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the paris issue!

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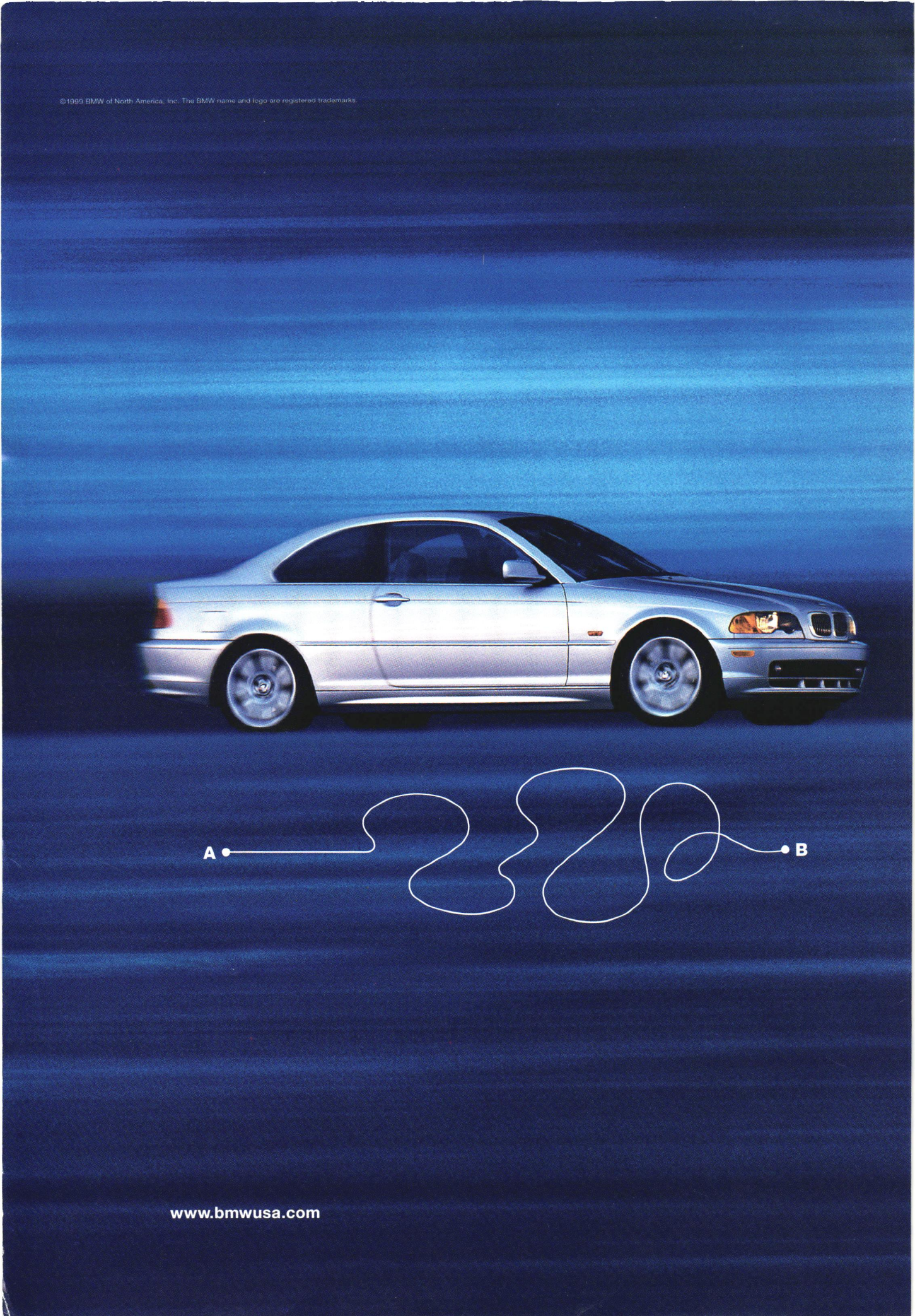

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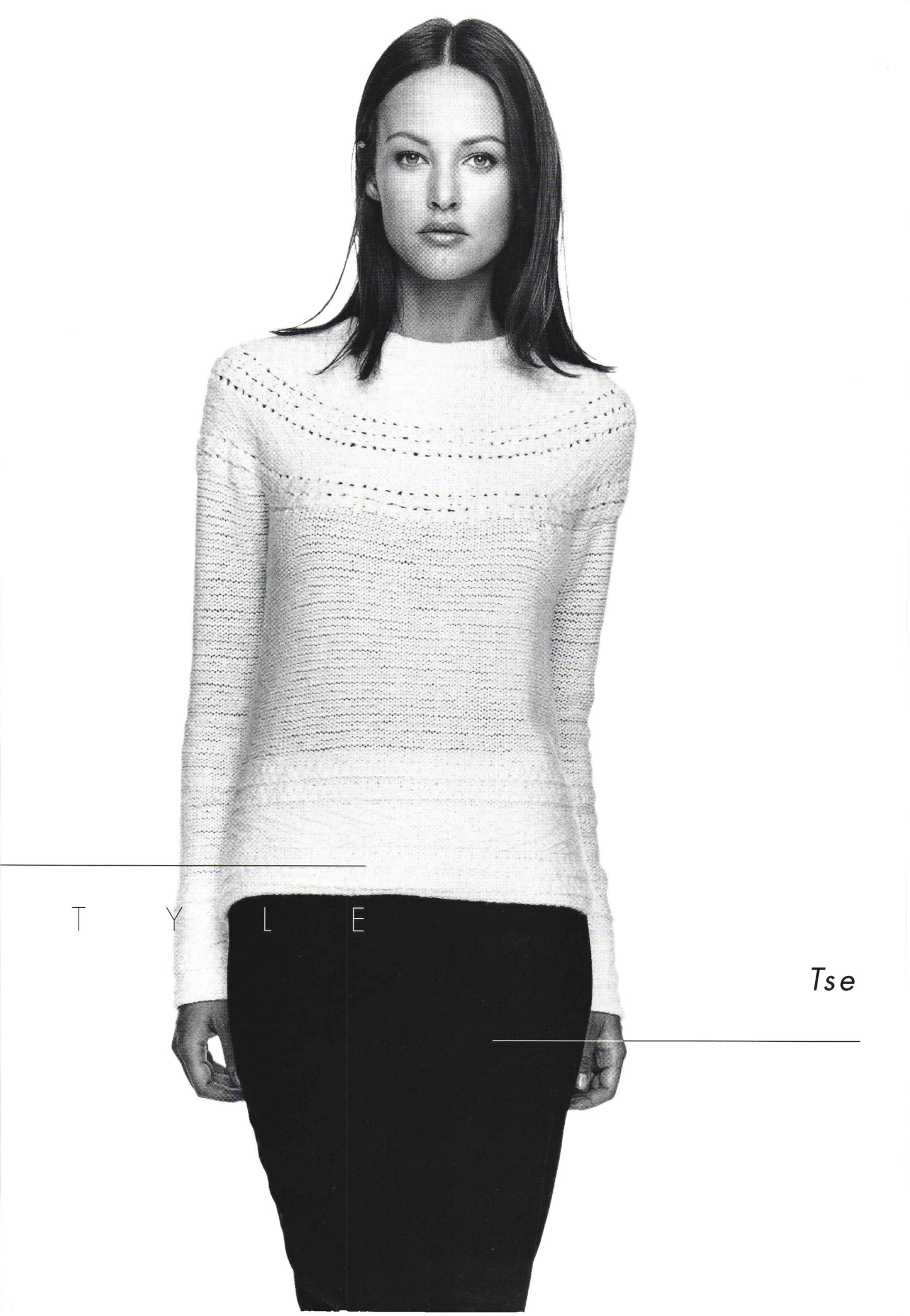
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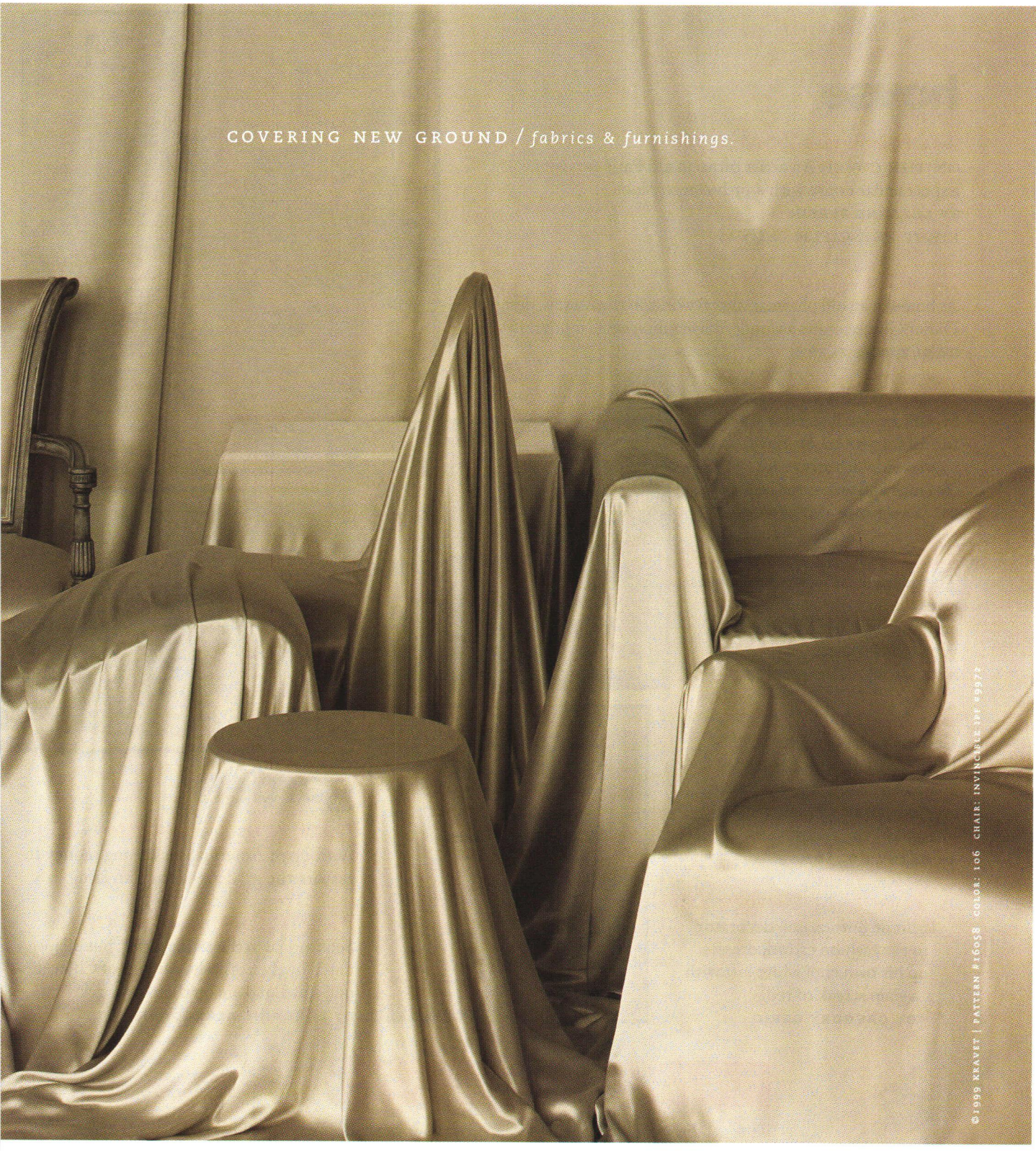

House&Garden
OCTOBER 1999 VOLUME 168 NO. 10

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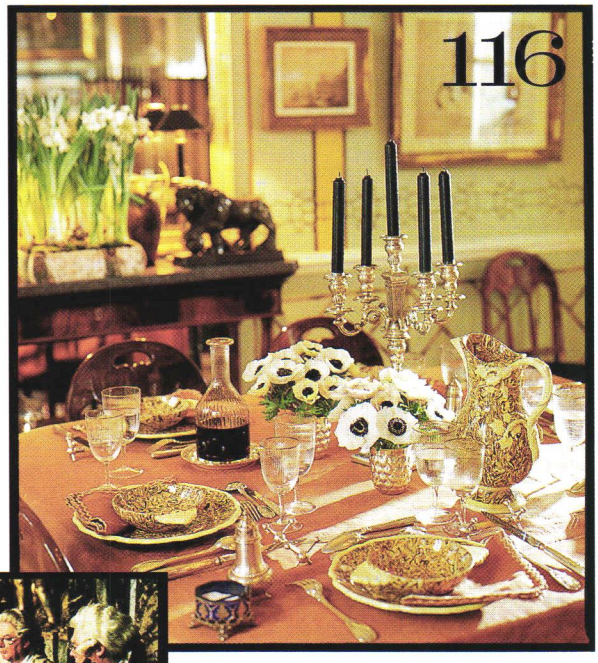

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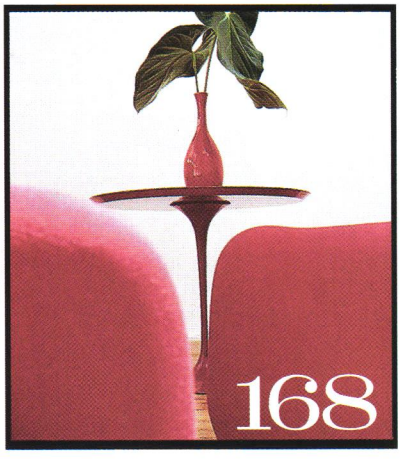

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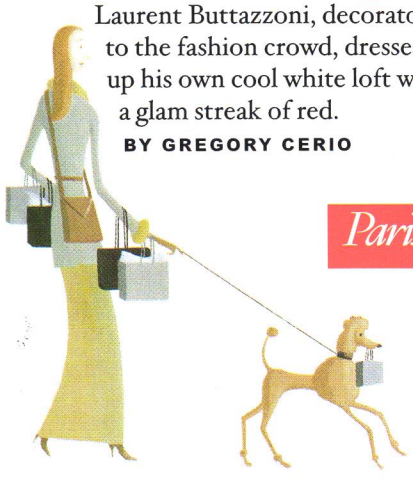

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

En garde, design enthusiasts! For your next shopping spree in the City of Light—our eclectic, selective map to the chicest, most au courant shops and boîtes in every arrondissement. Pull it out and take it with you.

ON THE COVER: "NO PARKING ZONE," PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIETER ESTERSOHN

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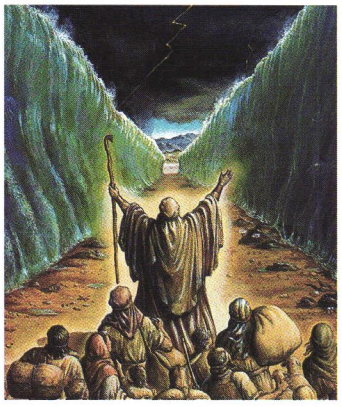

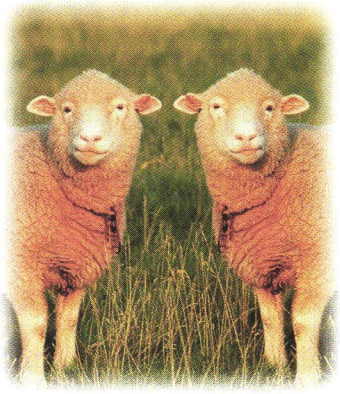

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TV Decorating 27

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BY DAN SHAW

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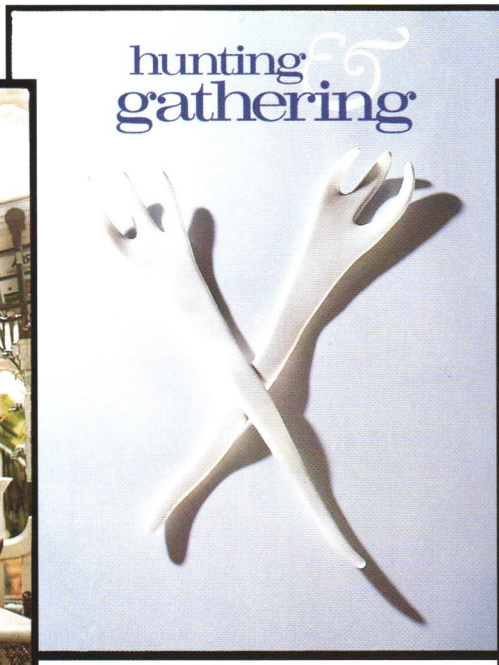

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PURE PORCELAIN Translucent and delicate, it was all the rage in the 18th century. The shapes of porcelain today are simpler and more sculptural, like the servers, above, from Tsé & Tsé.

object lesson

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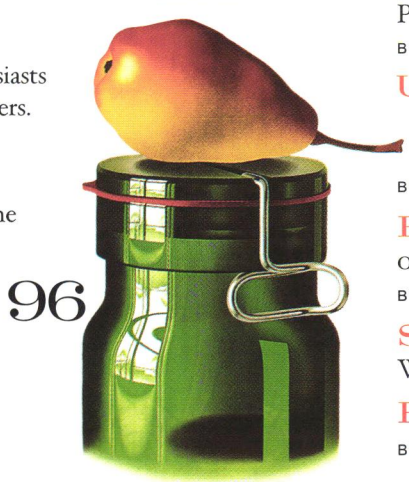

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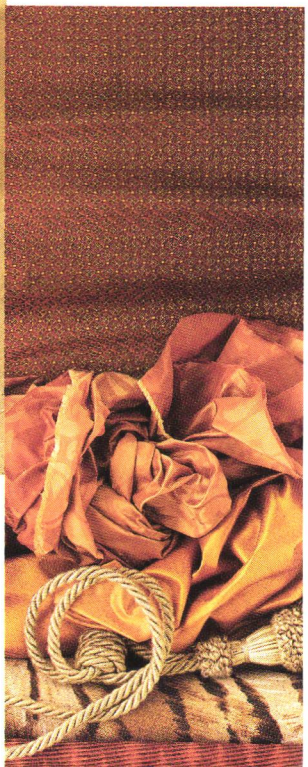

FURNITURE FABRICS TRIM ACCESSORIES

street life

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY it all started with the downspout. My sister Nicole and I and our five children were walking along the Seine when suddenly my 14-year-old exclaimed in astonishment over the dragon uncoiling down the front of a mansion, its tail unfurling mysteriously from its mouth. The copper work was intricate, handsomely wrought down to the scales peeling across the dragon's neck. The whole gang stopped to examine the gorgeous, unexpected detail; that such a banal thing as a gutter could have been so lovingly crafted, with such ambition for its public presence, such confidence in its claim to beauty, was something of a marvel.

And so it went, in Paris.

I hadn't been there, for the sheer pleasure of it, in a long time; I had visited frequently in recent years with business in mind, intent on getting there, getting things done, getting home. Then my elder son was seized with a mysterious passion to go to France, and there we were, on spring break, aimless but for the children's aim to see every major and minor tourist attraction in the guidebook. For the first time in years I found myself climbing the Eiffel Tower, touring Versailles, strolling through the Tuileries . . . but most important of all, getting my eyes up off the itinerary and refocused on the smallest details of how a city is put together, what begins to give it its particular charm.

These are some of the things we noticed, things I'd been in front of maybe 50 times before and had never seen until the children pointed them out: The gutters. The angels hanging off the clouds on the ceiling of the bakery Ladurée. (The nearly bitter intensity of the cinnamon they use in the raisin buns.) The enormous, heavily lacquered, peculiar maroon doors of so many houses. The proud, expansive beds of tulips everywhere. The near paranoia of restaurant owners about children. (We became accustomed to—and even amused by—the experience of walking into a completely empty dining room at the earliest end of dinnertime, only to be told, with scornful alarm, that the place was absolutely full and there was no table that could fit five children, *tant pis, bonsoir mesdames.* One went so far as to ask, with rude simplicity, "*Ou sont les hommes?*" Yes, where *were* the men?)

Dave Brubeck as elevator music. Nearly too much red, in shop windows, on lips, on nails. Boutiques filled with a fetish of pens and inks and every kind of notebook. Gilt and inlay, brushwork and stonework of an amazing variety on paintings and chairs and tables and all manner of stuff heaped in casual nobility or arranged with the preening self-importance of antiquity. One son was revolted by the encrustation of splendor at Versailles, and could see the place only in the political terms of a spoiled, irresponsible king; the other, who these days assesses every ramp, rail, and road from a skateboarder's perspective, got a fine appreciation for the architectural enfilade when he realized you could take a run through a long string of rooms in one straight shot.

The private side of Paris is shuttered to the casual observer, much more so than in a city like New York. It is almost impossible to stroll down the street and get those delicious twilight glimpses into people's homes. You get an impression of domestic life from the clues in shops: windows full of furniture, bathroom fixtures, fabrics, books, crystals, silver . . . what people buy is how people live. An issue like the one that follows is a rare privilege because it opens those doors on private worlds. Perhaps part of the allure of Paris is that it is so hard to penetrate. And yet the seduction is strong, happening all around you. At the end of a week, my 14-year-old tourist was miserable at the thought of leaving. He had fallen completely in love with a city. The only consolation I could offer was to tell him that he was lucky to have found love at such a young age. He has a lifetime ahead to enjoy it.

Dominique Browning, EDITOR

LeeJofa

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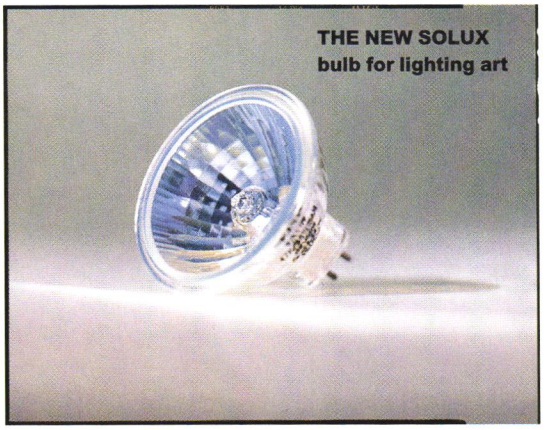

CONGRATULATIONS on the superb "Object Lesson" on lighting, in your March issue. I know so well that lighting is the most complex subject imaginable, but your article tackled the subject better than anything done previously and in a way that non-techno people such as myself could understand. Needless to say, everyone in my office has a copy of this "Object Lesson" on their desks.

HOWARD S. SLATKIN
Inteior Designer
New York, NY

SHIPSHAPE

THE PHOTOGRAPHS and styling for "Sea Worthy" in your August issue show how a traditional interior can be both inviting and warm without being fussy. I particularly enjoyed the dialogue with designer Lee Bogart and the architects at Kean Williams Giambertone. It is always interesting to see how a project evolves from drawing board to reality. Keep up the good work.

DIANE KOVACS
Interior Designer
Roslyn, NY

WALK THIS WAY

AFTER READING Dominique Browning's "Welcome" essay in the August issue, I now know why I love the magazine so much: I can relate to the editor! I, too, walked my son to school and loved it. He outgrew it and I accepted that with a stiff upper lip, but I wasn't ready. We had had our private time every morning, held hands, talked about everything from flowers and trees to what he'd be doing in school that day. He's 15 now and a great kid. Thanks for bringing back fond memories.

LEAH MURPHY
Norfolk, VA

ROLL CREDITS

THANK YOU FOR "Hollywood Makeover," [August] the exceptional story about the interiors that we did for a modest mid-century house in Los Angeles. We are especially pleased that Stephen Slan, the architect, received the recognition he clearly deserved. He was the sustaining creative force behind this project. Unfortunately, Ken Duran, the builder, did not receive credit for his superb work, nor did the craftsmen, Brent Bonnett and Peter Jones.

DIANE ROSENSTEIN AND
BRET WITKE
Russell Simpson Company
Los Angeles, CA

EVEN MY MOTHER CALLED!

THANK YOU SO MUCH for the very beautiful piece on the Shí catalogue ["Domestic Bliss," April]. We have gotten several *hundred* calls in response—better than we dared hope for. My mother, who has heard me drone on about it for the last year and should have understood the concept, apparently never listened; she was so excited about it when she read your explanation. Go figure!

LAURIE MCCLENDON
Shí
New York, NY

PLEASE WRITE US at *House & Garden* (4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036). We also accept letters by E-mail (letters@house-and-garden.com) and fax (212-286-4977). Please include your name, address, and daytime phone number. All submissions become the property of *House & Garden* and will not be returned; they may be edited and published or otherwise used in any medium.

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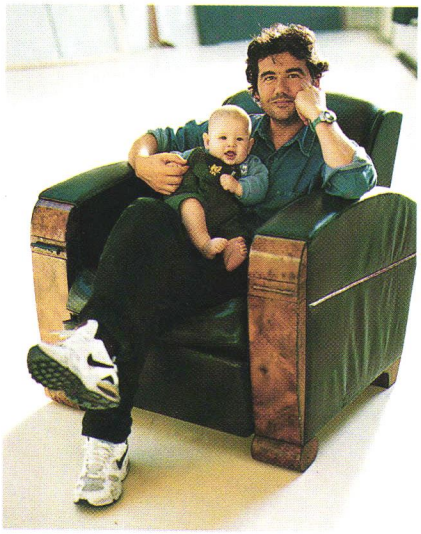
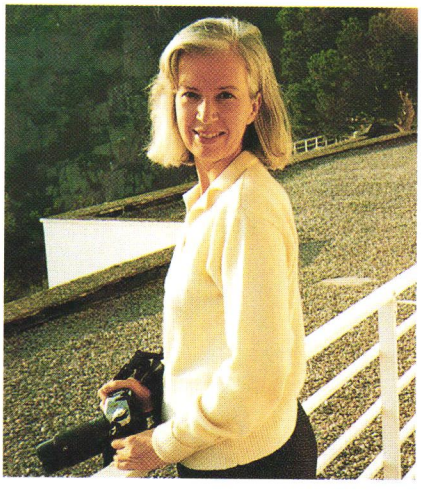


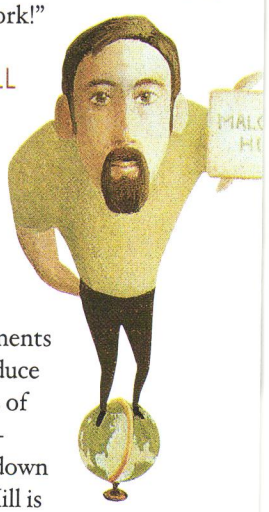
^ PASCAL CHEVALLIER
The photographer, shown with his son, Nathan, was just 20 in 1984 when he did his first assignment for *House & Garden*. "When you photograph a house, you're meeting real people, not models or celebrities," Chevallier says. "You have to understand the way they live and share in their life." This month he gets inside the homes and minds of two un-stuffy antiques dealers ("Rare Blend," page 162; "Living Memories," page 146).



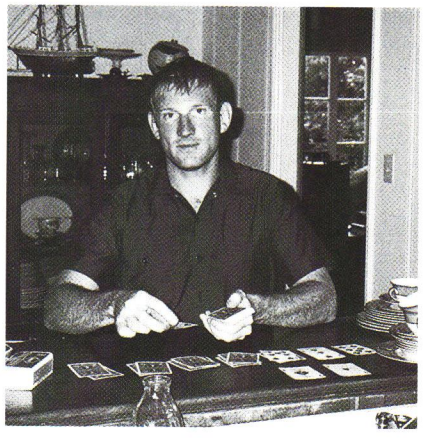
^ LORRAINE ALEXANDER
After 13 years as an editor and travel writer for *Gourmet*, Alexander moved to Italy last year. In "New Glory Days," page 174, she reports on Charles-Henri de Bartillat's faithful restoration of the gardens of Château de Saint-Loup. "You have to have a passionate commitment to carry through a fifteen-year project like this," she says. "That kind of attention to detail is time-consuming and expensive, but it's worth it."

PAUL FORTUNE
In "Coastal Bliss," page 46, *H&G's* West Coast editor takes us on the trail of gossip and material treasures in his hometown of 20 years. "L.A. is now on a par with any other international city, but I sometimes miss the days when you'd see Ella Fitzgerald dropping off her dry cleaning, Billy Wilder at the drive-thru car wash, diagonal parking on Rodeo Drive, and summer rentals for the price of a business-class ticket to New York!"

> MALCOLM HILL
When Hill took on the daunting task of illustrating our pullout map to Paris shopping (page 142), he used the city's arrondissements as a way to introduce subtle gradations of color, and he welcomed the trip "down memory lane." Hill is also a painter and sculptor, represented by Arena, a gallery in Brooklyn, New York. He lives in Montana and in Manhattan.



v DAVID COLMAN
"I would like to make the world safe for sense and sensibility—that is, for common sense and my sensibility to reign supreme," says the writer, whose wry column, "Passing Fancies," allows him to pass judgment on design trends, especially those that "have passed their prime and should be hastened along." In "Enough Rope," page 100, he tweaks devotees of sisal. — SABINE ROTHMAN



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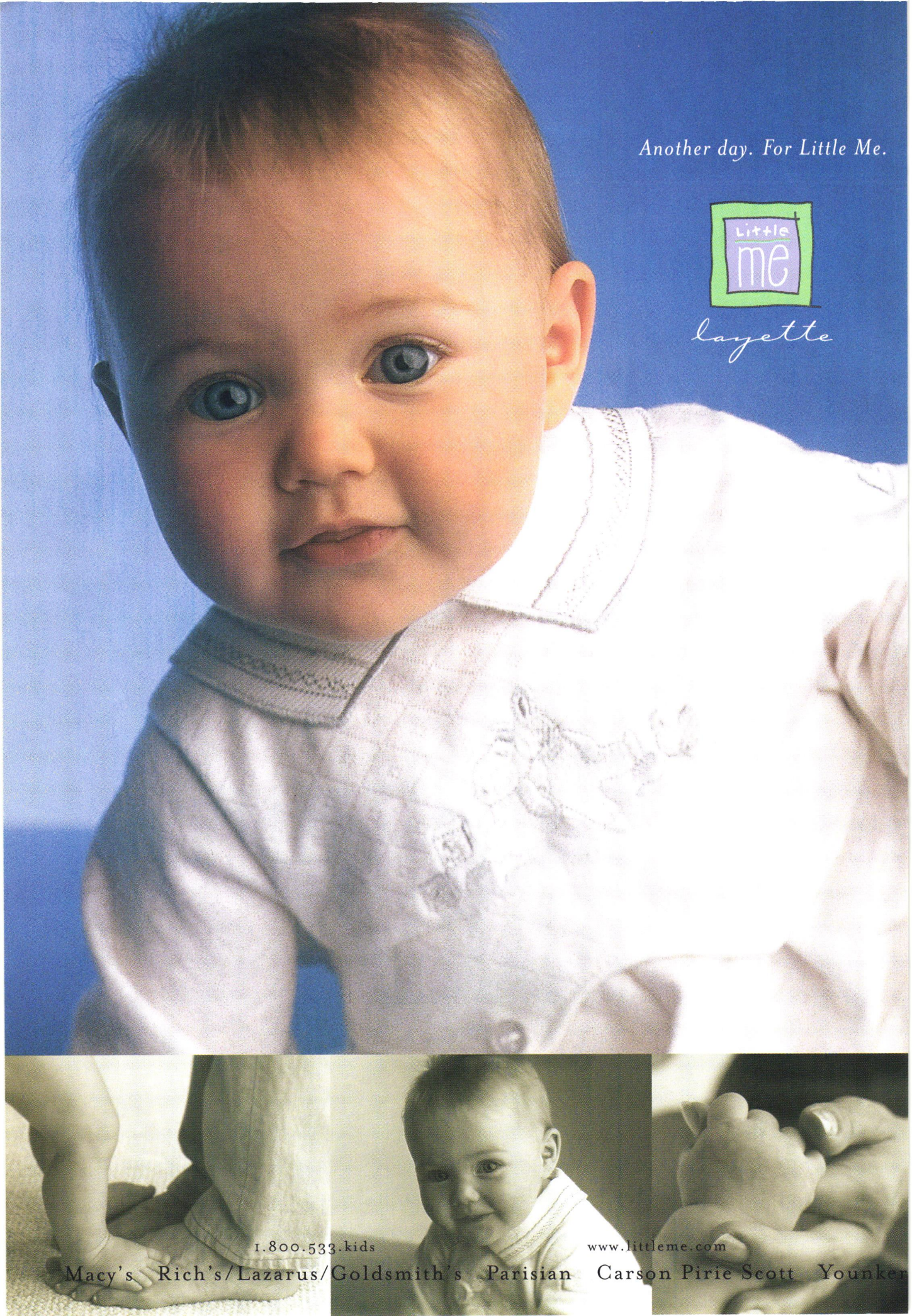
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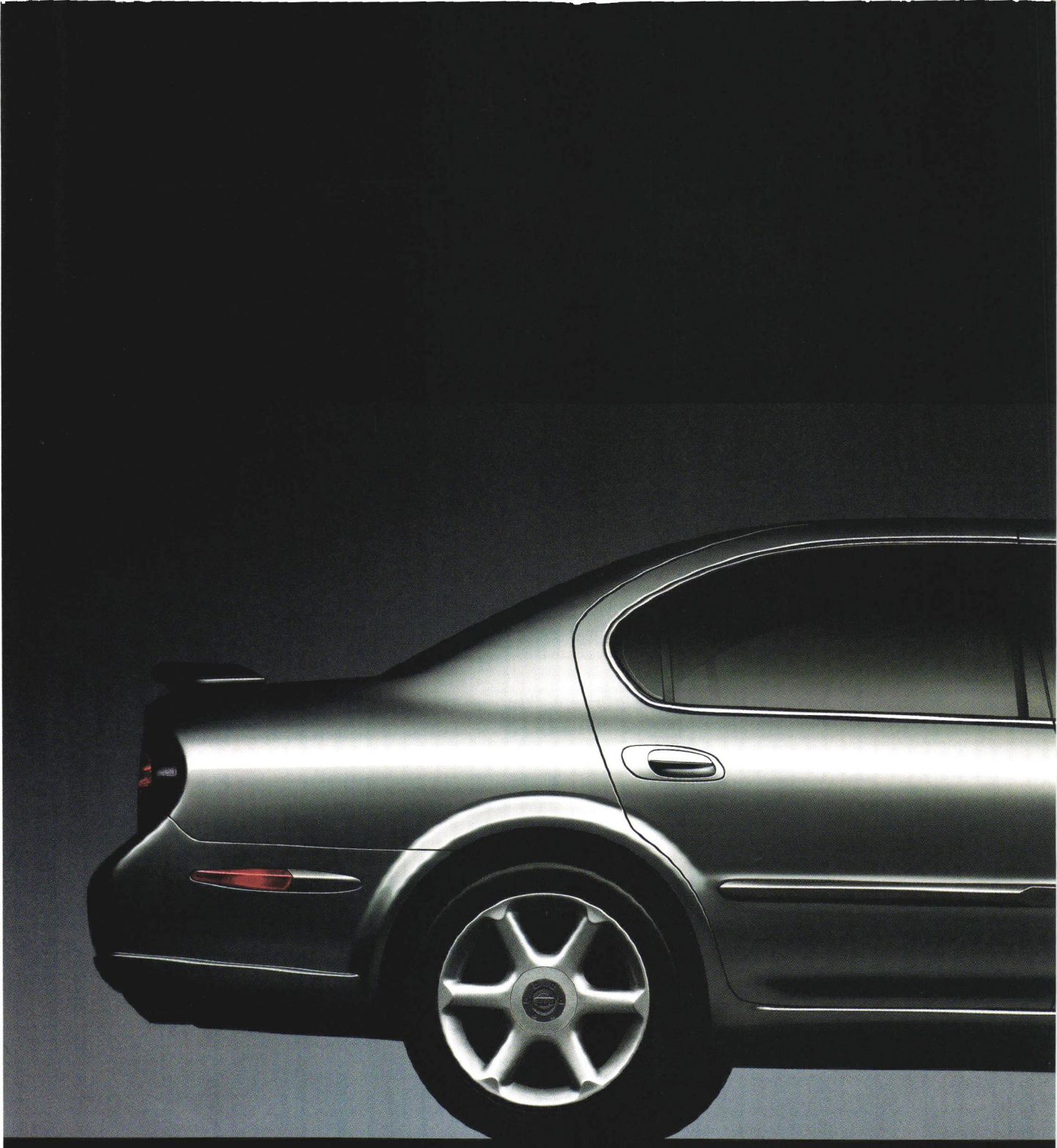

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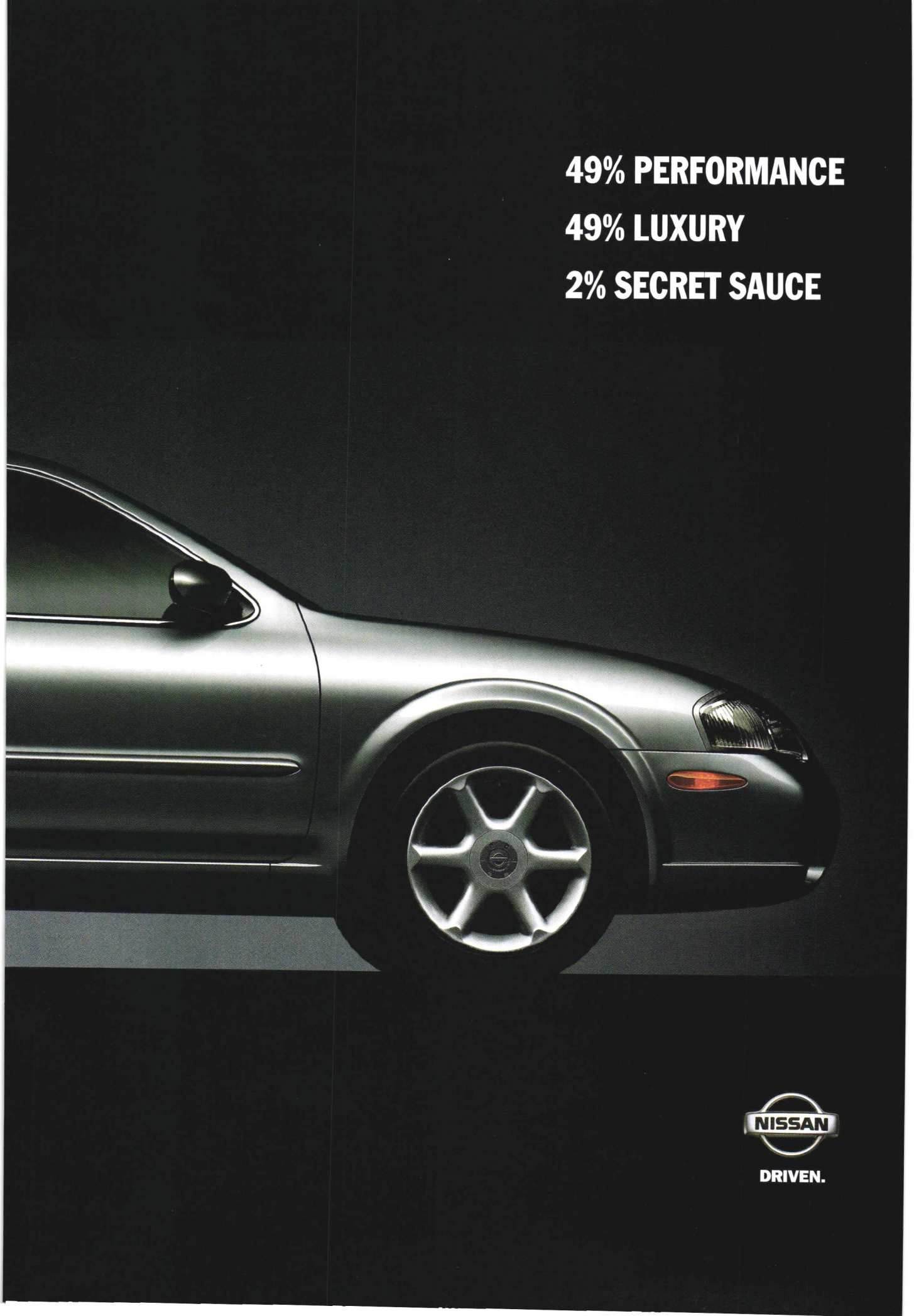
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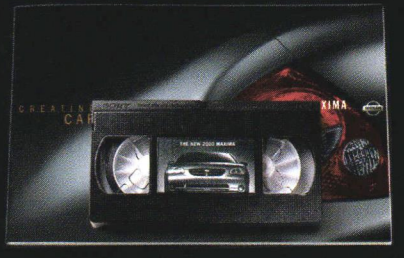

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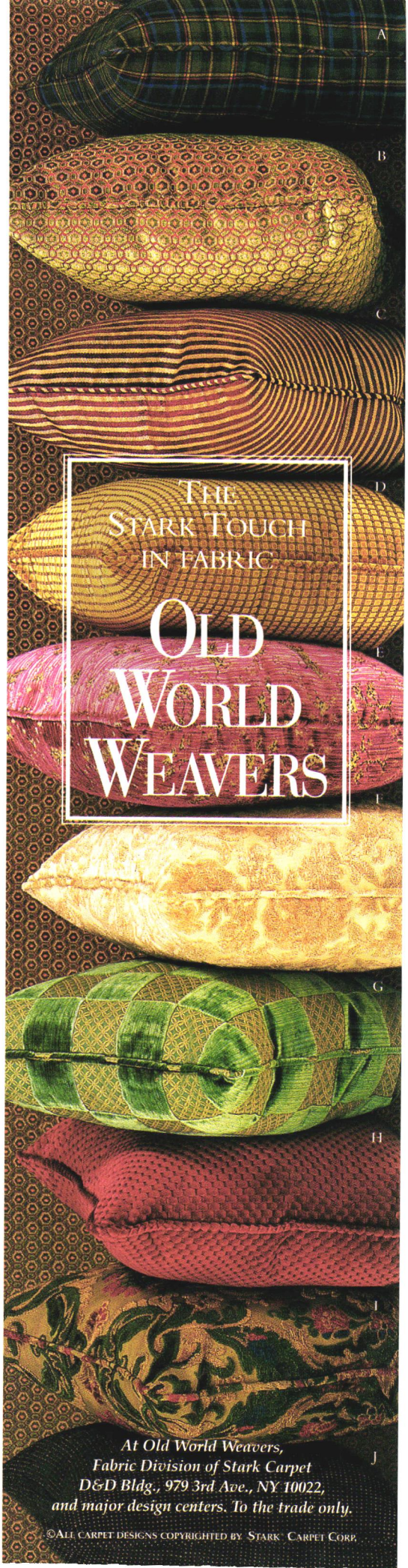

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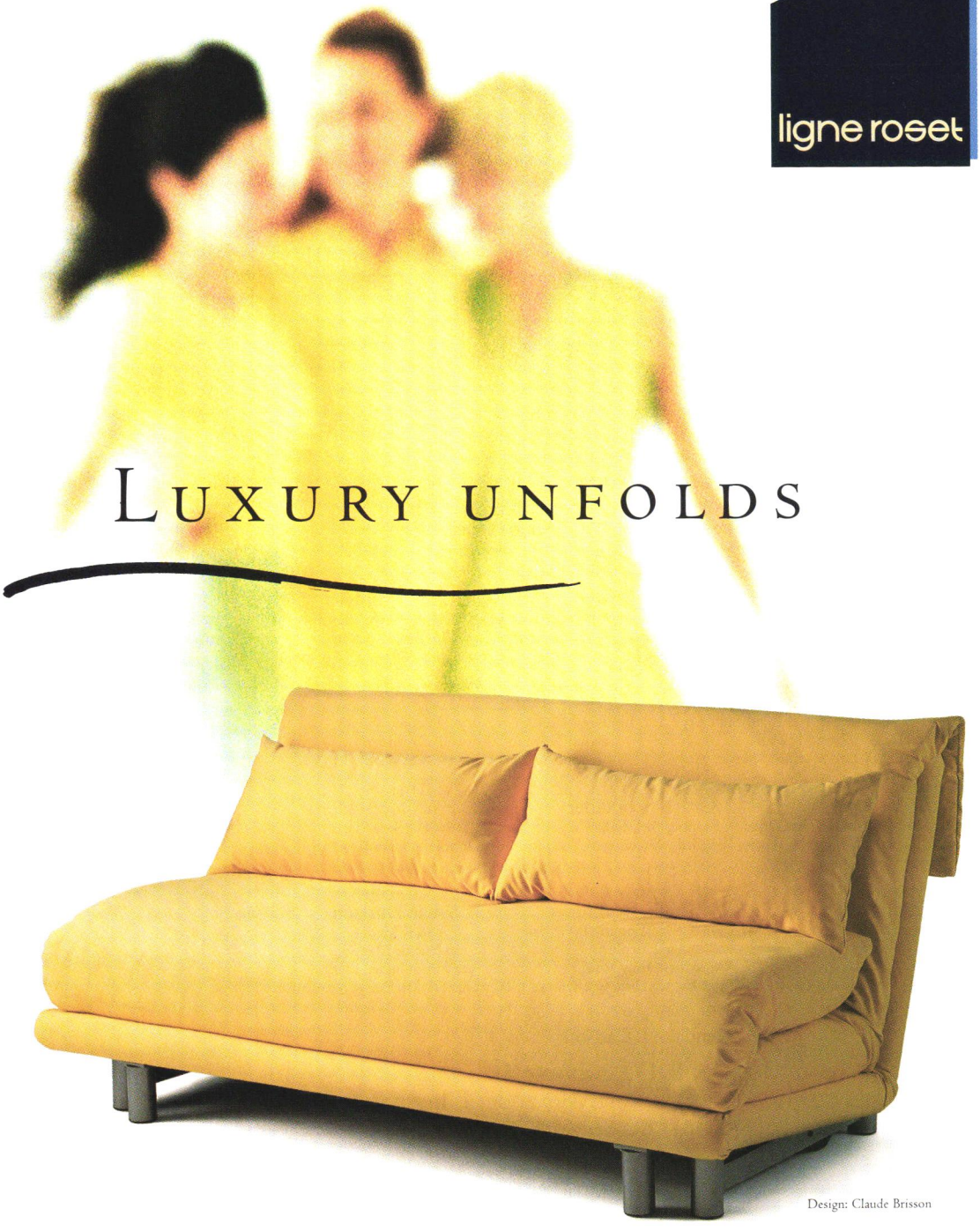

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Design: Claude Brisson

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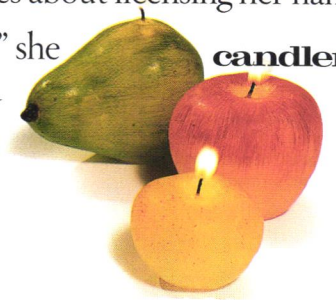
domestic bliss

Gardening and decorating are staples of Katie Brown's TV show

tv decorating

KATIE BROWN ISN'T AN INTERIOR DESIGNER, but she plays one on TV. The star of Lifetime's six-days-a-week, half-hour how-to show *Next Door with Katie Brown,* a former caterer and actress, advises viewers on everything from hanging wallpaper and reupholstering sofas to painting terra-cotta planters and creating seasonal centerpieces. Her shtick is so popular that she now thinks of herself as a brand and fantasizes about licensing her name for a line of sheets and towels. "And I want to start my own magazine!" she says. Brown is one of the new breed of TV stars whose specialty

candlemania
page 32

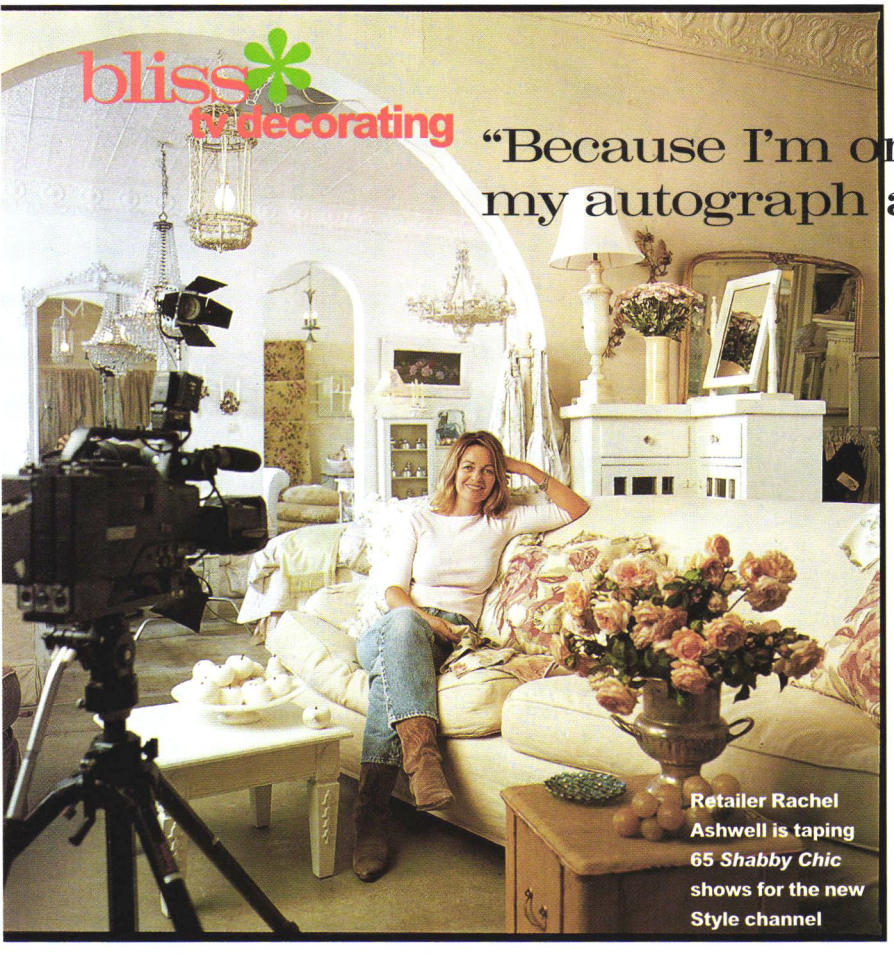


EDITED BY DAN SHAW

bliss tv decorating

"Because I'm on TV, people ask for my autograph at the flea market"

—RACHEL ASHWELL



Retailer Rachel Ashwell is taping 65 *Shabby Chic* shows for the new Style channel

is the world of interiors. While networks like CNN, E!, PBS, A&E, Lifetime, and Discovery all offer programming that covers decorating in some way, it is the success of five-year-old HGTV that proves there's a 24-hour demand for home-design shows. (HGTV is owned by the E.W. Scripps Co. and has no connection to this magazine.) With 35 shows a day, some 7,300 hours of original programming every year, and more than 50 million subscribers, HGTV is doing for decor what MTV did for music.

Unlike much of what's on television, decorating shows are unerringly earnest, which is apparently part of their appeal. "Our goal is to supply what we call the 'three I's'—information, ideas, and inspiration," says Burton Jablin, a Harvard graduate and former TV-news producer, who is HGTV's senior vice president for programming and production. "Most television is a waste of time. We are pleasant and useful."

The shows on the fledgling Style channel (owned by E! Entertainment Television, whose fare includes Joan Rivers's catty specials on award-show fashions) are more than entertainment, according to Marta Tracy, Style's senior vice president for programming. "Our viewers want fantasy *and* what's practical," she says. "We're aspirational and accessible, which is why we selected Rachel Ashwell to host a series." Ashwell, the founder of the Shabby Chic stores, which specialize in laid-back luxe, and the author of two decorating books, is taping 65 new half-hour shows for the network. "You get to go to the flea market with her and develop your eye," Tracy explains.

