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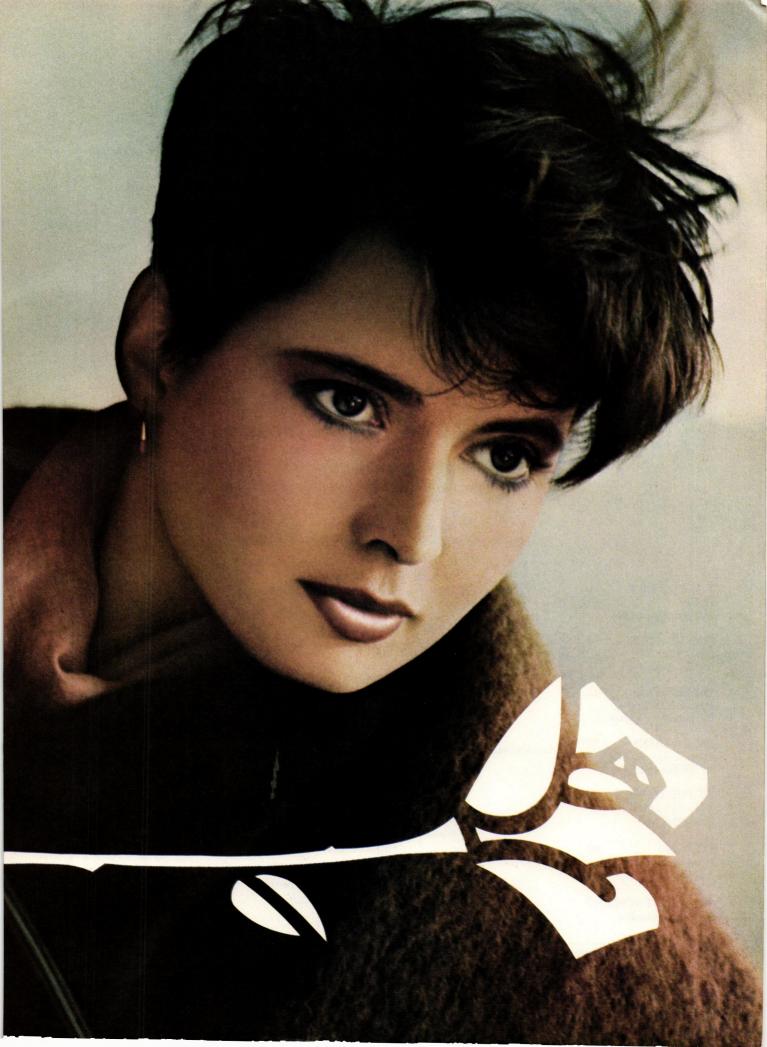


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September 1984

HOUSE & GARDEN.

THE MAGAZINE OF **CREATIVE LIVING** Volume 156, Number 9

THE WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

President Kennedy's garden restored/By Rachel Lambert Mellon

WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh restore a house by Auguste Perret/By Marie-Pierre Toll

HOUSTON HARMONY

Mark Hampton brings tranquility to Texas/By Alice Gordon

THE MODERNIST STRIPE

Architecture to reflect the hues of Lake Charles/By Lisa Germany

HOUSE ON CHEYNE WALK

John Stefanidis's sun-flooded rooms on the Thames/By Elaine Greene

ART OF THE ANKAS

Jill Cole's design for the singer and his family/By Gabrielle Winkel

THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

A mysterious twelfth-century Welsh house/By Alison Lurie

NEW YORK DIG

The Pompeii spirit in a Tribeca loft/By Herbert Muschamp

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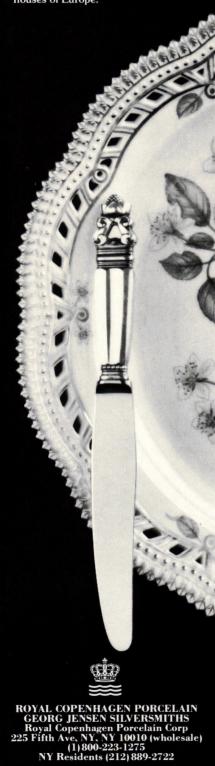
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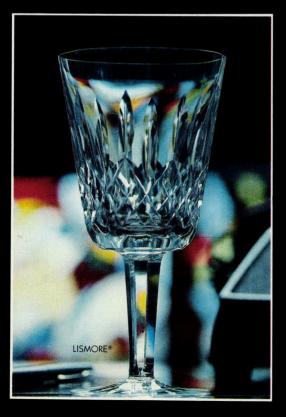
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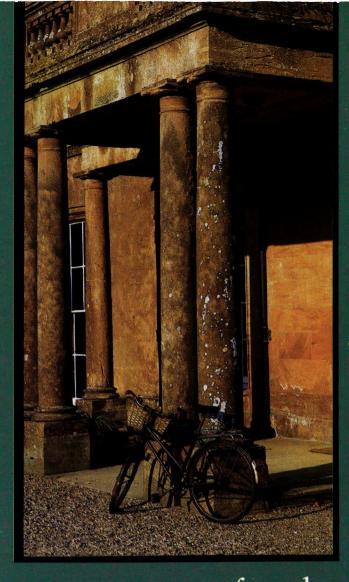
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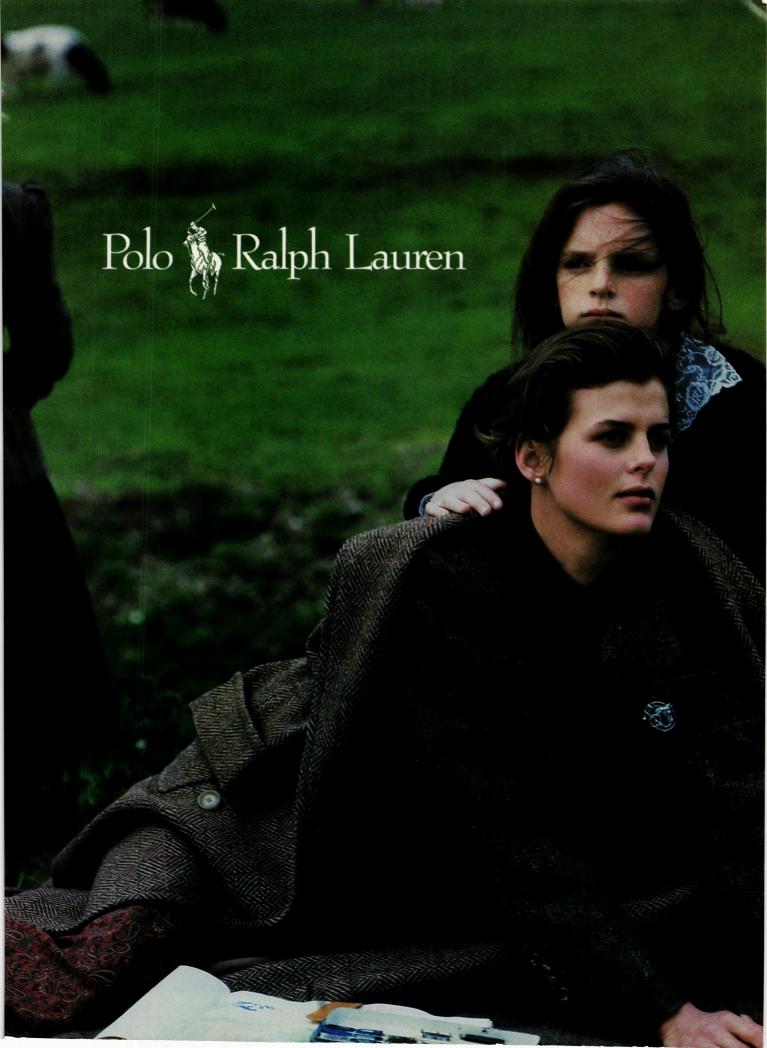
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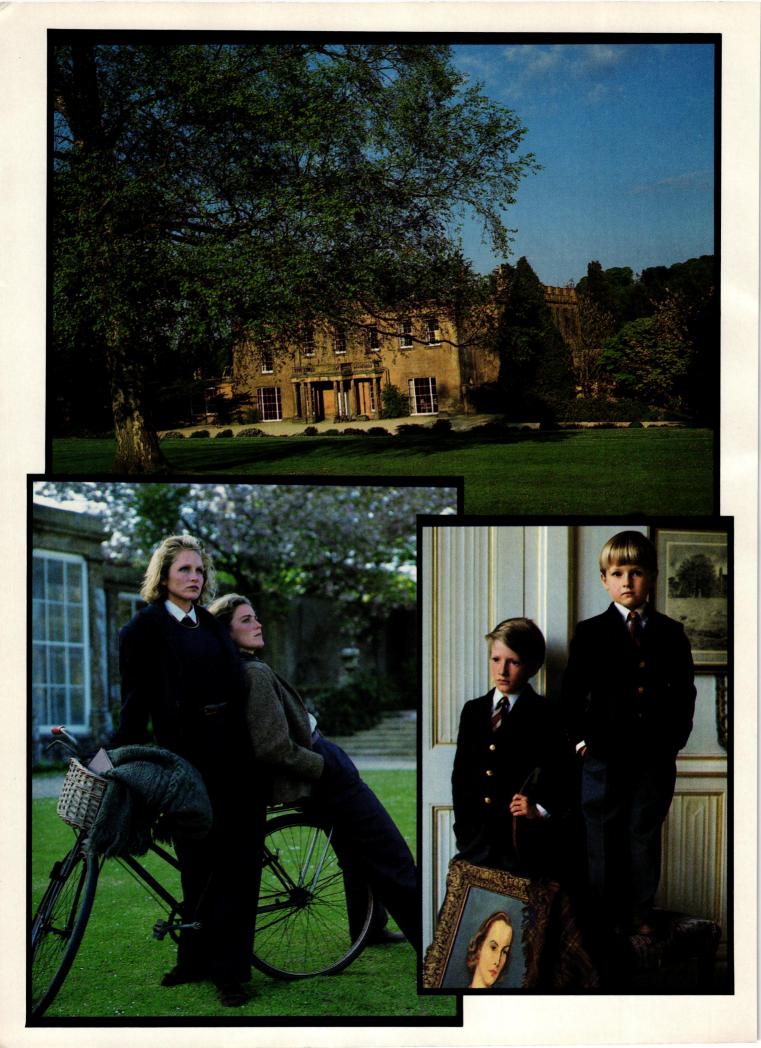


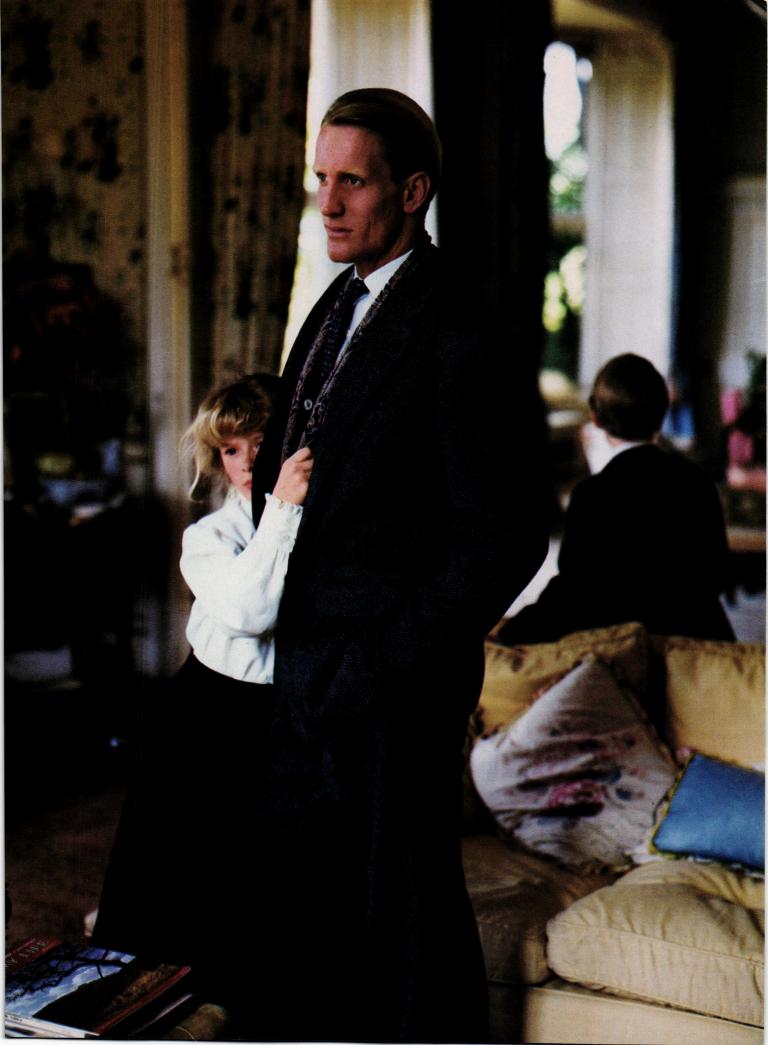
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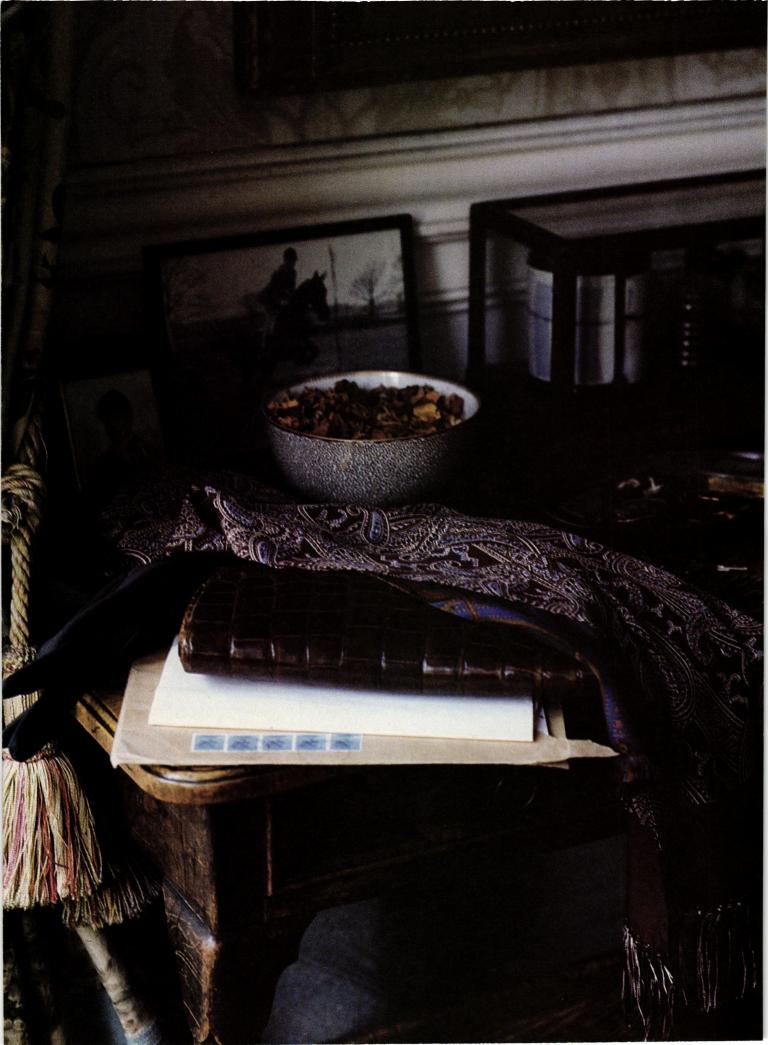
a constant race for what is next, rather, an appreciation of what has come before. There is a depth and quality of experience that is lived and felt, a recognition of what is truly meaningful. These are the feelings I would like my work to inspire. This is the quality of life that I believe in."

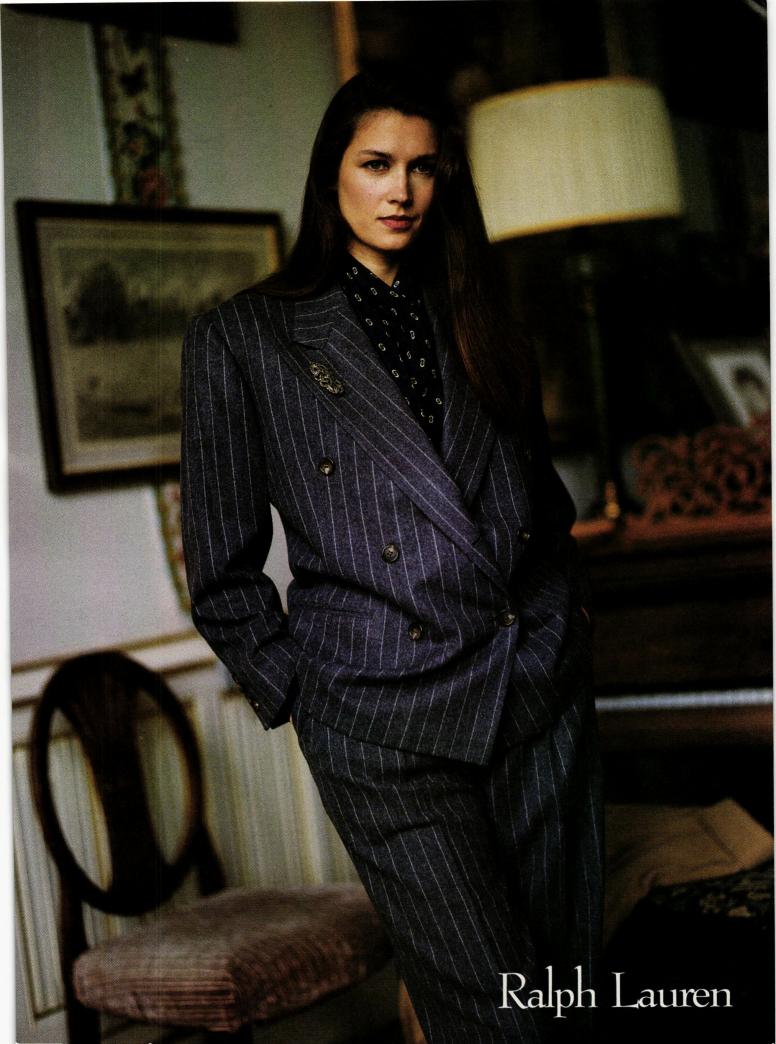
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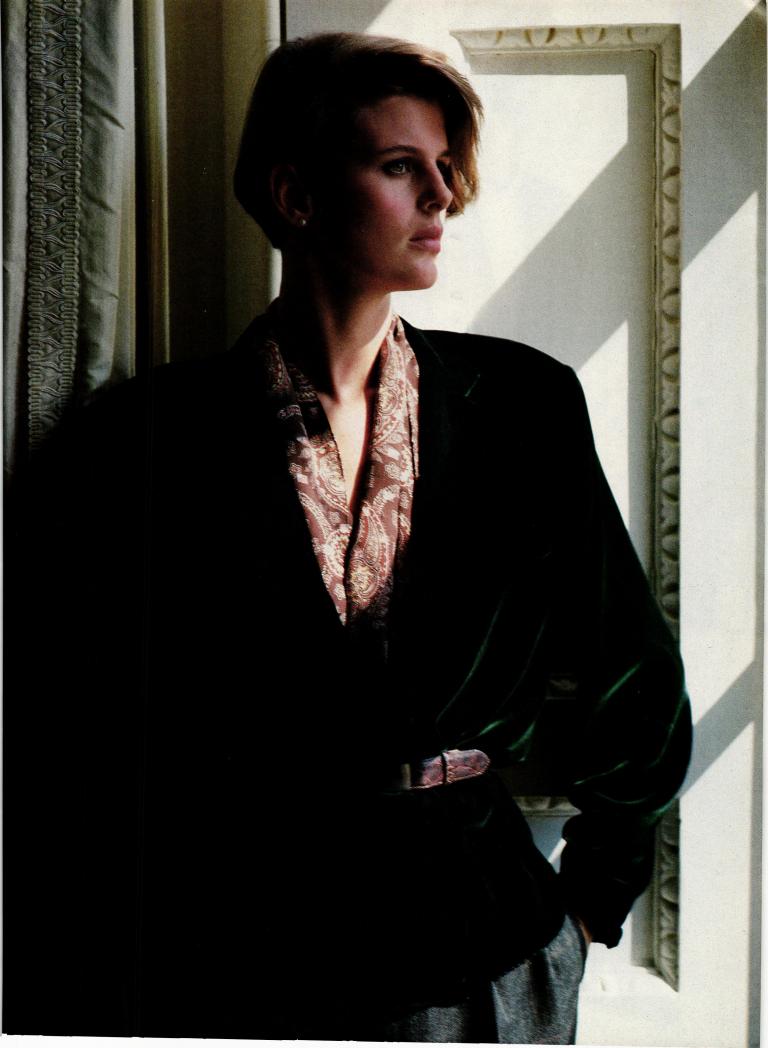




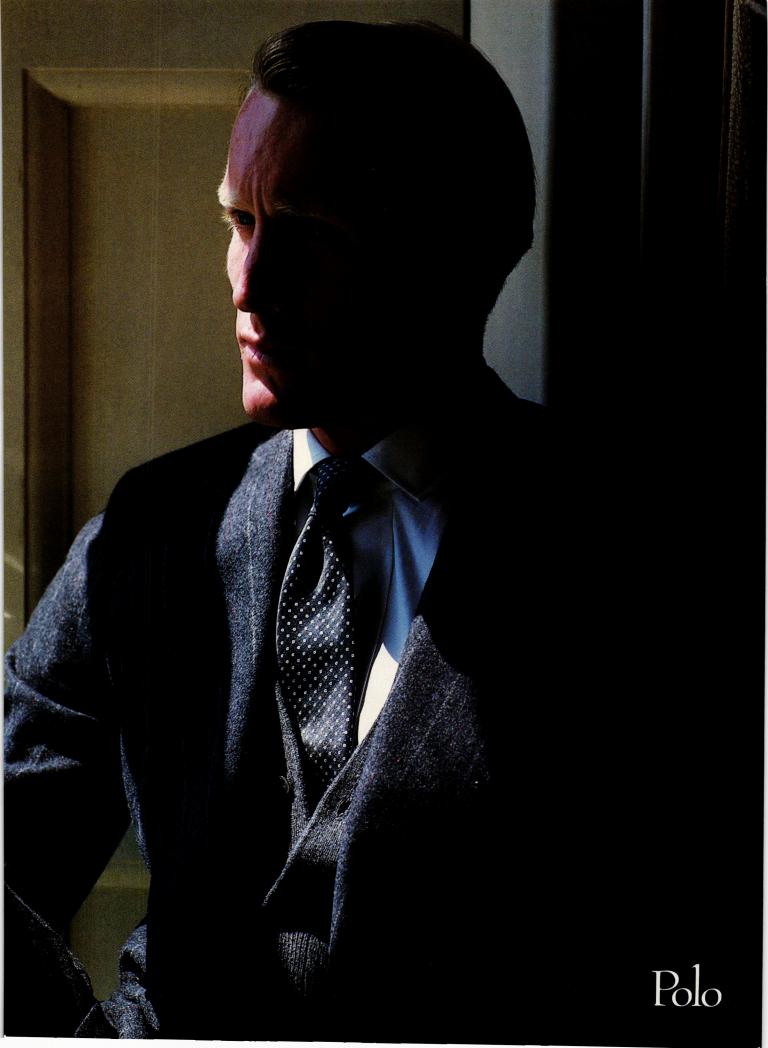






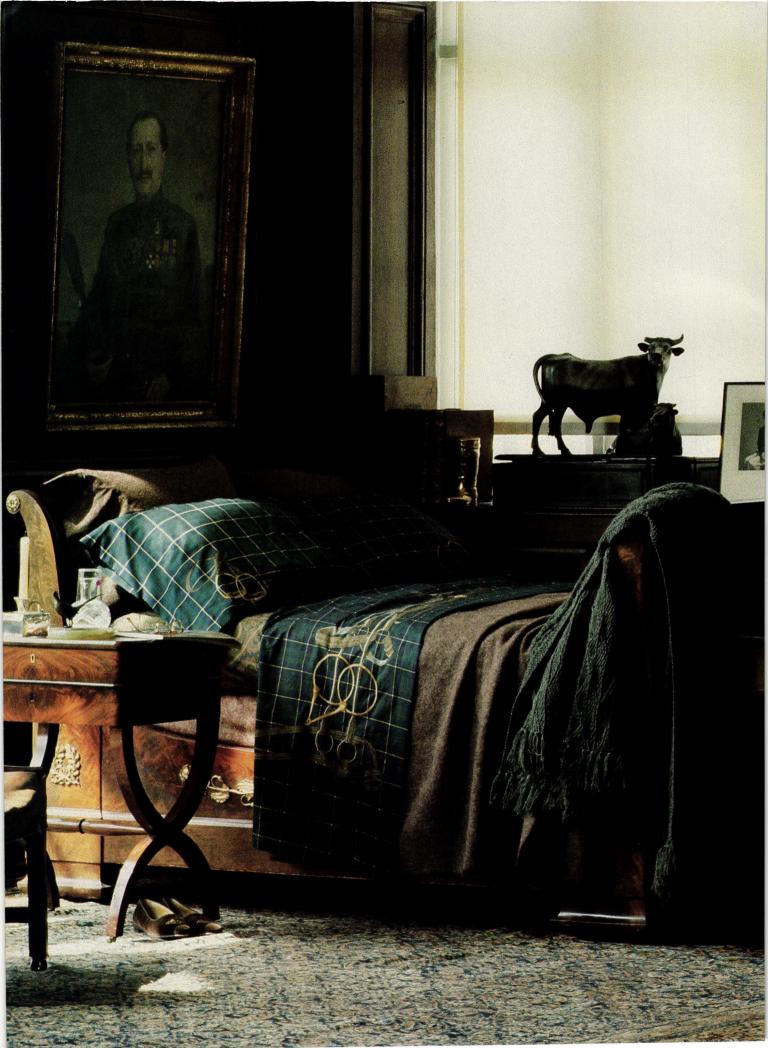


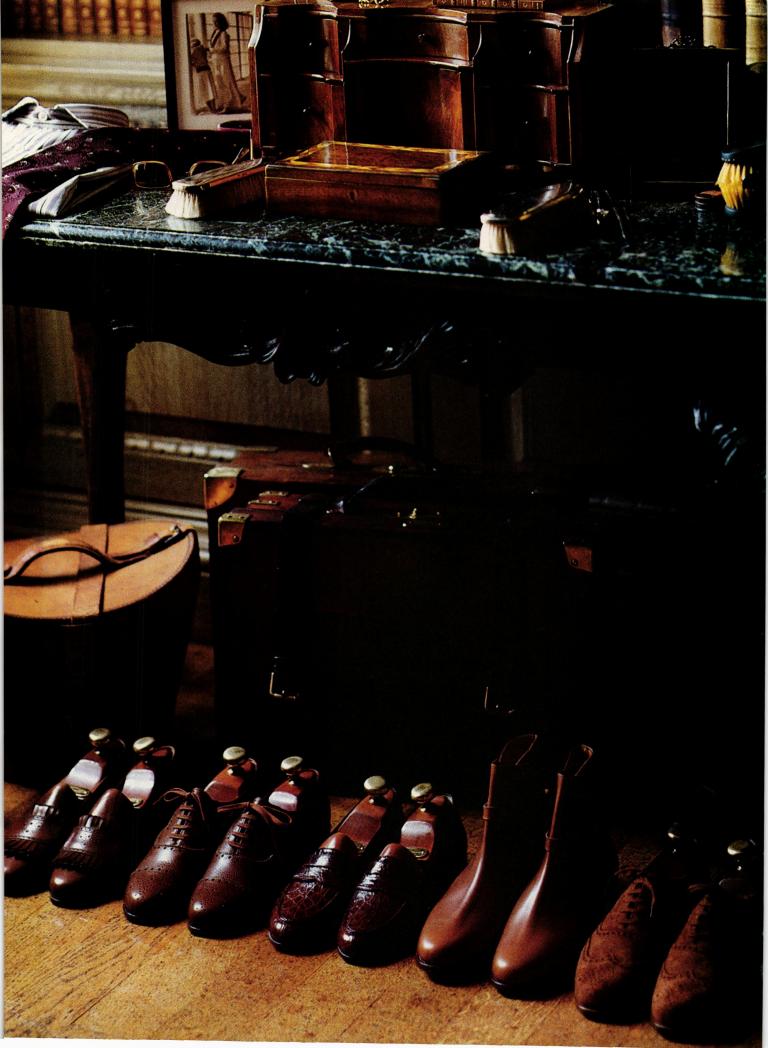














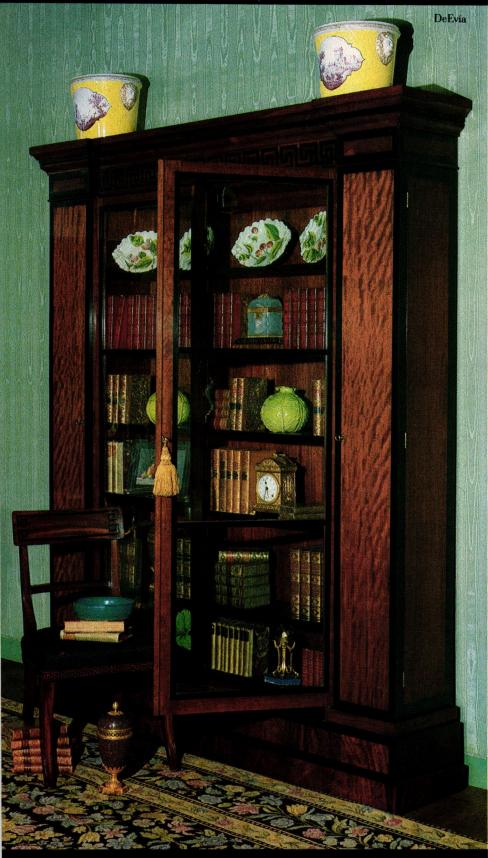


"There is a romance to living, a beauty in things that endure and have personal meaning."



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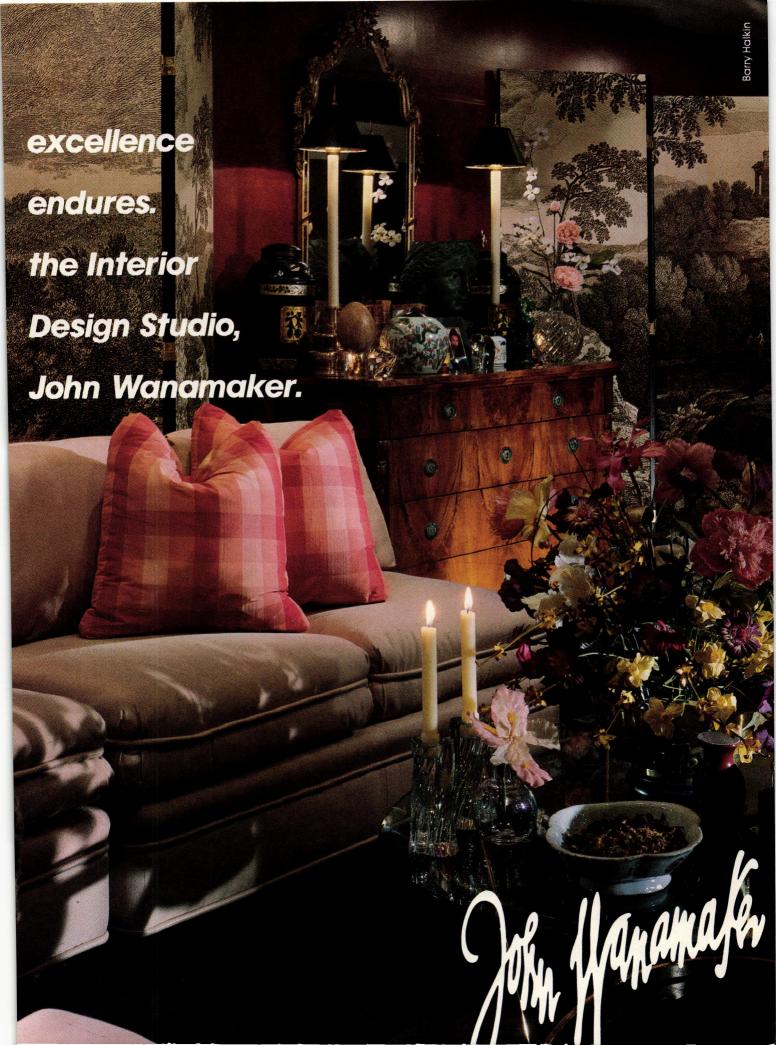
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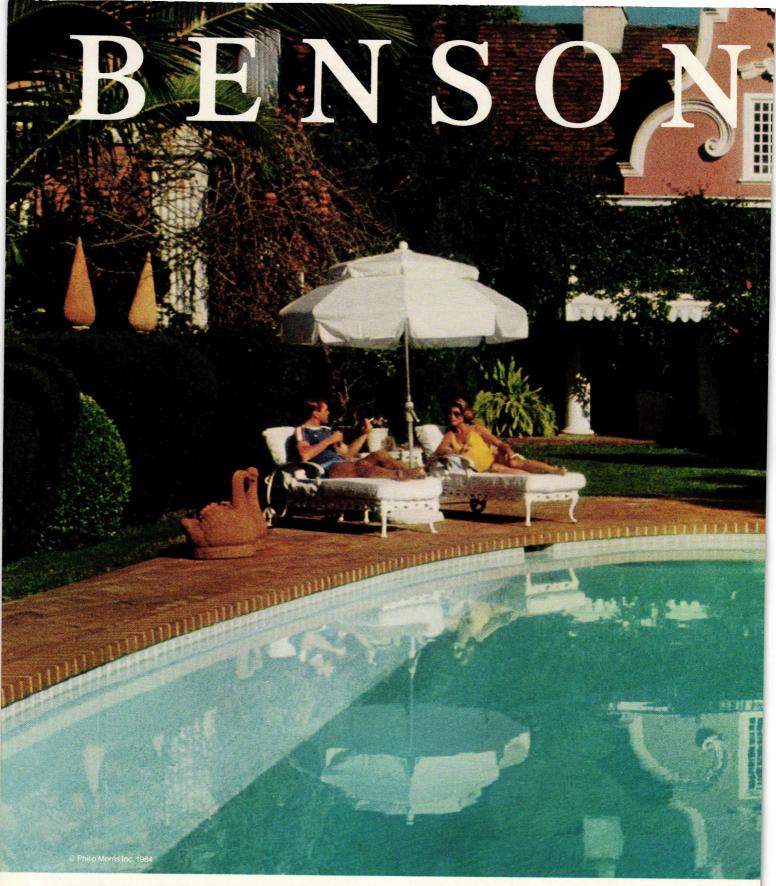
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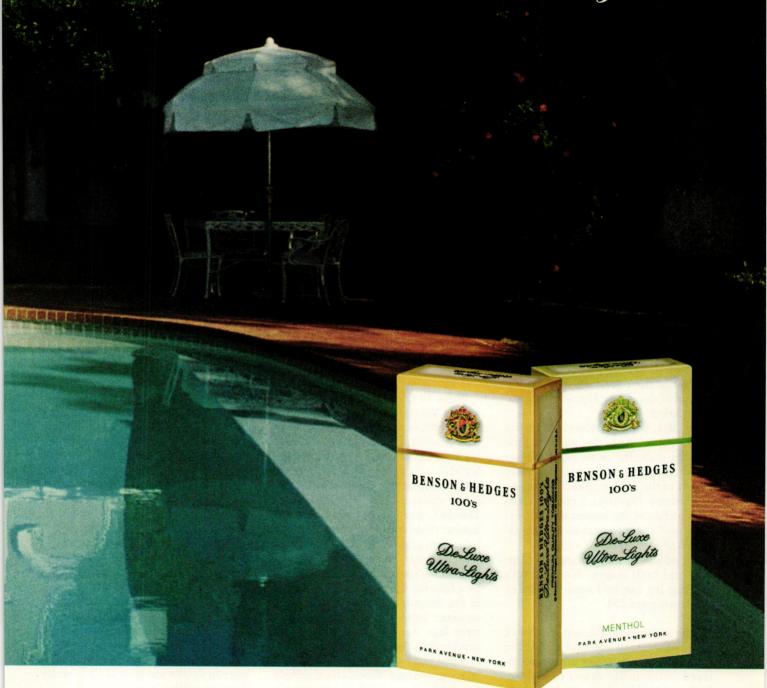




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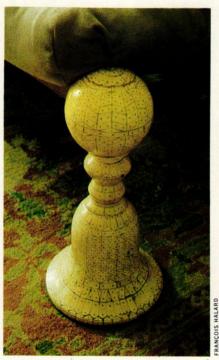
THE EDITOR'S PAGE

What better way to wrap up the summer than to visit the garden at the White House, first designed by Rachel Lambert Mellon at the request of President Kennedy in 1961 and recently restored under her guidance with the encouragement of President and Mrs. Reagan. It has always been known as the Rose Garden, although many other flowers grow there, of course, such as the spectacular tulips in bloom when Mick Hales took our photographs earlier this year. As the background for White House ceremonies, the garden has been seen by many over the past twenty years. But this is the first time that it has been photographed for its beauty alone, and we are pleased and proud to have it in the pages of House & Garden, along with a text by its creator, Mrs. Mellon, which first appeared in the premiere issue of the journal of the White House Historical Association

As Mrs. Mellon relates, over the years the garden has changed with time and the maturing of its plants. What hasn't changed is the extraordinary beauty of the garden, which continues to illustrate President Kennedy's understanding of the importance of gardens and their appeal to the sensibilities of all people.

To aid you in your fall garden planning and bulb orders, Mrs. Mellon's planting list can be found in Garden Pleasures, page 254.

With summer on the wane, most of us are now taking a second look at the rooms we live in when our more relaxed outdoor life draws to a close. Perhaps in a throwback to school days, we find September signaling that more serious things are starting up again, and we need rooms that will comfort and temper the demands of living a productive life.



The ivory leg of an Indian ottoman in the London drawing room of John Stefanidis's house on Cheyne Walk.

None fit that description quite so well as the rooms in John Stefanidis's house on Cheyne Walk in London. In this distinguished National Trust house in Chelsea the rooms are as comfortable as they are grand, thanks to the soft seating in soft colors that the designer chooses to live with. On pages 156-165, you will see how the usual hard-surface coffee or cocktail tables have been rejected here in favor of giant ottomans. In the sitting room, a generously sized ottoman is protected by a fake-fur throw from the twenties; in the drawing room, an equally large ottoman from India, with beautiful ivory legs, has been upholstered in a serviceable cotton, inviting feet-up comfort and providing extra seating at larger gatherings. When a hard surface for drinks is required, a large tray is easily placed on the appropriate ottoman.

Thirties rattan chairs in the Houston house designed by Mark Hampton provide another happy solution to this comfort requirement, page 140. The wide arms of the chairs do double duty as tables in a room where extra tables for the abundance of chairs could have turned an otherwise serene space into a jungle of legs.

Mark Hampton is a decorator who understands that it is the promise of comfort that makes a room visually inviting. You will hear more from Mark on this subject next month, when we begin a new House & Garden column by him, On Decorating.

Still another lesson in decorating for comfort is afforded by the story on Ogden Codman Jr. and the rooms he designed for The Breakers, page 208. If the rooms have a vaguely familiar look, as Pauline Metcalf says in her text, it's because Codman's work became the standard for good hotel-room decorating throughout the twentieth century.

Alison Lurie, in her essay on The Benevolent Tower, page 174, suggests that the age of the twelfth-century Tower in Wales permits it to assimilate anything. Today it seems primarily to assimilate writers—guests of the writerowners who continue the Tower's long history as watchtower and sanctuary.

A very modern house can also assimilate the unexpected—such as the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century glass given pride of place by the house with a Modernist stripe, page 148.

New or old, a house as sanctuary for cherished treasures, family, friends, even strangers is a thought we encourage you to take with you as you ponder the pages of this issue.

> Low Stopp Editor-in-Chief

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ON THE WALL

The reappearance of the bold picture frame By John Richardson

Antonin Proust—no relation to the novelist—relates how Manet used up seven or eight canvases on his portrait before doing it all over again in a single sitting. All the same Manet would not let Proust see the finished painting until a frame had been found. "The frame is vital," Manet explained, "without a frame the painting loses a hundred percent."

That was in 1880. Some fifty years later, modern architects consigned the cornice and other traditional moldings to oblivion, and in the same spirit did away with the traditional picture frame—"a redundant trimming," one of them said. Minimal baguettes in aluminum or wood became the order of the day, and not just for contemporary

art either. Some of the more with-it museum directors tried to minimalize the old masters: they would take Italian primitives off the mulberrv-colored velvet that was so suitable. polish them up, and exhibit them in plexiglass shadow boxes. It never worked. Underframed and overvarnished, old masters tended to look specious, like reproductions of themselves in a coffee-table book. But now as the minimal approach is on the wane, cornices and decorative features are no longer architecturally suspect, and the picture frame is creeping back into serious favor.

Nonetheless I

found myself derided, a year or two back, for putting a Frank Stella into a very broad silvered frame instead of the traditional baguette. An anachronism, I was told. But to my mind, the boot was on the other foot; aluminum moldings may look fine on certain contemporary things but are beginning to look dated on others. The wide silver frame on the Stella reinforces a bold image in a bold way; architecturally speaking, it contains it, above all establishes its scale. Likewise, when I put an Andy Warhol portrait into a heavy blackand-gold, pseudo-Spanish frame-best described as Post-Modernist baroque— I was accused of "going too far." Nonsense! When you hang an over-life-size portrait on your wall, it will look like a poster unless it's put in a heavy frame. At all events, Warhol approved: he even asked the framer's name.

