

# NEW YORK

## Art/Kay Larson

**Selections From the Unaffiliated Artists Slide File** is an unwieldy title for a graceful little exhibition at Artists Space, which celebrated its tenth anniversary last year with a show of ten artists—among them Laurie Anderson, Jonathan Borofsky, and John Torreano—who made big after starting off there. This year its new director, former Guggenheim curator Linda Shearer, decided to start the process all over again by expanding and upgrading the slide files (which are open to any artist without commercial ties) and making up an exhibition based on them. "Selections" is exactly what Artists Space ought to be doing, and *is* doing well. Not a single one of the thirteen artists in the show is familiar; not a single one is unworthy. Some are more worthy than others, of course, but life is like that. My personal pick is Jay Coogan, who constructs things that look like cartoons in 3-D black-and-white. He seems to have raided the shoe rack and broom closet for subjects—a foot, a sock, a cap, a (?) piano—all distantly related to Philip Guston's painter's dictionary of mundanities. In Coogan's case these oddities stand freely on the floor or hang on the wall, the most curious cross between painting and sculpture in many a day.

For curiousness, Conrad Vogel's carved paintings come a close second—they borrow on the cliché of the shaped painting, but with such baroque intricacies of form and perversities of color that they outshout their sources. Sidney McElhenny's paintings are more rectangular, but—such is the state of art right now—less conventional. In a piece called *Etruscan Swirl*, bits of linoleum and a swoop-nosed female figure float in spirals of paint—a classical parody of contemporary painting, or a contemporary parody of classical?

The thing these days is to find some form other than art itself to draw one's inspiration from. Architecture is another quotable item that threatens to be done badly by being done too well. Three artists here mimic it: Susan Yelavich, for whom it becomes abstracted angles and windows, planes and memory allusions; Ronald Morosan, who installs mirrors in freestanding walls; Andrew Nash, who converts bland California-style facades into eyeless, slightly ominous wall reliefs. Others to watch include Jeffrey Mendoza, with his stringy roots wound out of wire and foam-core, and Mike Metz, with a mute wire cage holding newspapers—an intellectual "ray gun." (105 Hudson Street at Franklin; through April 25.) ■