

# Main event targets fashionable young things

BASEL. For the first time, the organisers of Art Basel have introduced a section, titled Art Premiere, reserved for young galleries that previously stood no chance of entering the fair.

On the fair's second day, trade was brisk. Podnar (S6) had sold *Endless Copies* (2002), a video by the Swedish artist Alexander Gutke, for €15,000 to a private European collector (who plans to bequeath it to an Italian museum). It also sold Gutke's painting *Nine Ways To Say It's Over* (2006) for €3,500, to a female Kuwaiti collector buying for a foundation.

"We always hoped to give young galleries a shot in the arm by letting them show in the big

fair," Sam Keller, the director of Art Basel, explains. For some years, their only hope was to put a single, major project forward to Art Statements. "But many galleries had difficulty getting accepted because the committee didn't like their particular project. So we wanted those galleries to be able to enter on the strength of their entire programme."

More than 170 young galleries applied for the first Art Premiere but only 12 were accepted. Several galleries have shown in the past at the Liste fair, including China Art Objects of Los Angeles (X5), Ljubljana's Galerija Gregor Podnar, Catherine Bastide of Brussels (X6) and New York's



Showing at Art Premiere: Irwin's *Like to Like/Wheat and Rope*, 2003, with Podnar (S6)

Maccarone (U7).

Despite the establishment setting, the atmosphere can still be informal: "There's a certain kind of professionalism expected here, but we're not any more organised than at the last fair—we're still being very intuitive," explains Carissa Rodriguez of Reena Spaulings (S8), a Lower East Side gallery established in 2004.

The Spaulings roster includes young, hyped artists such as 2006 Whitney Biennial favourite Jutta Koether and Seth Price, recently featured in a Zurich Kunsthalle show, whose work sold to a private German collector.

**Marc Spiegler**  
and **Elizabeth Williams**