

SPIKE

7PM

By Aodhan Madden
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Paris, Paris Internationale, Art Basel

7pm in Paris

What keeps a critic going through Paris Internationale, Art Basel Paris, and a dozen exhibitions besides? Imagining the whole shebang happening in flip flops – plus a drop of culturally “useless” dew.

It's been a week since a spaceship of art aliens descended on Paris to wreak their havoc, straight out of Alex Da Corte's deflated Kermit the Frog head at Place Vendôme. Think Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks!* (1996) but slightly more stylish. ART BASEL PARIS. Or, leaving the invasion-drama metaphor to one side, maybe it felt more like the mass of chipped cups, trinkets, and burnt-out Tefal pans Merlin Carpenter hung up at di volta in volta in his show “ART PARIS BASEL.”

In any case, I am (still) confused and tired and in need of *mousse*, like Héléne Fauquet's shells glued to photos of bubbles at Ulrik (Paris Internationale). I have been sucking images for too long. Not just images, but objects, booths, texts, vibes, glances, gossip. Sucking, beating, and frying them for their sense, here is an attempt at a critical crêpe. Sorry if it's burnt.



Merlin Carpenter, “Holiday Homes 5-8,” 2025. Installation view, “Art Paris Basel,” di volta in volta, Paris, 2025. Courtesy: the artist; di volta in volta, Paris; dépendance, Brussels; and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York



Héléne Fauquet, *Turbinae*, 2025, inkjet print, seashells, frame, 21 × 16.5 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Ulrik, New York