The framer is of course the old-established (1907) Manhattan firm of Julius Lowy Inc.—I think the best in this country because they have by far the largest stock of moldings and antique frames, and the largest team of expert craftsmen. Lawrence Shar, who took over Lowy's from his father, Hilliard Shar, went along with the Minimalist vogue—he had no choice, and his people do it to perfection—but at the same time he kept his joiners, gilders, and carvers busy devising frames in every conceivable historical style, from sev-

enteenth-century Dutch to Federal, from High Renaissance to Art Deco, from Rococo to American Western. The only problem with Lowy's is the embarras de richesse. The permutations of molding, finish, and mount are so great that choosing a frame can be a lengthy process.

For an example of framing in the grandest manner we cannot do better than the Régence frame which Lowy's adapted for the Rubens Self-Portrait with his Wife and Son, formerly in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman and now in the Metropolitan Museum. But (Continued on page 36)



A Claude-François Desportes and gilt frames at Julius Lowy in New York



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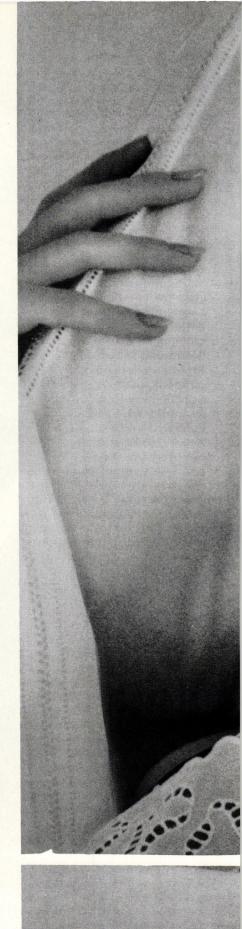
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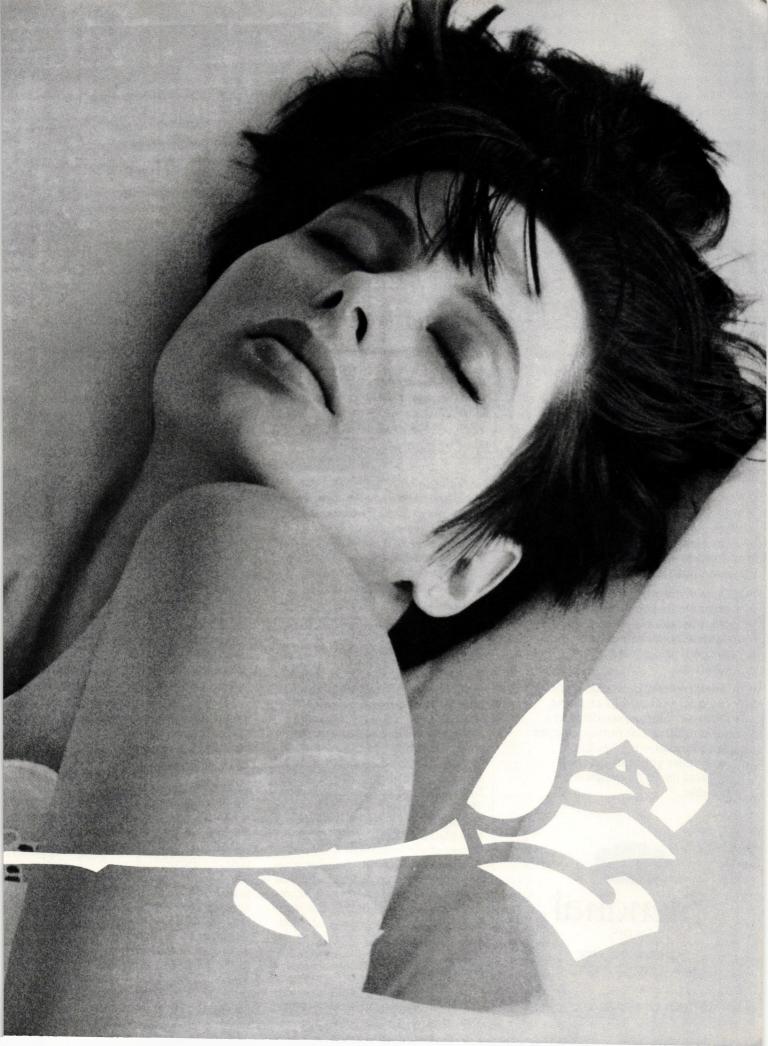
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BONWIT TELLER

(Continued from page 32) the chances are that frequenters of East Coast museums and galleries will have been regularly exposed to Lowy's handiwork—and not just in the form of frames, either: Lowy's are also picture restorers. And although I am maniacally conservative when it comes to restoring, relining, and revarnishing paintings, I can vouch for the fact that their staff is dependable and above all cautious.

However, framing remains Larry Shar's principal passion. Growing up in the business, he developed an instinctive eye for what works and what doesn't, whether he's framing a goldground Sienese primitive, a Bierstadt of the Rockies, or a Rauschenberg assemblage. And Larry knows exactly how far to go whether he's dealing with a WASP lady intent on playing *down* the family's Gilbert Stuarts, or a Madison Avenue dealer intent on playing *up* a Dubuffet doodle. He's especially firm with the latter. He hates overkill.

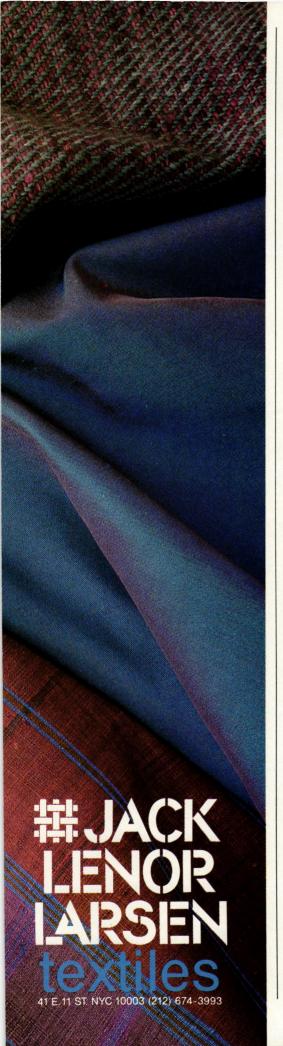
Though galleries make up the greater part of a framer's clientele, Lowy's rapport with New York dealers is not just a matter of framing, as I learned when I first came to this country in the sixties. In the course of going from one gallery to another, I became aware of an inconspicuous, preoccupied-looking man in a raincoat who was always being ushered in or out of inner sanctums, whether at Knoedler's or Wildenstein's or the Metropolitan Museum. This turned out to be Hilliard Shar's partner Max Fagelson. When I came to know Max better, I discovered that a prominent framer is well placed to discover the innermost secrets of the art market: what collections are coming onto the market, what condition things are in, who had bought what, and so on. Since Max was one of the few people in this most devious trade who knew where all the bodies were buried but didn't gossip, he was admirably placed to act in confidential negotiations. Larry Shar continues this tradition.

But back to a less arcane aspect of

framing: fashion. Larry insists on the crucial role that this plays. For instance, now that Salon painting is no longer in disgrace, the heavy Victorian frames made of composition as opposed to carved wood, which pompier subjects require, are once more an important item in a framer's repertory. The only trouble is that Hilliard Shar, like most other framers of his generation, threw out these ornate horrors as beneath a craftsman's contempt, so the son has had to duplicate the original "compo" process. As a result Lowy's can now do justice to the most simpering of nymphs, the most opulent of Orientalist extravaganzas. Likewise, the Art Deco frames, which Larry Shar confesses he was still discarding as recently as five years ago, have become such a hot item that Lowy's have been obliged to cater to this High Camp fad with a line of modish moldings that set off Deco dreck to perfection. This is not the place to go into the

history of framing beyond emphasizing that it inevitably reflects the history of painting and the decorative arts. Take Manet and the Impressionists. Although arguably the first modern artist, Manet was in some respects a traditionalist; when he declared that a painting gained enormously from being seen in a frame, he meant a great big gold one. The Impressionists, on the other hand, were more progressive, favoring simple Neoclassical moldings which they would sometimes paint cream. Degas, who had especially strong feelings on the way his work was presented, even went so far as to design frames—in a modified Louis XVI style—that would still conform to the taste of a discriminating collector. And when, in the course of time, the Impressionists became the most soughtafter school on the art market, dealers-consciously or not-followed Degas's lead and exhibited their wares in French eighteenth-century (as opposed to French nineteenth-century) frames. When authentic ones ran out, they turned to (Continued on page 38)





Degas, who had especially strong feelings on the way his work was presented, designed frames in a modified Louis XVI style

(Continued from page 36) reproduction. Meanwhile, in order to harmonize with the all-white look promoted by decorators like Syrie Maugham, the irreplaceable eighteenth-century gilding had been scraped off. In place of the gilding framers came up with a guanolike surface that tried and failed to approximate the tonality of a Monet or Picasso but succeeded all too well in matching the nubbiness and faint grubbiness of the ubiquitous off-white rugs. Fortunately Lowy's craftsmen are past masters at negotiating the virtues of chic pickers.

In recent years pickled Régence has given way to a taste for Spanish baroque frames. The massive moldings that used to provide a dramatic foil for mournful Madonnas and lachrymose Christs are now more often to be seen gracing a Picasso Dora Maar, a Braque mandolin, or one of Miro's sexually explicit pictograms. Alas, in the face of excessive demands on the part of dealers from Tokyo to Zurich, the supply of antique Spanish frames is virtually exhausted. As a result framers are doing a thriving business in reproduction Churrigueresque.

My own walls go to show that I have nothing against black-and-gold Spanish frames on contemporary art; however, if Madison Avenue galleries and Park Avenue living rooms are any indication, these have become a commercial cliché. Meanwhile some of the more sophisticated dealers are turning to the ebonized frames found on the seventeenth-century Dutch paintings or walnut panel frames in the German Renaissance manner.

By far the best solution for modern paintings was devised by that perceptive dealer, the late Paul Rosenberg. Rosenberg had the good sense to consult two great artists who were under contract to him in the twenties and thirties: Picasso and Braque. Together they conceived what has come to be known as the "Picasso" frame—basically a modern version of the old Italian Renaissance "panel" or "plate" frame: a broad flat area between two

simple moldings. The only difference is the finish: two tones of highly burnished gold (shiny for the moldings, matte for the flat bit; silvered in the case of Marie Laurencin). This molding continues to be enormously popular because it is simple, architectural, adaptable, and strong enough to contain the boldest image. No less important, it has turned out to be timeless. Far from appearing dated, "Picasso" frames look as modern today as they did when Mr. Rosenberg first sprang them on the public well over fifty years ago.

In this context it is interesting to see how the newly opened Museum of Modern Art has gone about reframing their great collection of paintings. Virtually all the old frames have been jettisoned and replaced with baguettes (substantial ones, not mere strips) that have been finished in different ways: rubbed gold for precursors like Cézanne and Gauguin, black for the Cubists, and so on. By and large this system works; it homogenizes very disparate things; it makes for harmony and continuity; and it enhances William Rubin's hanging, which manages to be eye-catching and eye-opening, historically logical and didactic in just the right degree.

However, as I wrote earlier on, powerful images require containment. Fauve paintings in particular cry out for the heavy frames which a discriminating eye usually accords them. For instance, the beautiful Fauve Braque of La Ciotat (1907) used to have far more impact and scale—above all scale when it was framed in an emphatic black molding than it does in its present minimalized state (I know: it hung opposite my bed for ten years). True, the requirements of a museum are very different from those of a private house. Still I think it unwise, even for a museum, to frame everything alike. It has an institutionalizing effect. It reminds me of what happens to individuals when they join the Marines. Shouldn't frames, like clothes, reflect or enhance whatever is within?

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Eat? Or dine? The rise and fall and rise again of the dining room.

Just a few years ago dining rooms seemed to be on the list of endangered household species, a list that included butler's pantries, libraries

and dressing rooms. Even a critically acclaimed off-Broadway play (The Dining Room by A.R. Gurney, Jr.) was based on the notion that this room was some sort of archeological artifact now useful only as a clue to the cultural and social changes of recent years.

But the latest news from the Home Front is that dining rooms are now high on many people's most-wanted lists and they're asking architects and designers to put them back into their lives.

This resurgence may be due in part to the Great American Gourmet Revolution now at its zenith. If you're going

to shine at nouvelle and all those other cuisines, you want a proper theater in which to display your new-found masterpieces.

Whatever the reasons for their comeback, the new dining rooms are very different from those staid rooms of yesterday. Gone is much

of the rigid formality. In its place, there's now a feeling of informal ease and comfort, reflecting today's more casual attitudes. In the Southampton dining room designed by Gary Crain shown here, you can feel this current mood. Even though the look is very Country/Traditional, the room is sparked with an informality that is thoroughly contemporary. Part of this effect results from the sprightly flower-strewn wallpaper and the inviting wing chair with its matching upholstery (from Schu-

macher's Chez Moi collection, the pattern is "Belle Isle"). The light-catching DuPont Dacron® and silk draperies and the imported wool Dhurrie rug counterpoint the period table and chairs in a very modern way, too. In all, a harmonious background for the social activity we call "dining."

Historically, separate rooms set aside solely for the purpose of eating didn't show up until well into the 18th century. As with many other things having to do with the cooking and serving of food, the idea of a separate "eating room" can be credited to the French and to the reign of Louis XV. The differentiated dining room helped to transform plain "eating" into fancy "dining." What had been a biologic necessity was turning into a key social ritual.

In keeping with this ritualization of dining. all sorts of customs were developed: England's Charles I had ok'd the use of cutlery several hundred years before with his declaration "It is decent to use a fork"; the central table surrounded by chairs, termed "table à l'anglais," was adopted world-wide; sequential serving of meals, one course at a time "in the Russian manner" became another international

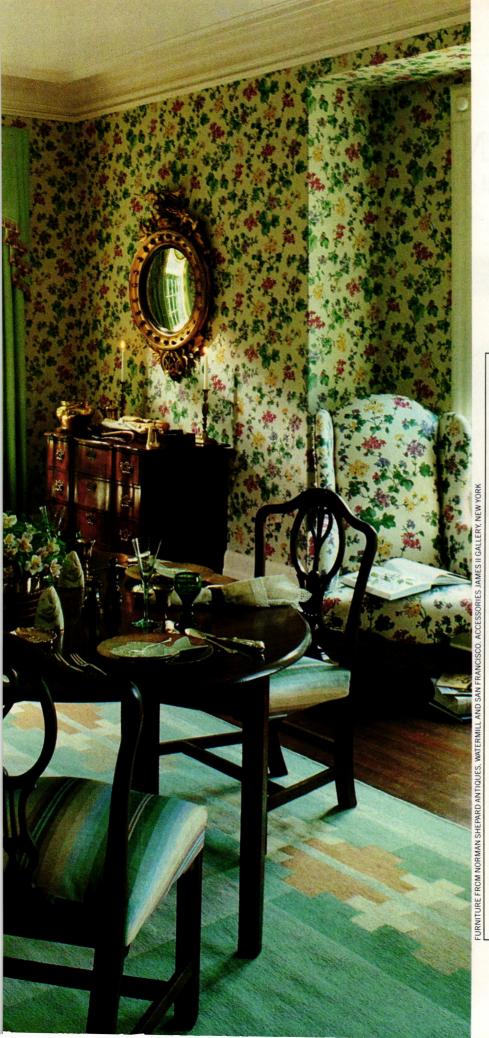
standby; special dining room protocol-as well as all kinds of special dining room furniture-soon cluttered the eating rooms of the world.

In the two hundred years after Louis XV, dining rooms ultimately became the focal point of almost every household, no matter how rich or how humble. These high-flying days continued well into the middle of this century. Then, a few decades ago it seemed as though we were back in the pre-dining room era again, and were being asked to





Schumacher's Illustrated Notes on 20th Century Taste. One of a series.



make do with the bit of space dubbed "the dining area" that was tacked onto some other room. Happily, this trend now seems to be reversed. Great meals are once again being served in great-looking dining rooms.



When F. Schumacher and Company opened up its shelves for business in the 1890's dining rooms were often imposingly sumptuous, even regal. All sorts of sumptuous and regal fabrics suited to the era were ordered from those Schumacher shelves. For today's dining room renaissance, Schumacher continues to meet the multiple needs of the present generation of decorators and designers. By offering the world's most comprehensive inventory of decorative fabrics and wall-coverings reflecting every era of design with unequalled authority. By maintaining a color palette that is unusually sensitive to the nuances of changing times and fashions. And by providing a handpicked selection of the finest rugs and carpets of the world. Whether it's for a new dining room, or a houseful of other distinctive rooms, decorators

and designers, wending their busy way in search of perfection, almost daily say to themselves (with an ingrained belief and a sigh of relief), "...surely, Schumacher."



BARNUM OF THE BIZARRE

Robert Ripley challenged a more innocent generation to "Believe It or Not!" By Alexander Cockburn

With his wild, indiscriminate, and childish curiosity, Robert L. Ripley built up one of the great child's collections of all times. Most children have their tiny collection of bugs, coins, stamps, and so forth. Ripley filled room after room in house after house; and when he ran out of rooms and houses he stored the crates of his treasures in warehouses around the country. Anything strange in the 201 countries he journeyed to that met Ripley's maniacally acquisitive gaze was bought, parceled up, and sent home. Humans were not exempt and when Ripley, in the course of his wanderings, met Wenseslao Moguel in the Yucatán, who had survived both a firing squad and the coup de grâce, he hired him at \$75 a week to display his bullet-riddled features in one of the Ripley "Odditoriums."

Ripley retained three or four people to scour the world in search of the bizarre and he was forever adding to his collection which he proudly valued at \$2 million. Geoffrey Hellman, who visited him early in 1940 for a New Yorker profile, reported on the surreal atmosphere of the 27-room Mamaroneck household with its chastity belts, Aztec masks, five hundred beer steins, the skeleton of a two-headed baby and a photograph of himself with a woman leper, "the most horrible looking human being in the world." Over these and hundreds of other treasures brooded his equally odd housekeeper, Mrs. Almuth Dold, formerly the wife of a Russian baron, once in a Turkish harem as a guest and

Ripley with Javanese Hindu deity in his 18-room New York apartment around 1940.

finely cultivated in the arts of graphology, astrology, palmistry, phrenology, numerology, and tea leaves. Married to an efficiency engineer, she ran Ripley's house for him, acting as his hostess and according to Hellman, "conversing easily with his guests in the barroom and at table."

Fanatical collectors are mostly a repressed lot, stumbling uneasily about in their unconscious, and Ripley was no exception. He spent hours every day compulsively rearranging all the pieces of his collection, before pottering about the waterways of his estate in various forms of marine transport. Occasionally, the libido burst through his surface pudeur in some striking ways, for example, he insisted that a lady sword swallower in one of his "Odditoriums" should ingest not tempered steel but a neon tube at the end of an electric flex. He was, in sum, like every eccentric uncle one has ever heard of with all the appeal of those delightful and childish creatures, as I suddenly realized in the course of a visit to the Ripley Museum in St. Augustine, Florida.

Like many children growing up in the dying years of the British Empire I had been surrounded by a collection of the Ripley genre. Curios and antiques collected by the innumerable members of my family who had been servants of that empire filled the house, and in the case of my grandmother's place, a few miles down the road in southern Ireland, imperial memorabilia crammed not

only display cases in the main house but also a small museum at the bottom of the wall garden.

My grandmother's father had been an Irish adventurer who achieved a successful and prosperous career as a colonial governor: from bleakly inauspicious beginnings administering Newfoundland he had passed through government houses in the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Ceylon before ending up as governor of Hong Kong at the end of the nineteenth century. So the display cases and the museum were filled with the consequences of a thousand Victorian shopping expeditions from Kingston through Kandy to Kowloon; carved figures, vases, baskets, scrolls, howdahs, (Continued on page 46)

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milliseconds it can sense a major frontal impact, inflate the driver's air bag, and tighten the front passenger's three-point seat belt.

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restrain his body before it can start moving forward.

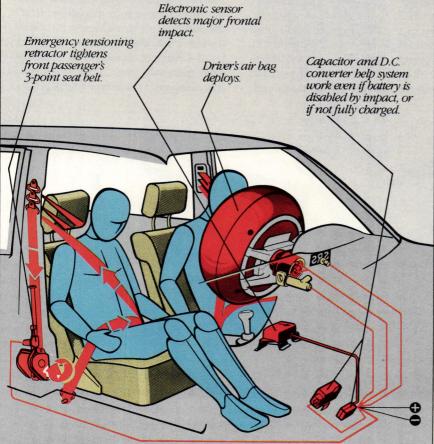
The air bag then rapidly deflates. And the front passenger's seat belt-like the driver's-can afterward be released simply by pressing the normal quick-release button.

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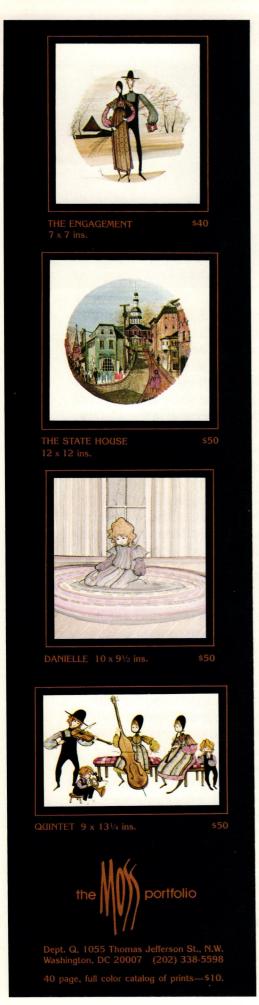
(Continued from page 42) palanquins, robes, a carved dug-out canoe, ivory, jade, mounds of imperial medals and—best of all for a child—a veritable arsenal of spears, clubs, shields, swords, daggers, and arrows whose tips were darkened with traces of what my grandmother said was curare.

No collection of this sort was complete without its shrunken head. The one in my grandmother's museum had supposedly been acquired by Greatuncle Maurice on one of his diamondprospecting expeditions up the Orinoco. Great-uncle Maurice had been something of a black sheep-another essential perquisite of any family's imperial collection—and we thought it quite possible that he had done the processing himself, shrinking this trophy down to the size of a tan grapefruit with long black hair which hung, out of my reach, from one of the museum's beams. Irish damp began to overwhelm the museum in the end and so most of its contents were crated up and sent off to scholarly institutions to languish in pedantic and well-labeled obscurity.

For me, as for many others, the appeal of the Ripley collection is that it immediately re-creates that childlike view which is the dawn of curiosity. There in the St. Augustine museum were the curio cabinets, the palanquin, and, grinning amiably from its display case, the shrunken Jivaro head. All around me were crowds of happy chil-

dren, speculating just as I had done on shrinking techniques and the toxic properties of native South American poisons, peering at the waxwork figure in the entranceway of the bucktoothed Ripley in his middle years looking welcoming and avuncular.

I cannot speak for the seven other Ripley Believe It or Not museums scattered around the North American continent but for anyone in northern Florida, wishing a respite from Interstate 95 or Flagler's great Spanish-style Ponce de León Hotel in St. Augustine (first major structure in the U.S. built with poured concrete), the Ripley museum is well worth a visit. The museum reminds us what the world was like before public television, the late Sir Kenneth Clark, or universal college education. In the American pantheon Ripley should stand in the same corner of the hall as such great entertainers as H.M. Stanley, P.T. Barnum, and Walt Disney; less serious than the first, less outrageous than the second and without the latter's degrading addiction to the cute. Of the time when newspapers had their star writers always traveling the world in search of strange tribes, places, and customs Ripley was Sancho Panza to Stanley's Quixote; and, while the latter sent serious dispatches from the darkness of Africa Ripley, in a more frivolous era, would return—as he did from China in the thirties-with a small glass vial, now in the St. Augustine museum, (Continued on page 52)





On his 1932 trip to the Orient, Ripley spent time with shark-worshiping cannibals during a two-day dance festival in Papua, New Guinea.

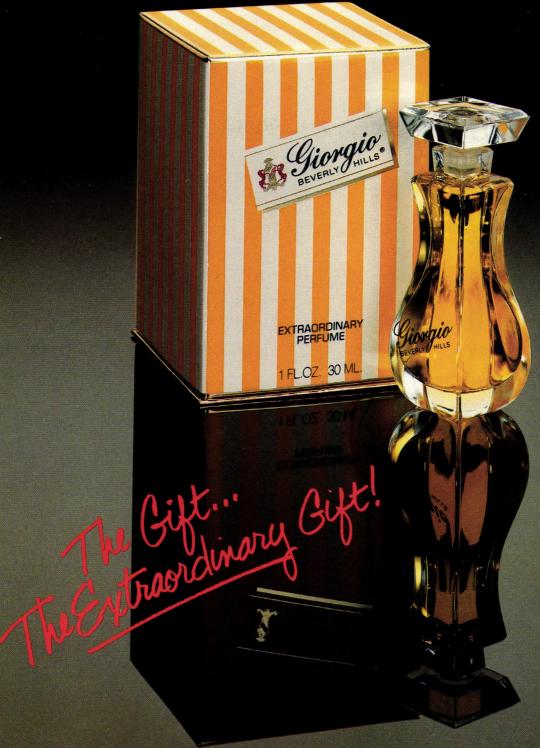


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COLLECTING

(Continued from page 46) labeled as "the only unbroken object in the city of Chapei after the Japanese invasion—a bottle of Chinese mange cure!" Ever the resourceful uncle, Ripley could make even a tiny glass bottle interesting.

Ripley was born in Santa Rosa, California, on Christmas Day, 1893. He had been an unhappy, bucktoothed child burdened with a stutter, the name Leroy, and a mother widowed when he was twelve whom he helped support by polishing gravestones. He was a talented artist and after a stint on some California papers, Ripley came east and got a job on the old New York Globe as a sports illustrator. Short of material one December day in 1918 he strung together some odd sporting achievements in an illustrated panel. A Globe editor titled it "Believe It or Not!" and within a few months, responding to surging reader interest, Ripley's employers were asking him to do one a day.

True success came in 1929. Simon and Schuster published Believe It or Not!, "A Modern Book of Wonders, Miracles, Freaks, Monstrosities and Almost-Impossibilities, Written, Illustrated and Proved by Robert L. Ripley." The book ran swiftly through several reprints and William Randolph Hearst sent a simple telegraphic directive to his men in New York, SIGN RIPLEY. Ripley's salary went from \$10,000 to \$100,000 forthwith and within a few years he was a major journalistic institution. About nineteen million newspapers carrying his feature were sold each day and he reached eighty million readers. He received an average of a million letters a year and launched radio and television series (the Ripley cartoons and programs of today are not, I should hasten to say, particularly satisfactory). By 1940 there were three "Odditoriums" and a number of Ripley trailer shows touring the country. Still immensely successful—though on the threshold of an era less sympathetic to his brand of journalistic showmanship—Ripley died in

He grins boyishly from the picture in the pamphlet available at the museum, but Ripley, like many compulsive travelers and collectors, seems to have been a complex and inhibited character. He was married for a few years in the twenties to a Massachusetts beauty queen but thereafter remained single. He had many cars but could not drive. Slightly vulgar, he was the quintessential Innocent Abroad, forever amazed at the strangeness of the world, forever determined to contain it within the confines of pragmatic American common sense. At the peak of his fame, at the end of the thirties, he liked to boast that he had visited 201 countries out of a possible 253. In the manner of globetrotters of that period he liked to be photographed in each country set against the appropriate fauna and flora, looking manly in tropical kit and with white-and-brown sports shoes.

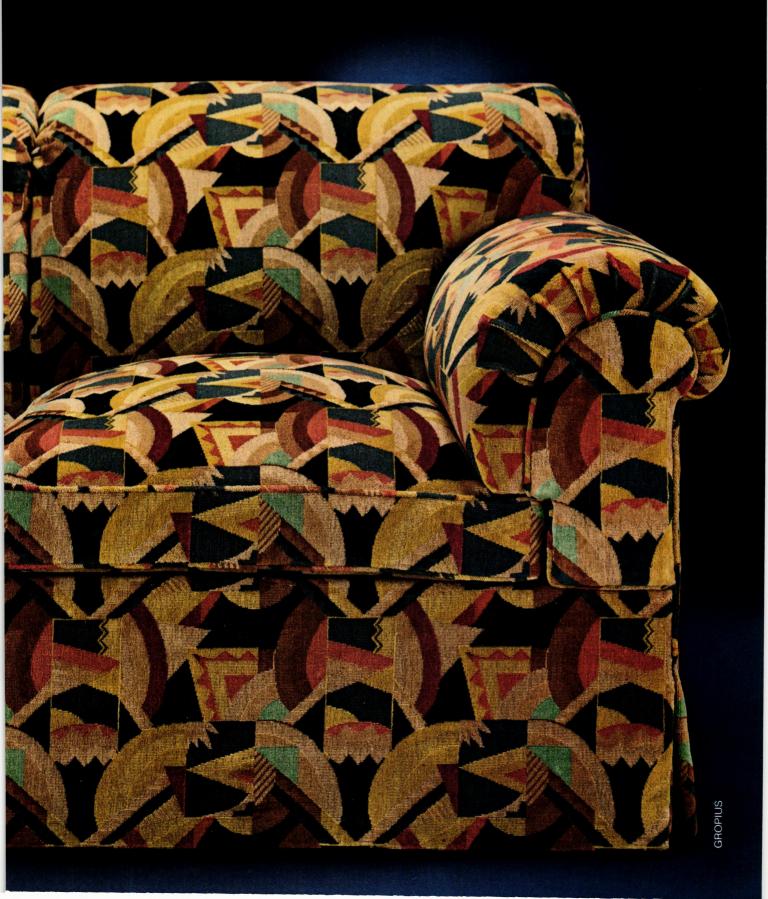
Just to make sure that guests to his home in Mamaroneck got the point, he had the miniature flags of his country collection displayed in the bar and a compass sunk into the floor of his sun porch, along with the directions and number of miles to all the many hundreds of places in the world more exotic than the small town in California where he was born. The child who polished gravestones had a taste for the macabre but not the occult, the incredible but not the false. He was a collector for the common man, with a marvelous ability to reduce space and time to the status of Collector's Item.

The first Believe It or Not! book has more of Ripley's personality in it than later products. "In Lhassa, Tibet," Ripley wrote, "there is a man with a horn growing from his forehead to the extent of thirteen inches. The reflected glory of the golden sun bounces off K2 and Mount Everest on this curious promontory each morning as its bearer makes his obeisance to Gatama while turning a prayer wheel. The Horned Kaffir of Africa, like the Horned One of the Himalayas, is still alive. I saw him in London several years ago. He seemed self-centered and satisfied, though black and a Christian."

As that last sentence suggests, Ripley lacked the Disney blandness. Although, as he said of himself, he made his living out of the proposition that truth is stranger than fiction, he did not feel it necessary to view all the world's truths with equal sympathy. Discussing the Hindu pilgrims at the Kali-Ghat temple in Benares—"Sky-facers who hold their faces rigidly upward until unable to bend them back; Uparm men, (Continued on page 54)

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COLLECTING

(Continued from page 52) who hold up their arms in the same way until they wither away"—he concluded sternly, "Most of the wretches that we see around the holy places of worship have no idea what their attitudes and symbols mean; all are intellectually degraded and some are mere fakers."

As collector for the common man Ripley had a keen appreciation for qualities he esteemed, such as time and effort. One exhibit at the Ripley museum in St. Augustine is a table with a label informing one that it was made of "11,000 separate pieces of wood from 29 different species of tree, by Klaus Finzer of Innsbruck . . . " Normal museums would have stopped there, but Ripley adds the all-important news that the table was intended "as a wedding gift for Finzer's daughter who entered a convent and never had use for it. It took nine years to complete." Throughout the museum there are such monuments to human pertinacity; a tiny bottle painted on its interior surfaces by manicured fingernails, a

railroad arc bridge made of "more than 3,100 ordinary tooth picks" by Joe Gross of Brooklyn, a vase 24 inches high wrought from the bladder of a camel. There is a stamp covered with the Constitution of the U.S. and Bibles the size of a fava bean.

Ripley knew the common man appreciated not only time and effort, but also their expression as value. So he made a particular point of collecting bizarre types of money from around the world. Cases in the St. Augustine museum are filled with stones, shells, whales' teeth, beads, pictures, symbolic objects that have served through history as a means of exchange.

Part of the delight of the museum comes from the rhythms of its eccentric accumulation, from these samples of money, to the camel's bladder, to the Iron Maiden of Nuremberg, to the final Barnum-like touch of "The Bathtub Marshall." This last, found on the top floor of the museum, is a tribute to the curator's ingenuity in making good use of every square foot. Behind a glass

partition is an antique bath with dripping tap. In the half-filled bath sits a uniformed figure and the label informs us that this is "The Bathtub Marshall ...Marshall de Castellane (1788–1862), Governor of Lyons, France" who "had three uniforms and three sets of medals, one for day wear—one for sleeping and one for bathing."

Although it disappeared after his death, by all rights one of Ripley's most cherished possessions, the Chinese junk in which he sailed on inland Florida waters near his winter quarters at Palm Beach should be anchored in St. Augustine's Matanzas Bay, off the Castillo de San Marcos. Visitors to the museum would thus get in advance that intimation of the exotic Orient which Ripley found so alluring and which caused him, after his first trip to China, to sign his cartoons Rip Li for a while. The Orient—outlandish and mysterious—lay at the very heart of his appeal, as the adventurous uncle who has knocked about the world, seen a thing or two, and returned to tell the tale.



Putty be Crow's 1 Help is in sig

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- Helps reduce puffiness, bags, and dark circles
 Soothes and refreshes with camomile and
- Gently relaxes with calming marigold

Eye-Contour Balm with natural plant extracts

- Minimizes expression lines and first signs of aging
 Moisturizes and revitalizes eye contours
 Softens with light, non-oily ingredients such
- as rose and cornflower



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IMPRESSIONS

LUGGAGE, ART, AND LOVE

The hard and soft of it or why art history can be a lesson for life

By William Hamilton

History of Art seemed too good to be true as a college course. You sat in the dark, watching gorgeous slides with a guide explaining everything—so much more pleasant than reading. The precepts were pretty simple too. Art has no confounding underlying logic like algebra and meteorology. There's not much to learn beyond identification and an attractive way to express your opinion. There are some principles, but they are more clever insights than irrefutable snares of superhuman logic.

I was delighted when it was pointed out Western art could be neatly divided in two. A very clear split between hard and soft art was revealed to us students in the slide-show darkness. As soon as you started thinking this way, pictures and sculpture, even buildings looked either sharp, slick, and hard or soft, vague, and intermingling.

The slide would flash on the screen, the professor would pace in front of it, his pointer moving like a feeler, lecturing away with his shadow crawling back and forth across the bottom of the colorful glowing projection like a big black bug. "Linear!" he would proclaim if it were the work of an artist who liked the edges of things sharp and hard and definite; "Painterly!" he'd say if things were a little softer and more blended.

I found this split to be a very appealing insight, fitting right in with the rest of the dualities revealing themselves in my education at the moment. Philosophy class (in a way that would have annoyed Mrs. Stewart, my childhood Sunday-school teacher) was just pointing out how without evil would you even know there was such a thing as good? In history class there was an ex-

emplary soft-versus-hard struggle between church and state; in English, John Donne was writing love poems that sounded religious one minute and religious poems that sounded like love poems the next. On our own, we were all reading D.T. Suzuki's *The Awakening of Zen*. Nothing was quite so clear to me my sophomore year at college as the yin and yang of absolutely everything:

"Let me confess that we two must be twain.

although our undivided loves are one,"

as I tried to explain to a girl at Vassar.

After getting educated, I discovered knowledge didn't help anywhere near as much as I thought it would to solve the problems gathering to greet me in the world. It turns out education can only add (Continued on page 60)





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BEAUTIFUL SKIN NOW AND FOREVER

IMPRESSIONS

(Continued from page 58) resonance, not guidance, when the bank calls to tell you you're overdrawn or she leaves for Australia with your best friend.

Making money can get anxious, but romance can get positively heartrending. Money operates in its own nasty little (or nasty big) kingdom, by its own rules. It's a self-enclosed, extremely straightforward tyranny you can't escape. Romance is something you can, and often must, escape.

The best ways to alleviate the pangs of love gone wrong are travel and art. Always run away when you can. Get some distance and go look at pictures in a museum and you will survive. Many more people than you might

think are smiling at the Goyas in the Prado and the Van Dycks at the Tate because they're grateful the portrait in their head of that heartbreaking face has been replaced, at least for the moment.

Running away requires luggage, and luggage, like art, falls into hard and soft categories. Each philosophy has an extensive following. Hard luggage is the luggage of limitation. Decisions must be made. At a certain point the damned thing just won't close, no matter how many of you sit on it (and if you're running away, chances are there's just you). Soft luggage, like a painting by Rubens, always has room for another cherub or nymph. It's generous stuff, receiving every afterthought, extra, and souvenir with the willingness of a fat lady taking one more bonbon.

But hard luggage has other advantages. It passes neatly as a pill into the digestive tract of transportation. At the check-out counter, it's gone. You're free. Soft luggage has a way of coming right along with you, hanging from you, and even falling asleep against you. In an old Surrealist film by Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel called The Andalusian Dog some fellow keeps accreting stuff until he's dragging along, among other things, a piano, a birdcage, and a dead horse. That's soft luggage for you. Lurching along with this exhausting and ambiguous flexing weight, maddening in its tendency to torque, for its shifting center of gravity, in the way it works as a pendulum directly against whatever rhythm you try to establish to progress is the price of its willing generosity at the outset. Just as hard luggage with its snappy finality is something like money, soft luggage is rather like love.

Recently relieved unexpectedly of half a romantic duality, vowing never again, once again, with hard, clear reason to fall for that soft, painterly seduction—I packed my two slick and swift little hardball suitcases and decided to go to London to replace what was on my mind with a look at the Wallace Collection in Manchester Square, which I heard had just been gloriously refurbished.

Sir Richard Wallace died in 1890. He was the bastard son of the Marquess of Hertford. Both he and his father collected (Continued on page 64)

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IMPRESSIONS



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(Continued from page 60) art in a way democracy and modern times have made impossible.

Small museums and collections have a charm and intimacy you don't find in the big ones. Who, of anyone lucky enough to go to the Frick Collection in New York City, hasn't stood there feeling blissfully at home, wishing the other people would please leave and dinner would be served? The trouble with the Frick is it is too romantic. You get to thinking: surely, she never would have left me if I lived here—if we lived here, together, hands intertwined, those great portraits peeking through the windows of their frames at happy us, strolling by.

Happily for the wounded lover, the Wallace Collection doesn't make you wish you lived there, hand in hand with someone. If the Frick is a bower of bliss for honeymoon dreams, the Wallace is forty years of marriage with thick doors to slam on your way into rooms of armor, daggers, and naked girls, leaving Madame with her porcelain rosebuds and virtuous portraits of noblewomen.

Examining the steel anger of armor and weapons, I got into conversation with a guard: "In eleven years only one woman ever stopped to look at it, and she was a very odd-looking woman indeed, sir," he said.

"Excellent," I replied, brooding on the ghastly tools of bone breaking and blood spilling, a rueful smile at my lips. No wonder there's war, I reflected, otherwise you get killed anyway, by romance.

Sir Richard, or maybe it was his father, seems to have especially loved eighteen-year-old girls of the eighteenth century as they were painted by such great masters of that sublime cheesecake as Boucher, Fragonard, Watteau, and Nattier. When you rise up the stairs from the armor, you come into throngs of life-size nude nymphs by Boucher. "Hi there!" What a nice welcome! Then, perfect pink girls swim like tropical fish in rows of tanks down one long gallery. Even the hardest broken heart must soften a bit at this cheerful sight.

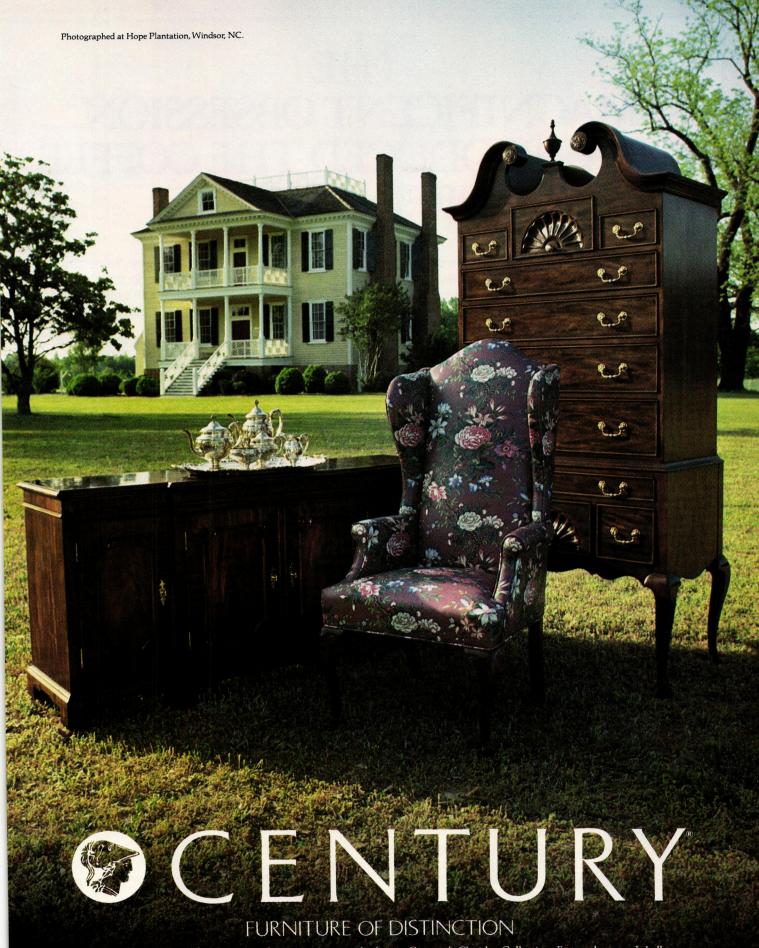
Eventually, you wind up in the great salon of the house with the phantom Wallaces reconciled in the most exalted imaginable harmony, a scene from nineteenth-century grand opera. Not only is this vast room lined with staggering masterpieces, but they are hung in vast, symmetrical assemblies. To balance such a stunning portrait as Rembrandt's greatest one of his son Titus, five in, third row on the left side of the east wall, is Frans Hals's *Laughing Cavalier*, five in, third row on the right side. There is an outrageous laugh in all this somehow: the methodical Sir Richard laying out and balancing his treasures like a nineteenth-century shopkeeper putting together a window display.

