

ANDREA BLUM

by Pamela Lins



Rainbow House, 2010, proposal for a guest house in Italy. Images courtesy of the artist.

Imagine this. My roommate is a dog. What if the dog were also a space? A built space creating a longing, a longing for absolute presence? You are in that space while you are looking at it and looking through it. Are you the dog, the space, or the roommate?

This fictional site operates simultaneously with our everyday lives. It is a place where relationships unfold in time, and structures unfold in space; lying together they suggest the abstract material of sociability. These formations are the relatives of architecture, the turf of Andrea Blum's work.

Blum's sculptures have a hint of the Kafkaesque—characters move through their narratives, accepting each surprising turn of events and re-adjusting their responses accordingly. A Blum fragment is not just part of a sensible whole that has been thrown together for you to read after you have taken in the entire work. Instead, the components

hold together via a more peculiar unfolding of time. The uncanny events that Blum precisely cobbles together for a work, such as failing rainbows, birds in a café, and explosions in bell jars, lie together easily, if not conjecturally, with more straightforward elements such as daybeds, benches, and chairs. Together, their striking wholeness persists both because of and in spite of the works' "sculptureness." These connections are then enhanced by the sculptures' materials and processes: perforated metal, glass, and drawing. But there is more here than mere physicality and materials. There are moods and buddies.

Blum's works are orientation mash-ups. They do not define themselves by their locations. Rather than being *in* a location, they *are* locations, psychogeographies of spaces, containments, and experiences. In *Birdhouse Café* you literally sit within a species' urban

relocation locale. *Rainbow House*, an octagonal room with rainbow-colored windows, evokes the mental landscape of Michelangelo Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*. Blum's recent exhibition, *Paradise Lost*, posits imaginary architecture as a network of thoughts—a shifting rainbow explosion unfolds spatially, compressing and expanding throughout the works, to highlight the thought process itself. Engaging the contextual qualities of their mostly European locations, whether private or public, interior or exterior, the works' contingent locality situates them with clear sculptural force.

Blum's sculptures sit and wait and they are forever in need of a body. They address an array of ways to rest in public, waiting for their stillnesses and relationships to start. Blum's chairs, benches, and beds position our bodies in classic minimal positions. They invite you to sit and drink coffee with the birds in Paris, to lie with the lizards in Spain, to rest with the other tired people in Venice. And you expect funny, quirky stuff to happen, as you may be paired with an animal. These works are *waiting to make a scene*. The choice is the viewer's: have coffee with a bird, or *watch* someone have coffee with a bird. To live in a rainbow, or to *watch* someone live in a rainbow. This is sculpture's condition of perpetually speaking to the next moment.

— PAMELA LINS is an artist who lives and works in Brooklyn.



Birdhouse Café, 2008, Maison Rouge, Paris.



Untitled In Bed With A Cold-Blooded Animal, 2008, Galerie Insitu, Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.



Gardens + Fountains, 2005, Venice Biennale.