

## LIZA LOU | EVERYTHING MORE IDEAL

The work is about a certain type of amplification — I've always felt that beads are a way to bring something further into view — it makes more of something. There's that Pessoa poem about flowers being more flowers than flowers, and here, I'm making the heroics of Abstraction even more heroic, and there's joy in it, and a sense of humor.

I love watching footage of the NY school — predominantly men, in suits, with cigarettes and this very serious conversation, like they are talking about nuclear physics. When I was a young artist, I didn't approach art as part of the patriarchal lineage — it felt important to strike out into a wilder territory, using non-traditional material, and to play with what could be — and was — often construed as "girl art." In this uncharted field, I felt like I could say something about what was overlooked and undermined. And it was a good position — it meant that when someone misunderstood or said the work was "merely decorative," I could have the last laugh — it was a strategy that included misunderstanding as a form of comment upon what is seen and not seen, what is and what is not taken seriously, or permitted, and it was always about valorizing whatever it was I was putting my hand to.

So now, thinking about Abstraction and applying the material to a form of spontaneity and gesture and stroke that very clearly references the heroics and fetishization of the paint stroke, I'm really interested in what is possible with the material, how it works, how colors relate to one another, the limitations inherent in the material; you can't blend it or rinse it, and it's a limited palette — once it's down on canvas, it's very hard to get rid of it, so it involves this improv, where each stroke requires everything I have, my full attention — I'm hanging on every breath while I work, this tightrope walk, and so this valorization of the paint stroke somehow feels apt — these aren't accidents, each stroke becomes monumental — this kind of violin-crescendo-here-comes-a-brush-stroke-feeling.

I listen to Maria Callas a lot when I work — the human body at full capacity, operating at the top of her range. That's what I aspire to — I want every stroke to feel as though it matters, so there's this gravity and at the same time, a feeling of play. There's a Zen thing to that, paying attention to every moment, looking at things from a microscopic, cellular level, but that starts to feel doctrinaire and removed — and basically, I want people to get off when they look at my work!

For me, this sun, these meadows and  
these flowers are enough. But if they  
weren't enough, What I would want is  
a sun more sun than the sun,  
Meadows more meadows than these

Meadows, Flowers more flowers than  
these flowers—Everything more ideal  
than what it is, in the same way and  
same manner! That thing over there  
more there than it is!  
— Fernando Pessoa