FOR VOYEURS WITH a real-estate fetish, decorating shows are pure pleasure. This year, Style will be taking viewers onto Valentino's yacht and into Donna Karan's East Hampton retreat. HGTV has scheduled one-hour specials such as *Homes of Aspen, Palm Beach Palaces,* and *At Home with . . . Helen Gurley Brown.*

As fresh as these shows may seem, it was nearly 20 years ago that CNN's Elsa Klensch realized that interior design could be infotainment. "Since June 1, 1980, we've featured one interior every week," says Klensch, who is acknowledged to be the pioneer of fashion on TV. "Our goal is to provide news about good interior design." Klensch's reports include visits to the very best show houses, like New York's famed Kips Bay. But finding telegenic rooms isn't always easy. "A very cluttered home looks terrible on a small screen," she points out. "And a bare beige room can be boring. Good rooms for us have vitality, contrast, and cleanliness."

To make sure she keeps getting invited into the best homes, Klensch removes family photos before videotaping. "We

screen **gems** of decorating

They're few but fabulous—the unforgettable television shows and movies that celebrate or castigate the wonderful world of interior decorating and design

'42 **we were dancing** Melvyn Douglas ogles fabrics in Gail Patrick's shop in the MGM adaptation of Noel Coward's *Tonight at 8:30.*

'59 **pillow talk** Doris Day, who plays the decorator-as-fashion-plate and obsessive career woman, is sidetracked by bachelor-turned-client Rock Hudson.

'61 **breakfast at tiffany's** Patricia Neal plays a woman who uses decorating as a cover for visits to her gigolo.

'62 **jacqueline kennedy's white house tour** CBS showed Americans how the First Lady decorated.

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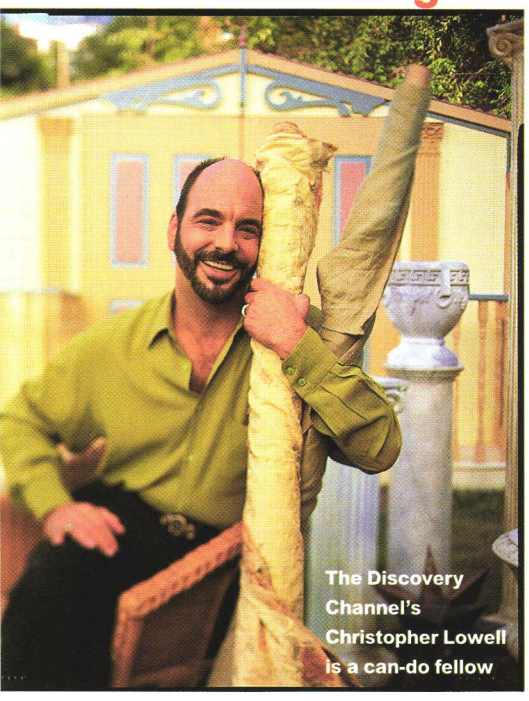
1872
Tourists flock to see
"Old Faithful"

1930
Chrysler Building graces
New York City skyline

1987
Queen Elizabeth
drinks a cup of tea

1999
BODUM Water Kettle
$39.99 at Target®


The Discovery Channel's Christopher Lowell is a can-do fellow

respect people's privacy," she says "We're not about celebrity. We're about design."

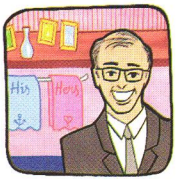
Still, television mints the most unlikely celebrities. Leigh and Leslie Keno, the identical twin brothers who are among New York's most respected experts on American antiques, have become stars because of their frequent appearances on PBS's *Chubb's Antiques Roadshow.* How else to explain that Warner Books has reportedly paid $1 million for their *Hidden Treasures: Incredible Discoveries in American Furniture?*

Christopher Lowell knows that hosting *Interior Motives,* a somewhat campy daily TV show on the Discovery Channel, has turned him into a household name. "I get two thousand pieces of fan mail a week," says Lowell, who is about to launch a line of paints

> "Decorating is becoming a butch hobby. Many of our viewers are male"
>
> —CHRISTOPHER LOWELL

and linens and has a five-book deal with Random House. This season, his one-hour program is being renamed *The Christopher Lowell Show* and will be filmed on the Universal lot in a green clapboard cottage (nestled between the *Psycho* house and the *Leave It to Beaver* set). Nevertheless, down-to-earth decorating advice is the show's raison d'être. "Our emphasis," he says, "is showing how to turn square white rooms into *something*." —D.S.

hgtv's fab four



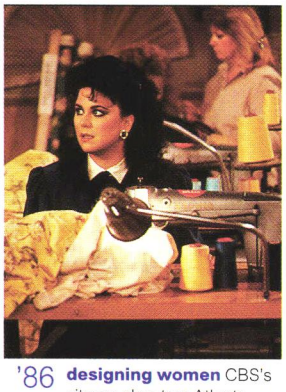
THE SHOW *Designing for the Sexes*
THE PREMISE That husbands and wives invariably disagree about decorating and a professional interior designer is the ideal marriage counselor.
THE PROMISE That tweedy host, Michael Payne, ASID, can sit down at his drafting table and create a blueprint for domestic bliss. The shows include footage of demolition and installation, as well as shopping trips for cabinets, tiles, fabrics, and furniture.
THE RESULTS The couples always end up happy, though the rooms are sometimes flawed. One show features a redone family room in which all the furniture faces away from the fireplace!

THE SHOW *Kitty Bartholomew: You're Home*
THE PREMISE That this perky veteran of ABC's *Home Show,* where she was the resident interior designer, has the taste and the connections to make great decorating accessible.
THE PROMISE You will learn something useful—how to deal with low ceilings or invest in decorating a rental with items that can move when you do.
THE RESULTS From the owners of L.A.'s Postobello, there were tips that included turning old sheets into slipcovers for dining-room chairs and putting a frame around a wall mirror to give it a new look.

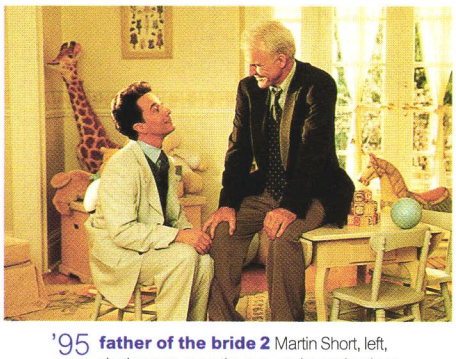
THE SHOW *Interiors by Design*
THE PREMISE That Chris Casson Madden, the author of 13 design books, has entrée into the most sophisticated homes and show houses.
THE PROMISE You will tour places that Chris or her urbane friends would normally go.
THE RESULTS Chris names names: While visiting a grand living room decorated by Princeton, New Jersey, designer Judy King, viewers learn that the ottoman is from Baker, the club chairs are upholstered in an Osborne & Little plaid, and the curtains are made from Brunschwig & Fils linen.

THE SHOW *Country at Home*
THE PREMISE That after producing more than a dozen style books, Mary Emmerling knows more about country style than do Ralph Lauren, Martha Stewart, and Paul Bunyon combined.
THE PROMISE Country-style decorating is appropriate for any room in any house in any town in America.
THE RESULTS Mary knows where all the gingham and whirligigs are. From a glass-walled contemporary house in the woods to a farmhouse in Beverly Hills, she takes viewers to homes that are filled with charming, rustic, and folksy furniture and fabrics.

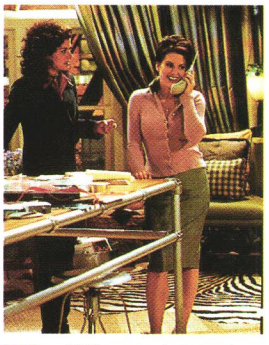
'78 **interiors** Geraldine Page, far left, is the brittle decorator whose stark minimalism is a metaphor for her chilly familial relationships.



'86 **designing women** CBS's sitcom about an Atlanta design firm, starring Delta Burke, ran for 7 seasons.



'95 **father of the bride 2** Martin Short, left, designs an over-the-top and over-budget nursery for an exasperated Steve Martin.



'98 **will & grace** A decorator + her best (gay male) friend = high ratings for NBC.

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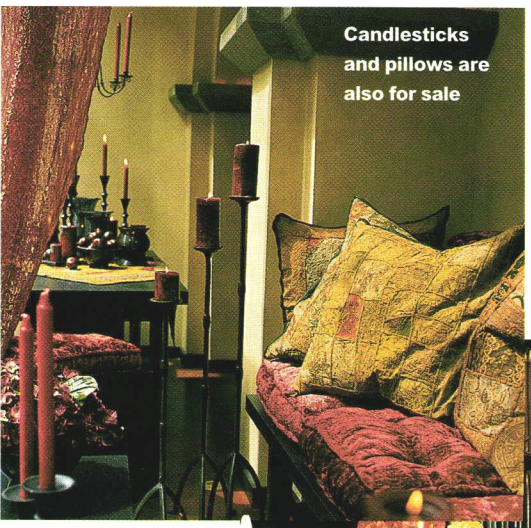
light up your life

Wax water lilies can float in pools or bowls

Wally Arnold doesn't consider himself a candle merchant. "Our stores are about celebration and inspiration—creating moments and memories," says the founder of Illuminations, the three-year-old retailer, catalogue, and e-commerce site (800-CANDLES; www.illuminations.com). "I don't see us as a candle shop," says Arnold, though his 27 stores stock more than 1,500 different candles, along with accessories like snuffers, silk flowers, and chandeliers.

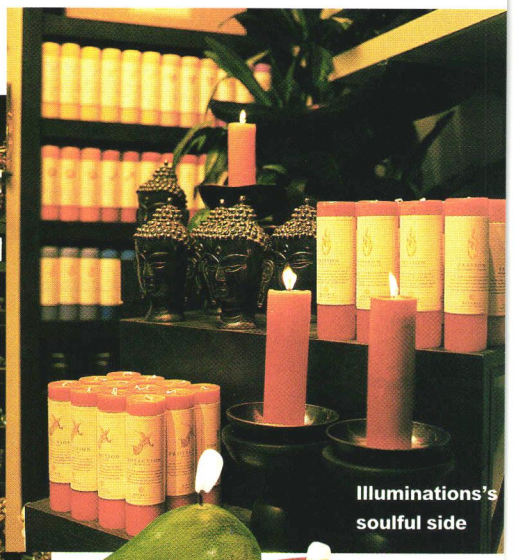
Arnold is a "lifestyle entrepreneur"—he sold his Sun Shade Optique chain to Sunglass Hut International six years ago—who understands that candles are integral to *every* lifestyle. Thus, he has divided his stores into "rooms" with a variety of moods and modes. The front room is always a seasonal celebration—a source for candles that can transform your mantel or table into a holidayscape. Last summer, there were blue-and-white life preservers and multicolored beach balls; for fall, there are jack-o'-lanterns and miniature apples and pumpkins. "We always have a touch of whimsy up front," says Bonnie Dahan, senior vice president of merchandising. "People respond to the ability to be playful and decorative." Illuminations also has a soulful side, which is represented in the Ritual Room. Besides the usual aromatherapy candles (such as lemongrass, which is supposed to promote love and happiness), there's a line of ritual candles that can be given to loved ones to ask for forgiveness, say, or to promote healing. "It's an alternative to sending flowers," says Dahan. "The candles come with instructions for a ceremony and invocations or affirmations." This area of the stores also features tabletop fountains (for good *feng shui*) and Buddha heads.

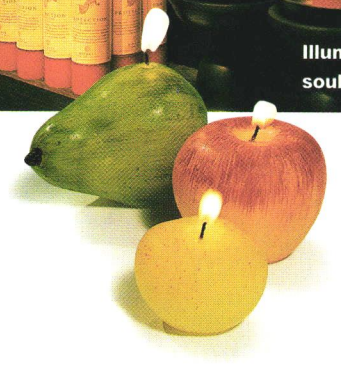
Another room is devoted to scented candles, but there's nothing Zen about them. "We're also big on nostalgia," Dahan explains, noting that lemon-meringue candles are big sellers. There are plenty of unscented candles, too—from a rainbow assortment of tapers to white and ivory pillars to give any wedding the perfect glow. Candles also glow in the stores, which are conspicuously darker than any other shop in the mall in order to highlight the stock. "We literally map out which candles will be burned each day," says visual director Gary Miller. "It's part of the opening ritual at each store every morning." He makes these plans with precision, since every candle comes with a burning time (so you can avoid having your candle-only chandelier go dark in the middle of dinner). And if those candles drip on your table or rug, not to worry: Illuminations sells Wax Away candle-wax remover, too.—D.S.

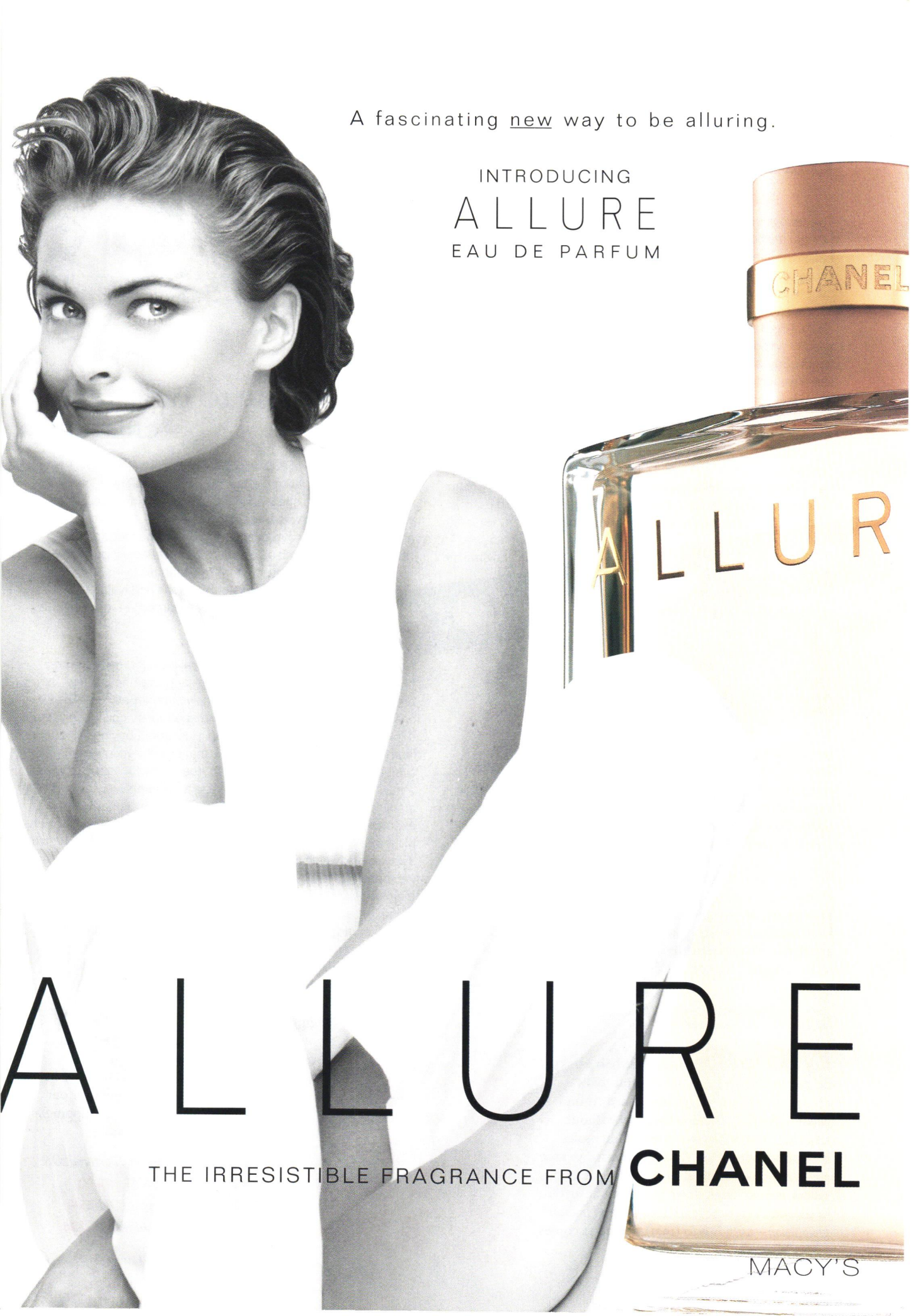

Candlesticks and pillows are also for sale

Scented pillars are ambrosial and attractive

No matter your taste, there are candles to suit your decor


Illuminations's soulful side

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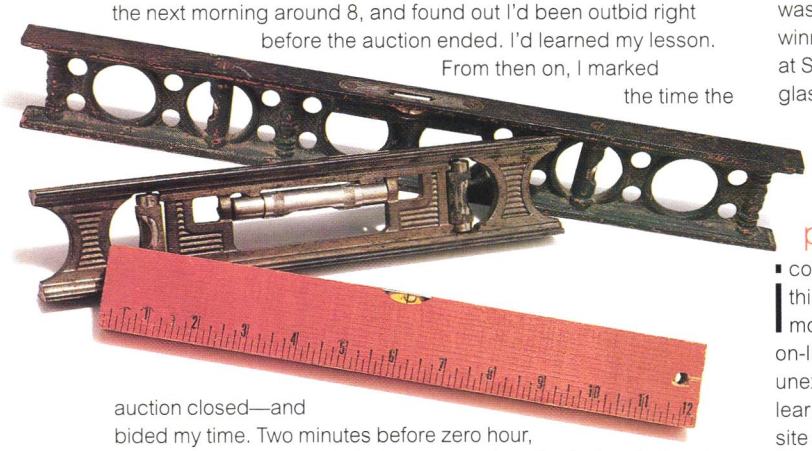
eBay addicts

"eBay taught me how to be a jerk"

—GREG CERIO

the miseducation of a gentleman

I've always been a courteous person; eBay.com taught me how to be a jerk. I first heard about on-line auctions late last year and decided to use the service to buy all my Christmas gifts. eBay struck me as a throwback to simpler days. I liked the sweet honesty of the sellers' descriptions ("It's got a couple of small dings but looks nice"). I liked the bargains. I liked doing business on the basis of an e-handshake. There was something neighborly about eBay, as if I'd come across a global yard sale. I was a fool. The first item I bid on was a pair of biomorphic bookends, perfect for my sister in L.A. I offered $25 and was promptly informed I was the high bidder. The auction was scheduled to close at 7 A.M. the next day. But when I went to bed, I noted with confidence that my name was still on top. I got up the next morning around 8, and found out I'd been outbid right before the auction ended. I'd learned my lesson. From then on, I marked the time the auction closed—and bided my time. Two minutes before zero hour, while some other "high bid" chump was already placing that cool Pierre Paulin table lamp he'd selected, I pounced. I did it again. And again. Do I feel guilty? A little. So if I ruin *your* gift-giving next year, may I suggest amazon.com?—GREGORY CERIO



the glass menagerie e-scapade

I left my heart, many years ago, in Frostbite Falls, Minnesota—the hometown, as cartoon cognoscenti know, of Bullwinkle J. Moose and his friends and enemies. (Okay, his enemies, Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale, are from Pottsylvania and Transylvania respectively, but they do visit Frostbite Falls.) When I spied six glasses—one each of Bullwinkle, Rocky, Boris, Natasha, Mr. Peabody, and Dudley Do-Right—on eBay, my heart sang. The auction was about to end; I sneaked in under the wire and placed the winning bid, which was a very reasonable $24. No Monet-grabber at Sotheby's could have been any happier. You may find the glasses (above), which also bear a discreet Pepsi logo, at best forthright and sturdy, but they're Waterford to me. Drop one, and I'll have to inform Mister Big, Boris and Natasha's redoubtable boss. You have been warned.—KATRINE AMES

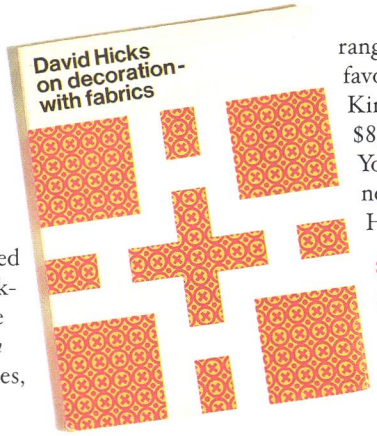
playing it straight

I collect antique levels—those essential tools for making sure things are perfectly horizontal (left)—and over the last few months, I have successfully bid on five from eBay.com. The on-line auction house has aided and abetted my collecting in many unexpected ways. For me, eBay isn't just about buying; it's about learning. There are very few books that explore antique tools, so the site has become an educational source. Items for sale are almost always posted with a digital image and a description of the condition, markings, and manufacturer. Through eBay, my vocabulary has expanded beyond Stanley to include defunct companies such as Millers Falls and Sargent. Now I'm focusing my collecting on give-away levels, which are almost always red-painted wood and inexpensive. Hardware and farm stores used to stamp them with their logos and give them to customers. I scan eBay postings trying to discover which company (or companies) specialized in manufacturing my new trophies. But I'm not an eBay-only fellow. If you have a level you think I might want, send me a description at newell_turner@houseandgarden.com.—NEWELL TURNER

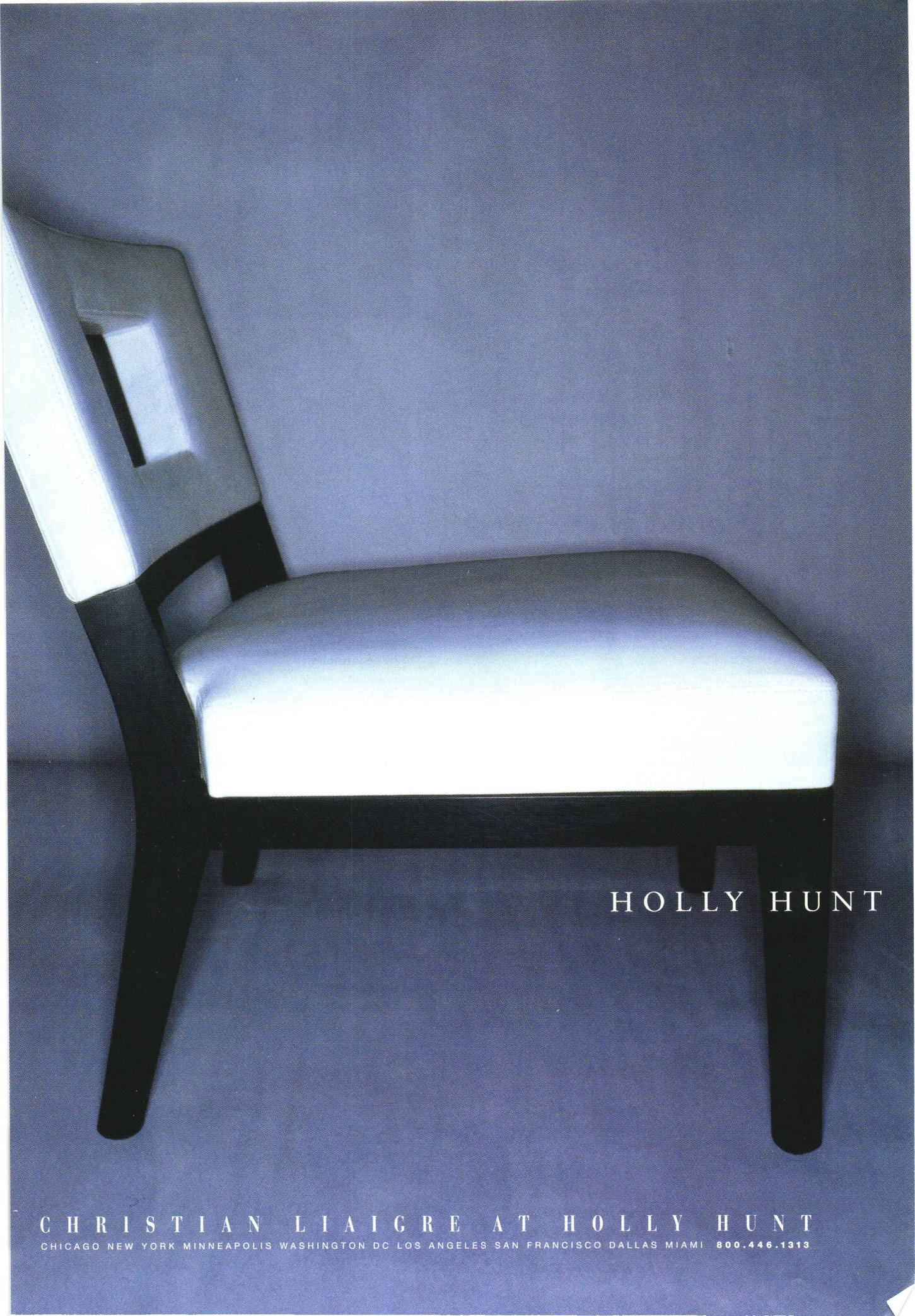
E-DITORS' CHOICE

cybertales

Many of the best books on decorating are, alas, out of print. Now there's an easy way to get those hard-to-find classics like *Billy Baldwin Decorates* without scouring used-books stores and library sales: **bibliofind.com**. This Web site devoted to used and rare books is linked to thousands of booksellers and can track down just about any title in seconds. A recent search for *David Hicks on Decoration—with Fabrics* (1971) yielded 12 copies, ranging from $15 to $30. They were a bargain. Our favorite New York decorative arts bookshop, Kinsey Marable, had two copies, for $85 and $75. We E-mailed Twice-Loved Books in Youngstown, OH (twice@bright.net), for our near-perfect volume ($20, plus $3.50 shipping). Here's who else was selling the book:



- **Great Northwest Bookstore,** *Portland, OR* **$15**
- **The Book Store,** *Belen, NM* **$18.50**
- **Candy Books,** *Worthington, OH* **$24**
- **Rybski Booksellers,** *Chicago, IL* **$30**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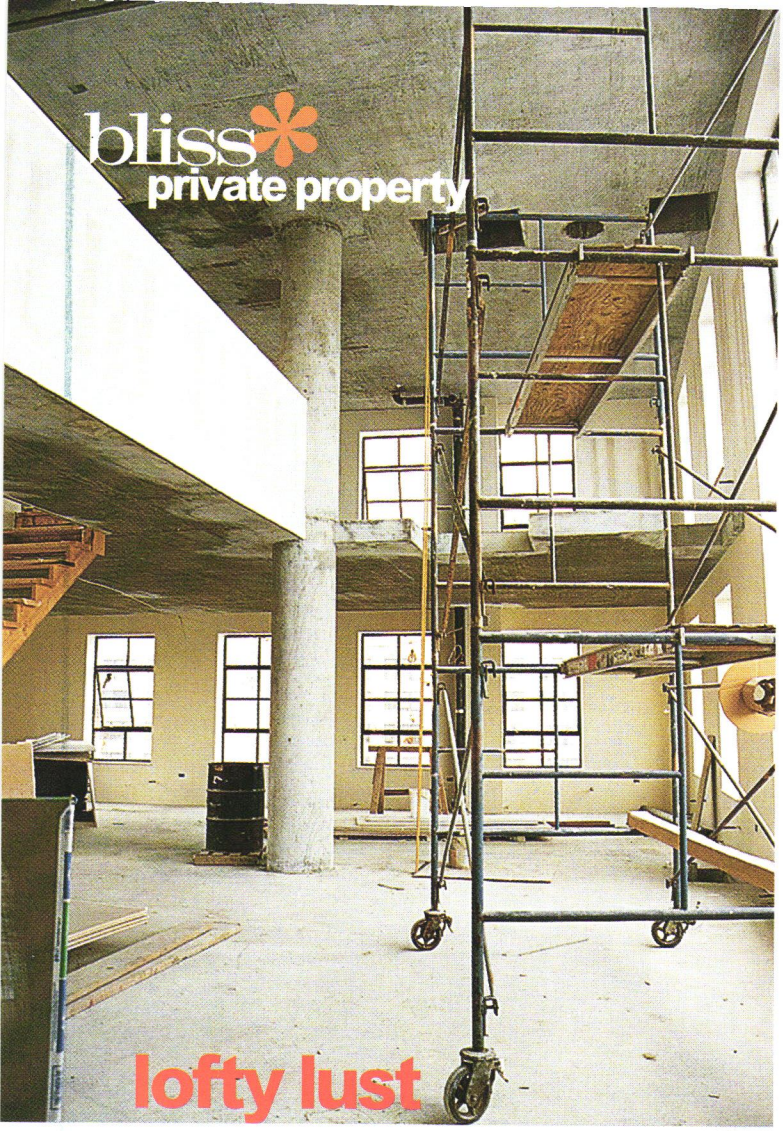
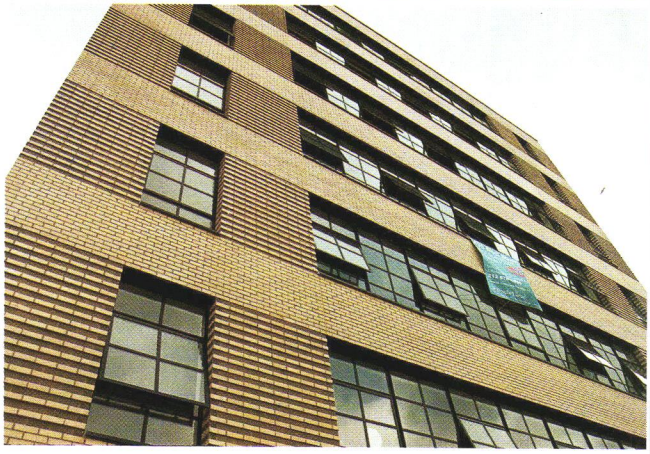




Steel awning windows give brand-new construction a sense of history.

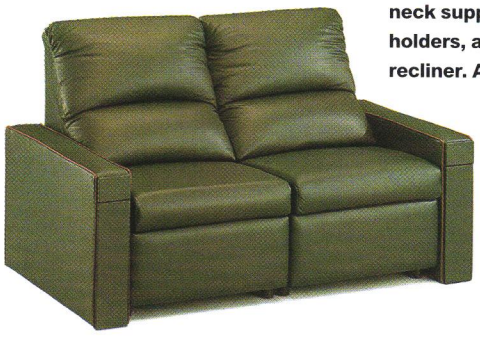
I WAS ALREADY in a "let's move downtown" mode when the doorman in my staid Upper East Side apartment building delivered the glossy brochure for new lofts. "We're really more downtown people," I tell my husband, who has always touted the gritty, arty cold-water—and once-cheap—lofts in which he lived 20 years ago before moving to my uptown Zip code (where I've lived my entire life). The prospect of living in a newly hip neighborhood plus thousands of square feet of open space propels us to West Street, where a developer is erecting what looks and feels like one of those old factories that are being turned into condominiums in downtowns all over America. We're met by Jan Hashey, a realtor with Douglas Elliman, who lets us absorb the unobstructed Hudson River views and western light on the edge of Greenwich Village and the old meat market. Then she tells us that the two duplexes in the nine-unit condominium (by architect and developer Cary Tamarkin) are already sold, each for well over $4 million. That's about $1,000 a square foot for *totally raw* space—no interior walls, no air-conditioning (though mechanical rooms "to accommodate future air-cooled, air-conditioning equipment" come with each apartment), concrete floors, a basic kitchen and one utilitarian bathroom. As the brochure notes, the lofts are "delivered ready for your architect." I'm desperately in love. I'm levitating. My husband reels me in. "What about the noise of the traffic zipping up the West Side Highway?" he asks. "Who wants to live on a major highway?" I might, I might. My tape measure is already out. —SUZANNE SLESIN

the best seats in the house?

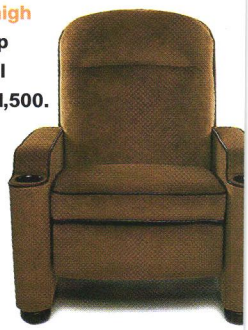
As screening rooms and home theaters become de rigueur, it's important for seating to be state of the art, too. "We try to maximize comfort, optimize acoustics, preserve sight lines, *and* maintain aesthetics," says James Theobald, marketing director of Theo Kalomirakis Theaters, NYC, a top-of-the-line home-theater design firm.

Theo Kalomirakis's T.K. Contemporary reclines and comes with two cup holders. About $1,500.

Accoustic Innovation's Cinema Chair II, shown as a pair, can be placed just two inches from the wall. About $740.



T.K. Deco has a high neck support, cup holders, and a full recliner. About $1,500.



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t. keller donavan, interior designer

RESIDENCES New York; Miami
EDUCATION Parsons School of Design
CURRENT PROJECTS Country house in Redding, CT; Atlantic Ocean–view apartment on Fisher Island, FL; six-bedroom suburban homestead in Short Hills, NJ
THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I WAKE UP Open the door and pick up *The New York Times* and turn on the Krups full of Chock full o' Nuts
I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT Counting my blessings
I SLEEP ONLY ON E. Braun linens
MY FAVORITE PLACE TO READ IS Business class to Paris or at the beach
THE BEST VIEW IN MY HOUSE IS FROM The foyer, because you have to turn the corner from the front door, and all you see is a field of red linen and sisal. It kind of makes your heart beat faster
MY REFRIGERATOR IS ALWAYS STOCKED WITH Seltzer water, salad greens, and Pepperidge Farm garlic bread
MY LIVING ROOM IS VACUUMED BY Beautiful Esperanza, the most glamorous housekeeper, with my Electrolux
THE MOST USED ROOM IN MY HOUSE IS The foyer. With all the boxes and bags coming and going, it looks like the loading dock of the D&D
MY DREAM HOUSE IS On the Seine, Thames, or at the beach. Being a Cancer, I need a water view
A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME UNLESS It's used and it's loved

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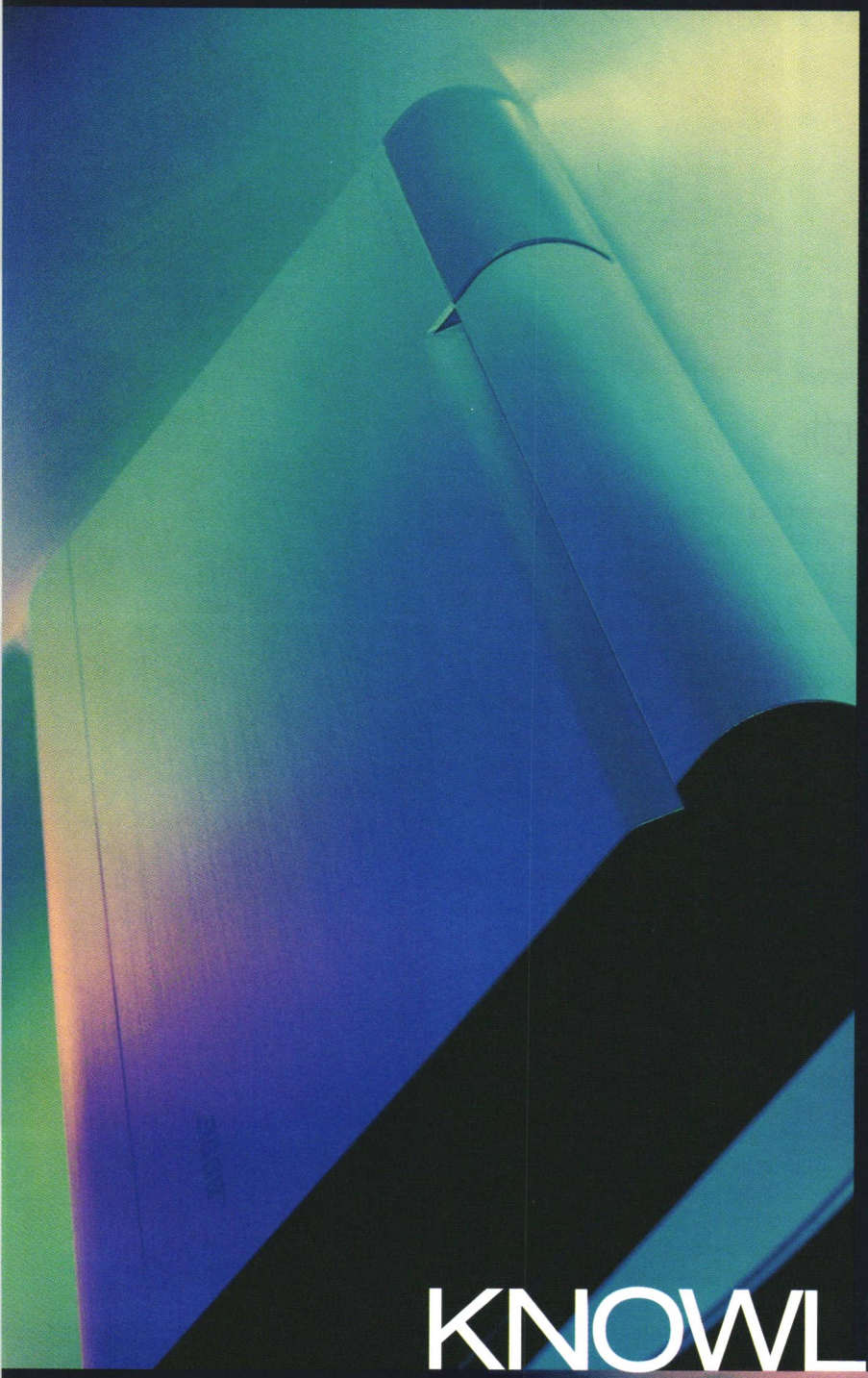

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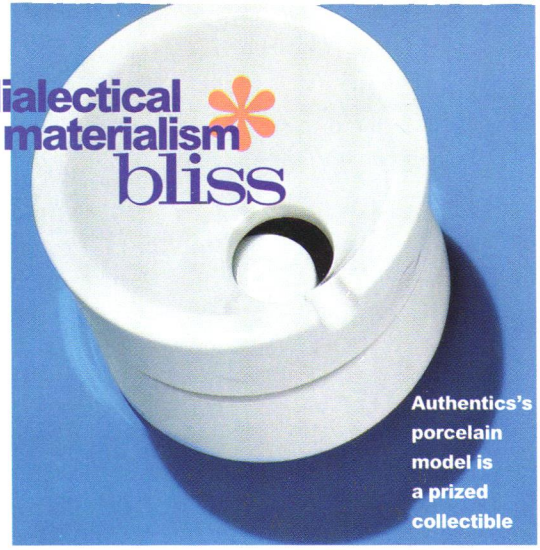
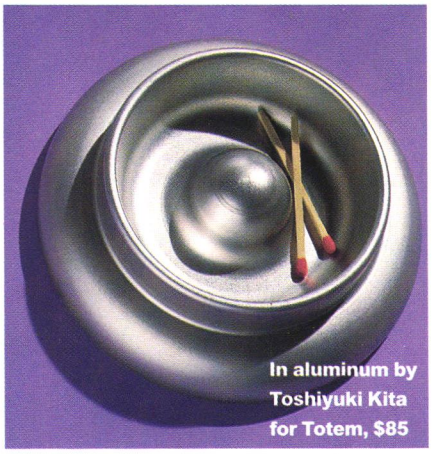
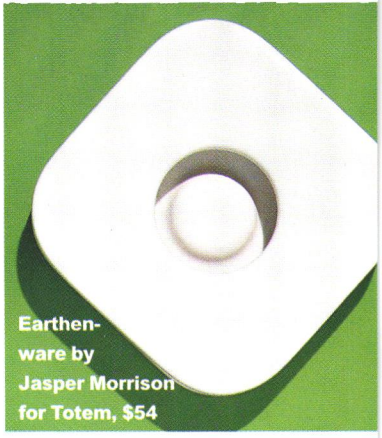






the new ashtray etiquette

WHAT Ashtrays

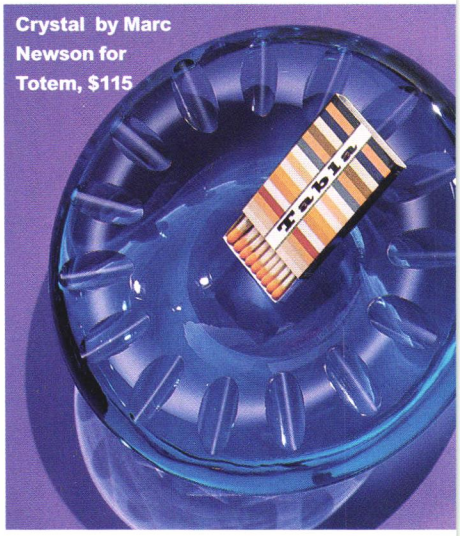
WHY NOW? Because anti-tobacco forces have made home the last refuge for smokers. Because hot designers like Jasper Morrison, Troy Halterman, and Hansjerg Maier-Aichen of Authentics are designing them. Because a coffee table still feels bare without one.

LIGHTING UP In the '40s, '50s, and '60s, ashtrays were ubiquitous. "Almost everyone had them in almost every room of the house, including the bathrooms," says Nancy Wanvig, author of *Collector's Guide to Ashtrays* (Collector Books). "People smoked everywhere—in business offices, doctors' offices, and high school offices."

CLEAN-AIR ACT "In the old days, it was polite to allow your friends to smoke. Nowadays it's polite to guarantee your friends a smoke-free environment," says New York interior designer Stephanie Stokes, who gives clients brass "no-smoking" signs for Christmas and has one prominently outside her apartment door. Manners expert Letitia Baldridge still thinks that the ashtray can be a social necessity. "If somebody is an addict, and you love them, you produce an ashtray."

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE Alexa Hampton set off more sparks than a Ronson Lighter when she included ashtrays and cigarettes in her 1999 Kips Bay Decorator Show House room. "I was asked to take the cigarettes away because it offended people," says Hampton. Now she accommodates smokers by stealth, using "non-ashtray" ashtrays. "If it's a pretty plate, people aren't quite sure what it's for, so it's less offensive."

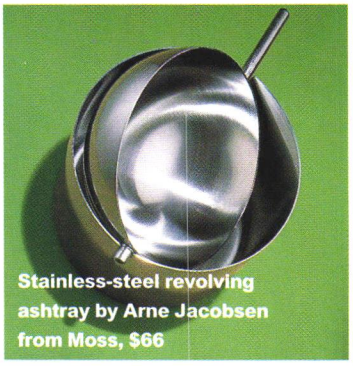
HARD PACK "I find fancy, fragile, overly decorated objects such as shallow glass or china plates and saucers totally inappropriate," Albert Hadley, the dean of American decorating, declares. "I like receptacles that have a reasonable width and depth, such as 'real' ashtrays of ceramic, metal, or glass."

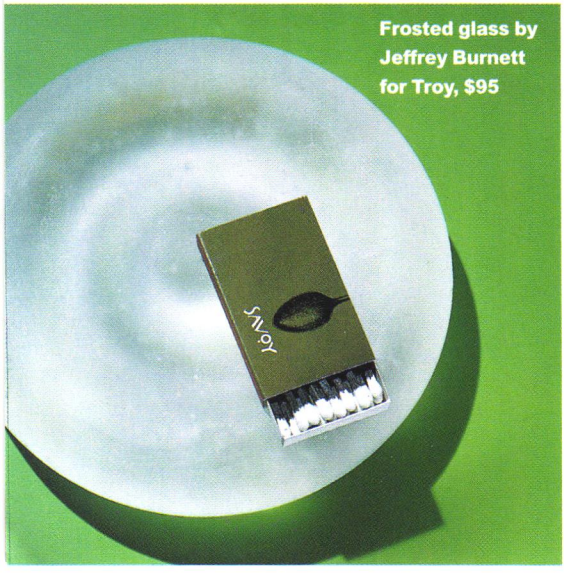


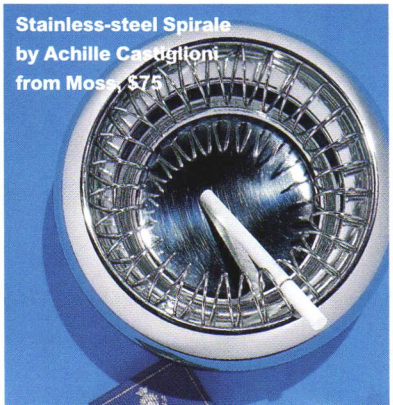
YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY "It's weird to encourage people to smoke," says Miami architect Alison Spear. "There is an old-fashioned elegance about ashtrays—I'm not into it."

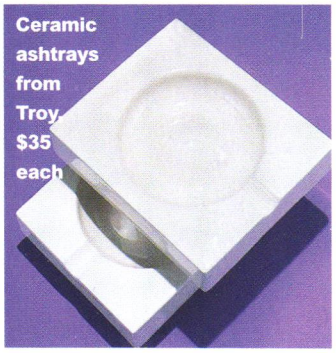
HOT GOODS Taboo or not, ashtrays are a staple of many trendy home-furnishing stores: New York's Troy, Moss, and Cappellini Modern Age carry models created by designers and architects. "Ashtrays are a design element," says Gail Schultz of Totem Design Group, who sells interpretations by Marc Newson and Toshiyuki Kita to smokers and nonsmokers. "People consider them accessories for the table."

SMOKE SIGNALS "An ashtray in a house is not necessarily an invitation to smoke," says New York interior designer Sheila Bridges. "Just as a bed in a house isn't an invitation for someone to spend the night." —LYGEIA GRACE









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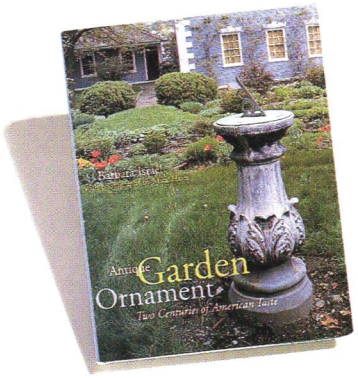
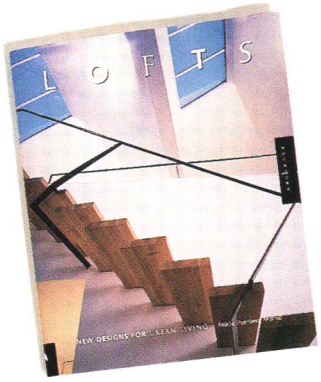
bliss bookcase

moving pictures

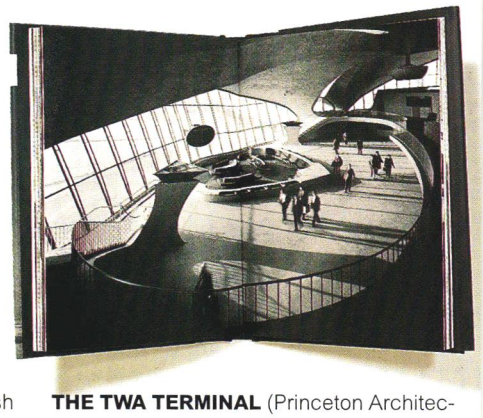
TRAVEL THE GLOBE with this month's sheaf of illustrated books, from a French country kitchen in Berkeley to an Italianate garden in Florida. If a trip in time is more your thing, revisit a New York City landmark that proves air travel was once glamorous. Or explore two fast-growing trends—loft living and universal design—that know no borders.—L.G.



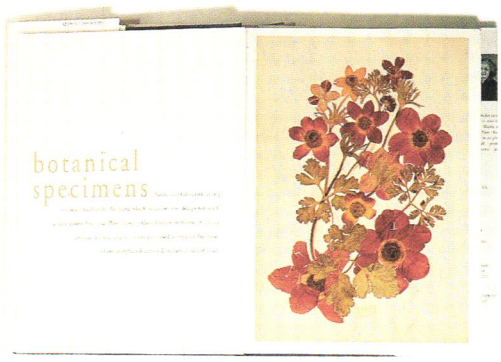
ANTIQUE GARDEN ORNAMENT (Abrams, $49.50) Barbara Israel's impressive history charts 200 years of America's love affair with outdoor benches, fountains, urns, and fences. For the collector, there's a list of foundries, with examples of marks and dates.



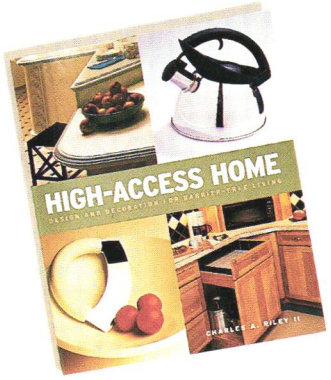
LOFTS (Rockport, $35) A surprisingly fresh look at an architectural style that is already in danger of becoming an urban cliché. Full of ideas for open-plan living, this book reaches beyond the usual boundaries of New York to Tokyo, Toronto, and Antwerp.



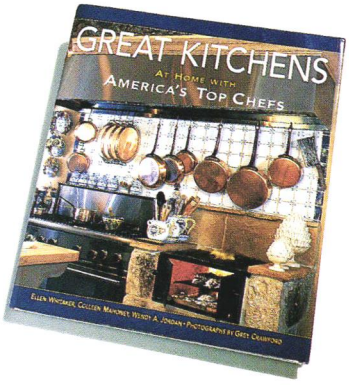
THE TWA TERMINAL (Princeton Architectural Press, $19.95) Ezra Stoller is the Annie Leibovitz of modern architecture. The first volume in the Building Blocks series, this slim book of 1962 photographs is Stoller's lyrical portrait of Eero Saarinen's jet-set icon.



THE PRESSED PLANT (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, $29.95) Preserving flowers *is* an art. In this beautifully illustrated history of botanical specimens, prints, and sun pictures, 100-year-old blossoms look as vibrant as the day they were mounted.



HIGH-ACCESS HOME (Rizzoli, $40) The home of the future is here, and it looks as good as it feels. From an elegant Connecticut show house to a California mission-style compound, Charles A. Riley II shows that barrier-free living needn't be institutional.



GREAT KITCHENS (Taunton Press, $34.95) A voyeuristic look into the private stages of 26 hot chefs, including Ken Hom's open-shelved kitchen overflowing with utensils and jars, and Mary Sue Milliken's streamlined modernist poolside galley.

REQUIRED READING

architect calvin tsao's hit list

MILLENNIUM: TRIBAL WISDOM AND THE MODERN WORLD, by David Maybury Lewis (Viking) "We're living in a global society—it's important not to be so Eurocentric. This book looks outside of mainstream cultures for universal values and rituals, and shows us how our environment is shaped by them." THE SENSE OF ORDER: A STUDY IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DECORATIVE ART, by E. H. Gombrich (Phaidon Press) and PHILOSOPHIES OF ART AND BEAUTY, SELECTED READINGS IN AESTHETICS FROM PLATO TO HEIDEGGER (University of Chicago Press) "The creation of beauty is guided by cultural and philosophical inspiration. Otherwise, we just recycle style again and again." WALKER EVANS & DAN GRAHAM (Witte de With) "Photographs that show two views of the world—the 1930s and today." LES ANNÉES series from 1910 to 1980, by Anne Bony (Éditions du Regard) "A fantastic cultural survey by the decades."

