

domino

By Sara Radin
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How The Wing's Curator Masters the Art of Art Collecting

Plus, her tips on buying your own art.



*We're constantly searching for on-the-rise tastemakers who inspire and guide us with their ingenuity. In our **New Voices** franchise, we shine the spotlight on emerging leaders who are shaping the design industry. Consider this the new class of creatives.*

Born in Paris, Lolita Cros began her curatorial practice while she was just a student studying art history at Bard College in upstate New York. Noticing the many talented (and undiscovered!) students in her classes, Cros began scheduling studio visits with them, wanting to find ways to showcase them. By her sophomore year of college, she curated her first exhibition, which took place in an empty apartment just a few minutes from campus.



That experience made her transition from campus curation to larger projects far more feasible. “I was like, you know what, if it’s easy to put on a show in Tivoli, New York, let’s try to do this in New York City,” Cros laughs. After graduating from college in 2013, Cros banded together with a group of friends to open an exhibition benefitting the victims of Hurricane Sandy, showcasing pieces by 20 artists, both established and emerging. Since then, the curator has made this juxtaposition of artists a recurring feature in her work.

Then in 2016, Cros joined the women-led coworking space, The Wing, as a member. “I remember looking around the Flatiron location and seeing they had some art on the walls,” she recalls. When the company announced the opening of its SoHo location in 2017, she reached out and expressed interest in bringing her curatorial experience to the space.

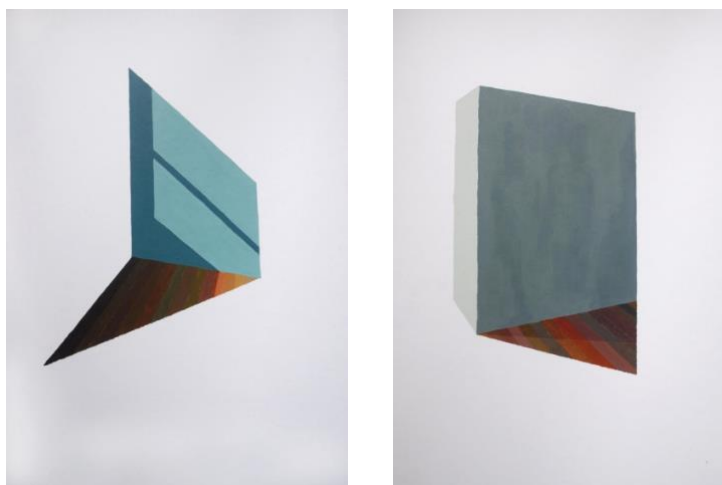


“Lobster Lunch” & “Plastic Menagerie” by Emma Ressel

While female artists have long been excluded from many spaces, Cros helped The Wing launch its Salon program, a permanent exhibition across all the company’s spaces with rotating artworks by female artists such as Marilyn Minter, Jenny Holzer, and Senga Nengudi. On top of this, she also moderates a series of talks within the spaces with many of the featured artists, giving them a platform to share more about their practice. In just two years, the Salon has already shown over 215 artworks by 75 female-identifying artists.

Her Objective

In her first New York City exhibit, Cros found that pairing the work of big-name artists with that of more emerging creatives helped draw the interest of larger audiences and collectors, getting great exposure for the lesser-known names in the space. “I thought it was a really empowering way to present art and change people’s minds,” she says. This practice has since become a trademark of the rising curator.



“Shadow 3” & “Shadow 2” by Adrienne Tarver

Cros wanted to make art more accessible to audiences by taking it out of the museum context and placing it into more genuine spaces like The Wing, in addition to showing that art doesn't necessarily have to be expensive.

Her Work

Cros is currently working with The Wing to bring art to the walls of all of its new spaces, including the upcoming locations in Boston and Chicago. To source new artists, Cros spends ample time searching through Instagram and researching local art scenes to find out which residencies and exhibits are happening. Then, she schedules studio visits in the cities where a new location is opening.



She's particularly interested in art that isn't just concerned about aesthetics. With this, she looks for work by artists who are creating pieces that have a deeper meaning. On top of this, she also helps the featured artists negotiate contracts and sales.



"Amor" & "Faible" by February James

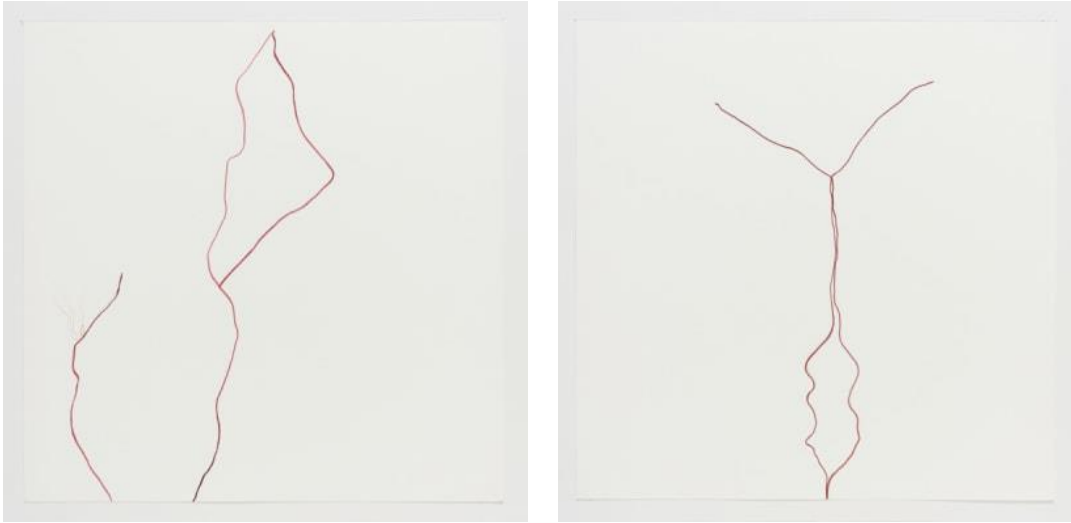
More than this, Cros enjoys sharing images of the artists she meets with and their work on her Instagram feed, giving people a view into her creative process. Currently, she's building a digital project where these intimate and inspiring experiences will be shared on her YouTube channel monthly, which is set to launch at the end of March.

Her Advice

When purchasing art or starting your own collection, Cros recommends first learning about local art through exhibitions, open studios, or graduate shows. From there, she says to start talking with artists about potentially buying something and get the conversation going.



While you might think you're buying something you don't need, Cros says to start thinking about the smaller things you might spend money on (like that midday latte). "If you saved that money after a year, you can put that toward buying a piece of artwork," she offers. It's also worth noting that art is worth investing in since it gains value over time.



"Untitled" & "Untitled" by Alba Hodsoll

Cros also says it's helpful to spend time figuring out what *you* like since everyone has their own taste. "I think art is subjective, so something I might consider incredibly tacky could still do really well at an auction," she notes.

Though people may still feel intimidated by the process of buying art, Cros says the best thing to do is to start by asking questions. "It's not scary—it's actually really interesting and stimulating," she says. "It can even be funny sometimes."