

TANJA POL GALERIE

SMOCKSHOP

PRESENTED BY ANDREA ZITTEL

29/04/09 - 09/05/09

Tanja Pol Galerie is delighted to host Andrea Zittel's artistic enterprise, 'Smockshop', in Munich. The smocks, double wrap-around garments designed by Zittel, collectively represent an aesthetically diverse yet functionally uniform body of work. Extending Zittel's longstanding interest in the form and function of everyday life, the smocks develop a modernist tradition of clothing design and manufacture, extending back to the Russian avant-garde, which emphasises utility and economy, and inclines towards an alternative experience of clothing to the prevailing discourse of fashion.

Each smock conforms to the same basic shape and form, but there is nonetheless an infinite array of colour, texture and pattern possibilities, as their method of manufacture derives from Zittel's principle that 'rules make us more creative'. Since it was founded in 2007, more than 300 smocks have been made by the collective. The process of making is collaborative, as each smocker is given license to interpret and rework Zittel's designs according to their own interests and skills. The clothes range from monochrome simplicity to lurid dazzle, and from formal elegance to sculptural inventiveness. Yet though each smock is completely unique, they have all been designed and made with a sense of universal functionality in mind; suiting most body sizes or shapes, and offering socially appropriate attire in both casual and formal settings, the smock is conceived as a garment for everywoman (and maybe everyman) at any time.

The Smockshop is part of Andrea Zittel's ongoing artistic project, to make work which is rooted in daily routine, and the functional experience of everyday living. Food, furniture, shelter and clothing have all at times been sites of investigation of how modern life is lived, and how we construct, define and distinguish between our wants and needs. From 1994, for six years, 'A-Z East', a small three storey storefront building in Brooklyn, New York, became the testing ground and showcase for her experimental inquiries into why people eat, sleep, wear, wash and generally live in the ways that they do. In 1999, she relocated her enterprise to 'A-Z West', a 25 acre site in the Californian desert, where Zittel's home, studio, and 'experiments in living' research and development facility continue to be based.

Andrea Zittel trained at San Diego State University and Rhode Island School of Design. Recent solo exhibitions include IKON Gallery, Birmingham (2001), Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2005), and the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York (2006). The Smockshop has traveled throughout the USA, and after was making its European debut at Sprüth Magers Berlin. It has now travelled to Munich and will then be on view at Sprüth Magers London in September, 2009.