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ANDREA ZITTEL'S TOTAL EXPERIMENT

EKSPERYMENT TOTALNY ANDREI ZITTEL

Abstract

One of the aims of the avant-garde movement of the early twentieth century was to blur the boundaries between fine arts and architecture, and to penetrate art into everyday life. This text presents the work of the American artist Andrea Zittel, one that unites art, architecture, and design. Her artistic practice is a kind of unique experimental "Gesamtkunstwerk" in which the artist literally lives. From her "household" she made a test field for prototypes related to various aspects of living. Her work includes, amongst others, inhabitable installations, sculptures, drawings, paintings, textiles, and videos. Andrea Zittel creates them to better understand human nature and analyse the social construct of needs. She questions excess in the context of architecture, objects, forms, and signs.

Keywords: experiment, Gesamtkunstwerk, inhabitable installations, limitations of needs

Streszczenie

Jednym z celów awangardy początków XX wieku było zacieranie granic między sztukami plastycznymi i architekturą, oraz wniknięcie sztuki w życie codzienne. Artykuł przedstawia twórczość amerykańskiej artystki Andrei Zittel, która łączy w jedno: sztukę, architekturę i design. Jej praktyka artystyczna to rodzaj unikalnego eksperymentalnego „dzieła totalnego”, w którym artystka dosłownie żyje. Ze swojego „gospodarstwa domowego” zrobiła pole testowe dla prototypów związanych z różnorodnymi aspektami zamieszkiwania. Jej prace obejmują między innymi „nadające się do mieszkania” instalacje, rzeźby, rysunki, malarstwo, tkaniny, video. Andrea Zittel tworzy je by zrozumieć naturę ludzką i analizować społeczną konstrukcję potrzeb. Kwestionuje nadmiar w kontekście architektury, przedmiotów, form i znaków.

Słowa kluczowe: eksperyment, dzieło totalne, mieszkalne instalacje, ograniczenie potrzeb

*In all affairs it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark
on the things you have long taken for granted.¹*

attributed to Bertrand Russel

1. INTRODUCTION

As defined², the term avant-garde came into artistic terminology from the nineteenth-century theory of utopian socialism by Henri Saint-Simon, who assigned artists the task of showing society the way to a better future. In the most general sense, the avant-garde movement

¹ <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/6372-in-all-affairs-it-s-a-healthy-thing-now-and-then> (access: 10.06.22)

² M. Giżycki, *Słownik kierunków, ruchów i kluczowych pojęć sztuki drugiej połowy XX wieku*, słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 2002, pp. 30–31.

encompasses all modernist artistic trends of the 20th century, from cubism, futurism and expressionism, breaking with the aesthetic doctrines of the past and aiming at gaining new areas for art.

It is also a manifestation of a specific artistic attitude, focused on experimentation and innovation. Avant-garde artists of the early 20th century tried to express with new means what was hitherto inexpressible³. The avant-garde movement was also part of the overall attempt to change man and his place in the world that later characterized this period. Avant-garde perfectly expressed the spirit of that time, of great civilization breakthroughs. It was part of a project to rebuild the world. Artists believed that the old world stood in the way of progress and had to disappear in order for the new world to take its place and grow. The rise of the avant-garde movement was inextricably linked with the modernization of both society and architecture and art. The main feature of avant-garde was its orientation towards the future⁴.

After World War II, we were dealing more with a neo-avant-garde, which already included many trends. These trends, according to Stefan Morawski, had a commonality that their creators stood for “practicing rather – anti-art, in which the existing aesthetic categories (form, virtuosity, expression, mimesis, talent and genius) are not important any more”⁵. The term anti-art refers to all manifestations that undermine the accepted rules and definitions in art from the inside. It is about art that defies itself⁶. So, it seems that the neo-avant-garde of art had become self-referential, turning away from the world’s problems.

Is avant-garde, in the historical sense, possible today? Can any movement still be radical and controversial? Can any movement today be progressive enough to be ahead of its time? Is a constant impetus towards constant change and development possible at all? Can art, including the art of architecture, still shape and transform the world and man? Is bold, resolute architecture that can fuel the discussion and lead to change possible?

