



## Press Release/Pressemitteilung

### Andrea Zittel. Personal Patterns

HLHE Dialogue *Living Abstraction*

Haus Esters, Krefeld | October 23, 2022 – February 26, 2023

The Kunstmuseen Krefeld are showcasing the work of Andrea Zittel (b. 1965 in Escondido, California, USA) in her first major solo exhibition in Germany in 20 years. Zittel is one of the most important artists of her generation, to have broken down the boundaries between art and life with a new concept of sculpture. In close collaboration with the artist, a site-specific presentation is being created in Haus Esters, designed in 1927 by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as a private residence. Featuring Zittel's abstract, concrete *Panels* and visual as well as personal patterns, the project explores her transdisciplinary practice.

Since the 1990s, Andrea Zittel has been experimentally exploring the space around her with her own body in "test sites for investigative living"—first in the urban context of New York City and later in the vastness of the California desert. With her reduced works, composed primarily of basic geometric forms, she creates a synthesis between art, design, and architecture. Art and everyday life, artist, entrepreneur, and private individual become one. For an entire season, for example, she wears the same clothes every day, her *Uniform*. She also regularly redesigns her living space, asking herself which multifunctional objects meet her needs. Influenced by early twentieth-century design and architecture, in particular the Russian Constructivists and the Bauhaus, Zittel develops simple, futuristic-looking furniture, fashion, and utopian prototypes. She operates as a one-woman enterprise with *A-Z Administrative Services* and later in a collective manner with the self-created living/work space *A-Z West* near Joshua Tree, California and the *High Desert Test Sites* (HDTs) project. Similar to a service provider, Zittel adapts her artworks, which are reminiscent of "products," to the needs and desires of her clients. Her *A-Z Comfort Units*, *A-Z Carpet Furniture*, and *A-Z Escape Vehicles* thus cast a new, critical perspective on ways of life and values that seem self-evident to us—but are not necessarily so.

*How to live?* A question Andrea Zittel poses on one of her prototypes for billboards—similar to architect and final Bauhaus director Mies van der Rohe, as well as Sonia Delaunay (Odessa 1885–1979 Paris), whose genre-transcending art will be shown in parallel next door in Haus Lange. "After working together with Andrea Zittel on the Garden House by Haus Esters, I am delighted that the artist is now able to channel her long-standing interest in the architecture by Mies van der Rohe into a full-scale exhibition project," explains director Katia Baudin. As part of the Bauhaus anniversary exhibition *Alternatives for Living* in 2019, a site-specific installation was created by Andrea Zittel for the Hellerau summer house in the garden of Haus Esters at the initiation of Katia Baudin, which was expanded in 2022 and is now a permanent fixture of the sculpture garden.

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

Kaiser Wilhelm Museum Haus Lange Haus Esters

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In the exhibition in Haus Esters, Andrea Zittel's geometric surfaces are juxtaposed with the geometric architecture of the 1920s, Mies van der Rohe's built utopia of a modern, free life. Zittel understands the human-made world as being composed of *panels*—for example, a bed, a bus stop, or a plot of land. As “energetic accumulators,” horizontal surfaces bind practical, social energy (tables, benches, streets), while vertical surfaces structure the space or convey information as “ideological resonators” (walls, billboards). “Zittel's conceptual and experimental practice explores human idiosyncrasies at the heart of life. She has a particular relevance in regard of current social and ecological questions, especially concerning the approach to information and materials,” explains Juliane Duft, curator of the exhibition. With its reduced configurations of forms, Zittel's installation-based exhibition provides a concentrated reflection surface for the abstract designs of our contemporary living environment. The international loans created since the 1990s span from graphics, clothing, carpets to furniture-sculptures. With them and works tailored specifically to the spaces, Zittel furnishes Haus Esters with her surfaces and patterns. Much of her work, especially her more recent sculptures, is both geometric-abstract and functional, similar to Mies's villas, and explores private zones in relation to social, public spaces.

*Personal Patterns* is part of the *HLHE Dialogue* exhibition series, which showcases the art of Sonia Delaunay and Andrea Zittel in the fall of 2022 under the Leitmotif *Living Abstraction*. According to the museum director Katia Baudin, who initiated this dual exhibition, “the neighboring modernist villas by Mies van der Rohe serve as the ideal backdrop and catalyst for a fruitful encounter between two visionary female artistic positions who have striven to break down the barriers separating art and everyday life, using the language of abstraction to examine and respond to societal changes.”

**Andrea Zittel (b. 1965, Escondido, CA, USA)** earned an MFA in sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and a BFA with honors from San Diego State University. Her work spans sculpture, drawing, painting, video and textiles and has been shown in numerous solo exhibitions, including Purnell Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh (2020), Schaulager Basel (2008), New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2005), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (1999), and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek (1996). Group exhibitions and projects in public space were the 16th Istanbul Biennial (2019), the Whitney Biennial, New York (2004, 1995), Documenta X, Kassel (1997), Skulptur Projekte Münster (1997), and 45th Venice Biennale (1993). 2019–2022 Zittel has created a permanent installation for the garden house in the sculpture garden of Haus Lange Haus Esters.

#### **Program *Living Abstraction***

A dynamic public program accompanies the exhibition. It addresses the transitions and boundaries between art and design through dialogue tours, workshops, lectures, school offerings, and cooperation projects. It focuses on social issues of our contemporary coexistence, as well as on historical aspects. The Ukraine as Sonia Delaunay's country of origin and the textile history of Krefeld both play an important role. Based on Andrea Zittel's experimental practice anchored in life, we cast new perspectives on materials, everyday objects, and our needs. There is also a broad educational program for schools, nursery schools, and daycare centers: [kunstmuseenkrefeld.de/education](https://kunstmuseenkrefeld.de/education).



### **Catalogue**

A publication in German and English will document the exhibition.

### **Artistic Direction *Living Abstraction***

Katia Baudin, Director, Kunstmuseen Krefeld

### **Curator**

Juliane Duft, Research and Curatorial Associate, Kunstmuseen Krefeld

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**Kunststiftung  
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### **Visit**

#### **Haus Lange Haus Esters**

Wilhelmshofallee 91-97  
47800 Krefeld  
Tue–Thur, Sun 11:00 am–5:00 pm  
Fri–Sat 11.00 am–6:00 pm

For special opening hours on holidays,  
see [www.kunstmuseenkrefeld.de](http://www.kunstmuseenkrefeld.de).

The Kunstmuseen Krefeld are a cultural  
institution of the City of Krefeld.

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