No sophomore hoping for a ninety in History of Art could find purer examples of the hard and soft approaches to picture painting than those of Nicolas Poussin's *Dance to the Music of Time*—clear, cool, linear, and hard as the windshield of a new car—and Jakob Van Ruysdael's soft and broody, mysterious and painterly *Landscape with a Waterfall*, which are hanging across from each other in this stupen-

dous gallery. I kept walking back and forth between the two. Good old yin and yang, like a pair of jump cables, were recharging my battery. What a grade I could have gotten balancing the abstracted, spiritual content of the hard and linear Poussin (gods and goddesses dancing in gay, oblivious eternal abandon to music provided by a cynical-looking, lyre-plucking musician representing Time) against the naturalistic content of Van Ruysdael's painterly landscape and then springing a flashy academic somersault by showing the naturalistic picture referred to eternity while the gods and goddess one referred to mortality. But of course the lyre-player has plucked me past college and all I could parlay out of the magnificent pictures of the Wallace Collection was a thrill.

But what a thrill such pictures can give! Art is the magnificence of humanity. It makes our endurance heroic. What is more wonderful about us than our ability to turn our suffering into our art?

Invisible orchestras played inaudible but heroic symphonies as I walked out of the Wallace Collection. The world appealed to me again. I called friends, shopped, dined, and got ready to return. Of course I couldn't get everything into those two mean little suitcases, so I got a nice big canvas bag for the excess. \square



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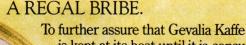
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By Appointment to His Majesty the King of Sweden.



WHEN POSITION IS **EVERYTHING**

Using the ancient Chinese art of feng shui to make interiors more auspicious

By Sarah Rossbach

In 1977, while working in Hong Kong, I began Chinese lessons with a man known as Dr. Lin Yun. He was friendly, portly, and looked like a Chinese version of Buddy Hackett, tending toward a sartorial taste in Hawaiian shirts, black slacks, and slightly elevated shoes. But rumors flew about that colony of his prowess in an ancient art called feng shui. I had heard of this ancient art but had only a vague notion of what it was. Soon enough, however, I had opportunity to learn

more, because our classes were regularly disrupted by the frantic appearance of a desperate believer who had tracked down Lin Yun and wouldn't leave until his cause—rocky marriage. failing business, poor health-was attended to. So, as if on cue, we'd close our textbook and Lin Yun would invite me to join him on what perhaps could be called feng shui field trips.

It turned out this age-old science was very mystical and very pragmatic; it had ancient agrarian origins but was used today for the most sophisticated of environments. Thousands of years ago in early Chinese culture, farmers sought harmony with the vast and animistic nature thought to be both creative and destructive. Earth was considered a "living, breathing organism" (Eitel) and mountains and rivers as dragons who inhaled and exhaled a vital, life-enhancing energy, ch'i. To survive and prosper, the Chinese



Feng shui is one way of achieving what the characters of I Ching, above, state: possession in great measure; supreme success.

called on shamans, who, like architectural dowsers, sought ch'i to discern the most harmonious and auspicious place to site a city, build a house, a temple, or a grave. Feng shui evolved as a mix of Taoism, Buddhism, and vinyang theory of balance and oneness with nature, common sense, superstition, and, sometimes, but not always, good taste. Its tools ranged from intricate cosmic compasses, to building and furniture placement, to the I Ching. Added to this was a dash of intuition, imagination, and interpretation of omens from the environment. Correctly harnessed, ch'i can bestow the goods: happy marriage, family, long life, wealth, and a successful career.

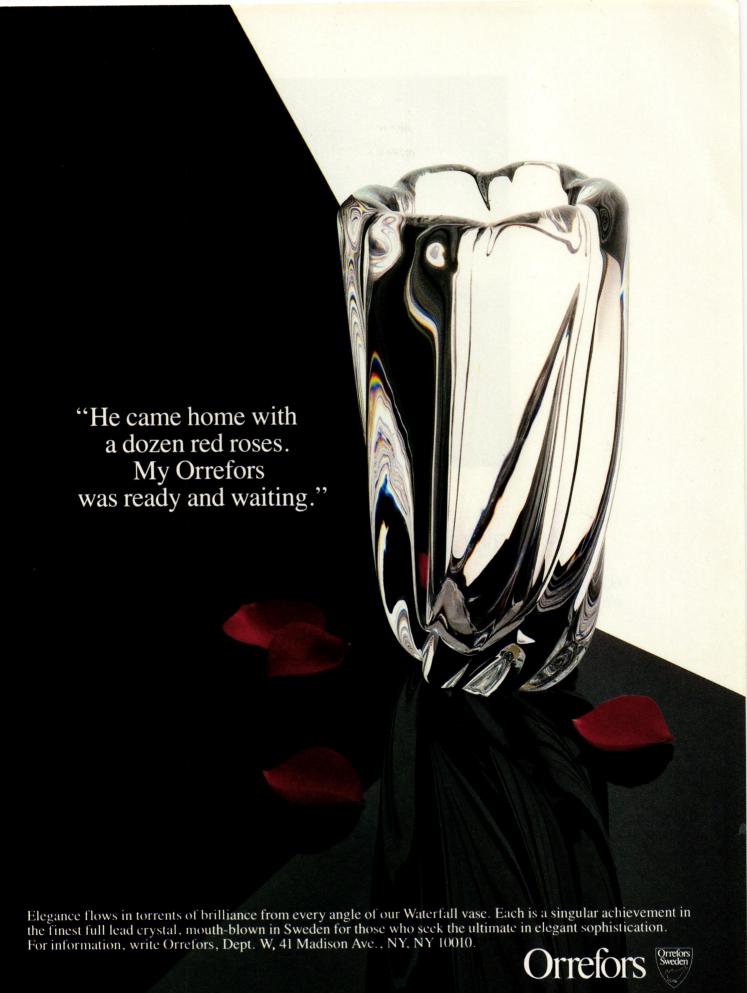
According to Lin Yun, modern-day home builders, decorators, restaura-

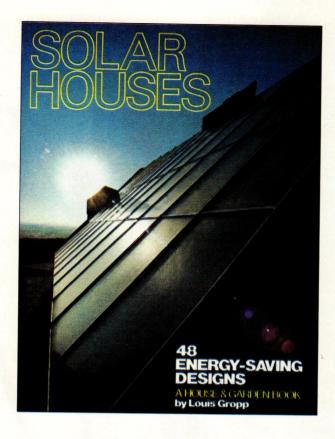
teurs, and such mighty internationals as Chase Manhattan and Citibank in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan are not beyond calling on experts of this ancient earth science for help. "Man's ch'i is altered and affected by his surroundings and whether they are balanced and aligned. So the shapes of beds, the forms and heights of buildings, and the directions of roads and corners all modify a person's character and destiny."

A couple of years after I returned from Asia, Dr.

Lin called to say he was staying in the Bay Area and lecturing on feng shui at Stanford and Berkeley. He had addressed The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and he was planning to lecture at MIT, but would stop in New York to see a floundering Dosanko restaurant in the South Street Seaport. He hinted he was curious about some other restaurants in New York. And so it was one gray day in November we found ourselves on yet another field trip. This one to some well-known Manhattan watering holes.

His latest feng shui assignment, Auntie Yuan, was our first stop. At the appointed time, he jumped out of one of three Lincoln Continentals; the other two soon disgorged at least twenty followers and admirers-Chinese restaurateurs and their wives, a United Nations employee, Lin Yun's dentalstudent nephews, a Taiwanese businessman, and (Continued on page 74) 5





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AT THE TABLE

(Continued from page 70) an accountant from San Francisco.

As this small and noisy throng stood in the not-too-large bar area of Auntie Yuan, he proudly pointed out mirrors above the bar and behind the wine rack that he said created the illusion of twice as many bottles and would double the amount of liquor sold. Mirrors are the aspirin of feng shui: besides doubling luck, when correctly placed, they can balance ch'i, deflect knifelike corners that aim threateningly at occupants, draw in such positive forces as water. scenery, and money, create the illusion of space in cramped quarters and reflect all intruders to anyone whose back is to the door.

As we filed behind him into the kitchen, Lin Yun said that the location of the chef's station is an important consideration in any restaurant. "A kitchen represents wealth," he said. The Chinese word for food (ts'ai) sounds the same as their word for wealth. Here, he added, the kitchen is in the "fame" position, one of eight areas into which a room, office, or house can be divided according to the mystical I Ching octagon; thus its food is assured good publicity.

After bowing greetings to Mrs. Yuan, the chef, Dr. Lin pulled me aside. He said that because food/money is in the hands of traditionally temperamental Chinese chefs, the stove, above all, must be sited with great care. "Twelve hours of standing in front of a hot wok will affect any cook's *ch'i*, making her or him hottempered," he explained. "But as an old saying goes, 'A good chef is rarer than a sage,' I try to make them comfortable."

The aluminum wall behind the stove, he said, acted as a mirror, allowing the chef to be aware of all who entered. Naturally if the chef is surprised, a nervous chain reaction is set off, affecting everything—the food at hand as well as the waiter's attitude and finally the customers' satisfaction. Tapping a wind chime hung behind the chef's back, Dr. Lin said its ring would mystically wake up her subconscious and draw publicity to the food. Wind chimes also redirect and disperse

strong *ch'i*. A light above the chef would both put the restaurant in the spotlight and improve its dishes and income.

As he headed toward the cloakroom, Lin Yun said a cash register's position is most important for any business because if properly placed it attracts money. "In ordinary restaurants, a cash register is in full view so it can absorb the guests' money, but



New York's Auntie Yuan used black on the walls—the color that "traditionally symbolizes and draws in money."

here, because First Avenue's *ch'i* is reckless and dangerous, it is hidden in the coatcheck area." For added security, a vase with a red ribbon wrapped around it, symbolizing peace, sits next to the register and a bamboo flute, also with a red ribbon, hangs to the side. The flute, according to Lin Yun, acts as a sword protecting profits and patrons and as a funnel, "conducting *ch'i* section by section, making business better and better."

Other decorating touches, he said, also served mystical functions. The black walls, for instance, have their own meaning. According to an arcane designation that divides ch'i into five elements-earth, fire, water, gold, and wood-black is a manifestation of water, which traditionally symbolizes and draws in money. "Black brings wealth to the restaurant," he explained. Gesturing proudly toward the elegant framed calligraphy scrolls of "Tao" or such sayings as, "When old friends meet despite great storm, there is true friendship," Lin Yun said, "I painted these with old Chinese sayings, but behind each character is a chant for good luck." And pointing to the bright, diagonally cast spotlights that crisscross the restaurant like still, miniature searchlights aimed at small flowers in glossy black vases on the tables, he said, "They are like many suns bringing up both the *ch'i* of diners and the luck of the restaurant."

Whether feng shui was ever used in Imperial banquet halls, tea houses, or floating restaurants where sing-song girls entertained between courses is unclear. According to Dr. Lin, in the United States, restaurateurs are his most frequent clients. One of them, Johnny Kao, owner of Mr. K's in Washington, D.C., told me he credits fifty percent of his success to feng shui. But Lin Yun said he was curious to see what Western restaurants did to attract business. So our next stop was Le Cirque, a three-star restaurant, known as much for its good French food as for being a favorite of Richard Nixon, Mrs. Bloomingdale, and the President and Mrs. Reagan, among others. Even as we had passed by the healthy green plants outside its 65th Street entrance, Lin Yun said. "These show the area's earth ch'i is very lively and good." Once inside, he waxed ecstatic about the mirrors on either side of the entrance fover for giving depth to a normally constrained space, and about the four small trees in each corner for attracting ch'i. Then, pointing to a mirror above the ceiling light, Dr. Lin commented, "Although they haven't studied it, they have created 'good' feng shui and so the restaurant is very famous."

He liked the lighting, and the *ch'i*-activating flower arrangements—plants, both real and fake, evoke nature in miniature, create *ch'i* and allow it to rise and circulate and shield rooms from the edges of sharp corners. He approved of the bar position on the cusp of "moneymaking" and "family"—meaning tranquility—positions. He said, however, the dining area had several potential *feng shui* problems. Most notable were the *ch'i*-obstructing columns and the seat of the money keeper, which faces away from the Mayfair Regent (*Continued on page 76*)



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AT THE TABLE

(Continued from page 74) entrance. A decorator has partially solved these problems by putting mirrors on the columns, but he neglected to cover the "knifelike" corners that point at tables. Lin Yun suggested "adding vines or flowers to soften the edges." One mirror facing the money keeper solves the positioning problems by creating an Annie Oakley–style vantage point for viewing all who enter from the hotel.

The spacious kitchen particularly impressed Lin Yun. At five minutes before noon, it was a sea of calm. This, he said, coupled with chef Alan Sailhac's "smooth *ch'i*," made the waiters and cooks agreeable. Peering into the small pastry room, Lin Yun said it was in the "moneymaking" section of the kitchen, meaning profits would be sweet.

Next we decided to head uptown to Elaine's, renowned for its bad food and famous faces.

As waiters ran by us, Lin Yun said Elaine's two shortcomings were the narrow area outside the kitchen, bottling up traffic and ch'i, and the closeness of the kitchen to the toilets. The latter problem could be fixed, he suggested, by hanging either a wind chime, a flute, a mirrored ball, or a half-length beaded curtain between the two areas to redirect the kitchen's ch'i. Otherwise, he warned, though money may enter the restaurant, in the end, "the profits will get flushed out." When asked about a similar setup at Auntie Yuan, he said it was corrected simply because he had personally blessed the area.

The fake grapes, hanging down from the archway between the bar and the main dining area distribute, like wind chimes, strong *ch'i* that otherwise might flow too swiftly, harming business and making patrons uncomfortable. Walking into the side room, he praised the mural of Venice: painted vistas of sky—meaning horizons—and water—meaning money. He said, "Because it is sited in the 'career' and 'knowledge' side of the room, the mural ensures the owners will have knowledge to broaden business to appeal to a large variety of customers."

Pointing to the mirrors on the opposite wall, he said, "Elaine had good intuition on improving the *ch'i*, because the mirrors both reflected the mural and created (*Continued on page 80*)



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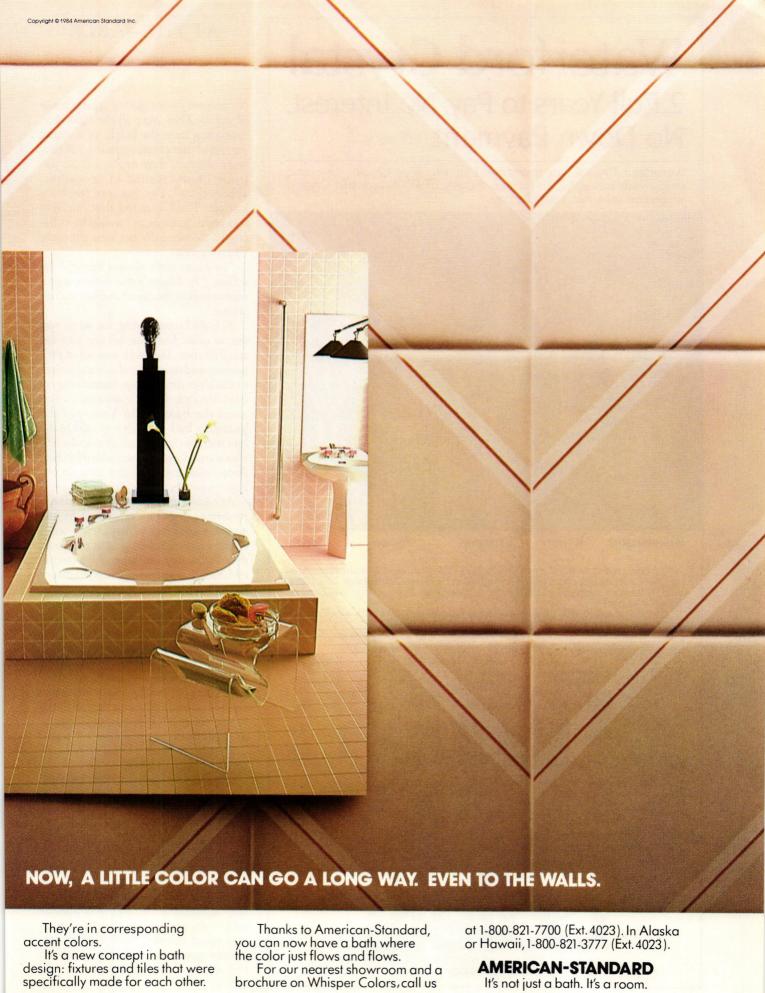


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AT THE TABLE

(Continued from page 76) greater sense of depth. They were all the right size, extending from the height of a sitting person to that of one standing. "If they were shorter, they might cut off patrons' heads creating an uncomfortable feeling." Peering into the busy kitchen, Dr. Lin noted that the light was good, but that ch'i would be enlivened if the white divider were painted a vibrant green.

"Brighter isn't always better," he added. "At Elaine's the darker atmosphere makes the mood mellow and re-

laxing.'

At Café Luxembourg, the scene was not as calm. Lin Yun led me into the small kitchen. He said it was out of proportion and unbalanced in comparison to the large dining area. Remarking on chef Patrick Clark's amazing calm amid the bustle, Lin Yun said the kitchen's bad *feng shui* would make him irritable in a matter of months. He also warned against the slanted kitchen door—slanting structures forbode oblique, unexpected accidents.

As he was explaining that both these problems could be remedied by the simple expedient of hanging a wind chime on the kitchen side of the door, thus "adjusting the balance," a couple of Chinese waiters approached, fascinated by his feng shui assessments. "You mean our boss hired you?" they asked, in disbelief at the owner's possible awareness of the ways of the East. Dr. Lin giggled a denial but indicated that the restaurant's success could be traced to the wide and mirrored barwhich was packed even at 5:30 P.M. He shook his head, "How do they all know to use mirrors?" If plants, red flowers, or aquariums (containers of water draw in money) were installed, he said, profits would multiply.

The biggest shortcoming, he said, however, is the position of the toilets in the fame side of the octagon, meaning that "although the café may get a lot of publicity, it may be sullied with a bad reputation for being, say, too haughty or too harried."

Meanwhile, back at the South Street Seaport Dosanko—with half of its *feng shui* alterations complete—a partner said, "Since we added a plant, a flute, and wind chimes, business has improved noticeably. But, it's only been two weeks. Time, and a mirror, will tell."





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DESIGN





A LIVING LANDMARK

At 95, Truus Schröder-Schräder is still very much the mistress of the revolutionary modern house Gerrit Rietveld built for her in 1924

By Martin Filler

Prinshendriklaan in Utrecht is much like any other upper-middle-class residential street in Holland. lined with substantial red-brick row houses that bespeak the solid values of their builders. Near the city center those structures are floridly ornate, but as one moves toward the edge of town the architecture becomes increasingly simpler, the scale smaller, the mood closer to the dull sameness of the typical Dutch suburb. Then suddenly on the left is a house that nev-

er fails to startle on first sight. Here among the foresquare symbols of the benevolent burgher life is an artifact of stunning surprise: it is the Schröder house, the seminal modern landmark built by Gerrit Rietveld in 1924 and ever since numbered among the enduring touchstones of twentieth-century art.

To the architectural pilgrim—and there are thousands of them each



Gerrit Rietveld's original rendering of the Schröder house interior, 1924. Top: Rietveld and Truus Schröder-Schräder during the thirties.

year—the Schröder house inevitably seems smaller than imagined, a result of its lack of the familiar scale references that we are used to in conventional houses. Rather than the monolith of our received notions, the Schröder house strikes the first-time viewer as more a large piece of cabinetry than a full-size work of architecture. (Rietveld, in fact, had started out as a furniture maker, and the intricate volumetric conception of this building speaks clearly of his professional origins.) To the unsuspecting passer-by, the Schröder house is even more astonishing: though six decades old this year, it still seems thoroughly futuristic, so modern that even a layman would agree that architecture as a whole has never quite caught up with it. But more amazing yet is that this acknowledged masterpiece of Modernism is still inhabited by the remarkable

woman for whom it was built.

Far more than merely the patron of a world-famous house, Truus Schröder-Schräder can now be seen in the perspective of time as a close partner in the creation of one of the most inventive interior designs of this century. Though both she and her family to this day maintain a circumspect silence about her long personal relationship with Gerrit (Continued on page 87)

DESIGN

(Continued from page 82) Rietveld, it is nonetheless certain that she and the Dutch architect will be accorded a paired place in the annals of design equivalent to that of Le Corbusier and the furniture designer Charlotte Perriand, or Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and the interior designer Lilly Reich: that is, a collaboration that became a rare synthesis of talent, wherein the efforts of each are truly inseparable.

This August 23, Truus Schröder-Schräder celebrates her 95th birthday. Though the last few months have been difficult ones for her as she recuperates from a painful broken hip, she is able to look back on her extraordinary life as a pioneer of the modern design sensibility with exceptional clarity and insight. She makes the revolutionary fervor of early Dutch Modernism seem not a historic movement, but rather a contemporary development.

At a time when current architecture is obsessed with the pre-modern past, Mrs. Schröder is able to summon up the mood of the moment when the epochal break with centuries of precedent occurred. "I had not much respect for the past," she recalls of her attitude as a teen-ager in the first years of the new century. "Modern things had my love. When I saw other girls my age walking by I often thought to myself, 'Are they like me, discontent with everything that is accepted?" Most weren't, of course, and the young Truus Schräder found few kindred spirits in Arnhem or Leiden, where she grew up as the younger daughter of a textile merchant. Although her older sister had been allowed to attend university, she herself was not, even though she had a deep desire to study architecture. Truus's marriage to Frits Schröder, a lawyer, in 1911 produced



Sixty years later, the house still startles

three children but not the sense of being in tune with the new times she felt were demanding her involvement.

Truus Schröder-Schräder-her maiden and married names were hyphenated in the Dutch practice—met Gerrit Rietveld, who was a year older than she, around 1918, when he came to the Schröders' house in Utrecht with his father to restore an antique desk. They immediately appreciated one another as forward-thinking and impatient with the status quo. That attitude was made inescapably clear in the revolutionary chair designed by Rietveld in 1917: the Red and Blue chair, as it came to be known, was the first great artifact of the De Stijl movement, the group of likeminded Dutch artists, architects, and graphic designers who banded together in 1917 to promote a new modern aesthetic by which they hoped to raise the world from the physical destruction and psychic degradation loosed by the First World War. Their outlook was uncompromisingly messianic, and it gave a new shared center to the lives of Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder-Schräder.

In 1923, when he learned that he was terminally ill, Frits Schröder encouraged his wife to think about building a new house that would serve her and their children more sympathetically than the conventional house they had lived in during their marriage. Not surprisingly, for the design of that new home she turned to Gerrit Rietveld, who thereupon embarked on the most significant commission of his career and produced one of the genuine masterpieces of modern architecture. The site that had been selected for the new house was conducive to experimentation: at the far end of a row of attached houses, the plot was at the very edge of Utrecht and faced a broad, open field.

Rietveld's scheme was characteristic of many other great works of art, being both brilliantly complex and essentially simple at the same time. The plan, a basic rectangle, provided for service functions and extra bedrooms on the ground floor, with the main living areas, master bedroom, and kitchen on the main floor above (a format also shared by the contemporary villas of Le Corbusier, among others.) This was the first great convertible interior in modern Western architecture, made possible by (Continued on page 88)



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DESIGN

(Continued from page 87) the ingenious system of sliding and folding walls that Rietveld provided at Truus Schröder-Schräder's insistence, her most important contribution to their joint effort. "He would compromise more easily than she would," Marian Schröder, the client's daughter, recently recalled. "He didn't like to compromise, but she didn't like it either. Her influence was very strong. She couldn't do the technical side, so she could be very persistent in insisting, 'You have to find a way to do it.' And he always would."

The design process was an event of extreme intensity for the two, and the realization of his scheme brought Truus Schröder-Schräder to a state of near rapture, which she transmits in the retelling even now. "We were so very, very happy because it was so beautiful," she recounts. "While they were building it, the children and I went up onto the roof to look at it and I remember saying to them, 'Can you really believe that this will be our house?' and they could not, because it

was too beautiful.'

That feeling was not shared by many of their fellow townspeople, however, who saw the Schröder house as a bizarre evesore rather than the brave emblem of a new artistic order. The Schröder children were taunted by schoolmates for living in such a strange abode, and many of them were forbidden by their parents to play with the young neighbors who lived in the local wangerdrocht (monstrosity). Despite the oddity of the exterior, the interiors of the Schröder house in due course confirmed the wisdom of Truus Schröder-Schräder's foresight. Although her intention for wanting the mobile wall panels was to be able to reorganize the interior spaces after her children left home, during World War II the movable partitions and wellthought-out plumbing made it possible to accommodate them once again, this time as independent young adults, with welcome privacy and relative

The years of the Nazi occupation brought an abrupt end to Rietveld's always-small architectural practice, but he continued to design furniture, and he patriotically applied his artistic talents to the underground resistance effort by forging identity cards, passports, and ration books. Though

neglected and increasingly obscure in comparison to the more prolific masters of Modernism such as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, Rietveld was "rediscovered" in the late fifties, and won several important building commissions before his death twenty vears ago at the age of 75.

Since then, Truus Schröder-Schräder has witnessed the further flowering of Rietveld's reputation, a fact that she could not have missed as the occupant of his most famous architectural work. Over the past two decades, the stream of visitors-most of them uninvited, an increasing problem as the owner moves on into advanced old age—has grown to torrential proportions. But despite the daily trials of inhabiting a house that the architectural enthusiasts of the world believe (with some justification) to be part of common cultural ownership, there is a large measure of pride in Truus Schröder-Schräder having lived long enough to witness her house transformed from home to art-historical heirloom. "I knew quite well that I was working on a revolution," she admits sixty years after the fact, but also disclaims the self-consciousness of the act that other vanguard figures have tried to attach retroactively to their contributions. "I think that is so belachelijk," she says quite firmly, putting a deliberate emphasis on the Dutch word for "ludicrous."

As Truus Schröder-Schräder enters the homestretch to her centenary, her house remains as surprising as ever. Although the rooms are in exceptionally good repair for their age, they lack the seamless perfection and high degree of surface finish one imagines the cerebral artifacts of the De Stijl movement to have had. Far less abstract and machinelike than they seem in the precise and pristine renderings of Rietveld, the interiors possess a thoroughly homey feeling that makes a pot of yellow begonias, or a stack of exhibition catalogues, or a snapshot of the architect pinned against a deep-blue wall seem perfectly sympathetic additions. They, as much as this house, are reminders of the deeply humanizing aspect of early Modernism that has been forgotten in recent times. It is that quality above all that the living spirit of one of its most important surviving pioneers helps us to remember, vividly.



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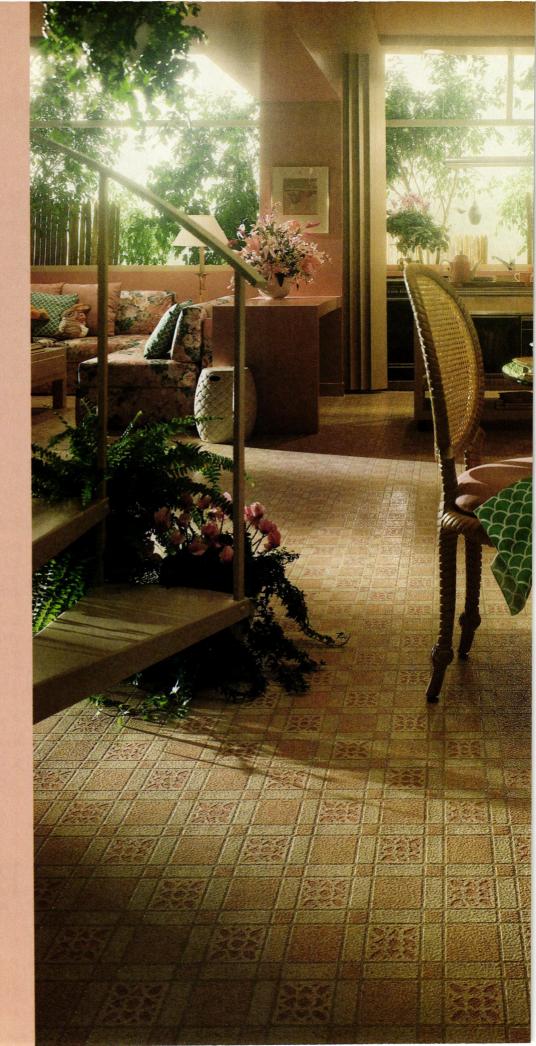
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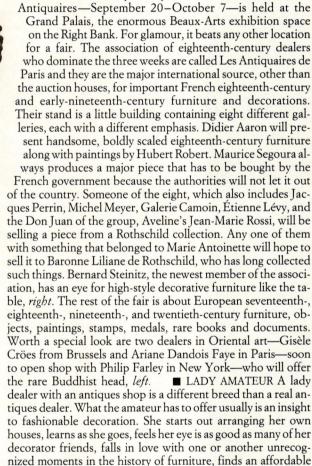
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ALL ABOUT STYLE

when a number of Versailles-like stone piles went up around England. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the Prince of Wales shopped enthusiastically for French court furniture along with his friend the Marquess of Hertford and others. When it became unpatriotic to like French design during the time of Napoleon, the Regent's taste was diverted to the Oriental fantasies he and John Nash devised for the Brighton Pavilion. Fifteen years later, however, the Duke of Wellington was decorating the Waterloo Gallery at Apsley House in a flamboyant French manner. It is somehow not so surprising that the English would respond to Louis XIV's baroque classicism or to the elegant, restrained Neoclassicism which began at the time of Louis XVI. But what is improbable in terms of what we think of as the Englishness of English taste is the period from 1730–1760. when the English appropriated all the infectious pleasure, the frivolity, lightheartedness and asymmetry of the French Rococosometimes even outfancifying the French themselves. So suppressed was even the

memory of the period that as recently as 1933 John Betjeman wrote that there had been no Rococo in England.
But it has always been the ecial talent of the Victoria & Al-

special talent of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London to jar public perceptions. In its current exhibition—"Rococo, Art and De-

sign in Hogarth's England'—until September
30—this neglected period comes to life with quantities of
furniture by Channon, Linnell, and Chippendale, engravings by Gravelot, paintings by Canaletto, Hogarth, and
Hayman, sculpture by Roubiliac, above, silver by Lamerie

and Meissonier. This exhibition is made up of material from 120 sources including 22 country houses which have lent things made for them in the period. There is a generous number of objects from American museums. ■ BARON THYSSEN'S TREASURE Baron Hans Heinrich von Thyssen-Bornemisza is perhaps the premier private collector in the world. The American part of his life includes being a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum and a director at Sotheby's. Besides his collection of old master paintings seen in 1980 at the National Gallery in Washington and his twentieth-century pictures shown last year at the Metropolitan and collections of bronzes, ivories, silver, and furniture, the Baron has completed over the last 25 years a collection of gold boxes, objets de

vertu, and Renaissance jewels. From September 20–30 the public is invited to Sotheby's in New York to see this Thyssen treasury, which includes the German hardstone box, right. There will be a complete catalogue (Vendome) with some good essays and lots of color plates. The Baron's museum in Lugano is open to the public every summer. Last day this year: October 15.

■ DAVID HOCKNEY FABRIC Such is the separation between art and decoration today that it is virtually impossible to get a famous contemporary painter to make a design for an upholstery fabric. But friendship sometimes provides a wonderful back door, which was the case when David Hockney did a clean, cotton design, *left*, Punchinella, for Celia Birtwell, London; tel.: 221.0877. □

Terra-cotta model of a statue of Handel by Roubiliac

One of Baron Thyssen's hardstone boxes



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David Hockney

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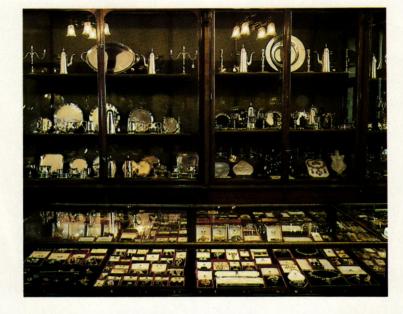


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THE JEWELS OF BOND STREET

By John Bowes-Lyon



An abundance of antique rings and necklaces, Georgian silver in cases at S.J. Phillips Ltd.

Opposite Sotheby's on New Bond Street, the discrete entrance to S. J. Phillips Ltd. is to be found. "Silversmith, jewels, antique plate, bijouterie," proclaims the stationery—but it is something of an understatement, for in reality one is about to enter an Ali Baba's cave. It is not only the venerable atmosphere that distin-

guishes this shop but also the terrific assortment of treasures-many unique—which make up the stock. It is the world of the Edwardian era-of beautiful tiaras, parures of emeralds and amethysts, walking sticks with jeweled handles, old English and Continental silver, ruby and diamond studs and cuff links and superb jewelryeven a peer's coronet or two.

Many of the major collectors of the past fifty years have been customers of S. J. Phillips. Pierpont Morgan and William Randolph Hearst were among their earlier clients; Judge Untermyer bought a large part of his collection of silver and objects of art from them, and much of Mrs. Harvey Firestone's silver and collection of gold boxes came from the shop. The late Arturo Lopez-Willshaw was a somewhat different type of collector; he bought anything that caught his eye—silver, furniture, gold boxes, Renaissance objects and jewelry. He also bought presents for all his friends, which used to fascinate managing director Martin Norton, who was used to collectors, however rich,

spending all their money on themselves.

What distinguishes S. J. Phillips from other jewelry businesses is not only that everything is of the finest quality-although often not enormously expensive—but that their stock is made up of the whole spectrum of European jewelry-from rare Renaissance pieces to gold cuff links made in 1984.

If you want to buy a diamond flower spray made around 1750, or some French steel jewelry, popular in the early nineteenth century-or again, a gold bracelet set with scarabs and made by Castellani—or an enamel and diamond powder compact made in the twenties by Cartier—they have it. The shop handled the sale to the British Museum of a pair of eighteenth-century gold ice pails that once belonged to the Earl of Spencer.

Martin Norton, who runs the family business which was founded in 1869, is the third generation to do so-his

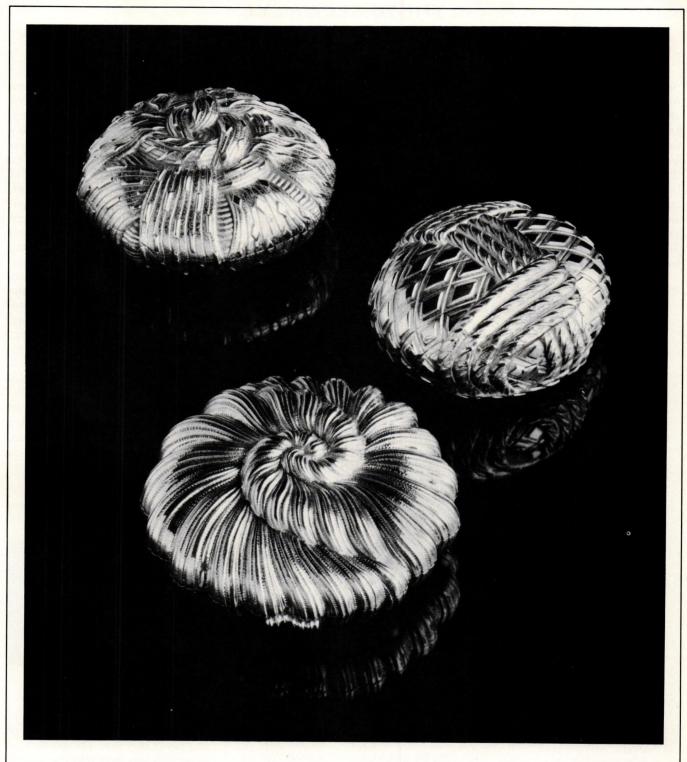
mother was a Phillipsand he is helped by his sons, Nicolas and Jonathan, and his nephew Francis. Mr. Norton has been on Bond Street since he left school in 1929, having learned his basic knowledge first at The Central School of Arts and Crafts and then at the Courtauld Institute. His sons and nephew all

received similar apprenticeships before joining the business-and by attending sales all over the world, they keep up-to-date with current auction

Beyond the showcases of the entrance galleries is a second room-an inner sanctum-where the most important items are displayed on tables and around the walls in vitrines. Mr. Norton is usually to be found seated here at the center table, taking a telephone call or consulting with his sons on the pricing of an object.

Clients old and new receive the same courteous treatment and the benefit of Mr. Norton's extensive knowledge. Friends, and dealers from abroad who are in London for a particular auction, look forward to an invitation to luncheon in the small downstairs dining room where good food, wine, and conversation abound.

Among the most important treasures that S. J. Phillips has handled is the Savernake Horn—a thirteenthcentury medieval work of art which was recently sold (Continued on page 98)



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THE DEALER'S EYE

(Continued from page 96) to the British Museum. The firm was able to buy about two thirds of the Russian Crown Jewels when they were sold at Christie's, including diamonds originally worn by Catherine the Great. Recently they bought a ruby and diamond necklace which Napoleon gave to his second wife, Empress Marie-Louise-it was made in 1811 by Nitot, and the diamonds had once belonged to Louis XVI. Then in 1816, it was remounted by Bapst for the Duchess of Angoulême. Curiously, this information is only now known because a few months ago Mr. Norton happened upon the inventory of the French crown jewels for the years 1811-12.

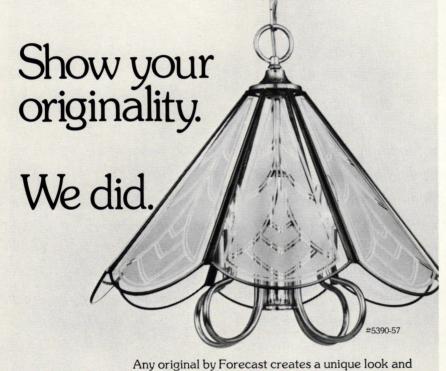
Many of the important gold boxes sold by S. J. Phillips have actually been handled by them three or four times before—a kind of recycling, Mr. Norton is of the opinion that people tend to buy expensive things late in their lives but unless their children like them. they usually get sold again when the collector dies. People who pay ten thousand pounds and upward for one gold box are not hard up for money, and in most countries where there is a doubt about the currency such objects tend to be a good investment. One would think that the most portable of possessions such as jewelry and silver—objects which carry a high insurance premium and have to be kept safely locked up-would be the first things to be sold when estates are being broken up, but Mr. Norton says, "Funnily enough, it is very often the pictures that leave the walls first, forcing the owners to then face the problems of redecoration." Indeed when substantial money has to be raised, it is the pictures and furniture that are usually reappraised first.

Today much of the antique jewelry and silver that S. J. Phillips has on display comes from private sources in America. The salesrooms in London and New York are, like the dealers, finding it difficult to get enough goods to sell, so prices remain high for anything of quality.



The classic cabinet-lined salesroom on London's New Bond Street.

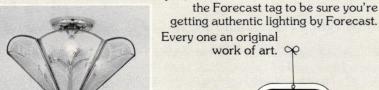
The interest in collecting objects of virtu never dies out. The number of collectors is only limited by the amount of material available. Many dealers collect for themselves, which makes it more difficult for the layman to find pieces within his means. Last year S. J. Phillips's biggest client decided to give up buying gold boxes, but they found someone else to take his place with no difficulty. Asked what a young person with a limited amount of money should start to collect nowadays, Mr. Norton says, "At the moment eighteenth-century diamond jewelry is undervalued, as are small, very good pieces of English silver." □



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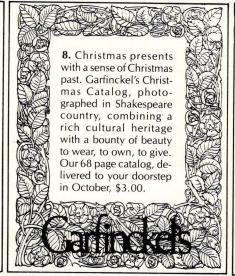
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ANTIQUES

CONNECTICUT FURNITURE

The myth that this colony's cabinetmakers were capricious hicks is contradicted by the subtle objects they left behind

By Robert F. Trent

In the past, Connecticut's eighteenth-century furniture did not appeal to urbane collectors. but nowadays major case pieces and the better chairs are commanding prices in the \$80,000-\$150,000 range. Clearly somebody thinks the stuff is of more than academic interest. Some collectors today seem to feel that the high-style (and far more expensive) pieces from the major colonial cities are too formal to live with and prefer the simpler Connecticut designs. And Connecticut furniture may have been slighted before because of persistent caricatures of its origins and appearance. The party line of dealers and even scholars used to go something like this: the inhabitants of Connecticut were conservative rustics who, paradoxically, were also individualistic and creative. Living in the country, Connecticut's people were always a little behind their contemporaries in Boston, New

York, and Philadelphia, and they reacted to new fashions in a neurotic manner, copying each new style but embellishing it with naïve, complex, original ornament. And, the caricature continues, they always used cherry wood finished the color of orange linoleum or maple syrup.

As we gaze upon the Chapins' dressing tables and framed chairs or Samuel Loomis's chests-on-chests, something begins to seem very wrong with this version of history. The Chapin examples are fairly plain, with little or none of the rococo carved ornament one expects to see on Philadelphia furniture of the same period, but the dark, reso-



Samuel Loomis's cherry chest-on-chest, Colchester 1770–1790, is restrained in its overall form, bold in its ornament.

nant surfaces of the objects and their carefully calculated proportions do not seem at all countrified. Loomis's chest-on-chest (probably called a "case of drawers" during the period) is also dark and restrained in appearance, the ornament executed with economy. How are these objects to be squared with the popular notion that this furniture should be bizarre and orange? Clearly we need to consider the origins and intended effects of this furniture more carefully.

