

**PRESSBOOK**

KATE ERICSON & MEL ZIEGLER

*Artnet News*

*August 2014*

## Ericson + Ziegler's Functional Art

Blake Gopnik, Friday, August 15, 2014



Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler are two unsung heroes of socially-conscious conceptualism, and this is their "Give and Take," on view for another week in a [mini-retrospective at Galerie Perrotin](#) in New York. (Click on my image for a closeup.)

There's a very obvious link to Marcel Duchamp's "In Advance of a Broken Arm," the snow-shovel-as-art that Duchamp came up with in 1915, as one of the first-ever readymades. (A version of that work is in the Duchamp exhibition at Gagosian gallery that I should be Daily Pic-ing soon, if I can get a decent image.) But Ericson and Ziegler, as always, added a do-gooder social dimension: These tools were real ones on their last legs, as used by gardeners in Central Park; Ericson and Ziegler spent the proceeds from selling them as art to buy the workers brand-new, functional ones. Here's radically modern art trying—or at very least pretending—to improve the world, one rake-tine at a time. This is a genre that I've called the "functional readymade," and I rather like it: It's like inviting museumgoers to pee in Duchamp's urinal. (Image courtesy Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler and Galerie Perrotin)

The Daily Pic also appears at [ArtnetNews.com](#). For a full survey of past Daily Pics visit [blakegopnik.com/archive](#)