hannoever, director of Kunstmuseum St. Gallen Gianni Jetzer and Natasa Mitrovic at Tobias Mueller's reception.



Director of Kunstverein in Hamburg Milan Ther and Karma International's Karolina Dankow in her exhibition of Valie Export.



Designer Arienne Birchler, artist Wanda Nay, Marc Spiegler and Sophie Meier at Tasoni’s summer party.



Dealer Ebba Wallmén, artist Matias Faldbakken and curator Niels Olsen at Tasoni’s summer party.



Dealer Michal Wolinski, artists Alexandra Bachzetsis and Giorgia Garzilli outside Tasoni’s summer party.



Artists Vera Palme and Laura Langer at Kunsthaus bar.



Artists Virginia Ariu, Philipp Timischl and Giangiacomo Rossetti at Kunsthaus bar.



Artist Karolin Braegger, director of Kunsthalle Fribourg Kathrin Bentele, artist Marina Sula and dealers Marie Lusa and Kyungmin Lee outside Kunsthaus bar.



Artists Klara Lidén, Karl Holmqvist and Peter Fischli at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Artist Karl Holmqvist and curator Hans Ulrich Obrist at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Artists John Kelsey and Marie Angeletti at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Artists Mickael Marman, Hallvard Nuland and Kara Kaiser at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Director of Museum Ludwig Yilmaz Dziewior and curator Otto Bonnen at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



The crowd at W26/ Reena Spaulings with artwork by Wanda Nay.



Artists Arthur Fouray, Jan Vorisek, Vincent Schmid and Thomas Julier at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Jurg Haller, artists Lorenza Longhi and Emily Sundblad and Anne Stock at W26/ Reena Spaulings.



Zurich Art Weekend dinner in the Kunsthaus Chipperfield hall.



Flatmarkus’s Markus Rischgasser in his exhibition of David Weisshaar.



Artist Urban Zellweger, Dayle Bechtler, artist Florent Bonzon and Jacqueline Uhlmann at the opening of Ida Ekblad at the park of the Baur au Lac hotel.



Artists Sylvie Fleury and Brit Barton at the opening of Ida Ekblad at the park of the Baur au Lac hotel.



Artist Ida Ekblad, Mitch Rales and Baur au Lac's Gigi Kracht at the opening of Ida Ekblad at the park of the Baur au Lac hotel.



Director of the MAMCO Lionel Bovier, curator Leonie Radine, director of Kestner Gesellschaft Eva Birkenstock, artist Banks Violette and dealer Maria Bernheim at Bernheim's dinner for Violette.



Curator Hendrik Folkerts and artist Ding Shilun at Bernheim’s dinner for Banks Violette.