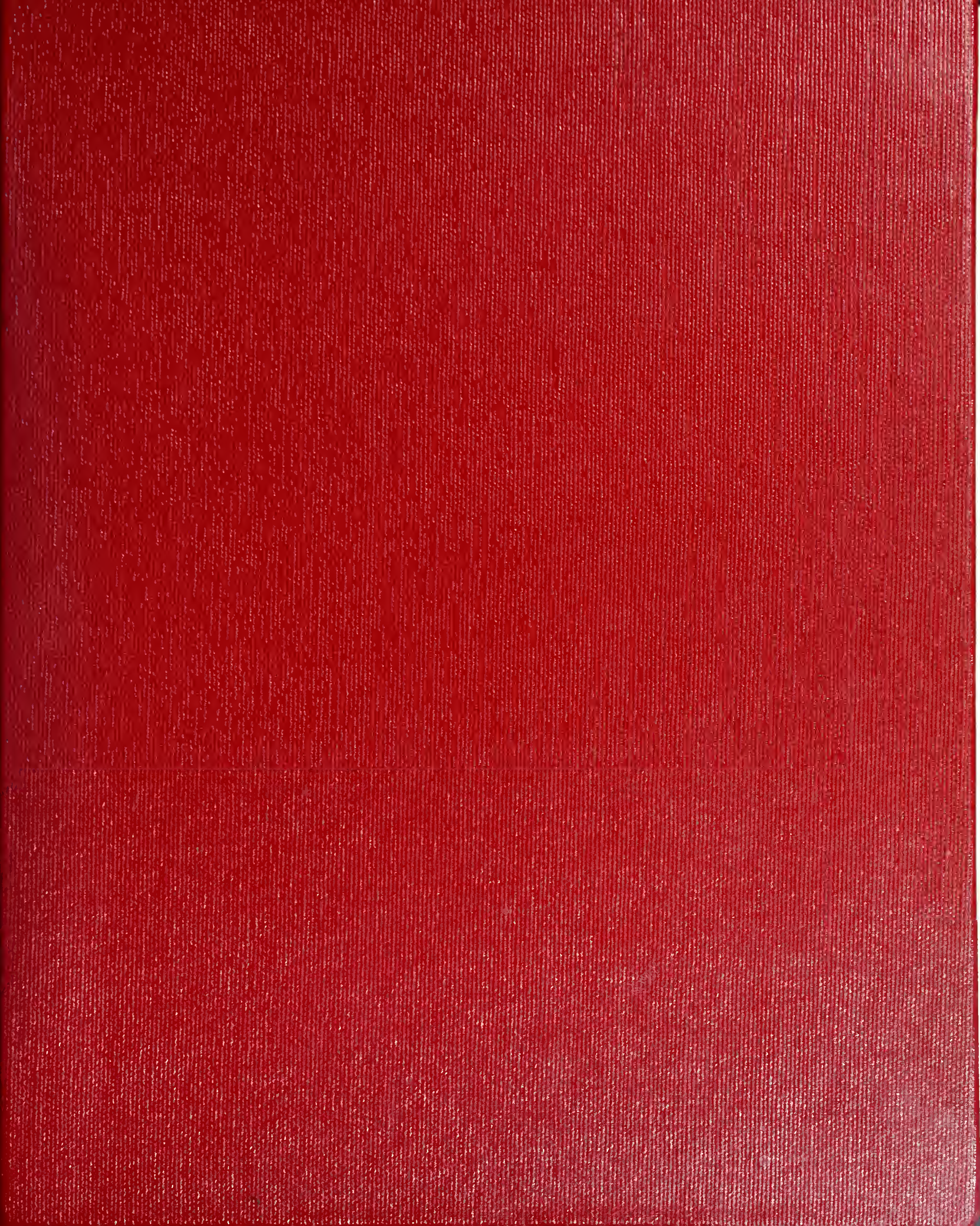

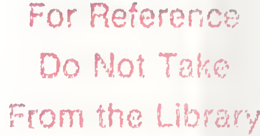
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Circus Lions, 1941
Watercolor on paper; 7⅛ x 11½ inches
Signed lower right: "Marin 41"
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Downtown, New York, circa 1925
Watercolor on board; 7⅝ x 10 inches
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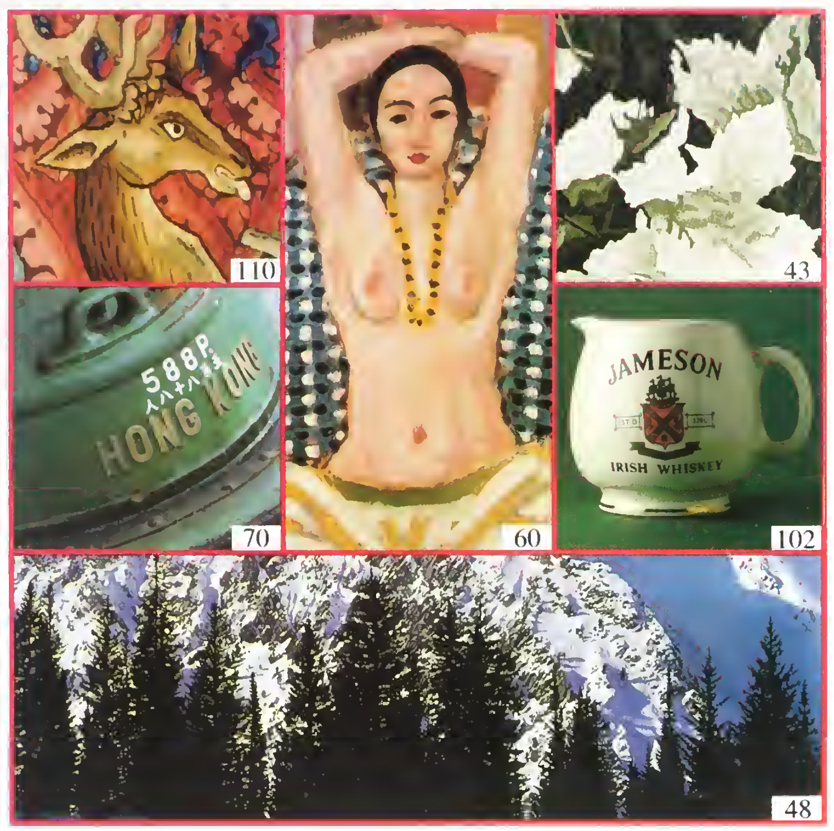

COVER Photograph by Luis Villota

11 CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD Us and UNESCO; the Rogozen Treasure, of Bulgaria; a house named Hoagie; the fashionable hat comes back; Saura's flamenco

32 AUCTIONS An insider's report

36 WINE Greatness from Côte Rôtie

43 DESIGN ON THE LEVEL A new dimension from rugs, by Phil Patton

48 SNOWBIRD HIGH You can even ski in powder over your head, by Robert Wool

54 RESTORATION DRAMAS The adventures of John Stair, America's top fixer of fine antique furniture, by Helen Dudar

60 ODALISQUES What did they mean to Matisse?, by Janet Hobhouse

68 THE BARD IN HARTFORD Zounds, Shakespeare gets a fine American accent

70 HONG KONG An introduction to our guide to this busiest of cities

72 GETTING THE GOODS Shopping without fear, by Corby Kummer

78 THE SIDE-STREET GOURMET Restaurants to seek out, by Nina Simonds

84 FIVE-STAR TREATMENT No hotels anywhere pamper you more

88 HOTEL DINING Eating well in the grand style, by Fred Ferretti

90 A PERFECT PIG The passionate quest of a jade collector, by Simon Winchester

94 COUNTDOWN AT HARRODS How a splendid store prepares for a sale

96 THE NORMAN CONQUESTS The world is at her feet, by Matthew Gurewitsch

102 BRING BACK THE BROWNS Celebrating three great characters of whiskey

110 INVESTOR'S FILE Tapestries

114 LIVELY ARTS Pop (and mom) songs

118 UP & COMING A watchmaker, a designer, a butterfly artist

120 TRAVELINE Reports from *Passport*

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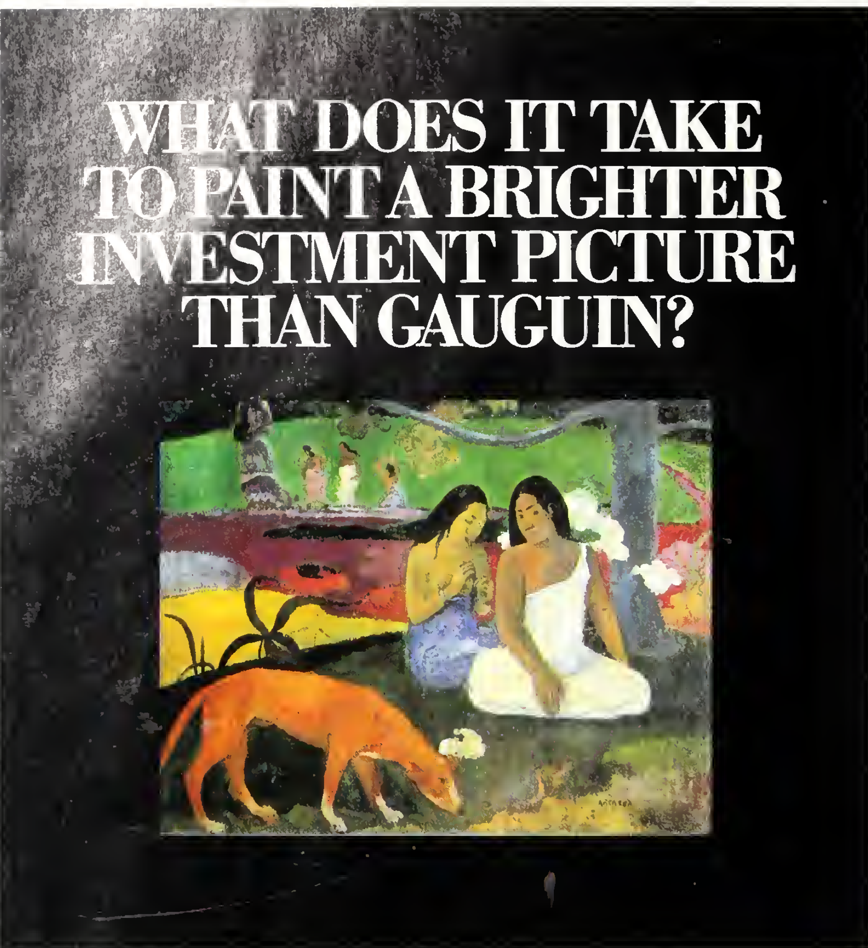

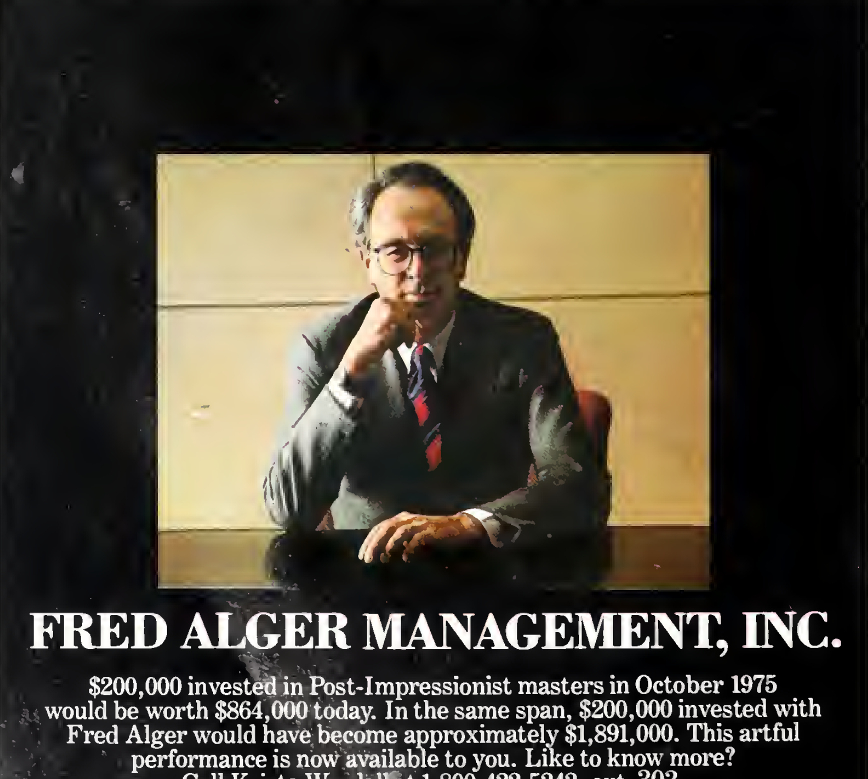

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JANUARY 1987

NICHOLAS WILTON

MY EYE by Thomas Hoving

UNESCO: IN OR OUT?

Some of the best news in the last few months was the announcement that the corrupt scalawag Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, of Senegal, wasn't going to run for another term as director-general of UNESCO. Unless it was some ploy to be drafted for reelection, it was the single decent act in his vile tenure, which began in 1974. In those twelve years UNESCO turned from its original mission of fostering international cooperation in education, science, and culture to take a decidedly anti-Western stance on all fronts. M'Bow also insisted that the rich nations should pay UNESCO's ever-rising bills and thus underwrite their own exclusion from power at UNESCO. The United States pulled out in 1984, accusing M'Bow of mismanaging the organization and giving it an anti-Western bias. It certainly was a large part of the problem. So, now that he's leaving, at the end of the year, the question becomes: Should we apply for reentry into UNESCO?

According to my tally, there are six arguments in favor. And six against.

AGAINST

1. Since each of the 158 member nations has an equal vote, the majority will rule. That means, in our times, that no matter who runs it, the place will remain a prime venue for anti-Western sentiment.
2. By the same token, no new leader will alter the organization's extreme pro-Arab, anti-Israel tendencies.
3. With a full-time staff of 3,085, and over two hundred meetings in more than forty countries in 1986, UNESCO has become a bureaucratic Augean stable that not even Hercules could purify. Fully one half of UNESCO's $147 million budget pays for personnel—stationed in Paris.
4. The international organization has ceased to be effective in any area except politics. Little practical work has been accomplished in the past five years in such key areas as hunger, disease, and poverty. It's therefore an appalling waste of American taxpayers' money.
5. Because there's no veto (and in all probability there never will be), the biggest funders have no proportionate say in what happens to their funds.
6. The organization is a haven for Soviet spies who use UNESCO perks like diplomatic passports and frequent travel as a convenient cover (in 1983 France's President François Mitterrand expelled forty-seven KGB officers from France, of whom twelve were employed at UNESCO).

IN FAVOR

1. The corruption of UNESCO is partly our fault. At first we didn't think much of the institution and therefore failed to send our best people. When things began to go awry, we didn't fight hard enough to stop the decline. By rejoining UNESCO, we can reverse the trend.
2. After the embarrassing scandals surrounding M'Bow—he has repeatedly been caught using UNESCO to enhance his wealth, comfort, and power, to the point of turning the top floor of the headquarters into a rent-free penthouse for himself—we can ensure that the next leader will not gain such personal power. Even the Third World bloc that staunchly supported M'Bow will help in that effort.
3. After we pulled out we achieved virtually nothing on our own in the areas covered in UNESCO's mandate (not that UNESCO did, either).
4. The morale of those who work in UNESCO is at a nadir. Our return would be welcomed, even if not publicly.
5. Without the presence of the United States, such projects as the much-needed preservation of a host of marvelous sites of antiquity will never go forward. The organization needs our drive and commitment—not to mention our funds.
6. Despite its sorry record under M'Bow, UNESCO is still the most noble and challenging experiment of the twentieth century, with its goal of world peace through the open exchange of educational, scientific, and cultural information. If we believe in that goal, we should act on that belief.

What's the call? For or against? As strong as the negative arguments are, I still think the United States ought to apply for reentry. Why? When we left we made our point. M'Bow eventually got the word not only from the other Western nations who stayed but also from Third World countries. The organization is ready for reforms, and they won't happen without us. Even though the rancid smell of corruption lingers over UNESCO, it remains a forum in our struggle to strengthen the moderates of the world and weaken the extremists. Finally, in a world of power politics, UNESCO still can shine as an experiment in international idealism. I think it's time to embrace the prodigal son.

But not without tough negotiations. □

ALL THE GOLD IN BULGARIA

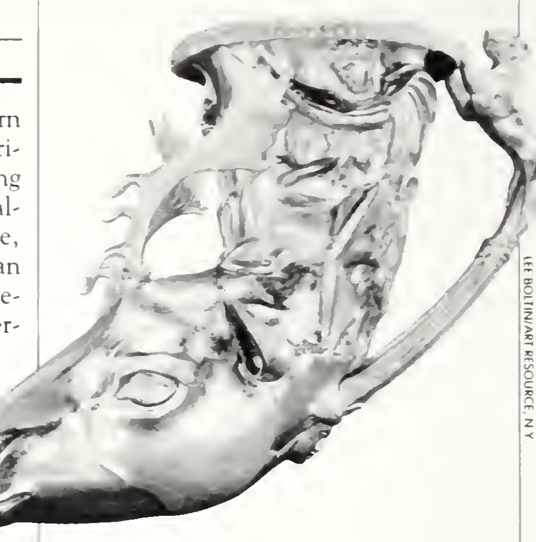
Much of the cultural reputation of modern Bulgaria is founded on forklift trucks, baritones, and roses. But it's not too surprising that a land locked in the pith of the Balkans, bounded by the Black Sea, Greece, and Turkey, should have produced an ancient culture comparable in many respects (and superior in some) to its better-chronicled neighbors.

The most visible proof of this is a remarkable array of gold and silver treasures unearthed from all parts of the country during the course of this century, particularly after the Second World War. Made of materials that are subject to the least decay and corrosion, these vessels, goblets, and bowls have survived to form one of the most impressive and continuous caches of precious metalwork in the world. The latest important find, the Rogozen Treasure, can be seen this winter at the British Museum (December 3, 1986–March 29, 1987).

Rogozen is a small village in northern Bulgaria. In December 1985 and January 1986, 165 vessels, mostly bowls and jugs, and three cups of high-quality silver, some gilded, were uncovered. Most are datable to the fourth century B.C.; some, earlier. The treasure probably derives from several workshops over a period of as much as a hundred years. Among the most striking details, a representation of the Thracian fertility and hunting goddess, Bendis, a series of griffons meshed into an almost heraldic composition, and inscriptions bearing the names of Thracian kings in Greek letters are all outstanding.

In contrast, say, to that of England, situated at a remote extremity of Europe, the soil of present-day Bulgaria has been trampled on and fought over for millennia—first by the enigmatic Thracians and then by Greek and Roman colonists. It felt the full force of Byzantine expansion after A.D. 400; was one of the most intense zones of Slavic migration—the country having been named for the group that finally established a kingdom in A.D. 681; and then endured several centuries of inter-Slavic rivalry before succumbing in the fourteenth century to some five hundred years of what they still call in Bulgaria the "Ottoman Yoke."

The impact of all of this was considerable on the architecture of the land and, of course, on the artworks that the buildings


LEE BOLTIN/ART RESOURCE, NY

Stag-head drinking cup from Panagyurishté: how much more like it remains to be dug up?

once contained. And while there are some spectacular survivals—the superb Hellenic frescoes in the Kazanluk Tomb, from the fourth century B.C., and an eleventh-century A.D. frescoed ossuary at the Bachkovo monastery, among others—the most substantial legacy from Bulgaria's rich and complicated past continues to be the exquisitely wrought gold objects that have been retrieved from underground tumuli and grave enclosures.

There is no definitive account in English of these Bulgarian treasures, though the public in the West got a chance to see "Thracian Treasures from Bulgaria" at the Metropolitan Museum in 1977 and gold from Varna in West Germany last year. But visiting Bulgaria—you can get off in Sofia on trains bound for Istanbul, if you have an appropriate visa—remains the best way to see the gold, especially the collections displayed in the capital's excellent Museum of National History. The oldest and heaviest here, thirteen vessels of pure twenty-two-karat gold, weighing about twelve and a half kilograms, probably date from the thirteenth century B.C.—the period of the Greek legends. Several of the vessels have exceptional designs and workmanship, and social or ritual functions that have been only speculated upon.

Perhaps the most famous treasure in Sofia is the Panagyurishté, discovered in 1949. It consists of eight drinking vessels (rhytons) and an exceptional bowl (phiale) studded with four concentric rings: three of African heads and one of acorns. The gold is exhibited with bronzes and appliqués of the same period (fourth to third centuries B.C.) for context.

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In Varna, on the Black Sea coast, another fascinating museum, opened only in 1983, displays finds that are of even greater importance. It is generally accepted that Varna's 3,000 small gold objects, found in an acropolis in 1972, may be the world's first worked gold, dating to around 4000 B.C. At least one Western scholar has proposed, partly on the basis of this find, that there developed an independent European metallurgy, which while postdating that of Sumeria was probably not directly related to it. This is a contention of some significance for the history of Western civilization. Given also that there are about 15,000 Thracian tumuli alone in the country, many as yet unexcavated, the story of Bulgarian gold may not yet have reached its climax.

—*John Welchman*

ERICH LESSING/MAGNUM

Centaurs, sword-wielding warriors, and Hercules as a child strangling the snake decorate one of the eight massive Panagyurishté gold drinking vessels.

GAUGUIN IN WILLIAMSTOWN

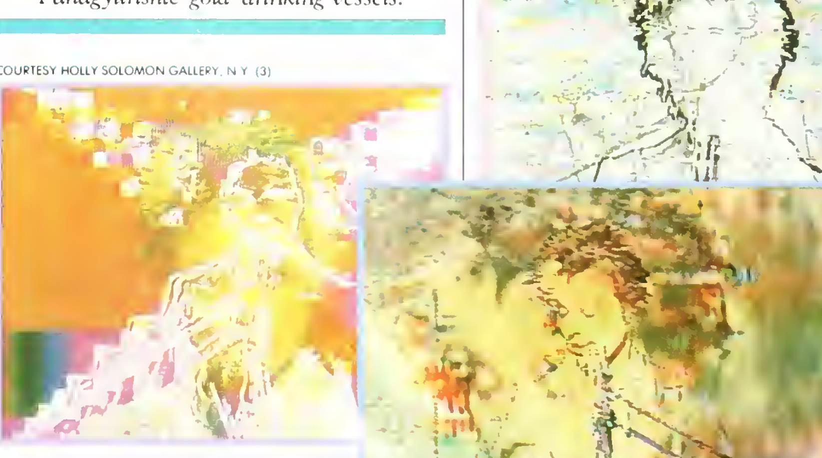
Filled with Bouguereaus and Gérômes, Degas and Pissarros, Monets, Sisleys, and no fewer than thirty-seven Renoirs, the genteel Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, in Williamstown, Massachusetts, has always given a pretty good idea of how French academic classicism begat Impressionist modernity. So, what's a Gauguin like *Breton Girl in Prayer* (1894) doing in a place like this? Well, it stays true to the founders' taste for charming subject matter while significantly extending the range of the collection to the Postimpressionist period. Executed during a year-long stay in France between the artist's two long residencies in Tahiti, this Gauguin has been seen only twice before in the United States, the last time over fifty years ago. The painting, acquired last September for "between two and three million dollars" from the Lefevre Gallery in London, also further confirms Williamstown as "Art Town U.S.A."—so dubbed by this magazine (July 1984) for having more masterworks, per capita, than any other American community.

STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE, WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

THE MUSE IN THE TUBE

There are images on your television screen, Nam June Paik says, that you never see—ghosts and echoes that may become fleetingly visible when, say, you freeze-frame something on your VCR. For more than a decade, 54-year-old Paik, the acknowledged father of video art, has tried to capture these evanescences from the screen, but he only recently chanced on the hard- and software necessary to do it. "Laser-generated photography," according to the Korean-born artist, is a process that is hard to explain ("Believe me," he says, "I'm quite dumb in electronics"); but it is more or less about video signals hitting a laser that, in turn, transfers the electronic nudge to photographic film. Even before the video images hit the laser, Paik processes them through the kind of terribly sophisticated computer graphics programs used on TV commercials. (He also found a way of applying the electro-imagery to canvases, which he showed recently, along with the photographs, at the Holly Solomon Gallery, in New York.) The results, like the images at left of the performance artist Laurie Anderson, are remarkably dynamic and elegant. But if the medium is fresh and exciting, the subject matter still has some catching up to do. It has tended so far toward celebrity pals of Paik's, like Anderson, Allen Ginsberg, Merce Cunningham, and John Cage. Coming up, Paik says, are homages to Joseph Beuys—and Humphrey Bogart.

COURTESY HOLLY SOLOMON GALLERY, N.Y. (3)



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Shown: *Hilliard miniature from the collection at Bowhill.*

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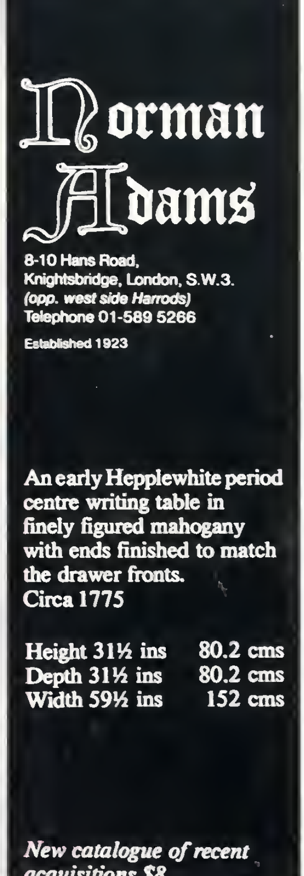

NEW VIDEO

Paul Cadmus: Enfant Terrible at 80. 57 minutes. Distributed by Home Vision. $39.95. Documentaries about art are often ponderous classroom affairs with questionable critical standards. In contrast, here we find a film narrated by the subject himself, the vibrant Paul Cadmus, who leads the viewer into his painting studio, spins anecdotes from his early years as a WPA artist, and offers insights on his own work in a fifty-year career as a self-styled "grotesque realist." Rather than packaged analysis, this art film provides the viewer the chance to pose his own questions.

L'Age d'Or. Directed by Luis Buñuel. 1930. 63 minutes. Distributed by Corinth Video. $59.95. This delirious picture is

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART/FILM STILLS ARCHIVE

Brilliantly strange: Buñuel's L'Age d'Or.

the sacred text of the surrealist film canon. Banned in France until the mid-1970s—one assumes for its freewheeling mockery of the bourgeoisie and the Catholic church—the film was not released in the United States until 1981. It is Buñuel's first long work and an encyclopedia of forgotten film techniques. It's also a three-alarm laugh riot.

Stranger than Paradise. Directed by Jim Jarmusch. 90 minutes. Distributed by Key Video. $79.98. This low-budget feature

MOVIE STILL ARCHIVES/MGM

On the road to nowhere: the heroes investigate Florida, in Stranger than Paradise.

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won the Caméra d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and scored a resounding critical success in the United States. Part of the growing American independent (i.e., non-Hollywood) film genre, and possibly its most engaging product to date, *Stranger than Paradise* is a road movie about a trio of young bohemians who set out for adventure and find themselves loitering in some of the grayest parts of the American landscape. A black-and-white quilt of deadpan humor, the movie equally rewards the casual moviegoer and the vanguard cinephile.

Boris Godunov. 111 minutes. Distributed by Corinth Video. $69.95. Video offerings in performance arts have greatly multiplied recently; among the worthiest is the Bolshoi Opera's treatment of *Boris Godunov.* A filmed spectacle, not a stage production, shot in color in the Soviet Union back in 1954, this version of Mussorgsky's opera redoubles the heroic score with extravagant production values. A huge cast (led by Alexander Pirogov in the title role) and grandiloquent cinematography impart an epic scale probably unachievable on the stage.

MOVIE STILL ARCHIVES

Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov—*the Bolshoi Opera's spectacular color-film version.*

World Series Highlights. 30 minutes average. Distributed by Major League Baseball Productions. $52 each. This is a series itself, one documentary for each year of the Series from 1943 to 1985. Narrated by announcers and filled with action, the tapes taken together make up an extraordinary historical artifact. At about a half hour a clip, a fanatic can review a decade of great championship baseball in just one afternoon.

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—*Ed Ball*

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FRANS HALS: A Girl singing; and A Boy with a Viol, both signed with monogram—oil on panel, 10¼ x 10¼ in. (26 x 26 cm.) diamond shaped.

THE DEVIL IN JERSEY

Projecting from a [illegible] promontory like the prow of a ship, [illegible] house nears completion outside Washington, D.C. Approached up a long curving drive, the house appears, then disappears behind a hillside. As the car swings back at the top of the ascent, the whole form of the place is now in sight, affirming the nautical first impression. The house is very long, almost motile, a cruiser coursing through the undulant landscape.

Soon to be occupied by a local physician and his family, this is the latest project of a group of architect-builders from Stockton, New Jersey, who call themselves the Jersey Devil. The choice of a south Jersey sprite as eponym is revealing—first, of a generally lighthearted approach to their art, a quality also evident in the working moniker assigned to the new house: the Hoagie. The name turns out to be powerfully descriptive. The new project is dominated by a long, curved hero of a roof, which overhangs the more variegated forms below. As the terrain slopes away at the west side of the house, a complementary, Wrightian cantilevered deck emerges.

STEVE BADANES

Jutting bowlike, the cantilevered deck from the latest house by the Jersey Devil.

Hands-on architects: the Jersey Devil quartet (from left), Greg Torchio, Jim Adamson, Steve Badanes, and John Ringel.

KENNETH GARRETT

The group's name also speaks volumes about its origins and character. At a time when architectural practice is ever more dominated by firms that sound and look like the old, traditional kind, the Jersey Devil retains both the flavor and the attitudes of what used to be called the counterculture. At the building site, the dimensions of this affinity become clear. The four "devils"—Jim Adamson, Steve Badanes, John Ringel, and Greg Torchio—are all present, dressed in work clothes, banging away with the rest of the crew. The house going up is not simply handmade; it's made by the hands of those who imagined and designed it, an intimate involvement that shows in carefully crafted detail after detail. And, when the working day ends and the hired hands barrel out of the driveway toward home, the devils stay behind. As they do with all their projects, they live on the site, here, in a battered old Airstream trailer and in a caretaker's house built first.

The ethic of the counterculture also shows in a strong sensibility toward energy and the environment. The Hoagie house boasts a number of extremely innovative environmental controls. Running down the center of the roof, illuminating the spine of the house, are a series of "Roto-Lid" skylights, the Devil's pride and joy. Developed with the aid of a grant and patented, Roto-Lid is an ingenious mechanical device that allows a skylight to provide effective solar heating and daylight illumination all year round, a chronically perplexing difficulty. It is typical of the Jersey Devil's approach that it engages architecture not just at the level of manipulating image (though it is mighty strong in this department) but also as a problem-solving discipline, an arena for innovation in domestic ecology.

Their work does have a look. As continuers of an available-resources, handwrought carpentry tradition (which, as at the Hoagie house, often involves the collaboration of other crafts people in embellishment), they make buildings in which carpenters' virtues are paramount. There's

THEY MAKE BUILDINGS IN WHICH CARPENTERS' VIRTUES ARE PARAMOUNT.

an abiding joy in joinery and finish, in the individual character of materials, in a sense of relationship between house and setting. But don't think of them as naïfs, as superannuated hippies plying their simple virtues. They are architects, schooled and conscious, and quite hip to the style wars of the current scene. They're clearly situated on that axis which runs from Frank Lloyd Wright through Bruce Goff and are roughly subsumed under the rubric of the organic, which simultaneously values craft, appropriate technology, and formal daring.

The Hoagie house has taken the Jersey Devil two and a half years to build, and it shows. At nine thousand square feet, it is their biggest project to date, a size that

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they seem [illegible] able maximum for the [illegible] which they work. Compared [illegible] thousands of square [illegible] crank out, this may not [illegible] like [illegible] deal. But it is. There is nobody truer to the cause of architecture than the Jersey Devil.

—*Michael Sorkin*

STEVE BADANES

The Hoagie house seen from the air: the formal daring of Wright meets the latest in climate and light controls.

FLAMENCO, THE MOVIE

Some film titles simply shouldn't be translated; foreign audiences, losing the flavor of the original, may find themselves deceived. The English title of *El Amor Brujo*—"Love, the Magician"—sounds like that of a madcap Fred Astaire–Ginger Rogers romance. But that is not what the director Carlos Saura had in mind when he announced that with his latest film, he and the choreographer Antonio Gades "have created a new genre: the Spanish musical, one that is authentically our own."

No top hats here; no show girls or ballroom gliding either. Instead, there are Gypsies—raven-haired women and straight-backed, knife-carrying men—who raise their voices in cries and cadences familiar to neither Eastern nor Western music, who do not simply dance but exorcise the demons of their passion in dance. The magic of *El Amor Brujo* is *el arte flamenco*, which the Gypsies have been practicing in Spain since their arrival there from India centuries ago.

THE MAGIC OF EL AMOR BRUJO IS EL ARTE FLAMENCO.

Flamenco is not merely the singing, clapping, and dancing that tourists are accustomed to seeing in *tablaos;* it refers to the whole of Gypsy culture. The word *flamenco* (literally, Flemish) was attributed to or appropriated by the Gypsies upon their arrival, since it is thought that some may have entered Spain via the Netherlands. The term includes Gypsy belief in superstitions and the occult (a Gypsy will not eat at a table where the bread has been broken or cut lengthways), their laws and code of honor (stricter, even today, than the Mafia's), and their traditional celebrations, of which Christmas Eve and weddings, both depicted in the film, are the most spectacular.

American audiences may be most familiar with Saura's 1976 film *Cria Cuervos.* With his collaboration with Antonio Gades, for over twenty-five years now the world's leading flamenco dancer and choreographer, the former director of Spain's National Ballet and one-time choreographer at Milan's La Scala, the Spanish director has been able to represent on the screen a culture and tradition otherwise inaccessible to foreign audiences. *El Amor Brujo* is the third in the trilogy of Saura-Gades collaborations that began with *Blood Wedding* (based on García Lorca's tragedy of Gypsy honor) and found international success with *Carmen.* This film, which unlike its predecessors follows a direct narrative wherein the songs and dances emerge as an integral part of the characters' lives, may turn out to be the most accessible of the three.

Based on Manuel de Falla's (1876–1946) ballet of the same name, *El Amor Brujo* presents the story of Candela (played by Cristina Hoyos), a Gypsy girl who is unable to marry her lover Carmelo (Antonio Gades) because she is still pursued by the ghost of her former suitor. Through the help of a good friend (played by Laura del Sol, the lead in *Carmen*) who seduces the ghost, the wedding takes place.

Few Spanish artists have been immune to the influences of flamenco, and so that tradition has been made a peculiarly Spanish heritage. De Falla incorporated the popular melodies and rhythms of flamenco into his own composition to give it its haunting quality. Saura and Gades have enlarged the score with traditional flamenco songs and dances brought from the Gypsy caves of Sacromonte, in Granada. There they found their cast of extras, some two hundred Gypsies who lend the film its human landscape and ensure its authenticity. Many songs and dances that, as in the case of all oral and popular traditions, run the risk of disappearing are here preserved. Following their imperative for authenticity, Saura and Gades also changed the original setting, the Gypsy caves, to the now more familiar shacks that surround most large Spanish cities. Silhouettes of abandoned cars, scaffolding, scrap metal, and telephone wires provide a contemporary backdrop to the songs and dances that fill the perpetual night sky of the movie.

—*Alison Hughes*

Star-crossed lover: Cristina Hoyos, above and below, stars with Antonio Gades in Carlos Saura's new movie.

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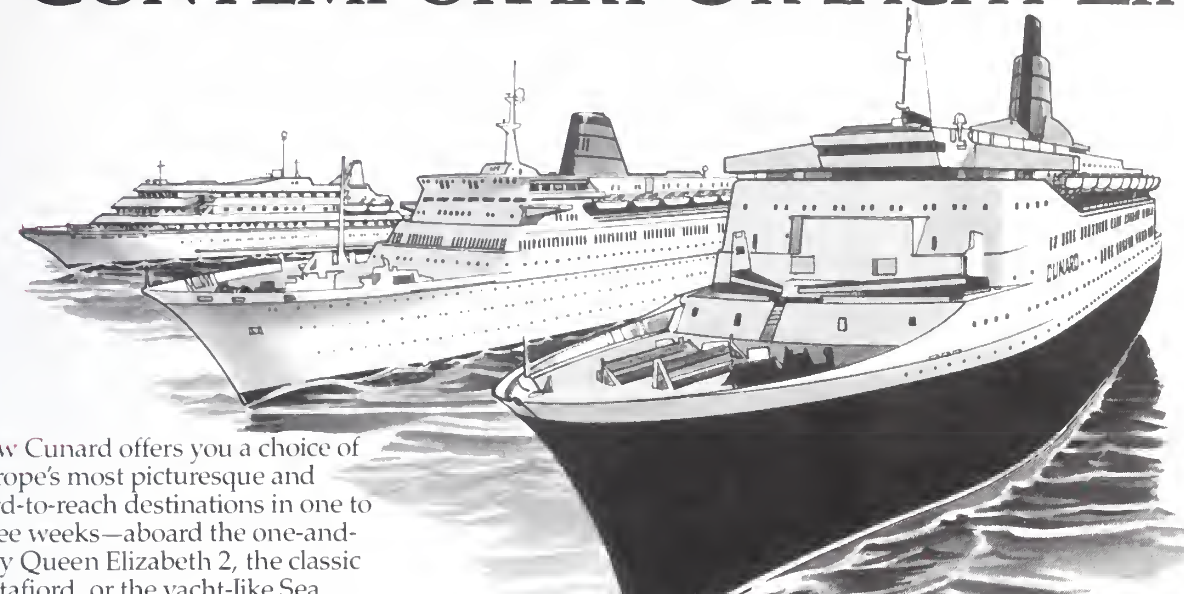

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ALAIN LE KIM (3)

Hats are big in Paris: above left, a fashion student's extravagant experiment; top right, furry drama by Lacroix; bottom right, Philippe Model's sensible turban.

CHAPEAU!

Hats are making a comeback among style-conscious Parisians. Schoolgirls are crowning their neatly pulled-back hair with flea-market hats, postpunks are signaling their individuality with predictably unlikely headgear, and *soignées* Parisiennes are again beginning to find hats as indispensable to their "look" as earrings or dark glasses, all in the cause of seductive drama or, at least, charm.

But why?

It may have something to do with Christian Lacroix. With his recent lavish creations, the young designer for Jean Patou not only pulled the venerable house into the fashion headlines (see *Connoisseur* of last November) but also did a great deal to refurbish the notion of wearing hats. Besides his sensational headgear, Lacroix has come up with such exquisitely wearable pieces as a little black cocktail hat, which consists simply of a tiny cap with a stand-up bow at the nape.

Many of this season's hats manage to be both fairly small and striking. Some of the best of those seen on the street come from Philippe Model, who has emerged in the last two years as one of the most inventive and polished of the new generation of hatters. Model's sister Laurence, who runs the shop at 33 Place du Marché St. Honoré, has noticed a rise in sales of the more extravagant styles and colors. "After all," she remarks, "it's easier—and cheaper—to buy a really great new hat than a whole new outfit." (The most inventive hats cost between $100 and $250.)

The hat trend is still new and attracts attention, but people claim to wear hats primarily for their own satisfaction. "Women trying on a hat are trying out a different image of themselves," explains one Model customer making the rounds of the shop. "When you find your hat, it's not an extravagance; it's a transformation."

—*Regan Charles*

ANOTHER MENUHIN IN THE MAKING?

Five years ago, a diminutive ten-year-old girl from Japan played for Pinchas Zukerman at a master class of the Aspen Music Festival. Her choice of repertoire? The taxing Second Violin Concerto by Bartók. Her performance? "It was overwhelming," recalls Zukerman. "I never thought anyone that young could have such incredible soul."

Midori Goto is now a remarkably poised, unpretentious fifteen-year-old whose debut recording of double concertos by Bach and Vivaldi with Zukerman and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and a solo performance of Bach's E Major Concerto, was released this past fall by Philips. Since 1982, she has studied at the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School with Dorothy DeLay, the noted violin pedagogue. "At age ten," says DeLay, "Midori was able to handle more of the standard repertory than most twenty-year-olds."

Indeed, she has already appeared as soloist with such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, and the Philadelphia Orchestra, conjuring up memories of the youthful Yehudi Menuhin with her elegantly polished playing and brilliant technique. Most of her engagements have been at youth concerts or summer music festivals, or with regional orchestras, such as the New Haven (Connecticut) Symphony, where she will appear on February 17. "The idea with Midori," notes her manager, Lee Lamont, the president of ICM Artists, Ltd., "was to give her the performing experience she needs without thrusting her into the spotlight."

At Tanglewood, last August: Midori Goto.

WALTER H. SCOTT

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[illegible] until last [illegible] Tangle-wood [illegible] Symphony Orchestra under [illegible]. In a now-famous [illegible] on her three-quarter-size [illegible] during the final movement of [illegible]'s *Serenade for Violin, String Orchestra, Harp, and Percussion.* Undaunted, she appropriated the concert-

OFFSTAGE, SHE IS JUST ANOTHER NINTH-GRADER WHO DISLIKES FISH.

master's Stradivarius, broke another E string, then took the associate concert-master's Guadagnini, and completed the work with aplomb. The next day, the *New York Times* ran a front-page story headlined, "Girl, 14, Conquers Tanglewood with 3 Violins." Later that week, there were interviews with other newspaper reporters and coverage of the event on ABC's "World News Tonight."

Midori took the publicity in stride but was disturbed by the attention focused on the string-snapping episode. "I'm kind of upset," she explains, "because some of the journalists didn't even know what I played. I really like the *Serenade.*" Midori—as she prefers to be called—attends the Professional Children's School, in New York, and practices the violin four to five hours a day. After learning the notes of a new piece, she divides it into sections and tries "to decide what kind of character each one has to me." Sometimes, she asks DeLay to accompany her to key performances. "I'm sort of a glorified rabbit's foot," suggests DeLay, who adds that Midori is "astonishingly mature musically."

Offstage, however, she is just another ninth-grader who dislikes fish—especially sushi. Asked how she feels about occasional absences from school, such as during a three-week tour of the Orient last November with the St. Louis Symphony, she replies, in typical teen fashion, "It's okay. I just miss my friends."

The real challenge for Midori's mentors lies ahead, as demands for her special gifts increase. In the past, too much pressure and public adulation have proved harmful to some prodigies. "You have to let a young artist be young," observes Lamont. Zukerman, who continues to take an interest in his talented colleague, thinks she'll do just fine. "Midori is a force of nature, like the ocean," he maintains. "You can spoil it, but you can't destroy it. It has its own inner current."

—*Barbara Jepson*

BRUSSELS BOUFFE

Brussels has gotten a bum rap. Okay, it is not particularly attractive or even charming—the most famous landmark is a fountain of a boy urinating, and the city is overpopulated by NATO technocrats. To appreciate Brussels, you have to overlook all that—for the city's food. Its epicurean pleasures take second place to none in Europe. Brussels cuisine and delicacies will more than sate those who adore eating and drinking and are delighted to spend the day doing little else.

For breakfast, try the Mokafé, in the Galerie du Roi. The coffee here is a marvel, as good as any found in Italy. It is served with a pitcher of cream, along with a piece of chocolate or a buttery ginger-flavored cookie called a *speculoos.* Belgians eat pastry in the morning, usually a flan plump with fresh fruit, marzipan, or custard. The choices are all displayed here. *Cramique,* the chewy Belgian equivalent of raisin bread, is another option. Ask for jam with it, especially the kind made from the tart *groseille.*

After reading the papers, scribbling a postcard, and watching pedestrians, it's time you thought about lunch. Simple fare at a café is recommended, because dinner here is filling. Indigenous to Brussels are tasty open-faced sandwiches called *tartines.* Have the *fromage blanc,* which has the consistency of cream cheese and the tang of *chèvre,* or *jambon d'Ardennes,* a salty, Parma-like ham.

These and more ubiquitously European snacks, like *croque-monsieur* and omelettes, are served at La Mort Subite, one of the oldest cafés in Brussels. Located on the Rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères, with its fading Beaux-Arts decor, noisy ambience, and brusque service, La Mort Subite is popular with natives. It is named after a brand of beer, whose label translates as "sudden death." The best Belgian beers are very strong and not exported. Apart

There are few places on earth so devoted to fine food: Brussels is seen here from the Grand' Place, an important site of snack-eating and people-watching.

STEVE VIDLER/LEO DE WYS

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from La Mort Subite, consider Duvel or any of the Trappiste variety, dark beers brewed by Trappist monks. If you don't specify a type, expect to receive Belgium's Budweiser, Stella d'Artois.

Spend the afternoon on the food-shop circuit. Belgian chocolates are legendary, and better yet—should a craving for just one truffle unexpectedly erupt—they are sold by the gram. Neuhaus is deservedly considered the finest. Its flagship store is located a few doors away from the Mokafé. From there, Dandoy, just off the Grand' Place, is only a stroll away; this is *the* place for *speculoos,* which are also sold by the gram. Wittamer, squeezed between pricey antiques dealers on the Place du Grand Sablon, is an irresistible *pâtisserie,* renowned for its Black Forest cake and its *lingot d'or,* a dizzying concoction of custard, fruit, meringue, and flaky pastry. You'll want to sit and consume some, but unfortunately it's strictly takeout.

French fries are a common snack, and there are *frites* vendors all over town. Nothing special, really. Instead, search out a mussels stand, where these Belgian delicacies will be served on the half shell with a creamy vinaigrette. If some folks wince at the thought of raw mussels—on street corners, no less—they may be assured that these are available only in season and are delicious.

At cocktail time, drop into the Falstaff, across the street from the stock exchange. This brightly lighted, art deco café is Brussels's hippest hangout, and finding a table may be difficult. Order "half and half," a refreshing combination of white wine and Champagne.

It's hard to find a bad dinner in Brussels. The choice of restaurants is overwhelming, with many devoted to seafood specialties, and some already enjoying international reputations. The intimate restaurant L'Ogenblik, in the Galerie des Princes, is one of the city's secret gems. An abundant window display of fresh vegetables greets patrons; the menu changes weekly. A recent meal began with cold leeks and prawns, followed by thick strips of salmon and sole, entwined together and served in a beurre blanc sauce, and for dessert, wild strawberries and red raspberries with cream. On another occasion, sautéed wild mushrooms, mixed grill of fish, and hot apple tart.

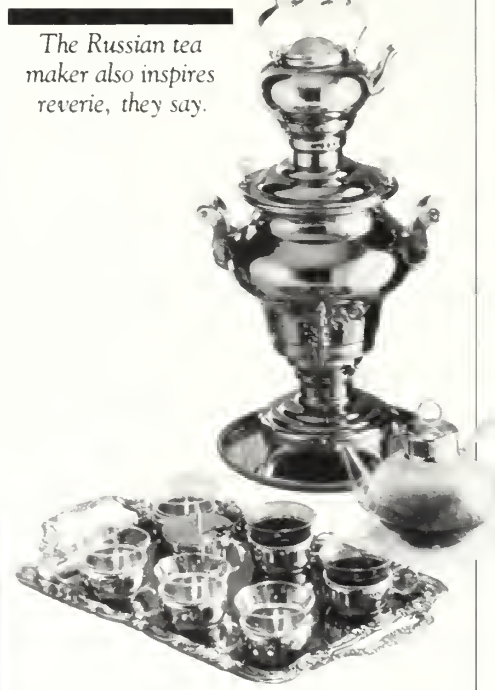
Two other possibilities: the Scheltema, on the Rue des Dominicains, for the *plateau de fruits de mer,* a cornucopia of cold shellfish, and Au Stekerlapatte, on the Rue des Prêtres, for superb beef. Both restaurants are lively, unpretentious, and frequented by locals.

End the day, stuffed and happy, in a bar. Brussels comes alive after 11 P.M., and bars tend to stay open until the last customer leaves. L'Art Tournant, on the Rue des Vieux Marchés aux Grains, specializes in American-style mixed drinks. The atmosphere is low-key, the crowd young and fashionable. —*William Harris*

The Samovar Hour

A hard winter is less difficult to bear when you can withdraw to other times and other places, in which the season had some cozying rituals and objects. A samovar is both, gurgling in a quiet corner of a cold winter's day and sparking reveries of Chekhovian warmth. To those who say that that was then and this is now, Beem Royal International, of West Germany, with regional offices in California (phone: 818-242-7781), responds with an electric samovar that looks like a czarist relic but is in fact modern and efficient. (They also have models with an up-to-date, functional appearance, if that is more to your taste.) The samovars, gold- or silver-plated, range from $150 to $700 in price, and the largest holds up to five liters of water, which along with the teapot on top can steam softly all day, supplying a seemingly endless stream of hot tea and comfort.

—*Melik Kaylan*



The Russian tea maker also inspires reverie, they say.

Edited by Robert Knafo

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AN INSIDER'S REPORT: BELLE ÉPOQUE BRONZES AND MUCH AMERICANA

Relative calm reigns over the market in January, affording the chance to do a little stock-taking. In the battle of the two titans last season, only Christie's showed real sales growth; but apparently a titan doesn't strike twice: this time it seems to be the turn of Sotheby's to gather the big share of "name" collections and ring up a brilliant year.

Not all is figures, however; equally important personnel changes have been afoot. Charles Allsopp, who has had a hand in virtually all the global successes of Christie's for nigh a quarter century now, has taken over as chairman of Christie's UK. He's odds-on-favorite to succeed John Floyd as head of the whole shebang in the not too distant future. Up in New Bond Street, the revered Orientalist Julian Thompson trades portfolios with the quondam Thatcher arts minister and scholar Lord Gowrie. Gowrie becomes chairman of Sotheby's UK, and Thompson, head of Sotheby's International. Together with the recent appointments of Simon de Pury and Christof Graf Douglas as heads of the Swiss and German operations respectively, these moves give the Sotheby's Holdings president, Michael L. Ainslie, an extraordinary management team. That Sotheby's has attracted or retained gentlemen of such exceptional stature should dispel any lingering murmurings that the Yanks who acquired the venerable house in 1983 would abuse it.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

From the Congoleum collection: Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait's Bass Fishing.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

Boucher's A Boy with a Girl Blowing Bubbles, *on sale at Sotheby's New York.*

The big story in 1987 will not be the oft-rumored takeover of Christie's by Phillips (it won't happen, period!) but rather the fate of legislation presented to the Chambre Nationale des Commissaires-Priseurs last September. If ECC freedom-of-trade statutes allowing community members to operate in one another's countries were extended to French auctioneers, the result would be an auction-industry equivalent of the "Big Bang" in London's financial markets. At present, the Commissaires-Priseurs are sheltered from extramural competition by their status as quasi-governmental agents. How quickly the Anglo-American, German, and other houses would sweep in remains to be seen, given the legal guarantees of title and authenticity required by French law. Still, the mere promise of competition may rouse the sleeping French giant.

London—Sotheby's, January 2–28. "The Glory of the Garden." A simply delightful conceit concocted in concert with the Royal Horticultural Society, revealing and reveling in outstanding paintings, furniture, decorative works, and assorted oddities—artistry out of England's passion for the parterre. A personal favorite is Henry Danckerts's seventeenth-century depiction of Mr. Rose, the royal gardener, presenting the first pineapple ever raised in England to Charles II. This is an exhibition, not a sale, but I can't imagine a more pleasant counter to January's dreary grays.

New York—William Doyle Galleries, January 7. Belle Époque. The second of this "new" category, put together by the specialist Michael Meek and featuring the nineteenth-century revivalist styles as well as Eastlake, Arts and Crafts, and art

A watering can and other garden curios, on view in London from January 2.

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View of the President's office at the Congoleum Corporation.

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deco and nouveau furniture, decoration, and art. The art glass will be highly sought after and there will be a handful of Tiffany lamps, with which Doyle enjoys great success. Don't overlook the bronze sculptures, a greatly undervalued field if you know your artists and foundries.

New York—Christie's and Sotheby's, January 13 and 15. Old-master paintings. The Christie's sale seems slightly stronger in earlier Continental works from the likes of Bassetti, Groth, Hals, Pynacker, Ricci, Watteau, Wouwerman, et al. The Sotheby's edge is mostly in later material, ranging from Boucher's voluptuous *A Boy with a Girl Blowing Bubbles*, one of eleven pictures representing the final act in the fabled Patiño dispersal, to an outstanding selection from the Heathcote Foundation collection, featuring superb English portraits by Hoppner, Gainsborough, Raeburn, and Reynolds, as well as several important Dutch still lifes. But the real star is Botticelli's *Virgin and Child with the Infant St. John*, circa 1491–96, from a private American collector and estimated at $400,000 to $600,000.

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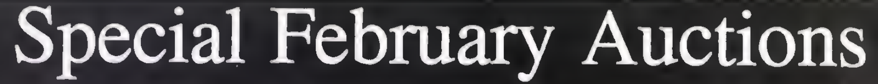
New York—Christie's, January 27. The Congoleum collection of American furniture and paintings. This extensive and first-rate collection formerly graced Congoleum's Portsmouth, New Hampshire, headquarters. Some 200 lots of furniture—Queen Anne through Federal—show the greatest strength in material from the middle quarters of the eighteenth century, as well as a handful of contemporaneous English pieces. There are a number of vivid sporting scenes (carrying some equally vivid estimates) that are well worth your attention.

New York—Sotheby's, January 30 and 31 and February 1. Selections from the Fine Americana art collection. The Fines really knew their stuff, so if this is your specialty, this is your sale: painted boxes and chalkwork, carvings, important painted furniture, quilts, hooked rugs, tinware, and weather vanes. A large group of English pottery of "American interest" from the period 1780–1840 (enameled creamware, pearl ware, "Gaudy Dutch," Pratt ware) may steal the show.

—*James R. Lyons*



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Côte Rôtie: This Undervalued Wine Is One of the Greats

BY ROBERT M. PARKER, JR.

A great Côte Rôtie can be rivaled by only a handful of the world's finest wines, but few Americans seem to realize it. It's time to wise up. The 1985s will be released later this year, and they are well worth a special effort to find.

The year 1985 was remarkably successful for French wine, but in only one area did it transcend other very good years for flavor intensity, complexity, bouquet, and character—Côte Rôtie. In 1985, the wines there could be called fabulously great, better than the 1983s, equal to the great 1978s and 1969s. The famous northern Rhône appellations of Hermitage and Cornas, a little south of Côte Rôtie, had very good, even excellent, vintages, but none were as majestically rich and exciting as the Côte Rôties—the most dramatic, intense wines I have tasted since my first tasting of 1982 Bordeaux reds.

While prices for Côte Rôtie are increasing, the best still sell for half, even a third, the price of a *grand cru* Burgundy or first- or second-growth Bordeaux. It is amazing that wine enthusiasts will think nothing of trying a mediocre bottle of red Burgundy for $35 or $40, while ignoring a superior Côte Rôtie on the same shelf for $15. As people become more sophisticated, this should change, and the great 1985 vintage will help.

GARY BUSS

Visitors to Côte Rôtie ("the roasted slope") are often shocked by their first glimpse of these vineyards on hillsides rising sheer from the river. The best sit on narrow terraces, some dating back to Roman times, that must be cultivated by hand. One, the Côte Brune, with a clay soil, produces heavy, dense, tannic wines. The other, Côte Blonde, with a limestone soil, produces wines that are more supple and seductive. The two authorized grape varieties are the noble Syrah and the fragrant, almost exotic, white wine grape the Viognier, often picked and vinified with the Syrah. Legally, a Côte Rôtie can have up to 20 percent Viognier, though 5 percent is common.

The great difficulty of cultivating the Côte Rôtie slopes has meant that over half the appellation remains unplanted. Those portions not yet planted in vines tend to be above the steep hillside on level ground called the plateau. Most growers acknowledge that the best Côte Rôtie can be made only from the steep slopes, with their perfect exposure to the sun, and many are worried, because it is so easy to plant vineyards on the plateau. The entire appellation of Côte Rôtie produces about 18,000 to 20,000 cases of red wine—not much, given the demand for so sumptuous a wine. This production is roughly equivalent to that of one Bordeaux château.

Recent vintages have been kind to Côte Rôtie. The 1985 produced remarkably concentrated, fragrant, rich, dense wines with heavy tannin but lush textures and long finishes. They are less hard than the 1983s but more concentrated and forward, because of lower acidities. While 1984 was an average vintage here, many wines are quite good, well colored, with decent ripeness; 1983 is an excellent vintage, but the wines are still closed up and extremely tannic, though with a depth of fruit to outlast the tannin; 1982 was a troublesome vintage to vinify because of torrid temperatures during the harvest, but the newly released Côte Rôties from Guigal and Gentaz-Dervieux are fabulous.

Most growers claim that the best time to drink a Côte Rôtie is when it is between five and fifteen years old, though vintages such as 1978, 1983, and 1985 will hold longer. A good Côte Rôtie has an explosive bouquet of cassis fruit, sometimes of violets and paperwhite narcissus. In the great vintages, a roasted-hazelnut or chestnut aroma and a smoky perfume add to their complexity. Côte Rôtie is a much

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[illegible] usual- [illegible] 12 to 12.8 percent.

[illegible] Côte Rôtie's best producers [illegible] analysis of recent vintages [illegible] limited, but they can be found in most major metropolitan wine shops.

Étienne and Marcel Guigal

In the last five or six years, this firm has emerged as the dominant house of the entire Rhône Valley. With each new vintage, Etienne Guigal's son Marcel brings his formidable wine-making talents to an even higher level, through hard work, meticulous care of the wines in the cellar, and willingness to pay top dollar for the supplementary grape juice he buys. He goes for tremendous power and concentration, while maintaining impeccable balance. The wines are never filtered—an easy way out at the expense of flavor and vintage characteristics. Guigal has three vineyard designations: La Mouline, La Landonne, and La Turque. While he is criticized by some for aging wine in new oak barrels as they do in Bordeaux, and because they think his Côte Rôties are too powerful and concentrated, the criticism is sour grapes. Virtually every three-star French chef and wine connoisseur beats a path to Guigal's door, hoping to be allowed the privilege of purchasing a few bottles of his Côte Rôties. The 1985s were fabulous, although since Guigal keeps his top wines in oak barrels for three years they will not be released until 1989. However, his 1983s, just as good though slightly more tannic, are being released now. They have great extract, remarkable dense ruby-purple colors, and unbelievable finishes and will need ten to twelve years' cellaring to shed their tannins. The La Landonne Côte Rôtie of 1983, he thinks, will last forty to fifty years! The trouble is that, except for his regular (excellent) Côte Rôtie, there are only 500 to 600 cases each of his single-vineyard wines. They are among the greatest in the world.

THE 1985 CÔTE RÔTIE IS THE BEST WINE I'VE TASTED SINCE 1982 BORDEAUX.

Albert Dervieux-Thaize

Albert Dervieux lives at the northern end of the Côte Rôtie. He has been president of the growers association since 1953, and as he talks about his beloved wine his bushy eyebrows are wonderfully animated. His wines are traditionally made, long-lived, and among the most backward when first released. He uses 5 percent Viognier in the blend and keeps his wine in large old wooden casks for two to two and a half years. He thinks new wood barrels mask the true character of Côte Rôtie. Dervieux produces around 1,500 cases from three different vineyards: Fongent, from ten-year-old vines grown on the Côte Blonde; La Garde, from fifteen- to twenty-five-year-old vines grown on the Côte Brune; and his best wine, La Viaillère, from fifty-five-year-old vines grown on the Côte Brune. His wines are egg-white fined but never filtered and need a full decade of cellaring to show their impressive character. His 1985s were almost black, with fabulous bouquets of black cherries and blackberry fruit, and remarkable length and concentration on the palate. His 1983s are much more tannic, less accessible versions of the 1985s, but no less concentrated.

Marius Gentaz-Dervieux

One of Côte Rôtie's greatest wine makers, Gentaz produces only 600 to 800 cases of wine from his three acres on the Côte Brune, so his genius will never be widely recognized. He so abhors new oak barrels that some of his are a hundred years old, and he claims that filtration ruins the wine's character. He keeps his wines in barrels for twenty to twenty-two months. The tiny quantities are sold to the choicest French restaurants and a handful of wine shops in America. His 1985s promise to be the best since 1978. His 1983s, while more tannic and backward, are wonderfully rich, with a scent of ripe raspberries and spring flowers in the bouquet, and great extract and full body on the palate. His wines are hard to find, so if you ever see a bottle, grab it.

Robert Jasmin

One of the most serious wine makers in the Rhône Valley is Robert Jasmin. He produces only 1,000 cases of wine from five acres of vines divided evenly between the Côte Brune and Côte Blonde. He thought his 1983 the best vintage since 1947; now he thinks his 1985 is better. He always used the maximum Viognier permitted (20 percent) in his wines, which must often have accounted for their precocious appeal and seductive charm. In 1985, however, Jasmin dropped the Viognier from his blend, aiming at a firmer, even more intense wine. He never uses new oak barrels and bottles his wine after fourteen to eighteen months. His wines have been consistently excellent, even in some of the mediocre vintages. His 1985 looks superb, his best since the great 1978 and 1976. It is supple, rich, and velvety, with excellent concentration of fruit, medium to full body, and more muscle, color, and depth than usual. It should be drunk between 1988 and 1996. The 1984 is, of course, much lighter but has the telltale raspberry, cedary fruit. His 1983 is a harder, more tannic wine than the 1985 but has the sublime bouquet of raspberry and peppery fruit, with a scent of toasty vanillin oak.

GARY BUSS

René Rostaing

Rostaing is one of the new stars of the Côte Rôtie, a part-time vintner who oversees the management of his five acres of vines. He learned his skills from his father-in-law, Albert Dervieux, and produces only 500 cases of Côte Rôtie. There are three types: a Côte Blonde, with 15 percent Viognier added; a Côte Brune; and a Côte Brune–La Landonne, from seventy-year-old vines. His wines are aged in 30 percent new oak barrels and are neither fined nor filtered. Several of his recent vintages have been among the greatest Côte Rôties I have tasted—in other words, among the greatest *wines* I have tasted. His 1985s are black-purple, with remarkable concentration: stunning as the 1985 La Landonne is, the Côte Blonde is even more sensational, with the concentration and length of the greatest vintages of Pétrus or Mouton-Rothschild. Both will be superstars. Rostaing's 1984 Côte Blonde is the top wine of that rather maligned vintage, wonderfully fragrant, velvety, rich, supple, almost sweet, with oodles of ripe fruit and an exceptional finish; given the difficult vintage conditions, it is simply unbelievable. His 1983s have probably disappeared from the market, but all need another six to eight years of cellaring.

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WINE

Paul Jaboulet Aîné

Jaboulet purchases grapes from growers to make its Côte Rôtie called "Les Jumelles" (The Twins). While this firm produces other splendid wines, their Côte Rôtie, while good, rarely hits the heights. It is made to be drunk quite young but can last eight to ten years. The best vintages for Jaboulet's Côte Rôtie have been 1976, 1978, and 1985, followed by 1983 and 1979. He thinks his 1985 is the best wine he has made since the wonderful 1976. It is surprisingly deep, loaded with blackberry fruit, and has a ripe, smoky, concentrated smell and taste, and velvety tannins.

Max Chapoutier

The Chapoutier firm is one of the oldest and most successful in France, producing a bevy of reliable, reasonably priced wines from throughout the Rhône Valley. From its seven acres of vines on the hillside of Côte Rôtie, it produces a supple, very fruity, medium- to full-bodied wine that may not hit the heights of complexity some growers achieve but is consistently good. The 1984 Côte Rôtie, just released, is fruity, soft, quite elegant, but rather light in style. The 1985 is extremely supple, very rich in blackberry fruit, medium- to full-bodied, and alcoholic and should be ready to drink in a year or two.

THE ENTIRE CÔTE RÔTIE PRODUCES AS MUCH AS ONE BORDEAUX CHÂTEAU.

Among the younger stars are *Bernard Burgaud,* who made one of the great 1984s from this appellation and a splendid 1985; *Gilles Barge,* whose wines are made in a very tannic, robust, rich style; *Gilbert Clusel,* who does not have the best vineyards but by tremendous effort is making fine Côte Rôties; and *Edmond Duclaux,* who makes an elegant wine, much in the style of his mentor Robert Jasmin. Duclaux's 1985 is a wonderfully lush, supple wine that explodes from the glass with the scent of ripe raspberry fruit.

Though it is quite approachable when young, Côte Rôtie normally should not be drunk before it is five to six years old. Prices vary, but in general Côte Rôties range between $15 and $20, with some of the rare, single-vineyard vintages of Guigal now costing about $40 a bottle. These long-lived, complex wines are one of the world's great values. □

Robert Parker is the author of Bordeaux *and publisher of* The Wine Advocate.

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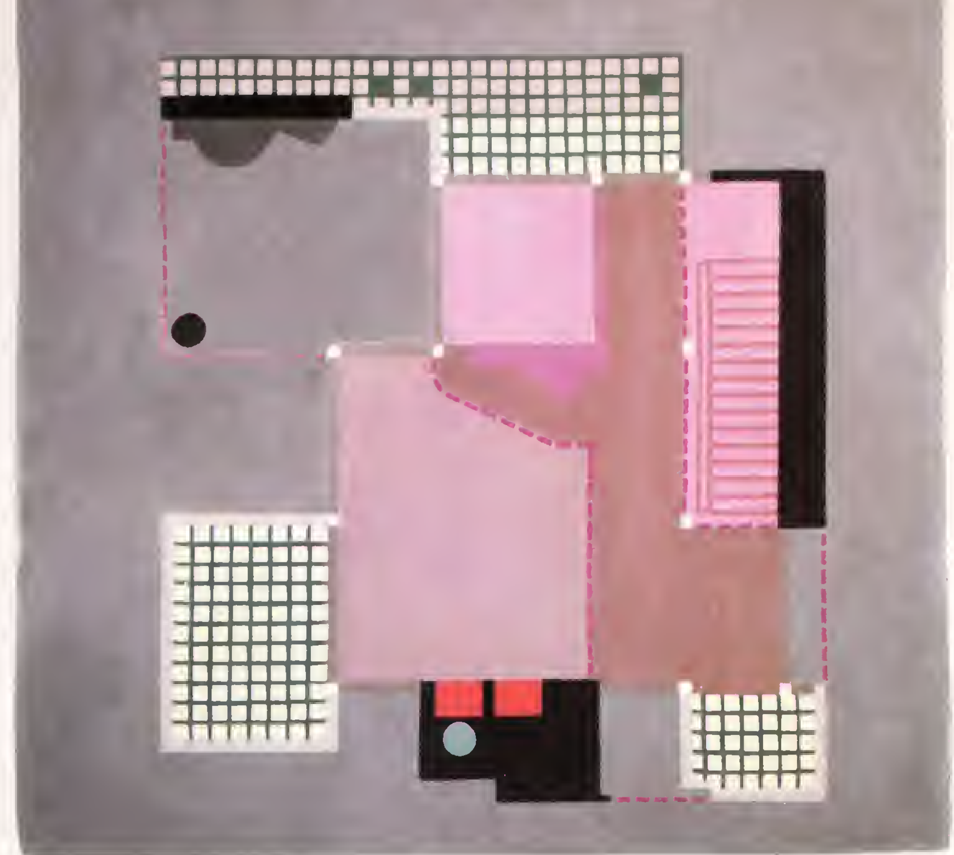


DESIGN ON THE LEVEL

COOL RUGS BY TODAY'S HOT ARCHITECTS ARE GIVING FLOORS A NEW DIMENSION

BY PHIL PATTON

Mimicking a blueprint, Richard Meier's Rug #1 *seems the witty epitome of an "architect's rug": it puts a floor plan on the floor and depicts volumes in two dimensions.*

The striking composition shown above is a rug designed by the architect Richard Meier. At first glance, it looks like a blueprint, the very picture of an "architect's rug," but the lined shape that seems to mark a stair goes nowhere. The grids might indicate tiled floors or they might not. The dotted lines could mark sliding doors or overhanging roofs. The usual notations of architectural drafting are controverted. Clearly, something special is being considered for the floor.

Meier's rug was commissioned and produced by the distinguished rug-and-carpet firm of V'Soske, of New York City. There, the philosophy of the floor borders on mysticism. Talk for a few minutes to the directors of marketing and of design, Ellen Hertzmark and Roger McDonald, and they will tell you, "The floor is the foundation of space. The rug holds the room together. It grounds a space."

In our time, rugs and carpets have become almost invisible. Under the sway of modern architecture, the rug, which had previously often been covered with crass and garish patterns, was neglected. When Le Corbusier or Mies van der Rohe used a rug, it was generally as a base to show off chairs. By the sixties, neutral, wall-to-wall carpet had become to the floor of modern buildings what vast expanses of plate glass or rough concrete were to its wall.

Since 1978, V'Soske has been seeking to reverse the situation. V'Soske has commissioned a number of outstanding architects, including Meier, to design rugs.

Hertzmark and McDonald like to think of their projects in terms of "a constant exploration of the floor." The language sounds like a paraphrase of an art critic speaking of the "constant exploration of

R Fern

Roger Ferri, formerly a painter, seeks to reintegrate painting and architecture. With its vertiginous sense of up and down, his tondo-within-a-rectangle composition for Rug #1 *(left) conveys the decorative swirl and sweep of a piece from the art moderne period.*

the picture plane." And indeed, in a number of rugs, the concerns of the architect do give way to those of a painter.

This is not V'Soske's first bold project. The firm has set such exacting standards of craft and developed such fine methods of tufting of fiber that it is renowned among all kinds of artists as well as architects and designers. In the twenties, Stanislav V'Soske, the company's founder, developed a means of hand-tufting wool and silk yarns to produce pile of varying height and density. (Previously, most American rugs had been made by the loop-pile method.) As a result, the rug designer had at his or her disposal a vastly expanded artistic range.

Artists who would never have thought to design rugs before suddenly became interested, especially when, in 1942, the Museum of Modern Art commissioned eleven artists to create designs for V'Soske to carry out. One of these, Stuart Davis's *Flying Carpet,* hangs on a wall at V'Soske's office, looking as fresh as on the day it came off the loom, in the late 1930s. Artists were not alone in their appreciation of the company's skills. Frank Lloyd Wright employed their services, as did such designers as Florence Knoll and George Nelson.

V'Soske's rugs by architects go under the collective title "The New Level." Beyond the intrinsic interest of each one, they serve together as a sort of index to the changing concerns of architecture in general. For one thing, they help mark the return of the decorative from its modernist-imposed exile. For another, they demonstrate the renewed desire of architects to shape more than buildings. And they reflect new concern for craft.

There are now more than two dozen rugs in the line, each made by hand in limited editions. For each, V'Soske produced as many as four different "proofs" before the final product was settled on. The architects have been demanding taskmasters. Several of them have even gone to the company's manufacturing plant in Puerto Rico to discuss hues with V'Soske's veteran dye master and apply the final touches.

Charles Gwathmey says that his rug Le Soleil Couchant *(top) was inspired by the sight of a landscape as viewed from an airplane. It nonetheless shows strong architectural influences in its careful, almost Bauhaus composition.*

Rugs have confronted architects with at least one crucial, and unfamiliar, problem. "It is hard to design something with no up and down," says Michael Graves, the first contributor to the line. "It is hard to work without gravity." For an architect, rug design seems the aesthetic equivalent of moving around in zero G: it inspires strange somersaults and new twists. Working flat on the floor, no longer tied to the T-square, architects have been able to let out all sorts of hidden concerns. Although the rugs are not all equally successful, they are nonetheless all interesting.

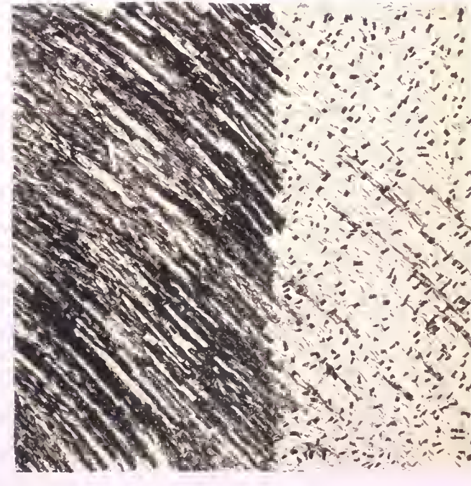
WHAT DO YOU DO WITHOUT GRAVITY?

The single quality practically all the "New Level" rugs share is their sense of release: release of their makers' painterly and sculptorly aspirations. It may be significant that two of the architects, Michael Graves and Charles Gwathmey, have signed their rugs, a privilege not offered by buildings. It is worth noting, too, that Roger Ferri, who has produced one of the most striking rugs, was a painter before he was an architect.

If their rugs mark an escape from the constraints of modern architecture, they also show that today's architects know their modern art. Charles Gwathmey says *Le Soleil Couchant* was inspired by the sight of the country from an airplane. The viewer might be likelier to suppose the inspiration to have been the canvases of Robert Delaunay or Marsden Hartley. Alan Buchsbaum's repetitive scribble pattern for *Pencilmarkings* could have come from Sol Lewitt, though the yellow sparks in the interstices of light and dark give it a dash of Op art, too. The volcanic orange breaking through cement gray in Shelton Mindel's *Crack* (included in the recent "High Styles" design exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art) at first glance suggests a Helen Frankenthaler print.

With *Task System,* Henry Smith-Miller and Laurie Hawkinson have perhaps gone furthest toward the V'Soske ideal of "exploring the nature of the rug." *Task System* is not one rug but a set of five, each of a different shape and associated with a different function: individual seating, group

Alan Buchsbaum's scribble pattern for Pencilmarkings *could come from Sol Lewitt, though it also looks like a fragment of an architectural rendering.*



[illegible] on ac- [illegible] all other [illegible] black's gravity, to kee[illegible]'s phrase, from "just [illegible] rchitects explored V'Soske's vast palette of yarn weights, piles, and tufting directions and added touches of reds, greens, and other shades to create "subblacks." These results resemble the programmatic art of the minimalist sculptors, such as Carl André. *Task System* is sculpture degree-zero, perfectly in harmony with the "quiet, unobtrusive" architecture Smith-Miller says he prefers, especially the "silent, sublime, serene" architecture of Louis Kahn. "When you first enter the apartments we've done, you don't think anything is going on at all," he says. The black rugs provide the same sense of gradual discovery.

Michael Graves has made his rugs resemble his buildings—or at least the bas reliefs and murals with which he adorns them. His two designs are pieces of Gravesian arabesque, in the familiar red-browns and blue-greens of his palette, landscape colors that, he has said, reflect "the interior as extended garden." But just as the lines are about to resolve themselves into, say, a wall and door or a mountain horizon, some other overlying plane ruins the illusion.

Roger Ferri first came into contact with V'Soske when he commissioned them to make three huge tapestries for a building of his in Texas and has now taken advantage of V'Soske's commissioning *him* to leap even more boldly into the pictorial. Chief among his professional concerns is the "reintegration of painting and architecture." On Ferri's rug, playful dolphins and swimmers frolic in a tondo within a square whose dizzying sense of up and down, of swirl and sweep, is as exuberantly and unabashedly decorative as any art deco mosaic or Tiepolo fresco.

"Dancing" is a word Ferri uses to describe a design he admires, and it applies to what goes on his rug. Architects spend a lot of time making things stand in place. Cutting a rug with V'Soske offers them a rare opportunity to kick up their heels. □

The rugs of Michael Graves (right, Rug #2) *are examples of art copying architecture; they resemble the bas reliefs on his buildings.*

Phil Patton, the author of Open Road, *wrote about the architect Arata Isozaki for the November 1986 issue of* Connoisseur.

SNOWBIRD HIGH

THE PLACE TO SKI IN POWDER OVER YOUR HEAD

BY ROBERT WOOL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES W. KAY

The snow just fell and fell," Suzi Kay was telling me, as we drove from the Salt Lake City airport up the mountain to Snowbird. "Forty-six inches in eighteen hours. A real Snowbird dump. It was glorious.

"It was over your head," she continued, "and light, so light and dry. You just pointed your skis down the mountain and floated through it. Weightless."

"You skied in snow over your head?" I asked.

"One of life's great experiences," she replied.

"How did you see where you were going?"

"Not very well. Sort of like moles tunneling down the mountain. Got to pull your neck gator up over your face or wear a face mask so you don't swallow the snow. It sprays all around you, makes it tough to breathe. I've sometimes seen people skiing around with snorkels on."

"Snorkels? Like underwater snorkels?"

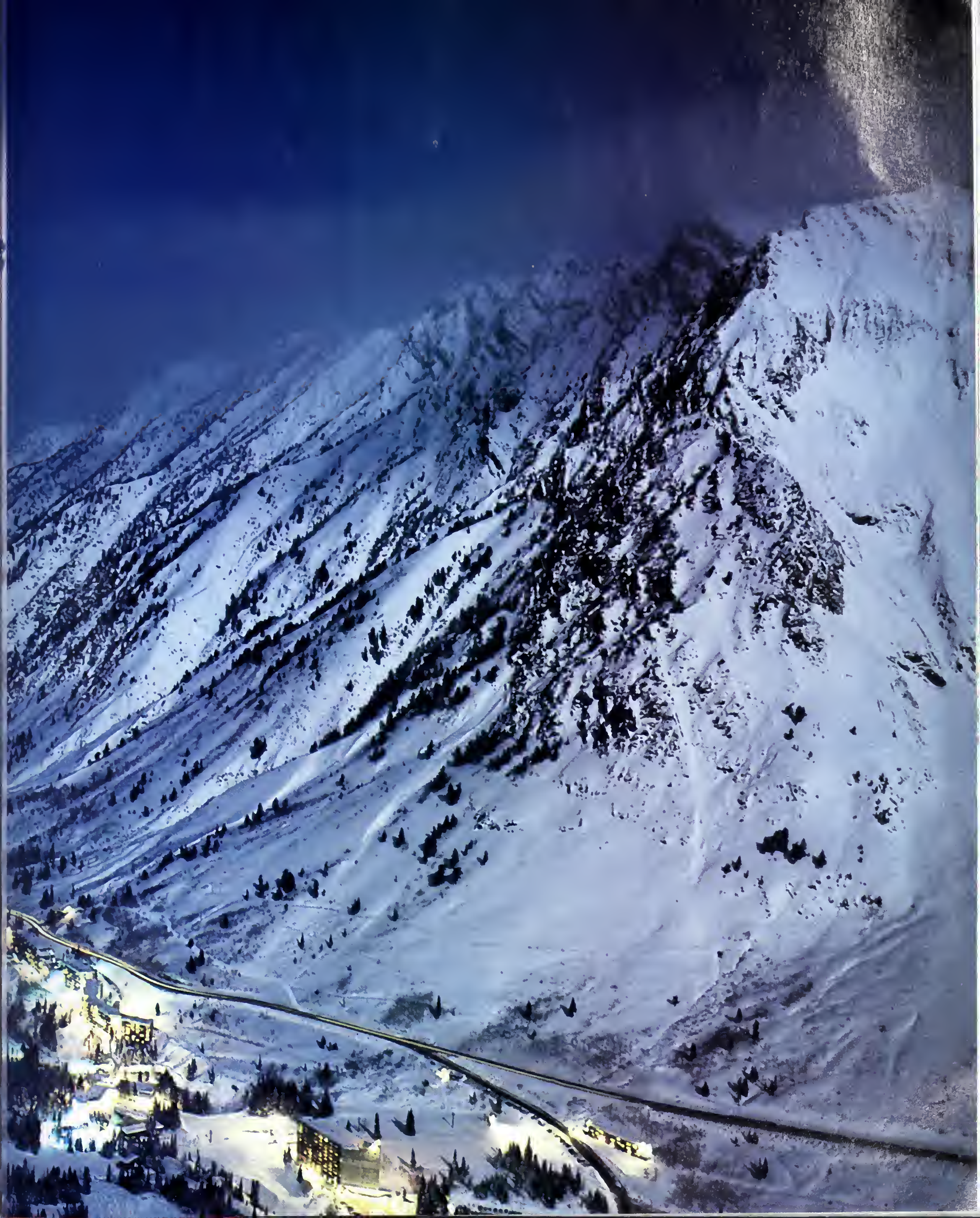
"Well, you are under water, in a way. Mostly, you just take a deep breath and go," she said. "Another world. Everything is so silent, and all that soft snow keeps coming down. The only sound you hear is people giggling."

Suzi is the head of Snowbird's Hostess/Host program, a group of very good skiers who guide newcomers to the area their first day out. Snowbird has the kind of mountain where you welcome that sort of assistance. She was describing the storm of three days before, which is what Snowbird, in Utah's Wasatch range, is world-famous for: the lightest powder snow imaginable, fathoms deep. Last year, more than 500 inches descended, compared with Aspen's mere 250 inches, or Sun Valley's 200.

And it is not only volume that matters to the powder hounds who cherish Snowbird; it is the texture of the white stuff. Most of the snow comes from storms that blow in from the Pacific Northwest. They pass over the vast Salt Lake and funnel directly up the corridor formed by mountains that line the way from the lake up to Snowbird. There, the storms dead-end, having dropped most of their moisture on the way up.

Around the nation, powder freaks listen for Snowbird weather reports and call in to the resort. When they hear that a storm is

Great bowl of powder: Snowbird's Little Cottonwood canyon.



approaching, the restaurant owner in southern California, the stockbroker in Chicago, the ophthalmologist in Boston—three of the area's more famous characters—stop their lives. They drop their work and their families, grab their skis, and board the first plane to Salt Lake City. They cannot miss a dump.

To ski such powder is perhaps a skier's greatest treat, but it is a high not so easily attained. First, you need the right light stuff. Other areas get powder, to be sure, but it is nowhere near so light as Snowbird's. While you get some of the special feelings and pleasures from that heavier stuff—and it *is* different from normal skiing—it is still not a Snowbird high.

Most ski areas in the world are in climatic zones that don't allow for any kind of powder. The snow is too heavy and wet. Packed down, it can offer terrific skiing but, as all serious skiers know, a pleasure level far below that of the elusive powder.

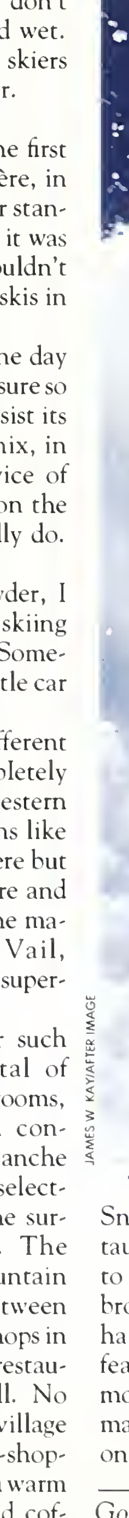
You also need a special technique to ski powder. The first time I encountered it was during a storm in Val d'Isère, in France. There wasn't much of it by common pówder standards, maybe eight to ten inches of fresh snow, but it was more than I could handle. I couldn't turn in it, couldn't seem to weight my skis properly, and couldn't control my skis in it. All I could do was tumble in it and swallow it.

That was some years ago. I vowed then that I would one day learn how to ski the stuff, not out of revenge but for the pleasure so many spoke of: no one who falls in love with skiing can resist its lure. But my chances were few. I tried in Vail, in Chamonix, in Zermatt. The snow was always too heavy, and the advice of instructors was unhelpful. Mostly, I was told to sit back on the skis, rather than keeping the weight forward as I normally do. Mostly, I kept tumbling and swallowing.

Then I heard of Snowbird. If they have so much powder, I reasoned, they must teach people how to handle it. As for skiing in it over my head, that was more than I really needed. Somewhere in between would be just fine, I thought, as Suzi's little car chugged slowly up the mountain road.

Aside from its special snow conditions, Snowbird is different from other resorts in a number of ways. First, it is completely man-made. It is not a converted mining village like other western areas, or an expanded farming village up in the mountains like many European resorts. Before 1971, there was nothing here but mountains. Then Dick Bass, son of a Dallas oil millionaire and until recently one of the major shareholders of Vail, opened the first of his superblocks.

There are now four such buildings, with a total of about nine hundred rooms, built with prestressed concrete to survive an avalanche and faced with granite selected to blend in with the surrounding mountains. The main lift up the mountain leaves from a plaza between the buildings. All the shops in Snowbird and a few restaurants are there as well. No strolling through the village after skiing for window-shopping, or dropping in to a warm *pâtisserie* for strudel and coffee. There is no village.



JAMES W. KAY/AFTER IMAGE

The buildings, which are separate hotels run by the central Snowbird organization, are comfortable and offer their own restaurants and lounges, saunas and heated pools. People come here to ski, not après-ski, though Bass has grand plans to expand and broaden the appeal of Snowbird. They include a new convention hall, a theater, and a continuing-education curriculum of fine arts featuring lecturers from all over the world—not to mention a mountaineering center, restaurants with spectacular views, and a major spa. Bass dreams of "a fifty-four-foot-high hot tub up there on the roof under the stars" and talks confidently of bringing to

Going up the lift may be as it is everywhere else, but going down—well, there is nothing like skiing in powder over your head.

Snowbird "people from around the world on the cutting edge of man's onward-and-upward thrust."

An immensely energetic, appealing man who loves great challenges—like climbing, at age fifty-six, Mt. Everest—Bass has invested over $75 million in this spot. He figures that when he's finished, his stake will run to $500 million, banks willing. He will also expand the skiing terrain, conservationists willing, and knows exactly where the new slopes will go, the new lifts, the four-story terminal building, the solarium and restaurant. Bass is the sort of person who takes visitors up to the summit at 7:30 in the morning, two hours before the mountain is opened, to share his ideas. He expects to develop Snowbird himself, with the entire plan spread out over the next twelve to fifteen years. Other investors don't seem to grasp his full vision, though he almost had one who did: the late shah of Iran.

In my great powder quest, I have decided to seek out Junior Bounous. Junior runs the highly regarded ski school at Snowbird and is one of America's greatest powder skiers and teachers.

A vibrant sixty-one, he has been teaching powder skiing since the 1940s, when he was working a mile up the mountain road, in Alta. "You had to learn powder there," he explains, "because in those days we had all the snow we have now, but no equipment to pack it down. I used to sand and plane down the bottoms of my army-surplus skis to make them more flexible for powder."

He has led me out to the lower part of Great Scott, its blindingly steep top part closed because of the danger of avalanches. Most of the magical stuff of Suzi's storm, a few days before, has been skied through and flattened out by either skiers or Snowbird's snow cats. Here, though, we can cut off from the groomed trail Chip's Run and sail into snow two feet deep.

The natives scornfully call this "crud," powder that has been sitting around for a few days and is somewhat tracked up by skiers. Though I know it is not nearly so light as the freshly fallen stuff, it is still the lightest powder I have ever encountered. We cut across the mountain in a long traverse, and immediately I sit back like a water skier, forcing my tips to rise up in front.

Glancing back, Junior stops, and the lesson begins. "If you sit back, you can't control your skis," he says in his soft, regulated voice. "You've got to keep your weight forward, just as you do on the packed snow."

"The only thing I've ever been taught about powder is to sit back," I tell him.

He shakes his head once. "Weight forward and evenly distributed on both skis. Let's try it."

I watch him travel down the slope, bouncing slightly as he cuts through the snow. I follow, making my own deep tracks, concentrating on "weight forward and evenly distributed." Amazingly, I feel some control over the skis right away. For the first time in powder, they do not seem as though they are running away from me on their own course. Still, at the end of the little run, I crash, trying to turn. I have shifted my weight to the downhill ski, which is what you do when you turn on packed snow, instead of keeping both skis evenly weighted.

Junior assures me that my problems are very common. People do sit back and they do have trouble at first keeping their weight over both skis. "The feel in powder is altogether different," he says, "and there's no sound and no sight. People have trouble with all of that."

It's a spongy sensation, like pushing against a packed eiderdown, bouncing up and down. The feeling is unique and delicious, completely different from the terra firma sensation of regular skiing. You can't see your skis, or even hear them. They dive into the snow; that can be unnerving. And they become silent: no more scraping sound as you shift from one edge to another, back and forth across the hard but eerily soundless snow.

We spend four hours just working to get that new feel, to keep the weight balanced, and to have the feet push down together as if on a "diving board" of compacted feathers under the snow. A push down and a bounce up. Junior has a wonderful name for it, "porpoise-ing," the skis being the fish that dives and surfaces, dives and surfaces continuously down the slope. Skiing is a sport of visual images, and by the end of the day and into the night the screen in my mind is playing, over and over, footage of me bouncing slowly, cleanly, while floating down the mountain.

We have two more days of struggle. I am going through the snow, feeling that platform and saying "bouncy . . . bouncy . . . bouncy," as I go "porpoise-ing" along. I am making my first little S tracks, the snaky line that powder skiers leave on the mountain as they descend a steep face. And though my style is still awkward, I am, for the first time in all my years of skiing, beginning to feel that sensual weightlessness that makes powder freaks so obsessed with "the deep and the steep."

Riding the tram up for our last run, I ask Junior a question that has been on my mind more and more as my modest grasp of powder skiing improves. "Junior, how do you breathe when you're in the stuff over your head?"

"In the superdeep," he explains, "we have what we call 'face shot,' when the snow billows up your front and onto your face. It could happen in fifteen inches of powder, certainly when it's over your head. You might have to hold your breath for four or five turns and stop. But the best way—after you get onto it," he adds, with a deliberate emphasis to his voice—"is you coordinate your breathing to your rise, your porpoise-ing. When you come to the surface, you breathe." Junior is much too kind to add, "You don't have to worry about that just yet."

As the tram rose, I looked out over Peruvian Gulch and Regulator Johnson and the other steep bowls that Snowbird is famous for and imagined them filling with powder: one foot, two feet, three feet of the softest, driest snow there is; and I could even pick my own spot. All the regulars at Snowbird have their favorite spots when the dump comes, the single place on the whole mountain they claim for their own, where they will rush to be the first to leave their own S marks in the virgin snow. I could even see my own spot over in Peruvian Gulch, and I could feel that feathery diving board underfoot. I took a deep breath as I porpoise-d weightlessly; I could hear my own giggle. □

Robert Wool, who often writes about skiing, is at work on Tax Smart, *a book about the new tax laws.*

A powder buff breaking his own trail on a forested West Baldy slope. All the regulars here have their favorite runs.

HOW TO GO

Fly to Salt Lake City. Snowbird is only forty-five minutes away. It's rare to have a major ski area so close to an airport. You don't need a car at Snowbird—everything is centralized—and you can get there by bus for only $6.

WHAT'S THERE

Snowbird is a demanding mountain, an expert-skiers' heaven; but there are also fine intermediate runs, and I certainly recommend it to an intermediate who wants to improve or to learn powder—in fact, to anyone who wants to learn powder. The big dump, of course, is not guaranteed, but every week or so Snowbird normally gets a fresh supply of snow. The packed-trail skiing is excellent. The area's snow cats do an amazing job of grooming some of the steepest stuff on the mountain, rendering them much more manageable for less-than-super skiers. To check on snow and weather conditions, call (801) 742-2222.

WHERE TO EAT

The eleven restaurants, all run by the corporation, are well managed, with fairly high standards. Fresh fish is flown into Salt Lake City and trucked up daily. You can eat well if you steer clear of weird "resort" specialties like veal Oscar (veal with king crab meat, asparagus, and tarragon hollandaise). Ample wine lists abound, heavy on Californian, at very fair prices.

WHERE TO STAY

There are four hotels of varying room sizes and packages, some of them with kitchens, all managed by Snowbird Corporation. Call (800) 453-3000.

WHAT IT WILL COST

This season, from November 22 to April 4, Snowbird is offering a package of seven nights, lodging, lift tickets, and a day of ski school for $565 a person, double occupancy.

RESTORATION DRAMAS

Sotheby's Restoration, the New York furniture-fixing arm of the great auction house, has an emergency—not the kind that endangers life or limb, but valuable goods and dire financial consequences are involved. John Stair, the director, has made a hurried house call. He has examined a custom-built bookcase newly arrived from Italy, and he has told the servants that the odd freshets of powder spilling from the little holes mean that live woodworms are in residence. Woodworm loves newish wood and recently caned seats and fresh upholstery fabric, and is smart about finding its way to them. Moreover, this imported colony has come to feast in a setting that promises an eternal banquet: an immense room housing at least $15 million worth of antiques, many of them sure to have been repaired at some time with contemporary materials. "Frightening stuff," Stair comments later, with a mock-serious shiver. "Br-r-r. Munch, munch—they're eating this thing alive."

He has been on the phone to London, where the owner is staying, to explain the need for speed and has been told, "All right, John. But I want you to handle it yourself." He has learned that the only service capable of fumigating nine by fifteen feet of expensive furniture is out of business. This is not a simple matter of spraying wood with a can of bug annihilator. You want a veteran who understands lacquered surfaces and knows what to use to avoid damaging them. You need a large vacuum chamber where air can be forced out of the holes so that the gas will get at not only the worms but the larvae as well. You need to know that the furniture must sit in the chamber for thirty hours until the invaders are dead and the gas vented. Finally, you need someone who will also gas the interior of the spiffy cobalt blue company truck that carted the pieces so that Sotheby's Restoration will not be passing dread woodworm on to other clients' treasures.

All afternoon, Stair's assistant, Judy Acs, has been canvassing exterminating services and antiques experts in the area. At one point, she consults the Metropolitan Museum of Art restoration department and then hangs up, casting lustrous blue eyes skyward in amused wonderment. The Met man couldn't help, but he knew where she would surely find the answer: try Sotheby's Restoration, he told her.

In an hour of extreme uncertainty, it's comforting to hear that somebody out there thinks you have all the answers. Sotheby's Restoration has been around for little more than five years, and its knowledgeable director would be the first to admit that he doesn't know everything—not yet, anyway. But he and an office staff consisting of two young women are dogged researchers. A day later, Stair will escort a wall of worm-ridden bookcases to a reliable fumigator finally located in Port of Newark, New Jersey.

Although that is the sort of thing you do for a valued client who spends millions for important antiques and plenty more for their

Giovanni Asaro carves the leg of an original governor's chair that is obediently posing for him.

Helen Dudar wrote about the Fred Leighton jewelry store for our March 1986 issue.

JOHN STAIR DOCTORS AILING FURNITURE AND SOOTHES WELL-HEELED OWNERS

BY HELEN DUDAR   PHOTOGRAPHS BY EUGENE RICHARDS

In his office, John Stair contemplates lamp bases before deciding which is most suitable for the Chinese vase plonked in front of him.

maintenance, pest control is not Stair's primary concern. He is in the business of repairing and refinishing fine furnishings, and he will do this for anyone willing to pay up to sixty dollars an hour, plus transportation and insurance costs, for the service, including customers of Christie's, Phillips, or the shop around the corner. The operation exists because for years the staff at Sotheby Parke Bernet was regularly beseeched by auction clients to recommend a reliable restoration service and was often stumped. There are good ones in New York, of course, but the tricky part is getting the job done at the price estimated and in the time promised.

A Sotheby alumnus, John Stair was a logical candidate for the job. For one thing, he was to the business born, the grandson of the London dealer who was half the memorable partnership of Stair & Andrew, the son of the influential figure who operated Stair & Co., on Manhattan's Fifty-seventh Street, for more than fifty years. He will argue with characteristic irreverence that a man gets a head start in the trade when he grows up hearing his mother's warning: "John, don't lean back in the Sheraton chair."

A rebellious student at a half dozen preparatory schools here and in England, Stair fled the classroom before he was eighteen to join the marines; he emerged from the military at twenty-two and was taken on in a bottom-of-the-heap job at Sotheby in London in 1964, the year the house bought the American auction firm of Parke-Bernet. Stair boasts that he was hired "strictly through pull." Sotheby was looking for Americans to train in the auction business and was not averse to starting with the son of the president of the American Art and Antiques Dealers Association.

Stair spent four years on cataloguing, the trade's equivalent of a solid college education. "You develop an intimate relationship with every piece of furniture that comes into the place." Eventually, Sotheby sent him home to open its branches in Toronto and Los Angeles and launch its New York budget operation, PB-84, now called the Arcade. Later he worked with his father as a dealer and "played dealer," as he puts it, on his own. For two years he headed Oxford Restoration, part of his father's firm, and realized that this role best suited his needs and talent.

In restoration, he discovered that he loved working in a warehouse. Even more, Stair's rebellious streak called for a life that allowed him to discard business suits and ties forever. "When your restorer comes in a suit," he says with self-mocking authority,

"start to worry." Stair claims to be singularly untalented at any of the work his shop does; indeed, he says no sensible person would want him applying wax to a garden-variety TV table. But he knows a great deal about western European antiques and the proper techniques of caring for them. Moreover, he has a piercing eye for reckless inattention to quality goods. It is no accident that Stair's roomy, cluttered office gives him a panoramic view of the refinishing floor—"That's where disasters can happen." The crew there currently includes the fourth-generation Stair, Colin, eighteen, who is learning the business from the wax down.

The director of Sotheby's Restoration is a large, bearded, generously proportioned, gregarious man who radiates amiability. Stair's habitual air of cordiality, however, vanishes when he sees fine furniture suffer mistreatment. He once threw a coffee cup in the direction of men who were moving chairs ineptly. Not long ago, he could be found roaring, *"What are you doing?"* at a trucker delivering an American oxbow desk worth at least $15,000. "He'd broken a leg unloading it on the platform, and when I went down, there he was sticking it back on at the wrong angle with some cheap plastic-based glue that hardens in five minutes and can't be dissolved. They all carry glue in their vans, and they don't tell you when they break something."

Were it not for such shipping mishaps, Stair might have trouble paying the rent. The rule of thumb in the insurance business, he says, is "three moves equals one fire." Trucker carelessness, together with central heating, the ravages of time, cigarette butts, and domestic accidents have helped Sotheby's Restoration grow into the largest operation of its kind in the country.

Lodged in a battered loft building on a seedy uptown commercial street near the East River, the business occupies three big sun-washed floors and employs twenty-eight people, more than half of whom are usually somewhere else. Stair has persuaded distant clients that it's often cheaper and safer to have the work done on their premises, and his crews have traveled as far as California, Canada, and Brazil. "We have four men who just got back from a month in Texas on a job for a man who had $1,400,000 worth of furnishings moved from Toronto to Dallas. The truck turned over on the way and the marble tops went through the commodes. It would have cost $32,000 just to ship the things to New York. We did the repairs down there at a cost of $28,000."

Stair estimates that, at any given time, his New York crews are ministering to the needs of about $16 million worth of goods. These might include a newly acquired $1.4 million French desk with a cracked top, to mend which cost the collector $400; a Boulle piece bought for $3,000 and repaired for $4,000; a drop-leaf table complete with cigarette burns that the house master *ébéniste* built for a woman who couldn't afford the original, auctioned off at Sotheby's; and a set of eight gilded Venetian dining-room chairs of stunning ugliness, poor copies of seventeenth-century originals. "You want to hear something worse?" Stair says as he shudders his way by them. "There are actually fourteen of them." Then he adds a favorite maxim: "Remember, bad taste costs no more."

There is almost nothing Stair won't take on if the job is big enough and reasonably rewarding. His men restored the thirty-two art deco elevators of the Chrysler Building. They worked on a sensuous wood Henry Moore figure whose rear had received so many fond pats while on exhibition in Japan that a sizable area darkened by human skin oils required refinishing. They reinforced the interior frames and added seat belts to a pair of matching George III Chippendale camelback sofas bought for installation on a private plane. For a famous singing actress who apparently had middle-of-the-night ice-cream crises, they put hinges in the carved central panel of a seventeenth-century English oak headboard so that a small refrigerator could be installed behind it. When Stair saw the big four-poster in her home, the secret fridge held two pint containers of Häagen-Dazs and two spoons. Then there was the client who kept bringing his furniture back for further attention "because it wasn't friendly enough"; and the woman who returns her table for cleaning and polishing—at $600 a throw—after every dinner party.

Right, top: Ock Jin Hyon, a lacquer restorer, working on an Oriental lacquer-and-gilt pedestal. Center: On the top floor, the cabinetmaking department. Bottom: Katie Lapham, an art-history student and apprentice, works part-time in the finishing area.

Top: Eliud Rios, the supervisor of the finishing department, replacing mounts on a table that is already late for delivery. Bottom: Holding his breath, Tom Hom applies gold leaf to a Chippendale-style mirror.

Given Stair's appreciation for objects of age and beauty, he is doomed to suffer from the reckless demands of some of his clients. His shop does a lively business gutting armoires and other pieces so that they can be transformed into liquor cabinets or one of those amenities he contemptuously refers to as "entertainment centers," places to hide TV set, VCR, and stereo equipment.

Leaning against a wall of his office is a fine ten-foot-high seventeenth-century Chinese Coromandel screen of the K'ang Hsi period. It belongs to "one of the wealthiest women in the world" and cost her $125,000. She wants the bottom thirty inches of each panel sliced off and converted into twenty-four small tables. A pained Stair, who considers he has "a moral obligation" to warn the client that she is damaging her property, has told her the work will reduce the value of the screen by nearly $100,000, but she doesn't care. She has more money than she can spend, and she lacks small, casual tables with pretty Chinese scenes on them. Stair will see that his men do "a good job," but it is not the sort of work he approaches with pride.

In Manhattan, it is Stair who makes the house calls and estimates the cost of a job, the time it will take, and the insurance value of the pieces. Still, when somebody downtown at the Sotheby's office fed a ream of data into a computer, even he was astonished to learn that 87 percent of his business came from a small, rich rectangle between Fifty-seventh and Ninety-sixth streets, bounded by Lexington and Fifth avenues.

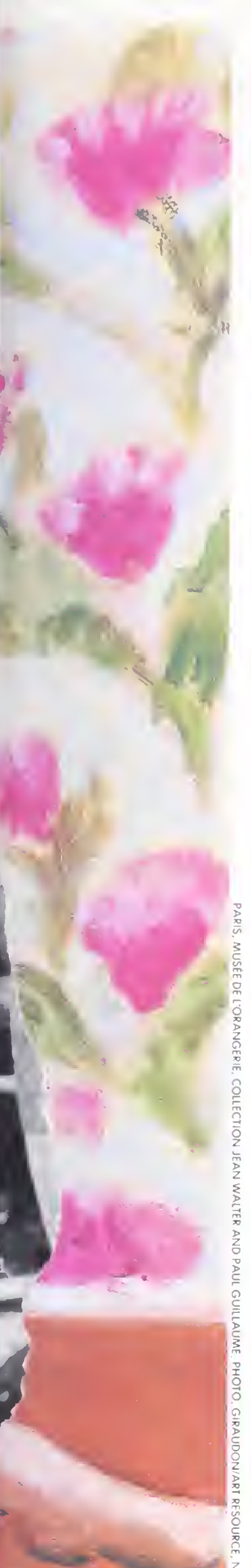
There are days, indeed, when all the work seems to be concentrated in one, powerhouse building. Stair has been on every floor of 820 Fifth Avenue, home to, among others, the Greek shipping tycoon Spyros Niarchos; the master collectors the late Charles Wrightsman and his wife, Jayne; and the upwardly spiraling Gordon Gettys. One memorable transaction involved a rare black lacquer French writing table which Stair took for a light touch-up before it was shipped to London. There it was auctioned for more than $1 million and sent back with a slight damage to Stair for another restoration before it reached the new owner's apartment, one floor below the old owner's apartment.

The restoration game is an old-fashioned business. Hardly anything can be done in a hurry, and some of the techniques and materials used are nearly three centuries old. At least once a month, a wary Stair is visited by a detail man touting yet another fast-working wonder substance. It may be the latest miracle goo for stripping finishes, a paste that hardens and can be peeled off and in the process "raises all the grain and tears the wood up." A few times a year, he will be offered an up-to-the-minute wax with seven ingredients, five of which contain silicone, a material guaranteed to form an ugly film on wood surfaces.

Stair also has a long-standing quarrel with the American way of applying fabric to chairs. Our upholsterers, he complains, use staple guns, which put two holes into old wood instead of one. This is also the only country in the world where black cambric fabric is applied to the bottom of chairs, making it impossible for anyone to determine whether or not the frame is original.

The Sotheby's restorer is not, however, beyond modernity. His equipment shelves hold boxes of hypodermic syringes, which have proved to be the most useful instruments for injecting glue into worm-gnawed interiors. A friendly doctor wrote a prescription for him. Another physician provides even more exotic service. One day, Stair looked at a pair of $280,000 Louis XVI side chairs sent in for repairs and realized that the pieces could not be taken apart without some knowledge of how the old nails from earlier repair jobs were angled. A gastroenterologist who is a regular client agreed to help. Now, from time to time, along with the ulcer and ileitis patients, a Sotheby's Restoration craftsman can be found sitting in the specialist's waiting room, clutching a small antique object in need of an X ray before work can begin.

Stair is one of those New Yorkers bound to the city by a love-hate relationship, and he is apt to alternate complaints about the harshness of the place with pride in its multiplicity. "You can get anything done in New York," he says. "Anything." Sitting behind his desk, he picks up an ivory object beautifully carved in the shape of a skeleton key; the top screws off and lo! it turns out to be the darling of crossword-puzzle composers, an *étui*, an early-nineteenth-century French needle case.



PARIS, MUSÉE DE L'ORANGERIE, COLLECTION JEAN WALTER AND PAUL GUILLAUME. PHOTO: GIRAUDON/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

In the winter of 1912 and again in the following autumn, Matisse traveled to Morocco, where among other marvels he saw the odalisques who were to become a primary subject of his art in the Nice period (see box). Matisse began to stay in Nice during the inclement winter of 1917–18, and he returned to work and live there every winter thereafter until he eventually settled in the town. It was in Nice that he remembered the exotic female figures of his Moroccan visits and made them into icons of a sensuous tranquillity. Of his early days in Nice, Matisse recalled to an interviewer: "Yes, I needed to have a respite, to let myself go and relax, to forget all worries far from Paris. The *Odalisques* were the abundant fruits all at once of a lighthearted nostalgia, of a beautiful living dream, and of something I experienced almost ecstatically day and night, under the enchantment of that climate."

Few images in modern art would seem to be more about enticement, or more enticing, than that of the classic Matisse odalisque in her characteristic setting: the naked or seminaked body, languorously posed on a couch or chair whose undulations express and magnify her own. She is surrounded by the highly colored planes and shadow stripes of a sunlit room, itself further decorated by a Moorish screen or an Oriental rug, with striped or patterned textiles and oval tables bearing vases that swell or bend or twist with bouquets of brilliant flowers. Such a room is as full of sexual and decorative vibration as a field in June, where every sound, odor, color, curve, and pattern of flower, grass, bird, and insect buzzes with the same intent, and where beauty has no other project than procreation. In Matisse's work, nature and artifact call to each other through the echoing forms and colors in a language of declared affinities, what the artist called *rapport*: "*Rapport* is the affinity between things, the common language: *rapport* is love, yes love." Earlier, Matisse told the poet Louis Aragon, "I do not paint things; I paint only the relationships between things." And again, "I marry objects."

So intense is the mirroring and conversation among still and living forms that these brightly lighted rooms with their French doors and windows, often open to the odors and breezes of the Mediterranean, nevertheless come to feel nearly claustrophobic, and the odalisque image itself seems replete and exclusive, as fulfilled as completed thought. It is this sense of satiety that seems to belie the element of enticement in Matisse's work, as though in relation to us the artist were simultaneously playing the roles of procurer and bouncer. Invitation, by definition, welcomes the entry of the onlooker (via the artist) into the world of the picture; but where that world is presented as not only attractive, abundant, and available but also self-contained and complete, one is inclined to hesitate lest an entry be an intrusion. The world of the odalisque is a gathering (of depicted forms) to which we are not invited. If Matisse is allowed in, it is because he has taught himself how to behave, studied the art of transparency so that his presence will not disturb, indeed will barely register. He penetrates the world of the odalisque with his eyes, and with an intellect that comprehends the concept—and the spiritual implications—of perfection. His response to all the blossoming sensuality he re-creates is a kind of chaste gratitude, a mysterious detachment, more like that of a Zen Buddhist in a brothel than that of a voyeur or eunuch in the harem (as, say, late Picasso was in his watcher and sleeping-nude images). In these pictures, there is no yearning, not the slightest hint of remorse. It is as if Matisse's response, ecstatic though it is, were on a short circuit and could move to the transcendent from the eye and intellect alone, bypassing the strictly physical and erotic, or as if Matisse's sensuality had something cold at its center, a check in the midst of its very generosity.

Matisse's work is about the joys of looking rather than those of making love, about the seductions of the eye—a kind of intoxication that causes rooms to tilt and colors to vibrate but that, as often with drunkenness, must be its own reward, since it does not enhance performance. Nor does this intoxication—a word Matisse himself used—preclude a religious response, any more than it does, say, in Sufi mysticism, where disorientation is the route to sacred communion, and of which, as a student of Islamic art, Matisse was aware. "Do I believe in God?" he asked himself in *Jazz* in 1947. "Yes, when I

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON/MAGNUM

Cartier-Bresson took this photograph of Matisse in 1951 in the south of France, where twenty-five years earlier the artist had painted the vibrant Odalisque in Red Culotte with Ewer and Round Table, *left.*

ES

WHAT DID THESE SENSUOUS IMAGES REALLY MEAN TO MATISSE?

BY JANET HOBHOUSE

work." Loss of self was the shared religious and artistic experience, a constant goal of his art, and one at which he arrived slowly. That loss guaranteed free and undisruptive presence in the chambers of the odalisque.

The eroticism in Matisse's work is always checked, displaced, "sublimated," or short-circuited. In his first paintings of bathers, the 1904–05 *Luxe, Calme et Volupté,* and in *Bonheur de Vivre,* of 1905–06, paradise is a curiously asexual gathering place, something like a women's recreation center. A certain flavor of exhausted lesbianism adheres to the images, less erotic than supine, and somewhat literary. In the paintings of the Nice period, however, the character of the female model is emphatically heterosexual. Her evoked relationship may be with the colors and objects around her, yet the artist's realization of, and receptivity to, her are a part of the image. There is clear conversation between her body and the artist's eye and intellect; the connection, if not whole, is intimate.

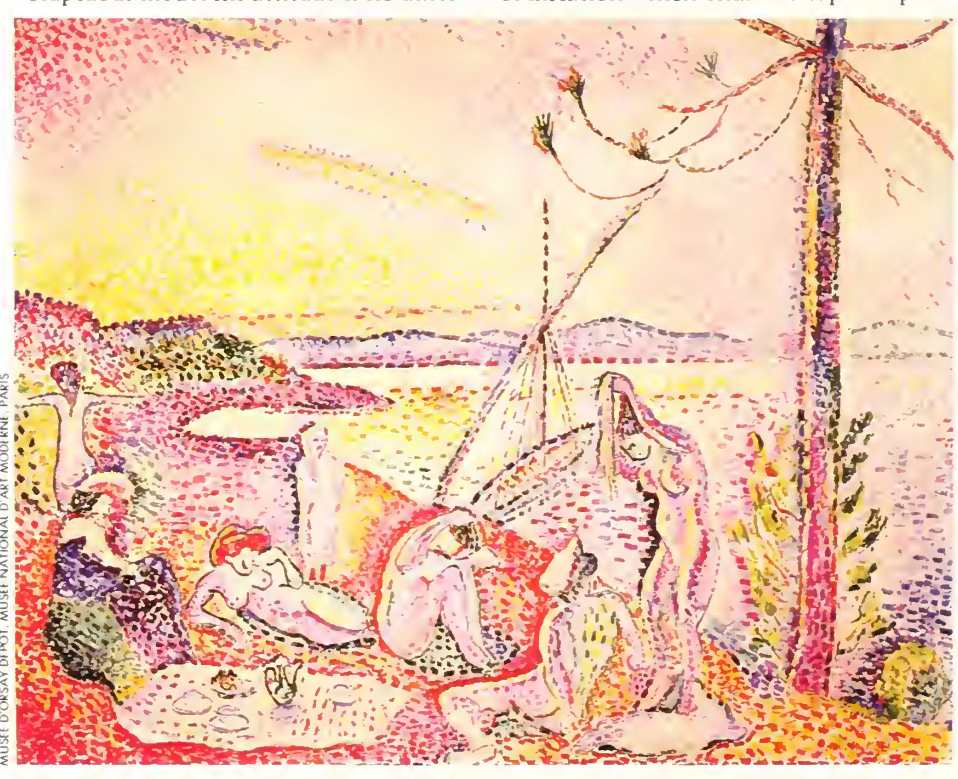
Yet why isn't it whole? Why such aesthetic and cerebral response to the undeniably erotic imagery? Some of the answer may lie in the artist's haphazard comments on his subject. "I do odalisques in order to do nudes," Matisse said to an interviewer in 1929 or 1930. Later, in 1951, he commented, "As for the odalisques, I had seen them in Morocco, and so was able to put them in my pictures back in France without playing make-believe." There is something in these remarks, as in others that insist he is only a "medium," that may seem to protest too much. He paints odalisques in order to paint nudes that are real. But so are naked models real, and the local prostitutes. It seems more likely that Matisse chose the odalisque as his subject not simply because he had seen her in Morocco, and not at all because she was "real"—though her literal existence was more comfortable for him than the fantastical origins of his previous inhabitants of paradise—but because her reality was movable and relative. She was, if not an invention along the lines of the figures of *Bonheur de Vivre,* then certainly rare and exotic, and surrounded by the aura of sexual, if not mythological, fantasy. The odalisque is not only a highly decorative and somewhat theatrically costumed siren, whose pantaloons, scarves, and bangles accentuate her bare arms and breasts; she is also a slave and perhaps a prostitute, and as such, something of a passive screen on which the owner of the hour—or the imagined owner—may project his desires and memories.

MRS. HAROLD URIS, NEW YORK

She is real and not real, a historical fact and a mirage, the stuff of dreams in her very actuality. One may do with her as one likes, just as one may do what one likes with the painted image of a human if one is the painter. In both cases, ownership is crucial; moral responsibility, limited.

Matisse's descriptions often insist on his purely "religious" interest in his subject: "All art worthy of the name is religious. Be it a creation of lines or colors: if it is not religious it is only a matter of documentary art, anecdotal art . . . which is no longer art. Which has nothing to do with art." At other times, though, Matisse claims the technician's interest instead: "Above all," he said in 1939, "I do not create a woman; *I make a picture.*" And Aragon reports, "Matisse has affirmed that before the most voluptuous model his attitude is no different from what it is before a plant, a vase, or some other object." But here is Matisse's full description of his subject, made in 1952: "Look closely at the *Odalisques:* the sun floods them with its triumphant brightness, taking hold of colors and forms. Now the Oriental decor of the interiors, the array of hangings and rugs, the rich costumes, the sensuality of heavy, drowsy bodies, the blissful torpor of the eyes lying in wait for pleasure, all this splendid display of a siesta elevated to maximum intensity of arabesque and color should not delude us. I've always rejected the anecdote for its own sake. In this atmosphere of languid relaxation, under the torpor of the sun washing over people and objects, there is a great tension brewing, a tension of a specifically pictorial order, a tension that comes from the interplay and interrelationship of elements."

The description itself is quite rousing until that curious definition of tension—which must surely be sexual—is shunted off to the sidelines of art-school jargon, as though butter wouldn't melt in the professor's mouth. As for "lying in wait for pleasure," from whom?, one asks. But Matisse describes well. The painting itself balks at the erotic intensity, derails its own momentum, just as Matisse did verbally when dealing with this crucial aspect of his subject. Here, a note to Aragon written during the early 1940s: "The presence of the model counts not as a potential source of information about its makeup, but to keep me in an emotional state, like a kind of flirtation which ends in a rape. Rape of



MUSÉE D'ORSAY DÉPÔT, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, PARIS

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART, CONE COLLECTION

"*I do not create a woman;* I make a picture." *Opposite, top:* Antoinette with Plumed Hat, Standing, Nude Torso, *1919; opposite, bottom:* Luxe, Calme et Volupté, *1904; left:* Standing Odalisque Reflected in a Mirror, *1923.*

"*It is the environment that creates the object.*" *Opposite, top:* Interior with a Violin, *1917–18; opposite, bottom:* Two Odalisques, One Being Nude, Ornamental Ground and Checkerboard, *1928; right:* Seated Odalisque, Left Knee Bent, Ornamental Background and Checkerboard, *1928.*

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART, CON[E] COLLECTION

what: Of myself, of a certain emotional involvement with the object that appeals to me."

I do not intend to suggest that Matisse was repressing a desire literally to possess his models, but that the issue of possession and even of rape is present in some of his works (in the very horizontality and passivity, not to mention theoretical occupation, of his reclining females) and that his tendency as an artist and an individual was to shy from it, or rather to disarm it by diffusing the eroticism throughout the work: "My models, human figures, are never 'extras' in an interior," he told Aragon in the forties. "They are the principal theme of my work. I am absolutely dependent on my model; I watch her moving freely, and then settle on the pose that seems most natural to her. . . . I often keep these girls several years until I have exhausted their interest. My plastic signs probably express their psychological state (their *état d'âme*, a term that I don't like), in which (or in what else?) I take an unconscious interest. Their forms are not always perfect, but they are always expressive. The emotional interest they inspire in me is not shown specifically in my representation of their bodies, but often in special lines of values which are scattered over the whole canvas or paper and form its orchestration, its architecture. But not everyone notices this. It may be sublimated eroticism, which is not generally perceptible."

Matisse was fully aware of the sexuality of his models and used this power to drive himself in his work. The arousal was generalized, however, a flirtation that ended in a "rape" of himself, or as he put it in 1940, in an orgasm that was purely aesthetic: "I'm trying to stay wrapped up in my work," he wrote to his son Pierre. "Before coming here I had planned on painting flowers and fruit—I even placed several arrangements of them around my studio—but this vague state of uncertainty we are still plunged into (for this country can be occupied under the slightest pretext) means that I am unable to bring myself, or perhaps am afraid, to start working *en tête à tête* with objects that I have to breathe life into and fill with my own feeling. So I've arranged with an agency for film extras to send me their prettiest girls. The ones I don't use, I pay off with 10 francs. Thanks to this system I have three or four young and pretty models. I have them pose in shifts, for sketching, three hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon. And this keeps me in the studio, surrounded by my flowers and fruit, and without noticing it I'm gradually brought into touch with them. Now and then my eye is

STATENS MUSEUM FOR KUNST, COPENHAGEN

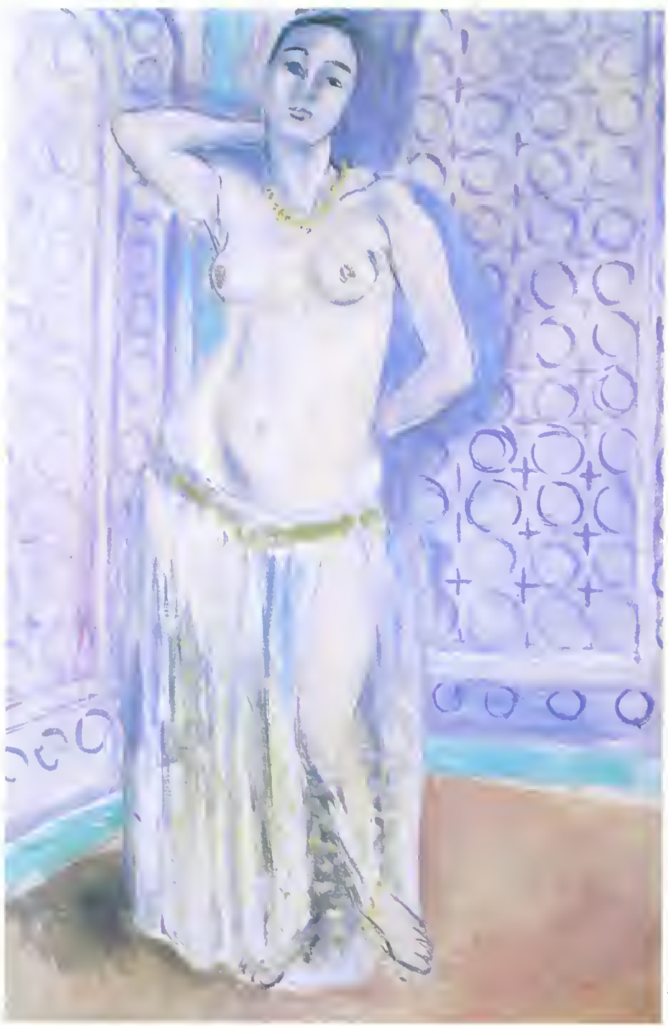
caught by a particular motif, a corner of my studio which seems full of expression—even beyond my capacities, my energies: and I wait for the *coup de foudre* that is bound to come. This robs me of all my strength."

This transfer of sexual response from the living source to her inanimate surroundings is characteristic of Matisse's work with the nude or seminude in his Nice paintings. The color and description of setting has an intensity that often contrasts with the cooler depiction of the central subject. In *Odalisque with Red Culotte* (of 1921, and again of 1926), all Matisse's expressiveness is sunk in the color and elaborate folds of the pantaloons, while the model herself gazes elsewhere, detached and contemplative, as removed from her own seductiveness as Matisse declares himself to be. It is her melancholy that checks our response to the image, splits it in two as it were, as though her physical beauty were merely incidental and not the primary subject of the work. In *The Hindu Pose* (1923), the mask face and Yogic containment of the model cool her erotic presence, while the flowers in the vase beside her burst into "expressive" bloom. And in *Antoinette* (1919), the sexuality of the image is similarly displaced, into the highly rhetorical feathered hat of the otherwise naked girl. None of these figures is half so intensely sensuous or so tenderly, passionately comprehended as certain ecstatic objects in paintings such as *The Rococo Armchair* (1946), or the cobalt-blue-lined open violin case of *Interior with Violin* (1917–18). And which subject in the title has greater femininity in *Dancer and Armchair, Black Background* (1946), a work in which Matisse seems to be demonstrating quite specifically this kind of impartiality?

But there is something else. Matisse spoke again and again of his need to identify with the model. "When I paint or draw I feel the need for close communication with the object that inspires me whatever it may be. I identify with it and this is what creates the feeling that is the basis of my art," he said in 1951. The odalisques were to some degree self-projections for the artist, mirror images in their passivity, contemplativeness, and, above all, solitude. Ma-

MODERNA MUSEET, STOCKHOLM

"My models are never 'extras' in an interior. They are the principal theme of my work." *Opposite, right:* Odalisque with Green Sash, *1927; below:* The Pink Blouse, *1923; right:* Blue Odalisque (or White Slave), *1921–22.*



MUSÉE DE L'ORANGERIE, PARIS, COLLECTION JEAN WALTER AND PAUL GUILLAUME; PHOTO, GIRAUDON/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

tisse's odalisques are notably iconic, single figures (though pairs do exist), often melancholy, half-abandoned, surrounded, like the artist, by beautiful objects, indeed inhabiting his space. The odalisque enters the solipsistic paradise conceived by the artist in his studio without fundamentally disturbing it. In fact, the environment itself defines her. ("The object is not interesting in itself," Matisse wrote in 1951. "It's the environment which creates the object.") She is in that respect kindred to the artist when he contemplates his surroundings, when he is no longer present to himself, but when he feels the expressiveness of the beauty around him. In her passivity, vacancy, and solitude, in the poses that can suggest lassitude and near-invalidism, she is a reflection of the creator when he is most inclined to create, a state that Matisse once defined as beginning "when the individual realizes his boredom or his solitude and has need of action to recover his equilibrium." If Matisse's odalisque strikes us as erotically perceived, though herself unerotic, it may be because she is something of a negative element in the work, part decoration like the objects around her, part projection of the artist's sensibility. She is the fusion of himself with his immediate surroundings in a fantasy image of the "other."

While the sexuality of the odalisques tends to be bled into the world depicted around them, or defused by the passive expressions of the subjects—they are as unthreatening and comfortably welcoming as Matisse's "good armchair" in his 1908 definition of his art—in the drawings of the period, there is no ambivalence about the character of the nudes or the artist's response to them. Seemingly composed by the artist in an unguarded state, these sketches are highly charged, as though the absence of color gave Matisse room to describe the erotic aspect more fully. The poses of the models are emphatically arousing, their faces alert, their bodies alive: they are arched or twisting and, above all, mobile in a way the painted odalisques are not, as though the paint itself conferred objecthood, a kind of freezing monumentality. In the drawings, there is a felt connection to the living models and an absolute union of erotic and formal responses: line expresses desire directly. These drawings convey the sense of skin on skin, the presence of the artist's hand, and the wish to touch that follows immediately from the visual impression. Even the cartoon element in these drawings seems a half-hearted disavowal; the artist's intensity overwhelms it.

For Matisse, desire was an apprehension

ANOTHER VIEW IN A NEW SHOW

Since November 2, 1986, and continuing until March 29, 1987, the cold air of Washington is warmed by Riviera sunlight, as 170 paintings from Matisse's early Nice period are on display at the National Gallery. "Henri Matisse: The Early Years in Nice 1916–1930," co-curated by Jack Cowart and Dominique Fourcade, presents work from this major though relatively unexamined period. Almost one third of the paintings have seldom or never before been on public view.

Matisse first began wintering in Nice in 1917 and continued to do so until the latter part of his life, when he became a permanent resident of the city. "What made me stay," he wrote, "are the great colored reflections of January, the luminosity of daylight."

Far from being a kind of holiday art, the achievements of these first winters in the sun possess an intellectual rigor and vitality that lie at the heart of their exuberance. The work presents not only the light and flora of Nice but the costumes and manners of the twenties Riviera, along with some of Matisse's most important images of women, in the interiors with model and odalisque.

COLLECTION, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, N.Y.

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART, CONE COLLECTION

of beauty that fulfilled itself in communication. His was an art of presentation, of giving rather than judging, or (as in Picasso, say) of the demonstration of power over, and possession of, the subject. The constant image of Matisse's art, whether the version is Arcadian or studio-domestic, was earthly paradise; his constant goal as an artist was to move closer inside it, to fuse with it by identification with the model until he could disappear, to paint himself into and then, in de Kooning's phrase, "out of the picture." When in the Nice period, he returned the living female to this artist's Eden; she was partly a projection of himself, partly a companion for his solitude. But his role in relation to her was again that of God, who creates an erotic, sensuous world but does not partake of it. (Unlike Picasso, Matisse was not a jealous God, but one motivated by the wish to give pleasure, by love. "Is not love the origin of all creation?" he once asked.)

"I believe my role is to provide calm," Matisse said in 1951, "because I myself have need of peace." But there are different kinds of peace and different routes to it. Matisse's was essentially religious in nature, the product of a spiritual union, involving the loss of self in the invented other. "It's only that I tend toward what I feel, toward a kind of ecstasy. And then I find tranquillity." The sacred universe that Matisse created finally with the last cutouts was a world made of such tendencies, identifications, and affinities: forms of flowers evoke those of birds, fish, and shells, expressing *rapport* through the common language of kindred shapes and colors. In *The Parakeet and the Mermaid,* for example, the arched female torso beckons across a world of undulating plant life toward the breast of the bird. Matisse feels the nature of both these subjects, and his own nature in them. "It is by entering into the object that one finds oneself," he said in a 1952 interview. "There was a parakeet I had decided to make out of colored paper. So I became the parakeet. And I found myself in the work." In the cutouts Matisse is the medium through whom both the Creator and his creatures express themselves, a two-way door, and thus invisible. The artist found himself in more than the model, the mermaid, and the parakeet. In his last years, when he was working on the chapel at Vence, he told one of the nuns, "I am doing it for myself." "But you told me you were doing it for God," she said. "Yes," he replied, "but I *am* God." □

Janet Hobhouse is the author of a forthcoming book on the nude in twentieth-century art.

THE BARD IN HARTFORD

A BOLD DIRECTOR LENDS SHAKESPEARE A FINE AMERICAN ACCENT

What are the prospects for Shakespeare on the American stage? Not good, one might suppose. If the English have problems performing the Bard—and they do—what hope is there for us in America, where no significant classical tradition exists in the first place?

Mark Lamos, the artistic director of the Hartford Stage Company, doesn't spend much time worrying about the macrotheory of the matter. Roughly once a year, he simply chooses a play of Shakespeare's, assembles a cast from scratch, and puts on the play—generously, graciously, with a seductive lilt to the poetry and a refreshing freedom from affectation. Since 1980, when he arrived, he has staged Shakespeare five times. In October 1985, his offering was that old favorite *Twelfth Night*, stylishly presented as an extended thirties house party, under the sparkle of a mirrored globe from a ballroom, threaded through with melodies of Cole Porter. The anachronisms fit Shakespeare's romantic comedy like a silken glove.

Lamos sees our times in late Shakespeare.

T. CHARLES ERICKSON

This year's Shakespeare, in rehearsal now for a six-week run beginning February 14, is a rarity: *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. It tells of a blameless prince who has the misfortune to discover a tyrant's guilty secret; of his narrow brushes with death; of his daughter, thought dead, who preserves her chastity though sold to a brothel; and of their reunion, in one of the most lovely yet troubling scenes the poet ever wrote. At this writing, Lamos and his designer, John Conklin, had not decided on the sets—a strife-torn, "six o'clock news look," perhaps, or a freer, fairy-tale setting.

Pericles marks the Hartford Stage's third excursion into the group of Shakespeare's four last plays, known collectively as "the romances." *The Tempest*, the felicitous staging of which is shown at right, and *Cymbeline*, which is only marginally less obscure than *Pericles*, both came off to resounding critical and popular acclaim. (The fourth is *The Winter's Tale*.)

The romances are all like fables; they deal with shipwreck, attempted fratricide, couples sundered by mad jealousies, faithful servants serving their masters at the cost of their own lives. Though they begin in turbulence, they end in harmony, with scarcely imaginable reunions, the worst

LANNY NAGLER

Magic in the air: a scene from last year's pro-

wounds all healed by time.

Some directors distrust the romances' deliberate storybook naïveté. Lamos revels in it. Having been trained as a musician—to take up drama, he gave up a violin scholarship at Northwestern University, in Chicago, after two years of study—he borrows a ready analogy from music. "The late plays of Shakespeare are like the late works of Liszt, or the late Beethoven quartets," he says. "They have a magisterial sense of personality—not self-

duction of The Tempest, *with Prospero (Philip Kerr, pointing) and the winged Ariel (William O'Leary) charming the survivors of shipwreck.*

consciousness, but *real* personality, individuality. They have a surface patina of exoticism, but underneath, I feel, a real inevitability. They speak of hope. I think they speak especially strongly to our disenfranchised age."

He acknowledges that the material demands of American actors unfamiliar ways of working. First, there is the technical hurdle of the language. "It's hard for our actors to learn how to move with the stresses of the verse," Lamos observes, "to sustain the sound through the end of the long lines. And it's hard for them to project the beauty of the language without sounding pompous and rhetorical."

But the greater challenge, he says, is to leave behind all the assumptions of the modern theater. This, even more than his handsome stage pictures and poetic pacing, may be the secret of his special success with Shakespeare. "To play Shakespeare, we have to throw out eighty-six years of Freud and Stanislavsky. From Chekhov on, through all the playwrights we perform most, each bit of action is a clue to some kind of 'truth.' That truth is the subtext. It's something you have to tease out and discover. In Shakespeare, if a character is lying, he tells you he's lying. The only way to play this scene is to forget all about the last scene and the next scene. There are no transitions. I think that makes Shakespeare very lifelike. Truth in Shakespeare comes at you moment to moment. He gives you truth up front." —M.G.

ELECTR

IF YOU LIKE TO CATCH A PLACE AT ITS FULLES

Wherever you are in Hong Kong, you will be surrounded by people racing to make money. The city has never been driven harder by the mighty engines of capitalism. For visitors, this means that hotels have never been more luxurious or vied as intensely to dream up ways to make life more pampered or efficient. There is staggering choice in the city's myriad shops, and owners will go far to win your custom. Restaurants compete to offer the most authentic regional cuisine in the most impressive surroundings. Flawless service has always been the main draw to Hong Kong, rather than a cultural life (although the city does have its own symphony, and its theaters and concert halls are busy). Businessmen come to make deals and order suits. Their wives shop. Everyone eats supremely.

The barrage of boutiques at every turn makes shopping seem imperative, although the sheer number can be frightening. Shopkeepers can be more interested in making a quick sale than in providing top-quality goods, and shoppers should be both wary and knowledgeable. Those who choose to face the challenge, especially in the Central district of Hong Kong Island, will be rewarded by seeing glimpses of local life, which is lived almost entirely on the street. Hong Kong may be the most intensely urban place on earth; it is certainly the world's most populous 409 square miles. Business transactions, family arguments, meals, haircuts, and herbalist consultations take place on the sidewalk.

If you go beyond pleasantries and business exchanges with any Chinese (everyone in business and most shopkeepers speak English), you will soon learn that

FRANK FISCHBECK/THE STOCK HOUSE

C · CITY

OW IS THE TIME TO GO TO HONG KONG

nearly every Chinese resident—and 98 percent of Hong Kong's population of six million is Chinese—wants to get out by 1997. Initial promises that Hong Kong will continue exactly as is for fifty years after the Chinese take over from the English ("One country, two systems") are already eroding as Beijing dithers over how Hong Kong will be governed. Merchants with business on the mainland already complain of a bureacracy that rules out the sort of greased-lightning transactions they are used to. Many have already obtained residency papers in an English-speaking country, a task businessmen report is most easily accomplished in Canada and Australia, which welcome Hong Kong investors. The English, they say, are not offering passports to their longtime subjects, and lists of applicants for immigration are long and chances for acceptance low.

Within this urgent capitalistic frenzy, the 21,900 English in Hong Kong lead a nearly intact colonial life. Women drink tea, play bridge and perhaps a game of tennis at the neoclassical Ladies Recreation Club, and exchange "amah dramas" (tales of difficult maids, mostly from the Philippines), while men tend to financial matters downtown. People dress for dinner, attend balls, thrill to the occasional royal visit, and look forward to home leave—when they confront the servantless, unprivileged realities of modern life that await them when they return.

The reason to go soon to Hong Kong is to see a superbly functional colony at the dizzying height of its financial influence, a place where almost anything can be done overnight. The sheer energy of the place is a tonic. Enjoy the spinning of the dynamo. It will not spin as fast again.

GETTING THE GOODS

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE WORLD'S MOST GLORIOUS SHOPPING CITY

BY CORBY KUMMER

First, change your ideas about Hong Kong bargains. You'll be better off buying a camera at a New York discounter, and you most likely won't find the designer outfit you've been eyeing all season—and on the off chance that you do, it will be three sizes too small and slightly more expensive than it was at home. There *are* bargains in Hong Kong, on the kind of clothes you wear on weekends and on porcelain, silk, table linens, pearls, and jade. This guide will point out places to buy all of these and list whole categories of goods you might not have expected Hong Kong to offer—and that could take up many more suitcases than a Nikon or a Nipon.

If you have a short time in the city, go straight to **Ocean Terminal,** in Kowloon, for a supermarket sweep. Malls are the going thing in Hong Kong, and Ocean Terminal is the best one for a good selection of everything sold in the city. It is joined to two other large shopping centers, **Ocean Centre** and **Harbour City,** whose quality is more hit-and-miss. The shopping arcades in the **Peninsula** and **Regent** hotels, also in Kowloon, are very good.

A shopping trip in the Central district, the main business neighborhood, on Hong Kong Island, offers the best look at the city's incessant activity. The arcades at the **Mandarin** and **Hilton** hotels, and in the **Prince's Building** and **Swire House,** are all excellent. These buildings are connected by walkways to the **Landmark,** itself a complex of buildings that together have the fanciest name boutiques in the city; but beware. The merchandise is expensive and edited for Oriental tastes and sizes. Nearby is the **Pedder Building,** one of the few remotely avant-garde design centers in Hong Kong, and worthwhile too for its many outlet-style stores.

