

"Anne-Lise Coste at Eleven Rivington," *Mousse Magazine Online*, 2013.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Anne-Lise Coste at Eleven Rivington, New York



Anne-Lise Coste's exhibition at Eleven Rivington features new paintings executed primarily in spray-painted acrylic. In the main gallery, an immersive series of 12 black and white canvases based on details of Picasso's *Guernica* breaks down the highly complex and visually dense painting into singular appropriated and abstracted scenes. In the smaller second space of the gallery is a display of a new series of text-based works and abstract paintings. All share a unique balance of severity and airiness, in addition to sharp wit. Impulsiveness is characteristic for her work—often painting over previous attempts with gesso until satisfied.

Treating letters as units of words allow her to bypass the strict rules of language and convention. With her decisive use of a spray gun to articulate with pigment, she fuses the vitality of expressionism (direct and intuitive mark-making) with the aloofness of Pop (mechanized paint application). Coste frequently raises existential questions—the social and political content of Picasso's regarded masterpiece is undeniable—articulating them by cropping details, re-articulating or subverting specifics, or executing gestures or texts in the form of direct statements / re-statements that expose every single pore. The tangled whole of her practice is a many-voiced inner monologue, a maze whose paths seem to know only two ways out: either an implosion of meaning via repetition, or an explosion through pure overload.

"I was asking myself how to do an anti-war painting in 2013?"

It felt to me that the ability to talk about war has become way too nationalized: Palestinians can talk about Palestine, Syrians about Syria (and likewise with other societal problems: poor on poverty, women on feminism, other colors than white on racism).

Is being anti-war today only legitimate if you yourself are suffering from war?

For me, writing Syria on a painting is not being topical or in vogue.

After being commissioned by the Spanish republican government for their Pavilion in the World's Fair in Paris, *Guernica* was recognized very quickly by all viewers as a universal statement denouncing the horrors of war, its violence and absurdity, which we all know brings us nowhere.

I want to go somewhere.

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I don't want to believe the art and the artist cannot be critical and straightforward.

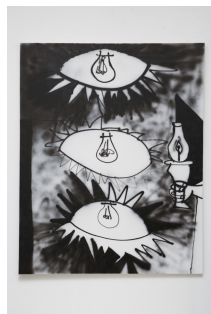
I hope my integrity is my power, I don't succumb to cynicism and disillusion, I re-assemble Guernica together, tableaux by tableaux.

Working freehand and having faith in the first gesture, I scream with the screamers: merde a la guerre."

– Anne-Lise Coste, 2013

at Eleven Rivington, New York

until 9 August 2013



Courtesy of Eleven Rivington, in cooperation with Nogueras Blanchard