

as a contemporary man—clues to read and to read through, to dissect and interpret in the knowledge that they do not come from the artist but through him. Art therefore gives us information about man: there is a marked syntony between the pressing necessities of artists and philosophers and those of the society in which they live.

Between the answers intrinsic to the work and the questions that they raise there will be a disparity. In this disparity lies the deep secret and the great power of art: elusiveness, the enigma which is continually renewed with the renewal of art itself, the absolute sovereign for whom everything is play.

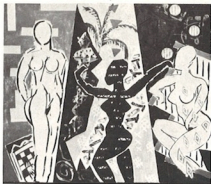
The six works by the artists present in this show hint at elusive enigmas. Marco Affinati, drawing his queries from the responses of anthropology, has made a snake of milk spitting a rainbow. Biagio Caldarelli and Maria Vittoria Sesta take from nature fluctuating symbolic forms. The former works with silence, the latter accentuates the expressiveness of colorful vegetation painted while listening to rhythmic rock at high volume. Mariano Rossano presents "pure" forms void of symbolic or metaphorical implications. Maria Antonella Barnaba, in contrast, charges her images with symbol systems, whereas Marco Antonio Tanganeli presents magic and primitive atmospheres born of genetic memory.

Demetrio Papanoni

## Germany

### RUNDSCHAU DEUTSCHLAND Munich

"Rundschau Deutschland," organized on behalf of the city in a former factory by Munich painters Stefan Szczesny and Troels Wörsel, showed the radical work of twenty-seven German new-wave artists, most of whom are aged under thirty. Many of these artists had exhibited before in "Heftige Malerei" in Berlin (Haus am Waldsee), in "Finger für Deutschland" (Immenhof's loft, Düsseldorf) or in "Mühlheimer Freiheit & Interessante Bilder aus Deutschland" (at Galerie Paul Maenz, Cologne). This young generation has left the cerebral heaviness of the sixties and seventies behind, as well as the doubts about the medium, the aesthetic of indifference, and the expansive visual thinking concerning social Utopias that characterized those years. They obviously want to be free, formally and ideologically, without aesthetic bonds. Instead of anti-art, as Katharina Hegewisch stated in the Frankfurter Zeitung, they show deliberate artlessness, as though they wanted to avoid the frustration that could come from comparisons with prior standards, be they their own or those of others. To act as one likes to act on the spur of the moment, with natural self-reliance, and plain (easily seen) or more codified references to the immediate environment, seems to be their common aim. Contradictions are allowed to break through with quick unpondering fantasy, in a kind of painting that sometimes reminds one of old cinema bills. Like Picabia and, occasionally, Picasso, these young German artists enjoy delightful imperfection. Even in paintings which make certain demands, like Rainer Fetting's or Peter Nagel's, color is allowed to splash and



Stefan Szczesny, *Badende*, 1981. Photo Hartmut Rekort.

drip. This common attitude expresses itself in different languages. The Berlin artists, mainly those who gravitate around the Galerie am Moritzplatz—Rainer Fetting, Salomé and Bernd Zimmer—prefer subjective gesture. Like so many artists in other communities, they profit from the mutual stimulation of working together. One result of such collaboration, produced by Salomé and Bernd Zimmer, was an enormous mural painted with rapid brushstrokes representing a night-train journey an ironically broken Bavarian dream. The message, imparted by association, is ambiguous, as it is in the critical and witty picture story of the Berlin couple Ina Barfuß and Thomas Wachwegner. A more restless version of this generally apolitical art was Markus Oehlen's (Hamburg) and Kippenberger's (Berlin) ironical commentary on building speculation, *Kiss the developer*.

With the exception of Peter Böhmels, Cologne artists are now less sensitive to the influence of the young Italians than they have been in the past. Böhmels does not deny an obvious relationship with his Italian counterparts, especially with Chia. Using a similar vocabulary, he tells personal stories which animate the imagination of the viewer. Everything on his unstretched canvases is colorful and fantastic, active and witty. Dokupil and Dahm seek a similar effect, but with different means. They tried to emulate a certain artist's pub atmosphere by putting three pictures on a wall wildly sprayed in silver, purple, and dark turquoise. Adamski, the fourth artist in this group, who work together as the *Brücke* did at the beginning of the century in Dresden, contributed a sort of large-scale Asiatic paper-cut design, from which a pattern had been carefully torn out.

The background from which the young artists of the Rhein-Ruhr-area derive is readily seen in the photographs of Axel Hütte. Unsentimental and strictly concentrated on the aura of his subject, Hütte portrays artists, musicians and painters from Düsseldorf, as well as their famous meeting point, the *Rattinger Hof*, recently closed. Alert faces, sceptical but not aggressive, these works adhere to the rejection of avant-garde conventions that was pioneered by Jörg Immendorf, Sigmar Polke and Markus Lüpertz.

Artists in Munich share the urgent wish to liberate themselves from established demands, while adhering to a vague but undeniable *Kunstwollen*. Troels Wörsel, who was born in Denmark and who has worked in Munich for the past seven years, has developed a formal principle for his abstract black and grey triptychs. Organized to a certain degree around a violent

criss-cross beam structure, his work uses specific light and dark values to create an ambiguous reading of the relationship between figure and plane. This ambiguity is further enhanced by Wörsel's rough and blurred use of paint, and by the unplanned compositional combination of his canvases. At first glance Stefan Szczesny's paintings, which are similar in their concern for form to those of Wörsel, emit an emphatic feeling for life. Against a luminous red background, naked, faceless silhouettes of women dance and jump with raised arms, reminiscent of Matisse's *Dance* of Czernae's and Picasso's bathers. They are integrated in a structural scaffold of color, covered with patterns, stripes, dots and squares. "Szczesny, by the way, feels that young German art is at an embryonic stage, and that it may develop during the next few years into a thoroughly Middle-European style.

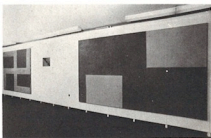
Ingrid Rein

## Switzerland

### HELMUT M. FEDERLE Stäbli/Zürich

An obvious predilection for the direct and uncomplicated was already evident in Helmut Federle's large-scale paintings on paper in the early seventies. Today his pictures have become more radical, open, and vital; their composition has something of the simple clarity and compelling force of repeated rhythms blaring from an electric guitar. Federle has always refused to comply with universal demands for an immediately comprehensible cultivated style in his painting. His claims are more total; hence every trace of color, every pencil line, gains a burning, purged intensity. The act of painting continually takes this artist to the point where maximum introversion and shrillness converge with sensitivity and aggression, in the search for a self-identity which is not without a subtle irony. The exhibition includes a picture in which Federle simply paints the letter H (two squares) of his monogram so that it "harmonises on all sides" formally and emotionally. For me, Helmut Federle's pictures possess a liberating, captivating depth, which conveys nothing less than the "here and now."

Bice Curiger



Helmut M. Federle. View of the exhibition. 1981. Courtesy Gallery Stäbli, Zürich.

Flash Art Italy, Germany