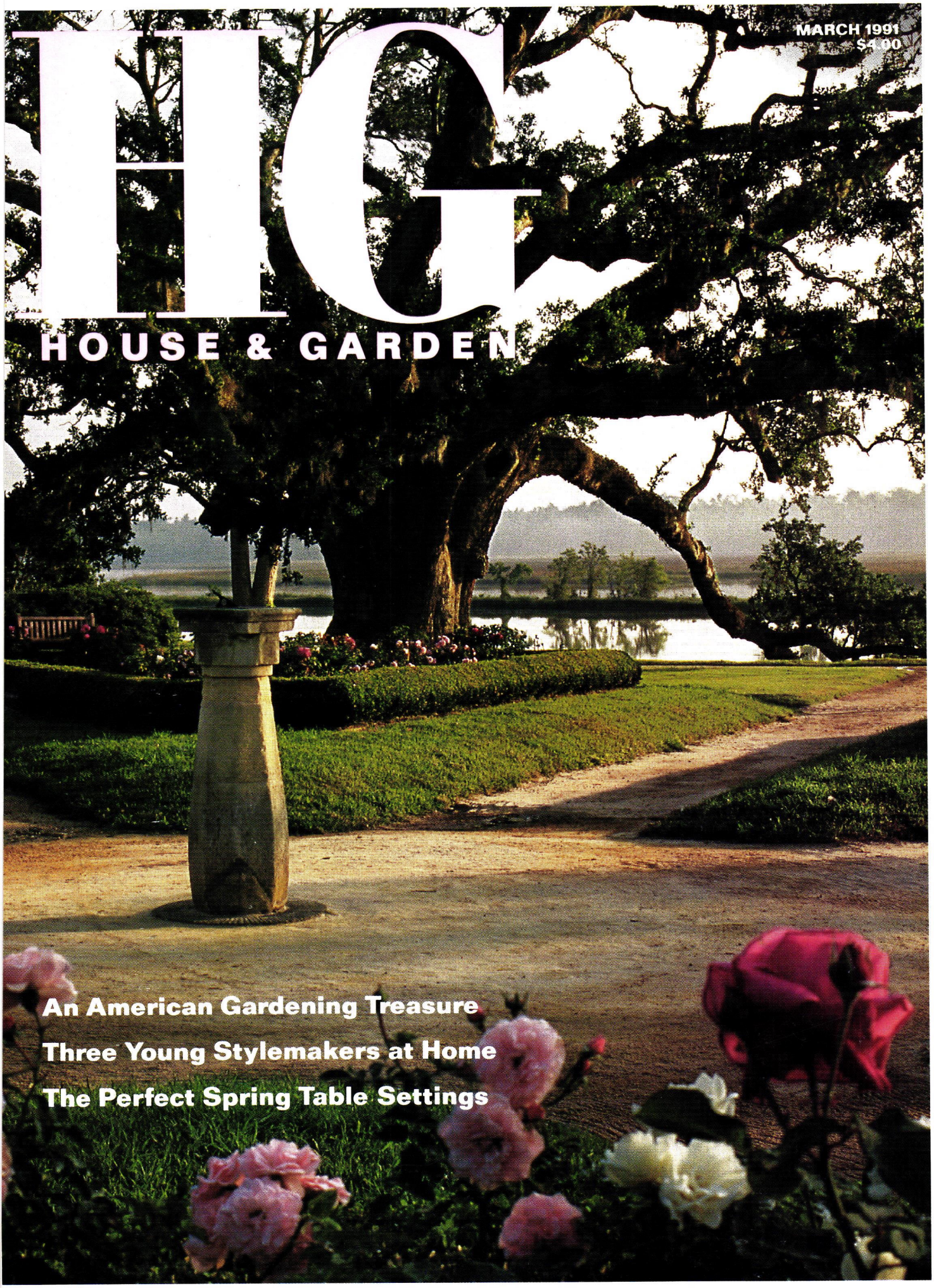

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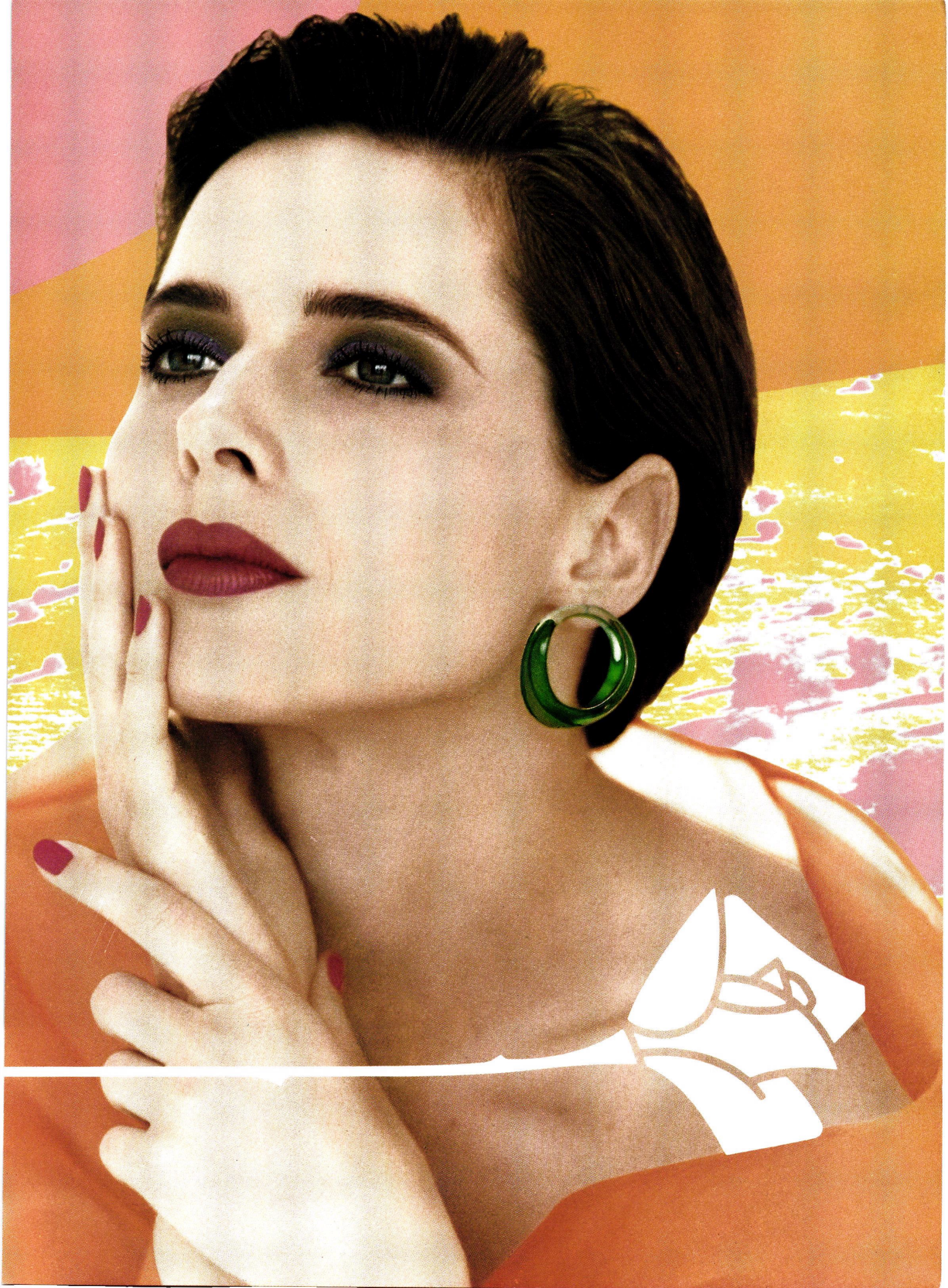

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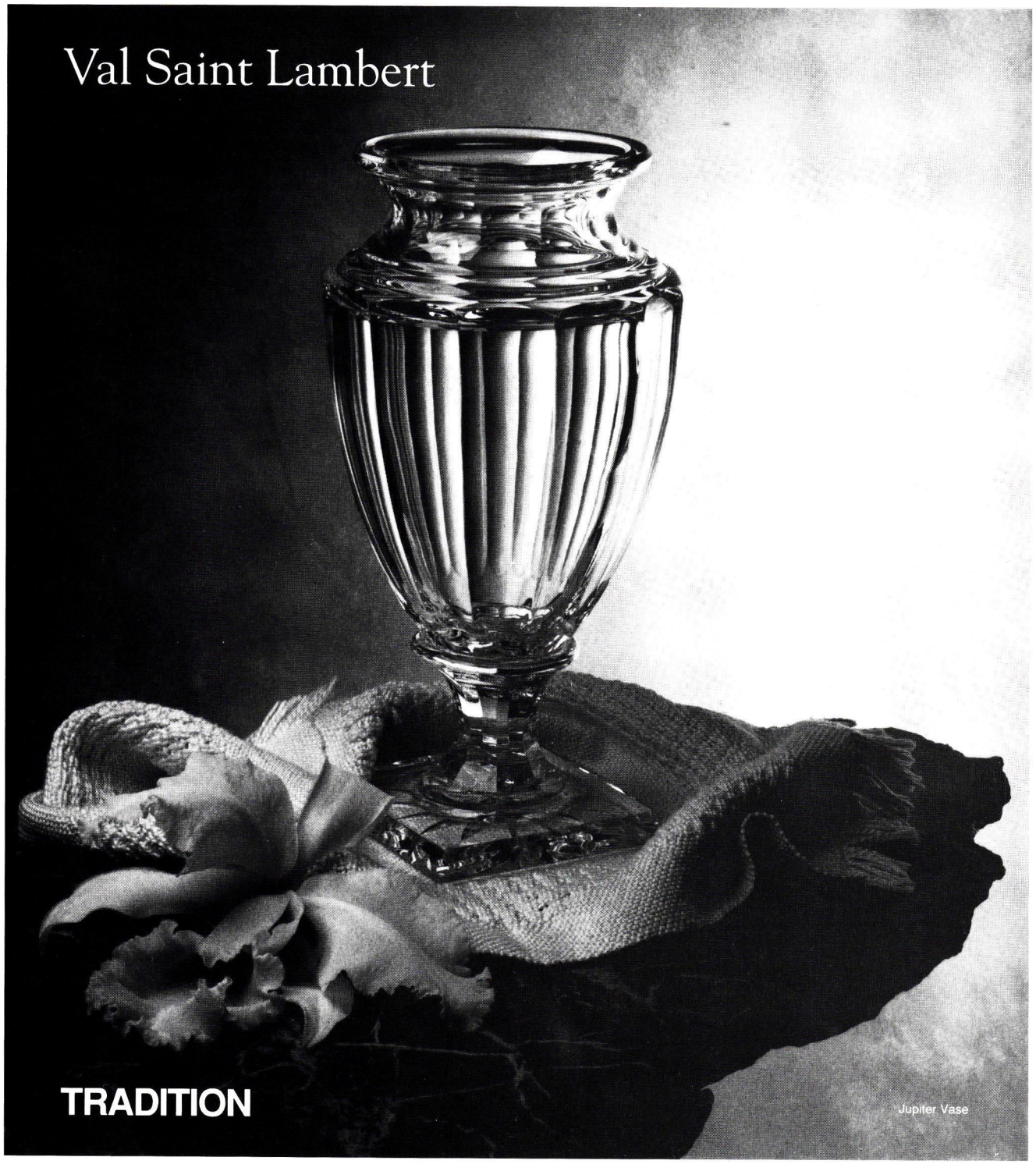

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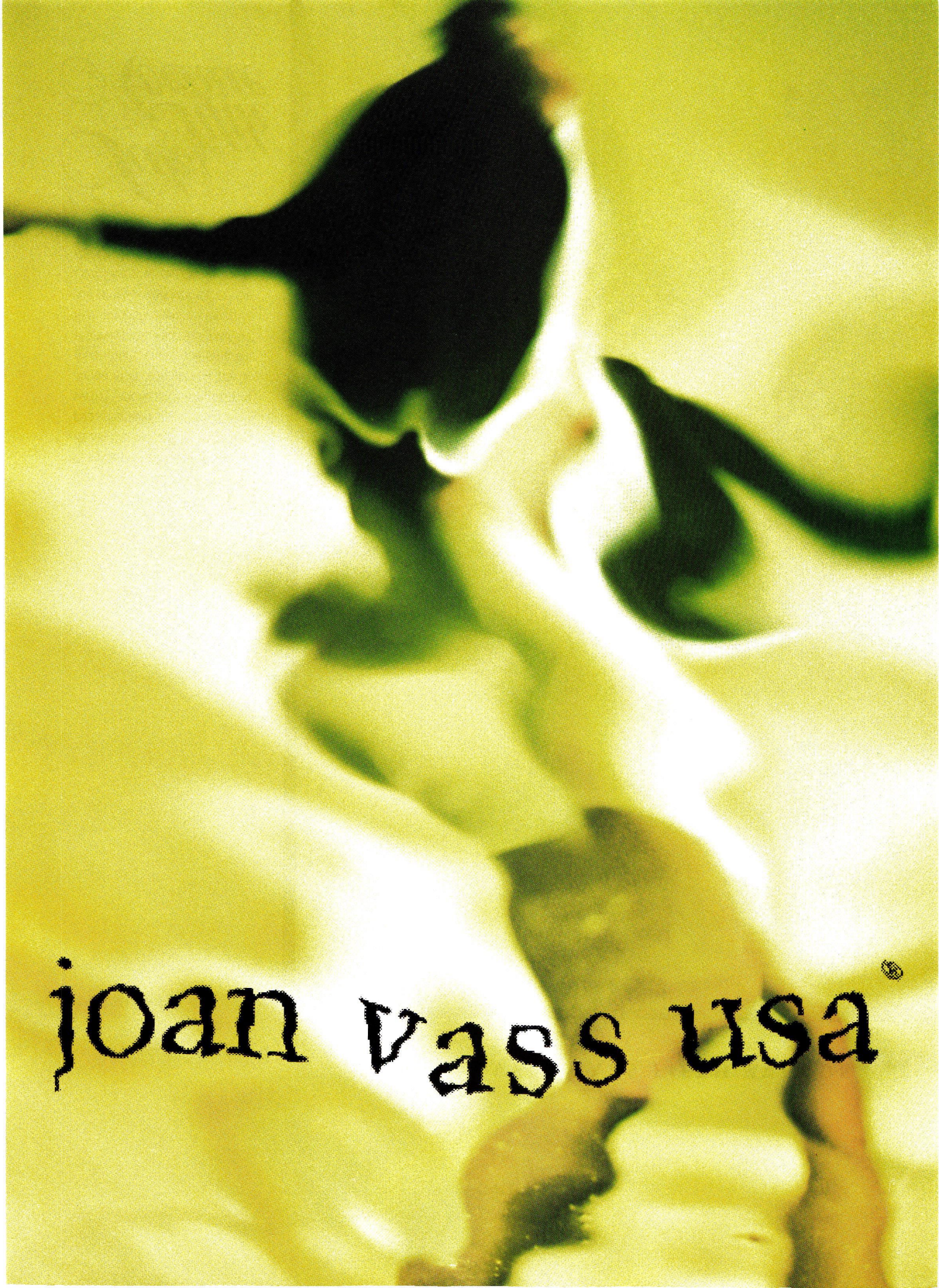
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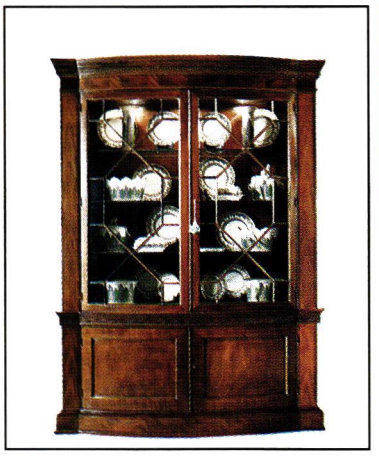

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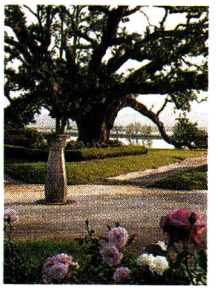
Children, above, play amid azaleas on a Main Line estate. Page 148. Below: Still life in fashion illustrator Bob Hiemstra's apartment. Page 160.

COVER *Middleton Place in Charleston, South Carolina, the oldest formal garden in America. Photograph by Langdon Clay. Page 96.*



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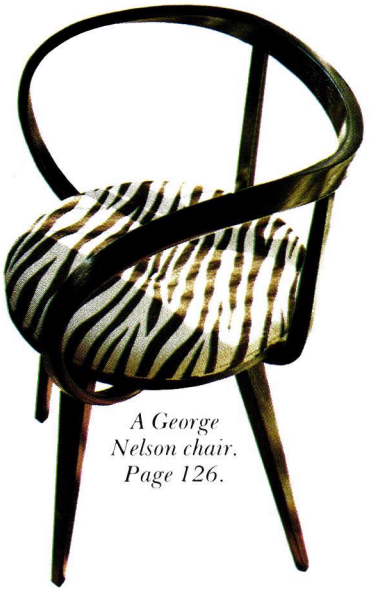
MARCH

Conical roof caps the porch of a Shelter Island cottage. Page 112.



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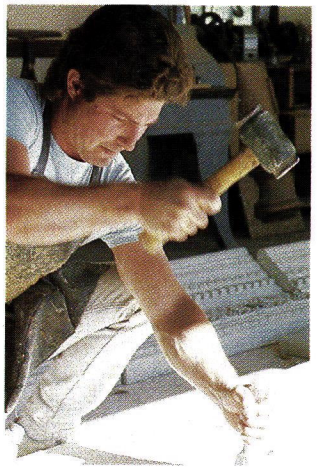
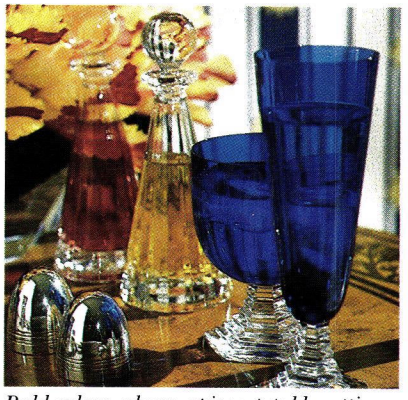
Straw hat for spring from Isabel Canovas. Page 92.





Bold colors, above, spice up table settings. Page 177. Left: Craftsman Robb Boucher at work on a stone casting. Page 60.

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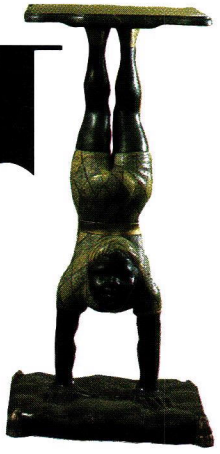

Venetian side table, right, from Peter Werner, West Palm Beach. Page 74. Left: Brooke Astor with Fafner at Portofino. Page 54.

MARCH

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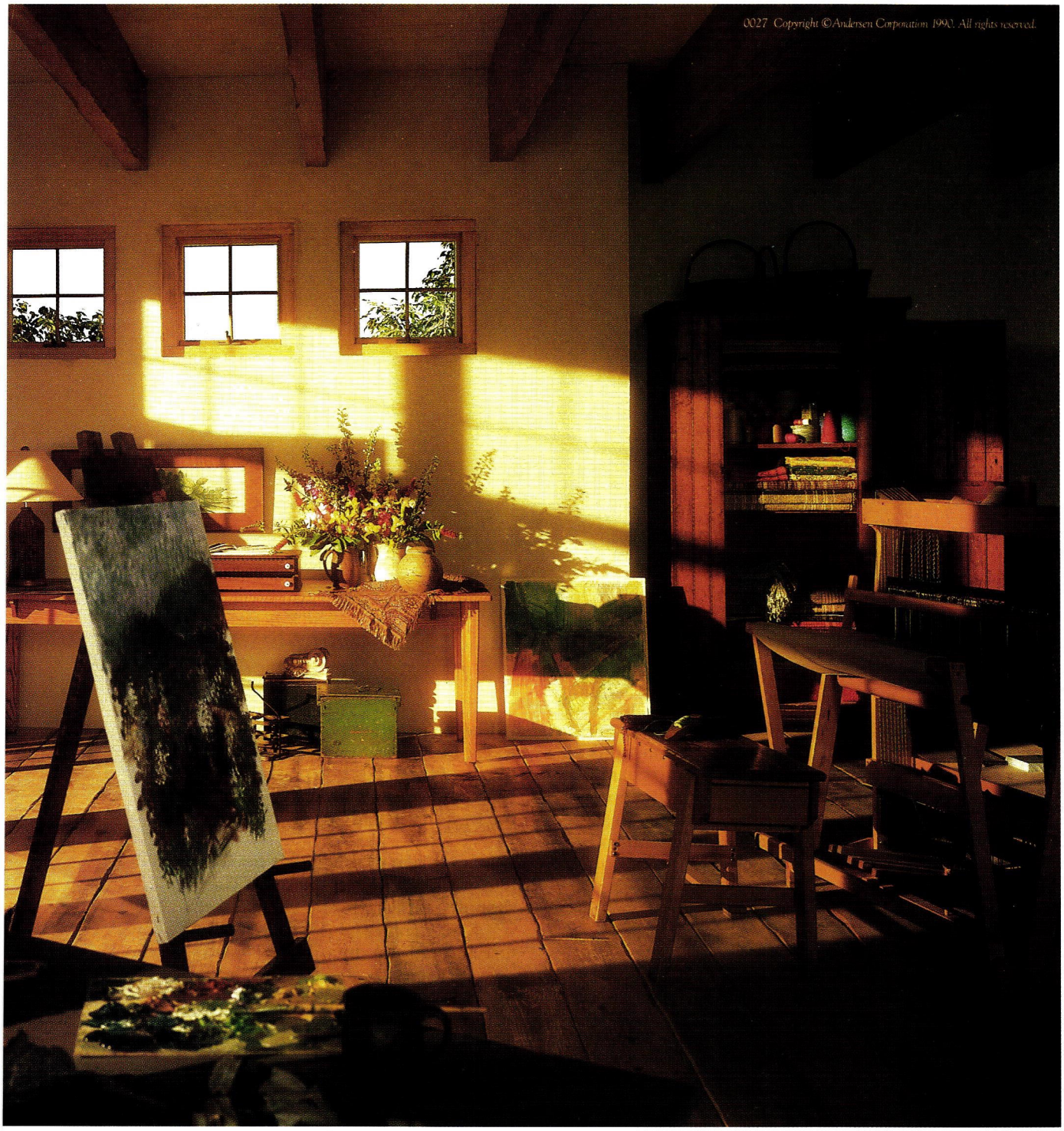

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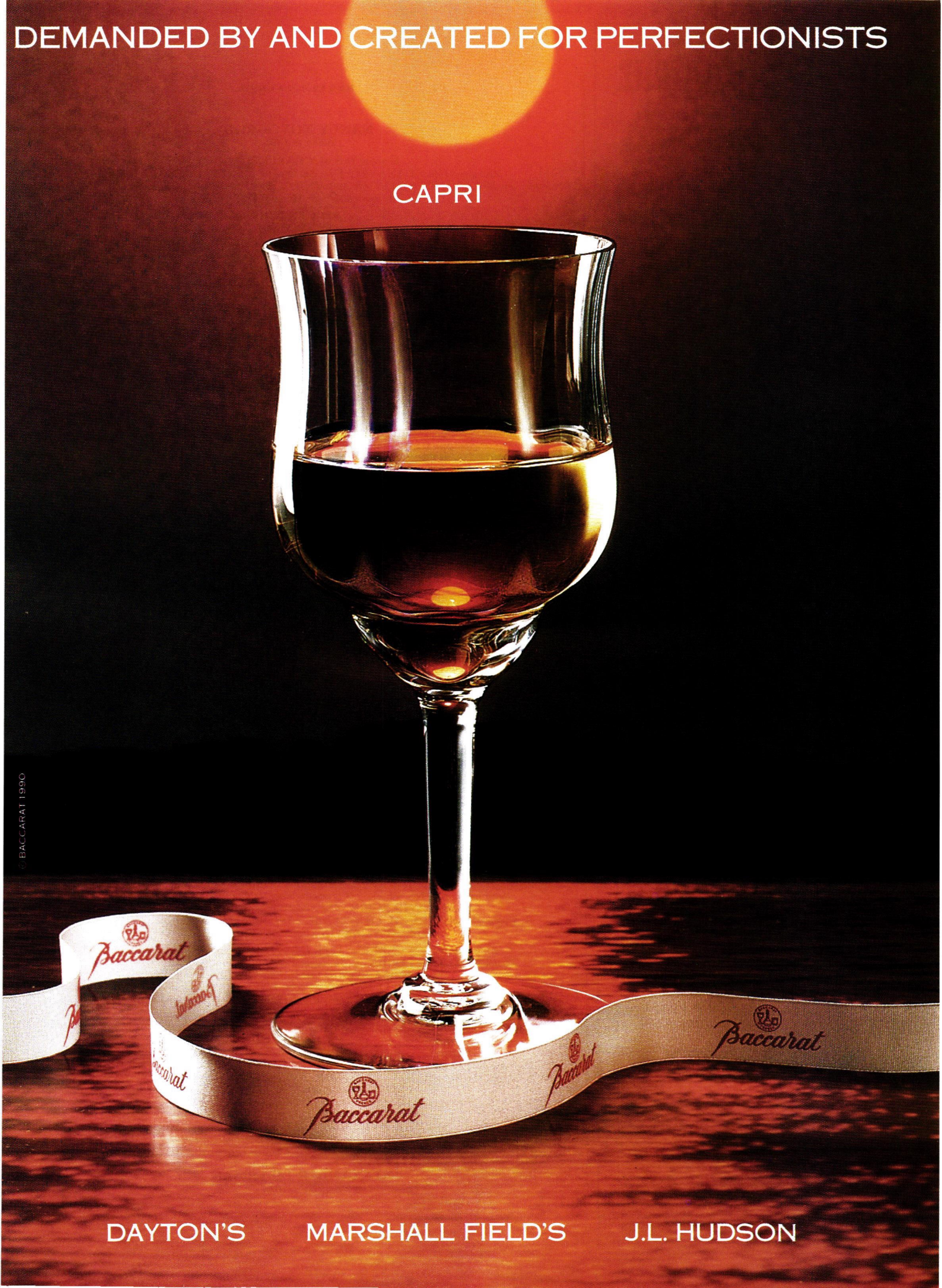
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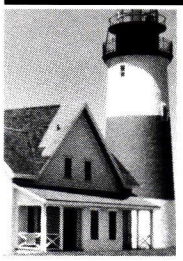

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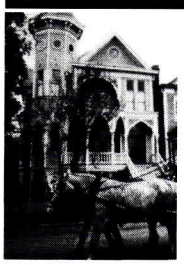

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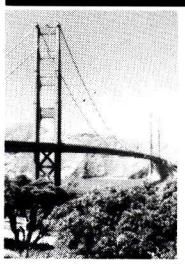

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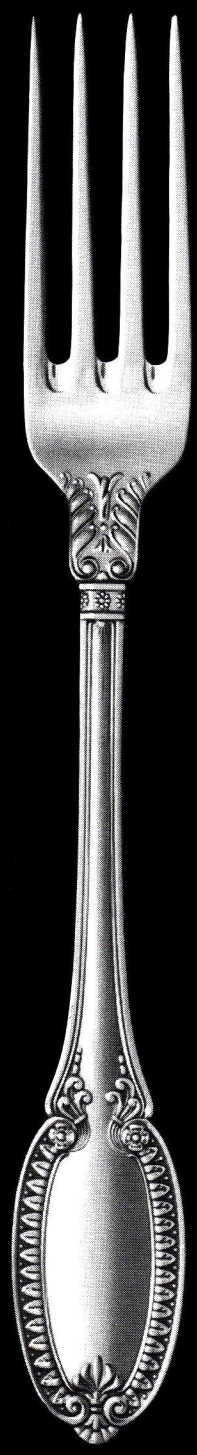

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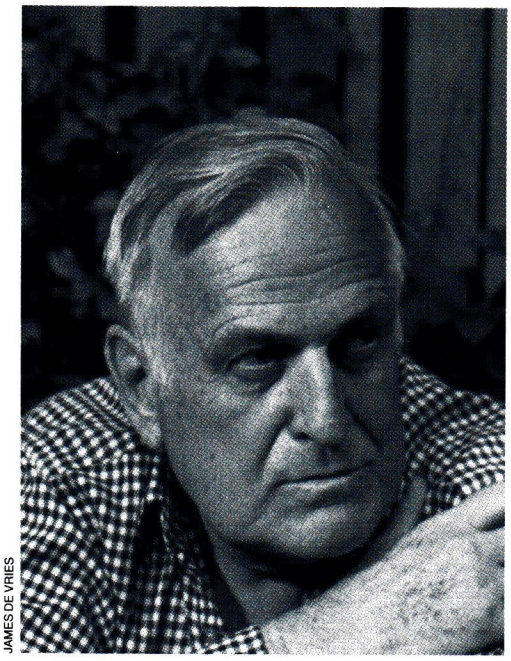
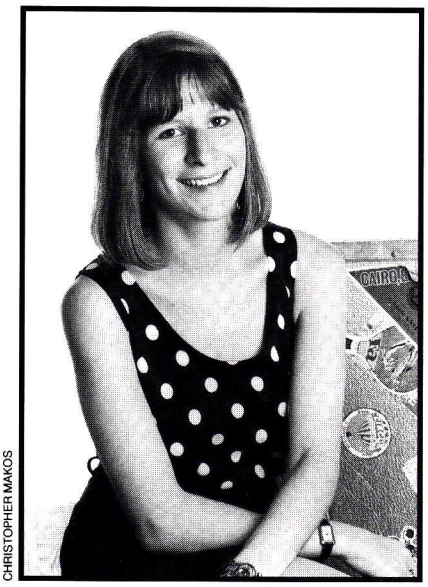


JAMES DE VRIES

John Richardson recently finished the first volume of a four-volume Picasso biography, part of which is excerpted in this month's "Art" column. An HG editor at large, Richardson is the first biographer to gain access to archives in the Musée Picasso in Paris. He also draws upon his personal recollections of the artist and his wife Jacqueline, with whom he was good friends in the 1950s and '60s. " 'My work is like a diary,' Picasso told me, and I have taken him up on this. One has to tread carefully, however. Diaries are nonetheless interesting for embroidering upon the truth."

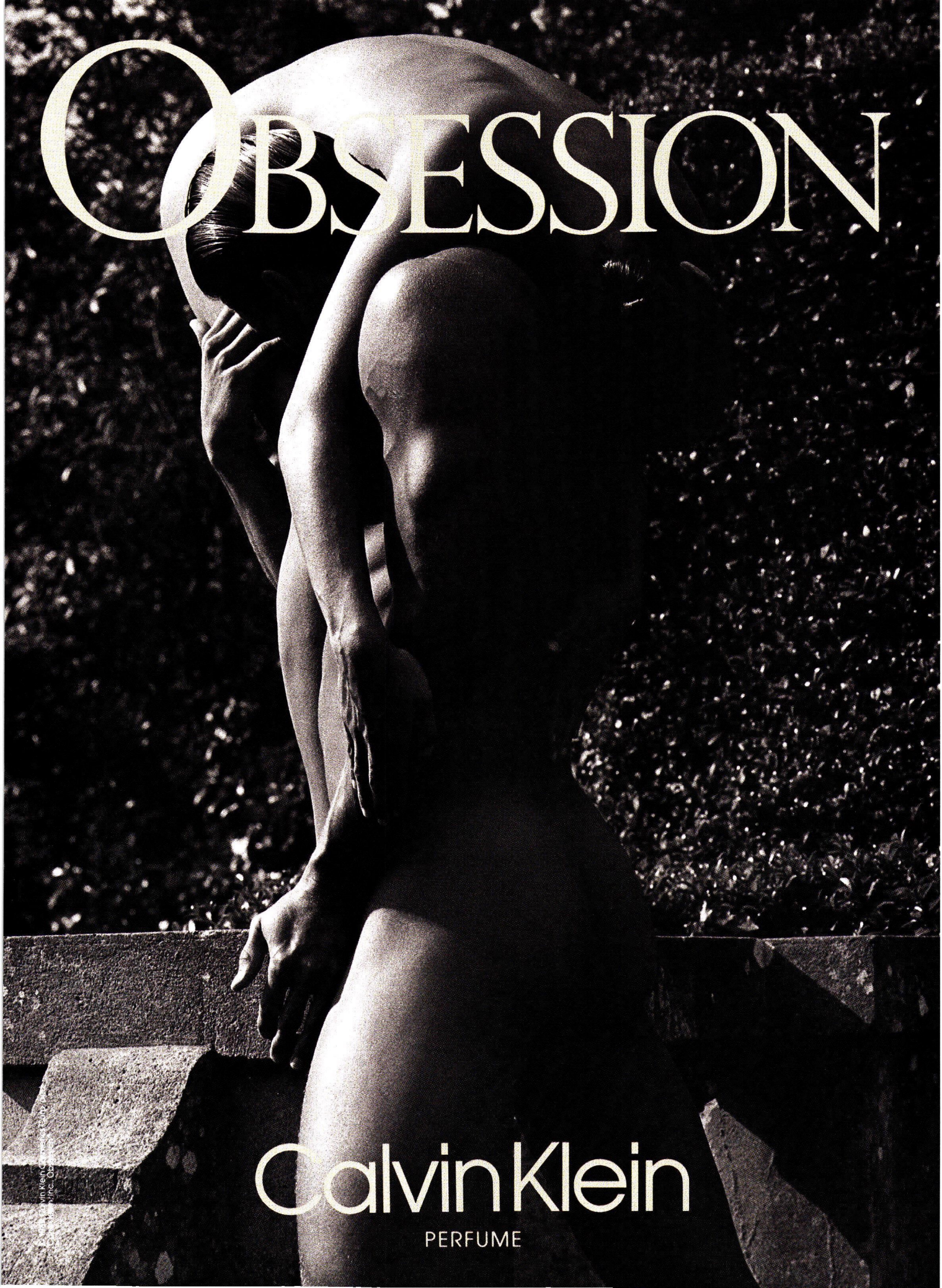
Annette Tapert tackles a broad range of topics in her writing—she has penned three books on military history, coauthored Slim Keith's autobiography, and delved into design in *Swid Powell: Objects by Architects.* "I view my projects not only as my work but as my one and only hobby. It gives me a chance to dip in and explore anything that interests me." For the March issue she looks at the homing instincts of three men in the fashion world.

ROBERT MANELLA



CHRISTOPHER MAKOS

Eve M. Kahn visits the Philadelphia pied-à-terre of Lord and Lady Wedgwood, of the renowned pottery family. A freelance journalist who writes on art, architecture, design, and preservation for *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker,* Kahn credits her discerning eye to her mother, an architectural historian. "She would frequently have me help her fill out surveys that identified old buildings or described roof types and windows. So at age ten, I was being quizzed on design terms."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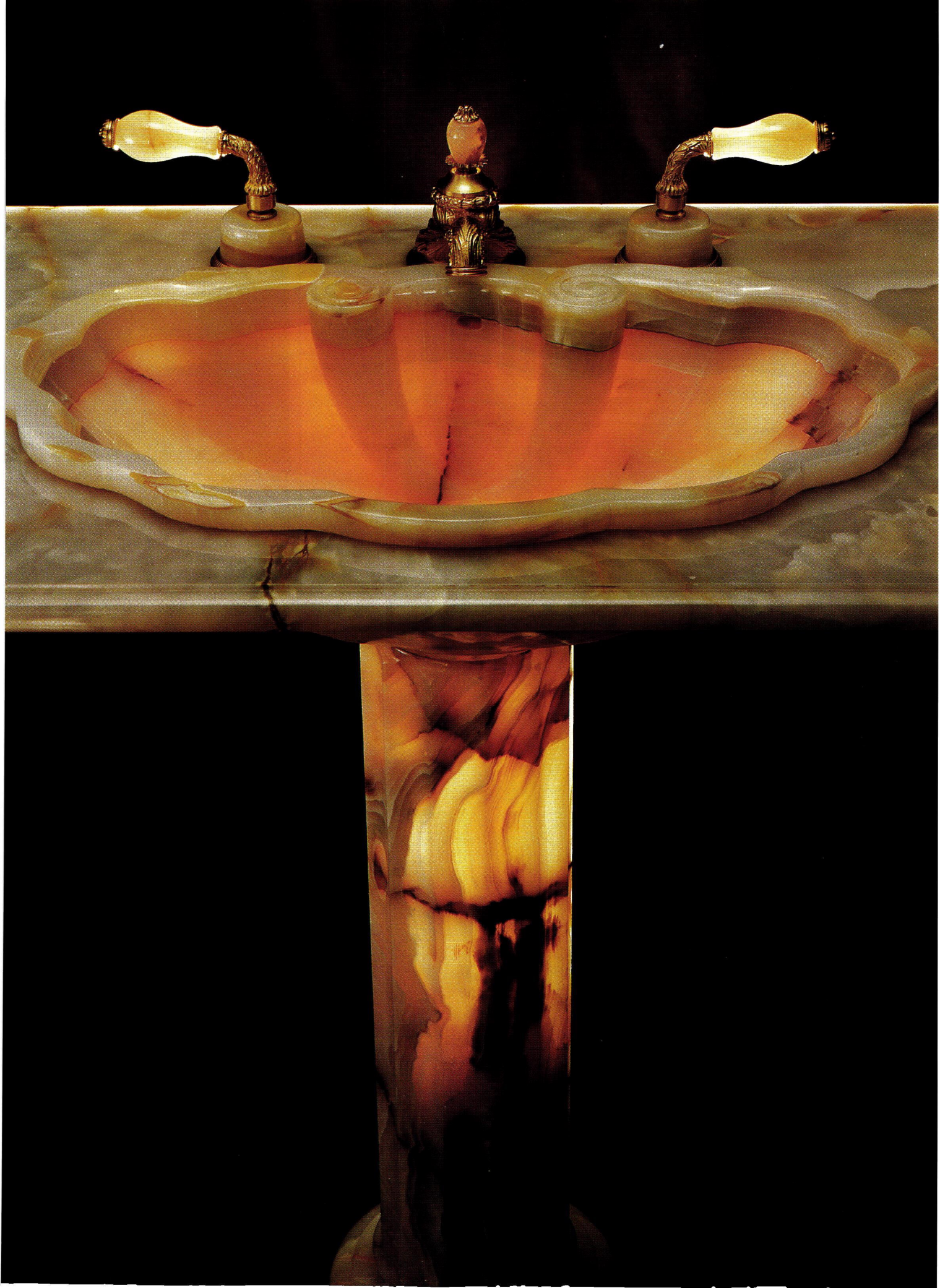

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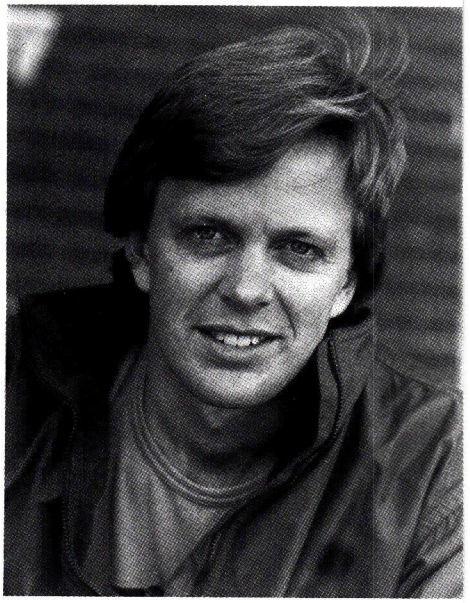

Ted Conover is a writer whose books *Rolling Nowhere* and *Coyotes* recount his experiences riding the rails with hobos and crossing the border with Mexican illegals. For HG, Conover took time off from his forthcoming book on Aspen to follow the trail of Jessica Catto, wife of U.S. ambassador to the Court of Saint James's, Henry Catto, from her Colorado ranch to the embassy in London.

JOHN SWANNDELL

Pat Booth offers an insider's shopping guide to the best of Palm Beach. Booth divides her time between London and Palm Beach, which provided the setting and title for one of her novels. "The town is like a secret society—a place full of interesting characters and big money. But true Palm Beachers are understated—they buy things that are either long lasting or inexpensive throwaways but never glitzy."

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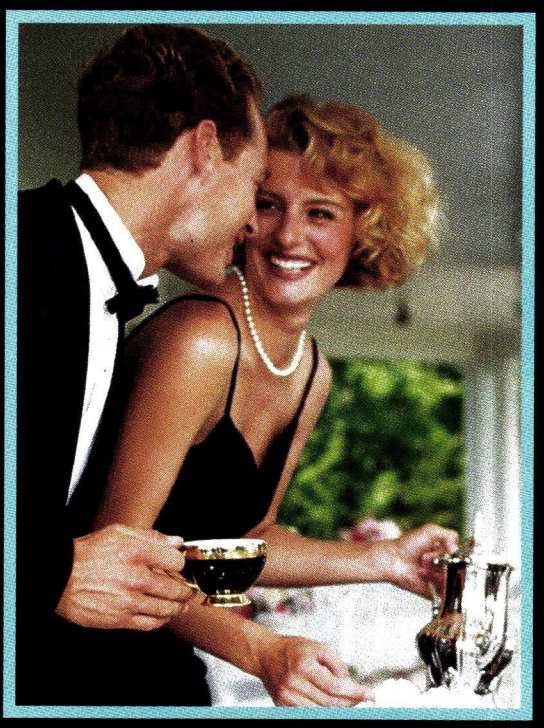

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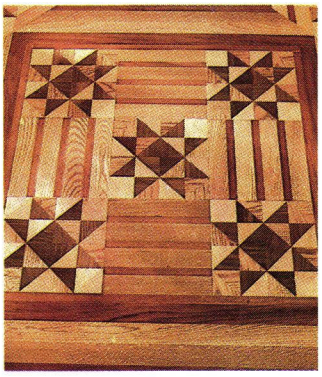
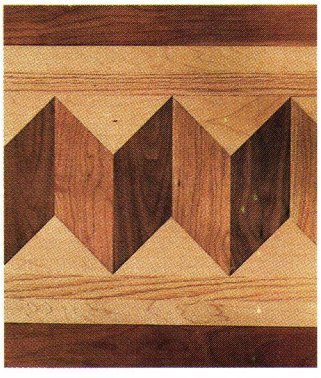
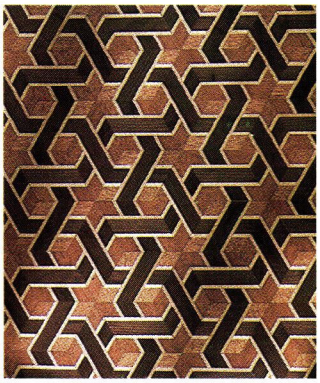
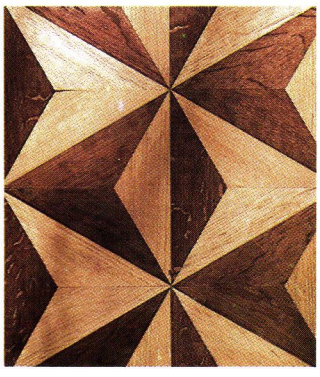
HG REPORTS ON THE NEW AND THE NOTEWORTHY By Eric Berthold



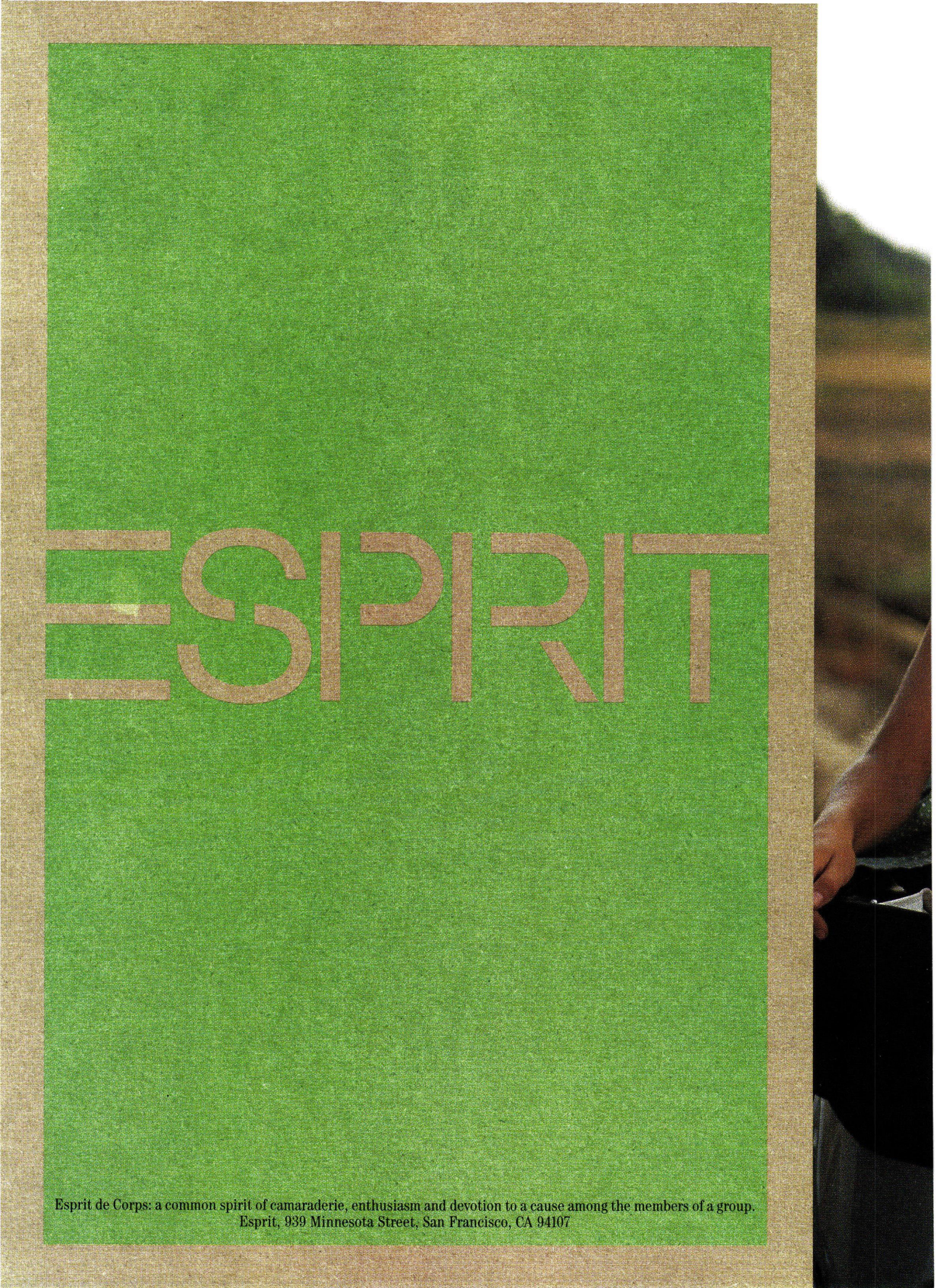






Woodworker Jay Dwight (*above*) likes to mill through antiques shops—where he looks for vintage carpentry tools rather than period furniture. "The job dictates the tool used, but today's tools limit the imagination of the craftsman," says Dwight, who employs both cutting-edge and age-old techniques in his parquetry (*right*). Inspired by everything from Shaker quilts to Navajo rugs, his designs "break away from the expected." (Jay Dwight, 205 West 88 St., New York, NY 10024; 212-769-0499)

ANDREW GARN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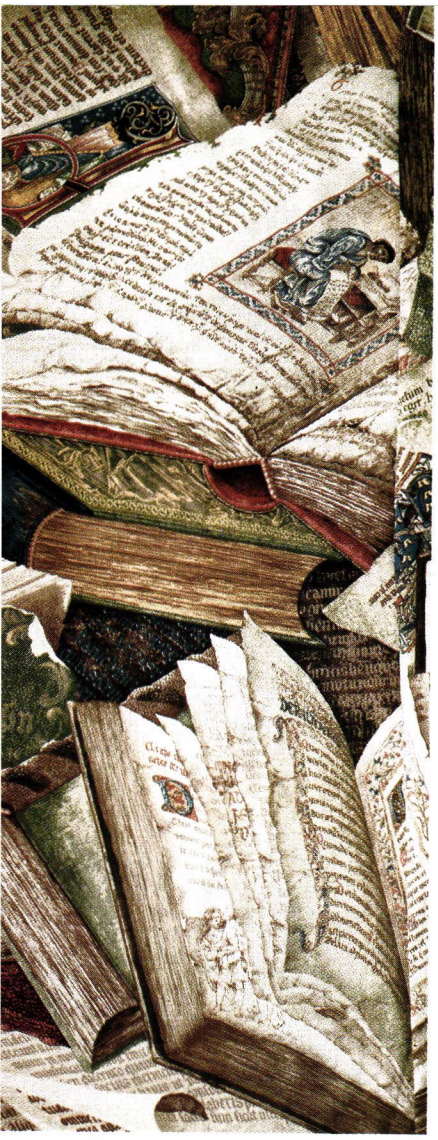
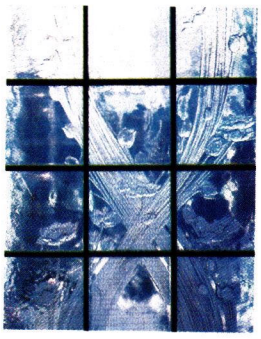


Fine Print A trompe l'oeil cotton print of Gothic manuscripts (*above*) is available to the trade from Boussac of France. For showrooms nationwide (212) 421-0534.

