

## Press Release

### **Andrea Zittel**

*Works on Paper*

November 27, 2020–February 13, 2021

Sprüth Magers, Berlin

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Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are pleased to announce the Berlin exhibition *Works on Paper* by American artist Andrea Zittel, presenting 26 new drawings that all hinge, in one way or another, on planar structures. Planar panels are flat rectangular elements that form the building blocks of so much of the reality that we construct around ourselves, from benches to bed frames to walkways. Zittel's artistic work regularly traverses the boundaries between art and architecture, and here reflects upon the planes and panels that exist in both our literal and psychological fields of reality.

Horizontal panels naturally function as platforms for actions and behavior, creating sites where life happens (e.g. floors, tables, benches, fields, streets). Vertical panels, in turn, privilege the eye and are the carriers of messages and ideologies (e.g. walls, screens, paintings, billboards). Rigid or flexible, these panels can provide shelter or divide space into particular zones of purpose or meaning; their function is assigned rather than inherent. In Zittel's watercolor *Study for Cellular Grid #6* (2019), low planar walls create a grillwork of compartments that demarcate human-sized, cell-like spaces evoking an office cubicle, private bedroom or even a cemetery plot. The work points to the way in which space, and its delineation, can be used as a medium for control and alienation while simultaneously offering a source of security, privacy and individualism.

Another of Zittel's new series on view, *Planar Panel Studies: Vast and Specific* (2020), depicts planar shapes lifted from print design, architecture and outdoor signage, which are then superimposed on loosely painted watercolor landscapes that evoke the high-desert Joshua Tree region where the artist has lived for two decades. The rectangle, while almost totally absent in nature, has become the most ubiquitous shape not only within human manufacturing and standardization, but also for human organization and imagination. In works from *Panels and Portals* (2020), planar compositions create hard-edged interior spaces perforated with a rectangular opening, or "portal," that offers a glimpse beyond the encapsulating interiors into a landscape devoid of flat surfaces or rectangular formats of any kind. Earth-toned washes meld with streaks of pale blues and pinks, adding a sublime, yet grounded, aura to the black-and-white planes that appear

throughout Zittel's works.

Since the early 1990s, Andrea Zittel has used the arena of day-to-day life to develop and test prototypes for living structures and situations to understand the world at large. Her experiments have at times been extreme – wearing a uniform for months on end, exploring limitations of living space, living without measured time. Yet through these experiences, a central goal has remained: to illuminate how humans attribute significance to chosen structures or ways of life, and how subjective and arbitrary our choices of structures can be.

The exhibition design has been developed in collaboration with Motet Design Group.

The Berlin gallery also presents an exhibition of work by American artist Cindy Sherman.

Andrea Zittel (\*1965, Escondido, CA), lives and works in the Californian Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree. Her work has been presented in numerous solo exhibitions internationally, including Miller ICA Carnegie Mellon University, Purnell Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh (2020), Kunsthall Stavanger (2018), Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA (2017), Middelheim Museum, Antwerp (2015), Nevada Museum of Art, Reno (2014), Baltic Center for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2012), Indianapolis Museum of Art (2010), Schaulager Basel (2008), Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Vancouver Art Gallery (all 2005), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (1999), Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz (1997), Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek (1996), and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1995). Major group exhibitions include 16th Istanbul Biennial (2019), Museum of Art and Design, New York (2015), Kunsthalle Bielefeld (2013), San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design (2010), Whitney Biennial, New York (2004, 1995), Documenta X, Kassel (1997), Skulptur Projekte Münster (1997), and 45th Venice Biennale (1993), among many others.

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Opening hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–6pm