

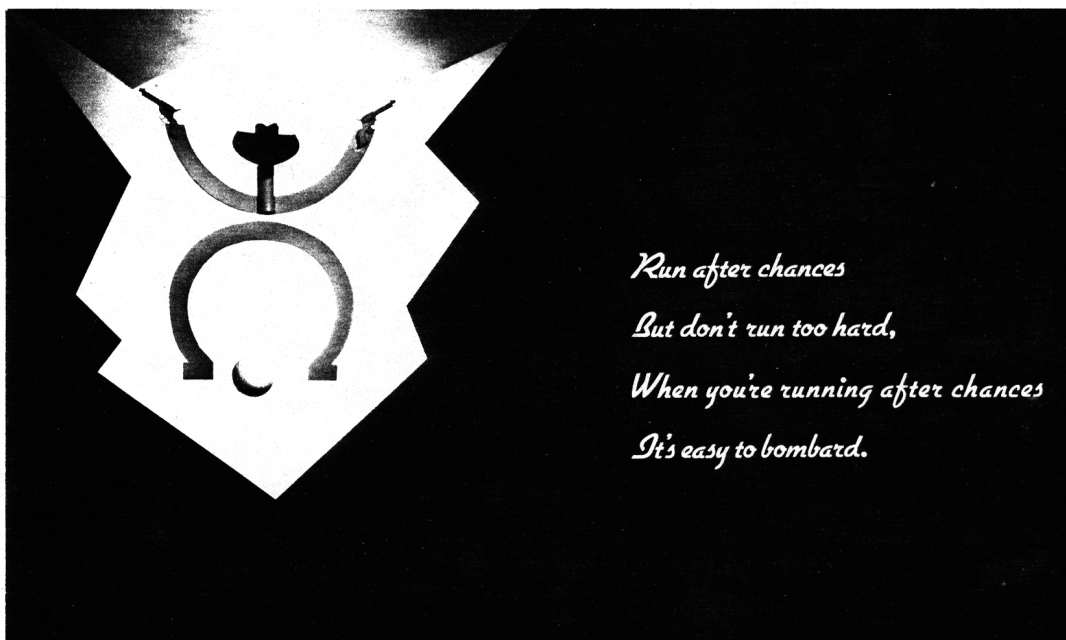
ARTISTS SPACE
February 26 - March 26, 1983

ROSS ANDERSON
ERICKA BECKMAN
DIANE BUCKLER
DEBBY DAVIS
STEPHEN FRAILEY
BIFF HENRICH
EDWIN RATH



“GRAND GALOP”

Organized by
JAMES CASEBERE



*Run after chances
But don't run too hard,
When you're running after chances
It's easy to bombard.*

The Bandit, installation view, prop, sign and music, dimensions variable, 1983.

To date, Ericka Beckman has presented her ideas mainly in the context of film. In her installation, which flashes on and off, the viewer sees a cowboy referred to as the Bandit, who is made of horse shoes meeting at the waist with a six shooter in each hand and cowboy hat floating between, where the head should be. This figure is seen through a hole torn in a wall separating it from the viewer. The room in front of this is black with gold balls dangling from the ceiling by elastic strings. The Bandit is lit from behind by a translucent wall of white light. Everything is figuratively animated by a repeating sound track that features a shrill voice taunting the listener with a catchy, but unsettling, rock melody. The sound of gun shots gives emphasis to the beat. The whole installation functions as a kind of warning sign/logo whose subject really is the equivocality of social signs: is the Bandit Robin Hood or Ronald Reagan? Are we to side with him or fear him? Is he the object of our fear or a sign to remind us to watch out? Its essential ambiguity suggests dependency on a surrounding social context.