

The Sun

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GALLERY - GOING



Michael Ashkin's rather stunning "Adjnabistan" (2005) is a dark, romantic coda to Ms. Zittel and Mr. Schütte's crate-and-container fetish. Filling Rosen's project space so that the viewer must scrape around the sides of the room, the 11-by-21-foot sculpture (on a 46-inch support) depicts in aerial view a desolate, post-apocalyptic township of shipping containers, caravans, and makeshift observation towers on some prairie or steppe. The ground is actually nine pairs of Sheetrock, the habitations made with dexterous precision from recycled cardboard and gypsum.

The piece recalls the ornate military models that fill the basement of the National Museum in Lille, France, from the Napoleonic era. It also brings to mind, in its focus and obsession, the model a character is compelled to make in Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." The work maintains a compulsive and sparse rigor, balancing all-overness and precision, investment, and casualness. André Breton once described Picasso paintings as "tragic toys for adults." The dinky nihilism of Mr. Ashkin's dollhouse makes a similar appeal.

Schütte until July 2 (24 W. 57 Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, 212-977-7160). Prices: The gallery declined to disclose its prices.

Zittel and Ashkin until June 18 (525 W. 24 Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, 212-627-6000). Prices: The gallery declined to disclose its prices.