

**Below: Anita Glesta, *Gernika/Guernica*, 2007–13. Steel, bronze, controller board, sensor, and speaker, steel boxes: 12 x 22 x 10 in. each.**

memory. From her experience came this multi-part, immersive work, which includes interviews with five survivors of the Guernica bombings and a woman who lived in the region, all children at the time and now in their 70s and 80s. They tell their stories simply but movingly, and it is intriguing to note what they remembered and how those memories must have been shaped, reshaped, and fixed in the years that followed—part fact, part fiction. For the Sackler installation, eight steel boxes in the guise of 1930s radios were placed throughout a spacious outdoor courtyard. The boxes are distinguished by small bronze figures taken from Picasso's *Guernica*—an oak leaf, symbol of Basque independence; bull horns; a horse's rump; a shattered heart, symbol of grief; or the artist's hands and feet, emblematic of creativity and pilgrimage—images of carnage but also of humanity and culture. Each box narrates the testimony of a witness, like a Greek chorus.

Inside the gallery, images of the

interviewees were projected on a large wall facing the courtyard; a river-like stream of red light on the floor below was filled with projected shapes suggesting the blitz of papers that fell from the WTC or the pamphlets airdropped by Franco supporters after the bombardment, propaganda blaming the Spanish Republicans for the strike. One side gallery featured a video of horses and bulls, referring to those in *Guernica*, with vistas of pastures and sky, as well as a mug imprinted with a reproduction of the painting ironically displayed in a vitrine like a precious artifact. The other side gallery showed Glesta's video of 9/11 footage and archival material about the bombing of Guernica. She has essentially deconstructed Picasso's painting, questioning the agency of images—even one as universally iconic as *Guernica*—and their power to convey, condemn, and disarm violence; she also explores how that agency is altered through repetition and constant reproduction into cliché and kitsch. Glesta obviously believes that art has a political effect, but her presentation, without heroic images, suggests that its influence is fluid, populist, human, and contingent, making any agency it might possess complicated and incalculable.

—Lily Wei

## BEIJING

### Anita Glesta

#### Arthur M. Sackler Museum of Art and Archaeology

Anita Glesta's multimedia installation, *Gernika/Guernica*, stitches together two earthshaking events, the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001 and the bombardment of Guernica in 1937. It was first shown in New York in 2007 at the Chase Manhattan Plaza and White Box in Chelsea. Since then, it has traveled to the Instituto Cervantes in Belgrade, Serbia, in 2008; the Museo Nacional de Antropología in La Paz, Bolivia, in 2009; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, Poland, in 2012; and Beijing's Sackler Museum of Art and Archaeology in 2013, where it inaugurated the Dame Jillian Sackler International Artists Exhibition Program.

Glesta lived across the street from the World Trade Center and fled the collapse of the towers, an indelible

