NOVEMBER 2002

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RETURN OF THE DRESSING TABLE

Isaac Mizrahi

ping the shion World

Finds!

Way back in the late nineteenth century, Jules Verne, that master of science fiction, envisioned many of the technological wonders that are commonplace today. Everything from the submarine, to the airplane, to rocket travel in outer space. He also predicted that we would have TV in another thousand years.

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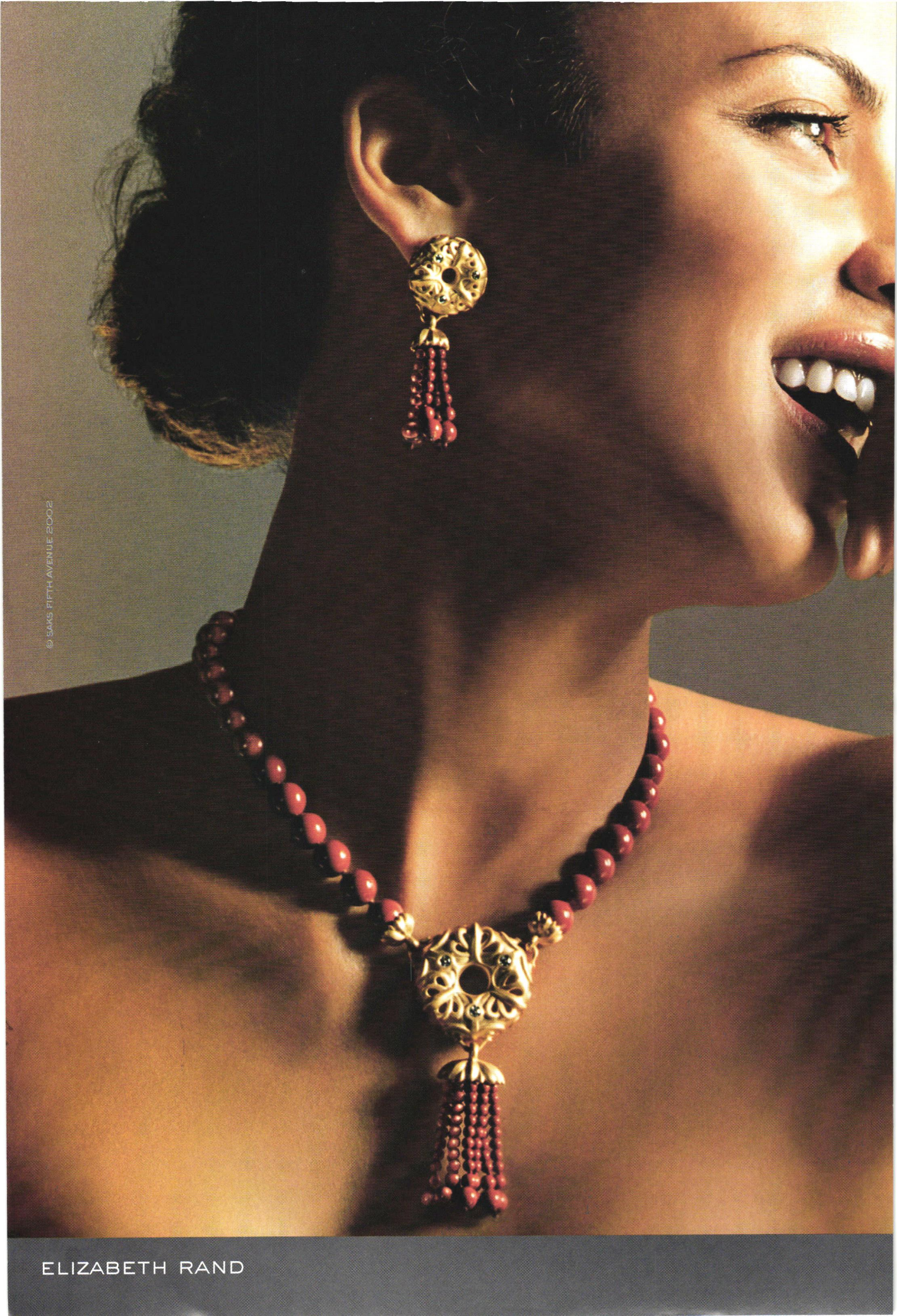
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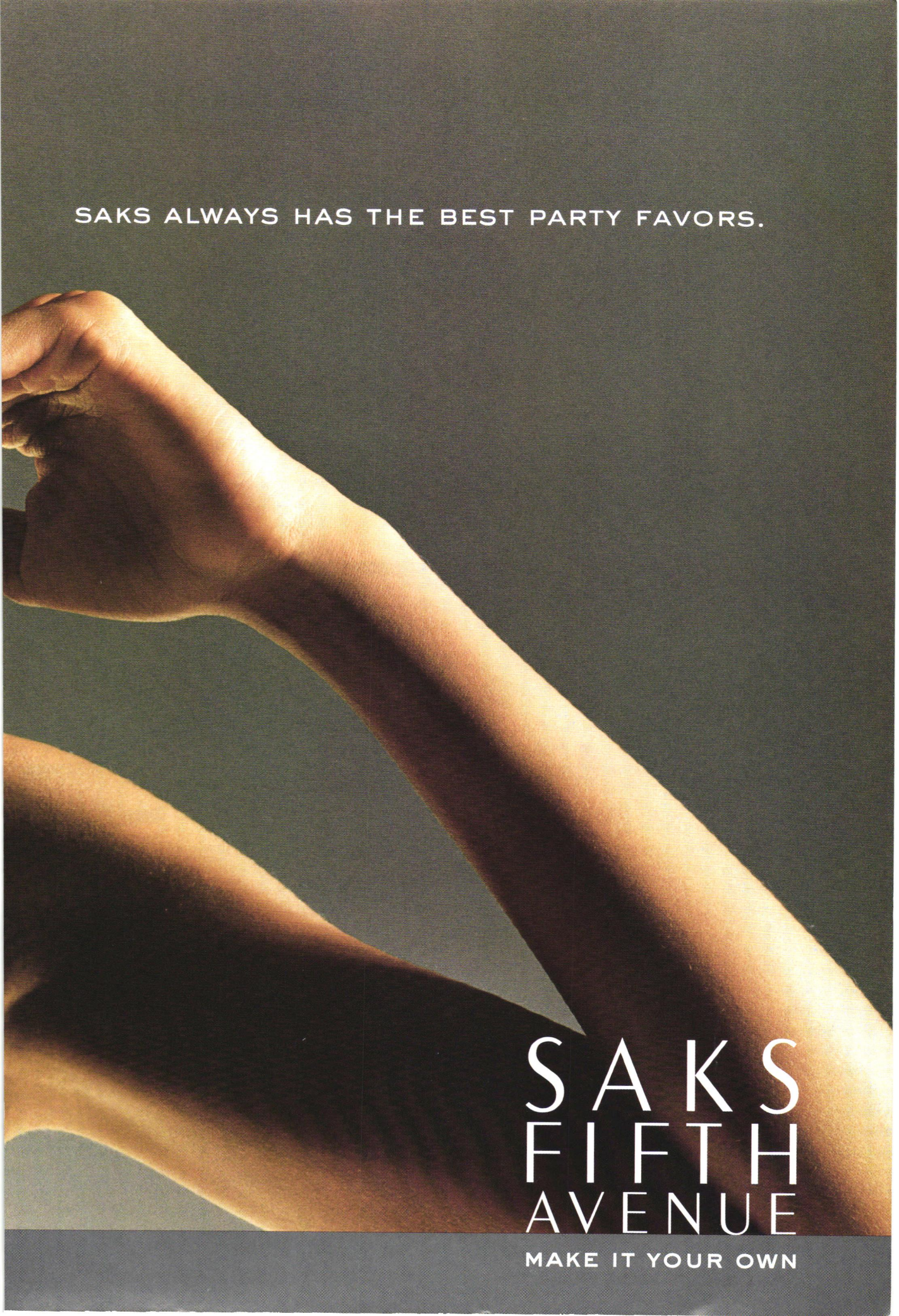
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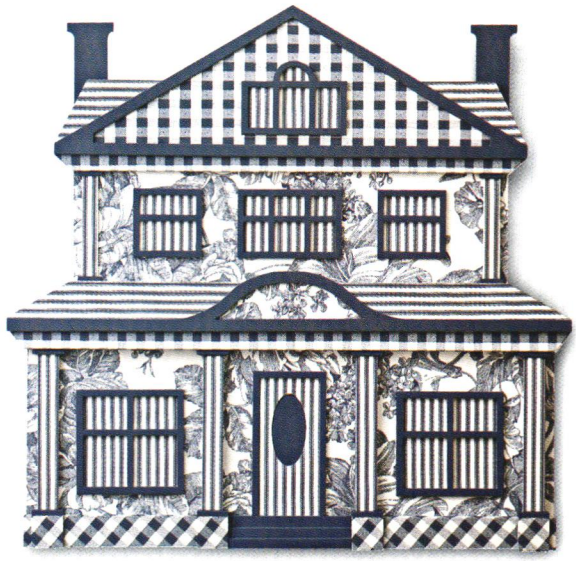

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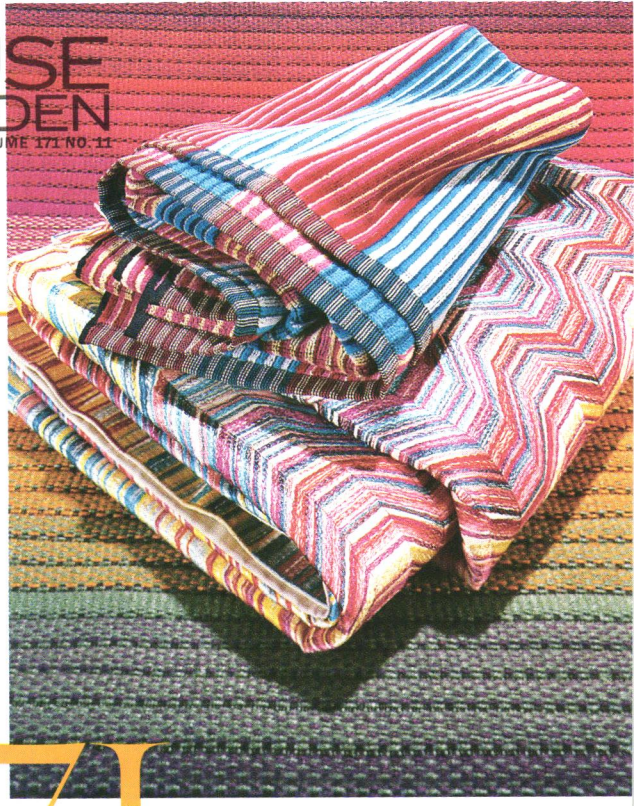

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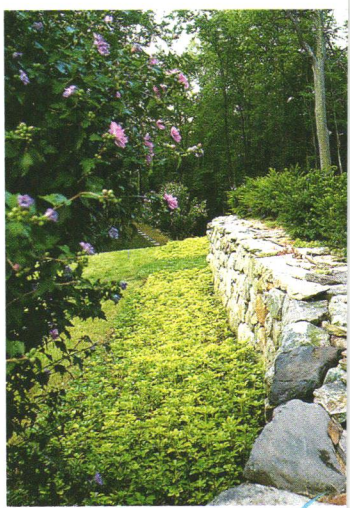

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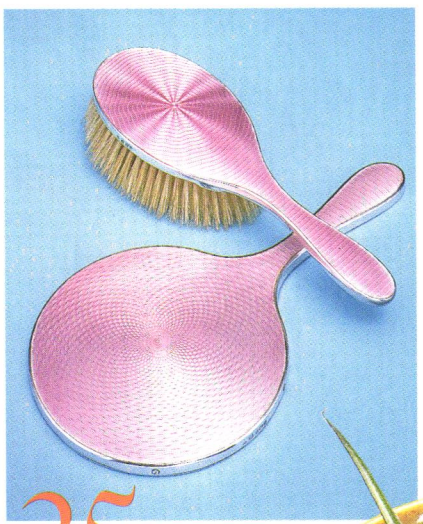

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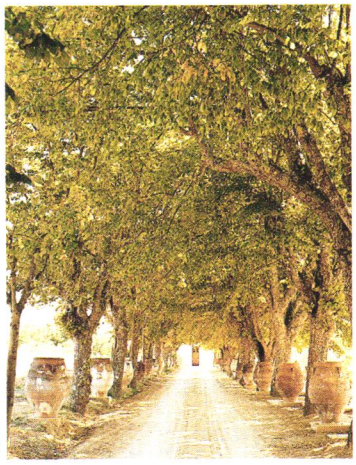

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on the cover

Dressing Table Frills: Skirt custom-made by Stitch, in Silk Box fabric with a Rangella bow, in Cocoa, both Robert Allen through Beacon Hill. Irish mirror, $3,494, from Mirror Fair. Ceramic urn, $445, and covered dish, $145, both Lorin Marsh. Large perfume bottle, ca. 1928, $780, Lalique. Aquamarine and rose quartz necklace, David Yurman. Silver rectangular boxes, $1,500 and $1,875, round box, $450, and vase, $475 a pair, all Sentimento Antiques. Gold heart box, $135, Tiffany & Co. Vintage Lanvin perfume bottle, Barneys New York Vintage Antiques, San Carlos, CA. Miracle Radiant Body Mist, $38, Lancôme. Galuchat Purse Atomizer, $465, and Powder Box, $520, both Parfums Caron. Photographed by Antoine Bootz.

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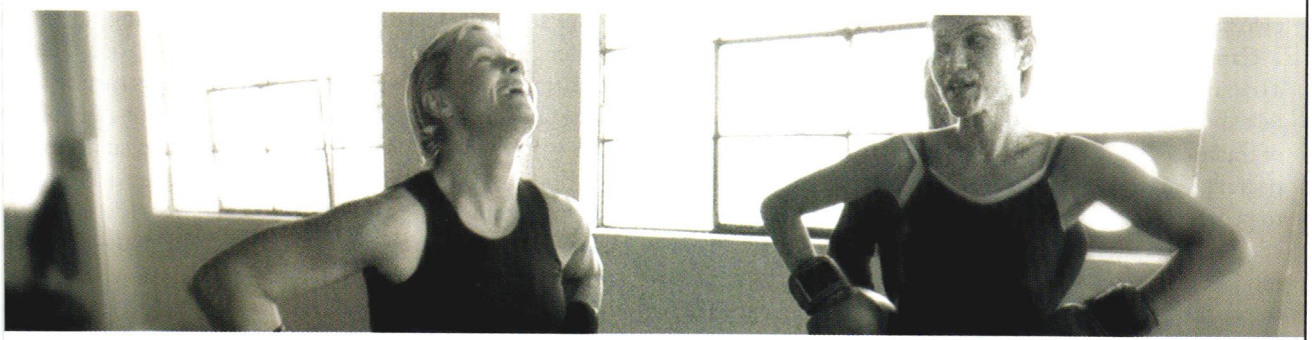

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welcome

family, food, and friends

MEGAN IS STRESSED OUT. There is a health center in the middle of her high schoo campus; it is a white, frame house. It sounds comforting, as she describes it. She woul like to be curled up in a bed there, having a nap. It would take the edge off her stres There are houses that invite such cozy allegiance. I have a few favorites, old farm houses, that I routinely drive by. I have never been inside them, but from the outsid they give off a promise of warmth, and gentleness, and intimacy. Nothing you war is too far away in such little houses. I think that is their appeal. The sofa is close by the fireplace; the teacup is close by the sofa; the bookshelf is near the tea tray; the friend is near the hearth, too; everything fits on the old Persian rug; the stairs to bed are narrow and high and swift. Megan says that the health center recommends sleep, food, and friends as the best helpers in alleviating students' stress. Family, I notice, is not on this list. I remember that when you are a teenager the only comforting members of the family are the ones who live far away (and are usually eccentric); most people in the immediate family cause stress.

Megan is one of my dinner partners at a Thanksgiving meal to which I have been invited by the generous and kindhearted friend of a friend. I'm not a third wheel, or a fifth wheel, but a loose wheel this holiday, one that has come clattering off my own family's caravan and rolled right into a stranger's campsite.

Carrie, our hostess, stands up at dessert to announce that it is a tradition in her family to go round the table and have everyone talk about the things for which they are thankful. It's the kind of tradition that makes you groan with anxiety, and then, unexpectedly, makes you well up with the pleasure of listening to people open their hearts. We begin with the children's table, and everyone, from ages 3 to 17, is remarkably coherent. They list food, friendship, and, this time, family; they are grateful that the world has not been blown up entirely. It has come to that, for our children. (Perhaps it is only the health center that is avoiding the family.) The adults take their turn, with fancier or simpler versions of the same things. I'm shy with strangers (I like hiding behind this page), and so I say, simply, I'm with the children's table: family, food, friends.

What I really wanted to point out—so, Carrie, my Thanksgiving talk, a year later—is the wisdom of the children's simple triumvirate. Because, at any moment, one or more of these will fail you: food will turn to ash; family will disappoint; friends will break your heart. But, most of the time, these disasters don't happen all at once. Your True Love will abandon you, bu your brother and sister will fly to your side. Your father ma infuriate you, but your girlfriend listens long, and with such ca that she leads you to remember the deeper connection, th force of an attachment that makes you vulnerable to such ange Your mother lets slips a casual, stinging remark; but, please, pa the pumpkin pie. It is delicious, especially with such cold, ric milk. Of course, the health center meant for us to consider th nutritional value of food. We will, later. But sometimes what most important is the comfort value of food; comfort deserv its own section in the famous food pyramid (which keeps ge ting turned one way and then another). Of course, I would vo for making comfort food the base from which all else rises.

And so it goes. Things go awry, people fall away. Othe come forward, like the volunteers that spring up in yo garden, bringing hope and happiness and surprise. The co stellations wheel round the skies; summer stars turn to wint stars; our spirits rise and fall on their own moons and plane Our children grow old enough to leave home, and they sh the door on their childhood beds and books with such fu bright, brimming, hopeful hearts. Their lives are so full th cannot imagine the emptiness they leave behind—nor shou they. The light goes out in one room; you carry your canc to another. A grief that once felt crushing eventually tur out to be like every dead thir hollowed out, desiccated, a shc and then dust, blown away on whisper. We let go because we ha no choice. We give love and we a given love—and we give and recei pain, disappointment, fear, sadne But we are thankful for it all, if or because it means we are deeply, er lessly, joyously engaged with li Happy Thanksgiving!

Dominique Browning, EDIT

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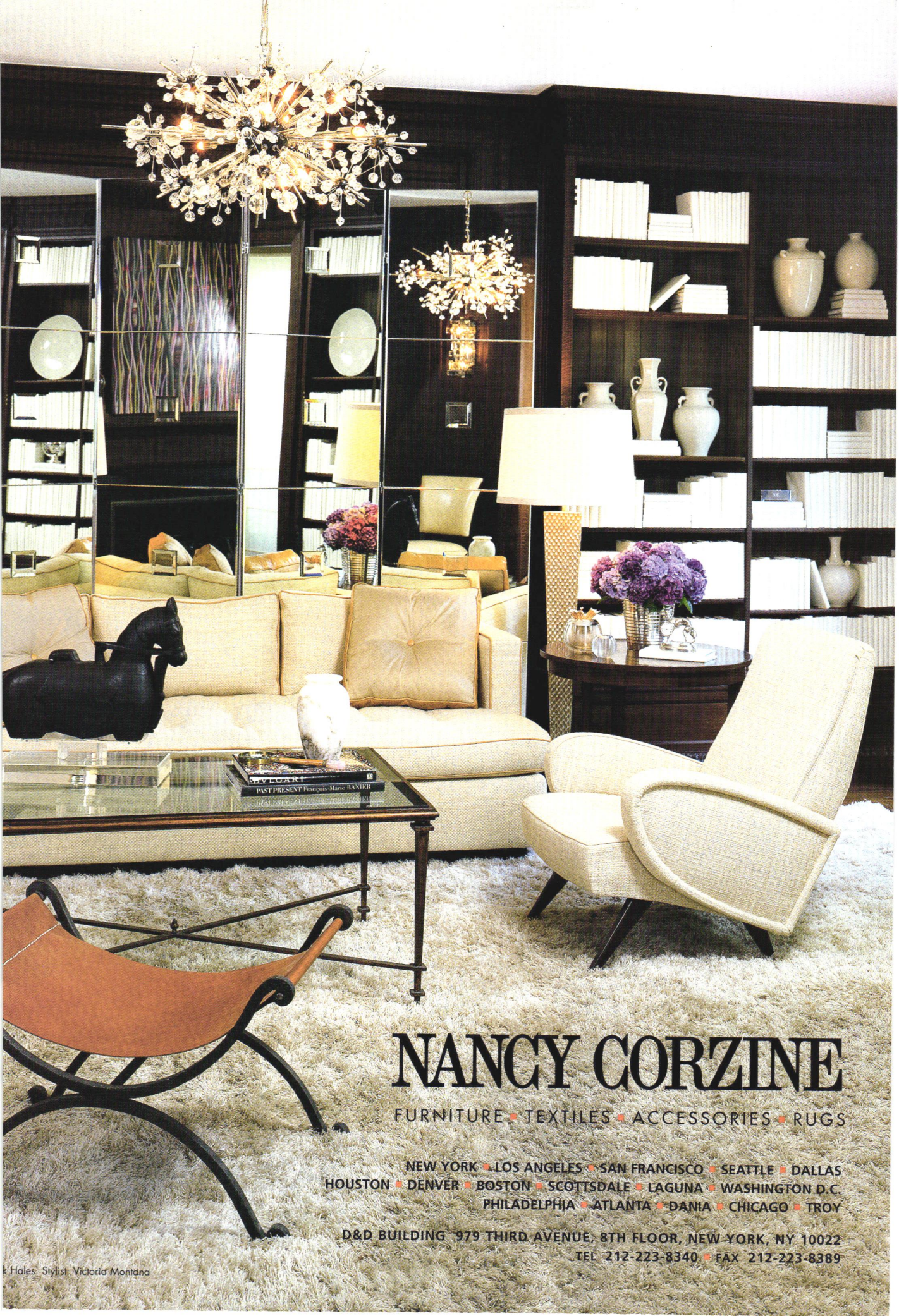

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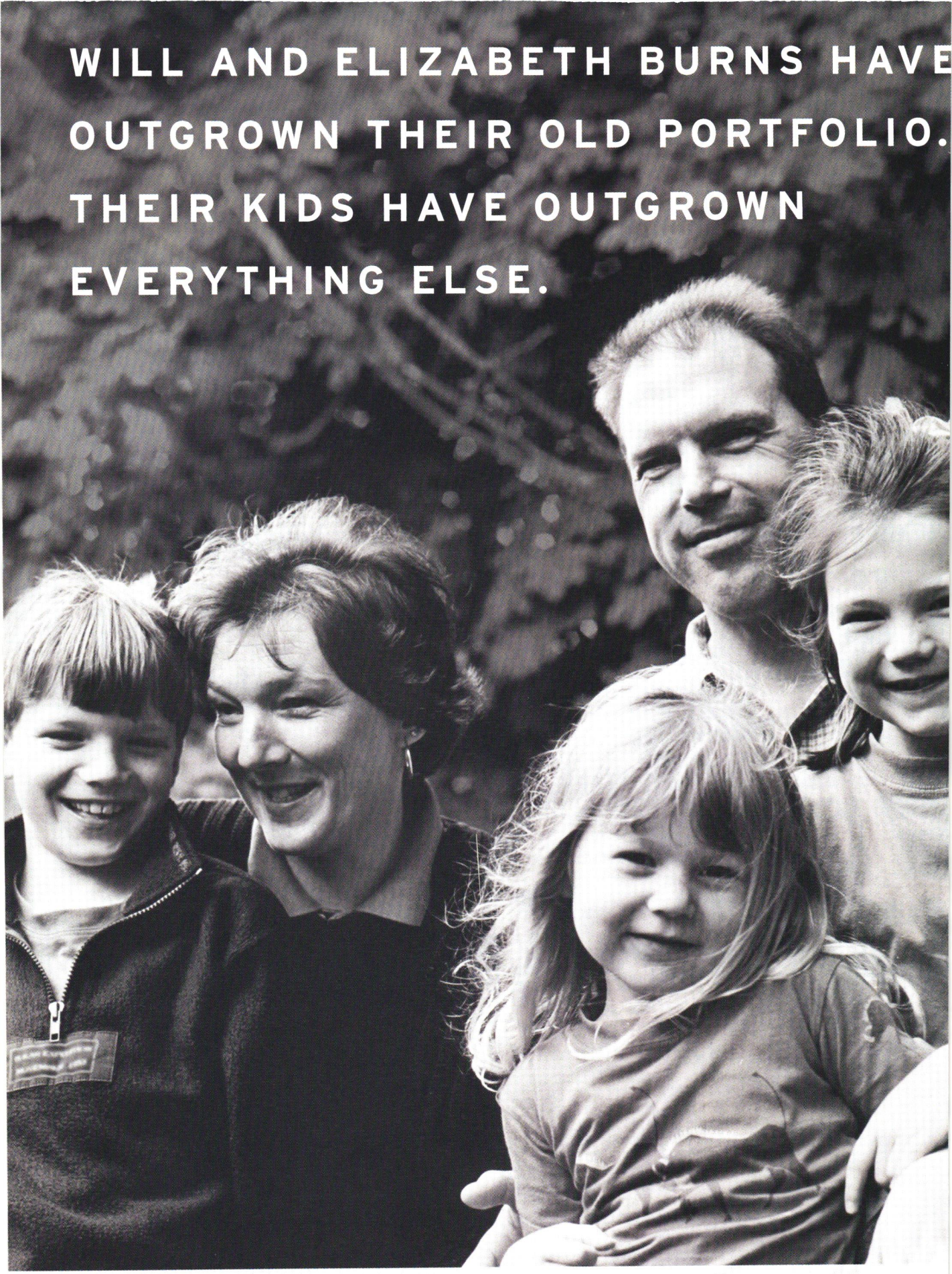

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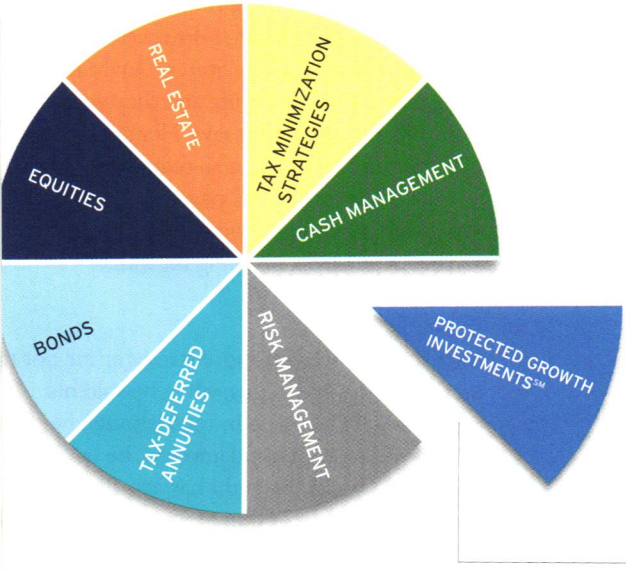
MICHELLE ARPIN BEGINA, MERRILL LYNCH FINANCIAL ADVISOR, ON GROWING A PORTFOLIO WHILE MANAGING RISK.



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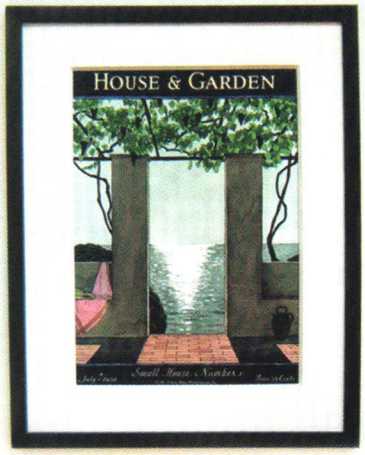

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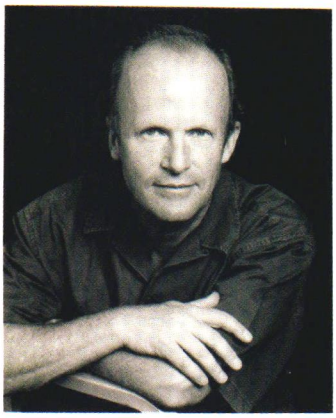
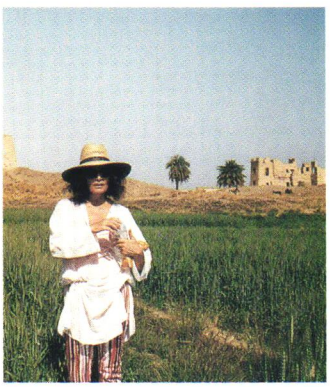
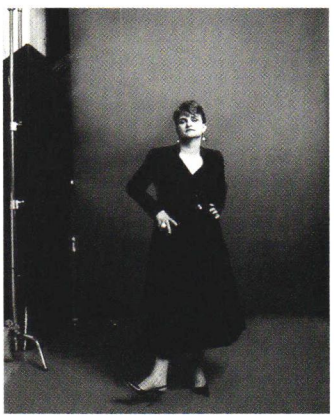


JIM CRACE
is known for his dark fiction, including *Being Dead* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000) and *The Devil's Larder* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001). So it may shock people to find out that he had a happy childhood, has a happy marriage, and has happy kids. "I can think about myself as I'm walking the dog," Crace explains. "I write to investigate things I can't encounter in my life." "Truly Cutting Edge," page 92, is an exception; he wrote from experience, and dusted off skills from his early journalism career. "You have to turn truth into a piece of embroidery," he says.



DIANE VON FURSTENBERG
is as successful as her iconic wrap dress. She designed it in her 20s, then moved to Paris and lived her dream of owning a publishing house. But suddenly her dress was "it" again, so she returned to the States. "A whole new generation has come up, and they wanted me," von Furstenberg says. Her good friend Christian Louboutin also requested her—to write "Chic of Araby," page 150. "It was painful," von Furstenberg says, "but he's like a brother. I'd do anything for him."

ISAAC MIZRAHI
can't sit still. "It takes more stress for me not to do things," he says. Thus, when he sold his ready-to-wear business in 1998 (though he still designs shoes, coats, and jewelry), he became a man for all arts. Mizrahi has acted off-Broadway, worked in film, written comic books and now hosts a talk show. "I don't see it as diversification," he says. "What I do just comes out of me." An example: the inspired text for "Dressing Tables," page 25. "I opened an E-mail asking for a few quotes," Mizrahi says, "and twenty minutes later I had this essay



CATHY HORYN
spent "almost every weekend for fifteen months" helping Bill Blass prepare his book *Bare Blass* (HarperCollins, 2002). "I took the title of editor because it covered a multitude of sins," she says. Her regular role is fashion critic for *The New York Times*. "Fashion isn't just about the clothes, it's about the people," Horyn says. In "An Unexpected Legacy," page 64, she discusses her relationship with Blass and his garden. "I've looked at a lot of ideas," she says, "but I'd rather have Blass be my guide." —JENNY GAVACS

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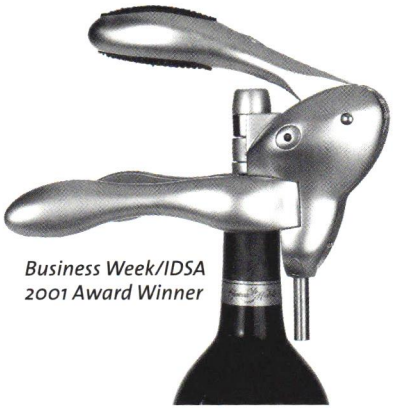

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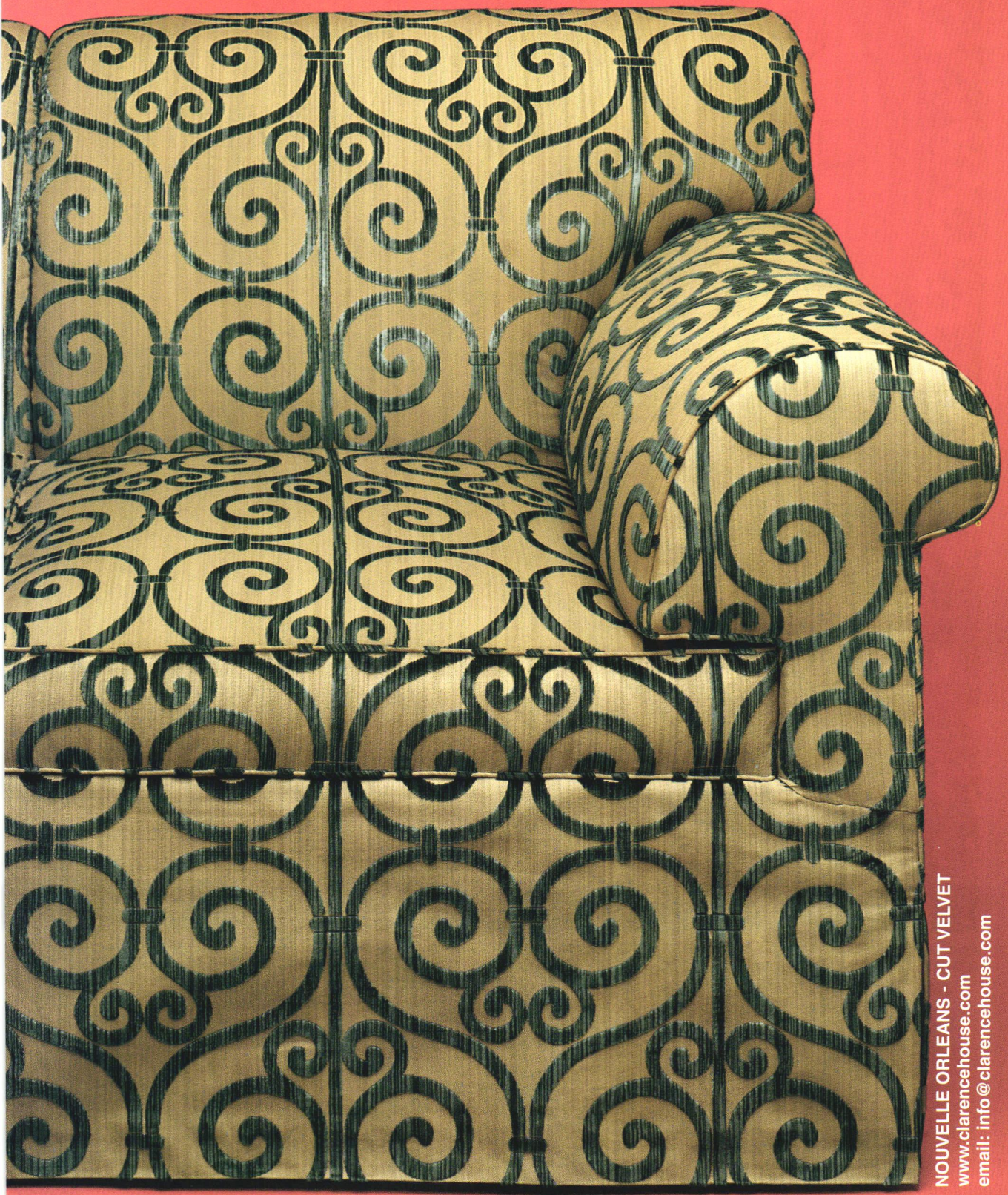

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DRESSING TABLES

Bring them back! In the pursuit of beauty, glamour, and romance, no bedroom should be without one Edited by Shax Riegler

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANTOINE BOOTZ ■ PRODUCED BY JAMES SHEARRON

domestic bliss

DRESSING TABLES

In the future, everyone will want a boudoir, and the dressing table will take center stage

by Isaac Mizrahi

Not only do I think boudoirs and dressing tables are coming back with a vengeance, but I also think femininity is coming back. I don't know if the trend is specific to women, though. I think everyone is soon going to be back in touch with their womanliness. It only makes sense. How long can we fascinate over manly things, as we seem to have for the past 20 years? I think by the next decade everyone will have a dressing table and chic, feather-trimmed lingerie. Men and women alike. Since people are having plastic surgery like crazy, it stands to reason that we're all going to need private checkpoints for it. The boudoir will take on a whole new meaning.

Lighting is everything. Regardless of the room. My favorite boudoir in movie history is Jean Harlow's in *Dinner at Eight.* The lighting in that room is flawless. Not to mention the decor. And the appointments. And the wardrobe. And that maid. And that jewelry. All those things must be taken into consideration when doing a boudoir. (Let's face it, what good is the most divine boudoir without the jewelry?) What I'm saying is that without the lifestyle to go with it, the boudoir is a cold comfort. It's like having a family room without the family, or a fireplace with no chimney. Before considering your boudoir, you have to make sure you have a few men calling on you regularly. Including a really cute and loving doctor, as Harlow does in *Dinner at Eight.* In a boudoir, the dressing table seems to

"It's just so nice to not be standing while putting on makeup," says Barbara Barry, who designed this DRESSING TABLE with a tiny, built-in sink, $12,362, for Kallista. All VINTAGE BOTTLES, The End of History, NYC. Sterling silver BABY BOWL, $150, RECTANGULAR BOX, $1,500, and silver-colored TRAY, $75, all Calvin Klein. Centered CANDLE in Spirit, $14, beComing. Romance PERFUME, $65 for 3.4 oz., Ralph Lauren. Striped glass PERFUME BOTTLE, $38, C. O. Bigelow. Crushed shell CLAM BOX, $15, Sage. TURQUOISE NECKLACE with diamond rondelles, about $8,500, and blue topaz with diamonds Ice RING, $1,900, both David Yurman. Verdura AQUAMARINE NECKLACE, $6,200, and STARFISH BROOCH, $155, both Bergdorf Goodman. Topaz, $1,575, and diamond, $3,975, RINGS, both Di Modolo Milano. COMPACT, $20, Floris London, NYC. Wallis blue Limoges SUGAR BOWL, $50, Bernardaud, holding a La Prairie EYE BRUSH SET, $125, Saks Fifth Avenue.

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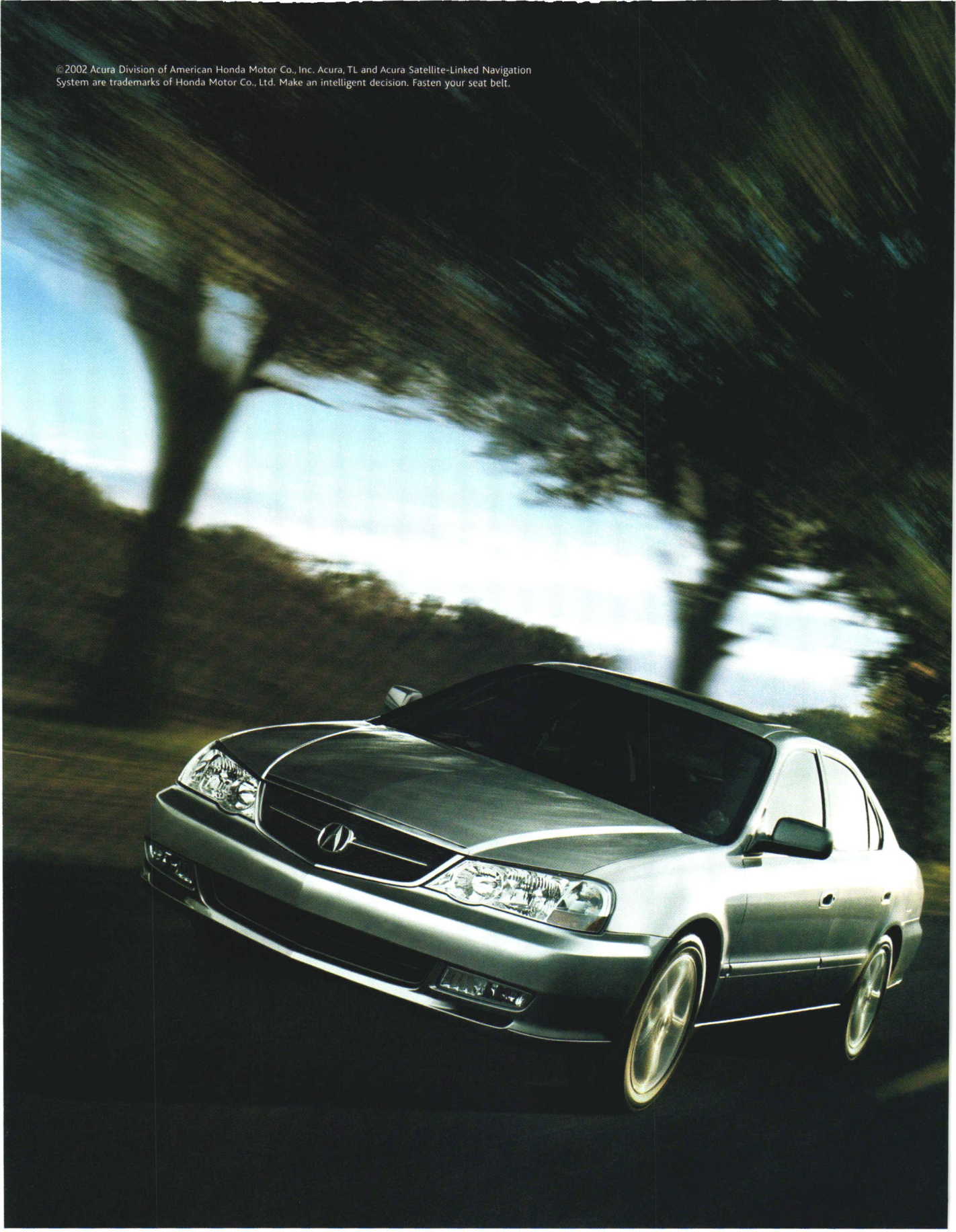

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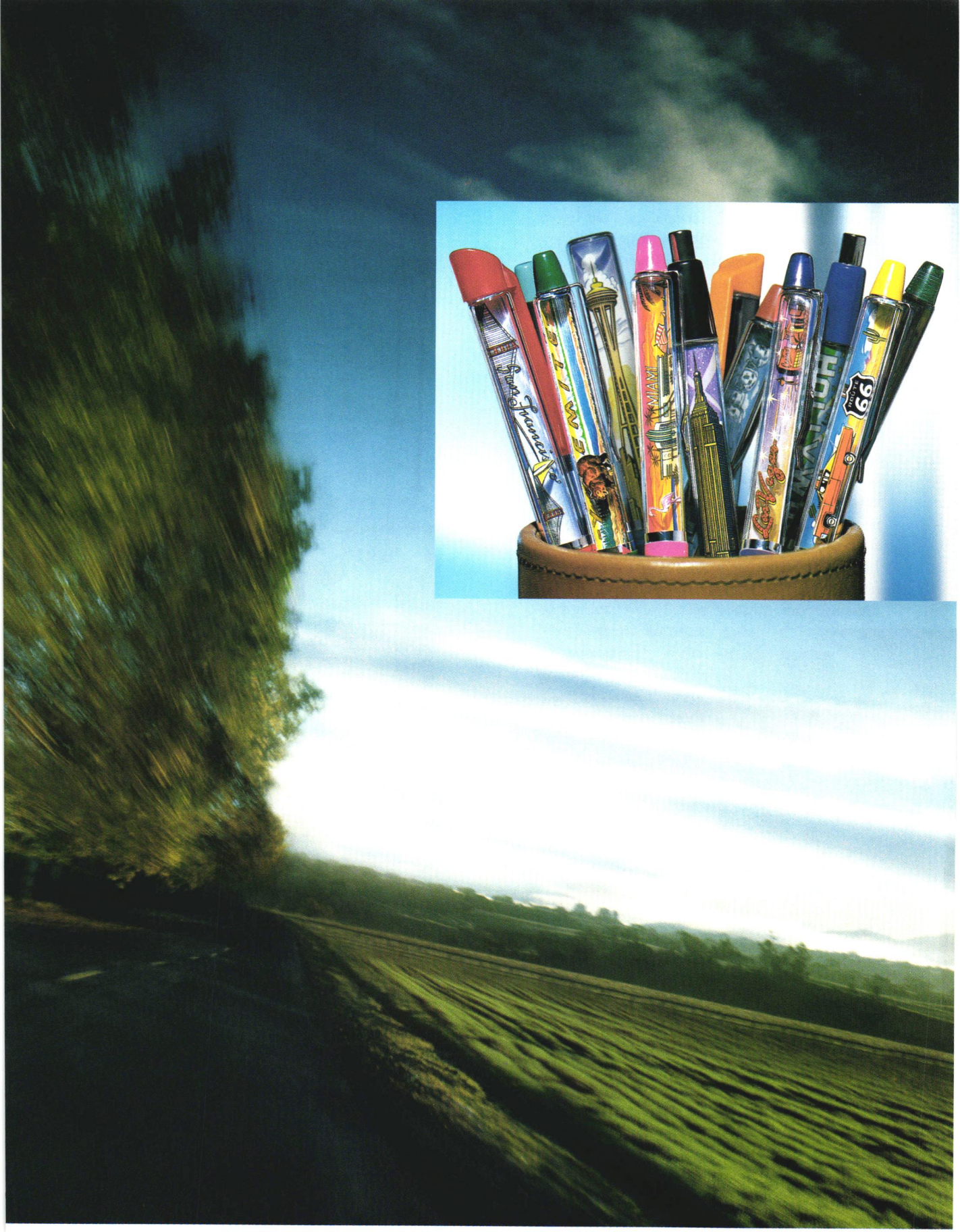

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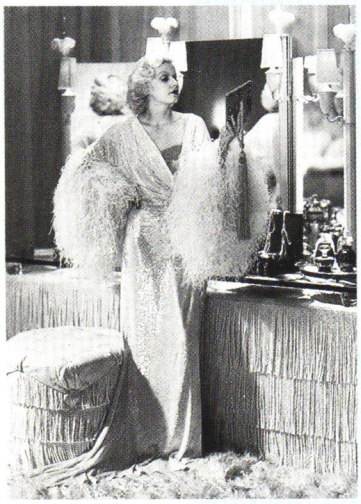
DRESSING TABLES

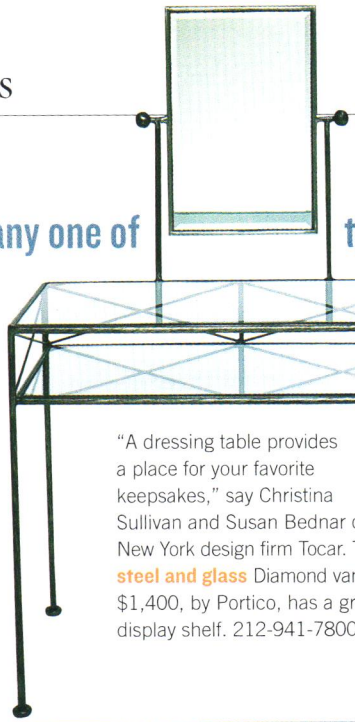
You'll feel like a movie star at any one of these tables

be both a stage setting for intrigue and a safe haven from it. Consider Clark Gable bursting into Vivien Leigh's boudoir in *Gone with the Wind* the night he knocks her up. Scandalous. As if he's invading her most sacred inner sanctum. Consider Greta Garbo's dressing room in *Mata Hari,* all those men she has wound around her finger, all that espionage and drama, all that power. The vanity table is the equivalent of a boardroom for a femme fatale. But enough of the 1930s.