FLOWER SHOWS & GARDEN TOURS Mar. 6–10: Atlanta Botanical Garden's "Fantasia: Adventure in Myth, Fable, and Fantasy," (404) 220-2223; Mar. 10–17: Philadelphia Flower Show's "Endless Spring. . . New Days Dawning 'Round the World," (215) 625-8253; Mar. 23–May 19: New York Botanical Garden's "Gertrude Jekyll: An English Cottage Garden," (212) 220-8700; Apr. 20: 63rd annual Georgetown Garden Tour, (202) 333-4953; Apr. 26–28: Cincinnati Flower & Garden Show, (513) 579-0259.



Window Shopping The new Henri Bendel boutique (*below*) at 712 Fifth Avenue, NYC, features restored windows (*left*) designed in 1912 by René Lalique.

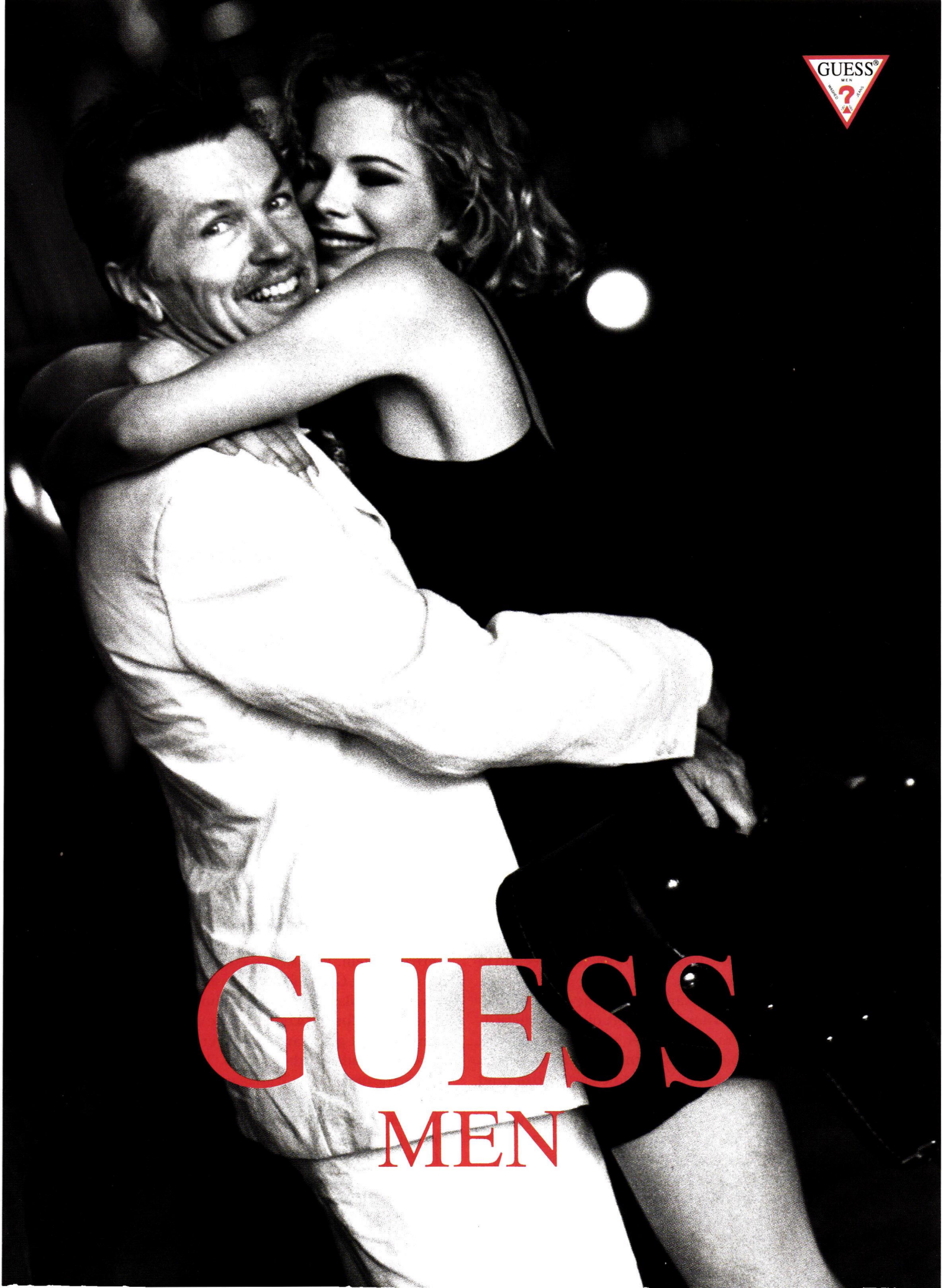
To Your Health Saint Louis's Cul-sec collection of cone-shaped goblets (*below*) is at Bergdorf Goodman or call (212) 838-3880.

Notes

Sitting Pretty Luigi Serafini's Sedia Santa (*left*) for Sawaya & Moroni is at Modern Age, 795 Broadway, NYC (212) 674-5603.

The Family Jewels "Catherine the Great: Treasures of Imperial Russia" (*left*), from the Hermitage, will be at the Memphis Cook Convention Center, Apr. 10–Sept. 8, Memphis. For information (800) 755-8777.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NG; PAMELA KOGEN; MICHAEL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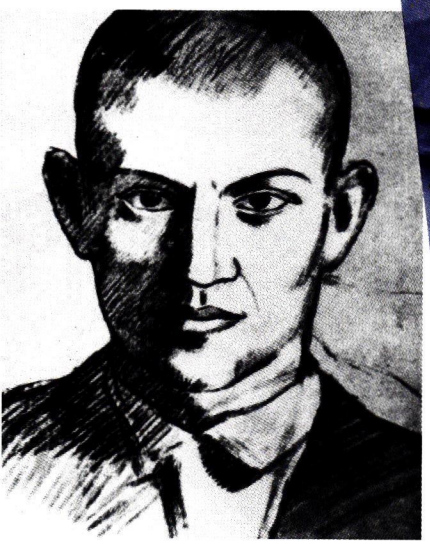
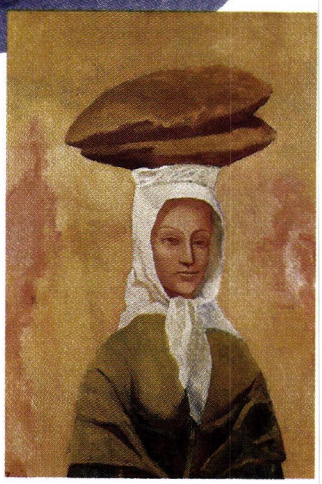


Picasso's Catalan Idyll

Looking homeward for inspiration, the artist headed for the Pyrenees

BY JOHN RICHARDSON



Self-portrait at Gósol, 1906, top left. Top right: A village festival. The inn is at center. Above left: Sketch from Picasso's *Carnet Catalan*. Above: *Woman with Loaves*, 1906.

By the spring of 1906 the twenty-four-year-old Picasso had been away from Spain for two years—longer than ever before. Poverty and pride had hitherto prevented his returning home. All of a sudden he was a success in Paris: the Steins, Gertrude and Leo, had begun to buy his work, as had the dealer Vollard. Besides wanting to show Barcelona that he had made good, Picasso was eager to display his beautiful "fiancée," Fernande Olivier. He also wanted to introduce her to his parents and see his native land afresh through her eyes. And, like Christ, with whom he sometimes identified, he had decided to regenerate himself with a sojourn in the wilderness: the remote village of Gósol, 5,000 feet up in the Pyrenees near Andorra.

The journey there was an ordeal. The Catalan Railways stopped fifteen kilometers short of Gósol; thereafter, access was on muleback over mountain tracks. A "bottomless precipice" gave Fernande vertigo, a rock wall bruised her knees, then her saddle started to slip and a muleteer rescued her just in time. After eight hours they arrived. "Ce fut un enchantement," Fernande wrote. It still is. One of the most dramatic spots in the Pyrenees, Gósol is as unspoiled today as it was in 1906.

The only inn, Cal Tampanada, had two rooms. Picasso and Fernande took one of them. The innkeeper, Josep Fontdevila, a crusty old smuggler of over ninety, consented to pose for Picasso. The two men developed a profound rapport. Lifelike drawings of Fontdevila's priestly pate give way to bizarre images in which Picasso, who had shaved his head like Fontdevila, identifies with him. Sixty-five years later, he still kept a drawing of Fontdevila in his living room. The skull-like image inspired his last ominously skull-like self-portraits.

"I like a view but I like to sit with my back to it," said Gertrude Stein. Picasso agreed. He did scant justice to the scenery at Gósol, focusing instead on the old smuggler. Fontdevila became a metaphor for this austere region, indeed for the whole austere country. Picasso also drew peasant girls carrying water jars, kindling, and loaves of bread—on their heads. These sketches culminate in the memorable *Woman with Loaves,* which reveals how much sustenance and contentment Picasso derived from renewed contact with his native soil. The woman is the antithesis of the street-wise gamines who stand for Montmartre and the Blue Period images of urban misery that Spain had formerly inspired.

During his ten weeks in Gósol, Picasso achieved as

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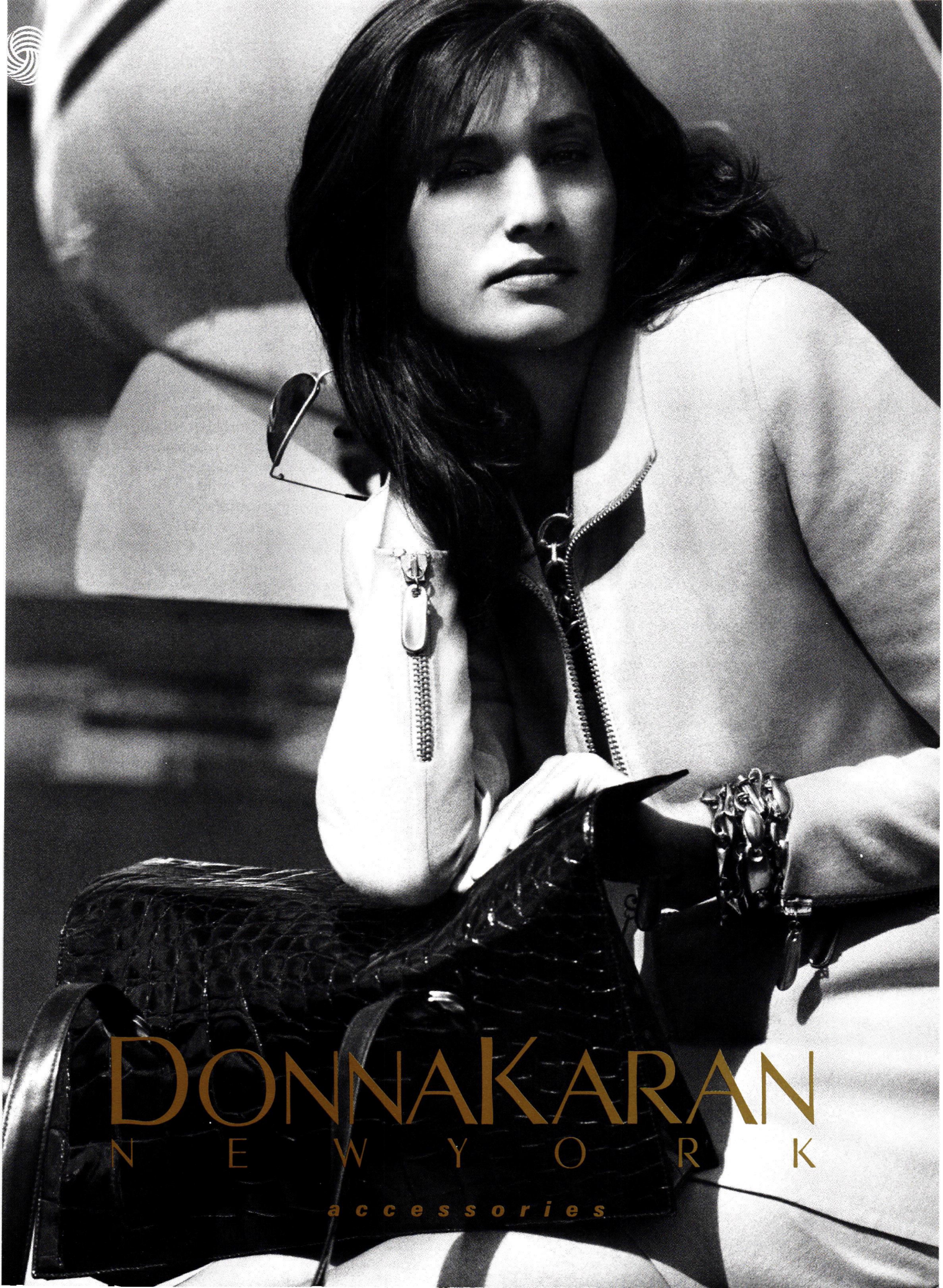
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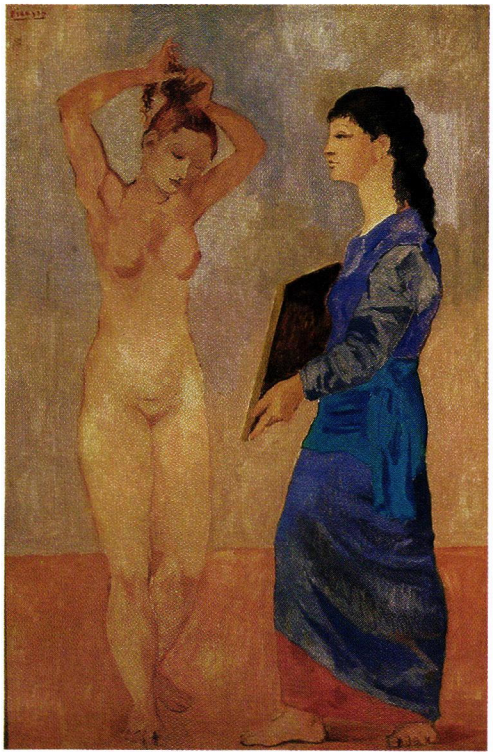
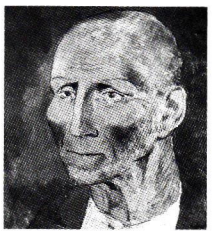


In *La Toilette*, left, painted during Picasso's summer in the Pyrenees, both figures depict his mistress and traveling companion, Fernande Olivier. Below: A portrait of the smuggler and innkeeper Josep Fontdevila, 1906.



much as he had in the previous six months; he also branched out in new directions—above all still life, a genre he would develop more imaginatively than any other artist in history. These early Gósolian efforts—clusters of opaque pots contrasted with translucent bottles—look insubstantial, especially when compared with the Cézannesque fruit dishes and coffeepots of two years later, but their phallic symbolism looks ahead to the 1930s, when he would metamorphose himself into a jug and his mistress into a bowl of peaches.

The first major paintings done at Gósol—naked youths for the most part—are true to the Arcadian classicism of the famous *Boy with a Horse*, which Picasso had recently painted in Paris. Soon, however, Fernande's voluptuous body takes over in works that hover on the brink of sculpture. Picasso was evidently tempted to think, if not actually work, in three dimensions. Since there were no facilities for modeling or sculpting, he opted for wood carving—something he had never tried. The three sculptures surviving from Gósol are rudimentary Fernandes whittled out of bits of boxwood.

Fernande's easygoing nature stood her in good stead at Gósol. Far from complaining about the loneliness and ruggedness, she rhapsodizes in her memoirs about life "up there in air of incredible purity, above the clouds, surrounded by people who were amiable, hospitable, and without guile. . . . Having no cause for jealousy, all Picasso's worries disappeared." Fernande had known Picasso for almost two years, but her presence had not permeated his work until now. Away from the pressures and distractions of Montmartre and the eternal money problems, the artist recaptured his pristine passion and divine energy. And, as he did with one mistress after another, he fantasized that he was God creating a new Eve. His portraits of Fernande give off an incandescent glow. The earliest suggests a drawing by Ingres. Succeeding likenesses take on a Gauguinesque air of mystery and gravity—a paradoxical image that is of its time yet timeless, primitive yet classical, Spanish yet French, utterly original for all its derivations. So long as they remained in Gósol, Picasso continued to see Fernande in this radiant new light. Back in Paris he would be less ennobling.

Before leaving the mountains, Picasso embarked on his most experimental work to date: a major homage to El Greco. This over-life-size scene depicts a team of oxen, a blind flower seller, and a seeing-eye girl. Despite their vast scale, the figures, with their strangely tapered extremities, look decidedly flimsy. However, *The Blind Flower Seller* is a milestone. Picasso manages to make his subject project rather than recede, as traditional perspective ordained. He also uses El Greco's overall pattern of rhythmic faceting to articulate the picture surface and give everything cohesion, as in cubism.

For all its scenic drama, Gósol attracted no other visitors. Given the miraculous effect on Picasso's well-being, the lack of company must be counted a blessing. Fortunately "the locals were enchanted by us," Fernande writes. "They . . . brought us partridges and thrushes to vary our diet of cocido [bean and sausage stew], and they made us play the peculiar games of the region." Picasso, who was a good shot, would also go hunting deer and chamois. These expeditions were a cover for smuggling, a local industry and the activity Picasso remembered most vividly about Gósol. The smuggler was someone with whom he could sympathize—a fellow outlaw.

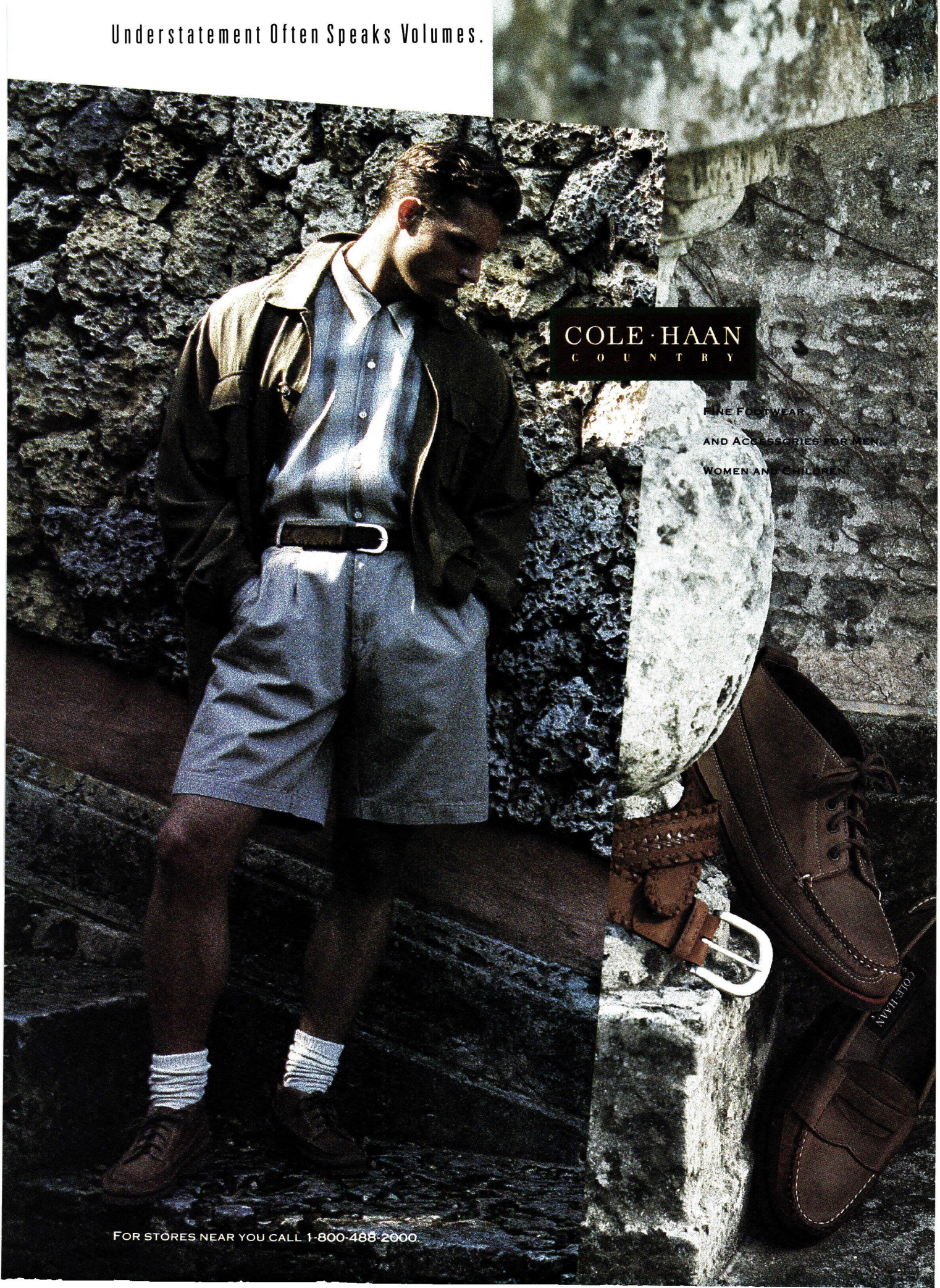
Around August 12, Picasso and Fernande's Pyrenean idyll was cut short; typhoid fever broke out under their very roof. The only medicine was tobacco leaves macerated in vinegar; the only doctor was hours away by mule. Picasso panicked; they must leave as soon as possible. Rather than face inquisitive friends in Barcelona, he decided to return directly to France, a far more circuitous route—northward over the Pyrenees—than the way he had come. Another problem: Fontdevila had to be restrained from following Picasso and Fernande to Paris. There was also a near disaster when their mule train encountered a herd of wild mares. The mules bolted, leaving a trail of suitcases, sculpture, rolls of canvas, and drawings. Miraculously, nothing was lost or damaged.

Back in Montmartre, the couple's spirits sank. The studio was an oven in August and mice had eaten everything, including the taffeta cover of Fernande's favorite parasol. Worse, they were attacked by bedbugs. Although Fontdevila had stayed behind, his spirit haunted Picasso. The artist drew him as if he were still around. Indeed, he is second only to Fernande and Picasso as a recognizable subject in the work of 1906–07. Even Gertrude Stein's portrait, which Picasso proceeded to repaint from memory, is based on memories of Fontdevila. The old smuggler lives on in Gertrude's guise. ▲

From A Life of Picasso. *Volume 1. Copyright © 1991 by John Richardson. Published in February by Random House.*

Picasso fantasized that he was God creating a new Eve

LEFT: ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY, BUFFALO, FELLOWS FOR LIFE FUND, 1906. RIGHT: PRIVATE COLLECTION. ALL PICASSO WORKS BY ARRANGEMENT WITH ARS, NEW YORK/SPADEM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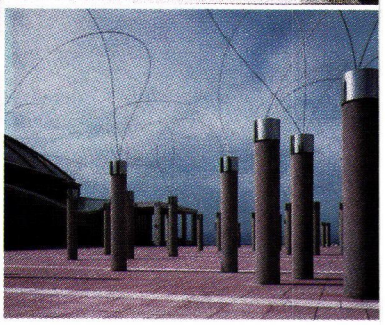
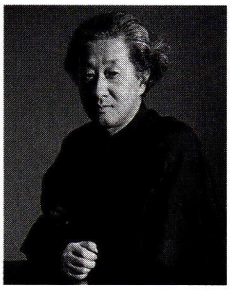
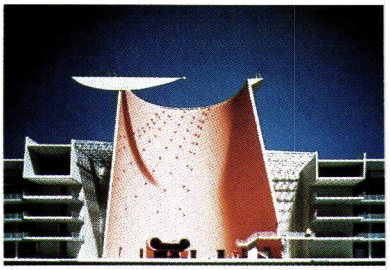


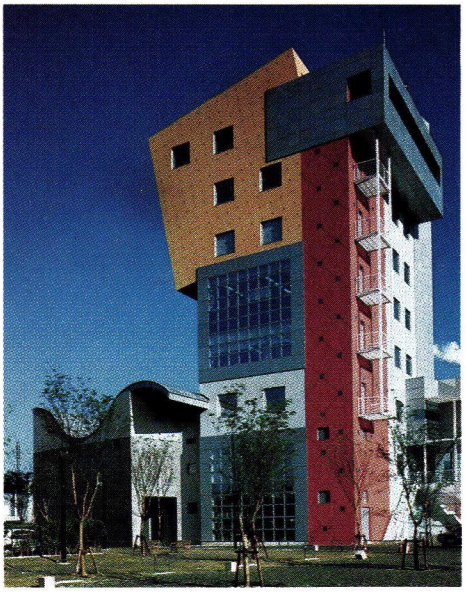
Simultaneous Interpreter

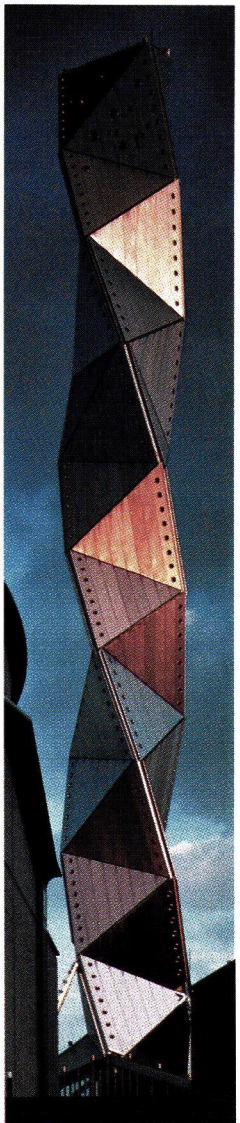
An exhibition at Los Angeles's MOCA surveys Arata Isozaki's global achievements BY ELLEN POSNER



OF ALL THE CONtemporary Japanese architects whose work is seen internationally in magazines and exhibitions, is sought out on pilgrimages to Japan, and is increasingly influential in the West, only one—Arata Isozaki—practices in any significant way outside his own country. In the roughly thirty years since he established his own firm, Isozaki has built a solid, impressive, and daring body of work in Japan. In the past decade, he has not merely ventured outside those geographic borders but has intervened on a large scale in two iconic Western cities: he made his first appearance in New York in 1985 as designer of the Palladium nightclub and is now overseeing the first phase of a projected 900,000-square-foot renovation and addition to the Brooklyn Museum (a collaborative effort with James Stewart Polshek & Partners); his red sandstone Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles opened in 1986. This month, an immense retrospective, "Arata Isozaki: Architecture, 1960–1990," opens at MOCA (through June 30). A companion volume under the same title will be published by Rizzoli next month.





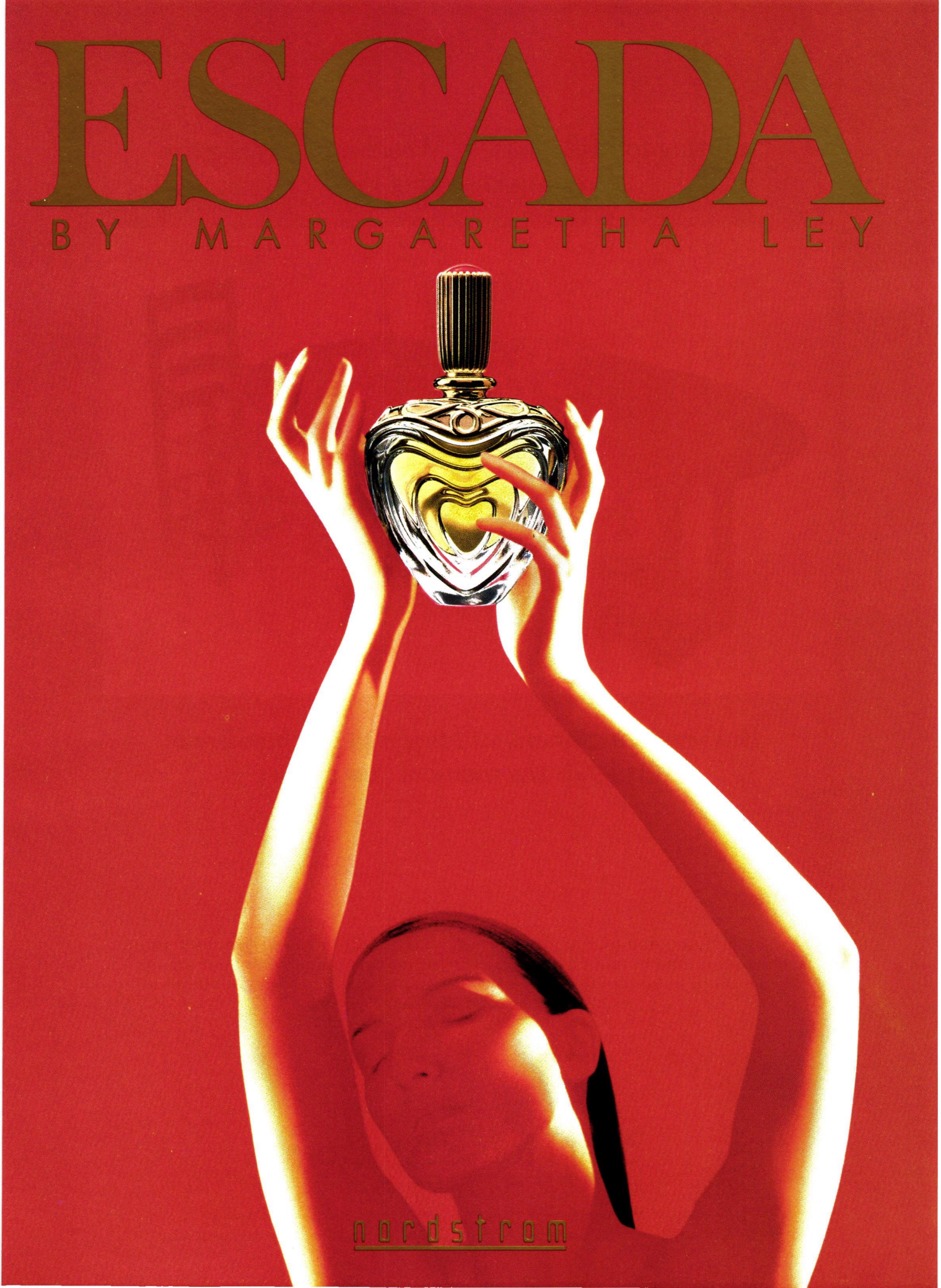


Richard Koshalek, director of MOCA and chief curator for the exhibition, suggests that Isozaki's global architectural practice has been nurtured by his marriage to Aiko Miyawaki, a sculptor. (A field of her taut whiplike forms, mounted on cylinders, stands at the entrance to Isozaki's recently completed concrete and travertine Palau d'Esports Sant Jordi in Barcelona, which will serve as one of the centerpieces of the 1992 Olympics.) Miyawaki, Koshalek explains, had found that as a woman in Japan it was exceedingly difficult to pursue a career as an artist and, instead, had been living and working in Europe. Her positive experience abroad and the couple's close interaction are likely, he says, to have helped Isozaki feel comfortable working outside Japan—even though, as an architect, he would face formidable differences in craftsmanship and construction practices.

As it turns out, Isozaki has discovered advantages to

Arata Isozaki, above left. Top: The Palau d'Esports Sant Jordi in Barcelona. Top inset: Sculpture by Aiko Miyawaki outside the stadium. Far left: Kitakyushu International Conference Center in Fukuoka, Japan. Left: Art Tower Mito in Ibaraki. Above: Two views of a model for an office building at Walt Disney World.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: YASUHIRO ISHIMOTO (2); YOSHIO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BY MARGARETHA LEY
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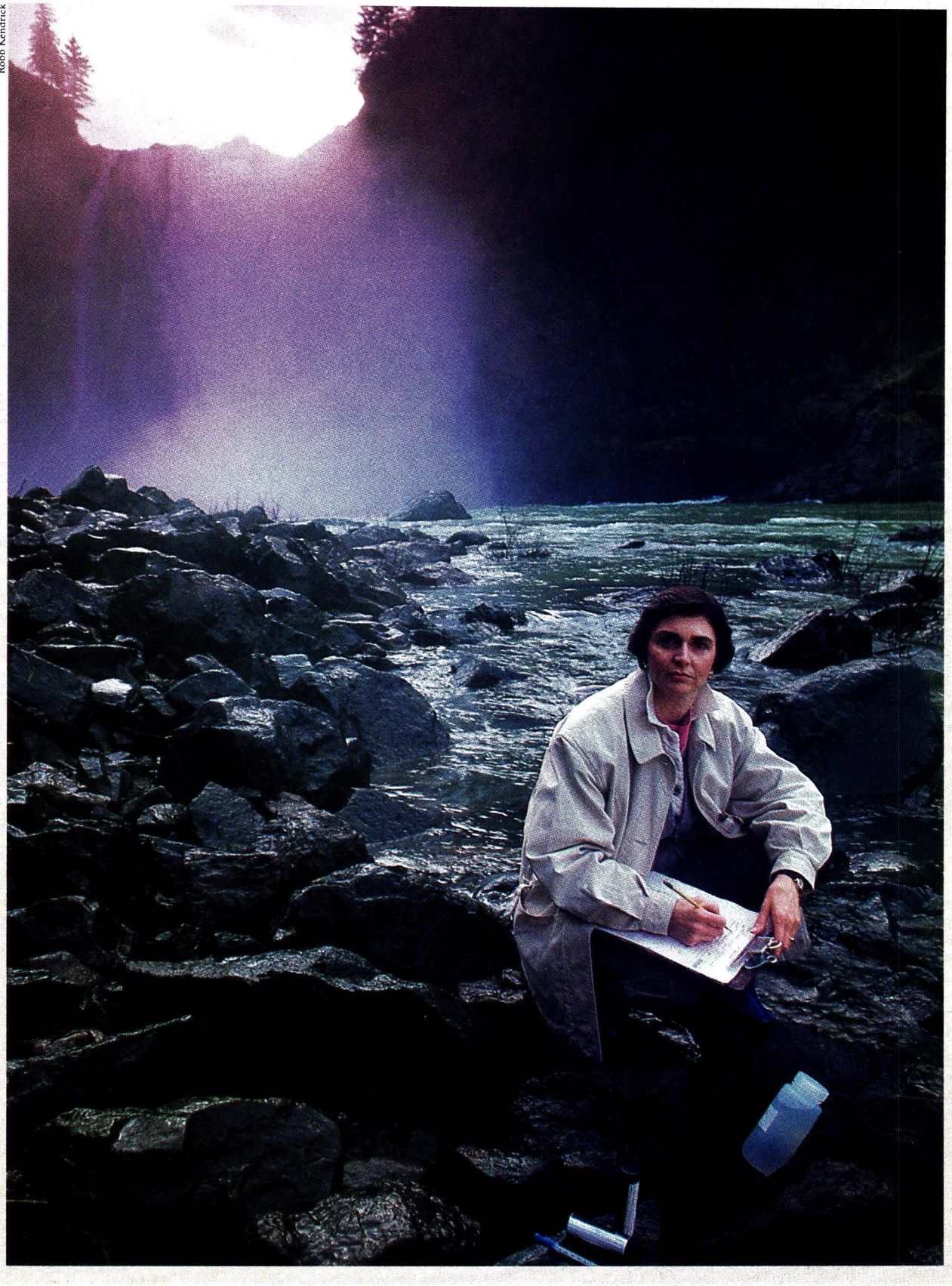

Sarah Hubbard-Gray, biologist and creator of the City of Bellevue's Stream Team Program, Snoqualmie Falls, Washington.

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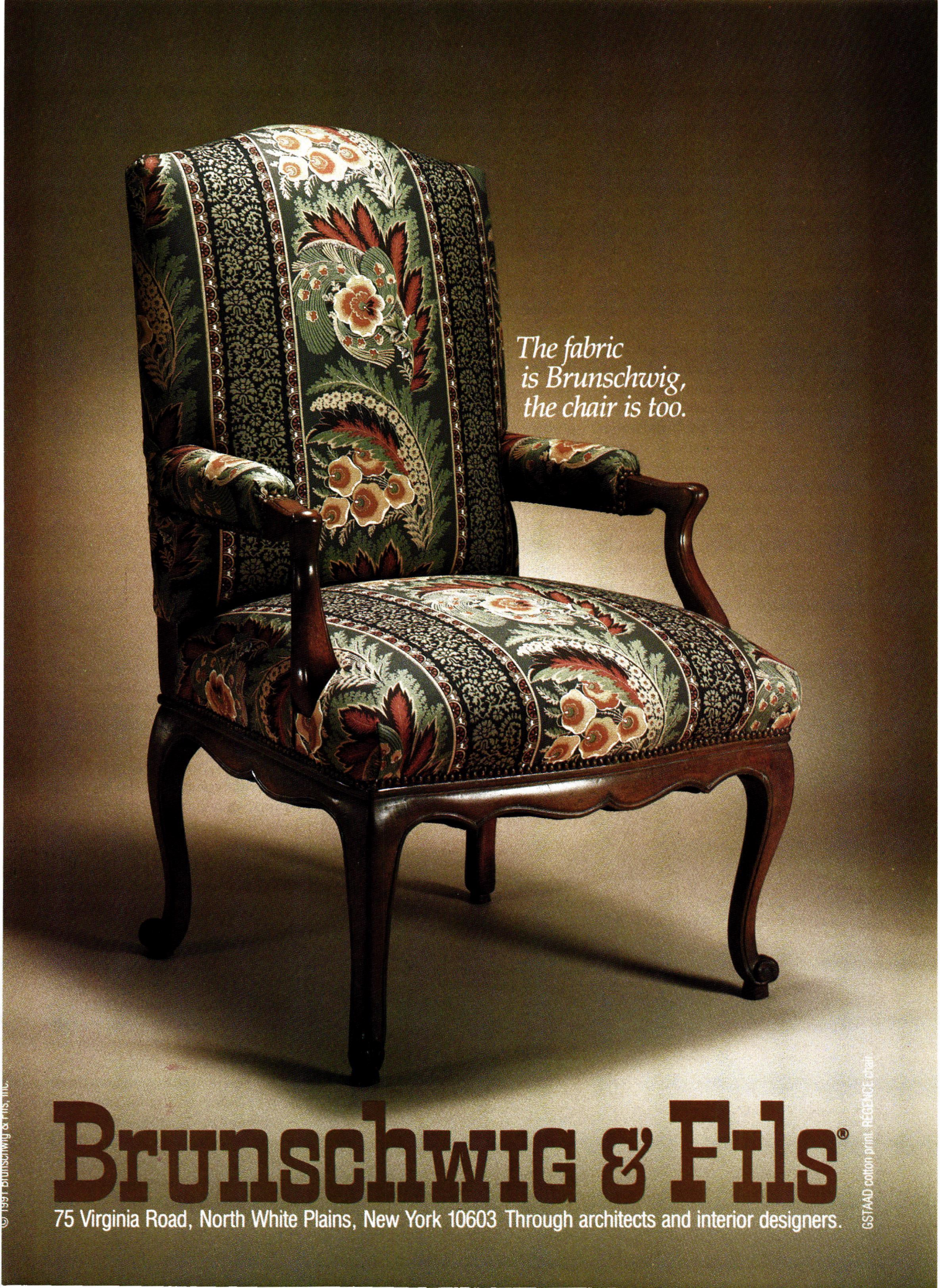

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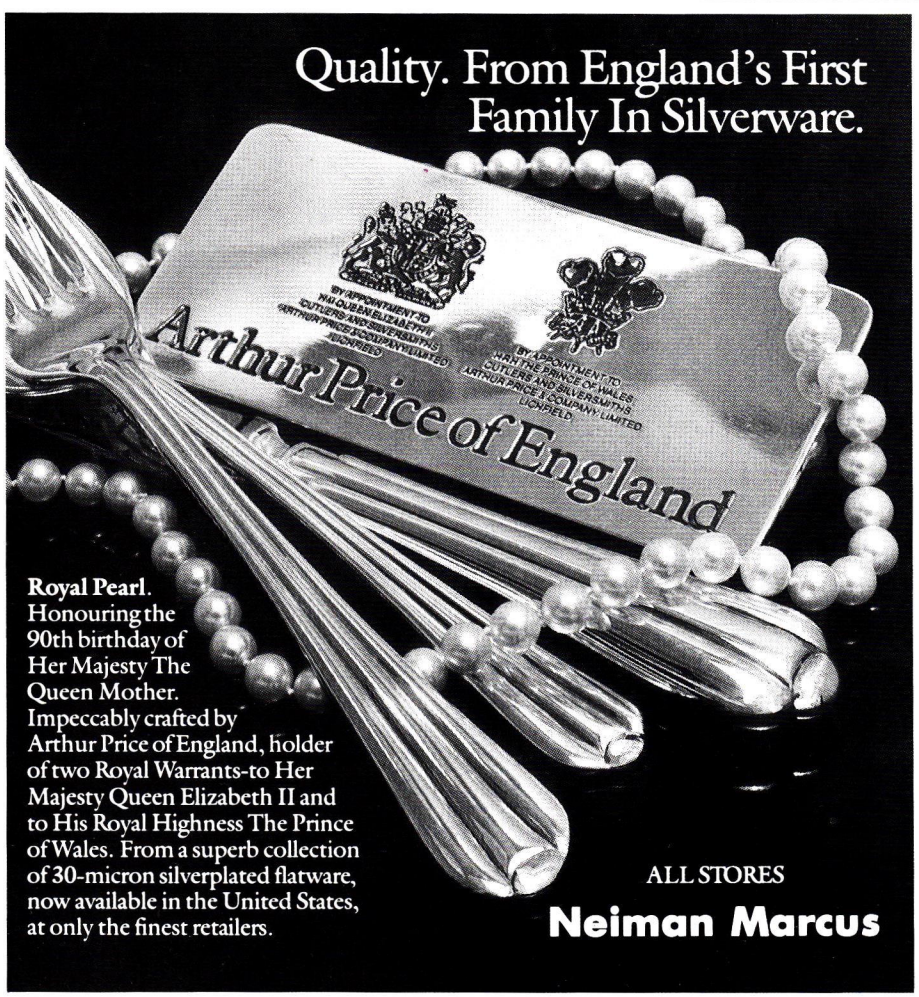
working in the West. While Japanese craftsmen are known for their prowess at executing complex details, he observes, "they generally are not so good at large-scale simple things; the contrary is true in the United States." He cites the stonework for I. M. Pei's East Building at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., as "much better than anything in Japan."