For Chinese goods such as linen, porcelain, hand-painted screens, and even jade, go to the Chinese department stores. The best is **Chinese Arts & Crafts,** which has many branches. (Others include, most notably, the endearingly inelegant **Chinese Merchandise Emporium,** at 90 Queen's Road Central, and several branches of **China Products** and **Yue Hwa.**) For fabric, shop first at a good store like **The Royal British Tailor** (121 Prince's Building) or **Betty Clemo** (mezzanine, Peninsula), and then see what you can find at **Cloth Alley** (Wing On Street), in Central.

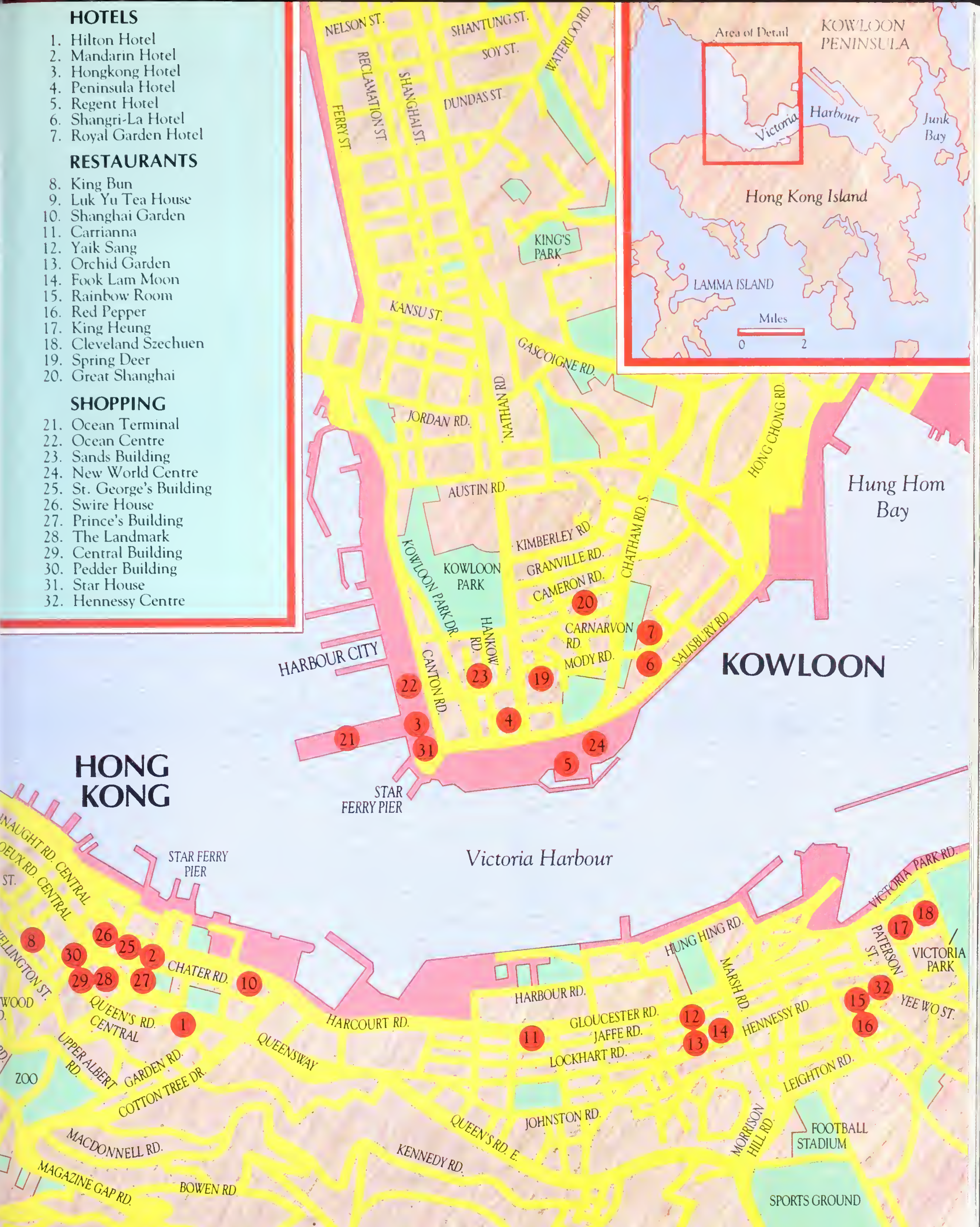
You'll probably hear a lot about street markets, which offer a little of everything—sportswear, sneakers, scarves, sweaters, bolts of fabric, cassette players, tapes, belts, T-shirts. The selection is much better at stores, where prices are usually identical, and where you won't be shoved by unrelenting crowds. Street markets do afford a good opportunity to practice bargaining. The shopkeeper who says firmly, "One price," means it—but try to whittle down the price at nearly every other shop, even if it's by only a bit.

Look for the red-junk emblem of the Hong Kong Tourist Association, one of the most informed and useful tourist bureaus in the world. The symbol implies (although it does not guarantee) the establishment's fairness and reliability.

If the whole project of going down your shopping list seems daunting, ask **Temptations Asia Ltd.** to take you around (write to them at 43–55 Wyndham Street, Suite 709, Central Hong Kong, or telephone 5-226-237). The extremely capable staff will focus your shopping list and guide you through town in a chauffeured car or take you to factories where you can order anything from sets of dishes and furniture to a fur coat, or to factories and shops with more designer goods than outlets and street markets in town offer. Temptations will also help you ship everything home.

Corby Kummer, an associate editor of the Atlantic, *is the author of* Shopwalks Hong Kong.

V B KOTOWITZ



HOTELS
1. Hilton Hotel
2. Mandarin Hotel
3. Hongkong Hotel
4. Peninsula Hotel
5. Regent Hotel
6. Shangri-La Hotel
7. Royal Garden Hotel
RESTAURANTS
8. King Bun
9. Luk Yu Tea House
10. Shanghai Garden
11. Carrianna
12. Yaik Sang
13. Orchid Garden
14. Fook Lam Moon
15. Rainbow Room
16. Red Pepper
17. King Heung
18. Cleveland Szechuen
19. Spring Deer
20. Great Shanghai
SHOPPING
21. Ocean Terminal
22. Ocean Centre
23. Sands Building
24. New World Centre
25. St. George's Building
26. Swire House
27. Prince's Building
28. The Landmark
29. Central Building
30. Pedder Building
31. Star House
32. Hennessy Centre
Area of Detail
KOWLOON PENINSULA
Harbour
Victoria
Junk Bay
Hong Kong Island
LAMMA ISLAND
Miles
0
2
NELSON ST.
SHANTUNG ST.
SOY ST.
WATERLOO RD.
RECLAMATION ST.
SHANGHAI ST.
FERRY ST.
DUNDAS ST.
KING'S PARK
KANSU ST.
GASCOIGNE RD.
JORDAN RD.
NATHAN RD.
HONG CHONG RD.
AUSTIN RD.
Hung Hom Bay
KIMBERLEY RD.
GRANVILLE RD.
CAMERON RD.
CHATHAM RD. S.
KOWLOON PARK
KOWLOON PARK DR.
HANKOW RD.
CARNARVON RD.
MODY RD.
SALISBURY RD.
HARBOUR CITY
CANTON RD.
KOWLOON
HONG KONG
STAR FERRY PIER
Victoria Harbour
CONNAUGHT RD. CENTRAL
DES VOEUX RD. CENTRAL
WELLINGTON ST.
STAR FERRY PIER
CHATER RD.
QUEEN'S RD. CENTRAL
UPPER ALBERT RD.
GARDEN RD.
COTTON TREE DR.
ZOO
HARCOURT RD.
QUEENSWAY
HARBOUR RD.
GLOUCESTER RD.
JAFFE RD.
LOCKHART RD.
HUNG HING RD.
MARSH RD.
HENNESSY RD.
VICTORIA PARK RD.
PATERSON ST.
VICTORIA PARK
YEE WO ST.
LEIGHTON RD.
MORRISON HILL RD.
FOOTBALL STADIUM
JOHNSTON RD.
QUEEN'S RD. E.
KENNEDY RD.
MACDONNELL RD.
MAGAZINE GAP RD.
BOWEN RD.
SPORTS GROUND

PETER CHARLESWORTH/CONTACT PRESS (2)

LUIS VILLOTA/THE STOCK MARKET

WOLFGANG KAEHLER

Left: From the Banyan Tree, hand-painted umbrellas and other Indian charmers. Center: From Charlotte Horstmann, beautiful, pricey antiques. Right, top: The Chinese Merchandise Emporium, where everyone shops. Bottom: The fancy Landmark shopping center.

FACTORY OUTLETS

Top-of-the-line designer clothes manufactured in Hong Kong rarely make it to outlets, and supplies of what does vary from day to day. The outlets listed here are considered to be well run and reliable; they also have many of the same items found in Hung Hom, a hard-to-reach outlet area that is best explored with a guide.

In Central, **Camberley** (room 813, Swire House) is known for sports clothes. There is almost always Anne Klein II in stock, but don't expect a complete range. In the Pedder Building, **Shoppers World** (room 104) and **Wintex** (room 404) are worth checking for sweaters and menswear. **Vica Moda** (1B, Bank of East Asia Building) has mostly silk dresses and coordinates, lingerie, and leather belts.

In Kowloon, in the Sands Building, **Oriental Pacific** (room 601) is a popular and good sweater outlet with a consistent range of shetland and cashmere; and **Top Knitters** (rooms 1006–1008) has a good choice of sweaters and sweater dresses, with some designer clothes. **Granville Road** is chockablock with outlets, few distinguished and all crowded. **Ça Va** (1726 Star House) has an inconsistent but often interesting supply of silk and woolen clothes.

ANTIQUES

Authenticity is always a problem where copies of porcelains, bronzes, and furniture are turned out expertly every day. Buy something because you like it and you're comfortable with the price, not because it seems to be a good investment. Really good antiques are kept in back rooms for serious buyers and cost as much as they do in America.

Charlotte Horstmann & Gerald Godfrey Ltd. (104 Ocean Terminal) is well known for beautiful and very expensive merchandise as well as good reproduction furniture; the reliability is rarely questioned. **P. C. Lu & Sons** (mezzanine, Peninsula and Mandarin hotels) also has lovely, reliable, and expensive antiques.

On Hollywood Road, the most reputable dealers include **Honeychurch Antiques** (no. 29), which specializes in Japanese and Chinese porcelain, furniture, carpets, and jewelry. **Monsoon** (no. 37) is known for authentic monochrome porcelain, in which it specializes, and for Japanese and Chinese textiles as well as intricate game boxes. **I-Wita Antiques** (no. 35) has Chinese furniture and scrolls. **Silk Road** (no. 20) is all Japanese—pots, imari porcelain, furniture, screens, and dolls. It is pricey, like nearly every other shop on this stretch of the road.

JEWELRY

The most striking and original jewelry in the city is by **Kai-yin Lo** (mezzanine, Peninsula), whose modern designs using precious and semiprecious stones are featured by Dior and Hanae Mori, among other couturiers. The shop has beaded belts and both antique and modern accessories. **Trio Pearls,** down the hall, has the most spectacular (and expensive) pearls in the city, as well as handsome jewelry. **S. H. Chan** and **K. S. Sze,** both in the Mandarin, are also top-quality jewelers.

Gold and precious stones are not good buys in Hong Kong. Pearls, jade, coral, lapis, onyx, and most other semiprecious stones are. **Anglo Tex** (Room 804, 22 Des Voeux Road) and **Amerex** (room 702, Takshing House) are pearl wholesalers that sell to the public. So does **Om-International** (6 Carnarvon Road), whose owner will explain different grades of pearls and is known for fairness.

Unless you are a confident jade expert avoid Jade Street, in Kowloon (except for a lark), and stick to reputable jewelers. **Lane Crawford** (Queen's Road Central and branches), a department store with English goods, has a reliable jewelry department and good selections of jade.

BESPOKE

Tailoring has become more expensive in Hong Kong than it once was. The collar of almost any shirt made there, and the cut of most jackets, say "Hong Kong bargain" from several blocks away. The only road to an acceptable result is to bring a favorite piece of clothing and leave it for a tailor to copy precisely. The more fittings the better; if your stay is too short to allow at least two or three, don't go to a tailor. The men's tailors in the arcades of the Mandarin, Hilton, and Peninsula have good reputations. Women usually find it easier to have the silk they buy in Hong Kong tai-

lored at home. **King's Fabrics** (20 Queen's Road Central), however, makes beautiful *cheung sam* (sheaths slit on the side) from imported silks.

Three shirtmakers each claim to be the best in the city, and each does variable work. **Mee Yee** (28 Stanley Street) is the most Anglophile of the shirtmakers but has a limited choice of fabrics. **David's Shirts Ltd.** (main shop, 33 Kimberley Road; branches in the Royal Garden and Mandarin hotels, and in New York) is a shirt entrepreneur. The workmanship is reliable, the choice wide, the salesmen aggressive. **Ascot Chang** (143 Prince's Building, and at the Regent and Peninsula) lives up to its high reputation and has a good selection of Sea Island cottons—at very high prices.

WOMEN'S CLOTHES

Two Hong Kong designers—**Jenny Lewis** and **Diane Freis**—are so admired that they have inspired many copies of their work. **Jenny Lewis** (5 Swire House) makes dresses in classic Chinese shapes, using panels of exquisite antique embroidered silk, lace, and beaded work. **Image Creation** (259C Deck 2, Ocean Terminal) offers similar elegant beaded dresses, bags, and shoes. Both shops design to order.

Diane Freis makes popular multipatterned dresses in bright pastel colors that look pretty, fit anyone (most are "one size fits all"), and pack perfectly. There are several Freis outlets in Hong Kong, including the one at 271 World Commerce Building, in Harbour City. **La Chine** (125 Swire House) makes plausible Freis-inspired dresses at prices that average one third less. So does **Mosaic Designs** (609 Silvercord, across from Harbour City).

Most other local designers suit Chinese more than American tastes. An exception is **David Sheekwan** (third floor, Pedder Building), who blends Italian styles with an Eastern sensibility and makes the most interesting clothes in the city. Many women like his distinctive oversize sweaters so much that they buy bags full of them.

Furs are another good buy. Stores specializing in furs made to order and known for the quality of their pelts, workmanship, and service are **Siberian Fur** (21 Chatham Road), **Ottawa Fur** (1a Carnarvon Road), and **Philip Chiu's Canada Fur Store** (150 Ocean Terminal).

HANDICRAFTS

This is perhaps the most appealing shopping category in Hong Kong. **Mountain Folkcraft** (12 Wo On Lane; also at 239b Ocean Terminal) carries a wonderful selection of folk arts and crafts from Asia, Indonesia, and China, including tie-dyed indigo fabrics, boxes, baskets, old jewelry, weavings, batiks, carvings, puppets, and many other items. Hong Kong residents shop at **Banyan Tree** (1403 World Finance Centre North) for dhurrie rugs, Indian silk paintings, carved wooden boxes, Indian silk for upholstery, hand-painted umbrellas, and other Indian goods. A branch upstairs has modern rattan furniture and lovely Indian cottons designed to go with dhurrie rugs. Locals also frequent **Amazing Grace Elephant Co.** (236–242 Ocean Terminal) for its well-chosen Asian handicrafts and clothing. Favorite items include Korean chests, Thai bronzeware, Thai silk pillow cases, Japanese vases, Korean copper, and ceramic Vietnamese elephants that can be used as end tables.

Finally, **Welfare Handicrafts Shop** (176 Ocean Terminal and on Salisbury Road) has pretty silk-covered boxes, checkbook holders, address books, and purses, among many other items that will make terrific gifts. Profits go directly to the artisans.

HOME FURNISHINGS

Cloth Alley has some upholstery fabrics, and so do **Design Thai** and the **Thai Shop.** Thai silk is heavier and finer than Chinese silk, and the most sumptuous Thai silk is designed by Jim Thompson. It is sold exclusively through the **Altfield Gallery** (42A Hollywood Road), a very handsome decorator shop with antique furniture and attractive gift items, such as hand-marbled paper objects and botanical prints.

The best selections of linens are at the various **Chinese Arts & Crafts** stores; the branch at Star House is the favorite of many people, but all are good. The **Chinese Merchandise Emporium** also has good linens and cashmere and camel's-hair blankets, as well as serviceable and cheap luggage. (It also has marvelous toys.)

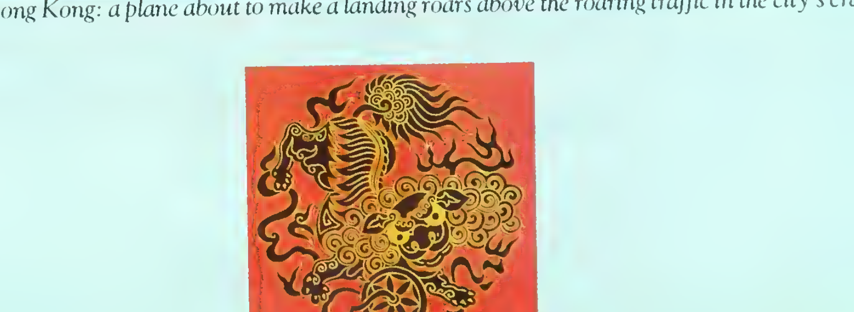
You'll find that **Cat Street Galleries** (38 Lok Ku Road) is a complex of three firms that offers the best selection of reproduction antique Chinese porcelain in the city. They also carry a wide range of reproduction lacquer and rosewood furniture. Western porcelain is not usually a good buy, so bring prices if you're looking for your favorite pattern. Take them to **Craig's** (ground floor, St. George's House) for English brands and to **Hunter's** (122 Ocean Terminal) for other European brands, including Lladro, Ginori, and Herend.

Brass and bronze items make good gifts. **Jinda Company** (second floor, 31 Wellington Street) is a good source for brass candlesticks, ashtrays, lamps, and trivets, as well as Thai bronze flatware, which is handsome and inexpensive.

If you want to hang something in rooms furnished from Hong Kong and would like to round out your Orientalia with something Japanese, visit **Sumi Arts** (room 106, ZA Wyndham Street), a small and well-run gallery featuring modern Japanese prints, silkscreens, woodblocks, and etchings. □

A silk embroidered gown from the elegant Jenny Lewis.

PETER CHARLESWORTH/CONTACT PRESS



You get used to this kind of thing in Hong Kong: a plane about to make a landing roars above the roaring traffic in the city's cramped and congested streets.

JEAN KUGLER THE STOCK HOUSE

THE SIDE-STREET GOURMET

A NATIVE'S CHOICE OF HONG KONG RESTAURANTS

BY NINA SIMONDS

Hong Kong has few rivals as a culinary paradise. Here, almost every cuisine known on earth is offered—as well as some of the best Chinese food prepared anywhere. The variety is extraordinary. While every regional school is represented, many think nothing compares to the haute cuisine of the southern, Cantonese school. In Hong Kong the best of it is always available.

There are humble little eateries where you can order steamed shrimp dumplings or barbecued pork and assorted vegetables served on a bed of crisp, pan-fried noodles. And there are splendid banquet halls serving Chinese haute cuisine—shark's fin, abalone, turtle. The choice is vast.

T. C. Lai, an author, scholar, and widely recognized gastronome, has been honing his fine and discriminating palate for years. When asked to name some of his favorite restaurants, he instantly replies, "There are no *great* restaurants in Hong Kong in the Western sense," but if pressed he relents and sets about planning a visitor's culinary itinerary and education. In a week, we sampled some of the finest food Hong Kong has to offer while being schooled in the art of ordering and dining in the traditional Chinese manner.

Meal One: Dinner at King Bun, and how to order a traditional Chinese banquet.

At the King Bun restaurant, on Queen's Road Central, Chinese and Caucasians, businessmen and statesmen, residents and tourists mingle to sample the delectable cuisine of Leung King, considered one of the finest cooks in Hong Kong. The first floor is for general dining, while the upper three stories contain spacious private dining rooms. The decor is comfortable.

We had our dinner in a private banquet room, and in spite of the clatter of mahjongg tiles nearby, we had a great meal.

Our banquet for twelve began with a tantalizing soup of duck and dried tangerine peel. The broth was beautifully clear yet fragrant and the duck so tender that the meat fell from the bone.

Next, "golden coin" chicken with prawns arrived. T.C. pointed out that the name was a bit of a misnomer, since the dish consisted of grilled, paper-thin slices of Chinese ham, pork fat, and sliced duck liver stir-fried with prawns.

In rapid succession we had a steaming plate of tender shreds of lamb, celery, bamboo shoot, Chinese black mushroom, and spring ginger root tossed in a light sauce and served over crispy-fried rice noodles; a multicolored vegetable dish made with Tientsin cabbage, broccoli, straw mushrooms, and asparagus in light sauce flavored with Chinese ham; a succulent whole chicken served on a bed of salt; and miniature fried dumplings (*fan guo*) stuffed with pork and shrimp and served in a clear chicken broth flavored with Chinese chives. T.C. admitted that the broth had a nice flavor but said the dumpling filling ought to have contained bamboo shoot.

While we enjoyed the food, T.C. explained how a Chinese banquet is ordered, an issue he addresses in his recent book *At the Chinese Table* (Oxford University Press): "Unless you are completely unacquainted with Chinese food, you should avoid leaving the ordering to the restaurant staff, who tend to recommend the more expensive dishes and encourage over-ordering. In a Cantonese restaurant, the idea is to order one dish per person. Northern restaurants tend to serve larger portions, and so fewer dishes may suffice.

"You should aim at a balance of tastes and textures. A meal should begin with dishes that are delicate in both taste and texture and will not fail to whet the appetite. A light stir-fried dish of seafood or chicken and vegetables might do for a start. Next, it is customary to serve a soup, such as shark's fin or winter melon. By then the diners are ready for something more substantial, such as a whole chicken, a roast duck, or a pair of superior soy pigeons. This might be followed by a minced quail wrapped in lettuce leaves, and then a fresh steamed whole fish. To wind up a meal, fried rice or tossed noodles are usually served, followed by a dessert of almond or walnut puree, or some other sweet soup."

Our sumptuous meal ended with a sweet walnut cream soup and delicately flaky pastries stuffed with lotus-seed paste.

Meal Two: Lunch at Orchid Garden, and a discourse on the importance of visual harmony.

On an unassuming section of Lockhart Road, in the Wanchai district of Hong Kong, some of the best Cantonese restaurants on the island are to be found. It was at the Orchid Garden restaurant, on the corner of Lockhart and Percival streets, that we met for lunch the next day. The tables are comfortably arranged on two floors; the rooms resound with the subdued roar of people enthusiastically enjoying food and one another's company. As at King Bun, the cuisine is Cantonese.

After what appeared to be a heated, ten-minute discussion in Cantonese between the maître d'hôtel and T.C., our meal was ordered. We were to sample—or so we were told—only a modest selection of dishes, since this would be a light lunch.

First came steamed skin of pomelo (similar to grapefruit but picked before the skin becomes too bitter), garnished with tiny shrimp roe. This was followed by stir-fried prawns with split, crispy shells sprinkled with a light sauce flavored with minced garlic and ginger root, along with stir-fried beef and bitter gourd slices in a fragrant black-bean sauce and a dish of tiny, whole, crispy-fried "white rice" fish. As if this might not suffice, the meal continued with a spicy stewed eggplant served with ground meat in an earthenware pot (*sha guo*), and steamed Chinese cabbage and duck-gizzard soup. There was plenty of steamed rice on the side.

While we sampled the dishes, T.C. lectured us on the importance of aesthetics in classic Chinese cuisine. "Taste is the response not only to flavor but also to visual harmony. For this reason, the Chinese sometimes take excessive pains to prepare certain dishes more for decoration than for consumption.

"Ingredients may be sliced, cubed, diced, shredded, or minced, the more uniformly the better. The cutting of the principal ingredients determines the shape or preparation of the others, resulting in such dishes as those we are eating today—chicken cubes with walnut, shredded pork with bean sprouts, and sliced beef with bitter gourd." Thus enlightened, we sat back to ease our swelling bellies and to down more of the delectable food.

Meal Three: Lunch at Yaik Sang, and a lesson on proper etiquette at the dinner table.

The Yaik Sang restaurant is another of the famous Cantonese eateries on Lockhart Road. A window on one side of the entrance is crowded with hanging strips of lacquer-coated barbecued pork loin, duck, and chicken. A massive, round cutting block sits in the center of the window, with a sharp cleaver on top, awaiting the next order for barbecued specialties. In the other window, a huge fish tank brims with live shrimp, fish, and crab.

Inside, the decor is tasteful, even dressy, and the help surprisingly patient and friendly. As we sipped hot tea, T.C. quizzed the young maître d'hôtel until the menu for our "modest" meal satisfied his exacting specifications.

We were served a magnificent ten-course lunch that included a barbecued *pi pa* duck (slightly smaller, less fatty, and meatier than other varieties); a dish of whole shrimp, shells split open, fried to a crisp and seasoned with spicy pepper-salt; and a tart, sweet rendition of lemon chicken, its sauce tasting disarmingly like lemon meringue pie. The most impressive dish was a "ten treasure" soup, containing lus-

© IAN LLOYD/THE STOCK HOUSE

At the Luk Yu Tea House, oldest in Hong Kong, customers drink tea and nibble on dim sum.

cious bits of crab, shrimp, chicken, black mushroom, abalone, and lotus seeds, served from a winter melon on whose sides Chinese characters were ornately carved.

As we enjoyed the food, T.C. explained a bit more about dining etiquette. "It is said that the Western host invites his guests to dinner, while the Chinese host invites them to eat. No doubt the Chinese take the eating aspect of dinner more seriously, and a guest feels at liberty to indulge himself. He will choose the morsels he fancies from the communal plate and make any labial and guttural noises he fancies while consuming soup."

We took all this to mean that we should help ourselves without further ado to the platters in the center of the table, and the food quickly disappeared. The meal ended with a soothingly hot sweet-almond soup, which we all sipped noisily.

Meal Four: Final dinner, at Fook Lam Moon, and a discussion of some costly delicacies.

Fook Lam Moon is reputed to be the best and most expensive restaurant in Hong Kong, though appearances hardly suggest this. The restaurant has distinguished itself by specializing in expensive foods like shark's fin, abalone, and conch. One small bowl of shark's-fin soup can easily cost over $18. Such costly delicacies have been much praised, but some Chinese are not fond of them. As our first course was served, T.C. talked about his ambivalence.

"I know very rich people who when they entertain often invite ten tables of people. If they serve shark's fin and abalone, as they often do, the cost per table could easily be over $600. Then, if you serve Japanese abalone, which is the best and retails for $600 a pound, each platter could cost about $200. You get only one thin piece, and most people don't even like it."

Our superb yet modest meal for six began with a whole, cut-up "crispy skin" chicken served with a fresh lemon dipping sauce. T.C. said that the preparation involved coating the raw chicken with a hot, syrupy mixture and letting it air dry. Once deep-fried, it assumes a beautiful, crisp, lacquered finish. Fook Lam Moon uses only chicken fed on rice still in its husk, which produces meat with a firm texture and delectable flavor.

Other highlights were a spicy stir-fried lobster in garlicky black-bean sauce; fragrant steamed beef flavored with dried tangerine peel; and boneless frogs' legs garnished with thin slices of Yunnan ham. T.C. also made certain we all had a good taste of steamed "yellow oil" crab. "This dish is available only in midsummer," he explained almost reverently, "and takes its name from its delicious roe."

For dessert, fresh lychees T.C. had brought were arranged over crushed ice. As we ate them, he told us about a Sung dynasty poet, Su Tung-po, who after offending the emperor was banished to Kuangtung Province. He was so enthralled by the fresh lychees that he wrote, "If I eat three hundred lychees every day, I don't mind being even in Kuangtung." □

Nina Simonds is the author of Classic Chinese Cuisine *and* Chinese Seasons.

Left: At Yaik Sang, "ten treasure" soup in a carved melon, duck, and prawns. Right: At King Bun, succulent chicken on a bed of salt.

PETER CHARLESWORTH/CONTACT PRESS (2)

THE BEST OF CANTON

King Bun Restaurant. 158 Queen's Road Central. Phone: 5-446743. A substantial meal for a party of four to six costs about $20 to $30 per person.

Fook Lam Moon. 459 Lockhart Road, Wanchai. Phone: 5-8912639. Average prices for four to six (including shark's fin and abalone): $20 to $30 per person, including beverages and tip.

Orchid Garden Restaurant. 481 Lockhart Road, Wanchai. Phone: 5-8912512. For four to six, lunch is $5 to $10 per person; dinner, $15, including beverages and tip.

Yaik Sang Restaurant. 456 Lockhart Road, Wanchai. Phone: 5-8910730. For four to six, a four- to five-course lunch is $10 to $15; a six-course dinner, $15 to $20.

IN SEARCH OF DIM SUM

Since the Cantonese are great snackers, their chefs specialize in *dim sum*—dumplings, breads, noodles, as well as sweet and savory pastries, served as hors d'oeuvres or snacks. They are prepared all over China, but by none so well as the Cantonese. There is probably no better place to enjoy them than Hong Kong.

Luk Yu Tea House. 26 Stanley Street. Phone: 5-235464. This is the oldest tea house in Hong Kong. On the first floor are handsome tables and booths, and leaded stained-glass windows suggest the Hong Kong of fifty years ago. During the dim sum hours (8 A.M. to 4 P.M.) the place teems with activity as customers socialize and dim sum are passed around by waiters wailing out their names. With the dinner hour (5:30 to 9) tranquillity prevails. Food is excellent and prices are reasonable. A filling selection of dim sum, $5 per person; dinner for four to six, $20 to $25 a head.

Rainbow Room. Lee Garden Hotel, Hysan Avenue. Phone: 3-888683. This is one of the best hotel restaurants in Hong Kong. Delicious dim sum are served from nine to three, and, from seven to ten P.M., excellent Cantonese dishes. Dim sum average $8 to $10 per person; a banquet dinner for four to six, $25 to $30 a head.

BEIJING AND THE NORTH

The regional cooking of the north is probably one of the most diverse in the Chinese cuisine, incorporating the refined dishes of Imperial Palace cooking, along with hearty Mongolian and Moslem dishes. Steam breads, pancakes, and noodles rather than rice are the staple. Northerners relish the pungent seasonings of garlic, chives, scallions, and sweet bean sauce. Famous northern specialties are Peking duck with Mandarin pancakes; deep-fried tine flounder with sweet-and-sour sauce; bird's-nest soup; stir-fried beef with scallions; and caramelized apples.

A GASTRONOMIC TOUR OF HONG KONG

Spring Deer Restaurant. 42 Mody Road, Kowloon. Phone: 3-7233673. Although rather well worn, this remains one of the best, especially for banquets. Book in advance and be sure the head master chef is on duty that day.

King Heung Restaurant. Ground floor, 59–65 Paterson Street, Causeway Bay. Phone: 5-771035. This is one of the city's best Beijing-style restaurants. The decor is simple, the atmosphere informal. Try Peking duckling, hand-thrown noodle platter, stir-fried meat and vegetables with egg cap, and candied apples or bananas.

SICHUAN AND THE WEST

Western regional cooking is known for its spicy flavorings—chili peppers, Sichuan peppercorns, garlic, dried orange peel—all used liberally. Noted specialties include *pang pang* chicken with peanut or sesame dressing; smoked tea and camphor duck; stir-fried spicy chicken with peanuts; fish-flavored eggplant; and silver-thread rolls.

Cleveland Szechuen Restaurant. 6 Cleveland Street. Phone: 5-673876. The atmosphere here is informal, the decor nondescript, but the food is spicy and flavorful. Smoked duck, orange-flavored beef, cold noodles with a sesame dressing, and sizzling rice with shrimp are delicious.

Red Pepper Restaurant. 7 Lan Fong Road, Causeway Bay. Phone: 5-768046. Though many Europeans eat here, it serves some of the best Sichuanese food in the city.

SHANGHAI AND THE EAST

Few Americans know this exquisitely refined cuisine. Its light, delicate seasonings accentuate the natural flavors of the ingredients. Dishes are mainly stir-fried, steamed, or red-cooked. Specialties: drunken chicken, beggar's chicken, stir-fried fresh-water shrimp, steamed dumplings, and stir-fried eels with garlic.

Shanghai Garden. Hutchison House, Central Hong Kong. Phone: 5-238322. Though this restaurant is part of the Maxim's conglomerate, it offers some of the tastiest Shanghai cooking in the city. The atmosphere is informal; the setting is rather opulent. Stir-fried eels in garlic sauce and fortune chicken are delectable, and most seafood dishes are good.

Great Shanghai Restaurant, Ltd. 26 Prat Avenue, Kowloon. Phone: 3-668158. The main dining room, decorated in traditional Chinese fashion, seats about 500, and there are private banquet rooms on the sides. Beggar's chicken, fried bamboo shoots, Shanghai noodles, and assorted dumplings are recommended.

CHIU CHOW CUISINE

A close cousin to Cantonese, it is a cooking style that originated around Swatow, in eastern Guangdong Province. Seafood prevails, and flavoring is light and delicate. Specialties: deep-fried crab balls, fried *e-fu* noodles, deep-fried goose, sliced whelk or sea conch, and delicious assorted dumplings.

Carrianna (Chiu Chow) Restaurant, Ltd. 151 Gloucester Road. Phone: 5-8938173. This restaurant is one of the finest that serve authentic Chiu Chow cooking. Its exquisitely prepared regional dishes makes it exceedingly popular. Specialties: four-combination platter appetizer, deep-fried crab and prawn balls, deep-fried goose, and fried *e-fu* noodles.

Chiuchow Garden Restaurant. Second floor, Hennessy Centre, Causeway Bay. Phone: 5-773391. Part of the Maxim's chain. Specialties are seafood dishes and a delicious chicken-and-spinach soup.

In making reservations, allow at least one day; more, if ordering special dishes.

Though Chinese restaurants do not as a rule serve mixed alcoholic drinks, they offer beer, rice wine, and assorted potent Chinese spirits.

Most restaurants are open every day for lunch (11:30–2:30) and dinner (6–10). A service charge is included in the bill, but an additional small tip is appropriate and, if the diner is American, expected.

Chinese kids in Hong Kong enjoy the Western life-style, while their elders (overleaf) stick closer to passé mainland values.

力保健

FIVE-STAR
TREATMENT

THE TOP HOTELS OFFER STYLISH COMFORTS AND INCOMPARABLE SERVICE

BOB DAVIS/THE STOCK HOUSE

The Regent Hotel has a joie de vivre that

Its hotels are one of the glories of Hong Kong. Everything works in them; indeed, they may be the world's best-run. Nonetheless, four stand out, and they are described on the following pages. Choosing the right one comes down to a matter of location and style. Kowloon is full of shops and restaurants; so is Central, but it is also close to the business centers. The Mandarin and Shangri-La are favorites of businessmen; the Regent offers sleek luxury; and the Peninsula, colonial echoes that can make a stay feel like a vacation. Each of the hotels has excellent restaurants that Hong Kong residents frequent (see "Hotel Dining"). If you cannot get into any of the four, don't fret. There is one more that, with a recent renovation, has gone from very good to excellent: the Hilton, in the Central district. Its elegant new interior is one of the handsomest in the city, and its service compares favorably with that at our top four.

The time to go to Hong Kong is the fall and winter, when the mugginess is over and the air crisp. (Even in February you rarely need more than a light coat.) Most concierge desks will supply abundant information about what to do with any free time. The best source—the concierges use it, too—is the Hong Kong Tourist Association, which also offers to-the-point walking itineraries.

The prevailing impression at the **Mandarin** is of deep and imperturbable peace. You drum on the soft leather of the reception desk, and the sound is like that of a priest's fingers on a prie-dieu. The carpets are thick, the footfalls of both guests and attendants quite soundless. The sea-lanes and the highways you see from the windows of your room teem with traffic, and

ll hotels should radiate but precious few do. Girls don't walk but fly downstairs. (This dazzling staircase is of white Carrara marble.)

yet it moves below as if in a silent film.

There is nothing overstated about the hotel, which, though it is only twenty-three years old, seems to have been one of the colony's landmarks forever. No disco. No conventioneers. Those who stay—truly the world's captains and kings, and the very rich—are looked after with quiet discretion and perfect solicitude. There are 545 rooms ($170, for a studio, to $1,200, for the Mandarin Suite), by today's standards a small hotel. Built of ferro-cement in undistinguished sixties architecture, it is not very pretty from the outside, yet it nestles cozily on the harborfront.

Small, but exquisite: the staff of 1,100—a ratio of two to one when the hotel is full, which is usual—seem able to perform any task and at spectacularly unhurried speed. I asked to have my shoes reheeled, and they were back, newly shined, within two hours. I needed an exotic set of plugs for my computer, and a small army of electricians fixed everything in five minutes. Fresh flowers, huge baskets of tropical fruits, extra towels, four daily newspapers, a linen drugget by the bed—all this and much more provided without my asking.

I could find little that fell short of perfection, though it can take an age to get a departing taxi if you haven't arranged for the hotel Mercedes. The message-taking—often a shortcoming in far foreign parts—was accurate to a fault. Women may find the brassbound masculinity of the Chinnery Bar a trifle intimidating, but there is always the Harlequin Bar, with its magnificent views of the harbor, or the ice-cold Captain's Bar, with its tiny dance floor and soft jazz after sunset.

And the pool and the health center! They are designed as Roman temples, all

The Peninsula, opened in 1928, has the discreet charm of a colonial survivor, and the attitude toward service is decidedly old-world.

WOLFGANG KAEHLER

pillars and warm marble floors, but with deep reclining chairs in leather. A generation of toilers for mighty hongs and great taipans have come to these two upper floors to have some of the tensions of the colony smoothed and bathed out of them.

If you stay at the Mandarin, no one will advertise your presence. In consequence, many with really important work to do in South China come here, lending an ambience of quiet power to a hotel that is already an Oriental legend. And there is no talk of ever changing the formula: old-fashioned, mannered, precise, and exclusive—that is what the Mandarin intends to remain, whatever the future for the noisy old colony that scurries and bustles beyond her protective windows. (5 Connaught Road Central; 5-220111.)

—*Simon Winchester*

The **Peninsula** offers the discreet charm of a colonial survivor. Envisioned in 1919 as an establishment to surpass anything of its kind in the Far East, the Pen finally opened in 1928, its history mirroring that of tough, glamorous Hong Kong. Built on one of the world's most expensive pieces of land, with only 210 rooms, it has survived this city's commercial ruthlessness.

The hotel has been less fortunate at the hands of interior decorators, but underneath it all, the old girl has good bones. Even the nondescript chairs in the vast lobby can't detract from the graceful cream-colored columns rising heavenward to the gilded rococo ceiling. Beneath it, on side balconies, a string quartet plays from teatime right through the evening.

An over $17 million refurbishment of rooms and restaurants, due to be completed this summer, should set things right. The decor of the enormous guest rooms, with their twelve-foot ceilings, will be one of comfortable refinement. More than ever, royalty, stars, heads of state, and loyal guests will reserve well in advance for their favorite rooms.

An old-world attitude toward service wafts through the place. The room valets, as they are called here, are professionals. These Chinese gentlemen unpack, draw baths, polish shoes, or tidy up in courtly fashion.

The guest-services booklet in each room makes for compelling reading. One can only wonder what would *not* be obtainable. Jogging gear, videocassette players, sports facilities, and watch repair are among the conveniences a phone call away. Downstairs, many of Hong Kong's finest boutiques are lodged in the Pen's arcades, and if what you want can't be found there, one of the hotel's Rolls-Royces will take you where you want to go. Whether you stay in one of the more modest rooms (at $170 a night) or splurge on the palatial Marco Polo suite ($1,200), the grand old lady will provide you with more comfort, amenities, and good service than you imagined possible. (Salisbury Road, Kowloon; 3-666251.)

—*Nancy Langston*

There is a resonance about the **Regent**, a yeasty buoyancy and joie de vivre that all hotels should radiate, but precious few do.

An electric crackle permeates every facet of the operation, effecting instant recovery from jet lag and wowing even the most jaded traveler.

Externally, the Regent is no architectural marvel, but the interior architecture—the lobby is the work of the Hong Kong–born Joseph Chan—is something else again. A relatively low ceiling and rather subdued atmosphere abruptly give way to an immense, soaring, light-flooded space backed by the constantly unfolding drama of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island beyond, seen through a picture window to end all picture windows: a Japanese-made glass curtain 260 feet long, 40 feet high, and half an inch thick. A dazzling white Carrara marble staircase swoops gull-like in curving flight to meet its rising inverse in a seamless join. The Regency lobby is Hong Kong in microcosm; Hong Kong in all its vibrancy, but with its dissonances harmonized, its sizzling vulgarity made cool elegance.

The amenities and service (the latter with no trace of servility) are unimpeachable. At the islanded reception desk, a crack multilingual team of polished Brits and urbane Chinese make something jadelike of the gritty business of registration. Upstairs, butlers materialize like genies, instantly at the press of a button, flashing convincing smiles, exuding convincing solicitude. Send a microscopically flawed garment out for cleaning, and a microscopically meticulous valet service will call your attention to the imperfection in a personal, typewritten note.

The Regent's interiors were decorated by Don Siembieda, an accomplished printmaker whose works adorn many of the 602 rooms and suites. Even the most modest of these accommodations, the so-called standard room, is superbly appointed and maintained. (Along with its own medical service, health spa, bakery, and such public accommodations as a complete in-house secretarial pool and business reference library, the hotel has its own furniture shop, which eliminates all evidence of wear and tear before damage materializes.)

Should Siembieda's name somehow be lost to posterity, future art historians might identify him as the Master of the John. His marble-sheathed bathrooms are, as Lord Byron remarked in another context, "dressed to a sybarite's most pampered wishes," with deep tubs, voluptuously roomy shower stalls, spacious counters, felicitous lighting, and a spray of the Singapore orchids, ubiquitous throughout the Regent, that account for most of an annual $2 million florist's tab.

Not a bad little hotel, really. (Salisbury Road, Tsimshatsui; 3-721-1211.)

—Jay Jacobs

When you arrive at the **Shangri-La** from Kai Tak airport, a front-office manager, impeccably dressed in striped trousers and morning coat, greets you and escorts you to your room, where hot chrysanthemum tea awaits you, along with butter cookies from the hotel's own bakery, a vase of orchids, and a gigantic basket of fresh tropical fruits.

To stay in one of the Shangri-La's harbor-view rooms, such as ours, no. 1216, with Hong Kong's rippling water traffic outside, is to be encased in a soft, pale blue and teakwood cocoon of comfort. Whichever of the hotel's 719 rooms and suites you find yourself in, it will offer a splendid view of harbor or city. In the smart larger accommodations, the beds are king-size, and just about every need can be satisfied by making use of an electronic bedside console. Two buttons draw or open gauzy day curtains and opaque night draperies; others control air conditioning, all of the room's lights, butler and valet services, six television channels, and a six-station radio. The closets are large and well designed. Spacious marble bathrooms provide the expected toiletries as well as thick terrycloth robes.

This luxury, which is given fullest expression in the Windsor Presidential Suite, with its Queen Anne chairs and Sheraton sideboards, and the Normandy Suite, reminiscent of an English club, will cost you anywhere from $120 a day to about $1,200 (for the Windsor). As a guest, you'll have access to the hotel's excellent health-center facilities, which include a small pool. For those who travel on business, as many visitors to Hong Kong do, there is also the impressive Executive Center, fully equipped with offices, secretaries, translators, and office machines.

The Shangri-La, like many other hotels in the city, reflects the designing hand and flamboyant taste of Don Ashton. Its lobby, built in 1981 and recently refurbished, is a broad expanse of marble and polished-walnut panels into which are set two massive murals depicting the mythical Shangri-La. Arches of white marble with gold-leaf fluting add to its opulence, as do the huge polished-brass planters and scarlet carved-lacquer panels at the entrances to the hotel's public rooms, one floor below.

This cavernous lobby—a favorite spot for afternoon tea—swarms with white-uniformed attendants who open doors for you, hold elevators, carry parcels. You need not even make the ten-minute walk to the Star Ferry service, which connects the two sides of Hong Kong's harbor, or take what amounts to a sixty-cent taxi ride there. Instead, a hotel shuttle is provided—Mercedes stretch, of course. (64 Mody Road, Tsimshatsui East; 3-721-2111.)

—Eileen Yin-Fei Lo

At the exquisite Mandarin Hotel, the swimming pool is a temple of restorative tranquillity.

PETER CHARLESWORTH/CONTACT PRESS

BOB DAVIS/THE STOCK HOUSE

Chefs at work in the kitchen of the Regent Hotel.

HOTEL DINING

EATING WELL–AND IN THE GRAND STYLE

BY FRED FERRETTI

In this city of 8,000 restaurants, virtually all good, some excellent, a few truly outstanding, many of the finest are in Hong Kong's hotels. Their names—Gaddi's and Man Wah, Plume and Eagle's Nest, Lai-Ching-Heen and Margaux, Lalique and Shang Palace, Pierrot and Tai Pan—reflect the diverse culinary mix of this exciting city, and in their dining rooms can be found the tastes of French and Italian cuisine—traditional and *à la minute*—and Chinese cooking—haute Cantonese and that descended lineally from the Chinese court.

Dining luxuriously and well has been possible in Hong Kong since Gaddi's opened, in the Peninsula Hotel, more than three decades ago, and the tradition continues reassuringly. Swiss and German chefs compete to work in Hong Kong's hotels, which invest liberally in dining rooms and kitchens and import any foods, from anywhere, at any time. Chinese chefs, classically trained in their own repertoires, refine these and become expert pastry chefs as well.

These exquisite hotel dining rooms are suitable, almost reverential backdrops for the food served. Several are aeries high over Victoria Harbour, with its ferries and lighters, junks and sampans, freighters and hydrofoils—a spectacle to be savored with a choice Margaux and *suprêmes de cailles à la mousseline d'avocat.* Others nestle in back streets away from the harbor, their distinction resting solely on what they serve—food that is traditional and imaginative, Asian and nouvelle.

I admire the panels of intricately carved red lacquer in the Shangri-La Hotel's **Shang Palace,** and my pleasure is enhanced by the crispness of a tiny roast suckling pig for four, or the exquisite double-boiled bird's nest in a sweet, hot coconut soup. I sit in **Pierrot,** atop the Mandarin Hotel, happily viewing a print of Picasso's 1929 portrait of his son Paul as a circus clown, and my mood is buoyed by the pan-fried goose liver with mango in a sauce of fresh ginger that I am eating. I admire the gallery of Lalique crystal in the Royal Garden Hotel's **Restaurant Lalique** even more when it is accompanied by lobster, braised sole, and scallops with their coral in a basilic cream sauce. And in the **Eagle's Nest,** a fine Cantonese restaurant at the top of the Hongkong Hilton, with a view of the city, a place of comfort and exhilarating food, the double-boiled winter-melon soup with crab meat, roast duck, crayfish, and *yeh heung* (the tiny yellow flowers the Chinese call "night fragrance") make the surrounding new high-rise banks almost palatable.

There are fresh, new places such as the glossy gray-and-beige **Golden Unicorn,** in the Hongkong Hotel, with Cantonese food and Western tableside service, where *for op see,* shredded duck, comes tossed with slivers of melon, scallions, pickled squash, jellyfish, ginger, shallots, crushed fried peanuts, and sesame seeds, a presentation that sings, "California cuisine."

And there is Hong Kong colonial tradition in **Gaddi's.** This restaurant, brilliantly French, with a history of fine Swiss chefs, has been dazzling Asia for thirty-four years. Its royal blue Tai Ping carpet, its giant Christofle chandeliers that once hung in Shanghai, and its seventeenth-century lacquer screen from the Summer Palace in Beijing provide an admirable setting for Parma ham sliced off the bone, *bisque de homard au cassis*, and roast chick-

Dishes at the Mandarin Hotel's restaurant: top, fresh fruit with pomfret; sautéed shredded turtle and celery with bamboo shoots; bottom,

braised fresh crab claws with pigeon eggs; sautéed fresh prawns stuffed with shredded ham and vegetables.

PETER CHARLESWORTH/CONTACT PRESS (4)

ens from Bresse with a rosemary sauce. Sitting among prints by Lautrec and Cassatt, you love everything about this place.

Are there better grill rooms anywhere than the green and copper **Mandarin Grill,** in the Mandarin Hotel, or the **Tai Pan Grill,** in the Hongkong Hotel? I doubt it. The smoked salmon on their boards is from Scotland, the carpaccio from Venice, the turtle steaks from the Cayman Islands. In the clubby Mandarin Grill you can have your beef prime from the United States, Angus from Scotland, Kobe from Japan; your *paillard* of veal from Holland; your lamb cutlets from Wales or New Zealand; and the first grouse of the season rushed from London.

Rather clubby, too, is **Margaux,** in the Shangri-La Hotel, with walnut walls hung with prints of long-ago races at Ascot. Its superb wine list includes Margaux in every vintage. A recent dinner there, cooked with consummate care, included Balik salmon with a mousse of fresh herbs, an intense consommé with shreds of fresh pigeon, a casserole of snails and forest mushrooms, and lamb roasted with shallots and garlic. Marvelous! Another time, try the duck breast from Rouen with a sauce of black currants and Chinese tea.

Easily as impressive is **Plume,** in the Regent Hotel, with two dramatically lighted dining levels, all facing the kaleidoscope of Victoria Harbour. Once seated, you are greeted with a Champagne-Mir (Champagne with blackberry liqueur), hot *na'an* bread from Plume's tandoori oven, and a tiny tub of goose-liver paté with green peppercorns. The food is clean and elegant, presented with clarity and directness. In a salad the tastes of crayfish and Chinese yellow chives are perfectly blended; a breast of duck is complemented by a saffron-laced risotto. Another delicious dish is juicy longans, melons cut into tiny geometric shapes, and slices of fresh water chestnut, all bathed in an icy puree of sweetened water chestnuts.

Just downstairs from Plume, in the Regent, is **Lai Ching Heen,** clearly one of the best Cantonese restaurants in Hong Kong. Its preparations are traditional and expertly done—roast suckling pig, bird's-nest soup, chicken baked in sea salt, rice steamed in lotus leaves—but its presentations are extraordinary. You will find your table set with jade—a beautiful presentation plate, condiment dish, napkin ring, and chopsticks rest, on which are propped a silver spoon with jade handle and ivory chopsticks banded in silver.

As beautiful a restaurant, though more subdued, is **Man Wah,** on top of the Mandarin Hotel, a small, princely place dominated by a sixteenth-century screen of black-and-gold lacquer from the Ming imperial court, set against walls padded in deep blue silk. Many people consider it the finest Cantonese restaurant in this Cantonese city. You may dine here on a soup of shark's fin with crab coral, fresh tiger shrimp steamed on a bed of lotus leaves, pieces of meaty pork ribs cooked in a sauce of rice vinegar and ginger, or chicken roasted with cinnamon sticks and white vinegar. Recently the Man Wah was selected to re-create a three-day banquet as it might have been served at the imperial court. I was invited and felt myself to be, if not quite an emperor, at least a palace retainer—a feeling that tends to recur in the dining rooms of Hong Kong. □

Fred Ferretti writes a column for Gourmet.

A PERFECT PIG

THERE IS ONLY ONE PIECE THAT CHUNG WAH-PUI WANTS FOR HIS SUPERB JADE COLLECTION

BY SIMON WINCHESTER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER CHARLESWORTH

A small pig, perhaps an inch long, fashioned from the purest white, nearly translucent jade and manufactured in central China during the Sung dynasty, would probably make Mr. Chung Wah-Pui, one of Her Majesty's loyal British subjects in Hong Kong, the happiest man on earth.

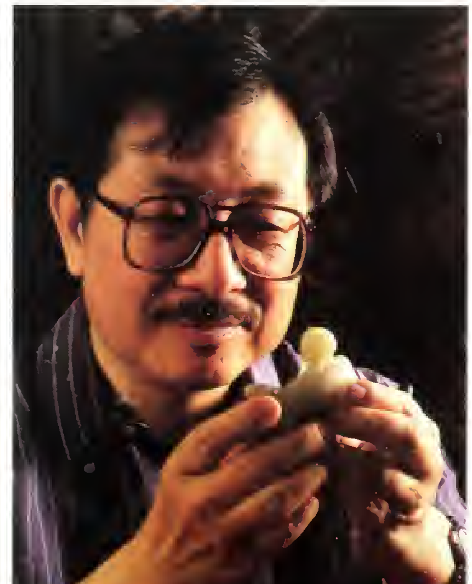
Mr. Chung, who is a structural engineer at a firm of local architects and glad to admit that though not born to wealth he is now reasonably well-to-do, has been searching for such an animal for the last decade. He says he must have inquired in the dark back rooms of every antiques shop between Kyoto and Kuala Lumpur; he has offered his bid at every auction room from Bombay to Boston; he has scoured the personal advertisements in every specialist publication in every language from Spanish to Serbo-Croat. But so far a blank.

No soothing white jade pig has come his way, no exquisite porcine carving in antique nephrite (which is what the best white jade is) to caress during long evenings in his collection room. The scores of thousands in folding money he has kept at hand for the purchase remain untouched, for the world of jade these days seems peculiarly and frustratingly pigless. After ten years, not a single beast has surfaced on the market—at least, not one both suitable and affordable. Mr. Chung, in consequence, is suffering acute symptoms of what he calls "a fearful disease."

An uncontrollable passion for jade is an affliction, and, as Mr. Chung would be the first to admit, he has a serious case. Nearly every night he comes home from the office to his pretty seaside flat on the peninsula of Chung Hom Kok—a rocky spur on the southern side of Hong Kong Island, best-known for the British electronic spying station at its very tip—and, after taking a light dinner en famille, goes to sit with an air of solemn reverence on a hard, straight-backed chair in his collection room. His back is to the window, so he is not distracted by the view of a sunset over the South China Sea or by the junks bobbing prettily on the waves. Nothing is permitted to divert him from his pleasure.

From dozens of silk-covered boxes, each closed with twin hasps of ivory and lined with black velvet, he removes his menagerie of precious animals made of jade found in north Chinese riverbeds and quarries. He takes out the catlike creature, who he believes was fashioned during the emperor Yung-cheng's time, in the early Ch'ing dynasty; he unveils a sleeping horse, colored gray "with black fissures and markings" and coiled around upon itself, nose resting on haunches "in the manner of the T'ang dynasty"; on his baize-covered table he places a pair of gray jade horses "not in combat but at play, suggestive of the Sung dynasty or later." There is a jade lapdog also from Sung times, though its age makes it impossible to divine who sat on the Heavenly Throne as it was being carved. He arranges the great green bullock, with a sleeping rider astride its back, that some unknown worker carved, painstakingly and lovingly, during middle Ch'ing times.

Chung Wah-Pui, one of Hong Kong's premier jade collectors, fondles a favorite.



Animal after animal, some recognizable, some mythic, some figurative; here a chimera, there a rebus, here an ugly monster, there a lamb or a rabbit or another animal of gentle aspect: some are fairly large—the gray jade dog of the Sung dynasty is ten centimeters long; others are tiny, like the three-legged Ch'ing toad "with two small russet areas reserved to depict two pomegranates in the style of the Suzhou workshops"—it is just four centimeters long and weighs no more than a couple of ounces.

It takes Mr. Chung half an hour to remove all his choicest pieces from their elegant silk cases. Then they are arranged in rank upon rank on the blue baize, beneath the soft glow of the study lamp. Now he does what all passionate collectors do: he picks up each piece and feels it grow

In Mr. Chung's menagerie of animals made of jade found in north Chinese riverbeds and quarries, there are mythical cats, a horse, dogs (three of them appear above), lambs, toads, bullocks, and imaginary beasts of many aspects . . . but not a single pig!

warm in his hand; he caresses it, strokes its flanks, explores its tiny crevices, smooths its curves, runs his fingertips along its sharper angles, traces the delicate cuts and whorls and filigrees of musculature or hair or the facial expressions that the carver engineered so many hundreds of years ago. This he does with each piece for many minutes, until he is satisfied that he remembers every morsel of contour, every molecule of subtlety.

He may take a delicate brush of camel hair and remove the minuscule specks of dust that have lodged in the carving of one of the more complicated animals; he may gently buff the convex curves of one of the smoother pieces with a pad of golden lambswool. Or he may just line all his beasts up, or otherwise arrange them in myriad ways—by age, by species, by type, by supposed maker, by the Chinese region of their provenance, by the degree of perfection, by the order of his fondness for them, by cost, by value (the latter two categories being, in the world of jade, very different), by color—pure white, butter yellow, green, gray, or, choicest of all, the color of mutton fat.

Then, after perhaps an hour and a half, he will gently repack every piece in its snug velvet-and-silk lodging, put the boxes away in the collection-room cupboard, switch off the lamp, and turn the key in the lock. The animals will be there tomorrow night and, with good fortune, tomorrow and tomorrow.

It might be ungenerous to describe Mr. Chung's deep feeling for his jade as an ailment if the same sickness did not afflict scores of otherwise reasonable beings around the world. Over the centuries, hosts of great and good men have become enraptured with the stone. One of them was the great Confucius.

"Wise men," he wrote, "have seen in jade all the different virtues. It is soft, smooth, and shining, like kindness. It is hard, fine, and strong, like intelligence. Its edges seem sharp but do not cut, like justice. It hangs down to the ground, like humility. When struck, it gives a clear, ringing sound, like music. The stains in it, which are not hidden and add to its beauty, are like truthfulness. Its brightness is like heaven, while its firm substance, born of the mountains and the waters, is like the earth. *The Classic of Poetry* says, 'When I think of a wise man, he seems like jade.' That is why wise men love jade."

Chung Wah-Pui remembers very well the first piece of jade he acquired. His father, a carpenter, was a self-made man and moderately well off when Wah-Pui was growing up. After World War II, the family moved to a house in Wanchai, an area now jammed with strip clubs and massage parlors, but in those days a middle-class village, close to the markets and stalls that still sell all the marvelous oddities of the Orient. The stall that the twelve-year-old Wah-Pui liked to visit stood by the seaside, between the Luk Kwok Hotel and the Wanchai police station. (Both still stand, but the sea has been pushed a hundred yards back by land reclamation.)

"It was the New Year market in 1946. You could get New Year sweets, and I remember hot dogs, which had become

[illegible] were all kinds [illegible] specialized in [illegible] Ming vase there for two [illegible] Hong Kong dollars in those d[illegible] nothing! I vividly remember [illegible] up a piece of pure white jade that had been carved in the shape of a pear. I had no idea how old it was, whether it was worth anything. But it had a wonderful soft, friendly feeling about it. You knew it was hard stone, but it felt almost *alive*—the one quality of jade that all collectors revere more than anything else. So I bought it: five Hong Kong dollars—a few cents. I put it in my pocket and I kept it for years, transferring it from suit to suit. I loved it. And then I went off to London to study and gradually—though it grieves me to confess it—I forgot about it. I forgot all about jade in general and that particular piece. Goodness knows where it went."

It was another twenty years before that uncanny feeling that a carved stone can seem to be a living, breathing thing came back. Mr. Chung was by this time working near London, living with his beautiful Hokkienese wife, Fong Yu, in a suburb. He had by now acquired the credentials that will enable him and his family to leave Hong Kong before or after 1997, "should the balloon go up," though at the moment he says he feels "moderately optimistic" about the colony's impending fate.

"One of the engineers in the company, a Scotsman named McGuire, came up to me one day and said, 'Mr. Chung, you're Chinese, what do you know about jade?' And he tossed down a pair of white jade figures, animals of some kind, and we began to discuss them in engineering terms. How hard the stone was. How tricky they must have been to carve. How long it must have taken—they don't cut with knives, you know. It's all done with Carborundum paste, or a river sand that they say is made up of a mixture of quartz and almandine, garnets and corundum. They polish for weeks on end. It can take a man a year to carve the tiniest figure. I got to know all about this just looking at McGuire's two pieces, and reading about how they were made. He could see I was fascinated, but he didn't want to sell them. They were worth a hundred pounds apiece—every penny I had. I wanted the pieces so very badly. And that, I suppose, is when it really started."

Then, back in Hong Kong, Mr. Chung met the legendary jade master James Watt, who came from New York on buying expeditions or to lecture, and who advised him that all jades, even inexpensive pieces, have the remarkable capacity to give real sensual pleasure to their owners.

Above: The great green jade bullock with a sleeping rider astride its back, made in Ch'ing times. Below: Sleeping horse, "in the manner of the T'ang dynasty."

"I began to buy, month after month. I would scour the shops, all over the East. I collected old pieces, discs, fish, pendants, medallions, tablets. I found tiger pendants of the late Shang times—sixteen hundred years B.C. There were neolithic pieces, thousands of years older than that. And the jade still glowed and lived and felt warm and soft. I adored it. It cost the earth, but I was doing reasonably well and I could just about afford the indulgence. I was perfectly happy, collecting."

A salutary disaster ensued. In the mid-1970s he encountered one of the most knowledgeable Eastern jade scholars, Ip Yee, who looked carefully at the small but growing collection and, in a memorably dark moment that taught Mr. Chung what a high-risk occupation jade collecting can be, pronounced very nearly all of it fake. "It is so difficult to tell, with jade being so very durable, just what is old and what is new. It takes years of experience, months and months of handling and feeling and inspecting the pieces, before you can have any sense of certainty about what you have. The meeting with Dr. Ip was very chastening. It taught me to be careful. It taught me to get it right."

At this point, a Shanghai art dealer named S. H. Chan kindled his interest in very old jade, the archaic jade made before the Han dynasty began, around 206 B.C. He scrapped his old collection, selling most of the suspect pieces—for what they were worth, he insists, and no more—and began the long, painful quest for truly old pieces, mostly in the form of animals. He learned—from books, from the great museum collections in Taiwan, New York, and London, and from Dr. Ip and his disciples—some of the deep subtleties of jade. He learned how to distinguish the delicate carving of old China from the cruder, more mechanical cutting of today. He learned the mysteries of jade's patina, the degree of polish and flawless convexity that no modern carver would be patient enough even to try to achieve. He studied for years before he was ready to risk his savings once again.

"I decided against large pieces, vases and bowls and statuary. I wanted small, rounded pieces that had a lot of detail and yet could fit into the palm of my hand. Animals were very popular throughout the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties and before, so I settled for them. I also collect a few bracelets and amulets and combs, but animals are my favorite. No live animals in the house. My only pets are jades!"

Now it is acknowledged that Mr. Chung's jades—the new collection that has emerged in the last twelve years—are exquisite. Alice Yuan Piccus, the Hong Kong representative of Christie's and a recognized expert, calls it "a small but perfectly charming collection, where every single piece is a classic of its kind." A distinguished Scots lawyer, who prefers to be nameless, like many other Hong Kong jade collectors, says that Chung Wah-Pui's animals and archaic jades "are, each and every one, a joy to behold."

When the Min Chiu Society, a group of Hong Kong collectors dedicated to the idea of promoting a better understanding of Chinese art and culture, arranged a 1984 display of the finest jades in Hong Kong at the Museum of Art there, no fewer than thirty-five of the total of three hundred jade objects on display were the property of Mr. W. P. Chung. "If the man can collect so well that in less than twenty years he contributes more than 10 percent of the best exhibition that Hong Kong can put on, then he's certainly got a rare skill and a rare degree of foresight," remarked one of the Min Chiu elders. "There are collectors who have more pieces. There are richer men, too. But his choices have been, in virtually all cases, just spot-on."

Back in 1982, when they were last val-

Mr. Chung with one of his best suppliers. "Jade isn't something you leave on a shelf. You have to feel it, to develop an intimate relationship with it. Knowing that other men have had the same intimacy hundreds of years ago gives you a sense of intimacy with them too."

ued, some of his smaller pieces were worth $700 each. His gray T'ang horse was worth much more, at least $12,000, and its value now is double that. Today his collection is worth well over $100,000. He reckons that some of the smaller pieces could fetch at least $1,200 at an auction scheduled for mid-January in Hong Kong. But he is not insured. "What for? Mere cash could never replace what I have collected. You can't really translate the idea of jade into something so basic as money."

Mr. Chung is an amusing man with a wry sense of wonderment about why he—why anyone—collects at all. He has read with some misgivings about the fascinating psychology of those whose joy is to build a collection of whatever—butterflies, postage stamps, jade animals.

"I collect jade because I love it. I am convinced there is in my case no other reason. It is not money. I find real, profound joy in getting to know each piece in great detail—the style of the animal, the precise type of jade it is made from, the nature of the carving and polishing, the depth of the patina, all the tiny subtleties about a piece of jade that can give you the clues as to when and where it was made."

He holds up a chunk of uncut, transparent jade, weathered and pitted by years on a riverbed. He bought it in Urumchi, in northwest China, two years ago. "I just love to imagine one of the old court carvers, under Shun-Chih, maybe, or Kang-Hsi, looking at this piece, perhaps for weeks and months, and then deciding, 'I'll make a pig!' And he cuts it roughly, and then he cuts and carves and polishes, and it takes a year, ten hours a day, with water and powder and bamboo sticks and brushes and files, and then it is honed and polished and carved again and polished again. And finally there it is, a pig, a lovely little pig, friendly, warm, translucent, soft but not soft, to be held and played with for hundreds of years. If he carved it during Shun-Chih's time, it would mean that for over three centuries people have been handling and fondling it. Jade isn't something you leave on a shelf. You have to *feel* it. You have to develop an intimate relationship with it. And to know that other men have had just the same intimacy, hundreds of years before you, with the very piece you hold in your hand—well, it gives you a sense of intimate connection with them, too."

It is perhaps hardly surprising that the animal that Chung Wah-Pui imagines his old carver to have made is a pig—the very pig for which he has been searching shops and galleries around the world. The reason for his singular obsession is simple enough, in a peculiarly Chinese way. He was born in Hong Kong in 1935, the Year of the Pig. To find the perfect white jade pig, then, would be to add a symmetry to his collection transcending mere beauty or worth or fame. "And as I collect these animals to bring me happiness," he says, "to achieve this most subtle of harmonies by finding the perfect pig—strange as it may sound to the Western mind—would bring me the greatest happiness of all." □

Simon Winchester, a well-known British journalist, is working on a book about Shanghai.

COUNTDOWN AT HARRODS

HOW THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEPARTMENT STORE GIRDS FOR ITS NEW YEAR'S SALE

BY ISRAEL SHENKER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID GAMBLE

The Harrods sale, high point of London's shopping season, is a battle royal. When all eleven doors open, on January 7 at 0900 hours—blisskrieg!

Climax of preparations comes on D-day-minus-one, when the managing director, like a commander-in-chief with staff in tow, tours the battlements—five floors, a hundred selling rooms, 230 departments, a hundred million dollars' worth of stock.

In November of last year, *supremo* Frank Drewitt retired, a veteran of two years, and the standard passed to Tony Clark. In honor of this changing of the guard and to provide the new commander with intelligence on the order of battle, *Connoisseur* offers the following reconnaissance report of what it was like the last time around.

•

1430 hours. "Okay," says Drewitt, putting down his glass and stepping forth smartly, "we've got a few acres to cover."

"We can butcher in the French style, the American style, the British style," announces the food manager, with just the right smidgen of bloodthirstiness. There are 500 different cheeses. Brie is one-third off. The buyer invites Drewitt to sample snail caviar. Our commander beats a polite, if hasty, retreat, and we are at his heels.

"How many smells have you got in the store?" Drewitt asks Rachel Andrews, cosmetics and perfumery. "Almost four hundred," she answers. Between cosmetics and the display hall is a mirrored passage. "That hole cost four hundred thousand pounds," Drewitt notes.

"I hope it rains tomorrow," says Lucy Cunliffe, the umbrella buyer. Magnanimously, Drewitt takes this in stride and asks the fashion-fabric buyer what his most expensive fabric is. A silk, at £595 a meter; that's about $900 a yard.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Drewitt," says the toys buyer. "Good afternoon, Mr. Drewitt," says her teddy bear. With five-second delay, this Taiwan bear plays back whatever it hears. The advance grinds to a halt: each lieutenant wants his turn.

George Kendall is the Harrods security chief. His target for the first four days is fifty-eight shoplifters. The necktie buyer—wearing the drabbest tie in the house, with 25,000 brighter ties to sell—hopes to collar thousands.

Some deputies know their targets by heart. One has inscribed them in ink on her wrist. Another clutches a paper saturated with figures. "Put them under your pillow tonight," Drewitt commands.

Drewitt wishes each officer a good sale, shakes hands right and left. One buyer, mired in sticky tape, cannot separate her hands in time to offer either one for shaking.

1700 hours. Countdown begins. The store has been cleared of customers. Staff are shifting stock, lowering prices, dreaming of victory on the morrow. □

Zero hour approaches (below); Tony Clark (far right) and squad.

Israel Shenker lives in the U.K. and is a former New York Times *reporter.*

THE NORMAN CONQUESTS

HER GLORIOUS VOICE HAS CAPTIVATED THE WORLD

BY MATTHEW GUREWITSCH
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD CORMAN

When Jessye Norman visits Salzburg, a not unusual event since she is a great favorite at the music festival there, it often happens that she orders a taxi and a car arrives emblazoned with her photograph. Philips, her recording label, has hired the doors as what the firm likes to call "movable billboards." "It's always so embarrassing when I happen to be in a cab with my picture on it," Norman says merrily, conversing in her dressing room after a rehearsal for a performance of Gustav Mahler's stupendous Eighth Symphony. Is she kidding? By chance, a cab waiting in the courtyard of the Festspielhaus belongs to the fleet that carries the Norman image. And sure enough, when she issues from the stage door, she climbs in with no trace of discomfiture—except at the manners of a fan who pounces from the shadows snapping a shutter.

"*Man muss zuerst fragen!*" she scolds, in ready German. "You have to ask first!" The fan murmurs an apology, mumbles for permission, gets a parting shot, and withdraws. The guards open the gates, and Norman's car rolls into the jammed labyrinth of Salzburg's narrow streets, her serene, uptilted profile framed in the window above the publicity portrait.

About her, there is the aura of a woman who knows where she comes from and where she is going. At forty, Jessye Norman has the musical world at her feet. She deserves her place at the top. Here is the assessment of Patrick J. Smith in the brand-new *New Grove Dictionary of American Music:* "Norman's commanding stature and stage presence have made her a major operatic personality, but her special distinction lies in her ability to project drama through her voice as well as histrionically. . . . Her opulent and dark-hued soprano is not always under perfect control, and at times sounds smaller than her frame would attest, but at its finest it reveals uncommon refinement of nuance and dynamic variety." As her audiences know, the amazing thing is how frequently and reliably Norman is at her finest.

She has made some unlikely converts, among them Robert Wilson, the visionary theater artist who dreamed up *Einstein on the Beach* and other landmarks of the contemporary sensibility. He still recalls the first time he saw her, at a concert in Paris: "When she walked onstage, I knew immediately that this was something special. And I immediately thought I would like to work with her. It was her carriage, the beautiful bones of her face, the way she sat. First of all, the long, slow walk out onstage, and the way she sat and the way she stood."

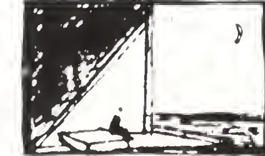
Wilson met Norman after the concert and some time later got to work on a series of stage images for her: a forest of outsize trees, a bedroom with an outsize bed, and a view out an outsize window to an outsize moon ("I always made her very small," he says). In these settings, he thought, she might sing what she pleased. Haydn, he suggested, or Mozart, or Wagner. It didn't matter. "I know," Norman replied. "I'd like to sing Negro spirituals." The result, *Great Day in the Morning*, played in Paris to tremendous acclaim in 1982. Last year, Norman and Wilson teamed up again, this time in Stuttgart for Gluck's highly formal opera *Alceste,* based on the Greek myth.

"I really don't know about opera," Wilson confesses. "I've always hated opera. It isn't easy with Jessye either. I mean, it's easier. The thing about working with her is that she knows what she wants. She has natural instincts, but they're correct and right. I've seen her in shows by other directors, and she can be pushed in the wrong direction. But she knows what's right.

"In Noh theater, they believe the gods are under the floor. The contact with the floor is essential. With Jessye, the feet are firmly planted. And firmly rooted. The sound a singer makes isn't in the throat or whatever. The whole body makes the sound. With Jessye, it's from the toes to the tips of her hair. It's her ears, her elbows. The sound comes from the feet up. Because the feet are on the floor."

If Wilson's words suggest a static, marmoreal stage presence, that would be only part of the truth. In a climactic scene like that of Dido's suicide in Hector Berlioz's *Les Troyens,* she can summon up the fury and elemental abandon of a Kabuki tiger.

Many people, even musicians, never know except by hearsay that music can strike to the core of one's being. Norman found that out almost as long ago as she can remember. She has never forgotten the first time she encountered, at age ten, the singing of Marian Anderson, on a 78 of the *Alto Rhapsody,* of Johannes Brahms. "I heard her voice and I listened, thinking, 'But this can't just be a voice! A voice doesn't sound *this* rich and beautiful.' It was quite a revelation. And I wept, not knowing anything about what it meant. I just thought, 'It must be terribly



Sketches, this page and following, are from Great Day in the Morning, *designed for Norman by Robert Wilson: "I always made her very small."*

important, this music.' " With appalled fascination, Norman read the pioneering black contralto's autobiography. She read the dignified accounts of the indignities visited on a black artist in the segregated America of the thirties and forties. She demanded that her mother tell her whether such things could be true.

The answer must have taught her, earlier than most, to think hard about her own place on the world's great stage, and the habit has not left her. She does not read reviews and so did not hear until almost two years after the fact of the column by *New York* magazine's music critic, Peter G. Davis, in which he compared Norman's first Met appearance in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Leontyne Price's farewell performance, as Aida, in the same house. Davis praised Norman's volatility and passion at the expense of Price, who, in Davis's view, had been inhibited and turned into a symbol by her status as the world's first black superstar in opera, and whose artistic promise, he concluded, "was never fully realized."

"What!" Norman demands. "What had he been waiting for? To open the new Met, as Price did, with new music no one has ever sung before! To sing *Trovatore* as no one has ever done before or will ever sing again! I just think people take incredible liberties saying what they think we ought and oughtn't to be doing.

"You see," she says, pressing on, "it would be completely impossible for me to have any kind of career if it hadn't been for people like Leontyne Price and Marian Anderson. Because, you see, of their strength of character." She recalls how the Daughters of the American Revolution barred Anderson from the capital's Constitution Hall. She recounts how a hotel

refused to [illegible] Anderson [illegible] dress befo[illegible] [illegible] permitted her [illegible] herself only if [illegible] it side to do it in a dark alley. "I'm not sure [illegible] could have had the strength and character to go through with that. And to think of the poise, the beautiful singing she did in spite of it. So I can't sit still for people who would like to say that singers who have gone before those of us who are coming now, black American singers, have not expanded or whatever as they should have done. They've done more than anybody ever imagined. And those of us who have any sense are very grateful." She sits back, her features again composed in august serenity. "And very proud."

ZOE DOMINIC

How dare these clowns mess with my tragedy? A fulminant Norman as the heroine of Ariadne auf Naxos, *at Covent Garden.*

In 1961, at sixteen, Jessye Norman—a girl whose total musical experience up to that point had been singing at the dedication of every new recreation center, supermarket, and church annex in her native Augusta, Georgia—entered the Marian Anderson Music Scholarship Competition, in Philadelphia. "Miss Anderson's sister was running the competition at that time," Norman reports. "Miss Anderson herself was not there. Of course I didn't win a prize at all. I had no repertoire and had never studied singing, really. But they couldn't have been more encouraging, and told me to come back after I had studied."

The judges at the competition were not the only ones to recognize Norman's untrained talent. On the way back home, the young singer and her chaperone stopped off to visit relatives in Washington, where Norman also sang an audition for Carolyn Grant, the head of the voice department of Howard University. She was promptly offered a full-tuition scholarship to come and study music—even though she was still too young to accept it. "There are tiny miracles that happen in life," Norman says with gratitude. (She has since endowed a scholarship at Howard in her teacher's name, though she prefers not to talk about that. It might sound like bragging.) "Singing isn't like playing the violin. We don't start having lessons at age three. The very best thing that could happen to a voice, if it shows any promise at all, is when it is very young to leave it alone, and to let it develop quite naturally, and to let the person go on for as long as possible with the sheer joy of singing—rather than being concerned with what comes later: the necessary concern over vocal technique. When I started voice lessons, I remember Miss Grant saying she hoped I would always enjoy the process as much as I already did, but that I would have the patience to learn exactly what makes singing possible, the purely physical aspect."

In four years at Howard, Norman learned her lessons well. After graduating, in 1967, she continued her studies first at Peabody Conservatory, in Baltimore, and then at the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor. Under the terms of her fellowship, she also had to teach voice to students in other musical specialties. "I've always said that I don't think I ruined any world-class voices," she remarks cheerfully. Then, in 1968, the young singer took first prize in the female vocal division at the International Music Competition of the German Broadcasting Corporation, in Munich, and there was no more time to teach. Maestros like Colin Davis, Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, and Rudolf Kempe were keeping her too busy.

After a debut in 1969, Norman sang four seasons with the Deutsche Oper, in Berlin. "It's like walking through a mine field when you're a very young singer with an important contract at an important opera house in Europe," Norman observes. "They've got this whole long list of eighty operas, and you're meant to fill a need. There's no other reason for them to have you there. They haven't just taken you in out of the goodness of their hearts. You're there to work. And it's very difficult not simply to accept everything that's proposed to you, even the heavy dramatic roles in things like *Parsifal* or *La Gioconda* or any of the Leonoras—all of these things that were of course much needed.

"But I don't think the dramatic soprano voice is invented. I think it develops. I went to the opera all the time and heard so many different singers. And I started to notice things. There were so many singers who were not very old chronologically, but their voices didn't sound very young." Norman was not one to ignore such warnings. "I just decided," she continues, soon edging into a tense singsong that mimics her anxiety at the time, "not from anything except my own mind, 'I'm sure it must be exciting to sing *Trovatore* when you're twenty-five . . . but you probably oughtn't to do it.' " With an excellent new contract in hand but afraid of caving in to the pressures, she resigned. "People said, 'What courage.' It had nothing to do with courage. It had to do with survival."

Five years were to pass before Norman sang opera onstage again. In the meanwhile she spent time in Paris and then settled in London, where, perhaps quite unself-consciously, she picked up the classy Mayfair accent that still comes and goes. (She may say "straightaway" for "right away" and "mean" for "stingy," and call the famous concert series at the Royal Albert Hall "The Prumms," but she sounds not a whit less cultivated when she falls back into plain American.) Her career flourished in recording studios and concert halls, principally in Europe; and in due course she returned to staged opera.

On September 26, 1983, the opening night of the company's centennial season, she made her debut with the Metropolitan Opera, as the prophetess Cassandra in *Les Troyens*. Her incandescent performance took America by storm—not altogether unexpectedly. Moving into this phase of her career, she had retained Herbert H. Breslin, Inc., which masterminded (and still manages) the Pavarotti phenomenon, to handle her publicity. Even though the promoters got her on the "Today" show and into *Life*, which is the sort of thing they want most to do, Norman took stock and took charge. She broke with Breslin, explaining simply that being marketed "just doesn't suit me."

Without the winds of hype to fan the flames, Jessye Norman exerts—through talent, artistry, generosity, beauty, poise, and glamour—a power over audiences that is wondrous to witness, and nowhere more so than in Salzburg. From the moment she takes the stage, she simply basks in glory. She has her fans, of course, as what opera star has not?: the delivery boy for the Paris telegraph office whose adulation inspired the film *Diva!*; the electrician who drove from Cleveland in the dead of winter for her *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Metropolitan Opera, waited at the stage door two hours after the final curtain to pay his respects, and turned around and drove back to Cleveland; the choristers of the American Boy Choir, who last fall recorded with her an album of Christmas songs, due next December, and then lined up, all forty of them, to get her autograph. The Salzburg crowd, though, does not make a habit of getting carried away.

ZOE DOMINIC

Norman listens. Ariadne, prepared for death but destined for love, hears the voice of Bacchus as a mystic summons.

Drawn in the main from Germany's industrialist elite, these are people who come to Mozart's birthplace to take culture as at a spa they would take the waters. They dress up; they sit straight in their seats, don't cough, applaud when they are supposed to and not when they are not supposed to. At the end of a recital, they stay put for an encore, at most two, and then decamp en masse. But after Norman's all-Strauss program before a sellout audience in the festival's largest hall, they cheered for fifty-five minutes.

When a recital threatened to draw on longer than she wished, the great soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf used to beam a gracious smile and close the piano. Norman would not consider that an option. "You have to be able to pull off that sort of thing. I'm not sure that I'm quite . . . We still had people, and we thought, We'll sing something, you know? I'll sing as long as I can stand." In Salzburg, she regaled her listeners with six encores.

Underlying Norman's triumphs is an instrument unmatched in its combined sumptuousness, range, force, and expressivity. Although she usually bills herself as a soprano, her repertoire fans out equally over the soprano, mezzo soprano, and true contralto literature. Her working range runs from high C-sharp (silky or piercing, as the phrase requires) down through a voluptuous middle range to rich, resonant low A's and G's (one critic has called them "deep ruby-red"). As Death in Schubert's song "Der Tod und das Mädchen" (Death and the Maiden), she even delves to a low D that seems to enfold the maiden in dark, mystic consolation. In her voice, conductors hear many voices. In the last six months alone, she has sung the soprano part in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for Sir Georg Solti (recorded by London Records) and Mahler orchestral songs in the central mezzo range with Claudio Abbado. Had a recording project of Leonard Bernstein's not fallen through, Norman would have sung for him the contralto part in Verdi's Requiem.

"I guess I place myself all over the place," she says with her melodious laugh. "And it doesn't worry me that some conductors with whom I've worked prefer to use me singing in the lower parts or the upper registers or whatever. It all depends, really, rather on what they have in their own heads as a sound. For some conductors, the soprano is a very brilliant, bright-sounding voice, and if they hear a person who's singing B-flats and C's, but the voice is naturally a bit darker, they think of that voice as being a low voice, which is kind of their problem, really. But I don't allow myself to be cast in a particular repertoire—or *only* in a particular repertoire—because I like to sing what I'm able to sing. I like the voice to do what it can, rather than only what seems most comfortable. I don't pretend that I can sing everything because I can sing high notes and low notes."

Nor are those notes, glorious as they are, an end in themselves. Norman has found from time to time that a well-vocalized early performance of a new piece, though not lacking "a certain credit," leaves her unsatisfied. She is not content, she says, "until the music becomes a part of me." For Mahler's oceanic song cycle *Das Lied von der Erde,* it took several years. Nevertheless, from the earliest entries in her long and distinguished discography (see box), she has consistently displayed an astonishing immediacy and interpretive finesse—qualities that have only deepened with time. As the Egyptian queen in the twenty-five-minute concert piece *Cléopâtre,* of Berlioz, she sustains a tragic grandeur through a jagged succession of episodes beginning in shame and rage, thence moving through lyric remembrance and doom-struck incantation to frenzied self-reproach and, after the snakebite, one dying flicker of renascent pride. The composer's fires set every facet of Norman's temperament flashing—all but her humor. Probably it is Jacques Offenbach who catches that one best. As the mythological heroine of his operetta *La Belle Hélène,* portrayed in the piece as a self-mocking flirt who can't help herself ("*C'est la fatalité!*"), Norman simply purrs with witty high spirits. Small wonder she causes a little war.

Whenever she sings, she knows what the words mean, every word. Apart from two short Ravel songs in Hebrew and some parts in Latin, Norman sings in English, German, French, and Italian, all languages she speaks. She is making a slow approach to Russian. "You see," she says, "I have a particular affliction. I am unable to say a word I can't spell. I can't just remember a sound. I can't learn a text pidgin fashion, because if I do, I can't ever vary the emphasis in any way, because I don't

JESSYE'S JEWELS: HER BEST RECORDINGS

Jessye Norman's discography runs to some five dozen titles. Here are some of the best.

Berlioz. No composer seems to call on more of Norman's countless moods. Her *Les Nuits d'Été*, coupled with Ravel's *Shéhérazade* (Philips), is splendid. Her *Cléopâtre* (on Deutsche Grammophon), on an album with Kiri Te Kanawa's performance of *Nuits d'Été*, is a stunner, as is her Cassandra, which may be seen as well as heard in the complete videotape of the Met's production of *Les Troyens* (Paramount Home Video).

Mahler. Norman's affinity for the composer's ironies and ripe Romanticism makes her recordings of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and *Das Lied von der Erde* especially treasurable (both on Philips). With the Vienna Philharmonic, she brings the right eloquence to the brief but crucial alto solos of his Second and Third symphonies (the Second, under Lorin Maazel on CBS Masterworks; the Third, under Claudio Abbado on Deutsche Grammophon).

Songs. Norman's dedication to the form has resulted in splendid albums of Brahms (two discs on Deutsche Grammophon, one on Philips, all recommended) and, even more exciting, Schubert (Philips). Twice she has participated, gorgeously, as one soloist among several in recordings devoted to the songs of Ravel. On both, she sings the tinglingly sensuous *Chansons Madécasses*. (One, a selection of five cycles, is on CBS Masterworks; the other, the complete Ravel songs, is on Angel-EMI.) Her album of spirituals (Philips) rings with a beautiful openness.

Songs with orchestra. Norman's voluptuous performances of Chausson material, including *Poème de l'Amour et de la Mer* (Erato), are worth seeking out. No less remarkable are her readings, all on Philips, of Strauss's autumnal *Four Last Songs;* Wagner's *Wesendonck Songs* and the "Liebestod" from *Tristan und Isolde;* and the part of Tove in Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*.

Opera. Except for her excellent Countess in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (her earliest major recording; Philips) and Sieglinde, in *Die Walküre* (Eurodisc), Norman's operatic recordings take her into out-of-the-way repertory. Her liveliness and commitment make each piece an adventure. Top of the line: Haydn's *Armida* (Philips), Gluck's *Alceste* (Orfeo), and Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène* (Angel-EMI), in each of which she sings the title role.

Note: The recording companies are adding and deleting titles on LP, cassette, and compact disc so fast, it is impossible to stay up to date with the catalogue. Most of the albums listed here are available, or will be shortly, in all three formats.

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know where I am—where the verbs are, where the nouns are, and why the sentence sounds like this."

In preparing her material, Norman relies not only on words but also on pictures. Ask her about Schubert's song "Der Zwerg" (The Dwarf), an enigmatic Gothic horror story in miniature, and she visualizes the scene on shipboard precisely. Mention Strauss's "Schlechtes Wetter" (Bad Weather), and Norman will describe the song's two characters, a mother and a daughter, down to the knot in a scarf. "I feel you have to see a picture. I'm not sure other singers work this way. I'm not sure this happens when I'm singing on the stage, but I need it as a reference in my own mind when I'm thinking about the song."

Jessye Norman is not one of our era's divas for a fashion plate *à la* the willowy Kiri Te Kanawa or the svelte Kathleen Battle. Nor, despite what *New York* magazine has called her "formidable physical presence," does she impress as one of those Victorian matrons in tiaras, like Margaret Dumont, their bosoms aglitter like spangled Gibraltars. By now her sure theatricality and sense of pomp seem all but instinctual. Shortly, the audiences at the Met will have the chance to judge again for themselves, as Norman appears after a season's absence in two new roles: as Elisabeth in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (this month), which she has not sung here before, and as Madame Lidoine, in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (March and April), which she has never sung anywhere before. Many admirers wish she would do opera more often, but she does not like to tie up the required blocks of time. "If I do three opera productions a year," she points out, "that's five months out of my calendar. And I love doing recitals, you know. It's probably the most demanding thing I do, and perhaps that's why I'm fool enough to keep doing it. But I find I enjoy opera productions a great deal. I love it. When you've got a fantastic team of people together, there's hardly anything better. I can't think what could be better.

"But very often, I'm afraid that we go wrong. We don't plan enough, we don't have enough rehearsal time, and then opera can be less enjoyable. So rather than sing a lot of opera performances all over the place, I would prefer to do productions that have me in mind and that would suit me, and music that suits me. Because there are so many opera singers that it's crazy to sing everything that's offered. One should do things that suit."

By which she does *not* mean settling into a comfortable, predictable groove. Apart from her work with Wilson, there are such adventures in her future as a rendezvous—her first, its venue and vehicle as yet unannounced—with the anarchic young director Peter Sellars ("Boy, is he crazy or what!"). Though she names no names, she is on her guard against the sort of star director who works up a formula and never goes beyond it. They may captivate you once, Norman concedes, but not a second time.

"Because you know the tricks. A director has to have more than a bag of tricks. He has to do more than have columns and lots of fabric on the stage and a shiny floor. He has to do more than just be clever about how to move crowds around. And he has to allow—to have the faith in the intelligence of the people who have been hired to sing the roles—that they might have one or two ideas of their own that might work. Who knows?" Again, that Olympian laugh. "It might be found that what we do quite naturally is more suitable—*for us*—than what someone else might want to suggest that we should do. Of course, it can be that the ideas you have for yourself are really quite ridiculous. But at the same time, I feel there are too many directors who want to use singers as puppets. And that just is not right.

"I'm very serious about studying and knowing about what it is I'm singing and the part I'm supposed to be doing. And I'm afraid I do have an awful lot to say. Whether it's of any interest or not, I've got it to say. It just comes out of me, just from preparing my work, you know? If I sing the part of Phèdre, I read Racine. It only makes sense to me. I don't arrive at rehearsal waiting to have the hand of the director, which is the direct hand of God, of course, to explain to me what it is I'm supposed to be doing."

Her self-assurance today and the sense of harmony that goes with it spring in part from happy memories. "My parents were happy to have us, happy to have us around, to support and encourage us," Norman replies, when asked what inspired her as a child, "and that's a great thing. I had a lot of inspiration when I was growing up. Inspiration came from Babe

"When she walked onstage, I knew immediately that this was something special. It was her carriage, the beautiful bones of her face."

Ruth. I refused ever to learn the ground rules of baseball, but just the inspiration to get out and try it and do it and be good at it, you know?—whatever it is."

In her enthusiasms, Norman has a sort of mercurial poise that keeps shifting aspect, like the shards in a kaleidoscope. "I love clothes, I love silks," she sighs, aglow with pleasure. "I love real fabrics—cottons and linens and silks and things. I love beautiful things. I love beauty in anything. I love beauty in an athlete, or just getting up very early in the morning for rehearsals. I love things that look lovely, very nice. A feast for the eye. It makes you feel good inside. I love the rain. It doesn't disturb. I love"—she draws the word out in a swooning glissando—"looking at racehorses. I love to see the horse in action, you know? There's such beauty in a racehorse. It's quite a marvel."

In making her own marvels, Jessye Norman goes about with clarity of purpose. "A lot of people need chaos," she muses when asked what conditions her art requires, "and somehow emerges this wonderful performance. I cannot do it. I need order, I need calm. I need peace and quiet. I need fun! I need discipline. I need flexibility. I need all these things." And these, to an extent, are within her control. But an element no less vital lies beyond what can be planned. Probably her deepest secret rests in that boundless receptivity of hers—that openness to experience in all its multiplicities. What she has seen, what she has heard, what she has felt and known transmutes to music. Through her song passes the shiver of the sublime. □

Matthew Gurewitsch is a senior editor of this magazine.

THE
Story of Rob Roy.
BY
A. H. MILLER, F.S.A.Scot.,
Author of "The History of Rob Roy," "The Story of Queen Mary," etc., etc.
GLASGOW
ROB ROY.

BRING BACK THE BROWNS

A CELEBRATION OF THE CHARACTERS OF WHISKEY

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY MICHAEL GEIGER

SCOTCH WHISKY, BY DEREK COOPER

No spirit can be said to have a more tempestuous or romantic past than what is now loosely and inaccurately called "Scotch"—a brown and mellow spirit that, when it comes off the still, is as clear as Highland spring water, a fact that astonished me when I was taken as a youngster on a visit to the Talisker distillery, in the Isle of Skye.

To me, the gleaming copper stills the color and shape of golden pears looked immense. "They're nothing but giant kettles," said the manager who took us round. Underneath each still, within its walls of firebrick, a huge coal fire raged. We were shown the whole process, which hadn't changed in a hundred years. We saw the moist barley spread out on the old malting floor.

"It's growing before your eyes," said the manager, "germinating and making sugar." Then we saw the pagoda-towered kiln where they dried the green malt to arrest its germination. There was an acrid, pungent smell from the glowing turves of peat, and we could see the thick gray smoke rising up to the barley to impart the aromas that give malt whisky its unique flavor.

We saw the malt being milled and then mashed in huge wooden vats, fermenting and bubbling away as the yeast turned it into a thin, low-strength brew. And then into the still room. "This is where we boil the wash, and when the vapors rise up we condense them, and we do that twice, and the best of it is Talisker whisky." And there it was, flowing like liquid crystal behind the locked glass doors of the spirit safe. And that is roughly the way they make whisky all over Scotland, from Orkney, in the north, down to the Mull of Kintyre.

When whisky comes fresh off the stills it's far too strong and fiery to be enjoyed. Only after it has matured in oak casks for a minimum of three years can it be described as Scotch whisky. In the stone warehouses at Talisker the whisky lay for five, eight, and even more years until it was taken away to the mainland to be blended with perhaps twenty or thirty other malts and grain whiskies and bottled for the Scotch-and-soda drinkers of the world.

There are about a hundred malt-whisky distilleries, many of them dating back to the early nineteenth century, a few with their roots in the eighteenth. Nowadays the mashing and fermenting cycle may be controlled by a microchip, the stills will be heated by gas or oil, but the formula remains unchanged—fine barley, pure spring water, and a hundred years or more of experience.

It is the individuality of the ninety or so malts now bottled singly that interests the connoisseur. In Britain, they are challenging Cognac and Armagnac as digestifs, while the Italians drink more malt whisky than anyone else.

I am constantly amazed that barley can produce so many remarkably idiosyncratic manifestations of itself. David Grant of William Grant & Sons Ltd. will tell you that although the water, the yeast, and the malt used to produce their two outstanding whiskies, Glenfiddich and Balvenie, are almost identical, the spirits themselves are recognizably different. And it is the same with the eight distilleries on the small Hebridean island of Islay. They share the same peat and water, yet if you take Lagavulin, Laphroaig, and Bowmore, to name three of the best, they are as different as Lafite and Latour are from Margaux.

A great malt creates its own character over the decades. That is why when a still outlives its useful life it is replaced with one identical to it, down to the last curve and dent. Stories are told of fanatical distillers who will not even allow the cobwebs to be disturbed, in case they contribute to the subtleties of the malt.

Some distilleries, like Macallan, mature their malt only in sherry casks; others, like Glenfiddich, use a combination of casks that previously held sherry or bourbon. There are tall stills and small stills. "It all tells in the end," a famous distiller told me recently: "the humidity, the quality of the barley, the speed at which you drive your stills, even the direction the wind is blowing!" If you find that hard to believe, I can introduce you to men who will distinguish a malt matured in a warehouse with an earth floor from a malt aged in a modern concrete warehouse.

An even greater influence is geography. The heart of Highland distilling is at the river Spey, where you will find Glenlivet, Mortlach, Tamnavulin, Linkwood, Longmorn, Glenfarclas, Aberlour, Cardhu, Knockando, and Balmenach. Then there are the malts of Islay, malts from the Lowlands and from the east coast. Again, the names conjure up varying degrees of dryness, fragrance, nuttiness, smokiness, sweetness, peatiness, and fruitiness: Auchentoshan, Bladnoch, Rosebank, Blair Athol, Glenmorangie, Fettercairn, Lochnagar, and Glengarioch. Some of these malts are light enough to be enjoyed as aperitifs; others are

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Derek Cooper is the author of The Century Companion to Whiskies *and* The Whisky Roads of Scotland.

[illegible] one would [illegible]

[illegible]—Chivas Regal, [illegible]mple [illegible], [illegible]he Antiquary, Logan deluxe. [illegible]kinla[illegible]s Legacy, to name but six fro[illegible]rable score of outstanding names—[illegible] great malts selected with great care and [illegible]arried with consummate skill. The role of the blender in the whisky trade is as important as that of the port taster in Vila Nova de Gaia. But to my mind, the single malts, like the great vintage ports, with their individual identities unmuffled by grain whisky, are the star performers.

There is nothing to beat tasting a well-matured malt in the distillery of its origin. Whisky comes off the still at around 12 over proof, or 64 percent. It is usually sold at 43 percent by volume, and even at that reduced strength it improves by the addition of a little water. Sparkling water lends a metallic flavor to a good malt; soft burn water is the answer, preferably ice-cold.

I've always thought of a good Highland malt as an open-air drink. The late Major Grant of Glen Grant used to take his guests through his distillery garden, across the orchard, and up the right bank of the foaming burn that flowed down from the hills. After a suitable walk, the party would pause to admire the view while the major took a big iron key from his pocket. Buried in the rocky bank was a safe and, inside, a bottle of well-aged Glen Grant, a few glasses, and a jug. The jug would be filled from the burn, the glasses from the bottle; and, as I can vouch from experience, a glass of malt never tasted better or more appropriate.

Irish Whiskey, by Patrick Skene Catling

Irish whiskey is the most characteristically poetic distillation of Ireland's ancient history and continuing conviviality. The word *whiskey* itself is derived from *Uisce Beatha,* the Gaelic for "the water of life," which obviously means more than a mere quencher of thirst. Irish whiskey is the most refined product of Irish agriculture and ingenuity. More than that, it is a cultural quintessence, an expression of Ireland's national philosophy: it is earlier than you think, and never too late. In Ireland, every hour is the happy hour.

In all societies, as Aldous Huxley pointed out, humanity has sought to discover or concoct modifiers of consciousness, to escape into artificial paradises. These have been attained sometimes by accident, sometimes by deliberation, but never more reliably than through the moderate use of conscientiously prepared and well-aged ardent spirits. Of these, Irishmen claim, the purest, smoothest, mellowest, and most heart-warming is whiskey. And, may it never be forgotten, the Irish were the prime creators of the stuff. Scotland, the United States, and Canada make more of it, to be sure, but the record shows them to be mere acolytes.

Over a thousand years ago Irish missionaries returned from the Middle East with an enthusiastic report of the alembic, an apparatus used to distill perfume. The Irish naturally soon learned to put fermented barley into it instead of aromatic oils, and so distilled alcohol. The word, incidentally, is one of Arabic origin that means kohl, the eye makeup. The Irish thus converted Arabian cosmetology into the magical science of making the whole world look beautiful. When Henry II of England invaded Ireland in the twelfth century, his soldiers found that *Uisce Beatha* was a transcendental consolation for military service abroad. They took the drink home and shortened its name to whiskey.

DAVID HAMSLEY (2)

The oldest distillery in Ireland and indeed in the world is Old Bushmills, situated among small farms near the coast of county Antrim, in Northern Ireland. The legendary Finn MacCool's Giant's Causeway, nearby, adds to the place's air of antiquity—the local basalt, congealed lava, was formed about sixty million years ago. The distillery was built beside St. Columb's Rill, one of the river Bush's blessedly inexhaustible tributaries, which rises in peaty ground and flows over basalt rocks, giving the water and hence the whiskey their subtly distinctive flavor. The earliest historical references to Old Bushmills testify that distilling was going on there as early as 1276, and Old Bushmills has been in business on the same tranquil site ever since.

The distilling process is basically the same now as it was in the beginning, according to Dennis R. Higgins, a biologist, who manages the Bushmills distillery. Modern technical innovations, he says, are only minor refinements representing "scientific rationalization of established practice. What we have learned from research in recent times about the mechanics and chemistry of distilling has taught us reverence for our forefathers' ancient traditional methods."

The language is esoteric, but what happens is quite simple—except for continual, pragmatic, nice adjustments, requiring all the distiller's inherited knowledge, personal experience, and skill. Irish whiskey is made as follows. The raw materials are malted barley, yeast, and water. The grist, ground malt, is mashed with hot water into a sort of porridge, which is allowed to settle in the mash tun. Biological action changes the grist's starch into sugar. The diluted sugar, called wort, is drained off and cooled on its way to the wash back, the fermenting vessel, where yeast is added. Feeding on the sugar, the live yeast produces—eureka!—alcohol.

Then the distillation begins. The Irish put their alcohol through a series of three pot stills, onion-shaped copper kettles, with varying capacities of 9,000 to 15,000 liters, whose design is centuries old. Ireland's unique triple distillation is one of the main factors contributing to the purity and delicacy of Irish whiskey—as delicate as a fist in a velvet glove. Scotch whisky (without the *e*) is distilled but twice.

The third Irish distillate is collected in the spirit receiver, where it is diluted with water to the proper strength before being stored for maturing in oak casks. The Irish import most of their casks from the bourbon distillers of the United States, who use them only once. Whiskey gains its characteristic light amber color from the years it spends in the casks. By Irish law, whiskey must be aged for at least three years; however, in practice, the malt whiskey is usually aged for at least six years, sometimes as many as twelve or more, and the grain whiskey, used for blending, is always aged for at least four years. When Irish distillers wish to give their whiskey a deeper color and a rounder, slightly sweeter taste, they age it in

Patrick Skene Catling is a reporter, critic, and novelist.

ECTION
MELODIES,
FROM
E WORKS
TERENCE CAROLAN,
CARROLL O DALY,
AND OTHERS,
Lyric Compositions,
GRACIOUS MAJESTY
ORGE THE FOURTH,
IRISH MELODIES
ERALD · ISLE

[illegible] The present trends are toward light-[illegible]er single malts.

[illegible] to close analysis in our laboratories at all stages," [illegible] says. "But the most important tests are organoleptic—[illegible] nose and taste buds."

To the layman as to the expert, the most obvious difference between Irish and Scotch whiskies is that the Irish has none of the smoky overtones of Scotch. The Scots deliberately induce smokiness in their kilns; the Irish insist that it should be kept out. "We use peat in a very subtle way," says Higgins. "It is there, but only in the background, allowing our rich maltiness to come through. Even in our lightest blends, the malt warmly glows."

Maturation having been completed, the malt whiskey is nosed and tasted by the blender, who supervises its mixture with grain whiskey in the blend vat. Finally, sufficient water, measured by hydrometer, is added to the whiskey to bring it to exactly the correct strength for bottling.

Old Bushmills distillery produces three excellent whiskies—Old Bushmills, aged for up to seven years; Black Bush, containing proportionately more malt and aged about one year longer; and Bushmills Malt, a single malt, aged for ten years or more.

After thoughtfully contemplating all three of them at the Pot Still Bar of the distillery's Visitors' Centre, where all members of the public in their right minds refresh themselves at the end of a tour of the plant, I proceeded by car and train, almost the entire length of the island, to Ireland's most modern distilleries, at Midleton, in County Cork.

Irish Distillers Group, a public company formed in 1966, owns both the oldest and the newest distilleries, which together distill all Irish whiskies. There are fifteen of them. The leading brands, in addition to Bushmills, are Jameson, Power's, Paddy, Crested Ten, and Tullamore Dew, whose democratically persuasive slogan is "Give Every Man His Dew." The Old Bushmills distillery produces 2.6 million liters of pure alcohol a year; the Midleton Distilleries produce 18 million liters. The group exports whiskey to more than a hundred countries worldwide, including the Soviet Union and, principally, of course, the United States.

After the higgledy-piggledy assortment of low granite buildings at Old Bushmills, the vast, dull green, cubistic factories at Midleton, occupying a 120-acre site on the Dungourney River, seemed starkly utilitarian.

In a lofty chamber, like the engine room of the biggest imaginable ocean liner, the bulbous copper pot stills for malt whiskey and the tubular Coffey stills for neutral grain spirits looked reassuringly familiar. The new scale of operations is immense, but the principles are immutable. Even the computer consoles are manned by human beings, not by robots. The traditions of Irish whiskey endure.

It was in the hospitality room (the bar) of the old distillery's administration building that I met the master distiller, Barry Crockett, the thirty-eight-year-old son of Maxwell Crockett, who was Midleton's master distiller before him. Barry studied archaeology, history, and economics but has a nose and taste buds that are too acutely perceptive to waste.

He has produced the Irish Distillers Group's magnum opus, Midleton Very Rare. He compiled it from the best of every batch ready to bottle in 1984, in such limited quantities that connoisseurs of Irish whiskey have been falling over themselves to get it. In Ireland, the legitimate retail price is about £48 ($65) a bottle, but single bottles have been changing hands for £100.

When I got a bottle of Midleton Very Rare in the Ball o' Malt Bar at the Irish Distillers' headquarters in Dublin, I almost wept

ENGRAVED BY OLD CROW FROM AN ORIGINAL PAINTING BY W.
KENTUCKY

... was solemnly recorded in the book ... ed and every sale recorded. It is good ...

... remin... C. K. Chesterton's lines: "If an angel out of Heaven Brin... other things to drink/Thank him for his kind attention... and pour them down the sink."

BOURBON WHISKEY, BY JOHN BOWERS

There come odd moments—say, when country music breaks unexpectedly over the radio or really good or bad news hits—when I reach for a bottle of bourbon. I drink it with ginger or a splash of water over ice, inhaling its slightly rough bouquet and letting its distinct, biting flavor wash down my throat.

Bourbon is what Americans used to mean when they ordered whiskey. But times change. Vodka has replaced it as the drink of choice, though bourbon's twinkling brown hue and sharp, semisweet scent evoke emotions that a colorless and nearly tasteless spirit can never arouse.

We may thank Captain George Thorpe and the Rev. Elijah Craig for bourbon. Thorpe came to Virginia in 1620 to aid the Indians but found the colonists in worse straits. To palliate their suffering from "diseases of the mind" caused by "acute nostalgia," he came up with a "drink of Indian corn," made from a fermented mash of grain. It was the first authentic corn liquor in America, clear, heady, packing a wallop.

Around 1789, Elijah Craig, a Baptist minister, turned Thorpe's clear liquor into what we consider bourbon. An oak barrel in which he was shipping whiskey to New Orleans had been charred inside. When it was opened on arrival, a brownish, full-bodied liquor came out. Craig was congratulated and next time purposely charred a new oak barrel—the key to making bourbon.

This method was widely adopted, but the product was known mostly by its location. Brand names did not appear until around the time of the Civil War, when clear glass bottles replaced wooden casks, into which the competition was slipping rusty nails and dead snakes. After Prohibition, the distillers' ranks were depleted, but the names remaining were distinguished: Old Crow, Jim Beam, Early Times, Maker's Mark, Old Grand-Dad, and Virginia Gentleman, among others. Jack Daniel's, incidentally, is Tennessee whiskey that has been filtered through charcoal to leave it more mellow, but people still call it bourbon.

A man who knows his bourbon is Robert E. Lee IV, vice-president of the distillery that makes Virginia Gentleman. He once gave me a leisurely tour. Unlike much manufacture in America, distilling remains a glorified cottage industry. Ancient cypress tubs hold bubbling mash; no one can remember when they first went into service. There are "barrel timers" at work, men who roll, turn, and position barrel after barrel in the warehouse with the bunghole pointing up. No machine does it better.

Virginia Gentleman makes a sweet-mash bourbon; this means that the cypress tubs are sterilized after each batch has "cooked." Sour-mash whiskey requires recycling some residue from the last batch into the new. All bourbon makers have their own, special yeast to start the fermenting process, and it is used again and again. The very yeast used in making the first bottle of Virginia Gentleman, in 1935, still works its magic.

They talk much of their special yeast, corn supply, bottling works, and full moons, but only a few facts are needed to understand bourbon. It must be aged in new white-oak barrels with charred staves for at least two, but usually four or more, years; it must be made of no less than 51 percent corn, combined with rye and barley malt to make a mash for fermenting; it must be distilled so that it comes out between 120 and 160 proof before aging (it is later cut with deionized spring water to lower the proof); and finally, to call itself bourbon, it must be made in the U.S.A.

Most bourbon distilleries are on "Whiskey Row" in Kentucky, a stretch of small towns south of Louisville, in what used to be Virginia's Bourbon County. Maker's Mark, a small, distinguished brand, is produced by the Samuels family, which has been making liquor since revolutionary days. "When I was a small boy," says Bill Samuels, president of the company, in a down-home drawl, "it used to be that if a bourbon didn't blow your ears off, it wasn't any good. But my father started substituting winter wheat for rye. It's made the whiskey pretty doggone smooth." Bill didn't taste bourbon till he was grown. "It was always around the house, so it never had a secret, luring quality for me. My folks taught me to respect its power." Today all bourbon makers want to soften the raw power of the whiskey, bringing it down to 80 proof and making it smoother. Even Old Grand-Dad, a noble firewater that used to dissolve your tonsils, has mellowed since the 1950s.

A drinker may refine bourbon's taste on his own. The mint julep, with its sprigs of fresh mint, superfine sugar, and bourbon served over ice in a chilled silver cup, is one way. Winston Churchill's mother may have invented another, the Mânhattan, a drink consisting of sweet vermouth, bitters, and bourbon. Some people drink bourbon in a glass of milk.

Gentlemanly Bob Lee not long ago lined up unmarked glasses of unnamed bourbons and confidently asked me to name my favorite. I sipped down the line, rinsing my palate after each with water. Fortunately, I chose Virginia Gentleman, but soon they all tasted pretty fine. I knew I'd had a *drink*. Somehow, a white-wine spritzer doesn't do the same for me. □

John Bowers often writes about the South and is at work on a book about "Stonewall" Jackson.

DAVID HAMSLEY (3)

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TAPESTRIES: IGNORED AND INSULTED, THIS IS A GREAT ART FORM

BY ROBIN DUTHY

Few collectors would pass up the chance to buy works of art at 1900 prices. After all, the art market as a whole is up 1,000 percent or more since then. Yet, amazingly, tapestry prices are lower today than at the turn of the century, when the massive buying programs of Huntington, Morgan, and other moguls pushed prices to their all-time high. Only two pictures had ever fetched more than $300,000 when in 1902 Pierpont Morgan gave that sum for a gold-ground tapestry. This was the peak of a market that started in the 1880s, when those legendary American millionaires started furnishing their brand-new Gothic and Renaissance palaces.

The market weakened during the First World War, rallied in the 1920s, and collapsed during the Depression. Prices never recovered, and the slide continues today. Demand has been moderately good for the top 5 percent of the market, but overall, it has dropped a further 10 percent to 30 percent since 1975.

Faced with such a rotten record, investors have not been clamoring to buy. Yet the case for tapestries is not hopeless. It is true that, unless you have a mansion to furnish, the cons will still outweigh the pros, though the intrinsic beauty of the material almost guarantees a comeback some day.

The great period of tapestry making in Europe ran from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, though superb weaving continued into the nineteenth. Fine workmanship and glorious color, however, may not compensate for the problems of excessive size and undesirable subject. The immense labor involved meant that only the very rich could afford to commission tapestries. They were usually needed to cover the walls of a castle and were woven to the required size. Sometimes the height—or drop, as tapestry people call it—runs to eighteen feet or more. Few homes can accommodate these monsters today, and prices for them are usually lower than for pieces half their size.

A midseventeenth-century Flemish tapestry eleven and a half feet high by seventeen and a half feet long, depicting Diana hunting a stag in a wooded landscape with a border decorated with shells, ribbons, and flowers, recently sold at Christie's for just $10,000. Even this magnificent panel was out of the question for most apartment or house dwellers.

Worse still, the subject matter of most tapestries leaves buyers cold. Of all the subjects tackled over the last six hundred years, biblical ones are the least popular. The Trojan War and other battle scenes are out of favor too, as are scenes involving bloodshed—Salome being presented with the head of John the Baptist, for example, or Judith and Holofernes. Sacrificial scenes are therefore hard to sell. In the 1920s, the throat of the sacrificial lamb or ox was sometimes rewoven, the wound repaired, and the hand clasping the knife transformed into a clenched fist—suggesting a man apparently preparing to punch a dozing animal—but it helped to sell the tapestry. Even mythological scenes that would create a stir in the auction gallery if

Wild men of the woods hunting: scene from a frieze made ca. 1470, sold in 1981 for $1,100,000, the world record for a tapestry.

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A Flemish large-leaf verdure *tapestry, ca. 1550, with cabbage leaves, birds, and flowers; many small repairs;* $40,000.

painted by Rubens or Poussin arouse little interest when they appear as tapestries. In all cases, small figures are preferred to large ones, which cannot help overwhelming a medium-size room.

What nobody seems to value or care about is the immense labor that went into these hangings. Today, demand for new tapestries is quite healthy, and weavers are charging between $300 and $1,500 a square foot. On this basis, anyone commissioning the Diana tapestry today might expect to pay between $60,000 and $300,000 and wait years for delivery.

In the midsixteenth century, Philip II of Spain ordered a suite of panels, each one forty feet long and with a total area of over 8,000 square feet. Since he was in a hurry for them, the Flemish weaver Willem Pannemaker used twelve looms, each operated by seven men, and also worked a night shift. Even so, the job took over five years and ran to 250,000 man-hours.

In the Middle Ages, tapestries captured better than any other art form the spirit of Gothic art. Yet they were scandalously neglected in eighteenth-century France, and many were destroyed in the anticlerical frenzy of the Revolution. The greatest of all medieval tapestries, the Angers Apocalypse, commissioned by Duke Louis I of Anjou around 1380, might have fared better in the hands of the Vandals themselves. Consisting of six pieces, each about eighty feet long and twenty feet high, and illustrating the text of St. John the Evangelist, this staggering creation must have made as great an impact as the glinting rose window of Chartres Cathedral. Visitors to the château must have been impressed not only by its size but also by the extraordinarily lifelike and moving expressions on the faces of the characters it depicted.

In 1782, the cathedral chapter of Angers tried to sell it off but received not a single bid. For over half a century, parts were used as doormats, pads for horses' stalls, and drop cloths during cathedral repairs. In 1848, it was finally rescued by a canon, who did what he could to restore and preserve it. Such indignities were surprisingly common. One reason for the rarity of tapestries that incorporate silver and gold thread is that many were burned to recover the metal. In France, the revolutionary government of the Directory burned 180 tapestries from the royal collection for this purpose.

The old market cliché that art is fickle hardly prepares one for the demotion of tapestries to the level of junk. When the market finally began to rise a hundred years ago, quantities of tapestries turned up in French farmhouses, where they had been used to cover wagons and haystacks or keep potatoes from freezing. The Cloisters' Heroes tapestry had been cut up to upholster chairs.

One reservation buyers might reasonably have about tapestries—though few seem aware of it—is that they lost their spontaneous artistic quality after 1500. It was Raphael who unwittingly sounded the death knell of this greatest of Gothic art forms. Commissioned by Pope Leo X to design a series of ten tapestries depicting the Acts of the Apostles for the Sistine Chapel, he made cartoons—now in London's Victoria and Albert Museum—which laid down with the greatest precision the zones and shadings of color he required. From that moment, tapestries became little more than woven paintings. Gothic tapestries, with their little rabbits, dogs, birds, and exquisitely observed meadow flowers, put in according to the whim of the weaver, had become old-fashioned. The *mille-fleurs* phase was over, and with the Renaissance began the ascendancy of painting over weaving.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, famous artists—Teniers, Boucher, and Coypel among them—took to designing tapestries. The weaver now became little more than a copyist, subservient to the cartoon designer. Against this ascendancy

the Brussels weavers of the Raphael tapestries made a touching last protest. Finding the robe of Christ too empty an expanse, they wove it all over with flowers. But Raphael's cartoons had another consequence. So admired were they, the looms of Flanders were swamped with orders for similar works, and later in the century quality began to suffer.

Though the weaver's skill reached its zenith in Europe in the fifteenth century, the origin of the art is lost in the mists of time. A loom appears in an Egyptian tomb painting of 3000 B.C. Homer describes Helen embroidering a textile depicting the combats of heroes, and Penelope wove the web—tapestry?—portraying the exploits of her husband, Odysseus. The evolution of weaving in France becomes confused in the Middle Ages because the words *tapis*, carpet, and *tapisserie*, tapestry, are used ambiguously. Quite possibly, the tribe described by Caesar as the Attrebates, whose skill in weaving was recorded, is perpetuated by the name Arras. Along with Tournai and Paris, this town dominated French tapestry making from the fourteenth century to the sixteenth. Its skills soon spread to the Low Countries, England, and Italy and eventually to most of Europe. Popular designs were extensively copied, and weavers began to incorporate their signatures into the fabric along with symbols for the towns where they worked.

Tapestries of Beauvais, Gobelins, Aubusson, and other famous factories can still be bought at auction today. Though the eighteenth-century scenes by Boucher are often filled with beguiling nymphs frolicking on clouds or shepherds in an idyllic pastoral setting, even they have proved hard to sell. Considering the recent revaluation of the *dix-huitième*, this sluggish performance is surprising.

At three major sales of fine Flemish, French, and English tapestries of the sixteenth to eighteenth century recently held in London and New York, twenty-nine out of a total of sixty-seven tapestries offered failed to reach their reserve. Those that sold realized an average of seventy dollars a square foot. Since the cost of a top-quality modern carpet is up to ten dollars a square foot, tapestry admirers are stunned by a differential that seems an insult to this great art form.

The price of a tapestry is dictated in part by what remains of its color. After all, a powerful sensation of color is what the viewer of a tapestry first receives. Only later does he begin to sort out the image in his mind. Though Gothic tapestries used only fifteen to twenty colors, the range of tones is remarkable. Eighteenth-century makers may have achieved a more riotous effect, to the point of debauching the eye. Most tapestries have lost their freshness, though the faded mellow tones of early specimens are themselves appreciated. Yellows and browns have faded most. Greens have turned blue and purples have lost strength, though reds and blues have kept much of their original vigor.

The condition of the fabric as well as of the color vitally affects demand. Many tapestries offered at auction today need restoration. The final damper on the market is the cost and time this requires. Most restorers and conservation experts have a backlog of at least two years' work, so anyone buying a badly damaged tapestry today might reasonably expect to have it on his wall sometime in the 1990s. Reweaving a tapestry, as the London dealer Jack Franses put it, is actually no more exacting than darning socks. All you need is good eyes and limitless patience.

Detail from The Rape of Proserpine, *a Beauvais tapestry, ca. 1760, estimated at $20,000–$30,000.*

The effect of all these deterrents is that most buyers will shun 90 percent of the tapestries offered for sale. Hence, prices for the most desirable 10 percent are strong and could well rise. What everyone wants today is a Flemish or French *verdure* or *choux-fleurs* tapestry in good condition with a six-foot drop and up to ten feet in length. Anything larger gets progressively cheaper. They would buy Gothic *millefleurs* tapestries too, though these are exceedingly rare. Such is the demand for them that buyers are willing not only to put up with biblical subjects but also to pay great sums for them.

Some experts believe the time has come to cut large tapestries to more manageable size—even though they know they risk being branded vandals by future generations. Where the central image is filled with people and animals, this surgery can lead to telltale signs—a knee entering at left, for example, or the hindquarters of a horse exiting right. But where a tapestry can be reduced without such effects, owners may well opt for such a solution rather than not hang a tapestry at all. And if prices for massive panels threaten to drop further, dealers will be tempted to do the same. It is a dangerous line to take, however, for that was no doubt how people thought about the Angers Apocalypse two hundred years ago and what nearly led to its ruin. *Plus ça change* . . . . ☐

Robin Duthy is author of The Successful Investor.

DOS AND DON'TS FOR BUYERS

1. Avoid tapestries with a drop of more than ten feet. Even if you have room for them, they will be hard to sell.
2. Avoid battle scenes, sacrifices, and other bloodshed.
3. Avoid tapestries with large figures. They overwhelm the average room.
4. Don't let central heating dry out the fibers. Use a humidifier.
5. Buy a tapestry in which the action takes place in the middle. If it is near the bottom, it may be hidden by furniture.
6. Buy a tapestry in hangable condition. Otherwise you could wait two years or more for the restorers to finish with it.
7. Buy at auction if possible. Turnover in tapestries is slow, and dealers have to mark up by 100 percent or more.
8. Buy *verdure* tapestries, that is, those with foliage, birds, or some pastoral scene. Demand for these is strong and should remain so.

A FINE ROMANCE WITH AMERICAN POP SONGS, STARRING BOLCOM & MORRIS

BY RICHARD DYER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROL FRIEDMAN

Elegance without frills: Bolcom & Morris play this month at Carnegie Recital Hall.

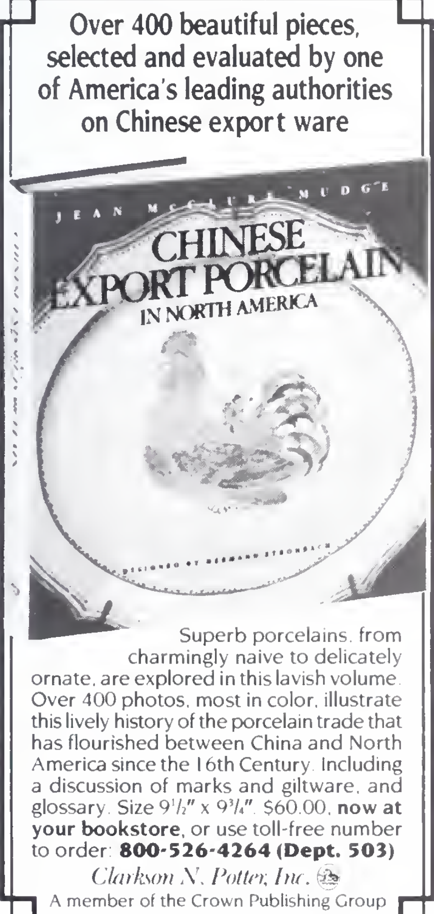
He was afraid to hear her sing, and she didn't want to hear him play the piano.

It was 1972, and William Bolcom and Joan Morris had been going together awhile; neither of them wanted to find out the other wasn't good enough. But then it happened. Bill Bolcom went to the Waldorf, and there, behind the ice swan, stood Joan Morris, singing. "She looked and sounded like Ruth Etting," says Bolcom, eleven years married and still smitten. "Before Bill," recalls Morris, "only the swan responded. It wept."

Before long they were performing "Ten Cents a Dance" together at parties, and giving their first concerts. In 1974 they made their first record, and in the dozen years since, they have recorded fourteen albums containing nearly 200 American popular songs composed between the Civil War and the present, in renditions of effortless elegance; they have played them in concert all across America, Canada, Great Britain, and Europe. On January 17, they will participate in the celebrity celebrations surrounding the reopening of Carnegie Hall.

Bolcom & Morris concerts are joyous, informal affairs, no matter what the venue. He'll probably play some ragtime or tango music to start with, or a piece by Darius Milhaud, one of his teachers. Then she'll come on, wearing something outrageous. Last summer, at their thirteenth consecutive appearance at the Mohawk Trail Festival, in Charlemont, Massachusetts, she turned up in the Federated Church (crowded to the choir loft with people like Dory Previn and Marge Champion) looking like Emily Dickinson in floating, period white—though the fruited necklace was something Emily Dickinson would have passed up, if she'd ever shopped in Tijuana.

One or the other of them will introduce each song with a few remarks about where it came from and which down-home diva sang it first. Then they'll perform. Bolcom's accompaniments are alert, sympathetic, adventurous, authentic—he points out that many standards are now



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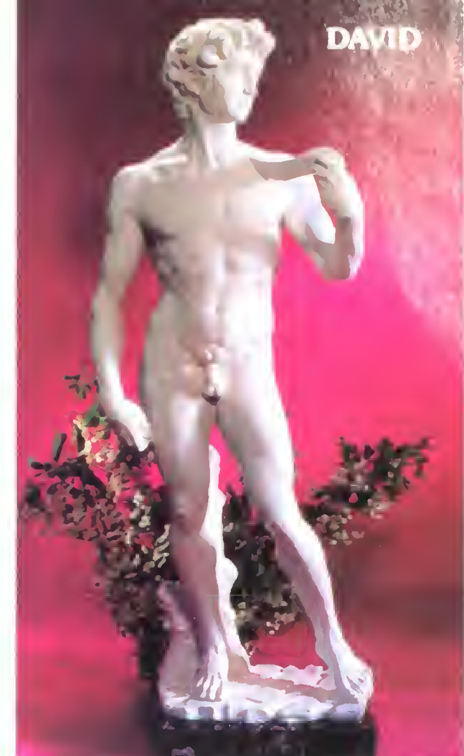

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[illegible] tempo, which al-[illegible] their [illegible] meaning. He might first [illegible] "I'm Just Wild about Harry" as [illegible] Eubie Blake first intended, an[illegible] the one-step it became in the Br[illegible] show *Shuffle Along*.

Morr[illegible] mezzo soprano strokes every song with silk. She sings "legit" and without a microphone, the way everybody had to when most of the songs she favors were written. Her words are dictation clear, nudged with the knowledge of an actress who is an acute observer of the human comedy. She knows how these songs sounded when they were new, and the general style is always correct; the details of phrasing, color, and dramatic imagination are always her own.

Occasionally a guest will come along for the fun—at the Charlemont, it was Sheldon Harnick, lyricist of *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Fiorello!*. He introduced "Artificial Flowers," a forgotten song from *Tenderloin:* "I wrote this song for Joan Morris to sing, only I didn't know it then."

After a couple of dozen songs there are always a few encores; the last of them, almost inevitably, is a song Bolcom wrote for Morris, "Lime Jello," a mad, "where's the Alka-Seltzer?" menu that could have been dreamed up only by a veteran of countless cultural luncheons and postconcert receptions. The refrain suggests the basic recipe for the chairlady's own Lime Jello Marshmallow Cottage Cheese Surprise: several times fans have borne a silver salver of the stuff to the footlights at the end of a concert.

Bolcom was born in Seattle in 1938. He was playing the piano by the time he was four, but his parents, he says, were smart enough not to exploit him as a prodigy: "They wouldn't put a dog through such a life." He entered the University of Washington at eleven as a private student, and he was already writing music. "I was no Mozart, but I knew my Kabalevsky and Prokofiev." He put himself through school working nights at a hotel and playing the piano at weekend stag parties. He wound up in New York, taught for a while at Queens College, and, when that ended, played the piano for dance classes and worked around the office at Nonesuch Records, where he persuaded Teresa Sterne, then the imagination behind that progressive label, to make some albums that were instrumental in launching the ragtime revival. "I was also eating a lot of soup, and to this day I don't like it."

Morris was born across the state line in Portland, Oregon, in 1943. She started to study singing when she was nineteen and went to Gonzaga University, in Spokane, Washington. She worked for the phone company and became Operator of the Month because she had a nice speaking voice and actually listened to the people who were talking to her. She liked to sing and wanted to be an actress, though she was painfully shy. She came to New York to study and bolster her confidence. "If I could be somebody else, it was usually okay," she explains, "but I had to learn how to use myself."

In Bolcom's own serious compositions, there is often a part for his favorite singer.

She appeared in a famous off-Broadway production of the nineteenth-century melodrama *The Drunkard*; the music director was Barry Manilow, "my best accompanist," she remembers appreciatively, "before Bill." And together with the harpist Jay Miller she put together an act and played Central Park. "He cut off the top of a baby carriage, put the harp on the wheels, and we rolled it into the park. I sang Beatles songs and Joan Baez songs, and we passed around a collection basket one of us had appropriated from St. Patrick's Cathedral. One thing led to another." With Miller she performed on Fire

Island, then at the Café Carlyle, and finally at the Waldorf, behind the swan.

Bolcom & Morris's first official concert together was under academic auspices, at Brooklyn College, late in 1972. Bolcom was finishing up his *Piano Music by George Gershwin* album for Nonesuch and asked Morris to sing for Teresa Sterne at the end of a session. "She was puzzled for a moment, then delighted. 'I get it,' she said. 'She sings them straight.' " It was Sterne who suggested an album of turn-of-the-century songs like "After the Ball," because there were no modern recordings and the songs themselves were in the public domain.

"I fought the suggestion because I thought the only thing I could do was camp the songs up," Morris recalls. "But one morning when I was making the bed, it came to me how I could sing them. The language was different, but I knew people who had been in similar situations. That made me realize how real it was."

Both collaborators wonder now at how smoothly one thing again led to another. "I had given up playing the piano in concerts," Bolcom recalls. "I had no intention of ever teaching again." Today he is on the faculty of the University of Michigan; he has also emerged as a major composer. His biggest work, so far, and perhaps the most assimilative work yet composed by an American, is a three-hour setting of all of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* for chorus, orchestra, rock singer, and soloists—including Joan Morris.

"WHEN I SING 'ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS,' I USE MY MOM A LITTLE BIT."

The work stretches across every conceivable musical style and ends with a reggae anthem dedicated to the memory of Bob Marley. It will be performed this month at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Currently Bolcom is completing a symphony for the Saint Louis Symphony, a work that will end with a setting of Theodore Roethke's "The Rose"—composed for Joan Morris to sing.

"I never knew what I was going to do next," Bolcom says, "but I did have the theory that it was important to find out exactly how it happens that words and music coalesce when they become a song, and to find out the musical language of our own culture. You look at France, and you can see an unbroken line that begins with the *trouvères* and goes right through Boulez. Our own composers spent a lot of time trying to be ersatz Europeans. What attracted me to ragtime was its fusion of European and American elements—and its complete absence of self-importance. That is also what happened in our show music."

Morris, too, has wound up as a very unlikely academic, joining her husband on the faculty in Ann Arbor, where she teaches young singers. "They come in with no sense of context," she says of some of her students. "They just copy whatever they've heard. It's like when Linda Ronstadt sings older songs—there's an eighties take on everything. It's always a surprise when we hear an old record by somebody like Helen Morgan. We stereotype these people in our minds, and when you hear them, it is always something fresher and more human than you expected. I ask my students to take the story out of every song and tell it first in their own words. If you tell people your story, they will hear it and understand it. When I sing 'Artificial Flowers' I use my mom a little bit, and think about the twenty-two years she spent selling hats in a department store and came out of it without a pension."

Morris's soprano is warm, silky, smart.

Bolcom & Morris plan to wait awhile before making another record; the last few have come too fast, they think. They want to make a Cole Porter album. "People keep telling us how much they love our Cole Porter record," Bolcom says, "and we haven't ever made one." They would also like to record more of their adventurous material, like the Ives songs they often perform in concert. The possibilities are limitless, and Bolcom & Morris have their fun working hard. "Ruth Gordon said something to us that I always tell my students," Morris says. "It's not enough to have talent. You have to have a talent for having talent—and treat it right." □

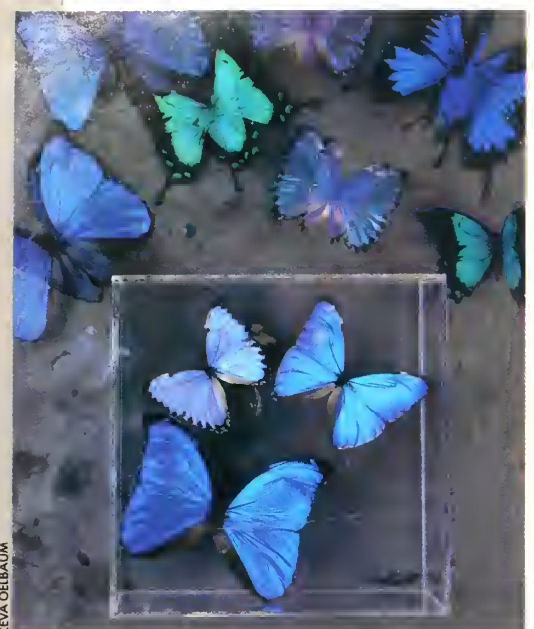
SWEET SONGS AND STRONG ONES

All fourteen records by William Bolcom and Joan Morris remain in print, a situation that is both unusual and unlikely to last much longer, because of the current changeover to compact discs. Three of the Bolcom & Morris records are already on CD, as it happens, and they are three of the best—*Silver Linings,* a collection of songs by Jerome Kern (Arabesque), and the two Rodgers and Hart records that have been combined on a single silver disc (RCA), squeezing out only four items from the LP total of twenty-six. Bolcom & Morris themselves are particularly fond of their second album, *Who Shall Rule This American Nation?* (Nonesuch), which features songs from the Civil War era by Henry Clay Work; the two are joined by one of Morris's teachers, the baritone Clifford Jackson. The granddaddy of all novelty tunes, "Grandfather's Clock," is Work's most famous song, but most of the others have a larger social and political significance. The first Bolcom & Morris album, *After the Ball* (Nonesuch), an anthology of turn-of-the-century popular songs, is by now a classic; of the other early albums, *Vaudeville: Songs of the Great Ladies of the Musical Stage* (Nonesuch) has fresh and unnostalgic performances of irresistible songs like "Shine On, Harvest Moon" and "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now." In concert, Bolcom & Morris spice up sweet melodies like that with more outré contemporary material—the albums devoted to songs by the early rockers Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller (Nonesuch) and to works by Bolcom and Arnold Weinstein (*Black Max–Cabaret Songs;* RCA) are strong stuff, undiluted, and don't invite consecutive listening as much as the others do. But all the Bolcom & Morris records are recommendable, particularly *Wild about Eubie* (CBS), which features Eubie Blake himself in a guest appearance; *The Girl on the Magazine Cover* (an Irving Berlin album on RCA with an amusing late-twenties-style drawing of a hatted and fur-collared Morris on the front jacket); and *These Charming People,* a charming series of duets with Max Morath (RCA). The newest album, *Lime Jello: An American Cabaret* (RCA), catches Bolcom & Morris live, in a sweep of repertory characteristic of their concert appearances, and in electrically immediate contact with their audience.

Richard Dyer is the music critic for the Boston Globe.

UP & COMING

ART ON THE WING; DESIGN DERRING-DO; THE LAST CHRONOMETRIST



ZEVA OELBAUM

BUTTERFLY MAN

On the sidewalk outside of Cartier, in New York, a crowd gathers. Everyone is staring into the main display window, swathed in blue velvet. Not, however, at the $260,000 necklace, but at a handful of iridescent blue and purple butterflies—real butterflies—frozen in midflight as if they have just been tossed skyward. In reality, they are preserved this way, a bouquet of color carefully composed by Marshall Hill, in his unique art medium: butterflies.

Hill shows his work at his two galleries in New York, one on Thompson Street and the other at Pier 17 at the South Street Seaport, near Manhattan's southern tip. He calls both places Mariposa (butterfly, in Spanish) and has made the one at the seaport into something of a tourist attraction. The luminous space is filled with soft electronic music, and though clusters of people hover noisily outside its windows, they enter quietly, as if awestruck.

Set delicately in three-inch-deep Lucite panels are the butterflies, arranged sometimes in kinetic throngs like bursts of heather, sometimes in sinuous lines like migrating fowl. Whatever one may think of Hill's creations as art, as objects they are simply, strikingly beautiful and cost up to $7,500 each. Displayed under pinpoint lights, large velvet and green Malaysian butterflies blend playfully with small yellow ones from Mexico in a work entitled *Amigos. Strangers in the Night* is a sweeping pattern in black and white. *Punk* features a pair of moths from Madagascar. Their brilliant, Day-Glo colors caught the eye of the Smithsonian Institution, which offers them for sale in its catalogue and gift shop. The museum has also expressed interest in a large mural for a permanent exhibit.

To get his raw materials, Hill travels to family-run butterfly farms in China, Africa, the Caribbean, or South America. There the insects are raised in giant pens. They are shipped to New York, where the artist and two apprentices strive to keep pace with burgeoning demand. "Europeans are always buying this stuff," Hill says. "And the Japanese are especially intrigued by it as a natural form of art." It's all very gratifying, but Hill has the good sense to keep his work in perspective. "I'll hardly be famous when I'm dead," he concedes. His butterflies, however, will be around for generations. —*Bob Keating*

Above: The medium (exotic butterflies) is the message at the Mariposa Gallery.