The historical reality of Connecticut life and Connecticut furniture, so far as scholars now understand it, was remarkably different and far more interesting than the creative-rube version.

By the 1750s, the colony was not simply a collection of farms inside a political boundary line. The ports along the coast and up the major rivers had populations in the 5,000–8,000 bracket, a respectable size by colonial standards. Connecticut was not prosperous and was controlled by a small clique of merchants who bought up grain, cattle, and lumber to exchange in Boston or New York for cloth, hardware, and other finished goods to sell back in Connecticut.

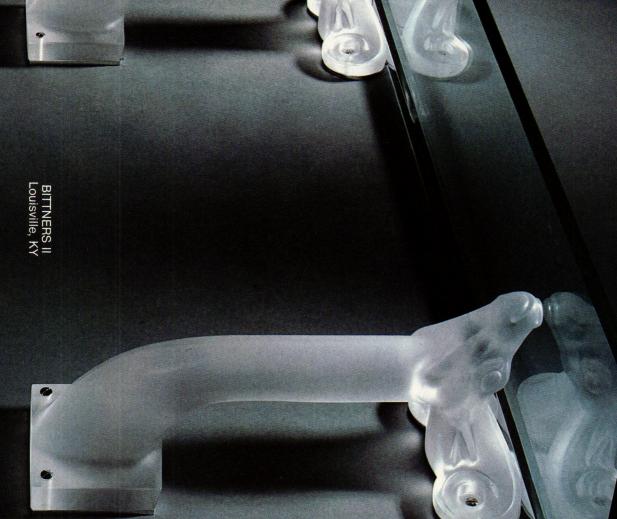
The woodworkers of Connecticut stood far below the merchants in wealth and prestige, but they, like their farmer clients, were not self-righteous hicks out of a WPA mural. They learned about the latest styles in three ways. First, they saw furniture that had been imported from Boston or Newport or New York. Most furniture historians have assumed that this was the princi-

pal way styles were transmitted, and much of the furniture made in Connecticut has therefore been misinterpreted as incompetent copies of urban models.

Another, far more prevalent way for new styles to reach rural towns was for a local boy to apprentice in a major urban shop, where he could copy or steal the patterns he needed and return home. And a third way was for an established cabinetmaker from a major seaport or even from England to move to Connecticut and set up shop.

These last two means of transmission were the most effective. They gave local cabinet- (Continued on page 104)

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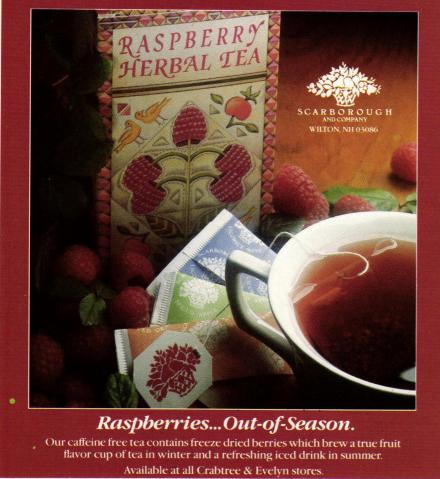


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ANTIQUES

(Continued from page 102) makers direct access to techniques and templates, or patterns, used to draw up the components of unfamiliar forms. Creativity really only intervened at the point when the artisan laid out the proportions of the piece and fitted the patterns for the various parts together.

In Connecticut and even in Boston and New York, most people could not afford the upholstered chairs and heavily carved high chests of drawers that figure so prominently in museum collections. The cheaper alternatives were the turned, rush-seated chairs that were produced in the thousands for shipment to country towns and the small board chests or chests of drawers made of softwoods and painted in imitation of walnut or mahogany. These cheap furniture forms sported the more obvious features of expensive, fashionable furniture, and they were influential in rural areas where wealthy people were few and far between.

On those few occasions in his working career when a Connecticut cabinetmaker was called upon to produce a case piece or a set of chairs "as good as any made in Boston," his first step was to search for the basic forms among the templates he had copied when an apprentice. Then the question of carving arose. In a large seaport, the various components of a major case piece were jobbed out to specialists like carvers, inlay makers, and gilders, thereby insuring a high level of workmanship throughout. In rural towns, the cabinetmaker had to provide all the ornament himself, (Continued on page 106)



Aaron Chapin's fine dressing table, Hartford 1784–1792, has unique carved cipher.

THE CONNECT



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(Continued from 104) and Connecticut artisans almost never achieved the kind of fluidity and crisp, naturalistic definition expected of the best urban carving.

The single-artisan factor does not fully account for the most elaborate Connecticut furniture of the 1770-1800 period, which seems so inventive or so bizarre to modern eyes. Some additional factors come to mind. Connecticut was influenced by many style centers, and what looks like inventiveness to us was often merely a selective combining of design elements from two or more urban schools. One or two particularly able artisans may have formulated a vocabulary of ornament that is strikingly different from known urban models, but the widespread practice of serving journeyman's time in an established master's shop meant that a successful type of ornament would quickly be taken up by five or more shops. For example, Benjamin Burnham and his apprentice Samuel Loomis, both of Colchester, evolved distinctive case pieces with dentiled cornice moldings, blocked fronts surmounted by Newport-style shells, spiral-carved quarter columns, and pagoda finials. But when case pieces with this ornament are examined, the construction of the internal structures indicates that many different artisans were responsible for practicing this ornamental mode. The explanation is simple. A master like Burnham who had struck upon a popular form or (Continued on page 108) ornament



Eliphalet Chapin's 1775 claw-foot armchair shows a Philadelphia influence.





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ANTIQUES

(Continued from page 106) had to fulfill a heavy demand before the fad for his style passed. Thus he had to run a large shop, with three or four apprentices and three or four journeymen. The apprentices would learn to make details like drawer dovetails from the master, and their dovetails would look just like Burnham's, but the journeymen would continue to make dovetails like those of their own masters. When they left Burnham's employ, their ornament would look the same, but their dovetails wouldn't. From the perspective of two hundred years, it's almost impossible to tell under what circumstances a given case piece was made and which ones represent the work of the master as opposed to his followers. In the case of Burnham and his apprentice Loomis, we possess signed examples of their work and documents identifying them as the makers of recognized examples that survived, but this kind of evidence is lamentably rare.

Collectors have always placed great emphasis on the fact that much of the best Connecticut furniture is made of cherry. Unfortunately, most of the examples they prize have been refinished a pale red or yellow color, when many examples still owned by descendants of important colonial families prove that the period practice was to finish cherry or maple the color of mahogany. It is not clear why cherry was so popular, for the wood has a number of drawbacks. It was not abundant. It was not available in the generous widths reguired to make case pieces with board sides. It was brittle and tended to warp and crack while it was seasoning. And mahogany was not that much more expensive.

But cherry had its attractive side. The wood has a fine texture and luster, and quartersawn boards display a minute ray figure that is unlike the fiery patterns of mahogany. This speckled ray figure of cherry definitely was a key factor in its popularity, because we know that some cabinetmakers fooled their customers by passing off sycamore, which has a similar ray figure, as cherry.

Dark finishes and subtly figured woods strongly influenced the apparent size and scale of Connecticut case pieces. The traditional regional house types had relatively small rooms with low ceilings that could not accommo-

date the towering case pieces favored in large urban centers. Connecticut copies of urban models are always smaller and plainer. Dark finishes made them look compact and massive, an effect that is lost when they are rubbed down and finished a light color.

We are tempted as we walk around museums and galleries to impose on



Ogee bracket feet with open volutes are characteristic of Samuel Loomis's work.

Connecticut furniture the idea that personalized expression is equivalent to the fulfillment of caprice. That has nothing to do with the calculated efforts of early cabinetmakers to capture and dominate a market by developing products that could be produced in quantity. Making furniture was first and foremost a business, based on the principle that getting a job done in the least amount of time produced the greatest profit. Cabinetmakers and their clients expended their limited resources grudgingly, and a sophisticated appreciation of their works must take that into account. On the whole, we must marvel that they produced anything approaching the flair of urban prototypes, and we must balance our desire to see and possess flamboyant objects with the flinty, almost humorless context from which they emerged two hundred years ago.

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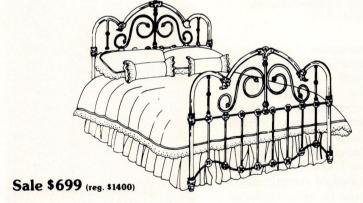
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GOD WAS HIS CLIENT

By Joseph Rykwert

GAUDÍ: THE VISIONARY by Robert Descharnes and Clovis Prévost The Viking Press, 251 pp., \$75

THE DESIGNS AND DRAWINGS OF ANTONIO GAUDÍ by George R. Collins and Juan Bassegoda Nonell Princeton University Press, 240 pp., \$143

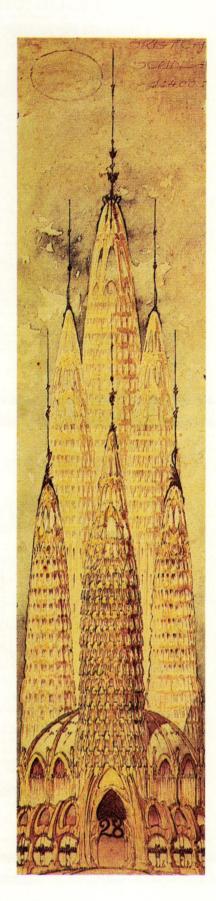
MODERN ARCHITECTURE SINCE 1900 by William J.R. Curtis Prentice-Hall, 416 pp., \$39.95

GAUDÍ by Ignasi de Solà-Morales Rizzoli International, 127 pp., \$14.95

EL MUNDO ENIGMÁTICO DE GAUDÍ by Tokutoshi Torii, Instituto de España, two volumes, 390 pp., \$140

Was he the great genius of architecture in his day, Antoni Gaudí, who claimed that God himself was his immediate client, or was he a confidence trickster who deluded even himself and left his city of Barcelona a stillborn oversize cathedral, a premature ruin? He is now the most publicized Spanish artist—always excepting Picasso. Four books about him, published recently and a long reference in another have prompted the question again. What is more, a group of young Catalan architects have recently declared themselves his disciples and held exhibitions of his work in Barcelona and Paris.

Most tourists who go to Barcelona see the Sagrada Familia, and many climb one of the spires to look down on the city. All that was built of it when Gaudí died in 1926 was the façade of one transept, and the shell of the apse. A temporary altar was put on the site of the projected high one. In the last



twenty years another transept façade was built. They are huge and spiky, the first one covered with elaborate high-relief sculpture and colored ceramics, the recent one still bare. Work on the building has stopped again.

Part of the visit is the descent to Gaudí's workshop, where there are the remains of his drawings, models for the church, and casts on which some of his sculptures were based. He lived this last and biggest work of his very intensely. In the end he was doing nothing else, and slept in an improvised bedroom in the workshop. When he died in 1926—knocked down by a tram on his way to church—he was taken for a tramp, and his body was not recognized till a day or two later; there had been no identifying paper on him.

One hundred fifty years ago Catalonia had become the industrial hub of Spain. The new middle class needed their national identity to guarantee their independence from despotic and disordered Castile and León and its incomprehending central government. Industrialization and growth brought the usual problems with them: the city grew explosively beyond its old bounds, the industrial proletariat lived in squalid hovels and tenements. There were epidemics. The poor rebelled and the feeling of national pride and national cohesion was invoked against the agitation. Clearly the town had to be renewed physically. In the 1850s the medieval walls were torn down and a competition held for the huge new city planned beyond them which in the end was laid out on (Continued on page 112)

A drawing made in the fifties by Gaudí's assistant and disciple, Lorenz Matamala, to recall Gaudí's 1908 project for a New York skyscraper hotel.

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BOOKS

(Continued from page 110) a grid with a few diagonal avenues by Idelfonso Cerdá, the man who invented the science of "urbanism," or at least the word.

Into this Barcelona an eighteenyear-old Antoni Gaudí arrived from Reus, a small town just outside Tarragona, to study architecture and there he stayed for the rest of his long life. His father was a boilermaker and this gave him a familiarity with metalwork, which occasionally surprised his associates since he could take a hammer to red-hot iron like a smith. He was given, in any case, to interfering with masons, with concrete shuttering, with the laying of broken crockery into cement (which became his favorite wall finish) long before Iulian Schnabel did it.

But he was also a fine draftsman. His studies left him with the usual cultural baggage of the time, the bulk of it being his reading of Viollet-le-Duc, the most virulent restorer of French cathedrals and Empress Eugénie's favorite architect, who proclaimed the gospel of a rational medieval architecture as a prophecy for the future. This suited Gaudi's partisanship of Catalan independence: most of Barcelona's buildings of any distinction were Gothic after all, since little had been done in Barcelona or elsewhere in Catalonia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Though Gaudí also liked to invoke the Oriental, Catalonia was never firmly part of Moorish Spain but a flirtation with North Africa went well with the myth of Catalan grandeur. Gaudi's first important building, the house for Don Manuel Vicens, one of those enlightened Catalan industrialists on whom he relied, was clearly Moorish, though spiky. And there was a spikiness about everything which he did. Before he even started building, while still a student, he designed some settings and floats for those Catalan Floral games which might have come straight out of Viollet-le-Duc's visions of medieval decorations. At about the same time as he met Don Manuel Vicens, he also received commissions from two men of much the same group. The Marqués de Comillas asked him to design a villa for a relation on his estate in northern Spain near Santander, which became a kind of highbrow Catalan colony with palaces, a college, churches, and (Continued on page 114)



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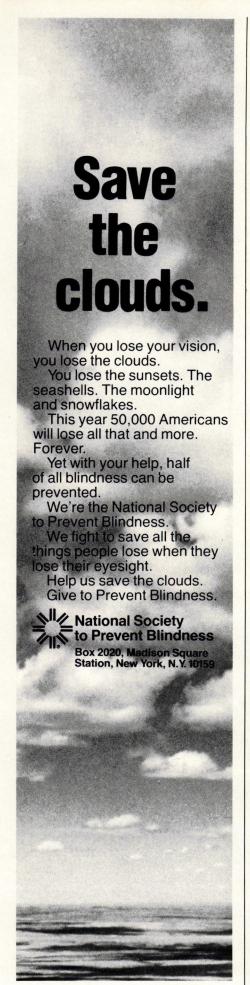
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(Continued from page 112) street decoration, all created by architects of the Catalan Modernism movement. In many accounts, Gaudí appears as an isolated genius, but in fact he was one of a number of architects working in Barcelona at the time. They were not of equal fire, but he sometimes owed a lot to them: Juan Martorell, Joseph Puig i Cadafalch, Luis Domenéch i Montaner, Joseph Domenéch i Estapa all subscribed to Catalan nationalism, all thought of themselves as modern. Some worked with Gaudí or built on adjoining sites. The group shared a common philosophy with their patrons, made up of varying doses of Ruskin and Nietzche, with a strong admixture of more or less orthodox Catholic piety.

The most lavish in his patronage of Gaudí was the textile magnate, Don Eusebio Güell. In 1882-83 he had stables and a metal gate to his country property done, the gate being a fearful metallic monster. Three years later came a vast and luxurious town house off the Ramblas, now a theater museum; about 1890 a workers' colony was laid out with Gaudi's participation, for which he designed a chapel; only the crypt was built. And in 1900 work started on the Parque Güell. Planned as a "model" garden suburb in the north of Barcelona, it nearly ruined its patron, and only certain large fragments were built.

Gaudí, who at the beginning of his career affected the manner of a gentleman-architect, arriving at the site in a carriage from which he would only reluctantly come down, suffered a rigorous religious conversion, and changed his style of life without any corresponding break in his architectural style. The Lent of 1894 was something of a crisis: he nearly starved himself to death, and a bishop was required to get him to eat. He was given some very bulky church commissions—a palace for the Bishop of Astorga in northwest Spain, the remodeling of the interior of Palma Cathedral on Majorca, and so on. But the project that became his life was the Church of the Holy Family, one he took over from an older architect in 1883 and on which he was working when he died in 1926.

Nothing was ever roofed. Gaudí, with his closest collaborator, the sculptor Lorenz Matamala, worked not only

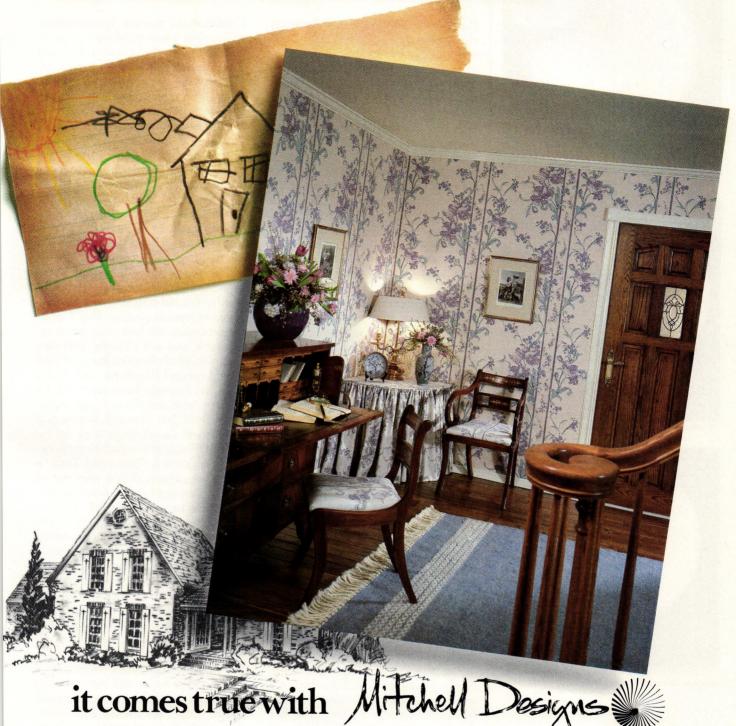
on the construction, but on the grossly opulent allegoric sculpture and the crockery ornament which covered much of the surface of the building. The symbolic system was built up from human figures in all shapes and sizes, birds and plants. They were modeled from multiple-view photographs taken with the help of several mirrors as well as plaster casts (casting chloroformed birds must have been squalid as well as awkward!). Each figure in the scheme



Gaudí following the procession of Corpus Christi, behind the banner of the Artistic Circle of St. Luke in 1924.

had an allegoric role: and that is the first difference between Gaudí and the Art Nouveau designers with whom he is so often aligned in the "normal" histories of art, as that by Mr. William Curtis, for instance, whose Modern Architecture Since 1900 gives him half a chapter. However, besides his obsessional interest in allegory and in verismo-to take a term used for the operas of Leoncavallo and Mascagni but equally apt for Gaudi's ornament there is another side to his work which is quite remote from the stylization and artiness of Art Nouveau, and that is his passion for structure. He invented, or rather reinvented for himself the method of designing structures by inversion. Eighteenth-century mathematicians had discovered that you can arrive at a uniquely stable structural shape by reversing the curve which a string or a chain assumes when it is loosely hung (Continued on page 116)

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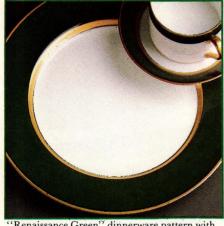
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(Continued from page 114) between two points, or weighted at even intervals: this curve was called the catenary or chain curve, to distinguish it from a parabola. Gaudí used this device in his working out of the Güell Chapel and continued to refer to it on other buildings. For the Güell Chapel, he attached a model of the site to the ceiling of his workshop, suspended cable from it and where the fall of the cable corresponded to key points of the structure, he hung bags of lead-shot. The cables he connected with planes of cloth and paper so that he had a complete upside-down model of the building, with the entire structure working in suspension before he reversed it into stone and concrete.

The apparent spikiness of Gaudi's buildings is both a by-product of his obsession with the arithmetic of allegory (twelve apostles, four gospelmakers, fifteen mysteries of the rosary) which has to be "pointed" as clearly as possible, as well as with structural virtuosity. Added to these is the early fascination with Moorish architecture. A drawing for one of his first projects, a Franciscan mission house in Tangiers—a kind of Gaudían version of Berber architecture-was done in 1891-92, before Horta designed the famous rue Janson house in Brussels, usually counted as the first Art Nouveau interior.

Strangely enough another episode, in which these obsessions become outsize, has been rather neglected: an American millionaire, who saw the Gaudí buildings in Barcelona commissioned him in 1908 to design a vast, many-towered hotel outside New York. It was to have been slightly higher than the Eiffel Tower, and nearly as tall as the Empire State Building. Nothing came of it, and the drawings which survive are all copies by a collaborator. George Collins, who has done the only substantial book on Gaudí drawings (altogether too substantial you might even think) with Juan Bassegoda Nonell, did not, therefore, include the scheme in his catalogue, but has contributed a chapter on it to Roger Descharnes's book on Gaudí of which a new edition has just appeared. It is the most valuable part of the book, written in that strident and aggressive tone that Dali always uses in talking about modern art. Dali, as Descharnes's patron and the best-known Catalan at the moment, has contributed a preface which will show you exactly what I mean if you read it. Dali and several other Catalan apologists for Gaudí, have surrounded his reputation with an aura of defiant daftness and made him into a proto-Surrealist who despised (and was despised by) all architectural rationalists. This is simply not true, and misleading. In the early thirties, the "modernist" Barcelona architectural magazine AC was always quoting Gaudí as a precursor of the modern movement. Le Corbusier himself registered his homage to Gaudí on his first visit to Barcelona in 1928 and has repeated it since.

The proto-Surrealist picture also presented Gaudí as a lonely genius. In fact he was not only one of a brilliant group of contemporaries that I mentioned earlier, but had a number of remarkable and still virtually unknown disciples, all of whom built a great deal in and around Barcelona. José Maria Juiol has recently been given a little publicity as it was the centenary of his birth. But César Martinell (whose first little book, Gaudínismo, grew into a full-scale study of his master) is still virtually unknown. Tokutoshi Torii, a young Japanese architect who moved to Spain ten years ago is a latter day disciple. His two-volume work is a vast compilation, attempting a systematic account of Gaudí, his sources and his works, but by themes. He has made much of the Mission House at Tangiers which many writers on Gaudí gloss over for lack of information as the one project in which many of his exoticisms are focused. It is a crabbed book and constantly elusive in the style of all Spanish Gaudí enthusiasts. But it is the one book which anyone investigating Gaudí in the future will have to have, even if it is too bulky and too crammed full of matter for the lay enthusiast; that is why the monograph on Gaudí by Ignasi de Solà-Morales is the only book on Gaudí you actually need to buy. He understands both the genius and the quirky background, makes sense of Gaudinismo and is the only one to give a clear and chronological survey of the work.

Still Dali was very proud of his prophecy (which he claims to have made privately to Le Corbusier and has been quoting publicly ever since) that future archi- (Continued on page 118)

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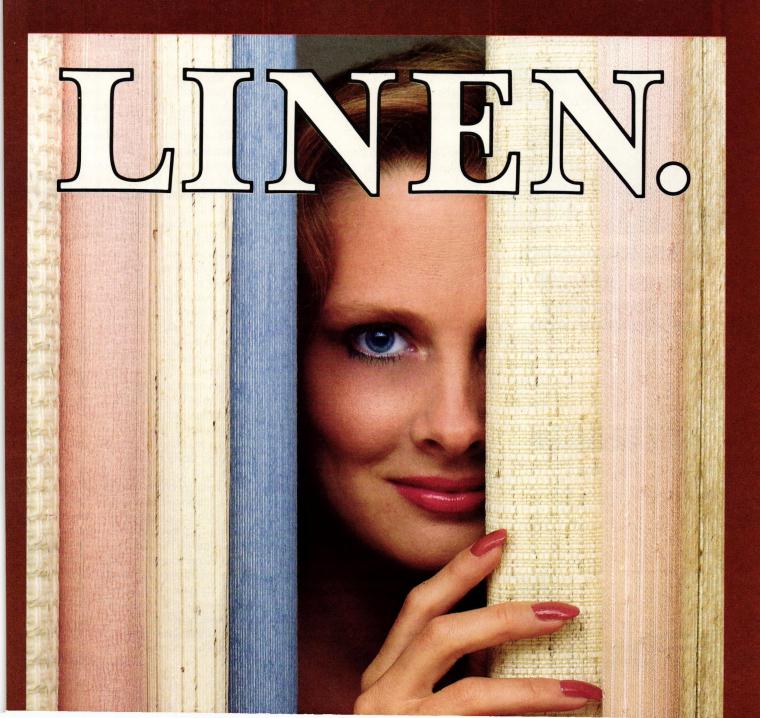
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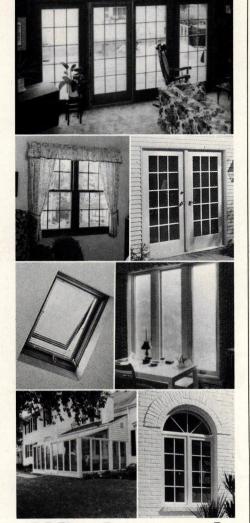
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(Continued from page 116) tecture would be "soft and hairy," paranoiac, Catholic, and Catalan, Yet Gaudi's work was hard and spiky, and almost relentlessly rational, like that of many artists who are called "mystics." His genius depended on the particular twist he gave to the interpretation of his context, that Catalan amalgam of liberal industrialism, Wagnerian mistiness, nostalgia for a history which has turned to myth, and defiant provincialism. It was certainly cranky, but the crankiness was in the context, and the genius in the interpretation. There was no confidence trick in Gaudí.

Books in brief

PIERRE DEUX'S FRENCH COUNTRY By Pierre Moulin, Pierre LeVec, and Linda Dannenberg Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 300 pp., \$35

Pierre Deux's French Country by Pierre Moulin, Pierre LeVec, and Linda Dannenberg is an excellent trip through Provence from the owners of the successful stores specializing in products from that region of France. Illustrated in color, the tour covers wide ground, both in style and custom, as well as place. We go from the Souleiado Mansion in Tarascon, where the printing of Provençal cottons began in the eighteenth century to the potteries of Moustiers and to Arles, the home of the best cabinetmakers.

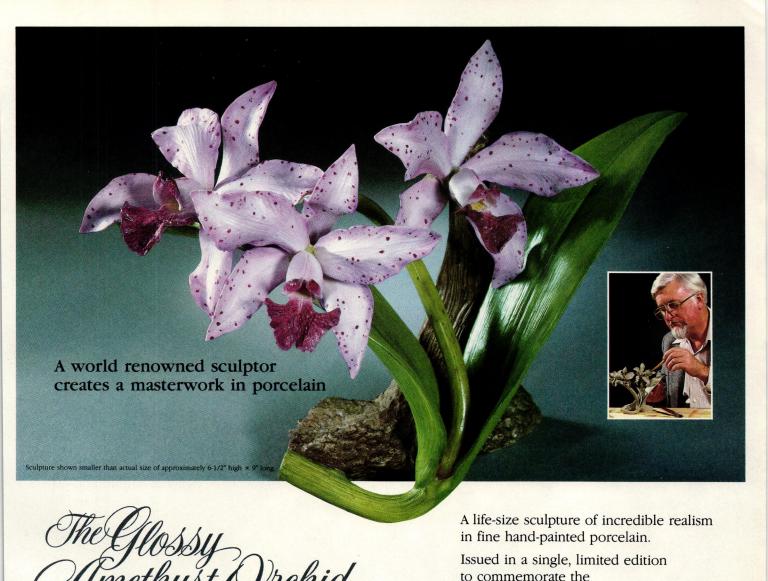
There are interesting lessons to be learned on how wood blocks were first used for printing, how the patterns were copied from materials brought from India in the seventeenth century, and how these cottons, known as indiennes, became the fashion of France in dress and furnishing. We learn how pots were thrown and glazed and tiles were painted. There are fascinating details about the origins of Provencal furniture and which carved curve denotes which region. There is good information on the stone, wrought iron, roof tiles, and the pigeonniers of Provence. The book takes us into some charming private houses and into poetic gardens. Finally, it spins the reader around the world to visit rooms decorated with Souleiado fabric and Provençal furniture. Though Guy Bouchet's photographs are very beautiful, the text seemed a bit overbearing. While grateful for the information, I could not help feeling that the colors were too often called "vibrant," the summer "searing," the wind "staggering," the grapevines "lush." I wish the writers had more readily followed their own excellent quote: "There is an earthiness to the style of Provence that is anathema to pretension," and allowed the well served eye to its own adjec-Diana Phipps tives.

CITIES AND THE WEALTH OF NATIONS: PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC LIFE By Jane Jacobs Random House, 257 pp., \$17.95

Anyone familiar with Jane Jacobs's writings will know what to expect from her seemingly optimistic title: things are bad and likely to get worse. The USA is in economic decline; so is the USSR; and the EEC; and COME-CON. Anything not declining is just underdeveloped. In this landscape of gloom a few islands of economic sanity stand out, like Hong Kong or Singapore. Economic health (which to her seems synonymous with infinite growth) is the exclusive property of the city which can "replace wide ranges of its imports (with home products) exuberantly and repeatedly." Inevitably, she offers no recipe for sparking off such exuberance, though she rightly insists that it certainly cannot result from either military overbudgeting or from paternalistic economic aid. Her jeremiads on both subjects may sound a little tired, but they are true enough, though readers who expect this prophet to follow them with apocalyptic damnation or visionary promise will be disappointed. If she does have a remedy for "stagflation" she has hidden it between the lines of her book. And if I have read there rightly, then it seems that Jane Jacobs would like to see the end of national sovereignty (and therefore of wars) in some kind of world authority to prevent further war on one hand, and on the other a fragmentation of world economy so that each city-region could be self-adjusting and each issue its own currency. The program she knows to be unattainable—so she writes fluently and trenchantly to confirm ingrown ideas rather than to stimulate new ones.

Joseph Rykwert

State



by Ronald Van Ruyckevelt

Ronald Van Ruyckevelt is a sculptor of extraordinary talents whose medium is fine porcelain. His private commissions include sculptures created for official presentation to President John F. Kennedy and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. And among connoisseurs of fine porcelain he is particularly noted for his remarkable ability to create bird and flower sculptures with the look of real life.

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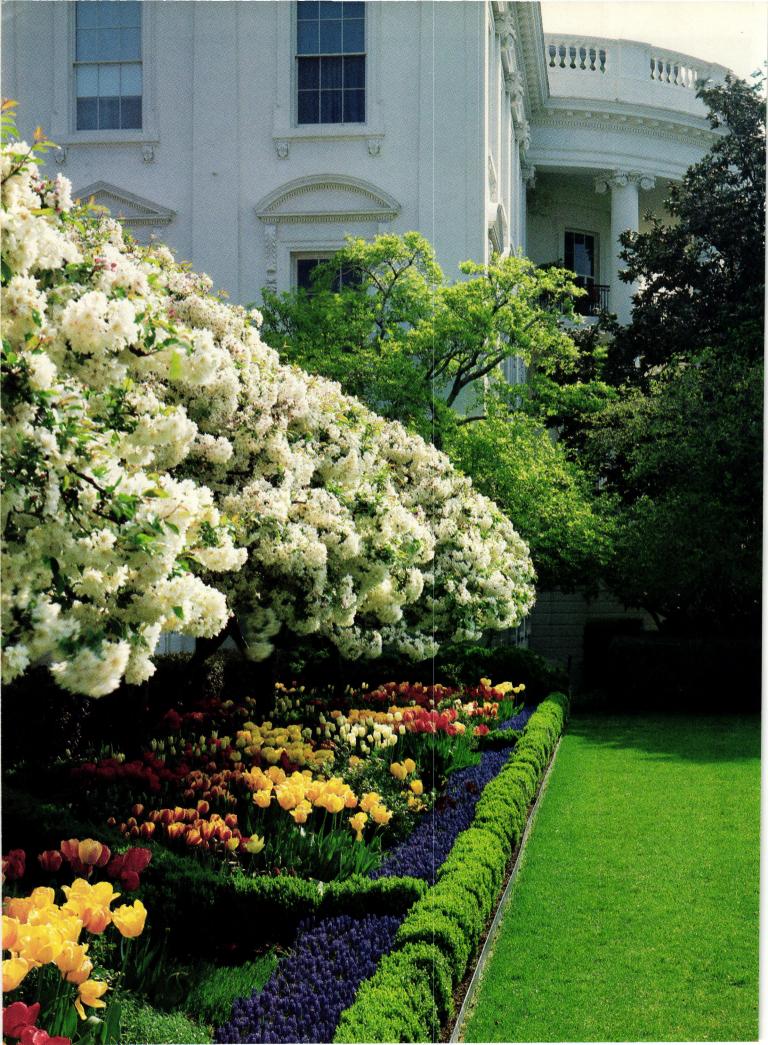
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THE WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

Photographed at the peak of its spring color, the garden designed for President Kennedy has just been restored at the request of President and Mrs. Reagan

BY RACHEL LAMBERT MELLON PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES

he inspiration for renewing the rose garden at the White House came from President Kennedy in 1961. My involvement began at a picnic on a hazy summer day in August at our beach house on Cape Cod, surrounded by sand dunes, the sea, and sailboats. It was a picnic for a few friends and included President and Mrs. Kennedy. Hardly had the President come ashore from his boat when he suggested we sit down and discuss a garden for the White House.

He and Mrs. Kennedy had just returned from a state visit to France, followed by stops in England and Austria. The President had noted that the White House had no garden equal in quality or attractiveness to the gardens that he had seen and in which he had been entertained in Europe. There he had recognized the importance of gardens surrounding an official residence and their appeal to the sensibilities of all people.

He wanted to start, in the greatest haste, to remake the area near his office at the west end of the White House, known as the Rose Garden, into an area both useful and attractive. Would I design it for him? It was a startling request, to say the least.

As an amateur, I questioned my ability to design a garden of such importance. Paying little attention to that doubt, he bubbled with enthusiasm, with fascinating details of how he wanted a garden to appeal to the most discriminating taste, yet a garden that would hold a thousand people for a ceremony. What gardener could resist? I agreed, on the spot, to meet in September.

Time passed, and the day came when I called the White House as promised and spoke to J.B. West, the chief usher, who arranged a day for our meeting in the garden. Perry Wheeler, a friend and a landscape architect living and practicing in Washington, agreed to come with me. He seemed to me a likely collaborator. I was fortunate in this choice for from the beginning to the end of the project, he remained always interested, always helpful, and ever the honest critic.

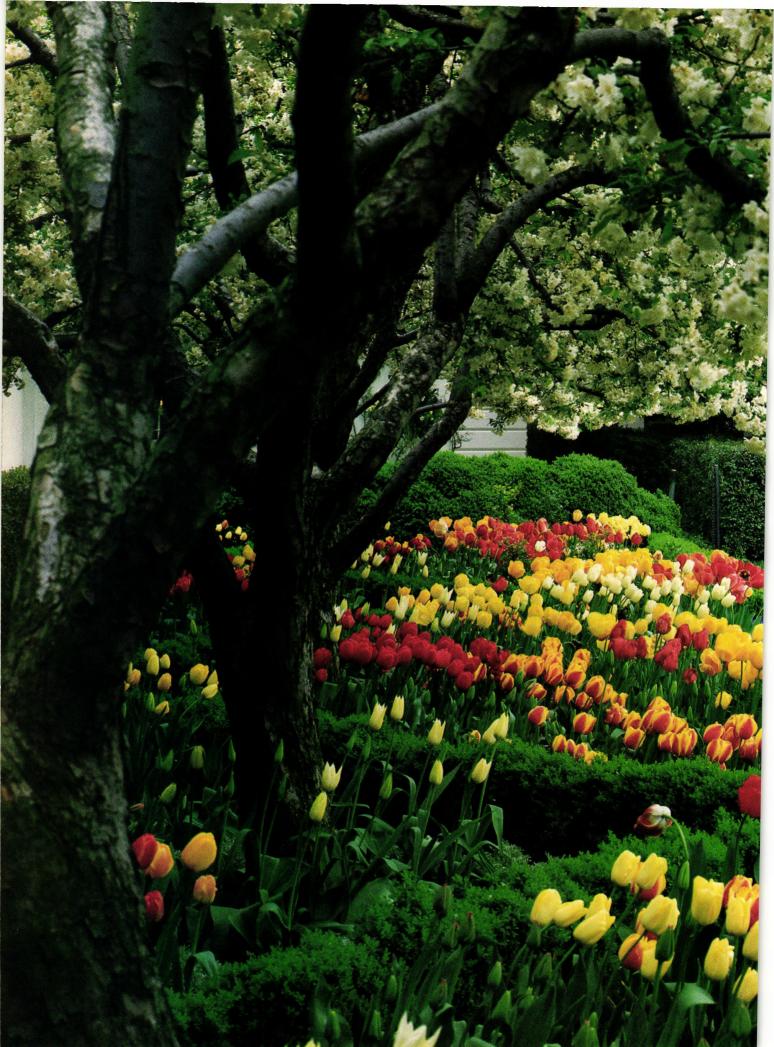
I vividly remember my first impression of the scene and the setting for the projected garden. The White House proper seemed exceptionally tall where it joined the long, low colonnade that linked it to the Oval Office and Cabinet Room. There were no trees near this wing or the corner by the White House, except for Andrew Jackson's tall, dark *Magnolia grandiflora* near the South Portico. Beneath the magnolias was a long semicircular white bench on which Perry Wheeler and I sat facing the President's office.

The garden had a simple plan. Four rows of clipped privet hedges about four feet tall ran the full length. In the plan of parallel lines were tucked away Tom Thumb roses and occasional standard roses. We sat a long time trying to imagine how this area could be designed to reflect the requirements the President had so clearly outlined to me that day at the Cape.

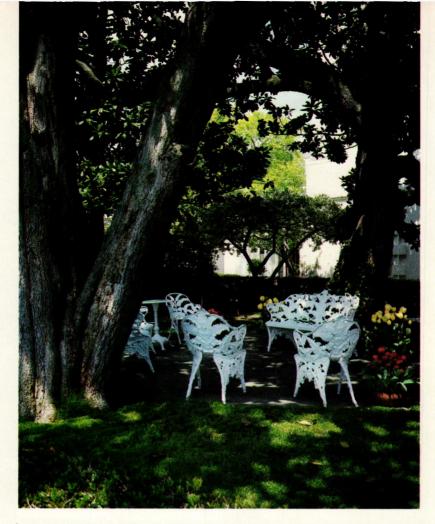
Beyond the colonnade, the door of the Oval Office opened suddenly, and the President came out and in his usual brisk way crossed the lawn to greet us. His first

The crab apples in the Rose Garden have benefited from last year's heavy pruning; this year blossoms cover the trees. *Overleaf:* Tulip bulbs today are part of a catch-as-catch-can consignment allotted with other bulbs for the Washington parks, and therefore often lack the subtlety of colors chosen especially for the Rose Garden in the past. For the original planting list, please see Garden Pleasures.

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At the far end of the Rose Garden, above, ferny metal chairs are temporarily grouped under the magnificent Magnolia grandiflora planted by President Andrew Jackson. Opposite: The view toward the colonnade that shades the Cabinet Room and Oval Office shows one of the four Magnolia Soulangiana trees planted in each of the four corners of the garden.

words were, "What do you think can be done? Have you any ideas?" Although I had no thoughts of what to do at the moment, President Kennedy's enthusiasm and interest were so contagious that I felt I must certainly find him a good solution.

I explained that I would have to think about it now that I had seen the space. The tall central block of the White House in one corner and the West Wing, with its two low colonnades forming boundaries west and north, would have to be united in a harmonious and uncomplicated way. To the south there was no "wall" of architecture, just open space.

After that first impression of the garden and my talk with the President, my sense of responsibility for redesigning the garden was very strong. I hoped to find an inspiration that would help me bring all of the President's requirements together. It was not until the end of October—the trees had lost their leaves—when late one afternoon, cold with the feeling of approaching winter and descending darkness, I was walking along Fifth Avenue in New York and looked up and saw three lovely magnolia trees growing in front of the Frick museum.

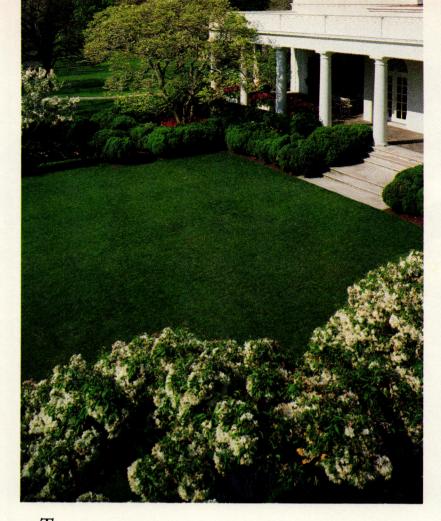
I had often admired these trees before, but this evening they had a special importance to me. Their pale sil-

very branches with heavy twigs seemed to retain the light of summer. I knew their pattern of growth would continue to give form in winter and would catch raindrops as well as tufts of falling snow. I felt I could now design the President's garden!

I envisioned all four corners planted with *Magnolia Soulangiana*. These trees would soften the difficult corners that were now bare and would permit sufficient light to fall beneath and around them to allow planting. A 50-by-100-foot lawn, large enough to accommodate a thousand people for ceremonial activities and receptions and small enough to be covered by a tent, would be in the center of the garden.

On either side of the large lawn there could be a border twelve feet wide in which to plant smaller trees, roses, and other flowers. The President loved flowers and asked if a variety of other types could be mixed with the roses. He had read the published garden notes of Thomas Jefferson and hoped for flowers used in Jefferson's period.

At the west end near his office, the steps were to be redesigned, for the President wanted them to serve both as steps and as a platform or stage. A central step was to be wider than the others, so that he could stand a little above the heads of the crowd in order that they might see and



The garden steps were designed with a central step widened to serve as a platform following President Kennedy's idea that they should be an important adjunct for ceremonies.

Overleaf: Twenty years later the double line of crab apples makes its own sculptural design as well as creating shadows on the tulips and lapis-blue Muscari beneath.

hear him more clearly. Above this "platform step" were to be three others, upon which those being honored would stand, above the President.

