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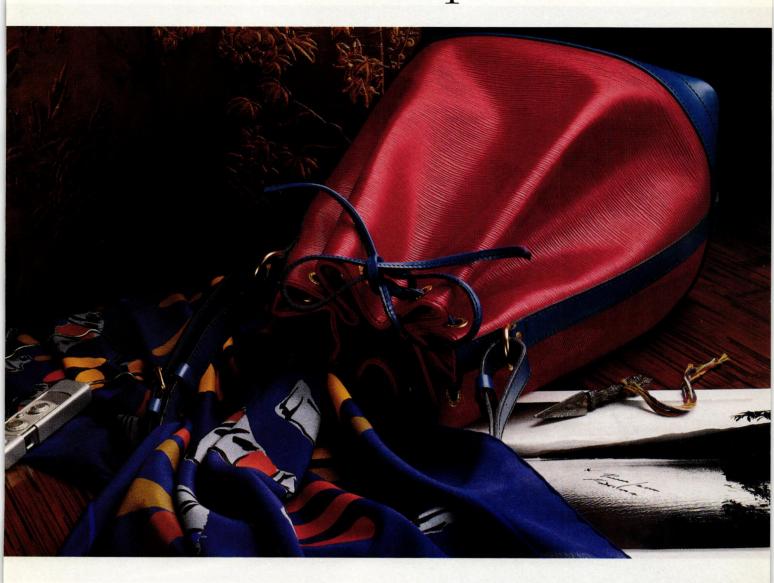
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HOUSE & GARDEN June 1992 Volume 164, Number 6





Sir Walter Scott's descendants at Abbotsford manor, left. Page 136. Right: An airy sophisticated New York living room. Page 130.









**COVER** Jay Griffith's poolside landscaping for a West Hollywood house. Page 86. Photograph by Jeremy Samuelson.

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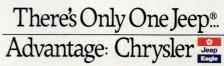


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Rendering of a 19thcentury interior, <u>above</u>, at the Frick Collection in New York. Page 34.



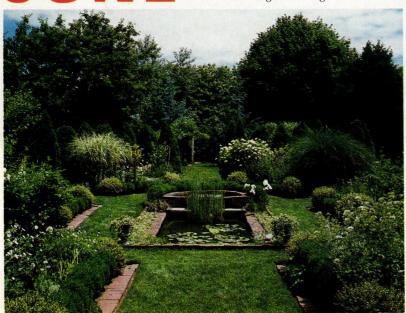


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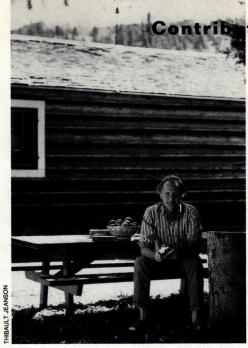
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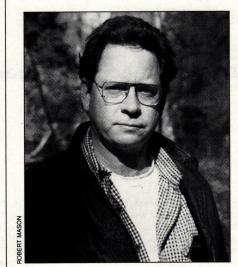


#### ntributors Notes

John Heminway, a filmmaker and the author of three nonfiction books about Africa, hosts and produces the PBS series Travels. He previously wrote, produced, and directed parts of the series The Brain and won an Emmy for writing its sequel, The Mind. For HG, Heminway reflects on his family's working ranch and fishing camp in Montana, a state, he says, where the word "neighbor" is used as a verb.



Jane Smiley visits the Iowa farm of two artists and describes an expansive garden that takes its cues from the local landscape. The author of seven books, including the novel *A Thousand Acres* for which she won the 1992 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, Smiley lives with her husband in a "prairie cube" in Ames, Iowa, where they tend several flowerbeds, an orchard, and "enough herbs and vegetables to stock the kitchen."



**Padgett Powell** explores Georgia's little-known Cumberland Island, "a spot unspoiled," he says, "by golf courses and shopping malls." Powell's first novel, *Edisto*, was set in the Carolina low country; his latest work, *Typical*, is a collection of short stories. He lives in Gainesville, Florida, where he is currently relocating both his 1920s house and his bamboo garden to a wooded site three and a half miles down the road.



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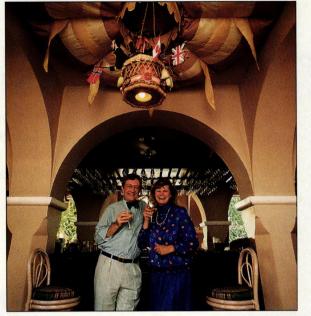
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Pictured: The "Remembrance" oak (or cherry) triple chime curio grandfather clock.

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#### **Contributors Notes**



ERTO GILI

**Isabella Rossellini** writes about the New York loft she shares with her daughter and their extended family of dogs, a cat, and a newly arrived ferret. Rossellini grew up in Paris and Rome and was a TV reporter before becoming an actress and a model. She has appeared in eleven movies, including *Blue Velvet, Wild at Heart,* and *Cousins.* Her latest, *Death Becomes Her,* will be out this summer.



Ruven Afanador captures cable TV style diva Lauren Ezersky in her Manhattan penthouse. The Colombian-born photographer moved to New York in 1989 and has since contributed to HG, Vanity Fair, and many other magazines. His first exhibition opens this month at Bogotá's Museum of Modern Art. He's also at work on a book about a man in the Amazon jungle—"a modern-day Tarzan."



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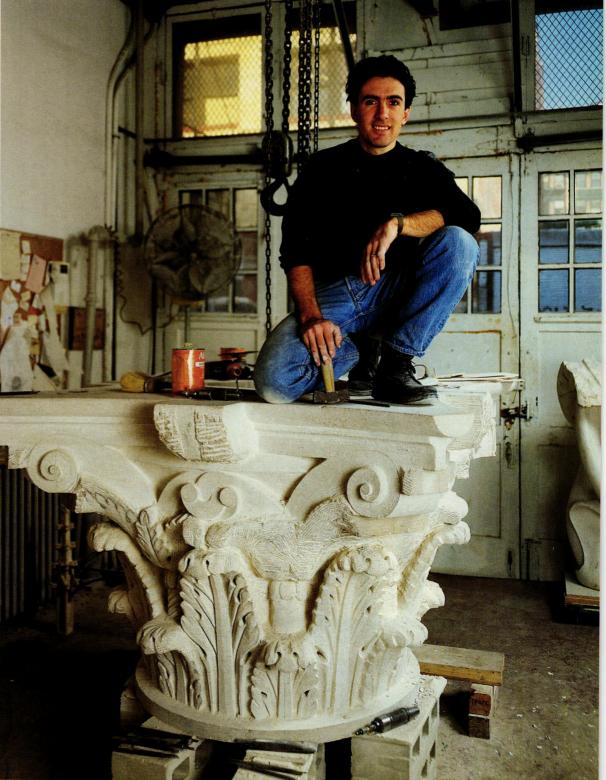
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#### HG REPORTS ON THE NEW AND THE NOTEWORTHY By Eric Berthold

,

"It's in my genes," says Gregory Muller, a stone sculptor since his first year of college in Boston in 1975. Muller, whose family tree includes a number of Italian marble carvers, went to study in Pietrasanta after his graduation. For four years he has been back in the United States, building his own firm-and creating stone pieces, from a Corinthian capital for a library (right) and mosaic floors (top) for a Broadway theater to delicate reliefs (below) and massive bathtubs. He works in marble, granite, onyx, and other stones but says his favorite is white marble, "for its purity and relationship to the classical." (Gregory Muller Associates, 45 Bond St., New York, NY 10012; 212-477-3614 by appointment)





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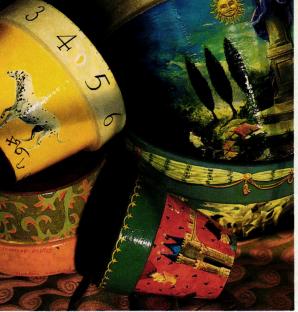
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# Notes



**Cache Prizes** Terra-cotta pots (*above*) painted by Kevin Sanders and Jacques Vigneault. For stores (212) 260-0822. Volute fabric, by Robert A. M. Stern, to the trade at HBF, (704) 328-2064.

To Be Frank Jean-Michel Frank oak table (*above*) reproduced by Écart, to the trade through Pucci International, NYC (212) 219-0142.

Iznik or Isn't It? Classic handpainted Turkish urn (*above*), \$300, at Katie Ridder Home Furnishings, 944 Lexington Ave., NYC (212) 861-2345.



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China Trade Hong Kong from the Harbor, c. 1870, and similar scenes on view June 9–July 3 at Martyn Gregory, 34 Bury St., London SW1Y 6AU; (71) 839-3731. Catalogue available.

**Worth a Fig** The fruit and its foliage embroidered on crisp table linens (*above*) by Anichini. For stores (800) 553-5309.

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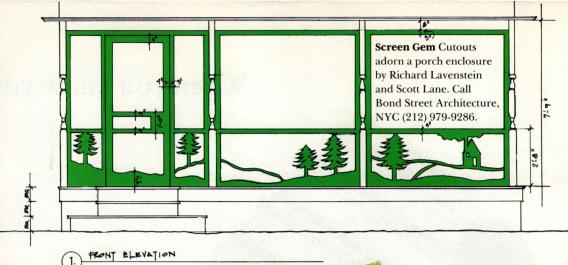
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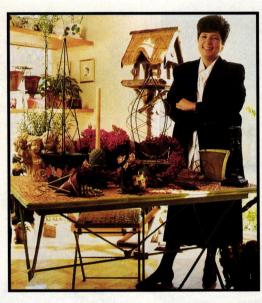
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Three-tier tole wall pocket (*above*), \$45, at William-Wayne & Co., 324 East 9th St., NYC (212) 477-3182.



**Garden Variety** Hélène Hart (*left*) offers items for and from the garden at Ivy League, 8730 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood. Call (310) 652-0102.

Jotes

Booty Tin-glazed drinking shoe (left), 1654, will

be among the pieces at Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, June 10–20, London. For information call England, (799) 526699.



THE CAFE BREAM COOKBOOK

Tastemakers New ingredients for the chef's library (above) include Lee Bailey's Cooking for Friends, photos by Tom Eckerle (Clarkson Potter, \$30); The Café Brenda Cookbook by Brenda Langton and Margaret Stuart (Voyageur Press, \$17.95); Great Cooks and Their Recipes by Anne Willan (Bulfinch, \$35).

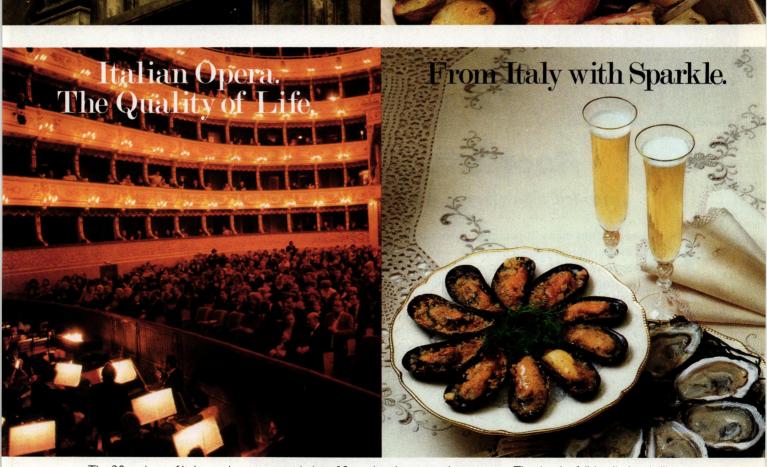
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**Modern Dresser** Silver designed by Christopher Dresser from 1864 to 1885 is reproduced in sterling by Alessi. For stores (617) 932-9444.



Stick Style A trio of folk canes (*right*) and 150 more on view June 4– Sept. 13 at the Museum of American Folk Art, NYC (212) 595-9533. Italian Architecture. The Quality of Life.

## From Italy with Character.

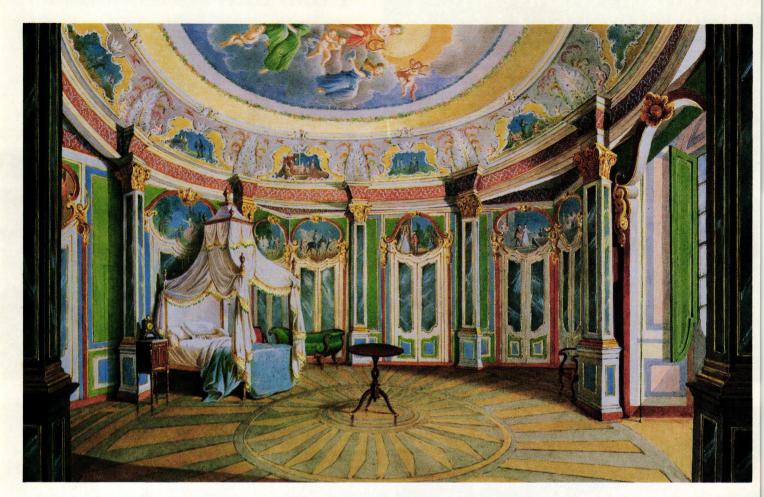


The 20 regions of Italy produce more varieties of fine wine than any other country. That is why full-bodied reds like Barolo from Piedmont and Cirò from Calabria are each appropriate with rack of lamb and sparkling whites such as Brut Spumante from Trentino-Alto Adige and Prosecco Brut from the Veneto are equally right with shellfish.



## Italian Wines. The Quality of Life.

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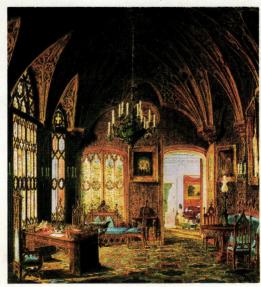
## **Rooms for Remembrance**

Painted views record the genealogy of taste BY EVE M. KAHN

Possessed of too many appealing estates throughout Europe, the Wittgenstein family rarely stayed anywhere for much more than a month in the 1830s. To ward off homesickness as they wandered from Paris to the Ukraine, they brought along their possessions—even the furniture and pets—and commissioned watercolors of the decor. Their souvenir album of doz-

ens of rooms documents sturdy tastes: in every country, it seems, they craved mint walls, gilt clocks, pockets of Gothic amid neoclassicism, convoluted drapery, and lavish flowers. And they were by no means Europe's most obsessive recorders of interiors. Countless aristocrats spent fortunes in mid century on accurate and still achingly beautiful housescapes.

The Frick Collection in New York is showing sixty-three examples of such renderings from May 21 to August 23. Half portray the Wittgensteins' residences between 1834 and 1843, the rest are European interiors painted between 1819 and 1893. They cover all of the century's main styles, from delicate Empire salons to imposing Elizabethan revival libraries, and they are detailed down to the desk accessories and the bellpull embroidery. Perusing them, says Charlotte Gere, the show's curator (and author



of the companion volume, *The Art* of the Interior, to be published by Thames & Hudson in August), "is like looking into a telescope that brings something very distant very close: the history of real taste." But the owners of the houses, she adds, remain enigmas: they appear faintly or not at all, and their belongings reveal too little. "They still seem to be miles away from

Pedro IV of Portugal's circular bedroom, 1850, <u>above</u>. <u>Left</u>: An 1837 view of the Wittgenstein family's Gothic study at their neoclassical palace in the Ukraine.

### Is it a luxury sedan or a fountain of youth?

045

When you were sixteen and driving was new, a car had nothing to do with commuting or gridlock. It was about fun. It was about the pure joy of driving.

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This car is so in tune with the driver it remembers exactly where you like the adjustable seat and steering wheel. It remembers two driver positions, in case you want to share this rejuvenating experience.

It's about time somebody gave the idea of performance luxury sedans some fresh thinking.

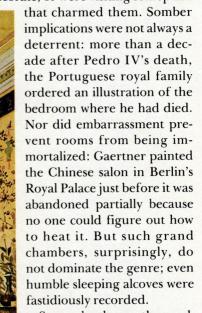




me," says Gere. "I don't feel I know them at all."

The practice of rendering interiors has roots in seventeenth-century architectural pattern books, gained momentum in the eighteenth century as gentry compiled illustrated catalogues of their art collections, peaked with interior decoration's first heyday in the 1830s and '40s, and died out with the popularization of photography in the last quarter of the century. Artist Eduard Gaertner is the best-known interiors specialist. His competitors included dabblers from fields like porcelain painting, scenic design, and portraiture. Amateurs also tried their hand, especially English women, and kept at it long after photography made their hobby obsolete.

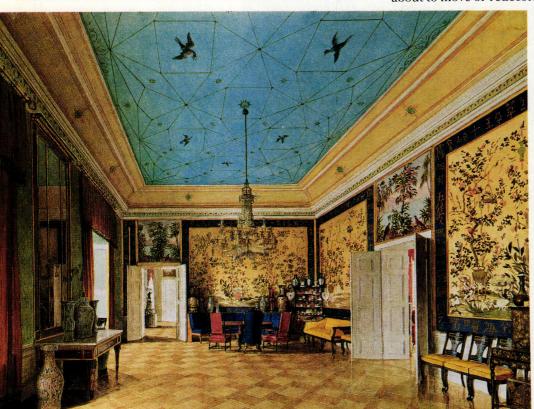
Clients typically had just finished decorating, were about to move or redecorate, or were visiting someplace



Some clearly are the work of the unskilled—background objects jut into foregrounds, chair skirts hang unnaturally straight. Others verge on trompe l'oeil. In Gaertner's portrait of a Prussian prince's

study, light shines through a minuscule glass candlestick and chair legs cast the faintest of shadows. The prince's room seems almost contemporary, with few paintings, streamlined furniture, and a white ceiling. And so do many of the spaces represented at the Frick, an illusion fueled by the well-preserved colors—patrons typically stored interior scenes in albums away from sunlight.

Occasionally, there's a sense that the artist was striving for more than documentation. Was Charles Wild mocking the pomposity of the circular dining room at Carlton House by portraying three women cringing in a corner? Did a bouquet on a chair refer to the recently married owners? Did a row of morose ancestor portraits speak of the client's temperament? Muses Gere, "There may well be stories that we simply can no longer read."



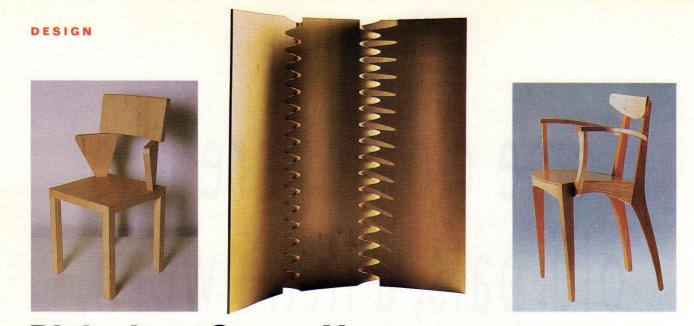
French salon, c. 1820, top. Above: The Berlin Royal Palace's Chinese salon in 1850, just before it was closed up. <u>Below</u>: An 1824 painting of a Florentine palace shows how the renters, an aristocratic Polish family, covered unfashionable murals with mirrors and portraits.



# Some clothes are like old pals, a little worn, but tough to part with.

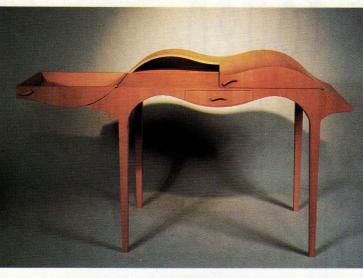
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### Plain Jane Grows Up By HEATHER SMITH MACISAAC





Sophisticated simplicity. Above, from far left: A new take on the wing chair by Bruno Borrione; an interlocking screen, devoid of hardware, by Katherine Krizek for Cappellini; a sprightly chair in beechwood and birch by Thibault Desombre for Soca Line. Far left: James Irvine throws some curves into a simple tripod table for Cappellini. Left: Ariane Merlo's undulating foldout desk in pearwood for Artistes et Modèles. Details see Resources.



Godley-Schwan fashioned fat hollowed-out legs for an otherwise thin console table, above. Right: Richard Peduzzi's chair for Plan Venise, Paris, is one clean sweep of cherrywood. AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN FURNITURE DESIGNERS ALIKE are turning to a plainer—and planar—look without sacrificing comfort or visual intrigue. The absence of applied embellishment, color or stains, and visible hardware reinforces the purity of sculptural forms derived from flat surfaces and curves. Made for the most part of light woods such as beech, maple, oak, or cherry, this furniture is stripped to the structural essentials but dressed up by lively profiles and clever engineering. All of which proves that powerful shapes and shadows can be ornament enough.





### His and Hers in the Hamptons

Two gardeners explore local traditions By PAULA DEITZ



A Lutyens bench anchors Erika Shank's borders.

n a Sunday afternoon in February 1985 they sat in a circle at Saint Ann's Parish House in Bridgehampton, New York. One by one, all thirteen of them rose to reveal well-guarded secrets about their shared addiction—gardening. This was only the third monthly meeting of the Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons, which had been chartered to "explore and encourage awareness and excellence in the art and science of horticulture" on the South Fork of Long Island. One of the fastest-growing local organizations in its field, the Alliance now has more than five hundred members.

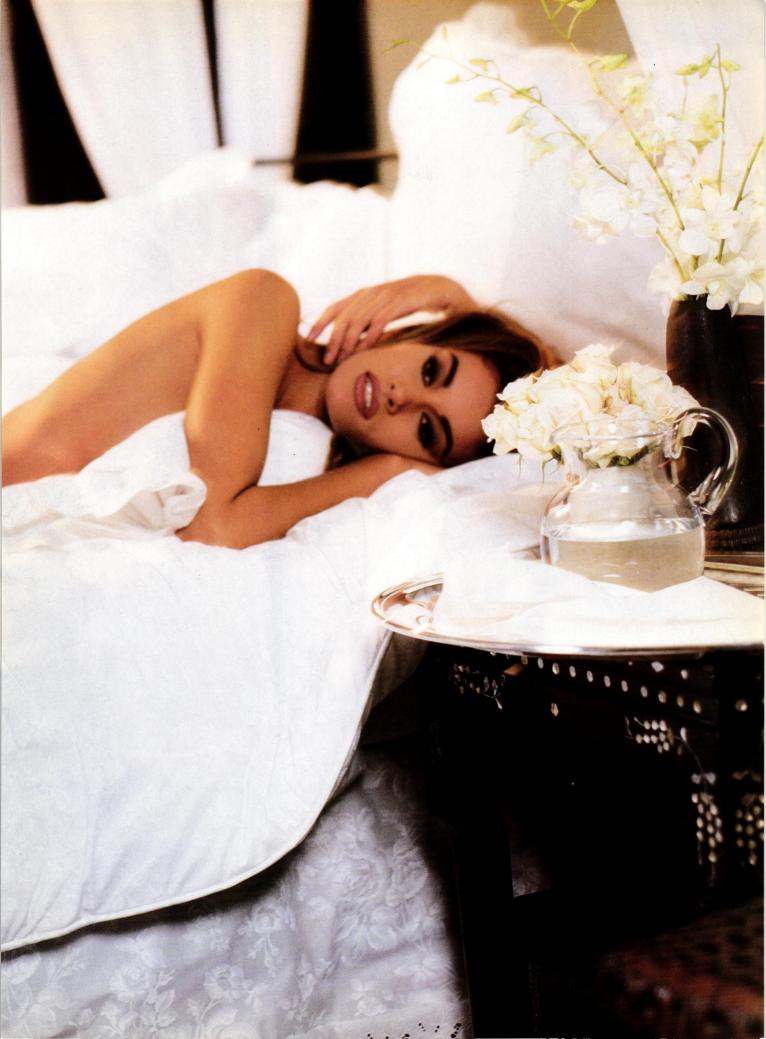
"One day my neighbor in Amagansett, John Whitney, asked me if I would be interested in beginning a group for professional and amateur gardeners who would talk together informally," recalls William Shank, a cofounder of the organization and now its vice president for long-range planning. Whitney is a landscape contractor with his own company in Amagansett, and Shank is a partner with his wife, Erika, in Shank Design Associates, a Manhattan firm that specializes in store and showroom design. Little did the two men know that their modest plan for exchanging practical information—on topics such as the relative merits of propagating plants from seeds or from cuttings would blossom into an ambitious educational program of lectures, videotapes, and monthly summer garden tours backed up by a biannual newsletter and a 3,000-volume library.

The Alliance's office and the Horticultural Library of the Hamptons, which includes a collection of old garden books deaccessioned by the former East Hampton Free Library, are located in what used to be the firehouse kitchen of Bridgehampton's gray-shingled Community House. Outside on the lawn, trees whose skillfully pruned branches made them hurricane-proof last summer are testimony to the group's successful merger of aesthetics and pragmatism. Inclusive rather than exclusive, the Alliance provides a channel for the almost fanatical regional interest in horticulture that developed during the 1980s, and that may well have supplanted the Hamptons' longstanding preoccupation with international-style and postmodern beach house architecture.