Today it seems we have caught up with the future. Humanity is preoccupied with fragmentation and individualization – it is not looking for unifying, universal thoughts. When various currents, tendencies, and styles coexist, it becomes increasingly difficult to find surprising solutions in architecture. Today, when advanced technological progress allows for implementation of every idea, it is difficult to find a radical avant-garde notion in terms of both techniques and forms.

Maybe the time has come to distance ourselves from the Enlightenment myth of progress. Perhaps the “avant-garde” should change to the “rearguard”, as Kenneth Frampton postulates⁷. He evokes the Gothic Revival and Art and Crafts of the mid-nineteenth century as a historical avant-garde movement which took an antagonistic stance towards the industrial process – an expression of the modernization of those times. Frampton describes

³ J. Muszczak, *Architektura mieszkaniowa a kondycja współczesnego człowieka*, Calibra, Pabianice 2021, p. 25.

⁴ T. Pękała, *Awangarda i ariergarda. Filozofia sztuki nowoczesnej*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2000, p. 142.

⁵ S. Morawski, *Na zakręcie: od sztuki do po-sztuki*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1985; [as cited in:] M. Giżycki, *op. cit.*, pp. 100–101.

⁶ M. Giżycki, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁷ K. Frampton postulates that architecture should become a rearguard: K. Frampton, *W stronę krytycznego regionalizmu. Sześć punktów architektury oporu*, “Autoportret. Pismo o Dobrej Przestrzeni” 2017, nr 2 (57), p. 14.

these movements as advancing the ideas of a cultural resistance strategy⁸ to the supremacy of progress.

Perhaps similar to the avant-garde movement, or just rearguard, we can also name contemporary attempts to “turn back time”, a certain kind of going back, abandoning, or slowing down of the modernization momentum, that here and there appears in the world of architecture and art. Referring to the motto of Bertrand Russell, it is important to question the matters that we take for granted: here I refer to issues such as the omnipresent compulsion of progress, development, innovation, and human transformation. It is part of the issues of the contemporary world that require critical reflection and even opposition. There are creators who undertake such activities. Perhaps it is too monumental to describe their activities as avant-garde. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to define them as experiments.

2. AVANT-GARD AND EXPERIMENT

Undoubtedly, “the experiment” is an indispensable part of avant-garde thinking. Jean-François Lyotard attributes the merit of experimenting to expanding “the image that is perceivable and expressible by exploring the invisible and the unspeakable”⁹.

Experiments are always based on the need to change. They were, and are, a projection of the problems of the times in which they arise. They are a reaction to the changing world. Thanks to experiments we gain knowledge and information. Sometimes they open up space for new solutions. Sometimes they only trigger the reflective-critical potential of an idea. But must all experiments be avant-garde in the sense of progression?

Wojciech Wróbel quotes Aaron Betsky’s words on experimental architecture in the introduction to the catalogue of the 11th Venice Biennale in 2008:

While architecture that is actually constructed by necessity reflects the economic and socio-political *status quo*, experimental architecture is an attempt to create a critical anti-construction against the existing state of affairs. It is a necessary place of resistance and alternative, being at the same time a form and method of action.¹⁰

Betsky also writes that it is often useless and has no specific form but is always open and infinite. Of course, there is also a risk of failure in the experiment.

Experiments in art, along with the art of architecture, can also be a consequence of scepticism. They can become a way to undermine the foundation of faith that everything must be exactly what we think it must be and what we are used to. Experimentation may ignore the “laws of architecture” – construction, functionality, logic, rationality, and in revolt against reality, they break thought patterns.

The result of the experiment does not always have to be something newly-created, the result of the experiment may also prove that something can be given up, that there is

⁸ *Ibidem*, Postscriptum, p. 21.

