

LISSON GALLERY

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Press Release

Angela de la Cruz
'Bare'

4 July – 18 August 2018
27 Bell Street, London
Opening: 3 July, 6 – 8pm

“I have been thinking about this concept of ‘Bare’ for some time – considering what is open to view, what is exposed, what the future holds.... I feel like we are walking into an unknown. The works in this show are all united through their bareness: be it perceptible openness or exposure – they all appear precarious, vulnerable and unprotected.”

– Angela de la Cruz, 2018

A new body of work makes up Angela de la Cruz’s exhibition at Lisson Gallery, her third solo presentation with the gallery in London. Titled ‘Bare’, the exhibition explores the vulnerability we are subjected to in the contemporary world – at a universal and individual level – and tries to offer a solution to the underlying uncertainty that represents our era.

This new body of work embodies de la Cruz’s oeuvre, overflowing with emotion, tension and humour. Asking “when is a painting not a painting?”, the artist’s work takes on a third dimension, free from the boundaries of the canvas and liberated from the formal constraints of painting. While embracing a minimalist approach that employs the use of monochromatic colour and repetition, the titles of the work – *Bare*, *Crates*, *Shutters*... – reflect the visceral and figurative nature of her paintings.

Like many of de la Cruz’s previous work, these new series characterise a strong sense of the human body. Her violent and radical interventions enhance a performative element in her practice – physically ripping, stretching, crushing and tearing the material. Usually kept smooth and pliant, de la Cruz breaks with convention by deforming the stretcher and piercing its flat edifice, unleashing it into the three-dimensional realm. In the artist’s words, “the body is making and negotiating space for itself”. Just as the body suffers from the bounds of mortality, de la Cruz’s works are a representation of this exposed materiality, relying on an emotional relationship between strength and fragility, between the beautiful and the broken.

Conceiving the exhibition like an album of songs, de la Cruz titled the exhibition after a series of new works. Her *Bare* canvas is cut open around the frame and then reattached, allowing for the structure underneath to be revealed. The artist described how she wanted to “imply that suggested gap – that hidden space – where everything seems transitional, impermanent.” Similarly, another body of work from the series, *Shutters* – the title alluding to security, privacy and prohibition – suggests an action: a movement of ‘shutting down’ and hurrying to close a space. The exhibition also includes a number of works from de la Cruz’s *Crates* series: hollow, cavernous, aluminium forms which have been crushed and warped to fit into smaller boxes. As in all her works, there is an undercurrent of tension and violence at play, which contrasts with the artist’s contemplative and meditative painting process.

Colour is a significant element of de la Cruz’s practice, and for this exhibition she has specifically selected hues for her works that correspond with the theme and atmosphere of the exhibition. From burgundy to caribbean blue, the tones align with the forms to emphasise the poignant and sombre characteristics of these pieces.

About Angela de la Cruz

Angela de la Cruz disrupts the gallery with unruly works that sit between painting and sculpture. She engages with the discourse about the ‘problem’ with painting by targeting its basic anatomy: the stretcher, normally left to its job of keeping the canvas smooth and pliant. De la Cruz breaks convention, quite literally, by mangling the stretcher and piercing the flat edifice of the canvas to unleash it into three-dimensional space. Slashed, twisted and reformed into something approaching sculpture, there is a dark humour at play: “The moment I cut through the canvas I get rid of the grandiosity of painting”, she says. Convention punctured, her works seem to mimic aspects of human behaviour or states of mind – cowering, cringing, surviving – and, more recently, this sense of human scale has been bolstered by works incorporating items of domestic furniture, such as chairs and tables. Prostrate on the floor or hanging on the wall like macabre trophies, they are evidence of a violent process and, as such, confront it as something thrilling, fearsome and, whether soiled or slick, just beneath the surface.

Turner-Prize nominee, Angela de la Cruz was born in A Coruña in Galicia, northwest Spain in 1965 and lives and works in London. She studied Philosophy at the University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain (1987) before moving to London, where she obtained a BA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, London, UK (1994) and an MA in Sculpture and Critical Theory from the Slade, London, UK (1996). Solo exhibitions include PEER, London, (2016); Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden (2016); Fundación Luis Seoane, A Coruña, Spain (2015); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2010); Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, Spain (2005); Museo de Arte Contemporanea de Vigo and Annex Space MARCO, Spain (2004). She was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2010 and is the recipient of the 2017 Premio Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Spain.

Angela de la Cruz will present a new exhibition this autumn at Azkuna Zentroa, the multidisciplinary space of the City Council of Bilbao, curated by Carolina Grau, opening 25 October 2018.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and develops 59 international artists across two exhibition spaces in London and two in New York. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt and Richard Long, before introducing a generation of significant British sculptors, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. In addition to a number of renowned artist estates, including Roy Colmer, the Leon Polk Smith Foundation, the John Latham Foundation and the Estate of Antonio Calderera, the gallery represents leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller and Tatsuo Miyajima. It is also responsible for raising the profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza and Wael Shawky.

Angela de la Cruz’s previous exhibitions at the gallery are documented in Lisson Gallery’s 50th anniversary publication, which launched last year to coincide with the gallery’s anniversary. For further information, please ask at reception or contact the gallery via the details below.

For press enquiries, please contact

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