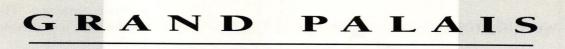
> Erika and William Shank in Amagansett, top left. Top right: The lily pond and beds he designed and tends. Left: Drawings of a fanciful knot garden from William Shank's commonplace book.

### ADRIENNE VITTADINI BED AND BATH COLLECTION





## ADRIENNE VITTADINI BED AND BATH COLLECTION



### Paris

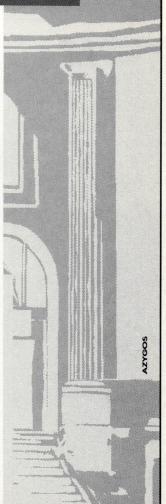


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"If we did not have separate gardens, we would have separate lives"

The Hamptons-loosely an area including Westhampton, Southampton, Bridgehampton, East Hampton, Amagansett, and outlying towns-can probably boast more garden designers per square mile than any other American summer community. In many ways the region has become our Cotswolds, thanks to the extraordinary number of small yet distinguished formal landscapes that complement gardens established earlier in the century by designers such as Ruth Dean. Just as American aficionados of horticulture have for many years been drawn to the English countryside, visitors



Plan of the Shanks' gardens shows his at top left and hers at right, with shared ground in between.

> from abroad have lately been making their way to Long Island to see "Hamptons-style" gardens.

Two such gardens—a his and hers pair—are located at the Shanks' house in Amagansett, a house they built in 1978 with a shiplike deck and lookouts inspired by a voyage on the *Queen Elizabeth 2*. "If Erika and I did not have separate gardens, we would have separate lives," explains Bill Shank, who likens the disadvantages of gardening together to working on a painting with someone else. Except for Alliance activities, early morning shopping, and workweeks in New York, the Shanks spend all their waking hours gardening. "The only reason we work now is to support our gardens," he adds.

Until 1982, when he began plotting his formal garden, Bill Shank saw their property, only two blocks from the ocean, as a natural landscape of native red cedar, bayberry, and highbush blueberries. Ultimately he was swayed by an age-old impulse: as he wrote in the first Alliance newsletter, garden design "springs from the gardener's dreams, fleeting thoughts, and memories" brought into harmony with a contemporary aesthetic. His own memories encompassed the decayed turn-of-the-century estate gardens with cracked fishponds he visited with his grandmother near Morristown, New Jersey, where he grew up. He was also influenced by gardens he saw as a student in Rome.

All of Bill Shank's ideas about gardens so far have been gathered and condensed in four five-by-eight-inch commonplace books that consist of his own notes and drawings, made

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Much as he conceives sets for display areas in his professional work, Bill Shank has used hedges, paving, arbors, trellises, and lawns to create his own version of the classic white garden. The plan resembles the outline of a Palladian window, with the rounded end of an oblong lily pond suggesting the central arch and symmetrical shrubbery beds the flanking panels. Like the hedge that curves behind the pond, brick paving gives a defined structure to informal plantings of iris, lilies, grasses, roses, and hydrangea. The interconnected forms, as Bill Shank calls them, retain their sculptural beauty in every season, even blanketed in snow. From the overlook of the house's "promenade deck," the garden appears immense; only standing within the landscape does the visitor begin to grasp its modest scale.

Off to one side is a rectangular herb garden with grape arbor, cordoned pear trees, and terra-cotta pots in carefully prescribed order. A vivid detail last summer was a new planting of perilla. When Bill Shank acquires a new plant, he often "banks" a cutting with a friend as insurance for its survival. Shank's enthusiasm for perilla made this unnecessary: the annual soon became popular with other Alliance members, and it is likely that neighborly emulation will safeguard future discoveries.

A neutral zone with a sundial separates Bill Shank's garden from Erika's, which lies on axis with the front of the house. She too has transplanted elements from her own past to Long Island. Early years near Lake Constance in Germany left her with memories of wildflower meadows as well as precisely cultivated gardens dotted with fruit trees. Her Amagansett landscape, as formal as Bill's, has patterns traced in clipped box and a Lutyens bench terminating the main vista. The palette is mostly blue with touches of yellow, white, and purple. Asters, salvia, goldenrod, and yarrow are particular favorites. And butterflies are so plentiful they count as another source of color.

Most local garden visits the Shanks make these days are those Bill arranges for the Alliance, like one last fall to Ruth Dean's own 1930 East Hampton garden, the bones of which are still intact. Another tour included Rose de Rose's extensive and eccentric—formal garden in Southampton. No matter how arcane the garden theme or idiosyncratic the horticultural display, every tour attracts at least sixty people. "Next time I start an organization," says Bill Shank, "I am simply going to call it Gardeners Anonymous."

even the most finicky of furnishings. Of course, Stainmaster Luxura is also a durable, stain-resistant Du Pont certified carpet. Which means that once you get your claws into it, you'll be forever proud to keep them there. Style shown: Connoisseur by Horizon Mill.



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### On the Bistro Beat

A chef tracks down the vestiges of a glorious dining era By Linda Dannenberg ESTAURIANTS / RESTAURANTI / RESTAURANTES / レストラン DILETTES / TOILETS / TOILETTEN / TOILETTE / ASEOS / トイレ US / BUSES / BUSSE / BUS / AUTOBUSES / パス ETRO/ISUBWAY / METRO / METRO / METRO / X トゥ AXIS / CABS / TAXIS / TAXI / TAXIS / タクシー

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P

cher Rostang bas two

and passions. the

first is cooking, too humble a word, really, to describe the exquisite cuisine that has earned his eponymous restaurant in Paris's seventeenth arrondissement two Michelin stars and nineteen out of twenty possible points from Gault Millau. The second is collecting what could be called bistro deco—from gleaming zinctopped bars to jolly little pottery salt and pepper shakers in the tubby forms of la mère Michèle and le père Lustucru, 1940s promotional items from a pasta and rice company.

BB

MN

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UL BERT

It's to satisfy the second passion that Rostang, a genial native of the Dauphiné region near Grenoble, sets out one Monday morning for the Marché aux Puces, the famed flea market that hugs the city's northern perimeter at the Porte de Clignancourt. With twelve vast exhibition halls full of stalls that range in style from the sidewalk rummage sale to the elaborate stage set, Les Puces is almost a village in itself. On Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays the aisles are bustling with shoppersand as often as his schedule allows, Rostang is one of them. Today, as always, he heads straight for specialized dealers who know him well. "I focus on two major halls, Paul Bert and Serpette," he explains, "Several dealers there are familiar with my tastes and let me know when something interesting comes their way."

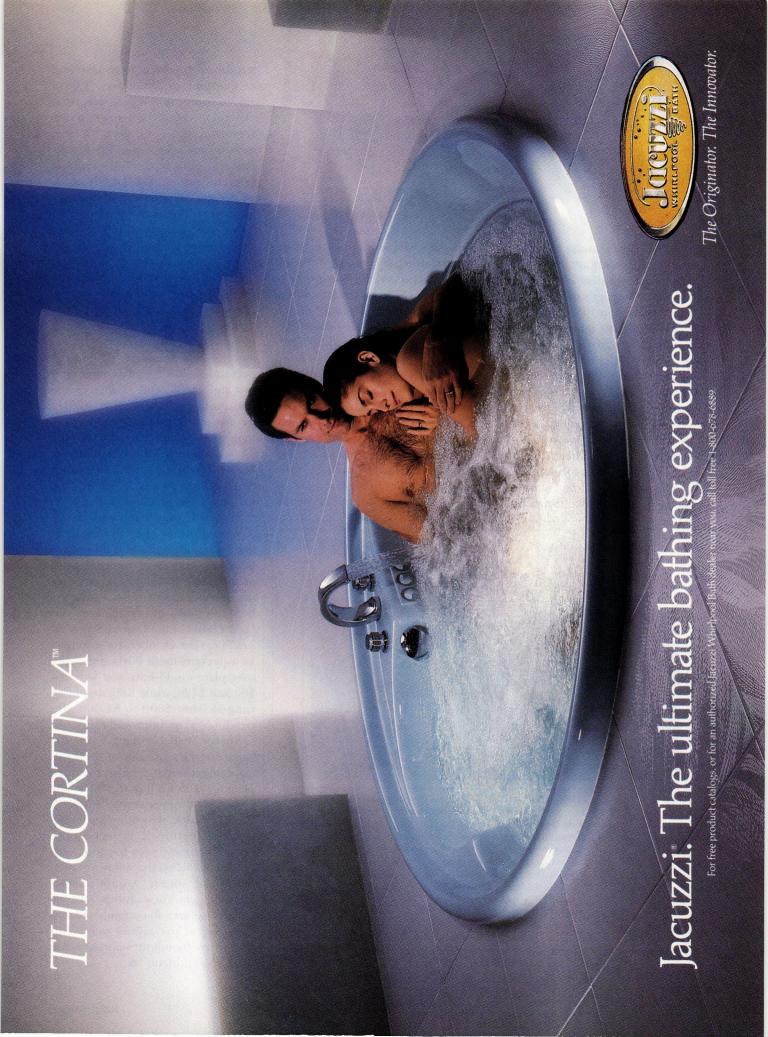
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His first stop is Jean Luc Perrier's Déco Bistro in Paul Bert, a full-blown re-creation of an antique bistro. So alluring is this scene with its zinctopped bar, etched-glass mirrors, marble-topped tables, and bentwood chairs that it's a disappointment not to be able to sit down and order blanquette de veau and a fruity young Beaujolais, or at least a rosy kir royale. Everything here, from the ashtrays to the tile floor, from the glass doors to the glasses behind the bar, is for sale. Understandably, many of Perrier's customers are restaurateurs like Rostang seeking items that will lend a nostalgic charm to their dining rooms. Other buyers take home 1940s bar clocks and turn-ofthe-century posters advertising coffee for their kitchens or tall pastis glasses for their bars; one Parisienne

Restaurateur Michel Rostang, above left, prowls Paris's Marché aux Puces for prime examples of bistro deco. Among his finds, below from left, a Robj sailor decanter, an enameled wall plaque advertising fruit juice, a Scotsman decanter, and a counter card for Lustucru pasta "made with fresh eggs."

**BOUCHE** 





SHOPPING



Rostang keeps his asparagus and artichoke Barbotine plate, <u>left</u>, and LU cookies poster, <u>right,</u> in his restaurant.



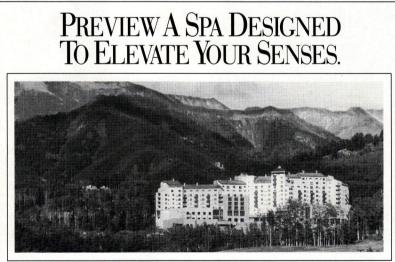
has even set out to create a bistro corner in her sixteenth-arrondissement living room. (Enthusiasts who want to see all of Perrier's offerings must go to Tournus in Burgundy where he has turned the interior of an old warehouse into fifteen bistros, each unique, complete, and for sale.)

Just down the aisle from Perrier's place in Paul Bert, Rostang pauses at Katherine Apelstein's atticlike stand to inspect an impressive nickel and brass baker's rack almost ten feet long and six feet high, as well as a set of classic rattan bistro chairs, worn but full of character. To enlarge his collection of figurative ceramic de-

Name

Address City/State/Zip Phone canters by Robj from the late 1920s, Rostang stops by Huguette Busson's stand in Marché des Rosiers. For Gallé vases—"Now is the moment to buy Gallé," advises Rostang, "since it has become somewhat démodé" it's Henri in Paul Bert. And for a perfect little bistro bar of sculpted or inlaid woods with a zinc or copper countertop, he heads over to Serpette and Bistro d'Autrefois.

Les Puces is Rostang's main source for bistro deco, but he also combs secondhand shops, auctions, and regional antiques markets. One he particularly recommends is the weekend market in Isle-sur-la-



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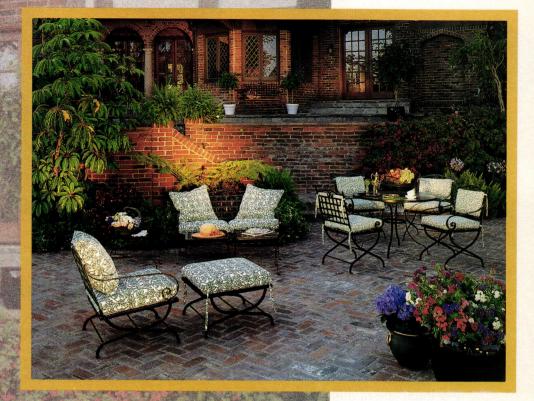
Sorgue, a Provençal town just west of Fontaine-de-Vaucluse. "I have always found the objects that used to decorate the old bistros very warm, very charming," he says. "I keep most of my collection in my restaurant and in the bistros"—he now has three Bistrots d'à Côté, newly created authentic fin de siècle–style establishments—"because this is where I spend most of my time. I like to have them around me, and I find that they create a nice ambiance."

Not that he always has the same pieces around him. Some are too precious to part with, such as the turn-of-the-century publicity plates from a sardine company in Brittany and the Robj decanters, stylized figures of a sailor, a woman in Breton cap and apron, and a kilted Scotsman, among others. But similar items-antique matchstrikes promoting an aperitif or liqueur, for example-can be purchased at Boutique Michel Rostang, around the corner from the restaurant, or right off the shelves of the first Bistrot d'à Côté. on the rue Gustave-Flaubert.

When Rostang began collecting in the 1970s, unpretentious little items went for a song. Now the renaissance of bistro food has given a boost to bistro deco—and bistro deco prices both in France and on the East and West Coasts of the United States. At Les Puces last October, for example, an asparagus-motif Barbotine appetizer plate would have cost between \$60 and \$120, while Robj decanters ranged from \$600 to \$2,000, depending on condition and rarity.

But for Michel Rostang it's not the value or potential value of these unassuming items that makes them appealing. "I don't buy them for any reason but the pleasure of living with them," he says. "The other joy for me is in the quest itself, in seeking out these objects and then haggling with the vendor when the stakes are relatively insignificant. Always remember to haggle," he cautions. "It's the game. Dealers will certainly sell you anything at the asking price, but you'll leave them with a distinct sense of disappointment!" ▲

GUY BOUCHET



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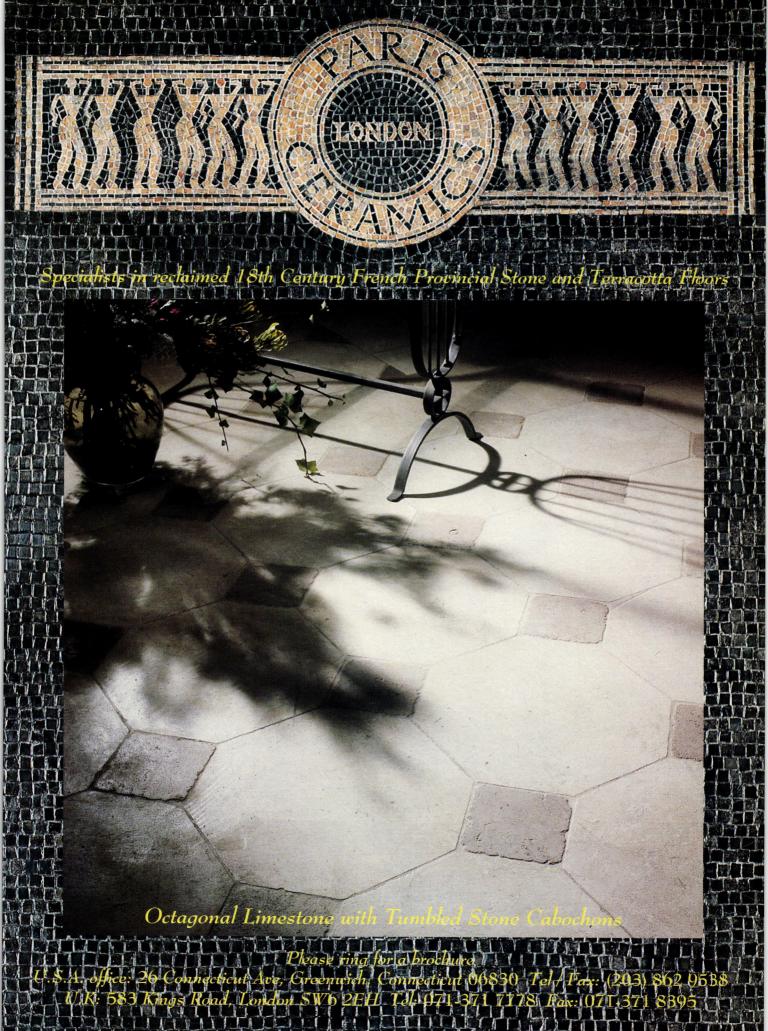
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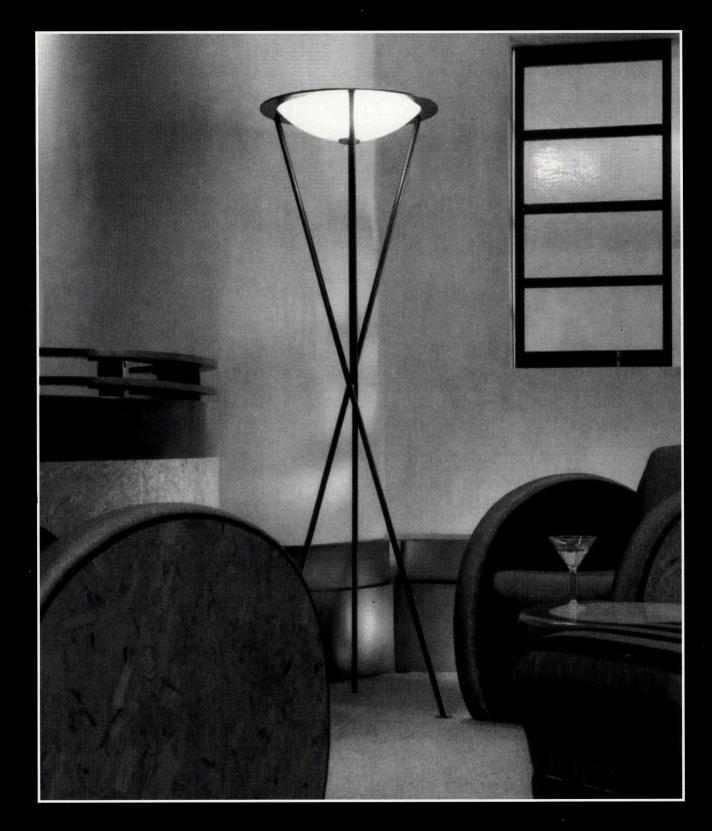
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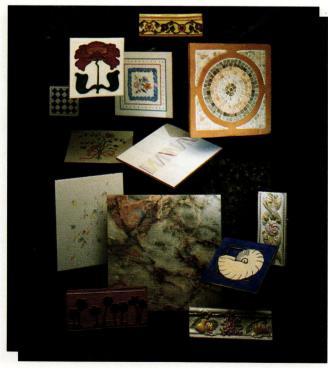
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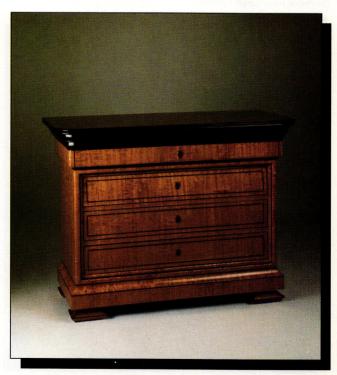
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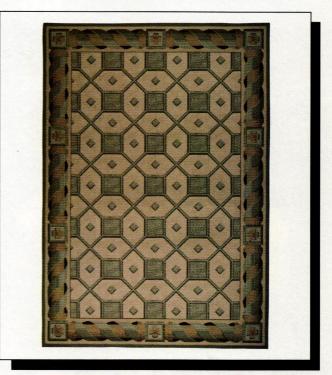
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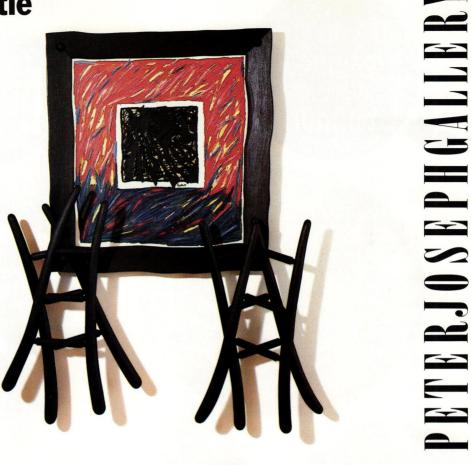
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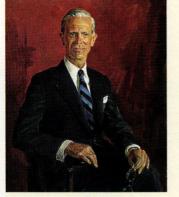
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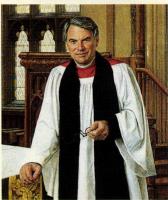




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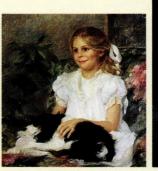
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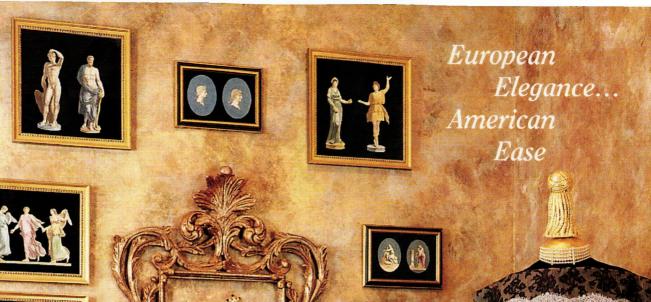






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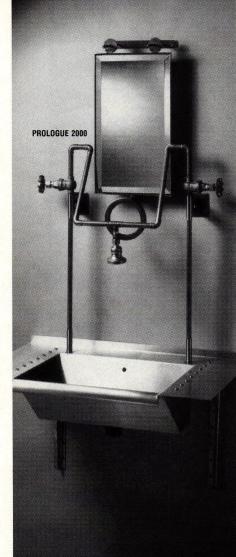
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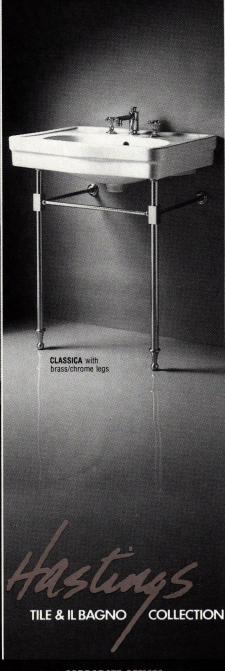
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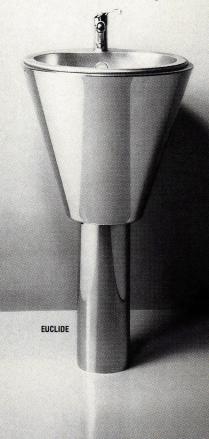
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# Farther South of the Border





Mexico is no longer the last horizon for Latin cuisine By LESLIE LAND



orth Americans eat a lot of South American food: orange juice from Brazil, shrimp from Ecuador, the summer-in-winter fruit bowl from Chile. But South American cuisine is another story. Admittedly the Brazilian national dish called feijoada completa, a lavish spread of black beans and multiple meats, accompanied by sliced oranges, steamed kale, and toasted manioc, appears in many mainstream cookbooks, if not on every Sunday table. And ceviche, the brilliant Peruvian method of "cooking" fish in lime juice sparked with onion and hot peppers, has been part of the international repertoire for several decades. But other than these exceptions a whole continent's worth of richness and variety is still by and large as terra incognita as Tierra del Fuego.

There's reason to hope that won't be the

case too much longer. Dishes cooked in what might be called Pan-Caribbean style-heavy on the black beans, rice, fried plantains, and hot peppers-are becoming more and more fashionable. According to the National Restaurant Association, Mexican is the third most popular "ethnic" food in the United States, right after Chinese and Italian, and while much of it may be less than authentic, it has helped create a growing excitement about a world-class cuisine; at least we now know the country has several regions. We also know that Mexico is by no means all of Central America. And we know that an entire continent lies farther south.

Each of South America's fourteen countries has its own distinctive cuisine, based partly on what the land provides and partly on history, but Peru, Brazil, and Argentina are the big three. Each

represents a different facet of South American food, and together they account for most of this country's South American restaurants.

Argentina probably leads in the restaurant department. Places like Gaucho Grill in Los Angeles and Zuperpollo in Miami pack them in for food that is, comparatively speaking, pretty familiar. In Argentina, as in neighboring Uruguay, ninety percent of the population see Resources.

Anticuchos and steak accompanied by chimichurri, above. Left: Humitas, a savory corn pudding. Below: Habanero, serrano, and jalapeño peppers. Festive Bauer ware from Buddy's, L.A. Details



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Bahian food is among the most complex and exciting in the world

is of Italian or Spanish descent. The pampas is cattle country, and Argentineans are undoubtedly among the world's champion beef eaters.

