

CLIFTON BENEVENTO

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ARTFORUM

Zak Kitnick

CLIFTON BENEVENTO 515 Broadway September 10–November 5



Zak Kitnick, *A Representative*, 2011, steel shelves, 18 œ x 147 x 18 œ".

Framed, glossy food posters form the basic units of Zak Kitnick's grids—less a raw material than a polished and reified one, subject to wry recontextualization. *Compendium (Distribution)* and *Compendium (Capital)* (all works 2011) set a neat catalogue of sumptuous cheeses next to berry counterparts; a taxonomy of shellfish borders a cohort of plump pears. Elements of a Baroque marketplace still life haunt the wall, stripped of any sensual or moralizing redolence—stripped of any redolence, period. Of course, in their encyclopedic sorting these posters bear more than a whiff of bourgeois taste. The readymade quaintness of that idiom is the real object of Kitnick's project. The juxtapositions invite speculation as to the (il)logic of their union. Why squash next to chilies, after all?

At once larger and possibly overlooked, a further installation is conducted in the reordering of the contents of the room's built-in bookcases. Kitnick supervised the resorting of their books from white to black, according to the color spectrum. Its title, *The Rest of the Room*, underscores a presence both inconspicuous and unavoidable. The more bibliographic resonance of this reordering evokes the same "aesthetics of

administration” as his clustered posters. Wrought from entirely different materials, though bound up with the same notions of containment and (dis)ordering, two other sculptural works, *A Representative* and *Perfect Schedule*, could be confused with ambient furniture. Assembled from black steel shelving components, these pieces have been set deep into the gallery walls and hence removed from any surrounding context or scale. Held in place by ordinary crosshead screws, they in no way dissemble their workaday materials. The banal familiarity of shelves has been transposed into a lattice of crisscrossed geometries. The unfeeling anonymity of industrial parts—erected into rhythms both manic and meticulous, futile and precise—conjures a range of connotations, from girder bridges to something out of Kafka. Even—or especially—judged on their own, these latter pieces merit a long look.

— *Ara H. Merjian, October 2011*