Let's face it, today you'd need money to support having a boudoir. Not only would you have to have the space, but you'd have to have the need for one. I realize "natural beauty" needs attention, but not to the extent that siren-thin eyebrows or marcelled hair does. I think age is a factor. Just recently I've become frustrated with my apartment for its lack of a dressing room. All these years I've looked at it as a sort of discipline for me, not having a huge, walk-in closet adjoining my bedroom. I've been forced to minimize my wardrobe, consider what I value most, get rid of the detritus. (Storage space has been an important factor in all this.) It has been a good lesson, but now I'm ready for an extravagant dressing room. I feel after all these years I deserve it. Which means I'm going to have to move to a bigger place. I suppose there are hundreds of young women out there who tell themselves that by a certain age they're going to treat themselves to an extravagant boudoir. Most young women today make up in the bathroom or on the subway; they don't have the time to sit in a bugle-beaded kimono and apply a face mask. (Alas.) It's tricky. These same women are probably dying for the indulgences that the boudoir affords. That kind of glamour is passé, but I'll bet anything a new kind of glamour is coming. How long can we remain in this kind of denial? Stick around.



In *Dinner at Eight*, Jean Harlow's dressing table is a Hollywood confection.



"A dressing table provides a place for your favorite keepsakes," say Christina Sullivan and Susan Bednar of New York design firm Tocar. The **steel and glass** Diamond vanity, $1,400, by Portico, has a great display shelf. 212-941-7800.

Dallas decorator Jan Showers loves mirrored pieces from the '20s, '30s, and '40s. "On a dressing table," she says, "the mirrored top helps reflect light." Hinson & Co.'s Le Dorat dressing table has plain and etched **mirror panels**. Through Mrs. MacDougall.

"The best dressing tables have lots of storage, so that makeup, brushes, and other items can be organized," says Palm Beach interior designer Tui Pranich. La Barge's vanity table, $2,226, has a **capiz shell veneer**. 800-253-3870.

"Often a client will see a dressing table, and that inspires the need to have one," New York decorator Sara Bengur says. Andrée Putman's **oak and glass** DoublePlay vanity comes in five colors. Through Ralph Pucci International.

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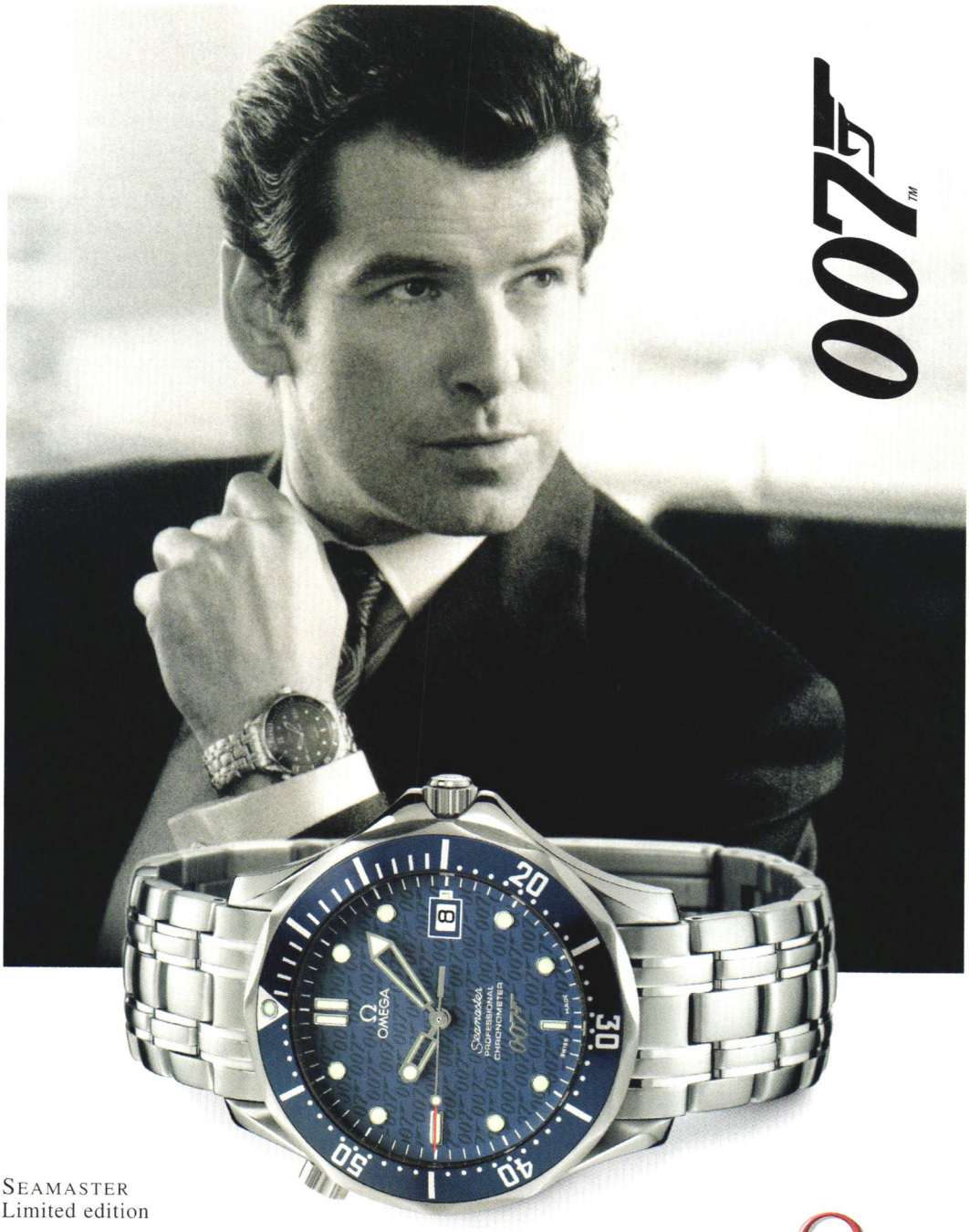

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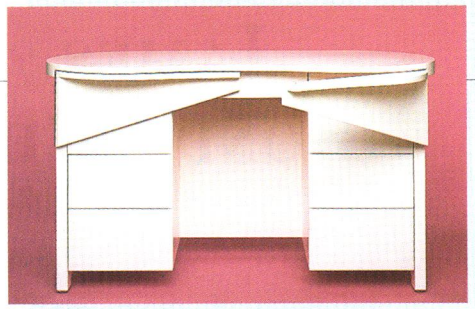
DRESSING TABLES

One simple table, four chic looks



"Dressing tables aren't necessities, but they're wonderful luxuries," designer Celeste Cooper says. Our model of choice is Minic's kidney-shaped, nine-drawer dressing table with swing-out arms. (Your upholsterer should cut the fabric to provide access.) Designed by the firm's founder, Valentine Minnich, in 1929, it's still sold to decorators around the world. "It's the table that Sister Parish and Betty Sherrill bought for themselves," Minnich's son William says. "It's a classic piece." Here are some fanciful variations.

Start with a "blank" like Minic's, and use your imagination. "The dressing table should be completely personalized," says designer Sara Bengur. An embroidered windowpane-plaid skirt has an elegant country look. Locust Valley Floral in Rose, Lee Jofa. Antique Swedish bench, White on White, NYC, 212-288-0909, upholstered in Linfor linen in Kelly, Lee Jofa.

It's a cinch to dress up your table with a billowy skirt in your favorite fabric and a big fat bow. Silk Box skirt in Shell with Cocoa Rangella bow, both Robert Allen. Custom Gilt Rope stool, $3,600, John Rosselli International, NYC, 212-772-2137, upholstered in Chantil Novasuede, Robert Allen.

"Pared down" doesn't mean plain. Give your table a Chinese Modern twist. Inverted-pleat skirt in Le Reveil du Printemps linen, Scalamandré. White soutache frog closures, $4 each, M&J Trimming, 800-965-8746. Acrylic swivel vanity stool, $282, Plexi-Craft Quality Products, 800-247-5394, upholstered in pale blue Turmalin, JAB.

The layered look is always in style. A geometric-patterned eyelet over a Schiaparelli pink skirt creates a bold, feminine statement. Brunella eyelet cotton and #15 fuchsia Taffetos Kaleidoscope skirt, also on stool, both Clarence House. 1940s French stool, $2,100 per pair, Coconut Company, NYC, 212-539-1940.

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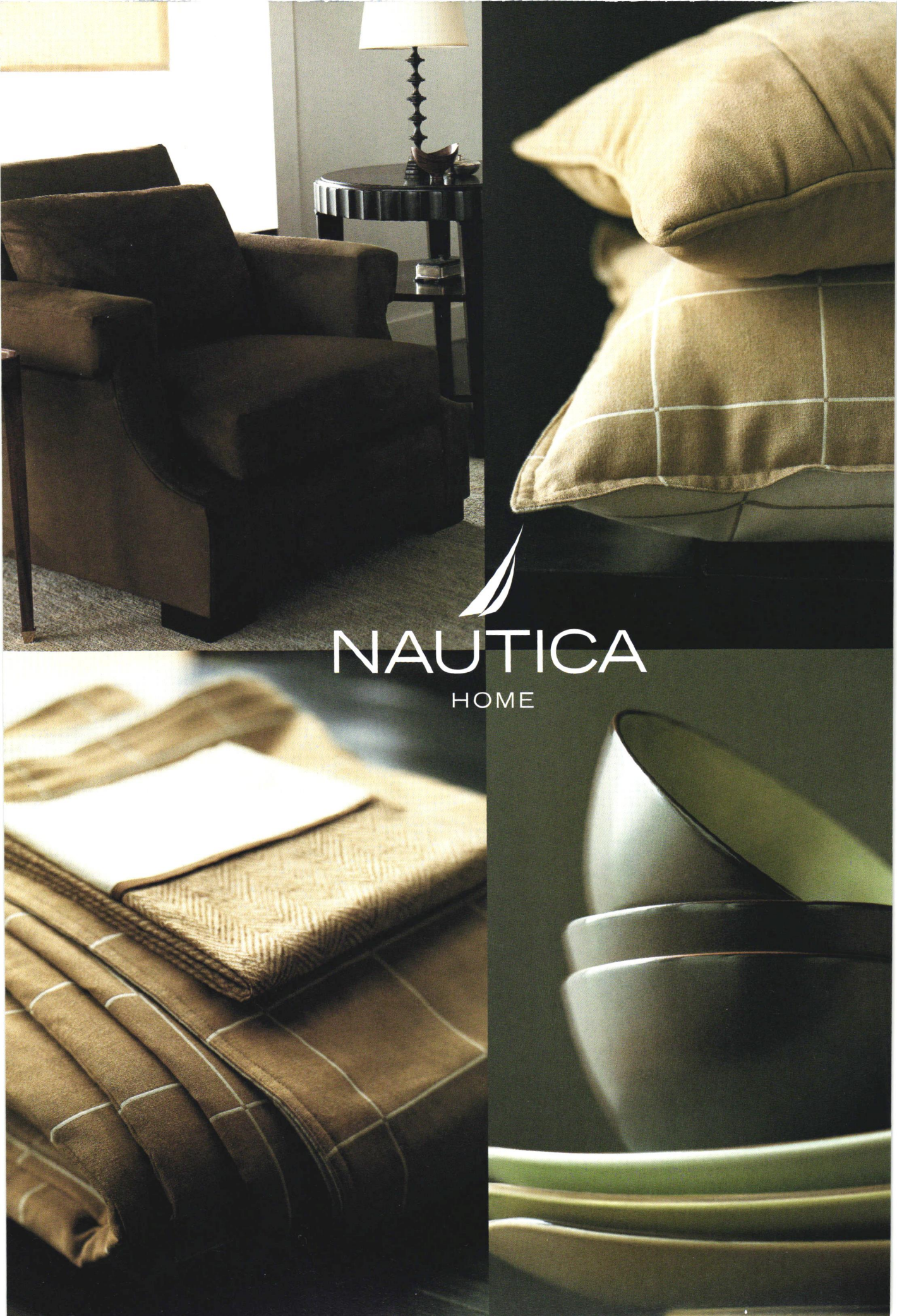
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HOUSE &GARDEN

DRESSINGTABLES

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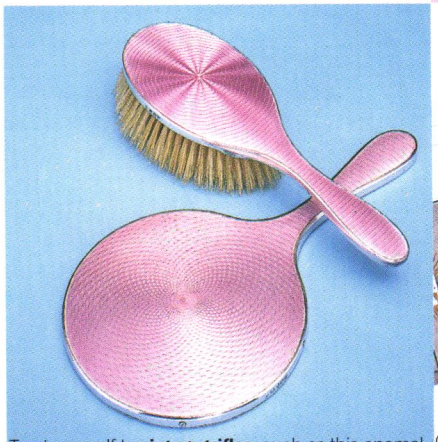
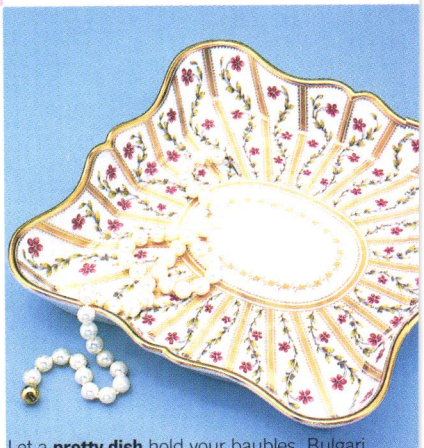
With an Irving Rice Swarovski crystal-studded **compact mirror**, you can be glamorous while you're on the go. $30 for mini and $40 for large, Saks Fifth Avenue. 800-347-9177.



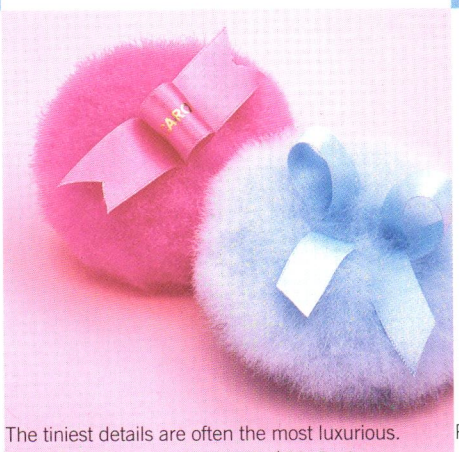
Treat yourself to **vintage trifles**, such as this enamel and silver brush, $900 (part of a set), Kentshire at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC, 212-872-8652, and mirror, $425, Penhaligon's, 877-736-4254.

Christie Mayer Lefkowith's *Masterpieces of the Perfume Industry* (Editions Stylissimo, $125) is a tantalizing introduction to the world of **antique perfume bottles**. Or visit perfumebottles.org.



Let a **pretty dish** hold your baubles. Bulgari pearl necklace with 18k gold clasp, $4,800. 800-285-4274. Roseraie square scalloped tray by Bernardaud, $252. 800-884-7775.

There's no reason to sacrifice style when it comes to storing your jewels. Hinged, footed sterling silver **jewelry box** with velvet lining, $875, Buccellati. 800-223-7885.



The tiniest details are often the most luxurious. Small fuchsia swansdown puff, $30, Parfums Caron, and blue goose down **powder puff**, $40, Floris London, NYC. 212-935-9100.

Pair your modern dressing table with the perfect minimalist perch. Custom **leather cube** covered in hot pink leather, $950. Salon Moderne, NYC. 212-219-3439. □

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ON THE SET

In director Todd Haynes's new film, the look is vintage *House & Garden*

by Ingrid Abramovitch

In *Far from Heaven,* Julianne Moore plays a Connecticut housewife whose home is a 1950s mélange of Danish Modern furniture, floral chintz, and faux Chippendale. The setting is not what one might expect from director Todd Haynes, whose last movie, *Velvet Goldmine,* was an ode to 1970s glam rock, or from production designer Mark Friedberg, the man behind *The Ice Storm*'s minimal sets. Haynes calls *Far from Heaven* an "unironic embrace" of the 1950s melodrama—specifically an homage to the soap-operatic auteurism of director Douglas Sirk (*Written on the Wind, Imitation of Life*). To perfect the look of New England at midcentury, Haynes studied pictures of domestic interiors in vintage *House & Garden* magazines, then filtered them through the sensibility of an old Hollywood studio set. "It's an eclectic style," says Friedberg, who shopped for the set at Duane, a TriBeCa store (176 Duane St., NYC; 212-625-8066) specializing in the kind of furniture that epitomized sophisticated suburbia at midcentury. It all looked so cool that when shooting wrapped, cast and crew snapped up the decor at a post-production sale. "I completely scored," says Haynes, who shipped couches, cabinets, and glassware from the set to his Arts and Crafts cottage in Portland, Oregon, "and I gave Julianne an easy chair."

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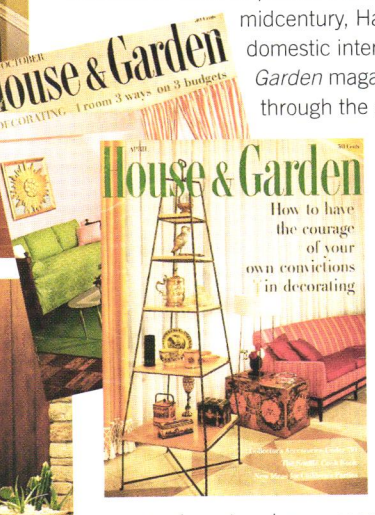

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1 Todd Haynes with items, including a bookcase, from the set of *Far from Heaven.* The decor was inspired by 1950s *House & Garden.* **2** The den. Note the bookcase. **3** Cathy Whitaker (Julianne Moore) poses and **4** Frank Whitaker (Dennis Quaid) unwinds in their picture-perfect home.

3

4

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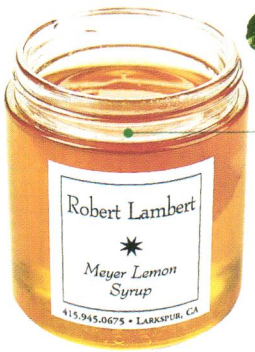
1 cup freshly squeezed Meyer lemon juice
3 cups water

In a saucepan, combin sugar and lemon juice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 1 minute or until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Pour into a large metal bowl and st in water. Place bowl in freezer. Stir every 2 hours with a fork, scrap down sides. Continue until mixture is frozen.

Summer may be over, but the season for Meyer lemons—November through January—is luckily just beginning. First brought to the United States from China in 1908 by Frank Meyer, these lemons are believed to be a cross between a lemon and an orange. They are certainly sweeter and more aromatic than the traditional lemon, and their exceptionally thin skin is as delicious and useful as their juice. No wonder they are one of the most versatile ingredients in my kitchen. I order them from Honey Crisp (877-638-3084) and Katz and Company (800-676-7176). Once you try one, there's no going back.

If you don't live in a climate conducive to growing Meyer lemons outdoors year-round, fourwindsgrowers.com will ship you a **dwarf Meyer lemon tree** that you can grow indoors. At last count, I had nine lemons on the tree in my apartment. $23 to $44.

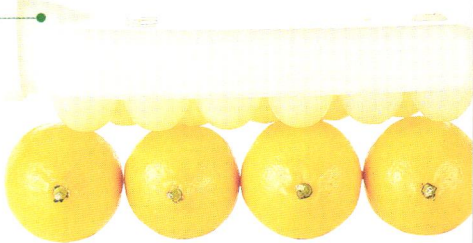


Move over, maple syrup! Try **Robert Lambert's Meyer Lemon Syrup** on pancakes and waffles. $9 for 4 oz. Grateful Palate. 888-472-5283.

DaVero California Meyer Lemon Olive Oil is great for giving a recipe an infusion of lemon. I use it on steamed vegetables and as a substitute for butter on bread. $20 for 375 ml. Katz and Company.

Make a simple tea using only lemon peel. Italians, who drink this tea at the end of a meal, call it **canarino**, for its canary yellow hue. Oriental teapot, $75 plus shipping, Mantha, Coex, France. wilfried@mantha.fr.

Extend the Meyer lemon season by freezing the juice. **Make & Shake ice trays** protect the juice from other odors. $3.95. Sur La Table. 800-243-0852.



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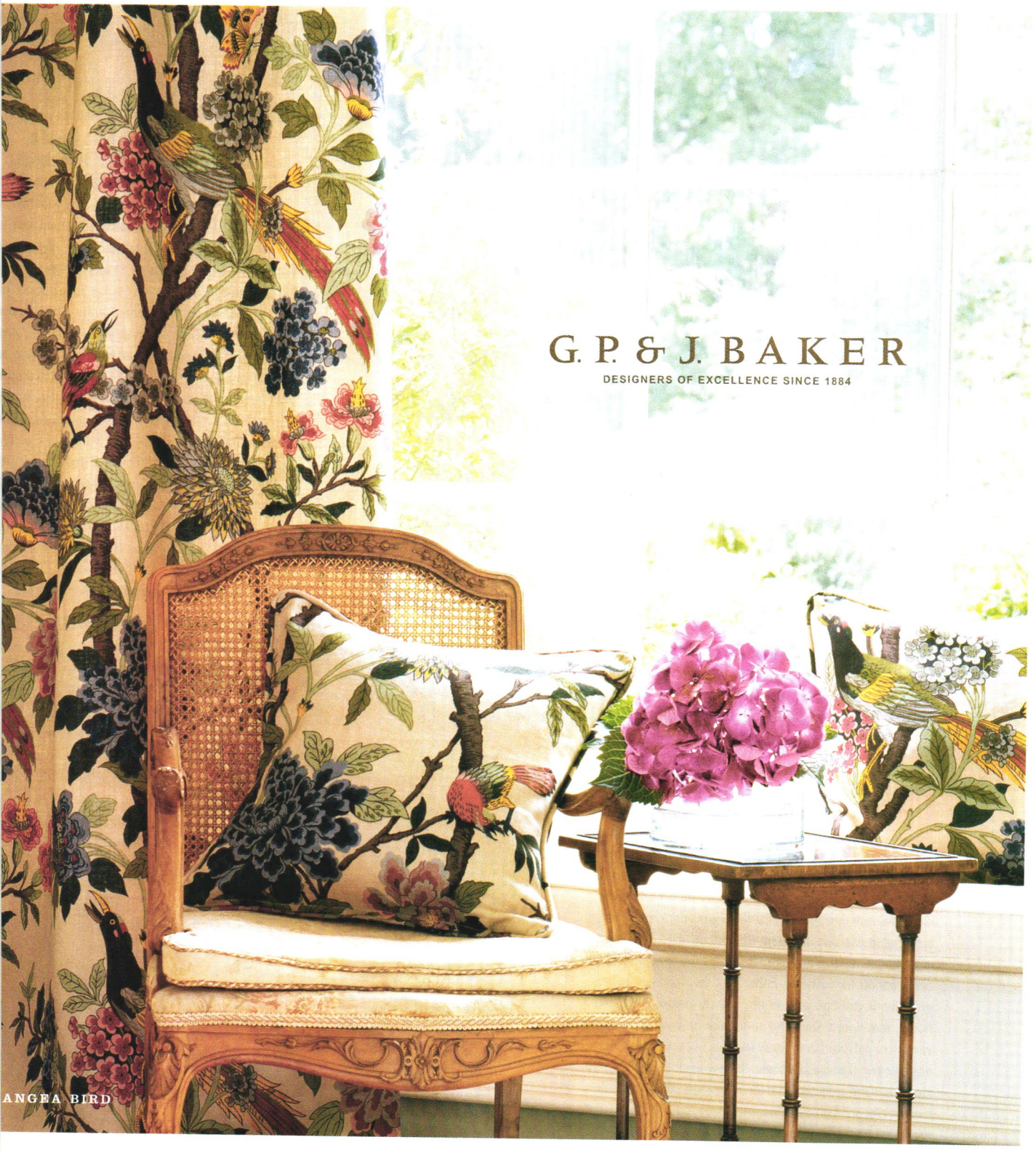

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THE FIX

You've got questions, we've got answers

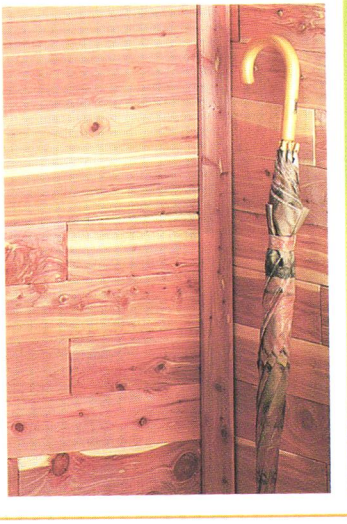
by Jackie Craven

Q We used our fireplace only a couple of times last year. Do we really need to have it cleaned?

A Don't be fooled by a squeaky-clean fireplace. While you were being tidy, nesting birds and shedding trees may have created a mess inside your chimney. Moreover, a fireplace that looks clean can still have layers of soot and creosote deep in the chimney where you can't see them. To prevent fires and deadly carbon monoxide fumes, the Chimney Safety Institute of America (csia.org) recommends a yearly inspection. A qualified chimney sweep doesn't merely check for cleanliness; your pro should also evaluate the condition of all your venting systems, including chimneys used by your heating system and other fuel-burning appliances. Chimney blockages can happen at any time, so it's also important to install a carbon monoxide detector on every floor of your house. Then, relax and enjoy your fire.

Q We'd like to line our bedroom closet with cedar, but there are so many kinds. What's the best?

A The cedar used to build your deck or side your house is not the best pick for your closet. Instead, ask your lumberyard or home improvement store for aromatic eastern red cedar or for an easy-to-install closet lining kit made from this species. Eastern red cedar repels moths and other pests, and its potent fragrance is more than pleasing. Choose tongue-and-groove planks for beauty or chipboard panels for economy. Either way, the wood will be most effective if you line your entire closet, including ceilings, floors, and doors. Don't try to spruce up your cedar with varnish or polyurethane; fussy finishes will cover the natural oils that give the wood its scent. Keep your closet door tightly closed and the aroma will last for many years. Want to freshen a cedar closet? A quick swipe with sandpaper will bring back the forest fragrance in even the oldest wood.



Q This fall the squirrels have found a cozy new home: our attic. How do we get rid of these squatters?

A Let the furry freeloaders know that your house is not a bed-and-breakfast: make them a terrible meal. Dan Hershey, author of *The Critter Control Handbook* (Voyageur Press), suggests mixing a tablespoon of cooking oil, five tablespoons o cayenne pepper, and a gallon of water. Sprinkle the brew on areas where squirrels have been gnawing into your attic. Then block the openings with meta screening. To make reaching the attic more difficult prune tree branches away from the roof. Squirrels stil inside? You'll want to remove them before they cre ate unsavory smells, chew your wires, and caus other havoc. Forget the fancy high-tech solutions Even high-pitched noises from an ultrasound pes control device are not likely to deter these busy crea tures. Instead, Hershey recommends trapping th squirrels using a humane live trap such as Havahar (havahart.com). Ask a wildlife control officer t release the squirrels in a distant, approved area.

Q Our yard has a new sprinkler system. How can we make sure the pipes don't freeze this winter?

A To prevent a geyser in you lawn, drain the sprinkle system every fall to kee freezing water from cracking the pipes. Som sprinklers have automatic drain valves tha remove water when the system is turned of Others must be drained manually by turnin off the water feed and opening the valve However, in very cold climates even a sma amount of standing water can cause damag To be safe, have a certified irrigation contrac tor blow water from the lines with a heavy-du air compressor. Make sure your pro als wraps insulation around any above-groun piping and valves. If you wish, the irrigatic service will return in the spring to start up yo sprinklers. For a directory of certified pros, lo on to the Irrigation Association at irrigation.or

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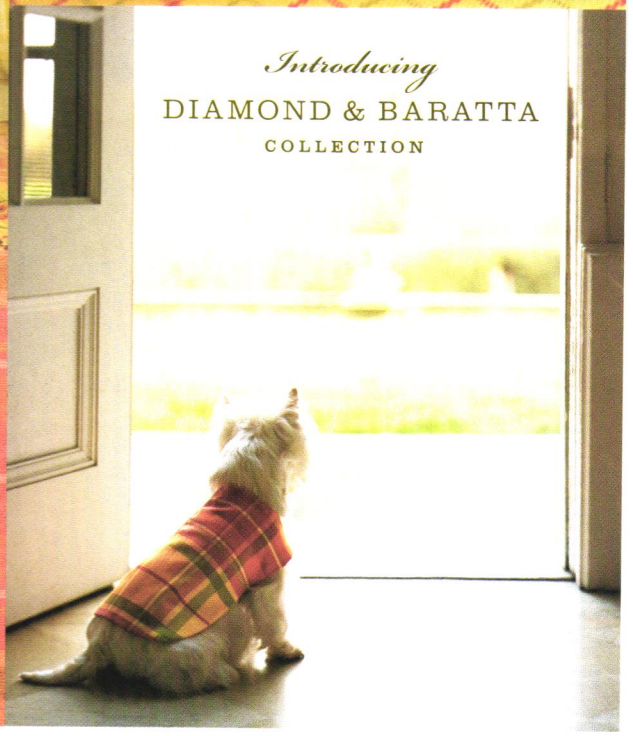

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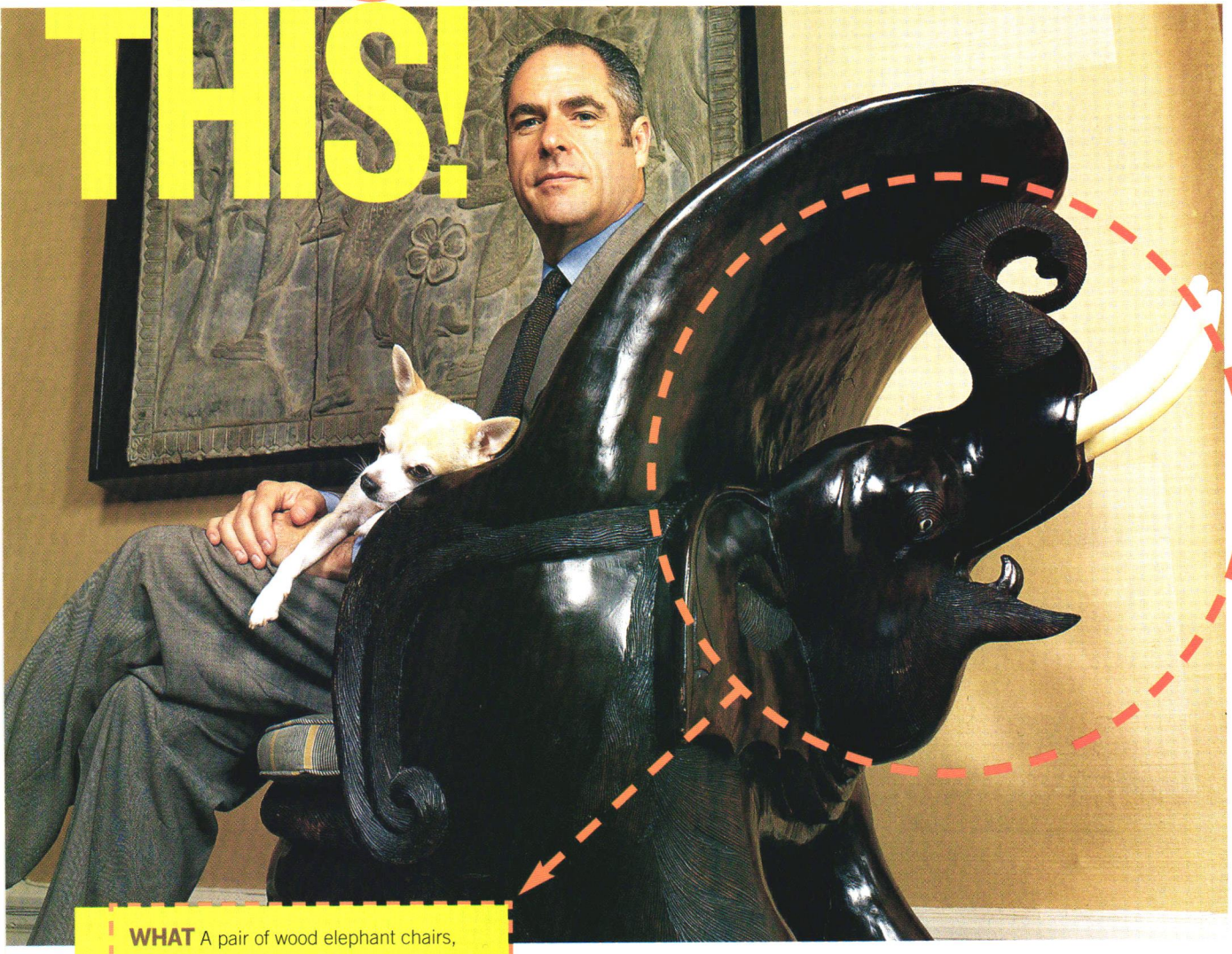
TASTE THIS!

In matters of design, there's no accounting for taste. M (Group)'s Carey Maloney takes a walk on the wild side

by Mayer Rus



WHAT A pair of wood elephant chairs, carved from a single tree, with faux ivory tusks. Possibly made in the Far East.
PRICE "Cheap."
WHAT'S THE APPEAL? "The quality of the carving and the scale counteract the jokiness," says Maloney. "They're strange and charming, but not slick."
FAVORITE DETAIL "The age rings make you comprehend the size of the tree."
TASTE VERDICT "In the Christie's catalog for the estate of William McCarty-Cooper, we saw a set of very, very similar chairs around a Louis XVI gaming table under a fantastic Braque. They looked amazing, and we felt vindicated."

CAREY MALONEY APPRECIATES THE CALL OF THE WILD. Twelve years ago, during a shopping expedition at a small New York antiques gallery, Maloney and Hermes Mallea, his partner in the firm M (Group), stumbled upon a pair of decidedly eccentric wood chairs carved in the shape of elephants. Badly in need of refinishing and weighing more than 200 pounds each, the peculiar pachyderms looked like refugees from a demented decorator's safari. The partners couldn't resist. "The chairs reminded us of one of our favorite places, the Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie in Paris," Mallea recalls. The designers sent their nonwhite white elephants to Sotheby's Restoration for a serious clean and polish before installing them in Maloney's Upper West Side apartment. The mammoth duo now hold court at both ends of a Paul Frankl dining table. "Only Hermes and I can sit in them," Maloney says, "since only we know how to shimmy out of them."

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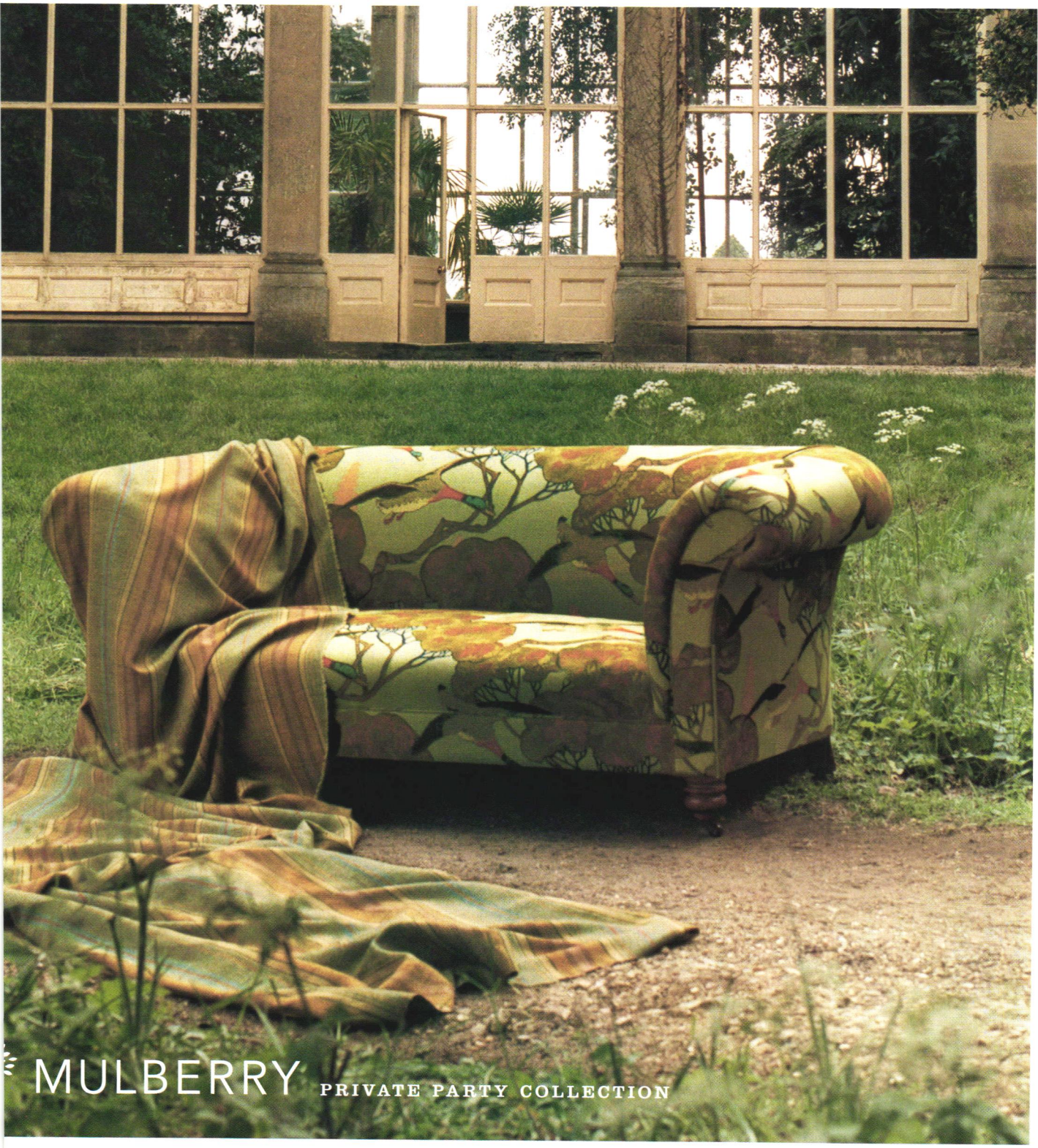

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BOOKS

by Julia Lewis

Rose in her New York studio. The Texas native made news as the designer of the Bush twins' inaugural gowns.

Fashion designer Lela Rose talks about some of the books that delight her and inspire her work

CHARLES JAMES by Richard Martin. "Charles James is one of the reasons that I wanted to go into fashion. He was a couturier with an architect's mind. His dresses were engineered and constructed much like buildings—from the inside out."

TOM FRIEDMAN exhibition catalog from the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art. "I'm so inspired by the witty, unexpected, and nutty nature of Tom Friedman's work. My production team thinks I'm crazy when I embroider a lining for a piece, but Friedman is even more mad and obsessive than I am."

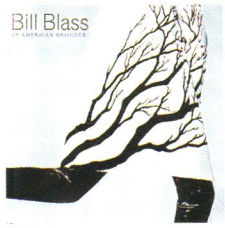
JAPONISM IN FASHION "This book is written in Japanese, but its pictures convey a history of Eastern and Western fashion inspired by traditional Japanese kimonos, textiles, and art. I love seeing how these elements have influenced figures from Madeleine Vionnet to John Galliano, as well as Japanese designers like Kenzo and Issey Miyake."

THE ART OF MANIPULATING FABRIC by Colette Wolff. "This encyclopedic book is for technophiles who love difficult details, whether they're on clothing, curtains, or upholstery. It's everything you ever wanted to know about gathering, pleating, tucking, smocking, and quilting—but were afraid to ask."

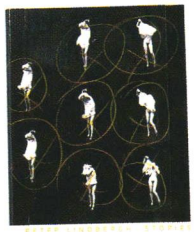
VALENTINO: 30 YEARS OF MAGIC "Valentino is the master of pure feminine glamour. This catalogue raisonné of his designs is hilarious and inspiring. His clothes are so elegant and over-the-top, you can't imagine wearing them—but you have, because your prom dress was probably a knockoff of one of his gowns!"

FASHION TODAY "A greatest-hits album of fashion history, photography, and design that is endlessly entertaining to fashion junkies like me. From Dior's revolutionary New Look to Halston's Ultrasuede era to Oliviero Toscani's politically charged Benetton ads, this behemoth survey covers it all."

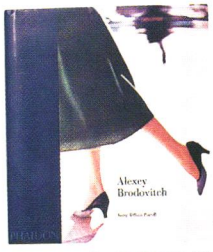
If you love fashion, you wo want to miss the best of th season's stylish new books



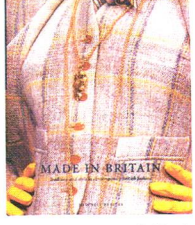
■ **BILL BLASS: AN AMERICAN DESIGNER** (Abrams, $65) Published in conjunction with a retrospective at Indiana Univers this book chronicles Blass's glorious 50-year career in fashio



■ **PETER LINDBERGH STORIES** (Arena, $75) An overview of Pe Lindbergh's work illuminates th celebrated fashion photographe cinematic approach to making marvelously atmospheric image



■ **ALEXEY BRODOVITCH** (Phaid $75) Kerry William Purcell documents the life and work of Alexey Brodovitch, the longtim art director of *Harper's Bazaar*.



■ **MADE IN BRITAIN** (Mitchell Beazley, $45) Catherine McDer delves into the history of Britis fashion, from Savile Row tailor Alexander McQueen.

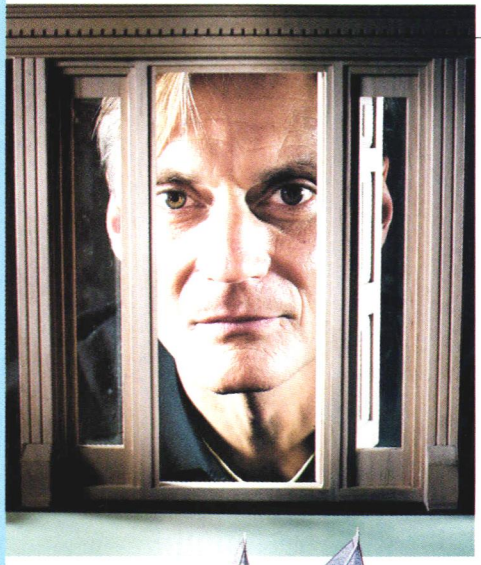
To order any of these four new bo call 800-266-5766, Dept. I820.