DRIVEN DESIGNER

At the London Coliseum, home of the English National Opera, the art of staging musical drama has undergone an extraordinary flowering of late—one that is sure to have an impact in America. In revivals of little-known works and in imaginative reworkings of classics, a new visual poetry has emerged, sometimes causing outrage, sometimes, wild applause—but never boredom.

This renaissance has been grounded in an intense, fresh vision of the operas themselves as well as an interest in accessibility (the ENO performs in English only, even if it has to commission the translation of the work). Although critics of the new wave have had a field day bewailing the outrageousness of the stage designs, most have ultimately come to agree that the work of David Fielding, a quiet, intensely private thirty-six-year-old designer, is original and provocative.

Fielding grew up in the English countryside and attended London's Central School of Art and Design, the premier seat of training for British theater designers.

Below: Looming over Handel's Xerxes, *David Fielding's memorably monumental set.*

CATHERINE ASHMORE

More Fielding heroics in Wagner's Rienzi.

During the 1970s he displayed his grasp of solid craftsmanship with fine traditional sets of the classics for the Scottish National Opera *(The Seraglio)*, Welsh Opera *(The Turn of the Screw)*, and Kent Opera *(Le Nozze di Figaro)*.

Bit by bit he turned up the volume of his imagination, beginning with his stunning recasting of Wagner's neglected *Rienzi* in September 1983. Instead of placing it in the quattrocento, Fielding moved the action to Mussolini's Rome, complete with an aerial bombardment of Fascist propaganda. Another production with the same director, Nicholas Hytner, was Handel's *Xerxes*, a dullish, stilted drama with ravishing music, staged in February 1985 for the composer's tricentennial celebrations. Fielding's surrealist baroque settings—combining Assyrian sphinxes with Grinling Gibbons paneling, spreading painted tapestry onto built architecture in a Magrittean *double vue*—highlighted the music's eternally modern stateliness.

His latest work has turned against the extravagances so lauded in *Rienzi* and *Xerxes*. Fielding tackled Tchaikovsky's opera *Mazeppa* in December 1984, conceived in conjunction with the American director David Alden. Fielding set it in a vaguely Stalinist Russia, festooned with bare light bulbs, bloody machine-gunned corpses, and broken chairs. All this looked so stark and terrifying on the vast stage of the Coliseum that first-nighters booed the design mercilessly, and the reviewers were scandalized. Such controversy, however, is always good for business, for after the brickbats came the roses. Performances were sold out, and the opera establishment clearly liked what it saw. Fielding will design *Idomeneo* for the Vienna Staatsoper with Johannes Schaaf and, after that, mount Handel's *Julius Caesar* at the Paris Opera. The new commissions offer fitting tribute to his ability to see the classics freshly, unencumbered by the silliness of most opera designs, much less the tempting, empty expressionism of much contemporary art.

—Philip Core

LAST OF THE WATCHMAKERS

In recent years, a small circle of Paris watch experts would gather most Tuesdays at a restaurant on the Rive Gauche to mourn precision watchmaking, which seemed to be moribund. Lately, however, the gloom has begun to lift. Paris has a new maker of splendid pocket watches, a transplanted Marseillais barely known outside the Tuesday circle. What makes François-Paul Journe particularly unusual is his youth. Journe is only twenty-nine; he is probably the first master watchmaker to wear blue jeans.

Journe began as an apprentice restorer, working with his uncle, a restorer of clocks and watches. Then, in 1982, he was shown a simple *tourbillon* (a rotating mechanism) timepiece made by the sixty-year-old George Daniels, the brilliant and blustery Londoner who has been putting out watches since 1969. "I knew when I held the Daniels watch," Journe musingly recalls, "that I wanted to create the new rather than simply restore the old."

In the years since, Journe has improved his technique and produced four more custom-made watches—averaging one a year—plus a "rough draft" of an uncompleted work. His current piece is the most sophisticated to date—a self-winding watch with all the goodies the Tuesday circle cherishes: an equation of time mechanism, *tourbillon*, spring *détente*, and *remontoir*. To show off its wizardry, Journe is sandwiching the movement in a transparent rock-crystal case. The watch, which will take a year to craft, also demanded months of consultation with the client. As for price, that, like the address of Journe's small, oak-paneled atelier, is unlisted. He says that he prefers only serious collectors with a few hundred thousand francs at their disposal to seek him out.

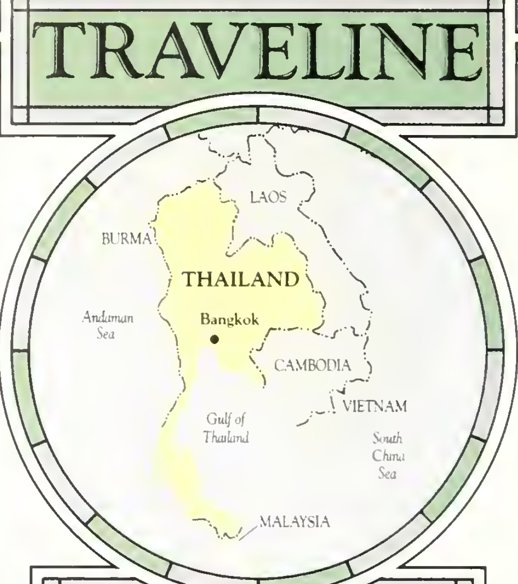
The work space, hidden in a courtyard at 32 Rue de Verneuil, doesn't encourage visitors. No signs mark the entrance. Journe's advertising budget is a yearly batch of engraved calling cards, all that his word-of-mouth business requires. He says it was by restoring the eighteenth-century timepieces of Ferdinand Berthoud (author of an entry on timepieces in Diderot's *Encyclopédie*) and Abraham-Louis Breguet (inventor of the *tourbillon*) that he learned the secrets of his craft.

Jean-Claude Sabrier, a Paris-based watch expert, says: "Journe is doing now what is no longer being done in the trade. He is making special, custom-made watches from start to finish. He makes his own plates and his own wheels; he draws out and designs his own movements. In twenty years, he may be the greatest custom watchmaker in the world." And the only one.

—Allen Kurzweil

The watchmaker François-Paul Journe, at work on a timepiece in his atelier.

TRAVELINE



Tips for explorers, antiques shoppers, and fine-art buffs

V B KOTOWITZ

Wats in Thailand. Bangkok is a huge, sprawling city with one of the world's worst traffic problems. The Grand Palace is its number-one sightseeing attraction. Completely restored in 1982, with new gold leaf even on its spires, domes, and Buddha statues.

Bangkok is the site of over 300 wats. (A wat is a Thai monastery-temple compound.) Don't miss Wat Po, the biggest, with an enormous reclining gold-leaf Buddha. Also visit Wat Benchamabopitr, the newest of the royal temples.

Boat trips on the klongs (canals) and the Chao Phraya River, as well as visits to the floating markets, are musts.

The best hotel is the Oriental, right on the river. It's one of the best hotels in the world, in fact. Address: 48 Oriental Avenue. U.S. phone: (800) 663-0787. Second hotel choice is the Royal Orchid Sheraton. Phone: (800) 325-3535.

One must in Singapore. There aren't too many important sights in Singapore, but its National Museum is quite outstanding. There you will see the arts and history of Singapore, as well as other countries of Southeast Asia. Chinese art objects from the Ch'ing dynasty and exhibits of ceramics, silver, and jade are interesting and well displayed. Daily audiovisual shows, between 10:15 A.M. and 3:15 P.M., give you a helpful introduction.

New Zealand with hook and line. One of the most attractive places to stay in New Zealand is Huka Lodge, near Lake Taupo. Tastefully decorated cottages surrounded by evergreens. On the Waikato River. Good food. Excellent trout fishing in Lake Taupo. Address: P.O. Box 6993, Auckland. U.S. phone: (619) 562-5494.

Little England." A very nice accommodation in Sri Lanka is the Hill Club, in Nuwara Eliya. Established in 1876 as a private club for expatriate English residents. It extends "temporary membership" to visitors. Most rooms have cozy fireplaces and private baths. Dinner by candlelight. Phone: 522-231.

The hill country of south central Sri Lanka is lovely. Many well-groomed tea plantations, and waterfalls.

Where to stay in Taiwan. The Grand is Taiwan's best hotel. Elegant, and lots of atmosphere. Overlooks the city. Good restaurants. Address: 1 Chung Shan North Road, Section 4, Taipei. Phone: (2) 596-5565. Second choice is the Ritz.

Tokyo's finest art. The variety, number, and scope of museums in Tokyo are nothing short of astonishing. The city has 143 museums and galleries that offer fascinating displays of everything from paintings to wrestling.

If you have time for only one, at least see the Tokyo National Museum, Japan's largest—formerly the Imperial Household Museum. Has the best and broadest collection of Japanese art and archaeology in the world; also Chinese and Korean art and archaeology. Paintings, decorative art, sculpture, ceramics, lacquerware, Buddhist figures. Open daily, 9–4:30, year round. Closed Mondays. Address: 13-9 Ueno Koen, Taito-ku.

Off the beaten track in Italy. Not many people know that just fifteen miles south of Milan is one of Italy's most outstanding art treasures: the Certosa di Pavia, a fourteenth-to-fifteenth-century Carthusian monastery. Splendid ornate basilica façade and charming cloisters. Monks will give guided tours. Closed Mondays.

The quiet, saffron-colored town of Pavia, five miles to the south, is also worth a visit. Has a monumental basilica and one of the oldest universities in Europe.

Browsing in Paris. You'll never find more antiques in one place than at Le Louvre des Antiquaires, a block-square "shopping mall" in Paris. It is across from the Louvre, between the Place du Palais-Royal (main entrance) and the Rue de Marengo.

When it opened, several years ago, some people wondered how all those individualistic dealers could exist together in peaceful competition. They have, even though not always peacefully. Prices are generally high, but there are also nice surprises. And they will handle packing, shipping, insurance, verification, framing, and restoration.

The Musée Napoléon I, a new museum in the Palace of Fontainebleau, outside of Paris, gives a fascinating picture of the First Empire through the paintings, art objects, furnishings, and memorabilia in this comprehensive collection.

Swiss treasures. Too many people who go to Zurich miss Winterthur, twenty minutes away by train. It has more and better museums than any other small city in the country. The chief attraction is the Oskar Reinhart collection, "Am Römerholz," of French masters from Poussin to Cézanne, plus paintings by Cranach, Brueghel, Rubens, Rembrandt, El Greco, and Goya, all housed in Reinhart's mansion. □

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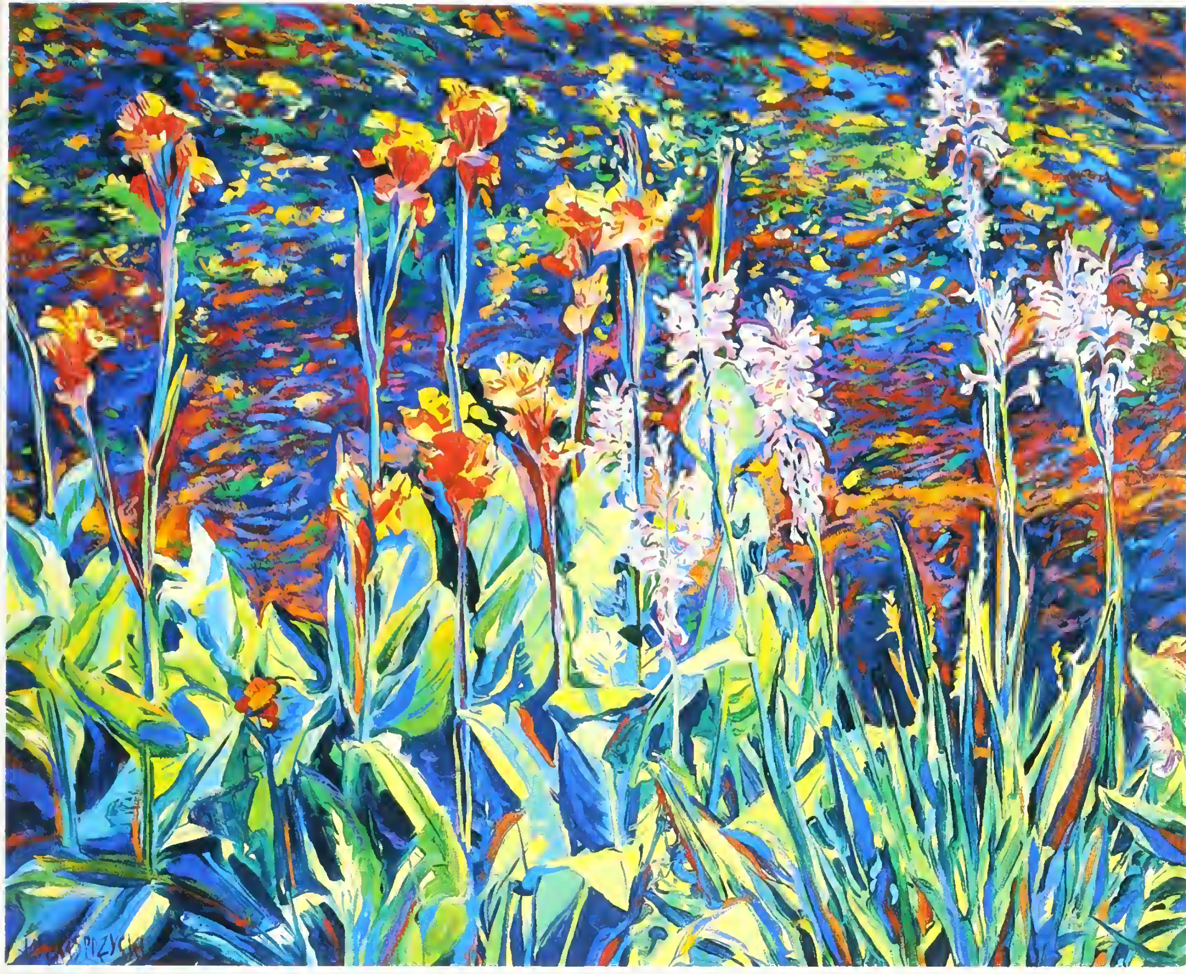

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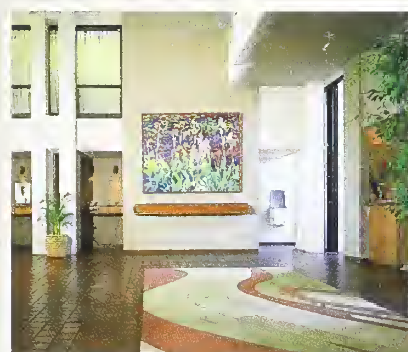

Kasprzycki's art graces the lobby of the famous Kapalua Bay Hotel.

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Jan Kasprzycki's acclaim is worldwide. His distinctive, dramatic style is on display not only in major collections, but also in such exquisite surroundings as the lobby of the Kapalua Bay Hotel. This incomparable hotel could have chosen anyone's work. It has chosen Kasprzycki's.

To purchase this beautiful painting or receive more information about the artist, his one-of-a-kind oils, and his limited-edition prints, please call toll-free: 800-367-8047 ext. 108.
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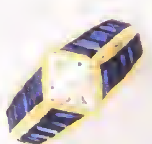

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26 CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD The rediscovery of Torres-García; Corbu's year; stonewalling as an art; a fine restaurant in Tokyo; Yale's medieval masterpieces

42 AUCTIONS Pre-Raphaelites galore

50 THE LIVELY ARTS Ballet's beautiful stranger, Amanda McKerrow

61 MY EYE An introduction to this issue on the Golden State

62 THE SUNSHINE BOYS Yes, there is a distinct California school of artists, by Phyllis Tuchman

70 SPORTS The California credo

72 FEASTS FOR THE EYE Why Los Angeles's best restaurants put fine art on the walls, by William Rice

78 GOOD LINES In praise of Bernard Maybeck's Bay Area houses, by Ogden Tanner

84 WHEELS Five quintessential cars

86 PUTTIN' ON THE GLITZ "God save me from old money," says the retailing wizard Amen Wardy, by Leon Harris

92 STEP-DOWN GARDEN On the steeps

94 THE GRAND TOUR Rating California's art museums, by Thomas Hoving

104 CALIFORNIA SUITES Where to stay on a whirlwind art tour, by Jane Lasky

106 A CULTIVATED EAR Betty Freeman's living room is the West Coast's center for new music, by Barbara Jepson

112 THE GREAT GAMBLE A winery in the Gabilan Mountains?, by Eunice Fried

118 CLASS ACTS Movie manners

120 POST-HOLLYWOOD FURNITURE In Los Angeles, anyway, form follows fantasy, by Hunter Drohojowska

124 PRIDE OF PLACE Life-styles in the San Joaquin Valley, by Katie Leishman

132 INVESTOR'S FILE New paintings

140 UP & COMING A fashion designer; the new Jaguar XJ6; a cosmetician's touch

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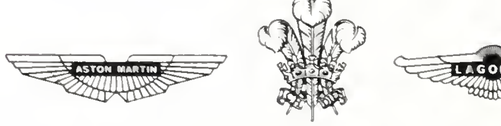

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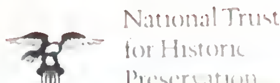
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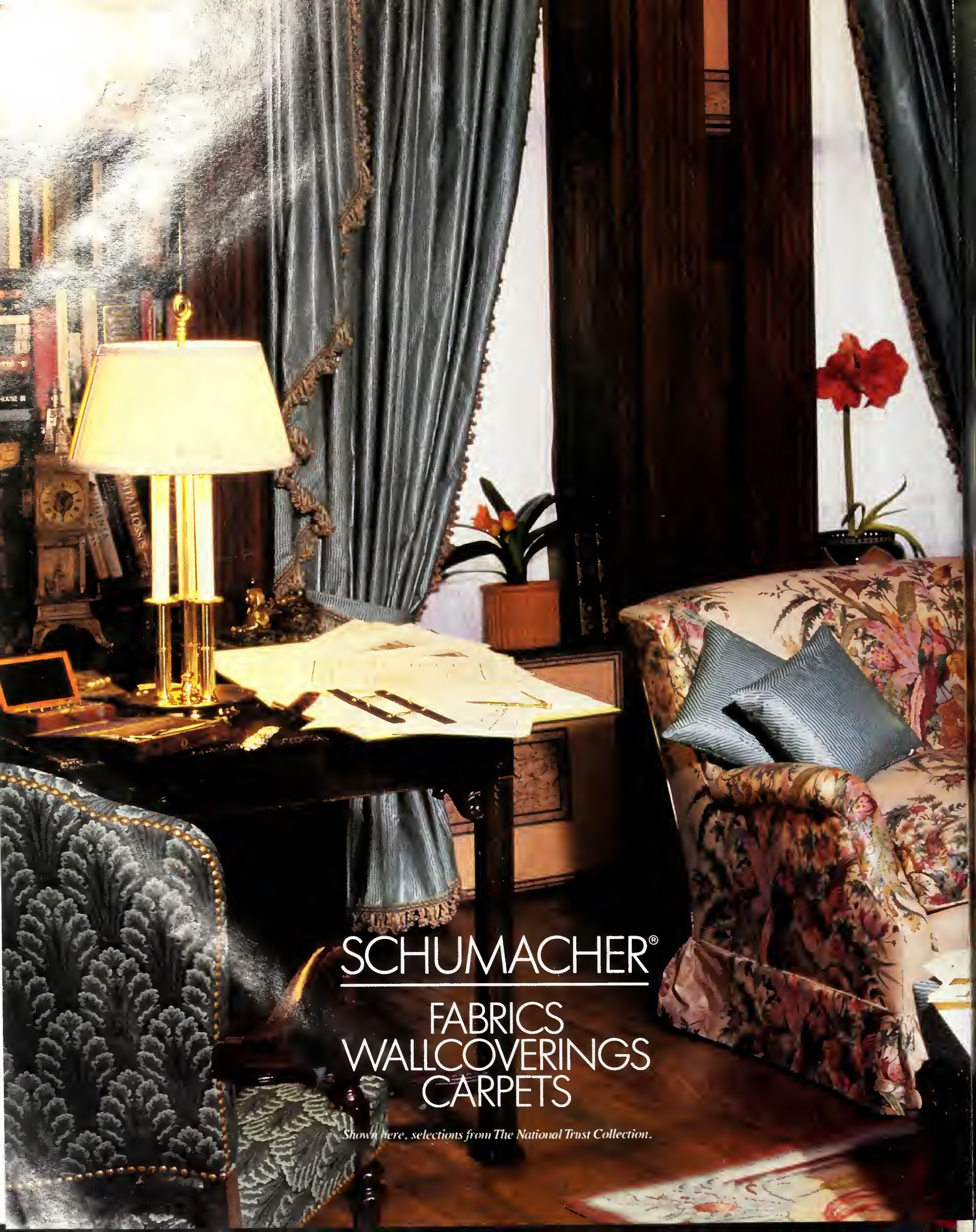
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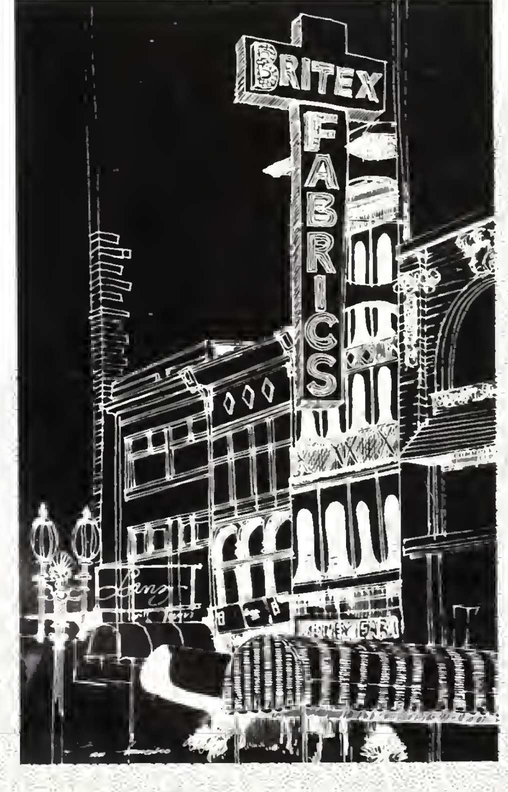

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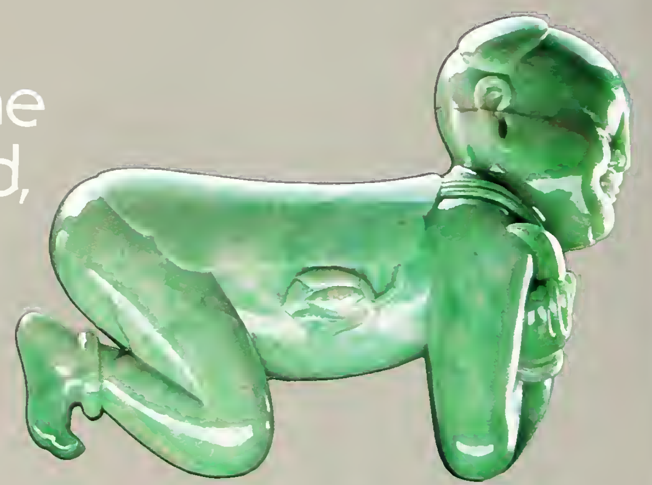
CLINIQUE

Off the record, they stole the show!



However, for the record, our pair of jade pillows established a new high for the artform: $4200000.00.

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SOUTH OF MODERNISM

The Uruguayan painter Joaquín Torres-García was cast in the heroic, even mythic, mold. Though he was dogged by adversity and neglect in his lifetime and afterward, his achievement prevails and his reputation grows. Now, a circulating exhibition of his work, currently on view at Houston's Museum of Fine Arts—its last stop—from February 14 to April 5, should finally establish him at the front rank of international modernism.

Entitled "Torres-García: Grid-Pattern-Sign, Paris–Montevideo, 1924–1944," it was organized by the Arts Council of Great Britain and the American Federation of Arts and has previously been seen in London, Barcelona, Düsseldorf, and Miami. It consists of 100 paintings, drawings, and wood constructions culled from private collections and the family estate and is a testimony to Torres-García's nearly incredible perseverance and productivity.

Torres-García was born in Montevideo in 1874 and emigrated to Barcelona with his family in 1892. Omitting his early and late representational art, the show proceeds chronologically from the time when reductionist geometric form, proportion, and texture began to preoccupy him.

Nonobjective wood constructions based on the golden section show his close adherence to Mondrian's ideas in the period 1929–32. The artist soon mapped out his own terrain, however, fusing a constructivist framework—including utopian notions of art as a universal order—with a personal sign system and color sense that owed much to an intensive study of ancient Peruvian art and architecture.

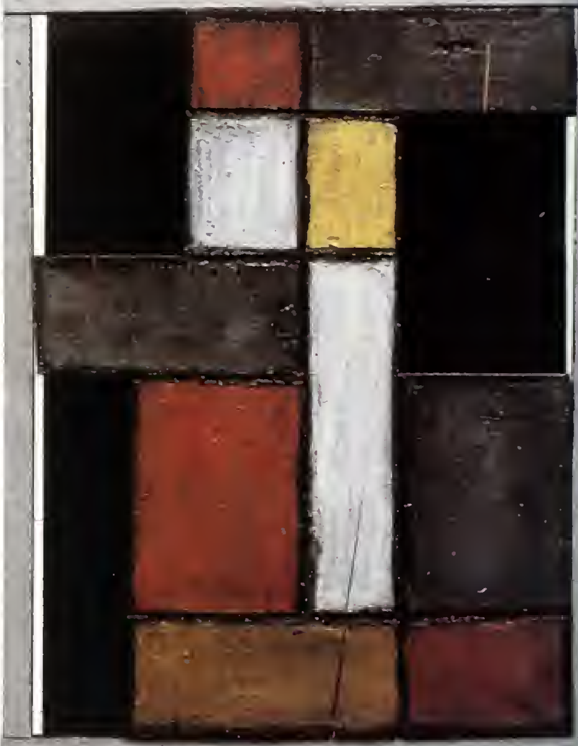
The catalogue of Torres-García's misfortunes begins early in his career in Barcelona, when a political upheaval in 1913 canceled his most important mural commission midway through its execution. (In fact, most of his early works in public buildings were subsequently destroyed.) It continues for the next twenty, peripatetic years—in Tarrasa (Spain), New York City, Italy, the French Riviera, Paris, and Madrid—during which he sought without success a living for his large family and recognition as an artist. And it does not end with his death, in 1949: a fire that swept the Museum of Modern Art in Rio in 1978 destroyed a show of his work including seventy-eight paintings and murals.

Torres-García achieved a measure of renown only after returning to Montevideo in 1934. There, he devoted himself to writing and teaching and to developing an authentic South American aesthetic combining ancient, indigenous traditions and modern abstraction. Elsewhere he remained neglected, partly because American and European critics invariably consign South American art to provincial status; but perhaps partly because of an independent, uncompromising, and didactic spirit that could be perceived as one of obstinacy, dogmatism, and self-promotion. In the United States he was probably underrated precisely because he was so influential; Adolph Gottlieb's and Louise Nevelson's debt to his work has never been fully acknowledged—as if to do so would diminish their achievements.

To the casual observer, many of his gridded rectangular abstractions stacked with row on row of graphic notations might appear alike. But focused attention reveals each one to be a distinctive statement—thoughtfully prepared, lovingly executed. In a series of pictures in the late thirties he loosened up the grid structure, using bold symbolic forms and brighter colors, but soon he reverted to more somber, densely patterned and abstractly constructed pictures, which also seem to be metaphysical summations of his ideas about Western and pre-Columbian cultural history, natural science, and life's mysteries.

In the context of today's cynical, frenzied contemporary-art scene, Torres-García's profound, unworldly ambitions—his insistence on a theoretical underpinning for his art and his dedication to the expression of a carefully calibrated, harmonious, and meaningful visual order—seem all the more remarkable.

—*Barbara Braun*



The maestro's Construction 1.

Construction in Earth Red, *1938.*

Height: 33½ inches.
Auction estimate:
£10,000-15,000
($14,250-21,375).

LONDON

Fine 19th Century Decorative Arts

This fine white marble group of the Flight from Destruction of Pompeii by Giovanni Maria Benzoni, signed and dated *F Roma 1878,* will be included in a London auction of Fine 19th Century Decorative Arts on Thursday and Friday, March 5 and 6.

For catalogues and further information, please call, in London, Robert Bowman at 44 (1) 493-8080. Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London, W1A 2AA. In New York, call Elaine Whitemire at (212) 606-7285. Sotheby's, 1334 York Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021.

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At the International Exposition of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1925, the executive committee placed the pavilion designed by the architect Le Corbusier built on the fair's most remote site and then erected an eighteen-foot fence around it so that no visitor could actually go inside. The pavilion—a purist, two-story apartment unit—was nonetheless awarded the first prize for architecture by an international jury, only to be overruled at the end by the veto of the French member, who objected that the structure "*contained* no architecture."

That kind of controversy was a matter of course for Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, who renamed himself Le Corbusier but was known as "Corbu" to his admirers and "Pope Corbu" to his detractors. He may have been the modern era's most savagely attacked architect—and its most passionately defended. The controversy his work inspired did not die with the architect. This year marks his centenary, and exhibitions of his work, to be held throughout the Western world, will give us a chance to make up our own minds.

Oscar Niemeyer, the great Brazilian architect, called him "the Leonardo of our epoch," but when the critic Lewis Mumford heard Le Corbusier called the greatest architect of the twentieth century, he muttered, "So much the worse for the twentieth century." Walter Gropius believed it would take an entire generation of builders to realize all the visionary concepts that had flowed from Le Corbusier's studio. Yet the rejection note on his grandiose plan of 1937 for rebuilding Paris read, "A vandalism unique in history . . . spiritually and materially injurious." Salvador Dalí said that word of the architect's death in 1965 "filled [him] with immense joy."

His influence was immense. Le Corbusier helped to launch not one but two major architectural styles—sleek, cerebral "purism," in the 1920s, and sculptural "brutalism," three decades later—but he completed only fifty-seven buildings in a career that stretched from 1912 to 1965, the year of his death. He proposed to lift structures above the landscape onto great pylons of reinforced concrete; redefined the house as "a machine for living in"; laid out one real city—in India; and on paper designed sprawling, all-too-prophetic metropolises, made up of isolated, identical towers lined up along elevated highways. Somehow, this polymath also found the time to write some fifty books, to paint, and to sculpt.

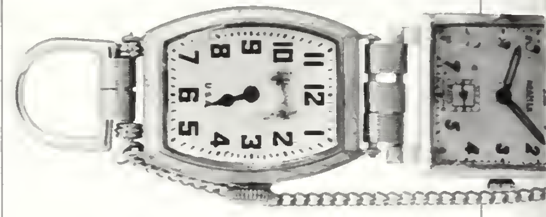
Le Corbusier was as brilliant and arrogant, as demanding and innovative, as his buildings were, and he took an almost perverse pleasure in the denunciations his work sparked. "Men are so stupid," he once wrote, "that I'm glad I'm going to die. All my life people have tried to crush me. First they called me a dirty engineer, then a painter who tried to be an architect, then an architect who tried to paint, then a Fascist. Luckily, I've always had an iron will . . . I've forced myself to cross Rubicons." He would be pleased that this year, once again, he'll have people talking.

Le Corbusier exhibitions are planned all over Europe. France, where he set up his office, will host a dozen, including a major retrospective, opening at Paris's Georges Pompidou Center in October, the month of the architect's birth (in Le Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland). Closer to home, New York's Museum of Modern Art will offer a retrospective of five important projects, beginning March 26, and the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, at Harvard—the only building in this country designed by Le Corbusier himself—will display his sculpture, paintings, drawings, and letters, also beginning on March 26.

—*Diane Raines Ward*

Le Corbusier in 1935 with the purist Villa Savoye.

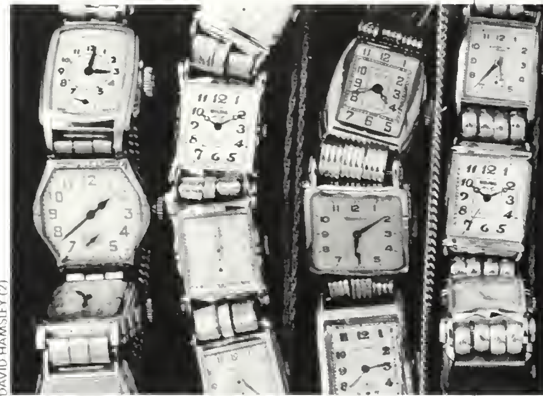
UPI/BETTMAN NEWSPHOTOS



BIJOU TROUVÉ

Take a broken watch face, add it to a cluster of pearls, a pair of dice, a vintage locket, or maybe knobs from an old TV set, and, if you're very lucky, you'll end up with a piece of jewelry like those made by John Wind and Hilary Jay. Two years ago, twenty-five-year-old Wind, a student of painting at England's Slade School of Art, began scouring London's flea markets for bags of junk and baubles. He started gluing his *objets trouvés* together into thickly encrusted brooches, which, within four months, were selling in Browns, the upmarket fashion emporium, and landing in the pages of English *Vogue*. After moving to Philadelphia last year, Wind teamed up with Jay, an ex–advertising art director, and formed a company called Maximal Art. Since then, they've been glitzing everyone from trendies like the entertainers Michael Jackson and the Thompson Twins to the models in Carolina Herrera's last fashion show.

Idle hands: MA's antique watch bracelets.

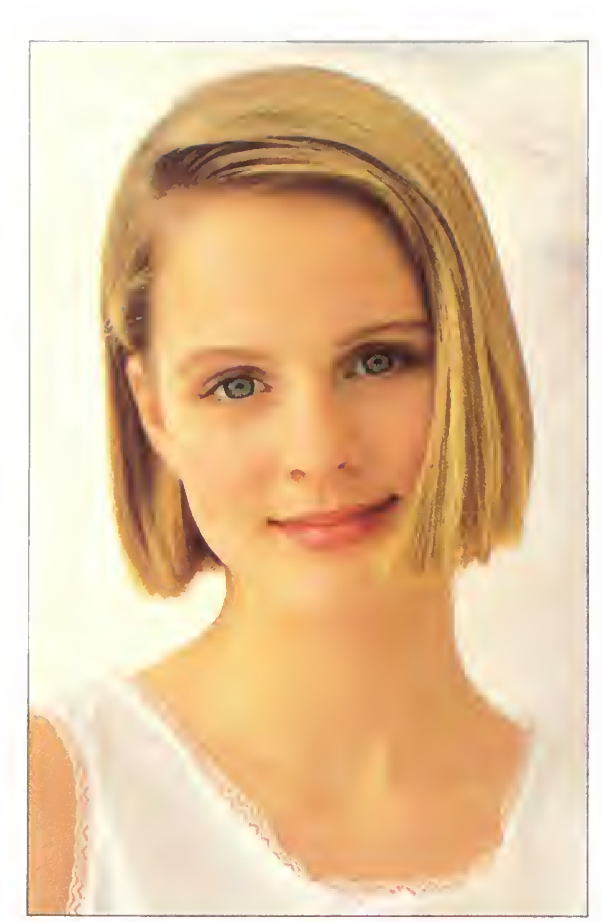


DAVID HAMSLEY (2)

Though some might want to call their limited-edition designs timely, "timeless" better describes their strongest seller, the watch bracelet, a linked chain of nonfunctioning antique watch faces scavenged from old East Coast factories and repair shops. Depending on vintage, value, and state of disrepair, prices range between $150 and $350. Lately, they've also taken to customizing jewelry by whirling their clients' personal memorabilia into assemblages.

—*Joe Dolce*

To every woman who didn't wash her face every night when she was 12 years old.



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PETRONIO'S MIND-BODY SPLITS

Stephen Petronio is not exactly prolific. His first evening-length dance was performed in a New York basement in 1982, and since then only four other group pieces and a smidgen of solos have followed. Yet, at thirty, he has emerged as one of New York's more important choreographers. His movement encapsulates the noisy, and often violent, sensory overload of contemporary life with unnerving accuracy. At the same time, he has ingeniously found ways to render the intangibles of thought processes into motion.

In the current dance scene, with its emphasis on pop-culture accessibility, fashion, and gimmickry, Petronio is hardly the flavor of the month. He doesn't rely on the theatrical froufrou of a Michael Clark, say, or the clever repartee of a David Gordon. Petronio loves fierce, unusual movement. He demands that his dancers move fast and in multiple directions simultaneously; limbs and torsos become eerily disconnected from one another.

The process begins from a series of images Petronio will have scavenged from newspapers and magazines. He animates and knits together these frozen moments. Some are reconstructed literally; others are used only as an emotional or kinesthetic reference point. For a work called *Walk-In*, for example, Petronio collected photographs of crashes, collisions, and death, which were subsequently translated into stumbles, collapses, and contortions.

Stephen Petronio staggers; he lurches; and his choreography is considered wonderful.

PAULA COURT

Petronio, who danced with the Trisha Brown Company for seven years, willingly acknowledges his debt to postmodern dance history. What he is reluctant to do is talk much about his new work, *Simulacrum Reels*. The title suggests the duality that informs all of Petronio's choreography. A reel is, of course, a specific kind of dance. A simulacrum is a representation of reality, a concrete visual exemplar, of something that once existed.

"The first image," Petronio eventually confesses, "is of someone being held up. I was mugged last spring and caught completely off guard. There was an adrenal jolt. I jumped out of my body, in a sense, and watched the whole thing happening—but didn't know how to respond to a knife running down my chest. Those moments of being out of control are kind of delicious to me."

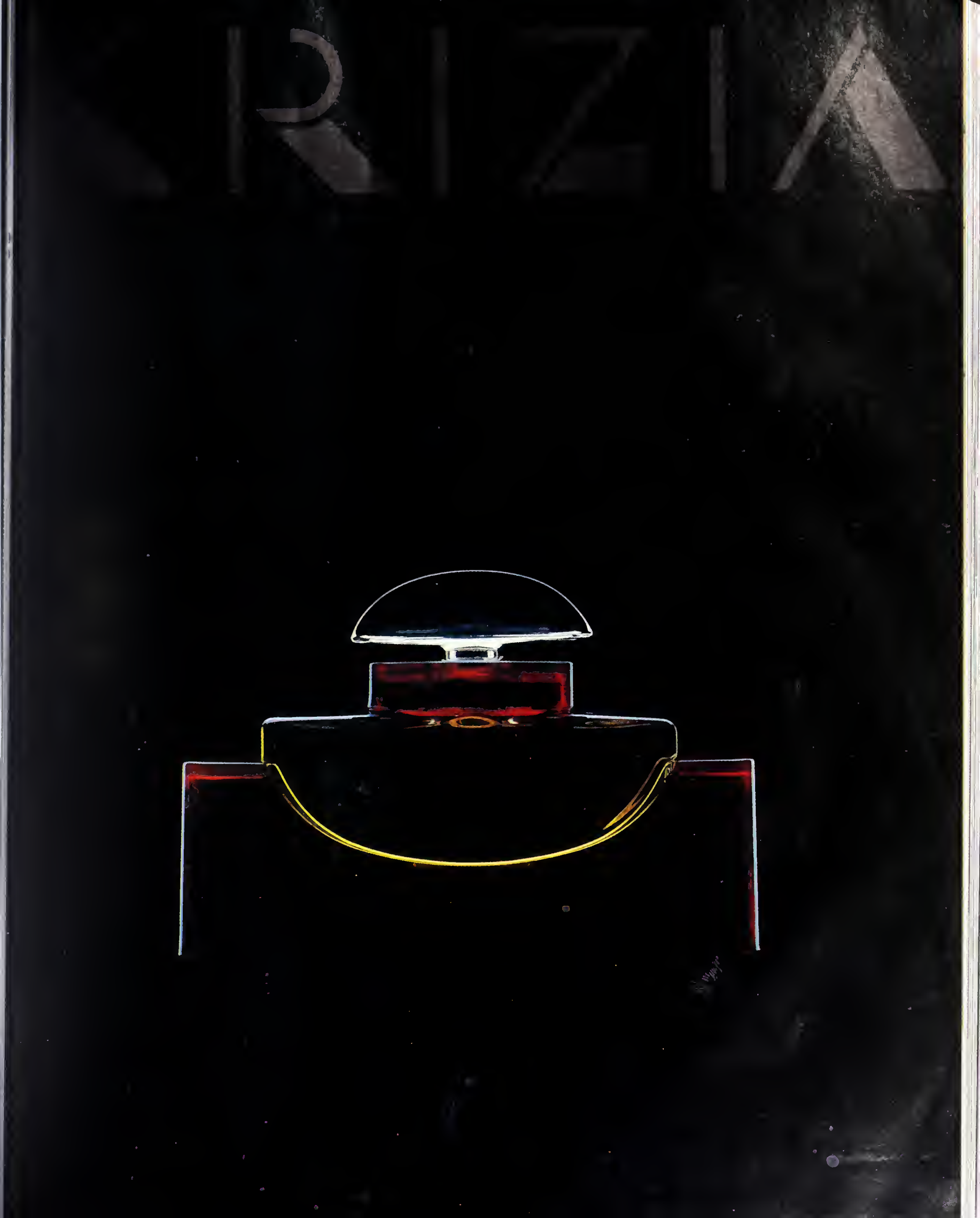
Petronio and his five-member company will be performing for three weeks in an engagement beginning February 19 at Manhattan's Dance Theater Workshop. The program, which includes two premieres as well as a revival of last year's award-winning *Walk-In*, will tour to Minneapolis this spring and Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco next season.

—*William Harris*

BEST SELLARS

What are we to make of the gadabout Peter Sellars? Fraud or genius? His merits are probably best judged case by case.

The diminutive director—he stands about five foot four—blazed his way to cult-figure status even before graduating from Harvard, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1980. In 1983, he was drafted for the Broadway-bound *My One and Only*. The show went on to glory, though not with Sellars. The producers fired him during tryouts in Boston. The same week, though, he got a consolation prize in the form of a "genius" fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation. In 1985, the Kennedy Center, in Washington, D.C., made him artistic director of the American National Theater. There, he scored with a phantasmagoric *Count of Monte Cristo* (greeted with lusty boos and raves), but never again. By the time he staged Sophocles' *Ajax*, with a deaf-mute in the filibustering title role, a short year later, nobody was looking. The American National Theater has since collapsed. Sellars has been busying himself with rock videos and a movie of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*.


KRIZIA

[illegible] ...que [illegible] in a [illegible] looks strangely [illegible] our own. At right, Cleopatra (Susan Larson) prepares for a dip. Below, she joins the prez (Jeffrey Gall) for an impromptu newscast.

BEATRIZ SCHILLER (2)

And with opera, which is where he does his best work—in part because the music keeps his imagination on a tight leash. In straight plays, Sellars does not scruple to cut and paste, to rearrange, to splice in foreign matter, with results that have frequently been condemned as sophomoric. In opera, Sellars accepts the discipline imposed by the score. No matter what antics he cooks up for the singers, he never monkeys with the music. If nothing else, the dramatic pacing of the composer's master plan is always intact. The question then is whether his *jeux d'esprit* strike sparks off the original. Sometimes they don't. When Sellars is bad—as in a staging of Mozart's *Così Fan Tutte* set among Vietnam vets in a tacky roadside diner—he is horrid. But when he is good . . .

On February 13, 15, 19, and 22, there is an opportunity to see him at his best when the Opera Company of Boston revives, with a single minor change of cast, the Sellars production of Handel's gorgeously melodious, devilishly wise *Julius Caesar in Egypt*, originally staged for Pepsico Summerfare, on the campus of the State University of New York at Purchase, two summers ago. On this occasion, Sellars projects the action into the near future. (A principal set is the Cairo Hilton, struck by a bomb though not yet completed.) The hero, a shark with a klieg-light smile, shows up in the media-smart personage of the president of the United States. Cleopatra comes visiting by starshine in a spangled gown, lowered from the sky by a forklift, looking like a vaudeville goddess in the crescent moon. As they play cat and mouse for lands and riches, romance overtakes them—heady, intoxicating, lethal. Around them, a whole world comes unglued. Ours. The eighties have not seen a more thrilling operatic production than the Sellars *Caesar*. Anyone who misses this second chance to see it is unlikely to get another. —*Matthew Gurewitsch*

YALE'S EARLY ITALIANS

James Jackson Jarves was an American collector ahead of his time. Born to a well-to-do Boston family in 1818, he began collecting early Italian paintings while living in Florence in the 1850s, a good twenty years before Bernard Berenson's advice that Americans buy such paintings helped to make them fashionable. It is believed that Jarves bought from dealers in Florence, accumulating over a thousand works at the peak of his collecting. Much of what Jarves owned, supplemented by later additions, has been newly installed in a permanent exhibition of late-medieval and early-Renaissance art at the Yale University Art Gallery, in New Haven.

The Jarves collection is richest in rare works of the period from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth, when artists shifted from large, immovable wall frescoes and small illuminated manuscripts to paintings on panel. Recently restored, conserved, and scrutinized, Yale's collection is one of the finest in the country. Many of a group of over eighty works, such as a Renaissance fresco in grisaille from a Sienese palace, have not been seen in decades, because of the constrictions of space and the vicissitudes of taste.

In 1871 Yale purchased the Jarves collection for $22,000 in what the *Yale Alumni Weekly* called "one of the most irregular pieces of University finance on record and one of the most brilliant." Jarves had hoped that his collection would form "the nucleus of a Free Gallery in one of our large cities." The works, over a hundred in all, had previously been rejected by the Metropolitan Museum, in New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston. They found a congenial home only when Jarves deposited them at Yale as collateral on a loan he was later unable to pay back. When they were put up at auction, Yale found itself the only bidder.

Evident in Sienese panels like *Saint John the Evangelist*, by Lippo Memmi (1340), is the desire to break from the Italo-Byzantine tradition. Although frontal and aloof, the religious figures have a distinct sense of humanity. *Saint Peter*, by the Venetian Carlo Crivelli, is a fierce, masculine image that still reflects traditional Italo-Byzantine art in its gold background yet prefigures Michelangelo in the saint's strong sculptural presence.

Secular subjects abound as well. A painted marriage cassone reassembled in the nineteenth century out of separate, original cassones is decorated with the classical myth of Theseus and the Ama-

COURTESY YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

Fresco of Saint Peter by Carlo Crivelli (circa 1472).

KRIZIA

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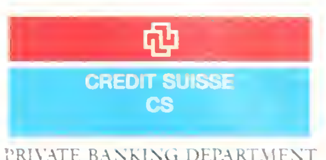

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*Provided respectively by Swiss American Securities Inc. and Swiss American Asset Management International.

zons. A languid nude woman seductively decorates the inside lid, in a rare detail. Other cassone panels with classical themes are logically, if unconventionally, displayed below eye level, the point of view for which they were intended.

The Yale installation is refreshingly understated. Small rooms, arranged geographically and chronologically within the larger gallery, emphasize stylistic affinities and suggest new ideas and attributions. This subtle, innovative installation would likely please Jarves, who wanted his collection to spark "the diffusion of artistic knowledge and aesthetic taste in America."

—*Gertrude Grace Sill*

STONEWALLING

Boy, this is work! The sun broils down on a titanic pile of boulders, dug up and dumped here by the contractor. A man swings a sledge in a punishing metronome of effort, bashing big ones into little ones. Stretching back, waddling on his heels, another man heaves rocks into place. Gradually, a stone wall begins to take shape.

Marcel Albertus Borst wipes his brow. "Planting grüthers," he calls this, with a rolling Dutch accent and a lopsided grin. His partner, Nick McCormack, concurs: "Grüthers," he says, in an equally opaque Yorkshire accent.

McCormack and Borst, Connecticut stonemasons from Stamford, are virtuosi of the sledge; they work dumb rock into constructions of durable beauty. Like all good stonemasons, they are booked at least a year in advance. "Grüthers," they explain, are huge odd boulders that fit so tightly into a wall that they look as if they "grew there."

In New England, certainly, few spectacular residences are considered complete without a stone wall of some sort. Beyond that are questions of cost and taste. Many property owners love the smooth perfection of quarried granite, which fragments into regular blocks when blasted out of a cliff. The most expensive is a pale, salt-and-pepper flecked gray. The regularity of these walls can make them seem rather municipal. Other walls use large amounts of mortar to fit and hold the stones.

And there is a third kind, more impressionistic and wild, built of natural fieldstones by master masons who are often European. They are built dry, without mortar, holding themselves up by the close fit of the stones to one another, and by a slight inward tilt that makes the top of the wall a couple of inches narrower than the base. Fine stonemasons have the ability to transform the irregular, colored rocks that come out of the ground into amazingly smooth and beautiful walls. If a quarry or masonry wall is mostly craft, a fieldstone wall is mostly art.

DEAN VALLAS

A masterly granite and limestone wall.

A hundred-foot-long, four-foot-high wall may cost about $10,000, including labor. "It adds," says one prominent New England developer about the effect of a stone wall on the value of a property. "It's impossible to put a dollar figure on it—that depends on the quality of the wall, for one thing. But it adds a lot."

—*Dean Vallas*

PALLADIO COUNTRY

The Veneto, in northern Italy, with its gentle hills and plains, has been farmland since antiquity—that is, until our century despoiled much of it by industrial blight. What has vanished, along with the charm of the countryside, is the context in which the great architect Andrea Palladio built his serene and elegant villas for the aristocracy of Venice and Vicenza in the middle of the sixteenth century. A luminous relationship between building and site is at the heart of Palladio's happy genius and the subject of a remarkable new book, *The Villas of Palladio*, with photographs by Philip Trager (New York Graphic Society, $45).

Philip Trager has published several volumes of photographs of American architecture that have all the depth, clarity, and nuance of the long exposures of the nineteenth century. To this technical mastery he adds a subtle combination of restraint and passion with regard to his subjects. Here, by some sleight of hand, he has restored to Palladio's great villas their lost sites. We see them surrounded by space, with their background of hills or

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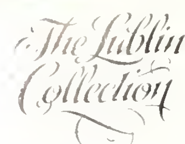

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rivers, their long approaches over harvested cornfields or long flowery grass, under fair skies or dissolving in mists.

Palladio was not the first to go to the monuments of ancient Rome for inspiration, but to his belief in the absolute standards of its architecture he brought an easy familiarity with the vernacular of the northern Italian farm. The result was a symmetrical building with a classical façade, opened up to the air instead of enclosed in a courtyard, sometimes joined to low outbuildings by colonnades.

PHILIP TRAGER

Passion and restraint: Trager's tumultuous view of the orderly Villa Barbaro.

Trager's camera records august interiors, with their domes, their slender porticoes, pediments, "Palladian" windows, and—often—rich frescoes. He shows us Palladio inside and out, frontally and in three dimensions, as he has never been seen before.

This superbly designed book has an invigorating and lucid text by the architecture historian Vincent Scully as well as, alas, an obligatory introduction by the architect of the moment, Michael Graves, which manages to say the obvious with maximum pretension. —*Eve Auchincloss*

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AUCTIONS

GORGEOUS PRE-RAPHAELITES; SUPERB DRAWINGS; GOOD KNICKKNACKS

For no particular reason I can intuit, this February looks to be a slow month. Some insiders suggest that the unusual surge in sales at the end of last year has slowed, at least temporarily, the consignment of new goods early in 1987 as potential sellers take stock. But this cannot be the whole answer. Certainly there was an increase in sell-offs late last year, particularly in the United States, where tax-law changes in capital-gains deductions created a short-term window of opportunity for sellers. Despite a lot of glib twaddle on the subject, however, most art-market selling is probably not so tax sensitive. The acid test is coming. In 1988, the European Economic Community is likely to insist on a value-added tax on all hammer prices in British auction rooms. A sharp upturn in sales before 1988 would indicate that the tax is spurring sales, but don't count on it.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Spencer-Stanhope's mournful Orpheus and Eurydice on the Banks of the River Styx.

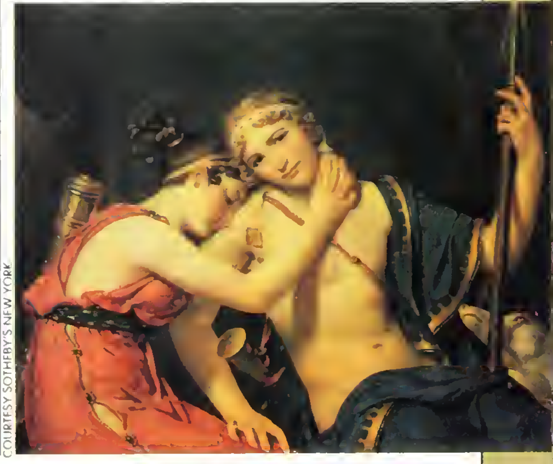
In any event, even on this month's lean menu we can find some delightful dainties. On February 11 and February 12 in New York, Sotheby's and Christie's hold their lower-key midyear Impressionist and modern art sales. The real opportunity here is for grabbing the better (and affordable) works by second-tier artists, letting the less sophisticated pay too much for secondary works by "names." On February 10, Phillips New York presents antique, Victorian, and later jewelry. No blockbusters here, but a good and really quite interesting selection of period items put together by Peter Beaumont, who has been sent to Phillips from London to beef up this department. There will be items ranging upward from $100. Among the better bits are an early-twentieth-century fancy-cut diamond pendant, circa 1912 (estimated at $20,000–$30,000), and an art nouveau plique-à-jour enamel diamond, ruby, pearl, and sapphire inset pendant (estimated at $15,000–$20,000) by Luis Masiera, an important and vastly underappreciated Spanish jeweler. And in London on February 16, Bonhams features its fifth annual sale of dog and cat art in conjunction with the renowned Crufts Dog Show.

COURTESY WILLIAM DOYLE GALLERIES, NEW YORK

Of special interest will be the two-session sale at Butterfield and Butterfield, February 28, of rare wines. Butterfield has taken full advantage of the enormous pent-up demand released by the July 1985 change in California's law allowing individuals to buy and sell vintage wines at auctions. This sale features approximately 700 lots, highlighted by some fifty selections of old California wines of the thirties, forties, and fifties from the private collection of Fred Beringer, scion of the fabled Napa Valley family and vineyard of that name. The sale will be held at Los Angeles's Ebell Club, with telephone hookups to the San Francisco galleries.

Left: Biedermeier fruitwood corner cabinet, at William Doyle; David's Telemachus and Eucharis, *estimated to fetch as much as $3 million, at Sotheby's.*

New York—William Doyle Galleries, February 4. Fine English and Continental furniture, decoration, and paintings. More than 700 lots of high-quality household goods, some quite old, all with a "look." You can get first-rate things to sit on, sleep in, write at, eat with, look at, and walk on. Last fall's two auctions set records of $740,000 and $761,000, yet the average lot is still under $1,000, which may have more than a little to do with the lots' extraordinary popularity. Private col-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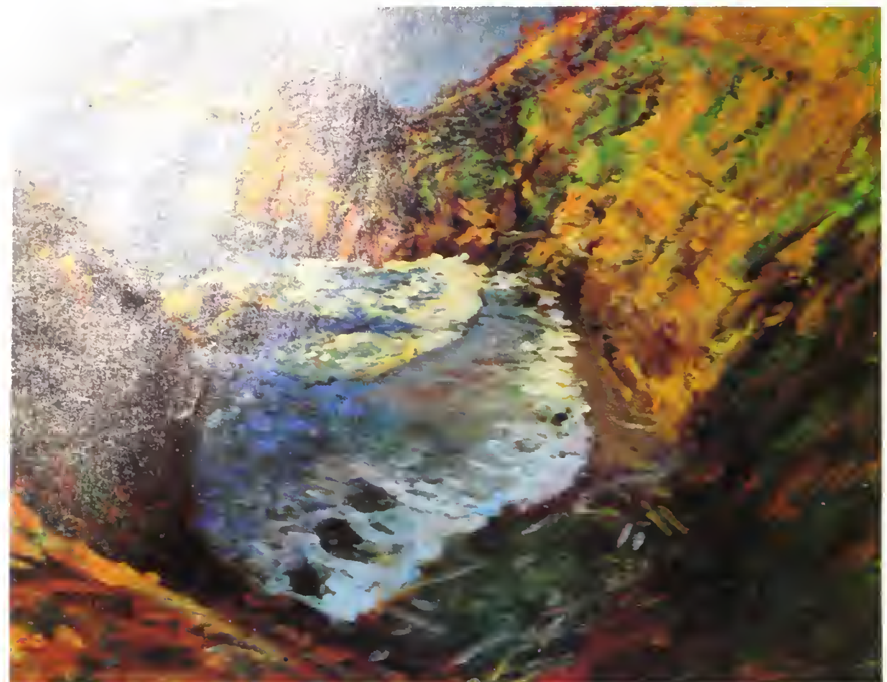

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AUCTIONS

COURTESY BONHAMS AUCTIONEERS, LONDON

Delamarre's Lauchen on a Desk, *at the Bonhams dog and cat art auction.*

lectors come in droves, armed with metersticks, measurements, and moxie to do battle for the perfect side table, hall runner, bull's-eye mirror, footed salver . . . and whatever else their hearts may desire.

London—Sotheby's, February 19. Drawings from the Witt collection. This precious collection, spanning the old masters to the modern period, was formed by Sir John Witt, whose father, Sir Robert, founded the Courtauld's respected Witt Library. The sale will offer some splendid English material, its strong suit (Gainsborough, Constable, Burne-Jones, and William Turner), as well as an occasional European work, such as Gauguin's masterly study of a Breton woman's head.

New York—Sotheby's and Christie's, February 24 and 26, respectively. Important nineteenth-century paintings. An encyclopedic *revue* of a remarkable century that it has taken us three-quarters of the next century to begin to appreciate. Christie's has the edge in sheer diversity (Dutch, German, French, Italian, Venetian, Barbizon schools), although not a lot of big names. What makes our hearts beat fastest is the mannered sensuality of Spencer-Stanhope's Pre-Raphaelite tour de force *Orpheus and Eurydice on the Banks of the River Styx,* which was exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878. It's an interesting contrast in both sensibility and subject to what should be the top lot at the Sotheby's sale, David's extremely important *Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis* (estimated at $2 million–$3 million), a wistful apotheosis from his post-Napoleonic exile in Brussels of his own pseudo-classicism. Overall, the Sotheby's sale is more consistent and has more solid works, by Vernet, Gros, Millet, Tissot, and Bouguereau. Between them, these sales are a major event in an increasingly strong field. —*James R. Lyons*

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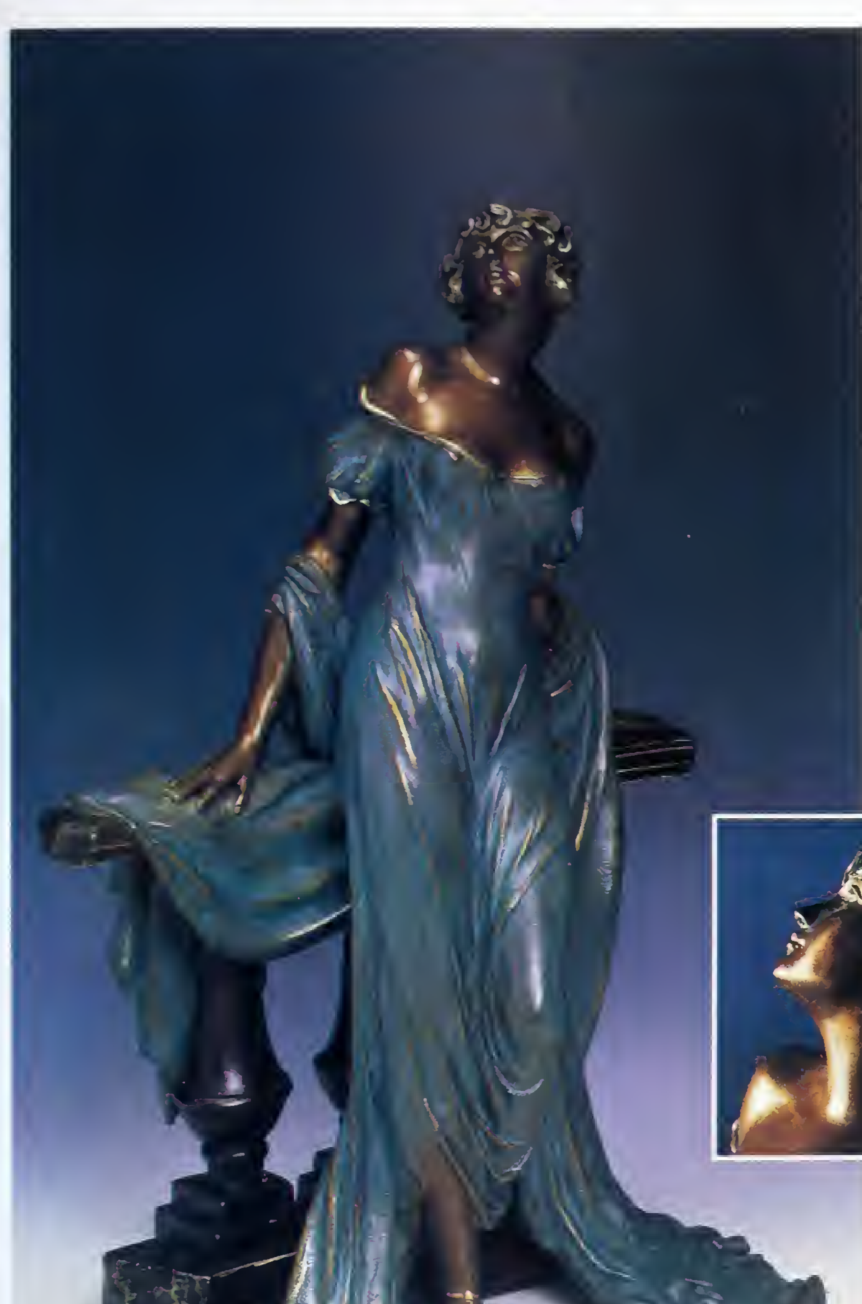

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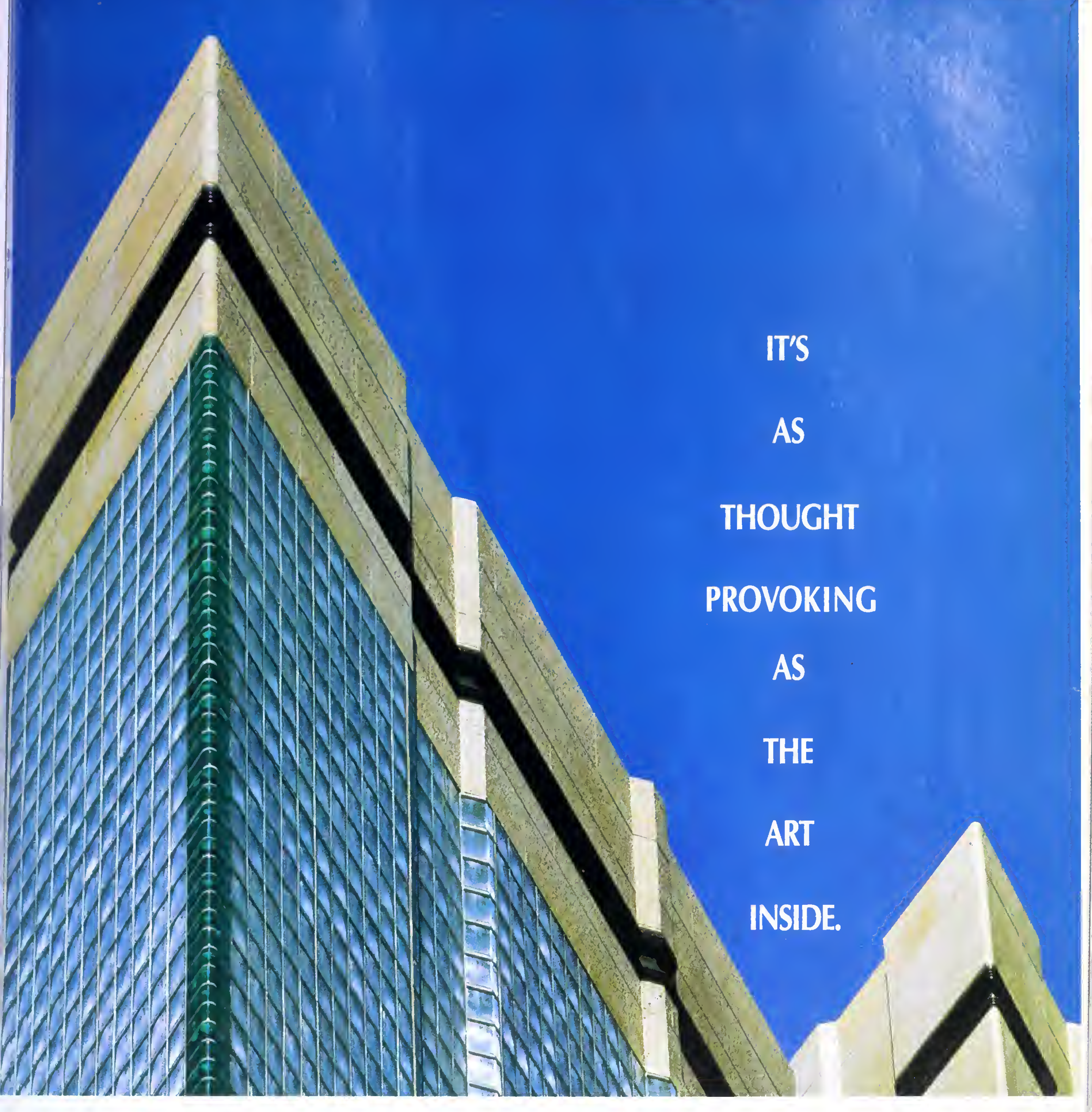

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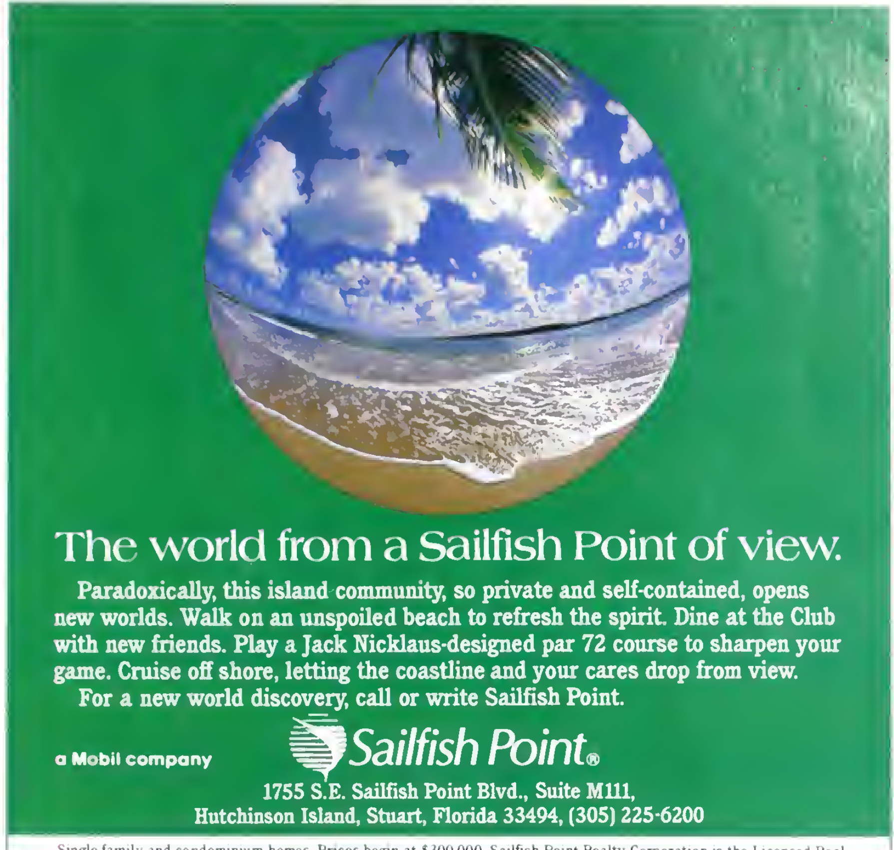

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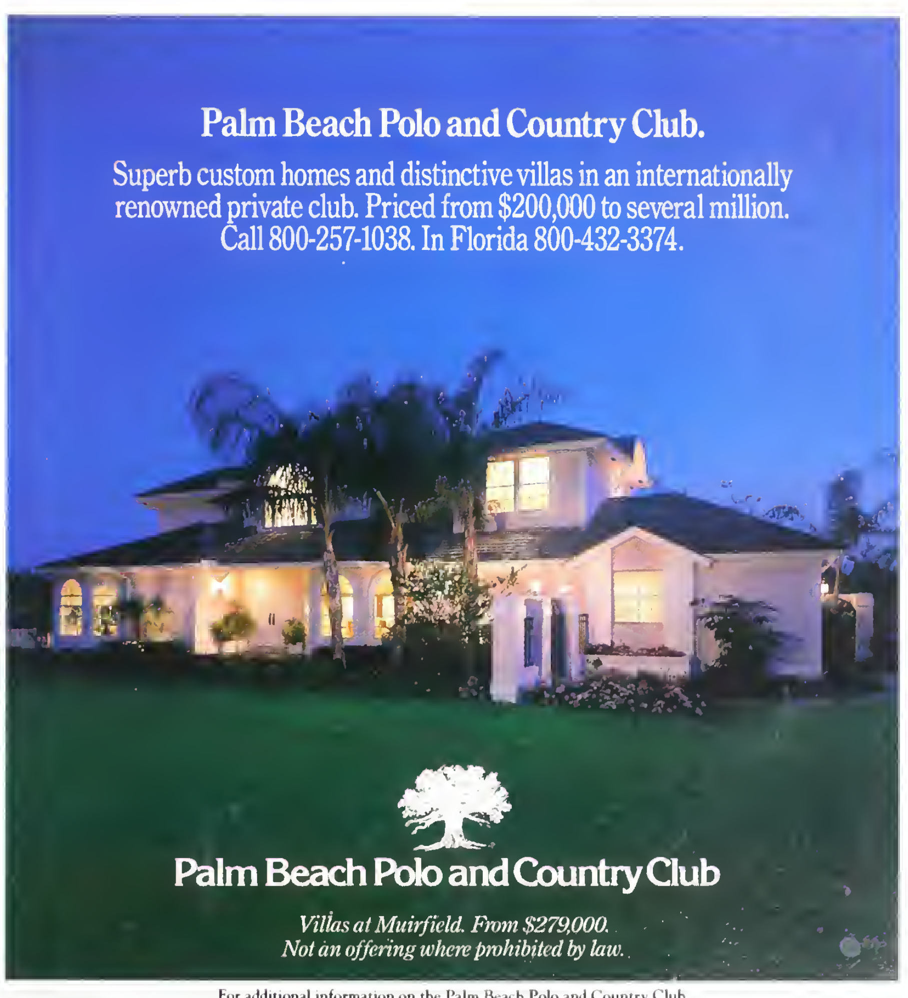

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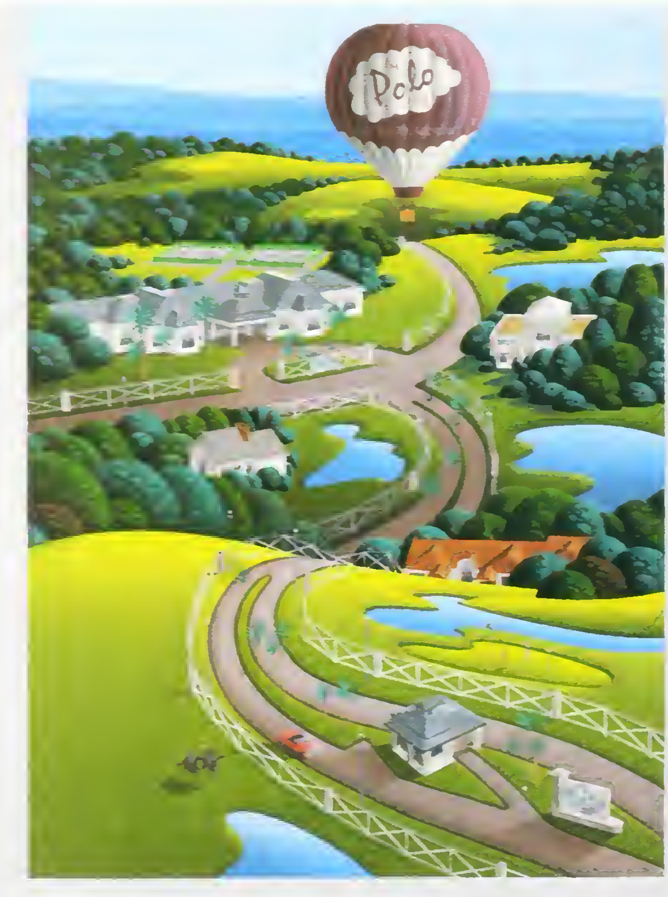

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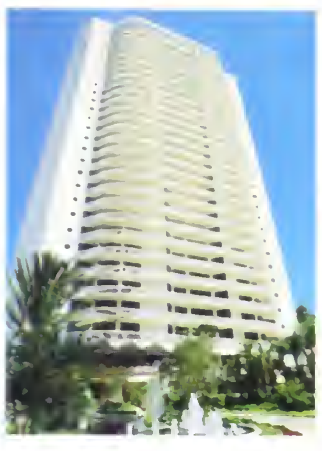

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GETTING TO KNOW BALLET'S BEAUTIFUL STRANGER, AMANDA McKERROW

BY ANITA FINKEL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN F. MAHONEY

In Fokine's silver-age Les Sylphides, *McKerrow shows her sterling form.*

Remember the popular medieval legends of *le bel inconnu?* The hero in such a story was a youth poised between childhood and manhood, wandering in the world to seek his fortune. Unknown to all, sometimes even to himself, he is a prince, and fated to be a king. Ballet has its own parallel myth of *la belle inconnue,* a girl on the threshold of womanhood, armed with her purity (of technique), flushed and breathless with the royal blood racing in her veins as she dances. No one knows where she comes from, but she appears, and right away, unmistakably, she is a star. Again and again, the ballet world has seen these dazzling girls leaping from obscurity to claim their place in the line of true descent.

When we watch Amanda McKerrow, a twenty-three-year-old soloist with American Ballet Theatre, those old tales—and their storybook endings—all come alive again. The part of the beautiful stranger was hers for three weeks in Moscow in 1981, when she won first prize at the International Ballet Competition. She was seventeen then, a high-school girl from a suburb of Washington, D.C. Persuaded and prepared by her ballet teacher, Mary Day, she entered the most prestigious of the world's ballet competitions. The blond American immediately caught the imagination of the Russian crowds, and their enthusiasm attracted the attention of the international press. All at once, McKerrow was on the front pages of newspapers, on the network news, her results from each round of the competition delivered to her faraway countrymen, who suddenly wanted to know how she had fared in her excerpts from *Les Sylphides* and *The Sleeping Beauty.* When she won, she was met at the airport by reporters from around the country. "I didn't expect a press conference," she remembers. "I didn't even know how much the States had been keeping track of the competition. Right away I felt the pressure. I knew sooner or later they'd say, 'Oh, she won a gold medal. Let's see what she can do.' And that's only natural. It happens in other fields. I've even done it myself."

Seldom has a career been launched with such fanfare, and seldom has a dancer faced as many pitfalls in the road ahead. The sad truth is that few competition winners in the West follow their triumph with solid progress and development in a major ballet company. Many, in fact, seem to have been thwarted by the expectations engendered in Varna, in Moscow,

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In Moscow, after the Bluebird pas de deux, McKerrow and her noncompeting partner, Simon Dow, bask in the cheers.

in Tokyo, in Helsinki. As a soloist in one of our two leading national companies, McKerrow has proved more than worthy of her victory. She has gone further and emerged as the heir of a style that has lacked a guiding exponent since Natalia Makarova stepped down from the leading roles in *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Giselle*. She has blossomed into the kind of ballerina we see all too rarely and that some felt we would never see again.

Virtually alone among this country's leading ballet dancers today, McKerrow has had only brief contact with the mode of training laid down by the late George Balanchine at his School of American Ballet. When she entered Mary Day's nationally respected academy, rather late, she had already been formed as a dancer. She describes Bethesda, Maryland, where she took her beginning classes, as "a hub of small dancing schools." Her own was called the Metropolitan Academy, and her immersion was complete: three to four hours a day, six days a week. By the time she was in junior high school she was attending school only half a day, in order to have time for dancing lessons.

For an American ballet school, the Metropolitan (now defunct) must have been quite unusual. Lessons were composed mainly of repeated drill in the formal syllabus known as the Vaganova system, the program used to train the dancers of Leningrad's Kirov Ballet. Balanchine took its regimens as a *point de départ* for his innovations. McKerrow's Metropolitan didn't depart at all. It gave its students Soviet-style rote work in the basic mechanics of position and technique.

Audiences everywhere cheer what this training does for Russian dancers, and McKerrow carries with her both its advantages and its limitations. It has given her the hallmark of good training: a spine of steel. She has, too, an unparalleled command of the complementary positioning of the legs and shoulders—known as *épaulement*—that according to conventional wisdom accounts for the expressive resonance and power of classical dance. When McKerrow's slim legs, defined by the circle of the classical tutu, slice through the air to achieve a supernaturally perfect position, she shows just how this is true.

The reverse side of her rigorous schooling is a tendency toward stiffness. For almost every prizewinner, there is some crux of technique on which a career is going to rise or fall. For McKerrow, that crux was the drill-like residue of the Metropolitan's Vaganova course. It gave her her unique purity and simplicity of movement—but she needed American Ballet Theatre in order to overcome its rigidity.

Schooling alone could not help her, though one of the things that first attracted McKerrow to Mary Day's nationally respected establishment was its dancier, less militaristic approach. Right after Moscow, McKerrow returned to the homey atmosphere of Day's school and its affiliated Washington Ballet company. She appeared at festive galas, including "A Diamond Night at the Ballet," at the Metropolitan Opera House, in New York City, in June 1982. Her by-the-book recital of the pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty* posed in observers' minds the very questions she had dreaded and anticipated since Moscow. She read the adverse criticism and decided to work harder. "It made me more aware of myself," she says, "more aware of my dancing, my style. And it probably made me more objective, because I had to be. I couldn't take things so personally. I had to learn to be objective about it and take a criticism as a correction, to improve and build on."

The artistic staff of American Ballet Theatre, which she joined the day after "A Diamond Night" as a member of the corps de ballet, provided crucial focus on the areas that needed improvement. The ballet mistresses Georgina Parkinson and especially Elena Tchernichova, McKerrow says, "didn't want me to look like a schoolgirl doing a variation." The wayward ballerina Gelsey Kirkland gave enigmatic but valuable tips, as did the choreographer Antony Tudor. Despite his reputation as an ogre, he is one of McKerrow's favorite people to work with. Natalia Makarova, who coached McKerrow in the part of the

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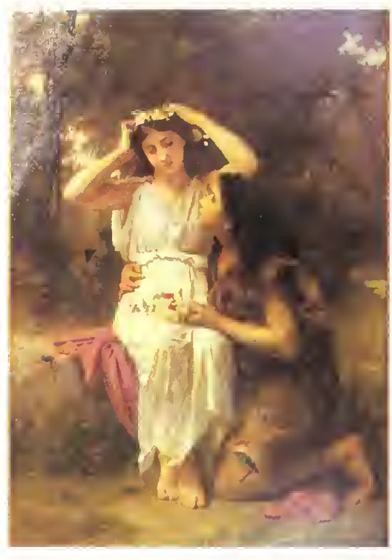

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venomous, murderous Gamzatti in *La Bayadère*, has also been instrumental in McKerrow's progress. "Natasha's not easy on you," the young dancer observes. "She wants the best, she wants the most, and she's going to get it. I would love to work with her further on other roles."

This past summer, McKerrow traveled to Japan with a small touring group headed by Mikhail Baryshnikov and danced *Giselle* with him. "We didn't rehearse much before we left," she says, "because he was busy performing. I remember our first performance in Tokyo. The pas de deux really came together. He was very positive with me in *Giselle*, and it's something he's done with so many people—if it doesn't feel exactly right, he knows."

Right now, though, the chief item on McKerrow's agenda is the part of Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, the supreme test of the classical ballerina, which she will perform in the new production to be unveiled by ABT this month in Chicago and scheduled to play in coming months in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, New York, and Washington, D.C. Her mentor in this and three shorter virtuoso roles in the ballet is the company's artistic associate, the distinguished British choreographer (and former head of London's Royal Ballet) Kenneth MacMillan. MacMillan also tutored McKerrow in his own *Romeo and Juliet* two years ago. Learning to fulfill that ballet's dramatic demands was crucial to McKerrow in extending her range and deepening her impact. "She suddenly was very bewildered by the approach and what she was given to do," MacMillan recalls. "It's a brilliant schooling she's had, a training that aims for perfection in movement. She approaches dancing in a very physical way. This is where she scores, in ballets where it is essential to display a beautiful arabesque, a sureness in pirouettes, a lightness in jump. All those things are very important to her." For the part of Juliet, which required her to present a full-blown character, MacMillan says, "she worked very hard and it progressed enormously. Now even her approach to rehearsal is different. She's more liberated. Less academic." These qualities will surely enhance her Aurora, too.

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tiful dancing. In the ABT company class that begins each rehearsal day, she is surrounded by talented dancers, including, at soloist and principal rank, some four or five formidable young women. These four or five share certain obvious similarities with one another; McKerrow is cut from another bolt of cloth. Her coevals are loose of hip in a way she is not and can swing their legs to their noses or ears with ease. All of them boast more prominently developed, powerful-looking thigh muscles; their movements are correspondingly emphatic and punctuated. They are lively with the quality of attack. They are athletic dancers.

Amanda McKerrow is a gentle dancer,

"OH, SHE WON A GOLD MEDAL. LET'S SEE WHAT SHE CAN DO."

soft-voiced and clear-toned. Sensing the difference between herself and her peers, she calls herself "lyrical." A better word would be "classical," as distinguished by simplicity, proportion, and, in terms of technique, control. McKerrow is rare today in that she is strong without suggesting athletics; she is *delicate* and strong.

As the class proceeds, the exercises grow harder. The teacher, Jürgen Schneider, sets a series of *battements battus,* little fluttering strikes of the foot against the ankle that demand the utmost control from the thighs. Everyone tries; only McKerrow does them correctly, without diluting the full value of the exercise or step. Those finely modeled thighs, it seems, possess considerably more real strength than one might think from quickly comparing them with the others'. McKerrow tempers force with softness, delivering the step with uncompromised perfection. One knows that when she takes on the *battements battus* that form the climax of the "white act" in *Swan Lake,* they will possess the full range of meaning so few dancers can give them—captivity, hope, trust, love.

Growing up as a dance student, Amanda McKerrow never clashed with her training environment. She did not harden up early. Her only exposure to the brutally competitive, often bitter world of New York dance training came in a five-week summer session at the School of American Ballet when she was fifteen. "I hated the competition," she says. "I would never repeat that part of my life—fighting to be in the front of the room." She was glad to get back to Bethesda: "I needed the stabil-

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ity of home and family." When she won the competition in Moscow, she worried not only about living up to her reputation, but also, she says, about how people who knew her might perceive her. "I certainly didn't want people to think it had changed me in any way. It's important for me to have people like me. I like to get along with people." She is still close to her parents, who travel around the country to catch her debuts in new roles. Off to Italy last October to film a part in a movie of *Giselle*, McKerrow was distressed that it meant a four-week separation from her husband, John Gardner, a fellow soloist at ABT: "He is my balance."

During the past summer, in the midst of a family vacation that included two weeks with her husband's family and two with her own, McKerrow went back to the mementos of her Moscow triumph, the intense weeks when, as the *belle inconnue* of

Student from Maryland wins Russian prize.

ballet, she achieved a fame briefly wider and louder than any other young dancer's before or since. "I didn't read the articles, I didn't read the newspaper things," she says of 1981. "It all happened too fast. And I was so aware—I felt the pressure, right away. So now I went back, and I looked at all the things. It's amazing that it generated so much publicity."

During the summer, she received an invitation to return to Moscow, to appear as a guest star with the Bolshoi Ballet. She was tempted but, in the end, regretfully refused: "I would have had to go for a week, and I would have missed too much rehearsal. Management didn't refuse me permission to go, but they said it would be difficult. And I understood. It's more important for me what's going on here, at ABT, this year." □

Anita Finkel writes on dance. Her story on the skating coach Carlo Fassi appeared in Connoisseur's *July 1986 issue.*

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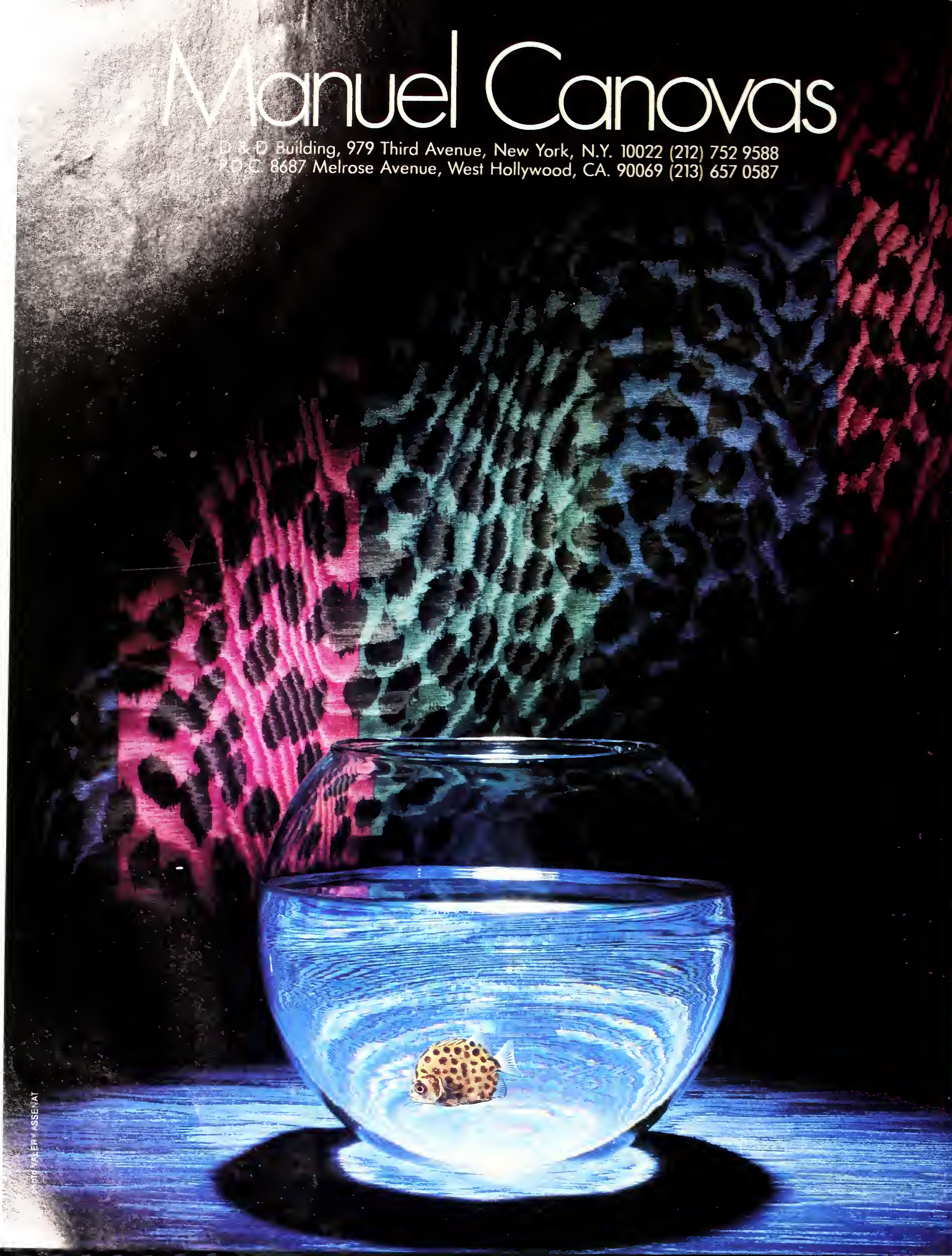
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WESTWARD, HO!

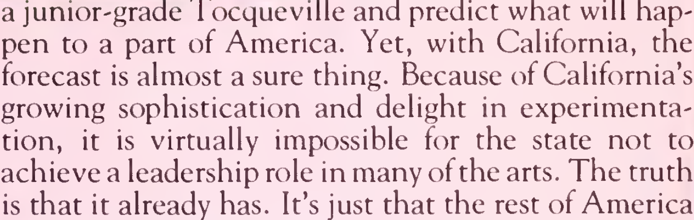
BY THOMAS HOVING

California is the France of the United States—fecund, sophisticated, opinionated, quirky at times, speaking its own patois and caught up in its own, chauvinistic dreams. It is, above all, ambitious, eager to show it can always do better; a place proudly tied to both Europe and the Orient. The state is more diversely beautiful than any other in the union and can seem to be smug about its privileged earth. The first time I went to California was at the end of the Korean War. I had driven across the country, and as I approached the state border I saw a group of buildings that looked suspiciously like customs. For a fraction of a second I feared someone would ask for my passport. Instead, I was stopped and asked very politely if I was carrying any fruit. No, why? The officer leaned into my window and patiently explained that fruit carried bugs, and bugs were not needed in California. Then he said something that I've never forgotten: "They might destroy the crops—and the beauty of the land." I drove off with the distinct feeling that I was not very welcome.

HARALD SUND

I was wrong. In the year I lived there I encountered nothing but friendship. The climate, of course, was particularly hospitable, especially for a New Yorker. In the brilliant sunshine, my active life blossomed. Yet, I had to admit that I found the state culturally deprived—depressingly so.

In the thirty years since my first sojourn—and I've made any number of visits—California seems to have become, if anything, more hospitable, certainly more successful, and far more discriminating. Look what's happened to California wines! And, in cultural affairs the state is unique in America. There's been a veritable explosion of facilities of all types—performing-arts centers, symphony halls, zoos, aquariums, art museums of the most exalted character. As for the creation of, and collecting of, contemporary painting and sculpture, California now outshines the eastern seaboard. There's a refreshing vigor, an exuberance, a celebratory sense of confidence in all aspects of the arts, despite a few well-publicized blunders (chief of which was the inexcusable failure on the part of the tasteless satraps of the Los Angeles Olympics to encourage artistic excellence).



It's always irresistible to be a junior-grade Tocqueville and predict what will happen to a part of America. Yet, with California, the forecast is almost a sure thing. Because of California's growing sophistication and delight in experimentation, it is virtually impossible for the state not to achieve a leadership role in many of the arts. The truth is that it already has. It's just that the rest of America has either not gotten around to recognizing the fact or is too envious to admit it. □

THE SUNSHINE BOYS

PRESENTING, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE REAL CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF ARTISTS

RON DAVIS, 49

He lives in Malibu and shares with a group of top California artists a way of combining abstract and representational qualities. Davis paints geometric shapes in the center of stark fields of color that create the illusion of a deep, abstract space. The forms are nonrepresentational, yet his large canvases convey ideas related to figurative practices—especially the way images are rendered and convey meaning. Davis explains that he exploits "the tensions between abstraction and the idea of abstraction."

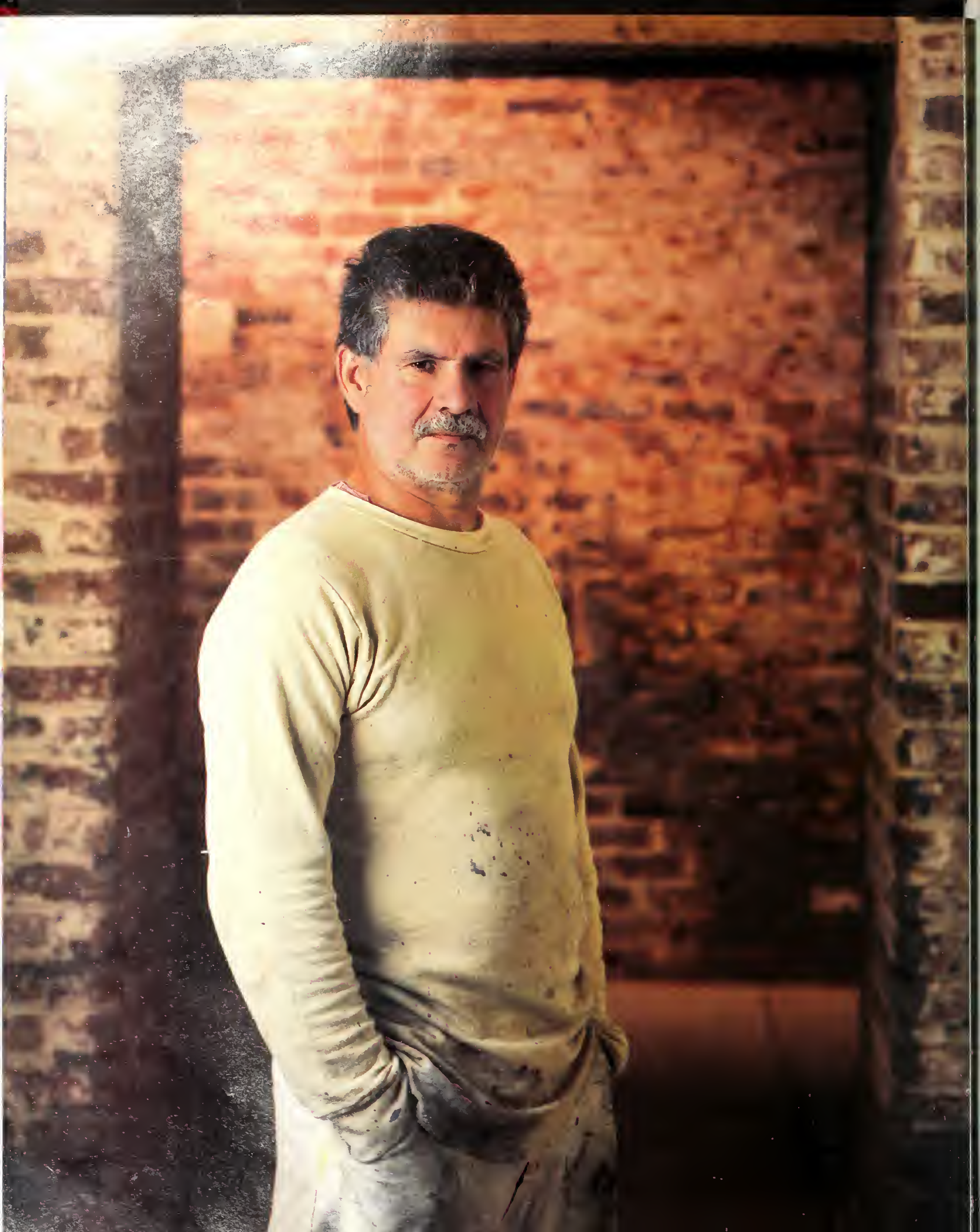
BY PHYLLIS TUCHMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM McHUGH

In the recent past, painters and sculptors based in New York were referred to as American artists while their colleagues in Los Angeles and San Francisco were called California artists. That's changing today. A newly assertive network of museums, galleries, and collectors in northern and southern California is refocusing national attention on local heroes—artists including Richard Diebenkorn, Sam Francis, Robert Graham, Ron Davis, Wayne Thiebaud, Mark di Suvero, Manuel Neri, and Stephen De Staebler. If culture were marketed the way automobiles and fast food and airlines are, a Pepsi Challenge–like campaign to garner more respect for what's happening throughout the Golden State would be evident.

Twenty years ago, Californians thought they had finally developed an art scene that could rival New York's. They had the institutions—places ranging from the San Francisco Art Institute and the California College of Arts and Crafts, in Oakland, to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the then new Pasadena Art Museum—and the programs to establish a support system upon which young artists could rely. As for art, well, the new stars in Los Angeles had come up with a style that could be described as surfboard minimalism. The art was smooth-planed and objectlike and differed from its eastern cousins by being formed from plastic-based materials that were often brightly hued. Alas, all the expectations were premature. The moment passed, hardly noticed, and California became, once again, part of the artistic provinces.

Meanwhile, a number of gifted painters and sculptors quietly and determinedly developed their work. A sense of perseverance and individuality pervades their efforts. If these artists were cast in roles in a Wild West movie, they would play the solid citizens rather than the flashy gunslingers. They have created art with a cumulative character. Subtle changes from one picture or statue to another have led to variations that eventually have amounted to powerfully conceived, full-bodied oeuvres.

What's it like to create art in relative isolation? Richard Diebenkorn did not mind the situation. "Artists painted for one another," he remembers. Beyond that, Wayne Thiebaud points out, a lot of his colleagues did not have access to "prime visual touchstones in museums like the Frick and the Metropolitan" yet

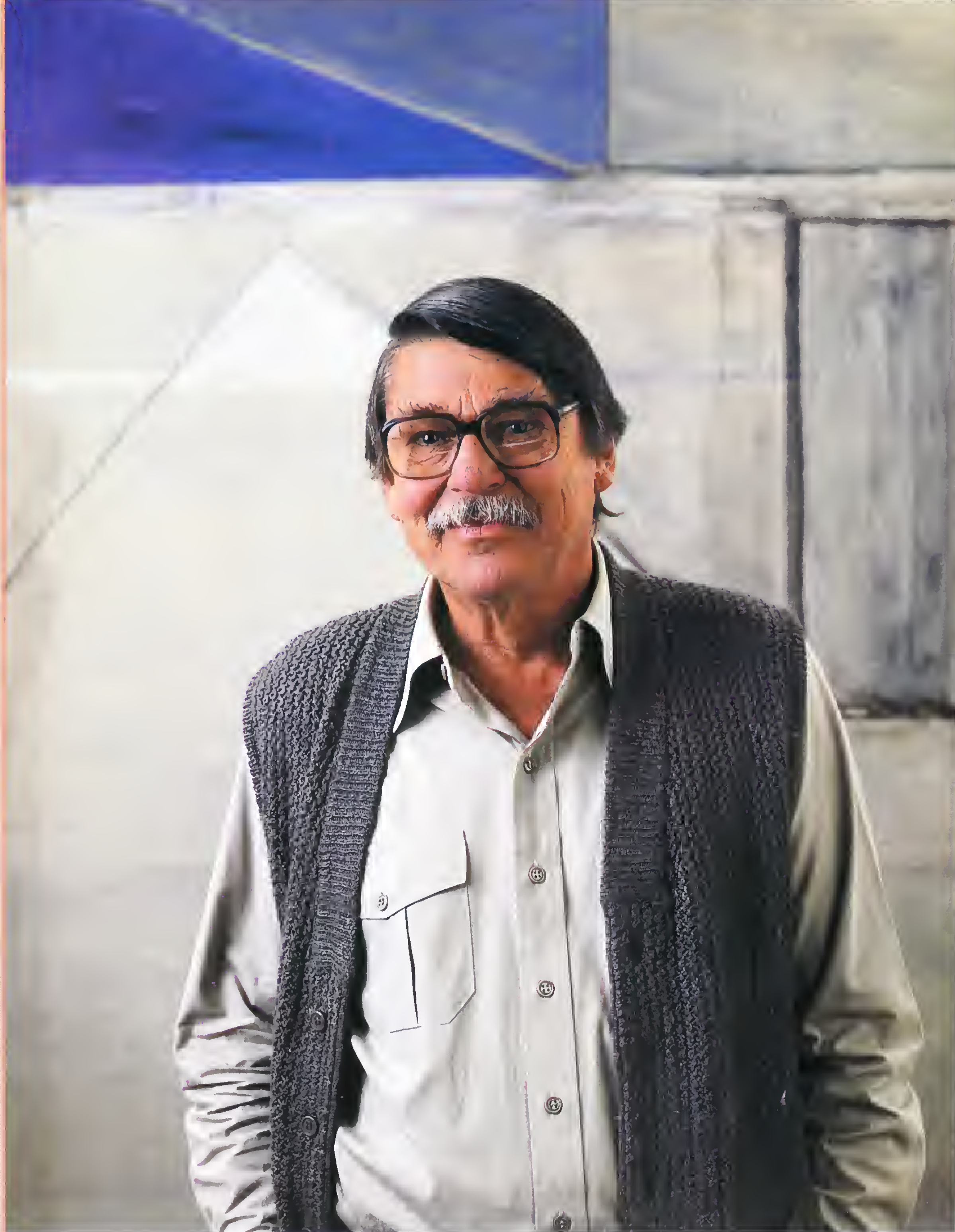


MANUEL NERI, 56

A sculptor, he teaches at the University of California at Davis, a forty-minute drive from his home and studio, in Benecia. Neri has kept the spirit of the Bay Area figurative school alive in his life-size female forms made from plaster and often completed with patches of paint, randomly applied. More recently, he has cast many of these in bronze and carved other images out of marble. When he was a student, he recalls, "people painted very heavily. It was almost sculptural relief." Today, he still admires the use of "the direct brushstroke" and likes to discuss how he is involved with "depersonalizing or deconstructing the figure." For him, figures are "vehicles to carry ideas." When he paints on his sculpture, he "adds another dimension. I can camouflage, destroy, emphasize, point out."

RICHARD DIEBENKORN, 64

In 1966, he moved from Berkeley to Santa Monica in order to teach at UCLA. At the time, he was still painting heavily impastoed canvases with figures set in backgrounds that frequently featured broad horizontal bands. The following year, in a studio in Ocean Park he had been sharing with the abstractionist Sam Francis, where, he says, he "could work larger," Diebenkorn began his still-continuing Ocean Park series. These canvases marked, he says, "a conscious decision" to return to abstraction, which he had given up twelve years before. Resonant blues, greens, and tans predominate on thinly painted surfaces. If Matisse had painted more abstractions, he might have made pictures like these.



ended up with forms that have a "glorious freshness and are about possibility." And Ron Davis comments, "You can think about what you want to do in ten seconds and then spend the rest of your life painting an illusion."

These artists, along with Robert Graham, Manuel Neri, and Stephen De Staebler, for all their differences, share something that comes from solitude and hard work. Each has masterfully blended the principles of abstraction with representational properties. Each does it his own way, a way that can be glimpsed in the photographs on these pages. It is this combination of elements that identifies the artists as a school—the Sunshine Boys. It also promises to be California's most enduring contribution to art in the United States.

Last summer, Richard Diebenkorn was asked about the differences between nonrepresentational and representational art, both of which he has practiced. "For me, and my life, there's been this duality," he answered. "These have been the two poles, and the major opposition in art." A few days later Thiebaud, whose recent series of cityscapes seems to be filled with a collection of mini-abstracts, confronted the same question. "I have trouble distinguishing between realism and abstraction," he said.

"[illegible] CALIFORNIA, SAYS THIEBAUD, ALLOWS ONE TO ESCAPE [illegible]OUSNESS AND THE PREDICTABLE."

"The differences are so minute and they are so beside the point in terms of the language of painting that it's uninteresting to me."

The mixing of the abstract and the representational has a long, rich tradition in the Bay Area. During the early thirties, when Hans Hofmann was teaching at the University of California at Berkeley and Diego Rivera was, at the same time, executing a series of murals nearby, they set the stage for the receptive merging of nonobjective art with simple, direct figures. For almost a decade local artists painted one way or another. Then, in the forties, Clyfford Still became an instructor at the San Francisco Art Institute (then called the California School of Fine Arts) and one of the most influential art teachers in America. Discussing Still's impact, the late Thomas Albright noted in his definitive *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area 1945–1980*, "The decisive break, he said much later, was not a move from naturalism to nonrepresentational painting as such, but 'the turning away from landscape to the figure—to dealing with the figure imaginatively, and with a kind of austerity.' "

What Still taught was reinforced by a brief stint at the same school by Mark Rothko as well as exhibitions of midforties paintings by Jackson Pollock and Arshile Gorky at the San Francisco Museum of Art. None of these artists was yet identified with abstraction; and their legacy in the West, far from being overshadowed later on by their subsequent work seen in reproductions, remained rooted in the transitional canvases that their California colleagues had experienced first-hand.

Surprisingly, the painter Sam Francis and the sculptor Mark di Suvero, two tried-and-true abstractionists, are the deans of today's California school of artists. Francis, sixty-three, and di Suvero, fifty-three, helped define the regional character in many ways. For one, their art evolved from their earliest successes. At the start of the fifties, Francis's paintings were drained of color; when di Suvero's sculpture was heralded initially, in 1960, it was made from weathered wood timbers. The older artist is now associated with a palette of bright reds, yellows, and blues, while the younger man's name is almost synonymous with large steel-beam constructions. Nevertheless, their work has not changed dramatically. There is a consistency to art made by Californians that can be compared to the weather there. You simply aren't keenly aware of seasons in the Golden State. This quality of relative changelessness is, in fact, a virtue of what is created there. Today artists who annually overhaul their styles are regarded skeptically.

Francis and di Suvero have also captured the grandeur of the West. Their art is spare and forthright, without complications. It has enormousness, an attribute that has something to do with the artists' environs. Francis uses a huge workplace in Santa Monica; di Suvero often works in a construction yard in Petaluma. They both believe that the cutting edge of American art is now in southern California. Francis, a member of the founding board of the Museum of Contemporary Art, says, "There was a certain amount of electricity as soon as MOCA was announced. We had a dead scene. Now we'll keep a lot of artists in the area."

Actually, the Sunshine Boys would not consider moving. They live and work in California mainly because they were either born, raised, or at least educated there. Some tasted life elsewhere, including in New York, and came back after they saw no reason to stray far from the well-known pleasures of the Golden State. Only De Staebler is a true immigrant. He was brought up near St. Louis, visited his sister in Los Angeles in 1954, and was smitten.

A key moment in the development among groups of artists in California came in 1966 when Richard Diebenkorn moved to Santa Monica from Berkeley to become a professor at UCLA. He was firmly established as a major artist. He had strong contacts in the San Francisco area, and so his move gave communications between the two art centers a big boost. (Graham and Davis, who had been students at the S.F.A.I., had already settled in Los Angeles.) Slowly, steadily, talking among themselves, the Californians developed their styles.

Because the Sunshine Boys have responded to a shared body of ideas and attitudes that are indigenous to the California art scene, the differences between the north and the south are not as pronounced as they were in the past, when all sorts of stereotypes abounded. Today

WAYNE THIEBAUD, 66

His paintings of San Francisco's streets and hills incorporate all sorts of perspectival systems—European old master, Oriental, and primitive—and are as indelible an image

of that city as Saul Steinberg's *New Yorker* cover showing Manhattan dominating the map of America. Thiebaud has homes in Sacramento and San Francisco and teaches at the University of California at Davis. "New York painters know what to make but don't know how to do it," he says. "Out here, no one knows what kind of painting to make, so they do it anyway." His latest retrospective was showered with praise as it toured the country. Perhaps significantly, the exhibition was not mounted in the East.

the contemporary-art communities in both cities thrive. Their rivalries are as trivial as those in, say, Manhattan, where there's an East Village scene, a SoHo faction, and a Fifty-seventh Street network.

Do they feel that they missed anything by living outside the mainstream? Robert Graham is convinced that events outside studios have little to do with the making of art. "If you hang around long enough, and you get good at what you do," he says, "it has nothing to do with galleries and museums and peripheral activities." Ron Davis, another Angeleno, concedes that there is "a price you pay" for being isolated and independent, as he is. But, he points out, "downtown Manhattan can be more provincial than here."

To Wayne Thiebaud, in northern California, the isolation has had a plus side. It freed artists to try "to escape preciousness and the predictable," he says. As for Manuel Neri, he never considered living in New York. "It's like being at the barricades there," he states. Besides, he asks, "who's a New York artist? Someone from Great Falls, Montana!" □

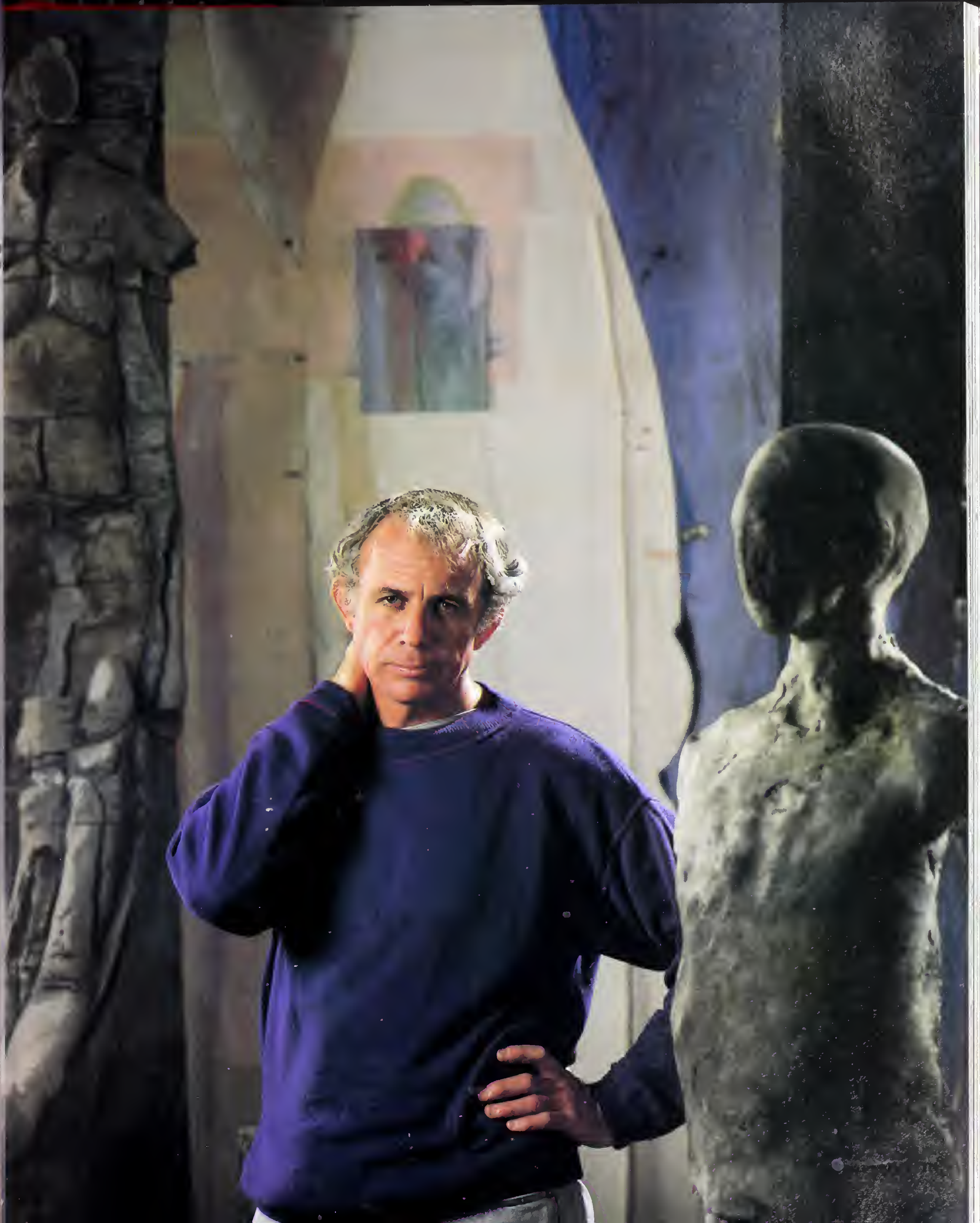
Phyllis Tuchman, author of George Segal, *writes art criticism for* Newsday *and other publications.*

ROBERT GRAHAM, 48

Outside of Los Angeles, he is associated with small bronze female nudes. Within his home city, however, residents are much more familiar with his monumental architectural projects: the gateway for the Olympics by the Coliseum, the dance door at the Music Center, and the fountains at Crocker Center. Graham's figures are so meticulously rendered—he has worked from models and videotapes that he makes of them—that their lean, reductivist qualities are hardly ever compared with minimalism, though they can be. Working in a studio that is actually a warren of spaces including his own bronze foundry, he reconciles historical genres with more-contemporary attitudes.

STEPHEN DE STAEBLER, 53

A ceramic sculptor, he now also casts in bronze many of his tall works made from fragments stacked on top of one another. They evoke Egyptian statuary and certainly illustrate how abstract and representational qualities are now being handled simultaneously by key artists in California. Some works are finished with pale pastel tones. De Staebler credits a class he took with Peter Voulkos, the artist who revolutionized ceramics in San Francisco and Los Angeles, for inspiring the direction of his art. Another turning point occurred when he started to work with parts from abandoned pieces that he stored in his backyard in Berkeley—elements he refers to as his "open-air notebook." He says that it took him "years to defy gravity without destroying the events in clay."



Right: A nostalgic view of Zuma Beach.

CREDO

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RON DAHLQUIST/FOUR BY FIVE

FEASTS FOR THE EYE

IN TOP LOS ANGELES RESTAURANTS, THERE IS ART ON THE PLATE— AND ON THE WALL

BY WILLIAM RICE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN LEATART

Los Angeles restaurants, already perhaps the most innovative in the nation, have added a new dimension. They are serving up fine art with lunch and dinner—in effect becoming part-time art galleries. By exhibiting contemporary artists, preferably local contemporary artists, they are winning status and, not incidentally, customers. In the words of Piero Selvaggio, owner of two of the city's most important Italian restaurants, Primi and Valentino, "Any restaurant that opens in Los Angeles today and hopes to win attention from the people who really count simply has to be art oriented."

This fusion of dining and art could not have been easily invented anywhere but in Los Angeles. The city, long noted for its benign climate, brilliant light, and openness to new ideas and the people who create them, has never before been so visually aware. People talk confidently of a distinctive "L.A. style." There is a new, lushly illustrated book about it and a monthly magazine with that very title. The style is really an amalgam of disparate design disciplines, an attitude expressed both in individual objects (such as the furniture shown on pages 120–23) and in whole environments.

The first place to show "L.A. style" was, of course, the home. The second is now the home away from home—the restaurant. Because everyone in Los Angeles dines out, restaurants are the city's most important public forums for influencing taste and launching new trends. Top chefs are regarded as artists and treated by adoring patrons as celebrities; what they "paint" on their plates truly does matter. Increasingly, the artistic statement also appears on the walls of their restaurants.

"There is a connection between the eye and the stomach," says Mauro Vincenti, whose classy downtown Italian restaurant, Rex, is the most beautiful in the city. "A restaurant needs visuals to help diners relax. In France, where food is made and presented according to very precise formulas and directions, *nature morte* subjects suit the mood. Today in California our food is less 'frozen,' and so is the art."

In Los Angeles, unlike in New York, creative people, art collectors, and gourmets often congregate at the same restaurants. They have come to assume a correlation between quality in art and quality in food, for the best art tends to be found in the most exciting places to dine. (Renato Danese, director of New York City's Pace Gallery, who admires the energy of the L.A. art scene, both within restaurants and outside them, nevertheless has felt constrained to point out dryly that California artists "are more appreciated locally than internationally.")

Michael's, an excellent restaurant in Santa Monica, offers diners a museum-quality display of such modern masters as David Hockney, Richard Diebenkorn, and Robert Graham. In this high-culture setting, the owner, Michael McCarty, commands what probably are the highest average dinner checks in the city for his Franco-California cuisine and superb wines. He has been an active supporter of the arts and, in return, numbers the city's

Opposite page: *Wind*, a lithograph by David Hockney, graces the walls of Michael's. Left: Much of the art is quite off-the-wall at Rebecca's, where a giant crocodile hangs atop Frank Gehry's underwater fantasy.

The juices are as exotic as the art at Rebecca's, where the largest velvet painting ever done runs above the banquettes (left). The California artist Tony Berlant painted the colorful images on both sides of the restaurant's doors, below.

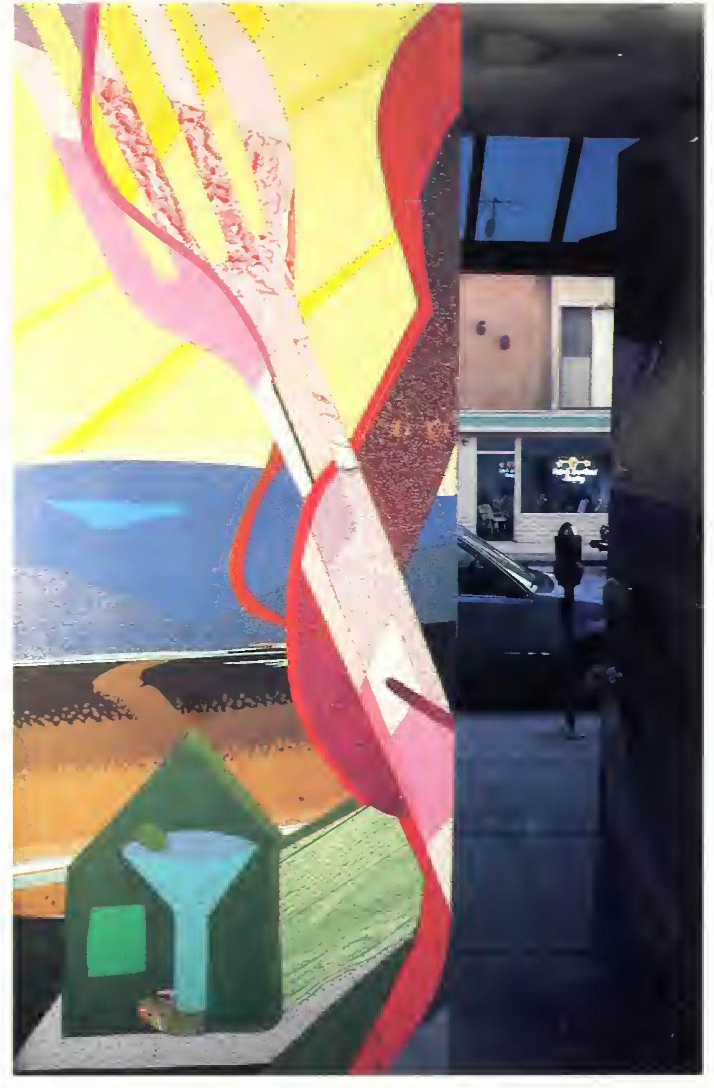
most affluent collectors and artists among his faithful clientele. "The art is just another facet of the environment, like flowers or silverware," he says smoothly. "Seating a customer under a Jasper Johns or a Frank Stella is like offering him a '61 Pétrus for $55. The connoisseur gets it, understands."

Well, some connoisseurs, anyway. Not everybody shares the premise that a restaurant is a perfectly appropriate place to exhibit—much less to sell—art. Danese, of the Pace Gallery, in New York, an outfit not averse to lending works of art as upscale props to Hollywood (most notably for *Legal Eagles*), draws the line. "We wouldn't lend or sponsor shows of unique work by the artists we represent in restaurants," he says. "And very few artists I know would permit it." To Suzanne Muchnic, the art writer for the Los Angeles *Times*, "good art is good art wherever it is hung, but in a restaurant the context is not serious enough or focused enough. The art is always decor, to some degree. Our paper would not review a show in a restaurant."

"Lots of people don't go to galleries, no matter what they say, and lots of artists don't get major shows," responds a Los Angeles designer. "People are less intimidated in a restaurant, when they are living with the art as they would in their own home." An L.A. restaurateur adds a more upbeat note: "It's a form of dinner theater. A restaurant can give you a full evening. A gallery can't."

How do restaurants get their works of art? Many pass that problem along to specialists. Trumps, located on Melrose near the hub of the city's interior-design showrooms, is renowned for its chef (and also co-owner), Michael Roberts, one of the more creative cooks broadening the horizons of contemporary western and southwestern American cooking. It draws customers with keen visual sensibilities as well as sophisticated palates. With its white walls, high ceilings, and exposed rafters, the restaurant is a remarkably neutral background—ideal for art.

"I think of Trumps as a home," explains the person who sup-



plies the art, the curator Janet Karatz. "The works I select are always contemporary and always fine art. No arts and crafts, no decoration, nothing very commercial. I am a consultant, on retainer to the restaurant. The artists loan us their work. Sales are through the artist or his gallery. I've done some pretty avant-garde things that have offended people. I don't think that drives them away from the restaurant, but I am a little bit careful, and I never hang anything for shock value."

Other restaurateurs who lack the confidence to select works of art, even with the help of an expert, have nonetheless followed the trend. They rely completely on a dealer. Indeed, restaurants may literally rent their walls, taking a commission on sales and advertising the artist and prices on the menu. Some have scheduled "shows." Others merely move pieces in and out when the artist wants them back or when boredom sets in.

There is a considerable degree of risk in all of this. The art must harmonize with the ambience and the menu. Bad art will win a restaurant no friends, and few restaurateurs have the background to judge new (and therefore less expensive) art or the bankroll to buy the best work by established artists. Even good art can be intrusive if it is not well positioned; and the stronger the art statement, the more need for customers who "get it" and approve.

That puts new emphasis on restaurant decorators. Behind the success of the deliberately casual Spago, overlooking Sunset Boulevard, where the chef Wolfgang Puck has captivated Hollywood celebrities with his designer pizzas and inventive California nouvelle creations, there is the fine hand of Barbara Lazaroff. She happens to be married to Puck and created the look of his restaurants (he also owns the innovative and highly praised Chinois on Main). "The lighter cuisine here at Spago, the reliance on simplicity, sets the mood for the decorative art," explains Lazaroff. "I felt, six years ago, that if I didn't make some kind of effort with the environment, Spago wouldn't be taken seriously. Also, I wanted to provide an outlet for young California artists.

"The art has to be fun," Lazaroff continues. "I sometimes have to say no to a piece, not because it is bad but because it won't work in the partylike atmosphere of a restaurant. I put small, subtle pieces in the bathrooms. People are alone with the art. They notice it. I've sold a lot of paintings out of the toilet." Her formula in the restaurants is, thus, to use work that does not call attention to itself as art, or is merely decorative. In other words, if a diner were asked whether he liked the art, he would be perfectly justified in answering, "Huh? What art?"

No one could respond that way at Rebecca's, in nearby Venice, the most talked-about restaurant in Los Angeles since Puck and Lazaroff's Chinois opened, in 1983. The food is Mexican in inspiration and quite good, if pricey. The place was designed by the noted architect Frank Gehry, who is something of a local hero. He put in his own art—most obviously a pair of crocodiles and a giant octopus that

"IN A RESTAURANT, THE ART IS ALWAYS JUST DECOR."

The owner-chef Michael McCarty believes in a correlation between quality in art and quality in food. On the walls of his Santa Monica restaurant, Michael's, are Charles Garabedian's painted ceramic tiles (left) and Richard Diebenkorn's Big Blue, *above a table of tempting desserts, below.*

The curator Janet Karatz selects the contemporary art for the highly regarded Trumps restaurant. On display are the airbrush paintings of Eric Orr, one of many local artists to be given a show here.

he designed to hang from the ceiling—along with pieces by Sam Francis and Peter Alexander, window decoration by Ed Moses, and arresting designs on both sides of the front door by Tony Berlant. The result is certainly striking. As a first-time diner put it, "Carlos Castaneda would love it here." Even the owner, Bruce Marder, whose West Beach Café, across the street, has long been *the* artists' hangout, was quoted as saying of his $1.5 million investment, "It's so weird-looking."

Images at Rebecca's are not integrated. They tap emotions and memories peculiar to southern California and the Mexican border. Here, according to one restaurant designer, is "a noncredit art course for foodies who are only beginning to learn about art and architecture. Gehry awes them. They are told he has crossed over, that architecture plus art equals sculpture. He's crossed so many lines he can't be criticized."

City restaurant, designed by Josh Dawson Schweitzer and David Kellen, appears at first to be a flagrant rejection of what is happening elsewhere. From the outside it looks very similar to the garages and small factories around it. Inside, there is no art on view: no canvases, no stuffed crocodiles, not even the shadow of a lurking art dealer. Instead, the architectonics supply the art: the vast upward sweep of stark white walls, broken here and there by doors and windows. The only immediate visual distraction is a TV screen over the bar. It shows not video art but cooks at work in the kitchen.

The food at City is eclectic, informal, and seasoned in novel ways. It ranges from barbecue to tandoori-roasted duck breast and incorporates ingredients as humble as cabbage or as exotic as tamarind. Some of it tastes quite odd. Garnishings for the dishes are intentionally minimal. "My partner and I want our food simple and uncluttered, and we wanted our restaurant to have the same feeling," explains the co-chef and owner Susan Feniger. "As a chef, I hope I am creative, but I don't think of myself as an artist. There's something contrived and trendy about chefs being artists. But I do see City as a huge art statement: the chairs, the various-colored carts, the table bases, the dishes. The art is not abstract. We wanted to concentrate on function."

A decade ago, California cuisine as a school—or a style—of cooking leapt across the continent; it was an idea whose time had come. Will the new refinement of exhibiting contemporary art on restaurant walls follow suit? It is surely an attractive addition to restaurants and can help lend a certain excitement, or ceremony, to eating, but even after all that has been said, one has to wonder. Who but Californians can mix their sensory pleasures so easily? (Will they next hire avant-garde musicians to play avant-garde compositions in restaurants?) Moreover, points out the sensible Carolyn Shanks, who did the bold, sleek design for Primi and has chosen to display unique fabric artworks by the local artist Robert Burton, "if there is artistry in the cooking, putting art on the walls makes sense—there is a relationship between the two arts. But you can't take the art on the walls and put that spirit into the food. Not even first-class art can make a restaurant artistic all by itself." And vice versa. □

William Rice wrote about the restaurateur Jovan Trboyevic for the March 1986 issue of Connoisseur.

THE ART SCENE

DAVID HAMSLEY (4)

Below is a sampling of some of the best restaurants in the Los Angeles area where contemporary art is shown. There are many others. Each listing indicates the cooking favored, the art featured, and the person involved in its selection.

Cha Cha Cha. Good, fairly inexpensive, home-style Caribbean–Latin American cooking and lots of celebrities, at L.A.'s favorite Third World restaurant of the moment. Works by a local artist displayed in tiny dining room. The place and the art have charm. Mario Tamayo, co-owner. 656 North Virgil Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 664-7723.

Chinois on Main. Innovative, often spectacular California-French-Chinese cooking. Ask for counter seating, to watch chefs work. Vibrant decor makes its own art statement. Pieces by California artists displayed in hallway to bathroom change periodically. Barbara Lazaroff, designer. 2709 Main Street, Santa Monica; (213) 392-9025.

City. Contemporary preparations, eclectic menu. Moderate prices. Architecture by Josh Dawson Schweitzer and David Kellen. Changing menu covers by local artists. Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken, owner-chefs. 180 South La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 938-2155.

Katsu. Exquisite Japanese food. Permanent collection of magnificent ceramics by Mineo Mizuno; paintings by Jonathan Borofsky, Steve Galloway, others. Katsu Michite, chef-owner. 1972 Hillhurst Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 665-1891.

La Petite Chaya. Superior French-Japanese cuisine. Permanent collection of ceramics; paintings by Jasper Johns and Kris Ruhs; sculpture. Satoshi Mochizuki, manager. 1930 Hillhurst Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 665-5991.

L.A. Nicola. Satisfactory, reasonably priced California cooking. Frequently changing shows by local and international artists in Martini Lounge and dining room. Larry Nicola, owner. 4326 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles; (213) 660-7217.

Michael's. Modern American, contemporary French cooking. Permanent collection of museum-quality works by David Hockney, Robert Graham, Billy Al Bengston, Richard Diebenkorn, John Cage, and others displayed in dining areas, staircases, hallways, and private dining rooms on second floor. Sculpture by Robert Graham and Loren Madson in outdoor patio. Michael McCarty, owner. 1147 Third Street, Santa Monica; (213) 451-0843.

Muse. Reasonably priced nouvelle American cooking. Underexposed California artists. Display changes on a five-week cycle. Ron Braun, owner, and David Green, manager. 7360 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles; (213) 934-4400.

Partners. Tasty regional American cooking, reasonable prices. Attractive interior and artworks by Wil Ennis. Artworks for sale. Larry Lloyd and Raymond Bellizzi, co-owners. 1836 Hyperion Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 661-0711.

Primi. High-fashion grazing on inventive Italian dishes made with impeccable ingredients. Artwork by Robert Burton; changes every three months. Carolyn Shanks, designer. 10543 Pico Boulevard, West Los Angeles; (213) 475-9235.

Rebecca's. Mexican cooking. Excellent cocktails and appetizers, including ceviche, chiles rellenos, quesadillas, Caesar salad. Design by Frank Gehry; artworks by Gehry, Tony Berlant, Sam Francis, Peter Alexander, Ed Moses. 2025 Pacific Avenue, Venice; (213) 306-6266.

Rex, Il Ristorante. Very refined, very expensive classic and new-style Italian cooking in one of the world's most beautiful restaurants. Periodic exhibits of modern California and Italian art and photography on balcony level. Mauro Vincenti, owner. 617 South Olive Street, Los Angeles; (213) 627-2300.

Scratch. Tapas (Spanish appetizers) are featured. Contemporary artists. Shows change on an eight- or nine-week cycle. Gail de Krassel, curator. Lack of harmony in food and artwork; the latter dominates the restaurant. 3105 Main Street, Santa Monica; (213) 392-9697.

72 Market Street. Well-prepared California cuisine featuring grilled fish. Open late. Desserts a specialty. Permanent collection. Artwork by Robert Graham, Laddie John Dill, Peter Alexander. Tony Bill, co-owner. 72 Market Street, Venice; (213) 392-8720.

Spago. Inventive California cuisine in a casual, celebrity-filled atmosphere. Pizza a specialty. Changing displays of California artists. Artwork for sale. Barbara Lazaroff, designer. 1114 Horn Avenue, West Hollywood; (213) 652-4025.

Trumps. Creative California and regional cooking by one of the city's top chefs. Expensive. Two or three shows a year, usually of a single California artist. Janet Karatz, curator. 8764 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles; (213) 855-1480.

Wave. California-French cuisine. Kitchen has been in transition. Emerging California artists. Robert Berman of the B-1 and the recently opened Robert Berman galleries, curator. 2820 Main Street, Santa Monica; (213) 399-9114.

West Beach Café. Well-prepared California cuisine; outstanding wine and spirits selection. Revolving shows of first-rate contemporary art. Wall installations. Fred Hoffman, curator. A favorite gathering place for Venice artists. 60 North Venice Boulevard, Venice; (213) 823-5396.

GOOD LINES

WHY THE HOUSES BY BERNARD MAYBECK ARE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CLASSICS

BY OGDEN TANNER

COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN DOCUMENTS COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

A few years ago, the proud owners of a house designed by Bernard Maybeck some sixty-five years earlier in Berkeley, California, invited all the other owners of Maybeck houses they could track down in the region to a Sunday brunch. More than a hundred people showed up to sip Bloody Marys and talk about their houses. Not many architects can boast an active fan club, least of all one formed three-quarters of a century after most of their designs were built.

Like all good architecture, Bernard Maybeck's improves with age, and

Above: Maybeck, his wife, and his children liked to dress up for family parties. Right: The romantic entrance of the G. H. Chick house, in Oakland.

people who live in his houses regard them with a rare passion—though there may be the odd mild complaint about the size of the closets or the lack of a downstairs bathroom. In the San Francisco Bay area, a region as architecturally sophisticated as any, the phrase "It's a Maybeck"—a real Maybeck, not a mere look-alike—is high praise indeed.

Bernard Ralph Maybeck was born in New York's Greenwich Village during the Civil War to an immigrant German woodcarver, and he died in 1957 at the age of ninety-five. Thirty years later, his legend lives on, where the evening fog slips through the Golden Gate to sit softly on the hills. He has been labeled "romantic," "eclectic," "idiosyncratic"; admirers have gone so far as to call him the "West Coast Frank Lloyd Wright," but though Maybeck admired Wright ("We're both Greeks, Wright and I"), each man went his own, highly original way.

Maybeck's best-known works are two stunning and wildly dissimilar structures that have achieved monumental status—one, the Palace of Fine Arts, a grand, brooding, classical ruin built of plaster for San Francisco's 1915 international exposition and so well loved that it has since been rebuilt in concrete; the other, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Berkeley, across the bay, a brilliant mélange of forms erected in 1910 and considered a milestone in ecclesiastical design.

Maybeck's greatest contributions to architecture, however, lie in no single building but in the houses he designed, ranging from the humble to the baronial. These are important not only for their pioneering ideas but for a freewheeling approach that remains fresh today. He is widely acknowledged as the father of the so-called Bay Area style, an amalgam of concepts peculiarly suited to the region's climate, available materials, and terrain. In the course of a half century, he designed some 150 houses, mostly in northern California, and of these the majority in Berkeley, where he was an instructor at the University of California's Department of Instrumental Drawing and Engineering Design. The appeal of his houses is as universal as it is elusive, as dramatic as it is difficult to analyze.

"THE THING TO DO IS MAKE THE HOME FIT THE FAMILY."

No two are alike, and though recurrent themes can be discerned, in virtually every case they appear in a different form—amusing, endearing, astounding.

Like other good architects, Maybeck did not believe in imposing preconceptions on a design problem; instead he sought solutions in the needs of his clients, the sites, and the materials he built with. "The thing to do," he said in 1927, "is to make the home fit the family. . . . I never plan a home for a man until I have asked him a lot of questions. 'What sort of woman is your wife? What kind of clothes do you both wear? What do you most like to read? Do you enjoy music?' " He also kept in mind "the man in the street . . . who'll buy the house after the owner sells it."

When he had learned enough about his clients, he began sketching, using rough charcoal and layer on layer of tracing paper, scribbling and reworking until he finally had something that looked right. It was a lesson he had learned well during five years at the École des Beaux-Arts, in Paris, where he went when he was twenty to study in the atelier of Jules-Louis André, with whom the great H. H. Richardson had studied earlier. "I have never been an architect," Maybeck once said with characteristic understatement. "I just like one line better than another." For him, architecture was above all the study of lines.

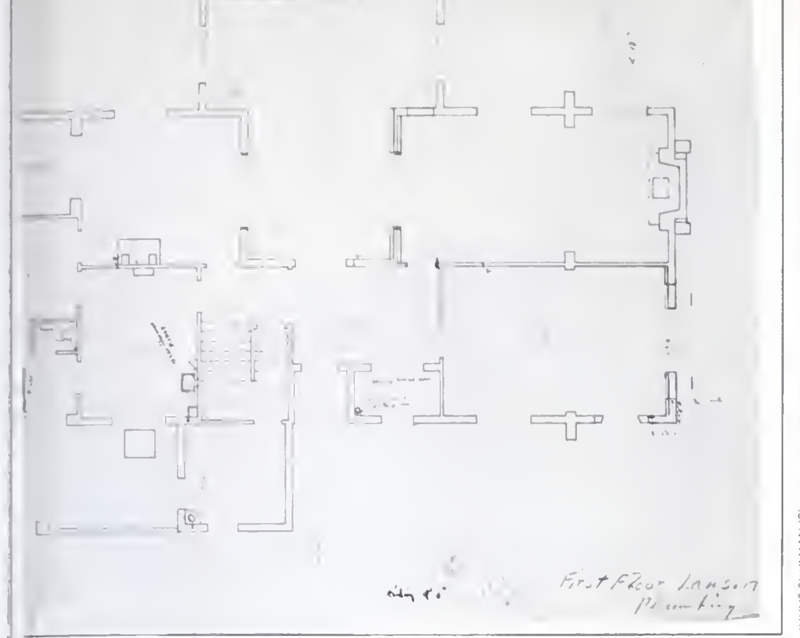
Out of the swirls and smudges on his paper, the lines he liked best eventually emerged. Many of these incorporated new design concepts just gaining currency. One was that of the open plan. Even those Maybeck houses that look modest from the outside unfold inside into a series of surprising, sweeping spaces that flow up, down, and every which way—even through the walls to the outdoors. The living room is the heart of the house, often soaring through exposed rafters to a dark, mysterious peak. "He liked plenty of room up there," one of his carpenters observed. In some designs an interior balcony adds to the drama, allowing the master and mistress of the house to step out of their bedroom and enjoy a different perspective on their domain. The focal point is always the fireplace, usually of ample, sometimes heroic, proportions, with built-in seating on either side, frequently decorated with Maybeck's own version of the client's family crest and fitted out with wrought-iron accoutrements, chandeliers, and furniture—all designed by him. He believed that a man's house is his castle and that the hearth is the center of family life.

