



KING'S LEAP

105 Henry Street (Store 5)
New York, NY 10002
www.kingsleapfinearts.com
info@kingsleaprojects.net

Ellis & Parker von Sternberg

Basel Social Club

June 9 to June 16, 2024

King's Leap Fine Arts presents a project with artist duo Ellis & Parker von Sternberg responding to ecology, the self-reflexivity of art communities, and the readymade as invasive species through sculptures, furniture, and interactive ephemera.

This year Basel Social Club takes place in a distinctly pastoral setting, and by way of such a departure a remarkable comment on the traditional aridness of an art fair is made. This exodus to the field is a demonstration; the integration into nature proposes that the Art World - art and artists, gallerists and galleries, fairs, collectors, curators and viewers - are themselves like a complex ecosystem, and so the interior one expects (whether a white cube, a 1930s villa, or a former mayonnaise factory), is only an aspect, or species, whose strength alone does not dominate the Art World food chain we inhabit.

However, within this displacement a fine network of both mutual cooperation and parasitic competition emerges, present in constant flux. The von Sternbergs respond directly to what this venue makes visible: ecologically speaking, hierarchy always remains through nascent adaptation.

The brothers sprinkle the vistas of Baseland with an assortment of property; couches and coffee tables and luggage, each belonging to an artist or art dealer participating at BSC and other fairs in the area. Authorship breaks down as doubt circumnavigates the ownership of these objects. The luggage, brought as carry-ons from New York, collapse the shipping and display of the artwork. On the coffee tables rest decorative statues, functioning as paperweights for a collection of press releases accumulated by the von Sternbergs through over a decade of exhibitions they have attended in New York. Fair attendants will be welcome to

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interact with the furniture, sculptures, and press releases.

The couches become a site of respite, a place to relax and take in the view; to read some PR and talk about shows and artists gone by. However a relationship to such surroundings, both the grassy field and the art fair, and our relationship to them, digs into something deeper. The complex nature of such a venue announces its own identity as an ecologically understood niche, and so there cannot be an attempt to integrate anything into it as a preexisting environment without causing an intrinsic disturbance. Moreover there cannot be a seamless separation of artworks from their own natural habitat that is the gallery or the museum. When cross pollination occurs, and intervention within one site causes an equal retraction from the other, something always must change. Through the action of borrowing, taking, and presentation, the brothers expose that our social environment, as Art World Participants, while conventionally sustained by collaborations, exhibitions, and friendships, is intimately symbiotic with an environment of transaction, power, and exchange.

The art world is a space of social and professional hybridity - where an artist's creative intentions inevitably cooperate with, and so disperse across, a multitude of unknown and indeterminable nonartistic practical and institutional requirements, and this is always reciprocal. The artist and their objects are only identified and secured after these many functionary processes are willfully disavowed and jettisoned, always in the service of a clear and convenient exhibition. At Basel Social Club Ellis & Parker von Sternberg cut a line through a relegated chain of progressively degrading relations to their own authorship that ends in these excreted objects; objects that, now nominated as 'artworks' by their participation in the fair's ecology, decompose the proprietary stakes of the author into the proprietary stakes of an owner.

Ellis and Parker von Sternberg (b. 1990 & 1988) are an artist duo based between New York, NY, and Minneapolis, MN. In 2024, King's Leap Editions published the von Sternberg's first catalog, *New Works*. Previous solo exhibitions include King's Leap (New York, NY). Selected group exhibitions include Twelve Ten (Chicago, IL), Freddy (Harris, NY), Gallery Albany (Albany, NY), New York Chain Suitcase, Brussels Show (Brussels, BE), and Triest (Brooklyn, NY). Ellis von Sternberg received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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Parker von Sternberg is licensed to practice law in Minnesota and received his degree from the University of Minnesota.