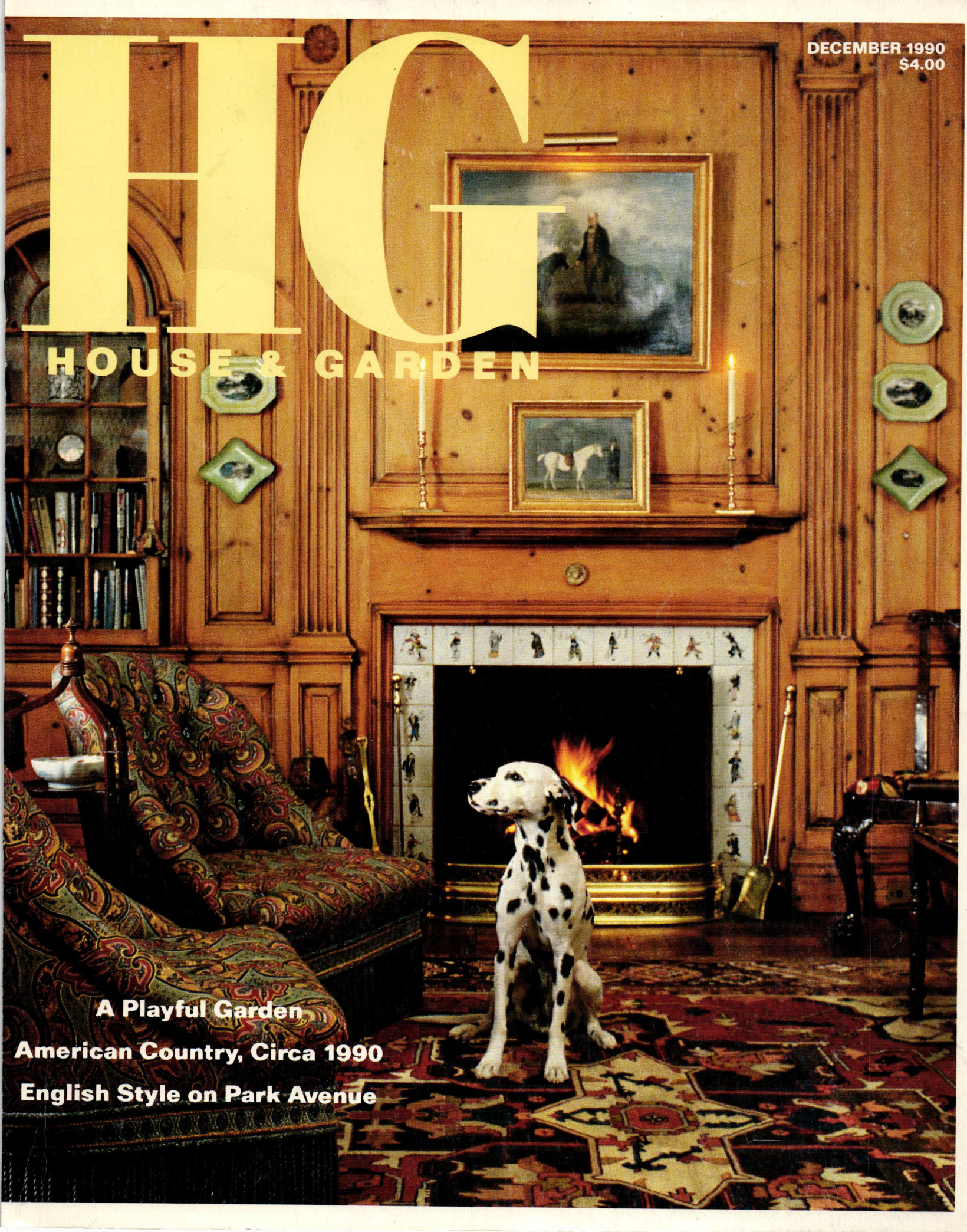
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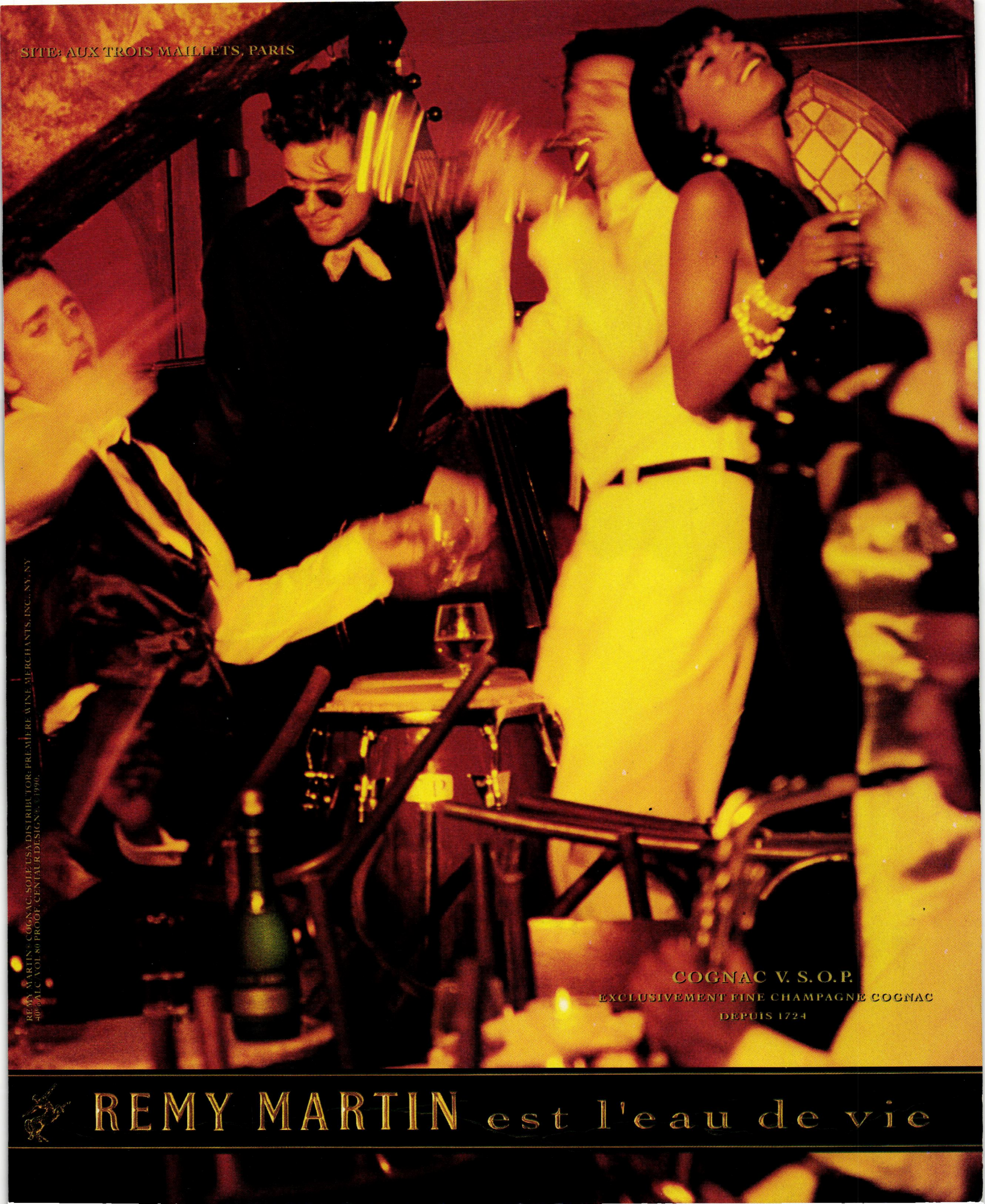

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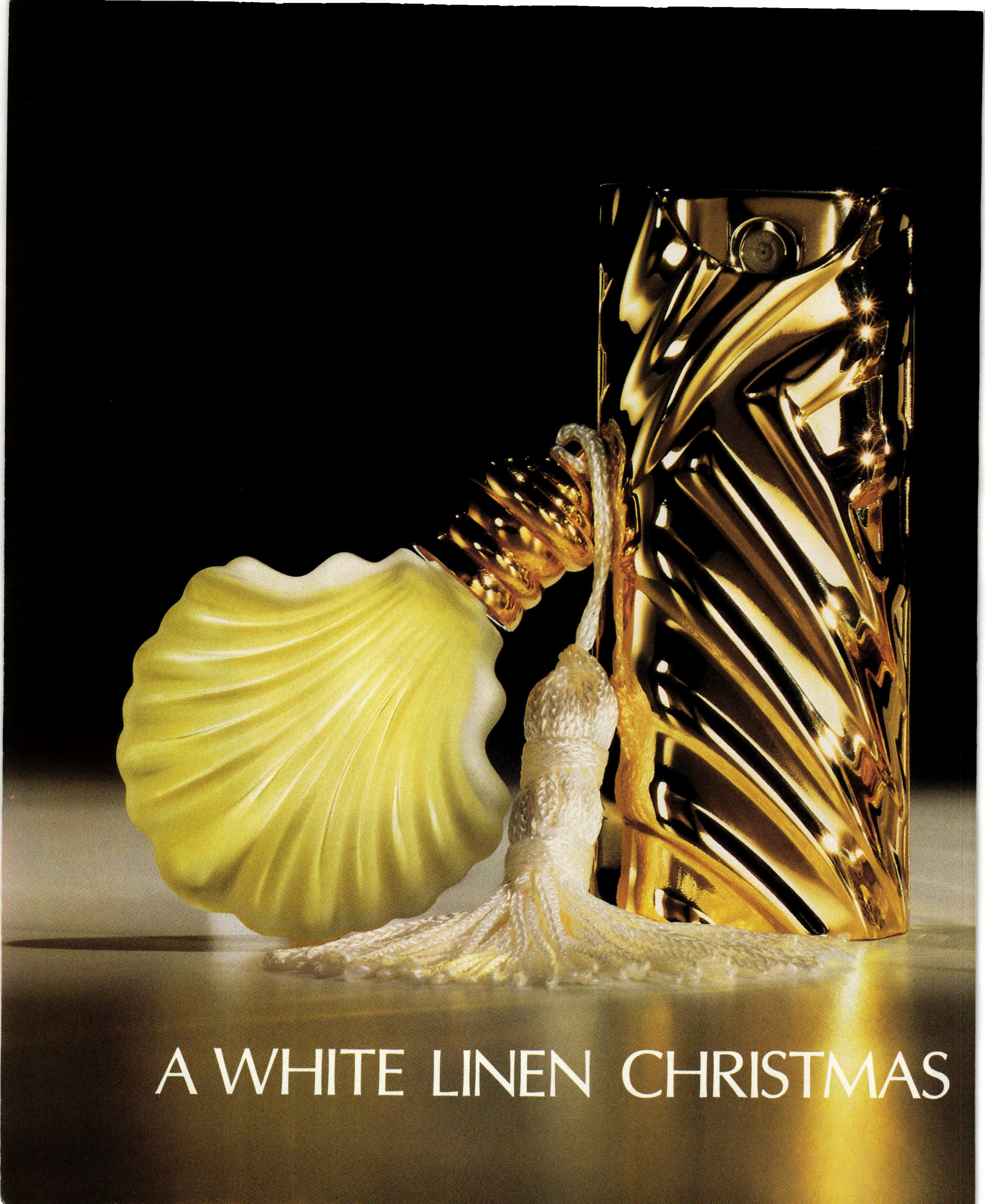
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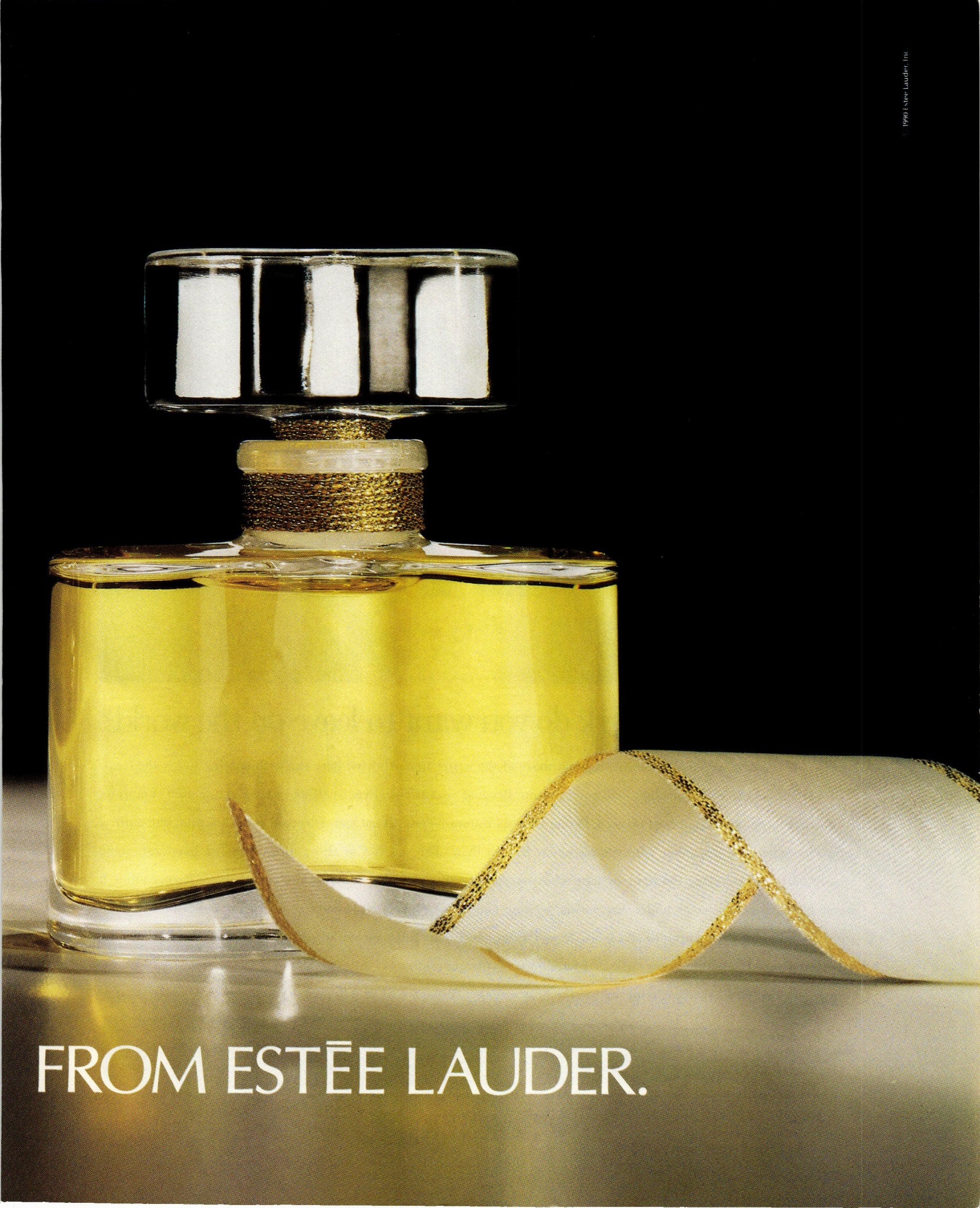
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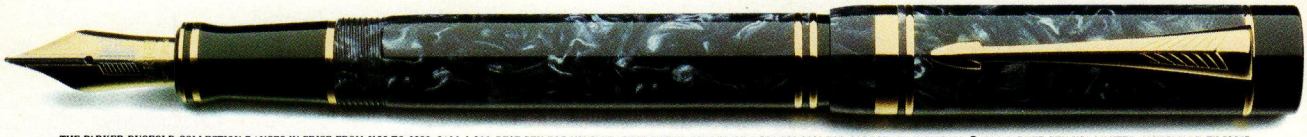

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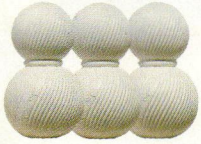

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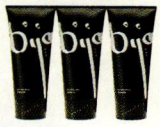

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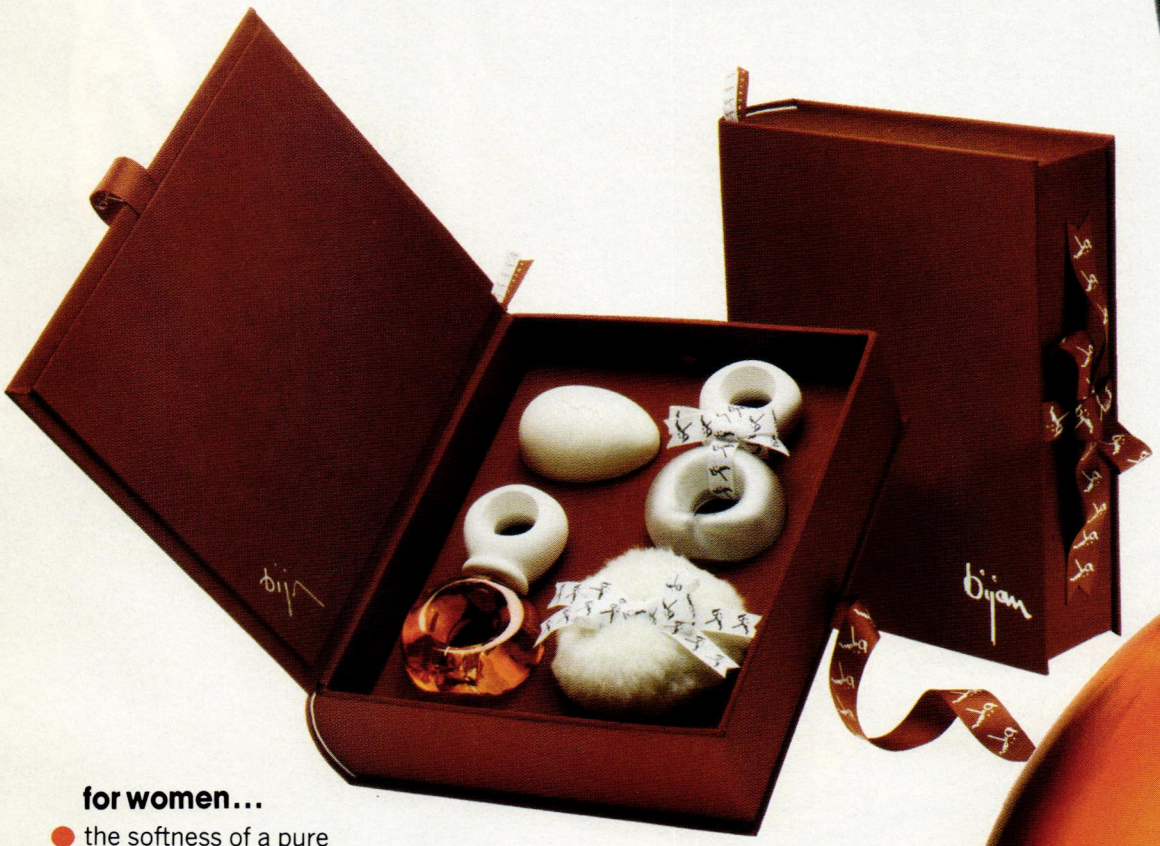

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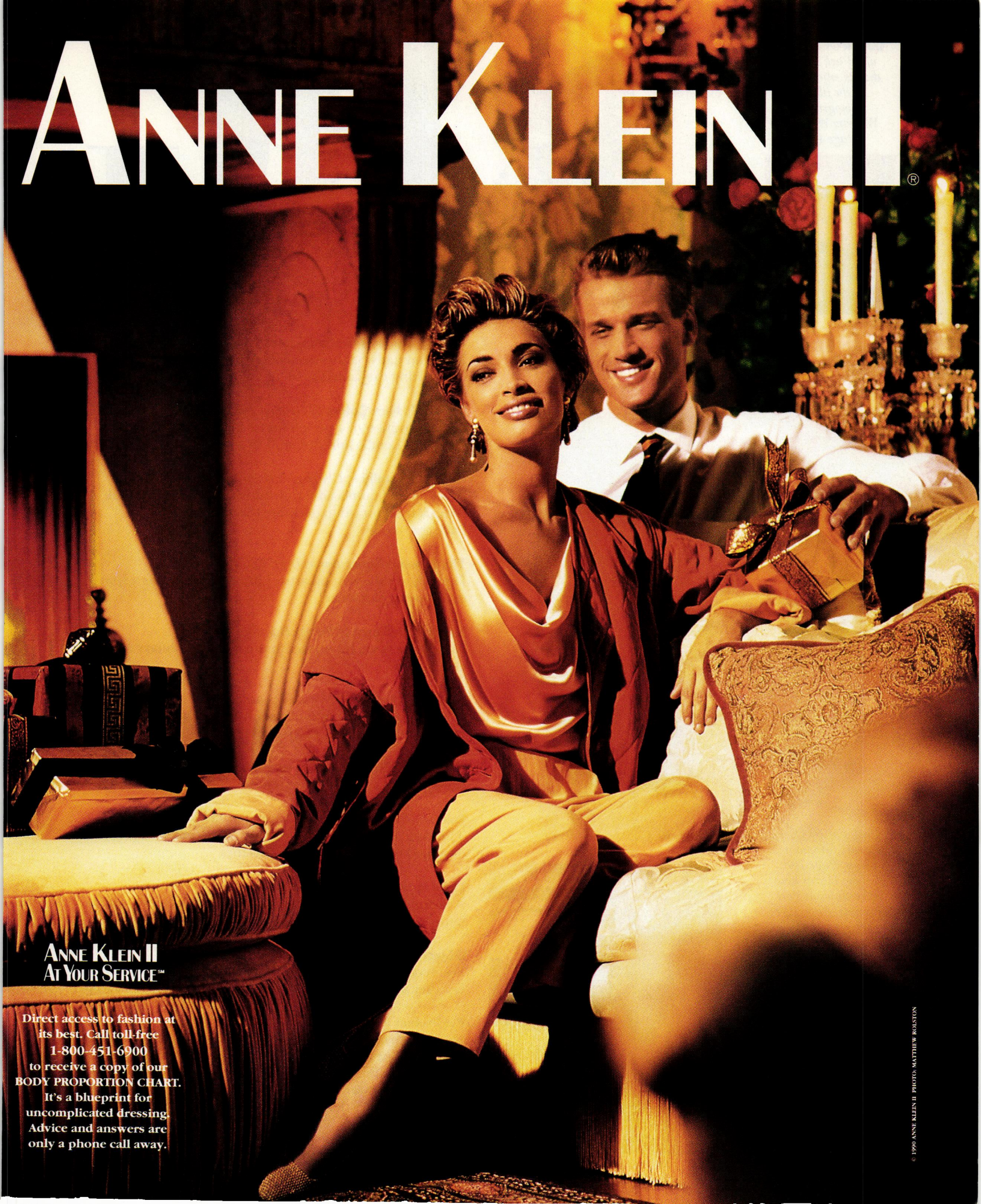
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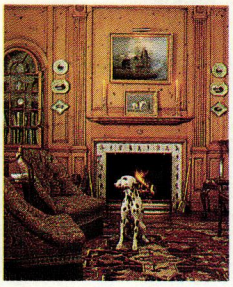
COVER *One resident of a Park Avenue duplex enjoys a fire in the library. Photograph by William Waldron. Page 166.*



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HOUSE & GARDEN DECEMBER 1990 Volume 162, Number 12

DECEMBER

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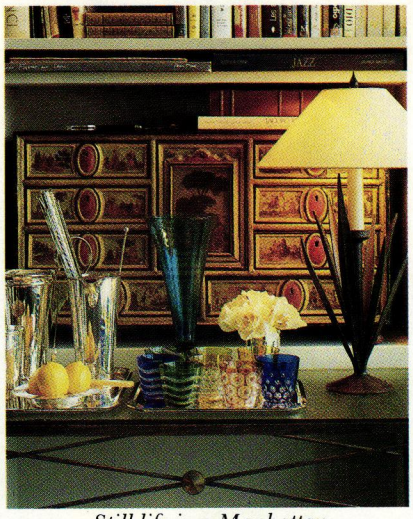

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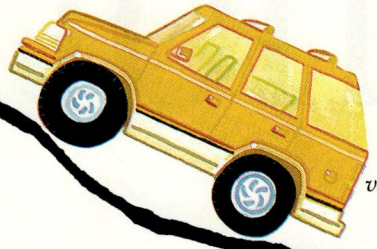

The Explorer, Ford's latest sport-utility vehicle. Page 92.

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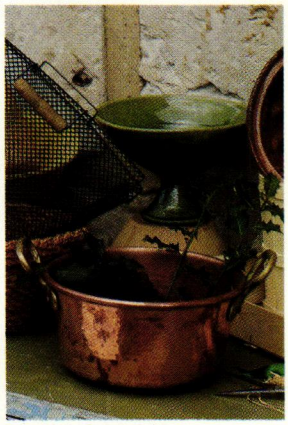
Velvet-covered sofa from Garouste and Bonetti. Page 52.



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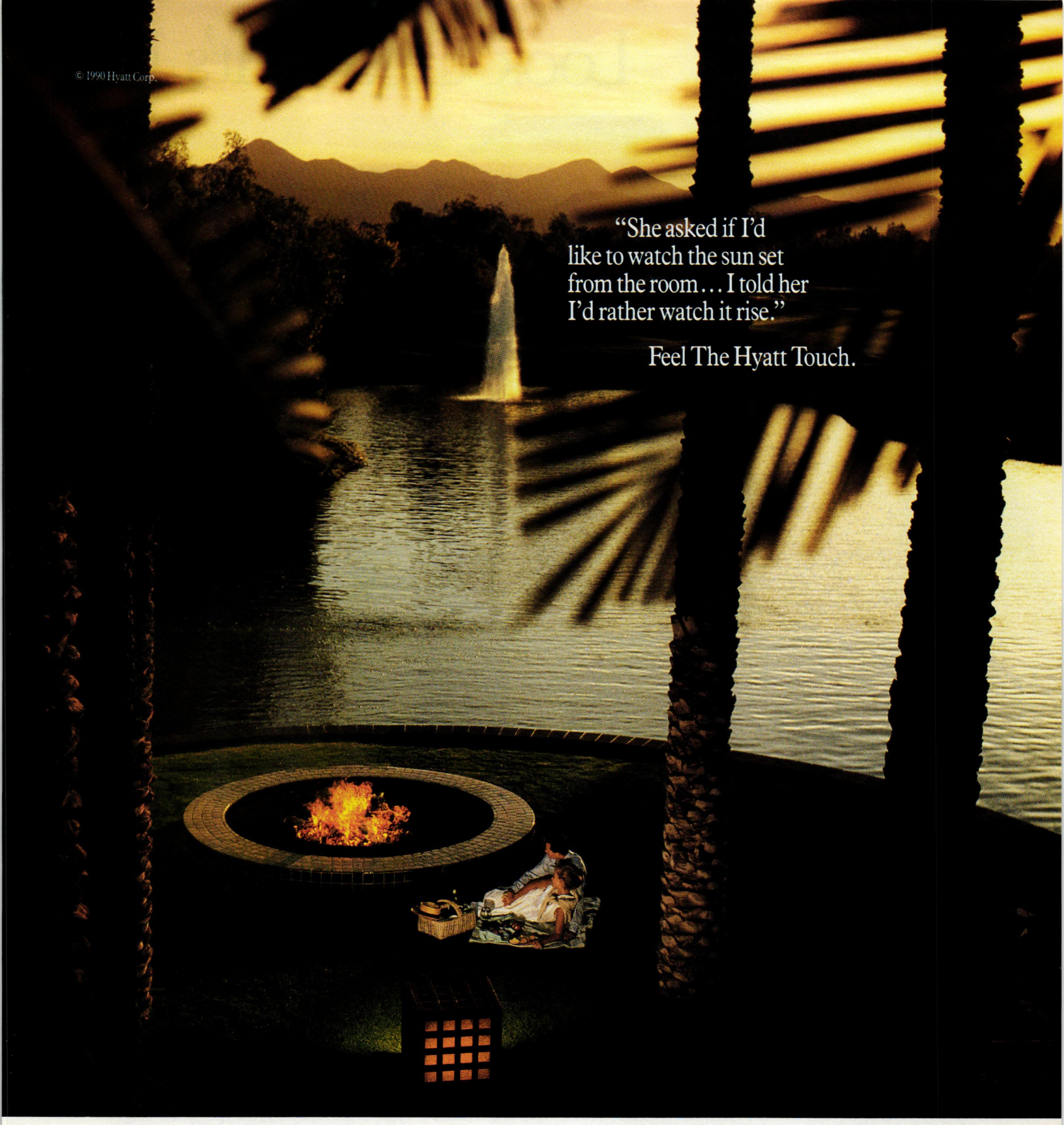

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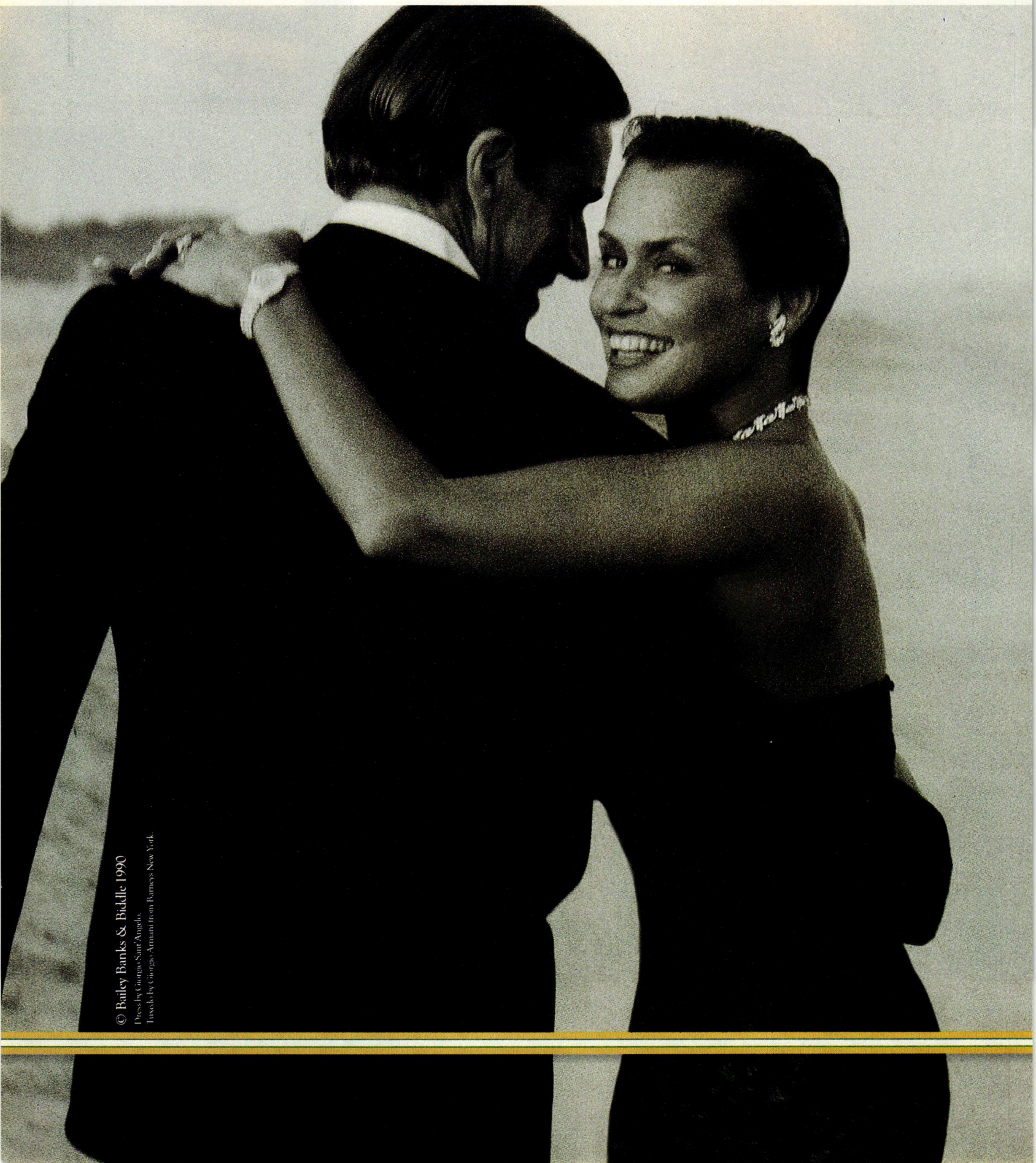

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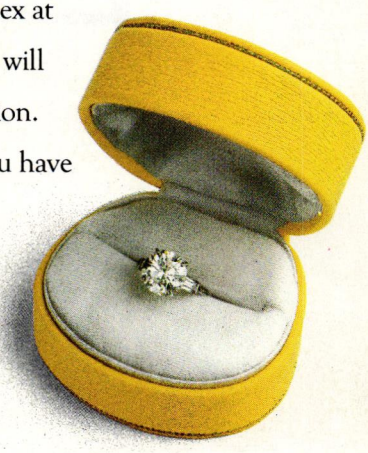

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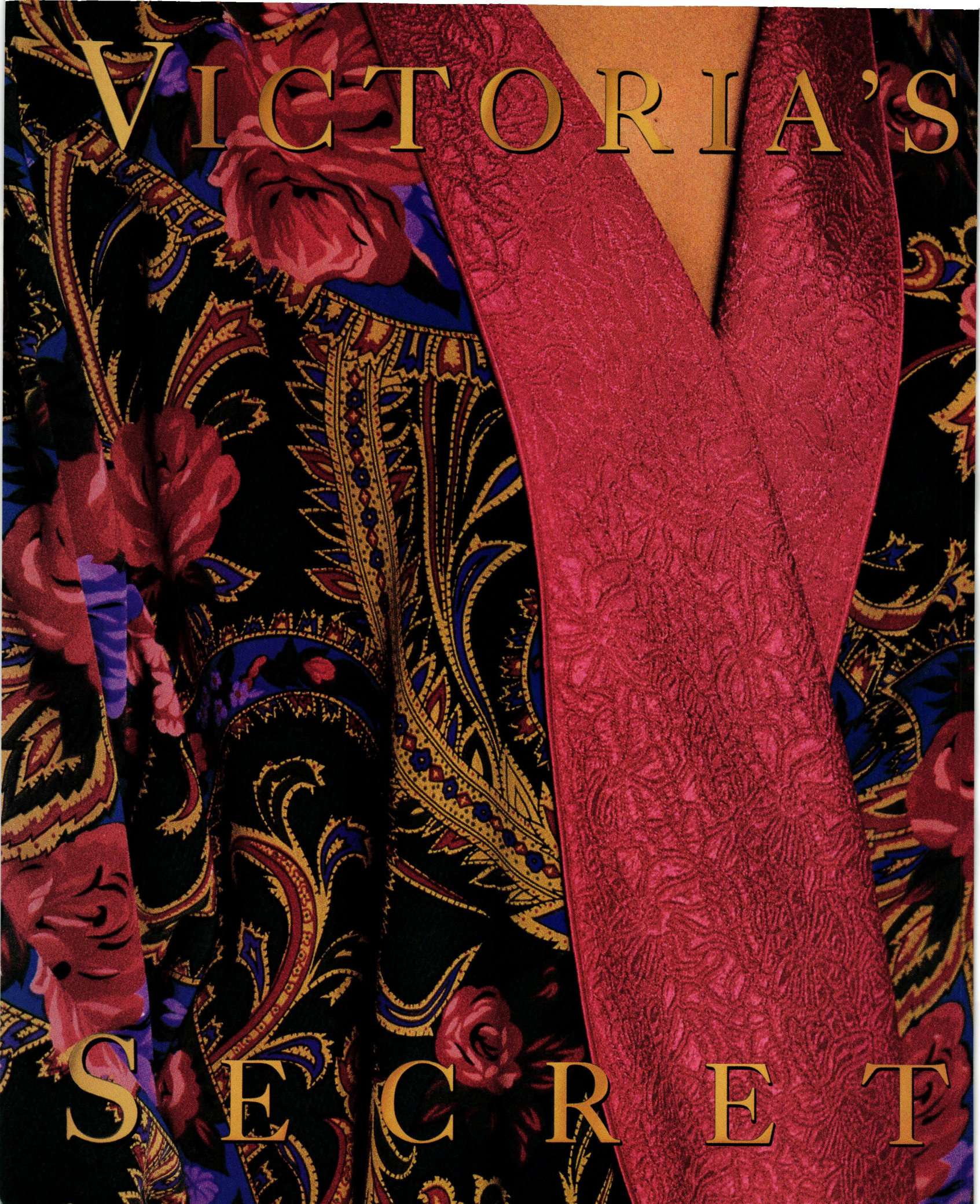
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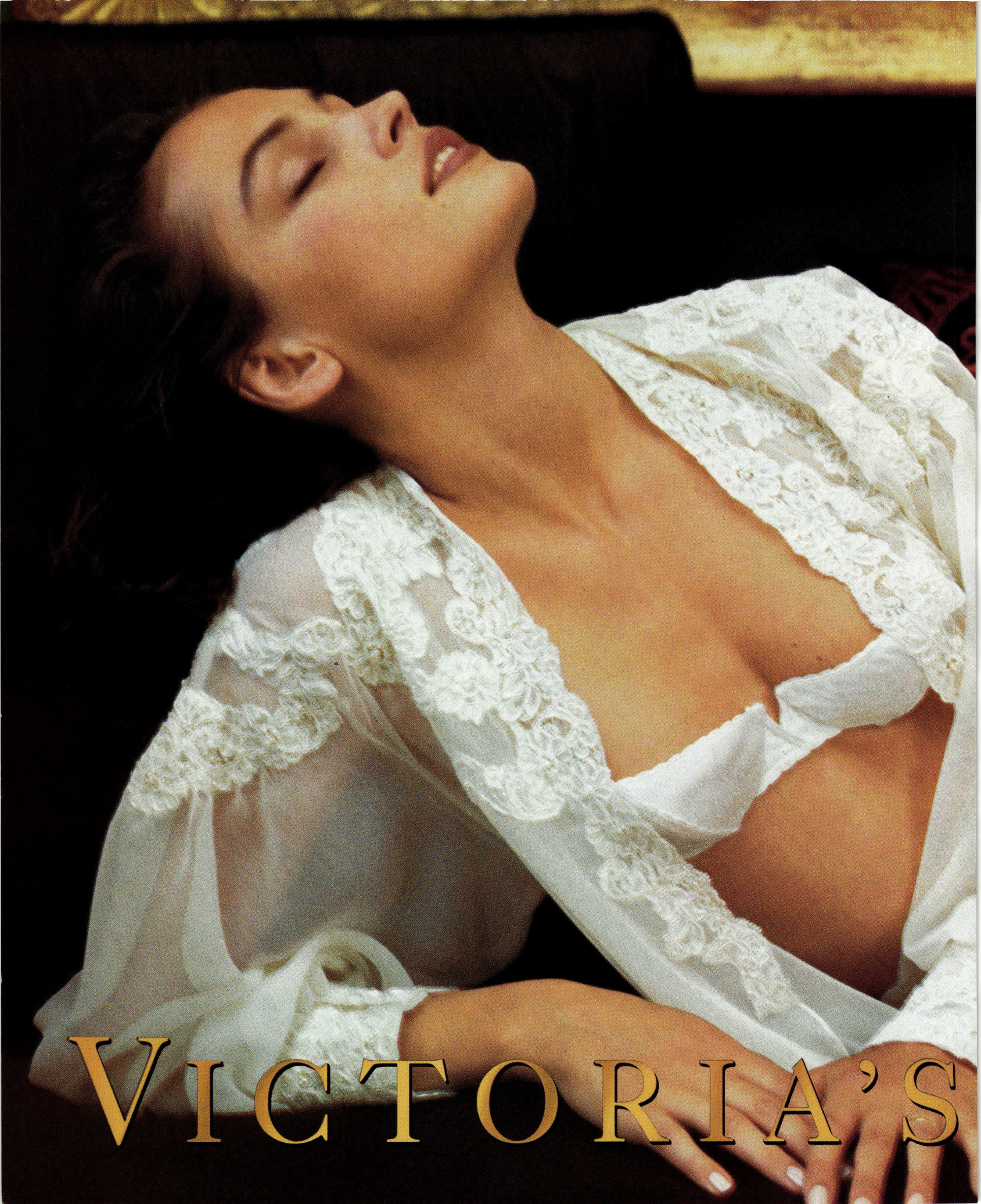
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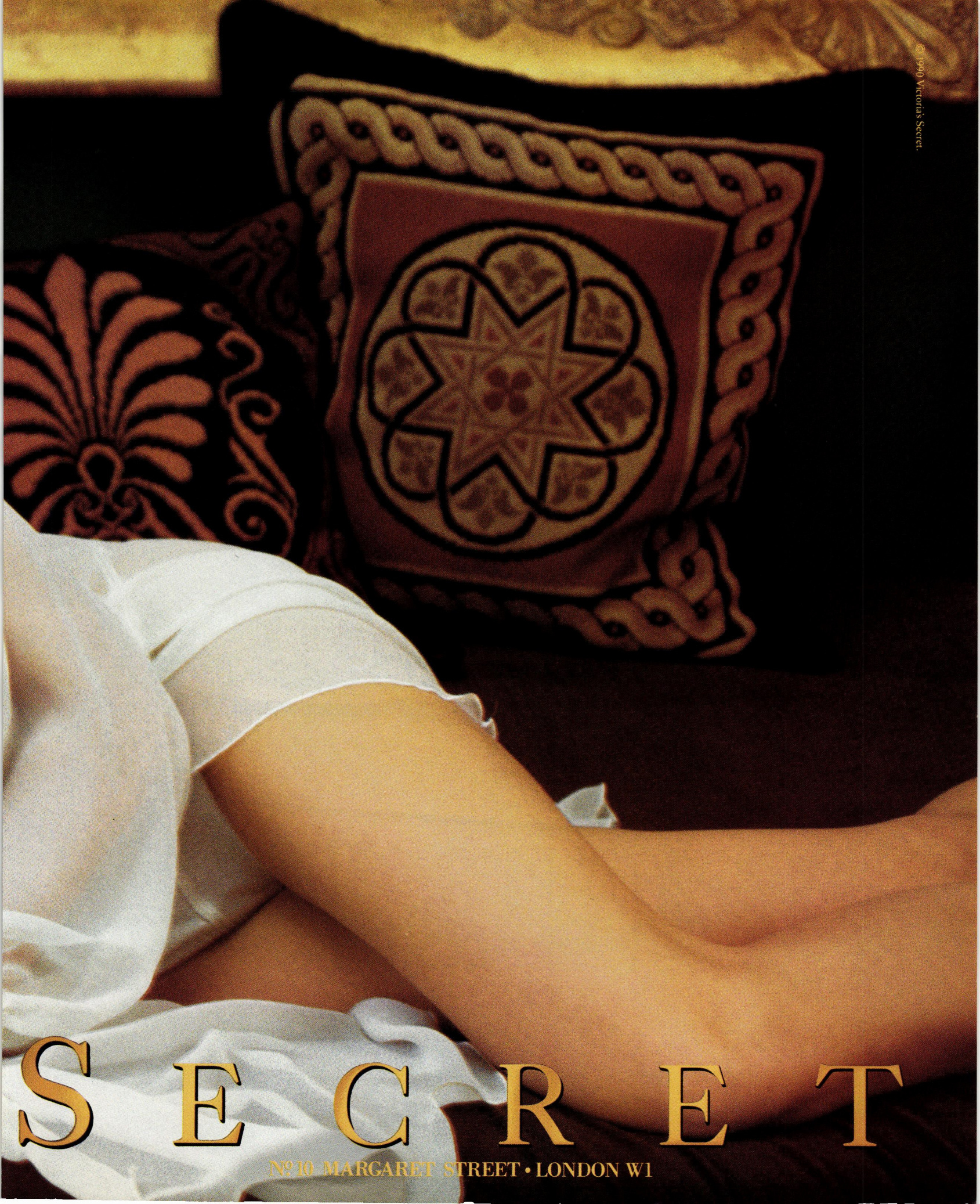
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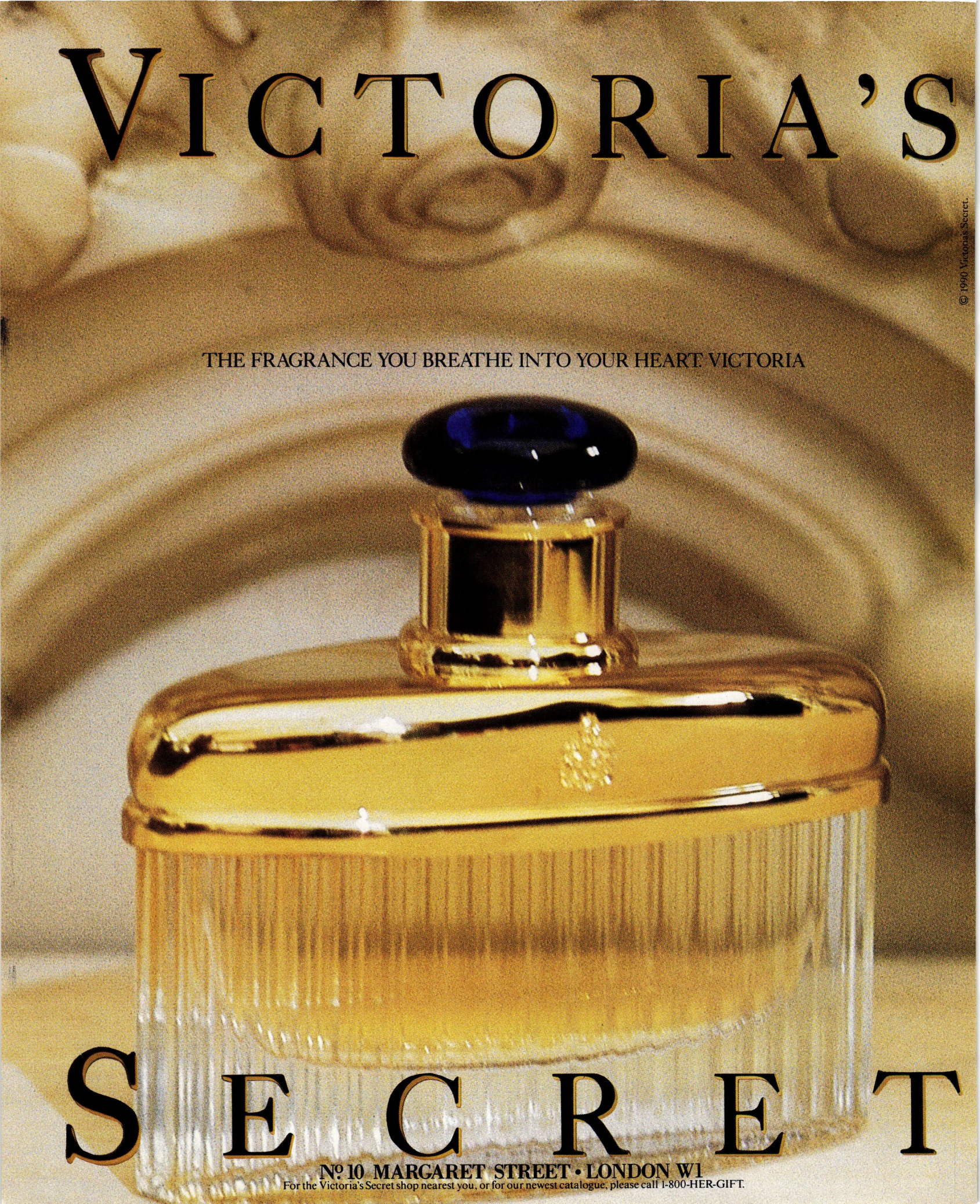
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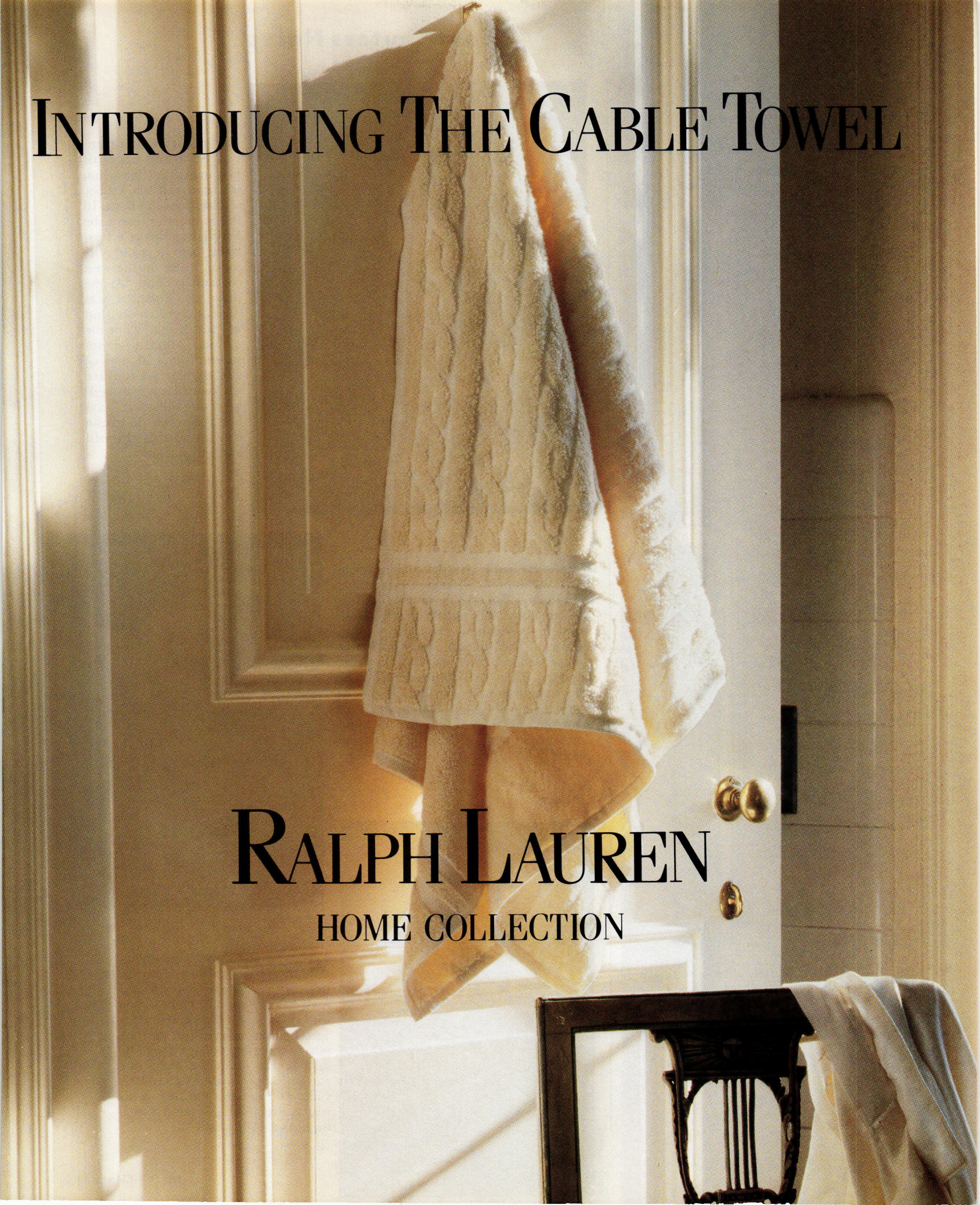
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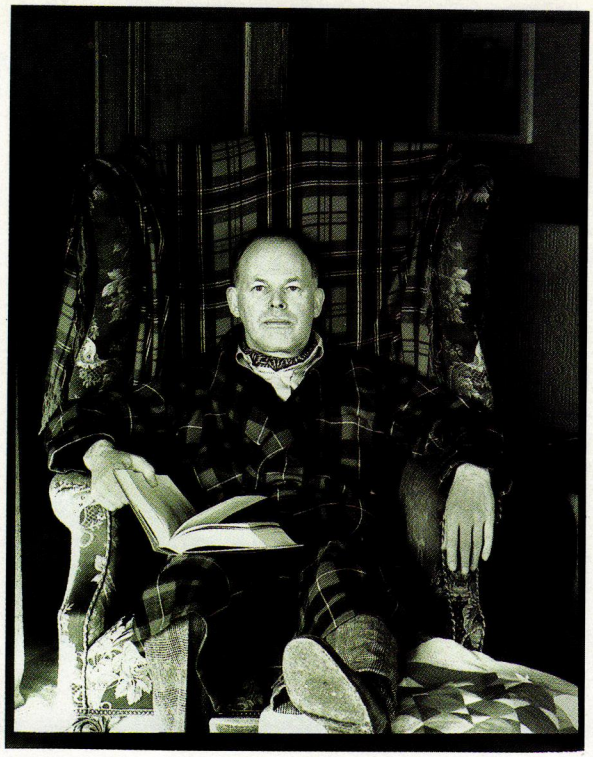
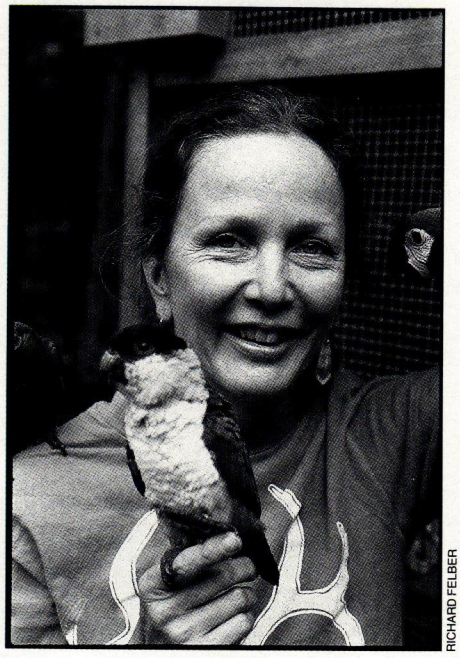


ERIC BOMAN

Mark Lancaster last appeared in the pages of HG in April 1988 when we featured his Tudor seaside house in Kent. In this issue, we present the English painter's new home base, a grand Victorian castle on the west coast of Scotland. "At one point the building was used as a youth hostel, but in spite of that, all of the original details—from stained-glass images of the owner's favorite yachts to faux bois ceilings—are still intact," says Lancaster, whose studio now occupies the old kitchen quarters.

