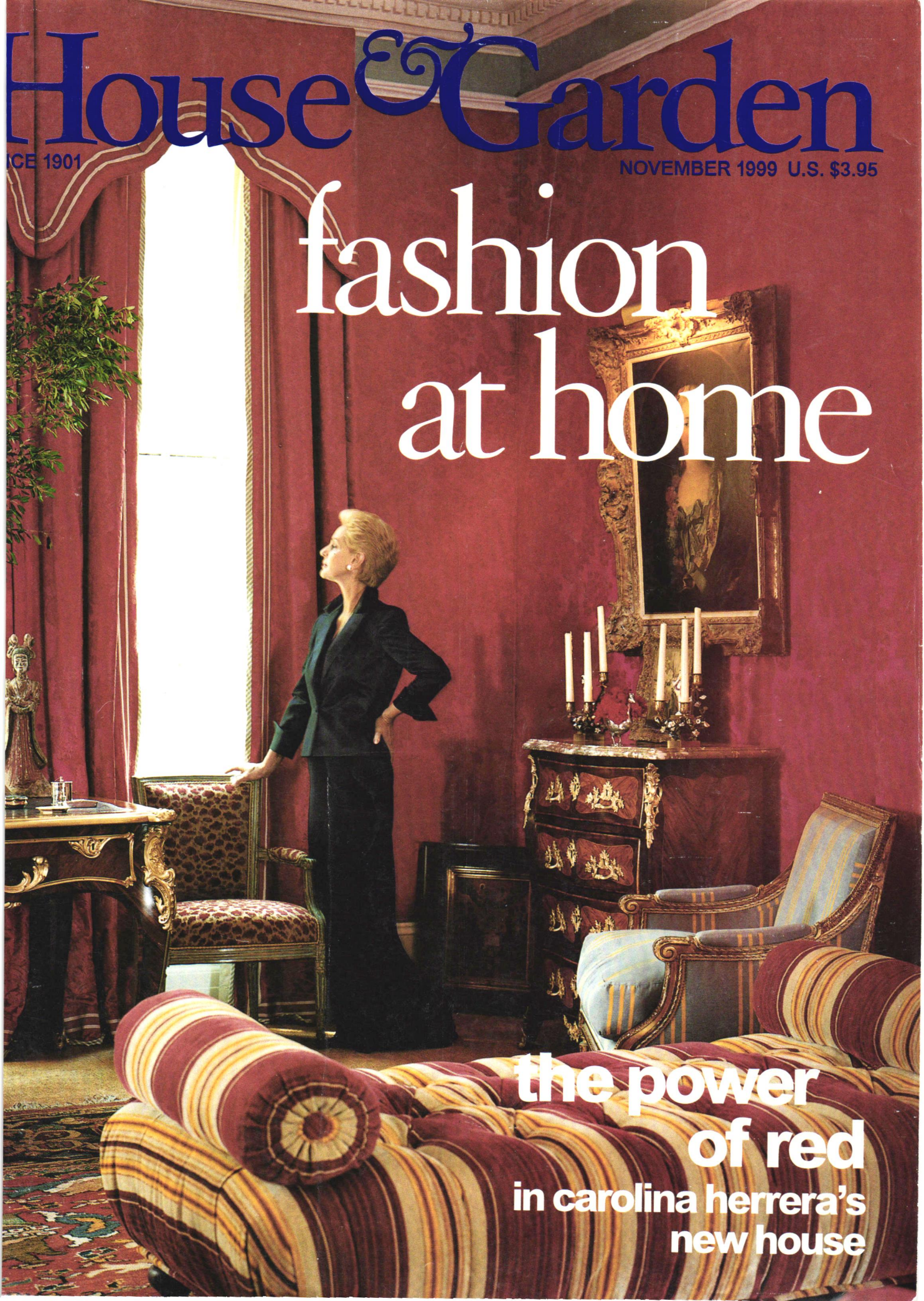
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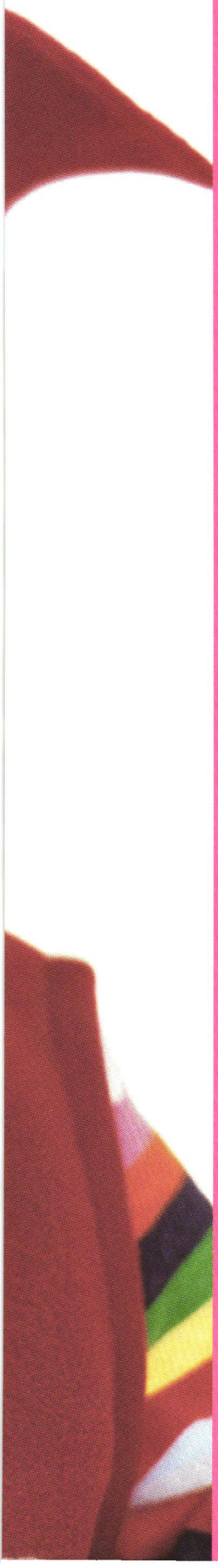

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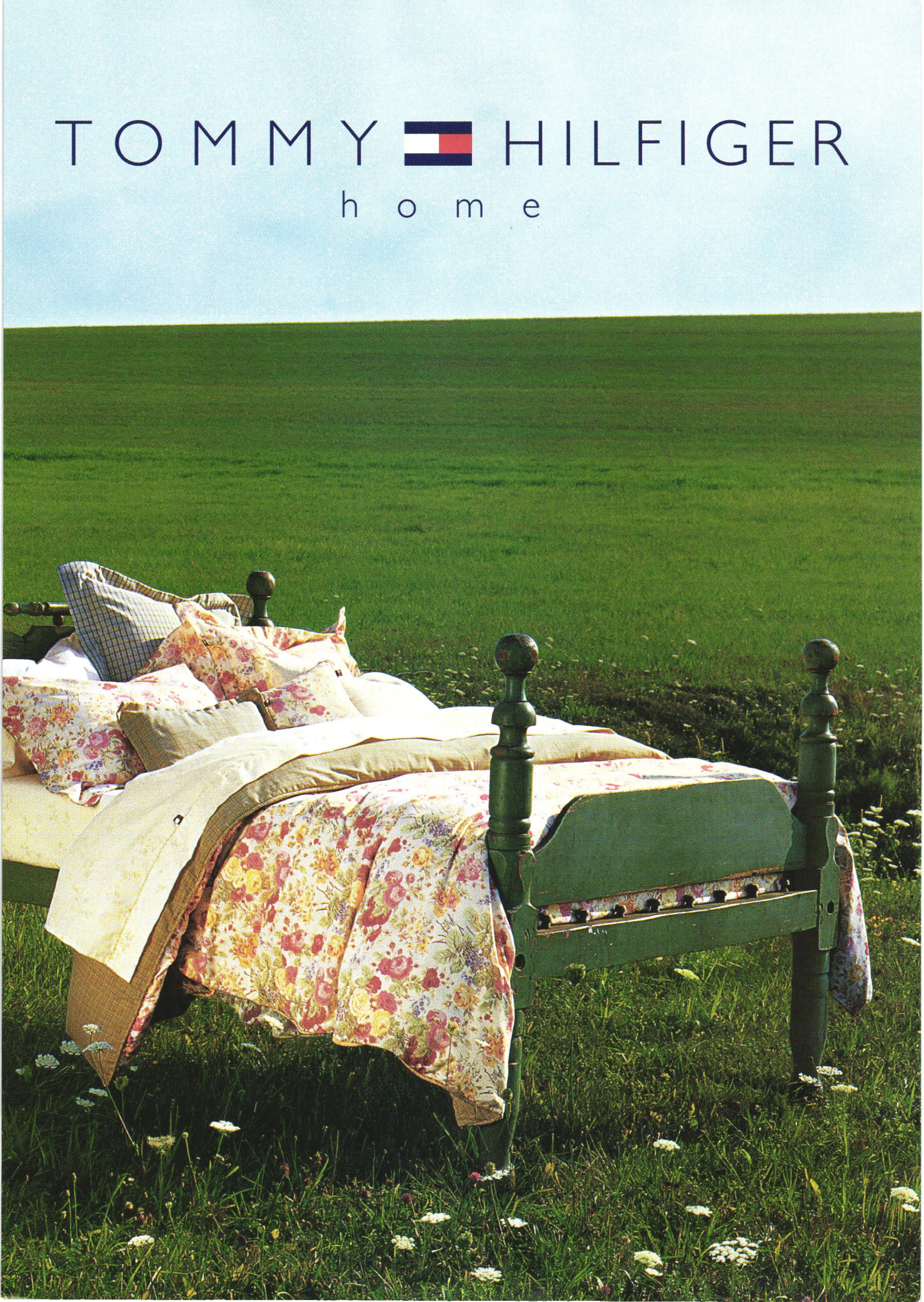

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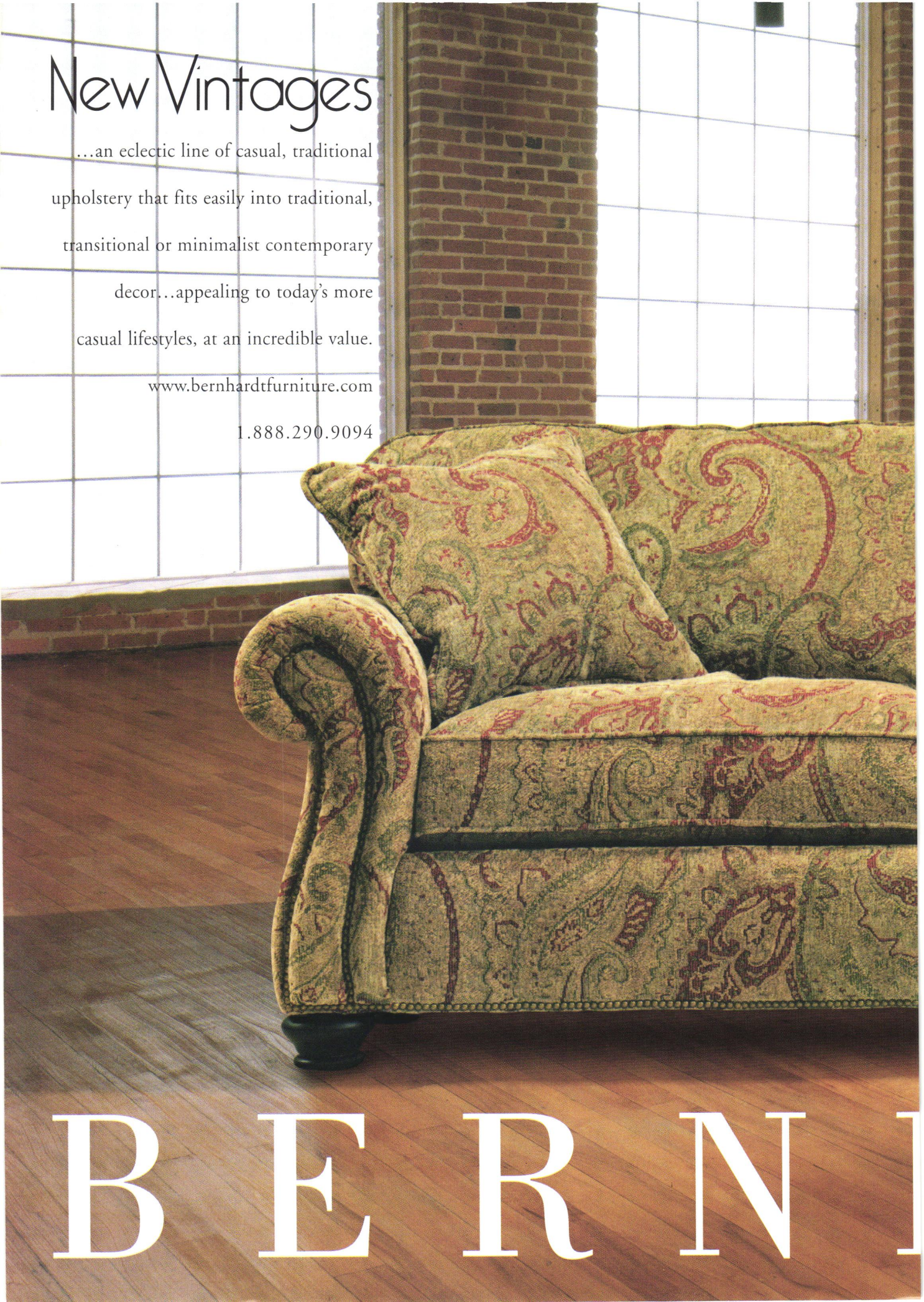
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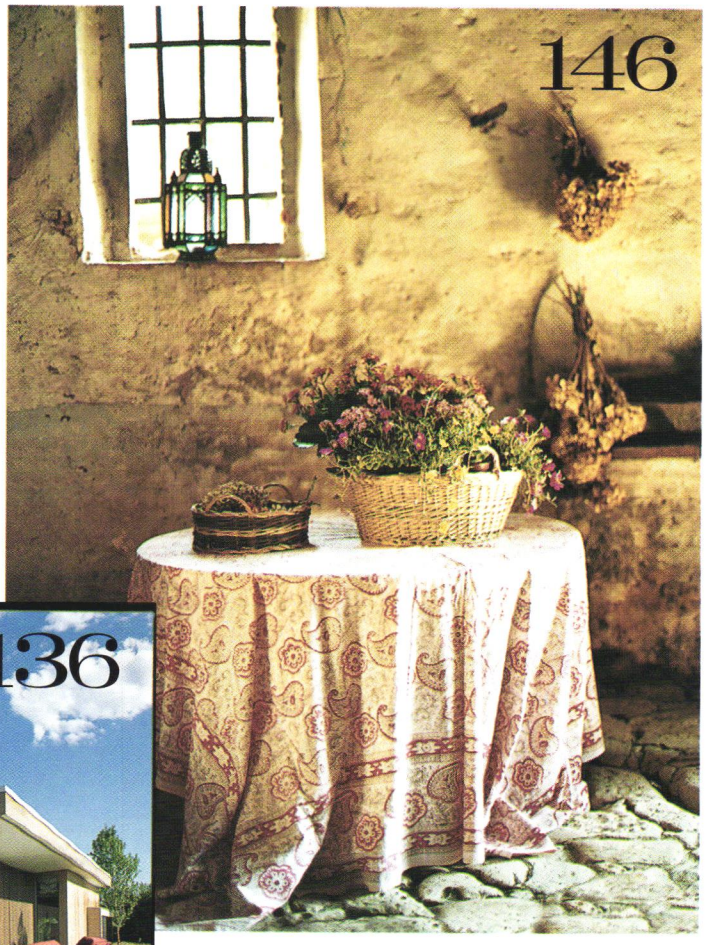

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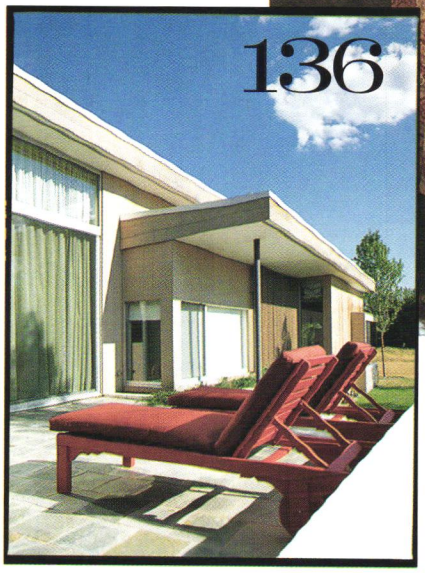

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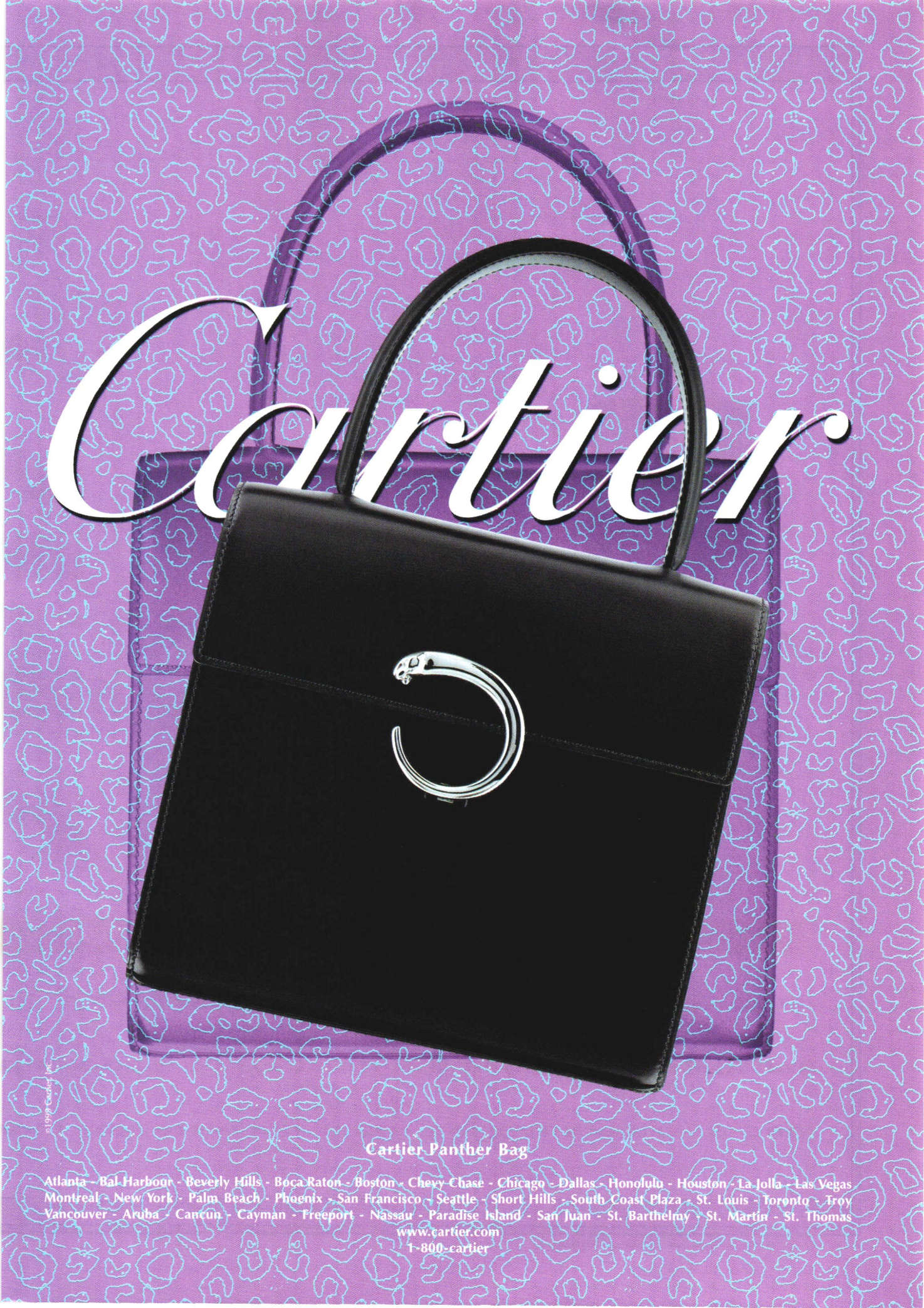

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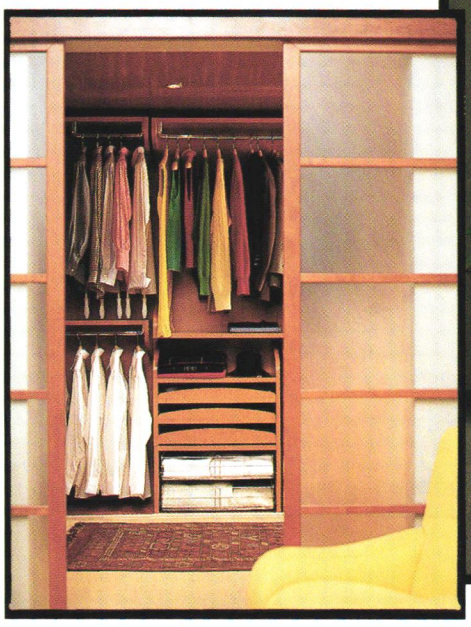

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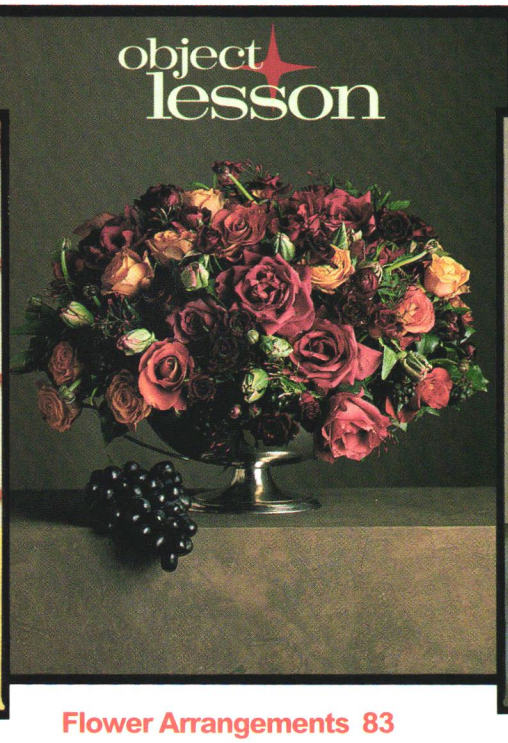

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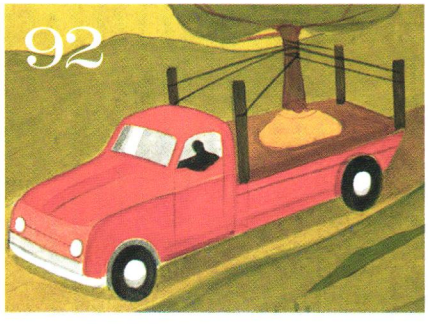

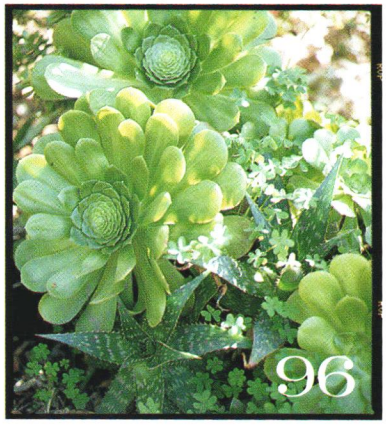

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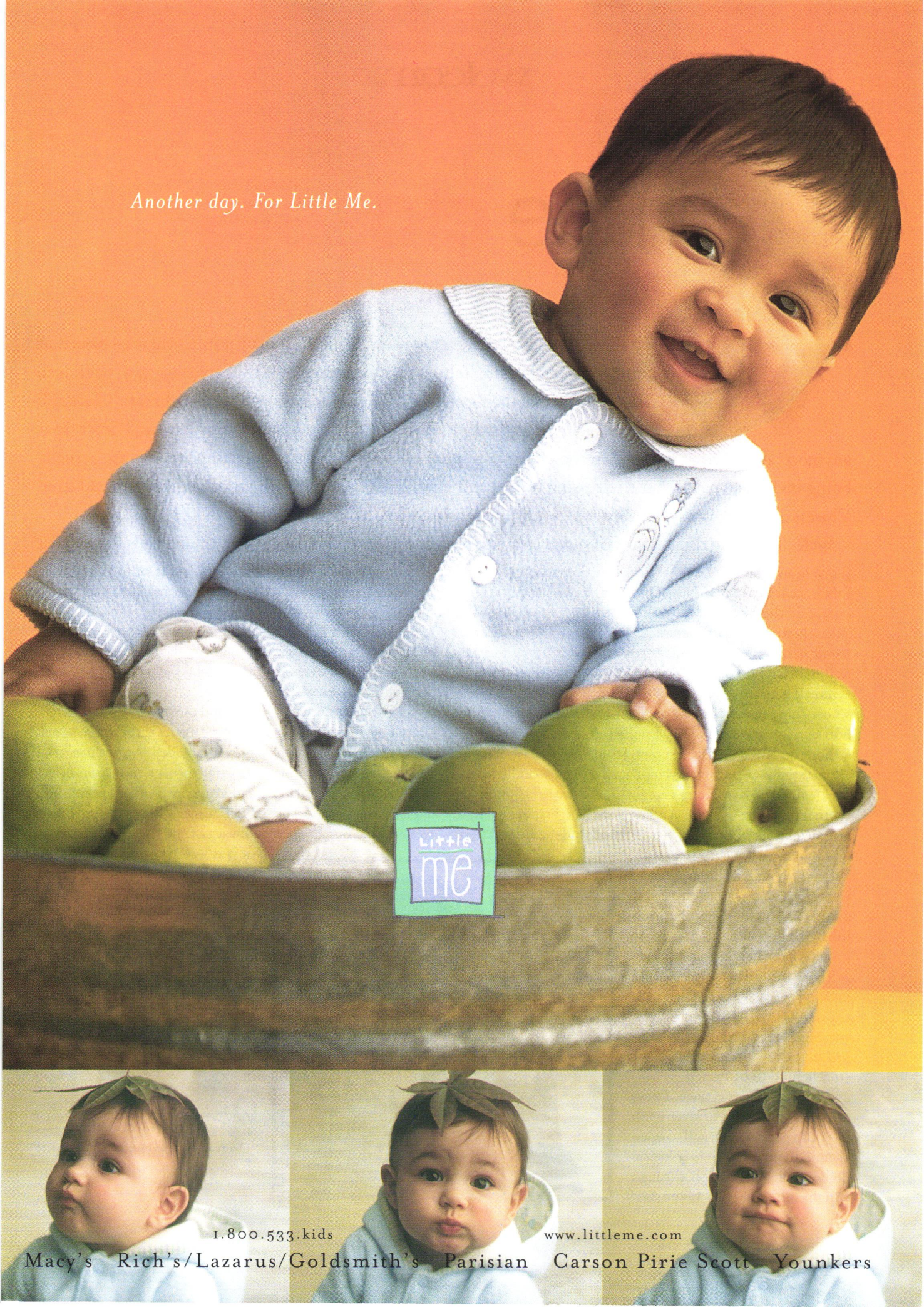
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in the closets

WHAT IS THE FASCINATION with closets? I don't know a soul who hasn't, at some time in her life, felt—and succumbed to—the temptation to peek into her hostess's medicine cabinet or linen closet during a party break. There, I'll admit it: I've copped a look or two in my lifetime—but I swear I don't do it anymore! And I don't have to. In these days of supposedly inconspicuous consumption, we are actually being invited to pay a visit to dressing rooms and medicine cabinets during a host's house-proud tour. Closets are now on display. But by leaving them wide open, have we sacrificed their secret lives?

Well, I suppose those kinds of public private places are interesting as models of compulsiveness; for those of us who have only a bit of the control freak in our DNA, neat closets exhibit a precision, fascinating in its foreignness, that we find elusive. When I gaze on stacks of squarely folded shirts, pants meticulously lined up, creases facing in one direction, bras neatly cupped in a row, ties nestled in adorable, orderly troughs, I swoon into an envious reverie. These are the closets of the disciplined, rigorous people whose china all matches, whose cosmetics are uniform, whose bottles of 409 and jars of silver polish are themselves pristine. Where do these creatures come from? No riot of color to confuse the eye—in fact, no color at all. No mismatches in the sock category—or in any category. No stray, seasonally incorrect garment in sight. And no wire hangers, ever! These are the closets of people who, as third graders, ironed their news clippings for current events. I hated them. And I desperately wanted to be one of them. For if a closet can be so immaculate, can life be far behind?

And then there are the closets of those of us who seem to hold nothing at bay. They're filled with the debris of a lifetime of tides—the highs that bring stuff washing in, the lows that leave all that stuff behind to be buried eventually by the next sea change. These are the closets built of layer upon layer of a person's life, and to open them is to invite an archaeological dig into the civilization through which someone has taken her faltering steps. I love visiting the closets of my childhood home, and never tire of rediscovering my mother's capri pants printed with splashy tropical flowers, redolent of 1940s Casablanca; her old bikinis (imagine a mother wearing such a thing!); my father's Air Force uniform; the ruffling, smocking, and tucking of my tiny days; the crushed velour of high school; the bell-bottom cords of college. . . .

We get to know each other—and ourselves—in two directions. One is by watching as someone moves through the world, going through the days of banal yet remarkably revealing activity. The other is by sifting and sorting through the closets of the past, places where memory and experience and treasure—and ancient wounds, too—are stored. Some of what you find ought to be tossed out, as there is always a time to let go. But some of it is worth saving; it's the stuff that, by telling us where we've been, also helps us uncover the direction forward. And all of it is worth examining. So, on second thought, I guess I *will* crack open your closet door next time I get a chance. It's kind of a thrill, not to know what I'll find.

Dominique Browning, EDITOR

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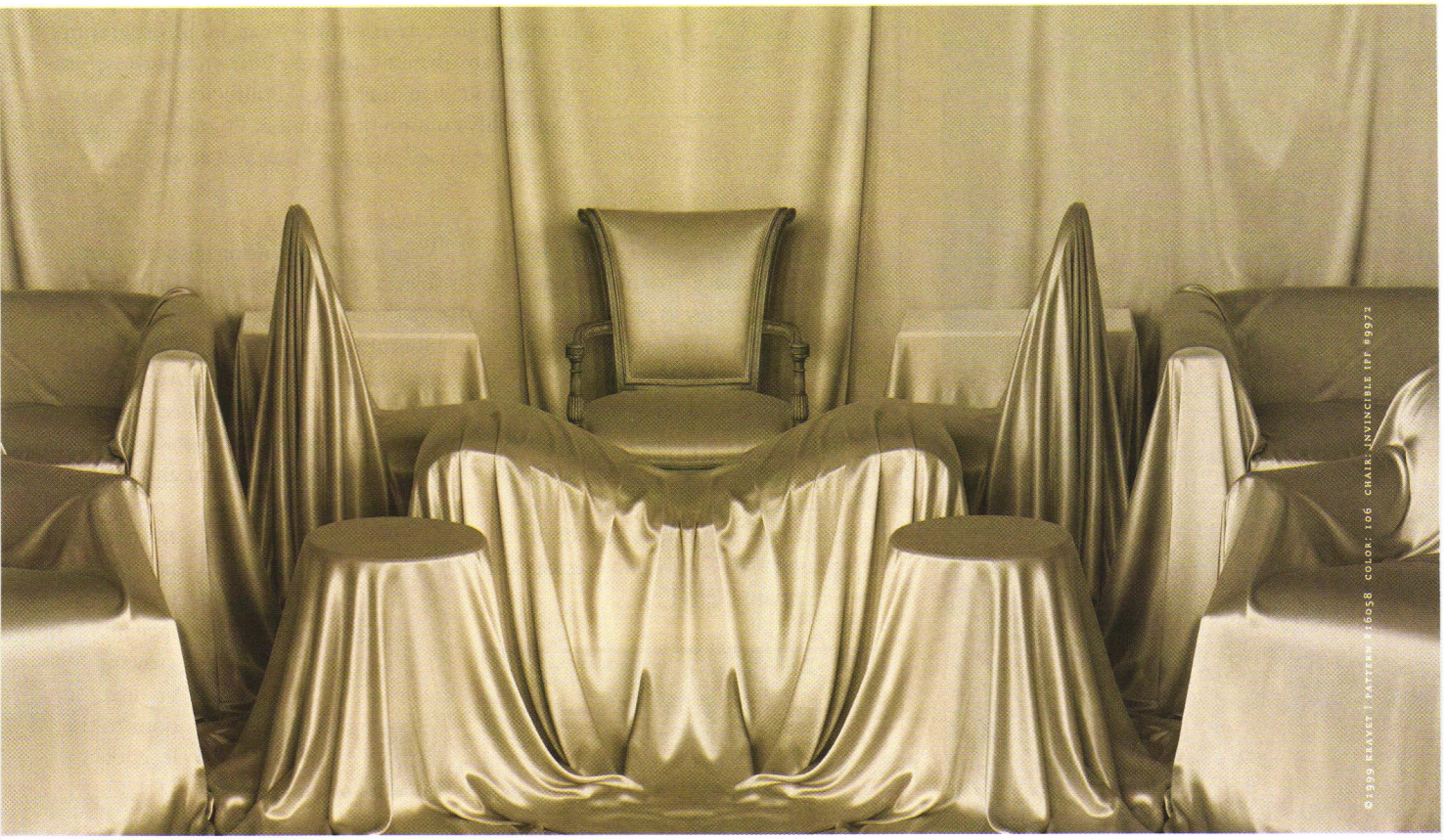

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- American antiques: city and country
- A holiday caviar party
- Creating a wine cellar
- Hotels: where top decorators stay

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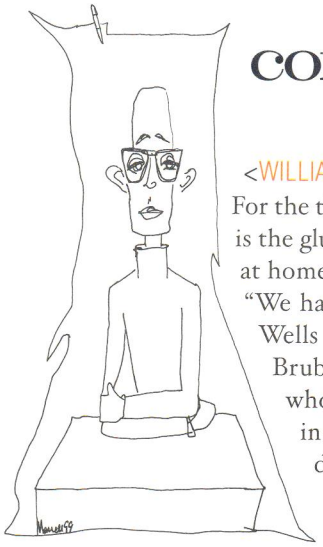
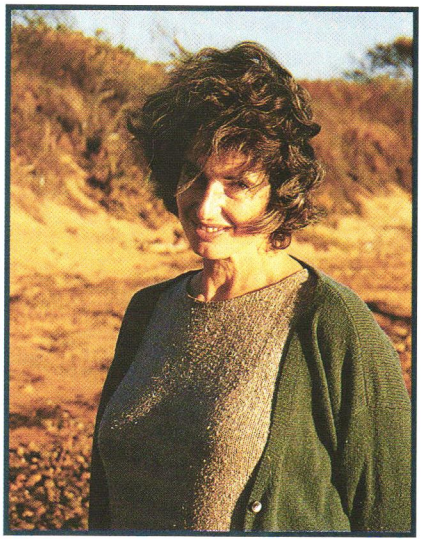


< WILLIAM NORWICH

For the third year running, *House & Garden*'s editor at large is the glue for a special issue devoted to the fashion world at home. "I think it's inspiring, I think it's new," he says. "We have two current fashion magazine editors, Linda Wells and Joan Buck, and one former editor, Holly Brubach. We're also showing young fashion people who have only one room they can be photographed in." A man of many talents, Norwich writes, produces, and even illustrates "Polite Society," his new monthly column on manners. "Courtesy is such a rare antique," he says. "Buy *that* at auction!"

MARELLA CARACCIOLO

Our contributing editor knows what makes a good story. "It's not about glamour and money as much as originality," she says. "I'm interested in houses and gardens—historical or contemporary—that have individuality, quirkiness, and humor." This month, she finds these qualities in fashion designer Domitilla Getty's Tuscan farmhouse ("Serious Fun," page 146). Caracciolo's latest book, *The Garden of Ninfa,* has just been translated into English.

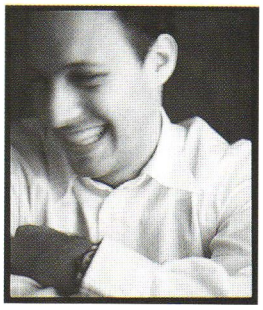


^ CAROL WILLIAMS

The author of *Bringing a Garden to Life* would like to encourage everyone to plant a sapling for the year 2000. This month, she does just that in her article "In Praise of Saplings," page 92. "Growing small trees is a way to understand that gardens are very much about the experience of time as well as place," she explains. "The paradox of gardening is that the practical takes you to the sublime." Williams lives in Sag Harbor, NY.

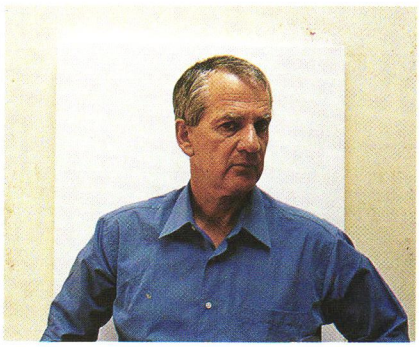
v JONATHAN KANTOR

"When you're working with beautiful objects, it's like shooting a supermodel," says the photographer, a frequent contributor to *H&G*. "Your job becomes much easier." For "Flower Arrangements," page 83, he drew inspiration from old-masters paintings in which "there was a sense of color and form emerging from darkness." Kantor learned to love his craft growing up next door to the legendary Horst.

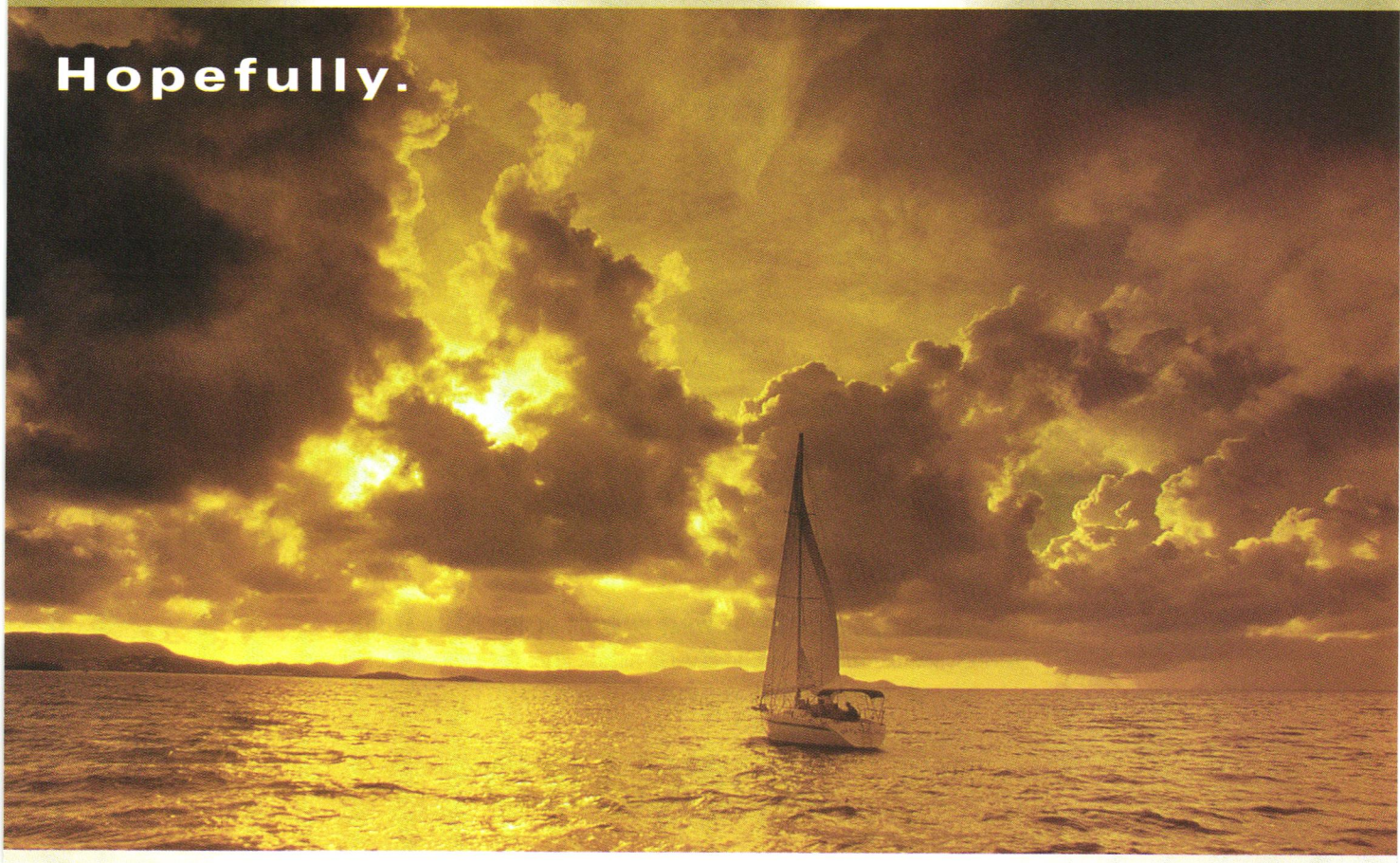


v PETER PLAGENS

Because they set "a serious house with no postmodern gewgaws" in a neighborhood that prefers tradition, the art critic for *Newsweek* praises the courage of Linda Wells, her architect, and her designers and calls the house they built "almost defiantly modern" ("Field of Vision," page 136). Plagens shows his paintings with the Nancy Hoffman Gallery. His novel *Time for Robo* has just been published. —SABINE ROTHMAN



Retirement is coming sooner than you think.



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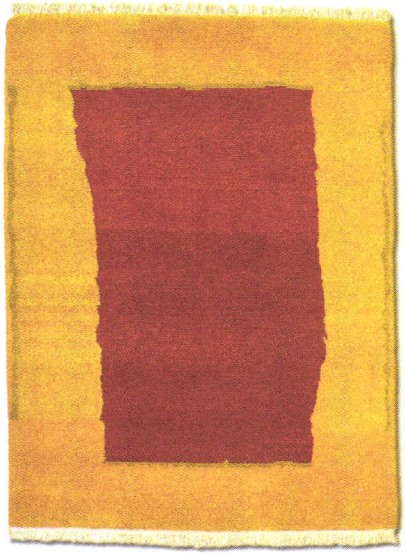

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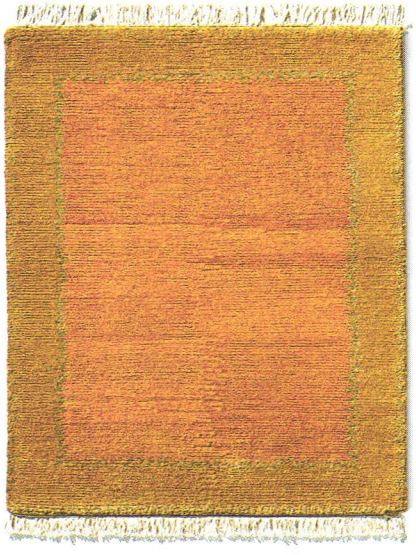

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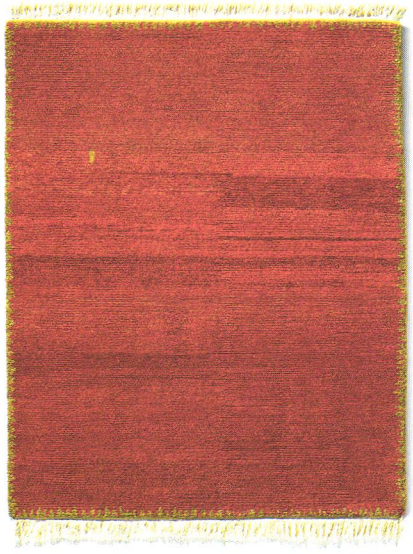

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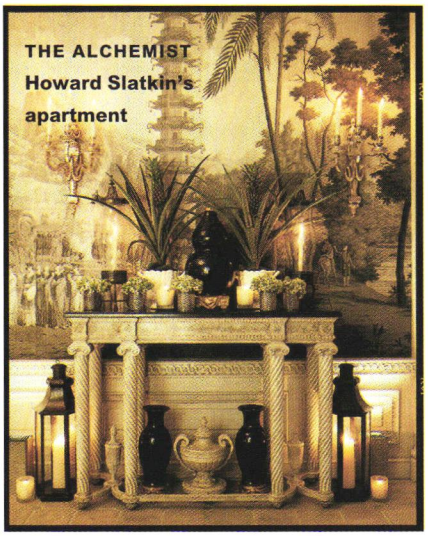
FILE UNDER FABULOUS

I JUST WANTED to congratulate you on your "Luxury" issue, which I have been poring over for the past two days. I was especially taken with the centerpiece story, "The Alchemist at Home." You may be sure that this issue will become a part of my personal archives.