Despite an already rugged schedule—involving, among other things, worldwide on-site supervision of construction—Isozaki has selected the projects to be included in the MOCA show, determined their placement, categorized the work by theme, and designed the installation. In agreement with many architects, critics, and historians who find that photographs of buildings are usually deceptive, he has excluded them from the show. Models, drawings, sketches, and silk-screen prints will serve as the primary conveyors of information. On the other hand, in an effort to use the latest Japanese technology Isozaki has installed three high-definition television screens that paradoxically will show not film or videotape but slides of his work: a compromise, presumably, between static and fluid.

Isozaki has not relied upon traditional Japanese forms or imagery (his literal quotations are more likely to be from Michelangelo, Ledoux, Wright, Gehry), and yet his work derives much from Japanese culture and sensibility—sources that are apparent in subtle transitions, calculated asymmetry, layering of space, implied depth, play between transparent and translucent, and meticulous attention to materials. In a gesture meant to acknowledge these roots, the retrospective will open with a full-scale re-creation of a teahouse (built in a nontraditional combination of wood, metal, and stucco), which Isozaki originally designed for a 1983 exhibition. From there, after documenting his early debt to the optimistic-nihilistic metabolists, whose add-on megastructures in the sky were meant to address postwar urban conditions, the MOCA show more or less chronologically traces the development of his diverse and thoughtful work.

As vivid and powerful as his buildings are, Isozaki has never evolved an identifiable visual idiom. His geometry may be simple or complex, he uses both convention and exaggeration, and, as is inherent in Japanese tradition, he moves easily between the austere and subdued and the brilliant and lush. Or he may combine these approaches. The recent Kitakyushu International Conference Center, for example, incorporates a bright yellow rhomboid tower as well as an undulating roof that collides with other shapes—among which are rectangular elements sheathed in pristine aluminum and glass curtain walls. A new cultural complex, known collectively as Art Tower Mito, comprises a series of discreet low-scale buildings clad in gray granite. Rising dramatically at the edge of the complex, however, is a slender 330-foot-high twisted triangulated structure, covered in silvery titanium panels, offering only an observation room at the top.

Isozaki is known for using wit and irony and, as he says, jokes in his architecture (a recently completed office building for Walt Disney World in Florida comes with an entrance canopy that can be read as mouse ears). But his work has a dark side as well to which, perhaps, the jokes are not unrelated. Born in Japan in 1931, Isozaki became acquainted with devastation at an early age, and images of destruction appear throughout his work. The references can be quite literal, even in his silk-screen prints of new projects, which he depicts as ruins or simply as isolated and abstract—alone in the landscape, as if no context existed or were even possible. Almost all of his work on paper is invested with an eerie poignancy. As architecture shows are meant to do, this one should prompt visitors to look at the buildings themselves to see whether—and how—ideas are translated into materials, space, and light. ▲



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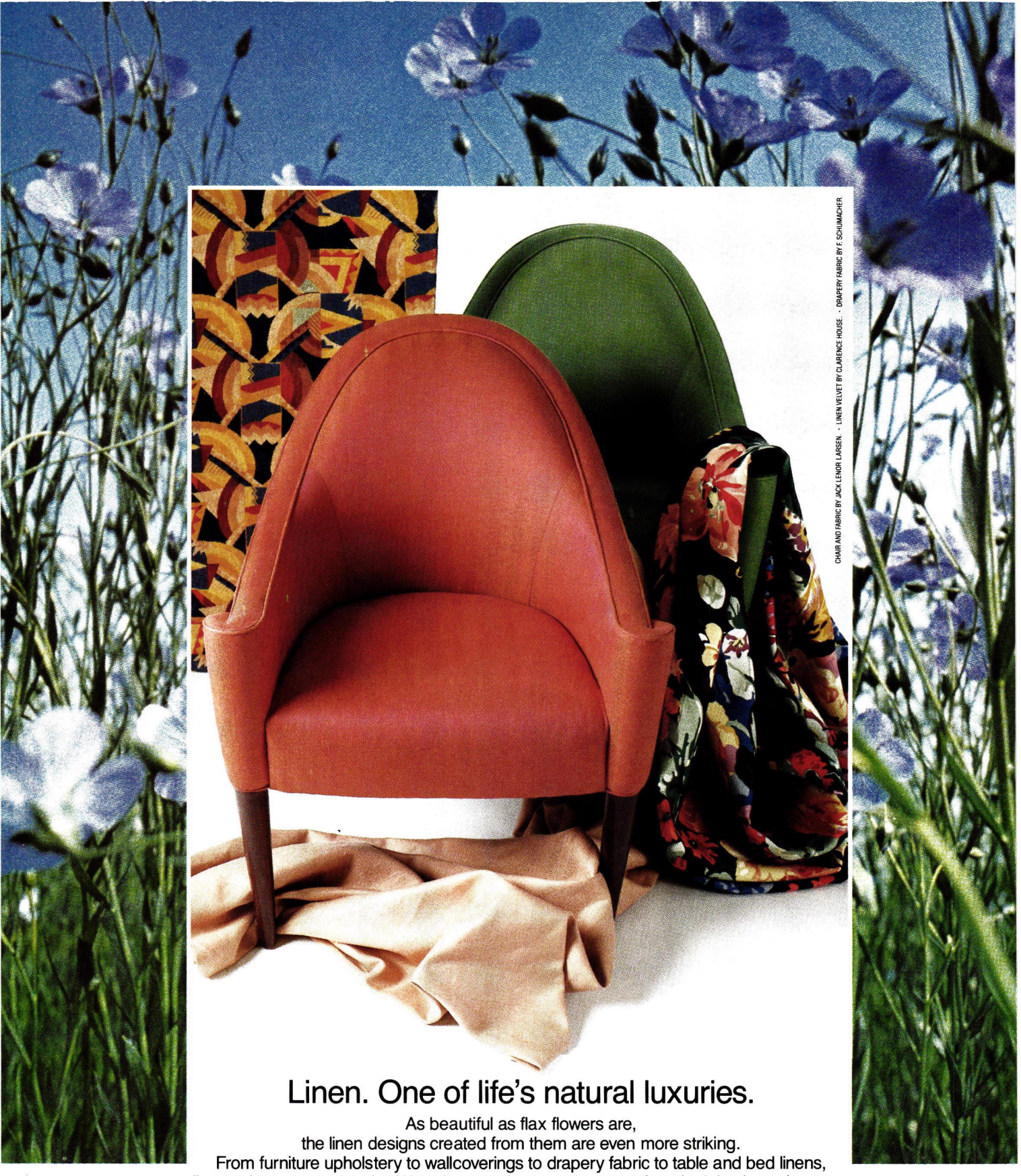

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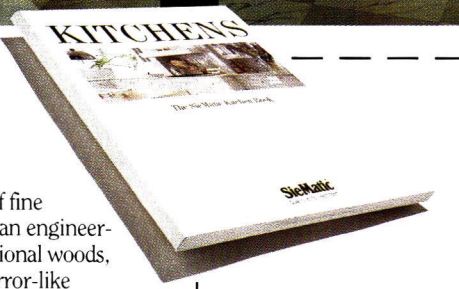

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Brooke Astor, then Mrs. Charles H. Marshall II, above, with her husband in Italy in 1936. Fafner, left and far left, surveys his domain. Inset: Il Castello.

Our Friend Fafner

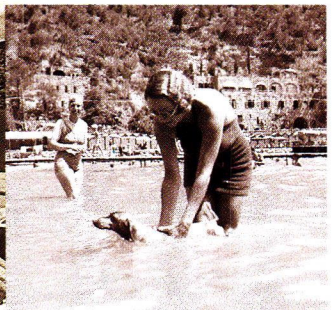
A dachshund was lord of the manor at an American couple's Italian retreat

BY BROOKE ASTOR

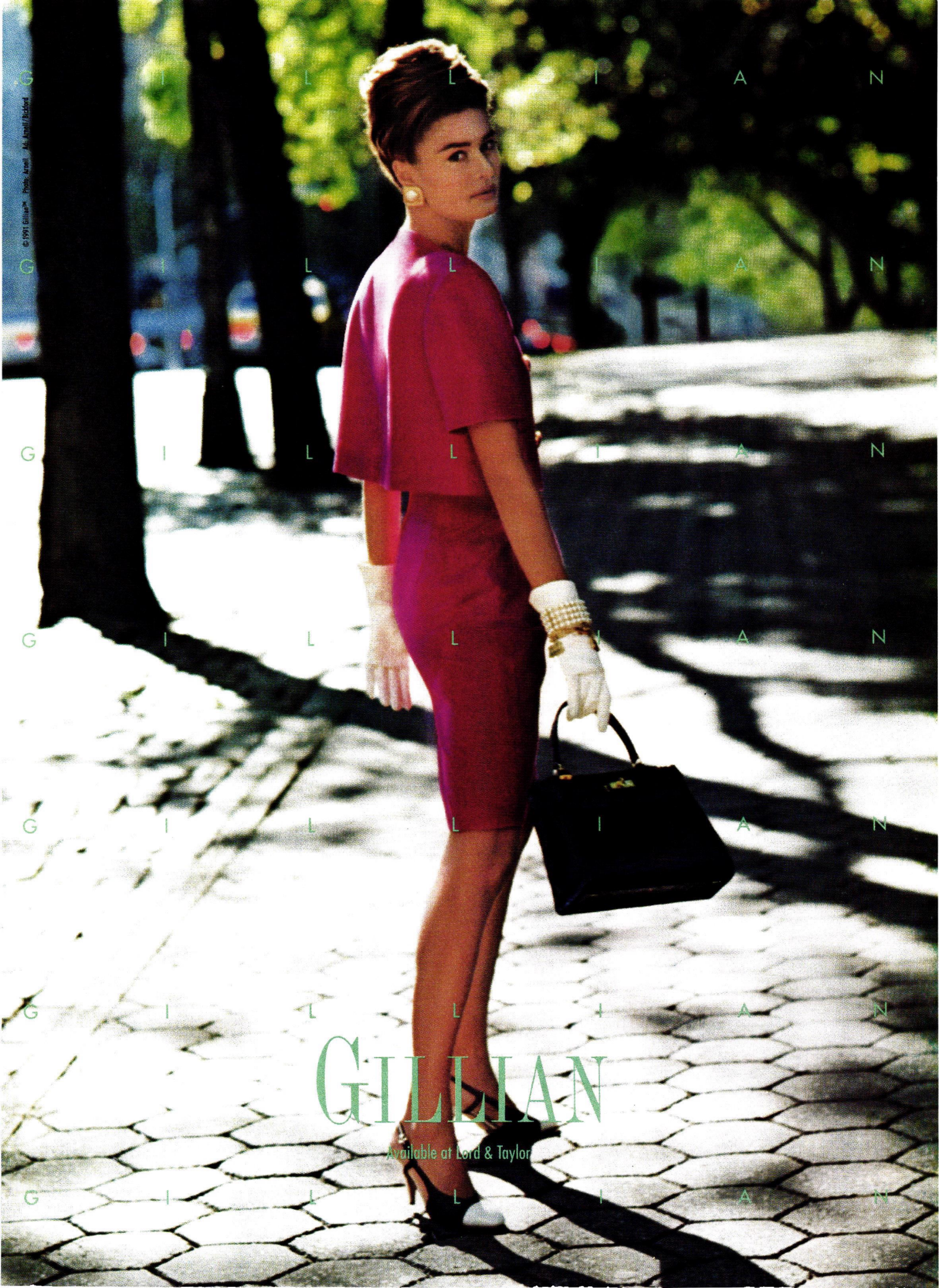
I have had dogs all my life and I have learned that they are as different from one another as people are, but never have I had a dog like Fafner. A golden red-brown dachshund, he was named after Wagner's dragon because of his dragon-shaped paws and long thin body. Fafner was a dog of dogs, an old soul with extrasensory perception, always on the verge of crossing over from dogdom to personhood. He would sit up on his hind legs and look me in the eye to sense my mood. If I was gay, he would play the clown, tossing his blanket in the air or pushing his ball with his nose. If I was sad, he would bury his head under my arm or give my cheek a furtive lick. He knew so many words that my husband and I took to spelling in front of him. Of course, always being treated as a person (he often sat at the table with a napkin around his neck), Fafner considered himself a person. His attitude toward other dogs was a mixture of arrogance and contempt, and he barked furiously whenever he saw one. He detested the whole canine race until his great erotic experience in Italy, an episode that brought on a nervous breakdown and called for the most tender loving care. But more of that later.

When Fafner was a year old, in 1930, we rented a house in Portofino on a ten-year lease and took him back and forth from New York every summer. Just as Fafner was no ordinary dog, our house was no ordinary house. Called Il Castello, it was a little Roman fort atop a terraced hillside overlooking the harbor. There were iron bands across the huge front door and slits in the tower walls from which arrows or boiling oil could be aimed at the enemy, and yet it was a cheerful, homey place. This was because it had been bought in the last century by the British consul in Genoa who turned what had been almost a ruin into a bit of Victorian England. Cozy corners were built into the stone walls, chintzes were hung at the windows, and the topmost room of the main tower was made into a billiard room.

It was a place of enchantment: the blue sea, the silver olive trees accentuated by an occasional dark green cypress, the profusion of flowering vines and sweet-scented shrubs, and the two umbrella pines that spread at one corner of the terrace like wide green flags. I stayed from early spring until October, when the villagers and the parish priest came to help us pick our grapes.



Fafner and his mistress, left, perform an alfresco duet on the terrace. Below: A dip in the Ligurian Sea off Portofino.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Not the least of the Castello's charms was our staff: Angela, the cook, and her three nieces, aided by various helpers. Outside the kitchen, Angela's niece Teresa was the head of the household, and it was to her I turned when, in the autumn of our second year, Fafner, for three days running, refused to eat. "The daughter of my brother in Santa Margherita is married to a veterinarian," she told me. "I will call him." I smiled gratefully as I held out a morsel of tenderloin to Fafner. He sniffed it languidly, turned his head aside, and then hid among the roots of an oleander. I was watching him anxiously when Teresa returned. "My nephew-in-law is in Zoagli—a cow broke her leg—but I have sent a boy after him," she said. "When will he get here?" I asked. "Oh, in two days. Senza fallo." Two days seemed like a long time, but there was nothing I could do. Fafner, who slept in my room, spent a restless night pacing up and down, and whenever I turned on the light to look at him, he would run to the far end of the room.

The next morning, when I came down to breakfast on the terrace, Fafner suddenly sat down in a flowerbed and let out a bloodcurdling howl. My heart leapt. Had he gone mad? At this moment, Teresa, binoculars in hand, rushed out onto the terrace (she kept in touch with all that went on in Portofino via her binoculars). "Buona fortuna, Signora," she cried joyfully. "Don't worry, it's all right. It's La Tillina." "Who is La Tillina?" I exclaimed, but Teresa was too excited to answer a direct question. Instructed by her, I took the glasses and focused on a procession of dogs—dogs of unknown breeds and of all shapes and sizes. As I watched, two of them made straight for each other's throats.

Teresa laughed. "It's always like this. It's La Tillina, the dog of Mario, the farmer at the villa across the path." I remembered having seen a small dirty-white animal with a pointed nose, a watery eye, and a scruffy tail—certainly not a dream princess. "La Tillina is something terrible," said Teresa, with a touch of admiration in her voice. "She is the only bitch in Portofino that attracts dogs all the way from Santa Margherita. They jump on the buses there." From then on, life was bedlam at the Castello. Dogs came from every village on the hillside; snarls, barks, and howls rent the air. One night, three dogs were killed, and the carabinieri took La Tillina away.

Fafner, confined to the Castello, was now skin and bone. Even after La Tillina's departure, he would not come near us. On the third night after she had gone, I was awakened by a loud thumping and saw Fafner scratching himself in a frenzy. His poor little body was covered with welts. I lifted him up and rushed into my husband's room. Sleepy-eyed, he and I took turns making a paste of bicarbonate of soda and coating Fafner with it. Toward morning we all three fell asleep, utterly worn out.

The next day Fafner was much better, and in a week his appetite revived. Psychologically, it was another matter. The first time we took him for a walk we saw Mario coming up the path with La Tillina, returning after her enforced absence. She seemed perfectly delighted to be at liberty. Fafner, though, crept close to my ankle, like a cat. The hair rose on his back, and he trembled violently. He obviously did not want to be noticed by the lady. We passed her in silence, and she seemed unaware of us. It was painful evidence of Fafner's shattered nerves.

We too were shattered by his unhappiness. Back in New York, under the guidance of our own veterinarian, we led Fafner to the marriage bed. This restored him to better health, but we always felt that he regarded it as a mechanical endeavor having nothing to do with the emotions. He had betrayed himself only once, and being a dog of character and determination, he never let it happen again. From then on he remained nine pounds of love, devoted entirely to human beings. ▲

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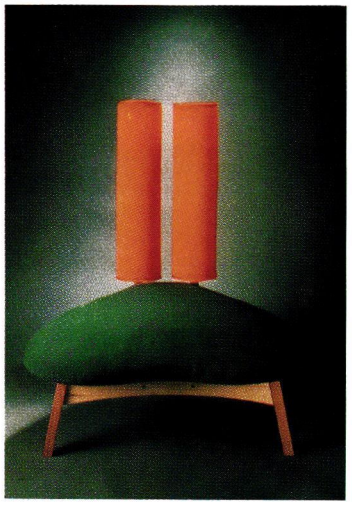

Chairs from the Montana series—Loosa, above left, and Claw-paw, above right, flank the Two Missiles in Every Backyard chair, above center.

Sitting on the Edge

Paul Ludick pushes his chairs into the vanguard of political activism

BY HEATHER SMITH MACISAAC

By the time Paul Ludick reached shop class in high school, he was way beyond napkin holders. Not only had he grown up with handy relatives—a father who worked in construction, a grandmother and great-grandfather who were expert at caning and rewebbing chairs—he had also attended a school that had third graders manufacturing their own stilts and junior high schoolers wielding acetylene torches. Still, Ludick arrived at furniture making in a rather roundabout way, via sculpture and performance art. "Chairs bridged both of these fields because you are dealing with a physical object and with the body," he says. "They provide one-on-one communication between the seat and the sitter, so they are a great means of delivering a message."

As it happens, Ludick has more than a few messages to deliver. Though he has an affordable line of steel furniture based on landscapes and line drawings, he's better known for his social and political pieces, which have been on view at the Bernice Steinbaum and Art et Industrie galleries. A show entitled "World Theater Apartheid" featured twenty chairs made of pine with chain link backs. A group of stools in the shape of cooling towers were the sobering centerpiece of an exhibition called "Chair-Noble." And one of Ludick's most beautiful and provocative pieces is his O-zone chair, with a gold-painted framework representing man's created world, a "cushion" of rocks from friends around the globe, and a slipcover of turquoise silk chiffon signifying the "fragile membrane protecting us all."

"I approach making furniture as creating this new entity," says Ludick. "Each piece has a life of its own." Not long ago, he did a little research on the perils of electromagnetism, which resulted in some pieces of furniture with distinctly unhealthy lives: mutations appear in the shape of a hump along the back of the Hallie sofa and in the form of a triple-seat cushion for Philfred, an ample club chair with tiny turned-in feet. This is one furniture designer who is interested in more than sitting pretty. ▲

Paul Ludick, above left, poses on his Hallie sofa. Below: Blue silk chiffon representing the ozone layer covers a chair with a painted gold frame and seat of rocks. Details see Resources.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, TODD FERRELL; CHARLES NESBIT; TODD FERRELL (3)

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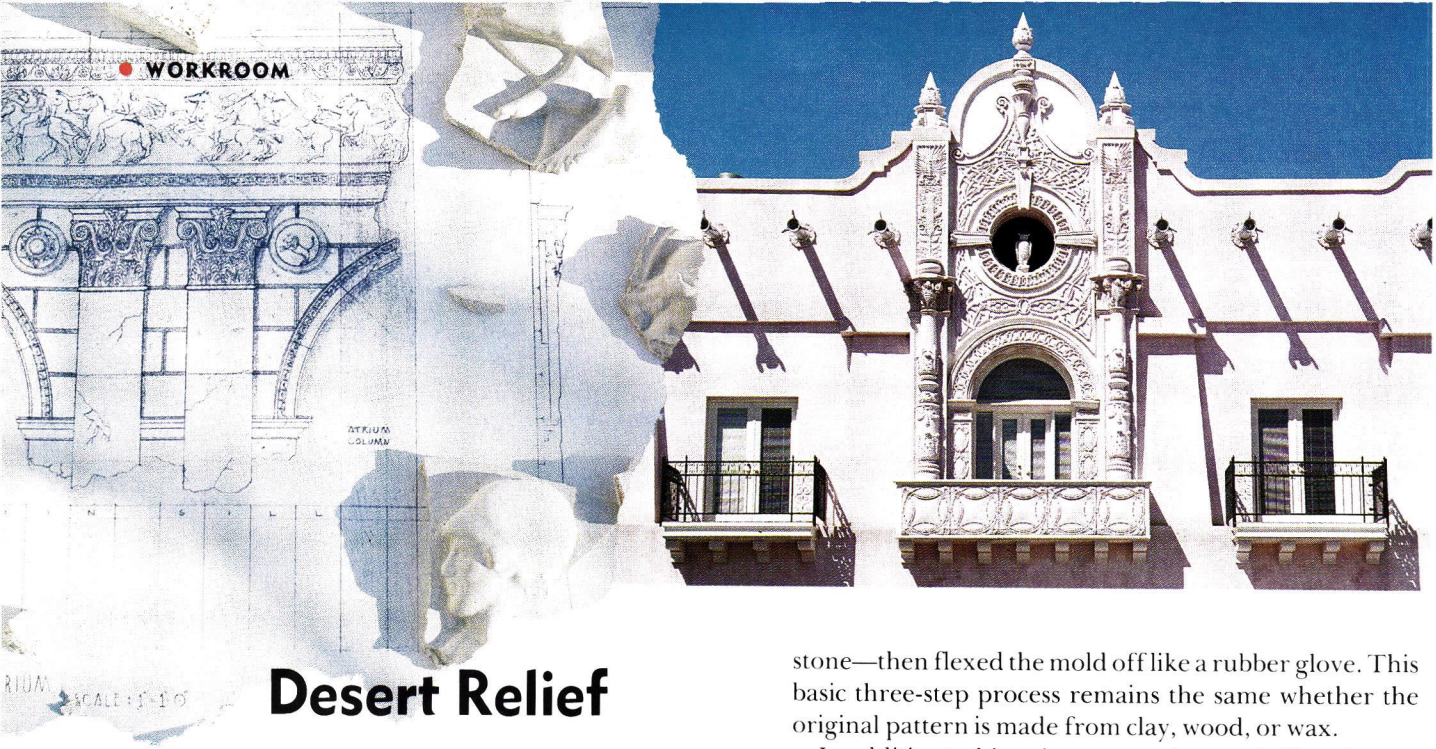
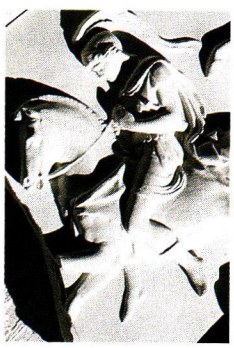


Desert Relief

Master craftsman Robb Boucher embellishes Arizona's classic stucco

BY CHRISTINE PITTEL

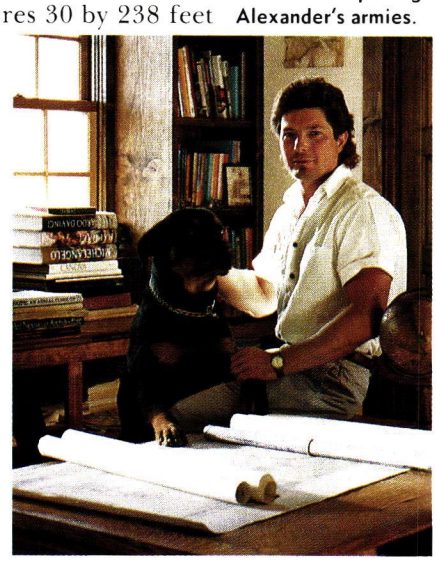


WHEN ROBB BOUCHER REBUILT AN old BMW motorcycle and rode off into the desert looking for ghost towns, he found himself a new career. In a mile-high canyon up in the Mule Mountains overlooking Mexico, he came to a halt in Bisbee, Arizona, a turn-of-the-century copper-mining town. Tired of being a carpenter, he started experimenting with clay and molds and stone casts while restoring the decorative tile work on an adobe hacienda. Architectural sculpture, with a southwestern slant, is now Boucher's self-taught speciality.

"I'm in love with the tradition of Spanish colonial architecture," says Boucher. "The buildings are pure and simple with a riot of ornament around the doorways." In 1987 he won the Arizona Governor's Historic Preservation Award for his painstaking re-creation of the façade of the Owl's Club, a residence for Tucson bachelors designed in 1900 by southwestern architect Henry Trost. Over the years the whimsical horned toad column capitals supporting pots of prickly pear, saguaro, and yucca cactuses—all of which were made of plaster of paris—had dissolved in the rain until there was nothing left. Boucher tracked down an eight-by-ten glass-plate negative of the building in the El Paso library and used that to map the face. He modeled the details in clay, then made a mold of the finished design out of flexible urethane, about a quarter-inch thick. He poured in the casting stone—a cementlike compound that resembles natural stone—then flexed the mold off like a rubber glove. This basic three-step process remains the same whether the original pattern is made from clay, wood, or wax.

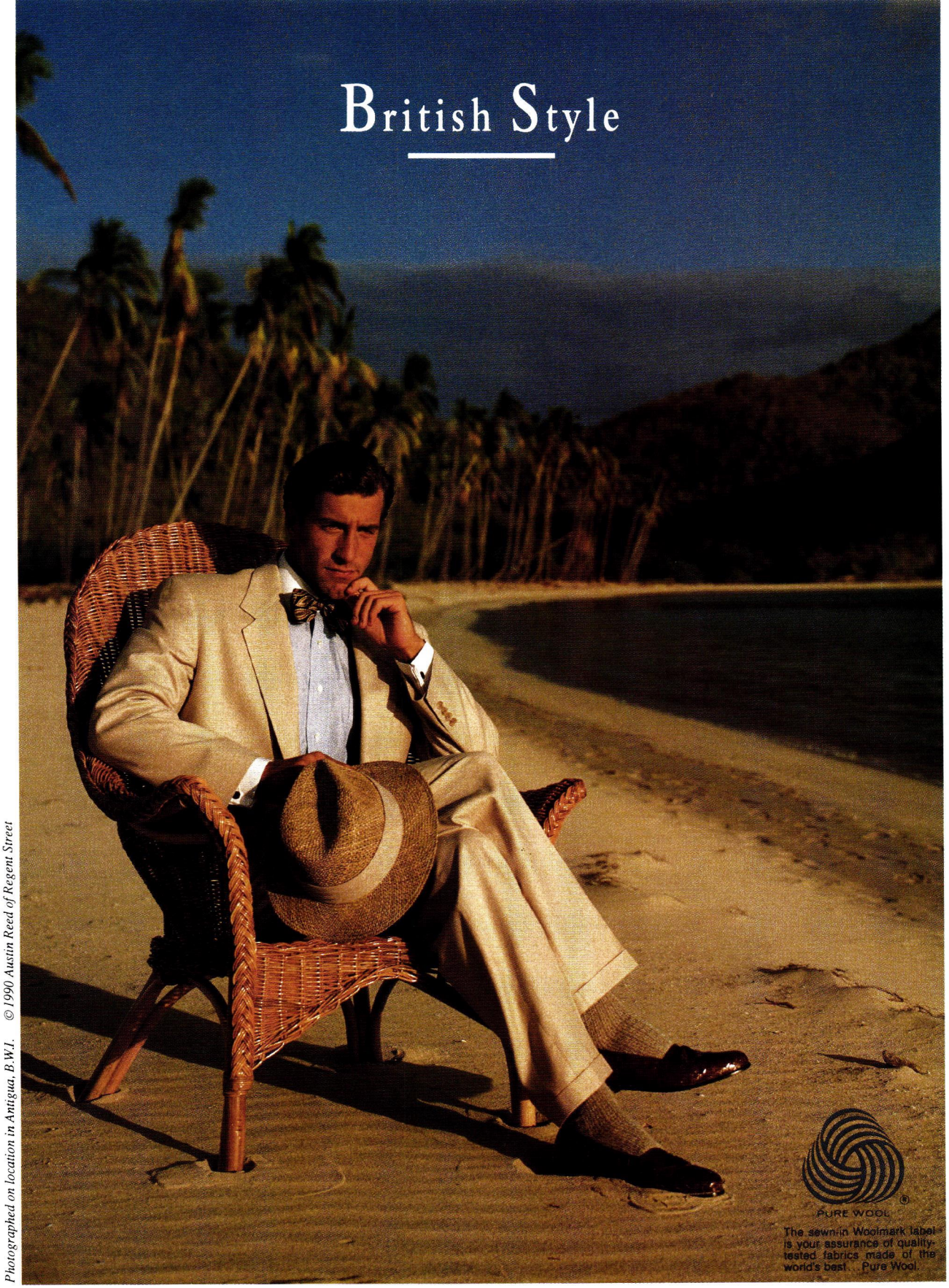
In addition to historic preservation work, Boucher accepts commissions for original designs, often depicting the flora and fauna of the Southwest. Flowering barrel cactuses and two bighorn ram's heads support the entrance arch he devised for a county library. Mice forage in one corner of two two-by-ten-foot desert murals—the tour de force of a two-story entrance portal designed for a Tucson office building. A tinted wash over the casting stone gives the finished product a sunburnt patina. "I'm trying to show people a world they're unaware of," explains Boucher, who draws inspiration from the vista outside his door.

In a loop of one of the last remaining desert rivers, screened by cottonwood trees and visited by jaguarundi, bobcats, rabbits, hawks, mule deer, mountain lions, coyotes, blue herons, and golden eagles, Boucher has built his studio. Modeled after the longhouse flanking a Franciscan mission (which harbored an iron forge, a tannery, and a winery in the Spanish vernacular version of a barn), Boucher's workspace measures 30 by 238 feet with a porch running the length. He built the cream-colored stucco structure for $10 a square foot, salvaging old wooden windows and heavy paneled doors and topping the roof with terra-cotta tiles. At one end is the core of



From his studio in the Arizona desert Robb Boucher, below, designs and restores architectural sculpture. Above left: Plaster fragments of his work and plans for a classical frieze. Above right: Boucher's award-winning restoration of the façade of the 1900 Owl's Club in Tucson. Left: Detail of a frieze depicting Alexander's armies.

MICHAEL MUNDY



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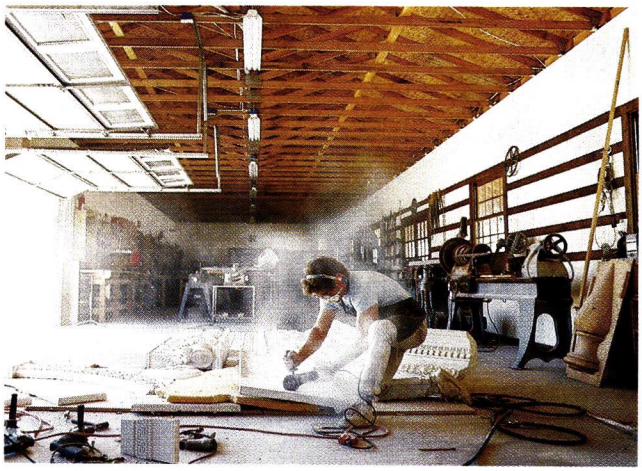

a much larger house he is planning in his head.

The bulk of the elongated one-story Casa de la Orilla (House by the River) is the workshop. This expanse might be considered Boucher's living room, since he spends most of his time here in the midst of present and past projects, which linger in the form of used molds and intricate wooden patterns arranged on the walls. The patterns have served their purpose but represent too many hours of work to be discarded. Boucher's rottweiler, Apollo, keeps him company as he moves from woodworking shop to modeling easel to casting pit. Around the workroom molds in many pieces are screwed together like a giant jigsaw puzzle weighing several tons. Visible through a haze of glinting stone dust, Boucher grinds the back of a casting, creating a fault line which he'll later fracture with a mallet and chisel. Mounted on a wall in the atrium of a client's house in Las Vegas, it will look like an ancient Greek temple fragment recently unearthed. The neoclassical frieze depicting Alexander's armies entering Babylon is taken from an eighty-foot-long academy cast of a work by the nineteenth-century Danish sculptor Thorvaldsen. The frieze, which Boucher spent four years restoring for free, has an exuberant array of 132 people, camels, horses, and elephants. When he first saw it in the library of the old Bisbee high school, Boucher "almost had a heart attack."

Though his commissions range from the classical to the commercial, Boucher's own imagery is rooted in the land. Sometimes the land comes to him. Recently he looked up from his molds and saw a four-foot-long bull snake hanging from the door on its way back from a swallow's nest, frantic birds helicoptering overhead. Boucher calmly held up a stick and allowed the snake to coil down safely. In his bedroom, Boucher often finds evidence of nocturnal visits by unseen animals. Before going to sleep at night he throws the French doors at the foot of his bed open to the river. "Most of my waking life has been dreams," he says. (Robert W. Boucher & Associates, Rte. 2, Box 21B, Hereford, AZ 85615; 602-366-5769) ▲

Through a haze of dust, Boucher grinds a casting. Finished, it will look like an ancient fragment newly unearthed

Mice forage in the corner of a desert mural, above. Top left: Boucher at work, grinding a stone casting. Center left: A fragment of a frieze. Left: Wooden patterns from completed projects ornament the walls of the workroom.

MICHAEL MUNDY

ELIZABETH ARDEN NEW YORK NY JACOBSONS BIRMINGHAM MI GROSSE POINT MI NORDSTROM SOUTH COAST PLAZA COSTA MESA CA PARAMUS NJ SARA FREDERICKS BOSTON MA

Bon Appétit, Y'All

A southerner finds family resemblances between down-home cooking and haute cuisine BY GENE HOVIS

During a recent trip to Paris I was again reminded that many of the delicious things I ate as a child in the South are practically first cousins of well-known French dishes. You can be sure that neither my mother nor her mother, Granny Dameron of blessed memory, had ever laid eyes on a French cookbook, but it does make a statement about the creative affinity between gifted cooks when they are handed some first-rate ingredients, wherever they happen to live in the world.

The French are justifiably proud of their famous soupe à l'oignon gratinée, served piping hot over oven-toasted bread in individual earthenware or china bowls, each portion topped with grated Gruyère that's been melted in the oven. It was very like the onion soup that made a frequent appearance on our table at home. My mother combined a small amount of meat with a huge amount of beef and veal bones (thanks to the generosity of our butcher) and stewed them for hours, producing a rich stock that rivaled that of the French soup. Both are thick with sliced onions that have been cooked slowly in butter to a warm golden color. However, since my mother had never been exposed to the French soup gratinée, her version lacked the toast and cheese.

Onion soup was popular in the restaurants of Les Halles, the legendary district of food markets and eating places that served the tastes and tables of Parisians for centuries before sadly falling victim to urban gentrification. It was at Les Halles that I was first introduced to the delicious French dish known as andouilles (and the smaller andouillettes), a type of sausage filled with strips of chitterlings, or chitlins, as we called them down home in North Carolina. Andouilles are boiled or grilled and served with lots of mustard and garnished with mashed potatoes or another vegetable. Sometimes they are cut into thin slices and served as an hors d'oeuvre.

Chitterlings have a delicate taste similar to tripe. Before cooking, my mother put them through a merciless scrubbing followed by an overnight soak in a pot of water laced with vinegar and baking soda and another washing the next day. They had to have been the cleanest chitterlings in town. Next, she simmered them for a long time in a broth of celery, onions, carrots, and a dash of red pepper flakes (I also add beer to the broth). She

My mother had never laid eyes on a French cookbook

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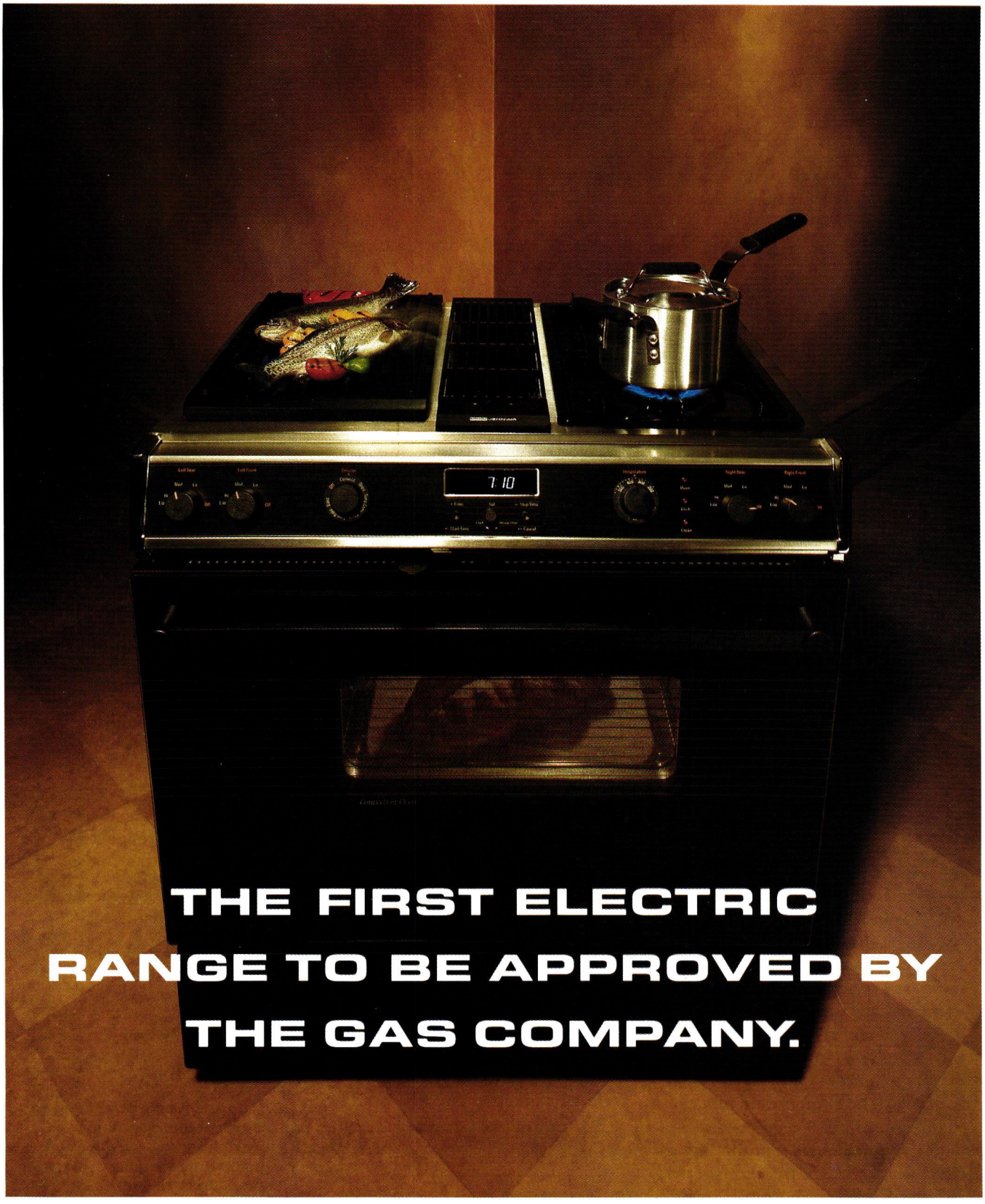

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Chitterlings. Place chitterlings in a large Dutch oven with garlic, onions, cayenne pepper, celery, and vinegar. Pour beer in pot and add enough cold water to cover ingredients. Bring to a boil, lower heat, cover pot, and simmer slowly about 3 hours or until the chitterlings are fork tender. Add more water if necessary. When done, drain the chitterlings. Cut into thumb-size strips, dip in beaten egg, and dredge in flour. Fry in about an inch of hot oil, turning the pieces on both sides.

Dipping sauce. Melt butter in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Sauté chopped onion until wilted. Add remaining ingredients. Lower heat, cover pan, and cook 30 minutes. Makes 2 cups.

The chitterlings should be kept warm in a 250-degree oven until ready to serve. Accompany with dipping sauce. Serves 6.

CHICKEN, SAUSAGE, AND BEAN CASSEROLE

- 2 cups navy beans
- Chicken broth
- ¼ pound lean bacon, cubed
- 3½–4 pound chicken, cut into 8–10 pieces
- 1½ pounds garlic sausage
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- ½ cup finely minced celery
- 1 medium green pepper, finely chopped
- 1 medium red pepper, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup buttered breadcrumbs

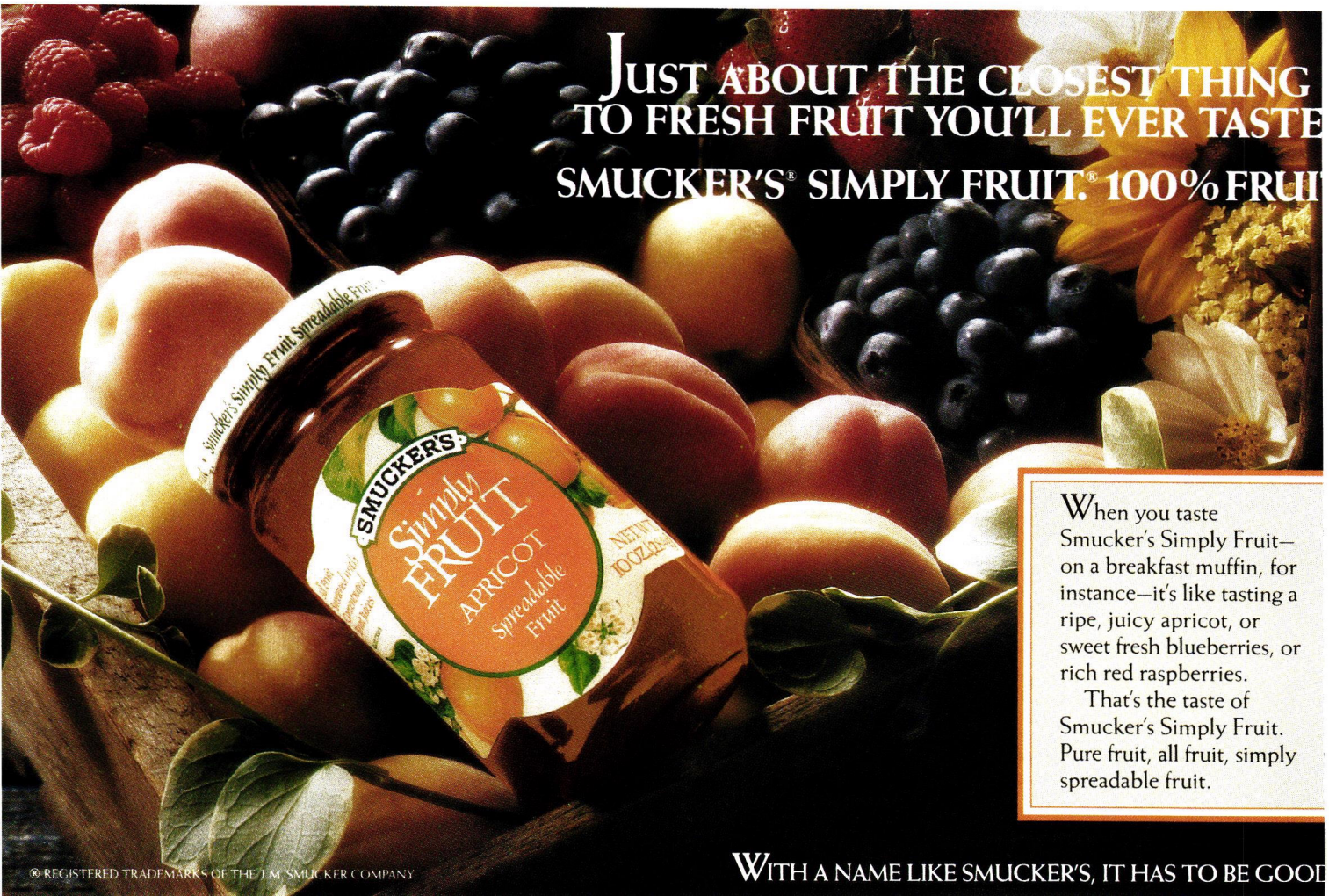
In a heavy casserole or Dutch oven cook the navy beans according to package directions, using chicken broth in place of water. Set aside when tender. In a large heavy skillet sauté sausages that have been cut into ½-inch rounds on the diagonal. Toss and cook until lightly browned. Remove from pan and set aside.

