

DESIGN AT ITS BEST

# HOUSE & GARDEN

AUGUST 2003



Simply  
Chic!

Gardens  
Galore!

A dramatic landscape photograph featuring a winding asphalt road with double yellow lines that curves through a field of tall grass. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, but a bright, glowing light source, likely the sun, is breaking through a gap in the clouds on the right side, casting a warm, golden glow across the scene. The overall mood is one of hope and perseverance.

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IS THE ROAD TO REDEMPTION.

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It didn't start yesterday. And it doesn't happen overnight. But last year we launched over twenty new models on the way to posting our second straight year of market share gains. And a whole lot of you rediscovered that an American car can be a great car.

The road to redemption has no finish line. But it does have a corner.

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- Industry leading emissions controls, using the least amount of precious metals.
- More return customers than any other car manufacturer in the world!
- The top two automotive assembly plants in North/South America in the J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Study.<sup>SM2</sup>
- 149 automotive awards in 2002.



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Coming this fall: The legendary Pontiac GTO roars back with a 5.7-liter V8.\*



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<sup>1</sup>According to R.L. Polk & Co., statistics for Overall Manufacturer Loyalty in 2002 model year, GM ranked highest by having the greatest percentage of households return to purchase or lease another GM vehicle. <sup>2</sup>The General Motors Corporation Oshawa #1, Ontario plant was ranked highest and the Lansing, Grand River, MI plant was ranked second highest in North/South America among plants producing vehicles for the U.S. market in J.D. Power and Associates 2003 Initial Quality Study.<sup>SM</sup> Study based on a total of 52,105 U.S. consumer responses indicating owner reported problems during the first 90 days of ownership. [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com). \*Limited availability. See dealer for details.





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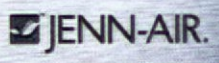
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# August

Welcome 12 BY DOMINIQUE BROWNING

## Domestic Bliss 17

Yes, sophisticated furniture belongs in a child's room, and it doesn't necessarily have to be pint-sized.

EDITED BY SHAX RIEGLER

## In the Garden 35

**A CHILD'S GARDEN** You can create a little paradise for your children—especially if you recognize that they excel at getting dirty, not at weeding.

BY DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN

**GREAT IDEAS** A seaside garden by landscape designer Diana Balmori is planted with typical backyard flowers not usually seen so close to the surf's edge.

BY STEPHEN ORR

**ONE GARDENER'S ALMANAC** As garden pests go, contractors often cause more damage and heartbreak than a plague of locusts. BY TOM CHRISTOPHER



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Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center unveils the first major building by premature superstar architect Zaha Hadid.

BY MARTIN FILLER

## On the Block 50

Once derided as symbols of a throwaway society, plastic designs are becoming highly prized collectibles.

BY GREGORY CERIO

## Uncorked 54

Among the millions of bottles of watery Soave that pour forth each year are a few shining examples of this white at its best.

BY JAY McINERNEY

## Past Perfect 56

Not all poets laud summer. W. H. Auden hated it.

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Where to buy everything.

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Smart people, silly choices; Dia-lightful. BY MAYER RUS



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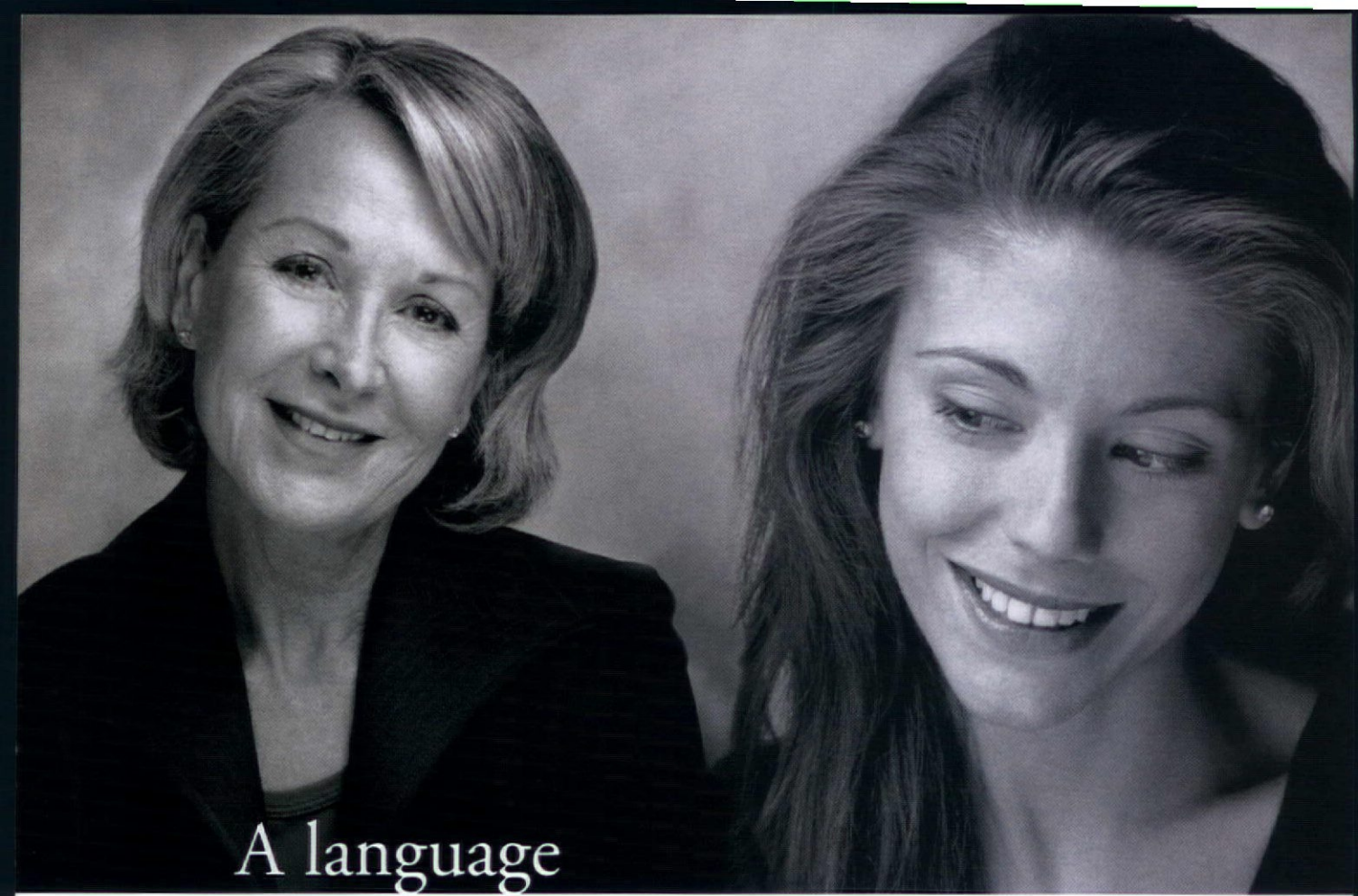
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DEPARTMENTS



A black and white photograph of two women. On the left is an older woman with short, light-colored hair, smiling warmly. On the right is a younger woman with long, dark hair, also smiling and looking down towards the older woman.

A language

more powerful than words.



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## THE FOOT

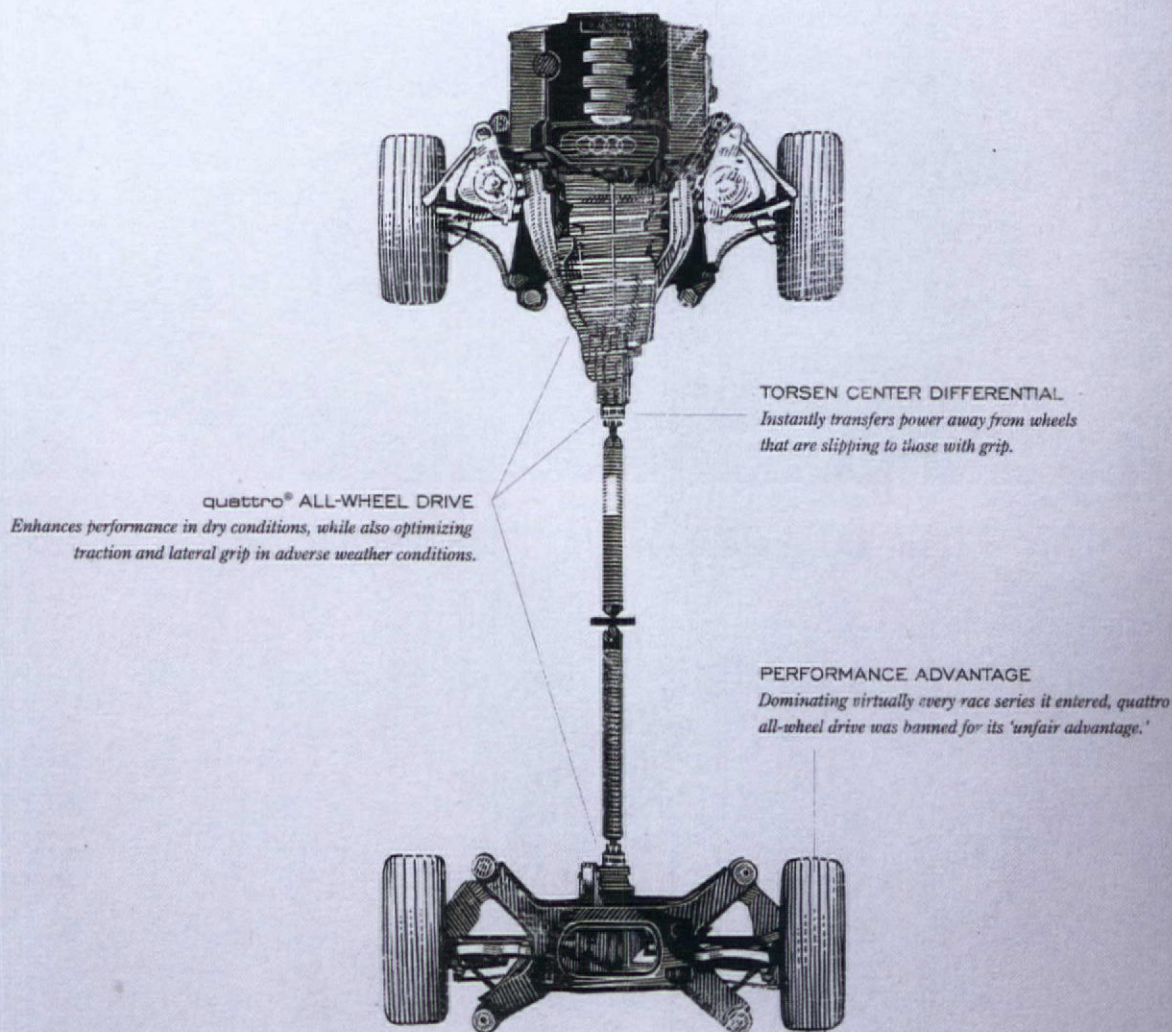


Fig. 321. – Fourth-generation quattro all-wheel drive system.  
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The all-new A8 L.



# August

## Family Affair 58

In Southampton, homeowner Robin Pickett keeps tradition alive while giving it a colorful twist.

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

## Helping Hands 70

Architect Harry Elson and designer Alan Tanksley make a showcase for a collection of art and crafts owned by Elson's parents.

BY BETH DUNLOP

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Ralph Lauren's first foray into garden design.

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Designer John Stefanidis and the painter Teddy Millington-Drake carved a splendid garden on a rocky Aegean island.

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING

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Garden designer Deborah Nevins builds an airy live-in orangery and fills it with bold botanical cuttings.

## Eye on Art 96

William Merrit Chase set the standard for Hamptons elegance.

## History Lessons 98

Taking cues from Sissinghurst, Giverny, Kew, and other storied gardens, a family creates a verdant paradise.

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

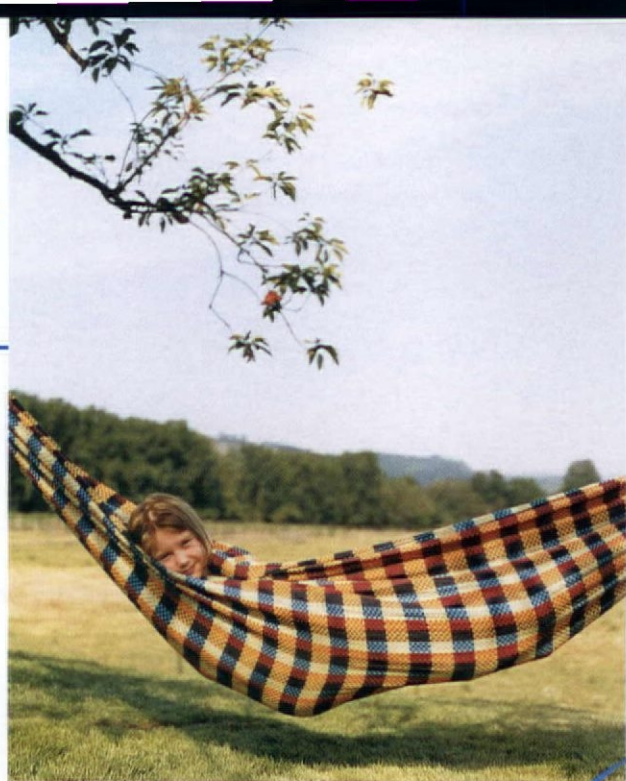
## On the Oregon Trail 106

Rob and Maria Sinskey pack up family and friends and hit the road to visit the small farms that are restoring quality to American food.

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN

### on the cover

From children's rooms to country estates, summer is the time to keep things simply chic. Pink peonies fill the Samoa teapot of Limoges porcelain, \$570, by Jean Louis Coquet from Lalique. 800-993-2580. Follement demitasses, \$60 each or \$335 for a set of six, by Christian Lacroix, and lacquered silver teaspoon, \$420 for a set of six, all from Christofle. 877-728-4556. In background, Jasper Conran's Daisy fabric in Black Ink by Designers Guild, through Osborne & Little. Photographed by Suzy Kim.



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106



88



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As I See It, #1 in a photographic series by Hugh Kretschmer.

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# welcome

## save it for a rainy day

**I**T IS A RAINY SUMMER SUNDAY, another day in a week of relentless, torrential downpours. At first the rain is a welcome respite from the sun that scorches and withers plants and skin; soon, though, the rain becomes cause for alarm. The gutters are clogged and rain is washing down the windows, seeping in over the sills. Mysterious jets are springing out of the retaining wall at the back of the garden; rain is sluicing its way across the driveway onto what was

once my terrace, and is transforming it into a swimming pool. The sump pump in the basement has come clanking to life, but it is an ancient machine and moves arthritically, creaking and grinding, complaining, dangerously overloaded.

I cannot weed; I cannot plant; I cannot prune; I cannot mow. I am housebound but feel like beating my wings against the bars of my cage; I look outside and there is so much to do. The weeds luxuriate; they seem almost to snicker. I can go to work on the gutters. I put on a raincoat and sneakers and march purposefully out to the garage to get the extension ladder, and that is when I learn that I am the proud owner of yet another useless gadget in my arsenal against the inexorable decay of the house. The ladder is so heavy that I cannot budge it. How did I ever hang it on those pegs? I remember that my father and brother were with me when I brought it home from the hardware store. Alone, I don't have the strength to handle it. And what was I thinking, exactly, when I bought a ladder that could reach higher than two stories? I was thinking that I could shore myself up against trouble. Here is trouble, and I am helpless against the waters lapping at the foundations of my house.

I am once again at the mercy of the plumber, or the roofer, or any genius who can calculate and divert the runoff pouring into my basement from the neighbor's uphill grounds. I will take help from anyone who will take my call. The gutters can wait. Indoors again, I get to work sorting through piles of catalogs. I can never get rid of them; they are the mailbox perennials, and I am addicted to them. The catalogs are full of the season's amazing gadgets: motorized floats that will spin you and your cocktail across the surface of your pool, for those too languid to paddle; outdoor heaters—40,000 Btu!—that will warm the air around your chaise, for those too weary to get a sweater. It is impossible not to start reading them, not to wonder at who would spend money on such things — and wonder, too, where I will store everything I am ordering. How do you get a life where flirting with the edge of infinity in your pool is your biggest problem? And why? Why do we need help with problems we do

not even know we have, when we cannot get help for the problems lurking under the eaves?

One catalog catches my eye, probably because there is a picture on the cover of a man with a wrench, bending over a puddle of water, and a woman behind him, her face a mask of shock and despair. I can relate to this. All my appliances leak. Even the toaster. The catalog, Duluth Trading, turns out to specialize in tools and gadgets for the serious tradesman. It is filled with lethal-looking things like a machete (with leather scabbard), a flame tool, patella knee pads, contractor's consoles, lineman's utility buckets, antivibration gloves, a calculator that "instantly finds lengths for common rafters and solves concrete square-ups and slopes," and enough holsters and buckets and holders and pouches to organize an elementary school. What a mysterious world of gadgets; they are seductive. You get tricked into thinking that your problems could be fixed if only you had the right tool. But the tools are meaningless in the wrong hands. Incredibly enough, the cover of the catalog turns out to be advertising the solution to an age-old problem known in the trade as plumber's crack: a T-shirt with an extra-long tail to cover the backside of the guy kneeling on the floor, his head in the cabinets under your sink, his jeans—well, you get the picture. More problems we didn't know we had. I would not mind if the plumber arrived wearing a bikini. Around here it would take a crack in the fabric of reality for the plumber to show up at all.

The rain lets up a bit. The sparrows nesting in the ivy that covers

the neighbor's garage part their curtain wall and swoop and dive through the drizzle. I watch from my window as they land in my gutters, pluck out pine needles and catkins from the oak and bits of straw and even the shredded plastic wrappers of cigarette packs left behind by the roofer, and return with the debris tucked into their beaks to shore up their nests. Soon my gutters are running again. What a clever gadget a sparrow turns out to be.



Dominique Browning, EDITOR

Bombay Sapphire Martini  
by David Rockwell

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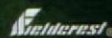
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# domestic bliss

A wizard's tent makes any room seem magical, while an adult-sized seat is a perfect throne for the wee and a comfortable perch for the weary (their parents). See next page for details.



## DREAM WORLDS

Create spaces for kids where their fantasies can come true, from a fairy-tale castle to a room that feels like a great summer camp. Here's our portfolio of ideas *Edited by Shax Riegler*

PRODUCED BY JAMES SHEARRON AND VIRGINIA TUPKER  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUZY KIM ■ WRITTEN BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH

domestic bliss

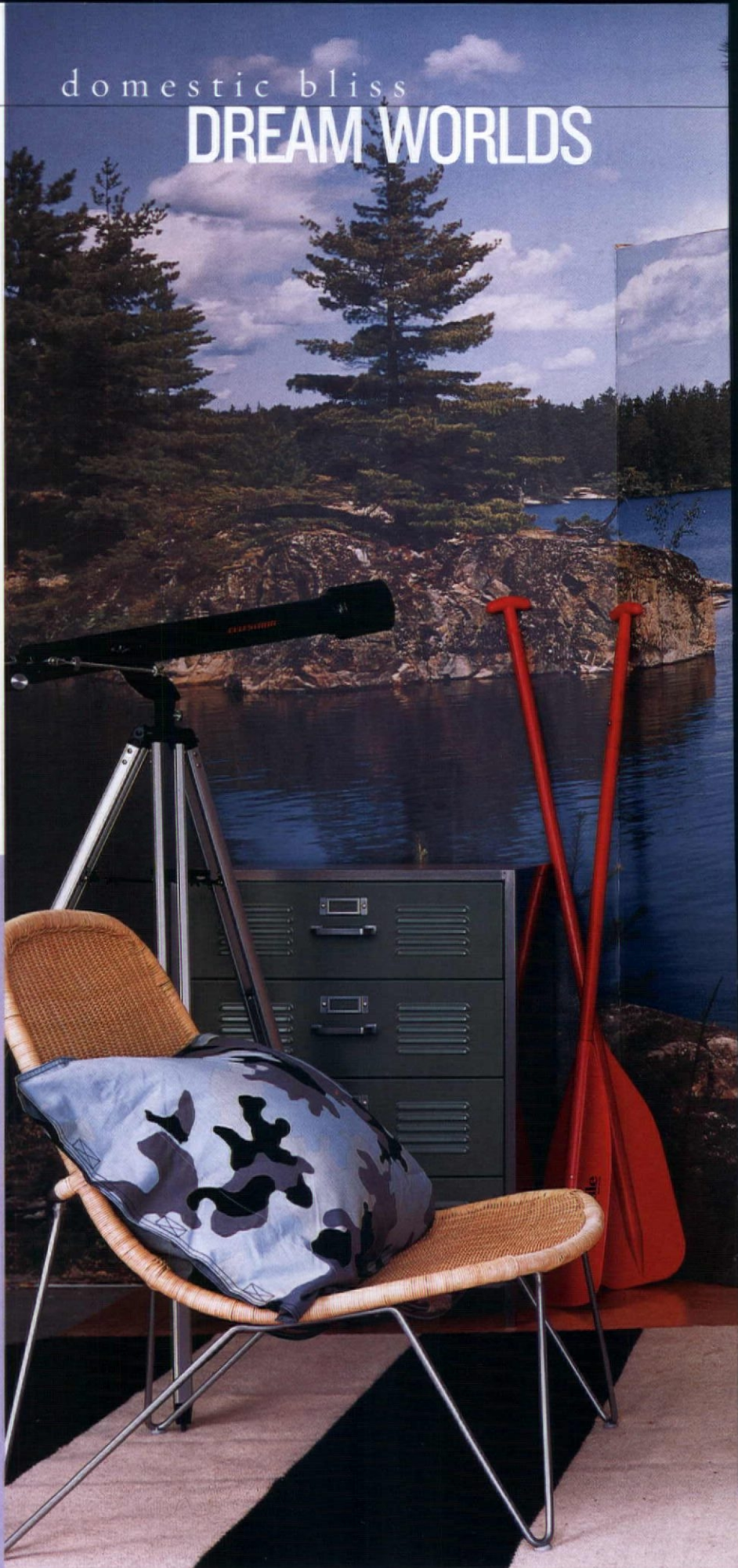
# DREAM WORLDS

## < Not all kids' furniture has to be pint-sized. In a child's playroom castle, an adult-scale chair becomes a sturdy throne

- Every sorcerer needs a private place for casting spells—and playing hide-and-seek. Create a **magical corner** with the Wizard tent from Fleur, \$295, in purple canvas. 866-397-3300.
- Hickory Chair's Tuscan **armchair** makes a majestic perch for a tiny royal. 800-349-4579. It is covered in Hogwarts-worthy Giza fabric from Clarence House.
- Turn Brunschwig & Fil's Stonework **wallpaper** into a castle wall by cutting crenellations into the top edge.
- When children are at play, **floors** take a beating. InterfaceFlor's square **fiber tiles** are easy to install and clean, and won't damage floors underneath. \$10 each. [interfaceflor.com](http://interfaceflor.com).
- For the final Midas touch, hang a six-light gold-leafed crown **chandelier**. Available for a princely \$5,575 from Lampworks. 888-526-7967.