Brooke Hayward writes about her friend and "culinary confrere" Gene Hovis, whose chocolate cake she rates as the "best in New York." The two frequently collaborate in the kitchen—"we prepare winter picnics of fried chicken, and for Thanksgiving we like to do a standing rib roast." Author of the 1977 best-seller *Haywire*, Hayward lives in New York and Connecticut with her husband, bandleader Peter Duchin, and their three parrots. She is currently at work on a nonfiction account of life in Los Angeles during the 1960s.



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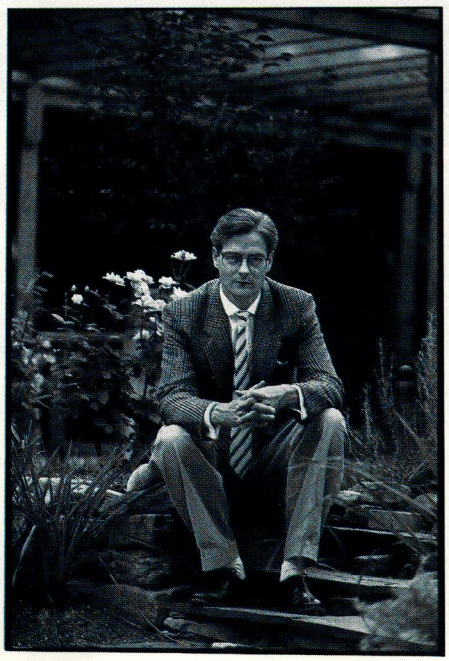

MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Adrian Higgins visits the legendary English gardens at Port Lympne, the country estate of John and Lady Sarah Aspinall. An Irishman who moved to Virginia ten years ago, Higgins started out as a reporter covering politics. Now, he says, he has found his niche as a garden writer. "It's an incredibly rich and diverse field that leads you to everything from architecture to social history."

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Marie Louise Boyer-Breton Oil on canvas 1906 78 X 47 inches

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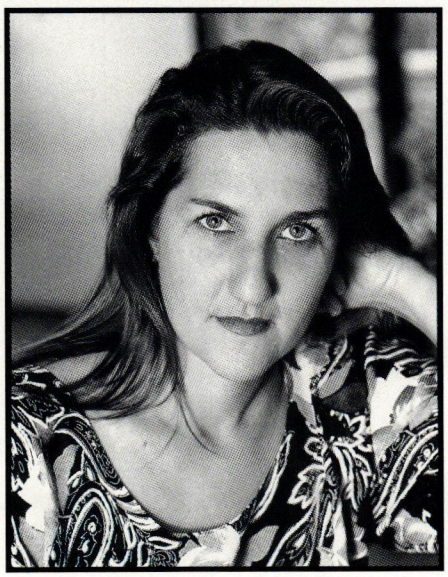
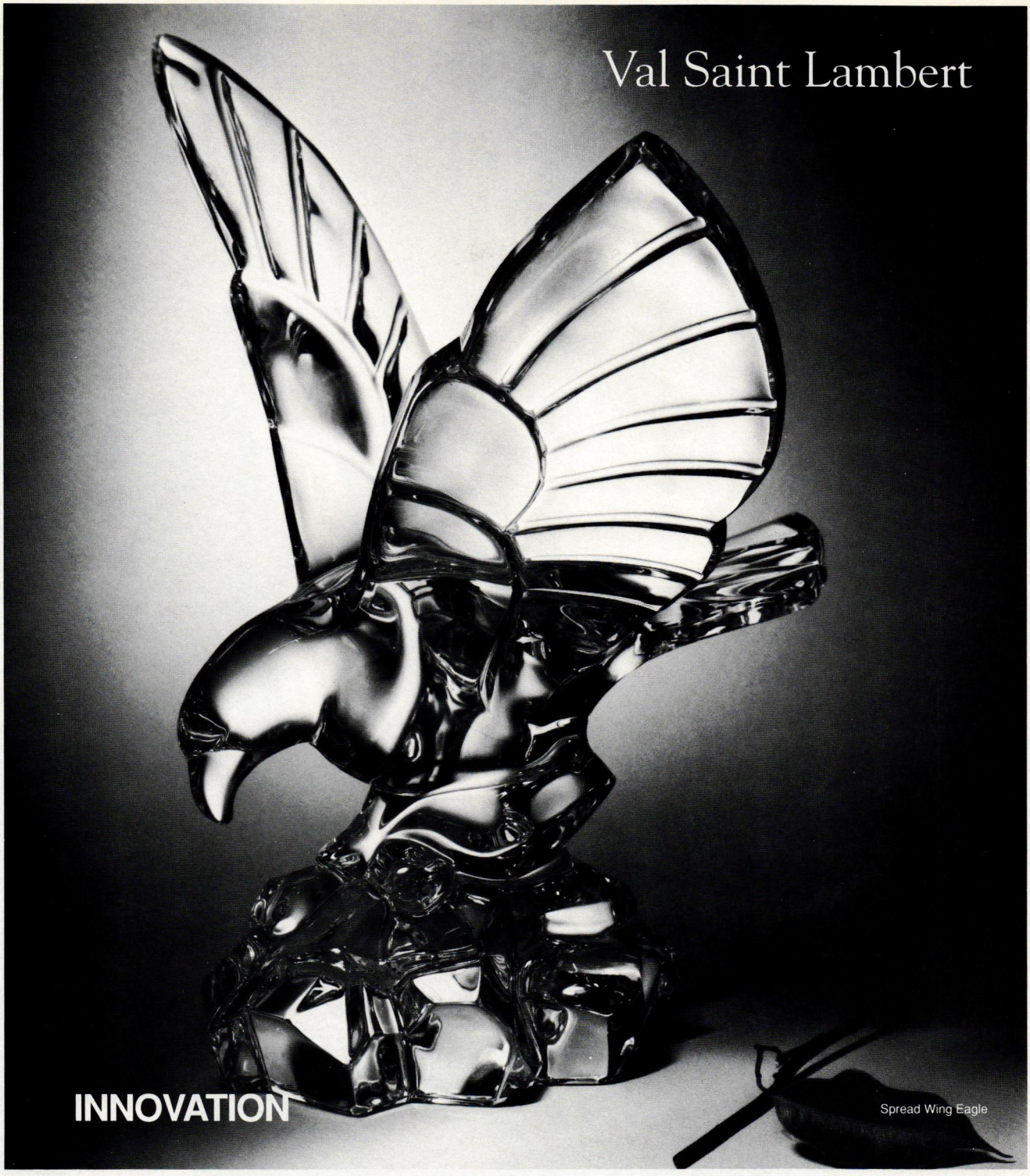
SIGRID ESTRADA

Gita Mehta, author of *Raj* and *Karma Cola* and producer of several television documentaries, delineates the differences between American and Indian decor in the "Taste" column. Mehta, who divides her time between New York, London, and New Delhi, claims to be uninspired by the fashions of those cities. "For me, decorating is a nightmare," she says. "I prefer my rooms to be organic."



ANN SUMMA

Margy Rochlin, a contributing editor of *Interview* magazine, has "interrogated" everyone from John Travolta to Pee-wee Herman. For HG, Rochlin test-drives the Ford Explorer, a tidier vehicle than she's used to: "Someone asked if I was doing an origin-of-life experiment in my own car because it's piled with magazines, cassettes, and clothes. Sure it's messy, but when driving in L.A., it pays to be prepared."



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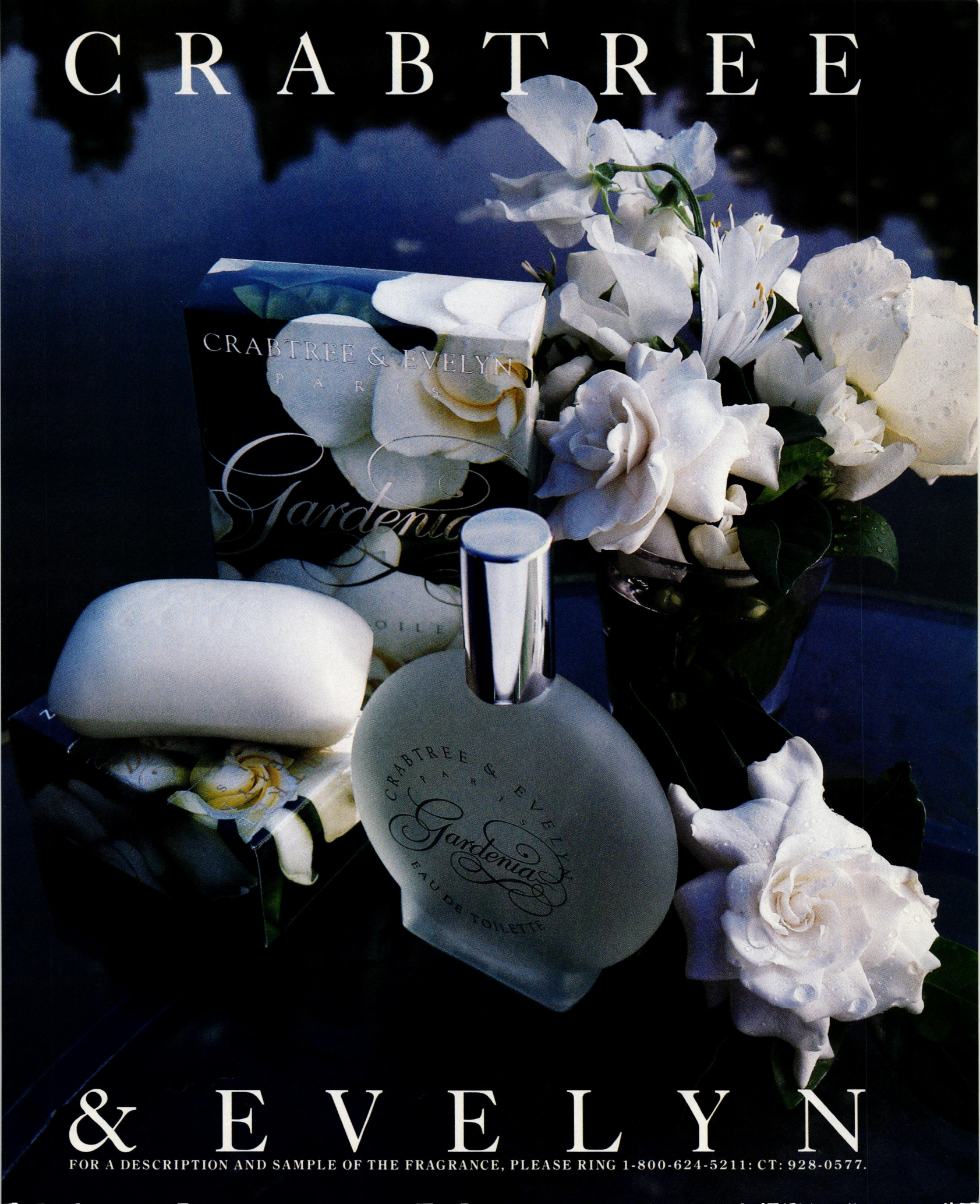
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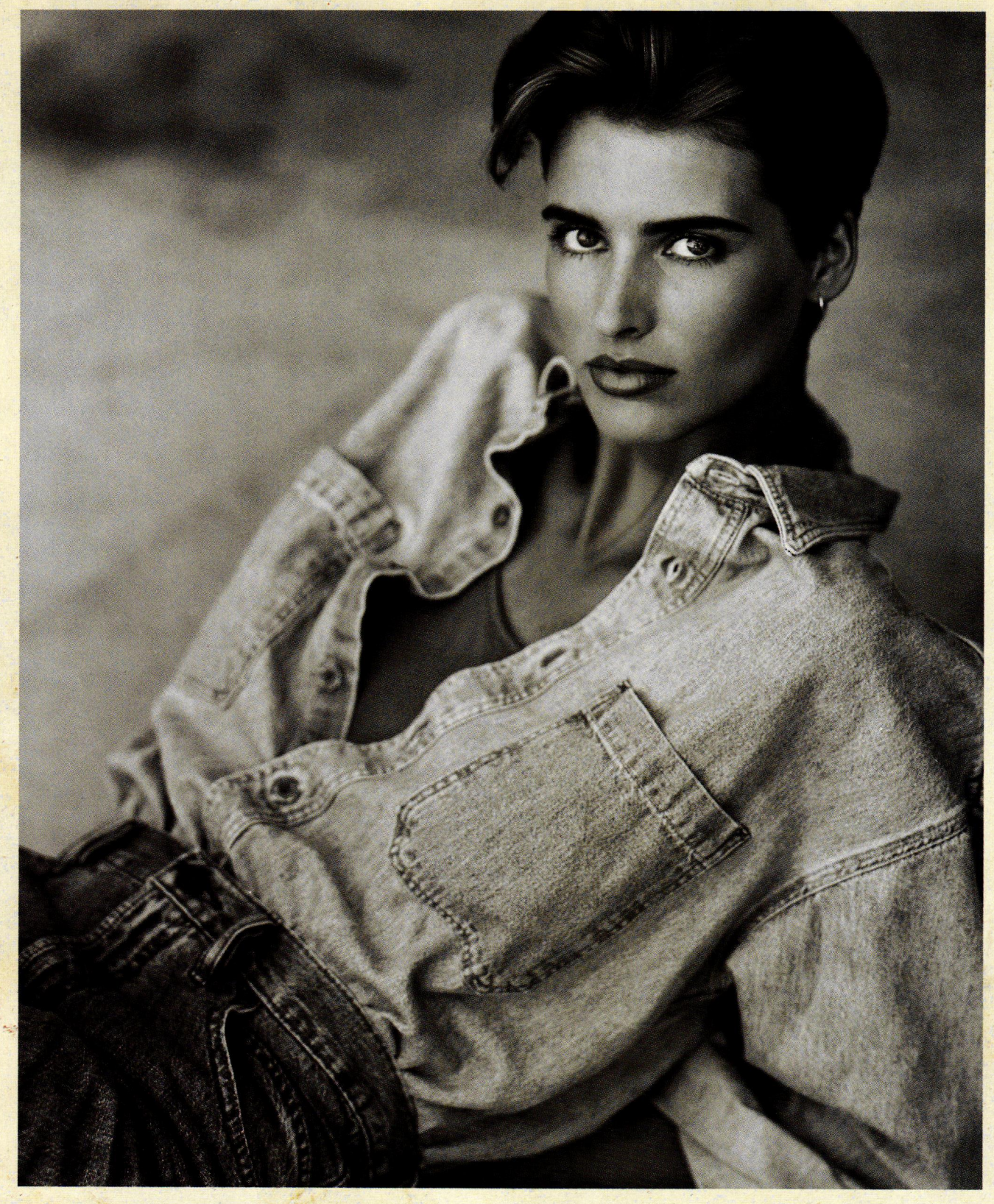

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notes

HG REPORTS ON THE NEW AND THE NOTEWORTHY By Eric Berthold

DAVID FRAZIER

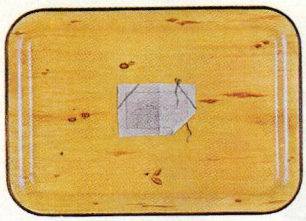
Anya Larkin designs, paints, and gilds wallpaper borders that wrap any room in sheer luxury. With a seven-year background in painted fabrics and wallpapers, the New York artist was eager to explore a new technique when a client asked her for a hand-designed border. For her first collection of gilt borders, appropriately entitled Gilded Age, Larkin has brushed, rubbed, and burnished leaves of silver, 22-kt gold, and copper into bold circles and squares, flashy diamonds, and jazzy checkers. With their glimmering detailing, these timeless geometric motifs dazzle the eye. "The designs of the borders are classical and yet very contemporary," says Larkin. "And the gilt really jumps right off the wall at you—it's a spectacular effect." Available to the trade in New York at Luten Clarey Stern (212) 838-6420; in Chicago at Holly Hunt (312) 661-1900; and in Los Angeles at Randolph & Hein (213) 855-1222. For other showrooms call (212) 532-3263.

notes

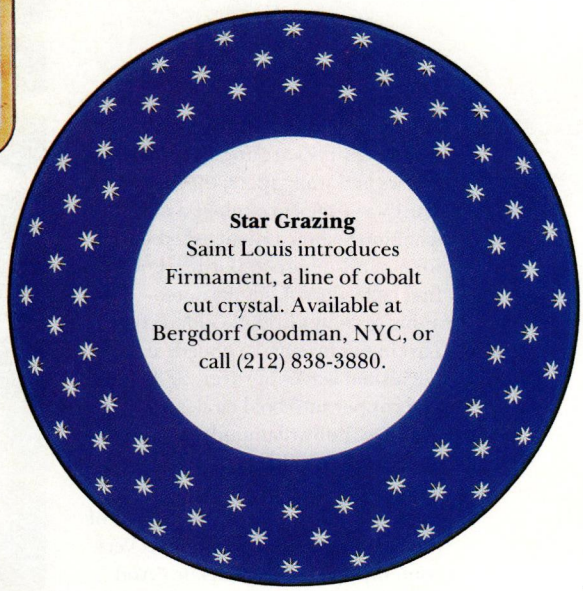
Sign Language
Sara Midda's impressions of signposts (*left*) and other French iconography are compiled in *South of France: A Sketchbook* (Workman, $17.95).

Decking the Halls Atlanta's top decorators create Christmas at historic Callanwolde (*above*), Nov. 27–Dec. 12, at 980 Briarcliff Rd., Atlanta; (404) 872-5338.

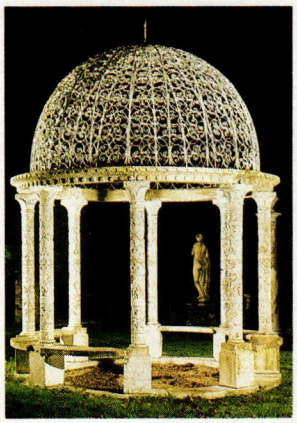
Simon Says Grace
Czech artisan Borek Sipek has created Simon (*below*), a versatile silver-plate centerpiece, $1,200. Available at Driade, 212 East 57th St., NYC (212) 888-5375.



Breakfast in Bed
Custom-made and hand-painted trompe l'oeil trays of tole are available to the trade at Christopher Norman, NYC (212) 879-6559.



Star Grazing
Saint Louis introduces Firmament, a line of cobalt cut crystal. Available at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC, or call (212) 838-3880.



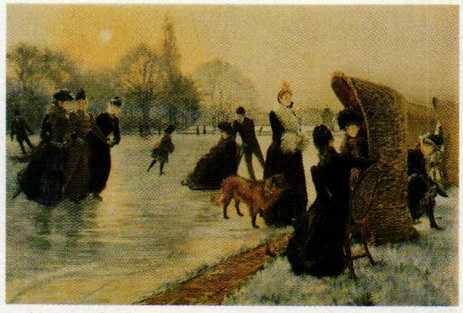
Near Pavilions
A 17th-century Italian gazebo (*right*) is among the many fine period garden ornaments and architectural antiques available from Crowther of Syon Lodge, London Road, Isleworth, Middlesex; (81) 560-7978.

Historical Figures Hand-painted reproduction 17th-century dummy boards (*below*) are at Branca, 65 West Illinois St., Chicago; (312) 822-0751.

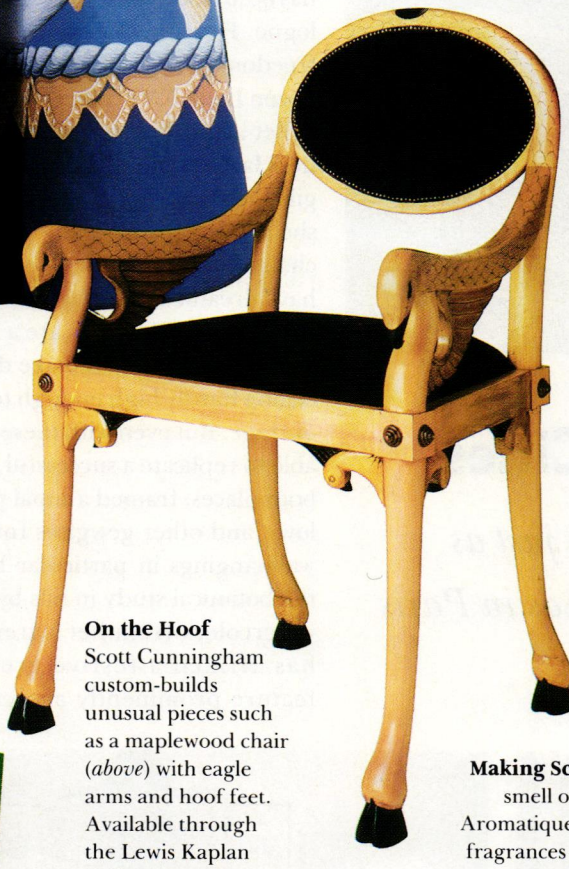
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MONICA STEVENSON; MONICA RANGNE; MONICA STEVENSON (2) GWENDOLEN CATES; NC; MONICA STEVENSON

Going for Baroque Sheridan's Bernini cotton bed linens (*above*), $29–$160, feature cherubs, medallions, and twisted rope. Call (800) 777-9563.

In with the Old Potter Ann Agee updates the blue and white (*above*) with a mix of classical and contemporary images at Objects Gallery in Chicago; (312) 664-6622.

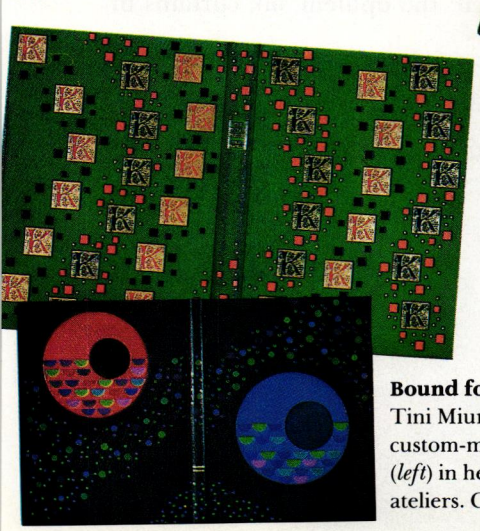


Winter Idyll Stephanie Hoppen in New York and London is featuring 19th-century heliogravure prints (*above*). Call (212) 753-0175.



On the Hoof Scott Cunningham custom-builds unusual pieces such as a maplewood chair (*above*) with eagle arms and hoof feet. Available through the Lewis Kaplan Gallery, London; (71) 589-3108.

Making Scents Mario Buatta brings the smell of honeysuckle indoors for Aromatique's new line of decorative room fragrances (*below*). Available nationwide.



Bound for Glory German-born Tini Miura practices the art of custom-made bibliophile binding (*left*) in her Tokyo and New York ateliers. Call (212) 995-5822.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MONICA STEVENSON; LARS KLOVE; MICHAEL HOPPEN; MONICA STEVENSON; INC; KIM WILLIAMS

A Tale of Two Cities

YSL's Joy Henderiks is just as much at home in New York as in Paris

BY JAMES SERVIN

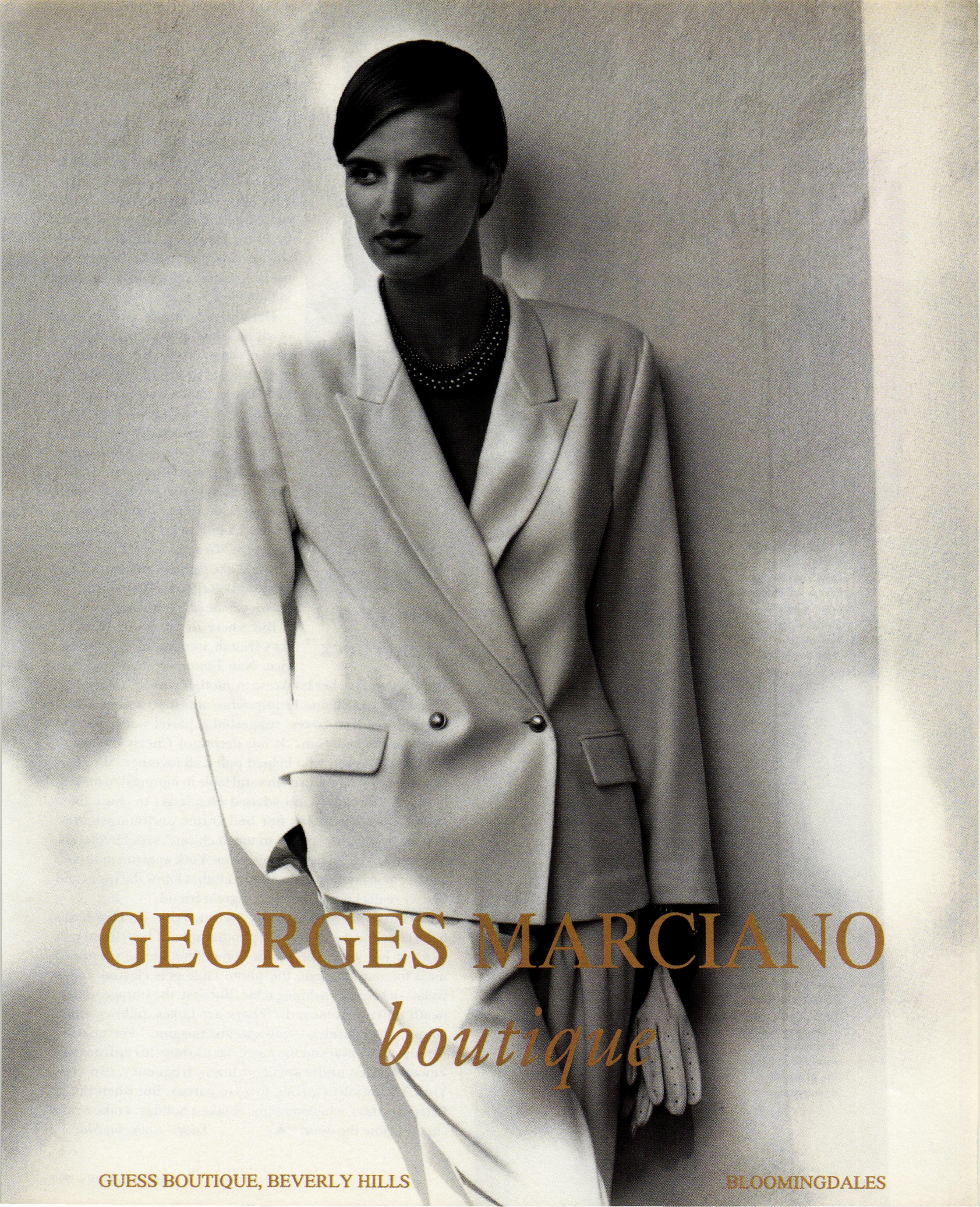
At her home base in Paris, Joy Henderiks entertains friends with buffets of pot-au-feu, poularde grand-mère, and artichoke terrine, prepared by a private French chef. In New York, these same guests are more likely to make do with Chinese takeout on her living room sofa. No one seems to mind. Least of all Henderiks, senior vice president in charge of corporate image for the Yves Saint Laurent group in America, whose responsibilities recently required her to take a pied-à-terre on Fifth Avenue with a view of Central Park. "I knew long before I made the move that I wasn't getting a castle in England," Henderiks chuckles. But she did have a minimalist aerie in mind at first. "I wanted everything very American—bright and white," she recalls. "Maybe a touch of gilt here and there but no dark furniture like my apartment in Paris. Then what happens? I end up with two apartments that are very much alike."

In some respects, yes. For the past fifteen years, Henderiks has occupied a five-room flat in Paris close to the Bois de Boulogne. Here, high ceilings and spacious rooms give her the freedom to lavish ivy and wisteria where she likes, to have a dozen Louis XVI chairs and a grand iron and porcelain chandelier in the dining room, to place an eighteenth-century Chinese lacquer table in the living room, a Regency console and gilt-wood mirror in the hallway, and to experiment with what she considers a few radical touches: "I covered the Regency chairs in green suede—something my mother would never have dreamed of doing."

In New York things are a bit more "cozy," to use Henderiks's term. "I have to make do with two cubicle rooms with a ceiling hardly high enough to stand under," she says in mock outrage. But even with these limitations, Henderiks has been able to replicate a successful motif in her Paris apartment: in both places, framed animal prints, lacquer boxes, books, pillows, and other gewgaws form artful still lifes. Many of the wallhangings in particular have sentimental value, such as the botanical study in oils by her grandfather and the floral watercolors from her parents' house; to these Henderiks has affixed a festive green moiré bow. Lush fabrics feature prominently as well: the opulent silk curtains in

NEW YORK: Henderiks, above, on her sleigh bed from MAC II, under a wall swag she made out of a Clarence House chintz. Far left: Her entry hall/dining room. Left: Animal prints and watercolors line the living room. Details see Resources.

MICHAEL MUNDY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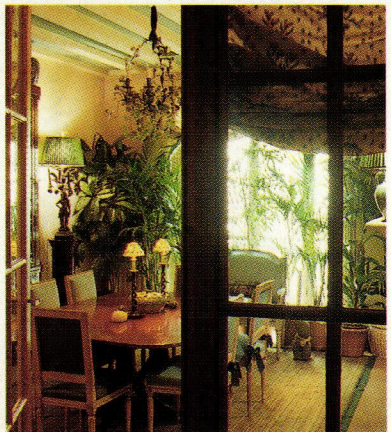
PARIS: Henderiks, above, in Yves Saint Laurent, at her faux bois front entry. Right: A trompe l'oeil cat perches on a living room bookshelf.

"In New York, it's my job to go out. In Paris, I take a rain check"

Silk curtains and a valance made from paisley fabric lend courtly elegance to the Paris living room, above. Right: A view through French doors into the plant-filled dining room.



Paris are the color, she says, of "faded tomato." In New York a swag of Clarence House chintz frames an elegant English mirror placed over a Syrie Maugham sleigh bed, which is upholstered in a matching linen. The swag is supported by a hand-carved gold-leafed arrow rod made by Clare Mosley, a Parisian artisan whose wooden tassels Henderiks uses as paperweights and curtain ties in both New York and Paris.

Henderiks surrendered her vision of an all-white living space in Manhattan when she began accumulating furniture that didn't quite fit the bill. "It was totally unconscious. Everything I've always loved kept catching my eye. Finally, when I got a few things," she says, gesturing to the Gothic revival desk, the English footstools, and the French modern lacquer table in the living room, "I realized I had to go the dark furniture way." In a big way. "I hate little things. I like eighteenth-century English and Regency furniture. It's massive," she says admiringly.

But where to put it all? Henderiks's friends stepped in to offer advice. Nan Kempner suggested that Henderiks move her bookcase to another corner "to open up the room a bit." Blaine Trump, who came for tea when everything was still in boxes, suggested a pastel wallpaper "to brighten the bedroom." It was decorator Chessy Rayner of MAC II, however, who helped pull it all together. She rearranged the living room chairs and table in minutes "to make it look less railroad-y" and advised Henderiks to chose linen rather than chintz for her bed frame and lampshades. "Chessy was right, linen is so much chicer," says Henderiks, who also notes, "in decorating a New York apartment there's an enormous system to deal with. I didn't know the ropes and Chessy really helped me. She's a great friend."

Of course, she's one of many. In New York, Joy Henderiks has a table filled with framed photographs of her closest pals to greet her when she comes home. Should she prepare a meal for one of them, the photo table gets cleared and—voilà!—it becomes a dining table. But first, the storage underneath must be removed. "There are boxes, pillows, extra lamps," she confides—"you can just imagine." Fortunately, Henderiks is always on the move, far too busy to confront this Fibber McGee underworld with any frequency. "In New York, it's my job to go out, to go to parties. But when I'm in Paris," she says, a bit longingly, "I take a holiday. I take a rain check. I close the door." ▲ *Editor: Catherine Marron*

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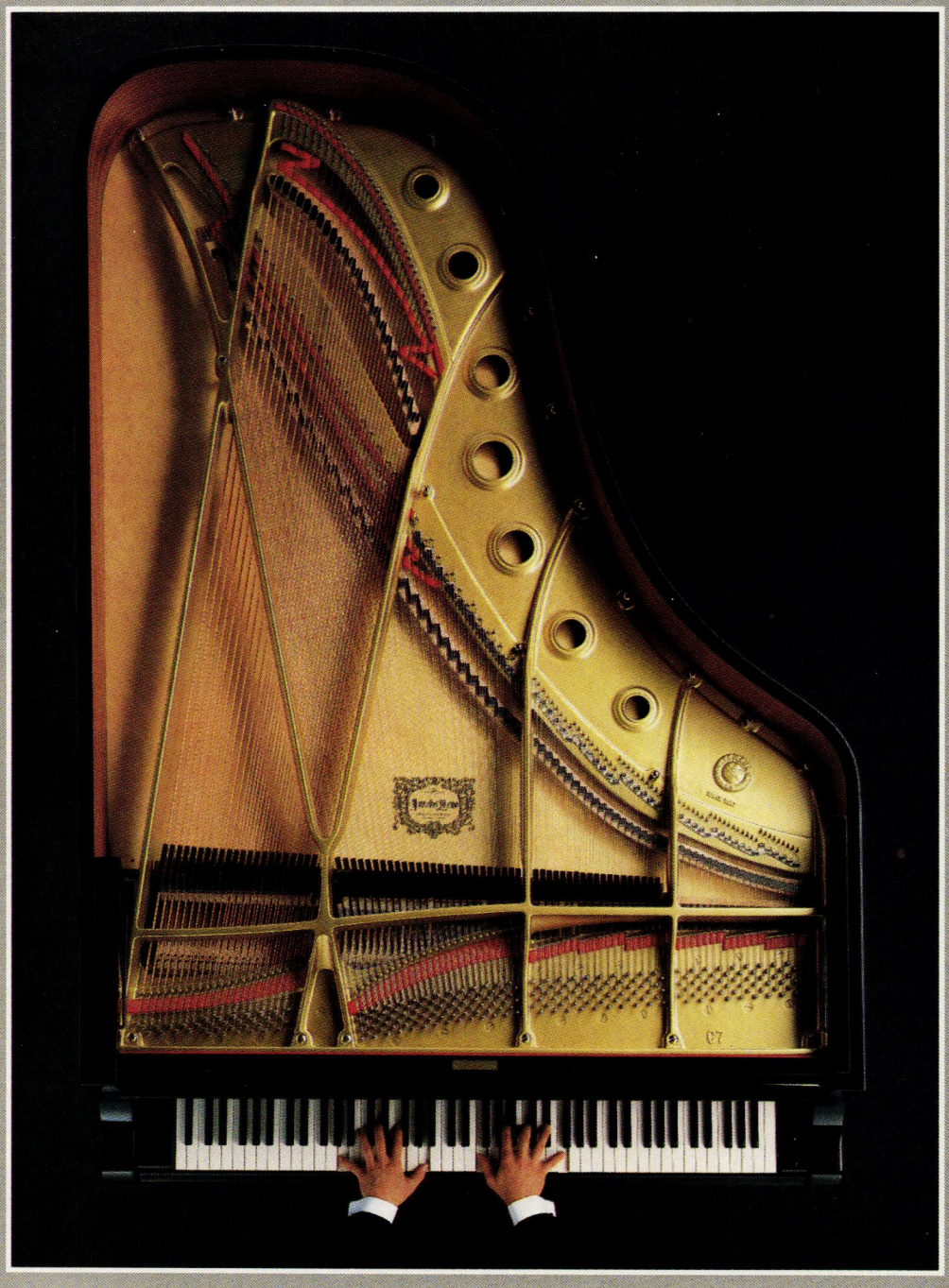

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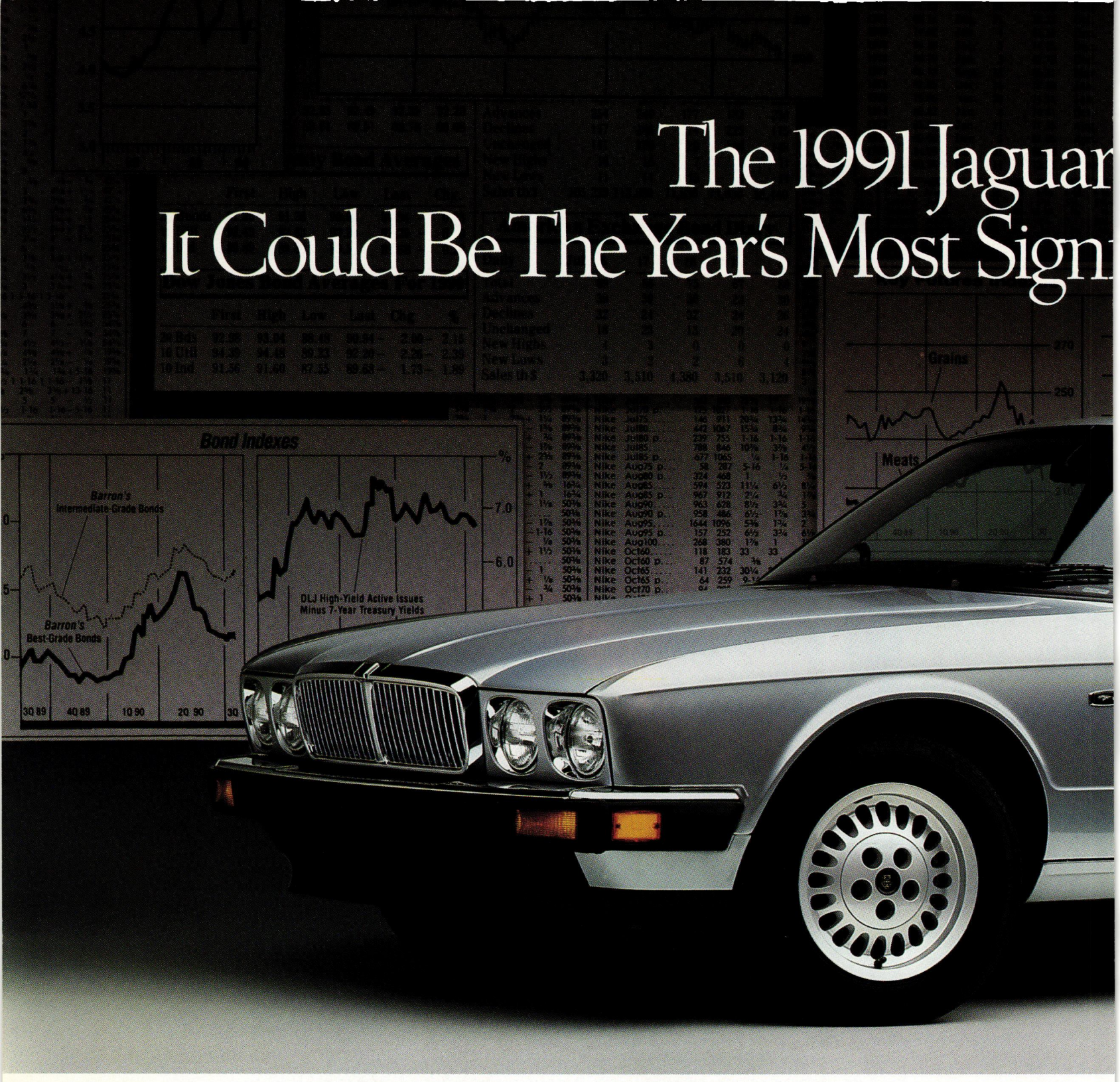

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Falling for Zimbabwe

The colonial grandeur of the Victoria Falls Hotel lures travelers to an African oasis

BY TED CONOVER

Rhodesia now exists only in out-of-date atlases, but where the new Zimbabwe borders Zambia, where the great Zambezi spills into a staggering chasm, there remains an elegant outpost of the old order that serves the present well. With the Victoria Falls Hotel, whitewashed and rising like a palace from the woods, the Africans have mainly gotten right what we managed to botch at Niagara Falls.

From its expansive terraces and gardens, one can follow the roar and the towering clouds of mist on a path to one of the scenic wonders of the world. A dense canopy covers the path, the temperature drops, the humidity climbs, and monkeys scream on the approach to Victoria Falls, first shown to explorer David Livingstone in 1855 by tribesmen who knew the falls as Mosi-oa-tunya—the Smoke That Thunders. "Scenes so lovely," wrote Livingstone, "must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight." Flight and falling are ideas that come easily to one perched on the precipitous cliffs, watching as nature pulls the rug out from underneath the Zambezi.

The builders of the hotel tried to realize a human complement to this natural grandeur. Two front wings angle forward to welcome and enclose guests arriving in the semicircular driveway; inside, everything is outsized early twentieth century elegance. Black and white checkered tiles in the foyer yield to wide green carpeted hallways and twin curving staircases up to the rooms. There is the Livingstone restaurant—with dishes like the Cucumber Canoe and the Crocodile Cascades, a big lizard tail poached in champagne with prawn sauce—and the I Presume bar.

After stopping at the grand braii (barbecue) one evening on the terrace, I elected to skip the nightly show of native dance in favor of the casino down the road. I lost a little money but still came out of Victoria Falls ahead. On a roundabout walk back to the hotel I happened to glance up at the three-quarter moon through the pillars of mist from the falls and saw my first lunar rainbow. (Victoria Falls Hotel, PO Box 10, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe; 800-448-8355) ▲

The grand Victoria Falls Hotel, above right, is a short hike from the falls, seen in a 1904 photograph, above, one of the seven natural wonders of the world. Left: A view from the hotel of the bridge over the Zambezi and mist from the falls.