NANCY HALBREICH
Dallas, TX



WE HAVE received the September issue, which looks very impressive. We think you are doing a remarkable job, but must report a concern. Our mailman complains about the size and weight of your magazine and says he will need an assistant if this continues! We say too bad for the mailman. And we say to you: Onward and upward!

HERBERT L. ROSEN
Pawtucket, RI

PILLOW FIGHT

WHY IS IT that you guys think you need 15 cushions on each sofa, or six pillows on a bed? Are you nuts? Anyone walking into the room would have to take ten minutes tossing cushions and pillows on the floor so that they can use the damn furniture. Get real!

RICHARD N. MORGAN
Louisville, KY

MOTHER'S DAYS

I WANT TO thank Dominique Browning for the joy she brings me each month with her column ["Welcome"]. I cut out her articles and share them with other professional women. She understands that my bedroom is my paradise *and* she understands my sons. I am an attorney who puts her sons on the bus in the morning and who is home when they return from school. I'm glad to learn someone like her can also have a successful career and be there for her children.

SUZANNE CLARK
Williamston, MI

I SO MUCH enjoyed Dominique Browning's "Smell the Roses" column [August]. I, too, had a young son who needed easing into his day. We also had our time together, each morning driving to school. I would praise and sometimes criticize gardens and homes along the way. I was also met with silence and an occasional glance out the window. Today my son is 26 and living in Seattle, and when he calls to talk about life far from home, he tells me about streets that he has found on his wanderings and the houses and gardens that he knows I'd like. So, thank you for reviving my own memories. Someday you, too, will get that call: "Mom, I saw the most awesome wisteria growing over someone's house!"

CANDICE FEINBERG
Tenafly, NJ

NO WHINING

"PUH-LEAZ!"

White zinfandel is the only wine I drink ["Uncorked," August]. It tastes good. End of story.

MARGARET L. TOTTIS
Dearborn, MI

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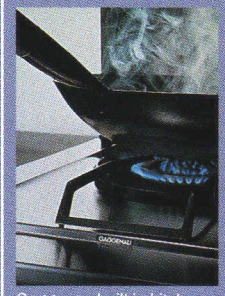

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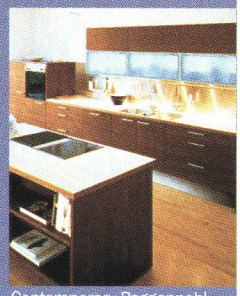

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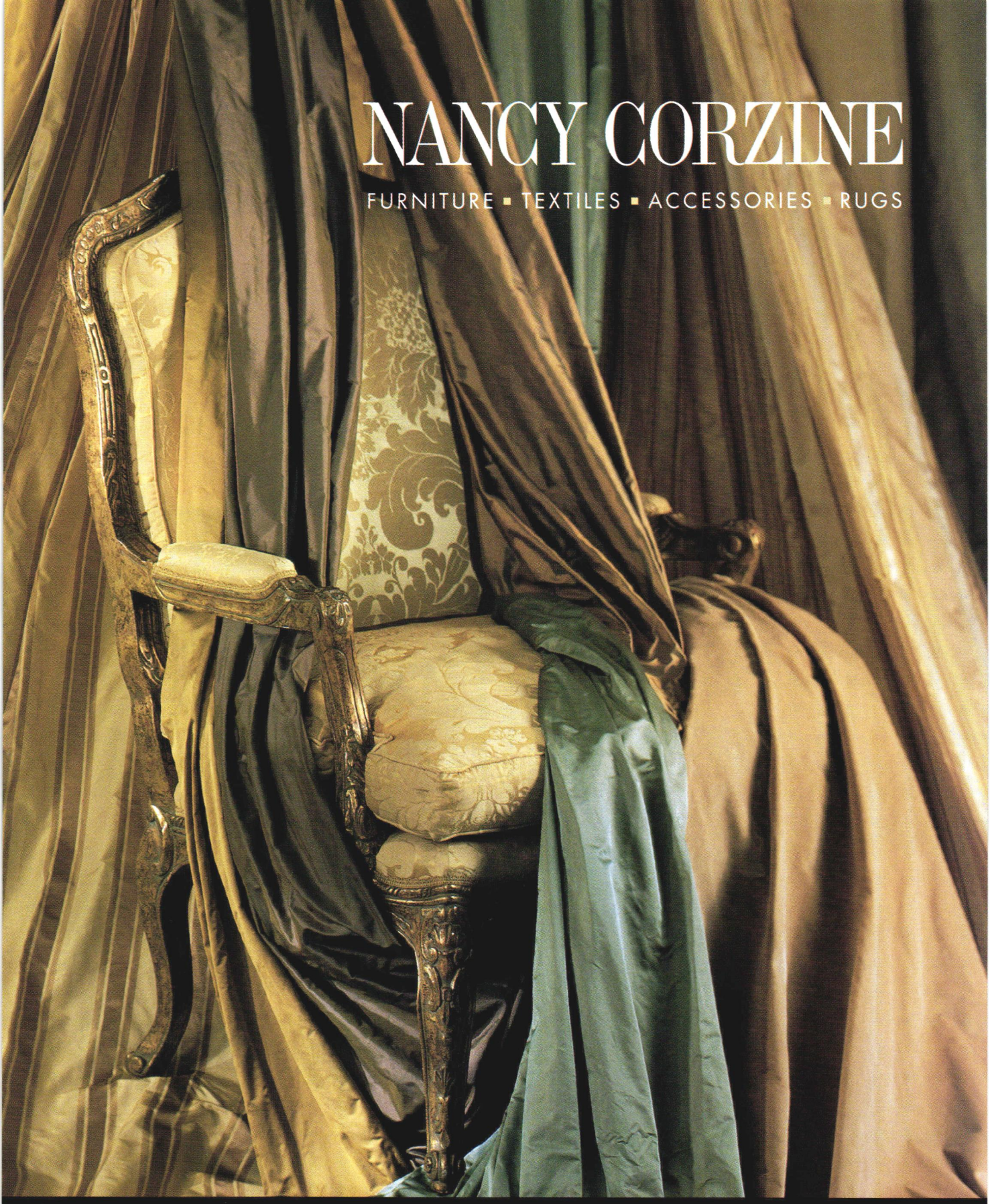

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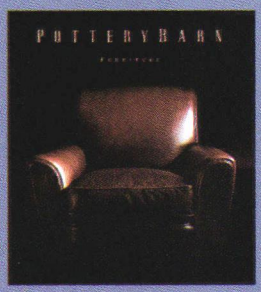

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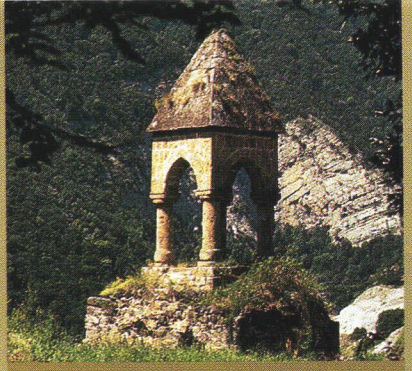

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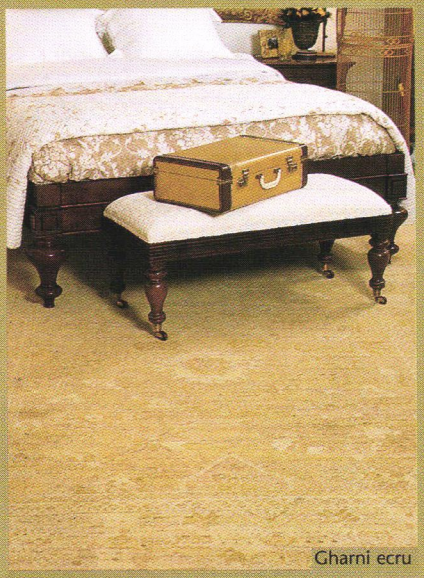
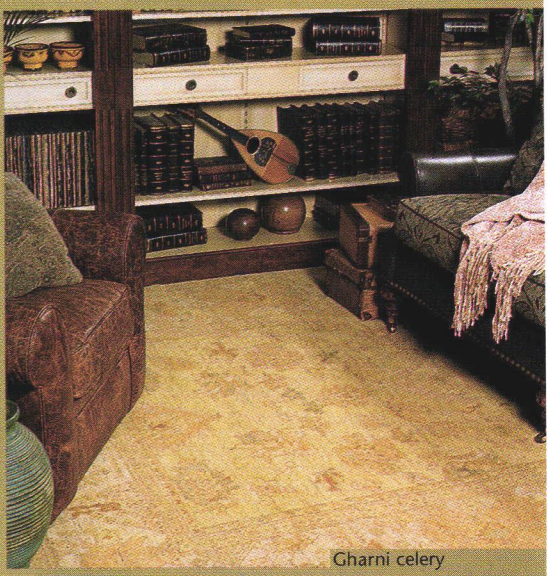


Gharni ecru

Sardarabad taupe



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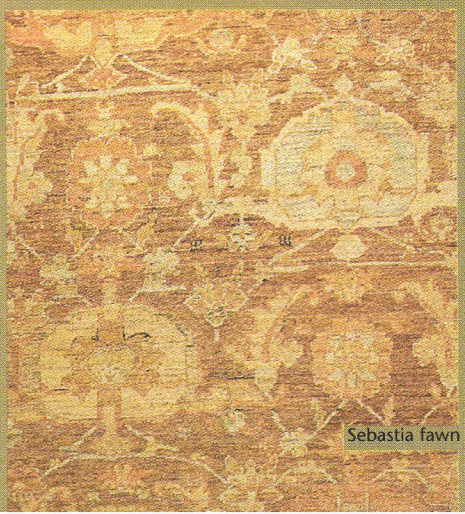
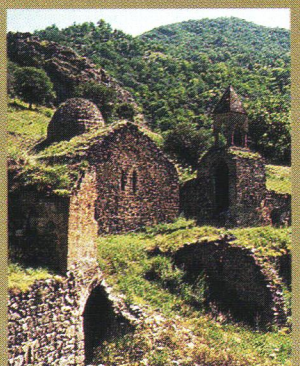


Sebastia fawn

Sardarabad field



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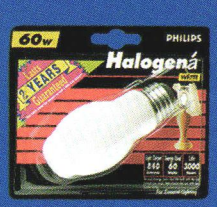

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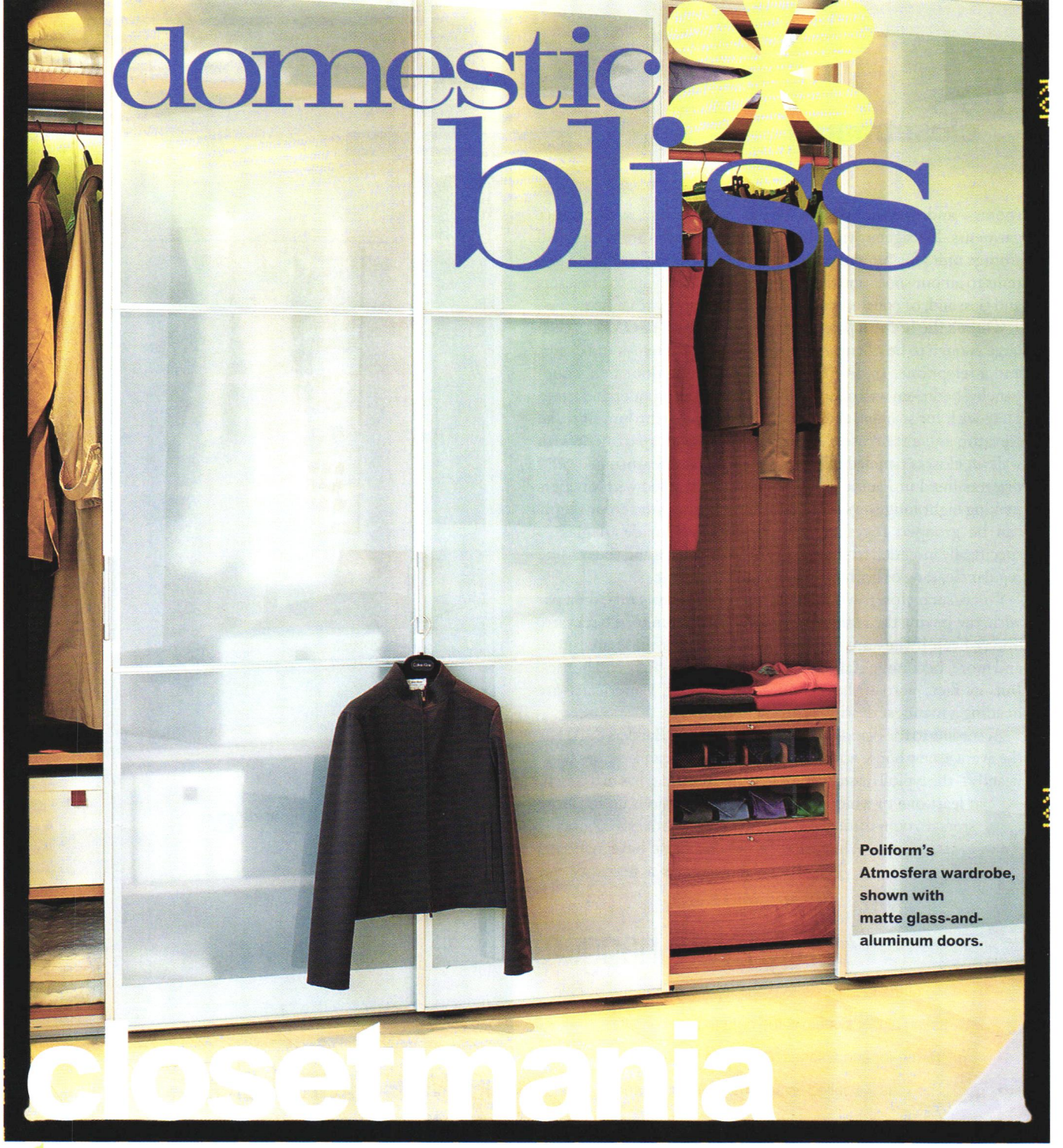
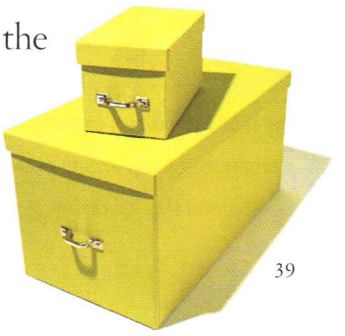


Poliform's Atmosfera wardrobe, shown with matte glass-and-aluminum doors.

closetmania

THE EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN CLOSET is inextricably linked to the nation's burgeoning passion for fashion. "Clothing has become more than something we use to cover our bodies—it's something we collect," says Los Angeles interior designer Celia Cleary. "A closet is now a place to display your Prada shoes, your Gucci bags. It's a mini-museum for clothes. You look at all the things you have and get a little rush." Pride of possession seems to be the motivating force behind the making of many of the closets at the high end of the housing scale. Plenty of these

hot goods
page 50



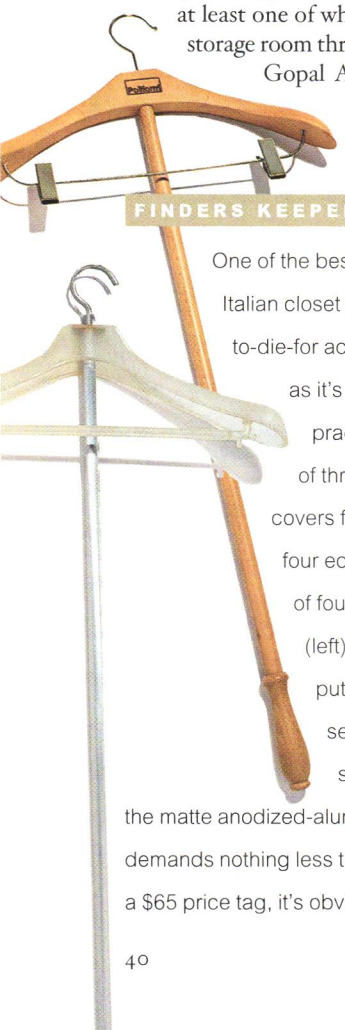
EDITED BY DAN SHAW

rooms—and they are rooms—are designed literally to protect garments. De rigueur trappings include temperature-controlled storage units for fur and pashmina; windows and ventilation systems to air out shoes and clothes; specialized shelving for sweaters and ties; and, of course, moth-proof cedar cupboards.

There's the house in Los Angeles with his-and-her closets, each large enough to be a living room, each with sofas, tables and chairs, and a telephone. In one Texas home, a simple door in a wood-paneled bedroom wall opens into a secret closet wonderland, complete with fur storage, cedar-lined cabinets, a bathroom suite, an elevator, and a staircase. Or the New York City apartment with walk-in closets paneled in macassar ebony and featuring jewelry drawers lined in Pacific cloth, sock drawers fitted with dividers making eight long rows so pairs of hose in the same color family can be grouped together, and shoe shelves made of glass—specifically intended to show any dust that collects and thus ensure regular cleaning of both furnishings and footwear.

Once, such closets would have been an extravagance on a par with, say, having the Hanging Gardens of Babylon for a backyard. Today, even if they are luxuries, spaces such as these are, more and more, becoming standard accoutrements in high-end houses. But in fact, across the economic spectrum, Americans are heeding a manifest destiny of storage space.

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the average new house now contains seven closets, and—more significantly—the typical master bedroom in that residence has two closets, at least one of which is a walk-in. "The trend is up for more storage room throughout the house," says NAHB economist Gopal Ahluwalia. "Kitchens must have pantries. The three-car garage is a necessity not



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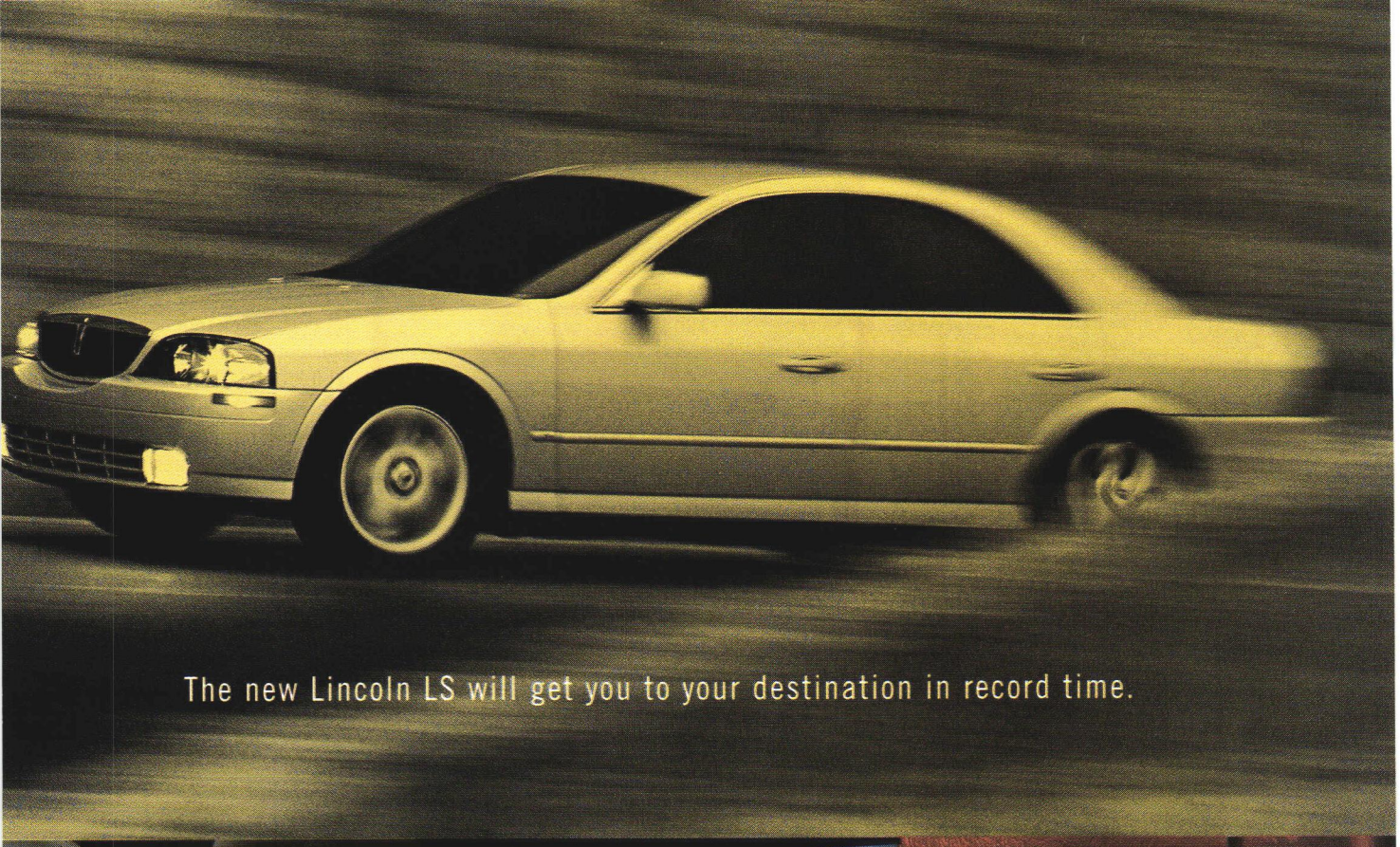
high-wire hangers

One of the best perks to come from ordering an upscale Italian closet system is the right to purchase the to-die-for accessories. Poliform's "inner equipment," as it's called, is seriously sensuous and practically dares you to stay organized. A set of three large ecru linen-covered boxes with covers for storing sweaters or miscellany is $326; four ecru muslin garment bags cost $336; a set of four massive walnut-dyed beech skirt hangers (left) with a bar handle that makes it easy to put them on a high rod is $308. B&B Italia's semitransparent plastic hanger (far left) is sold separately. It comes with or without the matte anodized-aluminum handle and is so cool that it demands nothing less than a Jil Sander suit or Prada parka. With a $65 price tag, it's obviously a hanger for designer clothes only.

Poliform's Senzafine closet

the well-tailored closet

Just like Milanese fashions, Italian closet systems—by POLIFORM, B&B ITALIA, and DOMA—are sleek and sophisticated. The configurations and options are seemingly limitless, which is one reason Poliform calls the system above Senzafine, which means "without end." Marianne Razavi, Poliform's U.S. marketing manager, says, "You can take these closets with you when you move and add to them if you need to for your new home." As with great clothes, it's the tailoring and the details that translate into high prices. This closet (with two more bays not shown) costs $12,705. 1. DOORS come in a variety of stylish finishes, from opaque glass to colorful lacquers. 2. PULL-DOWN CLOTHES BAR makes it easy to hang garments on a high rod. 3. LIGHTS and SHELVES allow for the creation of dramatic still lifes. 4. FRAMES come in lacquer, Italian walnut, and American cherry or pearwood. 5. DRAWERS have removable felt dividers for storing jewelry. 6. SHELVES are padded to cradle delicate ties and belts.



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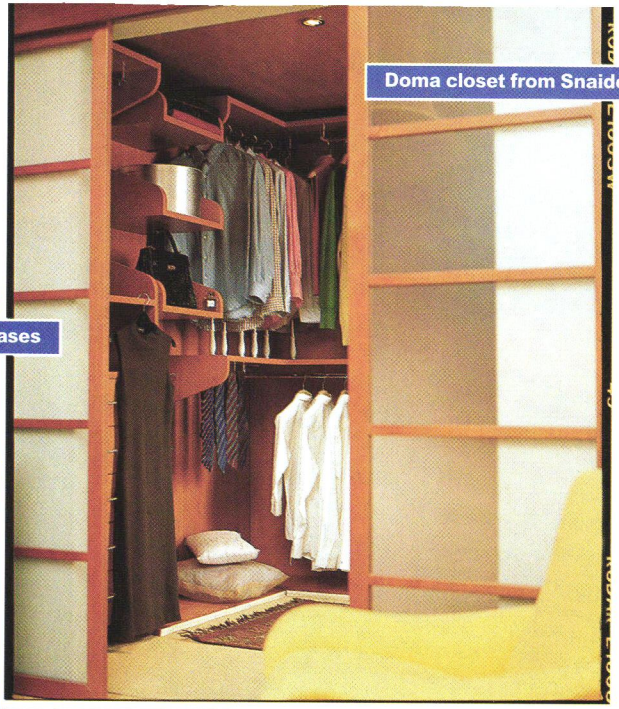
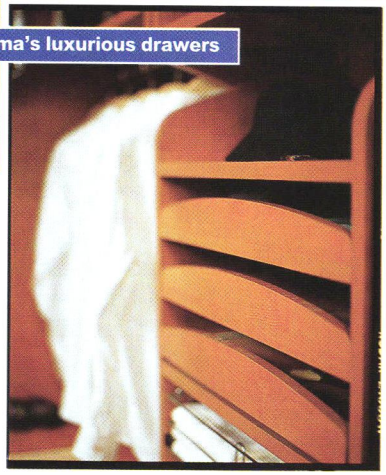
bliss closetmania

Poliform's display cases



Doma closet from Snaidero



Doma's luxurious drawers

because the family owns three cars, but because they want the extra room for storage. Americans today simply have more stuff."

As once-private areas like bedrooms and even bathrooms have become "showcase" sections of the home, a room-sized closet can serve as a sanctuary. Austin, Texas, architectural designer John Mayfield recalls one client who came to him to ask that he create a giant closet extension for her bedroom. "She said she wanted her own little nest," Mayfield says. "She wanted a little secret area she could hide in and play." Charles Bohl, an architect based in Annapolis, Maryland, was asked to design a closet to accommodate a chandelier—a family heirloom that the owner loved but which didn't fit with the decor of the house. "Having it in the closet rather than in the attic brings her pleasure," Bohl notes. "The closet is the most intimate place in the house." Yet some designers argue that for those who own much, the grand closet serves neither to burnish the ego nor offer a refuge. "One of the things our clients most appreciate is when we give them more storage space than they need," says Manhattan interior designer Bruce Bierman, who arranges closets whose primary purpose, whatever the rich trappings, is to impose order on the chaos of clothing. "Everything has to be convenient. The true luxury is function."

Bierman's own closet is a model for those he designs for clients. He groups his hanging clothes by color and has built-in shelves just for sweaters, ties, and luggage (which allows for quick, easy packing). He has a little storage area for shoe polishing equipment, and he designed those long, slotted sock drawers to organize his hosiery. A prospective client once took a meeting with Bierman in the designer's home. Even after Bierman had walked him through the house, discussing features in the living room, the kitchen, and the bedroom, the client was wavering. Finally, they reached Bierman's closet. "He took one look at the sock drawer and said, 'You're hired,' " Bierman recalls. "He said, 'If you're that obsessive about socks, you're the designer for me.' "

—GREGORY CERIO

the un-private closet

In Houston, fashionable women don't accessorize just their clothes with jewels and handbags, they decorate their closets with them, too. Interior designer Pepe Anderson hangs her oversized necklaces on antique candelabras perched atop a cabinet in her closet. Necklaces of Naga Indian beads and bear claws are dramatically draped on two antique Chinese figurines. Turquoise squash-blossom brooches nestle in the branches of silver palm trees. The overall effect is one of a well-appointed antiques store. Philanthropist Linda Finger, who creates jewelry from vintage tassels and ribbons, keeps her favorite pieces on eight 18-inch mannequins dressed in antique garments. Each doll has its own shelf in her closet, though Finger has been known to use them as centerpieces at her dinner parties. Socialite Katherine Rauch's glittery animal-shaped Judith Leiber purses are arranged like knickknacks on her coffee table. "My living room *is* my purse closet," she says. —FRENCHY FALIK

Pepe Anderson's closet, below; Linda Finger's mannequins, left.

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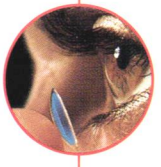
1636
Tulip Frenzy Devastates
Dutch Economy

1801
Hope Diamond Cut

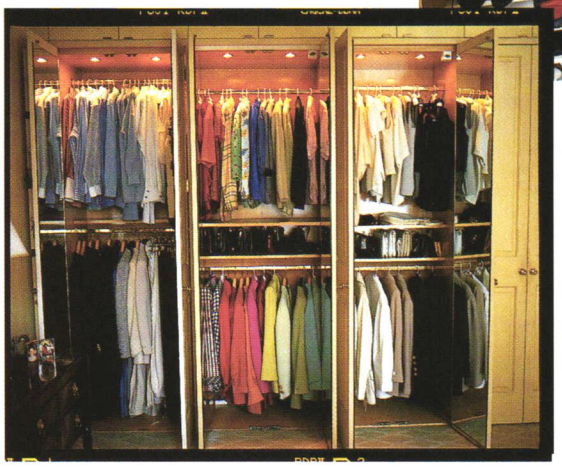


1984
Colored Contacts
Fool Millions

1999
The Torpedo Vase
$19.99 at Target

bliss closetmania

stephanie's stuff



The world is divided into two types of people," says New York interior designer Stephanie Stokes. "There are those who look at my shoe closet and say, 'You have *so many* shoes!' and those who say, 'Where do you keep the others?' " (Indeed, the "others" —her evening shoes—have a closet of their own.) In Stokes's elegant Park Avenue apartment, everything has its proper place. "There is a great deal of beauty in function," says Stokes, who developed many of her storage strategies when she lived in "the most beautiful apartment on the Upper East Side, with Gothic windows and fourteen-foot ceilings," which was, alas, only a studio. Always looking for ways to hide and organize things, she one day "found two inches," which she turned into her now trademark sideways series of drawers for earrings and necklaces. "I love mathematics and chess, so creating storage is like a game to me."

The game can be won, she says, only if you have a good cabinetmaker. Most visitors don't realize that her apartment has several wall-to-wall closets. Though it looks like a simple passage, the hallway connecting the foyer and her bedroom is a "gem of woodworking." The "walls" contain a silver cabinet, two coat closets, and space for boots, evening clothes, vases, and a filing cabinet. "I don't have that many closets," she insists. "I just have well-designed storage."—D.S.

Interior designer Stephanie Stokes has time to relax in her Manhattan living room, top left, because she never wastes precious minutes searching for pants or pumps in her immaculate closets. The two-inch-deep vertical drawers for earrings, above, are built into the wall next to her day-clothes closets, above left.

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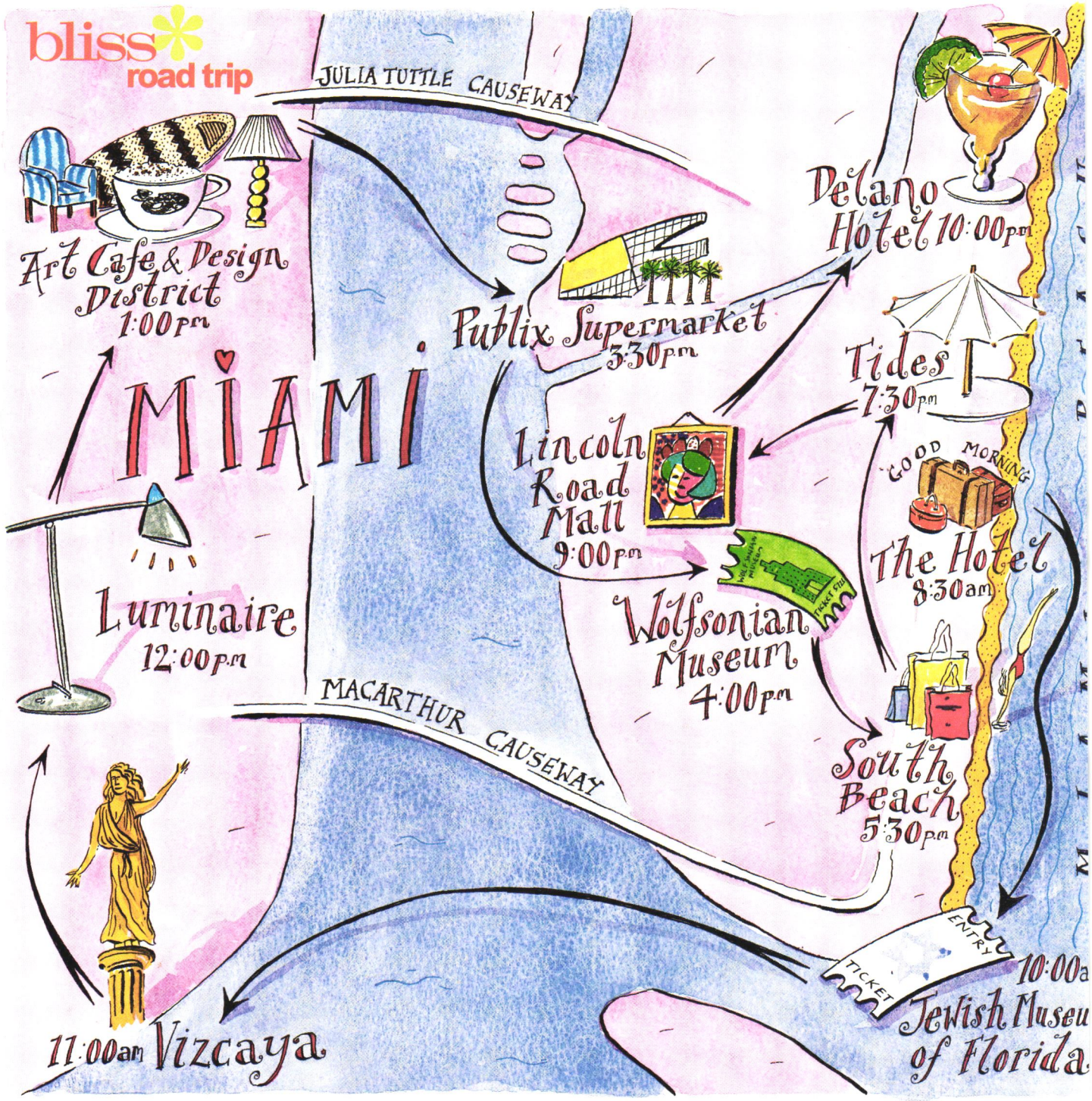

a very house & garden day in . . . **miami**

Rainy days are always a good excuse for shopping and touring museums. But even when it's sunny, our itinerary beats a day at the beach. **8:30 A.M.** The most fashionable way to start the day is to wake up at **The Hotel** (801 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach; 305-531-2222; http://thehotelofsouthbeach.com). Fashion designer Todd Oldham used his trademark acid-flashback style with restraint in decorating this 1939 inn, so even minimalists will enjoy the vaguely psychedelic tiles in the bathroom and the tie-dyed robes. **9:30 A.M.** If leisurely breakfasts aren't your style, grab an espresso (just $.60) at **Puerto Sagua** (700 Collins Avenue), a Cuban coffee shop that's a remnant of the old South Beach. Or pick up your hometown paper at **News Cafe** (800 Ocean Drive; 305-538-6397) and watch the fashion models head to work. **10:00 A.M.** Before it was a gay-friendly ghetto, the Art Deco district of South Beach was a sun-washed shtetl. At the **Sanford L. Ziff Jewish Museum of Florida** (301 Washington Avenue; 305-672-5044), there are exhibits that chronicle the gray old days and a gift shop where you can find seder plates and non-Deco mezuzahs. **11:00 A.M.** The late Gianni Versace, who was shot on the steps of the grand palazzo he'd renovated on Ocean Drive, must have been inspired by **Vizcaya** (3251 South Miami Avenue; 305-250-9133), the Italianate mansion that industrialist James Deering built in 1916. The bay-front house and formal gardens are the definition of tropical splendor. The offerings

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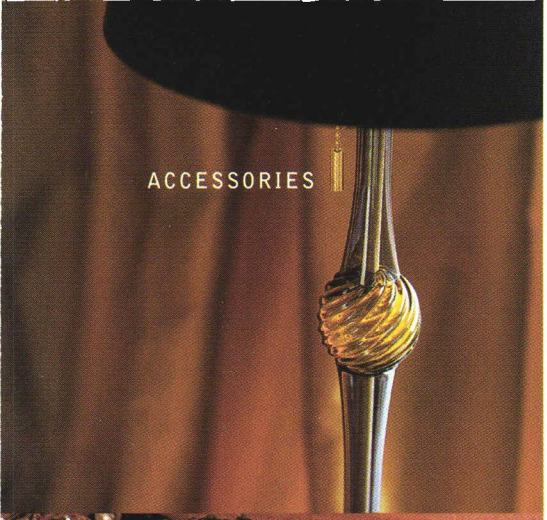
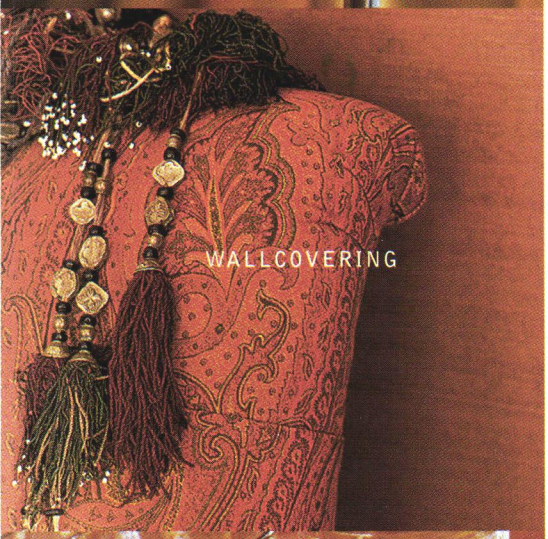
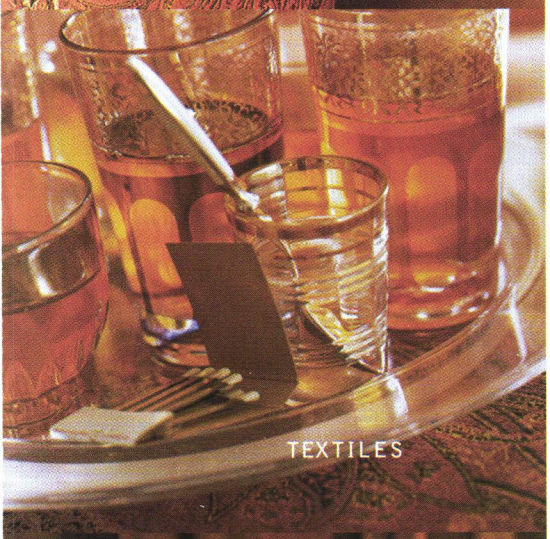
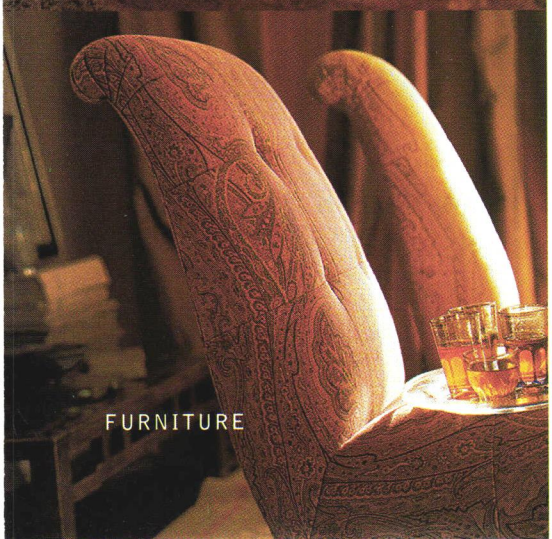


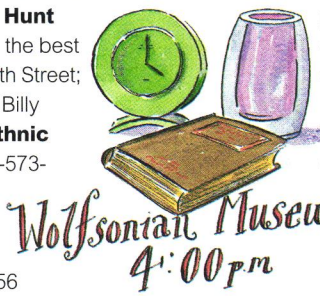


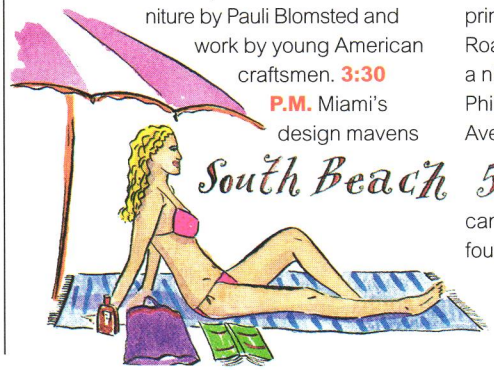




bliss road trip

at Vizcaya's gift shop range from antique cups and saucers to a $3,200 bronze sculpture of Neptune. **12:00 P.M.** For 25 years, Nasir Kassamali has been advocating the value of good design at **Luminaire** (2331 Ponce de Leon Boulevard; 305-448-7367; www.luminaire.com), his stunning showcase for furniture and accessories by Piero Lissoni, Antonio Citterio, Ingo Maurer, and others. Just browsing is educational: all of Luminaire's salesclerks have B.A.s in design. The two display kitchens, by John Pawson for Obumex, make a visit to this Coral Gables landmark an imperative. **1:00 P.M.** When effervescent architect Alison Spear needs to refuel, she goes to the **Art Cafe** (3918 North Miami Avenue; 305-573-2439), an unpretentious storefront where even the humble tuna fish salad is made with homemade mayo. **1:30 P.M.** Real estate developer Craig Robins is behind the renaissance of Miami's historic **Design District**, where to-the-trade showrooms are open to the public. **ICF, Knoll,** and **Waterworks** have recently opened in the neighborhood, and **Holly Hunt** arrives in December. Right now, the best shops include **Orson** (74 NE 40th Street; 305-573-6805), with an eclectic Billy Haines/Hollywood sensibility; **Ethnic Design** (53 NE 40th Street; 305-573-8118), which carries exquisite African items, including ceremonial knives that look like sculpture; **World Resources** (56 NE 40th Street; 305-576-8799), which has Indonesian furniture and accessories that are the essence of tropical living; **Sola Topee** (3925 NE Second Avenue; 305-576-8510), where oversized white upholstery paired with polished dark woods is a riff on Anglo-Indian decorating; **Leah's Gallery** (191 NE 40th Street; 305-573-9700), whose over-the-top Venetian chandeliers and exuberant sculptures appeal to the sensibilities of locals like Sly Stallone; and **Forecast** (180 NE 39th Street; 305-572-1111), which carries Deco furniture by Pauli Blomsted and work by young American craftsmen. **3:30 P.M.** Miami's design mavens have all made pilgrimages to the new **Publix** supermarket in Miami Beach (1921 West Avenue). It was designed by avant-garde Ecuadorian architect Carlos Zapata, who won kudos for his renovation of the Rubell family's **Albion Hotel** (1650 James Avenue; 305-913-1000). **4:00 P.M.** **The Wolfsonian** museum (1001 Washington Avenue; 305-531-1001) is devoted to furniture, decorative arts, paintings, books, and ephemera that demonstrate how design expresses and reflects human experience. While the museum is filled with beautiful things (mostly from 1885 to 1945), it is the sociocultural context the curators give them that makes this museum unique and provocative. **5:30 P.M.** Go for a swim in the ocean or stroll the South Beach shopping district around Eighth and Collins, where you'll find **Sephora, Armani Exchange, Cynthia Rowley, Phat Farm, Versace Jeans,** and a **Banana Republic** housed in a neatly rehabbed Art Deco apartment building. **7:30 P.M.** For a glamorous al fresco dinner, eat under a white umbrella on the broad steps of the **Tides** hotel (1220 Ocean Drive; 305-604-5000). Unlike other outdoor restaurants on the strip, it has Sinatra on the sound system instead of Puff Daddy. **9:00 P.M.** Stroll the Morris Lapidus–designed **Lincoln Road Mall**, which has dozens of outdoor cafes. Romero Britto is the Keith Haring of Miami, and his paintings, beach towels, and prints are sold at **Britto Central** (818 Lincoln Road; www.britto.com). **10:00 P.M.** Have a nightcap with the Beautiful People at Philippe Starck's **Delano** hotel (1685 Collins Avenue; 305-674-6160). If the air-conditioning proves too powerful, head to the gift shop, where you can purchase a pashmina shawl, the current four-season symbol of chic. —D.S.