In practice, this means that Miami's Los Gauchitos market is famous for its homemade ravioli, the same city's La Fusta prides itself on such home-style Italian items as Argentine chicken Milanese, and the venerable Gardel's has long been known as the most garlicky restaurant in Los Angeles. Yet no matter what comes out of the kitchen, the centerpiece of Argentine cuisine is the huge charcoal grill, the parrillada, on which everything from steaks to sausages to sweetbreads is cooked. All this meat is sauced at the table with chimichurri, one of those universal sauces that would probably taste great on an old shoe, never mind a good steak. Basically an Italian green sauce Latinized into a thick herbed vinaigrette, chimichurri is most often parsley-based, but sometimes it is made with basil or coriander.

If Argentina is meat, Peru is potatoes. The familiar tubers were first domesticated in the Andes, where most people still speak the language of the Incas, Quechua, which is said to have a thousand words for potatoes. It is a country and a cuisine divided between the narrow but wealthy coast, where life is quite cosmopolitan, and the highlands, where poverty means the potatoes come with aji, or hot pepper, and little else.

Most food authorities see Peruvian cuisine as the one with greatness in it. The fabulous seafood is subtly handled, and those who can afford it devise amazing sauces for those potatoes, sauces that combine native South American peanuts and sweethot mirasol peppers with Spanish contributions like garlic and cream.

Most Peruvian restaurants in the United States are modest places, pa-



tronized by Peruvians seeking a taste of home, though more ambitious establishments, such as Alejandro's in San Francisco and La Llama in Chicago, have attracted a wider clientele. And it would be hard to overestimate the contributions of the late Felipe Rojas-Lombardi, Peruvian-born soul of the Ballroom in New York, where diners are offered sophisticated, highly refined versions of the food of his native land.

Purists have complained that Rojas-Lombardi's food is not truly Peruvian. But authenticity may not always be the best way to introduce unfamiliar cuisines. Consider anticuchos, the totemic snack food of Peru, spicy charcoal-grilled cubes of marinated beef heart-hot, satisfying, and cheap. True anticuchos must be made from beef heart. But the Quechua word itself means cooked food from the Andes, and the truth is the anticucho treatment enhances just about any fine meat. Although I love beef heart myself, when I'm feeding those who don't I

substitute duck breast. It's an ironic switch from the cultural standpoint, but it makes sense as gastronomy. The textures are similar.

Making gastronomic sense of Brazilian food could take a happy lifetime. This enormous and various country offers at least three distinct cuisines, but to me the greatest is the food of Bahia in the east. There West African foods and techniques brought by the sugar plantation slaves combine with indigenous and Portuguese influences to produce some of the most complex and exciting food in the world. Its three cornerstones are coconut, fiery malagueta peppers, and dendê oil (palm oil), which colors whatever contains it a bright orange red. Peanuts and cashews thicken sauces, and ginger and dried shrimp season everything from fresh shrimp stews to acarajè, delicious fritters of spiced mashed cowpeas fried crisp in dendê oil. The oil is highly saturated, hard to find, and quite subtle, hence optional if you're more concerned with taste than with authenticity. It gives muqueca, a Bahian stew, an extra layer of interest, but the dish is already such a powerhouse of flavor the dendê oil may be excused.

Flexibility is acceptable in these dishes' home countries, so why not here? It makes sense, for instance, with humitas, a corn pudding popular all over Latin America. Sometimes simply cooked in a skillet, best when wrapped in fresh corn husks and steamed like tamales, at my house it's baked in a husk-lined casserole for the flavor without the fuss. There have never been leftovers. (For sources of ingredients see Resources.)

### CHIMICHURRI

Argentine Green Sauce

- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped onion
- 2-5 large garlic cloves
- 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cups tightly packed Italian parsley leaves
- 1 teaspoon oregano, crushed
- 3/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> teaspoon salt
- Pinch of ground cayenne <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

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Combine the onion, garlic, and parsley and chop finely. Mix with crushed dried oregano, pepper, salt, cayenne, olive oil, and vinegar in a nonreactive bowl and allow to sit at room temperature 3 hours. Taste and correct the salt and vinegar. Yields about 1¼ cups.

### **ANTICUCHOS**

### Peruvian Kabobs

- 1/2 cup bland vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons annatto seeds
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 3 large cloves garlic, finely minced
- 4 mirasol peppers, or 2 serrano peppers and 1 habanero pepper, seeded and finely minced
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup red wine vinegar 2 pounds beef heart or
- 4 large duck breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 4 dried hontaka chilies
- 3 tablespoons bacon or duck fat

Make annatto oil by combining vegetable oil and annatto seeds in a small heavy pan. Let sit for half an hour, then bring the mixture just to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 2–3 minutes. Remove from heat. Let cool to room temperature, strain, and set aside.

Heat a small heavy skillet over medi-

um flame. When hot, add the cumin seeds and toast them, shaking the pan, until golden, about 20 seconds. Remove toasted seeds from the pan at once, cool, then grind with a mortar and pestle or in a spice grinder. Combine the ground cumin, garlic, peppers, vinegar, and 2 tablespoons annatto oil in a shallow nonreactive bowl. (The remaining oil, tightly covered and refrigerated, will keep indefinitely.) Add beef or duck to marinade, cover, refrigerate 8-12 hours, or leave at room temperature 4-5 hours. While the meat is marinating, soak 4-8 bamboo skewers in cold water.

Prepare barbecue coals for grilling or preheat broiler. Coals should be covered with a fine layer of ash; grill should be as hot as possible. Remove meat from marinade and thread onto the skewers, allowing 4 cubes per skewer for hors d'oeuvres, 6 for main dish. Set aside. Reserve ½ cup marinade.

About 1 hour before serving begin the sauce. Discard stems of dried chilies and place chilies in small heatproof bowl. Cover with boiling water and allow to sit ½ hour, then drain. Combine drained chilies in blender or food processor with 2 tablespoons reserved marinade and purée (don't lean over work surface; chili heat is very volatile). Add another 3 tablespoons marinade and the fat and purée again.

Brush meat generously with sauce. Combine remaining sauce with remaining marinade and heat over low flame about 5 minutes. Grill 2 inches from heat about 2 minutes per side or until still slightly pink inside. Brush with the heated sauce and serve with the remaining sauce for dipping. Serves 6–8 as an appetizer, 4 as main dish.

## MUQUECA

Bahian Seafood Stew

- 2–3 tablespoons corn oil
- 2-2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> pounds mixed firm white fish, such as sea bass, halibut, or monkfish
  - 1 pound medium shrimp, shelled and deveined
  - 1 cup chopped onion
  - 1 cup peeled and chopped tomatoes
  - 2 malagueta peppers, or 2 habanero peppers and 2 serrano peppers, seeded and chopped
  - <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup crushed roasted peanuts
  - 1/4 cup dried shrimp, finely ground
  - 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tablespoons peeled and diced ginger

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tennis court and sports facility, and two extensive barn groups. The location is an ideal 20 minutes from Charlottesville, VA. For more information call Louie Bell at (703) 456-8149.

## FOOD

- 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cups unsweetened coconut milk
  - 2 tablespoons dendê oil Salt

Cut white fish into 2-inch pieces. Heat a generous film of the corn oil in a nonreactive skillet over medium heat. Sauté fish pieces, uncrowded, until they are barely cooked and set aside. Repeat with shrimp, adding more oil as necessary to prevent sticking.

Add onion to the pan, lower heat, and cook until translucent. Add the chopped tomatoes, cover, and simmer about 10 minutes. Add the peppers, peanuts, dried shrimp, ginger, and coconut milk, partially cover pan, and cook 20 minutes over low heat. Do not let mixture boil. Purée the mixture in a food processor or blender or put through a food mill. Return to heat and add the cooked fish and shrimp. Heat through, stir in the dendê oil, salt to taste, and serve with rice. Serves 6.

#### HUMITAS

Corn Pudding

- 8–9 ears fresh corn, not supersweet
  - 3 tablespoons cornstarch <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup milk
  - 1 small onion,
  - finely chopped
  - 3 tablespoons butter
  - <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup finely diced red bell pepper
- 1–2 serrano or jalapeño peppers, seeded and diced 1 teaspoon salt
- 8–10 sprigs coriander

Bring a kettle of water to a boil, then remove from heat. Husk the corn, discarding the outermost wrappers, and drop the tender inner ones into the kettle of hot water. Set aside. Cut kernels from corn cobs (there should be about 4 cups), scrape out all the milk, then grind kernels to a lumpy mush in a food processor or blender. Stir in cornstarch and milk and set aside.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Sauté chopped onion in butter until transparent. Add bell pepper and hot peppers and cook until softened. Combine with the corn mixture and add salt. Line a shallow 2-quart casserole with several overlapping layers of corn husks, allowing them to drape over the sides. Fill with the corn mixture, top with more husks, then fold the overlapping liner husks to the center.

Cover the casserole with tinfoil, place in a water bath, and bake about 1¼ hours, or until the pudding is firm. Peel back the liner husks and remove the husk lid. Garnish with fresh coriander sprigs. Serves 6. ▲

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**HG** JUNE 1992

# A Gathering of Household Gods

Puppets, mermaids, and masks watch over a charmed domain

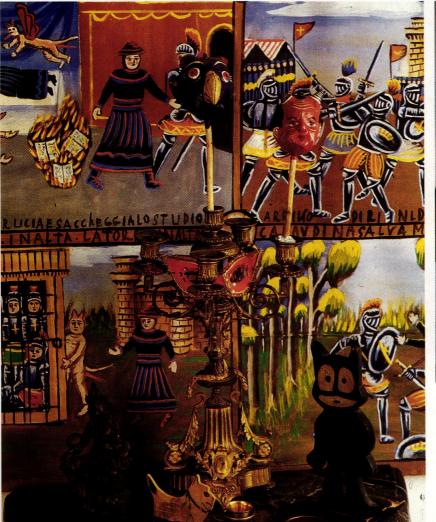
## BY FERNANDA EBERSTADT

hen asked his favorite travel book, the late Bruce Chatwin answered, Xavier de Maistre's A Journey Around My Room. For much of his writing life, Chatwin really did live in one Spartan room, which was the maid's quarters of a more palatial spread; I have three rooms (sort of) to bounce around in, and my wall-to-wall voyage includes cargo from Haiti, Mexico, Sicily, Jerusalem, Calcutta, and a sailor's bar in Hamburg.

I grew up in my parents' New York apartment, a honeycomb of dark grottoes encrusted with strange, sometimes frightening treasures—there was a wooden skull which I was convinced as a child was the cranium of an escaped convict and a pint-size knight in armor I was afraid to go past at night lest its lifted visor reveal ghostly eyes.

When I moved into my twelfth-floor digs on the Upper West Side five years ago, it was like decanting a thick rich tonic into a small clear bottle. I brought with me my own collection. My parents had given me a taste for objects—weird, expressive, humorous objects that might act as amulets against harm or confusion, objects that have become precious by being well worn, tossed smooth by ocean or stroked shiny by superstitious fingers, like the figure of a saint whose foot glows from centuries of being kissed. I grew up a bred hoarder of the worthless, an unsystematic but grabby collector of sticks and stones and coffee tins and rusty nails, of colored scraps of paper—clues—found in the street. The only thing I ever wanted to be besides a writer was an archaeologist, someone who gets paid to root around in the earth for broken shards, messages from buried worlds.

Writers, like all people who wrest their livelihood from gleanings beyond their control, are superstitious—we each finger our rabbit's foot, our lucky dice, our household god. There was always an idea of the sacred in my scavenging. For my first few double-digit birthdays, I bought the enameled nineteenth-century Russian icons of saints and miracles—one is of John the Baptist's head on a platter—that hang on my wall today. From foreign travels I bring home more such mementos—votive, dear, and preferably terrifying. One wall in my apartment is devoted to mermaids—a Haitian voodoo painting of a black





Fernanda Eberstadt, <u>above</u>, on her living room sofa where she edits her writing and reads surrounded by sacred playthings, <u>left</u>, including a narrative puppet backdrop from Palermo and a Felix the Cat doorstop.

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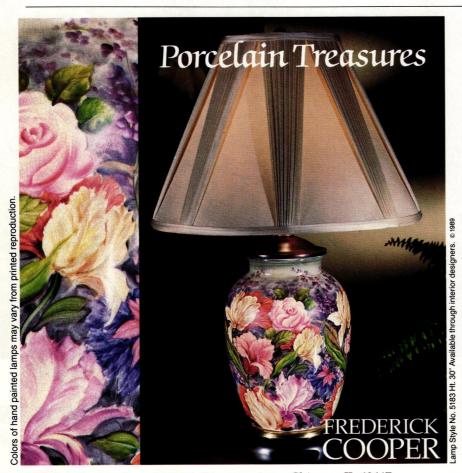
## WRITER IN RESIDENCE

mermaid sailing into the sky over a flaming pyre like a fish-tailed Joan of Arc; a pair of French mermaid brass knuckles; a New Mexican tin cutout of a mermaid bearing an American flag. On a bedroom wall is an African chieftain's flyswatter made of a nicotine-yellow horsetail topped with a baby-blue beaded handle, which was brought back to me by a loved one from a medicine store in Johannesburg. Certain things are intimately associated with places I've written about: a canvas puppet backdrop from Palermo which depicts in cartoon quadrants the misadventures of one of Charlemagne's more hapless knights whose girlfriend rescues him from shipwreck and then frees him from the cage in which red-tailed devils have imprisoned him.

Most of my things come from Mexico, where my first novel, *Low Tide*, was set: a mask of a bearded green man; retablos on tin and copper thanking the Virgin of Guadalupe for survival of sickness or a car crash; a wooden statue of an amiable Saint Jerome sitting and reading his book, with eyes as big as dolphins' and real horsehair lashes; an addled Saint Eulalia with bristly brows.

Even the refrigerator door is slathered with memorabilia—photographs of the bullfighter Paco Ojeda, of a miracle-working Moroccan rabbi (the picture came from a falafel stand in upper Galilee), of Poussin's arresting *The Death of Germanicus*—as well as injunctions to work—a pact, its deadline now lapsed, to exchange first drafts of a new novel with my former university instructor.

The main thing about where I live is this: I don't budge from my apartment, but sit here alone every day till nightfall. By three in the afternoon I am bouncing off the walls, but I still have to like being here. As a consequence, the place has taken on the air of an island convent, remote, golden, self-sufficient. Even the view northern cityscape, wooded bluffs of New Jersey, and, if you stand on a chair, a ribbon of Hudson—is abstract, glacially serene. The chiseled



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A wooden statue of Saint Jerome and a painted mermaid.

pinnacles of the prewar skyscrapers that march up Riverside Drive appear craggy as the Grand Canyon, geometric as a graph. The only hint of human life I can glimpse is the blue flicker of innumerable television sets. The only sound is a lady upstairs singing her scales. Even the sun is never seen directly but merely reflected, setting in the rosy blush of other buildings. My sole human contact is the telephone, which means I gab way too long.

To beat restlessness and change mood, I work in all three rooms of the house. Computers have made a writer's life more like a technician's-I have three computers and waste a lot of time glassy-eyed with despair when the printer jams or the disk won't read. In the bedroomdisfigured by the Zenith and tentacles of printer, VCR, answering machine-I write fiction and criticism; on the sofa in the living room I edit and read; at the refectory table in the entrance hall I write letters and journals. From room to room I carry the essential tools-a dictionary, an encyclopedia, a Bible, an atlas.

After work I blast Jim Morrison or Otis Redding, have friends over for dinner, chase away the demons of solitude and concentration. Some day I will pack my things in boxes and begin again from scratch, for I don't yet feel grown-up enough to live in a place that isn't in some sense makeshift or semisolitary. But for now, it is something close to bliss to have landed in this sanctuary in a raw and bruising city. ▲

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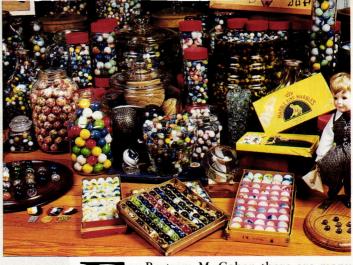


# The High Roller of Marbles

No aggie or cat'seye lies outside Bertram M. Cohen's sphere of influence By Margot Guralnick



Marbles dot one of Cohen's favorite ties.



or Bertram M. Cohen there are many worlds contained within his vast pile of tiny colorful spheres. Ancient Rome is represented by a green and yellow blob of fused glass and clay of the sort, says Cohen, that "Caesar might have played with." A ceramic likeness of Teddy Roosevelt stares out through the clear glass walls of a circa 1905 sulfide marble, one of only three known to exist. And a re-

cently made globe of polished flint comes from Tennessee, where people still play a traditional game known as rolley hole. "A marble is anything that's smooth and round," explains the sixty-year-old Cohen, who is more than a little rounded himself—and an exuberant oddball. From his Boston town house, the retired toy company president presides over a scattered empire of banded Lutz, gooseberry, clambroth, onionskin, end-of-day, Indian swirl, and, of course, common aggie and cat's-eye

marbles. Most of these patterns were handblown by German and American manufacturers of the late nineteenth through the mid twentieth century, when knuckling down—proper form for launching a shooter marble—was a preteen rite of passage.

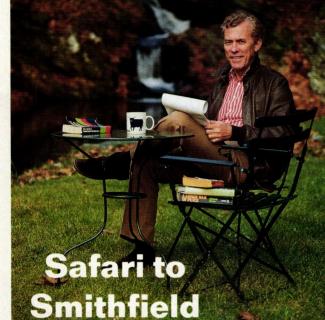
Although Cohen only occasionally gets his own knuckles dirty, he has spent half his life gathering marbles, a hobby started as something he and his son could share. Cohen is still on a roll, collecting not only marbles but every imaginable sort of related object, from Chinese checkers boards to postcards and comic strips in which marbles put in an appearance. Of late, he has also been buying, selling, and trading new marblesmany as big as paperweights-made by glass artisans who often incorporate dreamy celestial references into their work. Cohen's days are spent chasing after elusive Lutzes and peppermint swirls, writing news of his finds to comrades in the field, and seeing to it that everyone he meets walks away with a shiny oversize marble imprinted with the big black letters BERT.

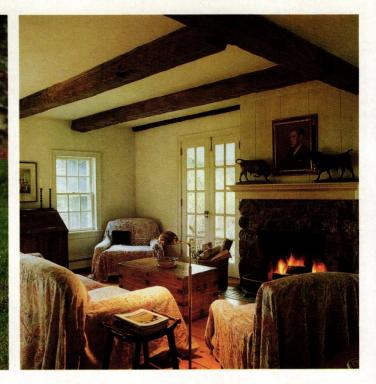
The collector's holdings range from vintage marbles, <u>above</u>, to the latest models, <u>left</u> and <u>top left</u>. Details see Resources.

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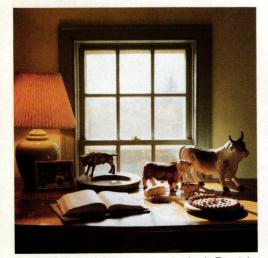


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Author Bartle Bull sets up camp in a colonial millhouse in upstate New York By JAMES KOTSILIBAS-DAVIS



Bull, top left, writes on a riverbank. Top right: Isadore Bonheur bronzes flank a portrait of Bull's father in the living room. Above: More of the family bull collection with white rhinos.

I thas been said that to have a full life a man should build a house, write a book, and be a father. At Brampton, in Smithfield, New York, Bartle Bull has done all three with characteristic attention to detail.

Searching the Hudson Valley in 1978, Bull, recently divorced, was looking for a country house to share with his eight-year-old son, Bartle. "All I want," Bull told the real estate agent, "is an old house in a pretty place. No suburban amenities. Farmers don't have swimming pools." One afternoon the agent drove him past a peeling colonial millhouse set by a stream and waterfall. "It's for sale," she said, "but it's in hopeless shape." "Stop the car," Bull said.

That weekend he brought his son for a picnic by the waterfall. Young Bartle loved it, and a week later the 1750 house was theirs. They named it after the prize Jersey farm Bull's grandfather owned in Ontario. Immediately Bull set to work, without an architect or decorator, supervising the renovation and dragooning friends—and his son—for advice and assistance. He replaced asbestos shingles with cedar, uncovered original ceiling beams and wide-plank pine floors, and absorbed small rooms into larger ones. As the two Bartles traveled they collected old country furniture: Victorian brass beds and eighteenth-century oak settles from London, Matabele chieftain stools bartered for in the bush while on safari in Zimbabwe, a sturdy 1850 desk from Gstaad, three iron chandeliers from Provence, and china ornaments from Patagonia.

After three years it was finished. The Bulls celebrated with a roaring Thanksgiving. Four days later an electrical fire destroyed three-quarters of the structure. "Architect friends told us to bulldoze the remains and start over," says young Bartle, now a college student, "but we were determined to preserve what we could and rebuild the rest. We installed a Sears Roebuck bunk bed in the unheated garage and camped and cooked there winter and summer weekends until the house was complete."

On Sunday evenings they drove back to Beekman Place in New York, where Bartle went to school and his father continued an eclectic career. Formerly the publisher and president of *The Village Voice*, Bull has also been a civil rights lawyer in Mississippi, a principal owner of *New York* 



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### PEOPLE

Bull does the cooking with his son and guests. Pool players stir the soup between shots







The kitchen features a restored 1900 Brunswick pool table, top. <u>Center</u>: French iron chandeliers hang above a Scottish pine dining table formerly in London's Bath Club. <u>Above</u>: The master bedroom's deep slate blue is a colonial color.

magazine, and the New York City campaign manager for Robert Kennedy. As work proceeded at Brampton, he practiced law with Jones Hirsch Connors & Bull in Manhattan, wrote articles on Africa for The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, contemplated his first book, and oversaw every element of the second reconstruction.

New and old parts of the house were blended by maintaining the integrity of the roofline and using traditional six-over-six sash windows. The ex-

terior is gray clapboard with shutters painted black softened with an aubergine tint. The bedrooms are trimmed in colonial colors: slate blue, pure green, and pumpkin. Young Bartle suggested an outdoor fireplace, and they designed one of brick that combines the practicalities of a cooking fire with the spirit of a campfire. "My son spent two summers as a chef's helper in Brittany, so he planned the expanded kitchen," says Bull. "We added a pool table and fireplace, more windows and bookshelves, a Garland stove, and Victorian pine cabinets."

Salvageable antiques were restored and new ones acquired on further adventures to Africa, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

Two Isadore Bonheur bronze bulls. charred survivors of the fire and centerpieces of the family's bull collection, were repatinated. Other bulls remain stabled at Beekman Place, including a pair painted by Rosa Bonheur (sister of Isadore) and a group of Egyptian and Renaissance bronzes collected by Bull's father and grandfather. Bull-a Taurus, naturally-lay in the reenameled Victorian bathtub as plumbers moved it about until he found just the spot in which you can see both the bedroom fireplace and the wild hillside where deer often browse.

After three years the house was again finished-and supplied with smoke detectors-and the Bulls turned their energies to the outdoors-restoring the old milldam, repositioning the driveway across the river, and building a footbridge opposite the house. In 1985, Bull set up a table by the waterfall and started writing. Pursuing a lifelong interest in Africa, he began Safari: A Chronicle of Adventure, a celebration of African safaris. This history led to The White Rhino Hotel, a novel set in colonial East Africa after World War I, just published by Viking.

Today guests approach Brampton by the footbridge as the waterfall catches their ear. They find a lively house with eccentric details: brass doorknobs from the vanished Biltmore Hotel, each bearing a B; bathroom light fixtures from the old Saint Regis; flags from travels to Algeria, Cuba, and Guyana; and everywhere, books and bulls and fireplaces. Bull does the cooking with his son and guests. Pool players stir the soup between shots. Festive dinners, often ending with flaming bananas, are served at a long Scottish pine table formerly used for food preparation at the Bath Club in London. After the meal, guests linger over wine, reading aloud from Arthur Conan Doyle, reciting ballads by Robert Service-"The Cremation of Sam McGee" is a favorite-or, most likely these days, telling tales of African adventures old and new.

RICHARD FELBER

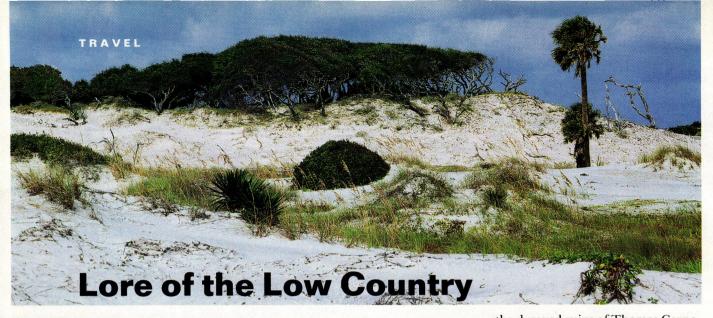
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hen the Carnegies, a family not unknown for public-minded largesse, conveyed most of Georgia's Cumberland Island not to a developer but to the National Park Service, something of a miracle was effected. On its sister barrier islands all along the Atlantic seaboard, the best way to see the pristine is, generally speaking, to pay greens fees. There are coastal islands not as overrun with links and condos and marinas and malls and swashbuckling bars as, say, Hilton Head, but these are preserved by "exclusivity" or they are honestly private, some still held by the poor scions of cotton and indigo families; you get on them by invitation only, Forests and baronial mansions have stories to tell visitors to Georgia's Cumberland Island

## BY PADGETT POWELL

and to get that you must know your low-country p's and q's. You can go to Cumberland, the last island before Florida, for nothing. It's all yours, essentially, when you get there—and you get not Waldenbooks but a very real bit of Walden. Whatever their motives for not selling the island to the land pirates, the Carnegies bequeathed America a doozie.