## > Make a bedroom feel like summer camp all year long. All you need is bunk beds (and a moose)

- Lake in the Woods, a **wall mural** from Environmental Graphics, gives kids a room with a view. The line of murals—used in many movie and TV backdrops—includes a moonscape and the Manhattan skyline; they can be trimmed to fit any wall. About \$100, by special order, Home Depot. 800-553-3199 for stores.
- For stylish kids' furniture, try Pottery Barn's new PBteen catalog, which carries the Locker **dresser**, \$449, Camo **pillowcase**, \$24, and ripstop **blanket**, \$39. 866-472-3001. IKEA's Tordal **bunk bed**, \$69, is a classic. 800-434-4532.
- This summer, Mars will be closer to Earth than at any other time in recorded history. View the planet's polar caps with a Celestron **telescope**, \$100, from Astrotec. 877-278-7683.





domestic bliss

## DREAM WORLDS

> Turn a patio umbrella into the focal point of an indoor rumpus room filled with graphic shapes, candy hues, and **groovy** knockabout furniture

■ Make an indoor shelter out of an outdoor **umbrella**.

(Just trim the pole to kid height.) Here, the Siam umbrella in natural, \$1,107, Janus et Cie. 800-245-2687. Or check out Pottery Barn's Market umbrella, from \$79. 888-779-5176.

■ Dingproof furniture rules in a playroom. Striped foam **chairs**, \$80 each, MoMA Design Store.

800-447-6662. Michael Young's Yogi **chair**, \$203, and **table**, \$105, in polyethylene, ModernAge, NYC. 212-966-0664.

■ Don't confine outdoor **fabrics** to the patio—water-resistant and scrubbable, they are perfect for a child's room. Giati Designs offers great colors like Lime and Daffodil.

■ Behr's new Disney Color **paint** collection, at Home Depot, features washable flat paints in a kid-friendly palette. Wall circles in Smackeral of Hunny.



> Who says **sophisticated** furniture doesn't belong in a child's room? A classic daybed and slipper chair will grow with your daughter

■ Invest in children's furniture with grown-up style. A **daybed** could one day be moved to a hallway, while a child's **slipper chair** has the right scale for a bathroom. Gustavian bed and Emma chair, Country Swedish; white acrylic **cube**, Albrizzi Design.

■ Black-and-white with pink is so very *Eloise*. On the chair and walls, Jasper Conran's mod Daisy **fabric**.

Brera cotton/linen in cerise on daybed. Both Designers Guild through Osborne & Little.

■ Start a **teacup** collection. Christian Lacroix's cups and saucers, \$60 each, are too fragile for play, but can come out for special occasions. Christofle. 877-728-4556.

■ What's a tea party without a guest? Piglet, \$18, and other **stuffed creatures**, FAO Schwarz. 800-426-8697.



## A grand hotel offers ideas for summer decorating

by Ingrid Abramovitch

Congress Hall, a colonnaded Victorian hotel in Cape May, NJ, reopened last summer as a seaside stunner. Colleen Bashaw, a Ridgewood, NJ, interior designer who has worked for Parish-Hadley (and is a granddaughter of the preacher who once ran Congress Hall as a religious retreat), shows us how she mixed beachy charm with sophisticated elegance.



"I wanted a floor good for dancing barefoot after coming in from cocktails on the beach," Bashaw says. In the turquoise ballroom, stained **black and white** diamonds spiff up the original wood planks.

Even the urbane lounge gets a touch of the beach: vintage **white shell** lamps stand out in the chocolate brown room. Shades from Oriental Lampshade Co., NYC. 212-832-8190.



The seashore inspired the designer's colorful palette of yellows and blues. Bashaw asked Sherwin-Williams to custom-mix the **perfect azure** for the guest rooms, left, and a turquoise inspired by the ocean for the ballroom, far left. The pillows are in Rose Cumming's Shell stripe.



A coat of paint freshens up old wicker furniture. In the lobby, Bashaw **painted vintage wicker** black and added upholstered seats in white chenille with black horsehair trim. Cabana stripe lampshades made from Scalandr 's cotton-and-silk Carnival stripe are the crowning touches.

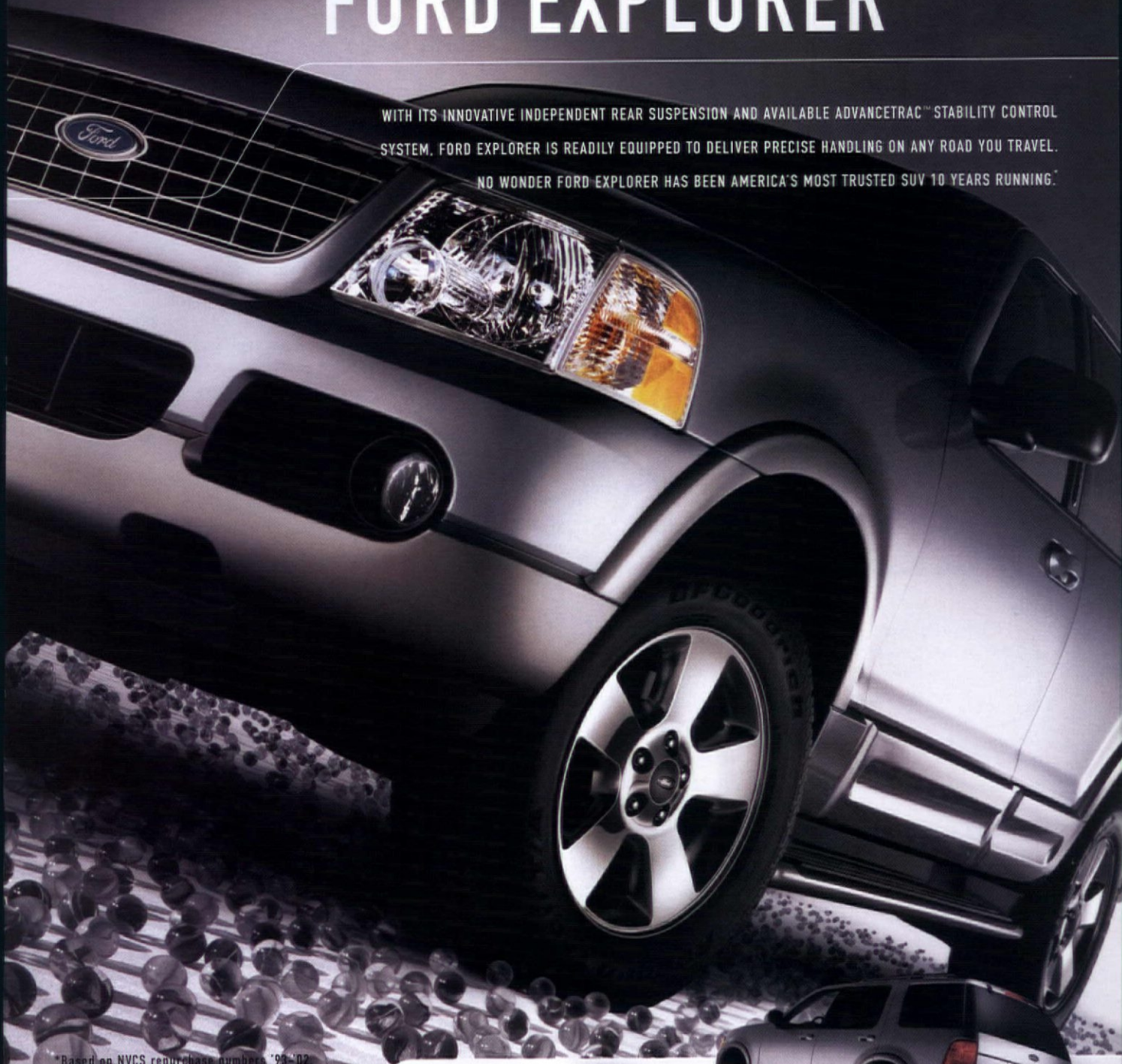


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# THE BIZ

When Claire Murray hooked her first rug, she had no idea what she was starting

by Catherine Newton



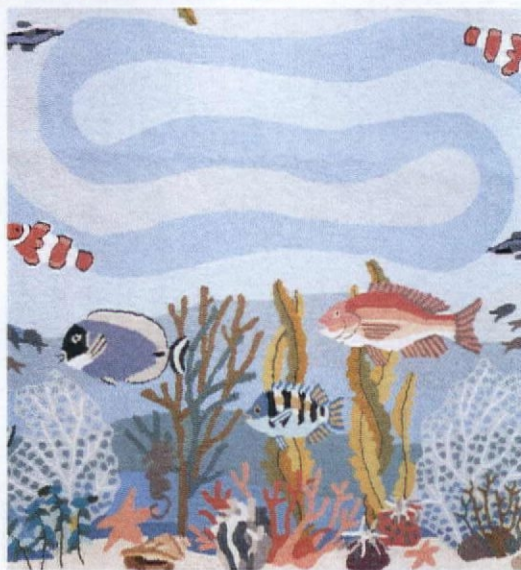
knew nothing about the hospitality industry. Nevertheless, she fell in love with a house on Fair Street and turned it into an inn, putting gardens in the backyard and decorating each of the eight guest rooms with her own handmade quilts and the rugs that she designed and hooked during long winters on the island.

Not long after, the rugs became a business. The owners of Nantucket Needleworks, who sold six-ply virgin merino wool yarn from New Zealand, were going to retire and give up their shop. Murray needed a yarn source, and bought the shop in 1986, even though, she says, "I knew nothing about retail." She began selling her patterns and finished rugs. Soon she renamed the shop Claire Murray, and the brand became a must-have among the crowds that descend on the island every summer.

Claire Murray clearly remembers the day she first saw someone hand-hooking a rug. A girl in her fourth-grade classroom in Washington state was working on a big yellow star. Murray was intrigued. Several decades later, across the continent, a 30-something Murray found herself on a ferry from Nantucket to the mainland, staring at a woman hooking a rug, and she knew it was time. She wanted—needed—to learn the craft that had long ago captured her imagination. The woman on the ferry sent Murray to Maggie Meredith, an artist who had been teaching a group of islanders how to create one-of-a-kind traditional rugs. Murray was hooked.

What she didn't know at the time was that she was planting the seed for a cottage industry that would grow into an international home accessories business. What she did know was that she loved making rugs and that she needed them.

Passion and necessity have been the twin cornerstones for the life decisions of Murray, who trained in printmaking and sculpting at the National Academy School of Fine Arts in New York City. She moved from Manhattan to Nantucket in the late 1970s and became an innkeeper, because she wanted a safe place to raise her daughter. A newly divorced, single mother, she



**Murray and her Our Nation's Garden rug, with all 50 state flowers, top. \$999; 7 by 9 ft. ■ Grape clusters on Botanical Fruit, middle. \$899; 7-ft. round. ■ Fish swim on Coral Reef, above. \$999; 7 by 9 ft. 800-252-4733.**

Today, there are a dozen Claire Murray stores in New England and South Carolina that exclusively carry the handmade rugs and other high-end accessories. Murray is now working to bring her designs to different markets. With her staff, she has developed 25 product lines—tableware, kitchen textiles, bedding, bath accessories, loungewear, sweaters—carried by more than 8,000 retailers. This summer she started offering handbags, and this fall she will launch a line of shoes. Motifs range from gardens and animals to scenes of Provence and, of course, Nantucket. "What I do," she says, "is translate the things I love—the cornflower blue of Nantucket skies, the grays of the island's shingle houses, the wonderful colors from the gardens."

And while the translations take many forms these days, Murray notes that her products are always inspired by one initial work of art. She starts at the floor, then works her way up and throughout the room, interpreting the original design for other objects. As Murray says, in an apt metaphor for her corporate success, "It always starts with a rug." □

## BREAKTHROUGH performance

Laura Innes, *ER*

Playing a character so lacking in vanity for the past seven years has given Innes a new perspective: "Women are about so much more than just appearances." She finds that cosmetic procedures can sometimes strip women of their individuality. "Everyone starts looking alike at a certain point. A woman's true vitality comes through when she's just being herself."

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# SECOND SKIN

Olay Regenerist gets deep with three actresses  
who love the skin they're in

They say no to drastic measures. Cosmetic surgery, laser treatments and chemical peels aren't even in their vocabulary. But that doesn't mean they want the lines viewers remember to be on their faces. These women are taking skincare into their own hands. Here, they divulge another layer with Olay Regenerist.

Regenerist has that effect on women. It's not just skincare; it's cell care. Olay Regenerist employs a unique Amino-Peptide Complex to regenerate skin's outer layer and reveal newer skin. One cell at a time.

Proving that dramatically improved skin need not require drastic measures.

Photo provided by Olay.com

## see change

Constance Marie,  
*The George Lopez Show*

As Angie Lopez, Marie is proof-positive that motherhood and sex appeal can still go hand in hand. "What kind of statement would I be making if my look was totally manufactured?" She believes that plastic surgery might send the wrong message to future generations. "I'm sometimes surprised at the lengths people will go to for social acceptance."

If you're not ready for surgery, give your look a lift from a bottle. Olay Regenerist Enhancing Lotion with UV Protection moisturizes and regenerates skin's appearance as it safeguards skin from the sun's damaging rays. Its light, non-greasy formula includes light-bending powders to soften the look of fine lines.

## SHE'S a NATURAL

Kellita Smith,  
*The Bernie Mac Show*

"I believe in embracing my evolution and celebrating my looks at every phase.

Truthfully, I think I just keep getting better." Smith refuses to succumb to the pressures of Hollywood, asserting there are countless ways to get results without taking drastic actions. "With so many advances in skincare, I feel completely empowered over the fate of my face."

Take control of your skin's destiny. Deliver intense moisture to dehydrated skin with Olay Regenerist Perfecting Cream. The rich, luxurious formula renews skin's outer layer and strengthens its moisture barrier so skin looks and feels like newer skin.



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We want to know what you think about new **Olay Regenerist**. Tell us how the products have helped you to beautifully regenerate your skin's appearance and we'll send you this trendy ultrasuede handbag (pictured). Simply mail your testimonial along with your name, address, phone number and proof-of-purchase including UPC and receipt (must reflect purchase between July 2 and August 1, 2003) to:

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Your materials must be received by August 8, 2003. One bag per customer. While supplies last. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

\*renews skin's outer layer to reveal newer skin



# GADGET INSPECTOR

"A juice extractor is indispensable," says chef Mario Batali, who uses his KitchenAid to add "the purest fruit flavors to all our dishes." We give six juicers the squeeze by Ingrid Abramovitch



### L'Equip Mini

\$129. lequip.com.

**THIRST** Taking up less counter space than competitors, the Mini turns pineapple chunks—and other produce—into frothy juice. Pulp is ejected into a detachable basket for easy cleanup.

**WORST** It doesn't seem to yield as much juice as some other extractors.



### Juicelady

\$130. Gracious Home. 800-338-7809.

**THIRST** The best-selling Juiceman now has a feminine counterpart dressed in sleek stainless steel. No fruit or veggie stands a chance against the pulverizing power of her titanium-coated blades.

**WORST** We found the Juicelady tricky to assemble.



### Waring Pro

\$99. 800-492-7464.

**THIRST** If you like your juice a touch pulpy, this extractor does the job for less money than the other machines we tested. Easy to clean, it comes with a stainless-steel pitcher.

**WORST** The model we tried leaked and emitted the smell of burning rubber.



### KitchenAid

\$250 to \$270. kitchenaid.com.

**THIRST** This beautifully designed model squeezes every last drop from fruits and vegetables. The citrus press is easy to use and comes in two sizes. Limeade or grapefruit juice, anyone?

**WORST** The design of the pulp basket makes it challenging to clean.



### Acme Supreme Juicerator

\$259. williamsonoma.com.

**THIRST** This machine pumps carrot juice as effectively as any juice bar, and has a citrus press, too. The disposable filters cut cleanup time by more than half.

**WORST** The Juicerator takes up a lot of counter space. It continues to spin for up to three minutes after it is turned off.



### Omega 4000 Juicer

\$250. Sur La Table. 800-243-0852.

**THIRST** A favorite of juicing fanatics, the Omega is a professional-caliber machine that efficiently juices everything from beets to cantaloupes.

**WORST** Carrots stain the white plastic. (The manual recommends soaking overnight in a solution of water and Cascade.)



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GLASS CEILING



# LARDER

These vinegars pass the acid test with flying flavors

by Lora Zarubin

Vinegar is one of the most versatile ingredients in my kitchen, so it's no surprise that my larder is filled with a wide variety of bottles. No two wines are alike, and that holds true for vinegars as well; each has a specific culinary purpose. My use of vinegar goes way beyond salad dressings. I use it when I sauté poultry, meat, and mushrooms, and when I stir-fry vegetables and make marinades. Vinegar should not be limited to savory dishes, either. I often drizzle a 50-to-75-year-old balsamic vinegar on fresh strawberries or vanilla ice cream. Here are some of my favorite vinegars and how I like to use them.

**Chalk Hill Clematis Balsamic Vinegar** is one of the finest American varieties. Made by Paul Bertolli, it has great acidity and a wonderful aroma. \$40 for two 375 ml bottles. In CA, 707-433-8416.

**O Citrus Champagne Vinegar** is great splashed over a fennel and Parmesan salad with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil. It has a delicate, spritzy punch from California champagne and lemon zest. Perfect for a light vinaigrette. \$12 for 6.8 oz. 888-847-7148.

**Castello di Volpaia Red Wine Vinegar**, made from Sangiovese, is my favorite red wine vinegar. It's aged in chestnut and oak for a smooth, elegant flavor. Sublime for delicate salads and mignonette sauce. \$8 for 500 ml, from Dean & DeLuca. 800-999-0306.

## WHAT A CROCK!

There has been a vinegar pot in my kitchen ever since I realized that I could use leftover wine to make vinegar instead of pouring it down the drain. Vinegar is easy to make, though you do need a starter. I got mine in the South of France, but you can easily get one from Beer and Wine Hobby, 800-523-5424, which also sells vinegar crocks and barrels. After the vinegar has aged for a year, I put it in a wooden barrel for more aging and flavor.



Robust **Gran Capirete Sherry Vinegar** counters bitter greens like arugula and radicchio, and plays nicely off of sautéed escarole or chard. \$13 for 250 ml. chefshop.com. 877-337-2491.

Rich **O Balsamic Vinegar**, aged for ten years in oak, chestnut, mulberry, juniper, and cherry woods, is my everyday balsamic for sauces, marinades, vegetables, and grilled chicken. \$12 for 6.8 oz.

Perfectly balanced **Apple Balsamic Vinegar** is made from organic apples. I use it in salads with Roquefort or chèvre, and for sautéing chicken. \$14 for 250 ml. The Apple Farm, in CA. 707-895-2333.

I use the light and slightly sweet **Marukan Organic Rice Vinegar** in sushi rice, stir-fried vegetables, and any Asian recipe that requires rice vinegar. \$13 for 17.5 oz. chefshop.com.

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# in the garden



Start them young: most children love flowers almost as much as they love being dirty and wet. With some baby-sized plastic tools, Nathaniel, 2, digs in.

## A CHILD'S GARDEN

With a little planning, you can create a paradise for your children—especially if you accept the fact that they prefer getting dirty to weeding **by Deborah Needlman**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TARA SGROI



Her own tiny plot—a 4-by-4-foot square within my vegetable garden—is a crazy quilt of flowers, vegetables, herbs, and climbers. Whenever we come home, she races straight from the car to see what has grown, and exclaims on its astounding beauty. I don't know anyone else like that—except me.

Like her mother, she also loves cutting flowers for the house. Only, she wants to pick every one she lays eyes on—and just the flower, with barely enough stem to keep the prized blossom intact. For her wonderfully clashing (and stumpy) bouquets, she fusses over her selection of a vase and the most “splendid” place to set it. She begs flowers for bouquets from other people's gardens and presents everyone who visits us with a cluster of their own.

Once you start seeing through your child's eyes, the choice of plants for her becomes obvious. A child's garden is all id—decadent excess and floral hedonism. There is no merit in restraint or value in structure, no sense that foliage matters, or even that it exists. Color—and no color is too brash—and sensory stimuli are everything. You must think large, bright, fragrant, weird, and tasty. And fast-growing. You'll want plants that tower over them, like sunflowers, and things that grow large before their eyes, like pumpkins. You'll want amusing vegetables, like purple beans, and freakish things, like misshapen gourds and edible flowers. You'll want vegetables they can eat

**G**ARDENING TEACHES CHILDREN about the cycle of the seasons and opens their eyes to the wonders of nature, giving them a taste for patience and disappointment, and I think that's just wonderful. But all I had in mind by giving my children seeds and a spade was the chance to garden again.

Before having children, I was someone who skipped meals, canceled plans, and toiled past dark by the light of my car's high beams in order to garden. Once I had my first child, I realized that my vision of a quiet baby nestled in a pram by my side as I planted would never materialize. I have a neighbor who built stairs and stone walls with a baby strapped to her chest. I could barely water a plant.

Whether it's because they are small and still believe that whatever Mommy finds interesting must be so, or simply because children really love nothing more than covering themselves in dirt, my experiment in horticultural indoctrination has taken off. Perhaps too well.

My daughter, nearly 4, is a flower-worshipping mini-me. The stroller grinds to a halt and she disembarks before every bud and blossom: “Mommy, I want to grow that in my garden, and that and that and that.” She peruses magazines and catalogs: “I want seed for this flower, and this and this and this.” She has yet to see a flower she doesn't admire.

