

“Sandy Winters at George Adams”

By Jonathan Goodman

Sandy Winters' materially and emotionally exuberant exhibition consisted of a drawn, painted and collaged wall installation titled *Fresh Cuts* (1997-8), a smaller one called *In Progress* (1998) and four smallish works on paper from 1997. Winters depicts forms that seem simultaneously derived from machinery and from nature and which lend themselves to a variety of readings. Often the works feel funkily irreverent and comically erotic; sometimes too, they look like contraptions meant to suggest the physically overwhelming workings of systems outside our control.

Fresh Cuts was a huge collage that followed the contours of the gallery space. Made of aluminum, canvas, cardboard and charcoal, it sprawled across a long wall and two smaller adjacent walls, creating a J-shaped installation. The mix of rough materials – stamped tin ceiling panels, plywood, newspapers and cardboard – gave the work an improvisational air, although one in which an abstract narrative seems to play out. In Winters' work, one thing leads to another; the scrawled forms, with their carefully worked out proportions of parts, suggest the repetitive motions seen in factory machines, as well as the interactions of bodies during sex. The work was a diagram of oddly organic plumbing: on the left end, a big bulbous stomach shape yielded to series of thick pipes. In the middle, connected to the pipes, was some sort of industrial scrubber; at its bottom was a disk that had wires projecting from its sides. Winters created a hybrid world of funny, but also slightly threatening, composite objects.

Her interest in improvisation was evident in the small site-specific installation *In Progress*. During the course of the show, as visitors watched, Winters drew in conte and charcoal on four plywood panels covered with blackboard paint. Polaroid snapshots documented changes in a big, slate-blue furnace-like device from which emanated shapes conflating factory tools and implements of war. In a gesture of deliberate openness, Winters allowed visitors to study an unfinished work and to review her decisions.

The four drawings in the show furthered the artists desire to devise a world of natural machinery. This is not so much a paradox as a conundrum in which delights a primary virtue. The fans, gaskets and pipes don't make any functional sense, and that's Winters' point exactly. She means to seduce through laughter, and she succeeds.