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## VULTURE

### Recession-Affected Art Basel Parties Fail to Incite Drunken Skinny-Dipping

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*Photo: Getty Images*

Simply put, Art Basel Miami is known for events that would shame Caligula. But the cost-cutting is noticeable this year. (Bottom line: Good art, but when it comes to parties, you're not missing much.) Many more events begin at ten and skip serving food outright. Design Miami's VIP lounge is a giant dried-grass-covered tiki hut by designers the Campagna brothers; a hostess explains, "It's not just grass, it's specially treated grass." So far, no one has ended up drunk and naked in the Raleigh pool, even after the Deitch party.

Stalwart Art Miami party hosts Cem Kinay (developer of Dellis Cay island in Turks and Caicos), Russell Simmons, collector Rosa de la Cruz, and Miami real-estate developer Craig Robins, who usually trump each other with the glamour of their events, all hosted small, exclusive, classy dinners or brunches. "It's so adult," said one bemused London author over truffled risotto. Sponsors have taken great pains to make it look like little has changed. At the famous UBS dinner, usually a testament to excess with sculpturelike piles of red lobsters on ice, this year they put out bowls made of ice, now brimming with lobster claws.

What does it matter? It was all a little sad, and with people looking to get away from talk of bailouts and the economy, the T-shirts worn by the Delano bellmen reading "Recess is on" didn't help.

Only the Russians didn't fail us. At a party co-sponsored by Phillips de Pury and Russian luxury-goods giant the Mercury Group — the occasion was the opening of the Bass Museum of Art show "Russian Dreams" — video art was projected on a giant beach ball and on white sheets whirled by a dancing ballerina, all floating nineteen floors up in the Gansevoort's rooftop pool. "It is very good, no?" asked host Simon de Pury. So good, it made us nostalgic.

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