Opposite the steps, at the east end of the garden, a flagstone terrace was to be laid under the historic *Magnolia grandiflora*. Here the President wished to have a place where he could sit and entertain his guests or, perhaps, hold a small luncheon.

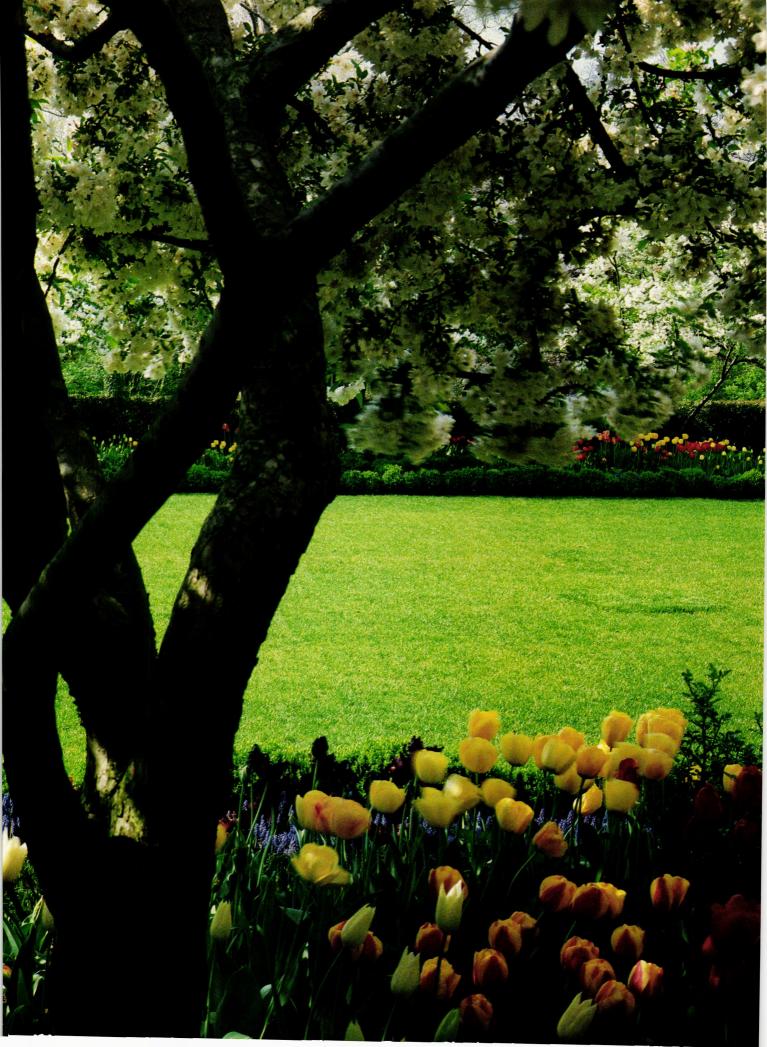
I had before me an interesting problem involving a fascinating place. The site had once been a stable yard; but due to its location beneath the great windows of the State Dining Room, the stable was soon relocated. Vegetables had been planted there by President Grant. In the range of rooms along the colonnade had been a milk house, icehouse, workshops, servants' dwelling rooms, and numbers of other small, thick-walled chambers called, in the earliest times, household "offices."

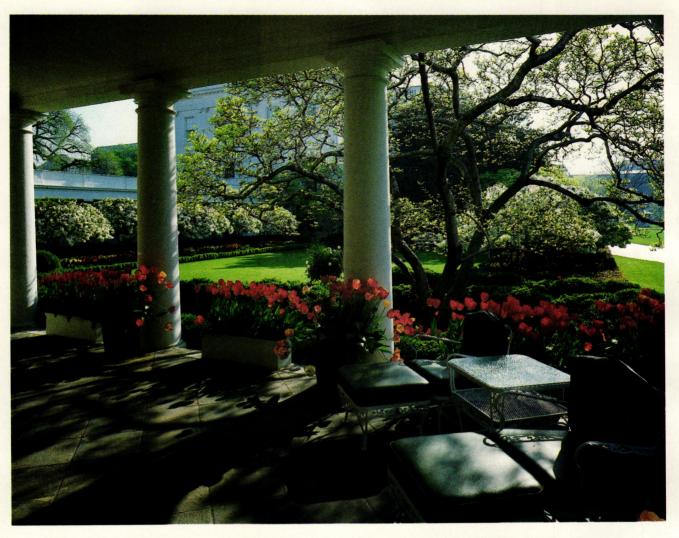
The first rose garden known there had been a dreamlike Victorian garden under glass, part of a large complex of greenhouses begun before the Civil War. A "rosehouse" was only part of the vast glazed domains, which also had rooms for palms, orchids, fruit trees, and camellias. As the greenhouses grew, their magnificence increased. The rose house, as it was called, was a plain, but very tall, rectangular glass structure that fit into the ell of the West Wing, the area of the present Rose Garden. Inside, the roses, planted in rows, were "farmed" more than being set out ornamentally. These rows were crisscrossed by water pipes with low sprinklers. Canvas curtains, like the studio curtains in *La Boheme*, protected the masses of delicate blossoms from violent summer sunshine.

Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt planted what she called her "Colonial Garden" on the spot in 1902, following the removal of the greenhouses by Charles McKim of the architectural firm McKim, Mead & White. Her charming portrait in the White House shows her seated in the Colonial Garden on a pretty wooden bench, with the South Portico in the background. Here she wanted only sweet peas, black-eyed susans, quince—and the jasmine in which she and Theodore Roosevelt took great delight on summer evenings, as they sat in white painted rocking chairs on the South Portico.

Through time, the White House has had occupants who have loved gardens and some who have not. Even among the "gardeners," there were different preferences. Mrs. Taft, for example, preferred potted tropical plants inside to flower beds outside.







Tables and chairs just outside the President's office, *above*, provide an atmosphere of country informality. *Opposite:* As you leave the Rose Garden facing south you look out onto the Ellipse and the Washington Monument beyond.

The one flower that unites all the occupants through the history of the White House is the rose. Thus, for most of the twentieth century, the Rose Garden has been a rose garden. Now, in 1961, President Kennedy wanted it restored in spirit but revised to become more than just a private garden.

My theory of the garden design calls for an overall outline, which I call the "bone structure," the most important element. Designing a garden is not unlike designing a building: you begin with the skeleton sketch, a general pleasing outline or form, and proceed from there. Within this structure, you can make subdivisions as you choose, more complicated or more detailed than the general

form.

In late November, my husband and I were invited to a dinner at the White House; Pablo Casals was to play. I was seated across the table from the President.

He looked over to me before sitting down and said with an inquiring smile, "Bunny, where is my garden plan?" "I'm afraid it is still in my head, Mr. President, not yet down on paper, but I will finish it and send it to you soon."

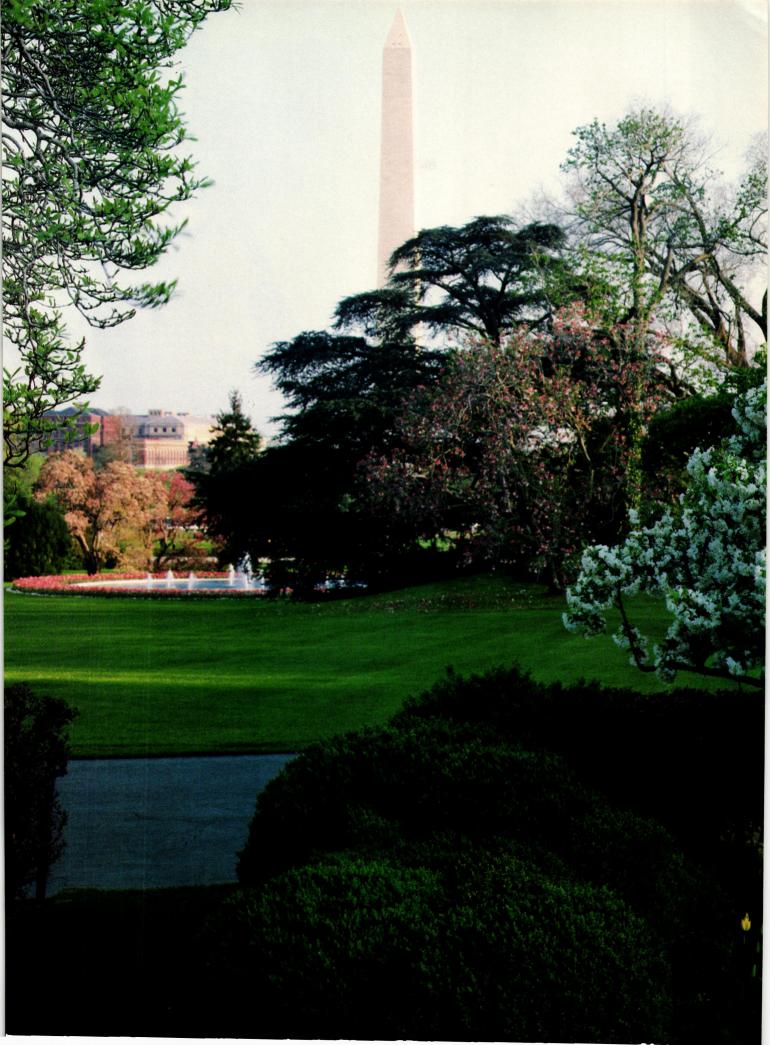
"That's the story of my administration," he quipped,

with a sparkle and a twinkle in his eye.

This informal exchange, brief as it was, spurred me to move ahead more quickly. A plan went down on paper, and I sent it to the President for approval. Within two days, I received his note of acceptance. I would have the full cooperation of the National Park Service. All costs would be covered by the Park Service, but I was to keep expenses as low as possible.

An important first step was to find someone to manage and implement the work of the Rose Garden. There was an official over the gardens and grounds at the White House, but we needed a specialist with varied experience who understood all aspects of the undertaking. I set out to study local National Park Service gardens.

One day in the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens in Washington, D.C., I met Irvin (Text continued on page 251)







WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh restore an Auguste Perret house

BY MARIE-PIERRE TOLL PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



The south façade of the house, <u>top</u>, designed by Auguste Perret in 1932. <u>Above:</u> Emmanuelle Khanh on her terrace. <u>Opposite:</u> In the hall, with its original marble and stone floor, the sculptures are by Anthony Donaldson.



Emmanuelle's bedroom looks down on the ample *terrasse* of the southern façade, *above*. The Lloyd Loom chairs and tables were found here and there by Emmanuelle. Jade-green car paint gives them a unity. *Opposite:* The sitting room or ballroom opens onto the dining room. The leather armchairs were the only furniture in the house when it was bought and were originally in navy-blue fabric.

Prehitect Auguste Perret's phrase "le beau n'est pas un luxe"—beauty is not a luxury—is well applied to this French house which he built in 1932, and Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh fell upon happily in 1975.

The house blends the rigor, the purity of lines of the thirties with the charm of old-time arrangement: the traditional suite of dining room, large sitting room or ballroom, smoking room or den, library, and large hall. Though the exterior of the house is severe, the details inside are softened and humanized by *prêt-à-porter*

stylist Emmanuelle Khanh and inventor Quasar Khanh.

The spiritual mentor of Le Corbusier, who worked with him, Perret is best known as the father of reinforced concrete and for the Champs-Elysées Theatre, l'Ecole Normale de Musique, industrial buildings, and the renovation of the French port of Le Havre. Among the very few houses that he built, the Khanhs feel this is his best. Through functional structure, the architect tried to enhance the sense of order, symmetry, and proportion of classic architecture. While the façade of the house is treated like the façade of a monument, the terrace and exterior stairs leading to the garden are spacious and open.

Perret built it for an Egyptian, Arakel Nasar Bey, whose grandfather had participated in the Suez Canal. After the bey's death, his wife had closed up the house except for the second floor to which she retired, until her death. When the Khanhs arrived in mid-winter 1975, it was empty, stalagtites hung from the ceilings, and the steel had rusted inside the concrete, forcing them to resurface the entire house. Emmanuelle finds it "reassuring" (Text continued on page 244)













The pink marble table, <u>opposite</u>, was designed for the dining room by Quasar Khanh. Flamingos were collected by Emmanuelle in California; 1930 Venetian chandelier. <u>Above left</u>: "When I love something, I like to accumulate it": Emmanuelle fills a console with flamingo candles and vases. <u>Above right</u>: A 1930 rolling table with handblown glass candlesticks "à la Cocteau." <u>Below</u>: Pair of 1930 baker's boxes, Depression glassware.







HOUSTON HARMONY

Decorator Mark Hampton brings his special brand of tranquility to Texas

BY ALICE GORDON PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

> eople all over Texas admire the architecture of John Staub, who was responsible in the twenties, thirties, and forties for establishing the dignified look of Houston's most widely regarded residential section, River Oaks. John Staub, however, learned the ropes from a New Yorker named Harrie T. Lindeberg, who, from 1919 to 1921, before River Oaks was begun, built four large houses in different period styles on a special block in a much smaller Houston enclave. In 1983, interior designer Mark Hampton finished redecorating the Italianate house for a young couple whose family was among the first to live in the area.

> That couple lives happily in their Harrie T. Lindeberg house because

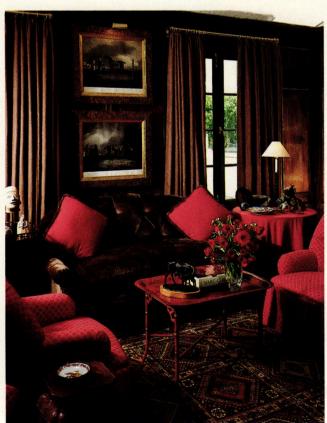
For the living room in this Houston house, Mark Hampton had the Brunschwig & Fils chintz dipped in creamy dye to deepen the pink, soften the glaze. Mirrors are in Jacobean revival-style frames. Walls were once "orange marmalade" pine paneling, now artfully gessoed, sanded, dry painted. Clarence House velvet covers the owner's grandfather's library chair, a comfortable, sentimental favorite. Black-and-gilt chairs are George III. Rug by Stark.







Over the Georgian side table in the entrance hall, above, is a painting by Chagall, a friend of the family. Clock is 18th-century English. In the adjoining living room, a portrait of the owner's mother by Murray Bewley. Right: The cozy library comprises warm colors and plush textures, equestrian prints in faux-bois frames, and favorite objects, including pre-Columbian pieces and a collection of Austrian bird bronzes, at right. On coffee table, a mare and foal by Texas sculptor Jim Reno. Rug by Stark.







The Waterford crystal chandelier in the dining room, above, was left unwired, and the couple's dinner parties are always lit exclusively by candles. Above fireplace, an 18th-century Italian still life. China is Royal Worcester from the 18th century.

Left: An English shaving stand, circa 1800, was found in London on a buying trip and has been converted into a working sink in the visitors' cloakroom. On the tortoise-shell lacquer walls are plates depicting various regiments of the French military, circa 1870.

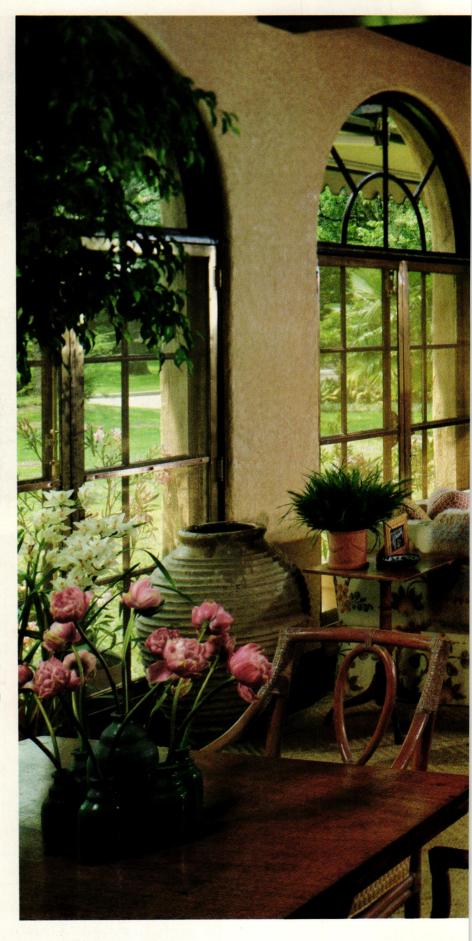
Mark Hampton understood that it deserved respect and that it would repay in kind the peaceable treatment he and his clients gave it. "The house is beautifully constructed," Hampton says, "and all the rooms have a different architectural character; we wanted to follow the architecture in the decorating. And it had to be comfortable because there are children in the house." (In fact, as we go to press, there is a new little girl in the family, one week old.)

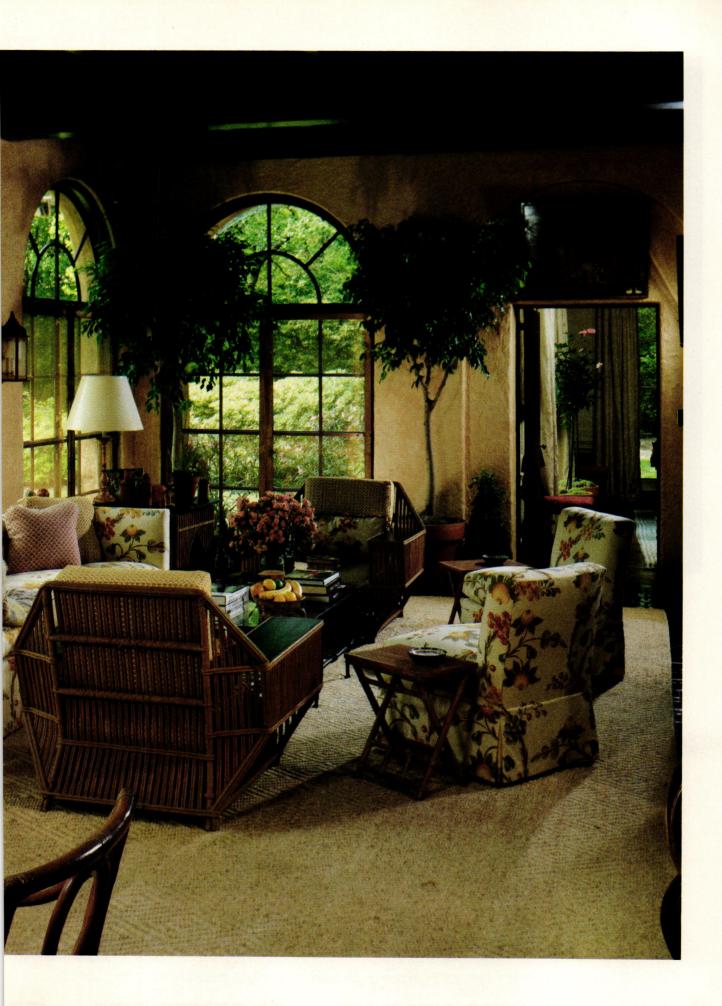
The house is surrounded by fat, gnarled old oaks. In the previous dark interior, the trees made the rooms even darker. To lighten the situation, Jim Smart, a trompe-l'oeil painter from London, moved in with the couple for a month, completely transforming the walls in the house. Now, Hampton points out, the house has a wonderful shadowy quality—"dare I say chiaroscuro?" he chuckles.

A good amount of the furniture was found on buying trips the couple took with Hampton to New York, London, and Paris. But much of it has been in the family for generations, long admired and well taken care of. Mark Hampton has responded to his clients' belongings with a family member's sympathy, and, as seems to be the rule in Mark Hampton's life, those clients have responded with fast friendship.

Editor: Clare Ruthrauff

The inspiration for the rich buff walls in the loggia came, says Mark Hampton, from the "faded Italian sunset" color of the exterior, the result of weathering without new paint for sixty years. Rattan furniture, in fabrics by Brunschwig, is from the thirties. The substantial pot by the sofa held olive oil in 19th-century Greece.







The curves of Victorian satinwood furniture complement the Syrie Maugham-style beds in the daughters' bedroom, above, done in Brunschwig chintz and wallpaper.

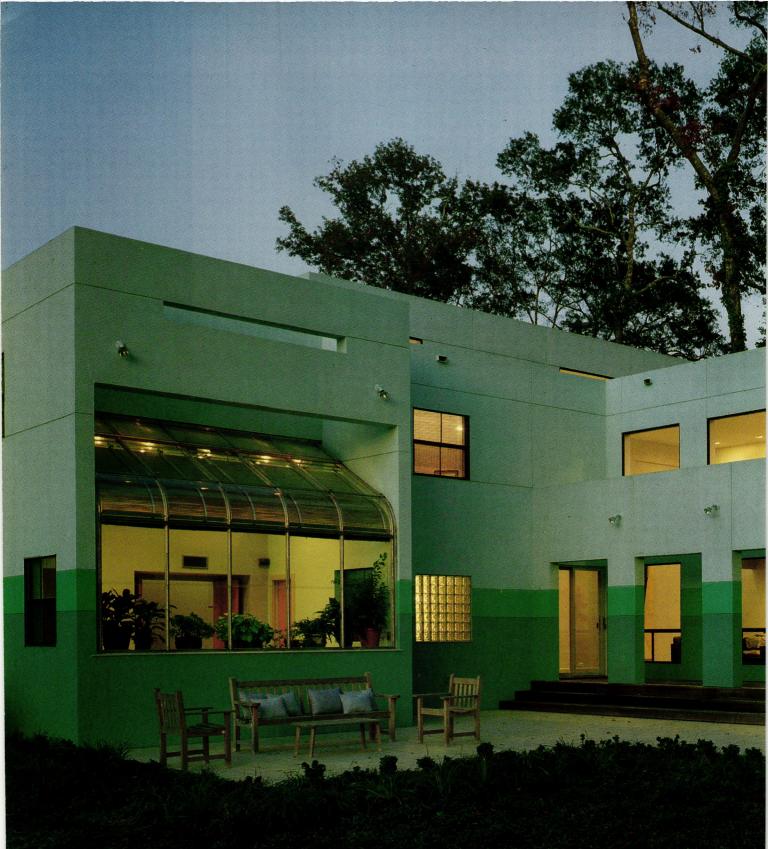
Right: The guest room, in Scalamandré toile, was decorated around the Empire furniture, once in servants' quarters, given to the owner by his mother and grandmother.

Opposite: The master bedroom's George III bed and prized antique Aubusson were both found in London.

Painted chair is Hepplewhite. Printed linen from Brunschwig. Linens by Pratesi.



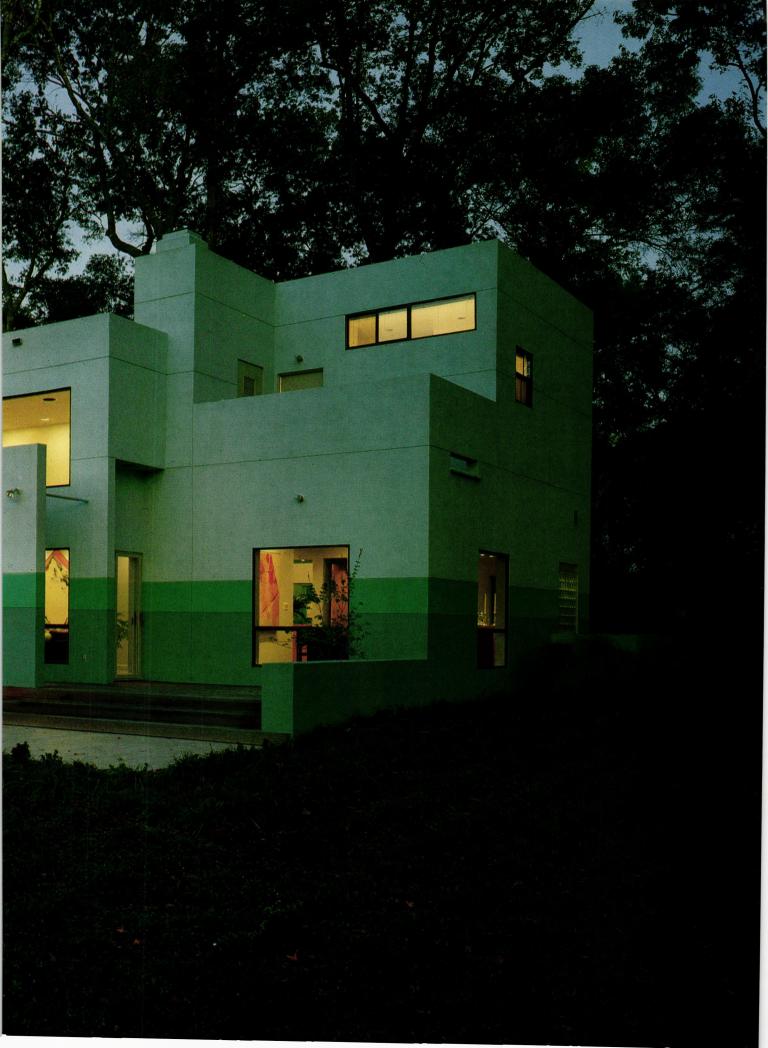




THE MODERNIST STRIPE

Architects Thomas Lonnecker and Peter Papademetriou design a Louisiana waterside house that reflects the hues of Lake Charles

BY LISA GERMANY PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER AARON







The three pastel colors of the Strauss house, <u>preceding pages</u>, mark a progression from ground to sky, elaborating on the natural hues of this landscape of bayous and coulees. <u>Opposite</u>: The upper-gallery level silhouettes the sensuous curves of an Isozaki chair in deep eggplant. <u>Above</u>: A front door shows a redwood side to the exterior; the interior side is oak, complementing other oak touches throughout the house.

ocal legend in Lake Charles has it that Jean Lafitte and his gang carried contraband into the bayous and coulees that fray the edges of Louisiana. These little inlets, dark and wooded, were still more or less hidden when Julie Ann Strauss was growing up there during the thirties and while she was away at Vassar in the forties. They remained so even in the fifties when, with her husband Kenneth Strauss, she started to raise a family. But by 1977, the land around this warren of marshy waterways had begun to be developed, and the Strausses bought a choice piece on the banks of the Nelson Coulee. They contacted Houston architect Peter Papademetriou, whose name they had discovered in Mr. Strauss's Princeton Alumni Weekly, and they began to articulate to him and later to his partner, Tom Lonnecker, what they wanted in their new house.

They communicated a certain predilection for crisp modern lines; they insisted on a floor plan that would ac-

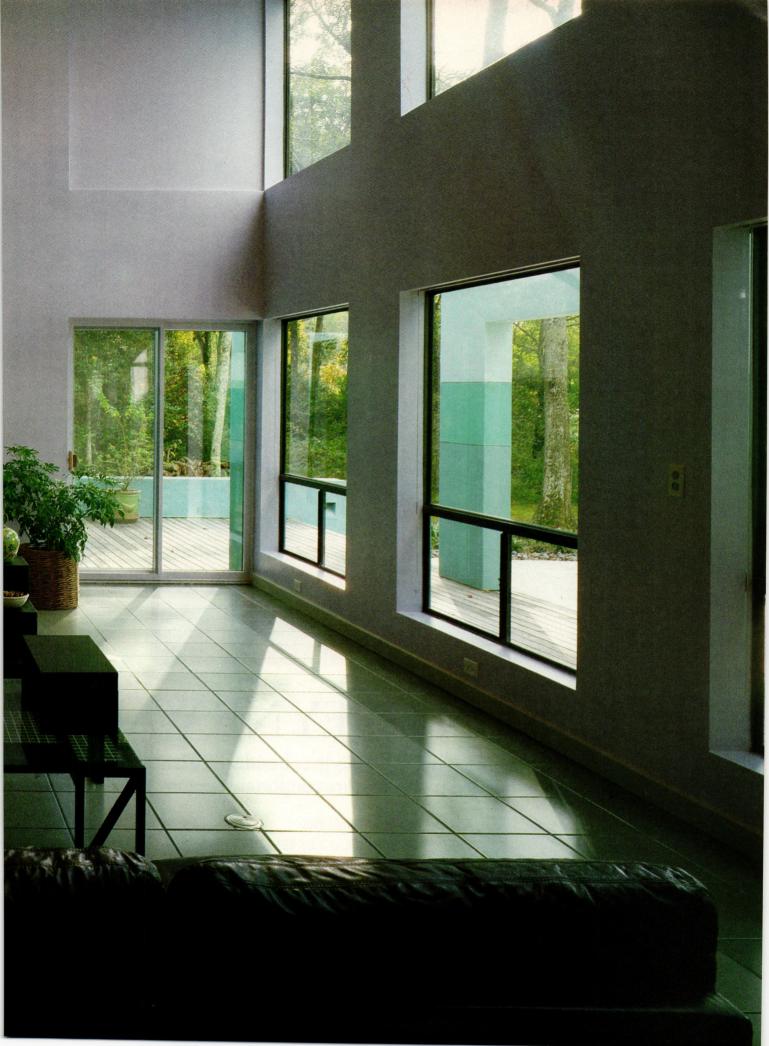
commodate the visits of their grown children, and they asked for ample storage space. Mrs. Strauss had read The Place of Houses by Charles Moore, Donlyn Lyndon, and Gerald Allen and had begun to wonder if her house couldn't be arranged around a central gallery the way the Russell house in Charleston, South Carolina (which was discussed in the book), had been arranged around a staircase. Since Mr. and Mrs. Strauss's art collection consists for the most part of rare eighteenth- and nineteenth-century glass in luminous candy colors, they both hoped to exhibit it to its best advantage. "We looked upon the house as a way to simplify our lives," says Mrs. Strauss. "We wanted it to remove all the clutter and make things we love stand out." Although they did not forget how much they valued the natural beauty of their lot or their desire for the views it afforded, Mrs. Strauss admits, "We never gave Peter or Tom any caveats about the exterior."

That is how it happened (Text continued on page 230)











HOUSE ON CHEYNE WALK

Interior designer John Stefanidis lives beside the Thames in sun-flooded rooms that are comfortably grand

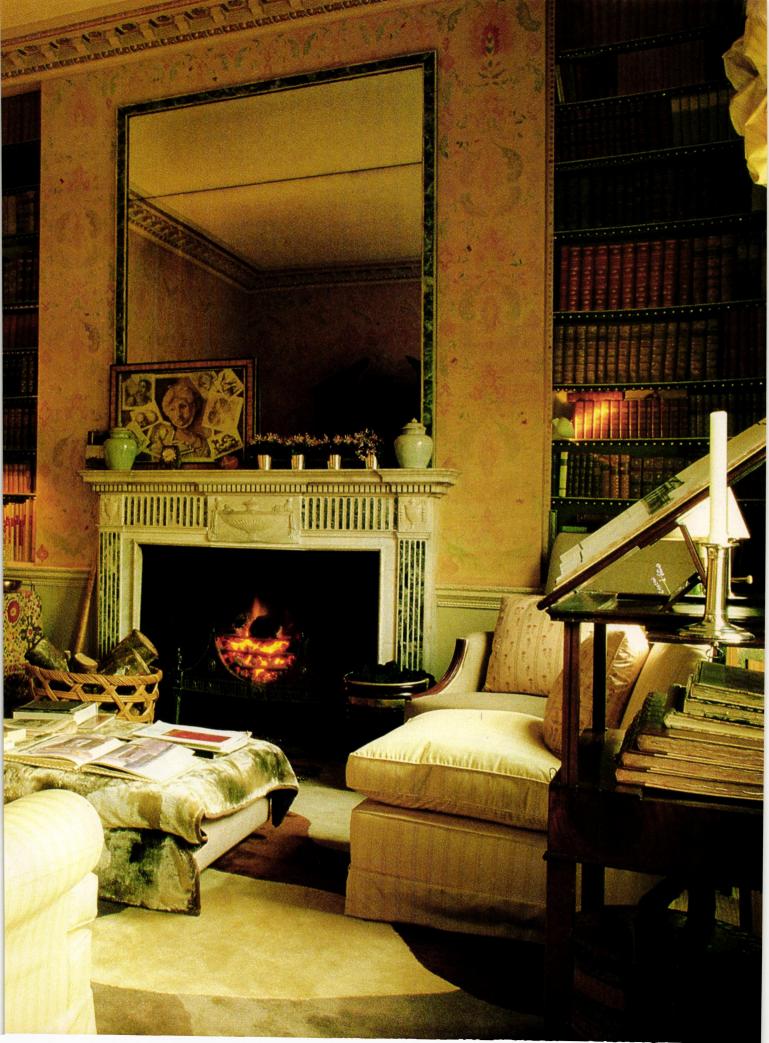
BY ELAINE GREENE PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

Sitting-room walls, <u>opposite</u>, were stenciled in subtle faded colors.

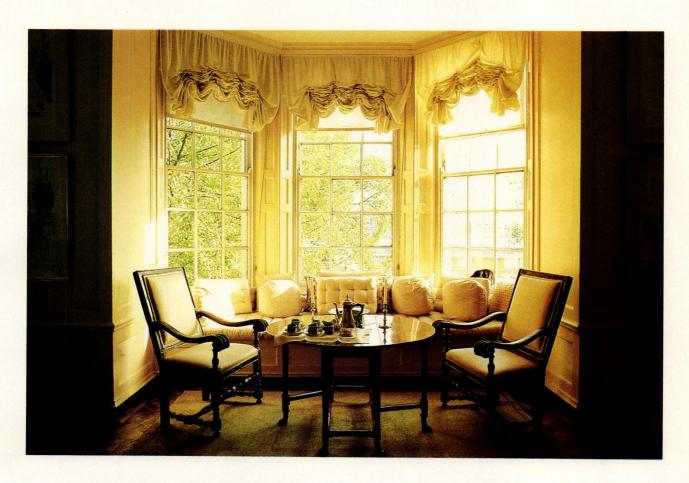
John Stefanidis based the design on an Islamic brocade. Drawing is a Matisse. <u>Above:</u> On 18th-century Venetian chest, a 20th-century bronze vase, Japanese candlesticks.











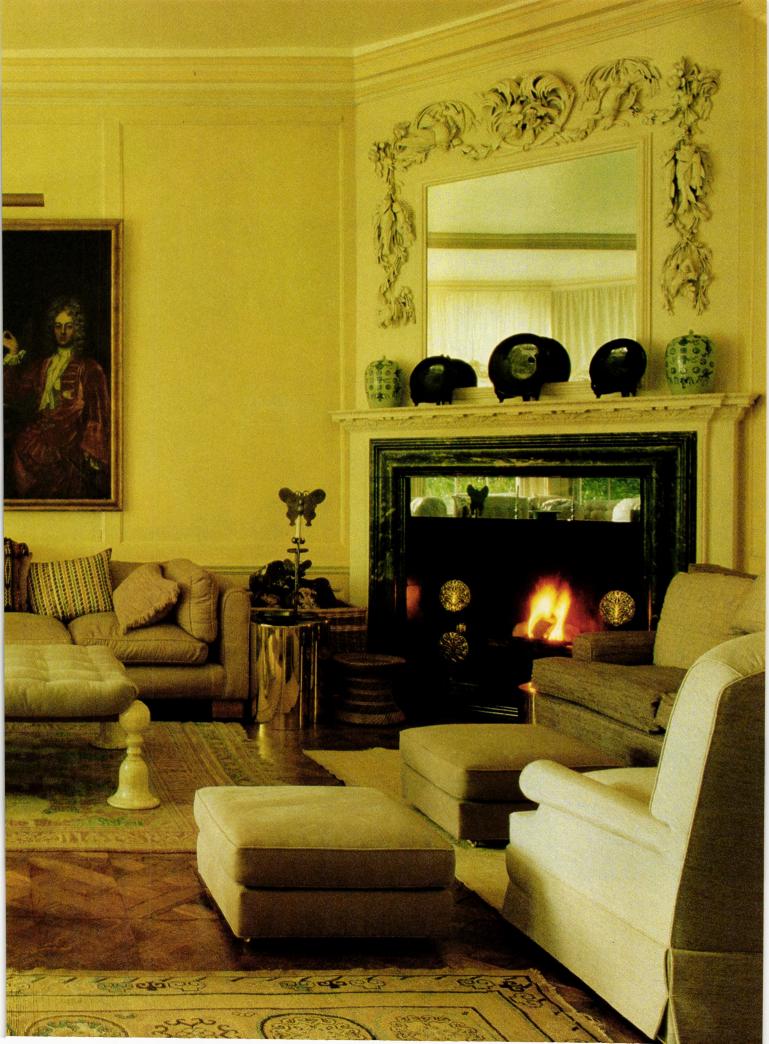
helsea is a fashionable and romantic London district on the north side of the Thames whose houses bear more than the usual number of blue-enameled historic markers stating that this or that luminary once lived here. The list of former Chelsea residents includes monarchs, a saint, and many artists: Richard III lived here as a Duke in 1483. Thomas More settled in Chelsea in 1520 and here played host to Erasmus and Holbein. Henry VIII built a Chelsea manor house where Elizabeth I probably lived between her mother's and her father's deaths. Writers Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, George Meredith, and Oscar Wilde had houses in the district, as did painters Turner, Sargent, and Whistler.

Whistler inhabited part of the only seventeenth-century great house that still stands in Chelsea, although the building was subdivided in the eighteenth century and now consists of three town houses. It is Whistler's old Cheyne Walk quarters on the riverfront that the London-based international interior designer John Stefanidis has owned for eight years.

Stefanidis is not immune to the historical glamour of his 1674 house: "The building stands on the site of Sir

The dining table, *opposite*, stands on a rich red carpet and under a white Dresden chandelier. Walls and woodwork are painted in several creamy colors. Chairs are a Stefanidis design. Drawings by Millington-Drake. *Above*: Another, less formal dining setting is the drawing room's sunny bay.









Thomas More's farm," he says, "and I look out my window at the same view Whistler so often sketched and painted." But it was his designer's eye that convinced Stefanidis to move here, where the rooms are large and tall and beautifully detailed and daylight streams through from morning till night. "The sparkling river light was irresistible," he recalls, adding, "Light is the first thing I perceive when I visit a new place."

John Stefanidis is known for his gentle way with rooms and houses and, indeed, with clients. He doesn't have a personal stamp that he feels he must set upon his every work. If a decorating connoisseur were able to spot a Stefanidis room in a flash, this discreet designer would feel

he had done something wrong.

The spirit of the place is what concerns him most, for that determines his design, in the country or in town. At his weekend house (House & Garden, November 1981), which Stefanidis built out of tumble-down cowsheds, floors are brick, rough trusses are exposed. "No parquet floors or gessoed ceilings here," he explained. "That's for another kind of country house." When furnishing a London mews flat, Stefanidis is always properly modest and cozy. In his own Chelsea house, built for a lord, he moved nobly through the noble spaces, placing excellent antiques, works of art, rugs, and chandeliers, but without a shadow of pretentiousness. Pretentiousness is not in John Stefanidis's vocabulary.

Sense of place is one Stefanidis strength. He is also appreciated for his subtle sense of color, playing variations on soft neutral shades so skillfully that no feeling of monotony results. Another strong point is his way with scale, which he may bring up or down, the latter best seen in his own dining room, where guests in a twenty-foot-tall space sit convivially under ceilings lowered by a double frieze of pictures and a chandelier. Comfort is a constant Stefanidis preoccupation in rooms of any size or degree of formality: he designs almost all the upholstered furniture that appears in his rooms and plans it dimensionally

and materially for the greatest ease.

How does it all add up on Cheyne Walk? The comment of a young visitor so pleased her host that he was willing to share it: "Whenever I come here, I feel I am in the right place." He hopes all his guests feel this way. □

Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

A Regency chaise longue stands at the foot of a Regency fourposter bed hung in Stefanidis fabric. The large oil painting of Medici lap dogs is by Jacopo da Empoli. Cabinet of spaced dowels with glass top is by Stefanidis. Venetian mask in foreground hangs on a cheval-glass column.

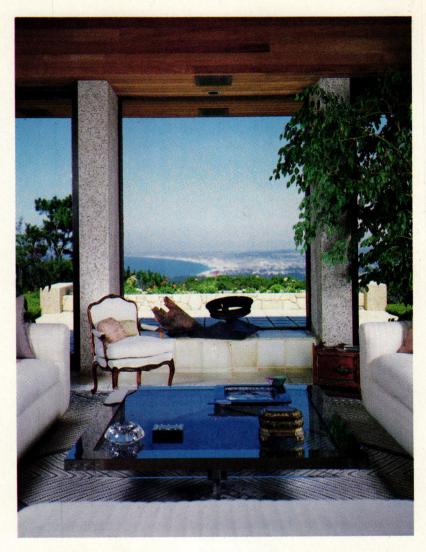
ART OF THE ANKAS

Jill Cole designs a home base for Paul Anka and his family

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE

The gallery is dominated by Steller's Albatross, a 1976 lacquer and oil on aluminum by Frank Stella.





A tray and cup by ceramist Mineo Misumo add dimension and interest to the custom-made glass and chrome coffee table in the Ankas' living room, *above*. On the window sill is a 1962 steel and wood sculpture by Mark Di Suvero. *Opposite*: Lynda Benglis's brass *Fandango*, 1979, hangs above a French marquetry desk.

The Paul Ankas are a family of collectors and collections. Paul collects gold records from "Diana" to "Times of Your Life." His Egyptian-born wife, Anne, collects contemporary art, Oriental porcelains, and eighteenth-century English decanters. Together they have a collection of five growing daughters, ages six to eighteen—all with the first initial A.

The center of all this collecting is a spacious hilltop house in Northern California. It was designed and built about seven years ago by Pasadena architects Conrad Buff and Donald Hensman—they also did the governor's mansion in Sacramento—to meet the requirements of a growing family, a professional recording studio, and an expanding art collection. The dramatic gallery is two stories

high and runs from the front door to the back of the fireplace that walls off the living room; it doubles as an entertaining area and provides the distance needed to view the massive works by Ellsworth Kelly and Frank Stella.