In the skillet sauté the chopped bacon. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside, leaving the rendered fat. Lightly brown the chicken pieces on both sides. Remove and set aside. Add sliced sausage. Then add chopped onion, garlic, celery, and green and red peppers. Sauté until onions are transparent and vegetables slightly soft. Combine meats, vegetables, and cooked beans in the casserole. While skillet is still hot, deglaze with the vinegar, using a wooden spoon to scrape up the crusty bits on the bottom. Add to the casserole. Toss carefully to distribute the ingredients evenly. Sprinkle top with buttered breadcrumbs and bake in a 350-degree oven 1 hour. This can be made in advance but should be removed from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Serves 4–5.

CARAMEL CUSTARD

- 3 large eggs at room temperature, lightly beaten
- ¼ cup superfine sugar
- Pinch salt
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup water

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. In a mixing bowl, beat together eggs, superfine sugar, and salt until eggs are thickened and sugar is well incorporated. Scald the half-and-half and stir very slowly into the egg mixture. Strain mixture equally into 6 4-ounce custard cups arranged in a roasting pan. Pour 1 inch of hot water around the cups and set the pan in preheated oven. Bake 40–50 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Chill if desired. In a heavy-bottomed skillet, melt granulated sugar over low heat. Add water, stirring constantly until the syrup turns golden brown. Remove from heat. Drizzle the warm syrup over warm or chilled custards. Serves 6. ▲



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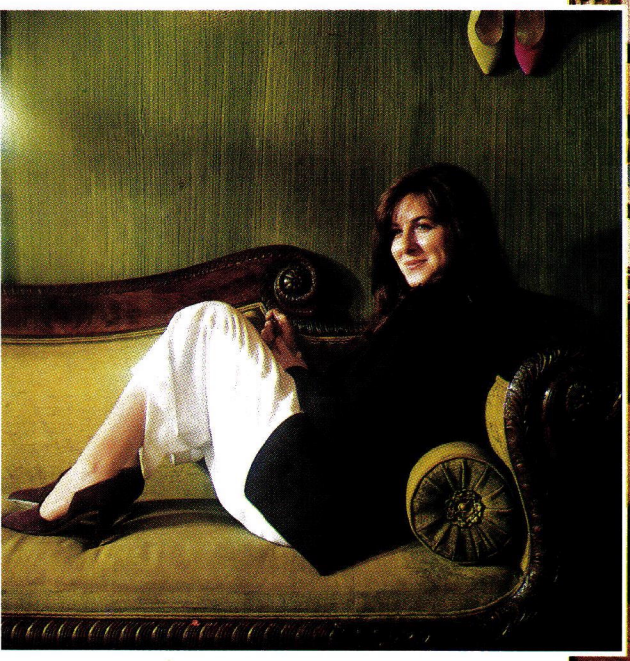

If the Shoe Fits

Vanessa Noel's apartment is a tour de force of fancy footwork

BY ELAINE HUNT

Shoe designer Vanessa Noel, top left, curls up on a Samuel McIntire sofa in her East 66th Street shop. Top right: She allows her shoes free run of the bedroom. Above: The living room is filled with a lush mix of patterns from zebra stripes to paisley.

Vanessa Noel says she can dance all night in precariously high heels and still sprint for a cab at dawn. Her footwear wardrobe encompasses forties-style blue suede pumps, red satin mules, and classic stilettos in pale Fortuny batiks—all of which bear the Vanessa Noel label. A twenty-eight-year-old self-described shoe addict, Noel began sketching out-of-the-ordinary footwear as a fine arts major at Cornell. After a few postgrad years spent "bouncing around the world"—a period highlighted by a search for the best cobblers in Italy—the Main Line Philadelphian settled in Manhattan and devoted herself to shoe design. In 1987, with her first collection complete, she opened a tiny Upper East Side shop that she likens to a 1920s Paris salon.

Furnished with fine American antiques, many borrowed from her parents' vast collection, the shop has become a meeting ground for the well-heeled set. One couple found each other over coffee and shoes, another brought in a pair of judges and got married, and Noel herself uses the space for dinner parties. She lives several blocks away in an antiques-filled two-room apartment in which shoes are displayed like sculpture on walls, lampshades, tables, and rugs. Says Noel, "It doesn't make sense to me to conceal something so beautiful in a closet." Footwear, she acknowledges, is both her business and her pastime. Her designs have recently made their way into Bergdorf Goodman. And when not dreaming up new models, she relaxes by twisting wire into the shape of—what else?—more shoes. (Vanessa Noel, 26 East 66 St., New York, NY 10021; 212-737-0115) ◆

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Kemble Interiors

Palm Beach Best-Sellers

A novelist tours her favorite haunts and finds lampshades and fanciful lettuce BY PAT BOOTH

Palm Beach is a town whose point is not so much its money but its attitude. Its class structure is modeled on the aristocratic European tradition rather than on the democratic American one. What counts is understatement and a rebellious devil-may-care sense of fun. What is anathema is pretension, overt signs of grandeur, taking yourself and your cash too seriously. The media seems determined to display the town as a geriatric waiting room for the imminent journey to Hades, enlivened by a few spectacular divorces along the way. In reality Palm Beach is like any other small town in America, a down-to-earth place where life revolves around families, children, and, of course, shopping. What follows is an insider's guide to Palm Beach's best purveyors of design, antiques, ceramics, collectibles, and other of life's essentials.

Embellished lamp bases topped with hand-painted shades line a table in front of a screen with botanical and fish prints designed by Kemble Interiors.

Kemble Interiors When you finally sell the ball-bearing factory in Cincinnati and decide on a glamorous retirement in Palm Beach, your shrewdest move would be to hire Mimi Maddock McMakin as your decorator. She does the area's grandest houses but insists that her designs be "squishy." Squishy? "Houses are for living in. They should be fun and out of the ordinary. Inexpensive things are often more beautiful than things that cost a fortune. Comfort is the most important factor. Sofas should be big and deep—and you should never forget that children are going to be sick on them." These are just the sort of sentiments you might expect from the Social Register scion of one of Palm Beach's oldest and most respected families, the Maddocks, but despite her practical leanings, McMakin has a weakness for frills. The tiny shop that she runs with partner Brooke Wendel Huttig is brimming with whimsical painted lampshades, botanical prints, dried flower topiaries, painted sisal rugs, and chintzes—all of which might find a place in one of her decorative schemes, as might a few of your children's drawings. McMakin goes for bananas not ficus, pelicans not eagles, and her tables rest on everything except wooden stilts. Give her a call. It'll take ten years off the time it takes you to understand Palm Beach. (294 Hibiscus Ave., Palm Beach, FL 33480; 407-659-5556)

Isabel's Et Cetera

Passementerie, silk plaid pillows, flowered fabrics, and prints, top left, are specialties at Kemble Interiors, a shop owned by decorator Mimi Maddock McMakin, above left. Left: Dodie Thayer's ceramic bounty at Isabel's Et Cetera.

Peter Werner Broken in by Mimi, you are ready for the next step—a trip across the bridge to West Palm's antiques mile, home to Peter Werner's trove of fairly priced treasures. Here is where you can buy Diana Vreeland's cerise velvet Louis XVI–style fauteuils en cabriolet or an Italian countess's French faience roundels that made their way south via a

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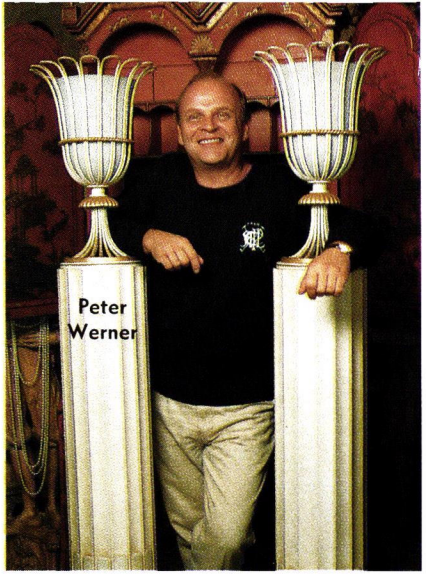


Paris flea market in the thirties. Catch silent-film star Ramon Novarro's 1920s Venetian bar, leather-topped, gold-leafed, and painted with leaping fauns. Admire the larger-than-life blackamoor that spent forty years in an alcove at the Fontainebleau Hotel. Take home a striped Regency sofa with leopards and tigers prowling across the back. Peter Werner presides over it all with a curled lip and a puckish gleam in his eye. This is not brown furniture for your Park Avenue triplex, but it is quintessential Palm Beach. (3709 South Dixie Hwy., West Palm Beach, FL 33405; 407-832-0428)

R. J. King & Co. David Vallese and John Eader are the new kids on the antiques block. Two years ago they moved here from Greenwich Village, where their shop, R. J. King & Co., is still in business on Bleecker Street, and they now have two locations, in both Palm Beach proper and West Palm. They specialize in top-drawer furniture, from Louis XV to Italian neoclassical, and their prices are fifty cents to the Madison Avenue dollar. The unifying theme is wood, Vallese and Eader's consuming passion. The rich yellowy brown walnut of a German Biedermeier sofa harmonizes with the peacock cherry wood of a Louis Philippe armoire. Ebony, walnut, and birch merge happily on the marquetry surface of a rare three-drawer Saxon commode. A late eighteenth century fruitwood dining table is surrounded by examples of rare French lemonwood and satinwood. These are pieces that get the adrenaline flowing. More important, the trust quotient at R. J. King is high. David Vallese knows his stuff, and he's telling. If a hinge has been replaced, a surface restored, you are the first to know—and presale when it counts. (3725 South Dixie Hwy., West Palm Beach, FL 33405; 407-832-1717)

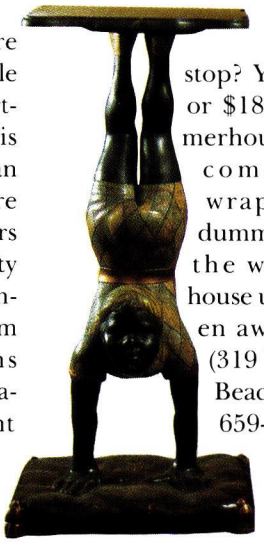
Isabel's Et Cetera The window display at Isabel's Et Cetera is a ceramic vegetable patch from heaven. This is the only place in the cosmos where you can buy Dodie Thayer's delicate green lettuce in the form of teapots, pitchers, plates, even salt and pepper shakers. The couple from La Jolla ogling the recent crop in the window told me they had been collecting Thayer's garden stuff for years. Across America savvy buyers have been busy doing the same. Prices rise regularly, but at the current $1,200 for a large tureen you can own one of the world's most prized heads of lettuce. (234 South County Rd., Palm Beach, FL 33480; 407-655-5394)

Déjà Vu When Palm Beachers tire of their couture clothes, they peddle them to Maxie Barley, who with partner/kid sister Marilyn Lanham is sworn to a silence more sacred than the confessional. The secret deals are done on Mondays and Fridays. Cars steal up to the side door. The shifty millionaires scurry into the consignment room. There's an eight-item minimum, and for two months Maxie will try to peddle the old Chanel and Valentino—fifty percent goes to her and fifty to you. Does this really happen and on what scale? Well, Maxie says one Palm Beacher has a sale limit of one hundred items a month. Another has a two hundred–item limit, but luckily that is only during the high season.

As for buying things, true blue Palm Beachers are brazen. They shop in daylight. Less secure snowbirds who are Maxie regulars make an 8 A.M. appointment and shop with the lights off. Whatever. Déjà Vu is a gold mine for one reason: ancient money loves a bargain. Old families count pennies. Maxie is considering opening other stores, but what plays in Palm Beach might not run in Dallas and Beverly Hills. New money has no respect for cash. (219 Royal Poinciana Way, Via Testa, Palm Beach, FL 33480; 407-833-6624)

The Summerhouse Just about the only time Palm Beachers venture onto Worth Avenue is to buy each other presents at the Summerhouse, a home-furnishings boutique in which wonderful objects, both antique and reproduction, are the object. There are Victorian tole trays bearing dog portraits (you can commission one of your favorite Fidos), Victorian engraved silver biscuit tins, botanical watercolors in handsome black and gold frames, and hand-hooked wool rugs featuring pigs and rabbits. Or how about a sheep-shaped doorstop? You can spend $8 or $18,000 at the Summerhouse, and presents come beautifully wrapped. Pick up a dummy board to stick in the window of your house up North to frighten away the burglars. (319 Worth Ave., Palm Beach, FL 33480; 407-659-6036) ▲

Peter Werner, top left, stands between a pair of 1940s gilded iron urns in his West Palm antiques shop where the wares include two fanciful Italian ceramic busts from the fifties, left, and a 19th-century blackamoor Venetian side table, below.



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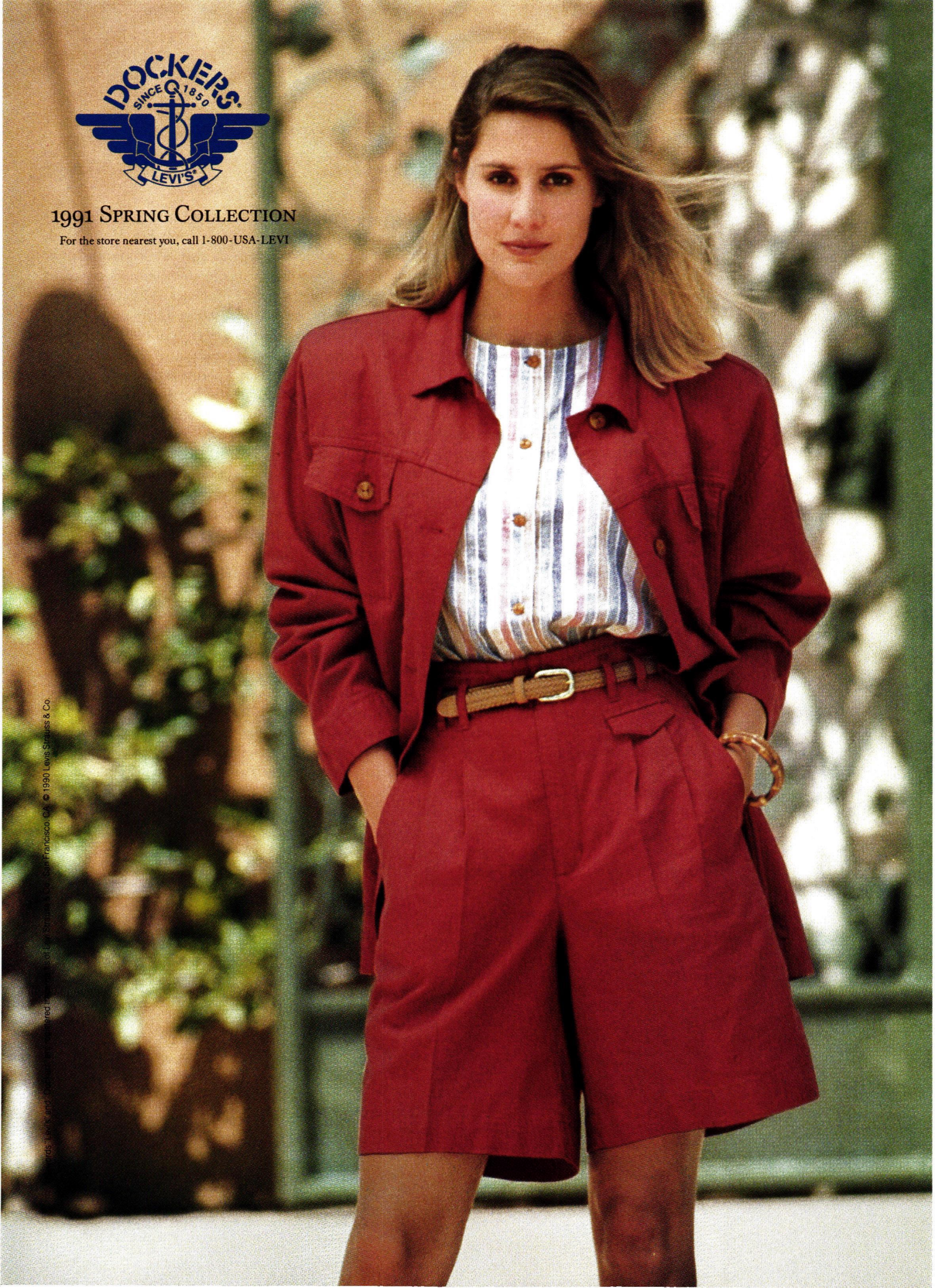
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Green Giants

All gardeners need some plants they can look up to

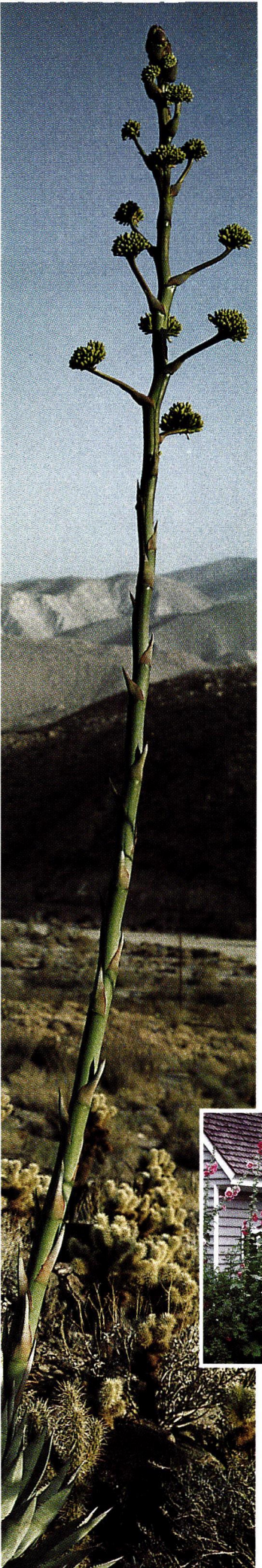
BY PATRICIA THORPE

For over ten years in New York City there has been a store called Think Big! The premise of the store is simple: an everyday object made enormous becomes funny and irresistible. Paper clips the size of clipboards; tennis racquets the size of a small person—the shopper feels as if he has wandered into the home of a yuppie giant, a giant who drinks brandy from a snifter one foot across and makes hollandaise with a whisk that could stir a swimming pool.

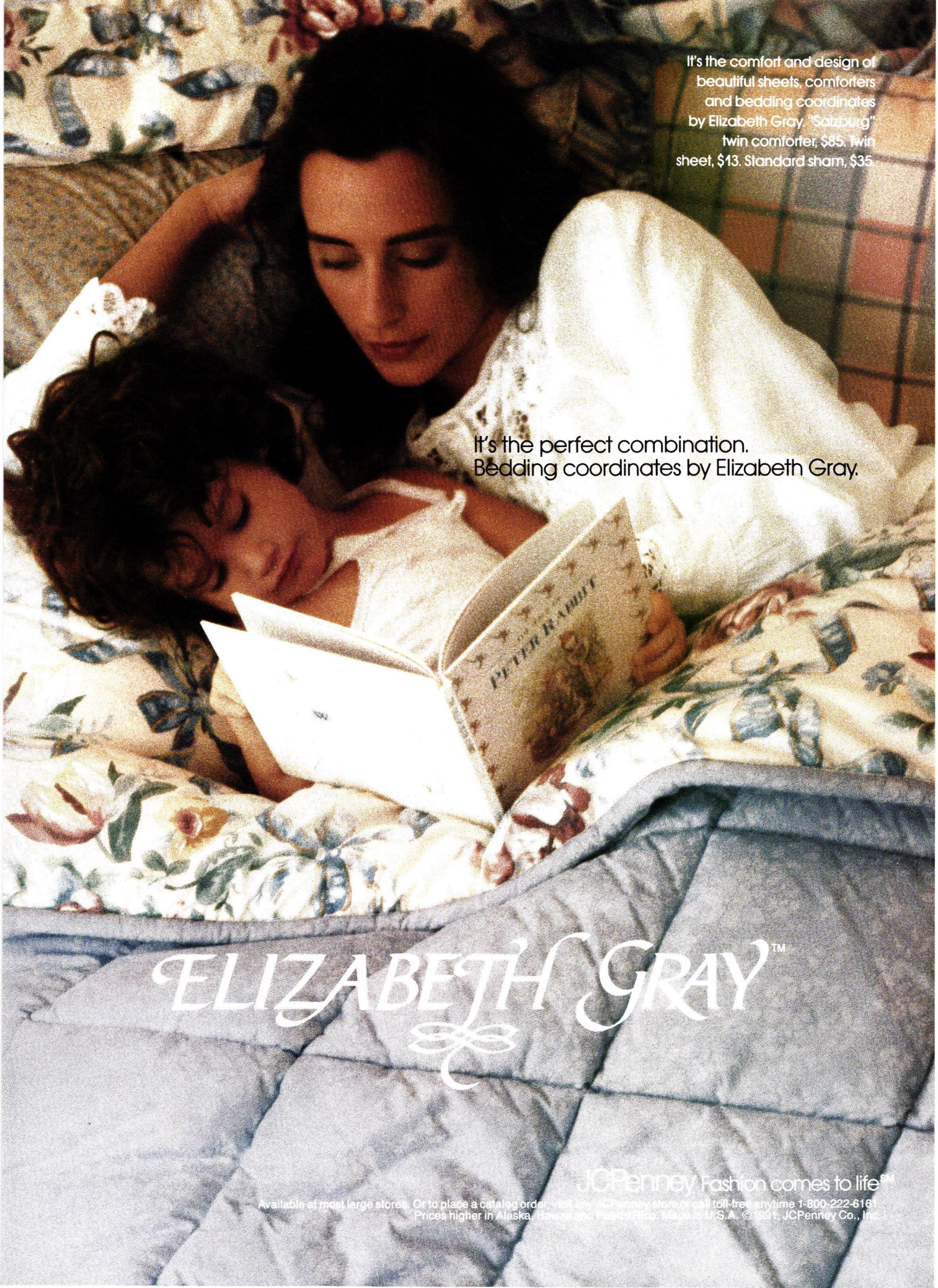
We have all enjoyed imagining that we are much bigger or much smaller than the objects around us—this is part of the delight we take in *Jack and the Beanstalk, Gulliver's Travels,* or *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* We watch our small children with envy as they move through the garden and we try to recall what it felt like to stand as tall as a tulip. We don't need a magic mushroom to feel like a small creature next to a big flower—we just need the right plants. Enormous plants. Not trees, which can take a lifetime to reach grandeur, but plants that start from nothing in early spring and rocket up past eye level to bloom against the summer sky. Big plants challenge us with their vigor to find exciting ways to use them in the garden.

In the recent era of border making, the floral seating plan has become as stylized as an Emily Post dinner party: low 'Silver Mound' artemisia and lady's-mantle in the front, middle-size plants in the middle, and anything over four feet tall in the back. *Far* back. The unfortunate gardener who places veronicastrum in the middle foreground can look forward to a season of embarrassment as acute as that of a hostess who places the wrong fork on the outside. But many big plants are unsuited to this kind of regimentation, and the border setup does not always enable us to see the biggest at their best. Too often a border is best served by low-key plants with corporate personalities. It is not the setting for eccentrics, troublemakers, plants with abundant personalities—the kind of plants that introduce an element of risk into the landscape, plants that suggest the gardener may not always have the upper hand. You can't appreciate the sculptural effect of gigantic leaves unless you see them in the open; you can't feel the delicious threat of a tall plant until you stand under it.

The recent popularity of *Crambe cordifolia* and *Onopordum Acanthium* seems an indication that gardeners are looking for more outrageous plants these days. Neither species gets much attention in the books of twenty years ago, but in the past five years these plants have shown up in glossy photographs in all the right places. I am generally suspicious of trendy plants but crambe is disarmingly eccentric: it looks like a cross between baby's breath and rhubarb. The large leaves are described in catalogues as



The century plant, left, towers over its western landscape. Above: Graceful hollyhocks reach for the roof. Right: The giant silver thistle makes a startling biennial sculpture.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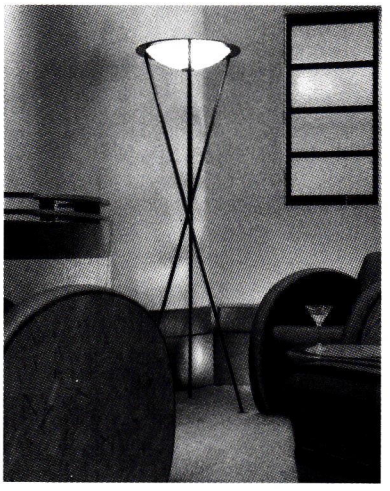

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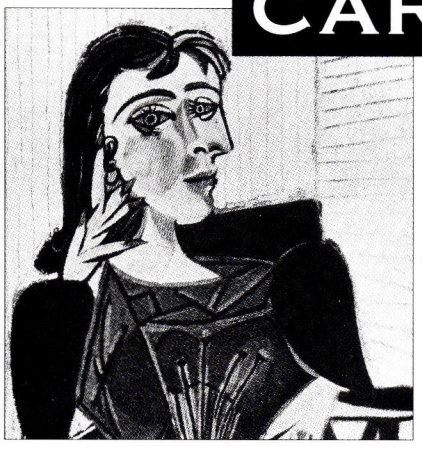

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"coarse," by which they mean ugly. A leafless spike shoots up over six feet and produces an airy cloud of delicate white flowers; unlike floppy gypsophila, the entire shimmering fountain stays stiffly erect and deserves to be seen in the round.

The rhubarb-like leaves of crambe may remind you that rhubarb can be a stunning perennial if you let it out of the vegetable garden. Above the flashy red-stem leaves a substantial plume of creamy flowers rises up to eight feet in early summer. If you are self-conscious about its humble origins, there are stately ornamental rheums, some with deep red foliage and flowers, that will top ten feet.

The giant silver thistle, *Onopordum Acanthium,* is more like a modern sculpture than a plant, a shining creation of steel needles which disdains the confines of border planting and prefers to settle itself as close to the path as possible. Like many biennials and like all thistles, it seeds abundantly where it is least convenient, so you find yourself cringing as you try to sneak by its spiny reach. You may ask why anyone would *want* to grow an eight-foot-tall thistle, a good question in August when it looks awful and you have to find a way to chop it down without impaling yourself.

A plant that can go from seed to seven feet in one season seems especially magical, but in spite of that magic we hide our giant sunflowers among the corn. Unlike the species mentioned above, all of which are most effective as single plants with lots of space around them, sunflowers are at their best in a row or mass. Hollyhocks are another old-fashioned favorite best used in bulk, their waving multicolored spires making a forceful vertical statement that can become abruptly horizontal after a stiff breeze.

All the above are hardy enough for most American gardens, and there are many more hefty showstoppers for the north. Elecampane, rodgersias to grace the waterside, towering mulleins, silphiums with entertaining leaves and silly flowers—these are the briefest introduction. In milder and semitropical climates the landscape fairly explodes with Brobdingnagians. No visitor to California will soon forget his first sight of a century plant, *Agave americana,* about to bloom. The flower stalk looks exactly like a piece of asparagus except that it is twelve feet tall. It is a superb joke, the perfect vegetable for the giant who makes hollandaise. The century plant playfully reminds us, as do all outlandish plants, of the wonder and power of the green world, a world that extends far beyond the border. We can take part in the magic of this world even as we learn that we cannot always control it. ▲

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Drawn to the Master

Four New York dealers train their eye on museum-quality draftsmanship

BY AMY FINE COLLINS

"Drawings make you feel closer to the artist than paintings," says Spencer Samuels, above left. Above: His 18th-century sketch of a cossack. Margot Gordon, below, with a work by Circignano, has an extensive inventory of Italian drawings, including a c. 1630 Guercino, left.

Ever since the landmark Chatsworth sale of 1984, when prices quadrupled in a day, old-master drawings have been luring new buyers. While the markets for contemporary and impressionist paintings appear for the moment to have flattened, prices for old-master drawings hold strong—a situation likely to be reflected by the price tags at Sanford Smith's "Works on Paper" show in New York next month. Yet purchasing this art can be an intimidating process. Old-master drawings are somewhat inaccessible—attributions often depend on the inexact science of connoisseurship, and collectors must be willing to forgo splashy status symbols for more elusive pleasures such as intimacy with an artist's creative process and a sense of history. "This is not a pursuit for vainglorious egos," advises dealer David Tunick. "It takes a lot of confidence to put money into something most people can't easily recognize." It also takes the guidance of an expert. Here, meet four of New York's top practitioners of the trade.

Spencer Samuels's profession came to him as naturally as the color of his eyes. He grew up among the treasures of the fabled antiques firm French & Co., established by his father in 1906. His rarefied reminiscences include a boyhood visit to client William Randolph Hearst's San Simeon ("We called him the Chief") and visits to the gallery by such grandes dames of style as Marjorie Merriweather Post and Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan. In 1943, having studied at Yale, the University of Florence, and the Courtauld Institute, the young Samuels founded

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHRIS SANDERS; COURTESY SPENCER A. SAMUELS &

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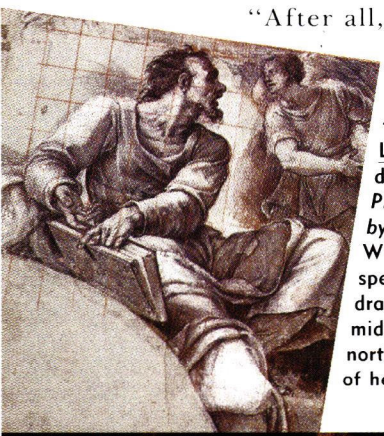
PASSY - Printed Percale

the firm's paintings department. French & Co. was sold in 1966, and Samuels now deals in paintings and drawings independently—currently out of a gallery in one of the former Finch College buildings. In his day this half-century veteran has scouted and sold some major masterpieces, among them Cranach's *Adam and Eve*, now on view at the Norton Simon Museum. He also discovered an early Vermeer, which went into Basia Johnson's collection. "It took me twenty years to prove its authenticity," he says. "You have to have a lot of patience in this business." At the moment, much of Samuels's time is spent building a collection of European paintings for a Texas foundation, which he directs. But he is still filled with enthusiasm for drawings, whether a recently sold Andrea Solario study of Leonardo's *Saint Matthew*—"probably the earliest record of the figure in the *Last Supper* as it originally existed"—or an anonymous eighteenth-century costume sketch priced at $1,200. "With drawings you feel closer to the artist than with paintings," he explains. Samuels doesn't mind that his children haven't followed him in the business. "After all, we've had a good long run." (Spencer A. Samuels & Co., 52 East 78 St., New York, NY 10021; 212-288-9333)



David Tunick, below, in his town-house gallery. Left: Sebastiano del Piombo's *A Prophet Addressed by an Angel*. Mia Weiner, above right, specializes in drawings like the mid 16th century northern Italian study of heads, above left.

Margot Gordon has approached art from every possible angle. Since studying art history at Smith, she has painted, sculpted, collected, and worked as a docent and dealer—first in modern and contemporary art and now in old-master Italian drawings. With her well-developed eye, she has a knack for championing established but underrated artists. From Florence in 1955, during her junior year abroad, she begged her father to send $1,200 for a Giorgio Morandi canvas, and she acquired a number of Henri Laurens's cubist sculptures at a time when he was virtually forgotten in this country. Gordon's high-ceilinged apartment-cum-gallery—built in 1917 as an artist's studio—leaves no doubt that her tastes and knowledge range wide and deep. An eighteenth-century Neapolitan portrait cozies up to a Matisse drawing, Milton Avery and Guido Reni paintings make themselves equally at home, and Magdalena Abakanowicz heads stare across the living room at seventeenth-century Bolognese terra-cottas of saints.

Eventually her husband, a lawyer, challenged Gordon: "Isn't there one undervalued area that you could specialize in?" She reflects, "I was so sick of all the hype surrounding contemporary art, I was ready to move back in time." Then the Italian old-master dealer Marcello Aldega, whose base is in Rome, invited her to be his New York partner. Six years later, with the biggest inventory of Italian drawings in the city (about 1,000, priced from $1,000 to $400,000), she attracts an international clientele, from interior decorators to museum curators. "How can anyone spend $125,000 on a trendy painter when you can get a Bernini sketch?" she asks, indicating a freely penciled religious allegory by the baroque genius. And Gordon stands behind her words. She builds her private collection "in a very simple manner." Like the breeder who

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY MIA N. WEINER; CHRIS SANDERS (2); NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

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can't resist keeping one puppy from every litter, Gordon often holds onto one drawing from each show. (Margot Gordon, 137 East 66 St., New York, NY 10021; 212-988-2965)

Seated in his grand turn-of-the-century East Side town house, surrounded by important works of art, **David Tunick** clearly relishes recounting his humble beginnings in the old-master prints and drawings trade. Twenty-five years ago, having decided not to go to medical school, he "traveled around with a dog and station wagon, selling art on college campuses." Attempting to consolidate his art history education, he worked for two years at the Metropolitan Museum and attended graduate school—"that lasted three months." Tunick, who modestly calls himself "a technician, not a scholar," reached the conclusion that "spending one's own hard-earned money is the best way to learn." Today known for breaking auction records, he follows a strategy of accumulating "an inventory of ten to fifty masterpieces." A drawing, he notes, should be published. "It should also have a great provenance, and there must be no question about attribution." Among his current holdings are a Greuze, judged by the Frick Collection's Edgar Munhall to be quintessential, tagged at $750,000, and a Fragonard he'll part with for $850,000, deemed by the Louvre's Pierre Rosenberg to be "the finest red chalk Tivoli drawing outside of a museum." Tunick's detractors gripe that he pays too much and sells too dear, but this passionate dealer dismisses such remarks. "That's what they said when I bought a Sebastiano del Piombo in 1977 for $200,000. Now it's in the National Gallery. And that's what I was told when I bought this building in 1979. If in real estate it's location, location, location, then with art, it's quality, quality, quality." (David Tunick, 12 East 81 St., New York, NY 10028; 212-570-0090)

> "How can anyone spend $125,000 on a trendy painter when you can get a Bernini sketch?"

"Unfortunately, my father didn't leave me enough money to be a collector," explains **Mia Weiner,** a specialist in fifteenth- to eighteenth-century Italian drawings. "But as a dealer I can own old masters at least on a temporary basis." Despite a "compulsive craving" for drawings, it was not an easy profession to break into. "I must have had blinders on. I just knew that come hell or high water, this is what I had to do." Before venturing out on her own, she worked for the late Herbert Feist for four years, and ever since she's been adding to her formidable expertise. Every July this avid researcher can be found in the archives of Florence, and every August she "hits as many churches and museums in Europe as possible." She does most of her buying abroad too, though occasionally a wayward treasure turns up in an unexpected location. Visiting a "friend of a friend," she found her attention riveted to a sketch on the wall. Her hunch that his "modest French drawing" was in fact an Annibale Carracci turned out to be on target.

Weiner's duplex apartment/gallery is a testament to her dedication to her field. Downstairs, she has accumulated a library that even a museum might envy. Upstairs, her furniture—"*not* for sale!"—is all Italian Renaissance and baroque. Even her dark blond hair is styled long and straight in the manner of a quattrocento Madonna. Weiner has mixed feelings about the recent surge of interest in old-master drawings. Formerly a collegial group, dealers have grown more cutthroat, she says, and auction houses now cater more to collectors than to the trade. Half-pleased, half-perturbed, she sighs, "Old-master drawing collecting has become terribly chic." (Mia N. Weiner, 8 East 77 St., New York, NY 10021; 212-249-9193) ▲

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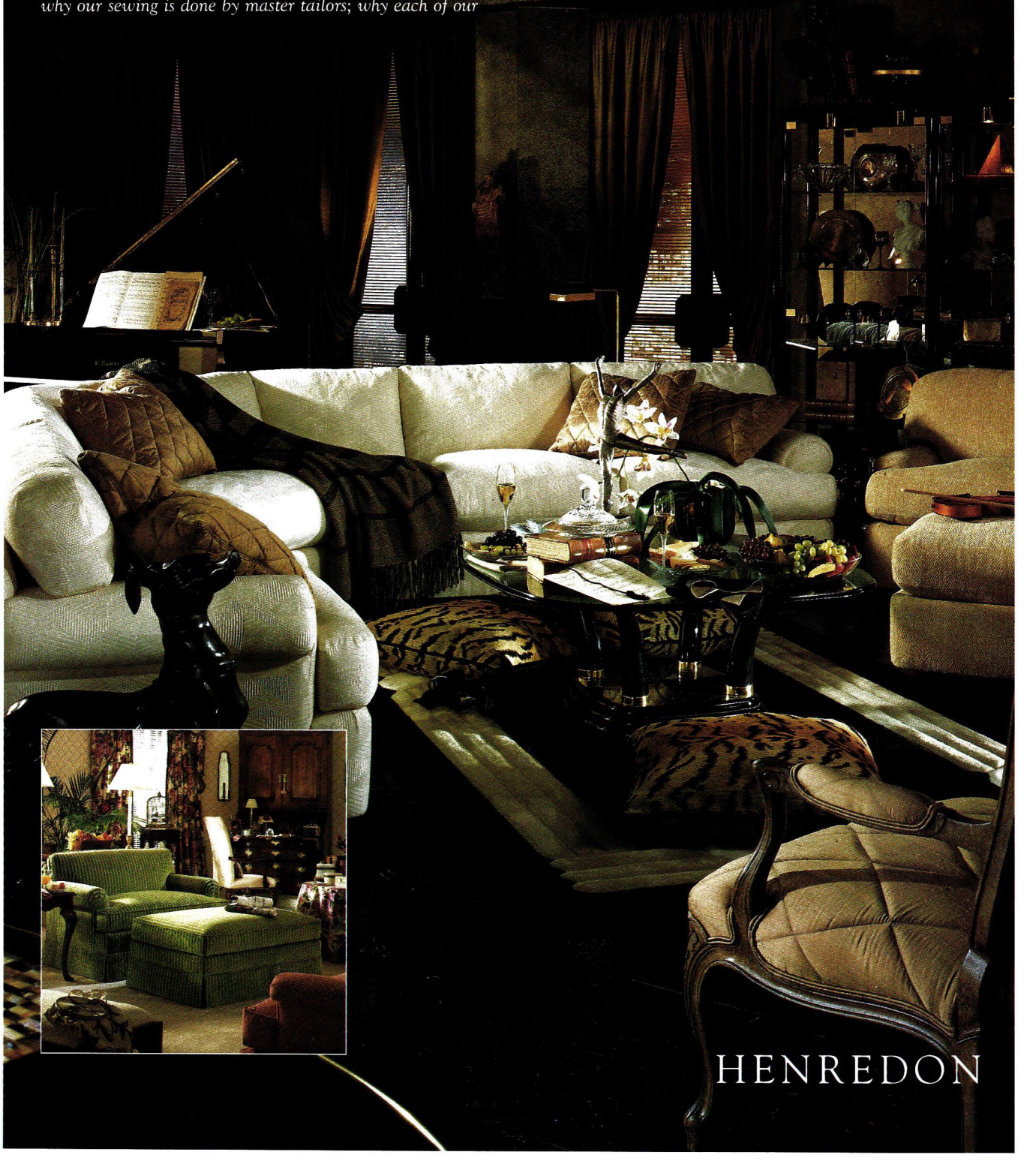


HENREDON

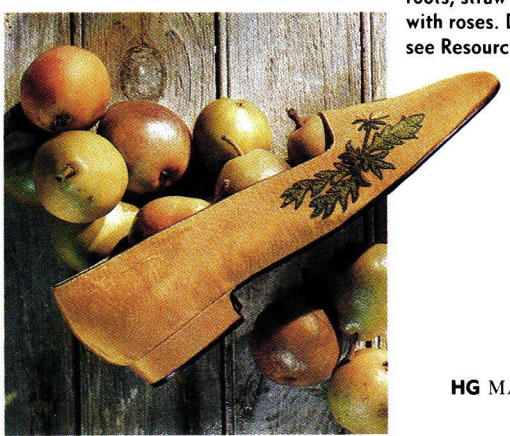
LIVING WITH

style

BY WENDY GOODMAN

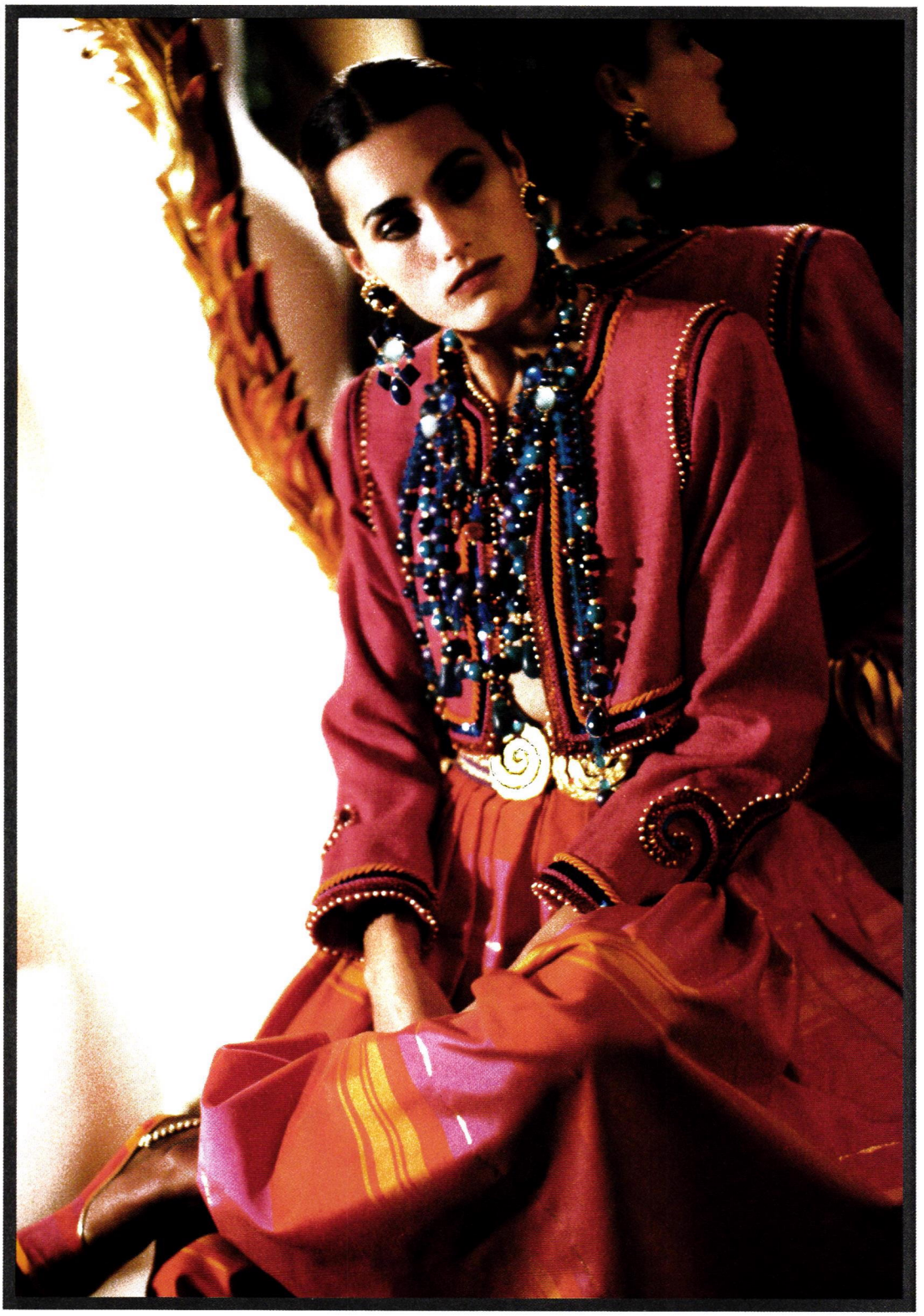
Isabel Canovas's new accessories for spring are plucked fresh from the garden

Are they earrings or bronze topiary birds dipped in 18-kt gold, or both? Isabel Canovas's accessories are always something of a surprise. This spring, the world's gardens—Persian, Italian, French, and English—have inspired the Paris-based designer's fertile imagination. Canovas captures the elegant formality of French gardens by stamping oxidized bronze cuffs with hedges in a fleur-de-lis pattern. The romantic mystery of ancient Persian gardens is evoked by embroidering rose trellises on pavilion-shaped handbags lined in a shocking pink ribbed silk. Canovas also turns away from the pages of garden history to sew sunflower silk flats with dandelions, that most dreaded of weeds for the seasoned gardener. Gauntlet gloves stitched with herbs and "I loved you in my dreams" ensure that those who merely dream of gardens are not overlooked.