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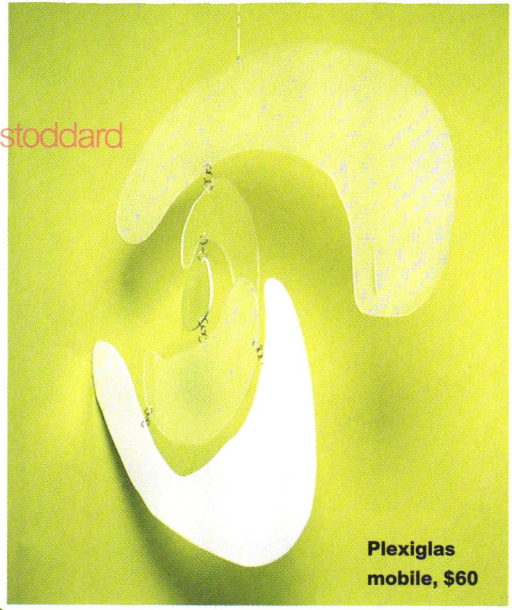
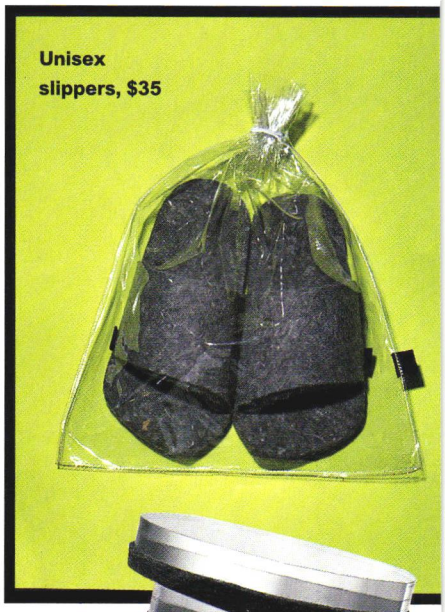
bliss hot goods

by brooke stoddard

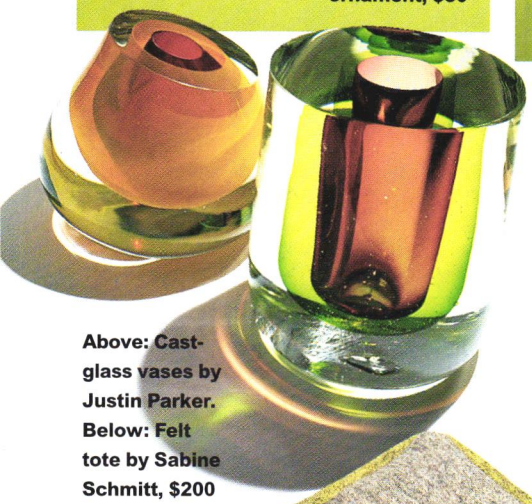
Glass snowball ornament, $50



Plexiglas mobile, $60



Unisex slippers, $35

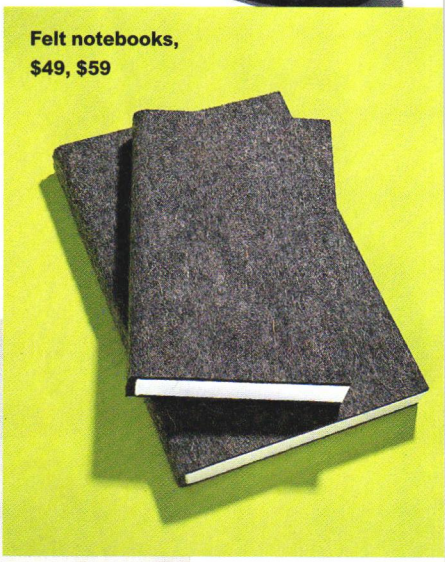


Above: Cast-glass vases by Justin Parker. Below: Felt tote by Sabine Schmitt, $200

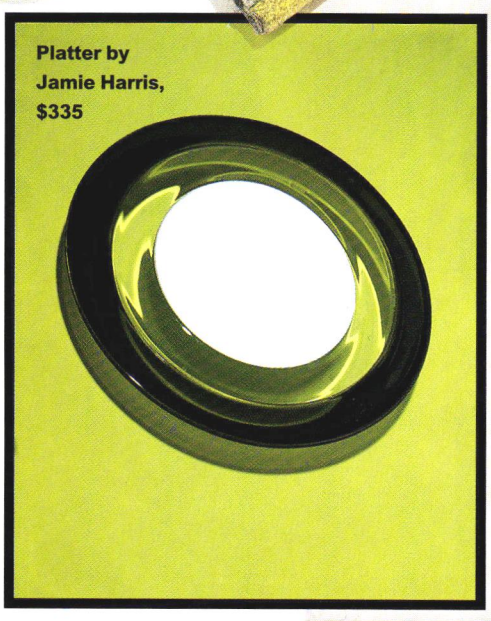
felt forum

At Troy (138 Green Street; 212-941-4777), the design mecca in New York's SoHo, you always find what's hot *and* cool. The source for furniture and lighting by international stars like Belgian minimalist Maarten Van Severen and New York's Jeffrey Bernett, Troy now has its own gift collection as well. Called Felt Winter, these accessories were conceived by creative director Chris Kraig, who was inspired by "the icy coolness of a winter day with dark gray skies." He used contrasting textures of cozy industrial felt, clear Lucite, and frosty glass to create the ten-piece collection, which includes unisex slippers, a Calderesque mobile, felt-covered notebooks, and icicle-like swizzle sticks. Troy's regular merchandise—such as chunky cast-glass vases by Justin Parker, lime linen storage boxes, and platters by glass artist Jamie Harris—makes great gifts, too.

Set of six coasters, $52

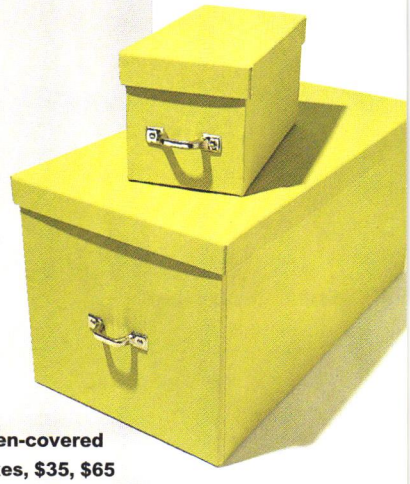


Felt notebooks, $49, $59



Platter by Jamie Harris, $335

TROY



Linen-covered boxes, $35, $65

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clothes calls

Even as Banana Republic readies its E-commerce site (www.BananaRepublic.com) for an October debut, the retailer is coming up with clever ways to make its traditional brick-and-mortar stores more interactive, too. At the two big flagships opening this fall at Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade and New York's Rockefeller Center, shoppers will be able to hand their Palm organizers to a salesclerk who will upload a store directory and map along with a "Do This" list of cool places and events in the vicinity. Customers can also check their cellular phones for recharging. (The stores will keep on hand chargers for six of the most popular phones.) This fringe benefit begets another one: You won't have to listen to so many shoppers calling their friends to discuss what they are buying. —D.S.

mouse & garden

Holidays loom on my horizon for weeks, then rush upon me, leaving me without a gift in hand or—more to the point, since my family lives many states away—in the mail. Fortunately, just before last Mother's Day, I discovered **garden.com.** It's a terrific site, packed with plants to order and plenty of gardening advice. Every aspect of the site is easy to use. I typed in my mother's zip code, and garden.com calculated that her garden's hardiness zone was 8. My mother and I love certain herbs, so I scrolled to the site's efficient search engine and typed in "lavender" and "rosemary." Amazingly, garden.com offers at least a half dozen varieties of both herbs. Each is photographed and clearly described. Opting for a mixed selection of each herb, I estimated the number of plants needed to fill the beds of my parents' small parterre garden. My imagination was already filling with the heady fragrance they would enjoy in a few months. The young plants arrived in Mississippi on time and in perfect condition. Now we're waiting to see which variety handles the heat best. —NEWELL TURNER

outlet shopping (with crowd control)

Bluefly.com protects you from the mob mentality of discount shopping in the pre-virtual age. You don't have to sift through piles of twin-sized Frette sheets, frantically searching for the one king, because Bluefly's technology eliminates the hit-or-miss aspect of outlet shopping. When you click on your personal "catalogue," Bluefly offers you items they carry that fit your criteria. If you want Navajo-print Ralph Lauren throw pillows, just let Bluefly know—and as soon as your ship comes in, they will flash you an E-mail. Of course, you can always wander through the digital aisles the old-fashioned way; how else would you ever find that Gucci bottle opener? —ROB HASKELL

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RESIDENCES **A Georgian house in London and a flat in Paris**

EDUCATION **Art school in Paris**

I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT **Taking my contact lenses out**

I ONLY SLEEP ON **I can sleep anywhere on anything**

THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I WAKE IS **Embrace my husband, playwright David Hare**

MY REFRIGERATOR IS ALWAYS STOCKED WITH **Mineral water**

MY FAVORITE PLACE TO READ IS **On the beach**

THE BEST VIEW IN MY HOUSE IS **From my study looking onto my garden**

MY FAVORITE WORK OF ART IS **A portrait of Diego by Giacometti**

THE LAST PIECE OF FURNITURE I BOUGHT FOR MYSELF WAS **A kitchen table, at the flea market in Paris**

MY LIVING ROOM IS VACUUMED BY **Tess, my housekeeper**

THE MOST USED ROOM IN MY HOUSE IS **The bedroom**

THE PIECE OF ART I MOST COVET FOR MY OWN HOME IS **A Paula Rego painting**

MY DREAM HOUSE IS **By the sea, surrounded by trees, in France**

A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME UNLESS **It is peaceful**

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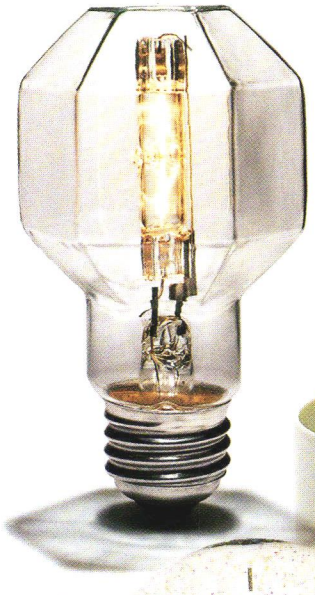
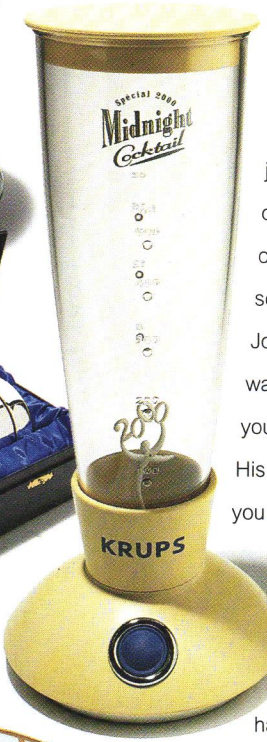
midnight madness





WHAT Millennium merchandise.

Y2K NOT From bulbs to blenders, dozens of manufacturers are marking the year 2000 with commemorative products. While most seem destined to go the way of Pet Rocks, some are bound to be collectibles.

HISTORIC HYSTERIA With a worldwide blitzkrieg usually reserved for productions such as the Olympics or a Disney movie, the millennium is, for better or worse, an equal-opportunity marketing event.

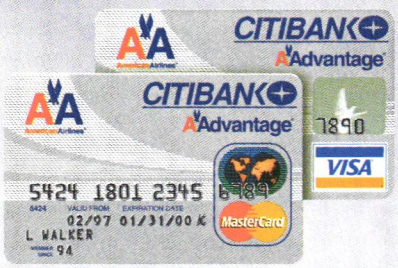
BUG BYTES John Hardy has turned a one-joke, year-end computer glitch into jewelry-cum-flashlights covered with creepy-crawlies. Jim DeMattei, senior vice president of John Hardy, says, "He wants to help you light your way into the future." His bottle opener lets you "corkscrew your way into the future."

TIME AFTER TIME Sligh Furniture and Howard Miller have placed their bets on limited-edition grandfather clocks with engraved dials and plaques commemorating the year 2000. "They are definitely meant to be heirlooms and are of heirloom quality," says Mark Siciliano, a spokesman for Howard Miller. "If they'll be collector's items, only time will tell." You can bury that joke along with a silver time capsule from the Exposures catalogue.

LIKE IT'S 1999 In a New York loft or on the beach in Bali, hosts will find a dizzying array of party gear for their New Year's Eve bash emblazoned with millennium references: embroidered napkins from Pottery Barn and Garnet Hill, Ken Walker's 01-01-00 brand line of plastic champagne glasses and ice buckets, and a portable cocktail blender by KRUPS. Philips is using America's biggest New Year's Eve party to market its Halogená 2000 light bulb, which will debut with Waterford's brand-new crystal ball made for Times Square.

IT'S A KEEPER After the confetti is swept away, some things will survive: imaginative espresso cups from Mono, a Saks water globe with icons of the century, and china and crystal from Asprey & Garrard. A British government agency has given the latter permission to stamp their commemorative silver with a hallmark that indicates not only the year but the high silver content of their dishes, champagne flutes, and napkin rings. It sounds like the deal of the century. —JOYCE BAUTISTA

From top: Philips Lighting Company's Halogená 2000 light bulb; Mono's Doppio porcelain demitasses; Water Globe from Saks Fifth Avenue; silver-plated time capsule from Exposures catalogue; KRUPS Midnight Cocktail battery-operated mixer; palm wood corkscrew from the John Hardy Collection; bone china from Asprey & Garrard.



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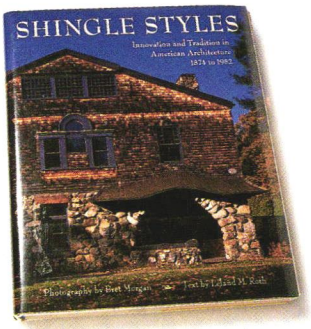
Sometimes, the further we go from civilization,

* Miles are earned on purchases only. The maximum number of AAdvantage miles you can earn with the Citibank AAdvantage card is 60,000 miles per calendar year (purchases recorded on your Jan. - Dec. billing statements). American Airlines®, AAdvantage Executive Platinum®, AAdvantage Platinum® and AAdvantage Gold® members are excluded from this limit.** Bonus mileage can be earned only by new Citibank AAdvantage cardmembers approved through this offer, which expires 3/31/00. Miles will appear as a bonus on your billing statement after you have made your first card purchase. AAdvantage, AAdvantage Executive Platinum, AAdvantage Platinum and AAdvantage Gold are marks of American Airlines, Inc. American Airlines reserves the right to change the AAdvantage program at any time without notice. American Airlines is not responsible for products and services offered by other participating companies. The Citibank AAdvantage card is issued by Citibank (South Dakota), N.A. This offer is not available in Puerto Rico and the U.S.Virgin Islands. © 1999 Citibank (South Dakota), N.A.

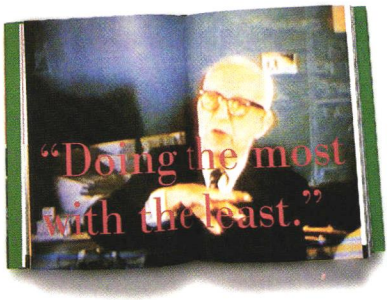
bliss bookcase by lygeia grace

master minds

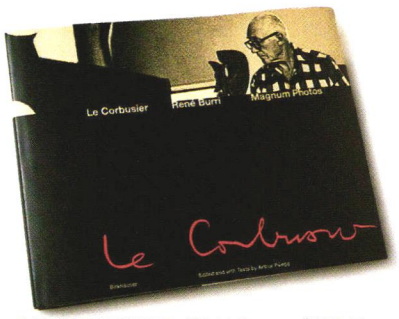
this month, indulge yourself with a satchel full of illustrated volumes on some of the giants of architecture and landscape design: Le Corbusier, R. Buckminster Fuller, and Humphry Repton. Or specialize, and pick up the latest dispatch from the horticultural world: an illustrated encyclopedia of the tulip.



SHINGLE STYLES (Abrams, $49.50) Leland M. Roth has assembled an engaging time line of this all-American architectural tradition, first championed by Charles McKim in 1874 and still thriving today.

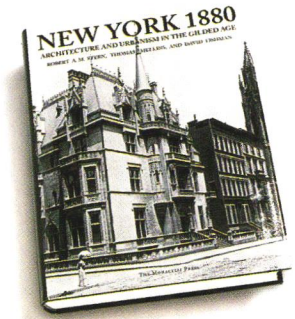


YOUR PRIVATE SKY (Lars Müller, $65) This is an exuberant portrait of R. Buckminster Fuller, the visionary who exhorted us to "think global, act local" and devised the geodesic dome and the concept of Spaceship Earth.

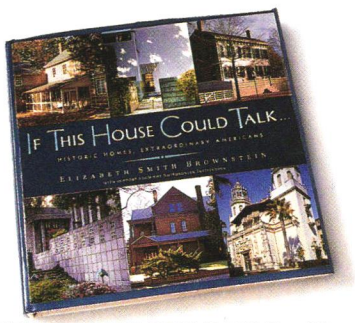


LE CORBUSIER (Birkhäuser, $80) The images of the master inspecting a construction site with the Dominican Fathers, his clients, are reason enough to own this portfolio of candid photos by René Burri.

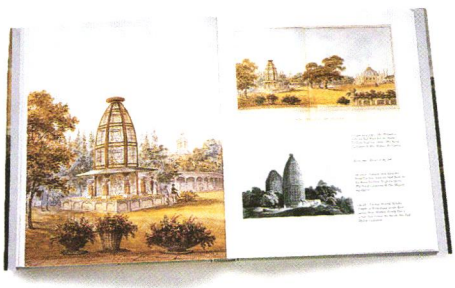
TULIPA (Artisan, $65) Christopher Baker's paean to the current *it* flower, this photographic botanical—with detailed notes by grower Willem Lemmers—captures the tulip in all of its infinitely splendid variations.



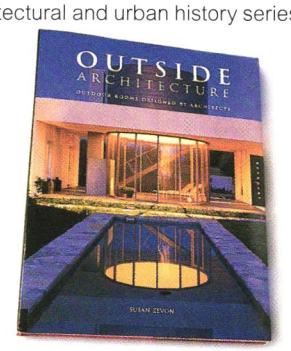
NEW YORK 1880 (Monacelli, $85) Robert A. M. Stern's passion for Gotham is contagious. The city's gilded age is the star of the fourth installment in his fascinating architectural and urban history series.



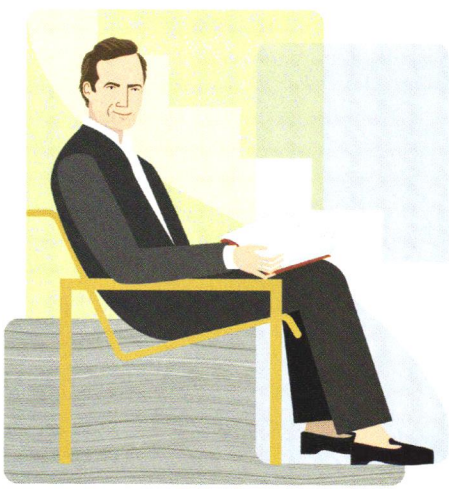
IF THIS HOUSE COULD TALK... (Simon & Schuster, $35) Elizabeth Smith Brownstein's entertaining architectural tour brings to life the residents and designers of 26 of America's most treasured houses.



HUMPHRY REPTON (Yale, $60) With more than 400 commissions, this 18th-century landscape gardener reshaped the Georgian countryside. As this beautiful volume makes clear, Repton transformed his field, too.



OUTSIDE ARCHITECTURE (Rockport, $50) Susan Zevon's album plays upon our fascination with open-air enclosures—from a romantic tree-house bathing pavilion to an arid stone and adobe desert courtyard.



REQUIRED READING architect lee mindel's hit list

"THE INTERNET is my favorite book. It's my most important source for information. I'm able to find almost anything and anybody at any time." LES ANNÉES SERIES, FROM 1910 TO 1980 by Anne Bony (Éditions du Regard) "Architecture isn't an isolated art form. These books put the development of design into a historical and cultural context." ARCHITECTURAL GRAPHIC STANDARDS (John Wiley & Sons) "It includes charts, dimensions, and information on materials for construction. You can check the height of a toilet for the right clearance. It's like reading a trivia book that goes on and on." TEN BOOKS ON ARCHITECTURE—VITRUVIUS POLLIO (Cambridge University Press) "A great reference book about all of the classical orders of architecture." THE HISTORY OF ART by H. W. Janson (Abrams) "A textbook we all used in school, it goes way back to cave paintings. It's like the Cliff's Notes of the history of art and architecture."

HER TABLE WAS SO LOVELY, NOBODY MENTIONED THE MARSHMALLOWS ON THE GREEN BEANS.

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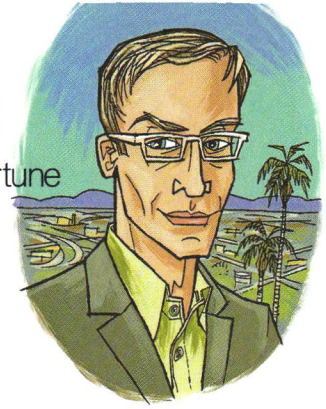
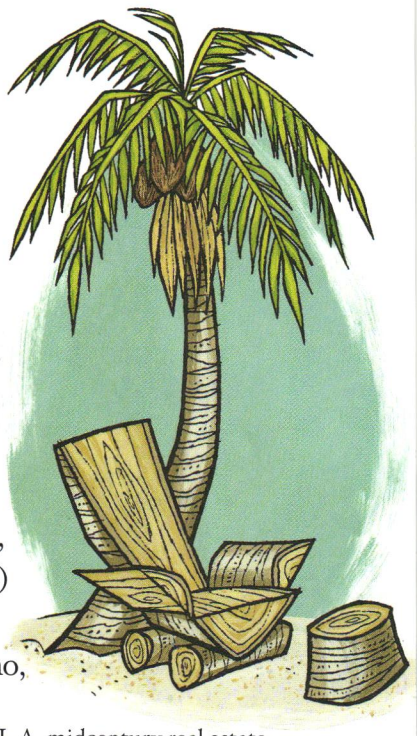
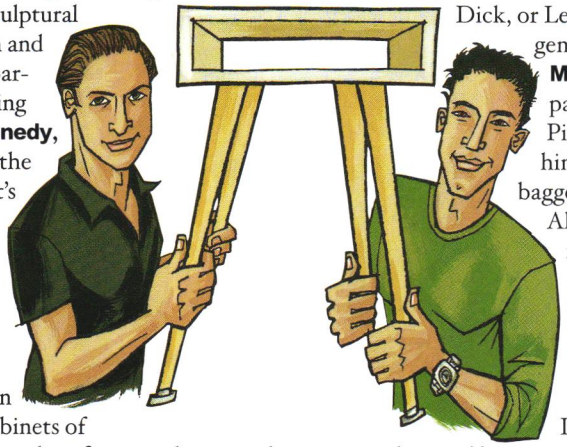




double your fun-iture

We've had twin actors, models, directors, and artists, so don't you think it's about time for twin furniture designers? Well, in L.A., it is! **The Joannides Bros.** (Stephano and Christos) are 26, talented, and cute enough to get their own TV show. Both brothers arrived in L.A. from Cyprus in 1992 to attend college. Stephano, following in his father's footsteps, studied architecture. Christos, the sensible, grounded older twin (by five minutes), studied journalism and art. Together, they opened a design company in 1997, and in August 1998 a store, **Idea Space Design**, on South Robertson Boulevard, to showcase their work. "We wanted a store for young people who shared our aesthetic for simple, modern furniture but in an affordable price range—Ikea with punch," says Stephano. They also mix their designs with a groovy collection of cross-cultural furniture and sculptural pieces. "We like to keep it stylish and simple," Christos muses. So, apparently, do their customers, including **Neve Campbell** and **Jamie Kennedy**, who find the look complements the pan–Pacific Rim minimalism that's hot now. And in a town that loves a deal, who wouldn't like two for the price of one?

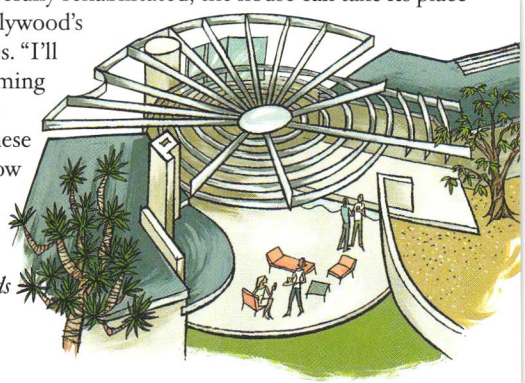


eco-coconut wood

With the world's supply of rare exotic trees being decimated at an insane rate to face the kitchen cabinets of the rich and shameless, it's time to take a firm stand against this unprecedented rape of an all too easily depleted resource. Sustainably managed rare woods are available from numerous sources now, and people who use illegally logged timber deserve to have a chain saw taken to them (let's see what you look like in cross-section, mister). To the rescue come **John St. Clair** and his Santa Monica–based **Coconut Timber Company**."I discovered coconut wood while building my brother-in-law's house in Fiji several years ago," St. Clair says. "The wood ranges from lightweight to heavy, is extremely durable, and when stained can resemble anything from oak to mahogany. After eighty years the trees begin to be less fertile, and eventually stop producing the palm oil they were grown for." Voilà, coco-wood! Unfortunately, the furniture that's been produced so far looks like something from Barney Rubble's attic. But sooner or later, decent designers will use this material with the style it deserves (Calling **Droog**, etc.). Meanwhile, the flooring, paneling, and columns available are fantastic and cheaper than rare woods. Anything that will save **Sting** another trip to the Amazon is (as you-know-who says) a good thing.

neutra no more

In the white-hot world of L.A. midcentury real estate, fads are dictated not only by which celebrity is buying which architectural gem but also by what properties are left on the market to buy. The lemminglike rush for all things Neutra has left few of the architect's good houses available. What's a poor, thwarted, modernist-hungry home hunter to do? Find a less lauded architect and pounce, before Tom, Dick, or Leonardo gets wind of your potential gem. Actress **Kelly Lynch** and writer **Mitch Glazer** are way ahead of the pack. They snagged a Neutra in Lone Pine when most people were confusing him with artificial sweetener! Now they've bagged **John Lautner**'s 1950 Harvey Aluminum house in Los Feliz. It was regarded by many as a masterpiece, and Lautner was horrified when the client, Pop-Top king Leo Harvey, decorated it in high–Lana Turner rococo. "The house had been raped with hideous Sheetrock remodels over the years," Lynch told me. "But we immediately saw the good bones under the bad Hollywood face-lift." Their other coup was finding the original contractor, John Delaveaux, who lives in Carson City and has lots of Lautner/Harvey gossip. "One of the reasons the house was so expensive to build was the acres of custom aluminum work: Harvey had an aluminum factory—Pop-Tops, get it?" says Glazer. Now carefully rehabilitated, the house can take its place among new Hollywood's legendary estates. "I'll have to keep coming up with money-makers to pay these bills," he says. How about a sitcom, Mitch? You could call it *Mr. Blandings Rebuilds His Midcentury Dream House*!



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bliss*
then and now by carolina irving

< 1966 **The jewel tones of Ungaro's layered dress echo the boho-luxe atmosphere of Shangri-la, the Hawaiian estate Doris Duke filled with Indian print fabrics, Persian antiquities, and French crystal.**

dressing rooms

One of my favorite games is matching dresses to decors—and the 1999 fall/winter couture collections set my imagination racing. A kaleidoscope of styles, the designs span continents and centuries, bringing to mind the houses and rooms I adore. Alexander McQueen's neo-medieval chain-mail headdress conjures up the gorgeous stony architecture of a fourteenth-century Italian castle; Jean Paul Gaultier's floor-length fox skirt exudes the same luxurious country air as Pauline de Rothschild's famous French-blue Mouton library; and Ungaro's layered rich-hippie ensemble could find no better setting than the extravagant Persian palace Doris Duke created for herself on a tropical estate in Hawaii. These may not be clothes for the everyday, but the fantastic environments that they evoke allow us to dream—and what better way to find decorating inspiration?

∧ 1996 **Tadao Ando's meditation space for UNESCO in Paris invites the same play of light as Chanel's otherworldly lattice dress.**

> 1910 **A mineral theme, bold colors, and a sleek cut make Thierry Mugler's malachite print dress a perfect fit for Adolf Loos's extraordinary Villa Karma.**

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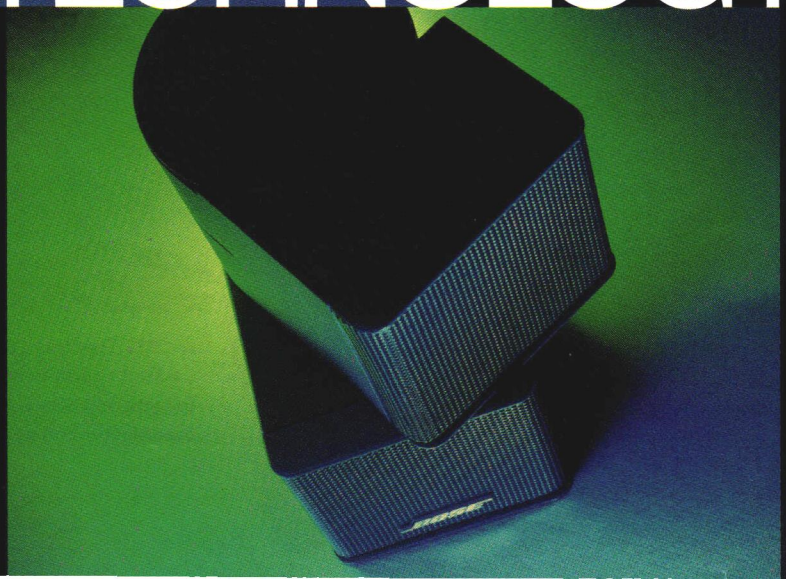
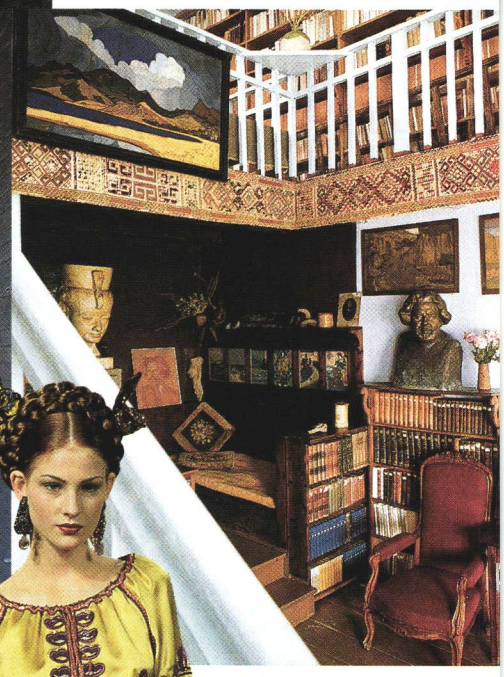


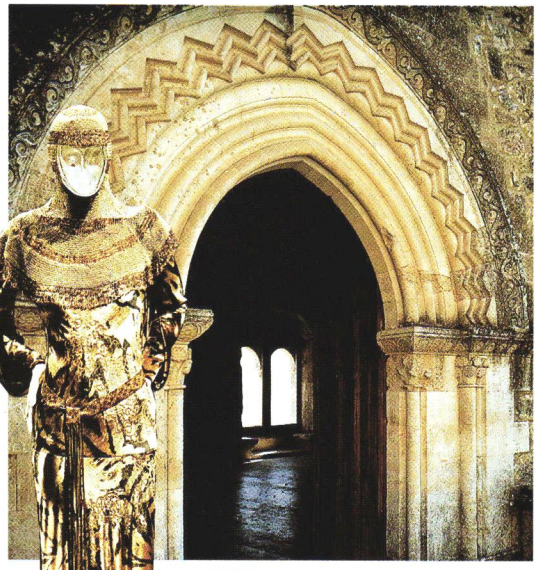
PRODUCTS SHOWN APPROXIMATELY 1/2 SIZE

bliss then and now

< 1962 Pauline de Rothschild's legendary ability to mix the antique with the new finds its perfect expression in the library of the family's Mouton estate. Jean Paul Gaultier's latest creation—with its simple top and outrageous fur skirt—exhibits a similarly restrained extravagance.



∧ 1893 Yves Saint Laurent's sophisticated peasant could have walked straight out of the house that Russian writer Maksimiliàn Volóshin designed and built for himself by the Crimean shore



∧ 1300s Alexander McQueen's improbably glamorous chain-mail dress for Givenchy and the fabled medieval Castello Mussomeli in the hills of Sicily are fortified with style.

∧ 1970 The dress that came down Christian Lacroix's runway reminds me of the supergraphics in Lynn and Steve Jacobson's Manhattan breakfast room, photographed by Horst.

"I'm not always neutral on color."

MARK POLLACK

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POLLACK & ASSOCIATES

cocktail hour

A chic, intimate cocktail party is the little black dress of entertaining. So when I have friends over for drinks, I keep it simple and elegant, pouring classic apéritifs like chilled Spanish sherry, Lillet, and champagne, and serving savory hors d'oeuvres that require minimal preparation. Marinated olives, salted almonds roasted at home, and Gail Monaghan's brilliant curry biscuits are sophisticated alternatives to the misguided cheese platter. Instead of offering crudités, I put out salted edamame (soybeans) or sliced fennel on a bed of crushed ice. Finally, I take extra care with presentation—my glass ice bucket from Hervé Baume in Avignon (011-33-1-4-90-86-37-66) makes bottles sparkle. And vintage cloth cocktail napkins, which I collect at flea markets and antiques shops, make even the simplest foods—like saucisson from Lyons—seem special, hon.

Apéritifs please the palate and stimulate the appetite for the meal ahead. Two gorgeous party drinks are white **Lillet** on ice with a slice of orange and **Campari** on ice with a splash of San Pellegrino and a wedge of lime.

Nuts are essential cocktail party fare. **Pistachios** from A.L. Bazzini in New York (212-334-1280; 800-228-0172) are my favorite.

I toss **blanched almonds** with butter and sea salt and toast them on a baking sheet until lightly browned. **Dark almonds** mixed with olive oil, chopped fresh rosemary, and salt also gain an edge from 8 to 10 minutes in the oven.

Instead of using fragile stemware, I choose **tumblers** in different sizes, like these Elsa Peretti thumb-print glasses from Tiffany & Co. (800-526-0649).

Emilio Lustau **dry Spanish sherry** is crisp and delicious paired with salty food. I keep it cold in a large Hôtel Silver **wine bucket** from Bergdorf Goodman (in NYC, 212-753-7300), with chilled sterling-silver Tiffany shot glasses at the ready.

I keep 3 or 4 bags of **edamame** (available at most Japanese groceries) on hand in the freezer. Boiled for 3 minutes, chilled in cold water, and then tossed with coarse salt, they are the perfect finger food.

So silky that it doesn't need crème fraîche or butter, Robert Morris's **smoked salmon** (in S.F., 650-588-7111; www.Morrissmokedfish.com) is heavenly on a dense multigrain wheat bread with a little dill.

Picholine olives are even more flavorful and aromatic after I marinate them overnight in olive oil, crushed garlic, orange peel, and sprigs of fresh rosemary.

Pile a silver plate high with sliced hard sausages: **saucisson** from Lyons and sweet cured Italian **saprossata**.

For piquant **bruscetta**, I top toasted baguette rounds with fresh salsas from Native Kjalii Foods (in S.F., 415-641-5808; www.sfsalsa.com). The fire-roasted papaya-mango blend is divine.

I love to serve food in glass, and the **Pomfret bowls** from Simon Pearce (in NYC, 212-334-2393) are discreet canvases for any kind of hors d'oeuvre.

The rich spice of Gail Monaghan's **curry biscuits** from Shi (in NYC, 212-334-4330) is a lively counterpoint to champagne.

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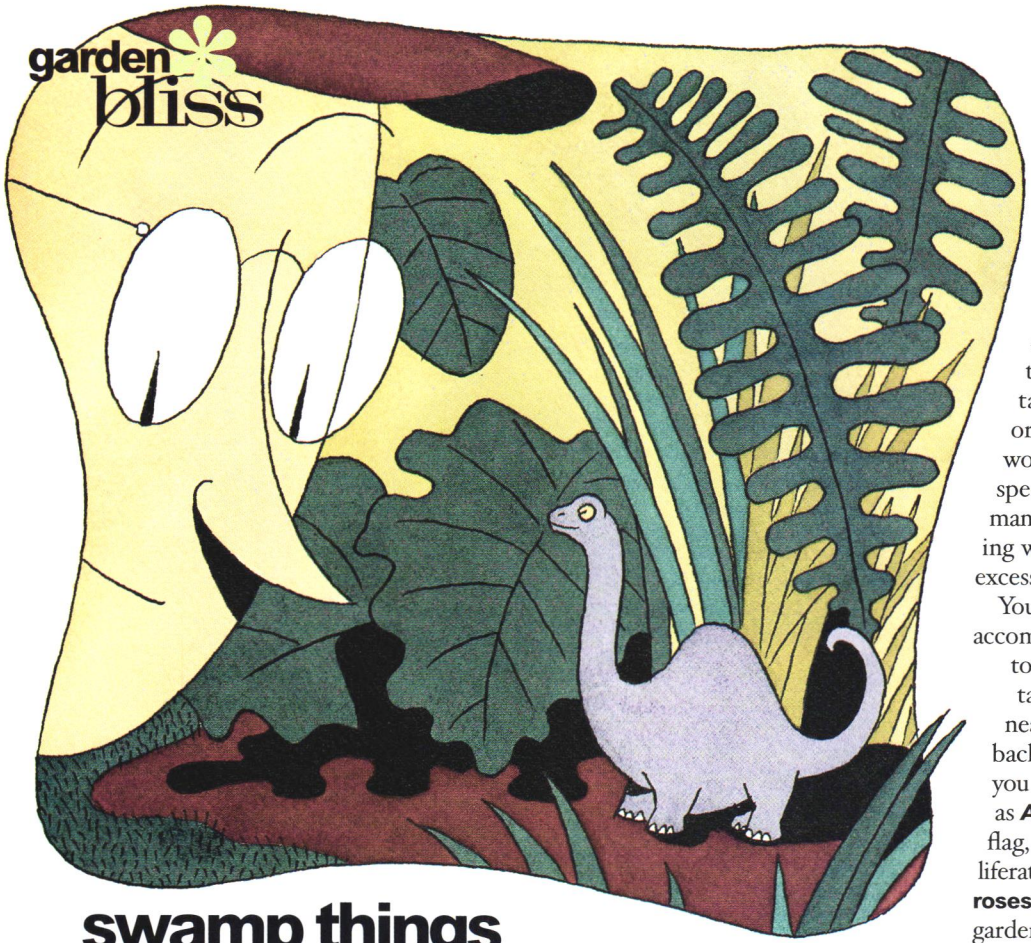


swamp things

Creating your own bog garden

Some gardeners collect hellebores, primulas, or antique roses. I collect garden oxymorons. My latest acquisition, "bog garden," joins such other incompatible couplings as "dwarf delphiniums," "wildlife garden," "beneficial insects," and my current favorite, "carefree roses." A bog garden sounds like a swamp landscaped by the set designer of *Jurassic Park,* or the scenes in 1940s jungle movies where the bad guy is slowly sucked into the murky ooze.

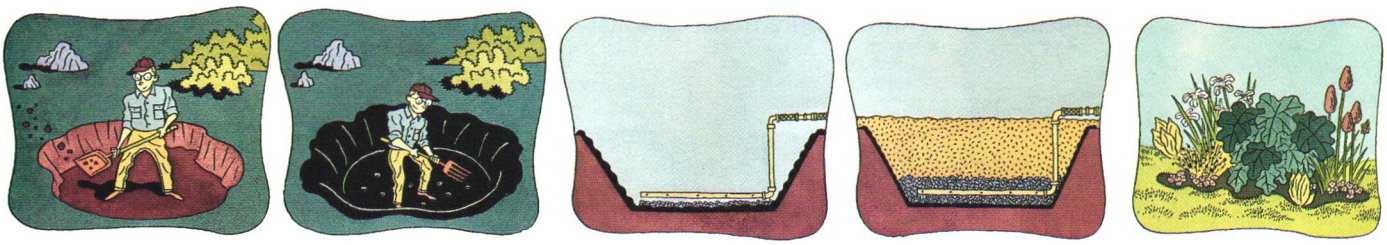
Even with these unpleasant associations, a moist bog is bound to have a certain allure after last summer's drought, which reduced East Coast lawns to the crunch of Extra Crispy Kentucky Fried Chicken and laid low even the most Xeriscaped landscapes. Always wet, yet with no standing water to attract mosquitoes, a man-made bog is a beautiful way to grow exotic or native moisture-loving plants. Just as you might build a raised bed for plants that insist on perfect drainage, a bog garden is constructed to grow plants that like their feet wet. Actually, "constructed" is a bit of an overstatement. Building a bog can be a simple Saturday project, the most difficult part of which is digging the hole.