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train to the house where she grew up: $63

pints at the pub where she met your dad: $8

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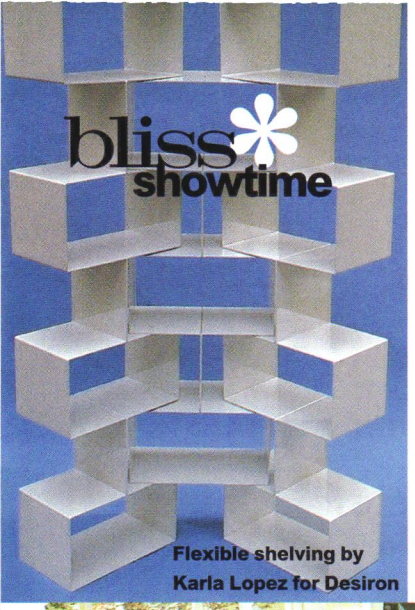


Flexible shelving by Karla Lopez for Desiron

Sleek kitchen unit by Valcucine

fairly fabulous

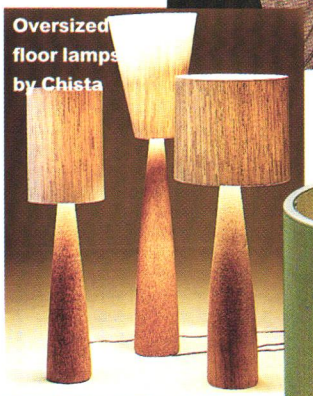
Milan, you have a rival. Furniture designers and retailers from around the globe came to New York in record numbers last spring to attend the 11th annual International Contemporary Furniture Fair. In the evenings, the action shifted from the Jacob Javits Convention Center to the streets of SoHo, where showrooms lured out-of-towners with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. The Museum of Modern Art was the site of the official kickoff party, where the young nobles of European design, including Giulio Cappellini, Ron Arad, and Habitat's Tom Dixon (whose iconic Jack lamps cast a golden glow on revelers in the sculpture garden), mixed it up with locals like Paola Antonelli, MoMA's curator of architecture and design, and SoHo textile designer Christine Van Der Hurd. Whimsical shapes, bright colors, and sexy textures at the fair had everyone buzzing that contemporary furniture is finally finding an American audience.—RYAN MATHENY

Pendant lamps by David Weeks

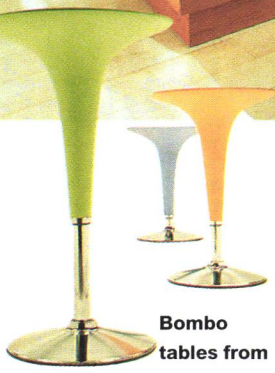
Silk-screened pillow by Salon Moderne

Space saver: the Tristano bed from Poliform

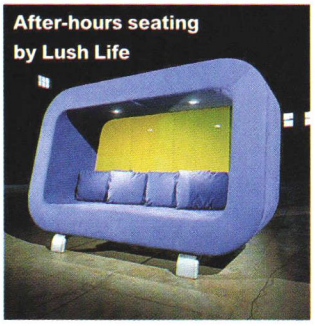
Designers Tom Dixon, and Harry A



Oversized floor lamps by Chista

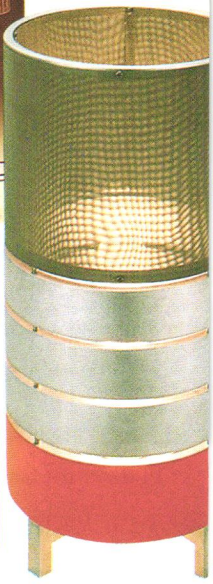


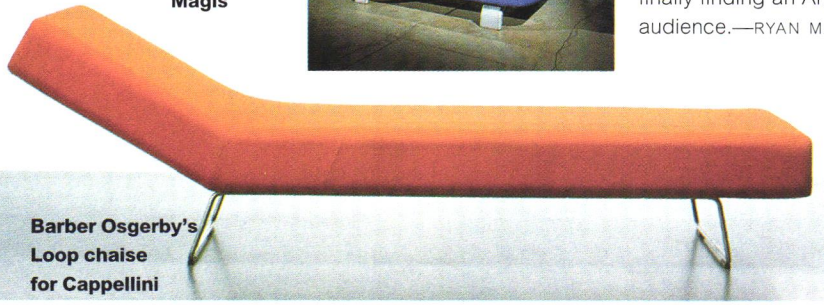
Bombo tables from Magis



After-hours seating by Lush Life

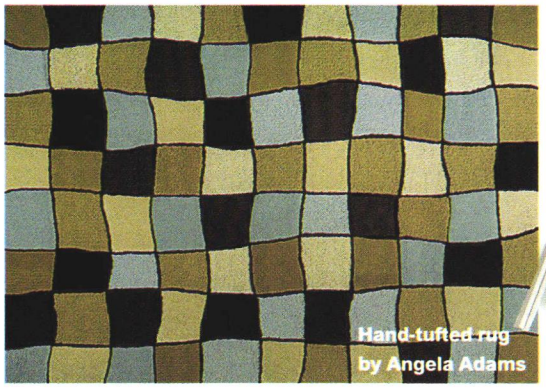
Stacking table li from Biproduct



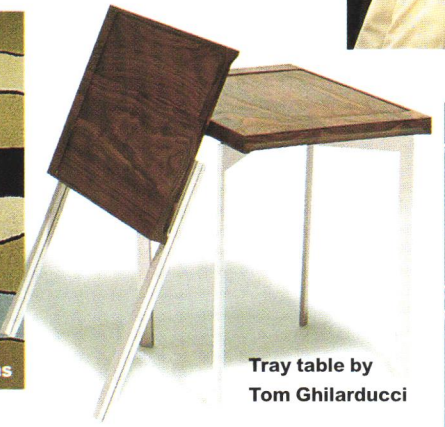


Barber Osgerby's Loop chaise for Cappellini

MoMA's Paola Antonelli with Ron Arad

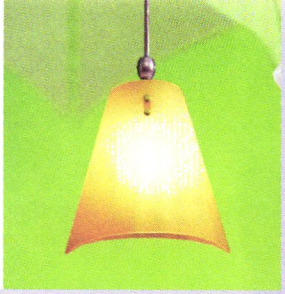


Hand-tufted rug by Angela Adams

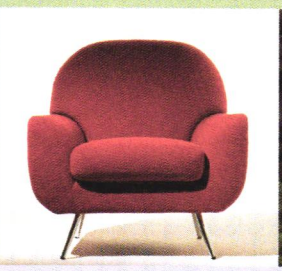


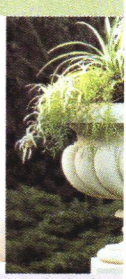
Tray table by Tom Ghilarducci

Christine Van Der Hurd with Giulio Cappellini



visit 900 design showrooms in 15 countries





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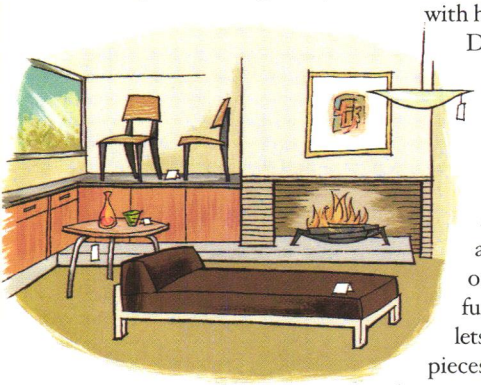
the grand canyons

As longtime residents of Laurel Canyon, my neighbors and I have become used to the gradual gentrification of this Hollywood Hills enclave. The latest celebrity to take up canyon-dwelling is **Bill Sofield**, Gucci store designer and lauded New York decorator. Forsaking his penchant for all things sleek and modern, he fell for a long-dilapidated but charming Arts and Crafts house, the former love nest of **Mary Pickford** and **Douglas Fairbanks**.

Sofield has set about renovating with gusto—adding wings, terraces, and a solid copper roof! He did so much excavation in repairing the foundation that he found space for a gym, wine cellar, and spa. He's even restoring a long-hidden speakeasy and creating a Sadie Thompson–meets–Susie Wong guest room/boudoir for his New York friend, photographer **Nan Goldin.** Sofield, who is often seen hiking on canyon streets, is dazzling the locals with not only his home but also his sexy, form-fitting jogging outfits. Still, I can't help wondering if he's actually slept in his canyon hideaway yet. After all, it's right on the main drag—one of the busiest thoroughfares between Hollywood and the Valley—so maybe my housewarming gift will be some Gucci earplugs.

miller time

The idea of traipsing around one more morgue-white gallery has been known to throw me into a narcoleptic stupor, so you can imagine my relief when art maven **Burnett Miller**, with his partner, Julia Diamond, moved his gallery into a **Neutra** house in bucolic **Benedict Canyon**. He has turned the flawless 1958 house into a space that showcases an impressive collection of twentieth-century furniture and art and lets clients browse and view pieces in an unparalleled domestic setting. He also managed to find Neutra's original gardener, an 80-year-old Mexican whose son is now restoring the gardens to their original glory.



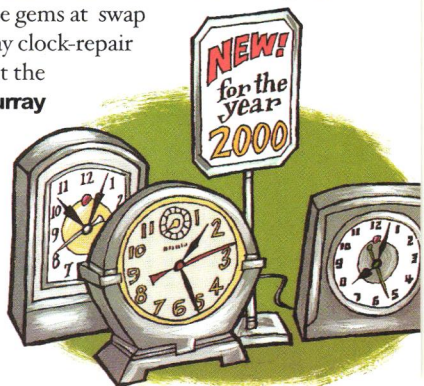
Voulez-vous Prouvé avec moi, peut-être? Miller scored an impressive collection of **Jean Prouvé**'s seminal modern pieces from the dormitories of the Paris University—quel chic!—and even a section of prefabricated metal wall from the Air France terminal in the former Congo. Future "presentations," as Miller likes to call them, will include a rare cache of **Brancusi** photographs discovered in Romania and possibly a show by New York conceptual artist **Joseph Kosuth**, documenting Wittgenstein's influence on Neutra's aesthetic in prewar Vienna. *Phew.*

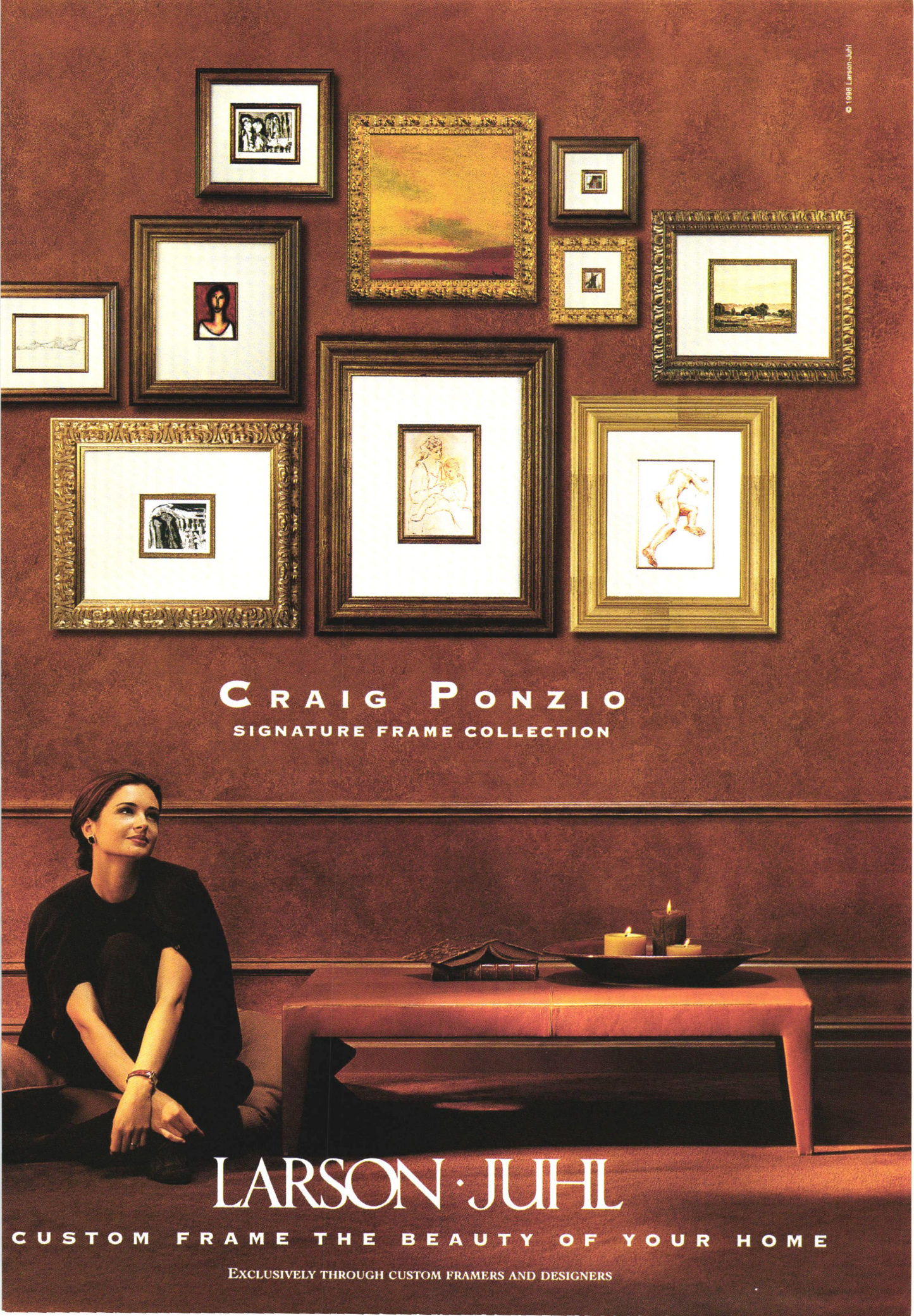
hit the lights

Bored with the Hollywood shuffle (though he continues to write screenplays), Fort Worth transplant **Blake Simpson** was looking for alternative forms of artistic expression. He came across a catalogue for an Argentinian company that developed porcelain foam filters for NASA fuel systems and hit on the idea of using them for lighting. He customized the filters, which look like coral and are ideal light diffusers. He has since designed steel and porcelain fixtures that have a surreal, organic quality that keeps them constantly in demand. Think **Great Barrier Reef** meets ***The Jetsons*** and you'll get my continental drift. He also makes an elegant bamboo standing lamp and a series of steel and travertine tables that recall '60s designer **Paul McCobb**. Simpson will also customize designs, which is a huge favor, so be nice if you call.

sound the alarm

Some years ago, while browsing in a pawnshop in Oakland (don't ask!), I came across a 1940s steel-case Telechron electric alarm clock. Charmed by its sleek good looks, adjustable face light, and reassuring purr (the original white-noise machine), I snapped it up. Since then, I have accumulated numerous clocks to pass on to friends, who are instantly flashbacked to their parents' bedrooms. Even the rattling alarm has a fin-de-millennium nostalgia to it. Look for these affordable gems at swap meets and out-of-the-way clock-repair shops. Next time you hit the sack, do like **Fred McMurray** or **Myrna Loy** used to do and give your clock a good winding. It beats watching Leno any day.

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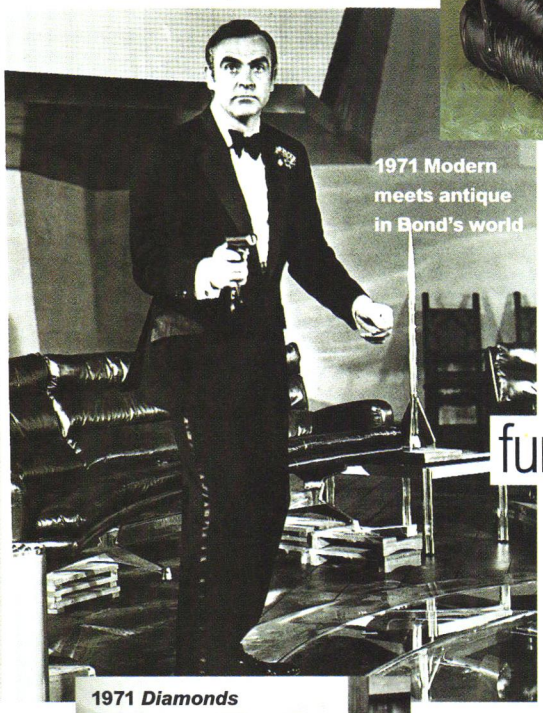
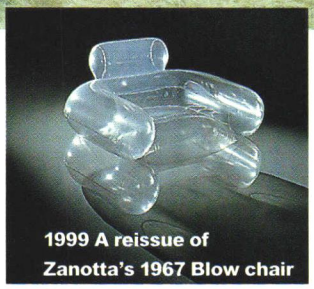
1999 Giovannetti's sexy Anfibio sofa

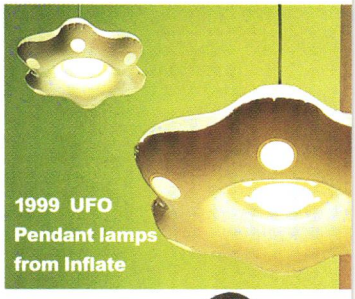
1970 Dorothea Elman's moon-scape living room in NYC, by Paul Rudolph


1971 Modern meets antique in Bond's world

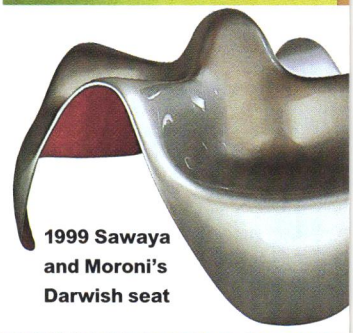

1999 A reissue of Zanotta's 1967 Blow chair

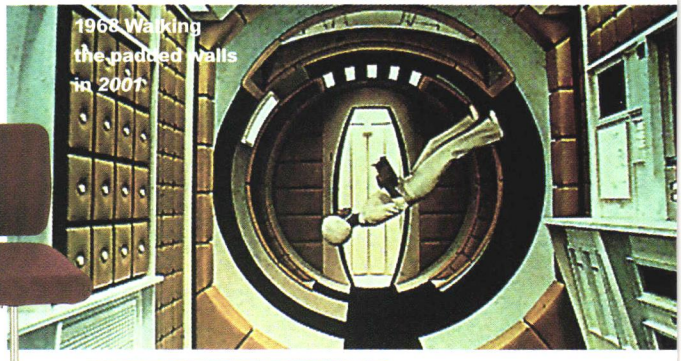
furniture flashback

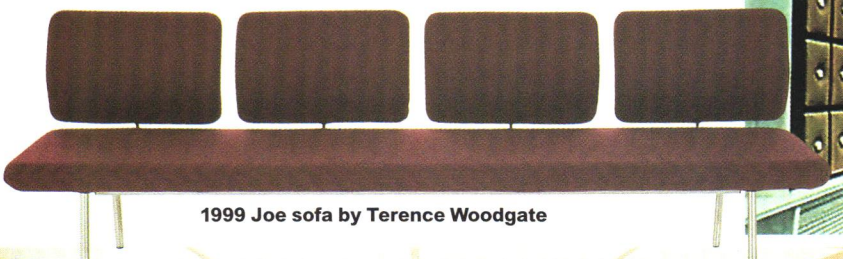
The retro-techno style of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and early James Bond films has returned. Contemporary designers have rediscovered fantasy and a sense of playfulness. The stunning neo-organic look that helped make Stanley Kubrick's 1968 sci-fi tale a decorating classic is a major source of inspiration, as are Ken Adam's glamorous sets for the 007 series that mixed slick padded furniture with European antiques. This year's Milan furniture fair was full of designs—from Terence Woodgate's Joe sofa (below) to Giovannetti's sexy convertible Anfibio sofa (above)—that could have been lifted straight out of *Diamonds Are Forever, Dr. No, Goldfinger,* and *Barbarella.* The Youthquake vision of the future was all about fantasy, cocooning, soft edges, and body-hugging sensual shapes—think of the lounge in *2001* (bottom) and Paul Rudolph's moonscape apartment for Dorothea Elman (top right) in New York. Today this sensibility is captured in the magnificent lines of Ross Lovegrove's One chair (bottom right) and Sawaya and Moroni's Darwish three-seater (right). Whatever would we *do* without the VCR?


1999 UFO Pendant lamps from Inflate

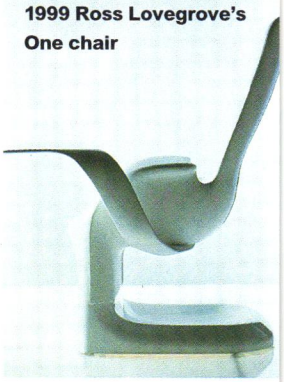
1971 *Diamonds Are Forever*


1999 Sawaya and Moroni's Darwish seat


1968 Walking the padded walls in *2001*


1999 Joe sofa by Terence Woodgate

1968 Olivier Mourge's Djinn chairs set the scene in *2001*


1999 Ross Lovegrove's One chair

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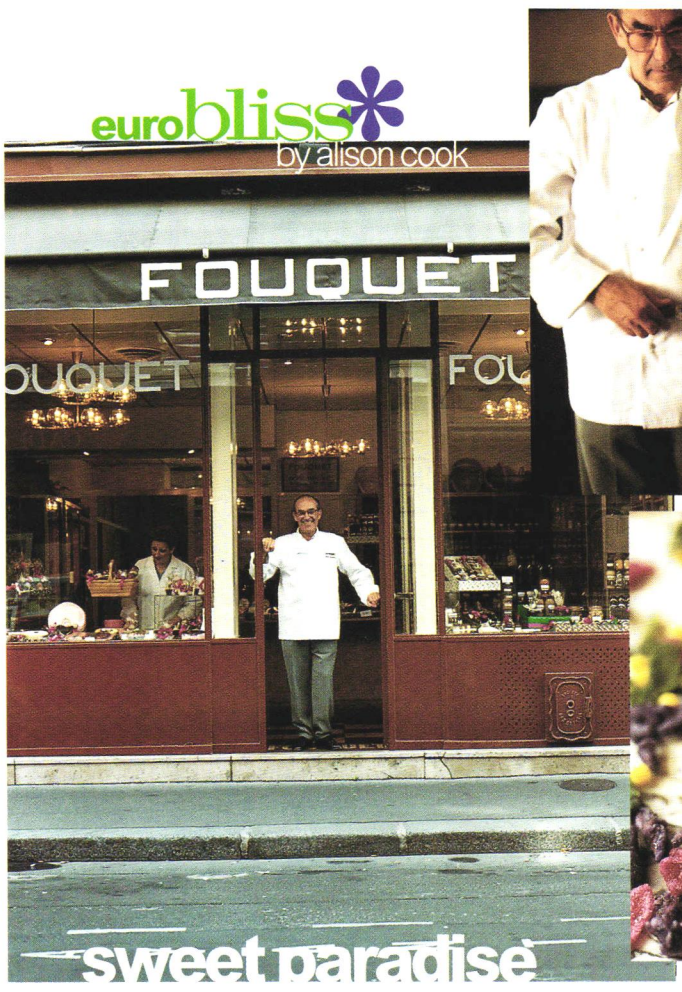
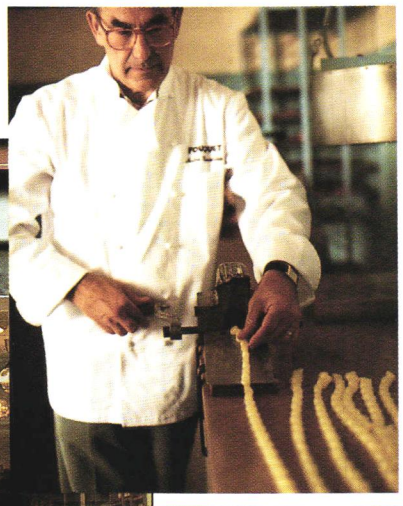
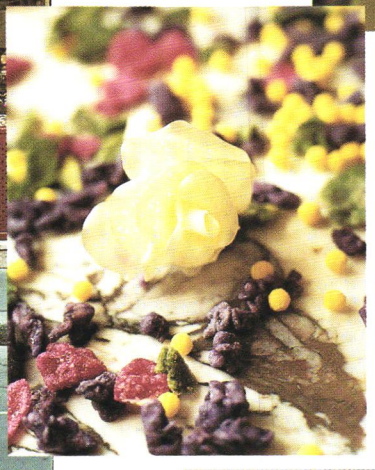
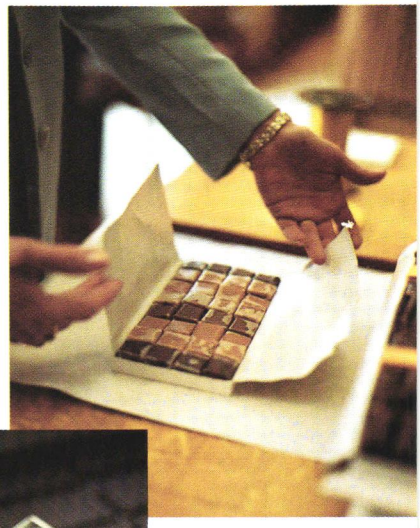
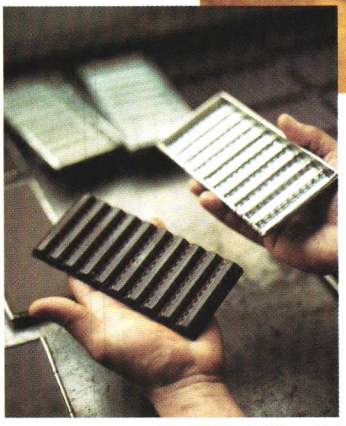
sweet paradise











At his confectionery, Christophe Chambeau-Fouquet, top left, makes *berlingots*. From top: hand-stamped chocolates, candied flowers, caramels, chocolate bars and molds, and custom salt and pepper.

THE TRICK TO shopping Fouquet, the profoundly old-fashioned Paris confectionery founded in 1852, is not to panic. So much gleamy perfection, from the satin-glossed candy drops called *berlingots* to the shiny platoons of jams and jellies, honeys and pickles. Such a bewilderment of ancient French bonbons, from hand-peeled almond dragées robed in a thin sugar crackle to outrageously buttery caramels folded into miniature waxed-paper envelopes. Such steep prices.

Breathe deeply. Fouquet habitués know this starchy establishment is not to be swallowed whole but savored year by year, a handful of products at a time. They know, too, that Fouquet is well worth the tariff. Flavors, as well as surfaces, gleam here, and everything is made by traditional methods in astonishingly small batches. "It's a lot of work," says proprietor Christophe Chambeau-Fouquet with a sly flash of understatement.

The word "artisanal" might have been coined expressly for the rites conducted behind the original Fouquet shop on rue Lafitte. (The grander of two stores is on Rue François-1er.) Here white-clad priestesses nurse potfuls of sugar syrup to precise temperatures, pull lavalike twists of candy, and herd the sweet oblongs called *acidules* down the ramp of a contraption that would have entertained Rube Goldberg.

In the cold rooms, the chocolatier nudges nougats down a comically tiny assembly line, where they are doused in the kind of intensely bittersweet chocolate that has made Fouquet famous. More is ladled into antique molds, to emerge as beaded-and-banded *tablettes* that may be the world's finest chocolate bars.

I can no longer imagine my domestic life without certain Fouquet essentials. The aromatic peppercorn mix, Mélange Fouquet, that somehow turns me into a brilliant cook; the fruity, unsweetened cassis mustard that transmogrifies the simplest grilled-cheese sandwich; the sea salt that makes grilled fish taste even more like itself. I'll find others in the years to come, a comforting thought as we lurch toward the jaws of the twenty-first century.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

FOUQUET: 36 RUE LAFITTE, 9e 6 ; 22 RUE FRANÇOIS -1ER, 8e 75 An international who's who shops here for artisanal French bonbons, preserves, honeys, and specialties.

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bliss the larder by lora zarubin

crustacean sensation

When I'm homesick for Paris, I put together a plateau de **fruits de mer**. *The French classic, perfected by Paris brasseries like Le Dôme and La Coupole, has become a staple at American brasseries like SoHo's Balthazar, where almost every table is crowned with a tower of oysters, mussels, and crustaceans. Prepared at home, a* plateau de fruits de mer *is the ultimate treat—brilliant for parties or for dinner à deux. You can buy ingredients locally or by mail order—I love the Pacific Coast oysters from the Hog Island Oyster Co. (415-663-9218) and Monterey Fish Market (510-525-5600). While traditionalists serve rye bread with this dish, I prefer a crusty loaf of sourdough.*

Boiled **crawfish** are always delicious. Lagniappe in Orange, N.J., 973-674-0498, ships both frozen and fresh.

Langoustines, which I buy from Wild Edibles in New York City, 212-625-9971, and serve poached and chilled, are a luxury. Large shrimp are an easy alternative.

Nothing's sweeter than Long Island littleneck **clams** in season, available at Wild Edibles.

Casse Noix Inox shellfish **crackers** from E. Dehillerin in Paris are gorgeous and easy to use.

Poach Penn Cove **mussels**, from Monterey Fish Market, in salted water; chill and set out in large scallop shells.

Fill deep **trays**, like these from E. Dehillerin, 011-331-42-36-53-13, top and middle, and New York's Bridge Kitchenware, 212-688-4220, bottom, with lots of crushed ice.

Dungeness crabs from Seattle's City Fish Co., 800-334-2669, arrive cooked and ready to go. I use only the claws, reserving the body for making crab cakes.

Wrap **lemon** wedges in cheesecloth and tie with kitchen string.

Serve 2 to 3 kinds of **oysters**. Kumamoto, Hog Island, Fanny Bay, Prince Edward Island, Malpeques, Belon, and Wellfleet are my favorites.

The three classic accompaniments are: **aioli, cocktail sauce**, and a **mignonette** made of shallots, champagne vinegar, and a dash of white wine.

Finger bowls and lots of folded **paper towels** are a must.

Dig in with modern **cocktail forks** from Dean & Deluca, in New York, 212-226-6800.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

E. DEHILLERIN 18 & 20 RUE COQUILLIERE, 1e. 19

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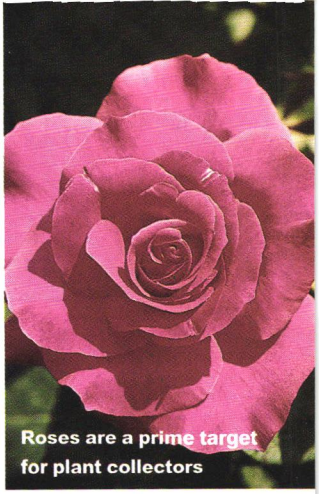
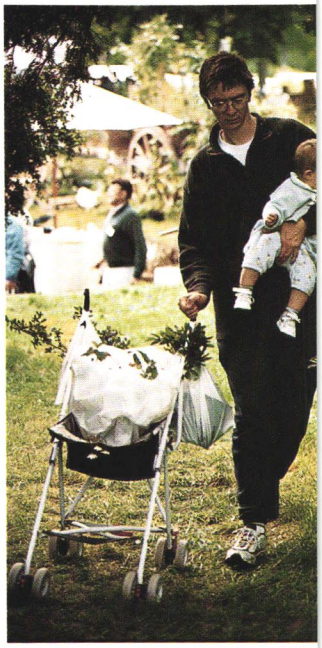
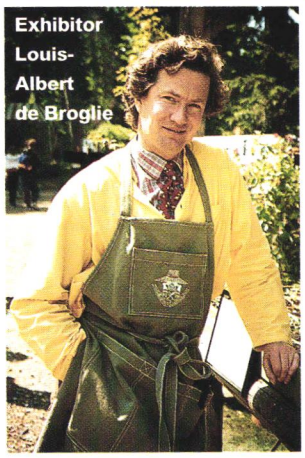
garden bliss

The château de Courson



Roses are a prime target for plant collectors





Exhibitor Louis-Albert de Broglie

a courson cornucopia

Calling all plant collectors. Don't despair if you missed the Journées des Plants de Courson last May; the fall exposition, from October 15 to17 at the château de Courson, just outside Paris, will provide exceptional finds for those who wish to fill holes in the garden prior to winter's planting hiatus. Courson is the place for horticultural enthusiasts who just have to have that special new iris, latest rose, or rare perennial that will be the talk of their garden. Cognoscenti like social doyenne Anne Cox Chambers aren't afraid to back their vans right up and load them with a staggering selection of specimens. Friday is filled with the fashionable set, all decked out in Chanel, Hermès, and Louis Vuitton. On Saturday and Sunday, families come to picnic by the lake and peruse the pickings, which are anything but slim. Domaine de Courson is an hour from Paris by rail or car. A shuttle bus is available at the train, except at lunchtime. Domaine de Courson, 91680 Courson Monteloup Tel. 011-64-58-90-12.

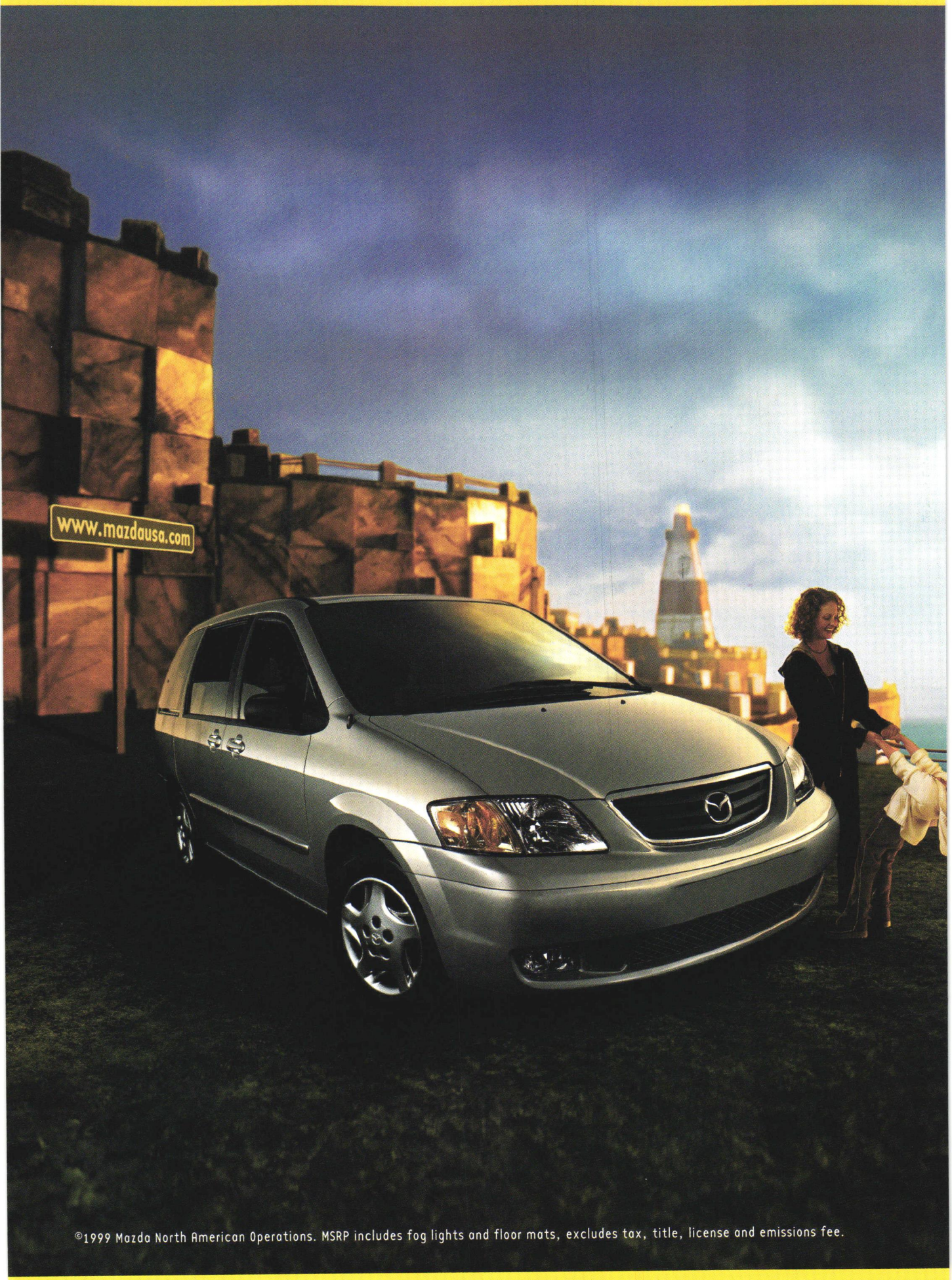
An iris in the Cayeux exhibit

Wheelbarrows are provided for shoppers

Botanical[illegible] on display

MICHAEL McDERMITT

Take everything you thought about minivans and throw it out the roll-down side windows.



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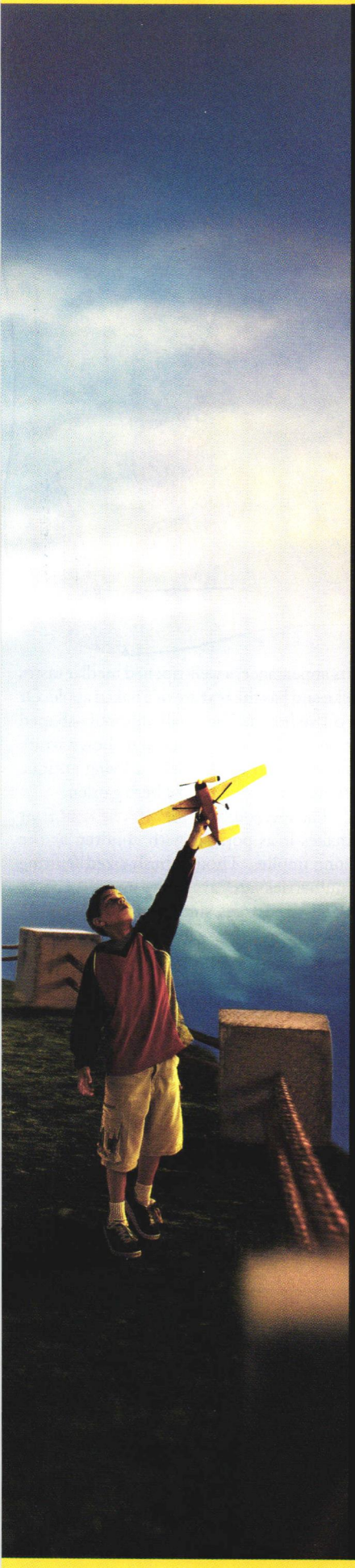

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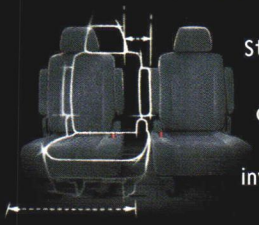

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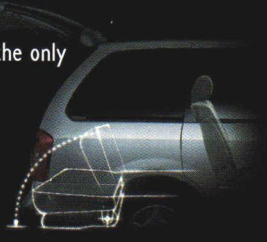
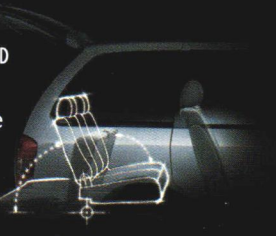


Tumble-Under™ Seat Hides Away



Seat Faces Front or Back

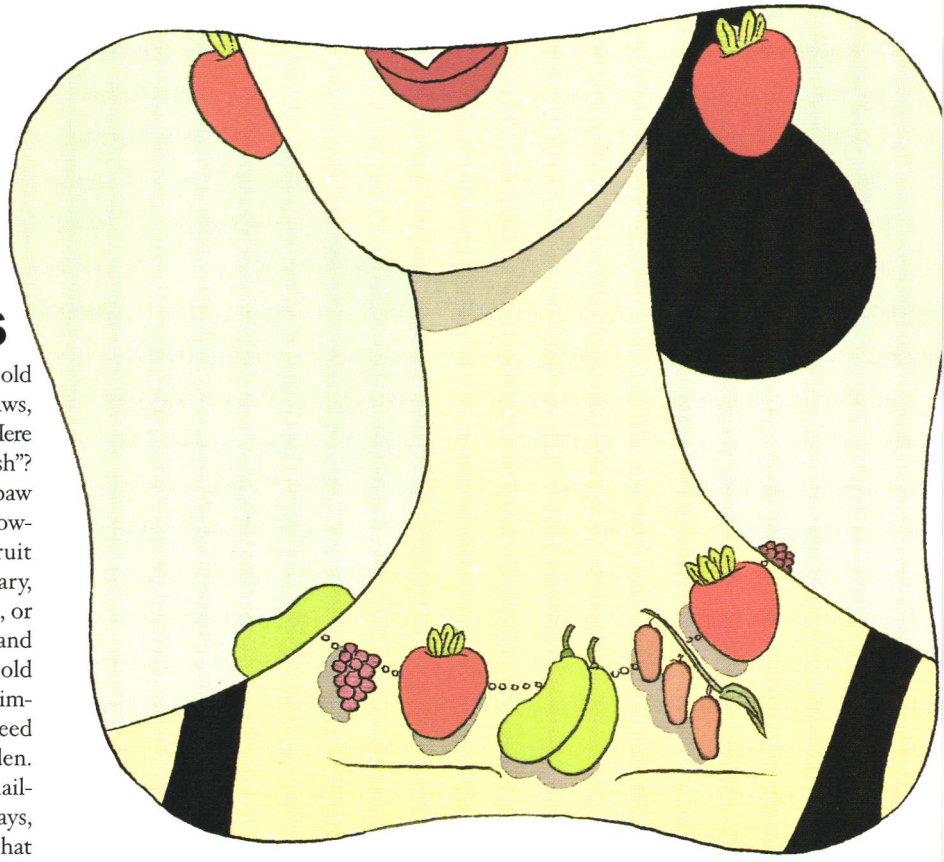
Roll-Down Side Windows

mazda

Get in. Be moved.

garden bliss

edible ornamentals



Do young children still sing the old nursery songs "Picking up papaws, putting 'em in your pocket," or "Here we go 'round the mulberry bush"? As a child, I didn't have a clue what a papaw was, or a mulberry bush either. Now, however, I covet these and other old fruit varieties. Why bother growing ordinary, commercially available apples, peaches, or pears, which require regular spraying and take up a lot of garden space? Unusual old fruit trees, such as papaws, jujubes, persimmons, medlars, and mulberries, don't need spraying and look better in your garden. Michael McConkey, owner of the mail-order nursery Edible Landscaping, says, "These are easy-care ornamental trees that happen to bear fruit. They're landscape plants that earn their keep."

Even if it didn't bear fruit, the native **PAPAW** would be a desirable small tree. Its huge leaves are the exclusive host to the zebra swallowtail butterfly, which lays its eggs on papaw leaves. Though papaws prefer full sun, they also thrive in partial shade and would make beautiful understory trees at the edge of a lawn. Papaw fruits grow in clusters and resemble mangoes, with a flavor and texture similar to that of bananas.

PERSIMMONS are sometimes available in grocery stores, but according to McConkey, store-bought persimmons can't begin to compare with the ones from your very own tree. Persimmon trees have lush magnolia-like leaves and glowing golden fruit that's dramatic enough to stop traffic well into winter. McConkey recommends the Jiro variety, because it is hardy, small (10 to 15 feet tall), and its fruit ripens early. Tree-ripened persimmons are incredibly sweet and make "the best fruit salad you ever ate," McConkey says, adding, "they make a great smoothy, too."

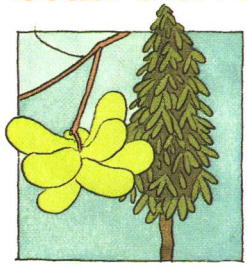
In China, the fruit of the **JUJUBE** tree is as familiar and well loved as apples are here. These small, pretty trees bloom with tiny yellow star flowers in summer and are usually spared damage from late-spring frosts. The inch-long jujube fruits can be eaten out of hand or left to dry on the tree like dates. They can also be cooked fresh, and are delicious in date- or, rather, jujube-nut bread.

And for an unusual, easy-to-grow fruit tree, take the **MEDLAR**. "No, you take it" will probably be the response if you offer a well-ripened medlar to a neighbor. The size of a small apple, this russeted fruit sports unsettling-looking calyx lobes. Monty Python would call it a "naughty bit" and say it's "lots of fun at parties," but a thousand years ago in England, the medlar was endearingly called "open arse." Today the French call it *cul de chien*. If you can get past its appearance, a well-ripened medlar tastes like and has the texture of a baked apple. Or so I've heard. The small, umbrella-shaped tree has leathery leaves and showy white flowers, and would make a living antique centerpiece for a formal herb garden.

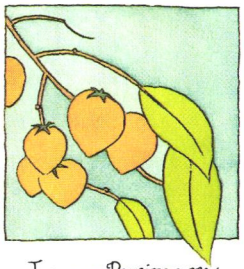
The incredibly sweet **MULBERRY** fruit makes it as popular with children as the song implies. Though bush-sized fruiting mulberries are available, most become good-sized trees suitable for growing on lawns, where they will not drop their fruit on your driveway or your vintage white Cadillac convertible.

Children are not the main reason to grow these easy, delicious alternative fruits. On the other hand, it would be fun for your child to present her teacher with a plump papaw or a ripe homegrown persimmon, or to pull a grotesquely attractive, richly ripe medlar out of her lunch box in December, when the other kids have to make do with a dorky Granny Smith. —CAROL KING

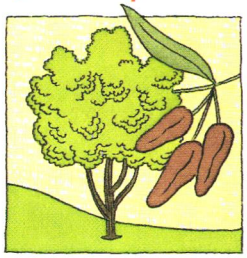
better than apples, peaches, and pears



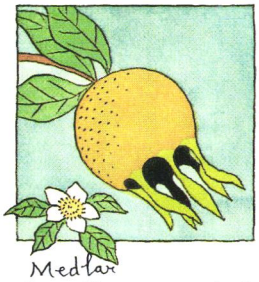
Papaw
(Asimina triloba)



Japanese Persimmon
(Diospyros kaki)

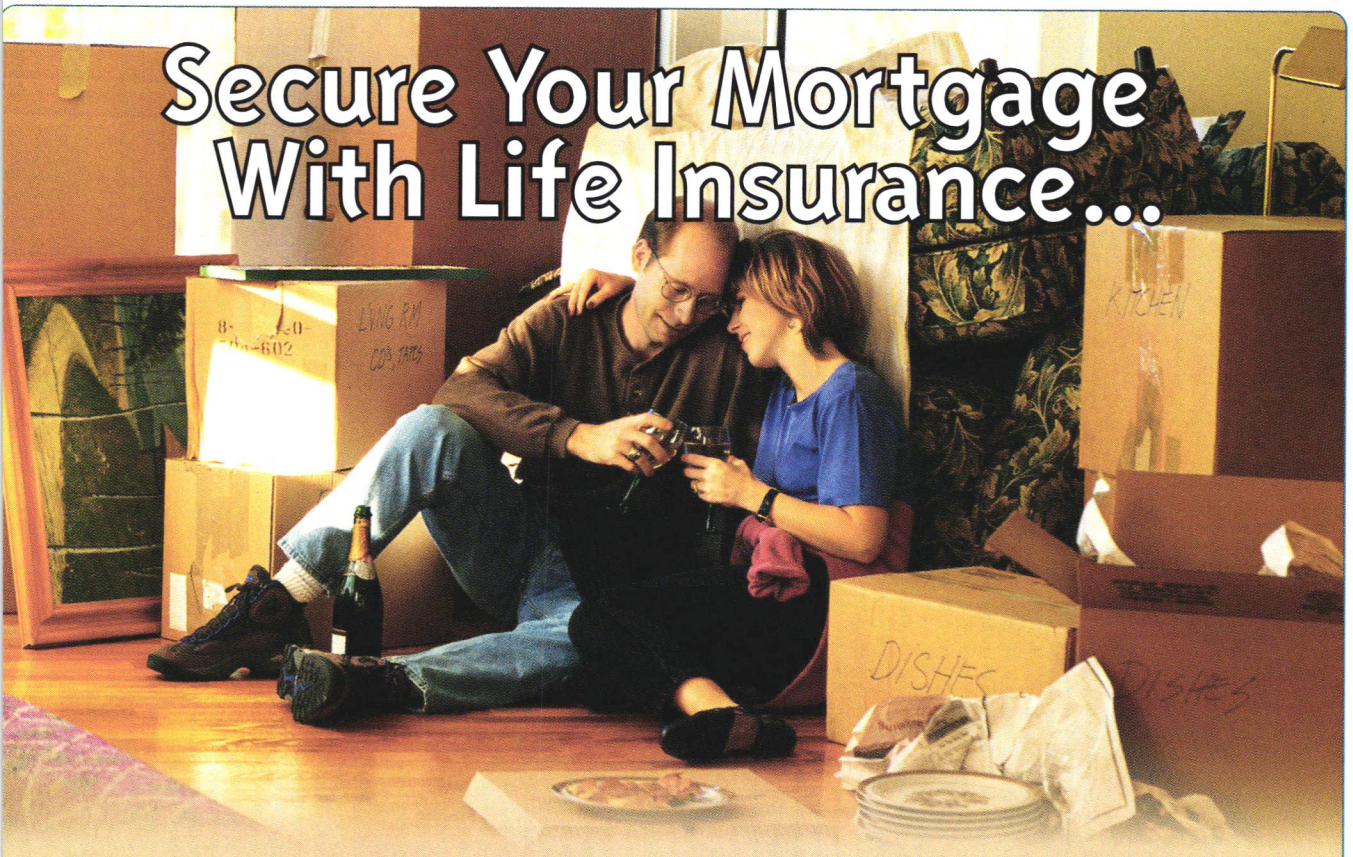


Jujube
(Ziziphus jujuba)



Medlar
(Mespilus germanica)

Black Mulberry
(Morus nigra)



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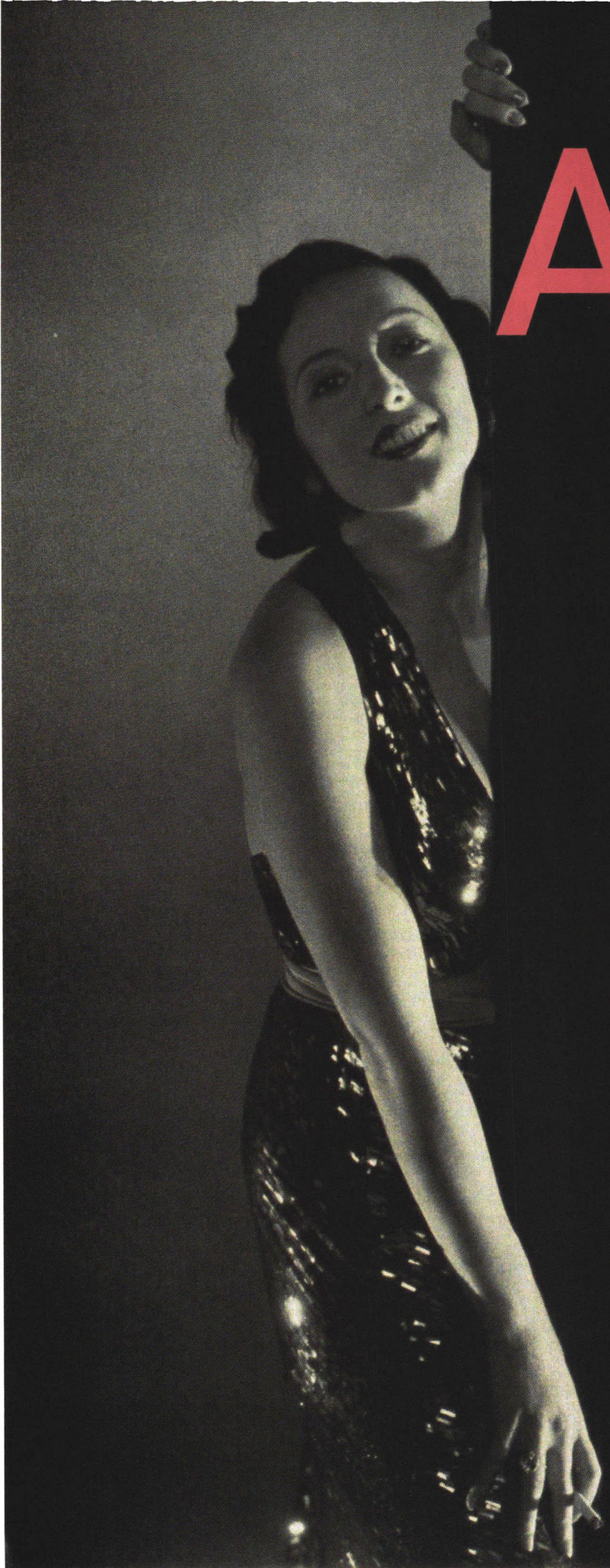

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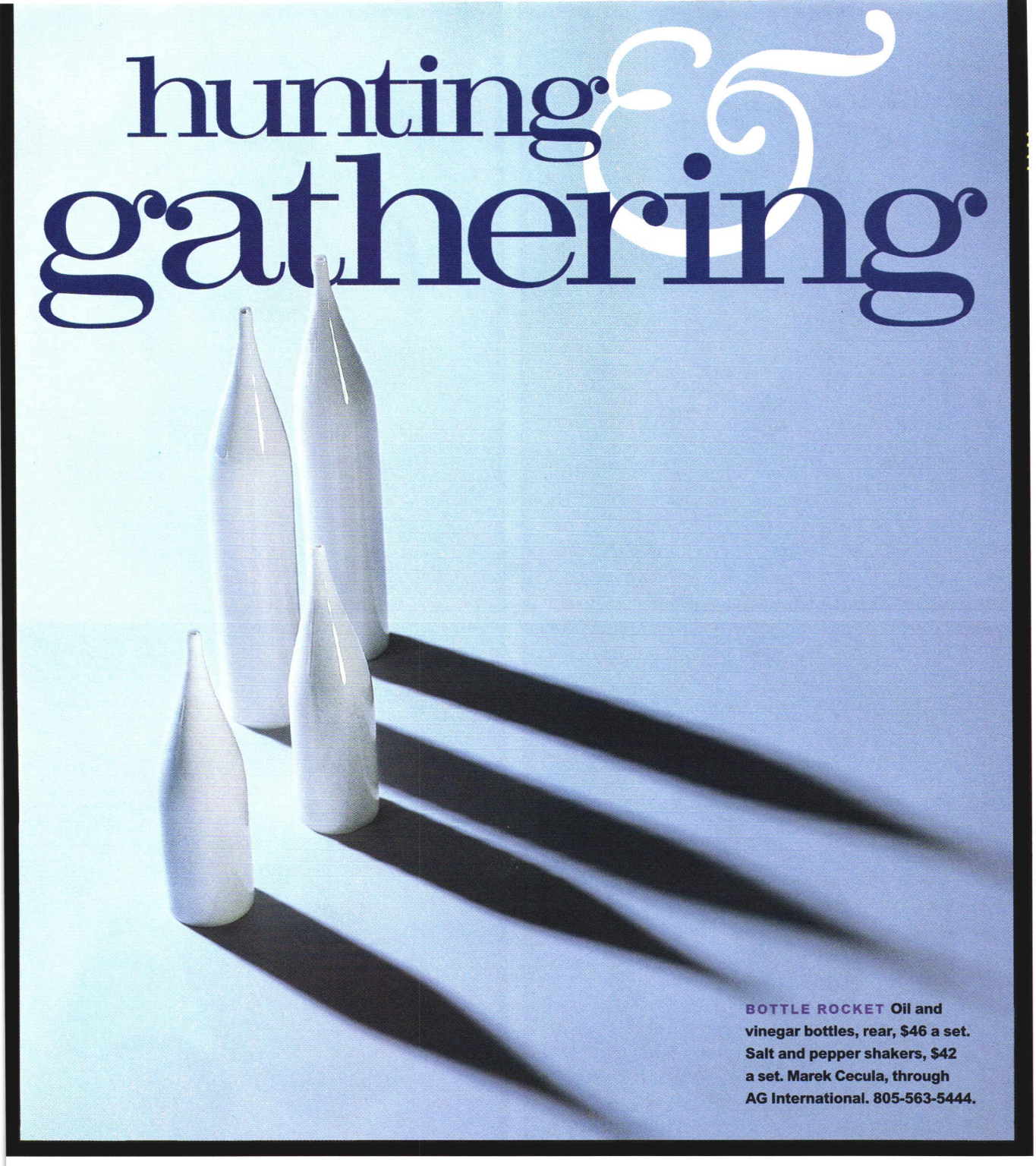


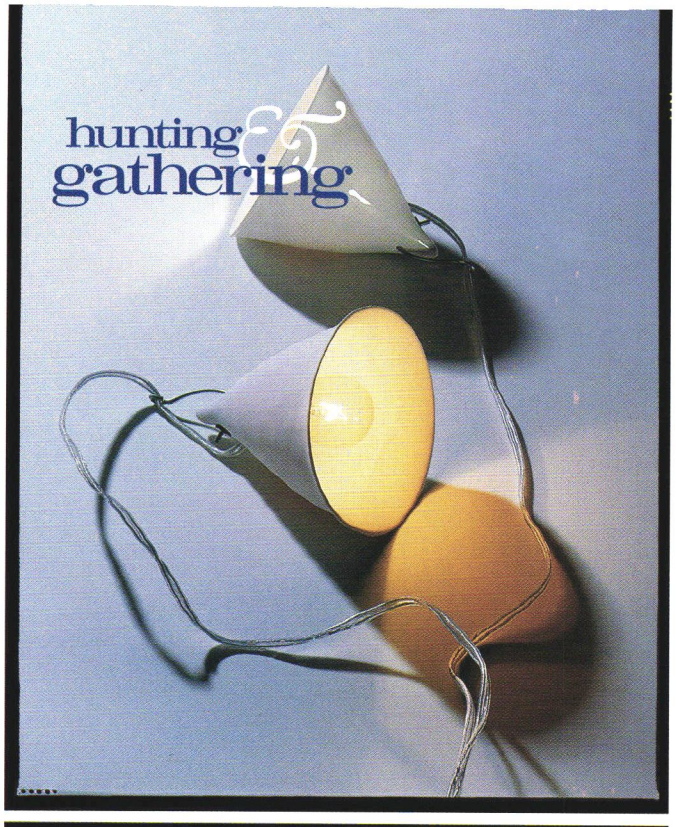
BOTTLE ROCKET Oil and vinegar bottles, rear, $46 a set. Salt and pepper shakers, $42 a set. Marek Cecula, through AG International. 805-563-5444.

