

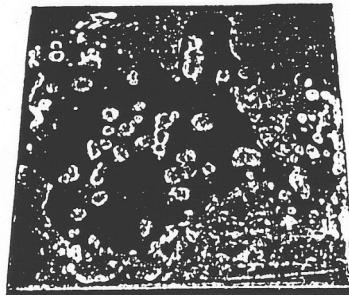
ARTnews

William Anastasi

SANDRA GERING

This intriguing show by William Anastasi harks back to a time when art and philosophy were nearly indistinguishable. Each of the three works is a re-creation of a prototype from the mid-'60s. *Sink* consists of six steel plates laid on the floor and covered periodically with water in order to create a slowly spreading oxidation of the surface. *Trespass*, one of the "wall removals" pieces, involved the removal of plaster from six rectangular sections of a wall by rubbing them repeatedly with a small stone.

Each one of Anastasi's works touches in a different way on the artist's ongoing concern with the relationship of art, illusion, and "the real." In *Sink* the floor operates as a kind of canvas on which the ever-evaporating water serves as a reflective surface that mirrors the world around it, in the manner of traditional art,



William Anastasi, *Sink*, 1991, steel and water, 19 by 19 by 1 inches. Sandra Gering.

and leaves behind a chemical trace. *Trespass* and *Issue* further demolish the conventional relationship between art object and the surrounding world by making the wall a frame for an artwork that cuts into rather than lays over it.

While such concerns have recently resurfaced in contemporary art, particularly among younger artists of the neoconceptual persuasion, they generally tend to be couched in more viewer-friendly forms than is the case with these austere cerebral works. Anastasi reminds us that there was a time when unadorned ideas were believed to have beauty sufficient unto themselves.

—E. H.

E.H. "William Anastasi." *ARTnews*, December 1991.