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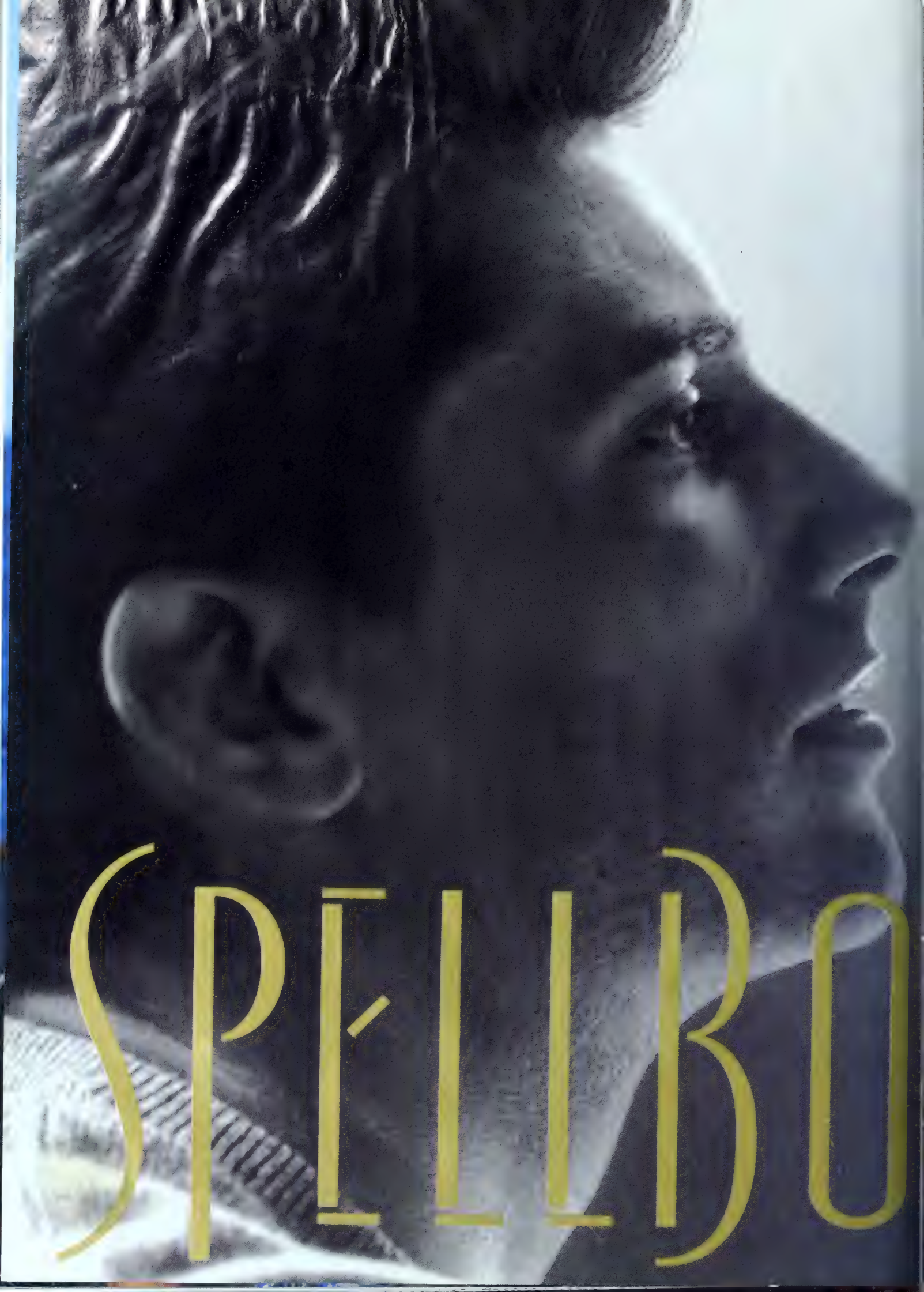
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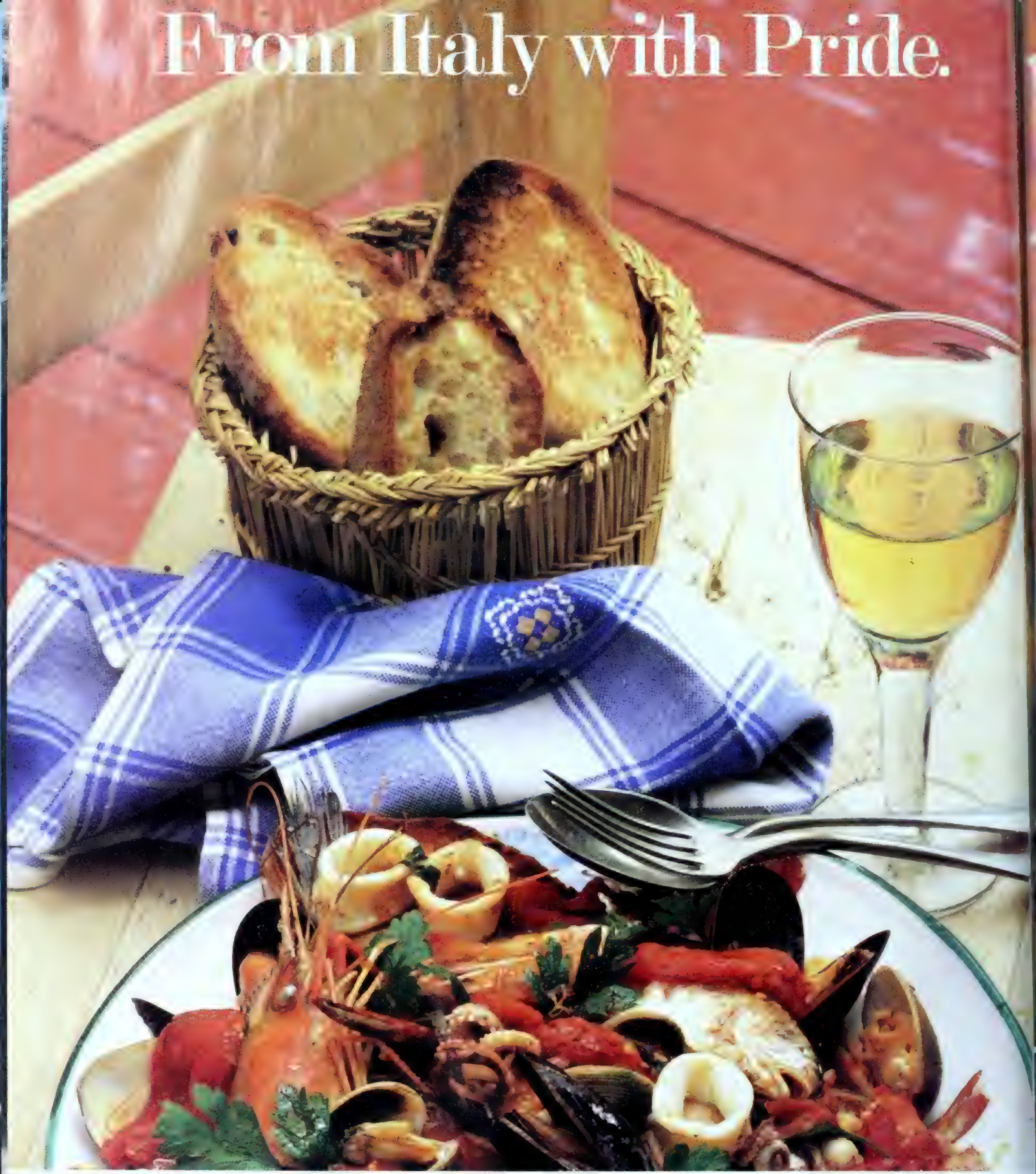

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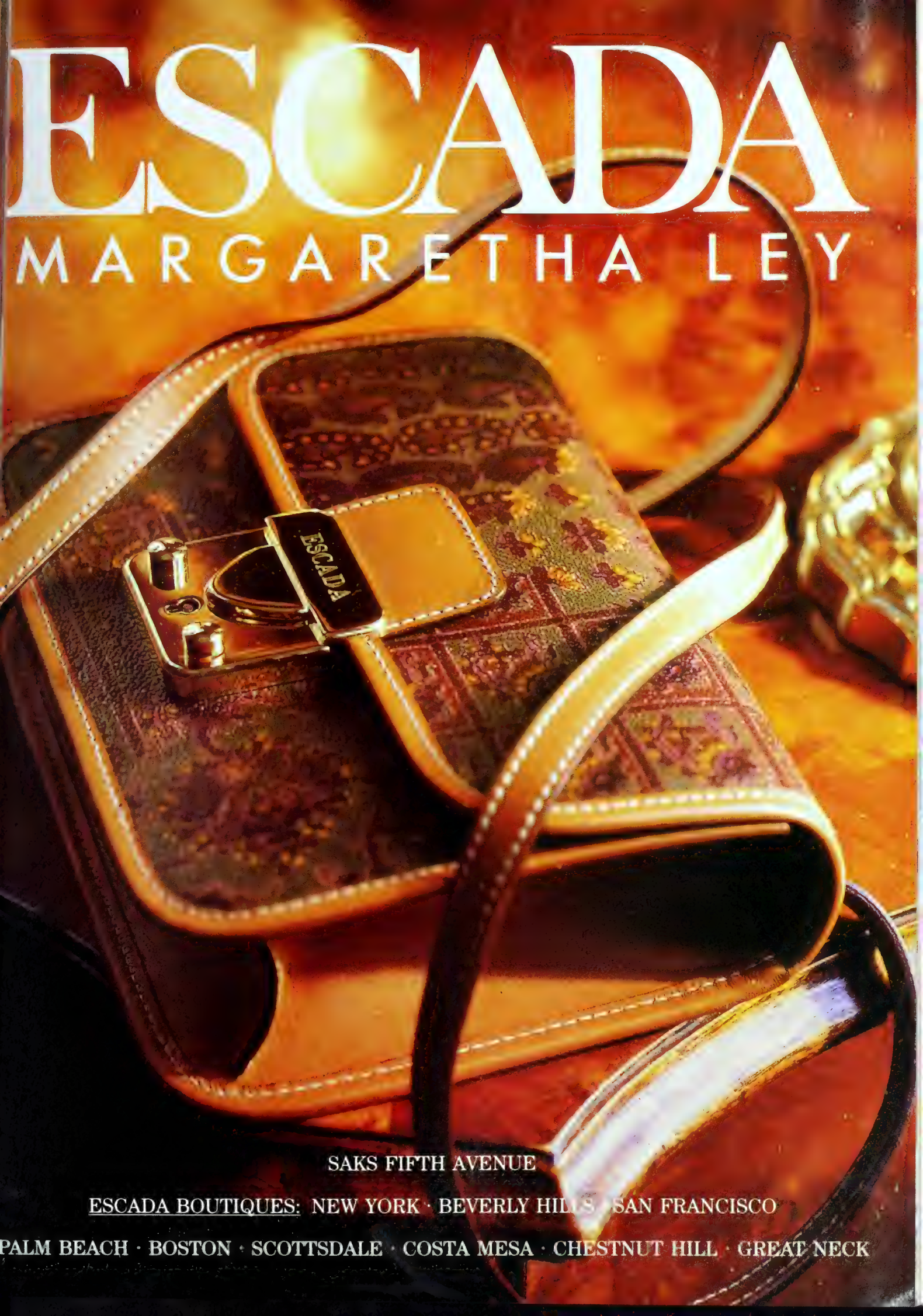
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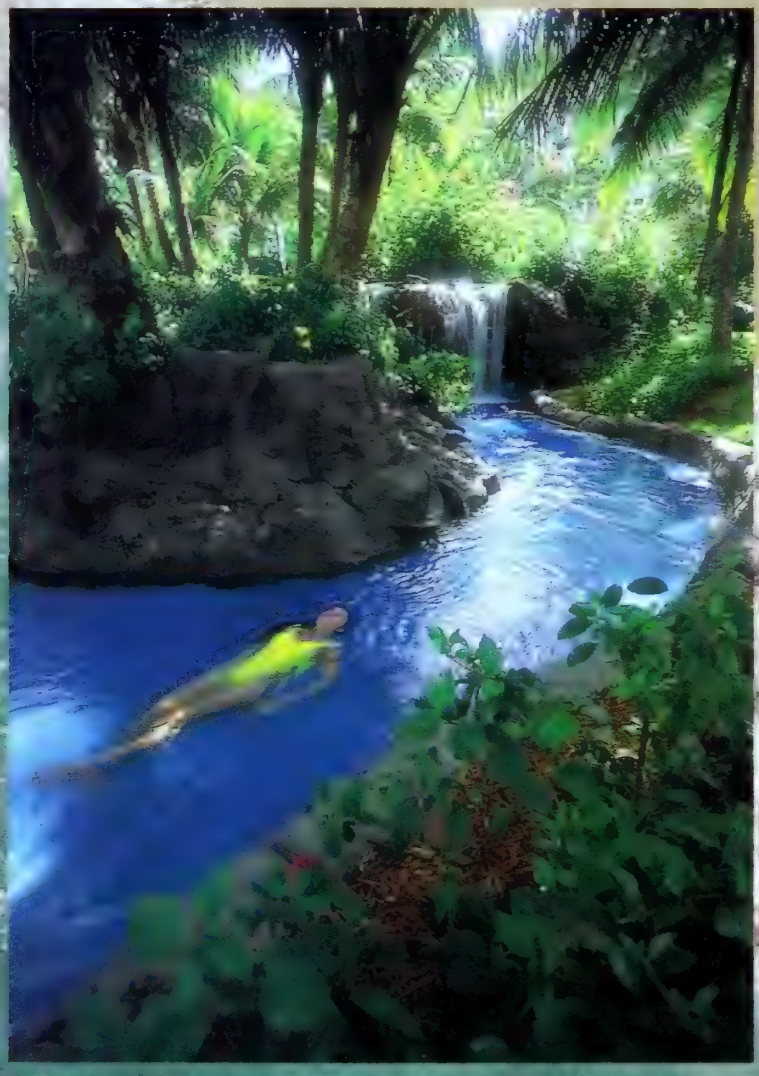

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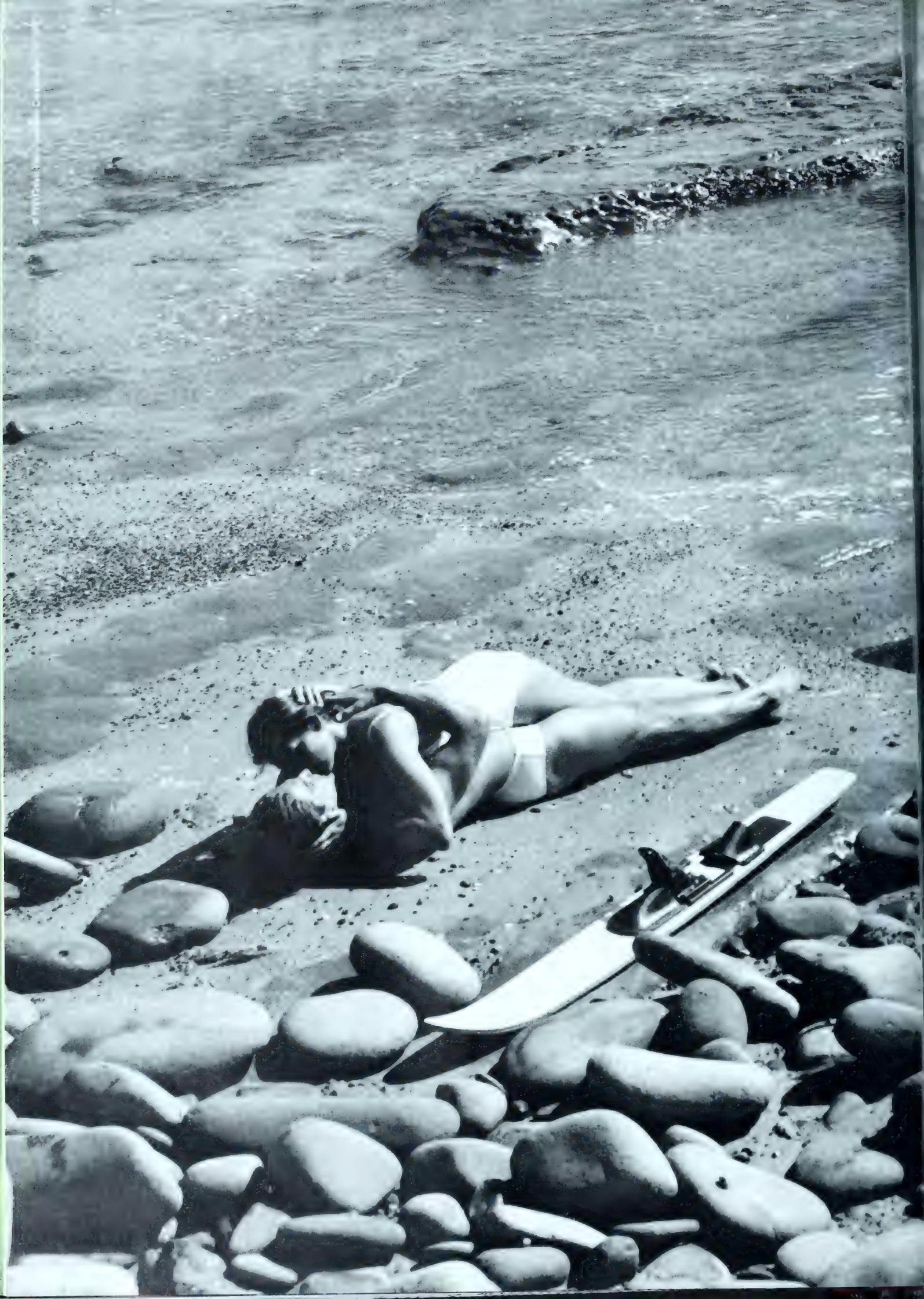
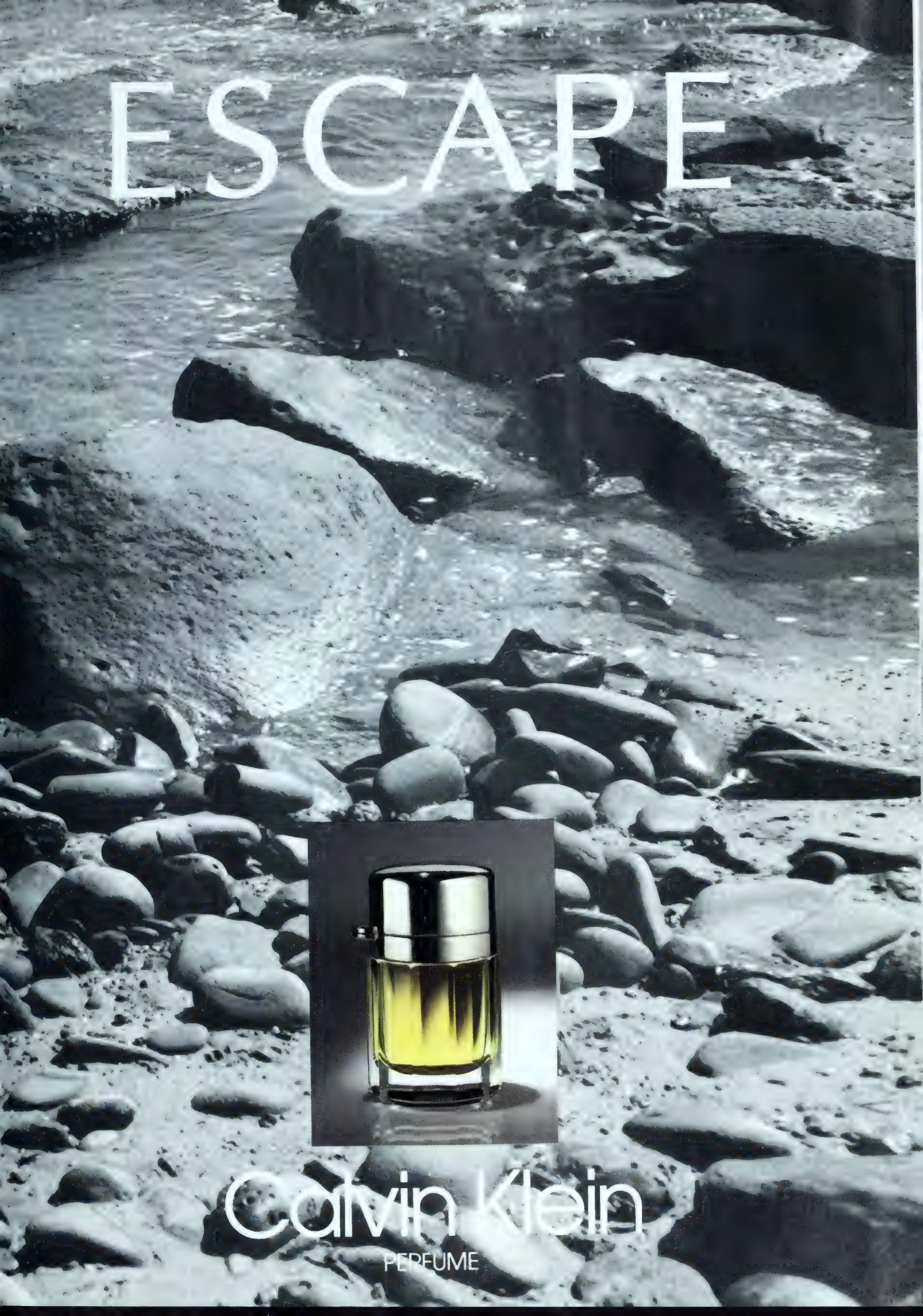



ESCAPE
Calvin Klein
PERFUME

HOUSE & GARDEN April 1992 Volume 164, Number 4

HG

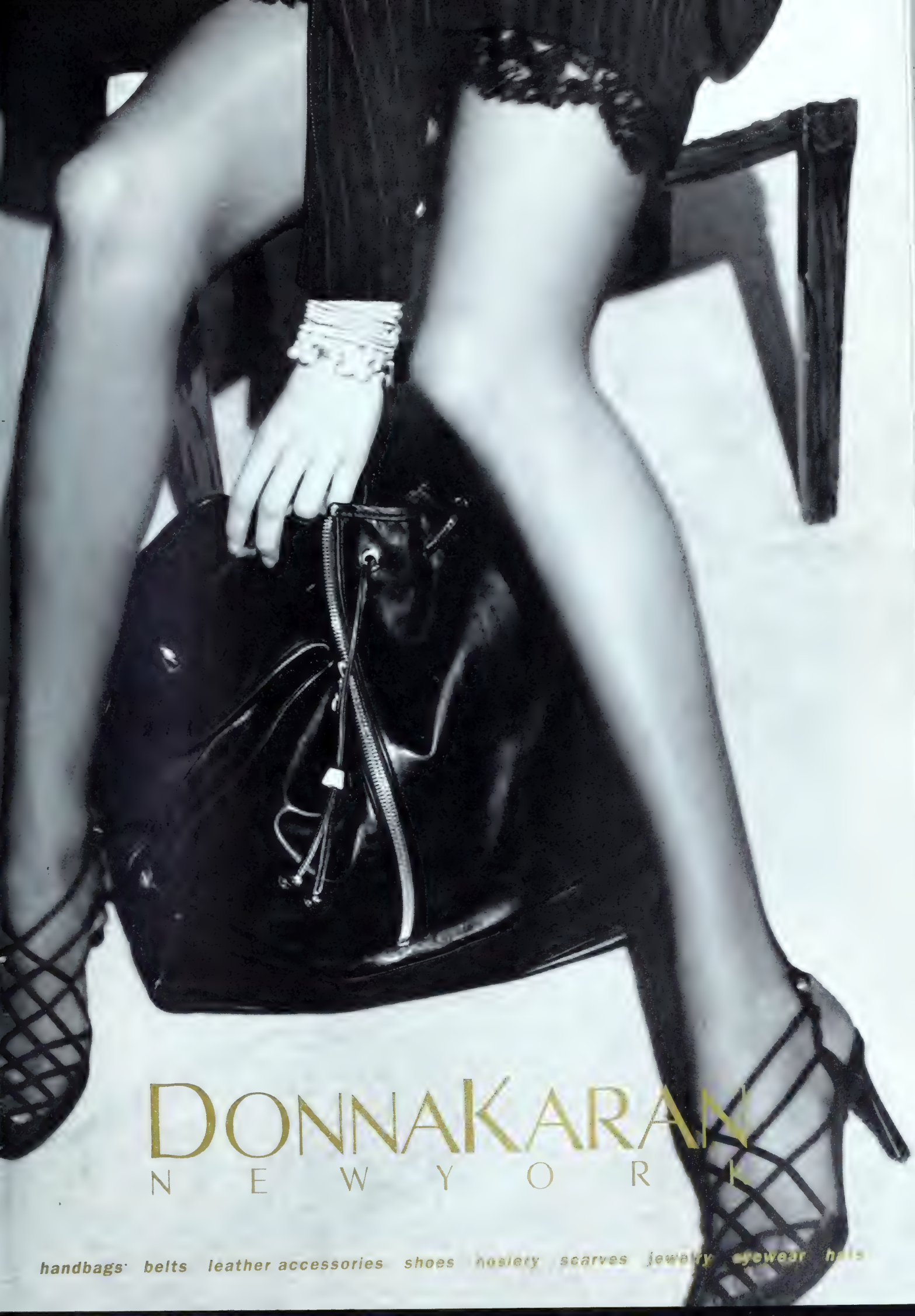
Stainless-steel cabinets, left, from St. Charles in a Steven Harris–designed kitchen. Page 138.

COVER
Tulips dominate a formal garden on Oscar de la Renta's Connecticut estate. Photograph by Richard Felber. Page 94.

APRIL

Art deco classics and a Chinese scroll meet in a New York apartment, above. Page 104. Left: Architect Richard Meier at the Getty Center site in Brentwood. Page 128.

FEATURES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APRIL

Lemurs, an endangered species, above, at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust. Page 46.

Joanna Rock, above left, a one-person wallpaper factory. Page 80. Left: Victorian antiques recall the Gilded Age in a Connecticut villa. Page 62.

HG

Czech cubist ceramic boxes, 1911, below. Page 72.

DEPARTMENTS


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Contributors Not

Rosemary Verey writes about an Oscar de la Renta creation—his own garden with classical allées framing views of the Connecticut countryside. At home in England, Verey, a garden designer and the author of eleven books on horticulture, tends four acres in the Cotswolds. Her neighbor and fellow gardener Prince Charles contributed the foreword to her book *A Countrywoman's Year* from Little, Brown, which also published Verey's *The Art of Planting.*

WILL SHIVELY

Michael J. Rosen reports on a public garden in Columbus, Ohio, in which topiaries replicate the figures in Seurat's painting *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884.* Rosen recently edited a collection of short stories for Doubleday, *The Company of Cats,* and a Harper Collins book of children's stories, *Home,* both out next month.

Elaine Hunt, HG's associate editor, fine-tuned her eye for design as Diana Vreeland's assistant at the Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute. "The first photo shoot I ever witnessed was Mrs. Vreeland sitting for Horst. I was only there to check her rouge, but Horst asked me to look through his lens. Now, whenever I'm on a shoot, I think of Horst and imagine greatness." This month Hunt produced the "Workroom" story about a wallpaper designer and the "Great Ideas" column about a media room disguised as an opera house.


PARIS
PARIS
YVES SAINT LAURENT

Contributors Notes

John Ashbery has published fourteen books of poetry, including *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror,* for which he received a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award. A selection of his art criticism is gathered in *Reported Sightings.* For HG, Ashbery explores New York's Hudson River valley, where he weekends in a "stately but confused-looking house that may be Richardsonian, Queen Anne, colonial revival, or all three."

VINCENT THFOIN

Jacques Dirand, a frequent contributor to HG, specializes in photographing interiors, still lifes, and architecture. In this issue he captures a Paris house remarkable for its austere mix of seventeenth- and twentieth-century art. Dirand has spent the past year traveling around Europe in search of extraordinary textiles which will be the subject of a Clarkson N. Potter book to be published next year.

GIANNI VERSACE

S I G N A T U R E

notes

HG REPORTS ON THE NEW AND THE NOTEWORTHY By Eric Berthold

"Dressing up the plain white box of some of New York's postwar interiors was our first objective," says Karin Stella (*above*), who launched Design Projects five years ago with partner Katy Eppley, at right. The New York–based interior design firm, which is about to expand to Boston and Saint Petersburg, Florida, specializes in custom architectural details, from inlaid wood borders to plaster crown moldings. With new laser woodcutting techniques, Design Projects craftsmen can produce flooring (*top right*) in any pattern, no matter how intricate, in only three weeks. With a bit more time they can reproduce hand-carved moldings (*center right*) as well as mantels and ornaments (*bottom right*). (Design Projects, 30 East 74 St., New York, NY 10021; 212-288-6664)


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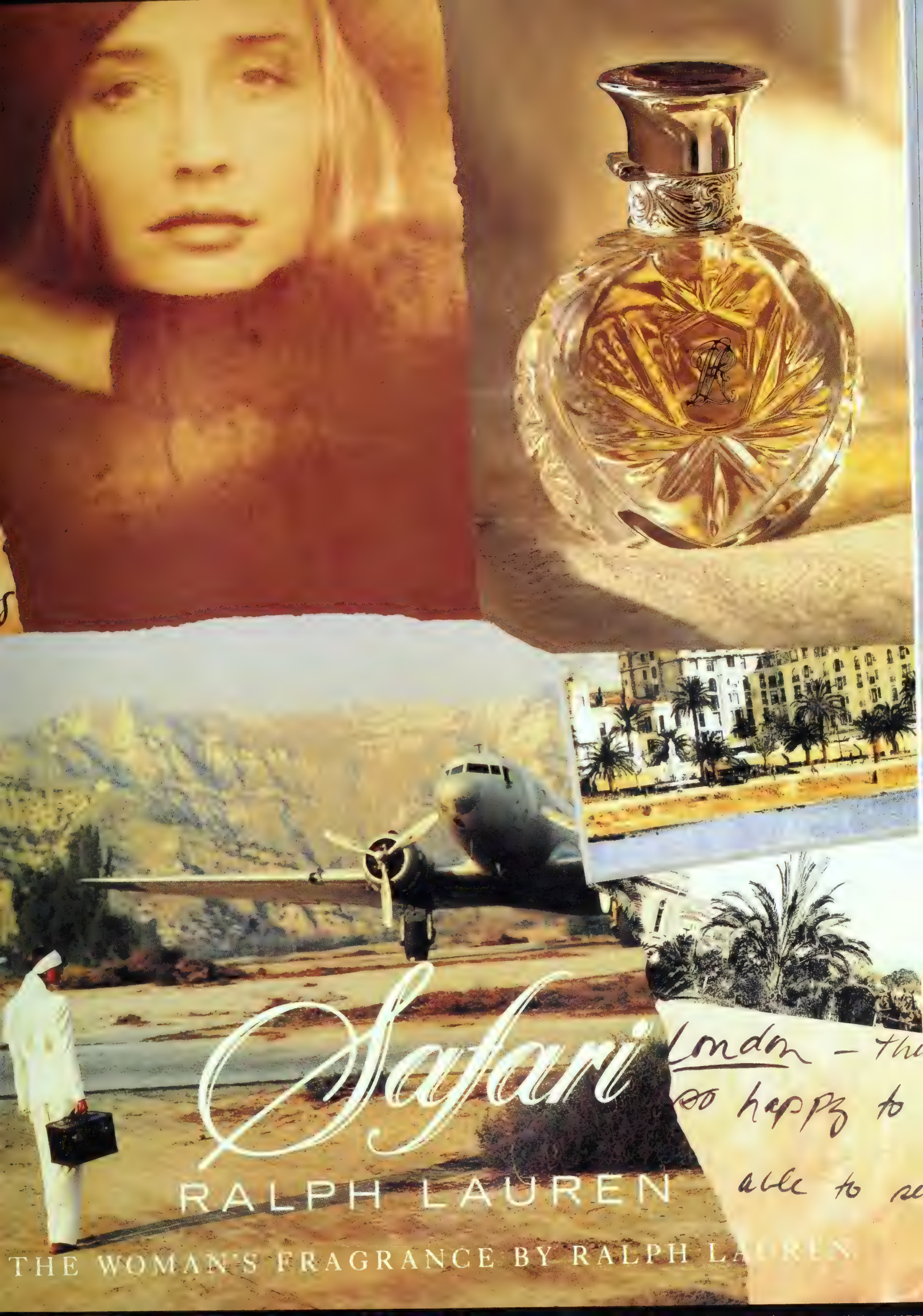
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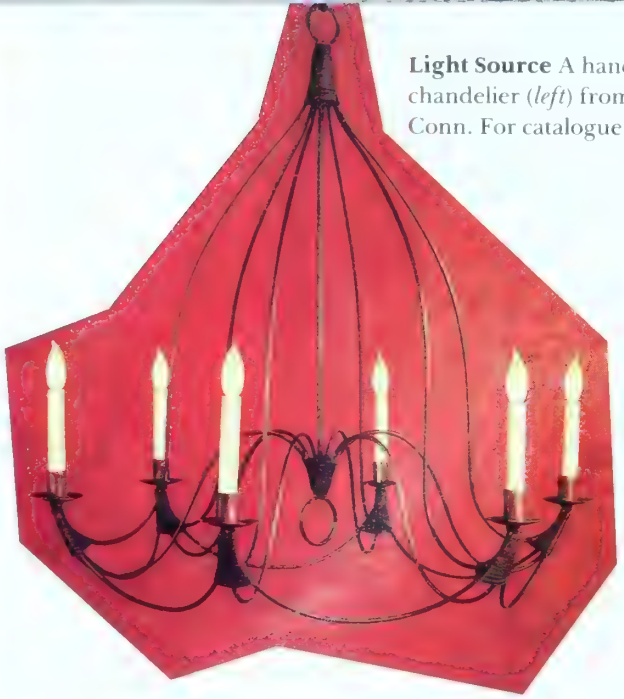


Light Source A handcrafted bell-shaped chandelier (*left*) from Studio Steel, Norwalk, Conn. For catalogue (203) 846-3978.