Windows are grouped or combined into large, single sheets of glass, early versions of the picture window that not only avoid cross lighting and provide more usable, uninterrupted wall space but also open the rooms up to views of the garden or the bay beyond. On the ground floor, windows are

The ample, light-filled living room of the Chick house, and its exterior, with many windows under wide eaves.

FRED LYON/WHEELER PICTURES

COURTESY THE BANCROFT LIBRARY



JULIUS SHULMAN (2)

Above: Plan of the Lawson house shows the graceful flow of rooms. An arched opening provides an unconventional frame for a view. The exterior is at once playful and powerful.

Maybeck's drawing (below) shows how he used an antic roofline and mixed many styles—successfully, in the Roos house, San Francisco.

often extended from floor to ceiling and open sideways—prototypes of modern sliding glass doors. In most houses the glass is sheltered by broadly overhanging eaves up to six feet wide, which both shield interiors from sun and rain and help tie the house visually to the site and the view. (A house without an overhanging roof seemed to Maybeck like "a hat without a brim.") Substituting for solid eaves here and there are open trellises and pergolas on which vines can grow, filtering the sunlight into dappled patterns and making another link between house and garden.

In his attempts to create generous, exciting interior spaces, Maybeck was among the first to combine adjoining rooms, sometimes installing sliding panels so that the spaces could be divided or thrown together at will ("When the wall separating dining from living room was removed," wrote the architecture critic Esther McCoy, "all Berkeley was shocked"). He also thought that housewives without servants should be able to enjoy themselves while working in their kitchens, with views of their gardens on the one hand and of their families and dinner guests on the other. He merged kitchen and dining areas over open counters; in one early design he made it even easier to cook and entertain at the same time by removing the burners from a standard electric range and installing them in the tiled countertop, building the oven into the opposite wall at a convenient height. For this stroke of practical genius—decades ahead of standard built-in components—he charged his clients nothing more than the cost of the range itself.

Maybeck's occasionally niggardly closets, it is said, were dictated by his view that a man needs only two good suits, one for special occasions and one on his back. But he more than made up for such lapses with other inventive details: built-in window seats, indirect cove lighting, a chimney designed to speed up air flow and create an adequate draft. Maybeck owners find that his fireplaces, even the most cavernous of

them, draw up smoke extremely well.

What is most striking about Maybeck's houses is the way he was able to select from a broad catalogue of materials and architectural styles and make it all work. He was a master of structure and craftsmanship, not only using posts and beams appropriately and economically but celebrating them as sculptural forms in the way they were exposed, joined, colored, and carved. Better than any of his contemporaries, he knew and loved redwood, a relatively abundant and cheap material in those days. He brought out its warm beauty in a hundred ways, notably in sculptural balustrades and in wide-boarded walls and ceilings left unfinished and exposed. When earthquake and fire demonstrated the vulnerability of wooden houses, he mastered newer materials, like concrete and metal factory sash, bringing out their nature too in his designs and adding some twists of his own. For a total expenditure of $600, he built a house for himself out of gunny sacks dipped in a foamy cement he called "Bubble Stone" and hung on a framework of wires—a demonstration of a kind of fireproof construction that anyone could afford.

When it came to matters of architectural style, Maybeck recognized few limits. He borrowed happily whatever elements he liked from the past—Gothic, Romanesque, Byzantine, Greek, Roman, Spanish Mission, Swiss Chalet—and paraphrased them in his own way. About the only vernacular he did not enjoy was the so-called International style, which came on the scene later in his career. "You mean those boxes?" he would say when the subject came up. "They haven't got anything to do with architecture. Architecture is an art." Some purists dismissed him as an eccentric dabbler; but the "dabbling" is what makes his designs "uniquely individualistic," according to his biographer Kenneth Cardwell (in *Bernard Maybeck: Artisan, Architect, Artist*). "His complete disregard for archaeological detail and proper 'good taste' in historic style is evident in all his works."

If there is one clue to Maybeck's genius, this is probably it. For him there was no "dead" architecture, no "right" or "wrong" style. He delighted equally in medieval tracery, Byzantine capitals, and twentieth-century corrugated-iron roofs, and he used them, often cheek by jowl, to solve the problems he confronted and evoke the moods he sought. "Maybeck was not only one of the great American architects, but he's extremely relevant for us today," says Robert Venturi, whose own ideas about architecture have strongly influenced today's postmodernist school of thought. "He wasn't just a classicist or a gothicist; he had many vocabularies. More important, he got at the essence of historical forms, and he was not 'correct' or stuffy in the way he used them. Indeed, he was purposefully and sophisticatedly *wrong*. He had verve, enthusiasm, courage. As a result, his work has great richness and tension, qualities that make it first-rate."

"HE HAD IDEAS COMING OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS."

There are still people around who remember Maybeck and offer charming and revealing glimpses into his personality. The photographer Fred Lyon remembers meeting him when he was working on an experimental model airplane that traveled on wires across his studio, its wings flapping. "He was so much more fun than anyone I had ever met," says Lyon, who was a teenager at the time. "He had ideas coming out in all directions."

Maybeck's daughter-in-law, Jacomena, who still lives in a rustic, peak-roofed house he built for her and his son, Wallen, in the Berkeley hills, recalls him fondly as a small, good-natured man with twinkling blue eyes, a "Pooh Bear figure," and a Santa Claus beard—a man who loved to talk to the young people who were drawn to him, to tell fairy stories to his grandchildren, laugh, sing passages from French operas, design costumes for birthdays and plays, and wear an artist's beret. He designed his wife Annie's dresses and even his own pants, tubular marvels with built-in suspenders that rose to a point just below his beard—"to obviate the need for a vest," he said.

"The secret, of course, was his mind," says Jacomena. "It never stopped clicking, having ideas, even if he was just sitting under a tree—something he wanted to do, something he wanted to build. He was always looking ahead. He told his students, 'Don't be afraid to dream. It's just as cheap to think big as to think small.' He believed in beauty. We loved him very much." □

Maybeck designed the Roos house's baronial hearth, fire screen, and coat of arms.

FRED LYON/WHEELER PICTURES

Ogden Tanner has written for the San Francisco Chronicle *and* Architectural Forum.

IN A STATE WHERE THE CAR IS AN EXPRESSION OF SELF, THERE ARE FIVE GLORIO

Even the sun cooperates. Henry Haga, the director of the General Motors Advanced Concepts Center, in Newbury Park, California, insists that West Coast light is richer, purer, more yellow, and that an automobile's shapes and surfaces assume greater importance in its glow.

Whatever the reason, the automobile is easily California's most relevant artifact. For much of the rest of the United States, the car is an appliance, a necessity, and a nuisance. Ah, but for Californians, the car is plumage and pleasure, freedom and a rolling financial statement, and, oh yes, a form of transit too.

It should also be remembered that the Okies *drove* to California. Everybody in California moved there from somewhere else. Wherever that somewhere else was, it almost certainly offered fewer opportunities for pleasuring oneself with wheels. Connecticut road salt and Massachusetts snow tires, Michigan mud and Texas dust, New York's no parking and Iowa's boring roads, Chicago's congestion and Miami's car thieves—this country is full of ways to make the automobile your enemy. In contrast, California weather is ideal, and from any suburb in the state, it's thirty minutes to totally open country, and even the city limits of L.A. and San Francisco offer outrageous pockets of road that bring out the Porsche pilot in the blandest personality.

Californians love cars, and they wear them with style—the way other people wear fur coats—in large part because many of their pecking orders are based not on one's intellectual or social achievement but on what one owns. "People have always moved out here because of the way California allowed them to live," says an actual native. "They didn't come out here to save money but to spend it."

Spend it you can, if you're a Californian into cars. Here's *Connoisseur*'s five-car garage of quintessential California cars: a ride for every occasion, whether you're off to dine at Spago, subdue Mulholland Drive, or sit in Silicon Valley traffic.

THE HAMMER: The Mercedes-Benz star is a California amulet worn to ward off poverty, but *this* Mercedes is so special it dispenses with that ubiquitous hood ornament. Everybody who's anybody has a 450SL, the Beverly Hills Chevy, but the most adventuresome will ante up $143,000 for the AMG 300E Hammer, a German hot-rodding workshop's 365-hp version of the factory's standard, $38,600 300E four-door sedan. What makes the Hammer special is its Ferrari-class acceleration, its handling, its top speed (a proven 178 mph), and a brutal, blacked-out monochrome look that makes this the Arnold Schwarzenegger of automobiles.

1955 CADILLAC CONVERTIBLE: Standing out from the crowd becomes increasingly difficult when the freeway is bumper-to-bumper conspicuous consumption; but

…RSONAS • BY STEPHAN WILKINSON • ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID WILLARDSON

if everybody in the world is a peacock, pretending to be a turkey isn't a bad idea. Hence, the popularity in California of aberrant cars such as this barge, once the despised symbol of Eisenhower-era excess. (It doesn't hurt that many 1950s American cars came in pastel pinks, blues, and greens once derided but now lauded as the "Miami Vice" look.) Some of the most desirable California retro-cars are true classics—early fifties bathtub Porsche Speedsters, 1955 Chevrolets, 1957 T-Birds—while the value of others, such as Nash Metropolitans and 1965 Dodge Dart convertibles, remains inexplicable.

ROLLS-ROYCE CORNICHE CONVERTIBLE: If you have more money than imagination and want to make a motorized statement without the fuss of being trendy, consider that ageless rock the Roller. You can make fun of a Rolls-Royce, you can outrun a Rolls-Royce, and you can even outspend a Rolls-Royce, but nobody can ignore this larger-than-life classic, especially in its latest, $168,100 incarnation, the Corniche II convertible. Argument abounds, as it does everywhere else, concerning Rolls-Royce's claim of being the best car in the world, but it's invariably a battle between the haves and the have-nots—and, in California, the soon-will-haves.

PORSCHE PRETENDERS: There was a time when simply owning a Porsche was cachet enough. That the cars looked like flying carpet sweepers didn't much matter, but along came the yuppie, who turned a cult car into a status symbol. Suddenly, in California, at least, everybody had one. The answer for many has been fake body panels that give otherwise ordinary Porsches the exotic look of near-unobtainable factory race cars. And now that Porsche has announced that the United States will not see on its roads the Porsche 959—a sequentially twin-turbocharged, four-wheel-drive supercar likely to have been the most expensive production automobile ever sold—959 look-alikes are already appearing on California streets.

THE FREEWAY PICKUP: The macho California reactions to the prettified car have long been Jeeps, four-wheel-drivers, and pickup trucks (the latter almost invariably shrunken Japanese versions, so that nobody mistakes you for a real workman). That they also make an "I'm outdoorsy" statement is no coincidence. The most extreme are fitted with enough lights to illuminate all of Pismo Beach, plus jacked-up suspensions and tires so tall you need a ladder to board. Inevitably, a reaction to the reaction is setting in: low-rider pickups, often made into convertibles and good for freeway cruising, are a repackaged version of a colorful Chicano concept. □

Stephan Wilkinson, a frequent contributor to this magazine, drives a 1967 Chevrolet four-wheel-drive pickup truck.

PUTTIN' ON THE GLITZ

"GOD SAVE ME FROM OLD MONEY," SAYS AMEN WARDY, THE RETAILING WIZARD

BY LEON HARRIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK HANAUER

In the shamelessly rich village of Newport Beach, California, a little man with a little store has had an immense effect on the conspicuous-consumption game. Indeed, he runs rings around such giants as Neiman-Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, I. Magnin, and Marshall Field's. To put it the way our little man would prefer, he has built the world's most expensive, exclusive, and extravagant women's store—and, as if to insult his competitors, he has done it in a former J. C. Penney garage. His name, and his shop's, is Amen Wardy.

If Wardy's success is attributable to any one overriding talent, it must be his incomparable ability to sell. Short, pudgy, and balding, Wardy does not look the part of a supersalesman. His voice is high; his attire could not be less elegant: one day recently, he was wearing an open-necked sports shirt, wrinkled linen slacks, sponge-rubber-soled shoes. His sonorously arresting name is, in fact, Arabic and translates into English as "The Hidden Rose." All that aside, the store he has created is superb. It is also neatly tailored to southern California. The atmosphere is carefully casual and carefree, embodying the idea that there is nothing forbidding about luxury. Says Wardy, "My customers do not come to look; they come to buy." And buy they do, with terrifying abandon. "My average transaction here is over a thousand dollars. I have ten or fifteen customers who buy a million to a million and a half dollars' worth from me a year." (Shopkeepers, like fishermen, are occasionally given to hyperbole. Trade sources estimate Wardy's annual sales at $20 million or less.)

Wardy's climb to the top began in 1957 when, as a chronically truant fourteen-year-old misfit in El Paso, Texas, he quit school entirely and persuaded his grandmother to lend him $5,000. He used the money to buy high-style women's costume jewelry, which he sold in a corner of her wholesale tobacco store. Grandma Zakia Ayoub and her husband had arrived from Lebanon in 1905 as immigrants and settled in Texas. They had built up their company, Border Tobacco, literally a pack at a time. Zakia, defying the odds, is still at it.

So successful was Wardy's costume-jewelry venture that he soon moved to an old El Paso mansion and expanded into more expensive and dramatic clothes than other local merchants dared to offer. It was here that he learned to sell and sell and sell, because high-rollers and big spenders in El Paso were, and are,

Leon Harris, whose articles often appear in this magazine, is the author of Merchant Princes.

The only Galanos salon in the world is at Amen Wardy. So is the only American outlet for Valentino outside Manhattan.

GALANOS

pretty hard to come by. In 1977, after a vacation in southern California, he moved his business to a tiny store in Newport Beach; in 1982, he moved again, to a space twice as large: the J. C. Penney garage. Here, he added stone façades, a copper roof, a porte cochère, and a series of bay windows, each with its own planting.

Even more remarkable was the transformation of the interior, where the original rectangle was turned into a maze of octagonal rooms whose parquet leads the visitor irresistibly from one room to the next. Some fifty beveled-glass skylights brighten the whole and infuse every fitting room with natural light. The lighted, beveled-glass showcases are so elegant that they seem designed to display Mayan gold treasures or Fabergé bibelots rather than handbags, handkerchiefs, and hosiery.

However, what finally defines a store is what is *in* the cases, and that's where Amen Wardy is unique. A few months ago, Neiman-Marcus in its downtown Dallas store had a total of 11 Judith Leiber handbags. At that same moment, Amen Wardy had 121 on display, with 58 in reserve, priced at from $800 to $3,000 each. "If Mrs. Leiber shows 275 bags, I probably buy 273 for this one little store," explains Wardy. "Three years ago, I sold an Arab prince 37 Judith Leiber bags in one afternoon for $38,000, and you can't sell 37 if you have only a dozen," he adds, triumphantly.

WARDY'S APPETITE FOR HIS WORK IS CLEARLY TOUCHED BY A KIND OF RELIGIOUS FERVOR.

"Why does a woman from Midland, Texas, fly all the way out here and spend $100,000 shopping in my store for three days instead of going to Dallas to Neiman's or to Saks Fifth Avenue, in New York, where she can also go to the theater and opera and ballet, none of which we have here in Newport Beach? We show her so much *more*—more Galanos, more Valentino, more Chanel, more Andrea Pfister shoes. But the most important reason of all is that no one ever selects *anything* to be sold in my store—not a handkerchief, not one pair of costume-jewelry earrings—except for me.

"When I buy a suit, I make a point to buy a selection of shoes and blouses and belts and bags and jewelry that go perfectly with it, whereas the shoe buyer of I. Magnin or the bag buyer at Bullock's Wilshire has only the vaguest idea of what her store's suit buyer or coat buyer or dress buyer has bought. When a woman comes here, it is never to buy just a suit or a dress. She always buys all the necessary accessories and usually several sets of accessories at that.

"I've sold $650,000 worth of Jimmy Galanos's things in just three days. I sell over $2 million worth a year of his things. We have the only Galanos salon in the world."

Only upon megacustomers is conferred the ultimate honor of a lengthy audience with the holy one himself, including a laying-on of hands, when Wardy's twenty-foot-square office becomes a selective fitting room where Wardy himself fits, flatters, cajoles, caresses, strokes, soothes, and, above all, *sells* the customer. As he puts it, "I can sell more in two days in this room than my twenty salespeople can sell in the rest of the month."

The decoration in this holy of holies is at best underwhelming, from the nonvintage Coromandel screen and Chinese rug to the Victorian match-striker; but even first-class antiques would not be able to compete with a $10,000 Bob Mackie beaded dress and ostrich-feather coat (he carries thirty different Mackie outfits, a $300,000 total stock of Mackie), or a $35,000 black, red, and royal embroidered Galanos gown.

"Some of my hungriest customers are the ladies who come out to California to our fat farms like La Costa or Pritikin or the Golden Door. When they're allowed out for the day to come here shopping, they're like sailors on shore leave after six months at sea—they're starving for self-gratification and reassurance and a sense of importance and success, so they go crazy trying to satisfy themselves."

On a conducted tour through Wardy's wonderland, even the most skeptical reporter is bowled over by a monologue, delivered in a high voice, that reveals an almost frightening intensity in the speaker. He talks about the past—about his miserable youth in El Paso and his determination somehow, someday, to surround himself with the beauty and luxury he saw in Loretta Young's television show. He confesses that even now, when he arrives home from a European buying trip—he makes four such a year plus monthly trips to New York—he pays no attention to his exhaustion and jet lag. Instead of going home to sleep, he races to the store and down to the basement receiving room to tear open the just-arrived boxes in order to see and feel the merchandise he selected weeks earlier. His appetite for his work is clearly touched by a kind of religious fervor.

Wardy makes sure that his store contrasts in many ways with those of his competitors. In New York's best department stores, for example, most expensive dresses are locked away in stockrooms, and the few that are left out on the selling floor are literally chained to their stand. "We just don't seem to attract that sort of person to our store," oozes Wardy. "I usually leave a $200,000 sable on a hanger casually hung on a rack. It does more than flowers to give a feeling of opulence, and I want my customers to slip into it and look at themselves in a mirror and be hooked."

Every Tuesday, the whole store blooms with fresh flowers—long, yellow lupins from Holland in big brandy snifters or orchid plants bowing with spray after spray after spray of blooms. "I don't think flowers cost us more than forty or fifty thousand dollars a year," Wardy says. "They're just part of a total program to please our customers in every way we can possibly think of that's not actually forbidden by law."

Well, not quite *every* way. Wardy has a tougher policy on returns and refunds than any other luxury store. "We give no refunds for any reason—only store credit—and no returns or exchanges at all on accessories. I am not in the second-hand business or in the costume-rental business. I know women who regularly buy dresses at Neiman-Marcus and I. Magnin and other Beverly Hills stores, wear them to the Academy Awards, get lipstick and sweat and liquor on them, and return them the next day. Not here! I don't want customers who return things."

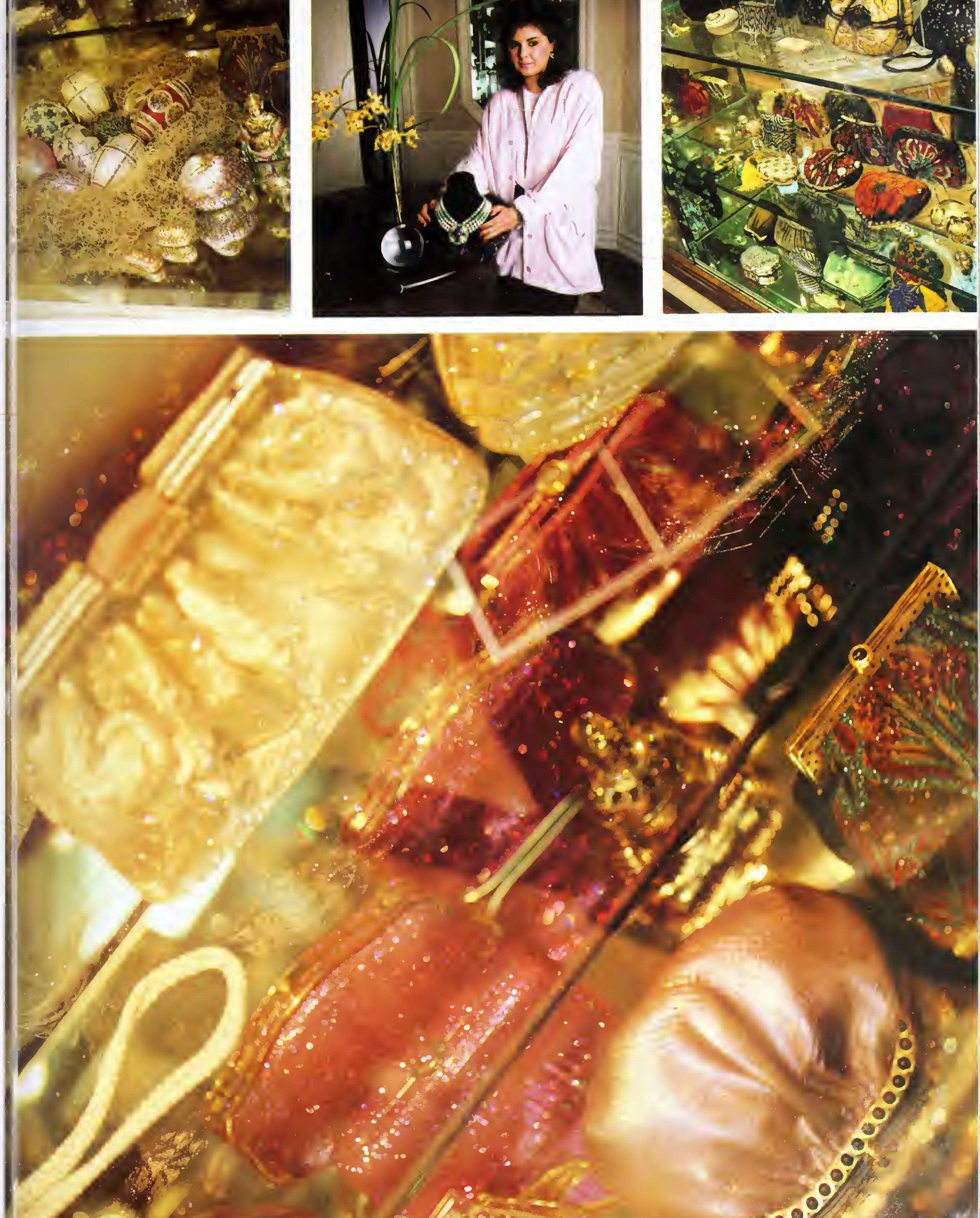
But what if they refuse to pay their bills?

"We have no charge accounts. Our customers must all pay immediately, by credit card or cash or check, for whatever they take out of this store."

Wardy is not shy about knocking the competition. Asked if he will open additional stores, he snaps, "My God, no! Even with only one store, I can't give my attention to every detail and every customer. I don't want to be like Saks [Fifth Avenue] and have forty stores that are obviously run not by an owner who cares passionately but, in fact, by a big, impersonal international conglomerate."

Not too surprisingly, his competitors return the favor. Top

Opposite: Wardy stocks the largest collection anywhere of handbags by Judith Leiber. "You can't sell thirty-seven if you have only a dozen," says Wardy. Top, center: Soffia Wardy, Amen's daughter.



executives of the major high-quality stores across America, when they hear Wardy's name, tend to whisper confidentially that he is on the edge of bankruptcy, if not already over the edge. Quips one, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first give credit."

"That's envy, just plain envy," sniffs America's ultimate bag woman, Judith Leiber. "And as they learn more and more about how brilliantly Amen is succeeding, they say worse and worse things about him."

Many famous stores, including Bergdorf Goodman, Bullock's, and Burdine's, instead of running certain difficult departments themselves, lease these to professionals in the particular field (most frequently, shoes, beauty salons, and food operations). Not Wardy. "If I can't run it, it's not here!"

Opposite: Artificial furs by Pauline Trigère. Above: Two Enzo Russo dresses, and a private Wardy label.

One of Wardy's few failures was his attempt to build a high-priced men's business. Now, although there is no merchandise in the store for a man to buy for himself, there are compensations. To name but one: a comfortable lounge where he can drink, free of charge, as much as he wants, watching on a forty-five-inch television screen as the Dallas Cowboys relentlessly charge their opponents, while the lady he brought (sometimes his own wife) charges merchandise no less relentlessly.

Wardy is divorced. His daughter, Soffia, nineteen, now works with Wardy in the store full-time. His sons, Jean Paul and Amen III, live with him in Newport Beach. "I hope that all my children will eventually come into the store with me," Wardy says wistfully. But he is not at all interested in young people as customers, not even yuppies. "I don't want the upwardly mobile. I want only those who have already reached the top and can afford a $5,000 [beaded] sweater or an $8,000 [ostrich] skirt. Until they have reached that level, they should shop at Saks."

He is equally uninterested in the kind of old-money doyenne (if any still exist) who used to buy her gillie shoes and tweed suits at R. H. Stearns in Boston or Henri Bendel in New York. "God save me from old money! What I want is brand-new, splashy, showy money eager to be spent," he explains shrilly. "If some conservative, rich, old woman came here, she would be wasting her time and mine. She would be shocked by street-length snakeskin coats, fire-engine-red leather pants, mink-sleeved wool suits, and purple fox furs."

Wardy gets so much of what used to be called "café society"—television artists, movie stars, and international celebrities—that he does little conventional advertising in newspapers and magazines, because he receives wide publicity from this Hollywood clientele. He coordinates clothes for Candice Bergen and other stars in Aaron Spelling's productions, such as "Hollywood Wives." Candy Spelling is a constant and favorite customer. Joan Collins confided recently on Johnny Carson's program that Wardy dresses her. Says the "Dynasty" costume designer Nolan Miller, "Amen's store is what Judith Krantz had in mind when she wrote *Scruples*. I would love to film an episode with Alexis on a shopping spree there."

It is unlikely, however, that Wardy will soon again be mentioned on Carson's show, because, he boasts proudly, "I now dress Joan Rivers for her show—all her clothes, accessories, shoes, everything!" Whether this is a good recommendation, or the opposite, is uncertain. As the self-professed unsexy and unattractive Miss Rivers used to confide, in a stage whisper loud enough to be heard three blocks away, "Very few people know this, but I get a substantial part of my income from the most exclusive stores in New York and Hollywood, who pay me a monthly retainer *not* to carry their shopping bags."

At the black-tie dinner dance Wardy gave on Saturday, February 2, 1985, to open his expanded and redecorated store, the four hundred guests were surprised to see Wardy's neighbor-competitor, Neiman-Marcus's Lawrence Marcus, and his wife, Shelby. Even more surprising was the brand-new, five-thousand-square-foot Venetian ballroom, eight-chandeliered, peach and pale aqua in color. There he plans to hold monthly style shows in the manner of the French couture houses.

The guests ate veal Marsala, rose-petal sorbet, endive salad, and a dessert of white-chocolate mousse drowned in bittersweet black-chocolate sauce. They sat on black lacquer chairs at black lacquer tables decorated with black metal candelabra festooned with creamy white calla lilies; all this on an instant and perfect lawn of black Astroturf and under a crystal-clear tent covered with 35,000 Tivoli lights.

Wardy himself with model in his office, where he sells (and sells) to his megacustomers.

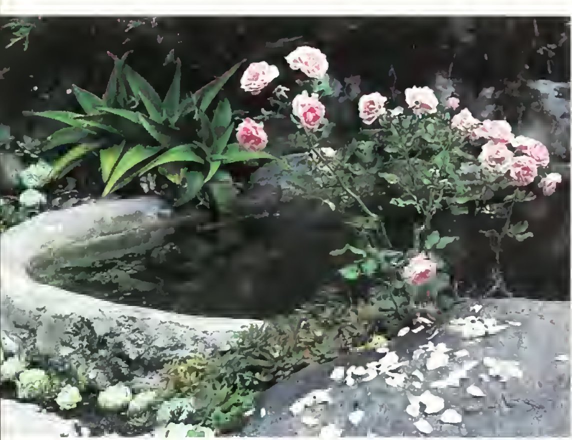
"The party cost me $100,000," declares Wardy, with characteristic ebullience. "I more than recouped that the next day when I allowed some of the ladies to persuade me to open the store for five hours even though it was Sunday." Small groups of husbands, who had never met before, were trying to comfort one another and to understand how Wardy induces their wives to part willingly with such enormous sums of money. "That dress she's looking at costs more than our first house."

If there were a Hall of Fame for fashion retailers, Amen Wardy would surely be in it already. But he is hardly resting on his achievements. Wardy has just created a perfume and had it bottled in France. "I can tell you what it's *not* like," he says. "It's not like Giorgio—it doesn't smell up a whole room!" □

STEP-DOWN GARDEN

THIS HALF ACRE NEAR SAN FRANCISCO CONTAINS INFINITY

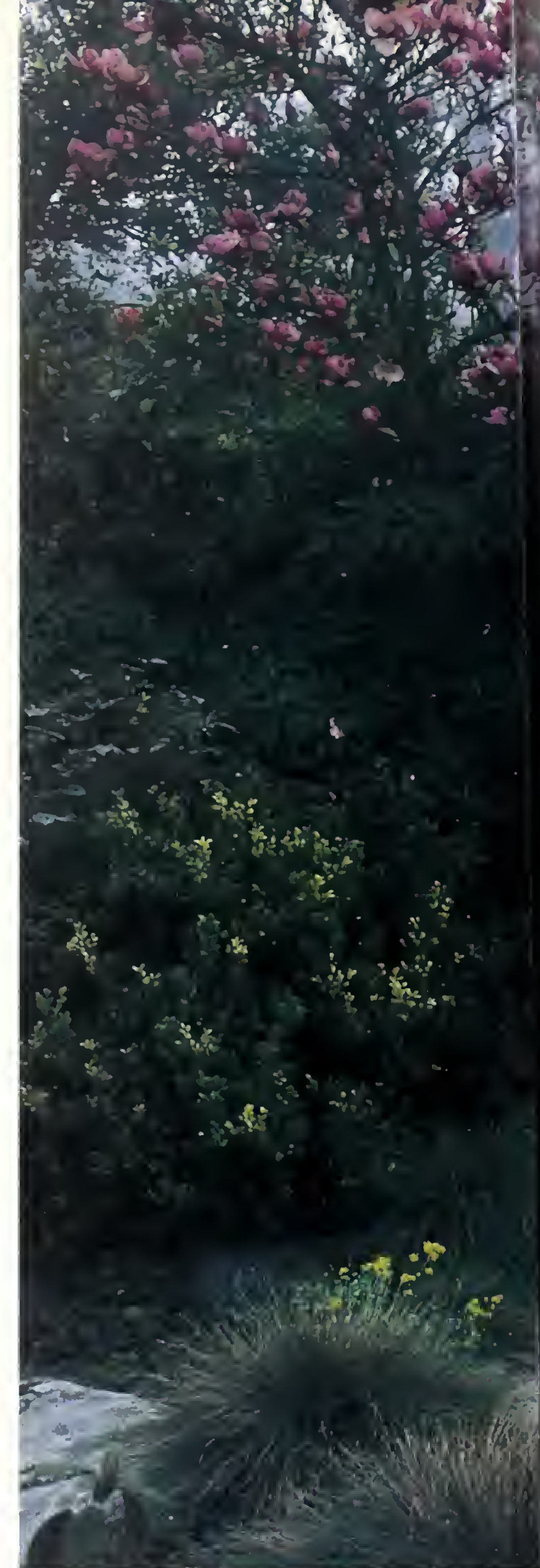
TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAMELA HARPER



Remarkable gardens are the rule in a state that is itself a garden of sorts. But no other garden in California compares with Harland Hand's half acre. A designer, artist, and craftsman, he has taken a mundane material—two hundred cubic yards of concrete, to be exact—and transformed it into something magical. Inspired by granite formations in the Sierra Nevada, he chose concrete as the only available, affordable material capable of being sculpted to similar effect. With it, he constructed hundreds of paving slabs, fifteen seats and ledges, nineteen pools, and over two hundred boulderlike steps. A natural look was achieved by avoiding large unbroken surfaces, straight lines, geometric curves and angles, flat surfaces, and regular shapes.

Hand's house is entered on the upper level. From the windows a spectacular view of San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge takes precedence over the garden clinging to the hillside below. Go out onto the balcony, down a wrought-iron spiral staircase, and the garden unfolds before you like a Japanese scroll painting.

In the Sierra, chaparral contrasts darkly with gray granite. Hand's garden was envisaged as a similar mosaic of dark and light, embellished with brightly colored flowers. Stepping-stone paths wind between islands of trees and shrubs, leading into twelve paved areas, or "rooms," on different levels. Some are open to sun, wind, and the view; others are secluded. Of the many seats that furnish them, no two are alike. Some are simple and boulderlike; others, combinations of seat-pool, seat-planter, or seat-parapet. Pools are equally varied, some used singly, some in groups of two or three. One is precipitously poised at the brink of a twelve-foot cliff.



Left: A rose and a rare Dudleya britton

Progress through the garden is slow. At every step, there is something to see, touch, hear, taste, smell; or a different mood to experience as you pass from shelter to open bluff, from sun to shade, from brilliant color to quiet grays and greens. The garden has rhythm; one thing flows into another; you never just *walk*.

ow among natural rocks and concrete. Above: One of the garden's "rooms," filled with morning mist flowing in from San Francisco Bay.

Hand is not only a designer and artist; he is also a plantsman and traveler. Every garden cranny is crammed with plants, an eclectic collection from many lands. Orchids tumble over boulders; forget-me-nots, violets, freesias, and miniature daffodils grow in the paving; wisteria and clematis intermingle on a driftwood pole. Two plants with furry gray leaves—lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*) and mouse-eared chickweed (*Cerastium tomentosum*)—are used in quantity, stitching the seams between structures and softening contours. Some plants are rare; others, commonplace but used in original ways. A dry stream of blue-green, pebblelike hen-and-chick rosettes (*Echeveria*) flows across a slope, in it a sculpted heron fishing.

This garden fits no established pattern, follows no rules. Most who visit are enchanted. A few, schooled in traditional Western design, leave puzzled. In mood it is more nearly Japanese than Western. Perhaps, to understand it fully, one must go to the mountains, there to marvel at nature's imitation of Harland Hand's garden—or so it seems. □

Pamela Harper writes about gardens and photographs them.

THE GRAND TOUR

RATING CALIFORNIA'S ART MUSEUMS AND THEIR CONTENTS

BY THOMAS HOVING

When it comes to art museums, California is fast becoming the promised land. The state is going through an exceptional period of growth, creativity, and vitality, evident in dramatic new building activities and grandiose acquisitions. The Los Angeles County Museum has just opened the key portion of a building program that may take up to a decade to complete, a rehabilitation intended to remedy the shortcomings of the original building. One of the new parts is the Times Mirror Central Court, a soaring glass-roofed court that embraces the three separate original buildings and provides an imposing entrance on Wilshire Boulevard. The second structure is the Robert O. Anderson Building. It houses a series of classic spaces for changing exhibitions as well as the museum's twentieth-century art, which is getting richer with every acquisition. Both efforts are smash hits.

The rival institution downtown, the Museum of Contemporary Art, has just dedicated its permanent headquarters. Supposedly, the brilliant Japanese master Arata Isozaki based his glorious designs for the rose red sandstone, dark-green aluminum, and glass edifice partly on the lush anatomical idiosyncrasies of Marilyn Monroe (see "Isozaki," *Connoisseur*, November 1986). The Getty is also on the move. That incomparably rich institution is midway through the planning phase of its proposed new showcase on a choice 162-acre piece of property in the foothills overlooking the city. If the architect Richard Meier can hold his creative own against the blizzard of curatorial program studies now pelting down on him, the new museum will score yet another architectural triumph for California.

With a few exceptions, California's acquisitions, too, have been among the most dynamic in the nation. In commissioning large and ambitious pieces, MOCA has seized a leadership role and has demonstrated how fundamentally more courageous than the more conservative East the West Coast has become. Another piece of good news is that Norton Simon himself, that keen-eyed and canny Beverly Hills collector and industrialist, has decided to start actively collecting again after a hiatus of several years. If he can match his past prowess, California will become even more of an art mecca than it already is.

The state is getting to be such a galaxy of highly publicized, big-league art museums that it is easy to overlook some of the more intimate collections. Many of those are gems, and no connoisseur embarked on a museum tour should pass them by. I'm thinking of such attractions as the Crocker Art Museum, in Sacramento, with its worthy collection of old-master drawings; the Oakland Museum, still one of the most intriguing architectural complexes in the West; the Southwest Museum, in Los Angeles, with its exceptional array of Indian material; the Newport Harbor Art Museum, a showcase for the avant-garde and experimental; and the superb sculpture garden at the Wight Art Gallery, at the University of California, Los Angeles, with its prime examples of Matisse, Moore, and David Smith. Finally, among the smaller dazzlers, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, between San Francisco and Los Angeles, is quite simply the ne plus ultra. The collections, rich in drawings, American painting, and Greek and Roman art, offer plenty of surprises and joys. The installations are near perfect, the hospitality legendary, and the published material excellent.

Now for the palaces. The University Art Museum, in Berkeley, which opened with a few shock waves in 1970, is still pleasingly brutal in impact. If anything, the building's raw concrete balconies, ramps, and stunning vistas to the central court look better now. Berkeley's permanent collection is modest in size but high in caliber, its shows have been top-notch, and the film program of the Pacific Film

The impact of the University Art Museum, in Berkeley, is pleasingly brutal. Hans Hofmann's Struwel Peter *(1965) is one reason why.*

Untitled *(1985), by Sam Francis, at San Francisco's inconvenient Museum of Modern Art.*

SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, PURCHASED THROUGH A GIFT OF CHARLOTTE MACK AND THE WILLIAM L. GERSTLE FUND

Archive may be the most energetic in America. Right now all forty-nine paintings given by Hans Hofmann in 1963 are on view, complemented by a series of his seldom-seen and intriguing *Lichtdrucke*—quick flat sketches on newsprint made in Munich in the twenties. The show, which continues through March 1, is masterfully arranged, and the catalogue, by Cynthia Goodman, comes to grips with the artist in comprehensible language.

BONANZA IN THE BAY AREA

Wouldn't it be nice if the traditional art collections of San Francisco were all housed together in a modern, bright, friendly structure with spacious, well-lit galleries? It will probably never happen. Though the boards of trustees of the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum and the California Palace of the Legion of Honor merged not long ago and thereby buried countless intrafamilial hatchets, the two institutions are segregated by cultures and by miles. Most of Europe, Africa, the Orient, and America are housed in the two Mission-style frame stucco buildings in Golden Gate Park that make up the Asian Art Museum and the Avery Brundage Collection. The French collections are placed in the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, a Beaux-Arts sugar box way up in Lincoln Park.

Thankfully, the interiors of the de Young are a great deal more appealing than the cornball exterior. The lighting is deft, and the pacing of the material shows a sensitive touch. The decorative arts are often shown in the paintings galleries—readily accessible yet never in the way. Despite the somewhat spotty quality overall, the old masters have great strengths in Italian paintings of the sixteenth century, Spanish works of the Golden Age, and Dutch baroque. Surely one of the most poetic early-Renaissance pictures in America is the Tuscan *Annunciation* of around 1450, attributed to an unknown artist called the Master of the Lanckoronski Annunciation. Despite the forced, balletic poses of the Virgin and the archangel, the painting pulsates with religious fervor balanced with enchanting elegance. Tintoretto's large *Madonna and Child* is explosive—one of his best pictures in America. Don't fail to see the magisterial El Grecos *Saint Francis* and *Saint John*. Several of the Dutch masters are profoundly moving. There's a super Rembrandt, the portrait of Joris de Caullery, dated 1632, which bristles with life. Note prime works by such Dutch painters as Jacob van Ruisdael, Jan Steen, and Philips Koninck. And what a portrait by Frans Hals! The droll, world-weary libertine might as well be called the Cynical Cavalier.

DOES SAN FRANCISCO SECRETLY HATE MODERN ART?

Most discriminating art experts agree that the heart of the de Young museum is its American pieces—paintings, sculpture, and furniture—the bulk of which was donated to the museum in 1979 by Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III. Revel in the majestic Philadelphia breakfront. Delight in grand paintings by such masters as George Caleb Bingham, Frederick Church, Eastman Johnson, and Thomas Moran. With the exception of Joseph Raphaels's *Children of the Artist* (the one genuine clunker in the entire lot of more than a hundred), there isn't a single disappointment.

The Avery Brundage Collection is one of the most thoughtful assemblages of Oriental art in the world, but be warned that it's crisp to the point of being clinical and is skewed heavily to specialists. The best pieces are the T'ang porcelains and—the best of the best—a pair of Khmer sculptures of the eleventh century depicting, life-size, a male and female, half-divine, half-royal. Carved in breathtaking detail in pale beige sandstone, these serene images rank among the top twenty works of art in America.

TREASURES FROM FRANCE

When it comes to pure, driving quality, the French pictures and sculptures at the Legion of Honor must be counted as San Francisco's most exalted treasures. The stunning fragment from the Angers Apocalypse tapestries (donated by Helene Fagan) is a rara avis indeed. The pair of genre paintings by Georges de la Tour representing a dotty old peasant and his bemused-looking wife—utterly contemporary in their anatomical distortions—are unforgettable (and models against which to gauge the value and authenticity of every so-called de la Tour in the country). In the frothy *La Défense Inutile* (circa 1770), a gorgeous young lady is trying, by futile whacks of a pillow, to fend off her lover, who crawls toward her from the bottom of her unmade bed. Is there a more endearingly sexy Fragonard in existence?

The imperial height of the Legion's halls shows to optimal advantage an epic

Devi (left) and Siva: two peerless Khmer masterpieces from the Avery Brundage Collection.

From the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco: Fragonard's La Défense Inutile; *Moran's* Grand Canyon with Rainbow *(1912).*

group of Rodin's marbles, terra-cottas, plasters, and bronzes and does wonders for his faded image. For a moment of frivolity—a quality in which certain nineteenth-century sculptors excelled—look for the terra-cotta showing an imperious, pouting Diana, by one Jean-Alexandre Joseph Falguière—a Greek goddess *à la* Offenbach.

NEEDED: A NEW HOME

What is the unsuspecting visitor to make of San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art? Inconveniently and obscurely situated on the top two floors of the War Memorial Building, in the civic center, it does boast a better-than-average permanent collection, including a wondrous Jackson Pollock, painted just before he "broke the ice," and a recently commissioned monumental and vigorous Sam Francis, which dominates the only spa-

FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

cious gallery in the place. The exhibitions are unfailingly on point, scholarly without ever being arcane, and the publications are always illuminating. But the poor institution is squashed into the saddest, most pedestrian space in America, with narrow corridors and rinky-dink galleries on two floors gained only by a crowded elevator. Old-timers say that San Francisco secretly hates contemporary art. Here's the proof!

NEW LIFE IN L.A.

Few art museums in this country have had as many ups and downs as the Los Angeles County. It was born brash and rather ugly—although, in time, the Periera Kleenex boxes of 1965, which are about

A Venetian comes to Malibu: Vittore Carpaccio's enchanted Hunting on the Lagoon, *at the J. Paul Getty Museum.*

to be encapsulated in new structures by the architectural firm of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, will be mourned as great monuments senselessly destroyed. In its early days, the museum hired a brilliant director, Richard Brown, and then pushed him out. It attracted a host of gifted private collectors, many of whom slipped away and not in such a genteel manner. For most of the seventies, except for some outrageous contemporary shows, blockbusters such as Tutankhamun, and, in 1969, the brilliant snatching up of the Heeramaneck collection of Indian art, the place all but conked out. Now it's as frantic and productive as a general contractor in double overtime.

The new Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer buildings, of white porcelain panels, green terra-cotta and limestone, and glass brick, bring at last a feeling of hospitality, cohesion, and stability to the institution. No doubt the impending competition from MOCA was in part responsible for the improvement of the physical plant and may have helped to trigger the recent series of stellar acquisitions of modern and contemporary art. The opening show is courageous, offbeat, and highly cerebral. It tracks the spiritual and occult roots of certain modern movements, reaching back to the end of the nineteenth century. "The Spiritual in Art, Abstract Painting 1890–1985" deals not with baldly materialistic abstract art (the kind that the painter Frank Stella sums up in the phrase "what you see is what you see") but art spawned from the chthonic penumbra of mysticism, Pythagoreanism, American Indian rituals, the cabbala, and Zen—among other manifestations of the occult. The point of the massive show is to cure the malaise the organizer Maurice Tuchman points to in the first sentence of his catalogue essay: "Abstract art remains misunderstood by the majority of the viewing public. Most people, in fact, consider it meaningless." In seventeen essays plus a glossary (which, *mirabile dictu,* are all written in plain English) we learn that a large body of abstract art was linked to spiritualism of various kinds and *did,* after all, signify something profound. The show is grand! Don't miss it! And when you go, keep an eye out for the Swedish painter Hilma af Klint, who created grippingly poignant abstract images throbbing with mystic content. Her will instructed that her paintings could not be exhibited until a certain number of decades after her death. Except for a small selection in Sweden, these stunners will be the first publicly shown works. Amazing material.

Among the permanent holdings of the Los Angeles County you have to pick your way. Certain areas are superior: the Indian collection, for example. These galleries succeed admirably, possessing a harmonic sense of drama and well-tuned lighting. American art ranging from colonial times to the early twentieth century is exceptionally fine, too, especially Copley's *Portrait of Hugh Montgomerie, the Twelfth Earl of Eglinton* (1780), the figure trussed up in a flamboyant kilt; and works by Winslow Homer, William Merritt Chase, George Bellows, and Robert Henri.

MOCA SEEMS TO HAVE BITTEN OFF MORE THAN IT CAN CHEW.

As for the galleries devoted to the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century, be careful. Truly worthy works of art are not profuse. Highly recommended, however, are these: Veronese's *Allegory of Navigation* (1570), a blaze of color, paint, and wit. The Italian gilded-wood sculpture of the Archangel Raphael (circa 1600) may well be the top piece in the museum's traditional holdings. Another masterpiece is Rembrandt's crystalline, early *Raising of Lazarus* (circa 1630). And *that* is equaled by the Frans Hals *Portrait of a Man (Pieter Tjarck)* (1635). Also make a point of seeing the Greuze *Lady in Turkish Fancy Dress* (1790); the artist is the unsung Rembrandt of the eighteenth century. Most of the nineteenth-century sculpture is excellent—far better than the Impressionist and Postimpressionist collections (only fair).

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art's arresting Sivaite Deity.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, PANZA COLLECTION

Rothko's Brown, Blue, Brown on Blue. *At MOCA's safe contemporary academy.*

Conclude the visit with a long sojourn in the new Robert O. Anderson galleries of modern art and make up your own mind who wins the prize—LACO or MOCA.

HO-HUM MODERNISM

The Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art has clearly bitten off more than it can chew. The $35 million endowment drive is not quite on schedule. The time payments to the Italian collector Count Panza di Biumo for an eighty-piece collection of American contemporaries—some $2 million a year—are getting a bit heavy. There has apparently even been talk on the board of deaccessioning some of the lesser material to raise funds, which is probably not a bad idea, since the Panza collection has some fatty tissue (especially when it comes to Rauschenberg, Kline, and Claes Oldenburg). Can the fledgling institution afford the upkeep of two large buildings? Here's hoping it can, for the Temporary Contemporary (called by some "The Peremptory"), that captivating former police-car warehouse, is the ideal exhibition area for innovative movements in today's art and thought.

"Individuals," the launch exhibition, with which the museum opened its doors, on December 10, 1986, and which will be in place a full year, involves seventy-seven artists and 428 works, including a number of pieces created "on site." It's solid, thoughtful, proper, fitting—and annoyingly predictable. Key, accepted artists

have been chosen at key—almost cliché—moments in their careers: Ellsworth Kelly for the "right" color-field pictures; Frank Stella for the early, "black" paintings; the correct Willem de Koonings; the acceptable David Smiths, or Bruce Naumans, or Louise Nevelsons, and so on. In the catalogue (loaded down with eight essays that are the epitome of the garbled "artspeak" made fashionable by *Artforum* magazine) the show's curator, Julia Brown Turrell, writes that "Individuals" is a far from comprehensive survey of American art from 1945 to 1986. Granted—but it is still too much a sanitized overview, merely the official "Academy." Missing is what the late Alfred Barr, Jr., brought to MOMA in its formative years: the confident policy of collecting and displaying a rich diversity of styles, from de Kooning to Picasso to Dalí to Claude Monet to Bacon to Pollock to Yves Tanguy. "Individuals" is a dazzling view, seen through a tunnel.

FABULOUS FURNITURE

The J. Paul Getty is one of the most striking examples in America of collections that combine masterworks with a plethora of study-storage material. The building, a loose interpretation of the so-called Villa of the Papiri, buried in Vesuvius's eruption in A.D. 79, is charming and convincing—and maintained like no other art museum in the country. The Getty is legendarily strong in French furniture and the decorative arts of the eighteenth century, master drawings (a brilliant collection enhanced last November by a drawing by Leonardo da Vinci, three sketches entitled *Child with a Lamb*), photographs, and certain sections of the department of Greek and Roman art. Here the strengths are the Greek vases, buttressed by the stupendous Molly and Walter Bareiss collection, and the justly famous Getty bronze. The old-master paintings are, by and large, disappointing and insufficiently lighted, but there are some steadfast pieces. Standouts include a powerful late Nicolas Poussin (*The Holy Family*); Vittore Carpaccio's magical *Hunting on the Lagoon* (circa 1490), which places in the pantheon of the top ten paintings in America; some worthy Dutch masters; and a stunning Edgar Degas (*Dancer and Woman with Umbrella Waiting on a Bench*).

AN OVERLOOKED GEM

Farther south, in San Diego, a town not known as a fine-arts town, the modestly scaled Timken Art Gallery, in Balboa Park, boasts collections that are radiant both in quality and in scope, ranging from Russian icons through superior works of the Northern Renaissance, the Italian sixteenth century, nineteenth-century America, and the Impressionists. All this thanks to the Putnam Foundation, founded by the gifted Putnam sisters, Anne R. and Amy, and the Timken family of Canton, Ohio. The Timken possesses the unmistakable aura of hospitality, conveyed by such varied details as the friendly greeting of the guards or the soft lighting, which puts the visitor at ease and enhances the appearance of the paintings.

HERE'S TO THE PUTNAM SISTERS! BLESS YOU, AMY AND ANNE!

There are only fifty pictures on exhibition in the gallery at any one time, and each is of landmark status. The following are especially fine. An enormous, pure, crystalline oak panel by the midfifteenth-century Flemish master Petrus Christus, representing the death of the Virgin; despite the somewhat lugubrious subject matter, the picture is filled with a sense of celebration. Then, there's a symbolic landscape, by the incomparable Pieter Brueghel, entitled *The Parable of the Sower*, in which states of mind are expressed in the brilliant landscape. After a few minutes of scrutiny, one's eye is inexorably drawn way, way down into the valley at the riverbank to a mysterious crowd of people. What are they *doing?* If there's a finer Girolamo Savoldo in the United States than the dramatic *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, I cannot point to it. Rembrandt's brooding—chilling—*Saint Bartholomew* shows the saint balancing in his hand the glistening knife with which he will be flayed alive. Magnificent! The still life by Guido Cagnacci is crisp; the Boltraffio *Portrait of a Youth Holding an Arrow*, potent; the portrait of Cooper Penrose by Jacques-Louis David, the very image of honesty; the flower study by Cézanne, a revelation—even for him.

A recent acquisition and a superb one is the portrait of the beautiful (and, one imagines, witty) Mrs. Thomas Gage (1771) by John Singleton Copley. The artist considered the picture to be "the best Lady's portrait [he] ever drew." The capstone of this superb collection is a painting by Eastman Johnson of a cranberry harvest in Nantucket, which is lyrical, realistic, and nostalgic all at once.

A WELCOMING WARMTH

The grand connoisseurship and singular generosity of the Putnam sisters is again much in evidence in the collections of the nearby San Diego Museum of Art, another exceptionally fine institution that is designed with an eye for its visitors' ease. You'll feel instantly at home. In the Oriental galleries, for example, one finds peppered among the riches a grove of tiny Bonsai trees. It's a neat touch.

This is a place for those who appreciate Spanish painting. There are two splendid Zurbaráns: *Saint Jerome* and the moving *Lamb of God.* The still life by Sánchez Cotán is one of the finest anywhere, and do not miss the Italian paintings of the eighteenth century, in particular a great Tiepolo and the smashing *Molo from the Bacino of San Marco*, by Canaletto.

GO FOR THE VIEW

The La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art is sited on one of the most beautiful spots in southern California, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The permanent collection moves in and out of storage on a regular basis and contains some refreshingly shocking examples of contemporary art. The changing exhibitions—ranging from a recent show on twelve-meter yachts to the current one (on the Italian sculptor Mauro Staccioli)—are, for very good reasons, the subject of animated conversation locally, and well worth the trip.

THE GREATEST

Save the finest for the last: the magnificent Huntington Library, in San Marino, recently refurbished after a fire, and the Norton Simon Museum, in Pasadena. Their collections rival those of such august institutions as the Frick Collection and the Kimbell Art Museum, in Fort Worth. The Simon stands alone in the country for the variety and scope of its holdings, ranging from quattrocento Italian up to the Impressionists—one of the most distinguished groups of those around. Every work seems to sum up its artist and its time—each is in perfect condition, continuing to grow in quality and sheer beauty each day.

The Huntington Library means, of course, more than books and art. The gardens are matchless, the rare books and manuscript collections nonpareil, and the domestic architecture on a par with that of some of the best homes in England.

It is English art that triumphs at the Huntington—and more than one art lover who always secretly nurtured a loathing for smug British painting has come here and been converted. What can one say about

At home in San Diego's Timken Art Gallery: J. S. Copley's pensive Mrs. Thomas Gage.

Lawrence's "*Pinkie*" (1794) or Gainsborough's *Blue Boy?* Both possess that uncanny power to be appealing and universal at the same time, conquering by innate brilliance all attempts to reduce them to clichés. One reason *Blue Boy* delivers such a knockout punch is that, essentially, it's late Greek. He's David after the fight with Goliath or a young Hercules at rest. His family tree goes back to Donatello, Praxiteles, and Myron.

The Virginia Steele Scott Gallery of American art is looking better than ever, especially the great Eakins and the marvelous Mary Cassatt depicting the mother and child in a rumpled bed.

TOP GUN

Acres of glass and perhaps the most awkward-looking museum in America are the only two flaws at the Norton Simon, and both are excusable. Virtually every painting and drawing is covered by glass, so, trying to find the best angle for viewing a picture, one has to dance around like a pugilist on the defensive. Still, the glass does provide optimal protection for the canvases. The building, which looks like a ribbon cartridge for some enormous electric typewriter, was there when Simon took over. At least the interiors are efficient and gracious.

The instant one walks into the place, one is surrounded by quality. Norton Simon is one of the greatest collectors in American history. Search as I did, I could find only two pictures in the collection that I could judge lesser, and which ones they are doesn't matter. To try to point out the gems is futile, for everything is a gem—a fact that becomes mind-boggling when one is told that only about half of the holdings happen to be on exhibit and that master drawings, such as the series of seven of Claude Lorrain, are rotated for reasons of conservation. This is a difficult museum; you've got to digest it all. My top favorites are:

1. Raphael, *Madonna and Child with Book* (circa 1504). Dogmatic yet utterly human.
2. Dirck Bouts, *The Resurrection* (circa 1455). One of America's top ten masterpieces, a deeply moving image of the faith—in matchless condition.
3. Nicolas Poussin, *Camillus and the Schoolmaster of Falerii* (circa 1635–40). This bittersweet canvas tells the tale of the schoolmaster of a besieged town who becomes a traitor and tries to turn his students over to the enemy leader, Camillus. Outraged, Camillus, in turn, turns the teacher over to his students.
4. Jacopo Bassano, *The Flight into Egypt* (circa 1540–50). Note the most beautiful and exuberant angel in baroque art, holding sway on the right-hand side.
5. Giovanni Tiepolo's ceiling from the Palazzo Manin in Venice, depicting "The Triumph of Honor and Nobility over Ignorance" (circa 1740–50).
6. Goya, *Saint Jerome* (1798). Raw and gorgeous.
7. Peter Paul Rubens, *Saint Ignatius of Loyola* (circa 1620–22). *The* monumental image of the Counter-Reformation.
8. Henri Rousseau, *Exotic Landscape* (1910). One of the most accomplished paintings by this self-styled "last of the Egyptian painters."
9. Cézanne, *Tulips in a Vase* (circa 1890–92). Truly a twentieth-century masterpiece, being an entirely created reality.
10. Every Degas in sight—and there are plenty of them.

When asked to name his special favorites, the man responsible for the splendid collection hemmed and hawed and finally came out with this: "The Raphael is fascinating, the Claude painting *pristine,* but where I'd wind up might be in the Asian art. That Vishnu, the tall brute with the polished surface is . . . and the Kashmir piece, I've never seen anything as beautiful as that. In the painting area, it's tough. I'd . . . well, they *all* have character."

And when it comes to vibrant art, all of California has character. □

Raphael's Madonna and Child with Book, *at the Norton Simon Art Foundation.*

HUNTINGTON LIBRARY, ART COLLECTIONS, AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

No cliché: "Pinkie," *by Sir Thomas Lawrence, at the Huntington Library and Art Gallery.*

CALIFORNIA SUITES

WHERE TO STAY WHILE ON A WHIRLWIND ART TOUR

BY JANE LASKY
ILLUSTRATION BY LARRY ASHTON

SAN FRANCISCO

For its size, San Francisco supports more world-class hotels than any other city in the nation. The five described below offer the personal service, genteel ambience, and subtle refinement of an elegant home. There are rarely rooms to spare in any of them, so reserve early if you plan to visit.

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Nestled among other Victorian houses and near Union Street boutiques, the fourteen-room **Sherman House** provides a fascinating alternative to more-traditional hotels.

Up a short flight of stairs and beyond a modest vestibule, a colony of finches chirps from an ornate bird cage in a room where Caruso once sang. This century-old home was built for Leander Sherman, a music patron who added a three-story recital hall in 1901 so that divas and stage stars could perform.

The interior designer William Gaylord has filled the landmark with lovely antiques. Each of the nine suites and five rooms—some in a separate carriage house—is individually appointed, and all feature wood-burning fireplaces, canopied beds draped with tapestries, and hidden sound systems.

The owners, Manou and Vesta Mobedshahi, cater in style to every request. A special meal? The Swiss chef Paul O. Grutter will prepare one anytime. (Accommodations, from $190 to $600. 2160 Green Street, San Francisco 94123; 415-563-3600.)

•

For seventy years the 329-room **Four Seasons Clift Hotel,** on Union Square, has pampered its guests royally. If a shirt needs pressing in the middle of the night, the valet will deliver straightaway. And you'll find the Clift's concierge, Ken Stevens, one of the city's most creative.

Throughout, appointments are elegant without being pretentious. Ask for a room or a suite that is done in powder blue and soft peach; these, in particular, soothe the spirit. Stop in for a drink in the magnificent Redwood Room, long one of San Francisco's most distinctive bars. The French Room is noted for its vast wine selection, Continental cuisine, and old French decor. (Accommodations, from $135 to $610. 495 Geary Street, San Francisco 94102; 415-775-4700.)

•

The 402-room **Stanford Court Hotel** operates like a well-oiled machine. Nowhere else in the city—possibly in the United States—will you find a better-maintained hotel. Four times a day, the award-winning president, James A. Nassikas, personally inspects his domain. The ambience here is that of a private club. In the warm, wood-paneled lobby lounge and elsewhere, modern amenities have been mixed with period pieces to create an eclectic flavor and an air of European elegance. My only quibble is that the rooms tend to be on the small side; suites, on the other hand, are remarkably spacious. The freshly redecorated accommodations have canopied beds, heated towel racks, and old San Francisco etchings.

Fournou's Ovens is a hotel dining room like no other. Terra-cotta tile floors and heavy wooden beams create a French country feeling, as do the massive open-hearth ovens, which turn out roasts of every description. Fournou's Ovens boasts one of the country's largest and best wine lists. (Accommodations, from $175 to $800. 905 California Street, San Francisco 94108; 415-989-3500.)

•

The discreet **Huntington Hotel,** on Nob Hill, seems aloof at first. It is not. The highly professional staff are required to learn guests' names, and over time some of them, like the genial Mary, the elevator operator for forty years, have become familiar figures.

Royalty, heads of state, and opera stars choose the Huntington for its smart residential decor and classic European air. Cynthia Reid, concierge *extraordinaire*, pulls all the strings from the vantage point of her regal Boulle-reproduction desk in a corner of the lobby (which is somewhat on the small side and a bit drafty).

None of the 143 suites or rooms are the same, but all are spacious. My favorite is suite 514, where a Chinese motif is complemented by lovely English chintz.

Two special bonuses: L'Étoile, perhaps the best French restaurant in the city; and transport around town in a 1962 Silver Cloud II. (Accommodations, from $125 to $570. 1075 California Street, San Francisco 94108; 415-474-5400.)

•

A chic newcomer near Union Square, the **Campton Place** doesn't take itself too seriously. A valet will unpack for you, for instance, but if waiting for ice from room service seems a nuisance, you may serve

yourself from a hallway dispenser.

Special features make staying at Campton Place uniquely enjoyable: thermometers to measure the bathwater; 2 P.M. checkout time (great if you're on your way out, sometimes a problem if you're on your way in); a choice of four morning newspapers. Conversely, some rooms do not have light switches near the beds, a situation that may cause the guest to blunder about in the dark.

Though the hotel sits on one of San Francisco's busiest corners, inside double-glazed windows block city noise, and a sense of intimacy prevails. Some of the apricot and taupe rooms are on the claustrophobic side, and the smallish lobby, appointed with handsome Chinese porcelains, can get a bit hectic; but escape is as close as the adjacent, low-key lounge-bar.

Don't miss the superchef Bradley Ogden's celebrated dining room. He makes magic with fresh, local and regional ingredients and serves the best power breakfast in town. Order the cinnamon-raisin French toast made from his own freshly baked bread. Room service is whatever you want as long as Ogden has the makings. (Accommodations, from $167 to $775. 340 Stockton Street, San Francisco 94108; 415-781-5555.)

LOS ANGELES

Many knowing travelers wouldn't dream of flying to the Coast unless they've booked a room at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Others swear by the Beverly Wilshire, recently taken over by Regent International. But Los Angeles has plenty of other options, with more on the way. The owners of San Francisco's Campton Place are planning to open a small, luxury hotel downtown in the next few years. Meanwhile, the Four Seasons chain is putting the finishing touches on a 280-room hotel on the west side of town.

Even if your itinerary takes you as far afield as the Getty Museum, in Malibu, or the Norton Simon, in Pasadena, choose your hotel for ambience and amenities, not location. Everyone who visits this spread-out city ends up in a car, so why make concessions?

•

When my family visits Los Angeles, they choose the **Hotel Bel-Air** not only for its tranquil tone and refined services but because the Mission-style estate reminds them of the classic country inns they appreciate in the south of France.

The grounds—eleven and a half acres of heavily wooded canyon—feature herb gardens, Moorish courtyards, and the signature Swan Lake. As you sit poolside in seclusion, surrounded by leafy banana trees, pink camellias, and brilliant red azaleas, it's hard to believe you are only minutes from the bustle of Beverly Hills.

Four years ago, the Bel-Air's new owner, Caroline Hunt Schoellkopf, hired five designers to update the hotel's Mediterranean villas and red-tiled California bungalows. Thirty-three rooms and suites were added at that time, yet regulars still seem to prefer the luxurious sixty originals. Wherever your room is, make sure to dine outside among the bougainvillea. (Accommodations, from $190 to $1,300. 701 Stone Canyon Road, Los Angeles 90077; 213-472-1211.)

•

Near UCLA, in a residential neighborhood, the 256-suite **Westwood Marquis Hotel and Gardens** exudes a European flavor. The tuxedo-clad staff of 300 are always discreet and attentive. An eclectic Continental decor with Oriental accents is in keeping with the formal tone, but the lovely second-floor garden, surrounding a free-form pool and Caribbean-style cabanas, offers a casual option.

Off the lobby is a sitting room adorned with Queen Anne wing chairs and plush sofas. Here, harp music fills the air during afternoon tea. Upstairs, rooms are individually designed and decorated. My favorites, the sixteenth-floor penthouse suites, feature butler service.

Make dinner reservations at the Dynasty Room, where you'll sample Philippe Reynaud's Continental cuisine against a backdrop of limited-edition T'ang dynasty porcelains. Sunday brunch in the Garden Terrace is a must. (Accommodations, from $160 to $600. 930 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles 90024; 213-208-8765.)

•

Visiting **L'Ermitage** is like entering a fine home. The well-mannered staff are unceasingly accommodating. Severyn Ashkenazy, who also owns the classy Bel Age and the sleek Mondrian, prides himself on honoring every request, be it a room-service breakfast of kippered herring or the pair of black hose you forgot.

All 114 suites feature fireplaces, large dressing areas, private terraces, and fully equipped kitchens. Telephones can have up to five incoming/outgoing lines. The dark decor is on the dreary side, but ongoing renovation should lighten things up.

The Café Russe is reserved for hotel patrons and their guests. Its intimate atmosphere is enhanced by a Renoir, a Harpignès, and a Richet. The French cooking is uneven. (Accommodations, from $205 to $1,250. 9291 Burton Way, Beverly Hills 90210; 213-278-3344.)

SAN DIEGO

California's second-largest city is sadly lacking in deluxe hotels. Even the venerable Hotel del Coronado is simply not up to snuff. There's hope, though. In about a year, Meridien Hotels will open Le Meridien at Park Coronado. The deluxe, 300-room hotel will have San Diego Bay and skyline views and promises to offer the stylish lodgings a city this nice ought to give its visitors.

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Be thankful for the **U.S. Grant Hotel.** Reopened over a year ago after an $80 million renovation, the turn-of-the-century landmark is again a reason to stay downtown; it is easily San Diego's best bet.

Built by Ulysses S. Grant, Jr., the president's son, the 283-room hotel once more exudes the old-world ambience that made this the center of San Diego's social activities. Formerly dowdy, weighed down with heavy black and red fabrics, the Grant has been redecorated in lighter, floral materials. Baths are done in marble and ceramic tile. The sixty-four suites contain built-in bars, fireplaces, and some bathtubs that double as Jacuzzis. Rooms with the most spectacular views are to the south and the west. (Accommodations, from $110 to $1,620. 326 Broadway, San Diego 92101; 619-232-3121.) □

Jane E. Lasky is a free-lance journalist in Los Angeles and the coauthor of The Women's Travel Guide.

"A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK MUSIC ENDED WITH TCHAIKOVSKY AND BRAHMS."

RAUL VEGA. HAIR AND MAKEUP: JETTY STUTZMAN/[illegible]UTIER

A CULTIVATED EAR

BETTY FREEMAN'S LIVING ROOM IS THE WEST COAST'S CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

BY BARBARA JEPSON

Today Steve Reich's popularity as a musical minimalist is second only to that of Philip Glass, and he has no trouble lining up performances and lucrative commissions. It was not always thus. Back in 1968, when times were harder, he once wrote a letter to a music patron with a reputation for helping composers. "I don't remember what the particular financial disaster of the moment was," says Reich, "but I told her about my work and enclosed my latest recording. A few weeks later, I got a check from her with no strings attached. It was like manna from heaven."

The manna came from Betty Freeman, a Beverly Hills art collector who is also one of this country's most influential private patrons of new music. Reich credits her with a crucial role in his career "because of the continuing support she's given me."

He is not the only composer to benefit from the sixty-five-year-old Freeman's generosity. Indeed, the list of over thirty individuals she has assisted during the last twenty-five years reads like a Who's Who of the musical avant-garde: among them are Virgil Thomson, John Cage, Harry Partch, Morton Subotnick, Terry Riley, Philip Glass, John Adams, Joan La Barbara, Conlon Nancarrow, and Robert Wilson. She helped defray expenses for a concert version of Virgil Thomson's opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* at Carnegie Hall in 1981 and its recording for Nonesuch a year later. Last November saw the premiere of the first of ten works she has commissioned for performance by the Los Angeles Philharmonic over the next five years. Her latest, most ambitious project to date is a proposed series of recordings of contemporary American music, one composer per album, that she is sponsoring in association with Angel Records.

"A lot of people think that music ended with Tchaikovsky and Brahms," declares Freeman, whose soft-spoken, reserved demeanor belies her determination. "I make no distinctions between old and new art. To me, there's art that's valid and art that isn't valid."

Although Freeman has aided composers across a wide stylistic spectrum, she tends to favor the more accessible minimalists and West Coast experimentalists over the drier, more cerebral East Coast academic serialists. In that regard, her patronage nicely complements that of Paul Fromm, the retired wine importer whose thirty-five-year-old Fromm Foundation has awarded commissions to about 180 composers and sponsors the Fromm Week at the Aspen Music Festival. Until recently, most recipients of Fromm's largesses were of a more formalist persuasion—composers such as Elliott Carter and Gunther Schuller. The Fromm Foundation's modus operandi is formal, too. Young composers seeking commissions must first send résumés and recommendations. If these are deemed of interest, they are invited to send a score or a tape to Fromm and his advisory committee.

By contrast, Freeman's activities are often more personal and less orthodox. Steve Reich's "check in the mail" story is hardly unique. John Cage, for example, has received an unsolicited, annual $5,000 grant for living for about twenty years. And Freeman's devotion to the late Harry Partch, a maverick composer who built his own microtonally tuned instruments, has become legendary. For two years, she lobbied steadfastly to get Partch's last opera, *Delusion*, staged at the University of California at Los Angeles. The music department refused. In 1969, the theater department finally capitulated. In 1972, Freeman produced an award-winning documentary on Partch's life, *The Dreamer That Remains*, which was aired on public television in the United States and abroad. When the composer was unable to obtain bank credit to buy a house, Freeman came to his rescue. She copurchased the house, in Encinitas, California, and gave him her share a year later. "Betty has a group of people she cares about and believes in," says Morton Subotnick, a pioneer of electronic composition who helped develop the Buchla synthesizer, "and she's there when we need her."

Equally important is her ability to connect composers with other potential supporters. In 1981, she founded a series of private "Music Room" concerts at her home in Beverly Hills. Her partner in the project is Alan Rich, the music critic of *Newsweek*, and the series has gradually become an important stimulus for new music. Ernest Fleischmann, the executive director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and a musicale regular, characterizes the audience as "a small group of influential decision makers in Los Angeles—

"THE MUSICALES," SAYS A GUEST, "ARE THE ONE EVENT I'LL MOVE OTHER ENGAGEMENTS OFF THE CALENDAR FOR."

people responsible for producing new-music events or encouraging their production." Recommendations, commissions, or performances often result. A case in point: in 1982, Fleischmann was sufficiently impressed by works of the West Coast experimentalist Robert Erickson to schedule his *Auroras* on the opening program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's 1985–86 subscription series.

The musicales take place five to six times a year for an audience of fifty to eighty invited guests. Rich and Freeman decide jointly what composers to showcase, whenever possible coordinating the concerts with the artists' visits to Los Angeles. "What attracted me to Betty," says Rich, who moved to the West Coast in 1979 to become the music critic for what is now *California* magazine, "was her concern that she might be missing someone. And that's where I come in." Each event features two composers—typically, one established figure and one upcoming local talent—who present live or recorded examples of their work. Rich also acts as co-host for the series, signaling the start of the concerts with wind chimes based on Partch's idiosyncratic tuning system and introducing the composers.

Performances take place in the thirty-three-by-twenty-eight-foot living room, its walls painted black the better to display a huge, largely white "edge painting" by Sam Francis, a light construction by Douglas Wheeler, and two works by Roy Lichtenstein. An informal question-and-answer period follows each piece. Afterward, everyone signs a leather-bound book inscribed "Il Salotto Musicale," which will undoubtedly interest future musicologists. Then composers and listeners mingle over wine and pasta.

The suppers are lovingly prepared by Freeman's husband of seven years, the Italian artist Franco Assetto. A tall, warm-hearted man, he takes refuge in the kitchen during concerts. "Franco prefers cooking to listening to the music," acknowledges Freeman with an affectionate smile. "Everybody knows that." Assetto's delicious concoctions range from standard pasta carbonara or pasta with meat sauce to his own "Pasta with 9½ P's": pasta, pomodori (tomatoes), prosciutto, Parmigiano, pecorino, piselli (peas), prezzemolo (parsley), pepperincini (hot peppers), panne (cream), and 'paragus—the "half" humorously referred to in the dish's name.

After last November's musicale, a very typical Music Room crowd stayed to compare notes and enjoy Assetto's splendid cooking. The featured composers were the experimentalists Pauline Oliveros and Stephen Mosko, a composer-conductor from the California Institute of the Arts (an interdisciplinary center for studies in the visual and performing arts, better known as "CalArts"). Those gathered to hear their music included Dorrance Stalvey, a composer and the director of the "Monday Evening Concerts" sponsored by the Los Angeles County Museum; Ronald Rosen, president of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and his wife, Judith, the board president of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, at the University of Southern California; and Wallace Smith, general manager of KUSC-FM, a public classical radio station that broadcasts many local new-music performances. For Smith, these evenings are indispensable. "The musicales keep me connected with what's going on in contemporary music," he says. "They're the one event I will move other engagements off the calendar for." No wonder Steve Reich, who made his second salon appearance last December, says the musicales have become *the* place to preview a piece that will be performed in Los Angeles, or to introduce another aspect of one's work to "an informed, interested audience."

This season's lineup is typically eclectic. The composers range from the international luminaries Pierre Boulez and Luciano Berio to the Americans John Harbison and John King. Previous musicales have featured the Pulitzer Prize winners Virgil Thomson and Bernard Rands, the minimalists Philip Glass and John Adams, the academic serialist Andrew Imbrie, and the electronic composer Carl Stone. Among the more unusual offerings have been a piece for tape and belly dancer, by the San Francisco composer Janis Mattox, and a work for the twenty-one-member Mills College gamelan—an ensemble of Indonesian-gong players—by the experimentalist Lou Harrison.

Harrison's composition caused some logistical problems. "I had asked Lou to reduce the size of the ensemble," relates Freeman, "because my living room isn't large enough to hold twenty-one performers, their instruments, and eighty guests besides. Lo and behold, on the day of the concert, this huge Pullman bus pulls up to the kitchen entrance and in troop twenty-one musicians. So we set up the gamelan in the entry hall and everyone sat on the stairs or the second-floor balcony."

Freeman has few preconceptions about what constitutes an apt form or setting for music, partly, perhaps, because she has been a serious music student herself and knows what really counts. She was born in Chicago in 1921. Three years later, her parents moved their family to Brooklyn—"I grew up in the shadow of the Brooklyn Museum and trained my eye on their Egyptian collection," she recalls—and then on to Westchester. Her father was the founder of the Witco Corporation, a worldwide manufacturer and marketer of specialty chemicals and petroleum products; the fortune he left her has allowed her to pursue her own interests. At Wellesley College, Freeman majored in English literature and minored in music. She also studied piano, with a devotion well beyond an

LEIGH WIENER

LEIGH WIENER (4)

Freeman surrounds herself with contemporary art, like her Oldenburg eraser (opposite) and sundry Lichtensteins. Before a musicale, she studies a new score (top right). Arriving guests assemble, survey novelties from their hostess's protégés (lower right). At the concert (lower left), the music's the thing; some listeners read along. At evening's end (top left), Freeman's husband, Franco Assetto, bids a guest good-bye.

"HELPING COMPOSERS IS NOT A SOCIALLY UPSCALE ACTIVITY TODAY. YOU DON'T GET YOUR NAME ON A PLAQUE."

LEIGH WIENER (3)

amateur's, for over twenty years, then gave it up abruptly in 1964. "I had four children by then," she explains, "and I understood that I was not going to become a concert pianist."

After her first marriage, in 1952, she began collecting modern art. "My first purchase was three sculptures by Henry Moore," she remembers. "Then in 1955, I approached Clyfford Still—you never bought a painting from Still; you 'traded money' in return for which he gave you a painting. I was one of a handful of Los Angeles collectors who bought right away works by Kline, de Kooning, Gorky."

Though many of these early purchases were subsequently sold, Freeman has amassed a collection of over a hundred contemporary works that now includes light sculptures by Dan Flavin, drawings by David Hockney, and paintings by Roy Lichtenstein, Sam Francis, and Morris Louis. She also owns a variety of creations by Assetto, whose output has included surrealist and neorealist paintings, fountains and other public monuments, jewelry, and furniture design. A giant typewriter eraser by Claes Oldenburg decorates the terrace; a Calder sculpture leads the way to the pool. Of particular interest is a six-by-twelve-foot painting of Hockney's from 1966. "It's in two parts," she explains, "because David was too poor at that point to have a studio big enough to carry a twelve-foot canvas." Entitled *Beverly Hills Housewife,* it depicts Freeman standing on her terrace in an elegantly simple gown of pink raw silk. Freeman did not commission the work, but she claims to have suggested its impish title.

Freeman's activities as a collector of modern art eventually brought her to the attention of Walter Hopps, then director of the Pasadena Art Museum. In 1964, the year Freeman gave up the piano, Hopps was starting a contemporary-music series called "Encounters" at the museum and invited her involvement. By that time, she was aware of the music of such avant-garde figures as John Cage and Terry Riley, and she was beginning to grow disenchanted with the art scene. "In the 1950s," Freeman says, "the creative vitality in America was in the visual arts. In the 1960s and 1970s, it began to shift into music."

She joined the three-member committee administering the museum's "Encounters" series and became one of its financial backers. Leonard Stein, director of the Schoenberg Institute, who was music director of the series, recalls that she contributed passion as well as money. "Betty gave the museum an extra jolt," he relates. "She already had specific ideas about which composers we should feature at the concerts."

After "Encounters" ended, in 1973, Freeman became involved in photography, which she learned during the filming of the Partch documentary. She began taking pictures of composers and musicians, often developing them in her darkroom at Assetto's home in Turin, Italy, where the couple live six months of each year. In 1985, she made her official debut with an exhibition of informal, candid shots of composers at the Otis Parsons Gallery during the New Music America Festival. (She now carries a busi-

Alan Rich (top) is the music critic for Newsweek *magazine and Freeman's partner in planning the musicales. Standing before an imposing canvas by Sam Francis, he offers some preliminary comments before the music starts. The guests know that they should expect the unexpected. On this occasion: the experimentalist Pauline Oliveros, whose instrument is the by no means avant-garde accordion.*

ness card that reads, "Betty Freeman, Girl Photographer.")

As she became better-acquainted with more composers, Freeman came to recognize how precarious their financial situations often were, and how rarely they received support from affluent individuals. "Helping composers is not a socially upscale activity today," she observes, as usual calling it as she sees it. "You don't get your name on a plaque or a building. You don't get a painting to hang on your wall."

As for the composers fortunate enough to secure private patronage, many have found that it often involves a somewhat uncomfortable *quid pro quo*. "Some patrons just love to have you come to their homes and their parties," notes Reich. "But Betty's support grows out of a genuine interest in contemporary music. She has a very satisfying life with Franco—she doesn't need to have a coterie of composers around to put some spice into an otherwise bland diet." In fact, it's hard to say exactly who in this case is supplying the spice to whom. Robert Wilson, the avant-garde theater and opera innovator, whose work requires major subsidies, finds Freeman extraordinary among sponsors for the strength of her own convictions. "Often people are told what to support," he maintains. "Betty has her own mind. She's very direct. If she doesn't like something, she'll say so. I can talk to her about my work."

About the only thing Freeman demands of those she assists is a sort of reciprocal receptivity. For many years, she contributed modestly to the "Composers Showcase" concerts in New York. When she called its artistic director, Charles Schwartz, to suggest that he schedule an evening of Robert Erickson's music at her expense, Schwartz demurred. "I just didn't feel it was exciting enough," he explains. Freeman then approached Continuum, the New York contemporary-music specialists, about a joint concert for Erickson and Lou Harrison at Alice Tully Hall. They enthusiastically agreed; the concert took place in 1985. Freeman has since withdrawn her support from "Composers Showcase" and occasionally contributes to some Continuum projects.

She seems determined not only to do what she believes in but to spur others to do likewise. In the fall of 1985, she decided that those who were attending the musicales should become the support group for the "New Music America" festival held in Los Angeles that November. "I made an announcement at one concert that there would be a collection for the festival and that people who didn't contribute would be dropped from the Music Room mailing list. And I stuck to that. It was difficult, and I suppose I alienated some people, but the festival meant more to me." Asked if anyone who failed to respond had been a good friend, Freeman pauses a moment. "Nooo," she muses, "they were the people who came to eat the pasta."

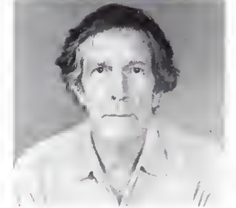
Though the activities she cares about remain largely unknown outside new-music circles, the scope and visibility of her patronage has burgeoned in recent years. She has lent her name to the competition she is cosponsoring with CalArts for composers from the western United States. Program notes increasingly acknowledge her role in commissioning works. Last December the American Music Center honored her with one of its Letters of Distinction for her service to contemporary music.

"After doing this for twenty-five years and seeing such wonderful results," notes Freeman, "I think it's time to set an example, to show other people what can be done. I love music. I can't imagine a life without it, but I think it's necessary to give something back. I like being a patron. Mozart could have used a patron like me in the last years of his life." □

Barbara Jepson, a frequent contributor to Connoisseur, *also covers the arts for the* Wall Street Journal.

CLAUDIO EDINGER

ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE (3)



BETTY FREEMAN

Freeman's taste is eclectic. By now, Virgil Thomson (top) has been overtaken by the mainstream, but Philip Glass and Robert Wilson (middle) are still certifiably avant-garde. Bottom row, from left: The Zen master John Cage, who for twenty years has been receiving an unsolicited grant for living of five thousand dollars a year; Lou Harrison; and the popular minimalist Steve Reich, no longer penniless.

THE GREAT GAMBLE

THE SOIL WAS THE ONLY THING GOING FOR THE CHALONE WINERY

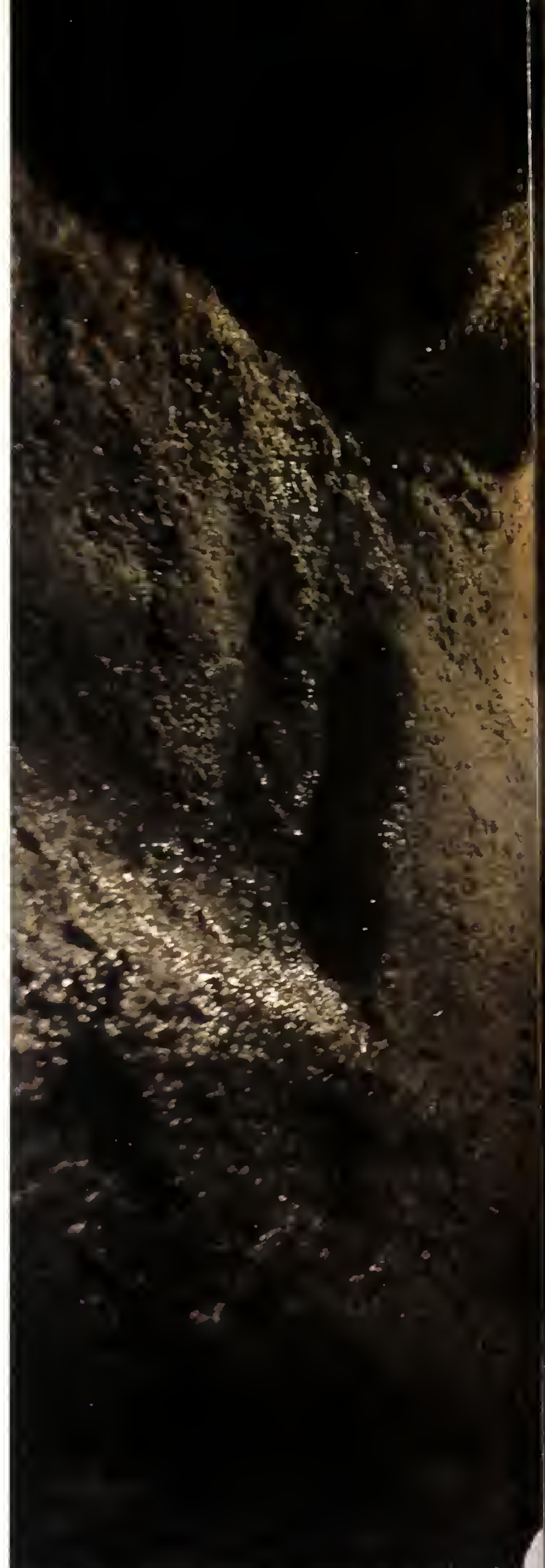
BY EUNICE FRIED
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAX AGUILERA-HELLWEG

The first things swept aside at Chalone Vineyard are conventions. There is no multimillion-dollar showcase winery, no talk of "state of the art" equipment, no telephone, no water line. And kerosene lamps can still be found in most rooms, a reminder that until last winter there was not even a power line.

A *rare California pinot noir with Burgundian character, in its French-made bottle.*

Nonetheless, this vineyard isolated in the Gabilan Mountains of Monterey County, about 150 miles south of San Francisco, has been sending astonishing wines down from its primitive mountain retreat since the 1960s. Most are from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, the grapes that account for the splendid whites and reds of Burgundy. More than any of the world's other noble grapes, Pinot Noir has an ethereal quality that is not readily expressed outside its homeland. For years, Californians have searched for the climate and wine-making techniques that would draw out the essence of the grape, but for the most part it has eluded them. In Chalone's renderings of Pinot Noir, more than in most, California comes close to emulating the greatness of Burgundy.

Theoretically, this shouldn't be. Here, on rolling benchland 1,800 feet above sea level, the land is classic chaparral country, with its brush and manzanita. In spring, it is green from the winter rains, and until the autumn equinox, when it will be tawny as a lion's mane, it is a sea of wildflowers—shooting stars, poppies, violets, and owl's clover. What is good for flowers, however, is not always good for grapes. The average yearly rainfall around Chalone's mountain is twelve to fifteen inches. "The University of California's Department of Viticulture and Enology, at Davis, does not advise growing grapes in areas with less than twenty-four inches of rain," recalls Richard Graff, master wine maker and creator of the modern Chalone. "Without irrigation, such conditions are



At Chalone, a cave carved ou

a mountainside is filled with French oak barrels in which the different wines are aged for from six to twenty-one months.

marginal at best. Chalone's irrigation sources are limited to reservoirs filled by winter rain to last out the summer."

But Chalone's site was chosen decades ago for another quality: its soil, which is basically volcanic underlain with limestone and calcium carbonate. While other wineries have found pockets of limestone, no other California vineyards have soil quite like that of Chalone. Spare and ungenerous, it bears a striking resemblance to the soil of Burgundy.

"In Europe, limestone is laid down in rather even strata," says Graff. "In California, where millions of years ago the Pacific plate began sliding under the Continental plate, catching marine deposits between, the limestone deposits are highly irregular. They're in pockets and veins, a bit like a marble cake.

"Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are greatly influenced by the soil they're planted in," Graff continues. "Especially Pinot Noir. Because it's so delicate, it takes a great deal of its character from the soil. It's not to say that climate isn't important. If it weren't, every year would produce exactly the same kind of wine. Weather does vary, and weather is what constitutes a climate. We can say that climate has a gross effect on

CHALONE'S SPARE SOIL IS STRIKINGLY LIKE THAT OF BURGUNDY.

the grape, while soil has a fine effect."

Even with the right soil, Graff points out, "you must be a devoted vintner to grow grapes up here. And you'll never make money just selling them. The production is too low, about one and a half to two tons an acre, while a normal average for these varietals is three to four tons. You'll notice we have no other wineries as neighbors here on Gabilan." Indeed, the history of Chalone, while turbulent, involves no neighborhood rivalries; it focuses solely on ownership.

The story begins at the turn of the century when a Frenchman named Tamm, who had been searching California for soil resembling that of Champagne, happened on this benchland. He planted vines but died before he could make wine from them; the vineyards were abandoned.

Dick Graff came to Chalone because he loved the wine; then he fought to keep the land; finally, he made wines that rank with the best in California.

Years later, in 1919, Bill Silvear was looking for wildflowers on this mountain east of Salinas Valley. Along with flowers he found the rare soil. He bought eighty acres next to the site Tamm had owned and planted Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, and Chenin Blanc. In the 1940s, he bought an additional eighty acres on which he planted the same varietals. The grapes were exceptional, but because he had no winery he sold them, chiefly to Almadén Vineyards.

In the 1950s, Bill Silvear was killed in a fall from a tree, and his widow sold the 160-acre property to two San Franciscans, Jack Sigman, a stockbroker, and Edward Liska, a psychiatrist, for $17,500.

In 1960, they hired a wine maker, Philip Togni. He fashioned a primitive winery by pouring a slab of concrete on the earth floor of a capon brooding shed Silvear had built, tuned up a second-hand single-cylinder generator to supply electricity for the press, and made the first vintage. He suggested it be named Chalone after the Indian tribe that used to roam the mountain. Meanwhile, Liska, displeased with a financial arrangement that left him paying the bills, sold his share to Sigman, who then leased Chalone and sold its entire inventory to Windsor Vineyards, in Sonoma County, for fifty cents a gallon.

Enter Dick Graff. A Harvard graduate with a degree in music, he was fresh out of the navy, working as a management trainee at a Los Angeles bank, when he stopped at the Windsor winery one day in 1964.

"I'd never been to a winery before, and except for one course I took, I knew nothing about wine," he says. "But I tasted Chalone's 1960 vintage there and was fascinated." When Graff heard that Sigman wanted to sell Chalone for $65,000, he visited the mountain winery and fell in love with it. "I had a late meal by kerosene lamp on the porch of the house and left determined to get the place."

Dick Graff had a friend who was willing to invest in it, but Sigman's lease with Windsor was ironclad for another three years. "But I said to Sigman, 'I suspect you really don't want to sell, so let me be your partner. I'll go to Davis to study wine making, and I'll pay you as soon as the winery begins to make money.' "

Sigman agreed, but first, he said, he must give 5 percent to a friend; then he would let the winery go through foreclosure in order to shed the Windsor lease. His friend would buy the winery back, and he and Graff would buy it from him. "That's just what happened. I borrowed $25,000 from my mother as working capital, which was secured by a deed of trust. I quit my job and in the fall of '65 went to Davis. My money had gone to Chalone, so I got a student loan and worked as a pile driver to pay my way."

In 1966, Graff had his first harvest at Chalone. "We turned up the old generator for electricity and asked everyone we knew to help. When the harvest was finished, I went back to working the pile driver." Then suddenly Sigman demanded money from Graff. The $25,000 had been working capital. He claimed he was still owed an interest-bearing note for 47½ percent of the business. He sued, and the case went to trial in 1968.

"I realized there was nothing I could do," Graff says. "We made a settlement. Sigman and his partner would take possession of Chalone and pay my mother and me $10,000 each. Sigman expected an investor would then buy into Chalone. But the investor's lawyer told him not to touch it. Sigman had no money to pay us, and my mother was put in the position of having to foreclose. When the time came for the auction, we gathered on the steps of the Monterey County courthouse with a friend, Bob Nikkel, who had agreed to buy the property. Just as the auction was to begin, a messenger appeared with a restraining order enjoining the sale, and it was put off for two weeks.

"When the auction was rescheduled, Bob couldn't be there. But as it turned out neither were any other bidders. The ploy two weeks before had frightened them off; no one wants to get involved with litigation. So my mother got Chalone."

Dick Graff put together a corporation, acquired a few investors, and bought the property from his mother for $65,000. In 1969, Chalone had its first vintage under his ownership. "It turned out to be a wonderful wine," he says.

About this time, Phil Woodward and John McQuown, two financial men in San Francisco who were interested in buying wine property, asked Graff to consult for them, but before long they decided to join him at Chalone instead. In 1972, Woodward became vice-president and treasurer and has since taken over the financial and marketing aspects of the business, while Dick has concentrated on wine making and the vineyards.

Too delicate for handling, the Pinot Noir grapes are thrown into the vat to be crushed. The rubber-boot-clad foot belongs to Michael Michaud, Chalone's chief wine maker.

In a series of purchases over the years, Chalone has added another 480 acres, for a total of 640 acres, of which 165 are in vines. They are planted in the same four varietals Silvear planted in 1919; indeed, many of those original vines still bear fruit. Fifty percent of Chalone's acres are in Chardonnay, 25 percent in Pinot Noir, 20 percent in Pinot Blanc, and 5 percent in Chenin Blanc. From them, Chalone produces an average of 15,000 cases a year.

"Until we have a water line up here, we can't plant any more," Dick Graff says. And how would such a line get water up the mountain? "Think of an eight-inch-thick pipe six miles long with a number of booster pumps along the way."

While simple amenities have been long in coming up Chalone's mountain, care has always been given to its wines. Graff bought French oak barrels in 1965—one of the first people in California to do so—and Chalone continues to use the best Burgundian casks. Pinot noir is aged in them eighteen to twenty-one months. Chardonnay is aged in oak until late in the

THE BORDEAUX STYLE

The redwood tower, fifty-five feet high, soars up from a benchland in the Mayacamas Mountains, 1,650 feet above sea level. It overlooks a gigantic amphitheater of vines planted along steep southern slopes, fifty-five acres mostly of Cabernet Sauvignon with 10 percent each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, the major grapes of Bordeaux. The winery's name is Carmenet, an ancient Bordelaise term, not found in dictionaries, that suggests Dick Graff's aim. Just as he has evoked echoes of Burgundy at Chalone, he means to reflect Bordeaux at Carmenet.

A few years ago there was speculation in these pages (*Connoisseur*, September 1982) about whether Carmenet, then named Glen Ellen, would prove to be one of the few vineyards great enough to be considered "privileged earth." It takes a while to prove greatness, and in wine the wait can be long—a decade at least, probably more. Still, the first few vintages tasted at Carmenet last spring suggest that a decade of thoughtful sipping should be no painful chore.

The first vintage under Chalone's ownership and the Carmenet name was in 1982; it was labeled "Red Table Wine." By California law, a wine named for its grape varietal—Cabernet Sauvignon, for example—must contain a minimum of 75 percent of that grape. Since it is not called by the name of its major grape, the Carmenet blend can be adjusted to each year's crop. This follows the custom of Bordeaux, where wines are generally named for their châteaux.

The fifty-five-foot-high redwood tower at Dick Graff's other winery, Carmenet, which overlooks fifty-five acres of vineyards planted with the major grapes of Bordeaux.

Carmenet's 1982 combines 85 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 10 percent Merlot, and 5 percent Cabernet Franc and promises to be a superb wine. Still young, hard, and tannic, it has good acidity and a steel spine; it is complex, full-bodied, and firm, with an intense aroma rich in varietal character, and a deep, jewellike color. Its elegance is more pronounced with each time it's tasted.

With the 1983 vintage, Dick Graff decided to drop "Red Table Wine." He wants the wine to be known simply as "Carmenet" or "Carmenet Red," to distinguish it from the winery's Carmenet White, which is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon, made from grapes of Sonoma County and Edna Valley.

In 1983, Carmenet was made from 87 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 10 percent Merlot, and 3 percent Cabernet Franc, and despite the wine's extreme youth it already is showing signs of a satiny texture in addition to beautifully melded flavors. Its nose is lightly peppery and berryish; its balance, excellent; and it is well knit. It should be ready to drink before the 1982 Carmenet.

The winery is now producing about 8,000 cases of Carmenet Red. It expects to reach 10,000 cases within ten years. "And that will be it," says Graff. "No other land up here is right for vineyards." But privileged land rarely comes in big chunks.

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spring following harvest; pinot blanc and chenin blanc, a few months less than chardonnay. The reserve versions of chardonnay and pinot blanc receive a few months more. There is no reserve chenin blanc.

The casks are kept in caves dug into the mountainside. Cool, dark, humid, these tunnels are the perfect way to store wine. Later, the wines are put in bottles made in France from a special Burgundian mold. "They're yellow-green like Burgundy bottles. They're a higher-quality glass and have a more graceful shape than those made in this country."

As for wine making, Graff says, "We use a set of techniques I've developed and have been perfecting for eighteen years. For example, in making pinot noir, we never destem the grapes, they're so delicate. We put the whole clusters in the tank. That's vital because it means the gentlest handling possible. It also gives the extra tannin that pinot noir needs. Our philosophy is to let each wine develop its own character."

The care has produced an almost unprecedented record. Despite variations in weather, Chalone has produced good wine in nearly every harvest. A few years stand out—1969, 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1984. Others are special for certain wines: 1982, for instance, produced outstanding chardonnay and pinot noir.

Chalone's chardonnay is golden-shaded, full flavored, and intense, with buttery oak overtones—an often austere and always many-dimensioned wine. The pinot blanc follows the style of the chardonnay but is more accessible and rounded—the best pinot blanc made in California. The Chenin Blanc grape usually makes good but undistinguished wine in California; at Chalone it emerges as fruit-laden and in the style of a light chardonnay.

Chalone's pinot noir is its greatest challenge and success. Extremely well balanced, it is a focused, tightly knit, bright wine with flavors that have so many layers that the taster discovers new depths with each sniff and sip.

In a tasting with the Chalone wine maker Michael Michaud, I was especially pleased by a pinot blanc '84 reserve, a full, flavorful wine of great complexity and fruit; by pinot blanc '84, more restrained than the reserve, balanced and elegant; by pinot blanc '81, with its light vanillin and buttery flavors and long, satisfying finish; and by chenin blanc '84, a wine of rich concentration, of fruit flavors—melon, especially—a chenin blanc that has rarely been bettered in California. Chardonnay '84 reserve is exceptional, with its many dimensions and its medley of fruit flavors and floral tones, while the '78 chardonnay reserve is intense, extraordinarily concentrated, toasty, and golden-shaded, a wine that calls for food to enjoy with it. Pinot noir '82 reserve is a clean, bright wine whose aroma suggests currants; it has a tightly knit structure and near-perfect balance. The standard '82 bottling, too, has rich, berryish pinot noir nose, while the '80 is also beautifully balanced, subtle, and complex, the essence of pinot noir.

Chalone made its first reserve wine in 1978, skipped the next year, and began a regular reserve program in 1980 for pinot noir, chardonnay, and pinot blanc. Produced from older vines, which give more concentrated flavors, reserve wines are

From Dick Graff's airplane, Chalone's special volcanic soil (a sample below in Graff's hands), which gives the wine its character.

available only through its mailing list.

Wines of this quality do not come cheap. While price depends on vintage and reserve status, the general range is: pinot noir, $18 to $26; chardonnay, $20 to $28; pinot blanc, $15 to $18; chenin blanc, $9 to $11.

In 1974, Chalone built a new, 12,000-case winery. "It seemed terribly big," Graff says, "and we decided to buy grapes so we could use it to capacity. We bought them from Jack and Catherine Niven, who own the Paragon Vineyard Company, in San Luis Obispo. But when our own newer vineyards came into production, we no longer had room for Paragon's grapes. So the Nivens built a winery at their place and leased it back as a joint venture. It's called Edna Valley, and we're making 40,000 cases there under that label."

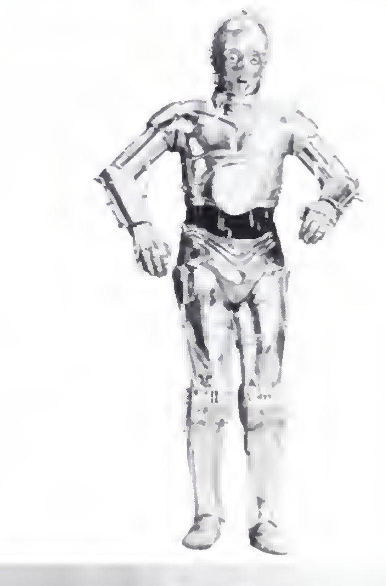
The Chalone corporation now owns Carmenet as well, a mountain vineyard and winery in Sonoma County (see box on page 116). Last August it bought Acacia, in the Carneros district of Napa County, east of Sonoma. Dick Graff, chairman and chief operating officer of Chalone Incorporated, the umbrella company, which is now publicly owned, continues as master wine maker for the corporation.

These days he covers all four wineries by air, landing at Chalone in his single-engine plane on a 1,700-foot strip smoothed out of the benchland. He has less time than he would like to spend in his little book-filled house, the same one where he dined by the light of a kerosene lamp during his first visit, over twenty years ago. He owns the house now. He has created great wine. And he has done what no one else in California has quite managed—he has coaxed a Burgundian motif from pinot noir. If his wine expresses the essence of the grape, his achievements express the essence of the man—perseverance, will, patience. □

Eunice Fried is the author of Burgundy: The Country, the Wines, the People.

CLASS ACTS

IN THE HOLLYWOOD VIEW, ANYONE WITH TRULY GOOD MANNERS HAS TO HAVE A BRITISH ACCENT



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POST-HOLLYWOOD

IN LOS ANGELES, AT LEA

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BY HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA

In the recent film *Ruthless People,* the nouveau riche couple played by Bette Midler and Danny DeVito live in a caricature of a Beverly Hills mansion. It's enormous and garish and has too much of everything, especially the southern California postmodern furniture, with its wacky geometry and Day-Glo upholstery in overbright rooms.

The film was a reminder that Los Angeles is the home of loony furniture designed by artists and architects. The West Coast's easygoing acceptance of the new and the different encourages its artists to ignore the traditional distinctions between art and craft, function and dysfunction, high and low culture. These days, of course, these distinctions are being questioned everywhere around the country, a sign of our rampant postmodernism. But the questions were asked first in southern California before the term postmodernism existed, and, as the pictures on these pages show, the answers continue to be various. Indeed, it now may be said that Los Angeles's distance from history and tradition, so long perceived as a liability, seems to have finally created a com-

RM FOLLOWS FANTASY

munity where the only laws and the only limits are those that are set by your imagination.

Here are the basic approaches, at least, of seven of Los Angeles's freest spirits.

1. Peter Shire: His Picasso-like energy and inventiveness have established him as the leader of the pack. Shire is one of the few Americans to exhibit with the Memphis group, in Milan. Yet, he is inspired less by the Italian designer Ettore Sottsass than by the Chicano low riders and brightly painted houses in his Hispanic neighborhood of Echo Park, in East Los Angeles.

Shire, who is thirty-nine, is a graduate of L.A.'s Chouinard Art Institute, where he first won attention as a ceramist. His unconventional, cubistic teapots functioned more as art than as pottery. Attacking conventional expectations generated by modernism, i.e., that sculpture is sculpture, furniture is furniture, and ne'er the twain shall meet, Shire began making furniture that could be mistaken for sculpture. He delights in such contradictory materials as fiberglass and bronze, rubber and steel, and gleefully uses tropical hues like fuchsia, chartreuse, and tangerine. His work melded art-historical styles of the past with his own

design and paved the way for scores of followers.

2. Jim Isermann: He is one of what seems to be an entire school of artists who have assigned a function to sculpture or created furniture that appears to deny its own utility. Jim Isermann, who lives in the seedy neighborhood of Hollywood, is inspired by furniture designs from the 1950s and 1960s. He was born thirty-one years ago and grew up in Wisconsin but admired the optimistic and forward-looking attitude of the atomic age, of Disneyland and "The Jetsons." In L.A., he found this aesthetic to be everywhere, in coffee shops, bowling alleys, and thrift shops.

As a student at the radical art school the California Institute of the Arts, in Valencia, Isermann was creating installations of furniture based on designs from the rich years after the Second World War. His phosphorescent hanging lamps, amoeboid coffee tables, and voluptuous TV cabinets allude to America's most hopeful, if naive, era. Isermann hopes to jog our collective memory and rekindle our appreciation for such styles. (Since 1979, when he began making furniture, interest in the period has swelled considerably.) He wants his furniture to be used yet, like Shire, considers it art. Since it was the surrealist paintings of Jean Arp and Yves Tanguy that partly inspired the biomorphic furniture of the fifties and sixties, Isermann closes the cycle by returning his furniture to the realm of art.

3. Jon Bok: Hundreds of hubcaps, flattened beer cans, are attached to the front of his bungalow in the Silver Lake area. Bok, twenty-seven years old, sees himself as a folk artist and has collaged his home with such stuff, reminiscent of the work of the folk artist Sanford Darling. He modestly collects Mexican and Appalachian folk art. Hence, Bok is proud of the fact that his only art training was at high school in his native Connecticut and that he didn't attend college.

He began making furniture as a form of therapy, after his sight suddenly started to fail last year. During those months, Bok made small crosses and sculptures, hoping to develop dexterity and coordination with his hands. When he regained his sight, after seeing a "psychic healer," he adopted furniture making as an occupation. Chairs, chests, lamps, and tool chests are cobbled together from cast-off chunks of wood, leftover paint, and found elements like tin cans, bottle caps, padlocks, and hubcaps. The results are ingratiatingly homely, as if they had been lifted from some barrio cantina.

4. Robert Wilhite: When he graduated from the University of California at Irvine, in 1970, he began making musical instruments, props, and furniture for the performance art of the late Guy de Cointet. Fascinated by their sculptural appearance, he concentrated his efforts on furniture crafted of such fine woods as maple, ebony, rosewood, and the purplish, exotic bubinga. Despite their luxurious surfaces, Wilhite is intent upon twisting the tradition of furniture design, extracting eccentric and confrontational shapes. An elegant rosewood table is perched on large red acrylic ball feet; the seat of a sophisticated chair tilts at an odd angle. They are improbably comfortable.

Wilhite, now forty years old, combines the linear qualities of constructivist sculpture with the heritage of the southern California arts-and-crafts movement. If that sounds like a strange combination, it's because Wilhite is another of those who are primarily intrigued with stretching the confines of a definition.

5. Michael Tolleson: He is an "architectural designer" straining against the corset stays of modernism. As he sees it, his furniture satisfies the need to fill an interior space in such a way as to integrate it with his architecture. A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, he is now thirty-two and lives in the MacArthur Park area of Los Angeles. He says his inspiration derives not from art theory but from minimalist fiction by the French novelist Alain Robbe-Grillet, "abstract stories which are telling but not in any specific way." His furniture is streamlined but quirky and humorful, sometimes harboring the merest hints of human shapes and setting up an ambiguity between the abstract and the anthropomorphic.

A geometric maple chair is outfitted with an aluminum curved back; a sandblasted glass table on a gray stained maple base supports mauve lacquer triangular leaves that drop down to extend the dining space. Tolleson imbues such reductive design with a bit of trompe l'oeil wit and in the process raises questions about the relationship of furniture and architecture.

6. David Hertz: Only twenty-six years old, he is an architect who graduated from the Southern California Institute of Architecture with a combined degree in art and architecture. He alludes frequently to a strong kinship, both aesthetically and philosophically, with the minimalist sculptors Donald Judd and Richard Serra. Composed from thick slabs of cast concrete, his furniture clearly shows signs of such influences. Hertz uses the material, he says, "because of its primal associations as man's oldest building material," developed during the Roman period. The lightweight product he devised comes in sundry shades, from peach to charcoal. This raw, blocky, natural material is confrontational and surprising when used for Hertz's own, streamlined designs. Although the concrete obviously refers to rough-hewn, unfinished construction, to freeways and commercial structures, his furniture, when placed in an interior, becomes powerfully sculptural.

7. Brian Murphy: An iconoclast who abandoned study in both art and architecture, he now uses common, everyday objects in his designs to bridge both disciplines. He eschews the preciosity of high culture and revels in what he calls his "white trash" aesthetic solutions. In the spirit of his role as the bad boy of L.A. design, Murphy carpets houses in Astroturf and builds wet bars and room dividers from vinyl sandbags. His version of a coffee table is a cord of logs placed stumps up and wrapped with wire.

Murphy, who is thirty-eight, lives in Santa Monica Canyon in a house of his own design that looks like a cross between an ocean liner and an art museum. His relationship to the found object is rooted in Dada and Pop art and lends his architectural projects an insouciance that defies anyone's preconceptions about architecture or art. Among his most popular pieces of furniture are chandeliers made from police flashlights suspended above a disc of shattered auto glass, and his wall sconces made of clear-plastic drafting triangles.

The list could be extended. Other obvious West Coast talents include **8. Ken Erwin, 9. Larry Whiteley,** and **10. Philip Agee,** each of whom has his own ideas. But by now, you have understood the point: furniture is art—if you want it to be. □

Hunter Drohojowska is an art critic and journalist who lives in L.A.

PRIDE OF PLACE

LIFE-STYLES IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

BY KATIE LEISHMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID GAMBLE

The agribarons John and Carol Harris savor a paradisiac moment on their River Ranch, in Coalinga.

In the minds of most people, California means Los Angeles, San Francisco, and a few beaches in between. Yet just a few hours' drive inland lies the green-and-ocher patchwork of the San Joaquin Valley, cradled between the Coastal Range and the Sierra Nevada, containing the richest agricultural counties in the world. Although this vast garden sustains the entire state, many Californians know this region no better than do visitors from New England or the South.

Even for the state's early settlers the valley was just a stopover on the way west, because the land then was semidesert. It was the railroad that brought the valley to life. Eventually the technology to pump up underground water made it possible to grow crops other than grain; some people made fortunes not just in farming but in water-management systems that made new land development possible. When the gold rush was becoming part of California lore, the riches of the valley were just being discovered and then handed down from generation to generation. Through good and bad seasons, of which there have been too many lately, much of the valley's business has remained in the hands of descendants of first settlers.

These stewards of the land are members of California's ruling class, although their style is unique. They are people who may be patrons of the arts on both coasts but are still just as active in valley historical societies; they may play in the town band and yet never miss an opening night at the opera in San Francisco—where they keep a pied-à-terre on Nob Hill. They may work all day on the ranch and then fly down to Los Angeles for dinner at a favorite restaurant. There is a distinctive modesty about many of the old families in the valley. Their money is in the land; they know the simplicity of their abundance—and its infinite fragility. A bad season can be a bad season whether one has five hundred acres or twenty thousand, as do John and Carol Harris, both of whose families have been farming and ranching in the valley since the turn of the century.

"Our cotton business really took a dive in the sixties, when synthetics were the rage," says Carol Harris. "We wanted to start a silly rumor that polyester leisure suits caused cancer in rats. That was about all we could do." Just when natural cotton was making a comeback, the Chinese began producing cotton at a price that Americans could not compete with. Last year the Harrises would have felt the setback, except that they had one of the few good almond crops in the valley. Nonetheless, the vicissitudes of recent farming have led the Harrises to diversify and to expand their beef division, looking for new marketing strategies.

In the midst of their crops, the cattle, the feedlot, and the stables, the Harrises live in a house—all sparkling white, glass, and trompe l'oeil—that would fit in perfectly in Beverly Hills. They can watch their own horses race, on closed-circuit television, or head out to the landing strip and fly up to San Francisco to do business and still be back by nightfall.

At the end of the day Harris tramps in in his cowboy boots, pours himself a glass of white wine, and discusses new directions his corporation is taking. "Beef has always been thought of as a commodity," says Harris, a member of America's beef-industry council. "We're trying to differentiate, as with car models. Ours is a Ferrari."

Harris is one of the political leaders among valley growers and often presents the farmers' case in Washington and Sacramento. Culturally, the valley identifies more closely with San Francisco and northern California, but politically, it is more like the conservative Orange County. He explains, "Some people use the valley polls to predict election outcomes: as the valley goes, so goes the state." This is ironic, given the insularity of life in the valley. Until recently that apartness has suited residents just fine, but new economic pressures on farmers and government regulations have forced them to take their feelings to town and put up big money to help elect concerned politicians. "Farmers don't want to buy influence," says John Harris; "they want to buy access because issues come up that are so esoteric a farmer really needs to explain them to someone. The farmers who are taking a leadership role are not all big farmers or all small ones, just people who are united philosophically."

The give-and-take among farms of all sizes is something Harris appreciates about the San Joaquin Valley: "In the Midwest you may only know farmers from ten miles around. Here you're talking to someone in Bakersfield one day, in Modesto the next." Valley farming is distinct in every way. "This is farming in the fast track. There are a lot higher stakes. On a crop like lettuce, we may spend $1,400 an acre. In Iowa, a farmer might spend $200 or less an acre on a grain crop. There is real gambling, but there are bigger returns.

"The landscape is of a different scale too. The valley has a magnetism to it, an energy level that is unique. Napa Valley is pretty, but it is a boutique in comparison." Harris can drive through thousands of acres without ever leaving his own land. Of course

"SHE READS *BARRON'S* AS CAREFULLY AS SHE DOES *WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY*."

he could retire tomorrow, and of course he never will. "There are lots of entrepreneurs in the valley," he says, "sons and grandsons of farmers who made their fortune here. They don't have to work but they do, every day, like their life depended on it."

The valley is full of such men, with one boot in the boardroom and one on the range. George Nickel, rancher and real-estate developer, is a certain kind of person one meets in the valley. Rangy, softspoken, he can be alternately matter-of-fact and nostalgic. When he drives over the range, he is always studying the landscape as though for some potential he hasn't yet considered. The sight of a stream gets him going on the subject of marketing bottled water.

Nickel is the great-grandson of Henry Miller, once considered the largest private landowner in the United States. Miller came from Germany, a butcher who rather than join the gold rush when he reached California in 1850 decided to feed the miners instead. Before long he had one of the biggest abattoirs in downtown San Francisco. Eventually he bought a ranch in the San Joaquin Valley and before he died had over a million acres.

Miller developed much of the land he bought with water for farming. He was an authority on water management, flood control, and canal systems. Control of water still means tremendous power in all the western states. Nickel served on the state water-reclamation board for eight years and was the designer of flood-control projects on the San Joaquin River.

With his three sons, Nickel operates several ranches in the valley, where he grows oranges, lemons, avocados, grains, melons, table grapes, and peaches; but about ten years ago the difficulties in farming led him to consider a new venture, resort development. He sold large portions of farm holdings and built a luxury golf and tennis club on part of his 10,000-acre Rio Bravo Ranch, at the base of the Sierra Nevada where the Kern River discharges out of the mouth of a canyon.

Nickel and his wife, Dodo, live in a home designed by Cliff May, hidden in the hills near the resort. The simple, low-lying house is breathtaking inside because it seems as if one is still out-

doors, so close are the cliffs, the river, the trees going golden. Eight children and many grandchildren are always popping in and out. Like the Harrises, the Nickels have a landing strip and can fly to another ranch or up to town when the mood suits them. Mrs. Nickel, who grew up in Santa Barbara, says, "When I was a child, I remember one boy in our class announced that he and his family were moving to Fresno. And we all wondered how parents could *do* that to a child. I never dreamed I'd be spending any time, let alone so much of my life, in this valley."

This is a refrain of many wives in the valley, of women who grew up in Victorian mansions in San Francisco or apartments overlooking all of Los Angeles, who dated a string of city boys but married one from Fresno or Tulare. "I spent the first year on the ranch crying myself to sleep most nights," says Angela Paul. Thirty-three years later, she radiates a special serenity, diminutive elegance, and a quiet command of the family business: growing plums, nectarines, and table grapes. She reads *Barron's* as carefully as she does *Women's Wear Daily* yet describes her role simply as that of "the mediator" between her three sons and their semiretired father, Ronald, who only occasionally comes off the sidelines to advise his boys.

The seventies were golden days for the Pauls' business. Now they travel, to San Francisco and Los Angeles, to New York and Paris. With a smile Angela says, "Well, you know what they say about the farm girl once she's seen Paree? Well, it's true." Now European friends come to spend a month at what they call Château Fresno. When Angela sees a Helen Frankenthaler to brighten the dining room, or a Henry Moore figurine of a mother and child that she has wanted for years, the Pauls treat themselves. "Angie's got me interested in the arts, even in the dress designers," her husband says, as though he still can't believe it.

But start talking with the Pauls about Saint Laurent, and before you know it the subject turns to plums. "Fashion and fruit growing are a lot alike," asserts Angela Paul. "It is marketing and anticipating new styles first. When Ron's father was farming, one variety of fruit might be popular for fifteen years. Now there's a new variety for five years; then the excitement is gone. The public wants new varieties all the time—better appearance, better color."

Growers get new varieties either by cross-breeding or by discovering mutations in the orchard. They also shop at breeders' nurseries. "You ask questions, and if you are smart, you pick the up-and-coming variety," says Ronald Paul, although these days such decisions are made by his three sons.

Many valley businesses are now in their fourth generation, and the history of a single enterprise may tell the story of a family or a town and much about the state, like the history of J. D. Heiskell Company, of Tulare, California, a company that prepares and delivers mixed and bulk feed for cattle. Patricia Heiskell Hillman, whose husband, Dale, now runs the business, is the great-great-granddaughter of George Donner, leader of the ill-fated Donner party. She is also the family historian, the one who keeps track of chili recipes from the 1880s, family diaries and letters, mining lamps and gold sacks. When she tells the history of the business one can make out the development of the valley, too: the introduction of irrigation around 1903, which made cotton growing possible; the rapid crop diversification throughout the twenties; the emergence of dairies in the thirties; the computerization of feed preparation in the 1970s. The family has been in Tulare for a century. "I know people drive through small towns like this and think, 'What do people do here?' " says Mrs. Hillman. "But there is a special culture here and a way in which you are continually enriched. I believe you could stay in Tulare and Visalia and not go anyplace else and feel, to a certain extent, fulfilled."

Of course, "old" families in California are old only by the standards of a young state. Pioneers' children, now in their nineties, still live throughout the valley. Their reminiscences are being hurriedly collected by town historical museums like the one in Tulare, where items on display—the paper flowers off a wedding cake, a plumed hat of Lillian Russell's—look like fresh merchandise. Workers who have dug up Tulare's main streets find perfectly intact Chinese gin jugs or what some believe to be opium pipes, artifacts of the coolies who once worked on the railroad that brought Tulare into existence.

The railroad's construction brought not only laborers but also Chinese merchants,

The traditionalists Patricia (née Heiskell) and Dale Hillman with son Scott at their grain mill. Right: The go-getters George and Dodo Nickel on their Rio Bravo Ranch.

Branching out: Ron and Angela Paul, with sons, on their fruit farm near Fresno.

who marketed their wares to the workers. That is how the valley's most celebrated restaurant, the Imperial Dynasty, in Hanford, California, had its beginnings two generations ago. Today the Wing family, whose ancestors started the restaurant, own all that remains of old Chinatown in Hanford.

Richard C. Wing is the owner and head chef of the Imperial Dynasty. Despite the burnished red walls and pagoda roofs of China Alley, where the restaurant is situated, the food he serves is Continental, although prepared with Chinese techniques. It wasn't always that way, as Wing explains.

His grandfather Gon Shu Wing, an egg-noodle producer from Canton, set sail for California in 1883. He had heard the tales of workers being imported or shanghaied to America to work on the railroad, and, eager to escape the repression of the Manchu dynasty, he decided to seek a new market in the new country.

Hanford seemed the logical place to start in the valley, near one of the largest Chinese labor camps in California. Gon Shu followed the workers from camp to camp but maintained a family home in Hanford. When the railroad was completed, most of the Chinese returned to China. Those who remained began farming, mostly in Sonoma and the Napa Valley. In fact, most of the original vineyards in California were planted by Chinese coolies.

Gon Shu started a restaurant in the basement of the Wings' home. The family raised chicken, squab, hogs, and vegetables; they made their own Chinese gin, black-bean sauce, noodles, soy sauce, and tofu, which they sold all over the valley. Gon Shu prospered and in 1883 opened a restaurant whose name meant "beautiful precious inn," in Hanford's Chinatown in a new building that still houses the restaurant.

"Originally the customers were only Chinese, but by my father's day, half were Caucasian, and by the time I took over, most of them were," explains Richard Wing. Rather than making it a "glorified chop suey house," he says, Wing decided to start serving French and Continental food.

He had learned European cooking during the Second World War, when he was the personal security aide and food taster for Gen. George C. Marshall. "I tasted everything in kitchens in

Moscow, Bogota, Paris, Rome, Frankfurt, and Beijing."

It was in the late nineteen-fifties that Wing decided to expand and change the restaurant. Today the Wings are one of the most prominent families in Hanford, responsible for much of the picture-perfect restoration of the Chinatown neighborhood on a site where a hundred and fifty years ago, legend has it, there was nothing but a Chinese shepherd, his flock, and two dogs.

If Wing has a single worry, it is simply that none of the next generation of his family seems interested in taking over the business. "We children have been offered a world outside of Hanford, which our parents couldn't have," says Wing's niece, Arianne, twenty-seven, who is pursuing a modeling career on the coast and in New York. "Still, when your family has been in one place for 104 years, you keep coming back. We all think about the business, but it is such a difficult one. Sometimes I find myself wishing my great-grandfather had had a law office. Even a laundry."

The decision to stay in the valley or go is often a landmark one in the lives of young descendants of the early settlers. They are free to commute, to travel and study, as their grandparents never could, but sooner or later the commitment must be made or passed over. Robert Shapazian, forty-three, is someone who left the valley, came back to work with his father in farming, raisin packing, and finance, and is preparing to leave it again.

Shapazian, like the Pauls, is Armenian. The Armenians are an important force in the valley. They came to California in waves after the great massacres of Armenians in the Turkish empire between 1894 and 1915. But even before 1890 some prominent Armenians had learned from Turkish officials to expect trouble, and the Shapazians were among them. Some of these first Armenian immigrants to the valley were English-speaking cosmopolites, who were in a position to buy land immediately, invest in business, and help the poorer Armenian farmers who later followed them.

Robert Shapazian's great-grandfather arrived in Fresno in 1879. A banker, he opened a jewelry business, as gems and precious metals were the stocks and bonds of the day. As he brought over other relatives, they expanded the family farm, growing citrus fruit, peaches, walnuts, and grapes. Although farming

The collector Robert Shapazian in his condo in Fresno, with parents and sister.

The dynasts: Richard Wing and his family have restored much of their native Hanford.

and raisin packing were the mainstays of the Shapazian business, the family began investing in real estate as well as in other areas that were not related to agriculture.

Robert Shapazian grew up in a house filled with antique furniture, porcelain, and art books, which he pored over for hours before going off to stack cartons in the warehouse. When he was in sixth grade he subscribed to auction catalogues from Europe and became interested in Oriental art. He wrote directly to dealers in Thailand and started to buy a few objects. "You didn't need much to start; a few hundred dollars I had saved," he says. "I bought first one thing, then another. When I was thirteen, I started selling to Gumps by mail. If I sold them something, they sent back a 'vendor receipt.' I was too young to know what 'vendor' meant. It reached a point where I was buying ten objects and selling eight to pay for the two."

Shapazian studied at Berkeley, Vienna, and Harvard, where he completed his Ph.D. in Renaissance literature, with a minor in art history, in 1970. "I had intended to become a professor but decided to try the family business," he says. "I did it less out of a sense of responsibility than out of emotional respect for the idea." After fourteen years of working beside his father, he has decided to return to the art world full-time in Los Angeles.

As far from the valley as a native may travel, its way of life leaves its mark. Says Shapazian, "I can wake up one morning in Paris and, half-asleep, thinking of the crop, tell myself, 'My God, it's raining, what are we going to do?' " With all the freedom in the world, one may never forget what it feels like to be financially dependent on nature—on the farm or off. □

Katie Leishman is a frequent contributor to Connoisseur.

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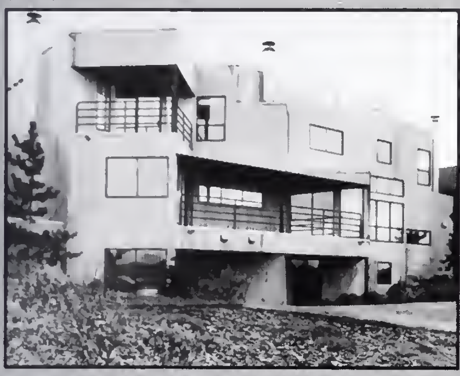

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VENETIAN TOWNSCAPES: PAINTINGS THAT HAVE STAYING POWER

BY ROBIN DUTHY

Ever since the Crusades, Venice has been a stopover for travelers. The wily Venetians made sure the Crusaders' ships were not ready to sail until they had spent heavily on the pleasures the city had to offer in abundance. Later, it was pilgrims en route to the Holy Land who helped fill the city's coffers. When the Cape route to the East was discovered, in 1486, Venice's commercial supremacy suffered a devastating blow. To compensate, the tourist trade was developed and was in full flower by the eighteenth century.

For aristocratic young Englishmen and other travelers it was the climax of the obligatory grand tour, which also took in Paris, Florence, and Rome. For many, that first view of glorious tinted buildings seeming to levitate out of a glinting blue sea sparked off a lifelong romance, but the masked balls, the courtesans, and the social whirl concealed an ailing society.

The republic's political power began to wane in 1508, when the European powers ganged up on Venice as the League of Cambrai and determined to carve up her territorial possessions. This backdrop of political decline, however, did not prevent an impressive renaissance of the arts. Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese were all painting after the decline set in; Sansovino and Palladio had yet to design many of the city's greatest buildings; and Monteverdi, Vivaldi, and Albinoni had not yet composed a note. By the eighteenth century, Venice was the pleasure capital of Europe, though there were no postcards, no holiday snapshots, no home movies the tourist could take home with him. He might make a drawing in pencil or watercolor if he had the skill, or he might buy a print. Or, if he was quite rich, he might commission an oil painting of the Grand Canal or another of Venice's spectacular views. These view paintings were just another product the Venetians found they could sell to their visitors.

Dozens of artists turned their hand to *vedute*—view painting—and the greatest of these *vedutisti* were Antonio Canale, called Canaletto, his nephew Bernardo Bellotto, and Francesco Guardi. In the 1730s, Canaletto was charging about thirty *zecchini,* or sequins, for his work—equivalent to around $50 (in modern currency, around $600). Today a fine Canaletto fetches $500,000. Prices for Venetian view painters as a whole have risen by 230 percent since 1975, and this remains one of the more secure sectors of the market. Canaletto's work is up 200 percent since 1975, Guardi's by just 60 percent. That of Michele Marieschi has risen by 310 percent, while Bellotto's work, now rarely seen in salerooms, is up by an estimated 380 percent.

View of the Piazza San Marco, *painted circa 1733 by the greatest of the* vedutisti, *Canaletto. He is up 200 percent since 1975.*

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METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, BEQUEST OF ADELE L. LEHMAN, IN MEMORY OF ARTHUR LEHMAN, 1965

Venice from the Sea, *by Francesco Guardi, circa 1760. Up 60 percent since 1975.*

Canaletto's rate of $50 a painting no doubt allowed him to live comfortably, since you could get by on $25 a year, though it seems trifling compared to the income of the Foscarini, the richest family in Venice, which ran to $70,000 ($850,000 in today's terms)—the exact sum, incidentally, needed to enroll in the Venetian nobility.

Only a handful of paintings firmly attributed to Canaletto come up for sale every year. Another thirty-odd are catalogued by the salerooms as being from the studio, circle, or school of Canaletto and are sold at prices ranging from $1,000 to $150,000. The attribution of many Italian paintings of this period remains tricky because different members of one family—including the Tiepolo, Ricci, Longhi, and Canale families—collaborated on the same painting. So, the question that often needs answering is: Who painted which parts of the picture? The high prices paid for "school" paintings testify to the wide variety of opinion.

The views that went down best in Canaletto's day were those showing the great Venetian festivals in progress. There was the Ascension Day festival, when the doge was rowed out to the Lido in his gala gondola, *Il Bucintoro,* to perform the symbolic rite of throwing a ring into the Adriatic to appease the sea, on which Venetian prosperity was built. The rest of the calendar was filled with processions to churches, regattas on the Grand Canal, and water-borne receptions for ambassadors and distinguished visitors. Such were the spectacles that maintained the republic's façade of wealth and power.

Joseph Smith, the English consul, was closely involved both in procuring Canalettos for English clients and in amassing his own collection (fifty-five of his Canalettos were eventually sold to George III). But Smith complained bitterly at Canaletto's prima donna behavior, claiming in a letter to a friend that it was not the first time he had submitted to a painter's impertinence in order to serve himself and his friends. An earlier agent in Venice, Owen McSwiney, was also critical: "The fellow is whimsical and varies his prices every day: and he that has a mind to have any of his work, must not seem too fond of it, for he'll be the worse treated for it, both in the price and in the painting too." In a letter to the duke of Richmond, however, McSwiney assured him that he could get a painting done in a little over two months with the help of a bit of bribery.

Canaletto was fully aware of his talents. He claimed to have abandoned the style of theatrical scene painting he had learned from his father, but there remained something dramatic in the handling of his new subject. Though he used a camera obscura to delineate the image before him, and might thus seem to have limited his scope for creative invention, he managed to convey by his handling of detail and color not only the sights but also the sounds and smells of Venice and bring them rushing back into the traveler's mind.

His first major commission—four paintings for Stefano Conti of Lucca—was an immediate success. The first pair—of two different views of the Grand Canal—became stock subjects, of which Canaletto, with or without assistants, made at least a dozen copies. So many versions or copies of Canaletto's best paintings are around that people once assumed he had a workshop turning them out by the score. Most are now regarded as the work of imitators, very likely two or three assistants,

Vaprio d'Adda, *by Bernardo Bellotto, who later memorialized Dresden and Warsaw.*

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, PURCHASE, JOSEPH PULITZER BEQUEST, 1939

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among whom was his nephew Bellotto. But why would Canaletto make excuses for late deliveries if he was willing to have the work done by assistants? At one time, the delay was caused by Joseph Smith himself, who undertook to buy everything Canaletto could paint for the next four years.

For all *vedutisti*, things took a turn for the worse in 1742. The War of the Austrian Succession broke out in 1741, and the fighting soon spread to Italy. The flow of tourists dried up, and Canaletto turned to views of Rome, capriccios, and *vedute ideate*. He already had a big reputation in England, where his work was owned by several dukes and other prestigious collectors. It was probably the drop in demand at home, however, that persuaded him to undertake the journey to England. It has been suggested that he went so that he could invest his earnings with greater security and better interest, though the inventory of his possessions at his death does not suggest that he was a rich man. In any case, there was no shortage of commissions awaiting him in England, though some professed to feel that his work had gone downhill and even doubted that he was the real Canaletto.

His output was, to say the least, uneven. Canaletto's biographer W. G. Constable points out that attribution of a painting to Canaletto depends on the basic characteristics of handling rather than on merit. In other words, many a painting can be attributed to him on stylistic grounds even though it may suggest a lesser artist.

Sometimes his works are easier to date than to attribute with confidence. For instance, we know that the Piazza San Marco was repaved in 1723; hence Canaletto's view showing work beginning on the new white marble lines can be pinpointed to that year. Similarly, the painting showing scaffolding on the Church of the Salute may be dated to 1719, when major repairs were undertaken.

A hundred years ago, the going rate for Canaletto had risen to $2,500 (about $20,000 in today's terms). Prices were static between 1890 and 1920 but took off again in 1928, when the four great views of Venice executed for the duke of Lucca, which had later found their way to Tatton Park in Cheshire, were sold for an average of $30,000 each. By the 1960s, prices were up to around $100,000, and since 1975 they have jumped another 200 percent to reach a midmarket price of $330,000.

As Canaletto's pupil, Bellotto worked for years under his uncle's shadow. Though he had become more than proficient by the late 1730s, a few years later his achievements were straining relations between the two men. They split up around 1744, and Bellotto moved on for a time to rural scenes, in which the simple events of a peasant's working life enrich the landscape. In this new and individual style, described by one critic as poetic realism, Bellotto may almost be seen as a forerunner of the Barbizon school.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S LONDON

A View of the Piazzetta and the Palazzo Ducale from the Bacino, *by Michele Marieschi.*

It was during his long terms as court painter to Frederick Augustus II of Saxony, in Dresden, and to Stanislaus, the last king of Poland, in Warsaw, that his most mature and moving work was produced. And how fortunate that was, for these two great European cities, substantially reduced to rubble in the Second World War, at least have their grandeur and beauty on record. Bellotto's paintings not only documented in detail Warsaw's growth but also served as authentic models for the reconstructing of both individual buildings and whole quarters after the war.

The charm of his work lies in the juxtaposition of stately edifices with vignettes of women hanging out the wash, others selling rabbits and game, a printseller's stall, or an oxcart trundling home. He too used a camera obscura to establish his per-

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spectives. Though it is almost essential for accurate representations, romantics feel that the camera interferes with the natural process of painting. We might indeed be disappointed to learn that Leonardo had painted the Mona Lisa from a photograph, yet to refuse the help of any scientific instrument that might produce a better work of art seems somehow obtuse.

Francesco Guardi, the third of the great

CANALETTO CONVEYS THE SIGHTS OF VENICE—AND ITS SOUNDS AND SMELLS.

vedutisti, was born into a family of artists. Little is known of Domenico, his father, except that he was a genre painter. The Guardis had a thriving business in reproductions or pastiches of Tintoretto, Veronese, and others. With his two brothers, Antonio and Niccolo, Francesco probably specialized in views of Venice—for which demand was strong, particularly after Canaletto's death, in 1768. But Francesco was emerging as an important artist in his own right, and today the midmarket price for his work stands at $45,000—a rise of no more than 60 percent since 1975.

Michele Marieschi, along with several other view painters, started out as a painter of theater scenery. Much influenced by Canaletto, he developed a lighter, freer, and more spontaneous style, which was extensively copied. Firm attributions to Marieschi are problematic, though the midmarket price for his undisputed works has now risen to $20,000.

The townscape was by no means invented by the Venetians. Views of a town were found painted on the walls of villas at Pompeii and Herculaneum. They reappear in Holland in the seventeenth century, where they became a specialty of Jan van der Heyden and Gaspar van Wittel. Arriving in Rome about 1694, van Wittel became known as Vanvitelli. Later, he moved to Venice, where his work exerted a strong influence on Canaletto, and where Luca Carlevaris before him had been a prolific, if wooden, painter of Venetian views.

It was in the next century, with Canaletto and his circle, that view painting reached its zenith. Pannini and Piranesi may have done wonders for Rome, but an extra something gave Canaletto and Bellotto the advantage, and that something was the magic of Venice itself. ☐

Robin Duthy is the author of The Successful Investor.

