

MODA OPERANDI

IN WITH THE *ART* CROWD

The Armory Show is New York's quintessential art fair. In celebration of its 25th anniversary, we photographed the new season on artist and model **Louise Parker** inside the studios of two exhibiting artists.



Parker, Louise. "In with the Art Crowd," *Moda Operandi*. March 5, 2019.

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ARTIST BRIE RUAIS



Unlike most artists, Brie Ruais begins her process on the floor, sitting on top of a giant mound of clay—precisely around 130 pounds of clay, or whatever is equivalent to her body weight at the time. From there, Ruais rotates in a choreographed routine, using her fists to push the clay outwards from the center in wild bursts of energy. After ten minutes the work is done, ready to be fired in a kiln.

Though short, the process is highly intense, a sprint rather than a marathon. It requires total mental and physical presence from its creator, something seldom found in today's digitized and disembodied existence. "I think there's less awareness around our relationship to our environment," says the sculptor. "My process really puts me in my body, and that is embedded in the material." In addition to her expansive, circular sculptures, Ruais also works with woven, interlocking structures—something she views as a metaphor for the interconnected nature of the universe. On closer inspection, one can detect fingerprints and fabric indentations. They are telling signs of how the hardened clay was once wrestled into its current form. "It's a physical record of my existence" she says, "like walking a trail and leaving the footprints behind."

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