

# What to See During Paris+

by **Laura van Straaten**

The new art fair by Art Basel has the French capital buzzing with museum shows, public installations, and pop-up exhibitions in unexpected places.



Courtesy of Paris+ Par Art Basel

Nine months ago, Art Basel made headlines with the announcement that it would bump the French art fair FIAC, in operation since 1974, from its coveted October slot at Paris's Grand Palais, and would be presenting a new contemporary art fair, to be christened Paris+ by Art Basel in its place

This week, Paris+ was welcomed as a sibling to Art Basel's existing fairs in Switzerland, Miami Beach and Hong Kong. Collectors, curators and art lovers from around the world flocked to greet the new arrival at yesterday's preview of 156 exhibitors from more than 30 countries and territories—as a commitment to the local art scene, just over a third of the exhibiting galleries are headquartered in France. Its first edition may have a handful fewer galleries than the last edition of FIAC, but some are those who haven't exhibited in Paris in a while, including the New York galleries Matthew Marks, Greene Naftali and Peter Freeman. Also here are the sprawling international powerhouses Hauser & Wirth, Pace, Gagosian and David Zwirner.

At the preview, Scarlett Johansson practically parted the crowds while David Blaine seemingly used magic to keep his presence on the DL. Also sighted were fashion designers Jonathan Anderson, Raf Simons and Michèle Lamy; architects Frank Gehry and Kulapat Yantrasast; collectors Delphine and Bernard Arnault; Don and Mera Rubell; Maja Hoffmann; Pamela Joyner; and curators and directors of many top museums including the Whitney, the Serpentine, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, the Hirschorn, the Louvre, and Tate.

Of course, Paris+ may be the grandest, but it is far the only fair in town: [there are more than 10 satellite fairs taking place at the same time](#). And when Paris+ itself closes on Sunday night, some of the public art works, other fairs and museum shows will carry on, for those who can't resist autumn in Paris. Here, W's top picks for art lovers in the French capital this season.

At Pace's booth, a Robert Motherwell painting that reads "Je t'aime" gets top billing.  
Courtesy of Pace Gallery.

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## The Booths to See at Paris+

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[Paris-based gallery Applicat-Prazan](#), celebrating its 30th anniversary and dedicated to the [Post-War School of Paris](#), has a solo presentation by the late abstract painter [Georges Matthieu](#), who died a decade ago.

At [Thaddeus Ropac](#), attendees at the preview paused for selfies in front of Yan Pei-Ming's "Permanent Rose Young Queen Elizabeth II" (2022), a new pink-tinted oil portrait of the departed monarch as a girl. Also on view in the booth: more than a dozen smaller works hung studio style, including a trio of paintings by Martha Jungworth and work by Lee Bul.

Pace blew a kiss to Paris with a Robert Motherwell painting that reads "Je t'aime" (I love you) at the center of its booth. In the booth's interior are 20th century heavyweights, including those with strong connections to Paris: Picasso, Calder, and most notably [Dubuffet](#). The exterior walls feature work by contemporary artists newer to the gallery, including Maysha Mohamedi and Matthew Day Jackson, both of whom joined Pace this year, as well as Lee Ufan, Adam Pendleton, Robert Longo, and Paulina Olovska.

The Brazilian gallery [A Gentil Carioca](#) stands out for devoting its whole booth to an installation of paintings by Rio de Janeiro artist Maxwell Alexandre, [whose solo show at the Shed in New York](#) opens next week (Oct. 26 – Jan. 8) on the heels of his [solo show at the Palais de Tokyo](#) here in Paris, which closed in March. Enormous paintings hang unframed from the ceiling, creating a mini-maze that's crowded and difficult to navigate, like the artist's own favela in Rio. The works, on a type of brown craft paper called *pardo*, are used by the artist to evoke the skin tone of the Black Brazilians, while paintings of enlarged, empty gold frames hang on the walls. As a whole, the installation contrasts the legacy of European classical painting with muralism and street art.

Among the emerging galleries section of the fair is Chris Sharp, who opened his [eponymous gallery](#) in Los Angeles less than two years ago, following the success of his tiny but celebrated art space [Lulu](#), in Mexico City. In his booth, collectors lingered over a series by the young English painter Sophie Barber, which features dogs depicted in the works of or owned by or famous male artists, including Munch, Hockney, Picasso, Koons, Renoir and Monet. (Sharp describes the series as a "barbed homage.")

In a space activated by Louis Vuitton, bags from the brand's Artycapucines series were displayed alongside artworks that have a relationship to the French house.

Photographed by Martin Colombet. Courtesy of Louis Vuitton

People seemed to be having fun at a display organized by Louis Vuitton — maybe because nothing was actually for sale and its show on [Monet and Joan Mitchell at the Vuitton Foundation](#) has been roundly touted as a success. The booth crammed in more than 40 artworks from more than a century of the brand's collaboration with artists, including Henri Matisse's and Francis Picabia's original designs for Vuitton trunks, commissioned in 1909; and an alarmingly realistic self portrait in wax by Yayoi Kusama that caused at least one visitor to do a double take. Artist [Kennedy Yanko](#) was spotted admiring the back wall of the booth where Vuitton's full Artycapucines Collection was on display—three years' worth of the brand's Capucine handbags that have been customized and made in limited editions of 200 by artists including [Josh Smith](#), Beatriz Milhazes, Vik Muniz, Urs Fischer, and [Tschabalala Self](#).