FROM TOP: ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY; UNIREP; BUD LAZARUS

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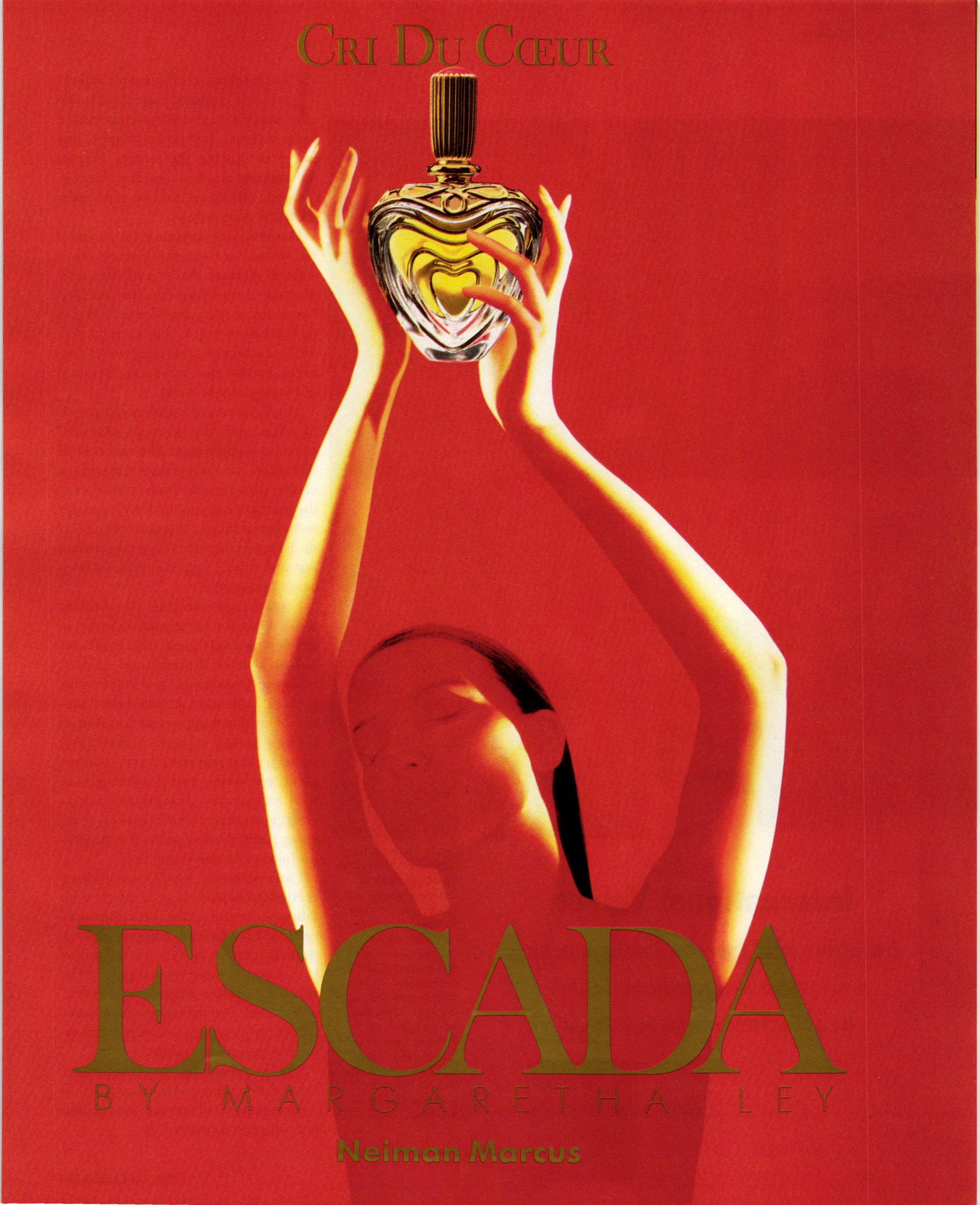
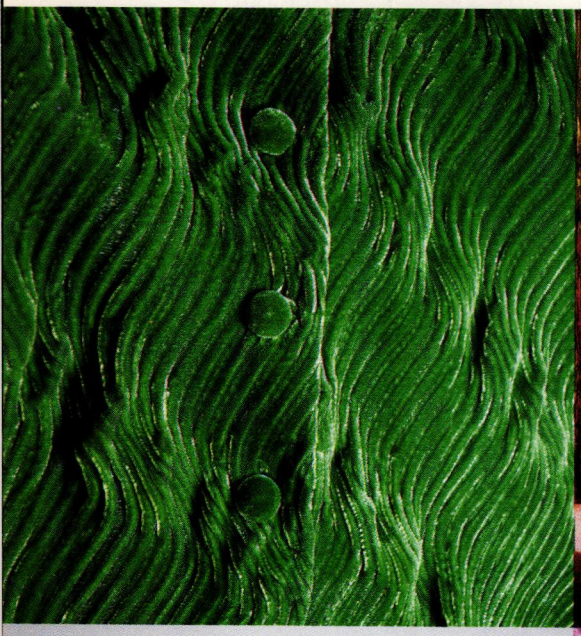
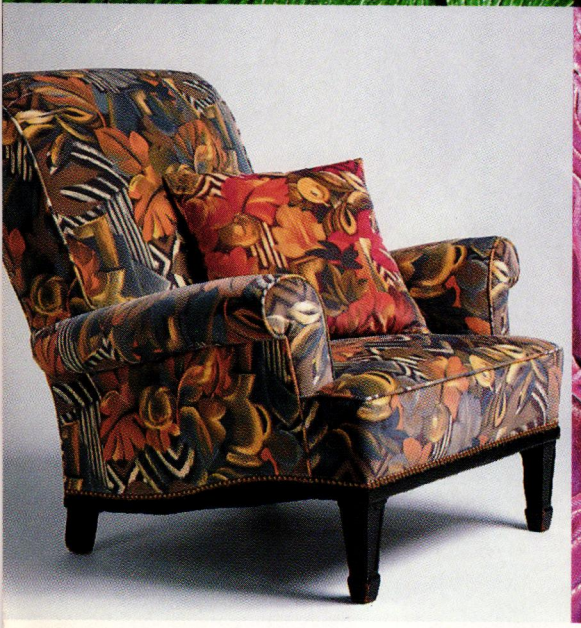


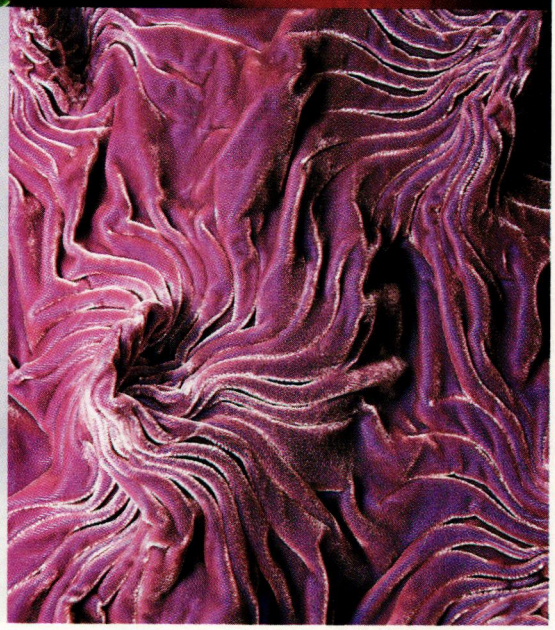
ESCADA

BY MARGARETHA LEY

Neiman Marcus



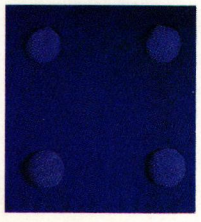




International Velvet

European and American designers give a new twist to a traditional fabric

BY HEATHER SMITH MACISAAC



In the hands of Nigel Atkinson, velvet takes the shape of a sea creature, above, and waves, top left. Top: Dialogica's quilted wall and sofa with pillows. Buccaneer's hat and riding coat by Selina Blow. Above left: A chair and pillow covered in Noa Noa velvet from Yves Gonnet. Left: Velvet-like rug in wool and silk by Charles Pfister/Pamela Babey for V'Soske. Details see Resources.

Interior design is not simply following clothes design these days; in the case of velvet, decoration is hot on fashion's heels. Just as stretch velvet leggings are hitting the streets, bright, painted, and crushed (or otherwise convoluted) velvets are settling onto sofas and climbing the walls.

Contemporary furniture fairs around the world have recently yielded velvet sofas in glorious shades and shapes by Massimo Iosa-Ghini for Moroso (Milan), a throne in crushed velvet by Marco de Gueltzl for V.I.A. (Paris), and a second collection of multihued velvet furniture by Monique and Sergio Savarese of Dialogica (New York).

The Savareses mix and match panels of velvet, applying up to six saturated colors to a single sofa. The rear wall of their shop, in a quilted diamond pattern of olive green crushed velvet, testifies to the partners' continuing devotion to this soft vibrant fabric. "Because of the way the light hits the nap, you get more than just one color," says Monique. "And it ages so gracefully."

London textile designer Nigel Atkinson is doing for velvet what Fortuny, in developing a tight pleat, did for silk. Atkinson's three-dimensional effects, achieved by bonding the velvet with polyurethane, have attracted the attention of fashion designers such as Romeo Gigli—who was seduced by descriptive patterns like jellyfish, wave, bamboo pleat, edelweiss, and mushroom—as well as interior designers such as Georges Andraos, who fashioned an inviting padded cell of velvet for the British Interior Design Exhibition.

Closer to home, Yves Gonnet has recently doubled the range of velvets in his fabric house and added the first printed velvet to his collection. Called Noa Noa, the lively pattern looks as if it could have been hand-painted by Gauguin. "The pile of the velvet subdues the colors," says Gonnet, "so that the pattern, taken from a rather vivid watercolor, is still exotic but the effect is subtle."

Subtle or smashing, the classic material has clearly outlasted the days when, as Atkinson says, "all you saw was the boring plain velvet curtain." ▲

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ANDY KNIGHT; DAVID FRAZIER; ANDY KNIGHT; DAVID FRAZIER (2)

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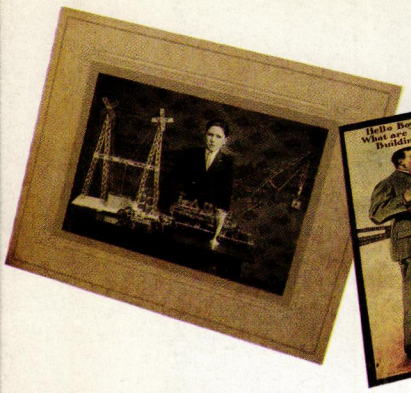
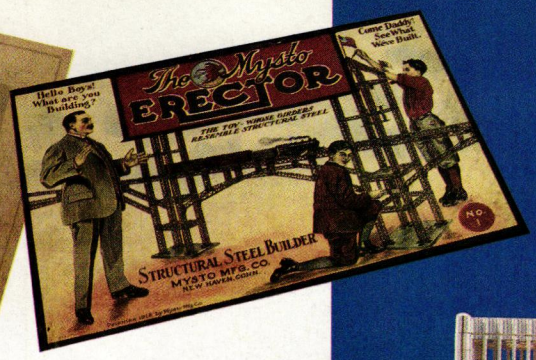
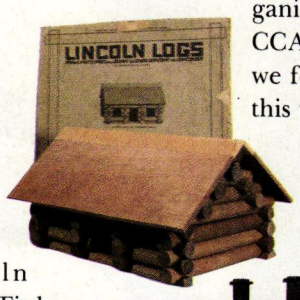




Buildings in a Box

An exhibition explores the history of modern architecture through Lincoln Logs, Erector sets, and Tinkertoys

BY PILAR VILADAS



An early Erector set owner proudly poses with his construction, top left. Top center: The Mysto Erector set. Top right: American Skyline. Above right: A cabin of Lincoln Logs and its ancestor, the Novelty Playhouse: The House That Jack Built.

For many people the mention of building blocks, Lincoln Logs, Erector sets, or Tinkertoys instantly evokes happy memories of hours spent absorbed in the construction of some towering skyscraper, cozy cabin, or imaginary city. Few people realize, however, that architectural toys such as these have a fascinating history—one that reflects the development of modern Western architecture.

This history is the subject of "Buildings in Boxes," an exhibition at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal which runs through March and showcases nineteen objects from the CCA's collection of over 300 architectural toys and games. The collection was acquired earlier this year from Norman Brosterman, a New Yorker with an architecture degree who became hooked on the toys when he found a Bilt-E-Z skyscraper set at an antiques store in the Catskills nine years ago.

"It is the most complete assemblage of architectural toys and games in existence, covering the early nineteenth century to the 1960s," explains CCA exhibition coordinator Brooke Hodge, who organized the show with librarian Rosemary Haddad. "The CCA already had some architectural toys in its collection, and we felt that these were not only interesting objects but that this was an appropriate place to house them. The toys also have a wide appeal and a strong educational aspect."

Indeed, the toys mirror the progress of our industrial society. A German toy village from 1800 is composed of crudely hand-carved blocks while the American Toy Village of 1875 shows how machine-milled wood blocks could be produced in large numbers, in this case to mimic some of the major structures in Springfield, Massachusetts, home of Milton Bradley, the toy's manufacturer. By the 1950s, Plasticville, U.S.A., offered children such components in a modern material and for newer building types, such as the motel, reflecting America's growing reliance on the automobile.

Some of the objects comment on building technology. The c. 1880 Novelty Playhouse: The House That Jack Built was made of long wooden blocks, scored to look like stone, that interlocked at the corners like traditional log buildings. This method was imitated more directly by Lincoln Logs, the 1920 invention of John Lloyd Wright, son of Frank Lloyd Wright—who was himself known for touting the virtues of the German Froebel blocks, which are also in the collection.

Other toys, such as the 1914 Mysto Erector set, the 1924 Bilt-E-Z ("As the Boy Builds the Toy, the Toy Builds the Boy"), and the 1957 American Skyline, reflected the growth of skyscraper technology. And others, like the small gray and black painted blocks designed by Josef Hoffmann around 1920 to make a factory, are simply beautiful to look at. The CCA plans to show more of the collection in future exhibitions every year or every other year—timed, appropriately enough, for the holiday season. ▲

ELLIOTT KAUFMAN

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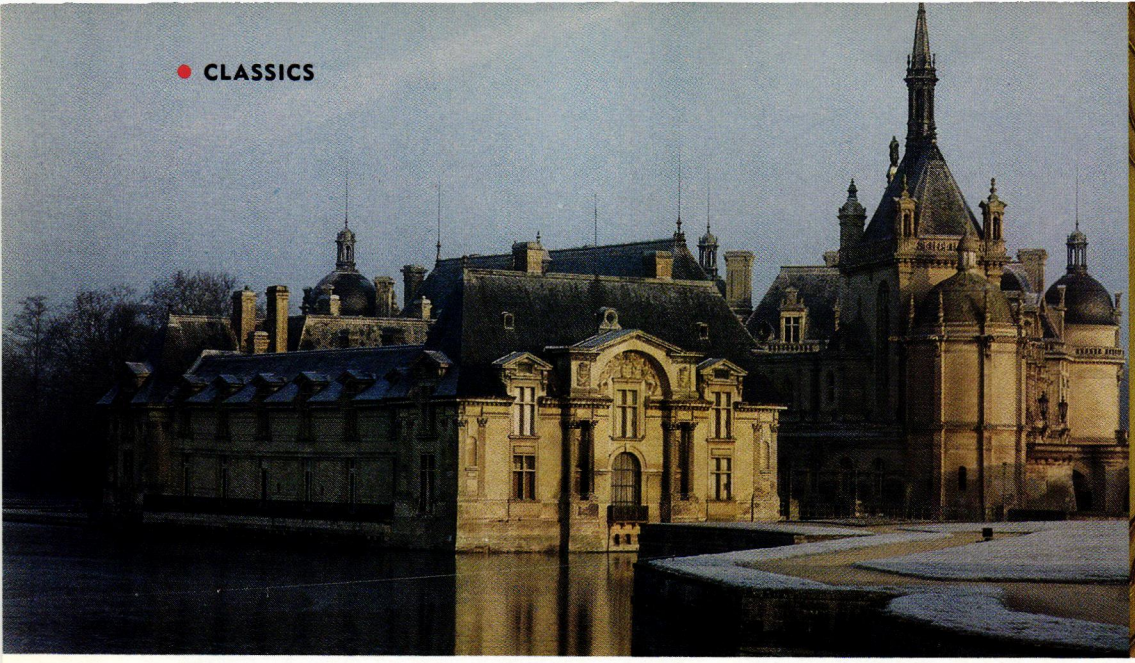

The Haunted Château

Shades of a tragic past people the romantic domain of Chantilly BY PRINCE MICHAEL OF GREECE

After the fall of Napoleon the Condés, a princely family belonging to the cadet branch of the royal house of Bourbon, were restored to full possession of their estate at Chantilly—or what was left of it. For Chantilly, once a lavish gathering place of the ancien régime, was by then little more than a shadow of past splendor. The Revolution had obliterated the Grand Château, the adjoining Petit Château stood abandoned, and the formal gardens laid out by Le Nôtre were overgrown beyond recognition.

Both tenacious and rich, the Condés set about piecing their property together and made the Petit Château habitable once again. But the last head of the family, the prince de Condé, lacked the heart to complete the task—the more so because his only son had been shot by Bonaparte on a trumped-up charge. After the prince himself was found hanged under mysterious circumstances in 1830, his huge fortune passed to the eight-year-old Henri, duc d'Aumale, a younger son of a nephew, Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans, who had recently been crowned king.

Aumale eventually spent a few years at Chantilly as a young man with his bride, princesse Caroline de Bourbon-Siciles, for whom several rooms in the Petit Château were redecorated. But in 1848 another revolution drove Louis-Philippe out of France, and the duke was obliged to follow his father into exile. Aumale did not see Chantilly again until 1871, when he returned to France after the fall of Napoleon III.

Almost immediately the ill-starred property the duke had acquired as a boy became one of his great passions. The architect Honoré Daumet was called in to rebuild the Grand Château in the Renaissance style, the surrounding demesne was restored to its former glory, furniture by Riesener and other celebrated cabinetmakers was installed, and Aumale collected paintings, drawings, books, and illuminated manuscripts with the single-mindedness of a true Orléans. Sometimes his quarry would be a unique piece he had been stalking for years—a Raphael, a Van Dyck, a Watteau, an Ingres—at other times he would carry off an entire collection. Aumale became a legendary figure at the auction houses, while his agents scurried around Europe on voyages of acquisition. Before long the duke's collection of rare manuscripts, which included the now priceless *Les Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry*, was the most important of its kind in France.

The prices Aumale was prepared to pay accurately reflect contemporary taste. For example, to obtain a single painting by the nineteenth-century academic Meissonier, *Les Cuirassiers de 1805*, he put up as much money as he had disbursed to buy three hundred enchanting Renaissance drawings by

Beyond the moated 16th-century Petit Château, top, rise cupolas and spires of the 19th-century Grand Château built by the duc d'Aumale. Top right: The duchess's bedroom, 1845. Above: Condé portraits in the duke's salon. Right: German bronzes on his desk.

PASCAL CHEVALLIER

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An equestrian in the Petite Singerie apes ancien régime style.

The moat reflects gilded light into a magic corner few visitors see

Jean and François Clouet. Chantilly was soon bursting with masterpieces, so much so that the Grand Château, now the centerpiece of the Musée Condé, was given over entirely to exhibiting them amid marble, ormolu, and exotic boiserie. In his will Aumale forbade the least change in the arrangement of his collection, with the result that Chantilly today is a rare example of nineteenth-century museology, virtually intact.

Besides amassing his collection Aumale won a seat in the National Assembly, hunted stags with his own pack at Chantilly, and wrote a number of books on history, which earned him election to the Académie Française. In contrast to the opulence that surrounded the duke as a public figure, his personal style was modest to a degree. He lived in a seven-room apartment on the ground floor of the Petit Château. His own bedroom was almost monastic, though there was a tiny rococo boudoir lined with exquisite Louis XV singeries, depicting monkeys in contemporary costume. Other rooms were refitted in eighteenth-century style by Eugène Lami, a favorite painter of the Orléans clan and a great exponent of historical reconstructions. Because this apartment is level with the moat, the surface of the water diffuses the sun's rays, gently gilding the light that lends the rooms an impalpable charm.

Few visitors enter this magical corner of Chantilly, parts of which are closed to the public. Perhaps for this reason something of the past still lingers, a hint of the people who once lived here. The most luxurious room is the bedroom of the duchesse d'Aumale, by all accounts a sweet unassuming creature. Her white and gold chamber is one of the rooms redone in 1845. Though the sun has faded the silk walls in her round Louis XVI–style salon, they are still a vibrant purple. In the duke's salon, family portraits hang against red damask. A more or less secret door leads off the dining room to another apartment, once the quarters of the comtesse de Clinchamp, whom the duke was rumored to have taken in morganatic wedlock after the duchess's death.

When Aumale died in 1897, Chantilly and its treasures were bequeathed to the Institut de France. Believing that he had inherited the place in consequence of a crime, the duke was loath to pass on such a tainted legacy to his descendants. Indeed, he blamed its curse for the deaths of all his children during his lifetime. It was his wish that one of his nephews should take the title of his favorite son, to keep his memory alive; accordingly, Jean d'Orléans became duc de Guise. He was my maternal grandfather, a personal link to Chantilly's long family history. ▲

The duke in exile, above, c. 1860. Top: Louis XVI motifs were adapted for the duchess's 1845 salon. Above left: In the Petite Singerie, a rococo boudoir, c. 1735, panels show monkeys engaged in human pursuits.

The Musée Condé is open every day except Tuesday. For further visitors information: Musée Condé, Château de Chantilly BP 243, 60631 Chantilly CEDEX, France; 44-57-08-00.

BOTTOM RIGHT: ROGER-VIOLLET. OTHERS: PASCAL CHEVALLIER

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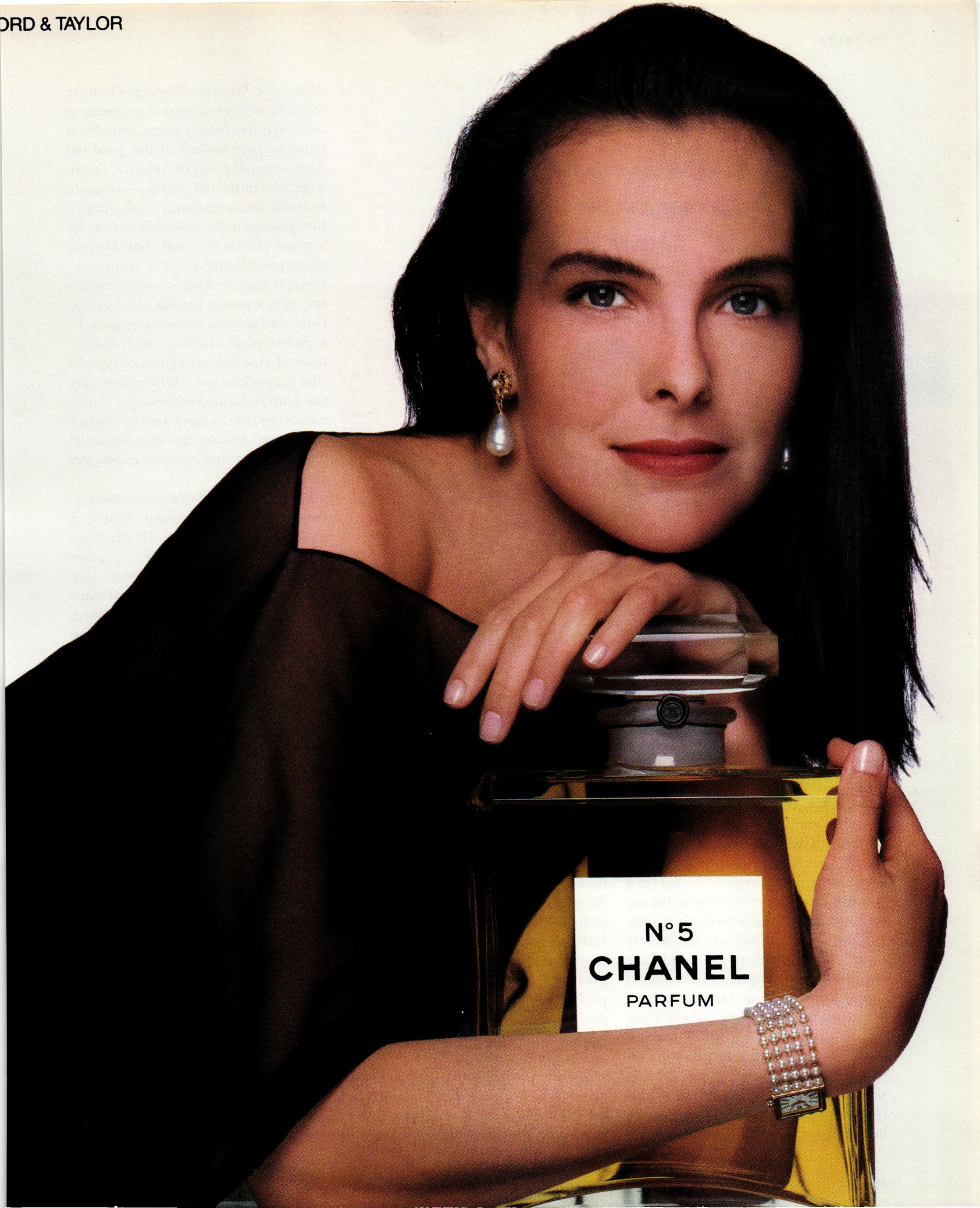

India's Art of Chaos

Excess is an essential element of decorating in the Indian house

BY GITA MEHTA

DORVAT BEN-NAHUM

At the beginning of this century a young Indian lancer from the kingdom of Jodhpur was received by the emperor of Japan at his palace in Kyoto. The lancer was horrified by the austerity of the ruler of the Chrysanthemum Throne. "Except for a painted screen at the very end of the audience chamber," he recorded in his diary, "the audience hall was completely *empty*." The Indian's shock would have been entirely appropriate, according to the British Indologist William Archer, who describes the Indian aesthetic as being of "gargantuan excess." There are those who say that American culture today, in its acquisitive drive, suffers from similar excess. But excess in the richest country in the world differs from excess in one of the poorest—and in their respective homes this difference is maintained by the golden rope of decor.

The lancer might have understood the Zen principle behind the emperor's decor since the word Zen is a corruption of the Sanskrit *dhyana,* meaning awareness. But to achieve awareness through the contemplation of a solitary object is, to the Indian, only tunnel vision. Not for India the tranquillity of gazing at the glaze on a single perfect pot. For India, the satisfaction lies in finding a pattern in the glazes on a hundred pots in varying stages of disintegration. Such an attitude has made the Indian home a *mess.* The householder's delight, perhaps, but the decorator's nightmare. What the Westerner hides in the attic, to be examined in moments of nostalgia, the Indian keeps proudly at hand because notions of the good old days—or, in the case of America, reconstructions of the old country—are alien to India. So on an Indian wall a miniature painted in the sixteenth century by a master artist at the court of the Moghul emperor will hang next to a group photograph taken to commemorate a meeting with a minor British official, and both will fade into obscurity against the lurid colors of a calendar with illustrations of ripe Indian deities or equally ripe Indian film stars. While this makes the Indian home interesting, it also means the Indian home fails to "make a statement," lacking the discrimination that in Europe and America constitutes an aesthetic.

But then Ananda Coomaraswamy, the great scribe of Indian culture, is scathing about aesthetics. He dismisses the aesthete as merely effete, capable only of a passive response. And there is no passivity in the Indian home. It exists in a civilization where eras and cultures are colliding with such force that the home itself is sustained only by an act of will, a stubborn clinging to an idea of order in the midst of disorder, a faith in form in the midst of malfunction. I once overheard a French lady commiserating with a former maharaja as he showed her around his palace. "It's so sad to see it like this," she said sympathetically. "It must have been formidable when it was perfect." Her host looked bewildered. He simply didn't understand the sentiment. The Indian home has never been perfect. It is always in a state of decay and reassembly. And in this mobility lies the essential difference between excess in India and excess in America.

> Beauty coexists with equally heart-stopping awfulness

For a start, mobility in the West is directed upwards. Increased status and wealth confer both the capacity and the necessity for visible improvement, demanding that residences, objects, furniture, paintings become ever more refined, more exclu-

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sive. The American house, recognizably European in origin, offers its owner the added luxury of choosing which element of Europe he wishes to emulate. In the hands of his decorator this luxury is too often taken to an extreme, and the result is a proliferation of rooms frozen in terminal Empire or terminal English country house. Discrimination, in short, is all. Paradoxically, all this excessive discrimination has led, like face-lifts, to a mind-numbing homogeneity.

But Indians cannot afford to remake the world closer to the heart's desire. In contrast to the upward mobility of the West, the Indian home has a sort of amoebic mobility enclosing within itself both its individual history and the history of a civilization which, because it cannot afford to throw things away, absorbs them. Or waits for them to fall apart. Those who have traveled in India will be familiar with high-ceilinged rooms which still retain the iron hoops that once held heavy curtains connected by ropes to small boys in adjacent chambers who pulled at the curtains to stir the summer air. Today between these hoops there often swings an electric fan with wide wooden blades where sparrows nest because the noisy air conditioner listing at an awkward angle beneath a carved window has long since rendered hoops and fans obsolete.

If the Indian home has an aesthetic, then, it is chaos—which enables it to accommodate regional influences as different in their ways as Spain is from Scandinavia, as well as European influences from the long reign of the British Empire and Islamic influences after centuries of Muslim domination. An average Indian bungalow, for instance, will probably have a pillared veranda: traditionally the number of pillars outside a house indicated the eminence of the owner, until the British imported Greek and Roman pillars. Now European decoration and Indian tradition are fused in stucco to support a roof from which is suspended by brass links a traditional Indian swing, facing wrought-iron lawn furniture derived from the European gazebo. Above the pseudo-Palladian doorway hangs a garland of tulsi leaves and marigold blossoms to bless the house.

Inside, Persian carpets will, if it is winter, lie on top of cotton dhurries used in spring, which are removed during the summer heat to reveal stone or marble floors. Such attention to the ground is inevitable in a culture accustomed to taking its shoes off before entering a room. On the Persian carpets will be a variety of furniture, from the cushion-covered platforms on which Indians habitually recline, to the Victorian sofas and chairs on which Englishmen once sat bolt upright, to the art deco remnants from the days when Indians learned the tango. Enclosed courtyards indicate the deep influence of Islam's sequestered women, and in the dining room—itself a British import—platters with the separate containers dictated by Hinduism's caste considerations lie in happy juxtaposition to European china, while in the corner an intricately worked Moghul ewer awaits diners who wish to wash their hands.

Over time, the architecture and artifacts of alien worlds have been made familiar to India through extended use. Possessions are not so much displayed as lurking around, waiting to be used, incontrovertible evidence that when an irresistible force, such as life, meets any immovable object, something's got to give—and in India the something is usually good taste. It is no good asking an Indian, What is that refrigerator doing plugged into that marble wall inlaid with lapis lazuli, because the Indian will only look at you as though you are a cretin and answer, Keeping the water cold.

India's greatest filmmaker, Satyajit Ray, once said that Indians have an infinite tolerance for decay. Certainly, in their houses elements of heart-stopping beauty coexist with elements of equally heart-stopping awfulness. Although such intolerable tolerance occasions gargantuan distress in the visitor, it seems to leave the locals unfazed. Perhaps this is because the Indian looks on his home more as a place to live than as a work of art. The art, if there is one in India, is supposed to lie in the living. ▲

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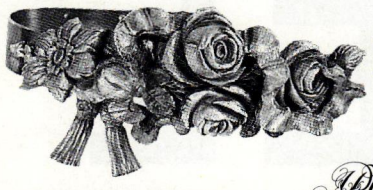

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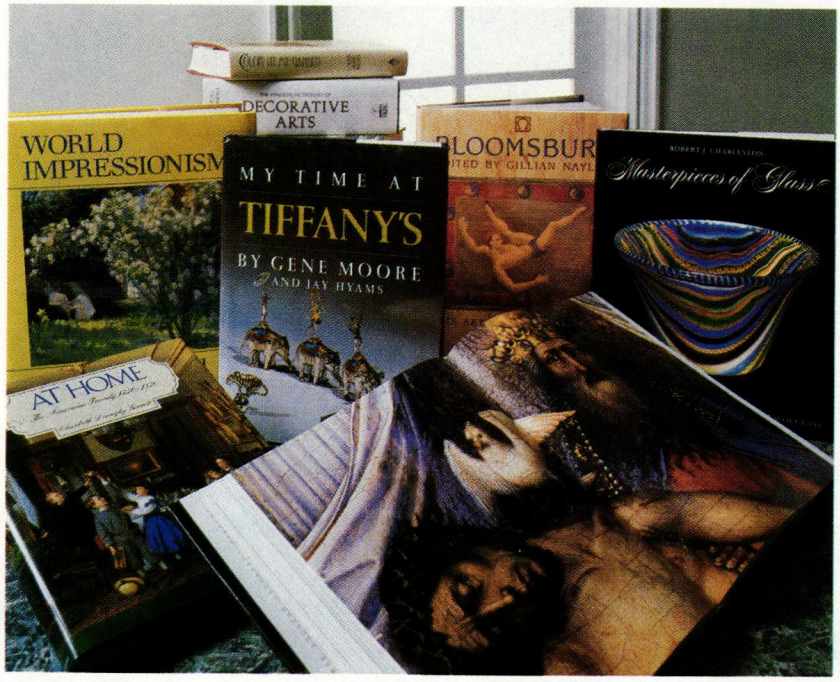
Season's Readings

From coffee-table behemoths to stocking stuffers, HG's editors pick the books they want to write home about



One way we can allay the urge to possess and give things beyond our inevitable limitations of money and space this season is through books. Robert J. Charleston's **Masterpieces of Glass: A World History from the Corning Museum of Glass** (Abrams, $75) is a model of the coffee-table book at its best. Presenting 110 pieces from ancient Egypt to Renaissance Bohemia to the contemporary American craftswoman Toots Zynsky, it depicts each object in a superbly detailed full-page color photo, which faces a concise but exceptionally informative text addressing not just the artifact at hand but also its larger significance within the development of the medium. Technical but accessible, scholarly but diverting, this is a survey one can dip into casually or delve into at length with equal—and considerable—pleasure. **Martin Filler**

In the rage for historical revivals, Swedish neoclassicism has emerged as one of the most seductive decorative styles. The combination of finely burnished wood furniture, luxurious woven silks, and bronze and ormolu mounted objects achieves a mood of lightness, of ornament without excess. Håkan Groth's **Neoclassicism in the North: Swedish Furniture and Interiors, 1770–1850** (Rizzoli, $50) is richly illustrated with photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg. It covers such monuments of the period as the royal palace in Stockholm, Rosendal, Haga, and Gripsholm Castle—and it left me with lots of ideas for how I'd like to live. **Nancy Novogrod**

Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett's **At Home: The American Family, 1750–1870** (Abrams, $49.50) is one of those books that pull back the velvet rope from the period room, dismiss the quaintly costumed guide, and conjure up the voices of long-gone men and women to tell you how everything really was. Garrett, a vice president at Sotheby's, New York, has combed our national attic for inventories, letters, diaries, and manuals that reflect on everything from the best-parlor niceties of draping a piano scarf to keeping wayward children from tipping over chamber pots, and there is broad humor as well as pathos in the accompanying paintings, drawings, and prints. This family portrait is indeed a speaking likeness. **Douglas Brenner**

I always knew that the talents of industrial designer Raymond Loewy were remarkable and, to say the least, wide-ranging. Loewy, as his 1951 autobiography declared, fashioned the shape of things "from lipsticks to locomotives." What **Raymond Loewy: Pioneer of American Industrial Design** (Prestel, $65), a well-illustrated and well-rounded collection of essays edited by Angela Schönberger, fills in is that Loewy's long career was itself every bit as carefully designed and executed as the Avanti car, the Exxon logo, and the Lucky Strike package, all of which made him famous. **Heather Smith MacIsaac**

Bloomsbury: Its Artists, Authors, and Designers (Bulfinch/Little, Brown, $55) pools the artistic, literary, and decorative talents of England's early avant-garde to fresh effect. Editor Gillian Naylor selects from the journals and letters of Roger Fry and Virginia and Leonard Woolf to illuminate modernist paintings by Fry, Vanessa Bell, and Bell's sometime lover Duncan Grant and to resuscitate Charleston, the country house where Maynard Keynes wrote *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* and Bell and Grant decorated just about every available surface in the fanciful style of the Omega Workshops, founded by Fry to ward off "the dull and the stupidly serious." **Peter Haldeman**

If you or someone you care about would like to be walked through a master gardener's garden while being shown how to do it all by yourself, invest in a copy of **Color in My Garden** (Atlantic Monthly Press, $29.95) by Louise Beebe

DAVID FRAZIER

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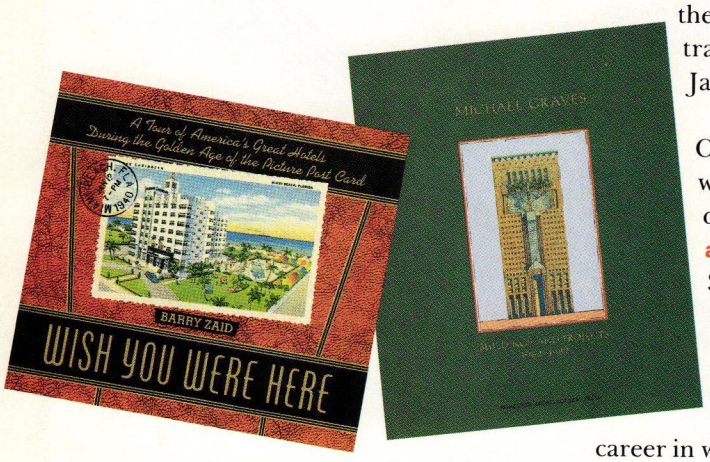
Wilder. Mrs. Wilder's 1918 classic, with its sparkling illustrations by her neighbor Anna Winegar, has been republished, and it is a rare pleasure indeed to find such a practical guide—one that is as useful today as it was seventy-two years ago. Focusing on what one might achieve without the assistance of a staff (unlike some current volumes), the author tells the story of her Pomona, New York, garden in a chronicle that maintains a delicate and effective balance between lyrical observation and practical advice. **Senga Mortimer**

In 1765 Catherine the Great embarked on a nineteen-year quest for European masterworks for her private collection, which resulted in one of the great treasures of the world, the Hermitage. Today the Hermitage houses more than 48,000 paintings and drawings, making it one of the largest permanent collections in existence. In **Paintings in the Hermitage** (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, $95), Colin Eisler discusses 630 of the more important works and offers a personally guided tour of the Winter Palace through the centuries, one that left me dreaming of making that special trip to Leningrad. **Eric Berthold**



Architectural fashions come and go, but Michael Graves's unique brand of neoclassicism prospers. **Michael Graves: Buildings and Projects, 1982–1989** (Princeton Architectural Press, $49.95 cloth; $34.95 paper), a 352-page monograph compiled by Karen Nichols, Patrick Burke, and Caroline Hancock, covers Graves's recent work—over 300 built and unbuilt projects—in drawings, models, and photographs, many of them in color. A must for architecture buffs, not to mention fans of the "Prince of Princeton." **Pilar Viladas**

With over 500 illustrations highlighting relatively obscure impressionist painters around the globe rather than the movement's most famous practitioners in France, **World Impressionism: The International Movement, 1860–1920** (Abrams, $75), edited by Norma Broude, makes a seductive argument for impressionism as a truly international artistic achievement. There are striking similarities in technique, subject matter, and palette among the artists represented here. But cultural, geographic, and aesthetic differences are also readily apparent: I was especially taken by the luminous northern light of the Scandinavian artists and the tranquil scenes painted by the Japanese. **Catherine Marron**

Growing up in New York City, I have always looked forward to the changing window displays at Tiffany's. **My Time at Tiffany's** (St. Martin's Press, $60) is no mere coffee-table book—although visually it fits that bill brilliantly with wonderful photographs recording Gene Moore's legendary career in window display, which included stints at I. Miller, Bergdorf's, and Bonwit Teller before he arrived at Tiffany's. His warm and witty text, written with Jay Hyams, concentrates on Moore's innovative use of everyday objects such as ice-cream cones, eggs, and dirt—a merchandising breakthrough that would forever transform window settings. **Wendy Goodman**

If there was a common thread running through the architecture of the eighties, it was a decorative thread. One of the consequences of this newfound fascination with pattern and ornament was the stampede of architects to the tabletop industry. In the United States, Nan Swid and Addie Powell spearheaded the movement that brought us Michael Graves coffeemakers, Robert Venturi dinnerware, and Ettore Sottsass candlesticks; **Swid Powell: Objects by Architects** (Rizzoli, $35) is their book. *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger attempts to put the Swid Powell story in a larger cultural perspective, and Annette Tapert supplies the running commentary. Not incidentally, the book makes a first-rate catalogue of the company's wares. **Charles Gandee**

Just when I thought I'd seen everything I'd ever wanted to see about art deco, a book on paintings of the period crossed my desk. British art critic Edward Lucie-Smith's **Art Deco Painting** (Clarkson N. Potter, $45) includes elegant if somewhat predictable works by Georgia O'Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, and Paul Cadmus and also offers some wonderful surprises. Tamara de Lempicka's soulful painting *The Refugees* proves that she knew there was more to life than glamour. And lesser-known artists such as Boris Grigoriev, Mariette Lydis, and Ernst Fritsch are given well-deserved attention. **Dana Cowin**

John Fleming and Hugh Honour's **Dictionary of the Decorative Arts** (Penguin, $40) is a book I turn to often for quick facts ("Hipped knee: a type of cabriole chair-leg"); for insider details ("Palissy, Bernard: according to his own account he was reduced to using the floors and furniture to fire his pots—to the fury of his wife"); and for settling office disputes ("Tête-à-tête: an alternative name for (a) a cabaret or (b) a confidant"). First published in 1977, this compact volume has recently been revised and beefed-up; there are now almost 5,000 entries and more than 1,000 illustrations. I always felt suspicious of people who claimed to read dictionaries for pleasure, until I found this one.

At Wig Wam Village 1, three miles east of Horse Cave, Kentucky, the ersatz Indian accommodations come complete with hot and cold water, inner-spring mattresses, and solid hickory furniture. Barry Zaid's **Wish You Were Here** (Crown, $19.95), a perfectly conceived album-style book of hotel postcards, spans the thirties through the fifties, from smart set resorts to roadside motels straight out of *Psycho*. Don't miss the airbrushed shot of the Waldorf-Astoria majestically dwarfing the Chrysler Building. **Margot Guralnick**

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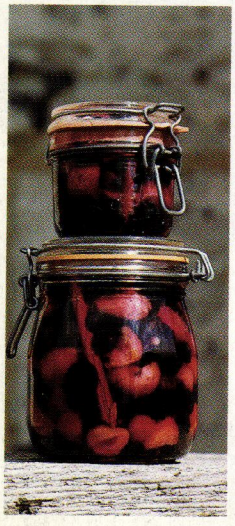
An Alsatian brioche-dough pretzel and a pressed tea brick are tucked amid jams, spices, and other treats in a linen-lined Norman apple basket, left. Below left: Bachelor's jam.

Beyond the Gift Basket

Containers are as extraordinary as the sweets and savories they hold BY CHRISTOPHER PETKANAS



Forget magnums of champagne, fruitcake, and sugar cookies—holiday baskets should brim with originality. To begin with, you need not use a standard wicker basket. A bushel basket, a copper jam basin, an antique footed ironstone bowl, or even a wooden butter barrel can also be filled with out-of-the-ordinary homemade delicacies as well as other surprises. Determined to come up with imaginative alternatives to the proverbial hamper from Fortnum & Mason, I recently looked to my own kitchen, and those of several other cooks, for novel Christmas offerings.

Living in rural Normandy, I decided to use an oval wire-mesh apple-picker's basket—traditional on the farm, but hardly the usual holiday gift container. Into the basket, which is lined with an old embroidered linen pillowcase, goes a brightly glazed brioche-dough pretzel, a customary dessert at New Year's in Alsace. A pomegranate, a French yuletide motif, is included for its mysterious beauty weeks after the holidays, when it has begun to dry in its leathery casing.

Rhubarb appears in my basket as a rich and puckery chutney, the recipe for which is supplied by two American friends living in Paris, Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, authors of a marvelous American cookbook in French. Onions are present in the unlikely form of a sweet-and-sour jam that is excellent with rabbit terrine or with cold sliced turkey the day after Christmas. Macerated confiture de vieux garçon, or bachelor's jam, submerges a mixture of red fruits in eau-de-vie perfumed with a baton of cinnamon and a split vanilla bean. Handwritten recipes for the pretzel and jams are rolled up and tied with tartan ribbon so they, too, become gifts.

If you live in a place that the person receiving the basket is likely to think exotic or romantic, he will enjoy being reminded of it with local foods. In my case that means the hazelnut bonbons called petits péchés, which are packaged in the sort of thin wooden boxes usually reserved for cheeses like Camembert. And, of course, it means anything to do with apples—fifteen-year-old Calvados, sparkling brut farmhouse cider, pommeau (three parts cider and one part Calvados), mellow cider vinegar aged for eight years in casks, and apple-sugar sticks wrapped in paper and mounded in pyramids. Taking the idea of place one step further, I like to slip in a book about my corner of the world, along with vintage postcards.

To fill the inevitable little pockets of space there are licorice sticks (the real thing, roots of the licorice plant), branches of fresh laurel, and cork-stoppered laboratory tubes of spices (one mixture combines star anise with cardamom and turmeric—superb with chicken, veal, fish, or shellfish). A tea "brick," a fragrant block of compressed tea leaves with Chinese decorations in relief, is for scenting the kitchen throughout the year. As a final flourish, I put in something my friend collects—old crystal, perhaps, or creamware or tole. For someone who fancies faience, I could not do better than to include one of the charmingly naive, naturalistic plates of

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Nestled beside jars of pesto and pepper jelly is a soft pair of gardening gloves

Unusual gift "baskets" include a plant pot, a copper jam basin, and a cake mold.

Paris potter Claire de Lavallée.

When the New York writer Emelie Tolley, author of *Herbs* and *Cooking with Herbs*, assembles a holiday bundle, she begins with an antique English trug. This flat "basket" of wooden slats, traditionally used for carrying cut flowers, is lined with moss and filled with treats for and from the garden, some of them wrapped in burlap and tied with raffia. Handsome old canning jars from Tolley's vast flea market collection contain her own sun-dried tomatoes. Covered with pale green olive oil, they're flavored with a sprig or two of basil or even a cutting of rosemary.

Another jar, filled with thick pesto, has a recipe attached for using the basil sauce to make a refrigerated goat cheese torte to serve with cocktails. Pepper jelly, whose counterpoint of hot and sweet complements both chicken and lamb, has dried peppers dangling from its lid, and a bottle of champagne vinegar includes either a handful of peppery nasturtium leaves and flowers or a bouquet of delicate salad burnet. A loaf of rough-textured peasant bread with a touch of cornmeal provides the perfect base for a rubbing of garlic and a drizzle of oil, to accompany winter soups.

Also nestled in the trug is a pair of buttery soft goatskin gardening gloves—"the only ones I know that actually let you feel as if you have some contact with the soil while protecting your hands." Next, says Tolley, "I gather a few packets of seeds, harbingers of the glories of next summer's garden—hollyhocks, four-o'clocks, or coneflowers." A small hand-carved wooden bowl cradles potpourri for the kitchen, composed of lemon verbena, lemon peel, cinnamon, cloves, rosemary, bay, and a few sunflower petals for color. Last of all, "I put in a big bunch of lavender from the garden. It will keep moths at bay, perfume a room, or add its subtle fragrance to a syrup for poached pears, ice cream, cookies, or a rich, rich pound cake."

Ruth Rogers and Rose Gray, partners in the River Café, probably the finest and certainly the most fashionable Italian restaurant in London, start out their gift with an empty (save for one bottle) crate of their best wine, Barbaresco 1985, a dense, serious red. Everything else that goes into the box—from an oregano plant and tongs for grilling vegetables to a Pavoni espresso machine and a bunch of fresh red chilies—expresses the quality and authenticity the two women insist on at their restaurant.