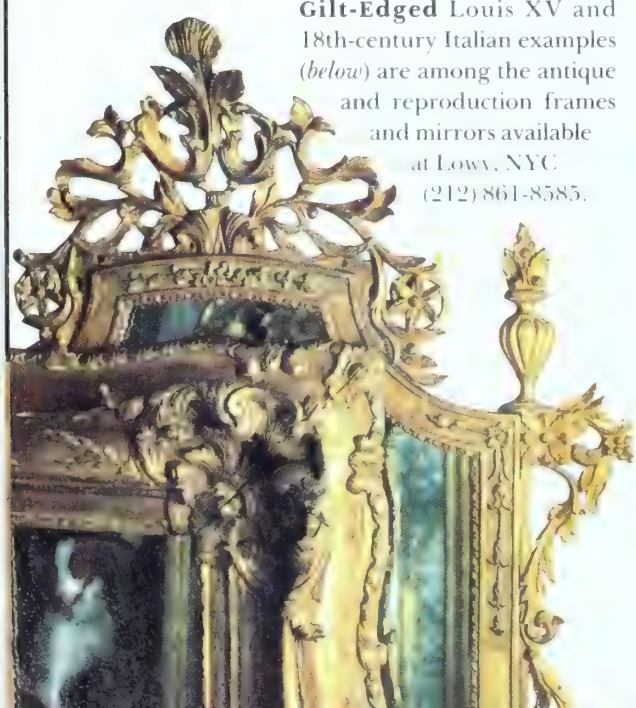
Home Front English campaign chair-bed (*right*), c. 1790, at Kentshire Antiques Gallery in the new interior design department at Gump's, San Francisco (415) 982-1616.

A Little Shade For candlesticks, in hand-painted tole (*above left*), $92.50, and silver plate (*above right*), $62.50, from Chelsea House–Port Royal. At stores nationwide.

FLOWER SHOWS

• The American Romantic Garden at the New York Botanical Garden, Mar. 21–May 17, with a talk by HG's Nancy Novogrod on Apr. 3, (212) 220-8700. • Park Place at San Francisco's Fort Mason Center, Apr. 8–12, (415) 750-5108. • Cincinnati Flower and Garden Show at Cincinnati's Ault Park, Apr. 24–26, (513) 579-0259.

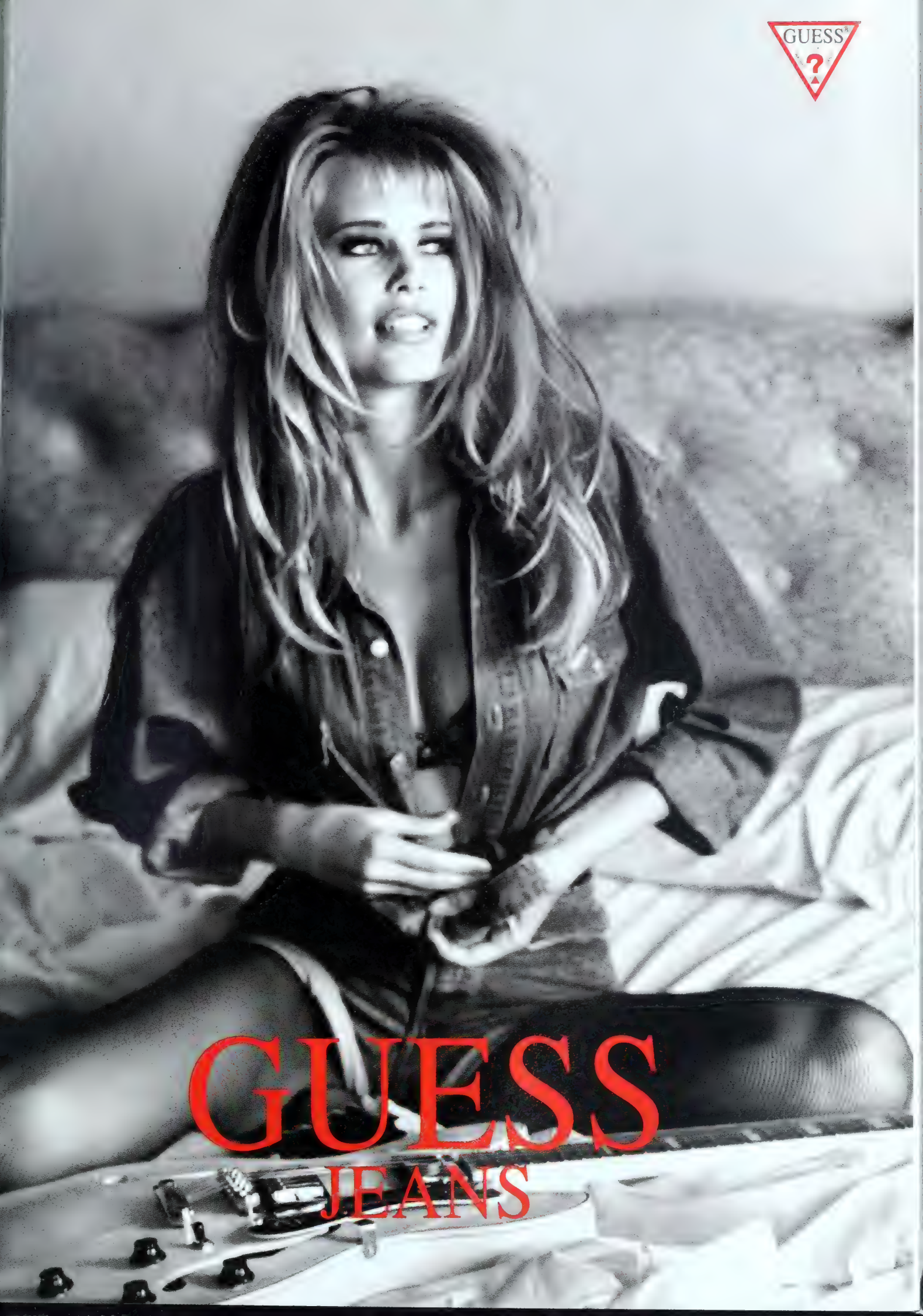
Legwork Custom carved cherry table with paw feet (*above*) by Christopher Maier, New Orleans (504) 586-9079.



Gilt-Edged Louis XV and 18th-century Italian examples (*below*) are among the antique and reproduction frames and mirrors available at Lowy, NYC (212) 861-8585.

Notes

Brush Up Four samples from color expert Donald Kaufman's new collection of sixteen interior paints. To order (201) 568-2226.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notes

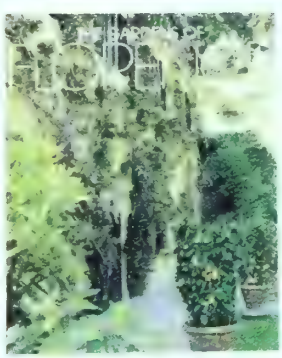
Shine On Blue Moon lamp (*above*), $350, made to order by Leo Blackman, NYC. Call (212) 477-4480.

Pigment of Imagination Architectural fantasy in watercolor (*above*) by Thierry Flon, on view Apr. 13–May 9 at Stephanie Hoppen's new gallery, 25 East 73rd St., NYC (212) 879-9343.

For a Great Wall Chinese-style lacquered mirror from the Parish-Hadley Collection at John Rosselli, NYC (212) 737-2252.

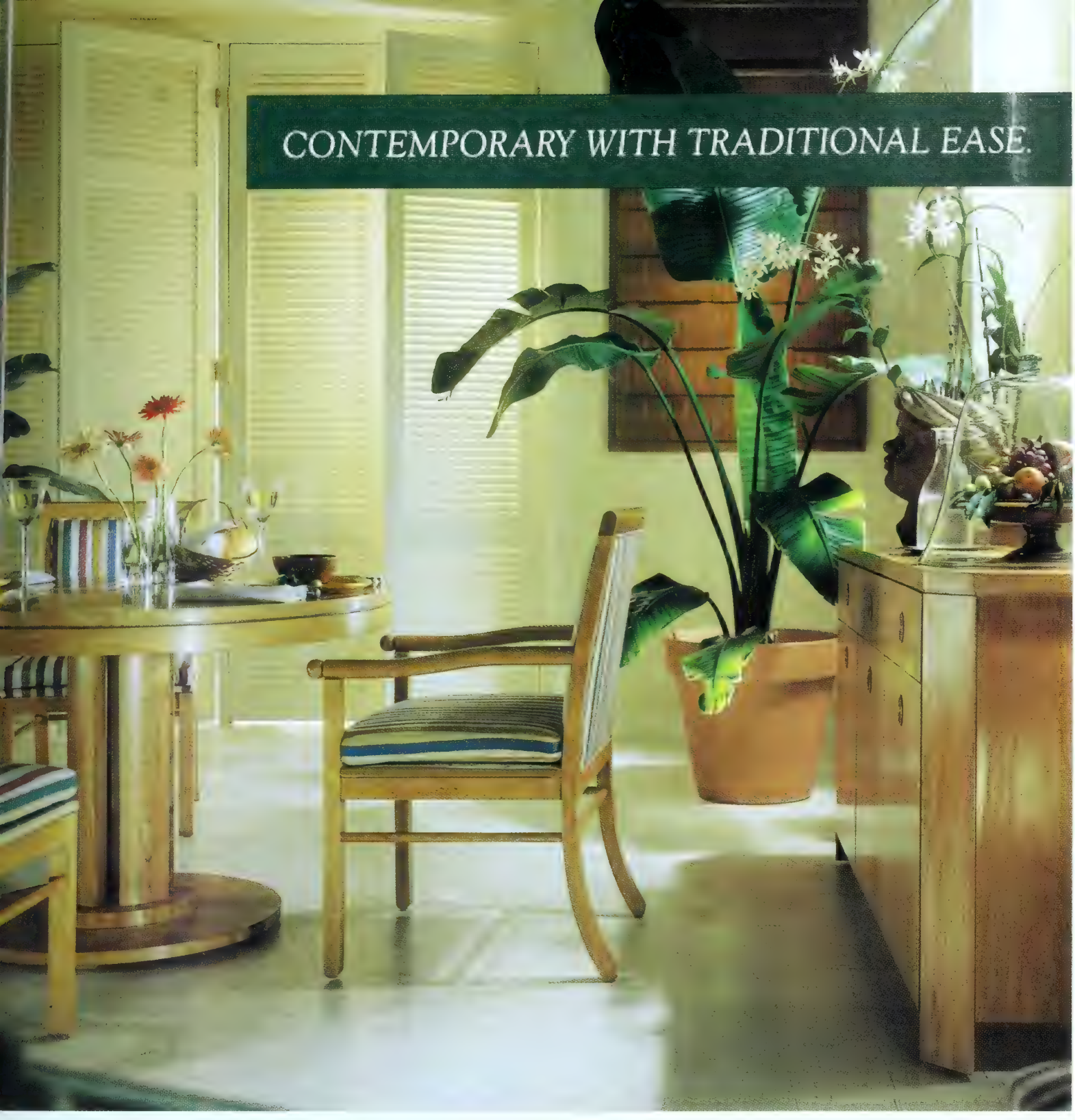
Standing Tall A bronze doré guéridon (*below*) with marble top to the trade at Mrs. MacDougall, NYC (212) 688-7754.

Having Pull Door and drawer hardware (*above*) by Arnold Goldstein, NYC (212) 229-0991. Wallpaper by Fern I. Tchur. Call (413) 637-4444.



Tuscan Retreats *The Garden of Florence* (*left*) by Mary Jane Pool and Alessandro Albrizzi (Rizzoli, $45).

Pagodas by the Yard Grand Tableau Chinois cotton (*below*) from Clarence House. For showrooms (212) 752-2890.



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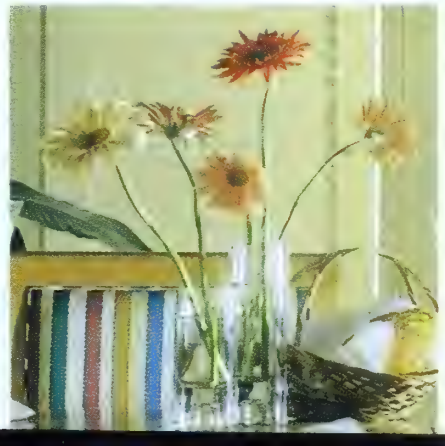

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Evergreen Seurat

A painted masterpiece branches out into three dimensions in a Columbus park

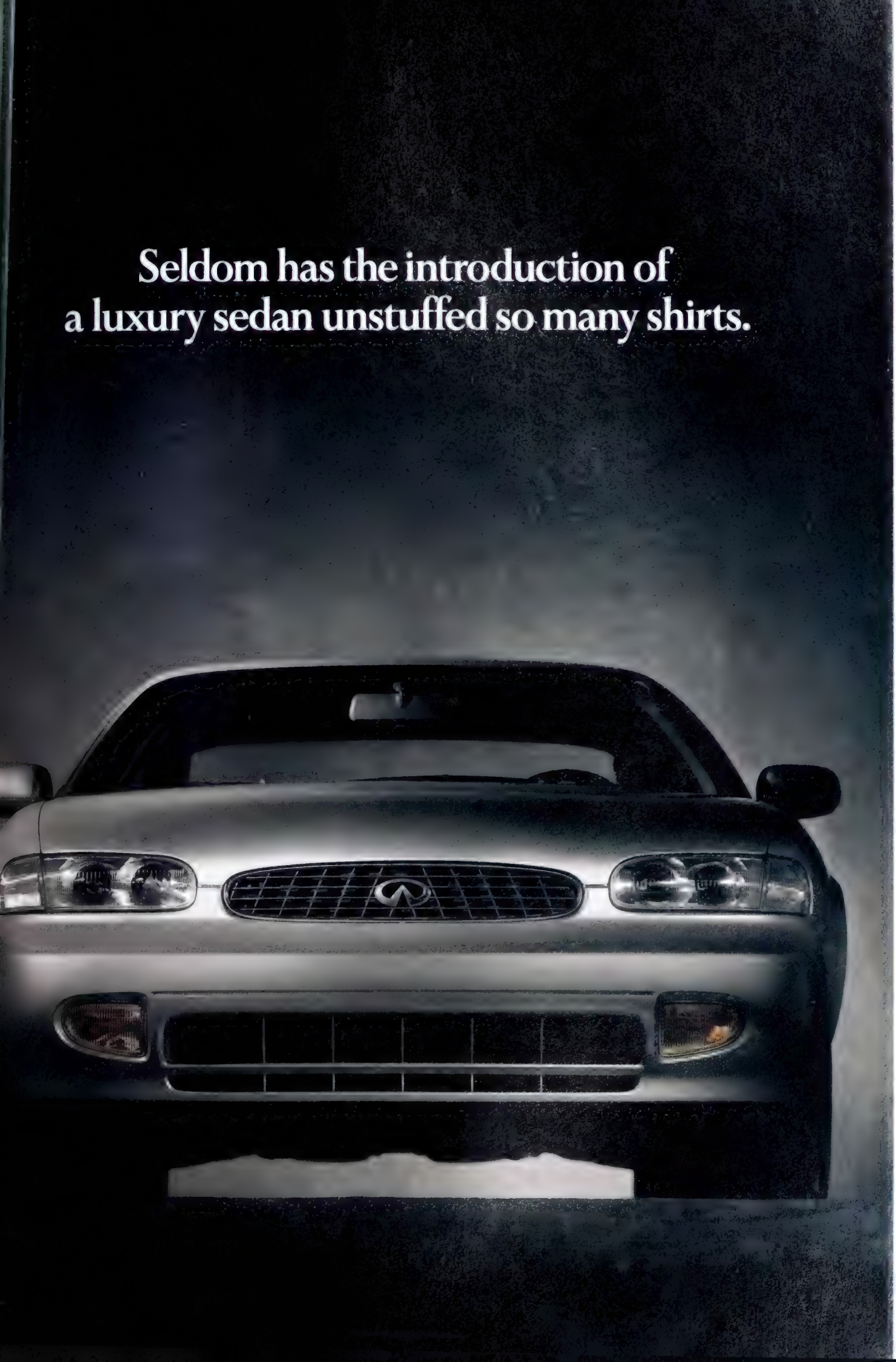
BY MICHAEL J. ROSEN

Artists perennially offer us depictions of landscapes, art imitating nature. But how often are we presented a landscape of a painting, nature imitating art? And when was the last landscape of a painting of a landscape? Since 1987, Deaf School Park in Columbus, Ohio, has been undergoing a transformation into a topiary version of Georges Seurat's prodigious canvas *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884* as part of "AmeriFlora '92," the international exposition that will open April 20. Whereas Seurat's Parisian subjects passed their afternoon on an island in the Seine, contemporary visitors to the Ohio park will arrive at a pond amid an island of art landlocked in downtown Columbus.

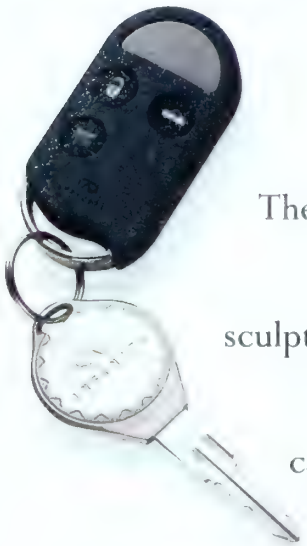
The ensemble, arranged in forced perspective, includes eight boats, three dogs, a monkey, and fifty-four figures (the tallest being twelve feet), all composed of ingenious bronze armatures, welded by Columbus sculptor Jim Mason, and varieties of yew trained primarily by Jim's wife, Elaine Mason, an arts administrator for the city's Recreation and Parks Department, key sponsor of the project. Aside from replicating the two dimensions Seurat depicted, the Masons had to introduce the third dimension as well as aspects of figures occluded from the painter's perspective. Minor elements such as a distant horse and buggy couldn't be encompassed within this large expanse, but there are trees cast in the role of trees, arranged and pruned to represent the species Seurat painted: cutleaf weeping European birch, Scotch pine, and callery pear.

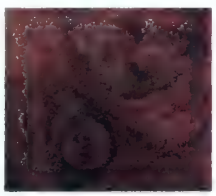
It is more than historically apt that this nineteenth-century painting should be metamorphosed upon the rubble of a nineteenth-century school for the deaf—the serene isolation of each has been integrated into an accessible public setting. In the original canvas, no one, save a small mutt and a running girl, is in motion. Seurat's figures are already planted, arranged in stylized postures—rigorously erect, reclining, or bent—and methodically painted with a topiary exactitude; the pointillist brush marks could be an abstraction of distant leaves. *(Continued on page 41)*

Yew topiaries, above right, compose Jim and Elaine Mason's version of Georges Seurat's *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884*, right. Above left: The bronze armatures suggest sketches.


Seldom has the introduction of
a luxury sedan unstuffed so many shirts.

The new Infiniti J30. Maybe you'd better sit down.



So this is what all the buzz is about. The new Infiniti J30. The fluid lines excite your eyes. And your emotions. The softly sculpted shape rounds smoothly from one plane to the next. Still, this car has opinion. Maybe it's the elliptical grille up front, that gleams with the polish of a fine silver pattern. It is somehow quite unlike anything you've ever seen. And being a very personal luxury sedan, the J30 comes with every driving comfort  imaginable. The interior is elegantly stitched and tailored in fine grain leather, and

detailed with the warmth of walnut. You begin to wonder if this car was conceived by artisans and craftsmen, or engineers. Settle in. Open the sunroof. Or think green and express your concern for the  environment by switching on  the no-freon air conditioning system. Check out the electronic wizardry. There's a keyless remote entry system. There's a Bose

audio system with a live concert hall sound, and even a compact

disc player built right in. An optional cellular telephone can be neatly tucked away (ask your dealer to do this) in the center console. Controls for hands free phone calls are on

the steering wheel. As luxurious as the J30 may seem, there's much more to it. On the road, you'll find a balance of comfort

and performance. Put your foot down and a 210 horsepower, V6 engine gives you an immediate sense of authority. So do anti-lock brakes. An optional Touring Package adds a racy rear spoiler, performance alloy

wheels, Super HICAS four-wheel steering and a sport suspension for more stability during aggressive cornering. Still, there is a more important measure of performance. Safety. In the J30, safety features aren't merely added on. They're built in. For example, the

body is reinforced with extra welds. Dual air bags are standard. Whew. The J30 is so thoroughly equipped you begin to wonder what's not included. Well, there's no chauffeur.

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Hasn't every viewer considered the idea of living within a work of art?

(Continued from page 32) (In the actual topiary, bronze armatures peer through evergreens like pentimenti, preliminary drawings that show through the final paint.) While of a particular time—Seurat's characters are arrayed in 1880s costume—the scene is timeless or, better, outside time, an indefinite idyllic moment in which the work-weary world has been temporarily abandoned.

Into the Ohio version of this *re*-creation of the very idea of recreation each pedestrian, killdeer, and mallard is invited to become a subject. Visitors who set the painting into motion, filling in the composition's expanded boundaries, ought to appear as anachronisms—jogging, Frisbee tossing, brown bagging—in a tableau of nineteenth-century repose. Yet the garden prevails as a suspended moment, an Eden where Everyman and Everywoman can be happily incarnated as evergreens without even a deciduous care.

Isn't this the wish of every artist, to see his or her work as a living entity capable of sustaining itself beyond the moment's attention? Similarly, hasn't every viewer considered the idea of living within a work of art, experiencing viewpoints beyond the artist's vantage? Here, within Deaf School Park, is such an engagement, such an intimate exchange between art and admirer. To stroll among these "immortals" is to be captivated by an uncanny confluence of art and nature, painting and planting, to be caught in the act—and the art—of being oneself.

Long after the transfigured park is dedicated in June, during Quincentennial Columbian festivities, the creation will continue to evolve with every season of pruning, with every subject who lingers a moment. ▲

Snowbirds Come to Roost

The nesting instinct leads a northeastern couple to Key West

BY EDMUND WHITE

They were snowbirds, but now they're becoming freshwater conchs. That's the Key West way of saying that Alan Farago and his wife, Lisa Versaci, used to come to the southernmost tip of Florida as winter tourists but now they're permanent residents.

To settle in Key West, the Faragos had to give up a lot. Alan, a businessman turned playwright, is often out of contact with the professional theater (although his play *Making Babies Like Crazy* was put on in Miami and *Nail Coming Through* will probably be done there this summer). Lisa, whose women's jackets and handbags were sold to boutiques throughout the country, has discontinued her accessories business (although she's converted the garage into a studio and her mind and eye are as quick as ever). But for them the price is not too high an entry fee to a place as beautiful as paradise but much more amusing, since it also contains elements of hell—rowdy drunks on Saturday night, corrupt politics, drug smuggling on midnight boats, all scenes right out of Bogart and Bacall movies. Even the deliciously crisp and sunny winter weather is offset by the million-plus tourists a year and the heedless destruction of the only living coral reef in the continental United States.

After starting their family in Providence, Alan and Lisa are delighted to be bringing up their three boys where snowsuits are not required (Max is twelve, Charlie is three, and Nick is one and a half). A passionate catch-and-release fly fisherman, Alan takes his brood with him as he threads his way through the ocean shallows southwest of the keys searching for tarpon and permit. Witnessing the deterioration of wildlife in the backcountry wilderness has inspired him to become an environmental activist; he is an avid editorial writer and the producer of a local television program on conservation. Lisa, for her part, is an advocate for women's and children's issues and organizer of the local pro-choice movement.

During the winter the Faragos spend most evenings with members of Key West's dazzling literary crowd. Where else could they enjoy an island with a year-round population of just 25,000 people and also dine out every night with the likes of Alison Lurie, James Merrill, John Hersey, Richard Wilbur, John Malcolm Brinnin, and Joy Williams? But if Key West is still haunted by ghosts of Tennessee Williams, Elizabeth Bishop, Wallace Stevens, and Ernest Hemingway (whose breed of six-toed cats still prowl his estate, now a museum), the town isn't twee like Nantucket or a

Lisa Versaci and Alan Farago, above left, with Fludder in the garden behind their Key West house, top right. Above right: The front sitting room is lined with Dade County pine. Details see Resources.

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preserve for the rich and famous like Palm Beach. It's a real community with a live-and-let-live mixed population—black, white, and Cuban, poor and wealthy, old and young, singles and families. Majestic nineteenth-century carpenter Gothic houses lie cheek by jowl with trailer camps and old cigar makers' cottages.

The Farago house is a handsome compromise between the old Florida of high-ceilinged shuttered rooms and the new Florida of cookouts and pool parties. The front sitting room, lined in termite-proof and rain-resistant Dade County pine, houses Alan's extensive collection of books about the China trade (he spent three years in China buying silks and goose feathers in the heyday of down jackets) and Lisa's assortment of tramp art—cigar boxes or picture frames made from scrap wood, even Popsicle sticks. The blown-glass lampshades here and in the adjacent ballroom were devised by Philadelphia artist Harry Anderson from early castoffs by Dale Chihuly, the dean of American glass artists. The ballroom's leather sofa and armchairs were excavated from a 1930s movie theater in Michigan.

The heart of the house is the kitchen, with its central island of stove and granite, wicker sofa, and discreet but exquisite dining table designed by Noguchi. The real stars of the kitchen, however, are the twenty French doors that dissolve all distinctions between inside and outside—and accommodate the family's royal macaw, Fludder, and ten-year-old black Labrador, Ruby.

Outside, the pool glows at night like a cabochon, and ground lights sketch in the exceptional depth of the garden. At the most distant point a tall totemic figure, *Leda and the Swan*, blowtorched out of rusting metal pipe by local sculptor John Martini, lures stragglers into its sacred presence. By day the mystery may dissolve but the luxuriant variety of a tropical garden takes focus. Palms, banana plants, and orange trees crowd upwards, and a year-old papaya tree is already bearing fruit. Orange bromeliads defy neglect; so does lignum-vitae, a native plant with delicate purple blossoms and wood so heavy it sinks in water and so resistant to rot it's used in ship interiors. Norman Aberle, the shy gardener, takes special pride in his big outdoor bonsai—orchids, ficus, and a seventy-five-year-old buttonwood.

The house itself has a complex past. Begun in 1865 and expanded in the 1920s, the whole structure had become completely dilapidated by 1984. Windle Davis and Dini Lamot of the rock group Human Sexual Response bought the house, kept the nineteenth-century rooms, and tore down the rest. When they rebuilt, they oriented the house toward the garden instead of the street and added the French doors and two-story wraparound back porch. When the Faragos moved in, they put in a study for Alan, redid the deck, and redecorated. Now their house is the liveliest place in town—a magnet for out-of-town friends, a forum for intense conversations about art and politics, and a perfect stage for the contradictions and affections of family life. ▲

The Farago house balances

Max, above, dives from the second-story porch added in the mid 1980s. Left: French doors open the house to the garden. Below: A lamp incorporating glass by Dale Chihuly illuminates an art deco leather armchair and a painting by Bill Drew.

formality with casualness


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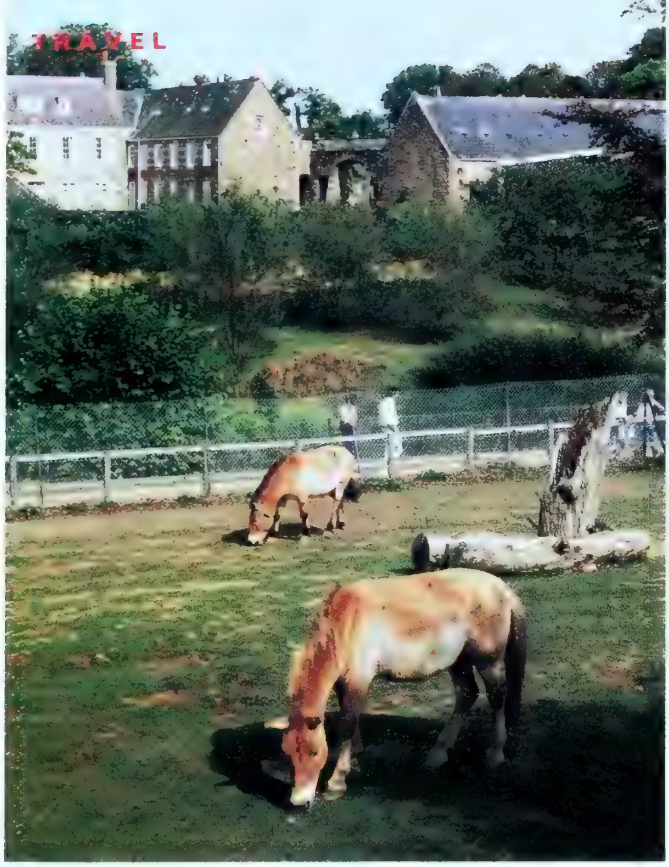

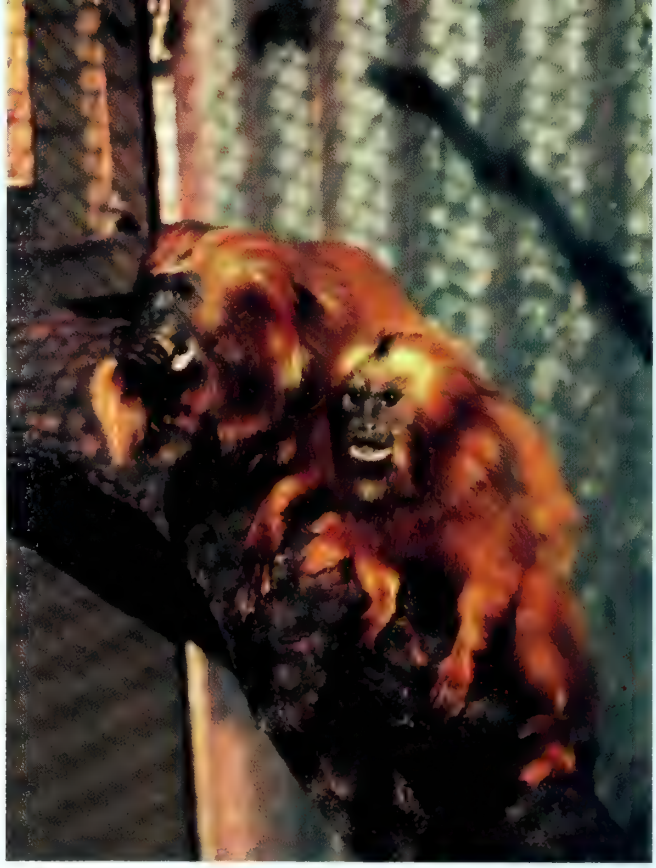

An Island Ark

Endangered species find shelter on Gerald Durrell's Channel Island preserve

BY JIM LEWIS

The island of Jersey is an Australia-shaped piece of land off the English Channel, a British bailiwick that lies near the coast of Normandy in the relative warmth of the Gulf Stream. To the north the island is grooved with deep verdant ravines and ends in cliffs above the water; to the south there are sandy bays and resorts. In between are a dozen or so parish villages connected by treacherously narrow lanes with leftover French names that the locals give a comic accentual spin. It is a flush and peaceful place: lax banking laws have made it a center of muted international finance, and boatloads of tourists arrive from France every summer to wander the seaside towns. Tucked away amid the lush inland farms, pretty stucco- and granite-faced houses, churches, and near an early medieval castle are specimens of some of the world's most endangered mammals, birds, and reptiles, happily reproducing on the grounds of a seventeenth-century manor called Les Augrès.

About 187 species board at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, ranging in size and anthropomorphism from lowland gorillas to the tiny Partula snail. Almost all of them are near extinction. The zoo that the Preservation Trust maintains, then, is like a great museum, albeit one whose final purpose is to make itself unnecessary. Consider, for example, the Mauritius kestrel, a big-shouldered brown and white speckled bird of prey. It is far rarer and more inaccessible than a Rembrandt, every bit as beautiful (indeed, painted with a similar palette), and, in an important sense, more valuable. Not long ago there were only six left alive on the planet. Now more than one hundred have been bred and carefully

Gerald Durrell, above left, holds a radiated tortoise. Top left: Przewalski horses graze at Les Augrès Manor. Top right: Rare golden-headed lion tamarins. Left: Saint Lucia parrots.


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Ring-tailed lemur, top left. Top right: The 17th-century manor house. Above: Babirusas, an endangered species from the East Indies. Right: Oriental water dragon. Below: The zoo's breeding program has successfully reared snow leopard cubs to maturity.

released back into the wild, although some are still kept on Jersey as a kind of genetic safety net.

That sort of spectacular rescue, though only a tiny bulwark against the great tide of extinction, has made the place something of a legend among zoologists and made its indefatigable founder, Gerald Durrell, the author and animal collector, one of the prophets of the conservation movement. He bought Les Augrès Manor in 1959, set up the Trust to run it a few years later, and has since helped it to expand (there are branches in Philadelphia and Toronto). Aside from maintaining the zoo and the breeding program on Jersey, the Trust makes loans and borrows from other zoos, cooperates with and cajoles governments worldwide, makes expeditions to retrieve animals, and publishes a newsletter for its 12,000 members. Trainees in the art of zoological conservation, mostly from developing nations, study and live at the farmhouse next door. So the zoo itself is only the public part of a vast and elaborate network, a kind of home base; Durrell himself is there only a third of the year.

If the visible zoo is any reflection of the invisible Trust, the animal kingdom has gained partisans of unequaled altruism. A committee of landscapers has turned the twenty-five-acre grounds of Les Augrès into a lovely sculpted park, with pens and aviaries distributed along trim sloping lawns. Because the larger part of the animals are from tropical climates—the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean islands of Madagascar and Mauritius—the flora tends to the exotic. Plantings of Chinese magnolia, for example, provide familiar coverage for the white-eared pheasant, and Amazonian flowers and foliage shelter the South American marmosets. Since all this exists amid a traditional Norman manor, the zoo, like Noah's ark, has an air of fine eccentricity: near the manor, a few yards from a sixteenth-century Jersey granite archway, are pens of colobus monkeys near a new colony of rare aye-aye primates.

The Trust's insistent devotion to its animals can make for some peculiar exhibits. In a large compound lives a family of lowland gorillas, who go by the cartoonish scientific name *Gorilla gorilla gorilla*. They're a popular crew and justly so, given their jet-black beauty and their appalling man-made rarity. But they have their own favorites: the humans who swarm over the elements of a wooden playground beside the enclosure, creating a

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spectacle staged by the zoo as a kind of quid pro quo (boredom can cause disaffection and even death in captive animals). And a line of aviaries, all of which hold pink pigeons, would seem an absurdly wasteful display at a conventional zoo. But the calculated separation keeps the few remaining birds from becoming dangerously inbred as their numbers slowly increase, and none of the visitors seem to mind.