NEWS

buffalo gal

s bison hair the new cashmere? Designer Ruth Huffman thinks so

Turning coarse bison hair into soft, downy yarn may conjure up Rumpelstiltskin spinning straw into gold. But Ruth Huffman used no magic to create what she calls "American cashmere"—only a hunch, much trial and error, and contacts at the National Bison Association. In May she received her second patent for the process. The Dallas native began her own clothing label in 1993. The following year, a *National Geographic* article and her newly acquired knitting skills inspired her investigation into the use of bison hair. Two years later she unveiled her chocolate brown knits. Now you'll find her throws, coats, and ponchos in Japan and Australia, and on western dude ranches. Last winter this "total city girl" moved to Clearwater Ranches in Oklahoma to be with her husband, foreman Don Bell, whom she met at the 2001 National Bison meeting. Her own mill, new colors, lines of woven bison fabrics, and other organic fibers are all in the works—it's a modern-day fairy tale with a happy beginning. Throw, $920; pillow, $590. ruthhuffmandesigns.com. —BROOKE COLLIER



POP ART

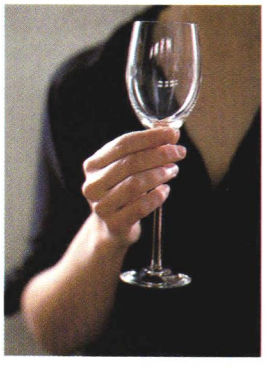
A 3-D tour of America's greatest houses

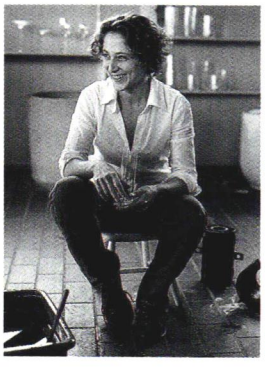
Chuck Fischer has painted scenic murals for decorators such as Albert Hadley and Bunny Williams, created fabric and wallpaper patterns for Schumacher and Brunschwig & Fils, and designed paper products for Caspari, bed linens for Martex, and china for Lenox. What possibly could be next? The New York–based artist's latest creation is *Great American Houses and Gardens* (Universe, $39.95), a clever pop-up book that will charm readers of all ages with its movable, three-dimensional illustrations. Biltmore, Monticello, and Vizcaya are among the magnificent estates that Fischer pays tribute to in his book. "I feel especially proud to be an American designer," he says. "These houses and gardens—and the people who created them—have clearly influenced my work." —JULIA LEWIS

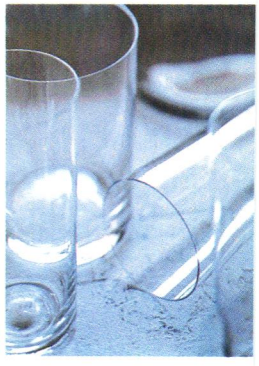
HANDLE WITH CARE

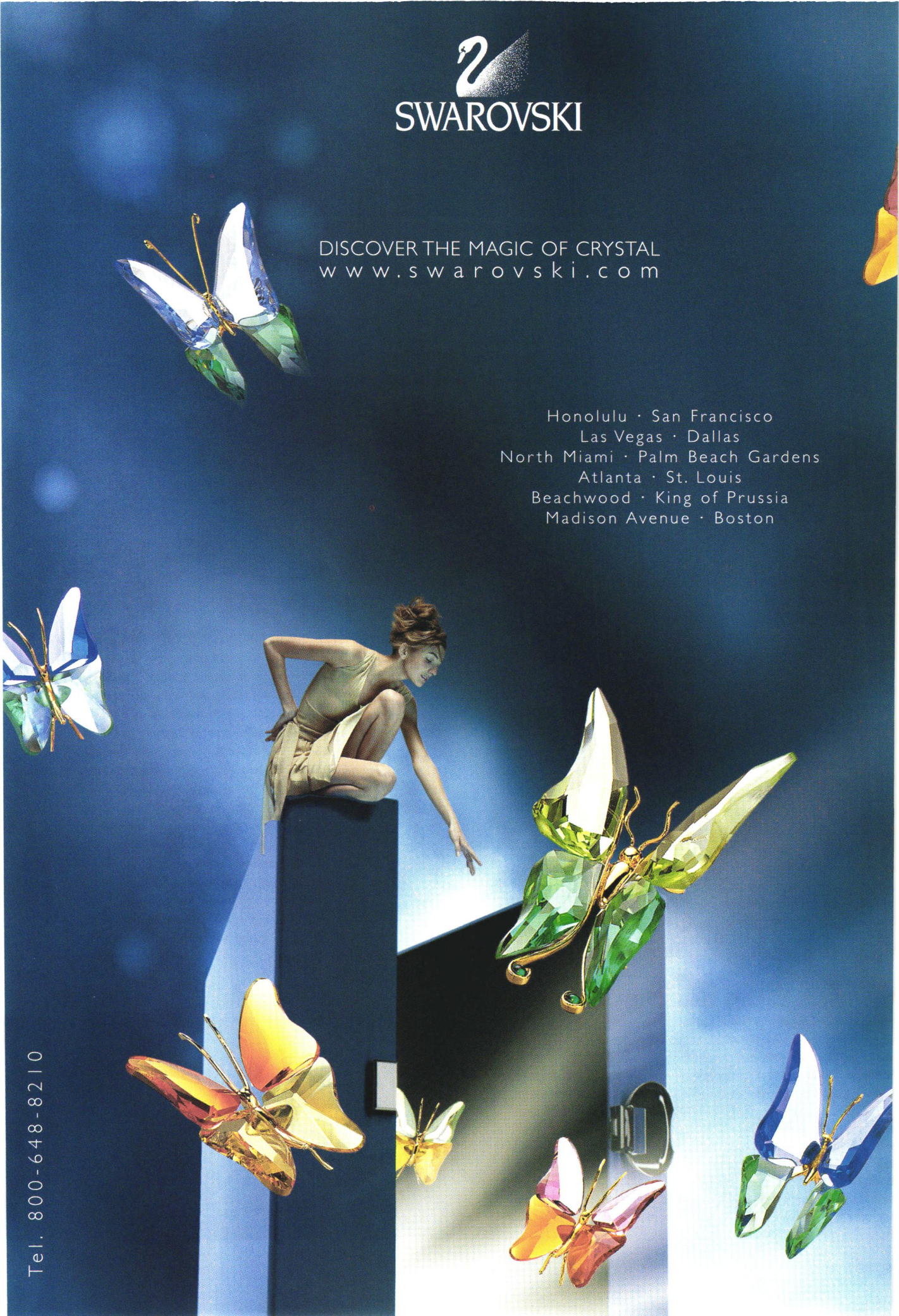
Designer-sculptor Deborah Ehrlich puts her art into her glassware

Intense fragility makes Deborah Ehrlich's glassware unique. Her precisely blown glasses form the thinnest possible barrier between lips and liquid. The glassware is simple, but the subtle shapes resonate with what Ehrlich calls a "pregnant silence." Ehrlich, who originally studied sculpture, designs in her Hudson Valley studio, then travels to Sweden for production. Holly Hunt sells Ehrlich's stemware and vases from her Chicago-based shop (312-329-5999) and says she sees a "sculptor's eye" in each piece. Ehrlich's Simple Crystal line of glassware has had a similar effect on Manhattan store owner Murray Moss. He calls her objects "behavior modifiers," because handling them demands such delicacy. "Using them elevates us and makes us less brutish," he says. "Heart pumps should be sturdy, but glasses should be delicate." Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190. —AMY CHOZICK





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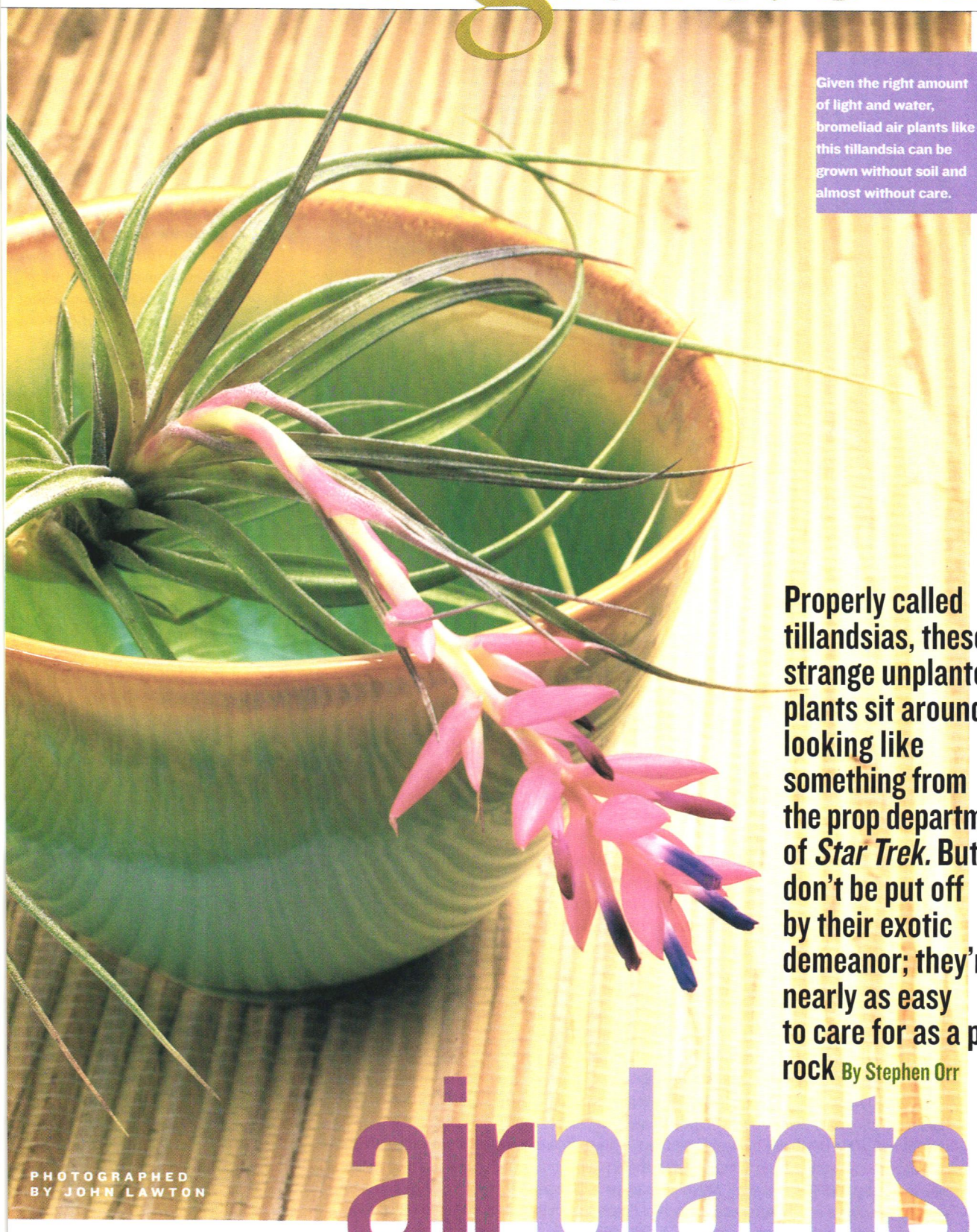


Given the right amount of light and water, bromeliad air plants like this tillandsia can be grown without soil and almost without care.

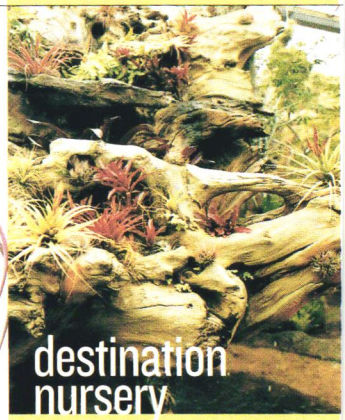
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN LAWTON

air plants

Properly called tillandsias, these strange unplanted plants sit around looking like something from the prop department of *Star Trek*. But don't be put off by their exotic demeanor; they're nearly as easy to care for as a pet rock By Stephen Orr

in the garden

airplants



destination nursery

Located unexpectedly amid the sprawl of L.A.–area strip malls, in Torrance, CA, is an unusual nursery. Rainforest Flora, which has been selling bromeliads for nearly 30 years, is most remarkable for the way co-owner Paul Isley displays his collection of subtropical rarities. In a setting that is as close to Hollywood in spirit as it is in geography, hundreds of tillandsias and other epiphytes are dramatically displayed on twisted tree trunks and affixed to cliffs of artificial stone, above. (Isley uses a special air plant glue called Tilly Tacker.) Waterfalls and pools of koi round out the tropical illusion. Rainforest Flora, Inc., 19121 Hawthorne Blvd.,Torrance, CA. 310-370-8044. rainforestflora.com.

Tillandsias are the conversation pieces of the plant world. In the wild these bromeliads are usually epiphytic (able to grow on a tree or rock, far from the soil that most plants require). But they can also live long and happy lives on your coffee table or windowsill if you follow a few guidelines. **WATERING** Most homes are too dry to suit air plants, but don't bother misting them—that doesn't provide enough moisture. Instead, dunk the plants in the sink overnight every two weeks or so, depending on the climate of your home. Gray-leaved tillandsias are more tolerant of poor water quality than other bromeliads, but if your water is extremely salty or alkaline, you might have to use distilled water. **LIGHT** Gray- and/or thick-leaved tillandsias need more light than green types, but harsh sun can scald both varieties' leaves. Bright but indirect light is best during the height of summer, while the direct but weakened rays of the sun are fine in winter. Plants can be displayed in low-light settings for as long as a month without harm if they are returned to the light thereafter. **FEEDING** Fertilizer isn't necessary for a tillandsia's survival, but if you want to grow bigger plants and flowers, add a pinch of Epiphyte's Delight fertilizer to the water once a month. Bird Rock Tropicals, Carlsbad, CA. 760-438-9393. birdrocktropicals.com.

A tray, above, is the only container you'll need for tillandsias. You'll need to remove them every two weeks or so for watering. Some species will form spiky, ball-shaped colonies of offshoots if they are suspended with string, right.

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one gardener's almanac

Vigorous and beautiful, fresh shoots of corn rival the purely ornamental rose garden. The colorful cobs can be eaten or used as decoration throughout the winter.

THE GOOD CORN Native varieties of the uniquely American grain are healthy, environmentally sound, and beautiful in the garden

by Tom Christopher

CAN YOU IMPEACH a flower? I stand amid rustling stalks, watching the newly risen sun play on the nodding corn tassels—golden, green, or red-flecked, even wine-dark purple. And I know that, if there were justice, this, and not that arriviste the rose, would be America's national flower.

Don't get me wrong: I love roses. I don't mind that the ones we grow arrived from Europe a scant few centuries ago. But while I can admire the perfection of a rosebud, it's the unstudied, very American grace of the corn in this southern Arizona field that makes me want to snap to attention and salute.

That, as an American, I should feel an affinity for corn is only natural, for humanity and this grain coevolved on the North American continent. The importance of corn to the native peoples is well known; what I hadn't realized is that for 4,000 years or more, corn has been equally dependent on us. Colin Khoury is a crop curator at Native Seeds/Search and one of the caretakers of the field in which I stand; he explains with a touch of wonder that no direct wild parent of corn has ever been identified, and that the plant as we know it cannot survive without human care. Our relationship, then, isn't one of exploitation but of symbiosis.

It is also, for me, an aesthetic partnership, as corn has become one of my favorite decorative plants. Indeed, I would rate it as the finest of ornamental grasses. To begin with, corn is phenomenally adaptable. Though archaeologists insist that it must be native to Mexico, it flourishes all across North America, from the Mexican to the Canadian border and beyond, from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Throughout this range, it grows with gratifying exuberance. Even in my chilly corner of the continent, if planted in mid-spring, corn will be, local wisdom insists, "knee-high by the Fourth of July." Not simply vigorous, corn is also beautiful. I intersperse "hills" of it, small clusters of corn planted in a circle, Indian style, among my other flowers, and at every season the corn is a star. The freshness of the green shoots is an epitome of spring; in summer, the dangling tresses of corn tassels provide a soft foil to other, more obvious blossoms. In fall, the dried cornstalks inject a note of rural nostalgia into

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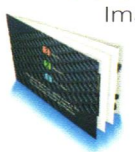

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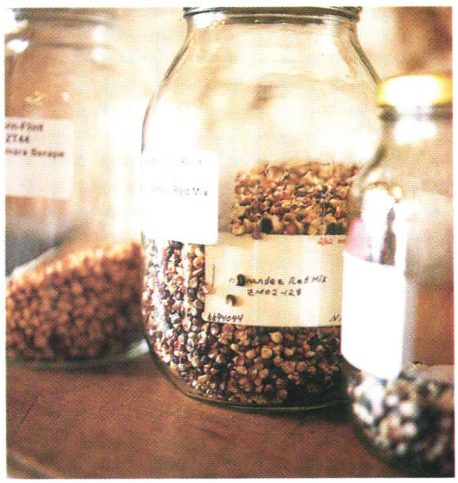
THE MALL AT SHORT HILLS
SHORT HILLS, NJ

my small urban yard, and the jeweled cobs, either on the stalk or arranged in bunches indoors for enjoyment through the winter, must be the garden's most brilliant fruits.

I've grown a number of different corns, my favorites being 'Strawberry Popcorn,' a compact type that bears small, scarlet, berry-shaped ears two inches long, and 'Red Stalker,' a tall, red-and-purple-stalked corn with larger, multihued ears. Yet the selection of corns I've found in mass-market seed catalogs has been disappointingly small. Typically, those sources list only modern hybrids, characterless corns bred as factories for sugar and starch. The search for something better is what brought me to Arizona and Native Seeds/Search.

Founded in 1983, this Tucson-based nonprofit has pursued a double mission. It began by collecting and preserving seeds of the crop varieties perfected by the tribal peoples and early settlers of the Southwest. After rescuing this living heritage from imminent extinction, NS/S sought to restore it to its rightful place in the local agriculture. By planting out samples from its seed bank, first in supporters' gardens and more recently at its 60-acre farm in the mountains just north of the Mexican border, NS/S increased its stocks so they could be redistributed to local gardeners. Currently, NS/S distributes more than 30,000 seed packets a year, some 5,000 of them (free of charge) to tribal peoples of Arizona, New Mexico, and northern Mexico.



Corn, top, plays a central role in the spiritual life of many southwestern tribes. Native Seeds/Search collects seeds, above, to restore corn to its rightful place in local agriculture.

Statistics underline the importance of corn in the regional heritage. NS/S has included 99 different plant species in its collection of 2,000 "accessions"—samples of seed collected at distinct times and places. Of these, almost 600 are corns. As Suzanne Nelson, director of conservation for NS/S, explains, this extraordinary diversity reflects, in part, a pragmatic adjustment to differing microclimates within the Southwest. While touring the NS/S cornfield, for example, I notice that most of the Hopi corns are notably compact. 'Hopi Blue,' for example, a blue-kerneled corn of the Hopi people, stands just three and a half feet high, a foot and a half shorter than the nearby 'Navaho Blue.' On the windy mesas of a Hopi farm, keeping your head down is a key to survival.

In large part, however, the differences between one corn and another have been a matter of preference. Corn played a central role in the spiritual life of most southwestern tribes, and ceremonial uses dictated the character of not only the cobs and seeds but even the pollen. From this religious connection sprang another, more personal one. Native Americans commonly referred to corn as a mother; the Hopi traditionally cradled each newborn child for 20 days with a perfect ear, a personal "corn mother."

In the fields, this relationship reversed. Farmers cared for the corn as they would for a child, singing to it as a mother does to her baby. Lifelong bonds developed. Families maintained their own stock of seed, saving some from each year's harvest to sow the next. So the different strains gradually became an expression o not only what yielded wel locally, but also what a family or community found desirable.

Myself, I fell in love with 'Flor del Rio,' a New Mexico variety fully eight feet tall with purple stalk and long purple tassels, though I also admire the extra-long, red-flecked tassels of 'Acom Red,' a corn of the Acoma Pueblo, th thousand-year-old New Mexico communit that is the oldest continually inhabited urba space in this hemisphere. For a dramatic con trast, I would juxtapose the short, fine-texture 'Jicarilla Concho' of the Apache people with th massive bulk of the '60-Day' corn of th Tohono O'odham people.

This last variety, incidentally, gives the lie t the current criticism of corn as an enviror mentally costly crop. Recently, the popular pres have turned on corn because of its need fo extravagant amounts of irrigation, fertilizer and pesticides. Perhaps so, as grown by moder agribusinesses. Yet what I find when the NS/ staff sends me to the Tohono O'odham natio 70 miles to the south and west, is entirely di ferent. Here, a community self-help grou Tohono O'odham Community Action, is hel ing tribal members revive traditional Ak-Chi farming. TOCA codirector Tristan Reader tak me down to the four-acre field that a young ma named Noland Johnson has recently cleared mesquite. Set at the outflow *(Cont. on page 19*

A CORN SAMPLER

'RED STALKER' **Red and purple stalks to a height of 8 feet or more; multicolor ears; a striking grass for bed or border. Seed available from the Cook's Garden, P.O. Box 535, Londonderry, VT 05148. 800-457-9703.**

'STRAWBERRY POPCORN' **Compact stalks to 5 feet tall bear 2-inch-long ears shaped and colored like strawberries. Seed available from the Cook's Garden.**

'HOPI BLUE' **Elegant dark blue ears on 3½-foot plants. And:**

'NAVAJO ROBIN'S EGG' **Seeds available from Native Seed/Search, 526 N. Fourth Ave., Tucson, AZ 85705-8450. nativeseeds.org.**

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in the garden

need help?

Fall solutions for spring bulbs, mulch, and roses

by Marilyn Young

Salvia guaranitica

Q Last year I bought several salvias that kept the garden alive and blooming in the late summer, but I understand they are tender. Can I prolong their time in the garden?

A Keep a supply of cotton sheets or similar fabric on hand. When frost is predicted, spread the cloth completely over the plants at night. It always makes me think of Mardi Gras or Halloween and ghosts in the garden, but it works. You can find information on wonderful varietals in *A Book of Salvias: Sages for Every Garden* by Betsy Clebsch.

Q I see fall roses blooming in some gardens, but by November mine are just lacy skeletons, thanks to Japanese beetles. I don't want to spray. Is there anything I can do?

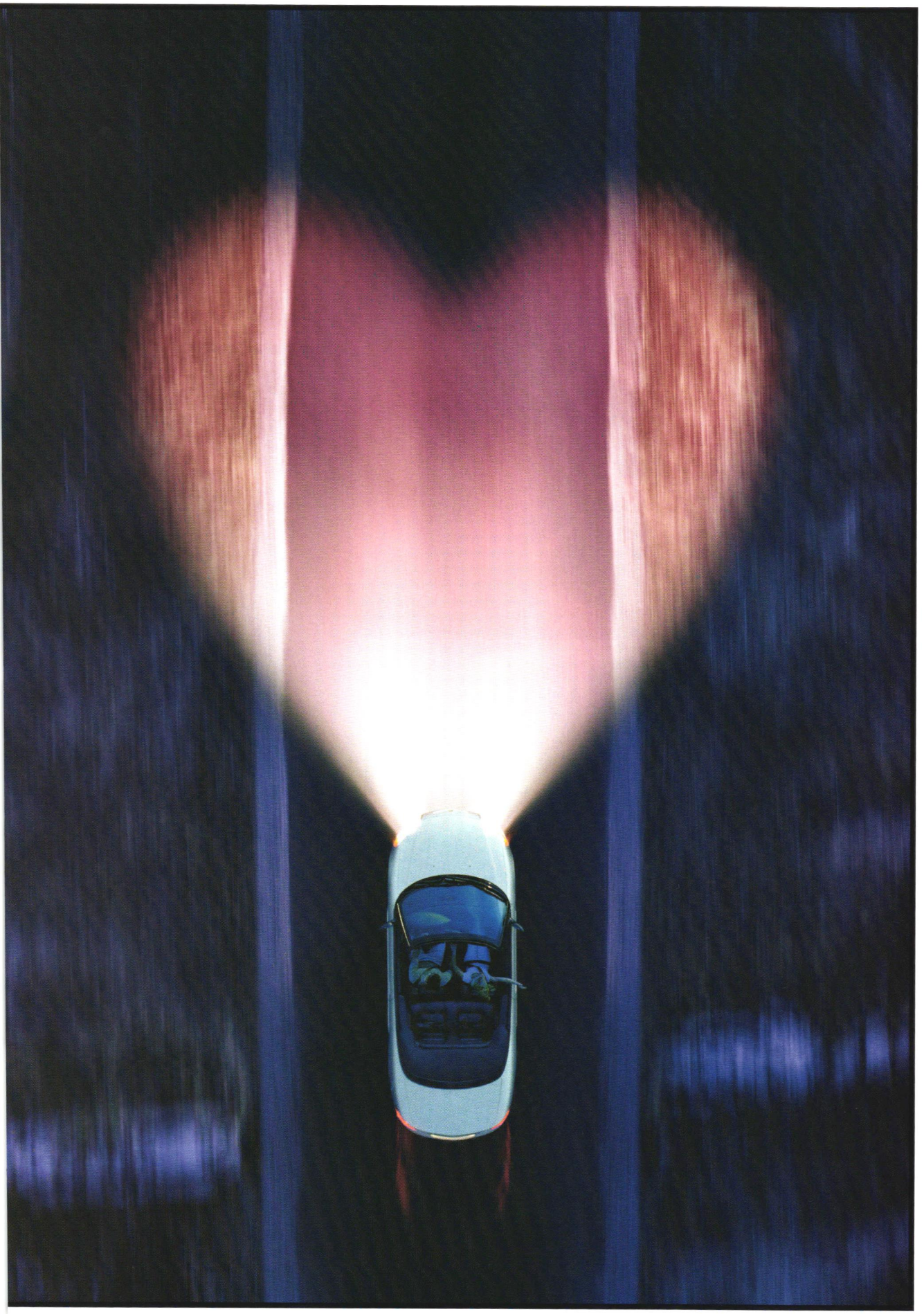
A Handpicking keeps the level of beetles down, and is best done early in the morning. Place a jar or bucket of soapy water under a leaf or flower supporting a clump of the sleeping beetles. Shake the rose gently, and the beetles should slide right into the water instead of flying away. Liz Druitt, in *The Organic Rose Garden*, recommends companion-planting roses with catnip, garlic, or geraniums to help keep beetles at bay.

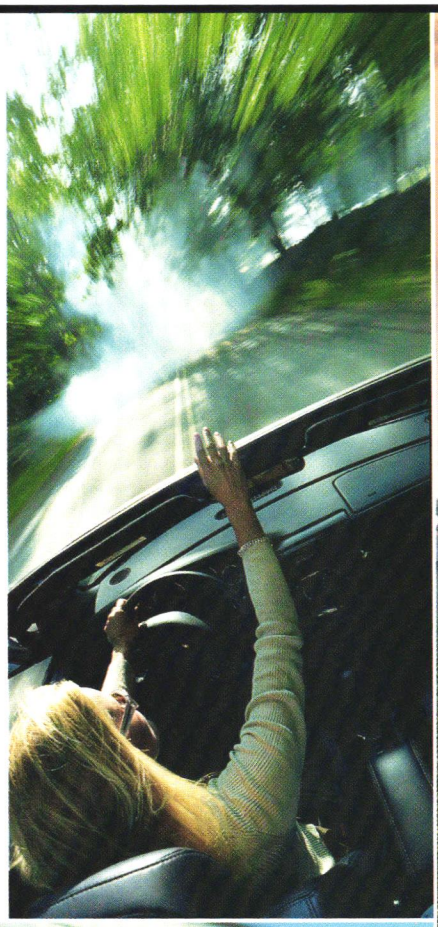
Q I have heard that fall leaves make a good winter mulch but also that they should be cleared away. I'm confused. What should I do?

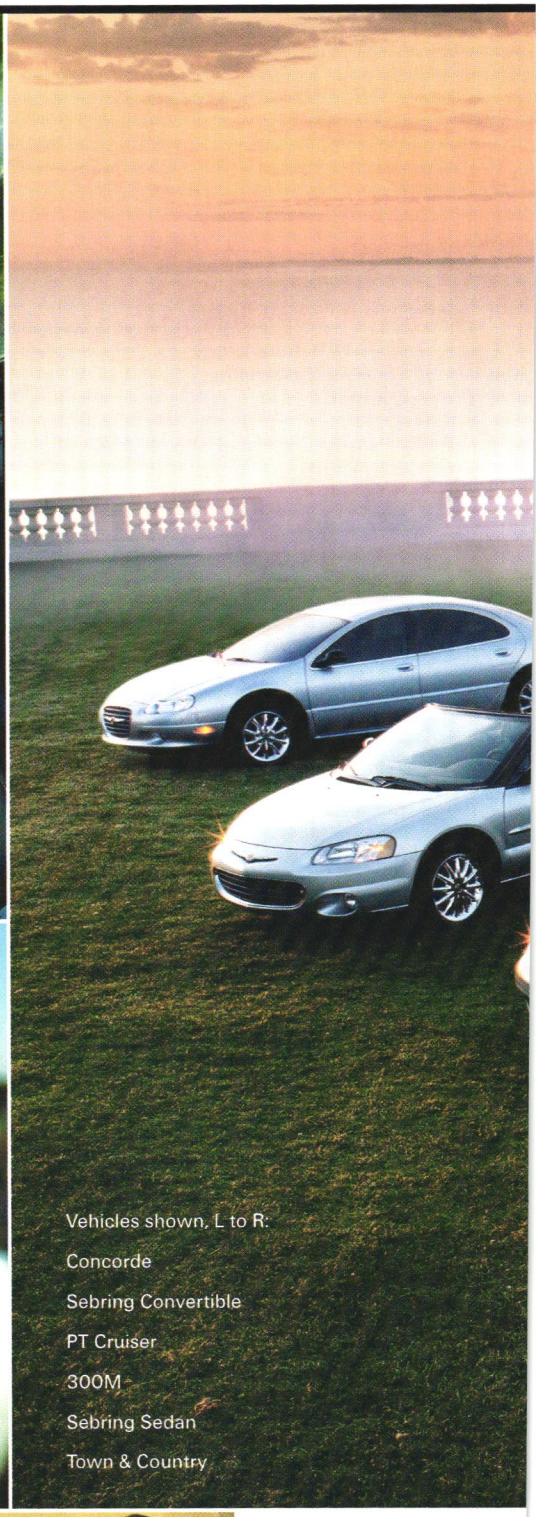
A Plants that enjoy well-drained areas in full su like to have clear, dry beds for winter. Remov any leaves that collect among sun-loving plant like bearded irises, baptisias, pinks, and herbs to allo for good drainage all winter. Oak leaves can be left a mulch in shady woodland areas, as nature intended. you have the time to help nature along, make a mulc by running a lawn mower over leaf piles, then sprea this mix 3 to 4 inches deep in the shade garden.

Q My local nursery is having a fall sale. Is November too late for planting?

A Fall is an excellent time to plant trees, shrub and perennials, and also a good time to relocat plants in most areas. Early on a rainy morning the perfect time to move sad-looking plants to happi places and to move plants that have outgrown their sit to better ones. Add rock phosphate (without nitroge and water-holding gel granules to the planting ho to help re-establish trees and shrubs, and then wat well. Or try the new Roots Transplant 1-Step, avai able at gardenroots.com. Until the ground freezes, ke on watering if there is no rain.







Vehicles shown, L to R:

Concorde

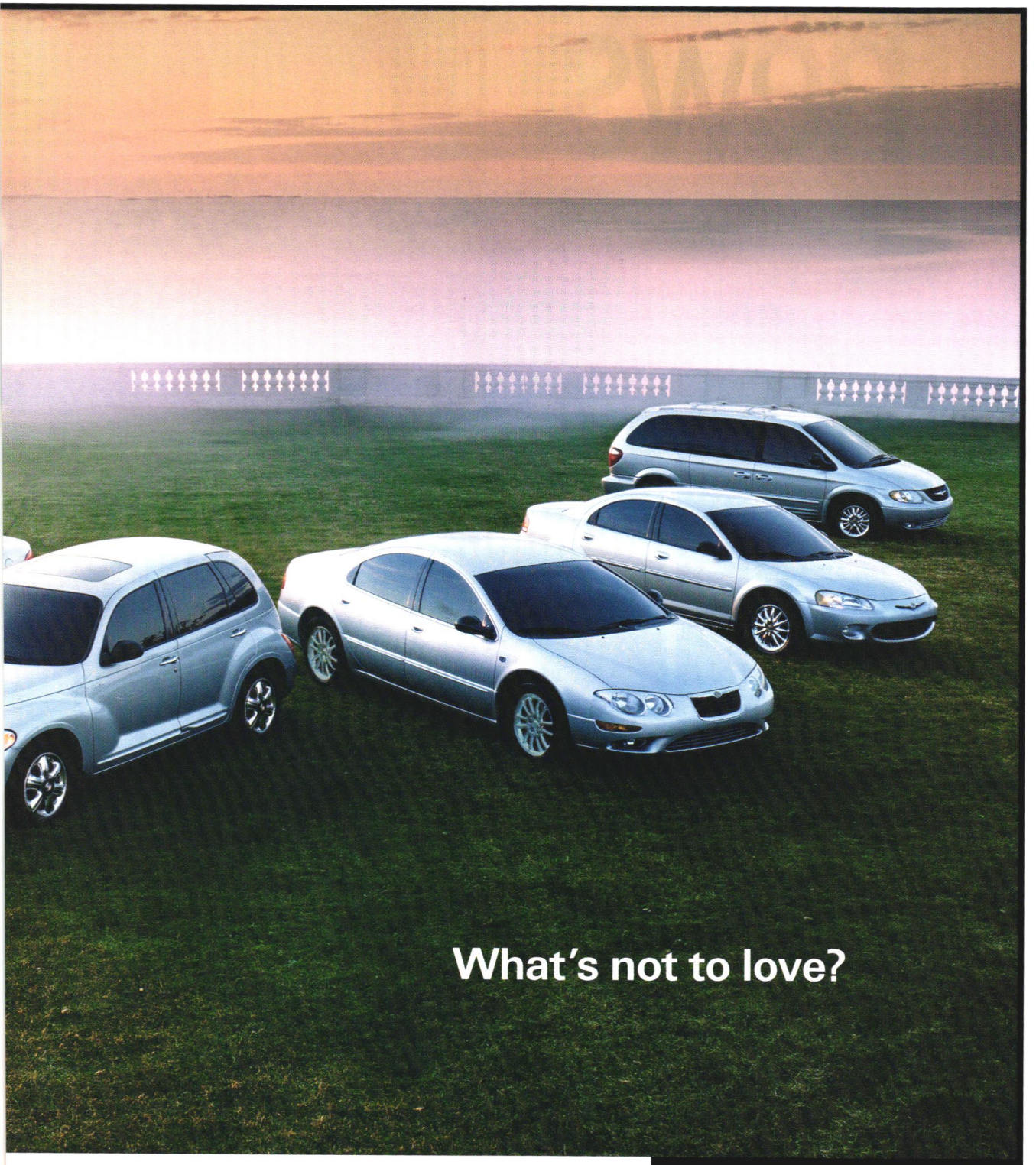
Sebring Convertible

PT Cruiser

300M

Sebring Sedan

Town & Country



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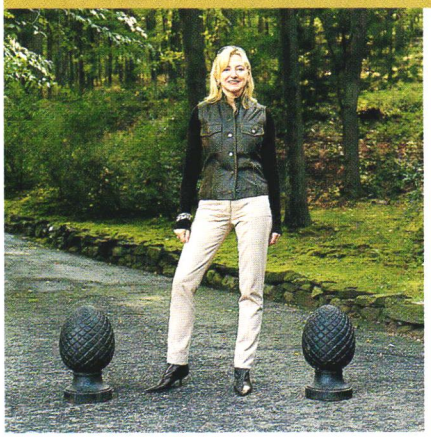
Drive = Love

news

LIGHT BULBS

Tulips, usually valued for their bright hues, make an elegant addition to the garden when planted in masses of white. Several years ago White Flower Farm, the 52-year-old nursery, experimented with masses of white tulip bulbs at its Litchfield, CT, garden and loved the result. It now sells a String of Pearls collection that includes ten bulbs each of *Tulipa* 'Calgary,' 'Maureen,' 'Mount Tacoma,' 'Spring Green,' and 'White Triumphator,' and covers 12 square feet. $28. whiteflowerfarm.com.



plant-à-porter

A new garden antiques shop reflects the fashion savvy of its stylish owner

Like a classic Chanel suit, Fleur, a new garden antiques shop in Mount Kisco, NY, boasts an elegant aesthetic. Barbara Cirkva, the executive vice president of Chanel and an avid gardener, opened Fleur with her husband in April and credits the store's success to her background in fashion. "Karl Lagerfeld taught me always to deconstruct things visually," Cirkva says. "Now I get to apply that to a different medium." Fleur specializes in French antique objects, from the rustic to the classic, most of which can be used either inside or out. The store, like a fashionista's closet, undergoes a huge transformation each season. For autumn Cirkva has brought in a variety of faux *bois* planters, acorn finials, standing steel planters, and antler chandeliers. 866-397-3300.

BY AMY CHOZICK

SIGN LANGUAGE

Bring some fantasy to your garden with British designer Paul Hervey's lollipop-shaped signs (about $18 each, plus shipping). The decorative "grow" and "dig" of painted iroko and galvanized steel are meant to add some pizzazz to a lawn or garden. Hervey studied design and retail display in London before launching his Web site/catalog business, which specializes in contemporary and urban garden accessories. phdp.co.uk.

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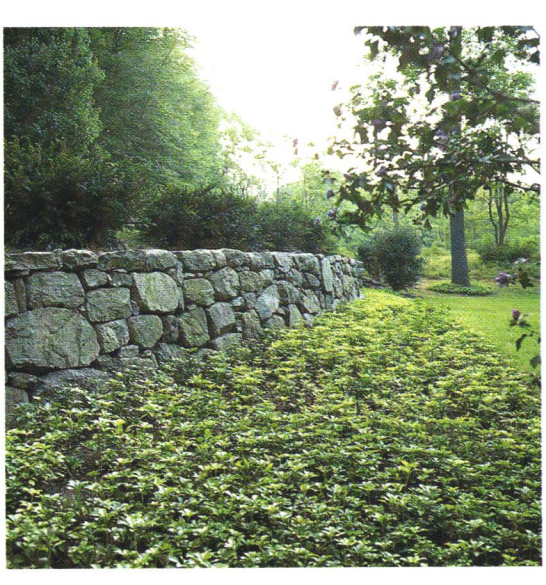
on reflection

AN UNEXPECTED LEGACY Bill Blass had a gift for planning a garden—open, simple, and very green. Somewhat to her surprise, the author boldly followed his lesson by Cathy Horyn

Pachysandra spills over a drystone wall in Bill Blass's Connecticut garden, above. ■ Inspired by Blass, Horyn extended her own pachysandra beds and planted yews along a stone retaining wall, right. ■ The designer with his faithful friend Barnaby and a collection of architectural fragments from London's Haymarket theater, upper right.



HE WOULD TALK, and I would listen. That was our routine, bolstered by strong black coffee and the occasional wallop of his insults. You had to be sharp for Bill Blass.

"You might do something with your hair," he once suggested.

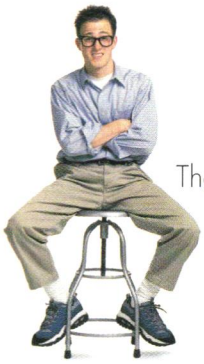
"Like what?" I said.

"Well, you might consider combing it, for a start."

Blass loved to charm his ladies, although I knew then that our conversations, begun in the late summer of 2000 and woven into his memoir, *Bare Blass,* offered me, at least briefly, a more privileged position in his life. I never doubted for a moment that if he could peel away the layers, going back to his Indiana childhood and the war, people would be fascinated by the incredible life he had led.

I started going up to his stone house in Connecticut on weekends. I had been there before and could see how the place, a former tavern built in George Washington's day and set amid lawns and handsome maples, had first caught Blass's eye when he saw it on an afternoon in 1976 with a friend, decorator Billy Baldwin. It had a crisp, American beauty—and not an ounce of pretension. But when you go back to a place again and again, sit in the same room, look out the same windows—through seven consecutive seasons—you begin to see things more clearly. From the start of

PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD FELBER ■ PRODUCED BY DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN



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I had a tremendous seat in a private world, and this vantage was changing my ideas about landscaping

our collaboration, we worked in the living room, the two of us facing each other, with books and magazines stacked about. I could see out the window, to the back lawn, as squirrels pitched themselves on a bird feeder from a nearby rhododendron bush. (Blass, by the way, always took the squirrels' side in that domestic war.) I realized that I had a tremendous seat in a private world, and that this vantage was changing my own ideas about landscaping.

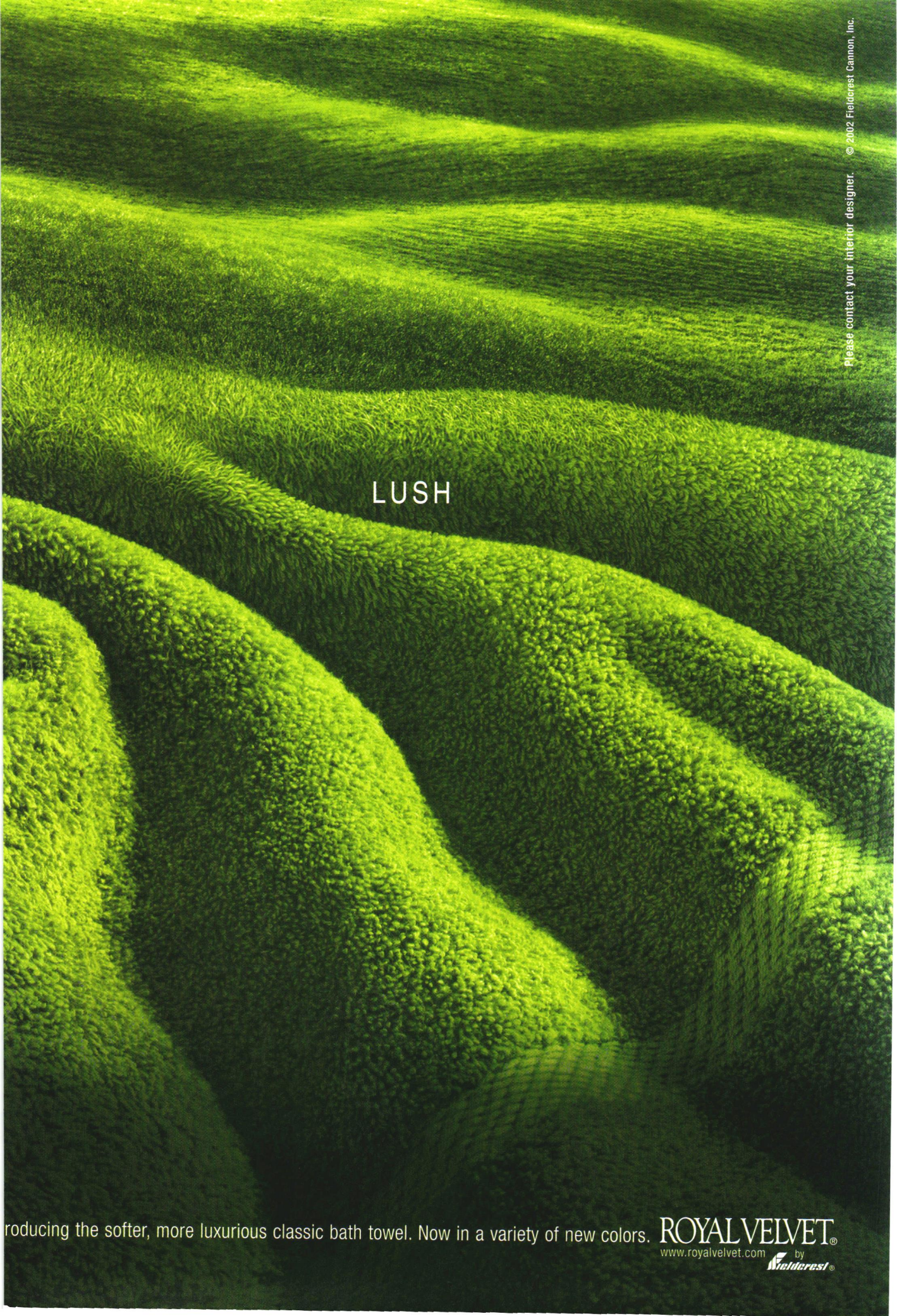
Among decorators, Blass's love of big, quirky objects displayed against an austere backdrop of white walls, dark floors, and a minimum of well-selected pictures and architectural drawings has exerted a potent influence. As designer

In the spirit of Blass, Horyn created a sloping lawn, above. Blass's property conveys a sense of order, below.

Stephen Sills said in the course of contributing his thoughts to the memoir, "Bill invented this remarkable style of a very plain background with all these bold objects and furniture. That idea set a whole new standard for decoration. But for me, there, every weekend, in a house that always seemed serene, it was the view out the window that got me. This was the strange unexpected bonus of a collaboration that was itself blessed with luck.

I had recently completed construction of a Greek Revival house in a Hudson River town. Manhattan architect David Bers and I sited the house to take advantage of surrounding conservation land, including a long meadow. But although I had installed stone walls at the front and back of the property and had put in a modest lawn with a few meek (it now seems to me) patches of pachysandra and boxwood, I hadn't faced the landscaping matter. Actually, what I faced, as I looked out from my writing desk, was a sunbaked Gibraltar of dirt and weeds that sloped down to a vernal pond, now murky and clogged with fallen timber. As Blass would say, with a magnificent eye roll, "Ugh."

Blass himself was not a fanatical gardener but, as with everything else he surveyed, the Connecticut property conveyed a sense of order and unfussy elegance. The two of us would often take walks around the property, sometimes accompanied by our dogs, and one of the first things I focused on was the way he used pachysandra in relief against low stone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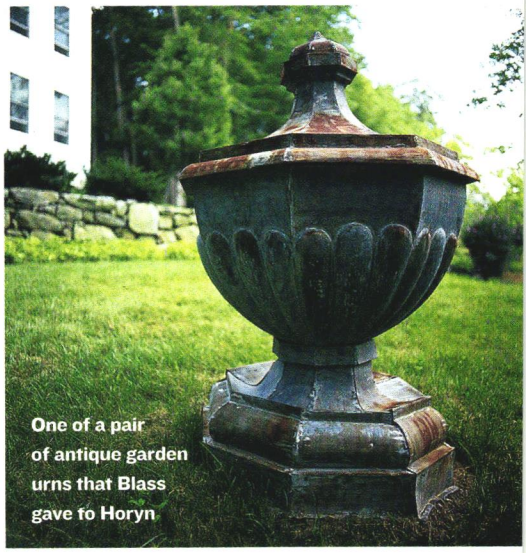
walls. His beds were never dinky—what, in Blass's world, ever was? They were bold, lavish strokes of green, often ten feet wide, and occasionally spiked with a quiver of ostrich ferns. At home, I began extending my pachysandra beds farther from the stone walls. In doing so, I was betraying another Blass ideal: a landscape based on intense layering of green-on-green plantings, rather than on colorful perennials. Though Blass liked flowers in the house, and favored masses of one kind—black tulips, say, or pale pink sweet peas—he loathed too much color in the garden, and would mow down his daffodils at the first peek of spring. This seems, I suppose, a rather extreme form of editing, but as his eye grew more severe with age and experience, his pared-down surroundings acquired more visual impact. In his garden, he limited color to a stand of lilacs in the front yard and, behind the house, a sweep of flowering trees.



One of a pair of antique garden urns that Blass gave to Horyn

Blass was not a fanatical gardener, but the Connecticut property conveyed a sense of order and unfussy elegance

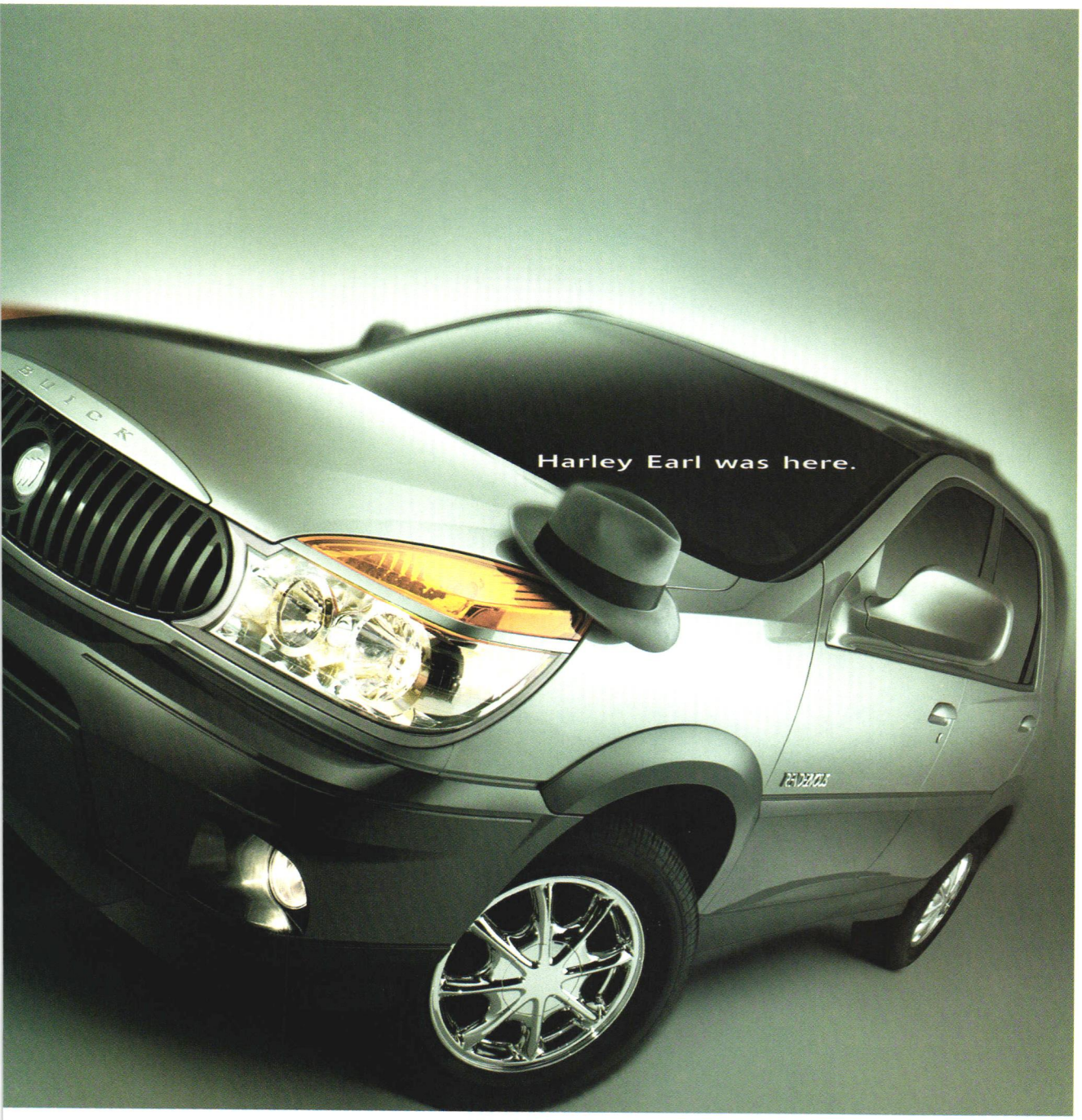
I think his backyard, and the mossy paths that led through the woods beyond, where he had placed sculpture, gave Blass the most pleasure. He loved looking out on the big open lawn, and I am reminded that just as his interiors were constantly changing, so too did this space. At the beginning of his Connecticut life, when the living room was conspicuously cozier, with its chintz-covered sofas, he had an enclosed cutting garden in the middle of the lawn. After he got rid of the garden, he thought about planting wild grasses, but nixed the whole idea and opened things up. That, in a sense, was what Blass was always striving for.