## little sprouts

### How to keep children (and yourself) interested

- **EMBRACE THE TACKY** Previously scorned annuals, gnomes, and metallic globes are all adorable.
- **A PLOT OF THEIR OWN** If the kids decide it is better to uproot than to sow, you will not mind.
- **START SMALL** Children are not avid weeders, and a 4-by-6-foot plot can hold plenty.
- **RULER OF THE PLOT** Let them choose their own plants and layouts as much as possible.
- **EQUIP THEM** Small, well-made tools will minimize danger to them and to your garden.
- **LET THEM WATER** They excel at it, and with a lightweight coiling hose attachment (smithandhawken.com), they may even stay dry.
- **GARDEN PROJECTS** For tips on those that will appeal to both mother and child—making rose water, lavender bath sachets, and mint tea—see kidsgardening.com.
- **DANGER LURKS** Be aware of tools left on the ground and open bags of fertilizer or manure—organic does not mean nontoxic.

in the garden

# A CHILD'S GARDEN

straight from the garden and bright annuals for cutting that produce all season.

If you have the space, it's nice to give a child a (small) plot of his own, but containers can also be stuffed with flowers and edibles. Even a sunny windowsill can harbor many herbs, houseplants, cacti and other succulents, and forced bulbs like hyacinth. Indoors or out, a handmade sign (laminated for outdoor use) is good for staking out ownership. My daughter dictated hers: **LILY'S GARDEN. ONLY LILY IS ALLOWED TO PICK THE FLOWERS. EVERYBODY ELSE IS ALLOWED ONLY TO LOOK AROUND.**

Over the winter, as my daughter affixed Post-It notes to every image of a flower she saw, I thought more about designing her garden plot than my own. But, consulting those who had done this before, I scaled back my plans, from a secret garden with table and chairs to a simple square plot that she can master and that doesn't create another garden area for me to manage. The plot you make may be the children's garden, but yours is the principal labor.

Gardening with small children has taught *me* about patience and disappointment and the wonders of nature. Good enough is now good enough. I figure that for every plant my 2-year-old son unearths, I can plant ten more



■ **Fast-maturing** crops like radishes offer speedy results. Lily, 4, opposite page, pulls up a harvest. ■ **Lettuces** grown as a cut-and-come-again crop are perfect for a child's plot. Zachary, 6, below, snips young leaves that will grow back three times or more. ■ **Watering, right,** is a child's favorite method of tending. Tulips give way to tomatoes and annuals.



## plants for kids

Any of these will delight their senses

■ **GREAT SCALE** Tithonia 'Torch' and 'Atlantic Giant' pumpkin. ■ **WEIRD-LOOKING** Love-lies-bleeding and the climbers love-in-a-puff and cup-and-saucer vine. ■ **EDIBLE FLOWERS** Nasturtium, viola, chive. ■ **CUTTING FLOWERS** Bright, simple annuals like zinnia, cornflower, and dahlia make more flowers when picked. ■ **DELICIOUS FRAGRANCE** Sweet pea or scented geranium. ■ **BIRDS AND BEES** Hollyhocks attract hummingbirds; asters bring butterflies. ■ **COOKING HERBS** Basil, thyme, and sage can be snipped for dinner. ■ **BIG SEEDS FOR LITTLE HANDS** Corn, beans, sunflower. ■ **FAST PRODUCERS** Radish, beets, lettuces, Shirley poppy, hyacinth bean. ■ **INSTANT GRATIFIERS** Cucumber, edible-podded peas and beans, and the tips of sugar snap pea shoots (great in salads) can be eaten straight from the (organic) garden. ■ **DON'T EAT THIS** Check out [ansci.cornell.edu/plants/alphalist.html](http://ansci.cornell.edu/plants/alphalist.html) for a list of poisonous plants; consider your child's habits and proclivities—you may decide that toxic tomato foliage is okay, but not poison berries. Sources, see back of book.

in the same time. When he excitedly offers me the freshly plucked heads from all the first snowdrops, I can (most of the time) delight in his joy.

Sometimes, after a companionable session of gardening, I fail to realize that the children have had enough until they are naked and knee-deep in the mud puddle they have been watering for the previous half hour. But when I see my daughter tromp through the garden, dripping wet, with the sun on her back, snapping peas from the vine and popping them into her mouth, I realize that what she must be feeling is what I've been after all along. I took up gardening as an adult to try to capture some of that childlike joy for myself. She's got the real thing. ▷

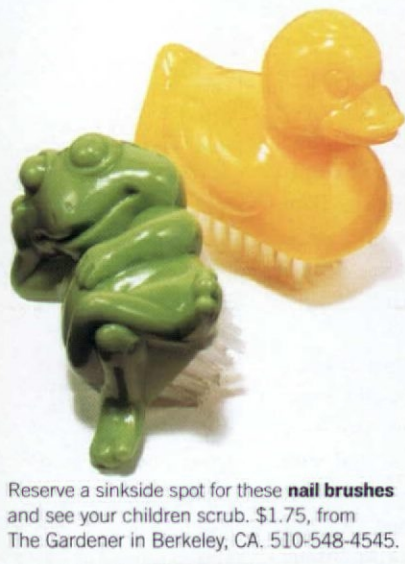
in the garden

## A CHILD'S GARDEN

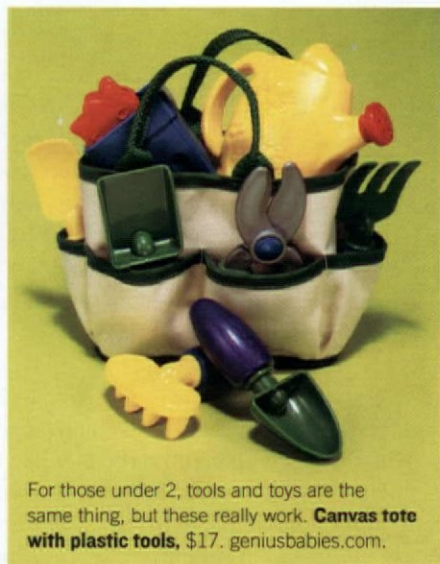
All the clothes, tools, and accessories to help small hands satisfy big ambitions



**Long-handled tools** (only shorter) for kids over 5. \$45 for six pieces. [kidsgardening.com](http://kidsgardening.com). Schylling makes tools for the 3-to-5 set. 800-767-8697.



Reserve a sinkside spot for these **nail brushes** and see your children scrub. \$1.75, from The Gardener in Berkeley, CA. 510-548-4545.



For those under 2, tools and toys are the same thing, but these really work. **Canvas tote with plastic tools**, \$17. [geniusbabies.com](http://geniusbabies.com).



Lightweight **watering cans** with gently sprinkling removable nozzles that you'll want to use yourself. \$16 each, from [landscapeusa.com](http://landscapeusa.com).



These delightfully **colorful hand tools** with painted hardwood handles won't get lost in the dirt. \$8 for a set. [nybgshopinthegarden.org](http://nybgshopinthegarden.org).



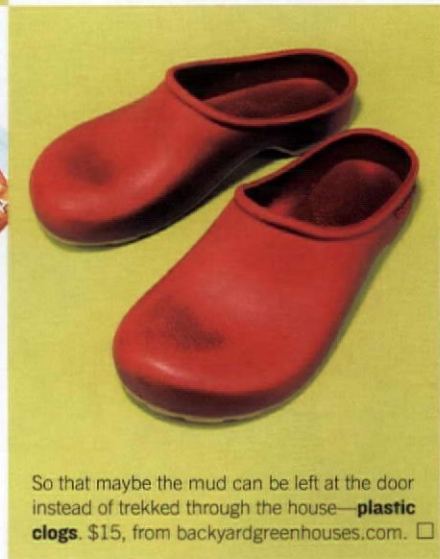
For the chic young gardener, a **mini Provençal market bag** from R. K. Alliston, one of London's best garden shops. \$9 at [rkalliston.com](http://rkalliston.com).



**Gloves** so cute and snug-fitting that children will actually wear them. \$3 a pair, in a variety of sizes, from [alextoys.com](http://alextoys.com).



**Organic Italian vegetable seeds**, selected for children, in irresistible packaging. \$3.25 per packet, from [growitalian.com](http://growitalian.com).



So that maybe the mud can be left at the door instead of trekked through the house—**plastic clogs**. \$15, from [backyardgreenhouses.com](http://backyardgreenhouses.com). □



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in the garden

# great ideas

## BY THE SEA


**Landscape designer Diana Balmori creates a seaside garden of plants not often seen so perilously close to the surf's edge** by Stephen Orr

Like any good seafaring story, gardening next to the ocean is an elemental saga of wind, waves, salt, and rocks. Storm-tossed coastal gardeners must develop the flinty resolve of a New England whaling captain, and the most successful learn to adapt quickly to challenging conditions. After all, even the best-laid plans can be suddenly washed out to sea. A Connecticut coast garden by landscape designer Diana Balmori is sited on a rocky peninsula that determines its simple layout. In her first attempts at making a garden on the property, Balmori tried working with the stony land. But soon she decided to take matters into her own hands. She trucked in fresh earth and devised a series of raised beds that give her the ability to place plants in a sheltered area, while controlling both soil quality and irrigation. Her choice of plants is unconventional. Rather than scrappy shore grasses and native shrubs, Balmori successfully grows the kinds of perennials and annuals, from peonies to nicotiana, usually found in a backyard. To be sure, the fact that the house and garden face Long Island Sound, rather than the rougher open ocean, makes her work easier. But even this coastline has its summer gales and winter northeasters. Still, they haven't defeated a seasoned plants-woman whose ingenuity holds lessons for all seaside gardeners.



### Between a rock and a hard place

■ **ADDING SOIL** During her first summers making the seaside garden, Balmori excavated crevices between large granite boulders and then shoehorned plants into the pockets. Since plants tend to dry out more quickly in sandy, rocky coastal earth, Balmori added fresh soil. Humus, decayed leaves, compost, topsoil, or small-chipped mulch will further conserve soil moisture. Seaside areas can also be lean in nutrients. Add organic fertilizer such as fish meal. Soil that is naturally salty can stunt plant growth and inhibit seed germination, so replace it with fresh soil where needed. ▷



### Seaside visitors

Plants such as these peonies, foxglove, and dianthus rarely survive the rough conditions and poor soil usually found on the coast. Diana Balmori's plantings, ensconced in protective raised planters, are grouped tightly to prevent water evaporation and dissuade weeds.





Color-themed plantings unite the raised beds. **1** A cottagey, pink mix of peonies, foxglove, dianthus, and heuchera resembles an English flower border. **2** A quieter grouping consists of silver-leaved artemisia and yarrow, white campanula, and iris. **3** Several planters are filled with red and orange plants: nicotiana, burgundy-leaved heuchera, astilbe, and lantana.

## Raised beds

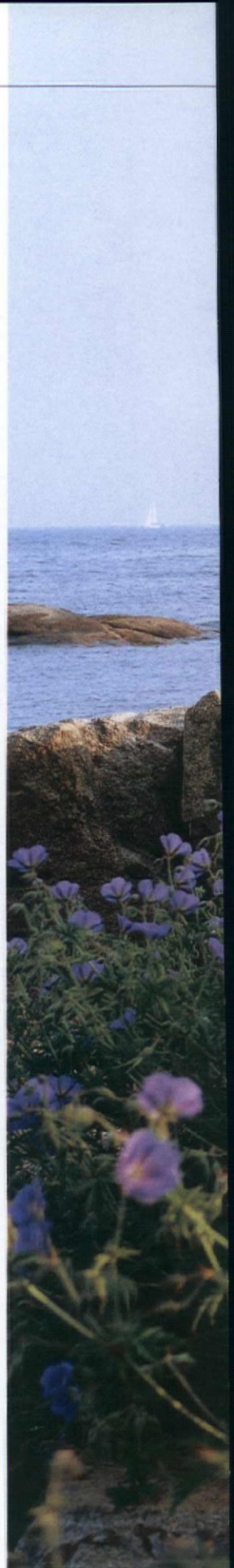
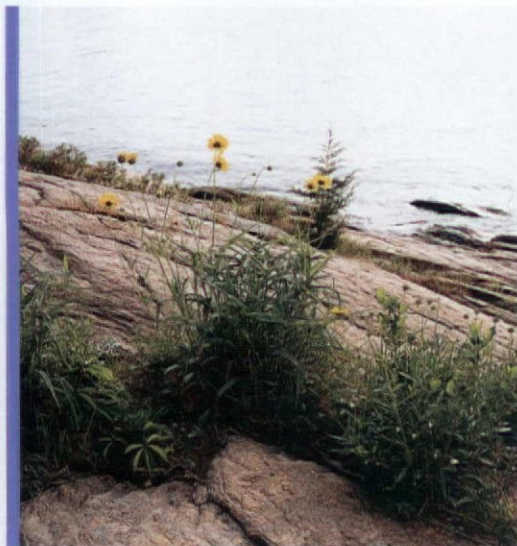
Though Balmori was successful growing plants among boulders near the shoreline, within a few years, there was little planting space left. To gain more, Balmori hit upon the idea of building raised flower beds. "I preferred to make individual units that could be reached from all sides and where one could control the soil conditions," she says. Today, ten beds are lined up on a gravel terrace below the house like small metal boats in a marina. They are made of Cor-Ten steel, which forms a protective layer of rust and does not corrode completely, even after years of exposure to the elements. The planters

are arranged in a comparatively sheltered position on the leeward side of the house. But they are still close to the seawall, and do experience some wind and salt damage. A small number of plants are lost each winter, depending on the harshness of the weather. Seven years ago, a strong hurricane swept one planter several hundred feet up the cove. Even so, the garden survives season after season. Recovery efforts such as flushing the soil with tap water remove salt and help sustain the remaining majority of the plantings. "This isn't a fixed garden," Balmori says of the plant laboratory. "Every year it's a different experiment."

## A sea of challenges

■ **WIND** As on any exposed site, desiccation, or windburn, is a major problem for seaside plants. Place beds in areas with natural shelters such as dunes or rocks, or position your garden on the least windy side of the house. If you need to install a barrier like a hedge or fence, make sure it blends in with its setting and doesn't block your sea view.

■ **SALT SPRAY** burns leaves, and makes them less efficient at drawing up water from the roots. Many seaside plants have adapted beautifully to salty conditions. Yarrow (*Achillea*) and sea lavender (*Limonium latifolium*), for example, have silvery or finely cut leaves that protect them from salt. Plants such as Montauk daisies and sea holly (*Eryngium*) have leaves with a waxy texture that repels salty water. Shrubs like Russian olive (*Eleagnus angustifolia*), willow, and sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) have narrow leaves that also resist salt spray. It is helpful to rinse plants with a hose after storms have blown salty air or water into the garden. □



# great ideas

BY THE SEA



**The color of distance** A bed carved between the stones behind the house is planted with hardy geraniums, such as 'Johnson's Blue,' and delphinium. The marine color tones are intended to blend in with the far-off horizon of the sea.

# one gardener's almanac

**DANGER: MEN WORKING**  
**As garden pests go, contractors are often the cause of more damage and heartbreak than a plague of locusts** by Tom Christopher



**B**ILL WELCH IS not given to profanity. A gentleman in the Southern tradition, he has never resorted to strong language in my presence during the 15 years of our friendship. Yet I could hear the damnation almost surfacing in his voice as he described to me what the painters had done to his garden. And I experienced a feeling of relief.

I certainly didn't take pleasure in his misfortune. But it was liberating to know that even he is not immune to contractors. Personally, I regard them as the most catastrophic of garden pests. Indeed, when I was once given the task of compiling a ten-worst list, I put "guys in steel-toed shoes" at the very top. That was unfair, of course. With the increasing number of

women entering the building trades, I should have given equal billing to "dames in steel-toed shoes."

Professor and extension landscape horticulturist at Texas A&M University, Welch may be the most accomplished horticulturist I have ever met. He wrote the book (books, actually) on gardening in the Deep South; in particular, his *Perennial Garden Color for Texas and the South* is widely regarded as scripture by the gardeners of that region. He's a compulsive collector of heirloom roses, regionally adapted perennials, warm-climate bulbs, native shrubs and trees, new vegetable cultivars, you name it. Unable to stop planting, he has accommodated his habit by renovating a series of rural cottages. After returning some dilapidated structure to a solid elegance it never knew under its original owner, he adorns it with a garden appropriate to the period and site. Then, typically, he sells, so that he can begin the process anew.

Consider Welch's story, which is classic. Welch's current project is a circa 1870s farmhouse near the University of Texas's Winedale Historic Center, in Round Top, Texas. Welch had substantially finished the structural renovations by the winter of 2002; the house needed only a coat of stain before he could surround it with plantings. He didn't think twice about volunteering the garden-to-be as a tour destination for Winedale's fall garden symposium. In this way, he put himself at the painters' mercy.

The first contractor he hired painted the barn, stopped work, and then stopped returning calls as well. A second contractor delivered only excuses right through the spring planting season. Welch had wanted the painters off the premises before he planted, but he could wait no longer. He installed a collection of antique roses and a parterre of sweet myrtles he started from cuttings of historic specimens. He fleshed out the young shrubbery with an array of annuals.

A plague of grasshoppers attacked the plants, but they were recovering nicely when the dilatory painter arrived. While applying a petroleum-based stain to the fence and house, the painter also sprayed it all over the young plants, turning green leaves to brown crisps.

Welch threw what he calls "a little fit." He tried to

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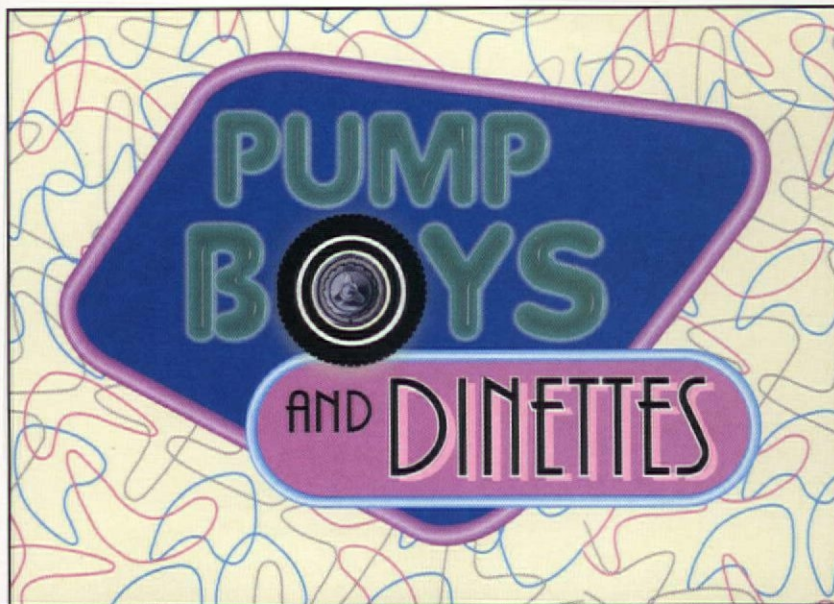


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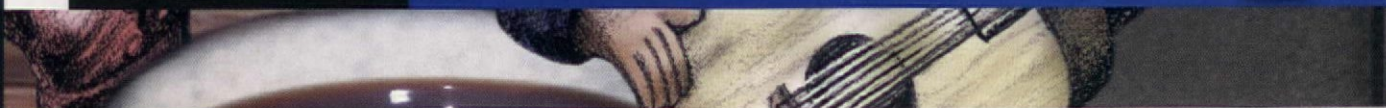
*by Jim Wann, Cass Morgan, Debra Monk,  
John Foley, John Hardwick and John Schimmel*

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## one gardener's almanac

impress upon the painter the need for respect. The painter waited until Welch was away to apply the second coat. This time, before turning on the compressor, the painter swathed all the plants with clear plastic drop cloths. He left the plants that way, wrapped like microwave entrées, for several days in the burning central Texas sun. In that sense, he did "finish" the job, and Welch had to hire yet another contractor to complete the painting of the house.

**T**HIS STORY MIGHT seem extreme if it were not familiar to every gardener who has survived home repairs. If there are two places to put that pallet load of lumber, my experience has been that garden-variety contractors will always set it down on top of the rhododendrons. They back trucks over the lawn when it is wet and soft, whack divots of bark off tree trunks with their backhoes, and mulch the flower beds with Styrofoam coffee cups and cigarette butts. Then, when you think you are finally rid of them and are repairing the

damage, they return to make some adjustment and it starts all over again.

My therapist suggested it helps to understand the other party's point of view. That's why I recently called the only contractor with whom I have actually had a good experience, horticulturally speaking. He is John Hayden Turner, the son in Turner & Son and current proprietor of the roofing and siding business his father founded in 1956. Turner replaced the roof on my house a few years ago without damaging a single plant, and he left my yard at least as neat as he found it.

Communication is the key to avoiding problems, he explains, adding that it should begin before any deal is struck. When he inspects a house to bid on a job, he also inspects the yard, to plot how he can gain access and move materials in and out. He has refused jobs, he says, when it was clear that he could not accomplish these tasks without causing substantial harm to the landscaping. Before stripping off old shingles, he hangs a tarp from the roof's edge and drapes it over the plants below so that debris slips over and beyond them. He'll upend a trash barrel over a

small shrub he deems to be at risk; larger ones he'll encase in scrap cardboard or shelter under lean-tos made from two sheets of plywood fastened together with screws at the peak. The perennials can be protected by scheduling the work for a season when they are dormant.

These are services that Turner believes other contractors would duplicate if they were requested to do so before a bid was submitted. I intend to do this, and insist that the contractor discuss all such measures with me. I want to mark out the avenues of access with stakes and plastic tape. I'm going to lay down sheets of half-inch plywood where he (or she) needs to stack materials. I'll be ready next time.

That's good, Bill Welch agrees. But he reminds me that we cannot always hire Turner & Son. Sometimes work must get done and time or money is short, and gardeners take whatever contractor they can get. That's why persistence is an essential quality for the gardener. In Texas, gardeners persist in the face of grasshoppers, armadillos, drought, and tornadoes. The least I can do, Welch intimated, is to persist in the face of contractors. □



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practice today, perhaps in history.” This will come as news to such undisputed architectural doyennes as Denise Scott Brown and Gae Aulenti, to say nothing of several of Hadid’s exceptionally talented female contemporaries (Billie Tsien, Kazuyo Sejima, among others), some of whom have created works far more convincing than anything yet executed by this diva of deconstructivism.

So how did Hadid do it? She had the good fortune to study under, and then work for, Rem Koolhaas, a genius of self-promotion right up there with Wright and

**The Walnut Street facade of the Contemporary Arts Center**

Le Corbusier. What she learned from him had much to do with the ways in which persona and polemics can infuse the

building art with an air of the heroic, especially in these less than heroic times. Koolhaas, a consummate media strategist, found fame through his provocative series of cult-classic books, whose subliminal topic is the latent eroticism underlying everything from urban planning to shopping. Hadid, far less of an intellectual than her erstwhile mentor, made her mark with the most spectacular architectural renderings since the early modernists turned the classical conventions of Beaux Arts drawing upside down.

