

# NO MORE TEARS

French-born artist Claire Tabouret takes on Picasso's *Weeping Woman* masterpiece.

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SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THE FRANKLIN Hills-based painter Claire Tabouret was on the way to her Frogtown studio, when, drawn by the San Gabriel Mountains, she just kept on driving. Passing through desert destinations like Joshua Tree she eventually found herself in historic 29 Palms, and the next day—following the suggestion of a stranger she met at a local bar—she purchased an old gold miner's cabin on five acres of off-the-grid land located outside of Pioneertown. The cabin was mysterious; beautiful and dirty at the same time. Inspired by the old clothing, furniture and tools seemingly abandoned in the cabin, she dug into Gold Rush archives to uncover the history of the place and its people, a theme that grew into the topic of her show "Eclipse," on view at Night Gallery last year.

The evolution of the works in "Eclipse" is indicative of Tabouret's creative process. Long before any paint is applied to the canvas, she develops a conceptual framework using a combination of mythology, history and autobiography. She then builds thematic photographic archives and consults historical online libraries in order to determine the posture, gestures and clothing of the strongly defined characters that populate her works.

Tabouret has always known that she wanted to be an artist. Born in southern France, she spent her childhood in Montpellier where she decorated her bedroom with images of Impressionist paintings, examining them intensely for their visual vocabulary. "Sometimes I would find that a composition I've made came from one of these in a very intuitive way," she says of her early influences.

At 19, Tabouret moved to Paris to attend the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, graduating in 2006. In 2015, she jumped on a plane and went to Los Angeles for the first time. "In LA I feel the voice that you can hear is the voice of the artists and the thinkers," she says of her adopted home. "The way I move in my mind here is different. You feel like there is still empty space between buildings and between streets, and even driving around my mind is more able to come up with new ideas. I don't feel saturation."

Up next for Tabouret is a two-part show this fall in France, where she will confront Picasso's *Weeping Woman* as well as her own complicated relationship to the iconic artist. Titled "I'm Crying Because You Are Not Crying," the exhibition will take over Almine Rech's Paris gallery as well as Picasso's former studio in Gisors. Reacting viscerally to Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, Tabouret studied images of wrestling competitions that she used as references to physically represent the push and pull of power struggles—whether that struggle is between people, an individual and their place in history, or someone and their future.

Now painting on black supports on variously sized canvases, Tabouret is playing more with abstraction and has created a group of new plaster sculptures to be included in the shows. Pushing to create something different from her former portraits, Tabouret is exploring the opposing forces in relationships while simultaneously owning the idea of *Weeping Woman*.



Claire Tabouret in her studio as she prepares for her two-part exhibition this fall, in which the artist reconsiders Picasso's *Weeping Woman*.