Last September, as we got deeper into the book project, I undertook the boldest move of my own landscaping effort: I knocked down Gibraltar. With Blass's open lawn in mind, I lowered the elevation and established a second, broader lawn that rolled gently down to the now cleaned-up pond. Blass gave me a pair of nineteenth-century zinc garden urns that had once stood sentry on stone piers below his pool area, and I placed them randomly on the new lawn.

Blass had been keen for me to meet Sills and his partner, James Huniford, whose country house he had admired and I soon found in Ford, as everybody calls him, a fearless garden accomplice. He made several suggestions that brought a Blassian order to my landscaping—among them, a bolder realignment of the pachysandra beds and the addition of a pair of maples. And with the help of George Bridge, a plantsman from Maryland, we put in more boxwood as well as two sets of lavender roses of Sharon at the ends of the front wall. It was Ford who dreamed up the Donald Judd gesture of placing a dozen concrete pavers on a grassy woodland path. I got them from Home Depot.

Don't imagine for a second that I am not grateful for those seven seasons in Connecticut with Bill Blass, who died this past June shortly after completing his memoirs. I have him to thank for many things, but most durably for the view from my window.

Cathy Horyn is the fashion critic at The New York Times.



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THE FASHION LIST

Haute couture comes home, with fashion designer rugs, lamps, plates, games, and chairs

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2 BURBERRY

1 Letting a smile be your umbrella is a noble sentiment. With Salvatore Ferragamo's silk bumbershoot, $185, you can beam and stay dry. 800-628-8916.

2 Train for a marathon and still spend time with your little one. Burberry's Baby Jogger in Nova check, $1,995. In NYC, 212-246-2570, for list of stores.

3 ROBERTO CAVALLI

3 Slink out of that nightie and slide under a Dark Lady printed silk quilt, $2,100 for queen size, from the Roberto Cavalli Casa collection. Call 800-483-7722 for stores.

4 PRADA

4 The fashion game just got a little more complex. Don't get rooked. Prada's stainless-steel chess set, $3,396. 888-977-1900. ▷

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PRODUCED BY MELISSA FELDMAN

THE FASHION LIST

5 VERSACE

5

Drink to the world in rose-colored glasses. Or cobalt blue, amber, or turquoise. Medusa Lumiere Color Longdrink crystal glasses by Versace for Rosenthal, $98 each. Eight sides for easy gripping. 800-804-8070.

6 REBECCA MOSES

6

A tisket, a tasket, a desk's worth in a basket. Silver fountain pen, $420, magnifyin glass, $384, horn paper knife, $108, and hand-worke stationery, $40 to $80, in wicker and leather "runaround" basket lined in linen, available in yellow and ten other colors, $774. Designed by Rebecca Moses for Pineider. All items available through Bergdorf Goodman. 800-967-3788.

7 MISSONI

7

You've loved wearing these *bellísimo* stripes. Now you can dry off with them and sleep under them, too. Missoni cotton towel, $45, atop a silk bedspread, $600. In NYC, 212-517-9339.

8 VERSACE

8

You thought paisley was Scottish? Actually, the pattern is Indian, and suddenly so very Italian. Star paisley print leather Carioca chair, $5,280, from the Versace Home Collection 888-383-7223.

9 CHRISTIAN LACROIX

9

Give your dinner parties a couturier's touch. The Mythologies Collection by Christian Lacroix comprises six dessert plates, each in a different color, wit an individual decorative mo $110 for a set of two. Throug Vivre. 800-411-6515. ▷

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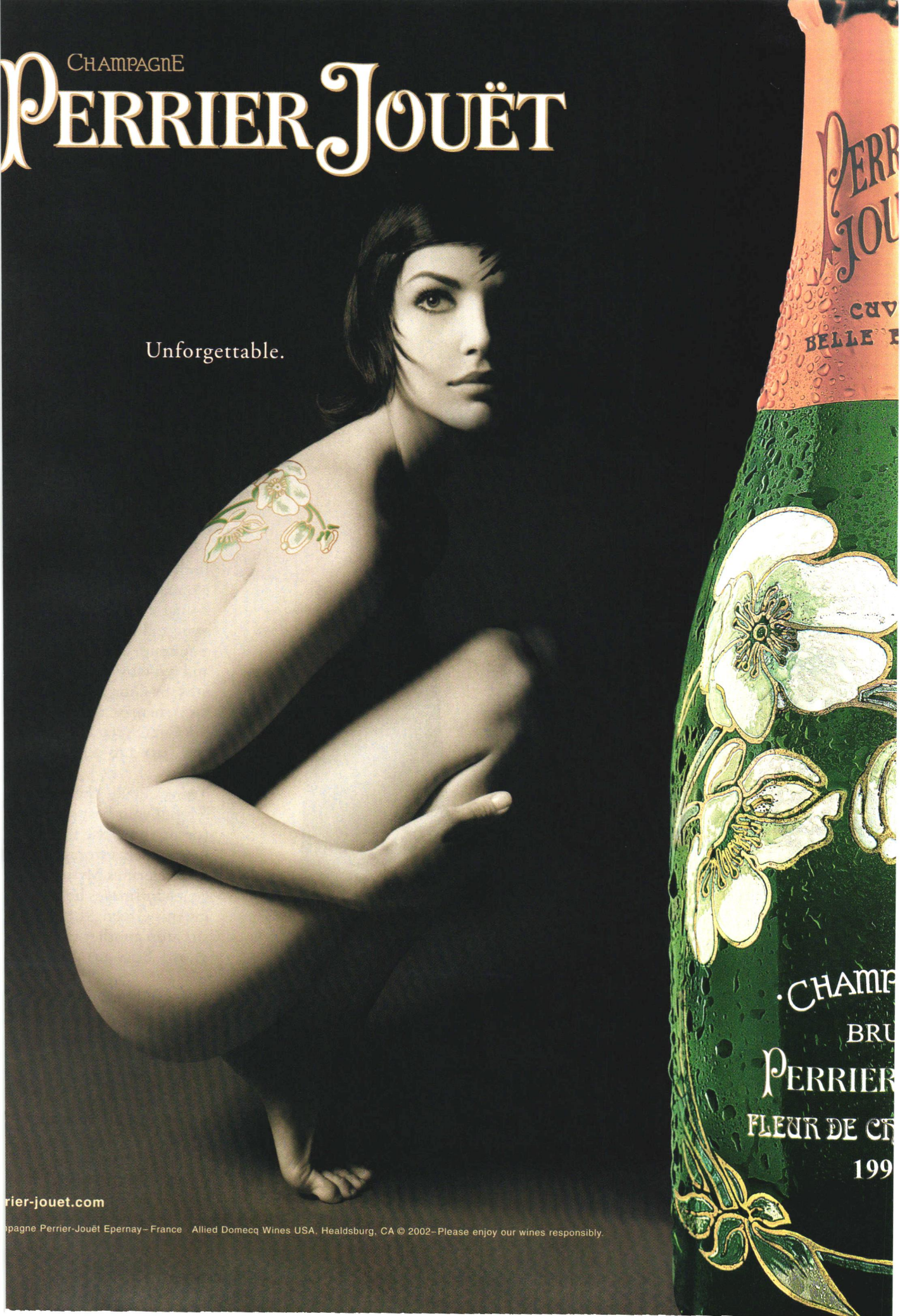

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THE FASHION LIST

10

If you're feeling a bit flighty, or even a little birdbrained, and need to stow things away hurriedly but handsomely, here's the thing for you. Florence storage ottoman in red ostrich, $14,746, from Ralph Lauren Home. 888-475-7674.

11

O! The House of Dior comes to your house in the form of a Splash porcelain dessert plate, right, $125 for a set of two, and a Cosmic porcelain salad/dessert plate, left, $55, both from Dior Collection Maison. 800-929-3467.

12

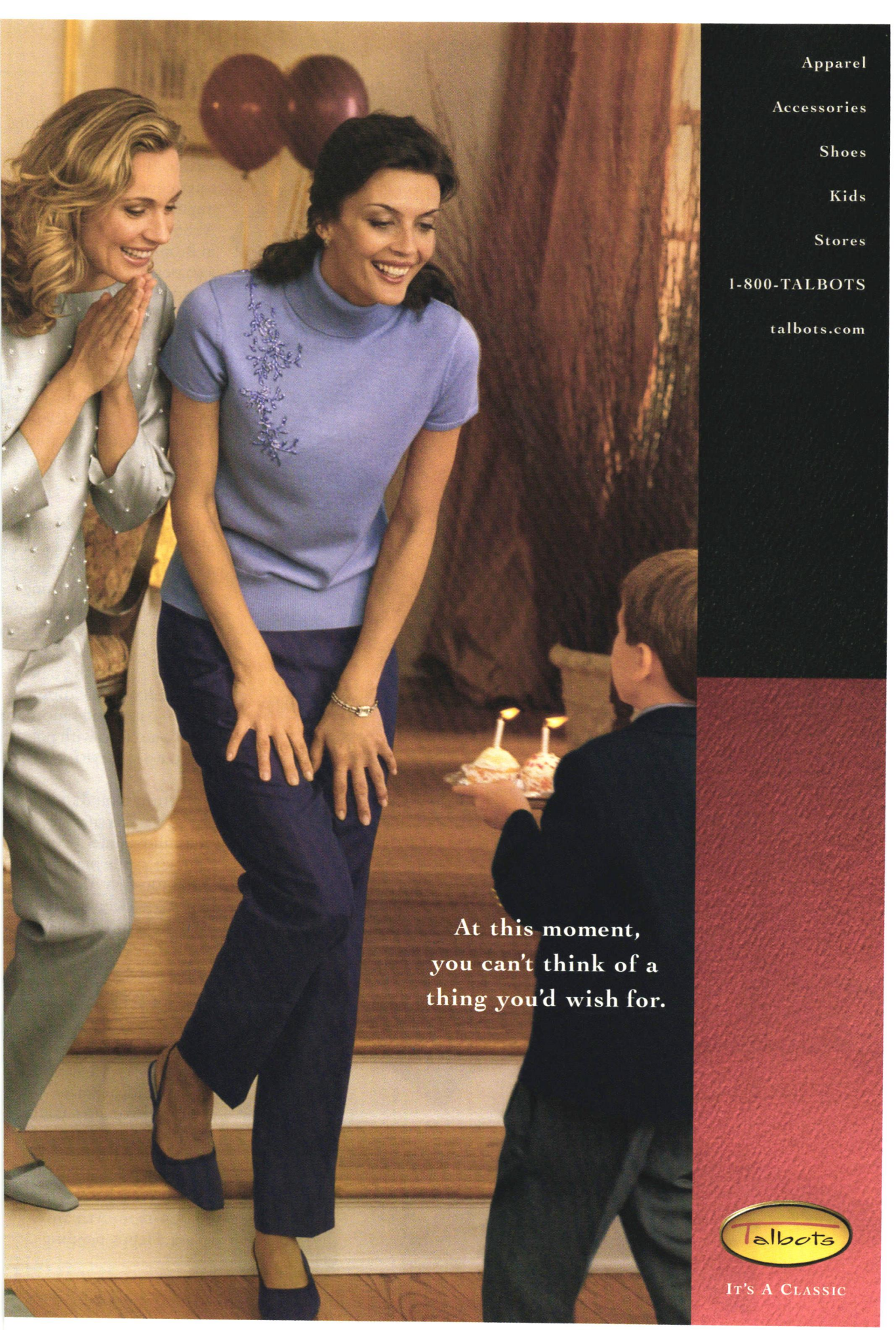
In the black? In the red? No matter. This lamp is unaffected by market swings. Burnished aluminum base, $425, and red fabric shade, $125, by Giorgio Armani for Armani Casa. In NYC, 212-334-1271; in L.A., 310-248-2440.

13

Think outside the box, but put your best plans (or anything else that merits such a storage space) in an Hermès Mysore goatskin Images box. One in Anis Green, $1,375, sits atop another in Brick, $1,950. 800-441-4488.

14

Lulu Guinness, the princess of purses, has been working on a new and different canvas. She designed this 8-by-6-foot hand-spun Tibetan wool rug, Canvas Rose, $3,240, for The Rug Company. In NYC, 212-274-0444. ▷



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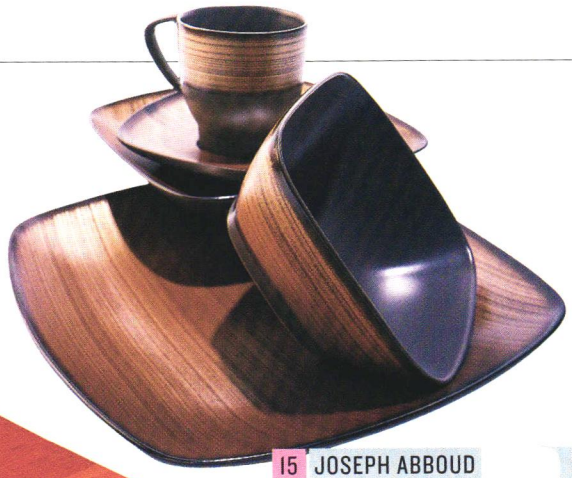


15 JOSEPH ABBOUD

15 Winter is fast approaching, and it's time to give some serious thought to good, square meals. They'd look mighty tempting on Joseph Abboud's stoneware dishes, in Bronze and Charcoal, abou $40 per five-piece place setting. 800-999-0600.

16 CALVIN KLEIN

16 The colors may say Tuscany, but they look right at home in America. Sienna Bands wool rug, 4 by 6 feet, $450, from Calvin Klein Home. For store locations, 800-294-7978. To order, 877-256-7373.

17 JASPER CONRAN

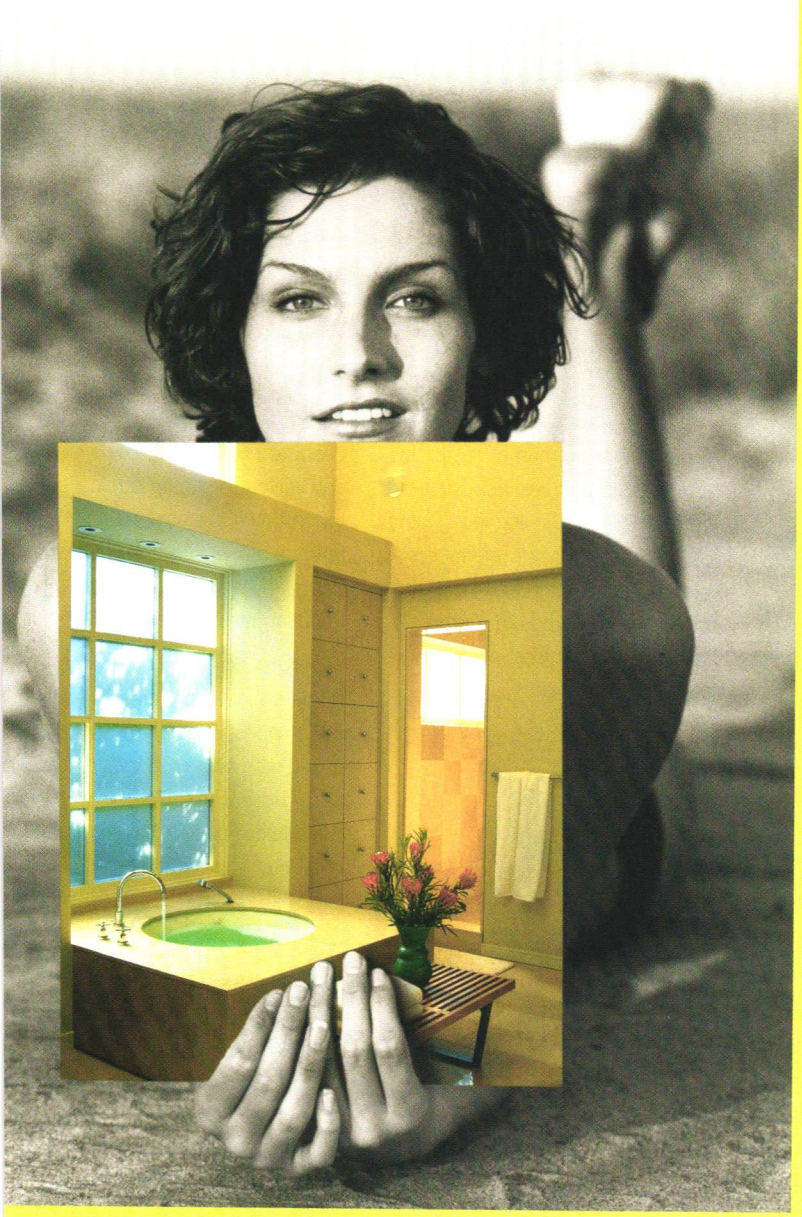
17 After-dinner drinks can be alcohol-free and still pack a wallop. Jasper Conran, best known as a costume and women's-wear designe crossed over to crystal thre years ago. Now he's setting another part of the table for Wedgwood. Conran's espresso cup and saucer are fine bone china with polishe pewter, $125. 800-955-155

18 JOSEPH ABBOUD

18 Furniture should dress for success as snazzily (but understatedly, of course) as the man of the house. Joseph Abboud fabrics for Kravet, from top: Signature Plaid wool in cedar, Cavendisa cotton in walnut, and 19144-30 wool.

19 GIORGIO ARMANI

19 If you're ready to stack a few z's, this may be the ideal place. Giorgio Armani's Edera chaise longue even looks like a languorous, relaxed Z. In leather with an oak base, $5,325, from Armani Casa. Happy napping. ▷



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THE FASHION LIST

20 DONNA KARAN

20 Now, *this* is the color of sleep. From top: Twilight Luster gray silk standard sham, $160, and satin-stitch European, $115, the Donna Karan Home collection. Bloomingdale's By Mail. 800-777-0000. ▷

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Fashion designers at home

"Ready-to-wear fabrics are more expressive than much of the upholstery fabric available. I'm also for interesting, amusing little objects like antique tin toy bicycle racers or a Victorian Silver Gremlin cigar lighter or weathered old mirrors. All these things add great personality to a room." **ALEXANDER JULIAN**

"I'm a fabric junkie. I love cashmere, silk, organza, leather, and velvet—anything sensual to the touch. My floors are made of antique oak planks from dismantled barns; my walls are polished Venetian plaster." **DONNA KARAN**

"My favorite materials for the home are natural elements: woven accessories, such as rattan trays, mixed with some touches of leather and woven wools. These elements bring texture, sophistication, and character to a room." **VERA WANG**

"I like classic background materials, such as warm, lustrous wood floors that are covered with antique rugs, for the living areas. Traditional but graphic combinations like black and white marble for the kitchen floor. Bold white trim on warm gray and taupe walls is perfect with colorful stripes and large open prints that are great for draperies and upholstery." **KATE SPADE**

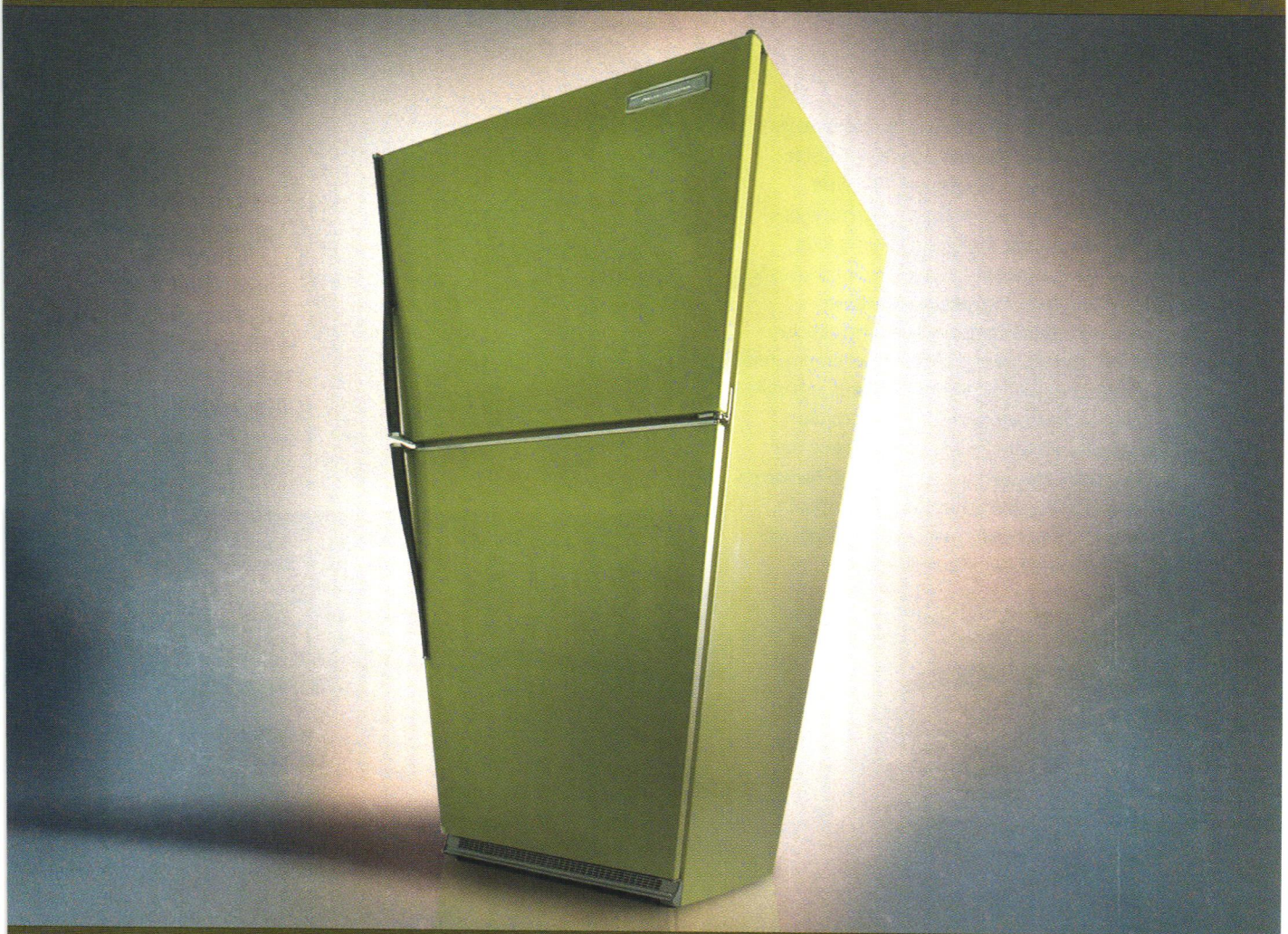
"I LIKE SPARSE CULTURAL CONTRASTS, LIKE A DARK WOOD AFRICAN BED MIXED WITH A GLOSSY RED PIERO LISSONI ARMOIRE"
—CATHERINE MALANDRINO

style with a smile

British fashion designer Paul Smith's new furniture line was recently launched at Comme des Garçons boutiques in Tokyo and New York. The Paul Smith Mondo Collection for Cappellini offers sofas, chairs, beds, and cabinets, including this lacquered piece embellished with a tongue-in-cheek, silk-screened image of a historical furniture design. $9,939 through Cappellini ModernAge, NYC. 212-966-0669.

"MY AESTHETIC IS THE SAME WHETHER I AM WORKING ON FASHION OR HOME: RAW MATERIALS, SUBTLE HUES, AND ORGANIC SHAPES THAT CREATE A SPONTANEOUS, RELAXED SPIRIT"
—NICOLE FARHI

because there are 382,000 avocado refrigerators out there.



DESIGNERS' **CHALLENGE**
THURSDAYS, 9:30 pm / 8:30 c

HGTV
HOME & GARDEN TELEVISION
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THE FASHION LIST

switch fitters

More and more fashion designers are crossing over into home decor

French fashion sensation CATHERINE MALANDRINO is collaborating with a fellow countryman, designer CHRISTOPHE PILLET, on a new tabletop collection. Her own line of soap, candles, and room sprays evoking scents of the East is now available at Henri Bendel, NYC. Handbag designer KATE SPADE has a new home accessories collection brewing. French knitwear designer SONIA RYKIEL is also launching a home accessories collection, in 2003. KENZO now has Kenzo Maison, a collection of sheets, rugs, pillows, and accessories.

Fashion houses call on today's hottest design talents to create dazzling new shops

Michael Gabellini is responsible for the sensual yet minimalist look of **Jil Sander**'s New York flagship store, which opened in September. The New York–based architect is currently designing shops for **Ferragamo**. **Asprey**, the British luxury goods purveyor, is expanding its offerings as well as its shops in London and New York. **Hussein Chalayan** has been named the company's creative director for fashion, and we are told to expect a new emphasis on home accessories. Sir **Norman Foster** is to handle the stores' architecture, while English decorator **David Mlinaric** will work on the interiors. New York designer **Randy Ridless** is the talent behind **Burberry**'s smashing U.S. flagship, which opens this month in Manhattan. The six-story emporium will include Burberry House, a new home collection.

21 RALPH LAUREN

21 Your house should be as well tailored as you are. Consider clothing your furniture in the equivalent of a dashing blue suit. From left: Haydock windowpane wool in navy, $162 per yard; Danforth stripe cotton blend in navy/red, $126 per yard; and Rafferty check wool, $137 per yard. All from Ralph Lauren Home.

22 SHANGHAI TANG

22 "Take some more tea," the March Hare urged. You won't have to twist our arms. Sin Sang teapot, $125, Shanghai Tang. In NYC, 212-888-0111, or 888-252-TANG.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

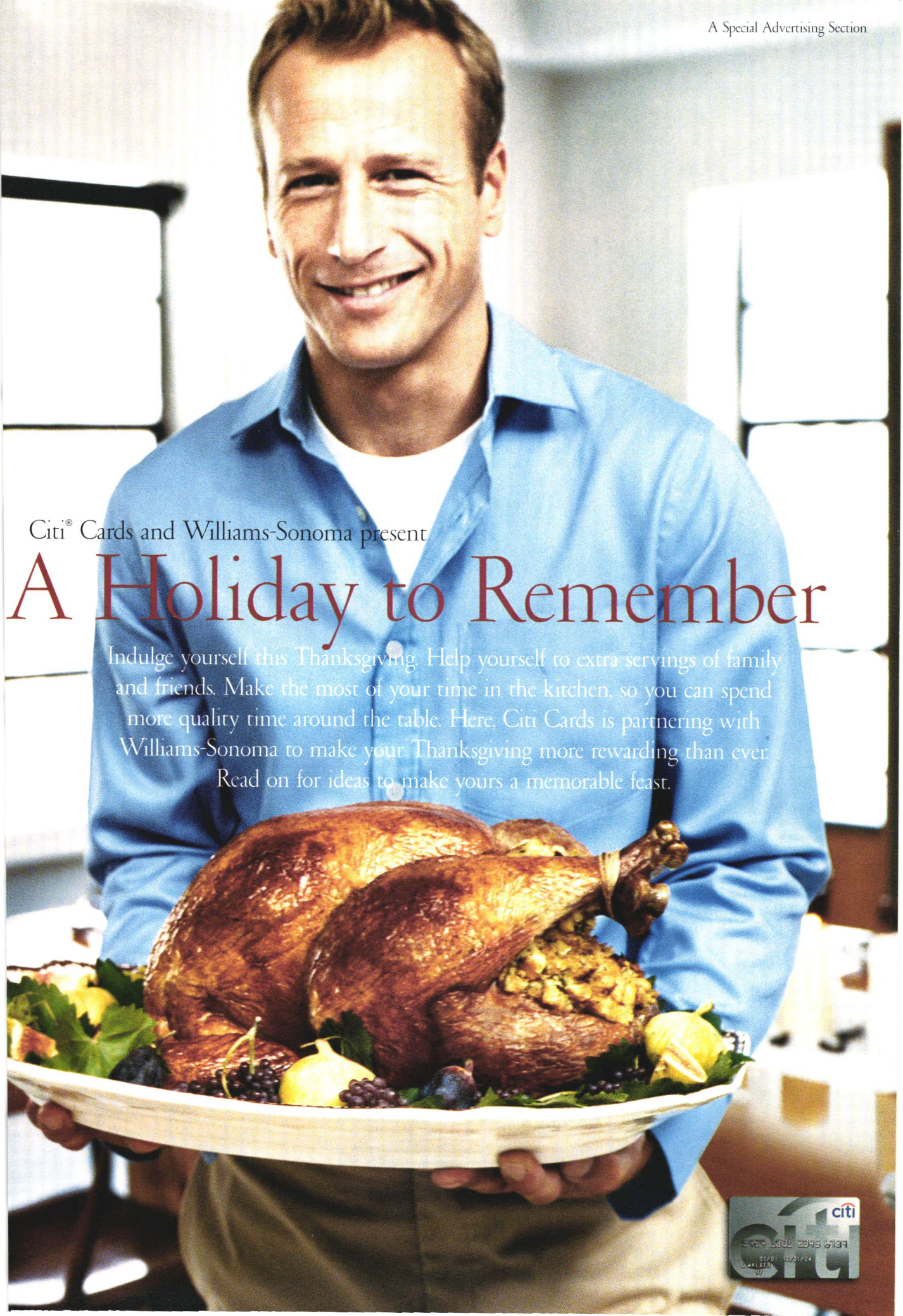
Fashion designers on entertaining

"I love the details that are unexpected, but I always notice a special decanter, sterling silver corn-on-the-cob holders, fabulous printed napkins, antique napkin rings, great glasses, candles, and gorgeous flowers. I love to mix it up!" **SUSAN LAZAR**

"I love peonies and lobsters because they're so red, candles to play with dark and light, and St. Louis glasses. Each setting is unique, from the glass to the plate." **CATHERINE MALANDRINO**

"I like a low table with scented candles, and sitting on linen, cotton sateen, or natural unbleached cotton canvas pillows. I've designed low chairs that are made from Indonesian teak. For the table, I like chopsticks, orchids, mixing antique bowls with dishes by Christina Perrin, and silverware from Egg in London." **DONNA KARAN** □

"I ENJOY USING STRANGE COLOR COMBINATIONS, SUCH AS ORANGE AND BROWN ROSES . . . A TOUCH OF THE UNEXPECTED"
—VERA WANG



Citi® Cards and Williams-Sonoma present

A Holiday to Remember

Indulge yourself this Thanksgiving. Help yourself to extra servings of family and friends. Make the most of your time in the kitchen, so you can spend more quality time around the table. Here, Citi Cards is partnering with Williams-Sonoma to make your Thanksgiving more rewarding than ever. Read on for ideas to make yours a memorable feast.

A Special Advertising Section

Thanksgiving Timeline

Got a taste for organization? Follow these helpful hints for a hassle-free holiday.

1 TO 2 WEEKS BEFORE THANKSGIVING

- Confirm the number of guests and plan your menu.
- Order the appropriate-size turkey.
- Plan your table settings, serving dishes and decorations.
- Make your shopping and "to do" lists.

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THANKSGIVING

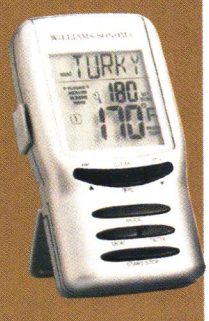
- Carefully read through all the recipes to determine the food and equipment you will need.
- Start your shopping.
- Organize the serving dishes and beverages and finish getting your house in order.
- If you have time, prepare any food that can be done ahead of time, such as cranberry sauce and pie pastry.

THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING

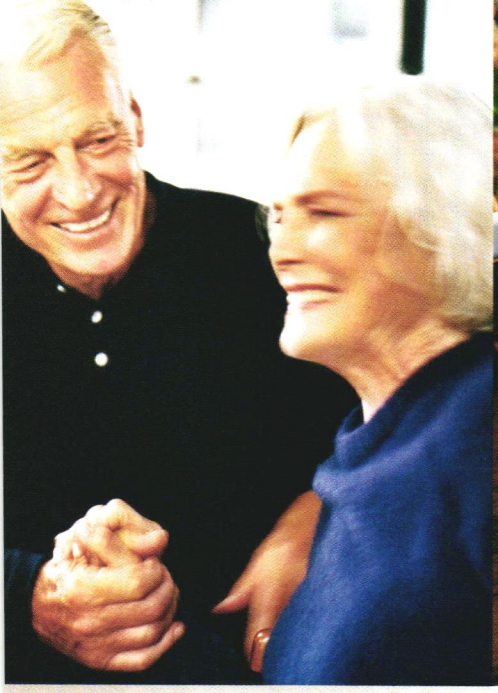
- Pick up the turkey.
- Complete your food shopping.
- Consult a roasting chart and determine when you will need to start preparing the turkey.
- If using fresh bread for the stuffing, put it out to dry overnight.
- Set the table.

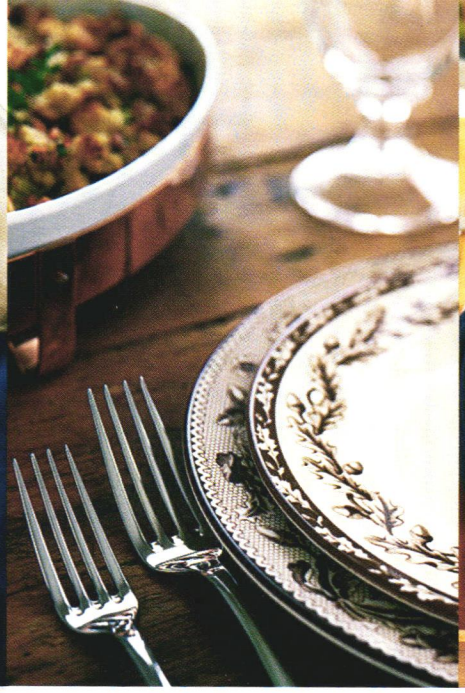
THANKSGIVING DAY

- Get up early, have breakfast and organize your day.
- Remove the turkey from the refrigerator and bring to room temperature, 1 to 1½ hours. *Note: Do not leave turkey at room temperature for longer than 1½ hours.*
- Bake the pumpkin pie in the morning.
- Prepare the stuffing.
- Prepare the turkey and put it in the oven at the determined time. *Note: Do not stuff turkey until just before you put it in the oven.*
- While roasting and basting the turkey, begin cooking the side dishes.
- Transfer the turkey to a carving board; prepare gravy and reheat side dishes.
- Seat your guests, carve the turkey and serve dinner.



This page *(clockwise from top)*: Make Thanksg prep work a family affair. Get your feast cooki Mauviel Aluminum Nonstick Roaster with Ove absorbs and transmits heat rapidly for superior Regular $120, Special $99 (large pan). Set the timer to "turkey" and go digital Remote Thermometer pages you when your turkey is ready; Regu Special $45. Make gravy as good as Grandma's—the Turkey Stock and T Gravy Base are made from all-natural ingredients; $4.50, $7.50. Use you Citi Card at Williams-Sonoma stores to purchase any of the featured pro





Thanksgiving Menu

Chestnut Soup with Spiced Cream

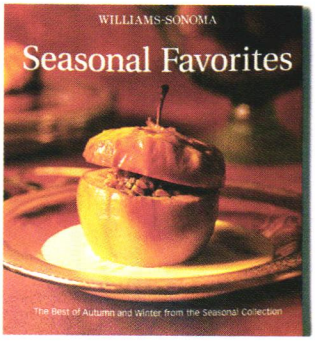
Roasted Turkey with Herb Butter

Golden Mashed Potatoes with Leeks and Sour Cream

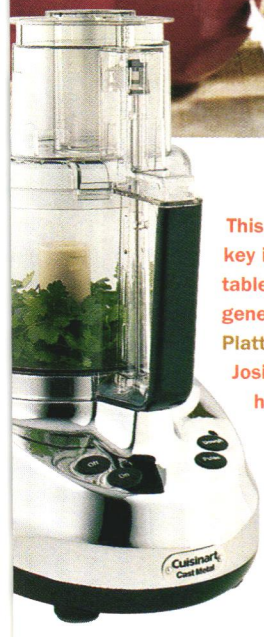
Brussels Sprouts with Toasted Hazelnuts

Spiced Pumpkin Pie

For recipes, please visit www.williams-sonoma.com/citicards.



This season, Citi Cards is partnering with Williams-Sonoma to give you a Thanksgiving bonus. Beginning October 15th, when you use your Citi Card to spend $50 or more at a Williams-Sonoma store, you'll receive a complimentary Seasonal Favorites Cookbook. *Turn the page for details.*



This page *(clockwise from top left)*: Laughter is a key ingredient at every holiday feast. No Thanksgiving table is complete without the stuffing. A meal for every generation. Pass the platter—this turkey Transferware Platter, made exclusively for Williams-Sonoma by Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, makes for the perfect family heirloom; $85. Cut down on prep time—the heavy-duty Cuisinart 14-Cup Food Processor has the largest feed tube on the market; $369. Making a piece of the pie. Use your Citi Card at Williams-Sonoma stores to purchase any of the featured products.

End the holiday on a sweet note.
Spiced Pumpkin Pie from the Williams-Sonoma *Seasonal Favorites* Cookbook, your gift with a purchase of $50 or more on your Citi Card (see offer below).

SPICED PUMPKIN PIE

1 small pumpkin, 2 1/2 lbs
Pastry for a 9-inch pie
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup firmly packed light brown suga
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
3 eggs, beaten
3/4 cup half-and-half
Sweetened whipped cream

Preheat an oven to 350°F. Lightly oil a bak sheet. Cut the pumpkin in half through th stem end and place, cut side down, on the baking sheet. Bake until easily pierced with knife, about 1 hour. Let cool. Scoop out th seeds and fibers and discard. Puree the flesh food processor fitted with a metal blade un smooth. Measure out 1 1/2 cups; set aside. R the oven temperature to 375°F.

On a well-floured work surface, roll out th pastry into a 12-inch round. Transfer to a inch pie pan and gently press into the bot and sides of the pan. Trim the edges, leavin 1 1/2-inch overhang, then fold under the ov hang and crimp to form an attractive rim. the bottom and sides of the pastry with a Freeze for 10 minutes. Line the pastry wit aluminum foil and fill with pie weights. B for 15 minutes. Remove the weights and fo and continue to bake until lightly golden, minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool. L the oven set at 375°F.

In a bowl, whisk together the pumpkin p maple syrup, brown sugar, cinnamon, ging nutmeg, cloves, eggs and half-and-half unt mixed. Pour into the baked pie shell. Bake a skewer inserted into the center comes ou clean, 45–55 minutes. Let cool for at least minutes. Serve the pie with the whipped on the side.

Serves 6–8

Williams-Sonoma *Seasonal Favorites*, copyright Weldon Ow Publishing and Williams-Sonoma, Inc., published by Oxmoo House, 2002.

FEAST ON THIS

This Thanksgiving, reward yourself as you're thinking about others. Beginning October 15th, present this completed coupon when you use your Citi Card to spend $50 or more at a Williams-Sonoma store, and receive a complimentary *Seasonal Favorites* Cookbook.* Just another way Citi Cards helps you use your credit card wisely.

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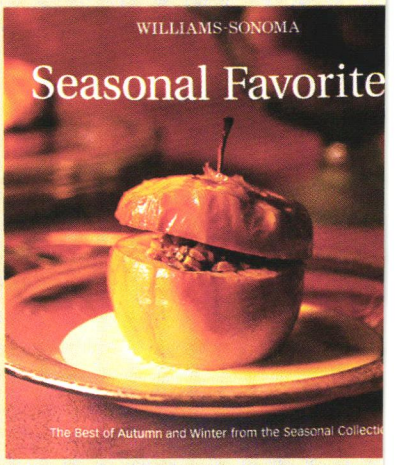


*While supplies last. Offer valid beginning October 15th. To locate a store near you, call 800-541-2233 or visit www.williams-sonoma.com/citicards. Redemption of this coupon adds your name and address to the Williams-Sonoma Inc. mailing list.

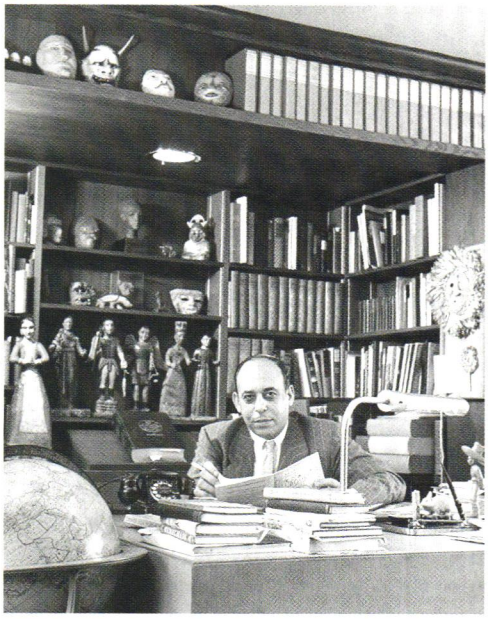
the merchant prince

A Sotheby's sale from the estate of Neiman Marcus chairman Stanley Marcus proves he had as sharp a talent for collecting as for retailing

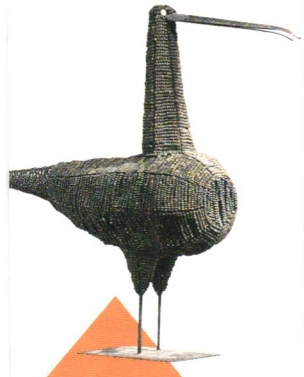
by gregory cerio

A portrait by Diego Rivera from his short-lived career as a cubist painter carries a high estimate of $450,000.

A pair of ancestor figures carved by the Lobi people of Burkina Faso and Ghana is estimated at $30,000 to $50,000.



Stanley Marcus in his office at Neiman Marcus in Dallas in 1945, with pieces from his collection



A piece of Finnish folk art made of beads on an iron frame is expected to go for $300.

WHEN STANLEY MARCUS, the retailing giant who turned the Neiman Marcus department stores into a national institution, died in Dallas last January at the age of 96, the testimonials to his genius were myriad. Alongside bemused reminiscences of the outrageous, attention-grabbing offerings that Marcus included in the store's annual Christmas catalog—the his-and-hers airplanes, the white mink cowboy chaps—friends and associates recalled his ceaseless search for quality, his attention to detail, and his unimpeachable fashion sense. "The qualities that made Stanley's store so unique were his own—great personal style and creative vision," Ralph Lauren says. "He was larger than life."

But perhaps the most telling remark was made by Marcus's daughter Jerrie. "When I was a child," she recalled, "saying you were bored was worse than saying a swear-word." This autumn, Sotheby's will auction, in its New York salesrooms, property from the Marcus estate—the bulk in a single-owner sale on November 16, and the remainder in evening auctions of Latin American art and American art on November 19 and December 4, respectively. And if anything of the character of the man can be discerned from his collection, Marcus's reveals a questing curiosity and an eager, open-minded, even greedy intelligence. In short, Marcus was a man who could not, would not, be bored.

Big-ticket fine art items in Marcus's collection will steal most of the limelight. Marcus came late to an appreciation of fine art, in his 30s, but he taught himself with energy and enthusiasm. Alberto Giacometti's 1950 *Figure Walking Between Two Houses,* the work carrying the highest presale estimate, at $2 million to $3 million, demonstrates the level of connoisseurship that Marcus developed (and his prescience as an investor: he paid $750 for the sculpture in 1951, which sounds cheap, even accounting for inflation). "Fewer people were buying sculpture in the 1950s, and this is a very rare composition for Giacometti," says Sotheby's specialist David Norman. "It shows Marcus wasn't buying to suit the current mood of the time. He was buying what he loved."

Other highlights include two Rufino Tamayo paintings (estimates range from $200,000 to $300,000), two Diego Rivera canvases from his brief career in the early 1900s as a cubist

($350,000 to $550,000), and four sculptures by Henry Moore ($8,000 to $300,000). One New York art critic who previewed the sale highlights pronounced himself underwhelmed by the "small, safe" choices in the collection. But friends of Marcus say that he never collected with an agenda for grandeur or prominence. "It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking: Neiman Marcus, Dallas, glitz, nouveau riche—and think of Stanley that way," says Jay Cantor, a Marcus friend and adviser and a former Christie's art specialist. "But the things he collected aren't necessarily gangbusters, or monumental objects meant to impress. They are exquisite in a quiet way. He collected for himself."

The November 16 sale makes that clear. Items come, literally, from all over the map. "He didn't feel attached to one type of object, one period, one medium," says Sotheby's pre-Columbian specialist Stacy Goodman. "He traveled widely, and really opened his eyes to the world." The lots include African art such as a pair of Lobi ancestor figures ($30,000 to $50,000), a circa eighth-century Coptic textile panel ($6,000 to $9,000), a Spanish colonial devotional statue ($4,000 to $6,000), Dale Chihuly glass sculptures, more than a dozen pre-Columbian pieces ranging from a tasseled Chimu textile panel ($40,000 to $50,000) to a seated figure from Veracruz ($400), and scores of folk art pieces from as far afield as Mexico and Finland. "The man, simply, could suss out quality wherever his interests took him," says Elaine Whitmire, curator of the single-owner sale. "He believed in excellence in his store, and he lived it in his life as a collector."

