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Early Sales at Art Basel Paris See Buyers Favoring Substance Over Speculation

Collectors here seem increasingly selective, gravitating toward institutionally grounded names and blue-chip fixtures, while showing less appetite for new figurative works propelled by purely commercial momentum.

By [Elisa Carollo](#) • 10/23/25 10:55am



Art Basel Paris opened yesterday (Oct. 22) with its official VIP preview, though a new pre-opening—the Avant Première—had already built strong momentum the day before. In just four hours on Tuesday, dealers secured a wave of early sales—setting a more composed tone for opening day compared to last year’s frenetic debut at the Grand Palais. For the Avant Première, galleries invited six top clients, each with a plus-one, drawing roughly 6,000 guests in the fair’s first hours, according to Art Basel. Another 12,000 attended the VIP preview, which helped prevent the jam-packed aisles of last year’s edition.

[...]

Also upstairs in the side rows was the always interesting booth of New York dealer Andrew Edlin, known for his discerning eye in discovering and championing outsider and self-taught artists. At Art Basel Paris, he spotlighted the work of Abraham Lincoln Walker (1921-1993), a previously underrecognized artist from East St. Louis whose work was rediscovered in 2024 thanks to the gallery, which brought him to international attention following a strong reception at recent U.S. fairs. Strategically and pragmatically, for both pricing and logistics, the presentation focused on Walker’s seldom-seen works on paper from the 1980s (priced around \$15,000 each), exhibited alongside a powerful oil-on-board painting from 1983-1992 that charts his movement from figuration toward abstract, cosmic explorations of faith, memory and transcendence. The latter sold by opening day, with other works on paper—and several on hold—that Edlin expected to close by evening.