

COCLICO

Photos by Alyssa Greenberg for Coclico

Coclico visits Lolita Cros at The Wing

Paris-born, New York-based art consultant Lolita Cros is elevating the voices of women with her distinct curatorial point of view. As a successful independent curator, Lolita is also becoming widely known for her work as The Wing's art consultant. There, she curates the work of women artists which are proudly displayed at each of their locations throughout New York City and newly-opened DC outpost. A true woman of the arts, we're excited by her mission of promoting emerging voices and making art more accessible. We recently met with this Coclico woman at The Wing SoHo to see her in action and to discuss "slow" creativity, uniform style, and her forever items.



Meet Lolita

My name is Lolita Cros; I'm an independent art curator and art dealer based in New York. I was born and raised in Paris, but I also lived in Casablanca (Morocco) for a bit. I moved to New York when I was 16. I curate shows in unusual spaces (Chinese restaurants, a vacant apartment, an ice skating rink, a construction site to name a few) with both established and emerging artists.

More recently I have been working with The Wing as their curator and advisor, which has been incredibly exciting and has allowed me to present works by world-renowned female artists alongside newly-graduated college students.



Woman of the Arts

Art for me is a very important tool: both educational and sentimental. People cry while watching a movie, dance to music, laugh at comedy, and for some reason, the reactions towards visual art always seems a bit contrived. It's almost like people feel like they need a Ph.D. to have an emotional response to a painting. I try to challenge that as much as I can, as I often think that the best questions and reactions to art come from people who know nothing about it. My family is not in the art world; they appreciate art, sometimes buy it, but are not connoisseurs. So I think about them a lot when I curate, I try to make my shows accessible to the "general" public. I want my ten-year-old niece to understand what's going on but I also want a scholar to see the depth of the artworks presented.



The Salon at The Wing

I think about The Salon at The Wing more as a private collection than a classic group show. This gives me a rare opportunity to show pieces across multiple mediums and genres in a (semi) public space that is unconventional. The Wing is a second home for a lot of women, and I want them to build a relationship with and find inspiration from the art surrounding them. It's very impactful being able to show up and coming artists alongside established names. In the same room, I can have a piece by Senga Nengudi (currently at the Whitney Museum) and Alba Hodson who is an emerging British painter. And I see members getting excited about the kind of access they have to those masterpieces. For them to know that despite Nancy Spero's four upcoming major museum exhibitions we still have one of her most iconic works for sale in our DC location is so special!

Working on so many projects at the same time also forces me to do a ton of research, which is another aspect of my job that is extremely rewarding. I reached out to artists on Instagram, but also to a lot of artists from the 2017 Brooklyn Museum exhibition "Black Radical Women," which is how I ended up with pieces by Lorraine O'Grady and Coreen Simpson among others. Following up, I was shocked to see how many artists in that show didn't have representation in the United States. It really emphasized the inequalities for women, particularly women of color, in the art world.

Paris and New York

It's funny because it was during a studio visit with Clara Claus, a French artist featured in The Wing DC Salon, that I fully understood the difference between France and the United States. She was saying that in France they teach you how to think before you produce anything; to explain what you are about to do, write papers about it and present your case. Whereas in the U.S. you are expected to convince people with your actions: show first and explain later. I think about that a lot when I work on a new project.



Forever Items

I can confidently say that all the art I bought so far will stay with me forever. The first piece I bought was by Jayson Musson, and it was right after his solo show at Salon 94, I loved the story behind the piece, and it really illustrated the climate of the art world then. The second piece was by Louis Heilbronn; I bought it after I curated his first NY solo show. The last two I bought were by Devra Freeland and Tessa Perutz who both have pieces in various Wing locations. Each piece is quintessential to each artist, but was also bought when I felt like their career or line of work was about to shift.



Uniform Dressing I'm all for dressing simply and accessorizing. I never buy anything new except for shoes and bags. These pants are from Proenza Schouler and are a hand-me-down from my friend Drake Burnette; my shirt probably belongs to my mother or my mother-in-law. So I like to elevate the whole silhouette with a new pair of colorful shoes.

Slow Creativity It's easy to follow trends when you're dealing with art (and even with fashion). I select pieces that I know for sure both the viewer and I won't get sick of. If a piece is aesthetically pleasing, I question its depth: is this something I could write a 10-page paper on? Do I like it because of the colors or because it moves me, and if so, why?