GOOD NIGHT, JOSEPHINE

What does a fashion photographer do when his eyesight begins to fail? If you're Roger Prigent, you fall back on antiques. After fleeing wartime France for Martinique, Prigent came to New York in 1950 and quickly made a reputation among magazine editors. In a career that lasted more than 40 years, Prigent shot models such as Suzy Parker and creations by the likes of couturier Charles James, and his work appeared on the covers of periodicals as diverse as *Vogue*, *McCall's*, and *TV Guide*. A lifelong collector with a passion for history, Prigent opened a Manhattan antiques shop, Malmaison, in 1978 as a sideline. Dealing "to the trade" only and specializing in the Empire styles of the Napoleonic era—Prigent spent his childhood in the town where Malmaison, the country palace of Napoleon and Empress Josephine, is located—the store was soon a favorite source for decorators. Prigent took little part in day-to-day operations at the shop until 1992, when his vision began to dim. Since then, Malmaison has branched into the brawnier Russian interpretation of Empire, and into French Art Deco and mid-century design. Now in his late 70s and, sadly, almost completely blind, Prigent wants to simplify and scale back. The public will finally get a crack at his wares when Christie's holds a single-owner auction of some 450 lots on November 26 in New York. For design aficionados, the sale promises to be a special event.

FROZEN ASSETS: Inuit art sales

The acclaimed new movie *Atanarjuat* (*The Fast Runner*) has stirred interest in the Inuit—the people, once commonly known as Eskimos, who live in the region of the Arctic Circle. In a bleak world of wind and bitter cold, mere survival seems an achievement. But the Inuit have also developed one of the most graceful and naturalistic artistic cultures in the world, producing sculpture and prints that rival Brancusi's purity and Miró's graphic sense. "The Inuit strength is that they did not go to any school—their art forms came down to them from a thousand years," says James Houston, a Canadian-born artist, writer, and designer for Steuben Glass, who lived with the Inuit on Baffin Island from the '40s through the '60s. For the Inuit, art is both pastime and ritual, he explains. In bad weather, hunters spent the idle hours carving an image of their quarry—a bear, caribou, or seal. The skills of the hunter were the skills of the artist, says Houston. "It's all keen observation."

Houston created the market for Inuit art. In the '50s, he brought the first caches of Inuit carvings to the developed world, and later introduced printmaking to the Arctic after spending time in Japan to learn the art form. Today, their art is the chief source of income for the Inuit, freeing many from dependence on hunting and trapping. Market awareness has diminished the unself-consciousness of Inuit art, and the most sought-after specimens date from the '50s and '60s. "There was a wonderful ten-to-fifteen-year period of naïveté," says Duncan McLean of the Toronto auction firm Waddington's, which holds its annual Inuit art sale November 4 and 5. "Imagine a person born in the 'twenties into a life that's harsh as hell, suddenly learning he can make a living carving art."

At last year's Waddington's sale, prices at the low end ranged from $300 Canadian for a print or simple sculpture to about $1,000 for a more significant carving. At the high end, *The Enchanted Owl*, left, a 1960 print from the limited-edition portfolio produced yearly by the Inuit of Cape Dorset, sold for $58,650. Houston's favorite artists include Kiawak, Johnnie Inukpuk, Osuitok, and the late Niviaksik—men who are or were his friends. "They taught me," he says, "far more than I ever did them." □

The Crane Paper Company on making spirits bright.

What makes the holiday season so magical? Warm wishes, joyful reunions, and treasured connections with family and friends. At Crane's, we create very special holiday greetings to help you celebrate relationships with the important people in your life. From personalized cards and invitations to photomounts and gift enclosures, Crane's has hundreds of ways for you to express your unique style. You'll find everything you need for your holiday greetings at your authorized Crane's Retailer, so stop in soon.

For the writer somewhere in each of us.

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special advertising section

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

WIND, UNWIND

The holiday season is the perfect time of year to open up your home and enjoy quality time unwinding and relaxing with friends and family.

To the Howard Miller family, the concept of "quality time" takes on a very special—and very literal—meaning. For the past 76 years, the Howard Miller name has been synonymous with the finest floor, wall, and mantel clocks and collectors' cabinets. This spirit of quality craftsmanship is evident in each and every piece the company produces, making it one of the most respected, in-demand brands of its kind.

While treasured for their heirloom quality, Howard Miller clocks are particularly loved for their ability to transform the look of a room. To wit: the line's Caribbean and British–Colonial–influenced Grand Cayman floor clock. With its aged Roman-numeral-face dial, pillowed-herringbone cane detailing, and lustrous Tradewinds Cherry finish, the Grand Cayman provides the perfect mix of elegance and exotica for those looking to transform a beach house, great room, or sunroom into something truly spectacular.

The Howard Miller Urban floor clock is another hugely popular piece. In addition to capturing the sleek yet elegant spirit of the new contemporary look, the Urban floor clock also features a cable-driven, Westminster-chime Kieninger movement. Simple yet commanding, the Urban floor clock features clean lines, a crisp white dial, and a simple nickel-finished pendulum visible through a beveled-glass, front-locking door.

From classic antique-inspired timepieces to the latest options in fashion and function, each piece is meticulously crafted in the old-world European tradition. Solid, quality pieces to be passed down and enjoyed for generations to come—that is the signature of a Howard Miller creation.

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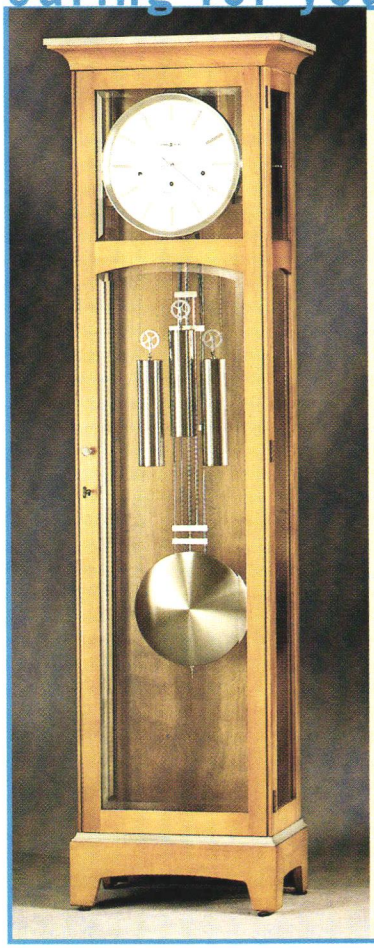

Any cherished possession is a pote heirloom—provided it is treated wit care. Here, several easy-maintenar tips to ensure that your family treas withstands the challenges of time.

Avoid the Extremes. Inconsistent or extreme environmental conditions ar among the most common causes o damage. Keep clocks, photograph documents, and heirloom furniture away from excessive sunlight or extr temperatures, including air-condition vents and heating units.

Inspect the Goods. Even if you store valuables out of sight, be sure they not out of mind. Inspect regularly an lightly dust with a soft brush or cloth keep dust or other deterioration at

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It's not surprising, then, that homeowners are demanding wall-to-wall carpeting that performs above and beyond its role as a mere floor covering. Apart from the holidays, a carpet must bear years of wear and tear.

"Durability is the number-one benefit that today's homeowners are expecting from the carpet they buy," says Katie McGrady, director of retail carpet marketing for Wear-Dated carpet fiber.

Great care is taken to ensure that each Wear-Dated carpet fiber product meets the company's durability demands—namely, a team of employees spends each workday making a 15–18-mile journey around a track of Wear-Dated carpet.

While durability is an important concern, comfort and softness are also critical, notes McGrady. "To meet the demand, we created DuraSoft®, a carpet fiber with a soft hand and subtle luster that provides a rich look without the sparkle or 'tinsel' effect associated with some fibers and finishes."

Beyond ultra-soft durability, Wear-Dated offers product solutions for any room in the home, including Therma Sealed®, offering the look and feel of wool at a fraction of the cost, and Traffic Control™, a Wear-Dated carpet fiber specifically designed to help prevent a high-traffic area from looking disproportionately worn.

"And with so many colors and shades to choose from, a homeowner can match a wall color, a window treatment, or select a contrasting color for maximum impact," McGrady adds.

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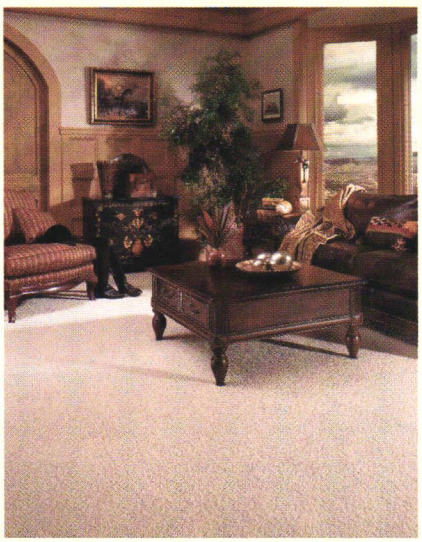

A wall-to-wall carpet can be a considerable investment. Here's how to protect your assets and keep all your rugs and carpets in mint condition.

Keep It Clean. Contrary to the belief that "a little dirt never hu dirt is not benign. Products kep clean have a longer life span. addition, dust mites have an insidious way of breaking dow carpet fiber over time. Run the vacuum cleaner regularly, and spot-clean immediately after a spill. Invest in a yearly professio carpet cleaning for good measu

Cover it. While wall-to-wall carpets today are incredibly durable, it never hurts to add a bit of extra protection in the form of throw rugs and area rugs. In addition to their protective benefits, these less-expensive additions allow you t bring some color into the room and anchor multiple shades within your décor

A Pointed Statement. Spiky stiletto heels and other rough-soled shoes should worn with caution on certain types of carpet, such as Berber, which can snag ar unravel. A protective pad under furniture legs also helps protect carpets from th effects of continuous weight from heavy items, such as dining tables and sofa

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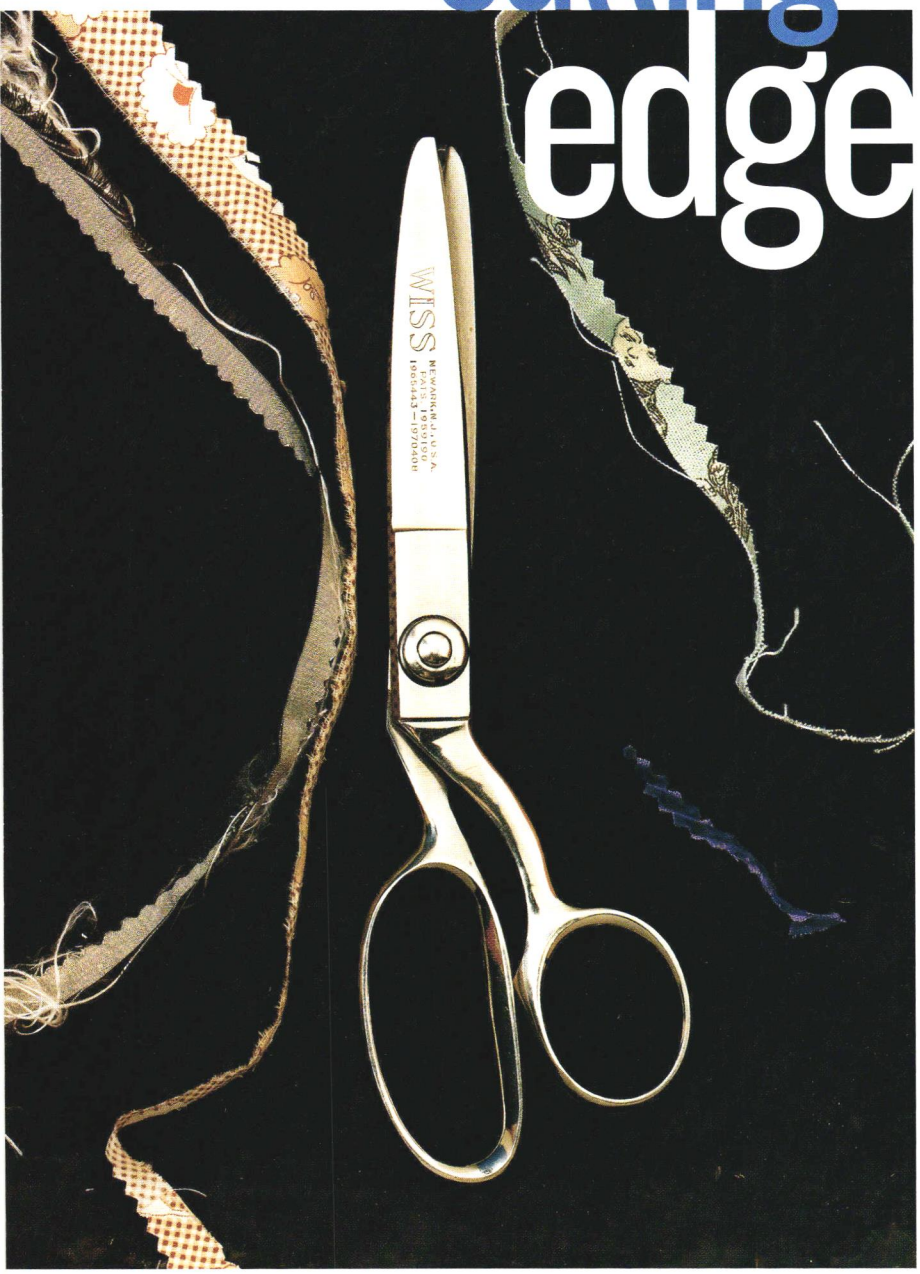

The author's classmates were most awed by his mother's pinking shears, "evidence that I inhabited a wider, more complicated household than their own," he says.

Scissors, those instruments of mayhem and magic, have lost the almost supernatural power they once had in our lives. More's the pity

by jim crace

I WAS 10 YEARS OLD when my mother's scissors won a school prize for me, a book called *How It Works.* "Best Science Project 1956." My mother, now almost 90, still has those same scissors. She was a devoted dressmaker. She had the finest scissors in the street, each pair crafted in silvered rust-resistant steel, made to last by perfectionists in Sheffield. Cheap or lightweight plastic-handled scissors were uncommon in those days. Our household boasted not only the usual nail clippers and kitchen scissors but a pair of long bladed cloth cutters, some tiny embroidery snippers, and—my favorites—her heavy, castellated pinking shears, used to seal the underhems and selvages of the pinafores and dresses that she made. We used to play for hours with the strips and curls of cut, waste fabric.

"Never let me catch you playing with my scissors, or cutting anything but cloth with the pinkers," she used to say. "You'll dull their blades." And there were other, less sensible more enthralling rules and lores, a legacy from Grandma Maud: "Always close the blades of scissors before you go to bed, or else you'll never get to sleep"; "Never provoke bad luck by opening scissors at the dinner table"; "Don't sever friendships by lending scissors to a pal charge at least a penny for the hire"; and (a cure for migraines) "Massage the nape of your neck with the handles of cold scissors." (That works. Try it.)

Scissors were implements of both harm and healing when we were kids. Just to touch them was to encounter all the crafts and perils of the universe. So when our school science project for the term was the lever, that most ancient and most simple of mechanical assistants, and we were invited by our teacher to bring in examples from our kitchens and our gardens, anything by which rocking on a fulcrum magically increased the human force applied, I begged my mother for the "hire" of her five pairs of scissors. She charged five pence for the honor. I mounted them with twine on card and baize. In my best copperplate I labeled and arrowed their various mechanics—LEVER, LOAD, PIVOT, RIVET, SWIVEL, EFFORT. Here was power and simplicity. Here was the one machine that all of

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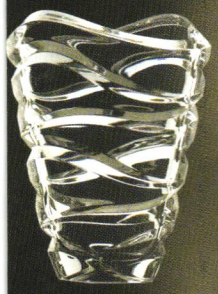

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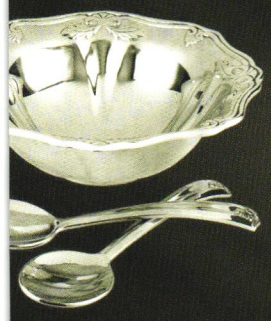

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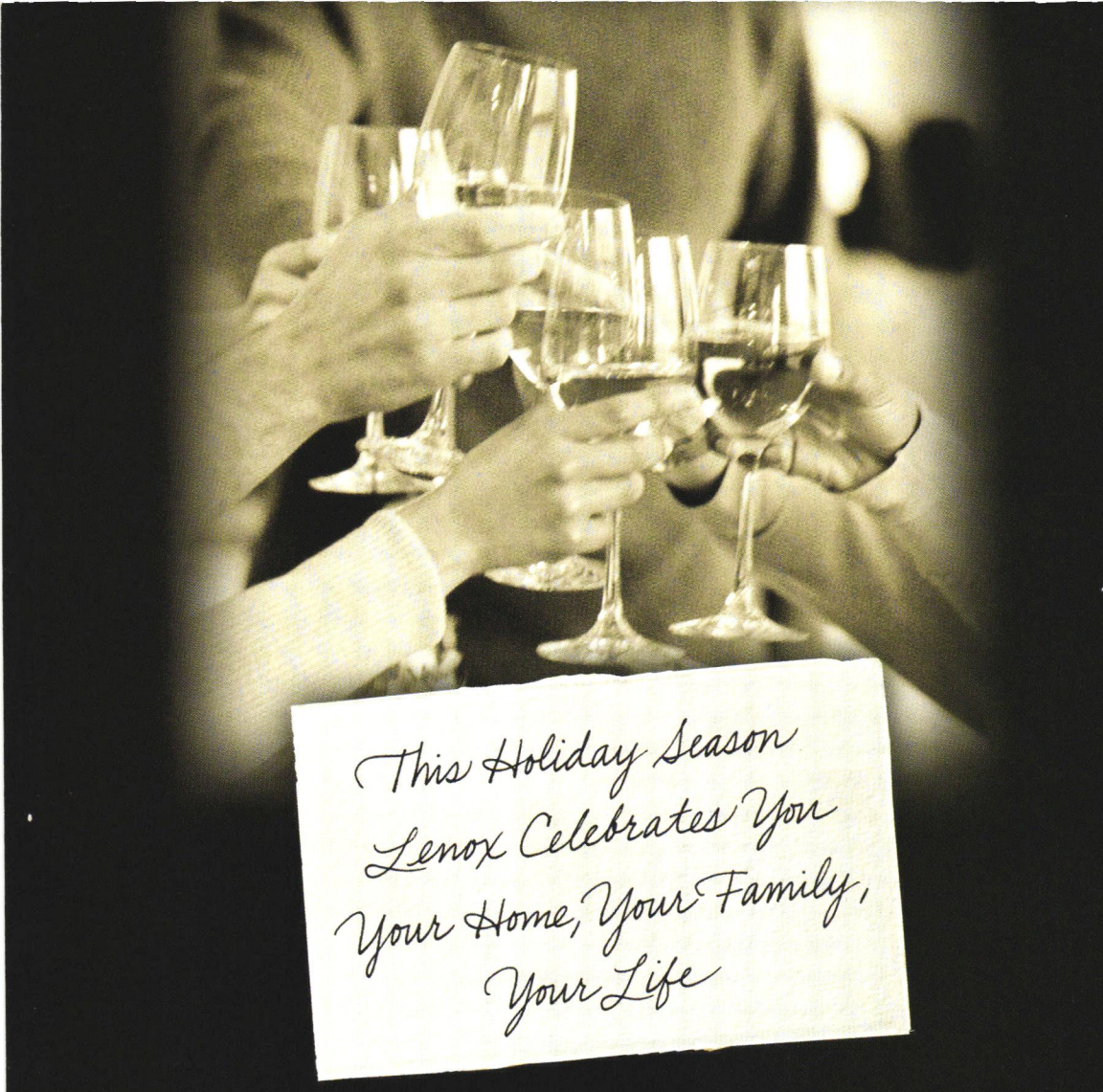

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For the name of the winners, please send addressed envelope between January 31, 20 2003 to: Lenox Brands, 100, Lenox Drive, 08648, Attn: Lenox Holiday 2002 Sweepstakes

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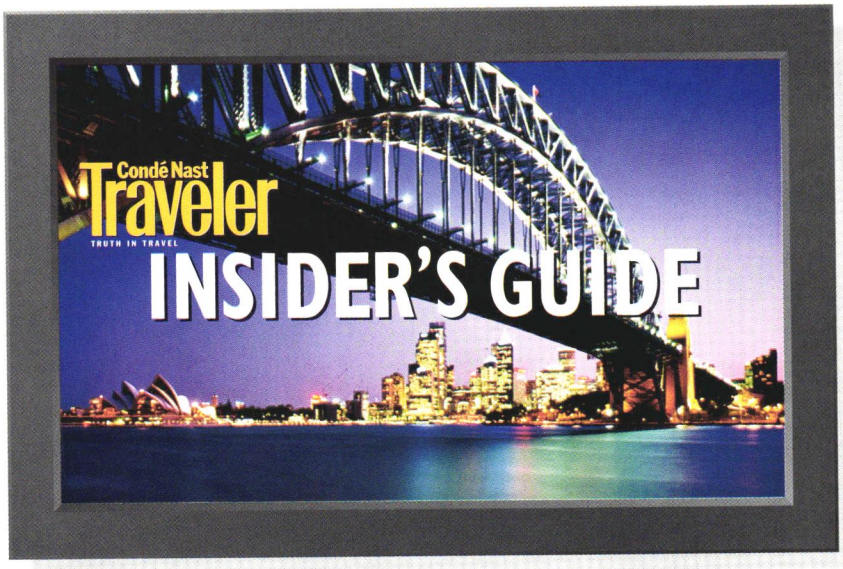

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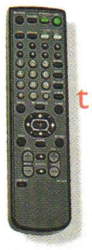
The best trip you'll ever  take without leaving home.

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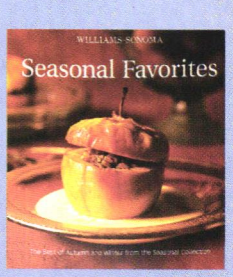

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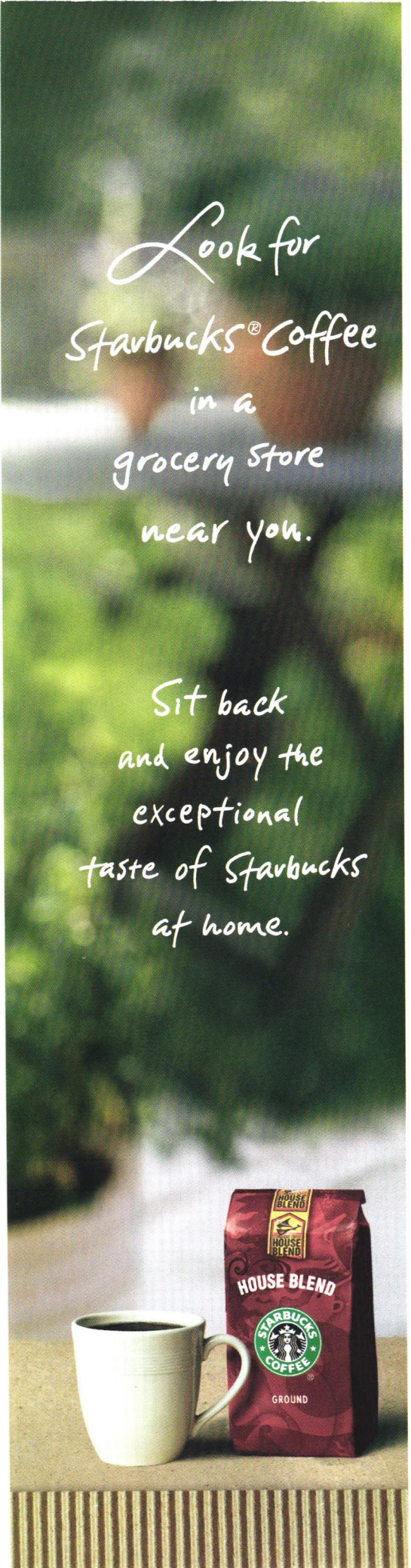

could use. I gave each implement its proper name and specified its uses. I made a list of all the household rules for disaster-free scissors management.

My classmates loved and feared those pinking shears the most, their drop-forged, ice-tempered, nickel-plated, mirror-finished blades, their safe and double-blunted tips, their zigzag cutting line, their possibilities as gory implements of torture, their evidence that I inhabited a wider and more complicated household than their own.

Now we have schoolchildren of our own, and at least 19 pairs of scissors in the house, the longest a pair of 11-inch wallpaper shears, the smallest, some travel scissors (now sadly not allowed to accompany me on air flights) that fold on rivets to pack away at less than two inches. Then there are the common (or garden) paper cutters, serrated kitchen scissors, and office scissors, all with colored plastic handles, cheap and lightweight, untouched by craftsmen, and none of which my wife or I can remember buying. (We think they breed and multiply like metal coat hangers if left too long, untouched, in drawers.)

YET HERE'S A MYSTERY: despite our glut of implements, when we need a pair of scissors, they're nowhere to be found. We always knew exactly were my mother's were. They had their allocated drawers and hooks in what was otherwise a shoddily ordered household. But in our spick, uncluttered home we have to hunt and shout and show our irritation before—one of life's minor rewards—a single pair reveal themselves, their handles staring at us from their hiding place with startled, empty eyes.

We have exotics, too—the hardly ever used bandage cutters and hair trimmers, those inexplicable lobster scissors that someone gave us as a wedding present, the stem clippers for flower arrangements. We're better equipped for scission than my mother ever was. Except we do not have, alas, a pair of pinking shears. Nor—more's the pity—do we have a single rule or ritual to ward off ill luck or tell us what to do whe scissors misbehave. Ours are only hal regarded tools, unprized, unthreatenin without a lore or narrative. We do n value them. We need to use them le and less, it seems.

I miss those days when scissors we more treasured and more menacin when, for example, if I ever had the mi fortune to drop a pair, then Grandm Maud would pressure me to proce with caution. I should not pick them u myself, she'd tell me. I ought to step c

When we were kids, just to touch scissors wa to encounter all the crafts and perils of the universe

them first to squash disaster underfo and then (just to be on the safe side) them lie where they fell until the f lowing morning. I always feared the d (oh, God forbid) when tumbling sciss points would stick into the floor a there would be "a death, a debt, a a disappointment."

Perhaps scissors—just like supers tions—are too uncomplicated to surv in an age when simplicity is confus with foolishness. Soon, I fear, they v be obsolete, replaced by laser knives, handheld power cutters. Or someo will devise newer, smarter versions the scissor tab on our computer scree enabling us in a microsecond and w no waste to cut our folders and our d uments in virtual space with just fingertips, but robbing us of all the cl pings, the parings, the off-cuts, the de tus, the residues, the vestiges of domestic undramatic lives, those lov discarded sweepings from the floor t proper scissors give to us with ev swish and closure of their blades.

Jim Crace lives in Birmingham, Engla His most recent books are the novel Be Dead, *winner of the 2000 National B Critics Circle Award, and a cycle of sh stories,* The Devil's Larder *(both Far Straus & Giroux).*

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stitches in time

A museum exhibition of quilts from tiny Gee's Bend, Alabama, demonstrates the astonishing, visionary potential of a humble craft

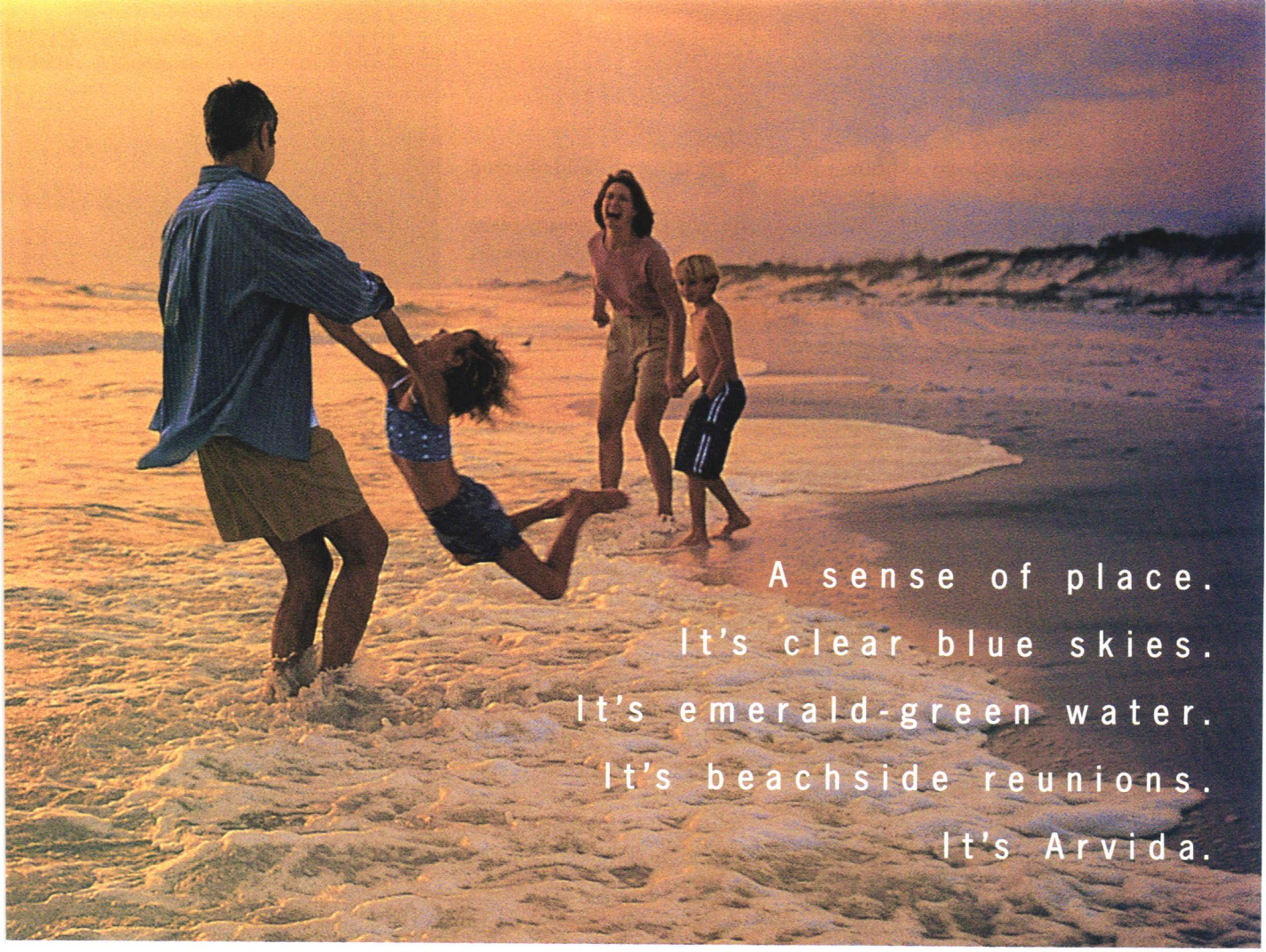
by barbara pollack

SIXTEEN INDIGO rectangles, mismatched and mangled, form a haunting and graphic arrangement on a pale gray field—solemn rows of stark shapes punctuated only by a few squiggling lines of magenta and green. This could be a geometric abstraction by a contemporary art star, a painting by Sean Scully, Barnett Newman, maybe Frank Stella. But, in fact, this is a quilt, part of a legacy of astounding creativity by four generations of African-American women living in an isolated community of rural Alabama known since antebellum days as Gee's Bend.

For anyone who has thought of quilts only in terms of random patchworks or the classic, fastidious, flying-geese and log-cabin patterns of Amish sewing circles, the quilts of Gee's Bend will come as a shock. These quilts are brutally sensuous and entirely idiosyncratic. Patterns set down only to be broken apart, and themes exploded with unprecedented spontaneity are brought back together by the syncopated rhythm of the bold color schemes. Largely unknown even to folk art aficionados, these pure products of the American South are being celebrated in a museum exhibition that debuted at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in September and will be on view at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art from November 21 through March 2.

"The sources of these incredible images are the great mystery," says Jane Livingston, one of the curators who worked on the exhibition. "They are so fresh and distinctive, an entirely original world of style." Quilt making is central to the African-American experience, especially in the South, but even within that tradition the quilts of Gee's Bend are a conundrum. They are not the products of communal quilting bees or made for ceremonial purposes. They were created purely for utility, to keep families warm, sometimes by mothers and daughters working together, but more often than not by a woman sewing alone, enjoying a moment away from the rigors of farm life. And while the skills of quilt making were passed down from generation to generation, each woman developed her own style, which is why the exhibition presents each of the 46 quilters whose work is on view as an individual artist. "You would expect something more cohesive, much more connected visually," says Alvia Wardlaw, curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. "But the women all have their own

Annie Mae Young, above, created the cotton and synthetic quilt at top left. A quilt by Mary Lee Bendolph, left, was made in part from leisure suits.



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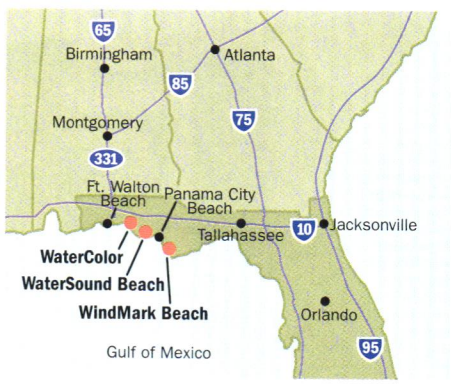

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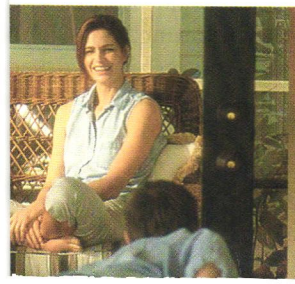
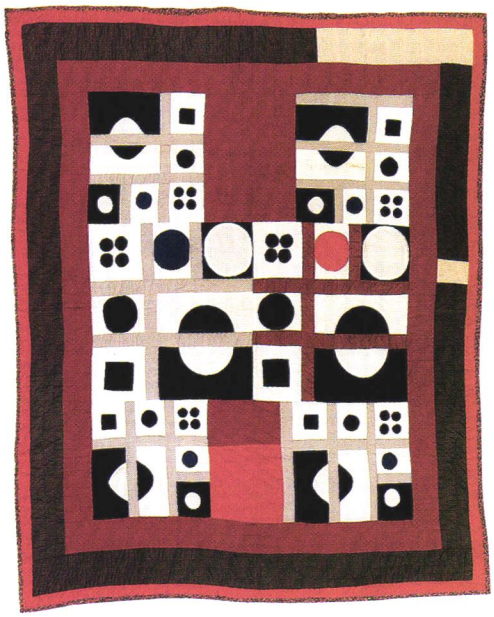
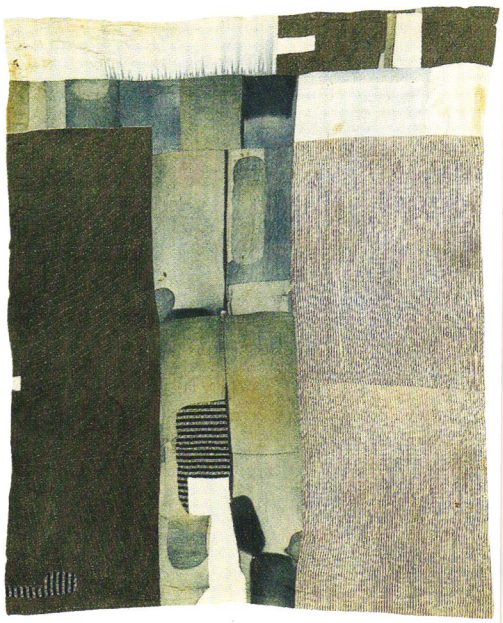


A Rachel Carey George quilt, right, made ca. 1938, uses old denim work pants. ■ Nettie Young calls the vibrant piece below her Milky Way quilt. ■ The late Lillie Mae Pettway made the 6-by-5-foot quilt, bottom, out of cotton, wool, and corduroy in 1965.





point of departure. It's a no-holds-barred approach to art."

"We had a pretty rough life in my early years; growing up here was tough," says Arlonzia Pettway, 79, one of the featured artists, who began quilting at age 10. She learned from her grandmother to rip apart worn-out work clothes, practically the only source of fabric in Gee's Bend for most of the twentieth century. Many of the quilts bear signs of the indigo blue, irregularly shaped pant legs of old overalls. Making something from nothing is at the heart of the Gee's Bend aesthetic, which is imbued with a wild streak reflected in the spirit of the surviving quilters. "From quilting, we learned how to get pleasure," Pettway says. Working start and stop, in between farming, cooking, raising children, and going to church, the women of Gee's Bend quilted as their sole form of self-expression. "I always had taken me some quilt pieces in the fields when I was working there," Lucy T. Pettway, 81, another Gee's Bend quilter, told the curators. "When I knock off work at twelve to eat, I make me a block or so till I go back to the fields."

Pettway is the predominant name in Gee's Bend. Most of the 700 residents inherited the surname of the plantation owner who, in the 1840s, brought their ancestors to this corner of Alabama, a town cradled in a swerve of

"The quilts are so fresh and distinctive, an entirely original world of style" —Jane Livingston, curator

the Alabama River and located in a county long known as one of the poorest and most segregated in the nation. During the Great Depression, Arthur Rothstein and Marion Post Wolcott photographed the Bend for the Farm Security Administration. Their portraits of tenant farmers persuaded the Roosevelt administration to undertake a major resettlement program in the area, building the two-room tract houses in which many Gee's Benders still live. In 1965, Martin Luther King, Jr., preached at Gee's Bend's Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, encouraging congregants to join his march on Selma. His oratory so riled white city officials across the river in Camden that they stopped ferry service to the peninsula. But the forced separation only reinforced community spirit, allowing Gee's Bend to remain intact even as other rural enclaves dispersed.

"The particular character of this community and the fact that it has been quite isolated adds to the richness of the quilting," says John Beardsley, a Harvard lecturer who worked on the exhibition. Noting that Gee's Bend has a long tradition of black land ownership

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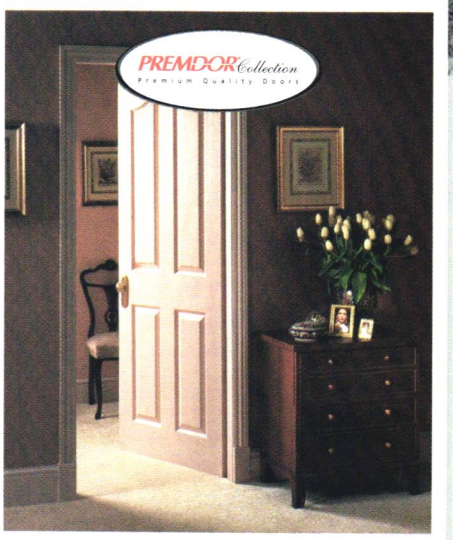

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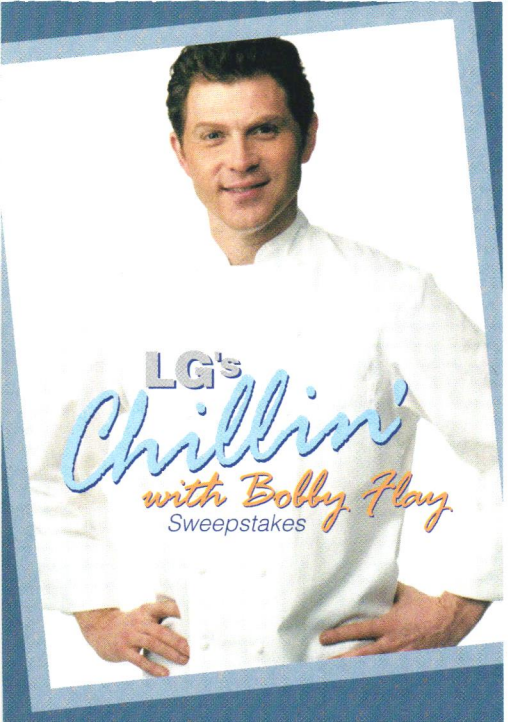

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A vividly patterned quilt made in 1960 by Loretta Pettway is reminiscent of the work of artist Jacob Lawrence.

Beardsley says that the quilts reflect the pride and independence that flourished despite the hardships of the place. When the exhibition curators arrived in Gee's Bend, they were greeted with a large service in the Baptist church. "One preacher made a point of saying that people are always coming here, taking pictures of the tumbled-down houses and the failing farms and representing Gee's Bend poorly to the rest of the world," recalls Beardsley. "He told us, 'I hope you are not going to be another bunch of people just taking from this community and not giving something back.' "

In the late 1960s, Gee's Bend quilts achieved a momentary brush with fame when Father Francis X. Walter, a civil rights activist, founded the Freedom Quilting Bee. The hope was that this homegrown industry would bring financial assistance to the depressed county. Sixty women were recruited to join the bee, which attracted, for a year or two, a chic New York following—purchases by William Paley, Diana Vreeland, artist Lee Krasner, and critic Henry Geldzahler, and a $20,000 contract from Bloomingdale's. It brought in a little money and a lot of fancy new fabrics, made by Liberty of London. A later contract with Sears, Roebuck added shipments of corduroy. But the women resisted standardization, and the contracts soon fizzled after corporate complaints of inconsistent workmanship. The women in Gee's Bend resumed their singular approach to their craft. It is for these quilts and not the products of the Freedom Quilting Bee that they are now celebrated.

The rediscovery of the quilts of Gee's Bend is due to the efforts of William Arnett, an Atlanta collector and one of the country's leading experts on African-American self-taught artists. Though Arnett had spent two decades scouring the South for his two-volume study *Souls Grown Deep: African American Vernacular Art of the South,* he hadn't been much interested in quilts until he spotted a photograph in Roland L. Freeman's book *A Communion of the Spirits* that showed a woman standing by a quilt draped over a woodpile. "It was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen," Arnett recalls. Its maker was Annie Mae Young, now 74 and considered by curators to be a master of the Gee's Bend quilting style. Arnett was soon visiting all the women in Gee's Bend, who found quilts stuffed under beds and in closets. Arnett purchased more than 700 works in varying condition, for prices ranging from $2,500 to $100 apiece, for the most tattered—modest sums in the art market, perhaps but enough to allow Arlonzia Pettway to put new siding on her house. Arnett likes to describe the quilts as "flags from countries that have yet to be discovered." He compares their freewheeling compositions to the experimental moves of jazz musicians. But for Pettway, the power of these quilts comes from the spirit in which they were made. "Those are quilts we made in our own homes, with our minds, our eyes, and our own hands," she says with pride. "We made those quilts in our own image, and we made them exactly how we wanted them to be."

Barbara Pollack is a contributing editor for ARTnews.

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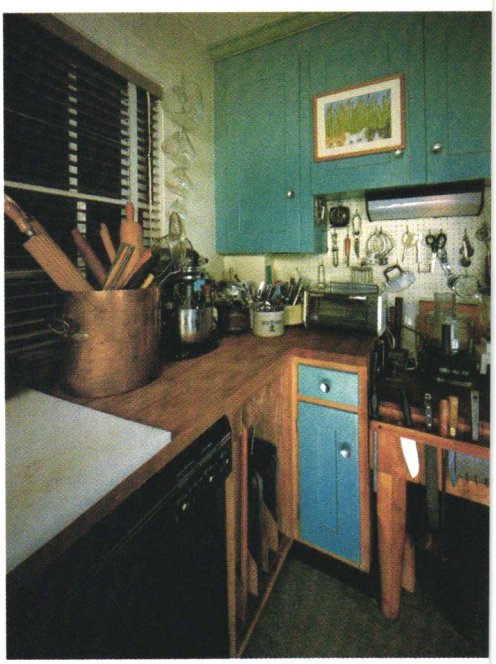
capital cuisine

The big draw in Washington is Julia Child's celebrated kitchen, which has moved to the Smithsonian—lox, stockpot, and barrel

by laura shapiro

INSIDE THE MOST famous home kitchen in America, a well-worn Bulfinch's *Mythology* sits on a bookshelf next to the cookbooks, along with a couple of Audubon field guides, a French dictionary, and a handbook of Massachusetts state government. The work surfaces are all 38 inches high—6 inches higher than usual—and one of the cupboard doors holds a hook for a little mirror, carefully placed at the right level for someone 6 feet 2 inches tall to check her lipstick when the doorbell rings. The stove is a splendid old Garland, most of the vegetable peelers come from the dime store, and a huge copper stockpot holds a magnificent spray of rolling pins. Over the sink where the garbage disposal was installed, the cook posted small warning signs, which she printed with one of those automatic label makers that were in vogue during the '60s: NO GREASE, NO FAT; NO ARTICHOKE L'S; BEWARE ONION SKINS. For some 40 years her kitchen has been photographed, filmed, videotaped, and written about, but this we never knew: even Julia Child got nervous around the In-Sink-Erator.

Now her kitchen belongs to all of us. Last year Child left her house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and settled into an apartment in Santa Barbara, California. She gave the house to her alma mater, Smith College, but agreed to let the Smithsonian have the kitchen. A large section of Peg-Board hung with copper pots and pans had already been promised to Copia, the American Center for Wine, Food & the Arts, in Napa, California. Everything else went to the Smithsonian in Washington—everything. "We had to tell her 'Yes, we really do mean your junk drawer,'" says Rayna Green, chair of the division of cultural history at the Smithsonian. This is the first time an entire working kitchen has been



Julia Child at work in 1969, top. "Above all, have a good time," she told Americans in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. We took the advice—and her—to heart. ■ She likes to have her favorite tools within easy reach, right. Time to wield a rolling pin? Look in the stockpot.

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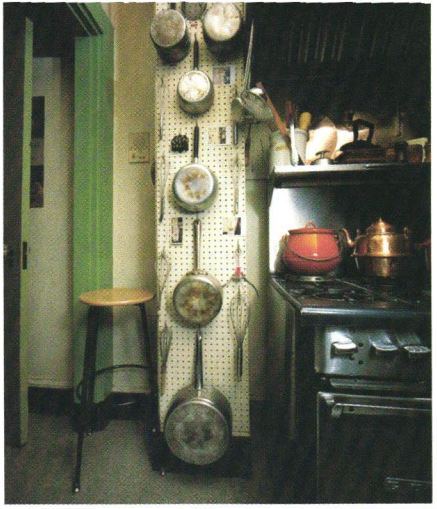
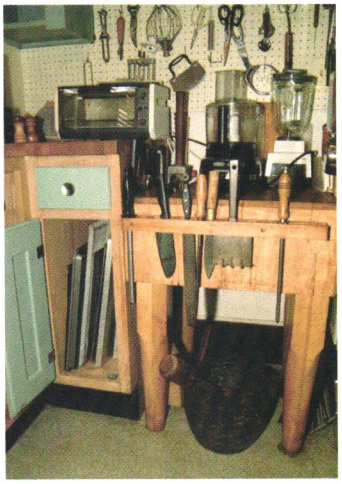
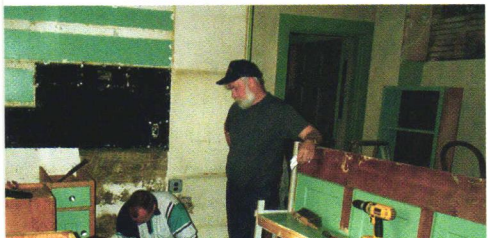
acquired and reinstalled in a museum exactly as it was in its original home, with each object placed where the cook herself placed it. "It would have been fine to have just the Garland stove and display it," curator Paula Johnson says. "But to have the Garland stove in context, with everything around it and on it, and to know how Julia used it—that tells a different story."

