



LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

MARA DE LUCA CRUISE COLLECTION 2013

Premiere: Saturday, February 23, 6 p.m.
February 23 through March 30, 2013

Luis De Jesus Los Angeles is pleased to announce **CRUISE COLLECTION 2013: New Paintings by Mara De Luca**, premiering Saturday, February 23rd, at 6:00 p.m. The show will remain on view through March 30, 2013.



Graphic chic. Sketched from essential lines. Sculpted by optical combinations. Ignited by striking flashes of light. For Cruise Collection 2013, a modern bon ton by Mara De Luca.

"For Cruise Collection 2013, I have created the poetic drama and darkly romantic mood of Rainer Maria Rilke's existential poetry while re-examining visual codes through a contemporary lens," explains De Luca. "I set out to contaminate the styles and conventions of Minimalist Abstraction and Romantic Painting with a new vision: conceptual rigor imbued with the facile seduction and sublime effect of high fashion advertisement."

A mix-and-match inclination of diverse aesthetics installed and experienced as a single visual event. A ready-made approach towards the monochrome. Poured clouds. Macro brushmarks. Collaged fabric overlays, transparent and opaque. Ruptured illusion. A romantic gesture.¹

Cruise Collection 2013 is Mara De Luca's second solo exhibition with Luis De Jesus Los Angeles. It represents her current project, "Elegies", which takes inspiration from Rilke's "Duino Elegies" (1912-22), recognized by scholars as his most important work. Rilke's ten elegies are an impassioned monologue discussing the limitations and insufficiency of the human condition. De Luca's response to Rilke's cry of despair ("*Who, if I cried out, would hear me among the hierarchies of angels?*") invokes its own philosophical struggle befitting our highly commodified existence: "*Beauty or suffering?*" "*Haute couture or fractured consciousness?*"

Mara De Luca's work investigates the history and visual language of abstract painting, and is a reflection on contemporary mass media expressed through diverse pictorial, conceptual and technical conventions. The "Elegies" series comprises ten painting "types" that mimic digitally rendered atmospheric imagery—



LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

what might be described as "hyper-analog" representations of light and space. The paintings are generated through paint pours onto unprimed canvas; the poured image is then overlaid with a semi-transparent fabric—a *ready-made* fade. Removed from its original context, the material loses its function as a fashion accessory and becomes a central figure in the work; its synthetic quality simulates an appropriate metaphor for our contemporary, yet superficial visual culture.²



De Luca addresses existential questions through an art historical lens, drawing upon various painting conventions: she reinvents the techniques of late 20th century modernist painters, recreates the minimal atmospheric effects of the California Light and Space movement and simulates nature's Romantic sky setting. The underlying current that runs through these diverse art styles is one of transcendental experience. For De Luca, Abstraction, Minimalism and Romanticism as referenced in the "Elegies" are tools used to mine the history of painting's rich visual language, to reaffirm the longstanding notion of art as an instrument to transcend chaos and to re-define its place in a contemporary and undeniably digital landscape.³

Mara De Luca was born 1973 in Washington, D.C., and lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her MFA from California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA, and BA from Columbia University, New York. De Luca has exhibited in museums and galleries in the U.S. and Europe. Recent and forthcoming exhibitions include *Stations* (a series of fourteen paintings inspired by Barnett Newman's *Stations of the Cross*,) at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; *Searchin': Los Angeles and the Quest for the Sublime*, curated by Mary Coyne, at Angels Gate Cultural Center, San Pedro, CA; and *Elegies*, an exhibition of new hybrid prints, created during her 2012-13 residency at Irvine Fine Arts Center, Irvine, CA, opening March 9th, 2013.

For further information, please contact the Gallery at +1-310-838-6000, or email: gallery@luisdejesus.com.

IMAGES:

Top: *Elegy IX (sv)*, 2012, acrylic and collage on canvas, 48 x 42 in.

Bottom: Studio view with the artist and *Elegy I.I*, 2012, acrylic and collage on canvas, 72 x 108 in. Photo by Charles DeRosa.

¹ This statement was adapted from the original press release for the Gucci Women's Cruise Collection 2012 and is offered as a tongue-in-cheek nod to De Luca's source inspiration: the seductive manipulation of words, images and graphics in today's media, the ascendancy of art as "fashion", and the continued influence of Rainer Maria Rilke's poetry upon a retail contemporary sublime.

^{2,3} Wojas, Gosia, "Requiem for Sublime", October 26, 2012. Los Angeles.