Hadid’s dazzlingly abstract invocations of radically fragmented volumes and interpenetrating spaces can be hard even for architectural specialists to decipher, but they are exhilarating. Difficult though they are, these projects exude wall power galore. And as technology has changed, Hadid has morphed

# the reckoning

Cincinnati’s Contemporary Arts Center unveils the first major building by premature superstar Zaha Hadid by martin filler

**I**N THIS AGE of nonstop media hype, no architect has received a more frenetic buildup before completing an important building than Zaha Hadid. Over the past two decades, the buzz surrounding the Baghdad-born, London-based Hadid, now 53, ratcheted up to a deafening roar. It all seemed a bit disproportionate for someone whose minuscule oeuvre consisted of a tiny firehouse in Germany, a tram station-cum-car park in Strasbourg, some public housing in Berlin, a glitzy exhibit at the disastrous Millennium Dome in London, a ski jump in Austria, and a handful of interiors.

Things had clearly gotten out of hand when earlier this year *Architectural Record* magazine preposterously proclaimed Hadid “the best-known, most important female architect in

her representational method from manual drawing to computer-generated graphics with *Matrix*-like seamlessness. But, however compelling paper architecture might be, there comes a time when you must put up or shut up, and that day of reckoning has at last arrived for her.

The opening in June of Hadid’s Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, the new home of Cincinnati’s Contemporary Arts Center, has been the most eagerly awaited architectural event of the year, save for the inauguration of Frank Gehry’s Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles in October. The CAC, one of the liveliest institutions of its kind, hasn’t attracted this much national attention since 1990, when it was attacked by local authorities for displaying the sexually

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# BLUEPRINT

thrusting this way and that and often ending up in a point. Gravity and building codes are the enemies of her compositions, and she lacks the instinctive grasp of sculptural form that makes Gehry the preeminent practitioner of this kind of high-stakes architecture. The crucial difference is that he begins not with flat imagery but with hands-on fabrication of three-dimensional models, which are later translated to the computer screen by his high-tech associates.

Sited on a corner of the busiest traffic intersection in downtown Cincinnati, the CAC immediately brings to mind

two iconic New York museum buildings. With its cantilevered, concrete-clad upper stories thrusting forward like the opened drawers of a desk, it's a mildly cockeyed riff on Marcel Breuer's 1966 Whitney Museum of American Art. And the two-story-high glass curtain wall set into the broad main elevation recalls the similar treatment of the facade on Philip Goodwin and Edward Durell Stone's



**Zaha Hadid, above, refers to the swoop of concrete that ends in the back wall of the lobby, above left, as an "urban carpet."**

■ **The ramp/stair between the floors, left.**

original 1939 Museum of Modern Art. Here, however, Hadid has some fun with the panes by spacing the vertical mullions ever closer as they run across the width of the dark, reflective window wall.

The worst part of the exterior is the horizontally projecting portion covered in matte black aluminum panels. Their

dark finish is unevenly applied and wrecks the impression of this element as a single compositional unit. Like Gehry and Koolhaas, Hadid is not overly concerned with perfect detailing, which is fine as long as it doesn't subvert our ability to read certain parts of a building as the designer intended. To Hadid's credit, though, she kept construction costs down to a remarkable \$20 million (a fifth of the tab for Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao), and you can't expect quality on the cheap.

**T**HE C.A.C. is meant to function as a social engine as much as an art space. In heartland cities, institutions like this one are far more than mere galleries, providing a vital communal link with the world of ideas that contemporary art can open us to. Emphasizing that sense of civic engagement, Hadid gives the ground floor a welcoming street presence, a celebration of humane city life seen far too infrequently amid today's urban sprawl. Recessed strip lights set flush into the paving carry the eye on the diagonal into the building like the oblique sight lines in a Renaissance treatise on architectural perspective. *(Cont. on page 112)*

transgressive photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe, resulting in a sensational censorship trial that the CAC won, happily. The combination of its colorful past and Hadid's white-hot aura seemed certain to make hers an epochal commission.

As it has turned out, this is a good but surprisingly underwhelming building, hardly the defining event to cement Hadid's place among the modern masters. It feels conservative, in contrast to the dynamism of the architect's renderings, which relate to the finished structure in much the same way that the catwalk presentations of the Paris couture collections do to the toned-down, more salable clothes that wind up in stores.

There are reasons for this disconnect. Hadid's explosive depictions rarely acknowledge the structural necessities required to support her vertiginous pileups of boldly varied components,

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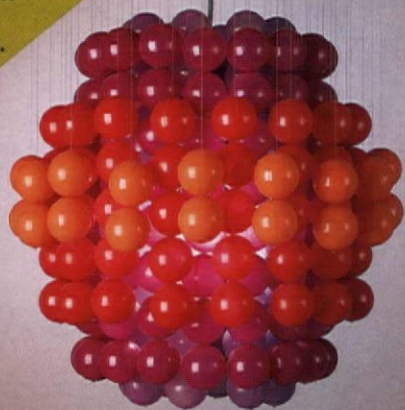


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A 1964 Verner Panton plastic Wonderlamp sold for \$10,000 last December at Wright, a boutique auction house in Chicago.



## ON THE BLOCK

A pair of these sleek Panton chairs from 1973 recently went for \$600 at auction.



the subject of an exhibition that opened in July at the Palm Springs Desert Museum. "Acrylic is an honest material. It has integrity; it lasts forever. Acrylic pieces are like diamonds in an interior."

Plastic also figures prominently in the collection of one of today's most enthusiastic devotees of avant-garde furniture, Jenette Kahn, a New York media executive and author of an acclaimed book on radical design, *In Your Space*. "Few materials make color so radiant and exciting, and it's a medium that has invited designers to do some of their most innovative work," says Kahn, who owns plastic pieces by Verner Panton, Wendell Castle, Bernard Rancillac, and others. "The material itself is inexpensive, but the results are worth their weight in gold."

Wait a minute, you say. *Diamonds? Gold?* We're talking about *plastics* here! Plastic means cheesy—something disposable, over-produced, and certainly *déclassé*, right? Well, perhaps not. Those who follow the auction market have recently noticed more

and more plastic designs showing up in sales catalogs for boutique auction houses and even the major firms. A growing

number of collectors are coming to appreciate plastic pieces, not only for their radical forms but also out of a realization of the importance of plastics in the history of twentieth-century industrial design. "There comes a point when people 'get it,' and that's when stuff becomes sought after," says Peter Loughrey, founder of L.A. Modern Auctions and modern design specialist for Butterfield's Auctioneers. "Plastics are on the cusp. That dialogue from *The Graduate* was never more apt. To someone looking for an area in which to start collecting, I'd say there's one word: plastics."

The image of plastics as cheap is still correct in one context—price. "It's the field with the greatest differential between critical acclaim and market value," says James Zemaitis, head of the modern design department at the New York offices of the auction house Phillips, de Pury & Luxembourg. Last May, Phillips sold an elegant Dondolo rocking chair, a 1967 design by Cesare Leonardi and Franca Stagi, for \$20,000. In December, Richard Wright, a Chicago auctioneer specializing in modern art and design, sold a 1964 Verner Panton Wonderlamp—a

A laminated cabinet from the '70s by Raymond Loewy fetched \$3,000.



This 1970 Joe Colombo Tube chair, made of padded plastic cylinders, carried a \$10,000 estimate at a recent sale.



# one word: plastics

Once derided as symbols of a throwaway society, plastic designs are becoming prized collectibles  
by gregory cerio

IF ASKED TO LIST SOME of the principal patrons of cutting-edge interior design in the late '60s and early '70s, most people wouldn't name Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope, or Tennessee Williams. Yet all three bought extensively from Charles Hollis Jones, the Los Angeles-based furniture designer whose signature pieces of that period were made almost entirely of clear acrylic. "They were good clients—when Tennessee was in L.A., he would buy anything of mine if he had the money," recalls Jones, 57, whose work is

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(triamcinolone acetonide) Nasal Spray

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Shake Well Before Using

**BRIEF SUMMARY****INDICATIONS AND USAGE**

**Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray is indicated for the treatment of the nasal symptoms of seasonal and perennial allergic rhinitis in adults and children 6 years of age and older.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS**

Hypersensitivity to any of the ingredients of this preparation contraindicates its use.

**WARNINGS**

The replacement of a systemic corticosteroid with a topical corticosteroid can be accompanied by signs of adrenal insufficiency and, in addition, some patients may experience symptoms of withdrawal; e.g., joint and/or muscular pain, lassitude and depression. Patients previously treated for prolonged periods with systemic corticosteroids and transferred to topical corticosteroids should be carefully monitored for acute adrenal insufficiency in response to stress. In those patients who have asthma or other clinical conditions requiring long-term systemic corticosteroid treatment, too rapid a decrease in systemic corticosteroids may cause a severe exacerbation of their symptoms.

Children who are on immunosuppressant drugs are more susceptible to infections than healthy children. Chickenpox and measles, for example, can have a more serious or even fatal course in children on immunosuppressant doses of corticosteroids. In such children, or in adults who have not had these diseases, particular care should be taken to avoid exposure. If exposed, therapy with varicella-zoster immune globulin (VZIG) or pooled intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg), as appropriate, may be indicated. If chickenpox develops, treatment with antiviral agents may be considered.

**PRECAUTIONS**

**General:** In clinical studies with triamcinolone acetonide nasal spray, the development of localized infections of the nose and pharynx with *Candida albicans* has rarely occurred. When such an infection develops it may require treatment with appropriate local or systemic therapy and discontinuance of treatment with **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray.

**Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray should be used with caution, if at all, in patients with active or quiescent tuberculous infection of the respiratory tract or in patients with untreated fungal, bacterial, or systemic viral infections or ocular herpes simplex.

Because of the inhibitory effect of corticosteroids, in patients who have experienced recent nasal septal ulcers, nasal surgery, or trauma, a corticosteroid should be used with caution until healing has occurred. As with other nasally inhaled corticosteroids, nasal septal perforations have been reported in rare instances.

When used at excessive doses, systemic corticosteroid effects such as hypercorticism and adrenal suppression may appear. If such changes occur, **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray should be discontinued slowly, consistent with accepted procedures for discontinuing oral steroid therapy.

**Information for Patients:** Patients being treated with **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray should receive the following information and instructions. Patients who are on immunosuppressant doses of corticosteroids should be warned to avoid exposure to chickenpox or measles and, if exposed, to obtain medical advice.

Patients should use **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray at regular intervals since its effectiveness depends on its regular use. (See **DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**.)

An improvement in some patient symptoms may be seen within the first day of treatment, and generally, it takes one week of treatment to reach maximum benefit. Initial assessment for response should be made during this time frame and periodically until the patient's symptoms are stabilized.

The patient should take the medication as directed and should not exceed the prescribed dosage. The patient should contact the physician if symptoms do not improve after three weeks, or if the condition worsens. Patients who experience recurrent episodes of epistaxis (nose bleeds) or nasal septum discomfort while taking this medication should contact their physician. For the proper use of this unit and to attain maximum improvement, the patient should read and follow the accompanying patient instructions carefully.

It is important to shake the bottle well before each use. Also, the bottle should be discarded after 120 actuations since the amount of triamcinolone acetonide delivered thereafter per actuation may be substantially less than 55 mcg of drug. Do not transfer any remaining suspension to another bottle.

**Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, and Impairment Of Fertility:** In a two-year study in rats, triamcinolone acetonide caused no treatment-related carcinogenicity at oral doses up to 1.0 mcg/kg (approximately 1/30 and 1/50 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults and children on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis, respectively). In a two-year study in mice, triamcinolone acetonide caused no treatment-related carcinogenicity at oral doses up to 3.0 mcg/kg (approximately 1/12 and 1/30 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults and children on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis, respectively).

No mutagenicity studies with triamcinolone acetonide have been performed.

In male and female rats, triamcinolone acetonide caused no change in pregnancy rate at oral doses up to 15.0 mcg/kg (approximately 1/2 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). Triamcinolone acetonide caused increased fetal resorptions and stillbirths and decreases in pup weight and survival at doses of 5.0 mcg/kg and above (approximately 1/5 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). At 1.0 mcg/kg (approximately 1/30 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis), it did not induce the above mentioned effects.

**Pregnancy: Teratogenic Effects: Pregnancy Category C.** Triamcinolone acetonide was teratogenic in rats, rabbits, and monkeys. In rats, triamcinolone acetonide was teratogenic at inhalation doses of 20 mcg/kg and above (approximately 7/10 of the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). In rabbits, triamcinolone acetonide was teratogenic at inhalation doses of 20 mcg/kg and above (approximately 2 times the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). In monkeys, triamcinolone acetonide was teratogenic at an inhalation dose of 500 mcg/kg (approximately 37 times the maximum recommended daily intranasal dose in adults on a mcg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). Dose-related teratogenic effects in rats and rabbits included cleft palate and/or internal hydrocephaly and axial skeletal defects, whereas the effects observed in the monkey were cranial malformations.

There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Therefore, triamcinolone acetonide should be used in pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus. Since their introduction, experience with oral corticosteroids in pharmacologic as opposed to physiologic doses suggests that rodents are more prone to teratogenic effects from corticosteroids than humans. In addition, because there is a natural increase in glucocorticoid production during pregnancy, most women will require a lower exogenous corticosteroid dose and many will not need corticosteroid treatment during pregnancy.

**Nonteratogenic Effects:** Hypoadrenalism may occur in infants born of mothers receiving corticosteroids during pregnancy. Such infants should be carefully observed.

**Nursing Mothers:** It is not known whether triamcinolone acetonide is excreted in human milk. Because other corticosteroids are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray is administered to nursing women.

**Pediatric Use:** Safety and effectiveness in pediatric patients below the age of 6 years have not been established.

Corticosteroids have been shown to cause growth suppression in children and teenagers, particularly with higher doses over extended periods. If a child or teenager on any corticosteroid appears to have growth suppression, the possibility that they are particularly sensitive to this effect of corticosteroids should be considered.

**ADVERSE REACTIONS**

In placebo-controlled, double-blind, and open-label clinical studies, 1483 adults and children 12 years and older received treatment with triamcinolone acetonide aqueous nasal spray. These patients were treated for an average duration of 51 days. In the controlled trials (2-5 weeks duration) from which the following adverse reaction data are derived, 1394 patients were treated with **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray for an average of 19 days. In a long-term, open-label study, 172 patients received treatment for an average duration of 286 days.

Adverse events occurring at an incidence of 2% or greater and more common among **Nasacort AQ**-treated patients than placebo-treated patients in controlled adult clinical trials were:

Adverse Events	Patients treated with 220 mcg triamcinolone acetonide (n=857) %	Vehicle Placebo (n=962) %
Pharyngitis	5.1	3.6
Epistaxis	2.7	0.8
Increase in cough	2.1	1.5

A total of 602 children 6 to 12 years of age were studied in 3 double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trials. Of these, 172 received 110 mcg/day and 207 received 220 mcg/day of **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray for two, six, or twelve weeks. The longest average durations of treatment for patients receiving 110 mcg/day and 220 mcg/day were 76 days and 80 days, respectively. Only 1% of those patients treated with **Nasacort AQ** were discontinued due to adverse experiences. No patient receiving 110 mcg/day discontinued due to a serious adverse event and one patient receiving 220 mcg/day discontinued due to a serious event that was considered not drug related. Overall, these studies found the adverse experience profile for **Nasacort AQ** to be similar to placebo. A similar adverse event profile was observed in pediatric patients 6-12 years of age as compared to older children and adults with the exception of epistaxis which occurred in less than 2% of the pediatric patients studied.

Adverse events occurring at an incidence of 2% or greater and more common among adult patients treated with placebo than **Nasacort AQ** were: headache, and rhinitis. In children aged 6 to 12 years these events included: asthma, epistaxis, headache, infection, otitis media, sinusitis, and vomiting.

In clinical trials, nasal septum perforation was reported in one adult patient although relationship to **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray has not been established.

In the event of accidental overdose, an increased potential for these adverse experiences may be expected, but acute systemic adverse experiences are unlikely. (See **OVERDOSAGE**.)

**DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**

**Recommended Doses: Adults and children 12 years of age and older:** The recommended starting and maximum dose is 220 mcg per day as two sprays in each nostril once daily.

**Children 6 to 12 years of age:** The recommended starting dose is 110 mcg per day given as one spray in each nostril once daily. The maximum recommended dose is 220 mcg per day as two sprays per nostril once daily.

**Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray is not recommended for children under 6 years of age since adequate numbers of patients have not been studied in this age group.

**Individualization of Dosage:** It is always desirable to titrate an individual patient to the minimum effective dose to reduce the possibility of side effects. In adults, when the maximum benefit has been achieved and symptoms have been controlled, reducing the dose to 110 mcg per day (one spray in each nostril once a day) has been shown to be effective in maintaining control of the allergic rhinitis symptoms in patients who were initially controlled at 220 mcg/day.

In children six to twelve years of age, the recommended starting dose is 110 mcg per day given as one spray in each nostril once daily. The maximum recommended daily dose in children 6 to 12 years of age is 220 mcg per day (two sprays in each nostril once daily). Some patients who do not achieve maximum symptom control at a dose of 110 mcg per day may benefit from a dose of 220 mcg given as two sprays in each nostril once daily. The minimum effective dose should be used to ensure continued control of symptoms. Once symptoms are controlled, pediatric patients may be able to be maintained on 110 mcg per day (1 spray in each nostril once daily).

An improvement in some patient symptoms may be seen within the first day of treatment, and generally, it takes one week of treatment to reach maximum benefit. Initial assessment for response should be made during this time frame and periodically until the patient's symptoms are stabilized. If adequate relief of symptoms has not been obtained after 3 weeks of treatment, **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray should be discontinued. (See **WARNINGS, PRECAUTIONS, INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, and ADVERSE REACTIONS**.)

**Directions For Use:** Illustrated Patient's Instructions for use accompany each package of **Nasacort AQ** Nasal Spray.

**OVERDOSAGE**

Like any other nasally administered corticosteroid, acute overdosing is unlikely in view of the total amount of active ingredient present. In the event that the entire contents of the bottle were administered all at once, via either oral or nasal application, clinically significant systemic adverse events would most likely not result. The patient may experience some gastrointestinal upset.

Rx Only.

Please see product circular for full prescribing information.

**Aventis Pharmaceuticals Inc.**

Bridgewater, NJ 08807 USA

US Pat. Nos. 6,143,329 and 5,976,573.

Other patents pending.

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striking light fixture composed of hanging red plastic balls—for \$10,000. Art pieces and prototypes aside, these items represent the top echelon of the plastics design market. Most pieces go for a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, and many for much less. In November, a wave-shaped 1962 Joe Colombo Acrilica table lamp fetched just under \$6,000 at Phillips, while a Panton VP hanging lamp brought \$3,100. Raymond Loewy DF 2000 plastic laminate case furniture from the '60s routinely goes for under \$2,500. Christie's sold a set of six Jones acrylic chairs once owned by Tennessee Williams for \$6,000. Lamps by the '60s Italian design firm Superstudio can be found for \$1,000; an Ettore Sottsass Valentine typewriter by Olivetti goes for \$150.

Granted, plastics aren't for everyone. For each attribute of plastics, there seems to be, unfortunately, a corresponding weakness. While designers love the freedom of form that the material allows them, plastic tends to be cold and have no cozy "give." Though many plastics theoretically last forever, some older types of polyurethane can degrade when exposed to sunlight, and white plastics are prone to yellowing. Plastics are waterproof and have great strength in proportion to their weight, but they are susceptible to scars and burns. "Minor scratches can often be buffed out, but deeper scratches, chips, and cracks are very problematic," says Richard Wright. "Wood takes on a patina and looks good with a few nicks, but you want plastics to be pristine. People who are serious collectors are obsessed with condition."

The irony, then, is that mint-condition objects made of common, ordinary plastics can actually be rarer than those made from materials that are considered precious. Perhaps even more appealing to the nature of a true collector, the field of plastic design is rich in history and detail, a treasure trove for those who take a connoisseur's delight in arcana. Plastic materials have been around since the mid-1800s, and refinements and discoveries in industrial synthetics continue to this day. The term "plastics" encompasses scores of materials, from familiar products like Bakelite, Lucite acrylic, fiberglass, polyester, and vinyl to those whose names only a chemist can pronounce. Developments in the use of plastics in home furnishings are well documented. So, in the same way that aficionados of midcentury design can look at an Eames chair and tell which year's production run it came from by the feet or the

rubber shock mounts, plastic collectors can date a design by its materials. The seductively curving Panton chair, perhaps the most famous piece of plastic design, is the perfect example. The first chair ever made from a single piece of synthetic material, it was introduced by the Swiss firm Vitra in 1967. The initial version, made of cold-pressed reinforced polyester, proved too costly to manufacture. In 1971, the company put out another model, made of a space-age thermoplastic called Luran S, but this new material wasn't as tough as had been hoped and was dropped in 1979. After further tinkering in the Vitra labs, subsequent editions of the Panton chair have been made in molded polyurethane and injection-molded polypropylene.

Yawn-inducing scientific gobbledegook? Maybe. But to certain collectors, the fun is in the minutiae. Peter Loughrey says he recently sold a "major" museum a red stacking side chair designed by Joe Colombo and made of ABS—acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, a plastic used early in the development of injection molding. The price was \$1,000, and, Loughrey says, "they were happy to get it. Lots of collectors buy only ABS. It's a rare and important material in the evolution of plastics."

So sneer at plastics. Roll your eyes at polyvinyl whatsits and thermobabble manufacturing. Somewhere, a design geek is proudly sitting on her 1972 Luran S Panton chair. And, auctioneers say, she's also sitting on a tidy investment.



The Eero Aarnio Ball chair is still made in Finland from the original molds.