Child and her husband, Paul, an artist and photographer who died eight years ago, moved to Cambridge in 1961. They







Paul Child drew outlines of pots and pans on Peg-Board, top, so that each could be returned to its place. ■ The self-confessed "gadget freak" has a fondness for high-quality knives of every size and heft, above right. ■ Hideous venetian blinds, above left, the disposal that prompted nervous warnings to herself—the Smithsonian has it all. ■ Museum staffers and volunteers, left, measured, packed, and shipped the kitchen, then reinstalled it exactly as it had been.

envisioned the kitchen as her professional workplace, as well as the heartbeat of their life at home. Her first book, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking,* was just about to be published, and the plan was for her to give cooking lessons while trying to break into magazine writing. That wasn't quite how it turned out. "There is a fine noncommercial station here, Channel 2, WGBH, to which many people of our type (not TV dinner types) listen," she wrote to Judith Jones, her editor at Knopf, in 1962. "They seem interested in having a series of cooking programs next year, and want me to work up some ideas." A year later, *The French Chef* made its debut, and Americans who loved good food stopped feeling all alone in the supermarket. Child took to television like garlic to butter. Her attitude toward the kitchen was revolutionary: Americans had never seen an expert handle food with such outright pleasure and explain the details of French technique as if she really wanted her audience to understand and to cook for themselves. Countless reporters flocked to the Cambridge kitchen—Child always kept her phone number listed—and three TV series were taped there: *In Julia's Kitchen with Master Chefs, Baking with Julia,* and *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home.*

In keeping with Child's open-house spirit, the Smithsonian put together this exhibit, which opened in August, almost entirely in public. Museum visitors watched while volunteers from the Culinary Historians of Washington measured, photographed, and wrote descriptions of more than 1,200 items transported from Cambridge. "Can Opener," one entry reads. "Hand-held metal and red plastic device for removing ends of cans. Two handles, plastic covered, hinged together at end, with turning handle attached to turning gears and circular cutting edge." Other treasures include a champagne stopper given to her by James Beard, and the emergency signaling mirror issued to Child during World War II, when she was overseas with the Office of Strategic Services. "You can see a personal trail of life, and a craftsman's workshop," Green says. "The stuff she acquired at first was to practice *cuisine classique,* so for instance there's a huge mortar and pestle. But she is absolutely pragmatic. When the food processor came in, she took to it instantly. And she had a microwave. She said it was great for drying out the *Boston Globe* on Sunday when it got wet."

CHILD SAYS she's proud to have her kitchen housed at the Smithsonian, but, the truth is, she has never been unduly reverent about anything, especially her own cooking. Visitors to the exhibit don't see precious culinary collectibles; they see 25 refrigerator magnets, a pair of frankly hideous venetian blinds, and a bottle of Gravy Master. No, she didn't make gravy with it—she made wine. Though she always cooked with the real thing, for economy's sake she toasted the audience at the end of each show with a friendly glass of what she called "Château Gravée-Mastaire."

Rarely has a nation been blessed with an icon so unabashedly herself. No wonder museum goers from bikers to baby boomers have been clustering around the exhibit, reveling in the chance to tell one another their favorite Julia Child stories. They describe legendary moments from the shows; they talk about how their mothers scribbled down the recipes; invariably, they imitate the Voice. "She's part of American folklore," Green says. She's part of America's soul.

Laura Shapiro is a food historian and author of Perfection Salad *(Random House).*

scenic overlook

Emmet Gowin's elegant aerial views depict the natural landscape and its man-made scars

by toby jurovics

In "Off Road Traffic Pattern Along the Northwest Shore of the Great Salt Lake, Utah, 1988," Gowin captures the tracks of motorcycles and SUVs that scar this delicate landscape.

FOR THE PAST 20 years, photographer Emmet Gowin has been engaged in creating a far-reaching document of our landscape from above. The artist first took to the air in 1980, following the eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington State, as a way to survey the aftermath of the volcano's devastation. Gowin and his pilot followed the landscape's gradual renewal over a period of several years; then a day of bad weather obscuring the volcano's summit turned them inland. Coming upon the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, nestled into a bend on the Columbia River, Gowin discovered the origins of a project that occupies him to this day. The foundations of the town of Hanford, dating back to the Manhattan Project, had been scraped away to a shadowy

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scar. Continuing his flights farther afield, Gowin began to search for what he has called the "late-twentieth-century landscape."

Although Gowin has ranged as far as the former Czech Republic, the Middle East, and Japan, the western United States has been his greatest subject. Recognizing our ability to change the earth on a massive scale—one that is often imperceptible from an earth-bound vantage point—he seeks to uncover the visual complexities of the man-made landscape. Photographing from small, single-engine planes, Gowin has made more than a thousand flights. When a subject catches his eye, he leans from the door with his camera as the pilot banks in tight circles around a target. What seem to be vast, open spaces on the map are pocketed with missile silos, military installations, mines, and water treatment facilities. Even in the seemingly most remote areas, nearly every frame he exposes carries some indication of human intrusion. A single flight in northern California found evidence of both abandoned Cold War–era missile silos and hundreds of thousands of tons of nineteenth-century mine tailings along the banks of the Feather River. In his photo "Off Road Traffic Pattern Along the Northwest Shore of the Great Salt Lake, Utah, 1988," motorcycles and SUVs have left calligraphic tracks across the desert backdrop. Sadly, they will scar the delicate ecosystem for decades.

In marked contrast to the nature of his subjects, Gowin's photographs convey an unusual elegance—and a complicated abstraction gained from his airborne vantage point. "An aerial photograph," he explains, "possesses a unique ability to reveal the history of a place." Forms slowly emerge, at times taking on an almost anthropomorphic quality, as we search for the familiar from this unusual perspective. The edge of a circular agricultural field, irrigated by massive sprinklers nearly a quarter mile in length, makes a gentle curve that barely registers at eye level. From above, however, we see a vivid disk against a barren backdrop, or a series of monumental lily pads. In other photographs, the vagaries of scale transform a hillside dotted with anthills into a distant constellation, or the shore of an inland sea into a planetary horizon.

GOWIN IS A masterful printer, and his split-toned images, created by a complicated process during the final development of each black and white photograph, contain hues that extend from soft grays and blues to pink, ocher, and burgundy. This toning can also create a metallic sheen that echoes the most tragic of these landscapes, such as the crater-filled valleys of a nuclear test site in Nevada. Yet these prints are also particularly adept at portraying the subtleties of geology and a sense of the processes that form the contours of the landscape. There is a precision to these photographs that highlights every shift and fold of the terrain, revealing natural features the way a topographic map does. Mountain crests stretch across the earth's thin crust, and streams and riverbeds appear, like the capillaries under our own skin.

Even in the seemingly most remote areas, almost every frame he exposes carries some indication of human intrusion

Although these most recent photographs seem a distant journey from the intimate photographs of family and community and rural landscapes with which he began his career, Gowin draws an easy parallel between the two bodies of work. He has frequently remarked, "What we do to the earth, we do to ourselves," reminding us of the consequences of our actions, and the weight of all that is at stake. □

A retrospective of Emmet Gowin's aerial photographs will be on view from October 20 to January 6 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

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The inventive Randall Grahm is back, with a whole new approach to making wine by jay mcinerney

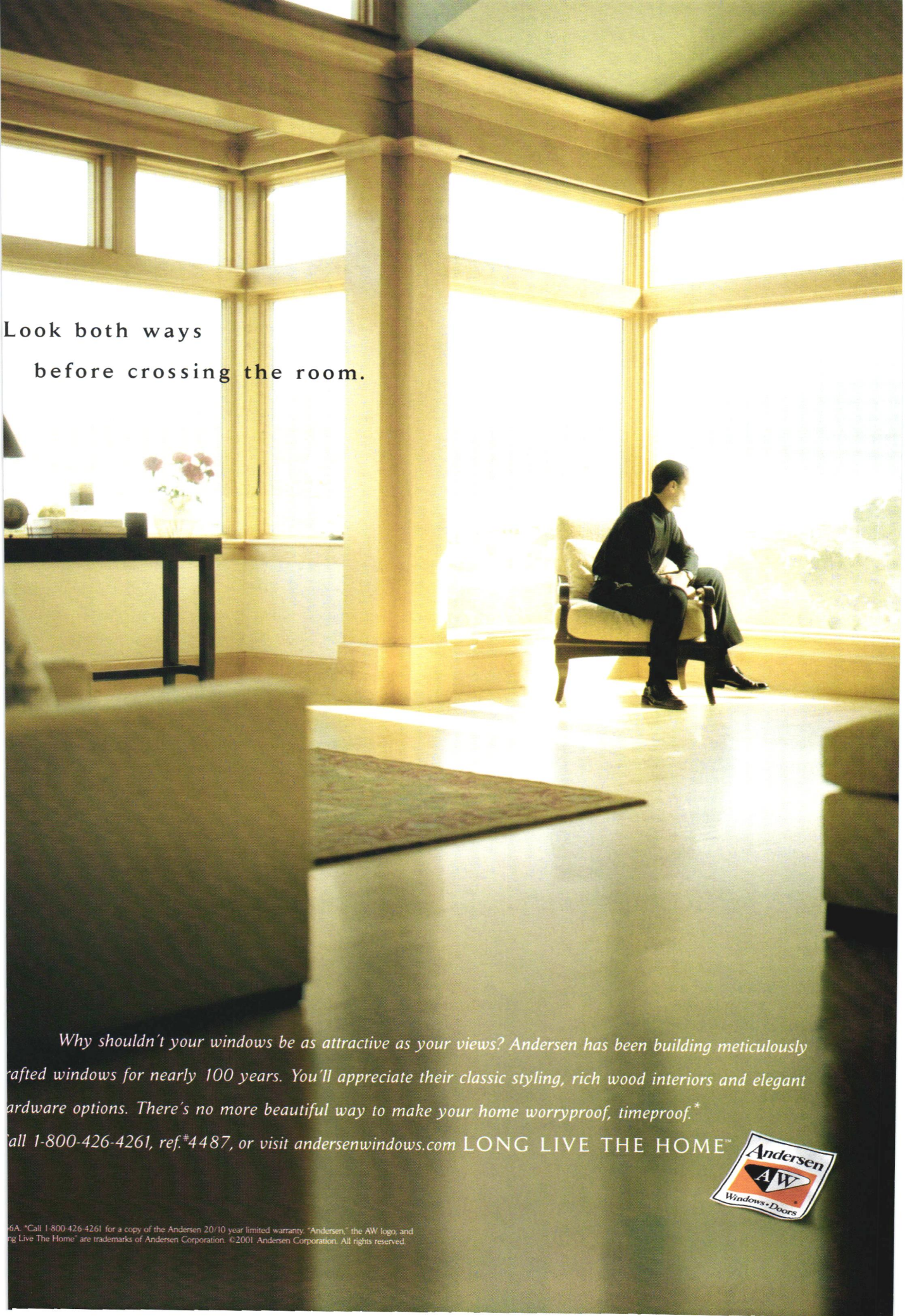
RANDALL GRAHM'S plans for world domination have suffered numerous setbacks at the hands of litigious wine barons, the hegemonic California cab/Chard axis, and glassy-winged sharpshooters, but he doesn't seem remotely discouraged. At 49, he has the youthful appearance of an underfed grad student, ponytailed late '60s University of California at Santa Cruz edition, and exudes an enthusiasm only slightly tempered by wry wit and skeptical intelligence. When we met for lunch recently at the Union Square Café in New York, he was greeted like a rock star, not only by the staff but by fellow diners, who repeatedly interrupted us to kiss his ring. (Not that it bothered me. *Really.* Ever though New York is supposed to be my turf. was totally *fine* with that.)

Grahm is one of the eccentric visionaries o the wine world, in the same unclubbable club a Didier Dagueneau, Sean Thackery, and Stanko Radikon. He is the founder and proprietor o Bonny Doon Vineyards, godfather of California' Rhône Rangers, the Bizarro Universe's evil twi of Robert Mondavi.

Readers of his newsletter may suspect tha Grahm got into the wine business in order t indulge his literary bent, marked by a taste fo outrageous puns ("carneros knowledge," "ma freud," "entre noose") and abstruse references t literature, philosophy, and Chinese medicine. recent issue includes a Salinger parody entitle "A Perfect Day for Barberafish." Grahm als penned a parody of *The Bridges of Madison Count* back in the heyday of that tearjerker, with *übe* critic Robert Parker cast as the romantic lea

Grahm's wine jones kicked in when he wa studying philosophy at UCSC and took a job a a wine store in Beverly Hills. "It seemed like good way to meet girls," he says. At the stor Grahm tasted some of the great French wines. realized that the only way I was ever going to b able to afford wines like those was to make the myself," he says. Pinot noir was his first love, bu he discovered the wines of the Rhône Valle through his friend Kermit Lynch. Grah decided that Rhône grape varietals were bett suited to California, and the rest is wine geek hi tory. He wasn't the first California Rhônephile- he credits David Bruce—but he was the Elv Presley of the so-called Rhône Rangers.

While Napa was becoming famous for i cabernets and Chardonnays, Grahm sought o old vineyards of Grenache and Mourvèdre, a planted his own grapes near Santa Cruz. Amo his first successes were two new-world versio



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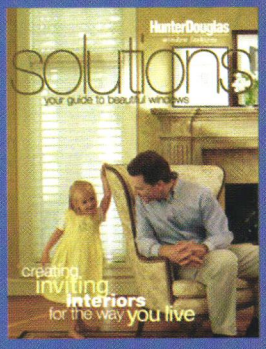

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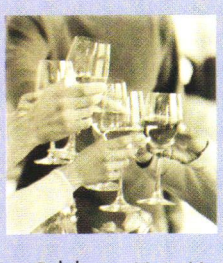

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of Châteauneuf-du-Pape that, besides impressing the critics, demonstrated his talent for outrageously clever names. His Old Telegram is an homage to Vieux Télégraphe; Le Cigare Volant is a reference to an ordinance passed by the town council of Châteauneuf-du-Pape banning alien spacecraft, known in France as flying cigars, from landing within the town limits. Grahm's dessert wines, particularly his sweet muscat, have received outstanding scores from Robert Parker.

GRAHM'S AIRSHIP of a career seemed to lose altitude in the '90s. His vineyards were among the first to be wiped out by Pierce's disease, spread by a nasty insect called the glassy-winged sharpshooter. (I was clever enough to purchase the last vintage, a case of his 1994 Bonny Doon Syrah, one of the greatest new-world syrahs I've tasted.) Parker stopped reviewing Grahm's wines for many years—either through lack of interest or because of the *Bridges of Madison County* parody. The movement Grahm had begun made it harder for him to purchase grapes. On the other hand, he started Ca' del Solo, a line of Cal-Ital wines made from Nebbiolo, Barbera, and pinot grigio. He planted more than 80 acres of grapes in Soledad, illuminated at night by the prison's spotlights. And he was the first American wine maker to experiment with micro-oxygenization, a method of oxygenating wine to soften its tannins and (theoretically) extend its life.

The most innovative move for this inveterate innovator was the creation of his wine club—called DEWN (get it?), for Distinctive Esoteric Wine Network—a new paradigm for marketing wine and a new wine-making concept of one-off creations. The DEWN wines are single performance tours de force, sometimes made in collaboration with European wine makers. To create his '99 Fish Out of Water Ripasso, Grahm passed Nebbiolo juice over raisiny dried Barbera skins. "Why?" he asks. "Because we could." The massive, black curranty 2000 Le Monstre was made in the Languedoc in collaboration with a French wine maker, while the voluptuous '99 My Favorite Marsanne nearly earns its title for this taster—it's right behind Chave's white Hermitage.

The good news is anyone can join the club, and the wines are ridiculously reasonably priced. The weird news is they are made only once—wine as performance art. "Traditionally, wine making is about tradition and continuity," Grahm acknowledges. But he seems to believe that life is too short to exhaust all of his wine-making concepts, not to mention his store of wacky names. The labels, by artists such as Ralph Steadman, are just as—how you say?—inventive. As a philosophy major—and a Riesling lover—I can't resist a wine called Critique of Pure Riesling. But Grahm's wit has cost him points in snottier corners of the wine world. Show-offs don't break out a wine called Macho Nacho for client dinners.

For all of his iconoclasm, Grahm is ultimately a wine conservative. He rails against the overuse of new oak barrels and oenological "Viagrafication." "Both Parker and *The Wine Spectator* have oversimplified wine," he says. "It's all about intensity and power. Valuing a wine for intensity is like judging music on how loud it is. Strangely," says the post-hippie, who regularly gets his *chi* adjusted, "I'm kind of a Tory about wine."

Kind of. □

For information about joining DEWN: bonnydoonvineyards.com.

the oeno file

- **2000 LE CIGARE VOLANT** Structured and age-worthy, but also feminine, balanced, and complex. Reveals its mysteries slowly. Resembles a '99 Gevrey-Chambertin as much as a '99 Châteauneuf. The '99 was kind of Edna St. Vincent Millay; this is Wallace Stevens. $32
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PAST PERFECT

july 1945

Adrian, the man who dressed a thousand stars at MGM, loved how the California sun moved through his house. This is an excerpt

The author, left, at work. ■ A long coveted Grinling Gibbons carving is a focal point of the living room, below.

PROBABLY BECAUSE Janet [Gaynor, his wife] and I were both born in the East, we get a great kick out of living in a very eastern house on a western hill—with no snowed-in moments. The most bromidic phrase a Californian hears from a newly arrived easterner is "I like it out here, but I must say that I yearn for a change of season. Too much sunshine for me!" Possibly true at first, but after you've lived in California you can *never* get too much sunshine, and you *do* sense a change of seasons.

All this Rotarian praise for California seems far removed from trying to tell about our house, or why Janet and I love it. It is probably because it behaves so well in the sun.

The living room gives the illusion of much sun pouring in because of the windows, which are enormous bays at each side of the room. And yet the sun never gets in too much. One sees it outside with lots of reflected light, so that we are constantly aware of it without being submerged in it.

The sun comes into our bedroom early and leaves early for other parts of the house. It comes into the little East Indian room for lunch and departs, politely, immediately afterward, leaving it cool all afternoon and the most comfortable spot for dinner.

It has been most surprising to our friends to find how easily Venetian, French, and Austrian pieces fit into an American house. The Austrian stove looks snug and right in the little room where it now stands; the baroque rose-festooned containers filled with lemon leaves, which stand on either side of the bay windows in the living room, seem to be made for the place; and the little Venetian chandelier swings as happily in California as it ever did in Venice.

I watched the Grinling Gibbons carving (now over the living room mantel) for years before I ever owned it. One day in New York, I came upon it in an antiques shop. Each year, I made a pilgrimage to see it. After ten years of my ogling it Janet insisted that I buy it. Today its wood mellows beautifully against the robin's-egg blue of our living room walls.

The dining room gets the afternoon sun. It is pink, with pink gingham curtains. The Regency table and chairs are black and gold. The antique wallpaper panels are framed in gingham, which plays against the classic formality of the architectural subjects.

June is a very dreary month in California because it brings so much fog, and one feels that it will rain until noon practically every day. But June only lasts 30 days. Then we have sun.

It is all a matter of choice or taste—and it is wonderful that all tastes are different. And the most wonderful of all is the ardent way we all love that part of the country in which we live.

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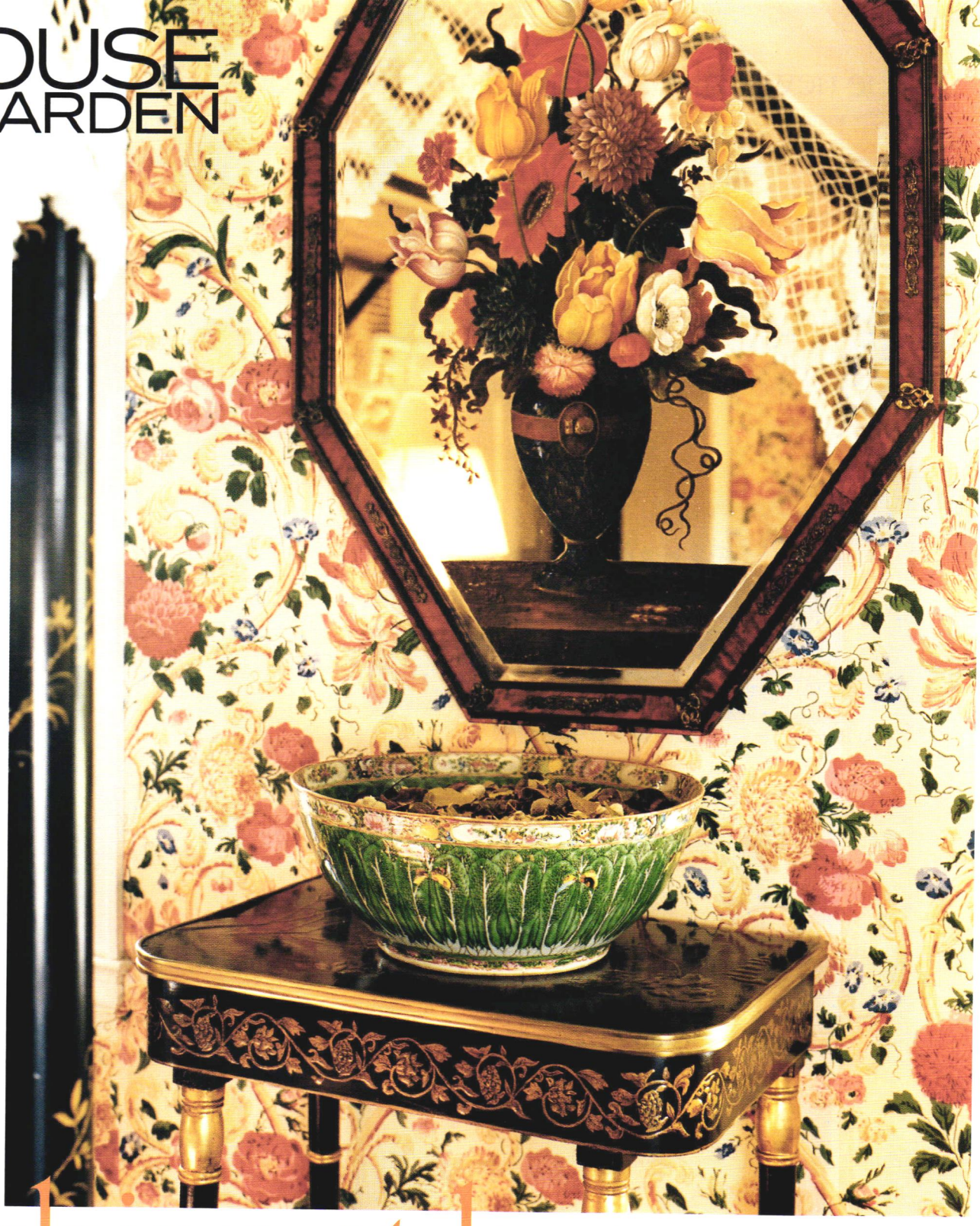


fashion at home

We quite rightly tend to admire people whose lives are all of a piece, people who talk the talk *and* walk the walk. A look behind the scenes at designers who dress or address the world in brilliant color or classic lines or contemporary chic should reveal homes consistent with the designers' styles of couture. And so it does with the interiors we have included here. Fashion, it seems, is not so much a passing fancy as an abiding point of view.

In Oscar de la Renta's guest bedroom, a 19th-century reverse-painted mirror echoes the flowered wallpaper. The Oscar de la Renta Home potpourri, by Slatkin & Co., fills a Chinese export bowl on the Charles X gilded and lacquered table.

The new look of Annette and Oscar de la Renta's Connecti

OSCAR WORTHY

WRITTEN BY MARTIN FILLER PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS HALARD PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRA

treat is the inspiration for the designer's home collection

designer savvy

The sitting room is evocative of an English country house with superb furniture.

trade secrets

FURNITURE The round Empire table, signed "Jacob," was bought years ago from Galerie Kugel, Paris.

ACCENTS The potpourri is Country, from Oscar de la Renta Home's potpourri line, by Slatkin & Co. Sister Parish "improved" the 19th-century clock with the fluted finial.

FABRIC Colefax & Fowler's Avebury in Terracotta/Blue is on the walls. Bennison's Roses in Blue chintz is on the armchair and sofa.

AS LONGTIME LEADERS in the fickle world of fashion, Annette and Oscar de la Renta have remained remarkably true to their distinctive yet complementary personal styles. Their several residences—including a baronial Park Avenue apartment, a Caribbean dream house at Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, and a country place in Kent, Connecticut—have evolved from the owners' shared belief in design as an evocation of their lives, and not vice versa. Like many other couturiers past and present, de la Renta takes a keen interest in decorating, because, as he explains, "when you design clothes, you imagine a woman in a certain kind of environment. And for me, being a Cancer, the places where I live have always been very important."

Chief among them is the New England hideaway that the de la Rentas consider their true home. Three decades ago, de la Renta and his first wife, Françoise, bought Brook Hill Farm in the northwest corner of Connecticut to be close to their friends Alexander Liberman, legendary editorial director of Condé Nast Publications, and his wife, Tatiana. Within a few years of the de la Rentas' arrival, they were joined in the neighborhood by fellow New York designers Bill Blass and Diane von Furstenberg, as well as by such style-conscious friends as Henry

designer savvy

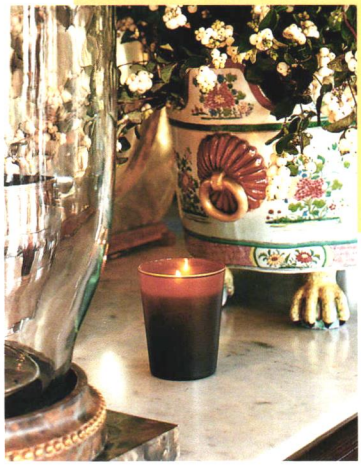
The dining room channels the spirit of Syrie Maugham.

trade secrets

FURNITURE A set of ivory-painted 18th-century English chairs surrounds the mahogany table. Between the windows sits a Swedish Baroque ceramic stove. **ACCENTS** Red glasses on the table are filled with Oscar de la Renta Home's scented candles, by Slatkin & Co. Carved palm trees are in the corners.

GOODSCENTS

Some people fantasize about bottling memory. With the home fragrance collection he introduced last fall, Oscar de la Renta has done it. Developed in collaboration with Slatkin & Co., Oscar Home scents—City, Country, and Island—evoke de la Renta's houses. "His homes all have distinct fragrances, and this line captures that," says his stepdaughter (and VP of licensing) Eliza Reed Bolen, seen above with de la Renta. "It is yet another extension of Oscar's personal style." Potpourri and room spray come in understated wooden boxes; candles, in chic opaque chocolate glasses. Oscar Home is available at Bergdorf Goodman, Nieman Marcus, and other fine stores. Next year, a new scent, Holiday.



and Nancy Kissinger, Slim Keith, and John Richardson. That heady influx caused the suddenly chic area to be dubbed the Fashion Belt.

With the inimitable Françoise (editor at large of *House & Garden* at the time of her death, in 1983), de la Renta had created a retreat so beloved that, after he married Annette Reed in 1989, they decided to sell her considerably more imposing establishment in Westchester and make Brook Hill Farm their exurban base. The new Mrs. de la Renta brought not only her passion for gardening (the horticultural potential of the Kent spread, with its breathtaking views, provided a major incentive for the move), but also a goodly number of superb furnishings from her former weekend home. Those fine pieces, mainly of early-nineteenth-century European origin, reinforced the highly sophisticated but nonetheless cozy atmosphere of a rambling house that may seem typically American on the outside but inside evokes the English country house tradition, with a nostalgic dash of Chekhovian Russia. "This is really very much my wife's taste," says de la Renta, and indeed she has stuck with the same flower-strewn printed linen upholstery fabric that she first used more than 20 years ago.

Annette de la Renta, like Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis before her, is known to call on various professionals for focused help in doing up particular portions of an interior. Thus she retains ultimate authorship of the whole, and would never dream of either ceding complete control to a single designer or redecorating any room in its entirety. "A lot of decorators have worked on it," says Oscar de la Renta of their Connecticut house, "because we have so many decorator friends. But Annette is always very sure of what she wants."

Her quite English incremental approach, as well as an Anglocentric dependence on floral chintzes to disguise paw prints in a household where Norfolk terriers have free run, results in an appealingly unstudied atmosphere in which fine objects seem like old friends rather than glittering trophies. A fine eye for placement cleverly disguises such limitations as the low ceilings typical of old New England farmhouses.

Built in 1935, this relatively modest structure has been judiciously expanded by the de la Rentas, who appended a 25-by-50-foot master bedroom and bath wing designed by Cuban-born architect Ernesto Buch, who then modified the exterior of the existing structure to better harmonize the old and the new. That private sanctuary is the one place that the couturier's *(Cont. on page 184)*

designer savvy

The guest room is "florabundant," a heady array of color and pattern. A crocheted pelmet gives the tester bed a quaint air.

trade secrets

FURNITURE Lacquer abounds, on a secretary, a 19th-century table by the bed, and a Charles X gilt and lacquer table against the far wall.

FABRICS New chintz on the walls complements antique fabrics on the bed and easy chair.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MICHELLE BROWN FOR MARK EDWARD INC.

DESIGN TO INSPIRE

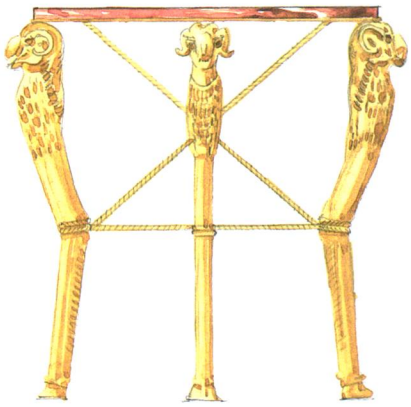
Century Furniture offers up the Oscar de la Renta lifestyle

At the High Point Furniture Market this fall, Century Furniture introduces its Oscar de La Renta Collection, including pieces he designed for the company and adaptations of furniture that he owns. The line arrives at retail stores next spring. Like his home fragrances, this endeavor will be organized by themes—City, Island, and Country—inspired by the designer's houses. "This collection reflects the way I live," he says. It's no wonder, then, that the pieces he has drawn from his charming Connecticut place express glamour, ease, and elegance. Below are sketches of some highlights from Country.

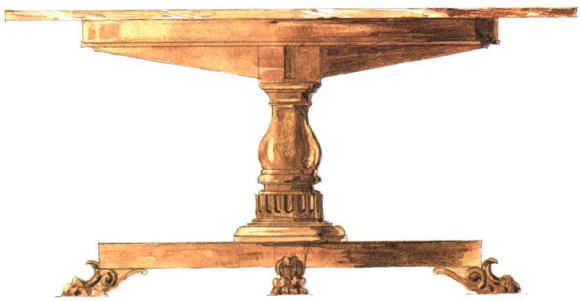
■ **AN 18TH-CENTURY GERMAN COMMODE** appealed to de la Renta because of its form and finish. The model graces his living room.

■ **AN 18TH-CENTURY-STYLE DINING CHAIR** combines elements from various sources and is covered in an embroidered fabric.

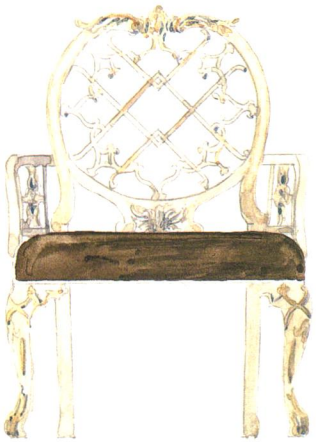
■ **A CURVACEOUS DINING CHAIR** in warm mahogany was loosely drawn from the chalky white Chinese Chippendale beauties.



■ **AN ITALIAN NEOCLASSICAL SIDE TABLE** has a cast-metal base and a marble top. The original is in the designer's living room.



■ **ROUND TABLES** "are ideal for successful dinner conversation," he says. This one expands from 60 to 84 inches.



■ **A CHINESE CHIPPENDALE PARTY CHAIR** is based on de la Renta's antique dining chairs, which he bought at Sotheby's in London.

In the living room, a 19th-century Russian neoclassical drop-leaf table holds a pair of 18th-century Japanese stoneware rabbits, a 19th-century mahogany obelisk, and a pair of hurricane lamps. Bennison's Roses in Blue chintz slipcovers are identical to those used in Annette de la Renta's old Westchester house. Sources, see back of book.

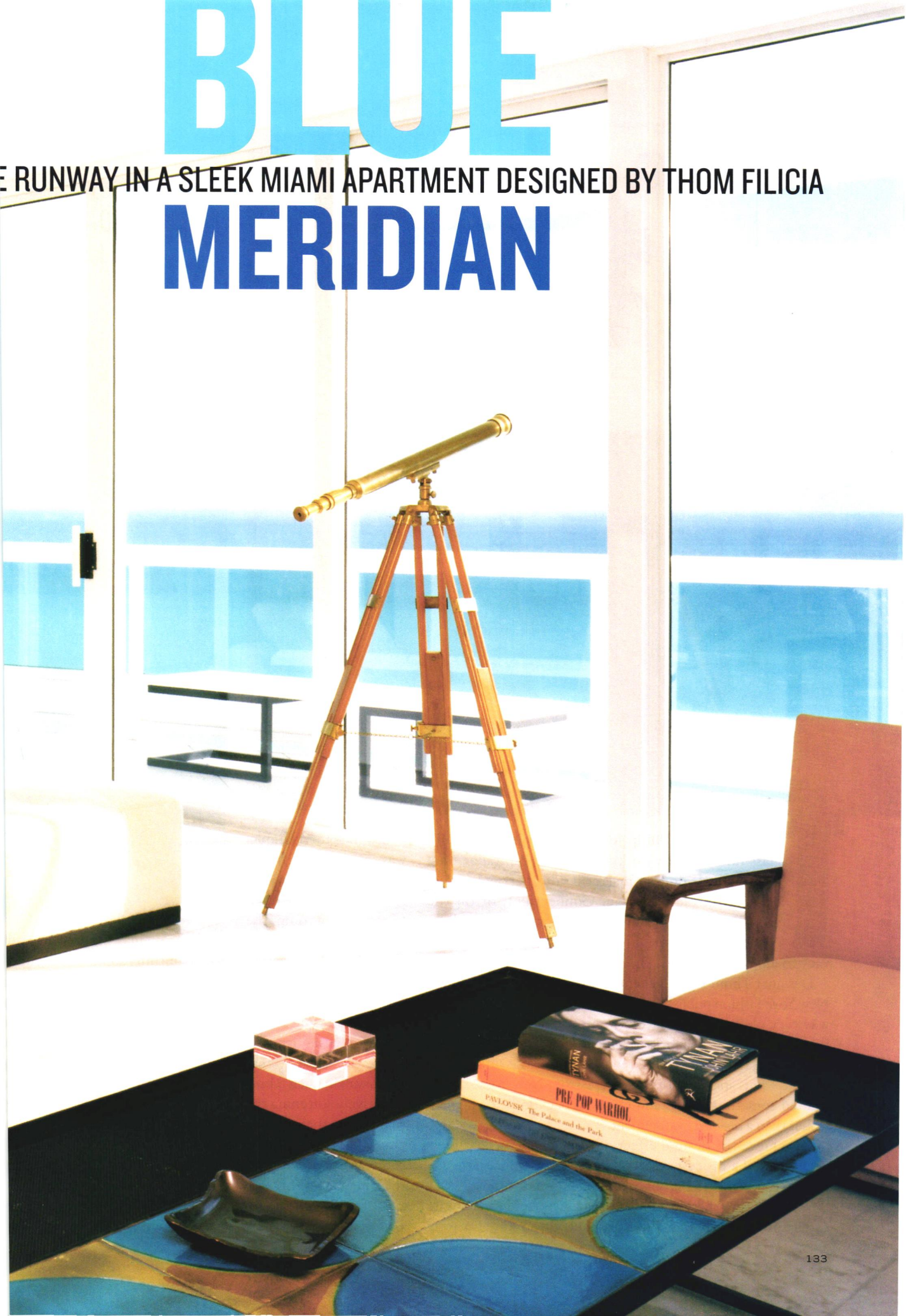
WRITTEN BY MAYER RUS
PRODUCED BY JAMES SHEARRON
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JASON SCHMIDT
STYLED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS

A NEW YORK EDITORIAL POTENTATE FINDS REFUGE FR

Thom Filicia designed the chaises in the living room to provide seating without cluttering the area or obstructing views. The chaises are covered in Arcadia linen by Rogers & Goffigon Ltd. Filicia designed the steel coffee table, which features ceramic tiles from the late 1950s by Roger Capron.

BLUE MERIDIAN

E RUNWAY IN A SLEEK MIAMI APARTMENT DESIGNED BY THOM FILICIA



TAKE IT FROM Philip Johnson. People who live in glass houses really do know how to capitalize on a great view. It doesn't matter if your particular glass house is in New Canaan, Connecticut, or on the 22nd floor of a Miami Beach apartment building. All you need is a magnificent setting and enough privacy to enjoy it freely.

Designer Thom Filicia's client, who is a prominent figure in New York fashion publishing, certainly grasps the concept. "He was very clear about what he wanted: a simple white box floating above the beach," says Filicia, who mentioned Philip Johnson's glass house as a reference point for the spirit of the project. "This apartment is his escape from New York, and he wanted something clean and open—a backdrop for his life, rather than a big design statement."

To achieve the desired effect of refined simplicity, Filicia orchestrated a process of calculated subtraction. He began by restructuring the floor plan to eliminate unnecessary impediments to the spectacular ocean views and to facilitate easier circulation through the apartment. One of three existing bedrooms, for example, was converted into a casual library and media room that is now open to the dining room, the adjacent kitchen, and the rest of the main living area beyond.

Filicia's scheme also involved banishing some of the building developer's less luxurious "luxury" amenities. First to go was an elaborately patterned floor border of black marble flecked with tones of gold and burgundy, which the designer replaced with crisp white marble. With a particularly clever decorative sleight of hand, Filicia draped the one solid living room wall in linen fabric highlighted with lustrous spun rayon, effectively softening the architecture's harder edges and slyly suggesting that another wall of glass might be concealed behind the fabric. Unfussy window treatments in the bedroom and media room do a straightforward job of blocking the sun whenever necessary.

"At first, my client wanted the apartment to be all white, but I didn't want to risk having the space feel unappealingly

design to inspire

Where to find contemporary furniture that won't cramp your style—at the beach or in town

■ **Outdoor Furniture** For modern seating that looks great on the deck or in the backyard, try DelGreco, which carries the classic Richard Schultz line, or one of Brown Jordan's more contemporary collections. Matthew Hilton puts a modern spin on oak with his latest designs for SCP, London.

■ **Chaises** Thom Filicia's custom pieces emphasize simplicity of line. For a similar look, we recommend Ralph Pucci International, which has chaises by Patrick Naggar, Paul Mathieu, and Spencer Fung. Donghia Furniture/Textile Ltd. also makes sleek seating.

■ **Sofas** B&B Italia has many clean-lined options, particularly in the Maxalto collection. Other sources include Todd Hase, Maison Gerard, Repertoire, and Mitchell Gold. Cassina also a good place to find contemporary European and American designs.

■ **Dining Chairs** If you're looking for a dining chair with a slender profile, try the Superleggera chair by Gio Ponti, available through Cassina. Kartell makes several chic yet inexpensive pull-up chairs, and there's always the classic Arne Jacobsen stacker for Fritz Hansen, available through Knoll.

designer savvy

To achieve a casual, loftlike feeling, Filicia removed doors and walls separating the dining room and kitchen, opposite page, and the living room, this page.

trade secrets

FURNITURE Cappellini's Classica chairs surround a custom dining table. A French '20s chair in Larsen's Mesa fabric sits by Filicia's Lucite and lacquer console.

FLOORING Sandblasted Carrara marble.

"I USED SPLASHES OF COLOR TO ADD WARMTH AND DEPTH TO THE DESIGN"

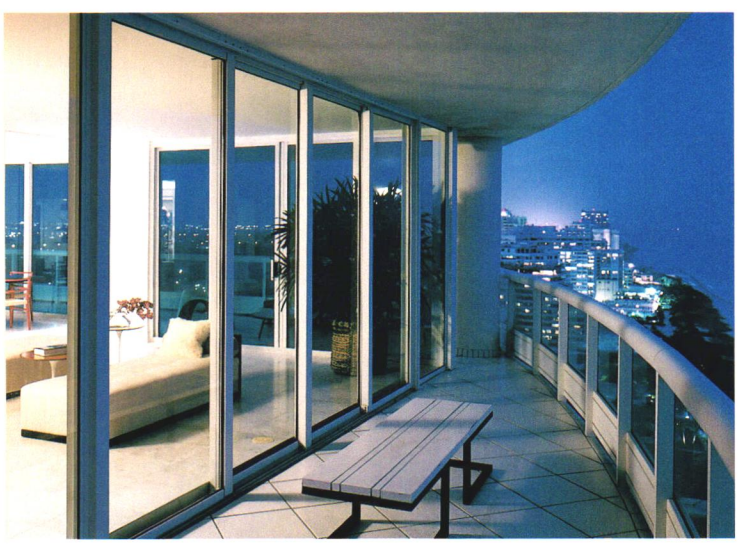
—THOM FILICIA

designer savvy

A diaphanous curtain on a solid wall softens the architectural envelope.

trade secrets

FURNITURE Two French 1920s chairs flank the Solo sofa from B&B Italia. Filicia designed the coffee table.
FABRIC Mesa is on the chairs, and Thailana silk is on the sofa, both by Larsen, through Cowtan & Tout. The curtain is Rialto by Coraggio Textiles.

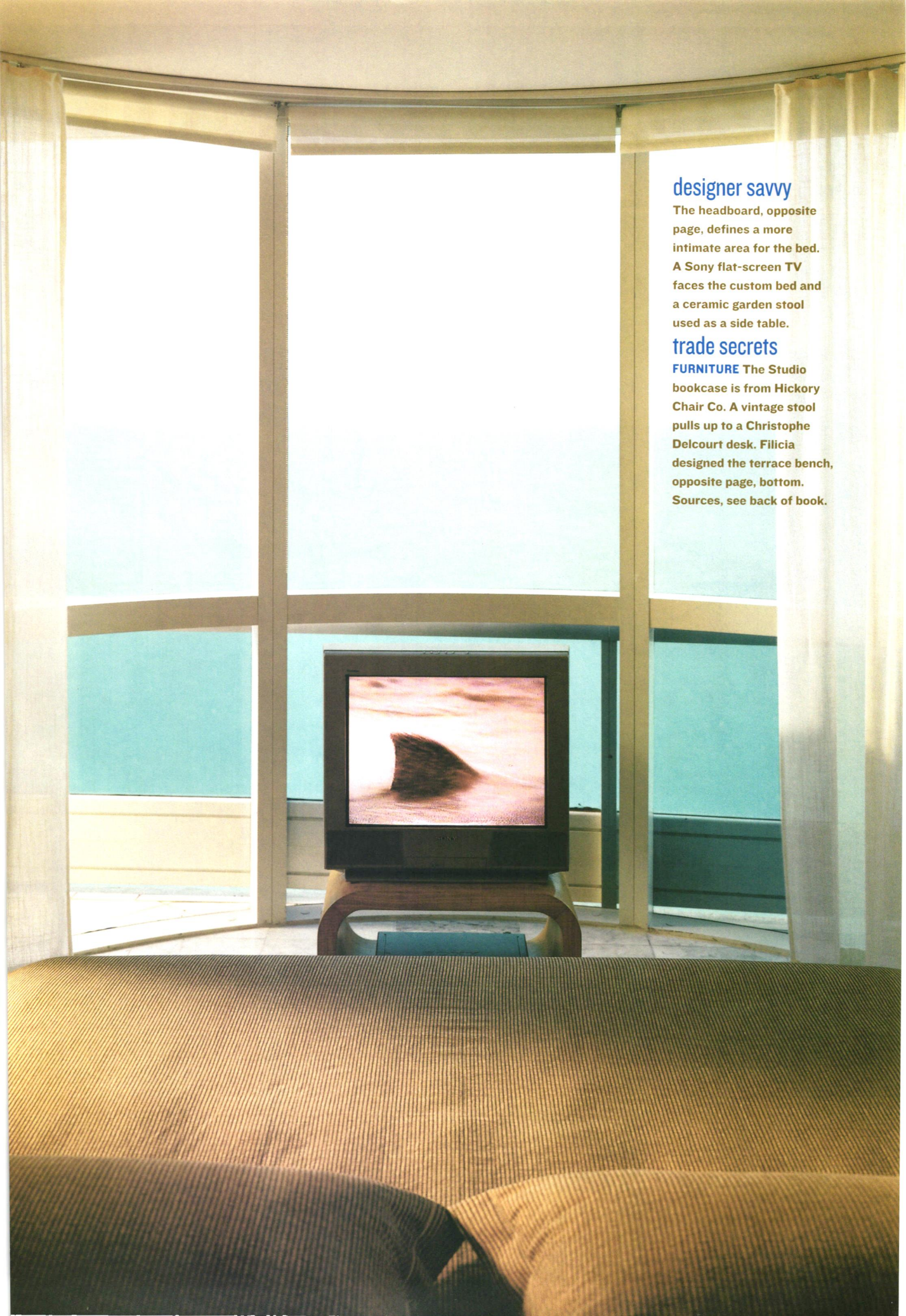


modern and cold," Filicia says. "I used small splashes of color to add warmth and depth to the design."

Furnishings represent a mix of custom-designed pieces and antiques sympathetic to the overall atmosphere of restraint and deference to the views. "There are subtle references to the 1960s, but we definitely didn't want a funky, Austin Powers vibe," Filicia notes. "The shapes of the furniture are sleek and restrained, but we chose materials and fabrics that have a bit of texture and richness."