Think of bog gardening as water gardening without the filters, pumps, algicides, or the dangers of a pond, but with the wonderful plants that pond owners usually grow in submerged pots: the native **common arrowhead,** sheets of golden **marsh marigolds** in spring, and **dwarf cattails** in summer. The bog allows a range of plants that not only would languish in your perennial border but would look silly there if you could persuade them to take hold. And unlike a natural bog or marshy area, where invasive plants won't yield their turf to more esoteric specimens, a man-made bog is easily managed. Once your plants fill in, weeding will be confined to pulling out the excess growth of the vigorous spreaders.

Your garden doesn't have to be big to accommodate a bog. A small fenced-in town-house garden might easily contain a boggy area in a shady corner near the fence. With rushes to form a background for tropical-looking ferns, you could add spiky yellow grasses, such as ***Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon'** or sweet flag, a **skunk cabbage**, and a vivid proliferation of pink and red **Japanese primroses**. A more spacious, sunnier bog garden might contain bigger bog lovers, such as **ligularias**, stately **royal ferns**, native red-spiked ***Lobelia cardinalis*** for late-summer fireworks, and, if you are willing to pull out the excess growth, the awe-inspiring giant-leaved ***Petasites japonica***, or butterbur. The swamp theme can be continued beyond the perimeter of the bog by adding plants that like moisture but can tolerate ordinary conditions. **Pussy willows**, native **azaleas** and **rhododendrons**, and **lace cap hydrangeas** make natural-looking transitions from the wet area to the rest of the garden.

To make a bog garden is to re-create a little piece of the world as it was when it was still wet behind the ears. If you squat down and squint, you may just glimpse a little Bogasaurus grazing among the ferns. —CAROL KING

mucking around *Five easy steps for a successful bog* —STEPHEN ORR



1. Dig a slope-sided depression in a suitably low-lying location.

2. Lay down plastic liner with its edge 2 to 3 inches below the surface. Punch out well-spaced drainage holes.

3. Install underground irrigation (for dry spells, if needed). Conceal hose connection with a large plant.

4. Cover bottom with pea gravel and fill with heavy soil lightened with sand and humus.

5. Place plants according to their love of moisture: wetter toward the middle, drier around the edges.

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Hunting & Gathering

HIGH STYLE Reymer-Jourdan's chinoiserie-style brass chairs are covered in Jacob's Ladder by Larsen, front, and Leapin' Lizards by Pollack & Associates, back. Blouse and skirt by Gucci. All upholstery by D&F Workroom, Inc.

house dressing

Out of the wardrobe and into our living rooms: the **fashion world** frequently influences the way we decorate our homes. This fall's clothing trends translate easily into interiors, from **luxurious**, highly textured fabrics to **denims**, **heavy wools**, and daring **reds**. Now your sofa can look as chic as your handbag.

PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER PHOTOGRAPHED BY DON FREEMAN

STYLED BY BARBARA TURK

modern opulence

WE'VE TAKEN FOUR fall runway trends and found fabrics for the home that share their spirits. The first look, which we call modern opulence, involves layering decorative fabrics with a sensual feel (think Gucci's recent ad campaign). The key is to mix these romantic materials in new and unexpected ways: for example, combining the luxury of traditional materials such

LEADING THE LUXE LIFE **Richly textured fabrics, including brocades and velvets, are currently in vogue; they also add sophisticated pattern to the home. From top: Victoria burnout silk velvet by Archive; spice-toned Quadri by Donghia; Benard abstract leopard print by Travers; shimmery Sikandra by Zimmer+Rohde; Blumenerwachen from the Vienna Workshop Archives Collection, by Kravetdesign; Sugar Cane by Larsen; and Doria brocade and Bolero, both by Nancy Corzine.**

True Blue

T-FAL® presents two brothers, two friends and Le Cordon Bleu

Le Cordon Bleu means "Blue Ribbon," a nod to its status as the premier cooking school for classic French techniques. It makes perfect sense, then, that two star graduates of this culinary mainstay named their restaurants after the place that trained them so well. Meet Eric and Bruce Bromberg, the familial force behind New York's acclaimed Blue Ribbon Brasserie, Blue Ribbon Sushi and Blue Ribbon Bakery. They—with friends and fellow alumni Suzanne Allgair and Sefton Stallard—bring the French celebration of food to every meal they prepare. Here, they're featured with Integral from T-FAL, the innovator of non-stick cookware, the Brombergs first choice in their restaurants and at home.

First to travel to Paris for formal culinary training, Eric Bromberg (*right*) inspired Bruce, Suzanne and Sefton to follow suit. All four hail from Morristown, New Jersey, but the Brombergs summered in France as teenagers and never forgot the near-obsession with food there. "It's art, it's history, it's tradition," enthuses Eric. After Bruce graduated from Le Cordon Bleu, he joined Eric in New York to open Blue Ribbon Brasserie in 1992, guided by the then ground-breaking concept of serving fine-quality "comfort" food—steak tartare, roasted chicken, even matzoh balls—until 4 a.m. "They said we were crazy," laughs Bruce. "But we knew they'd come." Come they did, changing New York's dining scene forever.

A true-blue winner: T-FAL's Integral 11.5" sauté pan. Its professional-gauge construction features a revolutionary star-relief non-stick surface, optimum heat retention and stability, and a deeper shape for increased cooking capacity.

Blue Ribbon Brasserie prepares "American" favorites with a nod to French cuisine. While the menu is eclectic—hearty burgers to pu-pu platters—what remains consistent is the mission to enhance inherent flavors from simple, savory ingredients. In 1998, the Brombergs called Suzanne and Sefton—who were then cooking in Colorado and Florida, respectively—with the delicious opportunity to co-own and manage their third dining endeavor, Blue Ribbon Bakery. Suzanne says the Bakery is different in style but not in food philosophy. "We have more options, lots of smaller plates—from mackerel and sweet onions to fois gras terrine—and incredible breads."

This "Sue" Chef uses the 10.25" deep sauté pan from T-FAL Integral. It's oven-safe up to 350 degrees Fahrenheit—great for recipes that start on the stovetop and finish in the oven. The handles are comfortable and stay cool to the touch.

Blue Ribbon Brasserie, 97 Sullivan Street, New York City, (212) 274-0404

Blue Ribbon Sushi, 119 Sullivan Street, New York City, (212) 343-0404

Blue Ribbon Bakery, 33 Downing Street, New York City, (212) 337-0404

Sefton's stint in Paris shines through behind the line at Blue Ribbon Bakery. He claims he learned classic French technique at Le Cordon Bleu and by haunting the local *patisserie*. This love of traditional fare shaped the menu: marinated baby artichoke hearts, country paté, sweet sopressata, New Orleans shrimp boil, grilled bass with cauliflower purée—and desserts like Mom used to make. Devoted regulars make the rounds to all three Blue Ribbon offerings. "We're like a family, all of us, and I think the customers feel it."

Sefton stirs things up with T-FAL's Integral 4.4 qt. *sauteuse*. Its distinctive style comes in an array of colors in hard-enamel finish—all dishwasher safe. T-FAL's Integral cookware, with a seven-beam star base and embedded stainless steel disk, provides ultimate resistance to warping and even heat distribution. Sauce pans feature tempered glass lids with adjustable steam vent knobs.

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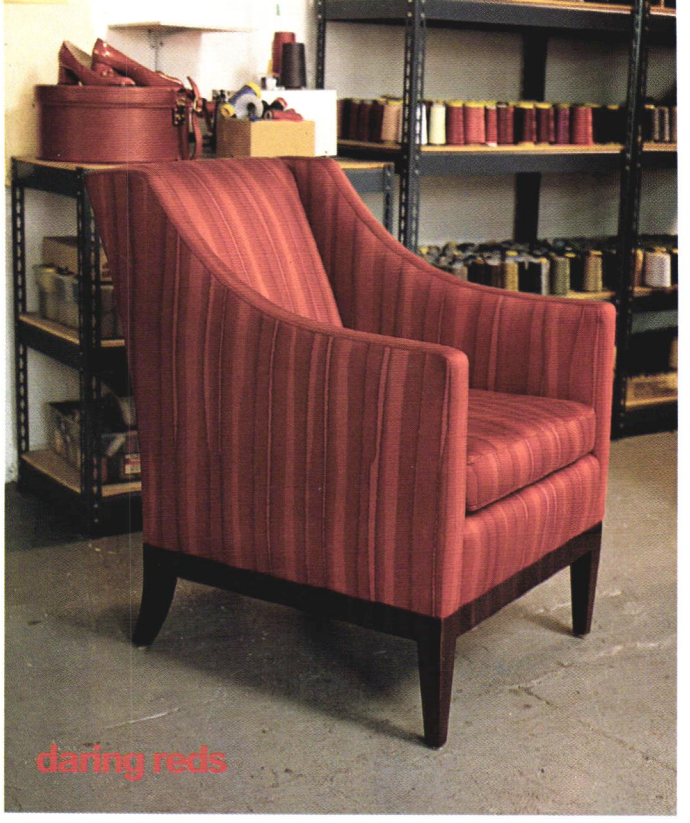
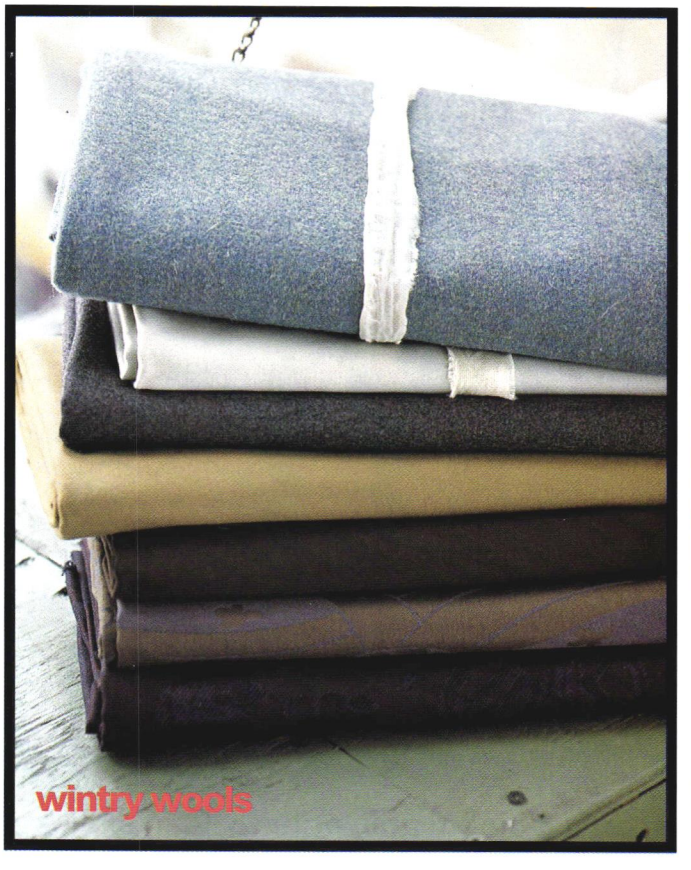




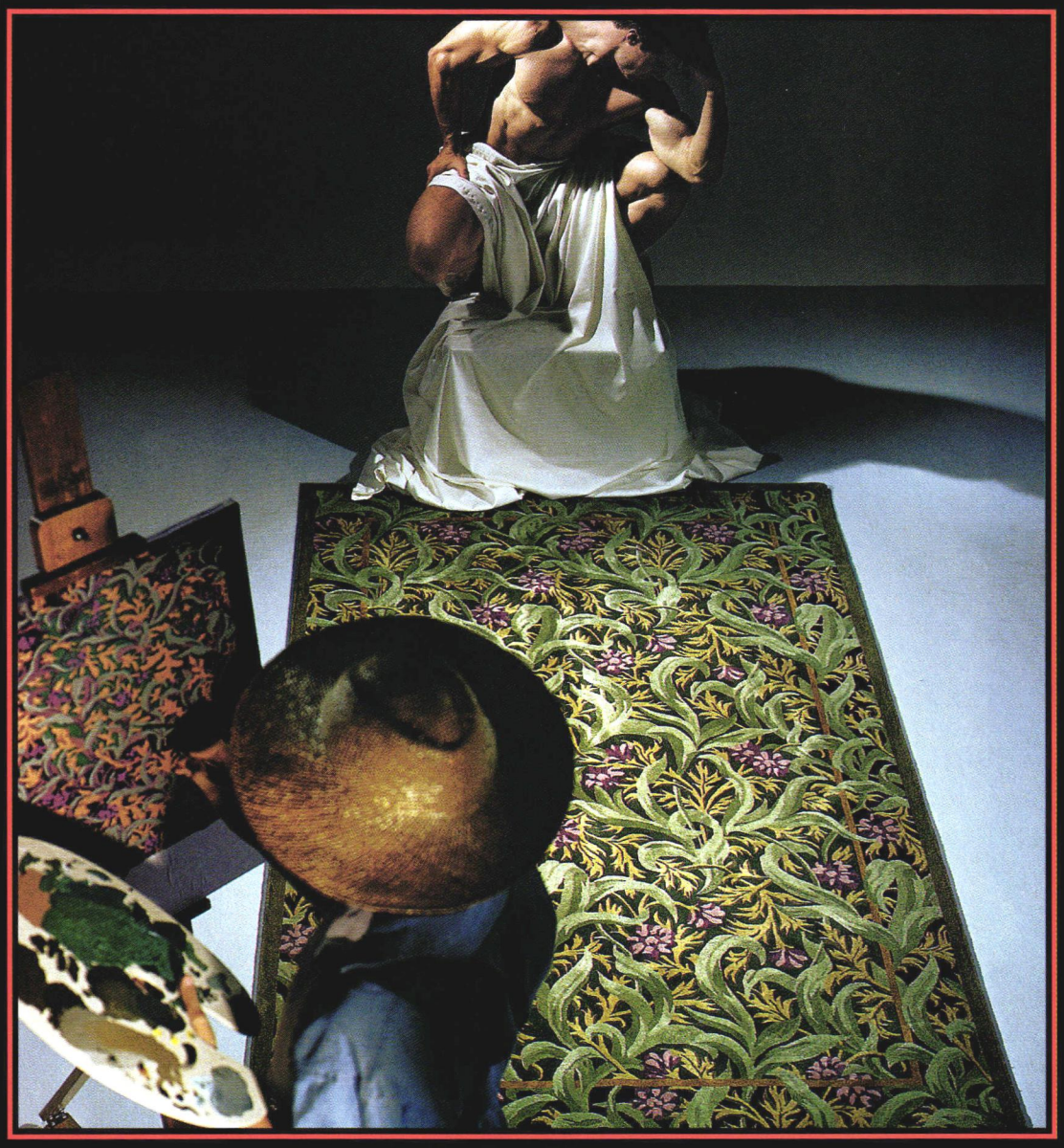
SEEING RED All the rage in fashion, the color red adds a dramatic touch to home decor. Choose one with real heat, such as Tango from Goins Textile Design, top left, on James Jennings's Tavistock zebrawood chair. Our favorite reds also include, top right, from top: Aria sheer by Larsen; Min in silk from Jennifer Robbins Textiles; Montrose by Colefax & Fowler; Sogno jacquard from Donghia; Cabochon from J. Robert Scott; Raise the Curtain velvet from Gretchen Bellinger; a matelassé from Kravet; and Toweling Stripe from Mulberry.

WILD ABOUT WOOL Full-bodied woolen fabrics are back in style; at home, they are an elegant, durable choice for upholstery. We covered the outside of Kerry Joyce's Cee Chair, above, in Brunschwig & Fils's Constable Flannel, and the inside with Rogers & Goffigon's Madison. Above left, from top: Harcourt Herringbone from Ralph Lauren Home Collection; Glacé from Donghia; gray flannel by Holland & Sherry; Limousin by Niermann Weeks; Venetian Satin by Classic Cloth; Heirloom damask by Larsen; and Kendi jacquard by Classic Cloth.

as brocades and jacquards with other textures, from a pink reptile print by Randolph & Hein to a faux sable by Pierre Frey. Red is without a doubt *the* color of the moment, and just as Louis Vuitton's embossed red-leather luggage makes a statement, so does a scarlet chaise. Thick wools are another fashion direction this season. If you love this warm, natural fiber, consider covering a favorite chair with it. Or use it for a curtain: wool has an elegant,

TRUE BLUE **You'd never see this at Versailles, but denim upholstery can make the formal seem more approachable. We think Marie Antoinette might have approved of this gilded Louis XVI–style chair from Julia Gray Ltd., which we dressed down in a soft Summer Hill Ltd. indigo denim. The chair was upholstered by D&F Workroom. On the mannequin, a jacket by Helmut Lang.**

Priorities Change.



To the trade. Photo: Paul Robinson

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fluid drape. Finally, dark denim à la Helmut Lang can be used for everything from chair and sofa upholstery to bedcovers. "Denim is strong, pure, and versatile," declares Ralph Lauren of his perennial favorite. "It's as appropriate in a downtown loft as in a Colorado log cabin or seaside cottage." In short, it's decorating's version of casual chic.—RYAN MATHENY

MOOD INDIGO **Dark denim coordinates well with other fabrics that have a casual feel. And it's as kid- and pet-friendly as any fabric you'll find. From top: Spatter by Hinson & Co. and Kimono by Sanderson, tied with Todd Hase's Belgian Linen; Stonewash Denim from the Ralph Lauren Home Collection; striped Loon Lake by Waverly; Indigo Too denim from Summer Hill Ltd.; Zig Zag from Sanderson; and stripe-textured Burlap from Designer's Guild. Sources, see back of book.**

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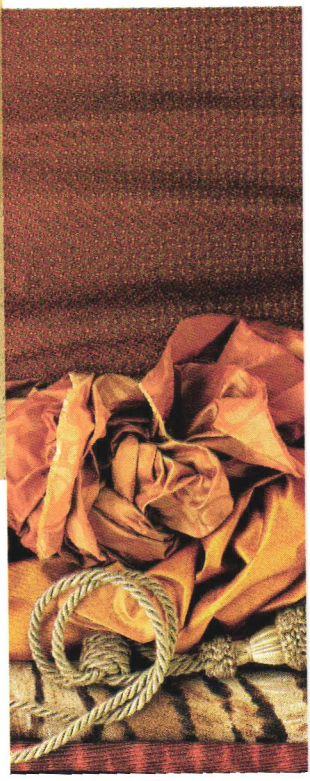

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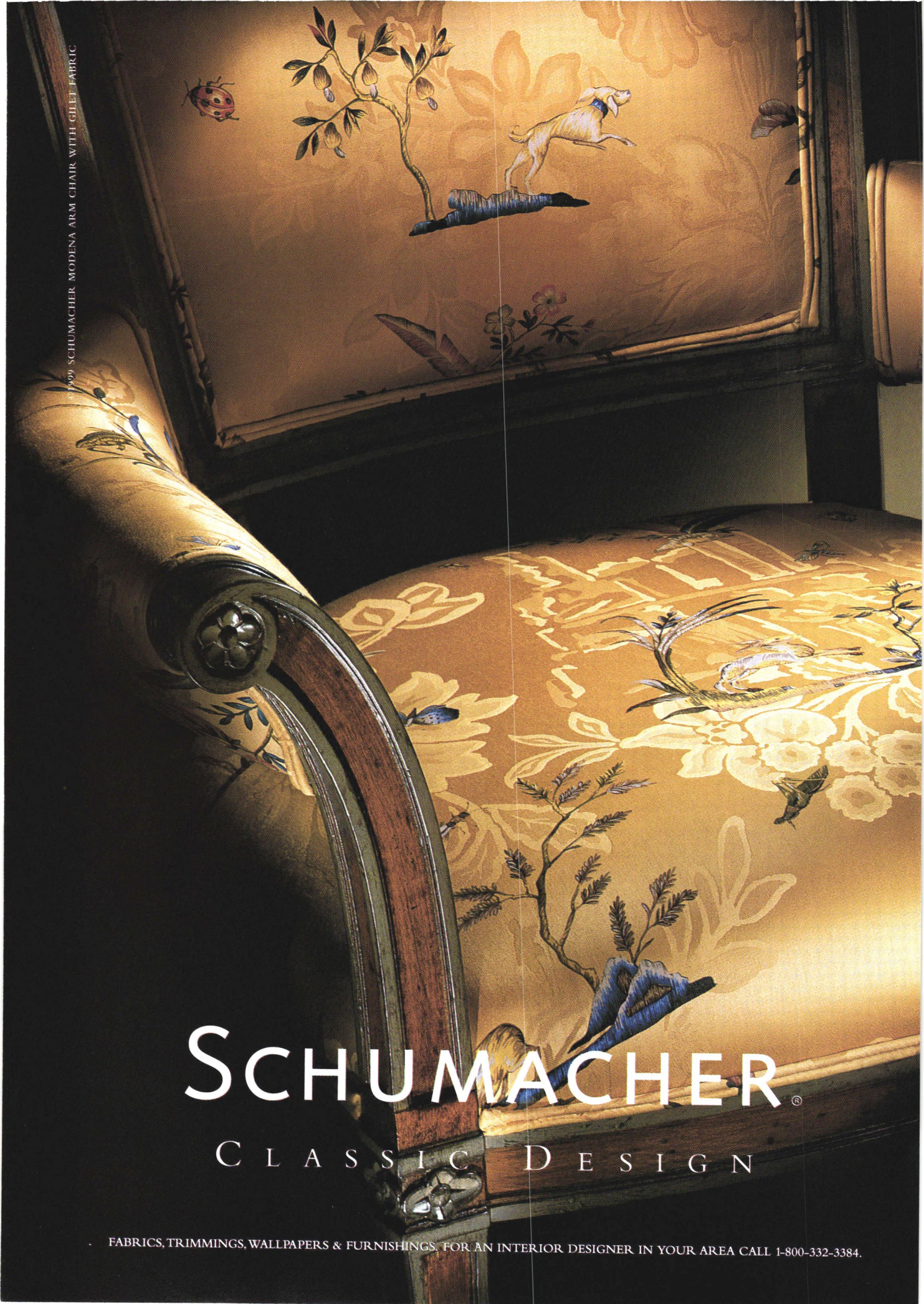
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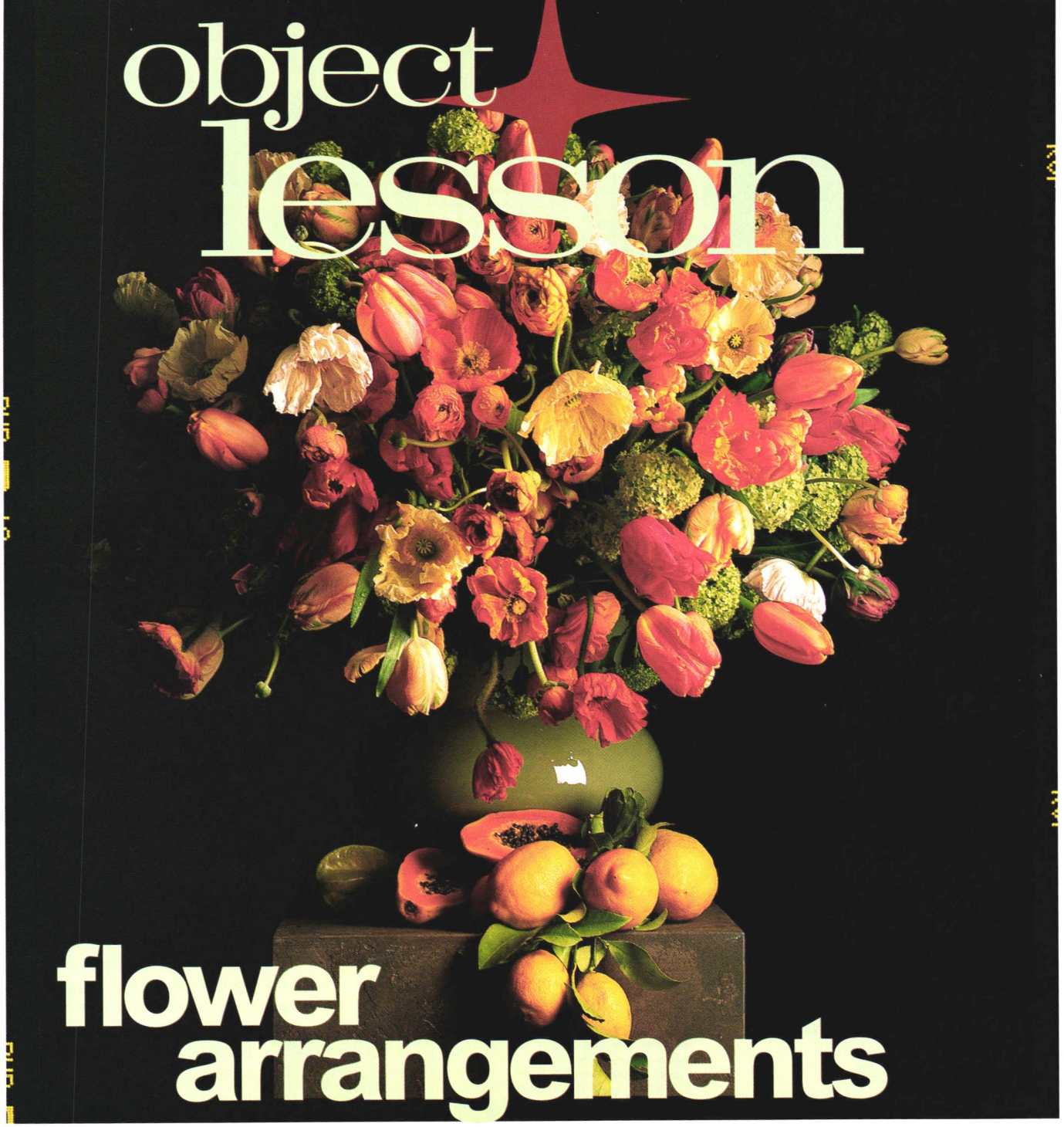


flower arrangements

lesson how to bring out the beauty in blooms **style** from grand to simple
budget designer bouquets aren't dirt cheap **materials** the vase makes it all work
insider secret chicken wire **design** choose flowers that fit your decor

AROUND THE WORLD'S floral design studios, the watchword is simplicity. From a lush arrangement inspired by a Dutch-style still life to a single flower in a bud vase, today's bouquets blend a reverence for nature with the diverse floral traditions of the East and West. With some basic knowledge, arranging flowers can become one's personal expression of

BY DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN KANTOR

FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS BY ANTONY TODD

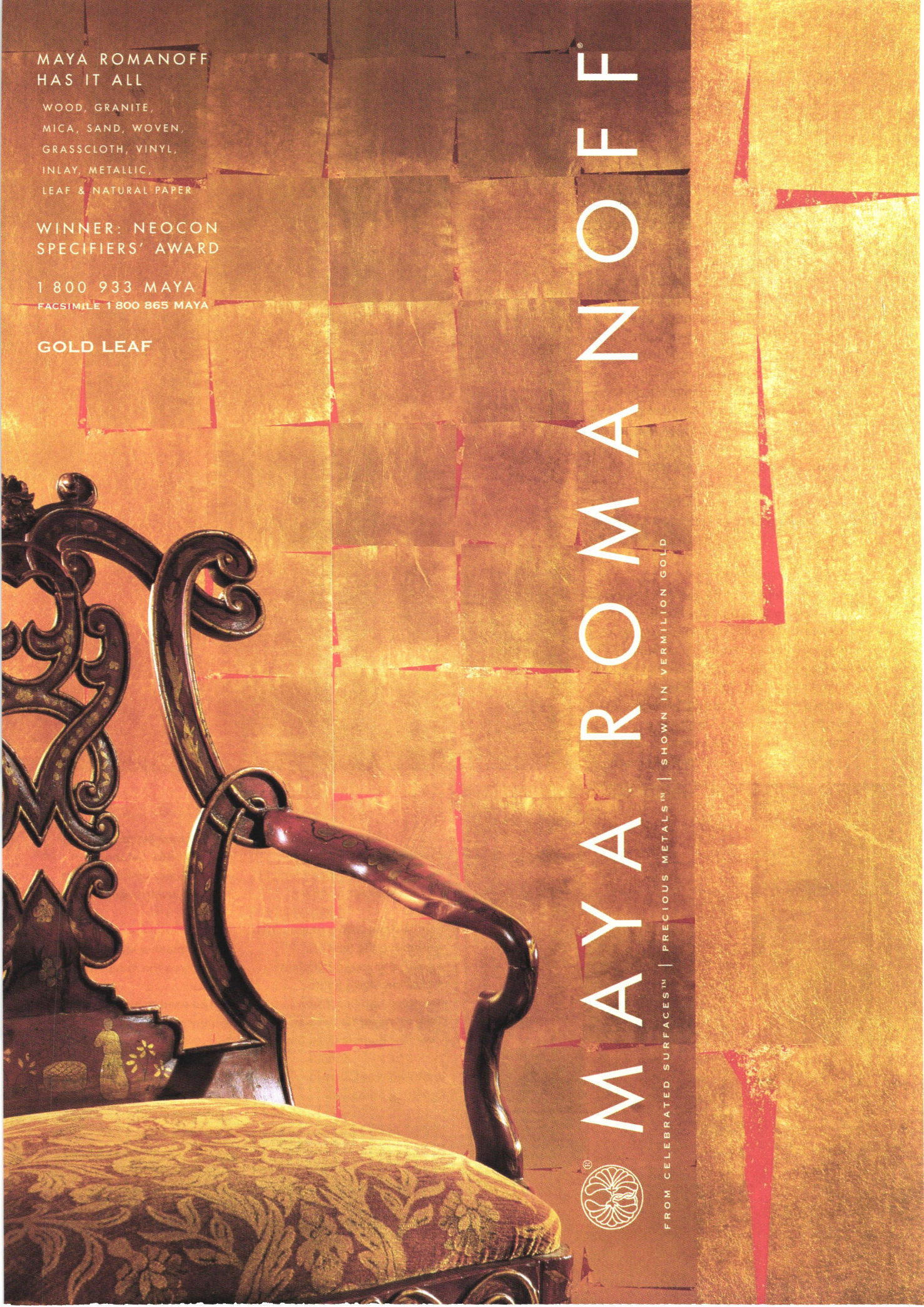
object lesson

style. David Browne's tiny, bustling flower store in New York's West Village is a casual kind of place. On any afternoon, neighbors drop by, and you might see Browne dispensing advice (and blossoms) to a frantic young woman throwing a party that night. Flowers in full flush—and a few that are decaying or even dead—spill out beyond the shop's doors and onto the sidewalk.

Yet this is also a place of artistry. Browne's floral compositions spring from vases, large bird eggs, cans, and other found objects—anything that catches his fancy. Strikingly textured tree branches and live fish share space with stems in glass vases. Sometimes even the toilet bowl serves as a vase for surplus roses. This may raise questions of taste, but Browne is making a point. He says he wants people to develop an eye that recognizes that even "a lowly milk bottle can be beautiful—and a perfect vase."

Browne is just one member of a new generation of designers who are redefining floral arrangements. Christian Tortu of Paris, Stephen Woodhams of London, and New Yorkers Antony Todd, Avi Adler, and Bill Tansey are, like Browne, developing

SMALL-SCALE POSIES, like those above, suit a night table or desk. A romantic burst of white ranunculus and 'Pink Parrot' tulips, at rear, conjures both a Dutch still life and a profuse English garden. The grouping is fashioned in the hand and tied with string to keep its shape. Old-fashioned lilies of the valley, right, look modern when packed densely in a shallow dish. To keep them upright, the stems are tied, then cut to create a flat foundation. A few stems of white anemones, left, recall the spare asymmetry of Japanese floral art. EAST MEETS WEST in the arrangements at left. In China, arrangements are typically made from flowering branches, such as pink quince, far left. The matte ceramic vase is a modern interpretation of traditional Chinese porcelain. Heavy branches like these are knitted together or held in place with crumpled chicken wire. A loose array of delicate ranunculus, right, sits in a Japanese ceramic vessel. Lifting the arrangement slightly opens the form, creating an airy look. In the classic fashion of India, gardenia and hellebore blooms, foreground, float in water in an Italian glass dish.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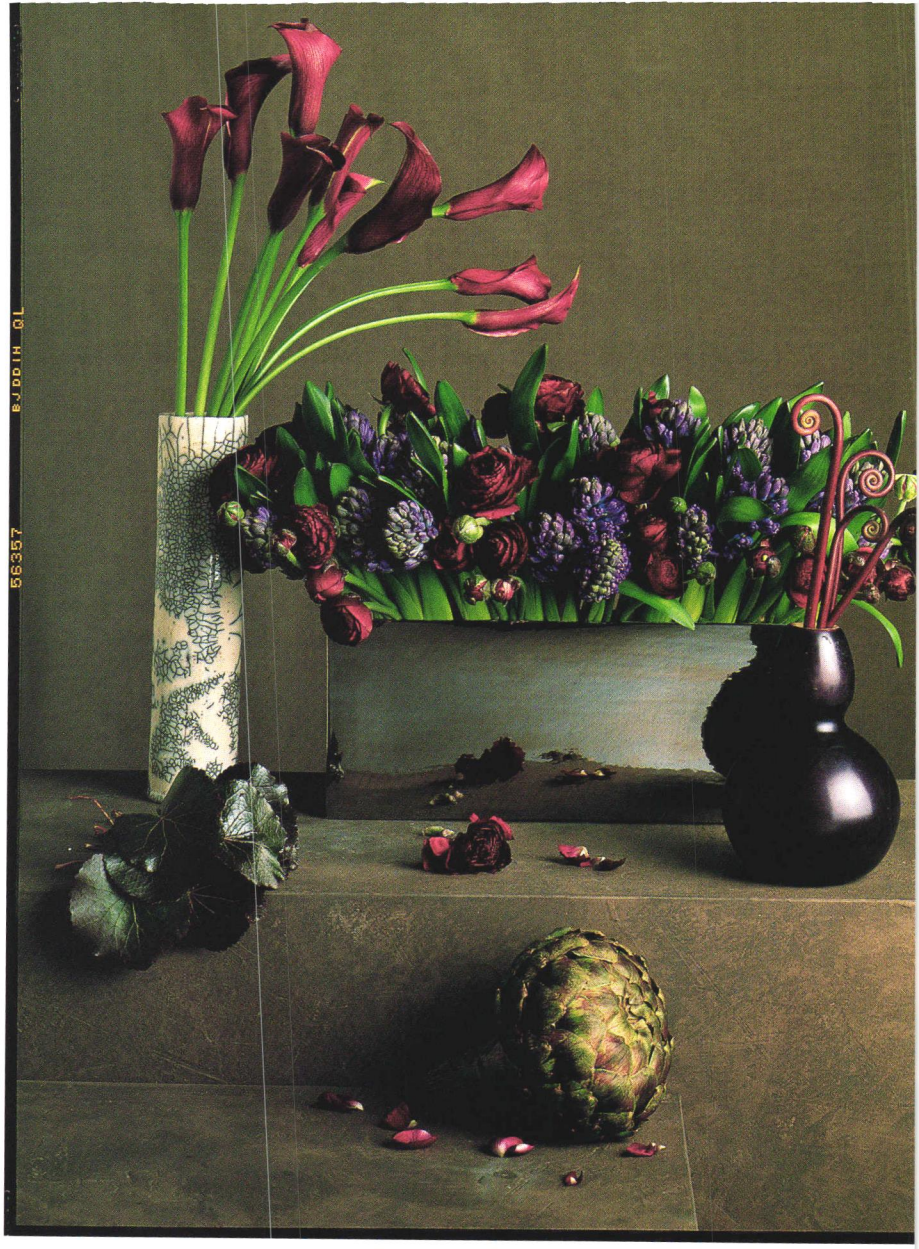
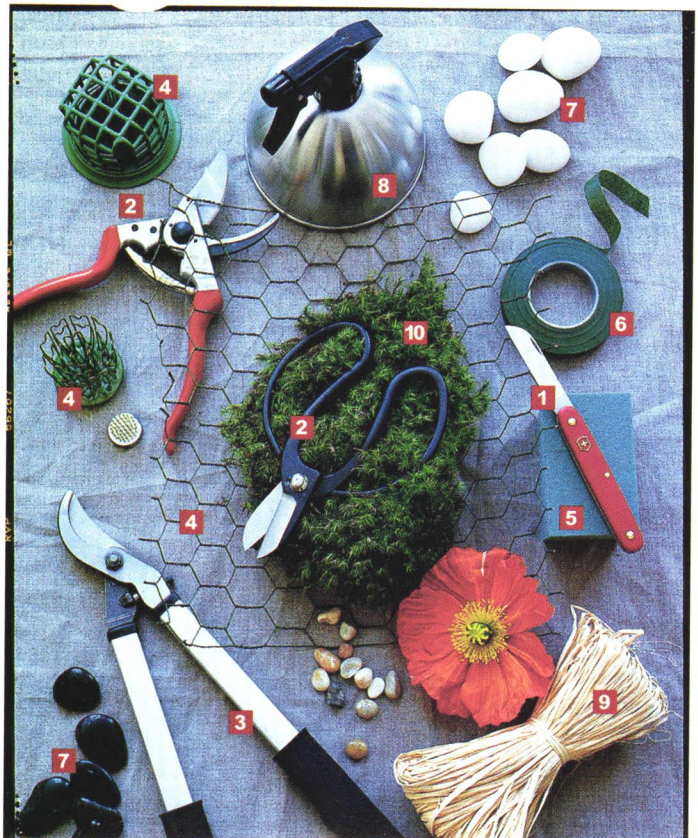
a style that is at once rich and minimal. "Diverse influences—history, your feelings about beauty and nature—go into a blender," explains Browne. "What comes out is simple and modern."

In some ways, these designers are fusing the world's two great floral styles, which, until fairly recently, remained largely segregated. Western arrangements, since their development in the seventeenth century, have always featured an extravagant profusion of blooms. The East fostered a restrained formality, with arrangements based on the relationship between the elements—stem, foliage, and blooms—using few, sometimes no, flowers.

But today's byword is globalization. The Japanese are now flocking to New York to study the casual American style typified by the design firm Mädderlake



RICH COLORS AND GRAPHIC SHAPES are the hallmarks of the modern bouquets in the photo at right. They include, from left, a simple, artful grouping of burgundy calla lilies. Boldly combined purple hyacinths and blood-red ranunculus, snug in a rectangular container, make a one-sided bouquet, perfect for placement next to a wall. Fern fronds are arranged in a striking gourd-shaped vase with an aubergine glaze.



The Florist's Tool Kit

1. A SHARP, CLEAN KNIFE An all-purpose tool to cut, scrape, and slice. Many florists prefer Swiss Army knives.

2. CLIPPERS A heavy-duty pair—Felcos (with red handles) are among the best—is essential to cut tough stems and twigs. Use a lighter pair (blue handles, from Takashimaya) for detailed work like nipping dead blooms.

3. LOPPERS Keep a lightweight set to prune flowering branches.

4. FROGS AND CHICKEN WIRE In the base of a vase, these supports keep stems upright. Crumpled chicken wire will steady heavy branches.

5. FLORAL FOAM won't support heavy stems, but will hold blooms in place in a shallow bowl. Let the foam absorb water before starting to make the arrangement.

6. WATERPROOF TAPE secures floral foam and can be used to make a stem-holding grid across the mouth of a bowl.

7. ORNAMENTAL STONES can be used to hide frogs in clear glass vases.

8. A WATER MISTER keeps flower heads hydrated.

9. RAFFIA OR STRING Tie up small bouquets so the flower bundles hold their shape in a vase.

10. MOSS Place at the top of shallow containers to camouflage either foam or a plastic flowerpot that's been slipped inside a vase.

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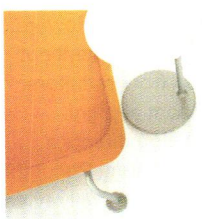

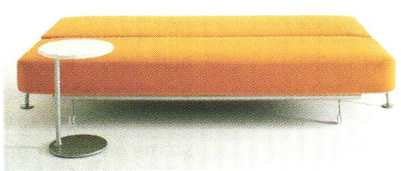

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A SINGLE SPECIMEN or a grouping of one type of flower focuses attention on the beauty of the blossom rather than the skill of the arranger. Here, from left, one Madonna lily stands in a glass urn modeled on a vase in an early Renaissance painting. In a simple white cup, this cluster of *Fritillaria meleagris* makes a charming posy. Stripped of foliage and arranged in a slender, unadorned vase, green blossoms of *Helleborus foetidus* capture a viewer's gaze. Even a drinking glass can make a perfect vase. A tumbler is just right for supporting tall, slim stalks of grape hyacinth. Sources, see back of book.

(whose members are strongly influenced by seventeenth-century Dutch still lifes). In turn, many contemporary American designers allude to Japanese traditions by mixing, say, denuded branches with garden roses, or by making asymmetrical compositions with just a few flowers. But the overarching trend in floral fashion is toward simplicity, with the focus on the beauty and color of the flowers rather than on the virtuosity of the designer. A perfect example is Tortu, whose shops display generous, loosely arranged flowers in plain glass cylinders that evoke the uncomplicated sense of joy one feels at a flower market.

Even the simplest compositions benefit from the knowledge of some basic principles of flower arranging. For instance, a bouquet should be roughly one and a half times the height of the vase (though you may, of course, choose to do squat or overscale arrangments). It helps to begin multiflower arrangements by placing the stronger-stemmed flowers in the vase first, to create a framework. Turn the vase as you are composing, so that you do not create a one-sided arrangement. (A lazy Susan helps.) Since the vase is the foundation of an arrangement (see page 90), designers suggest scavenging flea markets to develop a wardrobe of glass

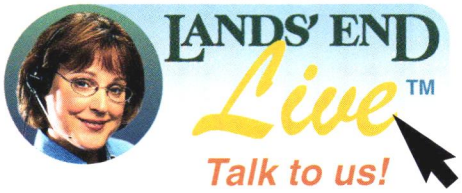
Tips to Keep the Daisies Fresh

The average cut flower should last about a week after it arrives in your home. The following tips from floral designers will help extend the life expectancy of your arrangements to the fullest.

Buying Choose flowers with buds just starting to open (very tight buds may *never* open). Give rosebuds a gentle squeeze to be sure they're firm. Avoid flowers with yellowing petals and leaves.