Besides staples like olive oil (from Fattoria dell' Ugo in Chianti), grappa (from Bartolo Nardini in the Veneto), and loaves of the flat olive oil bread called ciabatta, Rogers and Gray pack such presents as a mortar and pestle, a sack of tiny blue green lentils from Le Puy in south-central France, and beautiful tins of salted anchovies from Naples. More anchovies go into jars of homemade salsa verde: classic with a bollito misto of chicken, ox tongue, and cotechino sausage, the pungent sauce is also served with grilled lamb, sea bass, and, at the River Café, a sliced entrecote salad. Another accompaniment for bollito misto is Dondi-brand mostarda di Cremona, pears and apricots in mustard syrup.

"Rose and I love polenta, which explains the bag of the coarse-grain variety in our 'basket,' " says Rogers. "Coarse-grain is essential if you don't want to end up with mashed potatoes." Polenta flour is used in a simple almond cake that also goes into the crate next to a mezzaluna, the two-handled half-moon-shaped chopping blade: "Use it to chop herbs, and the result is the opposite of the wet mass you tend to get with food processors." As Rogers sees it, perhaps the best gift of all is one that encourages a friend to prepare the baskets—or barrels or bowls or whatever—of holidays to come.

ONION JAM WITH CRÈME DE CASSIS

- 3 tablespoons light olive oil
- 1½ pounds onions, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 6½ tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 6½ tablespoons crème de cassis
- 1 cup dry red wine

Add the oil, onions, and seasonings to a saucepan and sauté the onions over low heat until soft, about 15 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients, mix thoroughly, and simmer uncovered 30 minutes or until all the liquid has evaporated and been absorbed. Cool and serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes 2½ cups.

RHUBARB CHUTNEY

- 1½ cups sugar
- 1¾ cups white vinegar
- 2¼ pounds rhubarb, trimmed and cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 1 cup dark raisins
- 1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded, ribs removed, and cut into medium dice
- 2 medium onions, cut into medium dice
- ½ heaping tablespoon coarse salt
- 2½ ounces candied ginger, minced
- 1 clove garlic, chopped

In a large saucepan, dissolve the sugar in the vinegar. Add the remaining ingredients, combine well, and boil vigorously 10–15 minutes or until the rhubarb is completely cooked. Strain the mixture, return the liquid to the saucepan, and reduce by one third. Stir the solids back into the sauce and transfer the chutney to sterilized canning jars. Seal hermetically and store one month before serving. Makes 5 cups.

GOAT CHEESE AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO TORTE

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 8 ounces Montrachet cheese
- 3 sticks butter
- 1 cup pesto
- 1 cup drained minced sun-dried tomatoes

Beat the cheeses and butter until well blended and fluffy. Line a cake pan with

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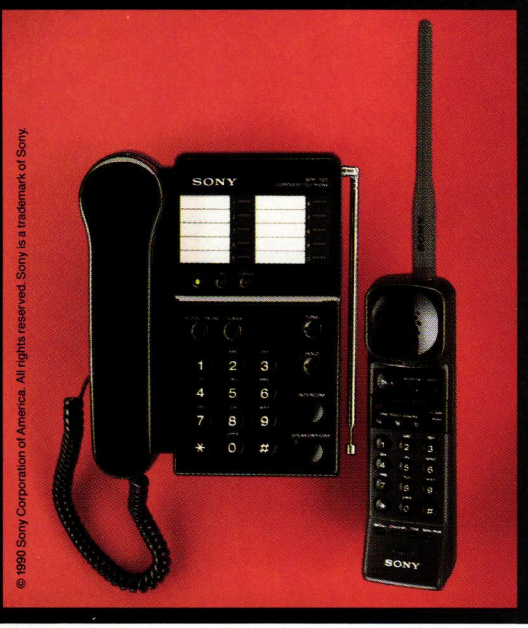

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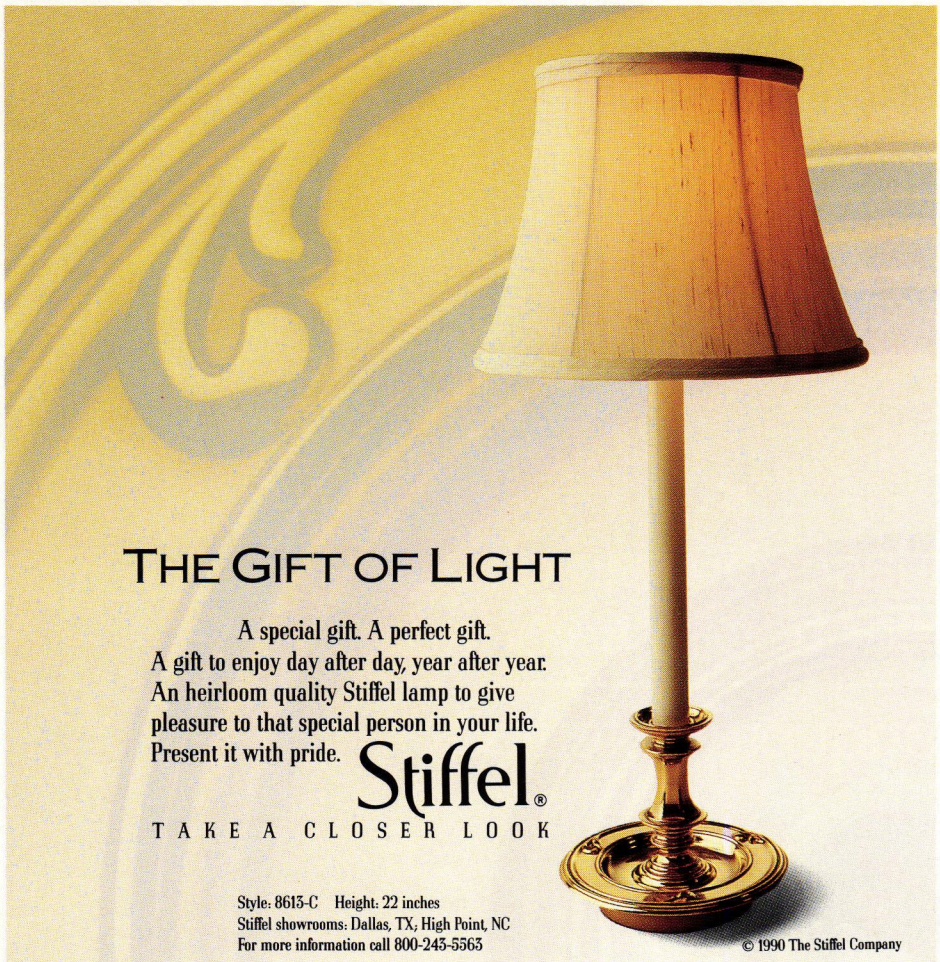

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damp cheesecloth, making sure the cloth is large enough to fold over the top of the pan. Fill the pan with one third of the butter-cheese mixture, followed by half of the pesto. Repeat. Spread over the remaining mixture and cover with the tomatoes. Place plastic wrap over the top of the torte and fold the cheesecloth over. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. To serve, fold the cheesecloth back, turn the torte out, and remove the cloth from the bottom. Invert, tomato side up, onto a serving plate and remove the plastic wrap. Serve with crackers.

HOT PEPPER JELLY

- 1 cup minced green bell pepper
- ½ cup (or to taste) minced hot red pepper
- 1½ cups cider vinegar
- 6½ cups sugar
- 6 ounces liquid pectin

Place the peppers, vinegar, and sugar in a stainless-steel or enamel saucepan and boil gently for 5–7 minutes. Remove from heat and carefully skim surface. Stir in the pectin and pour into sterilized jelly glasses. Makes 6 pints. Note: If only green hot peppers are available, substitute a red bell pepper for the green one to keep the combination of colors.

SALSA VERDE

- 1 cup chopped Italian parsley
- 1 cup chopped mint
- ½ cup chopped fennel
- ½ cup chopped basil
- 8 whole salted anchovies, washed, boned, and chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped capers
- 2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Combine the first eight ingredients, stirring well. Add the vinegar and mix again. Add the olive oil, beating it forcefully into the mixture. Makes 8–10 servings.

POLENTA AND ALMOND CAKE

- 7 ounces butter
- 7 ounces sugar
- 7 ounces ground almonds
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 eggs
- 7 ounces polenta flour
- Grated zest of 2 lemons
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 325°F. Cream the butter and sugar until the mixture is pale yellow. Add the almonds and vanilla and combine. Beat in the eggs, one at a time. Add the polenta flour, lemon zest, baking powder, and salt and blend thoroughly. Butter and flour a springform pan and pour in the batter. Bake 45 minutes. ▲

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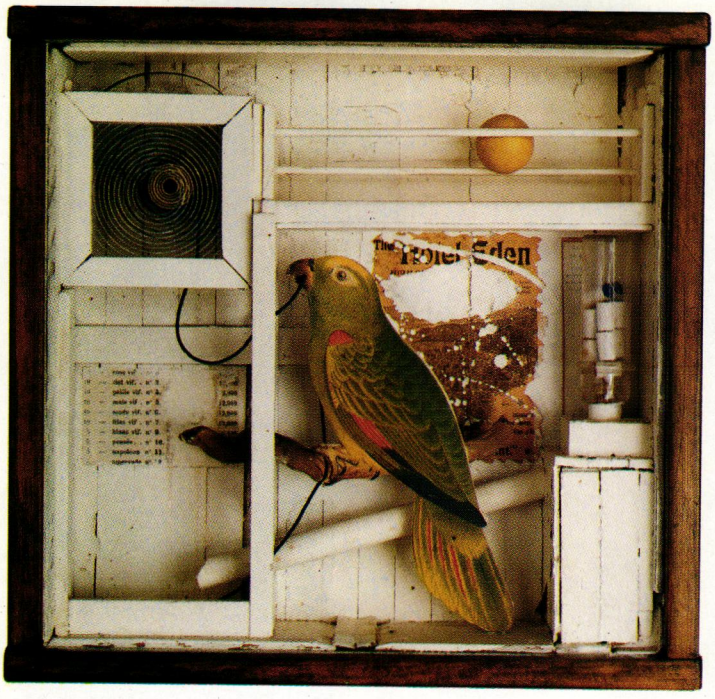


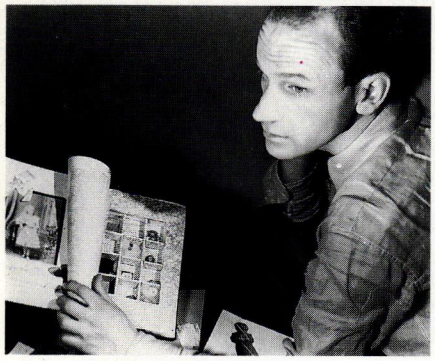
In the house on Utopia Parkway, left, Cornell created boxes such as *Setting for a Fairy Tale*, 1942, below. Far left: *Untitled (The Hotel Eden)*, c. 1945, one of his Aviary series.

The Artist as Homebody

Joseph Cornell remade the world in a modest Long Island house

BY DEBORAH SOLOMON

About two years ago I began work on a biography of Joseph Cornell, a project that in some ways seemed absurd. His life could not have been less adventurous had he been a clerk at the corner drugstore. To be sure, Cornell was a picturesque figure, a gaunt timid man who spent his days in a cellar workshop sifting through stacks of clippings and oddments—seashells, clay pipes, butterfly wings, pictures of ballerinas, and so on—and arranging them in small shadow boxes. Yet his life wasn't a story so much as it was an odd situation: decade after decade he lived with his mother and disabled brother in a small house in Flushing, Queens, on the outer edge of New York City. He traveled nowhere, and never had a real love affair. His address was strangely revealing: the artist who boxed himself into his own world lived at 3708 Utopia Parkway.



Cornell assembles one of his boxes, c. 1940.

Cornell belongs to what might be described as the homebody tradition in art. As much as there are artists who crave experience, there are those who actively spurn it. Édouard Vuillard, for instance: he was not a joiner, never married, and painted mostly domestic scenes—small, unexpectedly haunting images of chairs and floral wallpaper. Giorgio Morandi, too: he was an art-world monk, a reclusive Bolognese, locked in eternal contemplation of his table of old bottles and cans. Cornell shares with these artists the belief that experience—experience of the grand, worldly, Byronic variety—is somehow beyond his capabilities. Homebody artists present the world from inside the house, slightly stuffy and claustrophobic. They give us a room without a view.

Did Cornell ever venture beyond his front door? Absolutely. Central to his activities were his trips by train into Manhattan. Like a flaneur in nineteenth century Paris, out of the pages of Baudelaire, whose work Cornell knew intimately, he would wander the streets of the metropolis attentive to every sight. The artist's meanderings frequently took him down-

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, OTTAWA; HANS NAMUTH; PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION, VENICE, SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM FOUNDATION, NYC/PHOTO CARMELO GUADAGNO AND DAVID HEALD; COURTESY JOSEPH CORNELL STUDY CENTER, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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AN EXOTIC BLEND WITH ORANGE PEEL, FRUITY HERBS, AND CLOVES

It was a **COLD** *night and I had a hot date with* **Mr Bubble** *and an even hotter cup of tea so I poured a big steaming cup,* **INHALING** *the rich rush of orange as I s a u n t e r e d to the tub to test it with my toe (Just Right) I s a n k in and sipped small orange spice sips as the* **steam warmed** *my face and swirled through the room until there was nothing else but me and a river of* **Orange Blossoms** *lightly lapping against a spicy slightly* **CINNAMON** *shore the lazy lull of its waves* **SUDDENLY** *broken by a big long* **slurrrrrrrp?!** *The plug had been pulled.* **Mr Bubble** *made a* **noisy** *exit d o w n t h e d r a i n.*

A DIFFERENT CUP OF TEA

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"...the most gratifying feeling I experienced as I entered my nineties came from the immediate success of my sculpture collection, and the realization that I have touched the lives of so many art collectors who otherwise might never have known this phase of my work."

From his tiny apartment on the right bank, a dark-eyed young artist dreamed of participating in the celebration of the extravagance of the day. It was the beginning of the spectacular age of Debussy, Diaghilev, Picasso and the infamous Mata Hari. It was a time when ladies sported lavish attire, bedecked with pearls, sequins and precious gems. It was Paris, 1913. His name was Romain de Tirtoff.

Born of a prominent Russian family, he brought to Paris the mystery of his Eastern roots. His penchant for expressing his remarkable eccentricity through his designs propelled him to international eminence, providing the impetus for a generation of fashion, theatre and graphic designers. He set the artistic tone for the influential *Harper's Bazar*, with his designs appearing on virtually every cover for 20 years. Eventually, the world would know him simply by the French pronunciation of his initials.

After an already prolific career spanning eight decades, in which he had explored a variety of different art forms, Erté embarked on a series of entirely new creations: his figurative bronze sculptures. Some of his most outstanding creations are those sculptures he created during his last years, which were inspired by the theatrical costumes, haute couture gowns and the designs for *Harper's Bazar*, conceived and created much earlier in his career. Each one of the pieces, having been stimulated by the freedom of fantasy rather than the limitation of reality, embody the essence of Erté's creative genius. Casting the images in bronze and adorning them with gold leaf and semi-precious stones, the extraordinary artworks he designed "for the sheer pleasure of creation" were brought to exquisite three-dimensional life.

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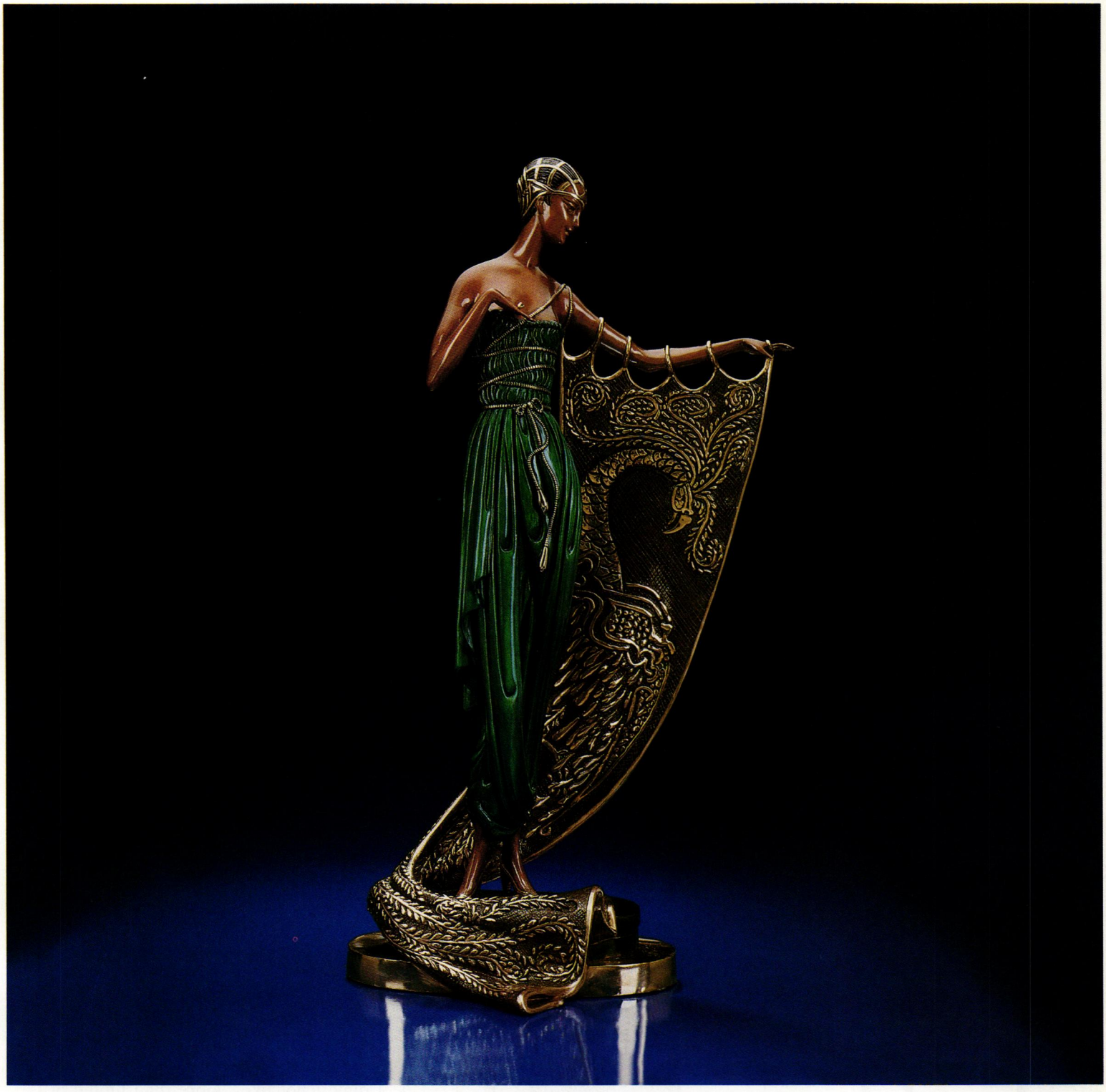

"Emerald Night" Bronze sculpture by Erté

California: Hanson Art Galleries, *Beverly Hills, La Jolla, Sausalito, Carmel, San Francisco* · Fine Art Collections, *Sausalito, Tiburon* · Quinn Pollak Gallery, *San Diego;* **Florida:** The Art Spectrum, *Miami* · Graphic Art Collection, *Hallandale* · Wentworth Gallery, *Palm Beach;* **Louisiana:** Hanson Art Galleries, *New Orleans;* **Georgia:** Merrill Chase Galleries, *Atlanta;* **New York:** Benedetti Gallery, *New York City* · Studio 47 Art Gallery, *New York City;* **New Jersey:** Re Vann Gallery, *Atlantic City* · Howard Mann Art Center, *Lambertville* · Reflections on Canvas, *Westfield;* **Massachusetts:** Bloch Gallery, *Boston;* **Illinois:** Merrill Chase Galleries, *Chicago, Oak Brook, Schaumburg;* **Nevada:** Minotaur Fine Arts, Ltd., *Las Vegas;* **Michigan:** Park West Gallery, *Southfield;* **Arizona:** Solomon Fine Art, *Scottsdale;* **Washington D.C.:** P&C Art, Inc.; **Ohio:** Gabos Art Gallery, *University Heights;* **Maryland:** Lake Falls Fine Arts, *Baltimore;* **Washington:** Kenneth Behm Galleries, *Bellevue, Seattle;* **Hawaii:** Hanson Art Galleries, *Maui* · Merrill Chase Galleries, *Honolulu, Kauai.* For additional gallery information please telephone 203·869·9500.

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town to the secondhand bookshops that once lined Fourth Avenue, where he would scout for material for his boxes—boxes that are magical and enchanting and give no hint of the quiet gray asceticism in which their maker lived.

Cornell, who died in 1972 at the age of sixty-nine, is generally identified in art history books as the dean of American surrealism. He came of age when the French surrealists were dominating the art scene, and from their work he came to understand the poetry that inheres in the juxtaposition of incongruous images. Yet Cornell was essentially a solitary figure, out of step with the modernist parade. While his contemporaries were exploring what Ezra Pound called the "make it new" ethos of avant-garde art, he remained fixated on retrieving the innocence of the past. His little boxes, which often bring together symbols of his own childhood (soap bubbles, say) and extravagant invocations of a vanished European past (yellowed travelers' maps, hotel advertisements), present us with a fairy-tale world untouched by the betrayals of experience. In Cornell's lifetime, artists who agreed on almost nothing agreed on him: he was an original, and key figures in successive generations, from Marcel Duchamp to Robert Motherwell to Andy Warhol, all made the pilgrimage out to Queens to see him in his famously middle-class surroundings.

The house on Utopia Parkway was in many ways an extension of the artist's allusive imagination. True, from the outside it was spectacularly ordinary: a two-story white frame Dutch colonial with blue trim and a garage off to one side, it resembled other houses on the block. The inside, however, a musty mélange of Edwardian furniture and five-and-dime tchotchkes, more than hinted at Cornell's activities. The tiny dining room overflowed with his "dossiers"—extensive files compiled on personalities both living and dead. (They brought together such unlikely file-mates as Vermeer, Hans Christian Andersen, Claire Bloom, and the various ballerinas for whom Cornell harbored feelings of unrequited love.) Downstairs, in the cellar

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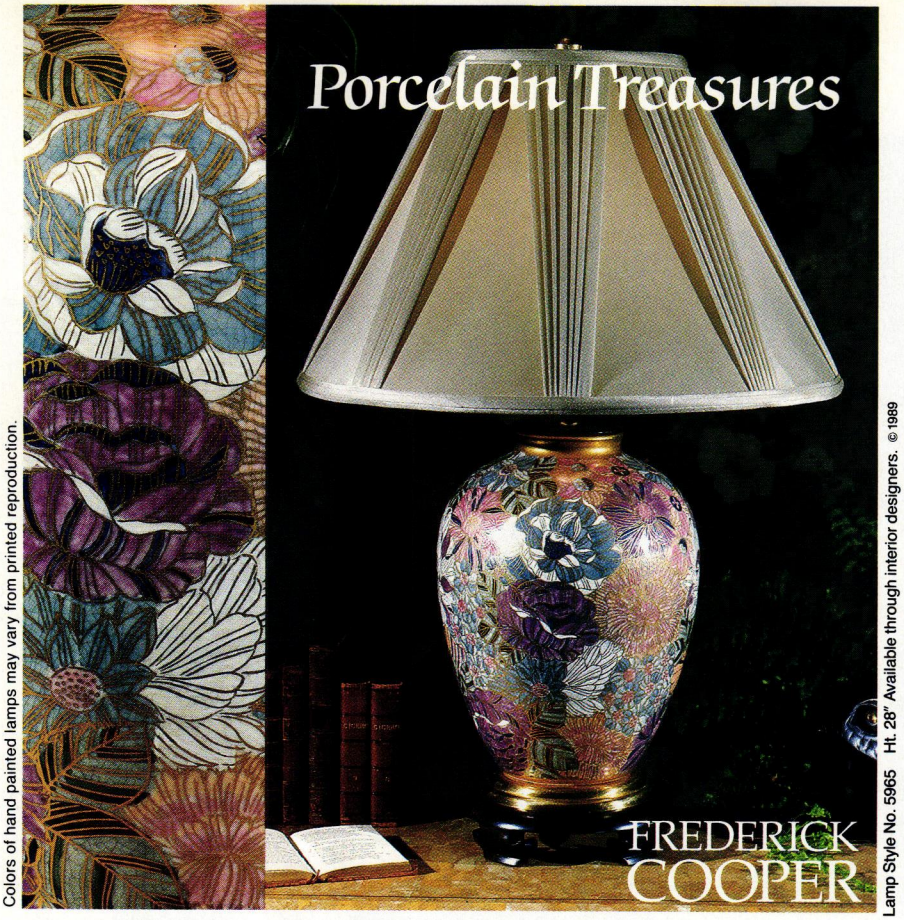
workshop, boxes in various stages of completion and treasured finds from urban journeys were crammed on sagging shelves. Like the storybook castles one finds in several of his boxes, Cornell's cluttered house became a sanctuary of dreams and fantasy.

The artist was especially fond of the tiny patch of garden behind his house, which in his mind was as mythical a place as Arcadia. In nice weather he might be found sitting beneath a tree, tossing peanuts at blue jays. These moments offered him not just pleasure but prized opportunities for reverie, and he faithfully recorded them in his diary.

Cornell's life might seem to correspond with Flaubert's famous principle that an artist should live like a bourgeois yet create like a revolutionary. Did any other artist ever live more reticently yet travel further into the strata of the imagination? One wouldn't want to make the mistake, however, of romanticizing his stay-at-home existence. Cornell certainly didn't. In his later years he lamented to friends that he felt he had missed out on much that life has to offer, if not on life itself. His boxes, he believed, were merely the dead residue of the process that had inspired them; in his diaries he bemoaned the "inadequacy" of his medium next to the "freshness & spontaneity about life and people."

Why does an artist choose to stay home? For Cornell the choice was not a choice at all. Home, for him, was everything: a sheltering wing, a place to work, a metaphor for self-invention, the means by which he shut out the workaday world and retreated into a private one where the past was as accessible and alive as the present. Home, moreover, was one of the themes of his work. As much as Bonnard painted busily patterned parlors and Matisse gave us the tranquil rooms of Nice, Cornell, too, was an artist of interiors. What were his boxes, after all, if not little rooms, cramped and airless, each containing its own cryptic tale? Which isn't to say that, like his French counterparts of the intimist school, he was interested in celebrating the homebody life. Rather he wanted to escape it, and in his work he did. ♠



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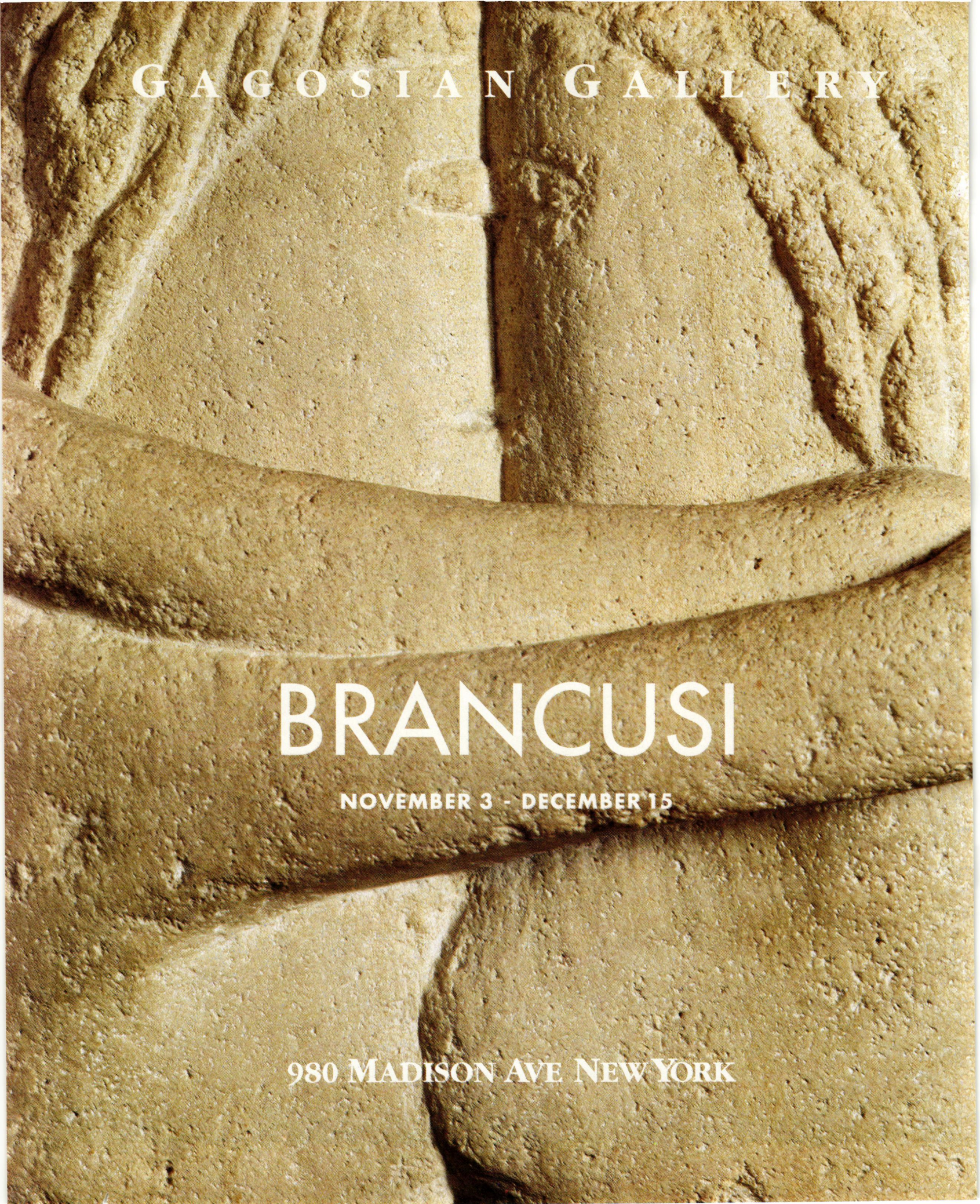
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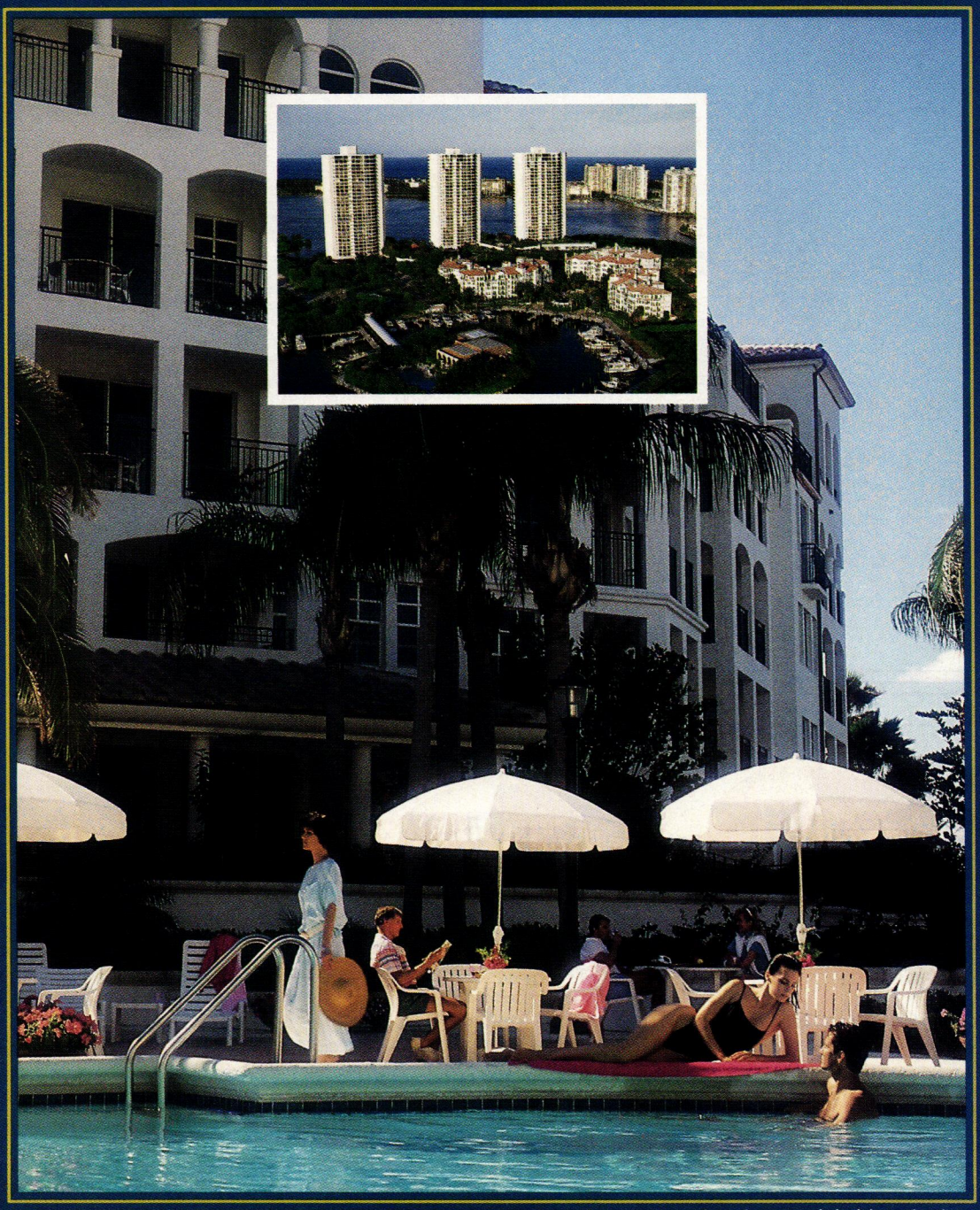

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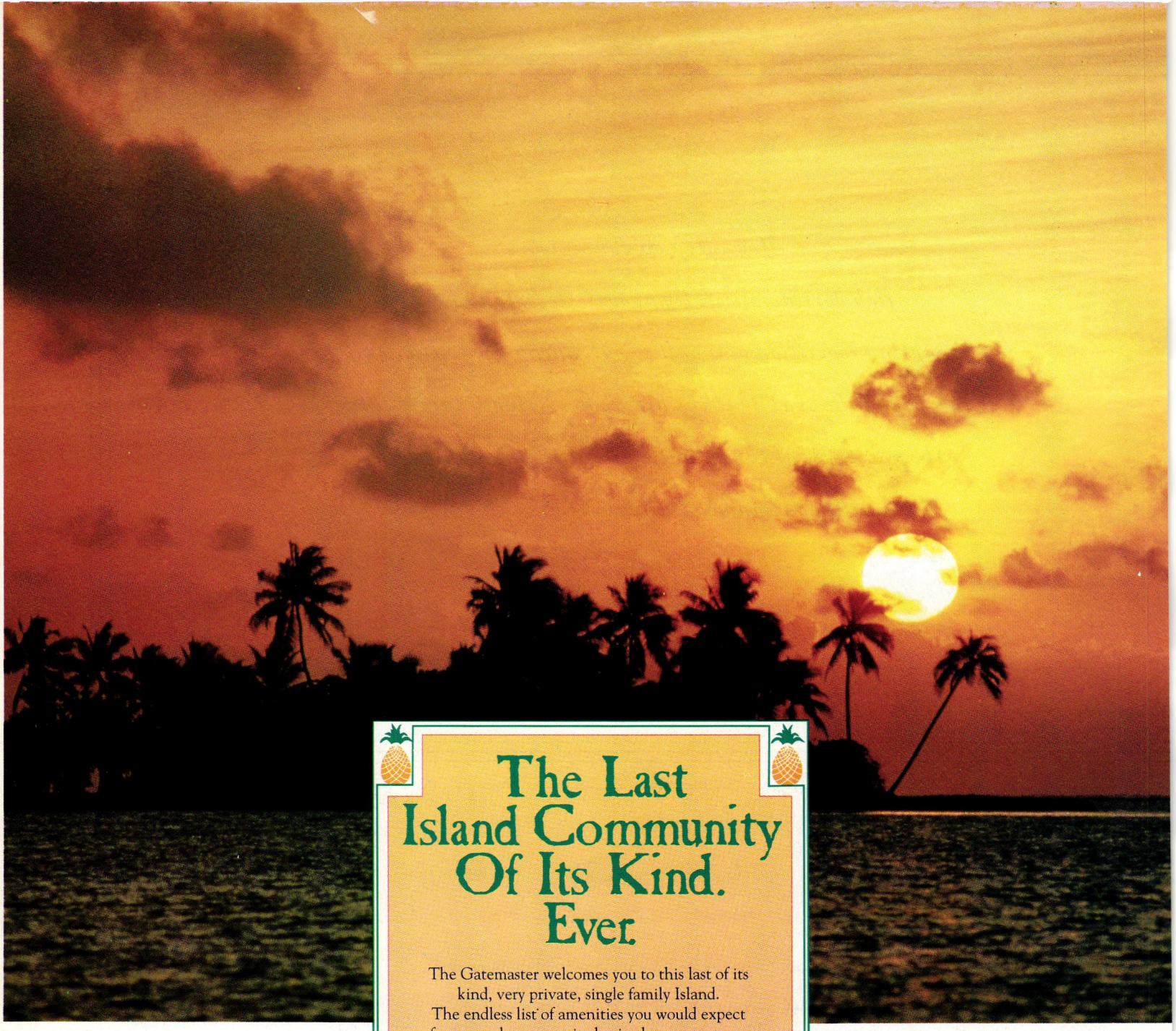

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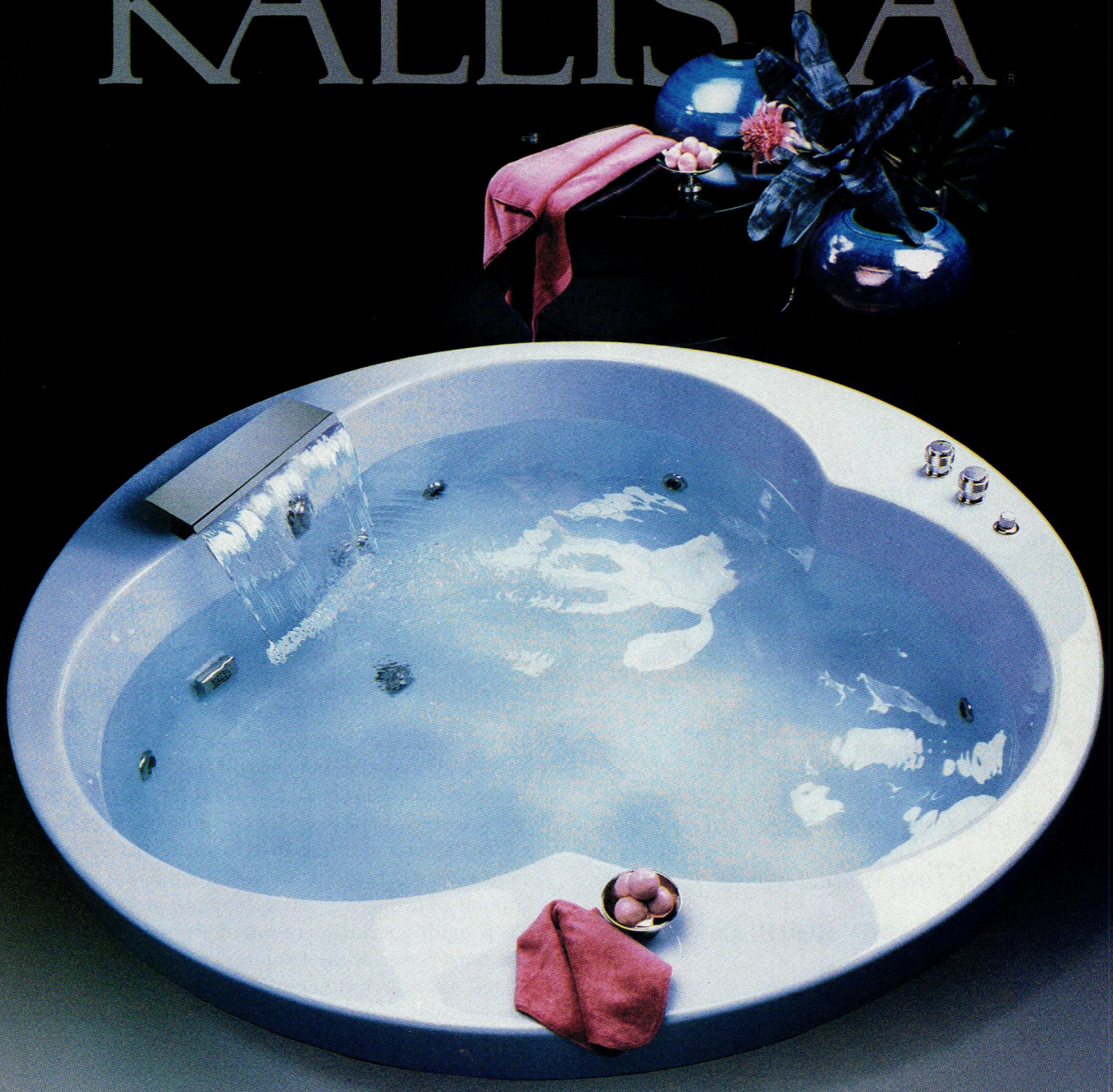

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Backroad Chic

The Ford Explorer races toward the frontier of four-wheel-drive fashion

BY MARGY ROCHLIN

Fifteen years ago, before what is now referred to as a sport-utility vehicle assumed generic status with the middle class, my father bought my mother a boxy silver-colored Jeep Wagoneer. He chose it because my mother had "customized" all our other family cars. The red Falcon station wagon had deep rivers on one side; the fender of the brown Buick was as wrinkled as a piece of old fruit. She was not so much a terrible driver as a woman with other things on her mind. My father's logic was to put her behind the wheel of an automobile that would assure she'd cruise away the victor.

In America, bigness confers security. But until now these suburban tanks haven't been built to protect. Not really a car yet not quite a truck, sport-utility vehicles (SUVs) land smack in a categorical loophole with fewer safety restrictions, which explains the number of SUVs that at relatively low speeds simply flopped over while turning. And not only housewives with grocery bags have been unknowingly risking their skins; they've become an important fashion accessory with Hollywood's we're-rich-but-not-pretentious set. With a crossover market like this, how long could the car industry resist throwing life-preserving features into the bargain?

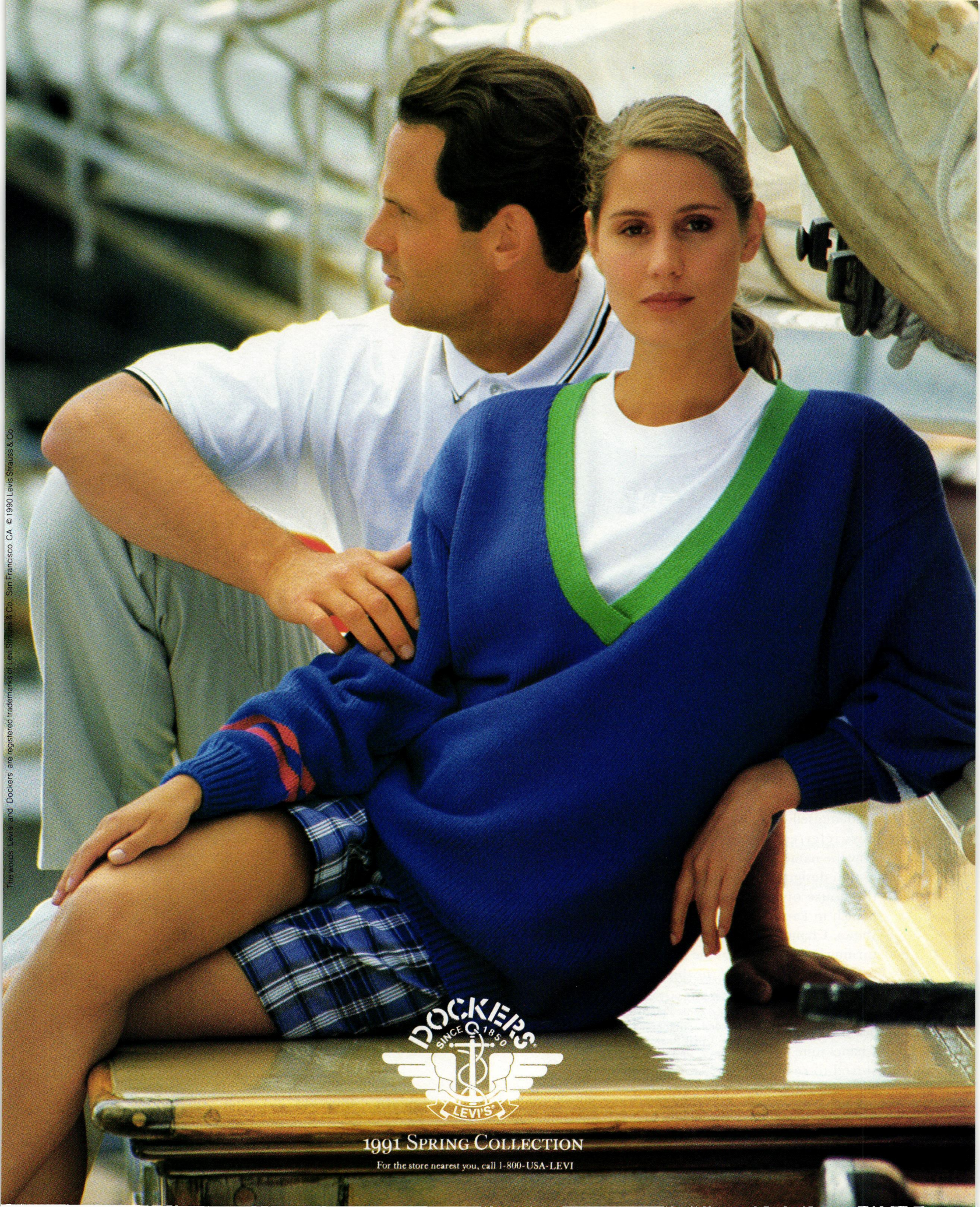
The 1991 Ford Explorer is the first to fill this void: it has more government-recommended safety devices than the Toyota 4 Runner, the Chevrolet S-10 Blazer, the Jeep Cherokee, or the Nissan Pathfinder—in other words, more than any SUV in its formidable class. But Ford also had to imagine what would be considered tantalizing to a city dweller with a pioneer fixation. Which is, judging from the Explorer, something as roomy and rugged as a Conestoga wagon but with gale-force air conditioning, comfy suspension, a premium JBL sound system with a subwoofer, nine strategically mounted speakers, and 145 watts of blasting power, and as many compact storage crannies as a ship's cabin. There are reservoirs carved into the dashboard and the central armrest and tucked behind the rear seat cushions, and a trio of black plastic discs dispenses your otherwise loose change.

> Bigness generally confers security

But cars like these aren't about actually needing a one-touch push-button four-wheel drive (although the Explorer offers such a mechanism). They're about the thrill of knowing you can rusticate if and when the spirit moves you. The first time I took the Explorer out, I found myself whizzing up steep private roads, the kind with signs at the entrance that clearly state NO TRESPASSING. On another day a friend and I discovered ourselves in the pounded dirt backyard of a complete stranger's Coldwater Canyon estate. We did 360s while discussing how breezily the Explorer took such hard turns and the efficiency of the adjustable seat bolsters, which at the flip of a switch curl up around your thighs as tightly as control-top panty hose and keep you from sliding around on the seats. Then we tested the horsepower of the Explorer's big electronically fuel-injected 4.0-liter V-6 engine: we screeched off before the homeowners realized that it was two adults responsible for the thick film of dust on their picture window.