Isabel Canovas's earthy delights. Clockwise from top left: Dreamy gloves dressed with herb blossoms sprout beans; fruit-filled basket bag festooned with tender rosebuds resembles a flowerpot; oxidized bronze cuff boasts a boxwood parterre; silk shoe with encroaching dandelion; leather handbag has Persian roots; straw hat brims with roses. Details see Resources.

PHOTO ARTHUR ELGORT



YVES SAINT LAURENT

rive gauche

RALPH LAUREN

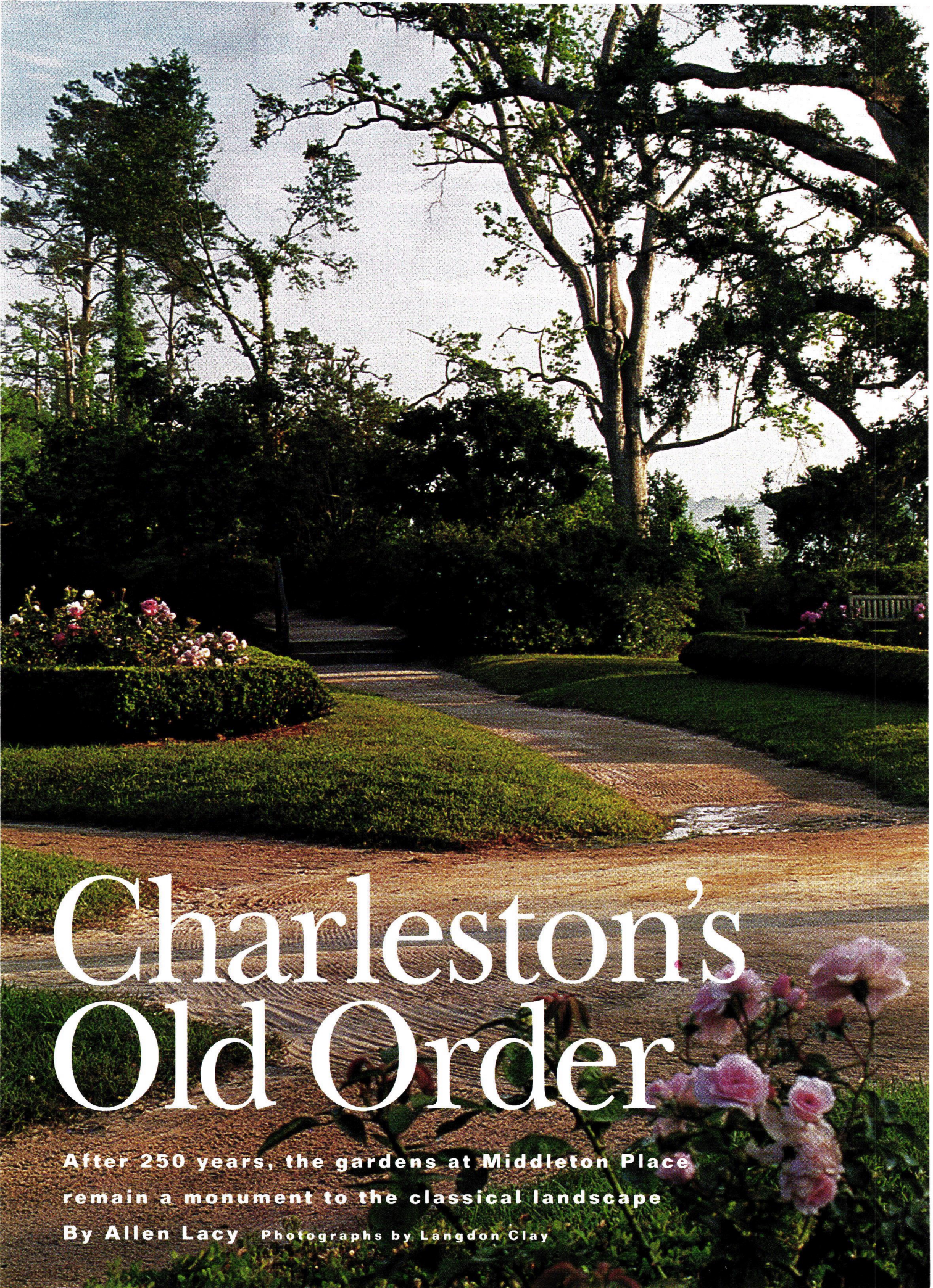
March

AS I HAVE admitted before, our early deadlines make for certain seasonal dislocations, hence, I am writing this March editor's page a week and a half before Christmas, in the thick of outings and parties that have brought me together with some interesting people in the field of decoration. One such person, the designer and architect Peter Marino, was my gallery-hopping companion quite by chance this weekend. Our conversation ranged from art and travel to the principles of design—in particular, what to do with my mantel. "Do you know of an interesting pair of objects?" I asked. His reply, very gently offered so as not to offend: "I don't think one should put pairs of anything on mantels." "Even for a symmetrically laid out room?" I asked. "Especially for symmetrical rooms—you need to throw them off." On the other hand, the esteemed decorator Albert Hadley feels that symmetry is important. "If it is not there, one spends too much time noticing its absence," he says. This latter school of mantel design is represented by one of the rooms in the sophisticated and grand Madrid house of the Spanish decorator Pascua Ortega, featured in our March issue with an article by Rosamond Bernier. Even more luxurious is the eighteenth-century Moscow theater and palace Ostankino, which we visit with Andrew Solomon, an authority on Russian art. We show the Philadelphia houses of Lord and Lady Wedgwood, of the great china company, and the noted print dealer Graham Arader and his family. Modern art and design get their play in our stories on MOMA's new show on the 1940s and the vintage 1940s and '50s pieces in a New York apartment designed by Corinne Calesso and Peter Samarin. Among the most pleasing decorations of all are those provided by nature, and our piece on the formal Charleston, South Carolina, garden Middleton Place testifies to the charms of both classical balance and natural asymmetry. The search for the perfect mantel scheme—yours or mine—may continue, but there are plenty of ideas and pleasures to partake of along the way.

A French ormolu clock on a Fernando VII mantel, c. 1830, in Madrid.

Mary Novogrod

EDITOR IN CHIEF

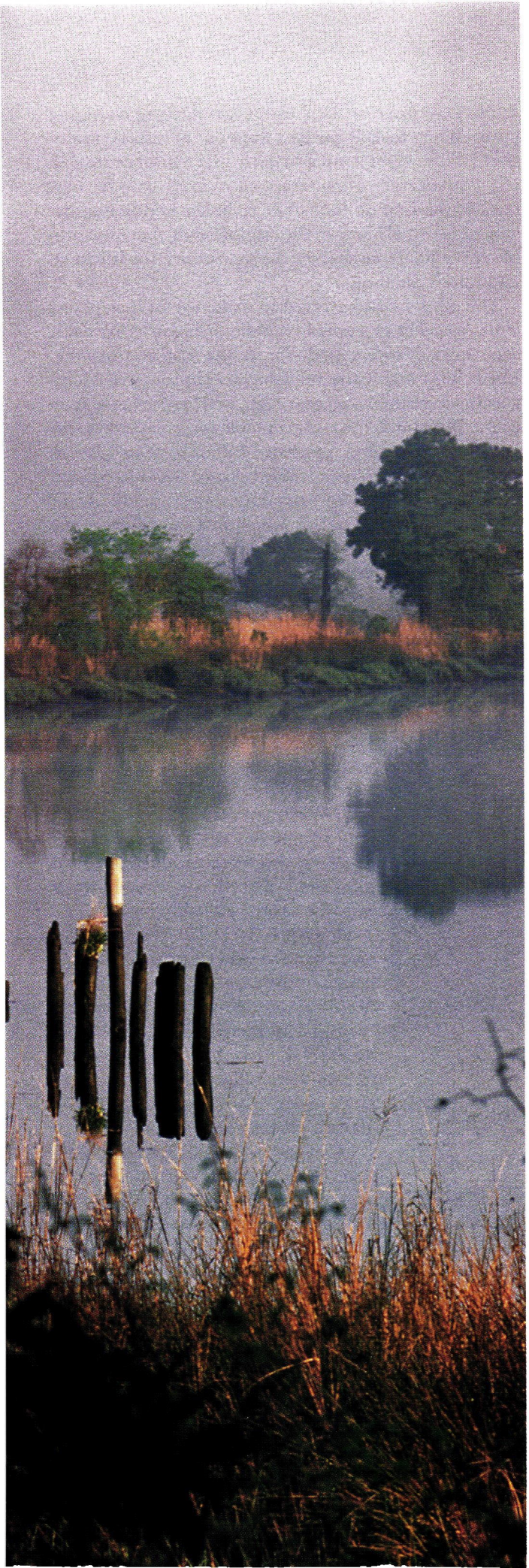


Charleston's Old Order

After 250 years, the gardens at Middleton Place remain a monument to the classical landscape

By Allen Lacy Photographs by Langdon Clay

Old roses flower in the 18th-century Sundial Garden. Beyond the ancient Middleton Oak lie flooded rice fields and the Ashley River.



TO REACH MIDDLETON PLACE, HALF AN HOUR from the historic district of Charleston, South Carolina, I had first to drive through territory that seemed familiar even though I had never been there. The highway that eventually becomes Ashley River Road passes through a commercial suburban landscape that could be anywhere in America where people live to the rhythms of the automobile. Shopping centers and malls, convenience stores and gasoline stations, fast food franchises—this landscape is everywhere, and it is nowhere. It has no history. It is anonymous. It knows nothing of tragedy, and it embodies no dreams of either past or future.

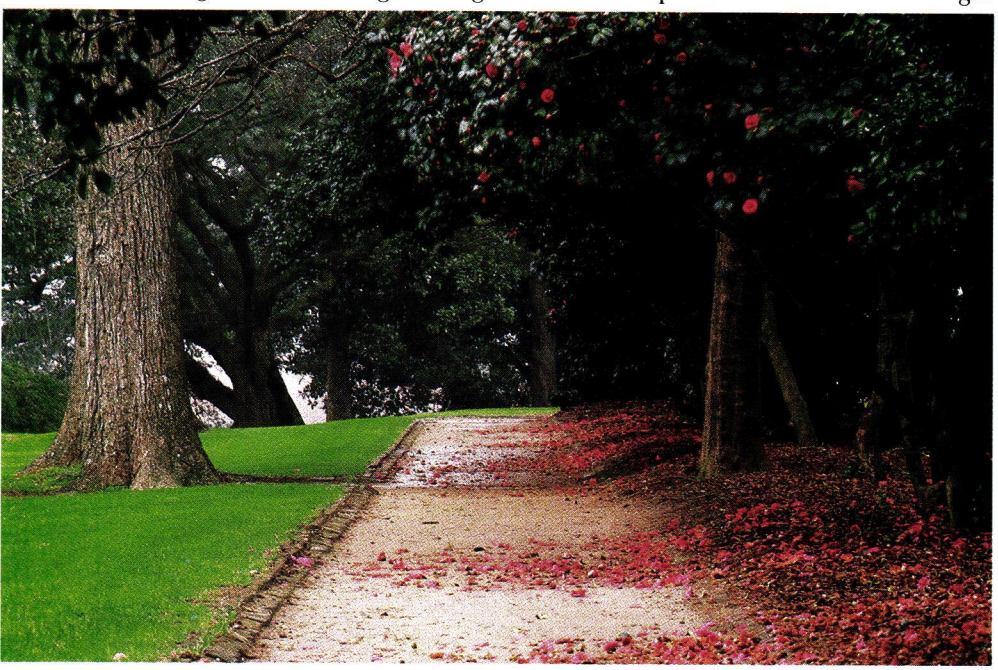
Then the shopping centers and the residential subdivisions thinned out. Ashley River Road on this, my first (but surely not my last) visit to Middleton Place, bore witness to the fury of Hurricane Hugo, which slammed into Charleston eight months earlier, in September 1989. Downed trees and broken branches were piled up along the roadside, but many live oaks survived to form a cool tunnel of green en route to Middleton.

Middleton Place—both words name it with precision. Since Henry Middleton began to work on its gardens in 1741, it has been in the loving care of the Middleton family, some bearing other surnames as the property passed down through the female line. All that remains of the original house—built circa 1735—is a pile of rubble. The house and one flanking building to the north, a library containing 12,000 volumes, were looted and torched by Union troops in 1865, at the very end of the Civil War. The great Charleston earthquake of 1886, whose epicenter was probably on the Middleton property—with tremors estimated at seven or even higher on the Richter scale—completed the destruction of these two buildings. Left standing is a

Relics of the river landing, *left. Below:* A post–Hurricane Hugo aerial view shows later informal landscape elements grafted onto the original geometry. Along the axis connecting the oval drive to formal terraces and the Butterfly Lakes, traces of the long-lost main house are visible next to the surviving south wing.

two-story south flanker of reddish brown brick, built around 1755 as gentlemen's guest quarters, which is now referred to as Middleton Place House.

The gardens fell into neglect at the end of the Civil War and languished until the 1920s, when Middleton heir J. J. Pringle Smith and his wife, Heningham Ellett Smith, began their life's work of bringing back the plantation's former splendor. Today the hand and mind of Henry Middleton are still evident. These are very much gardens of the eighteenth century, designed according to what Blaise Pascal called the "spirit of geometry." Middleton's design was a strong one, basically a right triangle. One side runs eastward from a point on the main drive, on through the center of the ruins of the main house to a lawn overlooking a series of grassy terraces above the Butterfly Lakes, Middleton's unique contribution to the history of the formal garden. The base of the triangle bisects a long rectangular reflection pool. The hypotenuse bisects a series of garden rooms with their own geometry of square, circle, and octagon.



Visiting Middleton in azalea season, Vita Sackville-West found a "heart still mindful of the English way"

These euclidean forms are imposed on a natural landscape of surpassing beauty, a bluff overlooking tidal marshes teeming with life, and a long and graceful curve of the Ashley River twenty miles by water from Charleston, where local tradition holds that the Ashley combines with the Cooper River to form the Atlantic Ocean. In the far distance across the river from Middleton lie woods as dark and deep as those Robert Frost pondered.

The gardens of Middleton Place were not designed once and for all in their final form. They evolved over the first century of their history, reflecting changing tastes. When formal gardens went out of fashion in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, old gardens were often scrapped to make way for new ones in the English landscape style. At Middleton, beyond the formal bones of the original plan, there was ample space to accommodate the new desire for informal naturalistic planting.

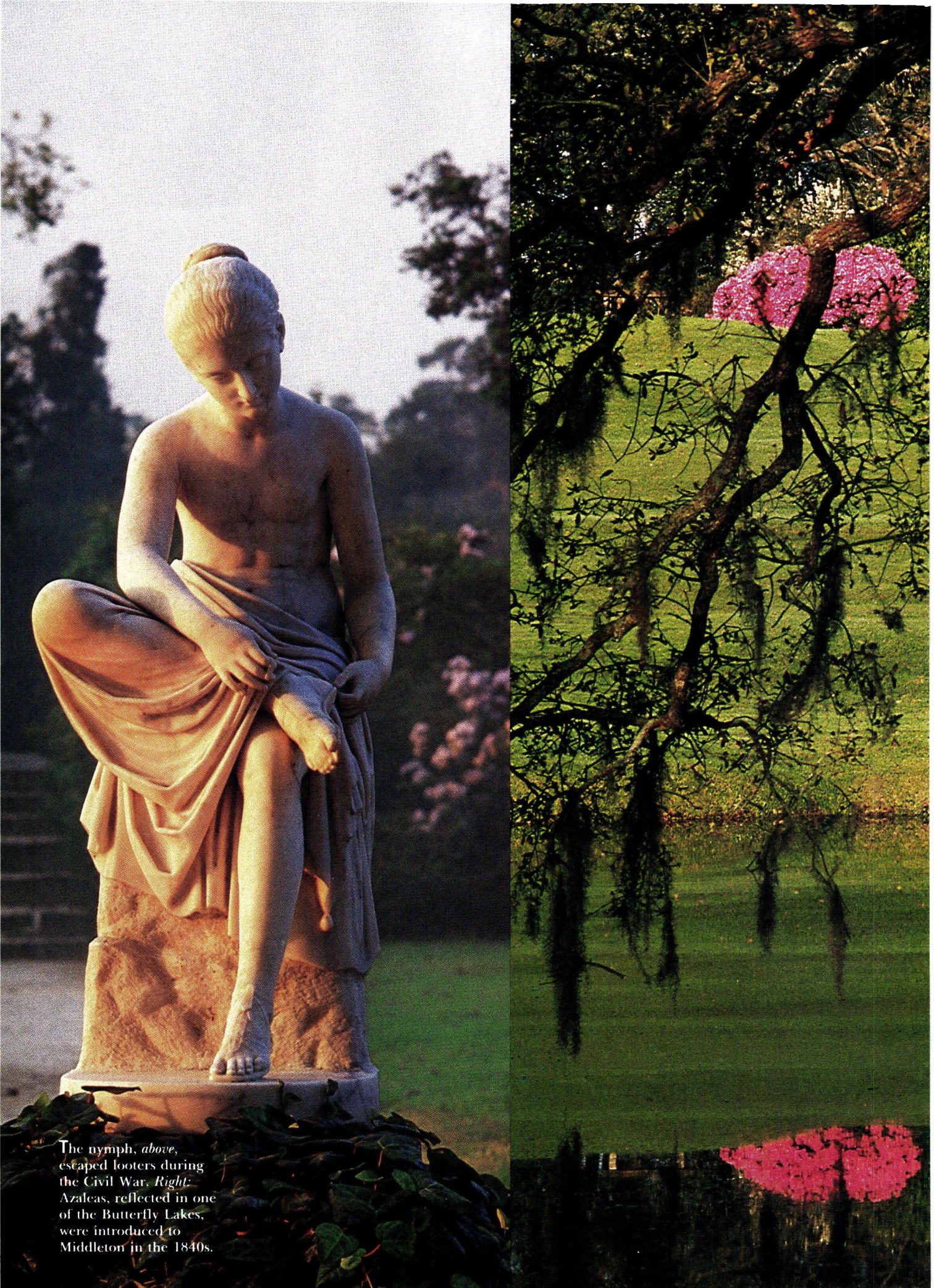
The gardens also evolved to make use of new plants from Asia. The glory of old Middleton lies in its live oaks, especially in one called simply the Middleton Oak, which, if the most extreme claims are true, may well have germinated a thousand years ago, well before the Magna Carta. But Middleton is also notable for its camellias and crape myrtles, some reputedly dating back to 1786 as gifts from André Michaux, the botanist who introduced these Asian plants in the early days of the republic. And I must not forget the azaleas, which first came here in the 1840s: 35,000 of these shrubs burst into flame in March and April on the hillside above Rice Mill Pond.

Middleton Place has long been a point of horticultural pilgrimage, for Americans and travelers from overseas alike. When Harold Nicolson was lecturing in Charleston in February 1933, he visited Middleton with the South Carolina writer DuBose Heyward. In a letter to his wife, Vita Sackville-West, then in Ohio, Nicolson approvingly described the tall camellias, the grassy terraces, and the vista of marsh and river. "It is as romantic in its way," he wrote, "as Sissinghurst."

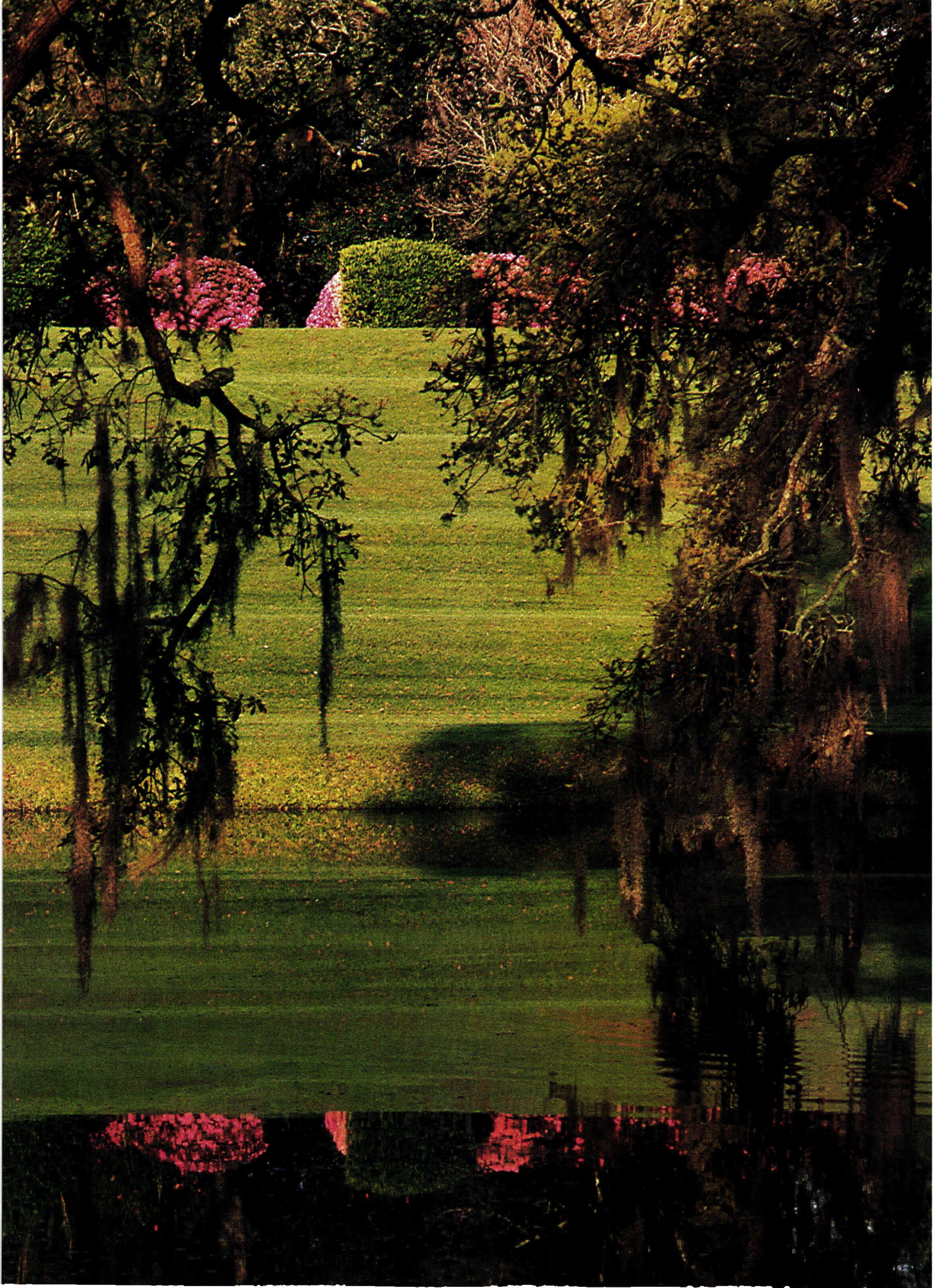
That April, Sackville-West made her own visit to the low country during the height of the azalea season when Middleton Place moved her to poetry. "Stand I indeed in England? Do I dream?" she asked in the opening line of "Middleton Place, South Carolina." Her answer finally was no, that in England's glades there was no flash of scarlet wings, no flame of azaleas, no "greybeard moss bewitching ancient trees." But there were still affinities, still connections, between this stately American garden and the English gardens she knew and loved. Here, she concluded, she found a "heart still mindful of the English way."

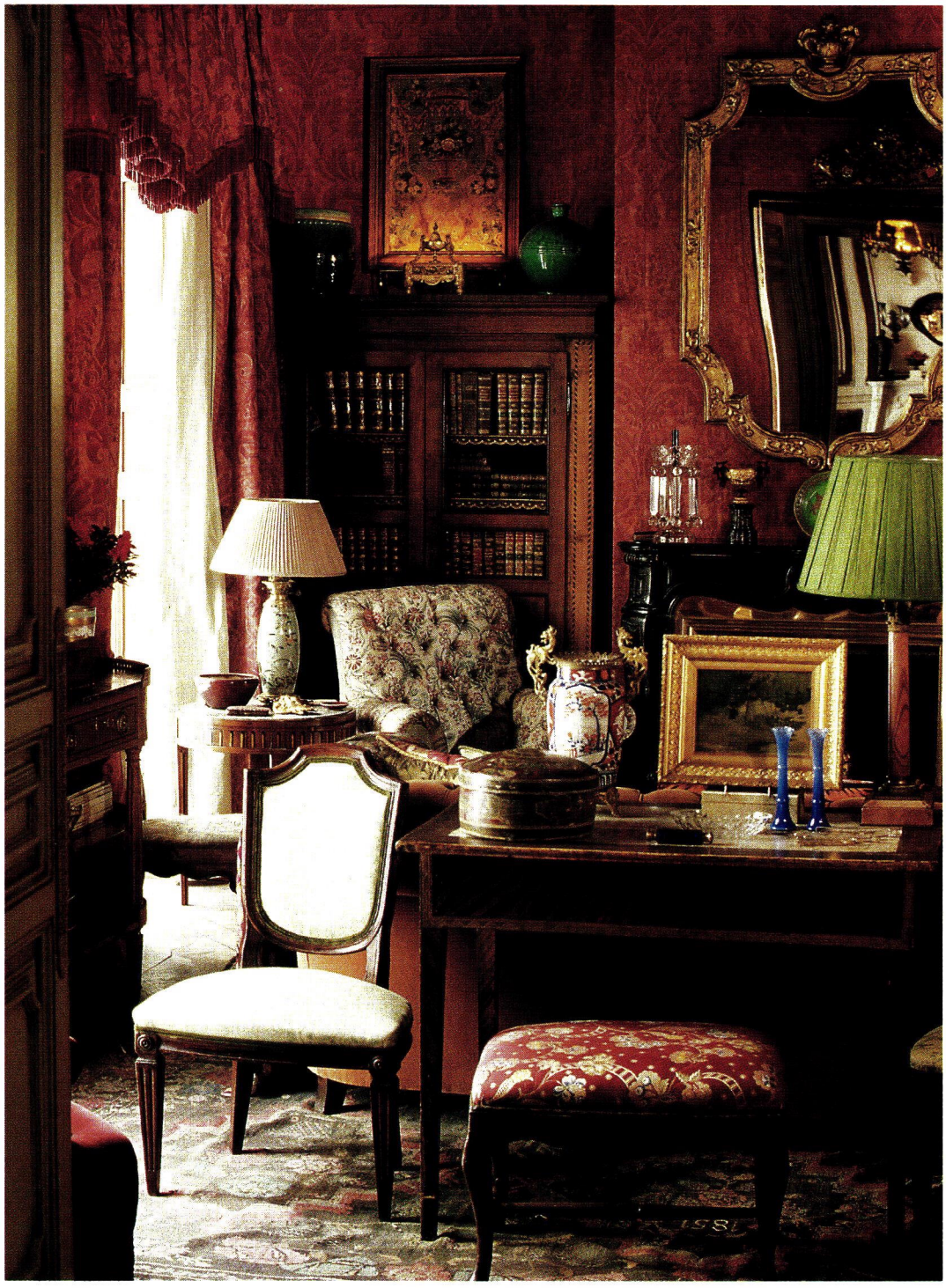
Her husband's comparison of Middleton with Sissinghurst is a charming example *(Text continued on page 184)*

According to family tradition, the first camellias planted in long allées, *above,* were brought to Middleton in 1786 by André Michaux. *Opposite below:* Azaleas beside Rice Mill Pond. *Opposite above:* A cultivated wilderness of cypresses and Spanish moss transposes the English romantic taste for naturalistic scenery into the South Carolina marshes.



The nymph, *above*, escaped looters during the Civil War. *Right:* Azaleas, reflected in one of the Butterfly Lakes, were introduced to Middleton in the 1840s.

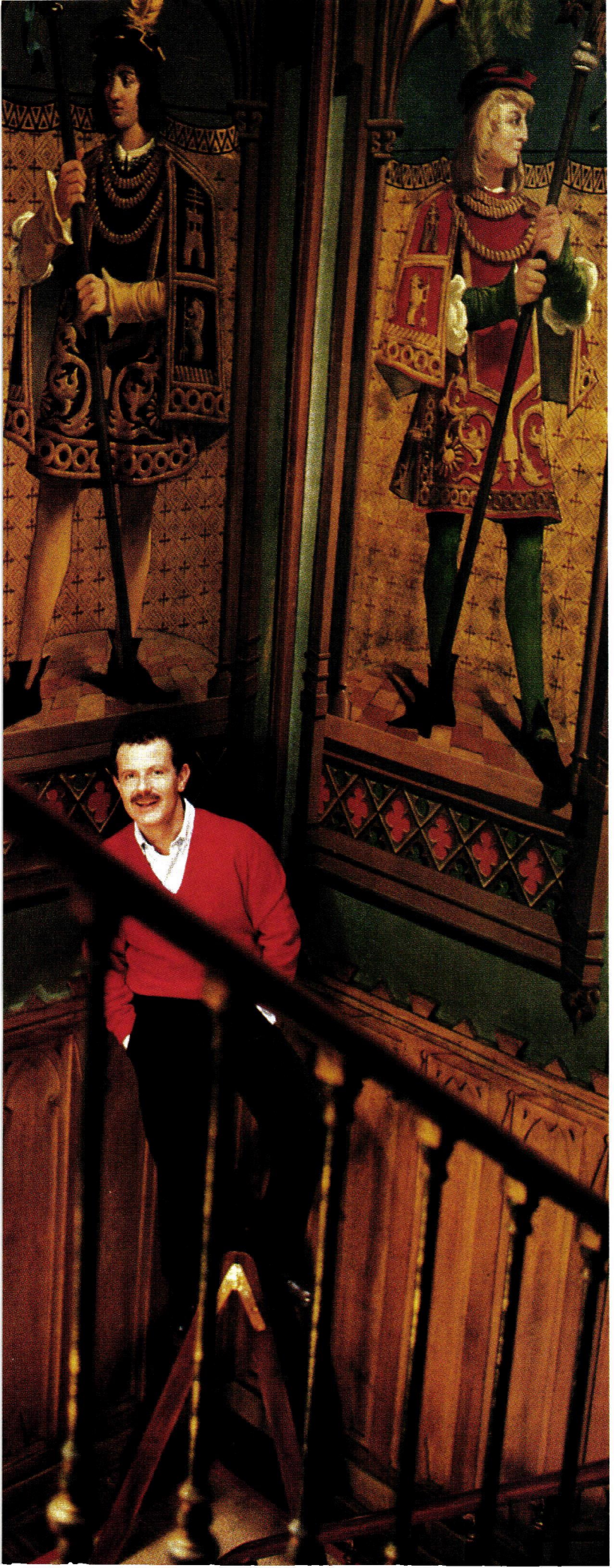




Grandee Decorator

In his historic house in Madrid, Pascua Ortega holds court among the city's tastemakers

By Rosamond Bernier **Photographs by François Halard**



JUST AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE Ritz in Madrid there is a network of streets with names that recall the Siglo de Oro, the literary golden age that flourished there more than three hundred years ago. Cervantes, we read, and Lope de Vega, and many another. On one of those streets is a house that was built in the seventeenth century, rebuilt in the nineteenth, badly damaged in the Spanish Civil War, and then gutted almost completely and given new life in the 1980s by a boyish Catalan with eclectic tastes and an international point of view.

"Everyone knows Pascua," one's friends in Madrid always say. And it's true. At forty-five, Pascua Ortega is the Spanish decorator very much of the moment and a relaxed, if unconventional, host. "Come to dinner at ten and we'll talk before," he had said. We came into what looked like the palace of a pasha, with deep armchairs, a welter of textiles, and every kind of cosmopolitan echo. The house is also his place of business, we discovered, but there was neither a computer nor a telephone bank to be seen. Señor Ortega was not back yet, but drinks were served at once.

Then he arrived—friendly, brisk, and compact, in anglicized weekend clothes, with a voluble, somewhat freewheeling command of English. "Take us on a tour," we asked, and he did. At the top of a staircase that had Wagnerian overtones (*Lohengrin,* maybe) we found a domain that was warm, cosseting, full of surprises, and blessedly quiet. "It is a miracle to live in silence in Madrid," said our host, and with good reason.

It is an astonishing house. In its high-ceilinged rooms there is a tumult of textures—old, new, silk, velvet, striped linen, toile de Jouy. It has Russian furniture, Austrian furniture, Chinese lacquer, Piranesi prints, a fireplace brought from France, blue and white Minton tiles brought from England a hundred years ago, and barstools with petit-point covers.

Pascua is one of the great European scavengers. "The flea market in Madrid is fantastic," he told us. "You can still find things there, provided they are out of fashion. More funny things and more attractive things and more sophisticated things than you can find in Paris at the Marché aux Puces." He has a whole collection of paintings of moonlight. ("I am very moody," said this

Pascua Ortega, *left,* perches in front of wallpaper and paintings commissioned for his house by a former owner, the marqués de Roncali, minister to Isabella II. *Opposite:* In the Salon Rojo, a Carlos IV giltwood mirror hangs against walls Ortega covered in Fortuny fabric. His collection of 18th-century Spanish furniture includes an inlaid Catalan bookcase topped by two vases from Aragon. Details see Resources.

Restored Fernando VII gilding and paintwork in the Salon Blanco are reflected in a convex English mirror above the mantel. Ortega set the scene for conversation by grouping an Empire bed arranged as a divan with Restauration chairs, a 19th-century Russian stool, and a Biedermeier settee.

most convivial of men, "and I have all kinds of moons—French, English, Catalan.") He has a handsome bust of Saint-Just, the "angel of the French revolution," and a contemporary copy, complete with faked signature, of a painting by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema. And he has a model of the Patio de los Leones in Granada, which was exhibited at the 1900 Paris Exposition. "It's made of alabaster and marble, and it breaks like glass. Every two years I have to have it repaired."

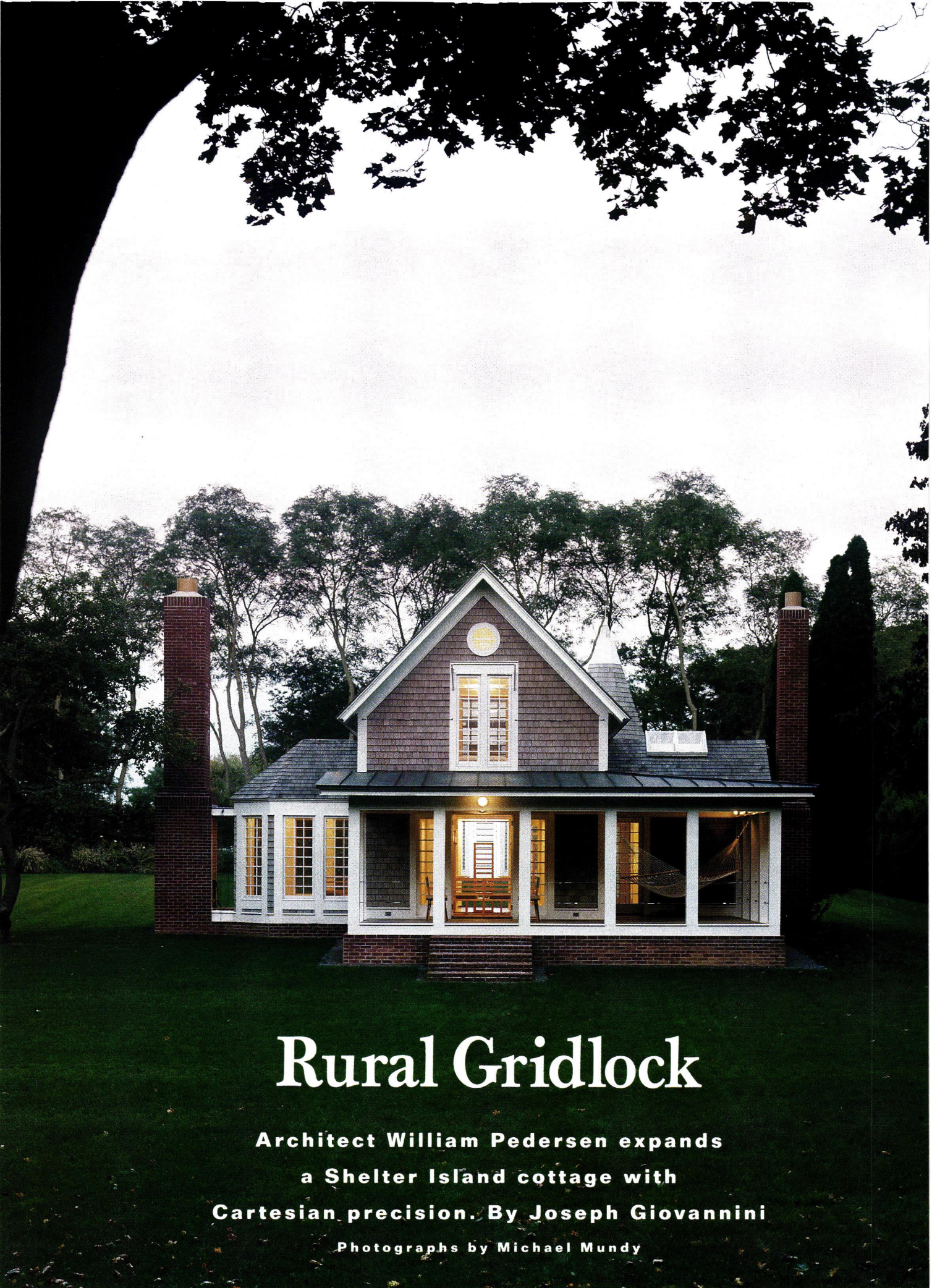
The house also offers the privileged intruder a crash course in Spanish furniture. "People think the house is very Napoleon III," Pascua said, "but basically it is Carlos IV, with countrified overtones. It's rather like Louis XVI—same period, same style." There is also a room that is exactly as it would have been at the beginning of the 1830s, "in the style we call Fernandino—after Fernando VII, an awful king, one of the worst, we hated him." (Awful or not, Fernando gave his name in this case to a very seductive interior.) Then there is a tiled gallery with potted plants—the sort of Andalusian galería, Pascua explained, that was fashionable at the end of the last century. "It gives me a feeling of vacation the moment I come in. Nothing is very important, but the atmosphere is witty." When he is at home, Pascua spends most of his time in what used to be the dining room: "Here I have music, the fireplace, and my books. Outside is the patio, the sound of water, and the smell of jasmine."

Just before the other guests were announced, we asked Pascua how he had come by his present renown. He told us that he grew up in Barcelona—"a city rather like Milan in that it is too much impressed by fashion. It is the opposite of the British way of seeing fashion as not quite vulgar, but—well, something not to be *(Text continued on page 187)*

Valencia damask, *right,* covers an Alfonso XII walnut and satinwood bed. *Left:* In the dining room, Ortega combined Carlos IV mahogany spindle-back chairs with a set of Empire scroll-backs. Restauration plates are mounted on the wall with hand-colored 18th-century prints after Raphael's Vatican logge.

Ortega's high-ceilinged rooms offer the privileged intruder
a crash course in the history of Spanish furniture

Lunch and breakfast are often served in the galería. Vintage wicker and a Thonet folding chair stand near a marble bathtub converted into a fountain. Terra-cotta alhambrillas on the floor were inspired by tiles at the Alhambra; wall tiles were also based on Moorish originals.



Rural Gridlock

Architect William Pedersen expands a Shelter Island cottage with Cartesian precision. By Joseph Giovannini

Photographs by Michael Mundy

The main house, *opposite*, has been extensively renovated. The master bedroom, *above right*, and living and dining room, *below right*, are connected by stairways and by columns surrounding the dining table that rise to form bedroom light posts. Furniture was designed by Pedersen. Details see Resources.

A cluster of ordinary and exaggerated volumes forms the new rear building, *left. Opposite:* The lofty space at the top of the stairs converts easily from guest room to weekend studio. *Below from left:* A cantilevered dresser in the master bedroom; shadows cast by rafters; a bare-bones steel and wood stair in the main house.

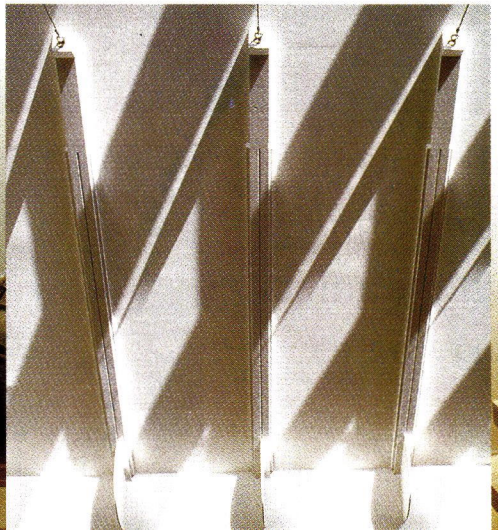
The same forms that punctuate Pedersen's high rises become almost monumental in his own backyard

ble unexpectedly fairy-tale in this down-home New England community of frame houses. Visitors don't quite know how to approach the house. Stepping onto the porch is like stepping onto a boat.

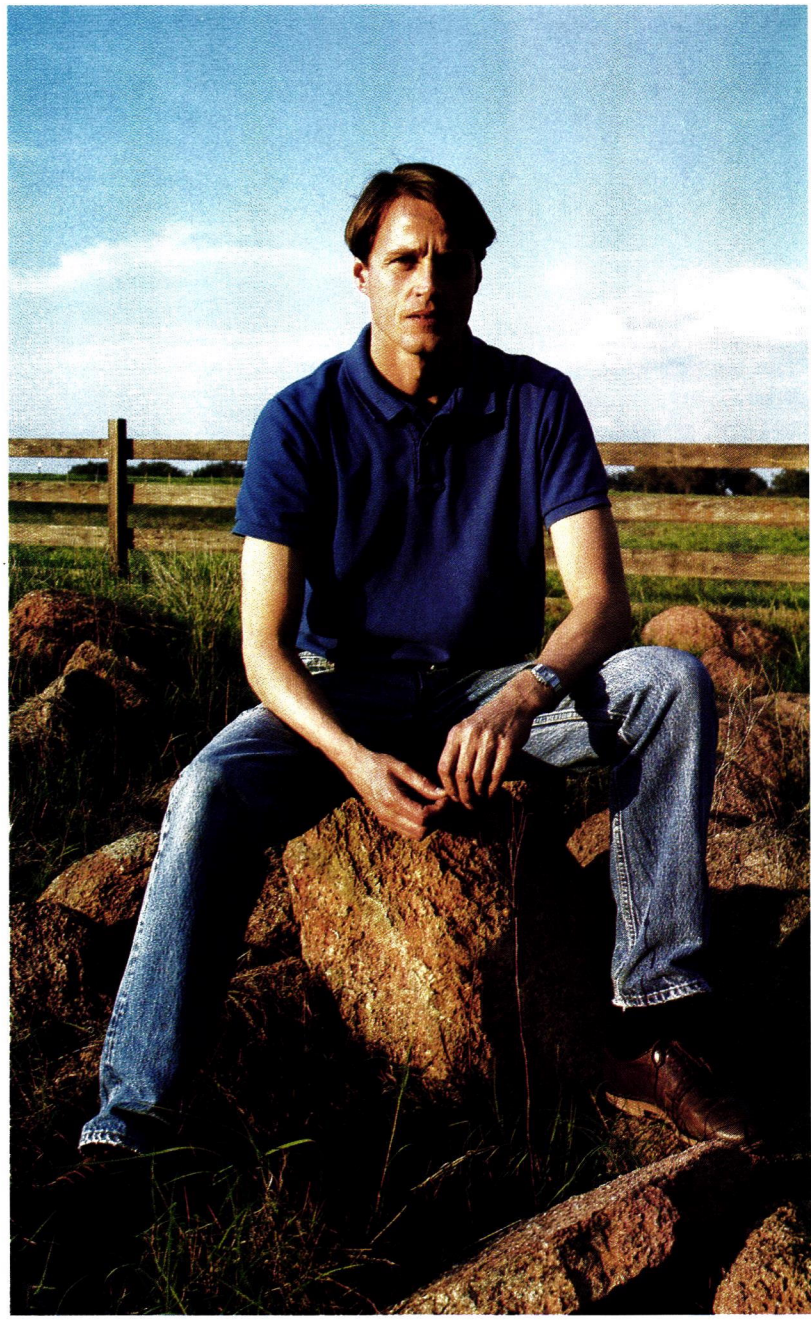
William, in a plaid shirt worn over another plaid shirt, emerges from one of the many French doors, his finger marking his place in a novel. Lead designer of Kohn Pedersen Fox, one of the country's most prominent architectural firms, he also plays classical piano seriously, jogs seriously, and fields perhaps the most successful softball team among New York architectural offices. He and Elizabeth, an advocate for homeless women and children, have been married twenty-nine years and have vacationed here for more than a decade; the front porch was the music room where they taught daughters Kia and Lea violin and cello.