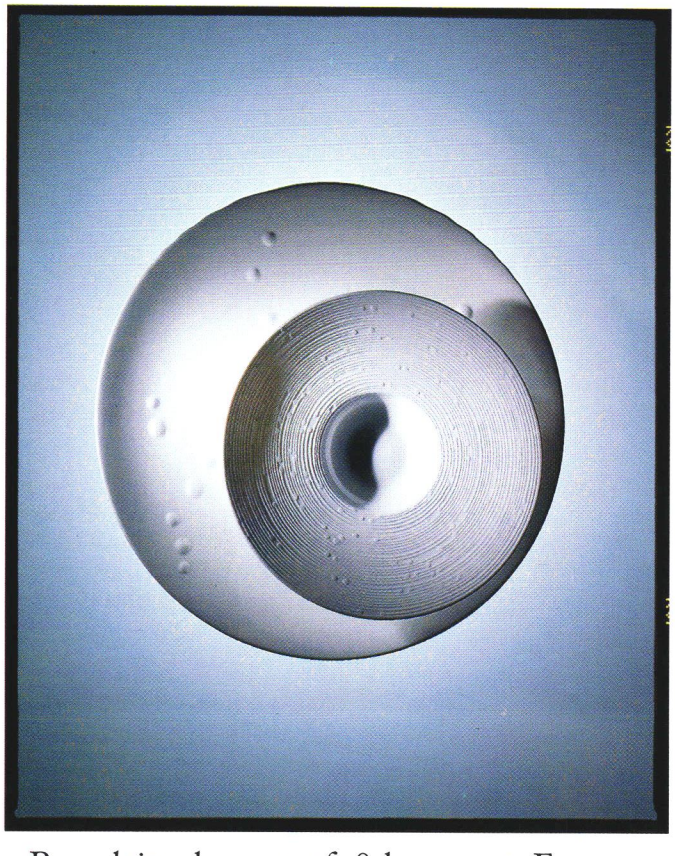
china moon

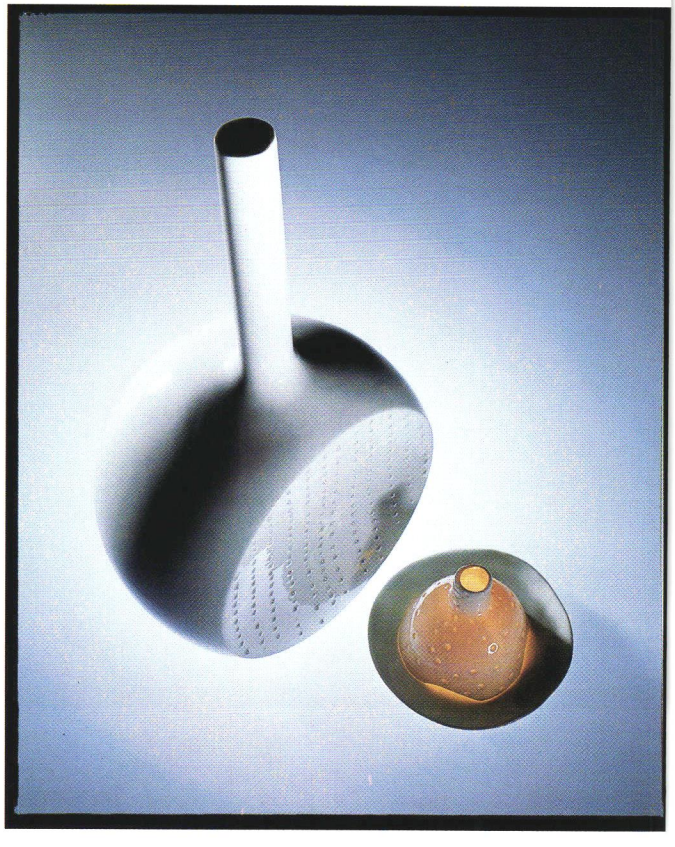
A new generation of designers is casting **porcelain** in a modern light, allowing the material itself to chart the course. Forms are simple. Colors are **subtle**. Patterns and surfaces are drawn from the **fine texture** of the white clay, with results that intensify its delicate translucence. Who knew something so **of-this-earth** could be so ethereal?

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELE GASTL PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD

hunting & gathering







Porcelain, the rage of 18th-century Europe, was once as valuable as gold. It's easy to see why designers have been attracted, then as now, to its eggshell-like translucence and delicacy. "At the end of the century, we're going back to traditional skills and materials, and yet we're

LUNAR LANDING **Top left: Tsé & Tsé's hanging cornet lights, $150 each, in matte and glazed finishes, at Shì, NYC. 212-334-4330. Top right: Silver-glazed porcelain charger, $65; medium white porcelain plate, $40; and small silver-glazed porcelain plate, $48, all by Tsé & Tsé, at Shì. Above left: Dot-textured plate in bone china—an English formula in which bone ash or calcium phosphate is added to porcelain ingredients—$62, by Bodo Sperlein, available at Counterpoint. 888-545-5073. Stefanie Hering's Coupe plate, from her Diaphane collection, $65, Bernardaud, NYC. 800-884-7775. Above right: Tsé & Tsé's Igloo de Nuit votive, $45, at Shì, NYC; Bodo Sperlein's Troy vase for Nymphenburg.**

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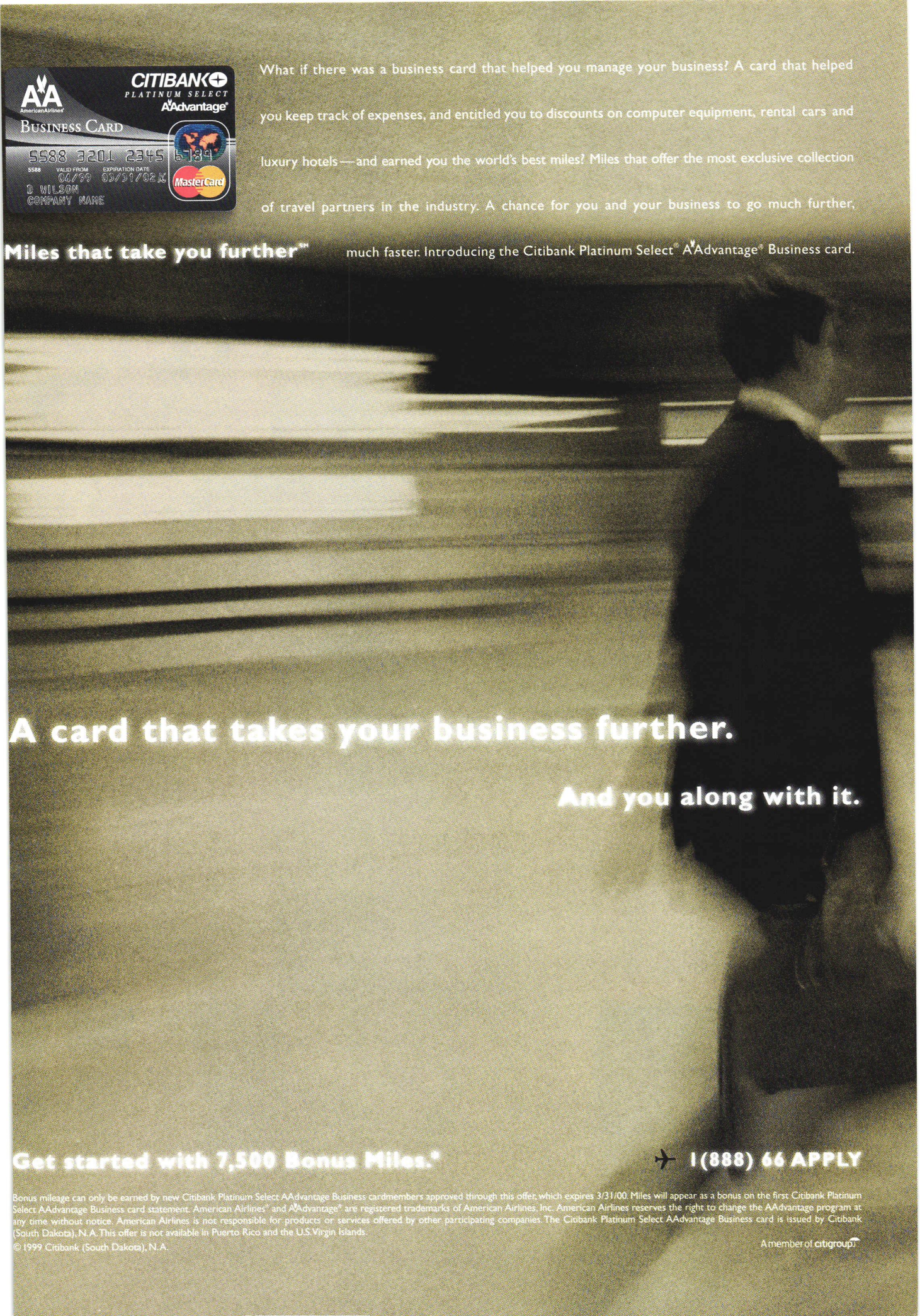
MILKY WAY The hole-pattern bowl, $4,600, in hand-thrown white porcelain, was designed by Stefanie Hering and is available through Counterpoint. Call 888-545-5073 for a store in your area.

making something new," says Bodo Sperlein, a London-based designer. He creates sculptural tableware and other pieces for Nymphenburg, the German porcelain maker, that are radical stylistic departures from the company's Rococo figurines. Tsé & Tsé, a French design team, also fashions modern shapes in porcelain. The company's simple lamps and votives turn a cool glow invitingly warm. Stefanie Hering, a young German designer who works in hand-thrown porcelain, plays an elegant joke, punching holes in a bowl's sides for another layer of transparency. One small step for porcelain, one giant leap for design.—SABINE ROTHMAN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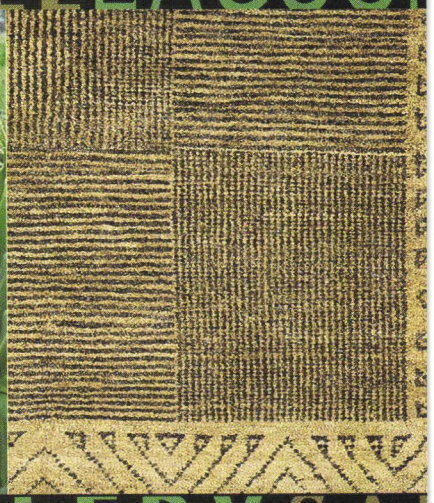

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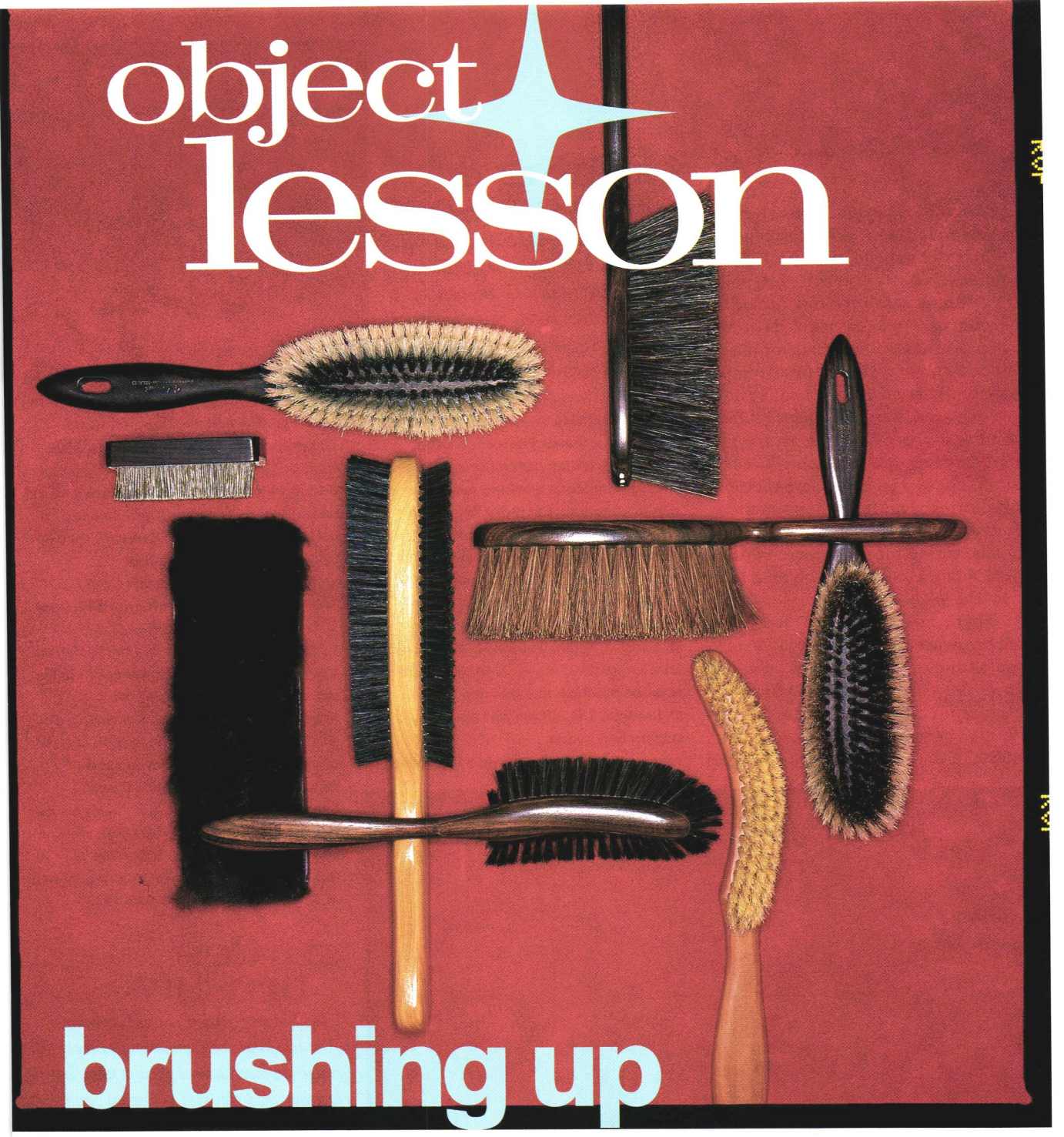
object lesson



brushing up

lesson brushes do it better **material** look for natural bristles
budget from $3 to—believe it—$190 **purpose** busting dust
cleaning tip how to wash a brush **design** even Jeeves would be impressed

Los Angeles decorator Ted Russell admits that he's a "brush fiend." He can tell the difference between brushes made of pig hair (white and soft) and boar (black and stiff). He knows which tool to use on his Ultrasuede chair: a fingernail brush, which he finds gentler than most suede brushes. Rather than have his best suits dry-cleaned—a process that wears out the fabric—he blots them with a wet cloth, hangs them from

WRITTEN BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAY ZUKERKORN
PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN STYLED BY ARIANA SALVATO

object lesson

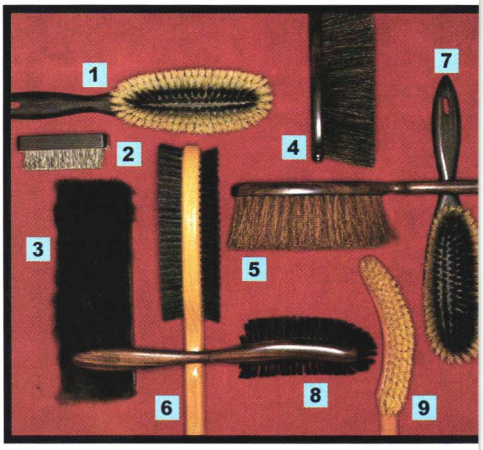
a tree limb to air out, then gives the jackets and pants a good brushing.

Once, we depended on brushes for countless tasks: to dust a felt hat, polish the silver, or scrub the dirt out of the bottom of a narrow vase. That was when brushes weren't made of plastic and nylon, as most are nowadays, but of natural materials like coconut fiber, goat hair, and horsehair. Natural-bristle brushes may seem like an arcane passion, but they are increasingly sought out by those who appreciate their elegant forms as much as their functions. And for many tasks, like washing a bottle, caring for a cashmere sweater, or cleaning a mushroom, no other tool does the job as well.

"There are rag people and there are brush people," says Cheryl Mendelson, author of the soon-to-be published *Home Comforts* (Scribner, $35), an encyclopedic guide to housekeeping. A rag person herself, she admits that "there are certain jobs that brushes

clothing & shoe brushes

A good old-fashioned brushing is still the best way to care for many kinds of fabric and leather. G. Lorenzi in Milan, Italy, makes more than 50 kinds of clothes brushes, including the specialty models shown here.



CASHMERE BRUSH (1) **Dry-cleaning will strip a cashmere sweater of the wool's natural oils, warns Francesca Leoni of Malo, an Italian cashmere clothing line. She recommends washing cashmere with a mild shampoo. Let it dry, then brush where it pills (a normal occurrence). Malo gives customers a free defuzzer comb, but the deluxe and longer-lasting alternative is this wooden brush with black boar and white pig bristles $85, from G. Lorenzi, Milan. 011-39-02-760-228-48.** SUEDE SHOE BRUSH (2) **Small, metal-bristled brushes, like this one from G. Lorenzi, $30, lift out dirt and raise the nap on fine suede.** A SHOE BUFFER (3) **made of soft ram shearling, $110, restores natural oils and puts the ultimate finishing touch on fine polished leather. From G. Lorenzi.** A FUR BRUSH (4) **has long boar bristles to reach deeply but gently into long-haired furs such as mink and sable. A polished-ebony handle adds to its allure, $125, from G. Lorenzi.** TWEED BRUSH (5) **Sorghum bristles won't catch and pull threads from delicate, loosely woven fabric. $80, from G. Lorenzi.** DOUBLE-SIDED CLOTHES BRUSH (6) **This all-purpose brush boasts both hard boar bristles for deeper cleaning and softer boar bristles for finer fabrics. $36, from G. Lorenzi.** SUEDE CLOTHES BRUSH (7) **Alternating layers of pig and boar bristles keep suede jackets clean and soft. $83, from G. Lorenzi.** HAT BRUSHES (8, 9) **are curved to dust around the crown of your best boater or homburg.** (8) **$75, from G. Lorenzi.** (9) **$14, by Redecker, available at Terra Verde, NYC. 212-925-4533.**

garden brushes

Useful in any garden or outdoor room. A coarse brush or corn broom sweeps rough surfaces such as granite steps; bristle brushes wipe clods and cobwebs out of cloches or pots. Our garden editor, Charlotte Frieze, was especially taken with the hedgehog-like flowerpot brushes, left, which are handmade by a Scottish firm that supplies brushes to the royal household. "You can use one to loosen the dirt in a pot and not risk chipping it," Frieze says.

FLOWERPOT BRUSHES (1, 2, AND 4) come in small, medium, and large sizes. They have bassine bristles and sycamore handles. Each is about $10, plus shipping. A GRATE-CLEANING BRUSH (3) scrubs barbecue grills, metal garden ornaments, alloy wheels, even shoes, $8. All of the brushes are from the Lord Roberts Workshops, Edinburgh, Scotland. 011-44-131-337-6951.

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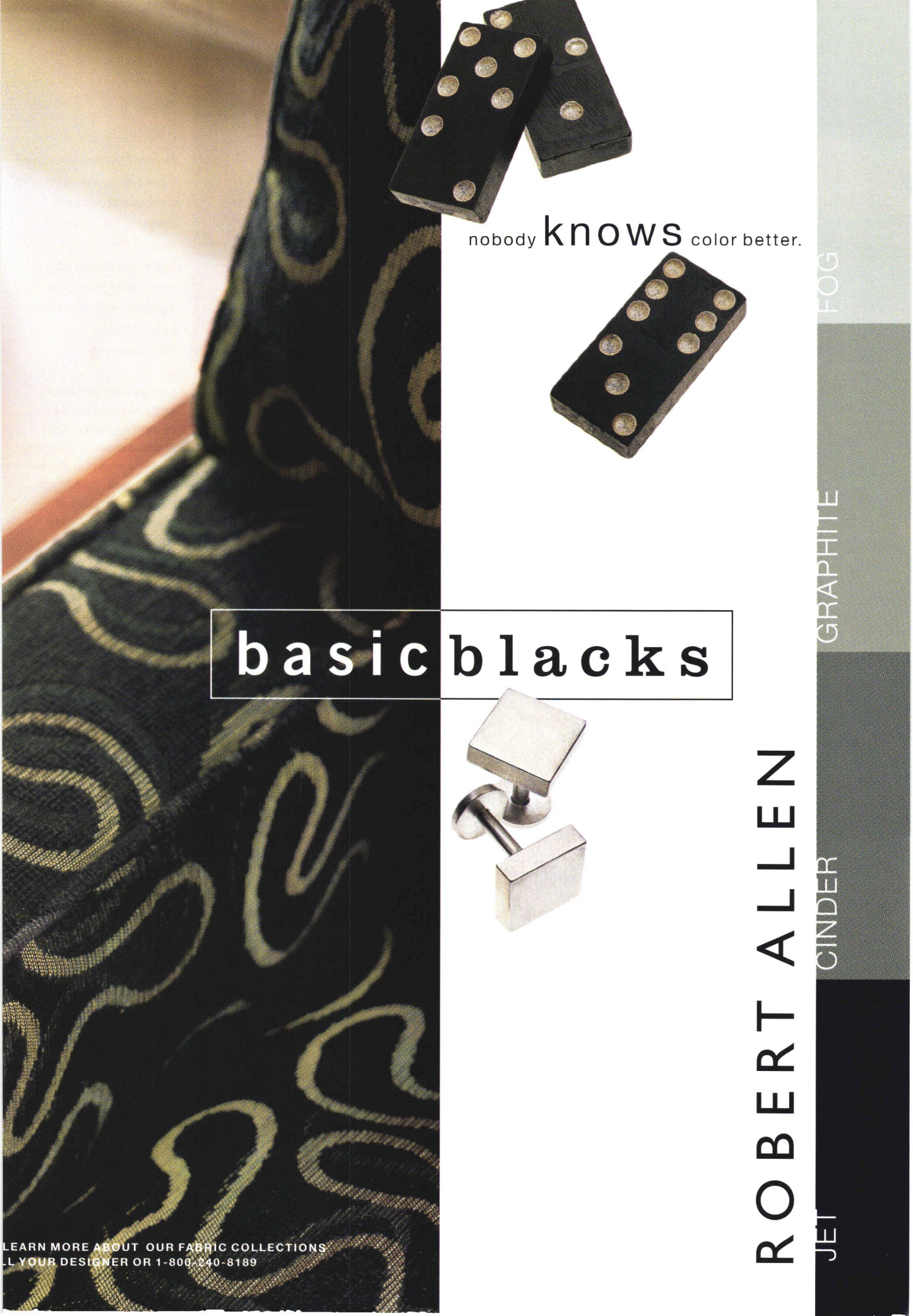
object lesson

house brushes

You might have last seen odd-looking brushes like these—each is designed for a specialized household cleaning task—in the hands of characters on Upstairs, Downstairs. *But once you try, say, a cobweb brush, you'll wonder how anyone endures the ignominy of an untidy ceiling.*

With all their curves and crannies, radiators are particularly hard to clean. RADIATOR BRUSHES (1, 4) make the task easier. (1) This one by Lord Roberts Workshops, $7, plus shipping, gets into that tight space between the radiator and wall. (4) Redecker's brush, $12, with two rows of bristles on a wire base, enables you to dust between a radiator's pipes. From Terra Verde. A KEYBOARD BRUSH (2), $28, works on any keyboard, from piano to computer. Available from Terra Verde, NYC; and Summerill & Bishop, London (no mail orders), 011-44-171-221-4566. For polishing silver and silver plate, a specially designed SILVER BRUSH (3), $8, plus shipping, makes it easier to lift off tarnish. Lord Roberts Workshops. The wooden handle on this COBWEB DUSTER (5), $40, extends to reach high ceilings. From Redecker; available at Terra Verde. COUNTER BRUSH (6) This versatile tool, for sweeping counters and many other surfaces, has soft bristles in horsehair. $12, from Restoration Hardware. 888-243-9720. An angled BILLIARDS BRUSH (7) reaches into corners for cleaning the felt surface of a pool table. $20, from G. Lorenzi. A BANISTER BRUSH (8) whisks dust out of curved or scrolled woodwork. $8, plus shipping, from Lord Roberts Workshops. A silky DUSTER BRUSH (9) of goat hair is perfect for the gentlest jobs, such as cleaning porcelain figurines. $25, from Terra Verde and Summerill & Bishop. A LIBRARY DUSTER (10) is angled to clean the shelf edge and the sides of books at the same time. $15, plus shipping, from Lord Roberts Workshops. A tiny DUST BRUSH (11) sweeps out cracks and crevices. $7, from Terra Verde.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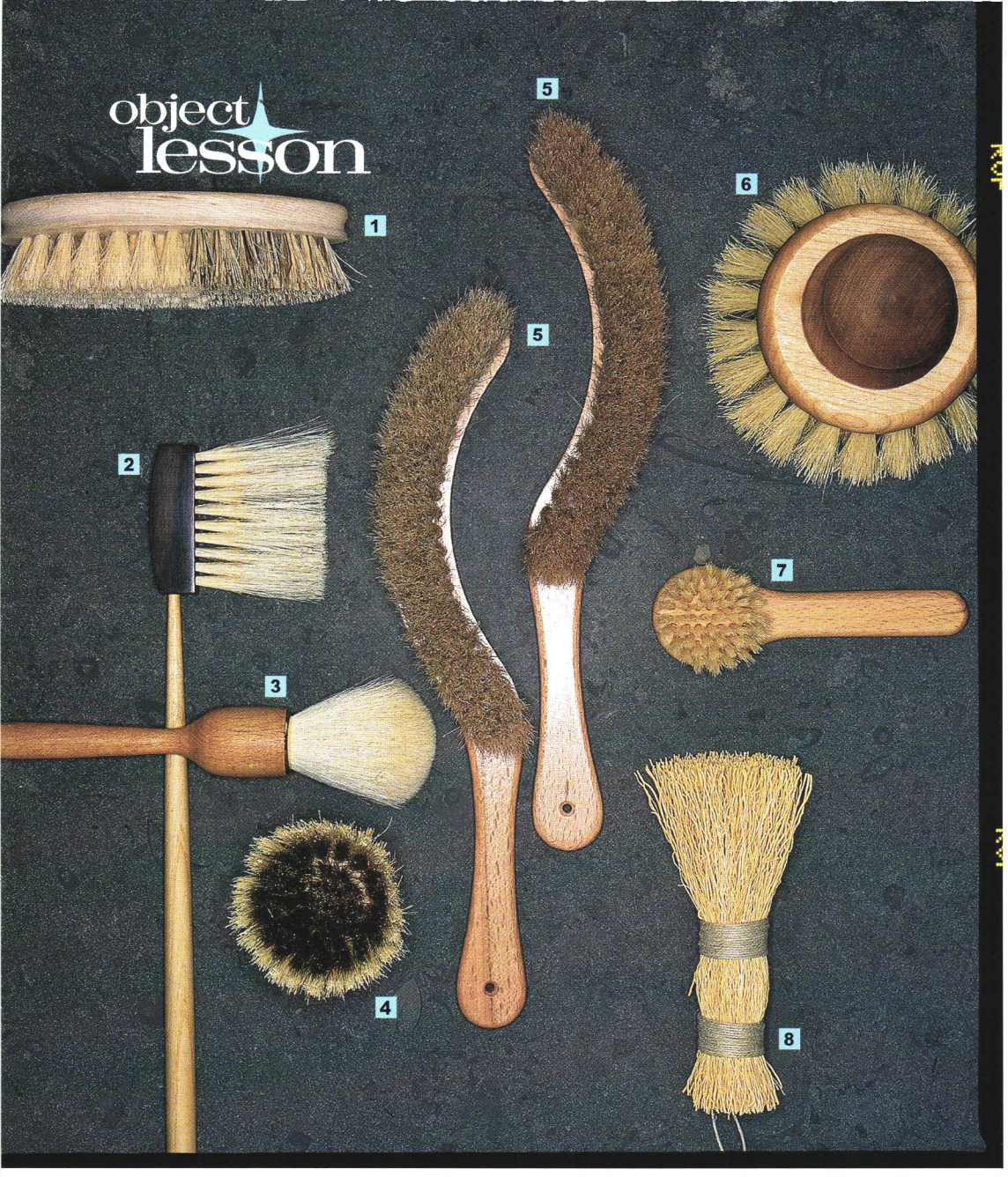


kitchen brushes

Before food processors and Chore Boys, kitchens were stocked with brushes designed for all kinds of tasks. They are still surprisingly effective at everything from cleaning mushrooms to scrubbing pots. What's more, they look charming.

A VEGETABLE BRUSH (1) lets you scrub carrots and potatoes instead of peeling them. This method retains nutrients and is a must for potato-skin lovers. This brush has finer bristles at one end for delicate vegetables; coarser ones at the other end for tough cleaning jobs. $6, at Terra Verde and Summerill & Bishop. Pastry chefs use PASTRY BRUSHES (2, 3) for, among other things, painting on glazes and egg washes. The long-handled brush (2), $50, from G. Lorenzi, has extra-soft bristles made of ox-ear hair. Redecker makes one (3) in goat hair, $18, from Terra Verde. A BARBECUE BRUSH (4) has wire and hog bristles that help scrape the char off the grill. $9, from Terra Verde. Left-and right-handed CRUMB BRUSHES (5) are an old-fashioned way of clearing the table that looks quaint, but works well. $10 each, from Lord Roberts Workshops. Use this Swedish-made PAN BRUSH (6) to clean pots and pans, wood tables, and garden furniture. $15, from Svenskt Hantverk, a Stockholm shop. 011-46-8-21-47-26. Washing a mushroom can take away its flavor; an alternative is using this soft-bristled MUSHROOM BRUSH (7), which gently lifts off dirt. $9, at Terra Verde and Summerill & Bishop. A WASHING-UP WHISK (8) made of broom root can handle tough-to-clean iron pots, and it works just as well on stainless-steel pans. The root bristles will become stronger and last longer if you boil them before the first use. $3.50, from Svenskt Hantverk.

"There are rag people and there are brush people"

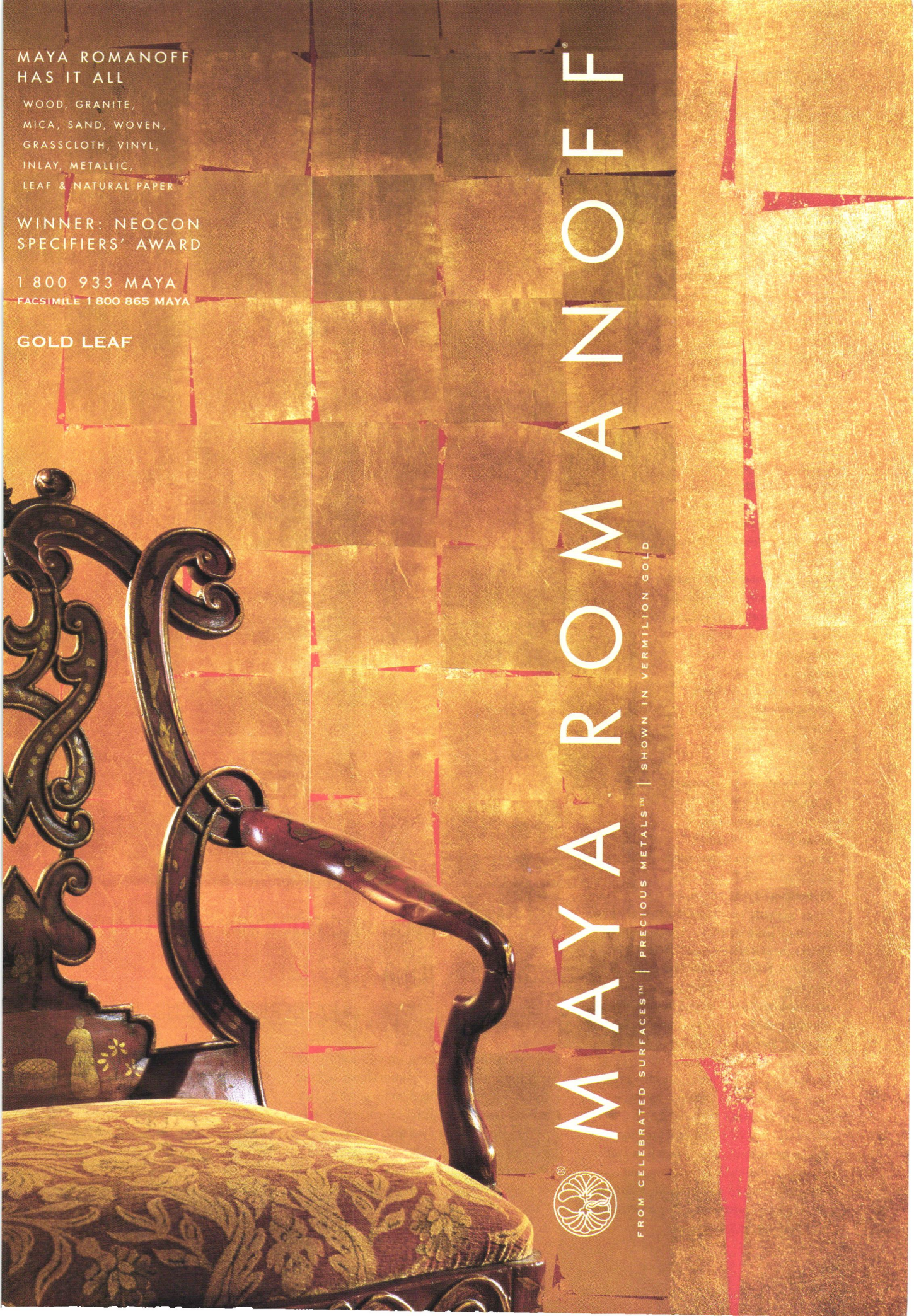
—CHERYL MENDELSON, AUTHOR, Home Comforts

are terrific for, like dusting a painting or a figurine. And I have a million shoe brushes."

Today natural-bristle brushes are hard to find, unless you know where to look. In Europe, stores like G. Lorenzi, a third-generation Milan shop that sells 50 kinds of men's hairbrushes and an equal number for women, have stocked natural-bristle brushes for decades.

Terra Verde, a housewares store in New York's SoHo, recently began carrying a line of brushes from Germany that includes one specifically designed to clean a computer keyboard. "People get into brushes," says Katherine Tiddens, the shop's owner. "They will notice the PC brush and say 'Isn't that cute!' But then they realize that it really is useful. Or there's the cobweb brush. Everyone has cobwebs on the ceiling, and when you find out there's a brush to clean them off, it's a cool thing."

Utility is one thing, but for many natural-bristle fans, it's the earthy appearance of these humble tools—as well as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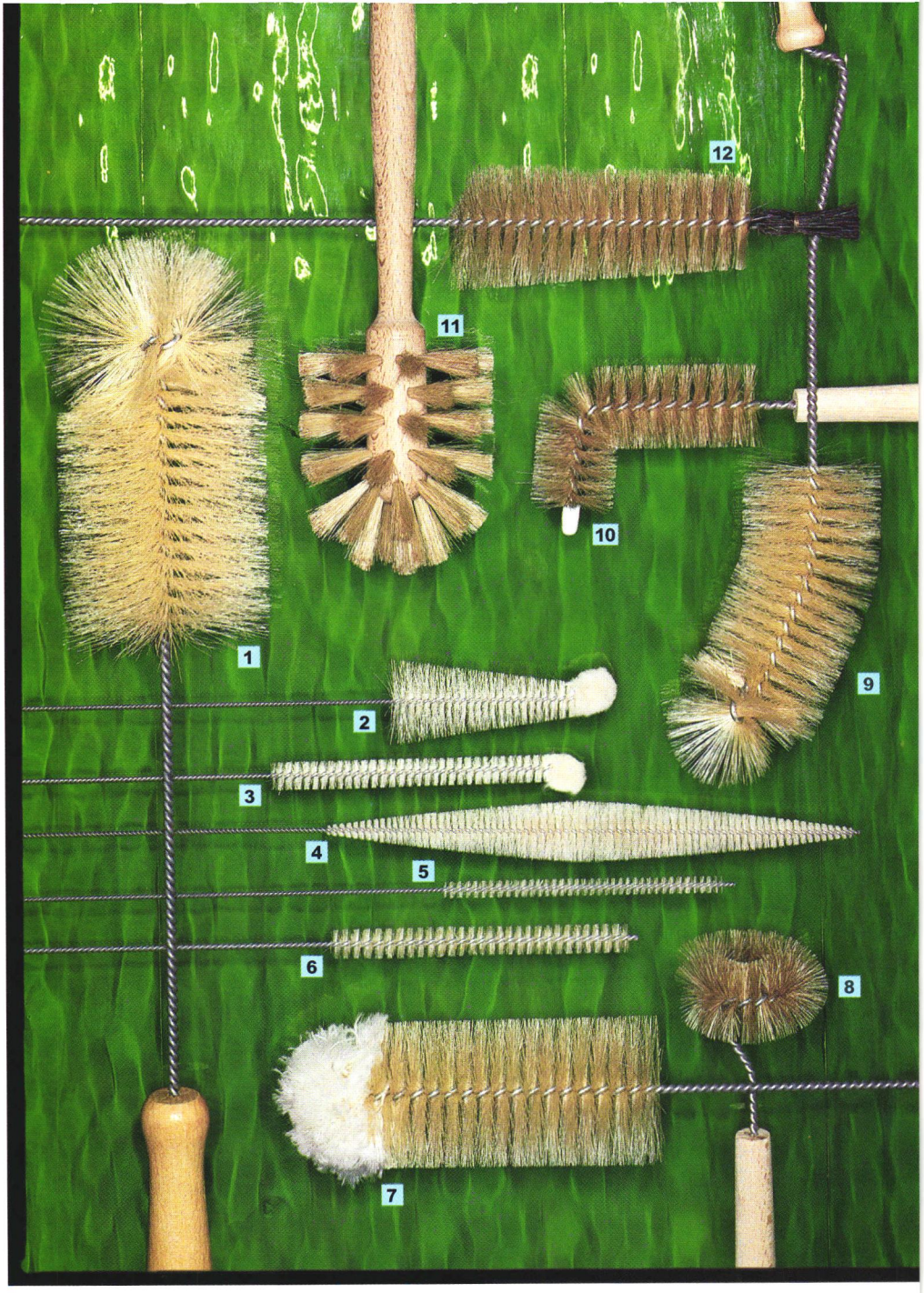
object lesson

bottle brushes

For those of us who try to clean vases and wine glasses by squeezing a sponge and our hand in as far as they will go, specialized bottle brushes are a revelation. There seems to be one for almost any shape out there, from chubby baby bottles to champagne flutes.

A SODA BOTTLE BRUSH (1), is just the right size for rinsing out a Dr. Pepper bottle before it goes into the recycling bin. $8.50, from Terra Verde. BOTTLE BRUSHES (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8) These natural-bristle brushes, by the German firm Redecker, come in a variety of lengths and shapes for cleaning vases, bottles, glasses, or decanters. To get the stain out of the bottom of a wine glass or flute, choose a slender brush with a cotton tip (2, 3), $4 to $7, available from Terra Verde and Summerill & Bishop. A HOSE BRUSH (5) is extra-narrow, to clean tubes or reusable straws. $4, from Terra Verde. BABY-BOTTLE BRUSH (9) The curve of this brush, $4, helps parents scrub out bottles shaped for an infant's hands. From Redecker, available at Terra Verde. BATHROOM-CLEANING BRUSH (10) The angle of this brush is for scrubbing hard-to-reach places such as the inside of the overflow slot on sinks and bathtubs. $4, from Redecker, available at Terra Verde. GLASS-CLEANING BRUSH (11) For wide-mouth glasses, try this brush with soft, rounded bristles. $3, from Williams Sonoma. 800-541-2233. BOTTLE BRUSH (12) Ideal for those flea-market finds, this brush has soft bristles for general scrubbing and a stiff-bristle tip to get encrusted dirt out of vases and bottles. $4, from Terra Verde and Summerill & Bishop.

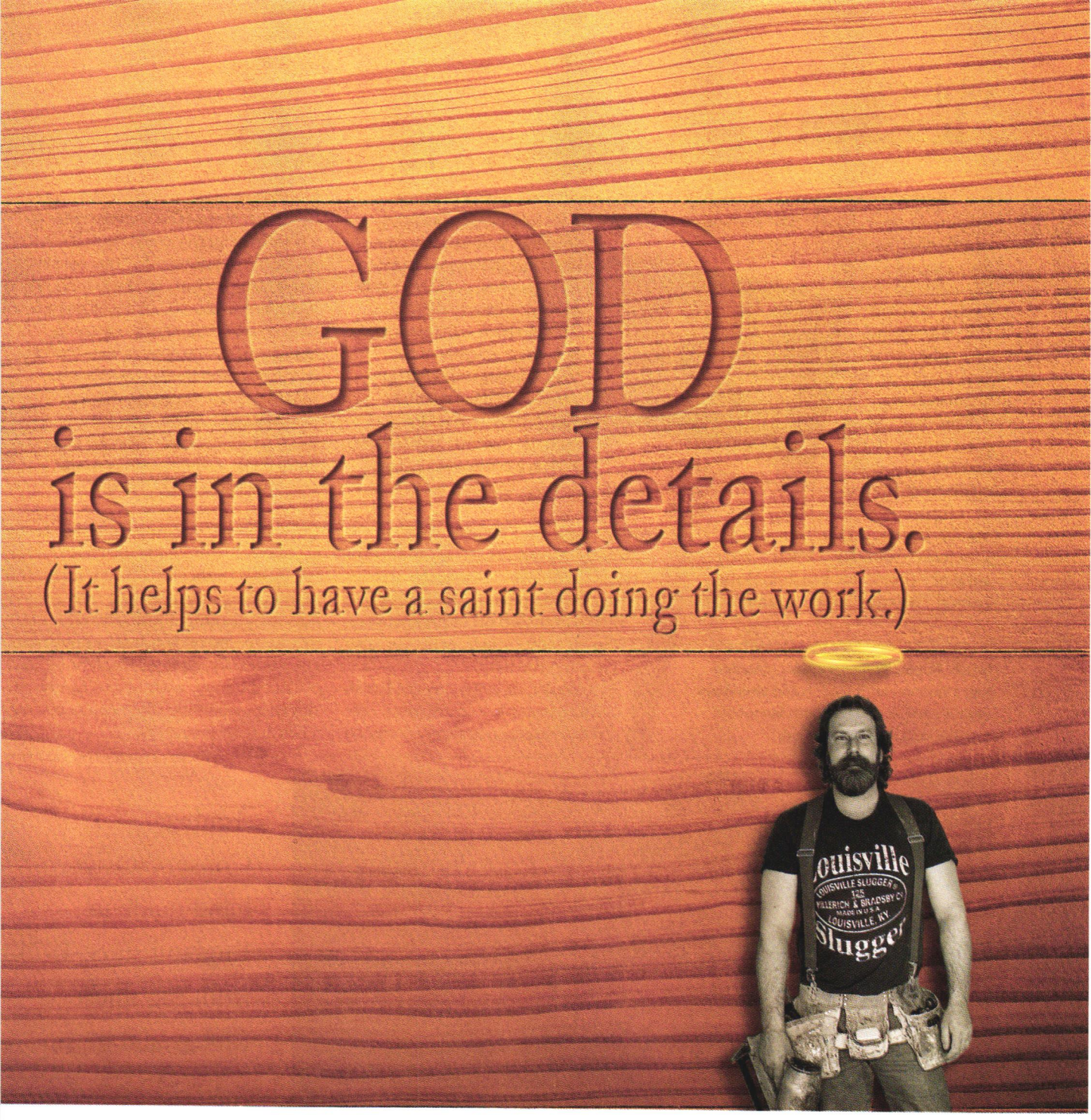


"When you find out there's a brush to clean cobwebs, it's a **cool thing**"

—KATHERINE TIDDENS, Terra Verde

the romance of using an old-fashioned implement—that makes them attractive. "They're as nice to look at as they are to use," says June Summerill, who places bottle brushes and dusters made of goat hair right alongside the Provençal linens she sells at Summerill & Bishop, her London housewares shop. "You don't have to hide them in a drawer."

Indeed, at New York City's Moss, a modern-design emporium where the merchandise is locked, museum-style, in glass cases, natural-bristle brushes are displayed like rare artifacts. The brushes sold at Moss (which are also available from the gift shop of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and at Modern Object in Columbus, Ohio) are from a whimsical collection called Blindenanstalt



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object lesson

Clean as a Bristle

von Berlin. They come in funny shapes—a shoe brush has a wooden handle that looks like a shoe, for example—and are made at the Berlin Institute for the Blind, which has a 120-year tradition of brush-making.

The key to a good brush is the bristles, generally made from shaved or clipped animal hair, says Mauro Lorenzi, grandson of G. Lorenzi's founder. Used since ancient times in brush-making, animal bristles have numerous advantages over nylon bristles, including a tendency to maintain their stiffness. "Animal bristles don't build up static electricity, and they also absorb oil," Lorenzi notes. "So as you brush, you are also cleaning the hair."

Lorenzi, of course, is the brush connoisseur's connoisseur. He sells brushes specifically designed for the most punctilious tasks, from a pastry brush made of ox-ear hair for dusting cakes to a brush made for maintaining tweed, and an angled one for cleaning a billiards table. His brushes come in decidedly nonutilitarian materials such as whalebone and polished ebony, with prices to match. But that's a quibble when you're getting a brush with greatness.