Perhaps that's because the overall tone of the place, its certainty of purpose and patient loyalty to its cause, shows through so strongly that its oddities are of a piece with its charms. It is admittedly short on "charismatic megafauna"—the zookeepers' somewhat wry term for crowd-pleasers. There are no elephants here, no rhinos, no giraffes. But they are not missed. On my visit I noticed two signs of having found one of those rare places where an idea and a practice are matched with a setting of equal exemplariness. The first was the appearance of the animals themselves, their sleekness and obvious good health and humor: a trio of red-ruffed Madagascar lemurs lay on their backs in an enclosed grassy woodland, contentedly sunning themselves; a twelve-day-old white-naped crane chick picked through the grass while its parents towered protectively above it; a line of cotton-top tamarins marched in head-to-tail formation across a piece of rope strung between two trees, like characters out of Kipling.

The second sign was the constant sound that I remember as well as any sight. Parrots screeched and other birds squawked, monkeys chattered, a snow leopard yawned noisily, and a gorilla drummed on her chest, and mixed with these sounds were the delighted cries of visiting children. This last group of wildlife, like the objects of their wondering gazes, seemed pleased beyond measure to be there. ♠

For visitors information: Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, Les Augrès Manor, Trinity, Jersey, British Channel Islands JE3 5BF; (534) 864666.

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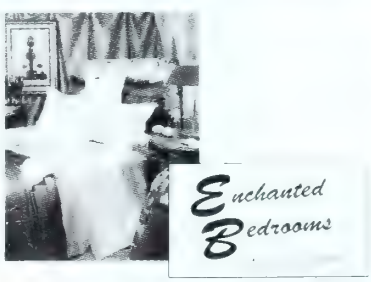

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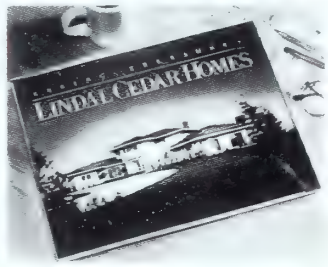

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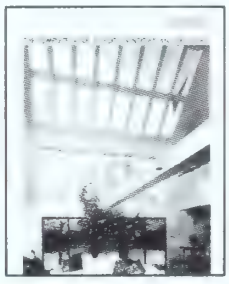

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Weeds and Other Delicacies

The first shoots of spring tempt the palate BY LESLIE LAND

Ancient as a dinner of herbs, innocent as weeds, the equation of edible greens with spring still pulls us—a celebration of renewal. In a world of long-distance year-round everything—strawberries in January, grapes in June—the true pleasures of the season are right in our own backyards where dandelions spangle new grass and wild sorrel creeps across woodlands and abandoned fields.

Say "spring vegetables" and most people will think of asparagus, peas, and artichokes, but there's a long list of earlier arrivals, even for the most intransigent urbanites. Sophisticated produce purveyors now supply sweet violets, fiddlehead ferns, and garlicky ramps as well as the more familiar spinach, chervil, beet greens, and baby lettuces. They're even selling mesclun, the salad mix of small perfect leaves, shoots, and herbs that was once exclusively a country dweller's delight.

Mesclun can be made all year, changing as different greens and flowers come into season, but the best ones are the first ones, sentimental favorites. When I'm at home in Maine, mesclun starts with the things that even a late snow can't discourage: heads of radicchio the size of brussels sprouts, tiny rosettes of mâche, frilly endive thinnings, fat chives, rounded leaves of watercress, lobed leaves of rocket (the old-fashioned English name for arugula). The contrasting colors and textures and tastes—dark against light, sweet against bitter—need only the lightest of dressings to set them off.

As spring wears on and the leaves unfurl, French sorrel and spinach grow luscious and large, ready to move from salad bowl to soup pot. Combined with overwintered leeks, a handful of rice, and pure spring water,

Signs of spring. Clockwise from top left: Small is beautiful; dandelion salad; potage santé; pasta with vegetables. China from Hollyhock, Foster-Ingersoll, and Circa Antiques, L.A. Details see Resources.

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Spring mesclun

they make potage santé, the soup of health. Next thing you know, the mesclun includes purslane, tansies, pea tendrils, tarragon, and baby lettuces. Then lamb's-quarters have replaced spinach, mustard greens are cooking size, and full-grown spring lettuces (Lolla Rossa, Four Seasons, and Bibb are likely varieties) offer leaf after leaf of delight.

In any gathering of greens the line between wild and cultivated—like the line between herbs and salads, foods and "spring tonics"—is blurred by use and custom. Consider the dandelion. Although many a box of herbicide bears a mug shot of *Taraxicum officinale,* tons of dandelions are grown by market gardeners each year, and foragers comb parks and roadsides in search of the jagged leaves. The tradition of the spring dandelion feast was already well established in ancient Rome, and it continues in country districts of England, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, and Greece.

I cut my dandelion teeth in rural Pennsylvania when I was a budding foodie of four or five. Sandy, our family's Scottish nursemaid, discovered I could be kept occupied almost indefinitely if sent to gather dandelion leaves; all she had to do was promise to make my harvest into salad with hot sweet-and-sour bacon dressing. We left the farm when I was eight, and until sometime in my teens I was sure that dandelion salad of blessed memory was a triumph of Caledonian cuisine. In fact, it's more rightly attributed to the Pennsylvania Germans, who simply added the sweet touch to what is a common recipe throughout northern Europe.

Olive oil is the dressing of choice for southern Europeans. Italians and Greeks have a special fondness for stronger-flavored greenery, in part because of a widely held belief that bitterness is a sign of health-giving qualities. In the excellent chapter on the subject in her 1987 book, *Honey from a Weed,* Patience Gray quotes an old Carrarese saying, "Who wants to eat a good supper should eat a weed of every kind."

The number of kinds is staggering. Gray lists dozens, many of them as available in Nebraska as on Naxos. But from the gastronome's point of view, the great wild green after dandelion is lamb's-quarters, *Chenopodium album,* also called white goosefoot or, along with lots of other things, pigweed (pigs love greens). The gray green leaves with floury silver backs are a common weed of cultivated ground just about everywhere in the United States. They have a delicate taste, rather like spinach but less acrid, and a tender, almost melting texture.

I learned the virtues of lamb's-quarters from my neighbor, artist Lois Dodd, who got lasting lessons in cooking wild greens with garlic and oil when she lived in Rome. "We were there right after the war," she recalls. "The greens in the morning market were different all the time, almost always mixed. And I still remember the shock of seeing arugula growing wild along the Appian Way."

Arugula doesn't grow wild here (though it will self-sow in gardens), but there are plenty of other good things to gather. Foragers' guides, from Euell Gibbons's classic *Stalking the Wild Asparagus* to Roger Phillips's exquisite *Wild Food,* will show what's what. Even city dwellers can enjoy an approximation: exotic greens are available from mail-order firms such as Fines Herbes in New York City (800-231-9022, in New York 212-334-9022) and Diamond Organics in Berkeley (800-922-2396). (When buying mesclun from any source, beware of chopped greens: they don't look as good or last as long.)

Either way, carpe diem: it won't be long before dandelions will flower, becoming the stuff of wine instead of salad, the arrival of peas will mark the end of asparagus, and another season will be on the table.

Meanwhile, remember that the key to really great greens is dedicated washing. Fill the sink with cool water, shake the greens around, and lift them out. Clean the basin and do it again—and again, until no more sand appears. As Giacomo Castelvetro noted in 1614, "Too many housewives and foreign cooks get their greenstuff all ready to wash and put it in a bucket of water, or some other pot, and slosh it about a little, and then, instead of taking it out with their hands, as they ought to do, they tip the leaves and water out together, so that all the sand and grit is poured out with them. Distinctly unpleasant to chew on."

PASTA WITH SPRING VEGETABLES

- 1½ pounds asparagus
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 egg yolks
- 8 ounces orecchiette or other bite-sized pasta
- 1 bunch small scallions, thinly sliced
- ⅔ cup young beet greens, finely shredded
- 2 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoon butter
- Salt
- 3 ounces mild goat cheese, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 2–3 tablespoons finely chopped mint

Trim asparagus, then cut the bottom third from the stalks. Set tips aside. Chop the stalk portions fine and cook in the chicken broth over medium-high heat until the liquid has reduced by half, about 20 minutes. Strain liquid, pressing down on solids. When liquid is cool, beat into egg yolks and set aside. Slice the asparagus tips.

Cook pasta until al dente. Stir in the sliced asparagus, scallions, and beet greens. Cook 10 seconds, then drain. Add butter to the pot, melt over low heat, then add the pasta and vegetables. Add the egg yolk mixture and continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce has thickened, 3–4 minutes. Add salt to taste.

Pile pasta onto warmed plates and scatter cheese on top. Sprinkle with chopped mint. Serves 4.

POTAGE SANTÉ

1 large bunch sorrel, about 6 ounces
3½ quarts mixed spring greens
2 tablespoons butter
2 leeks, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons white rice
½ cup heavy cream
Salt
½ cup small chervil sprigs or leaves
1½ tablespoons minced chives

Cut sorrel into shreds. Almost all the greens should be mild-flavored—spinach, dark green lettuces such as romaine, beet greens, chard, lamb's-quarters. Up to 3 cups may be stronger-flavored—watercress, frisée, young mustard, arugula. Cut greens into ¼-inch ribbons, then chop coarsely.

Melt the butter in a large nonreactive soup pot; add leeks and cook over low heat until translucent, about 10 minutes. Do not brown. Add sorrel and roughly two-thirds of the greens, the rice, and 6 cups of water. Bring to a boil, lower heat to simmer, and cook, partially covered, until greens are tender, about 35–40 minutes.

Whip the cream until slightly thickened and set aside. Purée the cooked greens and return to the pan. Add the remaining greens and cook over medium heat about 3 minutes, just long enough to wilt them. Add the salt and divide the soup among 6 heated bowls. Swirl a generous tablespoon of the thickened cream into each bowl and sprinkle with the chervil sprigs and minced chives. Serves 6.

SPRING MESCLUN

9–12 cups mesclun
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 small shallot, chopped
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Pinch of salt
⅓ cup corn oil
1 tablespoon hazelnut oil

There is no fixed recipe for mesclun. Quantities depend on appetites and the nature of the mix, and amounts of dressing vary with the pungency of the greens. Allow about 1½ cups per person of small leaves of endive, frisée, dandelion, red lettuce, mâche, claytonia, violets, arugula, watercress, radicchio; fronds of fresh dill, fennel, chervil, parsley, coriander; and edible flowers. The aim is a mix that provides a spectrum of tastes and textures—sweet and sharp, soft and crunchy.

The small leaves of greens should be left whole; the fronds may be broken into pieces and the flowers separated into petals or chunks.

For the dressing, whisk remaining ingredients together and let the mixture sit 30 minutes. Strain over the salad and toss gently. Serves 6–8.

GREENS WITH GARLIC, RAISINS, AND PINE NUTS

1½–2 pounds strong-flavored cooking greens, such as mustard greens, turnip greens, kale, or broccoli rape
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 large cloves garlic, minced
½ cup pine nuts, lightly toasted
2 tablespoons raisins
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
1 small red onion, finely shredded

Bring ⅓ cup water to boil in a nonreactive 1½-quart pot and add greens gradually. When wilted, partially cover, reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until greens are soft but not falling apart, 15–20 minutes. There should be almost no liquid left. If necessary, remove greens and boil liquid until reduced to a few tablespoons, then return greens to pan.

While greens are cooking, combine oil and garlic in a small skillet and cook over medium-low heat 3–4 minutes until garlic is softened but not brown. Stir in the pine nuts and raisins and set aside.

When greens are cooked, stir in the vinegar and salt, then the oil mixture. Taste and adjust seasonings. Serve garnished with a generous sprinkling of onion shreds. Serves 4–6.

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN WILTED DANDELION SALAD

8 slices lean bacon
2½–3 quarts tender dandelion greens, torn into small pieces
¼ cup cider vinegar
3 tablespoons brown sugar
2 hard-boiled eggs, finely chopped
Freshly ground black pepper

Up to several hours before serving, fry the bacon until crisp, drain, crumble, and set aside. Pour off the fat, reserving ⅓ cup; do not wash the skillet.

At serving time, place dandelions in a large bowl. Combine vinegar, sugar, and reserved fat in skillet, add ¼ cup water and stir until sugar dissolves. Place over medium-high heat, bring to a rolling boil, and pour over greens.

Toss thoroughly and garnish with the chopped egg. Serve with freshly ground pepper. Serves 6. ▲

Parlor Revival

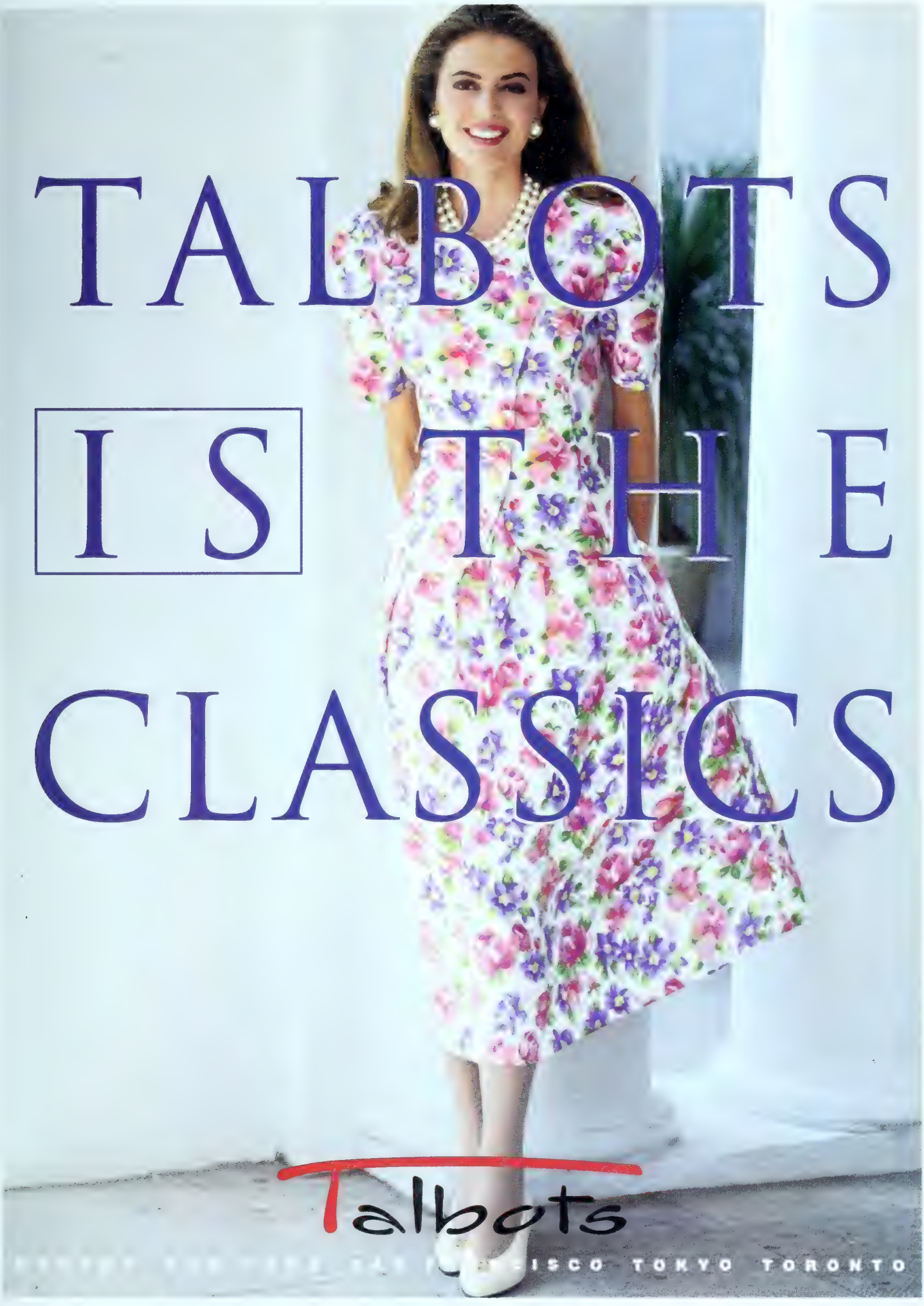
Victoriana fills every nook and cranny of two collectors' Italianate villa BY CELIA MCGEE

In 1883, five hundred well-heeled and discriminating subscribers across America received the first installment of the two-volume *Artistic Houses*. Printed in imperial folio size, it offered seven-by-nine-inch phototypes of the interiors of the Gilded Age's new rich: Vanderbilts and Hunnewells, Havemeyers and Flaglers, railroad magnates and meat-packing tycoons, oil barons, society doctors, industrialists, borderline scoundrels. The furnishings were by the great American design firms of the day. Herter Brothers, Pottier & Stymus, and Louis Comfort Tiffany's Associated Artists were all intent on asserting a post–Civil War surge in taste and artistic sensitivity and on locking up the juiciest commissions. But their glory didn't last. Dismantled, disheveled, stored away, and forgotten, their opulent furniture and objects have only recently begun to be salvaged by curators, scholars, a handful of dealers, and the occasional out-there collector.

Two of the most avid devotees are DeBare Saunders and Ronald Mayne, who, as Stingray Hornsby, collect, sell, and decorate with the same kind of (and often the same) high-style Victoriana published in *Artistic Houses*. Three years ago they bought the vast granite Castle on the Green in northern Connecticut, designed in the 1850s by Henry Austin for the Wheeler family, whose sewing-machine factory dominated the town. "Our fantasy," Mayne and Saunders call the Italianate villa overlooking the Wheelers' erstwhile industrial fiefdom.

The Stingray Hornsby honored by the twosome was Saunders's uncle, "an amusing and eccentric fellow" who, in addition

A 19th-century Chinese export mug and a Vieux Paris vase, above left, above an English beaded mantel valance. Above right: A c. 1845 Gothic revival secretary holds ivories, bronzes, and lacquer. Left: The master bedroom combines Eastlake-style and Gothic revival pieces. Wallpaper by Stingray Hornsby. Details see Resources.



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to driving the eponymous sports car, collected oriental antiques. Saunders also had grandparents and parents who collected—impressionist paintings, eighteenth-century French and English furniture. "When we visited my grandparents," he says, "the other children wanted to go outside and play ball. I was inside examining rock crystal vases. Sometimes I got to keep one."

After Saunders graduated from Parsons School of Design, the memory of the vases and his grandmother's rock crystal Cartier clocks resurfaced in sculpted Lucite heads set with semiprecious stones which he exhibited at a Madison Avenue gallery. Passerby Geraldine Stutz, then president of Henri Bendel, convinced him to switch to jewelry and made him a star. He worked with Diane Von Furstenberg for a while and, later, made jewelry for Oscar de la Renta's shows. He started a decorating business. "DeBare has had about eight careers," says Mayne. "I've had one other." While traveling on business, the import-export of foreign-car parts, Mayne began to collect art deco and art nouveau.

But a joint epiphany came in 1982 at an antiques show in a muddy Pennsylvania cow pasture where they fell for what turned out to be a signed Pottier & Stymus Egyptian revival settee. It got them started on the furniture of a

DeBare Saunders designs period-style curtains as intricate as Victorian gowns

period when, says Saunders, "furniture making was still an art. The art form you might compare it to is opera, because opera is music, painting, theater, sculpture, architecture. Just in terms of carving, these pieces were treated as if they were rare pieces of sculpture."

To help them with restoration, Saunders and Mayne enlisted Heinz Muller, a retired museum conservator. The name of their upholsterer is still, they say, their biggest secret. "Every competitor and museum is dying for it. It's like a great recipe." They work with this mystery man until the tufting and shirring, pleating and cushioning are just to their liking. "Until," says Saunders, "the architecture of the piece is perfect." A dead ringer for the settee they found in the pasture takes up one end of their thirty-two-foot-long front parlor.

Several of the fabrics and the carpets in the house have been re-created for them by Scalamandré from recolored document patterns. Saunders designs window

Herter Brothers made the parlor easel and Egyptian revival chair and credenza, above left. Carpet by Scalamandré. Above right: The neo-Grec table and gilt chairs and sofa in the garden room are by Pottier & Stymus. Far left: A Vieux Paris figurine perfume bottle and a vase by Édouard Honoré, c. 1850. Left: A Ball, Black & Co. silver tureen, c. 1865, and a Wedgwood urn are flanked by American colored glass.


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The name of their upholsterer is still their biggest secret: "It's like a great recipe"

treatments as intricate as Victorian ball gowns, their linings alone as tantalizing as a glimpse of "just one inch of a lady's petticoat," he says. Nearly all the wallpapers are from Zuber. The trompe l'oeil silver-curtain paper in the dining room is the most over-the-top. "A dining room should be dramatic," says Saunders. "The eye should be as delighted as the palate is. We eat in here every night by candlelight." The flatware is a Ball, Black pattern patented in 1863. Mayne is the obsessed cook.

The house is outspokenly not a museum. "That can be so unamusing and uninspired," Saunders says. "We're our ideal clients," says Mayne, "because we're doing this for ourselves." However ornate, the rooms are spare by Victorian standards, the pieces arranged for sculptural effect. "It's not *decorated*," Saunders says. But it's only because of their experience as decorators that Mayne and Saunders could have pulled off restoring and furnishing the eighteen-room house in a year. Taking possession of a place in complete disrepair, with sixteen amps of electricity and crumbling walls, they put in new wiring, plumbing, and central air. They made a schematic design, down to channels for hiding picture-light connections.

What *didn't* need to get done was as important as what did. The original gilt window cornices, flooring, plaster ceiling medallions, marble fireplaces, and Union Porcelain latch covers were intact. All that was used to revive the gilt-framed overmantel mirror in every room, says Mayne, was "a little soap and water." The hardest thing to find was period lighting. The garden room, which takes the overflow during large dinner parties, was designed around a gasolier from the Dakota and includes a Pottier & Stymus neoclassical sofa and chairs and a neo-Grec table (by the same firm), from New York's A. T. Stewart mansion, facing a painted theater drop from a castle in Spain. Mayne and Saunders have just completed a Gothic study off the Gothic master bedroom suite. They're putting in a summer dining room on the second floor of the carriage house they turned into an Italianate guesthouse, which is flanked by a Renaissance-style herb garden and a woodland garden centered on a goldfish pond.

Their final project is the belvedere, from which Mr. Wheeler could clock his factory workers. It's going to be a Turkish sitting room done up with more of the historic pieces Mayne and Saunders track down by researching family records, nosing through old wedding announcements, studying bygone estate auctions, and waiting for "strange nocturnal phone calls that make you drive three hundred miles to find something either hideous or so wonderful it makes your heart stop."

With almost everything in place at home—the Chinese library, the lady's guest bedroom, the aquarium for Saunders's pet frog, Duncan—they can continue to treasure-hunt for collector clients, many of whom have them concoct interiors complete to the last piece of Vieux Paris porcelain. The governor's mansion in Albany, New York, has carpets of their design. They're doing Tim Forbes's Manhattan brownstone. The singer whose name starts with M has bought from them.

But few live the period like Mayne and Saunders, with their fancy-dress balls, Victorian dinner parties, and the croquet matches they've reinstituted on the Green. "It's contagious," says Saunders. "Three or four houses around the Green are being restored now. We're helping to start a preservation society." Back in the cow pasture days, Mayne says, "we really did stand alone." Not anymore. ♠


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Going Home to Kew

After living abroad, the director of the Royal Botanic Gardens fulfills a boyhood ambition BY PAULA DEITZ

At the northern end of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, near London, there is an inconspicuous gate simply marked "Private." Though hidden from public view, the complex of gardens and greens beyond and the brick buildings that face them have become the nerve center for far-reaching developments in the worlds of botany and conservation. Since 1988, this has been the home and office of Professor Ghillean Prance, the director of Kew, and his wife, Anne, and these are their private gardens: two undulating perennial borders with central shrubbery, which extend from the solidly comfortable three-story late-Georgian house, and a Victorian walled kitchen garden.

Although it may not seem unusual for the director of Kew to have a splendid garden of his own, this is in fact Iain Prance's first English garden since his boyhood days gardening in Gloucestershire. In 1963, while completing his doctoral studies at Oxford, Prance went to New York—via a plant-collecting expedition in Suriname—to spend a year at the New York Botanical Garden studying plant specimens in the Herbarium. He ended up staying twenty-five years at the NYBG, where he eventually was named senior vice president for science and led numerous expeditions for botanical exploration and research in Brazilian Amazonia.

"What I looked forward to on my return to England," he said soon after his appointment to Kew four years ago, "was being able to have a British garden again in a climate that is suitable for horticulture," an allusion to the extremes of weather that make New York and its region inhospitable to many plants. The walled kitchen garden used to be one of Kew's best-kept secrets, but it has turned out to be one of the Prances' major assets in their imperative campaign to increase the Royal Botanic Gardens' role in scientific research, conservation, and plant exploration throughout the world.

"On the average," says Anne Prance, "we entertain thirty people a week—occasionally two hundred—for breakfast, lunch, tea, drinks, or dinner, and all the ingredients for soups, sauces, salads, and vegetables, when in season, come from the kitchen garden." For parties of up to sixteen guests she prepares all the cuisine herself, freezing stock and sauces against future use for the steady stream of important international visitors who appreciate her gleaming silver flatware and starched table linens. It is no exaggeration to say that rain forests and endangered plant species everywhere may ultimately be saved at the Prances' table. Also, with the recent launch of the American-style Kew Foundation and Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the number of guests is likely to rise as Kew tries to increase private funding from twenty to thirty percent. (Guests from the garden-visiting public now find a warm welcome at a new visitors center, which opened last month.)

Ghillean Prance, top. Above: His house on the Green at Kew has serpentine borders of perennials. Left: The Victorian kitchen garden supplies produce for family and guests.

"Nothing gets accomplished at Kew without teamwork," Anne Prance emphasizes. Although her profession is teaching English as a second language, she has become a key player in her informal group of

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Endangered plant species everywhere may be saved at the Prances' table

gardeners, scientists, and flower arrangers. Just steps away from the Prances' back door, along a path lined with old camellias and a mulberry tree, the walled garden has retained the same general workaday plan since Victorian times, and with constant harvesting, its appearance changes daily. High walls of mellow brick are enhanced by espaliered fruit trees and, in summer, climbing sweet peas.

In what Iain Prance calls the microclimate of the walled garden, peas, potatoes, broccoli, leeks, and fennel are just a few of the crops rotated periodically. Among several varieties of pole beans, the orange red scarlet runner stands out against a summer sky. Raspberries, gooseberries, and currants are grown under wire-mesh cages to protect them from the birds. And the herb section would suffice in beauty and quantity even on its own. Rows of marigolds grown alongside the tomato plants help to repel insects, and to set an example in conservation, the natural mulch used to fertilize the garden does not include peat from endangered bogs. A small potting shed houses an orderly array of garden tools and wire-mesh trays of onions drying in the sun. Inside a small greenhouse set against the garden wall, four grapevines clamber up the glass.

To accommodate the expanding programs at Kew, the Prances reassigned some of the interior of their wisteria-draped residence as more public areas for meetings and official receptions. The private dining room was relocated upstairs overlooking the double borders and, beyond them, the Princess of Wales Conservatory within the public area of Kew proper.

"One of the first changes we made to the garden," says Anne Prance, "was to widen the borders, to give them an exaggerated serpentine edge." By grading the heights of perennials planted in front of the old shrubbery, they have linked the two elements, and now the deep green background foliage contrasts with delphiniums, tree peonies, phlox, dianthus, and *Sedum spectabile* 'Meteor'. At seven-thirty breakfast meetings the view often includes a dew-drenched shadow of a tree before the sun has burned off the dew.

A crescent of blue and brown iris separates the private garden from the croquet lawn where Kew staff members often compete at lunchtime. Iain Prance's office is in the green-shuttered administration building, just across the garden (he also maintains a small research office in the Herbarium where he works mornings from seven to nine). At the end of the day, he has only to cross the lawn, but still, he says, "the house and garden make such a nice place to come home to." ▲

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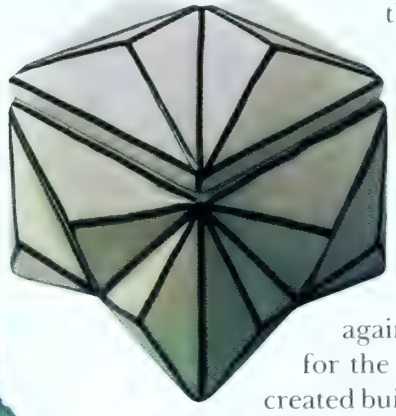
Cubism in the Round

Czech architects gave new dimension to the principles they learned from the paintings of Braque and Picasso

BY JOSEPH GIOVANNINI

In what is now Czechoslovakia, for a few exhilarating years before World War I, leading a cubist life was a tantalizing possibility. A coterie of Czech intellectuals, artists, and patrons wrote at cubist desks, toasted with cubist glasses, and entertained on cubist sofas in rooms decorated with cubist fabrics and wallpaper. Cubist architects in Prague and other parts of Bohemia built about a dozen multistory structures—including villas, apartment buildings, and a spa—which looked as though Braque or Picasso had painted them in space, their façades as elegantly faceted as the bodies of the "demoiselles d'Avignon."



For all its spatial suggestiveness, cubism in France remained the pursuit of artists rather than architects. It was only the Bohemians who fully understood the architectural potential in cubism and took it into the third dimension. From 1911 through 1914, in what was one of the earliest episodes of abstract architecture and perhaps the first reaction against functionalist modernism, Czechs searched for the spirit and hidden dynamics in matter; they created buildings, objects, and furniture whose surfaces, like the ripples and swells of bodies of water, suggested the movement of forces beneath. The crystalline bas-reliefs on these animated façades also represented a reaction against the faint ornamentalism and organic

Cubism took habitable form only in Czechoslovakia, in the work of such architects as Josef Gočár, whose 1912–13 apartment house, top left, juxtaposes a curved bay with faceted planes, and Josef Chochol, whose façades for a 1913 apartment block, left, and a 1911–12 villa, center left, are abstractions in three dimensions. Pavel Janák applied cubist theory to a chair, 1911–12, center right, and a ceramic box, 1911, above left.

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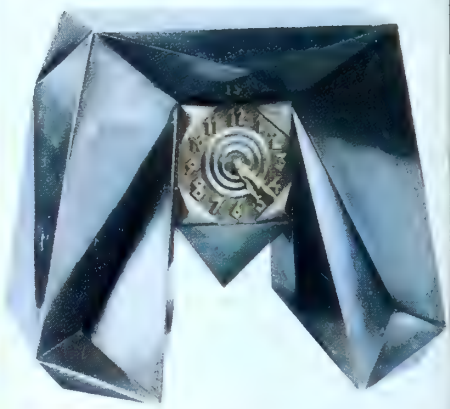
Czech cubists searched for the spirit and hidden dynamics in matter



Beveled surfaces and unexpected angles animate Gočár's writing desk, above left, and table clock, above, and the vitrine he designed for his own apartment, bottom. Left: Sunlight accentuates the folded planes and projecting elements of a Chochol apartment house on the Vltava River.

naturalism of dream-state fin de siècle Viennese architecture.

Prague in those years was alive with new ideas. Intent on forming their own cultural identity, Czech painters were eschewing the Austrian capital, traditionally the source of their artistic influence, in favor of Paris; they returned bearing the banner of cubism. In Prague's avidly receptive intellectual climate, works by Picasso and Braque were being exhibited, Einstein was lecturing, and Kafka was writing. According to Milena Lamarová, head of the department of design and a curator at the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, the Big Bang in architecture came in 1911, when the Group of Plastic Artists was founded. Pavel Janák, the primary exponent of the movement, was among the first to propose buildings conceived as expressions of force rather than function. His earliest drawings show prismatic architectural surfaces, without any supporting structure, as though mass had become energy. Antifunctionalists wanted matter to radiate joy.

A precocious and unique movement, Czech cubism anticipated neoplasticism in Holland and suprematism and constructivism in Russia before losing its momentum at home, first to war and then to politics. For several decades the furniture and ceramics as well as the houses and apartment buildings created during this daring experiment languished, discredited by the state as abstract, nonfigurative, bourgeois, and unintelligible to the masses. Beyond this official disapproval, the objects and buildings were obscured by the overwhelming beauty of the city of Prague, which assimilated such radical presences by an unconscious act of aesthetic integration: spired medieval churches, endless Habsburg palaces, and Jugendstil concert halls lulled away the shock of cubism.

But in the 1950s, without making ideological declarations, a few curators in Czechoslovakia started quietly collecting cubist pieces that otherwise might have been lost. Now the liberalized cultural politics of the Velvet Revolution have made possible a celebration of the accomplishments of Czech cubism. Last May the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague organized a major exhibition in association with the National Technical Museum and the Vitra Design Museum in Germany—under the patronage of two presidents, Václav Havel of Czechoslovakia and Richard von Weizsäcker of Germany. In a public acknowledgment of support that amounted to a political statement—and was much appreciated by the Prague intelligentsia—Havel attended the exhibition's debut. An enlarged version of the show then opened at the Vitra Museum in Weil am Rhein, where it became the first exhibition to occupy the whole of the spacious deconstructivist museum recently completed by Frank Gehry, a prismatic building conceptually akin to the cubist work displayed inside. The nearly three hundred pieces in the traveling show offer convincing evidence of a promising adventure in architecture and design. (The exhibition, funded largely by the Vitra Museum, is at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris from March 18 through June 9; it is scheduled to open at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York in the spring of 1993.)

