

ART BASEL 2024

DANIEL BLAU

ASHER | BASELITZ | CONDO | FOULKES | FAUTRIER |
HÖCKELMANN | LEROY | RAUSCHENBERG | SCHNABEL |
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DANIEL BLAU is pleased to present an exhibition of six outstanding artists exploring the fissures at the hinge of humanity this year at ART BASEL 2024.

Dan Asher, Georg Baselitz, George Condo, Jean Fautrier, Lynn Foulkes, Antonius Höckelmann, Eugène Leroy, Robert Rauschenberg, Julian Schnabel, Don Van Vliet and Andy Warhol.

Interior and exterior, landscape and mindset, chaos and form: art thrives on tracing the dichotomies of our human existence in the world, and the mid-20th century found its great artists toying with and teasing out the creative potential of our fundamental conflicts with vibrant energy.



Julian Schnabel (b. 1951)

"Untitled (Lola)", 1989, oil and gesso on velvet,
274,0 x 213,0 cm, ©VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2024

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Messeplatz 10
4005 Basel

Public Days

June 13 – 16, 2024

11 am – 7 pm

Vernissage:

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

5 pm – 8 pm

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The artistic binary found in *Julian Schnabel* is not between visual artist and musician, but between creator of still image and cinematographer. His eye for an overlapping, ever-developing world in constant motion, and his comfort with breaking beyond traditional genre boundaries, are obvious here. The abstract icons presented in DANIEL BLAU's exhibition insist upon their figuration and actuality by means of literal labels, scrawled directly onto the art itself and insisting on at least one possible route of interpretation by the viewer. The bloody neon reds of *Lola* cannot help but clash with the fact of Schnabel's fatherhood for the daughter whose name dominates the piece in thin and not-quite-cursive lines; meanwhile, the hunching, blotted forms of the much smaller, officially untitled piece alongside it are only opened up to interpretation by the Spanish word 'duende' crawling along the back of one blot like a spine, hinting towards creatures of folklore, towards music and dance and the ecstasy engendered and expressed thereby, towards a mastery of place or self, towards ego and subjugation of it or to it. Without context, among nothing but shape and color, the heavily-laden word 'duende' becomes a cypher, a key to an image that could open it in any direction – in whichever direction our own minds are inclined to lead us. Our final painting from Schnabel, 1989's *Bingo*, is another 'portrait' of someone close to the artist – this time, though, the name dominating the work is his dog's. One of a series, for which Schnabel employed everything from old army tarpaulins to rolls of velvet, it features what appears at first an image as abstract and free to interpret as the blots of *Duende*, until we recognize it, in fact, to represent the subject's pawprint. *Bingo* dates from the same year as *Lola*, and in a way the obvious materiality of its pawprint near-figuratism, bridging the divide between body and soul, helps us understand how fully, deeply, intentionally personal these images are. Realized on velvet, with both oil and

plaster lending a three-dimensionality to the work, the *Lola* series teases and tugs out the whole range of emotions and sacrifices, spiritual and physical alike, that constitute fatherhood and its unique love.



Julian Schnabel (b. 1951)

"Untitled (Bingo)", 1989, oil on army tarpaulin,
124,5 × 114,5 cm, ©VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2024