⁹ G. Dziamski, *Postmodernizm wobec kryzysu estetyki współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 1996 [as cited in:] T. Pękala, *Awangarda i ariergarda. Filozofia sztuki nowoczesnej*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2000, p. 142.

¹⁰ P. Wróbel, *Eksperyment w architekturze. Wolny wybór czy konieczność i obowiązek?*, “Państwo i Społeczeństwo” 2017, No. 1, p. 96.

a possible lack of it. It seems that in the context of contemporary ecological and economic events and problems, such experiments are important.

3. ELEMENTAL LIVING

*A work of art is an extract.
Dissolved in a glass of an ordinary day,
it should tint it all its colour¹¹.*

The ambition of the architectural avant-garde movement of the early twentieth century was to expand the field of the domain. Art was to enter everyday life. Architecture was to become a link between art and life.

Gabriela Świtek, in her book “Games of Art with Architecture”, indicates that

architecture is often the subject of criticism by artists who see, for example, its oppressiveness, incompatibility with the needs of everyday life or its ‘disasters’ in the socio-political sphere. In other words, in the face of the uncertain position of architectural criticism, distanced from artistic criticism, contemporary artistic practices sometimes take over its role¹².

An American, Andrea Zittel, is an example of an artist (a sculptor by education) whose activities focus, amongst others, on the issues of architecture, provoking deeper reflection on its representation and inhabitation. The artist’s works can be described as spatial artistic practices, going beyond installation, confronting the ambitions of architecture as a building activity, with it as a discipline involving reflection on society¹³.

Andrea Zittel continues the utopian avant-garde ideals that sought to combine art, architecture, and design. She is an artist, who with her rich and varied projects, wants to bridge the gap between the art and the real world. Her work is an example of experimental, holistic, artistic activity, which focuses on issues related to all aspects of everyday life, without looking for innovative, surprising or shocking technical or formal solutions. Since the early 1990s, she has conceived her work as an artist in what she calls a “life practice”. Every part of Zittel’s environment, from the home she lives in, to the clothes she wears, is intentionally designed to align a unique mode of existence that draws on Modernist utopianism, contemporary environmentalism, and progressive self-sufficiency¹⁴. She designs her own household environments to serve as test cases for her experiments. Her work provokes questions on the changing meaning of domestic space and the possibilities for new adaptations to living conditions today. Conducting experiments on her own life, namely living in an experiment, or house, she gives us authorised, credible, critical feedback on many contemporary, important issues around scarcity of space, goods, and natural resources. She examines how much we can remove from our lives and the limits of comfort. Restrictions and limitations are an

¹¹ *Jednodniówka futurystów. Manifesty futurystów polskiego, wydanie nadzwyczajne na całą Rzeczpospolitą Polską*, Kraków, czerwiec 1921, [in:] A. Turowski, *Awangardowe marginesy*, Instytut Kultury, Warszawa 1998, p. 45.

¹² G. Świtek, *Gry sztuki z architekturą*, Wyd. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2013, p. 97.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 222.

¹⁴ J. Griffin, *In her Element*, “Cultured” (Summer 2017) p. 172 [in:] <https://www.zittel.org/media/pages/texts/in-her-element/422d0a71d4-1600148187/in-her-element.pdf> (access: 20.05.22).

important part of her design. Since Zittel's work should be understood as a whole, the issues raised by various artistic media (architecture, art, design) intertwine.

The starting point for Zittel's work was the experience of living in New York in a minimal space. Her experiments in living began in 1991. Her work oscillated around the modernist concept of designing the space of a minimal apartment and living in situations of scarcity. In her studio, she began to produce works that dealt with the physical constraints of space: two rooms, less than 10 square meters, with an office in front and a private space in the back. She tested out alternative propositions to subdividing a small space or arranging furniture heights, based on activity, privacy, hygiene and so on. The combinations were often surprising. Among her early projects were also *Repair Works* (1991), broken and discarded furniture or objects which she repaired in a minimal and most pragmatic manner. By the comic visibility of the repair, she made palpable the difference between the furniture's use, value, and its display value¹⁵.