Signs of occupation still exist. The most prominent of these are Carnegie homes; one is open to tour, one is the Greyfield Inn, and one, Dungeness, the imposing main house built by Andrew's brother Thomas, is a ruin. One account of its burning possibly apocryphal but more fun to believe than not—is that deer poachers torched the house in retaliation for an incident in which one of their number was shot at. Standing before

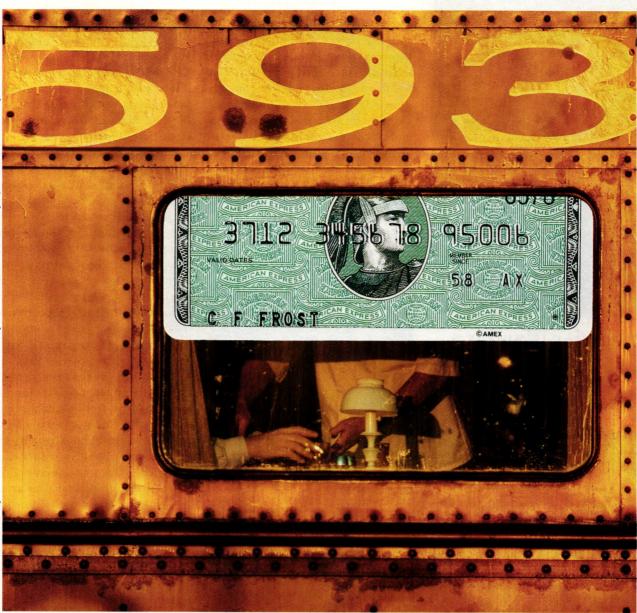


the decayed ruins of Thomas Carnegie's great house, with buzzards perpetually roosting on its chimneys, a complex question sets in. Does it serve Mr. Carnegie right for coming down here and setting all his kids up with mansions (summer mansions, now, it's the damned Vanderbilt syndrome in small)? Is it right that guys with names like Floyd Driggers and Marshall Drawdy burn down a rich fellow's house because their buddy Shoat gets shot at poaching that fellow's deer? Standing there in the marsh breeze, with miles of free beach and dune and wood to walk and horse and deer and hog to watch, and having had your own troubles with the Drawdys and Driggerses of this world, whose wives are at the moment dropping used Pampers in parking lots, you side for the only time in your life with Big Money, and thank Thomas Carnegie for this island. Andrew gave America more than 2,800 libraries and Carnegie Hall, but this is something.

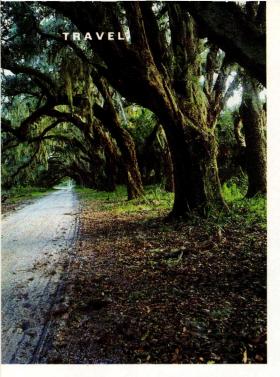
And now that our lesson in history and capitalism and philanthropy is over, let us enjoy the island. You get to it by Park Service ferry (from Saint Marys, Georgia) or private boat. You camp at one of five sites ("developed" means running water, toilets, showers, tables; "primitive" means none of the above and *no fire*, knocking the definition of primitive back one and a half million years), or you

The Carnegies' gift saved Cumberland Island's unspoiled shores, top, from development. A park ranger, <u>above left</u>, waits for the ferry, <u>left</u>, that transports visitors from the mainland.





By tomorrow, another country. And another change in your itinerary. Will someone understand English? Yes. At the next stop are American Express people. They're also at 1700 other travel service locations around the world.\* Something bankcards don't have. You're not surprised.



A barrier island is a barrier; it is beauty, but it is rough beauty tarpons leaping silver-scaled in the sun, the sharks rolling heavily and brown on the surface, like lengths of telephone pole barely buoyant. You will learn later (because the communion of these animals seems impossible and you ask about it) that sharks and tarpon are not uncommon traveling companions around here. Walking back in the dark you see a shark blasting mullet from shallows in phosphorescent explosions that suggest incendiary bombs.

Ride in a boat through miles of





stay at cozy Greyfield Inn, which is probably the precise antithesis of camping. If you go to Greyfield, you walk down and have a look at the poor fools in their tents; if you camp, you watch the slummers in their twill safari suits studying you. Everybody's happy. The ghosts of the rich and their poachers are in accord.

Things to do:

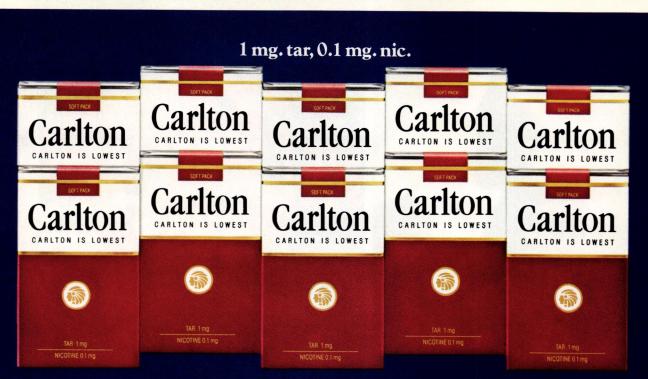
Walk south toward the north jetty of the Saint Marys River. Well before you get there see man-size silver things appearing above the water, flashing as bright as survival mirrors. Get closer and see that they are tarpon. Get even closer and see that they are traveling with sharks—the creeks and look at marsh and dune and oak, the dunes with feral horses on them and the oaks signaling the high ground where your house would go if you were not as poor as a poacher yourself and had more resources than your brother's boat, which you are in (and which he got in a foreclosure deal at the bank where he claims to be the manager, although they tell you on the phone, "Manager? Well, he works here,' leading you to speculate perhaps he's the janitor). "What if you actually had all this?" you ask your alleged bank manager brother. "If I had this," he says, squinting at the glare to try to see it all, "I'd be one sorry-assed mother." You nod. The two of you have more in common finally with the fictive Marshall Drawdy and Floyd Driggers than you do with Thomas Carnegie, and neither of you wants to work enough to have or hold all this. All you want to do is come here, and that you do.

It is possible to walk for miles and not see anyone, to stop and swim in the surf without stepping on a can or condom or bottle or light bulb and without a lifeguard to worry your tiny demise, should it come to that. Sleep under live oaks combed landward by the wind and napped so tightly that under these trees, even in storms, you can burn candles in the still air. This still air can be very hot. Take drinks and ice to Cumberland. Never go there attempting, say, to dry out—not the place for that.

When you encounter rangers, usually flying by in trucks along the road that runs transit-true down the middle of the island, you may jump in the bushes and hide from them. I do this compulsively, and I don't know why. You may or may not take to it. Another thing I do after a ranger sighting is check myself for ticks; Lyme disease is present on Cumberland, and it is alleged that every ranger there has it, another rumor more fun to believe than discredit. I note this ominousness to purpose: a barrier island is a barrier; it is beauty, but it is rough beauty.

You've seen wild horses, deer, man-size tarpon gamboling with man-eating shark, and you've enjoyed the pleasures of abusing Cordura nylon and the thrilling hiss of the Coleman lantern. Or you've taken the high road, Greyfield, where the good game, I'd guess, is gin and tonic until sundown, exaggerated courtesy to staff (so they don't suspect your closeness with Floyd Driggers), good meals, and a modestly late bedtime in the equivalent of a feather four-poster. Where you'd go wrong either way on Cumberland Island I don't know. 🌢

For visitors information: Cumberland Island National Seashore, Box 806, Saint Marys, GA 31558; (912) 882-4335.



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From petticoats to tablecloths, Debra Moises is all tulled up

Debra Moises in full bloom Clockwise from top left: Organza and tulle dress with a pearl choker. Tulle and blossom tablecloth adorns furniture from Newel Art Galleries, NYC, in front of a Ruben Toledo mural. Debra and Moises with a chiffon dress. Bouquetlike bags above a silk flower. Details see Resources. NO MATTER HOW TAILORED A WOMAN'S taste, she always loves something a little lacy," says Guatemalan-born Moises Diaz. He and his wife, Debra, and their company, Debra Moises, have been known since 1986 for imaginative accessories. They have now designed tulle tablecloths, trimmed with silk blossoms, that were inspired by their spring/summer collection for Bergdorf Goodman. The couple's first ready-to-wear line, it features organza and chiffon dresses with tulle and blossom petticoats and overskirts. Complemented by pearl chokers, evening bags, and sleeved shawls, these instant classics are delicate, feminine, and, like the tablecloths, fit for a dreamy midsummer's night.

style



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# BOUCHERON PARFUMS PARIS



## Boucheron, parfum pour Homme, an accomplice...

BERGDORF GOODMAN • NEIMAN MARCUS • SAKS FIFTH AVENUE



TUCKED INTO THE garden behind a California bungalow is the glass-sided house that landscape designer Jay Griffith calls home. In the living room below the "tree house" where he sleeps—a childhood dream come to life—Griffith arranges iron garden furniture and ceramic jars and urns to conjure up a

DBERTO GIL

mood of classical dignity. This sleight of hand is hardly a surprise from the man who festoons Hollywood backyards with crystal chandeliers. Transformations of a different sort take place in the New York loft of actress Isabella Rossellini. Aside from harboring cherished family pieces and one rather temperamental Japanese antique, she prefers to adopt furniture from richly furnished dumpsters. Even her bed is part salvage: its ironwork used to enclose church organ pipes. Decorating offers myriad opportunities for invention and expropriation, whether in the manner of Mr. Blandings's dream house or Marcel Duchamp's readymades. John Heminway, a longtime easterner and the host of PBS's Travels series, found his many-buildinged dream house in Montana, a state he knew would feel like home. On the Maine coast, decorator Leta Austin Foster established a family retreat that looks as if it had always been just as it is now. At his Scottish manor, Abbotsford, Sir Walter Scott created the architectural equivalent of his novel Ivanhoe-an evocation of the age of chivalry. It was with painstaking connoisseurship rather than dreams that Adriana and Robert Mnuchin built their prize collection of abstract expressionist paintings. And yet, in the Manhattan house where they have combined modern and African art, Georgian and Ming furniture, imagination clearly plays a major role. When pieces from far-flung worlds come together, magic enters into even the most meticulously planned rooms.

Nam Vorograd

EDITOR IN CHIEF

**Editor's Page** 

Settling in Mount Desert

**MANYAYYYY** 

A Palm Beach decorator and her family retreat to a century-old house Down East By Brooks Peters Photographs by Langdon Clay

At Cedar Hedges, *opposite*, Leta Austin Foster, *above*, visits with two of her daughters, India Foster and Elizabeth Dinkel, and a young friend while her husband, Ridgely, consoles Roger, their golden retriever. Details see Resources.

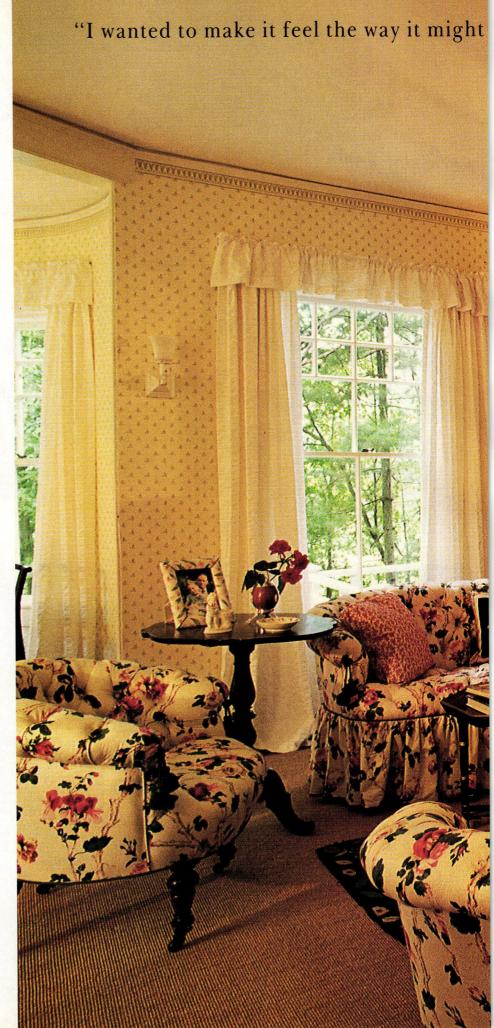


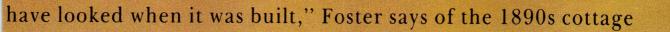
AINTED ON THE MANtel above a fireplace in Leta Austin Foster's summer cottage in Maine are two short words: ETT HEM. The phrase, Swedish for "a home," is the title of an 1899 book by the artist Carl Larsson, whose intimate familial style was a source of inspiration for Foster in decorating her house. "Ett hem just means we're here," she says. "We're at peace. We're in our own home."

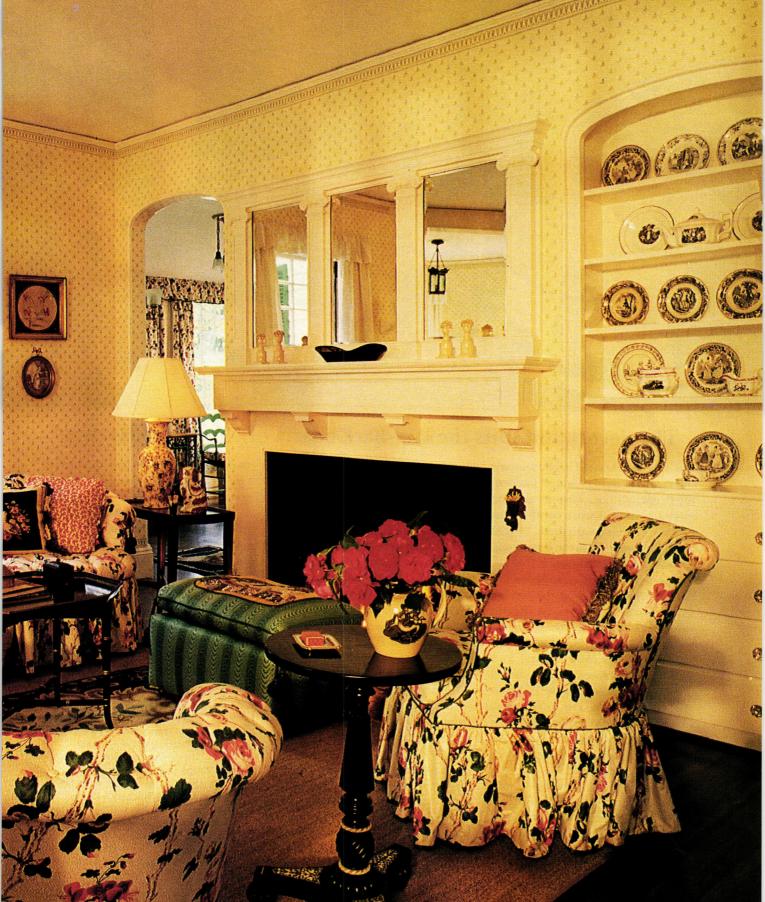
In 1985, after searching unsuccessfully for a place on the Maine coast, Foster, a fourth-generation Floridian known to her friends as Letsy, was walking with a friend through Northeast Harbor, the exclusive summer colony on Mount Desert Island, when she spotted a house with a rounded turret, gabled roofs, more than fifty windows, and thick green hedges on two sides. "That's it," she told her friend. "That's the kind of house I want." The property was in fact for sale, but the tenants wouldn't let the two visitors in. After she returned to Palm Beach and conferred with her husband, Ridgely, the Fosters bought the house over the phone without ever having ventured inside. "That was kind of frightening," she admits.

It was also risky. The house, designed by the noted Maine architect Fred L. Savage, was close to one hundred years old. The interior could have been in an advanced state of deterioration. But as a decorator specializing in restorations—she has offices in Palm Beach, San Francisco, and New York—Foster looked forward to the challenge. The following May she flew up from Florida and inspected the house for the first time. "There was snow on the ground," she recalls. "And I thought, I know this is the worst thing I've ever done."

Foster furnished the sunny living room with a generously padded sofa and chairs, upholstered in a geranium chintz from Cowtan & Tout, and hung curtains patterned after a tattered pair she found in the library. The wallpaper is from Brunschwig & Fils, the sisal from Stark.









## The decoration suits the laid-back charm of Northeast Harbor

But once she stepped inside and saw the spacious old-fashioned kitchen, the fireplaces in each room, and the intricate muntin work on the windows, her fears vanished. "I just loved the house from the beginning. It had very good feelings."

Foster has added considerably to those feelings by filling the cottage with whimsical Victoriana, Berlin woolwork, Creil pottery, handpainted chairs, antique cane stands, chromolithographs, quilts, and tramp art. "I wanted to make it feel the way it might have looked when it was built," she says. The furnishings, which she bought at local auctions and antiques shops or had made, are not valuable, she cautions—"They just appeal to my soul."

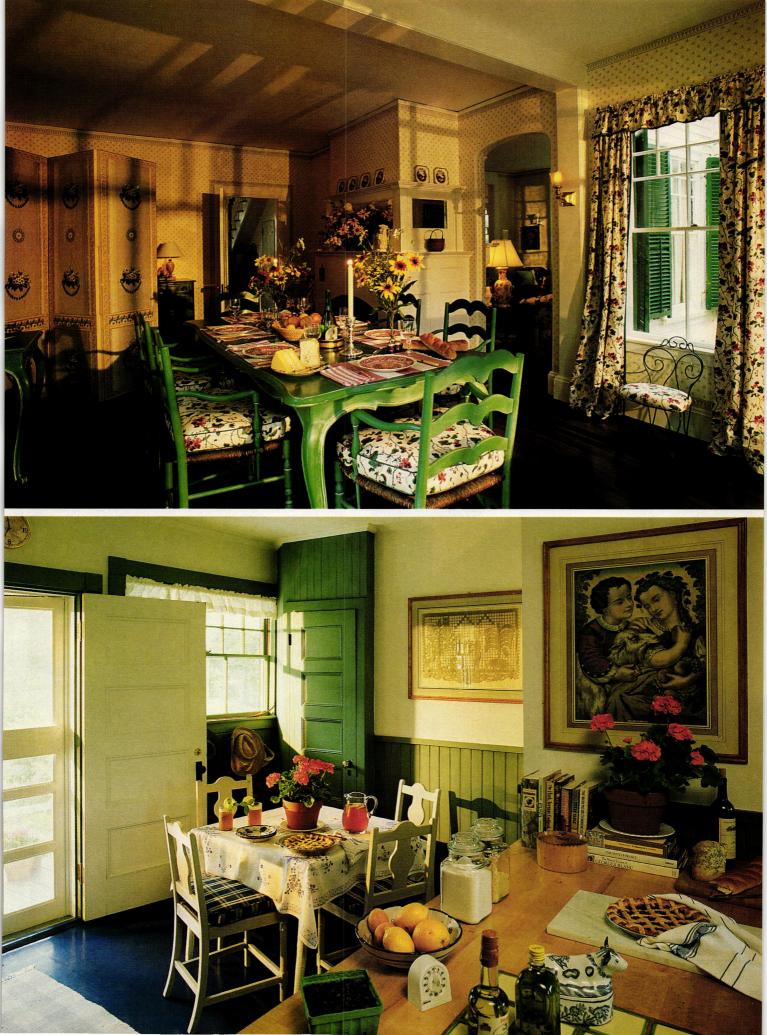
They also blend in perfectly with the laid-back charm of Northeast Harbor, which has always prided itself on its lack of pretension and respect for privacy. However exalted the name of the owner (the summer roster includes Astors, Peabodys, Rockefellers, and Millikens), the typical Northeast Harbor cottage has a simple name: Aunt Hannah's Pasture, Cow Cove, Shell Heap.

The Fosters' cottage, Cedar Hedges, required relatively little work to make it habitable for a large family. (Besides twelve-year-old India, the family consists of two daughters from Letsy's first marriage, three children from Ridgely's, plus three dogs and a cat.) Shingles on the roof and façade needed replacing. So did the kitchen wainscoting, which the contractor re-created from a small piece that survived in the butler's pantry. Foster repainted the woodwork in the kitchen green and had curtains made on the pattern of a hundred-year-old pair she found in the library. But the basic structure was not altered at all. "I have never understood people who say they bought a house because it called to them," she says, "and the next time you see it you can't even recognize the place because they've taken everything out."

"It just kills me that we let things be torn down by people who haven't taken the time to study a building's history," she says. "We have to think about how people used to design houses—land-friendly houses. We can't afford to throw things away and tear places down and use up more resources to put something cheaper in their place. We have to start planning for the future. And the only way to do that is to look to the past."  $\triangle$ 

Produced by Carolyn Englefield

Vintage wicker chairs make the porch, above, the perfect spot for summer reading. The cushions are covered in a floral cotton from Clarence House. Opposite above: In the dining room the painted wood table is set with linens from La Ruche, Boston. Curtain and cushion chintz from Cowtan & Tout. Opposite below: The woodwork in the kitchen was painted in a color Foster found in a book by artist Carl Larsson.





In the master bedroom an antique wedding ring quilt is neatly folded for use on cool Maine nights. Curtains of dotted swiss from Decorators Walk, bed linens by Frette, sisal carpet from Stark.

a time



THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY IS WHERE Robert Redford and Sally Field grew up, and it's also where, in the 1950s, on what had once been a walnut orchard, Jay Griffith was raised. Jay Griffith spent the usual portion of his childhood in the company of animals (dogs, cats, turtles, and a skunk, in his case); somewhat less typically, he could often be found landscaping parts of the backyard into discrete habitats for his pets. In the manner of green thumbs, his was inherited: Griffith's parents had themselves transformed parts of the yard into a pond and a mini tropical rain forest, and both of his grandmothers were ardent flower gardeners. "My mother's mother was known for her elaborate arrangements," he says, "huge bowls of flowers on a grand piano that you could see through arched windows. It was the cool middle-class thing to do."

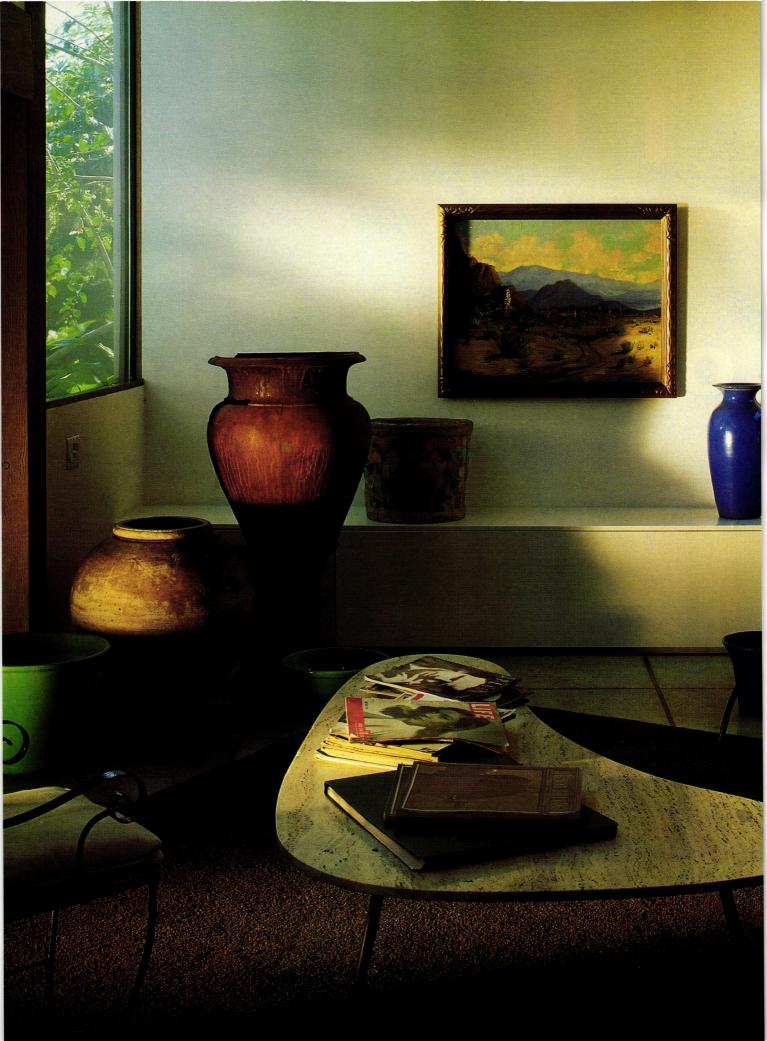
Like many people who grew up in the 1950s in places like the San Fernando Valley, Griffith has sought a certain remove from his past-a psychological distance spanned by both nostalgia and irony. After college he started the landscape design business he seems to have been almost destined to run, but it is, in every sense, a long way from the valley. This is Griffith's description of a Hollywood Hills residence he is working on with architect Frank Israel: "It's a sort of spaceship that's landed on the outpost of a rain forest with satellite gardens. The landscaping is complementary to this flying wombat of a house. From the house to the swimming pool there'll be giant circles five to eight feet across, each in a ground cover in a stridently different color. Straight out of the original Star Trek-that cheesy space-

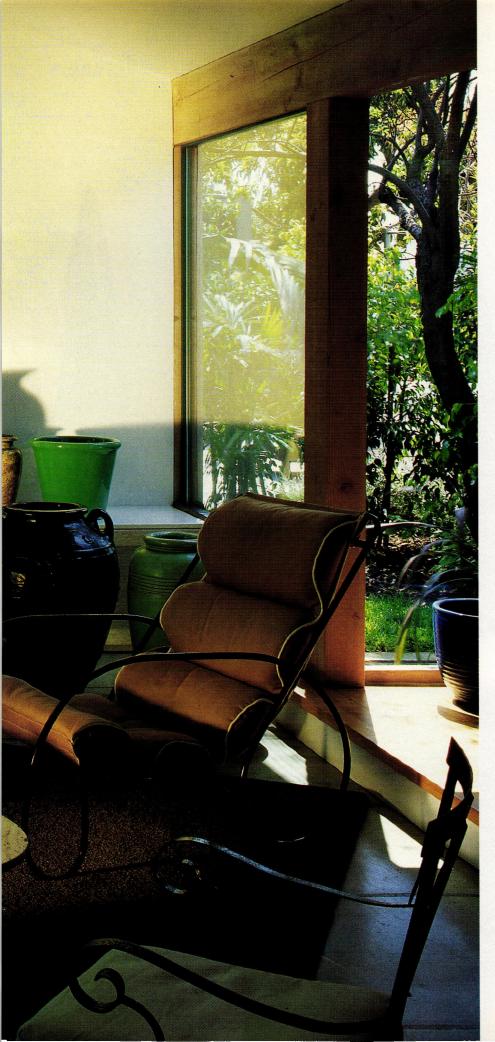
Jay Griffith, *left*, relaxes outside an alfresco room at his Venice residence. The outdoor chandelier is a Griffith trademark. *Opposite above:* Neon lights illuminate his studio at night. *Opposite below:* Swap meet finds, drought-tolerant perennials, and six towers hung with iridescent red nylon fill the garden behind the studio. Details see Resources.

