

# NIGHT GALLERY

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Julie Walker, "The Black Artists You Should Know at Basel," *Paper Magazine*, December 5, 2019.

## PAPER®

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## The Black Artists You Should Know at Basel

by Julie Walker | 05 December 2019

The art world's annual December pilgrimage to Miami for **Art Basel** is currently underway. The glamorous mega fair and the more than two dozen satellite fairs that exist in its orbit draw tens of thousands of attendees each year. Some go to schmooze, some go to buy, and everyone arrives ready to party.

So who's invited? Most of Art Basel Miami Beach takes place in a convention center a few blocks from the ocean. Million dollar paintings are sold by blue chip galleries, and over the years the event has expanded to include emerging artists from mid-tier galleries. Other shifts have occurred, too. While Black artists have always had a presence at Basel Miami, over the past several years there has been a significant uptick in representation and recognition.

This cultural shift is essential. It shines a light on the work Black and brown artists create — artwork that often speaks to the Black experience and chronicles the lives we live. Events like Basel help Black artists claim a piece of the billion dollar art market, which historically has excluded pretty much everybody save rich white men.

### Tau Lewis



"Harmony" (2019) Recycled leather, recycled poly-fibers, rebar, wire, hardware, seashells, stones, acrylic paint.  
Courtesy of Tau Lewis and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Cooper Cole Gallery Art Basel Miami Beach

Tau Lewis is a self-taught artist who incorporates found and donated objects as well as recycled material into her work. Born in 1993 to a Jamaican-Canadian family in Toronto, her work incorporates the legacy of the Black diaspora. "Harmony," along with her other works shown by the Cooper Cole Gallery at Art Basel, is part of a body of work devoted to celestial ancestors. The artist has an interest in sci-fi and it lends itself to her unique take on sculpture.