



ART & DESIGN

Emilia Azcárate: 'Liminal'

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Art in Review

By HOLLAND COTTER

*Henrique Faria Fine Art**35 East 67th Street, fourth floor,
Manhattan**Through March 22*

Developments in Emilia Azcárate's art appear to reflect changes in her spiritual life. Born in Venezuela in 1964, now living in Spain, Ms. Azcárate was raised Roman Catholic, joined the Krishna consciousness movement in her 20s, and more recently became a devotee of Nichiren Buddhism. All three disciplines are ritual-intensive, and so, in different ways, is the work in Ms. Azcárate's first New York solo.

The circular shape, in essence an interfaith form, predominates. One example fills a wall: Its radiating and concentric lines are composed of metal bottle caps the artist has collected in her travels, each flattened and cut into spiky florets representing Hindu and Buddhist chakras or wheels. A few small pictures on paper have designs worked out from strings of alphabetical letters typed on an old typewriter.

A group of dozens of watercolor paintings on wood panels seems, with the works' bright colors and busy patterns, designed far less to focus the eye or mind than to keep both on the move. And the grouping itself is

kinetic. The different-size panels are ganged together upright and free-standing on a shelf, and visitors are invited to rearrange them as they please.

Piece by piece, there's nothing formally new about Ms. Azcárate's art, but the potential for hands-on interaction is appealing, as is the ritualistic ongoingness of her project. During the course of the show, new mandalas arrive at the gallery each week, painted and typed on postcards sent from her studio in Madrid, or from wherever she may be.

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