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Observer's Top Five Pieces Not to Miss at Art Basel 2024

If you're off to Switzerland for the June art fairs, we recommend putting these standout artworks on your must-see list.

By [Dan Duray](#) · 06/14/24 1:49pm



Gladys Nilsson's *Piano Man* (1963-1964) at Parker/Feature. Dan Duray

The art at Art Basel in Basel—not to be confused with Art Basel Miami Beach or the newly rechristened Art Basel Paris, formerly Paris+ par Art Basel—is the best of any of them, and probably of any art fair in June or otherwise. It's the kind of place where a relatively obscure artist like Georges Vantongerloo can have a market moment, as he did this year, according to my colleague Marion Maneker at Puck. It's a different kind of art fair with less flash and fewer works suitable for selfies. At this fair, it's actually de rigueur to have those taken onstage, by a look-alike hired for this purpose, or so I was led to believe by the Eartheater concert (presented by TRAUMA in collaboration with Anna Uddenberg). All of my reviews are absurdly subjective, but I'm not neutral on this: there's plenty to like in Switzerland this year.

Gladys Nilsson, *Piano Man* (1963-1964), Parker/Feature

This work is presented in the artist's own frame and is too much fun. Nilsson is known for her work with Chicago's Harry Who collective, which took its inspiration from the counterculture and its comic books, but she's being more and more recognized in her own right, especially when it comes to paintings. I would compare this to Edgar Degas' attempts to capture the wildness of the orchestra pit, without his attempts at realism. The Simpsons yellow of the dancer's legs is inspired, as is the ambiguity of those pipes, which might be instruments.

Dan Duray, "Observer's Top Five Pieces Not to Miss at Art Basel 2024." *Observer* (June 14, 2024), accessed online.