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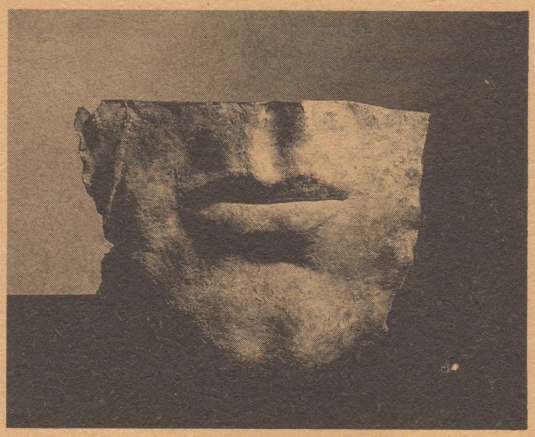
ARTSCRIBE INTERNATIONAL MAY 1990

FRANKFURT AND LONDON FAIRS

After the excitement generated by the first Frankfurt Art Fair last year, it was a bit disappointing to find this fair settling into the familiar mould. Young, innovative galleries were there in force again, but seemed to be more firmly buffered by the usual commercial hardware - to be expected in a city which now resembles nothing more than one vast bank. (Although, to be fair, the organisers claim that the ratio still sticks at 60% new art to 40% 'classic modern'.) Frankfurt is, though, the best for an overview of the sharper end of the German market and of the Austrian, Belgian and Swiss. There were, nonetheless, significant absentees, probably the result of timing; so close to the now hugely popular Madrid Art Fair, ARCO, held in February (when the Prado hosted the century's greatest Velasquez show). **Luis Campaña** of Frankfurt did not take a stand at the fair although he was host at the only party in town (forgetting the opening night dinner at the Palmengarten, which felt uncomfortably like a Munich bierkeller on a Saturday night). There was little else happening in the way of extra-curricular activities - the most popular bar in town was, by midnight, woefully short on food and temper! Others missed at the fair were London galleries **Lisson**, **Anthony Reynolds**; from Spain **Marga Paz** and **La Máquina Española** and from Germany Cologne's **Michael Werner**. Frankfurt has yet to attract any significant interest from the USA. There was, though, a welcome newcomer to Europe and a first for Frankfurt: the **Mori Gallery** from Sydney showing, among others, **Susan Norrie** and **Robyn Stacey**. The strongest stands were those of some of the youngest galleries - from Paris, **Michel Vidal** showing a curious pea-green boat by **Marc Couturier**; from London, **Laure Genillard**, white-cool with **Perry Roberts**, **Tessa Robins** and a new-look **Cathy de Monchaux**. However, it was **Julie Kewenig** of Cologne who stole the show as far as sculpture was concerned with row upon row of stands bearing highly desirable objects from an A to Z of distinguished names, from **Broodthaers** to **Hamilton Finlay** to **Rückriem**. Inevitably, there was plenty of **Baselitz** and **Beuys**, a good smattering of **Kosuth** (at **Xavier Hufkens**; **Kubinski** and **Hans Meyer**), **Judd** and **LeWitt**. British artists were much more prominent than usual: **Alan Charlton** was at three stands - **Dörrie Priess**, **Pierre Huber** and **S65** and the rising stars **Langlands and Bell** were at both **Fahnemann** (Berlin) and **Wernicke** (Stuttgart). Of the Italians, **Guenzani** (Milan) showed **Garutti** (*Artscribe* last issue) and **Stefano Arienti** whose artist's pages are in this issue.



Lips, Shaun Brosnan, Beaten Lead 1989
at Rebecca Hossack Gallery during the London Art Fair

The Fair was concluded by an auction of seventy works for the benefit of the German association for AIDS foundations which raised DM195,000. Attendance at the Fair was 45,000, a drop of 5,000 on last year, accounted for by the beautiful weather and the East German elections. Still low compared with Madrid (100,000), although dealers reported heavy serious buying and gave high praise for the organisation. (All, it seems, were happy except for the magazine peddlars who were lumped together cheek by jowl in a collective pitch which forced them to talk to each other.)

ART London 90 was opened on March 28 by **Richard Luce**. He stood at the bottom of Olympia's central staircase rather ridiculously flanked by two horseguards. Exhibitors were, though, more perplexed by Luce's presence than the soldiers'. Having been incarcerated in the building all day preparing for the Opening, they had only half received the news of **Luke Rittner**'s resignation as Secretary-General of the Arts Council. One art administrator being much the same as another to them, the rumour spread like wildfire that it was Luce who had resigned. As it turns out, the real position might prove rather more of a problem for the Arts Council's future. The fair itself was the usual curate's egg and seems not to have shifted much over period of its existence. Eschewed by the 'serious' international market, it is left to the younger British galleries to provide the interest. Fortunately they managed this rather well, with **Rebecca Hossack** (whose recent show of **Nicholas Adler** photographs was a treat), **Jenny Todd**, **Gillian Jason**, **Anderson O'Day**, **Flaxman** and **The Showroom** (both of whom had rolling, single-artist displays, Showroom starting with a strong, Judd stack-inspired piece by **Andrea Fisher**), **Mario Flecha** (with new works from **Rebecca Scott**), **Francis Graham Dixon** (leading the renewed interest in painting rooted in the 60s and 70s), **Frith Street** (with, among other things, two good pieces from **Callum Innes**) and **Pomeroy Purdy** all providing good company for **Maureen O Paley**'s more well-known **Interim**. Todd's stand with **Rosa Lee**, **Claire Scanlon**, **Graça Coutinho** and 'Aperto' exhibitor **David Leapman** was particularly impressive. British Airways announced the winners of their 'New Artist' award, worth £10,000 of air travel. First prize went to **Joanna Moss**, with **Mary Evans** and **Julie Major** runners-up. The selectors for the award were **Bruce McLean**, **Barry Barker**, **Jill Ritblat**, **Robert Hopper** and **Nancy Balfour**.