

## Feeling the burn: artist hits the gym as mercury rises in Basel

Augustas Serapinas creates the ultimate Art Basel workout using plaster cast pieces



For the perfectly sculpted body: Augustas Serapinas swaps weights for plastercast works of art  
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It might be 30 degrees outside but the sweatiest attendees of the Unlimited opening at Art Basel were surely the performers of Augustas Serapinas's *Čiurlionis Gym* (2023). For the piece, a group of toned participants—including the artist himself—exercised with work-out equipment that uses plaster works of art instead of regular weights. Named after the Lithuanian university that Serapinas graduated from in 2013, the work draws parallels between the repetition that students at art school undergo in copying models to develop their technical skills, and that gym-goers do in lifting weights to build muscle.

The work is a feat of endurance, with the first performance lasting the full five hours of the Unlimited opening; 30-minute-long performances will take place across the next five days of Art Basel. “The weights are between three and eight kilograms,” Serapinas tells us mid-performance, pausing briefly to answer our burning questions. He says that he works out “four times a week” before glancing at his sizable biceps to gesture to the fruits of his labour.

“No wonder he has such good legs,” remarks one visitor. “He does work with huge ice sculptures, too; that’s probably a great work out as well,” adds the Berlin dealer Justin Polera. This work was earlier shown at Frieze London 2016; in the seven years since, Serapinas has risen in art-world esteem and was the youngest person to show at the Venice Biennale in 2019. His work is now presented by Tschudi and Apalazzo; Serapinas is represented by Emalin Gallery.