

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Alan Turner

Naves, Mario. "Currently Hanging." The New York Observer, April 3, 2000.

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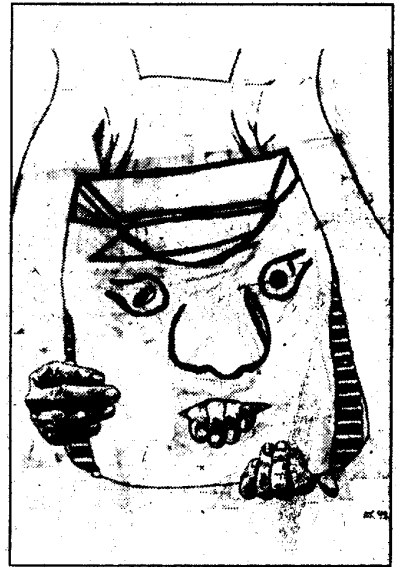
IS THAT A PIECE OF FRUIT? OR A PREGNANT BELLY?

Alan Turner, whose work is at Lennon, Weinberg Inc., makes a dry, diagrammatic comedy out of the human form. Mr. Turner draws portions of the body—eyes, noses, hands and mysteriously familiar folds of flesh—and cuts, pastes and reconfigures them. He mixes and matches these fragments with drawings of other favored subjects: a wallpaper pattern featuring fruit, corrugated cardboard, buckets and a crude caricature of what appears to be a soldier. In one collage, a leaping figure composed of an arm, a leg and a bicycle wheel is roped by a lasso, in another, a goofy, masklike face is constituted from—what exactly? A piece of fruit? A pregnant belly? It's hard to say. (Puzzling over these fleshy amalgamations is the point and the fun.) Mr. Turner's slippages of imagery—fingers becoming teeth, an eye replacing the head of a hammer—recall Surrealism and Dadaism, albeit without the spark of either. The artist takes these

The reality of inert matter imbued with an organic vitality has become suspect. Appropriation and fabrication reign; 'touch' is inveighed as retrograde or oppressively individualistic.

antecedents for granted and there is a concomitant flatness to the work. Mr. Turner's art is consciously—self-consciously—adept. We admire the pictures less for their magic than for their artifice.

Artifice, as it turns out, is Mr. Turner's gift. If Ms. Seborovski needs to test the parameters of her art, Mr. Turner is better off specifying the limits of his. His best pictures are the collages, which have a plainness the other work lacks. The paintings, with their nubly surfaces and queasy colors, are leaden in comparison, and his drawings remind us that Surrealism was largely an illustrator's game. Mr. Turner's art prospers on blatant bits and pieces. (The more seamless his art is



Alan Turner's *Puppet*, 1993.

the more humdrum it becomes.) The artist has a nice way with juxtaposing his repertoire of images and a nicer way with gauging the distinctions between materials. The transparency of vellum, the graininess of pencil, the coarseness of a photocopied drawing, and scraps of tape—which dot his collages with a this-is-all-there-is-to-it literalness—are handled with a pointed surprising gentleness. Mr. Turner's rebuses aren't as perverse or as profound as they might like to be. But their dexterity is droll and diverting. *Alan Turner; Drawings 1991-1999 and Recent Paintings* is at Lennon, Weinberg Inc., at 560 Broadway at Prince Street, Suite 308, until April 8.