

Media release

Basel, 7 June 2019

Far from comfortable – Helvetia Art Prize winner Kaspar Ludwig at LISTE

With a marble bench, cushions and vases, Kaspar Ludwig, winner of the 2019 Helvetia Art Prize, encourages visitors to his solo exhibition at this year's LISTE – Art Fair Basel to linger a while – but only at first glance. The international fair for young artists in Basel runs from 10 to 16 June 2019.

Works by young, up-and-coming artists will be on display next week at the LISTE – Art Fair Basel. Kaspar Ludwig, who won this year's Helvetia Art Prize in March, will be staging a solo exhibition at the fair. He attended LISTE as a visitor a year ago. The bustle of the fair and the numerous galleries and works of art provoked in him a sense of claustrophobia. This experience inspired his exhibition at LISTE. His project comprises a "bench", two "vases" and "cushions".

Not exactly relaxing

Kaspar Ludwig often uses everyday objects in his work. However, he is aware that people often lack conscious awareness of the everyday. So he alters these everyday objects to create a different perspective on them. The bench, for instance, is made from white Carrara marble and calls to mind the extensive grounds of an Italian villa. However, Ludwig has designed it so that the seat is lopsided. A place which, on first sight, promises a moment of repose is transformed into something uncomfortable.

Instead of the usual soft and smooth material, the neck cushions are made from brass, their surface is smooth and reflective and, above all, they are hard, making them unfit for purpose. The huge vases with their greatly elongated silhouettes and their ears look like human bodies, their slightly hunched posture suggesting a state of exhaustion or pain.

One-man exhibition as part of the Art Prize

The solo exhibition by Kaspar Ludwig at the LISTE art fair is part of the Helvetia Art Prize which, along with the prize money of 15,000 francs, is intended to help him embark on a professional career. Staging an exhibition at the LISTE offers young artists the opportunity to present their work to a wide, specialized audience and to build up a network. The winners of the art prize are chosen by a jury of specialists from well-known art institutions. This year, the jury members are Ines Goldbach (Director of Kunsthaus Baselland) Olivier Kaeser (Freelance Curator), Joanna Kamm (Director of LISTE – Art Fair Basel), Andreas Karcher (Head of Helvetia's Art Department), Nathalie Loch (Curator of Helvetia's art collection) and Karine Tissot (Director of the Centre d'art contemporain Yverdon-les-Bains).

Helvetia's commitment to art

The Helvetia Art Prize is a key aspect of the international insurance group's commitment to art. It has been awarded annually to an up-and-coming talent since 2004. Helvetia, which also insures art, has one of the most important collections of contemporary Swiss art, stretching back more than 70 years. The collection focuses on paintings, drawings and photography. In the Helvetia Art Foyer, its own, publicly accessible display space at the head office in Basel, Helvetia shows up to four exhibitions each year, comprising works from its own collection or solo exhibitions by artists whose work is represented in the collection.

Video profile of Kaspar Ludwig



Information about the LISTE – Art Fair Basel

Kaspar Ludwig, winner of the 2019 Helvetia Art Prize
Stand 2/1/4
Burgweg 15, Basel, Switzerland

Vernissage
Monday, 10 June 2019, 6-9 p.m., entry free

Art fair
Tuesday to Saturday, 11 to 15 June 2019, 1-9 p.m.
Sunday, 16 June 2019, 1-6 p.m.

This media release can also be found on the website www.helvetia.ch/media.

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