

Nicole Klagsbrun



WALLACE BERMAN

1926-1976

Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of WALLACE BERMAN (1926-1976) running from November 6 to January 9, 2010. An opening reception will be held on Friday, November 6th from 6:00-8:00 pm, featuring a screening of Berman's collage-film *Aleph* (1956-1966) with a reading by Tosh Berman and a live performance by John Zorn of his score for the film.

Building on the gallery's longstanding involvement with artists of the California counterculture, this exhibition presents a rare opportunity to consider the scope of Berman's practice. Considered by many to be a major figure of the assemblage movement, Berman was active within the Los Angeles and San Francisco Beat communities and acted as a mentor and spiritual advisor to many artists. Anticipating mail art and Fluxus movements, Berman's work has had wide-ranging influence despite the artist's determination to operate outside of the public eye.

Through sculpture, collage and the underground publication *Semina*, Berman fused aspects of photography, film and print. Central to Berman's multifaceted practice is the Verifax collage, an early photocopier technology. Berman manipulated ephemeral compositions directly on the copier plate, creating prints that are in fact unique originals. A magazine advertisement of a hand holding a small 1963 Sony transistor radio recurs throughout in these works; in place of the radio's rectangular speaker, Berman inserts collage elements such as a cross, a snake, and a Buddha, transforming the repeated image in a quasi-magical operation. Also on view in the exhibition are a rock assemblage, photographic collages, and hand-printed posters, giving a sense of the breadth and complexity of Berman's visionary oeuvre.

The project room features a restored version of *Aleph* both in its original silent form and with a new score by John Zorn, courtesy of the National Film Preservation Foundation with the assistance of Anthology Film Archives and the Film-makers' Cooperative.

Wallace Berman was recently the subject of a retrospective exhibition *All is Personal: the Art of Wallace Berman*, Camden Art Center, London, UK (2008). This is his third exhibition in New York; his first was at Charles Cowles, 1982, followed by Louver Gallery, 1990.