The vehicle has a uniquely pig-nosed look, which gives it its own special road presence. Once, while changing lanes, I almost flattened a college student on a fly-sized motor scooter (the rearview mirror placement takes a little getting used to). He cut my hand-wringing apology short by burbling, "Great car! What is it? Is it new? Does it handle well?" The Ford Explorer not only handles well, it rides high, and such lofty stature gives one an inexplicable sense of superiority as well as a new perspective on things. Traffic jams are no less avoidable, but at least you're able to see how far the pileup snarls into the distance. And I would never have understood why take-out windows at fast-food restaurants are positioned so far above the customer's line of vision had I not pulled the Explorer into the drive-through lane. At my new height I learned that in matters of junk food, perhaps it's best not to know who is preparing your meal. ▲

ROBERT DE MICHIELL



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LIVING WITH

style

BY WENDY GOODMAN

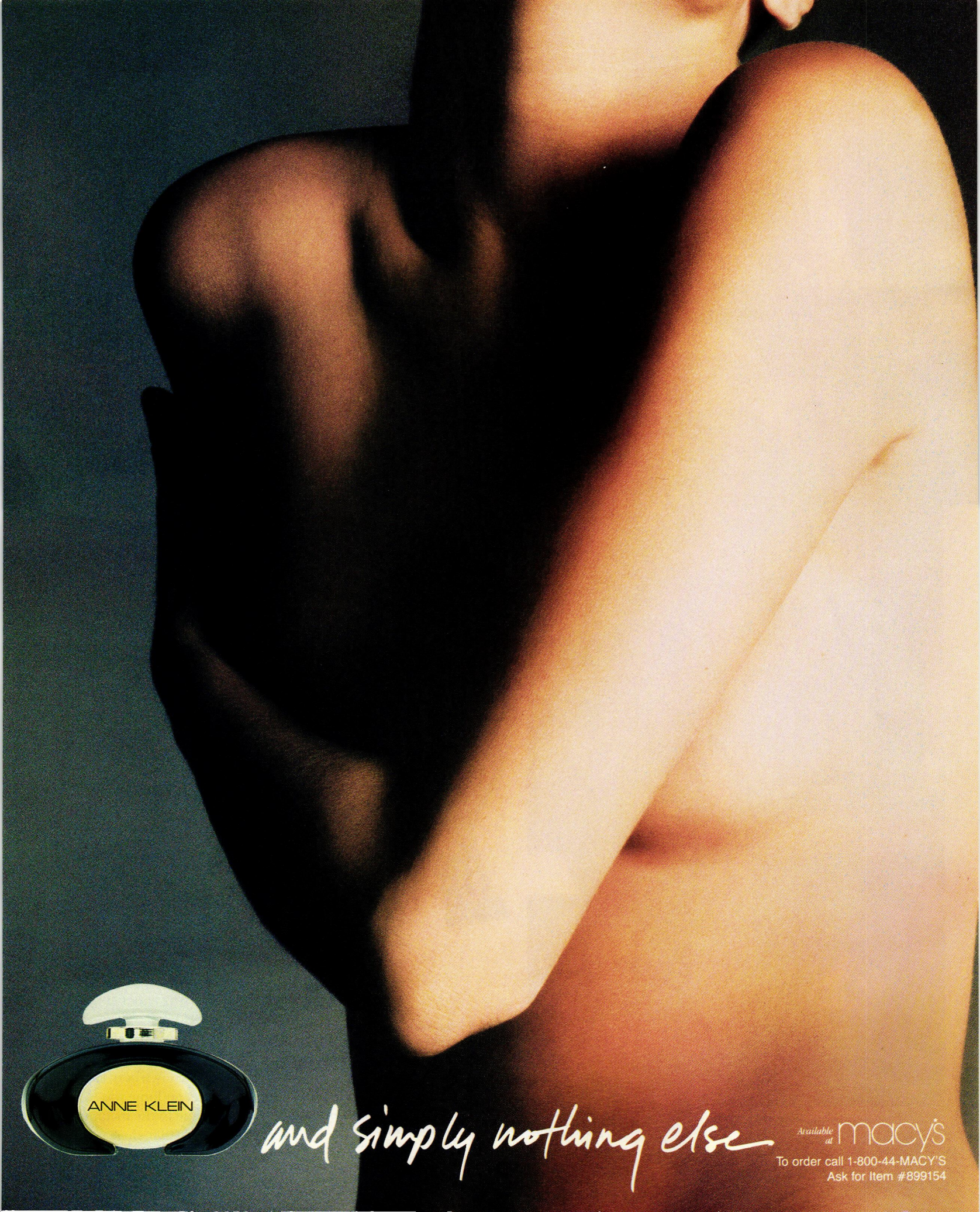
Chanel travels back in time to launch a new watch collection

Mademoiselle, as Coco Chanel was always referred to by her colleagues, is now the name of a luxurious watch collection designed by Jacques Helleu for the house of Chanel. For the recent launch in Paris during the fall couture shows, Chanel staged a stylish tribute, turning back the clock at the Hôtel Ritz.

From photographs of the thirties and details of the designer's everyday activities, the Coco Chanel suite was restored to re-create the atmosphere Mademoiselle fashioned for herself

Coco Chanel, above, in a contemplative mood, photographed by Cecil Beaton in 1937. Right: Chanel's 1930 evening dress rests on an 18th-century bergère in the designer's former Ritz suite.

LEFT: CECIL BEATON PHOTOGRAPH, COURTESY OF SOTHEBY'S LONDON. RIGHT: JACQUES DIRAND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during the four years she lived there until 1939. Many pieces were brought from her rue Cambon apartment, kept intact as an historic reference, including the famous coromandel lacquer screens that Chanel liked to pair with white flowers. Her vermeil breakfast tray lay on the bed, complete with biscuits waiting to be nibbled and tea leaves in the cup. Mademoiselle's dressing table looked as if she had been interrupted in midtoilette: a cigarette filter in the ashtray stained with her red lipstick, her white kid gloves lying casually next to her eyeglasses, and a book by her friend Pierre Reverdy, open to the pages where he scrawled a long dedication to her. Above the dressing table were sketches of Chanel's fashions by Bérard and Cocteau.

In keeping with the Mademoiselle Collection's three watch styles—one for morning, one for afternoon, and one for evening—each room in the Ritz suite was arranged and lighted accordingly. The bedroom basked in the radiance of morning, the salon glowed in the afternoon sun, and the small study was suffused with blue evening light. The study was added to the suite for the launch, as Chanel's quarters originally consisted only of the bedroom and the salon. It was as if Mademoiselle had just left the room or, better yet, might enter to catch you peering at her collection of precious bibelots. To gaze at the bergère in which Horst photographed the great couturiere or to walk onto the balcony where she surveyed the place Vendôme was to take a step back in time to the incomparable world of Coco Chanel. ▲

The couturiere, far left, in the salon in 1937. Chanel took her tea, left, in the bedroom, top left. The study, top right, was arranged as a setting for the Mademoiselle pearl evening watch, above. Details see Resources.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JACQUES DIRAND (2); GAIL FREUND; JACQUES DIRAND; F. KOLLAR MINISTERE DE LA CULTURE FRANCE

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december

THERE ARE a number of ideas that we bat around in editorial meetings, shaping and refining them before they actually develop into stories. Color and its uses in decorating is one such subject—I mention this after reviewing the lineup for our December issue, with its complement of richly hued interiors. Together they serve, quite intentionally, as a salute to the vivid spirits of the season. Close readers of the magazine will remember English artist Mark Lancaster's house from one of HG's premier issues over two and a half years ago; it will be no surprise then to find pockets of startling color in Mark's new lair—a cozily eccentric castle on the west coast of Scotland. For his Manhattan skyscraper apartment, Lucas Samaras has chosen a cool urbane gray as a background for the carnival of colors in his furniture and art. The legendary decorator and highly versatile designer Tony Duquette has constructed his own idiosyncratic world in California; the patinated blues and greens of his pavilions in the Malibu mountains, visited by HG style editor Wendy Goodman, are illustrations of a daringly baroque sensibility. And the New York apartment decorated by Ned Marshall is an homage to the English country house, with a bold American twist contributed by its persimmon, evergreen, and Pompeian red walls. HG's December colors don't stop there; they radiate out to mossy greens and even pastel pinks—witness our stories on the Pennsylvania farmhouse of designer Laura Bohn, with its palette borrowed from nature, and the Gramercy Park apartment of the Howard family, with its pink checked and flowered furniture. Color in the garden? Port Lympne's checkerboard is seasonal green and red. Color in design? See Heather MacIsaac on rich jewel-toned velvets. Color in depth? That's coming in a future issue. For now, I hope your holiday is festive—and every bit as colorful as you desire.

Painter Mark Lancaster has arranged classic modern furniture by Aalto and Eames in the billiard room of his Scottish castle.

ERIC BOMAN

Mary Novograd

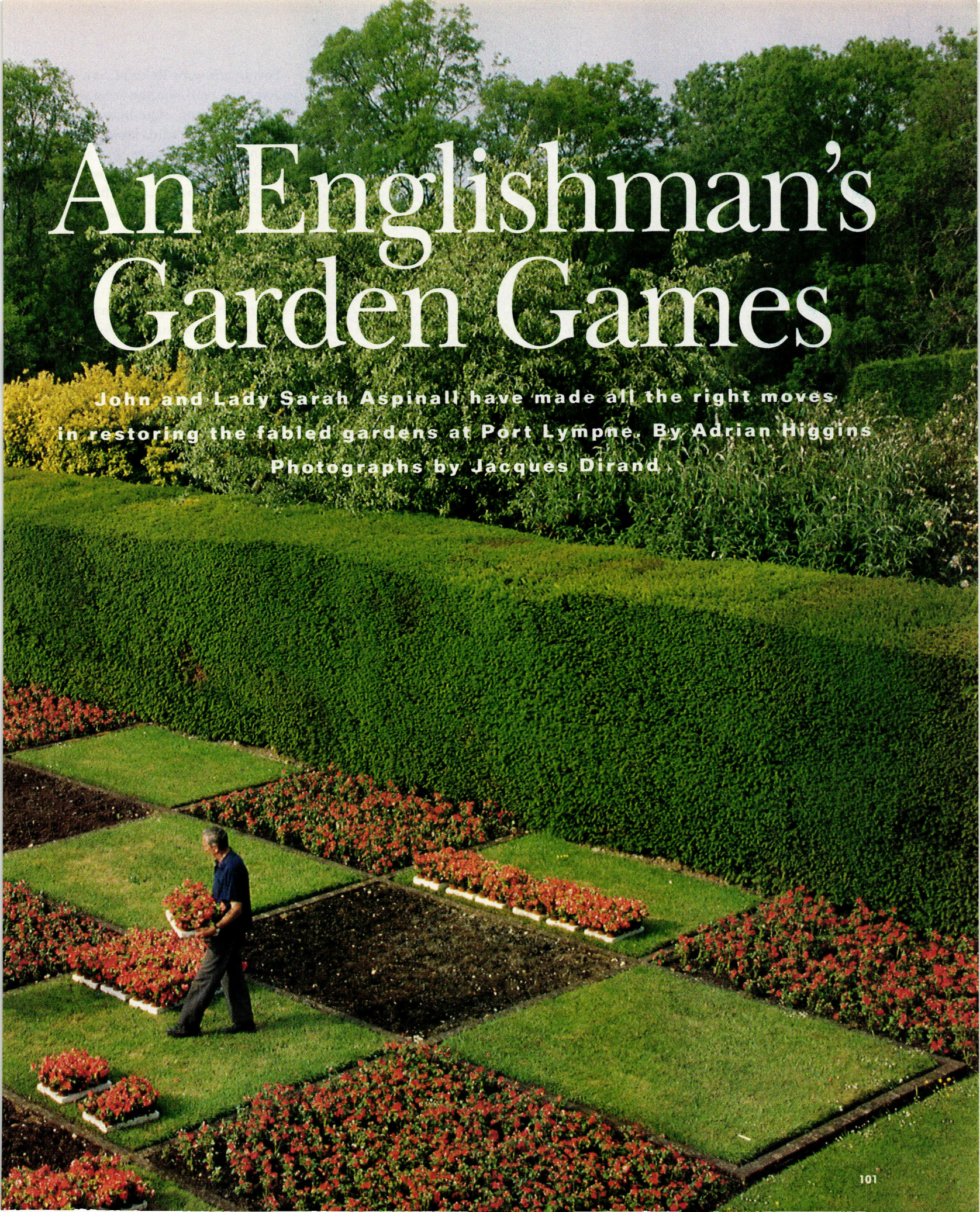
EDITOR IN CHIEF

In Port Lympne's Chess Board Garden, red and orange impatiens bloom between squares of lawn in place of the heliotrope and begonia favored by Sir Philip Sassoon, first owner of the estate.

An Englishman's Garden Games

John and Lady Sarah Aspinall have made all the right moves in restoring the fabled gardens at Port Lympne. By Adrian Higgins

Photographs by Jacques Dirand



Port Lympne, or Belcaire, as it was called until 1918, was the creation of Sir Philip Sassoon, statesman, multimillionaire, dilettante, lover of fast cars and faster airplanes, and above all a champion of style and ostentation. Born into two great trading empires—his father's family had made their fortune as merchants in India and the East; his mother was a Rothschild—he was drawn to the English gentry after leaving France to attend Eton and Oxford. Pip Sassoon was already a baronet and a member of Parliament when, still in his early twenties, he commissioned the eminent architect Herbert Baker to design a house at the village of Lympne as a luxurious country retreat. Completed in 1913, the rambling red-brick structure has mellow Kentish tile roofs, towering chimneys, and curled gables in the Dutch colonial style Baker had mastered in South Africa for clients like Cecil Rhodes.

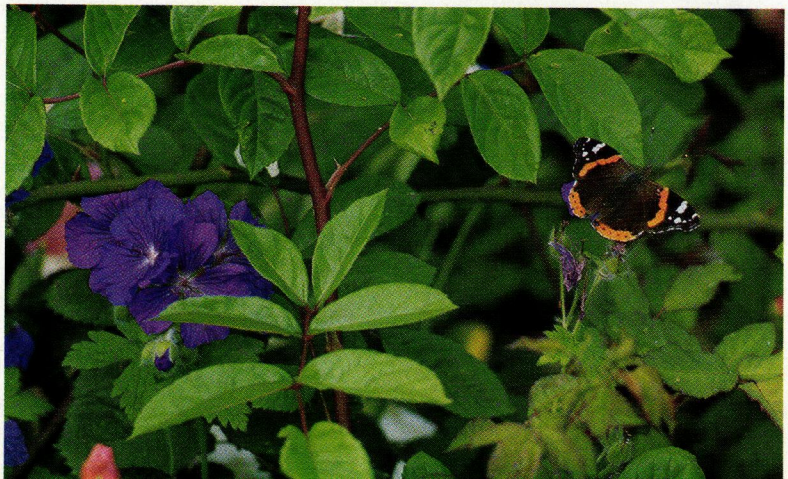
Work on the gardens was delayed until after World War I, when Sassoon engaged the architect and artist Philip Tilden to help him transform fifteen acres of raw hillside into a dramatic series of outdoor set pieces. Their collaborative designs drew on Lympne's strong Roman links (legionnaires once camped at Portus Lemanis, and the skeleton of a Roman was unearthed during reconstruction of the mile-long driveway) as well as on the classic forms of the Italian Renaissance: massive terraces, hedge-enclosed garden rooms, stone ornaments, pools, and fountains.

The historical references were always more fanciful than archaeological. For an open courtyard within the house, Tilden designed a Moorish Patio, which captures and intensifies the English sun with white marble columns and plaster walls. Outside, behind the house, the Trojan Stairs, a 125-step flight of York stone, rise to a plateau overlooking the grounds. Port Lympne's main, south-facing terrace (recorded on canvas by Churchill) leads down through double stairs to a landing from which wide semicircular steps descend to the main terrace. There Sassoon built a vast neoclassical bathing pool with tall jets of water, stone sphinxes, and raised po-

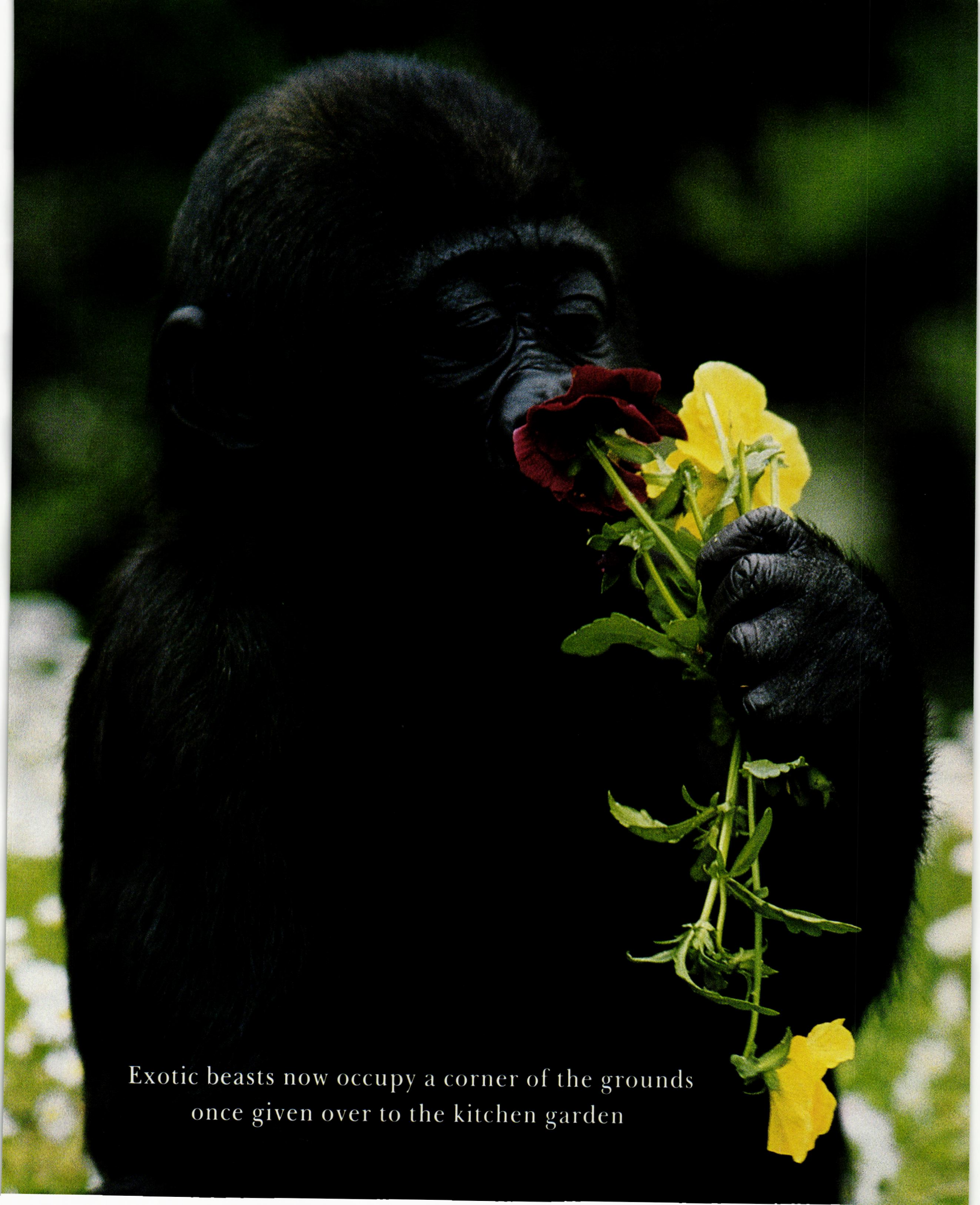
The English country house called Port Lympne might well be dubbed Portmanteau, it is stuffed with so many stories.

Between the wars the three-hundred-acre estate on Kent's southeast coast became a magnet for the leading figures of British society. Winston Churchill painted in the garden, Noël Coward sharpened his wit over the dinner table, and Charlie Chaplin arrived to find his weekend quarters redecorated in his honor. Other guests included T. E. Lawrence, George Bernard Shaw, the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Simpson, and, occasionally, the poet Siegfried Sassoon, a cousin of the unflagging host.

It is easy to understand the lure of the place. Port Lympne (pronounced lim) was a triumphant union of house, garden, and site that expressed all the confidence of the British Empire. As at the grand seaside villas of Italy, broad terraces surveyed spectacular views, here not the Mediterranean but the expanse of Romney Marsh below and the English Channel beyond. The terraces themselves enclosed a man-made landscape that was no less impressive in its monumental scale and flamboyance.



The 125-step Trojan Stairs, *above left,* descend to the west entrance of the house. Beyond terrace gardens, marshes stretch to the English Channel. *Left:* A butterfly and hardy purple geraniums among rosebushes. *Opposite:* Boumi the gorilla in the zoo at Howletts, another Aspinall estate nearby.



Exotic beasts now occupy a corner of the grounds
once given over to the kitchen garden

Though the landscape design referred to ancient Rome and

A statue of Mercury presides amid terraces replanted with herbaceous borders at the base, dahlias and roses above. Catmint forms a hazy purple band behind the pedestal.

he Renaissance, the links were more fanciful than archaeological

diums where guests could sun themselves and take in the view to the Straits of Dover and, on clear days, the coast of France.

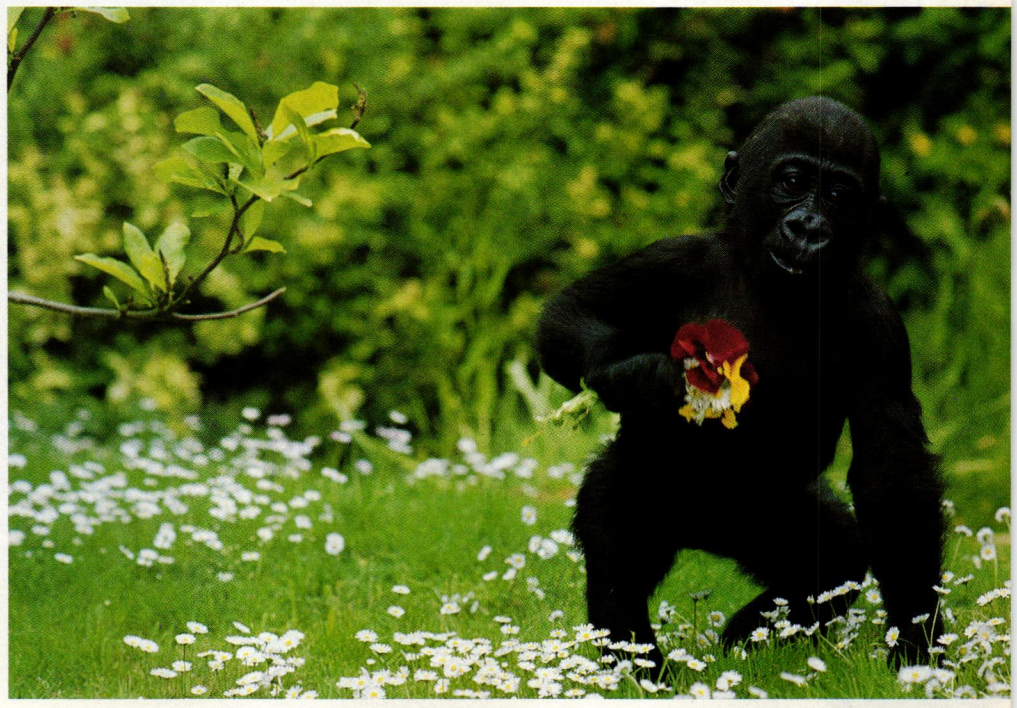
The pool terrace is flanked symmetrically by two of the most striking examples of Sassoon's taste for brilliant display. To the west, the Chess Board Garden consists of large alternating squares of lawn and colorful annuals—only two colors in a season, and one color to a square. (Sassoon liked heliotrope and begonias against the green grass.) To the east, the Striped Garden is laid out in long rows of hot-colored bedding plants. Elsewhere, Sassoon installed a fig yard, a hillside vineyard, and what is now the Clock Garden, densely bedded out with zinnias. Victorian-style carpet bedding had long since been rejected by the prevailing arts and crafts movement, which favored traditional cottage perennials, but the master of Port Lympne wanted a garden as bold and extroverted as he was. Besides, the strong patterns looked superb when he took friends aloft in his airplane.

Sassoon and his guests used Port Lympne in August. In July, the staff of gardeners was increased from fourteen to twenty-one, not just to plant the Chess Board Garden, the Striped Garden, and other annual showpieces, but to tend the huge double herbaceous border that was one of England's most celebrated garden landmarks in the 1920s and '30s. More extravagant vistas were added in the thirties with the construction of three great terraces to the east; to the west lofty parapets, balustrades, and statuary set off the dahlias and asters of late summer.

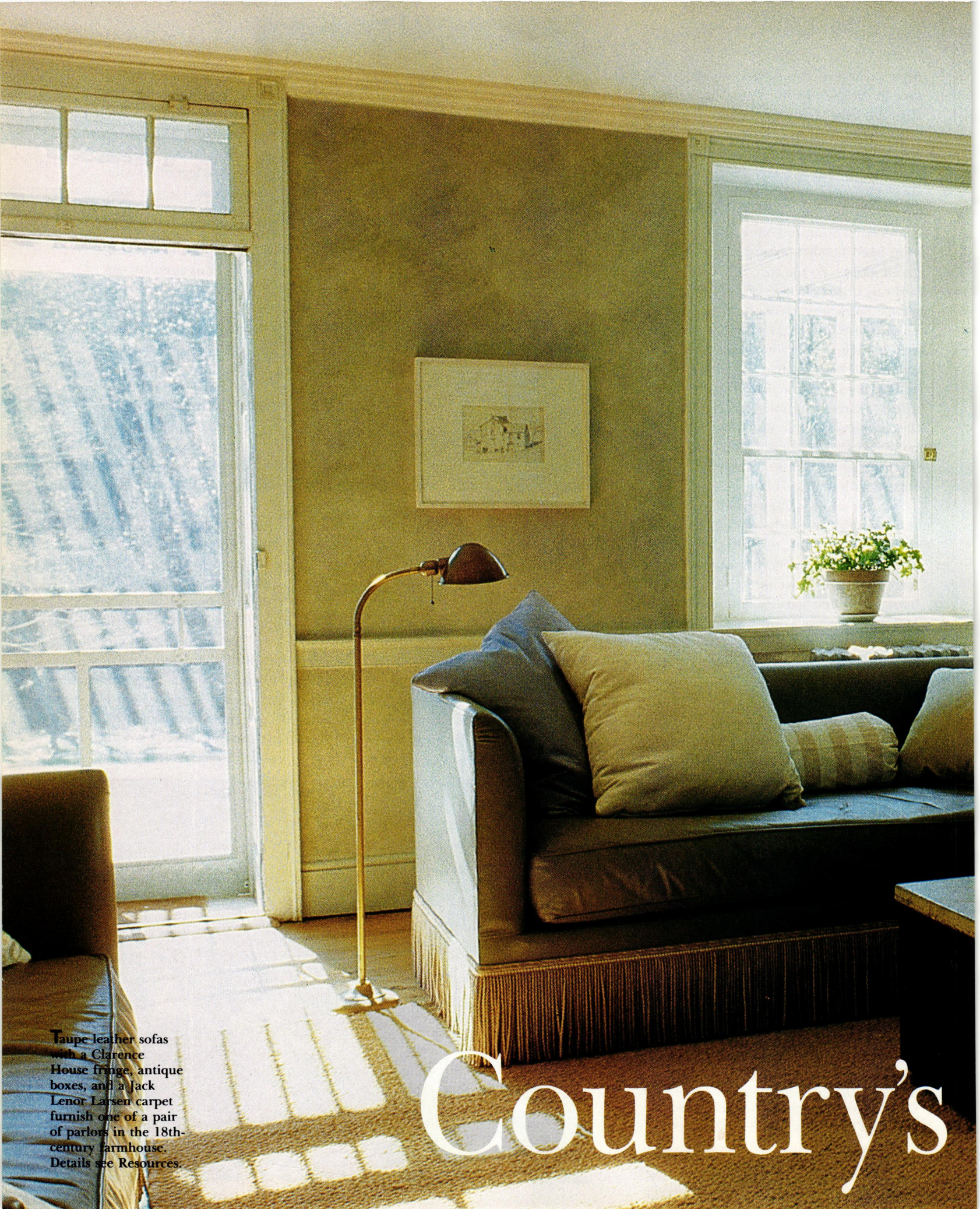
After Sassoon's death in 1939, the rise of Port Lympne inevitably was followed by its decline. How it was revived from the intervening decay and obscurity is a story almost as fantastic as its creation. The story began in 1973, when the present owners, John and Lady Sarah Aspinall, sought land in the country to expand their zoo and animal breeding program at Howletts, another estate some twenty miles inland, which is famous for rare gorillas, tigers, and other exotic beasts. The Aspinalls saved Port Lympne from a subdivision scheme and set about a faithful restoration of the house and garden that is an ongoing endeavor. (The couple own another Dutch colonial house designed by Herbert Baker, Noordhoek, near Capetown, which they have also restored along with its Gertrude Jekyll garden.)

The parkland at Port Lympne is given over to the Aspinalls' herds of rare mammals, but the grounds of the mansion recapture the essence of Sassoon's legendary villa retreat. The late Russell Page, who had visited Sassoon's Port Lympne in his youth, was engaged by the Aspinalls to restore the landscape around the house. He keyed this project to the now mature plantings and the survival of the garden's underlying structure. "The bones were there," says Lady Sarah, who today oversees the seasonal plantings of bulbs and annuals with head gardener Trevor King. The bones were also broken, however. The Western Terraces were collapsing, as were areas around the enormous pool, now a fish pond (the hillside had already begun to erode in Sassoon's time). It took two years just to discover the existence of the Eastern Terraces; found under thirty feet of vegetation, they too had begun to crumble and one had to be reinforced with buttresses. *(Text continued on page 186)*

> Sassoon wanted a garden as bold and extroverted as he was



Original yew hedges, *opposite top. Opposite middle:* The color scheme of the Long Borders restored by Russell Page is subtler than the bold palette of the 1920s. *Opposite bottom:* Foxglove. *Above right:* Classical stonework recalls the ancient Roman presence in Kent. *Right:* Boumi on a garden stroll.



Taupe leather sofas with a Clarence House fringe, antique boxes, and a Jack Lenor Larsen carpet furnish one of a pair of parlors in the 18th-century farmhouse. Details see Resources.

Country's

DESIGNERS JOSEPH LEMBO AND Laura Bohn may not exactly finish each other's sentences like an old married couple, but they come close. In matters of proportion, placement, and palette, each could speak for the other—no doubt a result of having sat on opposite sides of a partners' desk for the eleven years they have been together as principals of Lembo Bohn Design Associates. They not only have the same taste; according to Lembo, the two are telepathic. When each partner decided, independently and simultaneously, to venture beyond the soft and pale taupes, lavenders, and gray blues the firm had always favored, the decisions were identical: the color choice was chartreuse, of course.

As much as they may be in tune visually, Lembo and Bohn are totally out of sync manually. Lembo is the first to admit that he is the unhandiest of men. What is an exercise in frustration for him, however, is sport for her. As Lembo describes it, for Laura and her builder/developer husband, Richard Fiore, "demolition and renovation are recreation." Laura has her own chain saw and blowtorch—a good choice of tools if you are contemplating taking on the kind of project that would only generously be called a handyman's special.

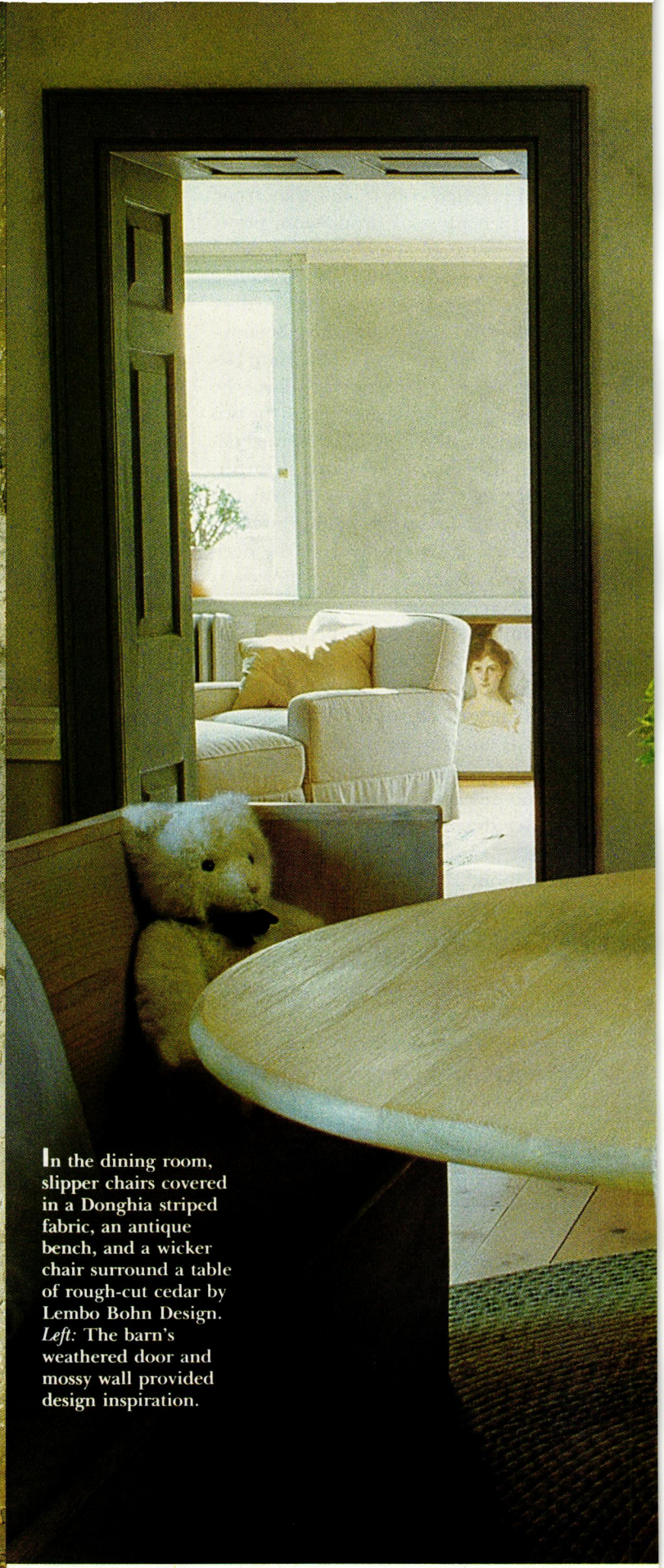
For the past five years Bohn and Fiore have dedicated nearly every weekend, all weekend, to the renovation of a Pennsylvania farmhouse whose two parts, dating from 1750 and 1810, had not benefited from a single instance of modernization or maintenance in over fifty years. Normally, a property such as this one—an antique house and post-and-beam barn on seventy acres in the heart of Bucks County—would not have languished on the market, especially in the heady real estate climate of the mid eighties. But as Bohn relates, "more than twenty-nine people looked at the house and not one made an offer. The work to be done was overwhelming—even for Joe D'Urso, who loved the property and told us about it."

With their heavy-duty tools and a lot of muscle, Bohn and her husband attacked the house, moving every steam pipe, lifting and shifting a staircase 180 degrees, removing a 1930s kitchen addon by severing it with a Sawzall and pulling it off with heavy rope and their pickup truck. With finer implements but no diminution of energy, Fiore re-created moldings and constructed closets while Bohn scraped away layers of wallpaper, paint, and grime—only to restore, in certain rooms, the look of these accumulations.

"The dining room, which has a fireplace long used for cooking, had a particular orange patina," recalls Bohn. "A layer of chicken fat, no doubt. Other

More than twenty-nine people looked at this house and not one made an offer. The amount of work that had to be done was overwhelming

Old (an interior window, a pie safe, a rustic Queen Anne chair, an oil portrait) and new (a banquette, a skylight, a slate-top table) meet in a cozy but bright corner of the kitchen, *opposite*, part of an addition to the house. *Right:* When Bohn rerouted the staircase, a doorway became a niche. The paneling and shutters around the dining room fireplace are original.



In the dining room, slipper chairs covered in a Donghia striped fabric, an antique bench, and a wicker chair surround a table of rough-cut cedar by Lembo Bohn Design. *Left:* The barn's weathered door and mossy wall provided design inspiration.

The older parts were structurally

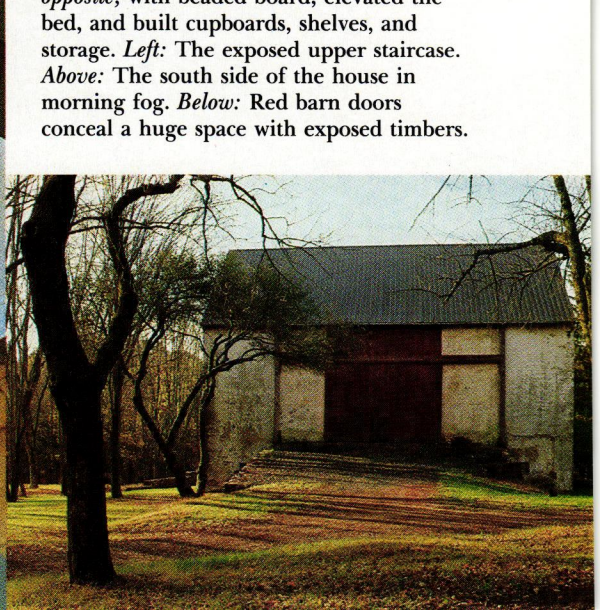
perfect, not off by an inch, and the building was incredibly symmetrical

rooms had various shades of mildew. I couldn't just strip all that off and then paint the walls a flat color. The irony is that the mildew I so carefully trompe l'oeiled to give walls age and depth has disappeared again under a new layer of the real thing."

Every weekend Bohn removed another layer; every workweek she and Lembo drew up new ideas as the original construction emerged. They were impressed that the older parts of the house were "structurally perfect, not off by an inch, and incredibly symmetrical. Every door and window has a mate."

Lembo and Bohn's design plays up the symmetry. They removed doors so that the view from the dining room is through a pair of doorways to a pair of matching front parlors. The staircase between these living rooms was turned around so that it now ends in a landing where one can choose to descend left or right into either parlor. In the master bedroom, the partners devised a headboard-bookcase of paneled wood between two windows opposite a composition of new *(Text continued on page 191)*

Lembo and Bohn lined a small guest room, *opposite,* with beaded board, elevated the bed, and built cupboards, shelves, and storage. *Left:* The exposed upper staircase. *Above:* The south side of the house in morning fog. *Below:* Red barn doors conceal a huge space with exposed timbers.



All in the Family

An extended family circle joined forces with Philip and Alexandra Howard to decorate their Gramercy Park apartment

By Charles Maclean

Photographs by Jean Pagliuso

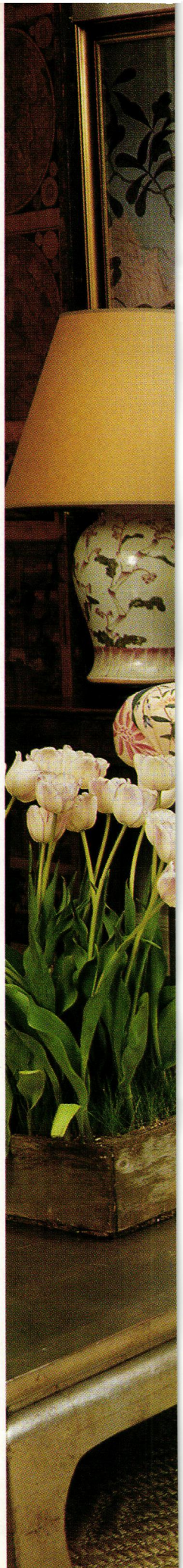
WAR, SOMEONE ONCE SAID, is the father of all things. On the domestic front, certainly, it plays a more creative role than people like to admit. There may be couples who never argue about where to hang a picture, what color to paint the kitchen, or how to accommodate a grisly heirloom, but for Philip and Alexandra Howard—for most of us, perhaps—decorating is the art of armed compromise.

When they first viewed their apartment overlooking Gramercy Park, the Howards didn't have to convince each other that they'd found their ideal. Living at the time at One Gramercy Park, they wanted to stay in the neighborhood but needed more room to house their growing family. They were debating whether to move into a basement across the square with what Philip describes as "a park view of ankles going by," when an answered prayer lifted their sights from bunker to penthouse.

"It was in wonderfully shabby shape," Philip recalls. "The owners had lived there for forty years without changing anything. The rooms were dark and rather gloomy, but they had real distinction." The Howards fell in love with the huge double-height living room with its French windows and mock Jacobean mantelpiece suggesting the baronial hall of some English manor lofted high above the rooftops of lower Manhattan. They shared a vision of making it light and airy, retaining that element of grandiose fantasy that enriches the best New York apartments. As yet, there was little cause for disagreement.

Philip asked an architect friend from his Yale days, Richard Nash Gould—nicknamed Dog on account of his doleful expression—to undertake the renovation. "We changed the traffic flow and made what was a narrow center hall into a series of telescoping rooms, like big fish gobbling little fish, but the apartment needed very little work," Gould says. "It had really good bones." It wasn't until Gould, who has a distinctive modernist signature, persuaded Philip to paint the walls varying shades of gray to establish the "overall tonality of the place," that the battle lines began to form. Alexandra complained that the severe colors they'd chosen would overpower everything else. But money, or the lack of it, came to Philip's aid.

A year after buying the apartment, he



Philip and Alexandra Howard and their children, from left, Charlotte, Alexander, Olivia, and Lily, in their living room amid paintings by Alexandra's grandfather Howard Cushing and Lily Cushing, her aunt. The chaise is in a Brunschwig & Fils chintz. Details see Resources.

A sofa and chairs covered in Schumacher oversize gingham lend a summery air to the living room, *left*. The sisal carpet is from Stark. *Above:* Charlotte Howard shares the baby grand with a model of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. *Below:* A corner in the dining room lined with family photos and drawings by Howard Cushing.

Diverging opinions about the decor pitted boys against girls, gray walls against chintz

launched a new corporate law firm, incurring enormous debt and risk. The sudden lurch into the financial uncertainty of the entrepreneur meant that decorating plans had to be put on hold. "We didn't have the resources, let alone the energy, to be worrying about curtains and upholstery," he says.

As the business prospered and funds became available, Alexandra's sister Justine Cushing, an experienced interior decorator who'd started out at Parish-Hadley, took over where Gould had left off. Just as Alexandra had expressed doubts about living in a sleek monochrome space, Philip now began to voice his concern about "ending up with a frilly chintz-choked *(Text continued on page 190)*

Rosy-cheeked Alexander Howard displays his menagerie on a living room table. *Opposite above:* The master bedroom's cottage-style bed came from the Cushing house in Newport. *Opposite below:* In the dining room, rain forest chintz and sage green walls lend a tone that is both stately and spirited. The painted screen is by architect Parker Bloser.

The Samaras Spectrum

High above Manhattan, artist Lucas Samaras puts a spin on his own color wheel. By Ingrid Sischy

Photographs by Oberto Gili

Samaras transported a folding screen, dining table, and chairs of his own design to the studio in his new skyscraper digs. *Opposite:* Plastic pillows full of yarn serve as chair seats.

TO THE SHOCK OF HIS FRIENDS Lucas Samaras up and moved. But they weren't surprised that he did it practically by hand. Every day for two months Samaras carried, in plastic and paper bags, the more fragile possessions from his past, a small walk-up on the Upper West Side, to his future twenty blocks away, a new midtown skyscraper with doormen who announce company. His route included Central Park, which he felt cut down on the embarrassment of such a pack-rat sight.

Now Samaras is living as near to the moon as one can on earth. These are rooms with views so amazing they make it impossible not to fall in love with Manhattan. Hopelessly. It seems flawless from up here. Central Park looks miniature, velvety, and soft—emerald green in the day, slinky black at night. You can't hear any street noise, but you can look down at all of the city's visual jazz—the cars riffing and jamming; the people scatting; the blues, the pinks, and all the other colors of the neon signs trumpeting for customers.

On a clear day you can witness the

Samaras has made an environment

perfectly suited to his need to be both in and out of this world

Glittering silver curtains and molding hand-painted by Samaras's sister enhance the view from the dining room to the living room and beyond. The artist, *opposite*, designed the dining table, lamps, and three chairs in the foreground; the wire hanger chair and chopsticks chair were made this year. Details see Resources.

A Samaras box holds jewels, beads, and yarn. *Opposite above:* Bedroom cabinets built by Tony Caccamo display jeweled objects and other pieces from the 1960s. The painting is *The Art Critic*, 1985. *Opposite below:* Sixty-two stories high, the living room offers views spanning the New York skyline.

planes coming and going at the airports. Samaras himself rarely goes anywhere, which is why his change of address stunned those who know him. In our eyes his old apartment was as much a part of him as his beard or his forthrightness. He'd been there for years and years, not seeking out tonier quarters when he got successful. But it's clear why he finally moved: Samaras has found and constructed an environment perfectly suited to his need to be both in and out of this world. He has always been an urban hermit, a loner on a grand and genuine scale—eating in, for example, instead of at fancy restaurants, almost always alone, usually something boiled, sometimes with the radio on, softly, sometimes the TV. In the new apartment Samaras often just looks out the window as he's having dinner; what you see out there is better than most movies. And what you see inside is a life in which art touches everything.

Going from room to room is like opening the drawers to one of those intricate boxes Samaras makes

Art isn't just dotted around the way we're accustomed to seeing it; it fills these spaces as it fills Samaras's days and nights. The show begins right away. There are two entrances: if it's your first time here, he'll probably open the front door, speak no more than a few short words, and stand aside while you walk ahead down a long corridor. Samaras likens this hall to the passageway into the tombs at Mycenae. The walls are covered with small paintings, drawings, and photographs, all but one made by him over the years. The alien picture is a photograph of the young Samaras in a belted leather coat. Diane Arbus took it. They liked each other, which isn't surprising—she so attracted to the outsider, he so drawn to the deep charged material that makes people tick and that usually comes out only on the shrink's couch or in the confessional box. High above all these images is evidence of Samaras's connection to human anxiety: strings of Venetian trade

beads hang from one end of the passageway to the other; they're not technically worry beads, but they look as if they have soothing power.

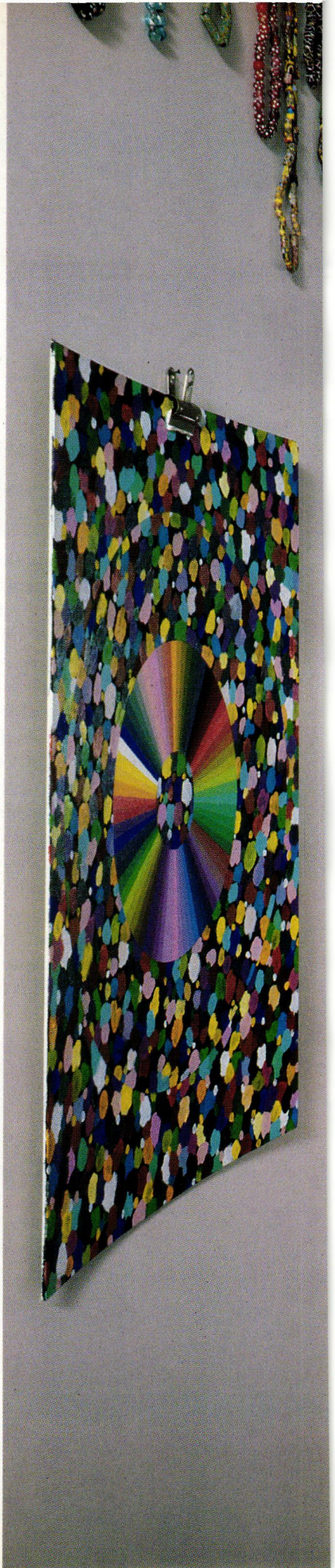
The living room waits at the end of this gangplank hallway. So does the view. Samaras knows he's got something here that's the equivalent of an ocean that sucks lemmings, and he has adorned the windows with glittering silver curtains to enhance the spectacle. An intricately striped molding—hand-painted by his sister after his instructions—wraps the room like a halo. The living room has been furnished with pieces Samaras designed: there are some of his chairs-with-a-difference—chairs that are so imaginative they make you realize how boring chairs usually are—and tables with such zingy patterns you think they're going to spin like a roulette wheel. One does. Lamps he made especially for the room look like pickup sticks unbound by gravity or stars in the middle of exploding.