Perhaps the most eloquent statement of cubist architecture is a five-story apartment building by Josef Chochol in a Prague neighborhood remarkable only for two of his other cubist buildings (including a villa facing the languid Vltava River). The masonry walls of the 1913 apartment block are sculpted into facets that, with a raking sun, break into large diamonds of light and shadow which contradict the structural lines of gravity. These sur-

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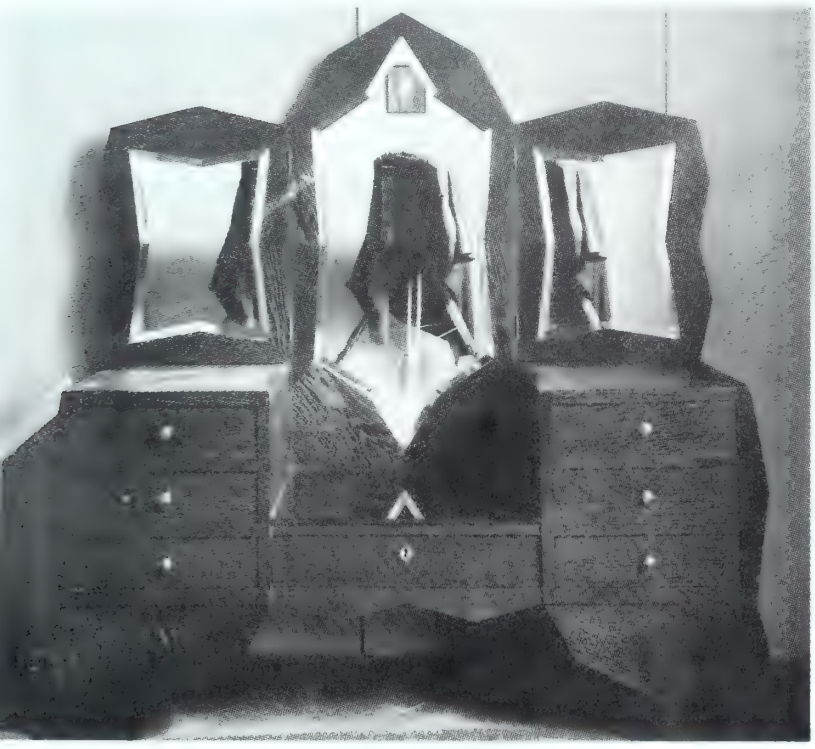
POISSONNIERE—Linen Velvet

The vanity, with its trio of adjustable mirrors, captured the cubist imagination



face modulations, based on oblique planes passing through vertical and horizontal planes, transform the apartment block dynamically. Chochol abstracted the building on its own façade; Picasso could hardly have transformed it further on canvas.

Other buildings of like spirit appear in surprisingly prominent locations, even in a neighborhood adjacent to Prague Castle. In Staré Město, the old town, drivers emerging from the Intercontinental Hotel's underground garage confront a block-long apartment house by Otakar Novotný, completed just after World War I. Its classical order is irregularly fragmented, its surfaces heaving in faceted movement. The effect is most pronounced when the building is seen from an oblique angle, the planes shifting against one another. In an early attempt at energizing space, Novotný also adapted the cubist principle of dynamizing and deforming mass to the wrought-iron gates and railings, which project from the flat planes. In Josef Gočár's 1911–12 three-story spa in the North Bohemian town of Bohdaneč, the architect tiered and folded the pediments over the entry with the skill of an origami master and angled mullions to create the illusion that windows bulge from their frames.

In a 1919 photograph, top, the camera records the fragmentation of its own image in the mirrors of a Gočár vanity. Above: Panels on the sides of a Janák desk, 1911–12, echo its bulging silhouette.

With their Gothic churches and baroque buildings, Czechs had long appreciated the spiritual pulse possible in stone. Janák, in the 1913 renovation of a baroque house on the main square at Pelhřimov in South Bohemia, capitalized on its undulations by turning the curves into facets, underscoring the common interest of the two styles in the articulation of movement rather than construction. But such spirited experimentation on façades did not affect the floor plans or interior spaces, which remained straight, regular, and suitable for any upright burgher and his family. Cubism inside these buildings was a matter of chairs and china cabinets and chandeliers. Perhaps the self-imposed limitation was a matter of engineering: in a world before computers, asymmetrically structured buildings would have required more time to calculate than to build.

The architects who were the primary agents of Czech cubism often sketched out in objects their ideas for buildings. Chairs have always been a laboratory for architects, and Janák designed a cubist classic: the back is a triangle, the seat a trapezoid with one subtly folded edge, and the legs are bent at the ankle, changing profile as a viewer walks around. The simple planes themselves have an ornamental quality. Desks were also favorites for cubist investigation; most seem to bulge, as though restraining an explosion at their core. A few ceramic pieces contain the whole cubist thesis, among them a white stoneware jewel box, designed by Janák, with black lines accentuating its crystalline edges: the surfaces are broken into triangular faces and pyramids that make up an unprecedented polyhedron.

But perhaps the object that most engaged the cubist imagination was the vanity; its triptych of adjustable mirrors afforded the opportunity of designing constantly changing reflections. Cut in the profile of gemstones and beveled at the edges, the mirrors of two vanities in the show reflect and fragment one another so that no image survives intact. In a playful period photograph of an imposing 1912–13 brown-stained oak vanity by Gočár, the shrouded camera, stationed on a tripod in front of the central mirror, photographs its own segmented image. The instrument of the supposedly neutral photograph is itself "painted" by the vanity into a cubist diorama.

The vanity would do the same to a Prague couple dressing for the evening–he knotting a cubist cravat; she arranging an off-the-shoulder scarf; both transformed by the oddly shaped and faceted mirrors, as by a painter's eye, into a living object lesson in cubism. ♠

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Rock's Steady Hand

Joanna Rock, left, hand-prints her wallpaper designs to give them texture and subtle variations. Below: She carves a leaf pattern into a linoleum block. Details see Resources.

Joanna Rock prints wallpapers inspired by Amish quilts and the Alhambra BY EVE M. KAHN

NOBODY ELSE DOES WHAT I DO—they'd be out of their minds if they did," says Joanna Rock, a one-woman wallpaper factory. First she dreams up a bold repeatable pattern and carves it into an eleven-inch linoleum block. Then she paints an eleven-yard-long strip of paper with latex paint, slathers the block with contrasting latex, and presses it along the paper's length. Finally, she hangs the results to dry on an overhead rack, like a preposterous bedsheet. For the rare orders too large to handle herself, Rock hires a silk screen studio to pump out football fields of her designs—with regret. "There's no movement, no subtle discrepancies," she sighs.

A fast-talking, easy-laughing native of a London suburb, Rock acquired printing skills in the mid 1970s when she was at London's Royal Academy of Music studying guitar. Discontent with her courses and decrepit living quarters, she took comfort in a part-time job as a printer for Peggy Angus, a linoleum block wallpaper pioneer. "That job was a lifesaving force," Rock recalls. Another, she adds, was classmate Charles Rock. He swept his bride first to the San Francisco area, where he taught music and she founded her wallpaper business, and then to Dobbs Ferry, a New York suburb, where he now practices law. When Colin and Oliver, the Rocks' seven-year-old twins, are in school, she descends into the basement and labors over paper. A single roll takes an hour and a half, and Rock generates a few hundred rolls annually.

Jazz Age–style geometric.

An Alhambra tile design adaptation.

William Morris revisited.

A door laid on sawhorses acts as her work surface; columns of paint tins ring the room on a waist-high shelf. The walls carry samples of the twenty-one patterns in her line: abstract squiggles, Amish quilt–style pinwheels, tapestry lions. Also on display are inspirations for future designs: photos of a two-hundred-year-old daffodil-filled wallpaper found in Quentin Bell's former Sussex house and a vibrant Precolumbian textile.

"Everywhere I look, I see something worth adapting," says Rock, who restrains herself to two new additions per year to avoid stretching too thin. And, whenever possible, she installs her wallpapers herself, basking in the textures. But her devotion to hard work does not preclude a longing for recognition. Showing off a delicate white-on-cream floral print she produced for Diane Sawyer's home dressing room, she muses, "The business keeps simmering along, and maybe someday it'll grow too big for this basement." ▲

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Scenes from Everyday Life

The realism of Stone Roberts suggests mysteries beneath familiar surfaces BY DOUGLAS BRENNER

The ghost of a Dutch master would probably smile at the paintings of Stone Roberts, a forty-one-year-old New Yorker. The smile might first show recognition and approval: "Ah yes, one of those still lifes we used to call breakfast pieces." But admiration might well turn to bemusement as the practiced eye passed from exquisitely luminous lilies, lemons, and gourds reflected in silver and glass to a plastic kitchen timer painted with no less elegant precision. A modern version of the hourglass that symbolizes fleeting moments in the classic vanitas? A shape and texture that simply caught the artist's fancy? A private joke? Unanswered questions echo through much of Roberts's work. More often than not the resonant enigma centers on the mysterious workings of time, the ways the artist puts history and memory to use in grasping an ephemeral present.

As a boy growing up in North Carolina, Roberts pored over the color plates in Francis Henry Taylor's *Fifty Centuries of Art,* and he still remembers exactly which images he found most absorbing: Hubert van Eyck's *The Crucifixion,* a Dürer watercolor of a hare, Veronese's *Mars and Venus United by Love,* an Ingres portrait. Over the years Roberts came to appreciate abstract, pop, and other movements that dominated the contemporary art scene, but when he began to study drawing and painting as a Yale undergraduate, he knew that his personal style would be more akin to that of the pictures he had loved in childhood.

Stone Roberts, top, with *The William A. V. Cecil Family,* 1990–91, a modern conversation piece rich in ancestral symbolism. Above: *Lemons, Lilies, and Gourds,* 1987. Above right: *The Visit,* 1989, alludes to religious iconography. Right: *Luke and Flowers,* 1987, casts Roberts's dog in the role of a naughty cupid.

Now, as a figurative artist in his own right, Roberts is keenly aware of the weight of associations that a gesture, a pose, or an object can carry. All the same, his paintings entice the eye not simply to travel through time but also across the dense, richly varied surface of an artifact very much in the here and now. Brush strokes make the fold of a sleeve almost palpable; color suffuses a shadowy bruise on the skin of a pear, creating episodes in a purely visual drama that can be enjoyed without art historical footnotes. Sensation and thought are tightly interwoven in patterns as intricate as those of the oriental car-

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pets that are a recurrent motif.

At its most obvious, Roberts's acknowledgment of the past may be as direct as the depiction of Seymour Guy's 1873 group portrait of the William H. Vanderbilt family which is included in the artist's own 1991 portrait of Vanderbilt descendants, the William A. V. Cecil family. The Cecils commissioned the new painting to hang opposite Guy's at Biltmore, the ancestral house Roberts used as the setting for his picture. Such formal reprises underscore particular dynastic loyalties, while the subtle counterpoint of glances and distant stares within the conventional format of a conversation piece hints at universal ambiguities of family ties. "I like the idea of a painting one can come back to again and again and see different things in," says Roberts. "You should almost be able to read it like a novel, with different relationships emerging over time."

It is tempting to tug at narrative threads in Roberts's paintings, especially when, following centuries-old precedent, he has applied a mythological or biblical title to a scene of characters in modern dress. In *Venus and Adonis* (1987–88), Venus could be a regular customer at Bergdorf Goodman, and the stricken Adonis, laid out on a penthouse floor, has a tennis player's tan lines. One need not be an art historian to sense portentous overtones in *The Visit* (1989). In lighting, tone, and composition, this work shows that Roberts has looked long and hard at Caravaggio and Georges de la Tour. Most of their followers would have called such a piece *The Visitation* and made sure that every detail identified it as the meeting of the Virgin and Saint Elizabeth recounted in Luke 1:39–56. Roberts has taken a different tack. Details such as the iris (long associated with Mary), the spilled wine, and even the harnessed dog (like the leashed monkey, a traditional emblem of sensuality held in check) can indeed be interpreted according to standard iconography. But the playing cards, the sunglasses, the charioteer pattern on the jacket of the blonde (a likeness of Roberts's wife, Betsey)—what do they signify? These may just be women any well-connected New Yorker might know going about their worldly pursuits, though there is a lingering intimation that mundane encounters can offer unexpected epiphanies.

The dog, a portrait of Roberts's spaniel, Luke (Saint Luke is the patron saint of painters), figures in many works. In *Luke and Flowers* (1987), he is caught in the midst of a minor domestic mishap, as if one of Stubbs's animal sitters had bounded off into Hogarth's *The Rake's Progress*. Or Luke could be the metamorphosis of countless naughty cupids or one of Balthus's bad children. The subject is also a fine excuse for a dynamic diagonal composition, a chance to play off fur against linen and peonies, crimson and ocher against black and white. With characteristic irony, Roberts nimbly transforms a leap of the imagination into a tableau of contemplative stillness. ♠

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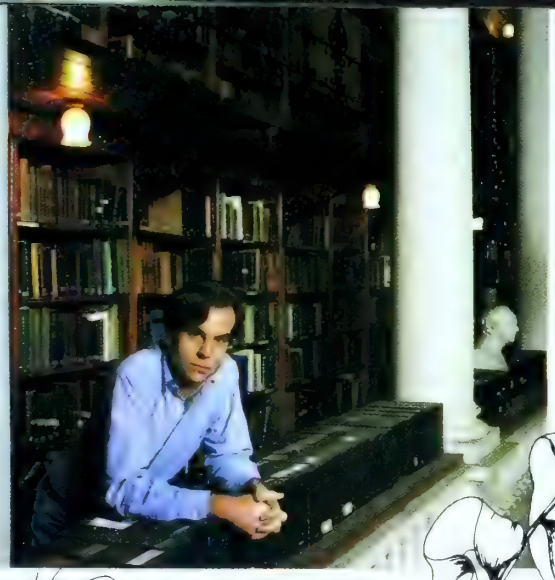

The Latest Words on Gardening

Mark Griffiths, top, editor of the new Royal Horticultural Society dictionary, is also a poet, an illustrator, above right, and a cycad expert. Above and right: His drawings of *Zamia fischeri* and *Z. pumila*, from the dictionary.

A young horticulturist uproots provincial ideas with a revolutionary new dictionary BY PATTI HAGAN

Last fall I got a sneak preview of *The New Royal Horticultural Society Dictionary of Gardening* as its editor, Mark Griffiths, penciled in his final changes in the cultivation notes: "I'm just going through getting rid of peat. The book is contaminated by peat and insecticides and herbicides." To encourage healthy horticultural practices, he relegated the offending chemicals to glossarial oblivion at the back of the book. Same for peat. "For the last twenty years peat has been the horticultural panacea in the U.K.," he declares. "That's how we lost the craft of soil management."

The new four-volume 3,000-page dictionary, published here by Stockton Press ($695, $795 after April 15), is in no way a revision of the 1951 Royal Horticultural Society dictionary, which Griffiths dismisses as "the last great puff of colonialism," a work "rooted in life below stairs or life in the potting shed." Since he put aside research for his doctoral thesis on cycads four years ago to take on the RHS project under editor in chief Anthony Huxley, Griffiths explains, he has dedicated himself to producing an original work of "systematic and beautiful and good botany" relevant to "the very intensive but small-scale domestic garden" of today—not just in Britain, but around the world. Griffiths says his model "for the look of the thing"—400 pages of botanical illustration, some of it his own—was Parkinson's *Paradisus* (1629) and "for the content" Liberty Hyde Bailey's *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture* (1900–02). For the rest he was confident he could "bring a few new things to it, like conservation and genetic engineering."

He could certainly draw on a plant-precocious youth: as a hay fever–afflicted seven-year-old, Griffiths read in Darwin that "orchids have enclosed pollen" and began an orchid collection; at nine he started what he calls "an extraordinary apprenticeship" to noted orchid nurseryman Peter Black; by ten he was training bonsai; at twelve he fell for the cycads at Kew and added the palmlike trop-


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Paphiopedilum, one of 400 pages of line drawings in the dictionary.

icals to his collection at home. "I was beginning to get fairly heated about conservation issues," he recalls, "and I thought that cycads were a group where people could really have some impact by horticultural means." Griffiths and his cycads and orchids went up to Oxford together in 1982, he to read English by day and garden for the department of botany by night, the plants to join the University Botanic Garden collections. The Linnean Society named him a fellow at twenty-three.

Now twenty-eight, Griffiths suggests a nineteenth-century naturalist/man of letters: he writes poetry and prose, studies plants, does botanical illustration, designs gardens, and edits. "The dictionary justifies it all," he says. "It allows me to bring together the literary interest and the taxonomic interest with true horticultural matters."

Although he has no academic degree in science, he points out that the dictionary is "very botanical." (Even so, "uncompromisingly botanical" descriptions—"elongate, subterete, arcuate, wingless, footless"—turn poetic.) And despite his having avoided the "tradition of taxonomic scholasticism," his dictionary describes and classifies 60,000 garden plants, including thousands of cultivars. Griffiths says the staff mined catalogues ("All the literature for modern cultivars is commercial"), consulted the "best possible people in the business," and developed a massive synonymy with cross-references.

"The only way to justify having all this bloody botany was to have something a little bit gentle," he continues, moving on to another of his innovations: the cultivation notes. "We ended up looking at cookery books like Mrs. Beeton for a short elegant form that told you how to do something." The garden recipes include charmingly phrased directions for encouraging plants to become "well furnished at the base" and "removing all uncongenial soil," along with hybrid cultural asides: cattleya orchids "have fascinated collectors, corsage-wearers and commentators as far from the horticultural community as Proust and Nabokov."

While the project's roll of advisers and contributors includes more than two hundred taxonomists and horticultural experts, the new headwords are clearly a menu of the editor's concerns: Biological Control, Conservation, Conservation of Gardens, Hardiness ("Hardiness is a complex phenomenon, a highly relative quality belonging to the individual plant—not to its projected site"), Plant Anatomy, United States: History of Gardening, Urban Landscape. Ecology, two lines in 1951, fills a page and a half and concludes with the observation: "Good gardeners are generally successful because they are intuitive ecologists: if they did not take account of such principles as competition, succession and invasion, their gardens would fail functionally and aesthetically. Their eagerness to harness these principles in such environmentally 'friendly' practices as Integrated Pest Management and organic cultivation reflects to some degree a flourishing of environmental concern in recent years." The Conservation entry is an impassioned brief for biodiversity and plants' rights.

"Orchid coverage has come down by fifty percent. A lot of these things are actually extinct"

While the new dictionary is rich in textural diversity, much biodiversity has been lost to it. "Orchid coverage has come down by fifty percent," Griffiths laments. "A lot of these things are actually extinct. One of the saddest things I've had to do is throw out plants for which I could find no evidence at all of cultivation." *Zamia skinneri*, a cycad he had never seen, kept its place only because he happened to spot it in the window of a London flower shop late one night last summer. Thus the entry on CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) takes a stern tone—"It is not unknown for unscrupulous nurseries to state that plants are nursery-propagated when they are in fact taken from the wild"—and assigns a job to every reader: "Horticultural societies and botanic gardens should be encouraged to campaign for nurseries not to sell wild-collected material. . . . Gardeners should be vigilant and refuse to purchase material of dubious origin." The book stresses that hybridization "has largely taken the place of plant collecting."

Now Griffiths is awaiting the critics. He frets about the cultivation notes ("Everyone has a different way of skinning a cat. People go, 'I've never grown a cattleya that way!' ") and accusations of inconsistency. "And some people won't see the point in our having something on, say, ethnobotany." He adds, "I think it's actually in the nature of taxonomy and gardening that people will bicker like hell about it." I suspect he'll be disappointed if they don't. After all, gardening is overdue for a good literary-horticultural ruckus. ▲

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LIVING WITH

Italian fashion photographer Fabrizio Ferri tries some sharp new angles

style

BY WENDY GOODMAN

Ferri's shifting focus. Clockwise from top left: Mahogany slat armchair with a flexible back. Ferri and his daughter, Marta. Walnut table with removable sets of drawers. Industria Superstudio's daylit top-floor space. Cashmere/velvet shawl over cotton shirt and pants, all by Industria. Details see Resources.

"MY EYES HAVE TO BE BIG IN MY BUSINESS," SAYS PHOTOGrapher Fabrizio Ferri, "but my ears are bigger. I listen to my friends and find out what they need." In March 1991, recognizing that the recession would curtail travel for fashion shoots, he opened New York's Industria Superstudio, a 22,000-square-foot rental photography studio. Now Ferri is launching an Industria line of practical and affordable clothing and furniture, designed by a team he assembled. The clothing is based on off-the-runway favorites like the sweaters that models borrow from their boyfriends. The slat chairs have pliable backs, and the table is topped with removable sets of drawers. Ferri hopes his next step will be Industria stores with pared-down studiolike environments. "You go buy clothes and furniture as you would camera equipment," claims Ferri. "You need to see the pieces with no pretense."


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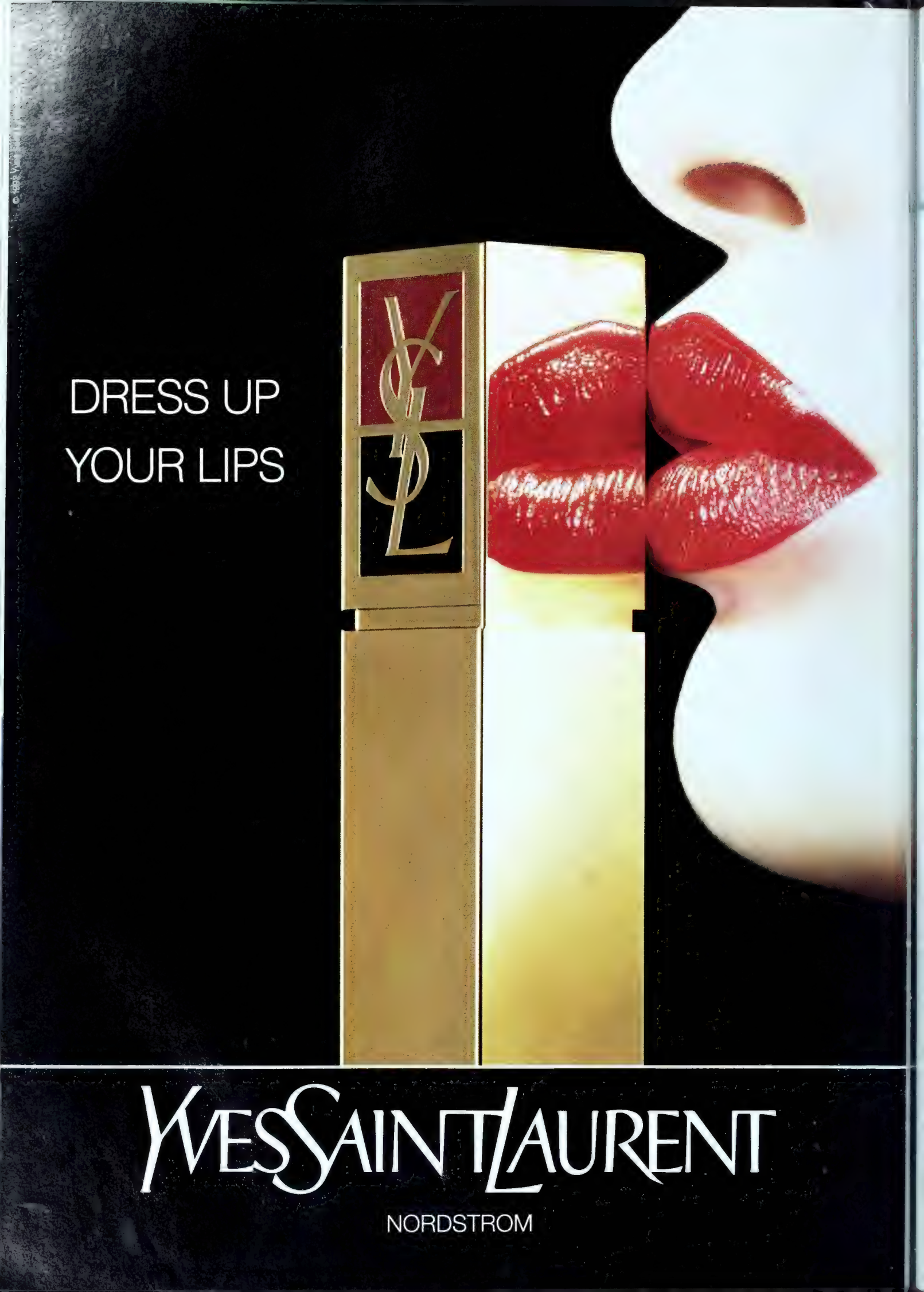
DRESS UP
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April

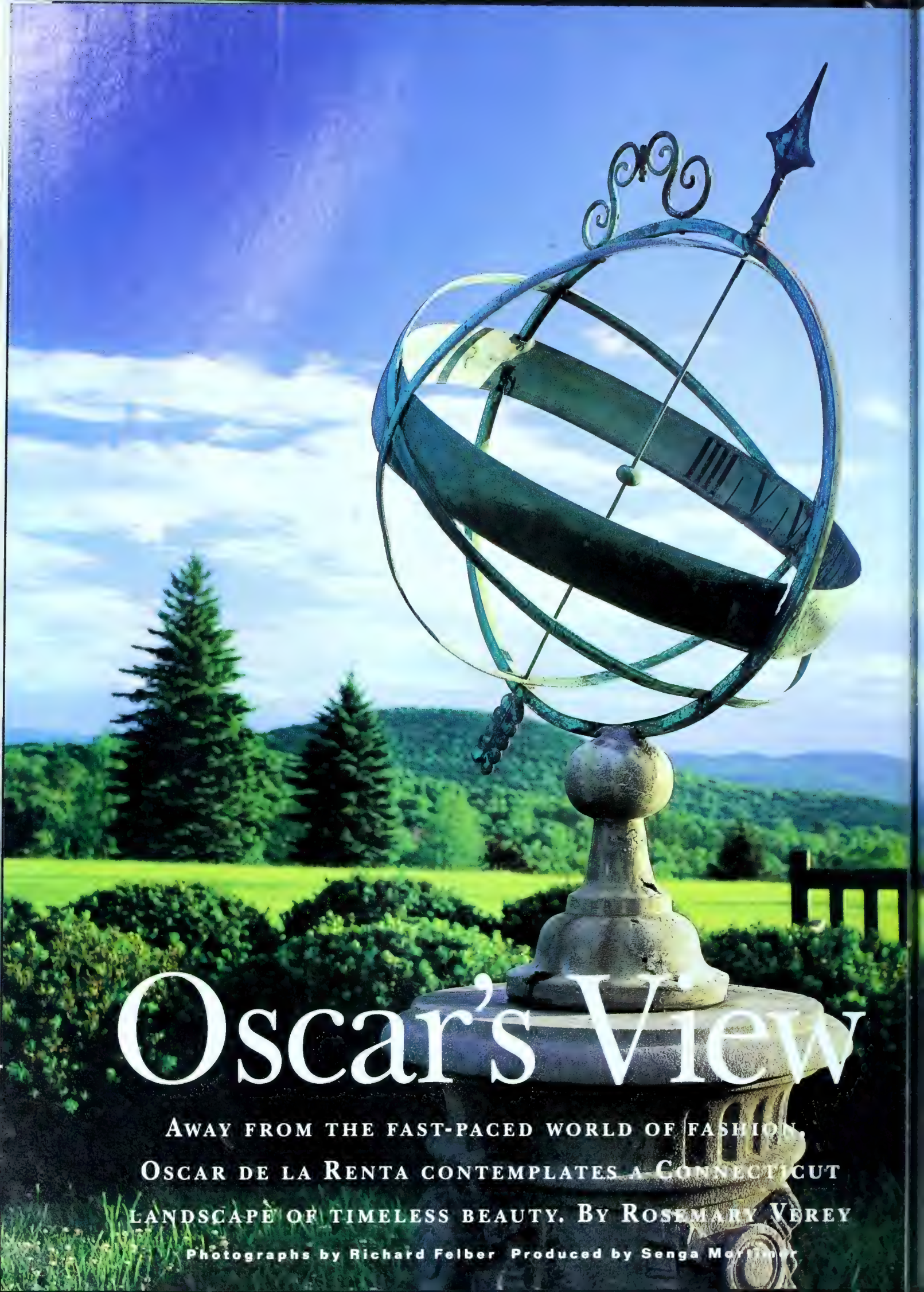
Editor's Page

Oak Hill, like many Hudson Valley houses, was built to take advantage of views of the river.

HAVING GROWN UP in New York with a memorable view of Central Park, I have found myself almost physiologically unable to live without a vista or at least without light and an airy sense of space. (How this has affected me and my family in the New York and Connecticut real estate markets is a complicated subject.) Nothing—not even the urban expansionism of the twentieth century—can erase the American longing for open space, whether Longfellow's forest primeval, Thoreau's Walden Pond, or, as in my early life, Frederick Law Olmsted's 840-acre approximation of the natural world. This month we consider the question of siting and view in a variety of ways, examining the centuries-old preserve of the Livingstons, Aldriches, and other patrician families whose houses front splendidly on New York's historic Hudson River. Then there's the more cultivated slice of nature of Oscar de la Renta's garden in the gently rolling wooded hills of Connecticut where ordered beds, allées, and borders have been coaxed from a stretch of land that would have tantalized Humphry Repton. A house by Christopher Alexander, the idiosyncratically modern architect, on an island in Puget Sound has everything to do with cooperation with nature—in terms of both its spectacular vistas of towering trees and the Olympic Mountains and its own cedar-sheathed structure, designed to meld with the forest. Decorator John Oetgen's house in Atlanta offers inward-looking diversions—French windows to allow in natural light and a garden trellis covered with flowers to block the driveway view. Architect Richard Meier's two new showstoppers—the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Canal Plus building in Paris—are meant to be the best-ever spots to survey their cities; they both embellish and oversee their respective skylines. The April HG also takes a panoramic look at the 1970s in an intriguing essay by Herbert Muschamp. Getting in touch with your feelings, as we all rushed to do in the seventies, may just be easier if you have a good view.

Mary Novogrod

EDITOR IN CHIEF



Oscar's View

AWAY FROM THE FAST-PACED WORLD OF FASHION, OSCAR DE LA RENTA CONTEMPLATES A CONNECTICUT LANDSCAPE OF TIMELESS BEAUTY. BY ROSEMARY VEREY

Photographs by Richard Felber Produced by Senga Mortimer

Annette and Oscar de la Renta, *right*, with Norfolk terriers Jupiter and Lily, in the avenue of pear trees. *Left:* An antique armillary sphere marks the end of the avenue where it opens onto a panorama of meadow and woodland. Details see Resources.

WHILE OSCAR de la Renta was showing his spring ready-to-wear collection in Paris last fall—the only American designer to be accorded this privilege—I had the good fortune to be walking in his very personal garden in Connecticut which he shares with his wife, Annette. Oscar had already talked with me at length about the garden, describing how it is surrounded by rolling hills, by woodland and meadows, about its structure and the way his planting plans have slowly evolved, and about his dreams for the future. His strong love of his land came through clearly.

To be successful, the creator of a garden must have a sympathy and deep feeling for nature and a love of plants, combined with patience and an understanding of design and color—above all he must have artistry. And, of course, he must realize that he is creating an ever-changing scene, both as the seasons advance and as each year brings new growth. Oscar possesses all of these qualities as well as a lively imagination. He has the hands of an artist, but they are useful hands that can dig as well as draw and paint.

Born in the Dominican Republic, he went to art school there and had a one-man show of paintings when he was only seventeen. Now, years later, Oscar and Annette's New York apartment has a long gallery divided by five-foot-high bookcases into definite spaces—living room, library, and dining area—each one filled with paintings, books, and objects of everyday life, all arranged in an exciting, enviable collage. In a subtle way those spaces and our conversation there prepared me for the pleasures of his garden and its compartments filled with varying incident.

It was in 1972 that Oscar and his late wife, Françoise, decided that they needed a country retreat away from the bustle of life in Manhattan. They imagined a tiny cottage, with nothing of special value inside, where they could relax. It was only out of curiosity that they went to see the Connecticut property. But as Oscar recalls, "The moment we drove in I said, 'This place is going to be our home.'" Here was peace, fifty-five acres (now grown to two hundred), a small gabled clapboard house with paddocks for horses, and the most wonderful view. All his life Oscar has loved nature, but until he bought this place he had never had the opportunity to enjoy a rural life.

Brick paths and circles of box and grass, *opposite above,* frame beds of alyssum and herbs in a formal garden. *Opposite below:* The adjoining enclosure has borders of salvias, snapdragons, dahlias, and roses interspersed with nicotiana and other scented plants. Lemon trees in terra-cotta pots are brought outdoors in summer. *Above:* In the pool garden, white roses and peonies stand out against the prevailing green.

While he learned to garden by trial and error and studied nursery catalogues and planting plans, Oscar was too busy to come to grips with an overall design for his estate, one that would complement and merge with the surrounding countryside. His New York apartment at that time overlooked the Frick Collection, and he found himself fascinated as he watched his friend the great landscape architect Russell Page laying out the museum's flower garden. He invited Russell for a weekend in Connecticut to advise him.

Russell arrived on Friday night, and on Saturday morning Oscar took him for a walk around the property. They passed a small border that Oscar had lovingly dug and planted himself, and Russell, looking down on it from his full six feet, dryly inquired, "What's that?" "I cannot describe to you," Oscar told me, "the way that he looked at my prize—my herbaceous border that I was so proud of." He was so embarrassed by Russell's evident scorn that he found himself saying, "The people who used to own the property did that and I simply haven't taken it out yet."

Russell asked what he would like, and the honest answer came, "I would love to have a garden." "Well," said Russell, "you know you'll never have a garden—a garden needs walls and you have no walls. Here you have this extraordinary view and all you can do is enhance it." Oscar was dismayed, but Russell sketched out some ideas.

Oscar carried out some of Russell's basic suggestions, but from then on he became the designer. Determined to have his flowers and to plant hedges to emulate solid walls, he concentrated on establishing a garden oasis tucked away where it would not interfere with the all-important view from the house. The stables were converted into a pavilion for a new swimming pool, which now forms the heart of Oscar's series of connecting garden rooms divided by hedges and the shrub borders that screen a small greenhouse.

To reach the pool, you go through a white wooden gate into a square formal garden laid out with box-

"As a boy, I thought scent was contained in dewdrops on flowers"

wood patterns. The centerpiece is a neoclassical stone urn on a pedestal, and round this a bed of spring bulbs and summer annuals is ringed by a circle of box. Concentric circles are formed by a brick path, a band of grass, and more box hedges. Bisecting brick paths define quadrants that are planted for color from spring through to fall. In spring the lily-flowered *Tulipa* 'White Triumphator' and the almost-black *Tulipa* 'Queen of Night', generously planted, flower at the same time as the ornamental crab apples. During the summer the scene changes to soft blues, pinks, and white—all chosen for their long flowering. In winter the clipped box makes the picture. These formal beds are backed by taller herbaceous flowers to give an element of height and fullness. No less formal is the planting of herbs for use in the nearby kitchen. The central urn with its ram's-head motif overflows with gray-leaved thyme.

