

'Flash Art' (G. Y.-H. Painsot)

The Italians Cucchi, Ceccobelli and Daniele degli Angeli refer specifically to works of art of antiquity without, however, depending on them. The force of their work lies in the expressive contrast between the element as a figurative object and the painterly means used to construct the work as a whole. The dispersion of the work in several pieces and the association of an object and a canvas seem to have become a formula that is not inherently effective. The pieces of Paladino and Spoldi seem feeble and anecdotal. I fear that we may be subject to an invasion of paintings in kit form, each with its little object attached on a string—much like what we are beginning to see in some of Paris's more marginal galleries. This kind of work, composite in its materials as well as in its system of cultural reference, can give disastrous results.

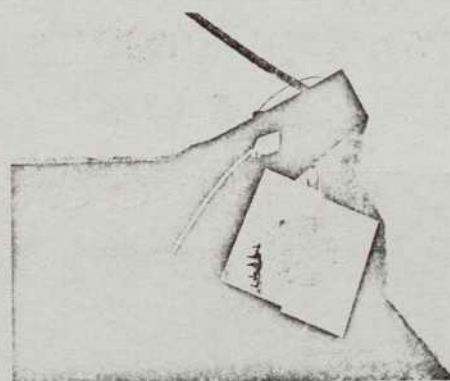
Getting back to the idea of the image, mention must be made of Garouste (France), whose work is particularly unusual. He is simultaneously presenting a series of paintings, photographs and objects at the Biennial and at the Durand-Dessert gallery. His range of colors is that of the end of the 17th century, using tonal modulations dominated by a brownish ocre tint. The image doesn't completely cover the canvas and gives the impression of being an unfinished study for a scenario, in which several characters are to be seen with four symbolic objects that allude to Greek mythology. The variation of characters with the symbolic objects attributed to other characters, the way in which the elements are represented by objects, photographs of paintings, paintings, written texts, and the absence or presence of works or of objects referred to in the exhibitions constitute the series of possibilities which make up the work as a whole. Garouste's 17th century style gives rise to the most interesting pictorial image of the Biennial!—the explosion of symbolic references and the object represented in a multiplicity of ways. This concept also represents the best aspect in recent Italian work, and is true of a certain number of abstract and decorative painters, as well.

Domenico Bianchi's canvas appears to be made up of cubist facets in the process of degradation, used in an expressive manner. Glasker (Germany) paints on carpets, although this may seem simplistic. However, the play between the signs and their decorative and expressive values, from one field to another, between the carpet and the painting, each element simultaneously masking the other.

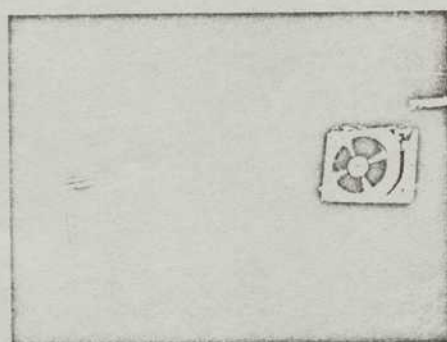
D. Gauthiers' two paintings on canvas and netting are made by a process of



Nahum Tzvet. Installation, detail



Pat Bruder. Installation 1980



Alain Fleischer. And therefore it turns, 1979.

assemblage. They have an advantage over those of Champion-Métadier in that they are free of the shaped-canvas reference. The brushstrokes in Gauthier's pieces are relocated on strips of netting that come from the floor and are draped over a wooden bar which cuts diagonally across the space occupied by the painting. Gauthier's work is symptomatic of the desire of a new generation of French painters to occupy space with color. Pat

Bruder uses a large variety of colored materials. In the piece in the exhibition he replaces brush strokes with rails from a model train, which he combines with painted surfaces and pieces of plasticene, to develop a form in space that is characterized by both continuous and discontinuous rhythms.

Doubtless the best paintings in the Biennial are those of artists interested in multi-dimensional representation, but only on condition that the components of the pieces are not reduced by a purely formal methodology but also embrace the expressive or iconographic considerations.

Photographic and video work

Situated as it is, surrounded by painting and sculpture, the video work in the Biennial is only significant when considered as an environmental element. Park's piece consists of a T.V. monitor "built into" a pile of stones, the image of the missing stones being continued across on the screen. The T.V. is also used as an object by Jafrenou (France) in his piece entitled *Le Plein de plumes*. Four superposed T.V. monitors replace the space occupied by a man who slowly drops feathers into a corresponding empty space, filling it up as the monitors fill up with feathers one after the other. Fleischer, unlike the others, substitutes the image for the real object. He projects the image of a record onto a turntable. Marie-Jo LaFontaine (Belgium) uses the multiplicity and continuity of images in a narrative structure much nearer that of the film. She presents the image of a dredger casting silt into a barge, considered as a sexual metaphor. Klaus vom Bruch uses time-spans. His piece consists of sterile and banal messages spliced together with political communications, the whole taking form simply because of the projection of the images in a constant stream, hence the T.V. on the floor in the Biennial where a large number of people pass by.

It is regrettable that the U.S.A. is represented by only a few videotapes of unequal quality. However this is an accurate reflection of the cultural supremacy of the U.S. The U.S. government neglects the big exhibitions because they know that the art market and the museums will pay for the works they wish to exhibit; that artists and critics still go to New York to seek new ideas is certain.

Among the photographic pieces there are two bodies of work that stand out from the sculptures and paintings that surround them: those of Gloria Friedmann (who adds color to her black and white photographs and then rephotographs them in