Samaras's is a life in which art touches everything. Art fills these spaces as it fills his days and nights

The walls of the living room are gray. Shades of gray grace the place as clouds do the sky; you feel you're floating up here, dreaming too. But there's more going on than splendidness. Samaras has turned his apartment into a magnified version of one of those intricate boxes he has made for decades. And going from room to room of this art-potioned space is akin to opening their drawers. Like the boxes of Joseph Cornell, Samaras's enchant with combinations of autobiographical details and other strange and wonderful stuff. In the case of his apartment, each room is filled with treasures that he has created or found and then mesmerizingly rearranged. There are gray cabinets that light up and display collections put together over the years—paperweights, miniature plastic wedding figurines. Others reveal objects he's made—painted plates, jewel-encrusted shoes, his boxes. A museum should be so smart as to show his fantastical work this way.

And architects could learn a thing or two from the way Samaras makes the transitions from space to space. There's a passage between two of the rooms that's as mind-bending as a scene in Alice in Wonderland. When you first enter a small study, it appears to be the last room in the apartment, but after a moment what had seemed to be a mirror reveals itself to be in fact another room. To get into it you have to step over a ledge. I've watched people hesitate here in disbelief, as I did the first time. The trick Samaras is playing is fun house–like, harking back to the mirrored rooms and corridors he began making in the 1960s. Here he performs his wizardry to induce an altered state because you're about to step into the cocoon whence he spins his magic—you're on your way into the studio rooms.

As in his old apartment, there's a little room where he makes some of the pieces and then there's the larger studio. In the old place he lived in that larger room. Things haven't changed that much, for while this apartment is umpteen times bigger and grander, he still spends most of his time in the studio. It has a little kitchen off it, the same size as the old one, and every time I've been over, that's where he's cooked, not in the more opulent kitchen off the living room. We eat at a tiny *(Text continued on page 191)*



Works from the 1970s and Venetian trade beads adorn the hallway to the living room, *right*. *Left:* Wedding figurines collected over the years fill a corner shelf in the artist's studio.

Wearing a Valentina smoking jacket, Gene Hovis, *opposite*, carries desserts to his dining room/library. *Above:* His table, set for an intimate dinner, is layered with antique linens and lace over a paisley shawl. The Irish crystal is from Vito Giallo Antiques, NYC. Details see Resources.

Host of the Town

New Yorkers vie for a place at the table of culinary arbiter Gene Hovis

By Brooke Hayward

IT IS A CRISP DECEMBER EVENING IN New York City; the plum-colored room pulsates with the sounds of rustling taffeta and chatter and piano music. A haze of amber light cast by candles and antique parchment lampshades floats dreamily in the air along with mingled perfumes. Standing by the closed mahogany pocket doors that lead to the dining room/library, Gene Hovis surveys approvingly the first act of another of his trademark productions: a perfect dinner party created for ten friends. From beginning to end and for three days he has been preparing—washing and ironing the nineteenth-century lace tablecloths and napkins; shopping for the ingredients and flowers; setting the table with lavish arrangements of cut crystal, German art nouveau silver, and English ironstone; writing in exquisite calligraphy a complete menu card for each guest; and otherwise doing the thing he simply does better than anyone else around: cooking. Earlier this evening, five trusted professionals arrived to help; two are in the tiny six-by-nine kitchen and three are on the floor serving.

In spite of all the activity around him, the fact that tonight's guest list comprises a group of men and women at the top of Manhattan's coveted A list (most of whom have begged for an invitation here at one time or another), Hovis is not a nervous host. Outfitted in a black silk smoking jacket made for him long ago by Valentina (his other uniform of choice for such occasions is a tuxedo shirt and a Valentina kimono jacket that ties with a drawstring), he enjoys himself thoroughly, remaining at all times the courtly old-fashioned southern gentleman. At 8:55 he goes to the piano, whispers a few instructions to the musician, rings a little silver bell, and the two massive pocket doors part as he announces dinner. From plush overstuffed chairs and sofas, the guests rise and look toward the glittering vision beyond. A long banquet table draped in paisley shawls and overlaid with lace gleams in the candlelight like a thousand diamond bracelets. A collective sigh is exuded. The second act has begun.

OBERTO GILI

Tonight is a celebration for the New York Public Library, a biennial event that some seventy hosts and seven hundred guests participate in to boost book funds. Hovis's calligraphy at each placement reads:

Sevruga caviar on fried toast
Chilled vodka with green peppercorns
Roast duck with ginger glaze
Red cabbage
Rösti
Green salad with Roquefort shavings
Popovers (with lots of churned butter)
Château Nénin (Pomerol)
Lemon curd pie
Demitasse

OBERTO GILI

Now, while everyone sips chilled vodka with green peppercorns and tries not to gobble bread rounds fried in butter and topped with a generous bull's-eye of crème fraîche, chopped egg yolks and egg whites, and caviar (supplied by Glenn Bernbaum, owner of Mortimer's restaurant), Hovis makes a graceful toast to literacy, then goes around the table briefly saluting each person. He likes to get this formality out of the way in the beginning and without too much fuss so that serious eating may commence uninterrupted. And, needless to say, he has not misjudged his audience. In this charmed atmosphere the carefully thought-out balance of people, preparation, and food—superbly home-cooked—is always a success.

"I come from a family of great cooks," says Hovis. He was born and raised in a small town in North Carolina; his maternal grandmother, "Granny Dameron," was the daughter of slaves. Granny Dameron dominates the opening chapter of *Gene Hovis's Uptown Down Home Cookbook* (Little, Brown), a delightful compendium of childhood memories and no-nonsense southern recipes. "As a child," he writes, "I thought that Granny Dameron must be quite rich. Her dining room table, always covered with a lovely hand-crocheted cloth and pretty hand-embroidered napkins, a bowl of fresh flowers in the center, looked opulent and lavish. It would be laden with watermelon pickles, chow-chow (cabbage relish), pickled beets, stuffed baked chickens, an assortment of fresh cooked vegetables, hot yeast pocketbook rolls, a towering snowy coconut cake with a filling of homemade jam, and, in the summer, delicious lemonade. It wasn't until I reached my teens that I realized very little of this opulence represented an outlay of actual cash, since there was a limited supply of that in Granny Dameron's life. She raised on her own land practically everything she served. Granny Dameron had no room in her life for idleness or waste."

It is a long way from Salisbury, North Carolina, to Hovis's rarefied dinner party, but he seems to have been determined to make the journey from the start. After charming a private high school education out of a family friend and mentor (for whom his godmother worked as a cook), Hovis graduated from college with a fine arts degree and came to New York to be an actor. Living

Hovis scans his seating chart, *right*, as guests arrive at the table for a benefit dinner celebrating the New York Public Library. *Above left:* The shelves of a marbleized closet reveal Hovis's weakness for antique crystal, porcelain, and silver, which he finds at flea markets wherever he travels.

At 8:55, massive pocket

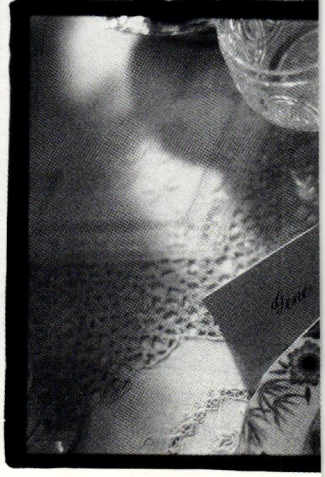
CHRIS SANDERS

doors part as Hovis rings a silver bell and announces dinner

in a tiny Greenwich Village apartment with an electric skillet and a hot plate, he began catering meals for friends as a way to make ends meet. He was really a chef posing as an actor waiting for a chance to be a chef. The late fifties in this country, however, were not a time in which it was respectable to be a chef, so instead he became the manager of a disco called Arthur and gradually accumulated a select group of clients who appreciated his culinary skills. In due course a prominent textile manufacturer made Hovis the executive chef for his company's private dining facilities. "It was fabulous," he says. "Every summer my boss would send me to Europe for six weeks to research new ideas and recipes—with pay, which was very generous."

After sixteen years, Hovis left his job and went to work on his cookbook. In the evenings he began staging wonderful dinners at home. "In truth, I've never really left the theater," he says. "When I

For days Hovis has been ironing lace tablecloths, writing menu cards, and otherwise doing what he does better than anyone else: cooking



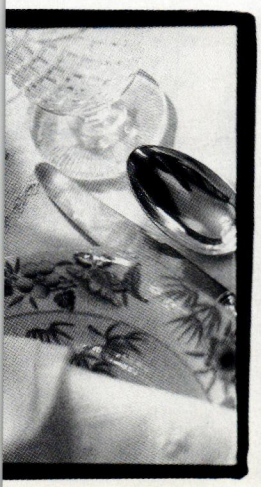
CHRIS SANDERS

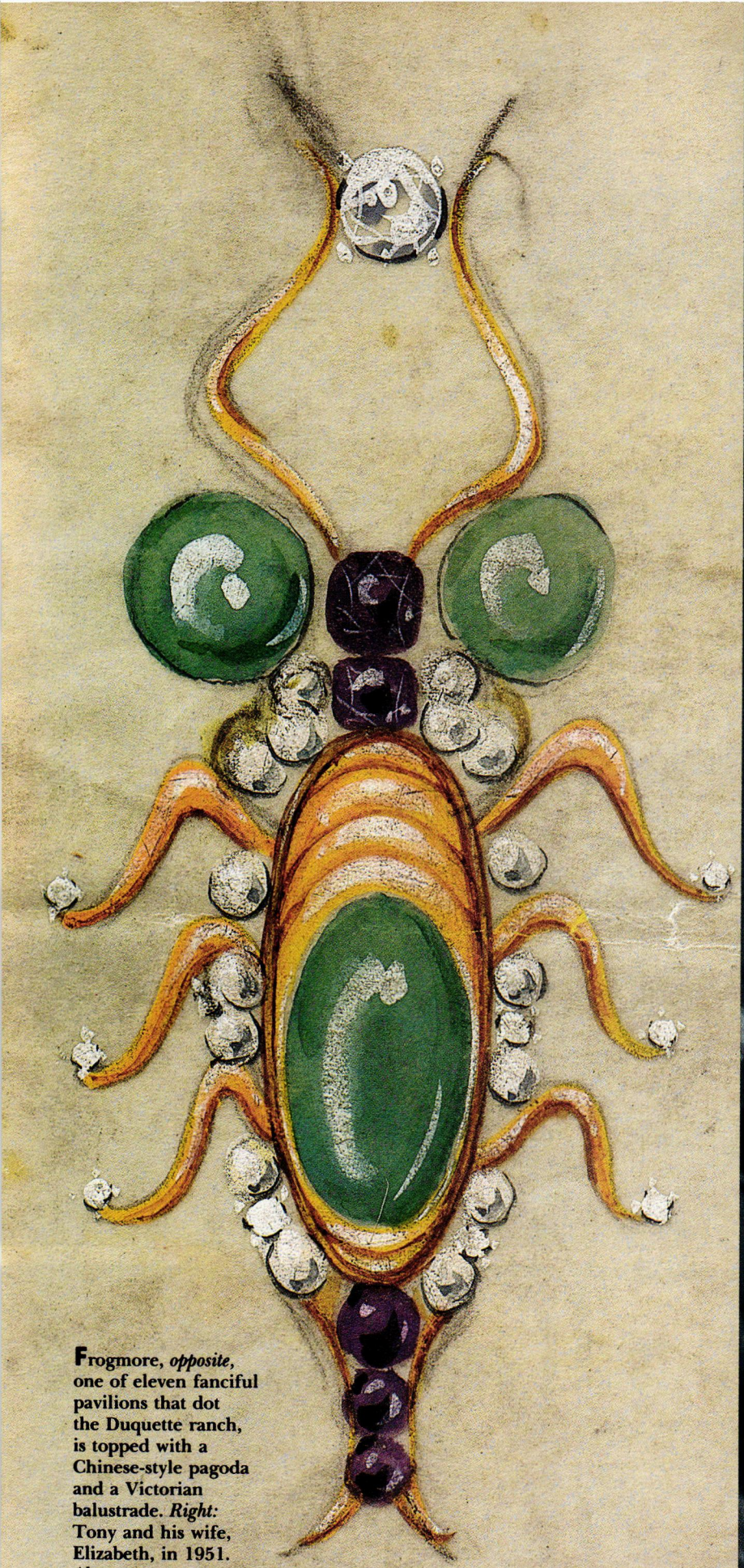
cook, my guests are the audience. First I create the ambience: the table, the lighting, the flower arrangements. Then I prepare the meal. And last—and hopefully—my guests applaud."

The props chosen for his enchanting settings are booty from endless shopping forays. "When I see something beautiful, I want it," says Hovis. "I have to have it." By haunting the world's flea markets, he has amassed a remarkable collection of collections, starting each when it was unfashionable enough to afford and moving on when prices got too expensive. In this way, his small apartment has been entirely furnished with Biedermeier and American Empire pieces which display groupings of wooden fruit-shaped tea caddies, snuffbox shoes, English match-strikers, Battersea boxes, and Chinese porcelains. A spectacular assortment of antique Paisley shawls has provided upholstery for sofas, chairs, and curtains. Meanwhile, the closets contain rigorously organized stacks and rows of beautiful antique lace, linen, china, crystal, and silver. "Sometimes I get bored looking at one kind of china, so each guest might get an individual place setting, a different dinner plate, and glassware."

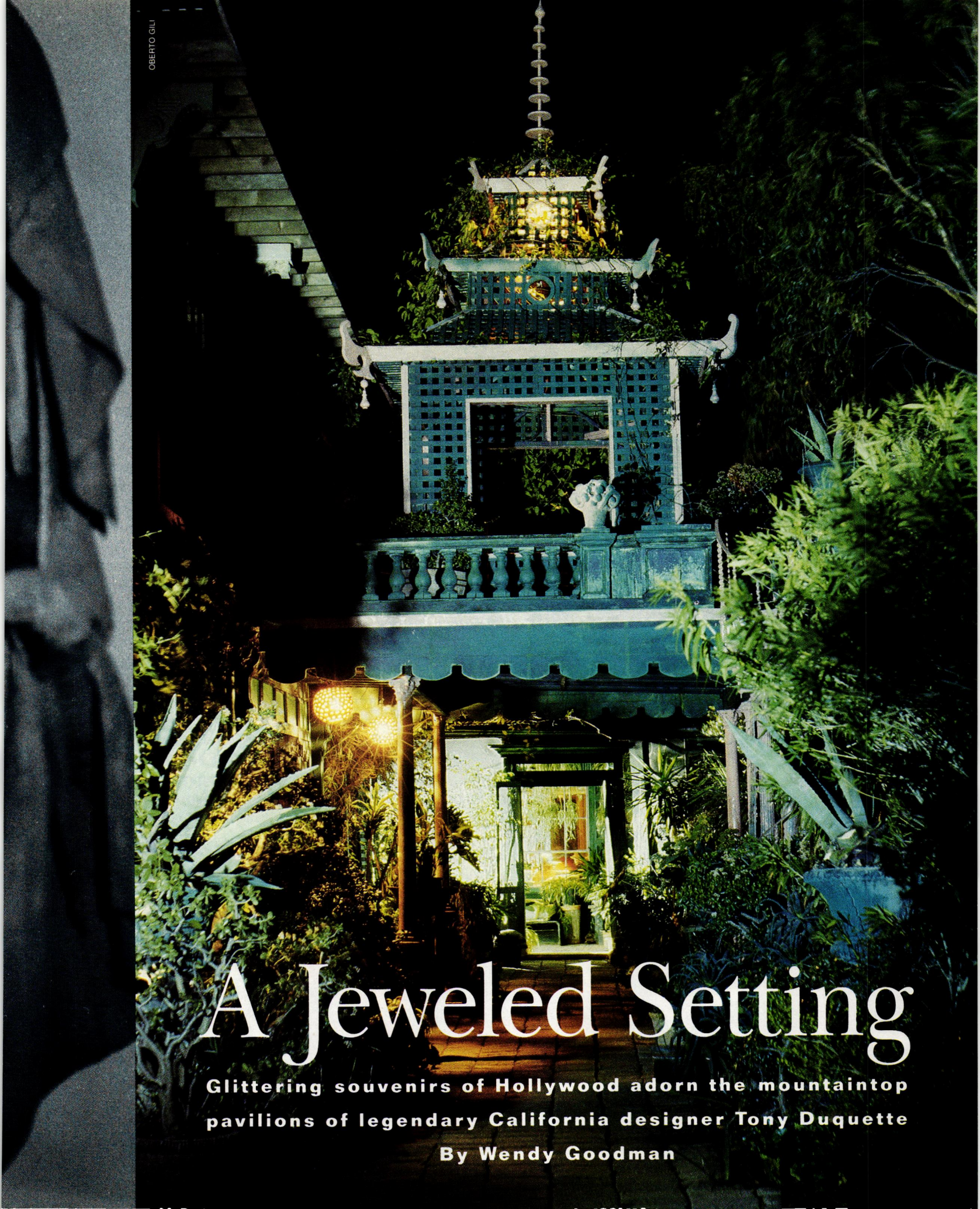
The preferences of a particular guest on any given night might also dictate the menu. Hovis is well versed in his friends' foods of choice. "One of Pat Buckley's favorites is red beans—there are lots of bean people. Carolina and Reinaldo Herrera love beans, as did Lady Keith, although her all-time favorite was chicken potpie. Glenn Bernbaum has very elegant taste. He likes scrawny chicken, broiled. By that I mean the kind of chicken I had *(Text continued on page 188)*

Tidy bundles of tablecloths and napkins fill a Regency linen press. Scenes from a New York Public Library dinner, *below from far left:* Hovis wearing a Valentina kimono jacket. A place setting. The late Slim Keith regaling Al Feinman and Bobbe Munves. Anne Slater with Hans Teetz. *Opposite:* The plum-colored living room and adjacent dining room, furnished with choice American and English antiques.





Frogmore, *opposite,* **one of eleven fanciful pavilions that dot the Duquette ranch, is topped with a Chinese-style pagoda and a Victorian balustrade.** *Right:* **Tony and his wife, Elizabeth, in 1951.** *Above:* **Duquette's 1946 design for a jeweled beetle pin.**



OBERTO GILI

A Jeweled Setting

Glittering souvenirs of Hollywood adorn the mountaintop pavilions of legendary California designer Tony Duquette

By Wendy Goodman

ALL OF FASHIONABLE HOLLYWOOD FLOCKED TO THE white-tie opening of artist Tony Duquette's studio on May 25, 1956. Marion Davies arrived, escorted by her husband, Captain Horace Brown, and a phalanx of Pinkertons to protect her diamonds and rubies. Hedda Hopper shared a sofa with Mary Pickford and socialite-turned-society-columnist Cobina Wright. Agnes Moorehead enacted her version of Sarah Bernhardt as Phaedra. And two new ballets were performed on a proscenium at the end of a cavernous ballroom. But the evening's main attraction was the studio itself, a former movie soundstage that had been transformed into a series of dazzling, neobaroque interiors by Duquette, a young Californian whose career decorator Elsie de Wolfe helped launch.

The two had met fifteen years earlier when De Wolfe spotted one of Duquette's fanciful table garnitures at a dinner party and rang him up, demanding that he make her a "meuble." Informed by De Wolfe's assistant that the meuble in question could be any large piece of furniture, Duquette, a recent art school graduate with a background in set design, built a dramatic dark green secretary embellished with mirrors, cut-glass emeralds, shells, and blackamoors, and topped by dancing sprites. Thrilled with her new possession,

To me, the magical element in design comes from juxtaposing art with nature," says Duquette. ***Clockwise from top left:*** **He mixed chandeliers with bark-textured wood on David O. Selznick's enclosed terrace, c. 1960. A walkway at the ranch. The prototype for Duquette's series of metal angels, presented to the city of Los Angeles in 1980. Duquette in 1947 with his early patrons, from left, Cobina Wright and Elsie de Wolfe. Wright in her Duquette-decorated living room, c. 1944. The duchess of Windsor in 1951, wearing a Duquette necklace.**

TOP RIGHT: OBERTO GILI. BOTTOM RIGHT: JIMMY CHEN

De Wolfe gave it center stage in her Beverly Hills living room and declared Duquette a genius.

Intense and soft-spoken, Duquette came from a cultured California family who encouraged his interest in art by allowing him to use their house as a testing ground. Then, as now, he followed in the tradition of Oliver Messel and Jean Cocteau, never confining himself to a single medium. And at a time when other designers were promoting modernist simplicity, Duquette's work was characterized by opulence, by inspired mixtures of organic and man-made materials, and by lavish historical and cross-cultural references. "I am equally comfortable with burlap and velvet," he has said. "Beauty, not luxury, is what I value."

With De Wolfe as his advocate, Duquette was discovered by the press—"Believe me," she wrote to the editor of *Vogue,* "I am not handing you a lemon"—and then by everyone else. In short order he was given gallery shows of his sculpture and decorations. Adrian, Hollywood's leading

Frogmore's festive kitchen, *top,* displays folk art under a ceiling patterned with Greek rag rugs. *Above:* The Duquettes in 1964 at the ranch with Greta Garbo. *Right:* Elsie de Wolfe in 1943 with her Duquette grapevine console.

TOP: OBERTO GILI

Tony and Elizabeth Duquette, *above,* today. *Right:* Tony Duquette with goddess figures he designed for MGM's *Ziegfeld Follies*. *Below:* At the ranch, an Austrian painted chest, c. 1820, supports a group of French ceramic eggs.

fashion and costume designer, offered Duquette carte blanche to create shop and window displays, to which he responded with plastered-lace elephants and orchestras of Siamese cats. And Vincente Minnelli signed him on to produce lavish stylized sets for the *Ziegfeld Follies*, *Kismet,* and other MGM movies.

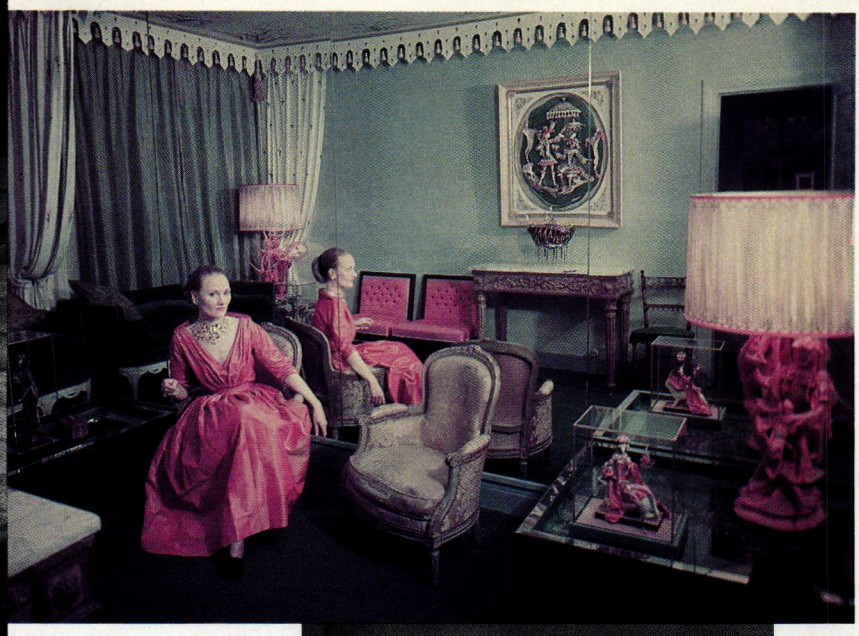
The scope of Duquette's work since then has been astonishing. A self-dubbed "do-it-yourself de' Medici," he was the first American to be given a one-man show at the Louvre's Pavillon de Marson. As a costume designer, he won a Tony award for his work in the original Broadway production of *Camelot.* As a jewelry designer, Duquette has counted the duchess of Windsor and Ann Woolworth among his clients. And as a decorator, his projects have ranged from an Irish castle for Elizabeth Arden to Hollywood houses for Doris Duke, Mary Pickford, David O. Selznick, and most recently, Herb Alpert.

In an age in which specialists execute the visions of visionaries, Duquette has always done it all himself. Nowhere is this more evident than at the Duquette ranch, located on 156 acres in the Malibu mountains. There is an otherworldly quality to its various pavilions silhouetted razor-sharp against the California sky. The

"This ranch is a cross between Tobacco Road and San Simeon"

ranch was purchased in 1957 as a country retreat from his Beverly Hills studio, and in the years since, Duquette and his wife, Elizabeth, a painter who is his frequent collaborator, have transformed the rocky terrain into what they aptly call the Empire. There are now a total of eleven living pavilions, most of which are equipped with bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens. They are named after places or animals for which the Duquettes feel a special affection—the Bosporus, China, Portugal, Ireland, and Frogmore (after Tony's collection of frog figurines). These follies—each a hybrid of Hollywood architectural relics, Duquette inventions, and decorative fragments gathered from all over the world—have taken shape in the form of Chinese pagodas, Georgian houses, and miniature neoclassical monuments. "Scavenging," says Duquette, "is what I love to do. It's my passion instead of drinking or gambling." The elegant cast-iron elevator from the old Hollywood Hotel sits like a giant birdcage on a garden path. The bedroom window from the Spanish-style Hollywood house that Greta Garbo and John Gilbert shared in the 1920s has been incorporated into a guest room in the Horntoad pavilion; and the kitchen door at Frogmore,

TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT: OBERTO GILI



Duquette drama, *clockwise from top left:* The designer with actress Agnes Moorehead in 1956. Elizabeth Duquette in a house outside Paris that she and Tony decorated in 1950. Merle Oberon posed for *Life* magazine in 1947 with her Duquette table setting. The kitchen at Frogmore, furnished with a Dutch ceramic stove and other travel finds. Elizabeth Duquette in the ballroom of the Duquette studio, c. 1960. At the ranch, a federal sideboard transformed into a kitchen sink.

CENTER LEFT AND BOTTOM RIGHT: OBERTO GILI.
BLACK AND WHITE VINTAGE PHOTOGRAPHS: TONY DUQUETTE COLLECTION

A plant-filled porch at the ranch, *above*, overlooks the arid mountain landscape. *Left:* A Duquette pin. *Opposite:* Another porch features a colonnade of 1920s streetlight columns crowned with a Victorian pelmet. Fiberglass copies of streetlight casings serve as plant containers.

the Duquettes' main living quarters, once belonged to Marion Davies's Santa Monica beach house. "Everything has been recycled," says Duquette. "This ranch is a cross between Tobacco Road and San Simeon."

There are lemon juicers recast as finials, 1920s telephone pole casings assembled into porch balustrades and metal gates made from airplane landing strips. Notes Duquette: "My wife and I have not lost the art of playing."

The ranch is perhaps the most unusual and oddly sophisticated of the legendary residences where the Duquettes have lived, worked, and entertained—always extravagantly. In recent years Duquette has devoted himself to monumental projects, including a series of twenty-eight-foot-tall angels that he created for the Los Angeles 1980 bicentennial. Angels seem right at home in the anything but down-to-earth world of Tony Duquette. California decorator Hutton Wilkinson, an old friend who worked with Duquette for fifteen years, says, "Even Hollywood at its most fantastic couldn't outdo Duquette off the screen." ♠

Editor: Joyce MacRae

OBERTO GILI

The Social

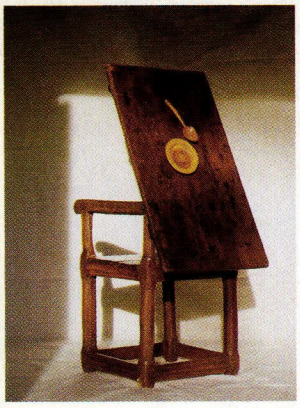
Rose Tarlow's surprising antique chairs talk to her

By Leo Lerman

Photographs by Oberto Gili

Climbing of Chairs

Connoisseur/furniture designer Rose Tarlow re-creates and collects period furniture. At home in Los Angeles, she holds an assembly of her prize antique English vernacular comb-backs. "I see them," says Rose, "dancing!" Details see Resources.



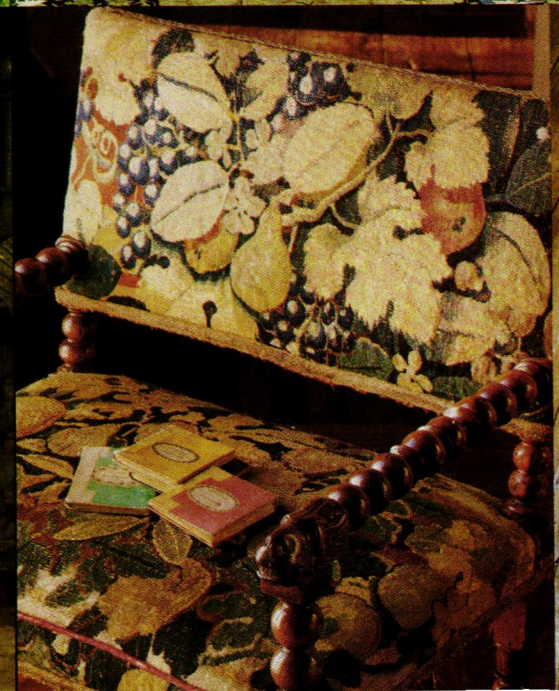
A CHAIR IS A MEANS TO AN END. BUT to Rose Tarlow, Los Angeles–based generative force, chairs not only coddle the seat. "I fell in love with chairs," says Rose. I will tell you more about Rose's licit passion later. Know now that Mrs. Tarlow is internationally appreciated as a creator and re-creator of elegant period furniture: these pieces are always embellished with an almost imperceptible in-period Tarlow twist. Along with period pieces, Rose is now designing a very Tarlow-today contemporary group. Rose is also an antiquaire, which is how she started, some fifteen years ago, in her own shop, Melrose House. She houses her for-sale antiques there and a selection of her self-designed period pieces. The latter are also offered in twelve outlets nationwide. Rose is, when ignited by a special problem or appeal to her sensibility or sentimentality, an interior designer. "I am not," she says emphatically, "an interior decorator." She is a connoisseur with an eager eye, an encyclopedic visual memory, and a happy penchant for fantasy.

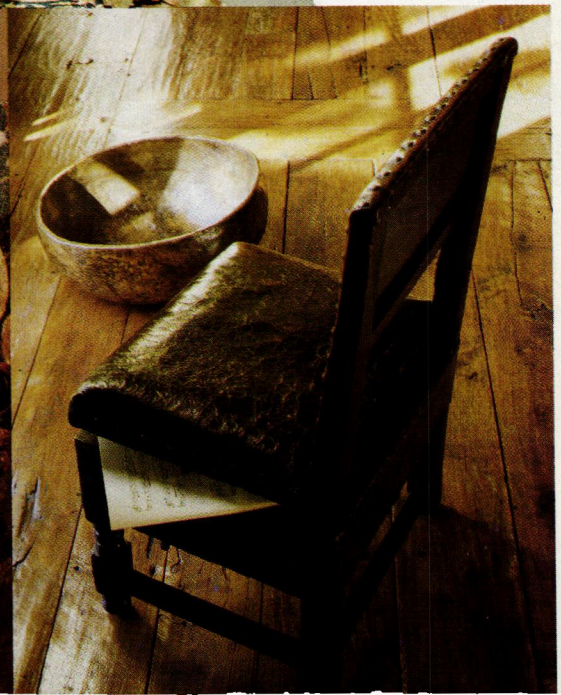
Rose lives in one of the most fanciful and most beautiful houses I have ever seen. Here she entertains superbly in a huge but cozy space, more a pavilion than a drawing room, lined with creamy vellum-covered books, lit by fifteenth- to seventeenth-century wrought-iron rushlights and subtly shaded lamps, green vines cascading discreetly on the walls, great wooden tubs of green-green wheat grass glowing in the dream light. Here are

Not a sculpture, *left,* but an early 16th century kitchen chair. *Above left:* An 18th-century English chair flip-flops into a table. *Above right:* A George III wing chair in its original undercover.

"I like chairs because they are like people. Chairs have personalities"

Rose Tarlow's Régence siège courant, *above far left*, probably companioned a desk. *Above left:* This beechwood Régence turn-coat shed its original dress for the exotic 18th-century Beauvais tapestry it now wears. *Above:* Powerful country hands bent this 17th-century English stick chair into shape for kitchen use. *Far left:* The austere presence on Rose's lawn was dug out of English oak. *Left:* A Louis XVI ratchet chair stretches out—for dalliance? *Below far left:* Henri II fold-up used in churches. *Below left:* A very rich man owned this 17th-century French armchair of carved turned walnut in its original tapestry. *Below:* This 17th-century English chair leads a double life, for sitting and storage.





Rose's curious objects of iron, her purple table glass, her modern drawings, her ivory-handled implements—each a work of art—her wooden bowls, wooden caskets, wooden containers of every artful contrivance, even a big bowl of wooden fish. "I love beautiful woods," says Rose. "I love the sensuality of wood. A friend said to me, 'Rose, you must at one time have been a tree.' "

In Rose's Los Angeles house and in her London flat (Bel-Air and Belgravia), an aristocracy of chairs stands unobtrusively, authentic fifteenth-, sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century clear-limbed gentry, English, French, even a patriarchal Chinese. They stand amid creamy colored comfy modern sofas, lounge chairs, convenient tables, and a nonclutter of timelessly beautiful objects. "I like everything," says Rose, "in all periods, all colors. They can all be right if used properly. They don't have to be old. They have to be good." Rose's chairs are *good*, and when you look at our sampling of them on these pages, you will see that they are *old*. And if you look at these museum-quality chairs closely, seeking the individual character of each, the bearing, the profile, you may catch a flicker of their private lives. Many of them began careers of servitude in country kitchens, even farmhouse outbuildings. Now they are all upper-upper class. Those chairs who long ago felt lucky to *(Text continued on page 186)*

"I love the sensuality of beautiful woods. A friend said to me, 'Rose, you must at one time have been a tree' "

The Louis XVI ratchet chair, *opposite*, maternally enfolds a baby cousin, signed Boulard. *Right:* Rose Tarlow's 15th-century Welsh country-helper stool. *Above:* A curvaceous splat distinguishes an 18th-century French kitchen chair.

Positive Altitude

The skyline's the limit in the apartment Robert Currie designed for two New York collectors

By Joseph Giovannini **Photographs by Scott Frances**

SUSPENDED ON THE FORTIETH floor as though in a dirigible, Marilyn and Myles Cane have become, in the year they've occupied their one-bedroom Upper East Side apartment, denizens of the New York sky. From the deep chairs facing the plate glass that curves around their living room, they regularly watch airplanes stack up over LaGuardia, helicopters buzz the East River, and weather fronts roll in from Westchester. They have eaten popcorn in front of crazed bolts of lightning and watched snow clouds completely erase the city below. At night, a stream of headlights down Second Avenue flows through the man-made aurora borealis. "Depending on the wind, we can even hear planes taking off across the river," says Myles, a semi-retired lawyer active on many boards.

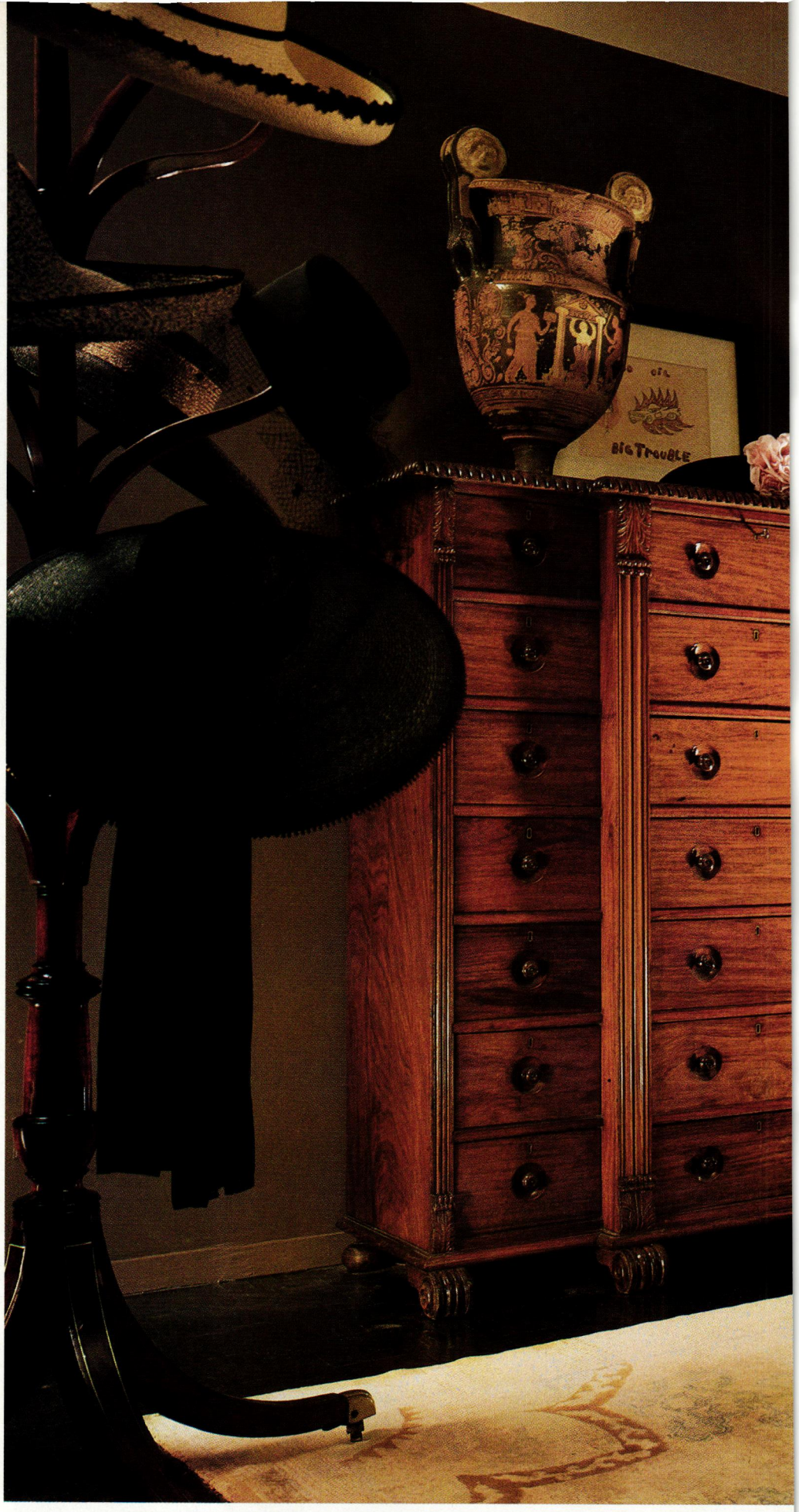
But the hypnotic view mesmerizes all the more because, over by the bookcases

Currie armchairs in Manuel Canovas wool, *left,* face the view beside a Giacometti lamp and Flemish tapestry. *Above:* Georgian chairs in Clarence House fabric and an art deco table set with antique silver and candlesticks by Elsa Peretti for Tiffany. Plaster vases by Olivier Gagnère. Details see Resources.

at the rear of the room, there is quiet rhythmic ticking and the occasional chime. The Canes are collectors, and Myles specializes in antique clocks: French carriage clocks, a Scottish grandfather, American banjos, a Viennese regulator. "I collect clocks because you feel the eternity of time—it's the sense you have watching the ocean." The same might be said of this apartment with a view, that its constellation of skyborne events, its sunrises and sunsets and the shifting colors of light striking the sage gray walls, turn it into a sundial.

Not that Robert Currie, an old friend of Marilyn's who decorated their apartment, designed the sky. But if the living room registers so many of its activities and moods, it is because he muted the room to serve as antechamber to the view. Nothing competes: he hung no curtains, laid no carpet, scattered no clutter, but placed only two pairs of comfortable chairs facing the drama outside, turning the room inside out. "The four chairs are actually enough," remarks Myles. Marilyn, inches away from the forty-story drop—looking beautifully composed, with her black dress, long black hair, and very red lipstick, next to the thin air—mentions that "in another lifetime," before moving to New York, she was an amateur pilot.

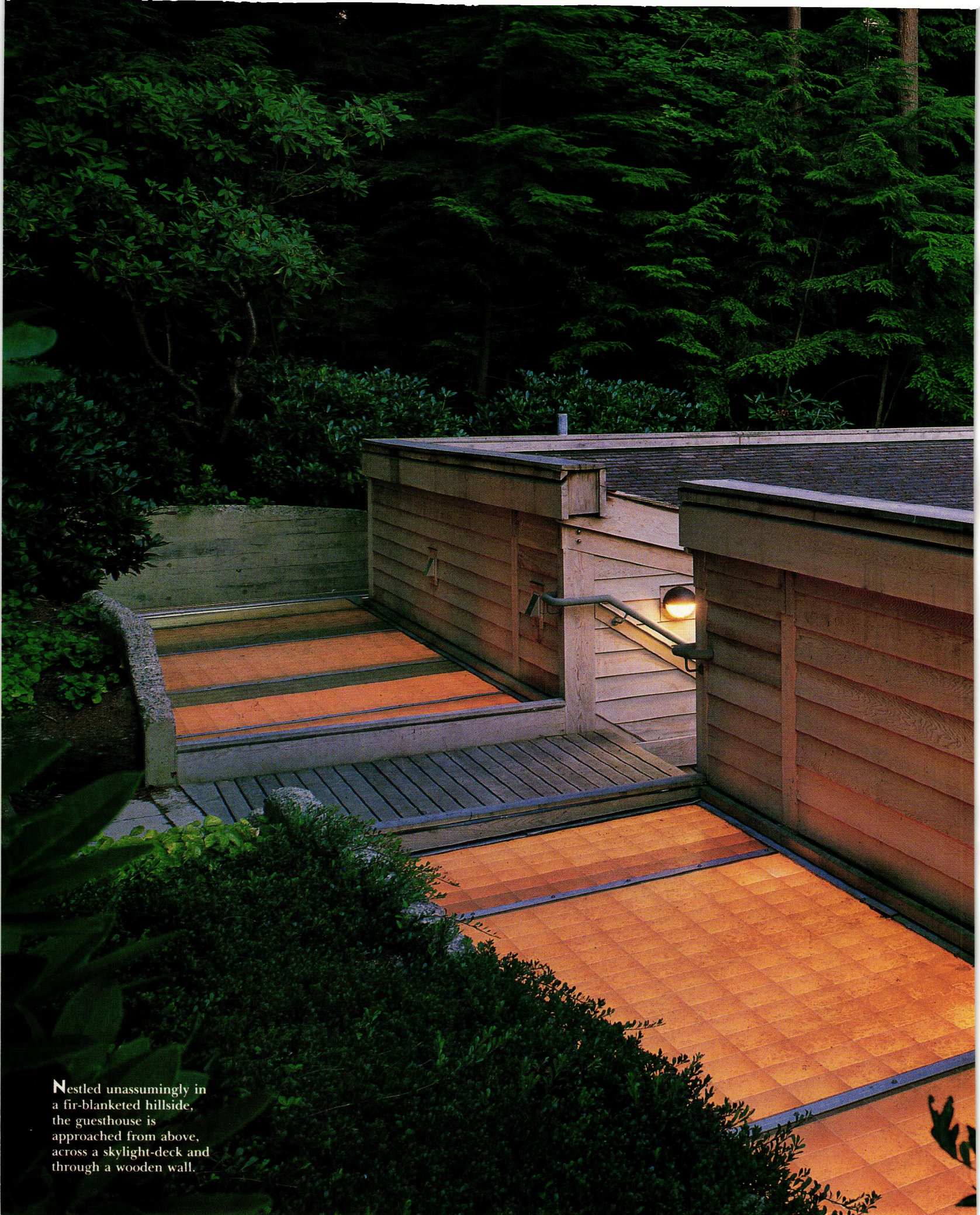
Currie confesses to being a designer without an ism and approaches new projects equipped mostly with a stethoscopic sensitivity to the character of his clients and their spaces. In a plain white shirt and khakis, rolled up at the sleeves and cuffs, he explains what he calls his "colored past," including surreal windows he dressed at Henri Bendel in the late 1970s and early '80s which gave clothes a story. (What was that woman doing with her head in the oven anyway?) Currie transposes that narrative approach to *(Text continued on page 189)*



At the foot of the steel bed covered in Fortuny cotton, a 1950s American iron and leather stool rests on a Chinese carpet from Doris Leslie Blau, NYC. Behind the Regency inlaid mahogany hat tree from A. Smith Antiques, NYC, is a William IV chest topped by a 1st-century Roman krater. A custom Currie lamp illuminates a 19th-century English hall chair and a David Seidner photograph.

"We didn't want a Biedermeier room

or a Louis Whatever, but one for the things that mean something to us"

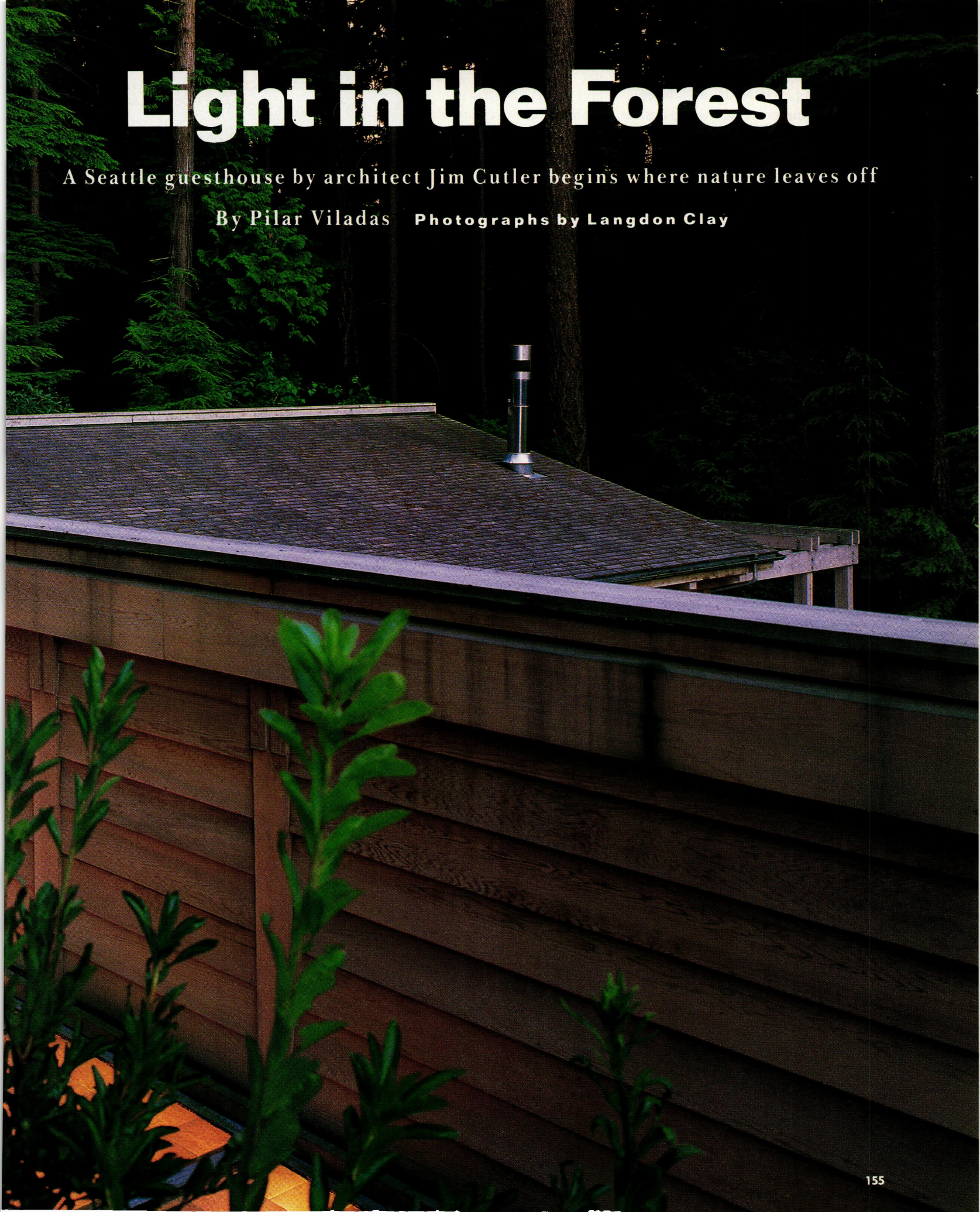


Nestled unassumingly in a fir-blanketed hillside, the guesthouse is approached from above, across a skylight-deck and through a wooden wall.