THE BRUSH-OFF **This classic barber's brush, originally designed for cleaning hair clippings off the neck and shoulders after a haircut, is made with horsehair bristles. $50, from G. Lorenzi.**

Cheryl Mendelson, author of *Home Comforts,* offers the following technique for cleaning a pure-bristle hairbrush. While her strategy will work on most brushes, some are made of very delicate materials. Always check with the vendor first to see whether or not your brushes will stand up to this cleaning method.

Remove all loose hair and dust from the bristles using a comb or your fingers.

Soak brush for just a few minutes in a mixture of warm water and a mild detergent. Mendelson recommends a baby shampoo or other very mild shampoo, such as Neutrogena. This will get the brush clean enough, but if you must disinfect it further, she recommends using a drop or two of chlorine bleach (never ammonia) per one quart of water, as long as the manufacturer deems this safe.

Rinse the bristles thoroughly, then blot with a towel.

Lay the brush with the bristles down on an absorbent surface such as a dishcloth or towel. Let dry.

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L'Art de VIVRE

ISUZU

ROAMIN' ARCHITECTURE

The art of living should extend beyond the confines of the architecture in which we live, to what is for many of us our true "second" home—the vehicle through whose means we are able to live out some of life's more golden travel moments. For those of us who have an abiding affinity to our wheels of choice, there is never a compromise when it comes to high-performance and comfort. It's innovation all the way, or nothing.

The Isuzu VehiCROSS exemplifies the art of driving by integrating the high-performance and sleekness of a European sports car with the comfort, practicality and ruggedness of a sport utility vehicle. Designed originally as a "concept car," whose model won it Japan's "Car of the Year" in 1997, the VehiCROSS boasts reclining Recaro® front-bucket seats, usually only relegated to hot little sports models. With seating for four, the car also comes equipped with rear folding 50/50 split seats, tinted glass and a leather-wrapped steering wheel. Tilt wheel, power windows with driver's side "one touch auto down," and electronically-controlled, collapsible, heated door mirrors are standard.

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To experience the innovation for yourself, visit the Isuzu dealership nearest you for a test drive, or stop by the Sixth Annual French Designer Showhouse sponsored by Isuzu to benefit the American Hospital of Paris, Tuesday, October 12th. A VehiCROSS will be on display at the Showhouse location (34 E. 69 St., between Madison and Park Avenues) amidst some of the best of French interior design. For more information on the French Designer Showhouse, call (212) 838-0157. The Showhouse is open daily and weekends from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Thursday until 9 p.m. from October 14th through November 14th. The $20 admission includes a catalogue.

WINDING ALONG THE VINE

If you're a true Francophile at heart, you can experience the grace and beauty of verdant French countryside with a driving tour of some of the most beautiful landscapes in the U.S—the lesser-known, but burgeoning vineyards that wind through California and Oregon.

Besides the more popular Napa and Sonoma Valleys, there's the coastal city of Mendocino. In addition as the stand-in for the fabled Cabot Cove, Maine in the former Angela Landsbury TV show, "Murder She Wrote," the quaint city is home to the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens (N. Hwy 1, 707-964-4352) and the Husch Vineyard (Hwy. 128, 707-895-3216), which sells award-winning chardonnay and gewurtztraminer. For French champagne, visit the affiliate of Roederer at the Roederer Estate (Hwy. 128, 707-895-2288).

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L'Art de Vivre

NOURISON CARPETS

FLOOR SHOW

Nourison, the largest handmade rug importer in the world, produces carpets in myriad styles ranging from traditional Persian replicas to classic French Aubussons, casual country looks and designs with contemporary motifs. Construction methods include 300-line hand-knotted carpets, needlepoint, hand-hooked, hand-carved, and hand-tufted.

The company's Bijoux Collection of micro, hand-hooked designs in 100% wool, offers consumers the aesthetic benefits of needlepoint with the cushion of dense pile. The collection includes over 40 patterns of 19th-century Victorian motifs that mimic the masterful elegance of another era featuring unique Savonnerie and all-over patterns. Two of the collection's newest looks include a William Morris-feted leafy naturalistic look, and an Arts & Crafts-influenced flourish of leaves and flowers. A third is a romantically colored Victorian Aubusson perfect for a formal room. Each provokes its own air of drama, adding a sense of history and luxury to any room. What makes each rug so special? Meticulous application of a an expansive palette of dyes that create a washed patina for the muted look of yesterday. The Bijoux Collection carries a suggested retail price under $1,000 for a 5'6"x 8'6" carpet and is available at fine retailers nationwide.

This carpet, known as The Camelot Rug, is a micro hooked replica of a 19th-century needlepoint that once graced the floor of the White House during the Kennedy Administration. The original needlepoint was purchased by Nourison at Sotheby's auction of the Jacqueline Onassis estate, and the company now reproduces the design in both needlepoint and Bijoux qualities, in a wide variety of sizes.

ECLECTIC ENERGY

Turn a bland space into an exotic one with an arresting and vibrant carpet and an equally dramatic wall covering. They'll not only break up the monotony of the room, they'll make the furniture look completely new. If you're reserving neutrality for the main rooms of the house – experiment. Turn a guest room or office into your wildest fantasy. Slowly and deliberately begin adding accents beyond the carpet and wall hanging: a colorful vase here, an amusingly loud fabric-covered stool there. Mix high-style Victorian antiques and pieces foraged from travels abroad with funky urban stuff for the ultimate in eclecticism.

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The French have always celebrated the art of living. The new Coeur de France collection from Century Furniture brings the beauty of the country alive in the living room, dining room and the bedroom. The Coeur de France bedroom includes a majestic metal and wood combination bed fit for royalty and the coordinating triple dresser. The clever Wine Grotto from the same collection offers the superb, Old-World look and craftsmanship of a French Country armoire, but provides the convenience of a mini-wine "cellar." The Gallery Desk and Convertible Table are two more elegant pieces from the line. Paired with the Toulouse Sofa or leather Parisian Club Sofa, your home suddenly takes on the air of a chateau in Provence.

The 50-plus year–old Century Furniture Company, the world's largest privately owned manufacturer of high-end residential furniture, is famous for its broad line of both wood and upholstered furniture for bedrooms, dining rooms, and the living area. Over nine hundred different pieces of furniture in a variety of styles including Asian, Italian, English, contemporary, and traditional are available to consumers. For dealer or consumer inquiries, please call (800) 852-5552.

IN FULL BLOOM

What's de rigueur in all the loveliest French country homes and maisonettes? A quiet elegance resulting from perfectly placed objects offset by a burst of sumptuous blooms from the garden. There's nothing like a random gathering of a garden's earthly delights to bring high fashion drama, or frivolous lightheartedness into your home. Half the fun isn't so much the picking, it's the arranging, and the more offbeat the vessel, the better. You can transform any room with botanical pleasures like French tulips, wisteria, clematises, wild roses, honeysuckle, or peonies.

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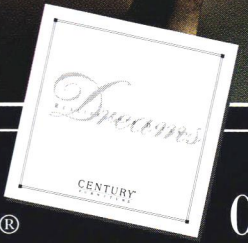

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L'Art de Vivre

INNERASIA

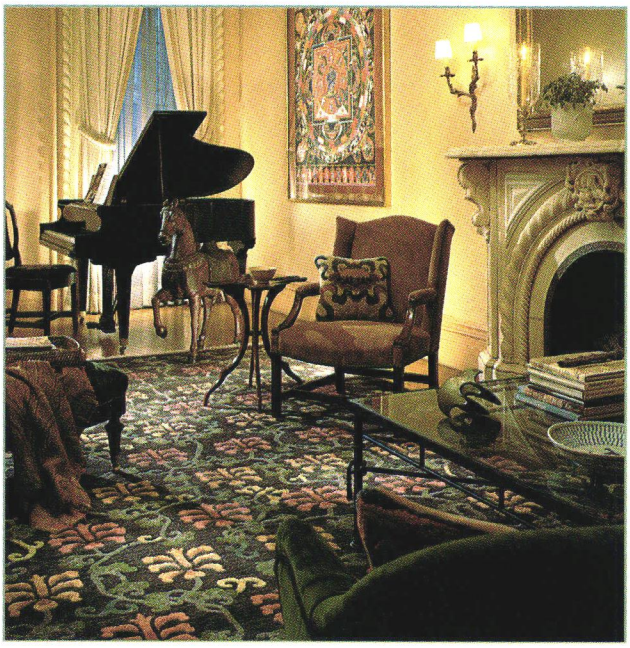
HERITAGE AS ART

The best home furnishings are able to transport us to another time and place simply by virtue of their craftsmanship and art. The most memorable pieces are those that serve as focal points, the ones we remember as we recall favorite rooms in the homes in which we grew up.

The perfect Oriental carpet can do more for a room than perhaps any other single element in our homes: we see it from every angle, use it in many ways. It not only becomes one of the most important artistic contributions to a room, it becomes a playing field for our children and pets. Wonderful colors, unique patterns, and excellent craftsmanship are inherent in the finest carpets in the best turned-out homes. Only the most interesting combination of these elements results in the kind of carpet we cherish and hand down as an heirloom to the next generation. InnerAsia's Gangchen carpets are just this kind of family treasure.

InnerAsia's carpets feature timeless designs, combining age-old traditional Tibetan patterns with new interpretations of Buddhist iconography. The colors are saturated and vibrant, the wool sumptuous and hearty. These carpets, with their rich, comfortable texture and eclectic designs, are equally at home in Early American, Arts & Crafts, French Country, traditional, or modern settings.

Kesang Tashi, InnerAsia's Tibetan-born founder, utilizes his heritage to innovate tradition in his company's remarkable Gangchen collection of Tibetan rugs-the only carpets truly produced in Tibet. Made from the Changphel wool of the Tibetan Highland sheep, which is long and lustrous with high tensile strength and natural resilience, the carpets are able to resist stains and spring back from furniture impressions.

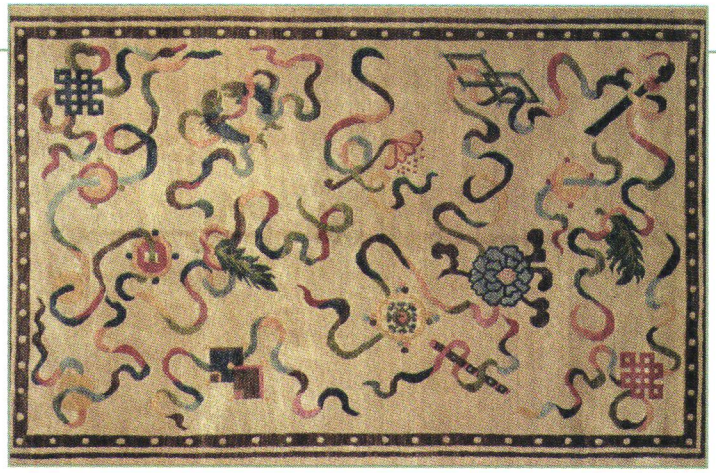


This exceptional wool is a result of centuries of selective breeding at a 15,000 + foot habitat. The result: woolier wool, more luxurious, and more durable rugs.

Every aspect of Gangchen carpets is done by hand, from the drawing of the "cartoon" from which the patterns are woven, and the hand-carding and spinning of wool, to the small, copper-pot dyeing, to the weaving, shearing, and washing of the rugs. The exceptional designs, materials, and craftsmanship make Gangchen carpets works of art to live with and admire, and ideal heirlooms for posterity.

For more information on InnerAsia, and the Gangchen collection, call the company's New York headquarters at 212.532.2600.

INNERASIA



CARING FOR YOUR HEIRLOOM

- Vacuum weekly. Take care not to get the fringe caught.
- Twice a year, turn the rug over and use the beating action of an upright vacuum to shake out any grit from the pile.
- To brighten the top colors, take a damp cloth and rub the surface briskly in a circular motion.
- Spin the rug at least once a year to avoid wear patterns.
- Soak animal or wine stains immediately and send rug out for professional hand-wash.

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AMTICO

FOCAL POINTS

Why not give all the special places in your home the glistening backdrop they deserve by selecting an elegant and luxurious floor? You can go even one step further with a floor that looks just like wood or ceramic tile, but is more durable, stain-resistant, and easier to install and maintain.

When refurbishing or renovating a room, most of us focus mainly on the furniture that inhabits the space, and make the walls and flooring our second thought. With *Design Out of the Box* solid vinyl tile from Amtico, designers and homeowners may find themselves designing the room, and choosing the furniture, around the floor.

This high-quality luxury flooring offers thirty-five exclusive designs from stripwoods, slate and limestone, to quarry tiles which can be laid anyway you like them. Instructions on how to change laying patterns–diagonally, straight, or herringbone style–come tucked inside every box. *Design Out of the Box* from Amtico is installed without messy grouting. And because the product is stain resistant and warm underfoot, it's appropriate for any room in the house, even the kitchen. Other distinctions of the *Design Out of the Box* collection: the vinyl tile resists moisture damage, buckling, heel marks, indentations, cracking, chipping, splintering, warping, rotting, fading, and discoloration from the sun.

For the environmentally-conscious, *Design Out of the Box* allows you to create fabulous floors with all the natural-looking

beauty of wood, but without the guilt attached to deforestation. Another attribute? Unlike many other products that require days for the grout or stain to dry, and even more time to apply sealers, you can walk on Amtico's flooring soon after installation. So, feel free to put down your new floor, and throw a party to celebrate it the next night. You can even serve red wine.

Photo: Neil Dent

ALL IN THE MIX

Pashmina shawls may still be all the rage in haute fashion circles, but what's the latest trend in interiors? Would you believe pashmina shawls, or to be more accurate, pashmina throws with delicate fringe? The prettiest ones, in sweet, subtle shades of frosty pink and peach, bring out the warm tones in interminably neutral furniture, and even in room-anchoring woodwork or tile. In fact, any rosy or shell-shaded accessory that works wonders in a cream or pale yellow room, adds even more unexpected appeal to rooms basking in cool blue tones. Call it the haute couture hallway effect. Who says the fashion runway has no effect on the home?

out of the box Design from Amtico

Photo: Neil Dent

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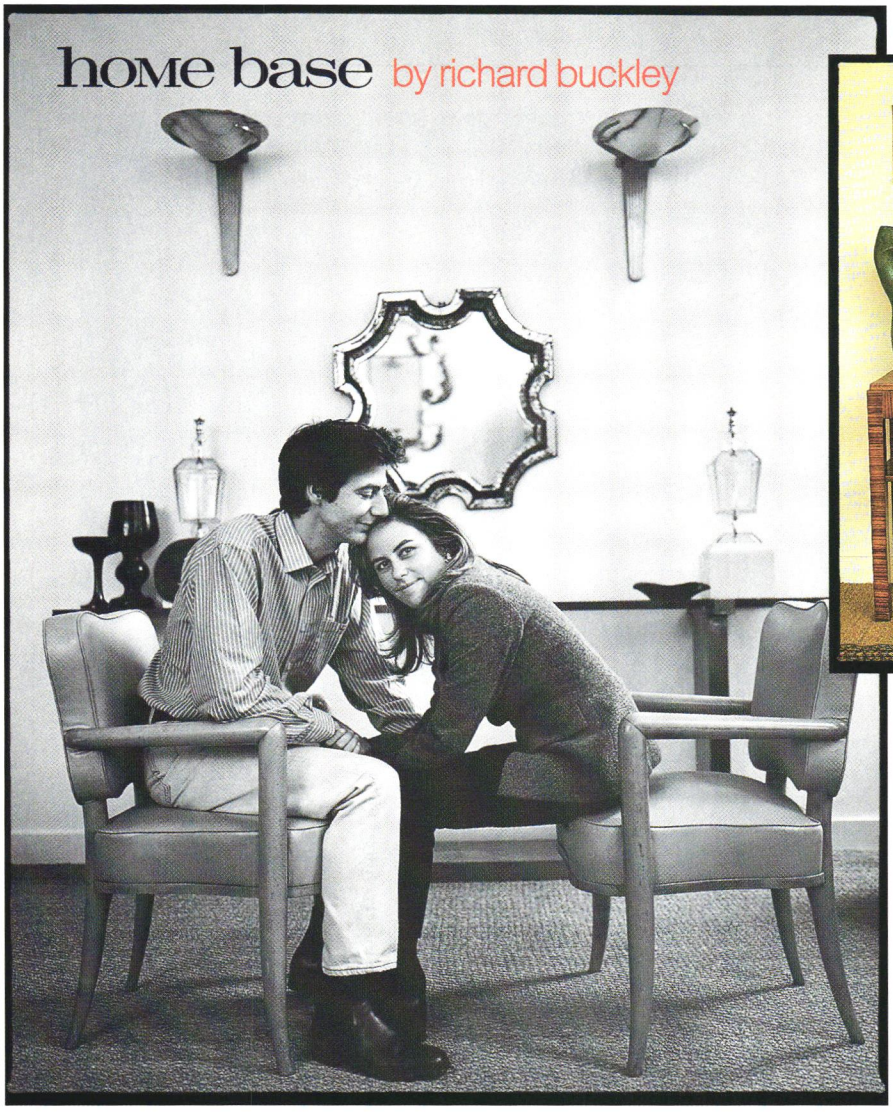
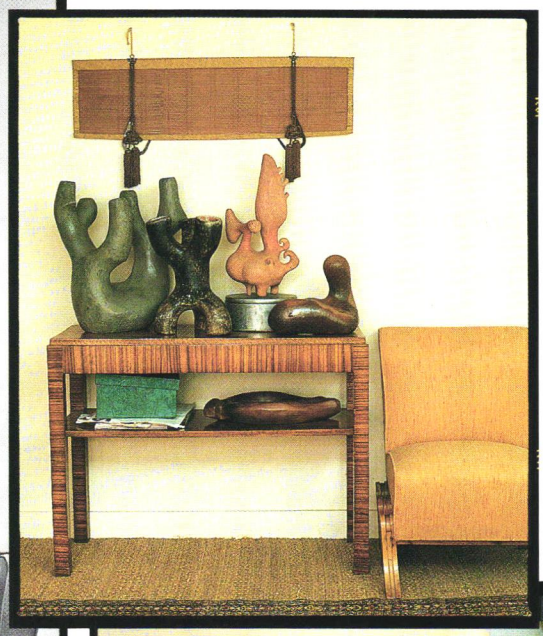
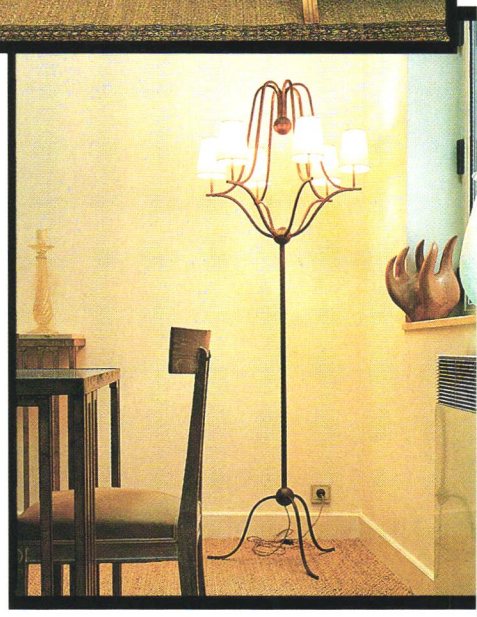






lost and found

Jacques Lacoste has redicovered the pathbreaking work of designer Jean Royère

CONNOISSEURSHIP At home, Jacques and Emile Lacoste enjoy armchairs by Jean Royère. Pieces by Szekely and Schlegel from the 1950s, top, rest on a 1930s Palisander table. Royère designed the standing lamp and the table, above, in the dining room. An Alexandre Noll sculpture sits on the windowsill.

"SHE DID WHAT?" Jacques Lacoste croaks almost inaudibly into his cell phone. Obviously, from the look on his face, whatever has happened is not good. "I'll have to call you back," he tells his wife, Emile, who is on the other end of the line. "I have to work."

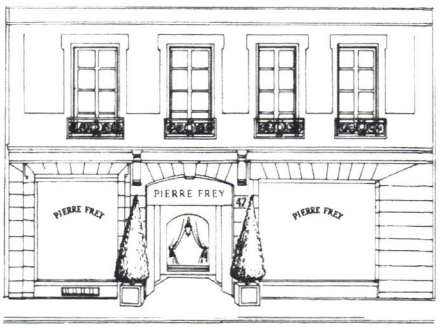
"My ten-month-old daughter just broke a very large Georges Jouve vase," Lacoste groans as he returns to the sofa. Considering that a lamp base by Jouve, a mid-century French ceramist, can cost $5,000, it is not surprising that his wife's call has left him in shock. A rough guess at what the vase might cost were it in Lacoste's Left Bank gallery would put it at approximately $20,000.

Emile has wisely chosen to deliver this tidbit of late-breaking news while her husband is in the middle of an interview, and even though it is evident that he is seething underneath, Lacoste remains calm.

"Where were we?"

Lacoste is an antiques dealer who specializes in French decorative arts from the '30s through the '50s. He also has the distinction of being the grandson of René Lacoste, the great tennis champion and designer of all those cotton piqué shirts with the alligator logo. While there are numerous Parisian dealers who sell refined French furniture and objects from the '40s, there are few who venture into the '50s and even fewer who deal in the work of Jean Royère,

"Royère was a visionary... his work anticipated '50s design"



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a decorator whose career spanned from the 1930s to 1960.

Americans, Germans, and Japanese have been snapping up mid-century modern design for years, but the French have just begun to catch the wave. Skyrocketing prices and quick sales attest to the period's new popularity. In May, Lacoste mounted a Royère show in his gallery, and most of the pieces were sold in the first two days.

LACOSTE HUMBLY refers to himself as a Royère connoisseur; others would say he is an authority. He acted as a consultant for the retrospective exhibition of Royère, which opens this month at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Lyon in Paris. Not only is his knowledge sought by scholars and curators, but two years ago he bought Royère's archives, including 1,800 photos of period rooms and more than 4,000 drawings.

"After the seriousness of the thirties and the neoclassicism of the forties, Royère was the first decorator to introduce fantasy to interior design," he explains. It was this flamboyance that first captured Lacoste's attention when he found one of the designer's undulating wrought-iron Liane wall-mounted floor lamps about ten years ago. Although it was in terrible condition, he could see that the piece was an amazing object. That lamp, which is now the centerpiece of the couple's dining room, acted as a catalyst, prompting Lacoste to learn more about Royère.

In many ways, Lacoste says, Royère was a visionary. Even in the '30s, his work anticipated the spaciousness, luminosity, and fantasy that would mark the design style of the '50s, as well as that period's modernity and optimism. Royère's fascination with organic forms anticipated Arne Jacobsen's egg chair by 20 years and predated the sinuous shapes of Pierre Paulin in the '60s.

Although Royère is the most widely represented designer in the Lacostes' Paris apartment, their taste in furniture and objects is as diverse as it is eclectic. The total effect is almost overwhelming in the fluidity with which so many items from so many periods and styles have been combined. A neo-Baroque Serge Roche mirror from the '40s and a pair of Ruhlmann sconces from the '20s are arranged on the wall above a glass-and-metal console by modernist decorator Lucy Renaudot. A delicate seventeenth-century Japanese screen, a family heirloom, sits on a massive oak cabinet/bar from the '40s. A stalklike Serge Mouille floor lamp from the '50s complements a curvaceous Geo cord-and-chrome chair from the '30s.

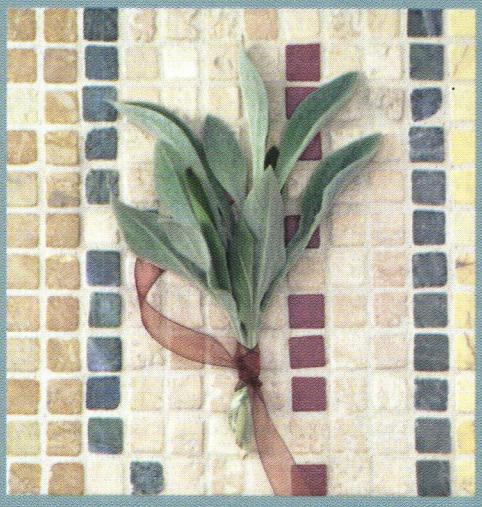
In discussing his decorating style, Lacoste just shrugs and says, "Many antiquarians like to live in *un univers passé*. I love objects that have a relation with the past." Asked if he is a little worried about having so many expensive and rare items in the house with such a young child, Lacoste says that it is not going to change the way they live or cause them to hide the things they love. "She just has to be trained not to touch certain things."

After the seriousness of the '30s and the neoclassicism of the '40s, Royère introduced fantasy to interior design

Emile's strategy has worked; an hour after her call, Lacoste's initial anger has been diffused and he is beginning to joke about the vase. "After all," he says, "it is only money, it's not like she fell out of a window. *That* would be serious." A few moments later, however, a baby can be heard crying from its pram out on the street. Lacoste turns his head, his eyes narrow, but then he smiles. "Ah, another potential Jouve breaker."

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

GALERIE JACQUES LACOSTE: 22 RUE DE LILLE, 7e 52 Lacoste specializes in furniture and decorative arts from the 1930s to the 1950s, including mid-century masters such as Jean Royère and Serge Roche.



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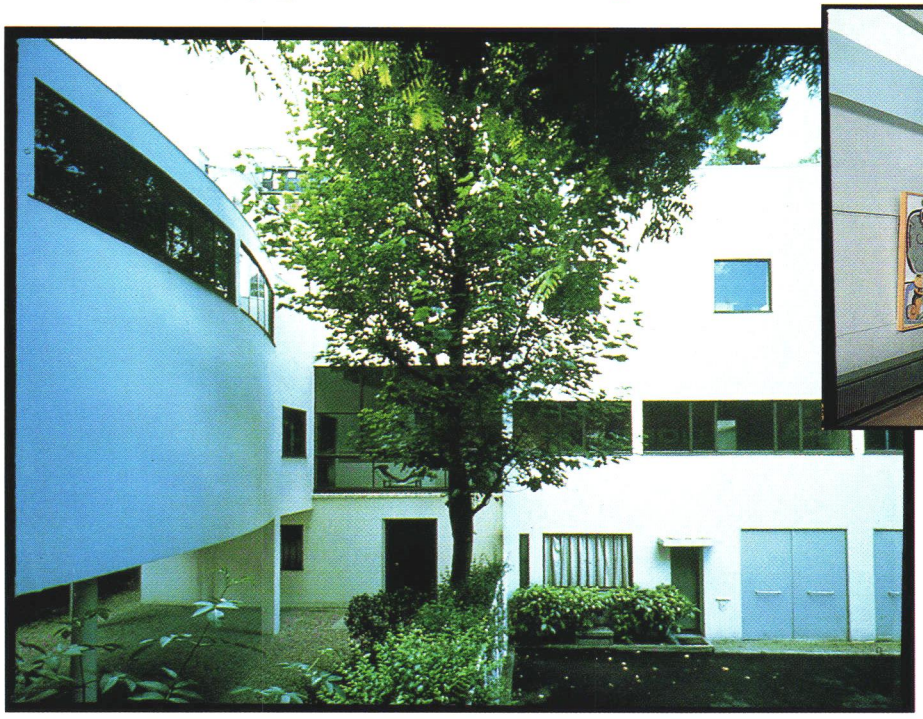
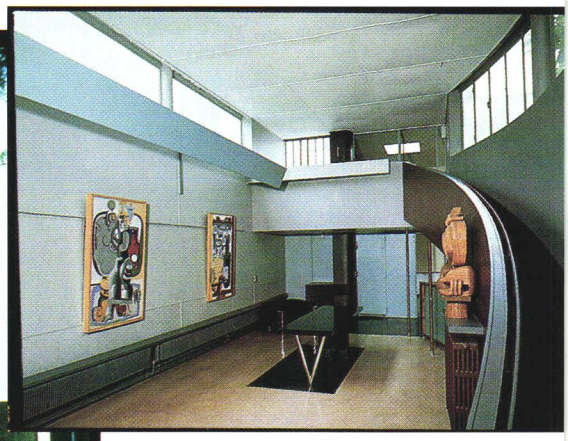




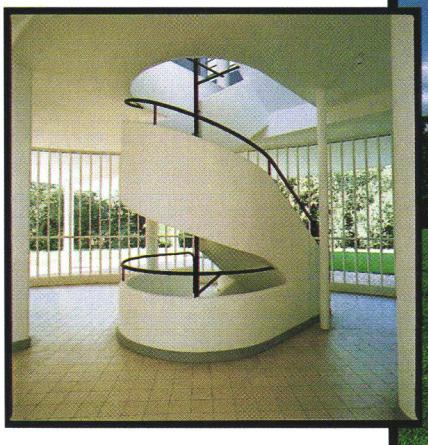
FONDATION LE CORBUSIER
10, square du Docteur Blanche

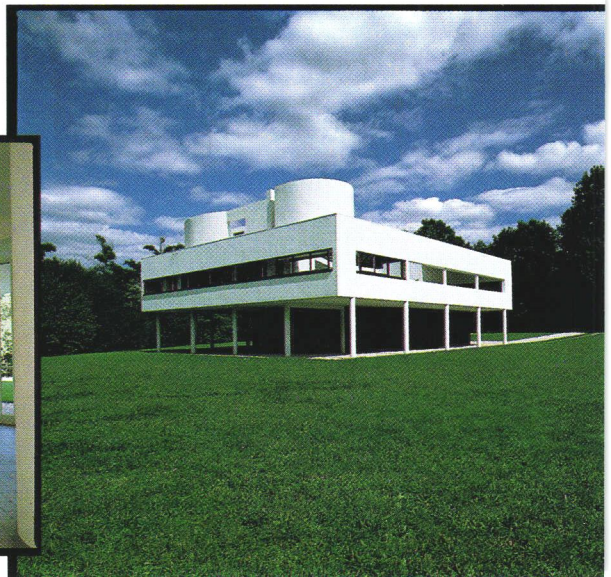
paris modern

A guided tour for enthusiasts of Le Corbusier and other mid-century masters

CHARLOTTE PERRIAND, a charter member of this century's first generation of modernists, will be 96 this month. Famous for her streamlined designs, including the chaise longue designed in collaboration with Le Corbusier, Perriand, like all early modernists, eagerly embraced the idea that technology would make the future easier, better, and more humane. The optimistic spirit of the new infused much of Paris in the '20s, touching everything from Josephine Baker's La Revue Negre to the architecture of Le Corbusier and Robert Mallet-Stevens. Although most modernist buildings from that period have been destroyed, altered, or absorbed into the Parisian urban landscape, a few have survived. With the current modernist revival, these buildings are becoming places of pilgrimage for an avid audience other than architectural students, and of these the Villa Savoye, on the outskirts of Paris, is now a principal shrine.

The Villa Savoye, which was built between 1928 and 1931 as a country residence for Pierre Savoye, an insurance-company director, and his family, is Le Corbusier's most striking residential building. The purity and formality of the structure's facade, including the strip windows, is made all the more dramatic by its being constructed on reinforced concrete columns, giving the illusion that the house is floating. Inside, the strict spatial geometry is broken up by a series of sinuous ramps that join one floor to another.





VILLA SAVOYE
82, rue de Villiers, Poissy

In the 16th arrondissement (8-10, square du Docteur Blanche), there are two adjoining houses designed by Le Corbusier in 1924. The Villa Jeanneret is currently the headquarters of the Fondation Le Corbusier; the other, the Villa La Roche, is open to the public. Commissioned by Raoul La Roche, a banker and art collector, the building explores the relationship between volume, space, movement, and light. It is most noted for the bowfront, two-story gallery with its elegant sweeping ramp to the second floor. Some of Perriand's early pieces were intended for the Villa La Roche.

The rue Mallet-Stevens is only a five-minute walk away. Every bit as influential and forward-thinking as Le Corbusier in the '20s, architect Robert Mallet-Stevens placed spatial concerns—geometry, volume, and perspective—above decoration. Here, in 1927, Mallet-Stevens created the

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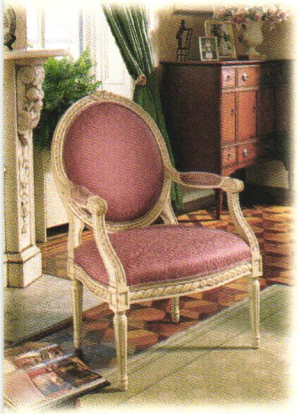

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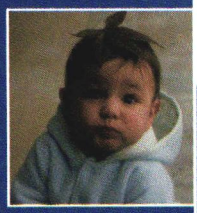

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SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

House & Garden

first modernist enclave of six villas, including his own home and studio. Time has taken its toll on most of the buildings, but fortunately one house has recently been restored to its former glory.

Pierre Chareau's Glass House, built in 1928 for Dr. Jean Dalsace, is one of Saint Germain's best-kept secrets and one of the masterpieces of twentieth-century residential architecture. Although it is not possible to tour the house, which is still owned by the family, it nevertheless attracts a strong cult following. During the day, it is not unusual to see people entering the building (31, rue Saint Guillaume) to get a peek at the facade from the courtyard. The steel-and-reinforced-concrete structure, sheathed in glass bricks, was radically modernist in its day and is still almost perfectly intact. Since architecture and decoration were viewed by Chareau and his peers as two parts of the same process, the house is a totally integrated inside and out. Not only did Chareau design the building and most of its furniture, but all the detail work, from large built-in cabinets to small items like soap dishes, clothes hooks, and even hinges, are his.

NOT FAR AWAY, and literally right down the rue Saint Benoit from the Café Flore, is MCFE, where faithful reproductions of Chareau's furniture and lamps can be found. For those with the budget of the Getty Museum, Doria on the rue de Seine has a number of original Chareau pieces, as well as Mallet-Stevens's own dining-room set. (His wife did the needlework backs and seats of the Breuer chairs.)

While the current vogue for modernism has about it more nostalgia for an idealized past than enthusiasm for the future, Charlotte Perriand remains true to the original spirit of the movement. Upon the publication of her autobiography in France last year, she stated in an interview that she had neither let fame go to her head nor did she rest on her accomplishments, but had always asked, "What is it that I can do better?" Not surprisingly, Perriand dedicated her book to "the generations that will build the twenty-first century."

Happy birthday, Charlotte.

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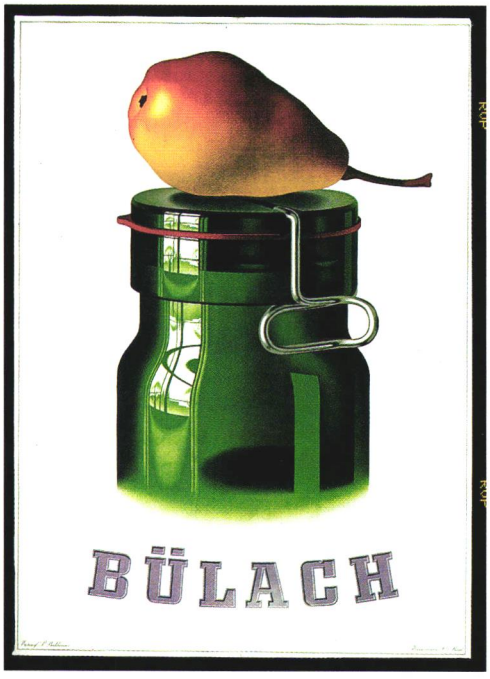
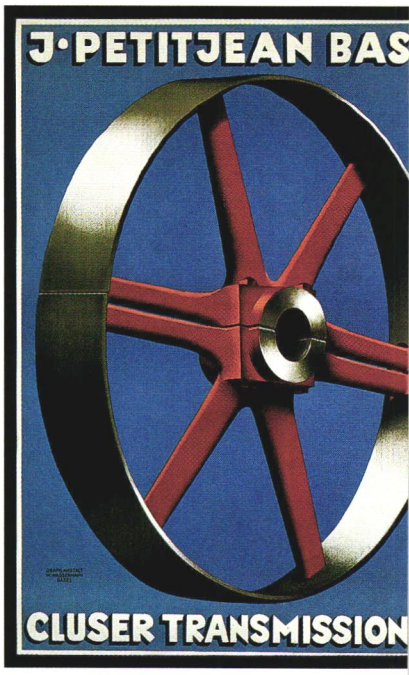




BRIGHT AND SHINING OBJECTS **PKZ, left, and Bülach, center, by Birkhauser. Stoecklin's Cluser Transmission, above.**

beyond words

Among the great prizes of the International Vintage Poster Fair this autumn are the elusive and allusive Swiss Object Posters

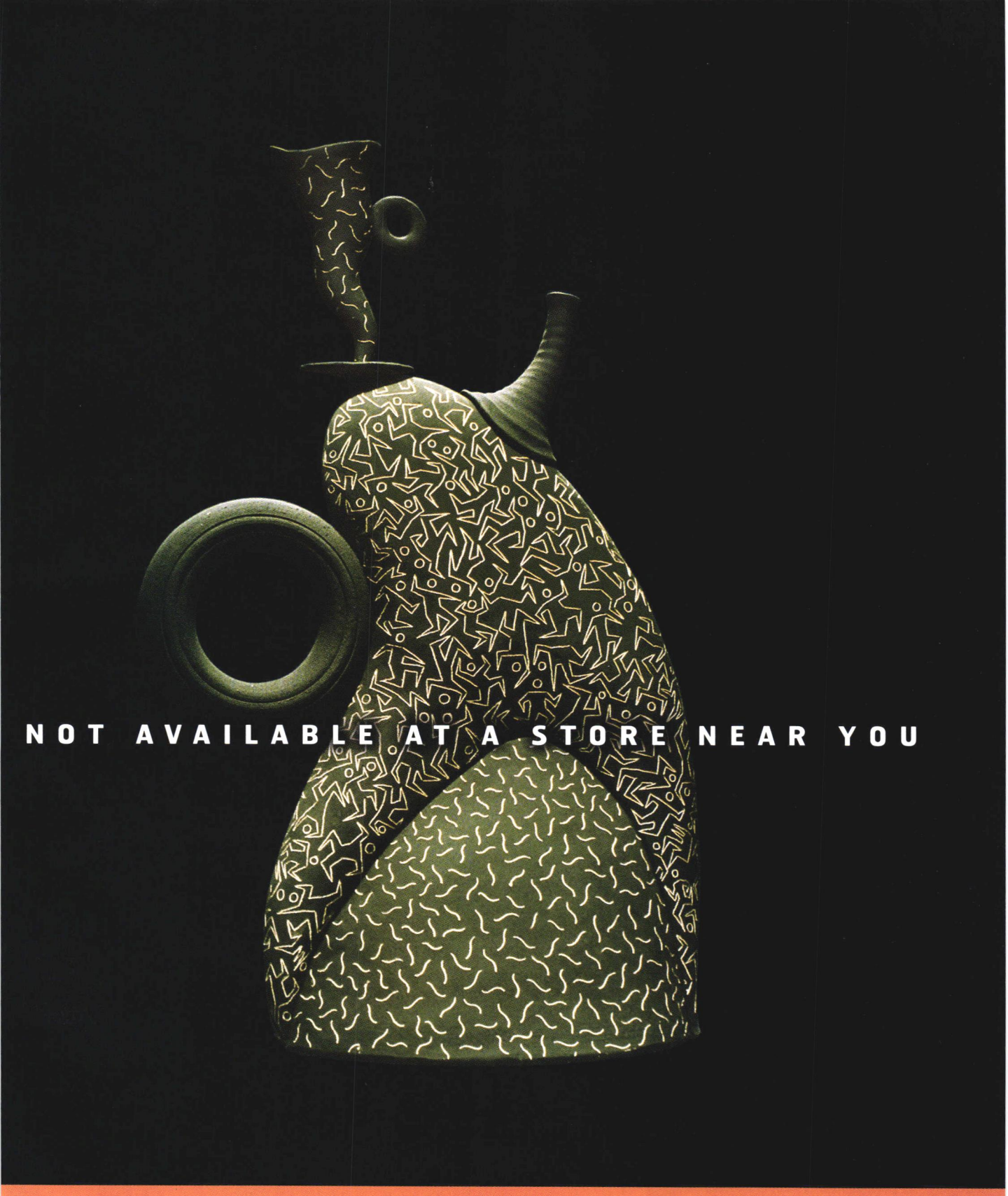
Of course the advertising poster was invented in France, where disguising commerce with art is as reflexive a national habit as following dessert with cheese . . . or scorning American materialism. Lithography, which made the four-color poster possible, may have been a German invention, but it took the French to recognize its marketplace potential. During the first flush of poster art in the Belle Epoque, French artists pitched apperitifs, *parapluies, parfums,* and *pastilles* in posters so rapturous, they make us forget that money was the heart of the matter. What Andy Warhol said about pop art being mostly "about liking things" is also true of the artists of the 1890s; they thrilled the middle class with art that associated the most ordinary products with gaiety, insouciance, and splashy movement. Almost from the beginning, these posters were collected by the French and shown in gallery settings, which helps explain why you can still find the work of masters like Lautrec or Mucha, whereas that of artists in other countries was often destroyed or lost.

Walking through the International Vintage Poster Fair in New York's Metropolitan Pavilion (October 22 to 24, and October 29 to 31 in San Francisco), you are struck by how durable and adaptable the poster's celebration of the commonplace has been. From Israel to Sweden, Brazil to Japan, prewar, postwar, or cold war, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, or social realism, lithography, silk screen, or computer-generated graphic, a well-cultivated enthusiasm for the commerce of life survives. The poster is the place where art dignifies the sell by overwhelming it (public-interest posters, movie posters, and certain forms of propaganda being exceptions), and certainly part of our enjoyment of any poster has to do with how beautifully it fools us into overlooking the pitch.

Posters are the work of extroverts. Even the fine political and propaganda posters on view at the fair are infused with an optimism not so common in politics itself. But, as Louis Bixenman, director of the fair and owner of the New York gallery Poster America, points out, visitors are seeing the best of what has survived the last 100 or so years. "There are," he says, "turn-of-the-century posters so awful you cannot give them away."

Posters are the work of extroverts. Even political posters are infused with an optimism not always found in politics itself

And there is plenty of more recent work that is scarce and much sought after. Jim Lapides, of the International



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House & Garden

Poster Gallery in Boston, pursues the relatively rare Object Posters that had their beginnings in Germany just after the turn of the century and flowered later in Switzerland during the 1930s and 1940s. (Switzerland is still noted for great posters, partly because its small size allows an advertising campaign based on them to reach pretty much everyone). Object Posters are more somber than most of their predecessors, showing a marked Bauhaus influence in their severe celebration of the common object. Turn-of-the-century artists had borrowed the shadowless technique and bold outlines of the Japanese print, emphasizing motion and gesture, calling only oblique attention to the product. Object Posters eliminate movement and social context, focusing so tightly on the product that they are almost abstract. The result is that most of them look, as Bixenman says, "as modern today as when they were created."

The poster is the place where art dignifies the sell by overwhelming it

FOR BOTH Lapides and Eric Kellenberger, a Swiss dealer, the works of Swiss artists such as Herbert Leupin, Niklaus Stoecklin, and Peter Birkhauser represent the pinnacle of the lithographic poster. Kellenberger accounts for the photographic intensity of their style by explaining that the artists vied with each other for perfection in representing the object. The results are cool and even intellectual, flattering the public into making the association between, for instance, Birkhauser's depiction of a perfectly stitched button and the Zurich clothier PKZ, which presumably sells things as handsome and perfectly made as this button. Or Niklaus Stoecklin's wheel that hangs wordlessly in blue space, an homage to the glory of the machine age and, only on second thought, a pitch for a transmission company.

By the end of World War II, artists had burned out on the rigorous style, and the public was, in any case, ready to return to a more lighthearted approach to life and advertising. The painstaking art of lithography was being replaced by the less time-consuming technique of photo-offset printing, which could not come close to the photo-realism of lithographic work. Masterpieces done in this style are extremely rare, so when they do come on the market, the prices are steep. Lapides says that he has had Birkhauser's PKZ button only twice in ten years; he puts its price at somewhere around $10,000. Stoecklin's wheel is so elusive that even the Museum of Modern Art doesn't have one, so Lapides suggests a price of $10,000 to $15, 000. (For comparison's sake, a great Lautrec, should one come your way, would be priced in the neighborhood of $25,000 to $35,000). On the other hand, Birkhauser's pear on a jar for the Bülach glass company would run about $2,500, and less-exalted examples of the genre can be purchased for less than $1,000. Not bad when you consider that original posters are often rarer than original prints, because fewer were printed and of those, fewer still survived.

For collectors not in the thrall of the modern, the fair has plenty of well-designed nostalgia and many curiosities of social history for sale in every possible category. All the work from the 30-odd dealers has been vetted for authenticity, so you should be protected against reproductions and outright fakes. Now that the T-shirt has replaced the poster as an instant card of identity and people are no longer framing Aristide Bruant to signal their cosmopolitan tastes, serious attention has shifted to the finer points of poster design, such as lettering, color, and technique, and the business of serious collecting has taken off.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

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enough rope

So much for sisal, an annoying trend of mysterious origin

THE WRITING that was once on the wall is now on the floor. That sisal you love? That everyone loves? That your decorator said was so flawless, so chic, so understated? So British? So *à la tropique?* So throwaway?

Throw it away.

It's rough. It's ugly. It's brown. It stains easily. There's far, far, far too much of it. It's not that elegant, it doesn't go with everything, and you can't say it 40 times fast. For an exercise in understatement, it became overstated pretty darn quick.

Once upon a time, sisal was a good idea. A great idea, even. It blew into fashion with a fresh-faced, no-artificial-flavors-or-colors appeal, and immediately became to carpeting what 100 percent cotton had already become to polyester. Better, more refined, more tasteful, more natural, and, most of all, more authentic, the thinking went. It took vision and daring to install sisal: so what if it was tough on the sole?

Judged by the great "U" standard, by which things are called their humblest names, sisal was a kind of gold spun back into straw, as sometimes happens in fairy tales. After all, sisal is nothing but the twined product of the fibers from the leaves of *Agave sisalana*. It was used for all sorts of things in Mexico long before the Spaniards set foot there, well liked if not loved for its strength, elasticity, and resistance to corrosion in salt water. The funny thing is that sisal may have begun its vogue in the 1980s, as a kind of aristocratic tatami—the perfect contrast to that boulle marquetry commode for which you paid a record price at Sotheby's. But when the crash came and the boulle went, the sisal stayed.

And spread.

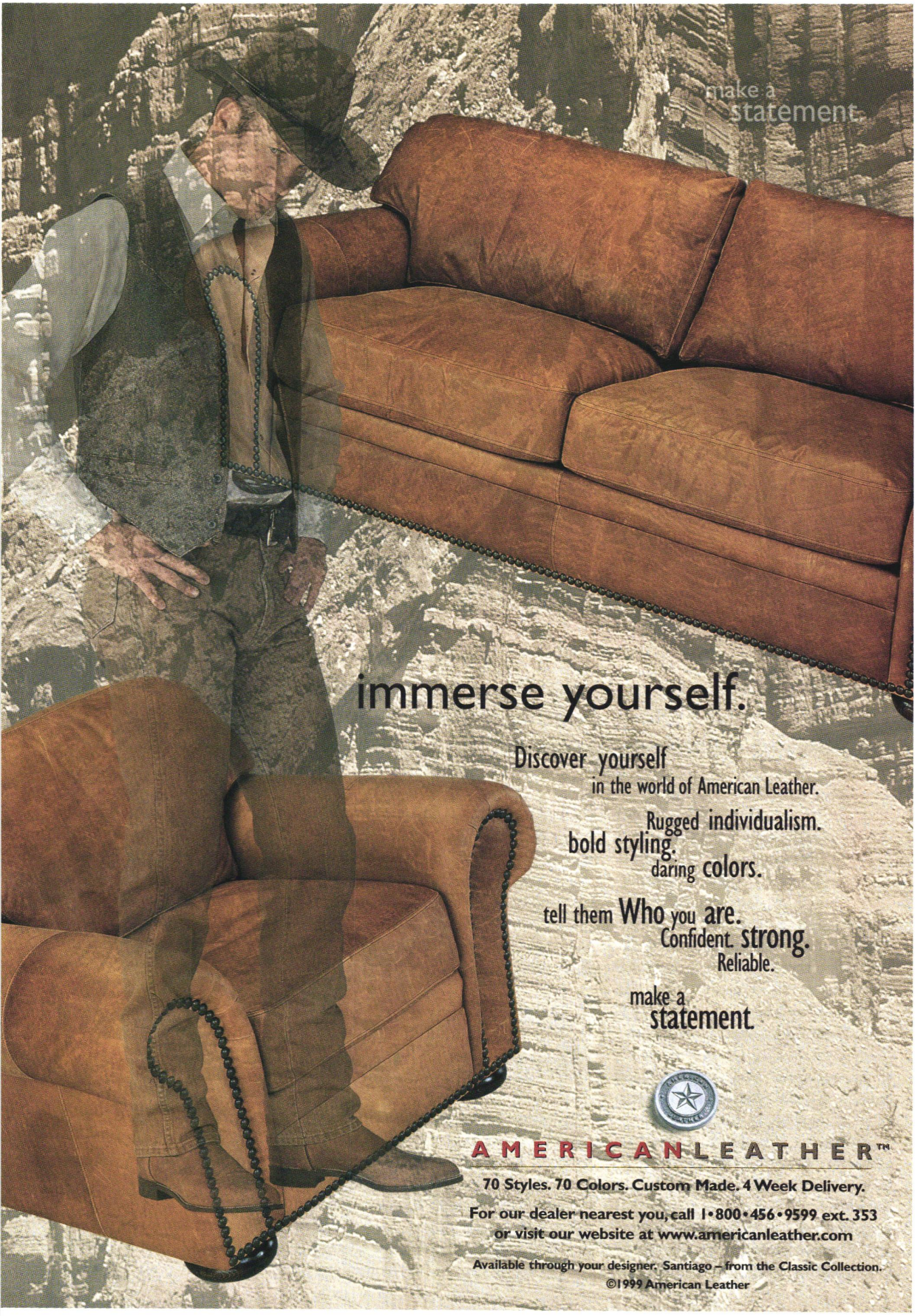
In fact, as the 1990s began, sisal took on new life, kind of the hair shirt for the floor, insisting that all who tread its bristly precincts do so as a penance for the chintz-covered excesses of the decade before (never mind that sisal itself had played a part in it); just as fashion designers in recent years have flirted with sober images of monasticism and minimalism as a palliative for the neon brights of the preceding years. At a time when junk bonds and art-star paintings turned out not to be worth the paper or canvas they were printed on, sisal was undeniably what it was, nothing special. Thanks to its loose weave, nothing could be swept under the sisal. And, given its third-world heritage (the largest producers of sisal are Tanzania and Brazil), sisal mats lent a note of multicultural political correctness to the house, as if to imply that we can feel each other's pain—underfoot, at least.

Decorators, however loath they are to renounce their past loves publicly, grudgingly agree about sisal now. "I had it all throughout my office for years," says interior designer Victoria Hagan. "And I always thought it was just fine. But it's lost some of its cachet. Nothing has made me feel as good in years as tearing it all up and putting down a beautiful flat, soft wool carpet." And Thad Hayes warns that if he has to go to one more cocktail party where there is only white wine and Perrier for fear of a red-wine-on-sisal disaster, he might just start staying home, laying in a nice swath of Stark carpet.

