

L & M ARTS

660 Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA 90291

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Gather (one million), detail, 2008-2010

LIZA LOU

March 26 – May 7, 2011

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 26, 2011, 6-8 pm

There is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in. - Leonard Cohen

L&M Arts proudly presents the first exhibition by Los Angeles artist Liza Lou in her home city, since her solo exhibition at the Santa Monica Museum of Art in 1998.

For the past six years, Liza Lou has maintained a studio in Durban, South Africa where she works with Zulu artisans whose families have worked with beads for generations. While Lou does not borrow from the tradition of African beadwork, this new body of work reflects her travels, meditating upon process, the impossibility of perfection, and what Lou terms “the culpability of craft.”

In the East gallery, Lou presents the monumental sculpture *Gather (one million)*, a shimmering 150-square foot golden field made from nine million beads in varying shades of gold which were threaded onto cut wire to make one million blades of grass. Its painterly freedom evokes the seasonal regeneration of landscape and the abundance of harvest but a closer examination reveals a more minimalist methodology. Lou systematically counted, weighed, blended and divided the blades into equal wheat-like sheaves. She then tied each bundle with hemp twine, labeled and numbered each one and then following a geometric grid, simply stood them upon the floor.

Lou uses geometric structures in many of the pieces in the exhibition in order to reveal the humanity underlying repetitive labor, resulting in works whose imperfections display ineffable beauty and human tenderness. One work, for example, titled *horse-shitting, hair-splitting, nit-picking, piss trickling*,ⁱ consists of a grid of beaded white squares which Lou pieced together with 24 karat gold beads to make a single sheet and then stretched like canvas. Imperfections become apparent in the making—the squares become rectangular, surfaces become dirty and misshapen; holes and pockmarks appear.

Another canvas, titled *Lost, Found*, is made of debris-covered beads the artist has collected from her studio floors over the past five years. The rejected silver beads, woven into various sized bandage-like strips were then painstakingly re-assembled and stretched to create a shimmering variegated whole.

The Book of Days is a deceptively simple monolithic stack. The sculpture is comprised of 365 single sheets of silver bead-woven “paper,” each made over a period of one year, and then stacked one on top of another. Only the top sheet is fully visible leaving the investment of time, workmanship and skill needed to weave each individual sheet not readily visible. The result is an intense work that seems to distill a sense of longing, as though our days are incandescent and ungraspable, compressed one on top of another and forgotten.

Liza Lou was born in New York City in 1969 and has lived in Los Angeles since 1990. She has had numerous solo exhibitions, including the Stiftung museum kunst palast, Düsseldorf; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo; White Cube, London; Aspen Art Museum, and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Group shows include The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Serpentine, London; Biennale d’art Contemporain de Lyon, and Taipei Biennale, among many others. The Dakis Joannou Collection, Cleveland Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Fondation Cartier, the Olbricht Collection, the François Pinault Foundation, and the Brant Foundation are but a few of the international collections that own her work. In 2002, she was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

A fully illustrated catalogue with texts by Francine Prose and Michael Duncan will be published to accompany the exhibition.

Rizzoli will publish a comprehensive monograph on the work of Liza Lou in March 2011.

GALLERY INFORMATION: L&M Arts, Los Angeles, 660 Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, 90291. Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 - 5:30 and by appointment. For additional information, please contact L&M Arts at: +1.310.821.6400 or visit our website: www.lmgallery.com.

1 ⁱ The title is excerpted from the letter that Sol Le Witt wrote to Eva Hesse, in which he advised, “You belong in the most secret part of you. Don’t worry about cool. Make your own uncool.”