In a project covering all aspects of life, Zittel started to produce *A-Z Uniforms* (1991–present). She designed one perfect dress to take care of all her clothing needs for a six-month period – one for each season. The idea of wearing a uniform every day for six months relieved her of the tyranny of constant variety and changes in fashion and social expectations. She aims (the project is open) to indicate that liberation may be possible through the creation of a set of personal restrictions or limitations. Here we can also find the echo of William Morris, one of the founders of the Arts and Crafts Movement in England in the 20th century. “Where Morris posited a celebration of craftsmanship and the handmade as a challenge to the banalities of industrial production, Zittel's do-it-yourself approach to production, and her creation and experimentation with her own rules, offers a challenge to the passivity of consumer culture”¹⁶.

Thinking of basic needs led her to design one of her first signature works: *The A-Z Management Maintenance Unit* (1992). The square channel metal frame and birch plywood construction was to serve all aspects of living in an attempt to satisfy the often-opposed needs of security, stability, freedom, and autonomy. It combined a sink, storage space, cooking, dining, and sleeping area within a compact installation. “The Unit was originally built for Zittel's personal use, to carry a sense of permanence with her as she moved about every six months. The Unit could be collapsed and easily transported, like a permanent house to carry to each new house”¹⁷. Again, through the design of the Unit, limitations had been transformed into liberation. In Zittel's search for functionality, simplicity, and efficiency, she often explores how much she can forgo the comfort of her objects.

After moving to a large industrial loft, the real and artistic challenges changed. A space that was difficult to warm, cool and maintain order in had become a problem there. The new environment provoked a new series of experiments. She designed small chambers that were big enough for one person and/or to heat/cool – *Prototype for A-Z Warm Chamber/Prototype for A-Z Cool Chamber* (1993). Again, she engaged in her work with physical constraints.

Another interesting example of work that undermines the necessity for comfort in a home environment is *A-Z Carpet Furniture* (1992–1993). She produced carpets with geometric

¹⁵ T. Smith, *The rules of her game: A-Z at work and play*, [in:] *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space*, P. Morisani, T. Smith (eds.), Prestel, New York 2005, p. 38.

¹⁶ T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁷ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-management-maintenance-unit/> (access: 10.07.22).

forms that indicated areal views of standard furniture arrangements in a 1:1 scale – a living room, bedroom, dining room. “With their rectangular forms and their rectilinear and angular arrangement, the furniture patterns evoke the visual vocabulary of Russian Constructivism and, more generally speaking, early twentieth-century modernism”¹⁸. “Carpets” can be used as “furniture”, reducing cluster in a room or they can be just hung on the wall freeing valuable space.

Her next project *A-Z Rough Furniture*¹⁹ (1998) again questioned domestic space and ergonomics. It was a series of rocklike formations carved from dark grey foam rubber that worked as multiple possible support structures for the human body. Here, the artist tried to discover new ways in which to position the body; both spatially and socially. The name of the object comes from “rough”²⁰, a comprehensive ideology relating to objects and their usage that Zittel created. Ideology which attempts also to embrace human imperfection rather than reform it. Even the word is her own creation (although it resembles the meaningful word: rough). “Furniture” followed all the rules of this ideology.

In 1993, she started to produce smaller portable *A-Z Living Units*²¹ for others. The first unit was about the size of a large shipping trunk, moved around on casters, and when opened, it provided a wardrobe, desk, filing space, cooking facilities, folding cot and stools. The 1994 *Living Unit* is slightly larger because it includes a comfortable built-in bed, more horizontal work surfaces, and superior storage solutions.

Zittel was still interested and explored the ideas of freedom realized through constraints. The *A-Z Escape Vehicle* (1996) was a small metal-clad trailer structure whose interior could be customized. Inside, a little universe is created to ensure security and intimacy. “The A-Z Escape Vehicles can be used to escape to an inner world, rather than traveling to a destination in the external world. As each unit was purchased, the new owner commissioned his or her own ideal fantasy escape for the interior”²². Zittel wanted to prove with this project again, that defined boundaries may liberate, and unleash one’s creativity.