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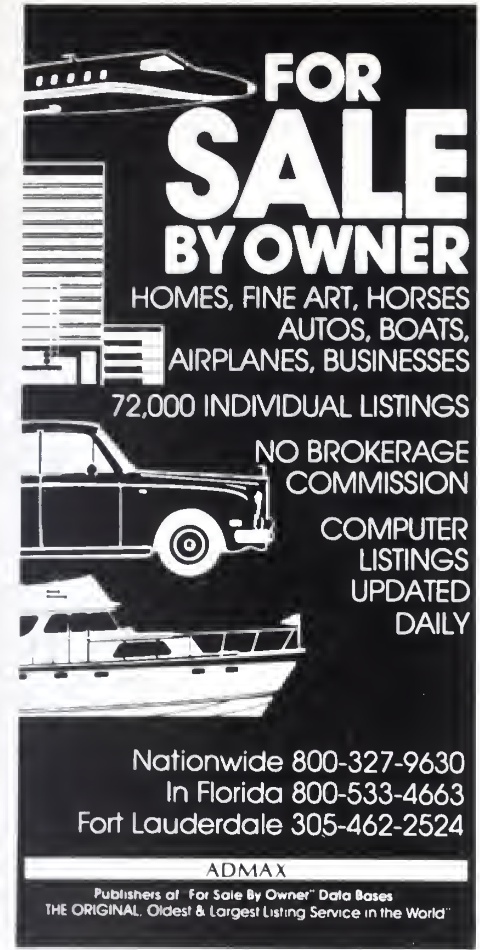

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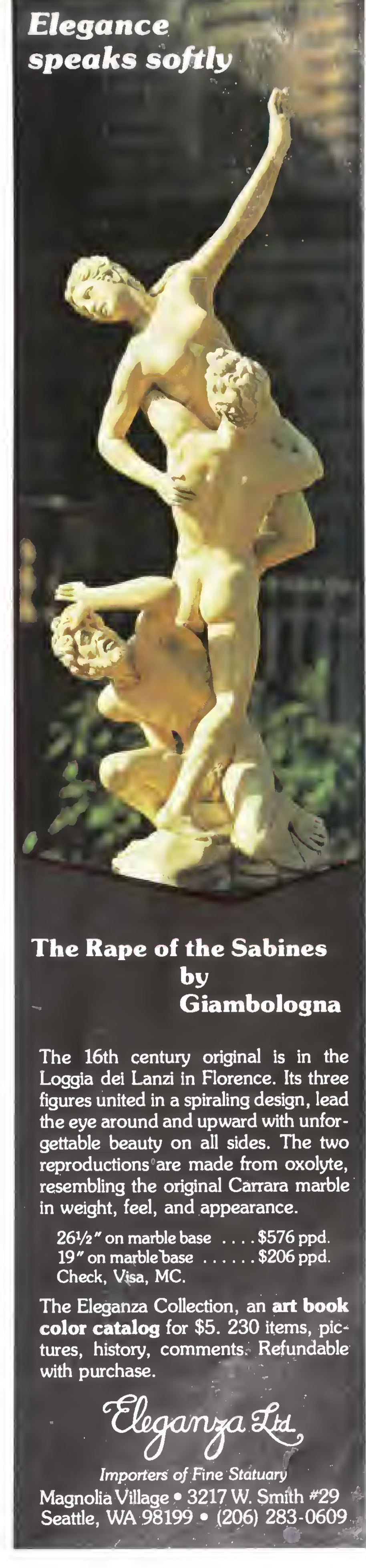

UP & COMING

SKIN-CARE QUEEN, BRIT-COUTURE, MUSICAL GLASS

COURTESY ALISTAIR BLAIR, LONDON (2)

SOLID TALENT (BRITISH, TOO)

After a skirl of bagpipes, a whimsical tribute to his Scottish heritage, Alistair Duncan Blair nervously motioned his first model to go onstage. It was his very first fashion show. She wore a soft red cape, which swirled over a matching coat with an easy, controlled shape. As she paused in the spotlight at the head of the runway, the applause exploded.

Soon the fashion critic Bernadine Morris was writing in the *New York Times*, "His elegantly stylish fall and winter clothes have captured the new mood of British fashion." Blair was off and running.

Within a few months, he was greeting customers on the selling floor of Saks Fifth Avenue, which launched his clothes in the United States. As Ellin Saltzman, the store's senior vice-president and fashion director, said at the time, "Most of the British fashions we see are put together with spit and masking tape, but these styles are beautifully tailored, the way British clothes for women used to be for years and years."

Blair's second collection, for spring, is coming into the stores right now. This time it is his short taffeta dresses, in such colors as orange, turquoise, and pink, as well as crepe de chine blazers and coats, that are attracting attention. And again, it is the quality of the workmanship that has drawn cheers from such retailers as Martha Phillips of Martha's, in New York and Palm Beach.

"British designers, especially the young ones, seem more concerned about making fashion statements than with making clothes that will work," says Martha, as she is known. "Blair's clothes have style, but you can also turn them inside out and admire how they are put together."

Blair was always confident about his designs, but finding the workers who care about their craft presented big problems in his getting started. From the beginning, in 1985, he was aware that he had to make quality clothes in good fabrics in order to allow London to compete with Paris and Milan as a fashion center.

Days before he secured the backing of Peder Bertelsen, a Danish industrialist with an interest in fashion, he went to see Geoffrey Beene in New York with his portfolio—just in case. Beene remembers the incident: "I looked through about half of it, and it wasn't necessary to see the rest. He had wonderful taste. I asked him when he wanted to come to work for me, and he said there was a chance of having his own company. I said, 'Go for it.' "

At thirty, Blair has had considerable experience in his business. After graduating from St. Martin's School of Art, in London, he worked with Marc Bohan at Christian Dior for a year and then with Hubert de Givenchy for two years. He assisted Karl Lagerfeld for five years, three of them with Chloé in Paris and two working on the KL collection in New York.

Observing the new climate of British fashion, David Sassoon of Bellville-Sassoon, clothiers to the royal family for more than twenty years, recalls the days when London fashion meant mainly pop and punk paraphernalia. "Now, young designers are beginning to realize that exhibitionist styles may have brought people to

Above: Turquoise silk taffeta dress called "Bohème," with red underlining. Right: Strapless orange silk taffeta number that Blair has named "Brazil."

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London to gawk, but the clothes must be well made if they are to sell," he says. "There's a big cleanup going on." If he's right, Alistair Blair is wielding the broom. —*Perdrix*

THOSE LONG, FLUTING NOTES

Among the fashionable topics of conversation just over two centuries ago, according to Oliver Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield*, were pictures, taste, Shakespeare—and the glass harmonica.

The eerie instrument of musical glasses enjoyed a vogue in Europe between 1746, when Gluck played a Concerto in D in London, and the 1830s. Having afterward fallen into relative obscurity, it is now making a remarkable comeback. In its most basic form the instrument is a series of water-filled vessels one plays by running a wet finger along their rims. In 1761 Benjamin Franklin lined the glass cups up on a central rod and thereby invented a more practical instrument for virtuoso performance—the version now coming back into use—which he dubbed the armonica. Beethoven, Donizetti, and Haydn wrote music for it, and one of Mozart's many marvels, the Quintet K. 617, provides the instrument its greatest challenge. Franz Mesmer used the glass harmonica in his experiments in animal magnetism. Goethe heard in its tones the "heart's blood of the world." The instrument, which makes a series of long, fluting sounds, was said to drive the people who played it mad; this may account for its decline. Between the 1830s and the present, the glass harmonica has popped up sporadically here and there, but interest has on the whole been meager. Most recently, in the late 1950s the German virtuoso Bruno Hoffman, who preferred the box of tuned glasses to Franklin's invention, made a few recordings, and Beverly Sills chose the glass harmonica to accompany her cadenza in her 1974 recording of Lucia di Lammermoor's mad scene. Joan Sutherland's new bel canto album (London) contains an aria from Donizetti's *Il Castello de Kenilworth* that features a dulcet obbligato for glass harmonica.

The recent revival of interest is centered in New England around the man who has made it possible, Gerhard Finkenbeiner of Waltham, Massachusetts. Although his principal business is glassblowing for the semiconductor industry, four years ago, intrigued by the history of the glass harmonica, Finkenbeiner studied blueprints in Berlin, visited surviving glass harmonicas in Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and the Corning Museum, and built a prototype. Since then he has manufactured twenty additional instruments, ranging from a small, fourteen-cup "home model" ($500) to a $30,000 "concert grand," which is larger and louder.

ROSE MARSTON/LOWELL SUN

Vera Meyer seduces sonorous notes from a glass harmonica.

Finkenbeiner says composers have bought his glass harmonicas, and people who want to lecture about Benjamin Franklin, and musicians who just happen to like the instrument's sweet, penetrating, and hypnotic sound. Among Finkenbeiner's first customers was Vera Meyer, thirty, a grand-niece of the musicologist Willi Appel who is a computer-systems support specialist in a company concentrating on hospital information systems. Meyer has played Mozart in recital at MIT, and "Over the Rainbow" and the theme from *Chariots of Fire* on the street in Harvard Square. She has performed the national anthem for '76ers in Philadelphia, entertained schoolchildren, and given demonstrations in California. "New Agers," she says, "pick up on the glass harmonica and freak out."

A virtuoso colleague, Kenneth Piotrowski of Newmarket, New Hampshire, has been compiling a catalogue of works composed for the glass harmonica; so far he has discovered more than 300 of them. And Meyer herself has founded Glass Music International, an organization of glass-harmonica enthusiasts that holds an annual international festival. "The instrument deserves attention," Meyer says. "There was a day when it was more popular than the violin!" —*Richard Dyer*

GAZELLE LEAPS IN

White women wrinkle; black women don't—at least not as much or as fast. Yet, for years, women of color have been laying on skin-care products specifically designed for Caucasian complexions—emulsifiers, moisturizers, and so on. And for years nobody has bothered to ask if that was such a good idea. This turns out to have been a big mistake, because black women face an entirely different set of skin problems—pigment discoloration, dead-cell accumulation, and greater oiliness. The pouring of moisturizing oils on nonwhite skin is, in fact, more harmful than helpful. Hence, Brazilians, Hispanics, Africans, Indians, Orientals—the two-thirds of the world that isn't white—have been stuck with the wrong treatment.

All that is beginning to change, with new research in the area; and one pioneer in the change is Patricia French, a thirty-year-old black ex-model from the United States who lives in Paris. With the aid of the Senegalese chemist Amale Ayad, French started work on the project in 1983. This April the result, a line of skin-care products with the brand name Gazelle, will be available throughout the United States.

The line includes traditional treatments, such as makeup remover and facial cleanser, specially adapted to nonwhite women, along with treatments that solve problems unique to colored complexions, such as cellular tone balancer (to create an even allover skin coloring). A need for these products became obvious to French when she was on a trip to Africa in 1980, as a model promoting a well-known line of

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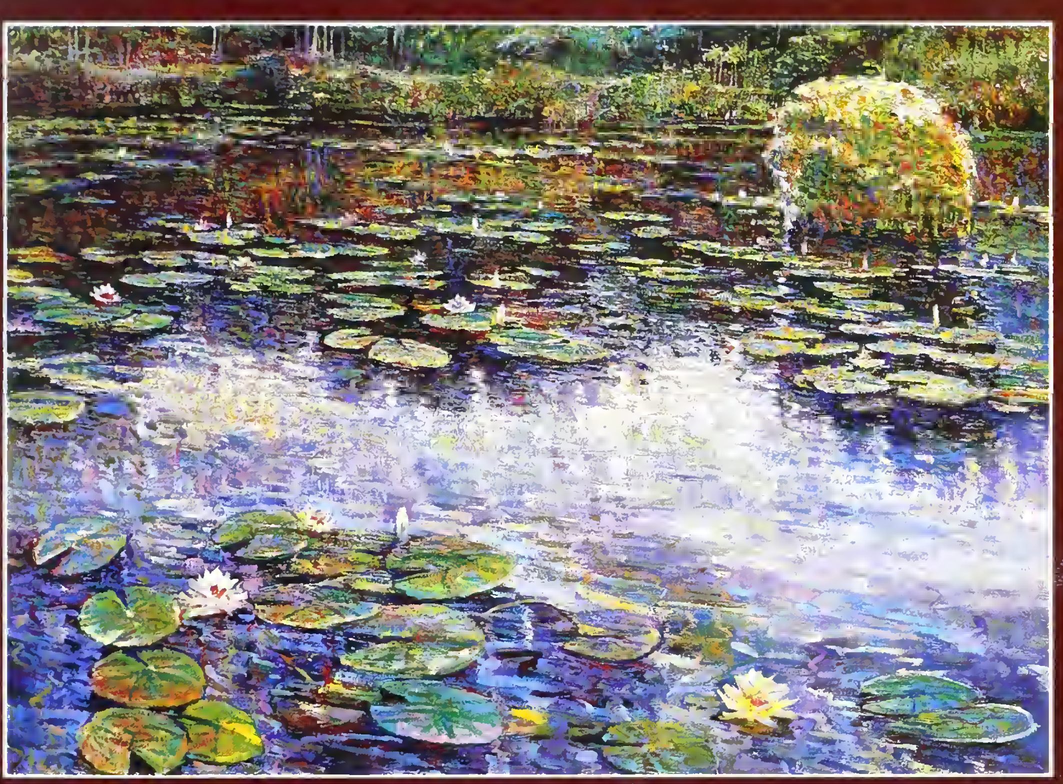

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Above: Patricia French, a long way from Atlanta, in her Paris office.
Below: Her color-conscious cosmetics.

cosmetics for black women. She recalls that the Africans responded poorly: "It was just a line of Caucasian products with a little extra brown or red added in, not something specifically researched for our needs." The needs, French discovered, were great. "Some women in Africa were having such discoloration problems," she says, "that they were using Clorox to bleach their skin."

Although a neophyte in the field, French has quickly become an authority on black skin care, being consulted by and quoted in prominent fashion magazines. In her green Ungaro jacket with black velvet lapels, French herself looks like her own ideal consumer, whom she defines as "a sophisticated international woman who is not looking at the Caucasian as the only model of beauty."

Her elegant office is five floors above Paris's Avenue Hoche—a long way from Warner Robins, the small town in Georgia where she was born. "It was so small," she laughs, "that the streetlights went on at 6:00 P.M. and shut off for the evening at 7:20 P.M." She came to Paris to study art, and switched to designing jewelry and modeling before creating Gazelle International.

Priced at from $16.50 to $42, the Gazelle line will be selling at upscale department stores like Galeries Lafayette in Paris, Marshall Field's in Chicago, Rich's in Atlanta, and other fine stores in London, Washington, and New York. If all goes as planned for her company, French says, she will next produce a hair-care line, then color cosmetics, and possibly a skin treatment for men. —*Robert Goldberg*

THE BIG CAT PURRS

If a Rolls-Royce debut is like a coronation, that of a Jaguar is like the coming of age of a debonair, randy prince. What makes this April's American debut of Jaguar's new model XJ6 even more portentous is that it is the British auto maker's first luxury sedan to be introduced in more than twenty years. Insiders know, also, that on this car is staked Jaguar's future.

It seems only a scant handful of years ago that Sir John Egan took over the company, at the brink of bankruptcy. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher gave Egan the word—there would be no bailout. The company would have to stand on its own, or go under. By instituting strict quality, quantity, and timing controls, he led Jaguar back into the black. Its XJ6 Series III luxury sedans laid to rest the Jaguar's reputation as a temperamental performer and proved that the company could build automobiles that were not only fast and stylish but reliable as well. Introducing the new XJ6 while the current model is hot is a risky move. If the new cat doesn't live up to the expectations set by its predecessor, it could send Jaguar crashing.

So, what is the new model like? First impression: it has a straighter, more linear look than its predecessor. Many details have been changed: the "eyelidded" rounded front headlights are history, for example, replaced by a more contemporary, rectangular face; and the slope from the hood is less dramatic. But these and other modifications have been made in the interest of streamlined aerodynamics—and of achieving a more unified body construction. Although up-to-the-minute robots with giant, insectlike mechanical arms may spray-paint and weld, each car gets a lot of human-hand care, too. To upholster and panel each car, an expert cuts calfskin and fits gold-inlaid walnut panels to the console, dash, and doors. The dashboard has an array of computerized displays, and the transmission can switch between manual and automatic, depending on the driver's preference. Through each step of production, a strict diary is kept as a constant quality-control monitor, an essential measure for a company that offers a comprehensive three-year, 36,000-mile warranty.

The car is powered by an all-aluminum, 3.6-liter six-cylinder engine. That, together with rack-and-pinion power steer-

The new Jaguar XJ6 has straighter lines but a lower crouch.

ing and a new rear self-leveling independent suspension system, makes the XJ6 an agile performer. I test-drove the new model in Scotland and found it the epitome of comfort—both at 30 mph and at 120. It offers a reassuring ride. As we were slipping along a verdant countryside at a silken 75 mph, a sheep on a rain-stained road prompted a sudden stop, and the antilock braking system gave a flawless performance. The Scottish roads, with their sudden climbs, narrow turns, and descents, tested the car's road-holding to the full. It came through magnificently. The new car will sell for up to $40,000, depending on how many of the extras you choose. □

Edited by Melik Kaylan

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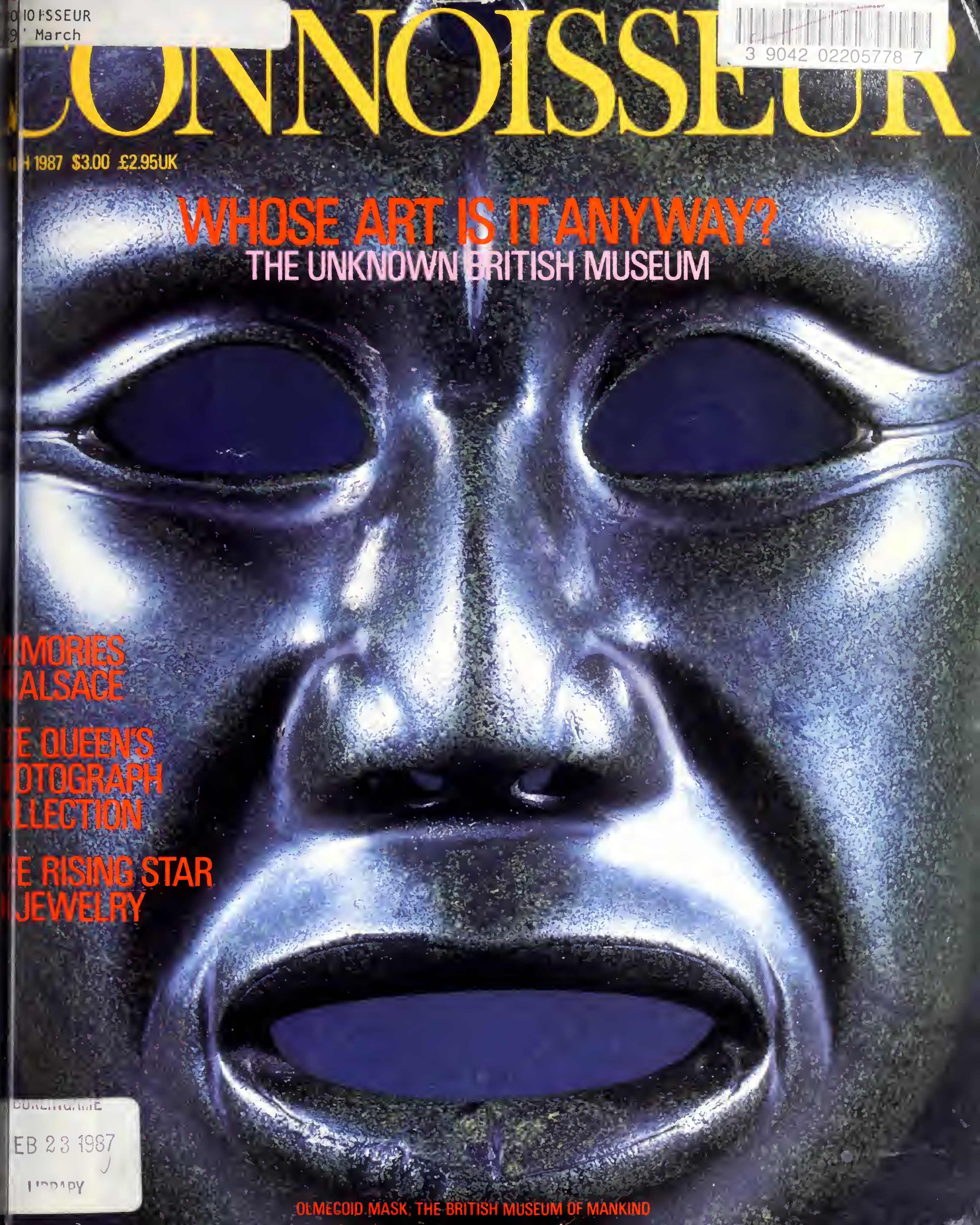

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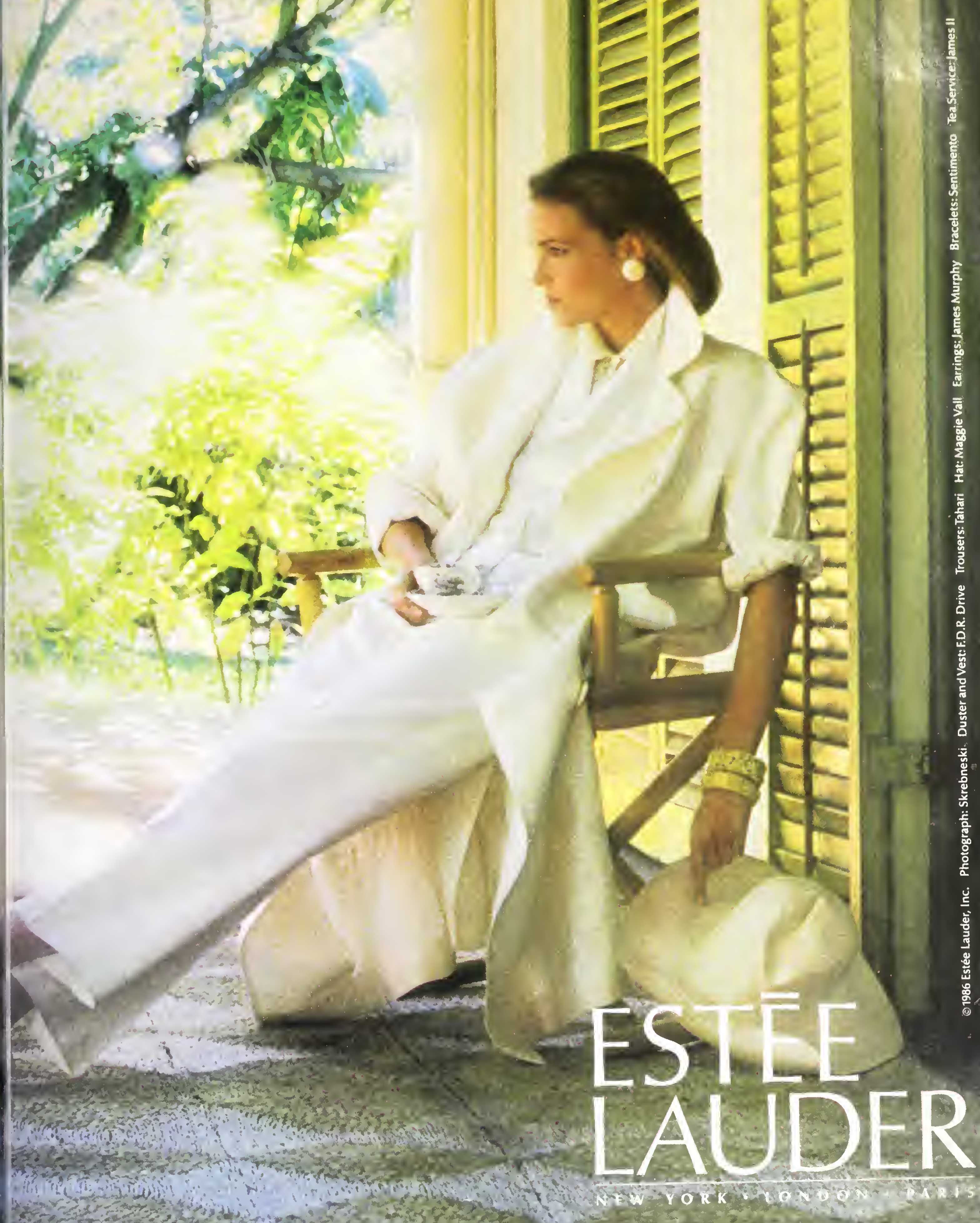
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21 CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD Our year V; a quest for Korean antiques; modern art in trouble; Tintin's last adventure; Abboud fashions; trout at its best

44 AUCTIONS A bestiary of books; Krupp's last hoard

52 THE LIVELY ARTS Intimations of Vincent van Gogh's ghost

59 B IS FOR BEAUTIFUL The jewels of Marina B. are extravagant, intricate, dazzling, by Caroline Seebohm

66 DIDIER'S DOMAINS Lessons from Didier Aaron, one of the world's top art dealers and decorators, by Leon Harris

72 FROM ROYAL ALBUMS A first look at the photographs that really interested Queen Victoria and her descendants, by Gail Buckland

78 WHOSE ART IS IT, ANYWAY? Thoughts stirred by the ethnographic treasures of the British Museum, by Michael Pye

86 NUMBERS GAME Two Rolls-Royces claim to be the oldest. One isn't.

88 THE POET OF COLOR Why a top museum honors Manuel Canovas's designs in the decorative arts, by Nancy Hoving and Patricia Corbett

92 IN SEARCH OF AUGUST WILSON A shy genius transforms American theater, by Ishmael Reed

98 MEAN STREETS In Alan Wolfson's New York, by Donovan Moore

102 STAR QUALITY The making of a great chef, by William Rice

106 PACKARD'S TRIUMPH How an American went about collecting great Japanese art, by Michael Shapiro

112 THE GLORY OF ALSACE Few places offer more art, architecture, gastronomy, or scenery, by G. Y. Dryansky

120 INVESTOR'S FILE Chessmen

126 WINE Good buys in bad years

130 UP & COMING Four Aussie designers, an artist in glass, a classical clarinetist

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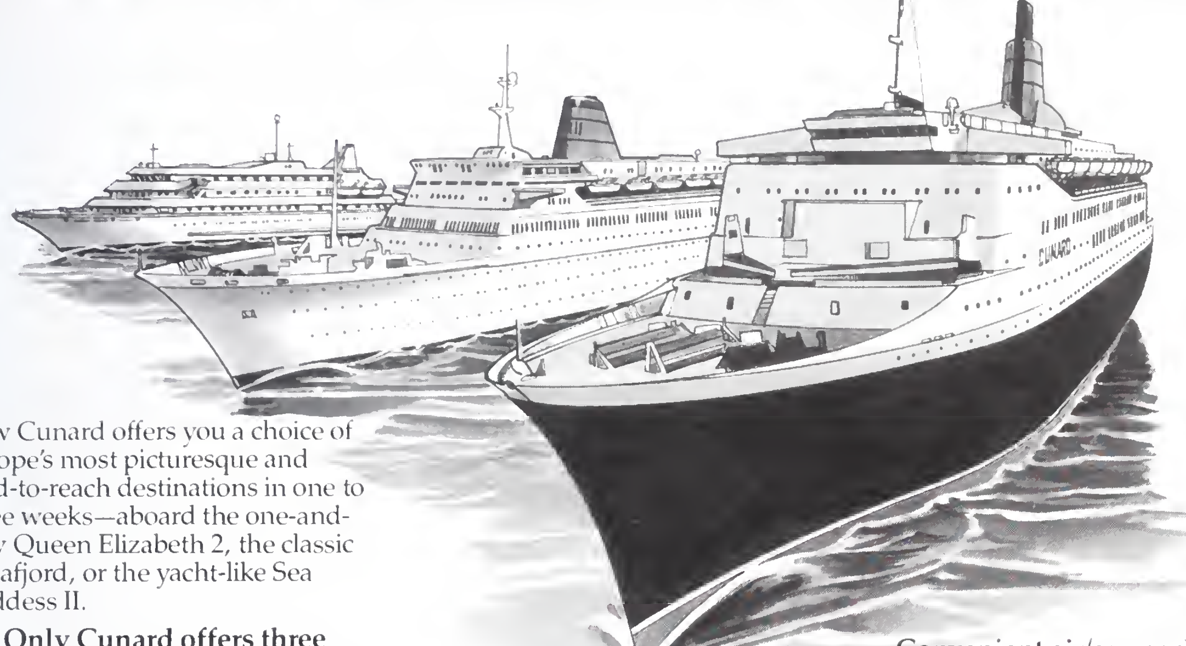

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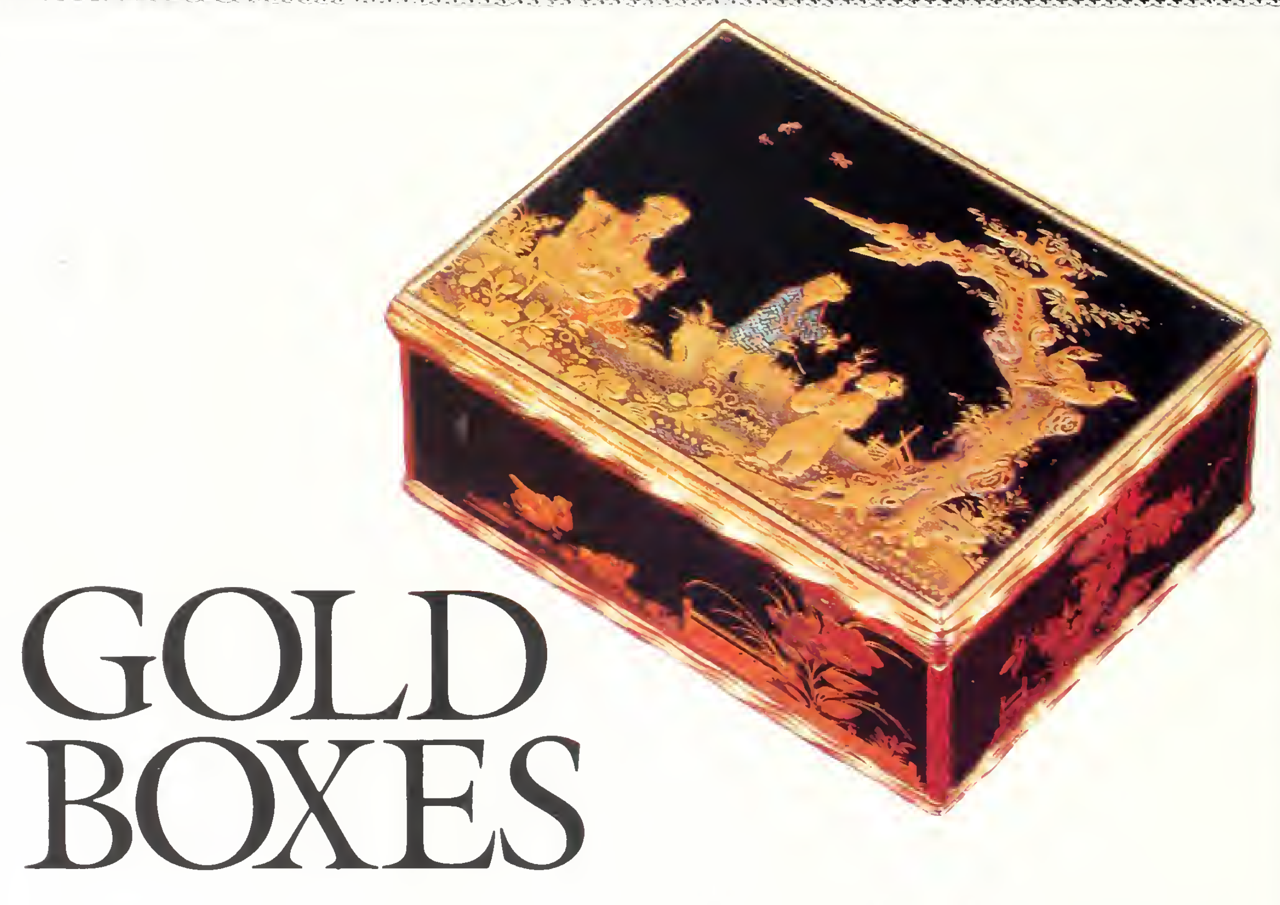

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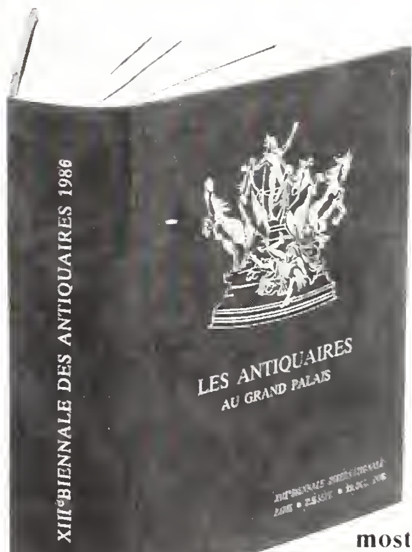

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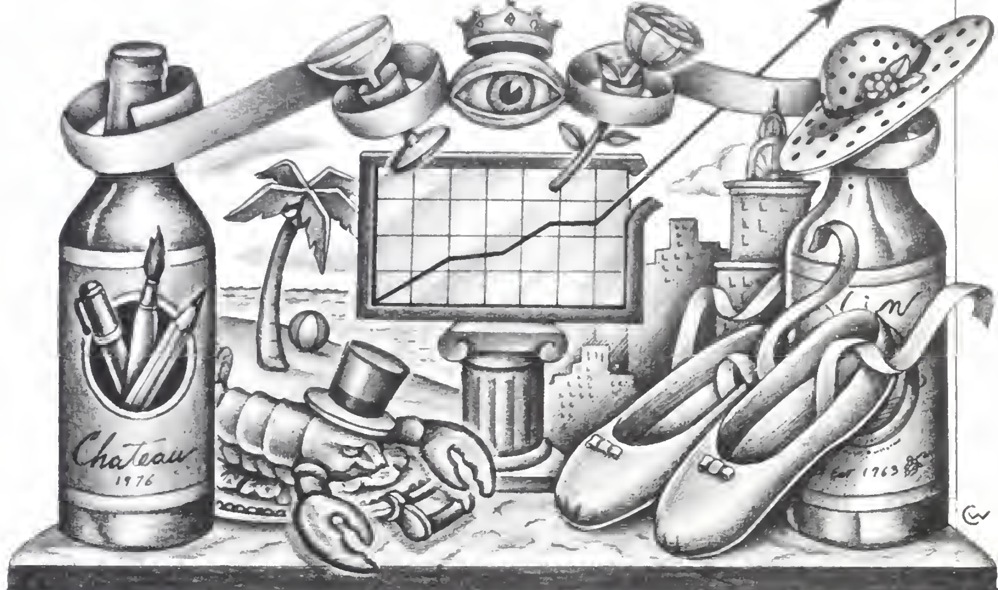
MY EYE by Thomas Hoving

FIVE YEARS AND GROWING

"A connoisseur is one who knows and loves that which is good, beautiful, uncommon, and interesting—everything that is the best of its kind and, above all, genuine."

That's a classic definition of the species, as written by the critic André Simon. If I were to add anything to the characterization, I'd say that today's connoisseur deliberately seeks out excellence in a wide diversity of experiences: from Rembrandt to Ruhlmann, from Mozart to Meursault, from the glories of the ancient world to the intricacies of modern electronics, from contemporary architecture that's more than just a pretty façade to jewelry that surpasses embellishment.

In the five years since *Connoisseur* moved from England to the United States, we have tried, with all the arrogant confidence typical of every connoisseur, to become the embodiment of the amended definition. We challenged ourselves to be nothing less than *the* guide to the civilized world, seeking out what's truly the best, not simply what's expensive, flashy, trendy, or snobby, as others do so routinely. *Connoisseur* is on the lookout for what endures and what possesses that fundamental ingredient of authenticity. In profiles such as those of the shoe designer Roger Vivier (in our December 1986 issue) and of the skating coach Carlo Fassi (July 1986), we focus on people who are really making it happen, not on those who hire public-relations geniuses to proclaim that they are. We find true artists—including, this past year, some hardly known Native Americans, plus Nancy Graves and Ken Davies—not the phonies who pass every month through the art world's sausage grinder. We delight in puncturing inflated balloons in any field, whether they involve over-venerated figures like Bernard Berenson (October 1986) or the traditional wisdom that all it takes to acquire great art is money (December 1986).



CHARLES WALLER

Now, all this means teamwork. We count heavily on the talents of a large group of writers and photographers—people with a point of view and judgment. And we depend on the contributions of a strong staff. Does any other magazine have a proofreader with a Ph.D.? And let me call attention to our researchers. Accuracy is a ne plus ultra around here, and every fact is double-checked, a process that seems to be going out of style these days.

Connoisseur is full of surprises—deliberately so. We know that although our subject is elegant, it is not above criticism. We do not dash around trying to discover controversy, but when we encounter it, we will relay what we discover. Readers like to learn the facts: that museums can be places as full of backbiting and poor judgment as the White House; that our times are a golden age for art forgers and smugglers; in short, that we live in an art-struck age. We report the truth when grand hotels are not so grand and when luxury limousines lose their looks. Conversely, we are always ready to stick our necks out and report on important innovations that promise to change the fields of food and fashion, design and interior decorating.

Is there room for improvement? You bet! Sometimes, we concentrate too hard on the lofty and the exotic. Every so often we can fall too much in love with the inaccessible and go off to a sooty temple in Indonesia, or promote too ardently a *recherché* movie by an émigré director. We're learning that *Connoisseur* shouldn't always take its readers to the unattainable. It is nice to ski in Chamonix, but we know that Snowbird, in Utah, is pretty challenging, too. A meal at Paris's super-exclusive Taillevent (where you have the impression you have to apply for French citizenship to get a dinner reservation) is great, but we do not want to scant the fresh produce in Seattle. Let's by all means enjoy golf on a private course by Jack Nicklaus while not forgetting the pleasures of more-public links.

As we turn five, André Simon's will continue to be our criteria, and our readers will continue to be guided to the best and the genuine—the classics. Now, too, we shall guide with greater frequency to what's up and coming, those fascinating about-to-be classics. Whatever the case, our subjects will continue to be exciting, beautiful, genuine, and—here's something else Simon didn't think of—fun. □

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NATIVE AMERICAN PAINTING IN PHOENIX

An exhibition of 136 choice examples of Native American paintings with ceremonial themes by Apache, Navaho, Rio Grande Pueblo, and Hopi artists, entitled "When the Rainbow Touches Down," is currently on view (through April 19) at Phoenix's Heard Museum and will travel to the Southwest Museum, in Los Angeles, on May 29.

It is an unusual, in-depth presentation of a native art form that developed as a result of collaboration between Indians and Anglos. Leslie Van Ness Denman, a San Franciscan who began visiting the American Southwest regularly in the 1920s, personally encouraged local Indians to take up studio painting—not previously an indigenous tradition—as a means of interpreting their way of life to Anglos in a marketable format. She collected their work during the thirties, forties, and fifties and further helped to revive and popularize Native American culture by persuading the federal government to establish the Indian Arts and Crafts Board (now under the aegis of the Department of the Interior, which became the beneficiary of her collection) and organizing artists' cooperatives and major exhibitions of Indian painting.

Perhaps the most notable artist to emerge from this context was Fred Kabotie, a Hopi who was a close friend of Denman's. Employing transparent watercolor washes, he placed illusionistic figures in abstract space to depict kachina dance ceremonies of the Hopi pueblos with great vigor, economy, and subtlety. Other important Indian painters in the show include Alfonso Roybal (Awa Tsireh), Otis Polelonema, Harrison Begay, Jimmy Toddy (Beatian Yazz), Gilbert Atencio (Wah Peen), and Joe Hilario Herrera (See Ru).

Tryntje Van Ness Seymour, curator of the show, is the great-great-niece of Mrs. Denman. She located and interviewed twenty-three living artists of the fifty represented in the Denman collection (as well as many of their friends and relatives) and asked them to comment about the works, extending in this way her great-great-aunt's wish to enhance our under-

White man's techniques, our art: Alfonso Roybal's Kossa (clowns) on a Bull *(1935).*

COURTESY THE HEARD MUSEUM, PHOENIX, ARIZONA

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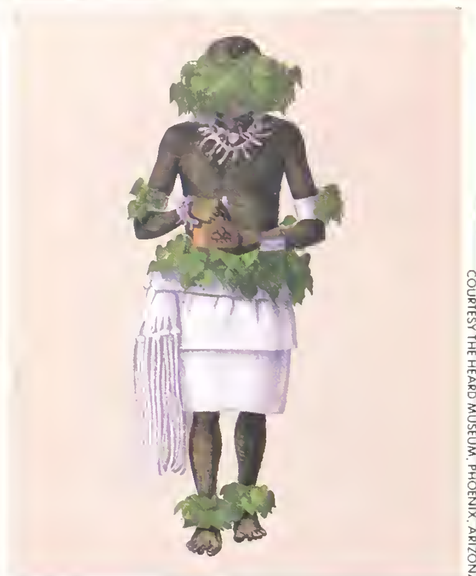


COURTESY THE HEARD MUSEUM, PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Fred Kabotie's Tsamal.eeya *(ca. 1930–35).*

standing of Native Americans by having them speak for themselves. Videotapes of eight of these interviews are included in the show, along with many Indian artifacts from the Heard's collection that reflect the art in the paintings. Seymour's effort thus represents a pilgrimage into her own past and at the same time that of these artists, and this should greatly enrich the appreciation of those who go to see these remarkable paintings. —*Barbara Braun*

WILL AN ISOZAKI GROW IN BROOKLYN?

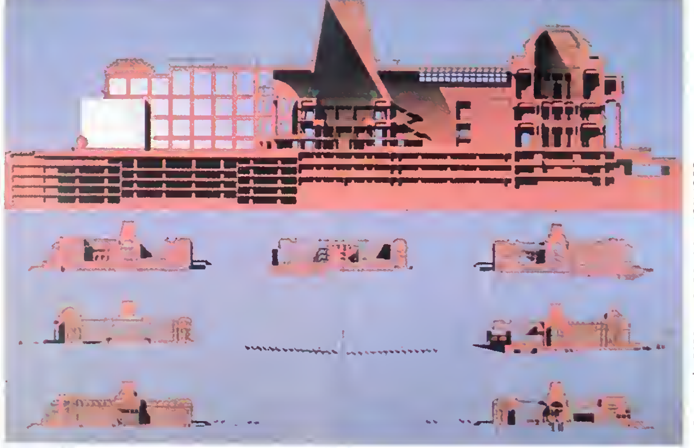
Home of some 1.5 million art objects, the Brooklyn Museum has always done things in a big way. In 1893, a competition was held to find architects for a building that would have outsized every other museum in existence, had it been completed. Unfortunately, only one-sixth of the grandiose structure planned by McKim, Mead & White was built before funds ran out. The collection has been crammed into this fraction of an art palace ever since.

Now that Brooklyn is back on the map after several decades of doldrums, the ambitious Robert T. Buck, director of the museum, hopes to repeat history, but with a difference. Once again, an architectural competition has been staged, calling for a vast master plan to revitalize, renovate, and enlarge the existing premises. Amid much publicity, five architects were given $50,000 each and just ten weeks to come up with something spectacular. Not for Buck and his panel of distinguished jurors the safe, unassuming beaux arts extensions proposed by three of the architects. The winning designers were Arata Isozaki, fresh from the triumphant opening of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and Duncan Hazard of James Stewart Polshek & Partners, of New York City. Proposing a flip side to the neoclassical original, the Isozaki-Polshek team drew up plans for the latest in neomodern monumentality, impressively combining the grand illusions of the past—including a truncated obelisk and columned porches—with the clean glass surfaces of modernism. Polshek was good enough to provide an explanation for his team's success: "We were the only architects that evolved a twenty-first-century expression out of a nineteenth-century building." Richard Pierce, spokesman for the museum, describes it as "a bold design for bold steps."

Others suggest that the choice (and the entire competition, which will be the subject of a book by Rizzoli Publishers) was more shrewd than bold and had much to do with fund-raising. The 681,500-square-foot project is expected to cost at least $100 million, at a time when, as one curator put it, "they can't even buy us yellow pads." After all, Isozaki is the architect of the hour, whose L.A. museum first horrified trustees and then galvanized them into raising money. "It's like a powerhouse combination for fund-raising," says Douglas Davis, the architecture critic for *Newsweek* magazine. "You couldn't think of a better package. If Isozaki is too flashy for some donors, then you've got Polshek as the good, gray—and serious—presence." The only question remaining is, will it get built or will it suffer the same fate as the original? To which Polshek replies, "Anything could happen. There is no real schedule; it's a very long-range plan." At the very least, two-sixths of a museum would be better than one.

—*Julie Iovine*

NATHANIEL LIEBERMAN/THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM, NEW YORK



COURTESY THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM, NEW YORK

Japan's best-known architect won the Brooklyn Museum competition. The next step is raising $100 million. Above: The scale model; left, elevation.

TINTIN'S LAST ADVENTURE

Notwithstanding competition from the opening of the $100 million Musée d'Orsay and the publication of the first, A–B volume of the Académie Française dictionary, the high point of the past cultural season in Paris was without question the appearance of a comic book: Hergé's last, the incomplete and posthumous *Tintin et*

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l'Alph-Art (Tintin and Alph-Art).

The comic strip in France has for years been an art form worthy of study and homage; and of its practitioners, none has been studied and celebrated more than the late Georges Rémi, alias Hergé (from his initials reversed: RG), the begetter of the adventurer Tintin and, in the supporting

PERMISSION OF CASTERMAN PUBLISHERS, TOURNAI, BELGIUM

Is this really the heir to Balzac? The late cartoonist Hergé, at work on Tintin.

cast, Captain Haddock and the twin detectives Dupont and Dupond (Thomson and Thompson, in English-language versions).

The statistics on the new album are themselves so eloquent as to render editorial comment almost redundant. There is the fact that the original print run of 80,000 totally sold out within twenty-four hours. When one considers, too, that it was priced at 200 francs (or about $30), it may be assumed that the great majority of buyers were adults. The book was dissected and analyzed on radio and on eighteen separate television spots. The largest-circulation serious newspaper in the city, *Libération*, devoted no fewer than seven pages of a single issue to the album, including an essay by the philosopher Michel Serres, who compared the book—in particular, the way in which its last, half-finished page ebbs into Mallarméan blankness—to the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Its success is all the more amazing when one reflects on just what one got for one's 200 francs. The narrative, involving a band of art forgers operating under the cover of a phony conceptualist school called Alph-Art (i.e., letters of the alphabet sculptured in Plexiglas), breaks off at a cruelly tantalizing juncture, with the forgers preparing to turn poor Tintin into a compressed metal sculpture. Even if sumptuously reproduced, the drawings are the roughest of rough sketches, with little of the meticulousness of design and instant legibility of line for which the draftsman was celebrated. The charm to be found in

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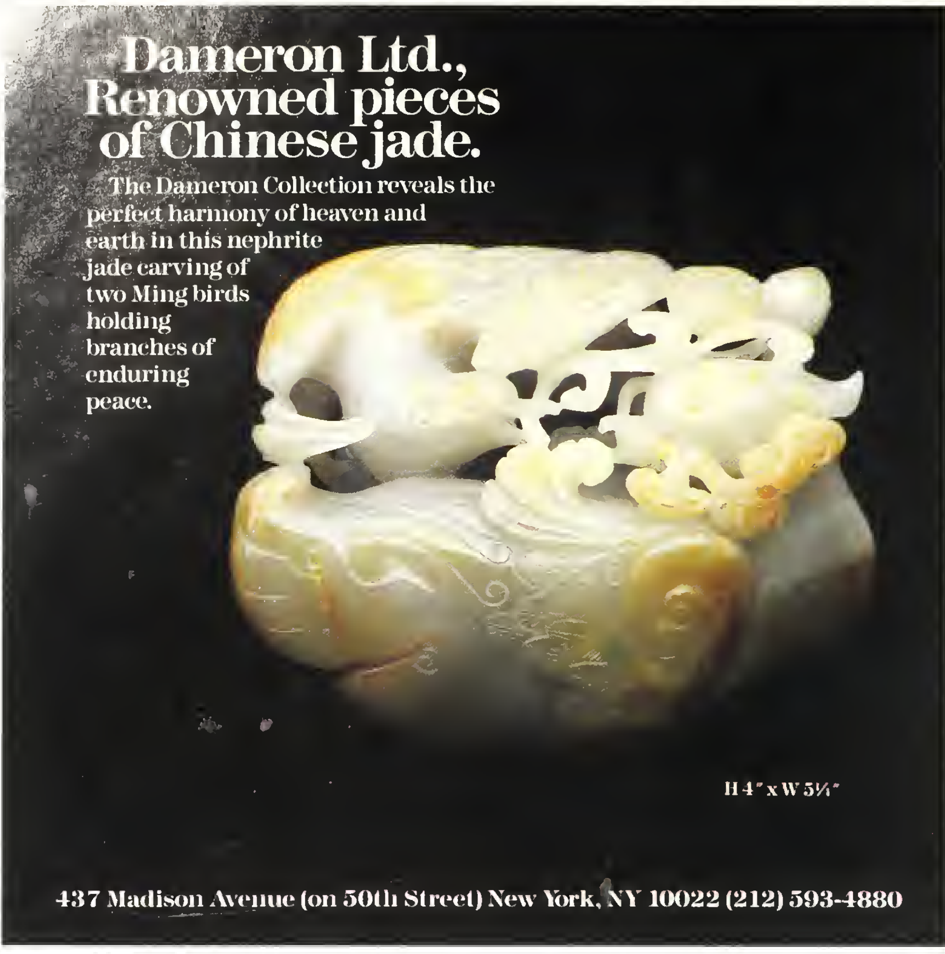

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Tintin's last adventure is essentially of an archaeological nature. So, can all the fuss and bother actually be justified?

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"Chef d'oeuvre" means "masterpiece," yet words, like money, are subject to a fluctuating rate of exchange. In view of a chronic French tendency to linguistic inflation, it may be that in this instance "chef-d'oeuvre" has become slightly overvalued. —*Gilbert Adair*

HARE PULLS OUT THE KNIFE

A poignant musical about a transsexual? Sounds bizarre, but *The Knife*, based on a story by the playwright David Hare, is Joseph Papp's latest surprise of the New York Shakespeare Festival. "Musical" isn't exactly an accurate description—*The Knife* is definitely not glitzy—and "opera"

David Hare dares: a sex change onstage.

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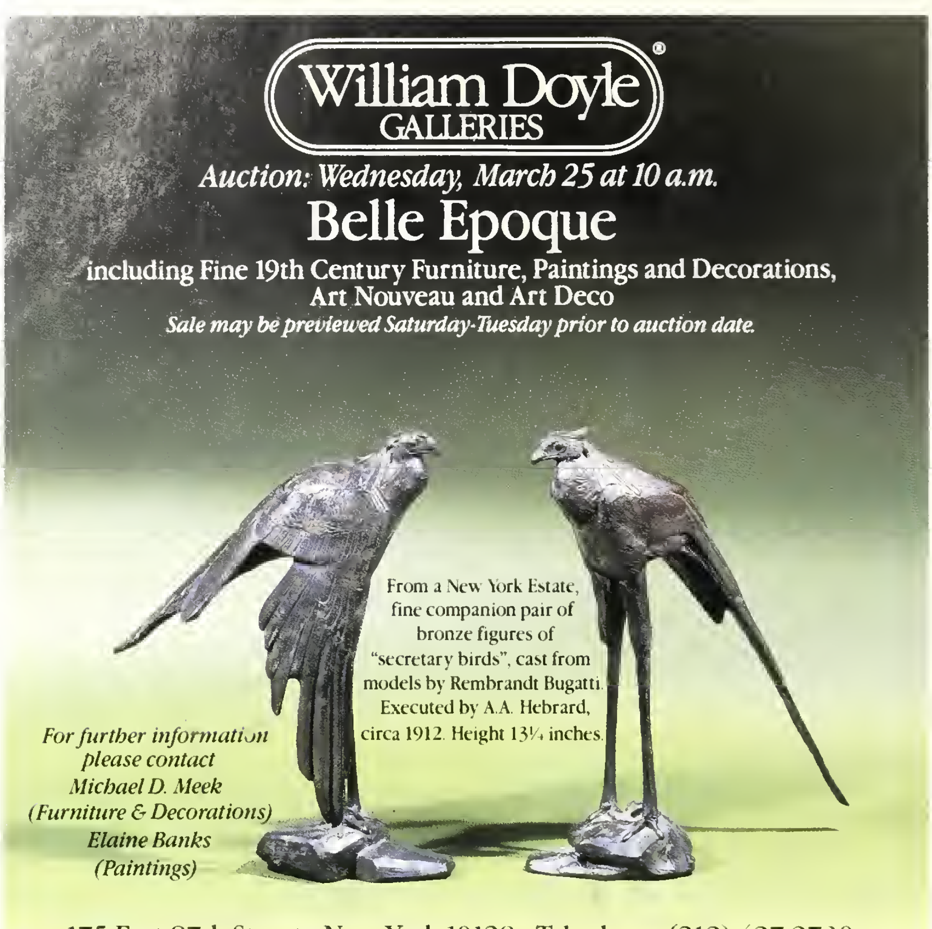

sounds too highfalutin. Yet the entire piece will be sung by a twenty-two-member cast, led by Mandy Patinkin, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Cass Morgan, and William Parry. Patinkin, who won a Tony award for *Evita* and a Tony nomination for *Sunday in the Park with George*, plays the lead, Peter/Liz. "I think he's the only actor in the world who can do this part," says Papp.

The Knife is about ordinary people caught up in a harrowing event. Peter, a hotel chef with a wife and three children, destroys his family to fulfill his need to change his sex. In addition to conceiving the story, Hare is also directing. Tim Rose-Price wrote the libretto; the score is by Nick Bicat, who provided the incidental music for the two recent Hare plays seen at the Public Theater, *Plenty* and *A Map of the World*, as well as the music for Hare's film *Wetherby*.

"It's incredibly moving," says Papp, who was approached by Hare with the project. "We workshopped the piece last summer, and at the end, everyone was in tears. There's nothing salacious, embarrassing, or risqué in it. It's devastatingly human. I think David really understands the woman in the man. All of his plays are about the irresistible drive toward some emotional goal. That's a drive that cannot be repressed."

The Knife, which began previews February 10, opens at the Public Theater at the beginning of March. —*William Harris*

THE LITTLE DISTURBANCES OF ART

Art used to age more or less gracefully, with distinguished wrinkles (craquelure), gradual color fading, and the rest. Aubrey Beardsley said somewhere that "a painting starts to disintegrate as soon as the artist puts his brush down." True enough; but the works that he knew to be inexorably deteriorating were still technically sound enough to look good doing it. Then there are the works that are born to trouble.

Early in his career, the Spanish artist Antonio Tàpies (b. 1923) loaded up his oil paints with sand and other gritty material to give his paintings a sculptural quality on the canvas. It was a nice idea, except that the canvas couldn't support all the weight, and the medium simply fell off, time and again. As one of Tàpies's former dealers noted, "It would just fall on the floor. You sent it back to Tàpies, who would put it back together again."

la passione di Roma
FENDI
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1987 Photo: Sheila Metzner Earrings: Fur: Fendi.

Robert Rauschenberg is another artist who didn't take any particular pains with a lot of his earlier pieces. Some objects that he applied with glue often didn't hold, according to Stephen Kornhauser, head conservator at the Wadsworth Atheneum, in Hartford, Connecticut, who also used to "have to sweep up under the Rauschenberg every Monday morning" when he interned at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The maintenance problems of most contemporary works are not so extreme, but there is cause for some alarm. In the postwar period, the widespread introduction of new materials (for instance, water-based acrylic paint), the admixture of materials (such as the combining of acrylic and oil-based paints or the adding of such substances as dirt, metals, sand, or wax to paint), and a fair amount of experimentation by artists have helped to make many new visions possible, but the works themselves may verge on self-destructiveness. Many have what conservators call an "inherent vice"—something that will make them come apart.

DIANA BRYAN

Hans Hofmann (1880–1966) tried out industrial enamel paint, which is what people usually put on houses, possibly to give a hardness to his work, or perhaps because he could get large quantities of it inexpensively. However, house paint is not intended to last for decades or longer; it becomes brittle and flakes off not long after it is applied because it does not expand and contract with the wood (or, in this case, canvas) underneath. It may also fade over time in sunlight.

The German Neo-Expressionist painter Anselm Kiefer tried to make his paintings from a patchwork of pieces of canvas of varying weights and textures, according to the conservator Margaret Watherston, who recently was asked to repair one of the artist's works. "He glued over a dozen different pieces of canvas together and then applied heavy coats of paint to the surface," she noted. "The work itself is very exciting, but there is just no support for all this weight."

Stories of problematic works by modern and contemporary artists can go on and on. A large number of paintings by Andrew Wyeth have developed severe flaking, for instance, perhaps because of improperly prepared panels. Willem de Kooning mixed safflower oil into his paints, making it difficult for the layers of paint under the surface to dry and bond together.

Artists, of course, may not be well versed or even interested in such technical concerns. In addition, many artists do not see themselves as creating works for posterity, and some may even consider the degradable activity an intrinsic quality of the work. At the other end of the art-making process, many collectors assume that works will age nobly—in the old-master way. They are rarely disabused of this belief by art dealers.

"Any de Kooning that has gone out of my gallery since I became his dealer, in 1965, is a carefully crafted piece that is, and should remain, in perfect condition," said Xavier Fourcade. Len Potoff, head conservator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, in New York, strongly disagrees.

"Generally speaking, there haven't been any complaints from collectors of Rauschenberg," noted the dealer Leo Castelli, yet Barry Bauman, a director and paintings conservator at the Chicago Conservation Center, relates that a traveling Rauschenberg exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago in the late 1970s came with the artist's personal preparator, who had his hands full keeping most of the pieces in one piece.

Gilbert Edelson, administrative vice-president of the Art Dealers Association, argues that "everything will deteriorate eventually, but who's to say when a picture is likely to fall apart? Nobody quite knows how long it is going to last." If that was true in Aubrey Beardsley's day, it's nothing if not more true in our time.

—Daniel Grant

HIGH TECH THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Around the corner from the Uffizi, and somewhat in its shadow, stands a smaller, even older house of treasure—Florence's Museum of the History of Science. This magnificent collection, refurbished in recent years, has at its thematic heart Galileo's telescope: the gilded wood-and-leather instrument, simple and revolutionary, that shattered the Age of Faith and changed the way the world thought.

Like Michelangelo, that other hero of the Renaissance, Galileo was sponsored by the Medici and censored by the pope. After his death, two Medici grand dukes, both former pupils, founded an academy to carry on the master's legacy of experimental science. Though it lasted just ten years, until 1667, the academy oversaw the design and manufacture of many innovative instruments, which became the property of the Medici; their collection was the nucleus of the present museum.

Representing what could be called Renaissance high tech, the state of the art circa 1650, many items here are treasures in themselves, precocious children of the Renaissance marriage between science and

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art. Here are optical and navigational instruments of all sorts—the telescopes, astrolabes, and compasses that made possible the charting of the heavens, the voyages of discovery, the mapping of "unmappable" continents and seas. Here are devices combining practicality and whimsy: a variety of "nocturnals," for telling time at night; a compass to be attached to a saddle bow, for navigation on horseback; flawless crystal thermometers in the shape of miniature frogs, which attach to the upper arm with silky gold threads.

The layman recognizes, in a formal way, what these instruments are but experiences still another response: a sense of the weirdness, the eccentricity, the marvelously idiosyncratic nature of these artifacts. Touring the museum's fifteen rooms, the visitor may feel he is wandering down the stranger, though necessary, byways of scientific investigation.

The craftsmanship is consummate. Every celestial globe, every sundial, every brass sextant, quadrant, and compass, is covered with tiny etchings—heraldic emblems, plumed helmets, decorative flowers. Early microscopes sit on carved-ivory bases. Precision mathematical instruments repose in fitted cases lined with red velvet. A brass odometer is bedecked with a filigreed border. The creators were obviously skilled cabinetmakers, and as much attention was paid to aesthetic appeal as to the engineering of the instruments themselves. One item, with miniature ebony horses prancing around a wooden "floor," suggests a Victorian toy circus, jointly crafted by Escher and Calder.

We also see history's grander mistakes. A sixteenth-century armillary sphere, bearing a royal seal, depicts Ptolemy's view, the "theologically correct" concept of an Earth-centered universe. At eleven feet in height, nearly large enough to fill the room, it is gorgeous, gilded, and spectacularly wrong. One gaze at its weighty, opulent authority suggests how much it cost Galileo to say, "I disagree." It reminds us that skepticism and doubt are scientific virtues.

The museum is housed in one of Florence's oldest buildings, the Castellani (1180); and in the newly renovated cellar we see, in medieval, vaulted rooms, an alchemist's laboratory and, slightly to the left, a laser display. A typed guidebook, in English, is lent free of charge. —*Linda Arking*

GO FOR THE TROUT AND ICONS

"Ohrid is a very long way from London." So Rebecca West began one of the thickest sections of her already monumental travelogue on Yugoslavia, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, the product of her wanderings in the thirties. Alas, this observation, like so much else, has been unhinged by technology. The new airport, a few kilometers from the gorgeous old town, would enable West, were she available, to enjoy in the same day her tea at the Ritz and a trout supper lakeside in Ohrid, with enough time left over to turn in early and write up the day in her journal.

But it remains true that if you come here, as you should, by rail and by road, through the midriff of southern Europe, Ohrid will seem as remote and as charming as it ever did, and that luscious red fish and the medieval icons will seem like the handsomest rewards for your efforts.

The present-day splendor of Ohrid dates from the astonishing development of the town in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D. as the pioneering center of Slavonic cultural and literary activity. The revered and legendary figures of Kliment and Naum, the most prominent disciples of Cyril (for whom the Cyrillic script is named) and Methodius, descended on Ohrid at this time and inaugurated a cultural and ecclesiastical flowering that has endured in the dozen or so winsome Slavo-Byzantine churches that remain, their glowing patterned brickwork still intact.

RSIN SKOPJE YUGOSLAVIA

Outstanding among these are the churches dedicated to the two immigrant saints themselves, and the oldest and largest surviving church in Ohrid, Sveta (Saint) Sophia. Their galleries of frescoes and icons, of the eleventh century to the fourteenth, comprise one of the most important legacies of medieval painting in Europe. Around the altar of Sveta Sophia are eleventh-century works offering the earliest-known representations in Byzantine art of the Apostles' communion and the first portraits of Cyril and Kliment, as well as two unique friezes of angels, swathed in blue and rose drapery, with individualizing portrait heads and wings appended at such fantastic angles that they look like chicken bones.

A fourteenth-century icon of Saint Kliment, who reigns in the church bearing his name.

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The frescoes at Sveti Kliment, by Michael and Eutyches, are later, and constitute some of the finest examples of the so-called Palaeologan renaissance, from the very end of the thirteenth century. Details of the Lamentation, for example, on the northern wall—the naturalistic gestures of the mourners and the dramatic pathos of the whole scene—demand comparison with the contemporary achievements of Giotto, the maker of the more enduring Renaissance, the one that happened across the Adriatic.

Opposite the western façade of the church is the small but exquisite Gallery of Icons, which houses about thirty works, mostly of local origin, including a magnificent double-sided processional icon from the thirteenth century, representing on one face the Virgin Mary and on the other a breathtaking scene of the Crucifixion.

And when you come down, at the end of your cultural wander, from the hill on which the old town sits, to eat that trout fished from the waters of the Balkans' deepest and perhaps the world's oldest lake—waters that shift into more shades of blue than you can ever imagine—the full strangeness and wonder of this unique Slavic fastness convince you of the truth of the claim made for generations, by both locals and visitors, that the traveler to Ohrid will always return.

The best hotel in Ohrid is the Grand Hotel Palace, with more secluded and luxurious accommodations available at the Inex-Gorica and the Metropol, four and eight kilometers, respectively, outside of town. The local fish delicacies and other regional specialties can be had in the hotels' restaurants, or at the Letnica, Ohrid's best-known restaurant.

—John Welchman

MR. HAHN'S SEOUL SEARCHES

Hahn Yong-Koo has taken notice. It is a Saturday morning in Seoul, and Mr. Hahn, who has been trading in antiques for over twenty years from his shop, Ahleumsa, in Mary's Alley, is in a personal sort of heaven—a big warehouse crammed with little shops that are, in turn, crammed with antiques that once filled Korean homes. There are other places in this vast, noisy city where one may buy antique furniture, but none where the prices are as low and the variety as wide as in the area called Chang Ahn Pyong. The warehouse is the largest facility in a neighborhood filled with antiques shops. For

COURTESY OF HAHN YONG-KOO

Hot on the Korean antiques trail: Hahn Yong-Koo (shown in his shop) reveals how he finds the best goods.

Mr. Hahn, and also for Westerners (who are streaming through Seoul in increasing numbers), this is the place to start looking for Korean antiques.

Mr. Hahn is a slight, bespectacled man who does not seem to tire from the marathon pace of his shopping. He has been looking for an hour and has seen nothing that touched him. He has bypassed wooden lunch boxes; thick, circular rice chests; long, heavy coin boxes fitted with enormous locks; and pearwood wedding boxes with elaborate brass fittings. "Too busy," says Mr. Hahn.

He has glanced at and dismissed any number of chests embellished with butterflies, bats, pear blossoms, and petals. But now, standing before a simple clothing chest with scratches on the top and dents on the side, Mr. Hahn says, "Once in a while you come across these unusual pieces." The inside is musty. The paper lining is worn. Mr. Hahn guesses that the chest is over one hundred years old. He gives the cast-iron fittings a shake. The wood is pine, not the wood of a chest made for a wealthy family.

That does not concern Mr. Hahn. Instead, he focuses on the design on the front, the paneling that forms the Chinese character for the word Asia. In that character Mr. Hahn sees the signature of a carpenter, long dead. The front paneling of a clothing chest is usually laid out in parallel lines, but this carpenter drew the character simply by adding square indentations.

"The carpenter, through his experience, invented his own style," he says. A scholar's desk will also make Mr. Hahn take notice. Just now, he adds, scholar's desks—low tables, with tops that curl up to hold long scrolls—are the most sought-after item in Chang Ahn Pyong. Because scholars were among the nation's elite, far fewer desks than chests were made.

A good desk, Mr. Hahn says, can cost between $1,000 and $5,000—as compared to perhaps $300 for a 150-year-old clothing chest in good condition, which might cost $500.

A wealthy family in premodern Korea could employ on its staff a carpenter, who would build the household furniture. A poor family bought what it could. The poverty wrought by the Korean War loosed a great flood of these furnishings to Seoul.

When Mr. Hahn began dealing in antiques, in the mid-1960s, there was but one art gallery in Seoul. Everything else could be found near the city's vast East Gate market, where artwork and antiques were interspersed with "everything from broken glass to secondhand cars." Eventually, the government decided to move the antiques dealers to a quarter of their own, Chang Ahn Pyong.

Eventually, too, beginning with the increasing affluence of South Korea, Mr. Hahn began noticing a change in the buyers. Now, most of the people who come to Chang Ahn Pyong are Koreans, he says, buying back what their families once had to sell.

—Michael Shapiro

LAST OF THE UPDATED TRADITIONALS

At first glance, his style looks neo-preppie. But don't say this to Joseph Abboud unless you want to make him cringe.

"Preppie is traditional, button-down, unimaginative, and very confining," fires off the thirty-six-year-old Boston-born designer after unwinding from a cringe. "My clothes are sensible but hip. They stretch imaginations, but they're believable."

All right, then—how about Après-Polo? The former comp.-lit. major from the University of Massachusetts launched his career in fashion fifteen years ago at

Bold as the rug at home: Joe Abboud's Turkish-kilim-inspired spring sweaters.

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Louis of Boston as a merchandiser, stylist, and buyer. Then he joined Ralph Lauren—first in sales and then as an associate design director for Polo (where, he explains, his tastes stood "a little left of center"). When the president of Freedberg of Boston asked him to style a menswear line under his own label, Abboud jumped at the offer. His first spring collection debuted this fall to accolades and high sales (expected to top $3 million this year), making it to the venerable racks of Bergdorf Goodman, Saks, Louis of Boston, and Robert Vance of Chicago.

Abboud readily admits his membership in the new ranks of "designers" who excuse themselves from designing. He never learned to draw and still relies on free-

AT POLO, HIS TASTES STOOD "A LITTLE LEFT OF CENTER."

lance artists to visualize his thoughts. "My best quality is knowing how to put a package together," says the ex-salesman.

Bloodless, perhaps, but it works. To "package" his first collection, Abboud ably drew inspiration from traditional designs of the Middle and Far East. Hand-knitted tussah silk and cotton sweaters borrow patterns from the many Turkish kilims that line the wooden floors of his house in Pound Ridge, New York. The prints on his silk foulard neckties and women's dresses both derive from Kashmiri paisleys.

Abboud's collection also reflects aspects of his relaxed, urbane mien. Linen sports coats in natural flax colors are broad-shouldered, unvented, and unlined. Cotton and linen trousers with wide legs, deep pleats, and high waists combine with oversized band-collar cotton shirts to help the wearer cut a figure not unlike that of the proto-preppie (sorry, Joe) *Esquire* man of the thirties.

A man of subtlety, Abboud avoids prep vulgarisms like light, bright pastels, tending instead toward dark, moody, hard-to-sell shades of navy, indigo, and russet. He also prefers expressive, expensive fabrics: hand-knitted sweaters start at $350; linen suits, at $650.

The newly written chapter of Abboud's story, his fall collection, will be based on geometric Indian and Eskimo patterns of the Pacific Northwest. Abboud also wants to try his hand at sportswear—without logos, he promises. —*Joe Dolce*

Edited by Robert Knafo

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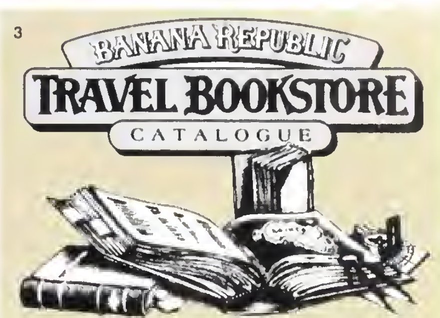

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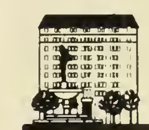

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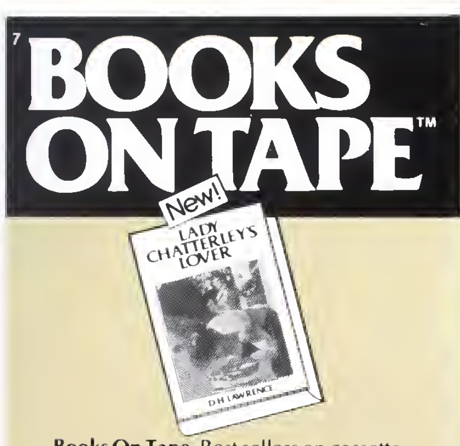

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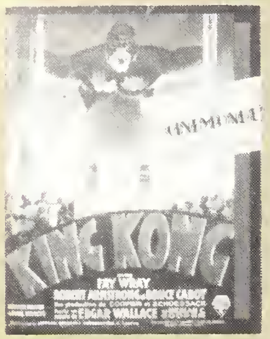

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Detail Illustrated:
Joseph Wright of Derby, A.R.A.: Penelope unravelling her web, 40 x 50 in.

AUCTIONS

A BESTIARY OF BOOKS; THE WINDSOR GLITTER; KRUPP'S HOARD

This month's activity is flanked by two of the most extraordinary sales of their kind we are likely ever to see. In Monaco on February 28 and March 1, Sotheby's will offer the Jeanson collection of hunting books, which resonates with importance on so many levels that we give it the lion's share of our space

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

One of three splendid Indian miniatures from the Baburnama, *at Sotheby's New York, March 25.*

below. In the second instance, on April 2 and 3 in Geneva, Sotheby's has the incalculable honor and good fortune to dispose of the jewels of the duchess of Windsor for the benefit of the Institut Pasteur. Naturally, we shall describe some of the best of these two hundred–plus lots next month; all would be outstanding even if they had belonged to Dotty Dingbat rather than the former Mrs. Simpson. But note that the collection will be on view in New York on March 17–22, likely producing the first instance at the corner of East Seventy-second Street and York Avenue of a gridlock composed entirely of Rolls-Royce cars.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S LONDON

A page from Le Roman des Oiseaux, *at the extraordinary Jeanson sale in Monaco.*

Monaco—Sotheby's, February 28–March 1. The Jeanson collection of hunting and sports books. Superlatives abound: the finest, most extensive private library on the subject, from medieval manuscripts to fine twentieth-century printed books, containing copies of virtually every important book on every conceivable form of venery, from the Far East all the way round the globe to the American Wild West. Sotheby's is not bashful about promoting this as the most important sale of its kind. The twin passions for shooting and book collecting of one man, Marcel Jeanson (1887–1942), resulted in a collection of more than 500 outstanding items in English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian, replete with acquisitions from previous great collectors such as Henri Gallice and the duke of Hamilton. For example:

A 1430 copy of Gaston Phebus's (1331–1391) *Livre de Chasse,* with eighty-six magnificent miniatures, one of the most important works of its kind, once the property of the czars and later in the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg (now the Leningrad State Public Library)—until Jeanson purchased it, in the 1930s (estimated at £300,000 to £500,000).

Twenty-five drawings (estimated at from £5,000 to £20,000 each) of midsixteenth-century hunting, shooting, and fishing expeditions by Jan ver der Straet, called Stradamus (1523–1605), a favorite pupil of Vasari's, who traveled from Florence to Antwerp, where his engravings were so popular that they were published in several editions.

A rare third-edition copy (the only known) of Dame Juliana Berner's *The boke of hawkynge and huntynge and fishynge,* printed in London in 1518 by Wynkyn de Worde, Caxton's assistant (estimated at £20,000 to £30,000). Also known as the Book of St. Albans, where Dame Juliana was prioress of the Sopwell Nunnery, the book is an eloquent if unwitting reminder that hawkynge, huntynge, fishynge, and aspects of "religionynge" were all terribly upper-class pursuits at the time.

Two brilliant modern items, Henry

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Louis XVI armchairs from the Arndt Krupp estate, March 10.

Fine French and Continental Furniture, Objects of Art, Clocks, Tapestries and Sculpture

Auction to be held on Saturday, April 25, 1987 in our galleries at 502 Park Avenue in New York. Viewing begins April 17. For further information, please contact the Sculpture Department at 212/546-1148 or the European Furniture Department at 212/546-1150. For catalogues, please call the Subscriptions Department at 718/784-1480.

Bertel Thorvaldsen, an important marble bust of Lord Byron, circa 1829, 19¼ in. high. Property of the Troy Public Library, Troy, N.Y.

Alken's 1820–21 *National Sports of Great Britain* (estimated at £8,000 to £18,000) and George Catlin's 1844 *North American Indian Portfolio* (estimated at £15,000 to £25,000), are examples of coffee-table entertainment of the last century.

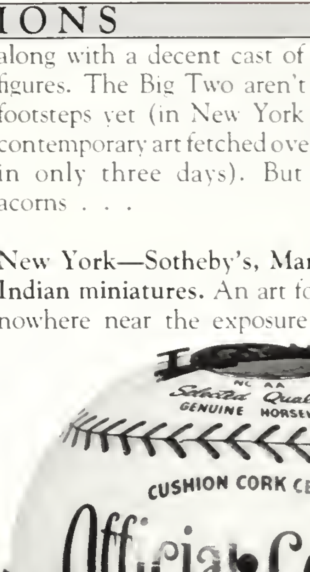
In its own way this sale should attract a more rarefied, pedigreed, and monied audience than any auction we have seen in quite some time.

New York—Christie's East, March 10. Items from the estate of Arndt Krupp. A splendid miscellany of French and Continental furniture and tapestries, German medieval and Renaissance sculpture, middling old-master paintings (the real goodies were sold off in January), Continental and (yes!) Thai silver, as well as other Southeast Asian bronzes and works of art—all removed from the late Arndt Krupp von Bolen und Halbach's Palm Beach home (favorite among four, the others being in Morocco, Germany, and Austria). A direct descendant of Friederich Krupp of (you guessed it) munitions fame, Arndt preferred less controversial pursuits, in 1966 "renouncing" his inheritance to slog along on a meager yearly allowance of only $910,000—although by the time of his marriage, some three short years later, he was reckoned to be worth $125 million. For reasons unknown to your correspondent, he became a fan of Thai culture and art, a taste reflected in several exquisite silver boxes in the sale, gifts from no less a luminary than Queen Sirikit. Thai is hot now, what with the year-long brouhaha being staged in Thailand to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and the thirty-sixth year of his reign. All in all, a window onto an insufferably lavish life.

London—Phillips, March 23. Contemporary art. Rather johnny-come-lately, given the extraordinary success of the Christie's and Sotheby's sales of contemporary paintings in November. This sale is also the maiden voyage for Phillips's delightful young American specialist Rhona Edelbaum, who seeks to transplant her own enthusiasm for contemporary art (spawned in the L.A. pop scene) to London. Whether it takes or not remains to be seen, but affordability should be no bar, since Edelbaum has consciously tried to put together a good mix of international styles and artists while "avoiding terrifying price tags." Some well-known artists (David Hockney, Allen Jones, Yves Klein, Wifredo Lam) star in this production, along with a decent cast of second-rank figures. The Big Two aren't hearing any footsteps yet (in New York alone, their contemporary art fetched over $30 million in only three days). But from small acorns . . .

New York—Sotheby's, March 25. Fine Indian miniatures. An art form that gets nowhere near the exposure it deserves. This 210-lot sale presents many of the most important and simply stunning examples that you will likely see for some time. At the core is the property from the collections of Ralph and Irene Beacon and of Mrs. LeRoy Davidson, distinguished respectively by their strengths in sixteenth-century Mughal and eighteenth-century Rajasthani material. Curiously, the earliest examples of "Indian" miniatures reflect a Central Asian Muslim tradition essentially Turkish, Kurdish, Persian, and Afghani in origin (the founding Mogul emperor Babur looked toward Kabul and points eastward only after several vain attempts to claim an ancestral throne at Samarkand) rather than subcontinental Buddhist India, although Buddhist and Raj court scenes predominate in the later work. There are three especially ravishing late-sixteenth-century miniatures (estimated at $9,000 to $12,000 each) commissioned by Babur's grandson, the emperor Akbar, to illustrate Granddad's autobiographical *Baburnama* (ol' Babur was much better at writing than at fighting).

—*James R. Lyons*



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EVIDENCE OF VINCENT VAN GOGH'S GHOST

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY GERALD DUMAS

Vincent and Claude.

Completely by chance, this extraordinary document came to us during the last weeks of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's current van Gogh exhibition, which will be on display until March 22. We publish it without attesting to its authenticity.

—The Editors

My name is André Buffon. I was born in 1860 in Rouen. For two years, in 1887 and 1888, I traveled with my friend the excellent artist Claude Mouret. In the spring of 1888 we had a most unusual experience. While having breakfast at the Restaurant Carrel in Arles, we made the acquaintance of a painter named Vincent van Gogh. (Of course, he was completely unknown then.) So began a strange summer during which the three of us were always together. I kept a daily journal, and although God knows I am no artist, I did a few sketches myself.

They are beginning to say now that this period marked a peak in Vincent's ability and was a productive time for him. Well! There are a few of us who know the reason for that!

My dear Claude died in the autumn of 1889, of consumption; the world did not note his passing.

I leave this journal to my niece, Marie Fouquet, who is free to do with it as she chooses.

André Buffon
Tours, 1941

4 April 1888—Van Gogh, Claude, and I out to the country this morning. They set up their easels in an orchard while I read and sketched a little. Van Gogh very interested in Claude's equipment. Asked him where he got his money. Claude, in merry mood as usual, told him he receives a comfortable monthly stipend from his family (true), and that a dealer in Rue du Bac has sold some canvases (untrue). Van Gogh borrowed some cadmium yellow. On way home, van Gogh did not speak. I do not know why.

9 April 1888—Van Gogh much preoccupied with money. He thinks he is being overcharged for everything. His brother in Paris supports him, but just barely. He is jealous of Claude's (supposed) success and admiring of his technique. This morning he said, "Orange branches coming out of a purple tree?"

Claude laughed and said, "Why not?" Then van Gogh said, "You lay on patches of color even more thickly than I do." But when he said it, he made it sound like a fault. Sometimes we catch him staring at Claude's wealthy array of colors. He calls Claude a "capitalist."

21 April 1888—Today in the fields Vincent complained of a headache and asked Claude to lay in some foreground areas "before the light changes." He cheerfully did so. Vincent asked Claude to use his own burnt umber. Claude is too accommodating, I think.

23 April 1888—Vincent asked Claude to show him how a reed may be used in sketching. Claude sharpened a reed and drew most of a landscape, then gave the reed to Vincent. Vincent added some lines to the trunks of the trees and put in a few

Vincent hesitating before a new canvas.

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Claude and Vincent conferring in the meadow.

coarse shrubbery strokes, which I thought ruined the sketch. Then he signed his name and walked away, studying it. I haven't seen the drawing since.

29 April 1888—Vincent complaining of his health again. God, he talks of nothing but himself! It is his art, his lack of money, or his health. Try talking to this fellow of politics and see where you get. Well, to be fair, he is also interested in God and checkers.

1 May 1888—Today Claude showed Vincent how to simplify his cypresses. Vincent was making a hash out of his. When he becomes angry, he works faster and faster. Then he brags about how a picture took only three-quarters of an hour to complete!

3 May 1888—A good day as to weather, but otherwise crazy. Vincent cannot do water, so Claude showed him a few of his tricks. He tried to make Vincent *think* water. Claude ended up by putting in all the water for him and also some of the bridge. While there was still some green-blue on the brush, Vincent asked Claude to lay in some distant trees. This fellow does not waste a jot of color. It all goes on the canvas. Then Vincent took the brush, messed in the water a bit, to make it *his*, I suppose, and signed his name. Boldly, as usual.

8 May 1888—Quite a day. We purchased Vincent breakfast, provided him with lunch, and took him to supper. In the afternoon Vincent tried an experiment. Sitting in a field beside poor Claude, he "directed" a painting. "Some more green there, that's it. Darker, darker. Swirl the blue up close . . . good!" and so on. I could not believe it. Claude is a fool! In the evening Vincent drank too much red wine, and we had to put him to bed.

14 May 1888—I spoke sharply to Vincent today. Recently Claude painted two portraits of Vincent. Today I noted that both bore Vincent's signature. "Well," said Vincent lamely, "I touched them up in the evenings. Besides, I selected the props, the clothes, the attitude, composition—everything, really. I wouldn't have needed Claude's assistance at all except that my mirror is no good." I told Claude that we should leave, but Claude likes Vincent and remains affable through Vincent's moods and ragings. Vincent calls Claude his Belgian impressionist, for some insane reason.

9 June 1888—They worked on a landscape together: fields, green and yellow as far as the eye can see. Another experiment today: instead of alternating at the canvas as usual, they painted simultaneously, Vincent on the left half, Claude on the right, passing brushes back and forth ("Give me the red. Are you finished with the orange?") until I thought I would go mad. Now and then Vincent paused to watch Claude, saying, "Yes, yes, a nice touch," and then he would repeat it on *his* side.

How does Claude stand it? I went over and shouted, "And you will take the credit, as usual!"

"What credit?" said Vincent. "Nobody buys my pictures."

On the way home he talked endlessly of how he hopes some-

Vincent and Claude talking about God.

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THE LIVELY ARTS

The day Vincent got mad because Claude preferred playing with a puppy to painting.

day to be able to do a figure in a few strokes. I told him that he was already doing figures with no strokes at all.

9 July 1888—Last night Claude spoke of the starry night and used the phrase "the vault of Heaven," and, by Heaven, if today Vincent has not used the very phrase in a letter to his brother! He drafts his letters in pencil now, and Claude goes over

VINCENT WOULD PAUSE TO WATCH CLAUDE, SAYING, "NICE TOUCH."

them, checking spelling. Just now Vincent said, "Today I attack in Prussian blue and chrome yellow!" Then he helped himself out of Claude's box. He has grown quite careless of costs, squeezing color out all over, on himself as well, as though he were a grand duke. He talks of God while playing billiards.

21 July 1888—I have convinced Claude that it is time to go. When we told Vincent, he wept and wrung our hands. Then he became stone-faced and brooded in a corner while we packed our clothes. At the train station he suddenly shouted, "Go! Go! You both lack a commitment to art! Besides, Gauguin is coming!"

Poor Vincent. We waved to him as the train left, until he was a speck. He looked so small and pitiful, and yet so strong. We saw him kicking flowerpots.

God grant the unsuspecting Gauguin is stronger than Claude was. □

Gerald Dumas is a writer and cartoonist whose work appears in the New Yorker.

"I came here with my books, clothes, and the Indian rugs I collect—I never want to be tied down with too many possessions again.

What I want is a place where a 10-year-old boy can eat an ice cream cone without my getting uppity about his making a mess on the sofa." —*Ali MacGraw*

Russell MacMasters

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B IS FOR BEAUTIFUL

ALL ABOUT MARINA B.'S INTRICATE AND EXTRAVAGANT JEWELS

BY CAROLINE SEEBOHM PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID HAMSLEY PRODUCED BY KATHLEEN B. HEARST

Jewelry is such an age-old art that it is almost impossible to imagine a piece that the Egyptians or Etruscans did not themselves make. This century, however, has an advantage the great craftsmen of the past lacked—technology. And now a designer has exploited it to make jewelry that is not only revolutionary but stunningly beautiful. Her name is Marina Bulgari; she is known simply as Marina B.

"It was about time someone with good creative juices started producing decorative and artistic pieces that don't look like everyone else's," declares Murray Mondschein, of the New York estate jeweler Fred Leighton. "She's burst on the scene with wonderful things. If people want contemporary jewelry, then I tell them to go to Marina B."

Marina B. has taken a traditional art, which she learned at the knee of her father, the great jeweler Constantine Bulgari, and made it startlingly modern. "I like jewelry that conforms to the body," she says. "My chokers, my bracelets, must fit like clothes."

And fit they do, particularly her chokers. Visit Tiffany, Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Winston, and look at theirs. First, you will find very few, because the choker poses the greatest challenge of all necklace styles: that of making inflexible materials such as gold or gemstones cling easily and comfortably to the human neck. Marina B. has found a solution. Within each one she implants a hair-fine spring, made of eighteen-karat gold or platinum, which makes the choker as supple and pliant as a snug, caressing scarf.

The feel of one of Marina B.'s chokers is so free and easy that her clients sometimes sport these luxurious, diamond-and-sapphire-studded collars as day wear, with jeans and T-shirts. "That is how they look best," Marina agrees with a grin. Wearability perhaps takes top priority in her lexicon of design.

Her chokers may be revolutionary, but Marina B. does not stop with them. For some of her earrings and necklaces, she has devised tiny pin mechanisms that allow the stones to be removed or changed. Even more ingenious is the Caty reversible earring, which has a minuscule hinge that pulls out so that the outer stones can be turned around the central, pear-shaped sapphire, so that the earrings can be worn with all-diamond surrounds, all-onyx surrounds, or one diamond and one onyx. With a simple turn, daytime jewelry becomes dazzling evening wear. Perhaps most magical of all are the Nasser earrings, made with thirty-eight diamonds and pink cabochon tourmalines. On each hangs a huge briolette green tourmaline affixed by a tiny hinge that makes it possible for the stone to move slightly in order to catch the light—an original and breathtaking effect.

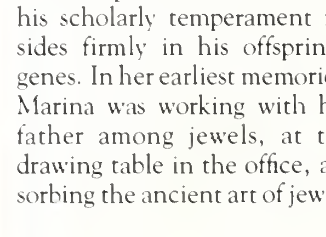
On many of these pieces is a heart shape without an indentation—Marina B.'s own signature. Even their backsides are works of art; the gold is woven in intricate forms, as decorative as the lining of a Chinese coat. This attention to detail and mechanical inventiveness has probably been equaled in this century only by Fabergé.

The jeweler herself would not make such comparisons. Now in her fifties, she is a handsome, strong-featured woman, with a brisk manner and the air of a scholar. Elegantly dressed (a favorite designer is Mila Schon), she shuns publicity, avoids fashionable parties, remains diffident about her success, and prefers to retire to an isolated Greek island with her uncle in her rare spare moments. (No doubt some of this reclusiveness is due to the continuing threats to the Bulgaris, as both parents and children remain targets of gruesome kidnappings and terrorism in Europe.) She was married once, to a neurologist, who died in an automobile accident. That was in 1963. She never remarried and has no children. Her life centers around her work, her research, and her immediate family.

Marina B. has Greek blood in her veins, which seems only natural, for it was Crete and Mycenae, and the Hellenistic period of the fourth century B.C., that produced some of the most brilliant goldsmiths of the ancient world. Boulgaris was the Greek name of the scion of the famous jewelry-making family that, almost penniless, arrived in Rome at the end of the last century. With the help of his two sons, Constantine and Giorgio, Sotirio Boulgaris made the name Bulgari synonymous with beautiful jewelry. After operating out of a small workshop in the Via Sistina at the turn of the century, the sons moved to a larger store, on the Via Condotti, which has been the home of the Bulgari family ever since. From here they have supplied fine jewels to most of the crowned heads of Europe and Asia.

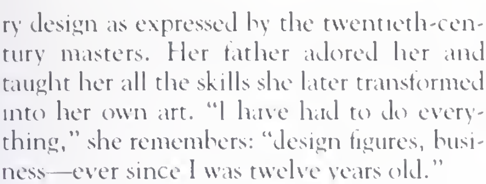
Giorgio was the specialist in stones. Constantine was the scholar of silver (beaten silver plate had been his father's specialty). Between them, they established a style in jewelry that was uniquely Bulgari. The large stones and striking settings in heavy gold and silver made the house of Bulgari a leader in the field well into the 1970s and caused the Bulgari designers to be eagerly sought after for their originality and taste.

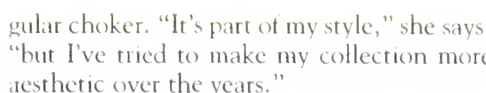
Constantine, an academic at heart, also produced a huge, meticulously researched series on the history of Italian and Vatican jewelry entitled *Argentieri, Gemmari e Orafi d'Italia*, the eighth volume of which he was working on just before his death, in 1973 at the age of eighty-four. He also produced Marina, and his scholarly temperament resides firmly in his offspring's genes. In her earliest memories, Marina was working with her father among jewels, at the drawing table in the office, absorbing the ancient art of jewel-



Opposite: An intricate hinge on the pointed tip allows the Caty reversible sapphire earrings to be worn with either onyx or diamond surrounds. Above: The Gina three-colored citrine necklace, earrings, and bracelet. Like many of Marina B's pieces, these were named for a friend of hers.

Above: Pharaon diamond ring and Shirine choker of yellow sapphires, diamonds, and black gold. Opposite, top: The Toupie earclips, inspired by the French toy top, are large amethyst briolettes with black onyx, blue topaz, and pink tourmaline and diamonds. Opposite, bottom: Pharaon Donatella emerald ring.





ry design as expressed by the twentieth-century masters. Her father adored her and taught her all the skills she later transformed into her own art. "I have had to do everything," she remembers: "design figures, business—ever since I was twelve years old."

Her mastery of all of these areas is the more remarkable in that Marina Bulgari was dyslexic. She attributes her difficulty in reading and writing to her left-handedness. In her school days, she was forced to become right-handed, a conversion that is now considered very inhibiting to a child's learning abilities. Marina still does many things right-handedly; an exception is drawing, for which she uses her left hand.

When Marina was grown-up, the next generation of Bulgaris was entering the arena. Marina has two sisters. Her uncle Giorgio (who died in 1966) had three sons, Gianni, Paolo, and Nicola, who still control the day-to-day running of the business. By the 1970s, the Bulgari firm had expanded across Europe, with shops in Geneva and Paris. Dashing and attractive as well as rich, the cousins also dominated the headlines. Gianni was a racing-car driver and hang glider, and Nicola collected antique Buicks. In 1971, Gianni was quoted as saying, "In Italy we are known as the Vatican. That's because we operate with so much charisma—and so much secrecy."

Where was Marina amid all this glamour? Retiring, shy, in love with her work, she was beginning to face the fact that her place was no longer with her Bulgari cousins. "It was the third generation," she explains matter-of-factly. "It became apparent that there were too many of us with too many differing philosophies. I had to do what the bees do."

It must also be remembered that Marina had been raised in a traditional Mediterranean family, in which the male unquestionably rules. A woman like Marina, brilliantly talented in business and design, does not easily find personal fulfillment in such a closely guarded environment. An indication of her cousins' response to her striking out on her own is that while they had to agree to her departure, they imposed a stringent condition: she must not use the Bulgari name in her new, independent career.

Not use her name? A tough condition, indeed. Marina B.? Reduced to just the final initial, it sounded like other names along the Corso—second-rate, unremarkable. But in 1979, she opened her first showroom, in Geneva; and before long, everyone knew who Marina was, for after she left Bulgari, she began creating some of the most extraordinary pieces of jewelry seen in this century. Today she has showrooms and offices also in Milan and Monte Carlo and, most recently, a store in New York.

"The freedom was fantastic," Marina B. says now, recalling her escape into untrammeled creativity. "I could do anything at all." The early work on her own was largely geometric—she points to a triangular necklace and bracelet all in diamonds, and a gold triangular choker. "It's part of my style," she says, "but I've tried to make my collection more aesthetic over the years."

So, the line has become softer and more feminine. It is also unmistakably Bulgari. No one as strictly brought up in the Bulgari school as Marina could shake free totally of the master's discipline. The heavy settings so representative of the Bulgari style—the massive stones, the baguettes, the sculpted eighteen-karat gold—are as deeply ingrained in her creative makeup as church ritual is in the music of Bach. But she has taken those inherited instincts into uncharted territories of gem juxtaposition, contrast, and shape. "She perfected the Bulgari house style," declares one of New York's best-known gem dealers, "and then ran away with it. It could almost be said to have gone too far—an overdose of colored stones in heavy settings."

There is perhaps something overpowering about some of her pieces. The size of the gemstones, the ornateness of the goldwork, the sensuousness of the swirling shapes recall the unrestrained jewelry designs of the Italian Renaissance. She inherited from the great jewelry designers of history an utter disdain for intrinsic value and a total commitment to color and quality.

The prices, needless to say, reflect this lack of restraint. Marina's "disdain for intrinsic value," which brings 714 diamonds (seventy-eight carats) together with three shades of citrine in the Gina necklace, for instance, will cost you $229,000. The Shirine earclips, containing 178 brilliant-cut diamonds (twenty-two carats), 12 "MB" cut diamonds, and 24 oval diamonds (worn by Joan Rivers on her nighttime talk show), are yours for $418,300. Such names as Yvette, Lalli, or Caty recall either the particular customer for whom Marina made the original piece (though she will not reveal who they are) or some idea that suits the design.

She designs from an evocative image. "I have never seen a specific object or piece that inspired me. My inspiration comes out of my culture," she says, with an impatient nod to her Mediterranean heritage. She talks of a code that she must unravel in order for the design to work—a difficult puzzle that she must understand. "Everyone has this code," she says modestly. "The creative part for me is to assemble the pieces." She loves certain colors—black, in particular. "I love black: black gold, black onyx, black mother-of-pearl." She also uses a lot of cabochon stones. "Cabochon creates volume. It's bumpy in a way that cut stones are not."

Once she has a mental image

of a piece, she draws it and redraws it at the desk in her atelier in Paris, where much of the designing work is done. Each piece is the result of her continuing studies in the technology of jewelry, for Marina Bulgari's extravagant vision is underpinned by a solidly research oriented mind, as her father's was. Sometimes she will take her ideas to experts in metal, for it is with their technical advice that she attempts the nearly impossible: manipulating gold, silver, and precious stones into the perfect choker or bracelet. These experiments are not always successful. She worked long and hard for a while with technicians at the University of Geneva, for instance, on a particular technical aspect of a necklace. "I finally realized that I had to abandon it, because it was too difficult to perfect," she says. "It took too much time in its early stages."

A challenge successfully met resulted in the Yvette necklace. "We used onyx, which is very easy to break. And to make such a high necklace"—it stretches up the throat in tiers—"each row of onyx must have a different shape to fit the neck. And then to fit the jewels correctly . . ." She smiles. The technical achievement pleases her, it seems, almost more than the aesthetic triumph. "I want to do unlimited research," she concedes. "I want to dedicate myself to finding a way of producing jewelry with wider distribution—something that costs very little but still has style." Her newest piece, the Nava necklace, a gold choker on a spring, with interchangeable stones, sells for $16,500—still a hefty price. Marina indicates a gold bracelet on her wrist. "I never wear my jewelry," she goes on, "but this is a prototype that I am testing. I shall wear it for three months to see what is right and what is wrong. The shape is not right yet." Shaking her head at its intransigence, she looks at the bracelet fondly, as one would look at a wayward child. In another life, she admits, she would have been a theoretical mathematician, "a permanent scholar." There is something paradoxical about this passion: Marina Bulgari, the eternal student, serious to the core, producing objects of wild, extravagant frivolousness.

One of the true tests of a designer's art is the extent to which it is copied. Oscar de la Renta, Chanel, Gucci, Vuitton, Cartier have all been faked—and now Marina B. "She is one of the most copied jewelers working today," the jewelry designer Christopher Walling says. Her look is unmistakable, an invitation to the counterfeiters. But no one can reproduce her technical refinements. Pick up a fake $5,000 choker. Feel its stiffness, its resistance. There is nothing mass-producible about Yvette, Rose-Marie 2, or the other characters in Marina B.'s gallery.

A pilgrimage to her Madison Avenue store offers proof enough. It is a quiet place, sleekly furnished in black lacquer and brown suede, with simple display cases lined in white silk to enhance the jewels inside them. Designed by the Italian architect Gae Aulenti (who also designed the jeweler's home in Rome), the store is a discreet, hushed chamber for those who are ready to spend $100,000 on a fabulous bauble.

The client is ushered past the glittering displays and seated in private at the rear of the store, where hand mirrors and velvety surfaces highlight the contrast of emeralds, rubies, diamonds, pearls. Perrier or Champagne is available, for the session may take many hours. One piece is tried on, then another. A husband hovers nervously, fingering his checkbook. "Will it fall off?" asks one doubter, unaccustomed to the spring mechanism that defines all Marina B.'s chokers. Single stones are brought out in suede-lined leather trays to be examined, held to the light, laid against the skin, rejected, selected. It is possible to buy a Marina B. jewel right out of the display case; many others are altered or made from a sample to suit an individual customer's taste.

This aspect of Marina B.'s business bears little resemblance to what is done by many other jewelry designers working today. Marina has an intensely personal relationship with many of her clients. She discusses jewels with them, counsels them, has dinner with them, and in many cases is a good friend. This accounts for the enormous amount of traveling she must do, for as well as working on new designs in Paris or Geneva, she must keep in touch with those who buy her work. She was recently in New York, meeting old friends and new clients. Her local fans include William Paley, Diana Vreeland, and Princess Yasmin Aga Khan, who always asks to see the newest pieces.

"It looked wonderful," one customer tells her, indicating the Yvette necklace. "Did you take a Polaroid?" Marina asks wryly. They discuss changes the client would like. "I would put the pink tourmalines in front, the emeralds in back with the sapphires," advises the jeweler.

Another client picks up the Rose-Marie 2 choker and opens it up like a flower. "They are such fun to play with!" she exclaims. There is indeed something playful about Marina's pieces. They swing, unfold, hinge, turn sideways, almost like super-refined Transformers.

In designing these pieces, many of them one of a kind, Marina B. seems to be making a generational leap—from the great artist-jeweler tradition of Fabergé, Lalique, Vever, Moser, and Tiffany, past the conventional, banal, diffuse design trends of the postwar years, to join the new breed of designers, like Joel Rosenthal of JAR's in Paris, who choose to work on single pieces for specific clients and thus produce jewelry that is as unique and personal as the nature of the wearer. □

Caroline Seebohm is the author of, most recently, The Last Romantics. *She wrote about Angela Cummings for the October 1985 issue of* Connoisseur.

Above: The Pauline multistrand pearl choker with large cabochon emerald, and Kashan emerald earrings. Opposite: Marina B. sketches a design in her Paris studio, where she does much of her work. Each new piece is named after a friend or a source of inspiration.

DIDIER'S DOMAINS

THE INS AND OUTS OF BEING ONE OF THE WORLD'S TOP ART DEALERS AND DECORATORS

BY LEON HARRIS

Didier Aaron, a witty, wily workaholic, is perhaps the most successful antiques dealer and decorator in the world. Half a dozen old-master-picture dealers are as big as or bigger than he; two or three antique-furniture dealers are at his level; and a handful of top decorators do as much business as or more than he does. But no one else does all three at once at remotely his level.

He has establishments in Paris, London, and New York, where, above the shop at 32 East Sixty-seventh Street, he keeps one of his several apartments. Here one afternoon he proudly shows a visitor an eighteenth-century lacquer commode made by the great *ébéniste* Joseph for the marquis de Marigny, Madame de Pompadour's brother. Aaron—trim, brown-eyed, and going gray—strokes the commode as affectionately and unconsciously as he does his dog Jimmy, a German pointer who has the run of Aaron's Paris penthouse and jumps up on some of the most expensive furniture in the world. "Marigny was the *ministre des beaux arts*," Aaron explains, "and this commode was in the inventory taken at his death. It is not for sale at the moment, but if it were, I would have to ask $2.5 million. So you understand that the inventory of a dealer, like me, who has shops in three different countries can add up to a rather serious sum."

Didier Aaron is a refreshing figure in an often staid profession. Like his colleagues, he is proud of his coups—he recently sold a pair of eighteenth-century Louis XVI *encoignures* by Garnier to the Getty Museum—but, unlike them, he takes himself with a grain of salt. "I pretend that my firm is well organized," he laughs, "but some years ago at the Clore sale at Christie's in Monte Carlo, when I very much wanted a Russian table, I finally stopped bidding because the person bidding against me had forced the price too high, only to find that the person was my son Hervé." Hervé runs the New York shop. Didier's elder son, Olivier, is an art scholar.

His sense of humor helps explain why it is difficult to find anyone with a harsh view of Didier Aaron. People enjoy his company and revel in his expertise. For example, no one in America has played a greater part in stimulating interest in the crème de la crème of the French decorative arts than the late Charles Wrightsman and his wife, whose rooms at the Metropolitan Museum are among its chief splendors. Mrs. Wrightsman declares, "I *never* go to Paris without going to Didier Aaron's shop. The finest French pieces in museums across this country come from him."

If there are purses even deeper than Mrs. Wrightsman's, they are those of the Getty Museum curator Gillian Wilson, who explains, "Didier is a great showman. When you go to see Fabre, one of the top dealers in Paris, you know you will see good, solid eighteenth-century French pieces. But when you go to Didier, in addition to seeing the best, you will also be amazed, astounded, delighted by all sorts of things—strange lacquer objects, nineteenth-century paintings, anything in the world that has struck his relentlessly busy eye as beautiful."

What is the explanation for this astonishing eclecticism? Is Aaron a magpie? Or is he simply more self-confident, more courageous? "None of that," scoffs the decorator Vincent Fourcade. "And there is no need for a Freudian explanation, either. It's just that Didier is original, curious, intelligent. In addition to being a dealer, he is an *amateur* in the eighteenth-century sense of that word. Didier has taste, and most Paris dealers have none."

Another leading New York decorator, Mark Hampton, says, "I wondered for years how in the world Didier manages to keep finding such superb objects and in such an extraordinary variety of areas—nineteenth-century painting, eighteenth-century furniture, Oriental sculpture—and then I found the answer one afternoon

Didier Aaron (standing) with sons, Olivier and Hervé, and Jacques Grange in between.

Leon Harris is a frequent contributor to this magazine.

P. HINOUS/AGENCE TOP

Inside Maison Maus, in Saint-Tropez, its interior designed by Jacques Grange.

at the Metropolitan Museum. I saw Didier and his son Hervé in the American Wing studying Philadelphia chairs. He never buys or sells American things, but he obviously has a boundless curiosity about everything that is beautiful and the endless stamina necessary to keep looking, keep rejecting, until he finds the *best*."

Aaron was born on April 27, 1923, on the Rue de Rivoli, just opposite the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. "I did not intend to be an antiques and picture dealer or a decorator," he says. "My father was on the bourse, and I wanted to create and run some giant commercial enterprise, but the war changed that. Luckily, my parents were not practicing Jews and I was not circumcised, so when I was picked up by the police during the Occupation, I wasn't sent to a concentration camp." Though he is modestly reluctant to discuss it, Aaron is proud of his service in the French Resistance, for which he received a Croix de Guerre and Légion d'Honneur.

"After the war, there was no money, and although I got my degrees in law and art history at the Sorbonne, I also went to work to earn enough money to marry Isabelle, who had saved my life during the war. My mother had been a private dealer in Oriental art, so I started dealing and decorating for friends.

The most important moment for me came when Ricardo Espirito Santo, the Portuguese banker who was the greatest collector of eighteenth-century silver in Europe, died, in 1953. The big dealers decided to let the widow wait and worry a bit before making any offers. But I got on the train for Lisbon and they offered me the collection for $2 million, even though I told them that was too modest a price. As a thirty-year-old, just-beginning dealer, I didn't even have the $2 million, and when I told them that, José Espirito Santo offered me collateral!

"I no longer regret that I did not become a business tycoon. If I made automobile tires or television sets, my customers would not say, 'Come see my house.' And one of the pleasures of an international business like mine is going to so many different places and meeting interesting men and women there: artists, businessmen, political leaders. We have done decorations for or sold important objects to the king of Morocco at Rabat; a palace for Prince Faisal at Riyadh; the Moroccan embassy at Brussels, as well as the palace of Princess Paola and Prince Albert of Liège; a residence in Gabon; a hotel in Nouméa; Howard Stein of the Dreyfus Fund in New York; Lord Lever in London. It's a long list of fascinating places and people whom otherwise Isabelle and I would never have known.

"Perhaps the most remarkable man I have met in my life is President Houphouët-Boigny, who is the president of the Ivory Coast and whose houses, at Abidjan and Yamoussoukro, are at least the equal of any in Europe or America. Of course, they have to have extremely precise climate controls. Otherwise, the marquetry

Another Jacques Grange interior for Didier Aaron, this the salon in the actress Isabelle Adjani's Paris apartment.

ERIC MORIN

COURTESY DIDIER AARON, PARIS (2)

Pure style Rothschild *by Jacques Grange, for Edmond de Rothschild's house.*

on the furniture would pop right off in the heat and humidity. Once, after a long power failure, that's exactly what happened. We flew our restorers out at once."

Asked to name his favorite decorating jobs, Aaron is clearly at a loss. "It's an impossible question," he insists. "It's like asking, 'Which is your favorite child?' My favorite is always the job I am doing right now, the glorious surprises just created that you have never seen before or even imagined. But you know, or at least you hope, that in a few months you'll be working on something even more exciting, or that you will discover an object more beautiful than any you have ever seen before. Otherwise, why stay in the game?

"I absolutely love the simple, architectural staircase Jacques Grange designed for the Saint-Tropez house of the owners of the Printemps department store, Bertrand and Micheline Maus, and although I think nothing is more beautiful than eighteenth-century French design, the bathroom and the dining room that Jacques did for the Paris house of Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, both *dernier cri* contemporary, are as beautiful as any rooms of any period anywhere.

"Unlike many dealers and decorators who believe that only *they* have perfect taste, I find a few clients whose taste is at least as good as mine. The couturier Hubert de Givenchy has bought objects from us and is a great friend, but he decorates his own houses and is the greatest connoisseur I know. No museum curator has a better eye than his, and very few even approach his knowledge and taste.

"What makes me happiest and what I'm proudest of is all the jobs we've done over the years for Baron Edmond de Rothschild. He is the richest and smartest of the whole family and my best friend. We worked on his château in Austria; the château d'Armainvilliers, near Paris, which he sold to the king of Morocco; his Rue de l'Élysée house—the greatest house in Paris; his ski house at Megève; and the château Clarke at Bordeaux, where he plans to make a new, Rothschild wine.

"We do not force on our clients our own preferences in decorating. We listen carefully to what *they* want and then create it. When Françoise Laffonte wants an Egyptian bedroom, we make it. When Yves Saint Laurent wants the rooms in his Deauville house named for and inspired by the characters in Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu,* that's what he gets. And the greater the variety of their desires, the more amusing for us. How boring it would be to do only pure, French, eighteenth-century decor again and again.

"What makes our firm amusing, what proves that Jacques Grange is a great decorator, is the variety of clients—movie stars as well as royalty, an office building in London [the new Lloyd's], a casino [at Divonne-les-Bains], a hotel [the Bristol in Paris], a museum [the Musée des Arts de la Mode, at the Louvre], restaurants and banks and *salons de couture,* as well as big châteaux and tiny lovers' nests.

More Aaron goodies: one of a pair of corner cupboards by Pierre Garnier, ca. 1765.

COURTESY J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

A clock made during the French Revolution, with a decimal dial.

"Of course, the clients who give any dealer the greatest pleasure are those who are themselves great connoisseurs, for example, Mrs. Seward Johnson. She bought from us a salon of twenty-four gilt Beauvais-covered chairs by Séné, which are in her house in Princeton. Nowhere in the world are there more beautiful chairs."

Aaron's Paris apartment displays the catholicity of his tastes. There are, of course, French eighteenth- and nineteenth-century objects, but mixed with these are Chinese, Japanese, classical, primitive, and art nouveau works, as well as contemporary works by Arman, including his eighteenth-century-style *fauteuil brûlé.* "I think this is the most important work he ever did," Didier says.

The remarkable mix in the houses of his clients reflects Aaron's passion for variety. At the residence of the banker François Propper, six African masks sit on a Boulle table, and in the bedroom an immense Jacques Brissot porno-realist triptych in collage has endless erotic details. In the basement of Edmond de Rothschild's Paris house, Aaron built a jungle swimming pool surrounded by orchids and banana trees. "I hope someday to have time to write a nonspecialist, nonscholarly book that is *readable* on the sociology of art," Aaron recently remarked. "I would try to

explain *why* an artist can be important in only his period—someone who paints like Renoir today would be nothing.

There are observable reasons for each phenomenon in the history of art. My specialty, of course, is French furniture of the eighteenth century. At that time, Paris was the center of the world, attracting great artists from foreign countries. Many of the greatest *ébénistes* were Germans. Their furniture was the greatest expression of French art, better than French painting. France was Catholic, and the Jesuits never taught that you should be ashamed of *luxe*. At Versailles, the fashion was to flaunt your riches. In Flanders, where the Protestants said you should avoid or at least hide *luxe*, even in the churches the painting was the greatest, because it had not the stigma of *luxe* that is attached to rich furniture."

Perhaps Aaron's greatest achievement is not any object he has discovered and sold, no decoration his firm has done, but his creation of the Antiquaires à Paris. Getting seven top Paris antiques dealers—Maurice Segoura, Aveline (Jean Marie Rossi), Michel Meyer, Jacques Perrin, Claude Lévy, Bernard Steinitz, and Aaron himself—to work in harness on anything, when they are as competitive and suspicious as seven sopranos, is the ultimate tribute not only to Aaron's patience but to his ability to lead his temperamental colleagues by telling the truth.

Cabinet made by Golle for Louis XIV's brother, Monsieur.

COURTESY DIDIER AARON, PARIS (3)

Opposite: Bedroom for Françoise Laffonte. Above: From Givenchy's collection.

With some, but not all, of this group and with a few other dealers as well, Aaron secretly buys objects jointly. Whether at auction or with private sellers, he can thus buy more cheaply than if he were bidding against the other dealer. He can also offer more objects for a fixed investment, and he has the secret partner's customers as well as his own. Aaron is frank about this practice, unlike a picture dealer such as Agnews, which alleges to own outright Claude drawings that were in fact bought jointly with Eugene Thaw, who is perfectly candid about the joint purchase. But Aaron understandably will not give details of his joint ownerships or of the increasingly difficult methods of moving works of art from one country to another.

He makes no bones, however, about how he captures the world-class antiques others are earnestly seeking. "Occasionally, of course, I recognize something that they fail to recognize, but much more important is that I pay top prices, so I get first look at what the provincial dealers and runners come across. It is foolish to pay them as little as possible and then have them see their object in a shop or at the Paris Biennale at an astronomically higher price. I give them 50 percent of what I sell their piece or painting for, so if I make a killing they do too.

"I tell the truth and deal honestly with sellers as well as buyers, not because it's moral but because it's good business. About 40 percent of my business is decorating. But fewer than 20 percent of the objects that go into our decorating jobs come from our own inventory. Decorators who insist on selling objects they already own to their clients are not only greedy but foolish. We know that because many clients come to us after they have been angered by that practice elsewhere."

Unlike some museum curators, who anxiously sweep them under the rug, Aaron delights in recounting his mistakes. In his Paris apartment he has a fake Syrian Hellenistic head on a coffee table. "I love it," he says. "Few people realize it, but a decorator's mistake can be just as fatal as a brain surgeon's. We decorated the Paris offices of Revlon for the chairman then, Michel Bergerac. We hung an enormous chandelier right over his seat at the head of the conference table, and two months before the first meeting, it fell—it could have killed him!"

Aaron has a wry perspective on his business. "I recently bought an absolutely splendid ivory and ebony inlaid cabinet. I thought it was Dutch or Belgian and offered it to the Louvre, but they weren't interested, because, they said, it was not French. This permitted me to offer it to the Belgian Royal Museum at Antwerp and the Getty, both of whom refused it. Peter Thornton, curator of furniture at the Victoria and Albert Museum, bought it the moment he saw it and, once it was safely in his hands, had an article published in the *Burlington* magazine proving it was made in Paris for the brother of Louis XIV, probably by Pierre Golle. I'm just a stupid shopkeeper—I'm not supposed to know what I'm selling. But that these eminent museum experts should be as ignorant as I am is frightening!" □

One of twenty-four chairs by Séné bought by Basia Johnson.

FROM ROYAL ALBUMS

QUEEN VICTORIA AND HER DESCENDANTS COLLECTED PHOTOGRAPHS OF WHAT INTERESTED THEM

BY GAIL BUCKLAND

Ever since photography was invented, in the 1830s, British monarchs, beginning with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, have avidly assembled photograph albums. Their contents are not generally known, so an exhibition of a generous selection from them called "Crown and Camera: The Royal Family and Photography 1842–1910," at the Queen's Gallery in Buckingham Palace, is an event of great interest. Few of these historic photographs from the Royal Archives have ever before left the Round Tower at Windsor Castle or been removed from their albums. If some of them seem familiar, it is only through reproductions. At last we are being given a look at the Royal Archives' photographic treasures.

Nine sovereigns at the funeral of King Edward VII, May 20, 1910, by W. & D. Downey. *Visual evidence that Queen Victoria's descendants and relatives ruled Europe. Among them are the kings of Norway, Bulgaria, Portugal, Germany, Greece, Belgium, Spain, Great Britain, and Denmark. Her grandson King George V sits in the center; his cousin the kaiser stands behind them.*

"Crown and Camera" is a landmark exhibition for three reasons. First, the photographs provide an intimate view of royal-family life from the beginning of Victoria's long reign through that of her son Edward VII. The photographed faces of "dearest beloved"s were among royalty's most prized possessions and gave Queen Victoria immeasurable comfort and delight. Family portraits embrace the royal households of Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Rumania, Greece, and Russia. Royal-family travel albums offer some of the earliest views of South Africa, India, the Holy Land, and Canada. Other tours, while not chronologically significant, are captivating because royal tourists and snapshooters invariably get royal treatment and visit places fit for kings.

Second, the photographs in the Royal Archives poignantly reflect the spheres of interest and obligation of the British royal family. The collection is filled with portraits of young soldiers who fought for crown and country, subjects who reached an advanced age or passed a significant anniversary, heads of state and deposed rulers, former African slaves and famous musicians, and scenes of war, industrial accidents, and daily life in the outposts of empire. There is little visual comment on American history—no

Gail Buckland was curator of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain.

REPRODUCED BY GRACIOUS PERMISSION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The marquess of Granby and Lady Victoria Manners, June 1888, by Byrne & Co.

The informality of the composition is unusual for a Victorian portrait, but stranger still are a child's eyes seen level with an adult's. The effect is the more striking because father and daughter have the same, sympathetic eyes. Lady Victoria throws her arms around her father with exuberant affection, while the way the marquess holds his daughter's little finger just as eloquently expresses his tenderness. Victoria, Lady Diana Cooper's elder sister, looks more like a waif than the granddaughter of a duke.

record, for example, of the superbly photographed Civil War or the opening of the West. Only people and events connected with Britain and its royal family are represented in the Royal Archives. Photography as art, however, was also collected and valued.

Finally, this exhibition is unique in that the queen has given her gracious permission that original photographs, not copies, go on public view. It is now possible to appreciate the full beauty, diversity, and richness of the historic images assembled in the royal albums. Few photograph collections have been so meticulously conserved or have seen so little of the light of day. When the show is over, the pages removed from the albums will be sewn back into their gilt-leather bindings and returned to the shelves of the Royal Archives among the boxes of fine prints and snapshots in silver frames that constitute one of the most important collections of historical photographs in private hands.

The photographs in the Royal Archives were commissioned, purchased, taken by, or presented to past British monarchs and their immediate families. While from time to time the collection is enlarged by purchases and by gifts of relevant material, what fascinates its curator, Frances Dimond, is the composition of the archive and the history associated with each picture (Photographs relating to the present royal family are kept by them and are not part of the Royal Archives.) The picture captions are often in royal handwriting, and the organization of the albums is significant, whether in formal nineteenth-century manner or the spontaneous style that went along with the snapshot craze at the turn of the century. An excerpt from Queen Victoria's *Reminiscences*, written in 1861 soon after Albert's death, is illuminating: "I always kept for those evegs. [the one or two nights a week when Victoria and Albert dined alone] the placing [of] any new drawings & photographs into the various albums - wh. my beloved Angel always did himself - There were the so called View Albums, 9 in number - filled since the year 40 with views of all the places we visited . . . Then there were the 'Journey Albums', - 6 in number, begun in 42 - into which we placed all the prints, woodcuts & photographs we cd. get of the places we visited, went thro', & events wh took place - & it was such an amusement to collect all these on our journies. I sent for all that cd. be got, wherever we went to - & when they arrived he selected them, & they were then kept to be sorted - when we got home again, & he (as in everything) showed such wonderful method in sorting & arranging them . . . It was such an amusement—such an interest."

Prince Arthur and Prince Alfred in the costume of Sikh princes, Osborne, September 6, 1854, by Ernst Becker.
Queen Victoria's nine children often dressed in costume and presented short plays and recitations to their parents on special occasions. This photograph was made shortly after a visit to the queen from the deposed maharaja Dhuleep Singh of the Punjab, who perhaps brought the boys these exotic clothes.

Photography was invented in Britain and France at almost the same time, but the British process of negative/positive laid the foundation for all subsequent developments. On April 13, 1839, only two months after details of William Henry Fox Talbot's photogenic drawing process were released, Queen Victoria was shown some salt prints by a relative of Talbot's and not only praised their "exactness" but wished to "try to do some herself." A year and a half later, Caroline Feilding, Talbot's half-sister, showed her Talbot's second and more sophisticated photographic process, called calotype. The queen expressed her desire to place these prints in an album with her other photogenic drawings; this makes her one of the earliest col-

Czarevitch Alexis of Russia on board the imperial yacht* Standart *at Reval, in the Baltic, 1908, by Queen Alexandra.
Queen Alexandra was a well-known amateur photographer, who used Kodak cameras and processing. Her snapshots were published by a newspaper in 1908 as Queen Alexandra's Christmas Gift Book. *It was a huge success, and its proceeds went to about thirty charities. Queen Alexandra was the czar's aunt, and she and the king were on close terms with their doomed Russian relatives. The album from which this photograph was taken contains many other informal, happy snapshots. Alexis inherited hemophilia from Queen Victoria through his mother, who was her granddaughter.*

Princess Alice of Albany, 1886, by George Piner Cartland. *Princess Alice, often described as "very dainty," was the daughter of the queen's youngest son, Prince Leopold, duke of Albany. A hemophiliac, he died at thirty-one, and Princess Alice became close to her grandmother. She married Prince Alexander of Teck (Queen Mary's brother); and in 1917, when the royal family replaced its Germanic titles with English ones, the Tecks became earl and countess of Athlone. At the time of her death, in 1981, in her ninety-eighth year, Princess Alice was the last survivor of all Queen Victoria's thirty-seven grandchildren and the oldest member of the royal family.*

From a series taken January 30, 1862, after the Hartley Colliery disaster, Northumberland, by W. & D. Downey. *Owing to machine failure, two hundred men were trapped in a mine and died. Queen Victoria immediately sent the Newcastle photographers William and Daniel Downey to the site. Here they record the owner of the colliery and four surviving sinkers. Nineteenth-century Englishmen counted on the infallibility of the machine; an accident like this disturbed deepest assumptions.*

lectors of the medium. She had ascended the throne in 1837, on the eve of the photographic age, and lived to see the birth of cinematography.

Prince Albert, who was Victoria's mentor as well as consort, was deeply impressed by photography's educational applications. As early as the 1850s, he proposed photographing Raphael's sketches, drawings, and finished works and commissioned photographers to make copies of the Raphael material in the Royal Library and throughout the world. As chairman of the Great Exhibition of 1851, Prince Albert saw to it that over 700 photographs were exhibited and that the illustrations in the three volumes of the *Report of the Juries* were photographs, not engravings.

Albert prided himself on his appreciation of fine art, and his visits with the queen to the early photographic salons, their patronage of the Photographic Society, founded in 1853, their active purchasing of art photographs, and their sitting for their own portraits were a boon to artists who were switching from the brush to the camera. They made excellent choices in commissioning photographers. Roger Fenton, the best British photographer of the 1850s, was often invited to Windsor Castle to make portraits and views, and his expedition to photograph the war in the Crimea was facilitated by royal patronage. Queen Victoria called upon Francis Bedford, a medal winner at photographic exhibitions, when she decided to give Prince Albert a surprise birthday present of sixty photographs of his native Coburg. She sent Bedford to Gotha the following year.

After Albert's death, Victoria saw photography as a way of holding fast to her memories. The ring on her finger and her bracelet bore his photographic likeness, and every bed she slept in had his framed portrait on the headboard above her pillows. Rooms he had used were photographed to ensure that nothing was moved out of place. As her family and empire expanded, Victoria came to depend on this most faithful of recording systems to keep track of her progeny and her possessions. She seems to have made many judgments on the evidence of photographs.

Mr. and Mrs. John Moore
married seventy years, September 6, 1894; photographer unknown.
Queen Victoria, never reconciled to Albert's early death, felt that her happy marriage was brutally cut short, so it seems at first surprising that she should have been interested in those of her subjects who celebrated the anniversaries of long marriages. The queen also collected portraits of subjects over a hundred years old and mothers who had many sons serving in the army.

The Long Walk, Windsor, 1860, by Roger Fenton. *A photograph balanced and harmonious, yet with a bold mark down the middle that transforms a Victorian landscape into a powerful, abstract work. Few nineteenth-century photographers had Fenton's mastery of line and form.*

After 1861, the number of portraits in the collection increased, while fewer art photographs, copies of paintings, and travel pictures were acquired or commissioned. Queen Victoria came to value photographic portraiture over all other kinds. Forty-four uniformly bound albums, entitled *Portraits of Royal Children 1848–1899*, were assembled during her life. Gladstone, whom the queen disliked, was indignant at the slight when he received "a two-penny scrap" upon retirement, where previous prime ministers had been presented with the queen's portrait in oil or bronze. The veracity of photography, however, appealed to the queen's sense of integrity. Gradually, as her children grew up and married, they compiled their own albums. The present exhibition draws from all the albums, daguerreotypes, photographic jewelry, and loose prints that entered the Royal Archives between 1842 and 1910. The Windsor Castle collection is fascinating not only because the very human people in the pictures were kings and queens, kaisers and czarinas, but because, looking at them, we witness history from a privileged position. □

The exhibition will be on view from March 1987 to February 1988, with a temporary closing from mid-October to late November. A catalogue of the exhibition will be published by Penguin Books. Material from the Royal Archives is quoted here by gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Jesse Lockhurst and Thomas O'Brien seen by the queen at Chatham, April 1856, by Cundall & Howlett. *Two of the many young soldiers wounded in the Crimean War, at the army hospital at Chatham. Queen Victoria would walk past the line of men, asking their names and ordering an aide to write down those most interesting to her. Afterward, she would request that photographs be taken. One of the albums at Windsor is filled with these forlorn faces. Victoria felt acutely that these men fought for her personally. Here Privates Lockhurst and O'Brien hold the grapeshot that wounded them.*

WHOSE ART IS IT, ANYWAY?

THE BRITISH MUSEUM SHOULD EITHER SHOW IT OR SEND IT BACK

BY
MICHAEL PYE

There is a drab London side street called Orsman Road, where middle-aged factories huddle together and the houses around are low. At the end, just before the public housing project, stand three glassy buildings in which no one now makes plastics or chairs. Instead, they have become a treasure house, in careful disguise.

In this unlikely place, the British Museum keeps its ethnographic collection, the vast and glorious attic of an empire. You can see a little—maybe 10 percent—at the Museum of Mankind, near the Burlington Arcade, in Mayfair; and some gold and ivory objects are locked in the strong rooms there. But mostly the treasure is guarded here, out of public view. For centuries, explorers and bureaucrats and missionaries and military men sent back anything they thought was fine—or odd, or valuable. Someone gave a "merman" to a visiting princess. It is an ugly, snarling thing: probably, the skin and tail come from a salmon; the head, from a blue-faced monkey, all sewn to make a shriveled mummy with oddly human hands. The British Museum was obliged to accept it politely and store it away.

The shelves stretch back as in a warehouse, rack after rack. The pen downstairs is full: there, a Yoruba door lies by an Indian totem door, all wrapped in plastic, watched by Aztec gods. The treasures seem to be waiting for a home.

These are treasures that transcend the usual definitions. One can sense, in these crates and boxes, actual lives. There are shrunken heads, smooth and dark, drawn up like a losing army in a glass case, and tatooed Maori skulls whose intricate patterns can be seen as a form of personal i.d. In a pile of light boxes lie blackened mummies from Peru with an odd sweet smell. There are faces in the boxes of pots—square, grimacing faces that peer up through tissue paper. They are Chimu portrait jugs from Peru. And there are names that would otherwise have been lost. In 1702, a Native American thanked a colonist called Winthrop for saving his wife from gangrene; he carved a spoon from the breastbone of a great auk. We know Papenau because his name is on his work.

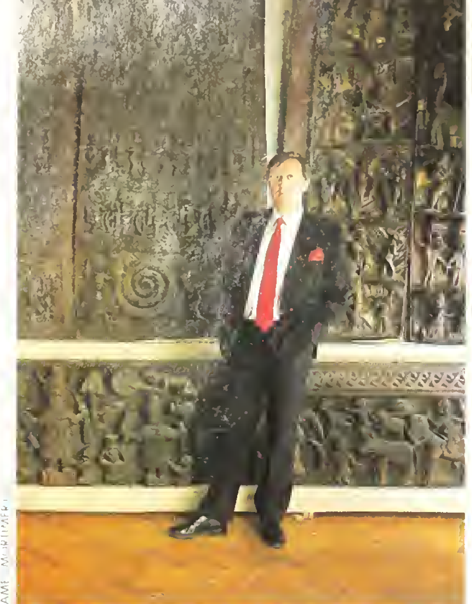
Click on the lights between the shelves, and you see the private life of other cultures, all packed away. It is irresistible to think it belongs elsewhere, where it can be at least seen. More appropriate would be to return it to the lands in which it was made and where it has great meaning. Why should the ethnographers be allowed to steal all these lives?

The simple response is to point out that the storehouse acts like a reference library, but without books: here, people come to read the sleds, scalps, spears, knives, boats, crowns, totems, skulls, and masks that crowd the shelves. This particular collection also influenced British artists like the sculptor Henry Moore and Eduardo Paolozzi. One soon realizes that the line between fine art and an ethnographic collection is an arbitrary one, often set by the taste of the last century.

Only an accident of taste gives a gallery to some Egyptian jewel but keeps as a part of a scientific collection, seen by hardly anybody, the lovely, deadly Olmec ceremonial adze. It takes the form of a were-jaguar, half cat and half child, carved in smooth jadeite; he scowls at the world. Whoever made this lived some three thousand years ago in Central America's first recorded civilization. And what is the qualitative difference between a Chippendale highboy, on display in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the lovely gamelan pieces that Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore, brought back from Java? Red and heavily gilded, covered with dragons and birds, it is one of the oldest collections of instruments played at shadow-puppet shows. Yet it is in a warehouse.

The snake is even more disturbing—a still, coiled rattlesnake, carved in granite. It is stored away on the American floor and has been called one of the finest animal sculptures in the whole Aztec corpus. The

In storage: an astonishing sun mask, made last century by the Bella Coola Indians of coastal northwest America.



Malcolm McLeod, the curator of ethnography, in front of two carved Yoruba doors.

snake left Mexico in the months after independence in 1821, long before the national patrimony was indexed and protected; it traveled legally. And yet the Mexicans ask if, morally speaking, it really belongs in a London storeroom, or even to the Spanish official who collected it in the eighteenth century. It is part of their own culture.

The British won't surrender a shard of it. No law was broken to make this collection, they insist, which is not surprising since the British made the laws. They turn down requests for objects from even insiders like the Sri Lankan director of antiquities, who knows the collection well, because he completed his Ph.D. in the museum. And they will not hand back the dull gold sword of kingship and the coronation stool of the Ashanti of Ghana, even though the curator of ethnography has known the Ashanti king ever since he finished his fieldwork in the kingdom and left owing the court five pounds (nowadays the two men talk diplomatically at the Dorchester Hotel). But nothing goes back, because British law forbids the museum to part with anything unless there is a perfect duplicate in the collection. The unique—the signs of kingship, the gods—have to stay in their boxes.

Not every object is as ticklish, culturally, as an image of god. Sometimes, the museum holds a dark side of history. Take the mourner's dress from Tahiti, a jangling affair of mother-of-pearl and bark cloth and the spiky white feathers of the tropic bird. It was given to Captain Cook on his second South Seas voyage, and even when you pry off the lid of its box it can still startle. But if you know who wore it, it is a thing of horror. The mourner led a rabble that bullied, sometimes even killed, passersby, avenging the wrongs done to the dead. Those thousands of pearl pendants, like a pretty breastplate, were meant to terrify. It is only if you take away its meaning that you can think it lovely.

Right: Neatly and fully packed shelves stretch for miles in the Orsman Road warehouses.

The explorers satisfied all kinds of nineteenth-century curiosity—the taste for the bizarre and for the carefully scientific. Sailors on an Admiralty expedition to find the Northwest Passage, that elusive, icy corridor between Atlantic and Pacific, met the Inuit people of Greenland. They sent back a sled, made from bone and ivory lashed together, and a harpoon lance. The blade proved almost more interesting than the rest because it is made from meteorite iron; Greenland has the heaviest falls of meteorites in the world. The man who most valued the Inuit work was Michael Faraday, father of electromagnetism.

The adventurers liked to keep a distinct, philistine distance even from things they greatly admired. Hugh Romilly, collector of glorious malanggan, found them "atrociously ugly . . . but splendidly carved and painted." They are bright wood carvings, some so deeply filigreed that they seem more air than wood; they are busy with a surreal rush of gods, fish, men, flowers, and snakes. They come from Romilly's explorations off New Guinea.

He had been hugging the coast of New Ireland in an open boat for days, and he wrote back to his mother on October 12, 1883, "I am writing to you under somewhat sensational circumstances. A cannibal picnic is going on not two hundred yards off me. I should be extremely sorry to alter that distance."

These cannibals were, he said, "the worst and wildest natives I have hitherto had the pleasure of meeting." He had seen

a defeated army wrapped in stout leaves and cooked for four days; as a visiting chief, he was offered the head. "I managed to look cheerful and to prevent being sick," he wrote, "but they were offended with me all the same for refusing it." Casually, he adds, "By the way, my young chief sold me a most extraordinary temple for a gigantic pig. I think he was sorry afterwards, as he had an embarras de richesses in the way of fresh meat."

Romilly and his chief seem oddly mismatched. The islander was selling something vital, a totem that binds a clan together. Malanggan are carved for mourning, though they also mark the ceremonies wherein an adolescent replaces a dead man in the adult tribe. Yet, to Romilly, the malanggan were simply curiosities for which he had affection. He was ready to give up his own oilskins to protect them on their sea voyage, to make his crew's life miserable to preserve them, even to keep them when he knew rough weather would overturn his laden boat. Nevertheless, he missed the point of the malanggan. "If you know anyone in England who is in want of a temple," he wrote to his mother, "I will send it home." Why is it still there, bereft of meaning, except to scientists?

Other collectors were more serious-minded. A British colonial administrator salvaged the "faces of the dead"—intricate three-dimensional screens from the Kalabari area of Nigeria, whose portraits and mirrors hold the power of ancestors like capital for the great Kalabari trading houses. The screens were under very direct threat from a late-Victorian prophet called Garrick Braide, who proclaimed himself Elijah, reportedly sold his bathwater, and offered salvation (for a fee) to anyone who wrote his name in his little exercise book. Braide wanted to smash the old religions, and if he had succeeded, he might have taken a curious story out of history.

The "faces of the dead" were made for slaves—the slaves who became heads of the very trading houses on which the slave trade depended. Such men were not allowed near the traditional Kalabari shrines and needed shrines of their own. The "faces of the dead" show the founder of a trading house, his dependents, and those he has defeated; the mask associated with his masquerade, or secret society; and his reflection—because reflection, ghost, and spirit are the same word in Kalabari.

Still packed away: these ivory salt cellars were carved by Sherbro and Benin tribes in the late fifteenth century.

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Sometimes, you can actually see when cultures met. On a towering Yoruba door, a carved panel shows the British resident arriving for the first time: he is pointy-nosed, in a solar topee, and he rests in a hammock. More often, you can see culture being used. A carved, painted hornbill from Borneo, mauve and pink with an intricate tail, looks less gaudy than others in the collection, but its story is more curious. British administrators were trying to make peace between tribes by means of an ad hoc Olympic games, a little pig-killing, and speeches. What made the peace stick was this bird, more usually a symbol of impending war, a standard carried by a bellicose tribe. It presided over the peace, wrote a British official, "a huge, gaily painted effigy of a hornbill, one of the birds sacred to all the tribes, and on it were hung thousands of cigarettes of home-grown tobacco wrapped in dried banana leaf." Wouldn't you, knowing only that, want to see this effigy?

Wouldn't you make a special trip to see the papery, intricate ivories from the old slave stations of Benin and Sherbro, in West Africa? They exist because "they're airport art—early airport art, of course," says Malcolm McLeod, keeper of ethnography, referring to these mementos of cultural clash, these objects that freeze a moment of contact. In fact, they were carved by African craftsmen for the Portuguese around 1500 and shipped back to Lisbon for the royal collections. Their appeal is enduring. The Medici owned Benin ivories half a century after they were made; and when Napoleon crashed into Portugal, other ivories were dispersed across Europe. When you see the pieces, of translucent ivory cut like jewels, their value and wonder are clear. But nothing about what they are, or what they signify, is simple.