After the main structure was completed, Jill Cole of Swimmer Cole Martinez Curtis supervised most of the interior work. The gallery divides the house into two main sections, the kitchen/family room and the entertainment area, which has the recording studio and media and exercise rooms. The Ankas opted for large spaces, which encourage family activities. Large comfortable sofas, most custom-made by Jill Cole, are covered in natural fabrics in natural colors, as are the walls. The fabric softens the hard edges of the tiled floors, stucco details, and



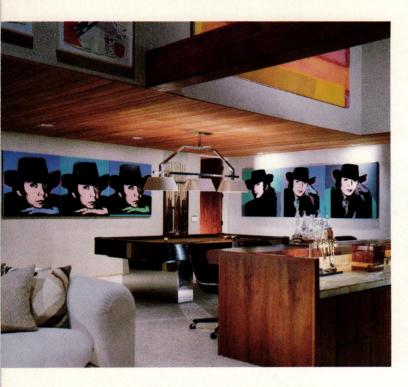


In the gallery from left to right:

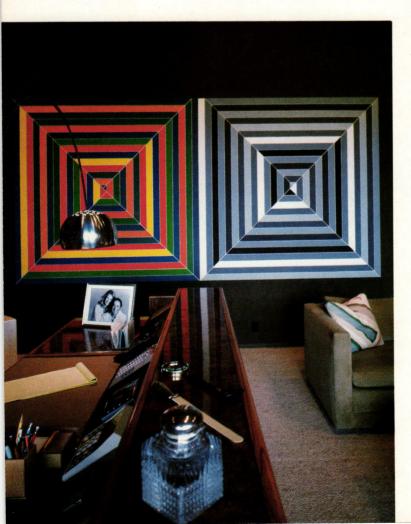
Aluminum-Steel Plain, 1969, by Carl Andre covers the floor in front of Sleep for Yvonne Rainer, 1965, by Robert Rauschenberg.

Swimming pools on the French Riviera are the subject of Jennifer Bartlett's trio of watercolors, In The Garden. Alexander Calder's standing mobile, circa 1940, shares the top of the French commode with pieces from Anne's ceramic collection. One of the Ankas' first major purchases was Green, Red, Yellow, Blue, 1965, by Ellsworth Kelly; Donald Judd's 1965 plexiglass and stainless steel box is lit from above.





In the media room, *above*, the eyes of Anka are upon you: Warhol silkscreens done in the mid seventies. Many of Anne's crystal decanters are in use at the bar. Below: Walls in Paul's study are covered in suede and brought to life by Frank Stella's Jasper's Dilemma, 1962-63. Burl desk trimmed in teak was designed by cabinetmaker Art Finkle.



large paintings, and makes rearranging the paintings much easier.

Paul is often on the road—sometimes up to forty weeks a year. Work is both a hobby and profession and he is always coming home with the latest electronic or music-related gadget. Paul records in the house in a wellequipped soundproof studio; when he is "in session" the house is invaded by musicians.

Paul and Anne Anka began their collecting and family about eighteen years ago. "We started with young New York artists and then moved on to more 'blue chip' artists," Anne recalls. "I was brought up in Europe and was quite traditional—with eighteenth-century furniture, for instance. When we moved out west the contemporary look took over. The scale of decorating changed because we had these massive paintings. We did keep some of the signed pieces of antique furniture, which are very precious to me."

New York gallery owner Paula Cooper worked with the Ankas and found them "enthusiastic and thoughtful collectors, a joy to work with." With Paula Cooper's guidance, their acquisitions ranged from a Carl Andre aluminum-and-steel checkerboard sculpture on the floor to a Sol Lewitt sculpture of cubes in which an unsuspecting friend once placed his umbrella. Anne enjoys "different kinds of art in the house, not just the canvas on the wall. I like very unusual pieces and the idea of fitting them so they become a part of the house."

Though most of the pieces, which date primarily from the early sixties, were ones the Ankas saw and fell in love with, two were somewhat made to order. The Warhol portraits were made for Paul's Painter album. Anne had some help from artist Jennifer Bartlett in fitting the two enamel works on the kitchen wall—"I sent her an architect's drawing of the area and she placed all the grids so

we put them up to her specifications."

Anne sees the art of collecting as a very purposeful pastime—one instilled in her by her parents and one she hopes her daughters will follow. At present they are busy collecting horse-show ribbons; all five daughters are active equestriennes. "When you develop an interest, it just adds dimension. Then when you are older and traveling around, you have something to look for, something fun to do." The entire family enjoys collecting picture frames, which appear on almost every flat surface in the house and are quickly filled with smiling Anka faces.

Editor: Marilyn Schafer

High above the kitchen complex, opposite, are two works by Jennifer Bartlett. The titles—131 Green St/Patmos, 1977, are a backdrop for At Sea, 1979. Five of Lynda Benglis's Patang Fossil Papers, 1979, line the wall below.



THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

For their writer friends, Diana and George Melly's twelfth-century house in Wales has special powers

BY ALISON LURIE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER SYKES



ften houses that have been lived in for many years acquire a distinct personality. Whether or not they have a "ghost" in the strict sense of the word, they are haunted by a mood, a presence. The more ancient the building, the stronger this presence. The Tower, Scethrog—which is listed in guidebooks as the oldest inhabited structure in Wales—has this quality: it seems, according to visitors, both watchful and benign.

In part this impression may be due to its history. The Tower was built, most probably in the last years of the twelfth century, by some Norman or English lord who had come into Wales to take up land and establish a great estate, driving the natives back into the hills. It probably sheltered armed knights from Brecon or Tretower Castle, and allowed sentries to keep watch over the rich valleys of the Usk River and the surrounding Brecon Hills from which Welsh raiding parties might come; perhaps it was also a stronghold for treasure. Today, seven hundred years later, it remains both sanctuary and watchtower; but now it most often shelters writers, including the current owners, Diana and George Melly. Mrs. Melly's

novels *The Girl in the Picture* and *The Goosefeather Bed* were written here; it was at The Tower that she and Francis Wyndham edited the letters of their late friend Jean Rhys, published this past spring. Mr. Melly, the well-known jazz player, comes here to work on his autobiography and to write essays and reviews on art, literature, and music. "The Tower is amazingly relaxing," he says. "I arrive from London in a state of jittery nerves, and in no time at all I'm like a contented animal"

Among the many writers who have lived and worked at The Tower are James Fox, author of *White Mischief*, and Bruce Chatwin, whose Hardyesque novel *On the Black Hill* takes place nearby. Arabella Boxer—who writes regularly on cooking for British *Vogue*—tried out many of the recipes for her last book, *The Wind in the Willows Country Cookbook*, in The Tower's old-fashioned kitchen, with its stone sink, coal stove, and immense farmhouse table. "It's an incredibly restful

place," Lady Arabella says. "It has a strange sort of stillness about it; going there is like being a child again."

According to local antiquarians the original fort that is now The Tower was at least four stories tall, perhaps more. The Usk once ran directly under its walls, and it was surrounded by a deep moat. Even today the house is sometimes cut off from the road by water during the winter floods. The ancient drawbridge is now in the museum at Swansea, but its mark can still be seen on the lichened gray walls, which are over six feet thick at the base and built of huge blocks of stone. Some of the upper windows are still fitted with the vertical wooden slats that protected its garrison from the arrows of the wild Welsh tribesmen.

In the seventeenth century, when the danger of armed attack was over, The Tower was converted into a dwelling house; much of the remaining interior construction dates from this period. In the latter part of the century it was inhabited by a cousin of the visionary poet Henry Vaughan. Vaughan himself, who was known as "the Swan of the Usk," was born in the parish, and in 1689 he moved with his wife to a cottage in the next field along the river, to which he composed two odes, one in Latin. He often visited The Tower.

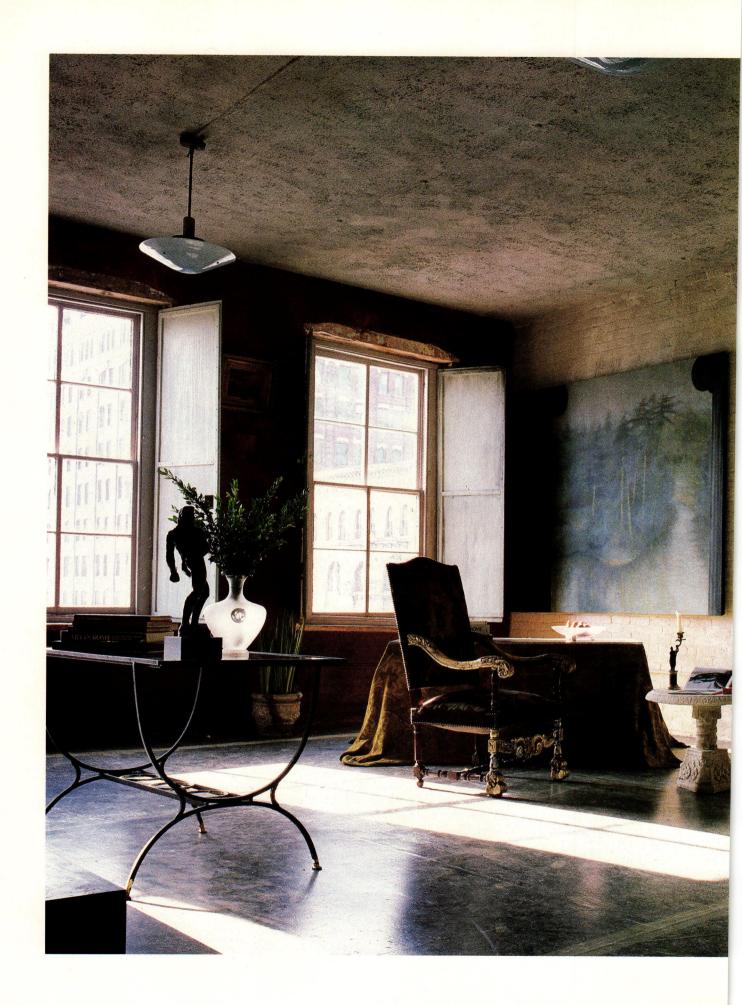
Over the next two hundred years the history of the house is obscure; but by 1973, though still inhabited, it had become a near ruin. Its ancient walled garden was an impenetrable tangle of nettles, household rubbish, and briar rose; and it was without running water, electricity, gas, or modern plumbing. Inside, the ceilings had been lowered to save on heat and the space cut up with partitions into a warren of ugly, littered little rooms. Yet when Diana Melly first pushed open the great ironbound door she knew at once that this would be her house. "It was as if I were under some spell," she says. "I turned to the estate agent and said, 'I'll have it.'"

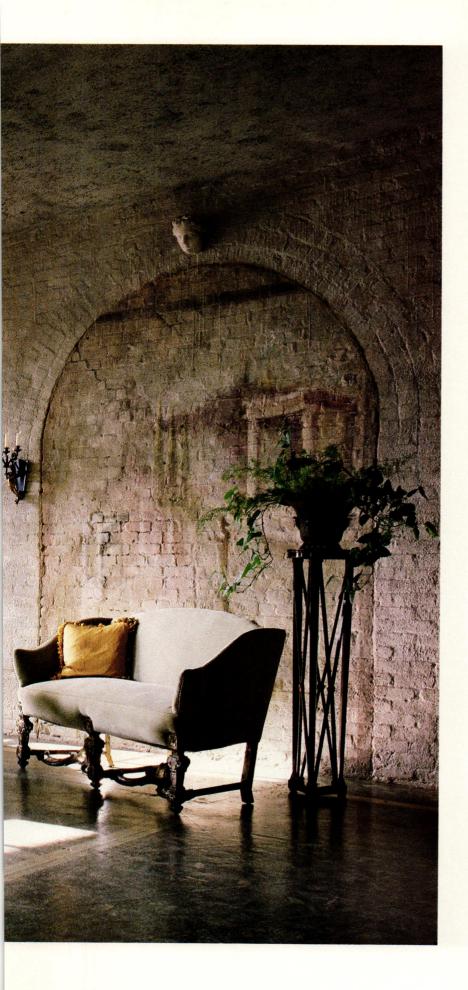
To restore The Tower to something like its early condition and at the same time make it a comfortable place to live demanded courage, patience, and imagination. After the jerry-built construction had been ripped out, ten layers of wall-paper had to be scraped off to expose the medieval stonework and the ancient oak beams. The beams themselves had been so blackened and fossilized by centuries of smoke that it was almost as impossible to drive a nail into them as to drive one into the stone corbels upon which they rest. But exciting discoveries were also made: secret recesses in the walls, a winding stone stair blocked off for hundreds of years.

As far as possible, The Tower was restored to its original design. It now again contains three great high-ceilinged rooms, one above the other. The lowest of these is sitting room, dining room, and kitchen; above it is the master bedroom, and at the top the gabled and skylit tower room where guests may sleep and work undisturbed. A second guest bedroom occupies part of the ancient stone woodshed, and two bathrooms and a sleeping cubicle have been fitted into the thickness of the walls. (*Text continued on page 226*)



The Mellys' stone Tower, opposite, is listed as the oldest inhabited structure in Wales. Guest bedroom, above, where writers Bruce Chatwin and James Fox have stayed and worked. Chatwin's 1983 novel, On The Black Hill, took place nearby.





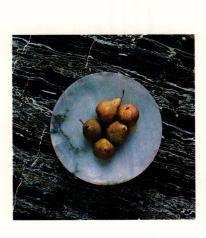


NEW YORK DIG

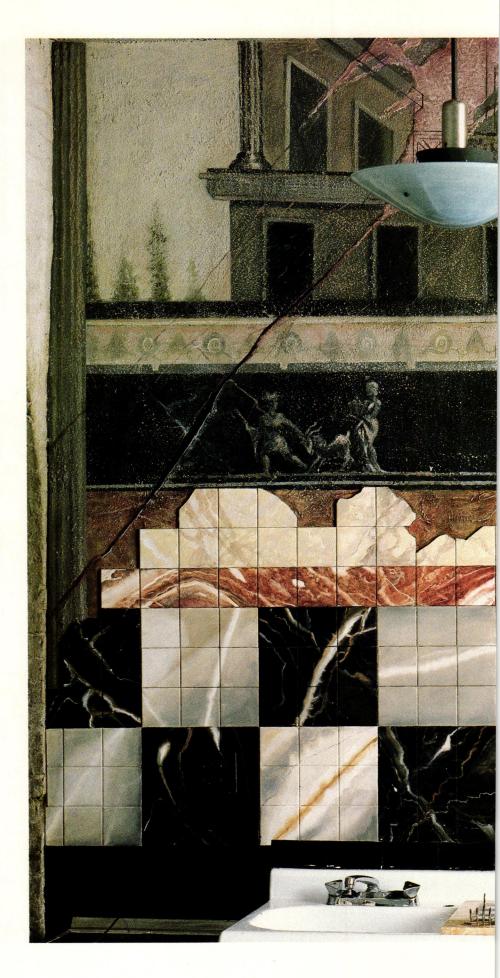
The Pompeii spirit lives again in the Tribeca loft of decorative painter Richard Gillette

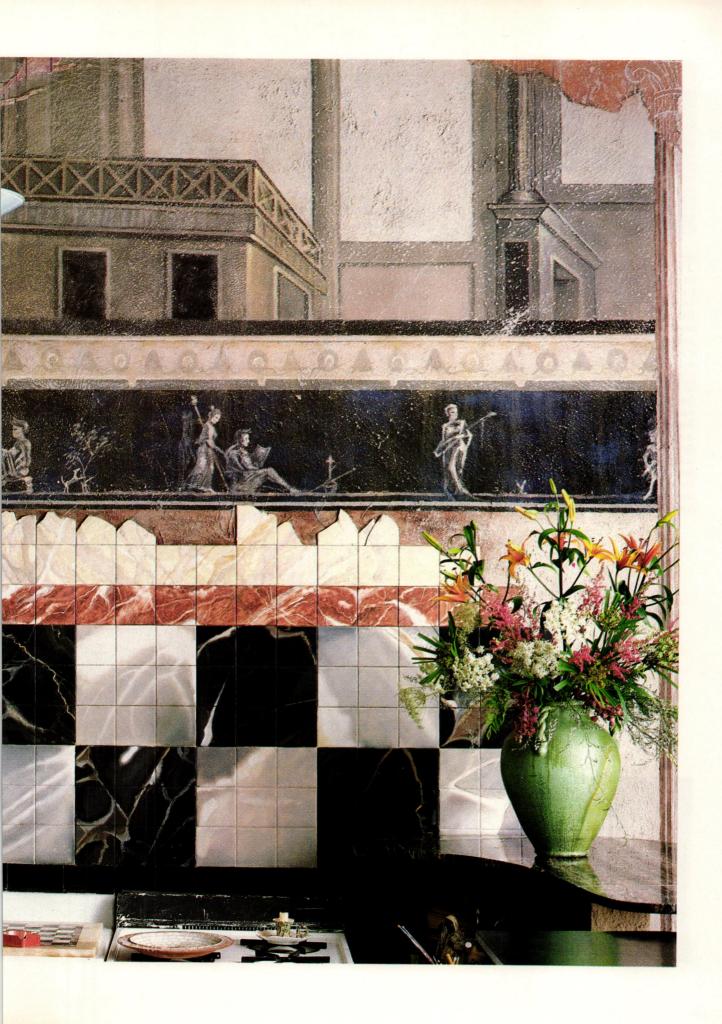
BY HERBERT MUSCHAMP PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE WOLF

Late afternoon light pours in on Richard Gillette's tribute to The Last Days of Tribeca, *left*. In the excavated ruins of ancient Pompeii, Gillette has found a stylistic analogue for a changing New York neighborhood and for the rediscovery of applied ornament after the era of modern Minimalism. *Above*: Beyond the rim of a caststone garden table, a detail of Gillette's trompe-l'oeil floor of inlaid marble adapted from an unearthed Pompeian villa.



Beneath a wall of marbleized bathroom tile that Gillette shattered with a hammer to "expose" a crumbling Roman mural, right, even the kitchen sink is thrown into the period-overlay scheme. The hanging light fixture, which recalls an antique alabaster lamp, is actually a glass Art Deco relic from the main floor at Macy's. Above: Nourishment for a master of painted illusion: real marble, real alabaster, edible Bosc pears.







The "bedroom," opposite, is raised on painted plywood steps to allow a view of the Hudson River at night. The "walls" are a pair of 300-year-old carved oak headboards from Brittany. "Roman pottery" at left is actually a set of fifties lamp bases found at a nearby discount outlet. Above: Atop a marble boomerang table from the fifties, an inscribed fan picture from a Diaghilev dancer is flanked by a genuine Roman amphora and a 300-year-old marble mortar from France. Below: Stacks of recently commissioned decorative panels form a changing backdrop for an Italian cast-stone sculpture from the twenties. Steel shutters have the finish of weathered copper.

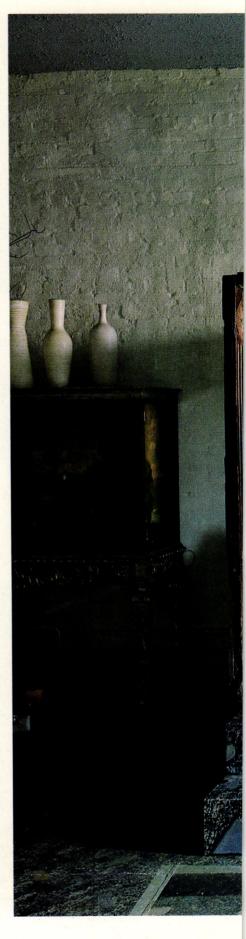


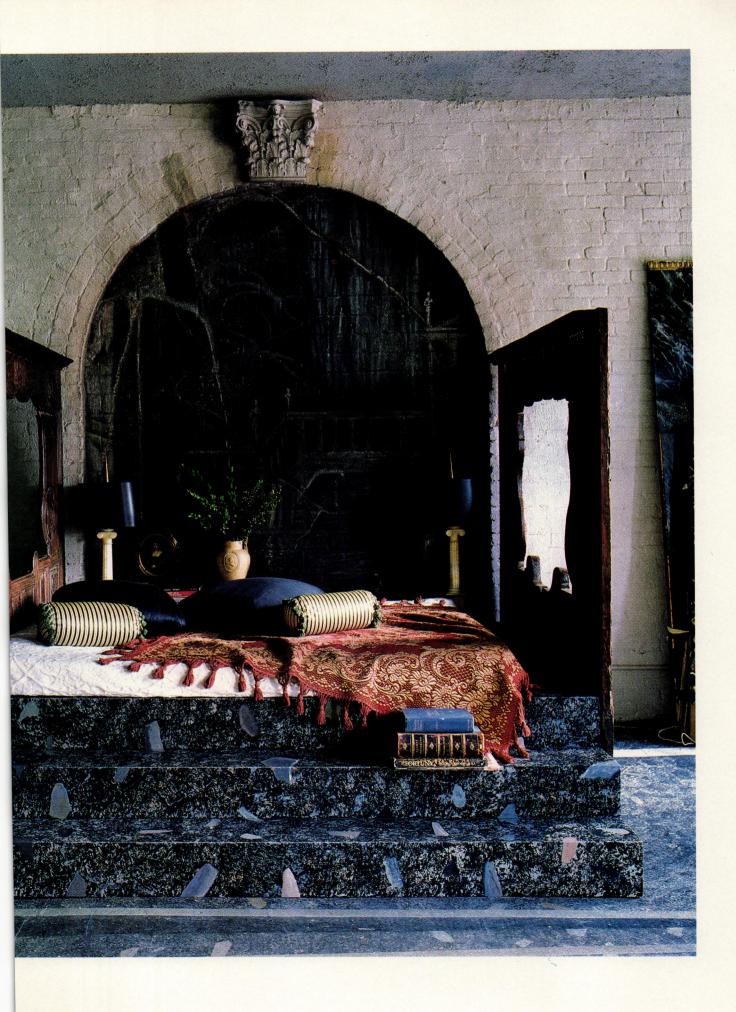
ribeca is a Manhattan district prized by urban archaeologists for its decaying nineteenth-century piers and lofts built on top of buried remnants of pre-Revolutionary New York. Just outside decorative painter Richard Gillette's window here, a team of excavators recently unearthed the remains of an eighteenthcentury iron foundry beneath the rubble of a demolished warehouse. Inside his loft, Gillette displays artifacts from his own development as a master of painted finish. Where other loft dwellers simply take the plaster down from the walls to find exposed brick, Gillette has exposed his imagination on all the surfaces of his loft, balancing his wide-ranging historical tastes into compositions of improbable harmony.

Gillette originally leased the space ten years ago as a studio to execute his large decorative murals, often used as photographers' settings: arcadian vistas, free-form Cubist and Constructivist fantasies, figurative Art Deco panels. Four years ago he got impatient with the commute from his Park Avenue apartment; also attracted by a spectacular view of the Hudson River, Gillette moved into his studio. It was then that he began to concentrate on the Pompeian motifs that now predominate in the loft's whimsical layering of period styles.

Gillette was scarcely less excited about his "discovery" of Pompeii than the eighteenthcentury excavators of the doomed Roman resort, mainly because he finds in his aesthetic expeditions a symbolic parallel between Pompeii and New York as capitals of pleasure and sophistication. He drives the parallel home most explicitly in a mural beside the loft's raised platform "bedroom": a nocturnal scene of the Campanian coast, its ghostly esplanade and galley present a historical-costume version of Gillette's view at night of the Hudson's piers

(Text continued on page 241)





RICHNESS FROM RAGS

Folk art collector Barbara Johnson finds art in the humble hooked rug

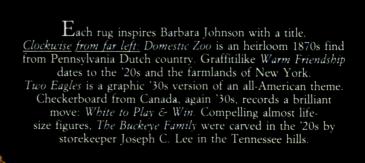
> BY JOAN LERRICK Photographs By Susan Wood



















Abstracts are a strong force in Barbara Johnson's collection.

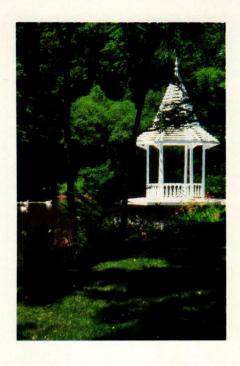
<u>Clockwise from top left:</u> Buck Rogers' Rug foreshadows the rocket age, although crafted in the '20s. Intrigued by the mix of symbols and textures, Johnson named it after the first space cowboy. Hooked in the '30s by an Ohio family of the sect, Mennonite is an extravagant nine-foot oval. Reflections in Red and Blue is a '20s preview of Op Art dazzle.

s the whaling collection moved off, the rugs took on a life of their own." Barbara Johnson was looking back at her legendary assemblage of whaling memorabilia—recently dispersed in a multimillion-dollar series of sales at Sotheby's-and looking forward to her pursuit of the hooked rug, as an endangered art form fast vanishing under mud and the tread of heavy boots. The Swiss-born Princeton lawyer and supercharged trustee of the Museum of American Folk Art now numbers three hundred rugs in her reserves.

It is the dual aspect of the hooked rug—as primitive art and as naïve personal expression—that enchants. "Part of the charm is the anonymity," Johnson feels, yet many of these faceless country women, working with a frugal store of used sacks and scraps of old fabric, were endowed with a wry commentator's wit and a native painterly talent that elevates their humble floor mats into art.

As collector, Johnson has not "been hampered by the rules of antiquity" but relies instead on "gut and heart"; later, scholarship follows. With rugs, "it should be a real love affair" and she has bought "both very rich and very poor—some pieces with price no object, and forgotten little things that needed adoption." Expert dealers would concur that, since most rugs date only from the 1860s to the 1930s, date and provenance are far less significant than sheer design content.

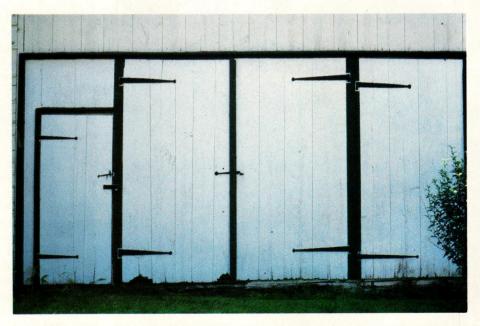
How to preserve and display rugs is a subject of much soul-searching and she is disenchanted with current answers that frame rugs as paintings. "If you elevate a piece of art beyond its own ambition, you don't do it a favor," and she is now experimenting. One thing is certain: the solution will be one that museums will emulate.



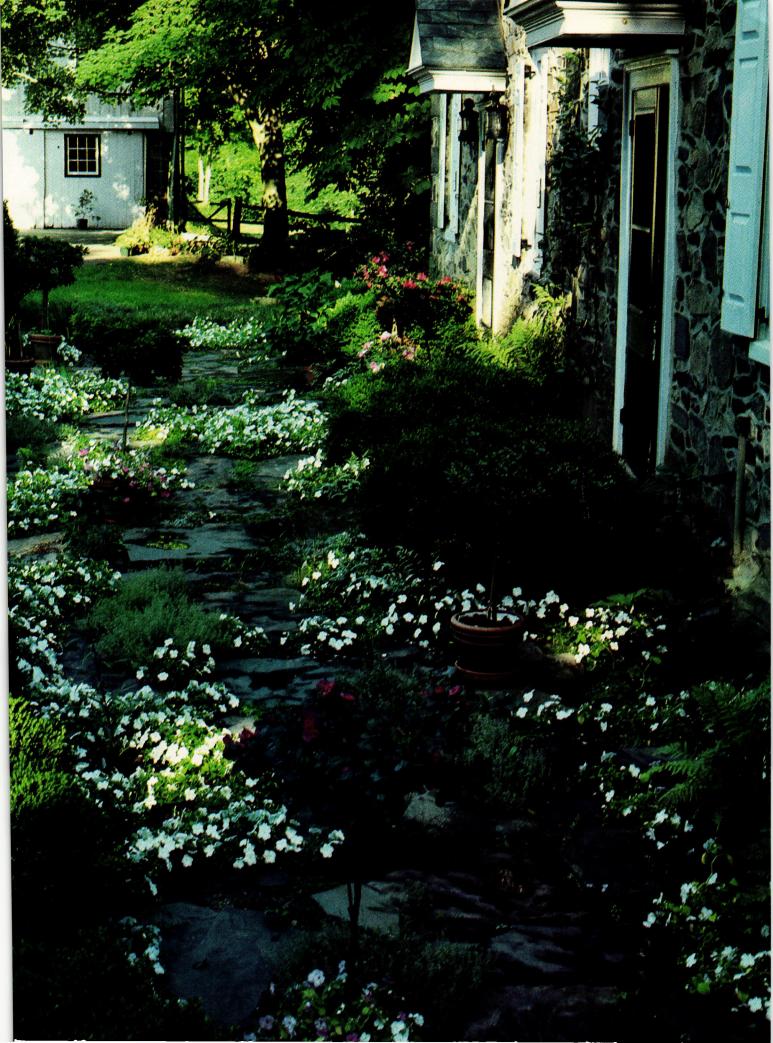
SQUIRE BY DESIGN

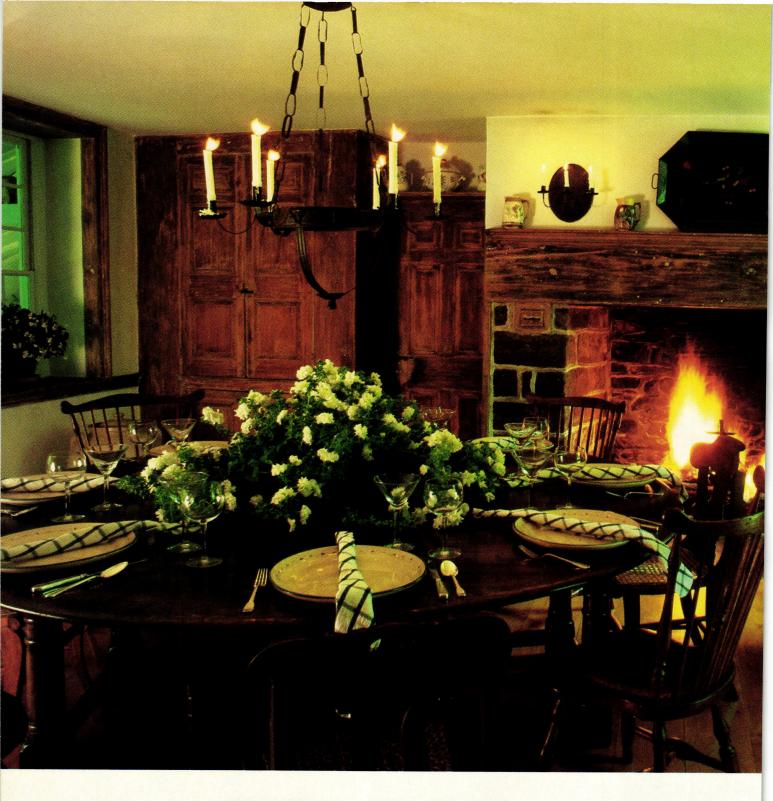
New Yorker Renny Reynolds re-creates an eighteenth-century ideal in Bucks County

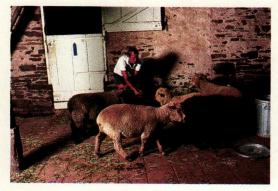
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERNST BEADLE



Renny Reynolds's 1723–93 farmhouse, *opposite,* in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, has a new stone walk that he built and planted. <u>Top:</u> Renny based the duck-pond gazebo on old English examples. <u>Above:</u> Black-green and white barn in local tradition.









Used as a kitchen once upon
a time, the dining room, above, has a cooking fireplace that includes a bread oven on the back wall. The original wide floorboards only needed cleaning and waxing, but many layers of paint had to be stripped from all the woodwork in the house. Eighteenth-century

American chairs are gathered around a gate-leg table seven feet in diameter. Renny insists that guests be able to see over centerpieces. He likes generous plates, often using platters, and generous napkins, often using hand towels.

Left: Renny Reynolds in the animal barn. Right: The house-long porch is a favorite summer room. Renny painted the wicker "a dirty green"—it needs a new coat every few years—and gave the floor its diamond pattern.

cow, a pig, and a goat live here, along with two horses, two donkeys, eight sheep, four rabbits, a large flock of chickens, four dogs, dozens of barn cats, an everchanging population of ducks and geese, and a chic Manhattan designer. The animals and their friend ramble about a 32-acre farm with a pond and a lake, gardens and fields and woods, seven outbuildings, and a stone farmhouse begun in 1723. In his other, city life, Renny Reynolds, master of this idyllic establishment, operates two New York flower shops called Renny and designs public settings and events using flowers, trees, and fountains.

It is only natural that a landscape architect whose professional creations are usually demolished the morning after their moment in the limelight would want some land on which to leave a more permanent mark. Having chosen Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for its gentle green hills and its stock of Colonial houses, Renny searched for two years before he drove up a long and winding road and came upon a classic vernacular house barely tampered with in two centuries. That day four years ago he entered into what he feels will be a lifelong commitment.

It will be a lifetime of work as well as pleasure, not that Renny makes a distinction between the two. Although he employs a couple who live on the property and look after the animals, this gentleman farmer is even more in-





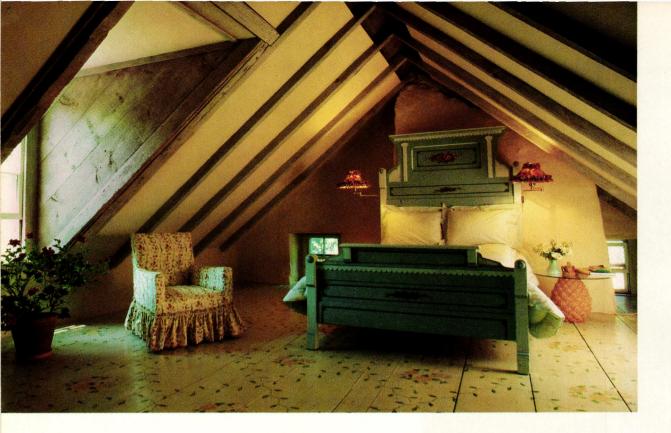






The double parlor, *left*, has a fireplace at each end and was undoubtedly two rooms originally. This was the only major architectural change Renny found in the more than 250-year-old house. Tall case clock is a Delaware Valley antique as old as its setting, and the Windsor chair is also Colonial American. *Opposite below:* Renny "played a lot" with the vast animal barn, basing its embellishments on what he saw in the area. Added were the cupola, once part of a Connecticut church, the Gothic-arch vents, the dovecote, and half the windows. *Above:* When the house was doubled in size in 1753, it gained a second stair, mirror-image to this one, and a second front door. *Below:* Another view of the double parlor. Sofa fabric from Clarence House; painted bamboo sculpture on wall by Keith Sonnier.





In Renny's own bedroom, opposite, he removed an ugly mantel that had not been original, preferring the expanse of plain plaster that surrounds the fireplace opening.

The checked pattern also encircles the room's three plaster walls at the cornice line. Above: In the attic, a bedroom was made under a newly insulated ceiling. Beams are washed in light blue. Painted floor and repainted bed by Mark Allan. Below: Flowers bloom on almost every guest-room surface. Rose of Sharon quilt from The Pink House.

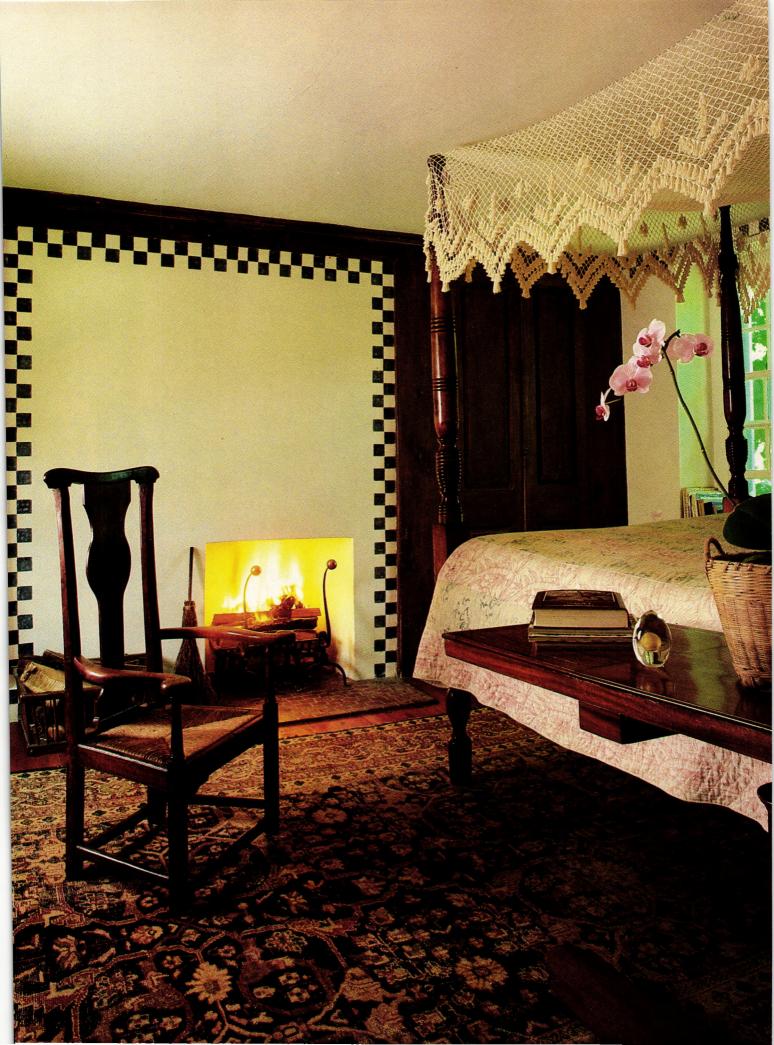


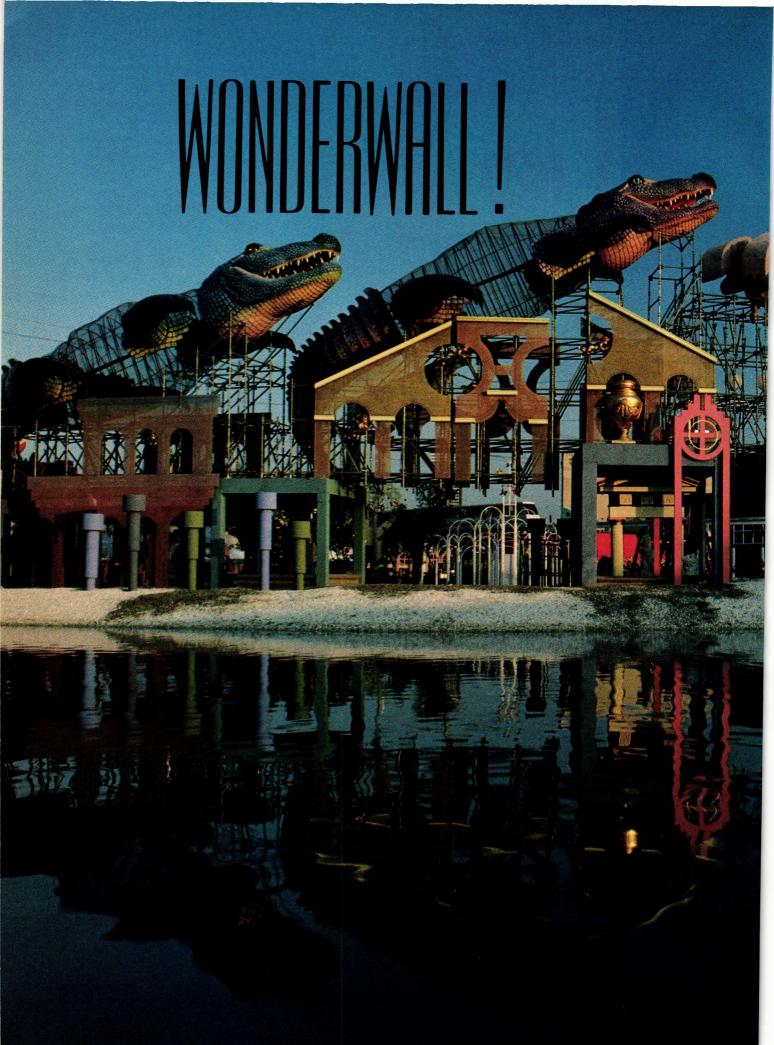
volved in maintaining and refining the farm than were the eighteenth-century landowners he so admires, Washington and Jefferson among them.

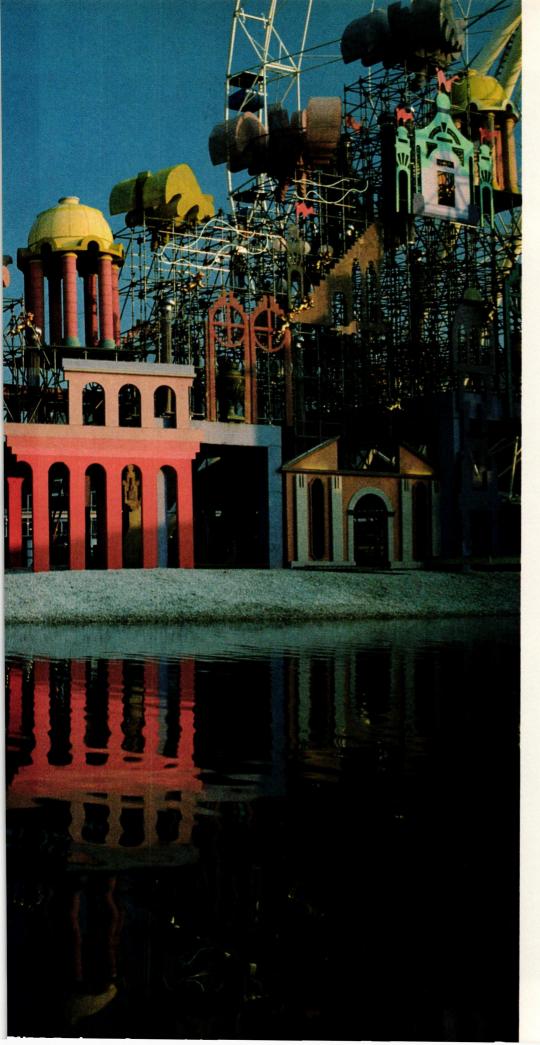
Renny works here as designer, contractor, and laborer. The first year he began by clearing dense vines and underbrush to make way for a kitchen garden, an orchard, an allée of perennial beds, and several single-plant gardens in which he masses ferns, irises, and peonies. Using old maps of his land, Renny found the location of a lost lake. He removed the trees on the site, bulldozed a bed, and allowed the choked springs and streams to fill it, to the delight of migrating waterfowl.