Preparation Always use a very sharp knife. Cut stems at an angle, so they can take up more water. Put the flowers in water quickly. For woody stems such as lilac and hydrangea, scrape off the bark about an inch above the cut, then slice the bottom of the stem vertically a few times or mash it with a mallet. A capful of bleach in the water retards bacteria and prevents odors. Stems that exude a milky sap, such as poppies, hollyhocks, and dahlias, must be cauterized with a match. Submerge peonies, roses, camellias, violets, and lilies in tepid water for a few hours before they are arranged (this also kills ants).

Maintenance Mist blooms often: all parts of a flower take in water. Heat and light promote the growth of flowers; arrangements last longer when kept out of the sun, placed away from radiators, and moved to a cool room at night. Stripping off excess foliage directs a flower's energy to the blossom. Recut the stems often. Drooping flowers will revive if submerged in water for a few hours.



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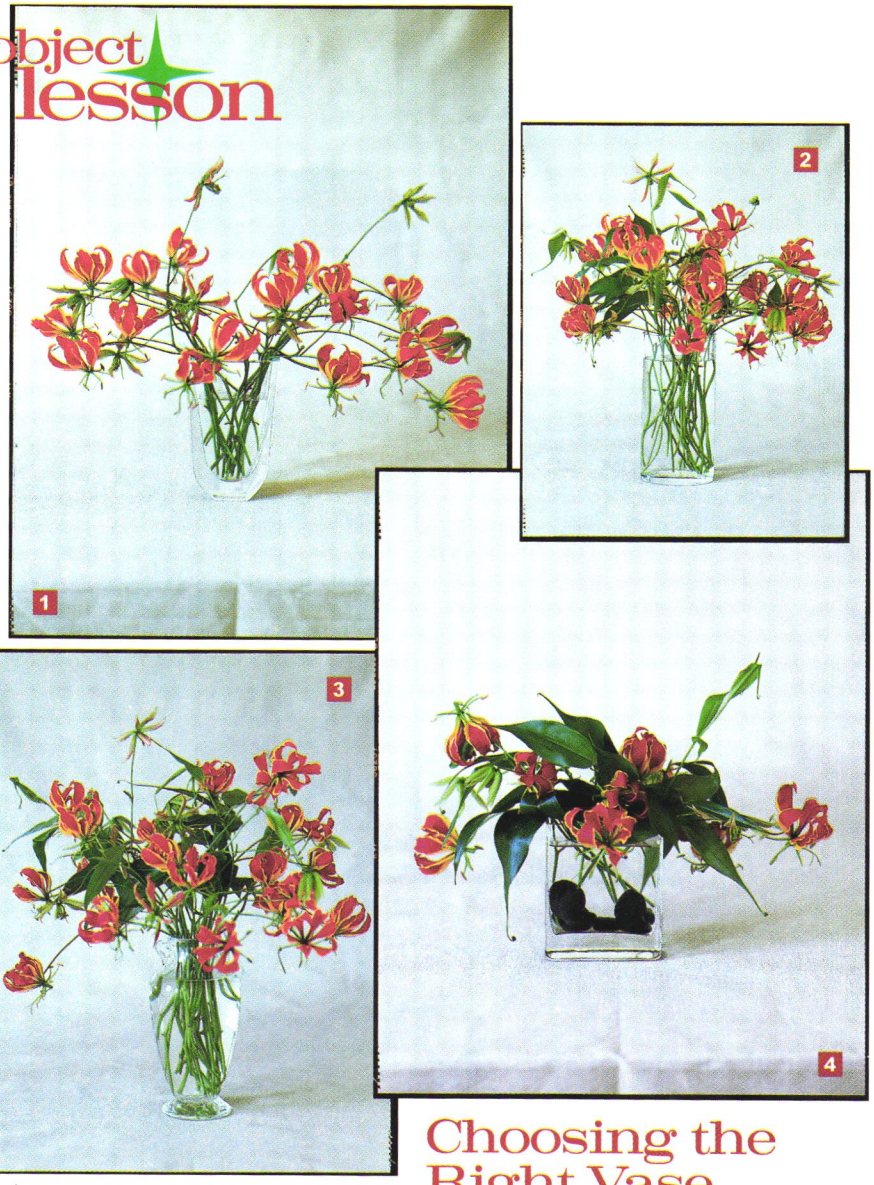


Choosing the Right Vase

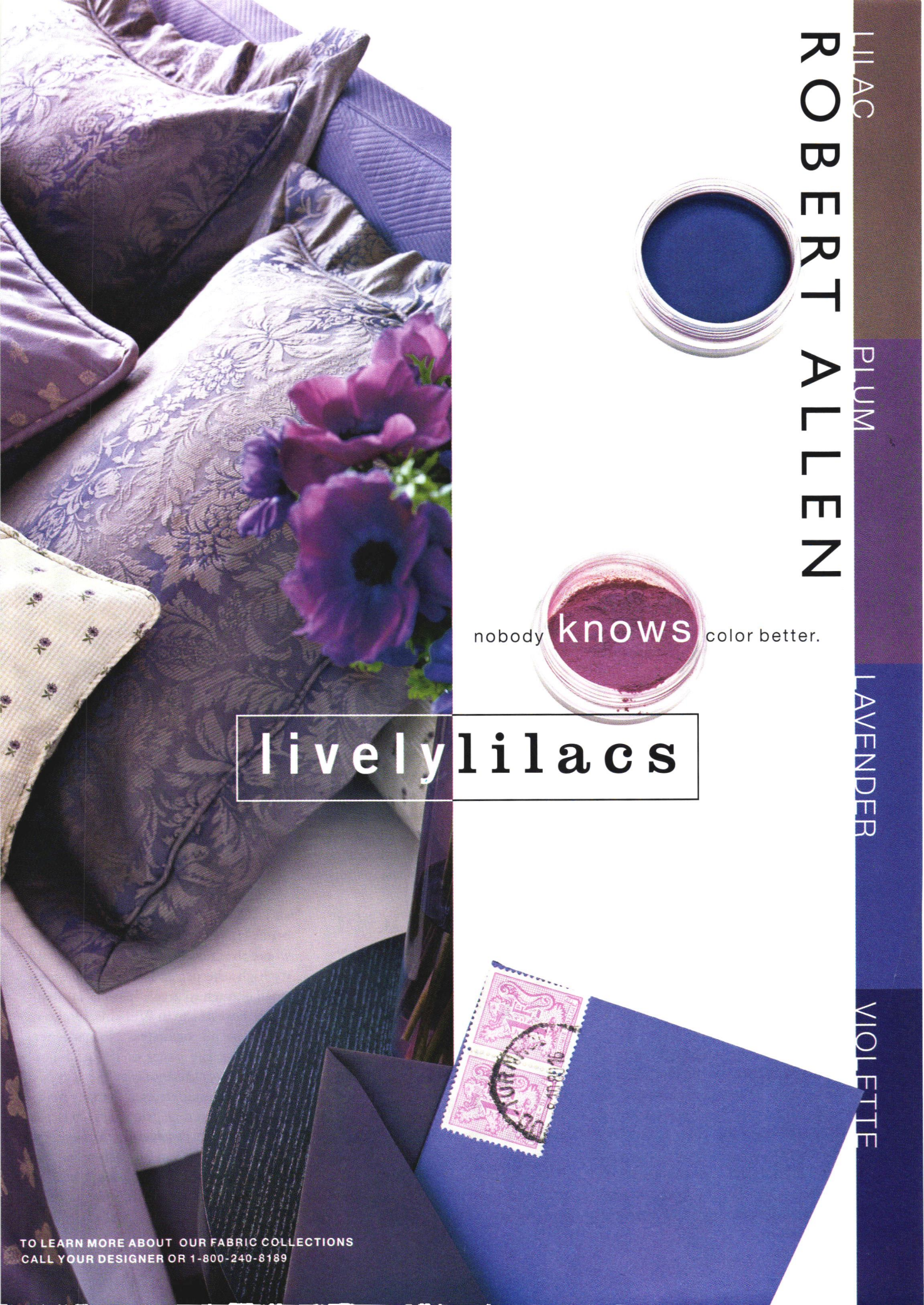
The vase you choose—there are four basic types—determines the shape of an arrangement.

1. Flared vases create an open, fan-shaped arrangement, and particularly suit flowers with stiff stems, such as roses, which get pinched together by tight-necked vases. **2. Cylindrical** shapes are great for weak-stemmed flowers like daffodils or tulips, which need extra support. Short, cup-shaped cylinders are perfect for tight, rounded bouquets. **3. The Urn** gives an arrangement either a formal or a casual air. Arrangements of several types of flowers often work well in this shape. **4. Rectangular and Square** vases open up arrangements more than cylinders do, and, in glass, showcase interesting stem patterns. They're useful in small rooms or other spaces where bouquets may be placed against the wall and seen from only one side.

and opaque vases. When you use clear glass, the water and stems become a part of the display. Cut and arrange the stems neatly, and keep the water fresh.

Of course, flowers aren't displayed in a vacuum. As Carolyne Roehm points out in *A Passion for Flowers,* "Arrangements should be created with their surroundings . . . in mind." A centerpiece for a formal dinner in a grand house will be different from a bedside arrangement for a downtown loft. The famed English floral innovator Constance Spry, a pioneer in tailoring bouquets to their backgrounds, always emphasized that the simpler and less cluttered an arrangement, the better.

Understanding the materials and traditions of floral arrangement helps us follow our own instincts. Above all, flower arranging should be a pleasurable pursuit. With that in mind, the best advice from today's floral designers may come from Tom Pritchard, whose first rule is: "Work only with flowers that make you happy."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in praise of saplings

Gardens are about time, and the wispy beauty of young trees holds the promise of a future

THIS PAST SPRING was notable for an unprecedented rumbling of flatbed trucks along the highways and back roads of the South Fork of Long Island, where I live. The cargoes were horizontal trees, their root balls sometimes 20 feet in diameter, trunks 30 feet long, the already leafed-out branches furled like giant umbrellas. The air echoed with the beeping of forklifts delivering their burdens to their respective planting holes. In the morning, taking my daughter to school, we might pass an old, white house, newly renovated, its roof shaded by the venerable boughs of two red maples that were not there the day before.

New landscapes are being made that look as though they have been there a long time, even though they have not. While they are often splendid, there can be an eeriness, even a melancholy about them. Gardens have always been as much about our experience of time as about place, so naturally I have wondered how these landscapes should be read.

The year is, after all, 1999, so I can only think that this phenomenon has to do with fin de siècle, and more than that, with fin de millennium. The closer we come to the transition into an unimaginable future, the sharper grows the hunger for vestiges of stability, of continuity with what has gone before. We know that big trees lifted from where they had grown and replanted with skill and guy wires somewhere else are, in fact, neither stable nor continuous. But they do serve as emblems, symbols of a past rootedness, which, for the moment, seem supremely desirable.

Once the threshold is crossed and we find ourselves on the other side, no longer ending but beginning, I think we may discover that a new impulse will come into our gardens. More and more we will be moved by the exquisite beauty of young trees. Where once they were despised for their lack of substance, the wispy seedling, the subtle sapling will take the eye precisely for the promise latent in their spare grace.

"I have never, at any moment, **wished any tree** in our garden to be bigger than it is" —Robert Jakob

Gardeners know all about this kind of beauty. Some of the best plant the smallest trees. In this neighborhood, I have watched Robert Jakob and David White create a garden of transporting richness and multidimensionality over a period of 20 years. Yet for all the artfulness of its design, for all the surprising garden rooms and opening vistas, whenever I go to visit I am apt to be shown minute plum trees in a pot or a bed of ten-inch hornbeams.

Generally, David prunes and clears, and Robert plants. Robert likes to order trees from far-flung catalogues, where the choice is enormous, the quality high, the prices low, and the trees small enough to arrive happily in small tubes. Forestfarm in Williams, Oregon, is one of his favorites. No gardener could turn the pages of its catalogue unmoved: 157 kinds of maples, 54 types of oak, rare mulberries, and many magnolias. The average price per tree is $8.

When Robert's selections arrive, they are too small to fend for themselves. So he sets them out in a holding bed of compost and leaf mold that is partially shaded (seedling trees can suffer

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scorching from too much bright sun) and fenced for protection from animals. There they will accustom themselves to local weather and soil until they are big enough to move to their assigned places, while still small enough to make the move and barely feel it.

Walking the garden, one feels how much its vitality and complexity stem from the mixed ages of its trees. In Germany, where he grew up, Robert's mother told him that the first thing to do on beginning a garden is to plant a walnut tree: "For good looks, good food, good wood." He did, and now a spreading *Juglans regia* shades a breakfast table on the lawn. The stately hornbeam allée, clipped to a height of ten feet, was planted 15 years ago. "Planting eighteen inches apart, we needed eighty trees. But at $3.95 a tree, we could manage it," Robert remembers.

Japanese persimmon trees (*Diospyros kaki*) are this year bearing mysterious green flowers and the beginnings of their first fruits, five years after planting out among lettuces in a flower bed.

I ask Robert if he has a standard apple tree, my own enthusiasm (ten years to first fruit, up to 40 feet tall at maturity). Yes, he does, a Dutch Boskoop, but we must look down for it, not up, parting vines to find the three-foot whip, which is still heeled in to a compost pile. Robert smiles at the little Boskoop and says heartfeltly, "I have never, at any moment, wished any tree in our garden to be bigger than it is."

While the big trees shade and protect, an intimacy is offered by trees that grow up close to us, revealing in bud and twig the pattern of their growth. Bill Miller of Sag Harbor is a master pruner, one who goes in and out of more great gardens than most. Though he prunes, reveres, and keeps alive the ancient trees, there is a fervor in his voice when he speaks of training young ones. It is the most rewarding work.

A good, early adjustment affects the entire life of a tree. The younger the tree is at planting, the easier time it will have adapting to its surroundings. Bill has often observed that when two trees of the same kind are planted in the same garden at the same time, one as much as a quarter the size of the other, the younger will grow past the older in a matter of a few years. (Enlivening the soil around the tree by digging over the top two feet and adding compost is also a great advantage, keeping in mind that a sapling's roots will quickly outgrow its planting hole.)

I ask how early in a young tree's life it may be safely planted in its ultimate site. As soon, Bill tells me, as it is big enough to "establish its presence in the garden." This interesting phrase means big enough to be protected from rabbits and deer, without becoming choked by weeds; big enough so that people will not step on it; big enough to be seen. What size this is will depend a great deal on the nature of the site and also on the attentiveness of the gardener. But Bill suggests, as a rule of thumb: a minimum trunk diameter of one and a half to two inches and a height of six or seven feet.

Though the training of young trees is critical, Bill points out that one actually does very little, sometimes nothing. The early years are when the framework of the tree is formed. Unless one is pruning for a special purpose, most of the time the tree will find its own best shape itself. One need only watch for mishaps: branches that grow from the trunk at too steep an angle; competing leaders (there should be a single unobstructed growing point to the whole tree); elongated branches that protrude too far outward or upward from the main canopy of the tree, making it vulnerable to future storm damage. When any of these are spotted, they should be duly noted, then removed when the tree is dormant.

Often there is no such mishap, and then Bill recommends doing nothing at all, pointing out that it is important for its vigor that a tree keep as much foliage in the early years as possible. In the care of young trees, the real work, and the joy, is in watching, as he says, year by year, "the curve of the trunk as it rises out of the ground, the way the branches emanate from the growing point, the twigs from the branches, how the leaves dissipate into the very air. . . ." As this intimacy develops, small trees grow large in the gardener's mind. Then, far sooner than one might think, they grow large on the earth.

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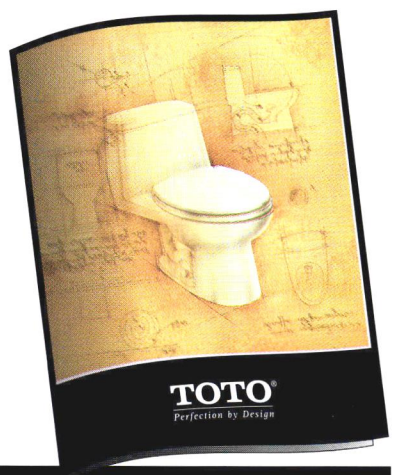

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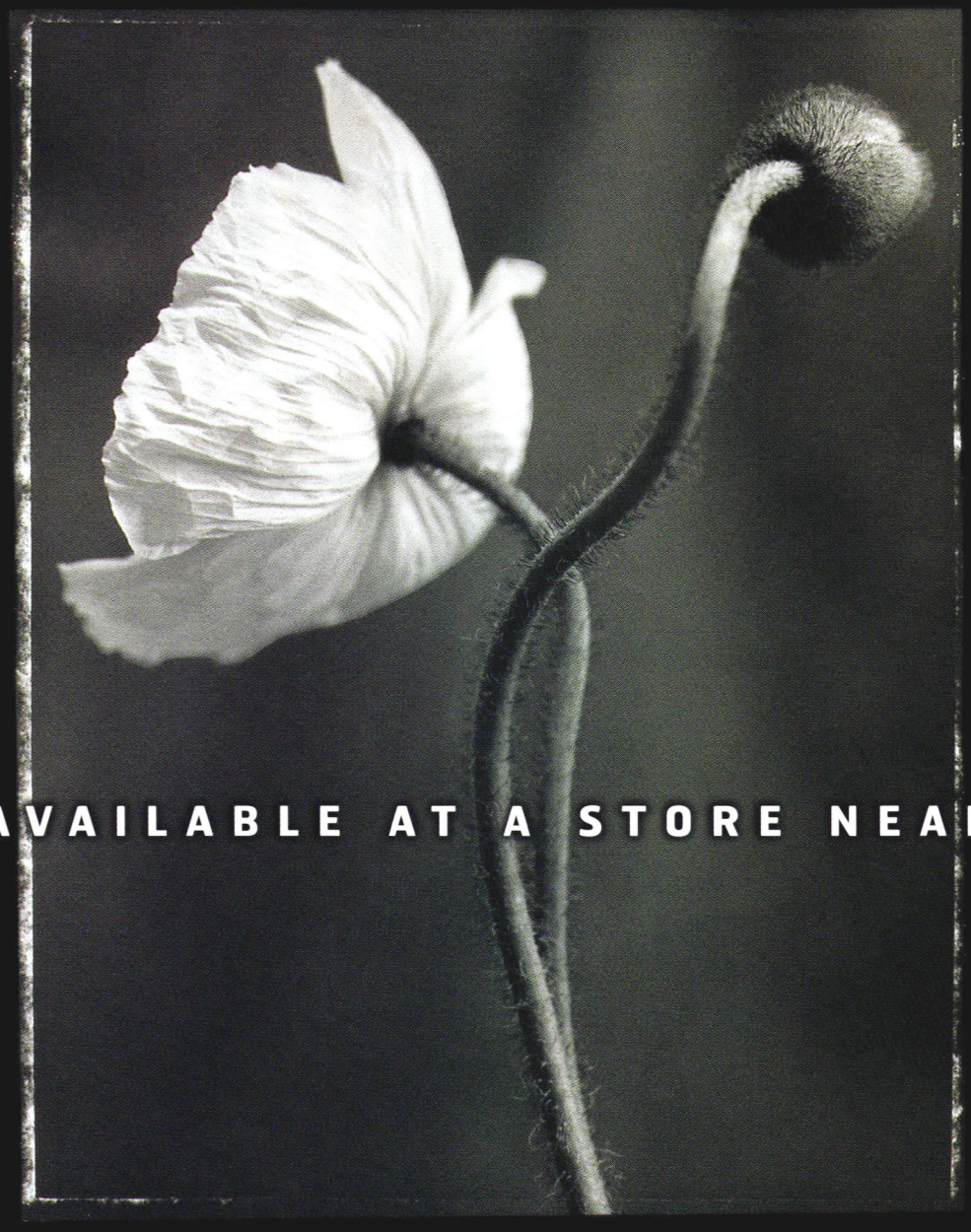

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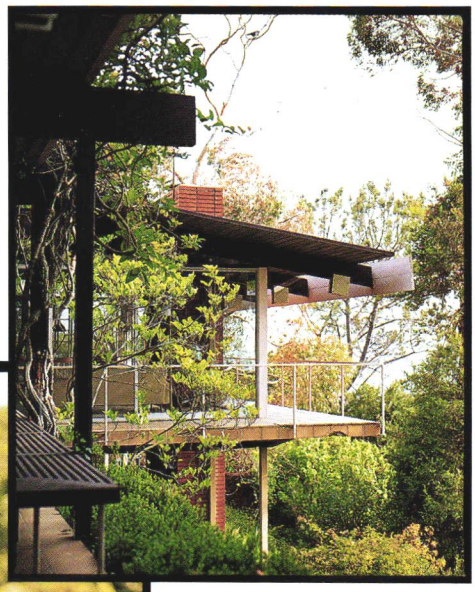
miller's crossing

A midwestern transplant ensures the survival of her California garden



HANGING OUT In the lower part of the garden, far left, an enormous tree aloe towers behind a wattle fence. Miller, center, perches in the "dry garden" on one of her steep site's 400-some steps. The house, above, was "made to order" by architect Knowlton Fernald, Jr.

Hortense Miller's given name means "garden." But perseverance and talent have a great deal more to do with her success than the happy accident of a first name. For 40 years, the artist and former schoolteacher, who turned 91 in October, has worked a piece of land in Laguna Beach, California, to create a garden distinguished for its botanical variety, informal beauty, and long history—an especially rare combination in Southern California, where both plenty and poverty make transience the norm. In 1977, Miller deeded her property, including its airy modernist house and extensive garden library, to the city of Laguna Beach. A nonprofit organization, Friends of the Hortense Miller Garden, helps maintain the garden and raises money for its endowment.

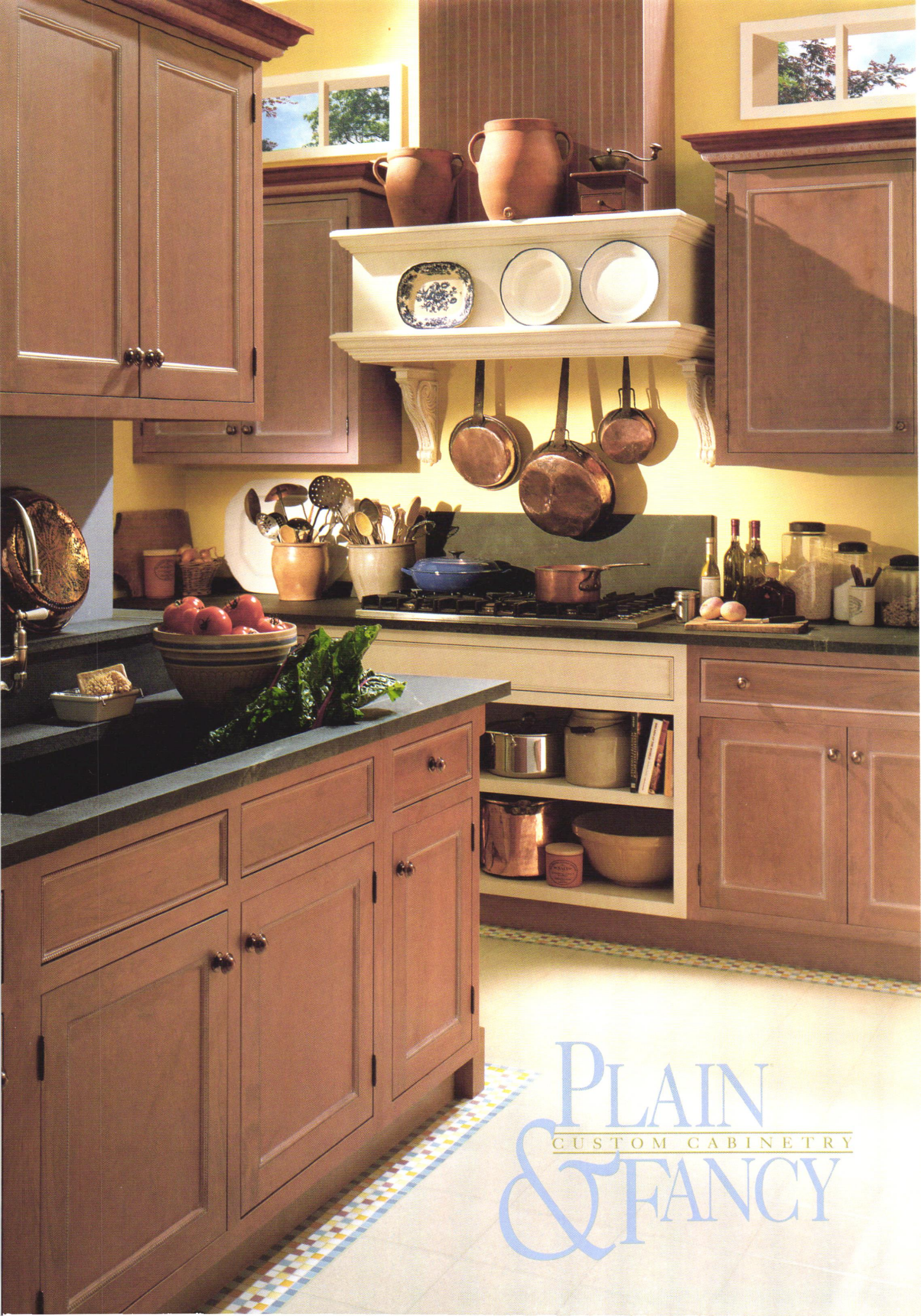
House & Garden *first ran a story on Miller's home in 1965, when it was already a testament to her skill and individuality. "Hers is an intensely personal garden, just as her house is an intensely personal house—although the plants in one and the furnishings and artifacts in the other reflect not only California, but many far places of the world," H&G wrote. The site has since survived two major fires, frequent visits from coyotes and other animals, and encroaching development. An excerpt from* A Garden in Laguna: The Writings and Life of Hortense Miller *appears below.*

A 25-Year History of the Garden (April 1984)

It's a good guess that the garden began when Miss Obert, kindergarten teacher, took us to look over a picket fence into the neglected front yard of an empty house. Thousands of dandelions had opened in the sunshine, standing knee-high in long grass. If you have known only persecuted dandelions, you have no idea what they can do when left alone. The furriness, the curl, the shine, the depth of color, the abounding joyousness: it was Heaven. In the many years since, I haven't seen a better display. These dandelions still speak through me when I say, "What's wrong with common flowers?" to an elitist or, "Leave it alone" to an interferer. It is now 70 years since Miss Obert and the dandelions. Meanwhile, in my youth I saw lotus in a Missouri River oxbow, a postcard showing trees that were pink, all of them—I couldn't believe it—white clematis overgrown at an old limestone house, oxeye daisies by the million in abandoned fields, big plushy sunflowers . . . and I was unable to do anything about the ache. I had to be with them. There was too much work for a living, too little land and money, too heavy a weight of convention. Then, grown older and tougher, I saw red bougainvillea against a blue sky in the Bordo Gardens of Mexico—a land without winter. And the wheels began to run. California, as has been said before, here I come!

It took some waiting and some doing. But when I was 50 (in 1958), there were two and a half acres on a California hillside that were legally mine. I had arrived. What I like best of anything

FROM THE BOOK *HORTENSE MILLER'S GARDEN WRITINGS*, BY HORTENSE MILLER. PUBLISHED BY AGREEMENT WITH CASA DANA BOOKS, DANA POINT, CA.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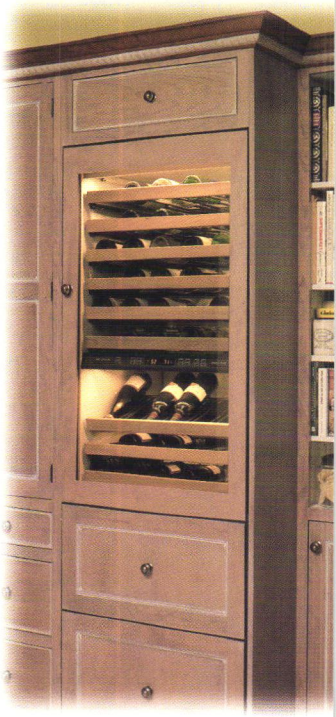

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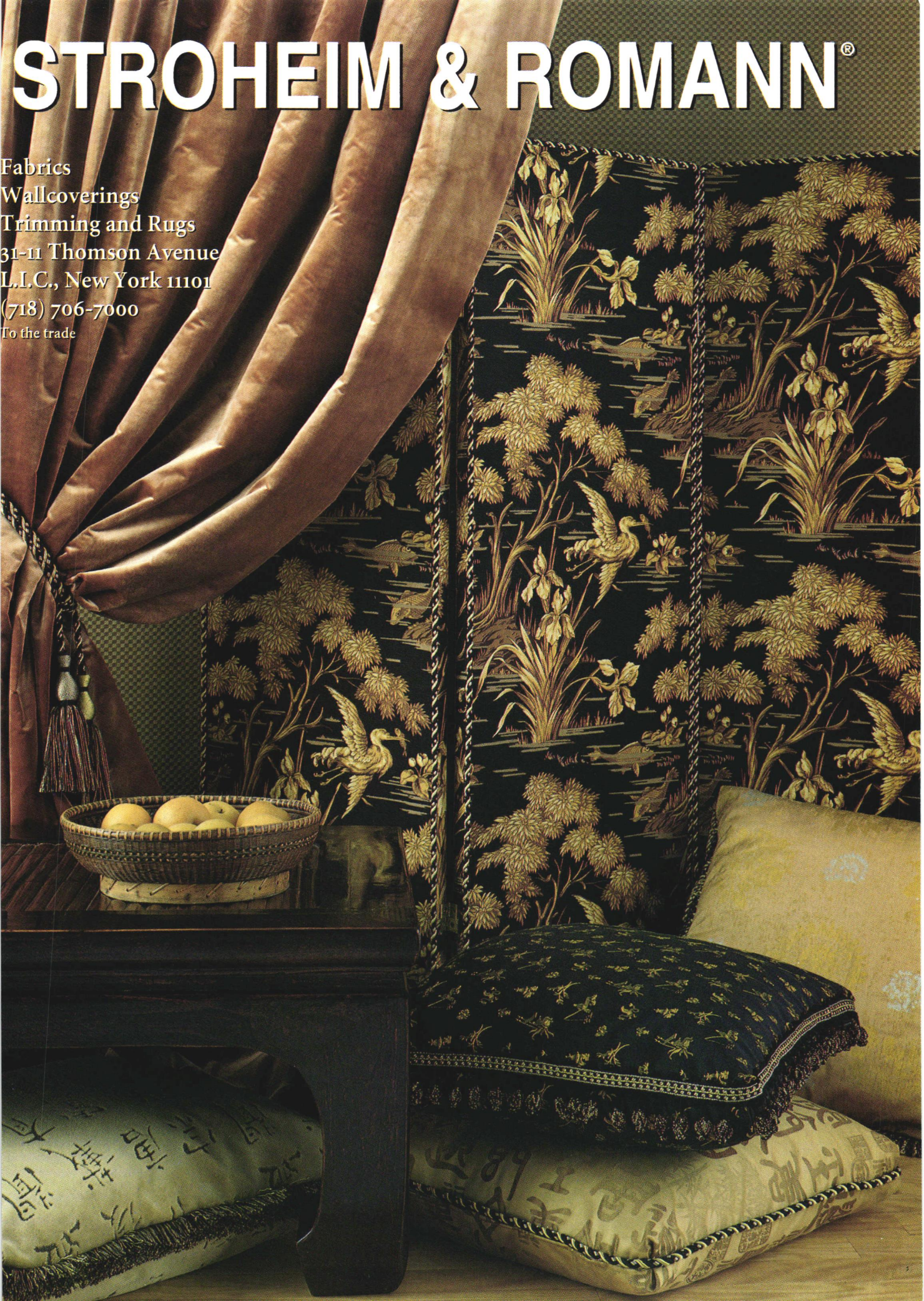
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in the world is millions of wildflowers covering hill and dale, and if I could ever be granted three wishes, I would have three of this one.

But the garden as it developed is a compromise: there are no hills and dales of wildflowers, no lotus, no dandelions, and even no outstanding bougainvilleas and pink flowering trees. You take what comes. In this case, it's generous.

"But the garden as it developed is a **compromise**. You take what comes. In this case it's **generous**"

Anyone expecting a wealthy garden or a scientific garden here must be much let down. Only a cottager would be cheered by it, for it developed for 15 years only to please one person who liked plants. The two-and-a-half-acre site was steep. The view was good—the ocean, a bit of the village, and Boat Canyon used as a ranch, but relatively unspoiled. And it was wonderfully quiet.

The earliest plants to go in were ice plants on the north hillside, the rice-paper plants, the reticulata camellias and 'Cinderella,' as these were brought in pots from the former house. The lemon eucalyptus, the Burmese honeysuckle, and the oleander were the first plants purchased—and the 'Belle of Portugal' and 'Cecile Brunner' roses were next. The peppertree, the agonis, the jacaranda, and the sycamore soon went in the patios. The plants on the level still remain. They have, however, grown much larger and taken over areas that used to be planted with cinerarias, cyclamen, or pinks, for instance; so we have less color. Ferns were started under the deck, and we brought scores of offsets and cuttings of yuccas, aloes, and agaves for the area down on the lower road. Once we planted under the deck, we kept going down, our excuse being that the sewer line had injured the chaparral. We put in the redwood tree and six torrey pines, the coral tree, and six gallons of Matilija poppies.

The sprinkler system was put in piecemeal as the garden expanded. The large systems were put in professionally, but the smaller ones were rigged up by us amateurs. I like to water, to turn it on when I observe plants want it (and this is variable) and to turn it off and walk among them to see how happy they are afterward. I do not think that an automatic system would contribute to my pleasure, but would lessen it. I do not notice that I do anything more stupendous in a rainy season, when I don't have to water, than I do in the dry season, when I do. So until I can think of something really impressive to do with the time saved, I may as well muck around turning valves.

We have had wall upon wall of riprap

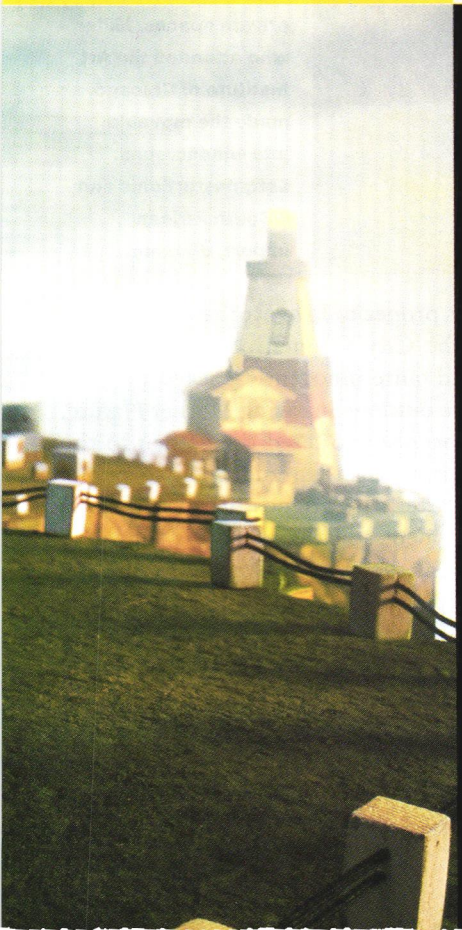
They tumble. They slide. They play hide-and-seek. A minivan with seats a l

put in, a little at a time. It follows the hills beautifully and does not stop the movement of water downhill. Plants grow in it so easily that the cement pieces disappear under them. Because we think the riprap is handsome, however, we keep it cleared. There has been no trouble with these riprap walls. The firebreak that was made around Laguna gave us our first chance to get into the chaparral. This opened up the wild areas and gave us a chance to plant more California natives, which proved to be more difficult than any other class of plants ever attempted here. We have tried all we were advised were possible, and in 20 years have been able to have success with only a few.

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLER **The living room, overlooking Boat Canyon, has floor-to-ceiling windows on all sides. Miller's sculpture hangs above the fireplace.**

FOR 20 YEARS the local wild animals were fed here nightly. They were mostly raccoons. But there were as many as seven foxes at once, seven skunks, and a couple of opossums. The opossums never became at all trusting, but the others did and would let us walk among them, or they would come to us. They got along together, and their manners were good, and they were, of course, a constant delight. Because of the endless building around Laguna, coyotes, never here before, came in. There were many of them, and although it is fine to hear them sing, the smaller animals can have no chance with coyotes. So I judged it unwise to concentrate them here. After the fire the animals, who could not eat ashes, were scarce, and I did not resume feeding. The feeding of

ike your kids.



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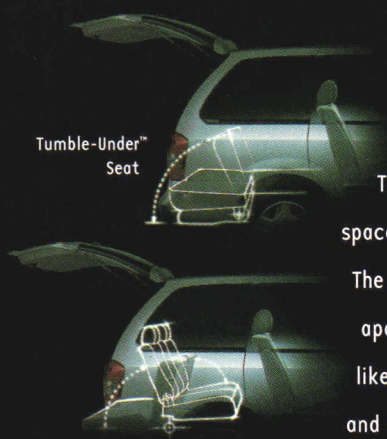

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birds has continued and now includes a pair of ravens who top off the carrion with doughnuts. Rabbits, ground squirrels, gophers, wild rats and mice and shrews, a variety of snakes, and a couple of sorts of lizards all make their homes here. We get along. "We'll get along" was an expression the eminent British traveler Mrs. Trollope heard repeatedly in Cincinnati when she lived there in the early 1800s. She thought it indicated sheer shiftlessness. Being middle-western myself, I come by this expression, whatever it means, honestly. That's how things are: we'll get along. We've had neighborhood resistance to the garden, and an enthusiastic fire. But we are still here.

OPEN AIR A courtyard, top, bursting with ferns, begonias, and trumpet vines separates the public and private spaces. Miller, who attended the Art Institute of Chicago, made the movable jute windscreens. Left, nasturtiums and a South African import, *dierama*.

By 1970–1976, it was proper to love Mother Nature and to try to save her. The City Council of Laguna Beach quite fashionably—and quite innocently—asked for gifts of open land. Not to be outdone in saving Mother Nature, or in fashion and innocence, I offered the garden to the city. It was to be kept as a garden and open to public visiting. Shortly thereafter, the Friends of the Hortense Miller Garden was formed, and the garden is shown to visitors by docents from the Friends. They also provide some financial support and volunteer labor, which adds to the size and variety evident in the garden. The contribution of unusual and beautiful plants alone is considerable. Their interest is a stimulus to make the garden more interesting, more beautiful, and the surety that it is not going to be broken into lots and built upon gives us a longer life than is possible to most gardens.

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dust buster

Who you gonna call when you're in housekeeping hell? Try Cheryl Mendelson, a Mrs. Beeton for our time

IN A SOFT, SLIGHTLY musical voice, Cheryl Mendelson offers her guest a cup of coffee. Dressed in muted colors, Mendelson sits, very straight, on a chair in her pleasant, book-lined living room on Manhattan's Upper West Side and smiles gently. It is a terrifying moment.

The only prospect more intimidating than visiting this apartment is that of Mendelson dropping by to visit yours. She is the author of *Home Comforts* (Scribner, $35), a brand-new, 880-page bible of housekeeping. Mendelson can instruct you in the proper technique for mundane things you may think you have already mastered—how to fold underpants, or wash your hands (essentially, much as brain surgeons do on *ER*). But she also illuminates more obscure corners: how to vacuum antique upholstery, sleep soundly (try refrigerating your pillowcase), clean a keyboard (piano or computer), decipher a fire extinguisher label, replace a destroyed stock certificate, get your name off direct-marketing lists, or test the "anti-entrapment feature" on a garage door operator. And when Mendelson explains the extent to which the Constitution protects your privacy, believe it: she has a law degree from Harvard.

It was law, in fact, that got her started on this book. In the 1980s the corporate attorney and erstwhile 4-H Pennsylvania farm girl began collecting housekeeping books as an antidote to her 70-hour work weeks. "I was yearning for the life I had on the farm," she says. Eight years ago, after giving up the law (she also has a Ph.D. in philosophy, and now teaches), Mendelson gave birth to a son. Soon she was aggrieved by care labels. "One thing was flame-resistant pajamas," she says. "I wanted my son to wear cotton pajamas, but if that wasn't safe, well. . . . This led me to ask, what is flame resistance?"

She thought her search would make a funny magazine article, and it might have. But once she quenched one thirst, another arose. Mendelson wrote several hundred pages about "what it takes to make a good home," which by her definition includes keeping a Scrabble set and knowing how to make a good cup of tea, before she decided to find a publisher. Once she did—and very quickly—she was somewhat alarmed at what she had undertaken: "It was daunting, but I was in the middle of it before I realized. I'd be writing something and I'd say, are you sure?" Serendipity provided the answers to many questions she didn't even know she had, such as how to store old audio tapes, but she also had many quests. When she was researching sheets, for instance, she would "call textile professors and fine-linen stores, and get different kinds of sheets to see how they wore," she says. "I even wore some out!"

Mendelson imparts to the subject that is closest to her heart a kind of academician's good cheer, underscored with a lawyer's tenacity and enough personal anecdotes to make her occasional didacticism palatable. "I followed little trails," she says. "I almost always began with something

The crusader believes that a well-ordered house is a happy one, and within reach of the overburdened and the slob

TEA TIME **The author in her New York City dining room, where she worked on her book after the project filled her study to overflowing. "It was emergency living," she says.**

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personal. I didn't want to be contemptuous of housekeeping, or impersonal." Mendelson is a crusader who truly believes that a well-ordered house is a happy one, and within the reach of both the overburdened and the slob. "You miss something if you don't keep house," she says, but she understands that not everyone can commit to total tidiness. "I'm not a cleaning fanatic. I preach triage when you're in trouble." If you're really strapped for time, she advises, "do the bedroom. That's where you spend the most time."

IF YOU HATE some aspect of housekeeping, she suggests that you examine why: "My view is that if you start poking at attitudes, you'll find that disconnect, your disdain of the process." Self-examination helped Mendelson make peace with dish washing, an activity her husband, Edward, a professor of English at Columbia University, has always enjoyed. "My sister and I had to wash the dishes," she says. "My brothers didn't have to, because it was women's work. I thought it was grossly unfair, and I'm glad history's verdict is on my side." Edward, she says, always washed dishes while he was on the phone, "so he connected it with sociability, communication. I've changed now. Doing dishes with Edward, Mr. Good Cheer, is a whole new thing."

Almost anyone, she thinks, can derive pleasure from some domestic activity. Ask her about her favorite and she takes on the appearance of a medieval saint in the throes of an epiphany. "I love to iron, to watch cloth get unwrinkled," she says dreamily. "The smell of steaming cloth—I thrill to that smell."