Some are supposed to be salt cellars, but they have chambers one above the other, which seems impractical. Some are certainly drinking horns or forks or dagger handles, and some are simply "lidded vessels." On one such is a Portuguese official, sharp-nosed, who supports with his attendants a ship with stylized rigging and a sailor in the crow's nest. It is only when you look a little more closely that the questions begin. The Portuguese official has the stubby legs of an African figure. The sides of the ship look more like tiling than like planks; the rigging was carved by someone who had never seen a ship under full sail. There are drinking horns where the royal coat of arms has been carved upside down; in Europe this would be a deadly insult. Fine snakes hang down like

JAMES MORTIMER

threads, and alligators snap at the head and groin of an outstretched figure. Women are bare-breasted but their thighs are covered, in deference to African propriety. Three mermen hold hands.

What's African and what's European has been muddled, mysteriously. If the Portuguese ordered these things, why do they look so unlike anything made in Portugal? The superficial links to European silver of the period evaporate when you look at the details. But if these pieces are part of different West African traditions, why are they so similar in both Benin and Sherbro—which have only the Portuguese in common? On the cut surface of the ivory, codes meet—showing, perhaps, how little the "redmen" really knew about the "natives," and vice versa. Still, the ivories are lovely objects—far too beautiful, one would think, to bury in storerooms or in warehouses on Orsman Road. If the facilities of the Museum of Mankind—or the British Museum itself—are too cramped to display such wonders, there must be somewhere else.

The sheer riches hidden away in these drab warehouses make a powerful argument just for access to what they contain. There is no need to build a temple for "primitive art," as the Met, in New York, did, for a tiny fragment of what the British Museum holds. Instead, we need some efficient space where all these stories can begin to come alive, because the objects in storage are not only about remote others; sometimes they are about us and our fathers. Take the somber wood death figure from the Haida people of Queen Charlotte's Island: it is dark as sorrow, with a blank face, and it comes with the story of a shaman who broke his leg in the forest and starved to death ("the kind of story," says the assistant keeper Jonathan King, "you make up for a keeper of ethnography"). But while it's true the Haida "buried" their eminent dead in the air on totem poles and carved these figures in their memory, this one was made for passing trade. That says something for the serious acquisitiveness of Victorian travelers, something about our parents' attitudes.

There are other objects, here in the warehouse, that are not simply "authentic"—made by some people for their own use. They are close to the core of a culture, and they stir other thoughts. Look at the king figures from the Kuba of Zaire, wood carvings that have a sheen of oil. That oil,

Unvisited: a terrifying phalanx of carved and painted wooden figures from New Guinea.

to the Kuba, is what brings out the spirit of royalty.

These figures reached the British Museum by an elaborately ethical route. There was a Hungarian adventurer named Emil Torday, newly returned from an errand for the Belgians. "They wanted someone to put up the flag near Lake Tanganyika," says the assistant keeper John Mack, "and he did. But when he came back, he needed funds—and he needed a reason to do some solid piece of adventuring." The museum commissioned him in 1904 to go hunting for cultures and equipped him with a "spymaster," to whom he reported as regularly as his travels allowed. Torday went to the lands between the Kasai and Sankuru rivers, in Zaire. There, he entered into solemn diplomatic session with the king and court of the Kuba people. He tried to explain the British Museum and to persuade the Kuba that they would want to be represented there. "He told them," Mack says, "it was a kind of Old Curiosity Shop in Museum Street."

The Kuba sent wooden kings to represent them ("Probably," Mack says, "Torday paid for them"). These figures once stood in the royal treasure house; a new king slept there and rubbed the figures with oil to activate the spirit of royalty.

Opposite: Moche portrait vases from Peru, some dating back to 200 B.C., peer from their packings. Below: A Hawaiian drum, collected by Captain Cook in the 1770s.

ERICH LESSING/MAGNUM (2)

Unheard: ornate cymbals from a Javanese gamelan acquired by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles in the early nineteenth century.

Each figure represents a particular king. But these are not portraits; rather, like medieval saints, they present, symbolically, the king who is shown. Shamba Bolongongo is here, the king credited with bringing to his people the arts of civilization in the early seventeenth century; we can date his reign by when Halley's comet blazed into the African sky. He sits before a mancala, a game board for a kind of backgammon.

He and other ancient things stop the breath and lead to troubling questions. The dark green diorite mask, which is shown on the cover of this magazine—Olmecoid from Mexico and perhaps 2,000 years old—should that be here? A Nazca pendant from Peru, with jovial, glorious colors set into a half shell; a gold pendant from Colombia, made before Columbus, which is a ceremonial knife, whose handle is a human being set about with beaked creatures and monkeys with birds' heads: they seem to belong in London only because they've been with Europeans so long.

And some things are shocking to the eye—feather gods from Hawaii, puppetlike figures with dogs' teeth packing their mouths and big, pearly eyes; where they come from, they are gaudy totems of war, of Hawaiian royalty, of the land of Hawaii itself. When you pack them away in Shoreditch, they are reduced to being mere data for scholars. Physically, they survive only because some bureaucrat, diplomat, adventurer, or missionary sent them to the great imperial storehouse back in London for safekeeping. As it did many things, the museum salvaged and restored them. But without their life, the meaning that makes them precious, what kind of treasure are they? If the meaning is lost, what is the point of keeping the dead teeth and feathers? Why not give such objects back?

For the keepers of great scientific collections, the answer is obvious. Storage makes possible the kind of scholarly work that could never happen if objects were scattered to their homes. You can compare cultures, watch some motif as it spreads from continent to continent. And simply to preserve that evidence protects the past from the politics and carelessness that can wreck what we know about ourselves.

But wait a minute. The Ashanti know about themselves and can learn more on their own territory. What the collection makes possible is the translation of all other cultures into terms of our own—our Western ethnography. We are not just in the business of safekeeping. We are also saying it is more important that we study ancient Aztec effigies or Hawaii's feather gods—take them over by understanding them—than that anyone ever worship them again. Some things die when they are taken away from the place where they have meaning. Something wonderful becomes a scrap of skin or gold, presenting loveless problems of conservation. Life is reduced to chemistry.

Maybe these are highfalutin thoughts to have in the world's attic, amid all the shrunken heads and old lunch boxes, but the faces make you think that way. The eyes of the feather gods are staring; the sheen on the Kuba king's head is what once made a man royal. You look at these things and you wonder: can they possibly belong in a warehouse? □

Michael Pye is a novelist and a writer for the London Daily News.

NUMBERS GAME

WHICH IS THE OLDEST SILVER GHOST STILL AVAILABLE?

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER MAUSS

How many cars can be the oldest Silver Ghost in the world? Obviously, one. The original model was purchased by the Rolls-Royce company and restored some years ago; it is, in effect, in a museum.

Now comes a harder question. How many cars can be the second-oldest Silver Ghost? The answer, according to the evidence, is two—or two that claim to be, at any rate. They are both in the United States, and, strangely, both have a claim to the same chassis number—60553, the number that the second-oldest would possess. Neither car has the original bronze chassis plate that was attached to the fire wall of every Silver Ghost—the only indisputable proof of age.

One Silver Ghost is owned by Martin R. Infante, who purchased it from the estate of Nelson A. Rockefeller, the former governor of New York State and vice-president of the United States. Before that, it belonged to his brother Winthrop Rockefeller, the governor of Arkansas, who kept it in his Museum of Automobiles, in Petit Jean Mountain, Arkansas. The car was originally purchased new by Samuel Stevens of Rome, New York, and was the possession of the Stevens family until 1947. Samuel Stevens, Jr., a retired airline pilot now living in California, vouches for its authenticity. He has family pictures of it taken in 1907 and a registration dated 1913 with the serial number 553. This Silver Ghost is the only 1907 model that still has its original distributor. However, it possesses a plaque bearing the number 60565. Recently, the above-cited evidence has convinced Samuels that the number was originally 60553. The plaque, possibly affixed later, may well have belonged to another Rolls that the Samuels family owned, which was subsequently junked. Infante is willing to part with this car for a million dollars.

The other car belongs to a Florida insurance executive, Richard K. Carroll, who purchased it from a former cigar manufacturer, Millard W. Newman, of Tampa, Florida. He bought the car in 1960 for $3,000 from a collector named Kirkland Gibson, who lives in Rhode Island. Gibson, in turn, acquired it in 1931, from, he says, "a gentleman whose name I have forgotten; I saw the car on the road and agreed to buy it on the spot."

This car's authenticity is backed by two important antique-car clubs.

Here, the plot thickens. Although Newman insists that he discovered the 60553 serial number stamped on the engine legs, Gibson says that in all the years the Silver Ghost was in his possession he never saw a number. Indeed, he adds that he always thought that the Rolls might be a 1909 or 1910 model—he was not sure, because a new body was put on the chassis in the 1920s. In response, Newman points at several parts of the vehicle as proof that it is a 1907. "The frame is perfectly straight with no hump

over the rear axle, just as on the original Silver Ghost. The frame on a 1907 R-R is much different than on Ghosts of 1909 or 1910." Newman found an original 1907 seven-passenger Barker Tourer body and fitted it on the car shortly after buying it. "I think I did justice to chassis number 553 to bring it back to its original splendor!" The car is now in England, where it is being restored from the ground up by J. N. Harley Engineering Ltd., in Alveston, Warwickshire. It is not for sale, though; if it were, it would presumably be worth at least a million dollars—assuming it is the oldest Silver Ghost available.

Enter Maurice de Montfalcon, an Englishman and Rolls-Royce fancier living in New York. Admittedly, he has an interest in the case: he was instrumental in arranging the purchase of the Rockefeller car by Infante. Montfalcon feels that the Newman version is not the second-oldest. On this subject, Montfalcon does not mince words; indeed, he has few compliments to pay the Newman-Carroll car. Carroll, a more laconic type, replies with the threat of legal action against anyone who impugns his Silver Ghost's authenticity.

One man who could cast the light of objective knowledge on the subject is J. N. Harley, the restorer of the Newman-Carroll car. Says he, "I have spent some considerable time examining this motorcar and [I am] now in a position to publish the summary of my findings." To share those findings, Harley requests a payment of $2,500 (plus expenses). Rather than pay, this magazine asked other experts and learned that Harley seems to have found nothing to discredit the Carroll car.

By all the laws of common sense, this ought to be a simple, open-and-shut case. Alas, it is not. Each car has its champions within the ranks of antique-Rolls-Royce collectors. Many factors are involved beyond the chassis number 60553, and certainly those numbers on the legs of the Newman-Carroll are not conclusive in themselves. They could have meant something else altogether; it is quite likely, for example, that engine numbers preceded chassis numbers because of the experimental nature of the engineering. On the other hand, it is also possible that the numbers mean nothing at all. What is sure is that both cars cannot be equally old.

—J.-C. Suarès and Melik Kaylan

Top: The Rockefeller-Infante Rolls-Royce, the only 1907 model with its original distributor.

THE POET OF COLOR

WHY A TOP MUSEUM IS HONORING MANUEL CANOVAS

BY NANCY HOVING AND PATRICIA CORBETT

Right now, on the heels of its Yves Saint Laurent retrospective, the Musée des Arts de la Mode, one of Paris's hot new museums, is exhibiting the works of Manuel Canovas. For those who don't recognize his name, Canovas is to decorative home fabrics what Yves Saint Laurent is to haute couture. What makes this show doubly interesting is that museums have never before taken fabrics designed for home decorating seriously, regarding them as poor relatives of the decorative arts. So, what is it about Manuel Canovas that elevates his work to the level of art?

The handsome, broad-shouldered man with an engaging smile strides energetically into the room, hand thrust forward in greeting, uttering words of apology for keeping us waiting. Although his classical features and deep tan betray his Mediterranean origins, he sports the offhand tweedy garb of an English landowner (only he is much better tailored). His easy Latin manner is seasoned with an unexpected dry, almost British sense of humor. We are in the sun-filled salon of his Paris apartment. The dazzling yellow silk moiré that covers the walls of the high-ceilinged room, the draperies at the windows, and the upholstery fabrics on the furniture are of his own design and manufacture. On tables and shelves lie his favorite things—objects, pictures, and scraps of ephemera collected during a lifetime of world travel. They serve as the inspiration for much of what he creates.

Enthusiastic as a schoolboy, he leaps up to show off yet another treasure, his pleasure palpable that his visitor should know the work of a largely overlooked artist he collects. His is an outgoing personality, one at home in any company and in any setting. Canovas clearly enjoys living well, being surrounded by beauty. Fortunately for a man who loves to travel, he must often do so, but he spends as much time as possible absorbed in the study of botany. His life seems to be preparation for his design work, and indeed his biography, at least in retrospect, seems to argue for predestination.

As a child growing up in Paris in a privileged environment, Manuel was trained in draftsmanship by his father, Blas, the younger son of an aristocratic Castilian family. He recalls that each carefully executed botanical study after nature won him a riding lesson. He recalls laughingly, "My passion for drawing was quite risqué at the time." Any interest or activity verging on the aesthetic was considered "perilously effeminate" by his father's family in Spain. But his father was a great amateur of and dabbler in the visual arts, and he encouraged his son's passion. At the same time he instilled in him a concern for quality, a key to the Canovas style, in which nothing—not the smallest detail—is left to chance: "I am very rational. I know many contemporary artists believe in the power of random discoveries or lucky flukes, but although chance may play a small role in my choice of subject, I laboriously plan every aspect of my drawing, down to the very last brushstroke."

The young Canovas was schooled as a fine artist, studying at the École du Louvre, the beaux arts academies of Paris and of Rome, and at Rome's Villa Medici as well. He began his world travels in South America and Mexico as an archaeologist but confesses that he was diverted by the lushness and brilliant colors of Mexico. He sketched what appealed to him, particularly flowers, and left archaeology to others. After trying his hand briefly at architecture, Canovas worked as a freelance textile designer in New York City in the early 1960s. His international background and peregrinations gave him a cosmopolitan aura that was not always easy to wear. "Although I am never entirely foreign in any part of the world," he says, "I am never entirely at home either." This sophistication extends to his designs, giving them a definite polish.

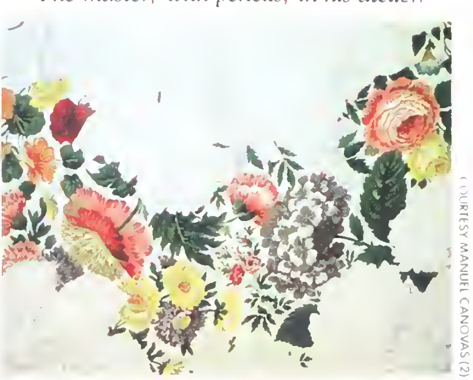
In 1962, he returned home to Paris, deeply influenced by his experience and with a special affinity for American styles in home decoration. To this day, although he recognizes a European flair for historical restorations, the interiors he most admires are in the homes of friends in San Francisco and New York.

Twenty-five years ago, however, his bold designs and bright colors were out of step with what was being done in the traditional French fabric houses. They then specialized in drab hues—faded rose, lifeless blue, and dull gold—and, Canovas recalls, "the style of French decorating had settled into imitation Louis XVI." Pompadour roses were the major print motif. Itching to use fresh colors and paint large-scale, interesting flowers of his own devising, Canovas was encouraged by the success of the English decorator David Hicks, who was just then beginning to make his mark by "revamping the world of decoration" with the daring use of unexpected colors and fabrics—covering walls with flannel and old armchairs with tweeds. (Even Buckingham Palace was introduced to shocking pink.) He nonetheless strove

Opposite: Japanese-inspired jacquards and printed chintz in Canovas colors.

BETTINA RHEIMS

The master, with pencils, in his atelier.



COURTESY MANUEL CANOVAS (2)

Middle: A recast 1850 document print. Above: Voluptuous peonies: "Bien Aimée."

COURTESY MANUEL CANOVAS (3)

Top: Daffodils in a spatterware pitcher join tulips, hyacinths, and anemones in a festival of spring: "Quel Beau Printemps."

Reference file: cookie jar with swatches.

to avoid a complete break with tradition: "I still hate the ephemeral nature of fashion, the endless effort of keeping up-to-date," he says. "What I like is the reassuring, unchanging quality of the home." And although he introduces some forty new patterns each year, they are fully intended to withstand the passage of time and changes in style.

Still, when the first five-piece Canovas collection appeared, in 1962, the distinctive patterns, especially the precisely sketched flowers and the variety and sharpness of the colors, shocked the French. Nonetheless, a market existed, "a refined minority of people showing a real interest in decoration," many of them belonging to a group of rising young French professionals. To them, Canovas appeared to have thrown open the shuttered windows and brought the garden inside. It seemed new—and American—to them. As he puts it, "The Europeans insist that my work has an American flavor—bright hues, large motifs—while my United States clients feel that my rich, elaborate patterns have a definite old-world quality." The first lady Mrs. John F. Kennedy used the rose-and-white pattern called "Gift of Summer" in decorating her daughter Caroline's White House bedroom. Canovas's success was assured.

Like Saint Laurent in his field, Canovas has had a major influence on home decorating, especially in France. Though he insists that "there is no such thing as a typical Canovas print," his admirers have no trouble recognizing his distinctive look, which, if it can be characterized in a few words, is like his personality: open, warm, full of color, sophisticated, and intelligent. What doesn't show is Canovas's hard work. He is constantly sketching what interests him. He has been entranced by the bright daylight and vibrant greens of California, the rustic sobriety of Amish and Shaker artifacts, the soft colors of the saris worn by village women in India, and the muted tones and subtle textures of Japanese obis. While most of his textiles bear the imprint "*dessiné par Manuel Canovas,*" some are more modestly marked "*édité par Manuel Canovas.*" This category includes his *trouvailles,* scraps of antique textiles that he reproduces without any modifications whatsoever. "You know, there are some designs that are so perfect, just as they are—like little baroque marches—that there is simply no point in trying to do a variation." Canovas elegantly shrugs off accusations of *passéisme,* excessive fondness for things of the past: "A writer once said that history is like a pretty woman who may be seduced on condition that one give her handsome children."

Sometimes, old patterns spark off the creative process in which colors, scale, and texture are transformed: "You probably won't believe it, but that swatch of leopard-spotted material, which looks like an Yves Saint Laurent shawl, actually derives from a Louis XV design." Even his own designs can trigger a fresh response. The Paris show has given him an opportunity to revisit some of his early designs. "There are some I would never repeat," he admits, "but I am also surprised to find motifs that are worth reworking—and reissuing—even after two decades." Inspiration derives also from objects that appeal to him that he has been gathering for years. They include old-master drawings, nineteenth-century silk-sample books, and a group of ribbons that belonged to Empress Eugénie. But none is stranger than his collection of sands from around the world, neatly labeled and stored in large jars (200 in all), many of them lined up on the shelves of his library. The textures and various colors of the sands have inspired a number of his woven fabrics. Canovas's palette seems almost infinitely varied, since he is able to draw on a rich color base of 7,000 hues, a range that simply does not interest most other commercial-textile manufacturers.

Flowers are Manuel Canovas's overriding passion, his "secret garden" of artistic inspiration: he has illustrated a total of 215 species in his designs. These include chrysanthemums, irises, hyacinths, even the American dogwood, which he diligently studied from photographs. To draw a plant, he says, he must first understand it, its structure, the way the petals move, how the leaves are attached. It takes quite some time before the flower can be freely translated, given those flowing, stylized contours that are Canovas's hallmark; only then is it possible for him to indulge in what he calls "the occasional infidelity" regarding natural shades of color. His favorite blooms inspire him with the same enthusiasm he might use to describe a beautiful woman. He praises the peony's "voluptuousness, tenderness, and gentle scent," setting it above the rose in his private botanical pantheon. "Bien Aimée," an exuberant explosion of pink blossoms, is, to Canovas, an "homage rendered to its loveliness." He enjoys as well the challenge of designing geometrics: "It is a question of getting the harmony exactly right, especially with stripes, where the almost mathematical balance of colors reminds me of musical composition, a symphony of tones." No wonder it takes him a minimum of three days to complete each

Canovas's translation of two eighteenth-century Chinese document prints, "Multiple Splendor" and "The Celestial Empire," appears at left, beside floral prints drawn from life.

design. Summarizing the steps in his creative process, Manuel Canovas states that he visualizes color first, "the way a composer hears his notes before actually jotting them down." He then tackles the design and determines the most appropriate material: "If the pattern is soft, I'll use a glaze fabric. If it's sharp, I generally prefer a more rustic textile." Finally he must face the hardest decision of all: the choice of name. "A name is a very important feature: it condenses and expresses the essence of the entire creative process," he explains. He once ripped the pages out of the New Delhi telephone book and gave his collection of Indian-inspired designs colorful local names.

Reaching for a large white bristol sheet dotted with small pansies ("not the gross greenhouse variety, but the small woodland species like violets"), Canovas squints at his latest design like a painter about to apply the final touch to an almost perfectly balanced composition. "I might just call it 'Brune et d'Or': *brune* like a dark-haired woman, and *d'or* for the posies' golden heart." He repeats the phrase several times, as if trying it out for size: it has a lilting rhythm reminiscent of his other floral patterns, such as "Quel Beau Printemps" or "Bien Aimée." Canovas follows different guidelines in naming single-tint or geometric textiles: their titles have to be shorter, punchier, and easy to remember, like "Colibri," "Confetti," "Mascara."

The quality of refinement that informs Canovas's designs carries over into every facet of his operation. "I take great pride in caring for and maintaining the tools and materials with which I work," he explains. A bouquet of sharp-colored pencils and soft sable brushes rests in a Chinese rock-crystal vase—his one good-luck talisman. It is part of an all-embracing philosophy, which he sums up thus: "I just don't trust creators who dress like Che Guevara." Conservative words, but from an authentic revolutionary. □

IN SEARCH OF

AUGUST WILSON

MARC HAUSER

A SHY GENIUS TRANSFORMS THE AMERICAN THEATER

BY ISHMAEL REED

Except for *A Raisin in the Sun*, which ran for fifteen months on Broadway in 1959–60, black drama in the United States has always meant fringe drama. Even such a solid piece of stagecraft as Charles Fuller's *A Soldier's Play* never played to a mainstream audience until it reached the screen as *A Soldier's Story*, three years ago. Even though Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf* fascinated Broadway theatergoers in 1976–78, American drama has for the most part been white man's drama: O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and so on down to Neil Simon.

Old pro with protégé: Lloyd Richards and Wilson at the Yale Rep.

PAUL J. PENDERS

Then, from out of nowhere, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* came along. A new play by an unknown black playwright, it had theater people buzzing even before it got its first professional staging. After wowing them in New Haven, where serious theatrical reputations are still made, it scored on Broadway, too. Last year, the black playwright who had come out of left field won a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Whiting Foundation Award (designed to identify and support deserving writers of exceptional promise). The offers started pouring in from Hollywood. No, said August Wilson, I don't want to write screenplays; I want to write dramas of the black experience in America in the twentieth century, ten plays, one for each decade. Though he has since written the book for a new musical—*Mr. Jelly Roll,* based on the life of "Jelly Roll" Morton—due on Broadway this spring, he has not changed his mind about the movies. His planned series continues. By now, the third of the plays has been staged at the Yale Repertory Theatre, in New Haven, and this month, the second of them, *Fences*, opens on Broadway after successful runs in Chicago, Seattle, and San Francisco. (Maybe this time, the producers will make money. For all the plaudits, *Ma Rainey* wound up in the red.)

Since when could a black play capture the attention of everyone in America who cares about theater? August Wilson was someone whose work I would need to get to know. Not much chance to learn about him in Oakland, though, which is where I live. To watch him in action and see his work on the stage, it took a trip, not to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he lives, but to New Haven, the place where his ideas turn into theater.

On my way through New York, I stopped to see *Ma Rainey* on videotape at the Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts. This was my closest brush with Wilson's characters as they speak and move. At first, the publicity had led me to suspect the play of being the latest in a long series of "mammery" entertainments of the kind that have delighted and comforted white Americans since the days of Aunt Jemima and Hattie McDaniel. In fact, the play deals with the pride, frustration, exploitation, and internecine aggression that sprang from what Lloyd Richards has eloquently called the black people's "deprivation of possibility." Ma Rainey, the blues singer, plays only a supporting role. At the center are the conflicts—ending in bloodshed—among her backup musicians, four black men.

The action takes place on a single day, in a recording studio in Chicago in the 1920s. Ma Rainey is expected for a recording session. Until she arrives, nearly an hour late, her producer and agent—both white, both exploiters—wrangle about what to do about their imperious but profitable property. In the next room, her backup musicians are passing the time in bitter and angry, yet often wickedly funny, exchanges. One, earthy and cocky, hopes to start his own band. Another, an intellectual, taunts him with his own pie-in-the-sky ambitions. When Ma Rainey finally arrives, she is looking for trouble—and plenty ensues.

As a piece of theater, *Ma Rainey* is a completely original creation, a fascinating combination of hypnotic Afro-American storytelling forms with those of Greek drama. August Wilson is a paradox. The Black Power playwrights of the 1960s and '70s knew their Chekhov and Beckett before they discovered Malcolm X. Wilson knew all about Black Power long before he started writing for the theater, and he has carefully avoided studying other playwrights. He refuses to sacrifice the integrity of his native black traditions. His acceptance may just mean that the once-feared Black Power style of the sixties has entered the mainstream, where so many radical movements eventually settle. Black rock 'n' roll, once shunned, can now be heard on the sound tracks of automobile commercials.

Getting to see Wilson was like arranging to view a gem on loan

GOD, WILSON INSISTS, DOES NOT HEAR THE PRAYERS OF BLACKS.

from a private collection. Access is granted (and barred) by Lloyd Richards. Richards is the Yale Rep's artistic director, dean of the Yale School of Drama, a director with a string of credits going back to such landmarks as the original production of *A Raisin in the Sun*, and—most important of all for this story—the artistic director of the annual National Playwrights Conference at the O'Neill Theatre Center, in Waterford, Connecticut, where new scripts by playwrights known and unknown go through intensive workshops each summer. It was at the O'Neill that Richards and Wilson first crossed paths, working on the puzzling, disjointed fifty-nine-page script that eventually became *Ma Rainey*. Of all Richards's many gifts to the American theater, none is more important than August Wilson. You might say that Wilson is Richards's greatest creation. No wonder Richards is protective, even a little possessive.

Richards, who is a stocky five foot five, wears a grayish beard, and dresses with Prussian fastidiousness, looks like a man who could still give a good account of himself in a street fight. One day he accompanied me to a rehearsal for *Fences* at the Afro-American Cultural Center, on Park Street. The play involves a former baseball player and convict named Troy Maxson, now a garbageman, who spends a good deal of his time onstage raging against his fate and against those who are close to him: his wife, Rose; his sons, shiftless Lyons and idealistic Cory; and Bono, his best friend and buddy at work in the sanitation department. At the periphery is Troy's brother, Gabriel, a pathetic walking casualty of the war who wanders the streets playing a trumpet. Troy's downfall comes when he has an affair with a younger woman, Alberta, who dies in childbirth.

The part of Troy is played by James Earl Jones (who created the part in New Haven, played it in Chicago, and will star again on Broadway). He bounded in wearing white sneakers, jeans, a safari jacket with a dark brown patch on the chest, a blue shirt open at the collar, and a blue baseball cap. He seemed to be very at home with the material, especially with the long passages of storytelling. In an interview with *Theater* magazine, Mary Alice, who plays Rose, has said of her experience, "I can . . . relate to the oral tradition: my grandfather, my father, even my mother were always telling stories. This is a very African tradition. Dark people did not write it; it was passed on orally. That's very much a part of what I heard in the play." It looked as if Jones felt the same kind of connection.

I spent three and a half hours watching the rehearsal. Richards led the cast through a number of takes of act 2 of the two-act play. He never raised his voice, though he can sting even with tones dipped in honey. "I've been here for over an hour," he reminded an assistant at one point, "and you haven't offered me coffee, tea, or anything." This got an instant reaction. Occasionally he looked over his shoulder at me, the guest. On a sheet lying on a desk in front of another assistant I saw a cautionary note: "A VISITOR." I felt like an intruder.

A platform located behind a red stool with three steps leading to it represented the stage. Balloons left over from a party the previous night kept floating to the floor. Onstage, James Earl Jones had become a fifty-three-year-old baseball player dreaming of another chance, only to be denounced by his wife for his infidelity with Alberta. (When I asked Richards why there wasn't a liberated woman in *Fences* as there was in *Ma Rainey*, he replied that Alberta was liberated. The answer puzzled me at first, but then I recalled that, in the 1960s, feminist intellectuals encouraged single women to have and raise children on their own.) The cast was excellent, playing off Jones's energy as Troy, a man tortured by an accident of birth. "I wasn't the right color," Troy says, explaining why his career in baseball was stunted. If Richards ever takes his actors delving deep into the characters, this was not the day. His directions dealt mostly with specific details of movement, which he often calls choreography. Again and again he reminded the actor Courtney B. Vance (playing Cory) not to cross the line when his mother, Rose (played by Mary Alice), is talking about Troy's daughter, Raynell. In a later scene, when Cory comes home from the marines for Troy's funeral, Richards took particular time and care to show Vance how to lift Rose. "Don't lift her off the steps!" Richards warned. "And not too many hugs. This could get cloying."

By far the most intense moments of *Fences* come in act 2, scene 4, in a classic confrontation between a son and his father. Cory challenges Troy with the knowledge that the house Troy bought for his family—"my house," Troy keeps calling it—was actually paid for with disability money belonging to Gabriel.

"It ain't your yard!" Cory shouts. "You took Uncle Gabe's money he got from the army to buy this house. . . . Then you put him out."

Troy explodes, with all the cold fury of a proud man justly accused: "You get your black ass out of my yard!" The rehearsal hall thundered with the threat of violence.

Throughout the rehearsal, the man who dreamed up this confrontation remained in the shadows, in the background. Sometimes, you would even forget he was there.

Front-porch realism: James Earl Jones as Troy (left) in Fences.

MARC HAUSER

That is how August Wilson is: shy, unassuming, huskily soft-spoken to the point of inaudibility. Talking to him is like trying to communicate with a clam. He seems to be one of the people who reserve their words for the written page. His hairline is receding, and his skin color is of a reddish hue. His appearance suggests a European or Native American (possibly Cherokee) as well as African background. He never knew his father but knows that he was white. Maybe it was his beard and sensual eyes that made me think you could take his head and torso and place them on the lower parts of a horse, and you'd have a satyr from a Renaissance painting. A deliberate primitive, Wilson neither attends nor reads plays. He feels that when he wrote poetry, he imitated the masters. He doesn't want that to happen in the theater.

WILLIAM B. CARTER

Tardy and temperamental, Ma Rainey (performed by Theresa Merritt) records "Black Bottom" in Wilson's first hit.

August Wilson is more than a playwright. He is what some Native American scholars would call a tradition-bearer, one who knows the old stories and reveres the precise styles in which they are rendered. You don't learn that in school. Wilson's official education ended in the ninth grade, but another education took place in the highest academies of the African literary oral tradition: the gambling dens, or the street corners like the one at Fullerton and Wylie in Pittsburgh, which the Harlem Renaissance author Claude McKay called "the crossroads of the world." Then there were the restaurants, also in Pittsburgh: Eddie's Restaurant, on Centre Avenue, Sef's Place, Pat's Place—places where the old-timers gather to "play the dozens," "signify," and indulge in all their other volatile, hyperbolic word games. Wilson's jobs as a cook and dishwasher gave him a front-row-center seat for the rich verbal entertainment and instruction—and incidentally also account for his frequent and accurate descriptions of soul food.

It was in Pittsburgh, from 1965 to 1968, that Wilson came into contact with other black writers, at the Centre Avenue Poet's Theatre Workshop and the Half Way Art Gallery, which was financed by Saint Stephen's Church. Some of those writers have gone to the penitentiary and into drugs, but Wilson has survived. One of his most frequent expressions is "life force." When I asked him why his character Alberta doesn't get an abortion, he said, "The seed shouldn't be squandered." That may be the Roman Catholic conservatism of his childhood talking.

Wilson hangs on to quite a few no longer fashionable political attitudes. To most people, the Black Power movement is little more than a memory now. The firebrands of a generation ago have cooled down and returned to the sheltered life of the university. Kwanzaa, the Afro-American holiday week invented by Maulana Karenga and observed annually since 1966 between December 26 and January 1, is one of the relics of those zealous days. Based on harvest celebrations in Africa, it extols seven principles—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—Karenga liked to think of as being African. An estimated twelve million Americans celebrate Kwanzaa now, but does anyone believe that part of it anymore? Amiri Baraka, one of the Black Power leaders Wilson acknowledges as an influence on his own work, recently published an autobiography in which he confessed that following a trip to Africa he realized that he was an American after all. Wilson says his aim in theater is to convince his audiences that Afro-Americans are an African people. He may argue that blacks and whites are different, or have his characters dare "the white man's God," but he is an American, too. God does not hear the prayers of blacks, Wilson insists—and how many of America's white fundamentalist TV evangelists would disagree? The apple-pie values of self-reliance and the family are at the heart of his plays.

Wilson's first theatrical efforts were staged by the Black Horizons Theatre, a group he helped organize in 1968 to "raise the consciousness of the community," as they said in the language of the times. He admits now that he couldn't write dialogue, but he rates his descriptive powers back then as "good." In 1977, his friend Claude Purdy suggested that Wilson turn a series of poems into a play. The result was the musical satire *Black Bart and the Sacred Hills*, which was "inspired by you," he said to me, the interviewer. (I was the author of a poem entitled "Badmen of the Guest Professor," which includes an allusion to Black Bart, the stagecoach robber and poet who gave Wells Fargo some problems in the 1870s.) *Black Bart* premiered in 1981, at St. Paul's Penumbra Theater, and got a good reception, but in hindsight, Wilson

"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME SOMEONE WAS SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO ME."

feels that the play's twenty-seven characters made it unwieldy. Besides, it was still more an anthology of poems than a play.

By now, Wilson had moved to St. Paul, where he got a job in the Science Museum of Minnesota, writing scripts for the museum's theater troupe for children. For the first time, he began to concentrate on the art of writing dialogue. The hindrance so far, he decided, had been his tendency to use the characters to recite his poetry rather than giving them all distinctive voices of their own. His second play, *Jitney,* about a group of black gypsy-cab drivers who organize their own company, was given a reading in 1980 and earned Wilson a Jerome Fellowship of $2,400 and the use of the performance facilities at the Playwrights Center, in Minneapolis. Thus encouraged, he began to think of himself as a playwright. Like hundreds of other aspiring dramatists and many established ones, he set his sights on the Eugene O'Neill Conference. He submitted *Black Bart,* as well as two unproduced plays: *Fullerton Street* (his play for the 1940s) and *Why I Learned to Read* (about two black teenagers who choose safer careers after an attempted robbery fails). The O'Neill Committee turned them down. That was when he began to apply his steadily improving skills to the script that, according to more than one critic, catapulted Wilson to the forefront of young American playwrights: the script for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.*

Wilson was born in Pittsburgh on April 27, 1945, and probably was hearing the blues before he could talk, but what he remembers is the first time he heard Bessie Smith. It was on a record, when he was twenty years old. "It was the first time someone was speaking directly to me," he says now. Bessie Smith led him to Ma Rainey, who gave Bessie her first break, and to Victoria Spivey and other old-time blues singers. And so it was that the old 78s that sold for a nickel apiece at the St. Vincent de Paul's Pittsburgh store inspired the play in which the street-smart insults of the game they call the "dozens" combine with the blues to weave a tale of economic exploitation, dashed hopes, forgotten dreams, and desperation.

When Wilson submitted his draft to the O'Neill in 1982, it was selected for workshops and readings. This brought Wilson into contact with Lloyd Richards, the man who would give Wilson's vision technical depth and range. Under Richards's eye, the strange new talent began an arduous apprenticeship that is not over yet. At the O'Neill and in later rehearsals, *Ma Rainey* went through frequent rewrites. (So did *Fences.*) Wilson's dramaturgy was unorthodox. He envisioned a single set that would allow the action to crosscut continually from one location to another, using music to bridge the scenes. Most of the early observers were convinced that *Ma Rainey* was really two plays, not one, but Richards accepted it. Richards was the one who made the hard choice not simply to use taped music and arranged for the original cast—none of whom were musicians—to learn to sing and play the blues. "It was tricky," he told me modestly. I wondered why he went to all the trouble. "I knew those characters," he answered.

Supernatural stirrings: Charles S. Dutton (left) in Joe Turner.

PAUL J. PENDERS

Richards told me he sees his job as that of supporting, extending, and supplementing Wilson's intent. He does not wish to "impose" on the playwright's work but to "illuminate" it. Wilson's work excites Richards, and Richards's knowledge serves Wilson. "He feeds me," Richards says.

Many of Wilson's characters are types. Some are after good times, like the womanizer Slow Drag, in *Ma Rainey,* or Dussie Mae, in the same play, who uses sex to obtain favors from both men and women. Others are saintly, like Troy Maxson's wife, Rose, in *Fences,* who holds the family together even though it means taking in Troy's child by another woman. (I told Wilson I thought that this was stretching it.) Wilson, never having known his father, believes a man should take responsibility for his family. Troy is flawed by corruption and arrogance. Having robbed to put food on the table, he is a convicted felon, but he does not commit the ultimate sin. He does not ever aban-

don his family.

Wilson writes about the black lower middle class. Their values are conservative and their faith in the American dream unwavering. Some of them have talents they hope to sell for a lucrative contract, but deep down most of them know that only luck—the lottery, or numbers, what Lloyd Richards calls "the one shot"—will raise them above their station. For the children, things can be different. To save his son Cory from the kind of disillusionment he suffered himself, Troy forbids him to play football and insists that he get a real education. When Rose wants to know why, Troy tells her how short-lived a black athlete's glory is: "I saw Josh Gibson's daughter yesterday. She's walking around with raggedy shoes on her feet." It's much too late for the parents to make it, but maybe their children will.

PAUL J. PENDERS

What hope for the next generation? A scene from Joe Turner.

The blacks Wilson portrays are not only victims of the racism in their own times but heirs to the disasters of the nineteenth century, when whatever gains blacks made were quickly wiped out by bad contracts and mob violence. One scene in *Ma Rainey* drives the point home with special force. As their game of the "dozens" heats up, the cynical Toledo taunts the character Levee with his being "spooked" by a white man, whereupon Levee tells in nightmarish detail the story of his father, an "uppity nigger" who owned fifty acres of good farming land in Jefferson County, about eight miles outside Natchez, Mississippi. One day, when the black farmer was in town to buy seed, eight or nine vicious white men came and raped Levee's mother. Levee suffered a knife wound trying to protect her, and his father was lynched—but not before he killed four of his wife's attackers. In *Fences,* Troy's father is described as a sharecropper who was so indebted to his landlord that he lived his life as a "pack horse," frustrated and evil. Wilson has written that while the first generation of white immigrants was accumulating the assets that would be passed on to succeeding generations, the parallel black generation was being robbed. At one point Wilson told me, "I write for my grandfather."

August Wilson is faithful to the values of the class he writes about, values familiar to me, to Richards, and, I suspect, to James Earl Jones, some of whose personal history jibes closely with Wilson's and Richards's. Before the rise of the civil-rights movement, resistance to racism was strictly an individual affair. Troy complains that the sanitation department leaves all the dirty work to the blacks while the whites drive the trucks. "You think only white fellows got sense enough to drive a truck!" Troy complains. "That ain't no paper job! Hell, anybody can drive a truck." Right around the time of the play, in the fifties, my mother, who worked in a department store, demanded an explanation from her employers as to why the white girls ran the cash register and the black girls had to do stock work. "I have a high-school education," she told them, and she was promoted. For the black lower middle class, nothing comes easy.

Wilson is one of the kind of people he himself believes in: the ones who use their talent to climb out of the hole history dug for their forefathers. It's true that, in his deliberate naïveté, he can be hokey. *Fences* actually ends with the surviving principals staring off into the sunset while Gabriel, Troy's demented brother, plays the trumpet that accompanies Troy's entrance into paradise. Despite such flaws, the play has received mostly favorable press and an enthusiastic reception, at its world premiere and on the road. Vernon Jarrett of the Chicago *Sun-Times* called *Fences* the best American play he had seen since Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman.*

Though the plays that have won Wilson the mainstream audience are realistic, realism will not hold him. Now, it no longer has to. *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Wilson's play for the 1910s, mounted at Yale last May) and *The Piano Lesson* (his play for the 1930s, to be produced next year at Yale) are moving toward the unreal and the supernatural. *Joe Turner* includes a ghost, a root doctor, and an exorcism. *The Piano Lesson* uses the musical instrument as its symbolic core. Though, like all its predecessors, *Joe Turner* was judged by the critics to be in need of some further editing, its hypnotic eloquence and force of metaphor show a marked advance in Wilson's theatrical power. Right now, it looks as if the coming years can only make his theater richer, more assured, more American, and more original. □

Ishmael Reed, the author of Mumbo Jumbo, *is a prolific novelist. His most recent novel is* Reckless Eyeballing.

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MEAN STREETS

IN ALAN WOLFSON'S TINY NEW YORK

BY DONOVAN MOORE

FADE IN. EXTERIOR. AAA DETECTIVE AGENCY. NIGHT. Wide shot of a deserted Manhattan corner. The newsstand is closed—metal shutters sprayed with graffiti, a bundle of newspapers left on the doorstep, trash lying in the gutter.

On the second floor above the newsstand is a one-man office. Through the window we can see a cluttered desk: open carton of Chinese take-out food, can of beer, black rotary-dial phone, Rolodex, pack of cigarettes, ashtray with stubbed-out butts.

On the far wall are two diplomas, one crooked. On the frosted-glass door are the words "AAA Detective Agency." Backwards. Farther right we see a half-open door leading to a small bathroom. The light's on. A dirty white sink and tiled wall are visible.

SOUND of light traffic in the background. Very still. Not a soul in sight, yet we get the feeling something will happen any moment.

A beat. Then an ENORMOUS HAND enters the frame and delicately places another bit of garbage along the curb. The hand works carefully, precisely.

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WIDER ANGLE: We see that the hand is in fact of normal size. It belongs to Alan Wolfson, designer and builder of miniature New York City "environments"—a Forty-second Street hotel room with the neon sign outside the window, a Tower of Pizza restaurant with a fortune-teller's window above it, the interior of a Lexington Avenue IRT express subway car. Through his work, some of the seediest scenes in New York are now in living rooms as far afield as London and Los Angeles.

"I take a potentially dangerous neighborhood and make it safe," says Wolfson. "If you walk through Times Square, you're liable to be watching out for the people. You're not going to stop and study the physical structure of the place."

But it's more than the whimsy of compressing a slice of Times Square into a twenty-inch cube that captivates the people who bend down to peer into Wolfson's miniature world. All of his pieces—from major street scenes to a mere subway entrance—are so detailed that it often takes several viewings of the same work for

Donovan Moore is a screenwriter living in New York.

one to become aware that at around one-eighth of an inch Alan Wolfson finally gives up.

Each brick in a building's façade is an individually cut quarter-inch piece of styrene plastic, installed one by one with an X-Acto knife and double-faced tape and given several coats of paint for a realistic, rough texture. The "grout" comes next: a mixture of gray paint and glue, inserted between the bricks with a hypodermic needle. For rivets in a subway-station column, Wolfson drills pinholes in a plastic I beam, threads styrene strings through the holes, cuts them down, and sands the stubs to get exactly the correct, rounded shape. Beer cans are pieces cut from a thin aluminum rod, painted, dented, and glued down precisely where the random traffic or the wind would deposit them.

Each element becomes a separate project. Example: a television set. If it's totally visible but off, that's a relative snap, about three hours of construction time. If it's on, it takes twice as long because Wolfson first has to make a transparency of his own television set—but of just the screen, with the vertical hold out of whack, so the picture is distorted. Then he cuts it to size, glues it into the scale-model television set, and has to figure out a way to backlight it. You get the idea.

The only things Wolfson does not make by hand are the newspapers that are found in almost every one of his works. He tried taking real papers and reducing them over and over with a photocopier to get them down to size, but the quality wasn't up to the exacting Wolfson standard. Now he buys them from a dollhouse-supply store. Because dollhouses are scaled at one inch to one foot, while Wolfson works at one-half inch for exteriors and three-quarters of an inch for interiors, the size of the print is the one thing that is out of scale. But you'd never know it. His papers are always dirty, wadded up, and plastered in the gutter, exactly where New York's sidewalk whirlpools of wind would blow them.

It's as if Wolfson were daring you not to believe you're focusing on a real scene. It's a game you can't win, because he never leaves you an opening. "Look, if a guy's name is Shorty, I'm not going to put his graffiti on the ceiling of a subway car," laughs Wolfson. "I don't know why, but I can be introduced to people and never remember their names or faces, yet I can close my eyes and see perfectly the number and pattern of rivets on a subway-staircase railing."

The form, subject, and craft of Wolfson's "dioramas," as galleries call them now, all spring from the typical artist's background: talent and the need to make money. It's not hard to develop an eye for the rougher edges of urban life when you grow up in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood: "My high school never has had a class reunion because it would have to hold it at Attica." And working with his hands has always come naturally: "I used to disappear for hours when I was a kid. My mother would finally peek into my room and find me cutting out little cardboard figures and gluing them into a shoebox."

Combine a photographic memory for New York street scenes with a flair for miniature work, locate both in Hollywood in 1979, and you have Alan Wolfson, movie-model maker (he made the clouds that the tail fin cuts through in the opening-credits

Wolfson gives names a lot of thought. This page: Tenement Hallway *(with life-size bill),* Metro Diner, *and* Village Cigars.

"First," says the artist (below, at work with brick wall), "I'll build a nice, new subway car, and then I'll trash it." Painstakingly.

sequence for *Airplane!*), who was winning first prizes in art-school contests but still looking upon his miniatures as a hobby. It took his getting laid off from a special-effects house for him to take a full-time shot at it. He packed three finished pieces into a drive-away Mercedes, delivered the car to its owner in the Hamptons after a three-day flat-out run, and dropped the pieces off at Louis K. Meisel's SoHo gallery. Meisel, who specializes in photorealism and precisionist artwork, told Wolfson that if he could build a couple more pieces like these, he'd give him a small one-man show. "No promises," Meisel promised. It was a sellout.

"This was a time when craftsmanship and art history were being tossed aside," says Meisel. "Artists were lazy but still wanted to cash in. Craftsmanship was the first thing to go because it's the hardest: precision, discipline, attention to detail. And then along comes Alan."

ALLAN MEISLIN

Wolfson removed himself to an old barn-studio in upstate New York to work. Just work. There were times when he'd go three weeks or more without seeing another living soul. Because he'd often have a scene in mind for as long as a year, the actual construction was relatively quick. Each piece, no matter how complex, followed the same process: make a thumbnail sketch, prepare a scale design, cut out the design and tape it together to make sure all the sight lines work, and then construct it after the 3-D mockup, all the while keeping in mind such things as the paths for the fiber optics and the room for air to circulate around the fluorescent lamps.

The hardest part was (and still is) to decide when to stop. "First I'll build a nice, brand-new subway car," he says, "and then I'll trash it. And finally at the point where I'm just adding more graffiti and garbage, I'll make a list of ten things. No matter what else I think of while I'm working, once those ten things are done, I'm finished. It's probably been finished for a couple days by then, anyway." And when he finished a piece, he'd pack up and drive it to the gallery. Meisel recalls, "There were Saturdays when Alan would come in with a piece at ten and it would be gone—out the door—by noon."

If you consider an artist successful when the hobby becomes a living, then you'd call Alan Wolfson successful today. He's back in Brooklyn, in a loft-studio, and he occasionally builds models for special-effects shots in his spare time instead of the other way around. The discipline, however, is unchanged. He still sketches a calendar in a notebook for each piece and keeps a record of how many hours a day he works. He estimates that a major piece requires about three hundred hours.

"I don't want you to think I'm too crazy," he says, "but I keep a stopwatch running beside me when I'm working. If I go down to Canal Street for supplies, or out for a quart of milk, or even if the phone rings, I'll stop the clock." Translation: by anyone else's reckoning, the amount of time required for each piece equals approximately his number of hours times three.

The other thing that has not changed with success is the feeling you get when you first see a Wolfson environment. His genius is that even though there is never a miniature person in sight, his work is positively alive. Its fascination is not simply a function of everything's having been made small. Every piece looks as if someone has just left, and your mind can't help spinning a story about what will happen next when that person returns from the bathroom, comes back to his greasy-diner dinner, lies down again after switching channels.

"Most art you can look at from across the room," says Meisel. "With Alan's, there's an intimacy. He forces you to walk across the room, take the time to get up close."

It's worth the time. Alan Wolfson can take a scene we see every day—often holding our breath as we walk past as quickly as possible—and, by making it small but perfect, make us laugh, make us wonder, maybe even make us slow down to see the artistry in the rivets of a subway staircase. □

by
William Rice

At the still-tender age of forty-two, Michel Chabran is almost a national treasure in his native France. He lacks only one thing before he can claim the full benefits—the privilege of circling the globe, as a diplomat spreading French culture and an entrepreneur selling his name and recipes in six-figure deals. The missing ingredient is a three-star rating in the *Guide Michelin*, the "bible" of French hotels and restaurants. Chabran has earned two stars so far; this year's edition of the *Guide*, just out this month, is not expected to bestow the ultimate blessing. To be sure, his first two stars ensure that Michel Chabran will not grow gray tending his stockpot. Now, can he take the last step toward fame?

Until 1977, no one would have given him a chance to rise to culinary heights. His early-teenage intention was to pursue a career in industrial engineering. Becoming a chef "never occurred" to him, he recalls. Nor did his hometown of Pont de l'Isère, beside the Rhône River, have a great culinary tradition; it boasted no outstanding cooks. When Michel was fourteen, however, his father fell seriously ill, and he was thus forced to help support the family. He went, as luck would have it, into the kitchen of the restaurant named Pic, in nearby Valence, a marvelous provincial shrine for French gastronomes that had recently won its third Michelin star. During three years there, young Michel absorbed the techniques of a great chef, Jacques Pic, and worked with the very finest ingredients and wines.

After military service he returned to Pont de l'Isère and joined his grandparents behind the counter of the small bistro they operated, a homely bar frequented by working-class townfolk. By 1974, he had earned enough money to buy kitchen equipment, expand the menu, and transform some upstairs rooms into accommodations for travelers. Not yet thirty, he was a restaurant owner, chef (with a single Portuguese helper), and innkeeper. So were 15,000 others across France. It took three years of intense labor that only the self-employed understand before he was picked to join the Jeunes Restaurateurs de France, an organization of potential-superstar chefs sponsored by Grand Marnier. Chabran vividly recalls his first meeting, not so much for the food as for the company. It was then that he met and made fast friends of Jean-Paul Lacombe of Lyons and Michel Rostang of Antibes and Paris, both sons of famous chefs and already on their way up the all-important Michelin ladder.

"All of a sudden I had friends who had friends," Chabran explains. "I was on the circuit. Paul Bocuse sent the critic from

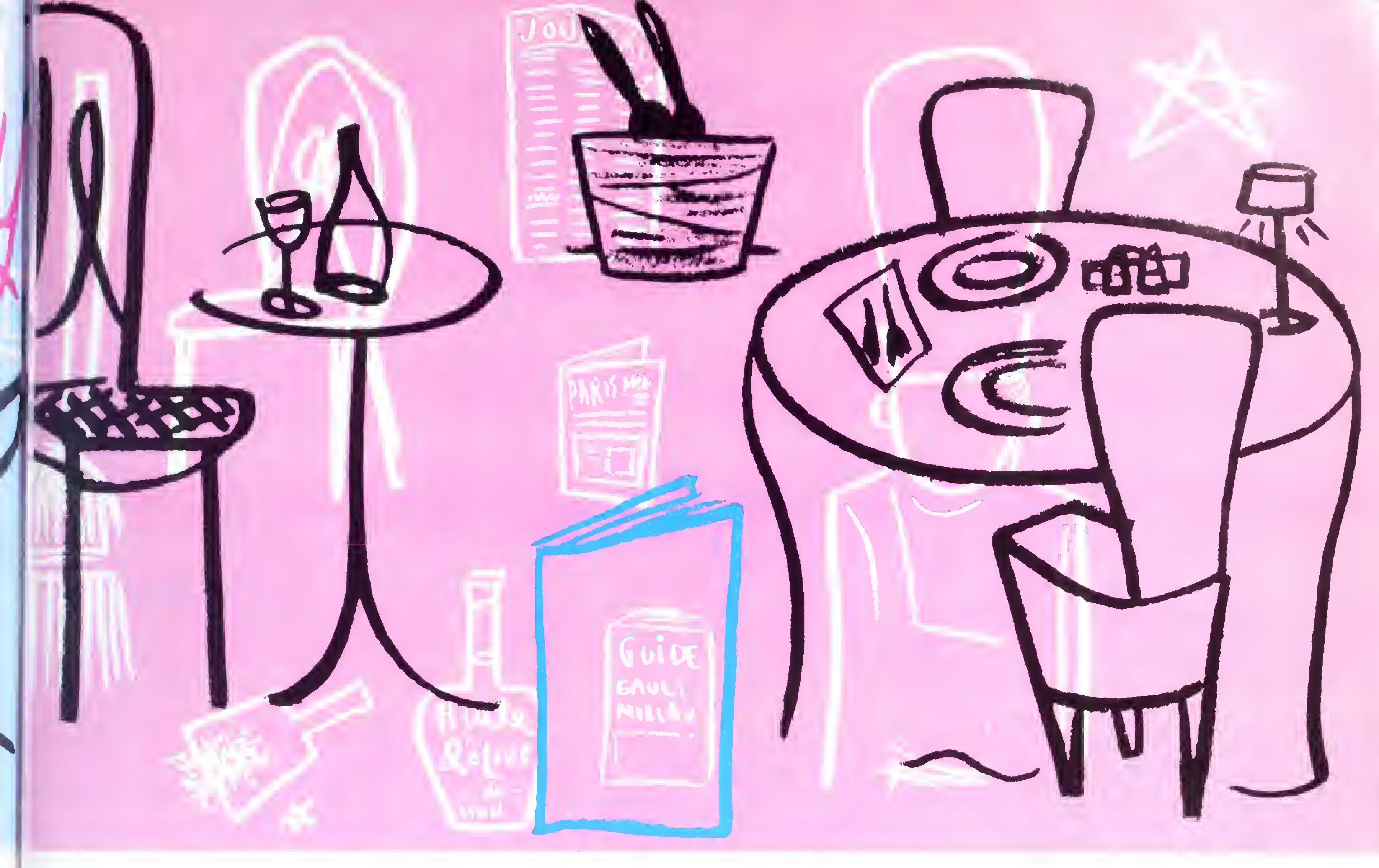


Illustration by Laurie Rosenwald

L'Express magazine, who wrote that it was a scandal I wasn't listed in any guide. That was in the fall. By spring I had my first star in the *Guide Michelin*.

"For a restaurant in the country," he goes on, "the first Michelin star is not that difficult. What you put on the plate is the most important. The food must be good and should look okay. Service must be correct, but it need not be special. They want the food and the surroundings cut from the same cloth. If your place is rustic, there is no reason to serve lobster or truffles. You should keep it simple, as fresh as possible, and, always with Michelin, you must keep your place clean."

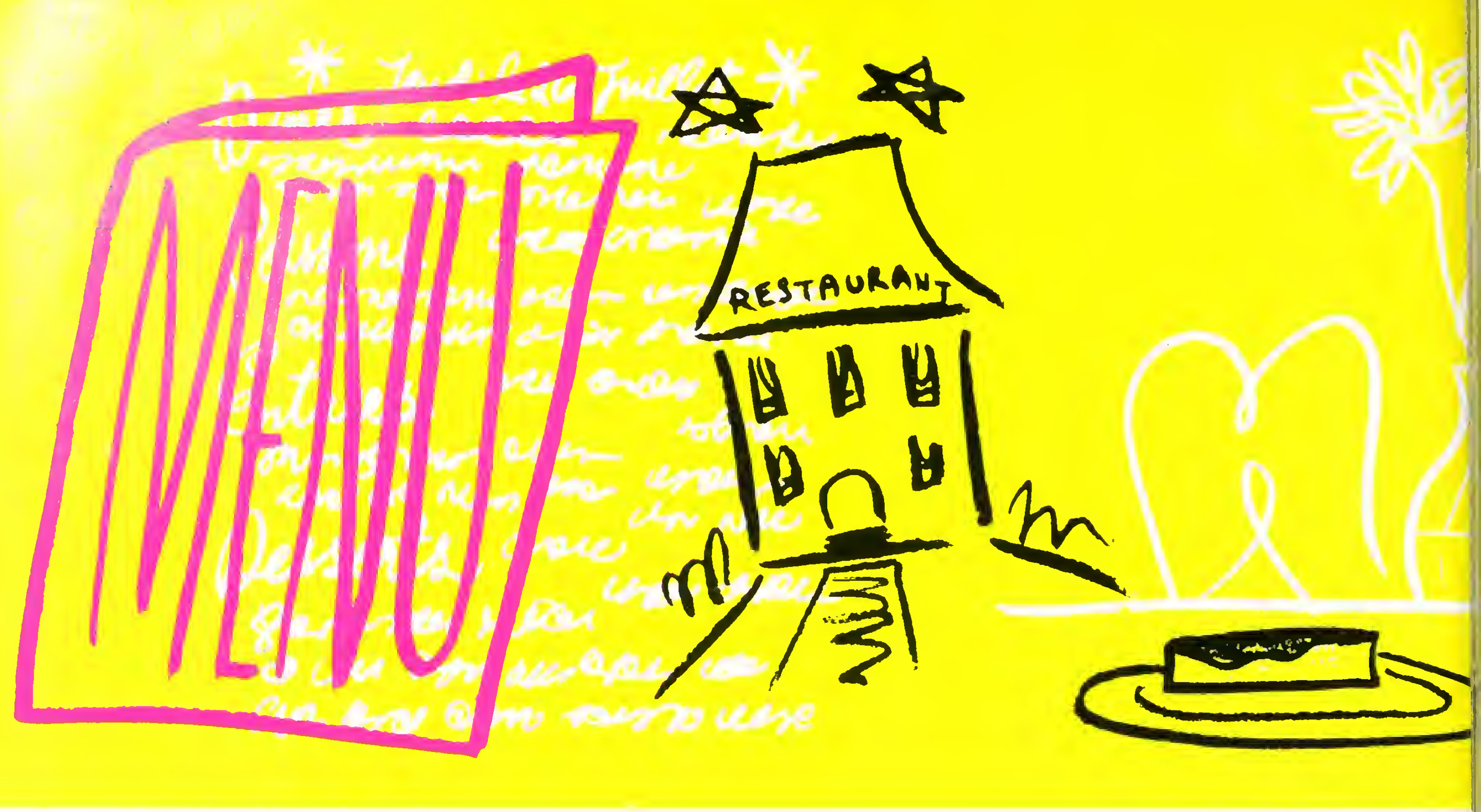
Looking back, he is tempted to view his one-star days as an almost idyllic period. His friendships deepened; his reputation grew; he found time to play tennis four or five times a week. But he seemed stuck with that single star for too long—seven years—and his efforts to improve led him to the brink of financial ruin. The single star just didn't attract enough additional customers to support the cost of improvements needed to gain the two-star rating and, with it, a frequent full house.

"You must improve in every detail," Chabran says with the earnestness of a student reading his catechism. "But you should change little by little. You must create more comfort and some sense of luxury—better-quality plates and glasses, a larger wine list. You have to improve the menu selection and strive to eliminate errors, even the possibility of error, in service as well as cooking. Michelin's attitude is that the people who visit the great restaurants of France are there for only a brief time. The chef must satisfy their anticipation and maintain a certain level of taste. They watch and they wait," he concludes. "They don't go for something that explodes on the scene."

An emerging trend began playing in Chabran's favor: the freedom to create that was unleashed by the nouvelle cuisine movement. He possessed imagination and a deft touch; he had the courage to innovate. The trouble was that one could go only so far in the Rhône, where the traditional foods—*daubes* and *fritures*—are as full-flavored and heavy as the wines. By the start of this decade, Paul Bocuse and others had pulled back from the arty excesses of nouvelle, returning partly to regional products and forthright recipes.

At the same time, Rhône wines were coming back into vogue for the first time in fifty years. In addition, the heavily traveled autoroute had an interchange only five minutes from his door. Chabran's tables tended to be filled.

Encouraged, he kept at it. As change followed change, Michelin's anonymous inspectors filtered through, making notes and writing reports that joined diners' comment cards in the



starred-restaurants file locked in the *Guide's* Paris office. "You keep hearing things, mostly gossip," says Chabran. "Michelin is rather mysterious."

In the meantime, he and his friends began The Five Chefs, a cooperative endeavor that would have shocked the secretive, jealous cooks of the past. They buy and sell wine, share supply sources, recipes, and apprentices, and travel together to cook for fun and profit in faraway places. Along the way, Chabran's partners convinced him of the importance of public relations.

In addition to a growing body of favorable articles, Chabran received timely assists from Henri Gault and Christian Millau, the clever journalists who coined the term "nouvelle cuisine," in its contemporary sense. Their Gault-Millau guide is an influential competitor to the Michelin. Between 1977 and 1982, two laudatory articles appeared in their widely circulated monthly magazine. In 1982, they gave Chabran their Clef d'Or (Golden Key), an award presented to only two or three restaurants each year. "The publicity helped," Chabran recalls. "It brought in traveling businessmen and led other chefs to send customers to me." The next year, Gault and Millau pushed him to their three-toque level, 17 points out of a possible 20, placing him on a par with such luminaries as the chef Gilbert Le Coze of Le Bernardin, in New York.

"Gault and Millau try to anticipate the future," Chabran says. "They're betting on you, and lots of people, especially chefs, pay attention to what they say. But the Michelin confirms your stature. It confers validity and has real value."

How much? Chabran estimates that the second star, awarded in March 1985, increased his business by 40 percent for the year. He served meals to 2,500 Americans, some of whom filled more than half his guest rooms during the summer tourist season. Nonetheless, he traveled frequently to Lyons, Paris, Canada, and the United States. Business deals were made in France, including the purchase of a château on the banks of the Rhône, where he plans to relocate his restaurant. In Los Angeles, The Five Chefs have been negotiating with the Italian restaurateur Mauro Vincenti (creator of Rex) to do a deluxe French bistro there.

Following the lead of Georges Blanc and Gérard Boyer, chefs recently elevated to three stars, when Chabran renovates his château he will install ten or twelve luxury guest rooms and surround it with a garden park. Meanwhile, his English is improving as rapidly as his tennis backhand is slipping. He is using the secret weapon of great chefs—boundless energy—to the fullest.

Will all this effort gain him fortune? Probably. Fame? To some degree, though he lacks the flamboyant self-assurance of a Bocuse. A third star? Perhaps, but both the service and the decor at his new restaurant will have to be sharply upgraded, and the time he spends away from Pont de l'Isère will work against him. And there will be a further accounting of his culinary skills. He knows he is good, and he is young enough to become even better; but can he join the ranks of his personal heroes Alain Chapel and Guérard? "I don't know," Chabran says. "I will expend all my time and money, and then Michelin will tell me." □

William Rice, the food and wine columnist for the Chicago Tribune, *writes frequently about dining in France.*

The Michelin Galaxy

The 1,300-page red "bible" of French hotels and restaurants is big business. More than 700,000 copies will be sold this year (at $16 each in the United States), and the French follow its recommendations as religiously as do foreign tourists. The winning of a second or third star (the highest rating) will bring a 30 or 40 percent increase in business and can be a ticket to fortune and fame. Fewer than 700 restaurants in all France wear stars. Others are listed in the *Guide* without stars, and many thousands more receive no mention at all.

The stars are given by an almost faceless committee of inspectors (about a dozen) and bureaucrats who work for the Michelin Tire Corporation. The *Guide*'s listings contain only factual information. The enormous volume of comments received from users of the *Guide* helps target restaurants for advancement or demotion. Inspectors' visits follow (more are made for two- and three-stars). Chefs come, or are summoned, to Michelin's offices in Paris, where they review their files and may seek the *Guide*'s approval for changes in menu or decor.

The one-star restaurant (574 as of 1986) is "an especially good restaurant in its class . . . a good place to stop on your journey," according to the *Guide*. The star may signify that you will find a young chef just beginning his climb to the top, or merely a place that stands taller than its nearby competitors. The star is a virtual guarantee of cleanliness and propriety, but don't expect a one-star in the countryside to have the same style and culinary sophistication as a one-star in Paris.

Two stars mean "excellent cooking, worth a detour . . . specialties and wines of first-class quality." (There are 84 restaurants in this category.) Some two-stars are paler copies of three-stars, still seeking the elaboration and polish required for promotion, or gradually fading after an unsuccessful run at the top. Most, however, are one-stars that have grown up, and they offer inventive cooking, authentic regional dishes, and good service.

The three-star level (achieved by some 20 restaurants in France) represents the pinnacle of Michelin's notion of what a great restaurant should be: formal and ornate, with elaborate presentation and a profusion of rich ingredients. "Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey . . . superb food, fine wines, faultless service, elegant surroundings. One will pay accordingly!" If you find it so, all is well. On the other hand, you may feel uncomfortable, overfed, and underloved, an insignificant part of a mechanical ritual.

Michelin not only has critics; it has competitors. The best-known is Gault and Millau's *Guide de la France,* which gives numerical ratings on a 20-point scale and does "review" restaurants in a pithy, often amusing style. Among new rivals, the best is the *Le Bottin Gourmand,* which took the field in 1983. It is better-designed than the other two and easier to use. (Of these guides, only the Gault-Millau is printed in English.)

Michelin also publishes red guides to ten other European countries, which, some critics say, ignore or underrate the best, most authentic native restaurants in each country. They probably do, and for one simple, very French reason. The *Guide Michelin* is aimed at the traveling Frenchman. So, formal service, elaborate decor, and French-inspired cooking win stars everywhere. For example, Italy's first and only three-star is Gualtiero Marchesi, an ultra–nouvelle cuisine restaurant in Milan. At one time, the chef actually refused to serve pasta!

PACKARD'S TRIUMPH

ETHAN HOFFMAN/ARCHIVE

When he started collecting art for the second time, Harry Packard, a logical man, composed an outline. This was 1960, in Japan, where Packard had come after the war and where, with nothing calling him home, he decided to stay. His first collection, two hundred prints, was gone, having been used to finance his art education. He had no money, but a friend had offered him a job. So, Packard composed his outline and, with his outline, in his reasoned way, proceeded to collect art again.

He collected Japanese art for fifteen years and then sold what he had collected to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for $11.3 million. Scholars who saw it were struck by the level of sophistication his collection displayed, the degree to which he had expertly acquired great things from so many periods. But while people were impressed with Packard, they were not always comfortable with him, for here was an engineer with limited resources who had managed to assemble a significant collection in ways so aggressive that people were sure he must have been a war profiteer. Although Packard had indeed collected after the war—and then sold what he bought—his collection reflected, above all, the work of a man who moved and thought in very straight lines.

When Harry Packard began collecting art for the second time, he did so by following the clear mandate set down in his outline. If he had to sell his house, or make enemies, or fly to France and buy a Matisse that he could sell in Japan to finance a purchase, that is what he did. It was not that Packard was without a sense of the romantic; only that in his view there were people who led with their heads and others who led with their hearts. "I use my head," he says, "more than my feelings."

Harry Packard, now seventy-two, sits in his house, just outside Kyoto, in a tatami room that looks out onto green mountains. Behind him hangs a picture that he thinks might have been painted by a man on a bender. It is a recent acquisition, a vertical scroll two hundred years old, picturing a series of turtles. Some of the turtles are blurred, yet this artist was famous for his well-defined portraits of women. Packard's wife does not like the picture, but that does not upset him. The picture moves him; to explain why, he assesses its component parts. Still, there is something about it that defies clear categories.

"This painting does not stop with the limitations of the paper," Packard says. "He probably laid it down on tatami and got half the paint on the tatami." He looks at the smears that represent the turtles and the streaks of paint that represent water. The background is full of empty spaces for the imagination to fill. Packard, thinking of what he himself has done, says, "I guess nobody is completely logical."

In the closing days of World War II, Harry Packard was in northern China. The Japanese were fleeing, leaving behind the remnants of fourteen years of occupation, among them a summer resort near Tsingtao. Some of Japan's best-known contemporary artists had paid for their keep with pictures painted during the summer. By the time Packard arrived, the Chinese were using these paintings to patch holes in the walls of their houses. They sold for a dollar apiece. Packard, who saw in them a capsulized history of modern Japanese painting, bought two hundred.

He had first seen the art of Asia as a boy in Seattle. His uncles were missionaries in China, and every so often their students would come west, bearing gifts. Some of these gifts were artwork of China and Indochina. Though he liked what he saw, Packard did not become keenly interested until years later, in 1943, in New York, when he was a student at the Henry Hudson Naval Intelligence School. Knowing that he might one day be sent to Japan, he visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art and came to know Alan Priest, the curator of Far Eastern art. Because he was eager, Priest introduced him to the museum's holdings of paintings and drawings. "I had no resistance," Packard says. "For me, it never had an alien quality."

The paintings he found in Tsingtao,

Michael Shapiro now lives in Tokyo.

THE AMERICAN WHO MAY BE THE CANNIEST COLLECTOR OF JAPANESE ART OF ALL TIME

BY MICHAEL SHAPIRO

PHOTOS: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, HARRY G. C. PACKARD COLLECTION OF ASIAN ART

Opposite: Harry Packard at home in Kyoto, with his turtle scroll: was the artist on a bender? Above: A fully replicated room in the Momoyama Shoin style, with sliding-door screen, Ancient Plum, *by Kano Sansetsu, at the Metropolitan's new Japanese galleries.*

however, bore little resemblance to what he had seen in New York. Really, they were little more than potboilers. After the war, he took his potboilers to Tokyo and sold them to buy wood-block prints. Packard could afford to buy. "I had a good job," he says of his work during the occupation, running a ceramics factory, "and spent all the money on a print collection."

He collected in his logical way: artist by artist. He began with Ando Hiroshige. When he had found five or six prints he liked, he switched to Katsushika Hokusai. After Hokusai came Toyokuni, and then Utamaro, five or six of each, until he was ready to move on. Moving on, however, meant going back, because once an artist was represented in his collection, Packard would look for someone who had come before him. "But each time I went back in time," he says, "the prints had to be in the same condition as the previous ones. I bought two hundred prints, and every time I bought a print I discarded one."

The yen was then fixed at 360 to the dollar — it is at about 160 today — and prices were low. Prints that might now sell for $1,000 could then be had for $25.

Earthenware jar with monochrome glaze, mid-Heian period, eleventh century A.D.

While questions remain about the decency of buying cheap in a country ruined by war, Packard says, "The Japanese were selling to me because no Japanese were paying that much. But I remember a dealer begging me to buy a print for 1,500 yen."

He also studied. Having learned Japanese, a fiendishly difficult language, well enough to speak and read, he found art scholars in Tokyo universities willing to offer private lectures. He read. He went through a bibliography of basic sources. Then he decided to go back to school.

By 1949, too old to apply for a postwar military commission and feeling drawn to no place in particular, Packard went home for a while, to California, to work for a graduate degree in Far Eastern studies at Berkeley. While he earned his master's, there was almost nothing in his field for him to see. The limited Japanese artistic holdings in the United States were on the East Coast, in Boston and Washington.

"IF I DIDN'T AGREE WITH WHAT THE AUTHORITIES TOLD ME, I'D SAY, 'TO HELL WITH THEIR OPINION.'"

All that existed for him to look at was a series of fifty black-and-white plates of various Indian, Chinese, and Japanese artworks. In 1953, he returned to Japan so that he could go to school all over again.

He pushed himself to improve his Japanese. When Waseda University accepted him, he became the first foreigner admitted to the school in a competitive test with Japanese. Thirty-four years later, he would still boast about that. For six years he buried himself in his studies. He pushed himself to understand the sometimes difficult texts. He spent his summers documenting and cataloguing eighth-century documents. He traveled to the island of Shikoku and walked from town to town, studying the ceramic findings from various excavations. He took off for a year to travel in India, since it was in India that Buddhist artwork developed and spread, with the faith, to China, to Korea, and eventually, in the sixth century, to Japan.

His print collection was gone, having been sold at auction to finance his studies. He had married and to support his family wrote and translated for the International News Service, a job that, he says, sometimes interfered with his studies. Yet as much as he drove himself to know Japan and its art better, as much as he pushed himself to absorb systematically all that he could, the curious thing was that it was not Japan or its art that enticed him. In fact, he says, had he found himself in Ireland or Switzerland or anywhere else after the war, he might have done the same thing there. The art was simply a means to an end—ambition, the desire to achieve something worthwhile. Had it not been for a calamity and a bureaucratic restriction, Harry Packard might never have started collecting Japanese art for the second time. By the time he did, in 1960, he had acquired a vast knowledge, one well suited to his ambition. All he needed was a way to apply what he had worked so hard to know.

He would have liked to affiliate himself with a Japanese national museum, but that was not a door open to foreigners. He would have liked to return to Berkeley to become chairman of Oriental-art studies. But then, one day in 1957, as he was crossing a street, a car hit him. He did not fully recover from the accident for three years. He had no money, employment only as a contributor to some Japanese newspapers, and the sinking feeling that his dreams were not to be realized.

Clay jar, 3000–2000 B.C.: applied, incised, cord-marked decoration.

He went to work as a sales engineer. He also composed his outline and set about finding, in his logical way, a new vehicle for satisfying his healthy ambition.

Years later, when Sherman Lee, a historian of Oriental art and former director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, saw what Harry Packard had done, he thought it "a very good collection." John Rosenfield, a professor of Oriental art at Harvard, finds it "extremely strong and well studied. It is a major accomplishment for any collector." Although others lambasted it, insisting that the collection was filled with fakes, Rosenfield sensed not only its great worth but that it revealed just how much a collector could "enter into the study of Japanese art and culture." While he was impressed by the comprehensiveness of what he saw, Rosenfield felt that if anything was missing, it was an "overall theme." "That," he says, "is its strength, not its weakness. It does not reflect a highly personal or private taste or style."

It was, to be sure, Harry Packard's strength, because once he had decided upon his path, little, if anything, stopped him. "I believe he simply never gave up," says Joseph Brotherton, his closest American friend. "It may have taken a long time. But once he made his decision that this was an object he needed, he spared nothing in getting that object."

Packard says, "I had an outline that I wanted to fill in." The outline extended over the period from 4500 B.C. to A.D. 1850, focusing on those eras that showed how Japanese art had developed. "At that time, I had probably as much training in art as a Ph.D. would have had," Packard says. "I was concerned with origins—styles and media." His first teacher in painting had taught him the importance of a visceral response to a picture. But once he had allowed "the object to make its emotional appeal," he then set about assessing its attributes and worth. "My mind rules my emotions, as a rule," Packard says. "Once the feeling is past, you turn to rational analysis. The mounting, the paper, the type of silk used. Does the signature match? Is the seal original? Then I would sit down with people with 'pertinent knowledge.' Let's say I consulted first-rank scholars. I wanted evidence." Sometimes he agreed with what these authorities told him, and when he did not, and wanted the piece, he'd say, "To hell with these people's opinions."

He looked at everything: paintings, sculptures, and pottery. He wanted only very good things, and if a certain era on the outline was closed off to him by price or supply, he would look to another representative time to fill the space. He established a network of sixty dealers, most of them in Tokyo and Kyoto, and got in touch with each at least once a month. Every other month, he set off from Tokyo, stopping in towns and temples along the way, inquiring about what might be for sale. In the years after the war, many temples and shrines, finding themselves in need of cash for the most basic repairs, began selling their artistic holdings to peddlers. The peddlers sold to dealers, and the dealers sold to Packard, who sometimes found ways to dispense with the middlemen.

Once, for instance, he was traveling

A two-panel screen of the Meiji period: Autumn Grasses, *by Shibata Zeshin (1807–1891); ink, lacquer, and silver leaf on paper. "I like paintings," says Packard, "in which the composition is bigger than the paper."*

south when, from his train, he saw a small town with thatch-roofed houses. He got off, rented a bicycle, and came upon a Zen temple. A priest remarked that, tucked away in its eaves, there were two statues he might be interested in. They were of solid wood, covered with plaster. Packard wanted them. The priest offered them as a gift. Packard insisted on paying. He wrapped the statues in burlap, put them on his bicycle, gave the priest the $300 or so he had in his pocket, and rode off with what proved to be a pair of rare and valuable eleventh-century temple guardians.

He bought and sold, using Egyptian sculpture, Roman glass, and a Matisse that he says cost him $12,000. This he traded for a series of iconographical works. He advised other collectors, like Avery Brundage. In short, he did everything he could to keep buying. "I couldn't have made enough money without selling," he says, "so I got into doing the same thing as I did with my print collection"—keeping the volume of his collection constant. He sacrificed for the sake of collecting. He covered the holes in his shoes with cardboard. "I didn't want to spend the money on an overcoat," he says. "I once sold my house to buy a group of art objects. I found a rental place I could move into. It was not a good situation for a family. I found companionship in contacts with Japanese collectors and scholars, but it was a solitary thing." He and his wife, who did not share his passion, later divorced.

Fudo Myo-o, who wards off Buddha's enemies. Heian period, twelfth century A.D.

In 1975, when there was no longer room at home for everything in his 400-piece collection—some pieces stayed with dealers, some with friends; some were lent to museums—Joseph Brotherton suggested that perhaps the moment had come to sell. He thought it was time for his friend to show what he had done, and though at first he hesitated, Packard agreed.

The museum world was well aware of what Packard had accumulated. "Everyone knew it was an opportunity," says Wen Fong, special consultant for Asian affairs in the Department of Asian Art at the Metropolitan. The museum then had only a small collection of Japanese art and no place to exhibit anything so large as

Detail number 4 of a fragment of a hand scroll, Konin Shonin Eden *(Legendary History of the Jin'o-ji), by an unknown artist of the Nambokucho period (A.D. 1350–1400). Color and ink on paper.*

what Packard had amassed. About half the price to be paid for the collection was designated a gift to the museum by Packard. The other half, he says, was paid by the museum into a charitable trust to assist artists and scholars. Packard kept $250,000 for himself.

"People always considered me a very commercial person, very mercenary," he says. "If I had taken all that money, people in Japan would have said that I had used these people, and all the rumors about me would have been true." Still, given the chance to do it again, he would have kept $1 million, if only because troubles with his back now keep him from working. Most of the money was spent on the house he now lives in.

Before the collection could go outside Japan, however, the Japanese government put up formidable hurdles. Generally regarded as having the world's most efficient system for preserving its cultural patrimony, it wanted to know just what might be leaving. Packard says that while Japan was not keen to see some of its better artwork go, it was willing to do so if the destination was appropriate. While the Metropolitan was such a place, the government would let nothing out before it had been gone over carefully.

That took a year and a half. When it was done, the government permitted virtually everything to go, having determined that no national treasures were included. Packard believes that forty pieces could have been so classified, had the government not been eager to have good artwork prominently displayed. The government still maintains that no national treasures left with the Packard collection. It has since contributed $1 million toward the building of a permanent site for the Metropolitan's Japan collection.

Waiting for that home to be completed, next month, Packard's collection has mostly sat in storage for ten years. Now at last people will get to see just what he did with all his ambition and all his knowledge. It may be a complex and diverse achievement, but the motivation, Packard says, was rather simple. "I did it as a substitute for not finding a position in an American university or in Japan. That's more or less it, for better or worse. It was a pretty egotistical approach for a man without a cent."

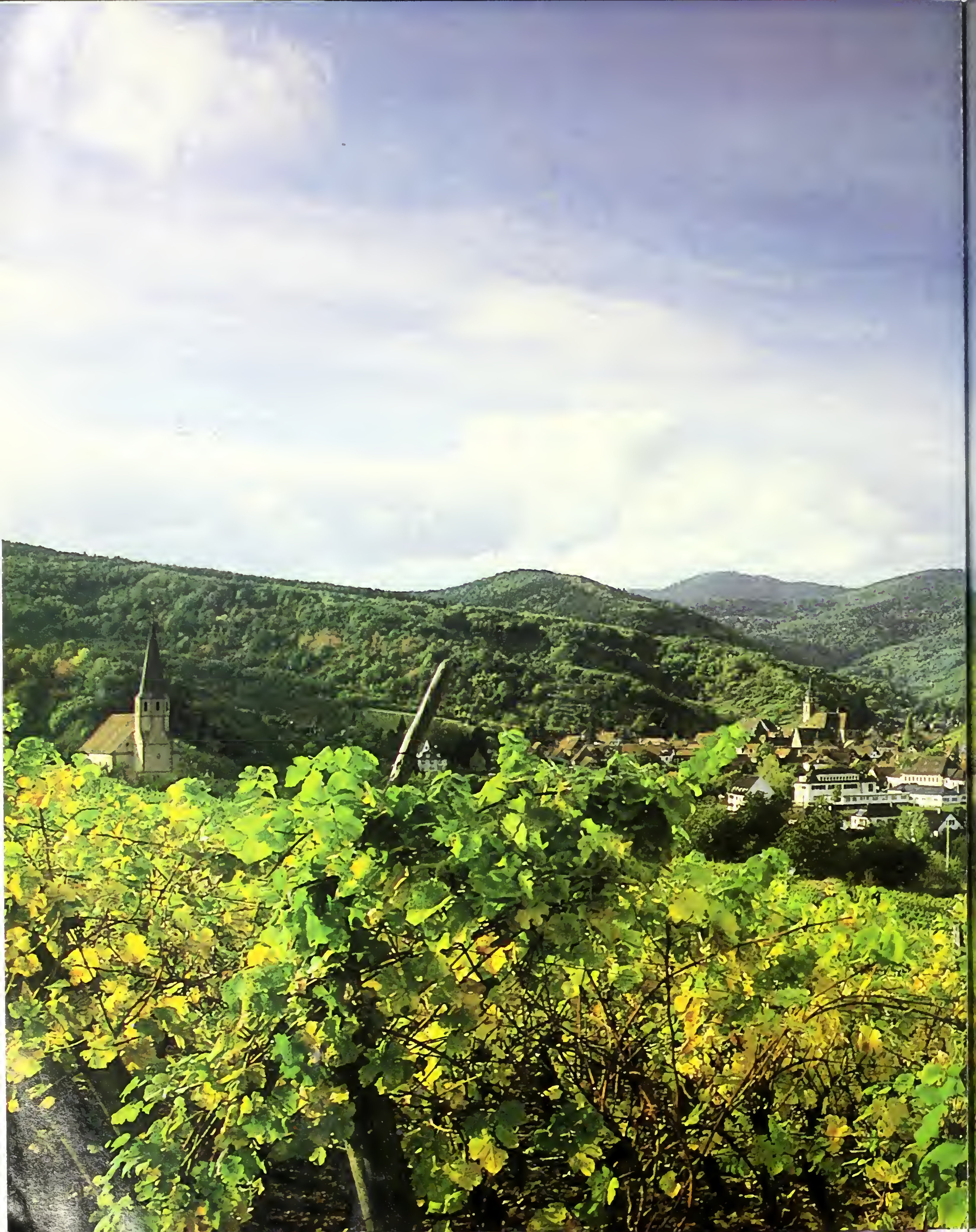
Harry Packard still collects, but he does not follow an outline anymore. He would, he says, but prices have gone too high and he cannot afford to do what he once did. Instead, he has been buying, among other things, historical prints for his young son, Jin-Michael. Where once the collection was everything for Packard, now there is his new family—his thirty-six-year-old wife, Hideko, Jin-Michael, who is five, and his two-year-old daughter, Hana.

Hana was born with cataracts. Packard spends a lot of time helping her to learn to see. Having had her vision improved by surgery, he says, she must now learn "effective sight," the ability to see with understanding.

Harry Packard took a very long time learning to see effectively. Even when his formal education ended and he could discern many details, there still seemed to be something missing from his view. Even now, when he speaks about the art he knows so well, Packard talks of brushstrokes and pointillism. His digressions are linear. He does not gravitate toward abstractions. Still, he will look at a picture painted by a man on a bender two hundred years ago and say, "Japanese art is basically emotional art. When the Japanese get drunk, they lose control over their emotions. I like paintings in which the composition is bigger than the paper. The qualities I like about the people are the qualities I like about the art." Then he adds, "I try to give life to my feelings by effective use of my mind. I recognize that feelings are important and should be fostered, even if they're not your forte." □

"Foxes Meeting at Oji," from the Hundred Famous Views of Edo, *by Hiroshige (1797–1858)—wood-block print.*

名所江戸百景
王子装束ゑの木大晦日の狐火
広重画
改
三九
下谷魚栄



THE GLORY OF ALSACE

Few Sectors of the World Offer So Much

by
G. Y. Dryansky

The French have a word, *dépaysement*, the state of being either outside your own country or cut adrift from the familiar. A Parisian going to Alsace is *dépaysé*. Though this French province has looked westward ever since Louis XIV created it, Alsace is French in a largely abstract sense, though it is certainly not German either.

Celts, Swabians, Lorrainers, Burgundians, Alemans, Roman legionaries, Swiss, and Jews—they have come and stayed. The plain they found is fertile, the wooded mountains full of game, the foothills ideal for making some of the world's best white wines. The Rhine offered easy access to the Low Countries and Germany, and the route south through Burgundy was safe. All these people settled at this propitious crossroad, proving that civilization is a more glorious force than tribalism.

Nowadays the onetime republic of Strasbourg is host to the European Parliament, and Alsatians like to think of themselves as the ultimate Greater Europeans. But this is nothing compared to the glory of Alsace in the High Middle Ages, when it consisted of a string of wealthy cities, casually international, with artistic currents that joined the Île de France, Burgundy, and Champagne with Flanders and Germany. For the visitor, the splendor of Alsace today is its still-unspoiled natural setting, in which the most conspicuous signs of man are those created by talented hands 500 years ago. Alsace is not just a change of place but a relocation in time. I visited Alsace last April. Who would have expected snow then, lying thick from the high forests of the Vosges to the sloping vineyards, the mouths of gargoyles fanged with icicles? The weather here is often extreme; this time it was freakish, but it enhanced the sense of *dépaysement*.

The journey, however, was made cushy by a new train service from Paris to Strasbourg, called "Nouvelle Première." It has a

MICHAEL BUSSELLE

The route des vins *wanders from one medieval village to another.*

RICHARD KALVAR/MAGNUM (3)

tasteful, power-office look—not cozy-chic like the old Blue Train, but posh-tech. The food served in the dining car has been touted by critics as the finest of all train food.

It isn't (more of this later). The best thing about *la grande carte* of the Nouvelle Première is that you're close to Strasbourg by the time you've finished dinner. As with all French trains that nowadays sweep along on clickless welded rails, you can set your watch by its arrival time, exactly 10:37 P.M.

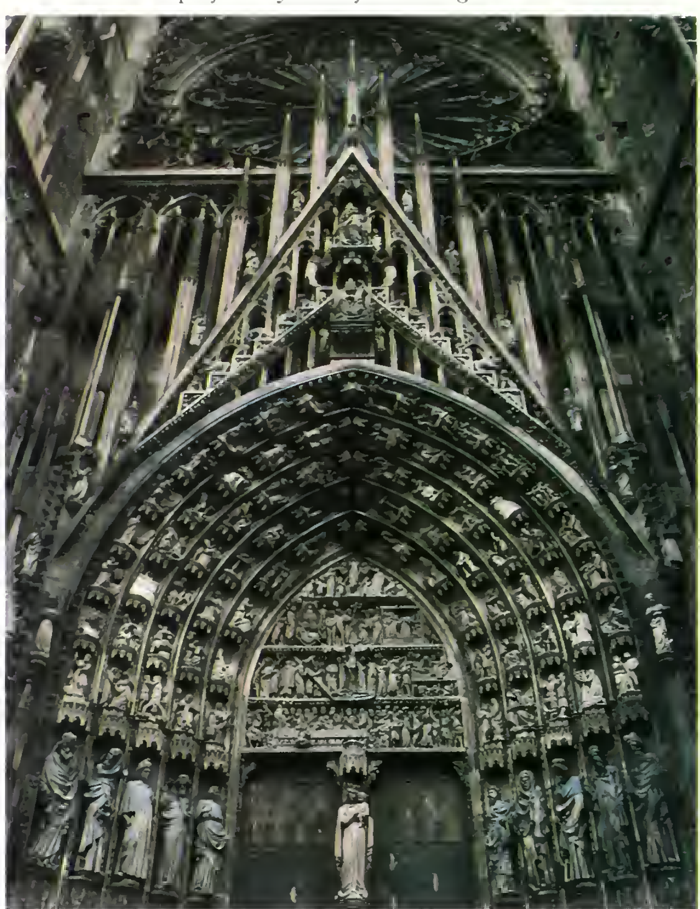
A cab rushes you from the station, alongside and over the sweeping waters of the narrow Ill River, into the old city. It looks so intact that a light burning in a small window might be where a university student, one J. W. von Goethe, is still cracking the books. But the light is electric. If electricity impairs the time warp a little, it does wonders spotlighting the cathedral at night.

Strasbourg's red stone cathedral, carved, like Milan's Duomo, fine as lace, is one of the most profoundly beautiful buildings in the world. It is as graceful as Milan's but more encompassing in spirit, with its massive, simple buttresses and airy spire. I had no need to race from the train, near midnight, to see it again; it was, by design, just a few steps away from my hotel.

There is no grand old hotel in Strasbourg. There are new, expensive ones of no interest. There is also the Hôtel des Rohan, a small, well-run place on a pedestrian street in the old town. The new, eighteenth-century-style furniture crowded in the lobby gives off a glare of elegant intentions, but the rooms upstairs are simpler and immaculate, and no grand-hotel concierge was ever more obliging than the one person at the desk of the Rohan.

Above: Paul and Marc Haeberlin of the Auberge de l'Ill. Below: Louis Rolly-Gassmann in his vineyards in Rorschwihr.

The façade of Strasbourg Cathedral, carved as fine as lace: one of the most profoundly beautiful buildings in the world.



Even allowing no time just for wandering among the medieval houses leaning beside the canals and the Ill as it rushes toward the Rhine, at the edge of the old city, two days are barely enough to take in Strasbourg. The Musée de l'Oeuvre Notre Dame, for instance, is not just an auxiliary museum of the Cathedral of Our Lady: some of the finest statuary belonging to its façade, done by sculptors who probably worked at Chartres, is now safe here, replaced by poor copies on the church front. More than a cathedral museum, it is a large and diverse collection of wood and stone sculpture, paintings, furniture, and tapestry that traces the currents of art in the region from before the Romanesque period to the Renaissance. A whole room is dedicated to the work of Hans Baldung Grien, Dürer's brilliant student, and there is a startling collection of busts by Nicolaus Gerhaert van Leyden, a keen realist. Architectural drawings showing plans for the cathedral, either executed or abandoned, date back to 1255. The rooms of stained glass from churches and monasteries in the region are probably unmatched anywhere in the way in which they show a quantity of masterpieces close up. The head of Christ of 1050 from Wissenbourg Abbey is the oldest stained glass surviving in France or Germany. This Wissenbourg Jesus seems to stir archetypal memories that go beyond Byzantium back to the kouroi of

preclassical Greece, while Peter Hemmel von Andlau's elegantly ambling stained-glass Adam of 1470 already speaks to the taste of the Renaissance. Between them, in room after room, are some of the best intervening examples of this all-but-lost art.

Strasbourg's Museum of Fine Arts, housed for the past century in a handsome palace built in 1704 by Cardinal Armand de Rohan-Soubise, was once an overflow collection of the booty Napoleon gathered for the Louvre. Most was returned after his defeat. The Strasbourg museum is still small, with a handful of star pictures and some good works by lesser-known artists.

Goya's portrait of Bernardo Iriarte alone makes the visit worthwhile: it is full of brio, of minimal but expressive details, and has a long dedication painted in a big, pale swath across the bottom. Along with two of that quirky Florentine dreamer Piero di Cosimo's more conventional religious pictures, there is a fascinating *Myth of Prometheus*. Besides these glorious paintings, the faience and porcelain of the gifted Hannong family are exhibited; and the living quarters of the sybaritic clerics whose palace this was are also on view. As you leave the Château des Rohan, you will once again see the looming spire of the cathedral, in one of its loveliest settings. The eye never tires of this skyward-striving marvel, which Johann Hültz finished in 1439, about the time Gutenberg began his first, Promethean experiments with printing in Strasbourg. For centuries it was the tallest tower in Christendom. Goethe climbed it time after time, fighting vertigo, as an exercise in self-control. Victor Hugo called it "a mass of stone shot through and through with air and light . . . palpitating in every breath of wind." Beneath it, in the façades and stained glass, in the intricate pulpit of Hans Hammer, in the unique Angel Pillar of the south transept, is treasure housed in treasure.

Leaving the feast that is Strasbourg for Murbach is like clearing the palate with a gulp of eau-de-vie. A stone gateway, the remnant of a monastery, straddles a mountain road at the edge of the Vosges. Beyond lies a village dominated by the blunt choir, transept, and powerful spires of what is now the local church. This twelfth-century structure, its nave gone, overreaches its surroundings. It was once the great church of the horrible monks of Murbach, a community dating to the eighth century whose most notable activity was terrorizing the valley below with its standing army. The monastery was open only to nobles; its abbots were princes of the Holy Roman Empire. The revolutionaries of 1789 did it in.

In the valley below, the roads are straight and wide. Starting in late afternoon from Murbach, you can easily be at the Château d'Isenbourg in time for a drink before dinner. Isenbourg, now an inn, sits in the middle of its vineyard and overlooks the red roofs of the village of Rouffach. The emperor Maximilian stayed here in 1511, but now it is mostly a banal nineteenth-century structure with a curious tower like a little lighthouse, added when the rebuilders discovered they had forgotten the staircase. The main rooms are rather rinky-dink; the dining room in the ancient high cellar, a place where food not so good as its pretensions is stiffly served. But the bedrooms are spacious and nicely decorated with bits of old furniture. There are a tennis court and a swimming pool, and the views of the vineyards and village are pleasant. Isenbourg is the best place to stay to visit Mulhouse, after a quick look at the old town of Rouffach.

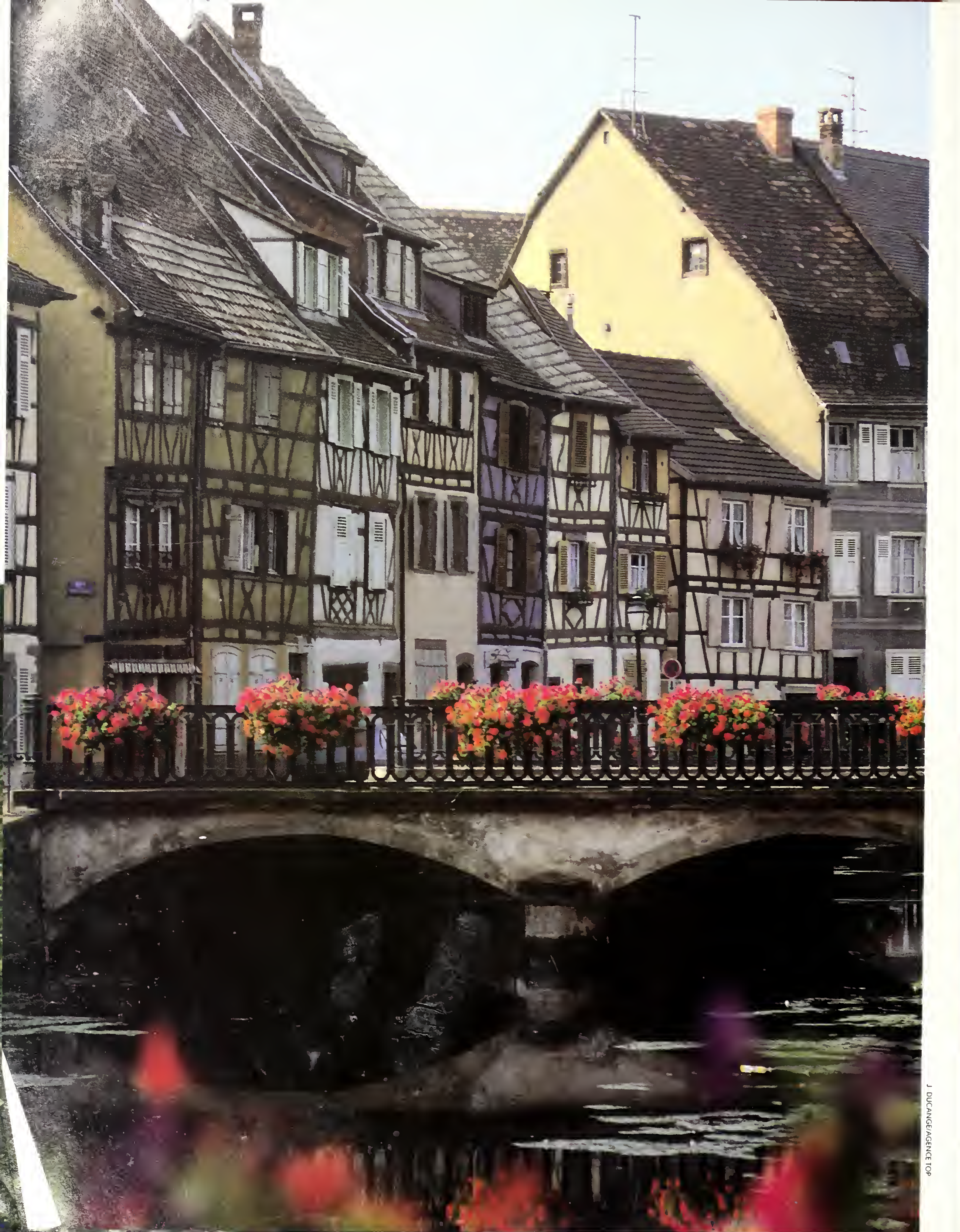
Michelin, that overrated, too readily trusted guide, gives Mulhouse no stars as a city. During the eighteenth century, the republic of Mulhouse was the center of a flourishing textile industry that is now severely depressed. The town may not be a place to stroll in, but it has three extraordinary museums. You are fond of Bugattis? There are 123, the largest collection on earth, at the National Auto Museum, where some 500 rare cars sit in a 200,000-square-foot warehouse divided into lanes decorated with copies of the lanterns of the Pont Alexandre III, in Paris. Reigning over all this, flanked with statuary of the sort you find on lower-suburban lawns, is a huge portrait of the mother of the brothers Schlumpf, to whom this museum is dedicated. The Schlumpfs drove their wool business to destruction feeding a collection that was private until 1982. With several one-of-a-kind models, the museum covers the automobile's history from the beginning to the future, seen in prototypes. Here is Chaplin's Rolls, there Bao Dai's Ferrari and Françoise Sagan's Gordini. For car buffs, Ettore Bugatti's own 1930 Royale coupe is reason enough for a visit.

The textile museum is a forlorn wonder, with peeling walls and austere displays. Yet it is the mecca of the world's fabric designers, who pay 2,200 francs for whatever they copy directly from the museum's six million old designs. These are pasted in big manufacturers' sample books, now falling apart from use, that date back to the eighteenth century. The collection of *toiles de Jouy* from the factory, near Versailles, that made them in the late 1700s is exceptional. In scenes from operas, myths, fables, and daily life, roller-printed in monochrome on a white cotton ground, the work was so fine that copies cannot achieve the finely modulated detail of the original fabrics.

The wallpaper museum, just outside town at Rixheim, is housed in what was part of a factory of the once famous Zuber company, which still does top-market panoramas. This museum traces the growth of wallpaper making in Mulhouse and elsewhere, as it kept pace with the decorative needs of the burgeoning middle class. Here are the earliest seventeenth-century printed squares, which predate wallpaper, and eighteenth-century panels by the extraordinary house of Réveillon. Here too, in a series of upstairs rooms, is Zuber's art of panorama at its height, with views of the Greek War of Independence, of Brazil, Hindustan, and North America—these done in 1834, depicting the ports of Boston and New York and cadets drilling at West Point. The printing of a panorama sometimes required more than 2,000 blocks, many of which survive. The rooms you see are done from new editions being sold again today. At the factory across the yard you can buy

Strasbourg Cathedral's La Synagogue, *now safe in the museum.*

PETER WILLI/AGENCE TOP



J. DUCANGE/AGENCE TOP

"Views of North America," thirty-two panels extending over fifteen meters of wall, for about $7,500.

Unlike Mulhouse, Colmar is a gem. You could spend hours walking through the pedestrian streets of its center, lined with intact fifteenth- and sixteenth-century houses. In the Rue des Marchands stands the house of Martin Schongauer, the painter of the late Middle Ages who inspired Dürer, just down the street from the house of the painter who is presumed to have been Schongauer's master, Isenmann. Farther down, a museum has been made of the birthplace of Bartholdi, the prosperous *pompier* sculptor who landed one of the great commissions of all time—the Statue of Liberty.

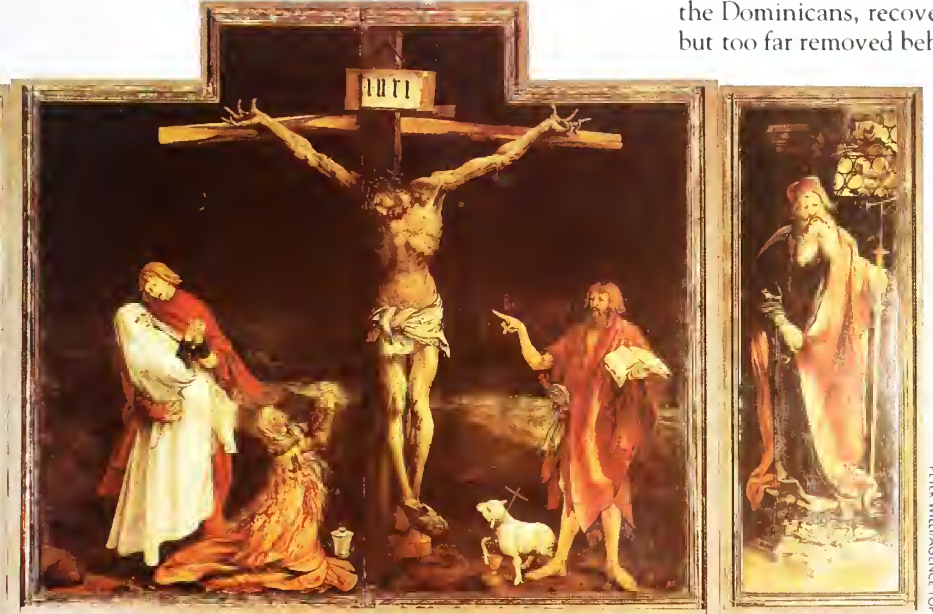
Colmar also has the most-frequented French museum outside of Paris, Unterlinden. In this thirteenth-century convent, the height of Alsatian painting of the late Middle Ages is copiously represented. It also has an unsurpassed Cranach *Melancholy*; but the true glory of the museum—and one of the glories of the world—is the altarpiece of the Antonine convent of Isenheim, done between 1510 and 1515 by the man known as Grünewald, whose real name may have been Mathis Neithart. Was he a Rhinelander? Alsatian? His biography is still a mystery, but his work bursts boundaries.

Flanders, Champagne, Burgundy, the Rhineland, Italy—looking at this startlingly ambitious and ingeniously successful altarpiece, you feel that Grünewald absorbed the best currents from all these places, perhaps by intuition. He was also a century ahead of his time in portraying dramatic sentiment that brilliantly stops short of sentimentality. The range here is stupendous, the inventiveness of scene and composition unmatched. Schongauer had a gift for depicting character and mood in features. A trained engraver, he wrung expression from details. But Grünewald went further, giving his compositions total expressiveness and foretelling the mannerists, yet with greater subtlety than many of them would master. Whether his scene is the jubilant lyricism of the Annunciation, the cruel pathos of the Crucifixion, or the astonishment of Christ's resurrection, every aspect of his space is alive with meaning. His angels are as delicate as Botticelli's; his Saint Anthony has the plastic aplomb of a Piero della Francesca. His falling soldier at the tomb recalls the dramatic exploitation of perspective of Uccello. His drapery has the emotional rhythm of an El Greco. You will need a rest before seeing the remainder of the museum, and also Schongauer's truncated but still lovely *Madonna of the Rosebush*. It was stolen from the nearby church of the Dominicans, recovered in the 1970s, and is back on display, but too far removed behind a gate to allow a really good look.

RICHARD KALVAR/MAGNUM

The twelfth-century church of the terrible monks of Murbach.

Opposite: Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century houses in Colmar. Below: The overwhelmingly powerful and expressive Isenheim. altarpiece, in Colmar, painted by the mysterious genius Grünewald.



PETER WILLI/AGENCE TOP

Only twenty minutes away by car, in the monastery church of Saint Stephen in Breisach, over the German border, is what is left of Schongauer's Last Judgment frescoes. They are considered one of the most important monuments of German sculpture but though of a later date lack the expressiveness of Nicolas of Haguenau's wood sculpture, done in 1490 and predating Grünewald's work on the Isenheim altar. The Breisach high altar, a huge and intricate triptych carved in wood by Hans Loi between 1523 and 1526, upstages them.

Visiting churches and walking through great museums can quickly lead to satiety on a short trip. Alsace's *route des vins* makes a delightful change. From Molsheim to Thann, the small road winds through the vineyards from one intact late-medieval village to another, picturesque to the point of being a bit breathtaking. Nothing cloys faster than the picturesque, but a half day spent between Bergheim and Rouffach will probably stay with you for life. Tarry in Niedermorschwihr, Eguisheim, Hattstatt, and Gueberschwihr. Riquewihr is so well known that it attracts as

many tourists as a theme park. Kaysersberg is just as pretty, and quieter. Everywhere you'll have the opportunity to sample, free, the white wines that have made Alsace famous—its Rieslings, tokays, pinot blanc, Gewürztraminers, muscats, and Sylvaners, drunk young, as well as the Edelzwickers, blended little local wines with a fruitiness that perishes with travel. The best houses at which to taste and buy include Schlumberger at Guebwiller, Hugel in Riquewihr, Beyer in Eguisheim, Trimbach in Ribeauvillé, and Faller in Kaysersberg. For eaux-de-vie, Alsace's fruit alcohols, try Jean-Paul Metté in Ribeauvillé.

These addresses were given me by Marc Haeberlin, after a memorable meal he prepared at his family restaurant, l'Auberge de l'Ill, in Illhaeusern: perfect foie gras; delicate duckling, just in season, with wild pleurotte mushrooms—everything tasting as if the best of what was there in the great ingredients was coaxed out deftly and with respect. I cannot say this was so everywhere I ate. Gastronomy is another of the region's traditional attractions, but Alsace is suffering from the blight of pretension that has struck elsewhere in France. Once the Vosges teemed with game, the Rhine with salmon, the swamps of the plain with frogs. The vineyards encouraged snails, and the farmers force-fed geese to make foie gras. The game is still there, the snails too, but no one is running around the swamps for frogs—the legs all come frozen from Eastern Europe or Asia—and most of the foie gras processed in the region comes from Israel or Hungary, where geese are stuffed in a more cost-efficient way. The salmon comes from hatcheries, like trout.

A wise innkeeper would make peace with these changes and concentrate on the local wonders that remain—the great *charcuterie, choucroute,* onion pies, and peasant dishes you don't eat elsewhere—but finding an authentic local meal is not easy. Instead, you are caught in the crossfire between "talented young chefs" competing for guidebook laurels. Even some of the great old establishments have been obliged to make an effort to follow the frenzy for signature "creative" food.

Particularly disappointing were Aux Armes de France, in Ammerschwihr, where the foie gras had less flavor than the brioche served with it, and l'Auberge du Père Floranc, in a nondescript corner of Wettolsheim, touted as a bucolic country inn by another publication. Here the rib of beef had the watery quality of meat that is too young or frozen. The rooms in both places are done with the taste of a Main Street, Nowhere, furniture store. Leave it to Michelin not only to give a star to the Père Floranc's cooking but also to applaud the seashell collection in the ugly hall of the inn's cement new wing. Not far from Aux Armes is Kaysersberg, with what looked like at least two charming little hotels, the Résidence Chambard and the Hôtel du Château. The Chambard has spacious rooms with views of the vineyard and the fortress, food of quality (though the *nouvelle* portions are small), and a superb wine list.

As for the cooking on the Nouvelle Première train, Joël Robuchon's dishes prepared in vacuum under plastic and reheated in a steambath are not worth the sixty dollars a head you pay. Robuchon is considered one of the greatest new chefs in Paris, but when I sampled his *blanquette de veau,* I recalled with nostalgia the man who owned his restaurant before him, the late Jamin, whose loss leader was an entrée of scrambled eggs with fresh truffles—perfect. My advice is to eat simply during your trip to Alsace and save your money for one or two truly memorable meals at l'Auberge de l'Ill.

Here is a list of places where you can enjoy the hearty cooking still left in the region—*choucroute,* stuffed sowbelly, tongue and hot potato salad, *tarte flambée* (the thin-crusted bacon and fresh-cheese equivalent of pizza), *fleischschnacka* (meat patties in baked crust sauced with bouillon), and, if you are lucky or order in advance, *baeckaoffa,* the casserole of several meats that Alsatian housewives used to cook in the baker's oven after the bread was done.

In Strasbourg: *La Maison des Tanneurs,* 42 Rue du Bain aux Plantes. Gault snubs them, Michelin awards no star, but Nancy Reagan found out about this place through the California grapevine and did well to eat here at the time of the famous Bitburg visit. The *choucroute* I had was as good as the one I remember having here fifteen years ago, though there were fewer items of the fine artisanal *charcuterie.* It's a family-run place in a sixteenth-century house in the oldest part of town.

Chez Yvonne, also known as S'Burjerstuewel, 10 Rue du Sanglier. The regular customers at lunch kiss Yvonne hello and goodbye, grateful for the simple wonders.

In Colmar: *La Maison des Têtes,* 19 Rue des Têtes. One of the town's most interesting old buildings, with its sculpted façade, houses what used to be a remarkably pleasant restaurant, which is a little less good since a change of chefs.

Parisserstuewel, Place Jeanne d'Arc.

Elsewhere: *Caveau Saint Martin,* in Kintzheim, for great *tarte flambée*; *Hirsch,* in Wantzenau, outside Strasbourg; and the *Relais des Menétriers,* in Ribeauvillé.

These addresses should hold you for the week or ten days you need to visit Alsace. If they don't, so be it. It is worth living on bread and water just to see the Isenheim altar. □

G. Y. Dryansky wrote about the tastemaking Ganay family for the July 1986 issue of Connoisseur.

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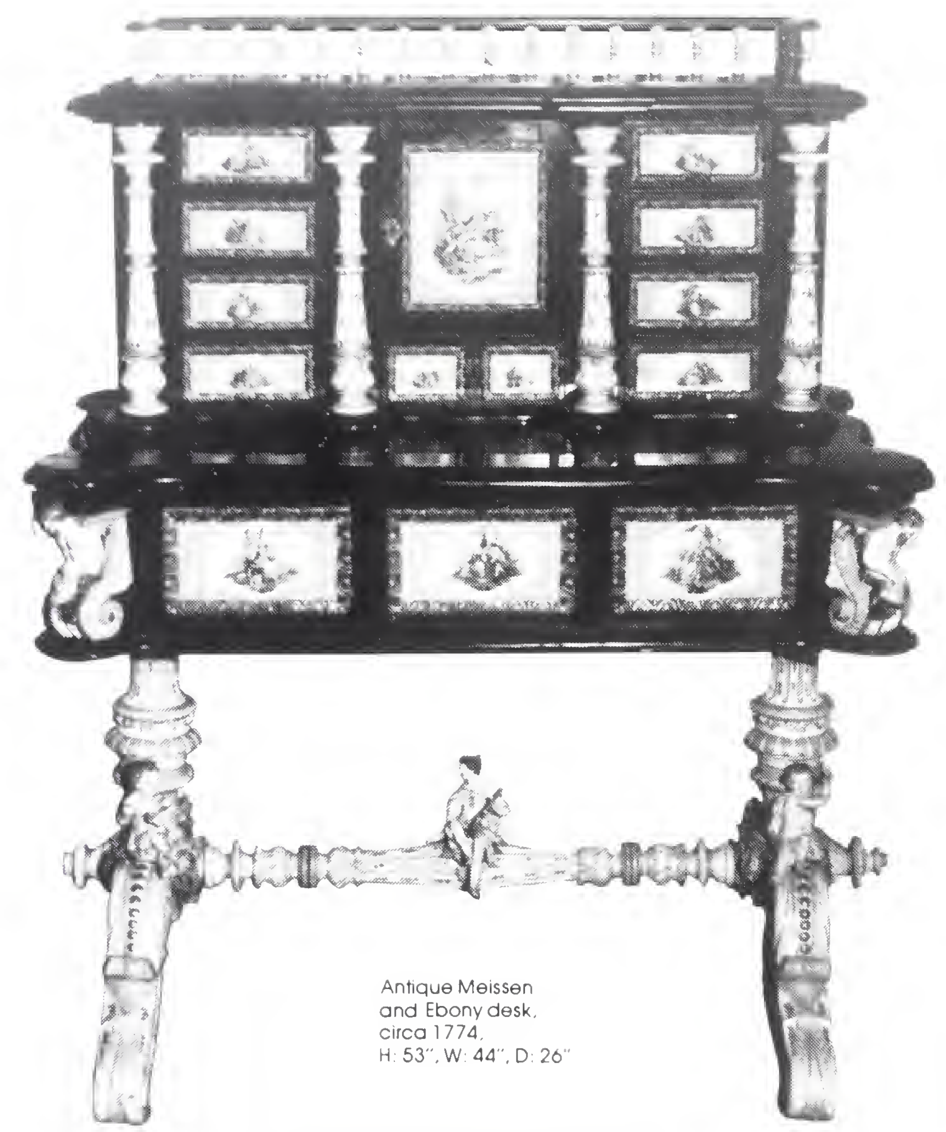

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CHESSMEN: THEIR HISTORY IS ANCIENT, THEIR APPEAL UNIVERSAL

BY ROBIN DUTHY

COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Chessmen carved in walrus tusk, ca. A.D. 1250, from one of Scotland's western islands.

Chess is the world's best and oldest game, and over the centuries it has developed a formidable mystique. As we watch the heroic struggles of the champions, attended by seconds, coaches, and analysts, we sense that we are witnesses to some supernatural combat. These grand masters, with their bulging brains and megabyte memories, seem to belong to some other species. Perhaps in a way they do.

National prestige rides on the outcome of a world championship, but any serious session brings to the boil a caldron of emotions. Aggression may be compounded by panic, contempt give way to pity, yet even then some murderous new scheme will be taking shape in the mind, for this is a game of war; and though the battleground and the combatants are but symbols, they are vehicles for powerful feelings.

It is hardly surprising, then, that some chess buffs are also passionate collectors of chessmen. These little armies may be bought with the unconscious intention of deploying them against imagined enemies, but at another level they provide fascinating insights into the development of many cultures. Considering the fact that chess players are counted in millions, the market for chessmen is minuscule. Delegates to the second International Chess Collectors Congress, in London last year, numbered just eighty, though more are expected at Munich in 1988. The volume of trade is too small to support a single specialist dealer in London or New York, though a few dealers in both cities always have some sets in stock.

Chess seems to have had its origins in India before recorded history, perhaps around 2500 B.C., and chessmen have, presumably, been made ever since. *Chaturanga,* the precursor of chess, was a game for two teams of two players in which each player had a king, an elephant, a horse, a ship, and four foot soldiers. The game was played on the chessboard we know today, with a four-sided die that determined which piece should move, and so depended partly on luck.

In the sixth century B.C. the die was discarded; the forces previously commanded by the team of two were united under a single player's command. One of the two kings was demoted in power and given the title of counselor or minister. With minor variations, the game spread to the Mediterranean Basin and the Far East between the sixth and eighth centuries A.D., and thereafter northward through Europe. The earliest surviving pieces date from the second century A.D. In the early sixteenth century, the rules were altered to become those we know today—the most radical change being that the combined power of rook and bishop was given to the counselor. Gradually this piece came to be known as the queen.

Only a few medieval European pieces have been found, and most are now in museums. Among the earliest is a group, carved from walrus tusks, found on the island of Lewis, off the west coast of Scot-

Robin Duthy is the author of The Successful Investor.

William Steinitz (right), the dreaded American master, thrashing Dr. Zukertort.

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A highly desirable Indian set from the early nineteenth century, carved in ivory.

land. Each piece has an intense expression, its eyes peering forward as though it had seen an army of ghosts.

Of all the chessmen the world has produced over two millennia, 99 percent date from after 1700. Among those that collectors are most avid to own are full-carved Indian sets made in Bengal around 1800. The opposing armies are often those of the East India Company and the maharaja of Jaipur, and four finely carved elephants may be included on each side. An average example fetched around $300 twenty years ago, rose to $3,000 by 1975, and has now crept up to $6,000. Variations in quality and size account for the present range, between $3,000 and $9,000. The market seems to assign the highest value to the most elaborately carved pieces, though these can resemble small wedding cakes, and many fastidious collectors prefer to pass them by. Prices are also affected by the working method: those turned on a lathe and screwed together are worth less than those carved entirely by hand.

Next on the collector's list might be a mideighteenth-century set made in Dieppe, the center of French ivory carving until 1830. The price of a medium-quality set now stands at $3,000, though along with most other sets these doubled and halved in value over the volatile period between 1979 and 1981. Pinpointing the date and provenance of all sets is crucial to their value. It may be determined on stylistic grounds, though other evidence is sometimes conclusive. During most of the eighteenth century, Dieppe sets included kings and queens of ordinary regal appearance; after the Revolution of 1789, these were stripped of their royal accoutrements and became elaborate, enigmatic towers. Dieppe sets often featured French forces against those of one of their African colonies, such as Morocco or Senegal. The battle of Waterloo later became a favorite theme. Napoleon and his consort, flanked by marshals, faced the duke and duchess of Wellington and George III's ministers. Napoleon himself was an enthusiastic, though mediocre, chess player. Consistently beaten by Talleyrand, he would push the board away, saying that chess was too difficult for a game and not serious enough to be a science or an art.

Chessmen can also be dated by design

Rio by night. Amazon by India
The Southern Americas by Roy

changes made to overcome weak points in their construction or by other peculiarities. Occasionally the identity of a piece is transformed, though it took the elephant several centuries to turn into our present-day bishop. The elephants' tusks, carved almost vertically because of the intractable materials used, gradually began to resemble a bishop's miter. Of all early chessmen, the piece known in the English-speaking world as the bishop is the best guide to the origin of the set. In France it resembled and was called a jester (*fou*) well into the nineteenth century; in Germany it was a runner; in Italy, a standard-bearer.

The finest and most expensive of all European sets that can still be bought are the German seventeenth-century pieces of ivory or fruitwood. The virtuoso craftsmen of Augsburg and other German cities rendered features and clothing in exquisite detail; such sets command as much as $50,000.

Another material used was porcelain. Meissen was the first of several European factories to make chessmen and has continued to do so. An eighteenth-century set now fetches around $30,000, while the contemporary version, though technically superior, can be ordered for $4,500.

Another popular though rare porcelain example is the Russian "propaganda" set, produced by the Lomonosov factory, in Leningrad, in 1928. It is no work of art, for the pieces are quite crudely modeled and have uniformly idiotic expressions. Even so, the opposing armies of capitalists and communists are amusing enough to lift prices to around $15,000. The capitalist pawns are workers in chains, while the communists are smiling women harvesters clutching sickles. The face of the capitalist king is a grinning skull; the communist king is a burly artisan with a club ready to swing at approaching bourgeois.

THIS IS A GAME OF WAR; THE PIECES, VEHICLES FOR POWERFUL FEELINGS.

There is no limit to the bizarre variations on the chess theme. Sets have been made from every imaginable material, including spent bullet cases. Most recently, an ingenious set by the Italian designer Franco Rocco consists of abstract geometric shapes in chrome- and gold-plated brass that fit together to form a puzzle cube, which must be dismantled before play can begin. Vestiges of knight and castle forms can be seen, and though at $2,600 the set may seem an expensive executive toy, its artistry and style could make it a classic.

The blue chip of the market is the 1849 design by Nathaniel Cook, to which the English champion Howard Staunton lent his name, just as Jack Nicklaus might to a set of golf clubs today. The design caught on, and by the end of the century the set was accepted internationally for tournament play. The nineteenth-century sets made by Jacques of London now fetch between $500 and $5,000, depending on

A twelfth-century Spanish chess queen carved from walrus ivory.

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A Russian set (1928): smiling communist harvesters vs. capitalist pawns in chains.

size and material. Whereas elaborately carved sets were seldom played with even at the time they were made, the Staunton sets are good for playing as well as for investment. Prices have been climbing at between 5 and 10 percent a year, and that growth rate could well be sustained.

Ultimately, the market for chessmen depends on the level of interest in chess itself, for prices will be fixed by the tiny percentage of chess players who turn collector. Though players bitten by the collecting bug describe it as more affliction than pleasure and warn their friends against it, their number seems to be on the rise.

The image of eccentric genius is not easily shrugged off. For that matter, chess players may enjoy this reputation. The popular feat of playing simultaneous blindfold chess against several players has helped to perpetuate the mystique of the great player. Najdorf took the feat to its extreme when in 1943 he tackled forty-five players at once. Some masters think of it as a vulgar party trick and will have none of it. In fact, the ability to perform in such conditions is no mystery. Every grand master has studied and committed to memory several thousand games; the more he knows, the better his game.

This is the chief reason why, until a century ago, Orientals were comparatively weak players, though chess was the principal board game of Asia. Except in Japan, the East had no chess literature and therefore no accumulated wisdom available to young players. Each had to develop his game from scratch. The situation will change, swelling the ranks of top players and collectors and sending prices up.

A modern Italian set: abstract geometric shapes fitted in a puzzle cube.

COURTESY ARTE G. EDIZIONI, MILAN

A glance down the list of chess champions suggests that the game brought them little happiness or peace of mind. Feuding seems to have been endemic, and blistering attacks in the chess press by one player on another commonplace. Paul Morphy (1837–1884), the greatest of American players until Bobby Fischer, was a child prodigy whose chess career was over by the time he was twenty-three. At twelve he defeated the international master Johann Loewenthal, who is said to have embraced the child warmly and prophesied that he would become the world's greatest player. If it really happened, the episode was hardly typical of the chess world, as Morphy was soon to discover. Meantime, he went from strength to strength, peaking at the age of twenty with a dazzling run of games. Moncure Conway said the experience of playing Morphy was like "a first electric shock, or first love, or chloroform."

At their best, Morphy's games combine elegance with surprise and run forward with the poetic movement of a beautiful machine; but he was soon catapulted from a sheltered life in New Orleans into what Fred Reinfeld described as "a world of scorching jealousy . . . and sordid scrambling for a quarter, or a shilling or a cent; the world Kieseritsky left for a pauper's grave in 1853." Morphy abandoned chess and, as his intended career as a lawyer came to nothing, became increasingly reclusive and melancholy. In later life, his paranoia led his family to move him to an asylum, but on arriving there he protested against his detention with such evident sanity that he was taken home.

Steinitz, who became world champion after Morphy, was known as the Michelangelo of chess. He was a ruthless player, hated by almost every other master, who never lost a match in thirty-two years. In his later years, Steinitz suffered delusions that he could move pieces by means of electric currents radiating from his fingers. He died while he was a charity patient in a sanitarium.

Other world champions, too, have come to a sticky end. Capablanca died from a cerebral hemorrhage at the age of fifty-three; Alekhine died at the same age, lonely and broke. Lasker had the sense to charge high fees to take part in tournaments, explaining to the organizers that he didn't want to end up like Steinitz.

Yet for all the strange and often pernicious effects it has on the lives of its devotees, chess is bound to flourish, and that fact alone guarantees a demand for fine chessmen. For those who can accept defeat without an identity crisis, the game can yet be a pleasure; and to play with a beautiful set that is growing in value makes it even more so. □

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WINE

GOOD WINES IN BAD YEARS

BY ROBERT M. PARKER, JR.

P. J. KAUFMAN

It is natural to want the best, which for those who appreciate wine means the top vintages of Bordeaux, a region unsurpassed in the production of huge quantities of high-quality wine. The Bordeaux *grandes années*, prized for their sheer richness, ripeness, and potential longevity, are in demand the world over. In the quest for the very finest, people sometimes forget that even in great vintages there are disappointments, even failures. On the other hand, in mediocre and less glamorous vintages without much international acclaim, stunning wines are often made. They can offer the happiest possible ratio between price and quality and at the same time are ready to drink. In the case of the great vintages, this may be ten to fifteen years. Moreover, while everyone expects a 1945, a 1961, or a 1982 *grand cru* Bordeaux to be stupendous, these levels of luxury command premium prices. Such maligned Bordeaux vintages as 1980 and 1984 often languish on merchants' shelves virtually unnoticed, in spite of their low prices, yet they can reveal rare pleasure if chosen with prudence. Of course, selecting a Bordeaux wine from a mediocre vintage requires making an intelligent choice, but it is worth the effort to become familiar with the top wines from these vintages, for they are often a quarter to a third the price of the same wine from a famous vintage in heavy demand.

Long ago I woke up to the delights of great, underpriced wines from poor years. I have fond memories of the superb 1950 Pétrus, 1957 La Mission-Haut-Brion, 1960 Latour, 1968 Talbot, and 1974 Trotanoy, all wines from vintages scorned in wine-writing circles. Yet such wines provide glorious, irrefutable evidence that legendary vintages like 1945, 1961, and 1982 are not necessarily the only ones worth talking about. Two recent Bordeaux vintages with plenty of underpriced stars are the 1980 and 1984 clarets. The 1980s have been sitting around on retailers' shelves for almost four years and are ready for immediate drinking. The 1984s are just now arriving.

The 1980, sandwiched between a succession of top years in Bordeaux, has become a forgotten stepchild. However, the shrewd and adventurous wine enthusiast knows how surprisingly good the best wines from this vintage are. In 1980, Bordeaux, indeed all Europe, had a very poor summer, and the vintage was written off by the wine press long before the grapes were picked, in mid- to late October, a month later than usual. But during the last part of September and the beginning of October, the weather was ideal—sunny, hot, and dry—and the grapes ripened late but properly. The 1980 clarets are fully mature, with few exceptions, and offer delicious drinking now, especially the following:

From the Médoc, Cos d'Estournel, in St.-Estèphe, is delicious, and in Pauillac no one made a better wine than Pichon-Lalande, although for pure breed and finesse the 1980 Lafite-Rothschild is excellent. In St.-Julien, one taste of wines like Léoville-Barton, Branaire-Ducru, or Gruaud-Larose would suggest a much finer vintage than what critics have indicated. In Margaux, two outstanding wines were produced. Giscours is excellent drinking now, resembling a wine from a much riper, more intense vintage than 1980, and Château Margaux, perhaps the top wine of the vintage, is still not ready to drink and should age well into the next century. In the Graves region, south of Bordeaux, Domaine de Chevalier made a superb wine, as did La Mission-Haut-Brion. In the right-bank communes of St.-Émilion and Pomerol, Cheval-Blanc is quite tasty, but Pétrus has emerged from a closed shell in the last twelve months to reveal a remarkably concentrated and intense wine, much more like a top vintage than a so-called off year. The interesting thing about the 1980s is that they are priced at about a third of what more highly acclaimed vintages, such as 1981, 1982, and 1983, are selling for—a 1980 Cheval-Blanc, for instance, is $29, compared to a 1983 at $69, while a 1980 La Mission-Haut-Brion goes for $20, compared to $44.50 for 1982. Obviously, wines like those recommended above represent great values and can be drunk now, with the exception of Château Margaux.

Robert Parker is the author of Bordeaux *and editor of* The Wine Advocate.

G. H. Rothe

Dawning

35½ x 23½ inches — original mezzotint — Edition 150, 15 A.P.

Mezzotint, ink.

As for 1984, this vintage followed the three large, high-quality crops of 1981, 1982, and 1983, and while the growing season in Bordeaux got off to a magnificently sunny start in April, May was wet and cold, and because of poor flowering much of the merlot crop was destroyed. However, during the summer the weather was fine and, except for torrential rains at the end of September, it remained quite good. But to the journalistic prophets, rain always signals catastrophe, and—just as in 1980—many wine writers dismissed this vintage long before the cabernet sauvignon grapes were picked in relatively ripe, healthy condition. The 1984s are now coming on the market, and while they were at first overpriced by the Bordelais—who used the excuse that they had to make strict selections in order to produce only the finest wines—they are going to have to be dumped in the marketplace because they are not commercially viable, having fallen between a very good and abundant vintage in 1983 and the enormous, high-quality crop of 1985. Few people want the 1984s, in spite of the fact that a number of excellent wines were produced. They will offer value, since in order to unload them, importers and wholesalers will be obliged to discount them significantly.

In the right-bank appellations of Pomerol and St.-Émilion, 1984 is not a particularly strong vintage, because of the devastation to the merlot crop. Nonetheless, should you see a bottle of L'Église-Clinet from Pomerol or Cheval-Blanc from St.-Émilion, don't hesitate to buy it; these two châteaux made excellent wines in 1984. In the Médoc and Graves, however, a number of wines have much more in common with such vintages as 1981, in terms of their richness, color, and longevity, than many writers have suggested. Truly outstanding wines were made at Cos d'Estournel, in St.-Estèphe, and Mouton-Rothschild, Lynch-Bages, Latour, and Pichon-Lalande, in Pauillac. This last is a seductive wine, with its creamy, velvety fruit and intense, fragrant, cedary, black-currant bouquet. In St.-Julien, Léoville-Las-Cases, Gruaud-Larose, and Talbot have turned in very good efforts, and in Margaux both Château Margaux and Lascombes have also produced excellent wine. From the Graves area, Haut-Brion's richly fruity elegance, character, and finesse are captivating, while La Mission-Haut-Brion made a rather robust, tannic wine with considerable style. The 1984s should drink well for at least a decade, and compared to other current vintages they should offer value because of the huge discounting that must occur.

SO-CALLED OFF YEARS CAN OFFER BOTH VALUE AND SATISFACTION.

Bordeaux is not the only area where maligned, so-called off years can offer both value and pleasure. The 1980 red Burgundies, criticized before the harvest much as Bordeaux wines were that year, have turned out to be the most satisfying and consistently good vintage for that region between 1978 and 1985. They are delicious to drink now and can still be found on merchants' shelves at a fraction of the price of more recent vintages.

One final suggestion: when serving a top wine from a mediocre vintage at a dinner party, don't identify the wine and the vintage until after your guests have had a chance to taste it and congratulate you on it. This ensures that the wine snobs in attendance can't dismiss your off-year Bordeaux or Burgundy as a bad wine, since they will have had to judge the wine by its character rather than its vintage. □

PICTURE SOURCES: Cover: Photo, Erich Lessing/Magnum, courtesy of the British Museum, London; detail, dark green diorite mask with pierced forehead and cheeks for suspension, possibly as a breast ornament; size, 11″ x 4″. Page 5: (top right) Photo, Daniel Jouanneau; (top left) photo, Erich Lessing/Magnum; detail; H: 33″, courtesy of the British Museum, London; (middle right) Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1755–1842), *Portrait of the Artist's Daughter*, 1787, detail; medium, oil on canvas; size, H. 0.73 m, W. 0.595 m; Wrightsman Collection; photo, courtesy Didier Aaron, (center) Alan Wolfson, *Tower of Pizza*, 1985, detail, medium, mixed media; size, 14″ x 17⅜″ x 17¼″, photograph courtesy Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York, (bottom left) photographer, Byrne & Co., *The Marquess of Granby and His Daughter, Lady Victoria Marjorie Harriet Manners*, June 1888, detail, copyright reserved. Reproduced by gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; (bottom right) photo, Lawrence S. Burr. Page 24. Photo, Mark Boisclair; date, ca. 1935, medium, tempera and ink on bristol, size, 11¼″ x 13¾″. Page 26: (top) Photo, Mark Boisclair, medium, casein and watercolor on cream-colored paper; size, 15″ x 10¼″; (middle right) photo, © 1987 Nathaniel Lieberman; *The Brooklyn Museum Master Plan Design Model*, 1986, by Arata Isozaki and Associates/James Stewart Polshek and Partners; medium, various hardwoods; scale, 1″: 40″; (bottom) "Sections and Elevations"; medium, silkscreen on paper; size, H: 54″ x W: 72″. Page 36: (top) Armillary Sphere; Museo della Scienza, Florence. Page 38: (bottom) Photo, courtesy Joseph Abboud, New York; (left) sweater of washed cotton and tussah silk; (right) sweater of 100% tussah silk. Page 44: (left) © Sotheby's, 1987, detail; *Encampment Scene, Mughal*, sixteenth century; (top right) © Sotheby's, 1987; author, Gace de la Bigne, date, late fifteenth century. Page 69: (bottom) Medium, veneered with ebony, tulipwood, and amaranth, gilt bronze mounts; size, H. 4′5½″, W. 2′, D: 1′4½″. Page 71: (bottom) Size, H: 49⅝″, W: 33″, D: 15⅜″. Pages 72–77: Copyright reserved. Photographs, courtesy of Royal Archives, Windsor Castle. Page 75: (top left) Detail. Pages 78–85: Courtesy of the British Museum, London. Page 78: Size, 35 cm x 52.5 cm. Page 81: (left) Ivory salt cellar from Sherbro, Sierra Leone, late fifteenth century; (top center) middle section of Benin ivory salt cellar, late fifteenth century; (middle center and bottom) Benin salt cellar, late fifteenth century; the lid is a European replacement; (right) three-part Benin salt cellar, fifteenth century. Pages 82–83: Wosera area of the East Sepik Province. Page 84: Moche portrait vases, 200 B.C.–A.D. 600, north Peruvian coast. Page 85: (top) Gamelan Orchestra, Java; size, H: 11″, L: 6½″; (bottom) medium, wood; size, 29.2 cm. Pages 86–87: Photos, Peter Mauss/ESTO. Pages 93, 95–97: Courtesy of Yale Repertory Theatre, New Haven. Pages 92 and 94: Courtesy Goodman Theatre, Chicago. Page 98: *AAA Detective Agency*, 1986; mixed media; size, 13″ x 16½″ x 13¼″. Page 100: (top) *Tenement Hallway*, 1980; mixed media; size, 24″ x 20″ x 33″; (bottom left) *Metro Diner*, 1985; mixed media; size, 15½″ x 15¼″ x 16¾″; (bottom right) *Village Cigars*, 1985; mixed media; size, 14″ x 19″ x 15″. Page 101: (top) *Times Square Shuttle*, 1984, mixed media; size, 10¾″ x 10¼″ x 13¼″. Pages 107–111: Gift of Harry G. C. Packard and Purchase, Fletcher, Rogers, Harris Brisbane Dick, and Louis V. Bell Funds, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, and The Annenberg Fund, Inc. Gift, 1975. Page 107: (bottom) Size, H: 7⅛″, D: 8¾″. Page 108: Size, H: 27½″. Page 109: (top) Date, ca. 1872–91; size, H: 26⅛″, W: 69″; (bottom) medium, wood with color and gold leaf; size, H: 80″ Page 110: Size, H: 13½″, W: 114½″ (entire fragment). Page 111: Size, H: 14⅝″, W: 10″. Page 115: Unknown artist; date, thirteenth century; medium, pink sandstone; Musée de Strasbourg. Page 117: (bottom) Medium, oil on wood. Page 122: All rights reserved. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Gustavus A. Pfeiffer, 1948. Page 123: Purchased from Henri Daguerre, 1926. Page 124: (top) Date, ca. 1928; all rights reserved. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Gift of Gustavus A. Pfeiffer, 1948. Page 132: (bottom) Medium, painting on glass, etched and incised.