And even over at ABC Carpet & Home, where they sell miles and miles of sisal a year, the managing director, Graham Head, puts his feelings on the subject bluntly. "You only buy sisal once, don't you?" he says with a laugh. "Personally, I would never have it again. It soils badly, and after a week it looked like I'd had it for thirty years."

It was one thing when sisal was a catchall for stray crumbs, but now that it's a catchall for timid taste, sisal's frayed edges are too much to bear. So if your decorators suggest sisal in any place other than your beach house, remind them of this: you're not paying them for indecision.

As the 1990s began, sisal took on new life as a kind of hair shirt for the floor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MIRROR IMAGES **Dear even when new, this pair of Chinese courtesans from the 18th century sold for $100,000.**

looking backward

The luminous colors and unexpected depth of Chinese reverse glass paintings have been tantalizing collectors for more than 300 years

"I'VE ALWAYS LOVED this art form," says Khalil Rizk, gesturing to a pair of Chinese reverse mirror paintings made for the English market around 1765 that depict two courtesans. The embroidered silks and floral sprays painted on the old and slightly rippled mirror surfaces shimmer and dance in the light. "I had them in one of my bedrooms, behind two *blanc de chine* lamps," the co-owner of the Chinese Porcelain Company recalls. "The light was soft and radiant, and the paintings looked gorgeous. They *made* the room."

Though tea, silk, and spices were the cash cows of the East Indian companies plying the China trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, decorative art was also a valuable cargo on many voyages. The European rage for chinoiserie in all its exotic expressions kept demand pitched high for decorative works. One has only to imagine a staid English drawing room of the period—slumbering in the classical style—suddenly bursting to life with the lush colors of famille verte balusters and whopping armorial chargers to understand the power and profits of the China trade.

Jesuit missionaries introduced the technique of reverse painting on glass to the Emperor K'ang Hsi in the seventeenth century. The artwork was so named because paint was applied to the back of a piece of glass in the reverse order to that used with traditional methods of painting on canvas or paper—foreground and details were done first, background last. A steady hand was a must because every stroke was visible through the front of the plate, and mistakes couldn't be painted over. The result was a painting that played with light, color, and depth in a way that no canvas could.

Since Chinese glass tended to be thin and brittle, thick mirror plates were brought in from Europe to serve as canvases. "The silvering would be scraped off the back of the mirror in the Chinese workshops," explains Rizk. "Then the painted surface was applied." Finished works were shipped in simple frames of Oriental hardwood or black lacquer. "When the pictures arrived in Europe, their Chinese frames were sometimes replaced with gilded ones in the Rococo style, to complement English furniture and decorations," says Rizk.

The range of themes is breathtaking. "The early period, in the mid- to late-eighteenth century, produced mainly Chinese scenes of ladies and landscapes," Rizk explains. "As the demand for new subjects grew, the artists moved on to shipping pictures and Western portraits. Then, around 1800, you get this big explosion of neoclassical paintings of Shakespearean scenes, French genre pictures, and copies of popular engravings." The best works were very expensive, and Europeans considered them to be rarified forms of decoration. "Oddly, with few exceptions, no one had them in China," observes Rizk.

A steady hand was a must—every stroke was visible through the front of the plate

Nina Campbell

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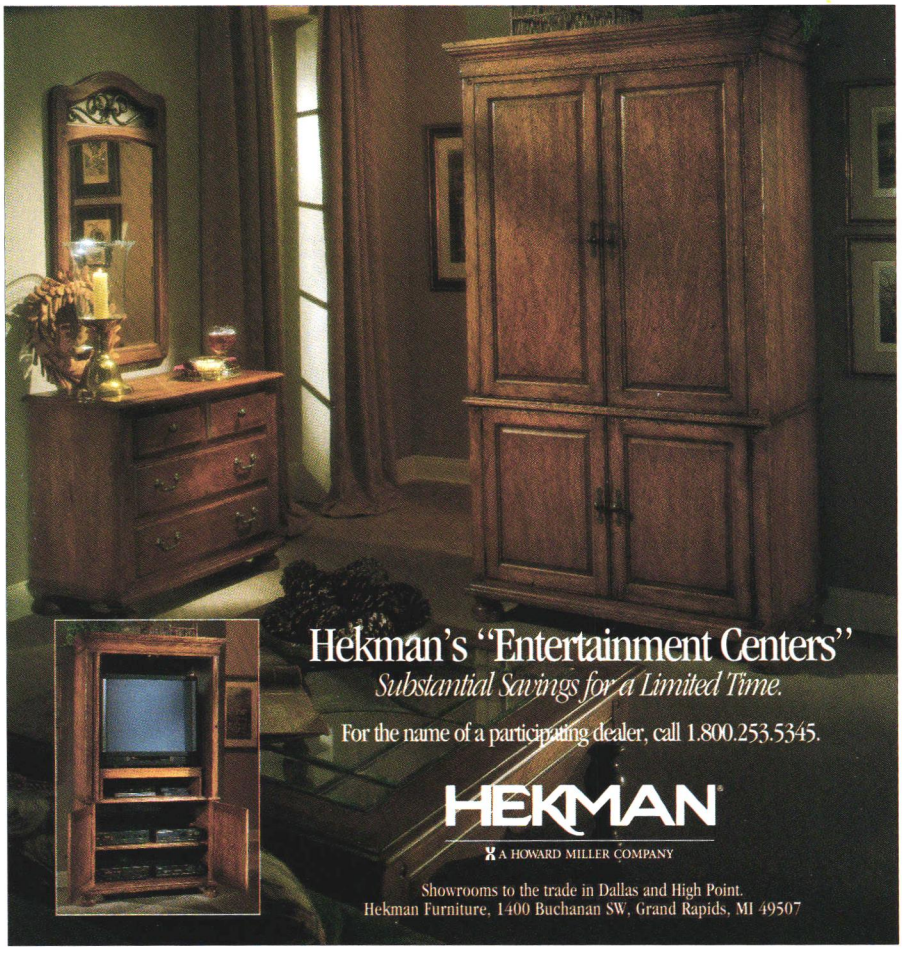

dealer's choice

BIRDLAND **Painted on the back of glass, plumage looks almost three-dimensional.**

When they did appear, they weren't highly valued. "Eighteenth-century travelers reported seeing them in bordellos."

Nearly every glass painting is unsigned—executed by an anonymous artist fulfilling commissions on deadline—making the grace and spirit all the more profound. One, titled "Pheasants on Rockery," is particularly luminous. Painted on a Vauxhall eighteenth-century mirror, the work is animated by a pair of birds standing among pink peonies and cherry blossoms. Rizk is selling the work for $70,000. The courtesans recently went for $100,000 for the pair. "The greatest and rarest mirror paintings, like these, date from 1750 to 1765," explains Rizk. Many of the ones from the nineteenth century—produced for mass trade on cheap glass depicting more prosaic scenes—he terms "rubbish." Considering their extreme fragility, it's a wonder any of the best mirror paintings remain. "If we buy two or three a year, we're lucky," says Rizk.

Having promised to reveal something unusual, he goes to a cabinet in his office and pulls out a wooden case, placing it on the table and unlocking it with a flourish. Out come several erotic paintings on glass, vividly rendered and engaging. "Somebody gave these to me," Rizk offers with a naughty smile. The China trade certainly had something for every taste.

RONALD VARNEY, *a senior vice president of Sotheby's New York, writes often on the arts.*

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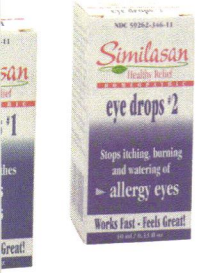

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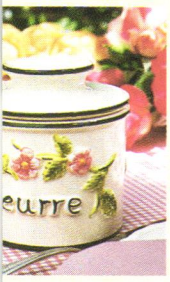

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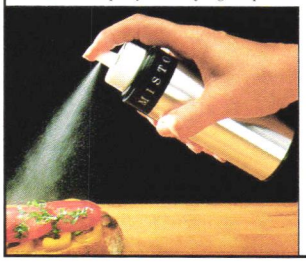

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here's the dirt

Boutique composts and beautiful rocks make American Soil Products the talk of the town

THERE IS DIRT, and then there is Dr. Dirt's dirt. It rises in a miniature mountain range at American Soil Products in Berkeley, turning a cement slab fronting San Francisco Bay into an interstellar landscape of reds and ochers, siennas and browns, blacks and whites. When the setting sun hits these piles aslant, this is dirt at its most glorious.

Not to mention its most wryly poetic. Lou Truesdell—a.k.a. Dr. Dirt, the bearded and cerebral master of American Soil's domain—addresses his dirt in terms that are nuanced, personal, almost anthropomorphic. "Behold this compost. Behold it well!" he declaims, allowing a handful of spongy-soft Walt Whitman mix to sift through his fingers. A seductive red-brown, it is potent stuff, not so mature as to have no heat left, which, according to Dr. Dirt, means it provides better aeration, more bacteria activity, and enhanced worm secretions and glues.

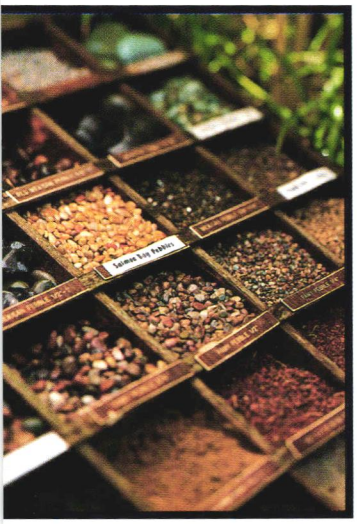
Here, Truesdell delicately sniffs out "a faint hint of eau de biosolids" (read: sewage sludge); there, he points out the sedate and well-aged Bessie's Barnyard mixture, a black-as-midnight confection of dairy and chicken manures. Over yonder is a popular heap portentously labeled The Clodbreaker, a powerhouse dirt designed to bust up the Bay Area's heavy-soil clays. Organic matter, humates, minerals, and volcanic cinder together conspire to keep clay particles from bonding into a gardener-proof mass.

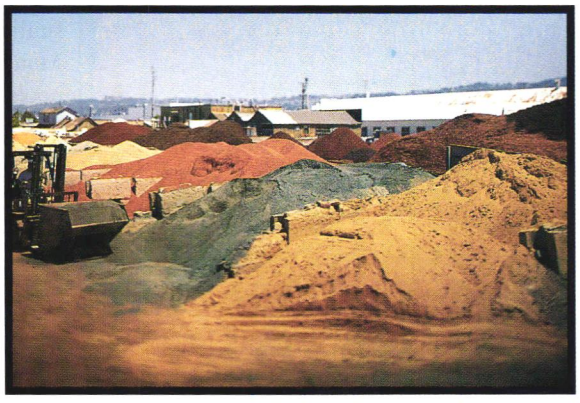
Truesdell's latest enthusiasm—coir-based soil mixes coaxed out of coconut hulls—is a classic Berkeley conflation of science and politics. Fluffed-up coconut coir not only does a better job than peat moss at holding water (and, unlike peat moss, re-wets easily), it comes with a built-in feel-good factor: it is a renewable resource. Truesdell, whose quintessentially Berkeleyesque background is in botany and chemistry, adapted machinery to tumble and fluff the compacted coir, then tested and retested his coir blends with various nutrients, fertilizers, and aerating materials before introducing bedding and potting mixes last year. In containers, coir decays and shrinks less rapidly than other materials. The bedding mix blends nicely into heavy clays. "Coir is the most universal material I've found," says Truesdell fervently. "I even grow my orchids in it."

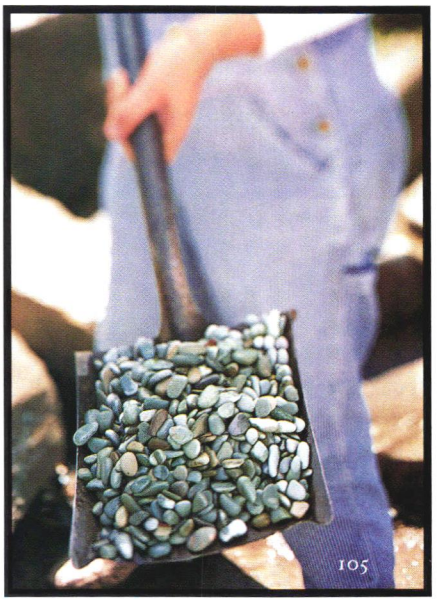
None of this comes cheap. Truesdell's mixes sell for $20 to $45 a cubic yard—in any quantity you like, from the container-load to the modest bag—which puts them well ahead of garden-variety blends. In Dr. Dirt's world, it's worth it. Think of what gardeners spend on plant materials, he argues; think of the levels of enjoyment that spring from a fecund garden. Dirt should hardly register as the last consideration. "Soil is the best deal in horticulture," Truesdell says. "It's worth it to pay a little more rather than have something you have to struggle with."

For people who view dirt as the sine qua non, Truesdell offers highly specific customizing services. When the Biosphere project required special soil for its terrestrial termites, American Soil delivered by the trailer-load. When the University of California Botanical Garden in Berkeley needed dirt for its tropical greenhouse and Alpine garden, it was Dr. Dirt to the rescue. A performance artist desperate for soil with just the right texture came by to finger the goods. Colored sand for a Disney movie?

Colored sand for a Disney movie? Exploding shale for Spielberg? Call Dr. Dirt







THE GOOD EARTH **A rainbow of pebbles—from a yellow Salmon Bay variety, left, to a blue Indonesian mix, right—are used for pathways and mulches. Truesdell sells rock, soil, and volcanic cinder, above, by the truckload.**

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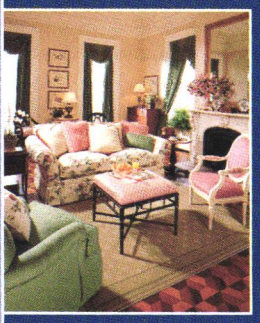
Timeless Elegance —A contest

Sanderson Fabrics and Wallcoverings and *House & Garden* invite you to join us as we celebrate the past with a chance to win a weekend for two at one of the nation's most historic inns: the John Rutledge House Inn in Charleston, South Carolina.



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House & Garden

Exploding shale for Spielberg? Call Dr. Dirt.

If Bay Area artists have developed an affinity for American Soil, it is due in large part to the legacy of Carol Williams, who developed the yard's alluring and totemic stonescape. What Williams wrought is to ordinary rock yards what Neiman's is to Kmart. Here, among sensuous specimen boulders culled from the high Sierras, the Mojave, and Nevada's mining territory, sculptors wander in search of just the right basalt column. Escorted by waddling ducks, surrounded by Truesdell's cherished clumping bamboos, landscape designers scout out monumental stones—costing up to $3,000— that qualify as pieces of garden art.

WHAT PROMPTS people to fork over large amounts of cash for oversized rocks, which then must be installed with trouble and even more expense? Williams, who now works as a consultant for American Soil, explains it as something more than aesthetics. Stone pulls things out of people, she believes—transports them "to the special places they hold in their mind's eye." But it goes even deeper. "Stone brings things to an environment that you don't always find in human relationships," she observes. "Permanence, stability, strength, power, peace."

All of those qualities are free for the savoring at American Soil. "Choose your status," jokes Lou Truesdell as he takes a seat on a slab of Arizona sandstone and gestures at a multilevel flock of stone treads that seem to capture and hold the sunlight. Close by, a tableau of Pecos Mountain boulders glistens with small pools that collect in water-worn pockets. The stones create a place, as Williams might put it, to hold in the mind's eye.

If it seems melancholy to think that this fall Dr. Dirt and his current "rock women," Suzanne Coffee and Pam Nagle, will pack the American Soil yard off to bigger new quarters in Richmond, to the north, there is solace in the fact that certain things will accompany them. The stones. The rainbow mountains of dirt. The ducks. And not least of all, the searching, restless Berkeley mind-set that gave birth to this extraordinary place.

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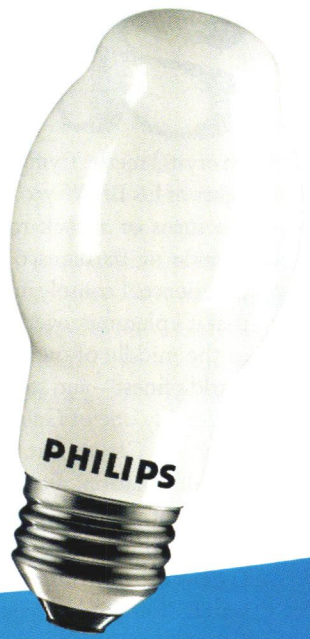

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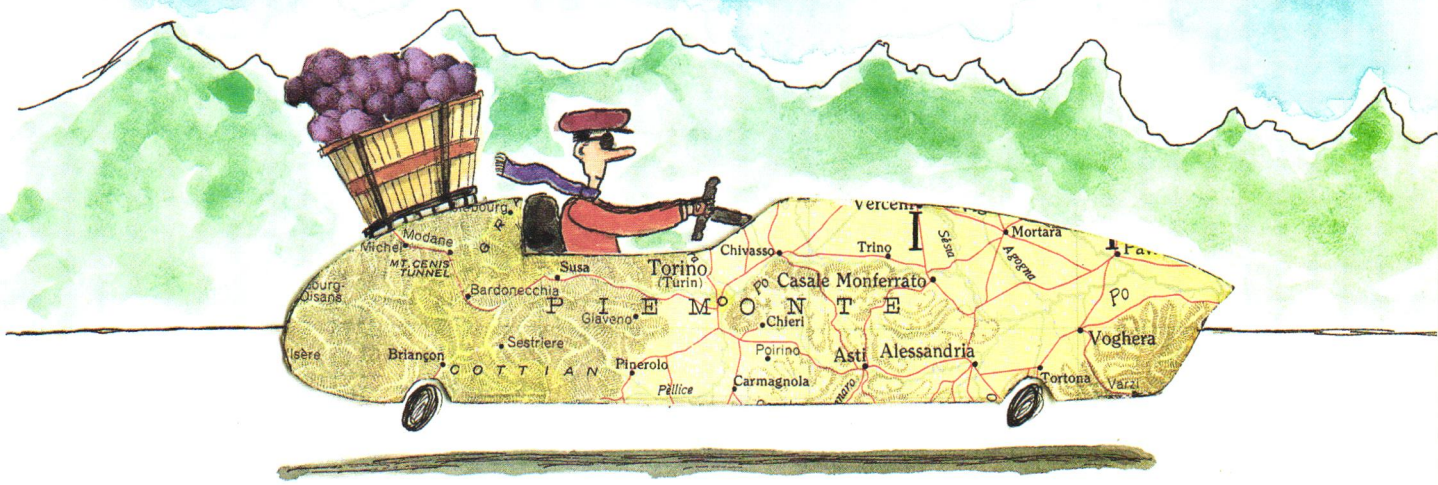

gaja à go go

Angelo Gaja works his unorthodox magic on the wines of Tuscany and Piedmont

ANGELO GAJA is a man in a hurry. He talks fast. He walks fast. And he drives like Jackie Stewart on crystal meth. Trying to follow the taillights of his BMW 750 through the hairpin turns of a back road in Piedmont outside of Barbaresco is a hair-raising experience. I console myself with the fact that if I plummet over the edge, I will die in the middle of one or another of the world's finest—and steepest—vineyards, preferably one of Gaja's. When I finally reach Da Cesare, the restaurant that is our destination, Gaja is donning the jacket of an impeccably cut double-breasted suit, looking crisp as he carefully fastens the buttons and then checks his watch. "Oh dear, are you warm?" he asks, frowning with genuine concern as I stagger out of my rented Opel on wobbly legs, drenched in sweat. Gaja takes the well-being of visitors to Piedmont personally: if he could rebuke the local weather at this moment, I'm sure he would.

At 59, Gaja shows no sign of slowing down. Since he took over his father's estate in the late sixties, he's almost single-handedly turned barbaresco—a formerly rustic, indifferently made, locally consumed vino—into one of the world's great names in wine, to the point where it threatens to overshadow barolo, its more venerated sibling. He has done this partly by a fanatic devotion to quality in his vineyards and cellars—cutting yields, selecting and aging the oak for his own barrels, and selecting the bark for his corks—and partly by driving and flying around the world to promote the wines.

Over the past 30 years, Gaja has given the wines of Barbaresco, and Italian wines in general, a new credibility, much as his friend and mentor Robert Mondavi did for the wines of the Napa Valley and the rest of California. "It's fantastic what Mondavi did for California," he says, fantastic being one of his favorite English words. "He saw the potential before anyone else. Also here he saw the potential, when he comes to visit in 1973. He says that everyone in the Langhe is sleeping. And he's right. We were all sleeping. Fantastic!" (The fact that he's told this tale at least a hundred times before doesn't seem to diminish his enthusiasm.) I find it hard to believe that Gaja has ever spent much time sleeping. Nor does he watch television; not too long ago, after deciding that his three children were watching too much of it, he took the television out to the courtyard of his winery and ceremonially disassembled it with the help of a sledgehammer.

Despite his obvious enthusiasm for food and wine—he keeps urging me to try different dishes—there is something ascetic and highly disciplined about Gaja, who is so fastidious that he stains the center sections of his barrels red in order to avoid the uneven staining that occurs around the bungholes when wine samples are removed. Over the course of three meals, I observe that he eats and drinks sparingly. "I spend a great deal of time eating and drinking for business," he says, explaining his restraint. But one gets the feeling that Gaja doesn't want to cloud his focus. His cheerful intensity is almost overwhelming as he describes his new vineyards in Bolgheri (home of the Super Tuscans Sassicaia and Ornellaia), his new winery in Montalcino (of Brunello fame), and the luxury inn he is creating from a medieval castle in his

Over the past 30 years, Gaja has given Italian wines in general a new credibility

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tiny hometown of Barbaresco (pop. 630), across the street from his winery.

If there is a dichotomy in the soul of Angelo Gaja, it is that of the local farmer who is also an international figure. Although his family is originally from Spain, they have lived in the hills of Piedmont for 200 years. His first love as a winemaker is the Nebbiolo grape, which is cranky and temperamental enough to make Pinot Noir seem like Doris Day and which seems to thrive, if it can ever be said to thrive, only in the steep hills of Piedmont. The wine from Barbaresco and nearby Barolo is traditionally extremely slow to mature and difficult for a foreign palate to understand, characterized at its best by wonderful aromas that are often said to evoke tar and roses. They are, like most Italian wines, best appreciated with food, a fact that Gaja says makes it difficult to show them in blind tastings against fruitier foreign varietals, although his own Nebbiolo-based wines inevitably garner stellar scores from the critics.

Gaja made a name for himself by applying French practices—particularly the use of new oak barrels—to the vinification of Nebbiolo, which initially raised deep suspicion in the area. But his greatest crime against local sensibilities was to reintroduce "foreign" grapes like Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon to the area. Now, with his purchase of new estates, first in Barolo and then in Tuscany, he is branching out even farther from his roots.

IF ANYONE can pull off this kind of expansion without diluting quality, it's Gaja. I visited his new estate, Pieve Santa Restituta, in Montalcino, which, until Gaja stole the spotlight for Piedmont, was the most internationally renowned wine region in Italy. His '95 and '96 vintages are as good as anything being made there, although traditionalists will complain, no doubt, as they did in Barbaresco, about his use of new oak. Touring the vineyard, though, it was easy to see one source of the quality: as much fruit lay on the ground—pruned away—as on the vines themselves. Dropping fruit lowers yields and concentrates the flavors of the remaining clusters, but this kind of dedication to quality doesn't come cheap.

The chief complaint against Gaja's wines is their expense; the single-vineyard barbarescos are released at more than $100 a bottle, about as much as grand cru burgundies and first-growth bordeaux. "The pursuit of perfection comes at a price," he explains wearily. Gaja's been hearing complaints about prices ever since his father first decided to charge twice as much as the other growers did. When Angelo first presented his wines in the United States, one wine critic at a gathering in Boston asked about prices. "When he heard them," Gaja recalls, "he says, this is ridiculous to charge for an Italian wine. He walks out in disgust." Gaja pauses. "That was before he tasted the wine. Then we became friends." Were there not so many reasons to like Gaja, I might suspect this critic of having befriended him in order to secure a line of supply for the wines. For, as you will discover, finding them is only slightly less difficult than keeping up with Gaja on a winding mountain road. But I'd take that drive again any day, if there was a bottle of his barbaresco waiting at my destination.

THE OENO FILE

'97 GAJA GAIA AND REY CHARDONNAY A distinctive styling of this ubiquitous grape, very ripe, like a Napa Chardonnay, racy like a top Puligny-Montrachet. Surprisingly, given Gaja's rep, the new oak is barely noticeable. Beautiful stuff. $110

'93 GAJA BAROLO SPERSS Old-style Barolos used to taste this good after 25 or 30 years—if one was very lucky. This will improve with age, but it's hard to resist now. Rich, ripe, and full of brooding dark fruit, along with that Nebbiolo signature dollop of asphalt. A great value by Gaja standards. $140

'95 GAJA BARBARESCO This is classic mid-weight Nebbiolo; rustic and gamy, like a great Nuits-St.-Georges. If the Barolo Sperss is velvety in texture, this is linen. Drink it with any kind of meat to take the edge off its youthful acidity. $150

'95 GAJA DARMAGI CABERNET Like his Chardonnay, Gaja's cab is unlike anyone else's. Riper than a Pauillac and earthier than a Napa cab. Lamborghini makes an SUV, and if it were bottled it would probably taste like this. Extremely well-balanced, though I might wait a couple of years to drink it. $150

'95 GAJA SITO MORESCO A delicious and (sort of) affordable introduction to the Gaja style: Nebbiolo and Barbera, mellowed out with a little merlot. $45

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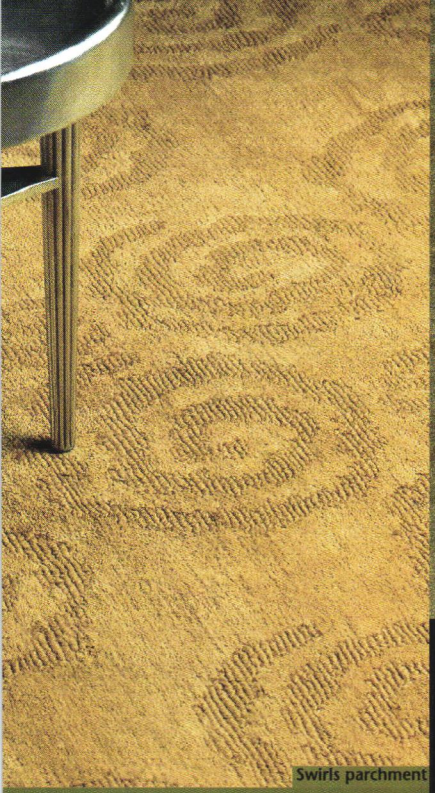
by véronique vienne

october 1925

IN THE BEGINNING, French Art Deco was not the streamlined style it would eventually become. *Au contraire*. It was a sumptuous and corpulent affair, as demonstrated by this modernist interior from the Paris International Arts Décoratifs exhibition, published in *House & Garden* in 1925. "The pieces look elephantine and out of proportion," the editors commented of the most talked-about display at the show. Created by Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, a master furniture designer and decorator, this domed grand salon looked like the dwelling of a new race of giants. A massive black lacquered cabinet was dwarfed by an even more colossal crystal chandelier. Soaring windows towered over lounge chairs and a sofa. And the ponderous floral motif of the silk-covered walls overwhelmed every other print and texture in the room.

In keeping with the general American opinion that the French modernist style was just a passing fad, *House & Garden* believed its readers were "not ready for such radical innovations." In fact, the U.S. did not even participate in the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, as the 1925 Paris fair was called in America. "We are so young that we are the most conservative nation on the face of the globe," the magazine noted. "We cling to what little traditions we possess." As it turned out, the novelty-hungry American public embraced the outlandish French Deco. Not long after the controversial show, Lord & Taylor and R. H. Macy were showcasing the works of Parisian decorators.

Ultimately, it was technology, not taste, that streamlined Art Deco. After 1925 metal was introduced as a structural material, making furniture lighter, jazzier, and more resistant to the damage of newly installed central-heating systems. As enticing ads for boilers and radiators filled the pages of magazines and newspapers, resilient chrome, sleek wrought iron, and gleaming glass replaced the fragile rosewood marquetry and ivory inlays of the more rotund modernist days.



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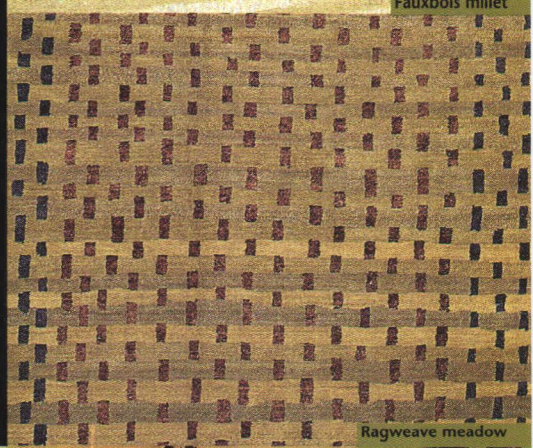

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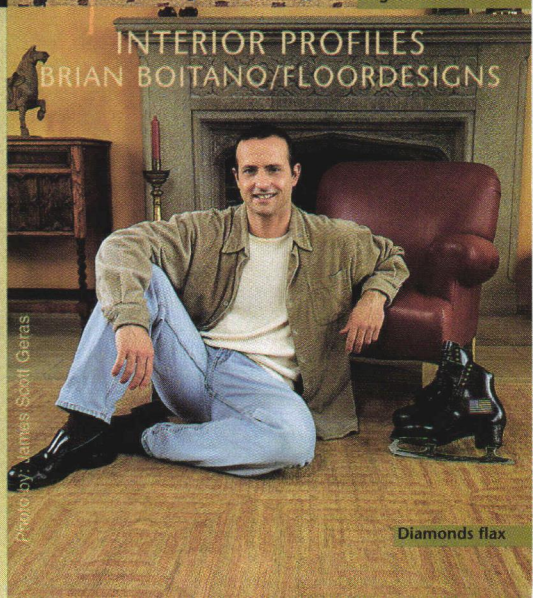
Brian Boitano, the Olympic Gold Medalist and TV star whose *A Holiday Skating Spectacular* airs Jan. 2, 2000 on NBC, is a stylist by nature. "My home mixes themes, woods, styles and periods" Boitano explained. "I like simple, understated design. When I saw the 'Diamond Flax' rug, I thought it worked with the Tuscan colors in my house."

Mark Kramer of Floordesigns, Inc. helped Brian choose coordinating rugs for his living room and adjoining game room. "Tufenkian's rugs capture a key element of the San Fransisco Style," Kramer observed, "that homey, yet eclectic look that Brian's house exemplifies."



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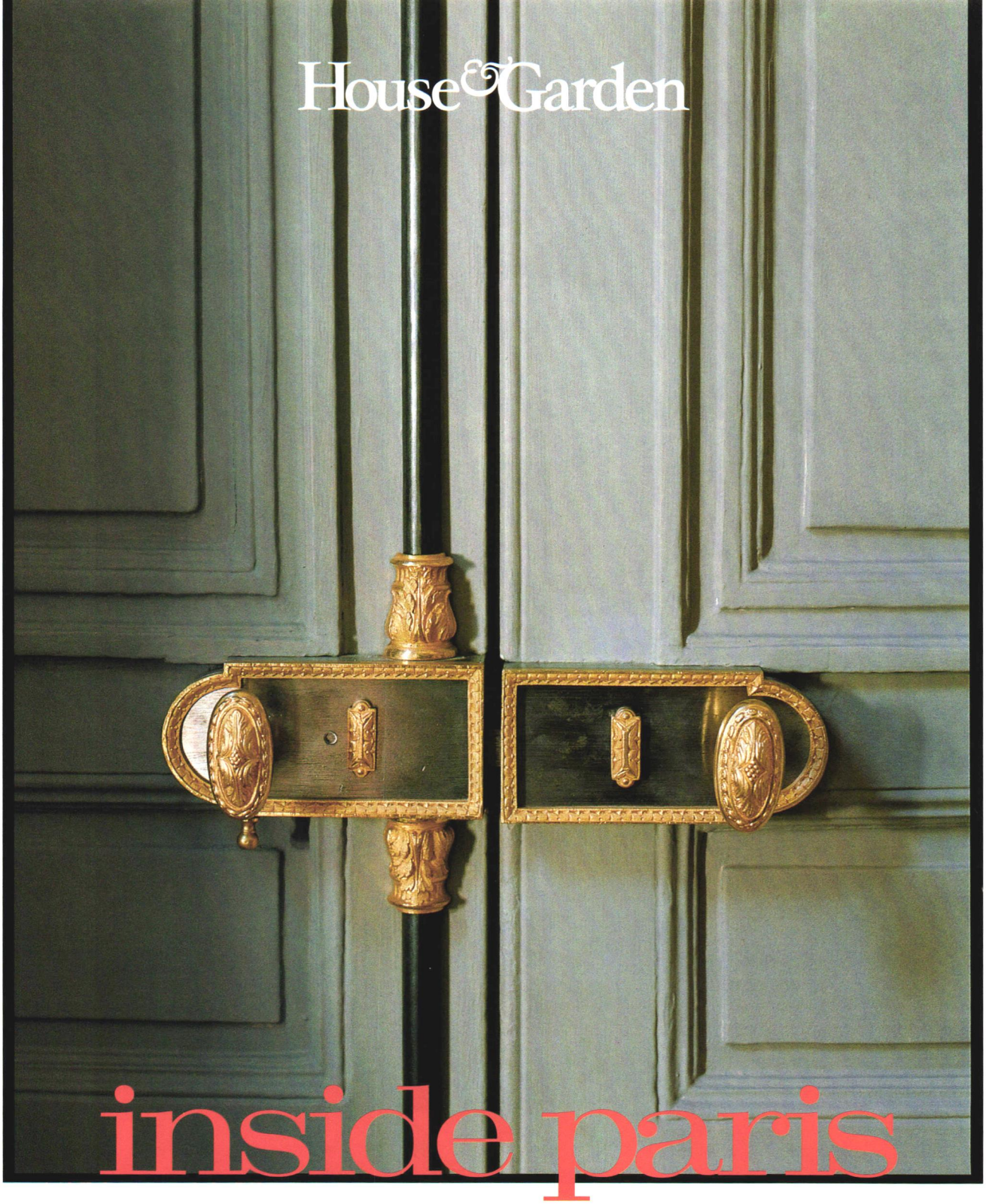


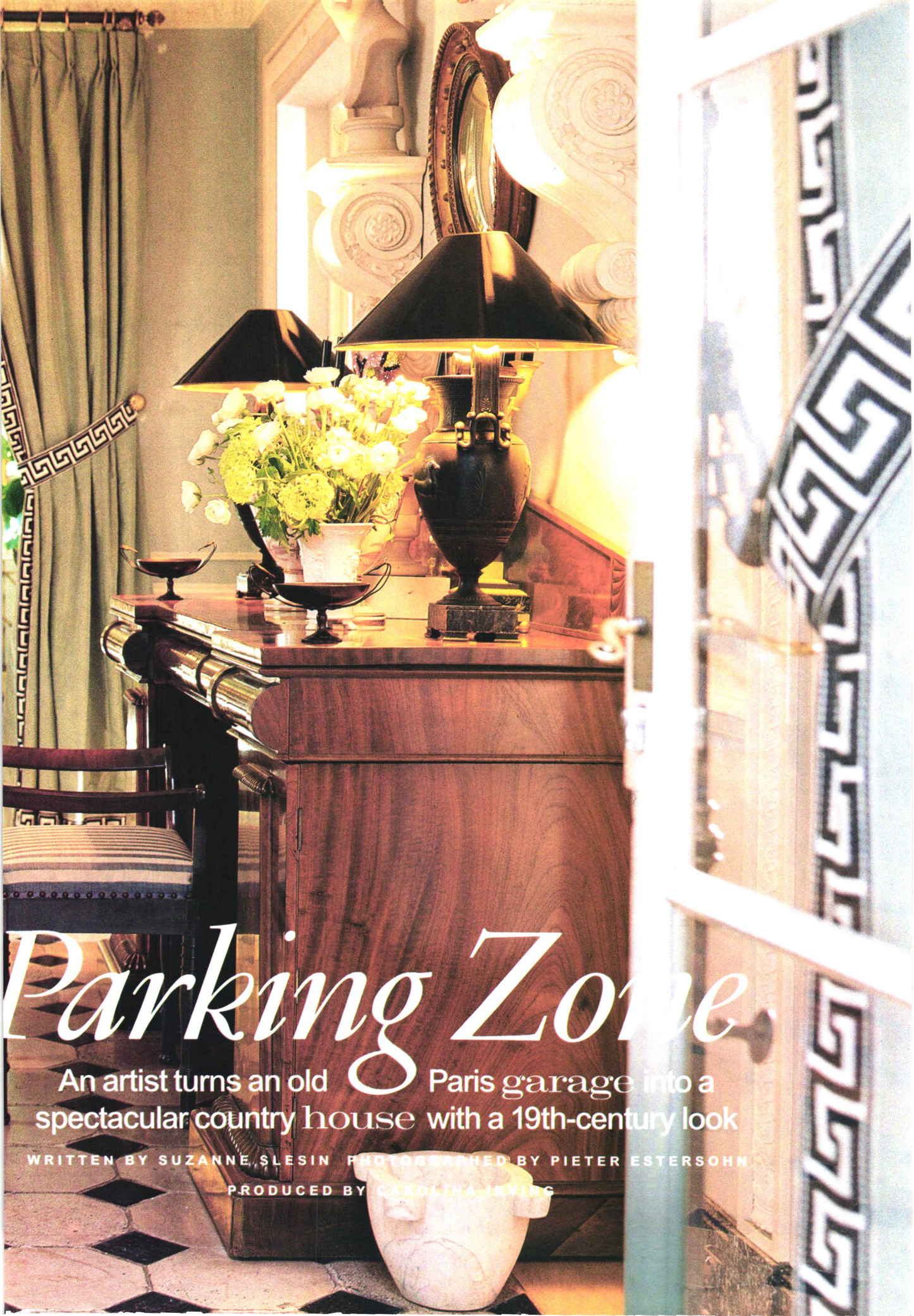
inside paris

first principle History may repeat itself elsewhere, but in the capital of France, it inspires, delights, and—dare we say it—illuminates the present. When Parisians redecorate or reconfigure interiors, they keep an eye on the past. Centuries of tradition, of proportion and light and detail, are reflected everywhere, from a garage made over as a seemingly 19th-century house to a modernist apartment.

For all the grand design of Paris, it's the small things—antique door fittings, the red top on a desk—that give the city its unique flavor.

A NEWLY LAID FLOOR of 18th-century black marble tiles and octagonal Seine stone, along with busts of Roman emperors and Greek gods, sets the scene in the foyer. Lamps made from French Empire urns stand on the 19th-century English sideboard. The gray taffeta draperies are by les Passementeries de l'Ile-de-France.

No



Parking Zone

An artist turns an old Paris garage into a spectacular country house with a 19th-century look

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIETER ESTERSOHN

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING

"I wanted a place a grandmother could have

IT WAS THE KIND of place that needed more than the proverbial imagination, hidden behind an imposing porte cochère on one of those oh-so-picturesque Left Bank streets that are dotted with perfectly atmospheric antiques shops. There it was, not a lovely little building begging for tender loving care but a garage and coal cellar. One visitor, who insists on remaining anonymous, was not only undeterred but enthusiastic. She bought the property on the spot. Some people were surprised that she didn't plan to keep it as a parking lot, but she had something completely different in mind. "I saw that I could turn it into a family home, so my children would stay around a little longer," she says. "I wanted a place that a grandmother could have lived in. Children need to have roots."

That meant taking on more than the usual renovation. Starting more or less with a blank slate, she created a series of high-ceilinged rooms that might have come right out of a nineteenth-century country house. Builders removed a ceiling from a back room and transformed it into an open, leafy, and unusually private courtyard. They punched out lots of old-fashioned

TALL WINDOWS OPEN onto a courtyard, adding to the old-world atmosphere of the living room, left. Faille, a woven silk fabric from Hamot at Madeleine Castaing, was used for the draperies, the sofa, and the base of the ottoman. A 17TH-CENTURY PAINTING after Guido Remi hangs above a Biedermeier sofa, below.

THE TWO TABLES emphasize the dining room's relaxed formality. Nineteenth-century French Gothic chairs, covered in horsehair from Rupert Cavendish, surround the Regency mahogany tables. The tablecloths are Italian damask from Tebro. THE CURTAINS are by Veraseta, with a Hamot fabric border from Madeleine Castaing.

windows to bring light into the graciously proportioned rooms. The owner calls the process, which most people would find challenging, "amusing." She was lucky with the furnishings, she says: "I had a lot of things, inherited some, and bought more."

SHE WAS DRAWN to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a period when rooms—especially in the great country houses—were formal yet relaxed, and always full of charm. She was also inspired by the work of legendary Parisian antiques dealer and decorator Madeleine Castaing, who died in 1992 at the age of 98. The owner often dropped into Mme. Castaing's salonlike shop on the rue Bonaparte at the corner of the rue Jacob (it's still there), hoping to see the dealer when she descended from her apartment above the store. "Madame Castaing was there every afternoon," she says. "She had the right eye at the right moment."

So does our Mme. Anonymous. Like Castaing, who could boast Jean Cocteau among her clients and was known for seeing the charm of a well-worn carpet, a dilapidated armchair, or a quirky set of chairs, she has the gift of mixing pieces from disparate periods: a Biedermeier sofa, Gothic-style chairs, a Louis XVI

ooms were formal yet relaxed, and full of charm

It is a house with rooms that reflect a place, a feeling, a memory of the past

BECAUSE THE SPACE was completely reconfigured, it was possible to carve out a wide hall on the second floor, this page, and line it with books. The maple-and-oak floor is in a herringbone pattern; the lights are from the 19th century. **IN THE STUDIO**, opposite page, the oak easel is by Sennelier. The blue taffeta used for the draperies, as well as the leopard-print fabric on the 19th-century mahogany Gothic chair, is from Lelièvre.

desk, a few classical busts. Textured fabrics that make you want to reach out and touch them are used on the inviting sofas and poufs, and to frame the tall windows with luscious, elegantly bordered draperies.

Castaing's signature color palette also makes an appearance. There is a lot of black, as well as the once-surprising combination of blue and green that Castaing described as "the sky and the greenery." The owner, who is an artist but not a professional decorator, is one of those women who know instinctively how to put a house together. When she needed a staircase, she sketched it and had it made. Each room reflects a place, a memory that she once experienced, then stored away. "I think I saw it in Sweden, or maybe elsewhere," she says of the two-color parquet living room floor that she stained by herself using decaffeinated coffee. "I thought it would look more interesting." So does the Etruscan-style painting on the walls of the small upstairs study she calls "the small boudoir." "I borrowed the idea from the Etruscan dressing room at Osterley," she says of Robert Adam's neoclassical villa in England. "I was so afraid to be in a brand-new place that I jumped on my brush and painted everything."

And, when asked about the large engraving hanging on the staircase, she says it illustrates the family tree on her mother's side from 900 to 1600. "There are three saints," she explains. "In France, that's pretty rare." With that tree and this house, there's no need to worry about her children's roots.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

MADELEINE CASTAING: 21 RUE BONAPARTE, 6e

Even though legendary antiques dealer Madeleine Castaing died seven years ago, the eccentric atmosphere still prevails in her shop. Decorators and collectors feel privileged to be able to buy some of the treasures with which Castaing had trouble parting.

A WHOOSH OF TAFFETA from Veraseta is a stylish accent in the study, opposite page, where the walls have been painted in motifs inspired by the Etruscan dressing room at Osterley Park House, in England. **A LOUIS XVI** desk, above, faces the sofa, which is covered in a fabric by Hamot for Madeleine Castaing. Two 18th-century bronze lamps frame a bust by Houdon. Oval frames hold 18th-century plaster and lava seals. Sources, see back of book.

I was so afraid of being in a brand-new place,
I jumped on my brush and painted everything"

cordial cool

At home in an old pharmaceutical works in the Marais, designer Didier Gomez crafts a wonderfully **embraceable modernism**

BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ

STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS

LIGHT FLOODS THE HIGH-CEILINGED, classically proportioned living room at the center of Didier Gomez's converted loft. Most of the furniture, including the Lenny sofa, the Wicky club chairs, the Prism coffee table, and the small Quartier Latin table, are his own designs for Ligne Roset. A plywood Eames chair sits to the right of an oval stool by Christian Liaigre. The piano is a Pleyel; the custom-made felt rug is also a Gomez design.

AS HE SITS IN THE SUNLIGHT by French windows that open onto his perfectly tended secret garden in the heart of Paris, Didier Gomez begins to reminisce. The Madrid-born, Paris-based interior and furniture designer recalls the time when he was eight years old and—shortly before his family moved to France—he, his parents, and his sister spent the night in the Alhambra, the fabled Moorish castle in Grenada that is now a museum. "We hid behind a bush until everyone had left," he explains, as if it was the most natural of experiences, adding with a sigh: "I'll never forget the poetry of that place, the smells, the water, the stars."

The way that cultures have blended in southern Spain left an indelible mark on Gomez, as a visit to his wonderfully appointed apartment in the Marais district confirms. There the atmosphere is at once stimulating and serene—the result, the self-taught Gomez believes, of the combined influences of "classic French interior design" and "all of France's architectural heritage," and the drama and romance of his Spanish heritage. "The mix of these things," he says, "explains how I work today."

Gomez never planned on being a designer. As a young man, he moved to Germany to study music and train as an opera singer. Soon, he says, "I realized it was not for me." In 1978 he opened First Time, a modern-furniture store in Paris. Eight years later, he sold the shop and opened his own design office. After making his name with store and office designs for Yves St. Laurent and Pierre Bergé, in 1991 Gomez and architect Jean-Jacques Ory established a firm that now has 70 employees. Their projects have ranged from the Carrousel du Louvre shop complex to offices for Louis Vuitton, new stores for Celine and Lanvin, and the renovation of the 600 offices for the staff of French president Jacques Chirac. "We design furniture, hardware, lighting—everything," says Gomez, who has also created furniture for Ligne Roset, Artelano, The Conran Shop, and Sentou Galerie.

Given that roster of clients, it's no wonder Gomez needs a nice, calm place to come home to. He feels he was lucky to stumble onto the high-ceilinged suite of rooms he occupies in the 4th arrondissement. "It was a pharmaceutical factory when I first saw it, with machines everywhere," Gomez remembers.

A VIEW FROM ONE ROOM to another lends a sense of ceremony to the space. The living room, above, is adjacent to the study, opposite page, where a monumental work by Emile Baer hangs above a Nomad sofa, designed by Gomez for Ligne Roset. The two small tables in front of the sofa are African artifacts from the 1930s. The chair is a vintage design by Jean Prouvé. The tables on either side of the sofa are by Jean-Michel Frank. **NEXT TO THE STUDY'S WINDOW**, right, Gomez has placed one of his favorite pieces, a Prouvé desk. Its red color is a surprising note in the monochrome interior.

He kept the original layout of the space but had the roof removed from the back room and planted a garden there. "One of my great joys has been seeing everything grow," he says.

Gomez particularly likes the lack of a central corridor and the way the rooms open directly onto each other. "Because we are in a historic seventeenth-century neighborhood, I wanted this to be like a traditional French apartment, with perspectives from one room to another, and spectacular doors," he says.

The quiet, almost ceremonial spaces with their unadorned walls hark back to a classical past. But at the same time, Gomez's use of wenge wood for the floor-to-ceiling doors and his deft mix of Asian and African pieces with modern furnishings—his own designs coupled with vintage pieces by André Arbus, Jean Prouvé, Charles Eames, and Jean-Michel Frank—set the interior emphatically in the modern idiom.

Large charcoal drawings from the 1930s, wooden columns, and a Moroccan lighting fixture coexist in the long, narrow dining room that, like the living room and master bedroom, overlook the garden. "I wanted the living room to be very serene, with white walls and little color," says Gomez, "so that the light blue walls of the dining room come as a surprise." There's another surprise in the darker, more dramatic study. Tucked away in the corner is one of Gomez's favorite pieces, a red-topped Prouvé desk. "It's a real rupture," the designer says of the bright hue, "but I don't care. I love it so much. Not everything has to go with everything."

On the contrary. "Being modern today is not having a total look," he says. "No one can live in a space capsule. People need traces of the past and a relationship with different cultures. There are things here that normally would not be together. It's so contradictory. I like that."

So do we.

THE SIMPLE YET FUNCTIONAL galley kitchen, above, has a poured-concrete floor. The overhead cabinets are from Ikea, and chairs from Ecart stand around the table, designed specially for the room by Gomez. **FLOOR-TO-CEILING** wenge-wood doors, opposite page, emphasize the classic 18th-century proportions of the space. In the dining room, chairs from Bonacina are pulled up to a table Gomez designed for Ligne Roset. The metal chandelier is an antique from Morocco; the four drawings, which date from 1936, are by Georges Bordes and were found in a Paris antiques shop. The flooring is bleached oak. Both the living room and dining room open directly onto the garden. **THE ARMCHAIR**, left, is a Gomez design for Ligne Roset.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

LIGNE ROSET: 25 RUE DU FAUBOURG SAINT ANTOINE, 11e

From the Carrousel du Louvre to the fashion boutiques that he is designing for Celine, Didier Gomez, left—along with his partner, architect Jean-Jacques Ory—is forging an international reputation. His furniture designs are already modern classics. Many of the pieces in his apartment can be seen at Ligne Roset. Artelano, at 54 rue de Bourgogne in the 7th arrondissement, also carries Gomez's designs. At year's end his new accessories will be available at Sentou Galerie, 24 rue du Pont Louis Philippe in the 4th arrondissement.