Light in the Forest

A Seattle guesthouse by architect Jim Cutler begins where nature leaves off

By Pilar Viladas **Photographs by Langdon Clay**



TALKING ABOUT INTEGRATing architecture and the environment is easy; doing it is the hard part. A minimal intrusion on the landscape may require a building so self-effacing as to be quite invisible—a daunting prospect for most architects. But then Jim Cutler is not most architects. Cutler founded his Bainbridge Island, Washington, practice on the principle that you can't fool Mother Nature and therefore shouldn't fool *with* her. "I have serious moral qualms about a building that devours the land," he maintains.

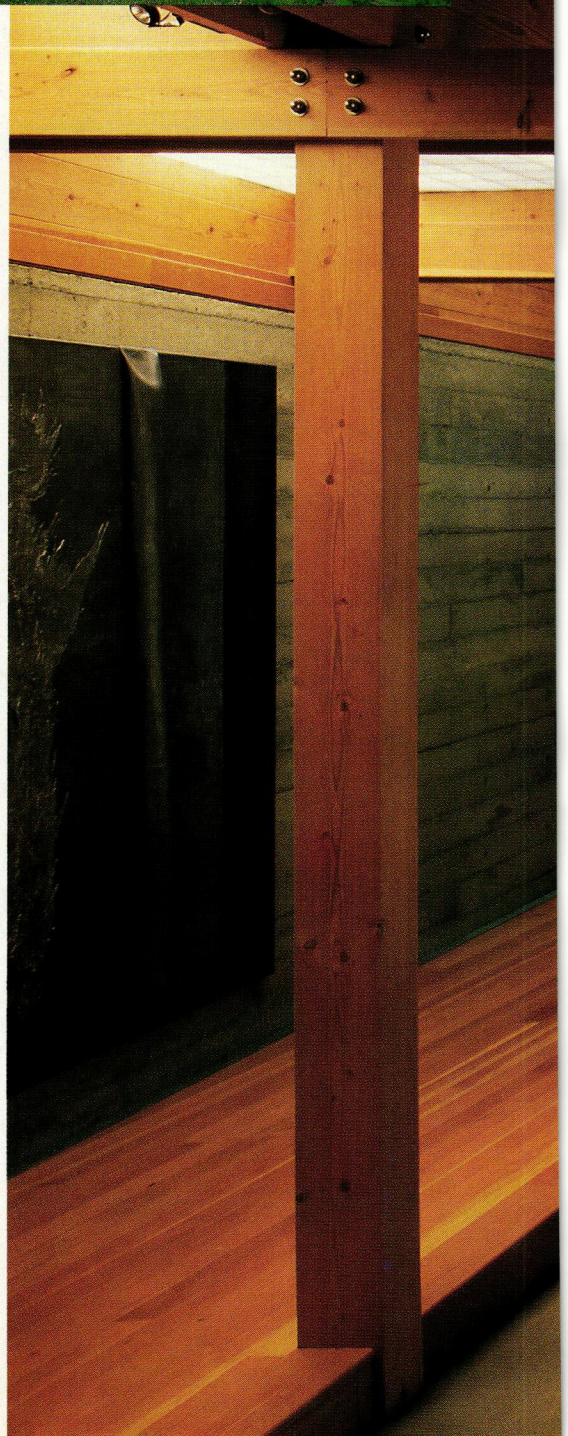
So when a Seattle couple, who live in a striking Arthur Erickson–designed house filled with a superb collection of contemporary art, wanted an elegant but unobtrusive guesthouse, they called on Cutler. "The project came with three criteria," he explains. "There was to be a sculpture walk leading from the main house to the guesthouse, the guesthouse had to have two bedrooms, and it had to be invisible from the main house."

The sculpture walk that connects the big house to the little (1,800 square feet) one is almost idyllic, winding through the towering Douglas fir trees that are typical of the lushly wooded enclave in which the clients live. Cutler worked on the walk with landscape architect Tom Berger to incorporate sculptures ranging from a muscular steel and timber construction by Mark di Suvero to a minimalist arrangement of painted-steel geometric forms by Tony Smith.

The path winds down to a wooden walkway that crosses a translucent deck and cuts through a wooden wall. You are now standing on the roof of the guesthouse, which is built into a hillside—making it indeed invisible from the main house. To enter, you go through the break in the wall and down a flight of stairs to the ground level of the L-shaped building. On this side of the house—the front—large sliding glass doors line the two wings (one for living areas, the other for the requested pair of bedrooms). The view from the front door reveals that the house's unassuming shedlike wooden structure has been built inside the remains of a crumbling concrete wall.

At least that's the way it looks—even the workmen who built the guesthouse thought that the concrete wall had been there forever. In fact, the wall is as new as the house. It is the result of a "story" that Cutler wrote about the place before he designed it—a story about the decay and regrowth of nature and the way in which the new marks the old. He envisioned the wall as a "simple, archaic found object" and the wooden structure as the organic thing that grew out of its demise. It was to be light, in contrast to the solidity of the concrete, "almost like a wooden tent."

To further this contrast, the plan of the house is rotated slightly off that of the concrete structure. A skylit corridor, topped by translucent fiberglass (which



A massive timber and steel construction by Mark di Suvero, *left*, marks the tree-lined sculpture walk that connects the main house to the guesthouse, *above*, which receives light through the fiberglass skylight-deck in back and sliding doors in front. *Right:* Warm gray concrete and Douglas fir wood in the living room set off furniture by Frank Gehry and artworks by Helen Frankenthaler and Jannis Kounellis.

This "wooden tent" is a ruggedly elegant foil for contemporary art

The sculpture walk winds past Tony Smith's *Wandering Rocks* and concludes with an inscribed marble bench by Jenny Holzer, *opposite below. Opposite above:* A Dan Flavin neon sculpture at the end of a skylit corridor between the house and the concrete wall behind it.

"I have serious qualms about a building that devours the land," says Cutler

reads as the deck from above), wraps around the rotated wooden structure, bridging the house and the wall while at the same time heightening the distinction between the two. The corridor narrows at the corner of the L to create a visual deterrent to visitors who might wander into the bedroom wing.

The interior of the house has a rugged elegance. Warm gray concrete walls—which took six color trials to perfect—serve as an appropriately ascetic foil for sculpture and paintings, and Douglas fir woodwork is simply but beautifully detailed, making this a rather luxurious "wooden tent." Seattle designer Terry Hunziker created furniture for the dining room and living room, where a "new" wood fireplace wall is built around the "ruined" walls of an "old" concrete chimney.

The fabricated contrast between old and new may seem somewhat indulgent—why not just build the house and skip the rhetoric? But for Cutler, it isn't just talk. While most of us don't think of houses as despoilers of the land, this is an architect for whom even the most architecturally sophisticated house sets a bad example if it ignores its surroundings. "Each insult to the environment allows the next one to be even worse," he argues. Looking at the treeless tract neighborhoods that continue to spring up around the country, you have to admit Cutler has a point. Considering his success at creating a building that generously defers to its site, and that eloquently comments on the process of nature, the architect's dialogue is no less meaningful for having been invented. ▲

Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

Objects of Affection

Four collectors pursue their passions in very different ways, but they all have one thing in common: they just can't stop

Antiques dealer Hubert des Forges shares his New York apartment with hundreds of figurative pitchers, *opposite*. Des Forges also has a weakness for ceramic birds and floral plates. *Left:* His frog umbrella stand, c. 1890. Details see Resources.

A Head for Figures

Hubert des Forges is never alone in his New York apartment, even when no one else is around. Gazing down at him from floor-to-ceiling shelves in the living room are 437 figurative majolica pitchers, most of them made in the 1890s by the high-style French potteries at Sarreguemines and Onnaing. They depict caricatured politicians whose faces could have been rendered by Hogarth or Daumier. There are also tail-coat-clad toads straight out of *The Wind in the Willows,* as well as a vast assortment of pigs, parrots, grasshoppers, firemen, chefs, sheep, grandmothers, and monks. Although their proportions are similar—they average nine inches tall by five inches wide—no two are exactly alike.

"They're colorful, they're amusing, and they're good company," says Des Forges, a French-born antiques dealer who came to New York twenty-one years ago and has never given up his heavy accent. He has been a collector since he received a small inheritance at age sixteen—he decided to invest the money in pitchers rather than "spend it stupidly," he says. In his twenties, Des Forges let his hobby determine his profession by opening an antiques booth at Paris's famous flea market, the Marché aux Puces. Ever since he arrived in this country he has been selling antiques on Manhattan's Upper East Side (his current shop, Hubert des Forges, is at 1193 Lexington Avenue) and adding new pitchers to his lineup whenever he can. His best finds come from fellow dealers, who, he says, "know only too well what I want."

Des Forges doesn't allow anyone but himself and Oscar Moore, his roommate and business partner, to handle the pitchers; he winces when a visitor lightly pats a pelican's beak. And yet pitchers are far from his only passion. Seven turn-of-the-century majolica umbrella stands in the form of a cat, a dog, a monkey, two herons, and two frogs occupy scraps of floor space in the living room; more than a thousand objects from the 1940s representing black men and women cram the bookcase beside the fireplace; nineteenth-century French Massier majolica parakeets grace the coffee table; and Massier floral plates turn the dining room's forest green walls into fields of blooms. To avoid overcrowding, Moore keeps his own accumulations to a minimum. "I collect good food and friends," he says. "They don't take up much room."

Their store, like their apartment, is packed with flora and fauna. A tiny aisle winds past a bench supported by carved bears and piled with dog-shaped pillows to a wall of twig frames and 1920s tole light fixtures that sprout metal blossoms. "All of this is me," says Des Forges, gesturing around the store. "These are happy things, and I am a happy man."

EVE M. KAHN

VINTAGE COLORS

Here are a few of the things Michele Mancini has in her living room: a 1951 mustard-colored love seat; a rattan sofa; two views of Miami Beach in the forties; a kidney-shaped table; a pink wall; a chartreuse wall; an aqua ceiling; a zebra-patterned rug; and more, much more.

There is a reason for this excess—for the past five years, Mancini has lived with her best finds for Full Swing, her Newport, Rhode Island, shop specializing in furniture and fabrics of the thirties, forties, and fifties. "Years of shopping," says Mancini, when asked how one accumulates an airbrushed zebra, forty mammy dolls, and a profusion of ceramic pink flamingos.

A former teacher and decorator, Mancini opened Full Swing in 1985 and met with instant success. Last year, when her supplies of vintage textiles began to run low, she launched her own line of fabrics in vintage-inspired patterns. Mancini also continues to deal in the real stuff with a network of pickers keeping her informed: the 1930s pots and pans border in her vibrant kitchen comes from a cache of 1,650 wallpaper rolls discovered in a New York warehouse.

Where others see only disaster, Mancini sees possibility

Where others see only disaster, Mancini sees possibility. Her ribbon-striped chaise came to her upholstered in orange fake fur, and her slipper chair, now recovered in a rare twenties damask, was retrieved from a neighbor's garbage. To Mancini, each piece of furniture speaks its own personal history. When she looks at her mustard love seat, she sees its original owner "in a black bouffant wig, looking like Brenda Starr in her plastic see-through high heels."

AMY VIRSHUP

Michele Mancini, *top right,* on her 1952 Evans Commander, lives above Full Swing, her Newport, Rhode Island, textile and antiques shop. *Top left:* Mancini painted her kitchen cupboards in the high-spirited colors of her Fiesta ware. *Above:* Detail of the kitchen's 1930s wallpaper border. *Left:* Mancini's "tropical fifties" living room with a rattan sofa in bark cloth from Full Swing.

WILLIAM WALDRON

Still Lifes in Progress

Ed Baynard got tired of flowers that come from flower stores. A problem, since flowers have long been the mainstay of his work—color field painting spliced to folk art in large high-spirited still lifes. He wanted flowers with roots. He also needed space for the vast collection of American art pottery he started buying back in the sixties, before he—or anyone else—really knew what it was. "I saw these pots as great art, as great as any abstract painting." So seven years ago, he left New York, moved to the country, and bought his hundreds of pots a 1905 arts and crafts house high on a hill in the Hudson River Valley.

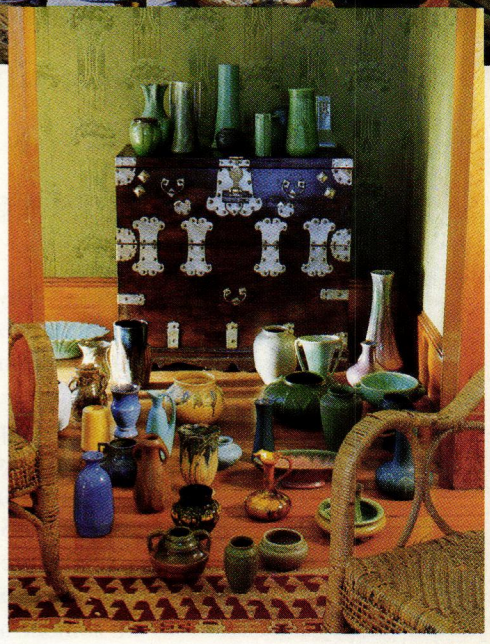
It looks out, in the distance, on the Ashokan reservoir, a shimmery patch of what could be a nineteenth-century American landscape, with Baynard as a puckish Frederic Edwin Church and the hillside property as a gardener's Olana. Delphiniums, daylilies, roses, peonies, and columbines have shown up in Baynard's oversize theatrical watercolors alongside stylized versions of his art pottery. More recently, he has turned to group portraits of just the pots.

Until he was thirty Baynard did everything but paint. "I made posters for the Beatles, designed clothes for Jimi Hendrix, sketched for *Women's Wear Daily*, traveled around the world. I came to art without any formal training." He began to collect art pottery, and more, the same way he began to paint, because he

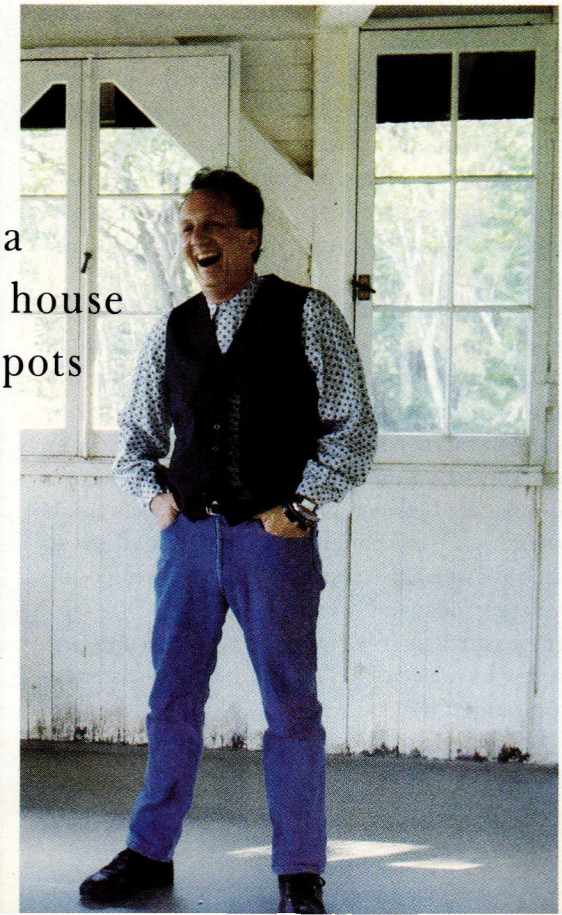
> Ed Baynard bought a 1905 arts and crafts house for his hundreds of pots

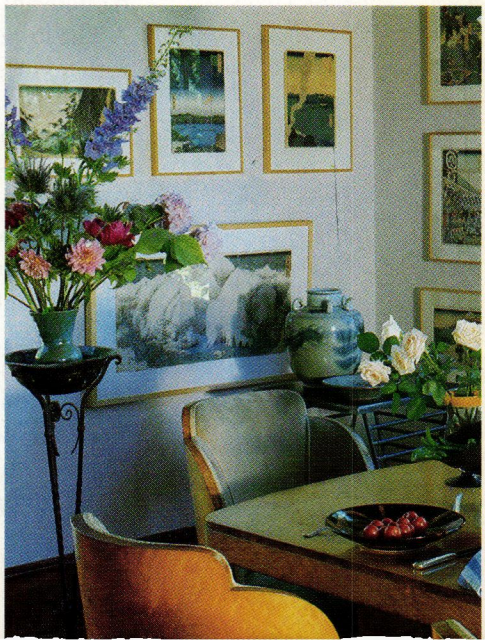
felt compelled to. It took him ten years to assemble his four favorite Hiroshige prints. He also has an important group of contemporary drawings, including a prize Susan Rothenberg horse. His pottery is scattered throughout the house. In one room countless pots seem to flow out of the period wallpaper behind them. Soon some new ceramics will join his antique ones. Baynard has just designed a line of dinnerware called Arts and Crafts.

CELIA MCGEE



Classic furniture by Eileen Gray and Russel Wright mixes with American art pottery in the living room, *above*, of painter Ed Baynard's 1905 Hudson River Valley house. *Right:* Period arts and crafts wallpaper and a Korean chest serve as the perfect setting for a group of pottery. *Below right:* The dining room showcases four Hiroshige prints. *Below:* Baynard in the airy tower that tops his house.





OBERTO GILI

"Why settle for a single linen hand towel when you can display twenty?"

ALL THE TRIMMINGS

Judyth vanAmringe doesn't mind scratches, tears, pulls, nicks, or chips on anything she collects, and she doesn't pay much attention to labels or provenances. She treats the furnishings in her 2,500-square-foot duplex on Manhattan's far West Side as raw material for her art. "I'm building a giant three-dimensional collage," she says. "I don't ruin anything; I take what an object has and then I add to it."

Trained as a printmaker, VanAmringe endured office jobs for a few years after she arrived in New York in 1969. "I'd rush home at the end of the day and make things—clothes, drawings, whatever," she recalls. "My fingers needed to get to work." She spent most of the seventies in the fashion business, concocting luxury accessories out of leather, cashmere, and crystals. When she bought her apartment in 1981, she applied the same lighthearted opulence to her living quarters.

VanAmringe avoids one of anything: "Why settle for a single sock monkey or hooked rug or embroidered linen hand towel when you can display twenty?" She loves outlandish contrasts, hanging tiny plastic key-chain charms on majestic wall-mounted antlers, stacking eight strands of pearls around the neck of an anonymous nineteenth-century marble bust, and posing florid snake-handled Italian ceramic lamps alongside Shakeresque boxes shaped like bibles. She hangs empty frames everywhere—"they make me imagine," she says—and has performed not a few magic transformations with her sewing machine, attaching spangles to somber antique shawls and converting obsolete hats into flamboyant lampshades.

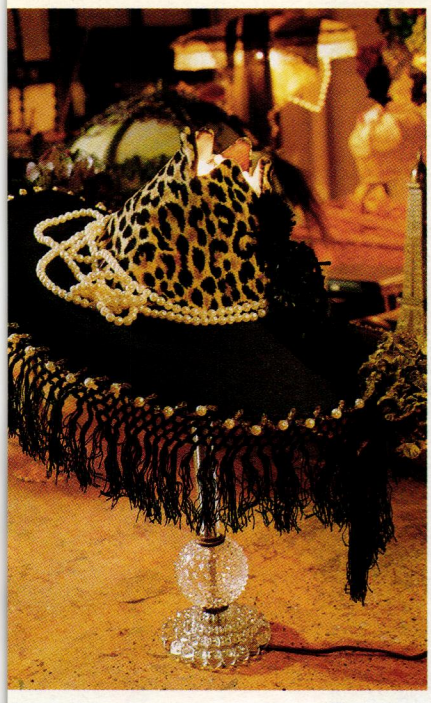
The lower level of the apartment serves as her laboratory, with textiles, spools of thread, and empty lampshade frames spread out on worktables. The upstairs is a living area devoted to welcoming armchairs, a pouf, and a bed enclosed by Victorian silk-covered screens. The lack of overhead lighting lends the rooms a moody time-warped quality, and there is barely space to navigate between pieces. One suspects this is the sort of interior Miss Havisham would have created, given a needle and thread and some trimmings. VanAmringe calls it "my nest, my beautiful haven."

She finds her treasures mainly at flea markets and antiques shows within a few hundred miles of Manhattan—distances she drives accompanied by her two black standard poodles, Bix and Ruby. She buys by instinct, she says, and is attracted to "anything shiny"; to barklike textures, including tramp art carvings, rust, and peeling paint; to bright colors; and to pieces that remind her of her New Hampshire childhood, such as battered wooden screen doors, rustic dollhouses, and porch swings. Occasionally she has attempted to buy for other people and has also decorated houses and apartments, but realizes "my tastes are not for everyone."

This past summer, motivated by an impulse to "make my art more accessible and not just live with it," VanAmringe opened a store at 107 Greene Street in SoHo. In it she sells old blankets and throws she has embellished with new beads and fringe; an icebox circa 1910, that she coated with mottled paint and vintage decals; stepladders and other small pieces of furniture that she gilded "just for fun"; and her signature hat lampshades. Even the unaltered wares seem to be products of her industrious hands: a basket full of charms that glow in the dark; a cabinet with preserved zoological specimens, from mosquitoes and butterflies to birds' nests and scorpions; vases studded with broken china and seashells; a toylike lamp assembled from a mosaic of Bakelite strips.

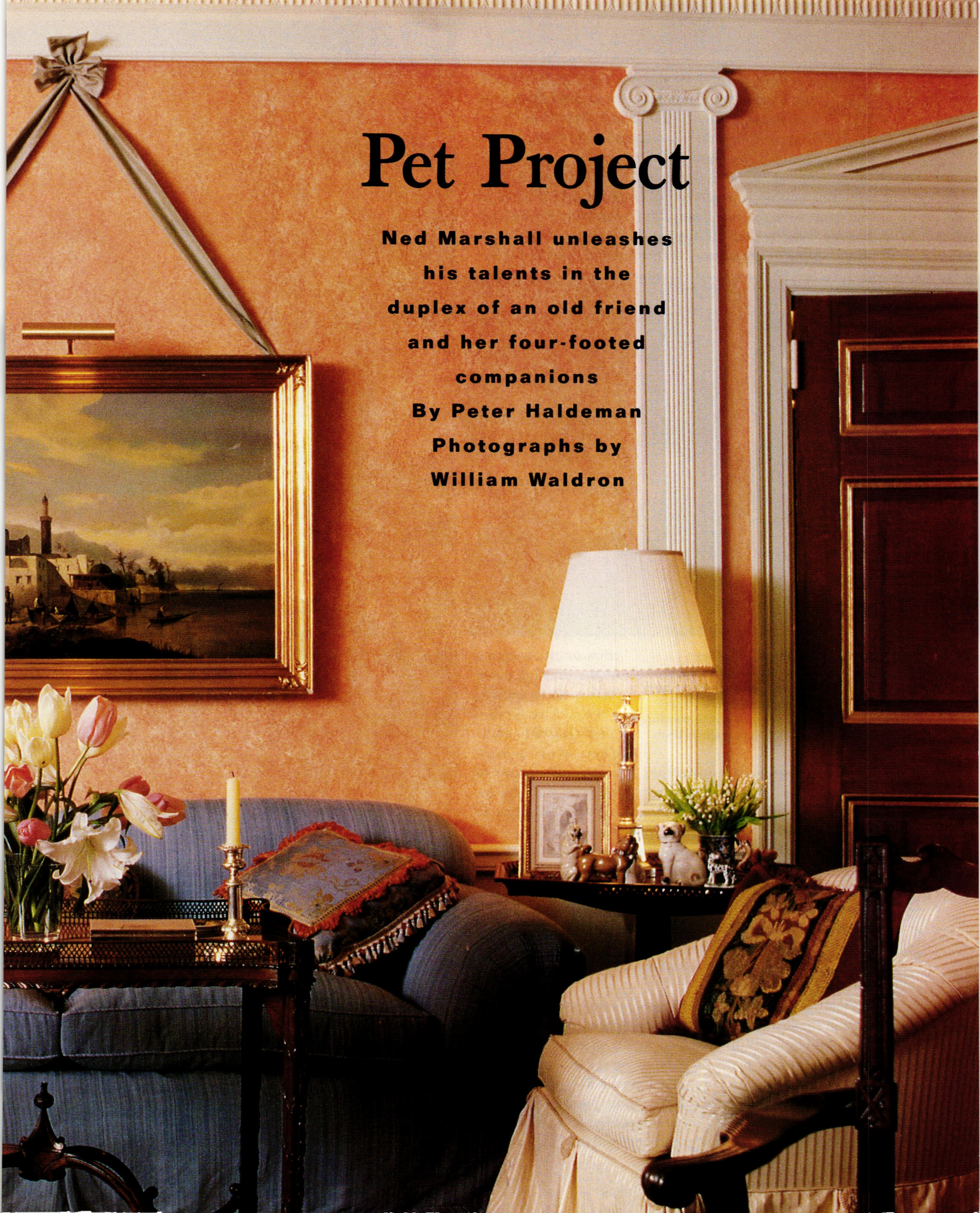
Believe it or not, VanAmringe culled everything in the shop from her own apartment. "It was a little crowded back then," she says wistfully, "but it feels empty now. I'm afraid I'm just going to have to fill it up again." EVE M. KAHN

OBERTO GILI



SoHo accessories designer and antiques dealer Judyth vanAmringe, *opposite above*, with her poodles, indulges her pack-rat impulses in her duplex apartment. *Opposite below:* A sofa filled with pillows she made using vintage fabric, beads, and fringe. *Clockwise from top left:* One of VanAmringe's trademark hats-turned-lampshades. A table dressed up with arts and crafts tiles and moody Spanish portraits. A lampshade of velvet grapes and leaves. VanAmringe's bedroom embellished with Victorian screens, a wall of mirrors and framed prints, and a Black Forest bear hat rack.

Marshall took his cue from the clients' Georgian antiques. The drawing room's persimmon walls were ragged and pediments were added. *Left:* Filagris with her mistress on an Adam-style faux marbre floor. Details see Resources.



Pet Project

Ned Marshall unleashes his talents in the duplex of an old friend and her four-footed companions

By Peter Haldeman

Photographs by William Waldron

EVEN IF *THEY* WANT TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS, A NAME like Filagris imposes certain responsibilities. You have to put in an appearance here. And there. That's Filagris in the library, Filagris in the foyer, on the faux marbre. At three and a half, Filagris has learned that things aren't always what they seem. If the floor in the foyer were real marble, it would feel like real marble; if the walls and doors were real mahogany, they would taste like real mahogany. Filagris chews instead on Penelope, her half sister, who's resting in the country at the moment. Filagris used to chew on the frogging of the drawing room chairs, silk armchairs covered by Ned—Ned Marshall, their decorator, whose leather moccasins dart around the apartment like a pair of quiet puppies. Ned changed everything to go with the antiques—English, mostly, eighteenth century. Things *she* brings back from Sotheby's, where she used to work.

The drawing room windows, *above*, are festooned in a Cowtan & Tout fabric; chintz from the same firm covers 18th-century painted chairs. *Right:* Filagris warms her bones in the library, where Marshall stripped ornate paneling and put up balloon shades "that really balloon."

She tickles Filagris's nose with her hair. She thinks Filagris smiles, when in fact it's just Filagris's lip snagging on her teeth. Sometimes Filagris is right under the piano in the drawing room when her sneakers are on the pedals. The famous hotel pianist plays at their cocktail parties in shiny black pumps. The parties are for charity, and they bring out warm feelings in the guests, some of whom will lean down and offer a little piece of shrimp toast.

Filagris eyes the overstuffed cushions and plumped-up pillows in the drawing room but, having been raised a certain way, will not jump up on the Georgian settee. The leashless on the streets, the mangy types in Central Park—Filagris has seen enough to appreciate and not press her advantages. The people who used to live here left a dining room chandelier so big Filagris was the only one who could walk under it. Ned said the chandelier was larger than life and the wallpaper was

The Heriz carpet is easy on the

paws, and the slipper chairs' fringe is good for hiding the head

Ned changed the "tinfoil" wallpaper and "larger-than-life" chandelier

to go with the English antiques

like tinfoil. He put a sharp-smelling glaze on the wallpaper to make it less shiny and said frankly it could use another coat so it wouldn't look so brand spanking new.

A week before the Christmas party, a rainy day: Filagris was lying on the bleached wood kitchen floor next to a pair of Ned's moccasins that had been left to dry. Suddenly, a shout from the library, a door slam. Ned said he couldn't possibly find a frame for the painting over the fireplace in time for the party. Later he said thank God it was raining that day or he might never have finished the library.

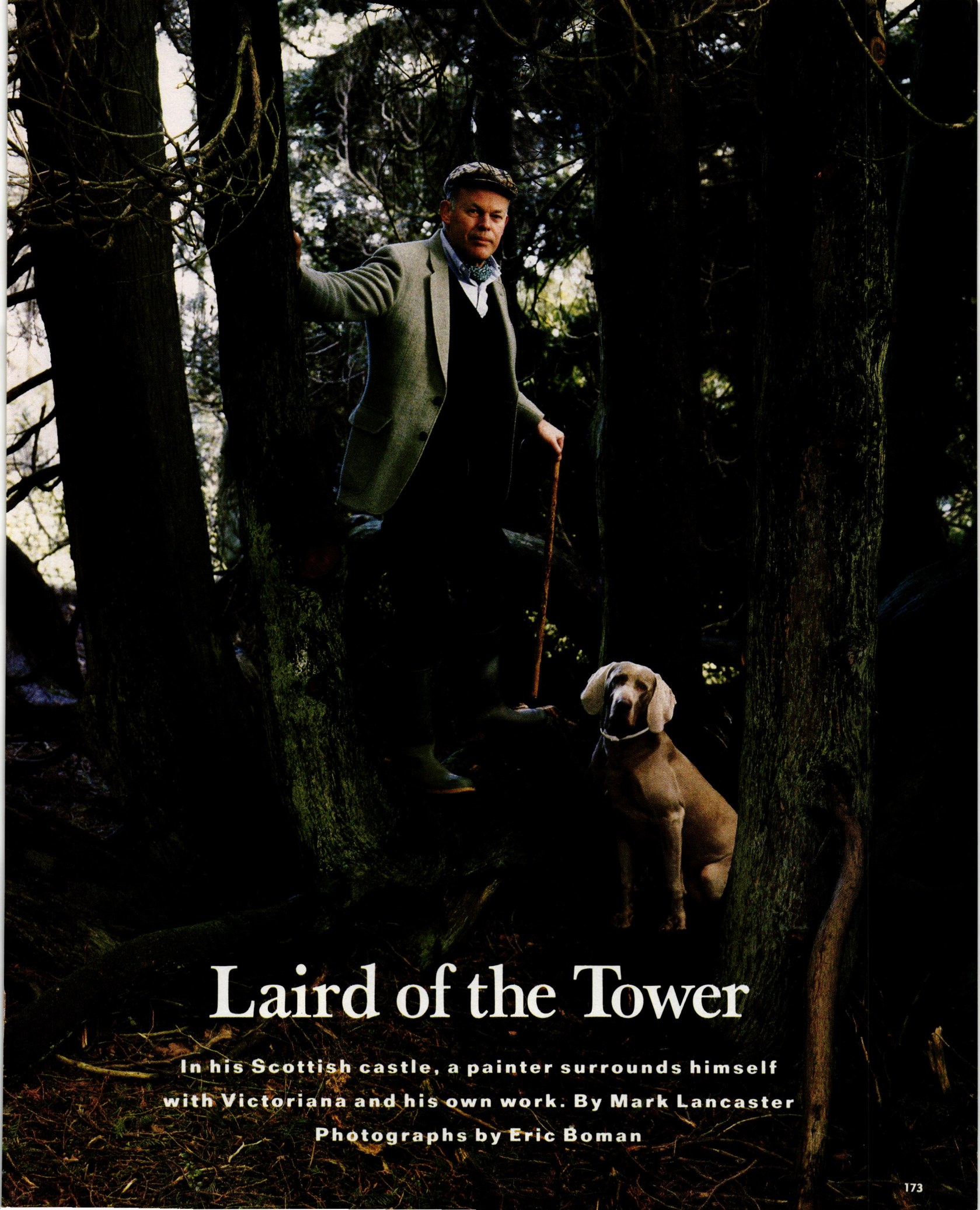
The bedroom settee, *above*, is upholstered in a Brunschwig stripe. *Left:* In the dining room, Marshall fashioned striped curtains from two hues of taffeta in front of a balloon shade in a Clarence House fabric. The Georgian table and sideboard stand on an Aubusson carpet from Stark.

The library belongs to *him*, him with the reverberant stride. He makes deals on the phone, reads the newspapers, and watches television in here. The carpet, a Heriz, is heavy pile, easy on the paws, and the slipper chairs have fringe, good for hiding the head. Filagris also likes to hide under their bed, until he gets in. Penelope likes to hide her head under the skirted ottomans. It's hard to explain, all this head hiding—it's just a way of getting cozy without getting stuck.

The photographer didn't go into the rooms Filagris and Penelope get the most use out of. Ned hasn't done them yet. There's the terrace off the bedroom, where Filagris naps, and the kitchen, where she and Penelope eat and sleep. Ned says they've *got* to get rid of that Ultrasuede pink banquette. If Ned had his way, all kitchens would be black and white.

Filagris sees women on Park Avenue wearing cheap imitations of her own coat. The earth and the leaves and the flowers are more fragrant in Connecticut, where Filagris runs all weekend. When they get back to the city, she and Penelope spend the day in bed, yin and yang on a big round cushion from Bean. It has cedar shavings inside, and its odor mixes with those of the kitchen throughout the day—and one can only wonder what Filagris dreams. ◆ *Editor: Carolyn Sollis*

Mark Lancaster and Sam, *opposite*, in the mossy branches of a *Thuja plicata*. *Above:* Built as a yachtsman's retreat in 1887, Lancaster's house boasts the corbiestepped gables, battlements, and turrets of the Scottish baronial style.



Laird of the Tower

In his Scottish castle, a painter surrounds himself with Victoriana and his own work. By Mark Lancaster

Photographs by Eric Boman

LET NO ONE TAKE THIS HOUSE TOO SERIOUSLY. IT IS A pleasure house, a mock castle, a yachtsman's house built to command a panoramic view over sailing waters and to draw attention to itself as a landmark from the water below. It was finished in May of 1887, a month before Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee. This was the zenith of Great Britain's power and influence in the world and a time of unprecedented optimism and prosperity among families whose fortunes had been made from trade with the Empire. "She is the brightest jewel in my crown," Victoria said of Scotland in 1871. Twenty-three years earlier, she had bought and rebuilt, largely to Prince Albert's design, their enormous castle at Balmoral, in the fashionable style known as Scottish baronial.

My house displays many of the characteristic features of the style: corbiestepped gables, conical turrets, bullnose corners, and a battlemented tower with an ogee-curved cupola. Though the architecture confidently plagiarizes the seventeenth-century fortified tower house, it still evokes the age in which it was built. Somehow it has survived intact—even from years as a Scottish youth hostel—without major structural change or loss of original features.

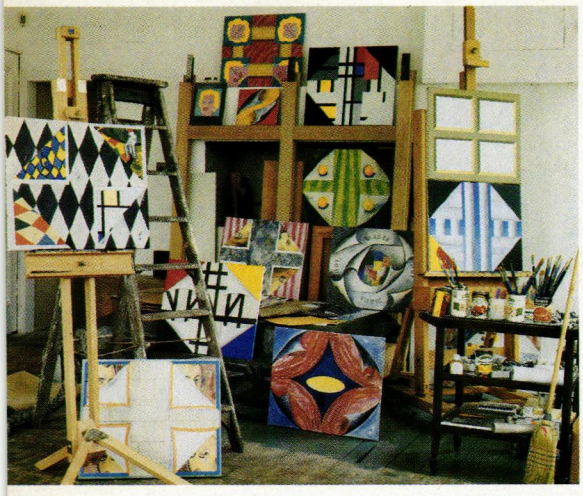
I found the house almost two years ago and have tried to reawaken its spirit through furnishings and color, as well as a lifetime's accumulation of what some have called "stuff." My collecting, if that is the word, has been focused by association. A vase of Poole pottery from my childhood bedroom, for example, unexpectedly showed up in the 1970s and prompted my interest. Searching for Poole ten years ago, I first saw and bought Keith Murray pieces; the following day a eulogy appeared in the *Times*. I have since become interested in nineteenth-century

An inlaid buffet, c. 1870, *above*, displays a Parian ware bust of Queen Victoria, Minton bread plates by A. W. N. Pugin, and Poole pottery. George Walton, a Glasgow collaborator of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, designed the table and chairs. *Opposite:* A 1916 portrait of Vanessa Bell by Duncan Grant hangs in the French-style drawing room.

Wedgwood, Mason's ironstone, Linthorpe, and Ashworth pottery. I notice that I have also collected furniture chronologically backward. The Aalto and Bauhaus chairs which have traveled with me from student days in Newcastle upon Tyne to London, New York, Kent, and Scotland have been kicked upstairs to the billiard room, now the guest sitting room. Scottish house sales have been invaluable, enabling Victorian furniture and trophies of Edwardian hunting expeditions to be resettled not far from the grand houses they never before left.

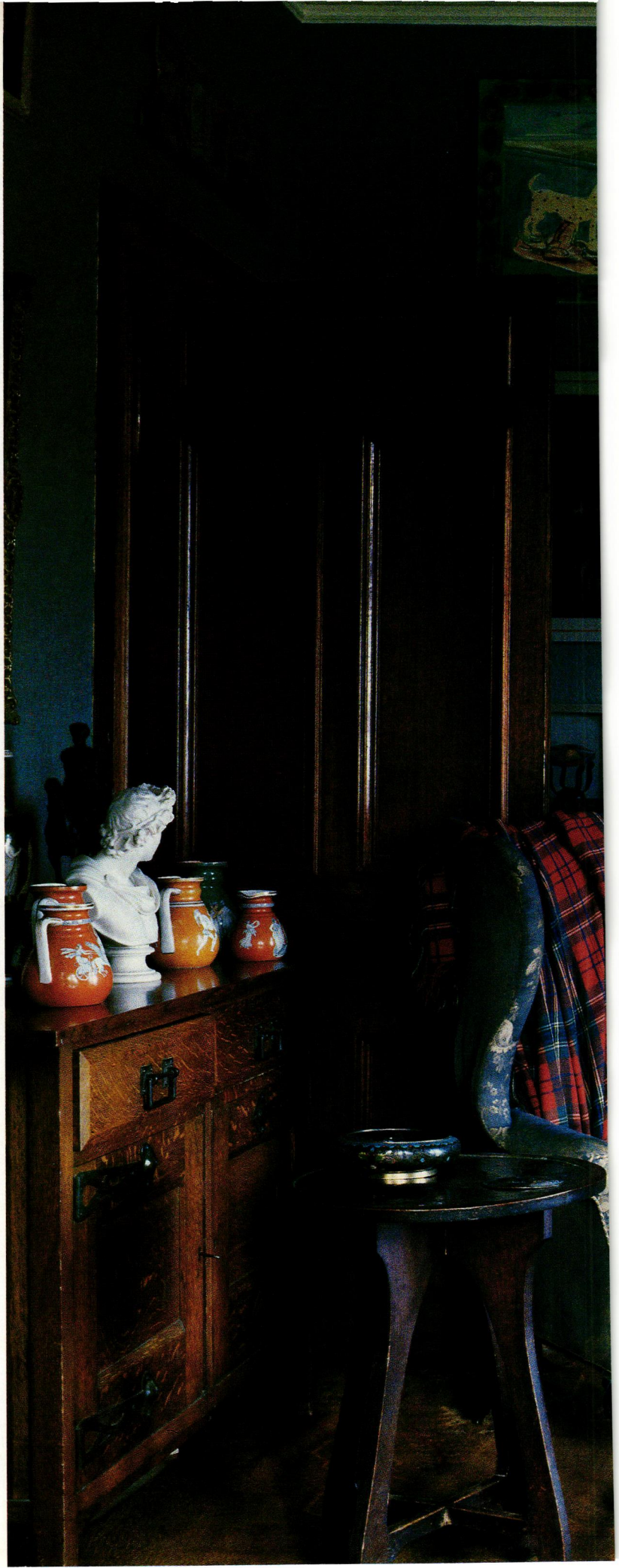
There was an early plan to have every room here green, but amendments added first blue, then yellow, orange, red, and purple. Painting pictures can take a similar route, and as one settles into new surroundings, traces of them become parts of, and sources of, one's art, consciously or not. I have made variations on pictures by other artists, in particular Duncan Grant, whose house, Charleston, is a kind of Arcadia decorated by him and Vanessa Bell. In recent work I quote from many sources, some esoteric, some banal, including decorative features from this house, motifs from Nymphenburg ceramics that I don't own, and Poole pottery that I do.

As an artist settles into a house, traces of it become parts of his paintings



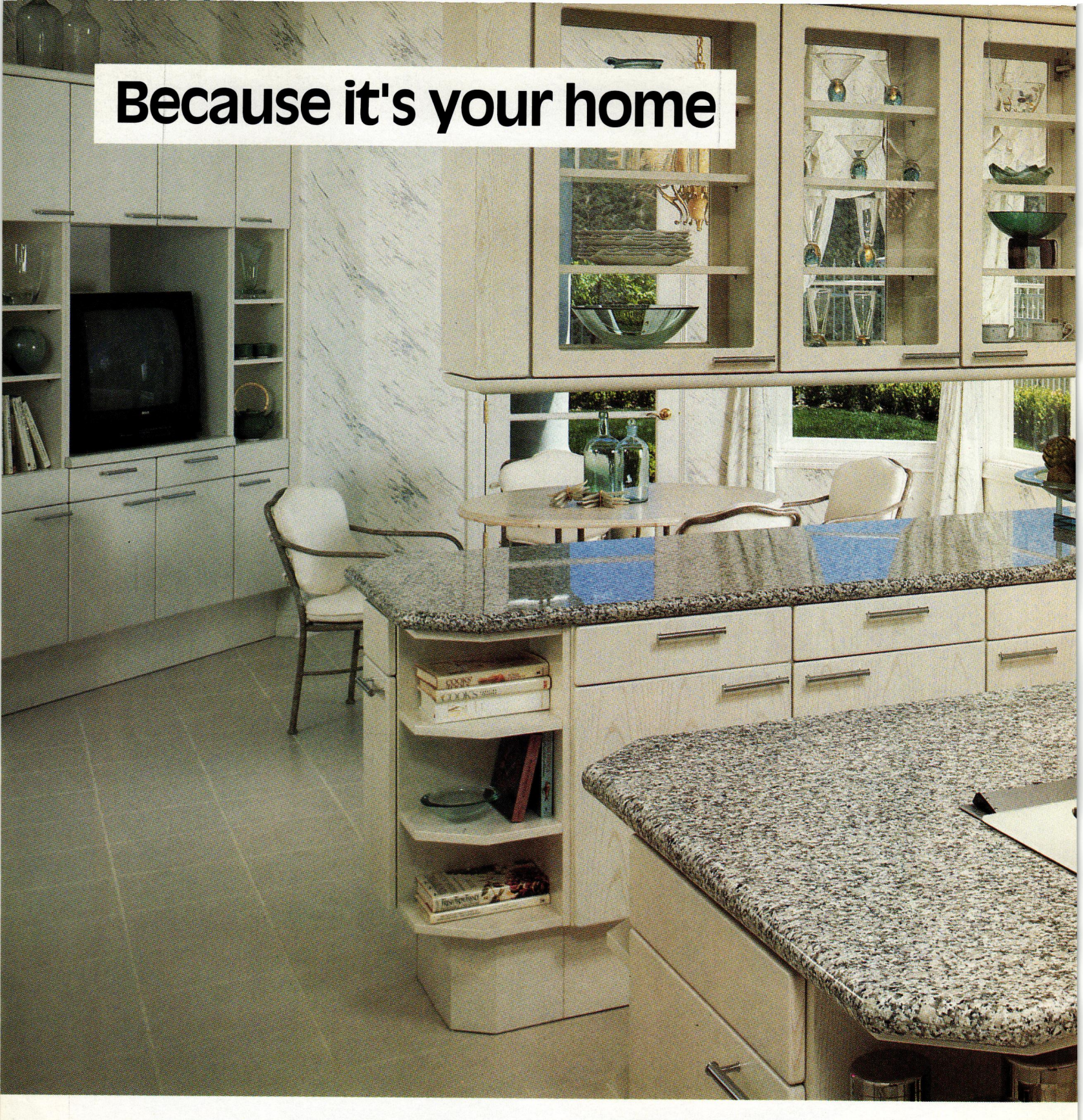
The pictures in the studio also have in common the suggestion of a layer being peeled away to reveal something beyond or beneath. The house, of course, retains layered imagery of its own. The thistle, the rose, the fleur de lis, and the elements air, earth, fire, and water are represented in stone and wood and intaglio wallcoverings and in plaster ceilings painted in wood grain to simulate the oak paneling. Stained-glass windows celebrate the voyagers of discovery Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus, and Sir Francis Drake. Favorite yachts are commemorated: the *Madge*, the *Marjorie*, and the *Siren*.

Water remains a vital mode of transport in the west of Scotland where ferries still ply their routes with clockwork regularity among the pleasure boats and naval vessels. By the middle of the nineteent *(Text continued on page 188)*



In the morning room, *right*, now used mainly in the evening, Staffordshire dogs and Mark Lancaster's own dog paintings are combined with pictures by Duncan Grant and an 18th-century portrait. The arts and crafts chest holds Ashworth pottery jugs. *Above:* Original kitchen quarters became Lancaster's studio.

