

# Texte zur Kunst

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*Sean Landers: Art, Life and God,  
1990 in der Postmasters Gallery  
New York.*

## Sean Landers

“Put a bag over her head and fuck her.”

Sean Landers' new installation exemplifies the same aggressive ambivalence as the “dude” tormented by an ugly girl's body. And the device is identical: a cluster of sculptures on various pedestals stands in the middle of the gallery, each sculpture covered by a garbage bag. Tacked to the walls surrounding the ensemble are several pages from a legal pad featuring various scenes from Landers' would-be movie called “Art, Life and God.”

These descriptions are written in ballpoint and rife with misspellings.

The sculpture might at first seem to illustrate the filmscript. It's offered as the work of Landers' alter ego Chris Hamson: starving artist, East Village bohemian and post-pubescent Catholic. Two things keep driving him crazy: making it in the art world — a dream which leaves him impoverished — and furtive sexual pleasures. The combination is bad, if not deadly, also in “Run-On” (Another of Chris's Last Letters Left at the Time of His Death).

I have a grease stain on the unpainted sheetrock behind my bed from my hair, I haven't showered in two weeks, my fungus now covers 30% of my skin surface, my mother won't return my phone calls, I'm subsisting on a ten pound bag of rice that I bought from a bodega, I've stapled the soles back, on my \$10 shoes bought on orchard St. for the third time now, I have not had sex in one month and one half, my penis is chaffed from beating it, I can't read past 8:30 pm because my electricity has been turned off and I can not see, I am a laughing stock amongst all my friends, love is nowhere



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to be found, I am very, very alone.

Landers parlays spelling errors, ungrammatical constructions and Catholic guilt into a disquieting poetics. If his filmscript is a tragicomic cartoon which careens wildly between slapstick and melodrama, its essential vulnerabilities nonetheless leave the reader to wonder just how close the artist and his Hamson persona really are. At times the overall effect is akin to Genet. Yet the sculptures are not simply sites to be haunted by the possibly “deceased” Hamson, they fortuitously capture the conflicted status of art in a market economy. To stretch a metaphor: Like a great body, the naked pedestals are still enough to elicit desire, but the veiled “artistic” part, the countenance, could be cause for embarrassment. John Miller