



LISTE ART FAIR BASEL

Machteld Rullens

Booth 45

Messe Basel, Hall 1.1

June 10–16, 2024

Page is pleased to participate in Liste Art Fair Basel 2024 with a solo presentation by Machteld Rullens, bringing the artist and gallery to Basel for the first time. Rullens effortlessly breathes life into discarded materials, coaxing them into forms and compositions that embody a harmonious balance between the utilitarian and the expressive. The artist from The Hague stacks, collapses, and folds cardboard configurations into striking assemblages coated with pigmented resin. Through improvised methods of construction like scantily placed rivets, shipping labels, and corner joints, Rullens leverages her objects to the cusp of painting and sculpture.

In her latest works, Rullens intensifies her exploration of scrapyard abstraction methodologies. The artist skillfully bends, mends, and shellacs her way through piles of cardboard, twisting these rugged fragments into captivating arrangements. The attitude of the “scrapyard” can be compared to an industrialized iteration of Kurt Schwitters’ “Merz” process, a nonsense word to describe the use of scavenged material, paste, and nails to build his Dadaist collages. However, Rullens differentiates herself by sourcing her materials from the factory floor rather than from around the house. Like Schwitters, she possesses the remarkable ability to metamorphose discarded objects into exquisite manifestations of pure formal expression while engaging in a dialogue with the very remnants that constitute their essence.

Rullens worships the jagged, uneven edges of these discarded materials. The artist rearranges and bathes them in a generous coat of thick resin, creating an impasto that defies the mundane. This resin, akin to the viscous red grease on rusty heavy machinery, bestows an illusion of perpetual wetness and thickness, even when fully dried. Rullens embraces a “make do and mend” style and a “good enough” attitude that reaps results and intent with high craft precision. The outcome of this approach is truly striking, as it imbues her creations with a delightful sense of economy. In a world where complexity often takes center stage, Rullens reveals the potential for transcendence in everyday life, inviting viewers to appreciate the beauty in simplicity and the elegance in resourcefulness.