After establishing *A-Z West* in 2000, her home, studio, workshops and open exposition space, amongst others, in Joshua Tree in the Californian desert, Andrea Zittel continued to expand her work in multiple directions. Living in a place like this, the artist started to search for materials and fabrication techniques that would be efficient, affordable, and practical in the extreme desert climate. One of the experiments was to transform used paper into paper pulp, from which decorative panels could be made (*Paper Pulp Panel*²³, 2002–present). She

¹⁸ T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 41; <https://www.zittel.org/projects/carpet-furniture/> (access: 8.07.22).

¹⁹ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/rough-furniture/> (access: 8.07.22).

²⁰ [...] The primary questions addressed in *Rules of Rough* range between the relationship of humans to notions such as wear, obsolescence, adaptability, ease, progress, and expertise. *Rough*, pronounced “raw,” does not necessarily mean raw. While “raw” suggests a more natural or original state, “*Rough*” describes the way that something becomes “undone” over time and as the result of repeated lived experience. “*Rules of Rough*”: 1. A *Rough* surface should absorb or camouflage dirt, rather than reveal it. 2. Because all possessions ultimately break down or wear out, a *Rough* object must deteriorate beautifully. 3. *Rough* is absolutely comfortable. 4. Something *Rough* doesn’t require an “expert” to make it. 5. *Rough* objects are never functionally fixed. 6. *Rough* is infinitely adaptable. 7. In a *Rough* room things belong wherever you put them naturally. 8. *Rough* is both progressive and regressive at the same time. <https://www.zittel.org/projects/rules-of-rough/> (access: 10.06.22).

²¹ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-living-units-1994/> (access: 10.07.22).

²² <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-escape-vehicles/> (access: 12.07.22).

²³ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-paper-pulp-panels/> (access: 10.07.22).

also recycled rubbish into furniture – using cardboard boxes – common today through online ordering²⁴.

She still explores the idea of the freedom of the intimate universe. Eighteen simple rectangular structures, human-size semi-circular metal capsules, were arranged in the landscape around A-Z West, each customized by a different person.

A-Z Wagon Stations [2002–present] are small living shelters that reference both the covered wagons of the western frontier and the standard suburban station wagons of today. Although they do not have wheels, they are easy to collapse, transport, and reassemble. Their small size allows them to evade building codes, providing the inhabitant with the potential for a greater freedom and autonomy²⁵.

The A-Z Cellular Compartment Unit (2001) in turn, operates as a “parody of functional regimentation”²⁶ in home design. Zittel’s goal was to push an extreme type of formatting, segregating and compacting in contemporary residential architecture. The work consists of an accumulation of ten interconnected cabin-chambers, each unit customized around a single specialised function – eating, sleeping, reading, and so on. “The work comments on the increasing compartmentalization of time, space, and function in both our interior living spaces and in our day to day lives”²⁷. Zittel wants to determine if it is a natural reaction of people to react to complexity by categorizations, and she tests the bodily experience of living in such a space.

A continuation of her artistic practice developing the issues of contemporary environmentalism and progressive self-sufficiency has become Wonder Valley cabins, transformed into two identical *Experimental Living Cabins*²⁸ (2017) located in the Mojave desert about 40 minutes from A-Z West. Each cabin is about 37 square meters and completely off-the-grid with no water, power or solar power (which strengthens the resident’s awareness of the use of water, light, waste production, and disposal). Inside this small living space every aspect of habitual behaviour has been considered and reorganized. Inside the cabins, *Planar Configuration* has been installed. These are structures that evoke Russian Constructivism or the Stijl abstract sculptures, single units composed of an arrangement of vertical and horizontal surfaces that function as furniture – seating, table, bed, counter, and room divider, but without imposing any specific use. Those are examples of “abstract” furniture to which you cannot assign any single role. It was not intended to create a comfortable experience inside the Cabins. It is to strengthen awareness of the fundamentals of living, to re-examine, even re-learn, everyday activities. The cabin’s guest may even be considered as part of performance art. Zittel examined here a more abstract and open-ended living environment.