A gate on one side leads through to the pool with its fragrant all-white flower garden, but if you walk on along the brick path and under a white wooden archway entwined with pink roses, you reach another enclosed garden. Once this was full of roses, but Oscar has wisely taken out most of them—the winter cold was too harsh—and instead he now has borders of bright colors and an abundance of flowers chosen for their scent, including nicotiana, dianthus, and sweet peas.

I remembered my conversation with Oscar, who had told me disarm-

ingly, "When I was a boy I thought scent was contained in the dewdrops on flowers and if I got up very early in the morning, I could collect it and make perfume. To my great disappointment it was not there at all." A sad moment for a young enthusiast, but today he is launching a third fragrance for women, Volupté, an alluring name celebrating the pleasure of all our senses. I asked Oscar if he had his own garden as a boy in Santo Domingo, and I heard about his six older sisters who grew flowers in their small town yard while he, the only boy, planted spinach and corn because he could sell his crops to his mother. The inspiration of a warmer climate and tropical colors comes through in this New England garden of annuals and roses edged with box where four large clay pots with lemon trees are put out in summer, echoing the symmetry of the borders.

Leaving the two enclosed gardens and walking on through the second white archway, you come upon a wonderful surprise. Instantly the view changes to one of open space and greenness, though the scene is still ordered and disciplined. Your pace may quicken as you walk along a majestic double avenue of *Pyrus calleryana* 'Red Spire' pears planted by

The changing scene. *Clockwise, from opposite above left:* Jupiter poses beside a box topiary flanked by agapanthus and daisies. An autumn profusion of antirrhinums, zinnias, and dahlias in the cutting garden. One of three yew "wedding cakes" is deployed like green sculpture on the lawn. Hostas line stone steps to the woods. Rhode Island Reds and other hens supply eggs for the house and manure for the potager. A goddess in a bower of white philadelphus. Densely planted sedum and perovskia bloom in a fall border. An avenue of spring-blossoming ornamental crab apple trees.

In spring the pale *Tulipa* 'White Triumphator' and the nearly black *Tulipa* 'Queen of Night', *right*, surround a neoclassical stone urn at the center of the formal garden. *Left:* A 550-foot-long perennial border parallels the series of "wedding cake" topiaries and the pear allée.

Gardens everywhere from Europe to New England have influenced Oscar de la Renta's ideal of harmony in the landscape

Powers Taylor and the late Doug Bean of Rosedale Nurseries. This allée extends past a stone urn, three giant "wedding cakes" of yew topiary, and up to an armillary sphere embraced by a double semicircle of clipped box bushes.

In the Connecticut countryside beyond, native birches, oaks, and sugar maples are allowed their freedom and beauty unimpaired. I was reminded of the estate Thomas Jefferson carved out of the woods at Monticello. Whether or not our surroundings are true wilderness, we all have an insatiable wish to conquer nature, but we should never work against it. The subtlety of man's approach to the landscape has always lain in his ability to create a harmonious meeting of the wild world and a nature that has been tamed to his own vision. Oscar's ideal of harmony has been influenced by many gardens he has admired everywhere from Europe to New England. He will undoubtedly continue to explore the realm of plants with an eye to blending fresh discoveries into his own already magnificent setting.

Besides Oscar and Annette, there are the all-important people who tend the estate: Roger Whitmore, the caretaker, and Felix Trinidad, a Santo Domingan, who like Oscar have a natural instinct for plants. Felix took me up through a hosta-lined woodland path and downhill to a working area where vegetables chosen by Oscar and Annette are grown with loving precision. The cutting garden next to this potager was bounteous with flowers waiting to be gathered and arranged in the house.

Gardeners and couturiers possess many of the same talents: imagination, knowledge, and industry. Both know which colors shock or coordinate, which textures rasp or soothe, and both see fashions change—but they never forget that the concept of beauty is timeless. A masterpiece of a dress may travel the world for many seasons, and the world will always come to visit a distinguished garden. The taste and skill Oscar de la Renta has displayed in his professional life are amply reflected in a garden which, though beautiful today, will continue to mature. ♠

The avenue of 'Red Spire' p
trees changes character with
the seasons. *Above:* In sprin
the allee looks like a proces
of pale bouquets. *Opposite:*
Dense summer foliage casts
rhythmic bands of shade.

"You'll never have a garden," said Russell Page. "A garden needs w

you have no walls. All you can do is enhance the view"

An 18th-century Chinese calligraphy scroll runs the length of the living room above a daybed in a Clarence House fabric and an armchair in suede, both by Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann. The diminutive faux marbre fireplace allows for an offbeat play of scale. Details see Resources.

Bentley LaRosa Salasky continues a great tradition of French style

Mood Moderne

By Heather Smith MacIsaac

Photographs by Oberto Gili

The designers' plans had to remain flexible to allow for fortuitous events like the discovery of a pair of Ruhlmann armchairs

ARCHITECT SAL LAROSA OF BENTLEY LAROSA Salasky makes it a practice to tell clients they should not expect that changing their surroundings will change their lives: problems in the "before" condition will not disappear in the "after." To this caveat one of the firm's recent clients, a serious collector of art and furniture who is married to a communications consultant, responds, "Sal, you proved yourself wrong." Restless in their old apartment, the couple were taken aback by the uplifting effect their new place had on them. "Sal brought the kind of peace into our environment that people search for all of their lives," the woman explains. "He understood my need for tranquillity. He understood furniture. He understood me. From the first meeting it wasn't just their portfolio that inspired me, it was Sal's ability to get inside my head." LaRosa agrees: "We had a meeting of the minds," a harmony that aided the architects in the difficult process of tailoring a New York apartment to a group of museum-quality French furniture that had yet to be assembled.

Here was a couple who collected contemporary art, lived in a streamlined seventies interior while they raised their two children, and had decided to downsize from a

a corner of the living room a Jean-Michel
nk desk is surrounded by a Tiffany
p, a Susan Rothenberg drawing, and
igh-back sofa by Bentley LaRosa
asky in fabrics from Clarence House.
posite above: A Howard Hodgkin painting
gs over a Eugène Printz cabinet, and
rank screen stands behind an Albert
euret torchère. *Opposite below:* Against a
ce Marden canvas the all-star furniture
eup includes an Edgar Brandt lamp, two
hlmann armchairs, and a Frank table.

three-bedroom to a one-bedroom apartment while upgrading the quality of their furnishings. They had always appreciated a spare aesthetic but their appetite for minimalist purity had waned. "They expressed an interest in art deco furniture, which, for people coming from a modernist point of view, seemed like a good transitional style," says LaRosa. Francophiles that the couple are, art deco for them meant elegant pared-down pieces composed of wonderful materials by such masters as Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann, Jean-Michel Frank, and André Arbus—not the Hollywood deco of mirror and chrome and jagged lines.

So while their clients started shopping, Bentley LaRosa Salasky got to work clarifying the layout of the prewar apartment which had good light and views north and west but no extraordinary features. The emphasis on late twenties and early thirties designs focused their efforts on creating clean rooms with graceful proportions and classical detailing. In the words of the woman client, "The architects took the negatives and made positives." An ugly foyer metamorphosed into an elongated octagonal entrance hall, paneled in cherry and anegré veneer, that is grand in everything but size. Tucked into the pockets created by the octagon are a hall closet, off-season closets, and a passageway to the kitchen which incorporates stereo storage and a jewel of a powder room. In the living room a grid of beams introduced a new element of balance, and a tiny fireplace added an unexpected play of scale. Lowering a window and fashioning an oval ceiling turned a small ordinary dining room into an intimate elegant one, perfect for the dinners for six that the owners like to host. And in the master bedroom, an arc of molding visually organized and unified a wall of closets and a door. All of the rooms show distinct character, but the flow between them is smooth because each, with the exception of the master bedroom suite, now has multiple entrances. Notes LaRosa, "Providing many paths makes the apartment feel bigger."

As the carefully composed architectural plans fell into place, the furniture lineup remained in a state of flux. When the owners found a pair of Ruhlmann chairs in Paris, every fabric in the living room had to be reconsidered and orders canceled. For months a steady stream of pho-

The shell of the apartment is as carefully crafted as the furniture

In the dining room, *opposite*, BLS designed bronze sconces and a mahogany table to complement the Cheuret heron chandelier in bronze and alabaster and 1920s French chairs. The entrance foyer beyond features a Frank Stella painting and a 1940s French table. *Above right:* Details of sculptural legs by (clockwise from top left) Adolf Loos, BLS, Printz, and Ruhlmann. *Right:* Drawings by Gustav Klimt, Francesco Clemente, and others are gathered in a study warmed by chamois-colored wallpaper from Norton Blumenthal and a sofa in a Brunschwig cotton chenille.

tographs, dimensions, and plans jetted between the peripatetic clients and architects. Fortunately, both camps almost always agreed on matters of taste. In the end what everyone learned was that it's best to have eighty-five but never a hundred percent of the furniture on hand before the move-in date, to allow room for serendipitous events—like the discovery of a Frank screen which, together with a Ruhlmann daybed and an Albert Cheuret torchère, forms a golden composition in a corner of the living room.

"When you have the opportunity to work with fine things, they offer a wellspring of ideas," says LaRosa. "The shell of this apartment is as meticulously crafted as the furniture, yet every surface has a degree of restraint." All of the exposed wood was oiled and hand-rubbed to a satiny finish except for the mahogany floors, which are waxed regularly. Some of the walls were painted five and six times, sanded and buffed between each coat; others were covered with subtly textured materials—raw silk, linen embossed with string—that set off the art. Original bronze hardware was removed for refinishing, and matching hardware was cast to fill in gaps. A half-oval piece of honed slate was set flush into the living room floor for a new hearth. Slabs of marble, rather than the quotidian marble tile, anchor the master and guest bathrooms, which are poetic renditions in frosted glass, nickel-plated brass, and slender porcelain tile of traditional French hotel bathrooms.

BLS seamlessly mingled thirties classics with their own renditions of modernist design

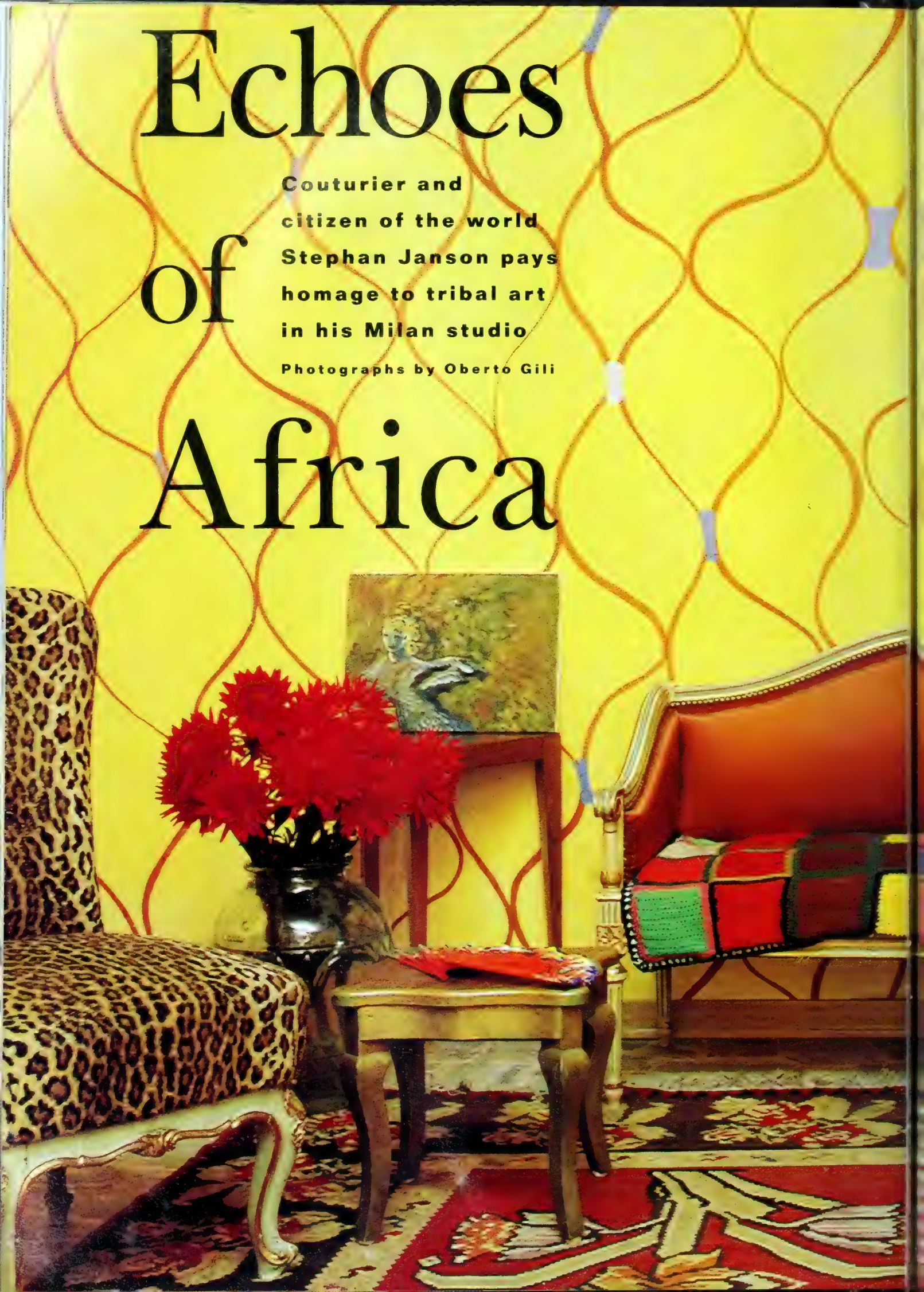
The few major pieces of furniture that couldn't be found came from Bentley LaRosa Salasky's drawing boards, including the master bedroom's king-size headboard, pair of night tables, and TV cabinet/chest of drawers in sycamore. For the dining room the architects created a mahogany table with shapely legs that end in delicate brass feet, as well as tapered bronze sconces designed to complement a rare Cheuret chandelier in the shape of a soaring heron. The new and the old are so seamlessly mingled that an antiques dealer who specializes in the period asked the clients how they ever found nine matching sconces and a suite of bedroom furniture in such pristine condition. Clients and architect could not have been paid a higher compliment. ♠

In the spirit of traditional French hotel bathrooms, BLS furnished the master bath, *left,* with a graceful nickel-plated brass basin and complementary sconces. *Opposite above:* The master bedroom is an elegant mix of the new (TV cabinet/chest of drawers by BLS, linens from Pratesi, carpet from Stark) and the vintage (an André Arbus chaise, an American 1930s parchment-covered cabinet, and a Jules Leleu armchair). *Opposite below:* On a wall of doors an arc of molding unites two closets and the glass-paneled entrance to the bathroom.

Echoes of Africa

Couturier and citizen of the world Stephan Janson pays homage to tribal art in his Milan studio

Photographs by Oberto Gili



By Wendy Goodman

A Frenchman who lives in Milan and commutes to Tokyo, fashion designer Stephan Janson personifies what he calls "the global citizen rather than the expatriate." One mark of Janson's cosmopolitanism is the name on the door of his new atelier in Milan: Apolide, an Italian term for being without ties to any single state. Another is just inside that door: a dazzling series of frescoes inspired by the wall paintings of West African women. "They are my tribute to Africa," he explains,

...on's Milan show-
...a Berber carpet
...alls inspired by
...an women's murals
...a vibrant back-
...for Louis XV–style
... in leopard print
... and a Louis XV
...sofa in red satin.
...h see Resources.

"my dream vision of Africa."

Born in Provence, Janson decided to be a couturier at the age of eight when he saw his grandmother's copy of French *Vogue* with Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian dress on the cover. "I hardly slept that night," he recalls, "and I dropped the idea of being a pastry chef." At twelve he moved to Paris. "From my bedroom window I could see the back of the house of Yves Saint Laurent. No need to say it was heaven." The following year Pierre Bergé invited him to see the next collection. "When the first model came out, I realized it was like my first day of high school. I understood the difficulties of my métier, but I could not have been happier." He launched his own line in 1987, after several years in New York as a designer for Diane Von Furstenberg.

As for Apolide's decoration, Janson says, "I couldn't design and show my collection in a neutral space." Under the spell of the photographs in Margaret Courtney-Clarke's *African Canvas*, Janson and his partner, writer Umberto Pasti, had painter Santino Croci reinterpret patterns from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Nigeria in appropriately earthy pigments. In a week the walls of the stairwell and entrance hall were covered with the chevrons and geometric motifs favored by the Soninke women of southern Mauritania, and those of the showroom with rhythmically curving lines of red against a brilliant yellow ground, a Nigerian evocation of a knotted fishnet.

Africa promises to be a continuing influence on Janson. He and Pasti recently bought a house in Tangiers, and he traces the fluidity of his latest collection to North African garments. "For me," he says, "Africa is endless inspiration." ♠

"I couldn't show my collection in a neutral space"

Frescoes on walls of the well, *opposit* and entranc hall, *above l* and *above r* express wha Janson, *far* calls his "dr vision of Af *Above cente* Gio Ponti s cotton flann *Left:* Bened Barzini wea Janson's wi jersey dress chiffon stol

Back Porch on the Future

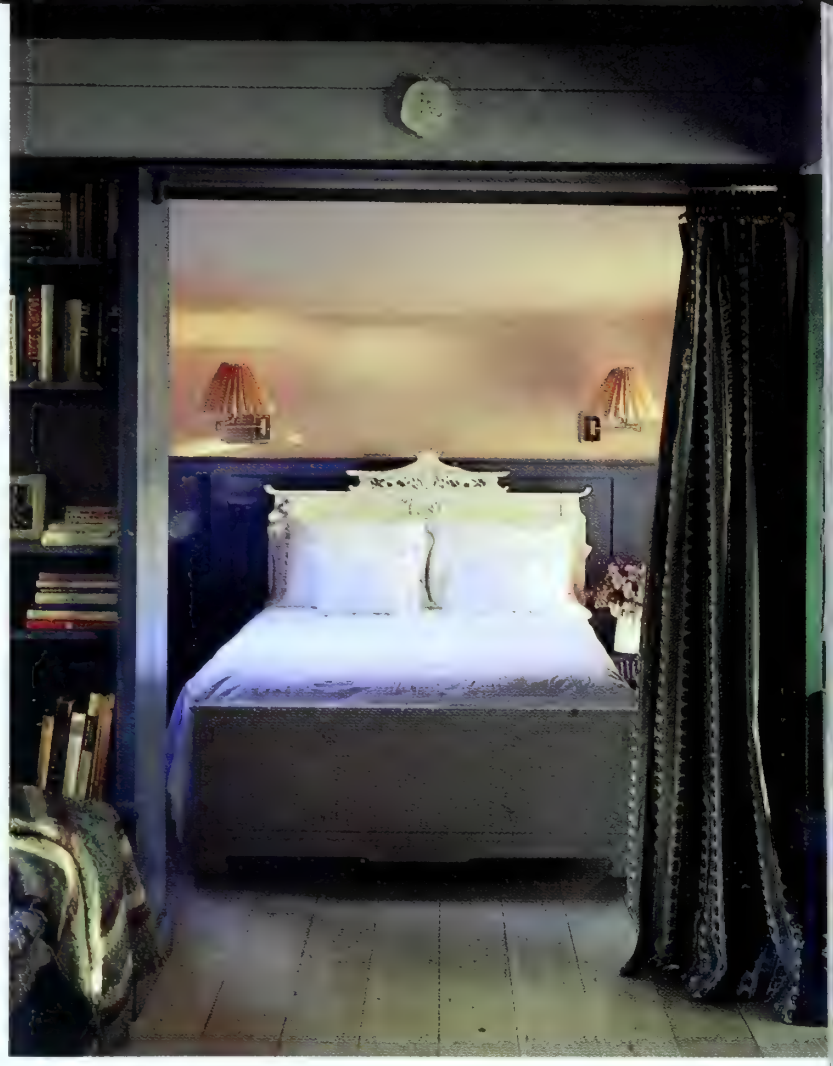
For a house on Whidbey Island, architect Christopher Alexander finds eternal archetypes in a homespun past. By Pilar Viladas

Photographs by Mark Darley

Ann Medlock and John Graham's porch, *opposite*, looks toward the Olympic Mountains, *above*. Architect Christopher Alexander designed the cedar-sided house to take advantage of its site yet have minimal impact on the land.

SEE THIS NICE, WARM, OLD-FASHIONED-LOOKing house? It's the work of one of the most controversial architects in America. Berkeley-based Christopher Alexander contends that no matter what style, contemporary architecture has produced buildings that people hate. It has strayed from the traditions that for centuries allowed Everyman to create simple, beautiful, well-constructed buildings. Alexander's attempts to recapture those traditions—in books such as *A Pattern Language,* in a growing number of built works, and in a commission blessed by the arch-populist prince of Wales—call for a revolution in the way we build.

Which is why Ann Medlock and John Graham spent seven years and every penny they had to build the house that Alexander designed for them on Whidbey Island, twenty-five miles northwest of Seattle in Puget Sound. They are mavericks themselves. Medlock, a former journalist who says she got fed up with "what is considered news," is the founder and president of the Giraffe Project, a nonprofit organization devoted to "inspiring people to stick their necks out for the common good." Graham, a former foreign service officer who served in Vietnam and at the United Nations before suffering his own brand of professional burnout, is the Giraffe Project's executive director. They left a comfortable life in New York for a vastly diminished income at the project, sold their apartment as Manhattan's real estate market bottomed out, and set out to build their dream house with Alexander and Gary Black, the vice president of Alexander's Center for Environmental Structure.



The house feels solid, as if it has been there forever

Alexander doesn't work the way most architects do. He interviewed Medlock and Graham at length about who they were and how they envisioned their lives in the house. He and Black spent hours walking the densely forested site, agonizing over which trees to cut. When something was built that didn't look quite right, it was ripped apart and built again, in keeping with Alexander's belief that architecture should be made on-site rather than on paper.

The house embodies many of the patterns, or conventions, that Alexander spells out in *A Pattern Language.* Its shape is long and thin, both to minimize its impact on the land and to maximize daylight in each of the rooms, which are strung together like beads on a necklace. The walls, enclosing a structure of heavy wood members, are almost a foot thick. "The difference in this house is the

The view, *opposite top,* from the sunny living room through the octagonal hall toward the kitchen illustrates Alexander's taste for alternating light and dark spaces. *Opposite bottom:* The informal dining area beyond the kitchen has its own deep bay window and mountain vista. *Above right:* The bed, made up with linens from the Cottage in Langley, Washington, is set into an alcove framed by the bookcases of the dressing room. *Right:* Natural light floods the stairwell. Details see Resources.

construction system," says Black. "You feel the way it's made." Dark and light spaces are alternated so that you are always drawn toward the light. Alcoves and bay windows—places for quiet conversation or reading—abound, as do built-in seats and bookcases. Color is used in every room, in hues chosen by Medlock, who showed a firm grasp of Alexander's theories on the subject.

The completed house feels solid and warm, as if it has been there forever. The light alone is worth a trip. A carpenter who helped build the house, Curt Brown (who is married to Alexander's sister-in-law), says, "It's a strange thing to be emotionally attached to a building, especially today. I have a lot of my soul in that building. There's a certain spirituality to it—it gets at your gut."

Medlock and Graham freely admit that the Alexander experience was no picnic—it took forever and cost more money than they had. Nevertheless, they'd do it again. "If you just want a place to live, don't do this," counsels Graham, who is no stranger to risky business; as part of a Harvard team in 1963, he made the only successful direct ascent to date of Mount McKinley's north face. "But if you want to make a miracle, do it." ▲

A mudroom paved with handmade tiles, *opposite*, leads from the main entrance to the kitchen and dining area. An octagonal room, *above*, with a compass rose painted on its floor, provides a transition between living and dining-kitchen areas and opens onto stairs on one side and a porch, *top*, on the other.


HOME

In his garden room Oetgen covered furniture in a Brunschwig check and used antique pediments as shelves for displaying prized objects and gifts from friends. *Opposite:* Cody, a bearded collie, sits in the entry before a stool with a cushion in a fabric designed by Oetgen. The spiked column serves as a coat-rack. Details see Resources.

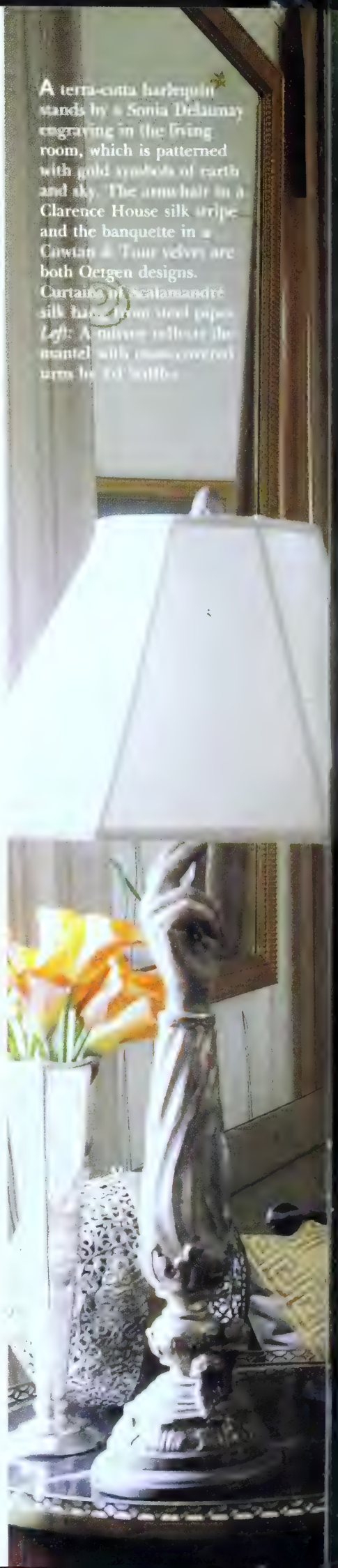
True Wit

Decorator and dealer John Oetgen plays with history and fantasy in his Atlanta house

By Dana Cowin

Photographs by William Waldron

Produced by Anne Foxley



A terra-cotta harlequin stands by a Sonia Delaunay engraving in the living room, which is patterned with gold symbols of earth and sky. The armchair in a Clarence House silk stripe and the banquette in a Unwin & Tour velvet are both Oetgen designs. Curtains of Scalamandré silk hang from steel pipes. *Left:* A mirror reflects the mantel with moss-covered urns he [illegible]

I LOVE HARLEQUINS. SOMETIMES I think I am a harlequin," John Oetgen said to me not once but several times over the course of a day together. This, coming from one of Atlanta's hottest decorators, gave me pause until I saw his house in Ansley Park. Clearly a harlequin had his hand in many of the decorative effects here. The walls are costumed in vivid colors and the rooms are arranged like stage sets, each offering its own distractions. Designed to be lived in at night, Oetgen's house is charged with an air of mystery and magic.

The Queen Anne–style brick structure built around 1910 was divided a decade ago into two spacious houses with a shared entry. By the time Oetgen bought his half in 1989, his career as a decorator and antiques dealer was in full swing. After dismissing the possibility of working in the family insurance business, he had graduated cum laude with an interior design degree from Georgia State University and gone on to win decorating awards, mastermind charity events, open an antiques shop, and develop an impressive list of clients—friends he'd grown up with in Atlanta and even the man in the other half of the brick house.

Oetgen's new neighbor happily gave him free rein in the shared vestibule, and the jester went to work. Challenged by the lack of closet space, Oetgen opted for a coatrack in the form of a plantation-size column that is pierced with gold spikes, which serve as hooks, and stops before it reaches the ceiling—"It's fake, and I don't want anyone to think it's real." The effect is the antithesis of imposing southern grandeur. The same holds for the flower arrangement, which is gloriously simple: anemone blossoms and lilacs in four squat gold pots. Says Oetgen, "This way you can see what's important—the stem and the bloom." On the walls, gray grosgrain ribbon studded with tacks simulates molding and gives the room perspective, an idea he adapted from one of his French heroes, decorator and antiques dealer Madeleine Castaing.

In the living room, Oetgen conjures an entirely different world. With a minimum of gold paint and admirable restraint, he suggests no less than the universe. "I wanted something that was mystical and amusing at the same time," he says. "The idea is that the painted grasses on the walls are the earth. The swirls


L'Art de Vivre

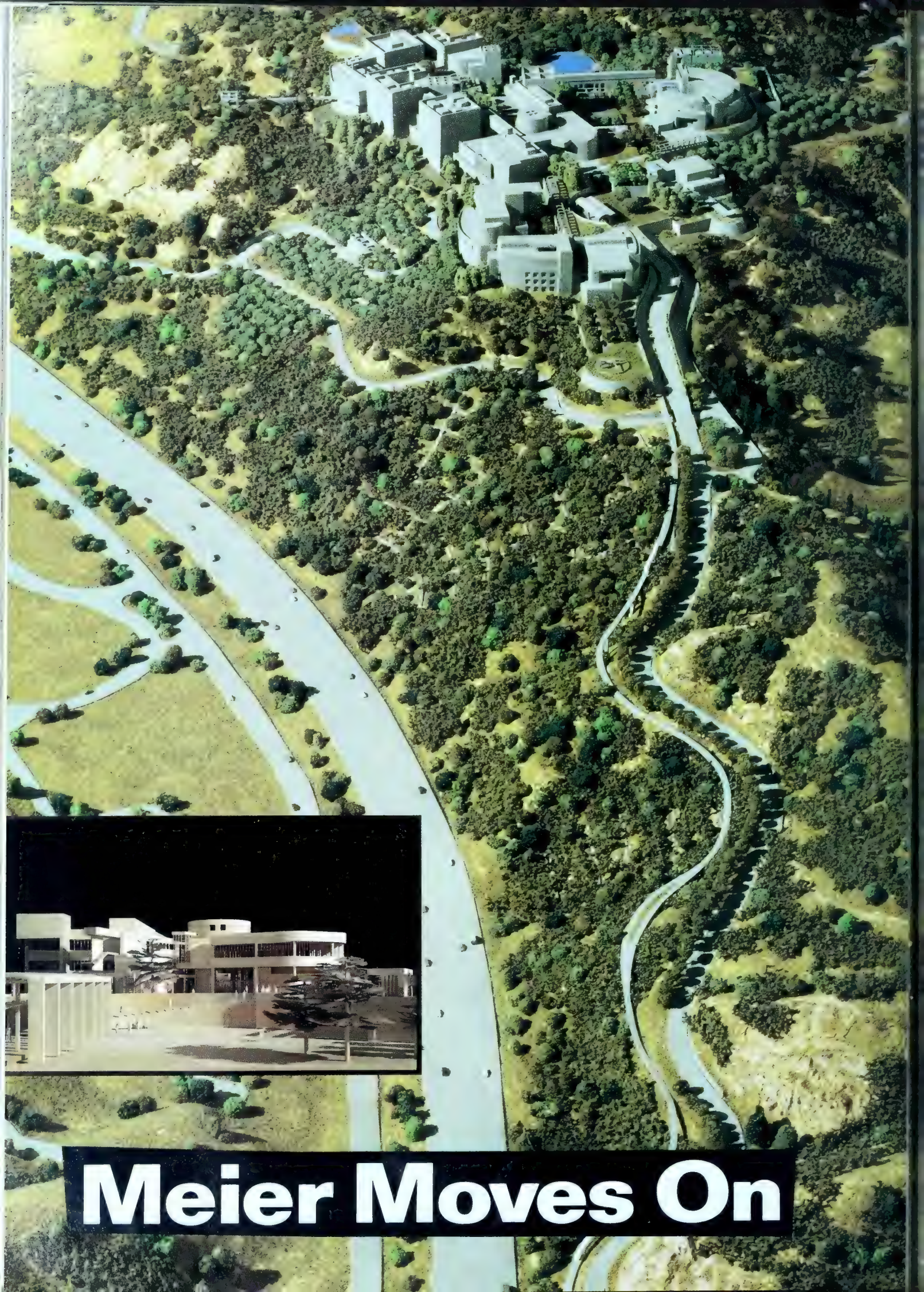
are symbolic clouds or eternity. And the stars and moons represent the heavens." At night the room glows, the heavens twinkle. Three-dimensional gilded plaster stars and moons of varying sizes and shades shine out from above, some just a faint glimmer, some bold and bright.

Beyond the metaphorical grass walls, sophisticated comfort, not cleverness, prevails. Possessed of a gentleman's education—Oetgen has traveled extensively, read extensively, observed extensively—he intelligently mixes elements that he admires most from a range of styles: a touch of eighteenth-century classicism here, twentieth-century moderne there. ("I like every century, except maybe the thirteenth," says the decorator, which might explain why his work for clients bears no signature imprint, just good taste.) Roomy banquettes that he modeled after French salon furniture hug the walls, while the rest of the seating floats on a sea grass carpet in the middle of the room. There are armchairs to sink into, klismos chairs tinted a celestial silver to perch on, and a square brass-studded ottoman to use as either a leg rest or a table. The soothing grays, yellows, and browns of the upholstery fabrics are too close for contrast, close enough for calm. At one end of the room, Oetgen's alter ego—a harlequin in terra-cotta—surveys the scene, toe pointed daintily on an art deco commode in front of a Sonia Delaunay engraving in vivid red, green, and blue.