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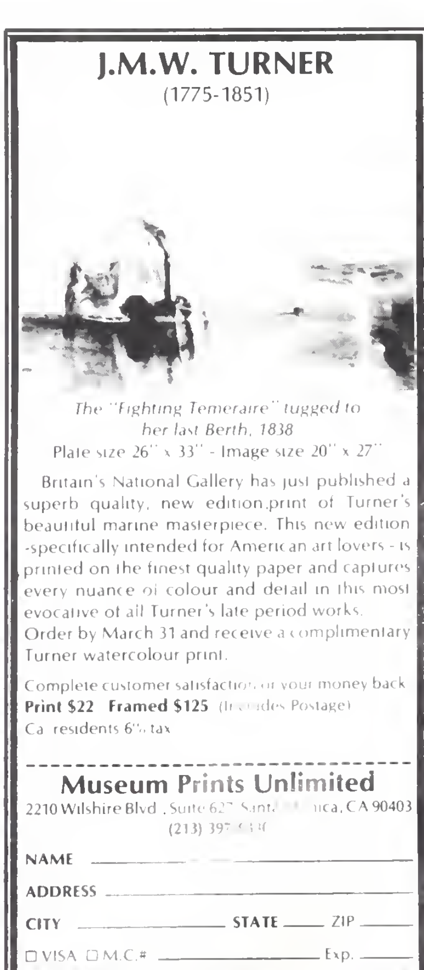

UP & COMING

CLARINET MAN; DOOZIES FROM DOWN UNDER; THE GLASSICIST

THE AUSSIES ARE COMING

For the longest time, Australian fashion was as barren as the country's desert bush and took its cues largely from European runways and American magazines. Then, in 1973, two upstarts, Jenny Kee and Linda Jackson, opened a small shop in Sydney called Flamingo Park. Though the two have since parted ways, they still share (and wear) a flair for design so striking that once, when they walked into a restaurant in Milan, Giorgio Armani and Karl Lagerfeld stood up to applaud. Now, other Australian designers have also discovered their roots and, with them, a source of inspiration and a "look" of their own. Oz (an Australian's pet name for home) fashion teems with the primitive symbols of the country's aboriginal ancestry shot through with the opals, gum trees, barrier reefs, and wildflowers of its sunburnt landscape and glittering coasts.

So quickly has the Australian fashion scene come of age that the fashion giant Neiman-Marcus is betting on it and last year imported eighteen Oz designers to Dallas for the store's annual hoopla devoted to the exposure of design talent from a foreign country. Because of the wild acclaim—and sales—an encore performance is being staged in San Francisco this March. Herewith a selection of four contenders for likely success stateside:

Stuart Membery's colors leap like lizards from his collection entitled "Fez."

The "mystical wild woman" of Aussie fashion, Jenny Kee, sporting her silks.

Jenny Kee

Her black tresses are tied in Mali mud cloth, her neck is swathed in color-splashed silk scarves, and her ears and fingers shimmer with opals and peace rings. "I love to wear what I make," says forty-year-old Jenny Kee, who might be viewed as the mystical wild woman of Aussie fashion, so exotic are her designs.

When Kee first wove images of koalas, kookaburras, and parrots into sweaters, in 1973, she spurred Australians to wear their national icons literally on their sleeves, a craze that has yet to pass. Today, Kee makes a much less literal interpretation of her surroundings. Besides cottons, wool knits, and rugs hand-tufted from wool, she concocts exquisite jacquard silk prints, which are hand-dyed in Milan by Fabio Bellotti, the printer for Valentino, Armani, and Kenzo. Karl Lagerfeld once commissioned her to line Chanel suits with lavishly swirling, opal-inspired silks; and her clients include Anna Piaggi, Lauren Bacall, Rudolf Nureyev, and Princess Di—"but let's not talk about them," she pleads.

Despite her prominence as Oz's premier fashion whiz, Kee buffers herself from the strains of her industry: she lives two hours from Sydney's bustle in the Blue Mountains, hates talking shop but loves to discuss ideas, and refuses to churn out seasonal collections. Instead, she wanders into Australia's vast opal mines or little-visited bush caves seeking out aboriginal petroglyphs to fan her creative embers. "It's a blessing that I've always been able to work from nature," she says. "I just draw what I see."

Linda Jackson

Though Linda Jackson is also striving for a fresher, more indigenous Australian fashion outlook, she has turned her sharp eye—and steady hand—toward couture, "one-of-a-kind items, 'one off the mark.' " In a manner reminiscent of Yves Saint Laurent, who in the seventies decked out society's matrons in silk peasant dresses, Jackson calls her line "bush couture," a more relaxed, ethnic version of its classic counterpart but no less serious: half a dozen dresses and countless bolts of fabric

Linda Jackson in one of her own aborigine-struck designs.

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ROBERT EPSTEIN

White linen elegance from Jill Fitzsimon's spring-summer '87 collection.

have found homes in the Australian National Gallery.

Jackson's forms avoid the structurings that wrap women in artificial shapes. From hooded dresses that recall Indonesian or African sarongs to red silk taffeta ball gowns trimmed in pink petals, her wares swirl and tie with a loose-limbed drape. She eschews patterns, preferring instead just to scissor her way through precious silks and toile. And almost single-handedly, Jackson has revived the art of hand-painting, printing, and dyeing, down under. In fabrics that dance with color superimposed on gold-relief gum-leaf or "black rainbow" motifs, her prints would inspire any wallflower to bloom.

"I use ultraviolet fluorescent paint, possibly the brightest colors you've ever seen," says the thirty-six-year-old native of Melbourne. Though the clothes look as if they come from distant lands—or worlds—"everything is derived from being here," she adds. "It's Australian ethnic."

Jill Fitzsimon

They used to call her "Jill the Jersey Queen"—and they didn't mean New Jersey. "No one can drape it like I can," says thirty-seven-year-old Jill Fitzsimon, who last year won Australia's Fashion Industry Award for Evening Wear (their version of the Coty) and posthaste expanded her fashion empire to New York. Today, she sells to over ninety specialty shops across America, including Elizabeth Arden, Saks, and Razook's.

Her designs are more accessible than the others' to conventional American tastes, albeit still infused with a uniquely Australian quality. Though her prints appear diluted (they are based on watercolors of the Great Barrier Reef), compared to Jackson's or Kee's, Fitzsimon's styles evidence a keen eye for shape and contour; "spirited sportswear," she calls it. Her linen, silk, and, yes, jersey jackets boast strong geometry, with snugly banded waists and pleats fanning the back. Dresses are draped to seduce: one, in hot-pink rayon with peephole cutouts, wraps to a plummeting neckline and has a slit skirt that almost vanishes when its wearer sits. "Not for sedate personalities," notes Fitzsimon with a glint in her sapphire blue eyes.

Stuart Membery

The color in Stuart Membery's clothes comes primarily from his own tart wit. "Australians have a sense of humor that's terminally negative," explains thirty-four-year-old Membery. As a result, an activity as straightforward as sewing a kangaroo on a sweater horrifies this droll designer almost as much as his having to leave the city for a trip to the bush.

Instead, Membery sets his needles to work on garments he describes as "*National Geographic* gone wrong." One collection, "Mexico," relies on overblown patch skirts and oversized cotton flamenco Desi Arnaz shirts to carry off his corny visual puns. His latest, "Austria," features sweaters showing Julie Andrews in pink crinoline climbing an Alp while B-52's drop bombs overhead, satirizing the actress's too-wholesome and overly cheery image.

Membery's fashion follies started after he abandoned careers in advertising copywriting and fashion journalism. Wending his way to San Francisco, he spent three years designing for Esprit before returning home in 1982, when, tongue wedged squarely in cheek, he started tearing apart clichés and pasting them back together on his clothes. A sleeveless shirt is dubbed "Farewell to Arms"; his forthcoming cologne, "Brat," is sold with a slogan, "Experience the hurt."

"We design for the misunderstood," explains Membery, who attributes his bite to a childhood nourished on American TV reruns. "Not for those who think, 'Oh, that's a nice shirt.' "

Never let it be said that Australians don't appreciate a good line—fashion or otherwise. —*Joe Dolce*

THE MOZART OF GLASS

Glass panes are items we ordinarily look through, so it is something of a surprise to encounter the work of the sculptor Renato Santarossa. He works with glass panes—ones that are being looked *at* by large numbers of people in Europe. Wherever he shows (in Basel, Paris, Amsterdam, Cologne, and other art capitals) he has drawn critical and popular acclaim. Indeed, the praise is now loud enough to be audible across the Atlantic.

Santarossa takes a clear pane and teases it from its invisible state. The resulting piece is etched, notched, nicked, chipped, scratched, incised, and sometimes put against other, similarly treated panes. The works are elegant and thoughtful. Santarossa deals not only with the actual glass pieces but also with the shadow play of light bouncing around behind them.

Sculptures as carefully wrought as these show the mark of artist and engineer. Santarossa is both: born forty-three years ago in Bolzano, Ita-

Contrast, *a glass sculpture etched, incised, and painted by the Italian artist Renato Santarossa.*

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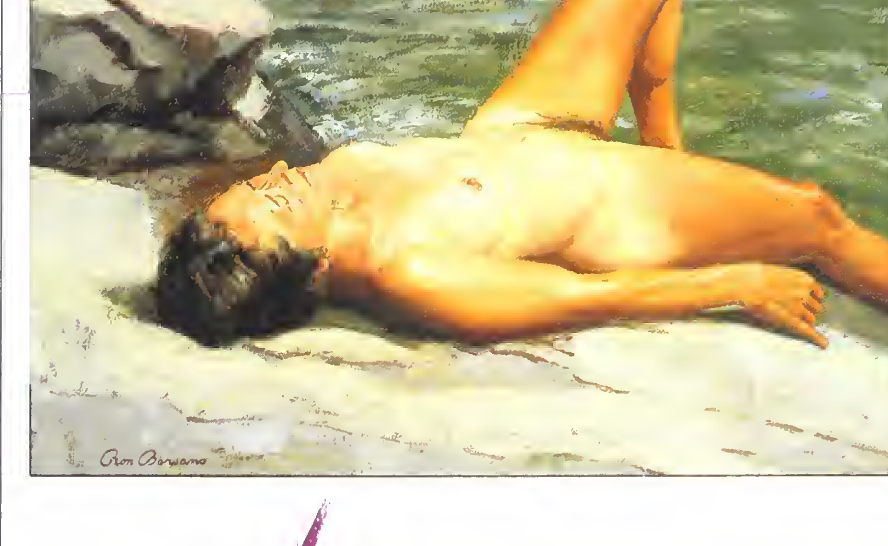

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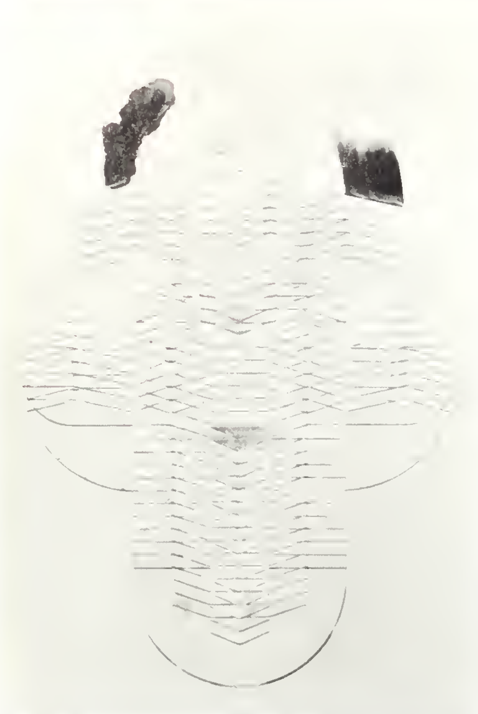

The work, as this glass collage shows, is precise, elegant, self-absorbed.

ly, he went to Germany in 1963 to complete his engineering training but then chose to work instead as art director in his father-in-law's stained-glass factory. In 1976, he turned to sculpture full-time, naturally with glass as his medium.

To him, glass is simply "the vehicle for my statement; it has the same significance as a canvas, a sheet of paper, a slab of wood or marble." Instead of shaping or blowing the glass himself, he prefers the challenge of using the finished pane, "one of our society's manufactured goods, an industrial end product," and to make that his raw material. The outcome is an oeuvre that explores dreamily the demarcations between opaqueness and transparency, stillness and motion.

Of late, Santarossa has begun to experiment with the use of color—dabs that make the objects "dance in space," he says. "The graphic and sculptural expression is wearing a new dress, so to speak; transparency has put on festive garb." The reception of the new work has been enthusiastic. Helmut Ricke, curator of glass at the Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, likens the effect to that of music: "Only when the viewer moves around the objects do they reveal their hidden inner movements, as music does." —*Susanna Gaertner*

VIRTUOSO VIBES

Thirteen years ago, when he was still a twenty-year-old junior at Yale, Charles Neidich made a brilliant New York debut in a solo recital at Carnegie Hall. "Charles Neidich," observed Donal Henahan, a music critic for the *New York Times*, "is a name to jot down if you happen to fancy clarinet playing."

It still is. His seductive notes recently prompted another *Times* critic to call him "a Pied Piper of the clarinet." Winner of the prestigious Naumburg Clarinet Competition in 1985—the first time a major clarinet competition has been held in this country—Neidich will give his second, much-anticipated Naumburg recital on March 10 in New York's Alice Tully Hall, at Lincoln Center. (For ticket information, call 212-362-1191.)

There, ticket holders will hear the world premiere of a chamber work for clarinet and violin, by the American William Schuman, commissioned specially by the Naumburg Foundation. "The program will also include virtuoso chestnuts by Paganini, Sarasate, and Falla," says Neidich, who tends to be self-effacing—until he comes onstage.

There, he holds the audience spellbound with the sheer impact of his performance. Not only is his virtuosity prodigious, but so pervasive is his musicality—the flow of the music—that it envelops the listener. His body language is part of the performance: if he plays a crescendo, he rises with it; he moves with the phrasing to complement the music. And when he takes a bow, he raises his clarinet in one hand, as if sharing homage with the instrument.

After graduating *cum laude* from Yale, where he was principal clarinetist of the Yale Symphony Orchestra, Neidich won the first Fulbright grant to study in the Soviet Union, attending the Moscow State Conservatory for three years. European concerts followed, and then appearances in Japan and throughout the United States.

Neidich is joining the top rank of world-class clarinetists—notably, Stanley Drucker and Richard Stoltzman. Of course, his repertoire, like theirs, embraces Mozart's Concerto in A Major for Clarinet (the first important concerto for the instrument) and other classic pieces. Neidich played the concerto last October with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra of New York on a tour of Spain, Italy, and France, to a spate of rave reviews. He tends to favor contemporary composers, such as Karlheinz Stockhausen and the witty Jean Françaix, the performing of whose clarinet concerto appears to require rubber fingers. "I'm committed to the music of my time, and I play it with commitment," Charles Neidich explains. That way, chances are his chances are awfully good the audience will like it. —*James Egan*

Edited by Melik Kaylan

One of the top rank of world-class clarinetists, Charles Neidich cannot stand still when the music takes hold.

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APRIL 1987

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29 CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD The Getty scandals (part one); a Roman museum in Spain; the art show you love to hate; investing in CDs; across England by foot

56 AUCTIONS The pace picks up again

70 BETWEEN THE LINES And now, in fiction, a detective who is an antiques dealer

89 BOUILLABAISSE AT ITS BEST Through Provence in search of the fabled dish, by William Bayer and Paula Wolfert

96 THE POLITICIANS' ARCHITECT Meet George White, the man in charge of the buildings of federal Washington, D.C., by Stephan Wilkinson

100 UNSUNG NAPLES Southern Italy's big city is exciting, extravagant, inexhaustible—and, once again, off the beaten track, by Marina Warner

108 NAPLES ON THEIR MIND Four who are leading the city's cultural risorgimento, by Patricia Corbett

112 HANDY TREASURES Snuffboxes—in a sense, the most precious *objets* of all

114 LA LANTERNE In just seven years, Libby Keck has reassembled the glorious decorative arts of Versailles in balmy California, by Leon Harris

122 THE LEIPZIG SOUND Why the entire world needs the Gewandhaus Orchestra, by Matthew Gurewitsch

128 QUEEN WALLIS'S JEWELS The gifts the duke of Windsor lavished on his wife go on the block, by Eve Auchincloss

136 LOOKING BACK ON THE NEW LOOK An assessment of Christian Dior, on the fortieth anniversary of his house, by Charles Bricker

144 THE MAN WHO LAUGHED AT FAME It nonetheless came to Diego, the younger brother of the sculptor Alberto Giacometti, by Michael Peppiatt

148 INVESTOR'S FILE Picasso—his works are oddly static on the market

160 UP & COMING What your thumbs can tell you; two who made a Bible; watch out, there's a new use for video

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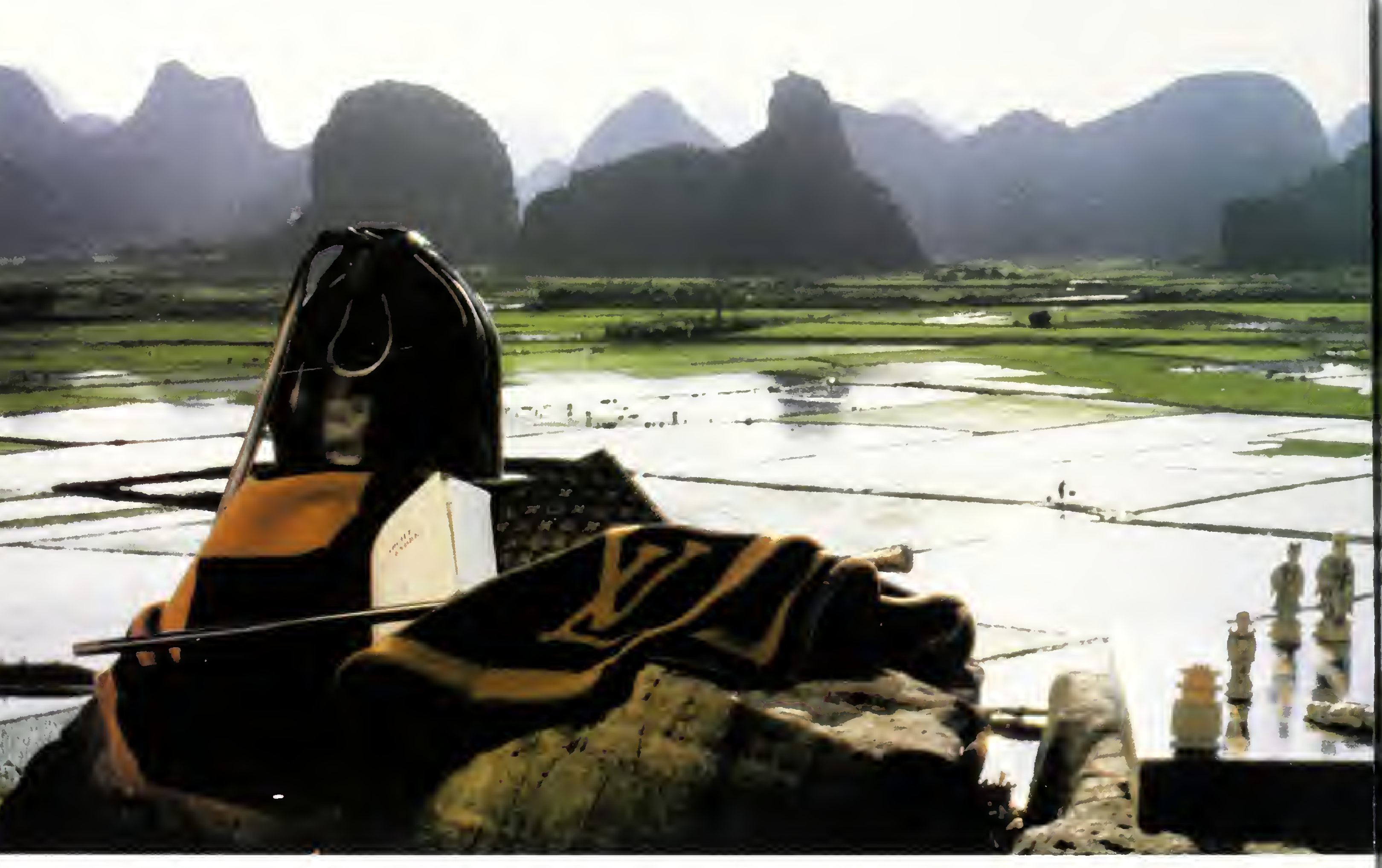

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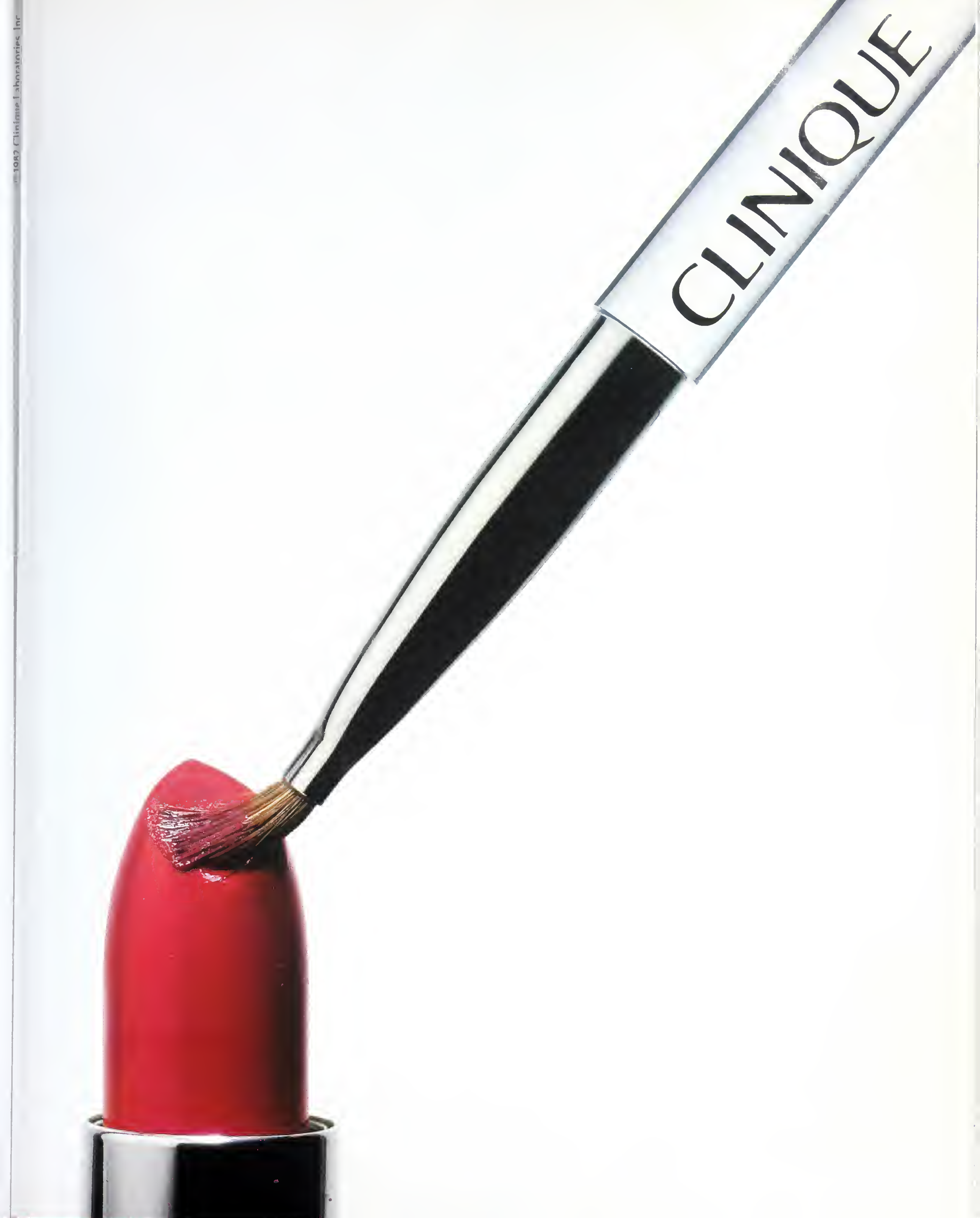

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MY EYE by Thomas Hoving

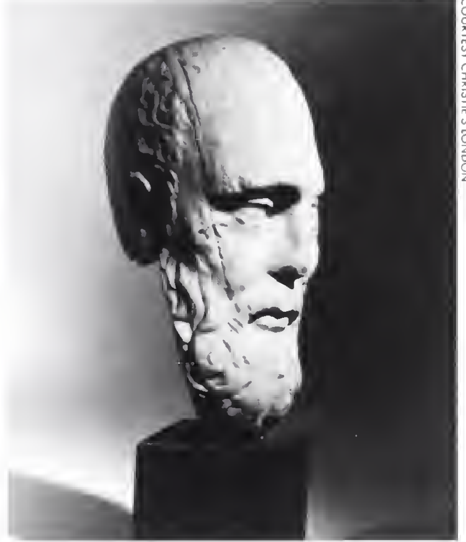
THE GETTY SCANDALS (PART ONE)

In early February, the London *Times*'s distinguished saleroom correspondent, Geraldine Norman, and I broke the museum tax scandal of the century. It happened at the Getty Museum in the department of antiquities from 1973 to 1983, while a certain Jiri Frel was curator. It involved some 6,000 individual pieces from classical antiquity given by donors of whom most are still anonymous. The value of these works is listed by the museum at a staggering $14.4 million. What makes the situation unique in museum annals is that one man, Frel, gathered it all in just ten years. In the majority of instances the fair market value of the gifts was inflated for tax-deduction purposes by two to four times and, in an extreme case—the one illustrated in the middle of this page—by as much as forty-five times.

To remind you of what that can mean, if someone in the 60 percent tax bracket (pre-1987) kited a value for tax deduction by only two times, he actually *made* money. That temptation was eliminated with the enactment of the new tax code, of course—much too late to correct the type of felony documented by the illustration.

The damaged Roman head, a Hadrianic copy of a Greek original depicting the poet Kleanthes, was sold in June 1978 at Christie's London for a paltry $892. The price befits its mediocrity and sorry condition. Yet only one year later the *Kleanthes* was given to the Getty by an "anonymous donor" (one Milton Gottlieb, of Los Angeles) and evaluated by Dr. Frel in museum records at the "full market value" of $45,000. Wow! When I called Mr. Gottlieb and inquired about the evaluation he said he really didn't want to talk about it. He did comment that "overevaluation [was] commonly done." I'll say.

I became suspicious of the goings-on in the antiquities department of the Getty late last summer after a conversation with Geraldine Norman about the mysteries surrounding the Getty kouros. This is the archaic sculpture that was first spotted for the Getty by Frel and purchased in December 1984 from the Basel dealer Gianfranco Becchina for a reported $7 million. The piece is said to have been found in digs on the privately owned island of Mozzia, off the west coast of Sicily. I have expressed my doubts about the piece, doubts that are now shared by a growing list of sage scholars. During one session on the phone, Norman asked me offhandedly if I had ever noticed the "extraordinary number of private donors" who'd given antiquities to the Getty just in 1983. I hadn't, so I obtained the Getty *Journal* and was amazed


COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON

at the number. Why, I asked myself, did the richest museum on earth need gifts, anyway, especially the lackluster kind that flooded in during 1983?

Intrigued, I acquired one of those dreary 990-PF tax forms the Getty submitted to the IRS between 1973 and 1985. I counted 103 individual donors, including many art dealers, one of Frel's three ex-wives and the parents of another, lawyers, real-estate people, and nineteen physicians. There, too, was the description of 938 donations—thousand of coins, bronzes, marbles, ambers, frescoes, jewelry, medical implements, lead fish, silver tablets inscribed with curses, terra-cottas, armor, weaponry, and a hunk of marble with part of the *Iliad* carved into it. Sherds alone were valued at $1.7 million. When I tallied up the "fair market value" of all these gifts, I was stunned at the total—$14.4 million worth. That was more than two times the amount that the legion of curators of twenty-two departments at the Metropolitan had managed to garner in the decade when I was director.

I matched up the anonymous gifts with some 200 mentioned in some twenty Getty publications and then collated those data with the donors named in the tax forms. Much of the material was second-rate. I discovered example after example where full market value had been enormously inflated. I found vast discrepancies in evaluations between works donated by scholars or serious collectors as opposed to those given by people obviously seeking a tax shelter. I talked with staff members and high officials of the Getty. Many mentioned that Frel himself had made or arranged the evaluations—in itself a shocking breach of museum ethics. What else Geraldine Norman and I found out is astonishing. To learn for yourselves, pick up the May issue of *Connoisseur*.

As for the near-term consequences, the Getty will probably have to clean house; heads will roll. In addition, the IRS will surely open up individual tax files going back to the early 1970s. I can also say it is unlikely that Frel was the only one at the museum who knew what was going on, and that efforts were made to "persuade" us to soft-pedal what we'd found by someone close to the Getty, namely, the powerful Norton Simon, who suggested that I meet him to discuss his purchase of *Connoisseur* magazine and "trying to make a deal with" me and the Getty. Dumb stuff!

So, stay tuned. It's a rich and complicated tale of overweening opportunism, shoddy management, duplicity, fear, stupidity, and warped values. Its impact is, above all, profoundly sad. Sad because a great institution has needlessly sullied its own reputation and in so doing has also impugned the reputation of all other museums in America.

Now, let the scandals out. Let sunlight in. The Getty, relieved of having to hide this unsavory story, will no doubt go on to flourish. Now, at least, it can begin to breathe easily. □

THE MERCEDES-BENZ S-CLASS AND THE MYSTIQUE OF THE "BIG MERCEDES."

From era to era over the decades, few automobile series have been accorded the admiration verging on awe that surrounds the premier sedans of Mercedes-Benz.

Shown in descending order at left are examples dating from 1955 to 1963 to 1972 to the 1987 S-Class sedan in the foreground. The "big Mercedes," they are popularly called. Not so much in tribute to their size—substantial but never excessive—as to their prowess. Powerful in a silky way, baronially comfortable rather than garishly luxurious, a big Mercedes manages to blend the dignity of a limousine with what one journal terms "the innate ability to leap yawning stretches of landscape in single, effortless bounds." The big sedan as marathoner, in brief. With the stamina to endlessly devour the miles on any highway in the world, at a pace that might exhaust the drivers of lesser cars. If not the cars themselves.

A big Mercedes of any era is remarkable. The current series, the S-Class, is the most remarkable yet. For its choice of three models, crowned by the 5.6-liter gasoline V-8 560SEL. For one of the slipperiest aerodynamic shapes ever bestowed on a large sedan. For its library quiet within 100 sumptuous cubic feet of living space. For its brilliant use of electronics —to activate its Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), for example. And to deploy its Supplemental Restraint System (SRS)—with driver's-side air bag and front seat belt emergency tensioning retractors —within a fraction of a second of a major frontal impact.

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HATE IT OR LOVE IT, IT'S A MUST-SEE

This is an odd-numbered year, and the Whitney Museum's predictably controversial exhibition of new work by American artists is here again (April 10–June 28). Established in 1932, the Biennial has survived numerous changes in scheduling, format, and intention to become this country's longest-running, most closely observed and energetically deplored exhibition. Indeed, "Biennial bashing" has become a popular critical sport.

One reason for the Biennial's dunning in the press and elsewhere is its uniqueness: no other exhibition attempts a periodic distillation of the full range of contemporary American art. This void leaves the Whitney show with a responsibility and pretensions disproportionate to its size and curatorial capacity. Yet, for all its flaws, the Biennial does provide some index of current directions in American art—more than any other institution seems willing to risk on a regular basis.

COURTESY SONNABEND GALLERY, NEW YORK

COURTESY BARBARA GLADSTONE GALLERY, NEW YORK

A major change in the show's format of two years ago is a reduction in the number of artists working in media other than film and video. There are forty-one, counting collaborative pairs as a unit—ten fewer than two years ago. As a result, three works by an artist (or their spatial equivalent) will be shown, instead of the last show's two.

In general, the '87 Biennial is cooler and more cerebral than its predecessor. Manifestations of theoretically grounded art abound: inventive exercises in decoding conventions of language, art, and the media lend the show a kind of moral fervor, as do numerous examples of politically pointed narrative, especially in film and video. Excluding the film and video section, the Biennial is, in keeping with tradition, dominated by the work of white male painters, most of them from Manhattan. Homage is paid to de Kooning, whose latest figurative abstractions are exquisitely spare statements of an eloquence unparalleled in his oeuvre.

Making their Biennial debuts are a number of painters who appropriate styles and forms of past art to widely divergent purposes. The New Yorker Peter Halley, the leading exponent of so-called Neo-Geo, reiterates in fluorescent colors elements of modernism's formal vocabulary, updating their look while denying their original meanings. George Condo, an American living in Paris, makes sardonic, virtuosic post-Surrealist paintings. Izhar Patkin, another New York artist, draws on literature for subject matter. His *The Black Paintings*, inspired by Jean Genet's play *The Blacks—A Clown Show*, is composed of four black rubber curtains stenciled with white ink and hung from the ceiling to form a rectangular enclosure. The work's program is multilayered, referring to past art and literature and contemporary racial stereotypes.

The Whitney curators' generally acknowledged preference for painterly photographs is flagrant in this year's Biennial.

COURTESY JANET BORDEN, INC.

Of the show's six practitioners, three make images up to eight feet high and fraught with allusions to paintings. In four-by-five-foot Cibachrome prints, Tina Barney documents the disappearing way of life led by her affluent New England family and friends. The duo of Clegg and Guttman parody official corporate portraits. The Starn twins, identical-twin brothers from Boston, make photographs that are chem-

A sampling of work by Whitney Biennial first-timers (from top, clockwise): Peter Halley's neo-hard-edge painting Three Sectors *(1986); The Reception (1985), a photograph of New England family life by Tina Barney; section from Izhar Patkin's room-sized* The Black Paintings *(1986); and the post-Surrealist* Poème d'Amour, *by George Condo, an American in Paris.*

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ically aged and stained, torn, scored, and otherwise carefully mistreated.

In sculpture, Louise Bourgeois and John Chamberlain represent the old guard; Alan Saret, the middle; with Robert Lobe and Richard Artschwager fitting in rather comfortably with the new, including R. M. Fischer and Jeff Koons. Of the six installations in the Biennial, only Judy Pfaff's is primarily sculptural, although Nam June Paik's jokey robot figures built from vintage TVs come close. Joseph Kosuth and Bruce Nauman offer headier conceptual fare. The other two installations are a video projection, by Judith Barry, and a piece employing new interactive video technology, by Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman; when activated, the work proceeds to reveal layer upon layer of psychoanalytic text.

As usual, the film/video section promises to deliver much of the Biennial's most interesting, lively work, with roughly half of the twenty-eight participants making their first Biennial appearances. The agenda includes feature-length and shorter films, new documentary forms, abstract animation, and all manner of video, with sharp feminist and political views, presented by Martha Rosler, Sherry Millner, et al. Don't miss it. —*Sarah McFadden*

CADWALADER SAT HERE

The story of a colonial general's shaggy-paw armchair came to a Hollywoodian climax this past winter when the object fetched $2.75 million at auction in New York, the highest price ever paid for a piece of furniture. On the way it had to weather injuries and insults, including misidentifications by two leading museums. Nor was the tale ended: at press time the chair's actual owner had still not been

The chair as auctioned, stripped to the joints.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

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Mark of distinction: The shaggy-hair paw, close up.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

determined, leaving unanswered the question of whether it would enter a public or a private collection.

A fine example of Philadelphia craftsmanship and patrician taste circa 1770, when the City of Brotherly Love set the pace in such things, the chair was made by the renowned Thomas Affleck for General John Cadwalader. The general was a pillar of colonial Philadelphia society and acquired a reputation for the smart house he kept on Second Street, an image founded in part on the numerous Chippendale-style furnishings supplied by Affleck.

Fancying his furniture adorned with shaggy-hair paw motifs, the general ordered the wing chair as part of a suite that included similarly carved side chairs, fire screens, and a sofa. Duly, the chair passed through several generations of Cadwalader heirs.

Sometime before her death, in 1959, Mrs. Beatrix Farrand, a noted landscape designer and descendant of the general, gave the chair away to a friend, who passed it on to her daughter, Mrs. Joan Stroud. Mrs. Stroud, now deceased, lent it to a neighboring country day school outside Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, for use in its library. In late 1983 a local antiques dealer named Kenneth Lindsey, asked by the school to conduct an insurance appraisal of its properties, came over and stumbled on the putative Affleck. "It was done in the most awful worn-out overstuffed green damask. It looked terrible," says Lindsey, who recognized it nonetheless and notified the owners.

Before being authenticated, the chair made the rounds at the Winterthur Museum and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, each of which has important American-furniture holdings (including other pieces from the same Cadwalader suite). In both places, according to Mr. Lindsey, curators dismissed the chair as a nineteenth-century copy. By the time the chair went to auction, further investigations had dispelled doubts of its authenticity.

The winning bid at Sotheby's was made by a New York art and antiques dealer named Leigh Keno, reportedly acting on behalf of an anonymous client, who may be Dick Dietrich, a prominent Philadelphia furniture collector. The previous record for a piece of furniture was $2,090,000, for a Louis XVI *secrétaire*, circa 1780, sold at Sotheby's New York in October 1986. —*R.K.*

HAWAIIANS BACK FROM IRELAND

BRAD BEALMEAR (2)

In 1823, King Kamehameha II of Hawaii and his queen Kamamalu went on a diplomatic journey to the court of George IV. To commemorate their royal trip, they had their portraits painted by John Hayter (reproduced above and below). In the spring of 1824 they caught measles and died within days of each other. The portraits vanished.

After 162 years in oblivion, they were miraculously discovered by Tiffany's vice-president and design director, John Loring, in a farmhouse in Kanturk, Ireland, where he had gone hunting for Georgian woodwork. Loring purchased the portraits from the proprietor, who, like most mortals, had no idea who the subjects were. Loring knew: he had seen sketches for the portraits on an earlier visit to Hawaii. Last January he donated the paintings to the Royal Iolani Palace, in Honolulu, and the couple finally made the long journey home. —*Joyce Pendola*

SPAIN'S NEW MUSEUM

Here is one of the supreme challenges for the contemporary architect: how to design a museum devoted to Roman art and antiquities. The problem is subtle, for the makers of what lies within the museum's walls were themselves among civilization's greatest and most prodigious builders. It would be all too easy to defer to classicism's overpowering influence and resort to a mere revivification of ancient forms.

José Rafael Moneo, now chairman of the Department of Architecture at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, did not succumb to that temptation. His new National Museum of Roman Art, in Mérida, Spain, is a triumph for the dialogue it engenders between modern architectural forms and those of the classical world, which it is committed to glorifying.

The antiquities museum's modern exterior.

MUSEO NACIONAL DE ARTE ROMANO, MERIDA, SPAIN

The main wing of the museum, which houses the galleries and exhibition spaces, looks almost industrial from the outside (and, indeed, Moneo has not hesitated to use today's industrial materials—glass, steel, and reinforced concrete—wherever needed). But the principal gallery is spanned by a progression of magnificent neo-Roman arches, which rise to a height of fifty feet and give the space an impres-

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sion of monumental weightlessness. Muted pink-brick revetment, another reference to Roman construction, has been used both inside and out.

As part of the empire, present-day Mérida, in the arid region of Extremadura, was Emeritus Augustus, capital of Lusitania and one of the crowning glories of the Roman world. Few former cities of the empire can compete with Mérida's vast Roman legacy: an amphitheater that held 14,000; a 6,000-seat theater, built by Agrippa in 24 B.C. and today the stage of

Inside the museum, stark vaulting in the ancient manner; right, a second-century A.D. Mercury, with his invention the lyre.

COURTESY MUSEO NACIONAL DE ARTE ROMANO, MÉRIDA, SPAIN (2)

the annual International Classical Drama Festival; a bridge spanning the river Guadiana supported by eighty-one arches; as well as aqueducts, villas, and roads.

All of the museum's 32,000 catalogued remains are from the region, although only a fraction are on display. There are large-scale mosaics, columns, murals, sepulchers, coins, and domestic objects, as well as a fine collection of statuary, including a bust of Augustus and depictions of deities such as Oceanus, Ceres, Pluto, and Proserpina. The museum also possesses extensive ruins, which were uncovered during construction and left in place. Moneo has opened the museum outward, through an exterior courtyard, to the archaeological precinct, which contains the remains of a paleo-Christian basilica, a Roman house, and tombs. "I wanted to stress that the remains extend beyond the museum," explains Moneo, "that the ancient Emeritus Augustus is very much alive and an integral part of the modern Mérida."

The integration of the two worlds is further achieved by a subterranean passage

that Moneo built, linking the museum to the Roman theater and amphitheater, located several hundred meters from the museum site. Together, they constitute one of the most extensive concentrations of Roman remains in all of Europe. "I can only hope that the museum will endure as long as the ruins that we are trying to preserve," says Moneo, "and then perhaps some future architect will build a structure upon my walls." —*Nicholas Shrady*

LA MODE ANDRÉ

Adeline André is a fashion purist, a perfectionist in search of timelessness. She is continually paring away details, bringing new meaning to the term "understated elegance." Based in Paris, she designs dresses without hooks, buttons, or zippers, having developed an ingenious three-armhole fastening. She has also banished prints, padding, and harsh black and white. Prints distract from the cut of the garment, she feels; pads distort the body's form; and black or white flattens the fall and texture of fine fabric, as subtler shades of navy and ivory do not.

The fall, or drape, of the fabric is everything to Adeline André. Her fluidly sensual dresses in glowing, monochrome shades of hand-dyed rose, peach, coral tomato, curry lime, or turquoise follow the body's every move. "After all," says André, "isn't the point of clothes to set off the wearer's physical personality and make her feel good?"

Her designs show an unusual distillation of good sense and technical skill, acquired at Paris's École de la Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture and fine-tuned during her two-year stint as assistant to Christian Dior's Marc Bohan. Bohan taught her that "the allure is all in the cut."

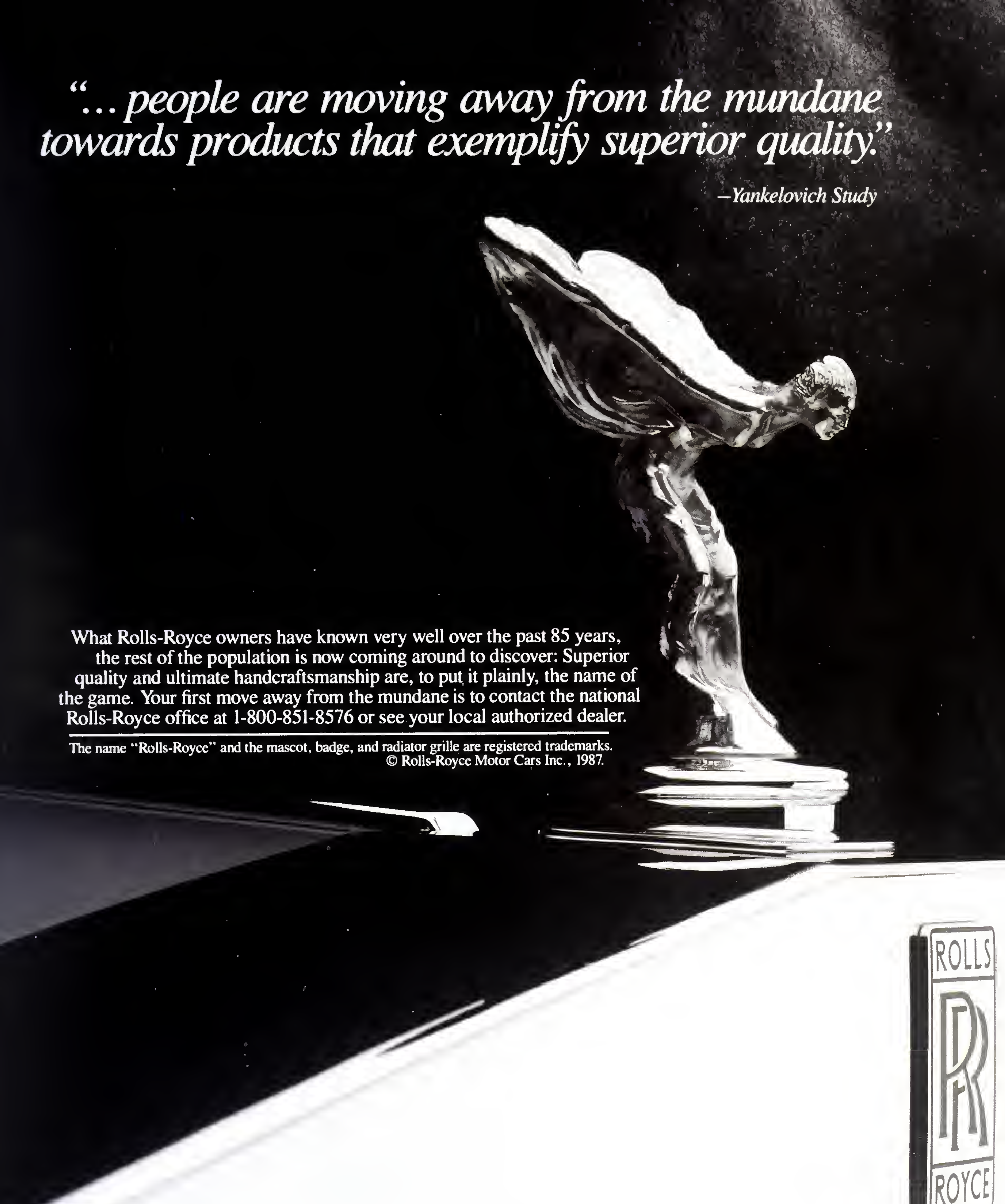
"The haute couture cut, 'in the round,' is particular to our culture," explains André. "Sportswear's flat cut is more efficient but doesn't take into account how a garment will look from the side. I'm trying to combine the best of both traditions: a cut that works from any angle on a garment that can be industrially produced and folds up like a handkerchief."

To this end, Adeline André is continually experimenting in her spare white workroom, dressed in her white, three-armhole lab coat, developing new combinations of originality and refinement—a slim knit tube dress that extends into a long hood with an opening for a ponytail, or a daring yet demure dress with a round opening that bares one leg at the thigh.

Yet for all the demands that she places on herself, André is no elitist. Her clients are varied in every way—size, shape, coloring, age, personality, and profession—and she designs with the differences in mind. "I like the idea that a woman may wear studded leather one day and a silk dress of mine the next. My clothes are more for a certain state of mind than for a certain customer." —*Regan Charles*

Adeline André's softly shaped spring dresses show the wraparound minimalism she applies to fabric. From near right: the "Mariana," the "Deborah," and the "Kartoucha."

FLAMINIO GAGGIONI (3)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BENDIXSON'S FINE WIRE ACTS

Among the glittering seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tiaras worn by the peers' wives at the opening of Parliament in London last November were two contemporary tiaras, affixed atop the heads of the lady Reilly and the lady Mulley. Both were made by the American-born London jewelry designer Frances Bendixson. The wearing of a tiara, along with a formal dress, is a necessity when Parliament is about to open—at ten in the morning. Since both the lady Reilly and the lady Mulley, wives of life peers in the House of Lords, did not have inherited tiaras, they commissioned theirs from this highly original jewelry artist. Bendixson made them of entwined silver and gold wire threaded with precious and semiprecious beads.

The two ladies won't have to wait for the next opening to wear their jewels again. Bendixson's tiaras are versatile: when turned over, with the central point facing down, they may be worn with equally elegant results as necklaces or chokers. Bendixson can also design a separate brooch that hangs from the necklace as a pendant. With the addition of an extra length at the back (that converts afterward to a bracelet), the tiara itself can even be worn as a jauntier wreath.

Bendixson, whose work is represented in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, has been weaving gold wire through semiprecious beads since 1975. She fashioned her first tiara in 1980 to commemorate the royal wedding of the prince and princess of Wales.

She counts as her immediate inspiration the grand and elegant wire jewelry made by the nineteenth-century sculptor Alfred Gilbert, as well as the whimsical twisted-wire sculpture and jewelry of Alexander Calder. In her studio in Chelsea, beside her worktable and tools—wire cutter, pliers, file, and rawhide mallet—are drawers full of beads in different colors and sizes—emeralds, sapphires, pearls, aquamarines, topaz, onyx, lapis. Sometimes a client will supply a special stone, like the two pieces of quartz that the lady Mulley's husband brought back from South America, which set the tone of her tiara.

A tiara alone may take up to fifteen yards of wire, as Bendixson twists it back and around on itself in curvilinear configurations that seem to outline or enclose the uneven clusters of threaded beads. Her designs—which include earrings, bracelets, rings, necklaces, brooches, and a special magnifying eyeglass with a bejeweled

DAVID GAMBLE

Twist and sparkle: Bendixson with jewels.

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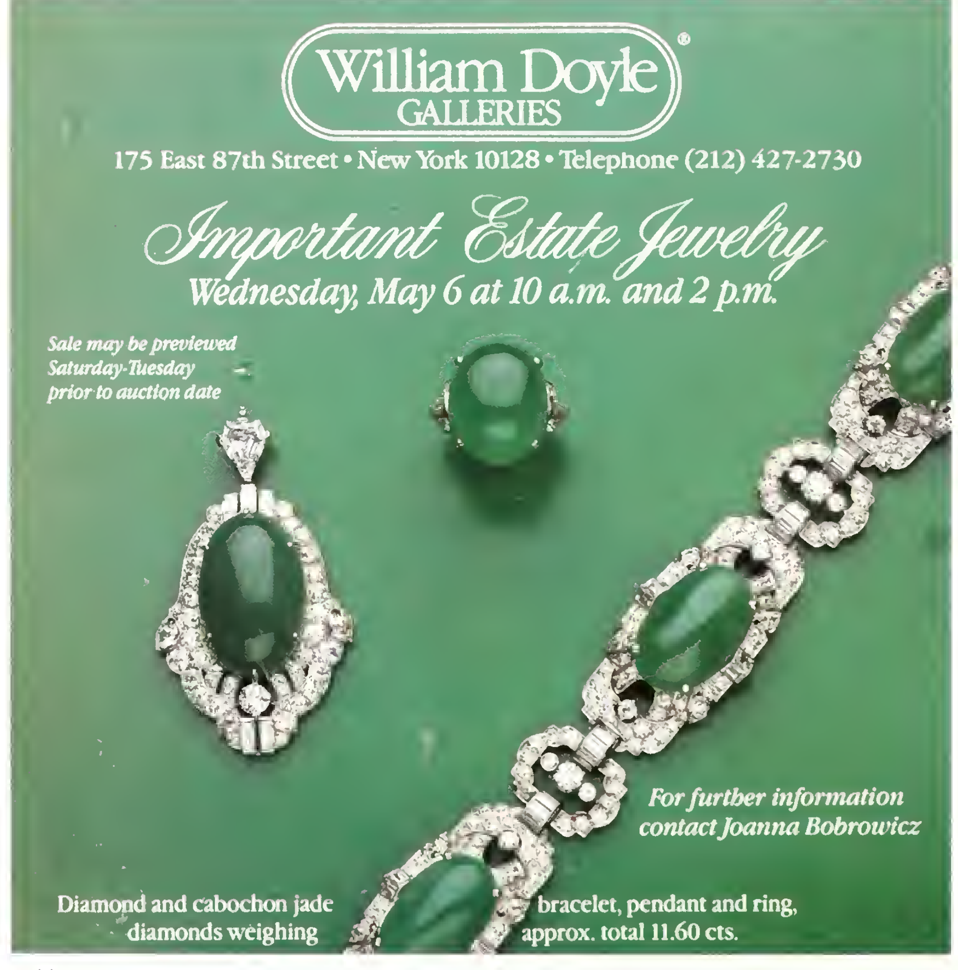

wire frame that hangs from a black satin ribbon—range in appearance from a bright, fairylike gossamer, like that of one tiara that would befit a bride, to a darker, more Wagnerian one, where the wire has been oxidized and the beads have been arranged in denser clusters.

Regal and baroque as her jewelry may be, each piece is designed with restraint, a reflection of Bendixson's belief that good jewelry must be as subtle as the human beings it complements. —*Paula Deitz*

INVESTING IN CDs

When stereo sound superseded monaural, the recording industry rushed to replace splendid recordings in the old medium with recordings that in too many cases had no particular merit beyond being technologically up-to-date. Fortunately, the industry has learned a thing or two since. The arrival of the compact disc has brought not only a flood of new recordings but a positive deluge of reissues of familiar ones that have stood the test of time. Old favorites are back, with vastly improved sound. Even vintage material is sounding acceptably Age of Dolby. If you own the following titles on vinyl, it is time to replace the worn-out black platters with the shiny new silver ones that won't ever wear out. If you don't own them already, what are you waiting for?

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Beethoven is a cornerstone in every music library. For the piano concertos, why not go back to the pathbreaker Artur Schnabel (on Arabesque), whose grasp of their logic is unsurpassed? For a scintillating adventure with the sonatas, bypass the obvious brand names in favor of the reclusive Austrian individualist Friedrich Gulda (Amadeo/Imported by Polygram Special Imports). For the symphonies, the contenders are the warm, vibrant set by the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig with Kurt Masur (Philips; see "The Leipzig Sound," page 122) and the magisterially detached ones by the Berlin Philharmonic with Herbert von Karajan (Deutsche Grammophon).

Several other symphonists deserve to be acquired in toto. Leonard Bernstein's affinity for the emotional seesaws of Mahler is legendary and thoroughly documented on his series with various orchestras on CBS Masterworks—but for the Seventh,

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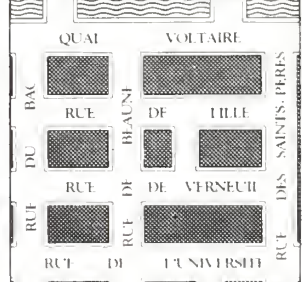

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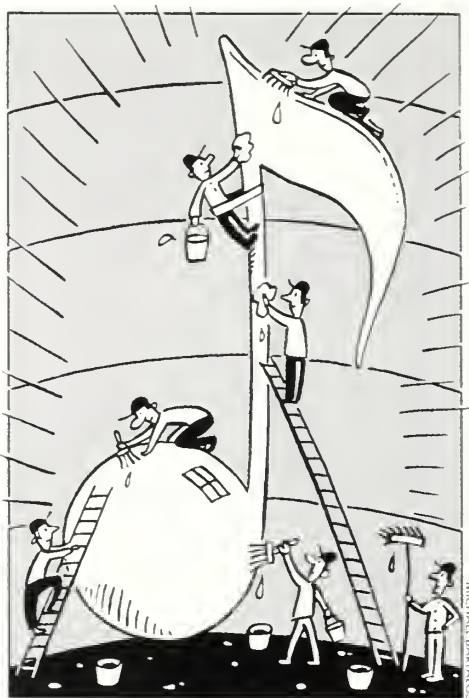

take the breathtaking new recording with the New York Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon). In the complete symphonies of Jean Sibelius, Sir Colin Davis and the Boston Symphony catch the right moods of melodious solitude and bracing, bitter pride (Philips). Schubert's untroubled early symphonies (First through Seventh) are excellently served on the complete set by Neville Marriner with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields (Philips). The masterly, daringly original Eighth and Ninth call for an ensemble of greater weight and power.

The operatic legacy of Maria Callas remains thrilling, inexhaustible, and unrivaled for variety and fire. Top reissues, in no special order: Puccini's *Tosca,* Verdi's *Rigoletto,* Bellini's *Norma,* Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor,* and an unorthodox *Carmen* (all on Angel-EMI)—plus a hair-raising *Medea,* by Cherubini (Denon).

The conductor Carlos Kleiber is too much the perfectionist to record an opera until he and a hand-picked cast are ready to make it new. His short list of albums makes a motley but sterling collection: Weber's *Der Freischütz,* Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde,* and Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* (all on Deutsche Grammophon).

On the stage, Gilbert and Sullivan have fallen on hard times, but the D'Oyly Carte performances from the thirties keep the flame burning with innocent merriment. So far, *Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado,* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* are on compact disc (on Arabesque), and the rest of the canon is on the way. —*Matthew Gurewitsch*

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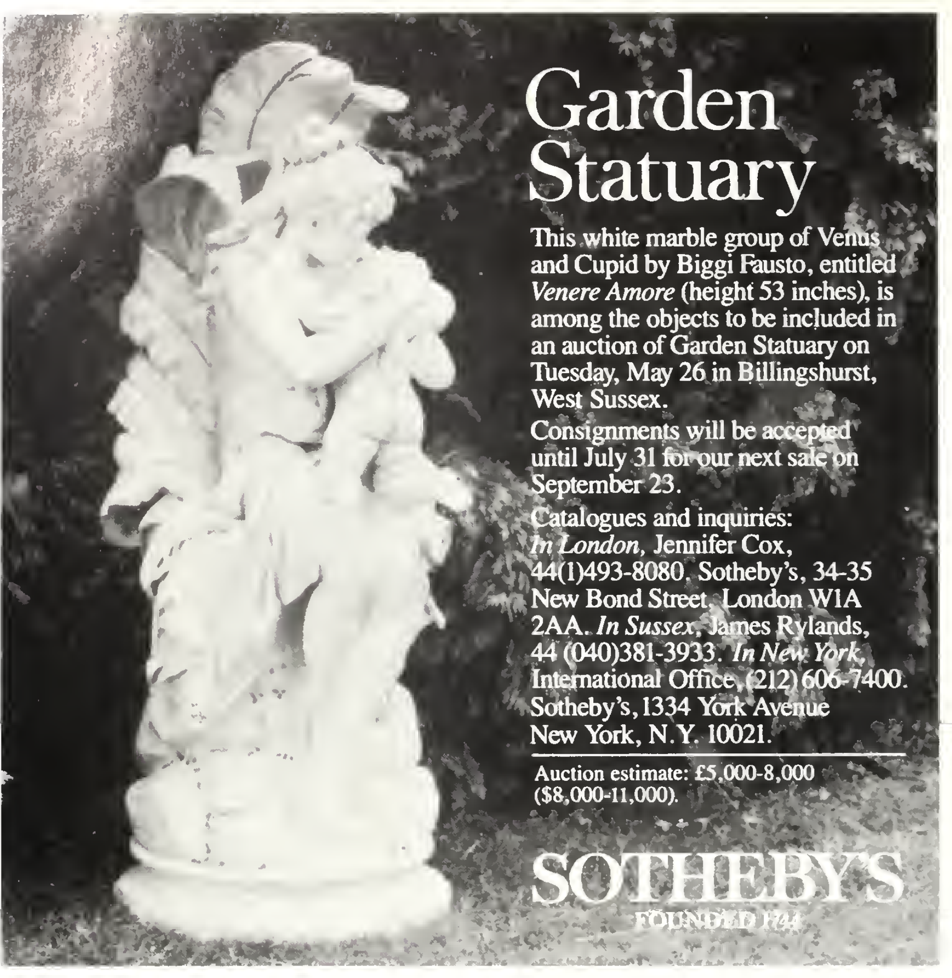

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A WALKER'S COMPANION

At the end of the 270-mile Pennine Way trek, tell the bartender at the Border Hotel, in Kirk Yetholm, to pull a pint of draft and "charge it to Wainwright."

Author of *A Coast to Coast Walk* and over fifty books on the subject of walking, Alf Wainwright, eighty, England's patron fell walker and pathfinder, made the offer in his guidebook *Pennine Way Companion*. That was in 1968. Wainwright is a man of his word; the offer still stands (although, owing to inflation, today Mr. Wainwright picks up the tab for only half a pint).

The coast-to-coast walk, which Wainwright charted in 1972 by piecing together national parkland, public paths, and public rights of way through private land, ends at the Bay Hotel, in Robin Hood's Bay, on the edge of the North Sea. "Charge it to Wainwright" there, too? "No, sonny, that game won't work here," writes the author. "Pay for your own. I'm skint."

While the Pennine Way—England's most walked trail—offers a test of endurance, the 190-mile coast-to-coast walk should be made "in comfort and pleasure, or not at all," writes Wainwright. Winding its way through three national parks—

THE WALK OFFERS AN ARRAY OF ENGLAND'S MOST SPECTACULAR LANDSCAPES.

the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales, and the North York Moors—Wainwright's cross-country journey is divided into twelve continuous one-day walks, ranging in length from eleven and a half to twenty-three miles, and offers an array of England's most spectacular landscapes.

His guidebook directs the walker each evening to the local selection of hostelry, most often bed-and-breakfasts in private homes. If reservations are made, there will most likely be hot tea and biscuits waiting and a fire burning in the fireplace.

Three hundred feet above the Irish Sea, the craggy brown sea cliffs north of St. Bees Head bear testimony to Wainwright's observation that this walk is for "connoisseurs of fine scenery." The first leg of the journey gives way quickly to the Lake District's majestic, green mountains, whose stark, stone-ridged slopes lie almost entirely above the tree line. The low route passes by Brothers Parting, where Wordsworth said a last farewell to his brother John, and by the poet's Grasmere. Plush green val-

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SOTHEBY'S
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and gentle tarns are counterpoint to the mountain's rough beat. The place in the Lake District to spend the last night, Wainwright suggests, is the town of Patterdale, by serene Ullswater; the lake's tree-lined shores roll into valley pastures, shooting up to the steep face of Place Fell, on one side, and the heather green slopes of the Helvellyn range, on the other.

"Stay if you want to and I'll carry on alone, and no hard feelings," Wainwright indulgently says to his readers, who may be overwhelmed by the beauty of the Lake District. "Mind, you might find yourself thinking in the next few days about Shap and the limestone plateau beyond, and wondering what Swaledale is really like and whether the North York Moors are as attractive as people say. You could have regrets. And (let's be clear about this) you can't expect to get your money back for the book if you prefer not to continue the walk. . . . Coming with me? Good. I thought you would."

FPG

A walker gets directions: it is easier to turn to Wainwright's guide instead.

Still to come are the sylvan Westmorland limestone plateaus, with their prehistoric stone circles and tumuli; the rich green valley of Swaledale, whose upland moors, grazing land for the Norse settlers, give way to the fertile lowlands farmed by Danes, Angles, and Saxons; a stop in Richmond, England's preserved market town; and James Herriot's North York Moors, whose brooding and isolated wilderness provides perhaps the most moving scenery of all.

A final walk along the North Sea bluffs, the descent into Robin Hood's Bay, and the ritual touching of boot to water may even lead to a brisk swim. Wainwright might not be buying, but you will probably drink a toast to your new friend just the same. *—Dean King*

PRETZELS WITH AN OLD TWIST

Alfred Milanese, good-looking, in his thirties, resembling an out-of-place actor or model, stands behind mounds of handmade pretzels in the Greenmarket, an outdoor farmers market, in New York City's Union Square. "These are the best pretzels in the United States," he says with passion. "They are totally handmade; when I say totally, I mean they are hand-rolled and hand-twisted."

A writer and photographer, Alfred is also the link in the pretzel connection between Lancaster County, in Pennsylvania, and New York. Aficionados swear by these unique pretzels, made by the Mennonite men and women who staff the bakery. All other commercial pretzels are machine-made, with the result that, Alfred claims, "the pretzel becomes dense. A handmade pretzel is filled with air holes. This is why they are fat, crunchy, and irresistible." Alfred is right.

The original recipe for pretzels can be traced to the Romans, who made them simply with flour, water, salt, and yeast; later, monks in Europe added soda to the batter and called them *pretiola,* little gifts. They were rewards given to monks or pilgrims after a long journey.The twists are supposed to represent arms folded in prayer—or the joining of two people in matrimony.

The recipe used by the Mennonites is at least a hundred years old. Actually, they make two types of pretzels. The "special" pretzel is the old-fashioned kind—dark brown, crusty, and sprinkled with tiny, diamondlike flakes of specially mined salt. There is also a pretzel made of dark whole-wheat flour, salted or unsalted. After selling the pretzels at the Greenmarket and to a few stores in New York City for five years, Alfred designed a red tin box for them, suitable for shipping, with a black-and-white label showing the horse-drawn carriage used by the Mennonites and the Amish. A six-pound carton of "special" pretzels (the whole-wheat type is not available by mail) costs $20, a three-pound carton $12, and the two-pound tin $12.95 (prices include shipping); all are available from Handmade Pennsylvania Dutch Pretzels, P.O. Box 151, Bowmansville, PA 17507. *—Colette Rossant*

Making the snacks in Lancaster County.

ALFRED MILANESE

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

The voyage starts at the dilapidated Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor. The destination is the East Brother Light Station, on a one-acre rock in San Francisco Bay. Most of the other local lighthouses have long since shut down or rotted away, but EBLS is a survivor. Built in 1873, it has weathered heavy winds, fire, and the 1906 earthquake. The biggest threat came in 1969, when the Coast Guard, judging the beacon too expensive to maintain, decided to tear it down. Local outcry prevented the razing and earned the lighthouse national-landmark standing.

It took another ten years before anyone could figure out what to do with the place. Then it was restored by volunteers who painted it and rebuilt the gingerbread trim; even the white picket fence around its rocky perimeter was replaced. In 1980 the island was opened to the public. People who wanted to stay overnight could put up in the lighthouse's four rooms.

What started as the ultimate field trip has become, since 1983, a coddled, sophisticated party for four couples each Thursday through Sunday night. That year, the young innkeepers Leigh and Linda Hurley were hired by EBLS Inc., a nonprofit organization, to manage the landmark and began transforming it into a first-class four-room retreat. Each of these rooms has now become one of the hardest to get reservations for in the Bay Area.

You first encounter the versatile captain Leigh Hurley at the helm of the small

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launch that makes the ten-minute trip to East Brother Island. As a boat approaches, the station flashes its light against the dramatic backdrop of mountainous Marin Peninsula and spindly Richmond–San Rafael Bridge. San Francisco is a clump on the horizon about a hundred years away.

Each guest room is, in its own, idiosyncratic way, decorated with brass beds, lace, and antiques. Each of them commands a phenomenal view of San Francisco Bay. As the panorama turns to shades of gray and blue, the guests climb the staircase to the top of the light tower in order to get a quick lesson from Linda in geography and the history of the island.

In the dining room, the feeling combines those of campfire and Chez Panisse. The two-hour dinner is delightful: a sweet

COURTESY EAST BROTHER LIGHT STATION

East Brother Light Station: minutes from San Francisco, and great food too.

and spicy Cajun pasta; delectable cream-of-cauliflower soup with almonds, cilantro, and cheddar; salad with goat cheese; salmon with chive sauce; a creamy macadamia *crème brûlée.* The meticulously presented "California-French cuisine," which Hurley cooks (and compares rightly with the finest in the area), is matched to good wines from local vineyards. Sated, the guests retire to their rooms, lullabied by the foghorn and the sparkling lights of San Francisco, beyond the bridge. The next morning, after a fine breakfast of custard French toast, they relax outside in the serene environs and wait for the appearance of sea lions among the gulls and pelicans on West Brother.

At ten o'clock the group gathers for the ride back to shore. Hurley, captain once again, warns that during storm season the launch sometimes cannot make the crossing, and guests have been known to be stranded for a couple of days. That's hardly a hardship. (The price is $250 per couple, including meals.) For reservations, call (415) 233-2385. —*Rob Brofman*

Edited by Robert Knafo

K · E · N · T · S · H · I · R · E

SCREEN: Flemish painted six fold screen, first quarter of the 19th Century.

DESK: Unusual Regency mahogany library desk with brass gallery, circa 1810.

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AUCTIONS

ART DOWN UNDER; SILVER MANIA; THE OTHER BIG JEWELRY SALE

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Ingrid Bergman's jewels, including the Bulgari necklace above, are at Christie's.

The story of the month, as you'll have noticed from the cover, is the sale in Geneva, on April 2–3, of the late duchess of Windsor's extraordinary jewelry (see page 128). But there are plenty of other items to talk about, too. April, after all, is the kickoff month to the hottest part of the season.

On April 6 at Melbourne's Southern Cross Hotel, we get to see what wealthy Australians do when they are not racing twelve-meters or buying up TV stations and newspapers. Sotheby's presents important Australian paintings, and though most of the artists (Buvelot, Campbell,

COURTESY PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NEW YORK

A gold Rolex moon-phase calendar watch, circa 1950, at Phillips New York.

Johnstone, Marten, Streeton, Westall) are unfamiliar to you and me, folks down under regularly fork out $100,000-plus for their works. Top lot should be Antoine de Chazal's portrait of Matthew Flinders, a fascinating figure in Aussie colonial history, which could challenge the '83 record of $506,000, for a portrait of the more familiar Captain Cook.

The next day, Phillips New York offers hundreds of old and modern watches, ranging in value from hundreds to possibly tens of thousands of dollars, by such makers as Cartier, Elgin, Omega, Patek Philippe, Rolex, Tiffany, Vacheron & Constantin, et al. Not on a scale with the $2.7 million dispersal at Sotheby's last December of historic timepieces from the Atwood collection, but a marvelous chance to pick up something with real cachet that you can actually wear.

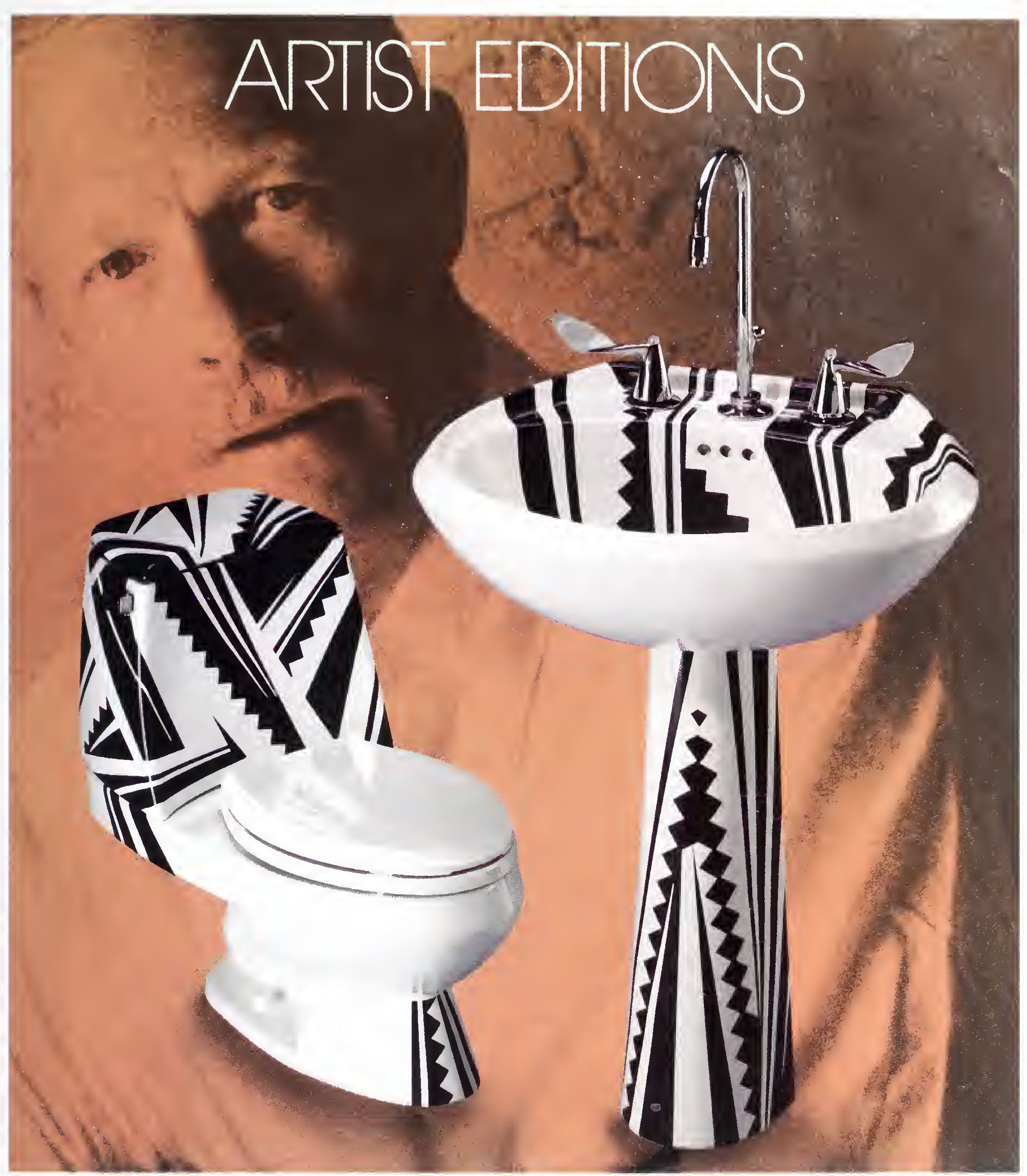
The scene begins to sizzle in London on April 8, as Sotheby's holds a major old-masters sale, in a hot, hot field that shows no sign of cooling off this spring. One of the most interesting pictures is a 1778 Batoni portrait of the eccentric, widely traveled Frederick Hervey, bishop of Derry and earl of Bristol, after whom the many "Bristol" hotels dotting the globe are named.

The back end of the month has its standouts as well. In New York on April 22, William Doyle Galleries holds its semiannual Americana blowout. Nicely balanced with great formal pieces (a splendid 1750 Pennsylvania highboy, a classic New England Federal sofa) and delightful decorative material (a cigar-store Indian, hearthware, porcelains, and ceramics), this is a major event, which Doyle cleverly schedules out of sync with the other houses in order to have center stage all to himself. If your tastes are slightly more contemporary, note that on April 25 Phillips New York features twentieth-century furniture and decorative arts, including much popular Stickley and Icart material.

In its field, the top sale in decades will be the April 27–28 Sotheby's dispersal in London of some 400 magnificent botanical books from the matchless library of Robert de Belder, justly billed as the most important botanical colorplate books ever offered at auction. This exquisite material, which will be exhibited from April 6 at Aeolian Hall (opposite Sotheby's in New Bond Street), rivals many great institutional collections. The most important single lot is the inscribed copy of Redouté's breathtaking *Les Roses*, but it is not likely to top the $5.5 million that his *Les Liliacées* (with original drawings) brought in 1985. A must-see event.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S LONDON

Non-Objective Composition (1915), by Alexander Rodchenko, in London on April 2.



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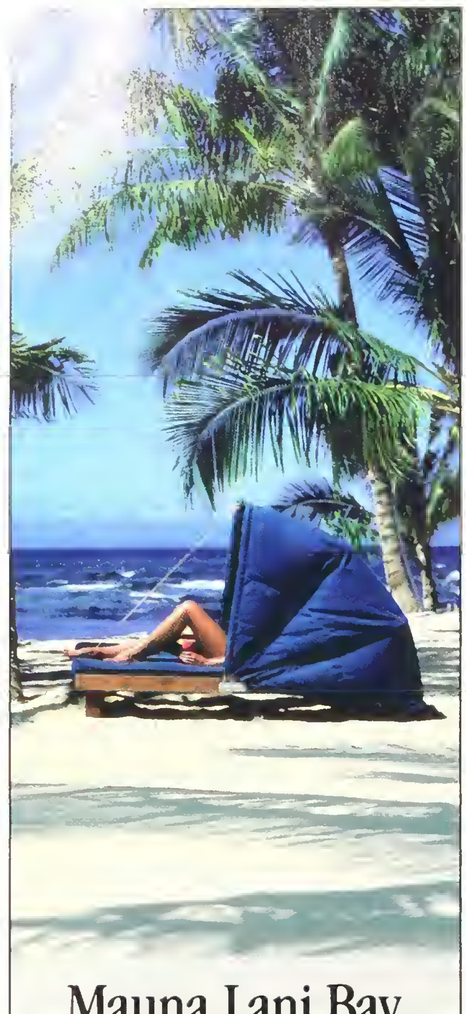

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AUCTIONS

London—Sotheby's, April 2. Russian avant-garde art. Never has a state had more plentiful talent available to sing, dance, draw, paint, print, photograph, write, or dramatize its glories than the USSR after the 1917 Revolution. And never has a state proceeded to betray, squander, and persecute its artists so ignorantly and monstrously. We know so much less than there is to know about Russian avant-garde art (there are the occasional glimpses, such as were provided by the magnificent 1982 exhibition of the Costakis collection in London and New York) that we can only applaud the announced goal of Sotheby's of making this sale an annual event. This year's version features paintings, drawings, prints, posters, and books by Constructivist, Futurist, neo-Primitivist, Rayonist, and Suprematicist artists, poets, and designers; estimates range from $500 to $50,000.

New York—Sotheby's and Christie's, April 7 and 29. Important silver. Silver hits new highs anytime anyone holds a sale these days, so we'll likely see even more records established this month. The important thing is that *this* boomlet is being led by real collectors buying for real value, in contrast to the boom/bust at the start of the decade, fueled by the coincident speculative collectibles craze and the absurd commodities market (remember the Hunts!). Each house holds its share of records, although Christie's has the edge of late—the $2.4 million Patiño collection topped the house's own previous record of $1.6 million, at the Morgan sale of 1982.

The luster of both departments derives from their very distinguished and very British directors. At Sotheby's, Kevin Tierney, who has been with the firm since coming down from Oxford in '64, and in New York since '68, has presided over dozens of important dispersals, from the Lansdell Christie sale, the year he arrived in New York, to last year's Cornelius Moore sale. His Christie's counterpart, Anthony Phillips, is a consummate professional whose talents, including his appetite for scholarship and his unerring instincts, have led him to double as head of all the decorative-arts departments.

These sales are well matched, giving no clear advantage to either house but only to buyers, who have an exceptional range from which to choose. Two lots that form an interesting contrast are a set of four superb transitional 1918–20 sauceboats, liners, and ladles, at Sotheby's, and, at Christie's, the extravagant racing trophy that was the 1861 Queen's Cup at Ascot—both from the renowned Garrard firm, which succeeded Rundell, Bridge and Rundell as royal goldsmith in 1830, was appointed crown jeweler in 1843, and enjoyed remarkable continuity under one family from 1792 to 1952. The Sotheby's pieces reflect the exuberant late-Regency style on which the firm's ascent was based, while the Christie's piece is a sterling (I couldn't resist) example of the fanciful presentation silver for which Garrard ultimately became famous (they even made the original America's Cup, in 1848).

New York—Christie's, April 28. Magnificent jewels. It's a shame that this sale has to compete with the Windsor blockbuster. It's got good size (more than 220 lots), great range and depth, and a fantastic core of goodies from the estate of the late Ingrid Bergman that should draw the curious as well as serious buyers (Miss Bergman's taste in jewelry was as exquisite as everything else about her). It will be particularly interesting to see how the dollar's recent roller-coaster ride is reflected in buying patterns and prices here.

—James R. Lyons

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

Garrard silver in New York: a sauceboat (1819–20) and a racing trophy (1849).

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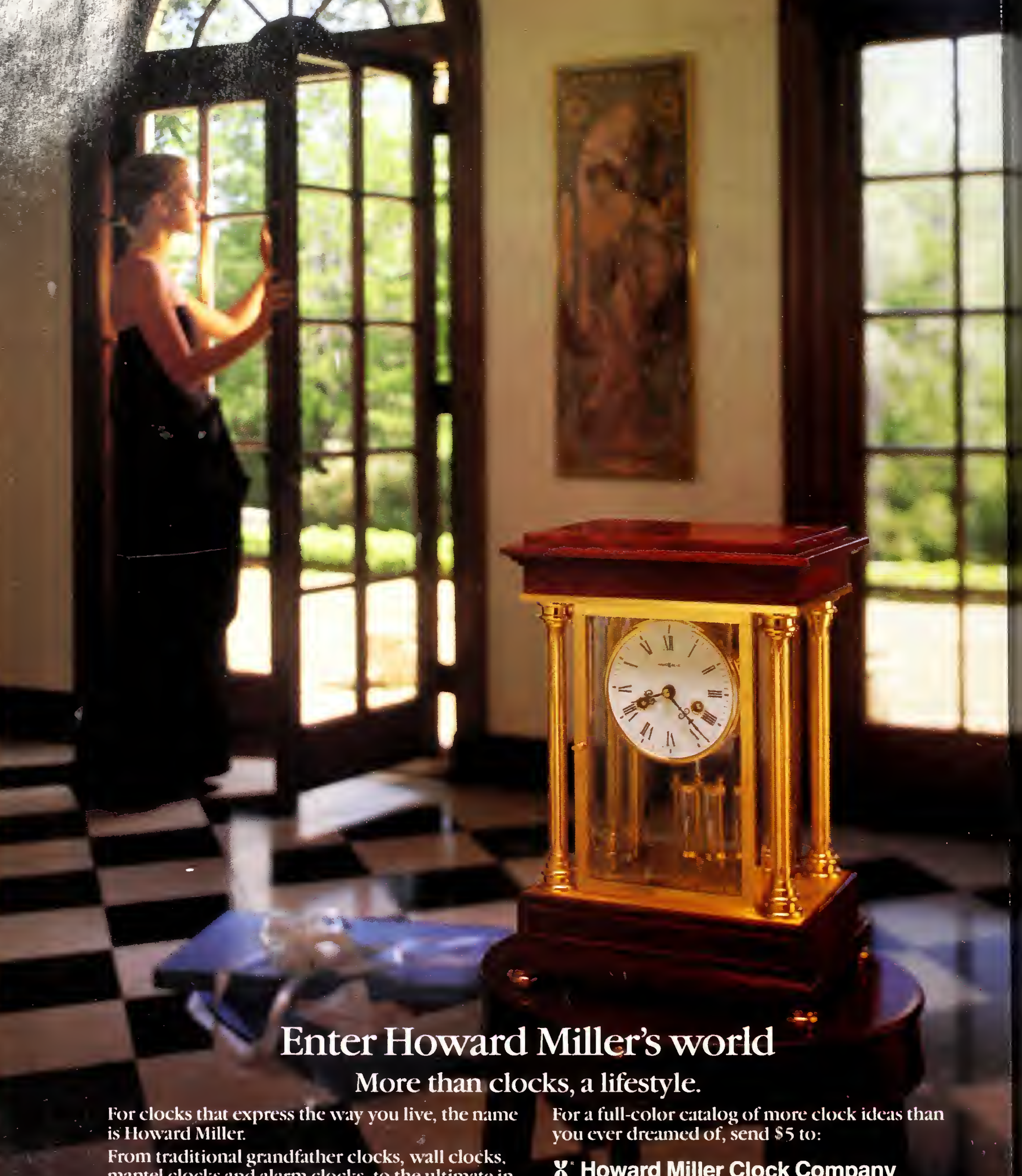

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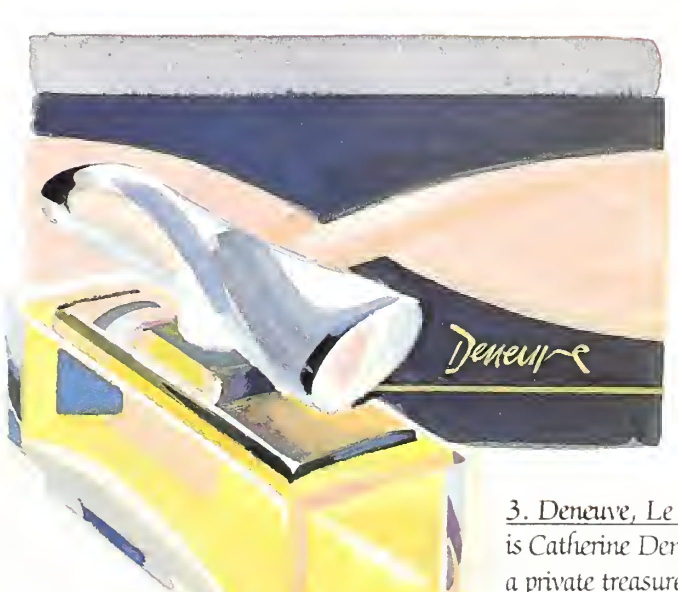

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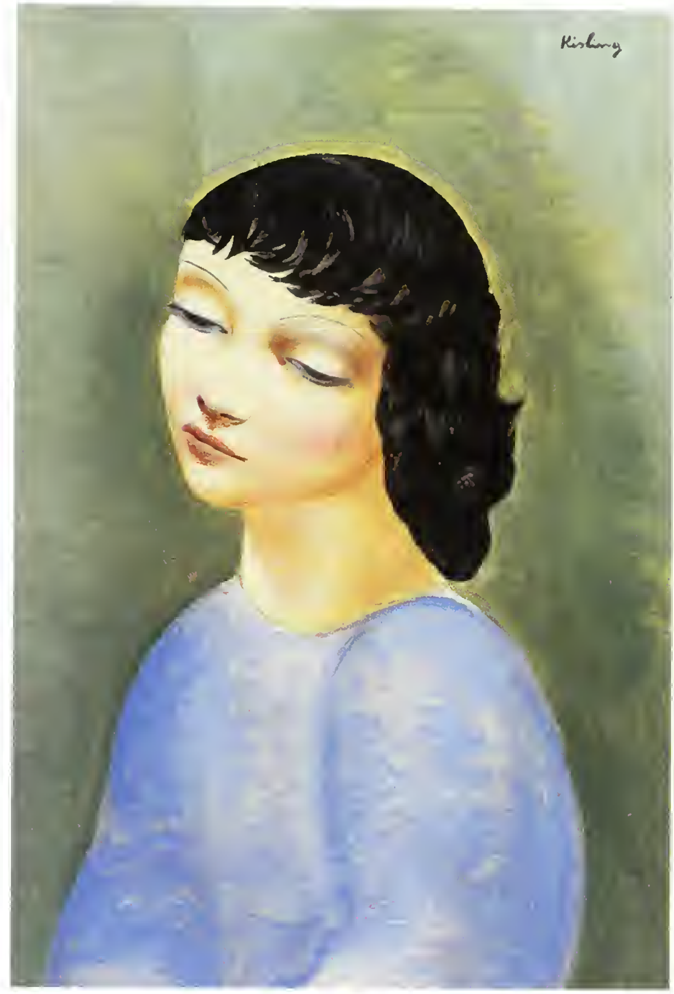

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ON THE LOVE, THE JOY, AND THE SHADY SIDE OF THE ANTIQUES TRADE

BY MARILYN STASIO

Everybody wants them.

You want them. I want them. Everybody. The poor in the gutter, famous actresses, millionaires on yachts, robbers clinging to drainpipes, dreamers, hookers, killers.

Everybody.

And what are they, these things? . . .

They're antiques.

The trouble is, there's blood on most. I should know, because I'm an antiques dealer.

That lurid view of the gentle art of antiques acquisition is the credo of a cocky character named Lovejoy, who calls himself an antiques dealer. People who have dealt with the firm of Lovejoy's Antiques might call him by another name: a shrewd operator, if reasonably satisfied; crook, faker, and con artist, if not.

At last view, Lovejoy, who normally does his wheeling and dealing out of a quaintly run-down cottage in East Anglia, was in Scotland operating a fraudulent estate sale for the benefit of an ancient clan fallen on hard times. Half the sale items had been flogged in, as the British say, from all over the empire; the rest of the "antiques" had been knocked up (British slang for "created") by master craftsmen toiling 'round the clock in a secret workshop set up on the estate. Thanks to the judicious sprinkling of quotation marks, euphemistic foreign phrases, and deliberate misspellings in the sale catalogue, the scam would be quite legal.

"Very few dealers know anything about antiques," says Lovejoy, explaining how he expects to get away with his dicey scheme. ". . . Most are simply Oscar-minus actors highly skilled at concealing their monumental ignorance."

As the reader may have guessed by now, Lovejoy (no first name—none is needed) is a fictional character, the lovable rogue-hero of twelve highly regarded mystery novels by Jonathan Gash. They are to the antiques business what the works of Dick Francis are to the world of horse racing, only funnier. Each is narrated by Lovejoy—and so irresistible is their irreverence that last spring the BBC made a ten-part television series, starring Ian McShane, chronicling Lovejoy's wicked ways. (It has just been broadcast here without fanfare; watch cable and public-television listings for probable reruns.)

Lovejoy pulls off the auction scam just described in *The Tartan Sell*. (The novel is published in hardcover by St. Martin's Press. Many of the earlier mysteries are also available in Penguin paperback editions.) In *The Gondola Scam*, the dashing scoundrel goes to work in a forgery factory in Venice, replicating Jacopo della Quercia sculptures for a millionaire art collector, who schemes to loot Venice and replace her treasures with forgeries.

Our hero himself is not above counterfeiting antiques. In *Pearlhanger*, he reproduces a celebrated baroque-pearl ornament, "the Siren," out of "gold, gold chain, a diamond or two, a ruby or two, a few small freshwater baroque pearls"—and Plasticine. In other ventures, he has fabricated a set of Victorian lace bobbins, a Chippendale table, a Celtic gold torque, an "antique" papier-mâché chair, a reverse-gadroon silver plate, and a Japanese firefly cage. "Creative art is all very well," according to Lovejoy, "but successful forgery has to be executed with skill."

To give this attractive reprobate his due, Lovejoy resorts to his forger's skills only to outfox greater villains than himself, unscrupulous persons who would defraud or murder innocent folk, or—worse, on Lovejoy's scale of values—who are bent on mistreating antiques.

"Antiques are how we hit back at time," he says about "those precious wonder-

John Grant, M.D., a.k.a. Jonathan Gash, poses at home with a few forgeries of his own.

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…hose very existence is proof of …ing more than the brute man." As …ame suggests, Lovejoy is a passionate …er of antiques and a celebrant of the joy they bring. He fondles porcelain shepherdesses, croons over furniture, gets all teary-eyed over Victorian chamber pots. If the object is true, it is also beautiful, and Lovejoy falls for it like a ton of bricks.

"All we ever want on earth, any of us, is love," he explains in *Spend Game*. "Antiques *are* love, but in a material form. They're just inert matter carved or shaped with love. That's why they're so valuable to everyone. We see the love in them."

"CREATIVE ART IS ALL VERY WELL, BUT FORGERY HAS TO BE EXECUTED WITH SKILL."

Of course, he then goes on to say that "wanting them so badly is only natural." Scalawag that he is, he advises anyone who falls in love with a genuine antique to "sell your house, send your missus down the mines and get your idle infants out doing hard labour. Then *buy* it."

However outrageous his trading antics, Lovejoy would never bamboozle an old grandmother out of her Russian amber rosary beads, or rob a little girl of the Celtic gold torque she's wearing as a hair ornament. He looks just as fondly upon guileless antiques collectors, which he assumes his readers to be, and is forever giving them brisk lectures and practical tips on how to acquire fine art and precious objects without getting robbed blind.

Ever since he made his debut in print, with *The Judas Pair* (which won England's prestigious Best First Crime Novel award in 1977), Lovejoy has incessantly been dispensing advice to the unwary collector. Attentive readers have learned, among other things, how to read an auction catalogue (in buying a painting in England, be sure to look for a listing of the artist's initials or, better yet, his full name) and how to distinguish cultured from artificial pearls (not by the pinprick method but by pressing the pearl to your upper lip—"cold means real, warmish means imitation").

That's the sort of shrewdness that has endeared Lovejoy's mystery adventures to collectors and people in the trade. Unlike those authors whose naïveté within the field leads them to romanticize its professional skills or ignore its pragmatic realities, Gash writes from the perspective of someone who has actually worked at the antiques trade and understands the way the business functions.

The Lovejoy mysteries—and some of the lovingly forged objets *around which they revolve.*

Only an insider could concoct, for example, the satiric sideshow that Lovejoy puts on in *The Tartan Sell.* To elude a gang of thugs, our slippery hero joins a traveling carnival as "the world's greatest antiques dealer," offering "Expert Free Appraisal of Household Objects, Paintings, Pottery, Furniture, Jewelry, Other Items!" He gives his grab-it-for-a-song scheme the highfalutin name of "Christys and Sothebies Joint Official Genuine Antique Road Show!!!," promising the rubes "All Valuations Free As Seen on TV" and declaring his services "Guaranteed By The Trade Descriptions Act By *Parliamentary Law.*"

"Always be skeptical," Lovejoy warns his clients. How seriously should a reader take the pronouncements that Jonathan Gash hands out in the name of his know-it-all hero? The liveliest response comes from those dealers and auctioneers whose trade Gash maligns with such malicious wit. Max Drazen, an owner of the New York auction house Tepper Galleries, says he could "throw his books against the wall. He's got such a vendetta going against dealers that I figure he's the guy who bought the phony Rembrandt and has been trying to get back ever since."

Actually, Gash turns out to be the pseudonym of fifty-three-year-old John Grant, M.D., a doctor specializing in tropical diseases who is with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of London. He worked his way through medical school during the 1950s, helping out antiques dealers who had stalls in the colorful outdoor markets of London's Petticoat Lane. During this period, he met all the raffish characters who shaped his views on the trade ("Dealers are *not* to be relied upon, in the main"), who taught him a trick or two about forgery, and who now appear in his books, scathingly satirized.

Interestingly, many of New York's leading dealers are dedicated fans of Lovejoy's. They quickly point out, though, that Gash's stories still have the aura of the 1950s, which might mislead a reader into thinking that the same shenanigans go on today. "Years ago, there was a lot more mystery about the auction process," explains Michael Shay, the president of William Doyle Galleries, in New York. "To-

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Antiques dealer? Con artist? A bit of both? Ian McShane as Lovejoy in the BBC series.

day, there are more experts, more scientific methods of authentication, and the buyers themselves are more knowledgeable and rely more on their own judgment."

Still, every dealer we talked to had a tale or two to tell about having been stung by an auctioneer who wasn't "exactly a showpiece for the profession." Stanley F. Waldman, president of New York's Manhattan Galleries, paid a Russian émigré $3,000 for an enameled egg he thought was worth $8,000. "The experts told me it was one of the best fakes they ever saw," he says. "I dumped it for $2,100."

How accurate is Gash's depiction of the rest of the antiques business? Christopher Hartop, a Christie's vice-president, and David McFadden, decorative-arts curator at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, caution nonexpert readers that Gash's references to British trade customs do not always apply to conditions in America, but they find Gash's brash tips on antiques and dealing to be "basically sound."

Gash cheerfully admits that he sometimes gets his information from standard reference works. In fact, he is happy to pass along his favorite sources: *Jewelry,* by Oppi Untracht (Hale Publishers, 1982); *The Gentle Art of Faking Furniture,* by Herbert Uscinsky (Chapman & Hall, 1931); *Antiques: Genuine and Spurious,* by F. Litchfield (G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1924); and *A Dictionary of Art Terms and Techniques,* by R. Mayer (A. C. Black Ltd., 1969). Another font of information is the British Museum, which the author declares to have "a great, a *colossal* store of forgeries." When it comes to the specific forgeries detailed so lovingly in his mystery adventures, however, the author wants it known that he has actually carried out each one himself. He takes himself to London's National Gallery or the British Museum to

East meets best. Roya

study the original, consult his books, and confer with an expert, and then manufactures the object in his own workshop.

"If I want to mention a particular kind of varnish that can be used only on a certain kind of painting, I will take care to test the process myself," he says, "even if, as happened in one case, it takes me between twelve and eighteen applications."

His least successful forgeries, he admits, have been porcelain and pottery. "You need too much gear to get it right," he explains. "And then, those potters are so *terribly* secretive about their glazes." His best work, he feels, has been done on paintings and drawings.

"That's because I studied under a real master, Tom Keating," he says, referring to "the great faker" whose brilliant copies of Modigliani, Constable, Degas, and Samuel Palmer fooled the art world for years. "Tom lived in a tatty little cottage down by the river, in a village in East Anglia, and he was always sloshed when I went for a lesson," says Gash, who declares it "a terrible irony and a real heartbreak" that Keating's paintings were dismissed by the art world until after his death, in 1984. "As soon as he died, Christie's held auctions, and his fakes went for as high as £16,000. When the man was alive, he couldn't sell them for a glass of beer."

Gash's admiration for Tom Keating notwithstanding, the author insists that he did not use him as a model for Lovejoy. His hero, he says, represents "lots of people" he has met, both in the antiques business and in his various medical residencies around the world. One of Lovejoy's most provocative qualities—his uncanny ability to "divvy," or recognize, an authentic

"I COULD THROW HIS BOOKS AGAINST THE WALL," SAYS ONE ANTIQUES DEALER.

antique by sheer intuition—was suggested to Gash by "nine, maybe ten" people who possess it. In fact, he thinks he had a touch of it himself once, as a teenager—and that it is strongest in the young. "The oldest person I've known who had it was a Chinese lady of about fifty, who used to work the Lantern market in Hong Kong for jade pieces. She was a Cantonese lady of enormous size who could pick out pieces literally in the dark, virtually from a mound of relatively poor and worthless pieces."

John Darcy Noble, curator emeritus of the toy collections at the Museum of the City of New York, says he once knew such a boy as Gash might have been during his youth. They went hunting together in the outdoor markets of postwar London. "He'd walk very briskly through a street market and just *point* to a covered box in which some treasure would surely turn up. Once, in the Brixton market, he leaned over a box of costume jewelry and without even looking picked out a beautiful string of pearls for sixpence. He was infallible."

Christopher Hartop of Christie's once knew a "picker" (a sort of scavenger dealer) from Norfolk, England, who so resembled Lovejoy that he wonders whether Gash used him as his model. "He had that same feeling for objects, that great love. Oh, yes, he was quite good at putting a coat of arms on a piece of silver."

In at least one respect, though, Lovejoy remains a nonpareil. "Whenever one of those potboiler novels about the antiques trade comes out," says Hartop, "someone will bring it into the office and we'll all read passages aloud and laugh ourselves silly. We don't do that with Lovejoy. He's much too authentic." □

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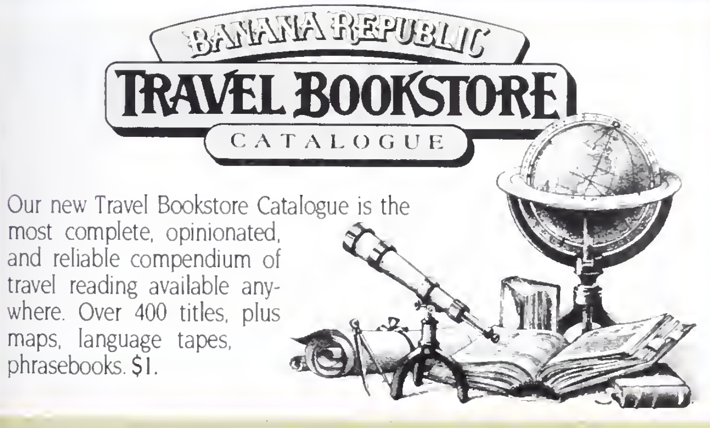

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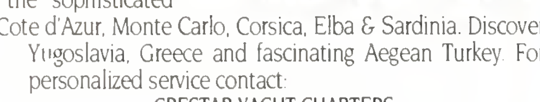

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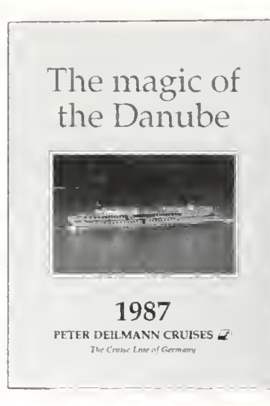

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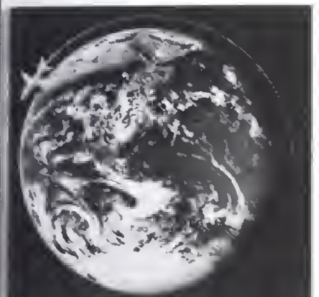

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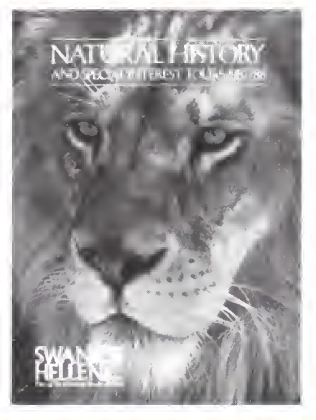

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CONNOISSEUR

THE BEST Bouillabaisse

THROUGH PROVENCE, IN SEARCH OF A FABLED DISH

BY WILLIAM BAYER AND PAULA WOLFERT PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEBASTIÃO SALGADO

The mistral was blowing when we drove into Marseilles—a hard, cold, dry north wind out of the Rhône Valley that cleared the sky, made every leaf distinct, chopped up the sea and turned it cobalt blue. It was early morning. We drove the corniche, passing joggers fighting the wind, then wound our way toward the port. The Canebière, the broad main street that bisects the city, was deserted. Then, suddenly, at Quai des Belges, we saw the crowds. Here, at the short end of the Vieux Port, a rectangle of water filled with boats, we came upon a group involved in a favorite early-morning ritual—the fren-

William Bayer's latest novel, Pattern Crimes, *will be published next month.*

Paula Wolfert is the author of The Cooking of South-West France.

Fishermen moor at Vieux Port and deliver their catch to Quai des Belges (background).

zied buying and selling of fish.

We had come to this huge Mediterranean city to eat bouillabaisse, the most perfect version obtainable. Beginning on the Riviera and then working our way west along the coast, we had been tasting this great dish of fish and fish bouillon wherever we had heard that it was good. Now at last we were mingling with the crowds at the very heart of the town whose name is synonymous with bouillabaisse.

The fish that morning were truly gorgeous. We saw skinny *vives*, silvery beneath the early-morning sun; whiskered red *rougets*; winged *galinettes*; handsome, basslike *loups*; flat, spiny-finned *Saint-Pierres*, recognizable by their large black dots. We saw sour-faced *lottes*; slippery *congres*; and magnificent golden *daurades royales*, thrashing on the tables as eager buyers crowded around.

Amid all this swirl and madness were a number of men and women assembling various combinations of ingredients. We recognized them instantly by what they bought: *vives*, *galinettes*, *Saint-Pierres*, *lottes*, and, especially, the two indispensable (and, in the United States, unobtainable) ingredients of bouillabaisse: frisky black *rascasses* and their larger cousins the scorpion fish, *chapons*.

We had been warned that Marseilles is a rough town, but from that first morning at the port, we knew that we adored it. The people were passionate and kind, and the city seemed alive. Still, there was one hitch, and it had to do with the dish we had come to eat. Bouillabaisse is big business in Marseilles, and nowhere was this more evident than in the tourist restaurants, especially the row of them along Quai de Rive Neuve.

Here at mealtime one must run a gauntlet of aggressive waiters, beckoning and cajoling with promises of culinary finesse and "true *bouillabaisse marseillaise.*" Warning: Accept all such blandishments at your peril, for the can openers are very busy in the back rooms of these oh-so-friendly establishments.

A few years back, a number of the better restaurateurs banded together to try and save the reputation of this native dish. They produced a document, the "Charte de la Bouillabaisse," which included several brief paragraphs on its proper service and components and warned against "the defrauding of the client."

A noble cause nobly defended. There was only one trouble: among the signatories, who included the owners of several excellent restaurants, was the *patron* of the famous Chez Fonfon, now sadly in decline, which even a taxi driver warned us had become "a shrine in ruins."

Of the charter, a friend who is a native of Marseilles said, "What they wanted to do was warn people that a restaurant couldn't possibly sell a decent bouillabaisse for ten bucks, which certain tacky tourist restaurants still claim they can do."

There is no "correct" recipe for bouillabaisse; there are as many ways of making it as there are cooks. At the restaurants listed in the accompanying box, you will probably be served the following:

An assembly of from four to seven varieties of white firm-fleshed Mediterranean fish (at least one of which must be *rascasse*), cooked rapidly in and then served with a bouillon consisting of fish stock and olive oil flavored with saffron, fennel, parsley, garlic, onions, tomato, and salt and pepper. Some cooks add crabs, mussels, and potatoes. Many restaurants offer lobster, at an additional cost. Inevitably, the fish and bouillon are accompanied by rounds of bread, either grilled, toasted, or fried in olive oil, and by an orange-colored sauce called *rouille*, a garlicky, peppery variant of mayonnaise, heavily scented with saffron.

Bouillabaisse is not a fish stew; the liquid of a stew is much thicker than the broth of a bouillabaisse. And, like a soufflé, it must be eaten immediately.

In a refined version, the more varieties of rockfish—fish that graze near rock outcroppings or the rocky shore—added, the better; and in a well-made bouillabaisse one should be able to taste the distinctive character of each variety. The *rascasse* is so important because of its texture and unique, aromatic flavor, which carries a suggestion of the seaweed it eats off the rocks. All the fish in a bouillabaisse must be white and firm-fleshed; oily-fleshed ocean fish are never used.

The mystique surrounding bouillabaisse also extends to *sauce rouille*. Some versions are made without eggs. In others, the gar-

Prices displayed along the quai vary with the day's catch. Opposite: Mme. Lulu, her husband watching, prepares her rouille.

Fine Stops in the Quest

There is no need to despair: although bouillabaisse is probably best enjoyed in a private home, it is possible to taste many excellent versions of the dish, which are served in restaurants throughout the south of France. The following is a list of our favorite places.

CÔTE D'AZUR

Les Hirondelles, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (36 Avenue Jean-Mermoz). Phone: (93) 01.30.25. (Closed Sundays and Mondays, and November 15–February 15.) A magnificent view of the harbor of Saint-Jean, filled with fishing boats and yachts. Inside there are flowers everywhere—tiny bunches, vast bouquets, floral wallpaper and tablecloths; even the shivering orange *rouille* is star-piped and accompanied with petals. Madame Venturino, now seventy-eight, is still in the kitchen overseeing the production of her personal version of bouillabaisse, with its unusually rich and thick soup. Expensive.

Tétou, Golfe-Juan (Boulevard des Frères-Roustan). Phone: (93) 63.71.16. (Closed Wednesdays, and October 15–December 20 and March 1–25.) As you approach this narrow white building, perched directly on the sand, you'll catch the aroma of garlic and saffron. Through the open kitchen you'll see giant caldrons in which the fish are being boiled. The reception is informal, the atmosphere boisterous. You may see some movie stars among the happy diners, and if you're lucky enough to be seated by a window at high tide the Mediterranean will be just fifteen feet away. Expensive. (Note: Tétou does *not* accept credit cards.)

Restaurant de Bacon, Cap-d'Antibes (Boulevard de Bacon). Phone: (93) 61.50.02. (Closed Sunday nights and Mondays, and November 15–January 31.) Beautifully situated, with a splendid view of Nice across the bay, Bacon serves, in our opinion, the finest restaurant bouillabaisse in France. Upon arrival one is shown a platter of the finest and freshest raw Mediterranean fish. The waiters are helpful: they offer you a bib, identify each fish, and skin and fillet it like surgeons. The broth here is rich and subtle, perhaps more savory than what we tasted at Tétou and with a stronger flavor of *rascasse.* The brothers Sordello use only the best olive oil and buy special croutons flavored with garlic, fennel, thyme, onion, and pepper. From June through September, a dinner reservation should be made at least a week in advance, a lunch reservation at least the day before. Astronomical prices, but worth every centime.

Recommended hotels:

Le Cagnard, Hauts-de-Cagnes* (Relais et Châteaux), a quiet inn built into the ramparts of this medieval town; half the accommodations consist of charming suites with private terraces and gardens.

Le Metropole, Beaulieu-sur-Mer* (Relais et Châteaux), a beautiful, old-fashioned hotel, built and maintained in grand Riviera style and set in a private park.

Mme. Larrieu proffers a platter of fresh fish at her Marseilles restaurant.

TOULON

Chez Maurice (Auberge de l'Arche de Noé), Île de Porquerolles. Phone: (94) 58.30.74. (Closed November 1–March 19.) The island of Porquerolles, the most popular of the Îles d'Hyères, is a paradise. There is regular ferry service from La Tour Fondue. Once on the island, you should work up an appetite by strolling to some of the secluded, idyllic beaches, famous for their silver sand. Telephone the auberge in the morning to tell Madame Gilberte Bourgues that you would like bouillabaisse for lunch. Her chef, "le bon" André Bossa, has cooked it for everyone, from Charlie Chaplin to the king of Belgium and Marc Chagall. Beware: his *rouille* is TNT. Medium-expensive.

MARSEILLES

Michel, Marseilles (6 Rue des Catalans). Phone: (91) 52.64.22. (Closed Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and in July.) Lacquered lobsters on the walls and thickly painted portraits of *matelots* make this place a little corny, but one is quickly diverted by the truly lovely display of seafood and fish. **Calypso** (phone: (91) 52.64.00), across the street, is owned by the same family; the differences are only in their business hours. (Closed Sundays and Mondays and in August.) Expensive.

Chez Larrieu, Estaque (64 Estaque-Plage). Phone: (91) 46.09.53. (Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.) Madame Paulette Larrieu loves opera, so be careful—she's been known to put out a sign: "Closed So As Not to Miss the Overture." Still, if you go at midday, you will enjoy her warm, gruff presence in the comfortable upstairs dining room, overlooking the small, protected harbor of Estaque. This suburb, in sight of the great derricks of the port of Marseilles, is just a fifteen-minute drive from the city. Marvelous fresh fish, superb bouillon, and, best of all, the proprietorship of a true daughter of Marseilles. Moderate prices.

Recommended hotel:

Le Petit Nice, Marseilles* (Relais et Châteaux). Ultradeluxe rooms and a superb, Michelin two-star restaurant tucked away a little out of the noisy center of town on the corniche, overlooking the sea.

—*W.B. and P.W.*

*You may book at any of these hotels, all members of the Relais et Châteaux chain, through David B. Mitchell & Co., 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016; (212) 696-1323.

lic is crushed with potatoes; and many people, particularly home cooks, thicken theirs with fish livers.

In an old collection of recipes is recounted a complicated tale of a fisherman who loves a girl of a higher social standing. To interest her, he produces a truly divine bouillabaisse, which, on his knees, he presents to her. But she rejects him. Passing by proudly on the arm of the rich man she has chosen, she tells him to forget her and eat his soup alone. She then throws at his feet, as before a dog, two hot red peppers and the liver of a fish. Hoping to find something good in this brutal experience, he combines the things she has flung at him and eats the resulting mixture with his fish. So, it is said, a *rouille* is like the last perfume of a dream or the bitter taste of bruised love—but containing, too, the invigorating force of the rupture of an affair, thus helping to liberate one from old restraints.

Mention the word "bouillabaisse" to a Marseillais and he will either go on about it to the point of Talmudic hairsplitting, or he will sigh and then shrug. Jacques Karpo, the director of the Marseilles Opera, sent us to a truly passionate exponent—Madame Paulette Larrieu, an opera lover, at whose restaurant (see box) we ate a truly marvelous version.

This enormously good-humored, no-nonsense woman said of the charter, "I refused to sign it. Why should I ally myself with that group of soup sellers?" She then proceeded to castigate the versions found in other towns: "In Toulon they trick you. They put in mussels and two fish! They call it bouillabaisse, but it's nothing!" She expressed utter astonishment that some people actually include a lobster: "Superfluous!" As for using carrots to make the broth: "Impossible! What do they think it is? A *pot au feu?*"

But the food writer and painter Richard Olney, who lives in Provence, defended the Toulon version: "I love the trashy Toulon bouillabaisse, full of potatoes and mussels and crabs, which give it a peppery taste. Originally bouillabaisse was a cheap soup made up of the left-over catch the fisherman or his wife couldn't sell that day. They'd throw everything together into a big old pot and then cook it all very fast. Anyway, all this talk of authenticity isn't the point. The point is, how does it taste? If you use good virgin oil and fresh fish and the right herbs, it's going to be good."

In various fine restaurants we had eaten superb, indeed exemplary, renditions. Yet something indefinable was missing. It had nothing to do with the dish itself but rather with the total experience. It occurred to us finally that if we were to assist in cooking a bouillabaisse we might uncover this elusive quality.

Alice Waters, of the Berkeley restaurant Chez Panisse, hearing of our project, had suggested we look up an old friend of hers in the town of Bandol. "Lulu makes the best bouillabaisse I've ever eaten. You won't be able to send your readers to her, but you should watch her cook."

Lulu (who asked that we not give her full name) is the owner of an important vineyard on the sun-drenched slopes between Bandol and Le Castellet. A small, lively, confident woman, she has each autumn prepared a banquet of bouillabaisse to celebrate the final day of the grape harvest. She offered to duplicate this banquet for us on a small scale; we would help her cook and then join her, her husband, her son, her daughter-in-law, and her nephew and eat the dish en famille.

We met her in the market in Bandol, a picture-postcard Provençal market set amid gnarled trees before a church. We stood with her while she chose the fish and the vegetables for the broth. Back in her old-fashioned kitchen, with its open hearth and hanging pots, we watched her clean and marinate the fish and then prepare the fish bouillon. Soon she had us working too, making the *rouille*. We crushed garlic and salt with an olive-wood pestle against the sides of a marble mortar; added red pepper and saffron and, at her instruction, thickened the mixture with a slice of bread and the poached livers and roes she had removed earlier from certain of the fish; and finally, very slowly, added virgin olive oil, stirring all the while.

As noon approached, other members of the family turned up, each going about a separate task. Lulu's son, François, built a fire of olive wood and vine cuttings in a sheltered area of the garden. His wife, Paule, set the long garden table while a maid collected wildflower bouquets. A large copper caldron, black on its exterior but shiny within, was then filled with the fish stock and set over the fire.

When the bouillon began to boil, Lulu added the herbs and vegetables and a bunch of dried fennel sticks to the pot. At precisely defined stages, depending on the cooking time for ea[illegible]dient, she added mussels, sli[illegible]s, and crabs; then thick slice[illegible]est, thinner ones; finally, [illegible] I feel like a painter," she said, smiling, "altering the color to suit my eye."

While the bouillabaisse cooked and Lulu skimmed the pot, a dog slept in the sun, a calico cat [illegible]ndered by, and we

Domaine
BANDOL

stood around sipping wine and nibbling slices of bread spread with *tapenade* as rich and thick as pressed caviar. At last, the bouillabaisse was ready. We filled our bowls, the fish and mussels and crabs were set in the center of the table on a great cork platter, and we began to eat.

In the foreground was the rambling old house, which also contained the offices of the winery. On the lawn, bordered by hedges and beds of flowers, grew cypresses and a spreading chestnut tree. From the edge of the lawn, vineyards spread out to carpet all the slopes and valleys around. High up in the distance stood the ancient walled town of Le Beausset.

We sat with the family on red-cushioned chairs at a long, narrow table set with a white tablecloth. The bouillabaisse ("a dish of discovery," Lulu says) was one of the best we had ever eaten. It had become a harmony of fish and vegetable juices accented with fennel and pepper; and although plenty of fine olive oil had been used, there was nothing oily about the bouillon.

During our luncheon we talked of the therapeutic properties of garlic, of the virtues of mussels and crabs, of wine (fresh as well as old), and of family happiness. As we devoured our bouillabaisse we were suddenly suffused with a sense of what our quest had really been about: an ultimate personal experience, a way of life in which fish and vegetables and herbs and smells and wine and vineyards and flowers and the sun and happy people all combine, an ineffable crystallization of all the bounty of Provence. □

Note: Air France, which has direct flights to Paris from New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston, provides especially easy connections for Marseilles. The airline can also make car-rental and special fly-and-drive arrangements.

Left: Mme. Lulu's precious ingredients.
Below: Friends and family enjoy the feast.

THE POLITICIANS' ARCHITECT

OR IS IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND?

BY
STEPHAN WILKINSON

For some time, the monumental west front of the U.S. Capitol has been blanketed with scaffolding, temporarily leaving a pair of towering construction cranes as the most visible symbol of our seat of government. They represent, too, the end of a long and heated controversy and in a very real sense also stand as a monument to the federal official who holds the extraordinary office of Architect of the Capitol.

George M. White, who was presidentially appointed to this sinecure, often finds himself explaining what he does and doesn't do. "One man to whom I was introduced said I looked rather young to have designed such an old building," White grins. He didn't design the Capitol, of course; Architect of the Capitol Thomas Walter did, in 1865, building upon a base mainly designed by Charles Bulfinch, his predecessor. But George White and his staff of 2,400 do virtually everything else that affects the operation, maintenance, renovation, restoration, preservation, policing, expansion, and design of existing, abuilding, and future U.S. government structures and grounds on Capitol Hill, Washington's own, 260-acre, law-unto-itself version of Vatican City. He has completed loving replications of the Capitol's original Supreme Court and Senate chambers. On his agenda is the overseeing of the installation of Alexander Calder's last and most elaborate major work, a stabile/mobile that was commissioned for the atrium of the new Hart Senate Office Building.

Lest the mentioning of glamorous tasks give the wrong idea, the Architect of the Capitol must be sure that there is toilet paper in legislative loos, that wastebaskets are emptied and light bulbs are changed. His responsibilities include mowing lawns, shoveling snow, fixing leaks, running a subway, and serving some 20,000 meals a day for clerks and congresspeople, secretaries and speakers. His average annual budget is around $100 million.

Though he has 24,000 tenants and 535 bosses, some with pretensions to aesthetic judgment, the sixty-six-year-old, tweedy White handles senators and congressmen with a slightly flamboyant but not quite eccentric air. He is not only a licensed architect (the first with this crucial credential to hold the office in nearly a century) but also an MIT-trained engineer, a Harvard Business School MBA, *and* a practicing lawyer. One discipline seemed to lead logically to the next—electrical engineering to architecture, for example, and architecture to law (because of questions of liability and contracts). "I'm not a mystic," White says with a smile, "but everything that I've done seems to have been preparing me for this job. I'm an administrator, an architect, running a business, understanding the legal ramifications of everything we do."

The fine-tuning of the Capitol building and its artifacts gives George White the greatest pleasure. When he was appointed, in 1971, the old Supreme Court room was used as a storage area, "piled high with furniture, tarpaulins, dust in the

KAREN KASMAUSKI

COURTESY ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

MAXWELL MACKENZIE/ESTO

Left: Only one man can authorize major repairs on the Capitol and other federal monuments. He is George White, shown (above, right) in the old Senate chamber, which he restored to its original jaunty opulence, reproducing (right) its star-spangled carpet and desks.

partitions everywhere," he recalls. With architectural ... and a reverence for the law, he has coaxed it back to a ...ly varnished, oil-lighted moment in 1859, the last year ... urt met there. The nine justices' original chairs, horse-...d from the current Court in exchange for five busts of the original justices, and replicas of the old carpet and railings, based on a posthumous painting of Chief Justice John Marshall set in the same room, highlight the restoration.

Directly above the subdued old courtroom is White's restoration of the Capitol's original Senate chamber. It is a pompous set, a woodsman-legislator's idea of grandeur: potentate's canopy cocooning the dais, garish stars on the carpet, an ornate chandelier above it all. "Ah, but that was the style of the time," White cautions. "It was a flamboyant period."

Times have changed in other ways as well. Each reproduction of a senator's desk—seventy-two of them, from a year when the Union numbered thirty-six—has a simple silver inkwell and blotting-powder shaker. Each within reach of the small, railed viewing lane is gone. White seems more amused than indignant. "One of the inalienable rights of the American is to take home a souvenir," he says.

Today, the old courtroom and the old chamber have no function; they serve, in effect, as museums. White has restored other rooms for the nation's lawmakers, however, including the speakers lobby. "It looked like a waiting room in a third-rate bus station—cigarette burns everywhere, spittoons on the floor." He put in period furniture, cabinets for newspapers, chandeliers, and other nice touches. It was all too much for one representative. "I'll have a drink at the bar with the girls," he cracked when he saw the place, "but I'm not going upstairs."

COURTESY ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

The refurbished Statuary Hall, in the old House chamber, represents a triumph for White of rearrangement over restoration.

As a good professional, White strives for architectural integrity when adapting an old building to modern needs, such as installing television cameras and an electronic voting system in the House of Representatives gallery. "The voting system looks like a racetrack tote board in operation," he says, pointing to what seems to be a patterned-damask wall above the speaker's dais, "but we had to bring this place into the twentieth century without disturbing the decor." A large section of the damask actually consists of plastic panels that display representatives' names and votes when backlit. White explains that, when the gallery was renovated, a swatch of the original damask wall covering was given to the plastics manufacturer to match, which he did incorrectly. By that time, however, all the original damask had been discarded, so the replacement fabric that is actually on the walls was woven to match the patterned plastic.

The Architect of the Capitol courted disapproval when he rearranged, rather than restored, Statuary Hall, in the old House chamber. "It was a warehouse of statues when I came here," he recalls. "You couldn't tell one from another, but I was told I couldn't do a thing about it because of the politics of the order in which the statues had been placed." White forged ahead, nonetheless, and got approval for placing the bronze figures in front of the columns, the marbles between the columns—all arranged according to size.

"Who's this guy Beadle, from South Dakota, right next to the entrance?" one congressman complained.

"I don't know," White replied, "but that's where he fits."

No controversy equals the one White inherited from his predecessor J. George Stewart, an irascible nonarchitect who pushed through Congress the extension of the Capitol's east face by thirty-two feet. The reconstruction project took place between 1959 and 1961, to the outrage of traditionalists, and Stewart was planning similar changes to the west front when he died in office, in 1970. The argument between preservationists and pragmatists was raging when White succeeded him.

To blanket the monumental west front with a new marble structure eighty-one feet out from the present walls, contend the conservationists, would entomb the last visible part of the original Capitol, designed by the country's first great architect, Charles Bulfinch. But that west wall, built of soft Virginia sandstone, is crumbling, and Bulfinch's original, small-domed design was superseded by Thomas Walter's erection of the Capitol's present, cast-iron dome, nearly twice as high and forty feet greater in diameter than Bulfinch's Parthenon-like cap. Frederick Law Olmsted's west-front terracing, done between 1872 and 1892, was obviously laid out with room to spare so that the Capitol's west walls could be pushed outward, giving a more visually balanced base for the top-heavy dome.

George White, while on the board of the American Institute of Architects, supported the AIA's implacably preservationist stance, but after a year as Architect of the Capitol, he reversed his position. "The design of the building requires extension of the front to the west," he now says, "and someday it will be done. The base is no longer appropriate. They've been talking about a west-front extension for a hundred years, and I think once it's done, the building will be complete, in accordance with Thomas Walter's design. The west wall was the only wall of the original Capitol that remained, but I said that was because the building grew as the country grew. If you want to retain that wall, why don't we go all the way and take off the House and Senate wings and the big dome?"

Congress rejected the plan and determined that the west front would only be repaired. The Architect of the Capitol did not repine. By next year, the old sandstone walls will not only have been strengthened and internally shored up with stainless-steel rods; they will also serve as the backdrop for a January 1989 pres-

The Supreme Court met from 1810 until 1859 under the splendid "umbrella" vault, designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe, now refurbished.

idential inauguration. White, who is responsible for the physical arrangement of all Capitol Hill ceremonies, decided that inaugurals should be held facing the Mall, in front of the postcard-perfect west front. "It's such an incredibly fitting setting," he says. "No one can figure out why it hasn't been used before now, instead of our going to all the horrible trouble and expense every four years of erecting hideous wooden and steel stands on the east front, using a parking lot. The view down the Mall alone is worth making the change."

George White's grandest accomplishment may well turn out to be the master plan for the United States Capitol. It is a thoughtful and humane piece of urban planning for the future of the Capitol area, one that expresses the architect's philosophy. The plan allows for graceful growth, postulates a transitional zone between the boundaries of monumental Washington's formal architecture and the adjoining residential areas, and revivifies some long-obscured axial views that were part of the city's original layout.

"The thing that triggered it for me was construction of the James Madison Memorial Library of Congress, just east of the Cannon Senate Office Building," says White. "It didn't take much to foresee the need, even at that point, for a fourth House office building. People don't like to hear that, but the fact that you don't buy a teenager new clothes doesn't mean he isn't going to grow. I felt the library was going where the fourth House office building should go, and that we had gone long past the period of playing pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey with a map of Washington anytime we needed a new building."

Characteristically, White put together a battery of advisory panels—architects and urban planners, historians and statisticians, environmentalists and others who he felt could give perspective to the organization of Capitol Hill—and spent five years distilling their work. The result is a major chapter in the evolution of Washington as the federal city—from L'Enfant's original combination, in 1792, of majestic *étoile* prospects with the gridwork of a commercial city to the recent completion, in 1901, of the McMillan Plan, which created the Mall and formalized the Capitol within a frame of largely congressional buildings, and, now, the White team's concept of how to allow for the inevitable development in future of the Capitol core.

Whether the plan is actually followed depends on future politicians—and future Architects of the Capitol. If it is, the federal part of Washington, D.C.—an area now characterized by heavy, often bland governmental buildings—should lose some of its smug, bureaucratic look and become gentler in scale, brighter, more graceful, more human.

"Ultimately, this job all comes down to aesthetics," says George White, who is proving himself to be a consummate politician. "Otherwise, what would you need an architect for? You could just get a builder, a contractor. They have the words . . . but not the music."□

Stephan Wilkinson is a frequent contributor to this magazine.

PIZZERIA

OWEN FRANKEN/STOCK BOSTON

UNSUNG NAPLES

EXCITING, EXTRAVAGANT, INEXHAUSTIBLE, AND OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

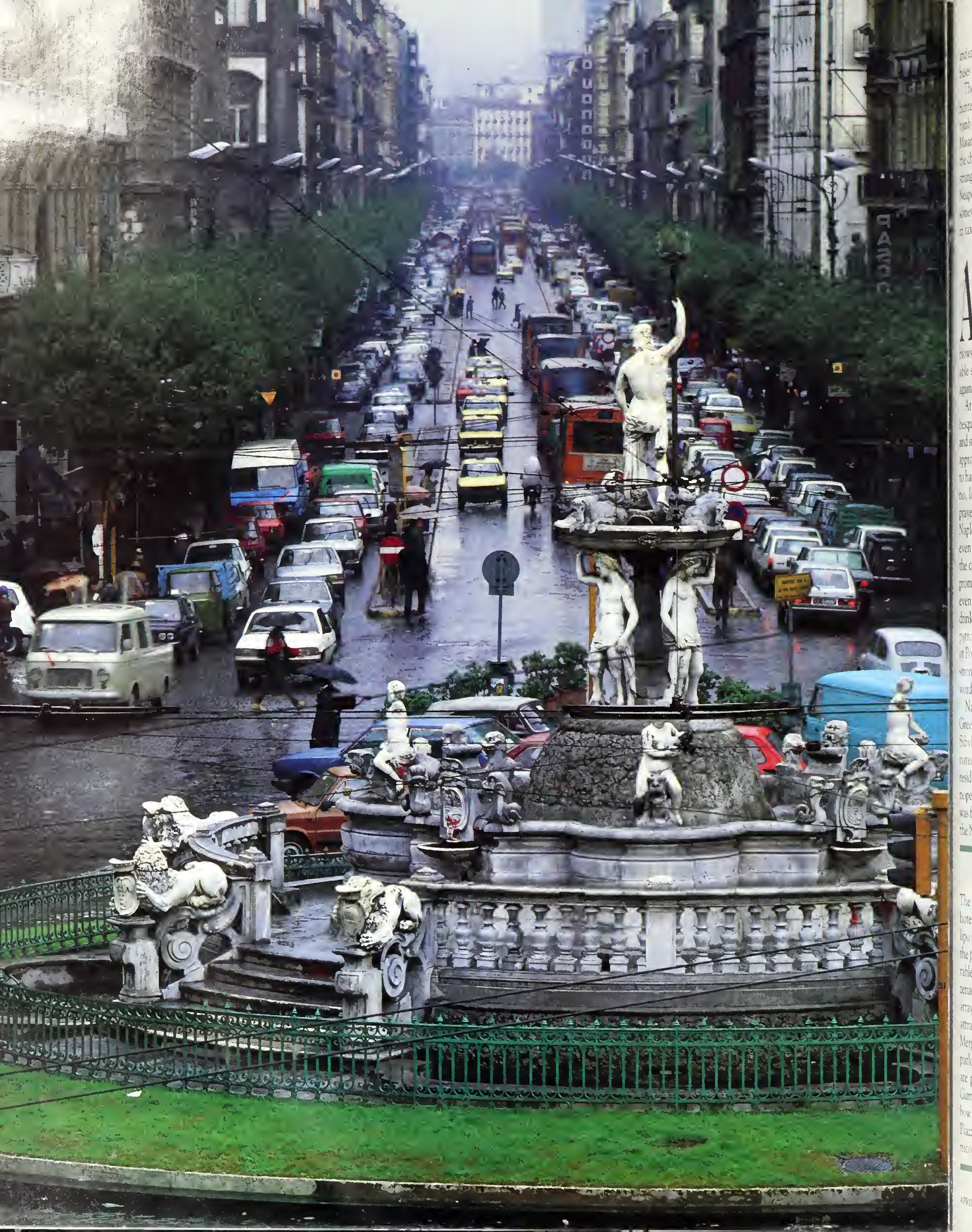
BY MARINA WARNER

Naples has become a stopover, and it's a shame. Travelers pass through on their way to Ischia or Capri, Sicily or Greece, and scuttle out of the city, fearful of its notoriety, its thieves, epidemics, squalor, beggary, and noise. But at last, as poverty and corruption diminish, the disrepute of Naples is fading too. These hurrying visitors are beginning to discover with astonishment the city's pleasures, its unexplored and unfamiliar beauty, the range and variety of experiences it offers. In spite of the pandemonium, the traffic, and the trash, the people communicate a small-town friendliness and curiosity.

Naples cannot be exhausted, and yet it does not exhaust its visitors. Unlike Florence or Venice, it hasn't become a tourist town, with shouting guides touting dubious masterpieces in every side chapel. It is not herds of foreigners but Neapolitans who shop

MIMMO JODICE

Left: Fishing boats and yachts moor in the Gulf of Naples below Castel dell'Ovo. Above: Textures of the city.



and eat and pack the churches on feast days, Italians who arrive in buses from Calabria or Basilicata to enjoy the museums.

The Easter holiday begins the season of weddings, and the keen hunter after some quattrocento sculpture—like the exquisite tomb of Mary of Aragon, carved by Rossellino and Benedetto da Maiano, in Monteoliveto (Sant'Anna dei Lombardi)—will find the chapel in use, crowded with wedding guests who don't mind a stranger on the edge of the group. The fact that the town is for Neapolitans, not foreign tourists, means that museum hours are somewhat erratic and transport, baffling. You can get anywhere in taxis, of course—though the drivers may be rogues.

V B KOTOWITZ

A town that lives for itself, not for its fossilized past and the dollars that brings, has a tonic quality. There is an upbeat mood to a city recovering from wartime tragedies and postwar horrors and now set to become again the artistic and commercial capital of the south. An intoxicating air blows about the place, as its traditional strengths—the incomparable setting, the warmth and nimble wit of the people—come again into their own.

At almost every point in the huge, hilly town, the double arabesque of Vesuvius can be seen, violet-gray in the spring, sable and snow-capped in winter, receding as the sun climbs in the sky, approaching closer as the light dims. The plume of fire that used to hang above it has faded, but Neapolitans still salute the volcano, like a deity, as they belt past on the ring road, and mutter a prayer to propitiate its anger. The sea, too, the famous Gulf of Naples, illuminates the city's streets with its dazzle and freshness; even when it is screened from sight by the tall, narrow buildings in the center of town, its presence can be felt, and its light breezes promise relief even in the hottest bedlam of traffic jams. In the evening, Neapolitans stroll along the front, where kiosks selling drinks vie in brilliance and decoration with neon shrines to patron saints of fishermen and restaurateurs. From the inky ridge of Posillipo above, the bay looks as starry as the night sky, and its strong, embracing curve suggests why the Romans used the same word (*sinus*) for bay and breast.

Naples is a great seaport, with hints of a fishing village. The Greeks came first, from Cuma, a little farther north, where the Sibyl made her prophecies and where the Western alphabet originated. They founded the new city—Nea-polis—and gave its first residential quarter the name of a mermaid buried there, Parthenope. Odysseus had heard her singing at Sorrento, but later she was found washed up on the beach and was buried. It is typical of the Neapolitan temperament, with its love of fantasy and its sympathy with the sea, that sirens should occupy so many of the city's fountains.

The Romans made Naples, with its outlying suburbs and resorts, a byword for luxury and voluptuousness. Propertius wrote that he hoped against hope that Cynthia, his lover, might resist the temptations of Baia, the nearby watering place frequented by the Roman upper crust; the seaside, he felt, was a menace to chastity. Pompeii and the more exclusive Herculaneum preserved the comforts of the mercantile bourgeoisie. The treasures excavated from those buried villas and gardens are mostly displayed in the magnificent National Archaeological Museum of Naples, though some are shown in situ or in galleries attached to the sites of both towns. It is in the museum, however, that the dazzlingly detailed mosaics are displayed—of the Battle of Alexander, the piled crustaceans and fish that Arcimboldo might have painted, the charming cat and other famous examples of Pompeiian family taste, as well as the haunting portraits of Roman men and women who vanished under the ash on a summer day in A.D. 79.

At Santa Lucia, a huge medieval fort, the Castel dell'Ovo—castle of the egg—dominates the harbor like a child's giant sand castle, forming a part of the extensive fortifications built in the twelfth century by the Angevin dynasty. The Neapolitans claim that the poet Virgil was a wizard and built the castle himself with the help of magic. He placed an egg inside a jug, the jug inside an iron cage, then moored the castle to it. If the egg broke, the castle would crumble. And so it happened during the reign of Joanna I; but with true Neapolitan resourcefulness, she simply made another egg to replace the broken one and so saved the castle. It is still standing and, as regional army headquarters, still acts as a fortress.

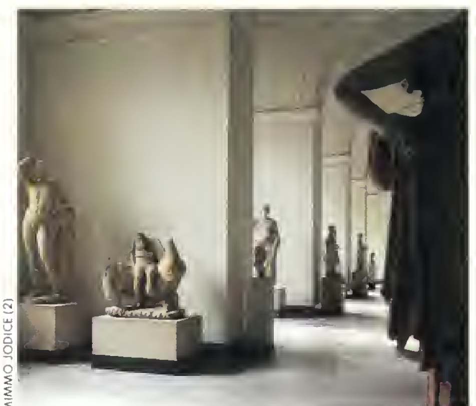
The Angevins continued to rule until late in the fifteenth cen-

WHERE TO STAY

The *Excelsior* and the *Vesuvio*, on the esplanade, are large luxury hotels; the *Hotel Britannique*, newly done up, stands on the Posillipo ridge, with fine views of the gulf and Vesuvius. The food on the *pensione* menu is wholesome but unmemorable. More memorable: the delicious pasta dishes and desserts at *Port d'Alba*, a pizzeria under a city gate in the alley of bookshops. The splendid arrays of fresh fish and cheese at *Ciro a Mergellina*, on the seafront, attract an elegant Neapolitan crowd. *Vini e Cucina*, opposite the Mergellina station on the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, is a tiny front parlor with a kitchen behind it, where one or two dishes of the day are prepared, aromatic, piping hot, copious, and cheap. *Caffè Gambrinus*, an exquisite mirrored and frescoed café, offers rainbow ices, light pastries, and perfect coffee on the corner of the Piazza del Plebiscito. *Scaturchio*, opposite the apse of San Domenico, is one of the city's many superb pastry shops.

Opposite: The sixteenth-century Fontana del Nettuno dominates Piazza Giovanni Bovio, itself on an axis with the central station.

[illegible] Ferdinand the Catholic united [illegible] and Sicily under the Spanish [illegible]nd appointed viceroys to rule in his [illegible]. Neapolitans have never ruled their [illegible]. Wave after wave of foreign overlords have printed their manners and tastes upon it and its people: Spanish baroque influenced the numerous churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; Spanish melancholia and bloody mysticism animate many of the votive statues of dolorous Madonnas and wounded Men of Sorrows; the Austro-Hungarian rulers, who followed the Spaniards, influenced the companionable elegance of such meeting places as the Caffè Gambrinus, with its mirrored walls, frescoes of nymphs, and tables for gossiping.


