

Media Alert

Brooklyn Museum Unveils Liza Lou's *Trailer* (1998–2000) in the Lobby, on View to the Public for the First Time in over a Decade

Opens September 13, 2024



Liza Lou (American, born 1969). *Trailer*, 1998–2000. Glass beads, aluminum, textile, wood, metal wire, plaster, rubber, found objects, electrical parts, and video (color, sound, looped), 120 x 96 x 420 in. (304.8 x 243.8 x 1066.8 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Sherry and Joel Mallin, 2022.24. © Liza Lou (Photo: Tom Powel Imaging)

On the occasion of the Brooklyn Museum's 200th anniversary, visitors will encounter an exciting new artwork in the Museum's lobby. *Trailer* (1998–2000), the first work by contemporary American artist Liza Lou to enter the Museum's collection, is a large-scale, immersive sculpture contained inside a thirty-five-foot-long 1949 Spartan Royal Mansion mobile trailer. The work explores themes of masculinity, despair, isolation, and violence with a cinematic flair and is on view for the first time in over a decade.

The interior of *Trailer* is completely covered in glass beads, its controlled color palette evoking the stylized aesthetics of Hollywood *film noir* crime dramas. Combining everyday objects of mobile-home living with traces of masculine-coded interior life, the scene suggests a sinister and mysterious narrative. From magazine covers to hunting gear, an oven range and comfortable couch to a flickering TV, whiskey bottles, crushed cigarette cartons, and more, everything is rendered in beads. A poised typewriter sits next to a camera and a handwritten letter reads "KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD TO LIBERTY," an obscure nod to the unsolved 1937 assassination attempt on Los Angeles District Attorney Buron Fitts. These elements coalesce into a foreboding portrait of a man just out of sight—or is he? *Trailer* demands close looking—of both its detailed intricacy and its series of allusions, asking questions about what is revealed and what is

hidden from view. Like individual pixels, the glass beads dazzle and coalesce into shapes and patterns, forming a sinister spectacle that examines obsession.

Trailer was the third major artwork that Liza Lou created in a series of works exploring idealized suburban America, following *Backyard* (1996–99) and her iconic work *Kitchen* (1991–96), a thrumming Technicolor transformation of a kitchen infused with feminist humor and critiques of commercialism, now in the Whitney Museum collection. Both works evoke experiences of passion and obsession as the laborious process of assembling and placing beads speaks to marshaling time itself as part of the process—and as a material for art and life.

A recent gift of Sherry and Joel Mallin, *Trailer* joins a lively array of artwork installed in the museum’s welcoming lobby space. Visitors can step onto the viewing platform and explore the work’s lurid world from within. To expand access for all visitors, particularly those with mobility aids, a digital interactive kiosk will feature a panoramic image and three-dimensional scans showcasing both the interior and individual objects up close. Visitors can also enjoy an interview with the artist and take a close look at the extensive treatment done by museum conservators in an exclusive Brooklyn Museum–produced video. On Thursday November 21, Liza Lou will speak as part of a Brooklyn Talk focused on collection artists. Concurrent with *Trailer*’s debut in Brooklyn, Liza Lou’s exhibition of new work exploring the gestural and microscopic forms of Abstract Expressionist painting—rendered in an array of colorful glass beads—is on view in her solo exhibition *Painting* at Lehmann Maupin Gallery through October 12, 2024. This offers a rare opportunity to experience the artist’s newest work and one of her earliest and rarely-seen sculptures in the same city.

Liza Lou: Trailer is organized by Carmen Hermo, former Associate Curator, Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, Brooklyn Museum.

Liza Lou: Trailer is a Museum Spotlight. Museum Spotlights are intimate installations of noteworthy collection works, recent acquisitions, and loans, presented to encourage deeper conversations about art, history, and justice.