Open area of A-Z West is an exhibition space in which several projects are currently located. The latest additions are *Planar Pavilions* (2018). It is a permanent, site-specific public work sited on the land between Zittel’s residence and the adjacent highway, from which they are visible. Each of the ten *Planar Pavilions*, black-painted cinder-block constructions, consists of a series of vertical planes of varying heights that function as walls, boundaries, and divisions. They are more open than enclosed. “They frame the surrounding landscape,

²⁴ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/aggregated-stacks-a-z-west/> (access: 8.07.22).

²⁵ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-wagon-stations-first-generation-2004/> (access: 8.07.22).

²⁶ T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

²⁷ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-cellular-compartment-unit/> (access: 1.07.22).

²⁸ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/experimental-living-cabins-and-planar-configuration/> (access: 8.07.22).

isolate inside from outside, and provide physical and psychological forms of shelter”²⁹. “Being in them affirms everything that I feel about architecture, and about how it makes us feel physically and psychologically”³⁰ says Andrea Zittel.

The works described above are only a part of the rich collection of the artist’s work. She also makes various two-dimensional works to analyse the boundaries between art and architecture. For instance, in *Planar Panel Studies: Vast and Specific* (2022), she deals with the rectangle, while totally absent in nature, has become the most ubiquitous shape not only within human manufacturing and standardization, but also for human organization and imagination³¹.

4. CONCLUSION

*House is simultaneously a living space,
laboratory, image of the world and a test*³².

O.M. Ungers

Andrea Zittel isn’t the first artist to have an all-encompassing approach to art-making. The Russian Constructivism and the Bauhaus artists and architects had a similarly expansive utopian vision. It seems that in the case of Andrea Zittel, an irrational and impossible utopia has become a reality. She actually inhabits and lives her work – “literally and metaphorically, physically and conceptually”³³. *A-Z West* became a giant laboratory, a total work, an “Institute of Investigative Living”. Her approach also resembles the elementary pragmatism of the Bauhaus. For Zittel, it all comes down to basic human needs, her central question is how one can live well with as little as possible. However, Zittel carries out her “less-is-more” mission in a non-dogmatic manner. This is also not boutique minimalism, an artificial designer set that she creates. She avoids strong means of expression, strong artistic gestures. She is interested in finding meaning in intimate, everyday situations and activities and examining what structures best facilitate them. She makes rigorous aesthetic choices within the objects she creates – in relation to proportion, materials, and finish, they reflect a purpose. In her art, she explores social construction of needs and examines how much do we really need – when it comes to architecture, objects of possession, materials, forms, signs. She wants architecture and objects to maintain minimal influence, that they are subordinate to the user.

In her experiments, Andrea Zittel obviously operates only in a narrow territory of residential architecture, an area of everyday space, the one closest to people. However, her art touches on a very important topic; it reminds us that we should start revolutions within

²⁹ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/planar-pavilions-at-a-z-west/> (access: 30.06.22).

³⁰ J. Griffin, *op. cit.*

³¹ <https://www.zittel.org/projects/planar-panel-studies-vast-and-specific/> (access: 9.07.22).