MIMMO JODICE (2)

Yet Naples, which has never enjoyed autonomy, has an undiluted and particular personality. Here were discovered ice cream, pizza, mozzarella made from the milk of water buffalo pastured in the meadows south of the city; it is the home of the street song, filled with love and strenuous mating calls.

Naples is also a mysterious and often disturbing place. Its reckless fantasies, pulling it toward the invention of so many pleasures, also draw it to the dark. In the Cappella Sansevero, in the center of town, the skeletons of family servants can be seen; they were preserved in metal by the alchemical experiments of the duke of Sansevero in the eighteenth century. Above, in the chapel, the sculptor Sammartino carved a wonder of illusionism with his effigy of the dead Christ. The veil in which he lies wrapped looks so diaphanous you feel you could blow it off.

Naples is a marvelous place to explore on foot. Behind the façades of the palazzi, the churches, shops, banks, and schools, a story may lie hidden to which the exterior provides no clue. The pilgrimage church of Santa Maria del Carmine, for instance, presents a severe gray and cream west front to the square; behind the austere walls the rococo interior runs riot in the local style developed by Cosimo Fanzago. And behind the magnificent rusticated façade of the Gesù Nuovo is an interior furiously alive with gold and colored intarsio—malachite, porphyry, jasper, and breccia.

The streets of the old part of the city crisscross one another

Below: Santissima Annunziata, now being restored. Above: Roman sculpture, Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

along three east–west axes—the Spaccanapoli (cleave Naples) and its counterparts to the north and south, Via San Biagio dei Librai and Via dei Tribunali. All along them, wonders are concealed within wonders. The Cathedral, where the young gather on feast days to flirt on the steps, contains four distinct churches. In the ancient round Baptistery, with a deep pool for immersion, are some of the earliest Christian mosaics in Europe—fifth century—but they have been badly damaged, most recently by the earthquake of 1980. The beautiful and harmonious Byzantine basilica of Santa Restituta, attached to the north wall of the Duomo, faces the gates of the Chapel of San Gennaro; the saint's blood is preserved in this sumptuous seventeenth-century chapel, with its high dome. It was built as a treasury for the precious relics of Saint Januarius's blood, which has liquefied in its crystal monstrance twice yearly, in May and September, since the Middle Ages. The faster the miracle takes place, the better the augury. When Vesuvius is active, the saint's image is taken to the threatened slopes to divert or halt the flow of lava.

F. GIACCONE/MARKA

A shrouded alabaster Christ in the Cappella Sansevero, now in part a museum. Below: Pompeiian mosaic.

Cathedrals are expected to contain marvels, but after you leave this one, the pleasures of discovery continue. Even the pastries of Naples are cunningly made to hold fragrant honeyed delights: the *sfogliatella,* a wavy shell with ricotta and candied fruit inside; the *corna d'arragosta,* a cornucopia brimming with cream; the *pastiera,* Easter cake perfumed like an Arab sweetmeat; and the *sanguinaccio,* made for Holy Week out of chocolate and—once upon a time—lamb's blood. Fish stalls with glazed picture tiles, groceries like gleaming cold larders with splendid cheese and pungent salami, alternate with the cautionary stalls of corset vendors.

Splendor and decay obey no perceptible laws of hierarchy in this city: the windows of the finest carver and mender of the famous Neapolitan crib figures, Francesco Campbasso, on the Spaccanapoli, are as grimy as any; the lottery salesman touts at the feet of the stone saint who intercedes with heaven from his plinth; in wayside shrines adorned with flowers, fairy lights, and messages, purgatory's fires are burning the parish priest in his biretta alongside other sinners; and the white kid boots worn by a child in the street would put to shame the princes of Aragon, who lie on the balcony of San Domenico's sacristy in tattered coffins that look like actors' costume trunks.

MIMMO JODICE

It is a city of extravagant procedures and show, where people address one another with flourishes, and the traffic policemen, with their white handbags and pith helmets, salute when you ask the way. Although the southern cult of honor is notorious, and the importance of cutting a dash—*far' figura*—inspires much exhibitionism, Naples is also a place that does not stand on ceremony. It is this streak that has given the city its reputation for lawlessness. There can be few places in the West where so many one-way streets carry two-way traffic, where red lights are so invisible, where salesmen will persuade you to buy two left shoes, where nuns drive bashed cars without taillights. At the same time, the tales of brigandage are exaggerated: your pocket is as likely to be picked in New York or London as in Naples.

Just before Spaccanapoli reaches the main shopping street, the Via Roma, it crosses the Piazza of the Gesù Nuovo, where the *scugnizzi* practice on motorbikes the tricks New Yorkers do on skateboards, and the posters proclaim the luck of Maradona the footballer, the proud boast of the Naples team—"He has made even Vesuvius tremble"—beside the frothing marble votive stupa, or *guglia,* of the Immaculate Virgin, erected in thanksgiving for the end of a plague. The convent Church of Santa Chiara stands on this lopsided, animated piazza. The medieval building was gutted by a bomb during the last war but has been reconstructed, and the fine family tombs of the Angevins were rescued from the rubble and reassembled. Within, Santa Chiara conceals a cloister, designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro in the eighteenth century, that is a wonder of ceramic art unrivaled in the world. The glazed majolica tiles of its shady pilasters and garden benches are painted with biblical and pastoral vignettes and clusters of fruit and flowers. The Franciscans still cultivate their little paradise.

Naples is not a city of greenery and seclusion; the cloister of Santa Chiara is exceptional. There is the usual Villa Comunale, or city park, where free concerts are held in summer, and where the aquarium, the oldest in Europe, is filled with flame-colored sea urchins and live coral. The great museum of Capodimonte, in the former Bourbon palace, stands on the heights, and children play football next to signs forbidding it. But within a day's journey in any direction from Naples, some of the most beautiful natural scenery in Europe can be reached: the plunging crags and seaworn arches of Capri, the tricks of the translucent light in the Blue and Emer-

ald grottoes, the shaded gardens of Ravello with their commanding views. In Pozzuoli, across the bay from Vesuvius, the lesser-known volcano Solfatara steams and grumbles, and as you walk on the glistening sulfur yellow earth toward the hissing fissures of the many *fumaroli,* you hear the bellowing and stamping of fires below, like the Minotaur in his labyrinth.

No one who wants masterpieces will leave Naples feeling impoverished. The Museo Nazionale houses one of the most important collections of Greek and Roman antiquities in the world, less well known than the Vatican's only because the original Bourbon owners banned all reproduction, even drawing. The museum at Capodimonte includes the greatest of the Caravaggesque Neapolitan school, as well as Titian's sharp portrait of Paul III; the Certosa di San Martino displays an unforgettable array of Christmas cribs; and in the church of Monteoliveto, the *Lamentation* by Mazzoni, with life-size terra-cotta figures in contemporary clothes, each in his attitude of grief a vivid portrait.

The heightened anguish in Mazzoni's fine sculpture is characteristic of one side of the Neapolitan spirit, but the city has a strong tradition of hedonism, too. In the local version of the classical tale of Pygmalion and Galatea, a sculptor doesn't bring the marble statue of a girl to life. Instead, a young woman mixes sugar, almonds, honey, scented water, gold, pearls, sapphires, and rubies in a bowl to make herself a husband, who turns out to be the most beautiful boy in the world. In spite of their troubles, Neapolitans know all about the good things in life. □

Votive shrines, such as the one opposite, appear frequently in homes and niches around Naples.

Marina Warner has written frequently about southern Italy for this magazine.

SEVEN GLORIOUS SIDE TRIPS

The Conca d'Oro, the Golden Conch Shell, as the curving cornucopia of the Gulf of Naples is called, is so beautiful and fascinating that visitors forget Naples itself. Travel in spring or autumn—the summer is too hot and crowded. See Naples first, then explore its surroundings.

Day One: The ruins of Cuma; the Sibyl's cave; the volcano of Solfatara; and the vestiges of Roman resorts at Pozzuoli and Baia. On the way back to Naples, stop at Posillipo, on the sea, and eat the freshest of fish at *Giuseppone a Mare* (Via Ferdinando Russo 13; phone: 7696002).

MITCH EPSTEIN (2)

Wisteria drapes an arbor at Villa Cimbrone.

Day Two: Take the ferry or hydrofoil to Capri, which in spite of everything is still an enchanted island, with breathtaking views and an abundance of wildflowers in spring. Capri has drunk so deep of the Mediterranean that its butterflies are blue, and so are its (rare) lizards. Capri has many luxury hotels and restaurants. *I Faraglioni,* Via Camerelle 75, attractive and not so expensive as some, serves fresh pasta and fresh seafood with salads of dandelion leaves.

Day Three: Pompeii, an ordinary urban community of ancient Rome. Great villas and temples can be seen elsewhere, but only here can you explore the shops and baths and houses, bourgeois or humble, of 2,000-year-old Roman families. Both *Zi Caterina,* Via Roma 20, and *Anfiteatro* provide delicious lunch and wines from the slopes of the volcano.

Day Four: Drive to Ravello, where the ancient Villa Rufolo hangs over the sparkling gulf of Salerno. You can walk in the shady woods of the Villa Cimbrone and on the nearby mountainsides, blooming with wild garlic in spring. Stay the night at either of two famous hotels, the *Palumbo* or the *Caruso Belvedere.*

Day Five: Drive to Paestum. At ancient Poseidonia, the best-preserved of Greek Doric temples stand by the sea in a complex that still yields amazing treasures, like the frescoed paintings of a diver and, from a tomb, of a dinner party, the earliest Greek paintings to survive, with the earliest use of perspective yet discovered. At the southern entrance to the site, the *Nettuno* restaurant, in a farmhouse, will provide a wonderful simple meal. Paestum is one of the wonders of Europe and amazingly little known. Either stay the night (the Nettuno has a sister *pensione,* the *Albergo Villa Rita,* Via Principe di Piemonte) and rise early to watch the sunrise tint the magnificent ruins, or drive on to spend the night at Amalfi (at *Cappuccini-Convento,* in a former monastery, high over the harbor, or the *Hotel Luna,* with a Renaissance cloister, down by the sea).

Day Six: Amalfi. This almost Moorish village of whitewashed alleys and majolica pepper-pot cupolas is surprisingly intact in spite of the hordes of tourists who converge on its tiny square and harbor. *Da Ciccio,* ten kilometers along the coast in the village of Vettica, is a splendid seaside restaurant where everything is good. Visit the Grotta Smeraldo, a sea cave as strange as the more famous Blue Grotto.

Day Seven: Drive back to Naples, on the way taking in Herculaneum, engulfed at the same time as Pompeii but grander. Then drive up the mountain road to the volcano and, if it is quiet, to the crater. An eruption is still possible at any time. Travelers passing the volcano salute it and the turbulent spirits in the magma core, about five to six kilometers down in the earth.

A second week would allow visits to the islands of Ischia and Procida, also in the Gulf of Naples; inland towns like Sant'Agata dei Goti, Santa Maria Capua Vetere; Caserta and its magnificent palace of the Bourbon rulers; Benevento; and, on the Sorrento peninsula, Positano, Sorrento, and the cathedral of Salerno, with a Cosmatesque pulpit and bronze medieval doors like Ravello's. Such abundance, happily, means the traveler must return.

Vivid remains at Herculaneum, destroyed with Pompeii in A.D. 79.

NAPLES ON THEIR MINDS

FOUR WHO ARE SPARKING THE CITY'S CULTURAL RENASCENCE

BY PATRICIA CORBETT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID GAMBLE

About Naples, it seems, the worst must be said first. Yes, the city is a monument to inefficiency. The only thing to run on time is saints' blood—San Gennaro's twice a year, and Santa Patrizia's every Tuesday morning. And, yes, Naples has such a terrible image that outsiders think of it as a vast slum, festooned with drying laundry and populated by *pizzaioli*, peddlers, priests, and strumpets, plus an occasional mafioso.

All that, of course, is simplistic and a little out-of-date. The truth is that Naples these days is undergoing a genuine renaissance. Some even say it is reaching a par with Milan for business acumen, with Rio de Janeiro for pulsating street life, and with New York for artistic and intellectual fervor. In the process, the city depends most heavily on its greatest asset—its people, especially those agile-minded, assertive Neapolitans who are increasingly bringing the most outlandish phenomena into the realm of reality. Of these heroes, four stand out.

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"I am laboring to put Naples back into the international art circuit, where the city really belongs," says Lucio Amelio. He might just be able to do it, too. Amelio is a topflight art dealer who represents a galaxy of stars: Warhol, Beuys, Haring, Paladino, Twombly, Rauschenberg, and Cutrone, among others. From a headquarters gallery located in the elegant Piazza dei Martiri, he directs a tentacular operation with branch offices in New York City and West Berlin. As he sees it, Naples is "teetering on the brink of creation and destruction—just like New York."

Amelio has much to do with the new creativity. "Since I first opened my gallery, twenty-two years ago, I have promoted some six hundred artistic events in the area," he says.

Nor is the gallery his only concern. He publishes exhibition catalogues, posters, books, and a quarterly. Recently he inaugurated the nonprofit Fondazione Amelio. The idea for this institution, which he describes as a "permanent work-in-progress," came to him after the 1980 earthquake: since 1981, he has invited seventy artists to Naples to create works inspired by the recent upheaval. The resulting Terrae Motus Collection was donated to the city and installed at Villa Campolieto, one of the eighteenth-century palaces built by Luigi Vanvitelli along the Golden Mile, near Herculaneum. Here, in the great frescoed halls, Richard Long placed fifty-two lava stones in a circular formation evoking a volcanic crater; Nino Longobardi scratched life-size graffiti on the creamy walls; Michelangelo Pistoletto designed a modern *Annunciation of the Earthquake: Polyptych;* and Beuys shattered glass and rocks around a rough-hewn table and stools.

"The quake turned out to be an extremely positive experience, sparking off an unparalleled burst of energy," Amelio says, looking to the bright side of a catastrophe that killed over 10,000 and left thousands homeless. "The sense of destabilization produced a fertile terrain for creativity." In fact, the sudden surge of interest in Naples did help stem—even turn—the tide of intellectual emigration. "Today we are beginning to have a 'Little America' here, just the way New York has always had a Little Italy," Amelio notes happily.

His energy seems boundless. Between brisk remarks to his staff ("Keep the noise down," "Stay away from me with that cigarette," "Is *anyone* alive here?"), he wraps up a long-distance telephone deal for a Warhol *Head of Christ* ("Get it to me tomorrow"). Despite his incessant contacts with the world beyond, deep down inside, Amelio feels *napoletanissimo*. He states proudly, "I grew up in Via dei Tribunali, and my father was a mechanical engineer—but in this city, I consider myself a prince."

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Francesco d'Avalos has set himself a task fit for a real prince, which is what he is, by birth. He is restoring one of the last privately owned great houses in town—his own, which he inhabits with his wife, Antonella. His struggle—nothing short of heroic—in the face of Neapolitan bureaucracy and indifference has won the admiration of even the most uninterested observers. The prince's burden is not a light one. His family's residence for nearly five hundred years, the Palazzo d'Avalos del Vasto encompasses

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The art dealer Lucio Amelio, before Villa Campolieto's eighteenth-century portico, displays the work of one of his young artists.

so much national, regional, and personal history that its resurrection would be difficult under the best of circumstances. It was home to the hero of the Battle of Pavia, Ferrante d'Avalos, as well as to Michelangelo's muse, Vittoria Colonna. The original decoration is thought to have included frescoes by Tintoretto and tapestries designed by Titian. Its current appearance owes much to the Neapolitan neoclassical painter Alessandro Fischetti and to Vanvitelli's contemporary Mario Gioffredo.

"The house is bigger than I am," announces Francesco d'Avalos with a deep sigh. A composer, conductor, and professor at the San Pietro a Maiella Conservatory, in Naples, Francesco d'Avalos sometimes rues the time he dedicates to the upkeep of his property; yet his skill in re-creating the ambience of the past is considerable and touched by a theatricality that derives from his musical interests.

"In decorating a room, it is the harmony of the whole which concerns me," says the prince. To ensure visual uniformity, he has trained craftsmen to execute *faux marbre* panels, polychrome *cotto* floors, tinted friezes, stucco moldings: "If something seems to be missing, we invent it. Neapolitans have always been past masters at copying, and, personally, I wholeheartedly endorse fakes—the right kind, of course.

"The quality of individual pieces is much less important to me," he continues; "you don't want to plant a flower among the vegetables." Francesco d'Avalos gestures toward "unsigned" portraits of forebears, "unimportant" canvases by such artists as Allori, Loutherbourg, de Vos, La Croix de Marseille; a smattering of "little sketches" by Vouet, Tiepolo, Pillement, and Vanvitelli; and fifty-three engraved likenesses of musicians, which the prince bought up piecemeal at Sotheby's and Colnaghi's. With equally casual, understated elegance, a group of rare Apulian vases excavated on d'Avalos territory graces a corridor console; before a window stands a much-published circular *pietra dura* table, from the collection of Pope Pius IX; a dazzling candelabrum by the Parisian goldsmith Thomire is set on the dining-room table. In an abandoned bedchamber, d'Avalos points to an oft-exhibited gilt canopy bed, perhaps sculpted for Marie of Austria's visit in the late seventeenth century. Stroking one of the four life-size caryatids, the prince vaunts its merits with typical Neapolitan generosity: "It's big enough for three wives and a mistress."

[illegible] d'Avalos recognizes that Naples is a city "where [illegible] works, but everything functions in its own, particular [illegible]. He could never live anywhere else. "I am like any object in [illegible] palace: here, taken in context, I have a special significance. [illegible] here I am merely another Neapolitan prince."

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When in 1981 he was appointed artistic director of Europe's oldest opera house, the San Carlo of Naples, the composer Roberto De Simone was absolutely overjoyed. Not that he was any stranger to success, being already celebrated throughout Italy for his work in combining ethno-musical research with composition and concert performances. De Simone's bravura adaptations of forgotten vernacular works, such as *Mistero Napoletano*, *La Gatta Cenerentola* (a revisitation of the seventeenth-century Cinderella tale), and the *Cantata dei Pastori* (the transcription of a mystery play), were best-selling discs, popular TV fare, and box-office hits. Even so, being a native son of Naples, he derives his greatest satisfaction from occupying the post that belonged to Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi and presenting his own works on the same stage where the bel canto masterpieces *La Donna del Lago*, *Mose*, *La Sonnambula*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* premiered. "The San Carlo was one of the great myths of my youth," says De Simone.

A child prodigy who made his debut in the theater as an accompanist at the age of nine, Maestro De Simone could hardly help absorbing musical culture: "My father was a prompter, my aunt an opera singer, my uncle a violinist, my grandmother an operetta star, my grandfather a member of a commedia dell'arte company." At the age of twenty-four, with a conservatory honors diploma in his pocket, Roberto De Simone embarked on his singular career. His scores are often based on the music of his native city. Indeed, their strong melodic line and compelling rhythms have caused some admirers to call them "Neapolitan musicals."

Something of a musical archaeologist (although he dislikes the academic connotations of the label), De Simone often prefers to use "unplaced" voices, which evoke the remote, sacred origins of his compositions: "Their spontaneous quality can convey an almost liturgical depth of feeling." In his recent *Stabat Mater*, a tribute to Pergolesi, the simplicity of the Greek actress Irene Pappas, singing the title role in nonoperatic fashion, was exquisitely

Evident below are the fruits of Prince Francesco d'Avalos's struggle to restore his ancestral home, Palazzo d'Avalos del Vasto.

moving. The fireworks of De Simone's *Requiem in Memory of Pier Paolo Pasolini* were produced by a battery of acoustic devices: orchestra, rock group, lyric choristers, and soloists.

The pieces composed or directed by De Simone, intimately linked to the spirit and topography of Naples, are best enjoyed in situ: at the august San Carlo, in the church of San Francesco da Paola, in the outdoor Anfiteatro Flavio, in the Maschio Angioino, in the great circus tents hoisted in popular quarters. The maestro's creations have also been repeatedly and successfully exported—to Germany, the United States, France, and Austria—and this spring will be included in Paris's "Seine Napolitaine" celebration, demonstrating, in De Simone's words, that "to be a Neapolitan does not mean that one is the prisoner of a provincial straitjacket; it implies world citizenship."

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If Naples has an out-and-out champion, it is Baroness Mirella Barracco. A tall, dark, tousle-headed girl with no pretensions, she is a former City College of New York lecturer and now professor of English literature at Naples University. She is also the mastermind of an ingenious matchmaking scheme, named Napoli 99, that brings big money to the aid of old monuments. A nonprofit foundation, it takes its name from the revolution of 1799, when the idealistic Parthenopean Republic was crushed, and harks forward to the date 1999, a year in which, presumably, Utopia will be, if not a reality, at least nearer.

When Barracco started Napoli 99, in 1984, it was her idea that seemed utopian. A friend forecast that the task ahead would be "like attempting to carve your way through the forest primeval with a penknife," she recollects. But Mirella Barracco and her business-consultant husband, Maurizio, pressed on, trying to raise money to restore their city's marvels. They soon found themselves enthusiastically flanked by a group of foreign Napoliphiles, including the literati Gore Vidal, Francis Haskell, Dennis Mack Smith, André Chastel, and John Pope-Hennessy. Regular press conferences (a rare occurrence even on the Italian corporate scene) were scheduled to stimulate public opinion, and soon contributions began to trickle in. So far, local banks, national airlines, car companies, and industrialists have given over $1 million toward the restoration of major Neapolitan landmarks. To spread the word (and raise money), the foundation also commissioned a series of original "Neapolitan" posters by artists and designers such as Milton Glazer, Folon, Ivan Chermayeff, Heinz Edelmann, and Massimo Vignelli. An exhibition of the works will be traveling to the United States, probably beginning later this year in Los Angeles.

The earthquake of 1980 "catalyzed our decision to become more involved with restoring Naples; we felt compelled to lend support to our desperately afflicted hometown." Moreover, Mirella says, she wanted to have Neapolitans do the work. "Naples is a tremendously vital metropolis, not a Third World outpost. We wanted to help it regain a sense of confidence and trust in its own powers of recovery."

Speaking of the warmth of Naples's populace, Mirella Barracco declares, "There is still an unusual degree of social cohesion among us. Perhaps it comes from the incessant body-to-body contact we experience going about our daily business in this crowded town!" This indefinable, almost defiant quality of *simpatia* may yet prove the essential ingredient in the Barraccos' formula. The foundation's motto says it all: "A future for Naples's past." □

Roberto De Simone (top), artistic director at Teatro San Carlo, rehearses on the steps of the church of San Paolo Maggiore. Baroness Mirella Barracco (right) is dedicated to restoring such landmarks as the cloister in the fourteenth-century church of Santa Chiara.

HANDY TREASURES

PER SQUARE CENTIMETER, SNUFFBOXES MAY BE THE MOST PRECIOUS WORKS OF ART IN THE WORLD

They are ravishing to look at, certainly: of intricately engraved gold or even platinum, some with plain surfaces, some encrusted with jewels or adorned with enamel miniatures so fine they could only have been painted with a brush made of a single hair. Yet for the moment, our host, Peter L. Schaffer, one of the family of owners of that venerable Fifth Avenue establishment A La Vieille Russie, was holding one of these eighteenth-century snuffboxes up to our—ears.

"Can you hear?" he asked. "It goes 'pop' when you open it." A test of workmanship: after two hundred years, the fit between lid and case is still perfect. "On some of these," Schaffer continued, "they made it so that the hinges don't show. You look at the lid and you can't tell if it's the front or the back."

Boxes of all kinds, he likes to point out, are the most collected of objects. Snuffboxes are jewelry, jewelry at the top of the line. Most were made to be

BY MATTHEW FLAMM

carried, by men, and though the vogue for snuff petered out long ago, the elaborate, spectacularly crafted boxes remain, he proclaims, "per centimeter, the most valuable works of art in the world." Some eighty of the very finest—all from the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection—are on display at A La Vieille Russie in a traveling exhibition organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Box making as a fine art reached its peak in eighteenth-century France, with the craze for tobacco. For decades the French artisans reigned as the undisputed masters, but in time, foreign artists in the demanding medium developed their own, highly treasured and distinctive styles. English boxes, known for a greater simplicity than the French, were often decorated with paintings of the countryside à la Constable. Swiss boxes often incorporated timepieces. Germans liked to fashion them from such stones as agate, jasper, chrysoprase, jade, bloodstone, and lapis lazuli. Others made boxes with gold-studded lacquer, with micromosaics. The only limitations on ornament were those of the artist's imagination. Certainly, money was no object. One early-eighteenth-century French box carried in its day a price tag of 129,850 livres—about $3 million, in today's money.

Besides being of a certain practical use, boxes were status symbols and as such were often given as gifts to reflect the wealth and sophistication of the giver. No longer were the heavy gold chains of the Renaissance (thinly disguised money) passed out as rewards for services to the crown. Chains ended up in melting pots, while ornamented boxes became precious heirlooms. Many monarchs not only dispensed boxes with abandon but also commissioned them for their collections.

"People like to say that there was a snuffbox on every single windowsill of the Hermitage—which, if you know the Hermitage, you know is impossible," says Schaffer, "but Catherine the Great *might* have had one in every room." Another great lover of snuffboxes—and their contents, evidently—was Frederick the Great, who favored a variety too large for the pocket; it had to be toted behind him by a page boy. Even Napoleon, who in so many ways opposed old royalist habits, gave snuffboxes as gifts.

The most precious boxes that have come down to us reflect in miniature the grandeur of the dwellings for which they were intended. Despite their dimensions, the paintings on the lids and sides often possess the monumental feeling of frescoes—and as that "pop" at their opening indicates, the boxes were meant to have an architectural solidity. They need it; they are so intricately put together that, once damaged, they are virtually impossible to repair. Says Schaffer, "They're like little palaces turned inside out." □

The exhibition "Gold Boxes" continues at A La Vieille Russie, 781 Fifth Avenue (at Fifty-ninth Street), through April 11 and benefits the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. It travels from there to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, in Richmond.

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PHOTOGRAPHS, COURTESY A LA VIEILLE RUSSIE, NEW YORK

Opposite: Two views of a gold-and-enamel snuffbox given by Napoleon to his mistress Marie Walewska; it has a miniature of the donor on the cover, and his initial and symbols of his victories on the base. This page: Gold, lacquer, and mother-of-pearl box (top) was made in Paris, 1743, while the bejeweled hardstone, gold, and mother-of-pearl beauty (above) was made for Frederick the Great in Berlin, around 1760. The gold-with-enamel box (left) was crafted that year in Paris.

Above: "La Lanterne," an adaptation of a pavillon *in the park at Versailles. Below: The drawing room, with its Huet panels, a rare ebony cabinet inset with* pietre dure, *a painted* fauteuil à la reine, *and a glimpse of the marble entrance hall.*

LA LANTERNE

LIBBY KECK HAS REASSEMBLED THE REGAL GLORIES OF VERSAILLES IN CALIFORNIA

"Elizabeth Keck's house is astonishing—no, it's overwhelming—in two ways," says Earl Alexander ("Rusty") Powell III, the director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. "The first is that she has put together a collection of French decorative arts that bears comparison with any of the past or present collections of this kind in the world—Rothschild or Wrightsman—in terms of stunning quality.

"The second thing is that, while the Rothschild collections were assembled over centuries and the Wrightsmans' over decades, Libby has created the Elizabeth A. Keck Collection and built her wonderful house in just seven years."

The subject of this praise is the wife of Howard B. Keck, the oil tycoon whose foundation gave $70 million to Caltech in 1985 to build the largest telescope in the world. Although it is without equal today, a century from now its technology may have been surpassed, whereas Libby Keck's collection will become more valuable.

"Absolutely the only thing in the world that makes me believe in reincarnation is Libby Keck," laughs the Paris dealer and decorator Didier Aaron. "She has an infallible eye, as good as any dealer or expert in the world or better, and her taste is intuitive rather than merely cerebral, so I think she must be some very rich eighteenth-century noblewoman reincarnated."

A hazel-eyed, blond, fine-boned beauty, Mrs. Keck explains her passion in a soft, throaty voice. "I grew up in Oklahoma City, where it's boiling hot most of the time, and in those days there was no air conditioning, so I stayed indoors and read and read: the *Arabian Nights*, and then Dickens and Balzac, Tolstoy and Twain and Victor Hugo. So I *knew* that out there was an extraordinary world.

"When I was fourteen, my parents took me to Europe, and when I walked out of the Ritz hotel and saw the Place Vendôme, I was struck dumb. That perfect beauty, perfect proportion, so spare, so simple, so quiet. I knew that I wanted, someday, a house of that perfection. That same summer, when we went to Versailles,

BY LEON HARRIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIZZIE HIMMEL

I said to myself, 'Kings have walked down these stairs; queens have sat in these chairs; someday I will be surrounded by their kind of beauty.' "

It proved to be no idle, teenager's dream. Much of what decorates Mrs. Keck's house today was made for kings and queens. In her drawing room is an ensemble that consists of a Japanese lacquer commode and *secrétaire abattant* made in 1789

Elizabeth Keck in her library; behind her, the bronze horse she outbid Partridge for.

by Adam Weisweiler. There are three such sets in the world. One belongs to the queen of England; one is in the Hermitage. Says Gillian Wilson, the curator of decorative arts at the Getty Museum, "How encouraging that these two museum-quality examples of eighteenth-century French furniture have come to California, even in a private collection."

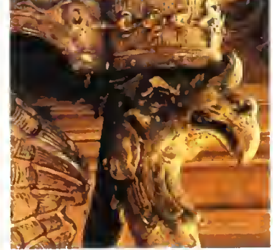
Besides the Weisweiler pieces, the drawing room contains four panels by Christophe Huet, who painted the *singerie* panels at the château of Chantilly and a circular marble, mahogany, and ormolu *guéridon* from the château of St.-Cloud. On either side of the fireplace stands a pair of marble jardinières made in the late eighteenth century for the king of Spain (there are two just like them in the royal palace in Madrid). Perhaps the most valuable piece in the room, and Mrs. Keck's favorite, is a black lacquer *bureau plat* by Joseph Baumhauer, generally known by his first name. It is from the collection of the Austrian Rothschilds.

Mrs. Keck's point of view is closer to that of the former owners of these treasures than to that of many Americans. One of the more foolish and ill-founded notions common among both private collectors and museums in this century is that the so-called decorative arts are neither so important nor so prestigious as painting and sculpture. If this ignorant distinction—unknown in the eighteenth century—has had any happy side effect, it is that the equivalent of a Leonardo or a Rembrandt among tables and tapestries can still be bought for hundreds of thousands of dollars instead of millions.

Elizabeth Keck obtains such pieces, says the dealer Jean Marie Rossi, because "she is a careful, crafty, self-made scholar." Mrs. Keck has another view: "I haven't made many mistakes, because I do my homework. I consult with experts, and I've trained my eye. Of the few mistakes I've made, some have turned out to be fortunate. For instance, last week two scholars came here from the Louvre. They told me that this pair of mirrors I'd thought were very early eighteenth century were in fact from the 1640s and made for the king and that the musical clock in the library was made for him too."

The connection with the Versailles of Louis XIV is important. In recognition of the building that inspired her, Mrs. Keck calls her house La Lanterne. It is an adaptation of a *pavillon de chasse* called by that name in the park of Versailles. A *maison à la lanterne* is a house you can see through from front door to back, and beyond.

Mrs. Keck is aware that she is acquiring major pieces and will be compared with some legendary collectors. She makes comparisons herself. "When I was in New York recently it struck me that Frick and Morgan, whose collections were largely made up of what Duveen found and sold them, were not really collectors. Duveen was the collector," she says, raising a point with which the museums might disagree. "I've bought pieces from all the great dealers, of course, but my very best pieces I bought myself, at auction, bidding *against* them. That large bronze horse from the atelier of Antoine Coysevox I bought in Monte Carlo. John Partridge was absolutely determined to get it, but I outbid him. In such competition I have an enormous advantage against any dealer who is bidding for himself. He has to stop bidding at some price that leaves him room to add a profit to his cost. I don't."



It is difficult to say which of Mrs. Keck's many masterpieces is the finest—perhaps the Joseph desk—but high

The drawing room: Savonnerie carpet, Avisse chairs, Caffiéri clock, Joseph bureau plat.

up on the list is the small, late-seventeenth-century writing table inlaid with brass and lapis lazuli by André-Charles Boulle. "That's another example of why this is *my* collection," Mrs. Keck explains. "I bought that at auction in Monte Carlo too. My eye, *my* heart, *my* love told me I must have it. Of course, I paid too much for it, as much as for a really great painting, but it is the most unusual piece of furniture I've ever seen, and there aren't two dozen paintings in the whole world that are *that* unusual.

"In the last seven years, I've flown to Europe forty or fifty times. I don't mean to pretend I did all this alone. It would have been impossible without the decorator Jacques Grange or without the genius of Didier Aaron, whose team of artists and artisans supervised every tiny detail.

"For example, I sent those chairs by Jean Avisse back to France to be reupholstered. There are fine upholsterers in America, but as Gillian Wilson of the Getty told me, in France they know to the fraction of a centimeter how high the seat of a *fauteuil* or *bergère* should be.

"I was resolved that every single such detail should be perfect, and with Jacques Grange designing every floor, every ceiling, every molding, I knew that would happen. I was not a slave to tradition, but when I departed from it, I wanted to know I was doing it. I was absolutely determined that La Lanterne would be warmer and more welcoming than the traditional

French house and that the way to achieve this was color. So when Jacques designed the traditional black-and-white marble entrance hall, I used his design, but instead of black and white, I chose marble in very dark brown and very light beige.

n the outside, I used eighteen-inch-thick blocks of limestone from Austin, Texas, because the color's better than Indiana limestone's. I'm a painter, and color is everything to me. On those stairwell walls, I had originally planned to use period tapestries, but I decided that I needed bold color there,

Above: Seventeenth-century pedestal by Boulle. Below: Statue depicting Asia.

and that big Helen Frankenthaler and the Motherwell, too, could hardly be more colorful. Without them, it was not alive enough.

"And when I say that I didn't do it alone, that I had the greatest help, I mean the carpenters and masons and painters—at one time there were seventy-two laborers in this house every day, finishing floors, painting ceilings, installing boiserie and slate shingles and lead gutters and downspouts. Many of them told me individually while they were here, and others wrote me letters after they left, saying they knew that never again in their lives would they work on such a project, that they told their wives and children how proud they were to be part of this. When I say that love built this house, I don't mean just mine—I mean their love too.

"It seems to me that love and the passion of genius never die. They remain forever in an object. There is as much of Boulle's spirit in that table today as there was the day he finished it, and that is finally what always determines whether or not I buy a piece—does it still throb with the strength, the quality, the passionate spirit of the artist?"

According to Jacques Grange, "what makes Libby's house so warm is that nothing in it is for show. Everything is intended to be used. For example, there are no period sofas, because the ones made then are invariably uncomfortable. In her house every sofa is the most comfortable available today, and she had each covered with fabric handwoven to eighteenth-century designs, so they fit in perfectly.

"In the eighteenth century, they didn't have coffee tables, but some rooms in this house can't be used comfortably without a coffee table, so she had one made in Lucite, and it disappears, just as the Lucite stand she had made for the Carpeaux at the head of the stairs disappears and all you see is the superb sculpture. Her rooms are welcoming and appreciated because they are *used*. She didn't want anything only because of its history. If she couldn't sit on it or write at it or put books or lamps or flowers on it, she didn't want it."

A visitor keeps wondering, why is this house more beautiful, warmer, more exciting than others? There are perhaps three good reasons. The first is color. The individual splendors in each of the Wrightsman rooms at New York's Metropolitan Museum are certainly the equal of Mrs. Keck's, but they exist in an unchanging, artificial light. One pair of chairs is even covered in the original, 250-year-old fabric. "Scholars and showoff snobs complain when they see great period pieces re-covered," laughs Mrs. Keck, "but that's affectation—they are ridiculous. I know collectors so insane that they keep chairs covered in shreds and tatters to prove they are authentic. I don't need to prove anything. When Louis XIV or Marie Antoinette had a piece that is now mine, it was covered with brand-new fabric, and so they are in my house, sometimes in the same pattern, handwoven for me at the same mill in Lyons as made the original.

"Every color, every yard of fabric, every inch of passementerie and gimp and braid I selected myself and had made by hand for me. Look at these silk taffeta curtains here in the drawing room. I selected them because I love turtledoves and because the colors are perfect for the room I had in mind. I didn't know until afterward that the pattern was originally designed and woven for Catherine the

Upper left: Downstairs gallery, with chinoiserie tapestry. Right: Régence dining room, Kändler porcelain on table, and a fine table à gibier. *Lower left: Library, with Gainsborough portrait and Caffiéri firedogs. Right: Conservatory, with Desportes tapestry.*

Great, and Marie Antoinette used it, too!"

The second reason that La Lanterne is so alive has to do with light. Surrounded by its own, two-acre park, with tall French windows admitting California's sunlight, it has a live atmosphere, unlike many great Parisian mansions, which are dim and dreary even at noon.

The third reason visitors are so overwhelmed by La Lanterne is what's in it. Cheek by jowl are literally dozens of masterpieces by Bernard van Risenburgh, David Roentgen, Joseph Baumhauer, Philippe-Claude Montigny, Jacques Caffiéri, Jean-Pierre Latz. Rusty Powell of the Los Angeles County Museum explains: "Each one, alone in a great museum or surrounded by lesser pieces in another private house, would seize the viewer's attention and never let it wander—but not here. In Mrs. Keck's collection, where every single piece, from the largest commode to the tiniest *brûle parfum,* is the best of its kind, all combine to make a perfect whole rather than being perfect individual pieces in an imperfect background."

The Régence dining room of La Lanterne is lit by an enormous chandelier of porcelain flowers. "There are two like it," Mrs. Keck says, "one in the Hermitage, the other at a castle in Bavaria." The din-

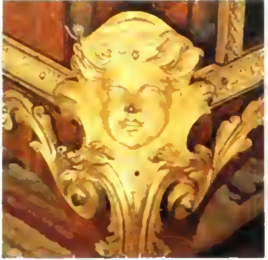
The bathroom, with its chandelier, does its best to resemble a garden.

ing room's boiserie and *brèche-de-violette* marble mantelpiece are from Edmond de Rothschild's house in London. The floor is of yellow and terra-cotta marble, and at one end of the room is a superb carved and gilt *table à gibier,* almost identical to one in Versailles. Over it hangs a full-length portrait painted by Aaron Shikler of Mrs. Keck in a yellow Dior evening dress.

The library is almost pure Louis XVI, but Mrs. Keck has again made whatever exceptions please her eye. On either side of the fireplace is one of a pair of red Queen Anne chinoiserie tables, and over the mantelpiece hangs Gainsborough's portrait of Sarah, countess of Kinnoull.

e haven't had time to buy many paintings yet," Mrs. Keck confesses, "but that's what I'll do next. I bought that Anders Zorn nude and child in the conservatory—though I'd never heard of Zorn—just because I loved it. My favorite among my paintings is in the upstairs sitting room, Mary Cassatt's portrait of her nine-year-old nephew that I bought from a descendant of the sitter."

Though no room in La Lanterne, even the most formal, is less than ingratiating, the most relaxing of all is the conservatory. Its chief delight is an eighteenth-century tapestry, *Les Nouvelles Indes,* designed by Alexandre François Desportes, the king of animal painters. In it he has created a glorious blue horse. Two fine paintings by Desportes of hunting dogs are hung in the narrow hallway, with the same throwaway *luxe* that put Pissarro and Bonnard drawings in her guest bathroom.



Scarcely less remarkable than her house is Mrs. Keck's garden. "I didn't want a French house in the midst of California trees—palms and eucalyptus. I wanted the closest thing we have in America to the traditional French plane tree, and that's the sycamore. So we cut down every single growing thing on these two acres except for one oak and started from scratch.

"My landscape designer, Joseph Copp, is a romantic dreamer like me and in his area is as great a genius as Jacques Grange. His men went all over California, and wherever they saw an old forty- or fifty-foot sycamore in someone's front yard, they tried to buy it and often succeeded. That *allée* looks as though the trees had been here for generations, but in fact they've been here for only two and a half years. Those deodars are sixty feet tall. I bought them from the Huntington and moved them here.

"To get this house on three levels and the garden too required removing thousands of tons of dirt. When we first calculated how many trucks it would take and how many months, we knew we had to find another solution or else our neighbors would justifiably be up in arms. I had an army of engineers studying the problem without success, until a Japanese engineer suggested that instead of carting all those tons away we could merely spread them over our own two acres and raise the property two or three feet—so we did."

There are few works of art in the garden. One of them is the first casting of Maillol's *Monument à Cézanne.* "The Louvre has the *second* cast," Mrs. Keck confides with a certain glee. The gardens are much sparer than the traditional French garden. The fountain visible from the conservatory, for example, is not a group of the usual mythological gods and goddesses but a stark granite boulder in the Japanese manner with a single jet of water rising from it.

Some terraces are made of a green slate from France rather than gray American slate, and the stone floor of the conservatory was also brought from France. "Libby must have spent more just on freight than anyone else does on building a whole mansion," suggests a friend.

Her bedroom is also full of masterpieces: a japanned desk by Jacques Dubois, a Jean-François Dubut chinoiserie cabinet, a Claude-Charles Saunier lacquered chest of drawers, two Charles Cressent chairs, a J. H. Riesener desk. But the

In her flowery bedroom, full of masterpieces, Mrs. Keck sleeps in a lit à la polonaise.

two most romantic things in the room are new: a garden of painted flowers on the ceiling and a *lit à la polonaise* with delicate, flying silk curtains. The adjoining bathroom, bigger than many a bedroom, is also a bower of painted flowers, lit by a chandelier with amethyst drops.

On a level below the first floor, overlooking the swimming pool, is Mrs. Keck's studio, where she produces big, bold abstract acrylic paintings. One was bought by a collector for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles from her 1985 show at the Stella Polaris Gallery, in Beverly Hills. Her next show will be at New York's Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer Gallery. "I don't have any delusions that I'm Rembrandt, but I love to paint," she says.

And how will she someday dispose of her house and the Elizabeth A. Keck Collection—which she points out is hers alone? Might she give it to the Los Angeles County Museum or the Huntington Library (she is on both boards), or might she, like Dominique de Menil or Henry Clay Frick, create her own museum?

"To keep it all together as a museum is tempting, after the work of putting it together. On the other hand, I have four wonderful grown children who love beauty. But happily I don't have to decide today how to *dispose* of it. I'll just keep building and buying and making it better." □

Leon Harris is a frequent contributor to Connoisseur.

THE LEIPZIG SOUND

WHY MUSIC NEEDS THE GEWANDHAUS ORCHESTRA

BY MATTHEW GUREWITSCH PHOTOGRAPHS BY URS KLUYVER

"You've heard the joke?" the distinguished professor wants to know. "At the Berlin Philharmonic, they play old fiddles and drive new cars. With us, it's the other way around." How much true history fits into a little quip. Gerhard Bosse has served for upwards of thirty years as first concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, in Leipzig, a city only ninety miles from Berlin, but on the far side of the wall. From the late nineteenth century to 1945, the fortunes of the two orchestras ran parallel, even to the point of sharing music directors. Since the war, though, the Berlin Philharmonic, at home in West Germany's showcase exclave, has reveled in prosperity unknown in the East. Under the leadership of the glacial Herbert von Karajan, it has evolved into the very prototype of the late-twentieth-century symphony orchestra, its aesthetic suitable to brave, new, futuristic worlds of glass and steel. If musical excellence could be measured in personal status symbols, the Gewandhaus would make a shabby showing indeed. As it is, the orchestra places in the front rank of international ensembles. Gewandhauskapellmeister Kurt Masur, the fifty-nine-year-old Brahms lookalike who has shepherded the orchestra since 1970, sits in his spacious office at Karl-Marx-Platz. "Tradition," he says. "*That* is our capital."

Given the current state of the musical world, the value placed on that capital can only rise. Tradition here means many things: at the simplest level, roots reaching far back in time. The city of Leipzig put a band of *Stadtpfeifer*—municipal pipers—on the payroll in the fifteenth century. Coffeehouses in the eighteenth century hosted the rival musical circles of Bach and Telemann. In 1743, private sponsors founded an orchestra society; in 1781, it moved into a building called the Gewandhaus, which gave the orchestra the name it has been known by since. The tradition of the Gewandhaus encompasses the authority of long experience and continuity but also a wholeheartedly progressive spirit that marked the institution in its proudest years, under such starry music directors as Felix Mendelssohn (Gewandhauskapellmeister from 1835 to 1847), Arthur Nikisch (1895–1922), and Wilhelm Furtwängler (1922–28).

Listeners in the West sense the Gewandhaus tradition first of all in the orchestra's distinctive sound, a sound that links us to the century-plus-a-decade bracketing Beethoven's First Symphony (1800) to Mahler's Ninth Symphony (1909). In that expansionist and eventful age, the concert hall was part temple, part parliament. Music spoke from heart to heart. Any orchestra so charged with that time's living presence is bound to have a cherished place in one's affections, especially since the number of such orchestras is dwindling fast. The phonograph and the jet plane have made the world of music both a larger and a smaller place. Now ace instrumentalists from New York or from Tokyo can drop into vacant chairs like computer chips into a board. Once anyone anywhere can hear anything, everything starts to sound the same.

Matthew Gurewitsch, a senior editor of this magazine, profiled Jessye Norman in January.

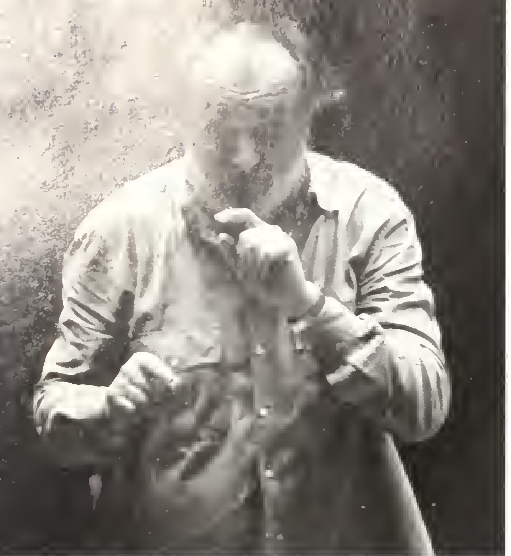
Camaraderie on the podium: two contrabassists compare notes at rehearsal. Privacy backstage: his concert dress not quite complete, a French-horn player tries his instrument.

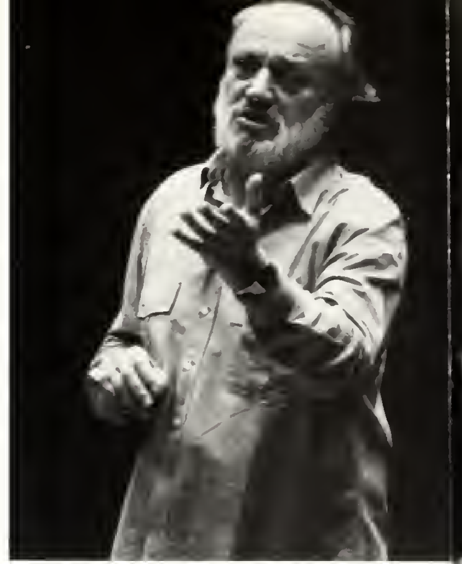
The Vienna Philharmonic presents one exception. No matter who is conducting them, the players retain a candlelight-on-satin sheen all their own. For many years, a second exception has been the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, but with the recent departure of the Dutch maestro Bernard Haitink and his replacement by the young Italian Riccardo Chailly (a glass-and-steel internationalist if ever there was one), the Concertgebouw seems fated to yield its place as standard-bearer in the core repertoire to Masur and the Gewandhaus. In recent seasons, the East Germans have come to these shores bearing the complete symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms—the Beethoven taut and dramatic, the Brahms majestic. We have had samples of their Bruckner (ruminative) and Mahler (mordant). This month, they will visit this country again, on the first leg of what Masur calls their first *Weltumsegelung*—a voyage around the world.

The conductor likes to think of his ensemble as an "*espressivo* orchestra," and the phrase points to what are the outstanding attributes of the Gewandhaus: spontaneity—and its warm, rich resonance. The principal coloration comes from the strings, especially from the dark glow of the cellos. The violas blend into that deep shade, not, as is commoner, into the penumbra of the violins. Supporting them all is the mighty array of double basses, ranged like biblical giants, with resonance to match. Against the weft of the strings, the brass stand out with a mellow fullness, the winds with lean and plangent clarity.

The total sound is, in the most honorable sense, the sound of yesteryear. "Some people don't think our method is good," says Johannes Forner, a music scholar closely associated with the orchestra. "They feel it is better always to have new influences. But we think it is best to preserve a basic sound by passing it on from teacher to student. The Vienna Philharmonic does it this way, too, but it's unusual. This way, you don't have to keep explaining the same things all the time."

Close to 90 percent of the players come from Leipzig's own Musikhochschule Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, which Mendelssohn founded for the express purpose of having leading players train their own successors. Turnover is slow. The few open positions will be filled, after due deliberation, when the right player appears at the





advertised audition. "Basically," Forner says, "it's a lifetime job. If a flutist loses his teeth, well . . . But otherwise . . ."

When a visitor suggests that the technical accomplishment in Leipzig, though at a high international standard, is not the last word in razzle-dazzle, Masur offers no apologies. "Technical perfection is always elusive," he says. "Our musicians do not play only in the concert hall but also for the opera and at church services. It would be easier if they did not circulate that way. It can happen that I play the same piece with completely different forces from one year to the next. As it is, the players never lose their joy in the music. We play with devotion, and we take risks. A listener can always tell whether you're playing in a creative spirit. And I think that if we are giving the music all we can, an occasional speck of dust doesn't matter."

Ralf Götz, a young, dark-eyed French-horn soloist whose mastery Carnegie Hall audiences have hailed with loud ovations, admits that much of his inspiration comes from other orchestras and, without prompting, names a historic rival. "I am always learning from what I hear," he says. "It is no good just to stew in your own juice. In the classic repertoire, the brass of the Berlin Philharmonic certainly stand out. They are stronger than we are. We are more restrained—and in modern pieces, we really can't compare."

On the other hand, the Leipzig ensemble has this advantage: they played what we now call the classics—notably the three B's—when they were brand-new. J. S. Bach is linked to the city in a double fashion. He spent nearly thirty years there as the choirmaster of the church of Saint Thomas; and it was Mendelssohn who resurrected him from long oblivion. As for Beethoven, the burghers of Leipzig took up his symphonies virtually as fast as he could write them. The Gewandhaus played the Fifth within two months of its Vienna premiere. (In Berlin, they waited fifteen years.) Before any other orchestra thought to do so, the Gewandhaus played all nine Beethoven symphonies as a cycle—in the composer's lifetime. Starting in the 1850s, Brahms played his concerti and conducted his symphonies at the Gewandhaus. And that is just the beginning. Besides introducing his own music, Mendelssohn championed his friend Robert Schumann. Bruckner's Seventh Symphony had its world premiere in Leipzig. So, posthumously (in 1839), did Schubert's Ninth, which the Vienna Philharmonic Society had rejected as unperformable and the world now knows, with colossal understatement, as the "Great" C Major.

Last winter, the Schubert showed up in Leipzig again, on a sold-out subscription series called "World Premieres at the Gewandhaus," on a bill with two short mood pieces (*On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, Summer Night on the River;* first presented in 1913) by the eccentric British colorist Frederick Delius and the new "concerto for orchestra" *Die Windsbraut* (The Bride of the Winds) by the East German composer Siegfried Matthus. Laid out on a grand scale not dwarfed by Schubert's, the Matthus score had been heard the previous spring in Munich; now Masur, to whom it is dedicated, was leading it for the first time, in a revised version that technically counts as yet another world premiere. What better occasion to sample the full range of Gewandhaus traditions?

"IF YOU PLAY IN A DETACHED WAY, YOU CAN NEVER GIVE ANYTHING EXTRA".

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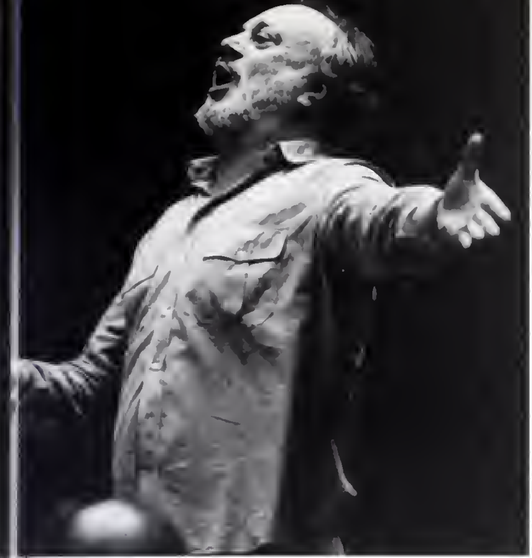
On Monday morning, Masur is taking the orchestra through the first of four three-hour rehearsals for the program they will play on Thursday and Friday. Though the stage is full, only about half of the Gewandhaus players are present. Except for the three first concertmasters, who do not play in the opera or at church, the full membership serves at both those locations as well as in the concert hall. On their own time, they all play chamber music, too. Many belong to one or more of twenty specialized smaller groups; and anyone is free to start another. "You never fall into daily routine," observes Hiltrud Ilg, a first violinist who has played with the Gewandhaus for twenty years, a bright, articulate woman who in a land of grays wears crimson and against steep odds maintains a discreet cosmopolitan chic. "Flexibility is one of our key strengths. Thanks to playing chamber music, we're used to hearing ourselves and our colleagues. That makes you play with commitment. If you always play in the full orchestra, you must never stand out for doing badly *or* for doing well. Working in small groups makes you capable of a supreme effort. If you play in a detached way, you can't ever give anything extra. If you play in a committed way, you can always hold something back. We combine commitment and discipline."

These qualities are never in doubt as the orchestra launches into Schubert's Great C Major, but Masur has particular fine points in mind. For such a big bear of a man, he cuts a very light-footed figure. Since a car accident several years ago, he has found it uncomfortable to hold a baton, and he rarely uses one. The beat of the music often courses through his whole body; he tends to pump from the knees. As one notices when one shakes his hand, an outer finger is still locked in a rigid curl, but the cues he gives are clean and expressive. And he is eloquent with his eyes.

"Trombones!" he calls out in the first movement. "Be careful not to start flat and end sharp." And to the violins, in the second movement: "Don't just accompany.



Masur at work. "I would like to be thought of as a musician without an instrument—or with the most multifaceted one of all."

The oboe solo has to stand out against something fierce!" In the scherzo, he asks for "more singing, less dramatics." In the gorgeous, cataractlike torrents of the finale, he wants more-chiseled detail and a broader sweep. "Remember where you're headed! Don't play the bar lines! . . . The fortissimi must be much more of an outburst! . . . Violoncelli, a small request. You're rushing the crescendo too much. Keep it a bit sly. . . . Just the strings! Like pins here, like pins! . . . Horns, even at fortissimo, keep it elegant. Don't scream so. It sounds really vulgar. . . . The clarinets are wonderful. Please keep it just that way."

Masur calls a break. The violins clack to the floor like June bugs shaken from a tree, and the maestro steps down to comment on the Gewandhaus and its philosophy. "In the West, there is a high demand for perfection and economy—which means there are few rehearsals and many performances. So, in rehearsals, technical perfection is the main thing. Here, we can take more time to enter into the spirit of a work. The goals: musicality, spontaneity, and an intellectual grasp of the material."

The cellist Hartmut Brauer, head of the musicians union at the Gewandhaus and a member of the orchestra for ten years, puts it another way: "I want a concert to be alive. It's okay to hear a mistake. What I care about is living people making music like musicians. You can't always deliver the technical perfection people expect on a record—but sometimes you can do better. Those are the *Sternstunden*—the hours under a lucky star. And you have to play in such a way that they remain possible."

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Leipzig is not an inviting place to visit. Thousands come each year, as they have for centuries, for the trade fairs. What might they see in an idle hour between industrial chemicals, heavy machinery, and communications technology? The Thomaskirche, where Bach worked, and where the chorus he led still sings on Fridays, Saturdays, and the high holy days. But four decades after the bombs fell, Mendelssohn's and Robert and Clara Schumann's houses, for which the city's musical institutions have vague plans, are still unfit to receive visitors. The museum—unregarded and virtually unfrequented—has a handful of masterpieces: a theatrical yet harrowing *Crucifixion*, by Cranach the Younger, with demons swirling at the foot of the cross; Hans Baldung Grien's *The Seven Ages*, the ages represented by almond-eyed females, from babe to crone; an *Isle of the Dead*, of Arnold Böcklin, more hypnotic by far than the same artist's similar canvas that hangs in the West. The zoo is a good one, with frisky tiger cubs and red pandas tumbling in their enclosures; and literary scholars can always lift a glass at Auerbach's Keller, where Goethe laid a diabolical scene in *Faust*. The newly restored Nikolaikirche, with pale-green palm leaves shooting from pillar to vault, affords an unexpected oasis of light and peace. Otherwise, the city is a jumble of old structures that survived the war and newish concrete boxes thrown up since. Local industry, inefficient car motors, and low-grade fuels fill the atmosphere with pungent fumes that sting the throat and eyes. The only (more or less) fresh air is indoors. The freshest air of all is in the Gewandhaus; the building has the luxury, rare in those parts, of high-grade climate control.

Completed in 1981, the latest Gewandhaus is the first concert hall to have risen in East Germany since the war. It perpetuates the name of the orchestra's first permanent home, in use from 1781 to 1884, upstairs at a true *Gewandhaus* (house of cloth), the place where eighteenth-century merchants gathered for the Leipzig fair would display their wares. Above the podium, the sponsors inscribed a motto from Seneca: "*Res severa verum gaudium*" (True joy is a serious business). The sentiment stuck; the orchestra took the tag along to each of its new houses. The second, the so-called New Gewandhaus, which had nothing to do with cloth merchants and was the model for Symphony Hall in Boston, was destroyed in air raids in 1944. From 1946 until the opening of the present Gewandhaus, the orchestra played in a converted meeting hall at the zoo. The current hall—not dissimilar in general layout to West Berlin's Philharmonie, where Karajan leads the Berlin Philharmonic—has an elliptical floor plan and seating that encircles the stage. It is one of those fortunate rooms where everything was done right.

Werner Seltmann, a solo bassoonist who has played with the Gewandhaus Orchestra for thirty-five years, is convinced that there is no better house anywhere. "If you are going to play music from every period, the hall must radiate calm. This is a good place to play. You know, there are always two acoustics—one for the musicians, one for the public. For the musicians, what makes it good is that you can hear one another, and that the sound doesn't change whether the hall is empty or full.

"Here, for the musician, there is hardly any difference at all in the sound with or without the audience," he continues. "That gives the conductors and the players great control. We feel it twice as much when we come back from a tour. You get used to a good thing fast.

"But there's something else. You can see

A nontraditional touch: Max Klinger's sculpture of Beethoven (1902) broods in the lobby.

"You can't always deliver the perfection of a record—but sometimes you can do better."

everyone in the hall from anywhere. On the platform, the hall feels small, intimate. That's good for the listeners, too. It makes you feel that you're taking part in the concert. We have to preserve the specific experience, the direct contact to people making music. No technical medium can ever be a substitute for that."

"We are so lucky here," chimes in Ulla Ackner, the head of the orchestra's public-relations office, who serves up hard facts with a heavy sauce of ideological self-congratulation. "We have no state interference. The mayor of Leipzig [technically the employer of all 200 musicians and 240 other employees of the self-governing Gewandhaus union] would never dream of telling Masur what to play. There is no need to woo people for their money the way we have seen in the United States. There's no dictatorship of old ladies—no offense to old ladies. Attendance is 500,000 a year, in a city of only 600,000. The audience and the orchestra have a dialectical relationship. We can and do play a lot of contemporary music. The audiences trust that if Masur has chosen something, it must have substance. We don't have to think in terms of the box office." A skeptical visitor wonders quietly how long the state would lay off if the box office did not confirm the cordiality of that dialectical relationship.

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In the rehearsals through the rest of the week, Masur continues to file and polish the Schubert. The Delius tone poems practically take care of themselves. "We'll have to let the cuckoo peek through a little more here and there," Masur smiles at the end of an early run-through that has come off with liquescent tenderness. The new Matthus score presents a real challenge. Inspired by Max Ernst's painting of the same name, *Die Windsbraut* conjures up nature as creator and destroyer in tempestuous sound images that may well make their way into the international repertoire. (Masur has already given its American premiere, with the New York Philharmonic.) The orchestra's assurance at the first reading is little short of phenomenal. The brass, which can be chancy, are in fighting form. The tuba sounds forth as firm as granite; the trumpets chase effortlessly through florid riffs. The hall quivers with the buzz of the double basses and the punch of the timpani. But Masur wants more. He is at his strictest, though never brusque. "Not so blurry! Observe the rests precisely!" Everyone sits up at attention. All of a sudden, a sharp attack. The winds scream fearlessly as the strings flood down in icy streams. Can this be the "traditional" Gewandhaus?

We'll need more sound on the harp glissando," the maestro notes. Cornelia Seehafer, looking as angelic as her instrument, answers, "I know—but if I play full-out in all the run-throughs, I'll have blisters for the concert." She is authorized to save. Even at the final rehearsal, with the composer in attendance and a television crew swarming like locusts, she takes the passage lightly. Masur does not so much as issue a reminder. ("I know I can count on her," Masur explains later in the day.) After a brief powwow with Matthus and a close look at two or three trouble spots, Masur calls a break.

When the players reconvene, it is back to Schubert and a few meticulous pitch adjustments. At the close of the quiet second movement, Masur pinches off the final chord with a delicate, sure gesture as if picking a ripe peach. "It would be lovely," he says quietly, "if the first cellos could make the passage"—and he gives the reference—"sound quite effortless, completely relaxed. I'd appreciate it if we could play that little bit again." The effect achieved, he asks for the final few pages, which proceed uninterrupted in a burst of beauty as if for the players' own sheer enjoyment. Masur bows to the orchestra. "*Toi toi toi,*" he says. "Good luck. Until this evening." The rehearsal is over, an hour ahead of schedule. Now all the Gewandhaus players need is the audience. The prospects for a *Sternstunde* are good.

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Music is a universal language, they say, and talent is a passport. Certainly it has proved so for Masur. He is in constant demand as a guest conductor the world over. Americans hear him often, with such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic and the Boston and Chicago Symphonies. Still, his first allegiance is to the Gewandhaus, where he chooses to spend six to seven solid months a year—by industry standards, an extraordinarily high proportion of time.

And the musicians? Not many of them could pull up stakes and go solo into the free world. Still, ask them what they wish for, and you will discover precious few malcontents. Heiko Schumann, a cellist and one of the orchestra's three newest recruits, cannot think of a single thing. Christian Funke, one of the three first concertmasters, can. He wishes that he could play the concertos he plays in Leipzig when the orchestra is on tour but recognizes the commercial necessity that compels presenters in international centers to demand big-name guests. Uwe Kleinsorge, an oboist and head of the entire Gewandhaus union, wishes more top-notch students would take up winds—and that Masur would use his prestige to attract more top-notch guest conductors from the West; he names Claudio Abbado, Seiji Ozawa, Zubin Mehta, Lorin Maazel. "It's a problem of money. In Salzburg I heard that Chailly gets $15,000 for a concert. We have no dollars, no West German marks. That might be our whole budget for a year." Gerhard Bosse, the retiring first concertmaster, notes that Western copyright owners of popular twentieth-century scores, including several by Richard Strauss, charge rental fees the Gewandhaus cannot afford. Hiltrud Ilg wishes she

had more time for her family and to pursue other interests: "But it's my own doing. I don't have to teach. I don't have to play chamber music. It's my own doing that I have too little time." Hartmut Brauer hopes the new Gewandhaus will stand forever: "The last one was destroyed, as you know. If that happened again, it would be . . . not so nice. I wish for peace. Everybody does, so people never say it; but maybe it's important to say it once in a while."

And, of course, all the wind and brass players want better, new instruments and all the string players want better, older instruments—except a lucky few like Gerhard Bosse, who has his magnificent Guarnerius (1694). Still, basically, everything seems to be as it has to be. There are no complaints.

How can it be so perfect? "Tell me," asks a musician out of the blue, "do you like Leipzig?" An awkward question, the visitor confesses. The Gewandhaus is a splendid place. The people there are so welcoming, so engaged with what they do. But outside . . . So little to look at. Such sullen faces. The air . . . "Yes, yes," the musician replies. "That's right. It's dirty and the air is bad.

"You asked what I wished for. I will tell you. On tours, I have been to so many wonderful places. I wish I could share that experience with my wife.

"Traveling is hard, you see. Inevitably it broadens your outlook. It's difficult if your wife, your friends, your sons and daughters never get to go away. People walk around here with a furrowed brow all the time, with a hostile, dead look in their eyes. When I come back from abroad, I really see that again. I suppose eventually it happens to me, too."

No, the visitor reflects. In this building, I have not seen that look on a single face. Now everything makes sense. What, I wonder, would Karl Marx have thought? All around lies a gray sea of foreclosed options, of guaranteed employment and no hope of excellence. The Gewandhaus is an island. Initiative counts here, and commitment, and pride in one's craft. Tradition. For a while or for a lifetime, music is the great escape. □

PORTS OF CALL

In April, the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig embarks on its first tour around the world. For the American leg of the trip, the repertoire includes works by Beethoven, Bruckner, Schubert, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler, as well as Barber's *Adagio for Strings* and the American premiere of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's Piano Concerto, with the East German pianist Peter Rösel as soloist.

The following American dates are scheduled: Wilmington, Delaware (April 22); New York (Carnegie Hall, April 23 and 24); Worcester, Massachusetts (April 25); Greenvale, Long Island (April 26); Ann Arbor, Michigan (April 28 to May 1); San Francisco (May 3 and 4); Pasadena (May 5 and 6).

From the United States, the orchestra continues to Japan and China.

ON THE RECORD

The essential recordings of Kurt Masur and the Gewandhaus Orchestra available here are the complete symphonies of Beethoven, the *Slavonic Dances* of Dvořák (two sets, opus numbers 46 and 72), and orchestral songs of Richard Strauss, including the *Four Last Songs*, with Jessye Norman the radiant soloist. These titles are all on Philips, on compact disc as well as on conventional records and cassette tapes. An outstanding set of the complete Brahms symphonies (also on Philips) is out of print but turns up quite regularly in specialty stores—and should be reissued before long on compact disc.

Travelers to the East bloc should be on the lookout for the Gewandhaus/Masur recordings on Eterna, the national label of the German Democratic Republic. The vast trove of riches includes masterly performances of Bruckner, Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Tchaikovsky.

The Gewandhaus organ is a force to be reckoned with. Under the thrusting "Spanish trumpets" stands the time-honored motto, from Seneca, "True joy is serious business."

THE GIFTS THE DUKE OF WINDSOR LAVISHED ON HIS WIFE ARE UP FOR SALE

QUEEN WALLIS'S JEWELS

BY EVE AUCHINCLOSS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENRO IZU

"THEY say that THEY liked this bracelet and that THEY want you to wear it ALWAYS in the evening. THEY have told Mr. Van Cleef but are very sad THEY cant make christen or write tonight. A boy loves a girl more and more and more." This besotted gibberish was written in 1936 by the forty-one-year-old king of England to the woman he loved. It accompanied a box containing yet another of the jewels he had been heaping on Mrs. Ernest Simpson since his first gift, of a diamond and emerald charm, in 1934.

No one who met the couple at dinner parties or in nightclubs could fail to understand the dazzling metaphor of the prince of Wales's, and then king's, blind infatuation with this twice-married American woman: the jewels that blazed in her ears, on her throat, wrists, fingers, and lean bosom. "Mrs. Simpson was glittering, and dripped in new jewels and clothes," wrote Lady Diana Cooper. Another observer found it surprising, considering that Mrs. Simpson dressed so simply, "to see that she wore such a mass of dressmaker's jewels. At that they all screamed with laughter, explaining that all the jewels were real." One evening she was seen "literally smothered in rubies," and later, at the opera, "in a simple black dress with a green bodice and dripping with emeralds—her collection of jewels is the talk of London."

It is the talk of the town once more, for on April 2 and 3, a year after the former Mrs. Simpson's death, in her ninetieth year, the collection is to be sold at Sotheby's in Geneva. For one of the greatest sales of the last half century, there was bound to be intense competition among the auction houses. Sotheby's won out by nothing more labyrinthine than charm. Maître Suzanne Blum, who handled the duchess of Windsor's affairs after the duke's death, received gently courteous letters from the Sotheby's Geneva jewelry expert, Nicholas Rayner, offering help should she ever need advice about disposing of the Windsor jewels. When a face-to-face meeting took place, there was no further question of who should sell her client's treasures.

The important pieces will be sold at 9:00 P.M. on Thursday, the rest at four-thirty on Friday afternoon. There will be a live linkup with New York, where people in the auction room will bid as slides are projected of pieces they had an earlier chance to examine at first hand, in March, while the jewels were on display in New York. Prices will be high. A small bracelet worth, say, $10,000, may well fetch two or three times as much. The proceeds will go to France, where the Windsors had few friends and whose language they scarcely spoke, but which gave them a tax haven and a sumptuous home rent free—in particular, to the Pas-

Above: An emerald, ruby, and diamond brooch (Cartier, Paris, 1957) with the royal "WE" monogram formed from their initials. Opposite: An articulated onyx and diamond panther bracelet (Cartier, Paris, 1952), which can also assume stalking position.

Institute, which now devotes itself to AIDS research. Americans, among whom the duke and duchess were most at home during their long exile, are likely to be the biggest buyers.

By the time the prince of Wales was king, in 1936, his love affair had become what H. L. Mencken called "the greatest news story since the Resurrection." A divorce was hastily arranged for Mrs. Simpson so that she could be crowned as Queen Wallis. "Why shouldn't the king be allowed to marry his cutie?" Churchill had asked, and Noël Coward perspicaciously replied, "Because England doesn't wish for a Queen Cutie." In December of 1936 King Edward VIII abdicated in favor of his brother, and after the crowning of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, in May 1937, the man who had been prince of Wales, king of England, and was now duke of Windsor married his beloved. The marriage was to last thirty-five years, but the duchess once confided, "You have no idea how hard it is to live out a great romance!"

Wallis Warfield Spencer Simpson Windsor had grown up in Baltimore in genteel poverty and, until the king began to shower riches on her, had scrimped. When she was presented at court in 1931, the year she first met the prince, her finery was mostly borrowed, though of her jewels she wrote to her Aunt Bessie, "I am buying an aquamarine & crystal ornament and large aquamarine cross. . . . imitations but effective." When the affair with the prince of Wales was well under way, she wrote her aunt, "I have 2 more bracelets and a small diamond that sticks into my hair. Smart. Ernest says the insurance is getting steep!"

As jewels poured from the royal cornucopia, her letters home ceased to keep track. She reported "a lovely pin with 2 large square emeralds for Xmas" of 1934. The next spring she could boast of "some lovely jewellery to show when we meet. Not many things but awfully nice stones." And she noted sarcastically, "It's clever of the US papers to know who gave it to me."

POPPERFOTO

Both she and the king rejoiced in her displaying the new jewels to let the world know what she meant to him, though she told the press, "It is true, I have a few nice pieces, but not anything to compare with what really rich women possess."

After the abdication, there was a new and compelling reason to keep Mrs. Simpson, soon to be duchess of Windsor, beautifully bejeweled. The king had not managed to make things right; she would never be queen of England and wear a tiara after all. He was desperate to make up to her for his failure. Throughout their marriage he went on bedecking her with jewels fit for a queen, just as, ignoring his brother's refusal to make her a royal highness, he demanded that the duchess be addressed as if she were one. The woman who not long before had bought dresses for $59.50 was now on the best-dressed list, setting a severe style that made an

Above: The duke and duchess of Windsor in wedding attire. Right: Diamonds and rubies by Van Cleef & Arpels. Bracelet inscribed "Hold tight," 1936. Necklace, "My Wallis from her David," 1936. Earclips. Two invisibly set feathers: a Christmas present, 1936.

appropriate background to her eye-boggling diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires.

Last winter at Sotheby's in Geneva, these treasures, packed in plastic bags and laid in drawers, had the air of articles to be called in as evidence in a court of law. Huge cocktail rings and earrings to match looked like costume jewelry, but weren't. A gold-mail bib necklace covered in emerald and ruby beads could have been stage jewelry for a production of *Aida*. There was a platinum bangle engraved "For our first anniversary," in his childish handwriting, with two diamond-encrusted rubies the size of taillights. The wide diamond bracelet of silken flexibility by Van Cleef, buckled with forty-five very fine sapphires and marked "For our contract," verges on the grotesque. She wore it on her right wrist on her wedding day. On her left wrist she wore a more appealing, modest diamond chain hung with nine crosses made of precious stones, each engraved to commemorate an event in their intertwined lives. This was one of her favorite pieces. "The crosses are crosses I've had to bear," she explained. "Each one stands for something. . . . Rather sentimental in this hardboiled world, isn't it?" There is a touching gold Cartier bangle engraved "For a happier New Year 1.I.41," and a silver locket with a picture of them both, given at Easter 1947: "All the things I said each year in the other locket 1935–1946 More & more & more." A charm representing a slipper and a Buddha is marked "Our Mr. Loo 7.VIII.34 6.VIII.37," memorializing a beloved cairn terrier named Slipper (also Mr. Loo), given her by the prince of Wales in 1934, that died of a viper's bite shortly after their marriage.

She had a menagerie of jeweled beasts. Most remarkable are the great cats designed by the brilliant Jeanne Toussaint of Cartier: among them, a brooch composed of a diamond-and-enamel panther crouching on an enormous sapphire, and panther and leopard bracelets so beautifully articulated that every part of the body moves with the wearer. While some of the other important pieces seem misbegotten, these cats are masterpieces.

The necklace that the king gave her for her fortieth birthday, on June 19, 1936, marked "My Wallis from David," is two twisted ribbons of diamonds and rubies, with a tassel of rubies. A platinum bracelet set with rubies and diamonds, marked "Hold tight 27.III.36," is the one "THEY liked." There are enormous canary-diamond clips. She was avid for canary diamonds and competed for them against women with deeper purses. When Jayne Wrightsman outbid her for an especially brilliant specimen, it put an end to their friendship. There is a diamond of thirty-two carats, set in a ring, that once belonged to Evalyn Walsh McLean, owner of the unlucky Hope diamond; it may go for a million dollars, though the duchess thought nothing of wearing it about the house in Paris. There is a lovely brooch representing the prince of Wales's feathers in diamonds. Then there are her pearls, two separate strands, one natural, one cultured, each bead the size of a gooseberry, with a large detachable central pendant.

The diamond necklace set by Cartier with five pear-shaped emeralds as big as gumdrops and hung with an emerald pendant—which, like many of the big stones, came from Winston—is, on the other hand, more mineralogy than jewelry, as the duke di Verdura, whose jewels she sometimes bought, would have said. The 19.77-carat emerald set in the ring the king gave her to celebrate her divorce from Mr. Simpson is one of the finest emeralds that Nicholas Rayner of Sotheby's has ever seen. It was originally set in platinum and was remounted during the 1940s in yellow gold. Both mounts are in the sale.

The Windsors were both passionate about being up-to-date, so a great deal of setting and resetting was done. It is still a question how big a hand he had in the design of his wife's jewels. Most of her Van Cleef pieces are part of the firm's standard repertoire, but Sotheby's has several designs that Van Cleef submitted to the king for the fortieth-birthday necklace, none of which shows it as it is. Can the king (as he then was) have made specific alterations? He took a keen interest in jewelry long before he met Wallis, lavishing superb pieces on his first mistress, the discreet Freda Dudley Ward, who made no public show of them. A cartoon of the 1920s shows him surrounded by importunate women, making his way into Cartier on the Rue de la Paix.

The second sale, at four-thirty on April 3, should cast a curious spell of its own, not by the grandeur of the stones but by the poignancy of intimate trifles. Among these items—they will go for up to ten times their actual value—will be a copper arthritis bracelet framed in gold from Cartier; a Gucci wallet, its clasp an intertwined WW surmounted by a crown; combs, cigarette lighters, lipstick cases, and gold necessaries still containing old powder puffs and strange purplish-pink powder; and a black suede belt with gold coins and a waist measurement of twenty-seven inches.

A few mysteries, however, still drift about the jewels. From the beginning of the prince of Wales's courtship of Mrs. Simpson, it was rumored that among the gorgeous plethora of gifts were emeralds left him by his grandmother Queen Alexandra, which strictly speaking were crown, not private, property. "Even if they were his to give her, my dear," one woman complained, "—which they are *not*—should she be flashing them in nightclubs?"

An event of 1946 seemed to confirm the rumors. The Windsors had left Paris to visit England as guests of the earl and countess of Dudley, outside London. With them they brought a trunk containing the duchess's jewels as well as the duke's gold Fabergé boxes and Queen Alexandra's unset emeralds. The duchess refused to lock the trunk in the strong room, preferring to put it under a bed. During the visit a jewel was delivered to them from Van Cleef in Paris that had not been ready when they left—a bird of paradise incorporating a large sapphire. Late one afternoon, when only the servants and a detective on duty were in the house, burglars entered and made off with the trunk's contents, though later the duke's Fabergé boxes turned up on a windowsill (they are not in the Sotheby's sale) and odd earrings were found on a golf

Above: Lipstick case; cigarette case ("David from Wallis Christmas 1935") and compact, each with a map on the exterior showing the route of a premarital yacht trip. Opposite: Sapphire and diamond jarretière *bracelet (Van Cleef), worn at the wedding, inscribed "For our contract 18.V.37."*

course. No dog had barked; no one had heard a sound. No clue was ever discovered; no jewel, it would seem, was ever retrieved. It was after this event that the duchess irritably told a reporter, "A fool would know that with tweeds and daytime clothes one wears gold and that with evening clothes one wears platinum!"

The duke's first remark after the burglary, their hostess (now Laura, duchess of Marlborough) remembers, was, "Now you see how stupid it was to have that bird delivered from Van Cleef!" Before the theft, says Laura Marlborough, the couple had been discussing Queen Alexandra's emeralds, which they intended to have set in Paris. Why had they brought them, in that case? For the same reason, perhaps, that they refused to have the trunk locked up safely in the strong room—because of the desire to have these talismans always close at hand.

Suzy Menkes, author of *The Royal Jewels,* says that Queen Alexandra's emeralds were private rather than crown jewels and came to her either as a gift from her sister the empress of Russia or from her husband, Edward VII, whose tour of India in 1875 netted him an Aladdin's treasure from the maharajas. At Alexandra's death they went not to the prince of Wales but to her daughter, after whose death they were sold to Garrard, from whom, through Cartier, the prince bought them. No matter how acquired, they presumably disappeared in the theft along with everything else. But is Laura Marlborough correct in believing, as the Windsors claimed, that they had lost *everything?* A list of stolen jewelry published by the assessors includes only ten items but concludes with the heady words "et cetera." Among the ten are none of great value—no sapphire-bodied bird of paradise, no emeralds, except for a ring. What might "et cetera" comprise?

In *The Windsor Story,* by Charles J. V. Murphy, who wrote the duke's and duchess's autobiographies for them, and J. Bryan, III, this is stated: "A member of the Duke's staff remembers that the Duchess's collection had been insured for $1,600,000. This was rather less than its replacement value, not to mention the additional historical value residing in that part of it which had belonged to Queen Alexandra. The difference was so substantial, indeed, that it was not reconciled until the underwriters and the Duke's solicitors had wrangled long and bitterly. The Duke's fear that leakage of the true worth of his gifts to the former Mrs. Simpson would excite curiosity about his remittances from the Crown worried him almost as much as the prospect of being out of pocket. At the end, the underwriters were generous; they paid for copies to replace the lost pieces; and they reinsured the collection, restored and augmented, for $3,200,000 (double the original appraisal), provided that at least half of it remain in a bank vault at all times."

A rumor circulated for years that the mysterious theft had been engineered by the royal family in order to retrieve the Alexandra emeralds. Whoever the thief, if the Windsors indeed lost everything, how do the jewels of the 1930s and early 1940s come to be in the Sotheby's sale? Are they copies of the originals made after 1946? Or were they bought back from the thieves with the insurance money? The fact that the markings on some of the important jewels in the sale prove that they are the original pieces lends credence to the latter speculation.

There are other puzzles. The duchess of Windsor, like other chic women of her day, was a fan of Fulco di Verdura's. He told a friend the story of how she had bought from him in Paris a topaz rose. She wore it, telling people it was her own design, but after a while returned to the shop, asking to trade it for a thistle, one of the emblems in her husband's regalia. "I would love to oblige you," Verdura told her, "but alas, I can't, for everything in this shop is designed by me and I understand that *you* designed this brooch." Where are her Verduras today? The only item in the Sotheby's sale is a heart-shaped platinum box with a large blue beryl set in the lid. Again, what has become of a forty-nine-carat canary diamond ring from Winston that the duchess doted on?

One possible answer is they are among the twenty-five bequests the duchess of Windsor drew up before she sank into a twilight in 1975. On her list were Princess Alexandra, the duchess of Kent, and the countess of Romanones, an American, who received a very fine bracelet, with a four-line inscription, beginning, "For *Their* third anniversary 12 March 1936." Third anniversary of *what?* one wonders. There may have been a clue in the following two lines, "too intimate," the countess says, to be disclosed, though she admitted to one interviewer that they allude to a bathtub.

As the love story of the century, that of the duke and duchess of Windsor is a rum affair. He was a middle-aged Peter Pan (as Ernest Simpson pointed out at the beginning of the affair) who had never had a mother's love. He found his needs fulfilled in the masterful Mrs. Simpson and remained utterly and abjectly in love with her to the end. In her way she loved him too, no doubt, though a guest at their wedding wrote, "If she occasionally showed a glimmer of softness, took his arm, looked at him as though she loved him, one would warm toward her, but . . . the effect is of a woman unmoved by the infatuated love of a younger man. Let's hope that she lets up in private with him otherwise it must be grim."

The duke of Windsor's will had specified that should he survive the duchess the jewels be broken up before being sold. He wanted nobody else to wear these precious tokens of his love. Sotheby's and the Pasteur Institute have reason to be glad that he was the first to go. □

Eve Auchincloss is an editor of Connoisseur. *Special research for this article was done in London and Geneva by Mary McDougall.*

Opposite: Diamond bracelet (Cartier, 1935) with gem-set crosses, inscribed to commemorate key events. Above: Emerald and diamond necklace mounted by Cartier, Paris, 1960, with emerald and diamond pendant by Harry Winston that can be worn as a clip. Emerald and diamond ring, to celebrate the divorce and engagement (Cartier). Below: Flamingo clip designed by Jeanne Toussaint (Cartier, 1940).

ON ITS FORTIETH BIRTHDAY, THE HOUSE OF DIOR CELEBRATES ITS CREATOR'S GENIUS

LOOKING BACK AT THE NEW LOOK

BY CHARLES BRICKER

"After the narrow, mingy styles of the war, the New Look came as an explosion of fabric and petticoats, everything everybody'd been denied all those years." Babs Simpson, in 1947 a fashion editor at *Harper's Bazaar,* remembers how everything at the magazine stopped when word flew back across the Atlantic from Editor in Chief Carmel Snow to save plenty of space to cover what she called the New Look: Christian Dior's first collection. Dior lived on for only ten more years, but what he accomplished in that all-too-brief period was so extraordinary that the Musée des Arts de la Mode, in Paris, is giving him a retrospective, which opened last month. At the same time, the house he founded turned forty and celebrated the New Look, which launched it, with a weekend of luxurious fanfare in its newly enlarged Avenue Montaigne headquarters. Festivities included the unveiling of Marc Bohan's fall–winter prêt-à-porter collection, "The New Look Revisited."

Dior himself had chosen a more romantic name for his spring line. He called it "Corolle," to harmonize with his vision of postwar women as *femmes-fleurs* swathed in skirts belling wide from rounded hips below stem-thin waists—the antithesis of the clunky, mannish silhouette that had dominated fashion since 1940.

LOUISE DAHL-WOLFE/COURTESY STALEY-WISE GALLERY, N.Y.

Christian Dior at home in the country.

Throughout 1947, fallout from the New Look explosion drifted onto more than the fashion pages. In the autumn, when Sally Kirkland moved from *Vogue* to write about fashion for *Life,* she was struck by Dior's capacity for monopolizing world news. "The guys would say, 'What's the new look *this* week, Sally?' The idea of an overnight shift, absolutely putting your whole wardrobe out of style, was definitely news—and, to some, upsetting."

Dior's fast trick was not the sleight of hand it seemed. Part of his genius lay in his ability to *know,* even if they didn't, that women wanted to discard the exigencies of wartime for a return to almost Victorian ideas of femininity. Dior had dusted off quite an old look, in fact, and given it postwar polish, yet beneath a certain deceptive sleekness these clothes were almost fetishistically satisfying in their feminine complications. Like other smart women, Evangeline Bruce, in her role as ambassador's wife, submitted elegantly to the New Look: "One *expected* to be corseted."

Françoise Giroud, former editor in chief of *Elle* and twice a French government minister, is writing a book about Dior and the "totally sensational" advent of the New Look. "It was a sociological phenomenon," she feels, "that went far beyond fashion. Coming after so long a period of restriction, it was a kind of *volupté.*"

Mme. Giroud makes a distinction between the clothes and the man. "This voluptuousness wasn't reflected in Dior himself; he didn't at all resemble the popular idea of a homosexual dress designer. He had the air of a provincial bourgeois,

Left: In the Place de la Concorde in the fall of 1947, Dior's elegant tailleur *with tiny jacket and voluminous skirt attracts all eyes*

WILLY MAYWALD/A.D.A.G.P. (2)

Left: A tailleur habillé *for spring 1950, with horseshoe collar and petal skirt. Right:* A tailleur *from the "A" line of 1955.*

which is what he was. He lacked éclat and, oddly, magnetism. The first time he came to New York the reporters were disappointed. He looked just like anybody.

"Dress design wasn't his vocation. I think the couture was really an expression of other things buried deep within him: his horror of our times and everything machine-made and mechanical. The New Look was a step backward, not only in the appearance of the dresses but in the way they were made." Virtually all models were stiffly lined with tulle, taffeta, organza; most evening dresses were boned, and a boned corset was de rigueur for day wear.

Yet as friends, buyers, and press gathered in Dior's salon on the chilly winter morning of February 12, no one was sure what to expect. The couturier was not an unknown quantity by any means, but this was his first independent effort. At forty-two, he had been a presence on the fringes of the couture since his twenties.

He hailed from a Norman family of rich and hardheaded industrialists who manufactured fertilizers, and as a young man Christian lived in comfort. His circle included gifted personalities from the arts; for a time he helped run an art gallery. "He was not the star of his circle," Mme. Giroud points out, "despite charm, intelligence, kindness, and even a certain gaiety. He knew all about art, he'd studied music, he'd even composed a ballet. But he abandoned composition when he realized he would never be a great composer. He was an amateur. But as things turned out, he found a way to express himself."

When the Depression forced Dior to make a living, a designer friend persuaded him to submit fashion sketches to couturiers and milliners. Within a couple of years he was selling his designs regularly and writing for *Le Figaro*'s weekly fashion page. In 1938, the couturier Robert Piguet took him on as a house designer.

The war intervened, with mobilization, discharge, and brief exile to the south of France. In 1942, Dior returned to Paris and a job at the house of Lucien Lelong, where he worked side by side with Pierre Balmain. When Balmain left Lelong to found his own house, Dior, now forty-one, began to reflect, Why not me? Just then, he was approached by Marcel Boussac, who, in addition to cotton mills and racehorses, owned a faltering couture house called Gaston. He wanted someone to put Gaston back on its feet. Instead, Dior persuaded Boussac to set him up in a new, small house for an exclusive clientele.

Taking with him Raymonde Zehnacker, a veteran of twenty-five years at Lelong, Dior set to work in September 1946. Mme. Raymonde became his indispensable *femme à tout faire* and a lifelong confidante. Her flair, combined with the technical expertise of Marguerite Carré, a veteran of Patou, ensured that the house's workrooms would transmute Dior's vision into faultless reality.

As important as Mmes. Raymonde and Marguerite, though not a technician, was Mme. Bricard. Mitza Bricard came from ten years at Molyneux to serve as Dior's *arbiter elegantiae* and muse. Babs Simpson describes her as "extraordinary": "I don't know whether she was or not, but she looked like the essence of the most luxuriously kept woman, always smothered in pearls and perfume—slightly but not excessively overdressed. And she made ravishing hats."

By February 12 all was ready. The salon, at 30 Avenue Montaigne, rustled with well-mannered suspense. Then the first of Dior's half dozen *jeunes filles* emerged, wearing "Acacia." By the time "Chérie" appeared, the audience was in his hands: eighty meters of white silk faille, constituting what Dior called his "most deliberately" New Look dress, swung in myriad pleats from the mannequin's nineteen-inch waist. The New Look, postwar fashion, and the House of Dior were launched in simultaneous glory.

"In 1947, I was only six years old," says Marie-Pierre Colle, daughter of one of Dior's art-gallery partners, "but Christian gave me and my sister Béatrice dolls dressed in the New Look. He made my first communion dress too. We called him Tio Christian, Uncle Christian, and after my father died, he became a father to us."

At once gourmet, gourmand, and compulsive eater, Dior regularly took the mud baths at Montecatini, near Florence, as a cure. "When he went there in 1957," says Mlle. Colle, "Mme. Raymonde and I were with him for two weeks. The night he died, October 24, we played canasta until very late. I'd just gone up to my room, when suddenly—*clac!*—it happened. A heart attack. For him it was a peaceful death, but for the world a great loss.

The quintessential New Look: "Bar," spring 1947. Over padded hips and corseted waist, a pink shantung jacket and black wool skirt.

"I was sixteen, and my dresses had always come from Dior. They still do. Much as you don't change dentists, I've remained faithful to the house. It has changed a lot, but I know the people and the workshops; I know they love me and will fit me well. At the moment I have several Bohans, very classic, very feminine."

The New Look was perhaps too complexly structured to qualify as "classic," but among Christian Dior's bourgeois virtues were a love of moderation, a dislike of ostentation, and a respect for craftsmanship. The writer Susan Mary Alsop tells this story: "When I lived in Paris I had a very rich friend in New York who loved to dress his beautiful wife at Dior. I was glad to act as intermediary. My friend ordered three beaded dresses. I said to Dior, 'Isn't it exciting, an order for three beaded dresses!' Dior was appalled. 'Stop the order and tell him to take just one. Beading is a minor French art, and I don't expect to make money on it. I do these dresses for the sake of the women who embroider them, but the idea of anyone's having three is absurd!' My friend in New York didn't pay the slightest attention."

Olivia de Havilland began going to Dior when she came to live in France, in the midfifties: "I never went anywhere else, though I haven't been for ten years. I sup-

LILLIAN BASSMAN

pose some of my American friends still go to the couture houses; few of my French friends do. It takes a lot of money."

Three of Miss de Havilland's films remain to document the three epochs of the House of Dior. "In 1956, for *The Ambassador's Daughter*, all the clothes were by Christian Dior. In 1959, for *Libel*, they were by Saint Laurent. And in 1962, during Marc Bohan's first season, we chose his things for *Light in the Piazza*."

Today, nearly thirty years after Dior's death, the force of his achievement continues to fuel the house's commercial vitality, which rests on a complex licensing system. Since Dior's name remains one of a few instantly recognizable fashion symbols, its owners license its use to some 200 companies, for products ranging from stockings, lingerie, and men's shirts to baby clothes and bed sheets. (Dior perfumes, though created at the time of the New Look, haven't belonged to the house since 1972.) No sacrilege is involved. Christian Dior was ashamed of neither the marketplace nor the profits to be reaped there: it was he, after all, who approved the licensing system, beginning with men's ties, as early as 1949.

The Dior exhibition at the Musée des Arts de la Mode is limited to Christian Dior's own career as a designer, a decade distinguished by constant and subtle evolution. Before 1947 was out, he modulated the "Corolle" line into the caught-up skirts and flyaway jackets of "Envol," and intensified "Envol" into the gathered folds and asymmetric detailing of "Zig-zag." By the midfifties, he had further refined his shapes in the "H," "A," and "Y" lines.

Elisabeth Flory is an art historian whom the Musée des Arts de la Mode delegated to the House of Dior four years ago to assure the gigantic task of researching the Dior show. She ransacked and reorganized Dior house archives stashed helter-skelter in cellars and attics, and engaged in an international hunt for mint-condition Dior clothes. "Forty of our 130 exhibits come from America. Evening dresses from the U.S. are generally in much better shape; their owners wore them once or twice and put them carefully away. French customers always tried to get as much wear out of a dress as possible."

Her favorite Christian Dior look, "speaking sentimentally, not as a historian," is 1953's "Tulipe" line: "Much simpler, less chichi, much finer and more supple after the rigid architecture of the New Look." From the depths of her encyclopedic knowledge, Mme. Flory can confirm the date of a collection with computer speed and accuracy: "No, the 'H' line was autumn–winter 1954–55."

The "H," "A," and "Y" lines, introduced during Saint Laurent's first years as an assistant at Dior—1954 and 1955—were forerunners of the easier shapes he developed on his own after Dior's death, beginning with the roomy "Trapeze" line, in 1958. Nancy White, Carmel Snow's niece, had just taken over as editor in chief of *Harper's Bazaar*. "As I recall, that first collection was okay so far as the house was concerned, and Christian had believed in Yves so much that they gave him free rein. They may have expected a carbon copy, but that's not what they got."

Then came July 1960. "We had Avedon photograph Audrey Hepburn in Saint Laurent's gray flannel dress with the bubble at the bottom, a very good idea that is still around—it was very influential." But not, at the time, with the French. And the same collection featured Saint Laurent's notorious crocodile motorcycle jacket. "The jacket and the bubbly silhouette stood out as new and young," says Sally Kirkland, who had the jacket photographed in the midst of a fleet of Harley-Davidsons. "They were out on a limb; you didn't expect them from a couture house."

Saint Laurent's induction into the French army that autumn and his subsequent nervous breakdown provided the House of Dior with an excuse not to rehire him in 1961. As a replacement, they brought Marc Bohan over from Dior-London. "Marc was well established," Nancy White recalls. "The British press was crazy about him." And for the house, an experienced man of thirty-four was a safer bet.

Bohan has in fact lent Dior stability, even if his name has never had the potency of Christian Dior's or Saint Laurent's. Mme. Flory, however, likes his clothes, "particularly the suits from the early sixties, very simply tailored, rather pared-down, soberer than Saint Laurent."

"These days," Nancy White says, "Marc does very much what the world expects of him—not the press but his customers." He turns out two haute couture collections a year for the couple of hundred women who can still afford to roam from house to house snapping up $3,000 blouses and $8,000 day dresses. But the couture also serves as a laboratory in which Bohan can develop prêt-à-porter ideas and guidelines for licensees.

As artistic director, he has a design staff

The romantic essence of the New Look: a pirate hat designed by Mme. Bricard (1949).

HENRI CARTIER BRESSON/MAGNUM

who prepare dossiers of texts, drawings, photos, and fabric samples that offer licensees a précis of things to come. Final approval of these trends is collegial, and Bernard Arnault, head of the Ferret-Savinel real-estate conglomerate, who now owns Dior, often has a say.

Christian Dior's own couture designs may well have gone unmodified by business considerations, but he guided the house into ready-to-wear in 1948, when he established Christian Dior–New York. Even then, things had begun to change for the haute couture. Princess Charlotte de Faucigny-Lucinge, widow of the writer Alfred Fabre-Luce, remembers the first suit she ordered in 1947: "wool, with a short jacket and a long, wide skirt of unpressed pleats—kilometers of fabric and extremely well finished." But Mme. Fabre-Luce, like many of her French friends, began to look for her clothes elsewhere as the sixties got under way. "I couldn't face interminable fittings. Of course, there was an undoubted aesthetic loss. You rarely see anyone in the street who rises above the ordinary, now."

It was with Dior's amiable cooperation that line-for-line copies of models from the Paris collection were made available at Ohrbach's within a month after they were introduced. The store executive Rose Wells Bing had Seventh Avenue manufacturers like Ben Zuckerman and Seymour Fox run them up in the original fabrics. "They were labeled 'Monsieur X,' but everyone knew. You couldn't tell the difference," Mrs. Bing says proudly. And among those who bought these copies every season were some of the very women, like Evangeline Bruce, who had been among Dior's first customers on the Avenue Montaigne.

LOUISE DAHL-WOLFE/COURTESY STALEY-WISE GALLERY, N.Y.

"Schumann," a vaporous robe du soir *of 1950—white tulle, lace, pink peonies.*

Today Christian Dior–New York is presided over by Colombe Nicholas, who has a Dior-gray eyrie twenty floors above Seventh Avenue. She has her own design staff to guide U.S. licensees and make modifications to Paris directives when these run contrary to American market studies. She prides herself on being "keeper of the flame of our number-one and only asset, the name Christian Dior."

In Paris, where the flame is also kept alight, Marc Bohan stresses with saturnine bluntness, "Dior is a trademark, like Porsche." He prides himself on looking forward, never back, and certainly his own couture collections reflect the way customers live now, not a retro preoccupation with what their mothers wore.

The last word about the evolution of the New Look (Dior himself created twenty-one lines in all) may never be written, either sentimentally or historically. The subject is too rich. But the interior designer Jean-François Daigre has a decisive point or two to make about the *esprit Dior,* which he feels vanished from the house when the man did. "That was only natural," he says, but you sense deep regret.

Daigre came to Dior in 1954 with Yves Saint Laurent, both fresh from couture school. He stayed with the house fifteen years, first designing dresses, later in charge of decorating the boutique and the windows to make better use of what his boss perceived as a flair for the theater. "There was a whole band of young enthusiasts in the house then," Daigre remembers, "and there was a marvelous family atmosphere, which sprang from his exceptional gift for relationships. Christian Dior shaped my life." Daigre pauses. "He was what people in the seventeenth century called an *honnête homme.*" The women who wore his clothes use a more banal adjective to describe him: "adorable." □

Charles Bricker wrote about Roger Vivier for the December 1986 issue of Connoisseur.

COFFIN/COURTESY DIOR IN VOGUE

Opposite: "May," an embroidered organdy robe du soir *(1953), being fitted on the model Alla. Left: The underpinnings of the New Look of 1947—padding and tight lacing*

THE MAN WHO LAUGHED AT FAME

BUT IT CAME TO DIEGO GIACOMETTI ANYWAY

BY MICHAEL PEPPIATT

Anybody today who really wants the best original contemporary furniture or decorative accessories will try to get some of those made by the late Diego Giacometti. The retiring younger brother of the artist Alberto Giacometti, he was virtually unrecognized until the last decade of his life. The culminating commission of his career was for the tables, chairs, and chandeliers in the Picasso Museum, in Paris, which opened in September 1985, two months after Diego's death. That job was a huge success. It bred more interest, and now the Diego look is the talk of the home-furnishings industry (see box). How would he have reacted to his posthumous fame? Michael Peppiatt, a frequent contributor to this magazine, knew him and wrote this portrait just before Diego went to the hospital to have what was to have been a routine eye operation.—*Editor*

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"What's that?" Diego demands, dredging something formless from the sauce on his plate. His craggily noble face has grown stern. "I think it's veal," I say.

"Veal!" Diego snorts. "Veal is *blanquette de veau*. That's a real dish. Not this nouvelle cuisine nonsense. What have you got?" I peer into my plate. "I think it's beef," I say. "Beef!" Diego snorts. "You want a *boeuf bourguignon*. That's real food. All you get nowadays is decoration."

Only the claret seems to find favor. Another bottle is brought. "This used to be a good restaurant before it got so fancy," Diego continues, on a note of gruff triumph, carefully sweeping bread crumbs onto the floor. "Alberto and I used to come here often. You could get *boeuf bourguignon* then, you know," he says, glancing at me suddenly with amusement.

All the talk so far has centered on food and drink.

"Diego," I venture, "I like real food, too. But what I really want to talk to you about is your furniture—your sculpture."

"But there's nothing to say about it," Diego says, for the third time this evening. His hands rise in a gesture of helplessness.

"But Diego," I insist, "I can't just tell the readers we both like *boeuf bourguignon* and leave it at that. No one will ever ask me to write an article again."

He smiles at this. At eighty-two he still has an expression of childlike candor. And now, quite visibly, the game is called cat and mouse.

"Oh, you'll manage, you'll think of something," he says easily. "It must be marvelous to write, to have words just coming to you like that."

A hundred yards down the street in this agreeably crumbling, villagelike *quartier* behind Montparnasse, Diego's little shed of a workshop lies locked up for the night. Early tomorrow morning he'll be there, in workman's clothes and a battered felt hat, pottering around, drawing a little, modeling a little—doing all the things he thinks it unimportant to talk about. It's clear he takes the fame that has come to him so late in life with a big pinch of salt. When I arrived in his modest living quarters, just behind the workshop, he was thumbing, not for the first time, through a glossy magazine full of glamorous color photos of his cramped, dusty living room. "That's meant to be this place," he said, jabbing a calloused finger at the brightly lit, wide-angle shots, then laughing in disbelieving glee.

Why, indeed, should he take seriously the fuss now being made of him? For sixty years of his long life, Diego was simply the "other" Giacometti, the one in the background, who helped his famous brother with the more manual tasks—building armatures for the sculpture, preparing the molds for casting, then applying the various coats of patina until the bronze took on the right finish. He became almost literally a second pair of hands for Alberto, with whom he worked, day after day, for forty years. The rapport between the two brothers was so strong that they rarely needed to communicate by words. Nothing testifies better to their deeply instinctive understanding than Alberto's busts and portraits of Diego. Alberto began making them, under the watchful eye of their artist father, when they were boys together in the Swiss village of Stampa and continued from their arrival in Paris, in the 1920s, until he died, in 1966.

It has been said that Diego's own creativity could not develop while his brother was alive. Alberto's obsessive vision and relentless drive certainly dominated the relationship; and only a man of Diego's unusual unassertiveness could have borne so secondary a role for so long. Nevertheless Diego had, as he says with charac-

The Giacometti menagerie. In Diego's workshop (above), carved owls, frogs, and assorted domestic beasts await final placement on a piece of furniture or sculpture. Below: Detail of La Promenade des Amis, *made in 1983 for his Paris home.*

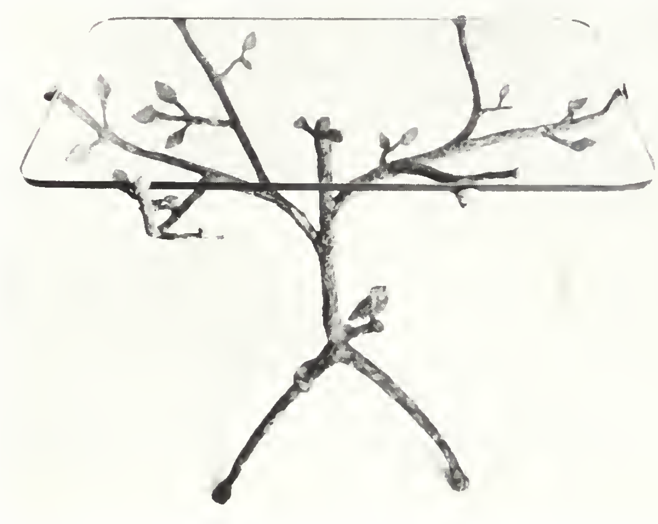
teristic diffidence, "always thought of making objects." And from 1950 onwards, whenever the growing volume of work for his brother permitted, he designed a great variety of furniture, from tables and chairs to lamps and chandeliers, from staircases to door handles, usually made to order for well-known interior decorators, art collectors, or museumlike institutions, such as the Fondation Maeght, in the south of France. After Alberto's death, Diego found himself not only with time on his hands but also at liberty to indulge his own sculptural fantasy—which the presence of a forceful, famous brother had inhibited. While he continued to incorporate the sparse tautness of his brother's vision, the furniture took on new accents of pure playfulness that were Diego's alone.

Though this master craftsman has lived at the hub of Europe's intellectual and artistic life for sixty years, his imagination remains rooted in the mountain-encircled valley in Switzerland where he grew up. Surrealism and existentialism, the conversation of Sartre and Picasso, seem nothing to him compared to a

ANDREJ REISER/BILDERBERG

y[illegible] spent wandering the rugged countryside and getting to know the ways of animals—of watching the dogs and horses, the owls, frogs, and foxes that now move freely among the knotty branches of his furniture. They people Diego's mind and spring up so naturally in his sculpture because, a lifetime later, it is still with animals that he feels most at ease. "I used to keep a fox in the studio," he says shyly, as if revealing an intimate secret. "It was an extraordinary animal, always playing, particularly at being dead. I used to come in, and the fox would be lying inert on the studio floor. I'd pick it up and it would pretend to be dead, with its head falling to one side and its tongue hanging out. So I'd put it back on the floor and turn around and pretend to start working. Then suddenly the fox would leap onto my back. I'd liked having it around, even though it smelled very bad. But one day it wandered off, I don't know where. Where would a fox go in Paris?"

Two cats—one of whom has the run of his living quarters, the other, of the studio—now keep Diego company; and among his happiest inventions is a birdbath held by a Jeeves-like feline in



ANDREJ REISER/BILDERBERG (2)

sleek bronze. A shy and extremely modest man, he seems at his happiest in this whimsical menagerie, producing an ostrich whose basketlike back serves to hold its own egg, or a tiny filigree stag so realistic it seems to be sniffing the air—as well as any number of wise owls, squat toads, and solid mice. A more public project of special note has been the commission to design furniture for the new Musée Picasso, in its splendid, seventeenth-century Paris mansion. One of the roles of Diego's tables, chairs, and chandeliers is to serve as a stylistic hyphen between the classical grandeur of the town house and the audacious modernism of the Picassos it contains.

Diego was an inspired choice for the Musée Picasso, since his furniture derives from ancient sources, notably Etruscan and Egyptian, while seeming wholly contemporary. Such well-known pieces as the bronze table with a cat's head at each corner, for instance, immediately recall the deities of Egypt (a country that Diego in fact visited during his footloose youth); yet the table looks at home in the most starkly modern interior. Other examples, whether chairs or lamps, have an archaic simplicity of form that puts them outside time and place; it is interesting to see how well they accord not only with modern but with every kind of "primitive" art. Their ability to blend with different periods and cultures stems from the most finely gauged proportions, from a universal sense of harmony.

This remarkable combination of grace and craftsmanship has brought Diego an international reputation and far more demands for his furniture than he can hope to satisfy. While he concentrated on completing the work for the Musée Picasso, the waiting list of those who dream of having their environment enhanced by one of his delicate consoles or sculptural chairs grew ever longer. True to his calling, the master craftsman is concerned above all that each piece to leave the studio correspond to his exacting criteria of workmanship; whenever pressures to produce become too great, he growls about not wanting to be turned into a "factory." Rather than court fame and wealth, Diego has turned his back on them. With characteristic modesty (and a hint of weariness), Diego says he can see no point in publications and shows, but he has lived to see a curator at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs begin to organize an exhibition celebrating the unsuspected range of Diego's achievement—the event duly documented with a splendid book about the artist.

Although a degree of affluence has come to Diego willy-nilly in recent years, he maintains the Spartan style in which he and his brother always lived. Proverbially tough (his cure for a toothache a few years ago was to extract the tooth with studio pliers), this mountain-bred man spurns most domestic niceties beyond a good bottle and the pleasure of getting into dandy clothes after a day's work. While Diego's daily routine has altered little, the area he has lived in for half a century has changed beyond recognition. Not only can one not find the *boeuf bourguignon* of yore but, more sacrilegious, the cafés that were the brothers' daily haunts have become banks; high-rise buildings have started to tower over the

A GROWING PRESENCE

It is estimated that in his lifetime Diego Giacometti made between 4,000 and 5,000 works. Usually he sold them to people he liked. His old friend and customer the designer Jay Spectre recalls, "You never knew when you were going to get anything, if you were going to get anything, or what he was going to send you. Despite many back orders, he was likely to let a newly assembled piece go not to any of the people who had ordered it but to a visitor he approved of, like Mrs. Paul Mellon or Mrs. Rex Harrison." He delivered when he was ready, without advance notice. One buyer adds that when a long-awaited piece arrived (at a very inconvenient time), he could not believe what he was being charged. Had Diego dropped a zero?

For a typical handcrafted item, he might well have asked $2,000 to $3,000. Today it would easily bring $45,000. Even before his death, prices for Diego Giacomettis began to soar on the open market. Now they seem to have firmed up, according to the Madison Avenue dealer Anthony Delorenzo, who is asking $100,000 for a single-commission console that would have sold for about $3,000 in 1969. Limited-edition Giacometti rugs now bring $8,000 to $10,000 at auction.

Diego's witty, archaic style continues to influence the home-furnishings market, as it has for a decade. Particularly notable is Spectre's new line, "Diego Mon Ami." Items include pieces for Century Furniture (small steel-and-glass side tables, for instance, priced at about $990); lamps for the Paul Hanson Company (under $500); rugs for Karastan (projected at under $1,000); and spirited translations of Giacometti figures into design motifs for reasonably priced Sasaki porcelain and flatware. So widespread is the Diego look that one has to wonder if he will ever be referred to again as "the other Giacometti." —*Nancy Hoving*

HANS NAMUTH

once eminently human maze of little back streets. Diego appears to be the one feature of the *quartier* not to have changed.

He puts his elegant felt hat on at a rakish angle, and slowly we move out of the restaurant, into the familiar street. "This used to be a paradise, you know," he says, stopping to let a car go past. "It was full of gardens when Alberto and I arrived. There were goats. You could even get local goat cheese. Imagine that! And the place was full of craftsmen. You could get anything you liked, any tool you needed, made for you right away. Imagine, for sculptors—a real paradise! But, of course," he adds, looking almost embarrassed, "all that was so long ago." □

Diego's furnishings transcend any narrow definition of style. They looked as good among the artist's own clutter (above) as in the neoclassical Jupiter Salon of the Musée Picasso (right).

RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX, PARIS

Picasso: Admired but Hard to Live With, His Work Is Strangely Static on the Market

BY ROBIN DUTHY

PHOTO FAILLET/ARTEPHOT, PARIS, COURTESY MUSÉE PICASSO, PARIS

Baigneuses *(1918), which the artist refused to sell, now in the Musée Picasso, in Paris.*

Art prices took off in 1986, with Rembrandt and Manet joining the band whose work has gone for ten million dollars. Jackson Pollock, Jasper Johns, and scores of other artists fetched record prices. So why, amid this frenzy, has the Picasso market run out of steam? We are dealing, after all, with a genius, and a prolific one at that.

It seems incredible, but the figures speak for themselves. A hundred or so Picassos, excluding prints, are sold at auction every year. Since 1975, the midmarket price—the average of the middle 80 percent of the paintings sold—has climbed from $46,600 to $47,800, a rise of 2.5 percent. The price touched $53,000 in 1981 but fell to $30,000 in 1984, before its recent recovery. Prices have gone up 50 percent in two years, but that doesn't explain the flat trend over the medium term.

Whereas prices for an artist's work can climb at an unseemly rate just after his death, the situation since Picasso died, in 1973, is different. The number of Picassos sold at auction doubled between 1975 and 1980, as the artist's heirs and other short-term holders began to unload. They tended to weed out the grade-two material and hang on to the best. That process continues today, with collectors getting more selective all the time.

Picasso painted in a bewildering range of styles, but broadly speaking it is his earlier work that fetches most today. Of the eight Picassos to have made over $1 million at auction, most were painted before 1920. A great early painting, *La Gommeuse* (The Hooker), has been auctioned three times. Its value rose from $3,600 in 1949 to $84,300 in 1960, clocking up an annual 33 percent growth. Auctioned again in 1984, the painting sold for $1,547,000, suggesting an annual increase over the second period of 13 percent. But it is only the best Picassos that have done their owners so proud. The definitive listing of Picasso's work by his friend Christian Zervos, which started publication in 1932, now runs to thirty-three volumes. Many of the fifty-thousand-dollar *Nu sur un Lit* or *Verre et Fruit* of the 1940s and '50s are not worth the money. They may remain a stable form of international currency, but they will always lag behind the market. Such a prolific artist as Picasso could not always produce masterpieces, but he was apt to sell his mistakes.

If there is a decline in Picasso's status, the reasons surely lie in the work itself. Why, people always wanted to know, did a man who could draw like Raphael not make proper "use" of his gifts—in other words, go on painting in the Western figu-

Robin Duthy's new book is The Successful Investor.

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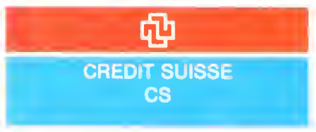

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*Provided respectively by Swiss American Securities Inc. and Swiss American Asset Management International.

La Minotauromachie *(1935): $165,000 in 1984—unlike most, its value has kited.*

rative tradition? And how obtuse the man must be, they concluded, who could squander his talents on such hideous and degrading images. That was the philistine response to Picasso's work. Then there were the "believers," who recognized his genius in his figurative work and took the rest on trust, even though privately they cared little for it. Thus Picasso watchers have polarized themselves, leaving the discriminating middle path almost deserted.

Picasso tended to duck questions about the meaning of art. "Why," he asked, "does one love the night, flowers, everything around one, without trying to understand them?" The answer is that people are more curious about paintings, sculpture, and other man-made objects, which are presumed to have been created with an idea in mind. Some artists refuse to explain their work, on the grounds that if they had been able to communicate in words they would have done so in the first place.

The collages of newspaper and other nondurable materials that Picasso began to make early in this century showed his disdain for the artistic tradition, and there can be no doubt that he was far from concerned with what the general public— that is, collectors—thought of his work. Whereas when Renoir died his studio was crammed with trivial or unsuccessful sketches, Picasso tended to keep only his best works and those that meant most to him. For that reason, the cream of his collection, now housed at the Musée Picasso, in Paris, is of the greatest interest.

Ironically, Picasso's death has put a damper on the market, for as artists go he was a journalist's dream. His genius, his colorful sex life, and his immense wealth, estimated at $300 million when he died, provided a stream of publicity that kept the public gossiping about him. These peripheral personal matters were a prop to demand, and they exist no longer.

Meanwhile, Picasso prints have been as sluggish as the rest of the market, with a rise of just 6 percent since 1975. Picasso created over 2,000 lithographs, etchings, and other kinds of print. The editions were rarely fewer than fifty, and often more. At least 100,000 Picasso prints are in circulation; their midmarket price stands at $1,930, compared to $1,760 in 1975. A few famous images have risen substantially: the *Minotauromachie* of 1935 has sold for $165,000; *Le Repas Frugal* of 1905, which was selling in 1950 for $125, has reached almost $100,000. Every genuine original print worked on by Picasso up to 1972 can be found in the definitive listing by Georges Bloch. (Investors should keep clear of the limited-edition prints "after Picasso" that have been marketed by his heirs. They are taken from a plate on which some other artist has copied a Picasso painting.

Picasso encapsulated neatly a popular

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view of art. "We all know that art is not truth," he said. "Art is a lie that makes us realize truth." Still, people want Picasso explained, for his paintings contain a host of symbols that individually or together must have signified something to him. His Cubist works are full of concealed references to his personal life. For decades, critics have tried to crack the code, and many plausible interpretations of his work have been published, but something about the man remains enigmatic.

Picasso created a stir from the first. He was given up for dead at birth, until his uncle puffed cigar smoke into his face. Almost from that moment his life was to be packed with natural or self-induced drama. His sister Lola was born three years later during an earthquake, moments after the family had fled to a neighbor's house. Soon afterward, Picasso's mother transferred her affection—or so Pablo felt—to Lola, and he retaliated by tying himself all the more closely to his father. In that period the ambivalent feelings toward women that permeate Picasso's work had their origin. Through seventy-five years of painting, idealization of women alternates with fury and contempt as he struggled to reconcile his opposing feelings.

The artist's whole life and work may be charted and best understood in terms of the partners, male and female, on whom he largely depended. The masterly study by Mary Mathews Gedo *Picasso: Art as Autobiography* throws light on the mental states in which Picasso worked and shows indirectly why his work can be hard to live

La Gommeuse *(1901): $3,600 in 1949; $84,300 in 1960; $1,547,000 in 1984.*

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with and why, on market evidence at least, his popularity may be waning. This, of course, need not suggest a falling off in admiration for his genius. It is possible to admire Picasso without wishing to own his more "difficult" work. Most people find his work disturbing, and that is probably how he would have wished it. He recognized early on that the Greek ideal of beauty was no more than a digression in the history of art, and sought other and more powerful means of expression. If those means aroused aversion and disgust, that was too bad; the message must still be delivered.

The great, seminal painting *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, which heralded Cubism and changed the course of twentieth-century art, portrayed a group of five prostitutes from a brothel in the Calle d'Avignon, Barcelona. The preliminary sketches for it included two male figures, both apparently self-portraits, and though he ex-

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Femme Assise au Chapeau *(1923), from the estate of Edward James. Sold last year for $4.29 million.*

cluded them from the final version, the painting had a deep, private significance for Picasso that will now never be understood. This was a foretaste of his later portrayal of women, though more comprehensible than the Cubist work that followed. In the context of European art of the 1900s, the leap into Cubism was sudden, though not unpredictable. As Alfred Barr noted, Picasso's work proceeded more by mutation than by evolution. The Fauves had already disintegrated color; the attempt to defy or elide time by simultaneously representing an object from differ-

ent viewpoints was sure to follow.

The disintegration of form that this entailed revived terrifying childhood memories. Indeed, the whole Cubist enterprise could never have been carried through without the partnership and involvement of Georges Braque. Even in the later phase of Cubism, when Picasso extended the color range and introduced figurative elements, the fragmentation of the subject remained disturbing.

Picasso's most successful work was done when a man or woman he loved or admired was acting as a catalyst. Among the men friends who triggered creative outbursts were Apollinaire, Cocteau, Diaghilev, Breton, Stravinsky, Éluard, and, of course, Braque. The effect of wives and mistresses on his output was patchy. There were periods of happiness and productivity, but Picasso always got caught up with women who were psychologically or physically frail. It was in the Spanish male tradition to see women as either wanton or saintly. There was therefore many an idyllic scene of mother and child, though, curiously, it is the mother who is in an ecstatic reverie, while the child looks pensively into the distance.

"ART IS A LIE THAT MAKES US REALIZE TRUTH."

As Mary Gedo points out, the early days of an affair brought forth erotic scenes. Just before his marriage to Olga Koklova, in 1918, he began a series depicting a bull goring a horse. The gored horse recurs in Picasso's work as a symbol of women, and the brutal sexual role of the bull or, occasionally, Minotaur is unmistakable. The violence lurking beneath the surface of many of Picasso's images is another factor making them hard to live with.

When relations with wife or girlfriend turned sour, the change was soon manifest in his work. The mutually hellish marriage with Olga engendered a series of microcephalic women that reflected his anxiety over her mental health and, later, during her pregnancy, a series of giantesses—bovine Amazons staring vacuously into space yet emanating some threat. And after his affair with Marie-Thérèse Walter went awry, unflattering references to her crept into his work. When that relationship too broke down, paintings of a psychotic woman and other symbols of Picasso's inner turmoil were the evidence.

Even during the earlier Blue and Rose periods, which Picasso himself refused to

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discuss—"All that was just sentiment," he told one critic—he was preoccupied with pathetic women and, later, with pitiful male figures, sometimes comforted by a small boy. The image of the gored horse symbolizing woman dates from 1901 but reaches its most poignant expression in *Guernica*, the massive canvas Picasso painted in 1937 in protest against Franco's bombing of the Basque village of that name during the Spanish civil war. Picasso let it be known that the bull stood for darkness and brutality; the horse, for the suffering people. Though he renamed these symbols to tie in with the national scale of the violent act done to Guernica, the idea of the rapist bull and its female victim is constant. Picasso's close friend Jaime Sabartes states that Pablo was first taken to a bullfight by his father when he was three. If, as seems likely, he saw a disemboweled horse, this may have recalled to him, as Mary Gedo suggests, the traumatic vision of Lola's birth and thus fixed in his mind the equation between life and death, horse and woman, which he painted to such effect in *Guernica*.

As critics delve further into Picasso's inner world, their reconstructions of the mental states in which he worked throw interesting new light on the paintings themselves. But their interpretations are unlikely to make Picasso's work any easier on the eye. On the contrary, they emphasize the extreme complexity and confusion of the artist's unconscious mind.

None of this can be expected to affect prices in the short term, though it confirms Picasso's life and work as a source of endless fascination. Whatever explains the static prices of the last ten years, the market for the work of such a man must recover in time. □

PICASSO ON ART

- Nature and art, being two different things, cannot be the same thing. Through art we express our conception of what nature is not.
- To me there is no past or future in art. If a work of art cannot live always in the present, it must not be considered at all.
- It is my misfortune and probably my delight to use things as my passions tell me.
- Museums are just a lot of lies, and the people who make art their business are mostly impostors.
- When I am alone, I do not have the effrontery to consider myself an artist at all—not in the grand old meaning of the word. I am only a public clown—a mountebank.

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UP & COMING

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LOOK TO LOWE

Whenever anyone tries to spot the best young artists, the name of twenty-seven-year-old Adam Lowe seems to come up, especially in his native Britain. Among his generation, the image is back in favor, and Lowe's particular preoccupations include such readily recognizable objects as bowls, heads, fire, and hands. "If you're not an abstract painter and you find the modernist tradition barren, the power of images reasserts itself," he says.

Here is one facsimile that even weighs the same as the original.

COURTESY FACSIMILE EDITIONS LONDON

Highly articulate, quiet but confident, Adam Lowe has caught the eye of the public. His work has sold well ever since he graduated from the Royal College of Art, in 1985. He has been hailed by prominent British art critics as a young master, and his work was included in the "85 Degree Show," the pick of U.K. art graduates. Most recently, he was commissioned by the leading architect-designer Nigel Coates to paint two works for the Metropole Restaurant in Tokyo. To allow him to toil undisturbed, a studio was built for him by his client and good friend Adrian Cassins, in Yorkshire.

Adam Lowe's Christ Dish: Pelagius *(1986)—hot young talent rises in London.*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

Lowe pursues an aesthetic path of his own, mixing abstract with figurative art, letting a strong image resonate in a less defined environment. In his striking *Head and Bowl* (oil on canvas, August 1985), a dark bowl dominates against a deep slash of red. In front of the bowl, less clear, is a head. Color and shape are bold; the connection between head and bowl, however, is enigmatic. "I hate anything that can be understood too easily," the artist says. He likes his pictures to suggest rather than state, to engage the onlooker's imagination. About him, Alistair Hicks, the London *Spectator*'s art critic, has been quoted as saying, "He produces the painterly image and is not afraid to tackle the most complicated, theological subjects—distilled onto a bold canvas."

His work can be seen this spring at Jacob Street Studios, a new gallery on Mill Street. So far, success has not spoiled Adam Lowe. He lives quietly in the East End, London's burgeoning artists' quarter, in a flat overlooking the river. His promise, as of now, is enormous.

—*Kathy O'Shaughnessy*

MAKING BOOK

Michael and Linda Falter's lives are inextricably bound up with the rare and ancient manuscript the Kennicott Bible. They fell in love on their second date while going to view it at Oxford's Bodleian Library. There and then, they decided to make a facsimile of it—the most faithful yet of any book. While working on the project, the two became quite inseparable, married, and had two kids. The result is visibly that of a labor of love.

The Kennicott is a Hebrew Bible dating from 1476—one of the loveliest of all illuminated manuscripts—and the Bodleian is very protective of it. It took the Falters two years to get authorization for their project. So meticulous was their approach that the duplication of stains and blemishes was as important as the development of a parchment that closely resembled the authentic vellum in density, transparency, and texture. Since the original artist, one Joseph ibn Hayyim, deployed as many as twenty-four distinct colors in a single square inch of design, computer-controlled laser scanners were utilized to obtain the finest color separations, while gold and silver metal leaf were applied by hand to each illumination by seven craftsmen working simultaneously for four months. Only in Italy could the Falters find the skilled artisans able to tackle the task, so the family moved there for the duration. The entire undertaking took five years to complete.

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COURTESY ÉDITIONS ROBERT LAFFONT, PARIS (4)

Their hands tell all (from top): Marcel Marceau, Sonia Rykiel, Paco Rabanne; from Voyage au Creux de la Main, *by de Bony (above right) and Stephanie Leclair.*

Library, exhibited it in its historic Long Room, alongside the (genuine) Book of Kells, and the art-and-book critic of the London *Observer* commented that "it seemed almost sacrilegious even to turn a page." Among other notable owners are the crown prince of Japan and the libraries of Harvard, Princeton, and Cornell.

Though gratified by such respect for their labor, the Falters would prefer the Kennicott facsimile, which sells for $5,500, to be regarded not just as an *objet d'art* to be admired but something more—a real book. Says Michael, "I first got the notion when idly wandering round the British Museum, where the most beautiful manuscripts are displayed under glass, and thinking what a great shame it was that all I could see were two open pages, nothing more." The Falters' Bible is intended to survive something the original no longer can—being read. —*Gilbert Adair*

CHRISTOPHE DUGIED

HAND MASTER

Want to get to know the real Charlotte Rampling? Take a look at her right thumb. Curious about the state of world terrorism? Study Muammar al-Qaddafi's finger spread. Wondering about the source of Sonia Rykiel's fashion sense? Hold her hand. So says Jean de Bony, a twenty-seven-year-old Parisian who is making a name for himself as the hand-print cataloguer and analyst of the rich and famous. He has booked and fingerprinted the likes of Rampling, Paco Rabanne, and Guy Laroche. In the process, he claims, he is developing a "human science" he calls *la chirologie.*

De Bony, an advertising-school dropout, first startled *le tout Paris* by providing quick personality assessments after shaking the hands of celebrities. Then, he began taking ink palm prints of willing stars and from those prints produced what he calls "temperament profiles." After scrutinizing more than 3,000 sets of prints, de Bony came up with his, er, "science," which to the untrained observer seems to mix astrology, genetics, dermatology, and perhaps a touch of speculation.

"This is not palm reading and crystal balls," de Bony says. "I don't pretend to predict the future." As he explains it, his *analyses dermothermiques* (handshakes) and *digitaloglyphes* (fingerprints) allow him to assess human capacities. Nothing less than memory, intelligence, suitable occupation, and relative independence are revealed in de Bony's ninety-minute, $50 session. One of his many typically modest conclusions: "The key to human will and reason resides in the thumb."

Personality, according to de Bony, falls into one of four temperament groups. By judging the dryness and warmth of the hand, de Bony can tell if you're in the quadrant of bile, like the hair stylist Alexandre (*vitalité* and *activité*); blood, like Édith Piaf (*vitalité* but *non-activité*); nerves, like Sonia Rykiel (opposite of blood); or lymph, like the international arms salesman Sam Cummings (opposite of bile, lacking vitality and decisiveness).

Further study of the Aqualac (nonsmudge black ink) prints produces a detailed survey map of the mind, showing the interaction of regions that affect character. De Bony is now adapting his expertise to satisfy the needs of personnel officers, insurance companies, and political analysts. "I just finished a study of the hands of African chiefs of state," he says, referring to a job he did for *Jeune Afrique* magazine on leadership qualities.

Looking forward to his own future, de Bony plans to open a Museum of the Hand. He already has a plethora of prints and bronze hand molds, plus a few remarkable items. One collector has already donated casts of the hands of Rita Hayworth and Prince Aly Khan. "It's incredible," de Bony says, "that these historical and psychological artifacts were once used as mere paperweights." Alas, the path to enlightenment has ever been strewn with obstacles, has it not? —*Allen Kurzweil*

Édith Piaf, her palm.

GOOD-BYE, JUNK MAIL

Apo Oguz and Jerry De Santis are about to revolutionize fashion. Not—one should hasten to add—with a smashing new line of fashion wear, but by dreaming up a new creative genre that stands to become a commonplace household item. A hybrid of video and catalogues, the creature already has a name: the videologue. It is, as politicians like to say incessantly, an idea whose time has come.

In plain English, the videologue is a

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"L'ESPOIR" oil on canvas 51 1/4" x 63 3/4" (130 x 162 cm)

An exhibition of recent works by Alvar,
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The artist will be present at the gallery on April 25 and 26.

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For information concerning the Alvar exhibition please telephone Mr. Fred Laidlaw, Vice President: 415-775 7444

mail-order catalogue that is filmed rather than printed. It was originally the brainchild of a young Turk—no euphemism, this—Apo Oguz, head of a New York video-production company, who teamed up with Jerry De Santis, owner of Buyer's Marketplace, a giant catalogue house serving such stores as Neiman-Marcus and Harrods. To launch their videologue scheme, or Video Marketplace, as they call it, the two approached a number of major fashion companies; and already Royal Silk, which sent out 25 million print catalogues last year, has availed itself of their services. In this year's mailing, Royal Silk has included, with its catalogues, an advertisement for the video that Oguz completed for the company last December. Thirty minutes long, it was shot in Hawaii and retails for $5.99 (deductible from the cost of the items ordered).

The first segment features sultry models displaying some sixty garments while sauntering through lush landscapes. This is followed by a six-minute "How to Care for Silk" instructional tape. The video concludes with fifteen minutes of slow motion and freeze-frame close-ups. Every item is tagged with identification numbers and prices. Shoppers either phone in orders to an around-the-clock number or fill out mail-order forms included in the package. Says Oguz, "Video has tremendous advantages over print: you can see a garment in motion and from all sides, how it flows and how it drapes. Plus, background sounds and music."

JACK MITCHELL

William Carter left dancing and now turns his talent to directing.

GIL GILBERT

Expanding video's empire: the producer Apo Oguz (left) on location in Hawaii.

Oguz's own story is a paradigm of the American dream. Just five years ago, Oguz started a tiny business, A.N.S. International, importing Turkish films stateside, converting them to video and selling them. Today, the company boasts enough high-powered production, postproduction, and duplication facilities to churn out a whopping 7,000 to 10,000 tapes a day. Knowing that by 1990 75 percent of all Americans will own VCRs, Oguz is also producing a monthly video fashion magazine, *In Style*, with segments on designers, beauty, and makeup. Directed by the award-winning commercial director Clifford Fagin, it should be available this spring. —*Joe Dolce*

AN AMERICAN IN ROME

For years Romans have grumbled among themselves about the lack of contemporary culture in their town: no new music, no new theater, no new dance. Now, for starters, they are getting new dance. In July 1986, the Ministry of Culture hired William Carter, a former dancer with American Ballet Theatre and the New York City Ballet, to head up the sadly lackluster ballet of the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma. He began work last September.

In October, the ballet's first season opened to unusually good reviews at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma Brancaccio, a theater specially renovated to accommodate dance production. The company performed with the opera in December (and will again in April); the two have been more or less integrated since the ballet opened, in 1880. Among the performances this season are Paul Taylor's *Aureole*, Alvin Ailey's *The River*, and José Limón's *Moor's Pavane*—all familiar to Americans but new ground to most Italian audiences.

Among Carter's innovations are bringing in guest teachers for a month at a time. The former dancer Lupe Serano, the New York teacher Robert Danvers, and the Danish dancer Henning Kronstam have all given classes—and the Roman dancers have felt the difference. "Another benefit," says Carter, "is that they know how interested I am in them." Indeed, after a class, several dancers come up to ask questions or show off their loss of weight or simply say hello. No previous director, including his immediate predecessor, Maya Plisetskaya, has been better-liked, say his fellow administrators.

Next on the lean, blond choreographer's agenda is a plan to add to the repertoire (which now consists of such chestnuts as *Giselle, Coppelia, The Nutcracker, Swan Lake,* and *Don Quixote*). Alvin Ailey, Paul Taylor, Agnes de Mille, Glen Tetley, Roland Petit, and Antony Tudor, among others, have been asked to contribute new ballets, and many are making trips to Rome this year to look over Carter's

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TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS (2)

Robert Pincus-Witten, art critic, immortalized by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders.

dancers and the theater's possibilities.

Unlike Nureyev, his counterpart at the Paris Opera Ballet, Carter himself will do little dancing. That way, he knows, he will "have more time to concentrate on [his] own choreography and training these dancers." As he says, "Italy's been cut off from the mainstream of dance—I don't know the reasons—and many of my dancers don't have much confidence. But they have the potential to create a great company. The romantic Italian spirit already infuses their dancing. Their lives are so filled with drama from the time they are born that, in general, they have fewer inhibitions than other Europeans or American dancers. So, the stage is already set for them to be wonderful."

—*Valerie Gladstone*

MODERN CLASSIC

There was a time when it was common practice for photographers to immortalize their subject in static postures of somber black and white. For Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, those days are alive and well, but with a slight difference. His subjects have as much immortalized him as he them. He has recorded a parade of top artists, art dealers, collectors, critics, poets, and painters through the eye of his lens. Old-fashioned, black-and-white portraits of such discipline and sobriety are instant gifts to posterity, immediate classics. And now, as Greenfield-Sanders completes a project with a leading Japanese fashion house, Comme des Garçons, his reputation is reaching its peak. He has photographed for them three full catalogues of portraits, showing various art-world luminaries dressed in the latest designs of this most avant-garde of fashion houses.

A native Floridian, Greenfield-Sanders, thirty-five, came to New York's Columbia University to earn a degree in art history. Next, he went to Los Angeles, where he got a master's in filmmaking at the highly prestigious American Film Institute. Rather than shoot films, he took a position shooting stills of Hollywood stars for *American Film* magazine. Soon he was recording the likenesses of Henry Fonda, Richard Burton, and Orson Welles. What really changed his life was the discovery in 1979 and purchase (for $50) of a dusty but highly prized turn-of-the-century Fulmer and Schwing 11-inch by 14-inch view camera. So, when Comme des Garçons called him to shoot its 1986–87 menswear catalogues, he simply turned his trusty camera back on his favorite subjects. "All they wanted was for their clothes to be worn by my people," he says.

The first three catalogues pictured the critics Robert Pincus-Witten and Hilton Kramer, the dealer Leo Castelli, the poet John Ashbery, and the painters Robert Rauschenberg, Julian Schnabel, Willem de Kooning, and David Salle. While you may have missed the catalogues, note that many of the portraits (plus new ones) go on exhibition this month at the Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery, in Manhattan's SoHo district. Next month, the Leo Castelli Gallery, in SoHo, plans to show Greenfield-Sanders's portraits in conjunction with the publication of a book (Lumière is the publisher) documenting the surviving American artists from the fifties. You can also commission a private portrait for no more than $1,500. —*Paul Bob*

Robert Rauschenberg, as he appears in Comme des Garçons's catalogue.

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Collector demand for Nelson's two previous triptychs resulted in early sellouts. To order your set of this magnificent work, please call toll-free: 1-800-367-8047 ext. 108. In Canada: 1-800-423-8733 ext. 108.

"Lahaina Rhythms, Land and Sea" by Robert Lyn Nelson. Limited-edition triptych of 450. 4 x 9 feet.

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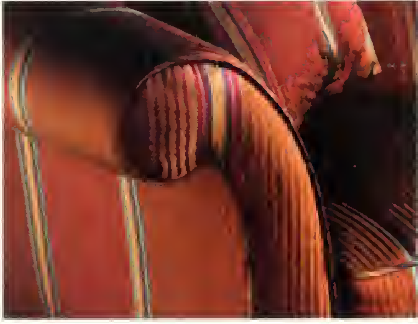

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