

Pick Of The Week

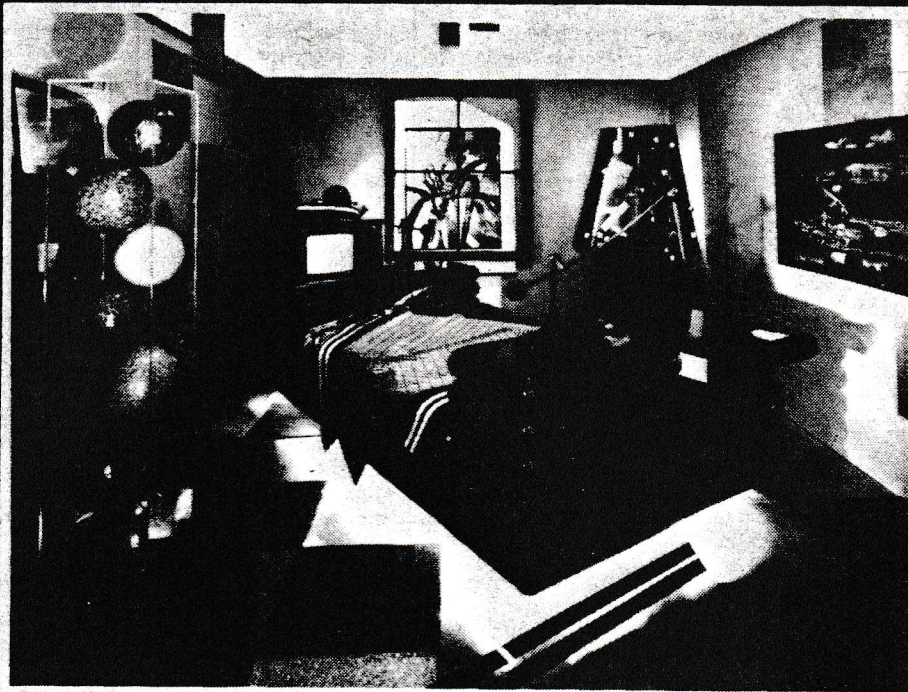


photo by Mark Schlesinger

There are always a number of bored, and boring, interior designers who want to give it all up for "fine art." Too often, the result is "decorator art" — humorless products of high design and inflated price. Inevitably, the work ends up in galleries and finds its own brand of collector. For the most part, though, it is a soulless endeavor. **Anthony Machado**, on the other hand, is unintimidated by either the label "fine art" or "design." He has embraced the absurdity of both pursuits and using, rather than denying, his design background has created some remarkable, surreal props for environments of the imagination. One hyper-designed room is dressed in black and equipped with all the contrivances essential to devotees of *Architectural Digest*. In themselves, the objects, the furniture and the art are caricatured and exaggerated. The environment becomes Buck Rogers' bedroom and a conceptual statement on interior decoration. Machado uses the chintziest, tackiest materials to achieve an effect of *faux* elegance. The room entrances are swagged in curtains of imitation marble plastic; the floor tiled in squares of astro-turf and glitter; a high-tech magenta car door mounted on the wall acts as "art"; so does a "sculpture" of silver-speckled bowling balls in a plexiglass case. The black plastic bed, priced at \$80,000, appears to float off the floor and features a pop-up TV set concealed in one end. In addition to the room, the exhibition includes a series of tableaux, cut-out reliefs and other objets d'art that look as though they were flown in from Mars. It's all high camp and good fun — the thrill of the Pacific Design Center gone New Wave. "Protosymbolism" continues at Janus to August 8.

—Hunter Drohojowska