

METRO PICTURES

Dawson, Jessica. "Bas Jan Ader," *VillageVoice.com* (July 2016).



Bas Jan Ader. Installation view, 2016. Metro Pictures, New York.

Bas Jan Ader lived the kind of truncated life that becomes legend. The Dutch-born artist moved to Los Angeles in the early Sixties and spent a decade among that city's conceptual artists; then, sometime in 1975, his art killed him. That year, Ader embarked on a solo transatlantic boat trip for the work *In Search of the Miraculous* and never returned; he was presumed lost at sea. A current Metro Pictures survey of Ader's films, photographs, and installations — almost all of which star the artist himself — resurrects a sensibility both elliptical and absurd. A pair of photos finds Ader, in the left frame, standing in a forest; on the right, both the trees and the artist have been felled. Other pieces show a circular saw cutting into a handsaw or the artist falling off a roof or toppling into a river. One imagines Ader's career maturing past seeming one-liners, but even these works manifest an infectious zeal.