



VISUAL DIARY: “Social Animals” Congregate in Miami’s Collins Park

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by Sandra Hale Schulman

“Social Animals” roared into Miami’s Collins Park and claimed the stretch of green grass, lined by palm trees and pavers, to create an eye-catching public art exhibition, only one block away from the ocean and smack in the middle of Miami traffic. The curated exhibition was presented by Art Basel Miami Beach’s Public Sector and the Bass Museum of Art.

Congregating in the exhibition were large-scale sculptures and installations by 24 prominent international artists represented by galleries around the world. “Social Animals” was curated by Nicholas Baume, the Director and Chief Curator of Miami’s Public Art Fund.

Exhibiting artists included Jeppe Hein, Santiago Roose, Charlotte Posenenske, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Matias Faldbakken, Mark di Suvero, Maarten Vanden Eynde, Mungo Thomson, Tom Friedman, Thomas Houseago, Scott Reeder, Tony Tasset, Matthew Monahan, Alicja Kwade, Aaron Curry, Ursula von Rydingsvard, Olaf Breuning, Oscar Tuazon, Sam Falls, Huma Bhabha, Michelle Lopez, Richard Long, Phil Wagner and Carol Bove.



View of the Bass with “Social Animals” on exhibit during Art Basel Miami week.

Presenting art where the general public can encounter it by happenstance or design is important for artists and for those viewing the work, said Baume.

“The growing importance of Art Basel’s Public program reflects both the strong desire of artists to work in ways that initiate a direct encounter with the public, and the investment that many galleries now make to help artists realize their most ambitious ideas,” stated Baume in June, after accepting his role as curator in the Basel-Bass collaboration. “The result is an opportunity for everyone in Miami to engage with great contemporary art in a highly accessible public setting.”



“Appearing Rooms” by Jeppe Hein. Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

While the exhibition is now disbanded, [Scott Reeder’s Real Fake](#), will remain on view until March. The humorous sculpture plays on content and context, a good match to a city like Miami that is famous for its pink Art Deco buildings and illusion of paradise. Reeder is an American artist and filmmaker. In 2013, solo shows were held in Berlin ([Kavi Gupta Gallery](#)) and New York City ([Lisa Cooley](#)).



“Real Fake” by Scott Reeder. Exhibited Kavi Gupta Gallery. Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

[Michelle Lopez’s](#) gorgeous Blue Angel was actually inspired by the destruction of the Twin Towers in NYC - the impact of industrial airplane parts against public buildings seared into her psyche. This large scale aluminum and airplane paint piece was funded through [RocketHub.com](#), an online fund raising site.

Donors could literally fund one rivet at a time. The sheer size of the 40 foot work leaning - or crashing as the artist suggests - into the side of the Bass gives it a much deeper, and bigger, meaning than smaller versions she has shown in galleries.



“Blue Angel II” by Michelle Lopez. Exhibited Simon Preston Gallery (New York, NY). Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

The unretouched absurdity of the “Duel” presented by Norwegian artist [Matias Faldbakken](#) made for a big impression in the park. This Peterbilt 281 big rig truck, is the last remaining one of its kind and is a kind of movie star.

It played a central role in Steven Spielberg’s early feature film *Duel* (1971). In the movie, a Californian man driving through the desert passes the lumbering truck; the truck driver is annoyed and pursues the man in a near psychotic manner down the highway.



“Duel Truck” by Matia Faldbakken. Exhibited Paula Cooper Gallery (New York, NY). Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

In “Let Us Rejoice”, Phil Wagner renders straight back chairs into columned totems. With a Mondrianesque paint job, these re-purposed seats become high chairs of the tallest order.



“Let Us Rejoice” by Phil Wagner. Exhibited Untitled (New York, NY). Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

Tayou Tug Of War by [Pascale Marthine](#) is a battle of the sexes created in humorous bronze. The nonchalant stance of the woman seems to be easily winning with one hand against the muscular efforts of the man at the end of his rope.



“Tayou, Tug of War” by Pascale Marthine. Photo by Sandra Hale Schulman.

BASIC FACTS: Art Basel Miami Beach’s Public Sector was presented from Dec. 3 to 8, 2013 in Collins Park in Miami. “Real Fake” by Scott Breeder remains on view through March. Collins Park is located at 2100 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, FL 33139. For details, visit www.artbasel.com.

Art Basel Miami Beach was presented at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

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