



# THE NEW YORKER

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## ART

**Galleries – Chelsea**

**December 14, 2009**

### **WALLACE BERMAN**

A near-mythic mid-century wild man, Berman (1927-1976) blazed through the art worlds of Los Angeles and San Francisco—after his expulsion from high school for gambling—experimenting with jazz, Beat poetry, spiritualism, film, and alternatives to painting. Collages, made using a Verifax (a precursor of the Xerox photocopier), reel with positive and negative images drawn from pop culture and more mystical spheres, including Kabbalah and the tarot. The show's experimental heart is Berman's only film, "Aleph," an eight-minute-long work that took a decade to make (1956-66). It's shown here in both its original, silent version and with a new soundtrack by John Zorn, whose avant-saxophone skronk strikes just the right unruly note. Through Jan. 9. (Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. 212-243-3335.)