



INTERSECTION

important, however, is the sense of physicality these paintings exert, exploring as they do the area between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional, between the painterly and the sculptural, the flat and the textural. In fact, material presence is crucial to the understanding of these paintings: since objectness is an intrinsic part of their identity. It is in precisely this tension - between image and object - that the strength of these paintings lie. At the same time, Mathiou celebrates the sheer visual joy of colour (and its symbolic value) alternating between sober, monochromatic and vibrant, bright coloured surfaces.

In these minimalist, stark works the artist has created a self contained world which is subject to its own rules and references. However, the question effectively raised is both academic and conceptual, firmly rooted in the post-modernist agenda: how far can the boundaries between sculpture and painting be broken down and at which point does painting become sculpture?

**Michael Anastassiades**, on the other hand, is interested in the behavioural aspects of objects, looking beyond qualities normally associated with design: function and aesthetics, and trying to establish a psychological dimension between object and user. Using a minimal language with emphasis on idea rather than appearance, he personalises and brings to life everyday utilitarian objects, giving them an identity and vitality they might otherwise not possess. His *Message Cups* are not inanimate functional containers but interactive mechanisms which transcend their everyday purpose, act as vessels of communication which unleash possibilities of exchange, and begin to reflect social conditions such as the breakdown of communication in the domestic environment. On the other hand *Bedside table/alarm clock* ceases to be a static object in space and challenges notions of given physical identity. Anastassiades' furniture mediates between people, architecture, and space thus crossing the barrier of pure, functional design. Rather, these objects can be looked at as messengers of social interaction which explore codes of domestic behaviour. Not quite sculpture but not pure design either, one could call them sculptural analogies - of human habit and gesture - functioning within predetermined spaces. In this sense, his unique, yet discreet work investigates the boundaries between sculpture, design, and pure idea. More importantly, however, Anastassiades seeks to provoke dialogue, participation, and interaction out of what would normally be a series of static, inanimate, utilitarian objects.

Since the 1970's, the body has been used both as symbol and resource, and has been acknowledged as valid a site for art. Both in photography and in performance art the body has become a metaphor for self-knowledge and 'truth'. **Christina Christoforou** uses the body as a reference to prise social insights, as



# Michael Anastassiades



Message cups , 1995  
Laminated birch ply, styrene, electronics  
Diameter 8 cms, height 10 cms



Bedside table/alarm clock, 1997  
Enamelled sheet steel, clock,  
vibrating mechanism  
20 x 20 x 50 cms