## Outside the Ordinary

Inside or out, Jay Griffith creates landscapes filled with fresh ideas. By Peter Haldeman Photographs by Jeremy Samuelson Produced by Deborah Webster







age look. We're toying with plastering the pool red so it will look like a giant bloodbath, and we're accenting the cracks in the deck by pouring molten copper into them. In another part of the garden I'm doing the veldt, after the Ray Bradbury story. It'll just be this huge thatch of different exotic plants. You can walk into it but, like Bradbury's veldt, you won't be able to get out."

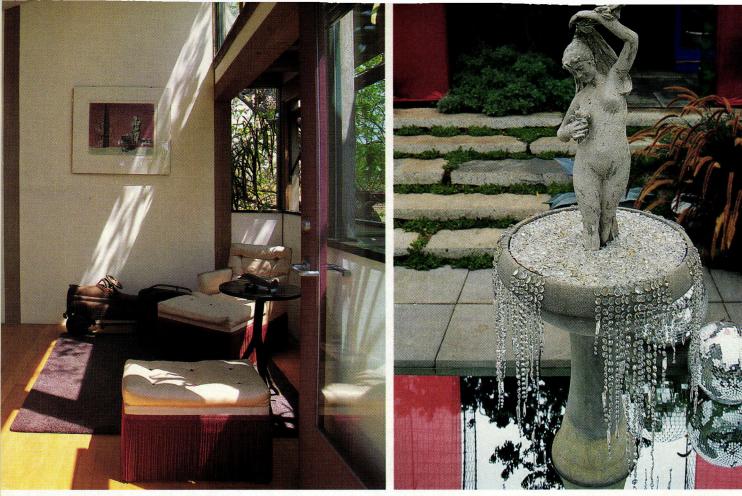
In addition to such forward-looking enterprises, Griffith has attained something like guru status in the centuries-old but very current school of indoor-outdoor domestic design, having anticipated by several years the custom of deploying patio furniture in one's living room and living room furniture on one's patio. At the same time, a fair share of his appointment book is given over to projects of a fairly conventional nature-gardens that have in common only their site specificity and a genial unassuming elegance. His clients range from Hancock Park matrons to television scriptwriters in the Hollywood Hills to the community of Venice, for which he landscaped a parking lot. He leans toward drought-tolerant plants and California natives; a favorite ongoing effort is repatriating, on four acres around a client's 1920s Santa Barbara farmhouse, natives like oak and sycamore and the matilija poppy. "It's a magnificent plant," says Griffith, "six feet tall with a pale green leaf and a flower that looks like a fried egg-a gorgeous, gorgeous bush that's just been lost."

Griffith tools around his clients' Westside environs in a 1962 T-bird convertible. In Venice, where his own house and studio are located, he walks. He's something of a neighborhood fixture, drawing honks and waves on the street. He waves back. He has hair the color of different metals, a goatee, and sharp hazel

An early proponent of bringing outdoor furniture indoors, Griffith has vintage wrought-iron poolside chairs in his living room surrounding a 1950s marble table. An assortment of Bauer jars and urns pick up the colors of a desert scene that once belonged to Griffith's grandmother. He says he's "driven toward things that may have come out of a hallucination." But hallucinations can be dreamy



The hillside behind a client's West Hollywood house is incorporated in a geometry of dodonaea; agave / aud artemisia- The cast-aluminum bench is from the 1930s. *Opposite:* In Griffith's bathroom, Fieldcrest towels echo the purple of a vintage tub?



"Maxfield Parrish, Salvador Dali, Liberace, Friz Freleng of Looney Tunes—those are my influences," says Griffith



eyes that seem attentive when he is comfortable, wary when he is not when, for instance, the afternoon his studio was photographed, a coastal wind kicked up and started to rip the sheets of red iridescent nylon he had stretched tightly across six twentyfive-foot-tall metal towers behind it.

The studio is a low-slung grapecolored structure on a corner lot the shape of a pie slice. Around the towers, amid a scattering of fallen peaches and clumps of unthirsty perennials (echium, artemisia, agave, pennisetum), Griffith had also arranged a huge metal genie lampsomething the carny in The Wizard of Oz might have owned-and an impromptu outdoor boudoir draped in bolts of blue nylon. Like everything else on the property, the fabric assumes an electric glow under neon lights that go on after sunset. In the center of the yard a fountain of crystals perpetually cascades into a mirror pool on whose serene surface float a pair of disco globes. While anxiously overseeing the untying of the red sheets, Griffith managed a helpful-if slightly facetious-ac-



count of his inspiration here: "I'm obsessed with the postnuclear, the after-the-fall. I just can't wait, so I made my own ruin. It's a combination of Maxfield Parrish, Salvador Dali, and Liberace. Those are my influences. And Friz Freleng of Looney Tunes." From its perch on a sideboard behind Griffith, the fourfoot head of a fiberglass gas station attendant glowered at its owner. A confessed swap meet junkie, Griffith had also said he was "driven toward things that may have come out of a hallucination."

But hallucinations can be dreamy as well as nightmarish, and at his house, just a few blocks away, one may encounter the flip side of Griffith's imagination. Cleo, Magda, and

Griffith's bedroom, opposite above left, is the ideal setting for a miniature 1937 La Salle sedan and other vintage toy vehicles. Opposite above right: A fountain of crystals cascades into a mirror pool outside the designer's studio. Above: From his desk inside, he looks out on an old gas station sign. Opposite below: Griffith massed king palms, microlepia, and Japanese black bamboo in front of a client's Hollywood Hills house.

Otto are a troika of schnauzers so perfectly groomed and trained they might belong to a member of the Pasadena Junior League. As it is, they live in the kind of neighborhood where lawns double as driveways; their own residence is the exception that proves the rule. To the street it offers only the pendant branches of a huge weeping willow. Inside a low fence a path of Arizona flagstone meanders into dramatically lush terrain, cultivated by Griffith and his friend Michael McCarthy over the past dozen years. Past high and low palms, past ferns and callas, the dogs escort visitors to a small overgrown house that turns out to shelter Griffith's kitchen and dining room. The dining room is cool and shadowy, the color of the inside of a cucumber, and it contains an ellipse of green metal garden chairs around a chaste mahogany and burl table and a sideboard made of a rusted Coca-Cola dispenser under a slab of Malibu and Catalina tile.

There's also a little garden house formed by two walls of recycled windows and one of moss and staghorn.

And finally, tucked behind a magnolia that dangles a crystal chandelier, sits a voluminous and airy cube conceived by Griffith and designer Skip Schaeffer. Like the garden house, it lacks any visible façade, and its exposed wrought-iron pool furniture (picture Jayne Mansfield's pool; picture the furniture) is an open invitation to indolence. Enormous Italian oil jars and urns amplify the heliotropes, aquas, and teals in a prominent desert painting that used to belong to Griffith's grandmother-a painting he says he used to hate. This is his living room. The bedroom is up a short flight of stairs. It has a loft bed, a wall of windows at branch level, and on almost every surface, artful groupings of toy cars, trucks, and planes from the 1930s.

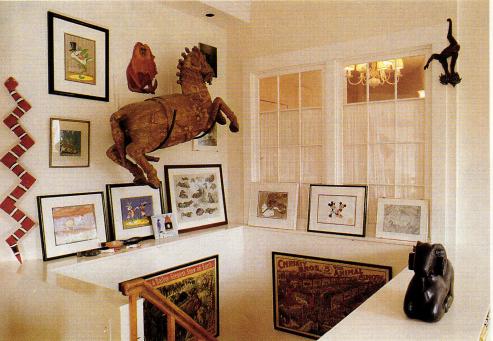
This is the tree house Jay Griffith always wanted as a kid, and it's where he was just before I met him—when he came downstairs with an unguarded slightly unfocused expression, dragged a hand through his hair, and said, "Sorry about that. I must have fallen asleep. I had the weirdest dream." ▲



### Sanctuary in the City

A New York loft becomes a haven for found objects and animal friends By Isabella Rossellini Photographs by Oberto Gili





My collection got out of hand when giving me an "animal something" became the easy solution to holiday presents

T WAS DIFFICULT TO RECONcile my dream of an apartment decorated in a warm, hearty Italian style with the reality of my life in the city: lots of pets, a small child, and a collection of animal objects that has gone out of control. My original dream was to furnish my loft with oversized comfortable sofas in white slipcovers, terra-cotta lamps with printed cotton shades, kilims, and lots of paisley throws. For a touch of fantasy and surrealism, which I seem to need to keep myself in a good mood, I also wanted to have the life-size white wooden stallion that my mother gave my father (I knew it was a stallion because the carving was terribly realistic). I was going to place the horse as if he had wandered by accident into this perfectly cozy living room.

But my plan strayed from the beginning. My stepmother refused to give me the horse—she had grown too attached to it during the thirty years it had stood in her house near

A Canadian circus poster in the study hangs near an 18th-century Italian table that belonged to Rossellini's mother, Ingrid Bergman. *Opposite above:* Monkey valances and a Balinese elephant are part of the living room menagerie. *Opposite below:* An Indian horse next to animators' celluloids in the hall.

CHEVRE-DEUX

CCV





#### My Swedish practicality overcame my Italian desire for well-being

my father's studio. And then, because my daughter was very playful, my cat shed, and the dogs occasionally urinated indoors, I had to give up the idea of the white sofas, the kilims, the paisley throws. My Swedish practicality overcame my Italian desire for well-being, and I bought only Santa Fe wooden benches, tables, and chairs, which were easy to clean but awfully uncomfortable.

To compensate for the loss of the white wooden horse, I bought an elephant from Bali carved out of one

Rossellini, in a Gigli blouse, *above*, holds her sister's pug, Cleo. Kitchen furniture is from Santa Fe. *Opposite:* A pictorial family tree adorns a master bedroom wall. Atop the American Empire chest is a portrait of the actress as a girl. *Right:* Her daughter's drawing of Macaroni the terrier has a place of honor on the refrigerator door. piece of wood, but it was less than life-size and that always bothered me. I guess that was what led me to start buying lots of animals in different forms: old circus banners announcing hermaphroditic goats and a snake boy; wooden snakes from Santa Fe; animators' celluloids of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Bambi, the 101 Dalmatians; an Indian wooden horse with his genitals attached to his belly by a hook; three painted monkeys (the ones that don't see, don't hear, and don't speak) to frame

my windows. The collection got out of hand when giving me an "animal something" became the easy solution to Christmas and holiday presents. I began to receive taxidermists' stuffed animals, which we Italians believe bring bad luck. I had to stop.

My friend John Ryman came to the rescue—first by rearranging what I already had and adding pillows to the stiff wooden furniture and then by coming in from Long Island with his red pickup truck full of sofas, chairs, and lamps from his ga-

> rage. We had great fun decorating the loft just to see what it could look like and then, at the end of the day, loading everything back on the truck.

> I felt I couldn't have a "proper" apartment until I was older, with a grown child and fewer pets. Prac-(Continued on page 156)





I seem to need a touch of surrealism to keep myself in a good mood



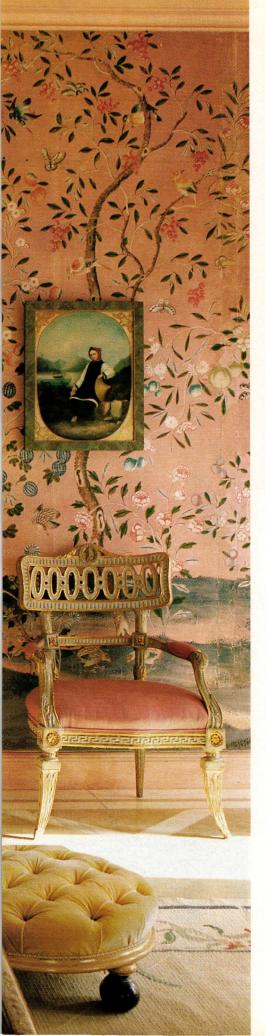
John Ryman designed the sink table and shelves, stocked with products that Rossellini represents for Lancôme. The chandelier and sconces were salvaged. *Opposite above*: Ryman made the bed out of grillwork from a church in Connecticut. A cotton stripe covers the sofa and armchair. *Opposite below left*: A collection of old hats above an antique chest. *Opposite below right*: "Shopping" at a dumpster.

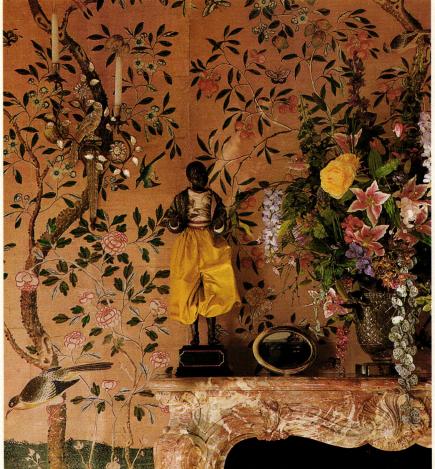
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### The Craft of Fantas

By design, few things are what they seem to be in a German couple's London house. By Rhoda Koenig

Photographs by James Mortimer Produced by Wendy Harrop





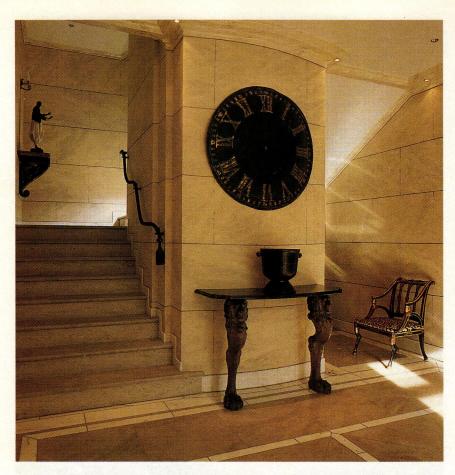
O VISITOR TO THIS LONDON PIED-À-TERRE, WITH its Chinese wallpaper, marble halls, and exotically draped dining room, would be likely to guess that it was once literally a cat house. Yet, before the advent of a small army of architects, builders, decorators, and painters, the place was home to a portrait artist and her twenty-four tabbies. Now

the only feline touch is the leopard-print upholstery on the gilded Regency armchairs that stand in a foyer with faux stone walls (painted to match a real limestone and marble floor) and a banister that looks like tasseled rope but is really made of cast bronze.

The frame for this theatricality is an unlikely one—a staid Victorian house with a proper English garden in deeply respectable South Kensington. But the German owners—who live, as their London decorator Veere Grenney says, "in Saint Moritz, on the water, and in the air" regard the place as a retreat. "In a vacation house people go a lot further than they would in their permanent residence," adds Ibiza-based decorator Jorg Marquard, who masterminded the overall design plan while Grenney concentrated on the details. Making full use of the license given them, the two designers jointly created a house that their female employer describes as having a "funny twitch to it."

The building may appear as if it has remained unchanged for more than a century, but that too has been the result of careful and cunning

Virtually nothing in the fanciful pink drawing room, *left*, betrays the fact that it belongs to an English Victorian house. All the furniture and fittings, nonetheless, were found in London, including Venetian chairs and a mirror from Guinevere Antiques and the 18th-century Chinese wallpaper from Toynbee-Clarke Interiors. The yellow silk velvet upholstery is from Manuel Canovas. *Above:* The Louis XV mantel and Venetian bird-shaped crystal sconce are treated like extensions of the wall pattern. Details see Resources.



#### The frame for this theatricality is an unlikely one—a staid Victorian in deeply respectable South Kensington

work. At the beginning of the eighteen-month project, Marquard and architect Moritz Lau-Enghausen set about altering the layout, shifting the entrance to a quieter street, and incorporating a separate painter's studio dating from the 1940s into the structure. The plumbing and electrical systems were completely revamped by German workers, and, ironically, it is their results that the châtelaine of this enchanted castle regards with the greatest enthusiasm. "If you look behind the scenes, everything is color-coded," she points out. "There is an integrated Hoover system, so you don't have to carry the vacuum cleaner up and down stairs. And the pressure pump system lets you have a shower like in the Brazilian jungle." The last is no small feat in London, where most showers dribble in a diffident way.

The cool pale foyer is what Marquard describes as a "neutral zone," which gives way to the lavishly feminine drawing room—a pink and green fantasy where crystal parrots perch on fireside sconces, chairs are cozy pink seashells, and a pleated lampshade is topped with a saucy bow. The wallpaper is mid eighteenth century Chinese—or three-quarters of it is, anyway. When the lush bird and butterfly pattern turned out to be insufficient to cover the walls, the owners commissioned a London painter to fill the gap with an exact copy. The

In the basement dining room, *right*, trompe l'oeil drapery merges with real curtains of yellow silk pulled back to show a lining of striped satin available from Brunschwig. The Regency chinoiserie chairs have festive polka-dotted cushions. *Above:* The foyer's faux stone walls are painted to match the lime-stone and marble floor. The handrail is cast bronze simulating tasseled rope.







theme of the furniture is heavily Venetian, from an eighteenthcentury silver-leafed mirror to a pair of occasional tables adorned with topographical views of the island republic. Like all the antiques in the house, these came from Greater London. "Whenever I've been to Venice," says Grenney, "I've never seen a thing for sale."

In the basement dining room, Grenney made full use of British workmanship to flesh out the antiques finds—and to carry on the things-are-seldom-what-they-seem theme which sneakily pervades the house. Four dining chairs have been exactingly crafted to match the ten Regency ones, and an eighteenth-century pier table is now perfectly matched with a new mate. To ensure that the setting is eternally sunny, the walls are painted with extravagant yellow draperies that converge at the windows with real yellow silk curtains looped back to show off a purple and white circus-striped lining.

Rock solid fantasy, art deco-style this time, takes over the enormous master bath where columns of blue marble stand at the corners of a tub encased in peach marble and the trompe l'oeil ceiling looks like the underside of a tent. It is the guest bedroom, however, that Grenney describes as the "funnest room," with its wobbly gilt stars painted on "highly distressed walls" and its bright silk-embroidered bedspread competing with a leopard-print rug.

Nor is the owners' sense of fun confined to their house. In its own neo-Georgian villa sits the family Range Rover, the maker's name altered to read Strange Lover. That, says Grenney, causes a few double takes as pedestrians think they've just passed a familiar sight, then realize, as do visitors to the house, that appearances can be deceiving.

Decorators Jorg Marquard and Veere Grenney created a starry backdrop for a 19th-century Italian lacquered bed, *right*, and a silk-embroidered spread, which whimsically contrasts with a leopard-patterned carpet available from Stark. The curtains are silk taffeta available from Brunschwig with a valance of Osborne & Little silk. *Above:* A 19th-century Italian secretary displays two blackamoor candlesticks that face mates converted into bedside lamps.



"I'M A DOWNTOWN GIRL WHO LIVES ON THE Upper East Side," muses fashion plate Lauren Ezersky. This Holly Golightly of the nineties reinvents Chanel looks at the fashion shows and other events she covers for *Behind the Velvet Ropes* on cable TV. She interviews designers for her column "Lunch with Lauren" in *Paper Magazine*, though, she admits, "we never do eat lunch—everyone is too busy!"

One wonders if she eats at all. In the penthouse she shares with her husband and their three dogs, the refrigerator is stocked with bottled water, period. "I'm not a domestic goddess," she says. "My approach to housekeeping is, call your maid." Her approach to decorating is less extravagant: the kitchen table and chairs are from Pottery Barn, and the sofa is from ABC Carpet & Home.

How does she collect so much Chanel? "I'm a smart shopper. I wait for sales. And I shop everywhere. We should all do our part to support fashion, don't you agree?"

Lauren Ezersky in head-to-foot Chanel from morning, above, to night, opposite. English Ivy fabricand wallpaper by Waverly, sofa from ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. Insets above, clockwise from left: On cable with designers Carolyne Roehm, Marc Jacobs, and Betsey Johnson. Details see Resources.





Breakfast at Chane

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THE HOLLY GOLIGHTLY OF THE '90s, LAUREN EZERSKY FLAUNTS HER STYLE ON CABLE T BY WENDY GOODMAN Photographs by Ruven Afanador

# The Call of Montana

An eastern clan stakes its claim to mountain streams and pastureland By John Heminway Photographs by Thibault Jeanson Produced by Babs Simpson





At the Bar 20 fishing camp, John Heminway, far left, casts for trout. Top: A guest cabin trellis overlooks an expansive landscape. Above left: A porch bell. Left: Black bears arrive in late fall with the chokecherries. Above: Vintage fish prints in the main dining room. Details see-Resources. 111

ONG BEFORE I'D EVER been to Montana, I knew I missed it. A chunk of America, free, uncluttered, and wild, it was on my mind as I trav-

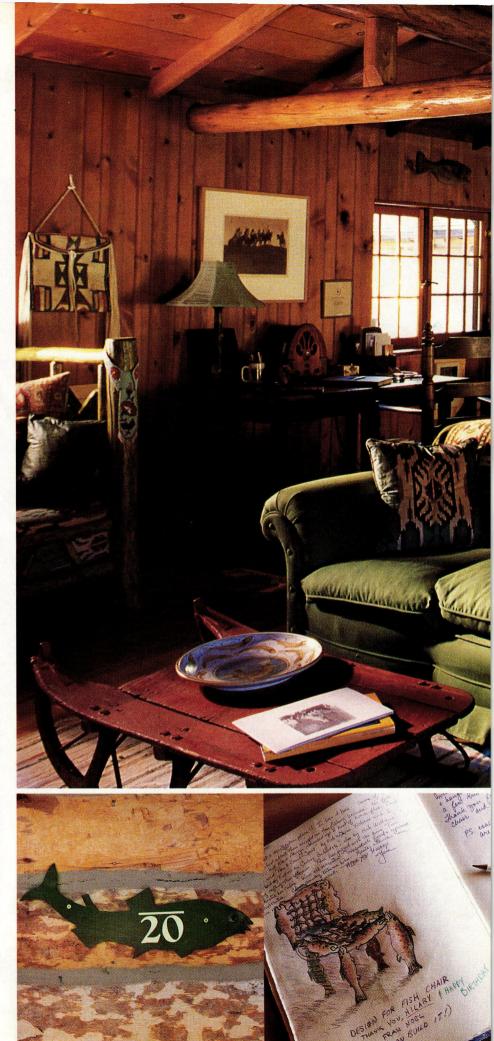
eled far away—through the Kavir Desert of Iran, along the Hadhramaut coast of South Yemen, in the Bangweulu swamps of Zambia. Montana must be an Africa, I figured, without the visas, blackwater fever, and perpetual roadblocks.

