Aqua launches with a splash

■ The Aqua art fair is new this year to the Miami scene, organised in the eponymous hotel by a group of Seattle dealers who felt that the West Coast was under-represented at Miami Beach. Led by gallerist Jaq Chartier and her artist husband Dirk Park, the fair has benefited from its location on Collins Avenue and by its comfortable venue. The hotel is arranged around a central courtyard which eliminates the cramped corridors of many hotel fairs and gives a relaxed ambiance to the event.

The quality of the art on offer and the reasonable prices were other pleasant surprises. There were discoveries to be made, for instance the stitched drawings by Mark Dombrowski at Bodybuilder & Sportsman of Chicago immediately selected by DePauw University for a conceptual drawing show, or the cardboard portrait heads by Scott Fife ($6,000) at the same gallery. This intimate, friendly fair made a small but significant splash in the vast Miami Beach art-fest this year. **G.A.**

Platform Gallery's William Powhida, *Miami enemies list* (detail), 2005