



**Young, gifted
and difficult**
Tough new talent
comes to town

s *The Guardian* **space**

interiors/property/design July 3 1998



Michael Anastassiades, with his table light: "I observe what we do, I imagine scenarios and situations, and from that I create new possibilities"

home, for example, you'll probably find at least one instance of a lamp standing on a small table. In Anastassiades's house, you'll find the lamp incorporated into that small table. More charming still is his alarm clock table where an analogue alarm clock is hidden beneath the top (or lid) of a sleek metal table. Whatever you normally place on your bedside table — keys, loose change, a glass of water — will be rattled by the vibrating mechanism of the alarm at your chosen time of awakening. And most useful is his laundry basket (on sale at Aero), a large canvas bag in a slender aluminium

frame. The bag goes in the machine complete with contents.

But then that's what design should be, not slavery to style but the reinvention of the everyday. "All my inspiration comes from things I see lying around, and things I hear — I love to play with language," says Laura Potter. She makes rings that look uncannily like Polos, but for the word "minted" replacing the brand name (so they talk about the sweets and ideas of status and value all in one go). A rosary of (real) paracetamol is finished with a resin cast of a pill bottle top and a pharmacy sign cast in silver. And her

silver Tetrapak truly defies the conventions of the jewellery world. "When you use silver it has such a strong, long history," says Potter. "And Tetrapak is specifically made to be disposed of." Here we are again, at the attraction of opposites. Which, these days, seems to be at the heart of the most thought-provoking design.

The work of Tord Boontje, Precious McBanc, Michael Anastassiades and Laura Potter is on show as part of "No Picnic", an exhibition at the Crafts Council (44a Pentonville Road, London N1, 0171-806 2500), which runs from July 9 to Aug 30.