

ART & AUCTIONS

'Art and the City' Takes to Zurich's Streets

From Colorful Amulets to Red-Brick Monoliths, 40 Contemporary Artists Show Work in Public Spaces

[Collecting]

By MARGARET STUDER



Zurich's lively contemporary art scene has taken to the streets this summer in "Art and the City," an international exhibition that includes a number of today's most collectible artists.

The event (until Sept. 23) was initiated by the city's government, which worked with galleries and other art institutions to bring pieces by more than 40 artists from around the world into Zurich's public spaces, including sculptures, installations, posters and performances. Works span the abstract, figurative and conceptual, reflecting the wide diversity of contemporary art today.

Zurich has a high number of top-quality galleries dealing in contemporary art that make the city an interesting stop for international collectors.

With this summer show, says Zurich Mayor Corine Mauch in the catalog's introduction, people can wander "through a city which is evolving, growing and continuously expanding its horizons through art."

Two white marble armchairs comprising "Sofa in White" (2011) by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei stand on the square outside the headquarters of Credit Suisse, inviting passersby to take a seat. The works play on the theme of globalization, reproducing one of China's most popular sofas in the heart of the financial district.

A five-minute tram ride away, on the site of a weekly farmers'

market, Indian artist Subodh Gupta deals with the topic of the sustainability and flow of commodities in a more than 5-meter-tall metal bucket that recreates in giant size the vessels commonly used to carry water in his country's villages. This is one of my favorite pieces in the show.

The gentrifying quarter of the city known as Zurich West will host most of the show's works. Formerly an industrial area, this district has turned trendy, with emerging high-rise buildings, cultural institutions, galleries and restaurants.

On the wall of one tall building, which houses the headquarters of the Migros retail chain, British artist Martin Creed has installed one of his popular neon pieces with the slogan, "Every thing is going to be alright."

Beneath a railway bridge, Swiss artist Franziska Furter's "Mojo" (2012), a colorful concoction of magic amulets, hangs like a chandelier, moving and tinkling with the wind. "Kids love it," says Etienne Lullin, her art dealer.

At a busy traffic intersection, Cuban duo Marco Castillo and Dagoberto Rodriguez (known as Los Carpinteros) have placed "Catedrales" (2012), five red-brick monoliths embodying attachments for a cordless electric screwdriver, as an ode to craftsmen. They stand like guardians of peace.

Another monumental work, and among my favorites, is Swiss artist Alex Hanimann's "Vanessa" (2012), a 5-meter-high chrome statue of a tomboyish teenage girl that gleams in the sun and reflects the surrounding buildings. Californian artist Paul McCarthy creates a more sinister note with "Apple Tree Boy Apple Tree Girl" (2010). The aluminum sculptures seem



Courtesy of Galerie Lullin + Ferrari; below, courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

playful but express a disgust with the destruction of childhood innocence through commercialization.

The Zurich West Löwenbrau Areal center, a former brewery, will reopen Aug. 31 after two years of restoration. It is a notable event for the city as the center will once again house major art institutions.

Hauser & Wirth, one of the world's most influential galleries, will open with a show of Paul McCarthy works. Galerie Bob van Orsouw, a Swiss gallery with a nose for new talent, will inaugurate with upcoming U.S. object artist Hannah Greely. The Kunsthalle Zürich, which first discov-

ered numerous now internationally successful artists, will present a show of new works by German photo artist Wolfgang Tillmans. And the Migros Museum, which has a renowned collection of cutting-edge art, will open with hip Icelandic performing artist and painter Ragnar Kjartansson.



'Untitled' (2008) by Subodh Gupta; top right, 'Mojo' (2012) by Franziska Furter.

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