## PLASTIC DADDIES

Leading designers in the use of synthetic materials

- **Verner Panton (1926–1998)** With his colorful, wondrous designs for Vitra and Herman Miller, the Danish architect was arguably modernism's most exuberant innovator in the use of plastics. "Most people spend their lives living in dreary gray-beige conformity," he said. "[My goal] is to provoke people into using their imagination."
- **Joe Colombo (1930–1971)** The Milanese architect studied painting when he first entered college, and an artist's eye for color and form is clear in his fanciful yet always functional designs.
- **Eero Aarnio (born 1932)** The Finnish designer's Ball chair, above, is an icon of pop art design of the '60s. For all its super-groovy looks, the womblike chair is as cozy as Grandma's quilt.
- **Vico Magistretti (born 1920)** One of the first Italian designers to experiment with plastics. While lovely and deceptively simple in form, Magistretti's pieces place a premium on usefulness.
- **Ettore Sottsass (born 1917)** Architect and designer of everything from furniture to appliances, Sottsass works with every conceivable material. Plastics figure in some of his best-known pieces, from the Valentine typewriter to the laminated Carlton room divider. □



Vico Magistretti's designs, like the Vicario chair for Italy's Artemide, are noted for their simplicity, utility, and lush use of color.



## the secrets of SOAVE

**T**HE VIEW FROM the exit ramp of the autostrada is emblematic of the problem with Soave. The first thing you see through your windshield is a huge, lime green warehouse with a bat wing roofline that looks like some kind of retro-futuristic vision from the animators of *The Powerpuff Girls*. Off in the hazy distance, floating dreamlike above the big SOAVE BOLLA sign atop the warehouse, you can see the medieval ramparts of Soave castle, perched on a distant hilltop. From the ridiculous to the sublime.

They ought to post a CAVEAT EMPTOR sign beside the exit.

Soave is the “most maligned, misunderstood, and polarized wine district in Italy,” according to Italophiles Joseph Bastianich and David Lynch, authors of the indispensable *Vino Italiano*. Most of us think of Soave as the insipid white beverage of our ignorant youth. But there are a handful of idealists who produce exceptional wines from the native garganega grapes in the rolling hills just northeast of Verona.

It says a lot about the current situation in Soave that one of the two finest producers has

**Among the millions of bottles of watery Soave that pour forth each year are a few shining examples of this white at its best**

by jay mcinerney

recently divorced himself from the appellation, removing the Soave name from his labels. “It’s water,” he says of the average Soave. “No aroma, no taste.” Roberto Anselmi is a Porsche-driving, black-Prada-clad native of the region whose genial and gregarious nature keeps rubbing up against his fierce perfectionism. Shortly after he welcomes me into his sleek modernist suite of offices in the village of Monteforte d’Alpone, he throws a small tantrum about the faint ammonia residue of some cleaning products in the tasting room and instructs his daughter to move our tasting to the nearby winery, while making a note to chastise the cleaning staff. In many ways he reminds me of Angelo Gaja, another hypomaniac Italian who inherited a wine estate in a backwater appellation and decided to conquer the world.

Anselmi’s father was a successful negotiant who turned out millions of bottles of undistinguished plonk from purchased grapes. After returning to the family seat with an oenology degree and high moral purpose, Roberto closed down the negotiant business and set about, in concert with his friend and neighbor Leonildo Pieropan, “to make a revolution.”

The revolution started, as is so often the case, in the hills. Or maybe it was a counterrevolution: the traditional Soave Classico district encompassed only the hillsides, with their poor volcanic and calcareous soils.

In 1968, when the official Soave appellation was created by the Italian authorities, pressure from the big growers resulted in a huge expansion of the zone to include vast swathes of fertile, overproductive flatland (ignoring the ancient Roman maxim “Bacchus loves the hills”). Anselmi concentrated his efforts on the steep hillsides and adapted new viticultural practices to replace the old, super-productive pergola system. Beginning in the late ’70s, he started producing serious, rich Soaves and lobbied fiercely for stricter regulations.

Anselmi failed to convince the authorities that his neighbors should be held to a higher standard. “After twenty-five years, I decided to divorce Soave,” he says. So you will just have to take my word for it that Anselmi’s wines are essentially Soaves, the essence of what garganega (accented with a little aromatic Trebbiano di Soave) from this region can produce: a wine with more body and fruit than the average Italian white and mineral highlights that can make it reminiscent of a good Chablis.

Anselmi's friend Pieropan remains married to the Soave appellation; he and his forebears are undoubtedly the best thing that ever happened to this tramp of a wine region. Stylistically and temperamentally, Pieropan is the opposite of Anselmi: a shy, bespectacled homebody who favors cardigans and lives with his family in a meticulously restored villa just inside the crenellated medieval walls of the town of Soave.

Despite his reputation as the ultimate traditionalist, Pieropan loves technology, and the medieval outbuildings around the house are crammed

with the latest in computer-controlled, stainless-steel fermentation tanks. His vineyards, like Anselmi's, are located in the hills of the Classico region, and his wines have long been cherished by connoisseurs for their purity, delicacy, and balance. His single-vineyard La Rocca is one of Italy's greatest white wines. Unlike most Soaves, Pieropan's wines can age for ten years and beyond, becoming increasingly mineral-y over time. They are the best possible proof that the region is worth saving.

A few other producers are making noteworthy wines, including brothers Graziano

and Sergio Prà, whose single-vineyard Monte Grande Soave, made from grapes with a serious case of vertigo, is consistently one of the best wines of the region. The Gini brothers, Sandro and Claudio, make a rich, plump style of Soave, as does Stefano Inama. Inama's regular Soave is very good, but he has made a name for himself in a hurry with two supercharged, wood-aged wines, Vigneti Di Foscarino and Vigneto Du Lot, which are deemed freakish by some traditionalists, tasting somewhat like super-ripe new-world chardonnays. Whether you like this style or not, they are an excellent antidote to the notion that Soave is a dilute and boring quaff.

A few other names to look for: Cantina del Castello, Cesari, Coffele, and Suavia. There may be a few good makers I'm unaware of, but the 45 million or so bottles a year from other sources are probably worth avoiding. Soave's reputation as a reservoir of cheap mouthwash works in favor of the consumer; the bottlings of the top producers sell for \$10 to \$15, and the single-vineyard wines are in the \$20 range. They are perfect summer whites—especially in this market. □

## the oeno file

- **2002 PIEROPAN CALVARINO SOAVE CLASSICO** Fills the mouth with lemon zest and green apple fruit. Very lively and refreshing, even a bit mouth-puckering at the moment. It will open up and drink well for several years at least. \$24
- **2000 ANSELMI CAPITEL CROCE** The star of the Anselmi line, this single-vineyard garganega suggests lemon, grapefruit, and honey, and finishes with a long, lingering mineral note. Super Soave in all but name. \$15
- **2001 PRA MONTE GRANDE SOAVE CLASSICO SUPERIORE** Rich, viscous, a muscle car of a Soave, with surprising power and body. Finishes with a vibrant mineral quality. \$16
- **2001 INAMA SOAVE CLASSICO SUPERIORE** A traditionally styled, unoaked Soave from this new-wave producer; a zesty, lime-y, refreshing aperitif. \$15
- **2001 CESARI SOAVE** Nice body and fruit, dry and balanced, with a touch of almond on the finish. An aperitif or a white-fish wine. \$10

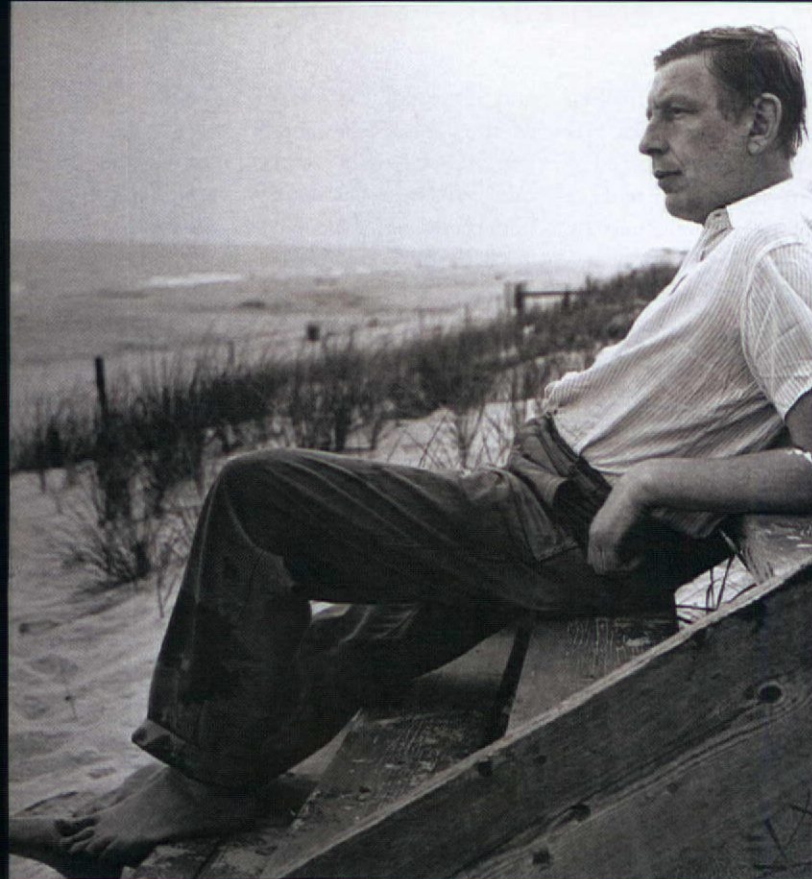
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vegetables, concentration and production, privacy. South—heat, light, drought, calm, agricultural plains, trees, rotarian crowds, the life of ignoble ease, spiders, fruits and desserts, the waste of time, publicity. West and East are relatively neutral.

In this pattern, I think that I detect two formative factors, Puritanism and Introversion. If, like me, you have been brought up to believe that man cannot, if he is to live rightly, surrender to his nature, but must, on the contrary, struggle with it; if again your temperament, like mine, is of the kind that prefers your own company or the company of one other to the company of several; if, when you go for a walk, you prefer the countryside to be uninhabited, except for yourself and your companion; if you are passionately convinced that a house should be a womb with small rooms, small windows, and thick walls, not a marketplace or a railroad station, then you are probably, like me, a cold weather man.

In hot weather what is bound to happen? Life will only be bearable if you relax, and your Puritan conscience will torment you. The lushness of summer vegetation will

seem a dangerous temptation. You will have no peace, no retreat. Inside, windows and doors must be left open and you must lie in bed defenseless under a mere sheet. If you venture outside, the streets and the beaches are crowded with noises and heaps of people, and it will not be long before you find yourself wishing to heaven it were wintertime, when

you could be sitting in front of the fire reading or having a really interesting, intimate talk.

Literature has not been fair to cold weather. In the past this was understandable enough: it was harder to keep warm in cold weather than cool in hot, and consequently the poets celebrated the coming of spring and summer, but let me hope that winter will find poets to sing its praises. Mr. T. S. Eliot made a promising beginning when he broke with tradition and called April the cruelest month.

I do not really function properly until I can put the thick lining into my topcoat; faith and charity vanish abruptly in some dreadful explosion of heat around the end of March. When I buy my morning paper, after a brief glance at the obituary page, I turn to a close study of the weather report, the immediate importance of which transcends any domestic or foreign situation.

Should circumstances ever drive me, like Ovid, into exile, I shall retire, if I am allowed, to a little fishing town in Iceland at the bottom of a grim fjord where the sun is not seen for five months in the year. There, not I hope alone, I shall eat fish, play the phonograph, and die in the greatest contentment. □

## december 1947

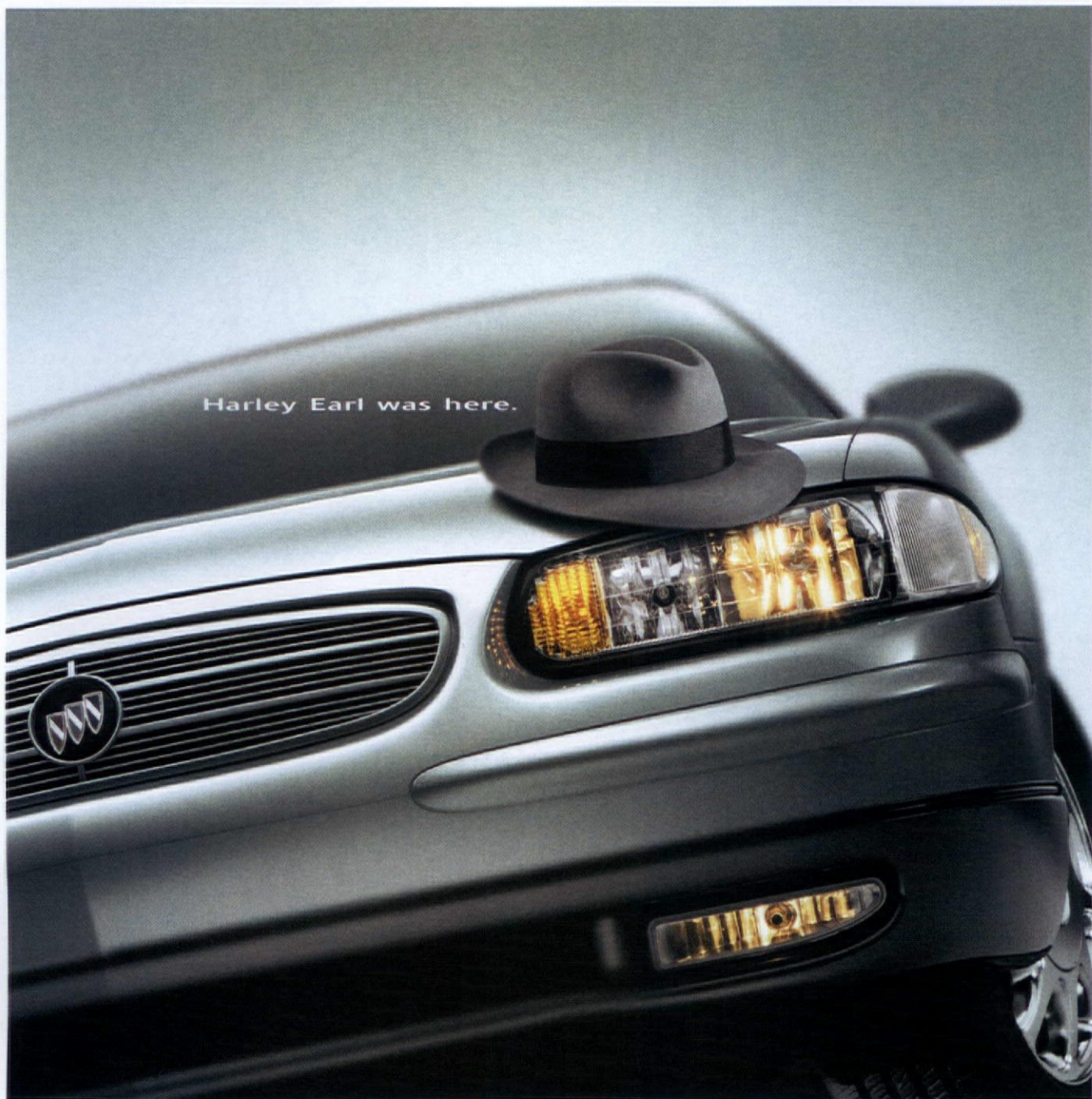
Not all poets laud summer. W. H. Auden hated it, and made a compelling case for winter. This is an excerpt

**M**Y COLDEST MEMORY is of the Christmas week of 1928 in Berlin. I had spent my month's allowance, and the friends from whom I might have borrowed were out of town, so that I could not afford to leave the house, and passed the days with my feet up on the very inadequate tiled stove, reading *War and Peace* for the first time, cold, hungry, and very happy. My hottest memory is of the first fortnight of August 1944, in New York City. I had money, friends, an electric fan, a shower, a refrigerator. I lay in a stupor wishing I were dead.

My feelings have been oriented by the compass as far back as I can remember. For reasons which will be, perhaps, more obvious to psychologists than to me, North and South are the foci of two sharply contrasted clusters of images and emotions. For example, as I reflect at this moment, I get the following associations: North—cold, wind, precipices, glaciers, caves, heroic conquest of dangerous obstacles, whales, hot meat and

ice is nice,  
hot is not

The great British-born poet W. H. Auden (1907–1973), seen above on Fire Island, NY, in 1946, was also an essayist and playwright. Among his best-known poems are "September 1, 1939," and "In Memory of W. B. Yeats."



Harley Earl was here.

A powerful engine growling behind the grille was one of the many legacies of America's greatest car designer. All of which live on today at the car company where he hung his hat.



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Robin and John Pickett enlarged the appearance of the living room in their Normandy-style house by adding a covered porch, this page.

■ Virginia landscape architect Charles J. Stick helped the couple create the parterre, opposite page, in which catmint and 'New Dawn' roses cluster around an antique wellhead.



# FAMILY AFFAIR



IN SOUTHAMPTON,  
HOMEOWNER ROBIN PICKETT  
KEEPS TRADITION  
ALIVE WHILE GIVING IT A  
COLORFUL TWIST

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK PHOTOGRAPHED BY SIMON UPTON  
WRITTEN BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH



**A**

ROBIN PICKETT'S summerhouse in Southampton, Long Island, afternoon tea is served daily amid chintz and Chippendale. The manners are gracious, the lampshades are smocked, and mother lives three doors away.

It is a way of life that comes naturally. Pickett is a great-granddaughter of Thomas E. Murray, a colleague of Thomas Edison's who bought almost a thousand acres of potato fields on the ocean here in the early 1900s. For five generations, Murray's family—whose ranks came to include Vanderbilts and Fords, and even a

Wimbledon champ, Pickett's stepfather, Sidney B. Wood—spent their summers riding horses, sailing, and sunning at the beach club. Pickett's mother, Pat Wood, chronicled their activities in the *Beachcomber* column she wrote for decades in the *Southampton Press*. "It was tremendous fun growing up," Pickett says. "All my friends were my cousins, and we would swim at our own swimming hole with our own lifeguard."

The Murray compound no longer exists. Most of the land was subdivided and sold after Pickett's grandmother died in the 1960s. When Pickett's aunt Catherine di Montezemolo decided to sell her home five

**DESIGNER SAVVY**

Greens and floral patterns in the living room, these pages, were inspired by Pickett's love of outdoor living.

**TRADE SECRETS**

**FURNITURE** Regency sofa and drum tables, Hyde Park Antiques, NYC. Sofa and chairs custom-made by Baron Upholsterers, NYC. **FABRICS** Sofa in Colefax and Fowler's Ellerby; custom trim, Passementerie. **Pillows** in Travers's Tuffon silk plaid.



“THINGS DO  
NOT HAVE  
TO MATCH  
PRECISELY, BUT  
EVERYTHING  
SHOULD BLEND  
TOGETHER”

—ROBIN PICKETT





years ago, her niece couldn't let it go. Pickett bought the house with her husband, John. While the life they have created here speaks nostalgically of another era, they have updated the home with their love of outdoor living and Robin's eye for fresh color and pattern.

"The good strong bones were there," she says of the Mediterranean-style house and the gardens where her aunt had planted willow trees and daffodils. Di Montezemolo, a former *Vogue* fashion editor, had used the land as a wildflower meadow, where her horses grazed. In 1994, she hired an architect, Millard Peabody, to build a house. "The archi-

tecture was based on my husband's family villa in Tuscany," says di Montezemolo. With its stucco facade, she adds, "it was also a little bit French."

Since the Picketts have five grown children, the couple needed space to accommodate visits from family and friends. Robert Paxton, a Virginia architect whom the couple met when they had a working farm near Charlottesville, designed a new guest cottage and pool house for the Southampton property. He also added a covered porch outside the living room so that the family could dine outdoors. To provide a view from the house, the Picketts

#### DESIGNER SAVVY

"Dining rooms are difficult," says Pickett. "I told muralist Robert Jackson to go wild."

#### TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** George III chairs and Regency table, opposite page, Hyde Park Antiques, NYC.  
**FABRIC** Dining chairs in Manuel Canovas's Sancí damask.  
**FLATWARE** Tiffany & Co., NYC.  
**RUGS** Chinese needlepoint carpets from Stark appear in the dining room, opposite, and living room, above.





PICKETT CHOSE A COLOR PALETTE  
INSPIRED BY THE GARDEN: FRESH GREENS,  
PINKS, AND AN ENERGIZING CELADON





hired Charles J. Stick, a Virginia landscape architect. He designed a parterre surrounded by hundreds of hydrangeas, roses, and crape myrtles, and placed at its center a circular bed filled with seasonal flowers and climbing roses.

As a young woman, Robin Pickett attended the New York School of Interior Design, but when it came to her own houses, she had always enlisted the help of Georgina Fairholme, an English grande dame who began with Colefax and Fowler in London and decorated Jackie Onassis's house on Martha's Vineyard. When, ten years ago, Fairholme announced that she was retiring to Italy (she has since returned to the United States and lives in Sag Harbor, New York), she told Pickett it was time for her to go out on her own.

From Fairholme, Pickett inherited several strong contacts in Manhattan, including Baron Upholsterers (specialists in rolled-edge chairs) and Passementerie, purveyors of custom trimmings. Fairholme also taught Pickett how to embellish a room with special details such as tufting on upholstery and ribbon trim. What's more, Pickett says, "I learned from Georgina to have a sense of fun and whimsy, that things do not have to match precisely but that everything should blend together." ▶

#### DESIGNER SAVVY

The masculine/feminine master bedroom pairs solid furniture with delicate color.

#### TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** Love seat and armchair, Baron. Custom bed by Bielecky Brothers, NYC.

**FABRICS** The garden, above, inspired the choice of fabrics, such as Colefax and Fowler's Jubilee Rose, used for the curtains and bed skirt, opposite page.

**WALL COVERING** Cowtan & Tout's Marlborough Stripe.



For the house in Southampton, Pickett selected a palette of fresh greens inspired by the garden. Anchoring the living room is a sofa in a bold Colefax and Fowler print of plump pink cabbage roses on a background of wide pistachio and ivory stripes. Two more Fairholme contacts helped pull the room together: paint expert Dennis Oliphant mixed an energizing celadon for the walls, and Nat Cohen of Stark Carpets found a floral rug in his collection that was a perfect match.

Pickett commissioned painter Robert Jackson to adorn the dining room walls with trompe l'oeil garden trellises, pagodas, monkeys, and birds. "I've always found dining

#### DESIGNER SAVVY

The guest room, above, and porch show a knack for light yet substantial environments.

#### TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** Rattan furniture by Kemble Interiors, Palm Beach. Porch coffee and side tables by Norcross Patio, West Palm Beach. **FABRICS** Walls, curtains, and bedspread fabrics by Colefax and Fowler. **RUG** Holbrook by Stark.

rooms difficult to decorate, so I told Robert to just go wild," she says. As with every mural Jackson has painted for Pickett in the past few years, this one includes a portrait of Baron, the family's 10-year-old West Highland terrier, who has his own chair and plate at the dining table. "He rules all of us," Pickett says. "He eats Cheerios."

If that seems a tad silly, it's really part of the larger plan. Rather than longing for a vanished past, Pickett has created a new home filled with family, beauty, and fun. "What I've always wanted," she says, "is a happy, lived-in house." ▶



THE HOUSE SPEAKS  
NOSTALGICALLY  
OF ANOTHER ERA,  
UPDATED TO  
REFLECT A LOVE OF  
OUTDOOR LIVING



# TRADE SECRETS



## Master Class Robin Pickett makes her own home using lessons from the past

Robin Pickett earned her license to decorate under the eye of Georgina Fairholme, an alumna of Colefax and Fowler, the English firm that John Fowler led with Lady Colefax and then Nancy Lancaster. (The company is now best known for its fabric and wallpaper; the Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler Decorating and Design division fashions interiors and sells antiques.) No wonder Pickett, like so many Americans, was drawn to the English country house tradition that Fowler popularized: he made chintz respectable and rescued us from Victoriana. His artful collages of fabrics and furnishings invite adaptation and personalization. His method allowed Pickett to indulge her passion for peppy color and natural motifs, and to create a house built for comfort. —SABINE ROTHMAN

**GROUND COVERS** As an alternative to rush or sisal matting, on top of which he layered Oriental rugs, Fowler often designed carpets with geometric or floral patterns inspired by 18th- and 19th-century models. In a similar spirit, Pickett used Chinese needlepoint and worsted

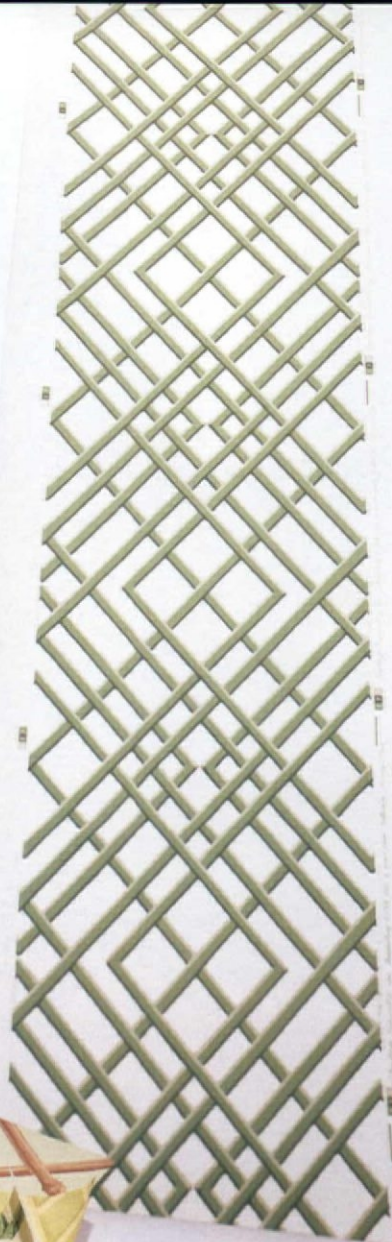
wool Wilton weave carpets with consistent small-scale patterns that extend the botanical theme underfoot and don't compete with her fabrics. Wilton carpets, woven on a Jacquard loom, were originally developed to compete with handmade needlepoints. Their pile can be looped or cut. From front: Kenmare is the wide loom Wilton in Pickett's bedroom; Carnation in lilac, a narrow French Wilton, and Sonesta in white, a wide loom Wilton, are pretty alternates. All are available, in custom colors, from Stark Carpet.



## WALLED GARDENS

Pickett hired Robert Jackson, a decorative painter, to create fanciful trompe l'oeil trellises in her dining room. Wallpaper is a more convenient way to bring garden structures inside.

From top: Try Brunschwig & Fil's Treillage Sidewall panel in celadon and off-white; coordinating borders allow you to create the architecture of an entire room in two dimensions. Bambu #9820-4, from Clarence House. Nuttlebury from the Wessex Collection, by Osborne & Little. Gallery Gardens in Moss, by Tyler Hall, through Carleton V.







## SMALL SCALE

Small patterns act neutral but add texture. Clockwise from bottom left: Colefax and Fowler's Petersham in green, at Cowtan & Tout; Bassett McNab's Small Scale Texture, at Carleton V; Colefax and Fowler's Byron Weave, Cowtan & Tout; Newport Plaid in Sage and Jubilee Collection #13029-04, both Duralee Fabrics, Ltd.; Jane Churchill's Pembury Check in pink/pale green and Colefax and Fowler's New Tavistock, both at Cowtan & Tout; Isabelle Embroidered Matelassé Coordinate in Hibiscus, at Schumacher.

## FITTING TRIMS

Fun finishing touches for curtains and upholstered furniture, from left: 3/4-inch Domus Dotted Braid in pink/green; 1/4-inch woven ribbon in pink/green/cream; 10-mm Imported Cord with Tape in pink/green; Domus Pom Pom Fringe in cream/celadon/red. All from Samuel & Sons Passementerie.



## Choosing Chintz Prints that have vertical stripes as a structural background for riotous blossoms will ground your palette



A dense pattern of buds and blooms floats over green and ivory stripes of varied widths on the softly faded linen-and-cotton Bramdean print in Pistachio, from Lee Jofa.



Exuberant sprays of roses and the casualness of a linen-cotton blend create the summery look of Escapade in yellow and green, designed by Suzanne Varney, at Carleton V.



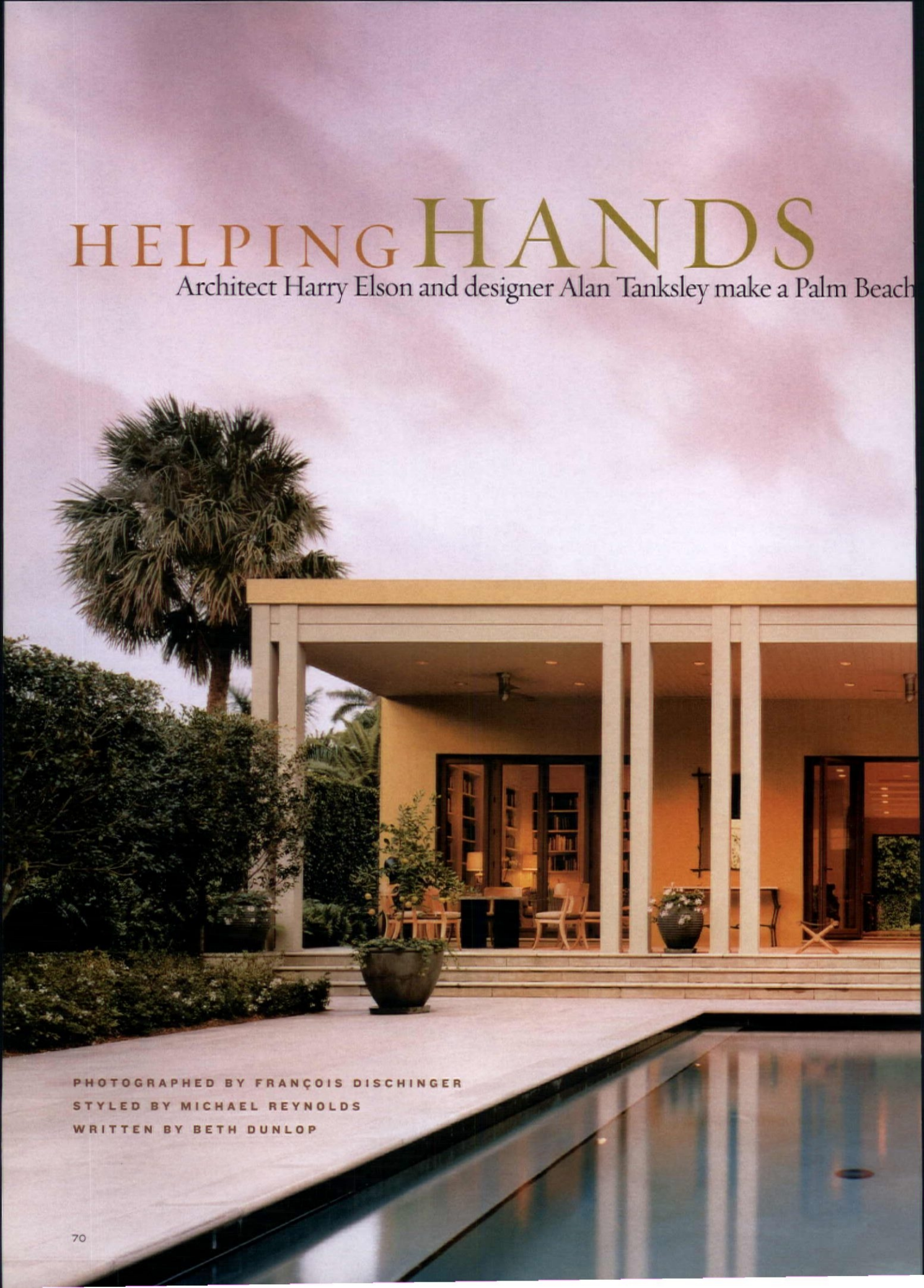
We think Vita Sackville-West would have loved the lush bouquet and subtle moiré stripe on Sissinghurst cotton in green, by Colefax and Fowler, available through Cowtan & Tout.



Colefax and Fowler's Ellerby in pink and green, at Cowtan & Tout, anchors Pickett's living room. This weighty linen blend has a herringbone weave. Sources, see back of book. □

# HELPING HANDS

Architect Harry Elson and designer Alan Tanksley make a Palm Beach



PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS DISCHINGER  
STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS  
WRITTEN BY BETH DUNLOP

**DESIGNER SAVVY** The loggia, as seen from the pool house, epitomizes the owners' architectural mandate: a house that is epic but minimalist. **TRADE SECRETS FURNITURE** Sofa, chairs, and chaise longue by Sutherland, through Holly Hunt. Custom limestone-topped consoles and mirror frames by Hannah Woodhouse. Cast-bronze coffee table custom-made by Carol Bruns. **FABRICS** Sofa, lounge chairs, and chaise longue in Perennials' Row Stripe in Dusk. **ACCENTS** Planters by Lunaform of Maine. Glass cylinder table lamps by Hinson & Company.

house a showcase for a stunning collection of art and crafts owned by Elson's parents





The ambassador had just arrived at the Palm Beach airport for a quick visit to check on the progress of his home renovations. “Let’s go

by and see the house,” he said to the friend who met him.

The friend began to mumble. “I don’t think you want to do that,” he said.

“Don’t be silly,” replied Edward Elson, at the time the U.S. ambassador to Denmark.

“We went by, and there wasn’t a house,” Elson says. Months earlier, he and his wife, Susie, had bought a fairly nondescript early-1990s house and turned to their New York architect son, Harry, to redo it. After long, fruitful hours of discussion and design—even a bit of

debate—the couple returned to Copenhagen.

They thought they knew what Harry was doing, but they didn’t. “Of course, at the end of the day, he was absolutely right,” Susie says.

The son had studied his parents well. “This was a very pedestrian, neo-Regency builder house,” Harry says. “I just stripped it down to its essence, to its bones.” What he built in its place is modern yet classically proportioned, simple yet highly sophisticated. It is a house with a certain ease and lofty ambitions, a house for uncomplicated living and formal entertaining.▷



#### DESIGNER SAVVY

The architecture allows the art and handcrafted items, such as Judy Kensley McKie's bronze lizard handles on the front door, to take center stage.

#### TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** Custom-made sofas surround a Wendell Castle coffee table.

**FABRICS** Sofas in Rogers & Goffigon's Loofah linen. **RUG** Custom wool-looped area rug by V'Soske Joyce Ltd., Ireland.

**PAINTINGS** Cristobal Toral's *Yellow Apples* (1973) and James Valerio's *Studio Figures* (1982).



The house is modern yet classically proportioned, with a certain ease and lofty ambitions. It is a house for uncomplicated living and formal entertaining



## DESIGNER SAVVY

The architect, seen with his parents, below, made the skylit dining room, opposite page, windowless, “like a Renaissance courtyard,” he says.

## TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** Table and server by Laurence Montano. Custom chairs by Guido DeAngelis.

**ACCESSORIES** Chandelier by Donald Lipski. **ARTWORK** James Valerio's *Summer* (1989) and Claudio Bravo's *Supermarket* (1973), opposite page. Chuck Close's mezzotint *Keith* (1972), this page, above Judy Kensley McKie's polar bear bench.

Edward Elson, former rector of the University of Virginia, and his wife, a former chairwoman of the American Craft Council who has been collecting for decades, developed a love for artist-made furniture, fine and unusual antiques, and New Realist paintings. During their six-year stint in Europe, they were captivated by the simplicity of style in Denmark and became fascinated by the Palladian villas of northern Italy. Thus the mandate to their son: make a house that is both minimalist and epic. “It is not large,” the architect says, “but it is somehow almost endless in scale.”

The central space is a capacious, high-ceilinged living room with the proportions of an art gallery, which it essentially is, accommodating oversized paintings by Jack Beal and James Valerio, among others, as well as ceramics, drawings, and a remarkable mosaic wing chair—it sits in one corner as if it were furniture—by Candace Bahouth. A library that features a metal chair by André Dubreuil and a bronze and silver-plate sculpture/table by Lucas Samaras opens off to one side. Oversized French doors lead to a broad, covered loggia. “What’s nice is that it all flows together, and yet there are intimate spaces,” Susie Elson says. “When just the two of us are here, it’s not too big, but we can have ten for dinner or entertain one hundred and fifty.”

New York designer Alan Tanksley came to “curate” the collections, a term used well in this case. He commissioned furniture—two curved, pale living room sofas that flank a Wendell Castle coffee

table, for example—that would, he says, “play a supporting role, framing and giving life to the room and allowing the very important, complex, and visually assertive pieces a presence.”

For the dining room, Tanksley commissioned from Donald Lipski a chandelier (“Well, it really transcends chandelier,” Tanksley says) that is an inverted tree. The dining room is a skylit cube filled with art and handcrafted furniture, but the tree dominates. By day, it is a work of art, but, Tanksley says, “at night it is an apparition, like something from Hawthorne, dazzling and ethereal.”

**H**ARRY ELSON, who worked for Edward Larrabee Barnes and Charles Gwathmey before setting out on his own, is a well-schooled modernist, but does not limit his scope or his sources. “I appreciate metaphor,” he says, “but as a starting point, not as replication.” He drew ideas from Palladio, Alvar Aalto, Erik Gunnar Asplund, Paul Rudolph, even New Orleans’s French Quarter. “I wanted a modern villa,” he says. “The building is not just the object but part of the landscape.”

The Charlottesville, Virginia, landscape architect Warren Byrd designed a garden that is divided into three distinct rooms: a narrow, junglelike walkway that culminates in Robert Arneson’s *Big Head of Jackson* [Pollock], the open pool area, and a lawn with a single sculpture, by Antony Gormley. The garden is planted entirely in green and white flowering plants, which make it “so serene and cool,” Byrd says.

For all that this house contains, it is tranquil. “Of all the houses we’ve had, the places we’ve lived,” Edward Elson says, “this is the one I enjoy the most. I take extra delight in just waking up in the morning in this peaceful and elegant environment.” □

*Beth Dunlop lives in Miami Beach. Her most recent books are A House for My Mother: Architects Build for Their Families (Princeton Architectural Press) and Beach Beauties (Stewart Tabori & Chang).*







**DESIGNER SAVVY** For all its extraordinary beauty, everything has a practical application, from the lap pool to a table and chairs.

**TRADE SECRETS FURNITURE** The steel bed frame in the guest room, opposite page, top, is by Tom Markusen, from 1984. Poolside teak benches with galvanized metal seats, left, by Sutherland, through Holly Hunt. In the kitchen, this page, Ron Arad's *Walking Table* (1990), and custom chairs by Olivier Vadrine for Neotu-Studio. **ARTWORK** In the guest room, Alfred Leslie's *David Burres* (1976) and *Helen Soaring* (1976).

# DEFINING MOMENT

## A RIVER RUNS THROUGH RALPH LAUREN'S FIRST FORAY INTO GARDEN DESIGN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
LEN JENSHEL  
AND DIANE COOK

When Ralph Lauren remade American style, we should have known he would not be satisfied until he remade Mother Earth as well. In an exhibition hall at Chicago's Flower and Garden Show last spring, Lauren designed a country estate garden worthy of the fantasies of a Henry James heroine. With its manicured lawns and clipped allées, the garden culminates in a romantic scene: a river of grape hyacinths runs along an embankment of grasses and daffodils and leads to a vine-clad pergola set for supper. As always with a Ralph Lauren set, there are touches that bring the fantasy within reach: a rowboat strewn with pillows can grace any lawn for an afternoon's repose, and a chandelier brings elegant dining into the garden.

—DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN







The Monastery of St. John the Divine, this page, looms over the town of Chora on the Greek island of Pátmos, where John Stefanidis and Teddy Millington-Drake built a house and garden, foreground. ■ The lemon tree terrace, opposite page, is furnished with a table and chairs of Stefanidis's design and has a view of a chapel devoted to the prophet Elijah on a distant hilltop.

# WORKING IN

DESIGNER JOHN STEFANIDIS AND THE PAINTER TEDDY MILLINGTON-DRAKE  
CARVED A SPLENDID GARDEN ON THE ROCKY AEGEAN ISLAND OF PÁTAMOS

# STONE



LATE IN THE SUMMER OF 1965, two travelers making their way across the Aegean chanced upon the town of Chora, on the small Dodecanese island of Pátmos. One of them, the painter Teddy Millington-Drake, wrote that “most of the houses were empty and closed. Old women in the street picked a basil leaf or a carnation to offer with a greeting as we passed. There were only two or three other foreigners on the island.” Millington-Drake’s fellow traveler was the designer John Stefanidis. “There were ruins everywhere—high walls and handsome houses, yellow with age, as they had not been whitewashed for decades,” he says. “Nevertheless, there hovered over the island a great stillness and beauty.”

Chora, whose narrow cobbled lanes do not allow for automobiles, was built in the eleventh century beside the Greek Orthodox monastery of St. John the Divine, who had written the Book of Revelation (otherwise known as the Apocalypse, one of the Bible’s most terrifying and beautiful texts) in a dank cave on the side of a hill. Millington-Drake and Stefanidis bought two sixteenth-century whitewashed village houses

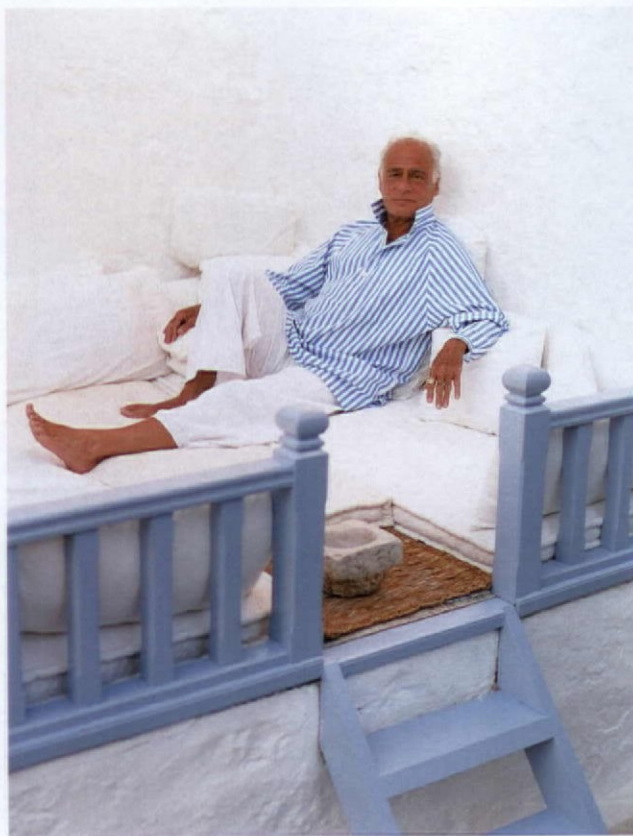
**DESIGNER SAVVY** Practical and lovely, wall buttresses are used as backrests on one terrace, shaded by an almond tree. The pots are filled with red hibiscus and bougainvillea.

**TRADE SECRETS FABRICS** The cushions are covered in white sailcloth and Sunbrella’s striped acrylic.





**“The sunlight** on Pátmos is ambrosial. It caresses and dazzles. It is more than we can ask for” —John Stefanidis



and turned them into one long, meandering two-story house, and made a third building into a house for guests.


Their dry and rocky property falls in shallow terraces to a broad valley. On a still summer night, the sound of the goats' bells in the low-walled fields floats through the blackness. Across the valley, a stony hill is crowned by a small church devoted to the prophet Elijah, said to be built on the site of a temple to Apollo. And “in a little valley nearby, half-buried in the foundations of a hermitage, small and white, graced by two palm trees, lie the remains of a Roman bath,” says Stefanidis.

At first, the only water available was collected in a cistern each winter. When the town finally had a water system, “it was possible to start some kind of planting,” wrote Millington-Drake. They intended to make a blue-and-white garden with little color, but as it grew more sophisticated, color could not be resisted—hibiscus and pink bougainvillea, shaped in pots as in India, and yellow allamanda. The garden was slow-blossoming, as gardens tend to be. Even now, Stefanidis does not consider the garden finished. It will never be finished.

A terrace in the garden, its wooden pergola heavy with grapevines and moon-colored plumbago, has a daybed and chairs, and a table for summer dining. It is called Freya's Terrace, after the late writer Freya Stark, a guest who used to work there each morning before her swim. She wrote to the owners: “It is a work of art you have inserted in the unexpected, bright frame of the islands.” This art is so subtle that Millington-Drake stopped one







**DESIGNER SAVVY** The palette of cool blues and white—chosen by Stefanidis, at rest, opposite page, in *yer sofrasi*, a traditional Turkish dining nook—maximizes the sense of serenity in the garden.

**TRADE SECRETS FURNITURE** Stefanidis designed the stone-topped table, this page. The tin lantern and wood-and-rush chairs were made on the island of Rhodes.

**TABLEWARE** The glassware, this page and opposite, was custom-made for the house by Venetian artisan Laura De Santillana. The Sèvres-pattern plates are from Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, England.