Alicja Kwade's installation at the Place Vendôme.  
Courtesy of Paris+ Par Art Basel.

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## Highlights of Paris+ SITES

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Taking advantage of near-perfect October weather, Paris+ has made the city itself an extension of the fair, with public work in 20 "emblematic" locations all around Paris, all sponsored by [David Yurman](#). The standout of Sites, by far, is the installation by Berlin-based Polish artist [Alicja Kwade](#) at the [Place Vendôme](#). Surrounded by the boutiques of some of the world's other top jewelers—Cartier, Graff, Van Cleef & Arpels, Bulgari, Chopard—Kwade's orbs in varying shades evoke gems in the raw, shaped and buffed by the winds of time. The installation, the artist's largest to date, is at once surprising and grounding. It is also the sole part of Paris+ that will remain on view after the fair closes on Sunday (through November 13).

But if you're here this weekend, the Jardin des Tuileries contains a flâneur's fantasy of discovery. Dotted throughout the greenery and the gravel paths of the garden are approximately 20 artworks, mostly sculptures by artists whose practices often "subvert and reimagine the role of art in the public realm," as curator Annabelle Ténèze puts it. "This place is a history of power, or monumental art and of culture and it is also now a very popular place." To inspire the choice and placement of works, Ténèze spent hours talking to the people—tourists and Parisians alike—who perambulate the park or pull in its green furniture into the shade to read on a hot day.

Niki de Saint Phalle's sculpture "Blue Obelisk with Flowers" (1992) is among the artwork on view in the Jardin des Tuileries.  
Courtesy of Paris+ Par Art Basel

Sculptures by the New York-based Mexican artist Raúl de Nieves appeal to pre-teens biking about with their parents. And fans of the Austrian artist Franz West will be pleased to come across “Lemurenköpfe (Lemure Heads)” (1992/2000), which were first displayed at documenta IX in Kassel in 1992. Of special note is French-American artist Niki de Saint Phalle’s sculpture “Blue Obelisk with Flowers” (1992). Remarking that the artist lost close friends and colleagues to AIDS, Ténéze describes this work as an “obelisk to the forgotten” that illustrates how that artist used color and joy as a sign of resilience.

An exhibition at Guerlain’s flagship successfully marries art and commerce.

Courtesy of Guerlain

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## ***Les Militantes* at Guerlain**

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Work by de Saint Phalle is also included in a group show at Guerlain’s flagship on the Champs-Élysées, on view through November 14. Titled [“Les Militantes”](#) (“the militants”), the show features work by 21 artists from around the world, including Louise Bourgeois, Ethel Adnan, Zanele Muholi, Kiki Smith and Nancy Spero. Often, art in commercial spaces can feel wrong or misguided, but the flagship, in the former

home of Guerlain's founding family (Art Nouveau and updated by Peter Marino) is so beautiful and the art so universally strong, that it somehow works.

Sam Szafran's exhibition at the musée de l'Orangerie is a welcome palate cleanser.

Photographed by Sophie Crépy. Courtesy of the musée de l'Orangerie.

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## Mickalene Thomas and Sam Szafran at Musée de l'Orangerie

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At Musée de l'Orangerie, [Mickaelene Thomas](#) has created three new large-scale collages, one monumental painting and, most interestingly, an immersive site-specific installation complete with a synthetic flower garden featuring her 2016 video/sculpture "Me As Muse." The works are presented as "revisiting" her time as an artist-in-residence at Claude Monet's home in Giverny, France in 2011. Her collages here are outlined with crystals, a clever way to suggest the light that so beguiled the Impressionists, but her work will make you appreciate all the more what Monet achieved with paint alone in the ["Water Lilies"](#) on permanent view.

Also here, and far more impactful, if you're already familiar with Thomas's extensive body of work, is [the Sam Szafran show "Obsessions of a Painter,"](#) which offers everything that is missing from the art fairs: the sweat of the studio, and the vertigo that comes from lofty ambition, feverish repetition, and efforts at experimentation. Again and again, he paints his studio; his staircase, and lush foliage. This exhibit came as a delightful surprise and felt fresh after a day of fair-hopping. The artist died in 2019, before plans for the show, which opened last month, were realized.

Thaddeus Mosley's Delacroix museum show, *La Suite de l'Histoire*, extends into the courtyard.



Courtesy the artist and Karma.

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## Thaddeus Mosley at the Eugène Delacroix Museum

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For his first solo museum show in France, American artist Thaddeus Mosley is presenting recent sculptures—a mashup of the miniature and monumental. The roughly carved wood pieces, some evoking the verticality of Brancusi’s “Bird in Space,” stand in sharp contrast to the resolutely Romantic artwork and ephemera that practically stuff the former home of Delacroix, who died in 1863. (Mosley’s New York Gallery, Karma, also has work by him on view at their booth at Paris+.)