



CALIFORNIA STYLE

ASIA CHOW

THE YOUNG
SCION FINDS
HER VOICE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
INEZ & VINOODH

STATE OF THE ART

STERLING RUBY, ALEX PRAGER,
CATHERINE OPIE, PIERO GOLIA AND ALEX ISRAEL
SHARE THEIR FRAMES OF MIND

SHOW AND TELL FROM A COLLECTOR'S
MANSE IN HOLMBY HILLS TO
MOBY'S MINIMALIST ABODE IN LOS FELIZ

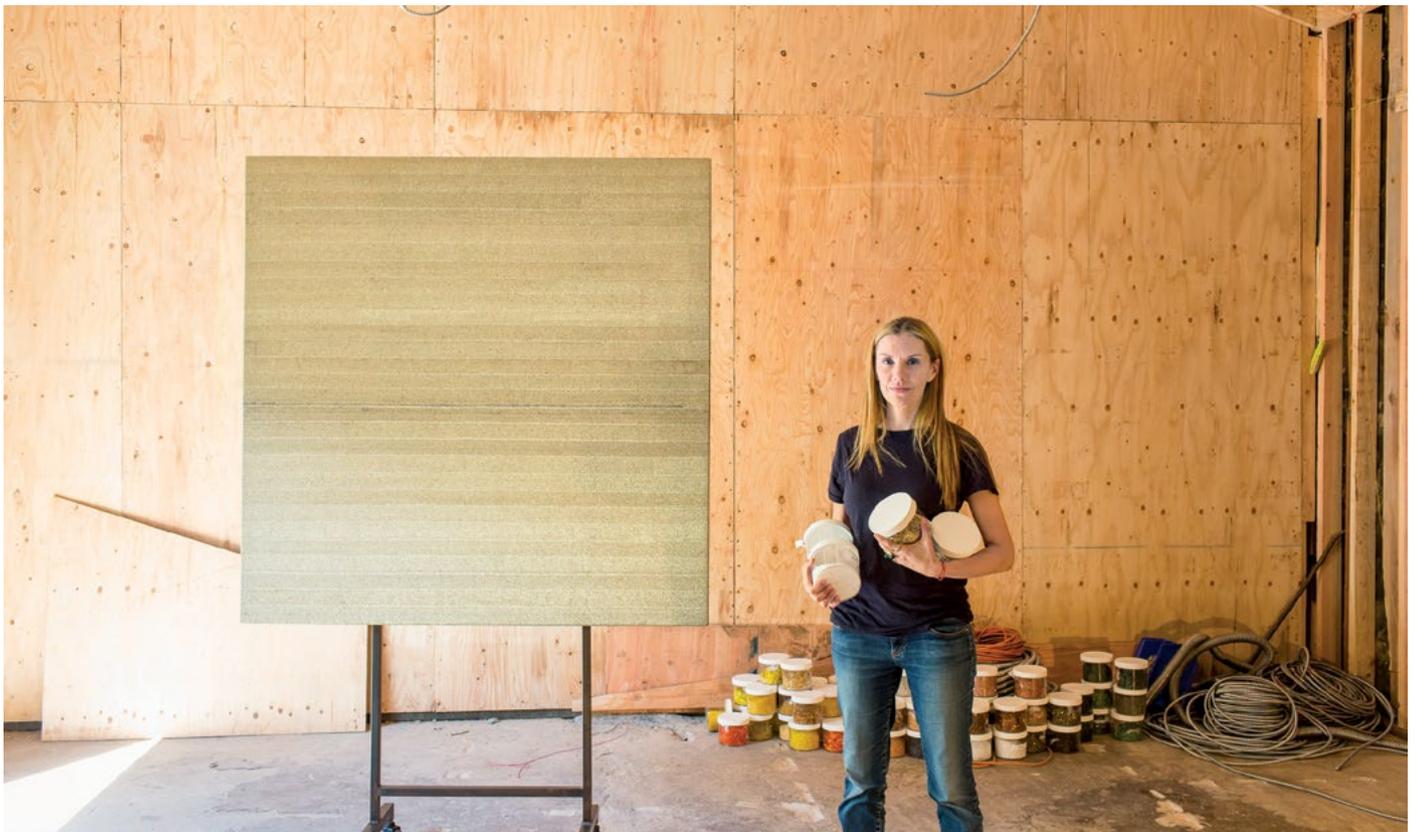
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Small Wonder Working on a microscopic level, Topanga-based artist Liza Lou makes magic, one tiny glass bead at a time **BY MELISSA GOLDSTEIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY NICOLE LAMOTTE**



COLOR FIELD: PABLO MASON

EDITED BY AMANDA TISCH WEITZMAN

FROM TOP A detail of Liza Lou's *Color Field*, 2011-2013. Lou stands next to a recent beaded work, *Vapor Solid*, 2012-2014, in her workshop.

DESIGN

BELOW FROM LEFT An array of Liza Lou's glass-bead supplies. Lou's studio was designed by her husband, Mick Haggerty, and modeled after Freud's office. Lou at work on a drawing.



"I hate to even say the word," confesses Liza Lou, taking a cross-legged seat on an earthy floor cushion in her midcentury-meets-Zen Topanga Canyon studio. "Beads. It carries this kitsch connotation—instantly you think of something tacky." The source of Lou's lexical turnoff is also her medium of choice: For 25 years, she's been synonymous with the material, both embracing and upending its low-art connotations.

It began with her debut magnum opus, *Kitchen*, 1991-1996, a five-years-in-the-making, 168-square-foot, room-size sculpture featuring mundane domestic items (cabinets, a table and chairs and a sink full of dishes) made over into dazzling pop art forms that took some 30 million beads to complete. The piece launched her onto the art world radar, was snapped up by Eileen and Peter Norton, and later acquired by The Whitney.

Since then, Lou's themes have moved beyond Americana and suburban dystopias to encapsulate everything from crime and punishment—*Cell*, 2004-2006, was inspired by San Quentin's death row—to landscape: for example, the floor-bound, three-dimensional grid *Color Field*, 2011-2013, which she will remix and expand to 60 feet long for a November exhibition at the Neuberger Museum of Art in Purchase, NY. (She also recently branched out into drawing.)

Though she grew up in the suburbs of Southern California, for the past 10 years Lou and

her husband, graphic designer Mick Haggerty, lived in South Africa, where she collaborated with Zulu female artisans. The bond they formed has had a lasting effect: "I realized I was bringing my will to the work—which doesn't sound so bad," she reflects. "But I thought, maybe I should listen more and say less."

The project has continued since she returned to California last August: A shimmering woven gold canvas representative of her current organic aesthetic hangs in her workshop and is the result of months of transatlantic group work. This latest style will be highlighted in her solo show at the Wichita Art Museum in May. "Everything is the human hand and touch. So you'll see these streaks and marks and variation," she says appreciatively. "It's not about having an idea anymore, it's about being awake to beauty when it occurs." lizalou.com. •



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Lou's pen supply. In her living room, Lou relaxes in a chair she brought back from Ethiopia. A guitar sits in close proximity to Lou's easel.