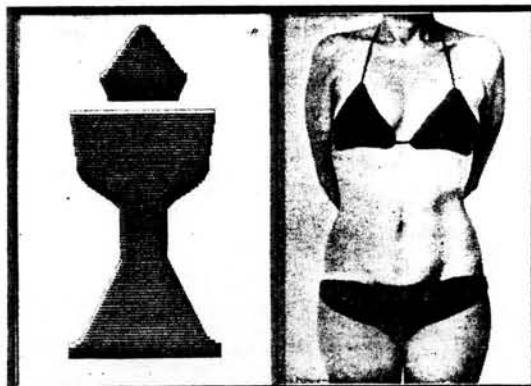


FLASH ART

ELAINE REICHEK

Concord Gallery

If the conceptualists of the late sixties were involved with facts and information—with semiotics and logical analyses of systems—many artists in the early eighties are more interested in making things and making unlikely connections between them. Elaine Reichek's post-conceptualist paralogy art equates knitting and building: humble women's craft and the loftiest edifices of man. She turns the modernist grid into knitting patterns for architectural façades—or vice versa, making knit/purl patterns from building elevations. She lines up a knitted garment, a diagrammatic pattern, and a tinted photo of the real building or the life-size garment being worn—as neatly and precisely as butterflies on display. Each piece is accompanied by a pattern book documenting the process.



Elaine Reichek, *Bikini (detail)*, 1982.
Yarn, pencil, pastel print and book, 100 x 210 cm.
Photo D. James Dee. Courtesy Concord, New York

She transforms the White House façade into a baby bonnet, makes house slippers that are sailboats (two sails equal one slipper), turns the Temple of Heaven and Chitchan Itza into colorful skicaps, flattens a bikini into a pattern that could be a chalice or an ice-cream sundae, knits the World Trade Towers as a pair of upside-down pants—and does it all with perverse logic and wit, never losing equilibrium. They are all peculiar garments, strange abodes. Her free associations lead to mysterious resemblances, tenuous connections, inappropriate materials. Everything is slightly off, including the scale. Nothing quite fits. There are humorous discrepancies between shape and pattern, diagram and object, concept and actuality. The sparse, clean conceptualist surface of the work intertwines with a complex chain of connecting ideas—free associations about gridding and mapping, about patterns for making things and patterns of behavior, about familiar archetypes and familial conventions. Her new work is bolder, wittier, and more bizarrely logical than ever.

Kim Levin