

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

The New York Times

**CHRISTOPHER CHIAPPA: "IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE A LIE" AT JESSICA FREDERICKS
KEN JOHNSON
FEBRUARY 12, 1999**

Jessica Fredericks
504 West 22d Street, Chelsea
Through Feb. 27

Once in a while you come across an artwork that makes you laugh out loud. There's one in this smart and entertaining New York solo debut by Christopher Chiappa, a young Conceptualist who lives in Queens. A small photographic diptych shows, to the left, a rear view of a young man with his arms around his parents; to the right, we see the smiling trio from the front and discover that the son is wearing a T-shirt bearing a Freudian legend that begins, "I want to kill my father." The rest, referring to his mother, can't be quoted here.

While Mr. Chiappa's works are immediately funny, they also have an ironically self-conscious complexity. A sequence of photographs shows the artist using an ax to chop his way through a series of plywood panels set up in a large boxy structure; it spoofs Minimalism, process art and macho performance. A notarized document ordering Mr. Chiappa to cease harassing and abusing himself sends up the solipsism and legalistic documentation frequently associated with 1960's-style Conceptual art. A green neon sign reading "Bruce Nauman Died" embodies an ambitious young artist's Oedipal wish-fulfillment in the medium and mordant mood of his predecessor.

Some sculptural pieces make funny connections between material and representation: a full-size coffin completely covered by 8,000 pink Band-Aids, for example, or a motorcycle helmet made of concrete. Mr. Chiappa is no slacker; everything he makes is carefully considered. It will be interesting to see where he goes from here.

TEL 212-352-9700 FAX 212-352-9704

www.katewerblegallery.com EMAIL info@katewerblegallery.com