



ANDREA ZITTEL'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE NORTH AMERICAN SHOW OPENS THIS FALL

Andrea Zittel: Critical Space on View in Houston October 6, 2005 through January 1, 2006
and in New York January 26 through April 29, 2006



Houston, and New York – October 3, 2005 – *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* is the first comprehensive solo exhibition of Zittel's work in North America. One of the most influential American artists to emerge in the past two decades, Zittel investigates contemporary life in Western societies. Her sculptures and installations draw on architecture and geography to explore the psychological, biological, and economic aspects of domestic and urban existence. *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* is co-organized by the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Andrea Zittel: Critical Space will open to the public in Houston on October 6, 2005 and be on view through January 1, 2006; the show's dates in New York are January 26 to April 29, 2006. Co-curated by Contemporary Arts Museum Houston Curator Paola Morsiani, and New Museum of Contemporary Art Curator Trevor Smith, the exhibition will then travel to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, October 6, 2006 – January 7, 2007; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, March 4 – May 21, 2007; and the Vancouver Art Gallery in Canada, June 9 – September 16, 2007.

Zittel researches, designs, and constructs her own domestic settings that serve as test cases for her experimental living structures. Her home environments and handcrafted "uniforms," produced under the name "A-Z Administrative Services," emphasize the ways in which personal needs such as security, self-empowerment, intimacy, and comfort are fulfilled. *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* will feature approximately 21 of Zittel's living units and environments from 1991 to the present, two of which will be site-specific installations. The exhibition will include examples of *A-Z Living Units* assemblies and

stations, *A–Z Escape* vehicles, *A–Z Desert Islands*, and *A–Z Raugh* systems; the complete series to date of *A–Z Uniform* handmade clothing; and a selection of drawings.

The exhibition will also feature recent work developed at A–Z West, Zittel’s desert studio in Joshua Tree, California. These works alter prevailing cultural conceptions about the desert environment—including myths about the frontier—and individual autonomy and freedom. Instead of using the desert as a metaphor for escapism, Zittel examines how it makes the cultural, political, and economic organization of populated spaces even more evident.

“Andrea Zittel’s objects combine the formal structures of sculpture, the ingenuity of architecture, and the inventive efficiency of design to challenge the ideal uniformity promised by the American suburban dwelling,” said Paola Morsiani, exhibition co-curator and curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. “Her work has provided the most intelligent and compelling commentary in the recent artistic debate over the meaning of collective space and our methods of adapting to modern urban conditions.”

“So few artists live their work as fully as Andrea Zittel,” said Trevor Smith, exhibition co-curator and curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art. “She throws off the equilibrium of everyday life by turning work into play and taking leisure seriously. The fluid transition that she makes between her art and real life forces others to think about the ordinary choices made each day that are normally taken for granted.”

Andrea Zittel: Critical Space will be accompanied by a major catalogue, the most comprehensive publication on Zittel’s work to date. The catalogue will include essays by co-curators Paola Morsiani and Trevor Smith; Cornelia H. Butler, curator, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Robert Cook, associate curator of contemporary art, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; an interview with Zittel by Beatriz Colomina, professor of architecture at Princeton University, and Mark Wigley, Professor of architecture and dean of the Graduate School of Architecture, Columbia University; and texts by the artist. It will also contain more than 300 color reproductions, including all work in the exhibition, and complete documentation on Zittel’s career. The catalogue is co-published by the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, and Prestel Verlag.

Andrea Zittel was born in Escondido, California in 1965, and currently lives and works in Los Angeles and Joshua Tree, California. Her work has appeared in numerous solo exhibitions including *Andrea Zittel: New Work*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1995); *A–Z Deserted Islands*, The Public Art Fund, Central Park, New York (1999); and *Andrea Zittel-Personal Programs*, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2000). Group exhibitions in which Zittel’s work has been featured include *Aperto '93: Emergency*, XLV Biennale di Venezia, Italy (1993); *Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties* (1994) and *Tempo* (2002), The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the 1995 and 2004 biennial exhibitions at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

A number of education programs for adults, families, and schools will accompany this exhibition at each venue. For further information on public programs, please contact the individual museums.

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About the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is a non-collecting institution dedicated to presenting the best and most exciting international, national and regional art of the last 40 years, and to providing a forum for the discussion and understanding of the art of our time. Through dynamic exhibitions accompanied by scholarly publications and accessible educational programs, the Museum reaches out to local, regional, national and international audiences of all ages. Recent exhibitions include *Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970*, illustrating African-American artists' influence on conceptual art in American contemporary art; *Perspectives@25: A Quarter Century of New Art in Houston*, a review of the first 25 years of the Museum's *Perspectives* series; *Splat Boom Pow! The Influence of Cartoons in Contemporary Art*, which explored social and political issues of the past 40 years through cartoon-like images; and *Matthew Ritchie: Proposition Player*, the first major museum show of Ritchie's work.

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members and donors to its programs. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from the Houston Endowment, Inc., the City of Houston through the Cultural Arts Council of Houston/Harris County, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Continental is the official airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

About the New Museum of Contemporary Art

The New Museum of Contemporary Art, founded in 1977, is the only museum in New York City dedicated exclusively to contemporary art from around the world. Over the last five years, the Museum has exhibited artists from Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Poland, Spain, South Africa, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, among others. The Museum has also mounted ambitious surveys of important but under-recognized artists such as Ana Mendieta, William Kentridge, David Wojnarowicz, and Paul McCarthy.

In 2005, the New Museum will begin construction on a new home at 235 Bowery at Prince Street. This 60,000 square-foot facility, designed by the Tokyo-based firm Sejima + Nishizawa / SANAA, will greatly expand the Museum's exhibitions and programs, and will be the first art museum constructed in Downtown New York's modern history. For the most up-to-date information, visit www.newmuseum.org.

The New Museum of Contemporary Art receives general operating support from the Carnegie Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, JPMorgan Chase, and members of the New Museum.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
Office of Communications and Marketing
(713) 284-8251
communications@camh.org
Access CAMH online at www.camh.org

Sascha D. Freudenheim / Casey L. Barber
Resnicow Schroeder Associates
(212) 671-5172 / (212) 671-5179
sfreudenheim@resnicowschroeder.com
cbarber@resnicowschroeder.com

Chelsea Scott
New Museum of Contemporary Art
(212) 219.1222 x.217 / (212) 431.5328 (fax)
cscott@newmuseum.org
Access NMCA on line at www.newmuseum.org