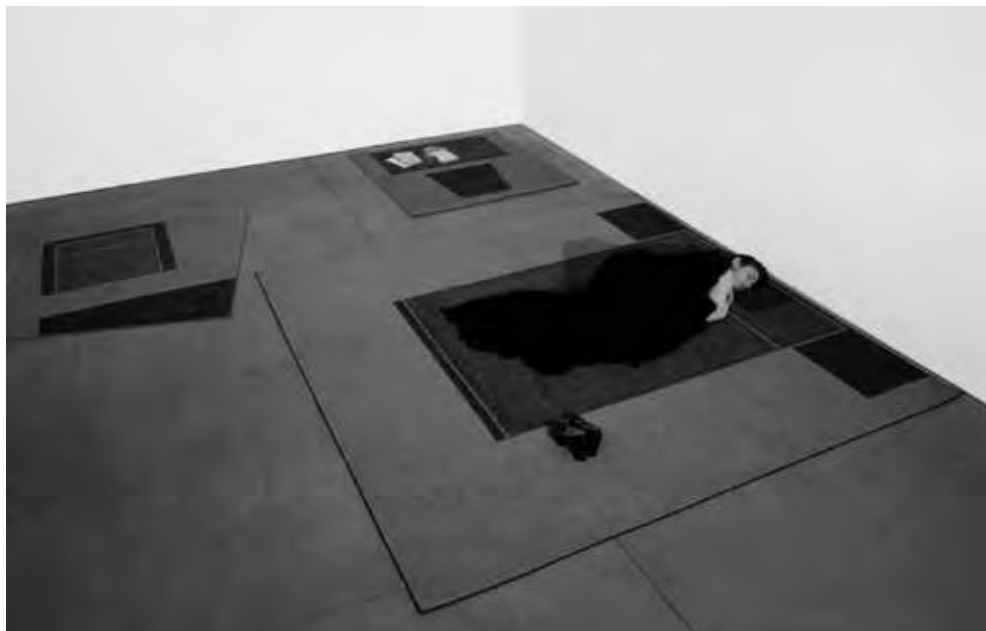
³² O.M. Ungers [see:] M. Kieren, *Der Architect als Bauherr, Ungers’ eigene Häuser als Ergebnis einer monologischen Kunst* [in:] O. M. Ungers, *Kosmos der Architektur*, A. Lepik (ed.), Hatje Cantz, Berlin 2007, p. 61.

³³ S. Cash, *A-Z and Everything in Between*, “Art in America” 2006, p. 126 [in:] <https://www.zittel.org/media/pages/texts/a-z-and-everything-in-between/267f895af7-1600148174/a-z-and-everything-in-between.pdf> (access: 20.06.22).

ourselves. This helps to see one's own agency, which can become an impulse to recognize our own influence on the world.

Among the individualistic, innovative, immoderate, over-expressive architecture that dominates today, such contesting experiments on the verge of art and architecture occupy an important place. They may be regarded as the "voice of reason" in an unsustainable architectural world. The broadly understood restraint in her design can open the field for discussion on how architectural solutions, models, and rules of living/lifestyles can respond to current economic, environmental and social problems. Her experiments strongly critique consumerism and its effect on our culture and environment. She designs rules for herself, in an effort to subvert the conformity produced by the passive consumption of a branded lifestyle in western culture. She is focused on the ideals and constraints of comfort. Her desire to turn limitations into luxuries. The avant-garde movement has always required sacrifices, a change in the way of life. Andrea Zittel proposes a return to simplicity and fundamentals of living. The starting point is the human situation in a complicated, chaotic world flooded with objects. In her work, she tries to reduce this world to the proportions in which it can be better embraced.

In these times of overwhelming overload of goods, images and information, Zittel criticizes the postmodern excess of signs. The forms she produces bear only their own meanings. She tries to reach basic forms that will not be entangled in signs, symbols, and interpretations. Their perception should be simple and undisturbed. Within her art, Andrea Zittel is also opposed to the extreme modern individualization of the language of forms. She chooses the universality and anonymity of architecture and objects as opposed to the author's originality and self-expression.



Ill. 1. *A-Z Carpet Furniture*, 1993, source: <https://www.zittel.org/projects/carpet-furniture/> (access: 15.09.2022).



Ill. 2. *A-Z Cellular Compartment Units*, 2001, source: <https://www.zittel.org/projects/a-z-cellular-compartment-unit/> (access: 15.09.2022).



III. 3. *Planar Configuration One*, 2016, source: <https://www.zittel.org/projects/planar-configuration-one-2016/> (access: 15.09.2022).



III. 4. *Planar Pavilions at A-Z West*, 2018, source: <https://www.zittel.org/projects/planar-pavilions-at-a-z-west/> (access: 15.09.2022).

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