

abstractions. Among these were the works Flexner showed in the 2010 Whitney Biennial.

For his latest drawings, Flexner has changed his technique once more. About half the show consisted of works on the quite small scale (five and a half by seven inches) that has been typical for him and that he made by pouring violet or gold calligraphy ink directly onto the paper and then manipulating it in indirect ways—no brush, no pen. Instead, he controls the flow of the ink by tilting the paper, spraying water on it, blotting the ink, or blowing through straws, thereby obtaining images that we recognize as landscapes, though they resemble none we have ever seen before. The other works on view, somewhat larger (nine by twelve inches) and resembling the earlier sumi drawings, were made with liquid graphite on synthetic waterproof paper. Again, the medium is applied directly to the paper, but since the paper does not absorb it and the ink dries slowly, the extemporaneity that has been central to Flexner's practice for two decades now is no longer a factor. Yet the imagery still suggests turbulent worlds of Heraclitean flux, full of powerful yet ephemeral effects. These are worlds in which we seem to witness places being born out of formlessness, with light and dark being apportioned as on the day of creation. Yes, some of these images seem eerily still, but the eeriness is that in which one senses a process at work that is about to manifest itself. Although Flexner can now work on his drawings at leisure, they are still landscapes of a moment.

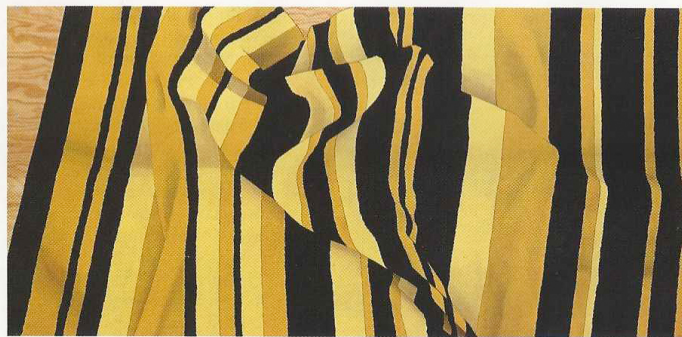
—Barry Schwabsky

## Andrea Zittel

ANDREA ROSEN GALLERY

Andrea Zittel's signature works usually integrate into quotidian routines and address basic needs such as shelter and clothing (a fact that feels particularly significant as I write in the wake of Hurricane Sandy). Exemplary in this regard are her "A-Z Living Units," 1991–96, and "A-Z Escape Vehicles," 1996, compact structures custom-made to efficiently house everything her clients would need to survive (and in the latter case, to retreat). But since viewers are rarely granted direct use of these functional art objects, it's always been hard to grasp how they are experienced, how they "work" on a daily basis. Perhaps for this reason, Zittel's exhibitions have at times felt somewhat pedagogical. Her recent show "Fluid Panel State" absorbed this didactic dimension: Zittel wrote an artist's statement and an accompanying "corporate" PowerPoint presentation, *Dynamic Essay About the Panel* (all works, 2012), a textual tutorial that helped viewers make sense of the numerous textiles—and drawings and paintings of textiles—on view.

The sixteen-minute slide show theorized the textiles' most basic form—the panel. This is not a new focus for Zittel, but a concept she's kicked around over the past two decades for its various subtleties, mining the ways in which panels can be literal, abstract, representational, and laden with ideological values. The slow PowerPoint presentation describes the panel as an "energetic accumulator" (when horizontal, as in a table or desktop) or as an "ideological resonator" (when vertical, as in signs, paintings, and pictures). A textile fluctuates between these modes depending on how it is displayed, and it can also be "fluid" when it is worn as clothing, as, for example, a poncho, a scarf, or Zittel's "Personal Panel Uniforms," 1995–98: garments made from sewn-together rectangles that were inspired by the Russian Constructivist injunction against altering the "true" nature of the fabric. (They were not on view here.) In this show, numerous weavings, mostly made in Zittel's typical desert palette and geometric-design motifs, were hung on the walls like paintings, assuming the status of "high" art (thus recalling the display of historic Navajo rugs or Persian carpets in museums),



and suggesting Conceptualist ties to language, pattern, and seriality. At the same time, their display in the gallery made the space resemble a "low" craft showroom or shop.

In the small side room that contained the PowerPoint display, Zittel installed textiles that could be described as "fluid," works that fold over the divide between fine art and functional design object. These included a lone cover draped from a nail, like a sagging flag or a coat, and several pieces from the "A-Z Cover Series 1," 2012, gold, black, and light-ochre striped "covers" that were here arranged into a three-dimensional sculpture that zigzagged along a wall (with semienclosed spaces that I saw visitors entering). In the larger main gallery, she presented a twelve-by-sixteen-foot plush nylon carpet designed with a layout that resembles a one-room house (the latest in her ongoing "A-Z Carpet Furniture" series, 1993–) amid small gouaches of figures interacting with the covers and a plywood "billboard" painting of a rumpled cover as abstract marketing object.

To produce most of the textile works in the show, Zittel enlisted the help of ten weavers from around the US, asking each to adhere to an unconventional set of instructions—switching thread colors with each session, for example, or marking the beginning of each day with a gold stripe. This brought to mind a statement she published in these pages in 2007 regarding her very first "A-Z Living Units" and the challenges she faced when hiring a company to produce them. As a young artist, she noted, she expected complete control over her sculptures, and she had to learn to relinquish that control when fabrication was outsourced. Today, however, she evidently embraces the indeterminacy that comes with working with others, going so far as to build in mechanisms that allow the temporal rhythms of labor to impact the final result. This is perhaps Zittel's way of letting go, her small art of surrender.

—Lauren O'Neill-Butler

## Kiki Kogelnik

SIMONE SUBAL GALLERY

"I'm not involved with Coca-Cola," Kiki Kogelnik avowed in 1966, marking her distance from Pop art, or at least its consumerist strains. But making the association was sensible enough. After moving to New York in 1961 (encouraged by Sam Francis, whom she'd met in Venice), the Austrian artist befriended Claes Oldenburg and Roy Lichtenstein, and visited Warhol's Factory; her early stateside output—in painting, drawing, prints, and sculpture—admits Benday dots and spray paint, flattened forms and jazzed-up surfaces. Kogelnik, who died in 1997, is having a belated moment. She was recently the focus of a retrospective at the Hamburger Kunstverein (another is slated for later this year

Andrea Zittel, *Prototype for Billboard: A-Z Cover Series 1 (Gold and Black Stripes)*, 2012, enamel on plywood, 36½ x 72½ x 2".