

# Wallpaper\*

## Elemental living: Andrea Zittel displays her furniture art in Berlin

Design / 6 Nov 2015 / By Nick Compton



The latest of Andrea Zittel's investigations are now on show at the Sprüth Magers gallery in Berlin. In previous works, she kept things largely functional; for 'Parallel Planar Panels' though, she has created abstractions of functional spaces. Pictured: 'Parallel Planar Panels' (installation view), by Andrea Zittel

Andrea Zittel is at once an artist and a self-proclaimed one-woman 'institute of investigative living'. Or rather, these investigations – of clothes (she has worn one summer and one winter outfit alone for the last 20 years) spaces and objects – are her art. Zittel, who spends most of her time on 35 acres of Californian desert, near the Joshua Tree National Park, is also a committed modernist of sorts. If her art is thinking about the way we live, can live, should live, then it is the American modernist ideal that she seems to spend the most time thinking about. (She runs an encampment here in sharp-lined steel-and aluminium pods. Visitors can stay for free as long as they help with the upkeep of the land).

The latest of her investigations are now on show at the Sprüth Magers gallery in Berlin. In previous works, Zittel has kept things largely functional (previous works include fully functioning trailers which collectors can haul across the country, should they wish); for 'Parallel Planar Panels' though, she has created abstractions of functional spaces. 'My newest works are still grounded in this examination of life and living,' says Zittel. 'However they are less traditionally functional and instead explore the nature of reality and human perception. As my interests become more fundamental – and existential – the forms themselves have likewise become more simple and elemental.'

The show is mostly compositions of panels. And Zittel suggests that the many and various 'panels' with which we construct our world – at Sprüth Magers these are sometimes aluminium coated in high-gloss automotive paint or upholstered in rather lovely textiles – have psychic parallels. Our mental space has walls, tables, flat surfaces, slicing through and chopping up and making rooms for whatever it is our brain makes of experience.

Essentially 'Parallel Planar Panels' consists of two sculptures: Bench (after Judd) is, as the name suggests, an homage to Donald Judd's Bench, a piece made for his home and studio on Spring Street in New York. 'I've continued working out variations on this furniture work,' say Zittel, 'as I've been fascinated by the way that Judd's Bench conflates (and confuses) the surfaces of the ground, the sitting surface, and the table.'

Planar Partition meanwhile, is a seemingly random – though of course not – mix of upright and flat out planes, in various materials, domestic and architectural. They are constructed worlds, of impeccable modernist taste, taken apart and put back together again.