

trustee of the Italian National Appeal of the World Wildlife Fund, had collected half a million signatures on a petition which was to be presented to the government in the near future. In March the World Wildlife Fund sent a request to the Italian Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Agriculture asking for the total abolition of bird netting in Italy.

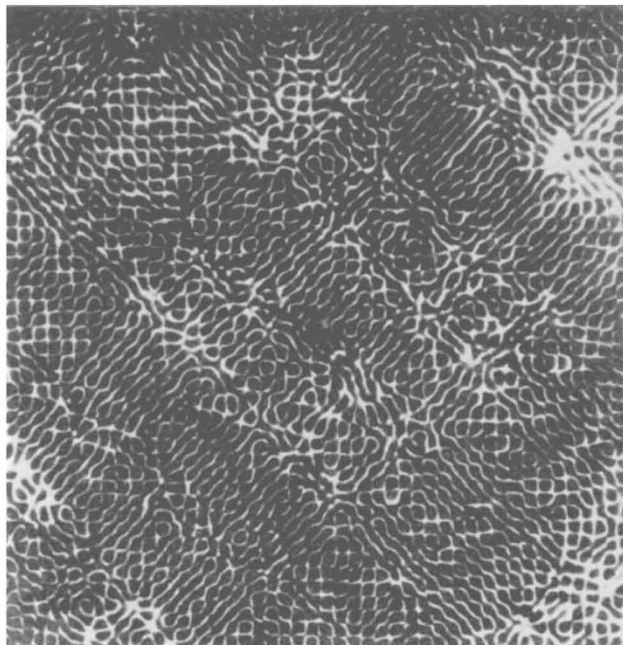
It seems that all this pressure has borne fruit and the Council of Europe now hopes that other countries, such as France, Greece, Spain and Portugal, will soon follow Italy's example. It is hard to know how widespread netting is outside Italy, but statements to the council from national delegations and from the International Hunting Council have revealed a thriving trade in netted birds between several member countries, and the council believes that coordinated legislation is needed in all parts of Europe against netting and the importing and exporting of netted birds.

EXHIBITIONS

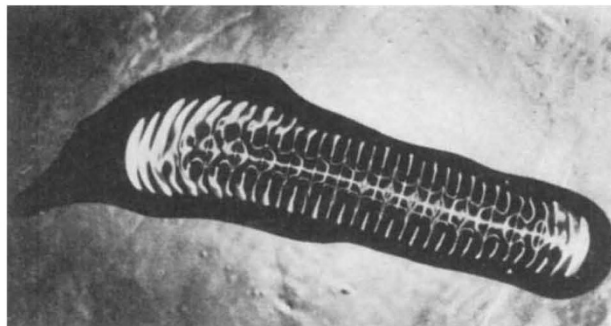
Patterns of Sound

A REMARKABLE exhibition of matter tortured by sound is on display until July 22 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. The exhibition is the work of Dr Hans Jenny, a Swiss physician, who has improved on Chladni's contribution to science by extending the range of forms and shapes that can be extracted from matter by vibrations. Whereas Chladni to get his famous figures merely sawed with a violin bow on a sand-strewn metal plate, Dr Jenny has applied crystal oscillators to glycerine, mercury, lycopodium powder, turpentine and the many other substances that are grist to his mill.

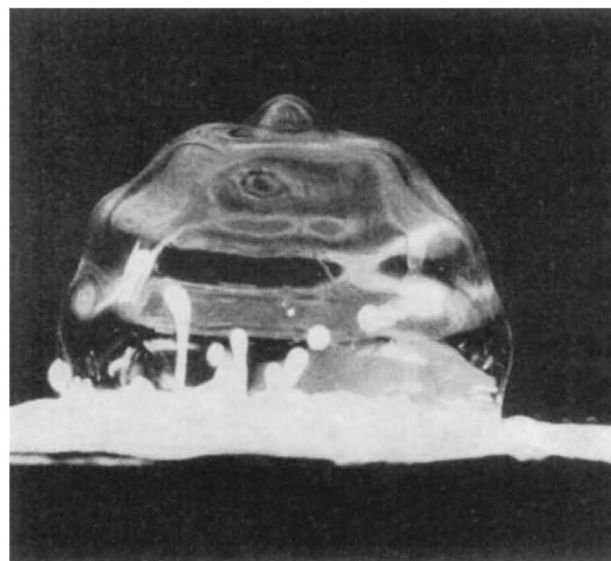
The results, recorded in the form of photographs and a non-stop film show, are a spectacular travelogue to a through-the-mirror land where ordinary physical laws seem to be held in abeyance. Who would believe



Chladni figure formed by quartz sand vibrated on a steel plate at 16,800 Hz.



Glycerine vibrated at 30 Hz (length of figure is 4 cm).



Soap bubble vibrated at 110 Hz forming a pulsating polyhedron (spikes of liquid soap in foreground).

that a soap bubble could shape itself into a dodecahedron and grow a stalk, looking to all the world like a bacteriophage? Or that water droplets could move sideways in squares? Or a blob of glycerine metamorphose into a vertebral column with 35 segments? Jenny's work shows how inanimate matter charged with vibrational energy can assume shapes of unexpected subtlety and vitality. Anyone who is tired of the humdrum behaviour of matter in the laboratory should visit the ICA exhibition to see the elegant but other-world sculptures that can be conjured out of paste, powder and iron filings.

UNIVERSITIES

Imperial Quart in Pint Pot

THE Herculean task of reforming the administrative structure of London University with its three-quarters of a million students and eleven federated colleges has been allotted to an independent committee under the chairmanship of Lord Murray of Newhaven, the director of the Leverhulme Trust Fund. Following the recommendations made by the university senate last January (see *Nature*, 225, 492; 1970) the chief aim of the committee will be to look into the future of London University as a federal institution, concentrating par-