Built at the turn of the century, the house originally was a lugubrious affair of dark weathered shingles. Inside, small rooms crowded two floors. "I turned a three-bedroom house into a one bedroom," says the self-deprecating architect, owning to a special knack for downward mobility in real estate. The newly shingled exterior hardly announces the openness of the interior where William has removed almost all the walls. Light pouring through the small windowpanes projects angled grids onto the geometrically patterned wood floors; the grids shift with the sun. Like a bright trimmed sailing craft, the house is yare, as old salts say—everything fits neatly, whether the nautical hardware, the succinct cabinets, or the wood trim in the walls representing posts and beams. Four columns stake out a dining area at the center of a cruciform plan, with a kitchen, living room, and exercise room at the cardinal points. A four-poster maple table nests within the columns, a box within a box—the smallest version of the house's post-and-beam system.

William has developed his geometric themes *(Text continued on page 187)*



The Education of Jed Johnson



By Pilar Viladas

Photographs by Michael Mundy

When I first met Jed Johnson, I was steeling myself for what I assumed would be a bit of an ordeal. I knew that he designed drop-dead interiors—for the kind of people who never want their names mentioned—so I assumed that his persona would be as grand as his client list. I had, as it turned out, assumed wrong.

The slender boyish-looking forty-two-year-old, who occupies a pleasantly messy office somewhat unfashionably west of midtown Manhattan, lends new meaning to

Jed Johnson, *right*, at his clients' Texas ranch. *Opposite above:* An East Side New York living room combines an Agra carpet from Doris Leslie Blau, NYC, with French antiques and curtains in a Clarence House silk taffeta. *Opposite below:* In Texas, Johnson orchestrated a collection of arts and crafts furnishings assembled with the help of the late Michael Carey. Details see Resources.

the term "self-effacing." Shy, quiet, and so soft-spoken that you have to strain to hear him, Johnson's reticent demeanor isn't that of your average big-deal decorator. And, as you might expect, he doesn't appear in *W* with ladies-who-lunch on his arm, you won't find him in the Hamptons making the weekend scene, and he isn't planning to market a line of anything.

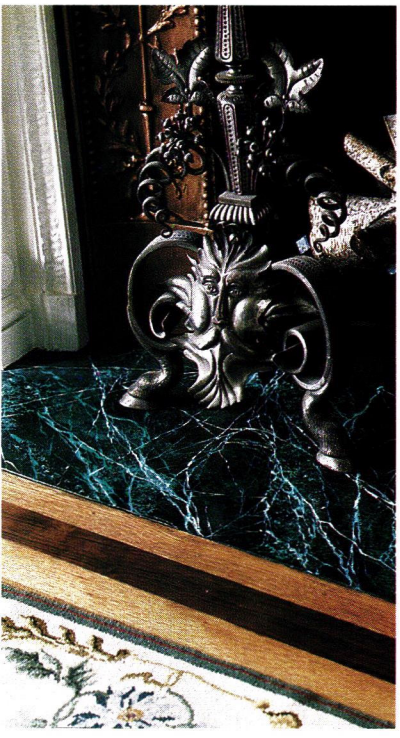
But don't get me wrong. It's not that Jed Johnson is the Boo Radley of decorating; in fact, he loves a good party as much as the next person. He simply prefers to concentrate on his work. "I never really thought that going out to lunch would show people how good your work was," he says in a voice a few decibels above a murmur. "The work is the most important thing, and it should be able to sell itself."

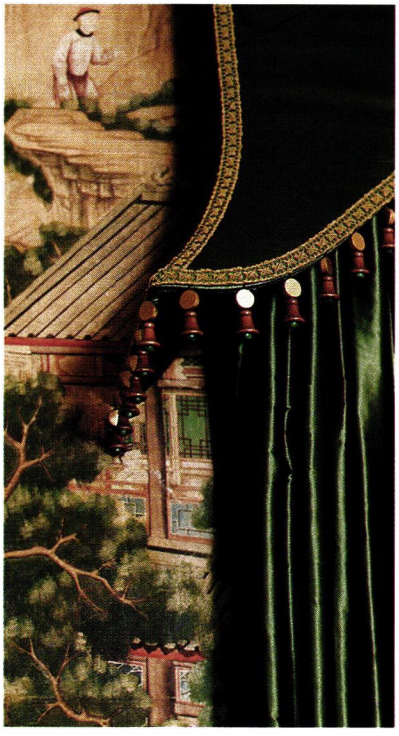
And it has—to the likes of Yves Saint Laurent president Pierre Bergé, Jerry Hall and Mick Jagger, and Richard Gere, to name a few of the clients who don't mind being named. Johnson's work, which he frequently does in association with his partner, thirty-nine-year-old architect Alan Wanzenberg, runs the stylistic gamut from coolly contemporary (the ultrahip New York restaurant Punsch) to Gilded Age ornate (an apartment in the Dakota for a collector of American paintings). He's equally at home with Duncan Phyfe, Gustav Stickley, and Jean-Michel Frank. He can design the most serious pair of silk damask curtains you've ever seen, but he can also design a very modern, very minimal steel and glass light fixture. Johnson has no preconceptions about decorating, because he came to it purely by accident.

Raised in Sacramento, California, Johnson arrived in New York in 1968 with his twin brother, Jay. On their first day in town, the two were robbed of every cent they had. They went to a Western Union office to wire home for money, and a clerk felt so sorry for them that he suggested they pick up a few stopgap dollars by delivering telegrams. One of Jed's first stops was Andy Warhol's Factory. It turned out to be his last. He caught filmmaker Paul Morrissey's eye and was hired on the spot. Eventually he moved in with Warhol and the two lived together for nearly a dozen years. Johnson immediately got caught up in the heady atmosphere of the Factory's filmmaking scene, which was in its glory days, peopled by superstars like Viva, Ultra Violet, and Joe Dallesandro. Johnson edited movies for Warhol and Morrissey and directed one of his own, *Andy Warhol's Bad*. He maintains that the film was—contrary to its title—good, but says, "I was in over my head."

Fate intervened, however, when Warhol bought a spacious East Side town house (which Johnson had found for him) and began filling it with furniture and objects, the booty of his frequent shopping expeditions. As John-

A Queen Anne secretary, *opposite*, 18th-century Italian armchairs, a Régence mirror, and a striped damask from Old World Weavers adorn the master bedroom of the East Side apartment. *Top:* At the ranch, Greene & Greene lamps light a Gustav Stickley dining table and chairs. *Above:* In a Connecticut dining room, English silk curtains flank a Cy Twombly painting hung against 18th-century Chinese wallpaper.

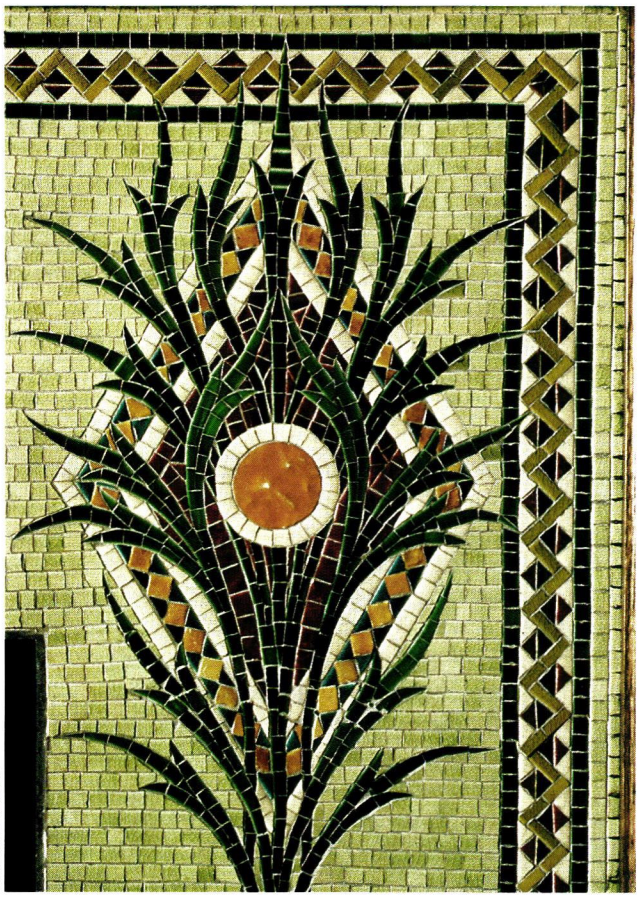




JOHN HALL

Johnson and Alan Wanzenberg at Punsch, *above left.* Curtains of silk faille from Brunschwig, *above,* in the bedroom of the East Side apartment and, in its dining room, *left,* a pagoda-shaped valance with wood bells. *Far left:* In a West Side New York apartment, a Renaissance revival andiron. *Below left:* The upper walls of an executive's office are covered with a Bennison Fabrics linen-cotton stripe.

"I never thought going out to lunch would show how good your work was"



FRANÇOIS HALARD

In a Connecticut house, *top right,* American antiques compose a classic grouping, and Roy Lichtenstein meets Queen Anne, *opposite. Top left:* The walls of the West Side living room are stenciled in shades of blue. *Above:* A mosaic fireplace from a prairie-style Chicago house graces Johnson and Wanzenberg's living room.

son recalls, "Andy was buying a lot of stuff, and it needed to be organized. He put the same enthusiasm into collecting cookie jars as he did great antiques, but he wasn't all that discriminating. In a way, he forced *me* to be. I like everything too, but there was always that voice saying, Where will it go? Andy didn't worry about that."

Johnson did. He organized Warhol's acquisitions, at first in what he describes as an academic fashion—"a room of art deco, a room of Herter Brothers"—and began to investigate period decorating techniques like stenciling (which he still uses today, often with spectacular results). And he began to buy furniture on his own. His first purchase was a pair of Philadelphia chaises from David Stockwell in Wilmington, Delaware. "I had looked at a lot of American federal pieces, and this seemed an appropriate style for the room I was working on," Johnson explains. "Instead of New York examples, which were too expensive, I started looking at the work of Philadelphia cabinetmakers, such as Antoine Gabriel Quervelle and Joseph Barry."

Warhol's house was never finished, thanks to its owner's shop-till-you-drop proclivities, but this perpetual work-in-progress was Johnson's design education. So were their travels, which often resembled a tour of the world's great houses and apartments. Seeing how Yves Saint Laurent, Hélène Rochas, and Stavros Niarchos lived and visiting the Venetian houses of families such as the Volpis and the Brandolinis offered Johnson the kind of exposure to beauty and style that no classroom ever could. "You'd see so many things in a short time, there wasn't just one thing—it was the total of them all. Decorating wasn't an issue," he says. "It just evolved in an unconscious way. It wasn't until after I had done several jobs that I said, 'Well, this is what I do.'"

If Johnson has no preconceptions about decorating, it may be because he came to it by accident

The projects that had been something of a sideline, done mainly at the request of friends, turned more serious after Johnson and Warhol parted company in 1980. Johnson found himself in business, albeit in a firm of one. "I did everything," he says. "All the bookkeeping and invoicing. I always charged too little." And since, as he readily admits, he was a "horrible businessperson—just the worst," he recruited his brother to help in that area.

By the time his office started to grow—the early eighties—he had met Alan Wanzenberg, who studied architecture at Berkeley and Harvard, and began another personal-professional alliance. The two now share not only a spacious apartment off Central Park West, which is filled with English and American arts and crafts furniture and contemporary art, but also a thriving business. While Johnson employs four decorators, an assistant, and a draftsman, Wanzenberg's architectural staff numbers about fifteen. The two work together and separately, and their personalities complement each other nicely. Wanzenberg is the front man, personable and loquacious, a perfect foil for the retiring Johnson. His office is a sleek arrangement of modernist black leather and chrome furniture, while Johnson's is a clutter of plain wood chairs, books, and fabric samples.

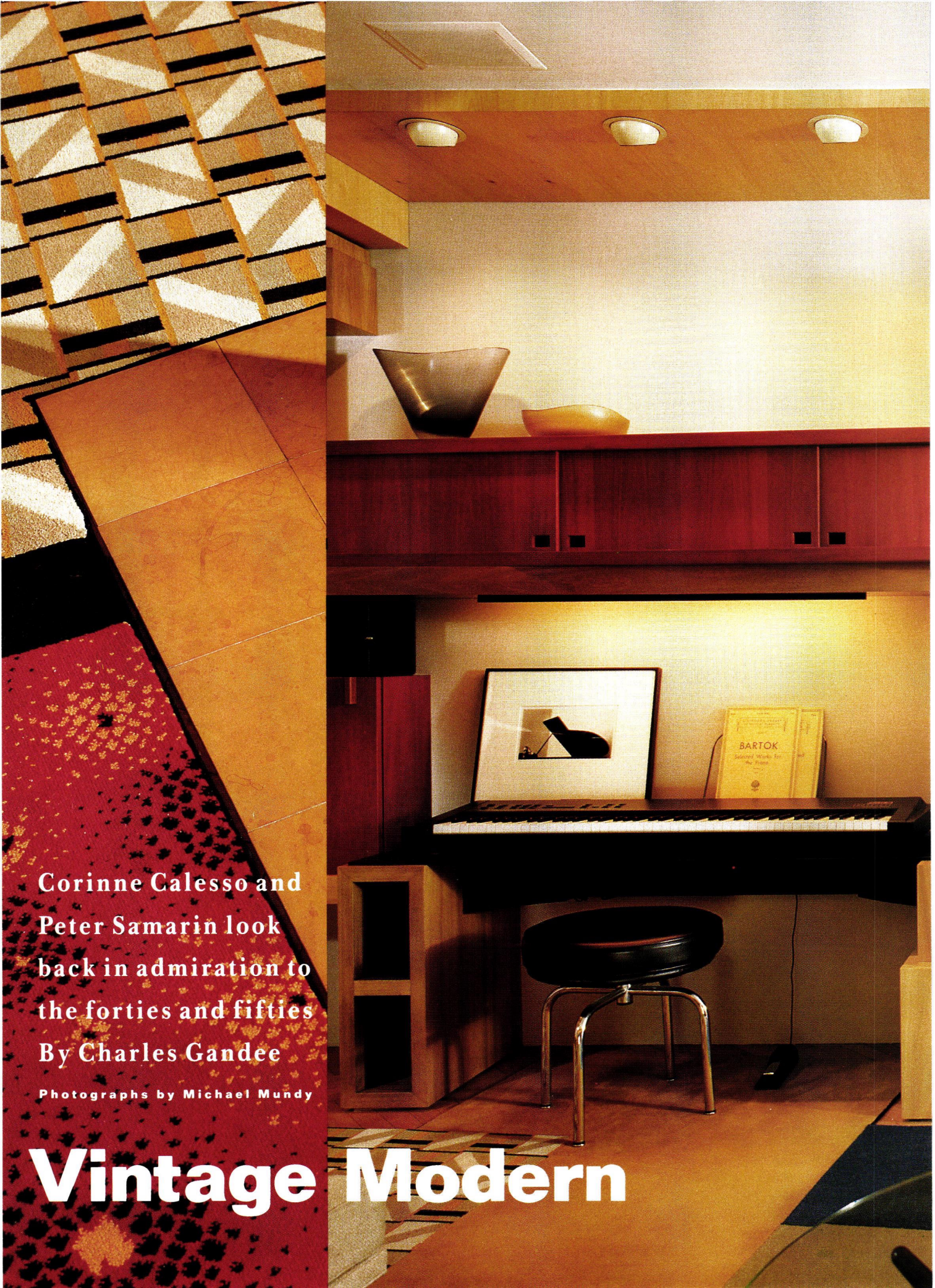
Whether he is carrying out a project with Wanzenberg (Punsch, for which Johnson gives most of the credit to Wanzenberg; a house in Vermont; the offices of Brant Publications, home of the magazines *Interview* and *Art in America*) or alone (the interiors of a large house in Saint Louis; a house in London), Johnson believes that the secret of decorating is "looking at the personality of the client and taking your cues from it. You spend time with people, and you get an image of a room that would suit them," something he attributes in part to his filmmaking experience. "It's very personal, and I find it fascinating. It's a challenge to figure out what's going to work for this person, in this house, and this setting."

What works for one person, house, or setting may be quite different from what works for another, so Johnson doesn't want to be stereotyped, although he and Wanzenberg have been closely identified with the arts and crafts style. He feels that the client's own collections—furniture, art, or both—should dictate the style of the house. Indeed, he credits his clients with sharpening his eye. "I was lucky," he insists. "I always had great clients, who have great art and furniture, and they're quite demanding. I was always working with eccentric people when I started out, so I got to learn a lot and see a lot."

For many years, one thing Johnson didn't see was what other decorators were doing, "but in the past five years I've been looking at other people's work." Specifically, he admires that of Renzo Mongiardino ("so luxurious"), Jacques Grange, Patrick Naggar, Peter Marino ("incredibly well resolved"), and Stephen Sills. And he is a fan of Philippe Starck—"I saw his restaurant Teatriz in Spain and loved it."

Johnson has spent a lot *(Text continued on page 189)*

A Venetian chandelier was the starting point for the West Side living room, *opposite*. Aqua silk taffeta from Scalamandré covers the sofa; the armchair's damask upholstery inspired the colors on the stenciled walls. *Above left:* Mahogany paneling topped by an intricate frieze lines the East Side bathroom. *Left:* In Texas, a mural of the ranch painted by Pat Sturts extends behind a pair of Stickley beds in one of the children's rooms.



Corinne Calesso and Peter Samarin look back in admiration to the forties and fifties

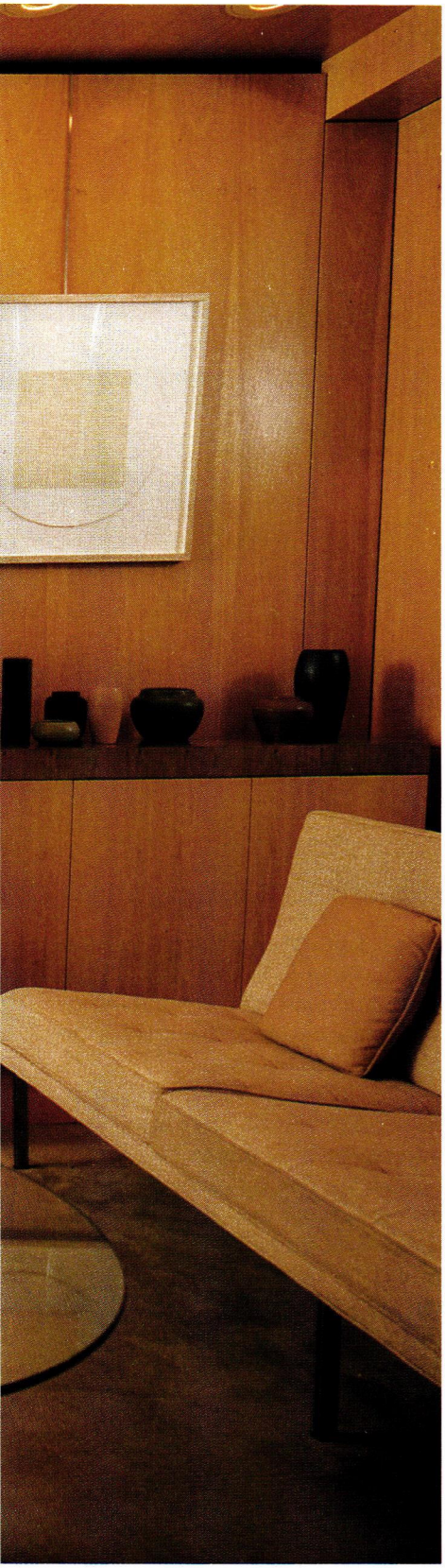
By Charles Gandee

Photographs by Michael Mundy

Vintage Modern

Calesso and Samarin's polychromed poplar storage wall both anchors and animates the living room. The chrome and leather Le Corbusier stool is from Atelier International. The Venini glass is from Fifty/50, NYC. *Opposite:* Vintage carpets frame natural-leather floor tiles. Details see Resources.

"We didn't want the zany boomerang style of the kitschy fifties, but we didn't want the Museum of Modern Art design collection either"



IN ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, AND decorating, perfection is an ideal that most of us are forced to abandon somewhere along the road from start to finish. The vast you-wouldn't-believe-it-unless-you've-been-through-it expenditure of time, patience, concentration, commitment, and money inevitably takes its collective toll. Which is when good begins to look great. Which is when enough is finally enough.

There are exceptions, of course.

Sam and Joe, as we'll call them, are two exceedingly private men in their thirties whose mutual commitment extends to their goal of an apartment "that looks like a suite on the ocean liner of our dreams." Although modest in scale, the one-bedroom Manhattan apartment the couple targeted as the site for making their domestic dream a reality became, over the two-year course it took to build it, an aesthetic obsession. According to Corinne Calesso and Peter Samarin, the now somewhat exhausted designers who also spent two years on the 975-square-foot project, "There's not an inch that wasn't discussed and discussed and discussed."

The point of departure for all those discussions was modernism. "We were born in the fifties," explains Sam, "so we wanted to make the apartment we wish we had grown up in." The designers were more than sympathetic. "We have always used modernism as a starting point," says Samarin, noting matter-of-factly that most people find modernism a bit "too cool"—a bit "too soulless" for domestic comfort. The particular vein that Sam and Joe were intent on mining, however, was not the clichéd minimalist school of white walls and polished oak floors with the predictable mix of Mies, Breuer, and Le Corbusier furniture. "We didn't want the Museum of Modern Art design collection," quips Joe. Nor did the zany boomerang style of the Jetsons hold much allure. Too kitsch. Instead, designers and clients agreed that their mutual goal would be the distillation of a range of styles from the thirties, forties, and fifties. Adding yet another inspirational twist to the mix was the moderne style of the landmark apartment building, designed in 1936 by a then forward-looking Wallace K. Harrison and André Fouilhoux.

Beneath the dining room's Serge Mouille chandelier, *above*, George Nelson Pretzel chairs surround a Gio Ponti table. *Left:* In the living room, a Florence Knoll sofa and Eero Saarinen Womb chair and ottoman face off across a Gio Ponti table. The aquarium fills in for a fireplace. *Opposite below:* Corinne Calesso and Peter Samarin.

"Peter and I believe that spaces, even designed spaces, should continually evolve," says Calesso. "One of

"We wanted it to look like a suite on the ocean liner of our dreams"

One of Joseph Beuys's *Minneapolis Fragments* hangs above a custom bed of cherry, leather, and stainless steel dressed in checks from Kirk Brummel and Jack Valentine, *above*. Serge Mouille's Saturn sconces are from Delorenzo 1950, NYC. *Left:* Also in the bedroom, Verner Panton's Cone chair. *Opposite:* A massive Traulsen refrigerator anchors one end of the ship-shape galley kitchen.

the challenges here was that these clients wanted the evolution to happen in compression." In other words, Sam and Joe wanted their apartment done, complete. The only change they cared to make after moving in was the rotation of their ever-expanding collection of photography and art by, among others, Berenice Abbott, Joseph Beuys, Brice Marden, Arnold Newman, Man Ray, Gerhard Richter, and Cy Twombly.

Visiting the apartment now, at long last complete, one almost has the sense of touring a suite of period rooms in a museum. Almost, because it's impossible to pinpoint precisely what period these rooms might be. The confusion stems from two sources: the assortment of vintage furniture—by Florence Knoll, George Nelson, Verner Panton, Gio Ponti, and Jean Prouvé—and the architectural envelope that cradles this idiosyncratic collection.

The success of Calesso and Samarin's graphic, all-encompassing scheme—which might best be described as environmental—hinges on the control they exert over less than obvious colors, patterns, and materials. Typical, for example, of the designers' surefootedness is the translucent glass partition that greets visitors at the front door. Replacing an uneventful white plaster wall, the striated glass panel is framed in stainless steel embedded in a precast concrete plinth, which is enveloped by leather tiles encircled by seven different carpet patterns inspired by cubism, collage, and Kurt Schwitters's constructions.

Such aesthetic pyrotechnics are risky business, requiring absolute finesse—something Calesso and Samarin appear to be committed to. "Everything is where it's supposed to be," notes Calesso. Exactly where it's supposed to be. ▲ *Editor: Anne Foxley*

Wedgwood Legacy

A descendant of Josiah Wedgwood adapts family patterns to American living. By Eve M. Kahn **Photographs by Edgar de Evia**

LORD AND LADY WEDGWOOD own, as you might expect, hundreds of pieces of the pottery that Josiah Wedgwood, Lord Wedgwood's forebear, pioneered starting in the 1750s. They also collect just about everything else that strikes their fancy, from Salvador Dali tiles to stirrup cups. "Rather than hesitate, we jump right in and buy," says Lord Wedgwood. The result is a Philadelphia pied-à-terre that recalls the ebullient jumble of an English country house in which generations of acquisitions somehow blend. "We're like the eighteenth-century aristocrats who went on the grand tour and came back with carriages full of finds," says Lady Wedgwood, an American, née Jean Quinn of Philadelphia. "They knew wonderful things always fit together."

But the Wedgwoods do not collect purely for collecting's sake. They are seeking, above all, comfort. They have three other residences—a London flat, a Wiltshire country manse, and a farmhouse in Normandy—and they travel constantly. He is Wedgwood's international spokesperson, and she imports antiques and helps companies plan special events. When they return to any of their houses, they want to feel at home. "I like to walk in and be surrounded by familiar things," says Lord Wedgwood. "It may look like clutter, but each and every piece has a special memory for us."

Lord and Lady Wedgwood, *center right,* in the garden of their Philadelphia house, live surrounded by their collections of Wedgwood, the British pottery founded by Lord Wedgwood's forebear, Josiah Wedgwood, *top right. Opposite:* Wedgwood forms in black basalt fill a library mantel. *Right background:* Wedgwood 1770s pattern book entries. Details see Resources.

The rooms display almost
every style made
by Wedgwood since 1759

They bought their house in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia in 1988, three years after they married and just after their daughter, Alexandra, was born. Set in a row of modest Victorians, it occupies half of a mansard-roofed structure once converted into tiny apartments. Lee Morse, a building contractor who specializes in restoration and is a longtime friend of Lady Wedgwood's, fortunately lives in the other half. After one planning session, Morse transformed their portion of the house from what Lady Wedgwood calls "a total disaster" into three stories of seemingly original Georgian and Edwardian details. He ripped out extraneous baths and kitchens and added a generous mas-

Wedgwood medallions flank a family portrait in the living room, *opposite*, furnished with antiques, travel souvenirs, and inviting chairs. *Left:* A living room wall displays more portraits, including one of Queen Charlotte, who was Josiah Wedgwood's patron. *Above:* Lord Wedgwood's dressing room is equipped with a Victorian armoire and a club chair, c. 1890. *Left background:* Wedgwood patterns document 19th-century motifs, from Gothic peaks to chinoiserie tigers.

ter bath and kitchen, revamped the third floor into Alexandra's bedroom and play area, and applied plenty of classical plaster ornament throughout. Chicago-based decorator Lyn Kavanagh helped the couple pull the rooms together. "She never takes the whirlwind approach," says Lady Wedgwood. "She helped us acquire, slowly and magnificently."

The informal old-world atmosphere they created is so successful most visitors don't realize half of the furniture is new. Lord Wedgwood

conducts business from a Baker replica of Disraeli's mahogany desk in the library, they dine seated on Baker copies of Chippendale armchairs, and they sleep on Baker's version of an eighteenth-century rice bed.

Some formidable antiques mingle with these impostors. A William and Mary sideboard passed down in the Wedgwood family greets arrivals at the front door; a nineteenth-century French buffet topped with a slab of rose marble stands outside the dining room; and the living room is anchored by a Philadelphia Chippendale settee. As befits a lord's house, prints of horses and hounds hang on the walls, and portraits depict the couple's ancestors as well as English kings, queens, and a few strangers. A mysterious seventeenth-century nobleman is known teasingly as "Jean's first husband," and an eighteenth-century French soldier in uniform (purchased for $5 at a thrift shop) has been dubbed Cousin Nicholas.

But the walls are not nearly as crowded as the tables and shelves; the Wedgwoods seem to abhor a horizontal vacuum. Around the living room they have arranged dozens of Chinese vases, most of them collected six years ago on a honeymoon trip to Beijing. They call this the "other blue and white stuff" because it lies near samples of just about every style and shape produced by Wedgwood since 1759. As with everything else in the house, it's difficult to discern which pieces are antique and which were recently molded. After boasting that his company today is re-creating more motifs from its old pattern books than ever before, Lord Wedgwood declares, "My houses mirror my business. I remember leafing through the wonderful early design books as a child; they precipitated my sense of what is beautiful."

Lately the Wedgwoods have been pouring their decorating energies into their three-hundred-year-old French farmhouse, but they have no intention of leaving well enough alone in Philadelphia. "We shuttle pieces back and forth from our various houses; some of them have earned frequent-flyer miles," says Lord Wedgwood, and Lady Wedgwood smiles. "When a house is finished," she says, "it's boring." ▲ *Editor: Carolyn Englefield*

"We shuttle pieces back and forth from our various houses. Some have earned frequent-flyer miles"

The dining room's Hepplewhite sideboard and 18th-century Irish wake table, *above,* mingle with fine reproductions, including Baker's Chippendale-style chairs. *Right:* A 1980s version of Wedgwood's classic Portland Vase. *Opposite above:* Florentine Turquoise, an 1884 pattern still in production. *Opposite below:* George Stubbs's 1780 portrait of the Wedgwood family. *Opposite background:* Border designs, 1770.

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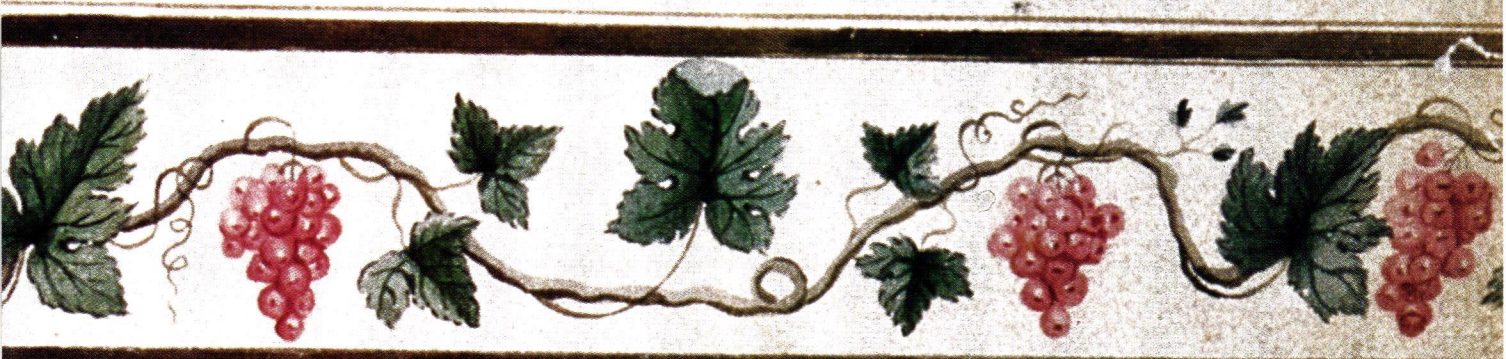

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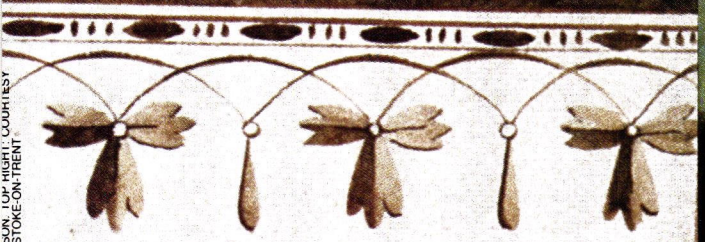


CENTER: COURTESY LEO KAPLAN/PHOTO MONICA STEVENSON. TOP RIGHT: COURTESY WEDGWOOD USA. BOTTOM RIGHT: WEDGWOOD MUSEUM, STOKE-ON-TRENT.

The Comfort Factor

Naomi and George Fertitta return to tradition after years of experimentation

By Peter Haldeman

Photographs by Michael Mundy

A 300-year-old Thai goddess stands at the end of a long gallery leading to the dining room and living room where, *right*, a Biedermeier chair and a Georgian bull's-eye mirror complement Richard Cava's mantel. Details see Resources.

Empire chairs in a Clarence House plaid, *above*, encircle the Regency dining table by an 1810 English oil depicting an unlikely gathering of birds. The wineglasses are from Ralph Lauren. *Opposite above right:* A Chinese tea table and Elisabeth Everett's rendering of Chopin's *Funeral March* typify the successful blend of English and Asian art and furniture. *Opposite above left:* Blocks of mulberry paper in the gallery provide a subtle foil for a rococo mirror and a Chinese table, c. 1850. *Opposite below:* Naomi and George with Cree, left, and Cameron in the master bedroom. Classical prints, after Bernini, line the walls.

A WEAK BREEZE BRIEFLY disturbs a layer of dead leaves in the gutter, and the doorman moves to the edge of the awning to fan himself with his cap. It is a hot, damp, almost still afternoon in the city. But six floors up, it might as well be snowing outside. In his blue bedroom the baby is napping. A housekeeper is tackling some ironing in the next room; another housekeeper is catching up on a soap opera. Down the hall, a long gallery of gleaming wood floors and rice-paper walls, their employer is in the living room with a magazine reporter. She is wearing a black miniskirt with a black tank top and black flats, and all this black is very dramatic against the room's pale shades, which in a magazine caption might be described as celery.

Her name is Naomi. One evening about a decade ago, while her husband (George) was out of town on business (advertising) and she was at a disco (the one Truman Capote used to talk about on Merv Griffin), Naomi had the most peculiar sensation. She felt she was watching her life on television. It was around the same time that Naomi and George found themselves in awe of the furniture in their own apartment. Instead of using their modern Italian sofas and chairs, they would admire the pieces from a certain distance, like sculpture. The furniture was subtly contoured, canvas rather than leather, softly lit, *voltafaccia* from the hard-edged high-tech effects Naomi and George had opted for in the mid seventies, 180 degrees from the floor pillows and billboard art they had grooved on in the early seventies. After they had started eating meals in the bedroom rather than at their marble dining table, Naomi and George made two decisions: they would have children, and they would collect antiques.

When the apartment was full of antiques and their first son, whom they named Cree, was old enough to attend school, Naomi and George made another decision—to move to Fifth Avenue, where the schools

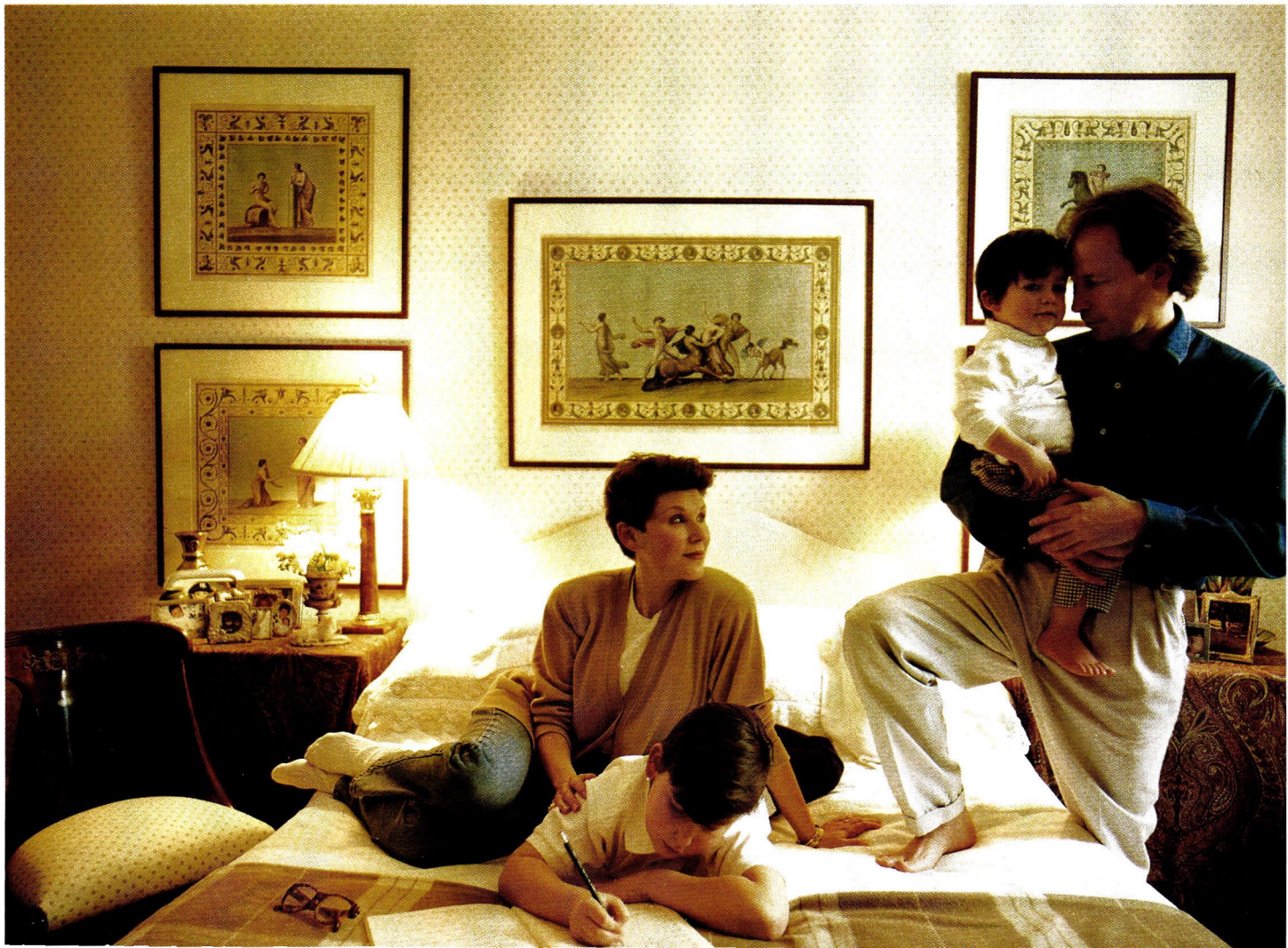
were better and the apartments were bigger. Here. Where a Dutch pediatrician had lived for thirty years. Where Naomi arrived every morning with coffee and doughnuts for the workmen and craftsmen who took only fourteen weeks when everyone said the renovation would be at least nine months. Where she glances out the window and says, "Life's hard out there. We wanted to be comfortable."

In another glance Naomi takes stock of the living room. "The word people use to describe this apartment is peaceful," she says.

Later, in a telephone conversation, George says, "Literally everyone who comes into the apartment says, 'This is so peaceful.'"

Whether it's because they have been married for sixteen years or because of *(Text continued on page 184)*

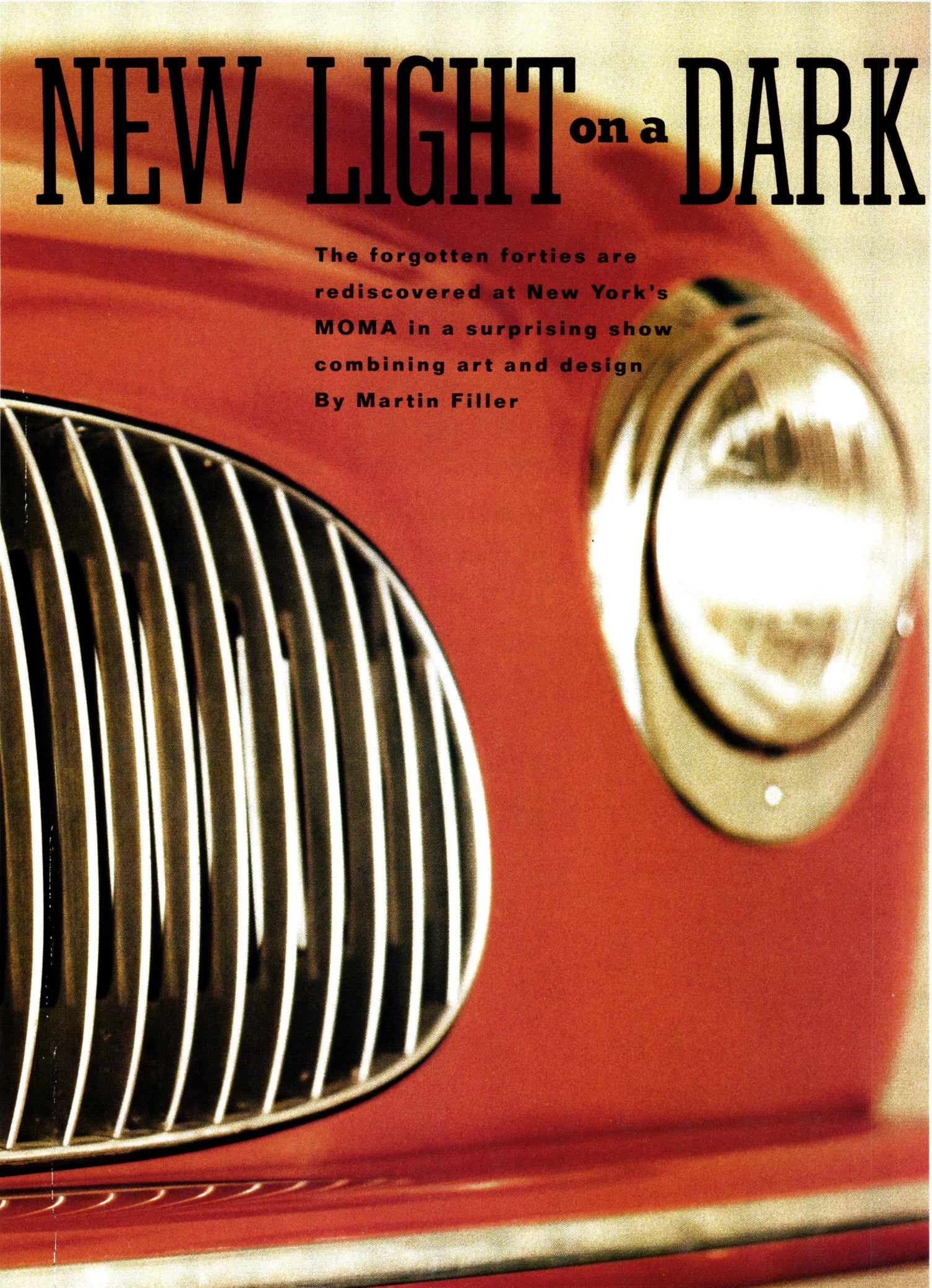
If there were a *Fortysomething*, instead of Hope and Michael you'd have Naomi and George



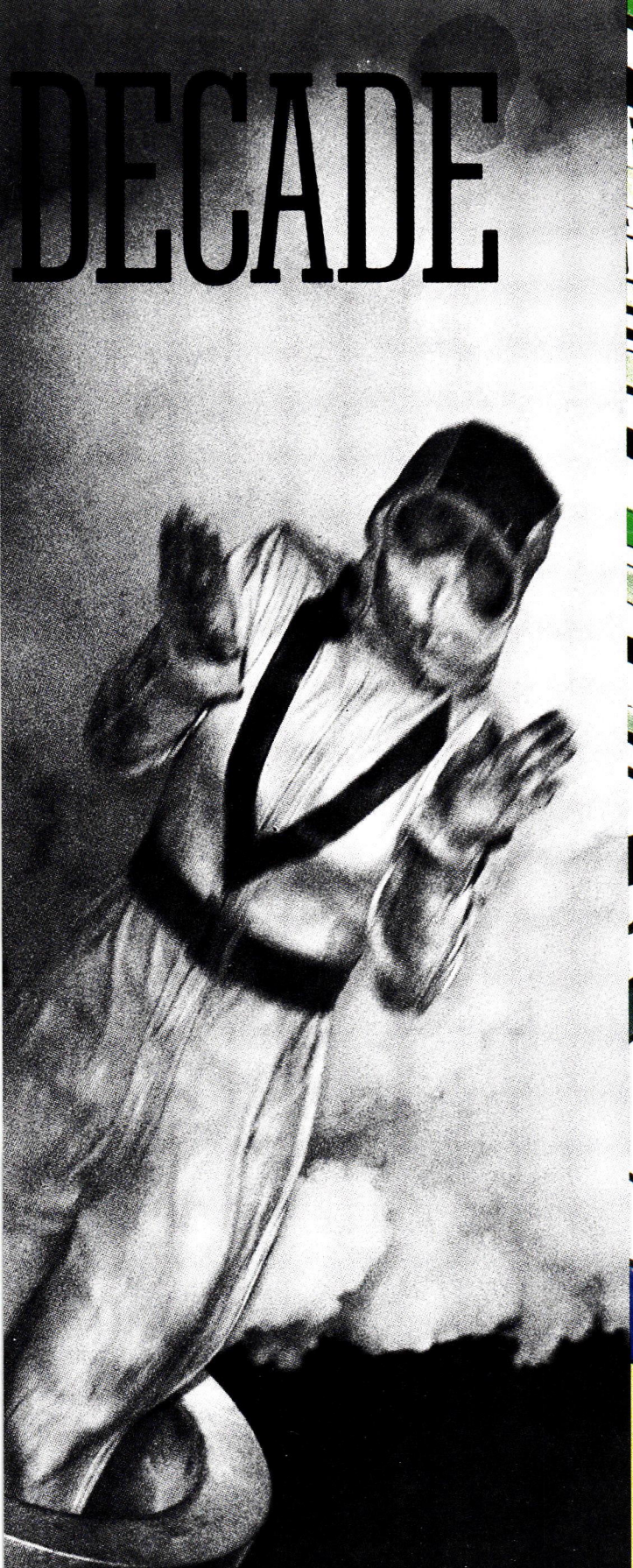
NEW LIGHT on a DARK

The forgotten forties are rediscovered at New York's MOMA in a surprising show combining art and design

By Martin Filler

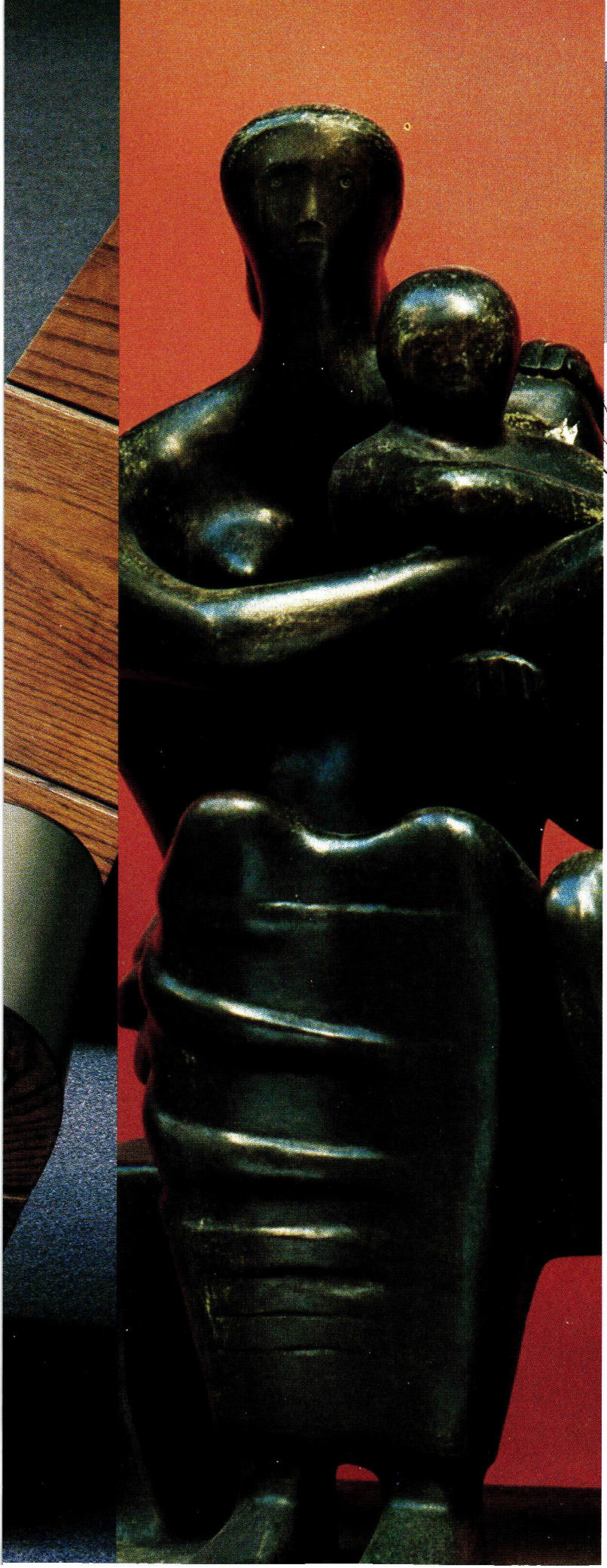


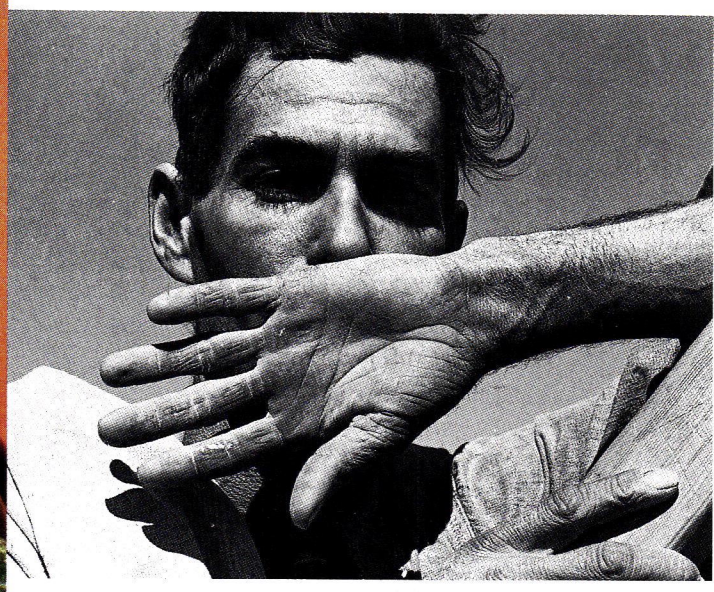
DECADE



Weegee's 1943 photo *Woman Shot from Cannon, New York*, detail, *above;* Léger's mural study for Rockefeller Center, NYC, 1939–40, detail, *right;* and, *opposite,* Pinin Farina's Cisitalia "202" GT sports car, 1948.

