



Judith Bernstein at Art Basel 2025

Booth D15
Messe Basel, Messeplatz 10, 4058 Basel, Switzerland
Tuesday, June 17–Sunday, June 22, 2025

KASMIN



Judith Bernstein with *The Dance (After Matisse)* in her studio, New York, 1993. Courtesy of the artist.

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Kasmin returns to Art Basel in Basel with a solo presentation of work by New York-based artist Judith Bernstein (b. 1942), on view in the Feature sector from June 17 through June 22, 2025. At Art Basel, Bernstein will debut a never-before-exhibited, 22-foot painting on canvas—*The Dance (After Matisse)* (1993)—which was realized in direct response to Henri Matisse’s pair of *Dance* paintings (1909-10). A curated selection of charcoals on paper will also be featured, including a regrouping of anthropomorphic screw drawings first shown in a historic solo exhibition at the Brooks Jackson Iolas Gallery in 1978. Spanning two decades, this focused presentation highlights the enduring political urgency, sharp humor, and radical commitment to feminist practices that have hallmarked Bernstein’s career for nearly 60 years. Following Bernstein’s critically-acclaimed New York solo exhibition at Kasmin in January 2025, the presentation at Art Basel looks forward to the artist’s career retrospective at Kunsthau Zurich (Chipperfield Extension) in 2026.

Bernstein’s *The Dance (After Matisse)* (1993) will be featured prominently against the entirety of a single wall. Realized by applying graphite sticks into oil paint with broad gestures, the painting features two phallic figures dancing across the canvas as one of Bernstein’s “Active Shooters” appears at right. It visually cites Matisse’s canonical *Dance* paintings from the collections of The Museum of Modern Art in New York and The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, which were reunited in Matisse’s retrospective at MoMA in 1992-93. In *The Dance (After Matisse)*, Bernstein responds to Matisse’s expressive rendering of the group of figures: “When I saw the show I realized that there were no phalluses on any of them,” the artist has said. As the New York art world reeled from the AIDS crisis and impacts of the 1980s culture wars, Bernstein subverted the unspoken sexuality of Matisse’s famous composition to create an allegory of euphoria in the face of cultural turmoil. Reimagining the scene through the lens of the phallus—a symbol of power she has claimed in her work since the 1960s—the painting inspires a cultural critique that remains as urgent today as ever.

The Dance (After Matisse) holds a unique place in Bernstein’s oeuvre, representing her largest commitment to canvas in the 1990s—a decade in which the artist’s work was rarely exhibited. In 1974, just one year after Bernstein’s first solo exhibition, the Philadelphia Civic Center Museum refused to exhibit a large, phallic charcoal screw drawing by Bernstein despite protest by Lucy Lippard, Linda Nochlin, Louise Bourgeois and many other artists, critics, and curators. The once-censored *Horizontal*,

1973, was acquired by The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 2023. But the controversy lingered over Bernstein’s career for some 30 years, before a 2012 survey exhibition at the New Museum in New York reintroduced the artist’s work to broad public view. During this time, Bernstein never wavered in her artistic vision, continuing to create large-scale work that employed tongue-in-cheek humor and biting social critique.

Also on view will be a selection of charcoal screw drawings—including a 10-foot high example—which Bernstein exhibited at Brooks Jackson Iolas Gallery, New York, in 1978. The legendary gallerists Alexander Iolas and Brooks Jackson, at the encouragement and introduction of artist William N. Copley, proved key supporters of Bernstein’s work after 1974. Bernstein began this groundbreaking body of work as the Vietnam War waged on, and they have since become her most recognizable motif. These “masterpieces of feminist protest,” as described by Ken Johnson of *The New York Times*, are a keystone of Bernstein’s conflation of war and sexual aggression. Blending mechanical imagery with the bodily and fetishistic, each is rendered in an explosive manner that reignites the momentous energy they inspired nearly 50 years ago. Paired with *The Dance (After Matisse)*, Bernstein’s screw drawings attest to the artist’s raw resilience and unapologetic drive.

About Judith Bernstein

Judith Bernstein has developed a reputation as one of the most unwaveringly provocative artists of her generation. For nearly 60 years, her work has explored connections between the political and the sexual. Steadfast in her cultural, political, and social critique, Bernstein surged into art world prominence in the early 1970s with her monumental anti-war and feminist charcoal drawings of penis-screw hybrids—one of the artist’s most recognizable motifs. She has lived and worked in New York since receiving her MFA from Yale in 1967.