Characteristic of Filicia's approach are the two custom-designed chaises in the living room: framed in ebonized mahogany and upholstered in off-white linen, the minimalist/luxe chaises provide additional seating for guests without cluttering the room or blocking sight lines to the deep blue sea. They are also the height of beachside chic.

"Simplicity is one of the toughest design disciplines," Filicia insists. "What I strived for here is simplicity with soul." □



designer savvy

The headboard, opposite page, defines a more intimate area for the bed. A Sony flat-screen TV faces the custom bed and a ceramic garden stool used as a side table.

trade secrets

FURNITURE The Studio bookcase is from Hickory Chair Co. A vintage stool pulls up to a Christophe Delcourt desk. Filicia designed the terrace bench, opposite page, bottom. Sources, see back of book.

FLAIR PLAY

WRITTEN BY PAUL O'DONNELL PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAMES WADDELL PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING

HERVÉ PIERRE, DESIGN DIRECTOR OF BILL BLASS, INC., DECORATES HIS MANHATTAN APARTMENT WITH AN EYE TOWARD FUN, FRENCHNESS, AND FASHION HISTORY

DESIGNER SAVVY

Looks are what count for a fashion designer. The elaborate wall panels are really paintings that Hervé Pierre made himself.

TRADE SECRETS

FABRICS The couch is covered in red velvet. Black and white scarves by Lars Nilsson for Bill Blass cover the end pillows.

ACCENTS Pierre made the lampshade out of an Hermès shopping bag. Nilsson made the Manhattan bag, available at Clearly First, NYC.

DESIGNER SAVVY

Pierre decorates with tableaux that have the flair of a chic boutique display.

TRADE SECRETS

FURNITURE Louis XVI–style armchairs are covered in a beige velvet. The bow-studded screen, opposite page, came from the Pierre Balmain salon in Paris.

ACCENTS Pierre designed the tricornered straw hat, left, and black glove, atop the screen, for Balmain Haute Couture. The glove holds a fan signed by Hubert de Givenchy that was used in his last show. A stack of Schiaparelli hatboxes echoes the book-and-art-bedecked ladder. The plaster angel came from a Christmas display at Lanvin, Paris.

Hervé Pierre arrived in New York for the first time on a Sunday afternoon in May, and went straight to Tiffany, where he had seen Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard cavorting in the movie *Breakfast at Tiffany's.*

In one window, there was a frog-shaped brooch. In another sat a jeweled snail. Recalling that day seven years ago, Pierre says, "I thought, that's a good sign for a Frenchman."

The Tiffany omen took its time delivering. It would be two months before his belongings made their way across the Atlantic. All the while, Pierre, design director of the Bill Blass fashion house, shuttled between Manhattan's drab fashion district ("Seventh and Thirty-ninth is a long way from avenue Montaigne," he says) and an empty apartment in far west Greenwich Village. To conquer his homesickness, Pierre says, "I tried, as a gimmick, to re-create a Paris environment." He took six-foot canvases and gray and white paint and created trompe l'oeil decorative wall panels for the living room. On the modest folding doors in his closets, he drew cartoon copies o Christian Bérard's famous salon doors at the Guerlain perfum shop on the Champs Elysées.

His furniture finally arrived, including an eighteenth-centur canopied bed in the style known as *lit à la polonaise,* plus noblewoman's sedan from the same era. It was as if a Frenc manor—the kind Pierre used to visit near his home in the Loir Valley—had come to roost in an apartment overlooking th Hudson River: a château by way of a Joseph Cornell box.

Scale is one way that Pierre's witty decor plays on percep tion. For all the gestures to grandeur, a visitor remains con scious of being in a very economical, delicately decorate space. Another of Pierre's tricks is to cross authenticity an

Schiaparelli
Schiaparelli
LE STYLE GIVENCHY
HALSTON
CHRISTIAN LACROIX
Journal d'une collection
JACQUES FATH
SIMPLY HALSTON
MOVADO
My Years and Seasons
DIANA VREELAND
COSTUME
pierre cardin
THE GENIUS OF CHARLES JAMES
CHRISTIAN LACROIX · PÊLE-MÊLE
PIERRE BALMAIN
JEWELRY BY CHANEL
BALMAIN
POIRET
VIONNET
Christian Dior

> "Seventh Avenue and Thirty-ninth Street is a long way from the avenue Montaigne"
> —Hervé Pierre

pure fakery. The bed's coverlet, draperies, and pillowcases are covered in a period Braquenié pattern, and the sedan chair is lined with a Le Manach pattern called Madame Elisabeth, originally designed for the sister of Louis XVI.

But from the plaster bust of an angel (from a friend's store window display) perched atop a stepladder to the family of oil and charcoal portraits covering one wall (nearly all flea market finds), most of the rest is "fake pretensions," Pierre happily admits. An ornate ivory picture frame turns out to be a construction of corrugated cardboard, a rainy day project from Pierre's first months here. High on one wall, an oval metal window frame, a remnant of a razed Haussmann-era Parisian apartment house, adds to the sense of a back lot.

Pierre barely looks old enough to be the brains behind a major fashion house. But in 1990, at age 24, he became the precociously young head of haute couture at Balmain. New York–based Oscar de la Renta displaced Pierre in 1993, only to hire him two years later and send him to New York to work on de la Renta's own signature label. In small ways, Pierre's apartment honors the tradition he left behind in Paris. Atop a screen he took from Balmain, a single, sinuous black glove holds a prop fan from Hubert de Givenchy's last collection. Over the bed hangs a framed invitation from the '50s, printed on silk and decorated with a drawing of a Louis XVI–vintage aristocrat, announcing a party given by the Baron de Rédé at the opulent Hotel Lambert.

Pierre reveres the intellectual backbone of French fashion. Each turn in conversation entails a search for a book from the piles stacked on every surface, as he seeks a picture, or a name, to illustrate a point. Passion, too, is present, as in Pierre's charming obsession with hatboxes, particularly Elsa Schiaparelli's hot pink models. The connections are personal too: above the stairs hangs a framed Hermès scarf his father gave Pierre's mother.

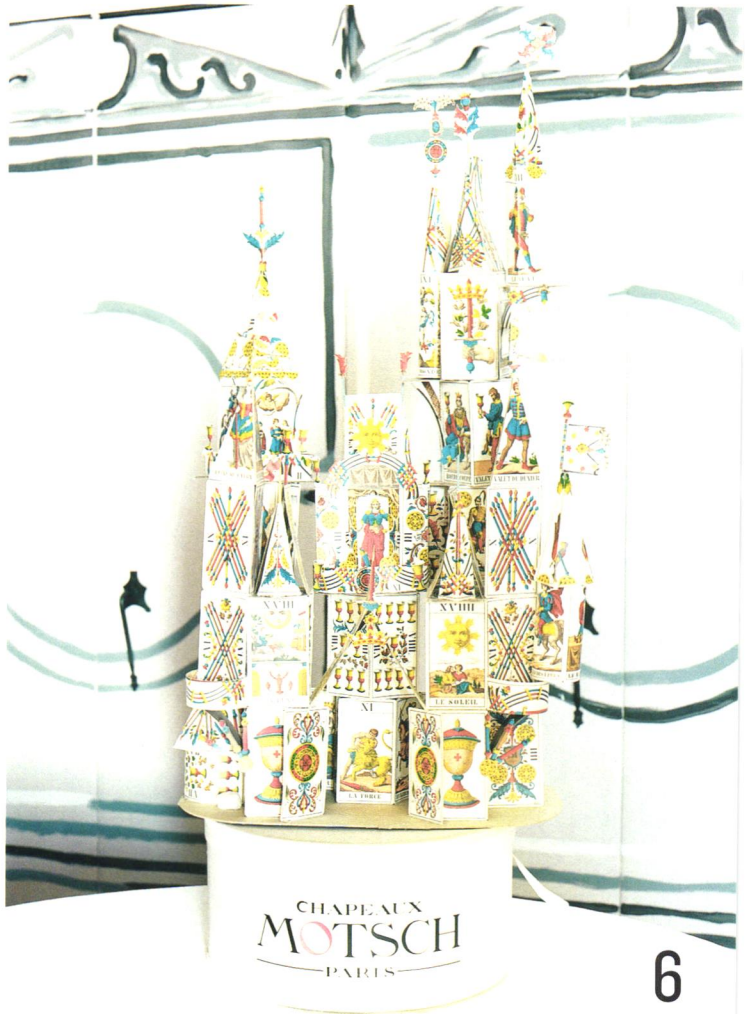
But Pierre no longer seeks solace in alien surroundings. After three years with de la Renta and three at Vera Wang, his move to the brashly American Blass may begin to redress a recent domination by U.S. bred or based designers over Paris fashion houses. Pierre's homesick hideaway was, perhaps, a beachhead all along. ▷

Pierre's collection includes **1** costume sketches and fabrics for an opera production; **2** an 18th-century men's vest paired with antique shoe trees; **3** a canopied beach chair used in the film *Death in Venice*; **4** original sketches for Balmain ads by René Gruau; **5** an 18th-century sedan chair holding such treasures as an ebony and silver cane owned by his great uncle; and **6** a castle that Pierre made out of tarot cards.

2

3

5



6

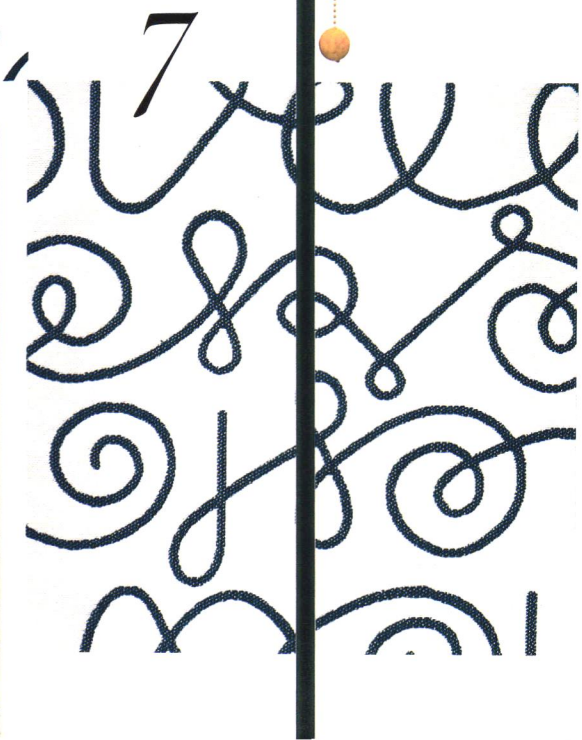
As his bed proves, for Pierre, too much of a good thing is never enough

The Louis XVI canopied bed in the style known as *à la polonaise* is covered in a Braquenié cotton (now discontinued) in an 18th-century pattern. Pierre Frey carries other Braquenié fabrics. Ostrich plumes adorning the bed are from Lemarié, Paris. Visit the Web site ostrichesonline.com for similar feathers in natural white and 40 other colors.

DESIGN TO INSPIRE

How to get Hervé Pierre's look at home

We channeled Pierre's talent to amuse and found an array of products with pretty and witty airs. **1** Côté France's French Lit de Repos Empire. Ariane Red twin-sized quilt, $385, by Elsa C., La Cafetière. Dobby Striped daybed bolsters, $159 for a set of three, Pottery Barn. **2** Pink satin ribbon, $8 a yard; pleated grosgrain ribbon, $34 a yard; wide-striped grosgrain ribbon, $13 a yard; all from Mokuba New York, NYC. **3** Pierre made pillows from Bill Blass scarves. You could try using Timney Fowler's Agra Ironworks cotton. **4** Marta Baumiller's Audrey floor lamp, $430, from Lampa, is mad fun. **5** If vintage hatboxes elude you, check out Joy & Jake's Retro travel cases, $75 for the small and $125 for the large. **6** The 23k gold Tresora and gilded white Palais frames, both from Larson-Juhl, are truly artful. **7** Names, a cotton blend, by Alexander Girard, from Maharam. Sources, see back of book. —SABINE ROTHMAN



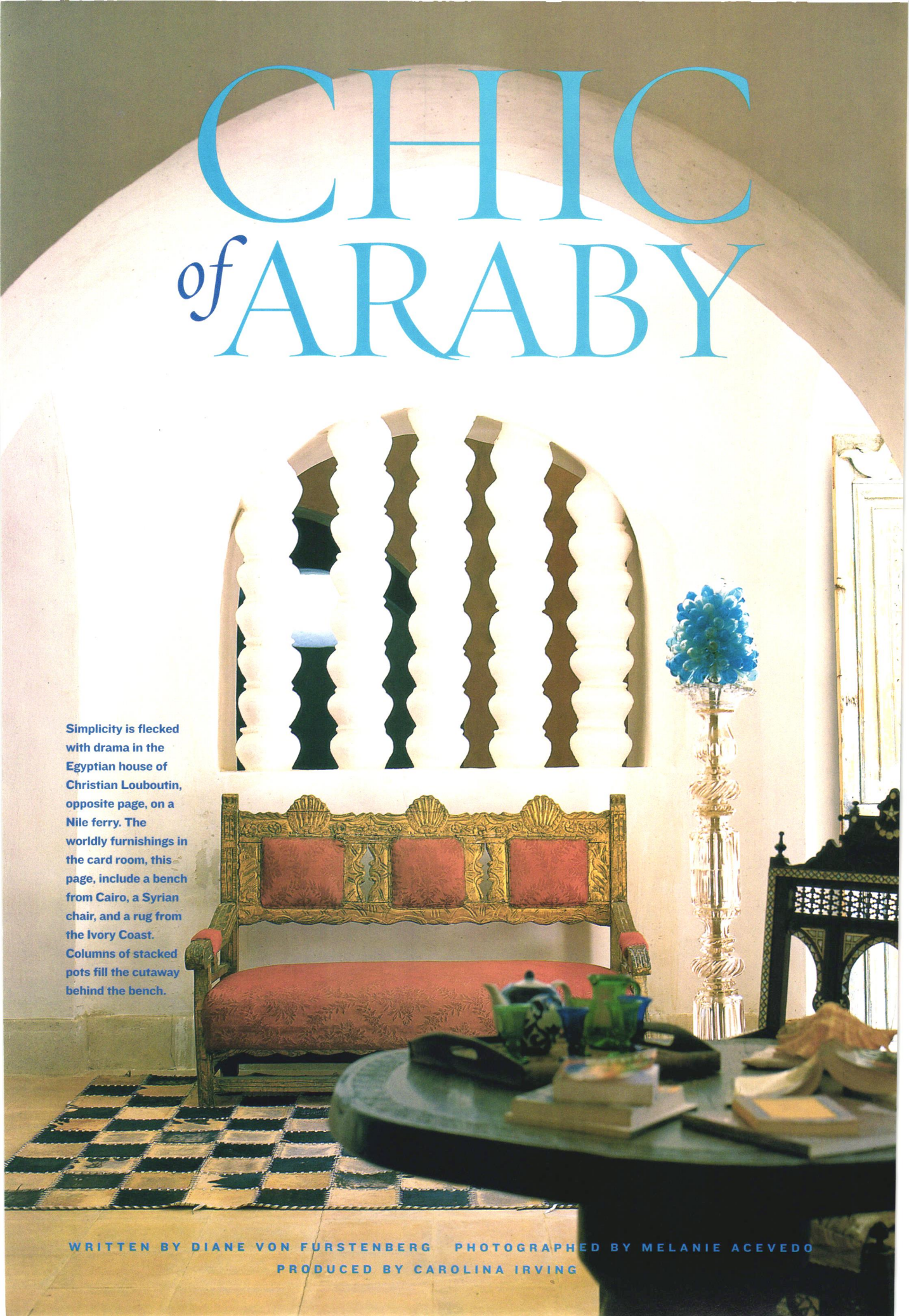
DEFINING MOMENT

DUCASSE TO GO

The recipient of eight Michelin stars for his restaurants—he has them in France, Monaco, and New York—chef Alain Ducasse is a multinational culinary force. To symbolize the boundary-crossing cuisine for which he is famous, Ducasse had the venerable Paris firm of Goyard make this kitchen-in-a-trunk for him. He worked closely with an architect, who designed the two trays, five pockets, and 44 straps that hold the essential tools of the master—knives, immersible thermometer, copper saucepan, colander. At 165 pounds fully loaded, this is a collector's item, not a carry-on. And Ducasse is the consummate collector; he has ordered another trunk for his complete stash of Michelin guides. And after that? Perhaps one for his galaxy of stars. □

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PASCAL CHEVALLIER PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN

CHIC *of* ARABY



Simplicity is flecked with drama in the Egyptian house of Christian Louboutin, opposite page, on a Nile ferry. The worldly furnishings in the card room, this page, include a bench from Cairo, a Syrian chair, and a rug from the Ivory Coast. Columns of stacked pots fill the cutaway behind the bench.

WRITTEN BY DIANE VON FURSTENBERG PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO
PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING

AN INTIMATE GLIMPSE AT THE EGYPTIAN HIDEAWAY OF FASHION DESIGNER CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

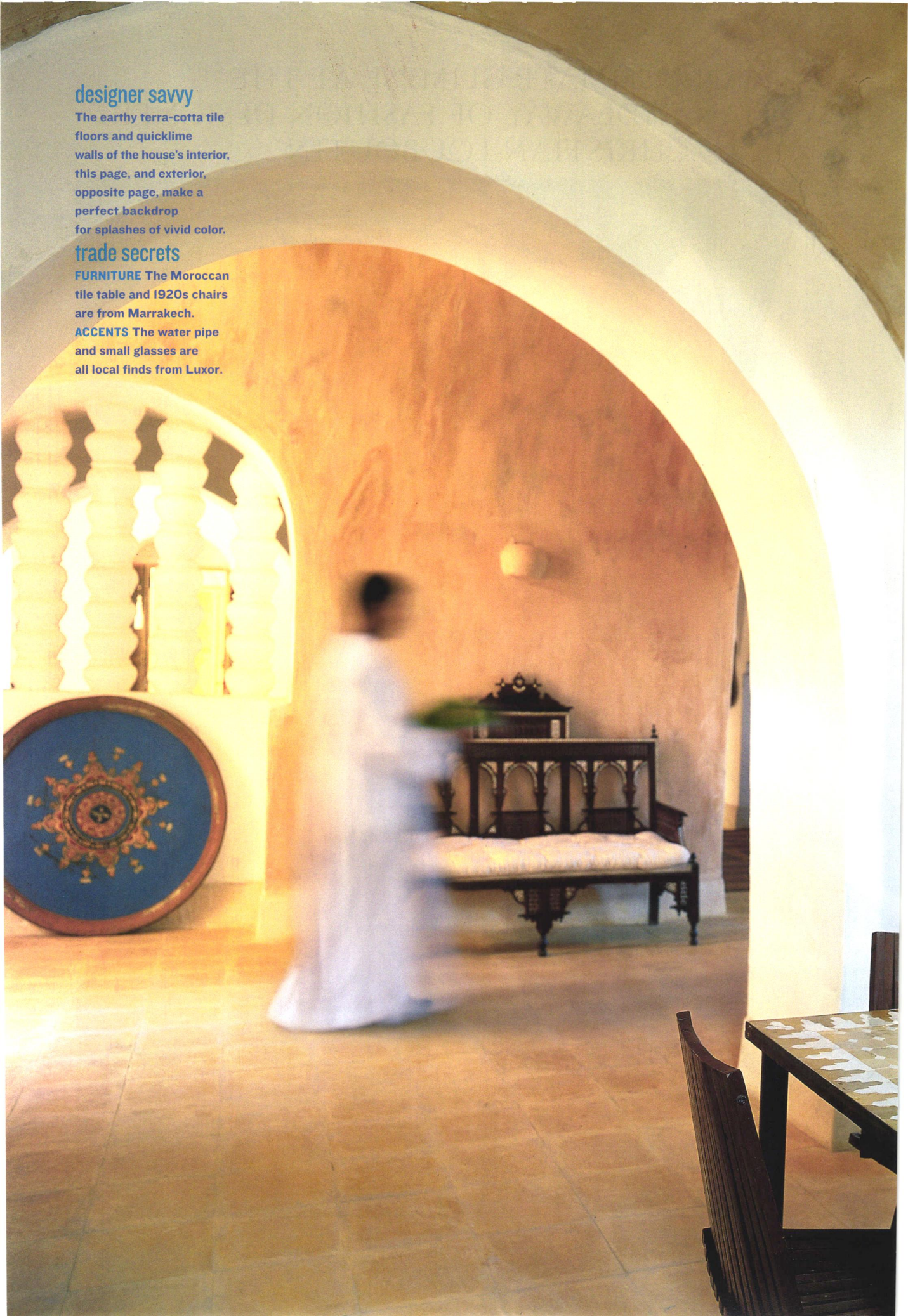
designer savvy

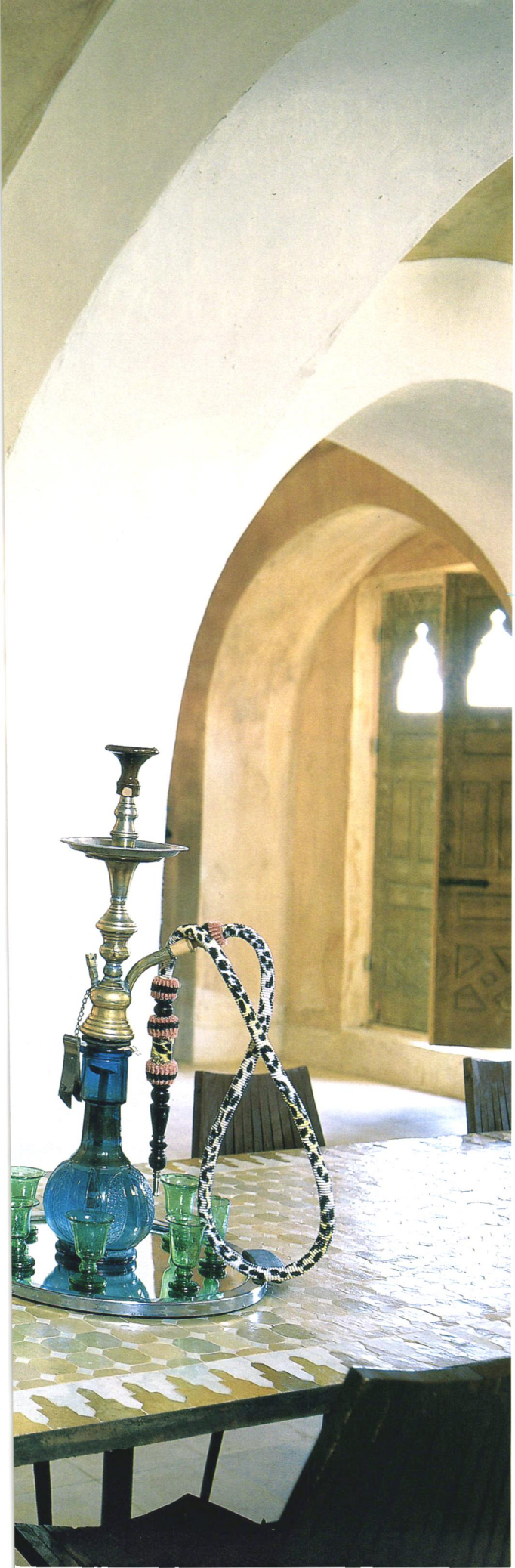
The earthy terra-cotta tile floors and quicklime walls of the house's interior, this page, and exterior, opposite page, make a perfect backdrop for splashes of vivid color.

trade secrets

FURNITURE The Moroccan tile table and 1920s chairs are from Marrakech.

ACCENTS The water pipe and small glasses are all local finds from Luxor.



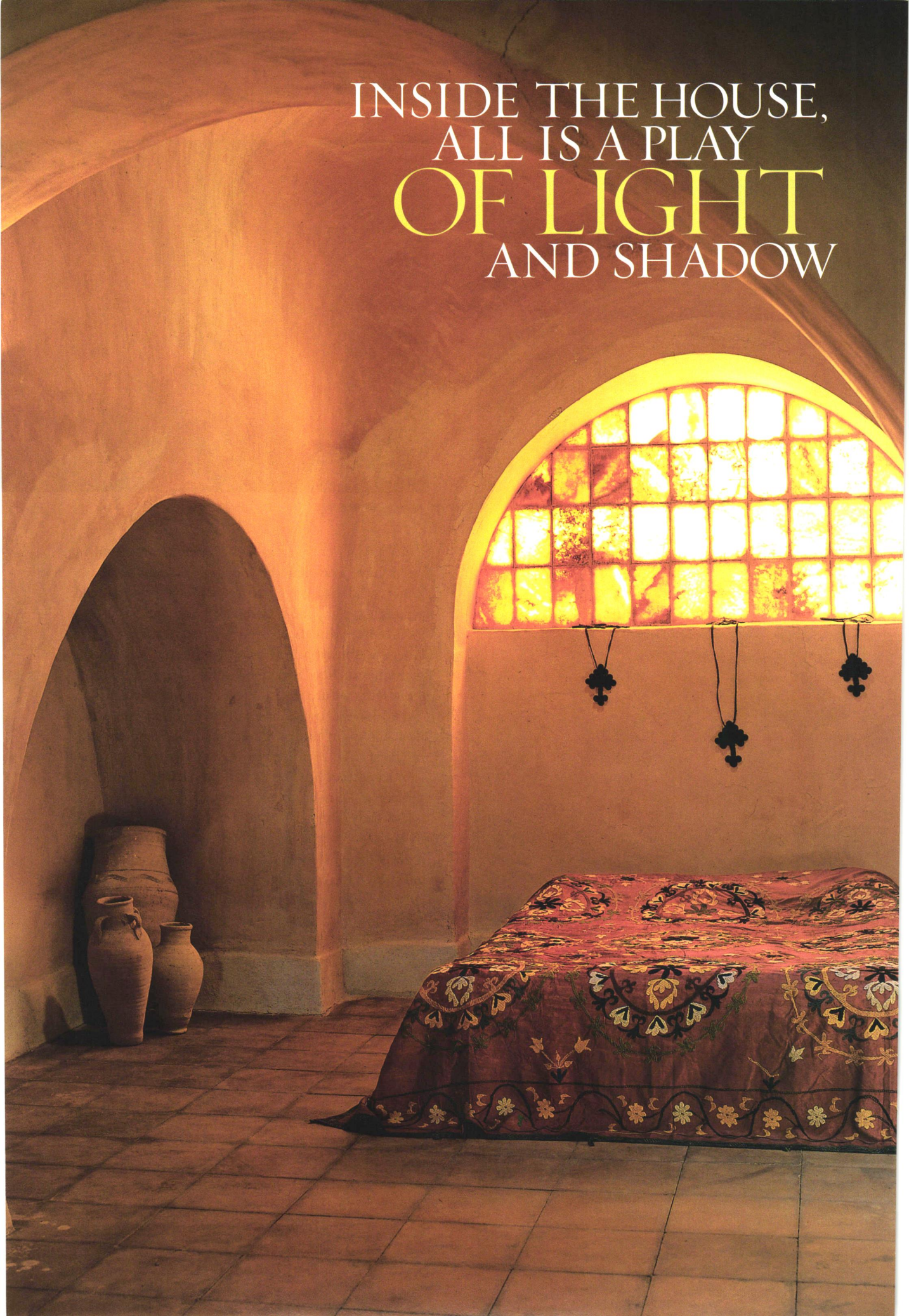


FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS, Christian Louboutin and I have traveled the world together. We have been to Uzbekistan, following the Silk Road through Samarkand and Bukhara; we've sailed the Mediterranean, visited Morocco, and crossed America. At least four times a year he stays with me in my homes in New York and Connecticut, and when I am in Paris we are together every night. Through the years, I have known Christian as the very best traveling companion, and as an entertaining, never irritating guest. But I had yet to know Christian the host—and a perfect host he is, as I discovered when I visited his house near Luxor, Egypt.

I already knew all about the place—Christian's dreams for it, the adventures he had building it. Together we had looked at drawings, corrected plans, and chosen furniture and rugs at the shop of our friend Mustafa Blaoui in Marrakech. Christian even took my suggestion for a name for the house—Sand Castle—but I had never seen it until last March. It was after the Paris collections were shown, and we were both exhausted and cold in the damp city. A few days in Egypt, we decided, was exactly what we needed.

We flew to Cairo, had a delicious dinner with our friend Amr Khalil, the well-known Egyptian designer and decorator, in his magically decadent apartment in Zamalek, a residential area of Cairo, and left the next morning at dawn for the 50-minute flight to Luxor.

When we landed, my first impressions were of the pleasant dryness of the desert air and the soft green eyes of Mahmud, the taxi driver who was waiting for us. Christian's house is located on the west bank of the Nile. We crossed the river over the recently built bridge, which completely changed the dynamics of


INSIDE THE HOUSE,
ALL IS A PLAY
OF LIGHT
AND SHADOW

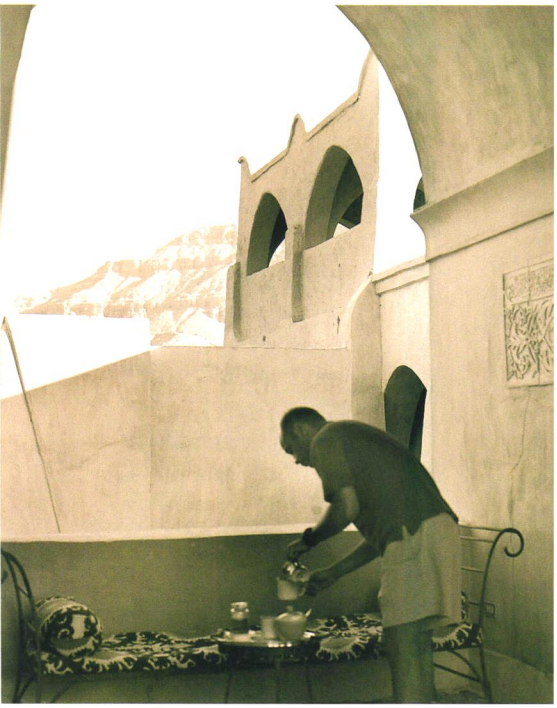
designer savvy

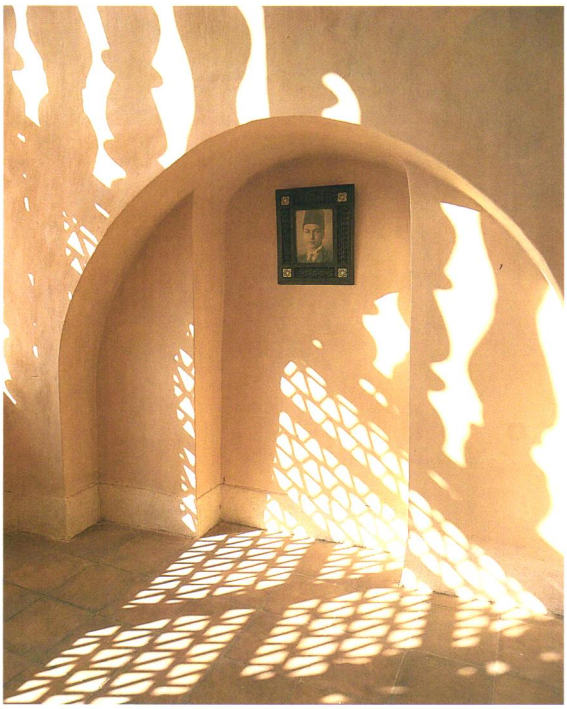
Startling contrasts of light and darkness heighten the sensuality of the house.

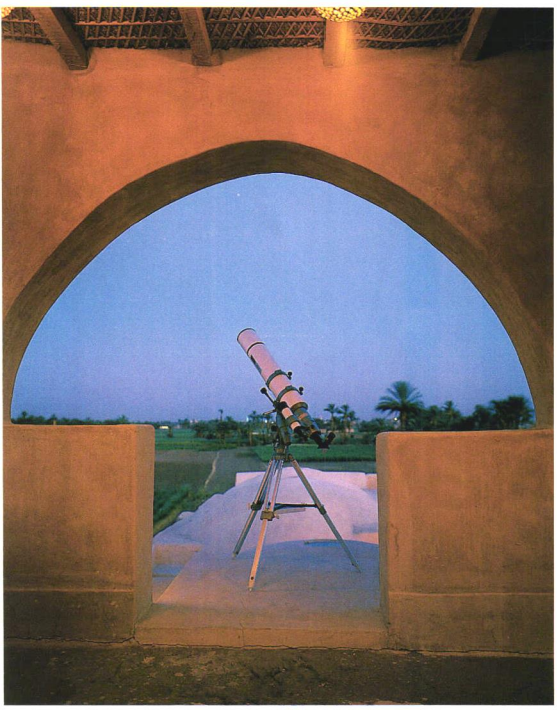
trade secrets

ARCHITECTURE The huge courtyard fireplace, this page, was inspired by one Louboutin saw in Istanbul. The windowpanes in the bedroom, opposite page, are slices of alabaster.

ACCENTS Three Coptic crosses hang above the bed, covered in an Uzbek textile that Louboutin bought in Samarkand.







designer savvy

Relaxation and contemplation lead to inspiration. On this page, clockwise from top left: The designer fixes tea. ■ The architecture makes a mesmerizing play of shadows. ■ A Coptic cross suggests a sandal design. ■ A telescope is set up on the roof; it was a gift from Diane von Furstenberg.

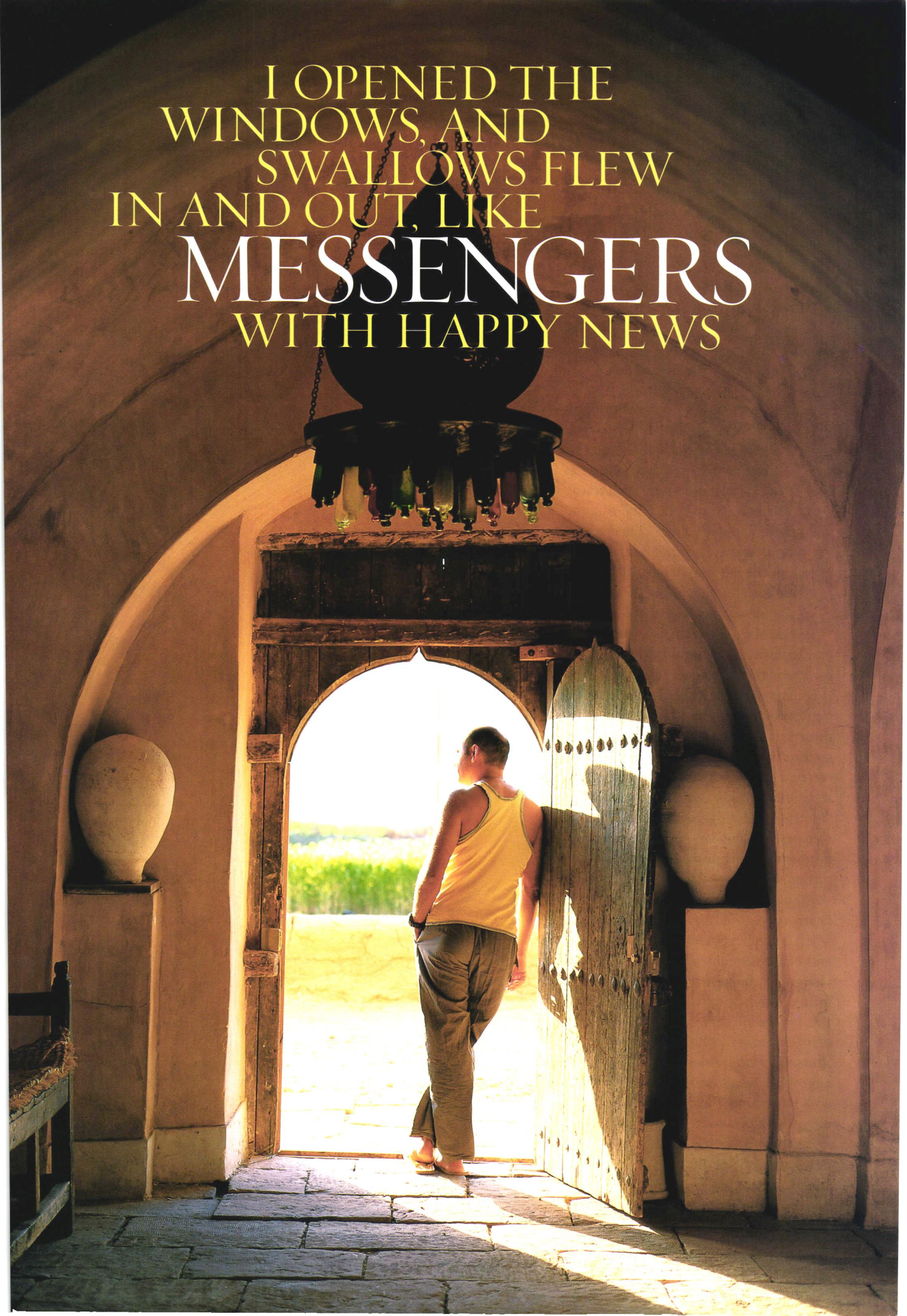
trade secrets

FURNITURE The metal Egyptian bench on which the tea service rests came from a shop in Cairo. **FABRICS** The cushion on the bench is from Cairo. **ACCENTS** A 17th-century lamp from Damascus hangs in the foyer, opposite page. Louboutin bought the lamp on a visit to Petra, a splendid archaeological site in Jordan. Sources, see back of book.

Luxor life. Before, the only way across the river was via a small ferry. To get over the Nile by car, one had to drive 60 miles to the nearest bridge.

Driving along, we soon came upon the Colossi of Memnon, twin 60-foot-high statues from the fifteenth century B.C. They once guarded the entrance to a temple that crumbled long ago but now seemed to welcome us to the oasis where Sand Castle stands. The house is built of mud, in the traditional 5,000-year-old manner. Inside, all is a play of light and shadow. You enter through a faded indigo wooden door, following a corridor to a large square courtyard. Off it sits the grand living and dining room, with its long Moroccan tile table, narghile (water pipe), and colors and comforts out of an orientalist painting. Adjacent is the kitchen, sacred domain of Ashraf, the cook, who would later delight my palate with eggplant salad, chicken with caramelized orange, and a wonderful soup using mallow leaves, called *mouloukhia*. Stepping back into the courtyard, I noticed a remarkable thing: a huge fireplace that transforms the space into a room open to the sky. It is the center and soul of the house.

We climbed to the second floor, where Christian very graciously gave me the master bedroom, his room. There's a low bed in one alcove, an armoire, a bookcase, and a large working table—the kind you find only in an artist's *(Cont. on page 184*


I OPENED THE
WINDOWS, AND
SWALLOWS FLEW
IN AND OUT, LIKE
MESSENGERS
WITH HAPPY NEWS

The owner won't take credit, but this constantly evolvi

WRITTEN BY CAROL WILLIAMS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
CHRISTOPHER BAKER
PRODUCED BY STEPHEN ORR

"You can't miss it. Look for the privet hedge." In the village of Southampton, New York, a privet hedge is about as useful a landmark as, say, a traffic light in New York City. But the several hundred feet of hedge that bounds this seaside garden billows like the surging Atlantic. The tall sides are immaculately sheared—it is the top of the hedge that is released to the sky. The élan is intentional, emblematic of the vitality that fills the garden on the other side.

Exactly what gives a garden life is always a mystery. Sometimes it's a good plan, sometimes the willingness to let that plan go for the love of a plant. Floriferousness can be a factor, but so can emptiness and restraint. If there is a constant, it is the "footsteps" of the gardener—the way that someone's plant by plant, moment by moment attention makes itself felt in a garden's very air.

All of these factors are at play in this nearly 20-year-old garden. Tish Rehill and Michael Doherty, the original designers, and Nancy Greenwald, who has been in charge for the past five years, are unanimous in believing that the source of this garden's charm is the client himself, who remains engrossed, adventurous, always learning. But the client won't have it. "I know nothing," he insists, deflecting all credit to the professionals. ▷

Gravel paths run throughout a rose garden underplanted with thyme, lamb's ears, and sedum. The main house, built in 1895 as a retreat for tuberculosis patients, enjoys views of the garden and the beach.

uthampton garden is the direct result of his adventurous nature

the invisible hand

Exactly what gives a garden life is a mystery. Sometimes it's a good plan; sometimes it's the willingness to let that plan go for the love of a plant. If there is a constant, it is the "footsteps" of the gardener

The first garden site was close to the main house, renowned locally for its ability to survive hurricanes and floods. The house was built in 1895 as a seaside retreat for tuberculosis patients, and its design is not only sensible but extraordinarily harmonious. Dune grass and beach peas grow to the edge of the ocean-facing porch. Waves of nearly every species of hydrangea break against the landward side.

Storms keep the surrounding plantings low. "There are bigger trees in the house than in the garden," the owner points out. Indeed, palms and ficus trees of staggering size and health are the main features of the high-ceilinged interior spaces, which are otherwise sparsely and thoughtfully furnished to emphasize the noble, airy proportions of what must have been a truly restorative sanatorium.

The beginnings of the garden were a small, sheltered pool and a bit of lawn and curved privet border. Within a few years the nineteenth-century shingled house next door was purchased so that the garden could be enlarged. Now it unfolds between the two houses in a series of

'Dortmund' roses, above, flow over an arbor that leads out of the rose garden and into a hidden shade garden beyond. ■ A sense of deep seclusion permeates every area of the garden. A seat placed in the rose garden, left, offers a visitor one of many seemingly isolated spots. ■ Under the rose arbor, opposite page, a carved stone jar planted with a fern stands on a grass path and marks a focal point in the garden.

Lotuses and water lilies, papyrus and blue-flowered arrowhead appear to float in a small pond, above. Self-sowing and rapidly spreading plants like evening primrose, nepeta, and alchemilla make up the border. ■ The gardener raises the stock from seeds and cuttings, which helps give the garden its rich, grown-in feeling. ■ An akebia-and-honeysuckle-covered pergola, opposite page, forms the entrance to the rose garden. Alchemilla grows in gaps on the stairs.

FROM THE POOL garden, one enters the pond garden through a carved pavilion of painted wood, brought here by the client from an Indian village. Lotuses and water lilies, papyrus and blue-flowered arrowhead appear to float in the small rectangular pond where a fountain plays. The surrounding boardwalks traverse what seems like a supernatural nature preserve, as alchemilla, houttuynia (gardeners, beware; see Ground Rules, next page), and wild geraniums spill out of bounds; salvias, the towering *Brillantaisia subulugurica,* and plume poppies hover. Three gracefully pruned sycamores anchor one side, while white lilies and white gooseneck loosestrife dance beneath.

The impression of an Indian print come to life continues in the rose garden, which one enters under an arbor heavy with wisteria, akebia, honeysuckle, and climbing hydrangea. The formally arranged shrub roses are interplanted with such surprises as bronze-leaved cannas, and underplanted with thyme and sedum. A second arbor, festooned with wild masses of scarlet 'Dortmund' roses, leads one out. Without initiation, it would be easy to miss a shade garden sequestered within a privet hedge. Bamboo, hostas, ferns, tiger lilies, and a solitary seat can be enjoyed with the thrill of total invisibility.

In counterpoint to all the sheltered, hidden flowering is the long, graceful sweep of lawn, parallel to the pool, pond, and rose gardens. The boundary between empty lawn and burgeoning gardens is a massive border of tall grasses, large-scale perennials, and flowering shrubs. White joe-pye weed, yellow flag, hyssop, baptisia, castor bean, *Miscanthus floridulus* and *M. sinensis,* vitex, and rose of Sharon form a living wall 200 hundred feet long and 20 feet deep, rustling in the lightest breezes. A distant spray of red climbing roses, a diving bird, and the top of a column are the only hints of the hidden gardens that lie beyond. ▷

enclosures and open expanses, of barriers and surprising connections.

The pool garden, a pond garden, a rose garden, and a hidden shade garden open one into the other, the transitions distinctively marked by arbors and portals. On either side, these gardens are sheltered by high screens—of wood, of privet, and of tall grasses, vines, and shrubs—for protection from the wind, and for a sense of deep seclusion. You hear the ocean close at hand, but you can't see it or feel its bluster.

The fanciful pool garden, with its boatlike deck and black umbrellas, suggests a voyage to the South Seas. Bougainvillea, oleander, plumbago, and datura grow mostly in pots. Some are above ground, some sunk into beds where they are grounded among grasses, oats, and nutmeg-scented geranium.

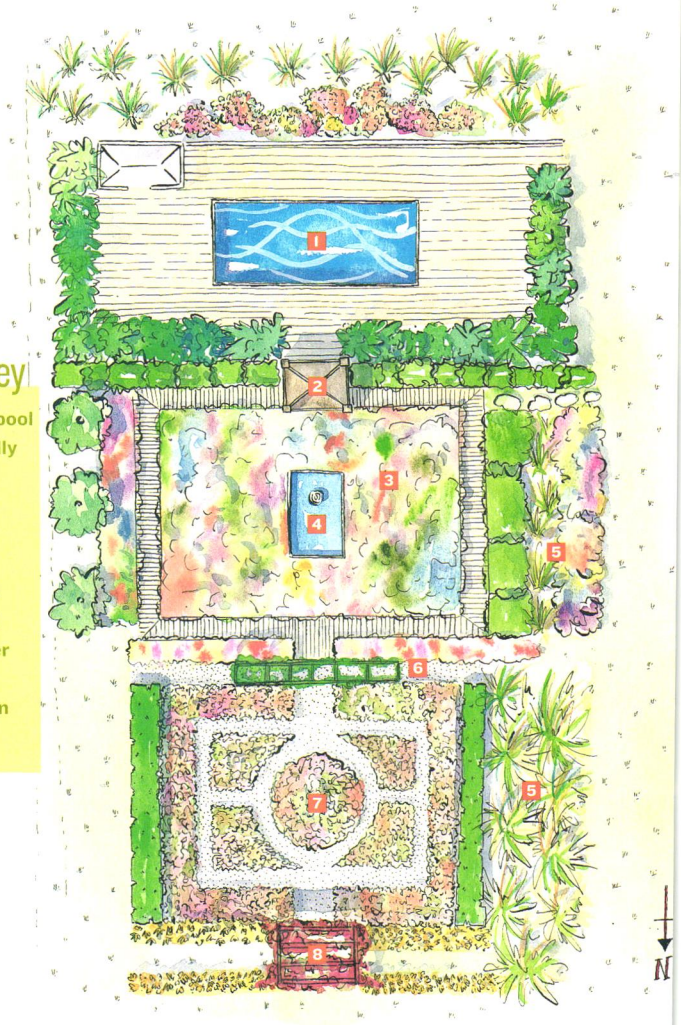
"This garden has so many layers now," Greenwald says. "Some seasons, whole elements disappear—plants, stone jars, a path. In other seasons we bring them back." Greenwald does not call herself a designer; she's the gardener, she says. And indeed she is hard at work in the garden four or five days each week, with only a single assistant. Her challenge is to incorporate the boundless horticultural enthusiasms of her client into a coherent whole. Though it may be more economical to buy plant stocks, this client prefers that Greenwald raise theirs from seeds and cuttings and divisions. Though this approach is labor-intensive, the result is a rich, grown-in feeling throughout the garden.