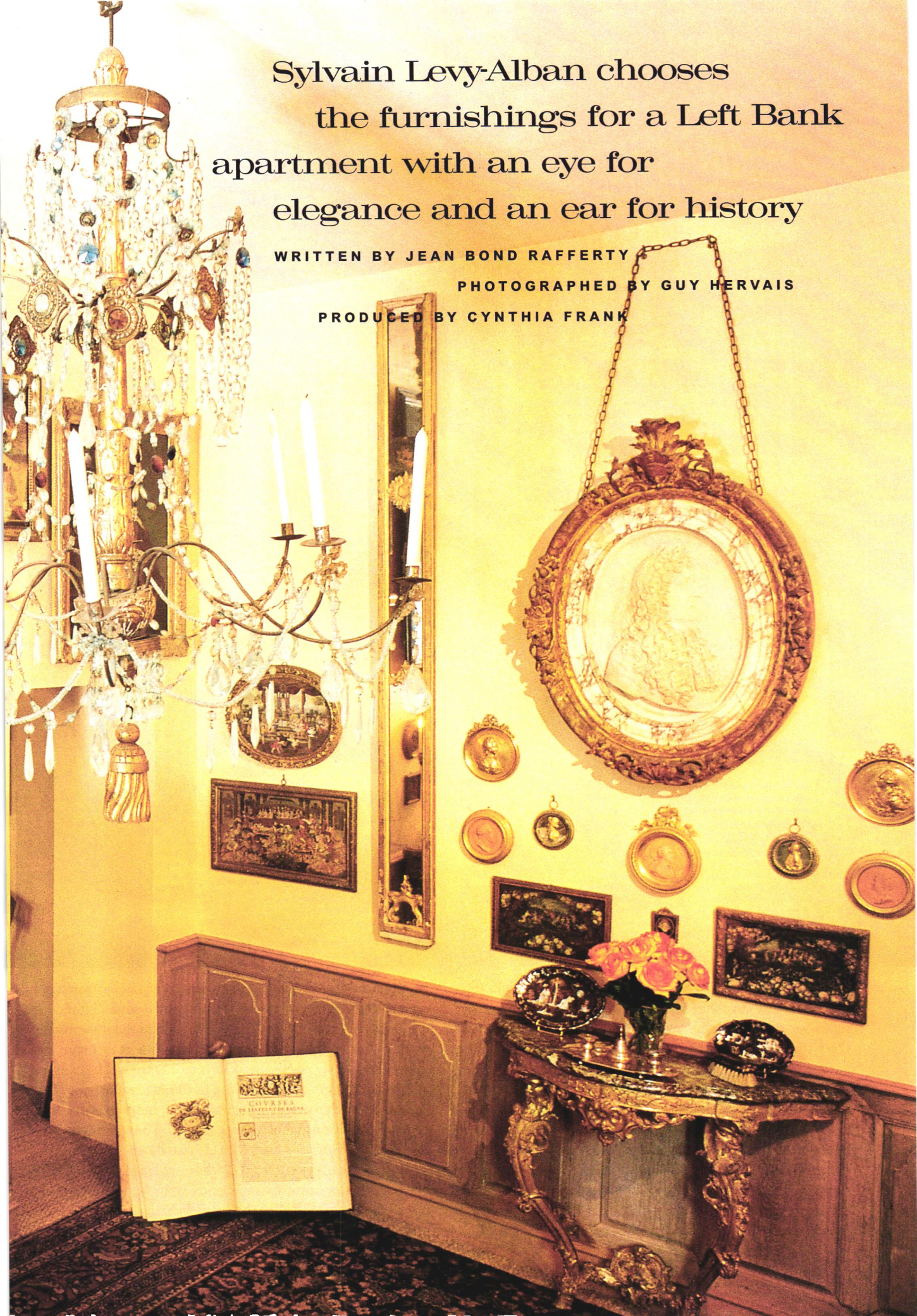
"Being modern today is not having a total look. Not everything has to go with everything"

—Didier Gomez

THE FLOORS AND DOORS of the master bedroom, this page, and the walls and cabinets of the bathroom, opposite page, are richly hued wenge wood, which contrasts beautifully with the light tones in other rooms. Windows were punched into the wall to open the bedroom to the garden. The wool bedcover is from Bisson Brunel; the chair is an 1880 Viennese design. **A NOGUCHI LAMP** hangs in the bathroom. The plumbing fixtures are from the Conran Shop, Paris. Sources, see back of book.

telling tales

THE HISTORY OF SEVERAL PERIODS speaks eloquently in the drawing room. The gilt-wood and colored-crystal chandelier is Genoese, c. 1780. The large painting is a 17th-century depiction of David and Goliath by a French artist working in Genoa. On either side of the painting are early-17th-century pieces from the workshop of Simon Vouet. The lit portrait, above, is a 17th-century depiction of a lady of the court of Marie de Medici. The large marble relief to the far right is of Louis XIV, by Girardon.

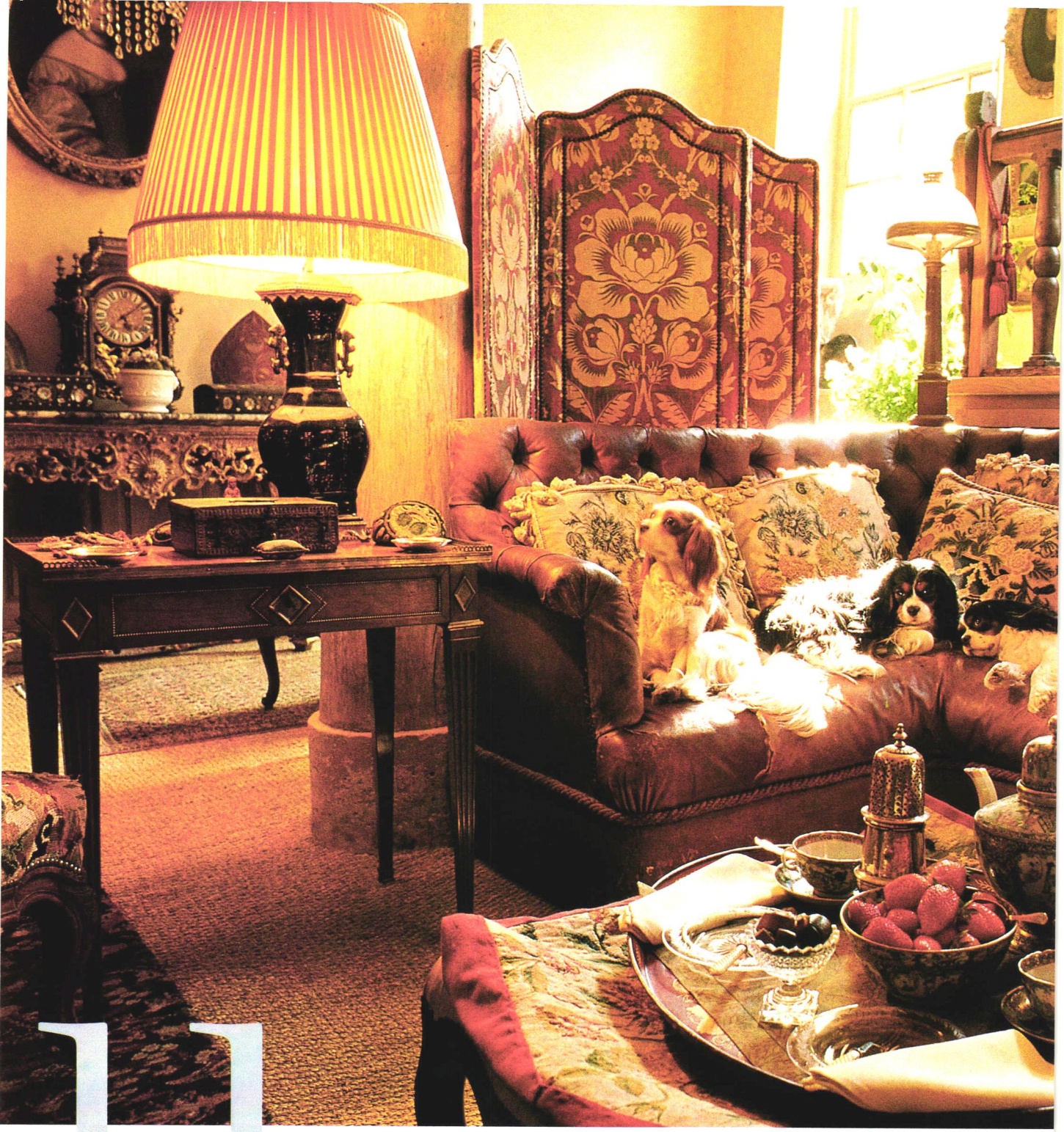


Sylvain Levy-Alban chooses the furnishings for a Left Bank apartment with an eye for elegance and an ear for history

WRITTEN BY JEAN BOND RAFFERTY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GUY HERVAIS

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

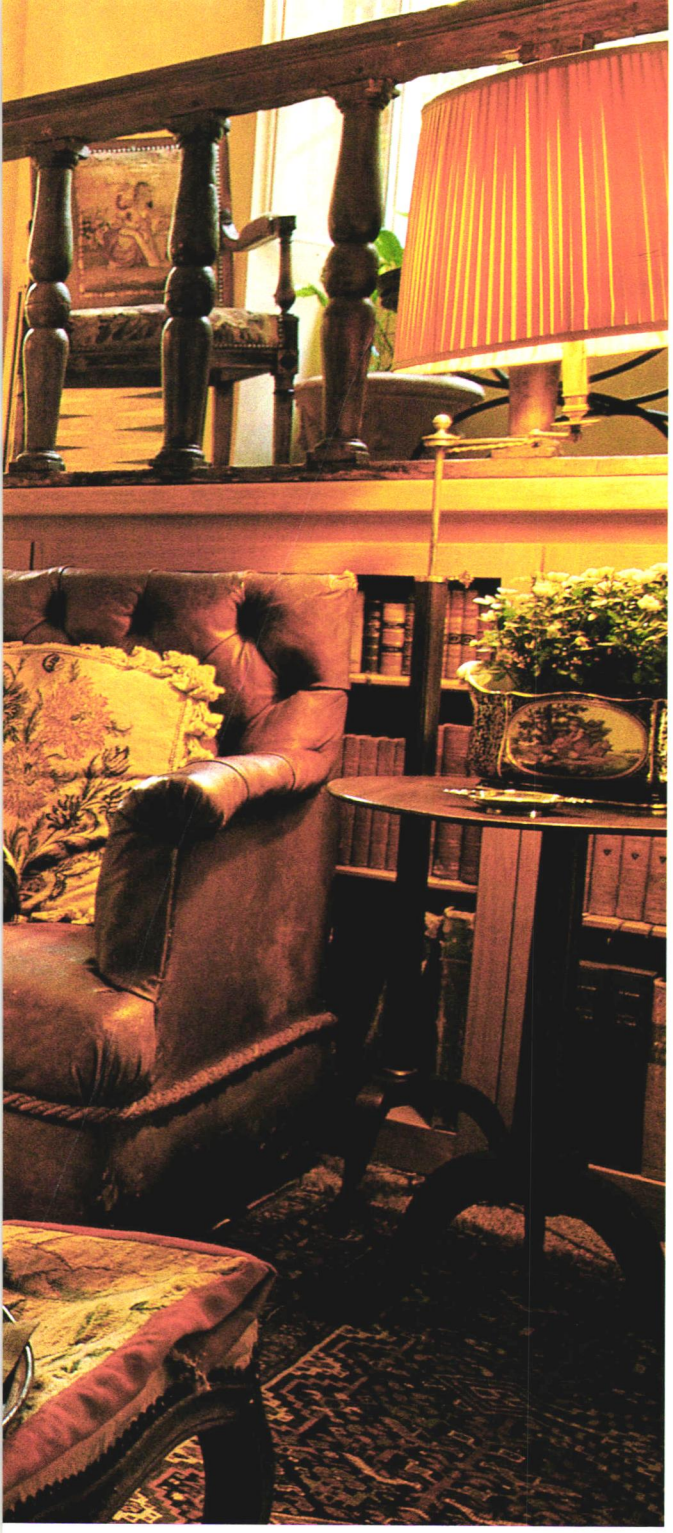


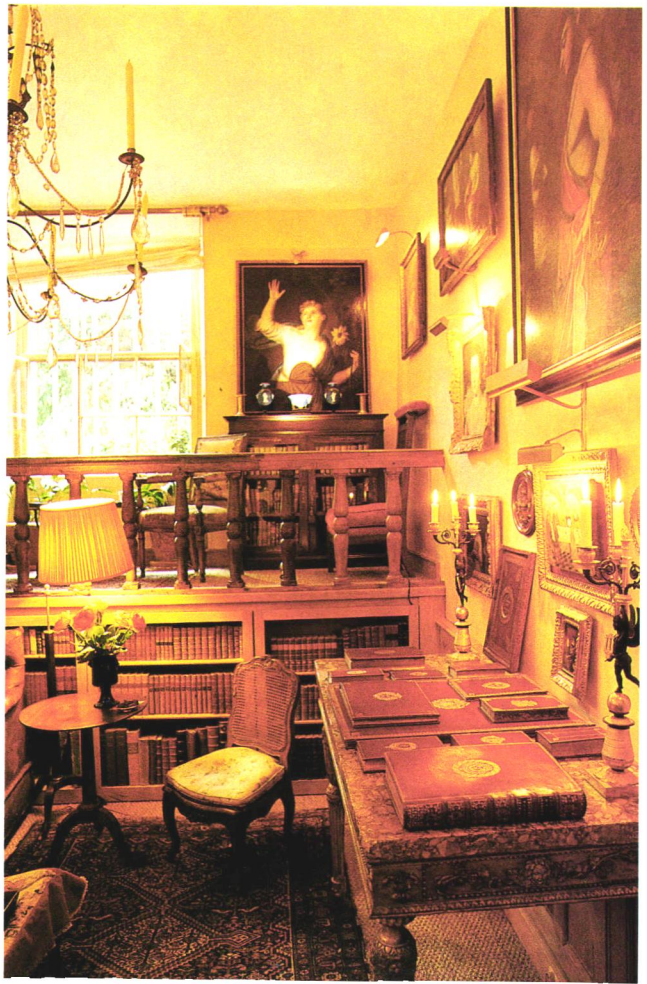
UNDER THE graceful branches of four paulownia trees, Paris's Place de Furstenberg basks in the bucolic calm of a peaceful village square. Not far away, overlooking a luxuriant garden from the apartment he has decorated for a client, Left Bank antiques dealer Sylvain Levy-Alban muses on the secret pleasures of St.-Germain-des-Prés. "You wouldn't guess you were in the heart of Paris. This feels just like a country house."

Levy-Alban was granted carte blanche by his client "to decorate with the same things I would have in my own home." So it's no surprise to find that these interiors exude the charm of the rooms in his rue de Beaune shop, a few streets away. The favored hunting ground of decorators such as Howard Slatkin, Brian McCarthy, Thomas Jayne, and Bruce Gregga, and a host of private American clients, the shop proclaims Levy-Alban's preference for *objets de charme*—seventeenth- and eighteenth-century furniture from France and Italy—rather than "important" paintings or "important" furniture. His style is intimate, not intimidating. "My pieces always have stories to tell," he explains.

And he delights in telling them. In the apartment, story lines are plotted with panache: One walks from room to room, from enchanting tableau to enchanting tableau. The owner's taste for the "fete and fancy of Venice" is celebrated by a Venetian room with an eighteenth-century red, white, and green glass chandelier, paintings of carnival scenes, and two harlequin masks from the fabled Beistegui ball at the Palais Labia.

In the salon, two striking Piedmontese chandeliers captivate





THE INTIMACY OF LEVY-ALBAN'S STYLE is reflected in the warmth of the drawing room, above. The 19th-century English sofa belonged to Madeleine Castaing. The needlepoint pillows are from the Chelsea Textile Company, London. The red tole serving tray is Directoire. The silk-damask screen behind the sofa is from Lyons, c. 1770. **THE LARGE CAMEO PORTRAIT**, above right, is of Marie Le Bailleul, the marquise d'Huxelles. A 17th-century boulle clock sits on a Louis XIV gilt-wood console table with marble top. On either side of the clock are 17th-century Italian boxes with gold-thread embroidery that bear the coat of arms of a cardinal. **ANOTHER ANGLE** of the drawing room, right, shows Empire gilt-bronze candlesticks in the form of winged cherubs. The books are French Royal with red leather bindings.

THE DINING ROOM is both formal and personal. The plates are 18th-century Sèvres, from the collection of Prince Guy de Polignac. The large tumblers were made specially by Pauly & Co., Venice, to match the Sèvres service. The wine glasses are 18th-century, from Burgundy. The saltcellars are also from the Polignac service and the ivory pepper mills are late Victorian/Edwardian. The framed floral panels of painted silk are 18th-century Chinese.

"You wouldn't guess you were in the heart of Paris. This feels just like a country house"—Sylvain Levy-Alban

THE PRIVATE ROOMS such as the bedroom, above, strike a more serene note than the public ones. A headboard and footboard of a Louis XVI caned bed have been joined to create the headboard. A Louis XV Provençal faux-marble cabaret table sits on a 19th-century Tibetan rug. The dressing screen is contemporary. IN THE MUSIC ROOM, left, the desk is 18th-century Italian. The candlesticks were 18th-century Venetian painted-wood wig stands. LEVY-ALBAN in his element, opposite. Sources, see back of book.

with tales of an eighteenth-century ballroom; a Louis XIV gilt-wood console whispers of the Palais Rose. A table graced the pink-marble palace built on the Avenue Foch for Count Boni de Castellane with the fortune of his American heiress wife, Anna Gould. During the 1950s, two deep red eighteenth-century marble columns graced the stairway of fabulous party-giver and antiques collector Arturo Lopez Wilshaw.

As we relax in the salon, Levy-Alban explains his decorating philosophy. "Things are chosen to enhance daily life and be comfortable to live with," he declares, "and there is also a certain research behind their historical effect."

Serendipity—finding the rare 12-foot boiseries for the bedroom in an eighteenth-century château in Toulouse—and an insouciant attitude to mixing periods give Levy-Alban's decorative scenarios a special magnetism. The observer is avid for the next tantalizing installment.

JEAN BOND RAFFERTY *lives in Paris and writes frequently for this magazine on European design and decorating.*

"Things are chosen to enhance daily life and be comfortable to live with"—**Sylvain Levy-Alban**

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

GALERIE LEVY-ALBAN: 14 RUE DE BEAUNE, 7e

You can read a history of European design through the 17th- and 18th-century French and Italian *objets de charme* in Levy-Alban's shop, and he can supply anecdotes about them to bring them to life.

shopping PARIS!

En garde, design enthusiasts! *House & Garden* presents a roundup of the chicest, most au courant shops in the City of Light—featuring a special pullout map and store guide

PRODUCED BY SUZANNE SLESIN AND JOYCE BAUTISTA

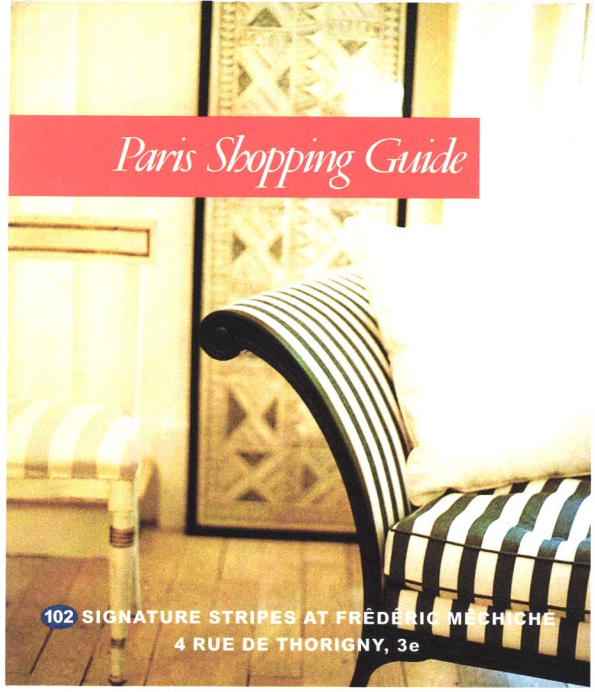
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JEAN-YVES SALABAJ

IN THE BUSTLING MARAIS neighborhood in central Paris, there are stores to suit all tastes—from Art Deco shops like 109 Hier pour Demain, this page, to trendy designer boutiques.

BIENVENUE!

FEW PEOPLE are as passionate about shopping as design editors. So we asked our in-house Francophiles—Suzanne Slesin, Carolina Irving, Cynthia Frank, Lora Zarubin, and Brooke Stoddard—to let us in on their favorite Paris stores, from classic to cutting edge. The Paris shopping scene has never been so effervescent and eclectic. The historic Marais district grows livelier by the day; the Place de la Bastille is suddenly the hippest area in town; and a global breeze wafts through some of the most innovative shops, filled with wares from Morocco and Mozambique, India and China. We couldn't include everything we liked, but everything we included, we love.

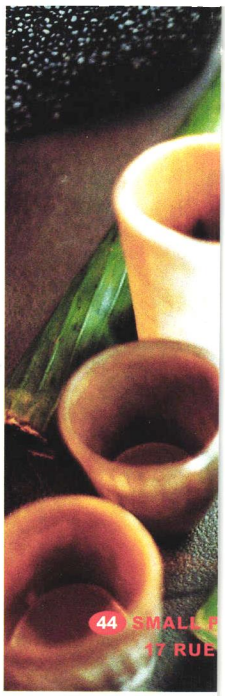
Paris Shopping Guide



102 SIGNATURE STRIPES AT FRÉDÉRIC MÉCHICHÉ
4 RUE DE THORIGNY, 3e

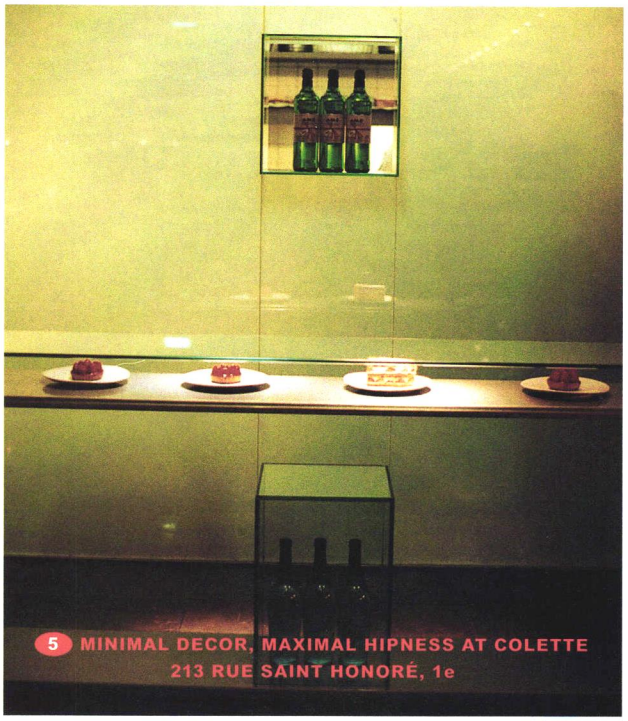
For information on these stores, look for the corresponding reference number on the pullout map and guide

32 A 1950S QUINET LAMP FROM ALEXANDRE BIAGGI
14 RUE DE SEINE, 6e

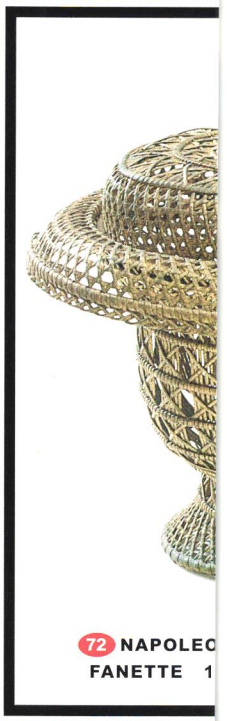


44 SMALL P
17 RUE

41 TABLECLOTH AND BOWL FROM KIM & GARO
7 RUE DES QUATRE-VENTS, 6e

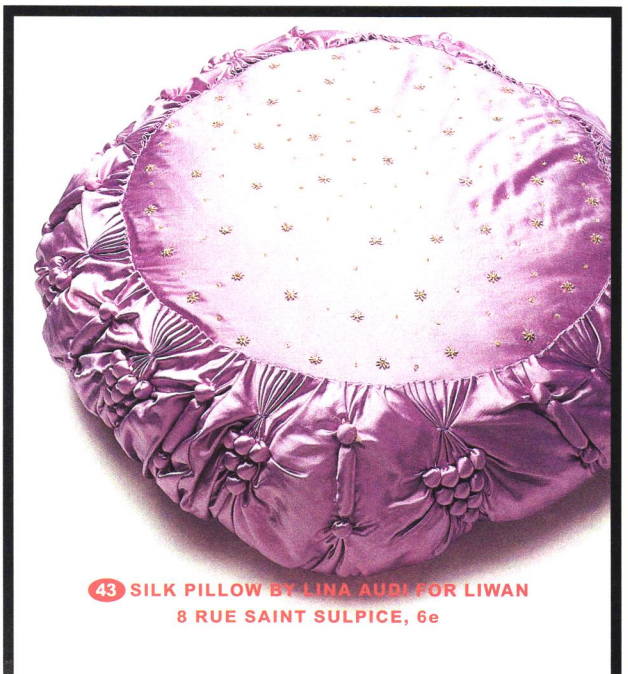


5 MINIMAL DECOR, MAXIMAL HIPNESS AT COLETTE
213 RUE SAINT HONORÉ, 1e



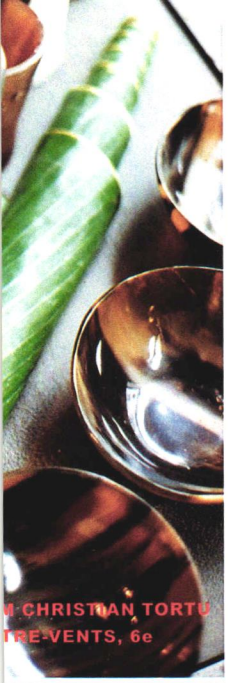
72 NAPOLEO
FANETTE 1

97 SLEEK FURNITURE BY CHRISTOPHE DELCO
76 BIS RUE VIEILLE-DU-TEMPLE, 3e
Buyer: Kristele Piard

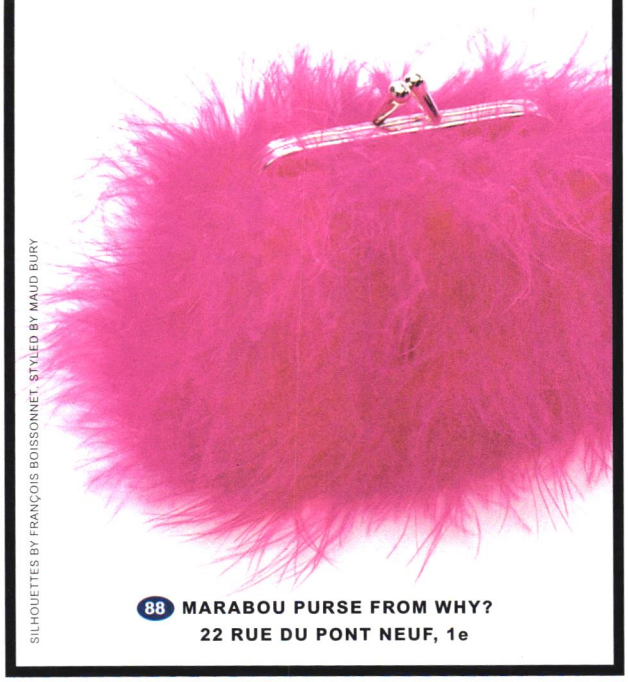


43 SILK PILLOW BY LINA AUDI FOR LIWAN
8 RUE SAINT SULPICE, 6e

115 IRON SIDE CH
29 RUE DU FAUB

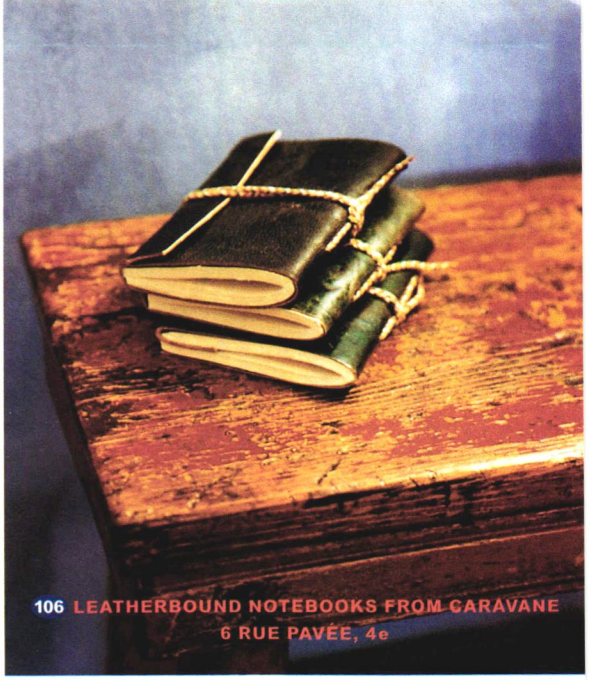


M CHRISTIAN TORTU
TRE-VENTS, 6e



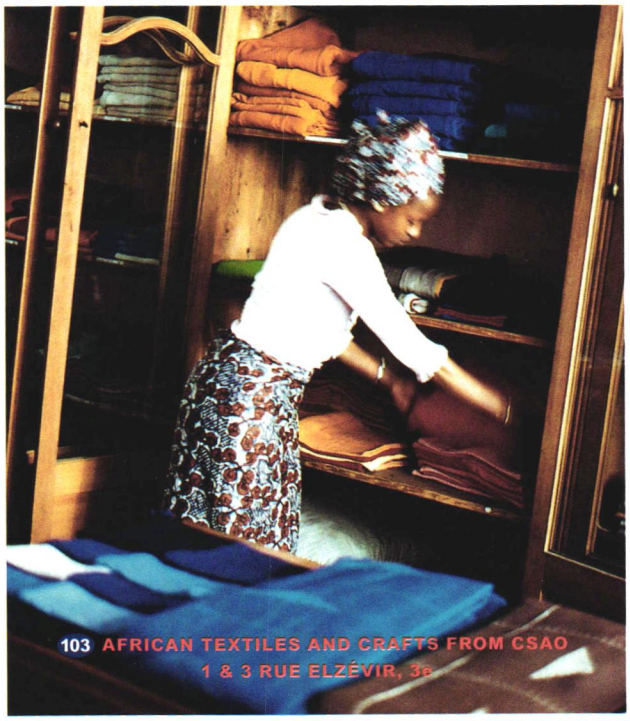
SILHOUETTES BY FRANÇOIS BOISSONNET. STYLED BY MAUD BURY

88 MARABOU PURSE FROM WHY?
22 RUE DU PONT NEUF, 1e



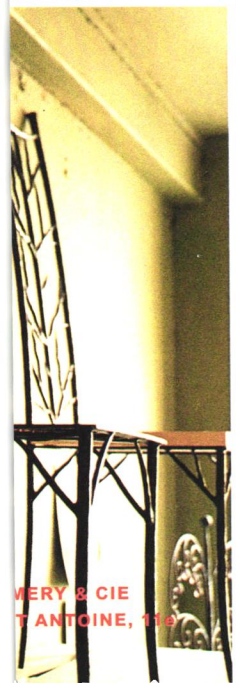
106 LEATHERBOUND NOTEBOOKS FROM CARAVANE
6 RUE PAVÉE, 4e

.E BASKET FROM
ENÇON, 15e

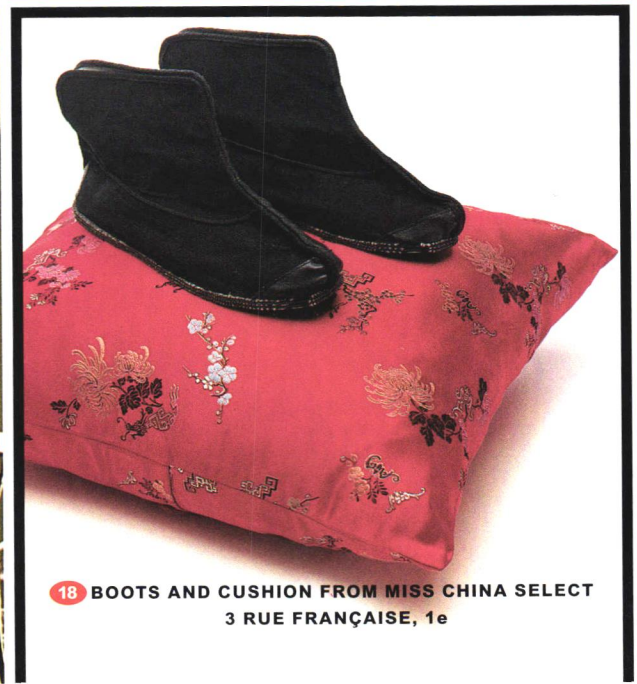


103 AFRICAN TEXTILES AND CRAFTS FROM CSAO
1 & 3 RUE ELZÉVIR, 3e

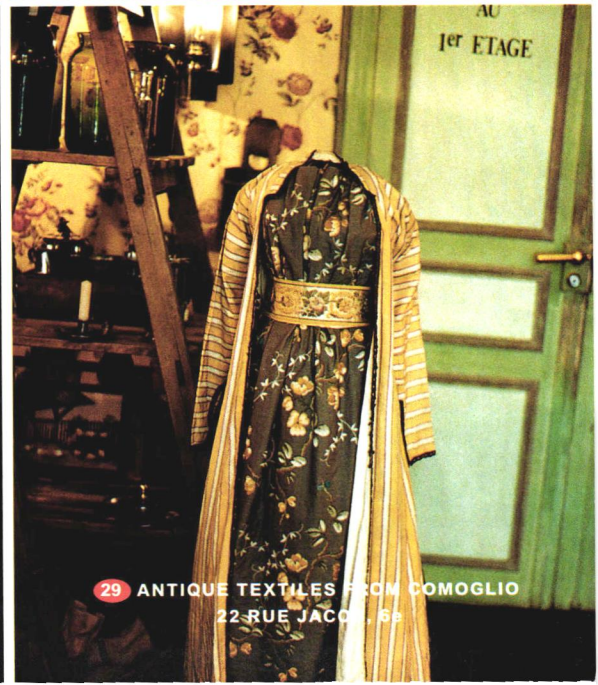
63 YING ARMCHAIR BY HUGUES CHEVALIER
17 RUE DU CHERCHE-MIDI, 6e



VERY & CIE
T ANTOINE, 11e



18 BOOTS AND CUSHION FROM MISS CHINA SELECT
3 RUE FRANÇAISE, 1e



29 ANTIQUE TEXTILES FROM COMOGLIO
22 RUE JACO , 6e

FAMILY PIECES, ESPECIALLY those from the collection of Daisy Fellowes, give the apartment historical depth. Amaury and Flore de la Moussaye sit on a Louis XV sofa covered in a striped silk made for Daisy Fellowes in 1936. The Louis XV *saut-de-lit* armchair, with fabric from the 1940s, was also hers. The portrait of the Marquise de Broglie, by Largillière, was one of several paintings inherited from the redoubtable Daisy. The apartment looks out onto a private garden, opposite page.

living memories

The spirited use of family antiques gives the Paris apartment of Flore and Amaury de la Moussaye a youthful elegance

When Amaury and Flore de la Moussaye moved into an eighteenth-century building in St.-Germain-des-Prés, their ground-floor and garden level duplex apartment was already in excellent shape. Part of a historic eighteenth-century building, the stately rooms had long been a residence of foreign ambassadors, and the couple thought briefly about leaving the place pretty much as they found it. "We started by saying we'd do nothing," Amaury says with a laugh, "but ended up doing everything. We decided to give it a personal touch."

Prior to their arrival in France, Amaury and Flore had been living in Chad, where Amaury built a medical center in memory of his great-aunt Comtesse Alexandre de Casteja. When it became too dangerous to stay on, they decided to go to Paris. They were looking for something small on the Right Bank, but the Left Bank duplex, with its 14-foot ceilings and private garden, just steps from the Seine proved irresistible.

Faced with a grand enfilade of rooms, most Americans would call in a decorator, but the French are more likely to look to their heritage for inspiration. Flore, 30, the daughter of the Marquis de Brantes and his American-born marquise, Sue, who had the idea for the chic Château de Cheverny country auctions, was raised at Le Fresne, the family château in the Loire Valley. After studying art history, Flore did stints at Sotheby's in London and Christie's in New York. Since her return to France, she and former auctioneer Xavier Wattebled have opened an antiques gallery a few streets from her apartment, on the rue de Beaune. She describes the gallery as specializing in "refreshingly different things not seen on

WRITTEN BY JEAN BOND RAFFERTY PHOTOGRAPHED BY PASCAL CHEVALLIER

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

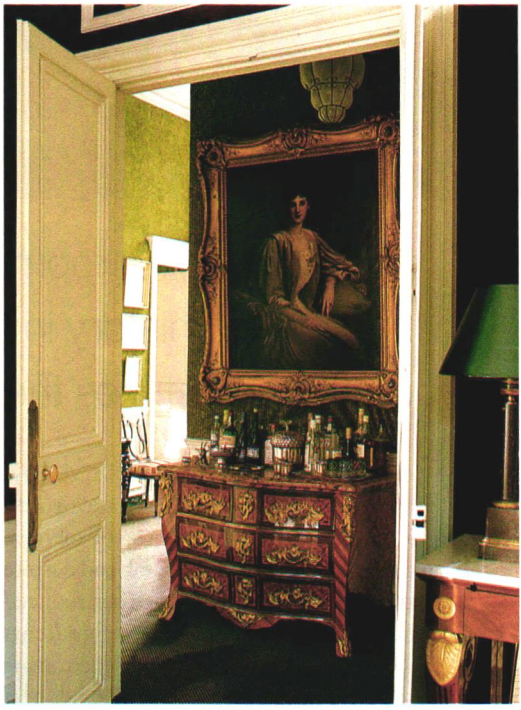
"We decided to put some black in the beige and repaint the boiseries ourselves"—Amaury de la Moussaye

the market before, bought mainly from estates, and with a reliable provenance and not costing outrageous prices." In the months since its opening, the gallery has become a favorite source for any number of clever young antiques dealers and decorators from all over the map.

Amaury, 35, whose father is a count, was brought up in Switzerland, where he early developed a passion for eighteenth-century objects. He began collecting seriously at age 18, and by the time he was 27, he had put together a connoisseur's collection of pendulum clocks, sconces, barometers, bronzes, and andirons to add to his trove of family furniture.

Using pieces from both families, the couple found their way to a style very much their own. "In France, we like to play at being our own decorators," Flore

THE DEEP GRAY TONES of the boiseries, left, an unconventional color by French standards, are effective in setting off the restored door fittings in the living room. A 17th-century boulle clock rests on an 18th-century faux-marble mantle with its original mirror. The fire screen is mid-18th-century French. A PORTRAIT OF Flore's ancestor, Marguerite Schneider, below, hangs over an 18th-century commode.



It's in the dining room that the role of family history in the couple's decorating strikes the visitor with most force

confides. "In my family, we've just evolved around the family furniture." Although Amaury had to sell several things to finance the hospital, and despite the fact that a burglary further reduced his store of antiques, the ingredients were available for their decorating scenario. "Flore's role was to do her best with what's left," Amaury says. "It wasn't easy, and she's done a great job."

With outstanding ancestral portraits by such painters as Nattier and Largillière and an exuberantly eclectic selection of eighteenth-century antiques, Flore has endowed the apartment with the breezy elegance, comfort, and allure characteristic of her shop. Its feel is very much the opposite of the stiff, pompous decor one might expect to find in a classified eighteenth-century landmark. Exceptional objects, like a Louis XIV boulle marquetry clock on the mantel, offer a stable backdrop to compositions of eccentric charm: in front of the fireplace, a vintage Hermès leather pig cozies up to an antique English inkstand made of three-pronged horns and an exquisite, tiny eighteenth-century *saut de lit*—a favorite spot for their cocker spaniel, Hoopla.

Flore and Amaury began the transformation of their place by painting the boiseries. "We wanted something

different, not too classic," Flore explains. They decided on beige, but the result was a disaster. "So awful—we said any other color will do," Amaury recalls. "We were in a hurry; the furniture was arriving two days later. We decided to put some black in the beige and repaint the boiseries ourselves. Whatever came out would be it."

The deep gray tones that resulted are now one of Amaury's favorite things about the apartment. "I've seen that gray in Colonial houses in America and in houses in England, but it's very unusual in France," he says. And, it turns out, controversial. "People either love it or hate it," says Flore.

Amaury adds, "Most French people are surprised, because they think eighteenth-century boiseries should be light gray or white and gold." They both agree that the darker gray sets off another

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND'S portrait of Daisy Fellowes, far left, reigns in the dining room. THE DINING TABLE and leather-covered Louis XVI dining chairs, above, are from the Daisy Fellowes collection. The 19th-century candleholders on the mantle are German gilt with porcelain flowers, from the Gallery Flore. The bronze bust is a 19th-century copy of *Pourquoi naitre esclave*, by Carpeaux. The fabric on the walls is from Sahco Hesslein, Paris.

THE SUNNY YELLOW STUDY, above, is both fresh and traditional. The 19th-century English partners' desk is from Daisy Fellowes. The curtains are Braquenié. IN THE GALLERY FLORE, opposite page, a Coromandel cabinet rests on a gilt-wood stand. Flore sits on a 19th-century English chair with 18th-century engravings behind her. Sources, see back of book.

one of their triumphs, the restoration of the original door fittings to their former glory.

The sunny yellow study with multicolored Tassinari & Chatel curtains and the dining room's plum-colored walls were also carefully considered choices. "Anything but dining-room red," Flore emphasizes.

It's in the dining room that the role of family history in Flore and Amaury's decorating strikes the visitor with most force. Graham Sutherland's arresting portrait of Daisy (the Honorable Mrs. Reginald) Fellowes is an imposing presence in the room. Often called the best-dressed woman in the world during the 1930s, Daisy was Amaury's great-grandmother, and most of their furniture comes from her via her daughter, Emmeline de Casteja, Amaury's great-aunt and godmother.

DAISY WAS ALSO renowned for her decorative flair. She was the first to launch the mode for jungle prints, and the presence of her leopard-patterned silk-velvet sofa made by decorator Georges Geffroy in the salon testifies to her prescience. "Her house was unique: extremely eclectic, with a lot of masterpieces," affirms Amaury. "What we miss here are the masterpieces—for example, Reynolds's only portrait of a black slave, now in the de Menil collection in Houston, and Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington's chef, now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum collection at the Villa Hermosa in Madrid. She had an amazing eye."

Daisy also had a penchant for kitsch, which the de la Moussayes enthusiastically share. Hidden at the end of a long corridor, the guest room boasts a great deal of it, much of it originally Daisy's: a pair of blackamoors with curly angelic wigs, a lithograph of a sphinx, a candle in the shape of a foot, and a lot of shocking pink, a color Schiaparelli was said to have invented for Daisy. While the young couple regale their visitor with stories about Daisy Fellowes—her talent, her accomplishments, and her escapades—it becomes apparent that the insouciant stylishness of their apartment is the best possible tribute to her.

JEAN BOND RAFFERTY *lives in Paris and writes frequently on design and decorating.*

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

GALERIE FLORE: 6 RUE DE BEAUNE, 7e

The gallery Flore runs with her partner, Xavier Wattebled, specializes in "refreshingly different things not seen on the market before." Most are bought from estates and are not, she says, outrageously expensive. The originality of the objects in the Galerie Flore, has made the shop a popular source, especially among young antiques dealers and decorators.

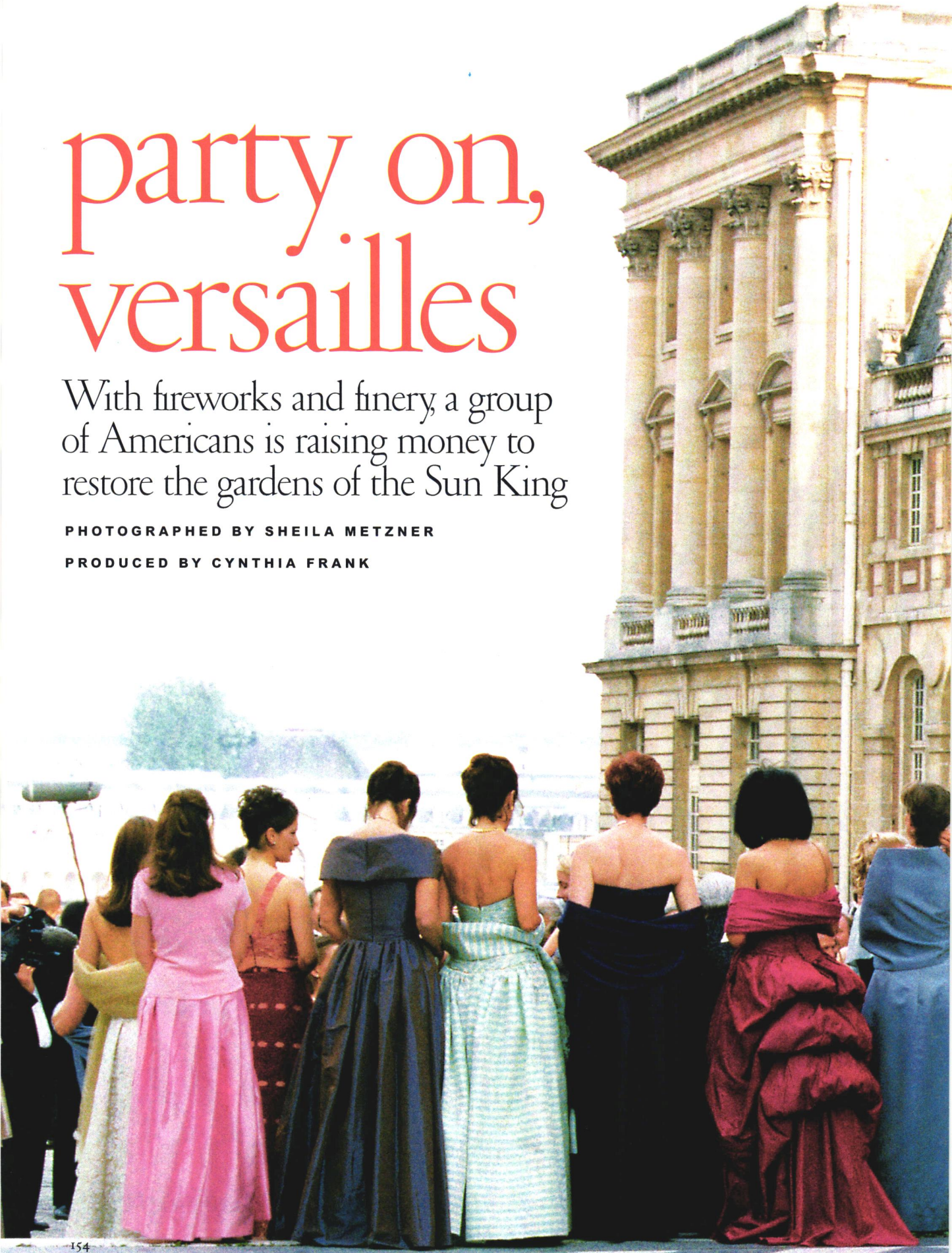
"In France, we like to play at being our own decorators" —**Flore de la Moussaye**

party on, versailles

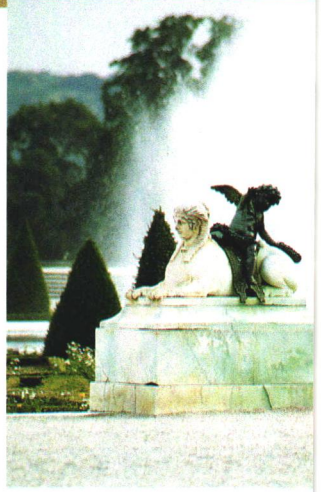
With fireworks and finery, a group of Americans is raising money to restore the gardens of the Sun King

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHEILA METZNER

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

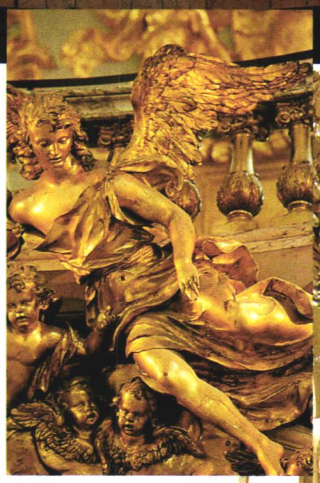


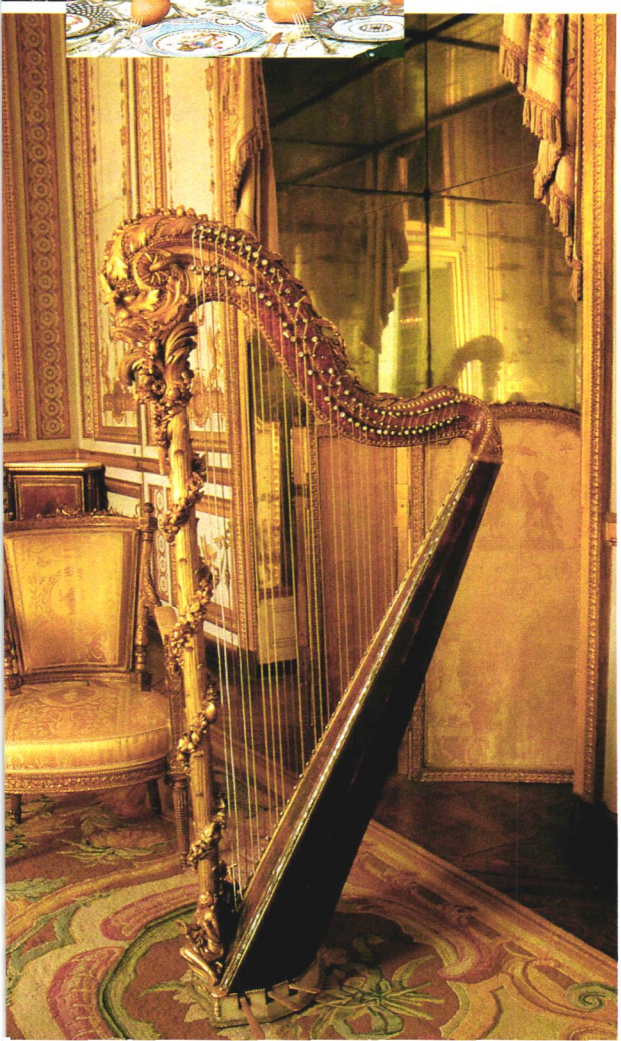
GOWNS GALORE Couture-clad ladies gathered on the Grande Terrasse for the champagne reception before the ball. For $5,000, guests could attend four events, including Le Bal de Versailles and waltz away with commemorative favors.