Bernstein is a founding member of A.I.R. Gallery—the first female artists gallery in the United States—and an early member of the Guerrilla Girls, Art Workers’ Coalition and Fight Censorship. In 2016, she received the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation annual fellowship and was elected a National Academician. In 2019, she was presented with the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Art.



Henri Matisse’s *Dance* paintings (1909-10) installed in *Henri Matisse: A Retrospective*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1992-93. MoMA Archives, New York. Photo: Mali Olatunji.



Judith Bernstein’s solo exhibition at Brooks Jackson Iolas Gallery, New York, 1978.



Detail of *One Panel Vertical*, 1977-78.

Bernstein will be the subject of a major retrospective at Kunsthaus Zurich in 2026. She has staged solo exhibitions at the New Museum, New York (2012), Studio Voltaire, London (2014), Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway (2016), and The Drawing Center, New York (2017), among other venues. Her work is collected by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Brooklyn Museum, New York; Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Buffalo, NY; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; Hall Art Foundation, Vermont; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; The Jewish Museum, New York; Alex Katz Foundation, New York; Kunsthaus Zurich; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Migros Museum of Contemporary Art, Zurich; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven and the Zabłudowicz Collection, London, among other museums.

VIP Days (By invitation only)

Tuesday, June 17, 2025, 11am-8pm, First Choice

Tuesday, June 17, 2025, 4pm-8pm, First Choice & Preview

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 11am-8pm, First Choice, Preview, One Day VIP & Two Day VIP

Vernissage (access with a ticket or by invitation)

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 4pm-8pm

Public Days (access with a ticket or a VIP Card)

Thursday, June 19, 2025, 11am-7pm

Friday, June 20, 2025, 11am-7pm

Saturday, June 21, 2025, 11am-7pm

Sunday, June 22, 2025, 11am-7pm

Contact

For press requests, please contact press@kasmingallery.com.

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The Dance (After Matisse), 1993
graphite and oil on canvas
92 1/2 × 272 inches
235 × 690.9 cm
(PK 32638)

“Maximum visual impact has long been Bernstein’s trademark.”

—Max Lakin, *Artforum*, 2025





Active Figuration Shooters, 1985
charcoal on paper, diptych
30 × 22 inches, each
76.2 × 55.9 cm
(PK 32154)

“Her relentlessly raw humor is a major weapon in her artistic arsenal.”

—Phoebe Hoban, *The New York Times*, 2025





Balls Over Landscape, 1977
charcoal on paper
29 1/2 × 38 1/2 inches
74.9 × 97.8 cm
(PK 32729)



Horizontal #7, 1976
charcoal on paper
29 1/2 × 41 1/2 inches
74.9 × 105.4 cm
(PK 32744)



