

THOMAS LÉLU

CALM DOWN IT'S JUST ART

17 April - 14 June 2025



CALM DOWN, 2025
Spray on canvas
80 x 60 cm (31 1/2 x 23 5/8 in)

Zidoun-Bossuyt Gallery is pleased to present *Calm Down It's Just Art's* French artist Thomas Lélú t's exhibition in Dubai. *Calm Down It's Just Art* will open on 17 April and will be on view through 14 June 2025.

Thomas Lélú's oeuvre masterfully interweaves photography, installation art, and textual elements. His artistic pursuits frequently involve the appropriation and recontextualization of imagery from popular culture and media. Through his work, Lélú interrogates themes of contemporary society, consumerism, and media representation. As an artist with a peripatetic practice, he intentionally obscures the demarcation between professional and amateur, thereby challenging and desacralizing the status of the Contemporary Visual Artist. Nonetheless, Lélú adheres to scrupulous protocols of research, selection, extraction, and organization of images and words, which constitute the substratum of his work before they are metamorphosed and transposed. This methodology of exploration, archiving, and contextualization positions Thomas Lélú as one of the archaeologists of our present epoch.

Highly active on social networks, Lélú transforms the digital realm into his boundless studio and laboratory. His words, whether slogans, declarations, or poems, evoke haikus in their brevity and mantras in their didactic profundity. Despite their ostensibly naive appearance, marked by orthographic errors, these texts retain a nonchalance that has become his hallmark.

As a metaphor for the artist utilizing available means, Lélú employs rudimentary tools such as paper and pen to communicate within contemporary systems. An inadvertent influencer, he harnesses modern platforms to reach the broadest audience in real-time. Exposing himself vulnerably, he undertakes significant risks daily. Analogous to a 21st-century Arte Povera artist, he engages with modest materials such as discarded cardboard, upon which he spray-paints declarations. By reviving the protest ideals and the fusion of art and life from the 1960s-1970s Fluxus movement and Allan Kaprow, his cardboard works integrate art into the streets and vice versa. With a touch of irony, he subverts these protest attitudes with slogans reflective of our disillusioned era. Ultra-contemporary, Lélú apprehends the transitory nature of the modern world, where moments are ephemeral, dissipating into the vast expanse of digital information.

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Lelu (1976, Seclin) is a French contemporary artist, exhibition curator, photographer, and fiction author. Trained at Ensad (National School of Decorative Arts), Thomas Lélú is also a communications teacher at the Penninghen school in Paris. His visual work has been exhibited in numerous galleries and museums around the world. He has published five novels, including *Le Parisien* (Flammarion), as well as essays such as *The Manual of the Failed Photo* (Léo Scheer) and *After* (Sternberg Press).