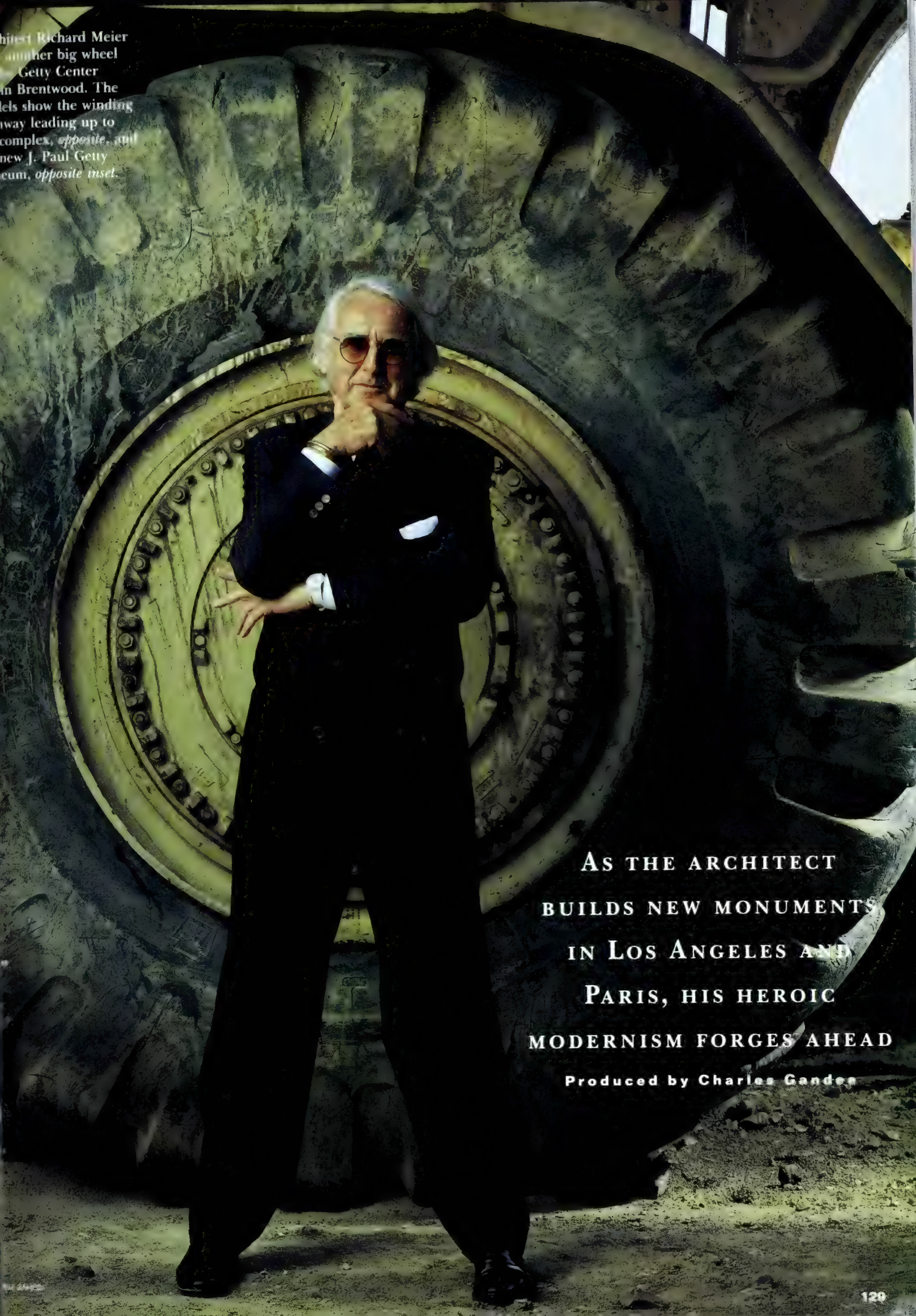
The Delaunay, as it turns out, is a gentle introduction to Oetgen's palette. Blue and green watery stripes wiggle on the walls of his dining room, furnished with an array of pedimented bookcases and complementary Queen Anne–style and Louis XV–style chairs purchased at separate Sotheby's auctions. In the evening the pierced Moroccan lantern hanging over Oetgen's simple wrought-iron table sprays dots of light onto the walls, transforming the space into an exotic retreat, a bedouin tent set for dinner.

Upstairs, the bedroom is bathed in three shades of red. Landscapes of Tuscany, Èze, and Guadeloupe are rendered in broad expressionistic strokes on all four walls. The result is reminiscent of a slide show of a great vacation projected, in this case, through a red gel. "In my bedroom I wanted to take a holiday, a trip to all of my favorite places and times, including the twenty-first century," says Oetgen. *(Continued on page 173)*

The dining room's hand-painted striped walls, pedimented bookcases, and curtains of Brunschwig fabric give it the look of an updated gentleman's study. *Above left:* Oetgen turned his bedroom into an exotic escape by painting a series of red landscapes on the walls. Sheets and pillowcases by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac; decorative pillows of Clarence House cut velvet.



Meier Moves On



hitect Richard Meier
another big wheel
Getty Center
n Brentwood. The
els show the winding
way leading up to
complex, *opposite*, and
new J. Paul Getty
eum, *opposite inset*.

As the architect builds new monuments in Los Angeles and Paris, his heroic modernism forges ahead

Produced by Charles Gandee

FEW RECENT EVENTS IN LOS Angeles have been as eagerly awaited as Richard Meier's design for the Getty Center—except perhaps Warren Beatty and Annette Bening's baby girl, and that took a lot less time. Seven years in the making, the architect's campuslike scheme for the museum and visual arts and humanities complex on a Brentwood hilltop may eventually cost as much as $650 million, but Meier promises that it will define views of the city that "enable people to see Los Angeles in a way they've never seen it before." The museum building itself will be a cluster of pavilions that "makes a big museum seem like a series of small ones." While the forms are classic Meier modern, the exteriors of the museum will be clad mainly in beige travertine rather than the architect's signature white porcelain-enameled metal panels. For a wide expanse of the quintessential Meier surface you must tune in to Canal Plus, France's first and biggest pay television company, whose new 420,000-square-foot headquarters now stands on the site of the old Citroën factory in Paris's fifteenth arrondissement. The façade of the administrative wing features a giant opening—an "urban window," says Meier—that frames the city beyond. The building, he adds, reflects the progressive policies of its occupants, but he is equally proud that young French architects find it "Hausmannian," after the urban planner who did so much to shape the City of Light. Vive le modernisme! **Pilar Viladas**

The "urban window" in Meier's headquarters for Canal Plus, *opposite*, frames a Paris view. *Opposite inset:* The office wing seen from the Seine. *Left:* The white paneled conical tower on the roof of the production wing houses a theater.

Patterns of Family Life

The textures and colors of everyday comfort mix in cheerful profusion in the London house of Sir Peter and Lady Osborne. By Andrew Solomon

Photographs by David Montgomery

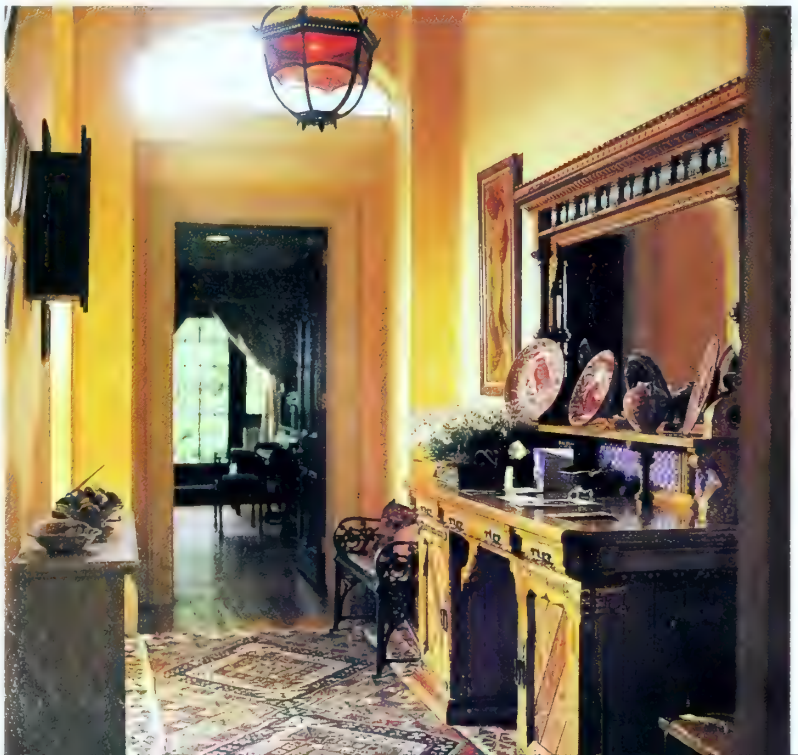
Produced by Judy Brittain

In the Osbornes' drawing room an Os
& Little cotton satin stripe sets off ant
William Morris florals covering a pill
and the long stool in front of the sofa
Near the windows a Portuguese table
a Tiffany lamp and a silver frame by
Ivanovic. *Opposite above:* Sir Peter an
Lady Osborne with their sons Theo, C
Adam, and Benedict. Details see Reso

AMY LOWELL, IN HER SEMInal 1915 poem "Patterns"—suffering under the terrible bondage of social constraints and romantic conflicts—asked in despair, "Christ! What are patterns for?" It is a question that seems not to have troubled Felicity Osborne. In her Bayswater house patterns are everywhere, tossed together in wild abundance, exaggerating and mirroring and undermining and complementing one another. This is a house about surface, not about depth; about what happens in two dimensions rather than three. It is sometimes too easy to miss the complexity of the skin of things; ornament and detail can disappear into form and architecture. Not at the Osborne residence.

Lady Osborne's husband, Sir Peter, is a founder of Osborne & Little, the noted English fabric and wallpaper house. One thinks of Osborne & Little today as a firm so well established, with such resonance, that it must date back at least to Victorian times, but Lady Osborne is quick to explain that it is only the Osborne name that has so protracted and distinguished a history. "Osborne & Little was founded in the late sixties," she explains, "when my husband was just out of university.

"I rarely buy anything so valuable that I can't use it," says Lady Osborne



Tim Farquar's *Fire Eater* surveys the dining table, *opposite*, set with Mason's ironstone and Baccarat tumblers. A nearby bookcase, *above*, houses several pieces of early 20th century English pottery, including a tiered pot by Clarice Cliff and a range of Carlton Ware. *Left:* Three William De Morgan plates rest on a John Pollard Seddon dresser, which dominates the melon-colored entrance hall.

He and his brother-in-law Antony Little felt that there was no interesting wallpaper available in England and set up a shop with paper they printed themselves by hand. We were all very young then, and it was experimental—though we produced, I think, some very beautiful things." That store—in what has since become the fashionable shopping area of Brompton—caught the eye of a director of Clarence House when he was strolling in London; his decision to distribute the wallpapers in America contributed to the meteoric rise of Osborne & Little.

These days, Osborne & Little is one of the great establishments of English design, with a worldwide staff of more than 250 and its own showrooms in America. Though the company continues to produce wallpapers, it is increasingly focused on

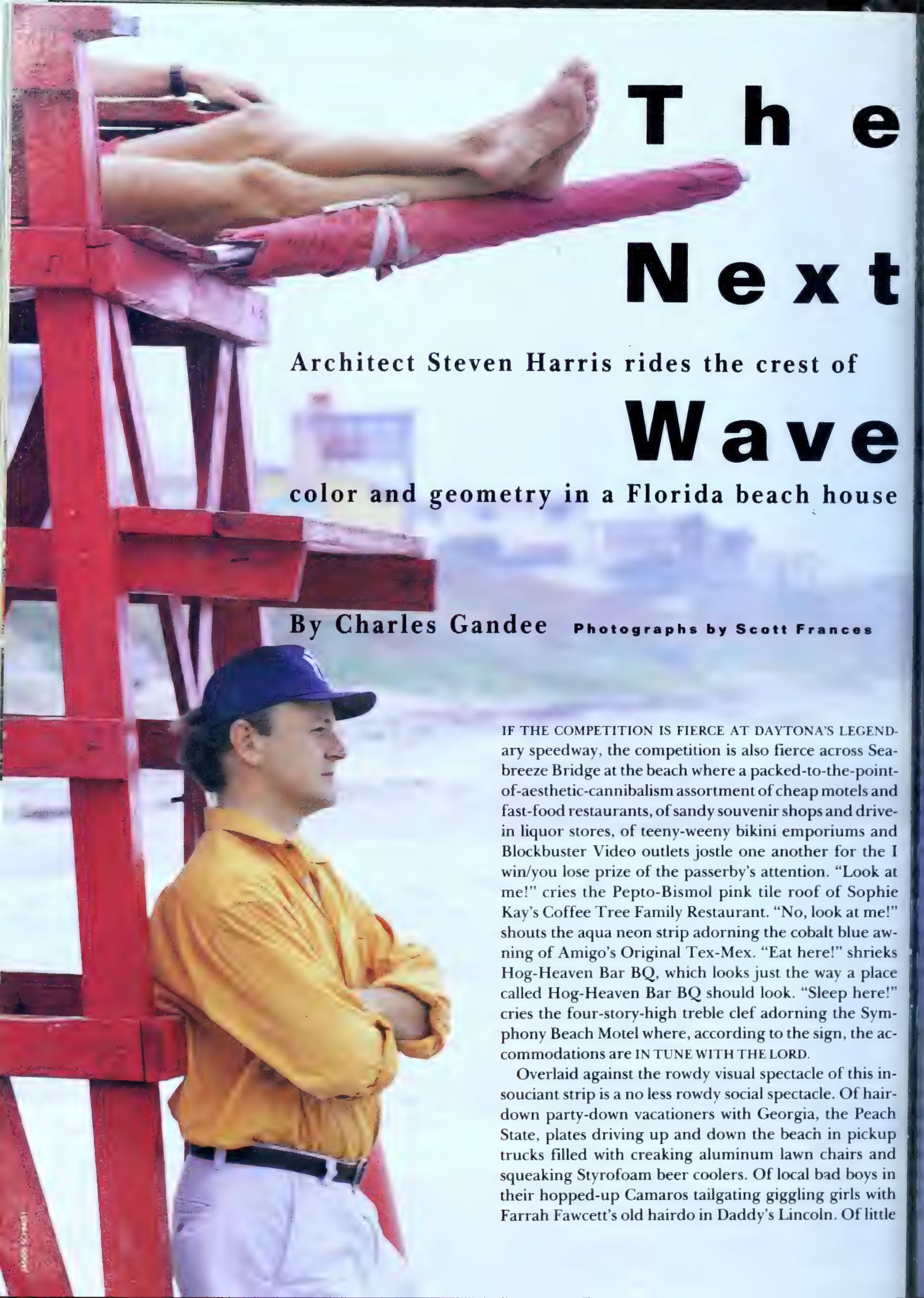
The colors are muted, but they are not faded

The wallpaper in the master bedroom, *opposite*, and most of the fabrics are Osborne & Little creations, from the damask at the windows to the patchwork on the bed. The dressing table and the headboard, *left*, are 19th-century pieces. *Above:* Minton tiles recount the Arthurian legend, and Edward VIII coronation glasses flank a Maling dish of Crabtree & Evelyn soaps.

the several collections of fabrics it launches every year. Most of the woven fabrics are made in France, but the silks and print fabrics are English, except for the most delicate prints, which are done in Switzerland. Osborne & Little has no single and easily articulated style but the emphasis is usually on elegant patterns in English colors: muted semi-pastels of peach and yellow or deep red, blue, and green to which gold and silver metallic threads or paint are often added. The apparently solid colors are always complex; among the Osborne & Little classics are a series of wallpapers that imitate paint effects, and many of today's papers have a richness that comes from the layering of several closely related tones in their backgrounds. The fabrics use surface and texture to increase the lushness of pattern.

Nearly all the fabrics and wallpapers in the Osborne house are from Osborne & Little. I asked Lady Osborne whether this was a matter of policy—home as showcase—and she laughed. "Other people's fabrics, though often very beautiful, are not free," she said. The drawing room paper has a pattern of two-toned gold stars on a rich cream background; it looks like the background for an Annunciation. The curtains are wonderfully sumptuous cream silk taffeta with green edges. In the kitchen/dining room there are classic stripes; in the bedroom the curves of a scroll pattern in the wallpaper are echoed on a larger scale by the paisley design in the curtains.

To limit discussion of pattern to the papers and fabrics would be to miss the real point of the Osbornes' house. Seldom have I encountered such an array of inlaid, painted, and veneered furniture and of exquisitely decorated and richly fashioned ceramics—even the bindings of the books stand out here in the full splendor of their embellishment. The collection is strongest on arts and crafts; there are William Morris fabrics and chairs and William De Morgan vases, plates, and tiles. There are *(Continued on page 172)*



The Next Wave

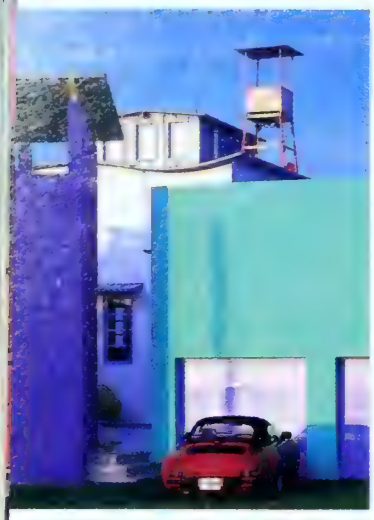
Architect Steven Harris rides the crest of color and geometry in a Florida beach house

By Charles Gandee **Photographs by Scott Frances**

IF THE COMPETITION IS FIERCE AT DAYTONA'S LEGENDary speedway, the competition is also fierce across Seabreeze Bridge at the beach where a packed-to-the-point-of-aesthetic-cannibalism assortment of cheap motels and fast-food restaurants, of sandy souvenir shops and drive-in liquor stores, of teeny-weeny bikini emporiums and Blockbuster Video outlets jostle one another for the I win/you lose prize of the passerby's attention. "Look at me!" cries the Pepto-Bismol pink tile roof of Sophie Kay's Coffee Tree Family Restaurant. "No, look at me!" shouts the aqua neon strip adorning the cobalt blue awning of Amigo's Original Tex-Mex. "Eat here!" shrieks Hog-Heaven Bar BQ, which looks just the way a place called Hog-Heaven Bar BQ should look. "Sleep here!" cries the four-story-high treble clef adorning the Symphony Beach Motel where, according to the sign, the accommodations are IN TUNE WITH THE LORD.

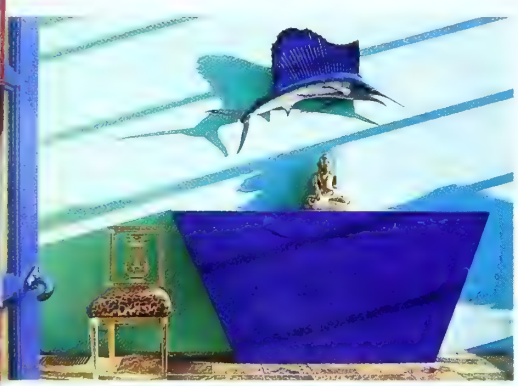
Overlaid against the rowdy visual spectacle of this insouciant strip is a no less rowdy social spectacle. Of hair-down party-down vacationers with Georgia, the Peach State, plates driving up and down the beach in pickup trucks filled with creaking aluminum lawn chairs and squeaking Styrofoam beer coolers. Of local bad boys in their hopped-up Camaros tailgating giggling girls with Farrah Fawcett's old hairdo in Daddy's Lincoln. Of little

ept for the Juan Gris–
ired mosaic tile pool at
heart of Chapman Root's
ond Beach house, Steven
is limited his allusions to
es a bit closer to home.
eguard tower, a bait shop,
ies motel, a milk bottle
the ringtoss down on the
ona boardwalk, a frozen
—the more you look, the
you find indigenous to
da's east coast community.
site: Harris on the beach.
ils see Resources.



old ladies in GM-blue Olds 98's with window blinds easing ever-so-cautiously into the Publix supermarket parking lot. There's also a beachside boardwalk where you can hear the siren song of sex and drugs and rock and roll interspersed with the carnival chorus of miniature golf being played, fuzzy pink bears being won at the ring-toss, cotton candy being spun in the forever-warm Florida air. The contiguous seaside communities of Daytona Beach and Ormond Beach, in other words, are the honky-tonk sister cities of the Sunshine State's east coast. And though Ormond fancies itself a bit more uptown than Daytona, having, as it does, more backyard tennis courts, more beige houses, and more "luxury" condominiums, it would not be inaccurate to characterize both these sweaty siblings as cut-off jeans and bare feet, as burgers and fries and hot apple pies that come in little cylindrical boxes, as $15-a-night single rooms advertised as "clean."

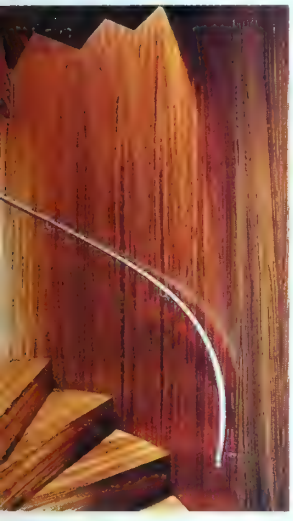
Since we all know what it means when someone says a child has a face that only a mother could love, perhaps the best thing to say about Daytona and Ormond is that they have a face that only a native son can fully appreciate. Architect Steven Harris is one such native son. Though Harris hied north after picking up his degree in philosophy from Sarasota's then-ultraprogressive New College to attend the Rhode Island School of Design and Princeton, and though he now lives in a decidedly upscale lower Manhattan loft, teaches design at Yale's architecture school, and drives to and fro in a big silver Range Rover, he looks back to his youth in Atlantic Beach, Florida—a somewhat less extreme variation on the Daytona/Ormond theme—with affection. Enormous affection. "The place is exuberant vulgarity at its best," claims forty-two-year-old Harris, who even now gets almost misty looking back: "I



To the street, *top*, as well as to the beach, *right*, the Root house presents itself as an unapologetically colorful collage of discrete volumes and shapes. *Above:* In the atrium-style entry, a sailfish, a Buddha, a metal console, and a gilded side chair with leopard-print leather carry the quirky collage concept from outside to inside. *Left:* Proper British Czech & Speake fittings from P. E. Guerin in the anything-but-proper mosaic guest lavatory by Harris's collaborator, artist Lucien Rees-Roberts.

have a photograph of my grandmother and her three sisters standing on the boardwalk in Daytona. My parents had their honeymoon in Daytona. I remember going to the boardwalk in the evening with them when I was four. I remember riding the rides, going down to play on the beach. There was, and still is, that kind of odd late-forties, mid-fifties hopeful American we-can-do-anything quality." From there Harris moves rapidly and romantically on to recount his formative teens behind the wheel of a convertible Corvair with a surfboard in the back.

Chapman J. Root II is another forty-two-year-old Florida boy who shares Harris's attachment to Daytona and Ormond, although, as the great-grandson of the man whose company created the original hobble-skirted six and a half ounce Coca-Cola bottle and as the son of the man who parlayed that creation into the largest independent Coca-Cola bottler in the U.S., his early years at the beach ran more along the lines of Porsches than Corvairs. But unlike Harris, Root never left. Nor does he intend to. This beach is home. Which is why he bought a late-forties rambling oceanfront "dump," as he characterizes it, which he then presented to Harris to renovate into a guesthouse for his and girlfriend Catherine Rahn's many friends.



Root's enthusiasm for the project, and, according to Harris, Root was wildly enthusiastic, goes hand in glove with an idiosyncratic sensibility cultivated by travel—"Catherine and I just got back from scuba-diving around those World War II Japanese shipwrecks in the Truk Lagoon"—and by a habit of hauling home ever more curious souvenirs to add to his ever-growing collection. Characterizing that collection, Root confesses, "I tend toward the primitive, the bizarre, the strange." Putting a finer focus on it, he adds, "I mean, I like tiger penises."

The exotic eye combined with the passion for local color would explain why Root had not a single reservation about Harris's proposal for transforming the once-anonymous concrete block house into a guaranteed-to-stop-traffic vision of architectural delight. Although more than one car has pulled into Root's yard to ask when the amusement park would be open, Harris explains: "The

In the living room, *opposite*, limestone floors are enlivened by Annie Sherburne's sea-inspired carpets under a barrel-vaulted ceiling with starry-starry-night lights. Roger Crowley's sofa is upholstered in what Harris calls "boiled lobster red" bouclé from Glant. Harris designed the chubby yellow chair covered in a Clarence House mohair. The glass trio is by Catherine Rahn. *Above right:* In the adjacent dining room, chairs from Donghia Furniture surround a table by Roger Crowley. *Right:* The view is the Atlantic; the bench is by Massimo Iosa Ghini. *Above:* A zebrawood spiral stair leads to the master bedroom.

house was an attempt to create something that represents the authentic culture of this beach community. In a funny way it's an incredibly unpretentious building; it's a series of dumb sheds. The issue being addressed is cultural engagement. Maybe it's even a bit political. It's not a bourgeois house because the ideas that inform it are not bourgeois visions of what a house should be. They are 'motel,' they are 'boardwalk,' they are 'pier,' they are 'grandstand,' they are 'bait shop,' they are 'lifeguard tower.' " The house is also unabashedly flamboyant, Harris concedes—has there ever been a purple, a green, a yellow, a red so blisteringly bright? "Because it's so over the top in terms of taste, most people hate it," chortles the architect. "Not enough people, but a lot. They think it lacks decorum." Which, of course, it merrily does.

Encouraging Harris along the way was his longtime companion and collaborator, British-born artist Lucien Rees-Roberts, who spent the final six weeks of the house's construction in Florida overseeing the patterns, colors, and decoration, all of which he helped develop in New York. Rees-Roberts's southern hiatus turned out to be something of a labor of love since, according to Harris, "Lucien's an Englishman who hates humidity."

If Harris's house for Root is a spectacle, it is a spectacle with not only a heart but also a point of view. Harris believes—and is willing to argue with considerable zeal—that every place, every community, every culture has its own spirit and vernacular, which should not merely be acknowledged but glorified. To drive the point home to his architecture students at Yale, Harris assigned the problem of designing a high school in Greenwich Village for gay teenagers. "The idea came from New York's Harvey Milk School, which is for gay kids who are either thrown out of or choose to leave public school," he explains. His idea was to "force the students to think about how a building relates to its culture, how a building represents itself to that culture." Two questions, as Chapman Root's house attests, that are uppermost on Harris's mind. ♠

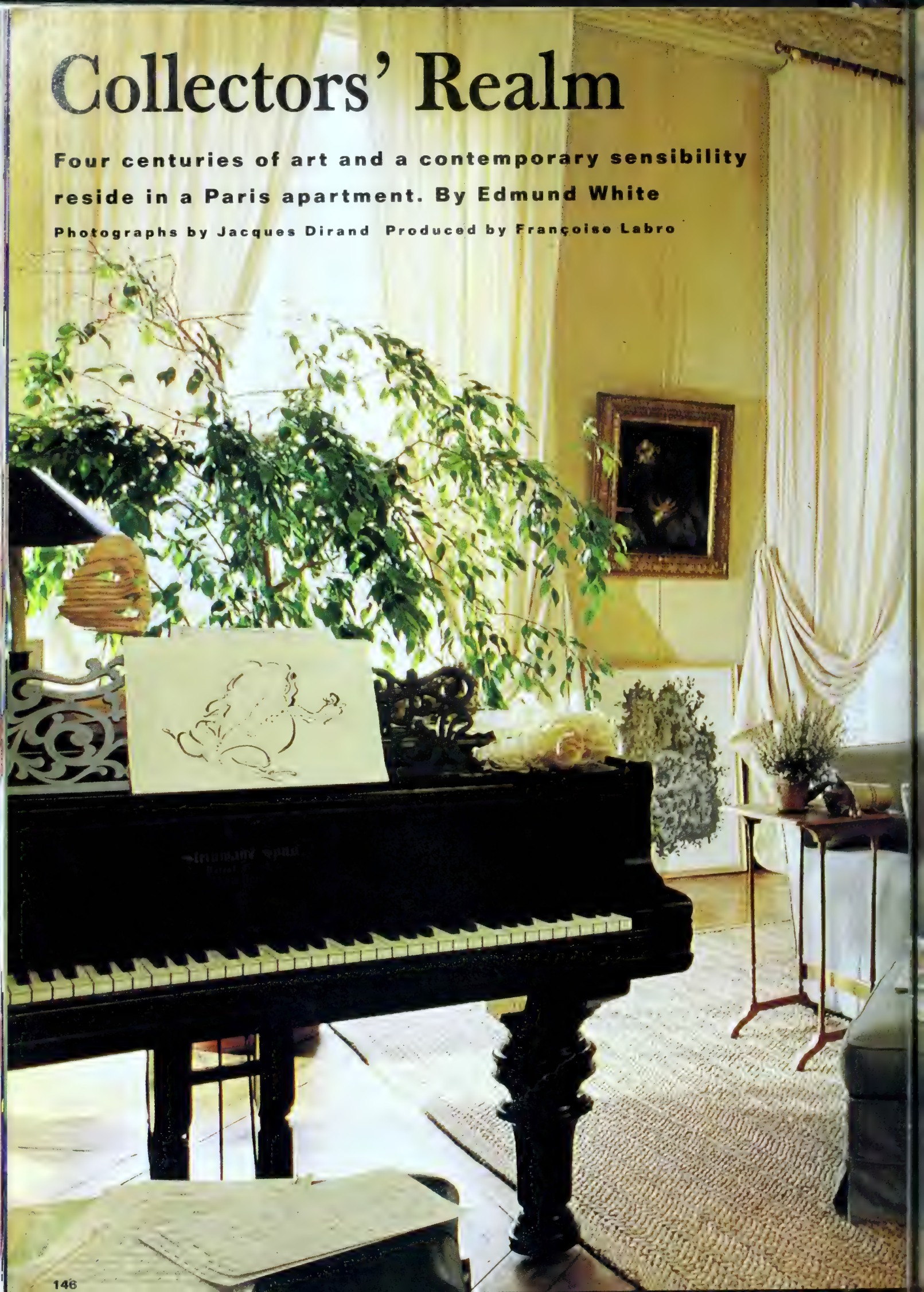
The stucco pool house, *above left,* was inspired by the grandstands at Daytona's speedway. *Opposite above* and *opposite below:* The "sin den," as the room held aloft by metal piers is called, was modeled after the interior of a cabin cruiser, with goofy gooseneck lamps and built-in banquettes. *Left:* In the master bedroom, a lamp by Kevin Walz for Arc International perches on a Meret Oppenheim table from Palazzetti. The fish rug is by Annie Sherburne. *Above:* A living room porthole looks into the guest room lined in purple silk from Ian Crawford. A Gianni Versace cotton from China Seas covers the bed.

"Because the house is so over the top," notes Harris, "most people hate it—not enough people, but a lot"

Collectors' Realm

Four centuries of art and a contemporary sensibility reside in a Paris apartment. By Edmund White

Photographs by Jacques Dirand Produced by Françoise Labro



In the salon, unlined linen curtains, painted walls, and a rush carpet from David Hicks create a quiet setting for 20th-century abstract works, a 17th-century portrait in the style of Mateo Cerezo, and a painting attributed to Ribera. Simple sofas are covered in raw silk from Manuel Canovas. Details see Resources.

"PRINCELY AUSTERITY" IS PERHAPS THE BEST formula for capturing the spirit of this huge Paris apartment. It occupies a floor of a gracious seventeenth-century hôtel particulier in the Left Bank neighborhood of Faubourg Saint-Germain, once the haunt of Proust's duchesses, now the embassy quarter. The spacious peaceful rooms—with their marble fireplaces, Versailles parquet floors, and plasterwork cornices—are so eloquent they are best left as monochrome and empty as possible. Austerity is not exactly a French bourgeois virtue, but for the art historian who lives here with her husband, it's second nature. Their sense of restraint and sobriety turns out to be the best foil for the majestic proportions of their apartment.

A studied artlessness rules over every detail. The Irish linen curtains, unlined and unhemmed, trail across the floor and are draped carelessly in improvised swags that vary every day but always give a dry yellow tint to the pearly light. The carpets in the main salon and the dining room are woven rush—of the very same sort used in such great French châteaux as Vaux-le-Vicomte during the seventeenth century.

In the shadowy volumes of these noble rooms a sophisticated concealed spot picks out the waxen, nearly green complexion of a suffering saint by followers of Ribera or Caravaggio or Mateo Cerezo. Statues and paintings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries alternate with abstract canvases and drawings of the 1950s by Étienne Hajdu or Jean-Luc Perrot; these periods share the same muted palette and high seriousness, perhaps even the same cruelty and sense of grotesque drama.

Very few pieces of furniture clutter the generous spaces. "I want everything to seem stripped and bare," the art historian declares, "like a Visconti movie set." In the bedroom, for instance, she's placed little else other than an antique garden chair, a massive bed, a flea market table, and black and white engravings—a series by Henri Fantin-Latour inspired by Wagner operas. In the study, large tables piled high with research books are surrounded by curved-back turn-of-the-century chairs by the Austrian architect Jo-

The walls have been treated to look old and the cornices dulled to look dusty

A grouping of 18th- and 19th-century pictures hang in the study, *above,* where curved-back Josef Hoffmann chairs and a Thonet armchair provide elegant seating. *Opposite, clockwise from top left:* A drawing by Dominique le Marois and two gouaches by Alain Gauvin in the entrance hall. French 17th- and 18th-century terra-cottas on a marble mantelpiece. Jacques Dunbar drawing with sculptures by Marydou Salvy and Isabel Echarri on the Steinway. Stones, sands, and bones gathered on the owners' travels displayed on a hall table. A Caravaggesque saint hanging above a pottery-laden console in the salon.

A 16th-century Venetian table and two armchairs dominate the library. The trompe l'oeil border over the built-in bookcases was painted by the owner with artist Jacques Dunbar.

sef Hoffmann; they form a neutral background for a French painting of a nursing mother by an eighteenth-century student of Chardin or for a nineteenth-century portrait of a Spanish cardinal.

This is the sort of simplicity that comes dear. The sofas in the salon are covered with raw silk from Manuel Canovas—and the couple have six entire sets of slipcovers in different shades. The dining room is painted with a subtle wash and the walls of the salon are treated with a complicated secco process to look old-fashioned and yellowed. The cornices have even been dulled to look dusty. The mistress of the house and artist Jacques Dunbar have brushed in monochrome paintings of baskets, fruits, books, even a stuffed owl above the bookcases in the library. The tablecloth is an antique linen sheet, the dining room chairs are from the Perpignan public garden, and half of the drawings are propped against the walls or the bookshelves, but this backstage clutter only throws into relief the quality of the baroque terra-cotta figurines, the sulfurous martyrs—and the watery light itself, always so hesitant and mutable in Paris.