That sounds like a cue to run home and clean, or at least tidy up. Imagine the delight of the departing visitor who spies a Jolly Rancher candy wrapper near Mendelson's front door. Surely the eight-year-old boy on the premises is the miscreant? "Oh, no," Mendelson fesses up. "It's probably mine. I love to buy those candies." Even saints have human frailties. What a relief.

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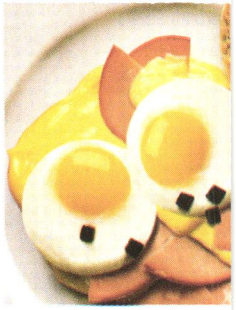

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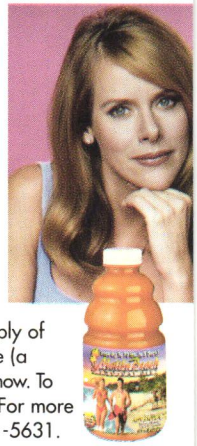

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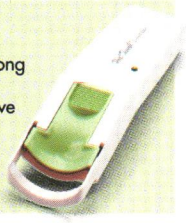

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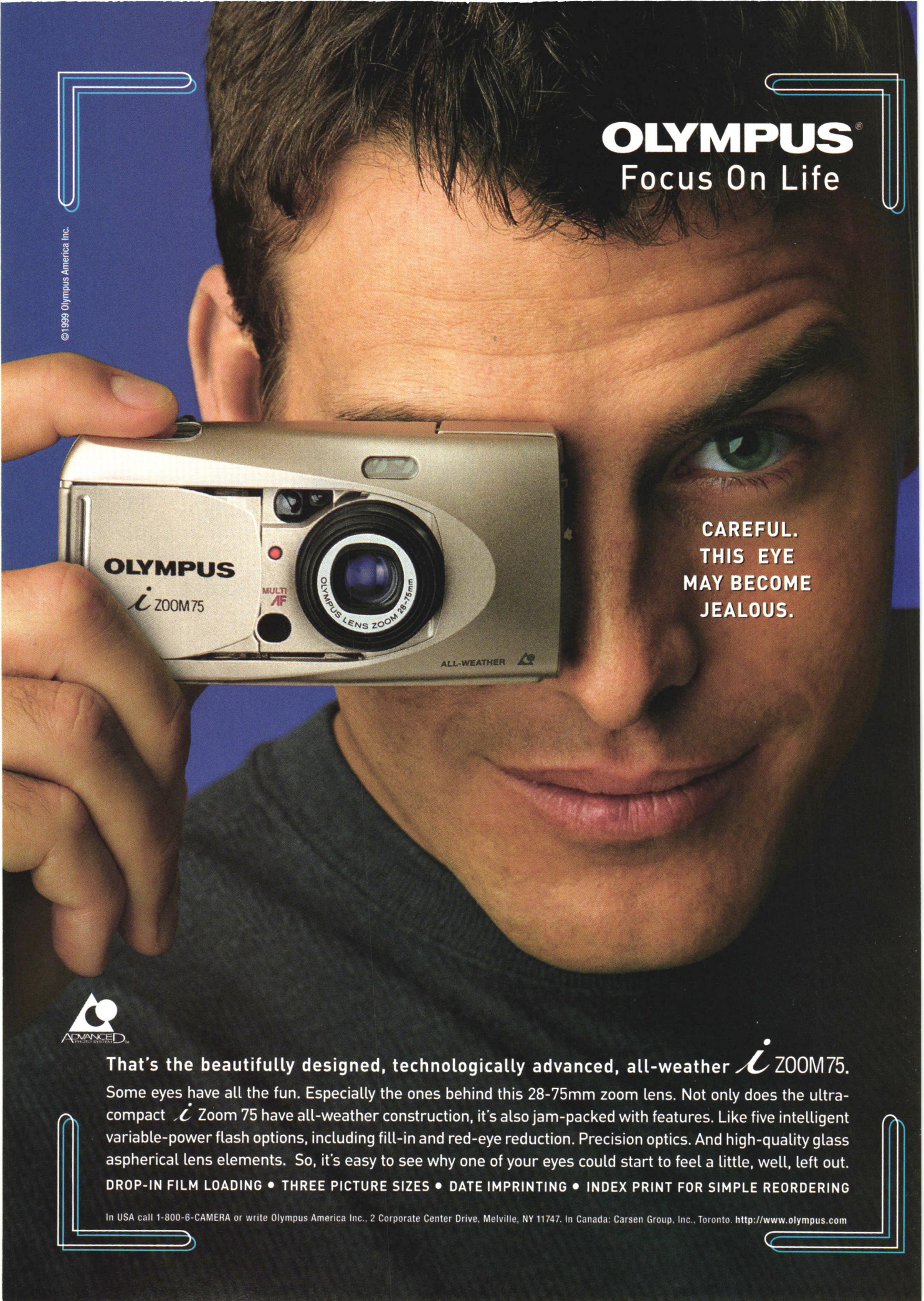
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the fire within

A savory meal cooked in the fireplace sates our longing for food kissed by an open flame

THE ROLE OF the fireplace in American life has dwindled to a ceremonial one. But it doesn't have to be that way: cooking in a fireplace is surprisingly easy and almost absurdly gratifying. When cold winds rattle the panes, indoor cookouts speak to the immutable law—encoded deep in humanity's tribal DNA—that food tastes better cooked over an open wood fire. And nothing galvanizes a winter party quite like cooking in the fireplace. "You're a hit every time you do it," swears a Manhattan friend who ate off the fire (a little lamb chop here, a whole grilled dinner for ten there) all last winter, although she lives 14 stories up.

She happens to use a Tuscan grill, a simple double-handled iron grate that slips neatly into a heavy base built to cradle a pile of burning logs. It's elegantly pared down and workable, but hard to get. (The Gardener in Berkeley is the sole American source.) Anyone can jerry-rig a similar setup by pirating a barbecue grate from the backyard and elevating it on suitably high stacks of bricks. The only accessories you will need are your favorite hardwoods—from cherry to oak to apple—and a low footstool, the better to crouch before the flames with long-handled tongs in hand.

Your latter-day guests will probably find your ad hoc fireplace grill every bit as exotic as the arrangements in Montreal's early-eighteenth-century Chateau Ramezay, in which a barrel cage was mounted above the fireplace so that the family dogs could turn the spits. People will cluster around the fire, as they have done from the dawn of the species. They will inhale the primal scents of wood smoke and searing meat, and kibitz, and place orders ("Make mine medium rare"). They will bring another glass of wine to the cook when she mutters, "My legs are getting scorched." They may even tell the apartment building's doorman not to call the fire department when he knocks, as he did at my New York friend's door on one memorable occasion, to see what's burning.

This is cooking of a vibrantly textural sort, all rough edges and varied surfaces

But the big fun will be on their dinner plates. This is simple, rustic cooking of a vibrantly textural sort, all rough edges and soot marks and interestingly varied surfaces, burnished and scorched and singed. Towering cylinders of beef filet transcend themselves when wrapped in a thin, butcher-cut layer of fat that lets them sear to mahogany over the hottest part of the fire. Their very texture seems altered, denser, as if a lightning-fast contraction has sealed in every bit of juice and charry flavor; this is not just another steak off the backyard grill. Neither are meaty, fire-tinged asparagus spears the mild-mannered, steamed creatures of spring.

No insubstantial green salad matches the gravitas of red onion and fennel caramelized by flame, tart and sweet with a current of licorice darting through. Slabs

THE HEAT IS ON Fireplace cooking, top and left, can be as simple as asparagus spears singed and tightened on a Tuscan grill over a mixture of hardwoods (here they are cherry, apple, and oak).

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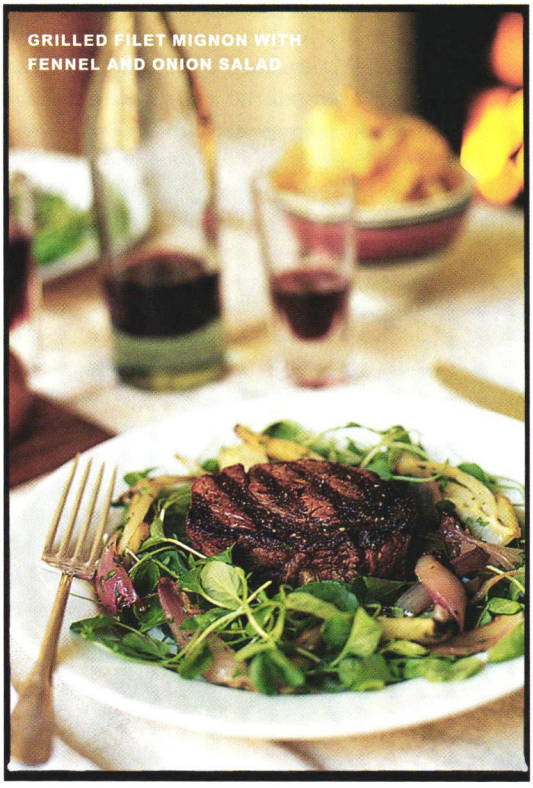
of rough country bread doused in olive oil and transfigured on the grill are the perfect counterpart, their flavor brought alive by a sprinkling of coarse salt. In every case, wood smoke will have rendered these dishes more interesting than charcoal ever could.

What tricks should the fireplace chef know? It's all in the prepping; after you gather your ingredients into a wintry still life, you're right out there with your guests. Timing is crucial, so plot it carefully or try a practice run (vegetables first, beef second, breads last) before party night. Know your fire. Don't be afraid of a little char. And give your guests room to draw close, as they must. Some tribal imperatives never die.

RECIPES

COOKING WITH FIRE

All of these recipes require hot embers and a sturdy grill. A Tuscan grill (available through The Gardener in Berkeley; 510-548-4545) is ideal, but a barbecue grate set across stacks of bricks will do. Make sure that your grill frame or bricks are carefully installed before lighting the fire. The grate should be put into place a few minutes before you are ready to start cooking.



GRILLED FILET MIGNON WITH FENNEL AND ONION SALAD

GRILLED FILET MIGNON WITH FENNEL AND ONION SALAD

Serves 4

4 ¾ lbs.	filet mignon steaks
8 oz.	suet (beef fat)
1	bunch fresh rosemary branches
2	cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
¼ cup	fresh rosemary leaves, washed and chopped
½ cup	olive oil
1	bunch arugula for garnish

FENNEL AND ONION SALAD

2	fennel bulbs, tops cut off, washed, and cut in half
2	medium red onions, cut in half (with skin still on)
	Olive oil for brushing vegetables
¼ cup	extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbs.	balsamic vinegar
	Salt and freshly ground pepper

Cut the rosemary branches into 2-inch pieces. Wrap the sides of the filet with the suet and stick the branches between the fat and the meat. Tie the outside of the filet with kitchen string to secure the suet.

Combine the garlic, rosemary leaves, and olive oil, gently toss the filets in the mixture, and marinate for 1 hour.

Bring a large pot of water to boil. Add the fennel bulbs and onions and cook for 1 minute. Remove from the pot and plunge into a bowl of ice water. Dry the vegetables with a kitchen towel and place on a platter. Brush with olive oil and place on a hot grill.

Cook the fennel and onions on each side until golden brown. When done, remove to a platter and let cool enough to handle. Remove onion skins; cut fennel and onions into large slices and toss with olive oil and vinegar in a medium bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Place the steaks on the grill and cook 5 to 7 minutes per side for medium rare. For well done, grill 10 minutes, depending on the heat of your fire.

Remove steaks from the grill and serve immediately with the salad on a bed of arugula.

THOMAS KINKADE

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GRILLED ASPARAGUS

Serves 4

2 lbs.	green asparagus
½ cup	shaved Parmesan cheese
¼ cup	parsley leaves, chopped
2	hard-boiled eggs, peeled and roughly chopped (optional)
	Olive oil for brushing asparagus

SHALLOT VINAIGRETTE

2	shallots, peeled and finely diced
2 tbs.	sherry vinegar
2 tbs.	balsamic vinegar
⅓ cup	extra-virgin olive oil
	Salt and freshly ground pepper

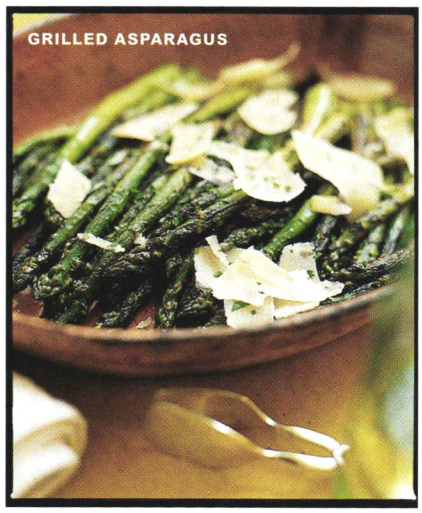
Bring a large pot of water to boil.

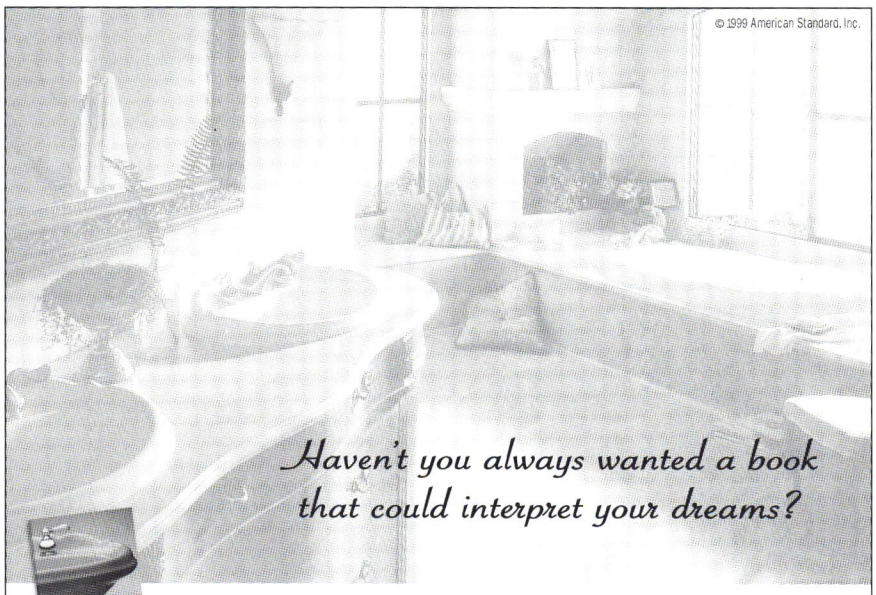
Peel the lower part of the asparagus stems and trim ½ inch off the ends. Divide the asparagus into two bundles. Tie kitchen string around the center of each bundle and blanch for 2 minutes in boiling water. Next, plunge the asparagus into a bowl of ice water. Remove the strings, dry the asparagus on a kitchen towel, and place on a platter.

To make the vinaigrette, mix together the chopped shallots and vinegars in a small bowl, then slowly incorporate the olive oil. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

Brush the asparagus with olive oil and place on a hot grill. Cook 1 to 2 minutes on each side. Remove to a large platter when done (the spears should be slightly brown). Drizzle evenly with vinaigrette and then sprinkle with shaved Parmesan, parsley, and, if you like, chopped egg.

Season with salt and ground pepper.





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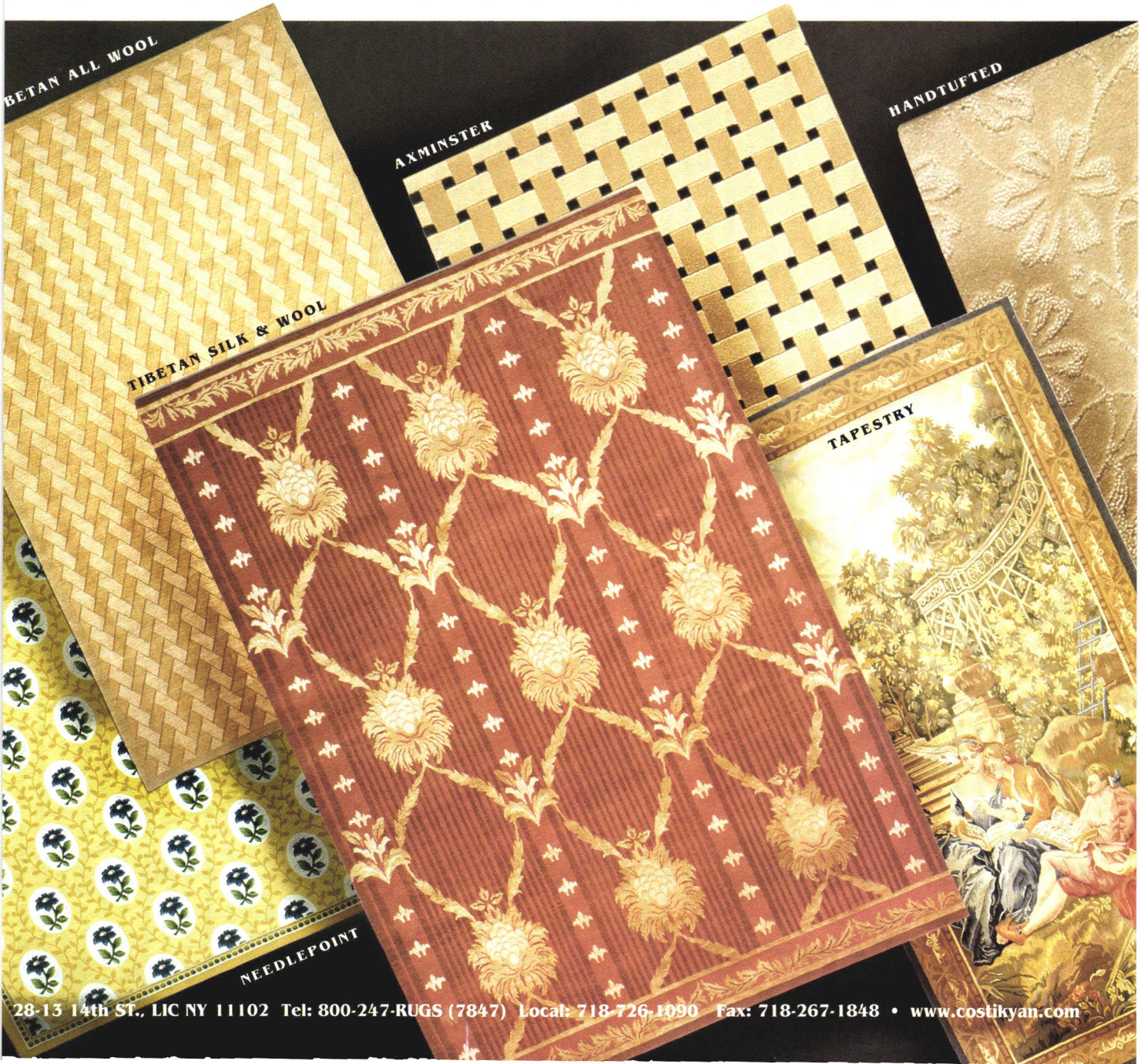

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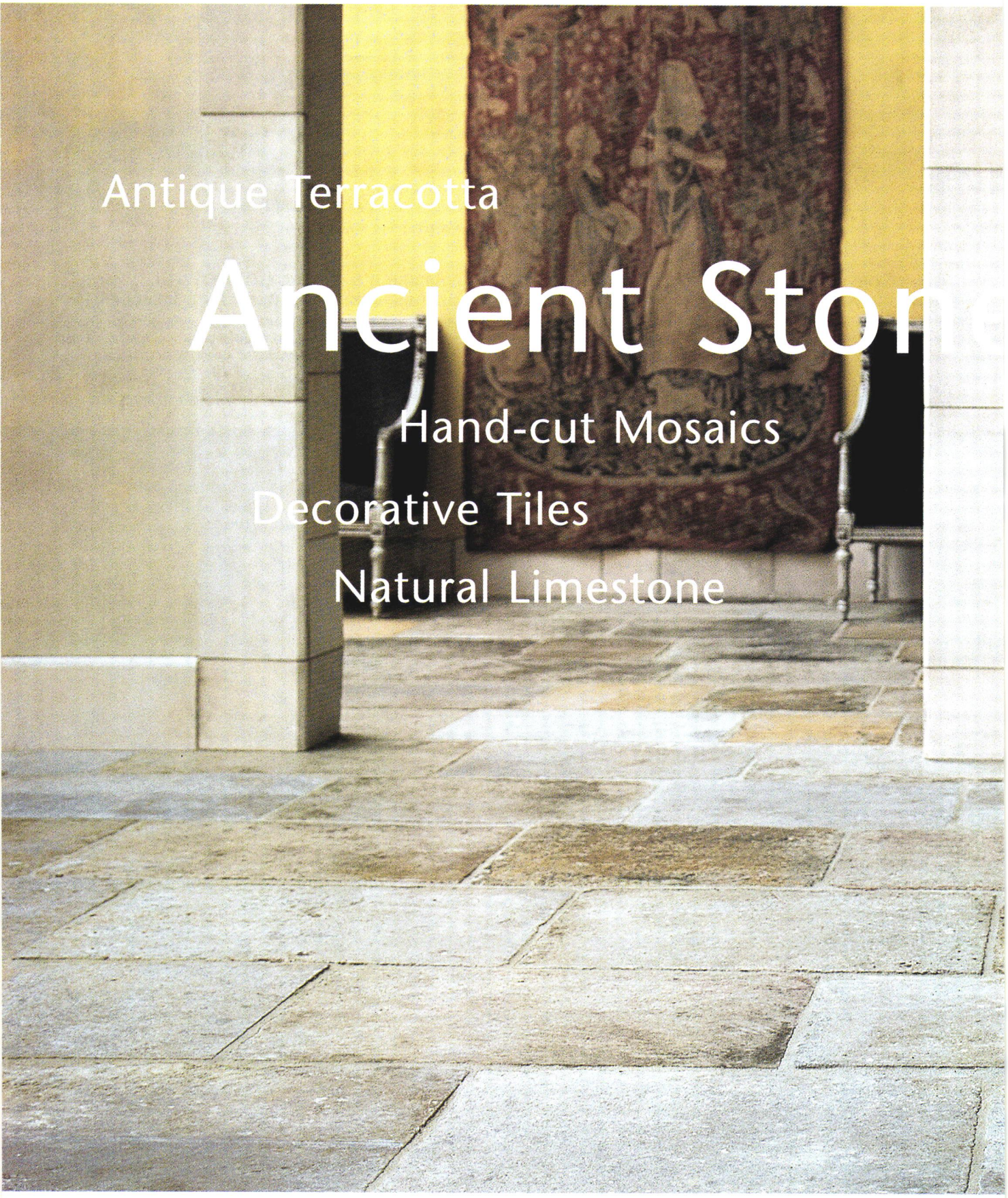
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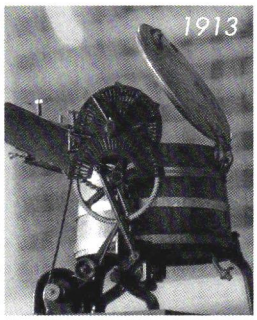

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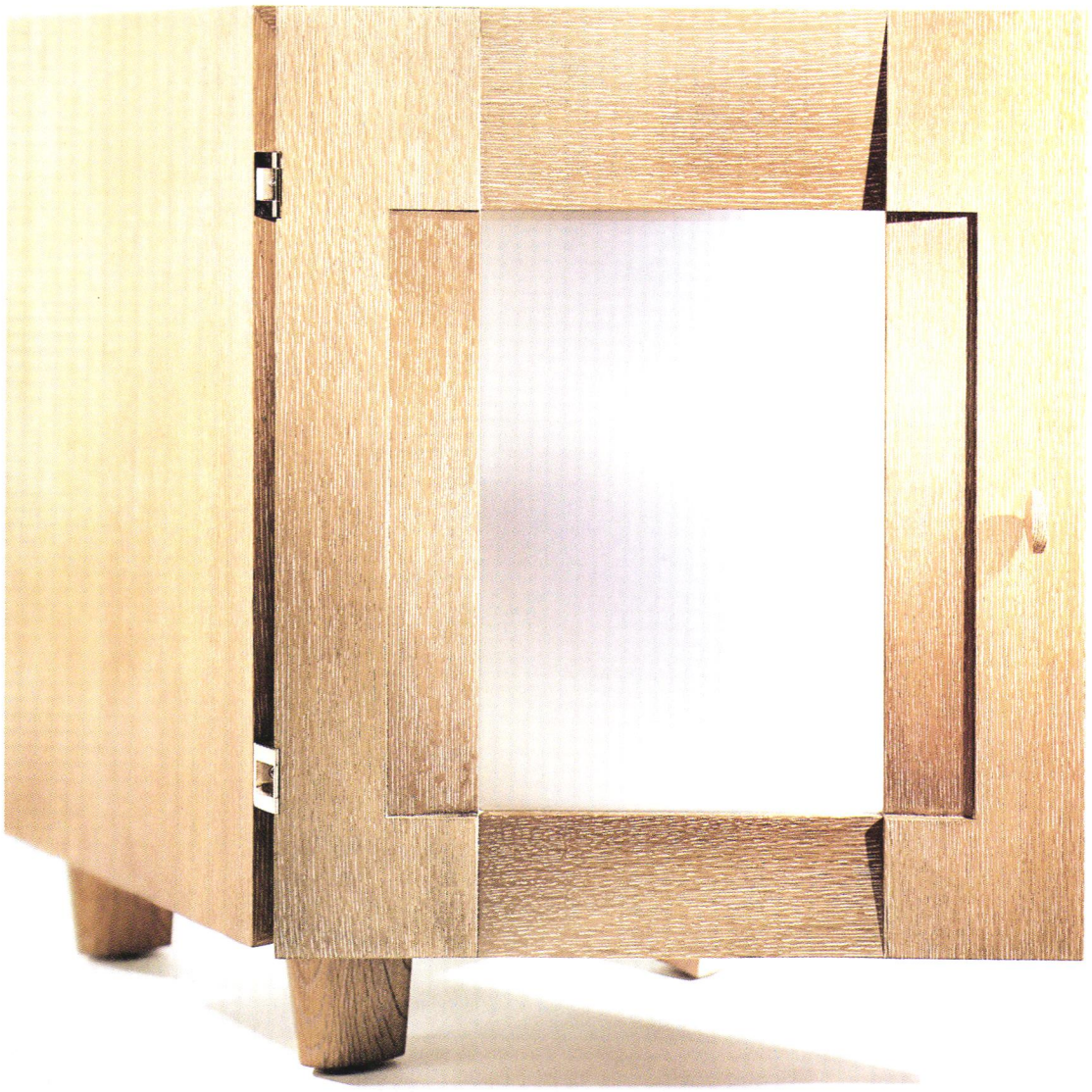

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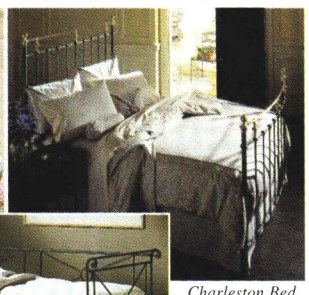

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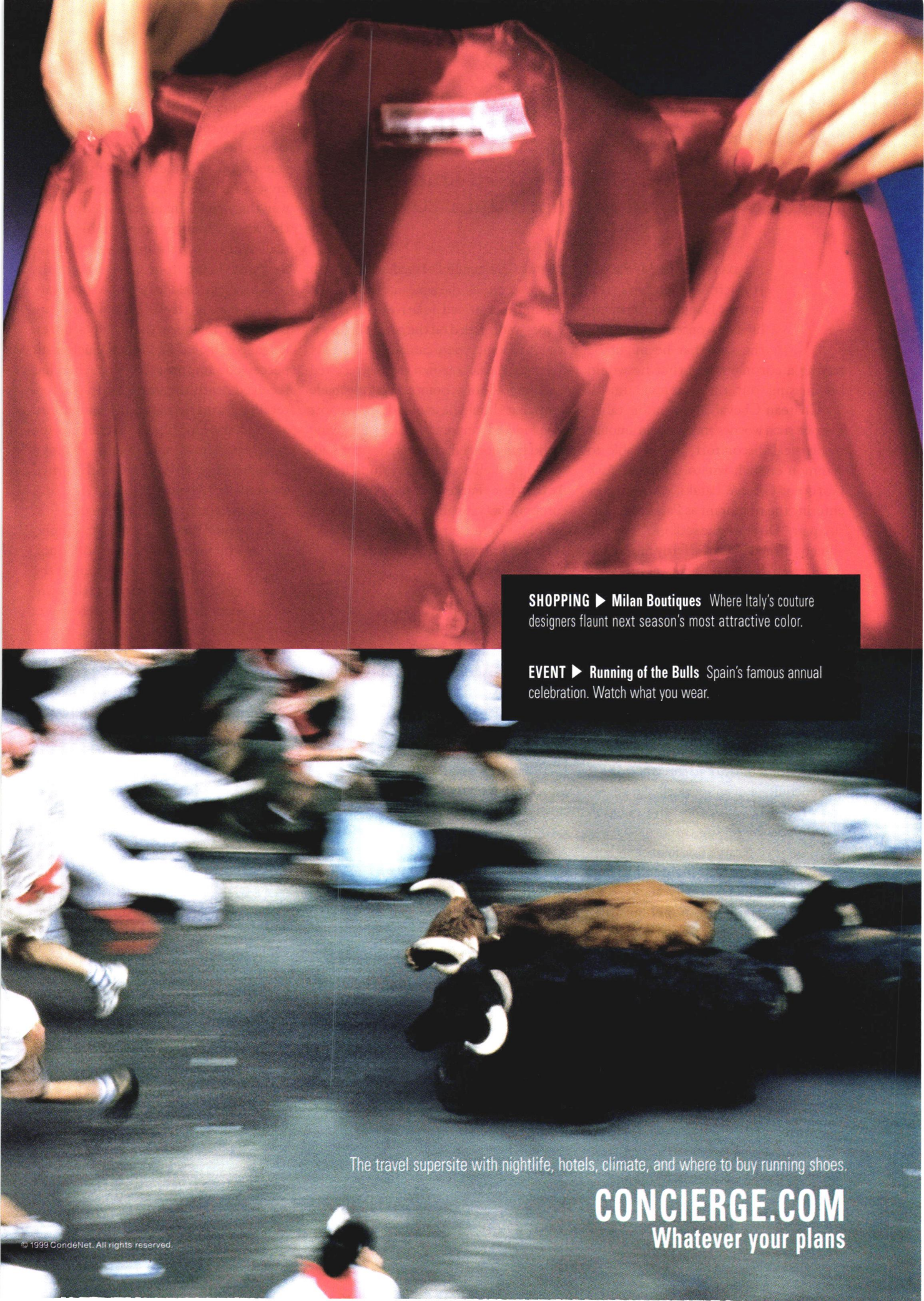
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the standout

Robert M. Parker, Jr., has been shaking up the wine world for more than 20 years

THE DAY Robert M. Parker, Jr., left Manhattan's restaurant Daniel on a stretcher, his main concern, aside from the fact that he might be having a coronary, was that he would be missing out on the magnum of '47 Château Cheval Blanc on his table. Despite such worries and a certain amount of physical discomfort, he was able to summon enough wit to tell New York Governor George Pataki, who was just entering the restaurant as Parker was carried past, "Don't eat the scallops." (Parker's ailment turned out to be fairly minor and unrelated to his meal.) This was probably the first time that a wine critic made the *New York Post*'s Page Six. But in the wine world, Parker has been the boldest of bold-faced names for the past 15 years, the Michael Jordan of wine tasting.

If anyone needs verification of Parker's nonpareil stature, it was recently provided by, of all people, the French. The self-proclaimed American wine advocate, who at the start of his career couldn't even speak the language, was recently awarded the Légion d'Honneur for telling the Frogs that a lot of their venerable bordeaux and burgundy isn't as great as it should be and that some of it positively sucks. The *French*! He's saying this not about their mothers or their girlfriends, but about their *wine*! And last June, Chirac kissed both of his cheeks and gave him one of those goddamned little medals to wear on his lapel for the rest of his life! *Incroyable*! Even Parker himself was blown away—he proudly displayed snapshots at a recent lunch—and believe me, he is not a guy who lacks self-confidence.

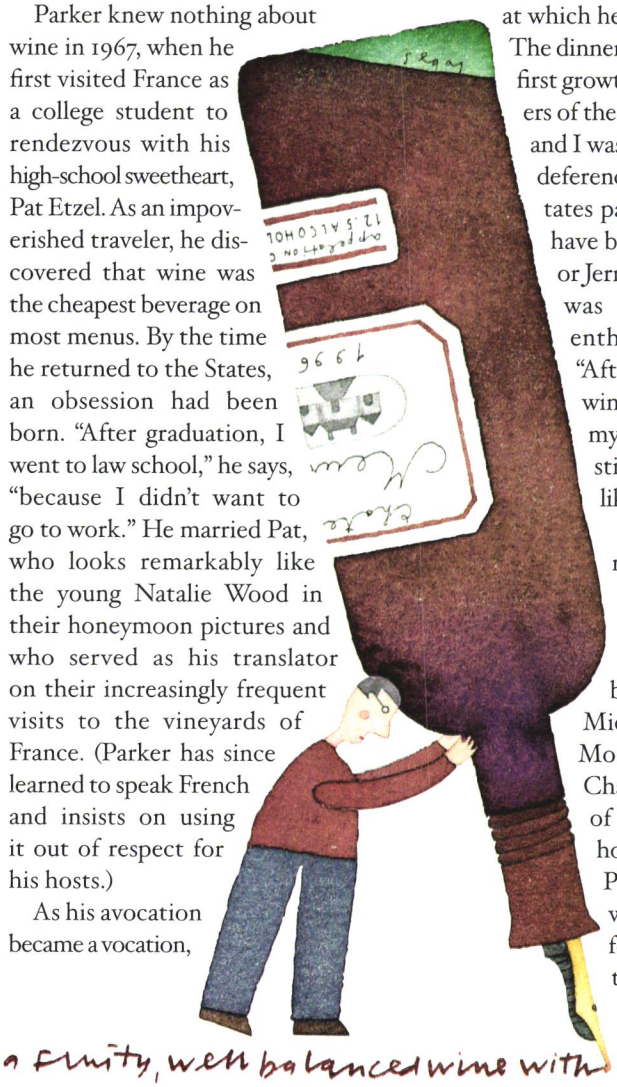
The first issue of Parker's *The Wine Advocate* (then called *The Baltimore-Washington Wine Advocate*) appeared in 1978. The nine-page newsletter opened with a survey of the 1973 bordeaux vintage, which had already been touted by the trade. Parker informed his handful of readers that "with a few exceptions, the wines are disappointing and overpriced relative to quality." Wines were graded on the good old American 100-point report-card scale. Châteaux Margaux, the famous first growth, received a failing grade of 55 points. "A poorly made wine that should be avoided," the report concluded. If anyone in the insular wine world had noticed, they might have said, "Who the hell does this guy think he is?" At the time, Parker was a moonlighting corporate lawyer publishing the newsletter out of his home in rural Maryland.

Parker knew nothing about wine in 1967, when he first visited France as a college student to rendezvous with his high-school sweetheart, Pat Etzel. As an impoverished traveler, he discovered that wine was the cheapest beverage on most menus. By the time he returned to the States, an obsession had been born. "After graduation, I went to law school," he says, "because I didn't want to go to work." He married Pat, who looks remarkably like the young Natalie Wood in their honeymoon pictures and who served as his translator on their increasingly frequent visits to the vineyards of France. (Parker has since learned to speak French and insists on using it out of respect for his hosts.)

As his avocation became a vocation, Parker quit practicing law and became the most respected, admired, and feared wine critic in the world, educating a generation of American consumers—myself included—and influencing the way that wine is made and sold around the world. A single point on his rating scale can be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to a wine maker. His books, which include *Bordeaux, Burgundy,* and *Wines of the Rhône Valley,* are published in more than half a dozen languages, including French. Such is his perceived importance that he has received death threats (later traced to a retailer formerly based in Manhattan) and was sued for libel by a French wine *négociant*. He is mobbed by women when he visits Japan. He recently turned down a *60 Minutes* profile. And did I mention the Légion d'Honneur?

I first met Parker at a charity dinner, at which he was the guest of honor. The dinner included a tasting of the first growths of bordeaux; the owners of the great estates were there, and I was amazed at the incredible deference these French potentates paid to Parker. He might have been Nelson Mandela . . . or Jerry Lewis. Also impressive was his almost childlike enthusiasm for the wine. "After a quarter of a million wines that have run across my palate," he declared, "I still get excited by wines like these."

"I'm a hedonist," he told me a few months later at a restaurant near his home, to which he had generously carried a bottle of '95 Domaine Michel Niellon Chassagne-Montrachet and an '88 Château Rayas from one of his three cellars. "My hobbies are wine and food. People keep asking me when I'm going to lose a few pounds, and I say, 'It took millions of dollars to get into this shape.' " While he is far thinner and more handsome



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than, say, A.J. Liebling, one feels for those stretcher bearers at Daniel. Parker is a big man in every sense. His prose, too, is robust and muscular—hardly the norm for wine writing. He tells me about a ten-course tasting menu at Charlie Trotter's in Chicago that left him unsatisfied: "Afterward we went to a place called Weinerville and wolfed down four or five dogs." The day before I saw him, he'd tasted 150 wines for his newsletter. How he is able to do this—and to evaluate and remember each of them—has been the subject of much speculation. Is he one of those rare "supertasters," born with more taste buds on his tongue? Parker himself is skeptical, although he notes that his father had an exceptionally keen sense of smell. "I may have inherited a particularly acute olfactory instrument," he suggests.

Parker may be a hedonist, but he's also a missionary. He sees himself as a reformer, a consumer advocate, the Martin Luther of the wine world. The name of his newsletter is revealing: no mere spectator he. "There's an inherent conflict between oenologists and consumers," he says. Since the beginning of his career, Parker has railed against the cozy relationship between wine writers and the trade, particularly in England, where many wine writers were—and continue to be—involved in the sale and distribution of wine. One well-known English critic was reputed to leave the trunk of his car open when he visited wineries—as a helpful hint. Except for unsolicited bottle samples, Parker accepts no freebies of any kind, whether travel, lodging, or wine. And his newsletter accepts no advertising. Partly as a result, *The Wine Advocate,* despite a worldwide paid subscription of just 40,000, is the most influential wine publication in the world.

PARKER'S CRITICS complain about his influence and his taste, the standard rap being that he likes big, floozy, in-your-face wines saturated with new oak, and that his power has resulted in "an international style" that ignores the nuances of grape varietal and geography. There's no question, Parker likes big wines. On the other hand, his favorite wines for personal consumption are southern Rhônes, particularly Châteauneuf-du-Pape. As he is quick to point out, the wines of Château Rayas, Château de Beaucastel, and Henri Bonneau are quirky artisanal wines made with little new oak. And when he decided to invest in an Oregon winery, Beaux Frères, with his brother-in-law, Mike Etzel, he chose that daintiest of grapes—Pinot Noir.

Old-world critics sometimes accuse Parker of favoring California-style superripe wines like the 1982 Bordeaux vintage, which helped make his reputation. But he has long been a critic of the overly technological U.C. Davis approach that has predominated in the New World until recently. His campaign against filtration, which he believes strips a wine of character for the sake of stability, has been so successful that the word "unfiltered" is now displayed on many premium wine labels.

Asked to describe the much discussed "Parker Effect" on the wine world, he says without a moment's hesitation: "Lower yields, ripe fruit, an artisanal approach. Less is better. Let the *terroir* express itself. This is my legacy." If this sounds a little technical, let me put it this way: The next time you open a bottle of wine, raise the first glass to Robert Parker, because, no matter what it is, it will taste better than it would have if the big man had stuck with corporate law.

THE OENO FILE

Here are Robert Parker, Jr.'s notes on some of his current favorites that cost less than $15.

'97 BADIA A COLTIBUONO CETAMURA CHIANTI An excellent bargain, this wine is loaded with ripe black cherry fruit, leather, and dried herbs. $11

'98 LA CARRAIA SANGIOVESE Medium-bodied and velvety, this wine exhibits textbook Sangiovese characteristics of strawberry/cherry fruit, new saddle leather, and dried herbs. $12

'98 DOMAINE DE COUSSERGUES SAUVIGNON BLANC This offers a super nose of melony, honeyed fruit intertwined with tropical notes—surprisingly rich and exotic. $10

'98 VEGA SINDOA EL CHAPARRAL This inexpensive, dark-ruby-colored offering is loaded with kirsch, pepper, and spice, as well as lusty levels of glycerin. $12

'98 DOMAINE DE POUY To take advantage of the wonderful aromatics and delicate, fruit-driven style, this vintage should be drunk during its first six to nine months. $7

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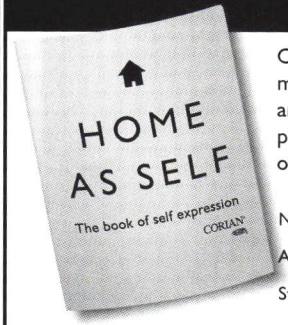

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past perfect

by véronique vienne

august 1930

TODAY, WHEN BUYERS inspect a house for sale, they check the closets more carefully than the kitchen, the bathrooms, or the backyard. If they were to open a door in a hallway and find this exquisitely decorated linen closet, published in *House & Garden* in 1930, they probably would make an offer on the spot. This is the stuff of domestic dreams: your own private sanctum dedicated to the god of tidiness.

Hand-painted mirrors slide back to reveal shelves edged with peach silk moiré, bordered in blue ribbon and lace. Dressers with glass-front drawers are adorned with sparkling crystal knobs. Most likely measuring no more than six by twelve feet, this small room is a giant kaleidoscope: neat piles of folded linen—some tied with ribbons—are duplicated again and again, their endless reflection creating a vision of divine order.

Modern walk-in closets, a post-Victorian invention, were uniquely American. In the 1920s built-in furniture became the craze as architects championed the idea that a room was more functional with fewer pieces of furniture. Inspired by Gustav Stickley's structural furnishings, Frank Lloyd Wright designed seats, tables, and cupboards as permanent fixtures of a house. Magazine editors encouraged their readers to get rid of cumbersome armoires and dressers and transfer their belongings into floor-to-ceiling units.

To accommodate these vertical displays of dry goods, spare rooms and alcoves were transformed into walk-in closets. Items that were once hidden away in dark cubicles, deep drawers, or heavy chests were now revealed, spread out within easy reach. Today, when we open a closet door, the sight of a person's domestic life laid bare still gives us a voyeuristic thrill.

