

# ARTFORUM

## Rosemarie Castoro

BROADWAY 1602 | UPTOWN

5 E. 63rd Street, 1ABC

September 12, 2015–September 30, 2015

When Rosemarie Castoro appears in art history, it's often as a footnote to Carl Andre, her husband for six years in the 1960s. This installation in her former loft, where she lived and worked from 1964 until her death this May, challenges Castoro's preterition in boy's-club accounts of minimalism. Culled largely from the '60s and '70s, the selection maps her movement from large-scale, pencil-scored canvases to raw materials, sourced from the hardware store and disposed in three dimensions.

Castoro conceived gray as an achromatic color, its austerity palliative of Pop's syrupy, synthetic palette. Her art emerges as a study in its qualities: the sheen of aluminum, the density of graphite, or the bulk of stainless steel. *Spine on its Side*, 1970, consists of six hinged Masonite panels coated with gesso and modeling paste. Brushed with a broom when wet, then rubbed with graphite when dry, its surface is sinewy and dense, like roughage run through the digestive system. Part of the series, "Free-Standing Walls," 1970, the piece posits painting as a function of sculpture, using the process of preparing a canvas—priming and underdrawing—to build a structure in low relief. Grisaille in hue and hatched in texture, it is a crusty chiaroscuro, extruded into sculptural space.

For Castoro, paint figured not as a medium of transformation but as a muck to be pushed through. The broom's tracks through pigment in *Spine on its Side* register as incisions, heightening the title's relay to the vertebrate body. Nearby, five black-and-white photographs image the artist as she drags a roll of aluminum through the streets of SoHo. The performance, *Gates of Troy*, 1969, analogizes the unfurling of metal to the parading of Hector's corpse, with Castoro cast as a vengeful Achilles. Its conceit invites us to imagine other of Castoro's objects as ravaged bodies, scabby and sutured.



View of "Rosemarie Castoro: Loft Show," 2015.

— Courtney Fiske

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