**FABRICS** The bedroom curtains, opposite page, bottom, are made of local linen.



## Depending on the **time of day** and the season, the paths of the garden spill from fragrance to fragrance

female guest from sunbathing in the garden in a bikini. "It makes it look untidy," he said.

Depending on the time of day and the season, the paths of the garden spill from fragrance to fragrance: rose, mandevilla, dianthus, datura, tuberose, lavender, lemon blossom, lily, gardenia, verbena, and the almost unbearably exquisite *Cestrum nocturnum* (night-blooming jasmine). There is shade in the garden, a most important thing in that dry place, and there is an ancient privacy to it; a feeling of worship and myth, as if a silent dryad hovered at your side. There is even an old serpent that slides from the stones to cool itself in the heat of the day.

On another terrace, thick with roses, a striped dhurrie is laid in the evening for cocktails; Turkish lanterns hung in the lemon trees light the paths. The Tomb Garden, its olive trees underplanted with santolina, oleander, and plumbago, contains the remains, sanctified by

the local priests, of Millington-Drake, who died in 1994. There is an herb garden of parsley, mint, rosemary, and coriander in raised beds bordered by agapanthus. There is a lemon grove; a garden of rare cacti; a forest of prickly pear; pomegranate and fig trees; cypress; a Mughal fountain in a cove of westringia; a Sleeping Beauty thicket of aloe; and stone walls tumbling with jasmine.

"It was a secret island, known to few," Millington-Drake wrote. "We didn't want other people to come, buy houses, and break the spell. When the occasional tourist, sometimes even friends, passed by, I closed the shutters." Little remains the same, least of all the garden. Only the light is unchanged. "It is remorseful, ambrosial," Stefanidis says. "It caresses and dazzles. It is more than we can ask for." □

*Susanna Moore's new novel, One Last Look, will be published by Knopf in September.*

### DESIGNER SAVVY

The garden terraces are suited for solitary relaxation or quiet socializing.

### TRADE SECRETS

**FURNITURE** The sofa with cerulean cushions was made by a local craftsman. **FABRICS** One terrace is set up for evening drinks with Indian dhurries, used as ground cover, and sailcloth-covered cushions and pillows dressed in Thai tapestries.

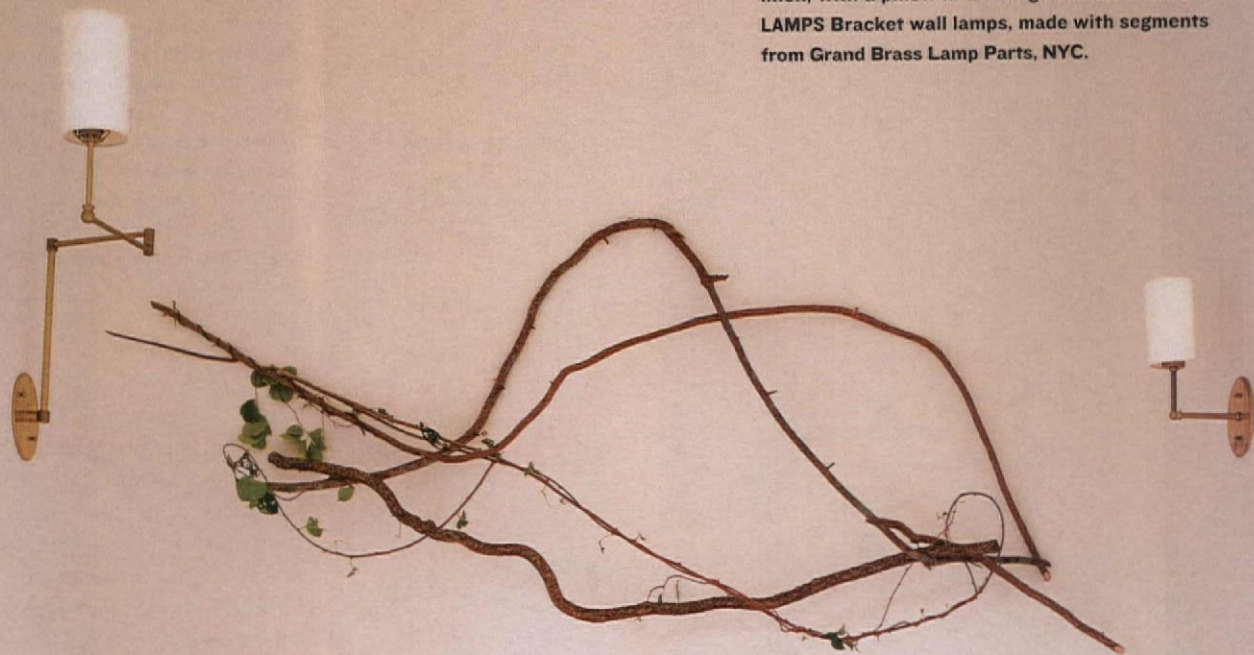
**ACCENTS** The accordion lanterns hanging in the trees and the painted market tray are Turkish.





**designer savvy** White cedar shingles, cladding the exterior of the house, opposite page, were chosen because they weather to a silvery gray patina. A linden espaliered on a trellis inscribes the west elevation of the Shaker-like structure.

**trade secrets** **FURNITURE** Bittersweet vines clipped from local woods create a wall sculpture above a daybed, this page, covered in old French linen, with a pillow in a vintage checked linen. **LAMPS** Bracket wall lamps, made with segments from Grand Brass Lamp Parts, NYC.



## taking her boughs

Garden designer Deborah Nevins builds an airy live-in orangery and fills it with bold botanical cuttings



## designer savvy

Nine-foot-high triple-hung windows help achieve the feeling of being outdoors and indoors at the same time.

## trade secrets

**FURNITURE** Nevins designed the dining table and Knole settee.

**ACCENTS** Anthracite fern fossil, opposite page, from Youngblood, Sag Harbor, NY, propped atop an early-19th-century American pine chimneypiece. Flanking it, cuttings of an ornamental raspberry. Vase and glassware by Pottery Barn.

**FABRICS** Antique French linen on the tables and couch.

**LAMP** Tolomeo table lamps by Artemide.

None of the properties that her friends had brought to her attention caught her fancy, so they were relieved when she finally announced that she had bought a wooded two-acre parcel on which she would create the year-round house she couldn't get out of her head.

"I've always wanted to live in an orangery," says Nevins, who was trained as an architectural historian before turning to the vocation that has brought her international acclaim. "The whole idea was to be able to sit inside and feel as though I were physically outside." To realize that vision, she turned to architect Peter de Bretteville to design the house. She knew just what she

wanted: a design that would reflect her respect for the classic simplicity of the local Shingle-style vernacular as well as her ardent love of all things French.

Not surprisingly, the cross-cultural result of that pairing evokes the Francophile spirit of Thomas Jefferson, especially in the nine-foot-high triple-hung windows straight out of Monticello that give the spacious living room the lofty, sun-flooded feeling of the citrus conservatory that Nevins imagined. Indeed, during the cold months of the year, the 20-by-28-foot space is home to fragrant Meyer lemon trees that spend the summer outdoors in

# for years,

garden designer Deborah Nevins—renowned for a starry client list aglitter with business, entertainment, and society figures too fabulous to mention, as well as this writer—was the horticultural equivalent of the cobbler whose children went barefoot. Because spring and summer are her busiest seasons, she had long rented a small, unwinterized weekend retreat near New York, where she tended a modest herbaceous border and nurtured fantasies of putting down permanent roots with the country house and garden of her dreams.

Against the off-white  
backdrops, the cuttings  
make the house seem like  
a three-dimensional  
botanical album



## designer savvy

The generous scale of the rooms makes the small building seem quite luxurious.

## trade secrets

**FURNITURE** Dominating one wall of the living room is an early-20th-century, 32-drawer French apothecary cabinet, from Rooms & Gardens, NYC.

**TABLEWARE** On the cabinet's shelves are early-19th-century French Creil creamware plates and cuttings of fig leaves.

huge terra-cotta tubs. At the opposite end of the ground floor is an actual greenhouse in which Nevins overwinters the many other non-hardy potted trees—including fig, bay laurel, and myrtle—that punctuate the areas surrounding the shingle-clad building.

AS GEOMETRICALLY severe as a Shaker barn, the compact form of the structure was dictated less by philosophy than economy. To keep costs down, Nevins asked for a footprint so small—a mere 20 by 45 feet—that when the foundation was poured, a neighbor asked why she was building her swimming pool first. And because complex gables can add significantly to a budget, the simple pitched roof makes the structure seem like a full-scale version of a Monopoly house (albeit a very elegant one, since the Parker Brothers game pieces do not come with a perfectly trained linden espalier on one narrow end). But there is not the slightest hint of cost cutting here, thanks to the generous scale of the rooms, which makes the building seem vastly larger and quietly luxurious once you step into it.

Nevins's approach to the interiors was much influenced by the taste of her good friend Rose Tarlow. Monochromatic off-white walls and linen upholstery throughout, antique wood floors and chimneypiece, and well-burnished antiques chosen more for patina than pedigree all give the high-ceilinged rooms a timeless aura







“The whole idea was to be able to sit inside and feel as though I

not unlike that of Tarlow's much published Bel-Air home, though Nevins's relaxed version is more appropriate to this rustic setting.

Window treatments are minimal to nonexistent. Nevins wanted to maintain a strong interconnection between interior and exterior, and on the ground floor eschewed curtains altogether, so that the eight great living room windows could be opened to the surrounding gardens unimpeded by fabric. For some privacy at night, she hangs an antique lacquer kimono stand with vintage textiles and places it in front of the window closest to where she is sitting. Yet there are some contemporary surprises, too, such as a concealed neon light installation by her friend the artist Stephen Antonakos that casts a serene blue glow in her second-floor bedroom and welcomes guests as they arrive up the curving driveway for one of her frequent dinner parties.

ON THOSE OCCASIONS, and every other day that Nevins is in residence, for that matter, the rooms are enlivened with the bold cuttings she prefers to conventional flower arrangements. Against the off-white backdrops, these striking specimens make the house seem like a three-dimensional botanical album. In winter, it might mean massive flowering branches that she cuts and forces in the greenhouse; in summer, a huge fig leaf or acanthus frond placed like a sculptural fragment to emphasize the incomparable design skills of Mother Nature. Oldest of all is a fern fossil embedded in a huge chunk of anthracite propped on the living room mantel. “That’s the piece I’d run for if the house caught on fire,” Nevins says, “though because it’s coal, it wouldn’t burn right away.” □



were physically outside”—Deborah Nevins



**designer savvy** In Nevins's bedroom, a delicately outlined 19th-century French iron tester bed encapsulates the elegant restraint of the house. A pair of myrtle trees flank the bed.

**trade secrets** **FURNITURE** American 19th-century table and turn-of-the-century chair. **FABRICS** French 19th-century linens cover the bed. **PAINTINGS** Portrait of Nevins at 14, by Nancy Ranson.



# EYE ON ART

## A PAINTING THAT SET THE STANDARD FOR HAMPTONS ELEGANCE

BY MARTIN FILLER

a century before the East End of Long Island was littered with postmodern McMansions, artist William Merritt Chase devised a stylish way of life for the newly fashionable Hamptons, one that has never been surpassed in sophisticated elegance. The beach communities of the South Fork had become more accessible with the arrival of the railroad in 1870, when affluent New Yorkers began to summer in those villages, and among them was a group of art patrons, who lured Chase, the leading American Impressionist, with the gift of a lot in the (Cont. on page 112)

**William Merritt Chase's *Hall at Shinnecock* (1892), pastel on canvas, 32 1/8 by 41 in., from the Terra Foundation for the Arts' Daniel J. Terra Collection. Photograph courtesy of the Terra Foundation for the Arts, Chicago.**

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK PHOTOGRAPHED BY JONATHAN BECKER WRITTEN BY JUDITH NASATIR



# HISTORY LESSONS

Taking cues from Sissinghurst, Giverny, Kew, and other



g

ARDENERS MUST APPRECIATE restoration drama: they witness it year after year. But the gardener who conceives a grand new production in the old style, and then nurses it to full bloom, is a rare species. Joan Carl and her mother, Mary Beryl Patch Turnbull, are examples of that breed, as Little Orchard, the Carl family's retreat in Southampton, New York, demonstrates.

According to Carl, Little Orchard was more reclamation and reinvention than restoration. She and her husband, Bernard, had been looking for a summer place for themselves, their three children, her mother, extended family and friends, five cats, and four dogs. Washingtonians for most of the year, the Carls loved the sun and sea air of the Hamptons.

The house, a multi-gabled wonder with ten bedrooms, was built in 1916. "Several harsh seasons had taken their toll," Joan Carl says. "The teahouse and old rose arbors were rotting. There were some peonies in a bed, and a small collection of roses by the drive."

Transforming the landscape from tangle to tour de force took more than five years, and the combined will of mother and daughter. They wanted the gardens to suit the period and mood of the house, so they reinvoked the quadratic equation of the original landscaping. The front of the house opens to the south quadrant, with a swath of lawn, an allée of sycamores,

The view of Little Orchard from the Victorian teahouse, above. Arbors bloom with 'Cécile Brunner' and 'Colette' roses.

■ Joan Carl, opposite page, strolls across the front lawn of her Southampton property with her dogs. The family refers to the four massive clipped boxwoods that punctuate the expansive space as "Monet's green haystacks."

storied gardens, a family creates a verdant paradise in the Hamptons



and a great copper beech. The east quadrant has a formal lily pond, fountains, a pool and pool house, tennis courts, and another expansive grass carpet. The rear of the house abuts the north quadrant, with yet another greensward and symmetrical rose arbors proceeding to a restored Victorian teahouse. The west quadrant is the setting for the greenhouse, the vegetable and cutting gardens, the orchard, the guest cottage, and Mrs. Turnbull's own garden.

Carl went straight to the source—or sources—for both the grand plan and many details. “We lived in England for two years,” she says. “The gardens at Sissinghurst inspired our white garden. Kew and the Chelsea Flower Show introduced us to countless annuals and perennials. The garden at Le Manoir aux Quat’ Saisons in Oxfordshire influenced the layout of the cutting, rose, and vegetable gardens.”

The rose-filled circular cutting garden, above, is replanted three times during the growing season with underplantings of bulbs, annuals, and perennials, used in bouquets in the house. A simple jet fountain and pool mark the center. ■ An allée of sycamores, opposite page, leads from a copper beech to a wooden bench copied from one in Monet’s garden at Giverny.

She was captivated by the sound of water at the Villa d’Este, and discovered vibrant rhododendrons in Scotland and the pure classical geometry of box parterres and formal allées in France. “In Giverny, we learned to appreciate the subtle sounds that tall grasses and leaves make in the breeze,” she says. “Monet’s garden also suggested the forms of our rose arbors, the curved wood bench, and the porch swing.” Beatrix Farrand’s gardens at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington provided insight into structure and seasonal color.

Vita Sackville-West’s axiom about garden design—“Profusion, even extravagance and exuberance, within



**“The specimen trees are among the greatest riches. Most were close to dying.”**





**We lost only one, which I consider a great victory” —Joan Carl**



the confines of the utmost linear severity”—certainly applies here. Massive privet hedges and mature hydrangeas frame the lawns and garden rooms. Annuals and perennials in border gardens explode with Technicolor intensity from April through October. The water lovers hover around the edge of the pond: astilbe, iris, and hibiscus grow alongside Carl’s phragmites (perennial grasses).

“The specimen trees on the property are among its greatest riches,” Carl says, “but when we bought the place, a good eighty percent were close to dying. We lost only one tree, which I consider a huge victory.” Legend has it that the property’s three large beech trees were literally beached a hundred years ago when a ship that was headed to Philadelphia from England broke up in a storm off the Long Island coast. “There’s a tree in the far quadrant that is a cedar of Lebanon,” Carl says. “It reminds me of my mother, who

grew up in Beirut, where her Boston-born father was head of the American University’s chemistry department for twenty years. Every summer, the family would head into the hills and live in tents they pitched under the cedars.”

Nostalgia provided a powerful impulse for restoring this property to its current glory. So did the desire to create the kind of place that Carl’s children would always hold dear. As for the gardens, Carl says, “Our goal was to create informality within classically planned spaces.” That they have, and so much more.▷

The small white garden, above, is backed by large shrubs of *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Grandiflora.’ Box-edged beds contain ‘Iceberg’ roses and white heliotrope and cosmos. The iron bench was inspired by an example at Anglesey Abbey in England. ■ The Carls restored the greenhouse, opposite page. They use it to start seedlings for the gardens and protect tender plants over the winter.

*Judith Nasatir is a writer in New York.*





# ground rules

If you establish the proper framework for a garden, harmony will follow by Deborah Needleman



## Estate Gardens

Combing the great gardens of Europe for elements to adapt, Joan Carl did what any owner of a grand estate would have done in the 1920s, the period from which her property dates. Eclecticism and historicism were the reigning principles of garden design from 1890 to 1940 (an era author Mac Griswold calls “the golden age of American gardens” in her book of the same name), so Carl harmoniously incorporated ideas from disparate sources within a framework of privet hedges, masses of hydrangea, and sweeping lawns—elements that define the horticultural vernacular of the Hamptons.

## The Layout

The original design of the property—with a garden emanating from each side of the house—is an elaboration on the

Renaissance concept of a villa in which the house flows into the garden. Carl restored this layout and used another Italian practice, enclosing a property’s perimeter with hedges.

## The Trees

■ **Topiary** Large shapes clipped from boxwood were popular in Italy during the Renaissance and, according to Carl, in Southampton in the 1920s. In the 16th century, as now, box topiary were fashioned from *Buxus sempervirens*. These are hand-pruned twice a year.

■ **Allées** Arboreal avenues, like the Carls’ sycamores, were a feature of Renaissance gardens adapted in France by Le Nôtre. The *Platanus acerifolia* were planted in the 1940s in rows 24 feet apart.

■ **Specimens** In the English landscape style of the 18th century, shade trees flourished unclipped and unregimented. Carl nursed 20 such grand trees, like the copper beech, by clearing away understory plants and fertilizing.

## The Flowers


■ **The White Garden** Like Vita Sackville-West, whose white garden at Sissinghurst inspired the one here, Carl appreciates formal hedges softened by billowing flowers. The beds are edged with Korean box, a hardier and more disease-resistant variety than English box (*B. sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’), which was used in Europe (and America) for hundreds of years.

■ **Hydrangeas** Carl uses casual clumps of these profusely flowering shrubs in a formal way to flank paths. Each cluster contains three hydrangeas planted 3 feet on center.

■ **Cutting Garden** Annuals and tender exotics are grown under glass for a rotating summer display, much as they would have been in Victorian England. The practice then, as now, requires the help of a gardener.

‘Nikko Blue’ hydrangeas and symmetrically placed urns, opposite page, mark the descent to an original circular fountain with statuary. The Carls excavated the lily pool beyond, which had been filled in during the 1960s, adding water lilies and koi. A cloudlike hedge of globe arborvitae encloses the pool and leads to a Lutyens bench. ■ This page, from top: roses and dahlias from the cutting garden. □



A photograph of a formal garden. In the center, a multi-tiered fountain with a central statue of a cherub is surrounded by water spraying upwards. The garden is flanked by tall, dense, green hedges. In the foreground, there are large, lush plantings of pink hydrangeas and purple lavender. A stone path leads towards the fountain. In the background, a large house is visible through the trees under a clear sky.

**Classically planned spaces will feel  
informal with masses of loose, blowsy  
plantings of hydrangea and lavender**

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID TSAY WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH POCHODA

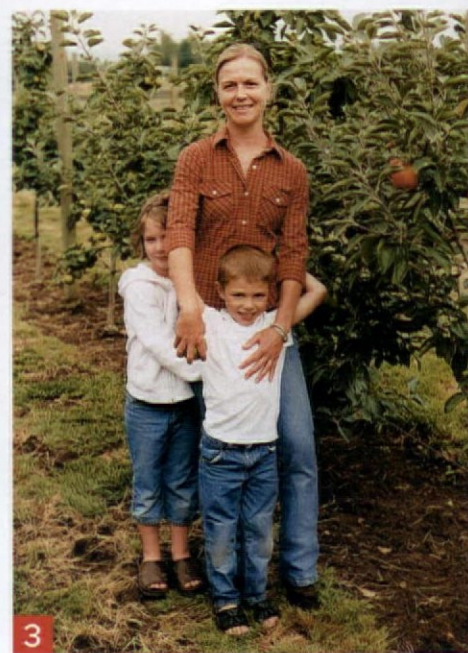
# ON THE OREGON TRAIL

Rob and Maria Sinskey pack up family and friends and hit the road to visit the small farms that are restoring quality to American food





Among the pleasures of the trip are the spectacular views, like the one, opposite page, from Mount Hood Organic Farms. Gus Gamble, this page, with a plate of little pies made from local berries.



## WHAT COULD BE MORE APPEALING THAN THESE TWO 1946 SPARTAN TRAILERS CURLED LIKE HAPPY

snails in the shade of a generous willow on a wilting July afternoon in the twenty-first century? That's the past for you: it always looks great when you edit it right. It's the present that often appears as ungainly as a double-wide Winnebago swaying down a narrow stretch of road. Wine maker Rob Sinskey and his wife, Maria, know something about the luxury of adapting the past. They bought these Spartans, restored one, updated the other with air-conditioning and a new kitchen, and set out with their daughters, Lexi and Ella, and friends Launce and Amanda Gamble and the Gambles' children, Gus and Jane. But first they put a vintage frame around their vacation: the idea was to travel in these beautifully designed objects back to the kinds of farms that existed before locally grown produce was replaced by agribusiness and chemical crops. Rob Sinskey locates the swing date, not entirely coincidentally, somewhere around 1946.

Family travel in a very small space may not be everyone's idea of summer fun, but the Sinskeys and the Gambles figured that the Spartans would be a lot nicer than any motel they'd find between their homes in California's Napa Valley and their destination in Oregon. Since the trip is about food, their traveling kitchen makes it possible to gather local organic produce and prepare it themselves, instead of chancing it at restaurants that are neither organic nor especially family-friendly. For Maria, who was executive chef at San Francisco's PlumpJack Cafe and now oversees the kitchen at the Robert Sinskey Vineyards, this journey is not so much a busman's holiday as an opportunity to get back to the basics of family life: setting up camp, making a meal, cleaning up, and going to bed without "the static of computers, television, and so forth."