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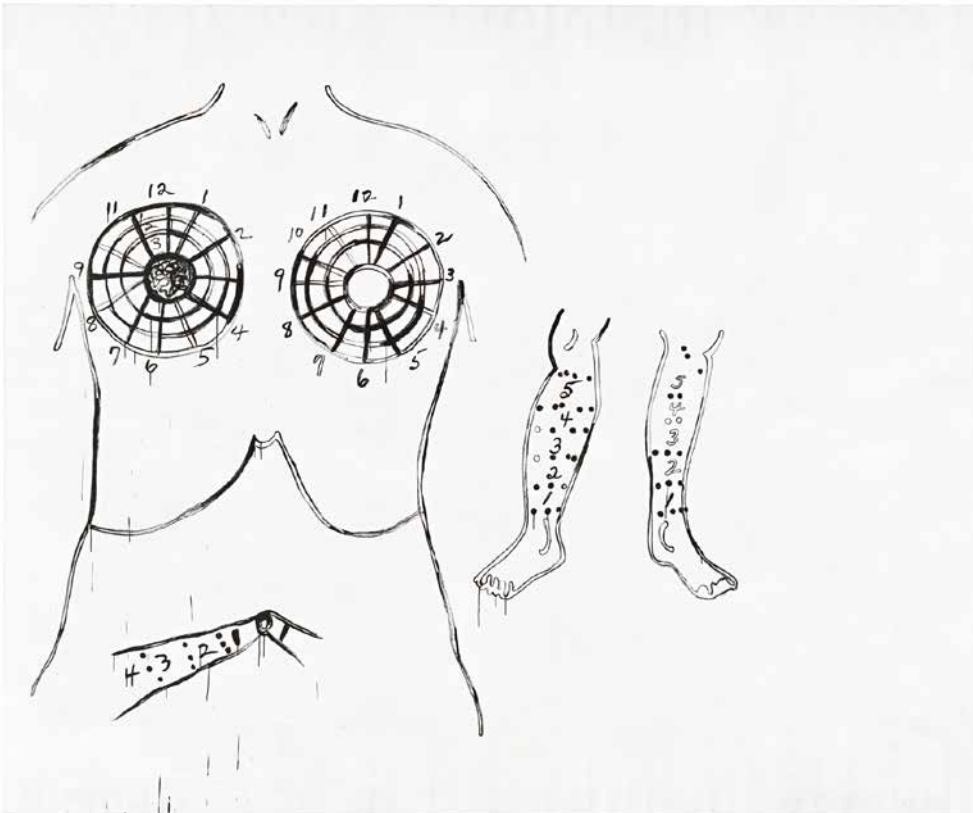
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Our *Warhol* this year, from 1985, is somewhat more direct in its treatment of the human form and spirit. *Physiological Diagrams* appears to turn its attention entirely inwards. The large-scale, wall-sized painting, polymer on canvas, seems at first glance to reproduce not the religious but the scientific, the stripped-bare anatomical. A second look makes clear how far this 'diagram' strays from anything to be found in a schoolroom, with its strange markings, labels, counterintuitive design and unexpected insertions.



Andy Warhol (1928 – 1987)

"Physiological Diagrams", 1985, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 294,5 × 356,0 cm, ©2024 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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The youngest of our artists, modern American master *George Condo*, is perhaps also the simplest point of entry for the man off the omnibus strolling into our show. His distinctive “fake old masters” approach to figurative painting presents few conceptual barriers for the newcomer or art world outsider, while still staying unafraid to challenge the gaze and force uncertainty upon his viewing public. *Thought Trap*, the 1983 work on paper exhibited here, is direct in its metaphor and symbolism, the blood-red figure standing alone in a surreal De Chiricoesque landscape, the vast half-formed loneliness of his being and disconnectedness to any distant human society or inhospitable landscape surrounding him capturing without any need of further elaboration the helplessness of his thoughts and the one mind in which they must remain trapped.

Condo serves as an excellent introduction to our exhibition through his very biography, too. A product of New York’s vibrant 1980s East Village art scene, he stands as a link between many of the other artists soon to be encountered, including Julian Schnabel, a friend and co-exhibitor, and Andy Warhol, at whose famous Factory he worked from the time of his arrival until 1983, the year of his first solo exhibition and of *Thought Trap*’s creation. And, like many of the artists here, Condo is a true multidisciplinary in his creative pursuits: his studies encompassed not only art history but music theory, as well, leading naturally

to a career that includes membership in a series of punk-adjacent musical bands and an impressive catalogue of work for book and album covers, including Kanye West’s *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*.



George Condo (b. 1957)
“Thought Trap”, 1983,
acrylic, gouache and oil on paper
55,9 x 41,9 cm,
©George Condo, courtesy Daniel
Blau, Munich

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Like the younger Condo, *Llyn Foulkes*' artistic journey has spanned the visual arts and the musical world, with striking success in both. In fact, almost every aspect of his work indulges in some element of multimedia, with the very recent *Ding 'n Dang (small)* being no exception. Foulkes conspires with his found objects to create a strange couple portrait for us. The contrast between ego and outside world, real inner turmoil and unreal physical surrounding, is approached in so much other art with attempts to visualize that turmoil and make it real; here, Foulkes succeeds by doing nearly the exact opposite, showing the strain between in and out by obscuring, deleting, and cutting away. It is the couple's eyes, the very windows into the soul itself, which are blocked out, refusing us even the imagined opportunity to glimpse within. It is an uneasy, because impossible, interrogation of the subjects that is thrust upon us as viewers, standing in front of an assembly of true things and real people repurposed, replaced, locked out from them and forever wondering.