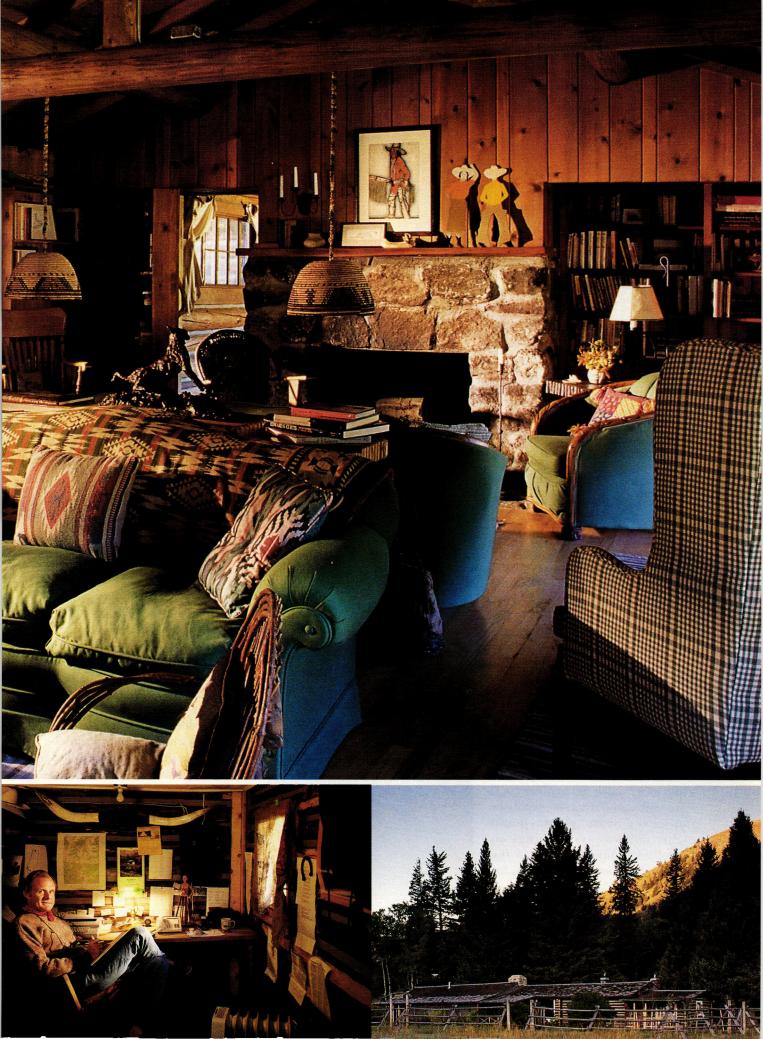
That was seventeen years ago when I worked out of London, making films about endangered animals and peoples. As much as I loved my errant way of life, I began to suffer from an ill-defined complaint-the suspicion that I knew a lot less about my own country than I did about other places. Something else was troubling: food. Much of the world I had come to know, once a breadbasket, was now panhandling for staples. Food shortages, I believed, would be at the heart of global mayhem. The West would become a lure to the dislocated; America, from purple mountain majesties to fruited plain, would serve as both the world's sanctuary and its cornucopia.

No matter if I was overstating the case. I left my job and, after a farewell journey to Africa, came home to New York to begin plotting how I could participate in a new agrarian renaissance. For two years I poked around the country, first surveying New England, then the Midwest and Colorado. By the time I reached Wyoming, in the company of a likeminded cousin, I knew I was getting warm. There had never been any doubt Montana would be the place, but, somehow, I wanted to earn it.

Montana was impossible not to lust

In the pine-paneled living room, *above* right, Hilary Heminway revived battered bunkhouse furniture by covering it with green canvas and 1920s Beacon blankets. South American baskets hang as lampshades. *Right, from far left:* The Bar 20 brand on a cabin plaque. A fish-inspired guest book entry. John Heminway in the shed that serves as his office. The main house, a spruced-up log cabin.







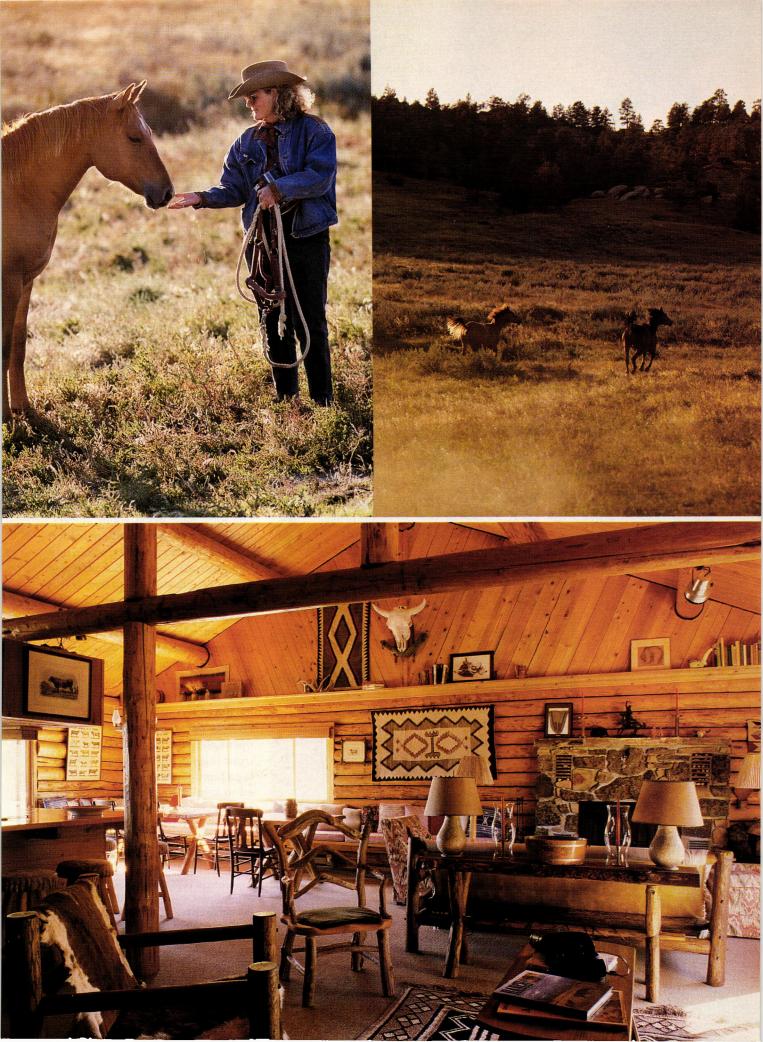
after from the start-a region where cattle outnumber people, where eagles sometimes convene like blackbirds, where the plains resemble edges of the Serengeti. Our family ranch, acquired after much tire-kicking in 1978 and jointly owned by me, my sister, Hilary Heminway, my brother, Jay, and our cousins Harry and Sissy Wheeler, is in the badlands of Montana-broken sandstone cliffs alternating with stands of bull pine and meadows of native grasses. We named picnic sites after places from our past: Watch Hill, the Eagle Club, Lake Forest, Annapurna. From every reach not another rooftop is visible, and from some spots we can see the Beartooth Mountains eighty miles away. Evenings on horseback, I take pleasure in the gathering unspoiled dusk. This, for me, is "darkest America."

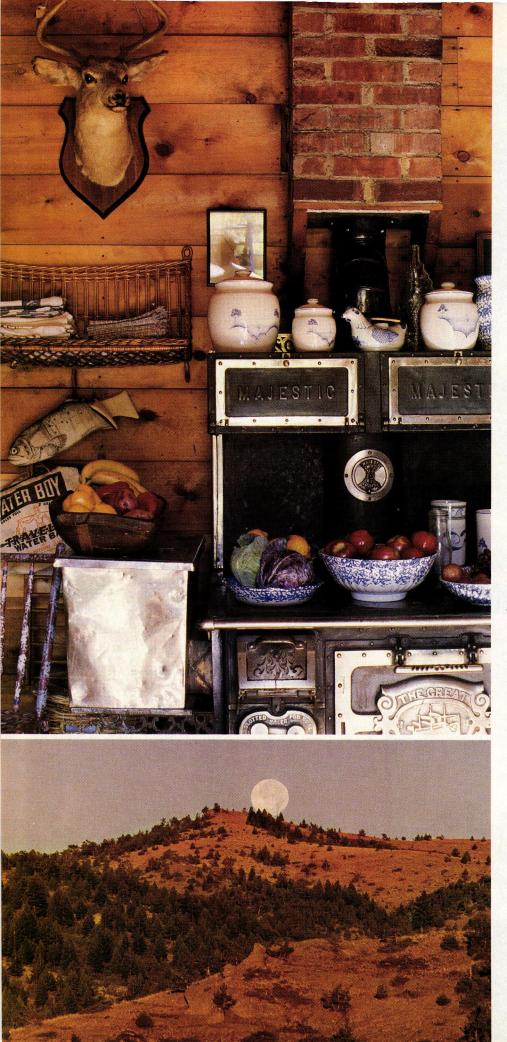
Early on, you discover that buying a ranch is just the beginning of many outlays. When acquired, much of the thirty miles of our fencing was in despair. Sheds had suffered what is euOur ranch house, designed on a matchbook, looks as if it were born in Montana a log ark afloat on a meadow



phemistically termed "deferred maintenance." Wells needed to be dug, hay meadows reseeded, windmills erected. A herd of cattle and a couple of bulls were at the top of our shopping list. We also needed a house. Only one with running water existed on the property, and it had already been allocated to the ranch manager. We built ours two miles away in a draw surrounded by ponderosa pines. Hilary and Sissy sketched the house on the back of a matchbook in a Billings café, and the builder, known only by the name of Tiny, went to work fighting snowdrifts and impatient creditors.

At the fishing camp the Three Bears Room, *above*, aptly accommodates a trio of pine beds by Indy Corson and posters by Buckeye Blake. *Left:* A pillow made from a Beacon blanket and a cigar box felt. *Opposite above left:* Hilary Heminway at the cattle ranch. *Opposite above right:* Quarter horses work the herds and have the run of the property. *Opposite below:* The ranch living room is outfitted with log furniture by Ken Siggins and Jimmy Covert.





Through much of this time I apprenticed to the ranch manager. A few months of the winter I spent camped in his cellar; in the summer I declared my independence by living in a trailer positioned next to one of our wells. During the first year our cows produced nearly 150 calves our humble contribution, so I convinced my family, to filling the world's bottomless maw.

My recommendation to anyone wishing to attempt a part-time move to a working ranch is to make your manager a friend, choose your partners well, and be sure one of them knows how to set up a house. Hilary, a Connecticut-based decorator, was at the heart of almost all of the design work. Already fluent with the West, she tapped into a Montana architectural genius at the time hardly recognized and found inspiration in the abandoned homesteaders' cabins dotted across our property. Our house thus looks as if it were born in Montana—a log ark afloat on a meadow. Inside, life evolves around one lofty hall: living room, library, dining room, and kitchen folded upon each other and overlooked by a bunk balcony. Edward Borein horse drawings, a French sleigh bed, Navajo and Ethiopian rugs, and Ken Siggins and Jimmy Covert log furniture give it the eclectic coziness we find seductive after a day feeding cattle.

But the ranch was only a partial cure for my case of Montana. About six years ago my sister and I started looking for a cabin on a mountain river as occasional solace from the openness of the ranch. I talked about trout fishing. She dreamed of creating a family "hill station." We intended to keep it small. After exploring several river systems, we succumbed to an isolated reserve about three hours from the ranch and not far from the *(Continued on page 158)* 

The fishing camp's main kitchen, *above left*, features its original 1930s woodburning stove, which is now used to heat the room. *Left*: A full moon hangs over a hill dotted with ponderosa pine. *Opposite*: Mosquito nets dangle above guest beds with 1940s cotton coverlets.



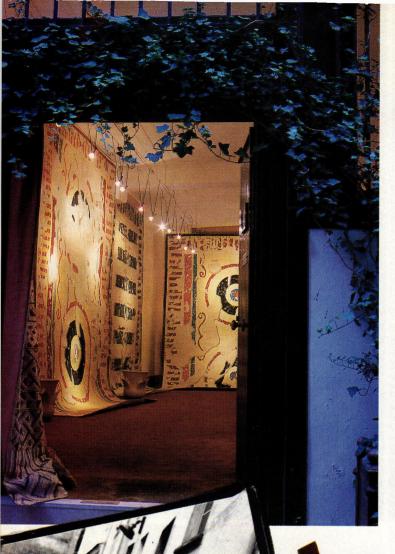
#### LE STYLE PASSEBON

PARIS HAS A NEW DEALER WITH A NEW IDEA ABOUT ANTIQUES BY CHARLES GANDEE Photographs by Scott Frances

> Pierre Passebon gazes through a Bérard he bought from the Boris Kochno sale at Sotheby's in Monaco. In Passebon's new trilevel gallery, opposite, clockwise from top left, a Frank lamp on a lacquered Porteneuve secrétaire, a Royère desk and chair in front of a screen by Max Tobler, a turn-of-thecentury bust on a 1930 dresser by Boiceau, a marble Apollo reflected in a fifties mirror. Details see Resources.

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LTHOUGH PARIS ANTIQUAIRE PIERRE PASSEbon traces his interest in the decorative arts to a teenage fascination with the "socialist spirit of art nouveau" (nurtured, perhaps, by his Jesuit schooling), his first foray into the aesthetic arena was as a dealer not of furniture but of drawings and prints. (In 1983, after a five-year stint in publishing, the then thirty-year-old Passebon rented a minuscule stall and hung out his shingle at the Marché aux Puces, Paris's legendary flea market.) Why drawings and prints? Because "they're small and you don't need a car," says Passebon, who, in 1983, didn't have one. Nowadays, of course, the I-only-deal-in-what-I-can-transport-by-Métro rule is but a quaint memory for Passebon, who, rest assured, has a car as well as three Paris galleries, each of which is sufficiently large to accommodate almost anything that should happen to catch the still-baby-faced-atthirty-nine dealer's ever-roving eye.

"Antiques are easy, my taste is eclectic," says Passebon, by way of explaining the romantic jumble of styles and periods jammed into the by-appointment-only bi-level gallery he opened in an atelier-like space at 6 bis Villa Malakoff in May 1988. And the splendid disarray— Jean-Michel Frank chairs piled up high here, a primitive African cabinet that looks like a tree trunk shoved into a corner there—attests to it. While his debut as an antiquaire was, by his own estimation, "a big success," Passebon was less than completely satisfied. He felt stifled. "If I'm just a dealer, it's very boring," he confesses. "For me

**P**assebon and artist Annabelle d'Huart. left, stroll on the rue des Bourdonnais in Les Halles, where in the spring of 1990 Passebon opened his second, SoHo-style gallery, above left, specializing in work by contemporary artists. Above: A desk by Vincent Corbière, a young French furniture maker Passebon represents.

it's important to be an agent of creation." By agent of creation Passebon means actively involved in sponsoring and exhibiting the work of contemporary applied artists—a greater challenge, he contends. "I have the feeling that people are afraid of living artists. They seem to

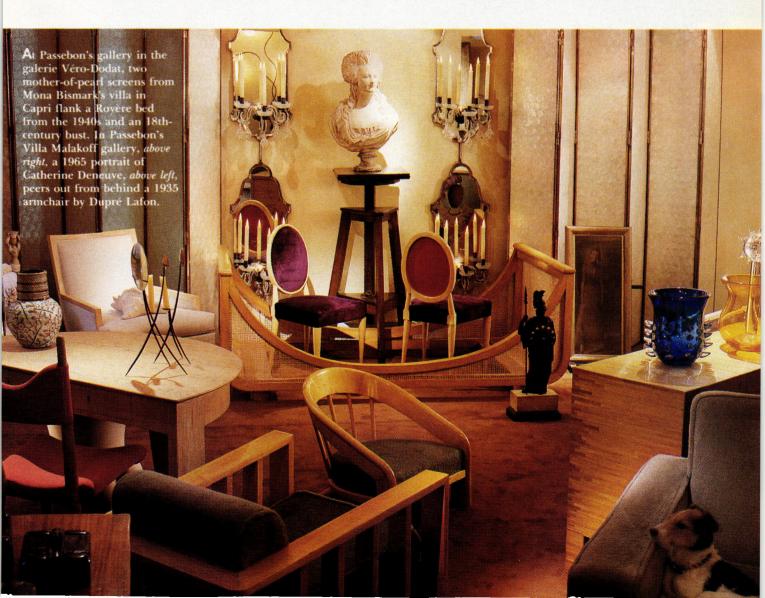
be more comfortable with dead ones."

Nonetheless, in the spring of 1990 Passebon opened a second, SoHostyle gallery for contemporary work at 38 rue des Bourdonnais in Les Halles, which he inaugurated with an exhibition by Argentine jewelry designer

Marcial Berro. "A big *big* success," says Passebon of Berro's specially commissioned lamps, chandeliers, columns, and urns. Furniture and murals by Paul Mathieu and Michael Ray followed and, after that, billboard-scale gouaches by artist Annabelle d'Huart. Passebon then came up with "Milky Way," a celestial-theme exhibition to which he invited participation from a diverse range of talents—from Bonetti and Garouste, Jacques Grange, and Patrick Naggar to Pierre *(Continued on page 160)* 



"I have the feeling that people are afraid of living artists," says Passebon. "They seem to be more comfortable with dead ones"



Beyond a meadow on the eighty-acre Iowa farm, Karen Strohbeen and Bill Luchsinger's gardens sweep down from the house and barn to a spring-fed pond.

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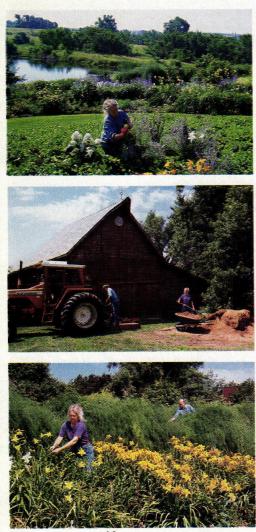
# All-American Crandlen

Artists Karen Strohbeen and Bill Luchsinger of south-central Iowa came to gardening as many native Iowans do, through inheritance. Some of Bill's earliest memories are of his grandmother's perennial garden in West Des Moines. One of Karen's grandfathers was a homeopathic physician in Iowa City who cared for a garden full of vegetables, medicinal herbs, and flowers meant to feed, please, and cure not only family members but also patients in the sanitarium he ran. Karen's other grandfather, too, spent a lifetime growing things. It was logical, then, when Karen and Bill settled

BY JAME SMILLY

Photographs by Peter Margonelli Produced by Senga Mortimer

on their present rolling acreage, at the end of a dirt road about fifty miles from Des Moines, that they would build a garden that is absolutely site specific. The double-dug mounded island beds (composed of one part soil, one part



Karen tries out combinations of perennials, top, in a bed planted with soybeans. Center: Sawdust for mulch is shoveled into a wheelbarrow. Above: Karen deadheads Hemerocallis fulva 'Hyperion', while Bill tends asparagus. Opposite above: White nicotiana and phlox, yellow daylilies, and lavender perovskia extend the cool palette of island beds into late summer. Opposite below: Earlier in the season, iris and lilies bloom beside vegetables and annuals in square beds. The lawn frames perennial borders contoured to the rolling landscape.

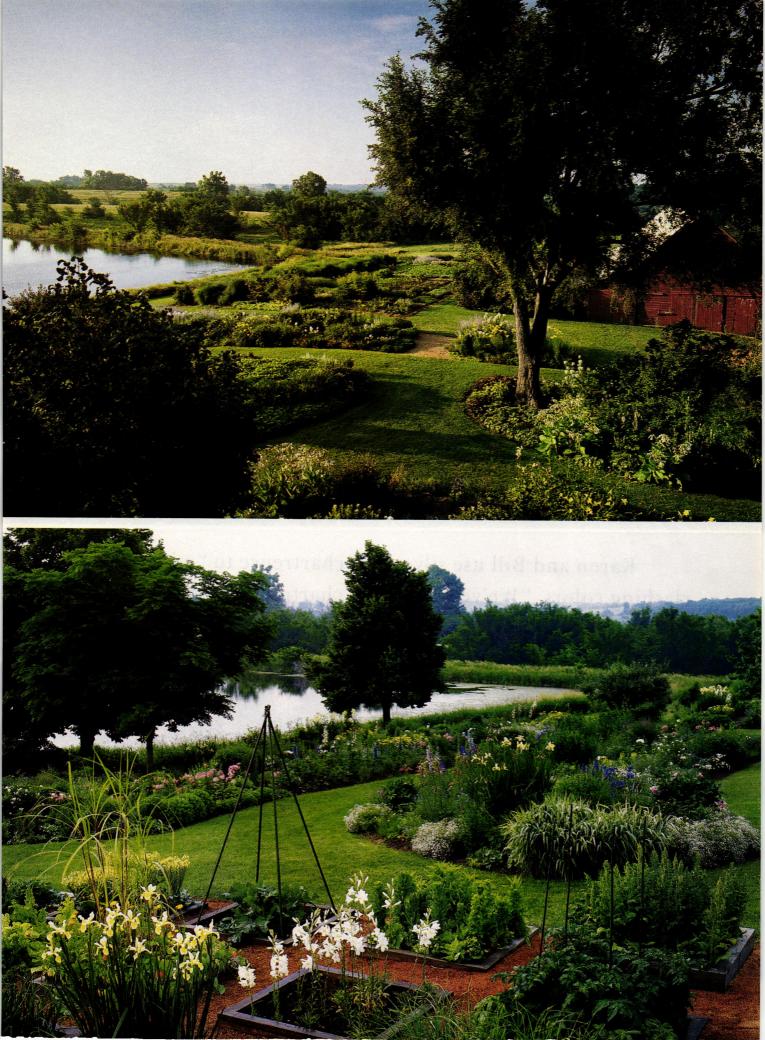
manure, and one part gritty sand) move in waves from the house to the pond. They would fit into no one's backyard. As a composition of colors, shapes, and textures, the garden grows out of a characteristic southcentral Iowa landscape where corn and soybeans sown in valleys and along contoured slopes are, more frequently than in other parts of the state, interspersed with pastures and hillside woodlands.

Bill and Karen moved here in 1982, after sojourning first in the small western Iowa town of Charter Oak and in New York City, where they realized that their dream was to live in the country, someplace, Bill says, "where we wouldn't mind growing old." Inside the house as well as out, they are clearly artists at work. The rooms are bright with colors; the interior walls have become large canvases for vivid brushstrokes in blues, pinks, greens, and yellows. Enameled aluminum sculptures of animals and plants crowd the furniture. One room houses apparatus for Bill's longtime profession of video making. Other rooms are full of equipment for computerized printmaking and presses for lithographs and etchings.

Karen and Bill view their purchase of the eighty-acre property, where there was already a smaller and less ambitious but beautiful garden, as another lucky inheritance. The previous owners, naturalists Bo and Jack Cleveland, had set out and lovingly cared for beds of flowers, herbs, and vegetables in a fifty-foot square. They were reassured to learn that the new owners would carry on with the garden. Says Bill, "Most American gardens begin from scratch, whereas many European gardens are very old-someone else, for example, tended the hedges in their awkward years." He and Karen replenished the soil in the twenty-fiveyear-old plot and laid out square raised beds. They also brought much of their own previous garden with them, moving plants from Charter Oak as carefully as they moved their printing presses.

In 1992 the garden has filled the eight-acre space dedicated to it-the newest bed, a sinuous oval near the house, was planted in soybeans in 1991. Soybeans, Bill points out, are not only a terrific green manure, they also show hidden problems. Where soil is compacted, the beans are noticeably shorter and weaker. Karen and Bill have, all along, planned the garden in accordance with idiosyncratic principles. Favorite early spring flowers grow farther from the house, luring the couple out just when exploratory walks after the long winter are most enjoyable; subtle arrangements with late-season appeal are closer to the house, where they can be contemplated over the course of a busy day.

"Each garden has to relate to the larger landscape," says Karen. "There is a constant visual weaving of one bed into another, of the foreground into distant views where gardens merge into the landscape." Bill adds, "The farther away a garden is the more demanding it is to design, because you have to make a larger statement that still holds your interest when you look at it up close." They plan a spring-to-frost progression of bloom that avoids hot yellows and oranges in July and August and consistently grades from pale yellow and white through pink and lavender to blue. They use silver and chartreuse to "mitigate" clashing colors. "We've found that chartreuse is like the bread of the garden," Bill explains. "It lets you taste many differ-





Karen and Bill use silver and chartreuse to "mitigate" clashing colors. "We've found that chartreuse is like the bread of the garden," Bill explains. "It lets you taste different shades"







ent shades. It helps you distinguish different greens, which otherwise can look dull, and it cleans up 'dirty' mauves." Cool yellow *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam' and blue flax also weave in and out of other species, tying the beds together.