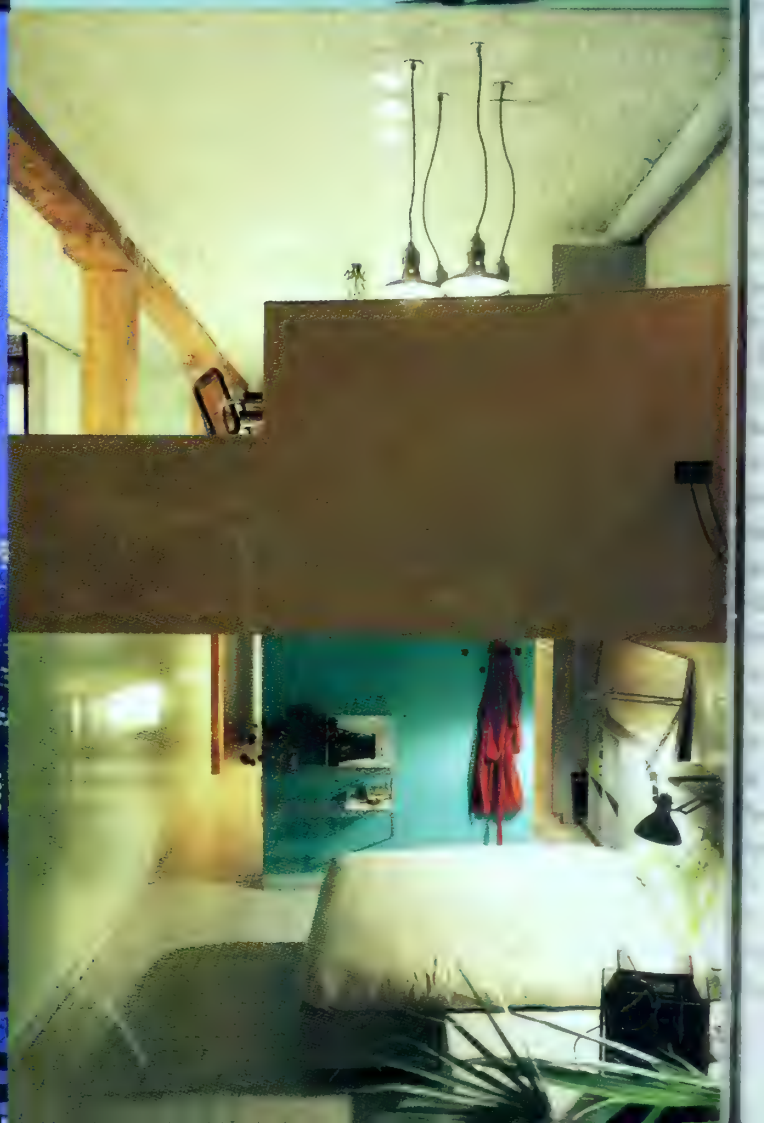
Like Heraclitus stepping into the river, the visitor here never experiences the same thing twice. All is flux—the position of the furniture, the colors, the constantly circulating stacks of books, the plants and bibelots. Sometimes the feeling of intellectual concentration is pushed aside when guests are invited in. The couple count among their friends many artists who offer to entertain from time to time. One musical evening features a private concert by a famous cellist; another, Russian music and poetry readings late into the night. Yet another is devoted to the music and cuisine of India. But when the champagne flutes are cleared away and the throws have been folded and stored, the atmosphere of hushed concentration is once again restored. It's perfect that the painted owl in the library reigns over the household: isn't it the symbol of Minerva, goddess of wisdom?

> "I want everything to seem bare, like a Visconti movie set," says the owner

On a chilly night, however, the couple can look up from their books at the mementos they've gathered from trips all over the world. Nothing to covet: just stones, sand, bones, all dry spare things in this rainy overrich city of foie gras and candied chestnuts. ♠

An antique linen sheet is draped across the oval dining room table, *above*, which is ringed with vintage garden chairs. Drawings by Jean-Luc Perrot line the walls, and an early 20th century bench from Cour Intérieur, Paris, sits by the window. *Opposite:* The bedroom is sparsely furnished—a garden chair, a flea market table, and a bed surrounded by a series of Henri Fantin-Latour engravings inspired by Wagner operas. On the loft overhead is an abstract painting by Eric Bauer.

Yves Saint
Laurent's
1940s look
1971, left.
Below: Ala
Bachabeau
high-tech
left. Belo
left: Johns
Burger's
Building
Hugh Sta
Of Americ
Century C
For left,
Calvin Kl
apartment
Joe D'Urs
Details se
Resource

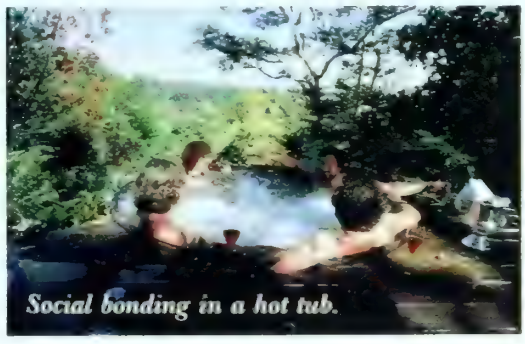


Getting in Touch with the 70s

By Herbert Muschamp

Produced by Charles Gandee

ARE YOU LYING DOWN? ON A WATER BED? WELL, GET ready, because the wheels of retro are rumbling again. It's time to move on from this interminable obsession with the 1960s. And what other stop is left for retro but the decade often dismissed as the sixties' dull anticlimax? So get out your WIN buttons. Expose the brick on those apartment walls. Home is where you'll be hanging your houseplants in macramé holders. And if the mood ring still fits, wear it. Oh, *no!* Oh, yes: it's springtime for the seventies.



Social bonding in a hot tub.

But this time retro's wheels are turning full circle—and maybe coming to a full stop. For retro was a child of the 1970s. Yves Saint Laurent's notorious Collection 40, inspired by postwar women's fashions, hit the runway in 1971. By the end of the decade, postmodernism, retro's highbrow twin, was in full pressed flower. What is there to retrieve from a decade already so dulled with golden oldies? What can the seventies offer us now?

Perhaps they can offer deeper insight into retro's cultural meaning, since in retrospect, as it were, it is clear that the seventies differed sharply from the twenties, thirties, forties, and other epochs people have rifled for style. Those decades believed in progress. Retro marked the replacement of that belief with a fearful reluctance to move forward on the twentieth century's express toward the future. Fear was a big item in the seventies. The decade began with Altamont, the Rolling Stones concert at which four people lost their lives and flower children lost their innocence. Wasn't it time to get off the fast-forward express before it crashed? "Suicide chic": that was an epithet people hurled at those bell-bottomed souls who hung onto the sixties too long. Even the Beatles were telling us to get back to where we once belonged. Get a job. Get a family. Get a polyester leisure suit. So what if life was no longer a gas gas gas? Was polyester really a fate worse than death?

Sensory awareness at Esalen, Big Sur

In hindsight it is obvious that something big was going on beneath the decade's beige Ultrasuede surface, a cultural shift we have yet to fully comprehend. But to grasp its significance we first need to recognize that the sixties had a lot more going for them than sex, drugs, and rock and roll. They had the entire history of the romantic movement and its legacy of social and artistic rebellion. The sixties did more than roll over, Beethoven. They echoed Beethoven himself, rolling over the classical tradition that preceded him. A seminal romantic idea is that authentic art opposes social convention. That idea unfolds in the writings of Rousseau, the paintings of Delacroix, the withdrawal from civilized constraints into the primitive state of nature. It plays out in the shock tactics of the modern avant-gardes, out to scandalize the bourgeoisie, frighten the horses, provoke riots in the street.

But what happens when opposition to social norms *becomes* the social norm? What happens when romantic rebellion ceases to be the exclusive prerogative of bumptious geniuses and becomes the people's choice? For that is what happened in the 1960s: rebellion became every adolescent's birthright. We were scarcely allowed to proceed to adulthood without giving our parents heart failure and totaling at least one car. That was the essence of pop culture's message, blaring incessantly from every radio, TV, and movie screen in the land. And in the seventies we began to discover the long-term consequences of the years when romanticism went pop.

The signs of change were conspicuous in the art

Mood ring colors: babbling blue, gregarious green, outrageous orange.

world early on. In 1971, Gordon Matta-Clark and a few artist friends got together to create a restaurant in a crummy New York neighborhood for which the name SoHo had only recently been coined. A boisterous, charismatic figure who made an art of slicing up old buildings with a buzz saw, Matta-Clark was a romantic artist in the old mold. His venture into the hospitality business, the restaurant Food, started out in the feisty sixties spirit of us-against-them, a countercultural alternative to uptown manners. There was nothing new about artists setting up house in seedy parts of town. But SoHo quickly turned into something radically different from the usual bohemian quarter. Instead of a raffish fringe alternative to upright decorum, SoHo became a model of community living and a social lure for the affluent.

The SoHo loft became a model home in the seventies, not just because it offered lots of big open space but because it offered the prospect that you could fill up all that space with big open houses. Before long, city officials were writing laws to prevent bankers, accountants, and lawyers from moving into SoHo's lofts. Artists were now commodity producers, major contributors to the urban economy. Even their work reflected a new social spirit. As art contracted into minimalism, dematerialized into conceptualism, and was reincarnated as performance, the work of art became almost secondary to its social occasion. Those who tsk-tsked the middle-class comforts of SoHo artists missed the story: a group of people who for a century had stood for social alienation now offered a fragmented city its nearest approximation to a real community.

The avant-garde

Boredom was easier to bear than the fear that America really blew it

ceased to have much meaning in the seventies. If there was a difference between downtown and uptown, the relationship was no longer one of opposition. The very idea of opposition came to seem stale and contrived. That was clear when Richard Serra put up his obnoxious sculpture *Tilted Arc*. Trying to breathe new life into the old oppositional stance, Serra instead proved just how rancid the idea had become. Everyone was weary of divisiveness. By late 1974 the United States was out of Vietnam and rid of a presidential administration that had exploited divisiveness for political gain. By the end of the decade the term "public art" was in currency, a sign that art had taken on a less aggressive social role. For many, Joseph Beuys became the period's most significant artist with work that elicited public participation and enacted rituals of healing.

Art world bonding had its counterpart throughout society in self-help groups like Arica and est, books like *Born to Win* and *Your Erroneous Zones*. It was in response to these avatars of "human potential" that Tom Wolfe bestowed on the period its most telling label, the Me Decade. Yet in a way the label was misleading. Self-help groups were notably *not* for rugged individualists spinning freely in their private orbits. They were tools of social bonding, a means of renewing the idea of community based on individual fulfillment. The books were less about "doing your own thing" than about inventing a common language with its own useful words and phrases like "Do your own thing." This was not a movement of Thoreaus heading out for a lonely spell at Walden Pond. It was a gathering of congenial pals in the bubbling waters of a hot tub.

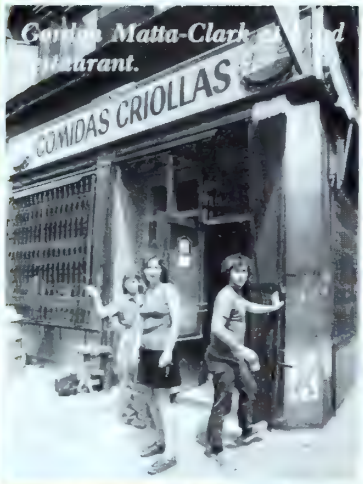
It was a bid, in other words, for company—perhaps not coincidentally the title of a 1970 musical by Stephen Sondheim which dramatized the new premium on "relationships." But it was *A Chorus Line* which put the brightest spotlight on the search for a realignment between society and self. In top hat and tails, the chorus line sang its tribute to "one singular sensation," the absent star the dancers had auditioned to back. But the Sensational One was also each of the dancers on the line, and their unity at the play's end as they high-kicked into their infinite reflection in the show's mirrored set.

Those on the lookout for warning signs of latent fascism may have found cause for alarm in this rousing spectacle of selves merging into a synchronized group. There were also those who detected in disco's pounding beat and machine-made mix the sinister specter of the mindless herd. But in fact, the point of *A Chorus Line* was to introduce the audience to the individual dancers whose lives we came to know. These were not the faceless hoofers of a Busby Berkeley musical receding into military formation behind Ruby Keeler. And anyone who wanted to get past the rope at *(Continued on page 173)*

Me Decade self-help classics for home and psyche, left.
A button abbreviates the public mantra "Whip inflation now!" above.

The J. Paul Getty Museum's Malibu villa.

Studio 54.



Gordon Matta-Clark [illegible] restaurant.

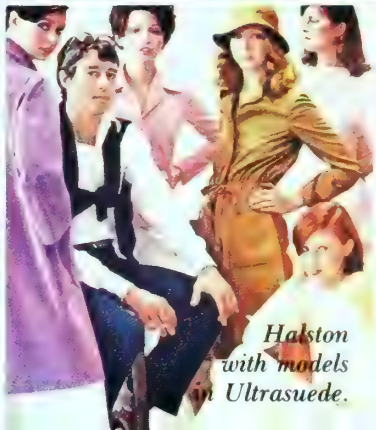
Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia, New Orleans.

Larry Kramer's apartment by Joe D'Urso.

Richard Serra's Tilted Arc, New York.

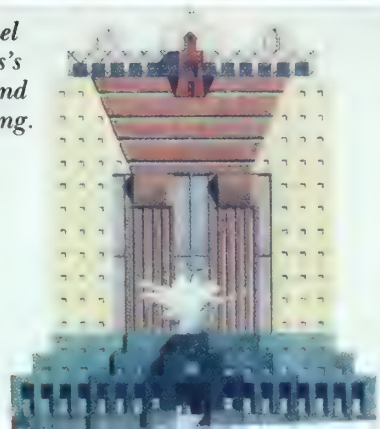
Rocking into the seventies.

Original cast of A Chorus Line.



Halston with models in Ultrasuede.

Michael Graves's Portland Building.



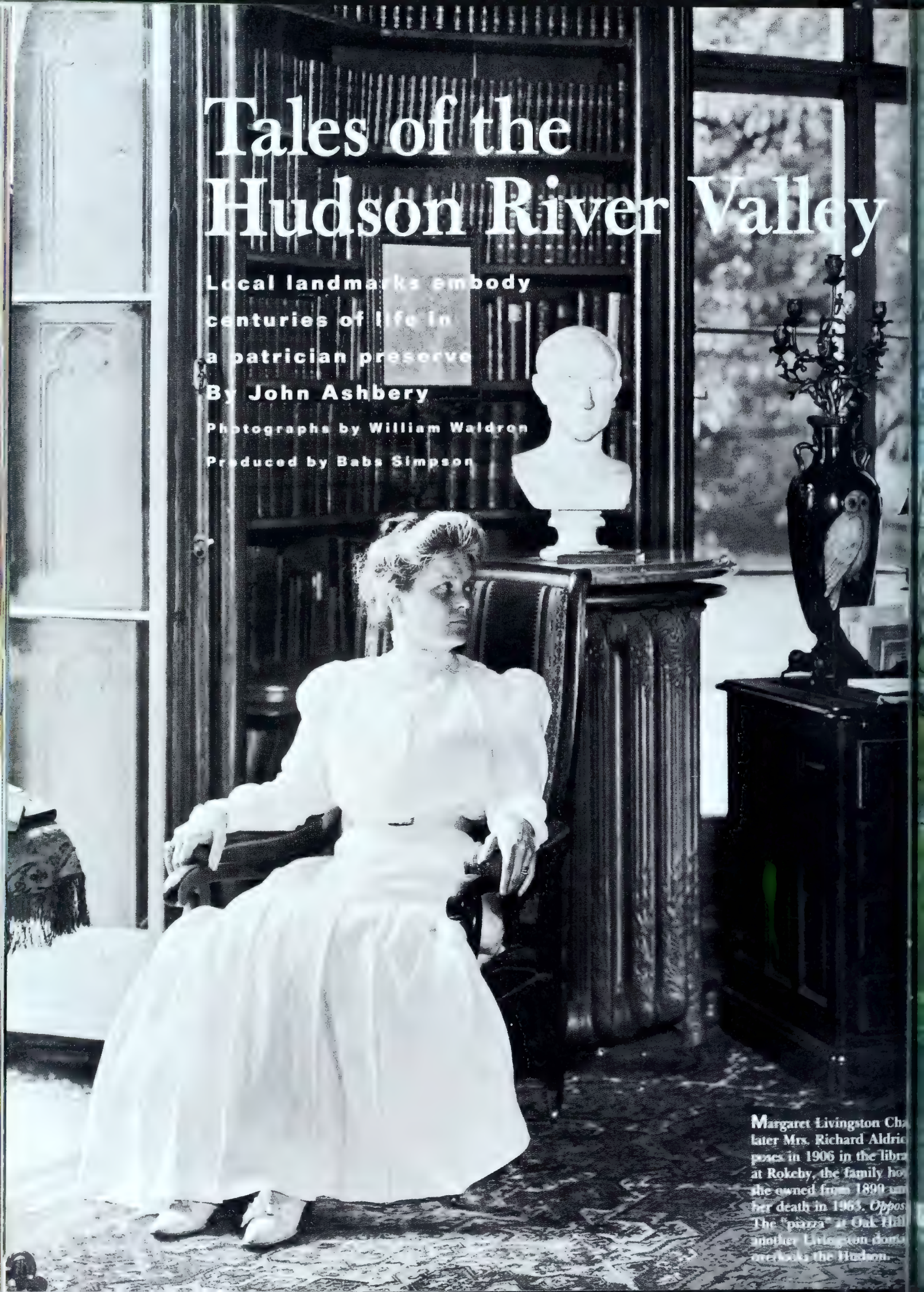
Tales of the Hudson River Valley

Local landmarks embody centuries of life in a patrician preserve

By John Ashbery

Photographs by William Waldron

Produced by Babs Simpson



Margaret Livingston Cha
later Mrs. Richard Aldric
poses in 1906 in the libra
at Rokeby, the family ho
she owned from 1890 un
her death in 1963. *Oppos*
The "piazza" at Oak Hill
another Livingston dom
overlooks the Hudson.

Rokeby's almost exuberant shabbiness speaks of the Aldriches' determination to keep the place afloat come hell or high water

THE UPPER HUDson River valley is hardly a well-kept secret. It is, as valley resident Joan K. Davidson puts it succinctly, "the cradle of American history, American art, and the modern American environmental movement." Yet for various reasons it remains elusive, a place of legends, of which Rip Van Winkle's is only the best known. The very fact that it's difficult to keep in focus a mental or visual picture of the valley helps protect its mystery and the pockets in which legends live on.

Ironically, unless you are one of a handful of landowners lucky enough to own a house overlooking the Hudson, the best way to view the valley is by train, which follows the river's eastern edge all the way from the northern tip of Manhattan to Albany, in some cases slicing through the backyards of estates, but generally keeping a low profile while providing breathtaking views that make the ride one of the most beautiful train trips in America.

It isn't just the unpredictable river itself, now unexpectedly narrow, now suddenly opening out into broad wind-washed expanses like the Tappan Zee, elsewhere divided

by islands or peninsulas which seem to have a private life of their own. It isn't even the view of the west bank itself, beginning with the fortresslike Palisades Ridge, then on to Bear Mountain (which *looks* like a giant hibernating bear), culminating in the colossal profile of the eastern extremity of the Catskill range that begins above Kingston and stretches some thirty miles northward and has been likened to the contours of a reclining giantess.

All these contribute to the experience, of course, but there is something harder to define: a sense of high adventure as the train detaches itself from the city and plunges due north into a land where place names like Rhinecliff, Tivoli, Wolf Hill Road, and—my favorite—Doodletown Road (nor must we forget Ichabod Crane Central School) do nothing to discourage that sense. It's a place where workaday rural life and the romantic past coexist, jostling each other only slightly.

Traveling by car you see much less: the great houses are for the most part securely tucked away behind woods and gatehouses that bar access to the river, though several (the Mills and Vanderbilt mansions and Montgomery Place in Dutchess County as well as Clermont in southern Columbia County) are open to the public and well worth seeking out. In general, there is a healthy mix of public and enlightened private stewardship that has helped secure the integrity of what Tim Mulligan, in his valuable guide *The Hudson River Valley,* calls America's Loire Valley.

A newcomer who is making an impact on the region, Joan K. Davidson acquired Midwood, an eighty-seven-acre estate with a sprawling hundred-year-old house perched on a cliff above the river, barely six years ago, though the J. M. Kaplan Fund, of which she is president, has supported environmental and historic preservation as well as sound land use in the Hudson Valley for decades. Her proprietary pride sounds quite as strong as that of the landed gentry when she characterizes "our stretch of the valley as extraordinary in its nineteen miles of almost contiguous scenic landscape full of gorgeous farmland, historic houses big and small, and good old river towns."

That stretch of coastline (some thirty square miles in all), recently

A manservant stands outside a drawing room window at Rokeby, c. 1884, *above.* Built in 1811–15, the house acquired its tower in the 1850s. *Left:* The estate is one of many marked on an 1894 Hudson Valley map. *Opposite above:* Olmsted Brothers improved the west gardens in 1911. *Opposite below:* The Gothic revival library on the ground floor of the tower.

designated the Hudson River Historic District by the National Park Service, is a surviving remnant of several patents dating from the late seventeenth century, when the English were seeking to develop the province of New York, as the Dutch had before them, through land grants to favored colonists who would in turn establish settlements in the wilderness in an aristocratic pattern descended from the feudal system. Two of the largest grants were Robert Livingston's Clermont and the Beekman family's Rhinebeck, a few miles to the south.

A ninth-generation Livingston, Henry, lives today in Oak Hill, a handsome if somewhat severe foursquare federal house built in the 1790s by his ancestor John and now topped with the mansard roof that so many Hudson Valley houses acquired during the nineteenth century. An affable man whose close links to the region are apparent even before he speaks of it, he is married to the former Maria Burroughs, a great-granddaughter of the Hudson River painter Frederic Edwin Church, whose quasi-oriental palace, Olana, looms on a hilltop nearby. Henry Livingston believes that his ancestor chose Oak Hill's site not just for practical reasons—the narrowness of the Hudson at this point would later facilitate a commercial link with the old Susquehanna turnpike to the west—but also for its beautiful view. "He had an eye for luminism," Livingston says, pointing to the seven-foot-tall windows facing the river which are unusually large for the period and "very cold." Nevertheless this is a warm house, burnished by being cared for by generation after generation.

A kitchen wing added in Victorian times seems to have become the hub of family activity; from it a broad corridor with parlors and a dining room on either side sweeps the length of the house to the "piazza"—another nineteenth-century addition, angled so as not to interrupt the river view from inside, where life goes on all year and the late-afternoon light pouring eastward over the Catskills is a joy in any season.

The same porch positioning exists at Rokeby, owned by Winthrop "Winty" Aldrich (an assistant to the state commissioner on environmental conservation and perhaps the most prominent of the Hudson Valley activists) and his brother and sister. Built for General John Armstrong, an Aldrich forebear, possibly

Dropcloths and wallpaper samples, *opposite*, help furnish restoration architect Jeremiah Rusconi's 1839 house in Hudson. *Above:* A Greek revival bedroom mantel. *Left:* Said to have been built by a sea captain, the house recalls Hudson's heyday as a whaling port. *Below:* The parlor-studio.

ROCKEFELLER TAVERN

Rockefellers gather in the 1930s at their ancestral house in Germantown, *above*, part of which was once a tavern. *Left:* In a downstairs hallway the present owners, Mary Black and Mike Gladstone, have concealed a lavatory behind the doors of a Dutch kas. *Below left:* A Dutch door connects halves of the house built at different times. Black's half is on the near side of the door, Gladstone's beyond.

to the designs of the French architect Joseph Jacques Ramée, the house was occupied by the family in 1815 while it was still uncompleted, after their temporary home burned down. Today it still looks as if they hadn't finished moving in: its almost exuberant shabbiness contrasts with Oak Hill's solid comfort and speaks of the Aldriches' determination to keep the place afloat come hell or high water.

Rokeby became the property of Winthrop's grandmother, Margaret Livingston Chanler, in 1899, after she succeeded in buying out her many siblings' interests; several years later she married the musicologist and *New York Times* music critic Richard Aldrich. Remodeled and enlarged in the mid nineteenth century and with further interior alterations done in 1895 by Stanford White, a family friend, the house is both ungainly and totally charming, the ideal house to have been a child in. A center hall furnished with gigantic Renaissance revival cabinets leads to a perplexing warren of little staircases and service rooms whose pattern no one has ever been able to figure out; at the corners of a landing White introduced "hidden" servants' passages to confuse things even further.

A reception room to the left of the

hall and a drawing room furnished by White with green upholstery and wallpaper intended to continue the tapis vert of nature outside are both oriented toward the river, as is the Gothic revival octagonal library, the ground floor of a five-story tower. The reception room still has its red and brown French floral paper hung on a wood and muslin framework to protect it from "rising damp"—to me only the title of a British TV series until recently, but a fact of life in the valley. Everything—gilt leather bindings, a fading Aubusson carpet, bibelots from wherever and whenever (including a piece of imperial Chinese embroidery salvaged by the indomitable Margaret, who was in China during the Boxer Rebellion where it was being used as a sandbag)—looks old, tired, distinguished, rich, and right. Miss Havisham would have felt at home here, but, obviously, so do the spirited and active Aldriches.

Somewhat more formal, though hardly austere, is the brick gentilhommière known as Forth House—in Livingston, a few miles east of the river—owned by the architect Harry van Dyke and his brother Frank, a horticulturist. Harry, who has a practice in New York City, has also done restoration work on historic houses in the valley region, including Joan Davidson's Midwood, the Rockefeller Tavern, and others belonging to art dealer Pierre Levai and novelist Harold Brodkey.

Forth House (whose name may be an abbreviation of Forsyth, that of an early owner, or allude to the River Forth—Scottish place names abound in the region), purchased by the van Dyke brothers and their late mother in the 1950s, has rightly been called one of the most outstanding Greek revival residences in the county. The façade, with its discreet white portico (the rear one runs the length of the house as a piazza), is sober but welcoming; the interior decoration is notable for its rows of lead medallions, copied from an ornament at the Erechtheum in Athens, that march around door and window frames and seem to be bolting the house together. The van Dykes have added a spectacular conservatory, which protects tender plants in winter and serves as a dining and party room in summer; adjoining it is a room

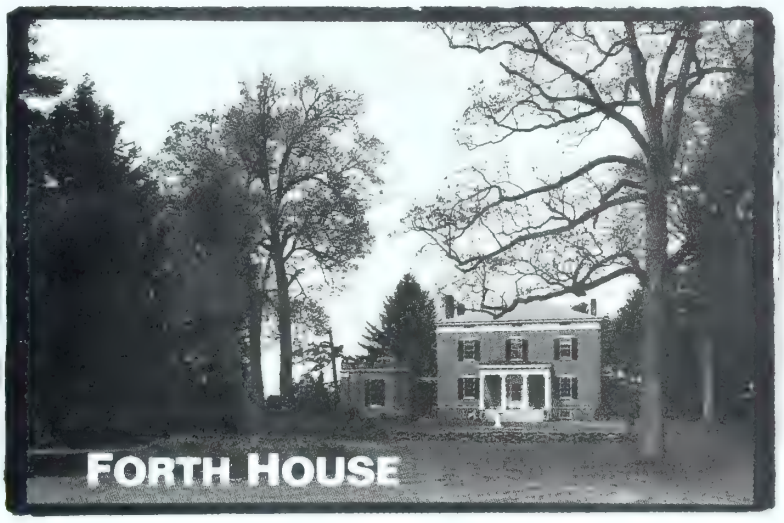
Livingston portraits survey the dining room at Oak Hill, *above*, now home to a ninth-generation heir. *Below left:* The American Empire sofa and matching chairs were made for Oak Hill. *Below:* The house dates to the 1790s.

chiefly devoted to housing issues of *Country Life*, which, as Harry observes, accumulate at an alarming rate.

One unusual feature is the triple-hung windows at the back, typical of southern houses of the time. They allow access to the piazza and a recently created terrace and let in breezes in summer. Outside, a series of enclosed formal gardens and "wild" English-style ones, as well as a grove of towering trees that screen it from a nearby highway, extend the serene classicism of the house.

> The valley is a place of legends, of which Rip Van Winkle's is only the best known

Several miles to the southwest in the town of Germantown (once called East Camp by the Palatine refugees who settled it in the eighteenth century) is the house known during most of the nineteenth century as the Rockefeller Tavern, now the home of art historian Mary Black and publisher Mike Gladstone. It is a remarkably clear wedding of the vernacular Dutch and English styles common throughout the Hudson Valley. The Dutch half, which originally served as a house and tavern where John D. Rockefeller's great-grandparents were married in 1772, was basically a plain one-room stone structure with a half-story loft above; it dates from about 1755. The more spacious and higher-ceilinged English half was added about 1800.



FORTH HOUSE

The tavern was ideal for the two houses under one roof that Black and Gladstone had envisioned, which are further united by long first- and second-story porches. A connecting Dutch door, originally an exterior door of the tavern, now serves as a perfect device for defining separate but contiguous units. Beyond adding a few windows and a downstairs lavatory cleverly hidden in a replica of a large Dutch kas, or wardrobe (of which Oak Hill has a particularly fine example), the owners have left the place much as it was. Both halves are furnished with a combination of nineteenth-century antiques and comfortable contemporary furniture and folk art from Black's collections, the most notable pieces being her family portraits by Erastus Salisbury Field and Gladstone's pair of Wardian cases, patented terrariums more often seen in Victorian engravings than in person.

Hudson, New York, is the train hub of the upper valley, and the first house one encounters on walking up from the station is Jeremiah Rusconi's faded redbrick Greek revival one. It stands as a kind of symbolic signpost to the small river city, whose fortunes have fluctuated with the times and are still doing so. Rusconi, whose business is architectural restoration (he was also the art director of the Merchant Ivory film *The Europeans*), bought the place *(Continued on page 172)*

Lead medallions based on paterae at the Erechtheum in Athens ornament Greek revival woodwork at Forth House, *right*. The dining table is set for one of the teas at which Harry and Frank van Dyke entertain neighbors. *Above:* Harry van Dyke, an architect, and his brother, a horticulturist, enlarged the 1833 house with a neoclassical conservatory, at left.

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THE STUDY

1

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Richard Jordan's masterly brushwork covers every inch of businessman Alex Nixon's media room, with a library embellished to evoke Faust's study in Boito's opera *Mefistofele*.

2

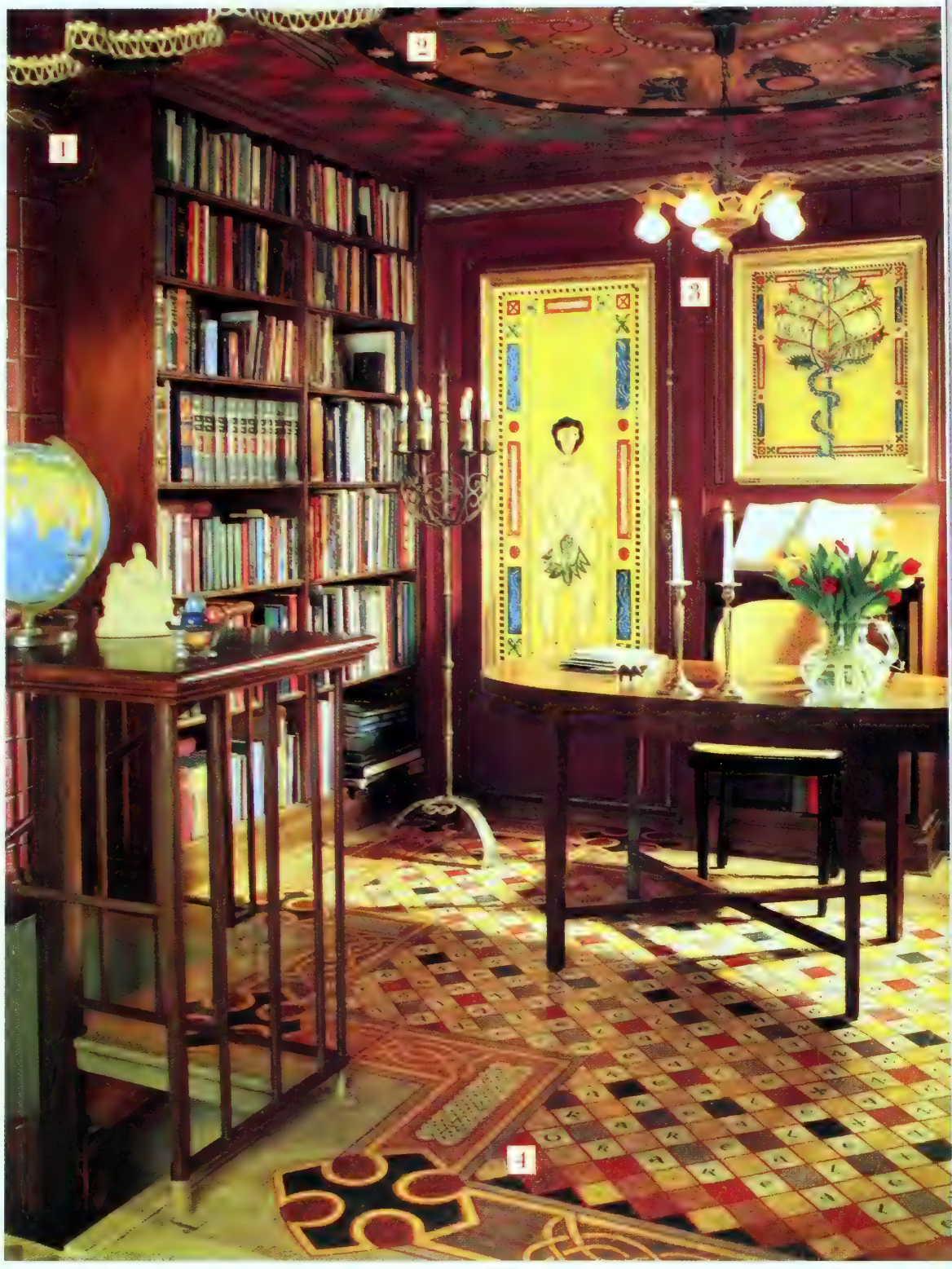
MEDIEVAL MURAL
Illuminated manuscripts inspired Jordan's vision of the Apocalypse that rings the ceiling.