The seven outbuildings were not quite lost, since they remained standing, but Renny had to reroof them, mend and level floors, nudge posts back into plumb, replace glazing, and repaint. The house was sound and intact, possessing its original floors and windows, and here Renny's job was easier: to restore surfaces and to furnish in a manner that would be true to the building's place and period and comfortable for a hospitable owner who rarely spends a weekend without half-a-dozen house guests. Renny calls his business Design for Entertaining, but the term could easily be applied to his farm as well.

By Elaine Greene. Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray





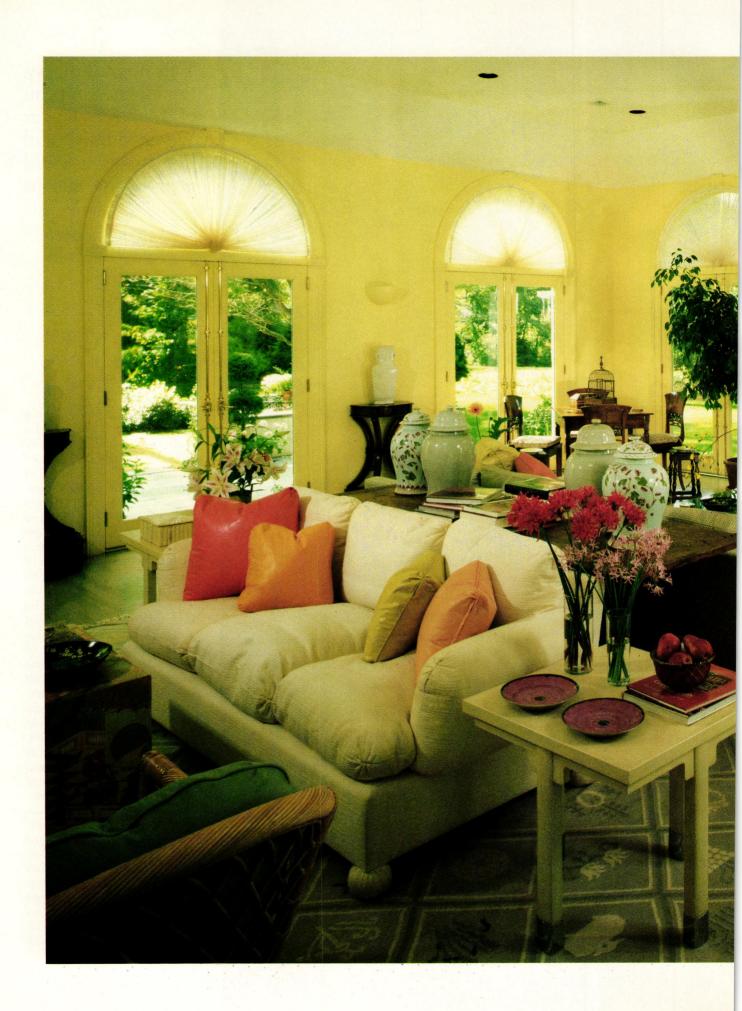


This mad fantasy, the architectural hit of the New Orleans World's Fair, will live on as a vivid memory for millions

> PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MADERE

omething there is indeed that loves a wall-and that includes the Wonder Wall, the hands-down architectural hit of the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans. Concocted by Perez Associates Architects with Charles Moore and William Turnbull as design consultants and Richard Peters as lighting consultant, it will continue to cast its magic spell until November 11, when the exposition closes and it will be dismantled. Many bedazzled admirers would love to see this crazy caprice remain part of the already rich New Orleans architectural experience. Built not for the ages but for a few months' fling in a benign climate, the Wonder Wall could indeed be reconstructed to last. But when such a thing was done, in 1965 with Bernard Maybeck's lath-and-plaster Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco (a relic of the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition), a great deal of the structure's original charm was lost. Better, perhaps, that the Wonder Wall should retain the kind of legendary allure in memory that few structures can ever live up to in posterity.

By Martin Filler. Editor: Heather Smith MacIsaac





LIGHT AND LAVISH

Architect
Bernard J. Harrison and designer Carolyn Guttilla give the favorite furnishings of a couple's life an illuminating new setting

BY MARGARET MORSE PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

In the garden room, the walls wear a white-on-yellow strié glaze.
Subdued upholstery fabric (such as the Canovas check) lets the green landscape shine in, without competition, through three walls of French doors. The vista here is a waterlily pool. Patterson, Flynn & Martin rug. Accessories from John Rosselli.



The corner of the living room, <u>above</u>, has an Italian inlaid fruitwood table that belonged to Mrs. Lewis's mother. A braided ficus—and espaliers and topiaries outdoors—reveal a fondness for artful trees. Cowtan & Tout cushion fabric. <u>Opposite</u>: A table skirted in Fonthill chintz overlooks a neighbor's pool and tennis pavilion. Chairs, plates, and swan from John Rosselli; the napkins, Henri Bendel.

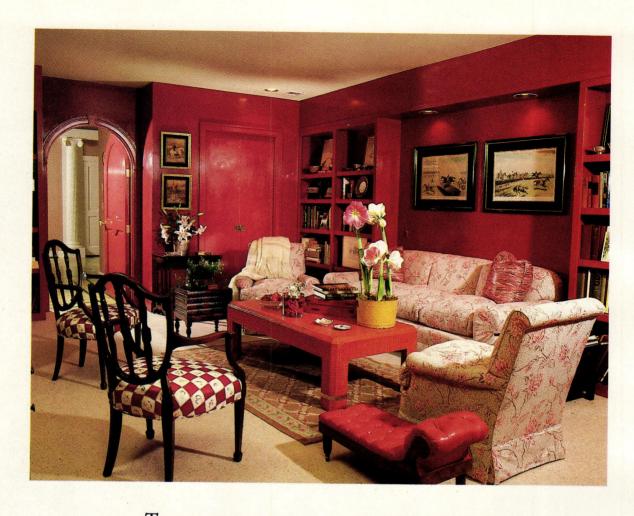
arious American places have provided hospitable addresses for Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lewis III, most recently Long Island. When verdant local acreage became available on what was once an estate, they decided it was time at last to have a house built to order—smaller than their previous houses but with the same gracious proportions. They turned to architect Bernard J. Harrison, a friend since prep school of Mr. Lewis (in the fifties a national polo player) and to interior designer Carolyn Guttilla, whose work Mrs. Lewis had admired at a showhouse: the mix of pale colors, plain chintzes, and durrie rugs convinced Mrs. Lewis that this soft rendition of modern could provide a fresh but sympathetic background for the Lewises' antiques.

Outside, the house is an amalgam of Georgian Irish and Palladian, with a nod to Barbados great houses. A wide center hall separates the public areas from the pri-

vate—the kitchen, library, and large garden room on one side, the master bedroom and dressing rooms and baths on the other. Upstairs is a guest suite. Since the Lewises like to eat at various windows in the house, they dispensed with a dining room. For sit-down dinner parties, tables are set up in the hall, which has closets for silver. china, crystal, and linens as well as the folding furniture. Although the house is more formal than the Lewises' Rhode Island summer house, the hall is furnished as whimsically as a tea house: balloon chairs, bamboo settees, and botanical prints mingling with Coalport platters, which Mr. Lewis is fond of calling "Cole Porter's china." After we photographed the house, Mrs. Lewis and her daughter marbleized the hall's pilasters-a cream color to stand out against the white backboards. As Mrs. Lewis says, "I like the adventure of changing things."

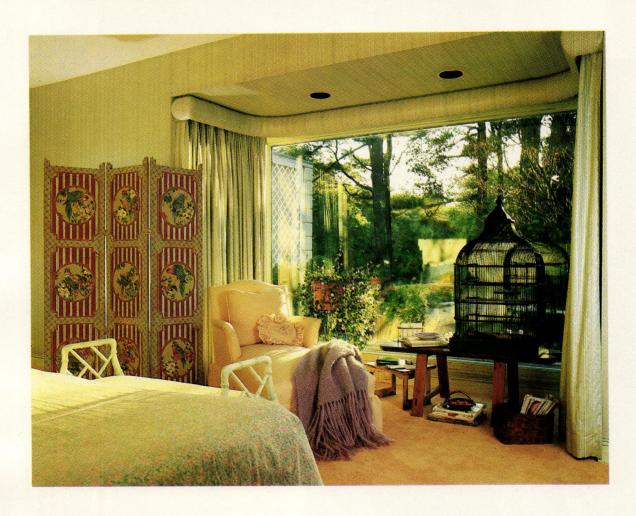
Editor: Lynn Benton Morgan





The glazed library, *above*, has a fireplace facing the sofa (in Rosa fabric from Fonthill) that is lit nearly every night. The double doors lead to a bar that opens onto the hall. Hepplewhite chairs are done in a Clarence House check. *Below*: The hall is lined with pilasters cut from columns of a former house in St. Louis and Nuage wallpaper from Clarence House. Pat Erlanger and Charlotte Flinn marbleized the floor.





When the Lewises eat breakfast in bed, they look out on a fountain. The birdcage—purely decorative (from John Rosselli)—typifies the indoor-outdoor feeling. Upholstered walls keep barks from the Lewises' dogs from interrupting a nap. Mohair throws from Mabel's. <u>Below</u>: A whirlpool bath screened by painted monkeys comprises half of Mrs. Lewis's dressing room. Ralph Lauren towels. An unseen detail: a converted spinet serves as the dressing table.



CHICAGO UNCONVENTION

Sculptors Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose collaborate with collectors Susan and Lewis Manilow on an unusual second home by doris saatchi photographs by mary nichols











A painting by German Georg Baselitz hangs next to a view of the Chicago skyline framed in one of the Thermopane windows. The stepped wall, required by the building code, derives from a platform Susan Manilow saw in an exhibition of David Smith sculpture.



A four-part painting by Mark Tansey shares a corner with a work by Robert Smithson, which is normally at the Museum of Contemporary Art on an extended loan. Above it is a photograph of the site from which the piece was taken.

The top floor of a nondescript nineteenth-century industrial building in a run-down area of Chicago so undistinguished that it doesn't even have a name would not be most Chicagoans' conventional ideal second home. For two natives of the city, the conversion possibilities of three adjoining dilapidated sweatshops fifteen minutes by car from their enormous Lake Shore Drive apartment was a dream come true.

When Susan and Lewis Manilow married eleven years ago, they combined not only their different but equally passionate interests in contemporary painting and sculpture, but also apparently endless supplies of stamina and enthusiasm. They can, and often do, visit museums, galleries, art fairs, and private homes all over America and Europe to see interesting work and still find time and energy between trips, as Susan Manilow recently did, to

manage a friend's winning campaign for a ward committee post, while Lewis Manilow, over the past few years, has waged a fight of his own for the preservation and development of the downtown theater district and served as president of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, in addition to earning a living.

In 1981, when Lewis Manilow's term as Museum of Contemporary Art president ended, he and Susan began to buy works of contemporary art so enthusiastically that very soon the inevitable occurred and they ran out of wall space in their apartment. At about the same time, Lewis Manilow decided that he had spent long enough working in his law firm's downtown office and began to think about setting up a separate business base for himself. "I had bought a building," he recalls, "and a number of things came together. I felt less and less need to be down-



A horizontal painting, Zwei Kerzen by Gerhard Richter, is posed between two vertical windows, the two candles echoed by the pair of antennae rising from the top of the John Hancock Center in the distance.

town and we found ourselves not buying pictures we very much wanted because we didn't have the space. And I was on the board of an art gallery that was being pushed out of its premises because they couldn't afford an increased rent. So I realized we could solve all these problems at once. We could have a space for our pictures, I could move my office to a better space for me, and I could provide a space for the Randolph Street Gallery where they could get themselves established for a couple of years."

The building that Lewis Manilow had bought was constructed in the 1870s on the ashes of the Chicago fire in what was once an important commercial street full of lively shops on the fringe of the city's great Polish neighborhood. After World War II, it had declined into an area of abandoned buildings and empty lots. "What helped us emotionally," says Susan Manilow, "was that

there weren't people living here so we weren't moving people out. But I think it will rise again now that people like artists are beginning to come here to live and work."

Two of the first artists to come to work in the area were Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose who, with Susan Manilow acting as general contractor, made up the building team. "In the beginning, it was a mess," one of them recalls. "I mean, it was total rubble. You could see down to the basement from the top floor. So we knew we had to put in new floors, new walls, new windows, new roof, new everything..."

Working from the ground up, they installed the Randolph Street Gallery in its new home with a two-year, rent-free arrangement and converted the second floor into two separate apartments which were then let to artists. According to Susan (*Text continued on page 225*)

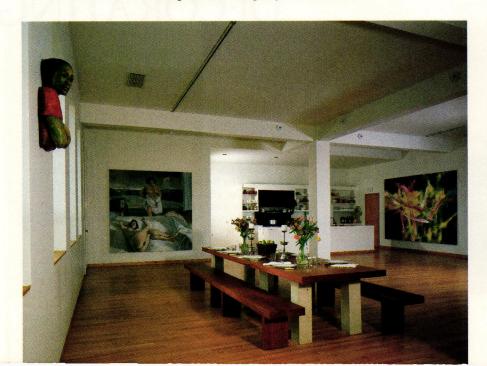


Beside the staircase, above, is Der Kettenraucher (Chainsmoker) by Walter Dahn. To the right is Julian Schnabel's 1981 Bones and Trumpets Rubbing Against Each Other to Infinity and beyond Anselm Kiefer's woodcut Grab des Unbekannten Maler (Tomb of the Unknown Painter). Below: Stella's metal relief Mysterious Bird of Ulieta and Ellsworth Kelly's Green. Apart from the chairs, furniture was made by Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose.





In the foreground, *above*, is *Standing Stone Circle* by Richard Long. The chairs are a revived thirties design. The oiled and rubbed mahogany tabletop, *below*, on 6-inch-square specially cut limestone legs seats twelve comfortably, with views of a painted plaster portrait of *Andrea* by John Ahearn on the left, an untitled painting by Eric Fischl in the background, and *Vogel* by Gerhard Richter.







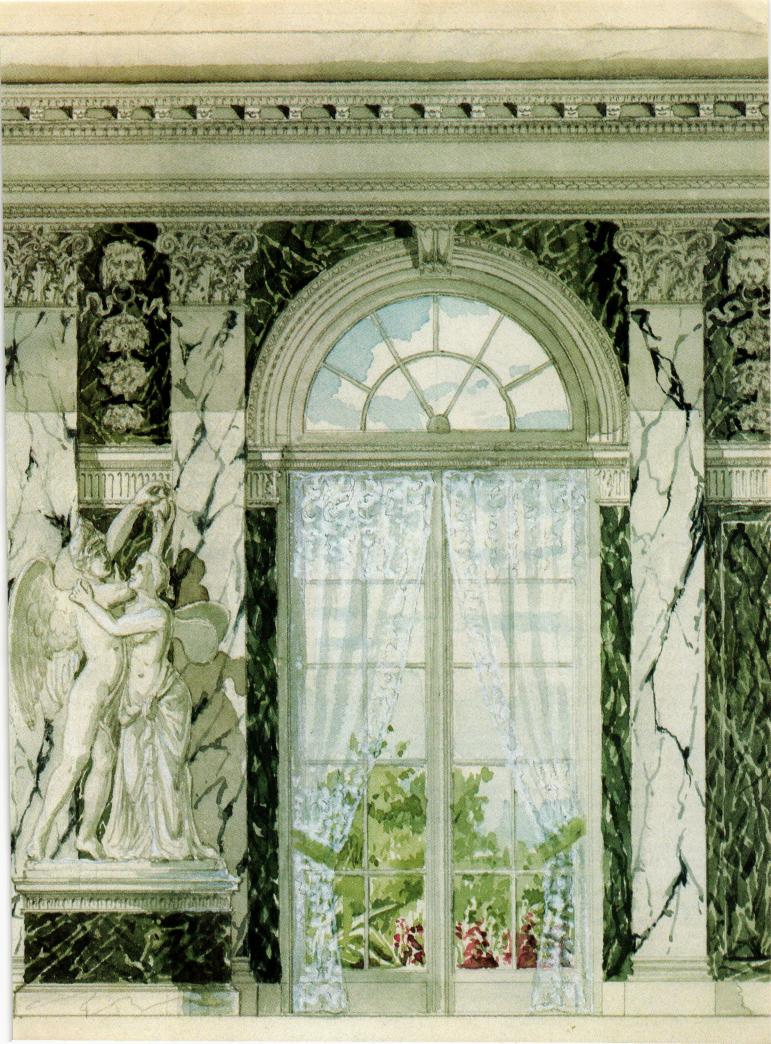
RESTORING
rooms in Newport by Ogden Codman Jr.,
the man who invented the woman who invented

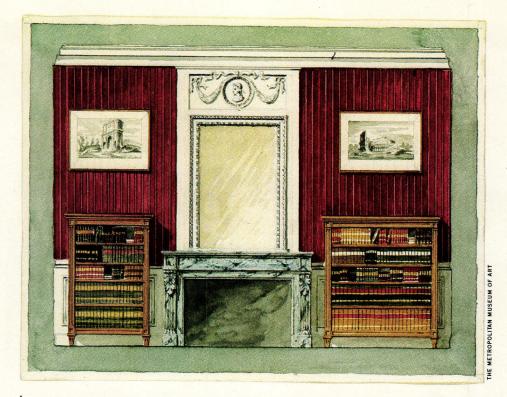
DECORATING

BY PAULINE C. METCALF PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



The dressing table, *above*, in Mrs. Vanderbilt's room at The Breakers. *Left:* Ogden Codman Jr., circa 1880, a dapper youth posed in a photographer's studio in Dinard, France, where the Codman family lived between 1876–1884. *Opposite:* A watercolor rendering done for the diningroom addition, circa 1896, to the Nathaniel Thayer house in Newport, R.I., a Victorian cottage "classicized" by Codman, and one of his most elegant early schemes.





A watercolor rendering, <u>above</u>, done circa 1893 for Edith Wharton's library at Land's End in Newport, one of Codman's most important early commissions. The mirrored overmantel, with plaster decoration, and a marble fireplace were Codman's trademarks. <u>Opposite</u>: In Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's room, pink flowers ramble over an aubergine ground in one of the fabrics reproduced by F. Schumacher for the recent renovation of second-floor rooms at The Breakers.

n December 13, 1893, Ogden Codman Jr. wrote to his mother, "Who do you suppose I have for a client? Teddy Wharton told me today that Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt wants to see me at this office at 11:30 tomorrow to talk about doing his Newport house, and he wants me to do a part. Just think what a client!! The nicest and richest of them all. I can hardly believe it is true . . . I am going to thank Mrs. Wharton who brought this about." The commission to decorate thirteen bedrooms, dressing and bathrooms of the second and third floors of The Breakers, the last and grandest of the Newport "cottages" designed by Richard Morris Hunt between 1893-95, was the most important one to date for the "clever, young, Boston architect" (as Edith Wharton called him in her autobiography, A Backward Glance, 1934).

Ogden Codman Jr. was a talented architect and interior decorator who practiced mainly in Boston, Newport, and New York from the early 1890s through the first decades of the twentieth century. Although he did the complete design for 21 houses and remodeled a number of others, his work consisted for the most part in creating elegant interiors—notable for their lack of excessive opulence and oversize scale—for well-to-do, old-guard families of the Northeast. In Newport, Codman carried out fifteen commissions between 1892 and 1910—a period when the summer colony was in its Edwardian heyday. Despite the fact that his taste and style have had considerable influence on the traditional interpretation of interior

decoration as used today, his name is relatively unknown except to decorating cognoscenti.

The recent renovation of the second-floor rooms at The Breakers (now owned by the Preservation Society of Newport County) provides us with an opportunity to reappraise these rooms in the true spirit with which they were designed. Due to the ephemeral nature of all interior decoration, it is most unusual to find a series of rooms whose décor and furnishings have not basically been altered since they were installed, except by the inevitable effects of time. To fully apprehend the "taste" and contribution of an individual designer has always been a most elusive task, and the re-creation of historic interiors remains a constant challenge to curators and architectural historians. In the case of Ogden Codman, thanks to his remarkably well-documented archives (including all letters, accounts, watercolor renderings, and architectural plans), it is possible to reconstruct not only the artistic and historical sources for his work, but also the social context and milieu for which they were done.

Born into a distinguished and cultured (but not tremendously rich) New England family, Codman began summering in Newport in 1890, opening an office at 18 Bellevue Avenue in 1893. After several years of minimal formal training, he had begun his professional career as an interior decorator in Boston in 1891, but shortly thereafter had moved his permanent office to New York. He had not forsaken his New England origins, but was shrewd enough (Text continued on page 216)

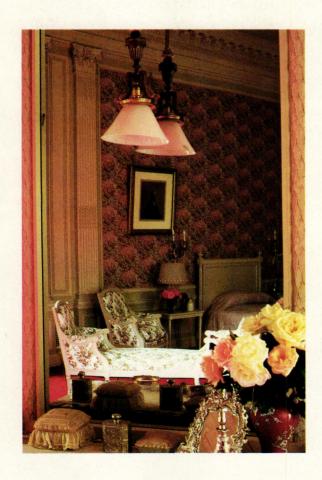








In Mrs. Vanderbilt's room, *above*, as in all the bedrooms in The Breakers, the furnishings are in complete accord with the requirements given in *The Decoration of Houses* for a boudoir: one or two comfortable chairs, a *lit de repos*, *below left*—"one of the most useful pieces of 18th-century furniture"—and, *below right*, a writing desk. In the window is a bronze model by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney for a monument at St. Nazaire. *Opposite*: Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's bedroom with a drypoint of her done by Paul Helleu about 1895.







RESTORING NEWPORT ROOMS

"What I want is comfort...I always decide against poverty when I see very good bric-a-brac"

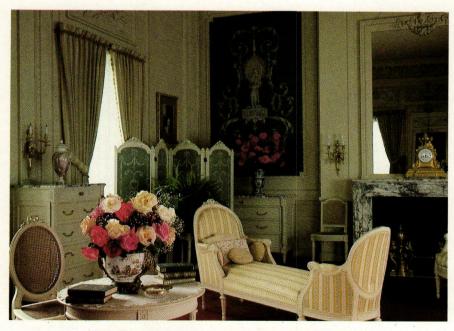
(Continued from page 210) to realize that a New York base was a better location to pursue a more rewarding clientele. Browns, Winthrops, Whartons, and Thayers were among Codman's earliest Newport clients-all Bostonian Brahmins to whom he was connected one way or another. Patronage of one's kin and social set was de rigueur among the small social elite there. Codman, however, as a member of the conservative New England set, was often disdainful of the newer arrivals in the summer community. While desirous, on one hand, to have the wealthiest clients to fulfill his professional ambitions, he referred to the manners and taste of some of the newcomers as "common." Codman's gossipy letters to his mother, who was living in France at the time, provide an amusing account of the discriminating attitudes of the young tastemaker. Referring to the house of an old Boston friend, Tom Cushing, he says: "It is such an ugly house, and shabby, not touched since it was built, but it looks

like a gentleman's house, which is more than most do here."

The most notable person among Codman's early Newport clients and the one most responsible for his future success was Edith Wharton. Her friendship and patronage were of invaluable assistance to him in launching his career (i.e., Cornelius Vanderbilt). Ultimately it would be through the association with her as co-author of The Decoration of Houses (published in 1897) that his name would be primarily remembered. As she described in her autobiography, it was during the process of transforming Land's End-"to give a certain dignity" to "an ugly wooden house with half an acre of rock and illimitable miles of Atlantic Ocean"---that she and Codman discovered that they shared many ideas of taste and decoration: "a dislike of sumptuary excesses" and that "interior decoration should be simple and architectural." The book, which is still the touchstone of classical taste in interior decoration, proclaimed that the treatment of the interior ought "to be based on right proportion, balance of door and window spacing, and simple unconfused lines...not a branch of dressmaking." While Edith Wharton's crisp prose gave the book its style, much of the historical and factual material can probably be attributed to Ogden Codman, including the selection of illustrations showing the most of splendid rooms in the great palaces and country houses of Europe.

In addition to their mutual ideas about taste and decoration. Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman shared other common bonds—not the least being commiseration with one another on the "dullness" of most Newport society, concern for good cuisine, and an overwhelming love and appreciation for the atmosphere and culture in Europe, primarily France. Both had spent formative years of their youth living abroad, a period which Edith Wharton referred to as "a happy misfortune which gave me the rest of my life, that background of beauty and old-established order." Ultimately both Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman spent the last twenty and thirty years of their respective lives in France.

The knowledge and understanding of European art and culture which was held by both the young authors certainly contributed to the self-confidence with which they prescribed the formula for suitable and appropriate decoration of houses. It is not surprising that Codman, having visited all the great palaces and residences of European nobility, felt himself sufficiently well-versed in their architecture and decoration to be able to translate the lifestyle and comforts of European aristocracy to the needs and aspirations of well-to-do Americans. Transposing the airs of nobility to Newport was not far from Codman's thoughts when he again wrote to his mother (on August 25, 1894), "Mr. Vanderbilt drove me down to (Continued on page 220)



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RESTORING NEWPORT ROOMS

(Continued from page 216) my office yesterday. It was much the same as driving with the Prince of Wales or a very good Duke."

Refinement and elegance are words which can easily be applied to the rooms at The Breakers. These rooms, recently rehung with fabrics reproduced from the originals by F. Schumacher, are remarkable for their fresh, understated appearance. With their mixture of cream-painted furniture, flowered cretonnes and chintzes, a blend of English and French detailing, these schemes set a precedent for generations of this style of decoration in America. If their appearance, to our eyes today, is reminiscent of deluxe hotel suites, it is to be remembered that these rooms predated the former by several years. The relative simplicity of these rooms is all the more evident by contrast to the flamboyant "Italian Renaissance" opulence of the rooms on the ground floor, which were decorated by the fashionable French firm of J. Allard et Fils, in conjunction with the architect, Richard Morris Hunt.

Hunt, who had already built a number of other houses for branches of the Vanderbilt family and had previously collaborated with Allard et Fils for their interior decoration, had little respect or tolerance for the schemes of the inexperienced and relatively untrained young man who wished to impose his ideas on the architect's original scheme. He warned Codman not "to follow in the footsteps of Gabriel" nor "to servilely copy French interiors." Many years later Codman wrote that he had carried out his commission for Mr. Vanderbilt with the assistance of a number of students from the École des Beaux-Arts, "who produced a really charming lot of designs," which were then taken over to London for Mr. Vanderbilt's approval.

Many beautiful color renderings were done for each of the rooms, sometimes with an overlay to give a choice of color or curtain design, the detailing of moldings and door surrounds carefully delineated as well as the pattern and design of the fabrics. The practice of providing each of his clients with many beautiful renderings was one that Codman appears to have done only through the 1890s. Apparently he heeded the advice of Mrs. Wharton that "it was perhaps poor policy to

overwhelm your clients by the number of your water-colour designs but you are now firmly enough established to be less lavish in this respect." She constantly gave him advice about managing his clients and warned him that "when a man begins in any profession...he must offer the inducement of being reasonable in his charges." Subsequently the cooling in their friendship was due in large part to what she considered his too-high fees for his designs for The Mount, the house she built in Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1900.

Although the rooms at The Breakers are an early statement of Codman's style, they display many of the trademarks that would be associated with his work. In keeping with a predilection for all things French, especially from the period of the eighteenth century, most of the furniture, hardware, chimney pieces, and *objets* were imported or made to order in France



Codman at La Leopolda Villa in France

from such famous firms as Jansen et Compagnie. Various firms would send photographs and drawings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pieces of furniture and Codman would select the style, wood, and exact finish he wanted. In order to provide the client with the piece most precisely suited for the room, it was more expedient to have copies made from a model, although there was certainly no difficulty in purchasing antiques at the time.

One of the most noticeable features of the bedrooms is the overall use of cream-painted furniture covered with flowered or printed cotton fabrics. Derived from the French Louis XVI tradition of (Continued on page 224)

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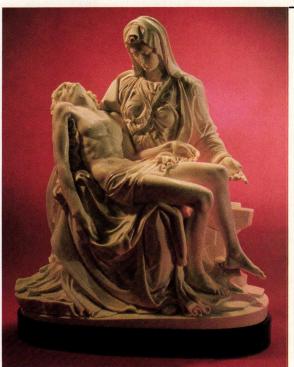
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RESTORING NEWPORT ROOMS

(Continued from page 220) painted furniture, this treatment is usually thought of as one of Elsie de Wolfe's trademarks. What is not generally appreciated is the extent to which Codman was the mentor, adviser, and source for many of her ideas on interior decoration. Beginning with her house on Irving Place, Elsie consulted Codman for the alterations and decorations of her various New York residences as well as the Villa Trianon. her house in Versailles. Undoubtedly Elsie de Wolfe's taste was similar to Codman's, and she had no qualms about the art of self-promotion.

The furnishings themselves used in the rooms are in complete accord with the requirements given in The Decoration of Houses for a boudoir—a writing desk, one or two pieces of comfortable chairs, and a lit de repos (as seen in the green-and-white room), "one of the most useful pieces of eighteenth-century furniture" which, "except in France, has been replaced by the clumsy upholstered lounge" (The Decoration of Houses). The use of toile de Jouy cottons for chair covers and curtains was another of Codman's trademarks also associated with Elsie de Wolfe. Although there are no toiles, specifically, in these rooms, most of the fabrics are of that type. Certainly, by comparison to most rooms of that day, which would have been overdraped and overstuffed with silks and brocades, these rooms are refreshingly simple.

The superabundance of pink flowers on an aubergine ground which predominates in Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's room is quite unique for a Codman scheme, perhaps indicative that the client herself, a budding debutante at the time, was rather influential

in the selection of the fabric.

It was said of Codman he often provided clients with splendid houses more tasteful than the clients, unaided, would have thought of wanting. The rooms at The Breakers are thoroughly tasteful-formal but gracious, classic yet comfortable, elegant without excess. Looking at these rooms, it is quite easy to agree with Ogden Codman when he says: "I hate shabby, dilapidated houses, and poor cooks, and all that sort of thing What I want is comfort...I always decide against poverty when I see very good bric-abrac."

Editor: Babs Simpson

CHICAGO UNCONVENTION

(Continued from page 205) Manilow. their area, the six-thousand square feet of virtually clear space on the top floor, "divided itself logically. The bearing walls had to stay. The only decisions we made were to put up divider walls for a bedroom in the back, for the two bathrooms, and for a small office in the front for the bookkeeper."

The remaining area is an L-shaped space measuring 120 feet on its longest leg. Sculptors Mose and Shapiro thought of it as a colossal, three-dimensional work of art and scaled every element accordingly. A stairway with cherrywood treads, designed by Howard Shapiro in tribute to his architectural hero Luis Barragán, leads in giant steps to the roof. The sofa, presented by a designer friend who couldn't find a client with a space big enough for it, will comfortably seat a whole family. Lewis Manilow can hold a conference around the five-by-seven-foot granite desk which Steve Mose devised for him to work at on his own.

The needs of the collection, which includes many extremely large paintings, determined some features more usually seen in public and commercial spaces. Very few private houses, for example, have an eleven-foot door leading straight outside on the third floor, used for works that won't fit into the existing freight elevator, such as an eleven-by-fourteen-foot painting by Paladino which was recently hoisted up and in on pulleys and cables hired specially for the job. Or a forty-ton unit that sits on the roof like a little house providing temperature and humidity control, a necessary precaution in a climate like that of Chicago, which can change dramatically overnight. Or halogen tungsten lighting on ceiling tracks.

Details have received the same attention as the largest elements. The fireplace refers to the steel boxes of Minimalist sculptor Donald Judd and a bathroom light fixture designed by Howard Shapiro recalls Dan Flavin's neon artworks. The monumental look of the dining table, with its eleven-anda-half-foot long, three-inch thick mahogany top set on chunky limestone legs, is based on a table in Chicago's Art Institute which holds a permanent display of Brancusi sculpture.

With so many accommodations to (Continued on page 226) art and

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CHICAGO UNCONVENTION

(Continued from page 225) artistic references, the space might easily have ended up a hushed and hallowed shrine to contemporary painting and sculpture isolated from the hustle-bustle of the workaday world. Instead, thanks to views of the extraordinary Chicago skyline from every window, the space is firmly attached to its city location. Inside, work begins at eight in the morning and with it the almost constant sounds of typewriter and telephone.

The kitchen is an integral part of the

sitting and eating area, its plain-fronted Formica-laminate cupboards, commercial range, and island worktop designed for the informal kind of entertaining which the Manilows prefer. "I finally got my dream kitchen," says Susan Manilow. "I love to cook and unlike our traditional apartment where the kitchen is miles away from where everybody is normally sitting, I'm right here with everybody while I cook." Decisions as to which place the Manilows use for entertaining are usually made on the spur of the moment. "Cer-

tainly if there are people who are really interested in contemporary art and haven't seen this place, we come here," says Lewis Manilow.

Susan and Lewis Manilow haven't decided what to call their new space, sometimes referring to it as the office and at other times the loft. It can't be classified as either, though it is both, as well as gallery and guesthouse. Unconventional as it is, for an adventurous Chicago couple, it is obviously an ideal second home.

— Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

(Continued from page 175) All these rooms have been stripped down to the original stone and then plastered white. They are furnished in a remarkable combination of old and new, exotic and native, luxury and simplicity. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tables and chairs and cupboards discovered at local farmhouse sales rest on rugs from Persia and Morocco; a High-Victorian brass bed is covered with an embroidered Indian spread; two matching early-nineteenth-century Gothic bookcases are filled with books on contemporary and surrealist art; a word processor sits next to a witch's iron cauldron filled with flowers. Somehow they all look perfectly at home; as Diana Melly says, The Tower can assimilate anything.

From outside there is almost no sign of the eclectic variety within. The Tower is a listed historic building, and visible alterations to the structure are forbidden: the house looks almost exactly as it must have in the seventeenth century. Diana Melly has restored the garden without modernizing it. Ancient climbing roses, pink and white, bloom in profusion along the old brick walls, and many of the fruit trees, skillfully pruned, have begun to flower and bear again, notably plum and crab apple. In the rich valley soil, sheltered from the wind, every variety of vegetable and herb flourishes: 44 species at

the last count. Each year the masses of soft fruit—gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, and currants, among others—are transformed into pies, preserves, and wines. Diana Melly also makes delicious wines from rhubarb and from wild flowers, as well as remarkable elderflower champagne and blackcurrant cassis.

For George Melly much of the attraction of the house is its location on



George Melly's puppet theater which sits in the living room of The Tower.

the Usk, which is famous for its wild, not stocked, trout. In 1982 Mr. Melly bought the fishing rights to one-and-aquarter miles of the river behind The Tower, and he comes down as often as he can during the season. "It's a very, very good river for a fisherman, the Usk," he told me. "Some of the trout in it are up to five or six pounds, but most of the big ones are too old and wise to be caught. Those I take are usually under two pounds." He prefers wet-fly fishing ("I find it much more exciting"), and uses a Graphite rod ("absolutely amazing in its flexibility"). His most successful flies have been the black butcher, the greenwell glory, and—early in the year—the march brown. He especially looks forward to the autumn, when there are salmon in the river, and is hoping to catch his first this year.

Some of the guests who come to stay with the Mellys also fish; others prefer simply to walk by the river or climb the surrounding hills. The Tower is within the Brecon Beacons National Park, and the 72 acres next to it along the Usk have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). According to the official proclamation, "The river Usk in a wide flood plain near Brecon has produced a wide range of wildlife habitats...that includes the old river channels, shingle banks,... (Continued on page 229)

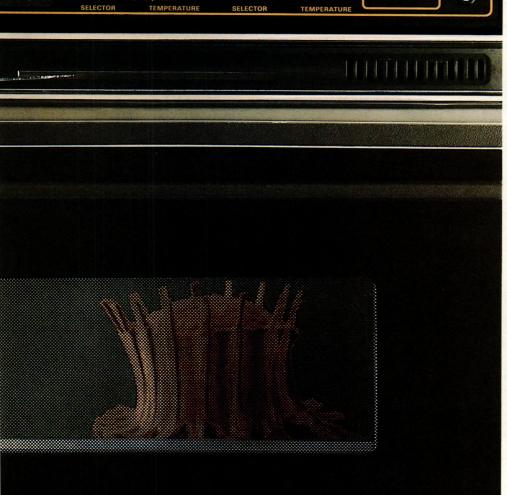
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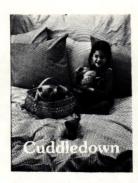
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THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

(Continued from page 226) eroding earth banks (providing sand martin nest sites), pools and riffles." These protected wetlands shelter rabbits. foxes, badgers, and hedgehogs, as well as wild mink whose ancestors escaped from a north Wales farm. Scarce species of bird, insect, and plant life flourish; there are five different kinds of willow and several rare wild flowers. In the autumn and winter the area be-

comes a wildlife refuge.

For those of the Melly's visitors who are professional writers, however, the great attraction of the house is as a place to work, in large part because of Diana Melly's gifts as a hostess. Everyone I spoke to praised her hospitality, her generosity, her tact with sometimes temperamental artists, her casually inspired cooking, and the intuitive sympathy of her criticism. When Bruce Chatwin, for instance, was writing his novel there, he would read his day's work aloud to her every evening. The atmosphere of the house is also very important. In the tower room, as James Fox says, "many a writer has broken his block." For him the building has "a mystical quality" that is somehow concentrated in the view to the west. If you look from The Tower in this direction you can see a bend of the river, the Brecon Hills, cows grazing, and a field containing a single central tree that seems, he says, to focus energy and weather around it.

Fanciful, perhaps. But it cannot be denied that in a sense The Tower has kept its psychological meaning over seven centuries. Today it gives writers both shelter and a vantage point from which to observe the world outside, just as it did the knights who lived there long ago. The poet Henry Vaughan's vision, in his Latin ode to the river Usk,

seems to have come to pass:

"So divine's thy murmuring hymn To these woodlands tall and dim That I think I hear on thee Orpheus' deep-drawn melody, His sweet strings resounding clear His ancient magic echoing here."*

*Translation by Edmund Blunden.

CORRECTION

In the July article on Los Angeles pools, the design of Sheldon Andelson's pool and house were attributed to Waldo Fernandez. They were designed by Warner and Grav.

THE MODERNIST STRIPE

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(Continued from page 151) that Lonnecker and Papademetriou pleasantly surprised the Strausses when they painted the exterior of the flat-roofed Modernist house in colors that referred back to the lot itself and to the Gulf Coast in general. Three stripes, blue-gray at the bottom, sea-green in the middle, and an aquamarine around the top, would also establish scale for the two-story house, and Papademetriou says that by being constant, the stripes would "play with the unusual changes in mass." The lowest bluegray register would anchor the building to the ground while the central green stripe would become a nautical metaphor for the displacement line on cargo ships. Thus the house could become a kind of ship. And yet, the Strauss house, cool and serenely majestic, is an unusual ship to sail into those old Cajun backwaters. To Jean Lafitte's jaded pirate eyes it would have looked like The Good Ship Lollipop.

To today's eyes, the Strauss house is decidedly sophisticated and rational, with nothing of the staginess of a Shirley Temple vessel. Nonetheless, its real glory partakes of the youthful exuberance of that make-believe boat. The colors-blues and greens on the outside, lilac and lavenders on the inside—are full of energy and joy. The very existence of the house represents the triumph of the human spirit. The five years between 1977 and 1982, when the house was finished, were marred by tragedy in the Strauss family. Serious illness and the death of a son caused the house to be started and stopped several times. Finally, there came a time when the Strausses decided to forge ahead with it, and Mrs. Strauss began to sort through and dispose of the accumulations of a lifetime. The new house with its happy colors and its uncluttered spaces became a way of moving on, of looking optimistically toward the future.

Tom Lonnecker says that it is important to him and Papademetriou "to give clients what they want," an attitude that led to the successful giveand-take between the architects and the Strausses. For instance, the architects did not tell the Strausses what colors they should choose, but instead left behind with Mrs. Strauss a Pratt & Lambert fan of paint chips. Mrs. Strauss went through and clipped out

the pinks and lilacs we see in the house. But, she says, "After I picked out all the colors, I left to Peter and Tom their final determination in the house." The two architects devised a way of turning the colors of the living room inside out in the gallery. Thus the colors of the recessed niches became wall colors, the wall colors retreated into the niches. And this only begins to suggest how meticulous their color calculations were to become.

In fact, the disposition of all the colors must be traced to the greenhouse/ music room, which is open to the outside through a wall and ceiling of windows. Because the soft aquamarine of the exterior is particularly visible in the room, the architects brought it inside and then combined it with other colors. From there they worked a progression of six colors so that as they moved through the house one color would drop out and another would pick up. A punchier version of the aquamarine ties the major rooms of the house together, "occurring and recurring," says Mrs. Strauss, "like motifs in an opera."

For all the vibrancy of the hues, however, color never outdoes form. The gallery space, in a deceptively simple fashion, takes care of all the problems posed at the outset by the clients. It allows for public spaces on the first floor to be separate yet connected to the smaller private spaces and for the master suite on the second floor to be discrete and yet accessible to the grown children's suite of rooms. The gallery accommodates the three-foot drop-off of the land from one end of the house to the other with a subtle split level, a drop of a few stairs. And because the gallery is opened to the second level, it connects the house not only laterally but vertically as well.