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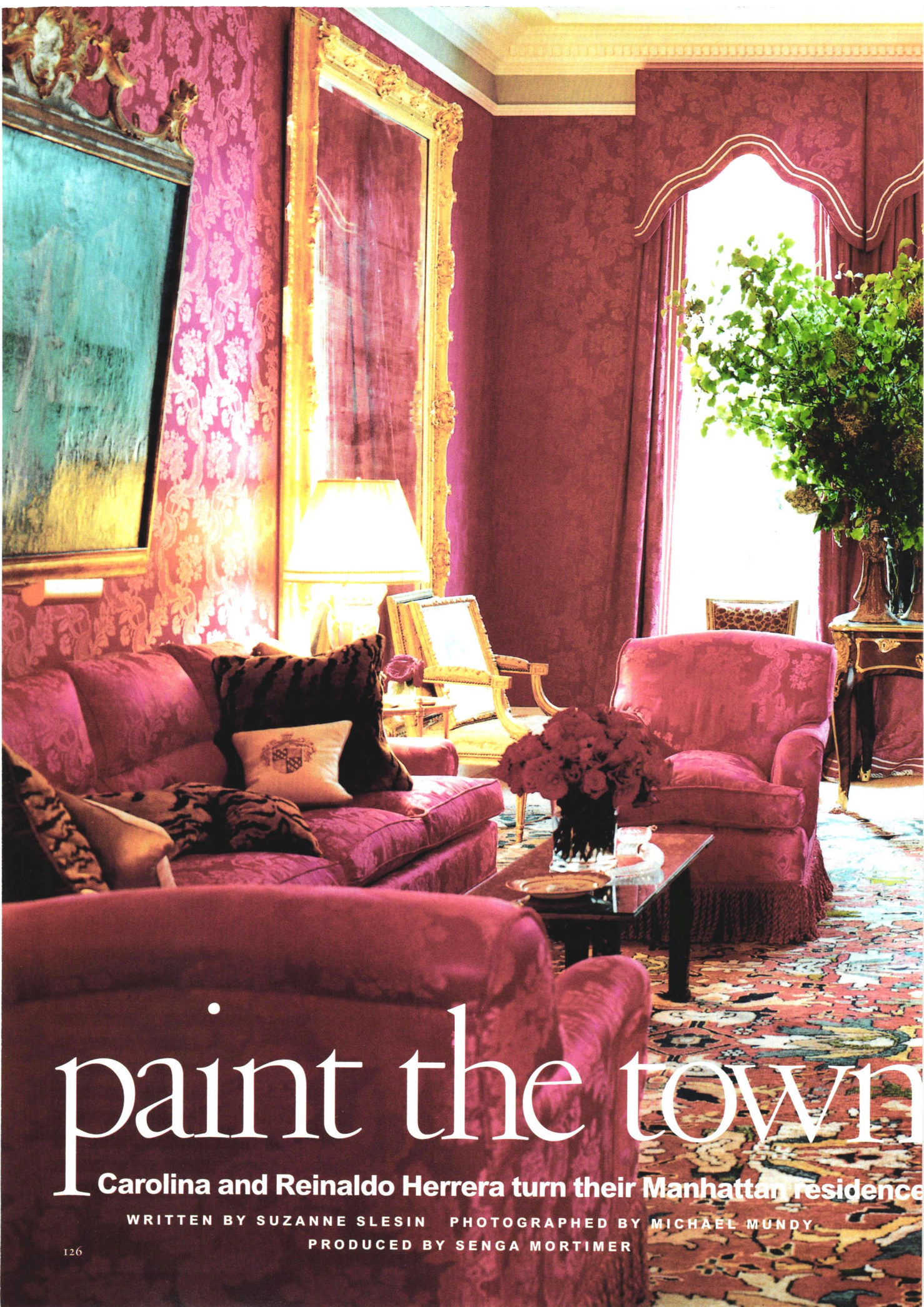
House & Garden

fashion at home

PHOTOGRAPH BY MELANIE ACEVEDO

first principle Couturiers are butterflies in the Garden of Design. Architects and decorators work scrupulously to produce an ideal blossom; fashion designers float on the breeze of change. The two species may ignore each other. Then: a special moment comes—inspiration, a new shape, *that* dress in *this* room—and fashion and high design suddenly, together, create a thing of surpassing beauty.

Pretty jewelry; lovely flowers. But when Monty Don butterfly brooches alight on *Sedum* 'Ruby Glow' buds, a new, startling, whimsical beauty emerges.



paint the town

Carolina and Reinaldo Herrera turn their Manhattan residence

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL MUNDY

PRODUCED BY SENGA MORTIMER

ABOUT 100 YARDS OF RED VALENCAY SILK and cotton damask from Clarence House, used on the walls, sofa, draperies, and armchairs, adds to the drama of the grand living room. The chaises are in a silk velvet from Clarence House. The Mughal rug and French minister's desk are both 18th century.

house red

nto a welcoming space that's as delicious as a raspberry soufflé

DECORATING BY committee is often a no-win situation—but not in the case of Carolina and Reinaldo Herrera's Manhattan town house. The couple—she is a well-known fashion designer, he the special-projects editor at *Vanity Fair* magazine—were happy to heed decorating suggestions from their friends, an international coterie known for their sophisticated taste and instinctual style.

"Put a little gray in the ceiling for extra shadow," advised former New York–based decorator Geneviève Faure, who agreed that a pale green would be just right for the Gustav-style dining room. (She also advised against tearing down the staircase balustrade. It stayed.) Kenneth Jay Lane, the jewelry designer, suggested that the pantry door should open into the hall rather than the dining room. The late decorator and writer Chessy Rayner insisted that the hall be an off-the-shelf shade of

PORTRAITS EMPHASIZE the couple's heritage. A gilded Napoleon III mirror, opposite page, one of a pair that was brought from Caracas, reflects a portrait by French artist Jean-Marc Nattier. A chair supports a drawing of Reinaldo's mother, Mimi, by Cecil Beaton. **TWO 18TH-CENTURY PORTRAITS**, this page, flank a Spanish colonial mirror. The marble mantel dates from George III.

CAROLINA HERRERA POSES in her sitting room, above left, with its fabric-covered walls. The 1940s pastel by Alfredo Rodriguez, left, is of Reinaldo's mother. A THAI BUDDHA HEAD rests on an 18th-century French cabinet. Cotton ticking by Ian Mankin from the Coconut Company is on the walls and has been made into draperies. THE ARMCHAIRS, above, are in a Clarence House silk taffeta. The 19th-century silk carpet is Chinese.

pale yellow, so that it would be easy to repaint. London-based interior designer John Stefanidis thought that mirrors would enhance the entrance foyer. They do.

On and on came the ideas, like a continuous stream of guests at an open house. "We simply called on all of our friends," says the Venezuela-born Carolina. Other than consulting with Sam Blount, a New York–based interior decorator who designed the draperies and helped with some of the accessories, and the two architects, Laura Garófalo and Omar Khan, who carried out the necessary structural changes, the Herreras just drew on their decades of creating comfortable and affable rooms. "We didn't want to hire a decorator to do the whole place," says Reinaldo.

All in all, the extravagant yet unpretentious, totally charming, and luxuriously joyous decor of the house was the couple's own doing. The Herreras entertain effortlessly—and often—and wanted their house to feel welcoming and warm. From the moment people enter the striking checkerboard-floored foyer until they climb the stairs ("There's no elevator," Carolina says. "I tell everyone it's good for their legs") to the reception rooms, the experience is one of gracious ceremony.

Each room is filled, yet not cluttered, with knickknacks and personal mementos, witness to a heritage of traditional

ITALIAN PAINTED CHAIRS from the Chinese Porcelain Company and an 18th-century French table set with Rockingham china emphasize the airy look of the dining room, which opens onto the garden.

decorating piqued with flair. Small tables are set up at a convenient arm's length from sofas and chairs; lamps cast a mellow glow atop desks and consoles; and family photographs, portraits, and drawings reinforce the Herreras' joint heritage.

It is the 30-foot-long drawing room—an explosion of red on the second floor—that typifies the quintessential Herrera style. "It's raspberry," declares Carolina, who kept ordering the Clarence House damask in 25-yard quantities. "One day," she says, "they called and said, 'Mrs. Herrera, what in the world are you doing?' " What she was doing was making draperies for the trio of tall windows and covering the walls, the easy chairs, and the deep sofa with the luscious fabric.

But when it was all done, she panicked. "It was just too, too red," she says. Her husband was a calming influence. "We have to wait for the carpet and the things that will go on the wall," he recalls telling her, especially the huge gilt mirrors that were once in their house in Caracas and that have traveled with them. "They were originally made for a ballroom," says Reinaldo. "We just thought that if they weren't right for here, we would simply send them back." Of course, they didn't have to. Like most things in the Herrera realm, the mirrors proved to be a perfect fit.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM, the Herreras wake up to Pierre Frey's Les Coqs toile on the draperies, sofa, and chairs. **A PORTRAIT OF CAROLINA** at 15, top left, hangs above a silver vanity set that belonged to Reinaldo's grandmother. Sources, see back of book.

PHILIPPE
CHRISTINE

HOWEVER MODERN IT LOOKS, the shape of the house, opposite page, also echoes the way collections of buildings come together to form old farms in this area of rural New Jersey. **BOTH EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR** are boldly inventive yet relaxed enough to accommodate Linda Wells, this page, her husband, and two sons.

field of vision

HAIR BY RIVER LLOYD FOR SALON AKS. MAKEUP BY BRYIN SMOOT FOR STOCKLAND MARTEL, NYC

Interior designers Stephen Sills and James Huniford and architect John Keenen tailor a modern house for *Allure*'s Linda Wells and her family

AS THE EDITOR IN CHIEF of *Allure* magazine, Linda Wells describes herself as dedicated to "finding the next great thing" in fashion. Her husband, Charlie Thompson, an investment banker with Credit Suisse First Boston, is usually bent on finding an entirely different kind of next great thing. They've got two rambunctious young sons. And they've also got a very nice piece of land in a very nice part of Somerset County, New Jersey, on which they wanted to build a weekend house. So they commissioned a neo-Colonial and filled it with solid old furniture, and Charlie stood back while Linda picked out lots of bright pillows, right? Wrong.

While they were still courting, more than nine years ago, the couple met with architect John Keenen, one half of the partnership of Keenen/Riley. (Terence Riley is the other half.) Their initial vision of a more traditional house changed when they realized the house-building project would define the kind of life they'd construct

WRITTEN BY PETER PLAGENS PHOTOGRAPHED BY PASCAL CHEVALLIER

PRODUCED BY WILLIAM NORWICH STYLED BY MIGUEL FLORES-VIANNA

The architect and the interior designers found ways to create a livable atmosphere without compromising their designs. **A SLIGHT KINK** in the roof line, top left, softens the modern profile of the house. **WARM GRAYS** and greens in the living room, left and above, harmonize the stunning assemblage of furnishings. Eileen Gray's black lacquer folding block screen and the 1940s French parchment and solid macassar-ebony cocktail table provide drama, while the sofa, club chairs, and large ottoman offer comfort. The carpet was custom-made for Sills Huniford Associates.

together. "We wanted a modern house," Linda says, "but not something cold and austere. We wanted to feel comfortable walking around in jeans in it, with the kids jumping on the furniture." She also wanted the firm of Sills Huniford Associates to do the interior. They're not the first designers who leap to mind when you imagine tykes on the loose, which is one of the reasons she thought she might not be able to entice them to the project. But, Stephen Sills says, "we liked the idea of working within the constraints of a modern American family, and a modern house. We wanted to make it warm and comfortable, too."

First, however, Keenen had to do his thing, which, to begin with, was to site the house and garage on a nearly flat field in a manner of studied informality. His idea was to have the structures echo the "collection of buildings" aesthetic of nearby farms. Says Keenen: "A house in an open field is a subtlely difficult problem. What at first appeared as a 'non-landscape' landscape became, in the end, the major organizing force behind the house." For privacy, he turned the house's orientation away from an intersection of country roads. Then, using an exterior combination of white masonry and a kind of wheat-stained cedar to pick up the setting, Keenen anchored his plan to a two-story core (the entry, dining room, and screened porch are beneath the library and two bedrooms), and let the rest of the house flow south, toward the gently sloping property's wetlands. At the beginning of that flow is a wonderful living room, gorgeously

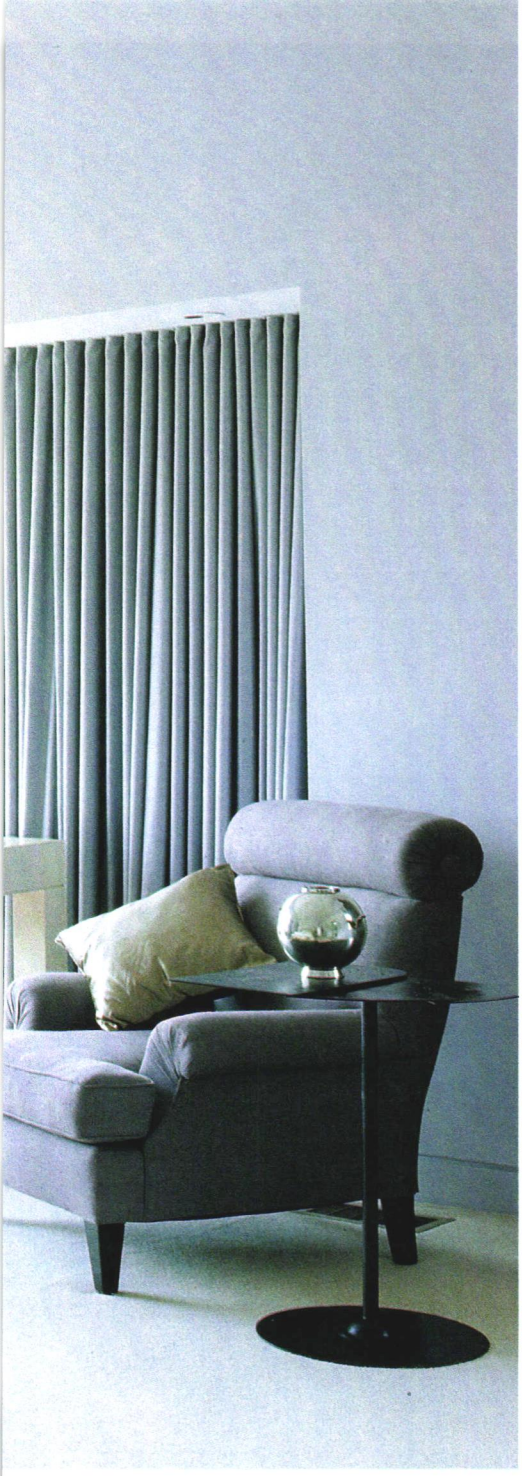
The decor is unusual for its combination of elegance and vigor. **THE CIRCULAR METAL LAMP** under the stairs, this page, is from Malmaison, NYC. The leather chair is by Jean-Michel Frank with Giacometti, from L'Arc en Seine, Paris. **THE DINING TABLE** and chairs by Samuel Marx, opposite page top, are from Liz O'Brien, NYC. The mid-20th-century square glass vase next to the sink, below, is from Amy Perlin Antiques, NYC.

open to great breezes as well as light from both east and west.

Not that the overall scheme obliterates any nuances. To the contrary, the house has plenty of them: a cheerfully cozy freestanding screened porch, pivoting panels in one wall of the library so that the room can feel closed for reading or open to the stairway, and even a noticeably high wet bar in the kitchen, tailored to Charlie's 6-foot-3-inch height. Delicacies are not confined to details: the immediately visible monoslope roof on the two-story section of the house has a kink, which softens, ever so slightly, the profile of this almost defiantly modern house.

In describing the interior, Sills says, "We appreciated what John and Terence did, so we wanted to go with the architecture, and not against it. This house is an open, modern canvas." In the living room, for example, he and James Huniford started from the ground up. They stained the wood floor a sage green to give it a feeling of "being adhered to the land," and topped it in a large section of sisal carpeting, custom-stenciled in a warm gray. They had the walls done in a series of minutely varied off-whites and accented the living room's sliding glass doors with cotton curtains in a particularly bouncy light green, a color, it's probably safe to say, few people have seen before. In fact, one of the reasons Wells and Thompson wanted Sills and Huniford was for what Linda describes as the firm's "not-obvious eclecticism" and ability to come up with "surprises." A recamier they found for the living room embodies that witty serendipity.

Huniford says, "Our business is all *(Cont. on page 187)*



Like the other rooms, the master bedroom has furnishings that enhance the arresting views of the surrounding landscape. **THE DESK**, above, is from Dwellings, NYC, and the Ruhlmann desk chair is from the Galerie Vallois, Paris. The 1920s Pierre Chareau wrought-iron propeller table next to the armchair is from the Delorenzo Gallery, NYC, and the 1920s Svens Tens pewter vase is from Alan Moss, NYC. **THE BLACK TERRA-COTTA URNS**, top right, are from the South of France. They sit on an Austrian cabinet from Malmaison, NYC. **THE FRENCH SCULPTURE** of a reclining female and the brass fluted Josef Hoffmann vase, right, are also from Alan Moss.

it's in the bag

FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER Manuela Pavesi collects clothes. "I can't say how many I have—I've never counted," she says, "but at the very least, one thousand pieces." She started buying—sometimes at flea markets—in the '70s, and her acquisitions now fill a large room. Pavesi stores her finds in genre-based sections—one cupboard for embroidered Indian garments, say, another for Victorian dresses. But when she goes out, she brings down the barriers: "You can mix early Chanel with new Prada. It's very crazy, but I try." No matchmaking for her, it's clear.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAOLO BARBI

serious *fun*

An old Tuscan farmhouse with lively murals suits the family and fashions of Domitilla Getty

BY MARELLA CARACCIOLO

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO

If the contents of a woman's wardrobe are any indication of her soul (as is so often the case), then Domitilla Getty's soul is a fascinatingly unpredictable and humorous one. In a room that functions as a dressing room in the Gettys' recently restored Tuscan farmhouse, vintage Givenchy and Yves Saint Laurent gowns hang next to flowery Tyrolean apron-dresses, while historic caftan-style robes (the sort that Vanessa Bell and her sister Virginia Woolf might have worn at one of their Bloomsbury gatherings) bought at Christie's auction house look perfectly at ease next to sexy little bargains purchased for a song at the open market in Siena.

During the past year or so, however, some new pieces of clothing have joined the company of these fading beauties. They are the long flowing skirts, the flirtatious dresses, and the line of boldly colored knitwear that Domitilla Getty has created for Miss Italy, her newly born fashion enterprise that can also be described as a delightfully ironic reinterpretation of the macho Italian's dream female: the sexy little housewife. After the startling success of Miss Italy's first collection, Domitilla is at her Tuscan home putting the finishing touches on her next one.

Playfulness, humor, and femininity are also the words that best describe Domitilla's other major adventure during the past two years: the restoration of a rambling old farmhouse that she and her husband, Mark Getty (the third of John Paul II's five children and executive chairman of the digital picture library Getty Images), discovered by chance some years ago. "There was a hermit living here at the time," Domitilla says. "He had barricaded himself in with a few goats and hens and was living on bags of stale bread."

During the visits she and her husband paid to the hermit, Domitilla explored the house and discovered that many of its rooms were painted with exquisite wall decorations. "It was as if every room narrated a story," says Domitilla, who admits to a fascination

THE FAMILY'S FURNISHINGS perfectly complement the murals that are original to the house. Clockwise from top left: A view into the sewing room shows a 19th-century Italian couch upholstered in striped linen; the Egyptian lamp was found in London. The wall border is from the guest room. The 1850 travertine sink in the kitchen blends into the cement and graniglia floor, added by Domitilla Getty. The chrome beds in the guest room are from the 1930s. The table in the living room is from Siena; the chairs are covered in white denim; the embroidered pillows are from the Arezzo antiques market.

for almost anything belonging to the past. Many years later, she and her husband bought the house for a song, and Domitilla set about restoring it and all its decorations. As you wander through the place now, you can hardly escape the playful sense of history in every room. It is as if every object reveals a fragment of a long-forgotten life. The same fascination can be found in Miss Italy, where every roll of fabric is 30, 40, or in some cases 70 years old. "There is a fascination in finding something old and bringing it back to use," Domitilla says. "I find it amusing, and I also love things that have about them a little history of their own."

A VARIETY OF TEXTILES and textures unifies the rooms of the house. Clockwise from far left: A costume of Indian muslin, probably from the 1920s, hangs on an antique Italian closet. An old kilim lines the foyer off the master bedroom. The daybed in the foyer is covered in English linens from the 1940s and 1950s. The detail is of the master bedroom wall. The Venetian headboard in the master bedroom is covered in white linen; a bridal veil covers the bedside table; the turn-of-the-century Italian curtains are muslin with a crocheted border. Sources, see back of book.

BY RICHARD BUCKLEY PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIERRE PARADIS

living on the edge

THE HOTTEST YOUNG FASHION DESIGNERS ON THE SCENE AREN'T AFRAID TO MAKE A STATEMENT, IN THE CLOTHES THEY CREATE OR THE PLACES THEY CALL HOME

olivier theyskens

WHO Neo-Gothic women's-wear designer and Madonna's couturier
WHERE The reception room of his house, a former brothel, in Brussels
POINT OF VIEW "I haven't yet found the right space where I would want to transform it. What I love about this type of house are its big rooms and small spaces"

hedi slimane

WHO Yves St. Laurent's red-hot menswear designer

WHERE His apartment in Paris, which he also uses as a photographic studio

POINT OF VIEW "I am not really attached to objects. I prefer a clean environment"

RIEFENSTAHL
McBRIDE
30

◀ jeremy scott

WHO Missouri native, now based in Paris, whose women's-wear designs have a punk spirit

WHERE In his cramped apartment, where this room serves as workshop, dining room, library, and guest room (visitors are welcome to sleep under his work table)

POINT OF VIEW "I like an eclectic, even haphazard, mix of things which are not always congruent but go together—like this desk I found in the trash and my high-tech stereo"

▼ xavier delcour

WHO Menswear designer whose clothes have a rough-boy edge with rhinestone flourish

WHERE His living room in Brussels, where he collects and clinically arranges little fetish objects in a cabinet de merveilles

POINT OF VIEW "Even if the space is full, the most important thing for me is light"

▲ an vandervorst and filip arickx

WHO The deadpan duo behind A.F. Vandervorst, who create softly draped, tailored clothing for women

WHERE In the hospital-like bedroom of their Great Dane, Bomboo, in Antwerp, Belgium

POINT OF VIEW

An: "When we met, we found we both had a passion for the design, colors, simplicity, and uniformity of hospitals"

Filip: "It's a universal language that everyone recognizes. It stands for years of continuity, not seasons, like trends"

▼ marie-hélène de taillac

WHO Jewelry designer who works in precious and semiprecious stones.

WHERE In the closet of her Paris apartment

POINT OF VIEW "It's not my closet. It's my love corner. As you can see, I like color. It's very important. There are so many shades of color, and it is one of the fascinations I have for what I do"

SOURCES, SEE BACK OF BOOK

ann huybens

WHO Designer of fluid, feminine women's wear

WHERE The garden of her house in Landegem, Belgium, which has been in her husband's family for four generations

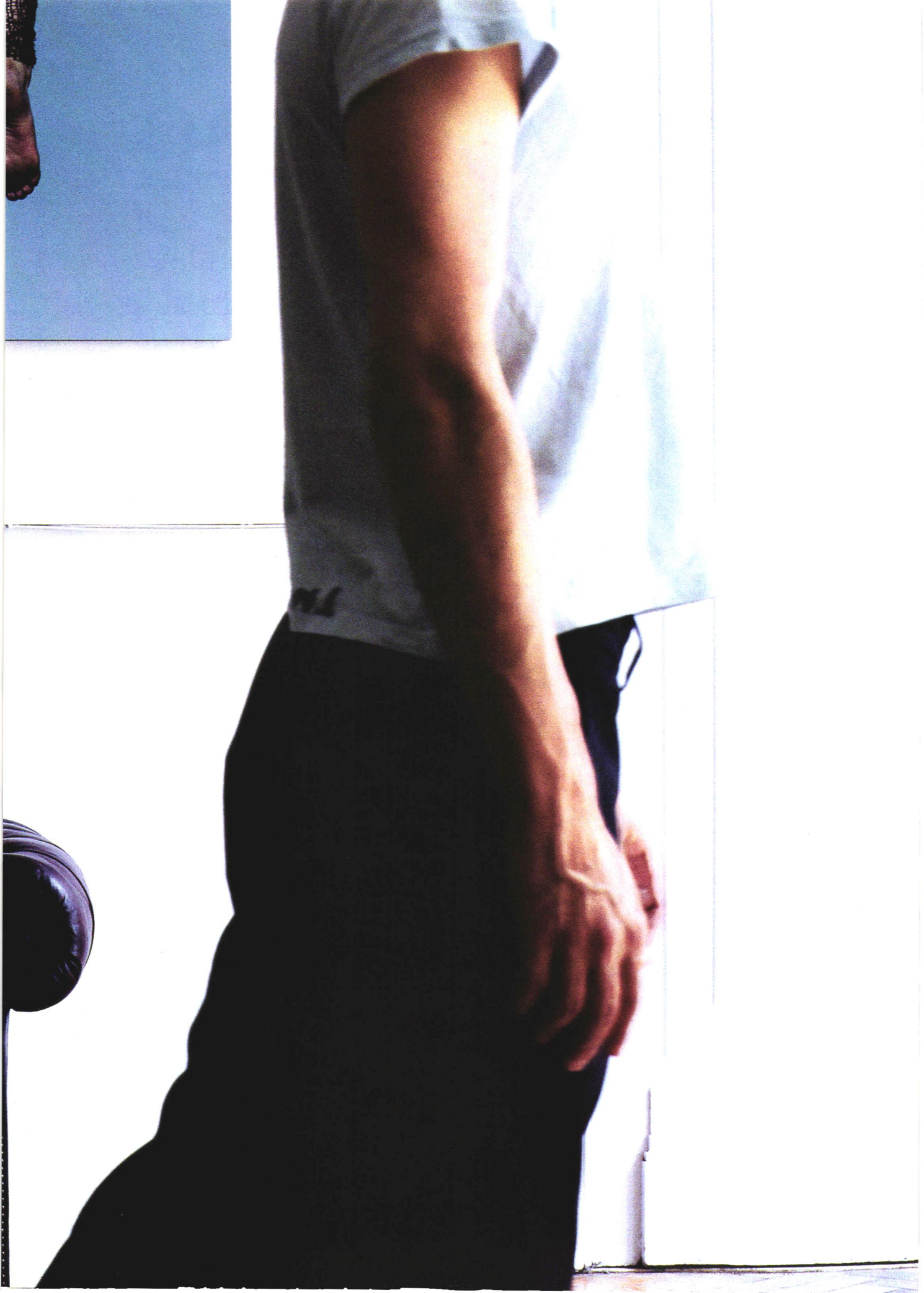
POINT OF VIEW "I don't need the quick references found in an urban environment. Nature is my biggest inspiration"

jurgi persoons

WHO Camera-shy designer of tailored, lacy women's wear

WHERE Antwerp, where he enjoys the comfort of his Chesterfield sofa

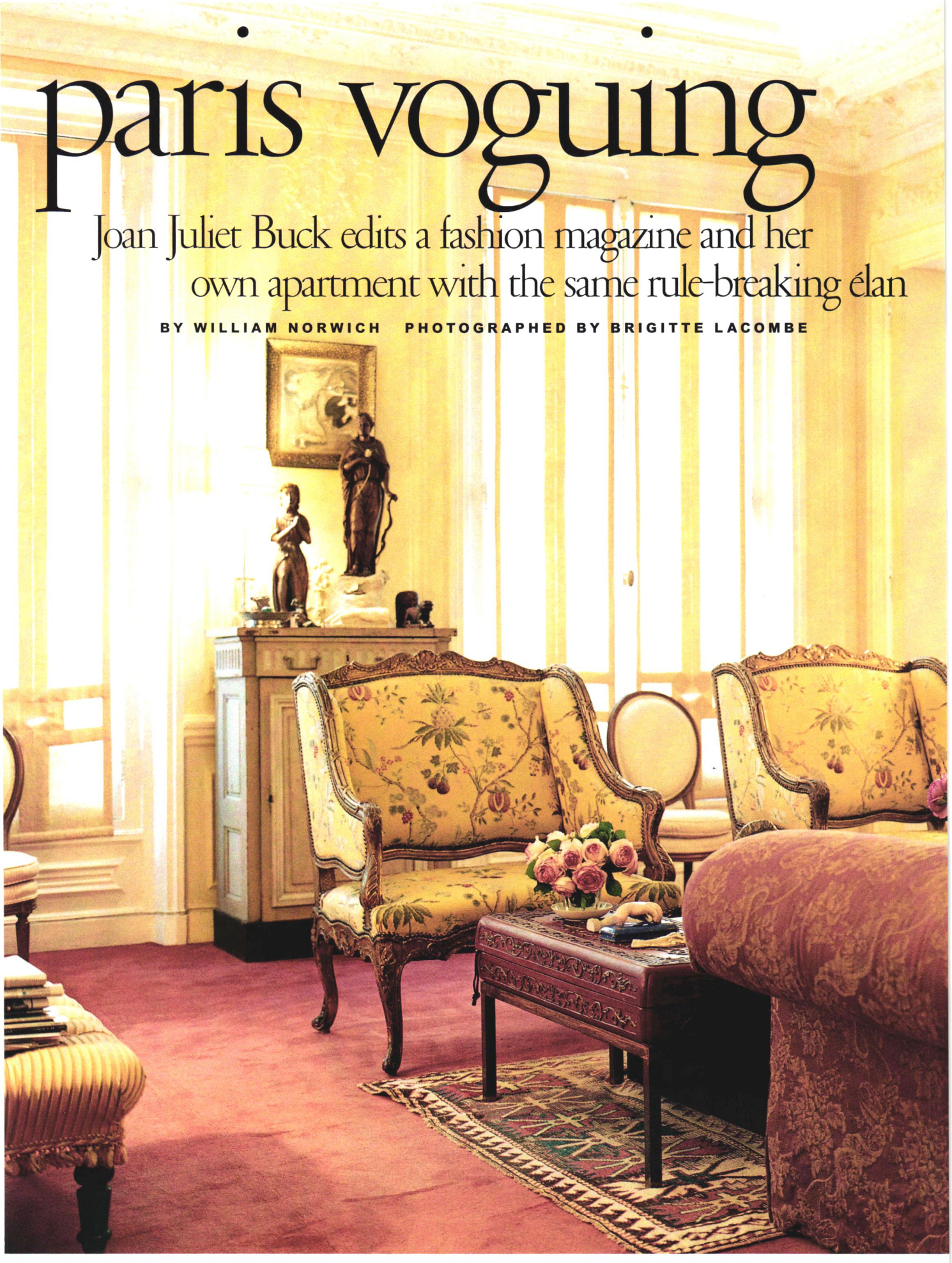
POINT OF VIEW "I am not a person who likes to decorate. I don't have the patience to spend time buying furniture or a carpet. I like to be in my bed, and then go out"



paris voguing

Joan Juliet Buck edits a fashion magazine and her own apartment with the same rule-breaking élan

BY WILLIAM NORWICH PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE



JOAN JULIET BUCK, editor in chief of Paris *Vogue,* answers the door of her flat in a sunny building not far from the avenues George V and Montaigne. She is holding a staple gun in her hand. Charlotte Rampling enters. The beautiful British actress considers the menacing object, and doesn't react. "So what's new?" Rampling asks, her amber voice crisp as spring peonies. Rampling removes her shoes and walks barefoot across the deep coral wall-to-wall carpet in the living room.

"Cock-of-the-walk orange," Buck specifies.

The ladies retreat to the study, where Buck is stapling posters printed from photographs she took of a sunset near Saint-Tropez to the walls. "Oh, this looks quite normal," Rampling deadpans about her pal's afternoon handicraft.

Buck laughs.

"Joan loves to move it around: furniture, her food, people at her dinner parties, whatever," Rampling explains. "Paris society is quite ruled by ways of being. By codes. By etiquette." She says this last word so saltily it rhymes with "cat." Rampling continues. "With the great style of *Vogue,* Joan is allowed to do things differently, and people really appreciate it."

Until 1994, when she was named editor in chief of Paris *Vogue,* Buck lived in New York City. She wrote for American *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* and published two novels, *The Only Place to Be* and *Daughter of the Swan.* Buck, the daughter of film producer Jules Buck and his late wife, Joyce, was born in Los Angeles. When she was three, her family moved to Paris. Their first residence was the Prince de Galles Hotel; they subsequently moved to London, and Jules Buck commuted between both cities. After attending Sarah Lawrence College, near Manhattan, Joan lived in New York, Los Angeles, Rome, and London, among other places. "Dozens of flats," she recalls. There was the midtown Manhattan apartment she shared after college with childhood friend Anjelica Huston, where they

BUCK'S PERIPATETIC LIFESTYLE comes to rest in her living room, where the 18th-century cupboard she has carried from place to place holds several of her treasures, including an 18th-century Diana. The 19th-century armchairs are covered in a Colony silk. The sofa is from ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. The *coq de roche* carpet is from Codimat, Paris.

removed the globe-shaped ceiling fixture, painted a moon face on it, and placed it on the dining table. There was the Go lightly place in West Hollywood, furnished with a foam octagonal given to her by the film director John Schlesinger. He'd found the cushions in Michael Butler's orgy room when he bought the house from the producer. For a while, Buck shared an ink-stained New York nest with then husband John Heilpern, now the theater critic for *The New York Observer.*

"Wherever I went, the furniture followed," Buck says. "Everything here has been moved around the world. As a writer, I tried to live in memory all the time. As editor of *Vogue,* I try to live in the present with an eye to the future."

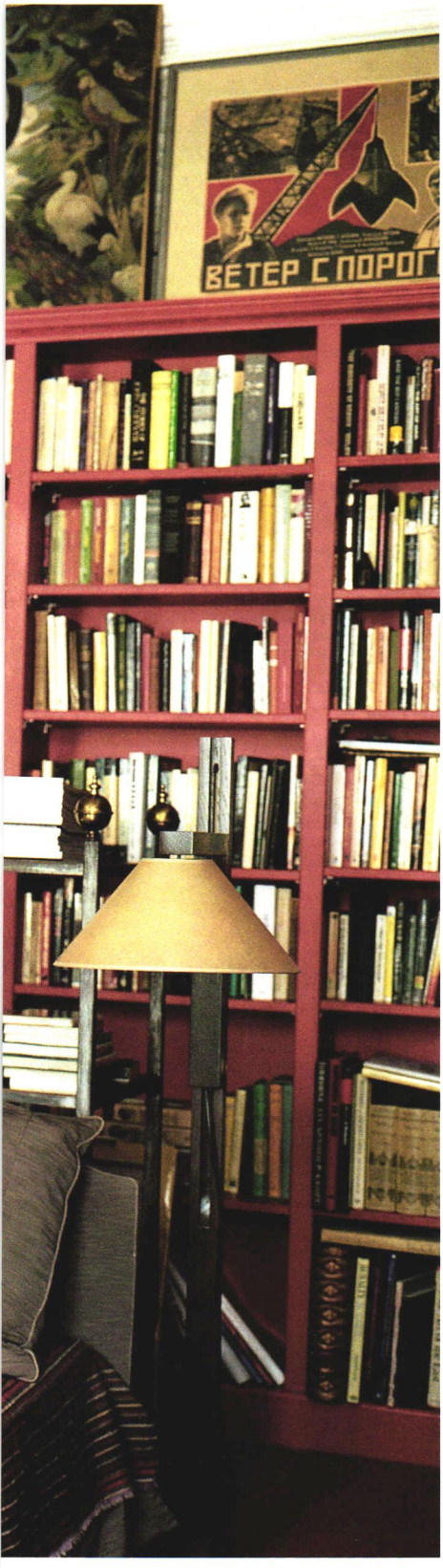
Family furniture mixes with flea-market treasures and new Christian Delcourt lamps. Instead of heavy French decorative window treatments, paper-bag-brown pleated linen panels provide shade and privacy. Buck removed the doors between

Although she enjoys decorating for the moment, Buck's sense of family history pervades her apartment. **IN THE LIVING ROOM**, above, the bronze doré lamps belonged to her grandmother, and the large piece on the wall is a photo blowup of a painting her family once owned.

IN ANOTHER VIEW of the living room, above, more family mementos—the tall tumblers were a wedding gift to Buck's parents. Above the fireplace, a Soviet poster of the Stenberg Brothers' film *The Man from the Woods* leans against a mirror. **IN THE DINING ROOM**, below, a 1920s standing lamp and an oblong shield from New Guinea (in the doorway) bracket ice-cream-parlor chairs from Habitat, Paris.

rooms for better visual flow. A *feng shui* specialist, recommended to her by British fashion designer Bella Freud and writer James Fox, suggested reworking the kitchen plumbing for better energy flow. New York–based furniture maker Christopher Knapp Bailey built an enormous coffee table, which can roll over the double bed in Buck's library/bedroom. "For company, it's a coffee table," she explains. "For me, it's a big tray with room for a laptop, dinner, newspapers, and office work while I watch TV."

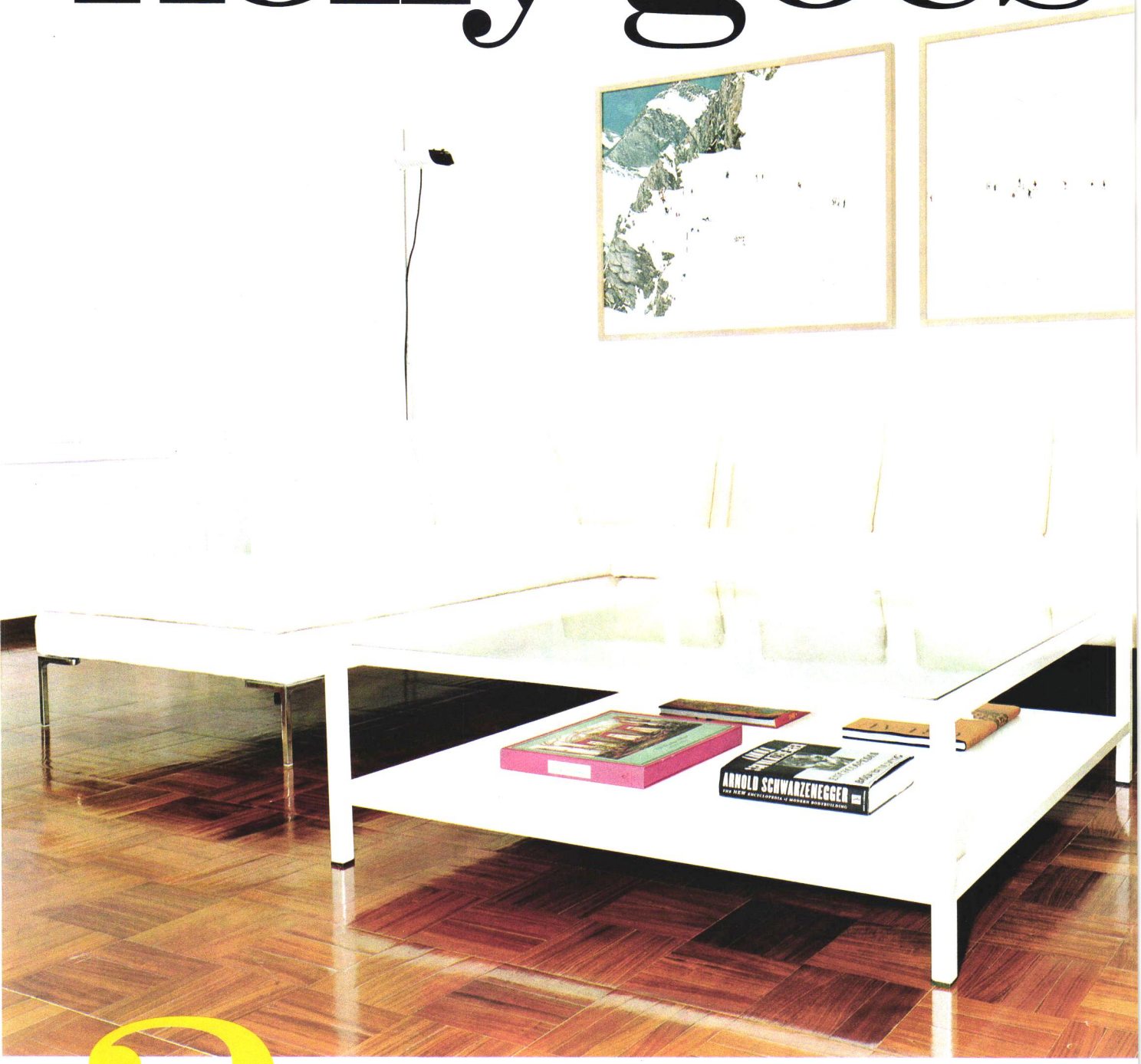
Editing a premiere fashion magazine has certainly changed the way she approaches decorating. "Fashion has allowed me to enjoy something that doesn't signify anything, doesn't remind me of anything," Joan Buck says. "We've moved past the whole Roland Barthes semiotic structuralist signifier/signified straitjacket. Now fashion is the pleasure principle. Very liberating. If I like a goofy lamp, I'll allow myself to fall in love with it."



THE BEDROOM, above, becomes an extension of the living room by means of a stained walnut table, custom-made by Christopher Knapp Bailey, which rolls halfway over the bed like a large tray for working, eating, and reading the paper. The bedside lamps were designed by Christophe Delcourt.

BLISSFUL IS AS BLISSFUL DOES, and Buck, above, has reason to be blissed out. Her dressing room, below, is all of a piece, with stained red oak cabinets custom-made by Christopher Knapp Bailey, metallic red boots from Sonia Rykiel's fall 1999 collection, many frocks, and bags, including a Fendi baguette on the 18th-century Venetian chair. Sources, see back of book.

holly goes



ALTHOUGH ALL THE WALLS, and even the insides of the closet doors, were covered in elaborate wallpapers in the Italian Empire style, Holly Brubach knew at once that she had found her new home in Milan. "The apartment was once lived in by a contessa who decided to let half of it go," Brubach says. The half that became available—the guest quarters—suited her perfectly. "It was because of the closets," explains Brubach, the former style editor of *The New York Times Magazine,* who since last November has been Prada's director of home and sport collections. "Most apartments here don't come with armoires, and my wardrobe wouldn't fit into one anyway."