Of course, it's a lot of work. "I had no idea just how much," Launce Gamble admits a few days into the trip. The caravan's





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first mishap occurs just after the families leave Napa, when the brakes lock on one of the trailers. Finding a place to pull off for a few hours of repair work, like finding a level place to camp, is not so easy when you have to maneuver the trailers as well as the two Ford diesel trucks that pull them. Even getting gas or stopping at a campsite for a septic dump or changing a tire requires more planning and patience than anyone could have counted on. So much for nostalgia.

When the caravan finally arrives at Kristin and Rich Ford's farm on Sauvie Island, 10 miles from Portland, it's tremendously hot, the children are tired, and the grown-ups are not at their best when one of the diesels sinks into the Fords' septic tank, flooding their laundry room. But there are compensations. Maria makes delicious little pies with the berries they have picked nearby, and Kristin serves Ford Farms' sparkling hard cider, an elegant, French-style drink that is memorably refreshing. And so the journey back to artisanal farming begins with the Fords and their 40 varieties of heritage apple trees, which they planted six years ago and which are now producing enough of this superb cider to sell at venues such as Whole Foods. The Ford operation looks bucolic, with

1 The trailers, parked beneath willows at the families' first stop, Ford Farms on Sauvie Island near Portland. 2 Rob and Lexi Sinskey with Jane Gamble. 3 Kristin Ford with her children, Anna and Jake, next to the trees that produce the heirloom apples for Ford Farms cider. 4 Gus Gamble carrying a few supplies. 5 Maria Sinskey cooking in the Spartan trailer's updated kitchen. 6 Roast potatoes. 7 Gus tucking into one of Maria's pies. 8 Jane and Lexi watch Maria prepare pies from an assortment of Oregon berries.



1

1 The small scale of the trailers is something children like Ella appreciate. Maria finds that trailer travel keeps the family together on a vacation. 2 A sour cherry clafoutis that Maria made from the cherries on the Jacobsons' tree, opposite page. 3 Gus and Jane enjoy a midafternoon snack.



2



3

Highland cattle grazing just beyond the house, rows of apple trees, three Labrador retrievers, and tidy gardens of flowers and vegetables, but the operation isn't self-sustaining yet, or anything less than labor intensive, even though it all looks so effortless.

A dinner of greens from the Fords' gardens, fried fingerling potatoes with onions, excellent steaks from the Highland cattle and from the Gamble Ranch in Napa, and the superb Sinskey Pinot Blanc and Pinot Noir washes away the difficulties of the day.

## REALITY BEGINS TO BITE HARDER THE NEXT

afternoon as the caravan leaves Sauvie Island and travels north to Hood River and the agricultural area known as the Fruit Loop. Orchards line the roads, but so do signs like "When the American Farmer Is Gone, Who Will Feed You?" and "Buy U.S.-Grown Fruit, the Safest in the World." The embattled tone is something Brady and John Jacobson of Mount Hood Organic Farms know well. They came here 22 years ago, attracted by a spectacular setting facing Mount Hood. They hoped to make a go of 150 acres of pear trees, but competition from foreign growers and the large producers that have now jumped into the organic market reduced their profits drastically. They still maintain 60 acres of orchards and, in conjunction with a (Cont. on page 112)



## blueprint

(Cont. from page 48)

The recessed, glass-walled entry further blurs the boundary between indoors and outdoors, carrying the concrete of the sidewalk right into the soaring lobby and straight to the back, where the rough gray material swoops upward to create the rear wall. This “urban carpet,” as the architect calls it, plays off against the strong black diagonal of the stairway that connects to the second story, where another similar flight switches back to the floor above that, and reflexively onward and upward.

This element continues the venerable tradition of museum staircases that function as public concourses—think the old MoMA and the Whitney again, to say nothing of the Met and the new American Folk Art Museum. However, this version feels a few inches too narrow to allow files of people to ascend and descend without brushing against one another, unless they’re on the Atkins diet.

Because the CAC has no permanent holdings, it’s free from many requirements of collecting museums. This adventurous client wanted a scheme more assertive than the neutral containers favored by institutions that put art, rather than architecture, in the forefront. “We never intended a background kind of building,” says CAC director Charles Desmarais, “and never had the slightest doubt that Hadid’s design was appropriate for us.”

How well its varied sequence of spaces will serve special exhibition needs—from large-scale installation pieces to video works to performances in a flexible black box—remains to be seen, as new permutations in experimental media evolve. One guaranteed success is sure to be the top floor UnMuseum, easily the most imaginative art gallery for children in many years. At the very least, the CAC is far more accommodating than the region’s other deconstructivist *Kunstballe*, Peter Eisenman’s Wexner Center for the Arts, of 1983–1989, at Ohio State University in Columbus, a building notoriously inhospitable to the objects on view in it.

An enviable number of current jobs will give Zaha Hadid ample opportunity to further test her mettle in the years just ahead. Only then will we know whether this unquestionably interesting figure lives up to the formidable reputation that has for so long preceded her. □

## eye on art

(Cont. from page 97)

Shinnecock Hills and an offer to head a summer art school.

By the summer of 1892, Chase was living in a new Shingle-style house designed by his friend Stanford White. It sat on a bluff with views of Shinnecock Bay, and the environs soon became the principal subject matter of the painter.

Here we have what at first glance seems to be simply a charming portrait of the artist’s family at their country place. The double-height hall with balcony epitomizes the decorating principles of the Aesthetic movement—that exotic mix of Asian and European influences exalting art as the highest goal of life. Chase incorporates such hallmark Aesthetic flourishes as huge blue-and-white oriental vases (filled with local bayberry boughs), a red lacquer Chinese chair, and prints in thin black frames à la Whistler.

**M**ORE THAN a genre scene, however, this exceptionally ambitious work pays subtle homage to what some consider the greatest picture of all time. Our gaze is first captured by the Chases’ eldest daughter, Alice (nicknamed Cosy), who peers out at us while her sister Dorothy peruses a foldout book of ukiyo-e, Japanese woodblock prints, which had a profound influence on innovative nineteenth-century artists. The bold diagonal of those accordion pleats directs our eye to the languorous figure of Alice Gerson Chase, the artist’s wife, who reclines in a slipcovered easy chair. Only later do we realize that reflected in the right mirrored panel of the armoire is the figure of the artist himself at his easel, recording this idyllic scene of domestic contentment.

The composition comes straight out of Velázquez’s masterpiece *Las Meninas*, which Chase revered and studied intensively at the Prado. Like the Spanish infanta in the prototype, Cosy Chase engages the viewer while the painter makes a ghostly appearance through the looking glass, putting us in the place of the artist as well. Though Chase’s dashing executed pastel makes no pretension to court portraiture, both works exude a transcendent calm that elevates a mundane moment into a parable on the goodness of everyday life. □

## on the oregon trail

(Cont. from page 110)

number of stores, including two chains, use the fruit to raise money for Portland’s public schools in return for the growing costs. In the meantime, Brady has turned the old pickers’ cabins on the farm into charming rentals and created a cash crop out of one of the most beautiful sites on either coast.

The economics of organic farming in the modern world are lost on the children. They are quite happy with Maria’s raspberry and marionberry muffins and a clafoutis of sour cherries from the Jacobsons’ tree. And Rob, at least, is still optimistic that an organic future can be something more than a luxury. He points to his success in turning his vineyards around. In 1990 the soil in the Sinskey chardonnay block was so hard you couldn’t get a shovel in the ground. Rob got a pick, turned the soil over, saw that there was nothing living there, and decided to get nutrients to the vines naturally. When the chardonnay block was successfully reclaimed, he decided to turn the rest of his operation over to organic methods.

**T**HE SINSKEYS HAVE extended their mission from their vineyards to the winery, where Maria sees to it that artisanal food is prepared for the tasting rooms. To drive the point home, her book, *The Vineyard Kitchen* (HarperCollins), pairs simple seasonal menus with appropriate wines. She has no trouble acknowledging that organic food is out of reach for most people, but that doesn’t deter her. If everyone who can afford organic food buys it, she reasons, the market will produce more and the price will drop. That’s the economies-of-scale argument, and it’s solid even if there is a paradox at the end of its rainbow: organic methods are so labor intensive that when demand increases substantially, small farms may well be driven out by the large operations that are already dumbing down the definition of organic. The Jacobsons know this, yet their business cards still read “Farming for Future Generations.” That’s their hope, and the Fords’ too. As for the Sinskeys, they plan to keep up their yearly trips to family farms, traveling in their Spartan trailers across the country and against the American grain. □

# THE INDEX

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WHERE TO BUY IT

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For sources, see Table of Contents, page 10. Country Swedish's Gustavian **daybed**, upholstered in Brera linen in cerise by Designers Guild, through Osborne & Little. Finished with imported cotton **ribbon** with laced cord #23319, \$10 per yard, from M&J Trimming, 800-9-MJTRIM.

## DOMESTIC BLISS Pages 17-32

**Page 17**, Little Drummer Boy **wooden toy**, \$26, The Warm Biscuit Bedding Co. 800-231-4231. **Pages 18-19**, Ikea/PS Hjalton rattan **chair**, \$69, IKEA. 800-434-1KEA. Amagansett wool **rug**, \$399, ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. 212-473-3000. Tom Dixon **Star light**, \$150, Totem, NYC. 212-925-5506. Charcoal gray Hudson Bay Point **blanket**, \$275, Woolrich, woolrich.com. **Faux fish**, from \$2, Loose Ends, Salem, OR. 503-390-2348. **Page 20**, **chalkboard screen**, \$129, Cargokids! 800-333-1402. Lady Bing **pull toy**, \$24, and **wooden blocks**, \$39, The Warm Biscuit Bedding Co. Smarties wool **rug**, \$39 per sq. ft., The Rug Company, NYC. 212-274-0444. **Pillows** in Daffodil, Lime, and Laguna Blue from the Montage Collection at Giati Designs. **Page 21**, striped **cake box**, \$59, Make My Day Special. 888-258-7102. Classic **stacking cubes** in acrylic, \$2,000 for a set of four, Albrizzi, NYC. 212-570-0417. William Yeoward **cake stand**, \$60, Bergdorf Goodman. 800-558-1855. Samoa **sugar bowl** in Limoges porcelain by Jean Louis Coquet, \$235, Lalique. 800-993-2580. Custom hanging pink **paper shade**, Oriental Lampshade Company, NYC. 212-832-8190. **Amelie cake** by Wendy Kromer Specialty Confections. wendykromer.com. Christian Lacroix Follemler lacquered silver **teaspoons**, \$420 for a set of six, Christofle. 877-728-4556.

## DESIGNER SAVVY Page 22

Colleen Bashaw Interior Design, Ridgewood, NJ. 201-447-1079. Congress Hall, Cape May, NJ. 888-944-1816. All **paints** custom-mixed by Sherwin-Williams. 800-474-3794. Skins II zebra-striped nylon **carpet** by Helios, through Floorcom Inc. Guest room **chairs** upholstered in Duralee's 13308 rayon/polyester chenille in pink.

## IN THE GARDEN Pages 35-45

**Page 37**, yellow floral **boots** by Tamara Henriques, \$36, Storybook Heirlooms. 800-STORYBOOK. Children's cutting and flower garden **seed collections**, Sara Raven's Cutting Garden. thecuttinggarden.com. **Pages 40-43**, Balmori Associates Landscape and Urban Design, NYC. 212-431-9191.

## UNCORKED Pages 54-55

Pieropan, through 67 Wine, NYC. 212-724-6767. Pra and Inama, through Italian Wine Merchants, NYC. 212-473-2323. **Ice bucket**, \$130, Simon Pierce. 877-452-7763. Vienna white-wine **glass**, \$25, Moss. 866-888-6677.

## FAMILY AFFAIR Pages 58-69

Four Winds Antiques & Decorative Arts, Palm Beach, FL. 561-655-7145. Landscape Architect Charles J. Stick Inc., Charlottesville, VA. 434-296-1628. **Fabrics** through Nessen Showroom, Dania Beach, FL. 954-925-0606. Robert Paxton, Architect, Charlottesville, VA. 434-977-4480. **Page 59**, antique **wellhead** from Architectural Heritage Limited, Taddington, Gloucestershire, England. 011-44-1386-584-414. **Pages 60-61**, Hyde Park Antiques, Ltd., NYC. 212-477-0033. **Pages 62-63**, mural by Robert Jackson,

Germantown, NY. 518-828-1805. Tiffany & Co. 800-843-3269. **Pages 66-67**, Kemble Interiors, Palm Beach, FL. 561-659-5556. Norcross Patio, West Palm Beach, FL. 561-832-6995.

## HELPING HANDS Pages 70-77

Alan Tanksley, Inc., NYC. 212-481-8454. Harry Elson Architect PC, NYC. 212-692-0606. **Pages 70-71**, Lunaform of Maine. 207-422-0923. **Cirrus ceiling fan** by The Modern Fan Company. 888-588-FANS. **Pages 72-73**, **sculptural works** by Judy Kensley McKie available through Pritam & Eames, East Hampton, NY. 631-324-7111. The Wendell Castle Collection. 866-999-4266. Crescent-shaped **sofas** custom-made by Luther Quintana Upholstery. **Pillows** covered in Nancy Corzine's Ashanti in Sienna. **Armchairs** custom-made by Guido DeAngelis. Darklite **ceiling lights** by Edison Price Lighting. **Pages 74-75**, **upholstery** for chairs is Larsen's 8669-13 velvet, with custom tassel fringe by Passcenterie. **Pages 76-77**, Neotu, NYC. 212-695-9404. Charcoal **pillow shams**, Takashimaya, NYC. 212-350-0100. Increspato glass **lamps**, Donghia, with shades by Oriental



IN THE GARDEN  
Pages 35-45

Lampshade Company, NYC. 212-832-8190. Bedroom walls **paint** is Satin Impervo low-luster enamel by Benjamin Moore. 800-344-0400.

## DEFINING MOMENT Pages 78-79

Jamaica wicker **dining chairs** and **fabrics** covering pillows by Ralph Lauren Home, at Ralph Lauren. 888-475-7674.

## WORKING IN STONE Pages 80-87

John Stefanidis Limited, London. 011-44-20-7381-1311. **Pages 84-85**, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, England. 011-44-1296-653-247.

## TAKING HER BOUGHS Pages 88-95

Deborah Nevins & Associates Inc., NYC. 212-925-1125. **Page 89**, Grand Brass Lamp Parts, NYC.

212-226-2567. **Pages 90-91**, Youngblood, Sag Harbor, NY. 631-725-6260. Pottery Barn. 888-779-5176. Artemide USA, Farmingdale, NY. 631-694-9292. **Floor pattern** designed by Nevins and executed in antique pine by Salt Construction, Sag Harbor, NY. 631-725-7501. Nineteenth-century American **bench**, Sage Street Antiques, Sag Harbor, NY. 631-725-4036. **Pages 92-93**, Rooms & Gardens, NYC. 212-431-1297. **Silk screen** is Stephen Antonakos's *Incomplete Red Square* (1975). **Pages 94-95**, **sconces** from Grand Brass Lamp Parts. Tolomeo **table lamp** by Artemide. Green glass **vase**, Rooms & Gardens.

## ON THE OREGON TRAIL Pages 106-111

Ford Farms/Cyberworks, Sauvie Island, OR. 503-621-3908. Mount Hood Organic Farms and Garden Cottages, Mount Hood, OR. 541-352-7492.

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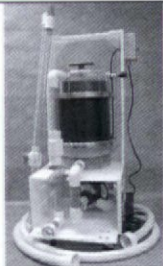
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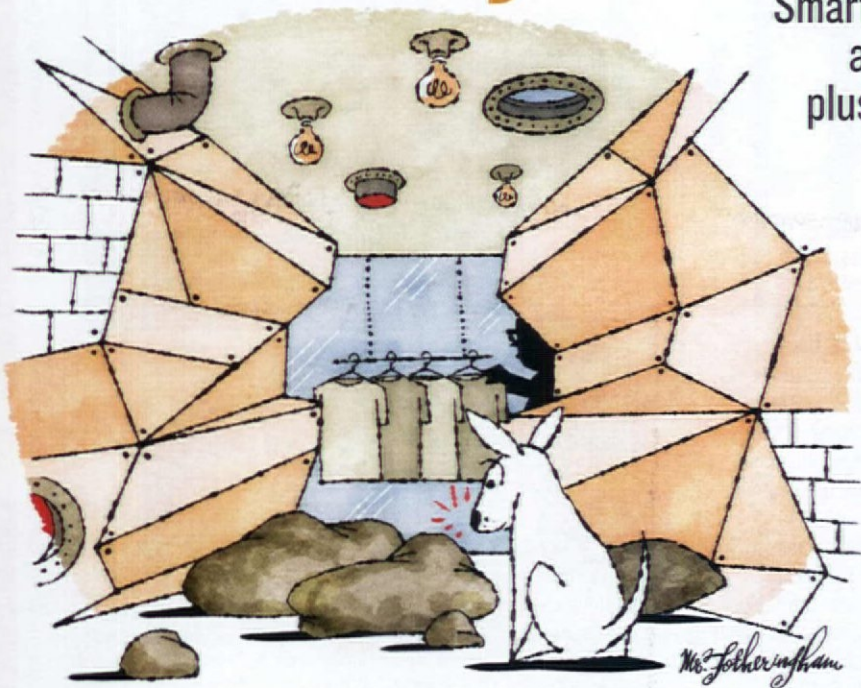
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**B**AD THINGS HAPPEN when good architects decide to present themselves as artists. This lesson was made painfully clear at the Whitney Museum's recent exhibition "SCANNING: the aberrant architectures of diller + scofidio." The cumbersome term "architectures" was a clear portent of pretension, especially when used in conjunction with novelty capitalization. I presume that the highfalutin title of this show was meant to suggest the overtly conceptual, theoretical flavor of the work of Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio. Along with traditional building models and drawings, the architects presented Deep Thought installations of suitcases suspended from the ceiling and toy robots on a conveyor belt. *Village Voice* art critic Jerry Saltz summed up the problem neatly: "Diller and Scofidio aren't even artists; they're architects pretending to be artists, and their so-called art is atrocious."

To be fair, artists who masquerade as architects usually fare no better than their cross-disciplinary colleagues. Consider the appalling new Balenciaga boutique that opened a few months ago in Chelsea, the epicenter of Manhattan's contemporary art scene. Forsaking established commercial arenas such as SoHo and Madison Avenue, Balenciaga apparently wanted to send a message of higher aspirations. To that end, the fashion house entrusted the design of its store to French conceptual artist Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. I can hardly imagine what "concept" the artist was trying to express in her installation of synthetic boulders and dirty bits of fabric that looked like post-plush toilet seat covers. On the day I visited, an exterminator wandered through the poorly renovated industrial space with a can of rat poison. All my senses vied for the title of Most Aggrieved; olfactory ultimately won the dubious distinction.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm all for creative transgression and experimentation. At the risk of sounding like Dr. Phil, that odious oracle of New Age jingoism, I truly believe in the power of self-actualization. All people should have the freedom to realize their potential, to chase their dreams, blah blah blah. Nevertheless, self-actualization is not the same thing as wishful thinking—it can't be accomplished by fiat or press release. If reinventing one's identity were that easy, I'd be Madonna.

■ BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENT may be my bread and butter, but I still like to give credit where credit is due. I am therefore happy to add my voice to the chorus of critical praise that has greeted the opening of Dia:Beacon, the daring new museum dedicated to conceptualist and minimalist art from the 1960s to the present. Housed in a former Nabisco printing plant overlooking the Hudson River 60 miles north of Manhattan, Dia:Beacon tantalizes culture vultures with a series of monumental artworks too large and ambitious for most urban exhibition spaces. The factory's vast, regimented halls and spare, industrial character (vintage 1929) are uncommonly sympathetic to the physical and ideological demands of Dia's collection. Art and architecture, happy at last.

Predictably, I do have one or two wee bones to pick. In the downpour of well-deserved kudos, I'm afraid, proper credit has not been given to the young architects of OpenOffice, the firm that collaborated intensely with "master planner" Robert Irwin. Dia officials, in their quest to champion Irwin as the visionary force that drove the mammoth renovation, have tended to downplay the tremendous efforts of OpenOffice's four principals: Alan Koch, Lyn Rice, Galia Solomonoff, and Linda Taalman. Yes, I'm sure that Irwin was a guiding force on the project, but architecture doesn't happen by itself, and Irwin is not an architect. Of course, he alone must receive full credit—"responsibility" might be a better word—for certain aspects of the project: the underwhelming parkingscape of fruit trees; Irwin's own open-air side gallery/garden, which looks like an employee amenity at a Stamford, Connecticut, office park; and his dorky, contrast-clad entry pavilion.

But let's turn my frown upside down. Dia:Beacon is an extraordinary accomplishment. My recommendation: pack up the kids and stay for lunch. □



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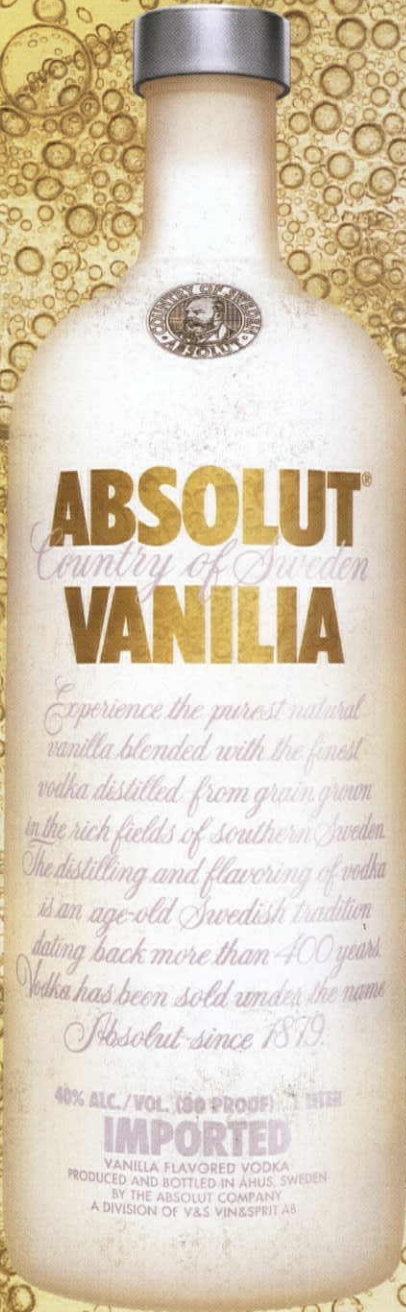


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