

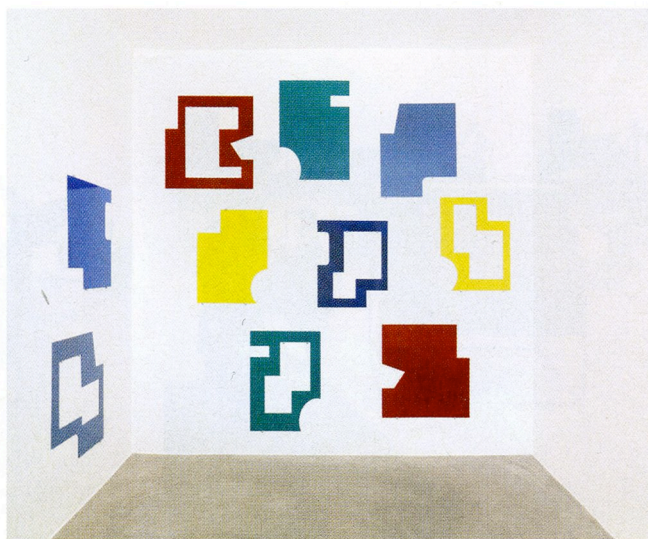
BERLIN

AYSE ERKMEN

BARBARA WEISS

The departure point for Ayşe Erkmen's art is usually its location. This strategy is about as objective and self-effacing as it gets: she begins with what's provided by the occasion, the time and place offered to her. Despite this emphasis on present-tense specifics, Erkmen's work tends to refer to its own past. The exhibition "Doppelhaushälfte" (Half of a Duplex House) could be construed as a memory of her 2007 exhibition on the second floor of this same building, in which she ran narrow strips of carpeting the length of the gallery and adorned the walls with glossy letters of the alphabet.

Weiss has since expanded into the downstairs rooms; in this show, Erkmen laid strips of material, tacked together by chrome studs, across the floor, echoing the layout of the rooms above (*sixtyfive percent*, all works 2010). The concern with memory did



View of Ayşe Erkmen's installation of 10 enamel-on-metal cutouts, all 2010; at Barbara Weiss.

not interfere with the piece's minimalistic bent, its reduction of space to a set of geometric modules. The cream-colored surface of the material—a satiny, slightly spongy PVC of the sort found on gymnasium or dance hall floors—made walking over the strips, Andre-style, seem inadvisable. Instead, the wide bands functioned as a barrier. This inaccessibility emphasized the remaining area, which became a space for memory and imagination, in a twist on Liam Gillick's early platforms reserved for "reflection." Like the carpet strips in 2007, the PVC rose slightly up the walls as though attempting to grasp the architecture in both its horizontal and vertical dimensions, or to reach upstairs physically as well as figuratively.

Erkmen's work emerges from classic Conceptual art, but her focus on shape is redolent of formalism. It is there in the floor piece, and in a series of 10 wall sculptures: irregular geometric shapes cut from metal sheets, sprayed with enamel and hung in a cluster, like disassembled puzzle pieces. Their shapes recall her "Cozy Corners" from 2009—a series of asymmetrical outdoor sculptures that she leaned against street signs and trees. In both cases, the modified rectangles, with various segments removed, could represent the floor plan of a one- or two-room apartment. The recurring theme is the use of abstraction as a tool for recollecting and imagining time and space.

Shapes are animated in the projected 5-minute film *hearts and circles*.

Variations on these two forms spin and dart and overlay each other. The work arose from Erkmen's 2009 exhibition at a different venue, the Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry in France, and its website, which deploys similar elements in an animated logo. Rather than referring to the floor above, this piece points to a location abroad. Starting with the here and now, Erkmen pitches us beyond it, into the mystery of other times and places, so that when our attention returns to the place we are in, it is made to seem correspondingly mysterious.

—Mark Prince