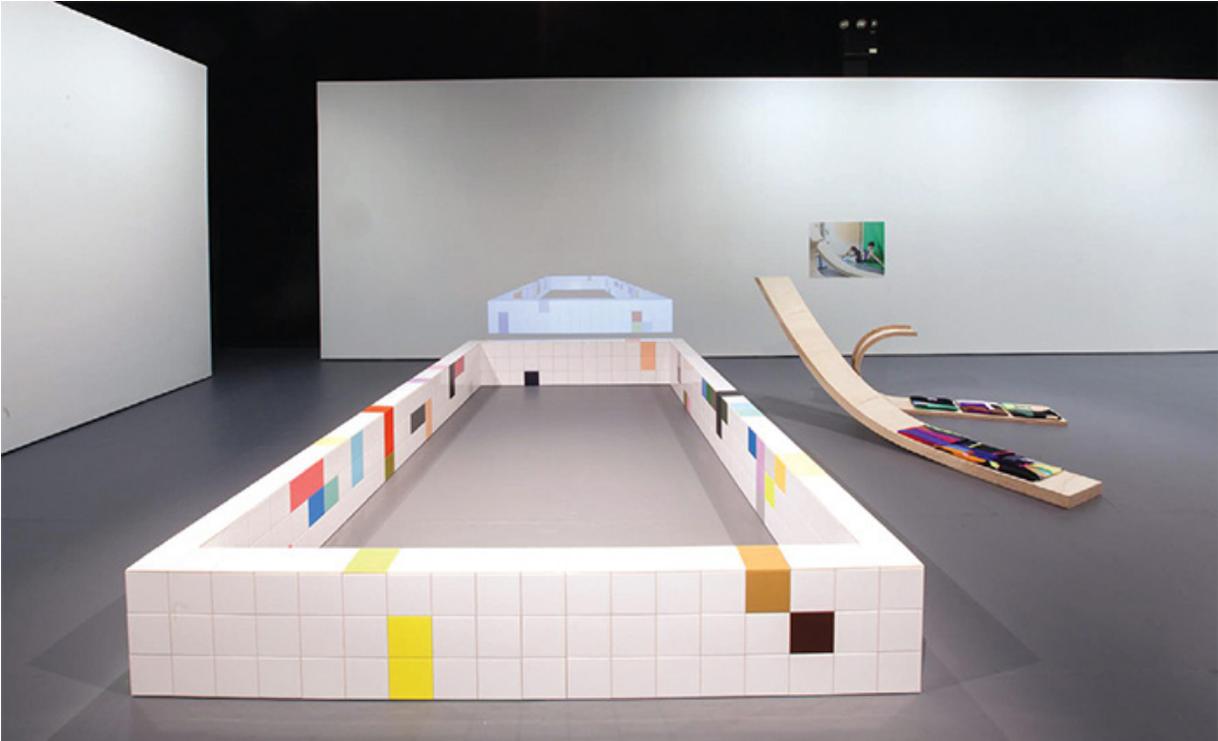


ARTFORUM

“No entrance, no exit”
THE KITCHEN



Anna K.E., *Unfinished Smile*, 2014, varnished tiles, Lycra, wood, video projection, ink-jet print. Installation view. From “No entrance, no exit.”

Today the membrane that screens private space from public has disintegrated to almost nothing. You could say it's as thin as a layer of liquid crystal. Still, slight as it might be, it's in this diminished borderland that “No entrance, no exit,” an exhibition of works at the Kitchen by Anna K.E., Alina Tenser, and Viola Yeşiltaç, was set. Each artist responded to the pervasive atmosphere of publicity in our present moment: one in which we have begun to accept that much of our activity is captured, distributed, and analyzed and in which we are virtually powerless to the fact that our every move might be performed for some unknown public.

The exhibition, which was curated by Lumi Tan, featured constricted, slippery spaces; its centerpiece was K.E.'s *Unfinished Smile*, 2014, a shallow, empty swimming pool tiled in gleaming white, and given occasional accents—in lilac, black, peach—that together create a pixelated effect. The same pool appears in a projection on the wall behind it, floating in an empty, groundless atmosphere, and offering the impression that it is a potential stage or studio ready for action. Other pointers include folded sets of shiny, brightly patterned swimsuits neatly placed on two wooden slide sculptures, and a display of images of the artist wearing the garments and posing by the pool in front of a green screen—the great contemporary signifier that the performance is scheduled for elsewhere. Whether we expect to see the artist appear in the pool itself or in the projection behind, we're disappointed on both counts—she fails to show up. She does, however, make an appearance in *Multiple Keyholes*, 2014, a three-screen video projection in which she is seen precariously balancing on the narrow windowsill of her studio, trying to line herself up with the grid of windowpanes, with little success. The third, most skit-like sequence is a loop of K.E. repeatedly slipping off the sill, upsetting some jars, and rolling theatrically to the floor.

In Yeşiltaş's eleven photographs of totemic assemblages of trinkets made by her father in the privacy of his own home, the man's solitary endeavors have been cast as conscious performance via the invasion of his daughter's camera. The artist again self-consciously casts herself as middleman in a large abstract photograph titled *The Lift Operator III*, 2015, which was laid on the floor and is ostensibly based around the metaphor of artist as lift operator, shuttling ideas between private thoughts and public display. The work itself fails to communicate the fullness of this idea but does, however, convey a sense of being trapped between two spaces: Reflective glass laid on the top of the photograph makes the image impossibly hard to read—and visually suffocates it. A section in which a soft-edged rectangle has been cut out from the glass provides relief, acting as much like an air vent as a rest stop for the eyes.

Tensor's videos and sculptures were by far the most oblique contributions here, though their ambiguities were the source of their power. In *Glider Shuffle*, 2014, a video projected on Plexiglas, an array of flat objects with softly beveled edges in polite shades such as beige and green (these turn out to be furniture gliders, caps placed on the bottoms of tables and chairs to keep them from scuffing hardwood floors) beguilingly skate around in groups and changing formations, in accordance with some invisible logic or choreography. The same objects can just be discerned in Tensor's panel sculptures, such as *Magnet Trap* and *Magnet Matching*, both 2014, here secreted under a greige coating. Tensor's works offer not a direct message about publicity or privacy as such, but, more important, a powerless feeling: We are caught between sparkling images that slide across glass, like so many fingers across a screen, and a smothering world managed by friendly, wiped-clean objects. It's a shallow space, but you could drown in it.

—Laura McLean-Ferris