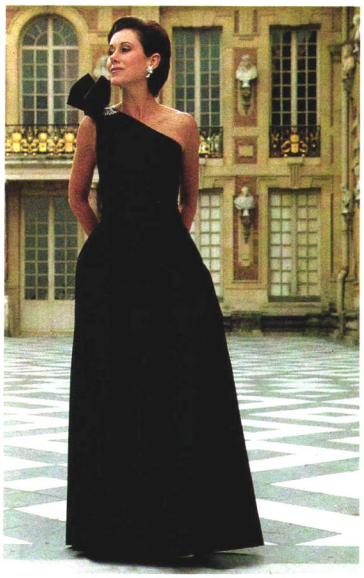
COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF VERSAILLES

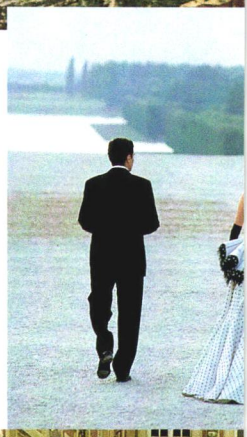
DESIGNED BY André Le Nôtre and Louis XIV, the gardens of Versailles were meant to symbolize the Sun King's power over man and nature. And, they were a great place for a party. Amid fireworks and fanfare, Molière's players performed at Louis XIV's fetes; Mozart entertained Louis XV's guests; and the arcadian revels of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI were unrivaled. Until now. Last June, the American Friends of Versailles—a charitable organization devoted to Franco-American relations and spearheaded by Catharine Hamilton—planned a week of festivities culminating in Le Bal de Versailles, which recalled the extravagance of the Gallic kings, but for a cause. The committee staged 16 gala events and raised two-thirds of the $4.2 million needed to restore the Trois Fontaines Bosquet, one of 16 groves carved out of Versailles's landscape. This particular grove was laid out by Le Nôtre, according to Louis XIV's design, and was comprised of three terraces, originally linked by cascades and flights of stairs and later by ramps, so that the gouty king could get around his favorite spot. The three fountains (hence the name)—each a different shape—were the bosquet's only ornament. But that must have been enough to charm the democratic souls of two earlier American ambassadors, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, who also danced all night in the gardens of Versailles. —SABINE ROTHMAN



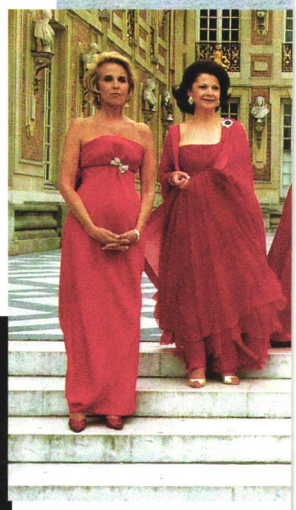


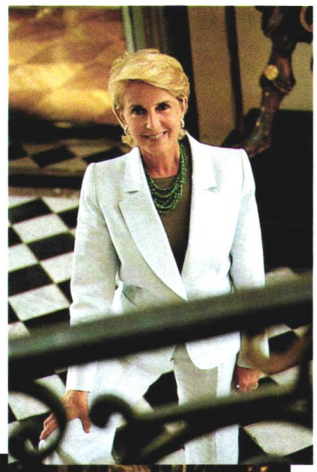
ALL THAT GLITTERS **Clockwise far left: Jean Cotelle's *Les Trois Fontaines Bosquet*, commissioned in 1688; party planner Pierre Celeryon in Louis XIV's bedroom; the Marie Antoinette Theater, where guests enjoyed a piano and violin concert; Baron Elie de Rothschild's place setting for a state dinner in the gallery of the Grand Trianon; Pierre Celeryon prepares for the state dinner; an angel above the altar in the Royal Chapel; a centerpiece from Catharine and David Hamilton's barbecue at their 17th-century home, Chateau de St. Georges Motel, the day after the ball; Marie Antoinette's music room; Sphinx meets Pan.**

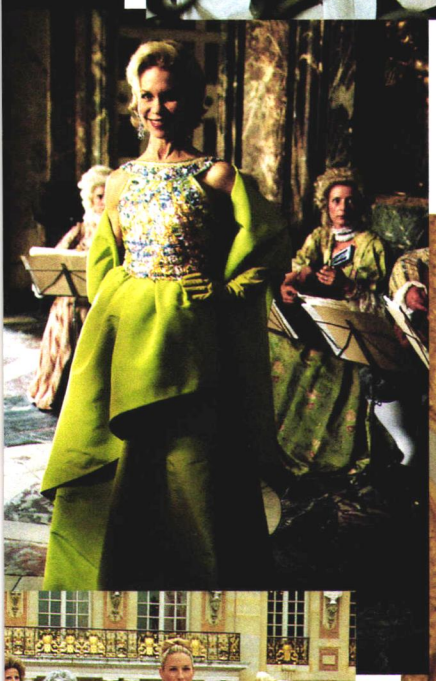




AT THE BALL Clockwise from top left: Carolyne Roehm; Charlotte Moss and Chris Walling; Susan Gutfreund; Sandy de Yturbe; Lynn Wyatt; from left, Sandy de Yturbe, Cecile Zilkha, Francine LeFrak, Michèle Fiéschi-Fouan, Anne-Marie de Ganay, Comtesse Helene de Mortemart, Gretchen Jordan, Lynn Wyatt; the Horners of the Hunt take five; pre-dinner procession in the Orangerie; Courtney Cline, Victoria Kataoka, Anne Catharine Morton, Alexandra Gugelmann; Hubert Astier (president of the Chateau of Versailles), Catharine Hamilton (president of the American Friends of Versailles), David Hamilton, Catherine Trautmann (Minister of Culture), Robert Noel Castellani, Le Vicomte de Rohan, (president of Les Amis de Versailles), Pierre-André Lablaude (chief architect of Historic Monuments); Renaud de Viel Castel and Diana Odasso.

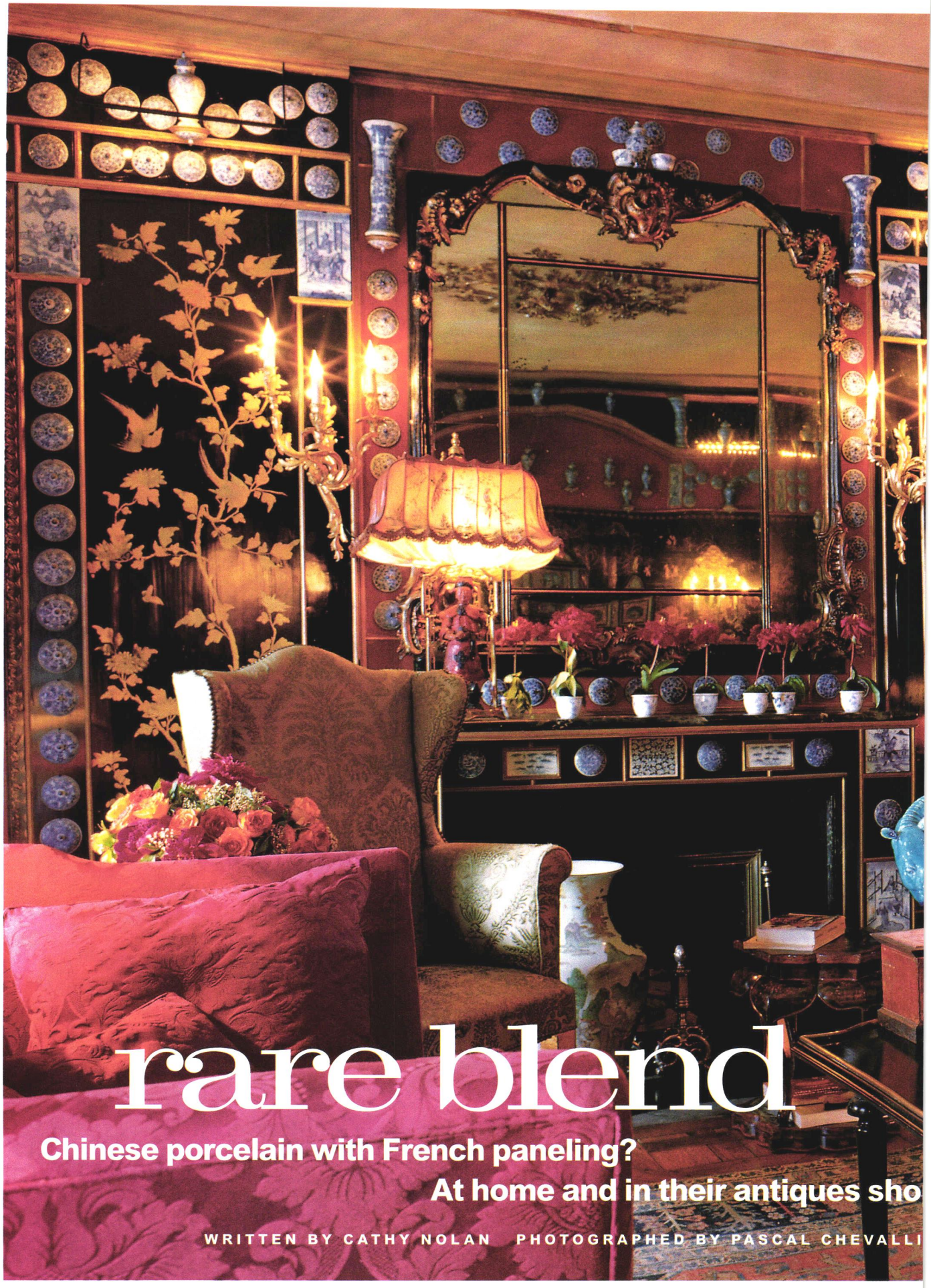






CHATEAU-HOPPING The day after the ball, M. and Mme. Jean de Yturbe welcomed guests to the Château d'Anet, above, their 16th-century home, built for Henri II and Diane de Poitiers; at the Hamiltons' barbecue, below from left, Raymond Nasher, Joanne Bilby, Patricia de Bary, Marquette de Bary; bottom, Arnold Scassi, Catharine Hamilton; left, hors d'oeuvres at the Chateau d'Anet.

GRAND FINALE The skies flame with feux d'artifice. Such spectacles were also popular with the French kings. In *The Gardens of Versailles,* Pierre-André Lablaude writes that the fetes of Louis XIV "mark a definitive stage in the history of the gardens."



rare blend

Chinese porcelain with French paneling? At home and in their antiques sho

WRITTEN BY CATHY NOLAN PHOTOGRAPHED BY PASCAL CHEVALLI

PATRICK AND JOSEPHINE Frémontier often use their apartment as an adjunct to their shop. The French lacquered wall panels in the salon are adorned with Chinese porcelain medallions and vases salvaged from a ship that sank in 1680. Two 18th-century Italian armchairs flank the fireplace; the sofas are covered in silk damask. The 19th-century rhinoceros sculpture is by Theodore Deck.

r Patrick and Josephine Frémontier the interplay's the thing

ODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING

ALONG ONE WALL of the salon, this page, porcelain is displayed around an 18th-century Roman cabinet with painted-glass doors. A pair of 18th-century German gilt-bronze sconces hang above two late-18th-century Sicilian chairs. **BESIDE THE DOOR** to the foyer, opposite page, sits a gilt-wood armchair covered in taffeta from Marché Saint-Pierre. In the entrance hall, an Igor Mitoraj bronze foot makes a big impression on visitors.

WANDERING through the antiques shops around the posh Quai Voltaire, it's not hard to become jaded. Here a classic Louis XVI commode; there an ebonized Empire divan; across the way, a gilt-bronze Regency chandelier. But sighs of delight soon give way to yawns. The furniture is gorgeous, yet so . . . expected.

But then step into the store Frémontier and—*mon Dieu!* Suddenly you're confronted with an astonishing eighteenth-century marble console (commissioned by Italian nobles, you later learn), its massive stone top resting on a sculpted and gilded base depicting eagles, palm trees, and—best of all—a camel, sitting smugly at the center of the scene.

Amazed reactions are nothing new to the shop's owner, Patrick Frémontier. After all, they're his main criterion for choosing the pieces in the first place. "We don't deal in the traditional—it doesn't move me," explains Frémontier, the fourth-generation head of the family business. "I am interested only in the unusual, the unique, the one-of-a-kind."

"Our clients have gone through the 'traditional' phase," adds Josephine Frémontier, his wife and partner of 32 years. "Now they want something fun and different."

Objects that make an original statement do, however, tend to demand space. As such, the Frémontier shop, which occupies the first two levels of an elegant nineteenth-century building across the Seine from the Louvre, is always cramped. To deal with the problem, the couple often decorates sections of their nine-room apartment on the building's fifth floor to show off their wares. "Our home is our showroom," says Josephine. "There's no fixed boundary between them."

The apartment's decor changes according to what is bought

and sold—something that happens often, given the enticing, eccentric interiors Patrick composes with the help of top-notch artisans. "I try to marry the most diverse origins, to show that quantities of objects that come from every horizon, every continent, put together with coherence and a few ideas, can work very well," he says. "This produces a decor that is a surprise."

ONE ESPECIALLY striking example of the creative mix Patrick strives for is the Chinese room he conceived in the family's salon. Playing off a decorating scheme devised in seventeenth-century Holland, he used porcelain medallions and vases to ornament carved wall panels. The eighteenth-century boiserie panels were rescued from a villa in the south of France; the Chinese porcelain, salvaged from a trading ship that sank in 1680, was sold at auction in Amsterdam in 1984 by the Vietnamese government. "The shipment had been ordered from Holland, with motifs in the Dutch style. So it's possible that this porcelain has finally found its intended use, after spending three centuries underwater," Patrick says, adding, "I bought a substantial amount."

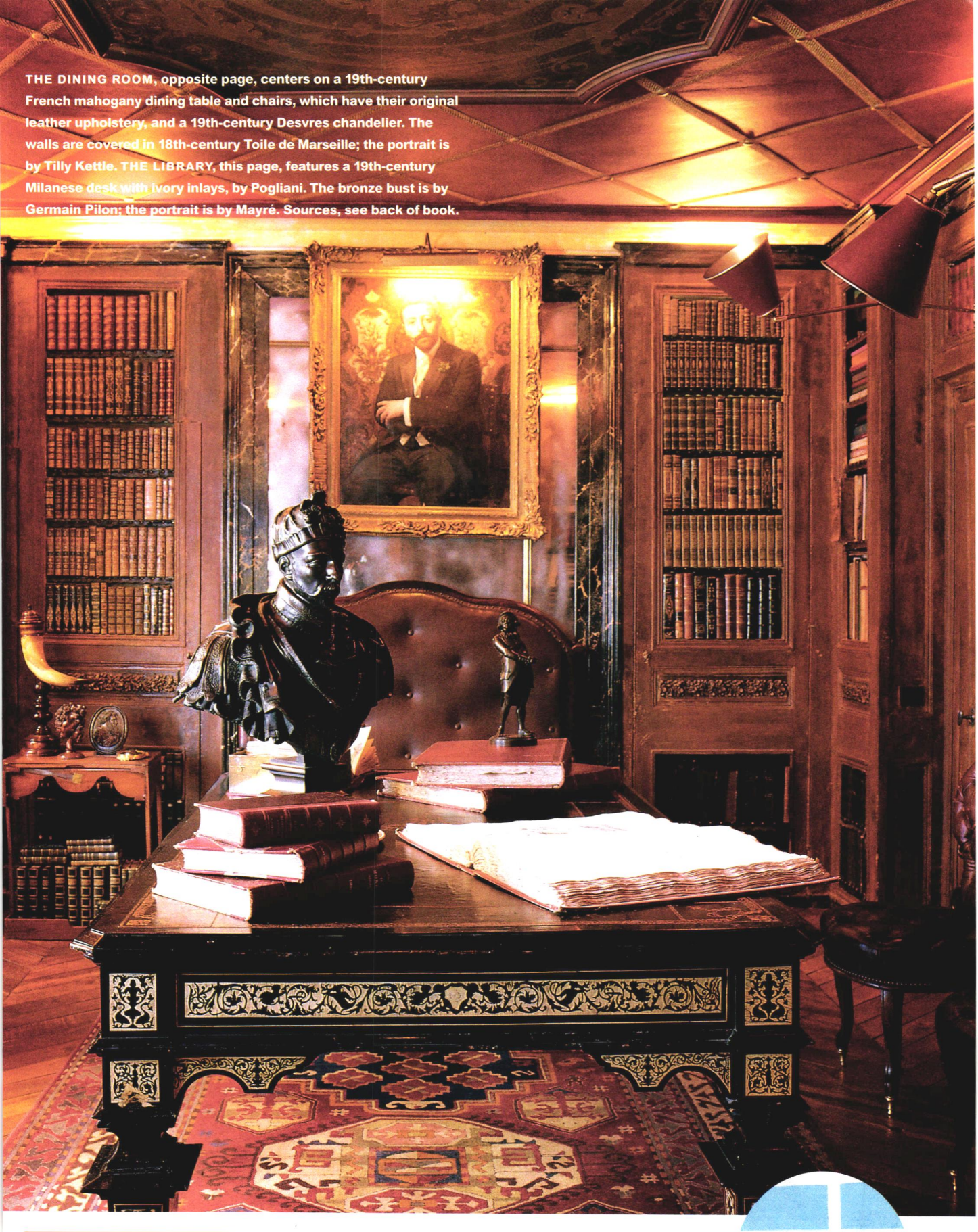
Even so, it was not quite enough. To complete the ensemble, Patrick added a nineteenth-century lamp "in the spirit of the Brighton pavilion," eighteenth-century Sicilian chairs, and modern, damask-covered couches. After boxing in the apartment's original marble fireplace mantle with a wood covering, the Frémontiers decorated the new fronting with porcelain plaques. The thing is, the plaques aren't porcelain at all, but varnished color photocopies that Josephine produced on a computer.

More inspired matchmaking—and stagecraft—is on view in Patrick's personal library. The wraparound bookshelves incorporate the room's original paneling. "But I redid the color, added shelves, painted the interior of the shelves to look like red leather, and put in a red leather ceiling, complete with a painting that once adorned the ceiling of a bar in Barcelona," he says. "I have no scruples about mixing books that I read with others that are there only to look at," Patrick admits. "I even put in a few rows of fake leather bookbindings."

But, as he explains, "the mix of objects with books is what's important." Along one wall, small, decorative treasures hang from the bookshelves. "It's a modest recreation of the 'curiosity cabinets' that they made during the Renaissance," Patrick says. The objects on display (which change often) include seventeenth-century ivory cameos, weights from a Portuguese royal pharmacy, and—"I hardly dare tell you!" Patrick says—penis bones of walruses, which are used as clubs by the Inuit.

"It's perpetual theater around here," says Josephine. The two would have it no other way. As Patrick says: "We don't want to live in a fixed decor. I always look forward to my next environment." No doubt, so do all their friends and clients.

CATHY NOLAN *is a magazine correspondent based in Paris.*



THE DINING ROOM, opposite page, centers on a 19th-century French mahogany dining table and chairs, which have their original leather upholstery, and a 19th-century Desvres chandelier. The walls are covered in 18th-century Toile de Marseille; the portrait is by Tilly Kettle. **THE LIBRARY**, this page, features a 19th-century Milanese desk with ivory inlays, by Pogliani. The bronze bust is by Germain Pilon; the portrait is by Mayré. Sources, see back of book.

Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

FRÉMONTIER: 5 QUAI VOLTAIRE, 7e

With wares ranging from 300-year-old Italian cabinetry to a modern bronze of a foot, the shop is a favorite among connoisseurs of the offbeat (like fashion designer Vivienne Westwood). "People love us or hate us," says Patrick Frémontier. "But we don't inspire indifference."

GIVING MODERNISM AN EXOTIC spin, the centerpiece of Buttazzoni's living area is a red kilim and a low, square table of his own design, upholstered on one end with an alpaca blanket and meant to be used while lying on the floor. The linen Roman shades are from JAB, Paris.

touch of rouge

Laurent Buttazzoni, decorator to the French fashion crowd, dresses his **white loft** with a dash of red

WRITTEN BY GREGORY CERIO PHOTOGRAPHED BY WILLIAM ABRANOWICZ

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS

TO LOOK AT Laurent Buttazzoni's cool, trim loftlike apartment in the 11th arrondissement, on a block within aria-shot of the opera, you'd never believe that twice a year the interior designer goes slightly insane. But for Buttazzoni, it's just another day's work.

Each spring and fall, you see, he creates a special decor for the showroom of John Galliano to complement the flamboyant Christian Dior design chief's new couture collections. When Buttazzoni first did it, in 1994, he whipped up an "abandoned house" look. He rented old, banged-up furniture, scattered dead leaves around, and laid a chandelier in the middle of a floor as if it had fallen from the ceiling. Since then, Buttazzoni has temporarily transformed the Galliano showroom into other odd worlds: a circus; an Indian lodge; a Degas ballet studio; the home of a fictitious muse modeled on screen siren Dolores Del Rio. The biannual projects are "very different from what I usually do," says Buttazzoni, whose latest project is a redesign of the Paris offices of minimalist couturier Yohji Yamamoto. But as one of those rare designers who let a client's tastes and personality guide the decor rather than impose their own, he explains, "It doesn't bother me to enter someone else's universe when it's interesting. And Galliano's is so full of craziness."

An architectural classicist by nature (Buttazzoni worked for Andrée Putman for eight years before going out on his own in 1994), he prefers things more sedate in his universe. White walls and plain wooden floors frame the inside of his apartment, which is in a former furniture factory. "The most important thing in an interior is that the proportions of volume and light are correct," he says. "Then you can put in any kind of furniture."

If he has chosen icons of modern design—pieces by Eero Saarinen, Jean Prouvé, Florence Knoll, and Harry Bertoia fill the place—the flat is not without eccentricities. Take the water-buffalo skull that Buttazzoni put atop a cabinet; or the pair of '70s lamps with shades studded with crystal chunks, which he found in Los Angeles; or the cow skins, left over

from a fashion shoot, that he uses as rugs in the dining area.

Then there are the splashes of red everywhere in the living room and bedroom—as startling (and sexy) as a lipstick stain on a white shirt collar. "Red is my favorite color," the designer says. "It's thrilling." The color appears in a loopy Jan Ekselius chaise and ottoman and in the alpaca blanket that upholsters the square, inch-tall table that Buttazzoni designed to be used while lying on the floor. Set upon a red kilim, the table gives the living area an air that is at once modernist and vaguely Eastern. "The place is simple, like me," Buttazzoni says, "but with little touches of weirdness."

Some of his ideas are both clever and a bit odd. While he used tall cabinets to form a wall between the bed and bath, he left a gap in the arrangement to provide a sight line from the living area straight into the shower. "You can take a bath and see the sky," Buttazzoni says. "Besides, the place is just for me."

Creating this sort of personal, personalized space is what his work is all about. Buttazzoni is a firm advocate of the new confluence of interior and fashion design that can be seen in home furnishing lines from Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, and, soon, Prada. The idea of home as fashion does not mean changing your decor as often as you would your wardrobe, Buttazzoni says. Rather, it implies that "your interior can be a part of a way of life. You should be able to say, 'I want to be dressed like this, in a place like this.' "

If that's true, it looks like Buttazzoni is dressed for success.

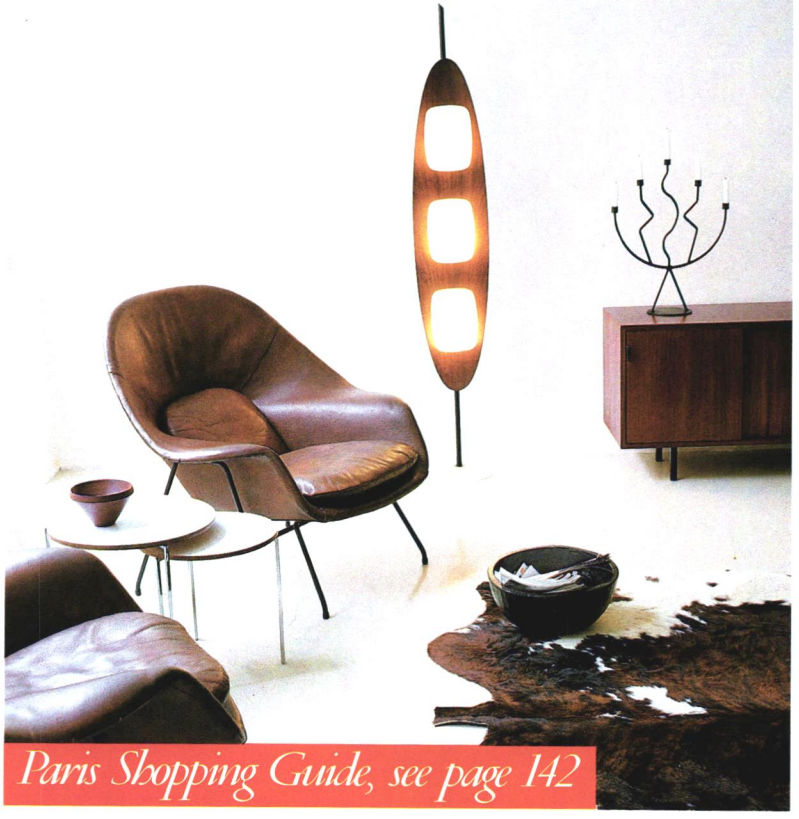
BUTTAZZONI, left, reclines on his Jan Ekselius chaise. CLOCKWISE from above: The designer's dachshund, Lucy, sits on a faux sealskin bedcover. The table at the foot of the bed is a Harry Bertoia design for Knoll. An Eero Saarinen Tulip table, also made by Knoll, and a Jean Prouvé chair stand beside the tall mirror. The pair of red Costanza lamps, by Paolo Rizzatto, from Luceplan, sit on a closet dividing the bed- and bathrooms. Buttazzoni found the crystal chunk-shade lamp, right, at Rubbish in Los Angeles.

"An interior is part of a way of life. You should be able to say: I want to dress like this, in a place like this"

—Laurent Buttazzoni

Here the exotic and **eccentric** live side by side with **icons** of modern design

A WARMER ATMOSPHERE fills the downstairs kitchen/dining area, with its cow-skin rug and laminated wood table, designed by Buttazzoni. He inherited the '50s Danish dining chairs from his grandmother. The curtains are made of fabric from John Heathcoat & Co. Ltd. A HANS BELLMAN plywood chair, right, stands near the kitchen. TWO RARE LEATHER Saarinen Womb chairs, below, share space with side tables and a credenza by Florence Knoll. All are from the Galerie Christine Diegoni in Paris. Sources, see back of book.



Paris Shopping Guide, see page 142

GALERIE CHRISTINE DIEGONI: 47 TER RUE D'ORSEL, 18e
Diegoni's immaculate showroom is nestled deep inside the bohemian crumble of Montmartre, but those with a passion for mint-condition Eames, Prouvé, and Perriand will find it worth the trip. Devoted to clients like designer Laurent Buttazzoni, Diegoni prefers to "sift out the fools" from her store—but if your taste fuses with her unerring eye, she will gladly give you a crash course in '50s, '60s, and '70s designs; and with prices like hers, you'll never need to dig a Knoll chair out of the flea market again. *—Rob Haskell*

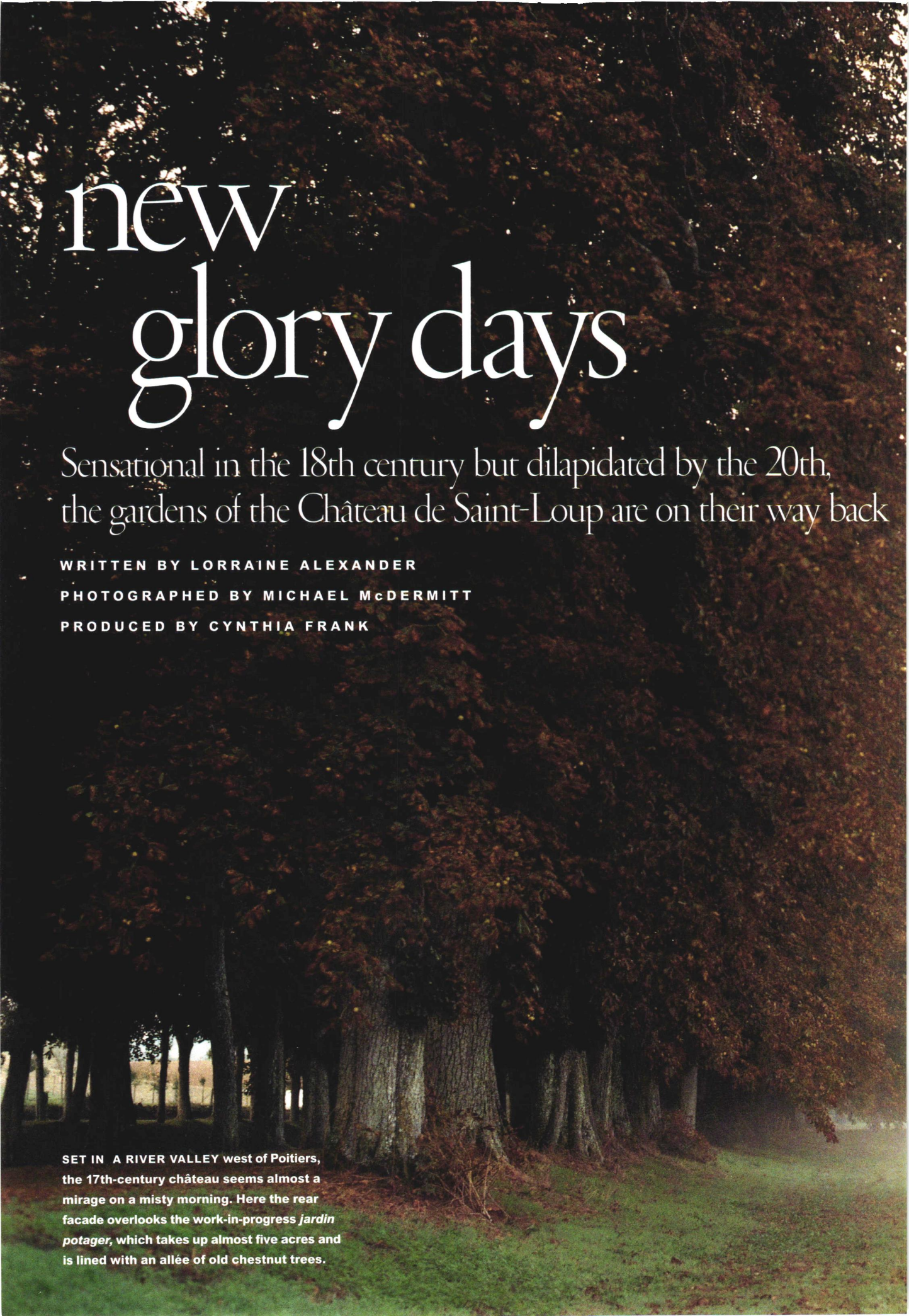
new glory days

Sensational in the 18th century but dilapidated by the 20th, the gardens of the Château de Saint-Loup are on their way back

WRITTEN BY LORRAINE ALEXANDER

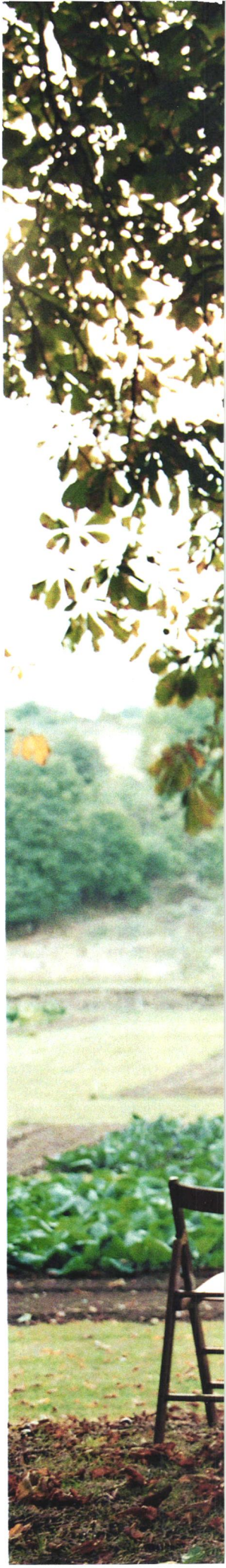
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL McDERMITT

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK



SET IN A RIVER VALLEY west of Poitiers, the 17th-century château seems almost a mirage on a misty morning. Here the rear facade overlooks the work-in-progress *jardin potager,* which takes up almost five acres and is lined with an allée of old chestnut trees.

A REAR VIEW OF THE CHÂTEAU shows its 17th-century core. The medieval keep, visible through the trees, contains a dungeon where Jean le Bon was imprisoned by the English in 1356. The cobblestone canal dates from 1631 and welcomes wild duck and heron.



"The whole point about Saint-Loup is that it is deeply rooted in enjoyment"

—Charles-Henri de Bartillat

PRIVATELY OWNED CASTLES of real historic or architectural importance are vanishing in France," says Charles-Henri de Bartillat, a 48-year-old former international lawyer who, 18 years ago, met and fell in love with just such a castle, Château de Saint-Loup. As we stand before the imposing early-17th-century structure, the stone facade flaking discreetly under its proud hip roof, it is easy to imagine the impact of that first encounter. As shafts of morning light pierce the house from front to back through its long and numerous windows, all that masonry appears to be lifted inches off the ground. This is the stuff of which romance and passionate real estate deals are made.

Fifty kilometers from Poitiers and just far enough south of the Loire Valley to be officially off the beaten path, the Château de Saint-Loup—house, gardens, and extensive parkland—has spent the last two centuries in somnolent decline. Its glory days were in the eighteenth century, when the property's wealthy and enlightened owners lavished it with every refinement, and, if de Bartillat can realize his ambitious dream, a portion at least of that glory may be restored in the new century.

The château itself is actually the least of its owner's preoccupations. Once the nearly 125 acres of Saint-Loup's gardens received the coveted designation of a *monument historique*, de Bartillat embarked on a 15-year project to restore them to the condition they enjoyed circa 1745, using national, regional, and European funding. That still leaves him with a hefty 20 to 50 percent of the tab, however, and the immense task of making sure his restorations are historically accurate.

CHARLES-HENRI DE BARTILLAT and his golden retriever, Boni, sit near the restored pavilion, opposite page. A VIEW OF THE *POTAGER*, this page, shows cabbages in the foreground. Eventually each section of the *potager* will have borders of edible, medicinal, and decorative plants, as well as rows of fruit trees lining the plots. Remains of the old surrounding wall have been uncovered and will be restored.

"I can't stand things to be average. I need them to be perfect," de Bartillat insists with his customary energy. "This isn't about my vision or taste but about fidelity to history. I go to the best people, because I want to learn, and learn well." One of those people is Joël Cottin, the head gardener at Versailles, who has taken an interest in the project and stops by on occasion to offer guidance.

Excluding the areas of clipped lawn fronting the house, which, for the moment, are "just being kept tidy," the focus of this white heat is Saint-Loup's *jardin potager,* which occupies almost five acres behind the house. Today—after only two years of restoration—this part of the garden is again a stunning assemblage of squares and rectangles that are gradually being given over to artichoke and pumpkin, raspberries and asparagus: a kitchen garden rivaled only, perhaps, by Villandry's.

Leaving what de Bartillat calls the architecture vegetal of the *potager*, we

THE INNER COURTYARD of the orangery, above, is filled with portable citrus trees and fragrant flowers. In the foreground are green-glaze vases from Anduze. **THE MAIN COURTYARD**, top right, looks out onto the orangery. **BONI**, right, is an expert on the orangery's suitability as a place of rest and contemplation.

PLUM, PEACH, AND APRICOT trees are espaliered along the walls of the orangery's outer courtyard. The wedge-shaped islands are bordered in snapdragon and box.

The decoration on the roof of the orangery is meant to underscore the festive nature of this part of the garden

THE ROMANTIC PAVILION, above, which resembles an elegant dollhouse, is the perfect place for intimate dinners. Before its restoration, the pavilion's roof had completely caved in. Today it straddles the canal, faithful in every detail to its 1745 incarnation. DE BARTILLAT FOUND the design for the garden bench, left, in an engraving by Fragonard.

head for the orangery, first crossing an allée of mature chestnuts and the seventeenth-century canal that leads down to the restored pavilion, a perfect venue for romantic dinners. The orangery is the part of the garden that is most nearly completed. Entering the larger of its two courtyards, one is struck by the color and order: serene green quadrants crossed by narrow gravel paths are punctuated at measured intervals by wooden planters and beautiful earthenware jars containing citrus trees. In the second, wedge-shaped garden, eighteenth-century wooden benches copied from a Fragonard engraving invite the visitor to sit while surveying the espaliered fruit trees that line the honey-hued walls.

It's a grandiose plan, Saint-Loup. But no matter how difficult the road ahead, de Bartillat is determined that the garden retain its connection to pleasure. "The whole point about Saint-Loup is that it is deeply rooted in enjoyment," he says during our garden ramble. When he notices a visitor resting on a grassy verge, he exclaims, "See that fellow over there! He's not concerned about chervil or chives. He's just happy to be here."

coming up

in the next issue of

House&Garden

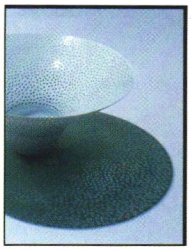
Fashion Insiders at Home

+ Their choices in fabric, furniture, and flowers

+ The all-out glamour of red

+ Plus: The closets we covet

On Sale October 12th



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COVER

Striped horsehair fabric on chair, Rupert Cavendish, 610 King's Road, London. 011-44-171-731-7041.

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Top photograph: Sèvres Porcelain, 4 Place André-Malraux, Paris, 75001. 011-33-1-47-03-40-20. Pauly & Co., Piazza San Marco, Venice. 011-41-52-09899.

Below left photograph: **Eero Saarinen Tulip table**, Knoll. 800-445-5045.

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Hunting & Gathering: **White porcelain servers** by Tsé & Tsé for Shì, 233 Elizabeth Street, NYC 10012. 212-334-4330.

Object Lesson: **Personal care brushes, 1. Men's whale-tooth hairbrush**, $60, G. Lorenzi. 011-39-02-760-228-48. **2. Shower brush**, $155, G. Lorenzi. **3. Baby's hairbrush**, soft pig bristle and sterling silver handle, $190, G. Lorenzi. **4. Body powder brush**, $65, Moss, 146 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-226-2190. **5. Barber's neck brush**, with horsehair bristles, $50, G. Lorenzi. **6. Fingernail brush**, boar bristles with pumice stone handle, $45, G. Lorenzi. **7. Women's whale-tooth hairbrush**, $65, G. Lorenzi. **8. Pitball callous brush**, horsehair with beechwood handle, by Blindenanstalt Von Berlin, about $27, available at Moss. **9. Massage brush**, $30, from Redecker, available at Terra Verde, NYC. 212-925-4533. Photographed against **tile** from Ann Sacks Tile & Stone, Inc., 5 East 16th Street, NYC 10003. 212-463-8400.

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Solux lightbulb, Wiko Ltd. www.wiko.com

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Pages 27-30, Lifetime Television. 212-424-7000. The Discovery Channel. www.discovery.com. HGTV. 423-694-7879. CNN. 212-714-6949. E! Entertainment Television. 323-954-2400. Shabby Chic, Santa Monica. 310-394-1975. Chicago. 312-649-0080.

Page 34, Kinsey Marable, 18 East 67th Street, NYC 10021. 212-717-0342. Great Northwest Bookstore. gnw@greatnorthwestbooks.com. The Book Store. birchbook@aol.com. Candy Books. candybooks@compuserve.com. Rybski Booksellers. rybski@flash.net.

Page 36, Douglas Elliman Realty. 800-ELLIMAN. Theo Kalomirakis Theaters, NYC. 212-239-7399. **Page 38,** T. Keller Donavan Design Studio, 30 East 60th, Room 1100, NYC 10022. 212-759-4450.

Page 40, Authentics artipresent GmbH, 414-598-8977. **Toshiyuki Kita ashtray and earthenware ashtray** designed by Jasper Morrison, Totem. 888-519-5587. www.totemdesign.com. **Cappellini white ceramic ashtrays**, designed by Tutti Quanti, Cappellini/ ModernAge, 102 Wooster Street, NYC 10012. 212-966-0669. Marc Newson **Venetian glass ashtray**, Totem. Arne Jacobsen **Cylinda-Line ashtray**, Moss, 146 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-226-2190. **Ceramic ashtray**, Troy, 138 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-941-4777. From outside New York, call 888-941-4777. Achille Castiglioni's **Spirale ashtray**, Moss. Jeffrey Burnett **frosted glass ashtray**, Troy.

Page 44, Clockwise from top left: **Shelving system**, $2,825 the set; each additional component is $500. Desiron, 139 West 22nd Street, NYC 10011. 888-DESIRON. www.desiron.com. **Kitchen unit**, Valcucine USA, 152 Wooster Street, Ground Floor, NYC 10012. 212-253-5969. **Pillow**, from $85 to $280, Salon Moderne, 281 Lafayette Street, NYC 10012. 212-219-3439. **Small bottle pendant**, no. 410, $210; **large bottle pendant**, no.411, $240, David Weeks, 61 Pearl Street, No. 612A, Brooklyn, NY 11201. 718-596-7945. **LPSS-L and LPSN-L lamps**, $830; **LPSD-L lamp**, $875, Chista, 537 Greenwich Street, NYC 10013. 212-924-0394. **Stacking table light**, designed by Stuart Basseches and Judith Hudson, $275, Biproduct, 97 Fifth Avenue, 4A, NYC 10003. 212-255-3033. **Tray table**, $599, Homer, 939 Madison Avenue, NYC 10021. 212-744-7705. **Pooky rug**, between $2,450 and $7,560, depending on size, Angela Adams. 800-255-9454. **Loop chaise**, $2,998, Cappellini/ Modern Age, 102 Wooster Street, NYC 10012. 212-966-0669. **After Hours seating unit**, Lush Life, Los Angeles. 323-343-9968. Available through architects and designers. **Bombo table**, by Magis, $459, at Limn Company, 290 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107. 415-543-5466. **Tristano bed**, $4,900, Poliform. For showroom locations call 888-POLIFORM.

Page 46, Diamond Miller Gallery, Beverly Hills, CA. 310-858-0669. Blake Simpson designs, available at Troy, 138 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-941-4777. To contact Troy from outside NYC call 888-941-4777. Shì, 233 Elizabeth Street, NYC 10012. 212-334-4330. Available in Los Angeles at O.K. 323-653-3501.

Page 48, Anfibio sofa, from $2,170, Giovannetti Collezioni, please call or send an E-mail: 011-39-573-946222. Giovanetti@ftbcc.it. **Blow chair**, Zanotta, available through dealers across the United States and in NYC at Moss. 212-414-1405. www.zanotta.it. **UFO Pendant lamps**, $75, Totem, 71 Franklin Street, NYC 10023. 888-519-5587. ww.totemdesign.com. **The**

Darwish seat, Sawaya & Moroni. 011-39-02-863951. **The One chair**, by Ross Lovegrove, Bernhardt and Contract Furniture. For showroom information call 828-758-9811. Available through architects and designers. **Joe sofa**, by Terence Woodgate, Lutz International. 410-642-6113.
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Page 58, Edible Landscaping, Afton, VA. 800-524-4156. www.eat-it.com. Oregon Exotics Rare Fruit Nursery, Grants Pass, OR. 541-846-7578. Toll Gate Gardens & Nursery, Bellevue, MI. 616-781-6535 (papaws and persimmons only).

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Page 74, Spectrum LT Green Waterglass, S.A. Bendheim, 122 Hudson Street, NYC 10013. 212-226-6466. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 151 Third Street, San Francisco, CA 94101. 415-357-4000. The Modern Object, 641 North High Street, Columbus, OH. 614-469-0047.

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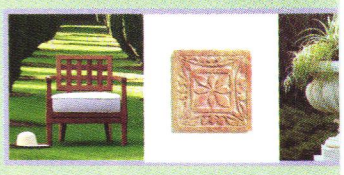

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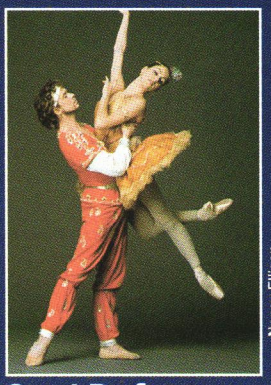
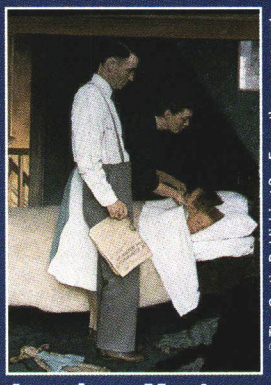


Nancy Ellison

Great Performances



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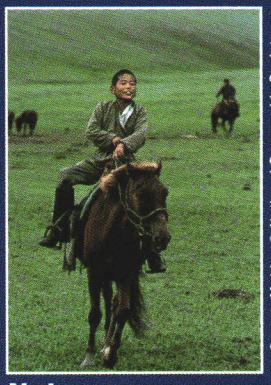

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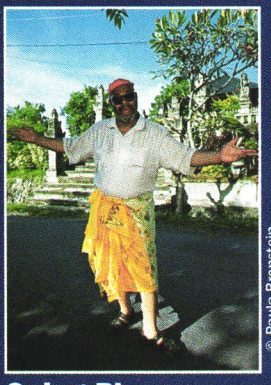

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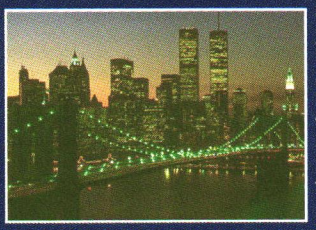
See the world from the comfort of your favorite armchair when **Going Places** whisks you off to popular vacation destinations with host James Avery.



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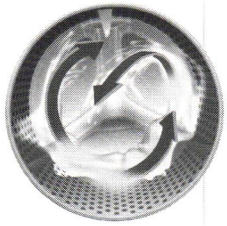

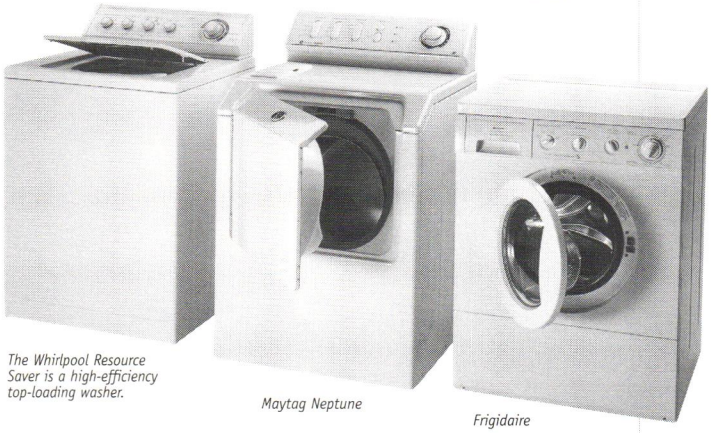

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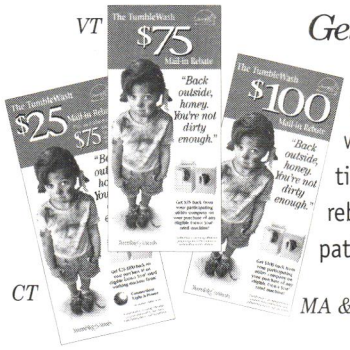

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Galerie Levy-Alban. 011-33-1-42-61-25-42. **Pages 136-137,** Madeleine Castaing, 21, rue Bonaparte, Paris, 75006. 011-33-1-43-54-91-71. Chelsea Textile Company, London. 011-44-171-584-1165. **Small glass dish**, Waterford Crystal, 41 Madison Avenue, NYC. 212-532-5950. **Pages 138-139,** Sèvres Porcelain, 4, place André-Malraux, Paris, 75001. 011-33-1-47-03-40-20. Pauly & Co., Piazza San Marco, Venice. 41-52-09899. **Pages 140-141, Robe on bed**, Sulka. 800-75-SULKA. **Slippers**, Tricker's, Jermyn Street, London. 011-44-171-930-6395.

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Flore. 011-33-1-42-61-42-22. **Pages 148-149, Statue of pig**, Hermès, for store locations in the United States call 800-441-4488. **Tassels on mantle**, La Passementerie Nouvelle, 15, rue Étienne-Marcel, Paris, 75001. 011-33-1-44-76-90-70. **Potted plants**, Galerie Liliane François, 15, rue de Seine, Paris, 75006. 011-33-1-43-26-94-32. **Pages 150-151,** Sahco Hesslein, 17, rue du Mail, Paris, 75002. 011-33-1-40-26-23-86.

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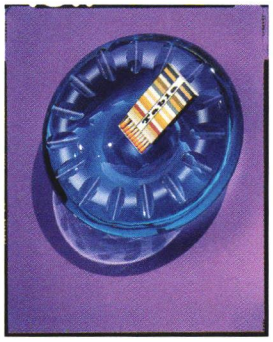
Interior designer, Laurent Buttazzoni, Buttazzoni Architecture Intérieure, Paris. 011-33-1-40-09-98-49. **Pages 168-169,** JAB, 155, boulevard Haussmann, Paris, 75006. 011-33-1-43-59-92-50. **Poul Kjaerholm white chairs**, Galerie Christine Diegoni, 47, ter rue d'Orsel, Paris, 75018. 011-33-1-42-64-69-48. **Pages 170-171,** Knoll. 800-445-5045. Luceplan. 800-268-7790. Rubbish, Los Angeles. 323-661-5575. **Rectangular ceramic vase**, Conran Shop, 117, rue du Bac, Paris, 75007. 011-33-1-42-84-10-01. **Bed pillows**, Frette Inc., 799 Madison Avenue, NYC 10021. 212-988-5221. **Faux-fur blanket on bed**, Pierre Frey, 2, rue de Furstenberg, Paris, 75006. 011-33-1-46-33-73-00. **Pages 172-173,** John Heathcoat & Co. Ltd. 44-188-425-4949. Galerie Christine Diegoni, 47, ter rue d'Orsel, Paris, 75018. 011-33-1-42-64-69-48. **Glass vase on dining table and white ceramic light fixtures**, Sentou Galerie, 11, rue de Varenne, Paris. 011-33-1-45-49-00-05.



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Paris Shopping Guide
Page 142, map illustration and details throughout by Malcolm Hill. Paris street names hand-lettering and details throughout by Anders Wenngren.

"Party On, Versailles,"
Page 156, Illustration: 6 Bosquet des Trois Fontaines, 1668, Jean Cotelle, Musée de Versailles nv 769, courtesy of the Société des Amis de Versailles.

Correction
In the August 1999 issue, in the article "Seductive Curves," the correct number for Georg Jensen is 800-546-5253. Chris Lehrecke furniture is available through Pucci International, NYC. 212-633-0452. Available through architects and designers. In "Hollywood Makeover," page 83, the ottoman fabric is from Diamond Foam & Fabric, L.A. 323-931-8148. The Walter Lamb table and chair set are from Off the Wall, L.A. 323-930-1185.

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—PRODUCED BY MARGARET A. BUCKLEY

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polite society

by william norwich

CONDUCTING oneself in a becoming fashion is easier than it ever was for Americans in Paris, thanks to—or no thanks to, depending on your point of view—the rapid globalization of the way we live now.

French manners are a piece of cake compared to the days of Edith Wharton and Henry James. Nowadays, wear a simple coiffure and a little black dress, preferably with a Paris designer label, and you won't go wrong. For men? A dark suit and tie. Unlike in Italy, the necktie still reigns in France. "Paris is Europe. Everyone, including the French, is becoming like the Americans. They like power and money," observes **Joy Henderiks**, a *House & Garden* contributor and an executive at Chanel. "I don't find that Americans make many faux pas," she says. "Actually, I find that Americans are so afraid of making mistakes that they are uptight."

"I think the cocktail hour is a waste of time"

—Karl Lagerfeld

But don't let your hair down just yet. No matter how many McDonalds open on the Champs Elysées, the French—who basically don't even like most of the French—still harbor the suspicion that all Americans are cowboys. Maybe it's the noise? Our national inability to master the whisper echoes through the Tuileries like car horns in the Grand Canyon.

Here are a few suggestions for surviving the rodeo of polite Parisian society: Don't speak French. "It's only darling when English or Americans speak fluent French," comments Henderiks. "Otherwise, no." This also saves you from having to decide when you can use the familiar "tu" rather than the formal "vous." If you get it wrong, the grandly fashionable Jacqueline de Ribes might happily correct you. "You don't know me well enough. Say 'vous' to me," Comtesse de Ribes has reportedly told Americans who have presumed "tu" too soon.

Eat. It is rude to count calories, request the sauce on the side, ask the butler for a Diet Coke. "Be enthusiastic, drop the diet when you're here," advises the elegant **Georgina Brandolini**, general manager of Pierre Balmain. American hostesses worry mostly about their guest lists; the French obsess about the food they serve. At dinner, or, for that matter, anytime, refrain from asking anyone what he or she does for a living. The French find this invasive inquiry *très américain*. Instead, ask your dinner partner "What are your interests?" which means "What do you do?" Send flowers after, not before, dinner or when you are a houseguest. Do arrive with anything luxurious: chocolates, caviar, smoked salmon, a good book. The gift of wine, unless it is from your own vineyard, is tricky since wine, like food, is the pride of your host.

You will also find that the cocktail party is not typical of French hostesses, so don't plan on giving one for your French friends. Cocktail parties are associated with commercial events, such as perfume launches, of which there are many in France. "I think the cocktail hour is a waste of time," Karl Lagerfeld says. During weekends at his house in Biarritz, Lagerfeld's guests meet before dinner to do watercolors together. Discretion and measured self-revelation are still accepted interpersonal currencies in France. Thanks to the new internationalized style, the French may do exactly what we do, but they do it all more subtly.