3

REVERSE PAINTING
An existing glass-paneled door and window are decorated with images of Adam and the serpent. Lit from behind, they give the effect of stained glass.

4

ENDPAPER PATTERN
A multicolored checkerboard taken from a medieval Latin manuscript is customized with letters that spell out "Orare Alexander," which loosely translates as "Pray for Alexander"—Alex Nixon's wry tribute to himself.



Great ideas

Painted effects transform a media room into an opera house

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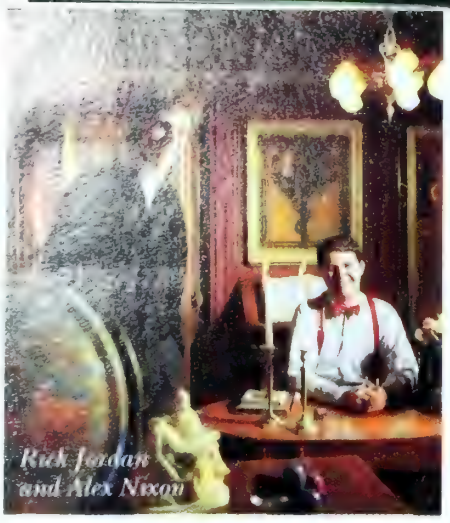

great ideas

THE THEATER ROOM

5

TWO ON THE AISLE Salvaged movie seats reupholstered in burgundy velvet stand on a faux marble pattern taken from the floor of the Sistine Chapel. A series of hollow-core storage-shelf doors are faced with painted columns, tiny capitals cast from dental plaster, and velour mats that frame sepia-toned photocopies simulating boxes at the opera.

6

SCULPTURE OVERHEAD
The vaulted ceiling, which Nixon installed himself, is painted with simulated architectural elements that add an illusionistic sense of depth.

7

BROADWAY CURTAINS
A cascade of burgundy velvet trimmed with gold braid (both from the theatrical-curtain company Nixon owns) frames the proscenium of the stage and conceals a pull-down eight-foot screen for the projection TV.

8

GLARE-FREE LIGHTING
A plastic statue of Diana was gold-leafed and placed atop a marbleized pilaster where it hides a bare bulb that floods the ceiling and crown molding with light.

9

PORTRAIT GALLERY
Nixon's photographs of family and friends replace the sepia photocopies on one of three walls he treats as a scrapbook in progress.

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Hudson River Valley

(Continued from page 166) nineteen years ago for $100 from the city, which wanted to tear it down. That was toward the end of the so-called urban renewal period, which saw the demolition of many of Hudson's historic buildings, including its famous General Worth Hotel, where Henry James and Edith Wharton were once refused admittance because they insisted on lunching with a pet dog. (The trio found a warmer reception at a nearby delicatessen.)

Built in 1839, the house purportedly belonged to a sea captain—there were many such in Hudson, a thriving upriver whaling distribution port in the mid nineteenth century (hence its omnipresent whale logo, which puzzles some visitors). Later it may have been a bordello—there were many of those too in Hudson, up until at least World War II. In the thirties a hotel and a dismal-looking lunchroom occupied the building. Rusconi's first task was to get rid of dilapidated additions to the front and rear. He then transformed the small wing, consisting of three rooms, one above the other, into snug and shipshape living quarters whose upstairs porch affords a view downriver past the station. The main rooms of the house, simply furnished with rag rugs, seersucker-covered chairs, and a heterogeneous collection of finds from flea markets and antiques shops, he uses as a working space.

The putative sea captain owner, who enjoyed an uninterrupted view across the river, would have been startled by today's nearby railroad tracks and fuel storage tanks, even though the house seems to rise jauntily above it all. Yet its position aptly characterizes Hudson, a city where beautifully restored nineteenth-century houses (many owned by "weekenders" from New York, as they are called with just a shade of contempt by the locals) coexist with scarred hardscrabble districts, reminding the visitor that this is a town, not a museum, with problems and promise, blight and unexpected beauty. Indeed, the historic valley as a whole is familiar with strategies of survival, some of them developed as defenses against the constant threat of "development" of the selfish and speculative variety. Luckily, for the time being at least, the survivors are holding their own. ▲

Family Life

(Continued from page 136) also fine examples of other great pattern-obsessed craftsmen, among them a Tiffany lamp and a lot of Fornasetti. There are two pieces of rather grand eighteenth-century Portuguese furniture, both elaborately carved and one inlaid with ivory. Over the mantel in the drawing room is a fabulous mirror with Minton tiles, designed by Edward Godwin, which was bought at auction by a proxy "who forgot to stop bidding," recalls Lady Osborne. "But we do love the mirror." If the patterns were busier, the effect would be intolerable, but though there are lots of patterns, many are simple and they do not overwhelm.

The dining room is full of Carlton Ware from the 1920s and '30s and Mason's ironstone, toward which Lady Osborne maintains a casual attitude. "I rarely buy anything so valuable that I can't use it," she says. "It was made to be used, and I enjoy it, and I put almost all of it through the dishwasher." The whole house is a funny mixture of the highly decorated and the English undecorated. Everything is clean and fresh. "Old fabrics are the emperor's new clothes of our time," Lady Osborne asserts, though she does have one panel of rather wonderful chintz from the Great Exhibition of 1851 in a bathroom curtain. The colors are muted but not faded, the tones rich but not muddy. Everything has its place, but it is a house in which you can flop comfortably among the cushions, a house in which children have clearly been made to feel comfortable.

Indeed, the Osborne children express themselves freely in their own bedrooms. One son, who is at art school, has covered his walls from floor to ceiling with postcards, bumper stickers, drawings, magazine pages, and

other pictures. They are overwhelmingly strong images, mostly psychedelic, but together the effect is one of pattern; though the room is at first startling in the context of this cozy English house, the sensibility that underlies it is not far from the sensibility manifest elsewhere in the Osborne house. It can be only a matter of time before champagne bottles fabulously distorted with the wax of a thousand late-night student candles give way to some latter-day William De Morgan.

What are patterns for? The patterns on the walls and the patterns on the furniture and the patterns on the objects and the patterns on the plates seem in this place, a pattern called home, to fit with well-established patterns for a life lived according to London habits and old-fashioned values. Such implacable surface order is the oldest priority of the English—and is in fact what patterns are for. ♠

True Wit

(Continued from page 126) "I was born in the fifties you know. I've got the Jetsons in me as well as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." A Mahal carpet, an English ruby glass globe, a red and white striped Louis XVI-style armchair, and lamps in the form of Bahamian Indians act as additional visual aids for armchair travel.

When the real world encroaches, Oetgen works to mask it. In a small room with windows overlooking the driveway, flower-covered trellises block the view. Green and cream checked fabric on the slipper chairs and sofa, an Italian marble table, and a Fragonard-blue ceiling enhance the feeling of being in an intimate garden. Another room, another mood summoned by Oetgen's repertoire of playful ideas. His gestures can be deceptively simple, for what Oetgen has captured in one house is his own heart in three dimensions. ♠

The '70s

(Continued from page 156) Studio 54 found out pretty fast that disco wasn't for conformists. Sticking out from the crowd was the surest ticket to get in.

Sleek standardized high tech, the decade's signature style, was chorus-line design: an off-the-shelf kit of parts for putting together a coordinated matte-black background effect. With its sets of stacking trays on wheels, adjustable tables, and rolling files, high tech even moved. The style was an extension of modernism, a movement whose collapse was marked by the 1972 demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project in Saint Louis. Modernism stripped of its social mission, high tech shifted functional form from the public domain to the residential interior. In effect, this was self-help design: high tech's great selling point was that

The '70s

you could order the whole look from a catalogue. The pioneering *High-Tech*, first of the glossy stylebooks that would soon descend on coffee tables everywhere, even listed the suppliers where you could order your own wire shelving, rubber floor tiles, and hospital room curtain tracks.

Joe D'Urso, a designer inextricably linked to the seventies, also treated living space as a kind of uniform. Varying little from room to room, client to client, D'Urso's interiors were like Halstons for the house. Recognizably modern in their limited palette, the crisp geometry of their furnishings, their almost religious reverence for empty space, D'Urso designs had the feel of minimalist art. In fact, with their white walls and sparse concessions to conventional ideas of domestic comfort, they resembled art galleries. Instead of providing retreats from the public realm, D'Urso's spaces symbolically connected their inhabitants to the outside world. You could stay home and still feel like a guest at a vernissage.

The word "classic" sums up the images projected by Halston on the body, D'Urso in the home. That word is telling, because with the climax of romanticism in the 1960s, the establishment of rebellion as a social norm, culture began to revert toward the kind of normativeness usually associated with the classical ideal. That ideal acquired increasing appeal throughout the seventies. Classical ballet soared in popularity: record audiences, *Time* and *Newsweek* covers, and salutes to George Balanchine as America's greatest living artist. Even a *Chorus Line* chorine conceded that "everything is beautiful at the ballet." Balanchine's New York City Ballet was "company style" at its most sublime. We went there not only for a dose of beauty but also for a lesson in civility—in the classical courtesy of partners, the willingness of dancers to endure strict mental and physical discipline in the service of art. We watched dancers grow to individual strength within a strictly codified style.

Classicism returned to architecture in 1970 when ground was broken for the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu, a building modeled with painstaking

care after the first-century Roman Villa dei Papiri. At its opening in 1974, some critics were appalled by this blatant return to the revivalism of the nineteenth century. But the following year Charles Moore, an erstwhile modernist, showed us a classicism for our time. Moore's Piazza d'Italia, a small New Orleans park, was disco classicism, its columns and pediments outlined in neon and surrounded by dancing water. By the late seventies, when Charles Jencks popularized the term "postmodernism," Michael Graves had abandoned his earlier neo-Corbusian vocabulary and introduced a highly personal graphic interpretation of the classical tradition. In 1978 onetime Mies disciple Philip Johnson set a broken pediment atop the AT&T Building, and architecture went full tilt into the retro mode from which it has only recently disengaged.

These wildly divergent works were far away from the world of uniform, impersonal order the word "classicism" often invokes. Indeed, what motivated these architects to overthrow the modernism of their early years was their desire for significantly more individuality of expression than canonical modernism allowed. Postmodern architects used classical forms like party hats at a theme ball.

Hardly a yawn of a decade, then. To look back at the seventies from today's perspective is to be struck by the shocking naiveté that allowed us the luxury to be bored, as though leisure suits, mood rings, and Joan Mondale's unflagging crusade for handicrafts were the biggest problems we would ever face. How halcyon it all looks now compared with the economic, environmental, and medical catastrophes that awaited us in the eighties. Why, then, when Peggy Lee struck up the refrain from the song "Is That All There Is?" did we all want to join in? Because boredom was a lot easier to handle than the lurking fear that America really blew it in the seventies. We lost the war, lost the oil, lost the empire. It was easier to renounce progress than to admit that we were no longer the future's only masters. But the hardest thing of all to reckon with remains the disturbing suspicion that losing an empire isn't the end of the world. It means we've got the whole world for company. ▲

Resources

CONTENTS
Page 12 E Line stainless-steel kitchen cabinets, to the trade at St. Charles, for showrooms (804) 424-3900. Electric barbecue/steam cooker (#KM88), gas burners (#KM83), at Miele, for dealers (800) 289-6435. Steel/aluminum refrigerator, to the trade at Sub-Zero, for showrooms (800) 222-7820. Countertop solid surfacing material, to the trade at Corian Tile, for showrooms (800) 426-7426. Wicker chairs, by Mondo, for stores (212) 477-3188. Isamu Noguchi mulberry bark paper/bamboo hanging light sculpture (#26A), from Akari-Gemini, for dealers (805) 966-9557. **16** Beasties custom-color hand-blocked wallpaper, designed by Peggy Angus, to order from Joanna Rock Wallpapers, 85 Lefurgy Ave., Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522, (914) 693-7699. Gourgourand viscose/cotton stripe on chair and back sofa, to the trade at Clarence House, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy

PEOPLE
Page 44 Floor lamp, by Harry Anderson, similar at Helander Gallery, Palm Beach (407) 832-4626

FOOD
Page 56 Early 19th century English drabware plate, early 19th century English creamware covered soup bowl, similar at Hollyhock, Los Angeles (213) 931-3400. Davenport English earthenware plate under soup bowl, at Foster-Ingersoll, Los Angeles (213) 652-7677. Depression ware glass plate, similar at Circa Antiques, Los Angeles (213) 662-6600. **58** Depression ware glass plate, similar at Circa Antiques (see above).

ANTIQUES
Pages 62, 64 Antiques, decoration, similar from Stingray Hornsby Extraordinary Period Antiques & Interiors, (203) 274-2293 by appt. **62** Gothic wallpaper, $85 roll, 10-roll minimum, to order from Stingray Hornsby Antiques & Interiors (see above). Custom-color San Francisco Brussels Wilton weave wool carpet, Rosanarch silk lampas on sofa (#96497-1), to the trade at Scalamandré, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Dania, Houston, Laguna Niguel, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; Jim Ditallo, Denver; Fee-McLaran, Honolulu; Gene Smiley, Minneapolis; S. C. Smith, Phoenix; Designers Showroom, Seattle. Reine Elizabeth cotton/polyester tapestry on chair, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). **64** Belgique cotton/acetate brocade on Egyptian revival chair (#96515-3), custom-color Longacre Brussels Wilton weave wool carpet, to the trade at Scalamandré (see above). Velours Soie cotton gauffraged velvet for curtain, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). Satin Stephanois viscose/acrylic on gilt furniture, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). Drapery Napoleon III hand-blocked woodblock wallpaper in dining room (#9006), to the trade at Zuber et Cie, NYC, Los Angeles; Travis-Irvin, Atlanta; Classic Revivals, Boston

WORKROOM
Page 80 Custom-color hand-blocked wallpapers Tapestry Lion, Eclipse, Alhambra Tile, Rowan, to order from Joanna Rock Wallpapers, 85 Lefurgy Ave., Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522, (914) 693-7699

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Pages 94–103 Rosedale Nurseries, Saw Mill River Rd., Hawthorne, NY 10532; (914) 769-1300

MOOD MODERNE

Pages 104–11 Architecture, decoration, by Bentley LaRosa Salasky, 160 Fifth Ave. Room 702, New York, NY 10010; (212) 255-7827 **104–05** Vittoriale viscose/cotton/linen on daybed, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). Suede on armchair, to the trade at Hermes Leather, NYC (212) 947-1153 19th-century Tabriz rug, similar at Ghiordian Knot, NYC (212) 371-6390 **107** Sofa, fabricated by McPike-Ameer, NYC (212) 206-9214 Dragon Empress fibranne and Satin Jaspe cotton/rayon on sofa, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). **108** Sconces, fabricated by Wainland's, NYC (212) 838-3385. Dining room table, fabricated by Kalle Fauset of Moss Fauset Woodworking, Hoboken (201) 714-9797 Fabric on chairs, to the trade at Decorators Walk, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy, Washington, D.C. **109** Tuscan Wall embossed linen wallpaper (#5245), to the trade at Norton Blumenthal, for showrooms (212) 752-2535. Lambert cotton chenille on sofa, to the trade at Brunschwig & Fils, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Laguna Niguel, London, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy, Washington, D.C. **110** Sconces, fabricated by Wainland's (see above). Faucet set (#6450), by Czech & Speake, at P. E. Guerin, for showrooms (212) 243-5270 Colorsound Series tiles, to the trade at Villeroy & Boch, for showrooms (201) 575-0550 Custom cotton towels with braided gold thread design, to order at Frette, NYC (212) 988-5221. **111** Jacquard cotton linens on bed, at Pratesi, NYC, Bal Harbour, Beverly Hills, Chicago, Palm Beach Courrage wool carpet, to the trade at Stark Carpet, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Troy, Washington, D.C.; Gregory Alonso, Cleveland, Dean-Warren, Phoenix

ECHOES OF AFRICA

Pages 112–15 Decorative painting, by Santino Croci, Via Acquedotto 10, San Giorgio su Legnano 20010, Italy; (331) 40-52-34. **114** Wine silk jersey dress and chiffon stole, by Stephan Janson for 1992 spring collection, at Linda Dresner, NYC (212) 308-3177, Birmingham (313) 642-4999

BACK PORCH ON THE FUTURE

Pages 116–21 Giraffe Project, Box 759, Langley, WA 98260 Architecture and construction, by Christopher Alexander, Gary Black, Curt Brown, Jim Dow, and Bryan Almquist of Center for Environmental Structure, 2701 Shasta Rd., Berkeley, CA 94708; (510) 841-6166 **118** Kilim pillows, from In the Country, the Retail Shop of Hemperley & Babbage Designs, Langley (206) 221-8202. Custom handmade unglazed terra-cotta tiles for backsplash and glazed terra-cotta tiles for counter, to order at Aruba Terra-Cotta & Tile, Seattle (206) 522-5691 **119** Cotton Chinese linens on bed, at the Cottage, Langley (206) 321-4747. **121** Custom unglazed terra-cotta tiles for floor, to order at Aruba Terra-Cotta & Tile (see above)

TRUE WIT

Pages 122–27 Interior decoration, by Oetgen Design, 2300 Peachtree Rd. N.W., Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-1112. Selected antiques, from John D. Oetgen Fine Antiques, 2300 Peachtree Rd. N.W. Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-1114. **122** Carsten Check cotton on sofa and chairs, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 109) Jacqueline cotton screen print with linen backing pillow, $150, at John D. Oetgen Fine Antiques (see above). 19th-century Italian inlaid marble table, similar at Melosi, Atlanta (404) 352-5451. **123** Greek stool, similar at Christa's, Chicago (312) 222-2520 Custom-Eze cotton check on stool, designed by John D. Oetgen, to the trade to order at Brunschwig (see above for pg 109). Old Peking turn-of-the-century wool runner, similar at Threlkeld-Schlemon, Atlanta (404) 237-7532 **124** Moss-covered urns on mantel, by Ed Stiffler, similar at Topiary Designs, Atlanta (404) 350-0851. Sunburst gold leaf wood mirror, similar at John D. Oetgen Fine Antiques (see above) **124–25** Gilded plaster moons and stars, to order at Oh So Faux, Atlanta (404) 233-4120. Bernice upholstered chair, Rive Droite banquette, Paige leather ottoman, to order from Oetgen Design (see above). Gloriana silk stripe on upholstered chair, Rayure cotton/silk stripe on pillow on chair, Grand Galon Athénée viscose Greek key trim on pillows, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16) Tallard Velvet cotton on banquette, to the trade at Cowtan & Tout, NYC; Travis-Irvin, Atlanta, Shecter-Martin, Boston; Rozmallin, Chicago, Troy; Rozmallin at Baker, Knapp & Tubbs, Cleveland, Minneapolis; John Edward Hughes, Dallas, Denver, Houston; Bill Nessen, Dania, Kneedler-Fauchère, Los Angeles, San Francisco; Croce, Philadelphia; Wayne Martin, Portland, Seattle. West Lake glazed silk for curtains, to the trade at Scalamandré (see above for pg 62) Toile Anjou linen/cotton (two colors) on klismos chair, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 109) Ravenscroft moss leather on ottoman, to the trade at Jerry Pair & Assocs., Atlanta (404) 261-6337, Dania (305) 923-3330 Kuman checked Jim Thompson Thai Silk on foreground chair, to the trade at Rodolph, Aiea, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Huntington Woods, Kansas City, Laguna Niguel, La Jolla, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, NYC, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, D.C. Louis XV bronze candelabra wired for lamp, 19th-century French boullotte table, bronze figures on boullotte table, similar at John D. Oetgen Fine Antiques (see above). Molin sunburst china plate on ottoman, at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC, to order (212) 753-7300 ext 8184 C'Gras sea grass carpet, to the trade at Designer Carpets, Atlanta (800) 241-0456 **126** La Nuit cotton sheets and pillowcases, by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, to order at Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, Paris (1) 42-60-37-33. Couvert de Feuilles viscose/cotton-cut velvet on rectangular pillows, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). Rouen Satin Stripe cotton/spun rayon for curtains, Carousel Stripe cotton on armchair, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 109). Jacobean Hand Embroidery cotton/wool on round night table, to the trade at Decorators Walk (see above for pg 108). 19th-century Venetian velvet picture frames, similar at Christa's (see above). 19th-century English ruby glass globe, similar at John D. Oetgen Fine Antiques (see above). **126–27** Custom pedimented wood bookcases, by John D. Oetgen, to order from Doug King of Kudzu Cabinet Works, Dawsonville (404) 216-4871. Mellon Tapestry viscose/cotton for curtains and on Queen Anne–style chairs, Siam Braid rayon trim for curtains, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pg 109) Antique Tiffany Century silver on table, similar at Beverly Bremer Silver Shop, Atlanta (404) 261-4009

PATTERNS OF FAMILY LIFE

Pages 132–33 Parallèles cotton satin for sofa, by Fardis for Osborne & Little, Colette silk taffeta for curtains, Taffeta silk taffeta for curtain border, Coronata wallpaper, from Folly Collection, all to the trade at Osborne & Little, NYC, Stamford; Ainsworth-Noah, Atlanta; Shecter-Martin, Boston; David Parrett, Chatham; Designers Choice, Chicago; Boyd-Levinson & Co., Dallas, Houston; Design West, Dania; Shanahan Collection, Denver; Randolph & Hein, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco; JW Showroom, Philadelphia; S. C. Smith, Phoenix; Stephen E. Earls Showroom, Portland, Seattle; Richard Russell, Washington, D.C. Silver frame, by Kay Ivanovic, to special-order from Kay Ivanovic, London (71) 603-9930. **135** Capri-Montaigne Optic crystal tumblers, by Baccarat, for stores (212) 826-4100. Regatta wallpaper, to the trade at Osborne & Little (see above). **136–37** Crabtree & Evelyn soaps, at Crabtree & Evelyn shops nationwide. Hertford Scroll wallpaper, by Nina Campbell, Pellinore cotton jacquard for curtains, from Elysium Collection, Palatine cotton damask on sofa, Callisto cotton/modacrylic/nylon on bench, from Gemini Collection, all to the trade at Osborne & Little (see above). Cotton patchwork quilt of Osborne & Little fabrics, available with two matching cushions, to order at Osborne & Little, 304–08 King's Rd., London SW3 5UH; (71) 352-1456 Monticello large bench, to the trade to order at Osborne & Little, NYC (212) 751-3333.

THE NEXT WAVE

Pages 138–45 Architecture, interiors, by Steven Harris of Steven Harris & Assocs. Architects, 285 Broadway, New York, NY 10007; (212) 587-1108. Landscaping, by Steven Harris (see above) and Glenn Herbert of Bellomo-Herbert & Co., New Smyrna Beach (904) 423-5515. **139** Wicker chairs, enamel-finish table, by Mondo, for stores (212) 477-3188 Italian glass mosaic pool tiles, by Vetrocolor, at Nemo Tile, NYC (212) 505-0009. **140** Hand-painted aluminum console table, to order from Steven Harris (see above). Leopard print cowhide on gilded chair, to the trade at Teddy & Arthur Edelman, NYC; Ernest Gaspard & Assocs., Atlanta; Design Resources, Beachwood; Caroline Cochran, Bethesda; Holly Hunt, Chicago, Minneapolis; Bowman & Assocs., Coral Gables; Hargett, Dallas, Houston; Egg & Dart, Denver; Shears & Window, Laguna Niguel; Litchfield Clare, London; Hinson & Co., Los Angeles; Design Resource Group, Philadelphia, Westwood; Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco; Mattoon & Assocs., Seattle. Chrome faucets with plug, by Czech & Speake, at P. E. Guerin, for showrooms (212) 243-5270. Pink and royal blue sink tiles, by Villeroy & Boch, yellow and blue sink tiles, by Interstyle, black sink tiles, by Vetrocolor, floor tiles, by Buchtal, all at Nemo Tile (see above). **142** Sea-inspired hand-tufted wool carpets, to order from Annie Sherburne, London (71) 237-5630. Siren sofa, to order from Roger Crowley, Architect, NYC (212) 439-6002 Roji cotton bouclé on sofa, to the trade at Glant Textiles at

Jerry Pair & Assocs., Atlanta, Dania; Ostrer House, Boston; Holly Hunt, Chicago, Minneapolis; Alfred & Roth Collection, Cleveland; Walter Lee Culp, Dallas, Houston; Kneedler-Fauchère, Denver, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco; Fibre Gallery, Honolulu; Hines & Co., NYC; Matches, Philadelphia; Wayne Martin, Portland, Seattle; Primavera, Toronto; Rozmallin, Troy; Matches at Miley, Washington, D.C. Custom armless chair, plate glass/steel cocktail nesting table, to order from Steven Harris (see above). Angora Mohair cotton/mohair on chair, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 16). Rapture of the Deep glass sculpture on cocktail table, by Catherine Rahn, Ormond Beach (904) 673-5935. Rhombus chair, Topo ottoman, pillow on sofa, to order from Roger Crowley, Architect (see above). Conterfond cotton/wool/polyester on Rhombus chair, to the trade at Kirk-Brummel, NYC, Chicago, Dania, Washington, D.C.; Ernest Gaspard & Assocs., Atlanta; Devon Services, Boston; DeCioccio, Cincinnati; Walter Lee Culp, Dallas, Houston; Shanahan Collection, Denver; Shears & Window, Laguna Niguel, San Franscisco; Bradbury Collection, Los Angeles; JW Showroom, Philadelphia; Thomas & Co., Phoenix; Le Tapisseur, Pittsburgh; St. Louis Design Center, St. Louis; Collins-Draheim, Seattle; Primavera, Toronto; Campbell-Louis, Troy. Isamu Noguchi tall mulberry bark paper/bamboo light sculpture (#UF4-L8), Isamu Noguchi round mulberry bark paper/bamboo light sculpture (#23N), from Akari-Gemini, for dealers (805) 966-9557. **143** Anziano wood/steel stacking chairs, to the trade at Donghia Furniture Co., NYC, Chicago, Cleveland, Dania, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; Interior Elements, Atlanta; Ostrer House, Boston; David Sutherland, Dallas, Houston; Wendy Boyd, Denver; Telio & Cie, Montreal, Toronto; Judy Baer, Philadelphia; Susan Mills, Seattle. Gaea plumed mahogany table, to order from Roger Crowley, Architect (see above). Massimo Iosa Ghini's chrome/foam Plana Bench, from Dinamic Collection, to the trade at Frederic Williams Interiors, for showrooms (212) 686-6390. Sillaba halogen sconce in stairway, by Fontana Arte, to the trade at the Lighting Center, NYC (212) 888-8388. **144** Steel Bar brushed stainless-steel lamp with copper mesh shade, by Kevin Walz, to the trade at Arc International, for showrooms (212) 727-3340. Traccia gold finish table with bronze-cast legs, by Meret Oppenheim, to the trade at Palazzetti, for showrooms (212) 832-1199. Happy Fat Fish hand-tufted wool rug, to order from Annie Sherburne (see above). Tektite glass sculpture on table, by Josh Simpson, similar at Grohe Glass Gallery, Boston (617) 227-4885. Cotton on chair (#82-88-09), to the trade at Duralee Fabrics, for showrooms (516) 273-8800 Norvent air vents (#3100), to the trade at Tom Barrow Co., for showrooms (407) 291-0961. Silk for guest room (#T6308), to the trade at Ian Crawford, for showrooms (212) 355-2228. Mandarin Rose cotton for bedspread, from Gianni Versace Collection, to the trade at China Seas, NYC, Los Angeles; Jerry Pair & Assocs., Atlanta, Dania; Ostrer House, Boston; Hinson & Co., Chicago; Walter Lee Culp, Dallas, Houston; Egg & Dart, Denver; Lancer-Furniture Guild, Hato Rey; Fee-McClaran, Honolulu; Duncan Higgins Perez, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C.; Stephen E. Earls, Portland, Seattle; Designers Showcase, San Diego; Shears & Window, San Francisco; Campbell-Louis, Troy. Custom bedspread, to order from Steven Harris (see above) **145** Gooseneck wall lamps, to order from Steven Harris (see above). Celadon Swirl screen-printed cotton sateen on banquettes, to the trade to order from Paula Zanger, NYC (212) 533-5008. Sangro cotton for blue and yellow banquette cushions, to the trade at Coraggio Textiles, NYC; Culpepper & Osborne, Atlanta; Davison's, Boston; Callard & Osgood, Chicago; Hargett, Dallas, Houston; Southard & Assocs., Dania; Bradbury Collection, Los Angeles; Gene Smiley Showroom, Minneapolis; Wayne Martin, Portland; The Showroom, Salt Lake City; Brustlin, San Francisco; Joan Eiley & Assocs., Toronto. Bimini cotton/rayon for pink banquette cushion, to the trade at F. Schumacher & Co., NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, High Point, Houston, Laguna Niguel, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy, Washington, D.C.; Gregory Alonso, Cleveland; Bailey's Showrooms, Kansas City; Designer's Focal Point, Phoenix; Edward Linder & Assoc., Pittsburgh; Designer's Resource, Portland, Sacramento; Design Extension, Tulsa; Crown Wallpaper Co., Toronto. Kidney-shaped and round stained bird's-eye maple coffee tables, to order from Steven Harris (see above) Custom tilt-turn windows, to the trade at Marvin Windows & Doors, for showrooms (800) 346-5128

COLLECTORS' REALM

Pages 146–47 Woven rush carpet, at David Hicks, Paris (1) 43-26-00-67. Cadoro raw silk on sofas and ottoman, to the trade at Manuel Canovas, NYC, Los Angeles; Curran & Assocs., Atlanta, High Point; Nancy Miklos Mason, Birmingham; Shecter-Martin, Boston; Donghia Showrooms, Chicago, Cleveland, Dania, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; David Sutherland, Dallas, Houston; Shears & Window, Denver; Matches, Philadelphia; Designers Showroom, Seattle. **148** Candleholders on console table, at Autour du Monde Home Country Store, Paris (1) 42-77-06-08. **149** Josef Hoffmann wooden chairs, similar at Cour Intérieur, Paris (1) 42-77-33-10. **152** 20th-century wooden bench, similar at Cour Intérieur (see above).

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE '70S

Page 154 Luxo aluminum/steel architect's lamps by bed, for stores call (800) 222-5896, in NY (914) 937-4433. **157** Breuer leather and chromium-plated steel tubing lounge chairs, to the trade at ICF, NYC, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.

GREAT IDEAS

Pages 169–70 Decorative painting, by Richard Jordan, 27 Grace Ct., Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 852-0705

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Gandee

AT LARGE

Actually, you can't get anything you want at Alice's restaurant

It's a Monday morning in Berkeley and Alice Waters—who, at a certain angle, in a certain light, looks more than a bit like Joan Baez (which is to say earnest and fresh-faced and decidedly more West Coast than East Coast)—is reeling. The forty-eight-year-old queen of California cuisine has just returned from a seven-day cruise in the Bahamas with her in-laws, which was, destination "island paradise" notwithstanding, more along the lines of epicurean and ecological hell than heaven. It seems that Alice, eight-year-old daughter Fanny, husband Stephen Singer, and his family were routinely asked to feast on such sorry fare as who-knows-what's-in-them hot dogs kept warm in "horrible steam tables with awful-tasting rice." Similarly, Alice and company were expected to look the other way each night when their ship matter-of-factly dumped the day's garbage overboard and sailed merrily on. These are not, you don't need to spend much time with Alice to know, the sorts of things that Alice likes. These are, as it turns out, precisely the sorts of things that Alice has crusaded against for more than two decades.

Alice Waters at Chez Panisse.

For a guy like me, who grew up in Florida on Mrs. Paul's frozen fish sticks swimming in Heinz ketchup, Alice and her twenty-one-year-old restaurant, Chez Panisse, constitute something of a culinary stretch. In fact, there is but one similarity between dinner at Chez Panisse and dinner at Chez Mom: dinner is what dinner is; take it or leave it, no substitutions, the menu is fixed. Since few things gave me more pleasure as a child than Mrs. Paul's frozen fish sticks swimming in Heinz ketchup and since one recent Tuesday evening at Chez Panisse Alice was serving up pan-fried prawns with fennel, sauté of black chanterelles on toast, spit-roasted rack of pork with mustard and wilted greens, and buckwheat crêpes with blood orange ice cream and warm blood orange compote, the autocrat-in-the-kitchen concept has at neither stage in my life been a problem. However, now that I've supped with Alice, I will confess it would be difficult to go back to Mrs. Paul.

"Once you taste a tomato in the summer you won't eat a tomato in the winter"

Which was a piece of news that struck Alice's woman-with-a-mission ears as music. "I feel it's important for everybody who has the possibility of a forum to get up and say what they think about the state of agriculture, about pollution, about education," says Alice, who, yes, keeps a compost heap behind her forum, Chez Panisse. "People can eat things here that they might not otherwise eat, or they can eat things here that they eat all the time, but here it tastes different and they say, 'Why is this so good?' " The reason it's so good is partially explained at the bottom of the daily menu: "Most of our produce and meat comes from local farms and ranches that practice ecologically sound agriculture." And Alice means it. Her insistence on things fresh and organic borders on the tyrannical: fresh means "picked this morning," and organic means "no herbicides, no pesticides—that the grower is taking care of the land, and for that I'm willing to pay a premium. It's like making a donation to somebody who is doing work I should be doing myself."

While Alice would agree her situation in northern California, America's horn of plenty, is highly conducive to her stick-close-to-the-source mandate, even in New York City, she points out, there are window boxes waiting for herbs, community gardens welcoming volunteers, and farmers' markets in need of support. "People talk a lot about eating things that are good for them, but they talk as if the conversation begins at the supermarket," says Alice. "I'm thinking about what happens before the food gets to the supermarket—how it comes out of the ground, how it's raised, grown, picked." Alice's advice? "Look for things that are in season. Once you taste a tomato in the summer you won't eat a tomato in the winter. It's a real pleasure to wait until July, instead of dulling your palate all year long with second-rate food."

As a primer for those of us who blithely buy tomatoes in December, Alice has written a cookbook for children and other beginners, *Fanny at Chez Panisse* (due next fall from Harper Collins), which is filled with food parables and recipes. "I don't believe in children's food," cautions Alice, "at least not what you see in most children's cookbooks—cute food with lots of sugar and potatoes. Many of my recipes are very very simple." And then she added, looking straight at me, "So simple that you won't need to ask Mom to help."

Charles Gandee