



Germaine Koh

HELP, 2002

printed plastic sign

with self-adhesive vinyl

8 x 12 in.

Germaine Koh's work is ingenious. It is—I guess, and enjoy the guessing process—conceptual art. I mean this in the very best way. It is wry and brainy. It unsettles me and sometimes makes me sad. Mostly, though, I grin. Is it bad to say that her art is funny, that it entertains? Not in the duller meaning of the word, of course, but that it doesn't—in going after ideas—neglect the more obvious pleasures. Shown above is *Help* from her "Signs" series, a manipulated "Help Wanted" notice that I first saw installed in what looked like a supply room from a nameless office. This is *Bartleby* reduced to a purer, quicker form. This is great—sad and odd and existentially funny. Her work is interested in the messages below the world, or the form and instance of the messages themselves.

ANDER MONSON