Llyn Foulkes (b. 1934)

"Ding 'n Dang (Small)", 2019,
found image, found objects, oil on panel in found frame, 30,5 x 25,4 cm,
©Llyn Foulkes, courtesy Daniel Blau, Munich

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The expressionistic, thickly spackled oils of *Eugène Leroy* present the perfect contrast to Condo's bubble-bright artificial realism. *Tête et Paysage* – 'head and landscape' – is a later work, dating to only ten years before the artist's death in 2000, at 90, but still unmistakably belongs to the giant of French painting, one of the most important forerunners and models for the generation of neo-expressionists that followed. His own influences were, like Condo's, decidedly traditional. A teenaged introduction to the Dutch Old Masters, and El Greco and Goya beyond them, drove him to study fine arts in the first place; it was an encounter with Rembrandt's *The Jewish Bride* in 1936, though, which provided perhaps the decisive spark, inspiring a life-long fascination with the flesh, materiality, and the seemingly paradoxical abstraction thereof. The materiality of the head here, barely discernable at first, emerges from the wilderness of incarnate emotion around it, gently merging into it even as it pulls away in chunks and layers of fleshy paint and the viscerally abstracted world of thought. Leroy would labor on his canvases for months, even years, applying those layers of oil paint over each other nearly endlessly, brushing, scraping, squeezing and digging it directly from the tube, adding color until his vision was achieved. Sparsity of paint in one area indicates the artist's satisfaction where light is concerned, while its abundance in others demonstrates a longer effort to reach the desired result, even should the image beneath the image seem almost entirely obscured in the thickly textured layers of oil paint.



Eugène Leroy (1910 – 2000)
"Tête et paysage", 1990, oil on
canvas, 73,0 x 60,0 cm,
©Eugène Leroy, courtesy Daniel
Blau, Munich

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Antonius Höckelmann (1937 – 2000)

"n.t.", 1968, pencil and pastel on brown wrapping paper
99,0 x 90,0 cm, ©Antonius Höckelmann, courtesy Daniel Blau, Munich

Echoes of Mannerism and the Baroque, meanwhile, are felt in the works of **Antonius Höckelmann**, who returns time and again to strange, curving caricatures of human heads and busts emerging in swirls out of the charcoal chaos around them. The untitled piece in pencil and pastel offers any number of twisted members and contorted bodies for the viewer to seek out as they dissolve into the madness beyond. There are no true boundaries here between the interior and exterior; the dichotomy of human ego and world beyond is both exposed as a lie and shown in starkest truth amidst the radical, amorphous disorientation of Höckelmann's baroque imagination. In his black and white forms, the organic paradox is allowed to breathe and thrive.

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Dan Asher (1947-2010)
"Untitled", 1983, acrylic on
unstretched canvas, 144,1 x 130,8
cm, ©Dan Asher

Dan Asher (1947-2012), a true multi-media artist originally from Cleveland, Ohio, known above all for his photography, sculptures, and evocative images blurring the distinction between drawing and painting, first exhibited with DANIEL BLAU in Munich in 1992. Asher created sculptures from modeling clay for the exhibition on-site, two of which we are proud to be presenting this year in Basel. He also, simultaneously, created a substantial series of very minimalist pencil drawings.

The 1983 work *Untitled* (self portrait), one of his few works on canvas, comes from the collection of his friend Donald Baechler. Although as a rule he employed canvas only rarely, Asher created a whole series of mask-like images both on paper and canvas during the early 1980s, employing a variety of materials from acrylic and tempura to ink and oil stick. He would paint these faces whenever he found himself sinking into a depression, and associated that spontaneous impulse with his diagnosed autism. These painted faces, mostly self-portraits, convey emotions that he was unable, or unwilling, to express with his own.

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