The forties are still seen as a major break in modern civilization





THE ART OF THE 1940S REMAINS THE great unknown chapter of twentieth-century culture. That decade, cast into darkness by the overwhelming shadow of global conflict, now seems outshone on one side by the more brilliant thirties and distanced on the other by the more accessible fifties. Although breaking the history of art into tidy ten-year installments has its shortcomings, the forties are still seen as the major caesura of modern civilization, years of unspeakable horrors and untold suffering. No wonder few people wanted to remember.

Now New York's Museum of Modern Art—itself a beacon of hope and an island of humane values during the apocalypse—is presenting a retrospective likely to cause a broad revision of received ideas about that bedeviled period. "Art of the Forties" (on view February 24–April 30, with an excellent accompanying catalogue distributed by Abrams) draws on the incomparable holdings of all six of the museum's curatorial departments: painting and sculpture, drawings, prints and illustrated books, photography, architecture and design, and film. The result is a powerful tribute to the men and women who were determined that the art of their time should not be extinguished through ignorance, intolerance, and brute force and could be a weapon with which to fight back those mortal threats to the human spirit.

The exhibition's organizer, Riva Castleman, and her five fellow curators have put together a superb 250-piece survey that is both comprehensive in scope and probing in detail. To their credit, they have not shied away from icons long

Oak and linoleum Multiuse chair and rocker, *far left*, by Frederick J. Kiesler, 1942. *Left:* Henry Moore's bronze *Family Group*, 1948–49. *Above:* Dorothea Lange's photograph *Migratory Cotton Picker, Eloy, Arizona*, 1940.

lodged in the collective memory of the MOMA audience—the circa 1943 Brancusi-like Panelyte propeller blade, photographer Dorothea Lange's searing 1940 portrait of a migratory farm worker, Piet Mondrian's vibrant *Broadway Boogie Woogie* of 1942–43, and Picasso's sobering *The Charnel House* of 1944–45. Nor have the curators shunned even more famous images that are questionable as art but revealing as documents of extreme popularity, like Pavel Tchelitchew's *Hide-and-Seek* of 1940–42 and Andrew Wyeth's *Christina's World* of 1948. And when is the last time one can recall seeing a Bernard Buffet in a museum exhibition?

But "Art of the Forties" also abounds in the work of artists still generally unknown years after their pieces were added to the permanent collection: Ivan Le Lorraine Albright, Jean Fautrier, Salvatore Fiume, Jean Gorin, Ian Hugo, Knud Merrild, Alton Pickens, Honoré Sharrer, Janet Sobel, Thomas Wilfred, and Wols. It is salutary from time to time to take a second (or even first) look at the output of forgotten artists that a major museum once thought worthy of preserving for posterity. This frank display of MOMA's well-intentioned misses as well as its stupendous hits also provides a tacit argument against the growing practice of deaccessioning. Museums are constantly reinventing themselves through buying and selling, but care must be taken that history is not reinvented in the process.

Two stylistic themes emerge with particular clarity from this rich mass of material: surrealism and social realism. The surrealists' obsessive interest in dreams, randomness, sexuality, the contours of the female body, and the symbolism of the unconscious mind were typical of the art of André Breton, Max Ernst, Matta, and Kurt Seligmann. Antithetical was the narrative, politically activist, and populist approach typified by their social realist contemporaries, including Walker Evans, Lange, Jack Levine, and Ben Shahn. But those two divergent modes of expression often seem like part of a single impulse: the assertion of the forces of life over death.

Another aspect of the show's wide range is the interplay between surrealism and social realism. The graphics designer Herbert Bayer's eye-catching 1942 poster *Our Allies Need Eggs,* alive with floating ovoids, applies surrealist incongruities to social realist *(Text continued on page 186)*

Seven-in-One tool, *right,* by Barcalo Manufacturing Co., 1940. *Inset right:* Prototype for Charles Eames's La Chaise, 1948. *Opposite left:* Eames, third from left, and his design team with molded plywood study for a glider nose, 1943. *Opposite right:* Gertrud and Otto Natzler's ceramic vase, 1945, and spherical vase, 1942.

The war years spurred an active interplay between high art and utilitarian design

Main Line Impressions

Print dealer Graham Arader and his family put their own stamp on Philadelphia style. By Celia McGee

Photographs by Oberto Gili

High above Oakwell, *right*, Walter Graham Arader IV surveys his father, his sister Lilli, and Man Dan. *Above:* Valli Arader used a peach tone on the walls of the living room, which is decorated with a faded Sarouk, a flowery chintz, needlepoint pillows, 19th-century English pieces, and Graham's prints.

REMEMBER THE SCENE IN *THE PHILADELPHIA Story* in which tall drink of water Tracy Lord, played by Katharine Hepburn, throws her arms around her father and tells him that the house he has just promised to build her and her bridegroom is the best wedding present a girl could ever ask for? Well, no—that scene doesn't exist. But if it did, Oakwell—a Lutyens-style neo-Elizabethan dwelling built in 1920 by a local natural-gas baron as a nuptial gift for one of his children—would have fit the bill. Situated not far from where *The Philadelphia Story* took place, the house is now owned by W. Graham Arader III, at age forty one of the country's foremost dealers in antique maps, prints, and natural-history watercolors.

In our hypothetical movie, Tracy would have more than met her match in Arader, a kind of Peck's Bad Boy of the Main Line who for the past twenty years has enjoyed setting the antiquarian map and print trade on its genteel ear. In reality, Arader is married to a Georgia native named Vallijeanne—Valli for short, Bugs to her husband, and a funny, gracious foil to his high-voltage personality. Because they bring clients to Oakwell as well as live there, the Araders have established a setting for their art and antiques that, though extremely handsome, isn't so precious that it can't accommodate the occasional tricycle, sneaker, or riding crop left around by one of their three young children.

A pair of paintings by Antonio Crivelli grace the stairwell, *above*. *Right:* Valli's design for the dining room ceiling derives from the celestial pattern on a set of Chinese export porcelain. The Georgian three-pedestal table is surrounded by a set of 18th-century Philadelphia chairs.

When they bought the house seven years ago, says Arader, "it hadn't been touched for sixty years." They carefully renovated it. Valli had made a name for herself as an artist before she met Graham, and she saw the house as a "great outlet." "It allowed me to be very free with painted finishes," she says, pointing at the living room's rough plaster walls and ceilings, which she gave a peach tone on top of a putty ground color. She is halfway through covering the walls of an upstairs sewing room with a pansy motif. And in the dining room she

"When all you see above are gold

stars, it takes you right out of the reality of a Philadelphia dining room"

took her design for the dark blue star-and-planet-studded ceiling from the celestial pattern on the Araders' formal china, a rare set of Chinese export porcelain. A pair of nineteenth-century French armillary spheres sit on an 1830 sideboard, and the Araders found celestial prints for the walls. "I love being in here at night," says Valli, "when it's dim and all you see above are those gold stars. It takes you right out of the reality of being in a dining room in Philadelphia."

Valli's color sense has flooded the house with a sea of antique oriental carpets in soft weathered hues. A collector of fabric and old needlepoint, she selects the upholstery for any furniture acquisitions that need re-covering and has devised luxurious window treatments for every one of Oakwell's twenty-five rooms. In the kitchen, for instance, she came up with the idea of using tree branches as curtain rods. "I imagine they did that sort of thing in the Old West," she says.

The West is fresh on the Araders' minds because of a recent family trip through Yellowstone National Park in the tracks of Thomas Moran, whose watercolors, paintings, and chromolithographs of the frontier enabled nineteenth-century Americans to see the landscape through explorers' eyes. Arader came to such images midway through his career, which hangs in capsule history throughout the house and which started with maps.

(Continued on page 186)

Prints by John Frederick Herring Sr. and shelves of Georgian pitchers flank the entrance to a Smallbone Unfitted Kitchen, *right. Above:* Lilli, Walter, and Josephine Arader admire the azaleas. *Left:* In the breakfast room, Redouté botanicals hang above an Empire sofa.

The Araders created a setting

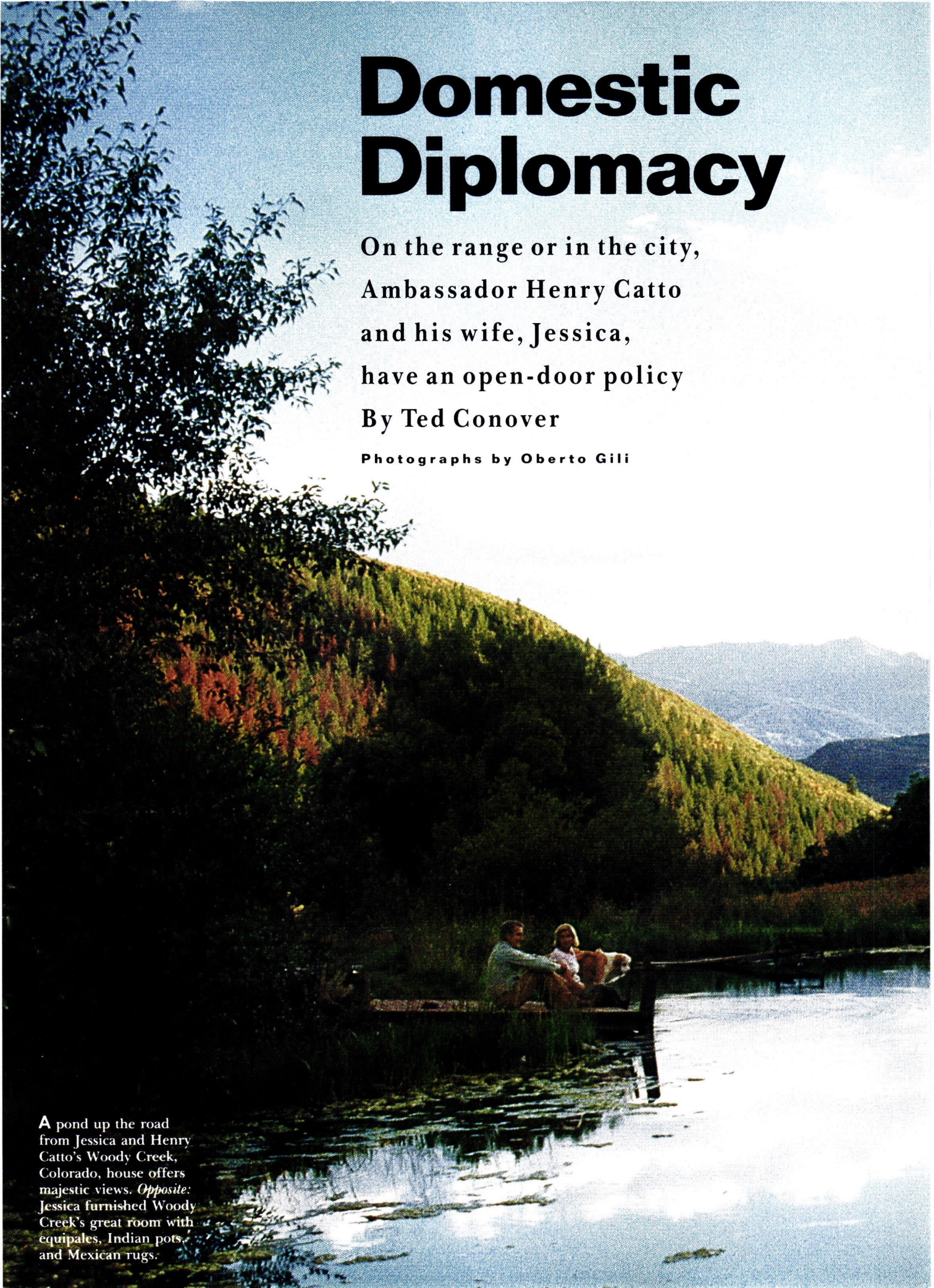
for their prints and antiques that is handsome without being precious

Domestic Diplomacy

On the range or in the city, Ambassador Henry Catto and his wife, Jessica, have an open-door policy

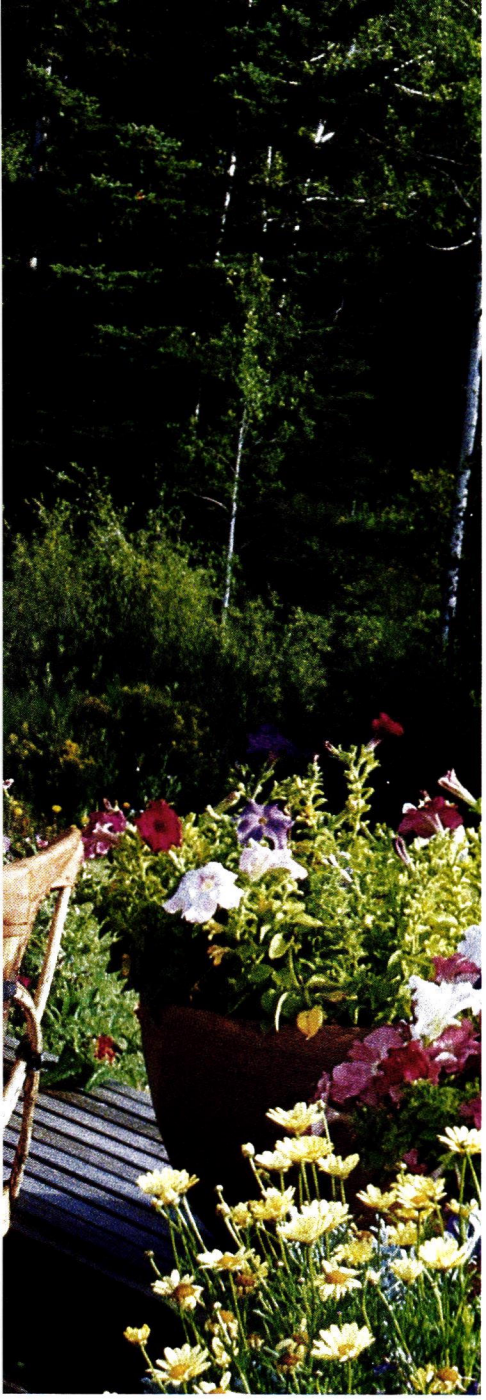
By Ted Conover

Photographs by Oberto Gili



A pond up the road from Jessica and Henry Catto's Woody Creek, Colorado, house offers majestic views. *Opposite:* Jessica furnished Woody Creek's great room with equipales, Indian pots, and Mexican rugs.

San Antonio artist Pat Sturts painted a trompe l'oeil niche in the kitchen, *left*. *Above:* Potted flowers, Mexican chairs, and an embroidered tablecloth from Bangladesh enliven the terrace. *Right:* Isa Catto and Jessica hit the trails on Piglet and Scratch. *Opposite:* Jessica had the family dining room at Winfield House painted apricot. Details see Resources.



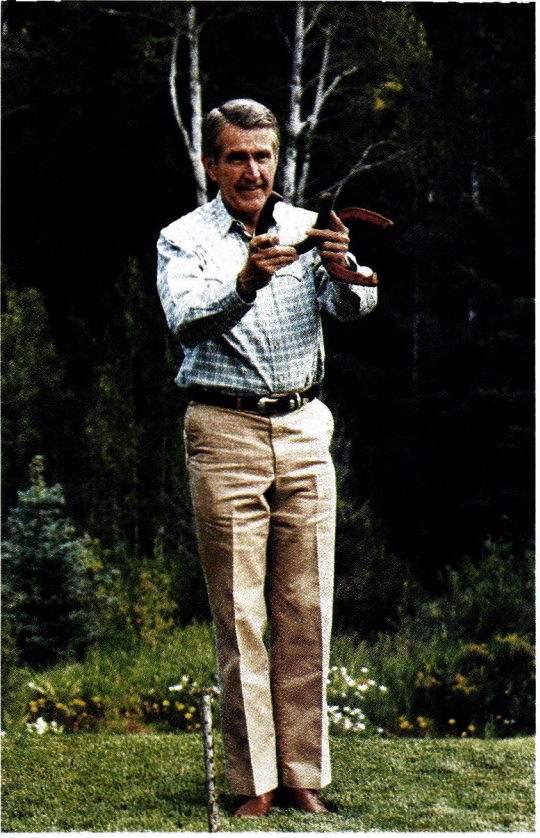
AT NINE THOUSAND FEET on a ranch in Colorado, a radio telephone is ringing. "Rats," says Jessica Catto, who has just sat down to a fat peanut butter and jelly sandwich after a long morning's ride around the property—a ride during which her dog, Chico, got so tired that a cowboy named Ty had to sling him across his saddle calf-style, and, descending a steep slope, Jessica's horse fell, ejecting its passenger, who landed on her feet. She drops the sandwich on a bare picnic table and wipes the crumbs off her chaps as she clomps across the creaky wooden porch into an old cabin to answer it. Through a window she can be seen smiling. It's—who else?—the American ambassador to the Court of Saint James's. Henry Catto, Jessica's husband, is calling from London, as he does almost every day.

Back on the porch, she explains that in one week's time she'll be back at Winfield House, the Regent's Park residence that goes with Henry's job. It's almost as hard to imagine Jessica Catto in pearls and heels at this moment as it is to imagine buttoned-up Henry mucking around the wilderness on a fat old horse like Sullivan. When Sullivan refused to cross a stream this morning, Ty had opined, "That horse'll only do what he wants to." "I can understand that," Jessica had said.

It was not an idle remark. Jessica Catto's passion for her life at the 10,000-acre Eagle Ranch and their house in nearby Woody Creek (down the valley from Aspen) is about on a par with her husband's love of big-time politics. When George Bush appointed his old friend Henry to London, Jessica made a decision to preside simultaneously over their

three very different households: the contemporary ranch-style house in Woody Creek, their no-frills cabin on Eagle Ranch, and Winfield House, a Georgian mansion built in 1936–38 by Barbara Hutton. "Jessica lives with an airplane strapped to her rear end," the ambassador has said of their relationship, "but other than that, it's fine. Jessica Catto half time is better than any woman I know full time."

Her independence may derive from Texas and family: Jessica's mother is Oveta Culp Hobby, formerly the editor and publisher of *The Houston Post* and a cabinet officer under Dwight Eisenhower. Henry is the scion of a prominent San Antonio family with insurance interests. In Washington, Henry broadened an impres-



sive résumé by serving as Gerald Ford's chief of protocol and Jessica became publisher of the *Washington Journalism Review*. By the time Henry was tagged for London, however, Jessica had another life going in Colorado—building energy-efficient houses outside Aspen and converting Eagle Ranch from a cattle operation into a study center and wildlife refuge.

Not that there isn't some overlap between ranch chores and diplomatic duties: among last summer's houseguests in Colorado were George Bush and Margaret Thatcher. What had been planned as a simple appearance to receive awards at the Aspen Institute turned into what Jessica calls "a bilateral summit in our living room," as the two leaders sat down to confer on Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Amidst the Zapotec rugs and rustic pottery, trompe l'oeil paintings and Mexican leather chairs, statements were hammered out which Bush and Thatcher delivered to the world from the Catto lawn. Diplomacy is nothing new to Jessica Catto. "The president caught a fish, made a speech, met a lot of people, shook a lot of hands," she says. "Reverse the order and you've got the same effect."

Jessica comes to London sporadically, hoping to make the important occasions. Unlike other ambassadors' wives, she's not on arts boards and doesn't tend to stand in for Henry when he's booked. Her own board of choice is the Environmental Defense Fund in the States. She bends tradition in other ways as well. Though grateful for the gifts of predecessors like Walter and Leonore Annenberg, who spent millions renovating and redecorating Winfield House, Jessica has firm feelings about the purpose of a room: "I think if you put together an atmosphere where people aren't standing around like storks, they're going to get to yes more quickly, and I mean that in a diplomatic sense."

A visitor to Winfield today will notice more throw pillows, more sofas, more seating arrangements in tight-knit clusters in the grand formal rooms. Pistachio paint and gilding have lost ground to warm colors and easy comfort. And Jessica felt it was important that at least one room in the residence showcase American style: the large family sitting room at the top of the stairs, where Henry spends much time reading, writing, and relaxing, has been redone in fabrics from Ralph Lauren's Safari collection, donated by the designer.

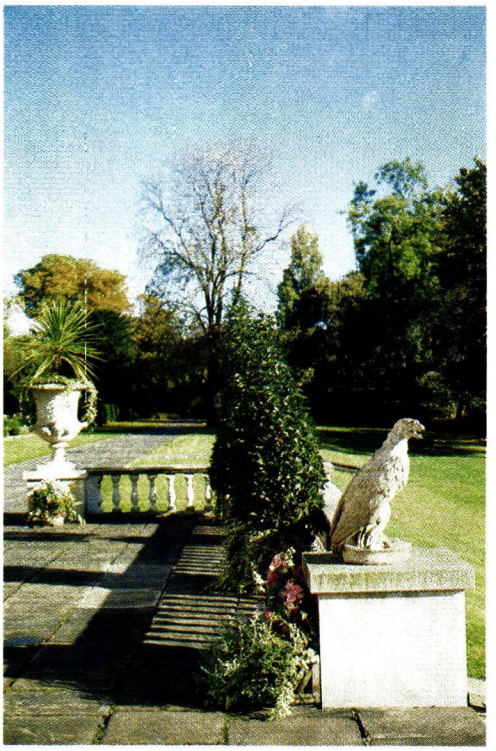
Other parts of Winfield stay just the same. The butler still answers the front door; a staff of about twelve "professional, supersweet people keep the place running like a well-oiled machine," says Jessica. "Winfield runs a good deal more smoothly than the ranch does, though it's maybe . . . not quite as much fun." ▲

Editor: John Ryman

SIMON BROWN

Scenes from an intercontinental marriage: Henry, *above*, going for a ringer at Woody Creek; an official Winfield House portrait in the drawing room, *right*, decorated by Billy Haines, Ted Graber, and Dudley Poplak; the Woody Creek house, *below*. *Opposite from top:* Winfield House's gold room, where the Cattos do most of their entertaining; a stone eagle on the Winfield House terrace; the view from the Cattos' Eagle Ranch cabin on 10,000 preserved acres.

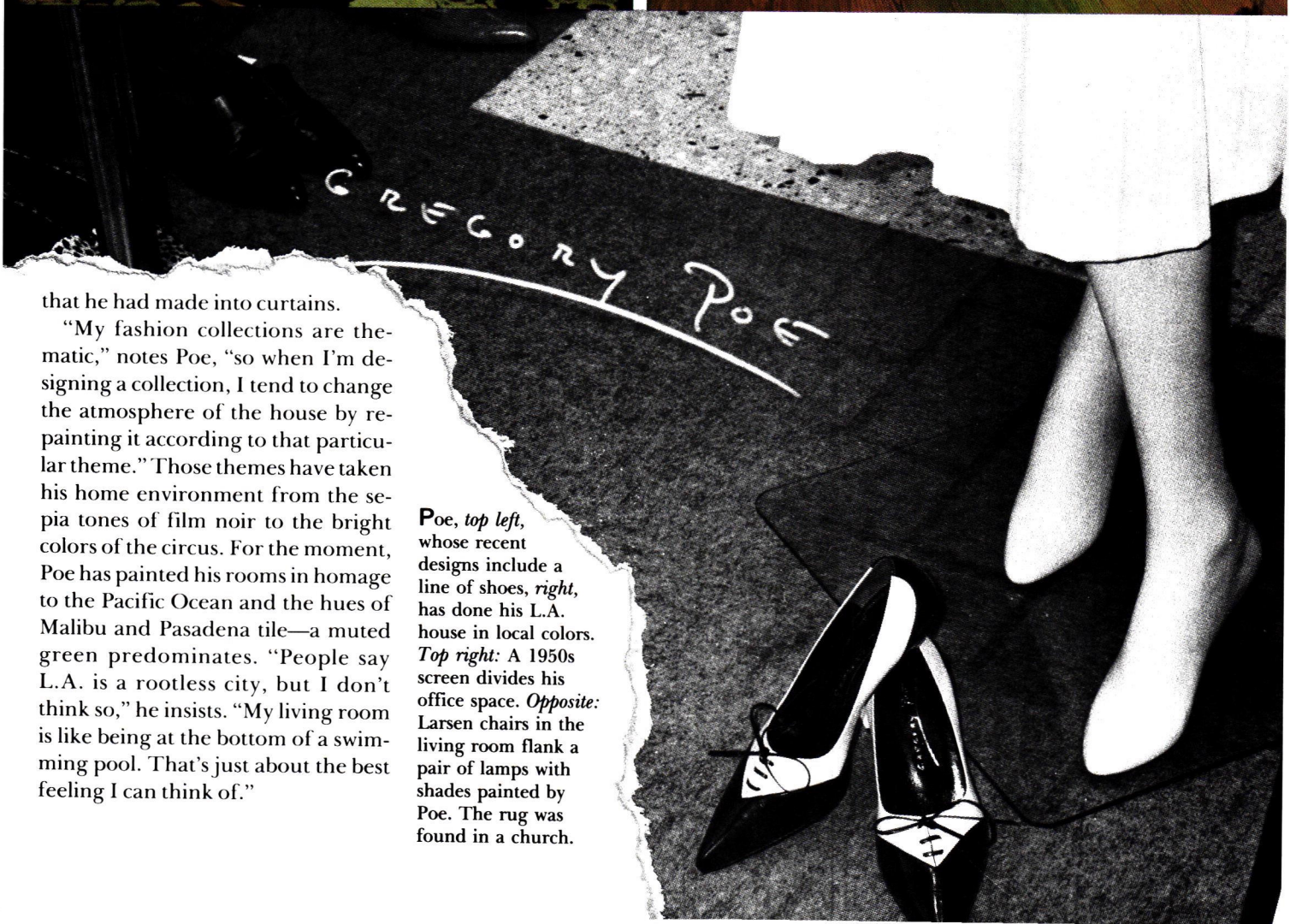
It's almost as hard to imagine Jessica in pearls and heels as it is to imagine buttoned-up Henry mucking around the wilderness



Designing Men

Three rising fashion talents tailor distinctive looks at home

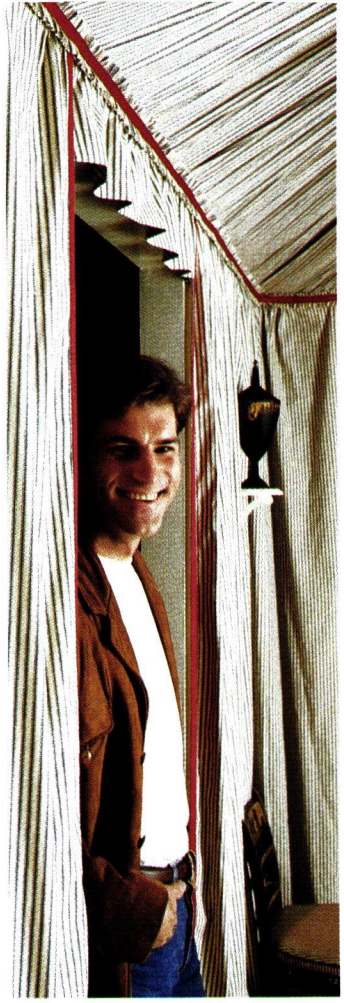
By Annette Tapert



that he had made into curtains.

"My fashion collections are thematic," notes Poe, "so when I'm designing a collection, I tend to change the atmosphere of the house by repainting it according to that particular theme." Those themes have taken his home environment from the sepia tones of film noir to the bright colors of the circus. For the moment, Poe has painted his rooms in homage to the Pacific Ocean and the hues of Malibu and Pasadena tile—a muted green predominates. "People say L.A. is a rootless city, but I don't think so," he insists. "My living room is like being at the bottom of a swimming pool. That's just about the best feeling I can think of."

Poe, *top left,* whose recent designs include a line of shoes, *right,* has done his L.A. house in local colors. *Top right:* A 1950s screen divides his office space. *Opposite:* Larsen chairs in the living room flank a pair of lamps with shades painted by Poe. The rug was found in a church.



Hamilton, *far left* and *opposite*, with recent fashions for Carolina Herrera, hired Sam Blount to bring country comfort to his New York apartment. *Left:* The dining area is tented in Cowtan & Tout ticking stripe. *Below:* The bedroom walls were glazed chocolate brown and hung with horse prints and photos. *Right:* Blount lined the living room walls with Brunschwig stretched linen. The carpet is from Stark.

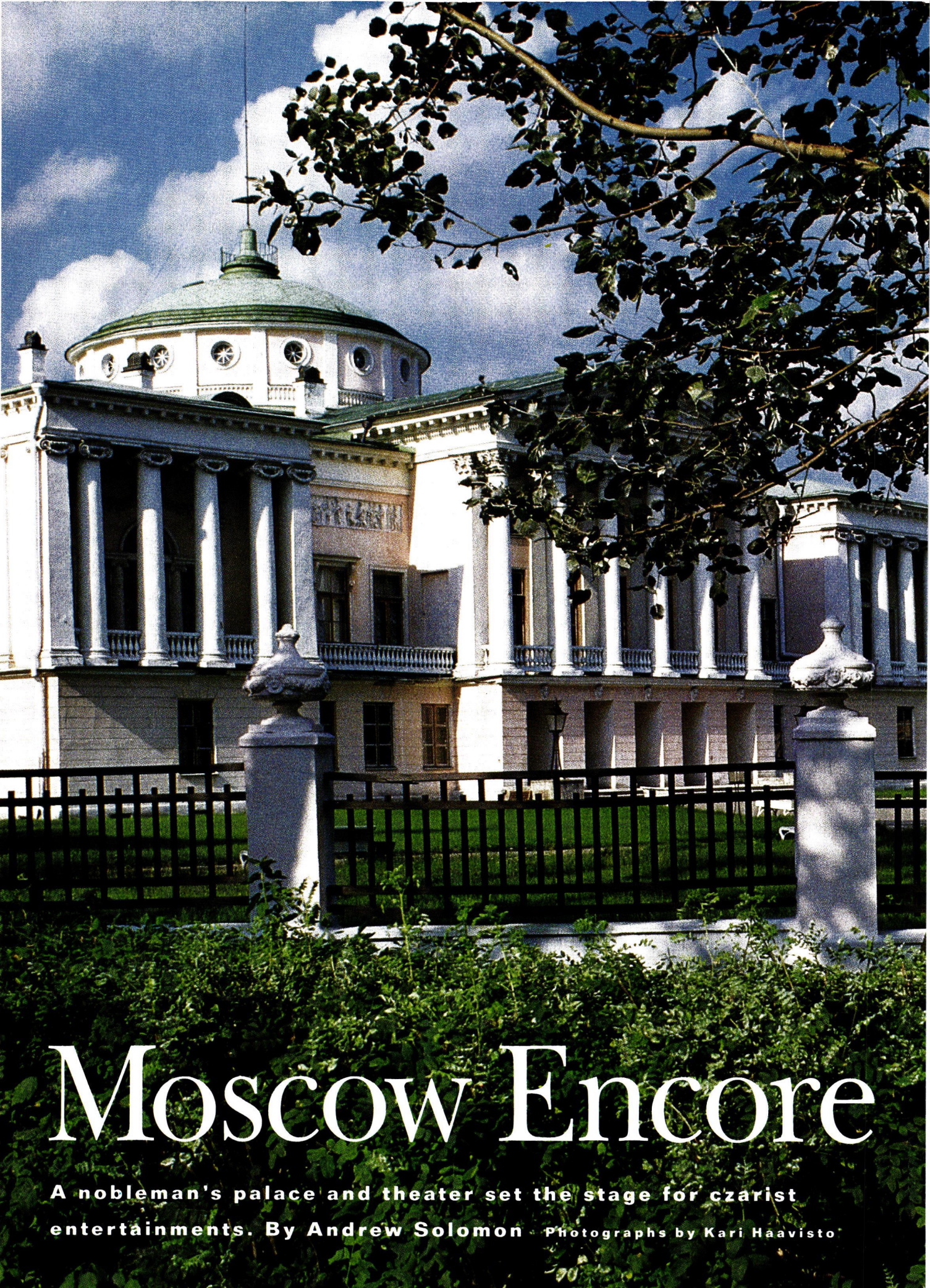
DRESSMAKER'S DETAILS

BILL HAMILTON

THE APARTMENT HAD belonged to Tennessee Williams, Steve Rubell, and, most recently, a group of college boys whose idea of decorating was to cover the place with black and white patio paint. Fortunately, Bill Hamilton, the thirty-one-year-old assistant to Carolina Herrera, possesses a gift that most city people lack—he's handy. With the help of decorator Sam Blount of Irvine & Fleming, he has transformed a two-bedroom dump into a quintessential New York jewel box.

"Sam was the decorator and I was the contractor," Hamilton recalls. "For a year, I would come home every night after work and put in two hours. I stripped floors, replastered ceilings, sanded down woodwork, and primed everything in white so we could decide what to do with it." An expert gardener and an accomplished horseman, Hamilton wanted to import the feeling of security and comfort he'd cherished as a resident of Greenwich, Connecticut. On the wrap terrace outside, he has created a garden, and his horse prints and photos line the bedroom walls. To incorporate the professional side of Hamilton's life, Blount used couture-like finishing details on the upholstered furniture, and Hamilton himself painted a border of women in ball gowns and short slinky dresses.

Surfaces too grim to repair were covered up. Hamilton put in many weekends at Carolina Herrera's studio stitching the linen that is stretched across the living room walls and the ticking stripe that tents the dining area. When it was time to glaze the bedroom walls, he drew upon an egg tempera technique he'd learned at school. "Most suggestions I make to clients never get executed," says Blount. "When I proposed that we tent the ceiling, I came back two days later and it was done." Is there anything Hamilton can't do? "Curtains," he says. "Let's just say mine didn't come out *quite* the way Sam's did." ▲



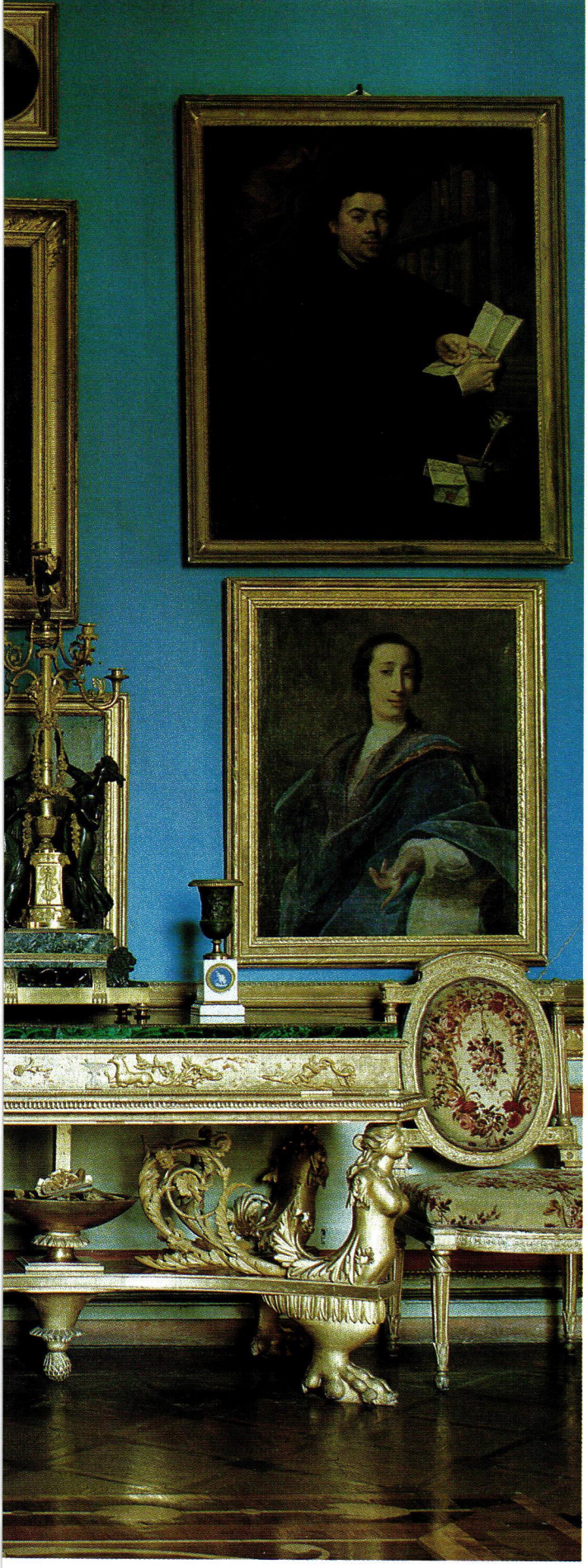
Moscow Encore

A nobleman's palace and theater set the stage for czarist entertainments. By Andrew Solomon Photographs by Kari Haavisto

Marble figures, lamps carved by serf masters, and brocade upholstery fill the Blue Room of Ostankino, once a center of Moscow cultural life. *Opposite:* The neoclassical exterior is stucco over wood.

GAYNOR AND DEBRA GOLDSTEIN. TO BE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER BY STEWART, TABORI & CHANG

Ostankino is one of the great houses in Moscow to survive the revolution; the count's art collection was spared



WHEN I SAID I WAS WRITING a piece about Ostankino, Moscow friends nodded their heads sagely and assured me that it was very beautiful, but almost none of them had been there. Western friends, including several who have lived in Moscow, had in most instances not even heard of the place. I went to Ostankino early on a Sunday morning in November. It was a cold day, but the snow had stopped and the sun was streaking through the clouds. I got off the metro at VDNKh, near the Exhibition of Economic Achievements, and walked, as I had been instructed, toward a 1,770-foot-high television tower. The streets of the area had flooded, and I found myself sinking into mud among overbuilt housing developments of the Brezhnev period. The only clear ground was in the middle of the trolley tracks, where I made my way slowly, jumping aside on the rare occasions when a trolley actually came.

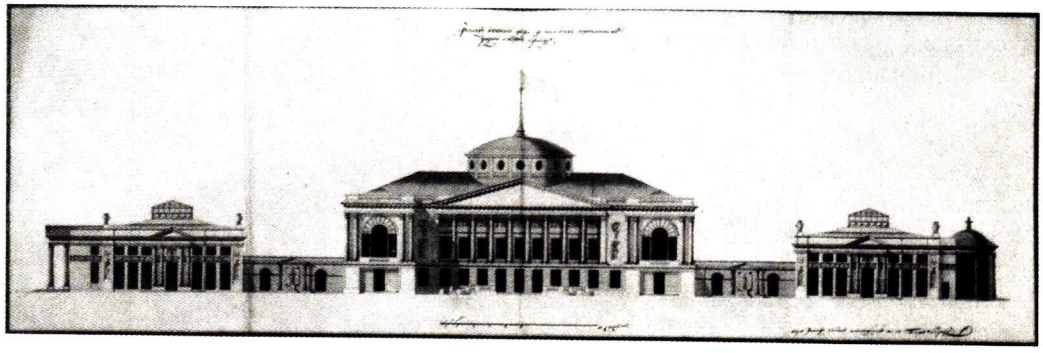
Ostankino itself is something of a surprise in this landscape. I rounded a dilapidated corner where two old women were arguing over a cucumber and found the house in front of me, elegantly neoclassical, stuccoed in pink, with a small older onion-domed chapel about 400 feet beyond the main structure. Ostankino is now closed for restoration, and the first two times I telephoned I was told unconditionally that there was no access to the place. But the third time a young woman named Yelena Vdovina, scientific consultant to the museum, agreed to make the necessary arrangements for me. "You'd better come in the morning," she said. "We have no lights in the house, and you can't really see anything once the sun

With its frescoed ceiling and grand chandeliers, Ostankino's auditorium, *above,* accommodated 200 guests at theater, opera, and ballet performances and converted into a ballroom in less than an hour for dancing. The old drawing is used for restoration purposes. *Left:* French furniture by Paul Spol alternates with malachite-topped tables in the art gallery. The paintings are original to the palace.

The palace combines the massive grandeur of Russia and the delicate refinement of Europe

crosses the sky. Come on Sunday—I'm responsible for the house then." And so on that Sunday morning I presented myself at the chapel (which is now a museum of objects from the house), and Yelena Vdovina, wearing a Chinese coat of brocaded blue silk, picked up a massive set of keys and led me across what was once the garden.

Inside, we put enormous felt slippers over our shoes to protect the famous parquet of Ostankino. Preparations for the restoration have been under way for over a year now; small samples have been cut out of various walls, and the structure has been analyzed and tested and diagramed. The house is completely made of wood—it is a sort of enormous log cabin covered in plaster. The conservators believe that it would be a mistake to introduce electricity; they worry that the house might crumble or go up in flames. Though there is a heating system, it has not been used in two hundred years, and it too is kept off for fear of disaster. I saw Ostankino in the dark and in unspeakable cold—in, that is, the conditions endured by the conservators now working on the building.