With upward of 75 pairs of shoes, dozens of handbags, and a few runways' worth of clothes, almost entirely Prada—and that's only in Milan—Brubach made closet space a priority. "The great thing about my coming to Prada," Brubach says, "is that my

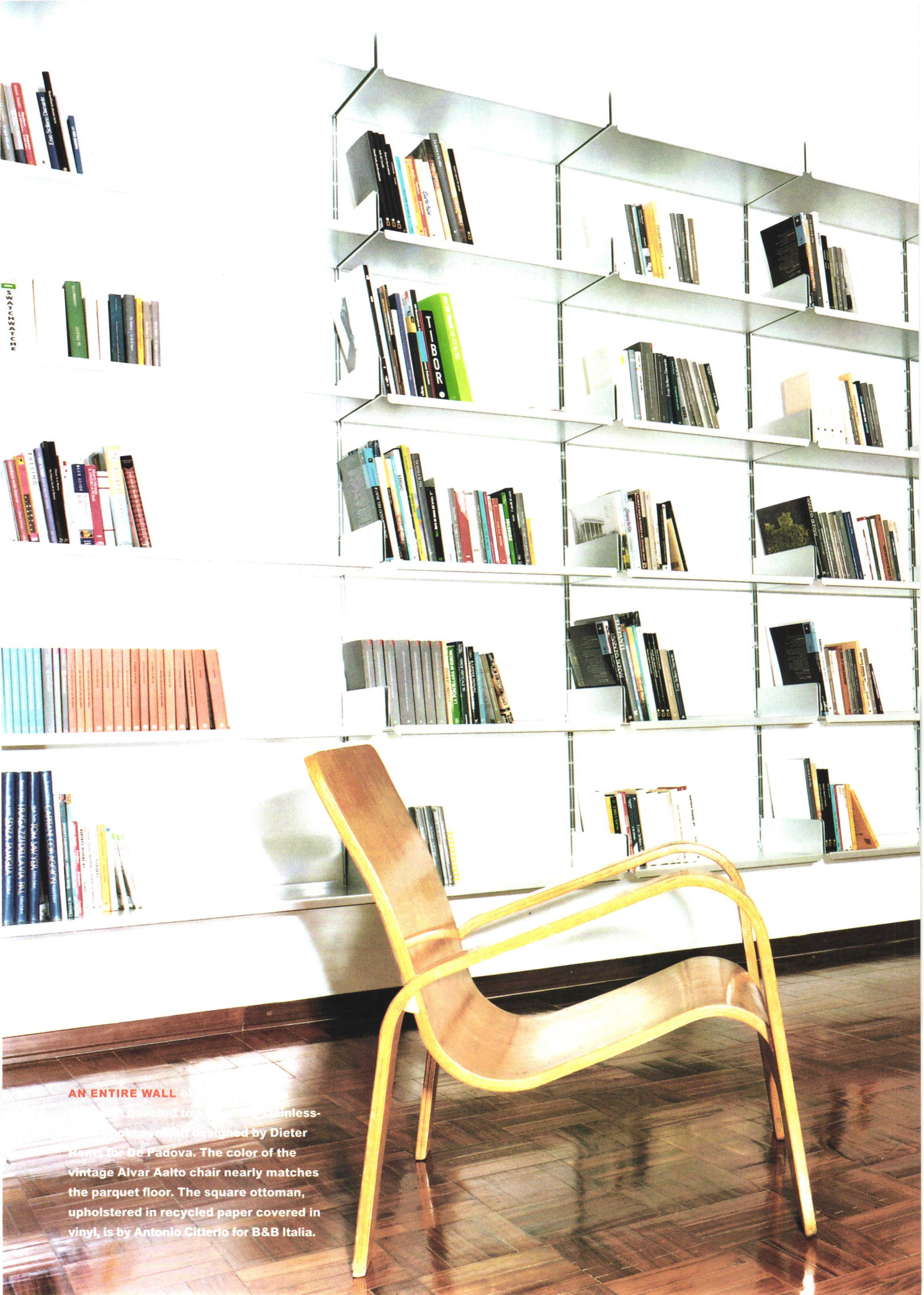
lightly

The fashion journalist changes jobs, cities, and lifestyle as director of Prada's sport and home collections

BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL WOOLEY

STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS

THE CLEAN LINES of the Charles sofa, by Antonio Citterio for B&B Italia, and the coffee table from De Padova in Milan, in the living room, above, suit the apartment's modern look. So does the 1997 diptych of skiers by Walter Niedermayr. Holly Brubach, right, works in the study.



AN ENTIRE WALL O
inless-
steel system designed by Dieter
Rams for De Padova. The color of the vintage Alvar Aalto chair nearly matches the parquet floor. The square ottoman, upholstered in recycled paper covered in vinyl, is by Antonio Citterio for B&B Italia.

taste is the same. I've been wearing Prada since 1990, so it's nice to work at a place where their worldview is my worldview."

Brubach has been friends with Miuccia Prada, one of the owners of the company, for years, and the decision to move to Milan, to work on what she calls Prada's "two new frontiers—sport and home design," combines two of her passions. "The sport collection had already been out for a year," Brubach adds. "I was brought in to broaden the range of the collection and establish its credibility in the world of sports."

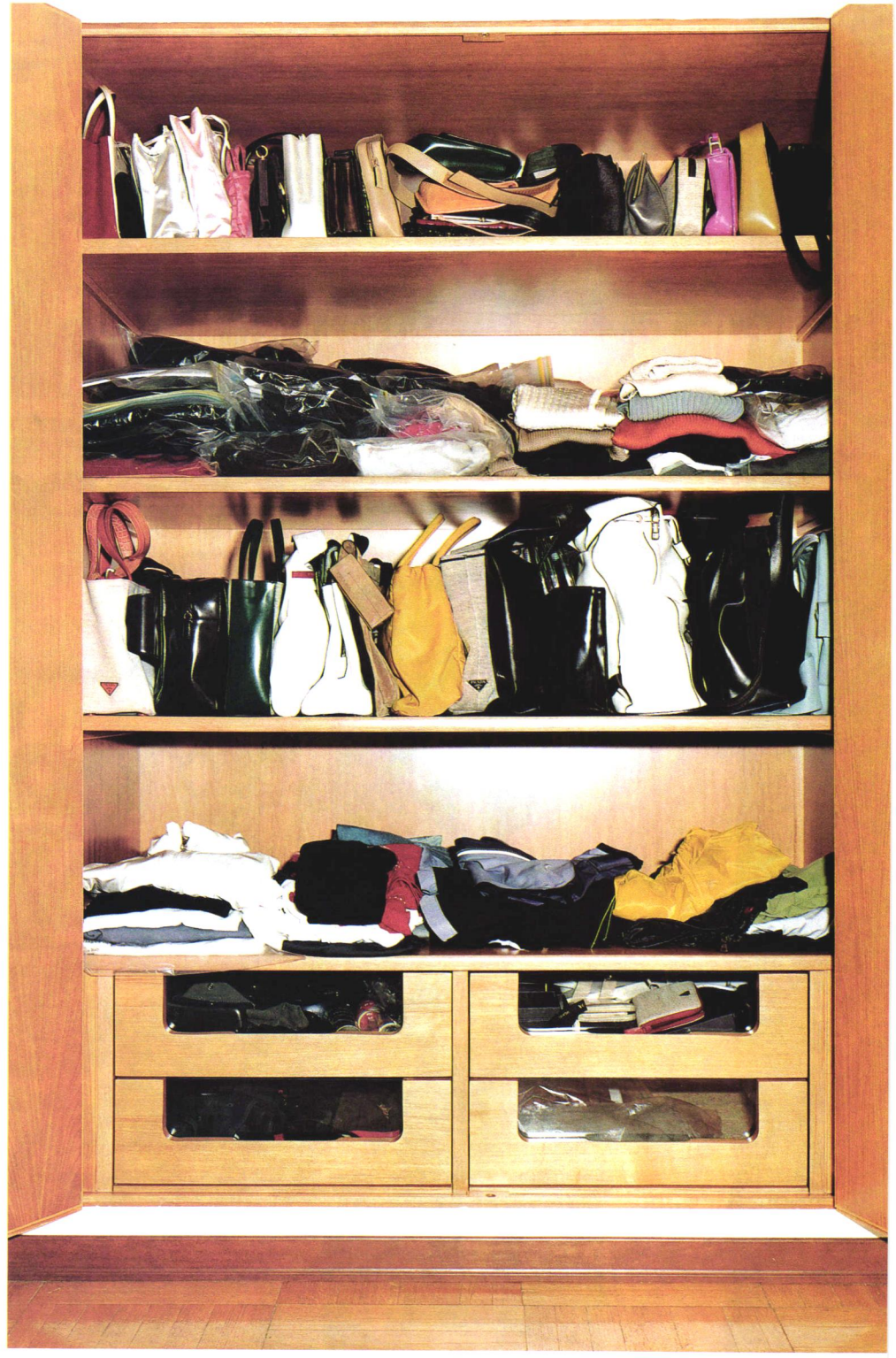
A former dancer and an avid golfer, Brubach is a self-avowed fitness addict ("I'm a gym rat," she says) who recently found a Milanese gym that specializes in bodybuilding. "That's one aspect of my life that is at odds with Italian culture," says Brubach of the gym's emphasis on muscle tone. "I had started out at a fashion gym, all aerobics, where everyone was trying to fit into the sample size."

Fitting into a sample—or any other—size is simply not Brubach's style. So, despite the apartment's old-world, antiques-filled rooms, she envisioned the "intelligently organized" suite of rooms as "the perfect place in which to do something modern." Maybe because she travels so much, and even though

"I wanted to **furnish** the apartment in **one fell swoop**, and not be forever 'still looking for a lamp' "—Holly Brubach

BRUBACH'S ENVIABLE COLLECTION of coats, skirts, pants, dresses, sweaters, shoes, and handbags—nearly all from Prada—is well on its way to filling the floor-to-ceiling closets in the windowed dressing room. (There are more clothes, of course, kept in her three other residences, in New York, Paris, and Connecticut.) The capacious built-in closets were one of the reasons Brubach decided to take the apartment. Soon, with the acquisition of exercise equipment, she will be able to work out at home in addition to the time she spends at the gym.

she has three other residences (a loft in New York City, an apartment in Paris, and a cottage in Connecticut), she says, "I'm a real homebody. There's something restorative about having a sense of place." And having spent six months living in a hotel while the apartment was being renovated, Brubach was more than ready to move in by May. While the traditional parquet and marble-chip floors in the kitchen stayed, the wallpaper came down, the old kitchen was turned into a study, and a spanking-new all-stainless-steel kitchen, manufactured in the factory where the Prada stainless-steel

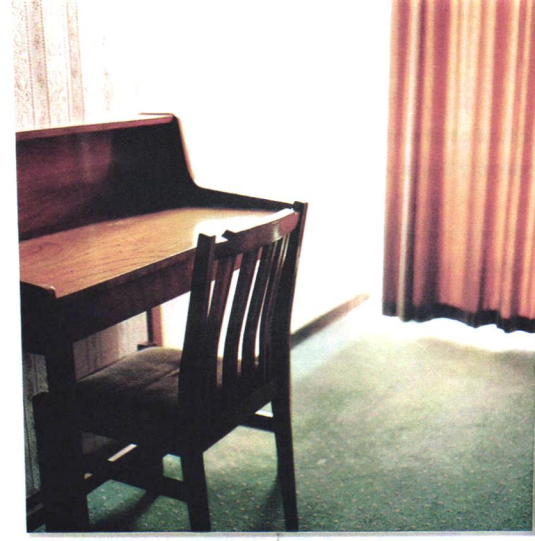


elevators are made, was created courtesy of Roberto Baciocchi, the architect who designs many of the Prada shops.

For the new apartment, which she describes as "the base of operations for my new life," Brubach decided not to do "the flea-market thing." Instead, she took an almost one-stop shopping approach, ordering Milanese architect of the moment Antonio Citterio's Charles Eames–inspired sofa, night tables, bed, and ottoman designed for B&B Italia. Of Citterio she says, "He makes something timeless out of a moment," and then explains that she wanted to furnish the apartment "in one fell swoop, and not be forever 'still looking for a lamp.' " A chair by Alvar Aalto, another by Hans Wegner, lots of books neatly arranged in a wall unit from De Padova, and a few well-chosen photographs complete the decor. "Some people may think it looks empty," Brubach says, "but I find it soothing not to have too many things to look at—maybe because I work in a field that's visual and am looking at things all day.

"Because nest building has always been a feminine pursuit, people associate it with women," she adds. "The more things,

DOLOMITI
ESSELUNGA



THE NEW, ALL-STAINLESS-STEEL kitchen, below right, designed by Roberto Baciocchi, was an important and time-consuming part of the renovation of the apartment. THE REFRIGERATOR, opposite page, is stocked with a photo-opportunity variety of Italian mineral waters. IN A CORNER OF THE KITCHEN, right, Elisa Sighicelli's 1999 light box *Budapest: Table with Curtain* is placed strategically above the table and a pair of Charles Eames chairs that came from the Nilufar Gallery in Milan. The marble- chip floor is original and typical of many old Milanese interiors. Sources, see back of book.

the more feminine the nest is. But I'm a woman, and I'm choosing these things. There's a way to live with less that suggests a new idea about femininity. As with clothes, I quite like a certain visual economy and rigor." But, adds Brubach, "that's not to say stripped of all visual interest or embellishment, ever. It's kind of like the way you eat every day," she says. "You want the vegetables and the fish, and the dessert once a month, but you don't want dessert at every meal."

Brubach has recently published two books. She describes her nine-year opus, *Girlfriend: Men, Women, and Drag* (Random House), a survey of drag queens in eight different cities, as "an extended meditation on the clichés of femininity in different cultures." She considers the publication of *A Dedicated Follower of Fashion* (Phaidon Press), a collection of her essays from *The Atlantic, The New Yorker,* and *The New York Times*, particularly gratifying. "It was nice that it could all be summed up in a book," she says of her fashion pieces. "But that chapter of my life is closed. Now I'm writing a few book reviews and only the things that interest me."

Over early-morning glasses of ginger tea, a visitor notices the graphic black-and-white cashmere throw on the bed in the spartan master bedroom. "That was inspired by an Ellsworth Kelly painting," says Brubach. But when asked whether it will be part of Prada's eagerly awaited home collection, "Everything is in the first stages of development," is all Brubach would say.

A SIMPLE EARTHENWARE VESSEL from Pembridge Terracotta Potters marks the center of Sarah and Monty Don's vividly colored Jewel Garden. **THEIR DAUGHTER**, Freya, opposite page, wears one of the hip Monty Don costume jewelry necklaces from the '80s.

BY CHARLOTTE M. FRIEZE PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO

the family jewels

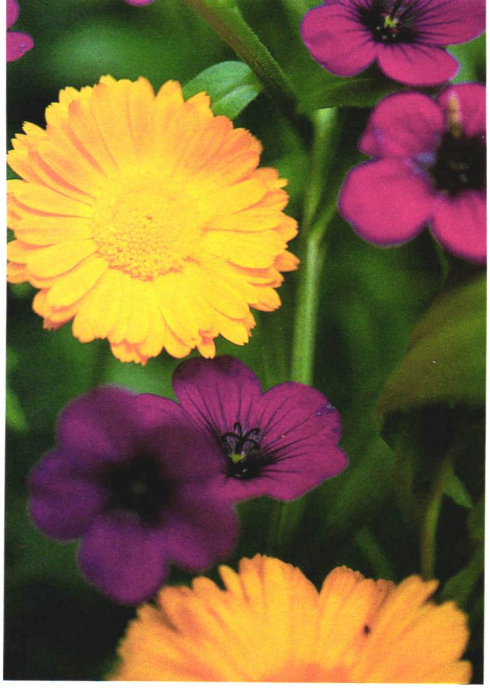
Eighties hipsters loved Monty Don's costume baubles. Now he and his wife, Sarah, have turned their talents to living gems, creating a vibrant Jewel Garden for their English country house

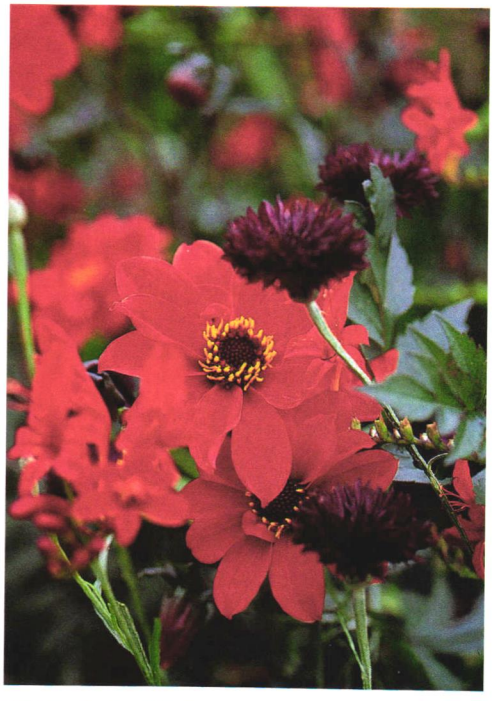
WE'VE SEEN WHITE Gardens, billowing with pure, snowy blossoms. We know all about Moon Gardens, filled with flowers and trees that glow magically in the lunar light. But a Jewel Garden? *That's* a new one. However, when we heard this Jewel Garden was the creation of Monty Don, it all began to make sense. After all, he may be the only person who ever had a cult following in the worlds of both flora *and* fashion jewelry.

Back in the '80s, the costume jewelry shop that Don and his wife, Sarah, ran in the Knightsbridge section of London was *the* place for hip and happening types looking for fabulous faux baubles. (Their clients included everyone from Princess Diana to Shirley MacLaine, and Monty Don designs were the rage from Fifth Avenue to Rodeo Drive.) Then the end of '80s extravagance took the steam out of their bijou biz. Monty parlayed his lifelong interest in gardening into a journalism career. Today he's England's favorite flamboyant doyen of all things herbaceous. He writes a column for *The Observer;* this month he begins a BBC Channel 4 series on the seasonal cycles in his gardens; and (inconceivable anyplace but garden-mad Britain) he commands an hour of live prime-time TV each night during the annual Chelsea Flower Show.

For all their new focus on the vegetable kingdom, the Dons would say their fascination with jewels never ceased.

A GOOD GARDEN, like her multifaceted Jewel Garden, above, "gets softer at the edges," says Sarah Don, "so one can hardly tell where it ends and the countryside begins." OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP ROW, from left: Monty Don brooches; *Geranium* 'Ann Folkard' with yellow French marigolds; *Ligularia dentata* 'Desdemona' and *Delphinium* 'King Arthur' with burgundy leaf orache. CENTER ROW: *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Torch' with 'Gypsy Queen' sweet peas; *Cosmos atrosanguineus* with *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Golden Dew'; *Centaurea cyanus* 'Black Ball,' *Dahlia* 'Bishop Llandaff,' and *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer.' BOTTOM ROW: *Centaurea cyanus* 'Black Ball' and *Rubus cockburnianus* 'Golden Veil'; Cardoon; a 1988 Monty Don brooch.



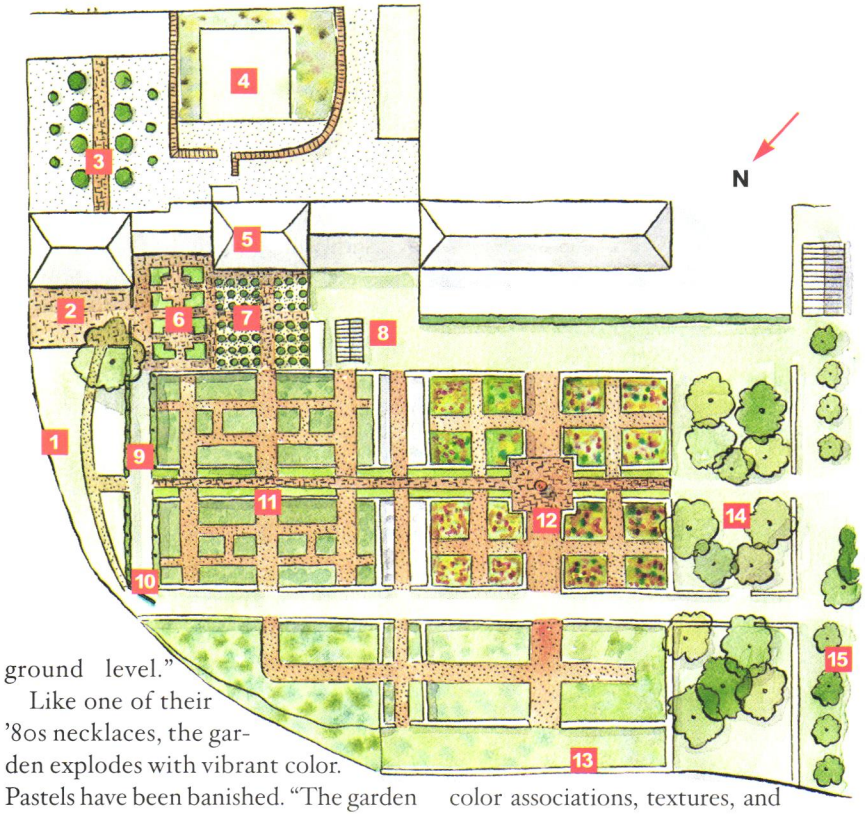


A 19TH-CENTURY HOPS KILN (with triangular roof), which the Dons use as an office, affords lovely views over the gardens. **AN OLD SCHOOL DOOR**, right, serves as a gate between an allée of linden trees, called a Lime Walk, and a grassy footpath.

They simply shifted gears: applying the colorways of costume jewelry to the selection of plants. Now their "brights"—as fuchsia, magenta, orange, and lime-green costume gems are called—are the flowers and foliage glistening in their Herefordshire Jewel Garden. Like a pendant dangling on a string of pearls, it sparkles at the end of a series of gardens, where herbs, fruit trees, and vegetables grow.

Surprisingly, when the Dons moved to the countryside in 1992, the property boasted a house built up through the centuries around a Tudor core, an early-nineteenth-century hops kiln, a row of seventeenth-century barns, a pigsty, lots of broken-down walls—but no garden. After the herb and kitchen gardens and an orchard were planted, the Dons put brooch-making sensibilities to work.

First, Monty created a square setting with walls of espaliered lindens. The square was divided into four borders by two main avenues, then further dissected by narrow gravel paths, creating a total of 16 square beds. "It's a walking garden, really, a journey through one great big border," says Monty, whose latest book on growing and preparing food from the garden, *Fork to Fork,* is just out from the Conran Octopus Press ($32). "Everything is vertical, people as well as plants. There is lots to see at eye height and a multitude of surprises to discover at



site plan

1 Spring garden
2 Backyard
3 Front garden
4 Walled garden
5 House and barn
6 Herb garden
7 Box balls
8 Greenhouse
9 Lime walk
10 Garden door
11 Kitchen garden
12 Jewel Garden
13 To cow pasture
14 Nut coppice
15 To orchard

ground level."

Like one of their '80s necklaces, the garden explodes with vibrant color. Pastels have been banished. "The garden is quite intensely put together, with saturated spaces of color," says Monty, "but there's always an escape route. You turn your head and you see a path that leads out to the countryside."

Monty credits Sarah with the "meticulous color associations, textures, and form," and the combinations of hues that make flowers pulsate as you walk down the paths, with clematis and sweet peas looming overhead. Here Sarah plays magenta *Geranium* 'Ann Folkard' against yellow French marigolds in one corner and magenta sweet peas against *Tithonia rotundifolia* 'Torch' in another. She uses the sapphire-blue blossoms of *Aconitum var.* 'Henry Sparkes' as a foil for golden *Ligularia* 'Desdemona.' The foliage of lime-green *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia' and *Rubus cockburnianus* 'Golden Veil' are perfect foils for *Cosmos atropurpurea* and *Centaurea cyanus* 'Black Ball,' and the deep purple orache for *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer.' *Verbena bonariensis* is pervasive, an indispensable counterpoint to every flower.

The Jewel Garden is now two years old, and, for all the pretty things the Dons have made to adorn the necks and ears of fashionable folk, it may be their loveliest work. Given how much they treasure the place, it seems sure to be the most enduring. For, as Monty Don likes to say, "it's what you put into the garden—intellectually, emotionally, spiritually—that makes it grow."

MAP ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL HILL

BOXWOOD BALLS, opposite page, nestle next to the herb garden, at right. **THE DONS**, this page, stroll through the vegetable garden after picking flowers in the Jewel Garden. Harvesting blooms, says Sarah, "is one of our greatest pleasures." Sources, see back of book.

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Hair, makeup by Stefano Antoniazzi for Trilese, Inc.

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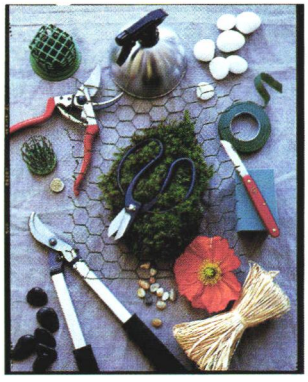

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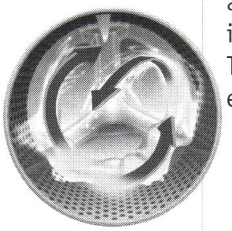

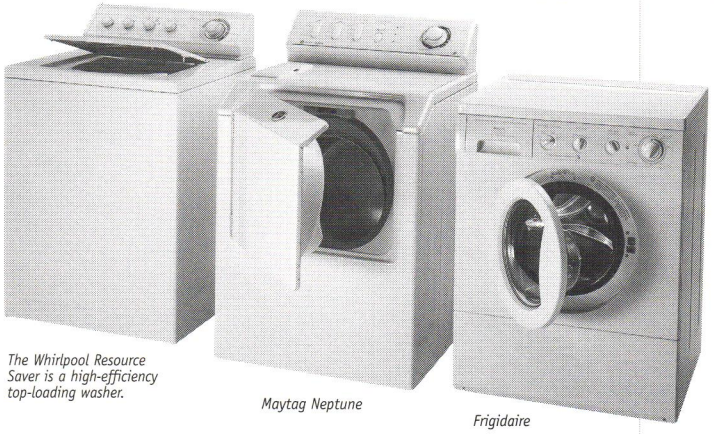

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Interior designer, Sam Blount, Inc., NYC. 212-888-0515. **Architect,** Garófalo + Khan Design, NYC. 212-741-4035. **Moldings** and **columns** by Euclidis Pagan, Architecture Sculpture and Restoration, Inc., NYC. 212-431-5873. All **handles** and **door knobs** from P.E. Guerin, Inc., NYC. 212-243-5270. **Dining room floor,** Applied Aesthetics Painting Studio, NY. 516-759-2188. Fabrics available through architects and designers. **Pages 126-127,** Clarence House, NYC. 212-752-2890. **Zambezi Grospoint** on bergeres, Clarence House. **Pages 130-131, Ian Mankin Empire I fabric,** The Coconut Company, NYC. 212-539-1940. **Pages 132-133,** The Chinese Porcelain Company, NYC. 212-838-7744. **Pages 134-135,** Pierre Frey, NYC. 212-935-3713.

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Sills Huniford Associates, NYC. 212-988-1636. John Keenen, Keenen/Riley, NYC. 212-645-9210. **Pages 138-139, Folding screen,** Delorenzo Gallery, NYC. 212-249-7575. **Cocktail table,** Karl Kemp & Associates, NYC. 212-254-1877. **Sofa** and **club chairs,** Dwellings, NYC. 800-95-DECOR. **Ottoman,** Karl Kemp & Associates Ltd., NYC. 212-254-1877. **10th-century gourds** above mantel, William Lipton Ltd., NYC. 212-751-8131. **Paintings** in dining room, *Untitled,* 1999, by Kathy Moss, Stephen Haller Gallery, NYC. 212-219-2500. **Pages 140-141,** Malmaison, NYC. 212-288-7569. Available through architects and designers. L'Arc en Seine, Paris. 011-33-1-43-29-11-02. Liz O'Brien, NYC. 212-755-3800. Amy Perlin Antiques, NYC. 212-593-5756. **Centerpiece,** by Desny, Delorenzo Gallery. **Candleholders,** Jean Francoise Blanchetti, Paris. 011-33-1-42-60-22-43. **Pages 142-143,** Galerie Vallois, Paris. 011-33-43-29-50-55. Alan Moss, NYC. 212-473-1310. **Terra-cotta urns,** Sentimento, NYC. 212-750-3111. Available through architects and designers. **Black propeller table,** Delorenzo Gallery. **Alabaster jar,** Malmaison. **Pen,** Montblanc. 800-388-4810.

SERIOUS FUN Pages 146-151
Miss Italy. 011-44-171-924-6556.

LIVING ON THE EDGE Pages 152-161
Designers' clothing can be found at the following retail stores: Olivier Theyskens, Neiman Marcus. 800-937-9146. Hedi Slimane, Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche Homme, NYC. 212-274-0522. Jeremy Scott, Saks Fifth Avenue, NYC. 212-753-4000. Xavier Delcour, Untitled, NYC. 212-982-2088. A.F. Vandevorst, Barneys, NYC. 212-826-8900. Marie-Helene de Taillac, Barneys, NYC. Ann Huybens, Bella Donna, San Francisco. 415-861-7182. Jurgi Persoons, Antique Boutique, NYC. 212-995-5577. **Pages 154-155, Chairs** designed by Pierre Gautier-Delaye and René-Jean Cailette.

PARIS VOGUING Pages 162-167
Pages 162-163, Colony. 011-171-351-3232. ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. 212-473-3000. Codimat, Paris. 011-33-45-48-79-67. René Duprat, Paris. 011-33-1 43-26-86-81. **Ruk lamps** on either side of mantel, by Christophe Delcourt, Galerie Christophe Delcourt, Paris 75003. 011-33-01-42-78-44-97. **Linen window panels,** by Pietro Seminelli. 011-33-1-43-47-44-11. **Pages 164-165,** Habitat, Paris. 33-1-53-00-99-88. **Glass vases,** Michael Anchin Glass Company, NYC. 212-925-1470. **Pages 166-167,** Christopher Knapp Bailey, Brooklyn, NY. 718-222-9004. Fendi. 800-336-3469.

HOLLY GOES LIGHTLY Pages 168-175
Pages 168-169, B&B Italia, NYC. 212-758-4046. De Padova, Milan. 011-39-02-777-201. **Painting,** *Kitzsteinhorn IV,* 1997, by Walter Niedermayr, through Gallery Gio Marconi, Milan. 011-39-02-29-404-373. **Mouse computer cart,** by Marco Zanuso, Jr., De Padova. **Photograph** by Jan Groover, 1981, through Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan. 011-39-02-204-3555. **Pages 170-171, Alvar Aalto chair,** available at Nilufar Gallery, Milan. 011-39-02-78-0193. **Pages 174-175,** Roberto Baciocchi, Arezzo, Italy. 011-39-05-75-355-544. **Light box,** *Budapest: Table with Curtain,* through Gallery Gio Marconi. **Refrigerator,** Whirlpool. www.whirlpool.com.

THE FAMILY JEWELS Pages 176-183
Pages 176-177, Pembridge Terracotta Potters, 011-44-1544-388-696. www.gardenpots.co.uk.

CORRECTIONS
In the September 1999 issue, the number for Old House Gardens is 734-995-1486; the number for Edelman Tiles is 800-886-8339.

PHOTO CREDITS
Page 122, "Past Perfect," *House and Garden,* August 1930, courtesy of CNP archives.

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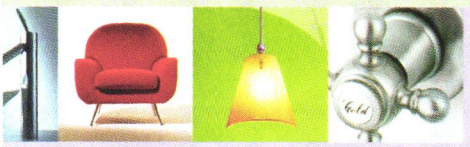

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Field of Vision

(cont. from page 142) all about finding unique things, from chairs to vases, that have form and add proportion to the room, whether they're for a country house or a grand apartment in the middle of a city." The find of what has come to be called "Field House" is a 1950s Samuel Marx dining room ensemble in luscious white lacquered wood. Huniford points out that "we didn't want something absolutely new, but we did want twelve chairs, to give Linda and Charlie the option of hosting large dinner parties." If there's a close second in the well-chosen-object sweepstakes, it's the starkly contrasting Eileen Gray black wood screen (from 1910), which lends a focal point to the living room's breeze-way. And so on, in astute articulation, throughout the house.

It's no secret that Field House, located in an area of Somerset County that's filled with stately, traditional houses, is a bit controversial. Keenen admits there's a little coolness in the locals' voices when they refer to "what's being built over there." And with landscape architecture by the renowned Daniel Urban Kiley about to be completed, the house is already the subject of some pretty intense gazing. "I've even had someone call me up and ask, nicely, 'How is that cake you're baking?' " Linda says, laughing.

But life with the house is worth the scrutiny. Keenen has given Linda and Charlie a humanely modernist dwelling, a kind of Frank Lloyd Wright prairie schooner concentrated to its essentials, but without the oppressive darkness and weight. And Sills and Huniford have carefully softened its inherent functionalism even further. What Linda and Charlie ultimately wanted, says Keenen, was a house whose every window framed a different view of the landscape surrounding it. The morning after the family moved in, Keenen recalls with a smile, "I got an excited phone call from Linda. 'It works!' she shouted in my ear." Most likely, he's in for a lifetime of the telephone ringing with rediscoveries of that good news.

PETER PLAGENS *is the art critic for* Newsweek.

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This month's hot dish: True Blue, a special advertising section appearing in this issue. The section features the culinary forces behind the Blue Ribbon restaurants in New York, as they stir up success using T-FAL Integral cookware. These four friends named their restaurants after Le Cordon Bleu culinary institute, where they honed their cooking skills.

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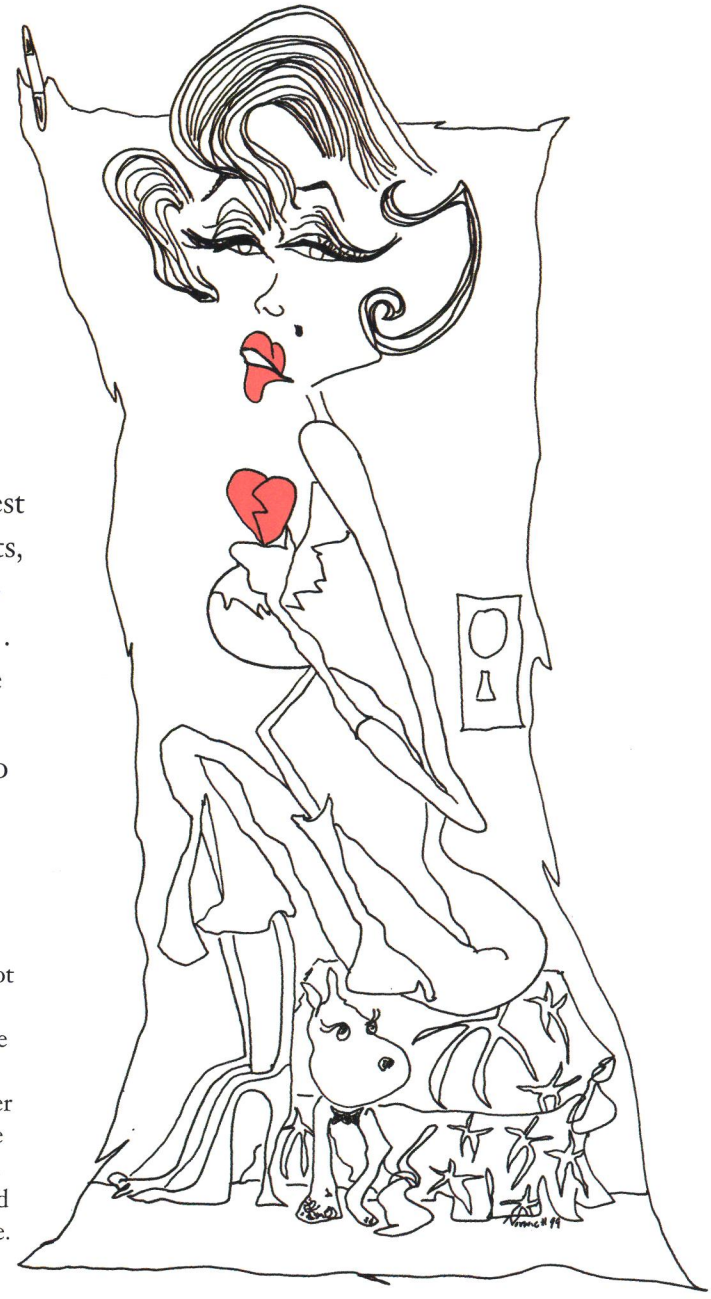
House & Garden

polite society

by william norwich



ALTHOUGH the space is usually limited and the lighting often poor, the best fashion shows are in closets, where clothes come home to live. Ah, sweet mysteries of style: the closet . . . signifying so much to so many. "The closet is the window to the soul," opines a friend. "It tells the truth, like the inside of a lady's handbag." No wonder, then, when we go calling, or when we are weekend houseguests, the temptation to snoop behind closed doors is irresistible. Of course, the etiquette is clear: Don't open that closet door, darlink! Nor drawer. Nor medicine cabinet.

That said, of course, the temptation remains. Doing the English country house tour this summer, how one regretted not being allowed to dig deeper into the most compelling parts of dwellings. For instance, at Polesden Lacey, a fabulous house in Surrey left to the National Trust by legendary Edwardian hostess Mrs. Ronald Greville, a rich "beeress," as this daughter of a Scottish brewer described herself, the bedrooms and the kitchen were off-limits. "Oh, Mrs. Greville was of a generation that never would have imagined the bedroom or kitchen would be of any interest to anyone," a National Trust keeper told me.

"I always look; hostesses beware," says interior designer **Jeffrey Bilhuber**. "I've learned from the best hosts that they intend their guests to use and investigate the house as if they owned it. I have welcome mats outside my closet now."

"Only if it is for sale," offers **Linda Stein**, the noted realtor with the Edward Lee Cave Agency in Manhattan. "Then you can open closets to see the space, or see how drawers work. There's a fine line between curiosity and invasion. Knowing the difference is what you might call 'board-acceptable behavior,' " Stein explains, referring to the code of manners expected by New York's grander co-op trustees.

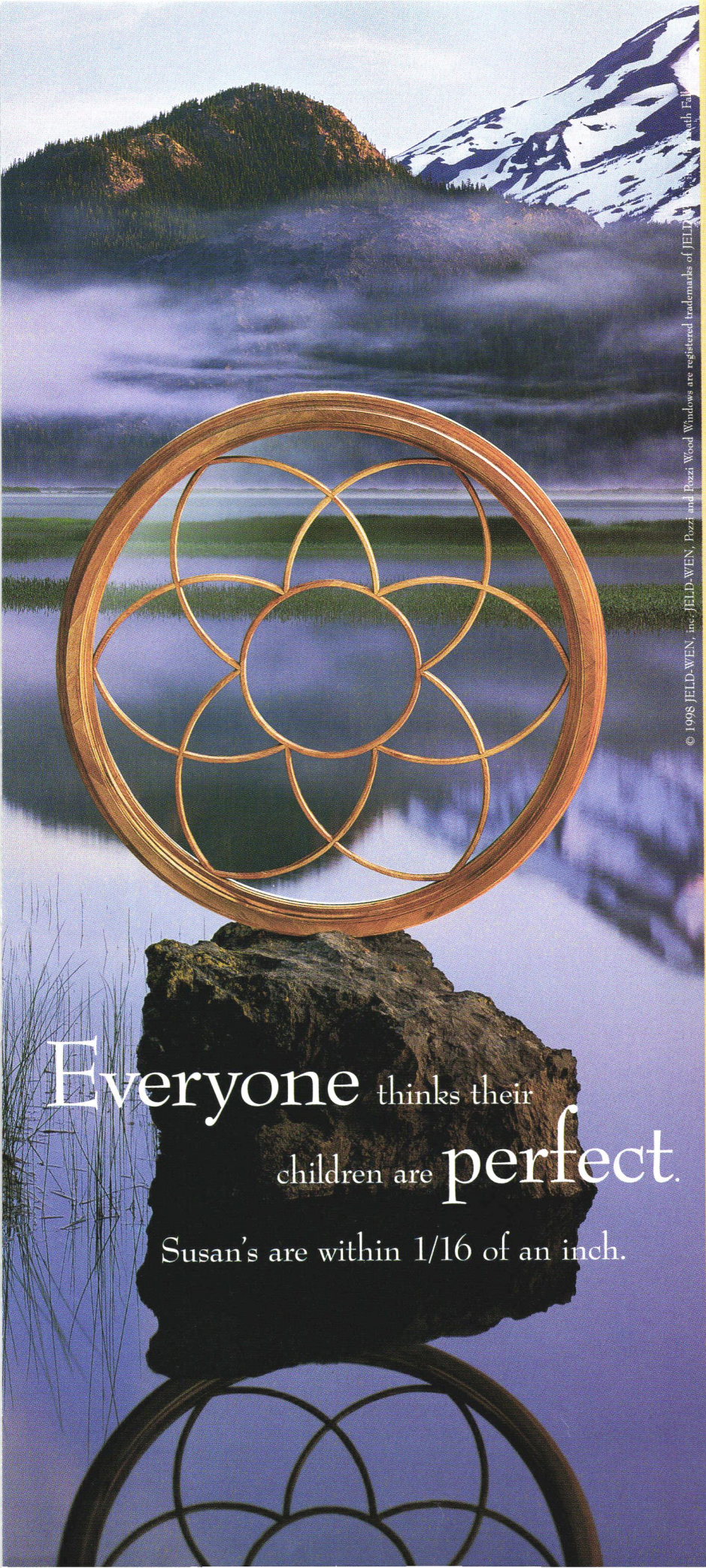
It is not a cozy solution, but it is okay to lock closet doors when you have guests. "Still, I wouldn't," says **Brooke de Ocampo**, one of the younger women on the International Best-Dressed List. "I have one frequent houseguest who is incorrigible, but I've come to consider it a blessing. I'm compulsive now about keeping my closets in order."

So we mind our manners and wait for the auction. In the future, everyone will have an auction for at least 15 minutes. That's another incentive to keep closets in order. When the late social arbiter Jerome Zipkin died a few years ago, a stash of his adult magazines almost made it to his Sotheby's sale by mistake. And when a colleague had an early preview

Marilyn Monroe must be turning in her legend

in July of the personal property of Marilyn Monroe, which Christie's will sell October 27 and 28, he opened a bureau drawer and found a pile of hypodermic needles and one lonesome baseball card. "Off the record," he was told. Well, Marilyn must be turning in her legend now that everything from her driver's license to her knickers—not the needles, needless to say—is for sale. Or perhaps not. She was in the curious business of getting her fans to think of her without her clothes. "Did you really have nothing on?" a reporter asked Marilyn after she posed for a calendar. "Not true," she answered. "I had the radio on."

ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM NORWICH



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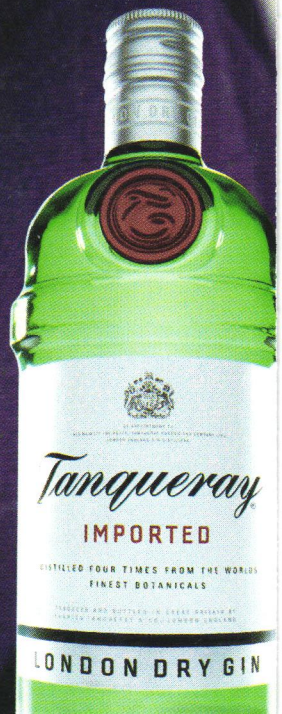

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