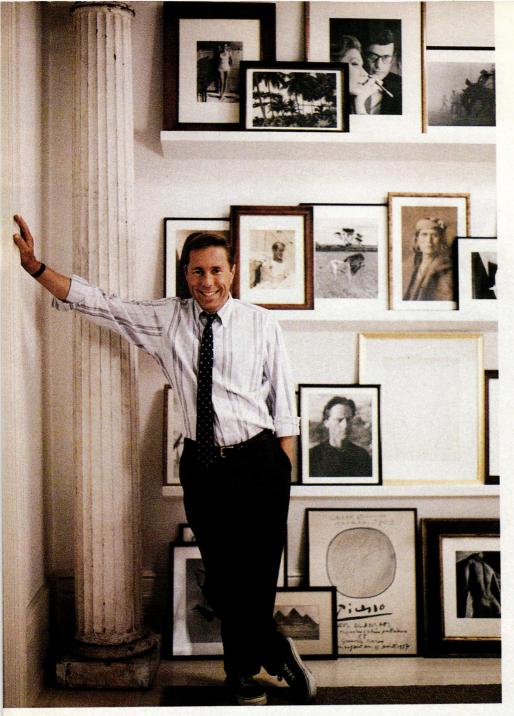
Now that the garden is built, Karen and Bill enjoy refining it by tinkering with combinations that don't look quite right and varieties that don't do as well as others. Much of their tinkering takes place in stock beds near the barn where plants are grouped by color and height. Soon Bill and Karen will be meditating upon one aspect of the garden they feel they have until recently taken for granted: trees within the garden as well as those in the immediate vicinity that form part of the garden's frame. Weather in Iowa can be destructive, and in the past few years many big limbs and some whole trees have been lost to ice storms. Karen and Bill expect to plant oaks, maples, and other large species in the landscape and to (Continued on page 156)

A resource for botanical study, *above*, plantings of coreopsis, perovskia, echinacea, and other species are arranged by color and height in a stock garden. *Opposite above*: Some of the more than twenty species of grasses grown here fringe the pond near floribunda roses, oriental lilies, and wildflowers. *Opposite below left*: Behind a cloud of blue flax a mown path across the dam stretches toward the prairie. *Opposite below right*: Purple clematis contrasts with yellow spuria iris. *Below left*: More clematis climbs the chicken coop. *Below right*: Under a Japanese elm, chartreuse lady's-mantle is played off against wine-red *Heuchera micrantha* 'Palace Purple'.



Bill and Karen maintain a progression of color through the garden from early spring to fall, relying on staggered plantings of flowers in similar shades. Along a meandering path, the blues of delphinium and aconite and the pink of cleome give way to the yellows of daylilies and Asiatic lilies.

"There is a constant weaving of one bed into another, of the foreground into distant views"



# Sets for Real Life

At home in the city and at the shore, Donald Sterzin acts as his own art director By Bob Felner Photographs by Thibault Jeanson Produced by Deborah Webster THE THING ABOUT DONALD STERzin's look is that it's not about things, it's about effects—the illusions that light, color, and shape create in the rooms they fill. The spaces he has put together for himself—like his rooms for Bruce Weber's evocative advertising photographs for Ralph Lauren—are art-directed. They look like art but they feel like home.

About two years ago Sterzin realized that he needed less austere surroundings in New York, where he is executive vice president and creative director of the advertising agency Carlson & Partners. "I was just about to buy an apartment that needed a mint for restoration when I found a rental," he recalls. Then the beach cottage Sterzin had been renting at Fire Island went on the market and he bought it.

Faced with two new places, he decided to satisfy his yen for blue and white and a "sunny feel," with echoes of Matisse paintings and Gerald and Sara Murphy's house on the Riviera, Villa America—"an expatriate look," he says, "soft, warm, and comfortable." He organized a decorating SWAT team captained by his associate, Mark Campbell, and issued the same terse instructions he gives to his photo crews: do it quick, do it well, and "chop-chop-chop!"

Campbell ("I'm the hunter") ransacked the city, particularly the tag sale annex at William Doyle Galleries ("They don't haggle," says Doyle's Patrick Ameche, "and they'll buy off the truck"), David George Antiques ("I love Donald's playful sarcasm and Mark's southern sensibilities"), and flea markets. Meanwhile Sterzin turned to his file cabinets full of pictures from magazines and books and dispatched them to antiques impresario David Drummond, who did some digging, then sent back photos of his finds.

"I ask myself how Donald always knows what to buy at the flea markets he's always going to," muses Weber. "His talent is editing. He can do it so quickly and perfectly."

Today the core of the city apartment is a gallery/dining room with a In Donald Sterzin's city living room, overlapping Afghan carpets from Montana Hemisphere, Santa Monica, set off a sofa covered in linen from Ralph Lauren Home Collection and a Regency chair in a Clarence House cotton. *Opposite:* Sterzin in his gallery/dining room. Details see Resources.

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"What Donald provides is comfortable elegance," says one furniture dealer. "These rooms don't just look good, they engulf you both physically and emotionally"





wall of cantilevered shelves, Campbell's improvement on the usual picture rail. The slightly angled sixinch-deep shelves both display and store Sterzin's collection of photographs, which range from pictures of Native Americans by Edward Curtis to portraits and fashion shots by Weber as well as Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Horst, Herbert List, Hoyningen-Huene, and others.

The summer house was built on the mainland in 1875, then moved across the winter ice in 1906 to the Fire Island hamlet known as Water Island. Since no cars are allowed on the island, everything had to be ferried over and hand-carried down the beach-the trickle of odds and ends during Sterzin's decade as a tenant became an operation on the scale of the building of the pyramids at Giza. Now the cottage seems like a grownup's fantasy of a tree house, with cool dark living and dining rooms downstairs ("It comes to life at night, when all the candles are lit," says Campbell) and a porch upstairs that wraps around two sunny bedrooms. Inside, nothing is too precious: old wicker, painted wood, striped canvas, yachting pictures, and casual-but-perfect still lifes of starfish and shells.

"What Donald does is provide a comfortable elegance," says Drummond. "We've all been in rooms that look beautiful but you can't wait to get the hell out of. These rooms don't just look good, they engulf you both physically and emotionally." It's nice to know that when Sterzin returns from the road, where he spends about seven months a year making a two-dimensional world seem real, he has two ideal three-dimensional worlds to come home to.



**O**rchids and garden roses punctuate the blues and whites, *opposite above*, of the airy, sophisticated city living room. In the Fire Island house, *above left*, a bedroom, *above*, with simple white siding, a vase of cosmos on an old wicker table, and bold red and white cotton slipcovers embodies a more rustic version of Sterzin's "expatriate style." *Opposite below, from left:* Sterzin creates still lifes for himself that rival those he devises for Polo/Ralph Lauren: blue-on-blue upholstery from George Smith and ticking stripe from Ralph Lauren Home Collection with roses in bloom and on vintage fabric; American art pottery, including vases by Fulper, Van Briggle, and Roseville; shells, starfish, a toy sailboat, and postcards tucked into a mirror frame.





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Wicker chaises, *below*, provide refuge from the sun on a ground-floor porch at Fire Island. *Opposite above:* Sunlight floods the living room, with its stained wood walls, painted vintage furniture, and yachting photographs collected by Sterzin and his associate, Mark Campbell. *Opposite below:* Blue and white china, new and old, fills a kitchen wall. *Above:* In a second-floor bedroom the structural timbers of the gable end of the house display seashore treasures.

# **Building by the Book**

Sir Walter Scott realized his dream of a baronial manor page by page, By Charles Maclean

Photographs by Christopher Simon Sykes

The stone turrets of Abbotsford, seen from a walled garden, conjure up images from Sir Walter Scott's novels set in the Middle Ages.

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N RETURNING TO ABBOTSFORD," WROTE SIR WALTER Scott's son-in-law and biographer, John Lockhart, in 1818, "[I] found Mrs. Scott and her daughters doing penance under the merciless curiosity of a couple of tourists.... They were rich specimens tall, lanky young men, both of them rigged out in new jackets and trowsers of the Macgregor tartan." The visitors, a lawyer and a Unitarian preacher from New England, had hoped to catch a glimpse of the world-famous author of *Rob Roy* scribbling away. One can picture them now as clearly as their modern counterparts—slung about with Nikons, trooping through Scott's time-sealed study. Still lived in by his descendants, the house remains almost unchanged since the days he lavished hospitality on all who



Dame Jean and Mrs. Patricia Maxwell-Scott, above, still live at the estate built by their great-great-greatgrandfather. Left: A watercolor of Scott's granddaughter and her child in the library, c. 1840. **Opposite** above: The sitting room is part of the private Victorian wing, built by the family in 1855 to escape the herds of visitors. Opposite below: Art displayed in the anteroom to the armory includes a figure of the novelist by John Greenshields and a portrait of his dog Ginger by Sir Edwin Landseer.

turned up at its castellated gates. Scott's pride and joy, and ultimately the cause of his ruin (in a somber moment he called it a "Dalilah of my imagination"), Abbotsford was built on the proceeds of his writing with the romantic, as much as social, ambition of establishing himself as a Border laird. Scott entertained Washington Irving there, while the turreted mansion he was still composing by installments (a wing or floor for each best-selling novel) rambled into the air like the high-flown description of a fortalice in *Ivanhoe*.

A year after Scott's death in 1832, under constant siege by visitors clamoring to see the great baronial pile that he'd literally dreamed into existence, his family was obliged to open Abbotsford and its grounds to the public. It has remained so ever since, setting a precedent that many stately homes would follow more than a century later. A splendidly curious, theatrical yet intensely personal monument to Scotland's heroic past, its importance as an influence on Victorian architecture and decorating styles can hardly be exaggerated. One of the most visited, best loved historic houses in Scotland today, Abbotsford still has the sprawling charm of a comfortable private country estate where the spirit of its builder lives on in the company of successive generations.

Dame Jean Maxwell-Scott and her elder sister, Patricia Maxwell-Scott, the present owner, grew up at Abbotsford; their father (Scott's greatgreat-grandson) died in 1954, and the two have lived there on and off ever since. Although they have other commitments-Dame Jean is ladyin-waiting to Princess Alice, the queen's aunt-they devote much of their time to keeping the house and gardens in trim for the visiting public. The sisters occupy the whole house but live mostly in the Victorian wing added in 1855 so that the beleaguered family could have somewhere to escape to while visitors made themselves at home. When they were children, Dame Jean recalls, tourists were not allowed in the



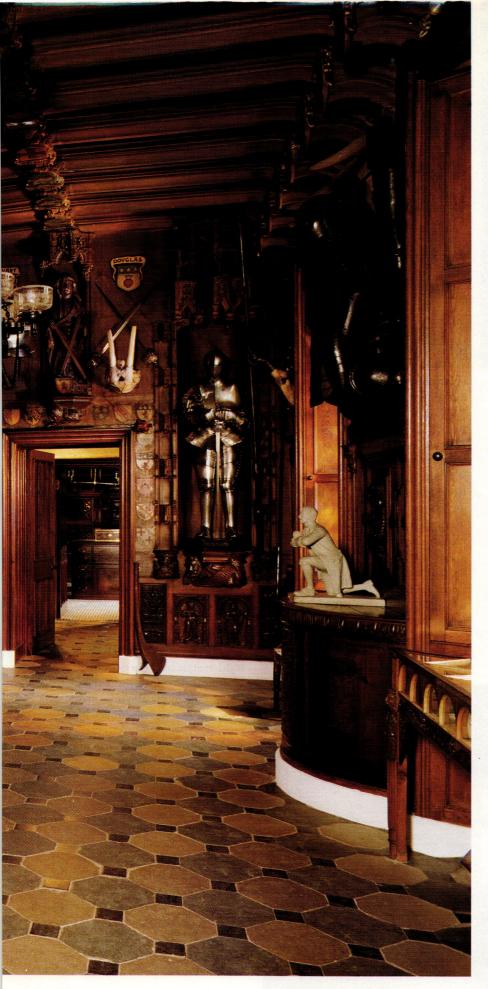
garden, and the dining room (where Scott died) was still used by the family. "Now they can wander anywhere," she says, as gaily welcoming as her illustrious forebear, "except in our part of the house, which wouldn't interest them particularly. We do get the odd nose pressed up against a window. If you've been used to it all your life, you hardly notice."

In the Border countryside that Scott loved, Conundrum Castle, as he christened Abbotsford, stands among trees he planted himself on a terraced bluff that falls gently to the River Tweed. An uninhibited hodgepodge of architectural styles—part Scottish baronial, part Gothic, part English manor house—Abbotsford's mellow period charm is not for purists. Ruskin called it "perhaps the most incongruous and ugly pile that





Abbotsford was Scott's pride and ultimately his ruin—in a somber mood

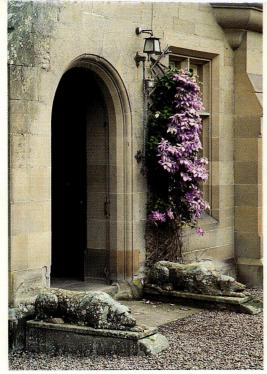


he called it a "Dalilah of my imagination"

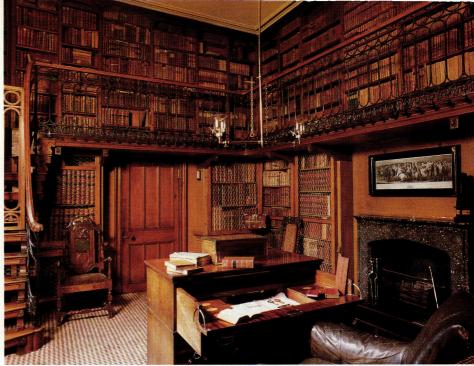
gentlemanly modernism ever designed," entirely missing the point that, as the embodiment of all Scott's dreams, passionate interests, and social ambitions, the house was a complete expression of its author's personality. A toy-town assemblage of medieval towers, crowstepped gables, and cloistered gardens, its pinkish walls are embedded with such exotic archaeological fragments as the old Edinburgh Tolbooth door through which condemned men passed to the scaffold. Extravagant antiquarian fantasy informs every detail of Abbotsford's construction, reflecting the pleasure Scott took in creating out of a humble farmhouse what has been described, not unkindly, as his finest historical novel.

Hanging in the private living room is a drawing of Cartleyhole, the original farm that Scott bought along with about a hundred acres in 1811 and renamed Abbotsford after the monks of Melrose, who once owned the land and used to ford the river just below the house. "Now I am a Laird," the poet, lawyer, and local sheriff proudly wrote his friend Lady Abercorn, full of plans for expanding the first estate he'd ever owned. The success of his narrative poems (The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Marmion, and The Lady of the Lake) had paid for the foundations of the new house, but the move may have prompted him to turn his hand to fiction. The immensely popular series of Waverley Novels was begun there and became tied to the building's execution not only by theme-Abbotsford itself conjures up the early novels set in the Middle Ages-but by financial need. The growing house soaked up vast amounts of money, and Scott had to write at a furious pace to keep up with his visions of aggrandizement. "The real road to ruin," he would declare with prophetic irony, "is...to

The splendidly gloomy entrance hall reflects Scott's medievalist fantasies. The carved-oak paneling is hung with armor, shields, and heroic relics exactly as he left them. A French clock and a replica of the skull of a soldier at Waterloo rest on the sandstone fireplace copied from a stall in the cloisters at Melrose Abbey.



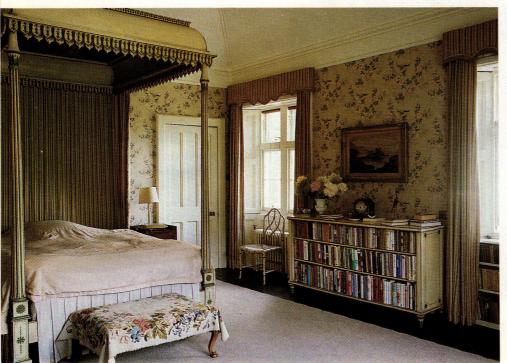
On an arcaded screen, opposite above, inspired by the Melrose Abbey cloisters, a peahen patrols a walled garden behind a border of roses and Maggie Motts. Opposite below: Architectural yew hedges. Above left: Stone deerhounds flank the private entrance. Above right: In his book-lined study Scott wrote novels at a furious pace to finance the building and upkeep of Abbotsford. Below: A guest room features a four-poster modeled after English actor David Garrick's bed at the Victoria and Albert Museum.



have an improveable estate with a taste for building."

Although he received help and advice on the design and decoration of Abbotsford from a gifted coterie of friends—in particular Daniel Terry, the actor-playwright, and William Atkinson, a leading Gothic revival architect—Scott's eclectic taste overshadowed their contributions. The mixture of old and new, of domestic comfort with the first revival of the Scottish baronial look, had an influence on nineteenth-century taste which, like the fashion for Scott's historical novels, was international.

In the entrance hall and armory, the array of heroic relics—suits of armor, heraldic shields, grim battle-



field trove-represent a passionate historicism that is, identifiably, the raw material of his fiction. Here you see Rob Roy's dirk, there the keys with which Mary Queen of Scots' lover helped her escape from Lochleven Castle; a case in the library shows Napoleon's writing folio taken from his carriage after Waterloo, as well as a morsel of oatcake found in the sporran of a fallen Highlander at Culloden. The cumulative impact of so many romantic curios now seems as artificial as a stage set for some bygone epic, but Scott's knightly quest was not so much for authenticity as it was for inspiration.

His plain book-lined study, with its hidden stair to his bedroom, allowed Scott to retire into the world of his imagination. More than any other room, it evokes the novelist's presence and bears witness to the monastic demands of his profession. Yet Scott had a touchingly modest opinion of his literary powers. A sociable family-minded man, he considered writing a means rather than an end and was never happier than when playing the role of Border laird he'd written for himself, moving about his estate with a permanent entourage of friends, dependents (including his personal piper), and devoted dogs.

It was in his study, nonetheless, that Scott, faced with sudden and complete financial ruin at the age of fifty-five, implemented the heroic

decision to write his way out of debt. In six years he earned £50,000 with his pen, and though the effort killed him, he paid off much of his debts. He also managed to save his beloved Abbotsford for his family. It's not surprising that the Maxwell-Scotts are proud to share their house with his immortal memory. "You do almost feel," Patricia Maxwell-Scott says, one hand resting on the back of her ancestor's worn leather writing chair, "particularly in this room where my father used to read aloud to us from the collected works, that Sir Walter's still here somewhere keeping an eye on things."

For visitors information: Abbotsford, Melrose, Roxburghshire TD6 9BQ; (896) 2043.



Scott built the house in installments-a wing for each novel



One of Cy Twombly's Bolsena series, 1969, hangs in an upstairs living room. A Yoruba ivory whistle raises a tiny carved hand in front of the sofa, and the side table holds a stack of West African bracelets.

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# At Home with Modern Masters

Adriana and Robert Mnuchin make an art of living with abstract expressionism By Robert Pincus-Witten Photographs by Oberto Gili

11





must begin with a bit of praise that is singularly irritating to Adriana and Robert Mnuchin: they do things perfectly. This trite formula may make their achievements seem like selfconscious conjuring when, in fact, the couple have an easy self-deprecating grace that suggests that whatever they do was the only sensible choice to have made.

Who are the Mnuchins? It is difficult for me to separate their public Identi-Kit from my own perception of them as friends. I'll put my cards on the table. Adriana once heard me "walk" a collectors' group through the Whitney Museum; subsequently she sat in a seminar or two of mine, and shortly thereafter I found myself a dinner guest in a Belgravian house in New York ablaze with the Few other collectors are able to fret over arranging a brace of Pollocks or Rothkos





Mnuchins' abstract expressionist masterpieces. Later I would lunch in their Connecticut house, which opens onto the single best view north into the Litchfield hills.

Robert-who inherits his appetite for collecting from his father, a wellknown collector of modern art in his own right-recently down-scaled from managing partner to limited partner in a leading brokerage house. He is also a winning sportsman-tennis and golf-who stands out by virtue of height, Captain Ahab beard, infectious laugh, and welcoming hug. Adriana's idyllic southern childhood echoes in a liminal drawl that can be turned up high when she wishes to score a point. An accomplished businesswoman, she has been as successful with sports clothes and cashmere as Robert has with stocks and bonds. Like him, she has recently divested herself of mercantile cares, replacing them with a

renewed focus on family, friends, houses, art, communities urban and rural, the opera, and social service. She is a vice president of the Whitney Museum's board of trustees as well as a member of the board of the Center for African Art.

Not far from their country place, Adriana and Robert have just finished working with the architectbuilders Roderick Thorne and David Cleaves on the gutting, rebuilding, enlarging, decorating, and landscaping of several shingle-style "cottages" at the old Mayflower Inn in Washington, Connecticut. The original structures, just down the hill from the most beautiful green in Connecticut, had fallen into savage disrepair, and, well, you already know how the Mnuchins do things. Tea roses set out with the breakfast silver, blue flames dancing in the grate, old leather and polished mahogany-a luxurious Edwardian

fantasy has been realized for every guest who tarries at the Mayflower.

Despite wilting agendas in Connecticut and New York, the Mnuchins invent time to gratify their obsession with art-the chase and capture, the studied display. Collectors, they are also connoisseurs. Without putting too fine a point upon a paradox, collecting and connoisseurship are diametrically opposed activities. Collecting is about the hoard, connoisseurship about concentration. Accumulation and reduction: both imperatives are aesthetic, though the latter is also ascetic. The conflict can be daunting, but out of dissension-Robert is appetite, Adriana regime-comes the Mnuchins' harmony.

Their collection is one of the rare holdings of important abstract expressionist art in private hands. By and large, the masterworks of abstract expressionism are already in

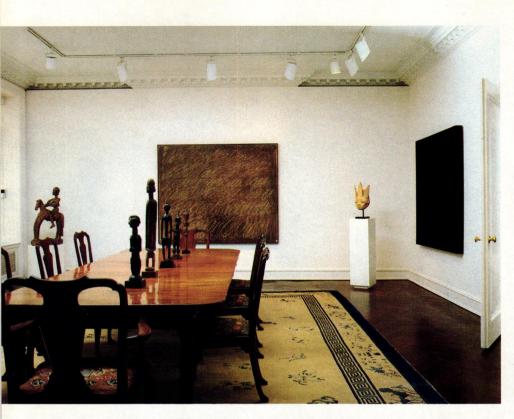


museums. The desire to build a collection of, say, major Florentine painting of circa 1425—or of Picasso and Braque, from 1908 to 1914 would pose a challenge comparable to what Adriana and Robert have undertaken. Creating the Mnuchin preserve is no mean feat, nor one that merely deep pockets make possible. Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning are here; Franz Kline, Clyfford Still, Barnett Newman, too—and all prime examples.

The range is broadened by the later work of artists such as Cy Twombly and Jasper Johns—down to

Mark di Suvero's Che Farò Senza Euridice?, 1958–59, opposite, shares the stair hall with 18th-century English chairs and a 19th-century root table holding a Bakongo staff. Above: Behind Ming armchairs Rothko's Red, 1958, and Pollock's Untitled, 1948, flank a living room window. Right: Brice Marden's Grove Group III, 1973, and Rothko's Untitled, 1954. Details see Resources. Virtual overviews of artists' careers have hung on the living room walls





Building a collection of major quattrocento paintings would pose a challenge comparable to what the Mnuchins have undertaken

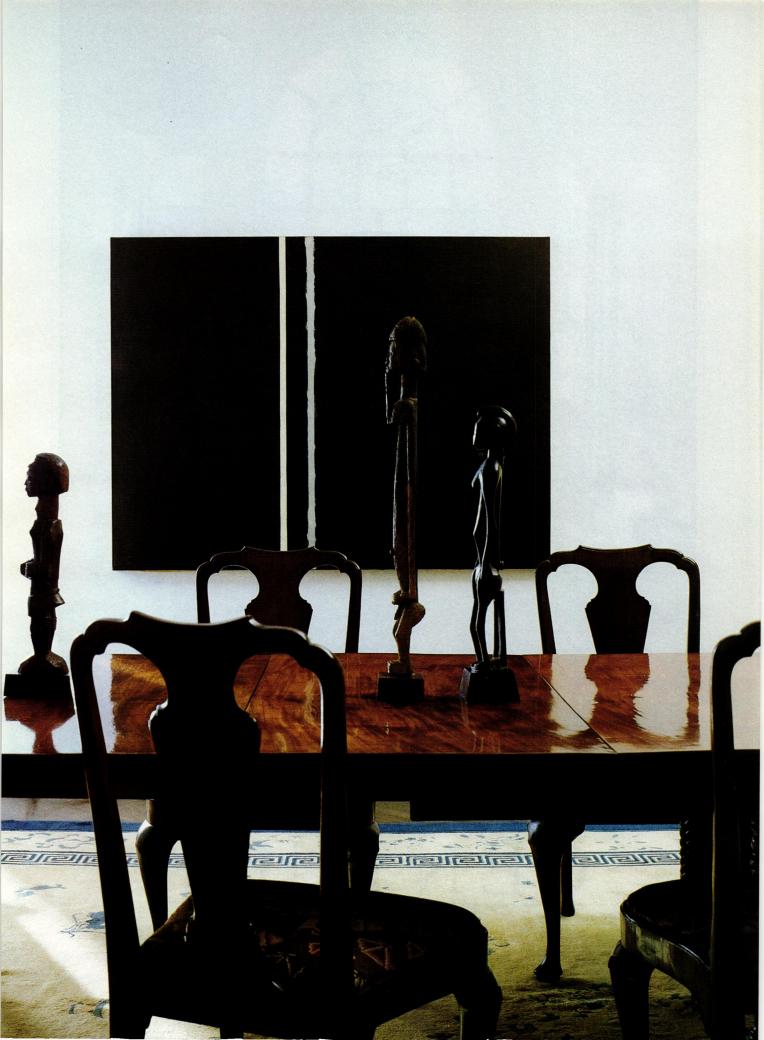


Frank Stella and Andy Warhol as well as painters of our un-Warholsome time, Brice Marden and David Salle. Although the Mnuchins were briefly drawn to immediately contemporary art, their eye is for painting—they are modernists, not postmodernists—and the mental conceits of conceptualism were abandoned as being less than true to the collectors' sensibility.