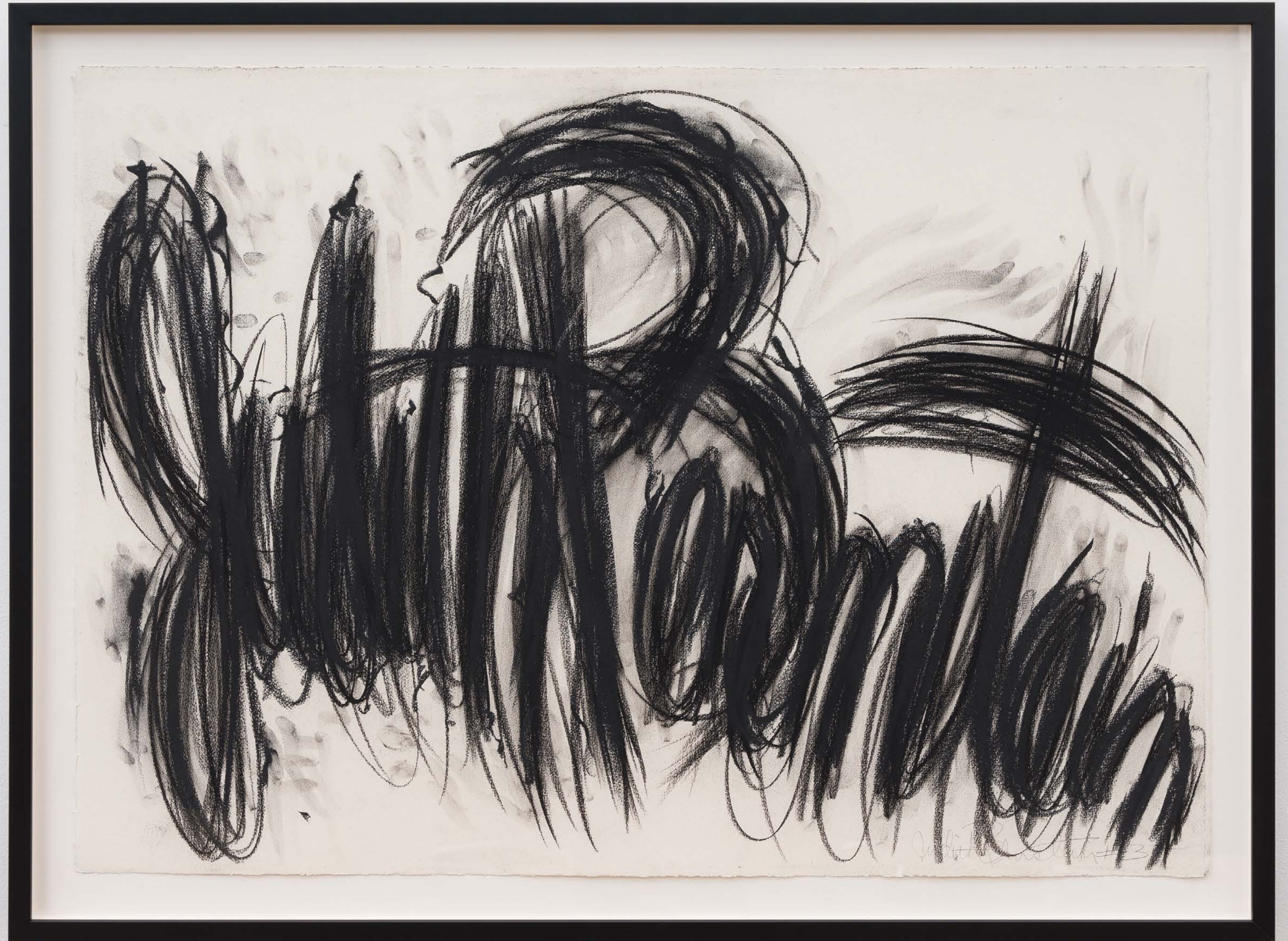
One Panel Vertical, 1977-78
charcoal on paper
120 × 52 3/4 inches
304.8 × 134 cm
(PK 28796)

Vertical #5, 1976
charcoal on paper
41 1/2 × 29 1/2 inches
105.4 × 74.9 cm
(PK 32745)





Vertical #3, 1976
charcoal on paper
41 1/2 × 29 1/2 inches
105.4 × 74.9 cm
(PK 32746)



Signature, 1995
charcoal on paper
29 1/2 × 41 1/2 inches
74.9 × 105.4 cm
(PK 32155)

“While I’m working, I just work. I go into my subconscious...my work is the psyche of the times.”

—Judith Bernstein to *Frieze*, 2025

Screw, 2024
lithograph
61 3/8 × 25 1/4 inches
156 × 64 cm
Edition of 30
(PKE 32779)





HORIZONTAL, 1977
black flocked print
22 × 30 inches
55.9 × 76.2 cm
Edition of 75
(PKE 32660)



HORIZONTAL, 1977
vermillion flocked print
22 × 30 inches
55.9 × 76.2 cm
Edition of 75
(PK 32778)

On View

Alexis Ralaivao: Éloge de l’ombre (In Praise of Shadows)

May 15–July 25, 2025
Opening Reception: Thursday, May 15, 6–8pm
509 West 27th Street, New York

Theodora Allen: Oak

May 7–July 25, 2025
Opening Reception: Wednesday, May 7, 6–8pm
297 Tenth Avenue, New York

Alma Allen on Park Avenue

May through September, 2025
Park Avenue Malls between E 52nd & E 70th Streets, New York

Locations
509 West 27th Street | 514 West 28th Street | 297 Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10001

Hours
Tuesday–Saturday
10am–6pm

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