But most impressive of all is this corridor's function as gallery space. By using glass block for the northern wall of the house, the architects knew that natural light would flow through the ambers and reds and pinky-purples of the antique pitchers and vases on the Strausses' display shelves, lighting them up and dazzling the beholder. Mr. Strauss is thrilled with the result and has told the architects that he now realizes, in a way he only partially understood before, just how brilliant the pieces of his collection are. \(\subseteq Editor: \) Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

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ALL THE BEST PLACES



RIVERVIEW TERRACE

A little-known street tucked behind New York's Sutton Place faces an uncertain fate

By Mary Ann Tighe

Riverview Terrace is an unlikely and probably unique piece of Manhattan real estate—a tiny cul-de-sac formed by six row houses, each only sixteen feet wide. On a secluded spot with grass, trees, and flowers growing directly over the FDR Drive, it also has a full view of the mighty Queensboro Bridge and the East River and is a mere five-minute walk from Bloomingdale's. In spite of its centrality, few New Yorkers are even aware that the street exists, since the only way to find it is to set out looking for it, and it continues to confuse taxi drivers, deliverymen, and postmen. But the residents of Riverview Terrace are more than willing to brook that confusion in exchange for their paradoxical New York City hideaway.

"Doesn't it remind you of the main street in Aix-en-Provence?" suggests one of Riverview Terrace's long-time residents. "It's like living in the country," says another. "You can walk in the garden and feel a kind of quietude you don't experience living in a highrise. All of the owners pitch in-anyone who knows about gardening, for instance, works on that. We've got a real sense of community here because we're all interested in keeping our little piece of property private."

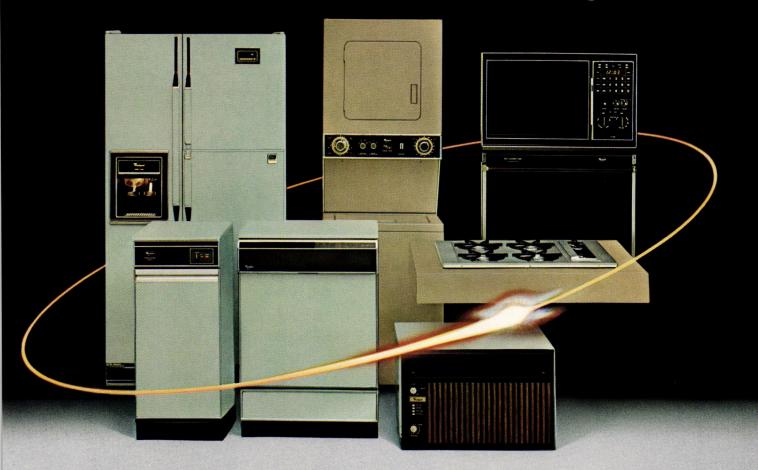
Tucked into a corner of the Sutton Place area, Riverview Terrace is reached by traveling east on 58th Street until the road ends at an iron railing that encloses a garden situated on a bluff high above the East River. By this point, signs have indicated that 58th Street has assumed the title Sutton Square, and this dignified name does seem apt for the elegant enclave. Sutton Place and the neighboring Beekman Place have been celebrated since

Above: The tiny street, which runs along the river, begins at the corner of Sutton Square.

the twenties as a midtown sanctuary for wealthy New Yorkers. And within this rarefied environment, Sutton Square is the most desirable spot. It consists of an unbroken row of town houses arranged as though along three sides of a rectangle, around a blocklong common garden that faces on the river. The façades of Sutton Square houses vary in style from Georgian through Hollywood glitz, but all share a prosperous and well-tended look an impression reinforced by the lineup of limousines to be seen there every weekday morning. Riverview Terrace, however, has a far more modest ambience; it is in, but not of, the Sutton Place area.

Where the street ends at the northwest corner of Sutton Square, there is a small plaque affixed to an iron gate, reading "Private No Trespassing." The gateposts are each topped by a curious beast, (Continued on page 239)

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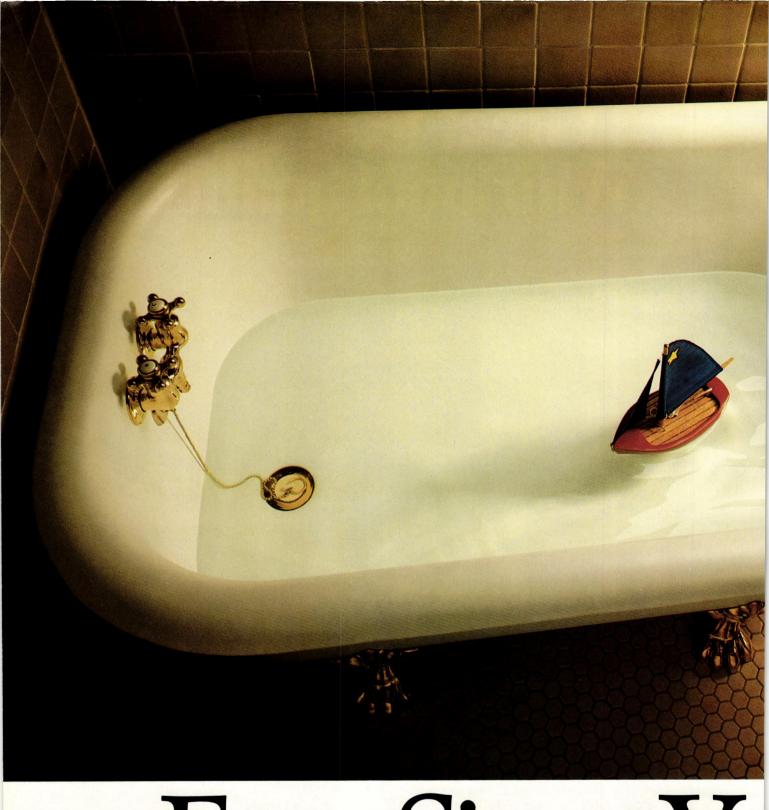
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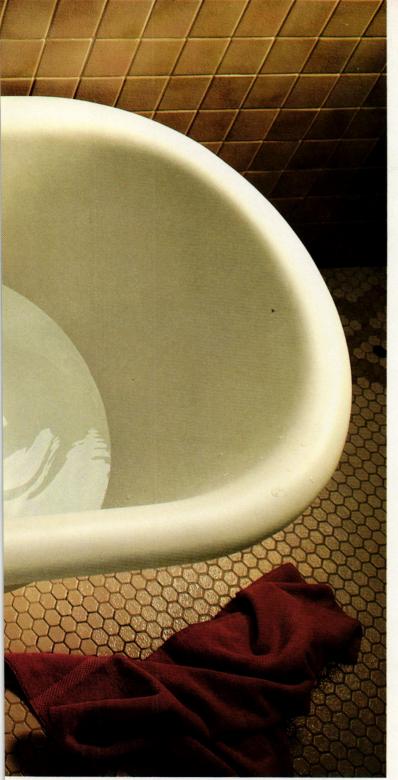
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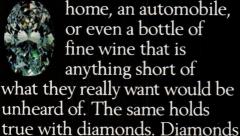


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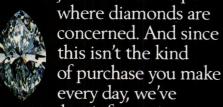
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ALL THE BEST PLACES

It is remarkable that this haven has survived the interest of developers for so long

(Continued from page 234) half goat, half fish, sculptures in poor repair, plaster falling away from the armature. They set the right tone for the street they guard, however, for Riverview Terrace is not so manicured as its neighbor, and, like its guardian figures, it has never fit neatly into any category, average houses in upper-crust territory, simple living on the city's most spectacular site. The buildings are, as one local has noted, "architecturally undistinguished," a reflection of their origin 106 years ago as houses built for middle-income New Yorkers. Today, however, Riverview Terrace is a rare vestige of single-family dwellings in an area zoned for high density. It is a magnet for developers, and prices reflect the high stakes at play here. At the moment, for example, one house on Riverview Terrace is for sale, furnished, at \$3.3 million. Four years ago the house changed hands for over \$1 million. Even with the extensive renovation of the property in 1982, that kind of jump in value is a direct reflection of the financial pressure being brought to bear on this homey sub-enclave.

The dollars involved in these transactions would certainly have startled Andrew J. Kerwin, the builder and real-estate operator who started construction in 1878 on a group of houses in this part of Manhattan, among them the Riverview Terrace row. For a time, he lived in the first of the brownstones; eventually, all were sold to solid, professional folk. Lawyers, decorators, and architects made up the first few generations of Riverview Terrace owners, in contrast to the rest of Sutton Place, in those years populated by civil servants, lower-level white-collar workers, and local business owners. most of whom rented. The New York Times Magazine description of the community in 1921 was true for the latter part of the nineteenth century as well. According to the Times, it was one of a "few little settlements ... settled in the seventies by 'nice people' in modest circumstances, who were erratic enough to prefer a view of the river to a convenient horse car "

Through its first four decades, Riverview Terrace remained largely unchanged despite the turmoil New York City experienced from the massive influx of European immigrants. While Sutton Place went into a decline brought about by a high turnover among renters, Riverview Terrace enjoyed a more stable population. From 1885 through 1935, for example, row house Number 4 was occupied by the family of John Hyslop, a furnace manufacturer and yachtsman whose obituary pronounced him "the official measurer for the New York Yacht Club." Because of its privacy, its extraordinary vista, and a history of owner-occupants, the little group of six houses was untouched by the changing character of the adjacent streets. This was to hold true even when Sutton Place underwent a dramatic transformation.

In 1920, a syndicate headed by developer Eliot Cross, having observed the desirability of the views and the absence of traffic and crowds, bought up the group of neglected town houses that now forms the Sutton Square complex. Cross does not appear to have pursued the Riverview Terrace property because it would probably have been difficult to buy all six houses. On Sutton Square, however, the landlords must have been delighted at the opportunity to turn a profit on their dilapidated units. So, after purchasing the buildings and evicting the renters, Cross designed the Sutton Square complex, removing stoops from the façades, planting the common garden, and establishing a covenant that committed the owners to proper maintenance standards and to the use of the houses only as single-family resi-

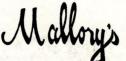
Among the first people to whom Cross sold (whether by luck or calculation is unknown) was the celebrated decorator Elsie de Wolfe. In 1921, she renovated Number 13 Sutton Place and took up residence there with her companion Elisabeth Marbury, the theatrical agent. Together they established a salon that attracted some of the stars of New (Continued on page 240)

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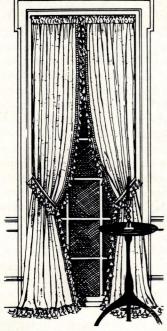
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BEST PLACES

(Continued from page 239) York society. And in short order, the Times was making note of a "curious migration" with headlines that announced Mrs. W.K. Vanderbilt and Miss Anne Morgan had both bought homes on "Sutton Place, a little known two-block thoroughfare...." The houses were sold for the considerable sums of \$50,000 (Vanderbilt) and \$75,000 (Morgan), and then the women spent several hundred thousand more on Elsie de Wolfe's renovations. Such doings transformed the area, which quickly became a magnet for the rich in quest of chic. It was a turning point in the city's housing history. For the first time, wealthy people were fixing up old houses rather than constructing new ones. By 1925, a thirteen-story coop building was begun, and in the next few years \$13 million was spent on fashionable apartment construction in a one-block radius.

Tiny Riverview Terrace remained impervious to the sudden success of the adjoining community. As the October 16, 1927, New York Times Magazine noted, "Certain families have been there for forty years and more. They turned their back on Sutton Place when it was dirty and disheveled and neglected, and they see no reason for changing their behavior now that it has

grown fashionable."

But eventually, with the rise of realestate values, Riverview Terrace did experience some changes. Number 5 has been altered by the addition of two balconies and another floor, breaking the serial effect created by its three-story neighbors. Number 6 has been most radically transformed. Its façade has been redone in concrete, albeit of the same soft brown color as the adjoining brownstones, and its complete absence of architectural detail, with most of the second-level wall surrendered to a large expanse of glass, suggests an attempt to assume the "style moderne." By comparison, the changes to Number 1 (since renumbered 7 Sutton Square) now with a neo-Federal facade, seem comparatively minor. But Numbers 2, 3, and 4 are fairly well intact, except for an air conditioner cut into a wall here or a torn old screen door there. The fine cornice work that crowns these three houses still testifies to the care of its builder, and the ivy climbing along the stones is enchantingly incongruous when viewed against the big-city backdrop.

It is remarkable that this haven has managed to survive the interest of planners and developers for so long. Right now a debate is under way about how best to protect Riverview Terrace. A year and a half ago, an organization called Sutton Area Community Inc. applied to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission for historic-district status. Hearings have vet to be held on this request, but already battle lines are forming about the best way to address the situation, since the Terrace's owners do not sanction this approach. "No, we do not want landmarking because it's too limited," one resident insists. "The Landmark Commission can tell you what you can or cannot do with your house. And landmarking also limits financial value. I may not want to sell, but I don't want the Landmark Commission owning my house either.'

The sale of these town houses to an assemblage broker or developer is still an implicit sacrilege among owners, but Riverview Terrace has already experienced some discomforting changes as a consequence of the price escalations. Turnover, for example, has increased considerably as the profit potential gets bigger. Once the neighborhood's pocket of stability, Riverview Terrace is now a street in transition.

Nonetheless, as the value of these properties grows to previously unimagined levels, the temptation to sell becomes greater. One owner explains

that "a lot of the families that live here have children, and if the houses are not landmarked that means they are increasingly more desirable to someone who wants to turn them into a highrise. It's terrible in a way, but if you want to leave your children and grandchildren a little something.... This is a one-of-a-kind place, and it may be selfish to look at it this way, but...."

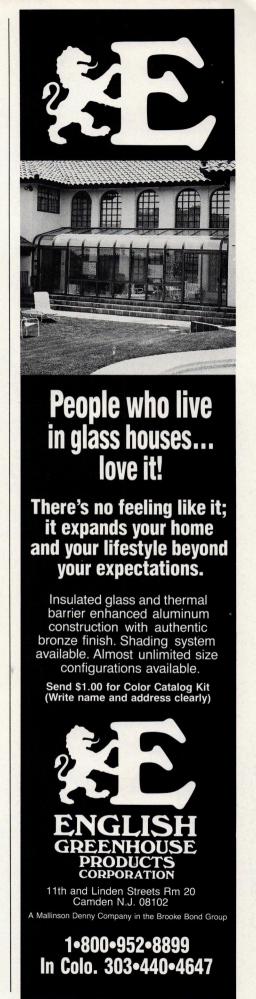
On a cold, clear winter morning, one of Riverview Terrace's distinguished neighbors, the architect I.M. Pei, crossed the street from his home to reflect upon the urban anomaly of Riverview Terrace. "This tiny little bit of a block is badly in need of protection," Pei said, his voice tender, as though he were talking about six baby chicks. "If one goes, all of it goes. Only a year or so ago, a broker was offering \$2 million to individual owners contingent on their neighbors selling, and I hear the prices have gone up since then! Those of us at Sutton Square don't have to worry because of the covenant we all signed; but there is nothing like that for Riverview Terrace." With this, Pei stopped, his eyes scanning the simple structures before him. Though his own design projects are on a grander scale, Pei does understand Riverview Terrace's special character. "You know, it has nothing to do with the intrinsic value of the houses as buildings. In those days, it was the style of life, not the architecture, that was so special—not so busy, with gardens and light and air and privacy. That's what attracts us today and that's what we must take care not to lose."□

NEW YORK DIG

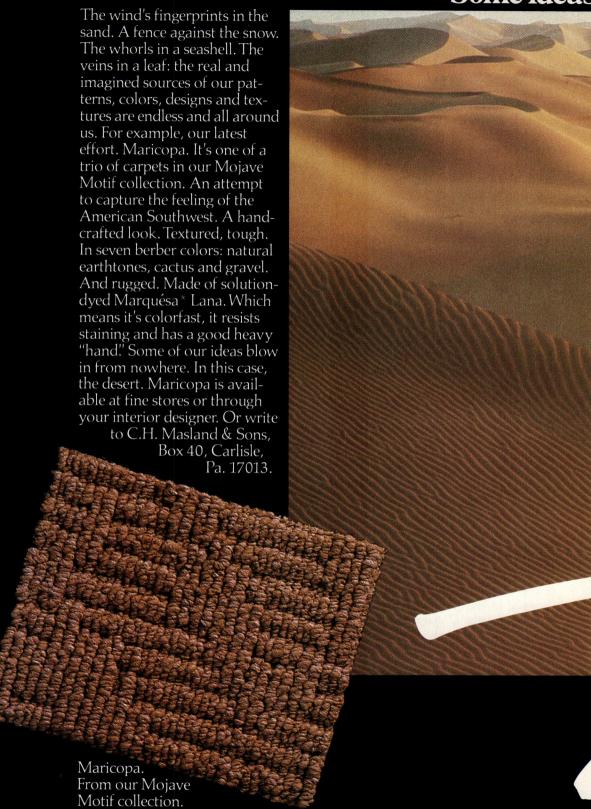
(Continued from page 180) and river traffic. Two additional murals, which were also freely adopted from Pompeian originals, are set into rounded, bricked-up arches, and the theme continues on the painted plywood floor, an expanse of abstracted panels of inlaid marble (complete with the *impluvium* that collected rain water through the roof opening in a Roman villa) cribbed from Pompeii's House of the Menander.

To Gillette, Pompeii forms the bed-

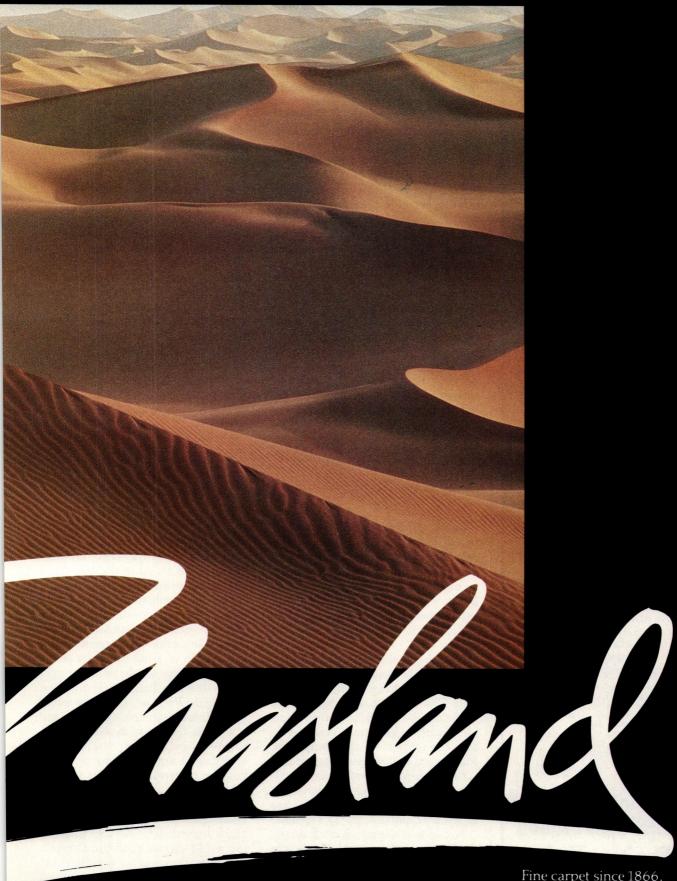
rock of a conceptual dig; from that historical point he moves up in time through medieval France and Renaissance Italy all the way through such recent epochs as Art Deco New York and fifties American suburb. These strata refer not only to a succession of periods in the decorative arts but also to the enthusiasms Gillette has passed through since he abandoned easel painting for decorative design. The civilization displayed here is Gillette's own urbane (Continued on page 244)



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NEW YORK DIG

(Continued from page 241) sensibility, which forges striking visual connections across time and place. Thus, his ancient Roman amphora is occasionally grouped with a set of fifties ceramic lamp bases from a nearby discount store. A French Empire candlestick illuminates a volume of thirties German photographs on top of a caststone garden table from the turn of the century.

In a corner of the loft, a shifting stack of recently commissioned flats for catalogues, record covers, and fashion spreads hint at newer interests, such as Bauhaus painter Oskar Schlemmer and Mexican Modernist Luis Barragán (in whose manner Gillette executed a "house" for a recent Bergdorf Goodman catalogue).

Gillette also likes to make individual objects play with the themes of composite and overlay. A French chrome torchère, treated by Gillette-colored acrylics to resemble long-buried bronze, could be an upended horn for announcing imperial arrivals at ancient

Roman games. By Gillette's bed are two lamps fashioned in the twenties from a pair of nineteenth-century marble candlesticks; between the lamps hangs a turn-of-the-century American copy of an Italian Renaissance miniature. By the window is an Italian caststone sculpture of a disturbingly hybrid iconography: is it a Madonna and Child or Leda and the Swan?

The spell of Gillette's unique interior civilization is so strong that even the views from his window seem to enter into the theme. Across the street, a stillfunctioning warehouse recalls the Washington Market that once supplied the entire city with produce (Gillette's building provided storage for butter cookies). A cruise ship gliding down the Hudson at sunset is a hallucinatory flashback to the era of transatlantic liners. And to the far left, the steel frames of the rising Battery Park City complex, their construction lights twinkling in the dusk, reenact New York's most ancient pageant as a city that thrives on change.

WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

(Continued from page 132) to think that in 1930 an Egyptian couple had thought to ask an avant-garde architect to build their house rather than to buy an eighteenth-century château! The family was cultured and refined, and entertained a lot. So the first floor was dedicated to receiving friends and guests."

The garden, also designed by Perret, has a Mediterranean flavor with its magnolias and pines and trees in espaliers. Two square basins provide the freshness and joyful murmur of running water, and stepping terraces prolong the terraces of the house—the roof terrace and the first-floor terrace.

"It has belonged to only two owners: the Egyptian family and ourselves. The same spirit inhabits it. The bey was an inventor, and so am I," says Quasar.

Not only is the house itself magic, the Khanhs explain, but the way it was found is magic as well. They had a dream house in Montparnasse, and had no reason to move except that Quasar wanted to see the changing seasons and reveal the stars to their children Othello and Atlantique. In Paris, they missed nature. One day they chanced on an ad in the papers: a strange house for sale.

"On the telephone, I asked for three things: first, space—there was more than we could use; second, an exposure to the south—it's on a north-south axis on top of a hill called les quatre vents or the four winds; third, the right price—it was a bargain! The highest point in the Paris area cannot be found twice. So we went there right away, and it was like the house in Sunset Boulevard-an enormous, dilapidated, abandoned house. It may not have been for everyone, but it was for us!" said Quasar.

Though he had always dreamed of building his own house, he signed the check immediately. All the money in the world cannot reproduce certain things like the immense wooden doors that cannot be found anymore. When they realized, bewildered, that it was January 19, 1975, and that the address of the house was 75 rue du 19 janvier, they knew for sure it was destiny at work.

"I feel so good at home," says Quasar. "I never leave it. I work here. It is a family house for all of us." Emmanuelle can design or read as she wishes. No need to escape weekends, since it already has a country flavor. Emmanuelle has planted flowers for her bou-

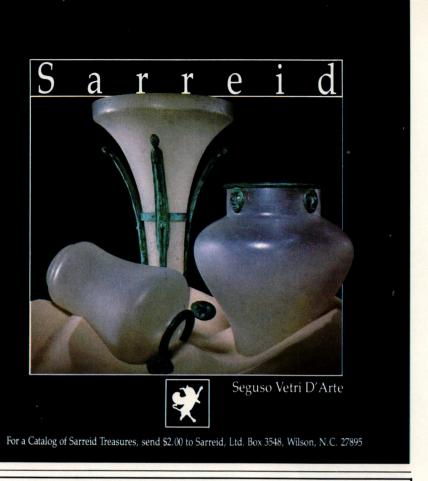
"I feel we are the natural heirs of this house. It was destiny in the best sense of the word. We made it alive again. We just changed the colors and restored it"

quets and she enjoys driving through the Bois de Boulogne to her new offices on the Avenue Victor Hugo.

"I have adapted to the house," she says. "The northern façade reminds me of a city hall, whereas the southern façade is more charming. We've planted a screen of shrubs to isolate us from the street. The exteriors are harsh and rigorous, but there is great harmony inside. We never bought expensive furniture," she adds. "I haven't tried to re-create a 1930 ambience but put in objects which didn't disturb the house and which seemed to always have been there."

Children and friends come and go. Coffee is always ready, and always Vietnamese food. When the weather permits, lunch is outdoors. In the winter months, dinner is in the old-fashioned kitchen. When they entertain, it is in the dining room filled with pink flamingos found and collected by Emmanuelle in California, and when there are more than fifty guests, candlelit tables are placed on the terrace.

One enters the house by the northern façade through an entrance designed for the bey and his numerous cars. The Khanhs transformed the rather sad courtyard into a shady garden. The ground floor was a series of seven or (Continued on page 250)



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JOURNAL

ROAMS & LANDLORDS

THE ETERNAL EDGAR

Degas. The Art Institute of Chicago. Through Sept. 23.

The 150th birthday of Edgar Degas (1834–1917) is the occasion for at least three major exhibits this year: in addition to this one in Chicago, Boston's



Museum of Fine Arts will show "Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker" from Nov. 14 to Jan. 13, 1985; and from Nov. 22 to Mar. 10, 1985, one can see "Degas: The Dancers" at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The Chicago show is the only one, however, that covers the full range of Degas's output, from paintings to pastels to sculpture, and from horse races to washerwomen to portraits (above, a detail from Uncle and Niece 1875-78). Ann Priester







THE SOUND OF ONE HAND LAUGHING

No more a mere cartoonist than Herman Melville was a writer of shipping notices, Roz Chast is the missing conscience of The Me Generation. The latest collection of her work, *Parallel Universes* (Harper & Row, \$7.95), shows the gadfly of gentrification at

her most incisive. She confronts the 3 P.M. of the soul ("Pick up dry cleaning... Defrost lamb chops...Call Marge"), asks probing questions ("Computer programmer or data stylist?"), celebrates the latest in accessories (The Tabletop Family—"They're smart and nice and very cute/Much better than a bowl of fruit"), and offers Zen for the eighties, above. Martin Filler

ARCH PRESERVER

Once they were ubiquitous: over ten billion burgers sold and over a thousand McDonald's stands built to the famous golden arches design between 1953 and 1968. But then Good Taste began to prevail, and the classic red-and-white striped tile models were replaced by mansarded banalities. Now fewer than twenty of the originals survive nationwide, and California architect Alan Hess has





LAN HESS

begun a crusade to preserve these key artifacts of roadside Americana for future generations.

As part of his effort, he has nominated the oldest one extant, *above* (Downey, Calif., 1953), to The National Register of Historic Places. But his enthusiasm for the building

type transcends brand loyalty, and he is also fighting to save Ship's, *detail left,* a 1958 drive-in beauty on L.A.'s Wilshire Boulevard, threatened with demolition to make way for yet another highrise on that increasingly claustrophobic corridor. Hess does it all for *you. M.F.*

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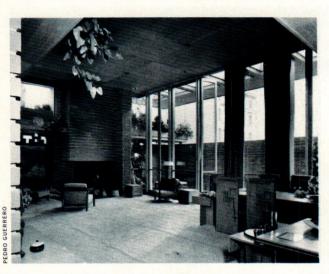
JOURNAL

RESURRECTING WRIGHT

The destruction of significant works of architecture is all too common these days, even if a building enjoys the aura of historic importance. So interest ran high when it was revealed that a house

by Frank Lloyd Wright—or rather the pieces of it—had been "rediscovered" in the basement of a former Wright apprentice near New York City, where they had languished for almost thirty years.

The structure, *below*, built in 1953 as part of an exhibition held on the site



of what is now the Guggenheim Museum in New York, was sold as part of a TV design auction to benefit New York's Channel 13. Few observers had expected the presale estimate of \$50,000 to be exceeded, considering that it will cost another \$250,000 to have the components reassembled, not including land. Thus the final sale price of \$117,500 puts this surprise survivor into the realm of a world's record, especially since Wright houses in the Midwest still go for a great deal less than that total. But this house has one thing that they do not: portability. And that will come in handy for its new owner, Michigan businessman Tom Monaghan, who plans to reerect it as a museum in his hometown of Ann Arbor, M.F.



PLASTIC IN ITS PRIME

Spurned not long ago as archetypically tacky, plastic now enjoys a new vogue among collectors who recognize that much of it (like the thirties toucan tape dispenser, *above*) is of superior design. This and 249 other choice specimens are in *Art Plastic: Designed for Living* by Andrea DiNoto (Abbeville, \$45).

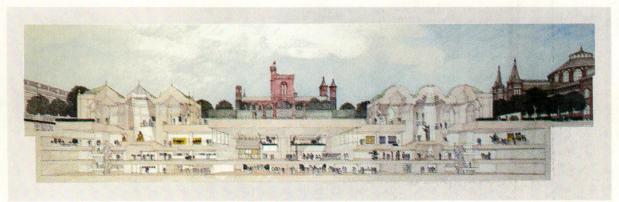
THE SMITHSONIAN GOES UNDERGROUND

America's museum boom might have nowhere to go but up; on the Mall in Washington, D.C., however, it was wisely decided that there was nowhere to go but down. The Smithsonian Institution's new Center for African, Near Eastern and Asian Cultures was skillfully designed by the Boston architectural firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott (under Jean Paul Carlhian's direction) to be as unobtrusive as possible on its sensitive site, and thus is 96 percent underground. (One wishes the same could be said for the nearby Hirshhorn Museum.) Among the parts of the new scheme that do



Above: Entry pavilion. Below: Underground section.

show are two clusters of nicely proportioned pavilions that mark the entry points but remain deferential to the beloved red-brick "Castle" nearby. Neither slavishly revivalist nor caught in the clichés of Post-Modernism, they meld discreetly with a well-landscaped park that quietly complements the majestic Mall. *M.F.*



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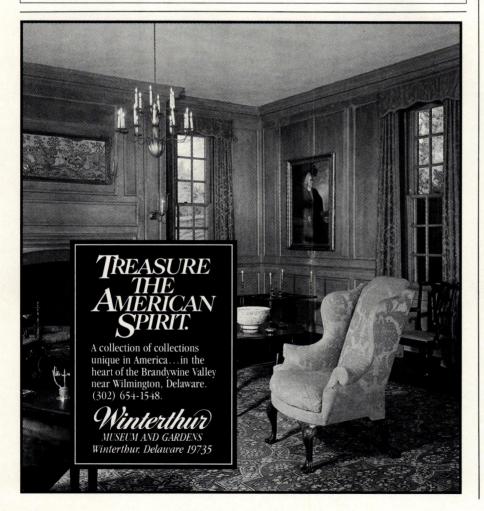
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WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

(Continued from page 245) eight servants' rooms with a washing room and a drying room. All that became one large space: the summer room which serves as Quasar's studio, where he designs and builds airplane models. The first floor with its six-meter-high ceilings, is entirely dedicated to receiving friends. The second floor holds the family quarters.

Ouasar met Emmanuelle when she was modeling for Balenciaga. He was an engineer, and painted as a hobby. His uncle was a tailor who taught him to cut and sew his first shirt at fourteen. One day, when lunching at a university restaurant, Quasar saw Emmanuelle's Balenciaga suit just wasn't right for such an environment. So together they drew and drew, and created a different look. Quasar would design; Emmanuelle would wear and sell the clothes. That is how the first Emmanuelle Khanh collection was born in 1958. It became a big success. When Emmanuelle managed the business on her own, Quasar went into other areas. From clothing he moved to furniture, which is the clothing of a house, while the house, he says, is the clothing of

"In the sixties, plastic was inexpensive," Quasar recalls. "From clothing I switched to ephemeral furniture. The pieces were inflatable, you sat on them, and when you were tired of them, you threw them away. Paper clothes were also designed at that time. Then came the energy crisis. Today, we have other ideas . . . we're not so expansive.

"I built cubic glass cars. They were the houses you transported with you. What amuses me the most is exploring, pushing the limits. We must be pioneers, and the thought behind the car was to create the most livable urban vehicle. The cube takes the smallest space.

"The airplane is my latest technical challenge. One is confronted with God and with nature. It is mysterious and marvelous at the same time. To build a new plane, lighter than the others, bring new solutions, to design planes for the twenty-first century. I couldn't resist it.

"The house is one huge workshop. In it, I find tranquility, concentration, and space. It is the spiritual center of my family. And from here, you can look out to the horizon."

WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

(Continued from page 128) Williams, the head horticulturist, who was also in charge of the government nursery on Dangerfield Island in the Potomac, where the choice of plant material was the largest and the quality the highest. Talking with Mr. Williams, I felt almost immediately that he was the right man to direct and oversee the new garden at the White House, as well as to make other improvements in the

White House grounds.

I spoke to Mrs. Kennedy about this, with the hope that if he were willing, Mr. Williams could be transferred by the Park Service to become head gardener at the White House. This strategy worked out well for everyone, and Mr. Williams soon took up his duties there, becoming involved with all the details of building a new garden. Much of the beauty of the White House landscape today is to his credit, as is the quality of the Rose Garden and the corresponding Jacqueline Kennedy Garden on the east side of the house. He has remained ever since as the guiding spirit of the work begun in 1962.

J.B. West helped complete our management team at the White House. He was chief executive officer in charge of White House operations and had been there since the thirties. He knew the schedule and activities of the President and his family and how we could adjust our building program to minimize

their inconvenience.

Both Mr. Williams and Mr. West lent their intelligence—not to mention their charm—to the project; their spirits are woven into the planting of the Rose Garden. The mention of their names recalls the ups and downs we experienced. One day while we were removing the old soil and replacing it with new, we cut into a mysterious cable buried in a corner of the garden. It turned out to be the hot line that set off the nation's military alert.

The scene was suddenly alive with security guards, to the alarm of everyone. We learned that the cable had been hastily installed during World War II by the Navy. Records of its location were inaccurate, hence our innocent intrusion. This startling experience was handled with calmness; not even the President reprimanded us for the deep digging. However, months later he asked me if I had found any other interesting objects in my gardening pursuits!

We continued to dig. The garden area was filled with rubble and relics and yielded many curiosities, such as Civil War horseshoes and bits of pots from the old greenhouses. We dug out the whole area to a depth of four feet and filled it with fertile soil. With new soil in place and Mr. Williams at work, my thoughts turned to finding available plant material. The magnolias I imagined planting there would be hard to find.

There were, however, seemingly forgotten groves of interesting trees in the vast public land of the federal city, where old plant material had been allowed to grow in a state of apparent abandon. Near the Tidal Basin and behind the rambling wartime Navy buildings (since torn down), I finally found the four magnolias. Forgotten for many years, these trees had survived both men and war. They were balled and burlapped and moved by a crane from obscurity to the White House. where they took root in President Kennedy's Rose Garden.

Their presence changed the entire character of this empty space. Their natural untended growth filled the four bare corners. The tree whose trunk reached higher than the others was planted in the northeast corner by the White House. Crowded by other trees in its previous planting ground, this magnolia had reached toward the light; it had gained a height not often found in Magnolia Soulangiana, which tend to spread after a certain period of upward growth.

When the planting was completed, the trees were pruned to give them strength and to create the shape each corner demanded. The special pruning was done by Everett Hicks, an exceptional man in his field. He had been trained by, and spent most of his life with, the Davey Tree Company. He combined a knowledge of pruning large trees with the eye and talent of a sculptor. These magnolias, my original inspiration, were not disappointing when they were in place. They gave life to what had been a cold, bleak space.

There is often unspoken encouragement when trees or shrubs are planted and you review the original plan to see how the reality of three dimensions measures up. Now in the Rose Garden shadows (Continued on page 252)



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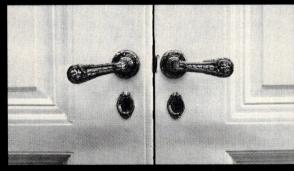
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-F O R -PRESERVATION

WHITE HOUSE **ROSE GARDEN**

(Continued from page 251) gave a quality of aliveness that could be repeated by the smaller trees I hoped to plant in the two flanking twelve-foot borders. The length of the borders would allow for five trees on each side. The force of the summer sun that bakes the city of Washington would be broken by the height and width of these trees.

The trees we chose were Katherine crab apples. Crab apples belong to the rose family and would blend well with the roses, perennials, annuals, and herbs that would grow beneath and around them. Aware that the garden would be used almost every day of the vear and that the President had high hopes for it, I decided to divide the long beds into sections. The design, with a crab apple as the center of each section, would repeat itself and run like a ribbon the length of both beds.

A large diamond-shaped outline of santolina would surround each crabapple tree. Each diamond would be set in a larger outline: a small clipped English boxwood hedge and, next to the lawn, a low growing hybrid boxwood called Greenpillow, developed by Henry Hohman in Kingsville, Maryland.

The divisions gave the garden its own pattern, not unlike an early American garden in Southern Virginia, in which the earth could be left bare if need be and the garden would still have form. The well-outlined areas could be bedded out as the seasons demanded; but the roses could remain, planted in the corners and edges as a strong accent woven into the tapestry of flowers that would change with the seasons.

In spring there would be flowering bulbs, such as tulips, with a border of lapis blue Muscari. In summer the border would be changed to plants of dark lavender heliotrope, while larger sections would have pale pink geraniums, lilies, white dianthus, blue salvia, lady's mantle, cosmos, and lemon verbena, to mention a few. In fall the plants could be lifted again to allow for planting of chrysanthemums, Anemone japonica, and Michaelmas daisies. As winter approached, the garden would be put to bed, only the roses would remain, while the soil was being fertilized and turned over.

To facilitate this plan, a government greenhouse in Maryland was renovated to meet the changing needs of the Rose Garden. Perennials could be held over, annuals started, and lilies grown in pots so that they could be used year after year. In this way there was assurance that the garden would have the important plants that were required for each season.

At the east end opposite the President's office, the openness created by the tall trunks of the old magnolias had to be filled in to give privacy and to outline the paved terrace. This was done with hawthorns and mixed varieties of hollies. The East Palatka holly used here was repeated in the bed near the President's office.

The garden was begun in the spring of 1962 and finished at the end of the same year. It was truly President Kennedy's garden. His concern for the growth and well-being of this garden was never ending. Often in the late afternoon working there by myself, changing and pruning plants, I would notice that his door would be open. He would be working at his desk. I was

aware of and touched by the serious tranquility of this scene. As he left the office, he always stopped to say, "Hi," or "How is the garden doing?"

Twenty years have gone by. The Rose Garden has seen administrations come and go. It is now known the world over. It has fulfilled John F. Kennedy's vision of a garden that would endure and whose atmosphere, with the subtlety of its ever changing patterns, would suggest the ever changing pattern of history itself.

People seeing the Rose Garden over the past twenty years as the background for White House ceremonies may not have noticed that like all gardens a change was taking place as the plants matured.

When President and Mrs. Reagan moved into the White House it was with the same caring eye of President Kennedy that they asked me if it were possible for the garden to be restored using its original outline and trees; but allowing again for the planting of more roses and flowers.

Still under the loval and watchful eve of its first and only head gardener, Irvin Williams, the crab-apple trees have been extensively pruned, allowing more sunlight to fall on the plants growing beneath. The osmanthus holly hedges have been clipped back creating more light and air. New roses are being put in under the guidance of Holly Shimizu from the National Arboretum. There are fewer roses than in the beginning as the spaces of light and shadow have changed. (The overgrown border of green pillow boxwood has been updated by new dwarf English boxwood to allow the border flowers to be planted as the seasons change.)

The magnolias have reached a greater height, their strong gray branches filling the empty corners of long ago.

Gardens brought back have the advantage of subtlety that age gives to the trees and shrubs, adding importance to its plan and design. This is true of the Rose Garden today.

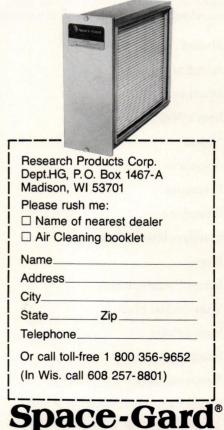
Editor: Babs Simpson



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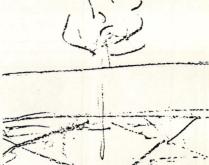
GARDEN PLEASURES

ROSE GARDEN SCRAPBOOK

Jacqueline Kennedy saved all of Rachel Lambert Mellon's sketches and plans for the White House Rose Garden and included them in a scrapbook that she gave the designer in 1966



he original spring planting list for the Rose Garden with Mrs. Mellon's com-



ments on the combining and placing of tulip colors is preserved in the scrapbook created for her by Jacqueline Kennedy, as are the two very early design proposals here. A 1961 drawing, above, on tracing paper shows the deep flower beds divided into diamond-shaped sections by low hedges of boxwood and santolina. The position of the crab-apple trees in the centers of the diamonds is indicated in the quick pencil sketch, right, made on a telephone pad. The color notations demonstrate the subtle harmonies of Mrs. Mellon's planting scheme.

Muscari Santolina Dianthus Lady's Mantle Nepeta Anemones **Echinopsis** Columbine

Saunders Hybrid Peony Roses Mixed Forget-me-nots

Viola (mixed blue) Viola (white)

Martagon Lilies Spring Crocuses (planted in sedum)

Primroses

Scillas (planted in sedum)

Hosta (existing)

Epimedium (existing)

Sedum Sieboldii (existing)

Achillea (existing)

Tulips (varieties below)

Queen of the Night Black Parrot Blue Parrot

Niphetos

Queen of Sheba Orange Favorite Bokhara Oriental Splendour

Glacier Sweet Harmony White Triumphator Zwanenburg

Queen of Bartigons Lily-flowering Mariette Parrot Fantasy

Eclipse Eclipse Special Florence Nightingale Purple

Yellow

Orange

White

Pink

Red

Yellow and orange mixed with some pinks now and then

Purples and blues not mixed but going into each other-with Phlox

divaricata

White tulips surrounded by gray plantssantolina, lavender, achillea

Used reds very sparingly Accent plants-see plan Keep away from Muscari blue borders



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