

## BORTOLAMI

**TOM BURR**

**ANDREA ZITTEL**

*concrete realities*

**29 June – 11 August 2017**

**Opening Reception Thursday, 29 June, 6:00-8:00 PM**

Bortolami is pleased to announce *concrete realities*, a two-person exhibition by Tom Burr and Andrea Zittel. Since the 1990s, Burr and Zittel have trained their attention on the built environment, addressing questions of site-specificity, subjectivity, and the body. This exhibition focuses on their ongoing projects in sites outside of art world centers, which find the artists developing distinct, but congruent methods of tackling their overlapping spatial concerns.

Andrea Zittel founded A-Z West in the California High Desert near Joshua Tree National Park in 2000 as a “life project” in which all aspects of day to day living become the site of investigation into human nature and the social construction of need. Included in the exhibition are *Tellus Interdum* and *Single Strand Forward Motion* (both 2011), which make visible the patterns of everyday routines. For *Tellus Interdum*, Zittel replaces the articles in an issue of her local Yucca Valley newspaper with lorem ipsum placeholder text and applies the sheets to gallery walls in a loose grid formation. The work highlights the newspaper’s capacity to compartmentalize and routinize its ever-changing daily content. *Single Strand Forward Motion* extends this rumination on the ontological frameworks we inhabit. Each of Zittel’s *Single Strand* works is created according to a “rule-set” that then determines its defining pattern. The shapes of the works are never the same, but the rule-sets always result in visually identifiable geometries. More recent works in the exhibition include *Parallel Planar Panels* and *Hard Carpets* (both 2014) from an ongoing series that explores the subtle contextual shifts that establish a planar object’s identity and function. Put simply, panels on the floor become rugs or carpets while panels on the wall become fine art and thereby objects to be viewed, but not necessarily handled or used.

Tom Burr has produced six new bulletin board works related to his current Artist/City project, **BODY / BUILDING**, at the Marcel Breuer-designed office building in New Haven, Connecticut that was previously occupied by the Armstrong Rubber Company and the Pirelli Tire Company, and is now owned by IKEA. Burr, who was born in New Haven, weaves together images of cultural figures that have shaped the city’s past, including Jean Genet, Anni Albers, J. Edgar Hoover, and Jim Morrison. Pinned on wood boards with thumbtacks, the images form an oblique social network that merges with Burr’s own personal history. While often semi-autobiographical in nature, the new bulletin board works specifically address the confluence of urban development, modernism, and radical utopian political programs in New Haven during the 1960s and 70s, reflecting on the movements through the prism of their protagonists and the aspirations they have come to represent. Using an approach that balances formalism with intuition, Burr’s emotive grids provoke a contextual reading of history that brings to light overlooked associations.

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**Andrea Zittel** (b. 1965 in Escondido, CA) lives and works in Joshua Tree, CA. Selected solo exhibitions include *On the Grid: a look at settlement patterns in the high desert*, Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, 2017; *Andrea Zittel: The Flat Field Works*, Middelheim Museum, Antwerp, 2015; *Eye on Design: Andrea Zittel*, Palm Springs Art Museum, 2015; *Small Liberties*, Whitney Museum of Art at Altria, New York, 2006; *Critical Spaces*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston – traveled to New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 2006; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 2007; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 2007; Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia, 2007. *OnSite: Andrea Zittel*, Milwaukee Art Museum, 2004. Selected recent group exhibitions include *Atlas I*, Fondazione Prada, Milan, 2017; *L'Esprit du Bauhaus*, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 2017, and *Human Interest: Portraits from the Whitney's Collection*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2016; *Aufschlussreiche Räume-Interieur als Porträt*, Museum Morbroich, Leversuken, Berlin, 2016; *Future Present*, Schaulager, Basel, 2015 and *NYC 1993*, New Museum, New York, 2013.

**Tom Burr** (b. 1963 in New Haven, CT) lives and works in New York. Selected solo exhibitions include *Tom Burr/New Haven: Pre-Existing Conditions*, Marcel Breuer Armstrong Rubber Building, New Haven, 2017; *Surplus of Myself*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, 2017; *Addict – Love*, Sculpture Center, New York, 2008; *Deep Purple*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2002. Selected recent group exhibitions include *Skulptur Projekte 2017*, Münster, 2017; *Question the Wall Itself*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2016 and *Béton*, Kunsthalle Wien; *Ordinary Pictures*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2016; and *Sculpture from the Hammer Contemporary Collection*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2016; *Body Proxy*, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, 2015; *To expose to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer*, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Wien, 2015; *The Present Modernism*, MUMOK, Wien, 2014; *30/60 Works from the Collection of the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne*, Mario Marini Museum, Florence, 2014; *Take It or Leave It: Institution, Image, Ideology*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2014 and *Not Yet Titled*, Museum Ludwig, Köln, 2013.