LEONARD WOOLF



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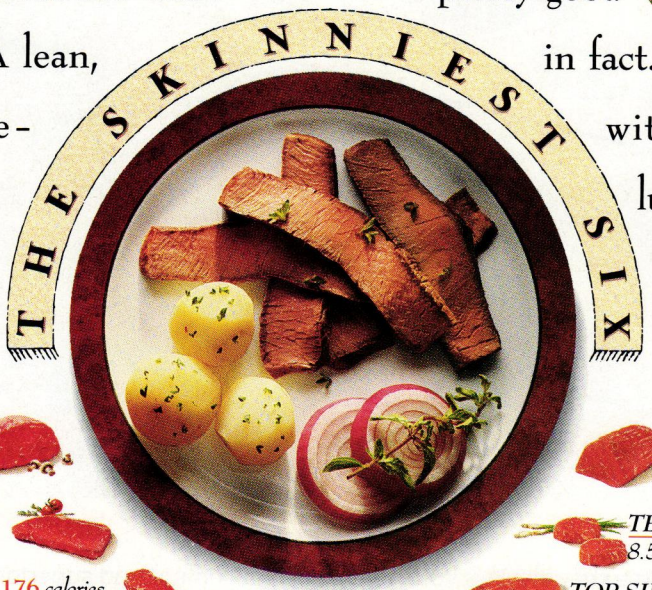

ROUND TIP 157 *calories*
5.9 gms total fat (2.1 gms sat. fat)*

TOP ROUND 153 *calories*
4.2 gms total fat (1.4 gms sat. fat)*

TOP LOIN 176 *calories*
8.0 gms total fat (3.1 gms sat. fat)*

EYE OF ROUND 143 *calories*
4.2 gms total fat (1.5 gms sat. fat)*

TENDERLOIN 179 *calories*
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6.1 gms total fat (2.4 gms sat. fat)*

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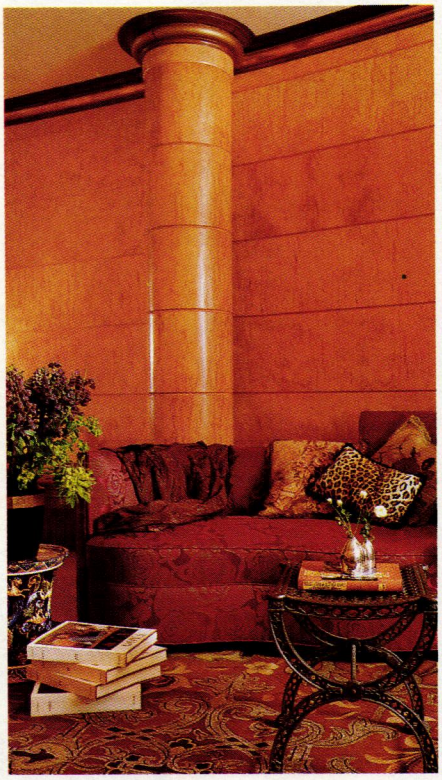
great rooms

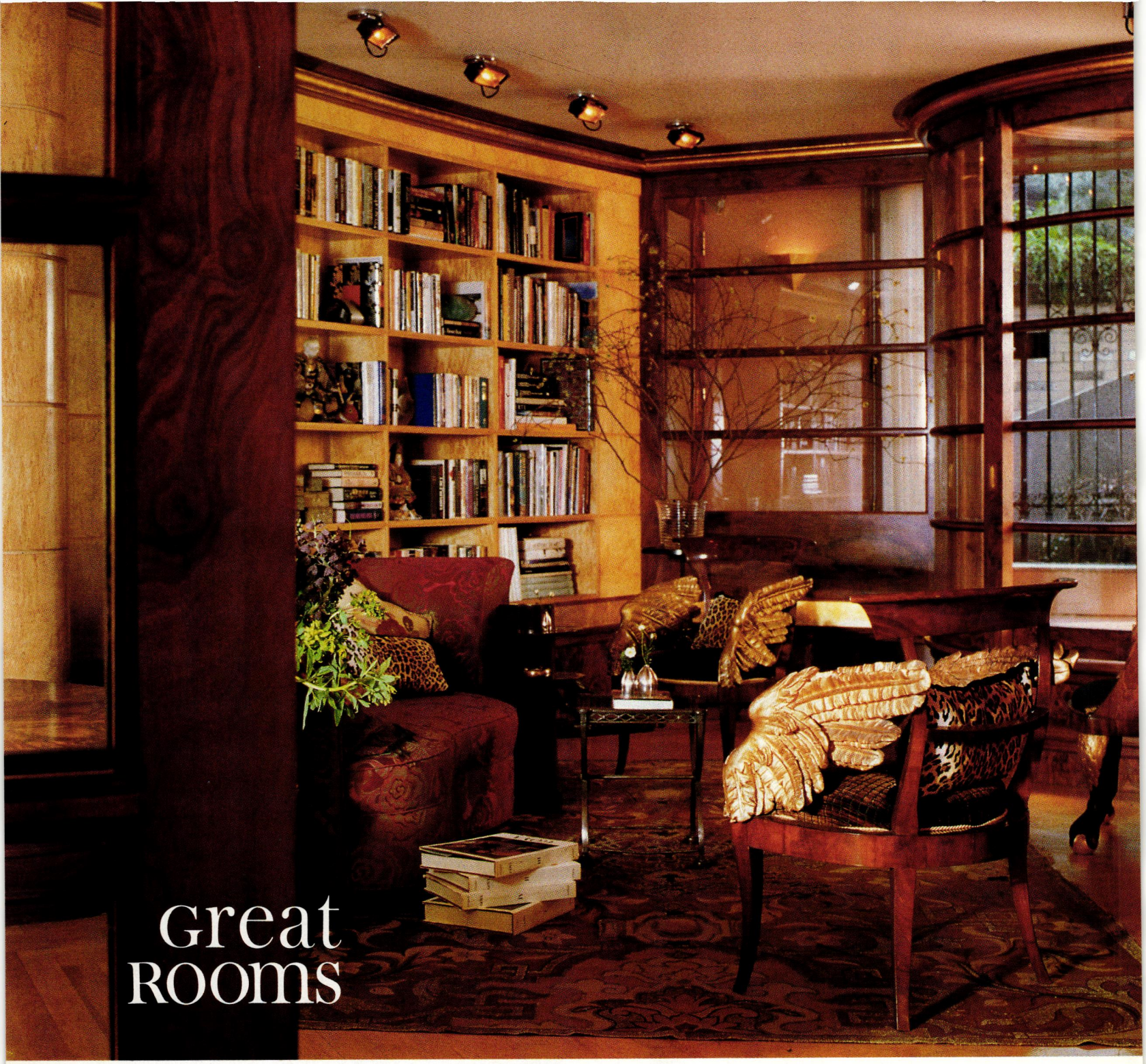


By Anne Foxley

The basement, that dank gloomy domain of the washer and dryer and the cinder-block wall, is a space few designers dare to explore for decorative potential. But when long-time clients of New York

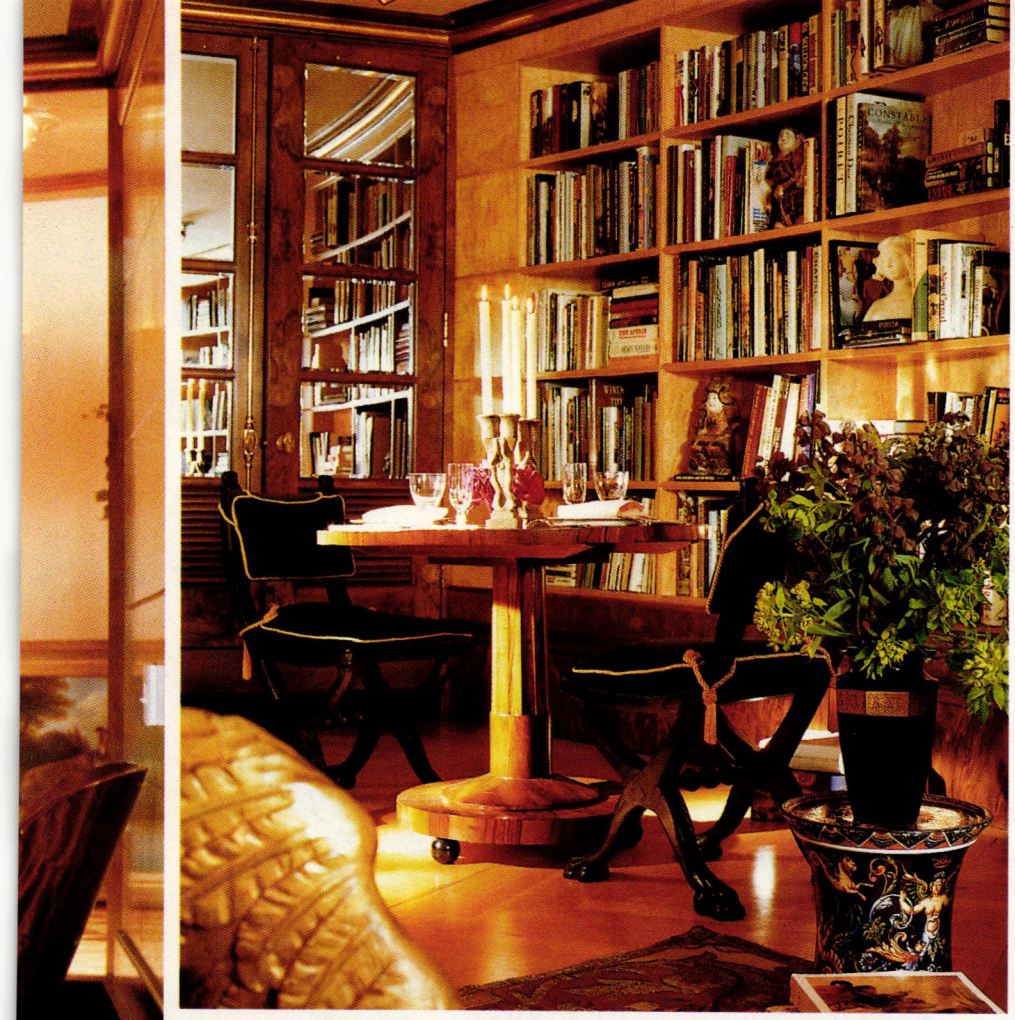
In the upper level of a small Fifth Avenue maisonette, closets are concealed within a lacquered semicircular partition that supports a lofty bedroom. *Above left:* The curving walls reappear in the lower level, a former basement storage area transformed into a regal birch-paneled living room. Details see Resources.

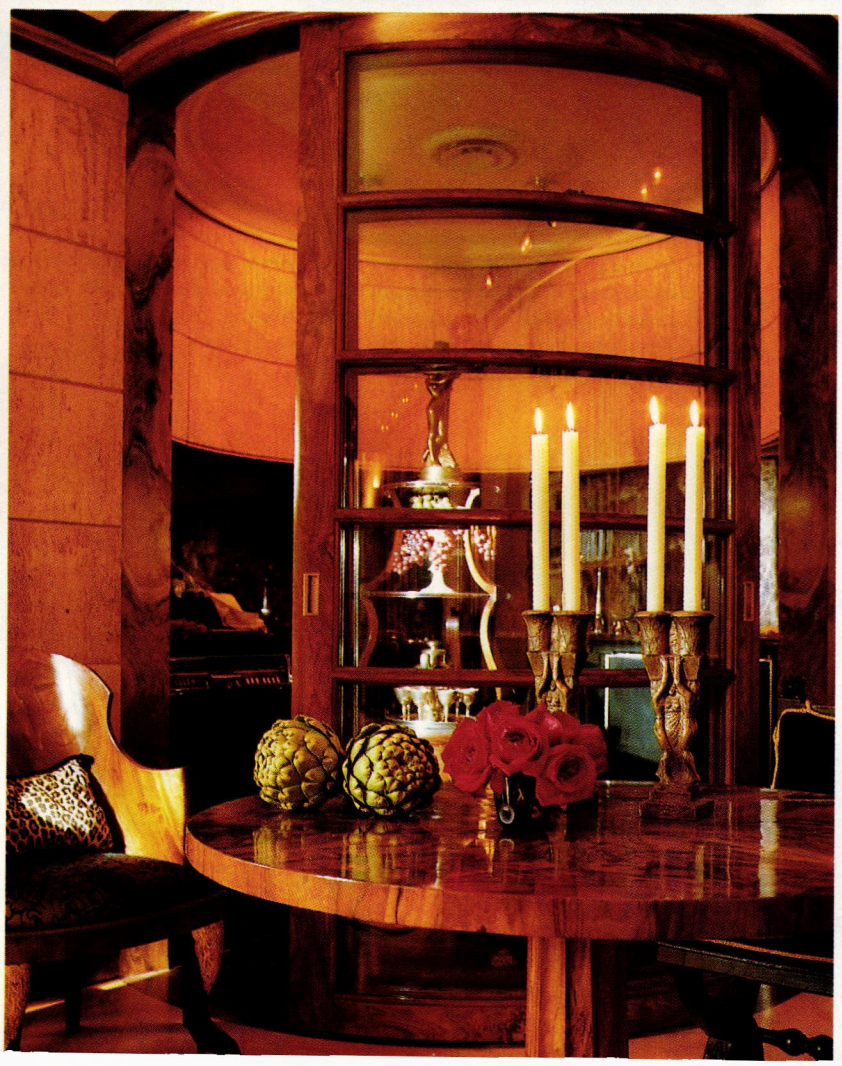
OBERTO GILI



Great Rooms

decorators Carl D'Aquino and Geordi Humphreys purchased the storage area beneath their small Fifth Avenue pied-à-terre, they had grand ideas. In place of a network of cobwebs and boxes they envisioned an elegant room for entertaining complete with a stretch of bookshelves, a compact kitchen, and a spiral stair





to connect upstairs (home to their D'Aquino Humphreys Interiors–designed loft bedroom, living room, and eat-in kitchen) and down.

Faced with a long narrow space D'Aquino and Humphreys, in collaboration with architect Paul Laird, took their inspiration from the luxury liners of the twenties and thirties and constructed a shell of gently curving walls that visually enlarge the room. The sleek ship's hull effect is amplified by floor-to-ceiling panels of Karelian birch, a golden Russian wood which, D'Aquino notes, is "now primarily used in the interiors of Jaguars." A pair of semicircular walnut-framed sliding glass doors off the front entry and the kitchenette further round out the room.

Laird custom-designed walnut baseboards, which ring the maple floor, and banded the ceiling with gold leaf. Against this exquisitely constructed backdrop an array of sculptural art deco, Biedermeier, and Empire furnishings are arranged in a series of inviting clusters. There's a well-padded French chaise longue that Jules Leleu designed for the *Normandie,* a set of accommodating barrel-shaped dining chairs from Russia, and a pair of parcel gilt Tuscan armchairs that appear ready to take flight. For upholstery fabrics D'Aquino and Humphreys rounded up a mix of silk damasks, antique tapestries, and faux animal patterns—from a leopard print to a crocodile-textured velvet—that serve as a witty tribute to the wife, a best-selling writer and humorist on animals. How do the owners like their new quarters? Says the wife, "Carl worked a miraculous transformation. Who ever thought life on the bottom floor could be so luxurious?" ▲

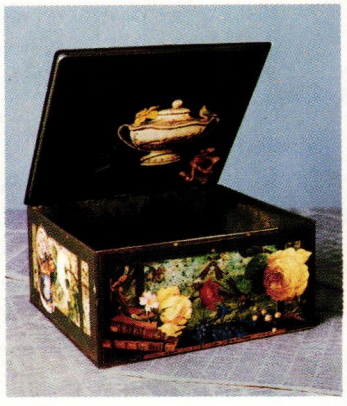
An arc of walnut-framed glass doors serves as the main entrance to the downstairs living room, *far left,* furnished with antiques, including a pair of Italian Empire winged armchairs. The Aubusson carpet is from F. J. Hakimian, NYC. *Above left:* French ebonized chairs, c. 1865, surround an Austrian Biedermeier table in front of mirrored doors that visually expand the long narrow space. *Left:* Another pair of curved glass doors separate a compact kitchen from the dining area at the far end of the living room.

OBERTO GILI

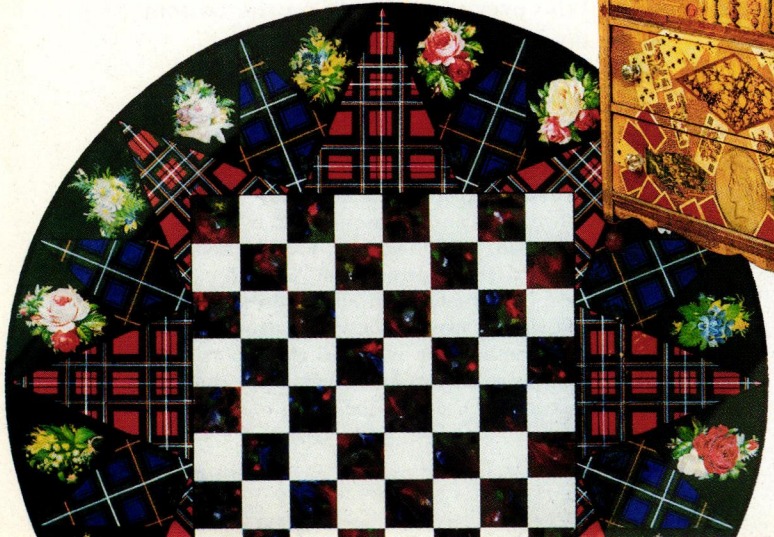
samples

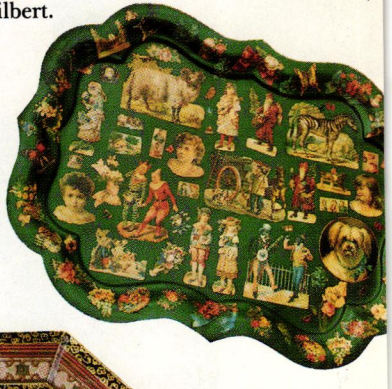
Victorian exuberance makes a comeback in today's mania for découpage

By Catherine Marron



Découpage resurfaces on everything from game boards to bureaus. *Clockwise from top right:* English sphere on stand, c. 1875, from James II Galleries. Lamps, from left, at Slatkin & Co., Charlotte Moss & Co., and Price Glover. English tray, c. 1860, from Yale R. Burge Antiques. Plate by découpagist Jered Holmes. 1920s Dutch bureau from Florence de Dampierre Antiques. Mid nineteenth century English game board with découpage and glass painting, from James II. Découpage box and decorative border by artist Dorothy Bayard Gilbert. All stores NYC. Details see Resources.





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Port Lympne

(Continued from page 107) The Moorish Patio was leaking and had to be redone, unstable stone balustrades threatened to fall from parapets, and most of the hedging had died or outgrown its form. Although much of the yew could be saved, large areas of Monterey cypress were beyond salvation and had to be replanted with hardier Leyland cypress that could be clipped into shape as it matured. In 1974, at Page's direction, the Long Borders were cleared, hand-dug twice, enriched with a ready source of fertilizer—two hundred tons of elephant dung—and planted with 2,500 perennials, herbs, shrubs, and trees. Edwardian in scale, each border is 135 yards long and 18 feet wide.

New lime trees fill the ranks along what was Sassoon's Magnolia Avenue, and the vineyard and fig yard below the pool terrace have come back to life. The West Garden, now the Iceberg Garden, has been paved instead of grassed, a concession to the 100,000 visitors a year who see the house, gardens, and zoo. Tigers, other cats, and wolves occupy enclosures at the top of the Trojan Stairs, a corner of the grounds once given over to the kitchen garden. In deference to the owners' love of all wildlife, insecticides are never used.

Despite the changes, the gaiety and intimacy of Port Lympne have come back to life. Russell Page, on one visit, turned to John Aspinall and remarked that the gardens were even more beautiful than they had been when Sassoon held court. Aspinall (or Aspers, as he is universally called in the British tabloids), a colorful figure in his own right who became wealthy as a London casino owner and is known for giving lavish parties, displays an abiding fondness for his glamorous predecessor at Port Lympne. A new owner without this affinity might have pieced the estate back together without evoking Sassoon's style. "I wanted him to approve of what we were doing," said Aspinall. "It's still Philip Sassoon's creation." The game begun by the master of the Chess Board Garden remains an absorbing spectator sport. ♠

Editor: Judy Brittain

Port Lympne mansion, gardens, and zoo park, Lympne, 3 miles west of Hythe, Kent. For visitors hours, call (303) 264-646.

Tarlow

(Continued from page 149) glimpse the peasantry at their bucolic revels can now kick up their heels with the kings and queens of chairdom in Tarlowland. As one of Rose's country bumpkins said to another recently, "If you wait around long enough, you become a 'prized possession.' "

"I like chairs because they are like people," says Rose. When she talks about chairs you can feel her running her hands over them with a kind of informed, respectful passion. "Chairs have personalities. I frequently wonder what they do at midnight, what they say to one another when we're not here."

"I wonder," I said to Rose, "about the people who sat on them, about how the chairs felt about them, and how they feel about the people who sit on them now. To a chair is there a difference between 'greasy Joan' who keeled the pot circa 1594 and sat at best on a stool and you, Rose, at ease in your venerable conclave of choicest kitchen-born comb-back chairs?"

Rose, being almost as wise as her most ancient chair, did not answer that one. She said, in her most practical voice, "I buy things that say something. At first I loved eighteenth-century furniture, fancy furniture. Then fancy became plainer. As time went on, my taste became plainer and plainer. . . . I love eccentric chairs, maybe too high, too short, maybe with an interesting flaw, remarkable woods, the original paint peeling off them, the original undercovering on them."

Here is the original muslin under-covering on a wide-mouthed, open-mouthed chair that laughs, its high, outsize wings on the ready to shield from icy eighteenth-century blasts. "It's the only wing chair I ever bought," says Rose, marveling at its cheerful oddity. Its mahogany legs resting on wooden casters, this English personage could have rolled into George III's combative world in the 1770s. There is a rough-hewn three-legged straddly stool, a perky primitive beastie of a stool. A stool is not a chair, but this stool is raised to chair status by the company it keeps. "Fifteenth century," says Rose. "Welsh, sycamore." Definitely farm furniture, it frees the legs for milking, sheep-shearing: it has relatives world over and time over.

Here is a capacious aristocrat: "Louis

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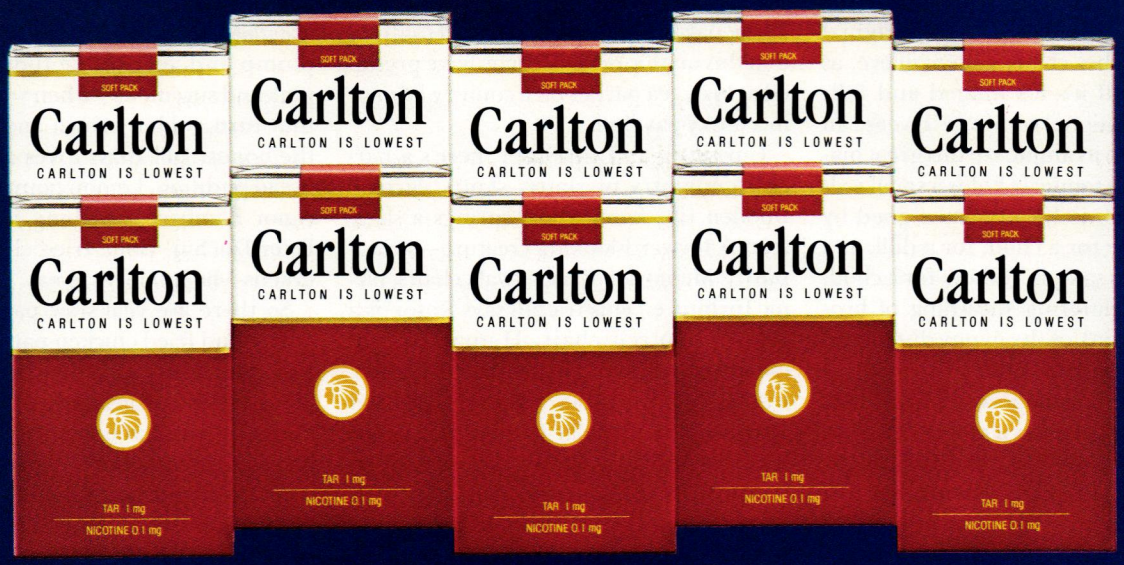

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Tarlow

XVI," says Rose. "Beechwood. Original leather. A ratchet chair, a crémaillère, as the French call it—it's hinged and falls back." For additional comfort? To ease an ailing body? On its ample lap this great maternal presence tenderly holds a small walnut-framed Louis XV cousin, signed by Boulard. Made for a child, for a doll, as a cabinetmaker's sample? I think for a child, encased in a glittering sheathing of brocades. And I think of the nanny disciplines chairs impose on their sitters.

Over there is a magician. That chair, presto chango, becomes a table. "It's all of a piece," says Rose. "It's a flip-flop. Eighteenth-century English, painted orange, now much of it off—tatters of its original dress." An economical friend, this piece, proffering its services for a one-person meal, and when in repose in front of a hearth, a bastion against errant down-chimney winds, even insidious witches.

"This is my most important chair," says Rose. I see an English oak presence as solid as the tree from which it was freed, as grand, in its way, and as protective. As a sculptor finds the figure in the block of stone on which he is working, the centuries-ago furniture maker found this avatar in the oak on which he worked. How odd that this mythic presence may have presided at lusty tea parties on a country lawn or in a bosky pavilion.

Curiouser and curiouser, here's a narrow geometry of slatty, slanty vertical wooden ribs from which springs a slatty seat. A forward-looking creature—sort of pushy. Memories of boardwalk chairs, picnic furniture. This friend, says Rose, "is a folding church chair. Henri II—that means between 1547 and 1559. French, walnut—so movable." The nonsecular purpose of this secular-looking peripatetic is confirmed by its crown incised with an evocative triad of crosses.

As I wander Rose's ensorcelling rooms, peering at the immigrants from black-hole kitchens consorting with émigrés from crystal-chandeliered drawing rooms, I think of the survival of *things*, treasured things, and how things miraculously survive while people . . . "Oh," says the oldest chair of all, "longevity, as any *thing* knows, is the best revenge." ♠

Editors: Wendy Goodman and Joyce MacRae

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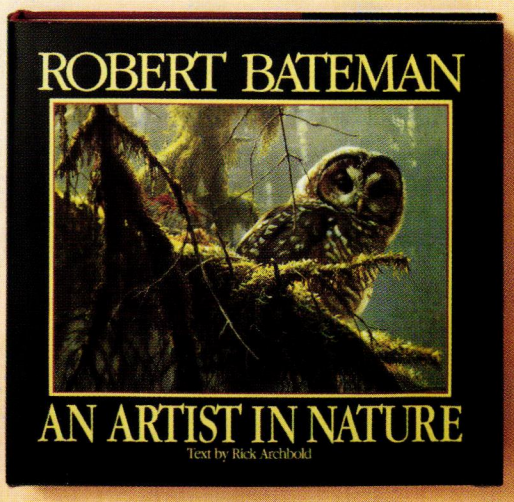

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RANDOM HOUSE

Host of the Town

(Continued from page 135) growing up, not plump and yellow like today's but pale pink and succulent—when you broil them, they turn golden brown and you can eat the bones. Bill Blass loves apricot-raisin bread pudding. Lemon pound cake for Eleanor Lambert. Anything for my friend Peter Duchin! Chili, fried chicken, beans, greens—he just loves to eat."

So there are veal stew parties, chicken potpie and fried chicken parties, pot roast with double-rich gravy parties, tea parties. Since Hovis is constantly experimenting, the repertoire has no limits. One element, however, is common to them all: the food is always simple and direct. This is an airline with no frills, as Hovis says. And everyone always has second helpings.

These days, his own plate is overloaded with more than most people could ever digest. Currently the creative-food director for Macy's Northeast, Hovis has a job that entails everything from menu planning for more than a dozen restaurants to supervising an enormous staff of buyers, chefs, and salespeople. Macy's at Herald Square is Hovis's new home away from home. He likes nothing better than conducting tours with a grand finale of pastry sampling in the Cellar Café. Here it is entirely fitting to hear him say, "Shopping and cooking are the two greatest joys of my life. If I ever won the lottery, I would buy a château in France and I wouldn't bother to pack, I'd just shop along the way." ♠

Laird of the Tower

(Continued from page 176) the development of the steam engine enabled paddle steamers from Glasgow to take people not only to the New World but also "doon the watter," down the Firth of Clyde for day trips to villages with turbulent histories which were turned into what the guidebooks called watering places. On such a site, on a promontory above the Clyde, this house has vistas over the waters of lochs, estuary, and sea to mountains and islands.

The grounds lead down to the shore with steps, terraces, and lawns bordered by rhododendrons and trees. Native willow, oak, and pine are dominated by exotic evergreens first brought from the Americas in the mid nineteenth century which thrive

close to the Gulf Stream. As tall as the house, the California *Sequoiadendron giganteum* is known in Britain as the Wellingtonia. From Chile came the *Embothrium coccineum,* with its cascading vermilion blossoms, and the monkey-puzzle, and from Washington and Oregon the *Thuja plicata.* The dividing trunks of this tree create a kind of low tree house, a scented, mossy hiding place. The deer hide here when disturbed, before they run back to the woods or resume grazing. Paths, dense with pine needles, curve beside rockeries shaded by laurel, then the house reappears above, framed between giant trees.

Rapid changes in weather bring dramatic changes of light, inside as well as out. Painting attempts it, but photography cannot yet imitate the eye's ability to assimilate at once the inside and the outside, the atmosphere of a room and what is seen of the world framed by a window or door. It is one of the greatest pleasures of living here that a sense of the outside is always present, whether looking through the arched kitchen door, which composes a picture of a lighthouse seen through a gap in the trees across a patch of water, or from the drawing room two floors above, where the same lighthouse is over the trees and an expanse of silver water reveals a flotilla of sails and red ferryboats. From the tower room a purple mountain looms beneath a vast cloud and a gray ship lies in gray water, all beyond a bright stained-glass portrait of Copernicus. From the morning room, beyond a marble sculpture in the window, the sharp horizon and a distant island take their place. Add the tick of a clock, the chug of a boat, the screech of some seabird, and, when I opened my window this morning, the sound of bagpipes drifting across the water. ▲

Positive Altitude

(Continued from page 152) interiors, now finding stories in existing rooms, with clients the built-in characters.

Marilyn and Myles, who originally each rented an apartment in their current building, were more or less introduced to one another in the elevator one day by their respective hats—each collects. When they married and decamped to a new apartment, they wanted to start afresh with objects taken from the fabric of their new lives. Currie created a bedspread from Fortuny cotton the couple discovered on their honeymoon in Venice and made room for a painted antique chest, which Marilyn bought, also in Venice, as a wedding present for Myles. A hat tree with a dozen of her broad-brimmed hats looks like a standing bouquet.

None of the Canes' objects are simply visually striking, but stem from an experience or interest—their collection of books on the French Revolution led them to textile fragments, mounted in an album, that might have been worn at the time, and readings on Rome and Egypt inspired the purchase of Roman glass and terra-cotta vases. Myles likes to read and smoke his cigar under a bronze lamp by Giacometti, a piece that reflects the couple's long-standing appreciation for the artist.

"It's not just a Bob Currie room," notes Marilyn. "We didn't want a Biedermeier room or a Louis Whatever, but one for the things that mean something to us. Bob pays attention to what people are like." The generous bookcases opposite the wide-angled view anchor the room and frame a collection of leather-bound volumes, wines, clocks, and vases that constantly changes as the Canes visit the reciprocal collection of volumes, wines, clocks, and vases at their country house. The bookcase is a scaffold that orders the objects that flow in and out after their travels and more local shopping excursions.

"How do you create a small space for people who are collecting all the time and still keep it simple?" asks Myles. "I get nervous when spaces are overdecorated," says the designer, whose decorating instinct is to subtract rather than to add. He did shop with the Canes for several pieces, including a French art deco dining table, four Georgian dining chairs, and a seventeenth-century Flemish tapestry with a view of a glade populated with two mythical birds "shorter than an ostrich but taller than a dodo," Currie points out.

The Canes walk over to the focal point of the living room where panes of plate glass multiply the reflection of the tapestry. Mirrored images of the seventeenth-century pastoral landscape are overlaid on the delirious panorama of twentieth-century Manhattan. "Especially in this city where there's so much excess, it's important to create tranquillity," observes Marilyn, "so personalities can come through." ▲ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*

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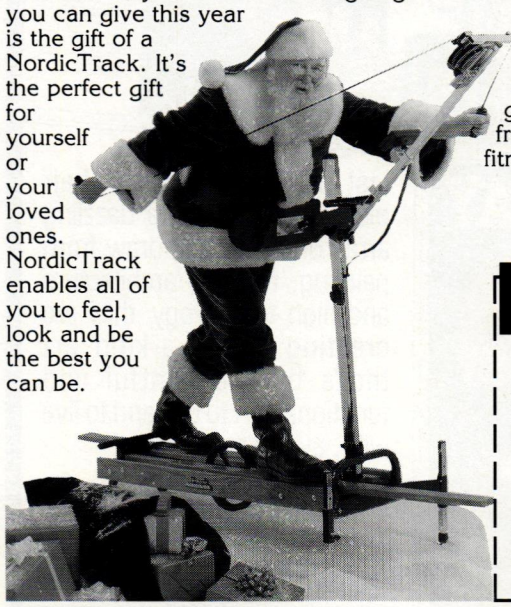

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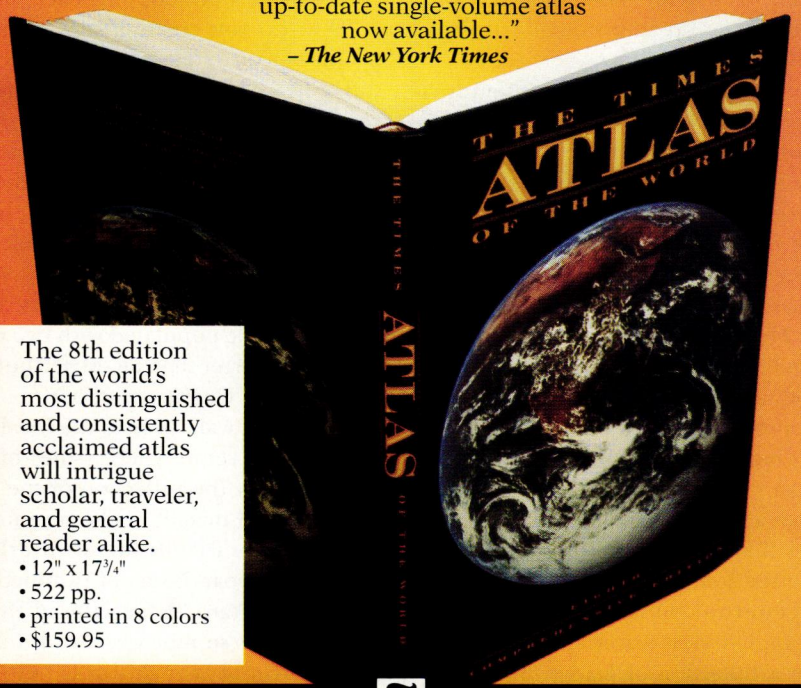

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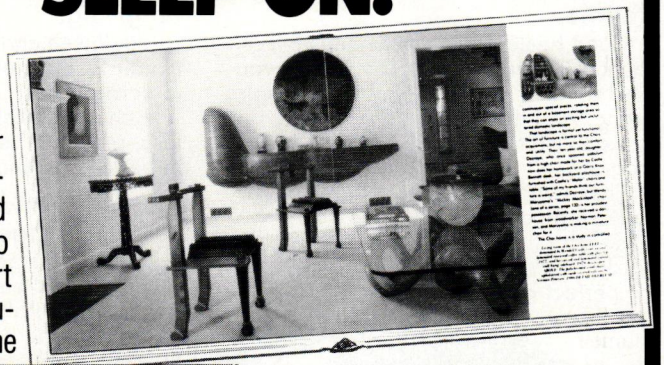

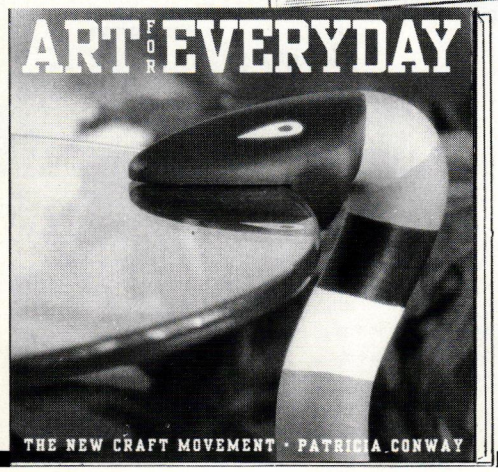

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All in the Family

(Continued from page 120) apartment." The inevitable schism followed predictable lines, pitting boys against girls, sisters against old college friends, gray walls against chintz.

"We wanted to do something lively and different," Alexandra volunteers, gently stating the sisters' point of view. "We grew up in a house with brilliant colors." Until they were teenagers they lived in a ticket booth and first-aid station at Squaw Valley, their father's sports resort in California. It was his sister, the artist Lily Cushing, who'd convinced him to paint the inside of the house fire engine red to keep out the cold. "Gray *was* different," continues Alexandra, "but if all the colors in an apartment are of the same palette, any changes you make are jarring." Nonetheless, Alexandra and Justine defiantly hung a green jungle-patterned wallpaper in the master bedroom. When to their dismay it showed up in the Beverly Wilshire hotel and, later, the fashionable New York restaurant Indochine, the rebellion faltered. The jungly wallpaper was painted out—gray.

Although the modernist camp had gained a victory, it did not win them the war. "It's taken eight years for the various forms of chintz to creep in," Philip acknowledges a little sheepishly. "We used to have stripes, solids, and one thing and another. Now it's all chintz, gingham . . . *lace*! Let's face it, basically I've lost."

If he doesn't seem altogether unhappy about the result, it's partly because it was his preoccupation with the success of the law firm that gave the chintz lobby a freer rein, partly because the joint effort of Justine Cushing and Richard Nash Gould has brilliantly realized the apartment's potential. Their diametrically opposed contributions, drawn together by Alexandra's collection of paintings by her grandfather Howard Gardiner Cushing and her aunt Lily Cushing, have achieved an elegant synthesis. Everyone agrees that the decorative oriental fantasy seascapes of Howard Cushing look particularly enchanting against the stern gray walls. In her choice of colors, fabrics, and furnishings, Justine picked up the bird and flower motifs from the art, creating her own family-style chinoiserie. The result is a comfortable intimate atmosphere within a context that remains coolly spare, graciously formal.

Though he has bowed to the inevitabil-

ity of chintz, Philip continues to fight a rear-guard action against what he regards as the sterile idioms of Upper East Side taste. "The battlefield," he declares, "has now moved to incidental pieces of furniture." He points out a large off-white textured plastic coffee table, which Justine teasingly accuses him of keeping wrapped up for six months "like a Christo sculpture." Philip doesn't deny the charge. "I didn't want this symbol of fashionable decoration, this huge object made of funny trendy material in the middle of my living room. I left it wrapped until the cardboard became unacceptably dirty."

But the coffee table stayed put.

One piece of furniture that has never provoked an argument is the Howards' piano, which, ironically, came with the apartment. Both Philip and Alexandra regard it as the heart of the living room, "the key to life here." A former member of Yale's all-male singing group, the Whiffenpoofs, Philip, who Alexandra insists could have been an opera singer, often has friends in for an evening of impromptu harmonizing. Alexandra grew up listening to her father play stride piano and encourages her children to sing and dance, to learn instruments, and to "keep the apartment filled with music."

Every Christmas the Howards give a carol-singing party that has become an unbreakable date in their friends' Yule calendars. On such occasions, which always draw a sprinkling of celebrities—one Christmas I watched Brian De Palma flee in terror from scenes of overwhelming merriment at the piano—the big room really comes into its own. A whiff of gunpowder may still hang in the air, but the Howards' apartment shares with all comers the well-tempered harmonies of a household at peace. ♠ *Editor: Carolyn Sollis*

Samaras Spectrum

(Continued from page 128) table by the windows in the studio, not at the dining room table Samaras made for the commodious and elegant entertaining space.

He tells me that in the mornings he wakes up for the sunrise, and if he sees a red band from his bed, he gets up to watch. "If it's good, I don't want to waste it," Samaras says. If the color doesn't impress him, forget it. At the end of the day, when he's in the studio, he can watch the sun melt into New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Samaras's roots are in old cultures, and that has as much to do with his love of this place as does his romance with New York. He was born in Greece, where he lived in a house on top of a hill; here, at night, when the skyscrapers are lit up, some of their glowing tops could fool one into thinking they're ancient temples. Then a dark shape with sparks of light passes by and Samaras says, "Dragonfly." It's an airplane. But you're in the spell of his world, so you smell the sweetness of the air and take another sip of wine from a glass that's gloriously cut and colored. Other artists of his generation made earthworks. Samaras has built a skywork, and he's living in it. How much more modern can a modern artist get? ♠

Editor: Wendy Goodman

Country's New Colors

(Continued from page 114) cupboards and drawers situated between the two entrances to the room.

They also modernized the house with a 26-by-26-foot addition, built by Fiore's company, BFI, which includes a huge open kitchen, a pantry, a seating area, an extra bathroom, and the one room the house was desperately in need of, an entry. ("I hate to just fall into a room," says Bohn. "It's not nice.") But for all the improvements, Bohn feels that the most satisfying effect is that "the house now seems much older than when we bought it."

For Bohn and Lembo, working on their oldest project thus far has significantly altered the course of a firm that had built its reputation on spare, urban, modern interiors. Slices of rural Pennsylvania have made their way into the Lembo Bohn Design vocabulary—multipaned fenestration, heavy cornices, raised panels in cabinetry, rubbed painted finishes, metal screening for cupboard doors or as a room divider. Things acquired at local auctions have furnished not only Bohn and Fiore's house and Lembo's loft but also projects as distant as a restaurant in Japan. These designers have learned that in the country, as well as the city, simplicity and sophistication can live under one roof. ♠

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Resources

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used as table, similar at Reymer-Jourdan (see above). Antique tapestry pillows, similar at Terry Morton, NYC (212) 472-1446. **182–83** Italian Empire parcel gilt/walnut armchairs from Tuscany, similar at Juan Portela Antiques, NYC (212) 650-0085. Crocodile handwoven silk velvet on armchairs, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Aubusson carpet with gold threads, similar at F. J. Hakimian, NYC (212) 371-6900. Charleston cotton/silk damask on chaise longue, 51" wide, $99 yd, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 40). Leopard Velvet on pillows, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pgs 116–17). Russian Biedermeier fruitwood barrel chair with claw feet, similar at H. M. Luther, NYC (212) 505-1485. **183** French ebonized chairs, c. 1865, similar at Juan Portela (see above). Linen Velvet on chairs, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Austrian Biedermeier table, French late 19th century majolica garden seat, similar at Niall Smith Antiques, NYC (212) 255-0660.

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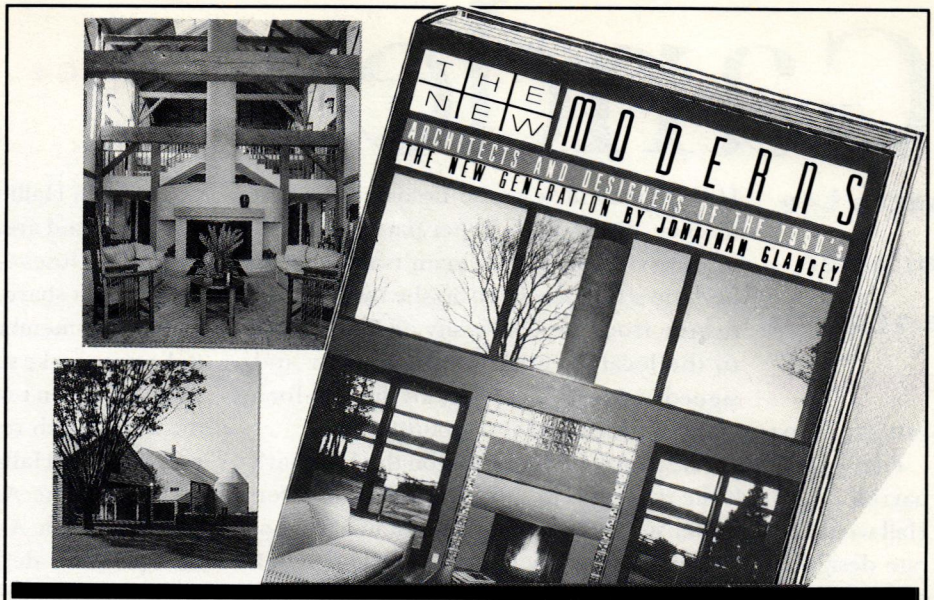

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Gandee AT LARGE

Jeannette Lee has built her house of cards

Her original idea was to become a schoolteacher. But in 1939, in her part of Missouri, married women weren't allowed to become schoolteachers. So she took her art degree from the University of Kansas City to the local greeting card company and signed on as assistant to the art director for a sum she then considered princely: $52 a month.

Fifty-one years later, Jeannette Lee is still on the Hallmark payroll. Although she tried to retire in 1983, chairman Don Hall would only let her step down as vice president of corporate design if she promised to stay on as a two-day-a-week consultant, contributing her appreciably-more-than-two-cents-worth on matters of style, taste, and aesthetic judgment. Which she did. And does.

Because Mrs. Lee probably knows more about cards and card sending than anyone else in the free world, and because 11 million Hanukkah, 2.2 billion Christmas, and 10 million New Year's cards will be exchanged this month, I hopped a plane to Kansas City one Sunday morning not long ago to have breakfast with the woman I decided to think of as the queen of cards.

Petite, punctual, and polite, Mrs. Lee arrived looking very professional and nowhere near her age. She wore a tailored gray suit and carried a Samsonite briefcase, which she snapped open before even tasting her first cup of decaffeinated coffee. "We've done every president's Christmas card since Eisenhower," said Mrs. Lee with unmistakable pride, and then she presented me with a stack of holiday greetings from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the first with smiling head shots—"Merry Christmas from Mamie and Ike"—the last with an atmospheric Jamie Wyeth—"Season's Greetings from President and Mrs. Reagan." Handing over a card on which an angel with a very modern face and a diaphanous gown floated through the air blowing a trumpet, Mrs. Lee noted, "Jacqueline Kennedy designed this one herself." The angel, she explained, was the product of a "trip I took to Camp David in 1963." It seems the First Lady wanted to design cards, but she was having a problem. "She would do her ink work and then she'd paint over it and the ink would run," said Mrs. Lee. After Mrs. Kennedy was instructed in the sponge technique she invited Mrs. Lee to stay for dinner, during which they discussed, among other things, the sorry state of Blair House, the government's guest quarters for visiting dignitaries. "If you can imagine, they have *wire* coat hangers," Mrs. Lee recalls Mrs. Kennedy exclaiming. Which, almost thirty years later, still makes Mrs. Lee laugh.

Jeannette Lee at Hallmark.

"Christmas and Easter are very bad times for sexy cards"

Although Hallmark has collaborated with a wide range of celebrities and artists over the years—from Groucho Marx to Grandma Moses—Mrs. Lee's success, and Hallmark's 44 percent market share, are attributable to the efforts of the company's 700-member creative staff. As their boss, Mrs. Lee's task was to make sure that the group's work was, first, in good taste—"we don't want to offend"—and, second, in sync with the times. With regard to the good taste mandate, Mrs. Lee reports that Hallmark has come under fire only once. It seems that the Ancient Order of Hibernians, an organization of Irish American Catholics, took offense one year at Hallmark's depiction of Saint Patrick's Day as a drunken bacchanalia. Mrs. Lee also reports, not incidentally, that the classic card for dad, the one with the leather wing chair and smoldering pipe, has been updated—minus the smoldering pipe. "Very au courant," I said. "Hallmark has always tried to stay on top of trends," explained Mrs. Lee. Along those lines, I asked if Hallmark had ever done sexy cards, the kind you see so many of these days. "Yes, we've made them," said Mrs. Lee with elegant reluctance. "But at Christmas? No. Christmas and Easter are two very bad times for sexy cards. There are a lot of very straitlaced people out there."

In terms of Hallmark's current crop of cards, Mrs. Lee pointed out a few new developments. The inside copy has gotten much longer, she said. "People want to say more right now. Perhaps because there are more situations that are not as ideal as we would like." To illustrate her point Mrs. Lee presented me with one card addressed "To Mother and Her Husband" and another card that contained the rather forlorn message, "Christmas is a special time for families—a time for forgetting past differences and for coming together in love." Mrs. Lee agreed that times had changed since Norman Rockwell's idealized vision of the American family.

Before departing I thought I might as well take advantage of Mrs. Lee's expertise, so I asked her advice about my own cards. Should I have my name printed inside? And should I send the same card to everyone on my list? "Yes" and "yes," said Mrs. Lee. "But if I were you I'd cross out your imprinted name and write a line or two on the one you send to your mother."

Charles Gandee

CHUCK KNEYSE