In the nearly five decades that have passed since the formation of the New York School, a consensus regarding abstract expressionism has emerged. Even conservative opinion now concedes that this movement generated not only the most original painting ever produced in America but arguably the most important in the West since the dazzling cubist meridian of 1908-14. By the same token, while the preeminence of abstract expressionism is a given, its patriarchal and hegemonic undertones are currently prompting serious revision by younger scholars and critics animated by political and gender-oriented activist agendas. Controversy still rages over Jackson Pollock's paintings from the last five years before he died in 1956. His final achievements are coming to be seen as equal to the emblematic work of his "drip," "allover," or "heroic" period of 1947-51. Pollocks of both periods are beautifully represented in the Mnuchin collection.

Attitudes regarding the last decades of Willem de Kooning's much longer life in art are similarly in flux. Critics had nodded dismissively at the de Koonings of the 1970s and '80s. But, following a daring hunch, the Mnuchins purchased against the tide of indifference. Their acquisitions went (Continued on page 159)

Barnett Newman's The Promise, 1949, opposite, dominates the dining room behind George I chairs and a William IV table topped by West African sculptures. Above left: Along the far wall are a Dogon equestrian figure, Twombly's Untitled, 1969, and a Yoruba mask. Ad Reinhardt's Abstract Painting, 1966, hangs beside the door. Left: Biedermeier furniture accompanies Philip Guston's As It Goes, 1978, in the master bedroom.





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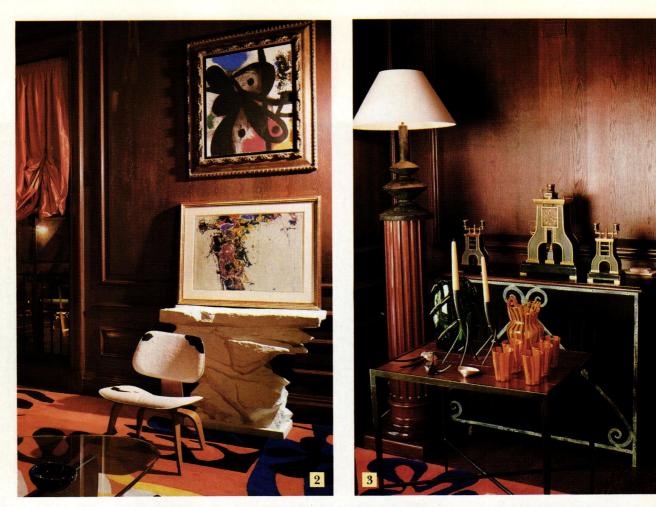
# Great



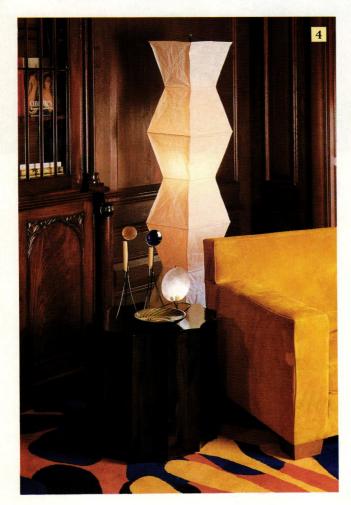
MODERNISM IN STRONG COLORS The rich woodwork, tall windows, and generous proportions of the library at New York's 1991 French Designer Showhouse could easily accommodate a traditional roundup of leather club chairs and hunting scenes. Jacques Grange, in association with his New York office at the antiques gallery and decorating firm Didier Aaron, took a more adventurous approach and assembled a group of bright modern elements: an Alexander Calder mobile, a carpet that is an homage to Matisse, Jean-Michel Frank-inspired armchairs in honey suede. The well-defined, if unexpected, palette extends from the art to the furniture-a use of color that avoids looking contrived thanks to Grange's sophisticated eye. Details see Resources.

# ideas

In a traditional library, Jacques Grange leaves his own modern imprint By Carolyn Sollis and Amy Taran



### A mix of studied and casual effects redefine the art of display



# **Great** ideas

**2 DISPLAYING ART** Two paintings exhibited in different ways show that even in a composed space, there's room for casual effects. Under a work by Joan Miró, a quarry console table without its glass top acts as a makeshift easel for a Sam Francis gouache and introduces a look of unstudied ease.

**3 MIXING OBJECTS** Grange put three surfaces to work as platforms for displaying decorative items in unconventional ways. A radiator grille supporting a French three-piece clock garniture, c. 1860, is uncharacteristically grouped with a side table given over to a 1950s Venini striped glass pitcher and tumbler set as well as nature-inspired candlesticks and shell designs by Ted Muehling. In the corner a William IV pedestal cleverly serves as a place for a sculptural lamp with a lava finish.

**4 LIGHTING EFFECTS** Rather than rely on a single source of illumination, the decorator has combined natural light, candlelight, and soft lamplight in a corner next to a window to create an appealing rather than overpowering glow.



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## **City Sanctuary**

(Continued from page 99) ticality seemed to me the only rational way to go. So I have stuck to my wooden furniture, my bare floors, and my numerous animals-alive and not-which keep piling up. The only time I deviated from this practical approach was when I bought an antique Japanese chest strangely shaped like steps. As soon as it was delivered, it started to buckle and crack. We were unable to keep up with the dealer's recommendations: humidifiers, no direct sunlight, a constant temperature. I was filled with guilt and a sense of failure. After that I promised myself never to buy antiques again. Something that has survived two hundred years could end its life in my loft within two short weeks.

John Ryman understood my prob-

## American Garden

(Continued from page 127) add smaller trees—redbud, apricot, Kentucky coffee tree, dwarf Alberta spruce—to the island beds.

They have striven perhaps most energetically to find perennials that do well in a climate where winds are often high, and temperatures can range from minus 25 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to over 100 degrees in the summer. While Iowa soils are marvelously fertile, climatic conditions can be inhospitable to plants like delphiniums (which Karen and Bill plant as annuals now) that are staples of British and European gardens. Achillea, artemisia, oenothera, salvia argentea, and some thirty other species have proven to be drought-tolerant stalwarts. Karen has solved the climate problem through experimentation with perennial varieties from all over, but especially from Hilltop Greenhouses in Omaha and Bluebird Nursery in Clarkson, Nebraska. The experimentation runs both ways. When Karen finds a local variety that seems to be doing well, she may send it to Harlan Hamernik at Bluebird to be grown in bulk and reintroduced to the perennials market.

Harlan, Karen, and Bill have collaborated on a set of four videos, available lems. He loves "garbage" and nothing feels better to me than to recycle what was destined for the trash heap. John goes around towns and villages collecting things that have been thrown out. Our favorite place is the dumpster of a famous and wonderful American fashion designer who lives outside the city in Westchester. I don't think I can mention his name-he might not like it, and I don't want to upset him. Anyway, he seems to do a lot of redecorating, so his dumpster is always full. From his "garbage" we collected a marvelous iron railing which John cut into pieces, saving the parts shaped like arrows to make towel racks for my bathrooms. Tiles from one of the fashion designer's floors became the tops of small iron tables in my living room.

John built my bed from a gate that used to enclose the organ pipes at a church in Connecticut. He made the

from Bluebird Nursery, that show how some favored hardy perennials should be planted and cared for. The approximately 160 species shown include Gypsophila paniculata 'Compacta', a lowgrowing baby's breath that Bill and Karen often use in underplanting; Caryopteris × clandonensis 'Longwood Blue', which is "more attractive to butterflies than any other plant we have, even butterfly bush"; and Aster × frikartii 'Mönch', a long-blooming mildew-resistant hybrid they believe Americans overlook. A new video will focus on grasses that control erosion and provide ornamental texture.

Now that Bill is no longer row-cropping the farm (he did have the fields in corn for a few years, but these days they are all meadows), the spring-fed pond receives no runoff and is an inviting spot for both fishing and swimming. One of Karen's favorite activities is to float in the pond and look at the garden, which, owing to the slope of the land toward the water, spreads out in its fullest beauty from precisely that perspective. In a somewhat marshy area on the east side of the pond (which is also used for irrigation), Bill and Karen have encouraged a bright meadow of native wildflowers. Orange butterfly weed has appeared there with heartening vitality alongside gayfeather, swamp milkweed, and other species bed high enough so the dogs would be unable to jump up and my paisley throw would be safe on top. When he salvaged windows and doors from the Westchester trash heap, I was ready to build walls and rooms to accommodate them. The layout of my apartment changed dramatically, but for the better. Now I have a studio, a TV room, and individual bedrooms and bathrooms for everyone, including guests —which is definitely a luxury for the communal life in a loft.

Ever since John taught me this approach to decorating I haven't stopped. It has become one of my favorite activities. Instead of feeling responsible for ending the life of a piece of furniture (like my Japanese chest), I feel I am adding a few years to something that was destined for the dump. And if it breaks—well, there is an end to everything.

widely threatened by herbicides.

While they value their privacy, Karen and Bill are true Iowans in the way they have shared both their plants and their skills. In their bedroom is a striking log cabin quilt Karen received from a friend in exchange for designing and planting the friend's garden. She has made several gardens in the Des Moines area, but with the videos and a book she is writing she hopes to inspire others to enjoy making gardens. Although Bill and Karen's farm is not open to the public, they have held open houses in past springs. Sales of cuttings and excess plants supported purchases of new varieties, and friends from Des Moines-fellow artists and art collectors-came to renew old ties.

By July, when the weather is hot and sticky and the garden is for the most part taking care of itself, Bill's and Karen's thoughts turn to preparing for their December show of prints, paintings, pastels, and sculpture at the Percival Galleries in Des Moines. Even so, the pleasures of the landscape are irresistible-the newest bed will be a lateseason display, full of white Japanese anemones, purple and white fall clematis, asters, and dahlias, bringing this thriving American garden as close to full circle as Iowa winters will allow. (For information on plant suppliers and videocassettes see Resources.)



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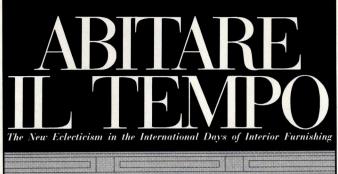
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## Call of Montana

(Continued from page 116) northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park. It straddles two and a half miles of a fast-flowing brown-trout river replenished by the drainage from several million acres of wilderness. The valley is just the right size—broad shouldered enough to welcome light, remote enough to discourage highway construction, and surrounded by views of lodgepole pine, river riffles, and snow-crusted mountains that make my knees wobble. Mule deer are ubiquitous year-round. Elk, moose, mountain lion, and black bear appear according to the season. And every indigenous predator, save the gray wolf, has left tracks.

The reserve, divided between twenty-two secretive landowners, had been formed in the 1970s as a kind of new-age commune. Some of the founding fathers are still there: a talented potter, an oceanographer. But many have moved on to city pursuits. From one we acquired the most historic slice of property known simply as the Bar 20. The title and brand go back to a deed Teddy Roosevelt signed over to a Mrs. Fargo (as in Wells Fargo), thence to a Mark Cross heir, a World War I naval commander, and a group who cobbled together a dude ranch that failed in the fifties.

Grandly (that is, with help from our father), we set out to re-create the Bar 20 as a family compound. We acquired more land as well as a neglected bunkhouse and some cabins across the river. All of these buildings were hopelessly demoralized—painted orange and patched with plywood. Fortunately, my sister and Chuck Defandorf, our builder, had a vision. The dark living room in the main structure suddenly developed a brace of French doors, a burnt-out closet became a bath, a generator shed metamorphosed into my office. And a cabin's funky sixties add-on was camouflaged thanks to Hilary's many walks through the woods with Benjamin Moore color chips in hand. For furniture my sister again called upon Ken Siggins and Jimmy Covert, mixing their work with vintage Molesworth designs purchased from an aging neighbor who had crafted them.

From May to November the Bar 20 has become the perfect human habitat. Mornings, I write to the sounds of springwater bound for the Gulf of Mexico. Lunch is usually a picnic orchestrated to a hike. Late afternoons, if there's a hatch on the river, I go my way with a dry fly. Some days we float the nearby Yellowstone with fishing guide Steve Pauli. Other times we head into the Absarokas on horseback. In summer, friends accumulate at a remarkable rate. Scarlett Daley, Chuck's girlfriend, oversees the kitchen, and in the evening the cool valley air is enriched with the smell of curries, cassoulets, and barbecues.

Of course, we aren't alone in this valley. The area has gone decidedly flashy in recent years, and only conservation easements (through the Montana Land Reliance), prescient laws, and far-seeing neighbors guarantee the land will remain as is. Maybe, in fact, the valley will improve. There's an active campaign to restore the wolf to its former range in Yellowstone. With luck these wonderful predators will prowl the ridges above us, and during the summer evenings on our screened porch we'll hear their lonesome howl. The Montana of my dreams will then be just about complete. ▲

## Modern Masters

(Continued from page 150) far in dispelling this condescension; indeed, their collection inaugurated the virtually unanimous approval that de Kooning's work of recent decades now enjoys.

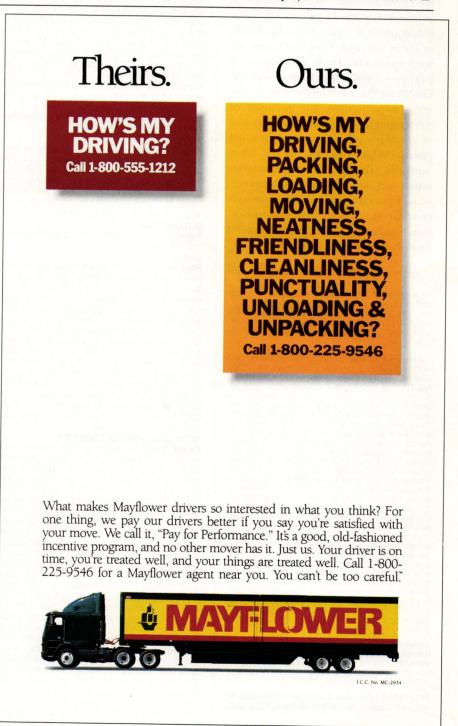
In the Mnuchins' case, the difficulty of the search for art is almost exceeded by the pains taken in displaying it. Admittedly, few collectors are able to fret over arrangements of a brace of de Koonings or a pride of Rothkos. Robert and Adriana's town house, its Adam-style façade forthrightly set across a double lot on Manhattan's Upper East Side, was restored to meet the standards imposed by collections of modern and tribal art, of Chinese and Georgian furniture—in addition to satisfying domestic requirements.

After entering a vestibule faced in white marble, the visitor passes into a square reception hall of regal measure. All the Rothkos once hobnobbed there; successive substitutions and moves from one wall to another have reflected the care taken to show each work to best advantage. (Since these collectors adhere to the belief that God is in the details, I am tempted to write "Mnuchiae" for minutiae.) Though Robert and Adriana live with exceptional furniture-Ming alongside George I, Biedermeier, and Hoffmann-pieces are selected with a view to understatement so that burnished beauty will not distract from the dignity of the paintings. At the rear of the reception hall, pedimented doors open into the dining room, where the abstract expressionist masterworks are most often found: a superb 1951 Pollock, a great Franz Kline of 1958, and the seemingly more minimal but equally epic efforts of Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko, and Ad Reinhardt.

A curved staircase rises to an apsidal landing and two large living rooms on the second floor. In the past, the landing sheltered a complex relief by Frank Stella; at present, an early muscular work by Mark di Suvero is installed there. *Che Farò Senza Euridice*? is one of four extant wood constructions that reveal this artist's command of the gestural vernacular of abstract expressionism. These early sculptures are frequently associated with the paintings of Franz Kline, a comparison that is reinforced at the Mnuchins' by examining the Kline in the dining room. The rooms on the second floor open into one another, and virtual overviews of Philip Guston, Richard Diebenkorn, Cy Twombly, and Brice Marden have been mounted on the walls. In the front room hangs an Arshile Gorky of fierce tenderness, the penetrating first version of *Charred Beloved*, 1946.

The collection, however superb, is

not an immutable and static display moldering in a dusty untenanted museum. Neither as changeless as the pageant of Isabella Stewart Gardner's trophies at the edge of the Boston Fenway nor as coyly rearranged as the treasures of New York's Frick Collection, the Mnuchin collection is, in vivid contrast, a vital organism. The question is no longer one of striving for perfection so much as savoring the life-enhancement and play its attainment allows.



## Le Style Passebon

(Continued from page 120) Le-Tan and New York–based Ted Muehling. Score another "big big success."

With antiques in the sixteenth arrondissement and contemporary work in the first, the only thing left for Passebon to do was merge old and new in a third gallery devoted to what he calls the "dynamic mix." Which he did last September at 20-22 galerie Véro-Dodat, arguably the most beautiful arcade in Paris. Though Passebon's new trilevel space effectively offers a crash course-albeit a quirky one-in the history of the decorative arts, it also serves as a showcase for his stable of contemporary applied artists, any one of whom is available for commissioned pieces. "When you look back at other centuries, you see friendships between artists and clients," explains Passebon, who likes to think of himself as a modern-day shadchen, which is to say, matchmaker. It is a position he likes to describe as "my pleasure."

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ALL-AMERICAN GARDEN Pages 122-29 Sources for hardy plants: Hilltop Greenhouses, 6412 North 42 St., Omaha, NE 68111, (402) 451-3303 (no mail order); Bluebird Nursery, 519 Bryan St., Clarkson, NE 68629, (402) 892-3457 (wholesale only). Videocassette: Hardy Flowering Plants: A Closer Look, by Closer Look Videos, boxed set of 4 cassettes with printed culture guide, \$189 plus \$8 shipping, from Bluebird Nursery (see above). December art show, at Percival Galleries, 528 Walnut St., Firstar Bank Building, Des Moines, IA 50309; (515) 243-4893

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André Emmerich, NYC (212) 752-0124. Sunflower terra-cotta roof tiles in front of fireplace, \$9,300 pr, to the trade at Marvin Alexander, NYC (212) 838-2320. Noguchi glass/ebonized wood coffee table, 1948, 1950s Seguso glass bowl on table, 1950s Venini glass/copper ashtray on table, Charles Eames ponyskin chair, c. 1946, at Fifty/50, NYC (212) 777-3208. English manuscript rack, c. 1830, Lovinson & Jacoby Gothic revival occasional table. Coade stone urns, c. 1780, at Didier Aaron (see above). Heart Painting I, 1970-71, painting in corner, by Jim Dine, at O'Hara Gallery, NYC (212) 355-3330. Brass floor lamps (#1U/WV), to the trade at Cedric Hartman, for showrooms (402) 344-4474, fax (402) 346-5929. 154 Femme, 1973, by Joan Miró, at O'Hara Gallery (see above). Quarry console table (#22056) in white matte finish (glass top optional), to the trade at Sirmos, for showrooms (212) 371-0910. Untitled, 1958-59, by Sam Francis, at André Emmerich (see above). French threepiece clock garniture, c. 1860, William IV mahogany pedestal, similar at Didier Aaron (see above). Wrought-iron table with leather tile top, by Michael Krieger, to the trade at John Boone, NYC (212) 758-0012. 1950s Venini glass pitcher and tumblers, at Fifty/50 (see above). Tusk blackened bronze candlesticks, sterling snail dish, two ebony/ sterling spoons, to order at Ted Muehling, NYC (212) 431-3825. Late 1940s green blown-glass vase, at Malmaison Antiques, NYC (212) 288-7569. Classic lamp (#50728) with faux lava finish, to the trade at Sirmos (see above). Tripod Moon blackened bronze candlesticks, one horn, one blue plastic, Sun hammered sterling reflector candlestick on blackened bronze stand, to order at Ted Muehling (see above). Akari-Gemini Noguchi lamp (#UF4-L9), 1950s Nason glass ashtray, at Fifty/50 (see above). Doric end table (#23022) with ebony finish, to the trade at Sirmos (see above). William IV bookcase, at Didier Aaron (see above). ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE

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# Gandee AT LARG

#### Barbara Hulanicki

#### is hot for Miami

"Oh! Wonderful Miami!" gushed Barbara Hulanicki, inspired by the tragicomic spectacle of a sad-happy septuagenarian parading along hus-

tling-bustling Ocean Drive in hip-happening South Beach—a.k.a. the Deco District—decked out in flaming orange oversize trousers, a cape inscribed with urgent religious messages, and a big hat. "Oh! That sixties hat!" Hulanicki continued in her British clip, clearly moved by the Samuel Beckett—like vision. "Isn't she nice?" And then a hint of regret. "I miss the lunatics. They used to send them down from the North in the winter. They would give them \$100 and bus fare. It's absolutely true."

Nowadays, of course, visitors to South Beach tend not to come *Midnight Cowboy*-style, which is to say by Greyhound. Nor, nowadays, will \$100 get you very far. Barely through the night, for example, at the Marlin Hotel, Hulanicki's latest high-profile design statement, where the

owner, Island Records mogul Chris Blackwell, said, "Think Jamaica!"-which Hulanicki did in a scheme she refers to as "seashorewith-Jamaican-vibes"-and where Robert De Niro is rumored to have been turned away because he failed to phone ahead. Or at least that's what they said in W. Hulanicki said she hadn't heard the one about De Niro, but she and the staff did, she admitted, get themselves all worked up over a visit from Gianni Versace. "We thought he was going to want truffles in the middle of the night," said Hulanicki. "But he was nice."



# "Miami today is like London in the sixties—everything goes"

Since I had visited the Marlin, I asked Hulanicki to address herself to the always tricky-in-Miami question of taste. "I don't like good taste very much," she confessed—as she had to. "Beige? Very boring." Hulanicki's work is not a bit boring, which is to say that not once since washing up on the Miami shore with her husband, Stephen Fitz-Simons, in 1987 has she been guilty of good taste. Certainly not in her debut project, Woody's on the Beach, a hot-pink and neon nightclub designed for Rolling Stones guitarist Ron Wood. Certainly not in her second nightclub, located in a flashy Coconut Grove hotel and shopping complex targeted, according to Hulanicki, "to the drug dealers who were spending like mad in the eighties." Certainly not in her current project, the transformation of the long-favored-by-backpackers Netherland Hotel into "luxury," as they say, "condos." Since the Netherland's façade is, ironically, beige, I asked what Hulanicki had in mind. A powerful palette of rust, blue green, yellow, burnt orange, and violet, she said, adding, "God help us with all those deco pastels."

Although candy-colored South Beach is a surprising venue for a pastel-weary designer, Hulanicki feels right at home. "Miami today is like London in the sixties—everything goes." Hulanicki knows all about London in the sixties because she was the mastermind behind Biba, the "Miniskirts R Us" retailing phenomenon that reigned as the arbiter of hip style in swinging London from 1964 until Hulanicki and Fitz-Simons "fell in with bad partners" in 1976 and hied south with son Witold to São

Paulo, where for six years they exported clothes for Fiorucci and Cacharel. After a return engagement in London to organize a proper education for Witold, Hulanicki and husband hit the beach, which Hulanicki describes as "heaven, heaven, heaven," despite one small reservation: "Miami is a magnet for badness."

Hulanicki's personal experience with Miami's badness includes the time one of her clients was gunned down at the airport, *Miami Vice*-style. And then there was the time two thugs rammed Hulanicki and Fitz-Simons's car and held them up with a sawed-off shotgun. "It was my first serious handbag," recalled Hulanicki. "Pale leather, Sonia Rykiel. But it was full of pretzels." Hulanicki hasn't carried a handbag since. Instead she wears a fishing vest, which doubles as her office. "This is it," she said, patting the vest's various pock-

ets, which appeared slightly overwhelmed by their contents: "I could take this vest off and open a real office, but I just can't face tying myself down. I like to leave it raw." Although Hulanicki has no real office and no real business telephone—she has friends around town who take messages for her—she does have one full-time employee, a young draftsman named José, who currently works out of an abandoned hotel on Ocean Drive. "He's very handsome," said Hulanicki. "He wears bicycle shorts to work, and he plays disco music all day. It's lovely."

Given her peripatetic history, I asked Hulanicki how long she planned to stay in Miami Beach. "The thing to say is I might leave tomorrow. That way you will probably still find me here in twenty years." **Charles Gandee**