



DOVE BRADSHAW (Ericson): Working with only carbon paper, Bradshaw has created a series of irresistibly intimate and deliciously textured works that marry the frottage of Max Ernst to the photograms of Man Ray and Christian Schad—with Kurt Schwitters and Anne Ryan officiating at the wedding. Of course, none of these modernist masters of collage techniques created a body of work rendered entirely in carbon such as Bradshaw exhibited, but her formal reasoning recalls theirs, and the pocket-size dimensions match the small scale of many works by Ryan and Schwitters especially. The peculiarities of carbon as a registering medium inspire Bradshaw and inform her original approach. So fragile and unstable that it retains its own barest crinkle and picks up every vein in the items on which it has been rubbed, the carbon records both temporal and physical incident with the same dogged faithfulness. Even as the carbon rubs off, the surfaces become layered with incident upon incident, the ghostly images of watchsprings, cigarette wrappers and pieces of scotch tape floating under, over or through the incidental graffiti, the delicate filigrees of accidental or deliberate pleating and the luminous halations of partly eroded areas. Studying Bradshaw's carbons is like studying amber in which the translucent, partly decomposed bodies of ancient insects obscure one another. There is no archeological interest to Bradshaw's imagery, of course—and in this shadowy medium there is none of the prosaic quality that distinguished Schwitters' bank receipts and tram tickets either. All that remains is the visual "feel" of things—and the temptation to guess at what those things might have been. Even that temptation falls away as the mystery and silky tenderness of these tiny works—are they drawings, or collages?—heighten with extended scrutiny.

—Peter Frank