Ostankino was built in the later part of the eighteenth century by Count Nikolay Petrovich Sheremetev, one of imperial Russia's wealthiest men, as a summer theater palace, on a property the family had acquired in the 1740s. As a child, Count Sheremetev took music lessons and playacted with his friend the crown prince Paul (later Paul I). When he came of age, he traveled across Europe to France, where his appreciation for the theater, opera, and ballet grew. Wishing to re-create in Moscow all the splendors he had known in Western Europe, he attached himself to the tradition of the "serf theater," then popular among Russian *(Text continued on page 180)*

Behind a carved lamp and a wood and papier-mâché French chair, *opposite*, bronze and glass urns line a shelf in the art gallery. *Right:* A theater fan. *Far right:* Count Nikolay Petrovich Sheremetev. *Above center:* A rendering of Ostankino and its domed belvedere, finished in 1798. *Top:* Loggia of the Blue Room, with faux marbre columns and likenesses of Peter I, Catherine II, and Alexander I.

A carved and papered ceiling arches broadly over the connecting gallery to the Italian Pavilion. *Left:* The doors to the Italian Pavilion are carved and glazed linden.

On plaster and wood, the serfs

created expanses of faux marbre and malachite, inlay and gold

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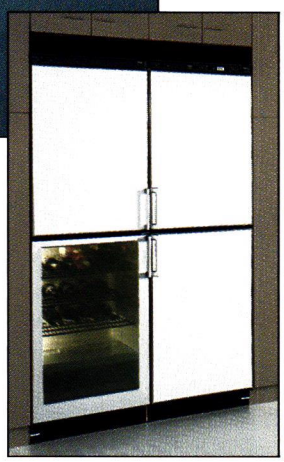

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BLUE NOTES. China by Christian Dior and Villeroy & Boch cruets by Paloma Picasso add a soupçon of regal color to a table further embellished with Baccarat goblets, Cartier Lapis candlesticks, Orbit flatware from Sasaki, Christofle salt and pepper shakers, a Baccarat Vector bowl filled with flowers, and a yak bone ball from Lexington Gardens, NYC. Baker Furniture's marquetry table stands against Quadrille wallpaper. Details see Resources.

BY ERIC BERTHOLD

great ideas

With bold colors traditional tables turn electric

great ideas

OLD-WORLD HUES. A John Widdicomb console set against walls lined with a Clarence House damask and paintings from Karen Warshaw, NYC, lends a Gothic glow to a spread that includes, from left, Lenox China plates topped with a pitcher from Karen Warshaw; Michael Aram's Enchanted Forest candlesticks; leaf napkin rings from Lemchen & Ramos, NYC; napkins of Gretchen Bellinger brown silk; beige linen napkins by Nancy Koltes, NYC; Lalique vases; pâte-de-verre handled forks and spoons by Daum; Fitz & Floyd Marrakech porcelain; flower salt cellars by Daum; Hilton McConnico's teacups for Daum; antique creamer from Karen Warshaw holding Oneida flatware; champagne flutes from New Glass Gallery, NYC. *Bottom right:* Yellow-stemmed crystal by Sasaki.

RUBY SPLENDOR. Mottahedeh's soup tureens on Gorham china overlook an edible still life by Debra Felberbaum. Crystal from Saint Louis; flatware by Arthur Price of England; Christofle salt and pepper shakers; napkins and ties by Nancy Koltes. Brunschwig silk covers the table. The curved bench is from Florian Papp, NYC; painted chair from Florence de Dampierre Antiques, NYC.

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Moscow Encore

(Continued from page 171) aristocrats, in which talented serfs performed for the entertainment of their masters. Sheremetev, however, left behind the realms of diverting amateurism in which this tradition had previously existed and brought his theater to the highest possible level. His households comprised 210,000 serfs, and for them he built a theater school at which the most talented were trained from the age of seven by French ballet masters and Italian voice teachers.

At the beginning, these activities were undertaken at Kuskovo, the old country home of the Sheremetev family. But the fashion at that time was for productions with elaborate sets and fantastical decorations, and the stage at Kuskovo was insufficiently deep for these. So after Nikolay Petrovich's father died and the count took charge of the family estates, he decided to build a house at Ostankino equipped with a great theater. It was constructed by serfs working in some instances from the plans of European architects and in others from their own. Under the watchful eye of the count, these men gilded, carved, and used every other technique for embellishment, producing a house that combined the massive grandeur of Russian architecture with all the delicate refinement of Western Europe. On plaster and wood, they created expanses of faux marbre and malachite, inlay and gold, and they draped the whole thing with the richest fabrics that art could then contrive. The furniture was produced by the workshop of Paul Spol, a Frenchman who had moved to Moscow.

Ostankino became a center of the cultural life of Moscow in its time, and the serfs of Count Sheremetev became famous across the land. The most beautiful and gifted of them all was an actress who was born Praskovya Gorbunova (Daughter of the Hunchback), later took the name Kovalyova (Daughter of the Blacksmith), and ultimately became Zhemchugova (The Woman Pearl). Nikolay Petrovich saw her on his own stage and was smitten with love; they were married in 1801 and ruled over a very brief but magnificent court life.

The entertainments at Ostankino must have been extraordinary. You enter the house and proceed up a grand staircase to a series of reception chambers before passing through the great picture gallery, which holds the count's vast collection (hidden during Napoleon's invasion), and at last arriving at the enormous theater around which the house is built. Everything in this room is changeable: the floor can be removed; the ornately decorated ceiling can be dismantled; the columns can be taken away; gaps can be opened and closed in the small rotunda to change the acoustics; the balconies can be brought forward or eliminated altogether. When a play was being performed, the audience descended a staircase and sat in a sunken area at the front of the room. Guests of honor sat on raised and balustraded platforms at each side, and Nikolay Petrovich himself sat in a loge at the door.

The stage is easily twice as large as the area reserved for the audience. Here the serf actors would perform and serf musicians, trained in the best European traditions, would play the latest music, of which the count was regularly informed by an acquaintance at the Paris Opéra. After the performance, he would lead his guests into the Egyptian Pavilion, off the main body of the house, where they would eat dinner to the accompaniment of other serf musicians. Then they would return to the theater, which would have been entirely reconstructed into a ballroom, and dance into the night.

The performances and receptions ceased after the countess died in 1803. Serf theaters became unfashionable, and for a hundred years no one used the house much. In essence, Ostankino was not touched from the time of Napoleon's departure until the revolution. In 1917, Nikolay Petrovich's grandson, more clever than most of his peers, donated the Sheremetev properties to the new Soviet state so that they might be enjoyed by the people. It is fortunate indeed that he did so; Ostankino and Kuskovo are among the several great houses of Moscow—and Nikolay Petrovich's grandson among the only aristocrats —to have survived the revolution. His great-granddaughter is allegedly living in Moscow today. ▲

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BY TINA LEE

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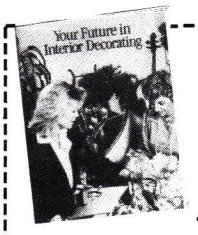

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Comfort Factor

(Continued from page 141) something else, Naomi and George manifest the unanimity of a pair of crime suspects. If there were a television show called *Fortysomething*, instead of Hope and Michael Steadman you might have Naomi and George Fertitta. George, who looks a bit like Sam Shepard, runs an advertising agency he founded in 1973. Naomi, who recalls Ali MacGraw, has been a magazine art director and a fashion stylist and recently returned to school for a degree in social work. Naomi says her friends tease her about appearing in the sort of publication she once worked for: "They tell me I can die happy now." George, from his downtown office where he has carved out fifteen minutes for a phone interview, is comically solicitous: "Don't forget to make us sound *fun*."

A unique strain of humility sometimes occurs in people who have worked in the media. "It could put a reader to sleep," says George, "but we have very similar taste, and it's very rare that we disagree on anything. We both like soft rich colors, art with a certain twist, things that make you feel content but also give your eye something to enjoy." Study pictures of Naomi and George's apartment and you can identify these things. Spend time there and you will feel content and your eye will have something to enjoy. And Naomi will play docent through a maze of art with a twist.

The painting over the living room sofa, Naomi and George's favorite painting, is a rendering of Chopin's *Funeral March;* Naomi points out that Elisabeth Everett's delicate composition is "surprisingly soothing." Engravings of satyrs and nymphs fill a wall of the master bedroom where Naomi and George "were after something a little more risqué." And an early nineteenth century English bird fantasy has pride of place in the dining room because it features a peacock, a stork, ducks, and other species that "wouldn't ordinarily hang out together."

Unlike some of their past pursuits, Naomi and George's antiques collecting has not been guided by an eye for homogeneity—this apartment is full of birds that wouldn't ordinarily hang out together. A Georgian bull's-eye mirror might have come from the same auction lot as the Adamesque mantel it hangs over—in fact, the mantel was custom-made by craftsman Richard Cava—but you're just as likely to find an English oil over a Japanese table, a Regency table under a Korean screen.

"The only art we buy now is frames for pictures of the children," says Naomi. "It sounds cliché, but the children are obviously the focus of our lives."

"We'll do more work on the children's rooms as their needs and lives change," says George. "Clearly, they're our priority these days."

Cree is now ten and returns from school just when Cameron, who is three, rises from his afternoon nap. Cree and Cameron share with children in television commercials the kind of grin that can suggest either impishness or demonic possession. They have reputedly taken crayons to the gallery walls, skateboards and tricycles to the floor. "Our neighbor downstairs always asks if the boys have on their lead shoes today," Naomi sighs.

Since such laments are no more and no less sincere than complaints about owning Italian furniture too beautiful for use, since a houseful of children will inevitably go the way of, say, a houseful of floor pillows, one might expect Naomi and George to have given some thought to their next domestic collaboration.

"Sometimes I think there'll be a point in our lives when we go back to a simple modern environment," says Naomi. "I always thought the Japanese had a great idea."

"I still love the simple aesthetic," says George. "Somewhere inside of me there's a Japanese farmhouse . . ." ▲

Middleton Place

(Continued from page 100) of British horticultural chauvinism. This year marks the 250th anniversary of the gardens at Middleton Place, the oldest surviving formal landscape in America, now tended through a nonprofit educational foundation by Charles Duell, the tenth direct heir of Henry Middleton. It also marks the sixty-first anniversary of the year that Nicolson and Sackville-West acquired Sissinghurst and began to make a garden there—a garden now under the care of the National Trust.

My own visit to this stately garden on the Ashley took place long after the camellias and the azaleas had stopped blooming, strewing the pathways with the radiant color of their petals. The crape myrtles had not yet begun to put in their word, but the roses were in full bloom. The soft green of the terraces where peacocks paraded, the deep blue of the Butterfly Lakes, the dark waters of Rice Mill Pond where swans glided by—all these bespoke a sense of place and of almost palpable time in Middleton's long history. Hurricane Hugo had hit hard here, destroying fences and some five hundred trees. But the live oaks, the Middleton Oak included, had ridden out the storm; only two were lost. The debris had been cleaned up, and Middleton showed only a few scars from its ordeal.

On my second evening here, the Charleston Symphony Orchestra played a pops concert on the greensward between the formal gardens and the stables. A crowd of at least one thousand souls had assembled to await the music in the gathering dusk. Children ran and chased balls. Teenagers and grown-ups hurled Frisbees. "We are not Hugo-nuts," said a placard by a card table where a family spread out its corn bread and barbecue. In front of the table they also spread out some legacies of Hugo—a limb from a fallen tree, shingles from a roof destroyed, cans of tuna fish like those that had sustained them for weeks after the storm.

The orchestra platform was right in front of the rubble of the old house, damaged beyond repair by war and destroyed by earthquake. The concert opened with "The Star-Spangled Banner." By the dawn's early light, the anthem's words proclaim, a patriot took pride. Our flag was still there. Both places and people can be survivors, and the comfort in that thought brought a lump to the throat. ▲

Editor: Senga Mortimer

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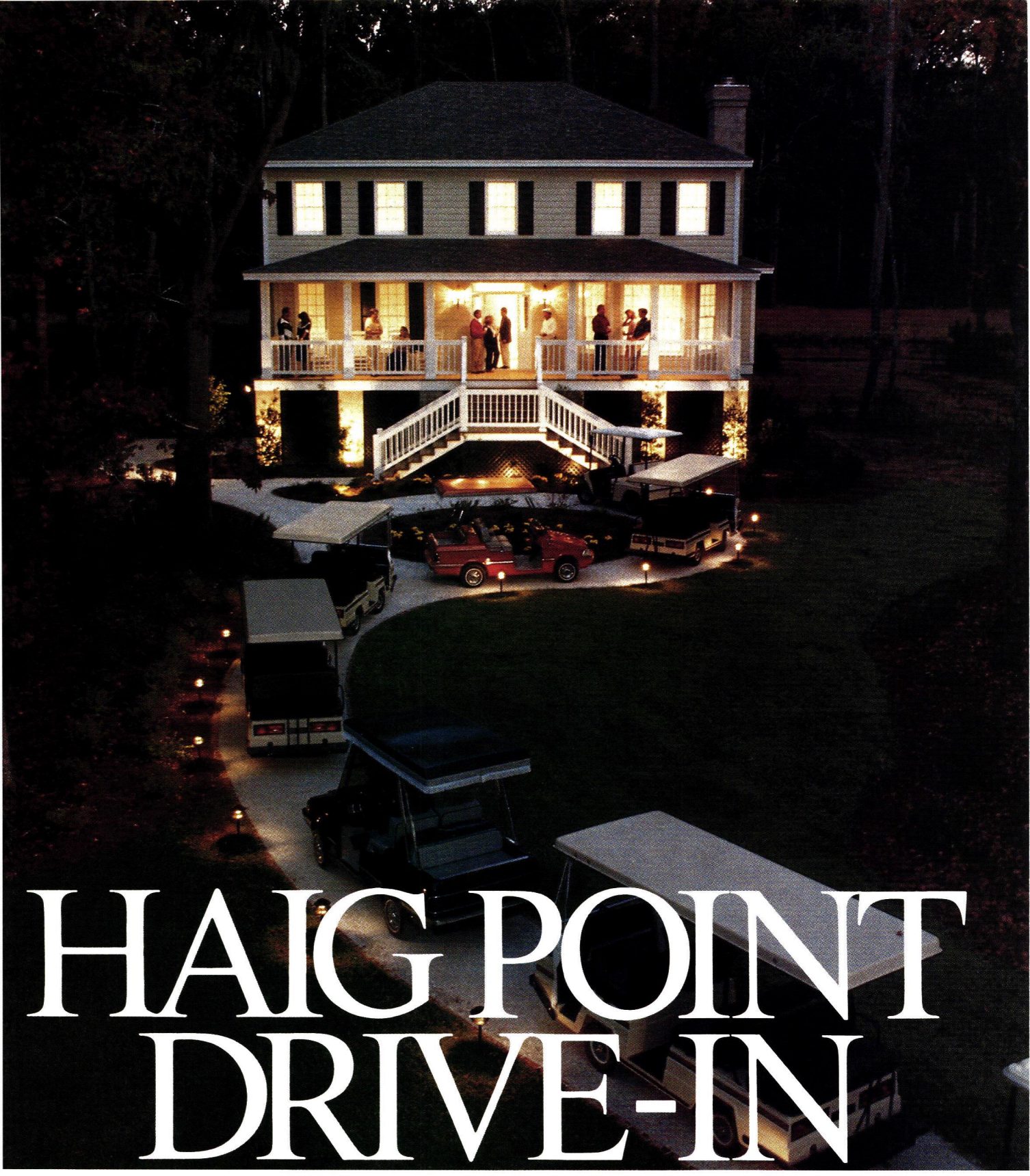

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New Light

(Continued from page 146) purposes, while the Barcalo Manufacturing Co.'s potently simple 1940 Seven-in-One tool could just as well be an Ernst sculpture. The New York photojournalist Weegee, best known for his gruesome slice-of-life pictures, is here quite the elegant fantasist in his 1943 *Woman Shot from Cannon, New York,* a picture so stylized that it might have been done by Horst for a *Vogue* fashion sitting.

In no period of history has there been a closer relation between high art and object design than there was during the forties, and MOMA played a major role in encouraging it through its landmark design exhibitions, especially the 1949 show "Modern Art in Your Life," which stressed the symbiosis between contemporary art and utilitarian design. Here the biomorphic influence of surrealism is present in the sculptor Isamu Noguchi's 1944 boomerang-legged coffee table and the architect Charles Eames's softly embracing La Chaise chair of 1948. The use of organic materials and the sensuous celebration of their natural qualities—epitomized by the lustrous wooden bowls of the California craftsman James Prestini—stemmed from the wartime rationing of metals and synthetics, but the passion and inventiveness with which America's designers exploited nonessential resources was nothing short of inspired. So is one of the most arresting surprises in the exhibition: a ten-foot-high molded-plywood glider-nose component Eames designed in 1943 for the aircraft industry's war effort. This gracefully arching airplane part, recently acquired for the MOMA design collection, is now exhibited for the first time.

The war years of the forties were a very lean period for architecture, with commissions at a virtual standstill for the duration, except for military and defense construction. It is significant that aside from a few elegantly minimalist designs by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the most memorable architectural image in "Art of the Forties" is Paul Strand's talismanic 1944 photograph of an eighteenth-century New England clapboard church, the embodiment of the values America was fighting to defend.

There were still four years left to the forties after the war was over, and the sense of relief and liberation that followed the catastrophe are palpable in the almost immediate shift in the sensibility of the post-1945 works. Nothing sums up the change better than Henri Matisse's sprightly caricature of General Charles de Gaulle in *Jazz,* the artist's dazzling 1947 book of prints, in which the formidable profile of the war hero becomes benign and decorative.

In America, the emergent generation of avant-garde painters—with Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Arshile Gorky chief among them—had at last freed themselves from surrealism and with abstract expressionism proclaimed that a new age in the history of art had begun. Theirs was the triumphant break with which the forties ended, a decade many at the time were glad to see go and which many today will be glad to see once again in this handsome thought-provoking exploration of art in dark times. ▲ *Editor: Susan Goldberger*

Credits for New Light on a Dark Decade
Pages 142–143—*From left:* Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of the Manufacturer, Carrozzeria Pininfarina/photo Eric Boman; Museum of Modern Art, Purchase; Museum of Modern Art, Given Anonymously. Pages 144–45—*From left:* Museum of Modern Art, Edgar Kaufmann Jr. Purchase Fund/photo Eric Boman; Museum of Modern Art, A. Conger Goodyear Fund; Museum of Modern Art, Gift of the Photographer. Pages 146–47—*From left:* Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Lewis & Conger/photo Eric Boman; Museum of Modern Art, Gift of the Designer/photo Eric Boman; Museum of Modern Art/photo from the Office of Charles and Ray Eames; Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Edgar Kaufmann Jr./photo Eric Boman.

Main Line

(Continued from page 152) "They're so beautiful and they tell a wonderful story," he says. "They display what was known about geography and history and science at the time, who was king, who the great settlers were, which nations were in power, which expeditions were being undertaken." Arader moved on to illustrations from the Western expeditions, eventually adding the watercolors originally executed for them. The latest stage is a serious interest in furniture as it relates historically and aesthetically to the maps and prints. "Look at that George II chair," says Arader of a Giles Grendey piece by the living room fireplace. "The baroque carvings have the same motifs as the cartouches that you will find on maps of the period."

Arader maintains an undiminished infatuation with the masters of printmaking. A series of Frémenville watercolors of butterflies and Ehret's engravings of hyacinths from *Hortus Nitidissimis* share his study with part of his valuable reference library; he chose a Barraband New Guinean bird of paradise for the entrance hall; some of the botanical watercolors Redouté painted for Empress Josephine hang in the breakfast room; and he and Valli sleep next to a large Audubon flamingo. The prints are restored in a lab in Oakwell's basement and "floated" in stylistically appropriate frames so that the edges of the paper are visible. "I believe in showing people exactly what they're getting," says Arader.

His approach to landscape design is equally unapologetic. With the help of Tony Holmes, he has created a new driveway that changes the entrance to the house from an oblique angle typical of patrician Philadelphia reserve to a wide-open view of the place, and the eleven-acre property is being replanted with scores of rare conifers. "My maternal great-grandfather was Joseph Michell, of the Michell seed company," Arader says, "and as a third-generation Swiss-Italian on my father's side, I can't help loving dirt." In a sunny corner, Lilli, Walter, and Josephine, ages seven, six, and five, have planted a flourishing seed garden. Valli's heritage rosebushes leading up to her perennial beds are straight out of Redouté's flower studies. And every spring the family's 30,000 tulips, hyacinths, and narcissus bloom in a display worthy of Robert Thornton.

None of this would hold a split second of Arader's peripatetic attention if it weren't *fun.* "Fun is why people collect," he says, "not because they need to. No one has ever bought a Redouté watercolor to protect them from the rain." But then there's Oakwell, where art and shelter go hand in hand. Tracy Lord should have been so lucky. ▲

Editor: John Ryman

Grandee Decorator

(Continued from page 108) accepted too quickly. My family is very traditional," he added, "as people used to be in Spain." He went into banking after college and moved to New York in the early 1970s to open an office for a Spanish bank. When the bank was sold, seven years later, he found himself without a job. "The transition from banking to decorating sounds complicated," Pascua said, "but it came easily. I had an apartment on East 73rd, between Madison and Fifth—small, of course, but beautiful; I did it up, often with my own hands, and I loved it."

Even after he returned to Spain in 1975, Pascua visited New York every year. "It had the real glamour of creativity. What happened in New York affected what happened in Europe. But then in the 1980s, when I was in New York last, it was all different—only money, money—and now Europe is more interesting to me." Fifteen years ago Pascua and a friend opened a restaurant in Madrid called Bogie, after Humphrey Bogart. "The place had been made over in the twenties or thirties as an art deco store, very strange, and we wanted to give it a little bit the feel of the movie *Casablanca*. It was altogether amusing. Everyone went there—cabinet ministers, transvestites, everyone. I soon had many people asking me to make things—restaurants and discos at first, because of Bogie, and then banks, because they knew I'd been a banker, and houses. So here I am—a decorator and designer."

And, of course, a host. The house is planned for people, envelops them, persuades them to be at their best. As he had said, the atmosphere is witty. (He claims to have instruments of torture in back of the bathroom for guests who don't behave, but I don't believe it.) The house also has an inbuilt informality that makes people happy to sit down anyplace and in any order. That is how Pascua Ortega likes it, and when it turned out that he had eleven women and only three men for dinner, he was not in the least perturbed. Nor were we. In fact, we couldn't have had a better time. ♠ *Editor: Tara Tahbaz*

Rural Gridlock

(Continued from page 116) down to the electrical outlet at the bathroom sink, placed on center and on axis. Descartes could shave here. Gridded with squares and crossed by axes, the house seems to have a mind at heart.

The interior may be ordered and ordering, and yet the walls of small windows make it effortlessly light and surprisingly transparent. Standing in the middle of the house is like standing in the middle of the lawn. But the axial view out the back to the guesthouse/studio does not reveal the same Cartesian rationality. The tower is a dense pack of quizzical volumes with an uncanny presence, like a royal piece from a chessboard—figurative and complex, endowed with certain powers.

William conceived this addition as he was working on a high rise in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where he was exploring Platonic and not-so-Platonic forms: among them, tall, thin rectangular buildings with steeply pitched roofs sliced across the top. The same slender forms that punctuate the high rise in Saint Paul are almost monumental in the backyard at Shelter Island. Details are simple and the materials vernacular. The structure's power derives from enigmatic forms attenuated to exaggeration. They seem priestly: the trellis recalls torii gates in Japan, and the roofs Shinto shrines.

A prow of steps up to a terrace fronts the building, covered by a trellis with angled beams that force the view. The play of perspective compresses space, tensing the approach. The compression is all the more graphic because the tall roof provides a clear visual backdrop. The bedroom itself is a tall chamber, brightly lit with a skylight running the length of the gable.

Perhaps a young architect passing by expressed the most pointed appreciation of the renovated house and folly when he deposited a note in the Pedersens' shoes, which they customarily leave outside the kitchen. He gathered, he wrote, that the complex was designed by an architect who lived there. He would like to apply for a job. ♠

Editor: Heather Smith MacIsaac

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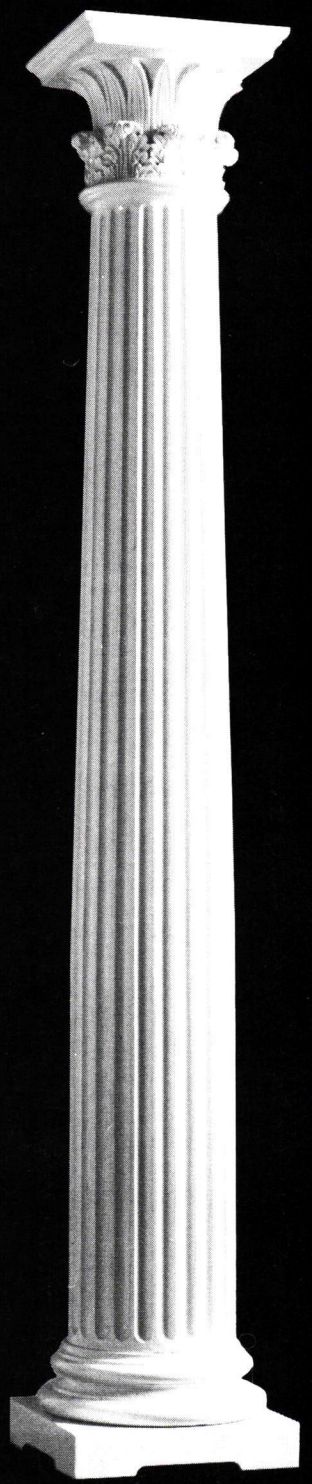

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Resources

DESIGN
Page 58 Montana Series Loosa chair, Claw-paw chair, to order from Nuovo Melodrom, NYC (212) 219-0013. Two Missiles in Every Backyard chair, $1,000, Hallie sofa, $8,000, O-zone chair, $1,000, or similar one-of-a-kind Ludick pieces, to order at Art et Industrie, NYC (212) 431-1661.

PEOPLE
Page 72 Montmorenci Moiréd Stripe linen on living room chairs, Leopard Velvet silk/linen/cotton on center of armchair, to the trade at Brunschwig & Fils, NYC, Atlanta, Beachwood, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Laguna Niguel, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, Troy, Washington, D.C.

TRAVEL
Page 82 Christian Liaigre Collection furniture, at Christian Liaigre, Paris (1) 47-53-78-76. Cashmere wool/cashmere on armchairs, by Pierre Frey, to the trade at Clarence House, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy. Eric Schmitt designs, at Neotu, NYC, Paris; En Attendant les Barbares, Paris.

STYLE
Page 92 Gant Brodé Scabieuse gloves, Panier Tressé Kildare straw bag, Manchette Versailles cuff, Ballerine Brodée Persephone flat, Saadabad handbag, Les Jardins Suspendus de Babylone hat, all at Isabel Canovas, NYC (212) 517-2720.

GRANDEE DECORATOR
Page 104 Glicine, 48"–51" wide, $247.50 yd, at Fortuny, NYC, for showrooms (212) 753-7153. **107** Marquis de Pierre cotton for curtains, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). **108–09** Feather Stripe linen/cotton on walls, 52" wide, $100 m, from George Smith, NYC (212) 226-4747.

RURAL GRIDLOCK
Pages 112–17 Contractor Kelley & Kelley, Sag Harbor (516) 725-2894. Custom cabinetry and furniture, designed by William Pedersen, made by Castle Woodcrafts, Pine Beach (201) 349-1519.

THE EDUCATION OF JED JOHNSON
Page 118 Agra 19th-century carpet, similar at Doris Leslie Blau, NYC (212) 759-3715. Taffetas Ombré Borgia silk for valances, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). Faille du Barry silk for curtains, Raphael Damask silk on fauteuil, to the trade at Brunschwig & Fils (see above for pg 72). Document on Venetian Velvet rayon/cotton on ottoman, to the trade at Decorators Walk, for showrooms (212) 319-7100. Custom handwoven silk on club chair and sofa, to the trade to order at James Gould Textiles, Riverside (203) 637-3062. Handwoven stair runner, similar one-of-a-kind custom rugs, to order from Elizabeth Eakins, NYC (212) 628-1950. **120** Damasco Imberline cotton/rayon on walls, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Brunschwig's Faille du Barry for curtains and canopy (see above for pg 72). Satin Sabrina silk on chair and ottoman, Velours Uni silk on chairs, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). **122** Brunschwig's Faille du Barry (see above). Ninon Taffetas silk for dining room curtain, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 72). Wide Stripe linen/cotton on office walls, at Bennison Fabrics, NYC (212) 226-4747. Mahogany paneling, designed by Johnson/Wanzenberg, made by Bretton Woodworks, Bedford Hills (914) 666-6840. **124** Mural, by artist Pat Sturts, San Antonio (512) 828-5801. **125** Custom-color Strié Plaid on sofa, Fu-xian Floral silk on ottoman, Nice silk on chair, to the trade at Scalamandré, for showrooms (212) 980-3888.

VINTAGE MODERN
Page 126 Tiles, to the trade at Leatherline, Bayside (718) 279-0356. **126–27** Stool, to the trade at Atelier International, for showrooms (800) 645-7254, in NY (718) 392-0300. Venini vase and bowl, similar at Fifty/50, NYC (212) 777-3208. Gold carpet, to the trade at Patterson, Flynn, Martin & Manges, for showrooms (212) 688-7700. Isadora linen on chair, to the trade at Donghia Textiles, for showrooms (800) 366-4442. Sabatini silver tea service, similar at Barry Friedman, NYC (212) 794-8950. Vase at right, similar at Muriel Karasik, NYC (212) 535-7851. **128–29** Florence Knoll sofa, Womb chair, to the trade from KnollStudio, division of Knoll Group, for showrooms (800) 223-1354. Aquarium, designed by American Design, NYC (212) 334-1223. **129** Chandelier, similar at Delorenzo 1950, NYC (212) 535-8511. Printed cowhide on chairs, to the trade at Teddy & Arthur Edelman, NYC (212) 751-3339. **130** Arles Check cotton/Dacron for bedcover, to the trade at Jack Valentine, for showrooms (212) 473-3913. Hoffman Check cotton/viscose on bolsters, to the trade at Kirk Brummel, for showrooms (212) 477-8590. Kirkwood Cloth rayon/linen/cotton on headboard, to the trade at Bailey & Griffin, for showrooms (215) 836-4350. Custom bed, from Massartre, Brooklyn (718) 499-8296. Sconces, similar at Delorenzo (see above). Vase, similar at Muriel Karasik (see above). Panton chair, similar at Fifty/50 (see above). **131** Refrigerator with French doors (#UR036DT), by Traulsen & Co., for dealers (800) 542-4022, in NY (718) 463-9000.

WEDGWOOD LEGACY
Pages 132–36 Lyn Kavanagh Interiors, Wilmette (708) 251-3821. **132** Black basalt cup/saucer, $50 (special order), Odessa Jasper ware vase, $92, at Waterford Wedgwood, for stores (800) 677-7860. **135** Stately Homes Collection Chippendale-style armchair at left (#5045), $3,072 COM, from Baker Furniture, 917 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654. **136** Wedgwood Jasper ware Portland vase, $10,000, from Leo Kaplan, NYC (212) 249-6766, or Waterford Wedgwood (see above).

THE COMFORT FACTOR
Pages 138–39 Handmade wallpaper, to order from decorative artist Richard Cava, NYC (212) 932-2839. Hampstead chenille on chair and ottoman, to the trade at Donghia Textiles, for showrooms (800) 366-4442. **139** Faux finishes on mantel, by Cava (see above). **140** Grenoble viscose/silk, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). Chairman with Gold wineglasses, from Ralph Lauren Tabletop Collection, by Waterford Wedgwood, for stores (800) 955-1550. **141** Tavistock cotton/rayon/flax on chair, to the trade at Cowtan & Tout, for showrooms (212) 753-4488.

MAIN LINE IMPRESSIONS
Page 149 Landscape, by landscape designer Tony Holmes, Philadelphia (215) 828-0367. **152–53** Custom-built Smallbone Unfitted Kitchen, to order from Smallbone, NYC, Greenwich, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C.

DOMESTIC DIPLOMACY
Page 156 Trompe l'oeil, by decorative painter Pat Sturts, San Antonio (512) 828-5801.

DESIGNING MEN
Pages 160–61 Brass chair, similar at Maison Gerard, NYC (212) 674-7611. Bouclé Franklin cotton/wool/viscose on chair, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). Jean-Michel Frank style armchair, to order from Michael Formica, NYC (212) 620-0655. Tiger Axminster-weave carpet, to the trade at Stark Carpet, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Troy, Washington, D.C.; Gregory Alonso, Cleveland; Shears & Window, Denver; Dean-Warren, Phoenix. French andirons, c. 1800, similar at Reymer Jourdan Antiques, NYC (212) 674-4470. Plant stand, Venetian glass 1950s lamp, similar at Reymer Jourdan (see above). Wrought-iron chair, c. 1940, similar at Mobili Decorative Arts, Washington, D.C. (202) 234-3262. Ashanti on headboard, 45½" wide, $237 yd, at Fortuny, NYC, for showrooms (212) 753-7153. Regalaire carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above). **162** Larsen chairs, similar at Skank World, Los Angeles (213) 939-7858. **164** Patio Stripe cotton, to the trade at Cowtan & Tout, for showrooms (212) 753-4488. Canvas rug, designed by Sam Blount, painted by Alicia Leatherbury, NYC (212) 366-4920. Giacometti Zoo cotton for tableskirt, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). Plain Linen for curtains, to the trade at Stroheim & Romann, for showrooms (718) 706-7000. French antique linen shams, Marseilles linen bedcover, c. 1870, similar at Françoise Nunnalle, NYC (212) 246-4281. **165** Scala Metisse linen/cotton, Sun, Moon, and Stars chintz for pillows, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 72). New Rustica Sisal/coir carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above). Stripe cotton on furniture, to the trade at Henry Calvin Fabrics, for showrooms (415) 863-1944.

GREAT IDEAS
Page 177 Dioricis porcelain, by Christian Dior, $375 5-pc place setting, at fine department stores. Full-lead crystal cruets, by Paloma Picasso, $50 ea, at Villeroy & Boch Creation, NYC (212) 535-2500. Orsay Bleu crystal water goblet and champagne flute, $105 ea, from Baccarat, for stores (800) 847-3004, in NY (212) 696-1440. Lapis silver plate with lapis candlesticks, $210 sm, $240 lge, at Cartier Boutiques. Orbit stainless-steel flatware, by Ward Bennett for Sasaki, $80 5-pc place setting, at fine department stores. Art Deco silver-plate salt and pepper, $125 pr, at Pavillon Christofle, NYC, Beverly Hills, Chicago, San Francisco. Vector crystal bowl, $1,250, from Baccarat (see above). Ball, $45, at Lexington Gardens, NYC (212) 861-4390. Stately Homes Collection Regency-style inlaid center table (#5165), $6,486, from Baker Furniture, 917 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654. Haseley Court wallpaper, to the trade at Quadrille, for showrooms (212) 753-2995. **178** Russian console table with veneer and faux marble top (#5522), $5,038, from John Widdicomb, to the trade at Baker, Knapp & Tubbs, NYC (212) 779-8810. Damasco Primavera linen/cotton, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 82). Kevork Ara Cholakian paintings, Tulips, $2,800, Melons, $4,000, Pears, $1,400, at Karen Warshaw, NYC (212) 439-7870. Lucia china, $165 5-pc place setting, from Lenox China, for stores (800) 635-3669. 19th-century pitcher, $175, at Karen Warshaw (see above). Enchanted Forest brass candlesticks, by Michael Aram, at Barneys New York, NYC; Elements, Chicago; Wilder Place, Los Angeles; Vignette, San Francisco. Banana-leaf gold wash on brass napkin rings, by Mark Rossi, $14 ea, at Lemchen & Ramos, NYC (212) 288-6391. Josephine iridescent silk, to the trade at Gretchen Bellinger, for showrooms (518) 235-2828. Ophelia linen napkins, $35 ea, at Nancy Koltes, NYC; Bergdorf Goodman, NYC; E. Braun, NYC. Biches crystal vases, 1932 design, $775 ea, at Lalique, NYC; Neiman Marcus. Nature pâte-de-verre/silver-plate forks and spoons with bronze accents, $150 ea, at Daum Boutique, NYC (212) 355-2060. Marrakech porcelain, $35 ea salad, $60 ea dinner, from Fitz & Floyd, for stores (214) 484-9494. Cactus flower pâte-de-verre cellars, $95 ea, porcelain teacups with 24-kt gold finish, $475 ea, at Daum Boutique (see above). Early 19th century creamer, similar at Karen Warshaw (see above). Golden Enchantment electroplate flatware, $112.50 5-pc place setting, by Oneida Silversmiths, at fine stores. Ofelia champagne flutes, by Wilke Adolfsson, $65 ea, at New Glass Gallery, NYC (212) 431-0050. Cathadia frosted-crystal/glass goblet, champagne flute, champagne flat, $35 ea, by Sasaki, at fine department stores. **179** Bird mini-tureens and stands, Pont aux Choux reproductions, $225 ea, by Mottahedeh, at fine stores. Masterpiece Pink china service plates, $65 ea, by Gorham, at fine stores. Floral arrangement, by Debra Felberbaum, at Flowers Forever, NYC (212) 308-0088. Tommy crystal, $230 water goblets, $230 wine goblets, $730 decanter, from Saint Louis Cristal, for stores (212) 838-3880. Royal Pearl silver-plate flatware, $200 5-pc place setting, by Arthur Price of England, at Neiman Marcus. Villars silver-plate salt and pepper, $95 pr, at Pavillon Christofle (see above). Meadow linen/cotton napkin, $27, Versailles tassels, $25 pr, at Nancy Koltes Fine Linens & Textiles, NYC (212) 995-9050. Celeste Silk Stripe, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 72). 18th-century Italian bench, at Florian Papp, NYC (212) 288-6770. Florentine neoclassical gilt/lacquer chair, sold as set, at Florence de Dampierre Antiques, NYC (212) 966-1357.
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE

Jed Johnson

(Continued from page 124) of time in the company of antiques dealers and designer-craftsmen, such as the late Jack Hargis, a dressmaker who loved antique fabrics and who made exquisite curtains, some of them for Johnson. "They were like beautiful couture dresses," he says. Hargis "always had two bags in his hands with little scraps and sketches, and he was always running, like the Mad Hatter." It was, in part, from people like Hargis—the last in a long line of unassuming connoisseurs—that Johnson acquired his considerable knowledge of antiques and fabrics. "They're all gone now," he laments. "There's no sense of discovery, of treasures hidden away. Everything is out in the open with a spotlight on it." But then, with a sheepish smile, he adds, "I sound like an old person."

Looking back on his relatively young career, as well as forward to the next decades, Jed Johnson is characteristically modest. "It would have been wonderful if I'd had the education, but I didn't," he says matter-of-factly. "What I had was the opportunity." ◆

Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

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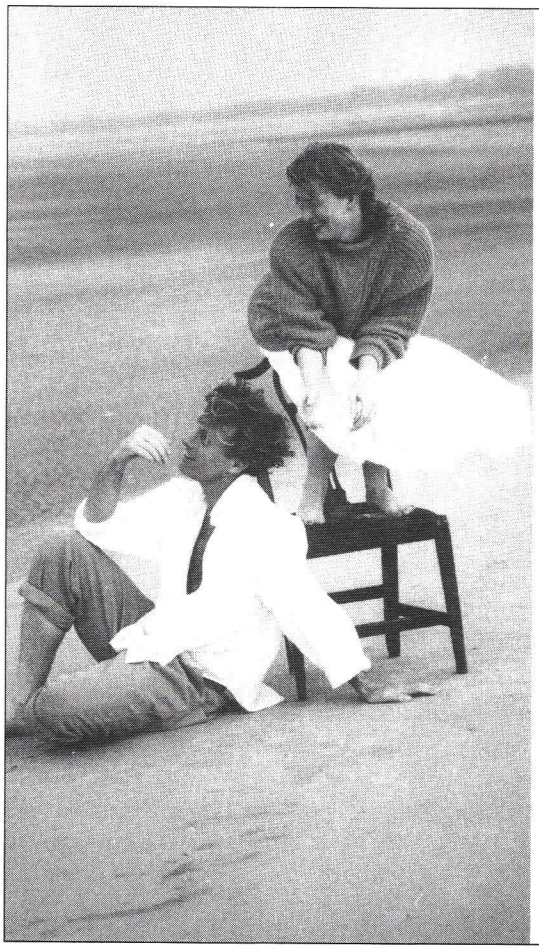

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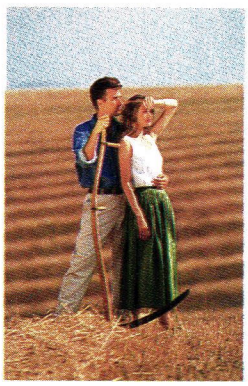

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AT LARGE

Elsa Klensch has style

I'm standing in the marble-lined bathroom of Suite 1418 at the Mark Hotel in Manhattan, and I'm watching Elsa Klensch tease her bangs. She's wearing basic Bill Blass black, a gold Isabel Canovas leaf-motif necklace, and Maud Frizon pumps, and she's concentrating on those bangs like nothing I've ever seen—feverishly working each combful of jet black hair until the whole rises, like a yeast-filled cake, like a helium-filled balloon, like a perfect wave swelling across the ocean of her forehead. "Why are you teasing your bangs?" I query, trying to sound as casual as the situation. "I have a long face," explains Elsa. "Like yours. Terrible for television!"

Elsa knows what's good and what's bad for television because for the past decade Elsa has been the star of *Style with Elsa Klensch*, a thirty-minute weekly cable television show that covers the ostensibly glamorous worlds of fashion, beauty, and decorating. As Elsa fans know, tuning in to CNN means a smorgasbord of delights from the good life—possibly a profile of New York decorator Robert Metzger, maybe an inside peek at the exercise regimen of a "hot" young model, perhaps an invitation to tour Giorgio Armani's private retreat on the coast of Italy. Elsa's venue is wide. *Style*, you see, has many components.

Nonetheless, one suspects that the ace up Elsa's couture sleeve, the card that draws in 1 million viewers each week, is the guarantee of a coveted front-row seat alongside the runways of New York, London, Paris, Milan, and Tokyo. Just like Elsa's. And, after *Style*'s peripatetic film crew has captured the vision of twenty-year-old Claudia Schiffer sashaying down the Chanel runway in a $4,715 gold leather jacket and leaving-little-to-the-imagination leggings by Karl Lagerfeld, there's always the added treat of Elsa herself, smiling and nodding backstage, bangs buoyant, eyes riveted to the ponytailed couturier as he answers her ever-enthusiastic inquiries about the new colors for spring, about the emphasis of this season's silhouette, about the sudden significance of Lycra.

"Karl Lagerfeld could kill his mother, and I'd just ask him about the design of his clothes"

"You have to be *absorbed* in an interview," said Elsa, when quizzed about her on-camera deportment. "And even if you're not, you should look as though you are. Barbara Walters is the great one for that; she gives her wholehearted soul." Unlike Barbara Walters, however, or Diane Sawyer, for that matter, Elsa never criticizes, never brings up anything unpleasant: "But didn't you say three months ago that hemlines were up to stay?" No, none of that. "I don't think it's my job to be destructive," explains Elsa. "My show is about good things."

On the other hand, and to her lasting credit, Elsa never gushes, never comes across as breathless, never appears to be oiling up to her subjects, never forgets, in short, that her mission is professional. "What I want to show is the beauty of life, the beauty of design," she offers. "It's a marvelous thing for civilization, and nobody else is doing it. I don't care about personalities. Personalities are so overexposed they're boring. *People* magazine can take care of that. Karl Lagerfeld could kill his mother, and I'd just ask him about the design of his clothes. What I care about is 'Is this a well-designed collection?' " And when it's not? "I don't run it."

Considering the power of television, I asked Elsa if designers ever tried to wine and dine her for a bit more airtime. "I'm past that," she sniffed, confessing, however, that Carolyne Roehm could always be counted on for Oreo cookies. But perhaps Elsa was never really susceptible to such bush-league bribery. After all, she's a well-seasoned pro who spent years toiling away at *Women's Wear Daily*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vogue*. "I still think of myself as a print journalist," she says. "I write my copy, I produce my show, I work." I asked Elsa if she missed the relative anonymity of print journalism, if she dreaded the looks she gets on the street. "Actually, I like that part of it," she said. "I'm amazed at the number of autographs I sign." On the downside, Elsa added that she has "learned never to go out unless I have makeup on, unless I'm dressed up."

Speaking of getting dressed up, I thought it only fitting to ask who, in Elsa's opinion, was the best American designer now at work. "I don't want to say," said Elsa. "They'll all get upset." She's probably right. Assuming, of course, that she was correct when she said, minutes later, "All designers can be horrible, petty, and miserable." This point I didn't doubt. Nor did I take it as a sign of Elsa's being remiss that I'd never know it from watching *Style with Elsa Klensch*.

Charles Gandee