

Smith, Roberta. "Al Hansen," *The New York Times*, 8 December 1995.

GRACIE MANSION

FINE ART

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1995

Al Hansen

Gracie Mansion Gallery
54 St. Marks Place
East Village
Through tomorrow

This lively show of small collages and assemblages pays tribute to the Fluxus, proto-Pop artist Al Hansen, who died in July at the age of 67. Hansen was an unreconstructed lover of women who excelled at making art out of almost nothing. His preferred form was predictable and, as seen here, a bit monotonous: a buxom female nude, usually a torso, that is a close relative of those favored by the painter William Copley.

The imaginative strength of Hansen's art lies in his ability to create this form in such common detritus as cigarette ends, cigarette papers, burned matches and, most notably, Hershey chocolate-bar wrappers that gave him the option of language. Cleverly rearranging their silver letters into irregularly repeating words — her, he, she, shy and yes — he created an unusually beautiful and ecstatic form of concrete poetry.

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