A substantial glass house is necessary. One is rented nearby, where Greenwald plants and propagates and where the inventory of tropical and subtropical plants, with which the owner is intrigued, is overwintered. Greenwald has become expert at growing these plants and at finding ways to harmonize them with the more familiar landscape vocabulary of temperate perennials and shrubs. Sometimes there is no way. The client is informed, and something else is tried. "There are no rules in this garden," says Greenwald, smiling happily. "We just do what works."

Carol Williams gardens by the sea in Sag Harbor, NY, and is the author of Bringing a Garden to Life.

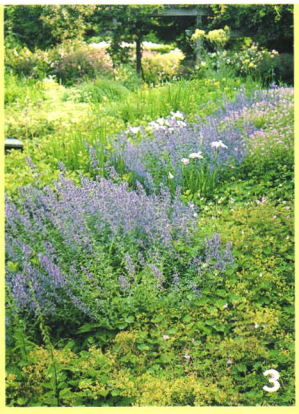
garden key

1 Swimming pool
2 Balinese folly
3 Perennial garden
4 Fountain and pond
5 Shrubs and ornamental grass border
6 Pergola
7 Rose garden
8 Rose arbor



ground rules

Perennials that move through the garden



1 Spreading along the path are the chartreuse flowers of *Alchemilla mollis*, left, and a pink flowering geranium, right. **2** *Oenothera speciosa* pop up through *Phalaris arundinacea* var. 'Picta.' **3** Alchemilla surround clumps of nepeta.

spreaders

- Calamint (*Calamintha grandiflora*)
- Catmint (*Nepeta* x *faassenii*)
- Evening Primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*)
- Hardy geraniums
- Lady's mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*)
- Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*)
- *Sedum spectabile*
- Common thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)

smotherers

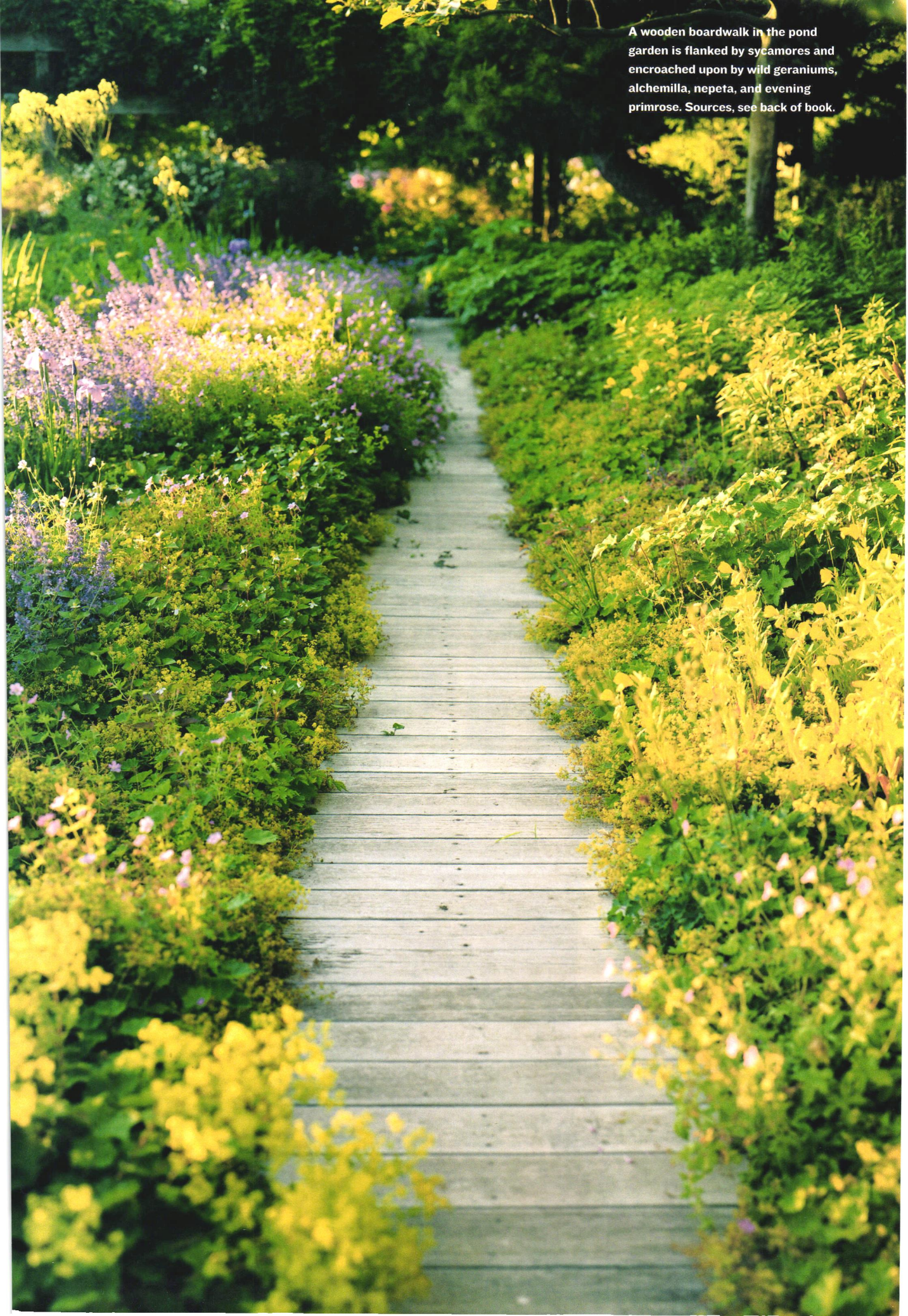
These plants will require vigilance to keep them from taking over. Use with caution.

- Bishop's weed (*Aegopodium podagraria*)
- Creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*)
- *Houttuynia cordata*
- Knotweed (*Persicaria*)
- Ribbon grass (*Phalaris arundinacea* var. *picta*)

aggressive plants

This garden has a pleasingly wild feeling that works well as a counterpoint to its rather formal layout. Many of the plants responsible for its relaxed air are not exactly invasive, but neither are they well behaved enough to keep to themselves. They are perennials that can be described as "aggressive": they spread freely, but not wantonly or dangerously. As they expand, they weave and mix, carpeting the ground in a loose, informal tapestry. These rugged beauties are great building blocks for new gardens or for very large planting areas, because they can colonize a big area in no time and make the place look well established. Their wanderings are curbed when they run into other plants or the confines of the bed.

While plantings like these require less maintenance than annuals that need to be replaced each year or fussy, slow-growing perennials, they do need to be kept in check. Their prodigious offspring can easily be dug up and divided in fall or spring, providing a free source of new garden plants. They are all tough customers that don't require much finesse: just dig up, split apart, and water well after planting. Cut back the alchemilla, nepeta, and geraniums after blooming to encourage a second flush of flowers. □



A wooden boardwalk in the pond garden is flanked by sycamores and encroached upon by wild geraniums, alchemilla, nepeta, and evening primrose. Sources, see back of book.

DEFINING MOMENT

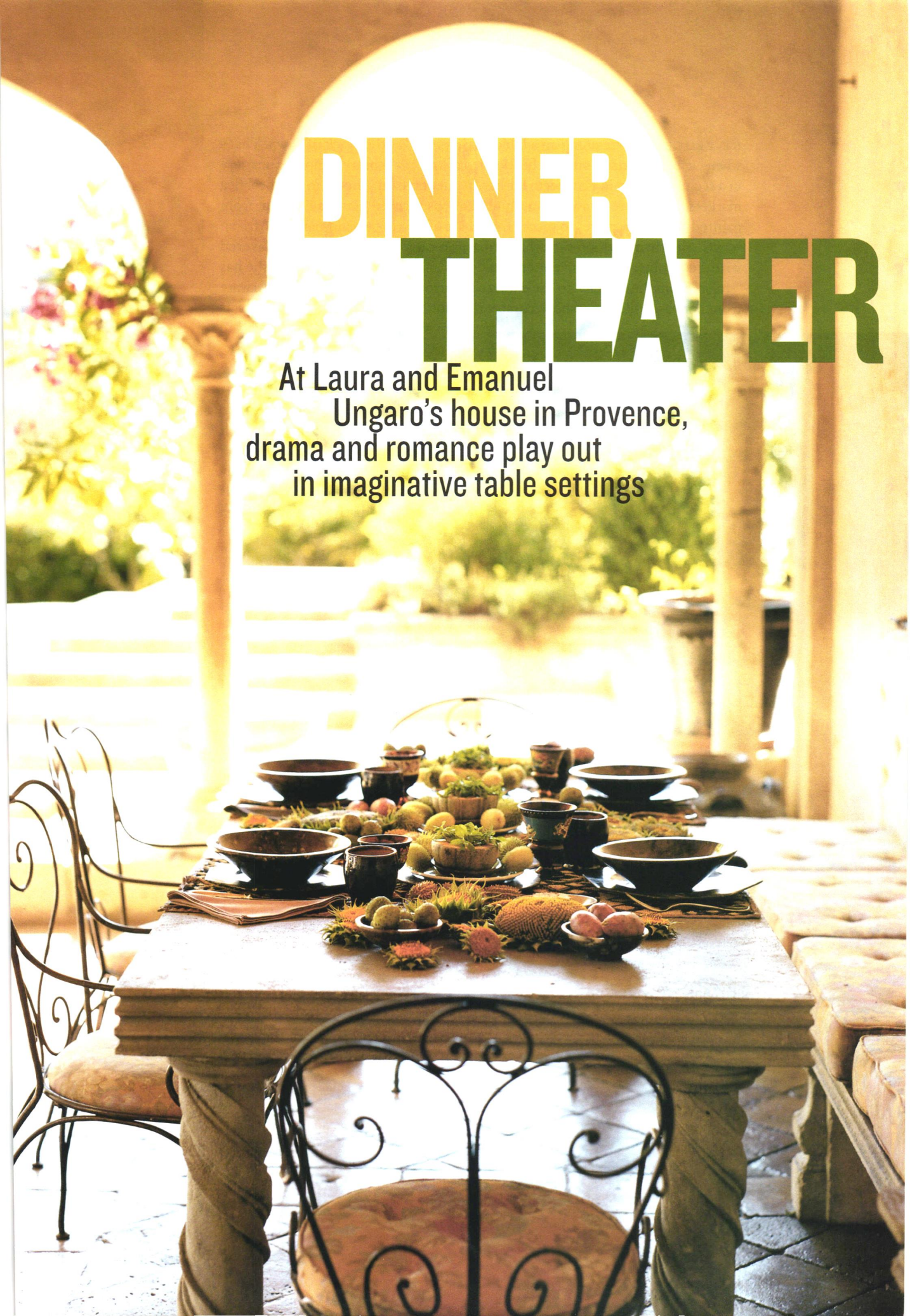
BLOWING IN THE WIND

Evelyn Lauder sees a great deal more of the world than most, but that hasn't inured her to the beauty of the ordinary. Her photographs of such daily miracles as a translucent leaf in Ecuador or shadows on a canvas chair in West Virginia capture the unexpectedly beautiful. While visiting Cuba under the auspices of the New York Preservation League in 1998, she paused to record the sort of minor epiphany she enjoys—laundry flying in a V-shaped formation from the balconies of an old Havana building. The clothes spoke eloquently to Lauder of the human spirit and the persistence of the astonishing in the everyday. Her second book, *An Eye for Beauty,* has just been published by Abrams. Her royalties will go to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. □

PHOTOGRAPHED BY EVELYN H. LAUDER

Sunflowers and a Moroccan marble bowl of chestnuts brighten the terrace, this page. ■ Italian Renaissance columns support a table on the terra-cotta floor of a cloister, opposite page. North African fossil bowls and marble plates are on the table, along with beakers that serve as glasses. Couture fabric by Emanuel Ungaro is on the banquette and 18th-century iron chairs.

BY MARELLA CARACCIOLO PHOTOGRAPHED BY MELANIE ACEVEDO



DINNER THEATER

At Laura and Emanuel Ungaro's house in Provence, drama and romance play out in imaginative table settings

THE PROCESS of dreaming up a table setting starts at the crack of dawn. That's when Laura Ungaro sets off from her house, a thirteenth-century Templar monastery in a secluded valley in Provence, for her frequent treasure hunts in the local flea markets. She will return with anything that has sparked her imagination, from painted Romanian plates to pieces from a set of Sèvres to hand-painted African bowls. She then puts a few of these treasures on a table that has been layered with a combination of ancient embroideries and bits of Ungaro fabric she has "stolen" from the atelier. After selecting some exotic glasses, plates, and silverware from her vast collection, she decorates the table with vegetables, herbs, or fruit from the garden, adding things she has collected during walks in the forest: almond husks, leaves, seeds, rocks, or flowers. Sometimes she will pour powdered spices onto the table. The meals she creates will, of course, match the colors and themes she has created for the table. Emanuel Ungaro proudly insists that it was he who initiated his wife into the addictive pleasures of flea

designer savvy

The red and white table setting on the summer terrace is a perfect example of Laura Ungaro's artistry—a flair for color and a global eye. Laura and Cosima Ungaro with a guest, top left. Emanuel Ungaro, above; Cosima and Ollie, left.

trade secrets

TABLE SETTING A covered dish, a footed plate, and soup plates by Richard Ginori 1735. Red Venetian glass tumblers; hand-painted 18th-century Indian bread plates. White cups by Marie Brandolini for Laguna B, available at Saks Fifth Avenue.
FABRICS Rose petals are sprinkled on the tablecloth of antique Italian fabric.

markets: "She hated it at first, because I would drag her out at six in the morning. But then her creative folly began. Her creations are like magical gifts: poetic, inventive, and musical."

Poetry, not prose, is key to Emanuel Ungaro's vision, too. Though he refuses to call his work an art, his taste resembles that of an artist rather than a craftsman. Music is a passion of his. So is poetry. "Rimbaud blew me up like a bolt of lightning in my adolescent years," he says. He embarked on his path to couture at age 6, sewing buttonholes after school in his father's humble tailor shop in Aix-en-Provence, to which his parents had immigrated, from Puglia, in southern Italy. At 22, he left for Paris. All he had, he says, was "two shirts, one pair of trousers, and empty pockets." After a brief period of being down and out, he went to work for the great Balenciaga. "He was a man of absolute integrity, with an extraordinary intellectual discipline," Ungaro says. "He taught me that fashion is a craft as well as an act of faith."

Laura Ungaro, who was born in Florence, is an enigmatic woman. Everything about her exudes a quiet strength. Despite her striking good looks and personal charisma, she dislikes the limelight. It took almost a year to persuade her to show us her tables. "It's too personal," she insisted. Her role as communications manager for Maison Ungaro, however, is far from retiring. Her keen theatrical eye and attention to detail have helped keep Maison Ungaro on the Olympus of fashion.

Laura's is a quiet but pervasive presence in the Ungaros' Paris and Provence homes. Though the master of illusions is undoubtedly Emanuel, and though he takes charge of their houses, because "a house cannot be made by two people," she softens his vision through elaborate flower compositions and a profusion of delicate scents. The meals are her creations. In Provence, their locations vary. There is the round stone table near the church for breakfast, and the table under the porch near Emanuel's rose garden for lunch. In the evening, a favorite spot is Laura's enclosed garden, where hydrangeas grow at the feet of eighteenth-century statues.

The table settings are, according to Emanuel, Laura's private stage. "They have become second nature to her," he says, though he admits that her habit of dragging home objects such as the jewel-encrusted marble plates she found in India has made traveling something of an ordeal. But the prize, he says, is worth it. "Laura knows that the art of telling a story can take many forms. Even if it's just the two of us, her tables and the meals she creates are always seductive." That is no doubt why she resisted showing her personal gifts to the world. They are part of an ongoing poetic discourse between two lovers. We have been given only a glimpse. ▷

designer savvy

The family eats in many locations in and around the house, top. Laura, above right, begins to arrange one of her dramatic meals in the dining room. Emanuel and Cosima, above, with roses for the table. This meal, opposite page, takes place on the summer terrace.

trade secrets

TABLE SETTING Hand-painted faience plates, antique latticework Provençal bread plates, and woven chargers, opposite page. Green glasses are French.
FABRICS Place mats are Provençal fabrics.
Sources, see back of book.

DESIGN TO INSPIRE How to bring t

1

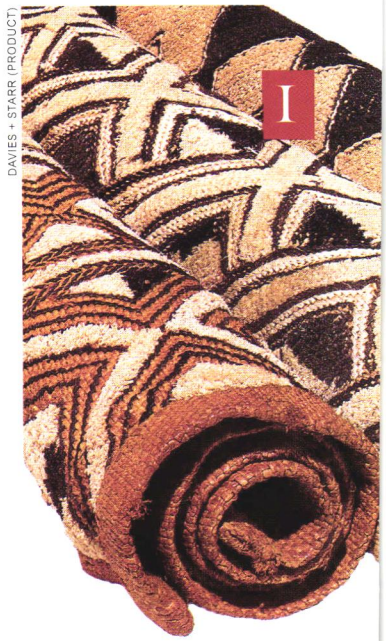
Let nature be your guide: set a green and pleasant mood with the finest china and humbler accents. **1** From left: Solid green tumbler by Lindean Mill, $55, Bergdorf Goodman. Gold/Moss tumbler, $14, The Terence Conran Shop. Handmade Retro votive/glass in lime green, $5, by Maan Yoong, Gorgeous Designs, Inc. **2** A Flora Danica dinner plate, $2,100, Royal Copenhagen, Georg Jensen, NYC, sits atop a rattan charger, $20, Artifacts Trading Co., Gracious Home. The china pattern dates from 1790, when King Christian VII of Denmark commissioned a service for Catherine II of Russia. **3** Teapot, $170 with sugar bowl and creamer, from the Leaf Plate Collection, by Christian Tortu. **4** Galaxy Runner, $118, by McFarland House/Napkins Plus, Bergdorf Goodman.

2

Temper fiery red glasses and a vibrant tablecloth with Grandma's porcelain plates, or find something new with similar charm. **1** A 9.5-inch soup bowl, $160, in Herend Porcelain's Fruit and Flowers pattern, at Scully & Scully, rests on an oversized terra-cotta Rosso Vecchio dinner plate, $37, Vietri. **2** Jacques Carcanagues, Inc., NYC, has an array of antique embroidered silk maharaja blankets from India, $500 to $750. Throw one over your table for the ultimate in boho luxe. **3** From left: Solid ruby tumbler by Lindean Mill, $55, Bergdorf Goodman. Fizz Highball, $6, Crate & Barrel. Lenox Holiday Gems goblet, $28 for four, Michael C. Fina. Lyric goblet in Cranberry, $7, and Fizz Double Old-fashioned, $6, both Crate & Barrel. Elba glass in red, $18, The Terence Conran Shop.

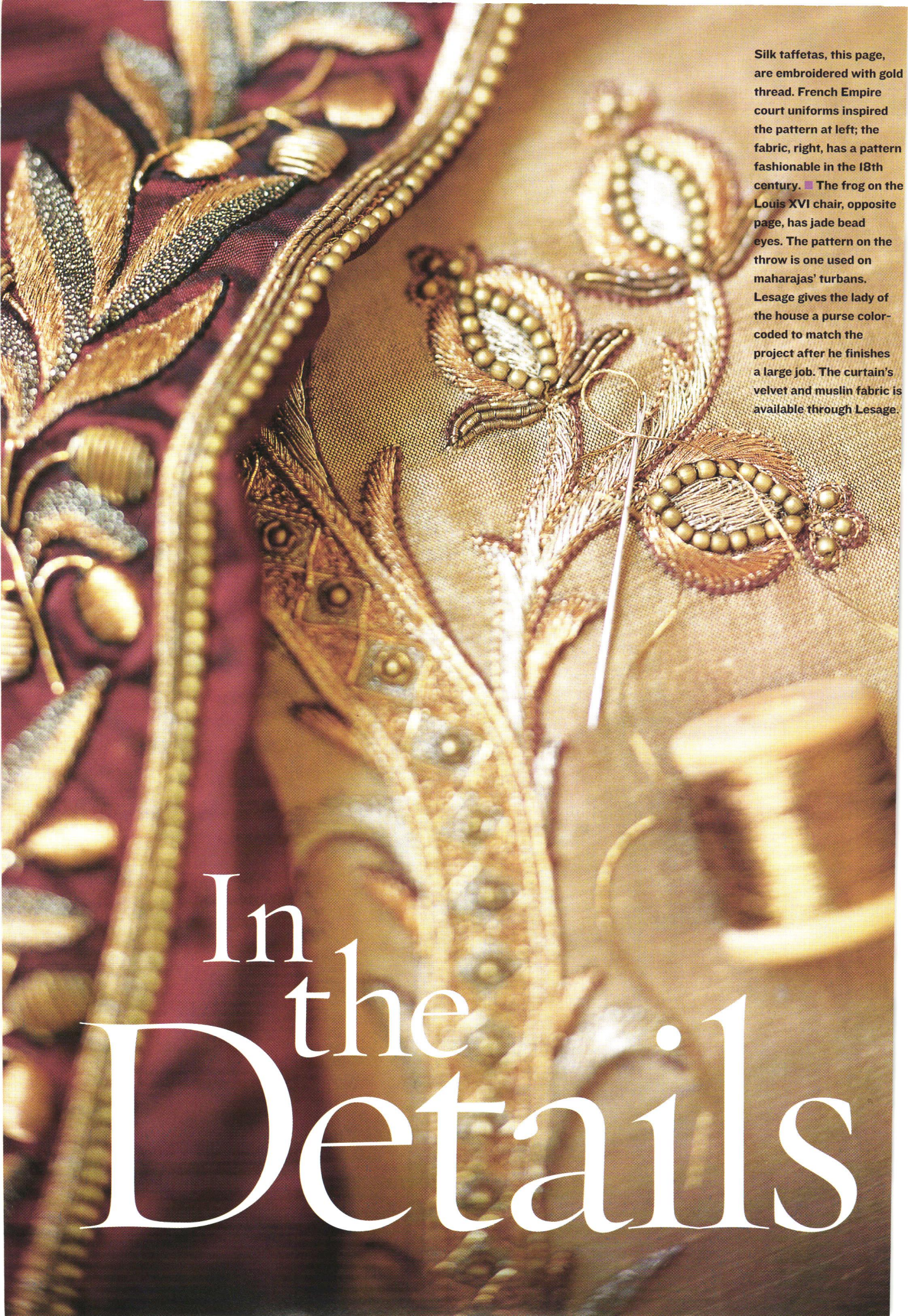
3

Exotic patterns add a worldly note to glazed earthenware in ocher and chocolate tones. **1** Kuba cloth textiles, meant for ceremonial clothing, are suitable for framing or for making beautiful throw pillows, but Ungaro uses them as place mats. Vintage Kuba cloths, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, $120 each, through Tribalinks, Tucson, AZ. **2** French Confit pots, ca. 1900, $335 each, were originally used to marinate game. We think the 12-inch-tall pots look stunning with a bouquet of sunflowers. Briggs House Antiques, Mamaroneck, NY. **3** Pichon's Marguerite dessert plate, $32, La Cafetière, pops against a Cioccolata dinner plate, $30, Vietri. **4** Traditional glazed wine cup, $12, handmade in Bulgaria, Bulgar USA. Yellow porcelain cup, $18, Global Table, NYC. Sources, see back of book. —S.R.



DAVIES + STARR (PRODUCT)

ngaro look to your table



In the Details

Silk taffetas, this page, are embroidered with gold thread. French Empire court uniforms inspired the pattern at left; the fabric, right, has a pattern fashionable in the 18th century. ■ The frog on the Louis XVI chair, opposite page, has jade bead eyes. The pattern on the throw is one used on maharajas' turbans. Lesage gives the lady of the house a purse color-coded to match the project after he finishes a large job. The curtain's velvet and muslin fabric is available through Lesage.

HIS FAMILY IS FAMOUS FOR HAUTE COUTURE EMBROIDERY, AND NOW JEAN FRANÇOIS LESAGE HAS BROUGHT THAT TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE HOME

WRITTEN BY MOIRA HODGSON

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

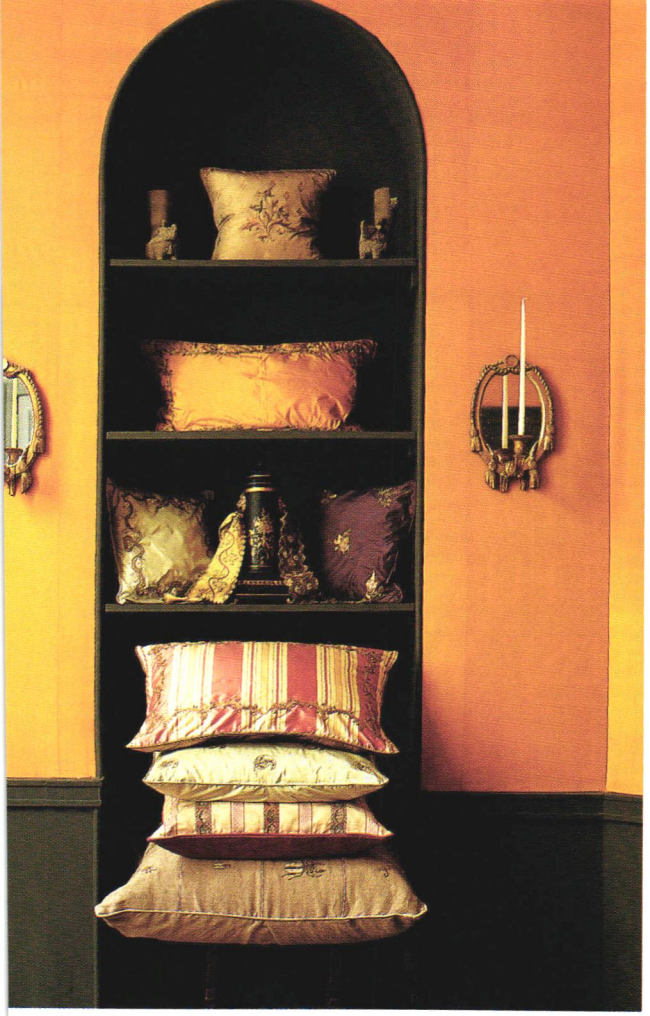
UP A FLIGHT OF STAIRS, at the back of a leafy courtyard off the rue Saint-Honoré in Paris, the apartment where Robespierre once lived is now a showroom for intricate eighteenth-century-style embroidery done thousands of miles away in India. In a twist of irony, the sorts of silks and embroideries favored by French aristocrats and the court of Versailles, the people Robespierre most despised, now fill the apartment's seven small rooms. A cupboard spilling over with richly decorated fabrics stands under the tiny loft space where the revolutionary is said to have hidden before his arrest.

A nineteenth-century butcher's counter dominates the main room, which still has its original marble fireplace, gilt-edged mirrors, and well-worn parquet floor. Stéphanie Decloux, the young director of the office of Jean François Lesage, opens one of the ten wooden meat drawers under the counter. Instead of a steak, she brings out a swatch of heavy purple silk. Delicate sprays of gold and mother-of-pearl flowers decorate the border. The silk looks like a museum piece. "Jean François invents ten designs a day," she says. "He was born on embroidered things."

The Lesage studio has embroidered furnishings for the Office of the French President, Windsor Palace, the royal families of Thailand and Holland, and the duchess of Montesquiou. Lesage's pillows, bedcovers, wall hangings, curtains, and table liners are used by the world's leading decorators, who brighten their clients' rooms with the likes of a silk cushion sewn with a dragonfly made of gold thread and seed pearls or an embroidered wall hanging re-created from a Chinese palace.

The House of Lesage (successor to the House of Michonet, which was founded by cousins of the Lesage

Clockwise, from top left: Velvet and silk taffeta cushions embroidered with crystal beads and gold threads. ■ The Oriental room's walls are covered in silk taffeta. ■ In the alcove where Robespierre slept, Lesage stores samples of fabrics he sells. The one he's holding uses at least four different embroidery stitches. ■ An embroidered button, a perfumed pouch, and a knotted rope with bells. ■ Silk taffeta embroidered in an Elizabethan design. ■ The company label on a linen document file.



Garouste & Bonetti chairs, this page, from the Palace nightclub sit in the entrance of Lesage's Paris studio. The pillow on the left has embroidery that mimics caning. Embroidered silk jacquard covers the walls. ■ An archive fabric, opposite page, which Lesage reproduced for a client, is a Louis XVI silk. The linen ribbon is a trim.

"I DON'T HAVE A FAVORITE PERIOD. MY CONCERN IS THE FINISHING, THE THINGS THAT NOBODY ELSE WILL SEE"

– JEAN FRANÇOIS LESAGE

LESAGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED BY THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF EAST ASIA

family in 1868) has long been famous for its embroideries for haute couture. But instead of following in the footsteps of his grandfather Albert and father, François, Jean François decided at age 20 to become an auctioneer. During his five years at the auction house of Maître Binoche, he met many interior designers, and decided to start a new line in the family business: furnishings for the home (not to mention the palace or castle).

His embroideries have been used by interior designers such as François Joseph Graf, Tony Ingrao, Alberto Pinto, Peter Marino, Howard Slatkin, and Jacques Grange. Lesage produces two collections a year, with themes and motifs deriving from, among others, Viennese Art Deco, Chinese dragons, Persian miniatures, Roman mosaic tiles, African wildlife, Fabergé eggs, and paintings by Picasso. He has even embroidered plastic and vinyl (a '60s theme) and, for one client, the inside of a computer.

"I don't have a favorite period," Lesage says. "My concern is the attention to detail, the finishing, the things that nobody else will see." The themes for this year's collections are the Renaissance, with rich reds, emerald green, and deep blue on a dark brown background; and twentieth-century neoclassicism, with mother-of-pearl, gray, pink, and violet.

Lesage's first motif was inspired by a book of Edgar Allan Poe stories that had gold beetles embossed on the cover. The beetles were one of his most successful designs, created with gold wire and white silk, a technique called *cannteille*. Most of *(Cont. on page 184)*

Clockwise from top left: The Napoleonic Bee, with silk and gold threads. ■ Samples of borders for sale hang behind an Empire chair in the mandarin room. The blue cotton fabric at the far right is Martinique, from Lesage's most recent collection. ■ Lesage reembroidered a Le Manach fabric with silver metallic threads. Sources, see back of book.

oscar worthy

(Cont. from page 128) publicity-averse wife asked not be photographed. Unlike many traditional residential architects today, Buch, who went on to design the couple's romantic coral stone house in the Dominican Republic, understands the crucial relationship between size and scale. Thus his expansive but well-proportioned addition in Connecticut adds an appropriately intimate grandeur—or, better yet, a grand intimacy—to a setting where the reclusive chatelaine can revel in her closely guarded privacy.

Two thousand and two is turning into the Year of de la Renta. Assouline has just published *Oscar: The Style, Inspiration, and Life of Oscar de la Renta,* a sumptuously illustrated biographical tribute written by Sarah Mower. Last spring, de la Renta concluded his triumphant ten-year stint as design director of the house of Balmain, the Paris couture institution that he brought back from the brink of extinction. But the demands of juggling collections for his own burgeoning firm in New York and, just a few weeks later, those in Paris finally became too much even for the energetic de la Renta, who, improbably, turned 70 this summer.

"I had to face the music and realize that I just couldn't do both," he admits. "I go to Santo Domingo for Christmas, and the day after the holiday I'd have to get on the plane and fly to Paris for the spring collection. I'd leave my house, my family, my beautiful beach, my garden, and the wonderful weather, and I'd arrive in Paris, where it's rainy, gray, and cold. And I'd say, 'What the heck am I doing? This is crazy.' I decided that in life you have to be really conscious of what your priorities are."

Ending his French connection doesn't mean that de la Renta is by any means slowing down. This fall he is introducing his first home furnishings line, for Century. "It's all very much an expression of my lifestyle," he says, "and many of the pieces are inspired by antiques I've bought over the years or pieces I've had made in the Dominican Republic." The wide-ranging collection, including mahogany furniture, rattan indoor-outdoor pieces, and upholstered seating, is, he says, with his characteristic lack of braggadocio, "an eclectic reflection of a lifetime of collecting, a very precise point of view of how I like to live and the things I like." □

chic of araby

(Cont. from page 156) room. I opened all three windows, and swallows flew in and out, greeting me like messengers with happy news. It was a good omen. I smiled at the photos of Natasha Atlas, the very à la mode Egyptian singer, that sat on a table, then went out to continue touring the house. The colonnaded hallway was filled with angled sunlight and shade, and there were places to rest—a sofa, an embroidered armchair. I passed another beautiful bedroom, more alcoves, and more passages filled with mystery.

Up another staircase I found the tower, a covered terrace open on four sides. One faces the sacred mountain of Thebes, which shelters at its feet the Valley of the Queens and the Valley of the Nobles, and on another side you see grazing cattle, miles of fields planted with sugarcane, and the palm trees along the Nile. Looking right, I saw the profile of the Temple of Medinet Habu, built by Ramses II; to the left stood the Coptic monastery of San Andrea, built in the sixth century and the last stop before the endless desert. There was almost too much beauty. I collapsed on a sofa, lulled by the exquisite stillness into the most restful nap I've ever had.

We did many things in the next few days. On the busier and better known eastern bank of the Nile at Luxor, we visited the temple of Karnak, went to the market to buy fruits, spices, and dyes, and had lunch aboard Egyptologist Alain Fouquet Abrial's houseboat. But it was the west bank, where Christian lives, that was a revelation, with its tranquil, timeless vistas straight out of my childhood imaginings of Bible lands.

Christian took me to meet Mohamed El Bialy, who can get you into all the west bank's most important archaeological sites. (And if you are not lucky enough to know Christian, try his friend Zena's lovely Al Moudira Hotel.) One morning, after visiting the tomb of King Horemheb, Christian and I hiked up the mountain in the blazing sun and were rewarded with an extraordinary view over the valleys and the temples and into the vast, peaceful distance. I will recall many things from my trip to the Nile's west bank—tastes, smells, sounds. But most of all I will remember a morning on a mountain with my friend, when I had a glimpse of eternity. □

in the details

(Cont. from page 182) his ideas come from the books and textiles he researches, covering everything from fourth-century Egyptian Copts to early-nineteenth-century classicism.

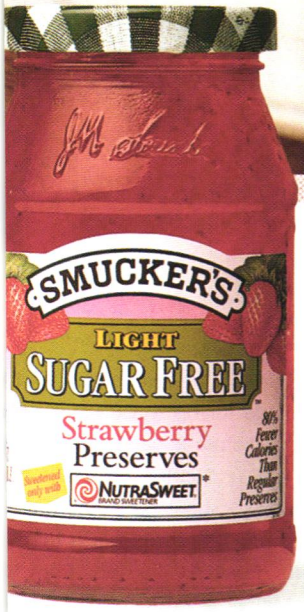
Lesage says he has always been fascinated by the architecture and art of East Asia, especially India, where the techniques of embroidery resemble those of Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. "I had a choice between having a small workshop in Europe or something very much alive in India, with master craftsmen who already had the skill but didn't know anything about Western decorative arts."

Eight years ago he founded Vastrakala (Sanskrit for "the art of textile") in Madras with Patrick Savouret and Malavika Rao. They began with five artisans and now employ 90, who work in the 1917 mansion where Lesage lives nine months of the year. The embroiderers are all men who come from families who pass the tradition from one generation to the next. "In Japan they would be called living monuments," Lesage says. "But here they don't know, until someone tells them, that they have gold in their fingers. I don't know how to stitch a button, but I know the techniques. So they need me as a bridge between them and the rest of the world." It takes 30 hours or more to stitch six inches. "In the time spent on one panel, you could create six dresses," Lesage says.

Working with an interior decorator is different from creating embroidery for a dress: "A designer will ask me for an embroidery sample on a theme, such as a neo-Chinese palace in eighteenth-century Russia. From that I have to propose something that matches his fantasies. It's an interesting way of working, because you must try to translate his idea into another language, which is embroidery."

The archives, housed in Madras and the Paris showroom, include more than 2,000 panels and fabrics, some dating from the sixteenth century. "My ambition is to continue to create in India the same high quality of embroidery that used to exist in Europe," Lesage says. "There is no consideration for the time spent. The only obsession is with making it perfect." □

Moira Hodgson is the restaurant critic for The New York Observer *and writes frequently on the arts.*



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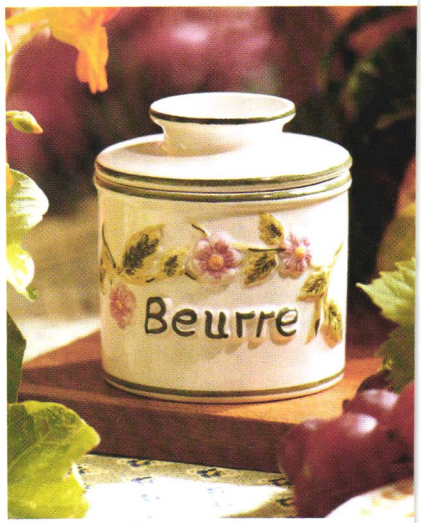

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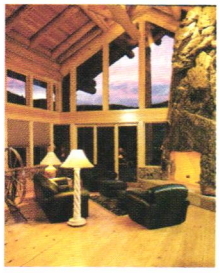

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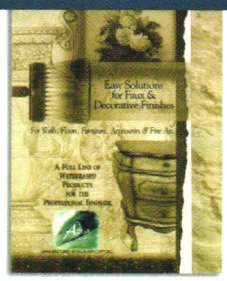

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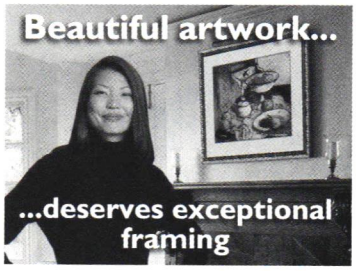

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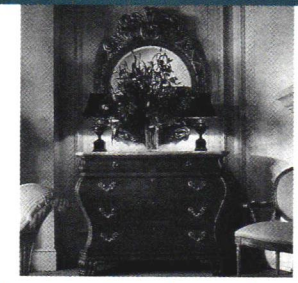

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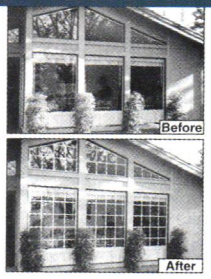

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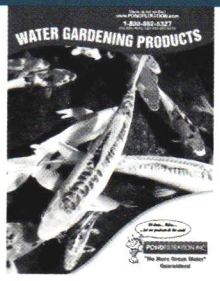

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Heat over medium heat for 5 min. Reduce heat and simmer 5 additional min.

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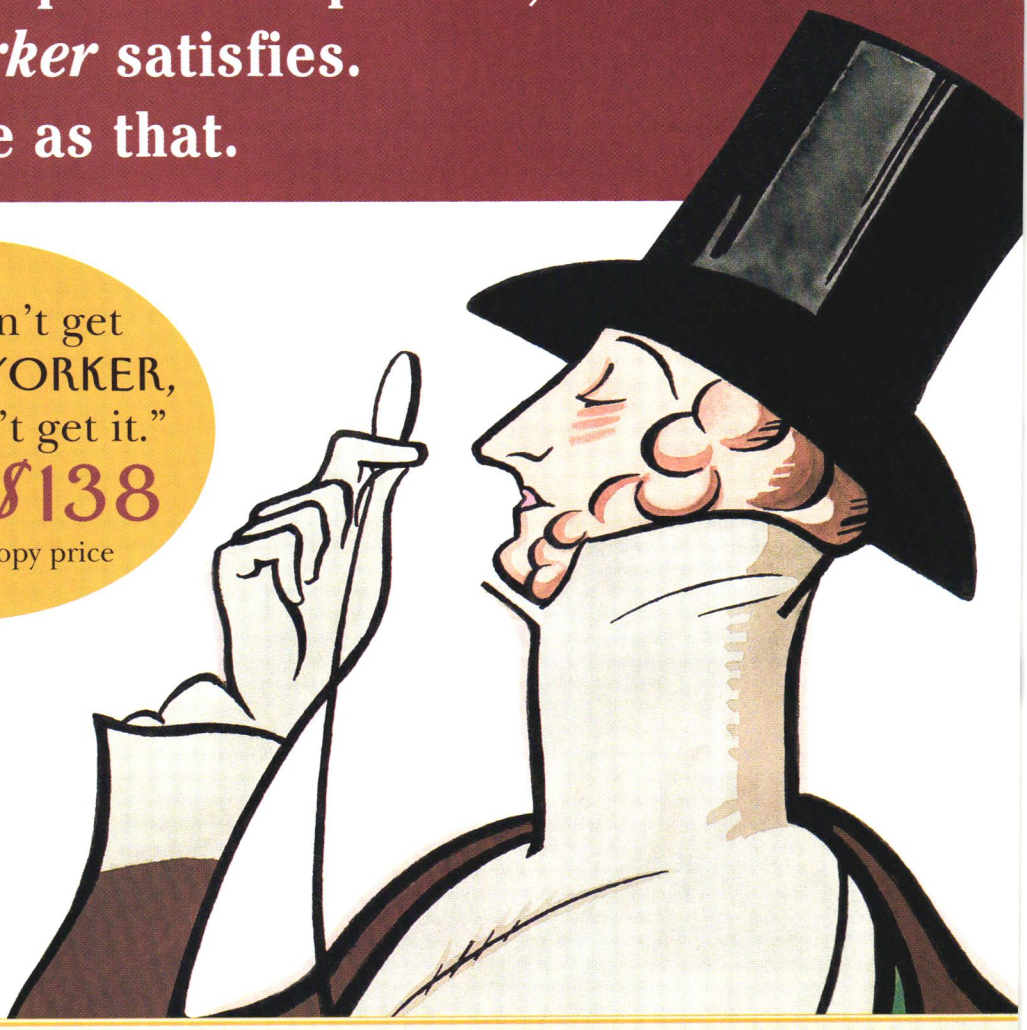

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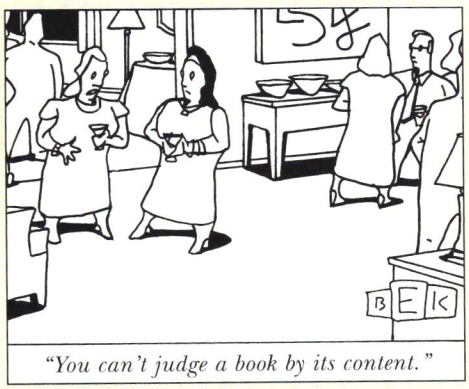

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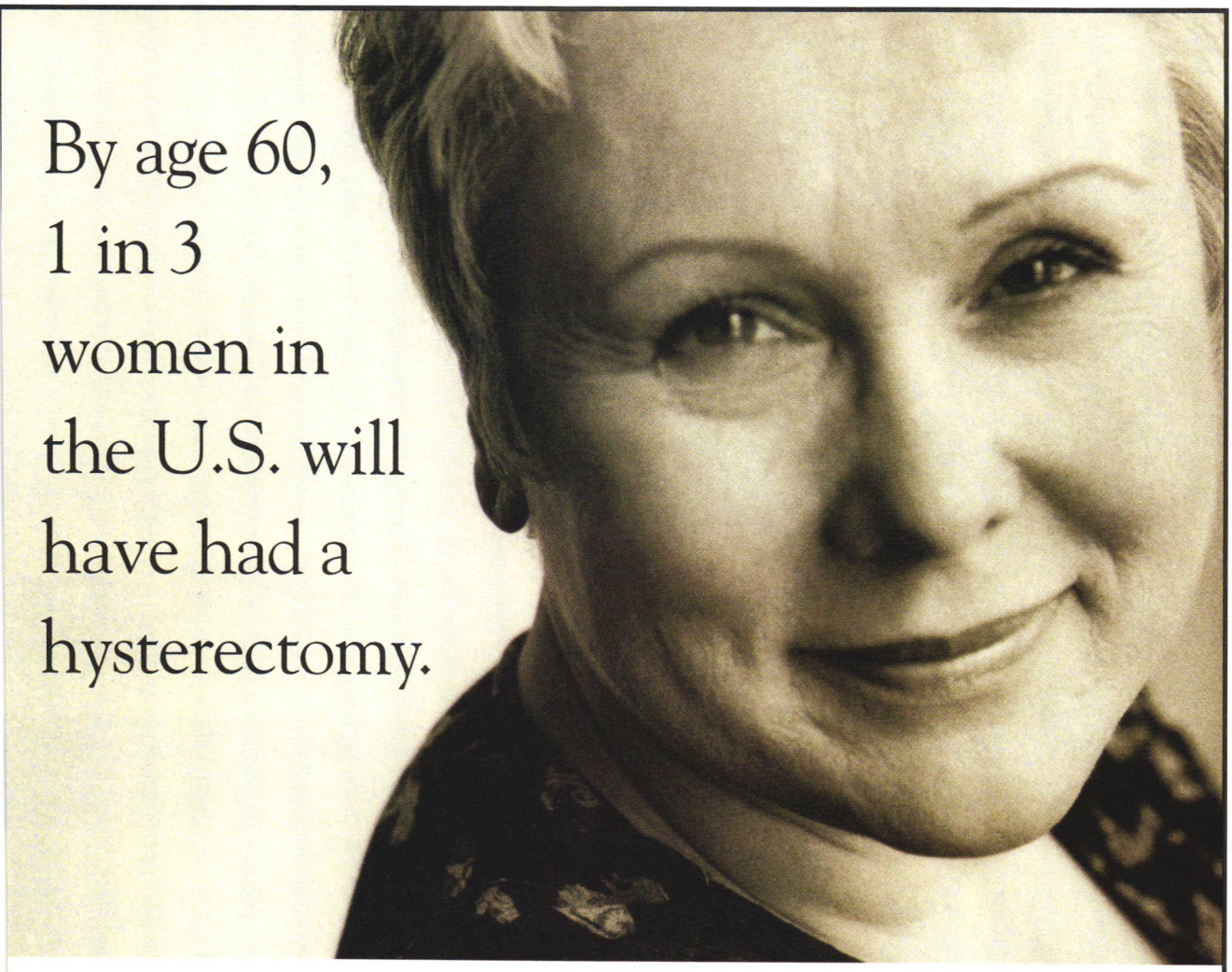

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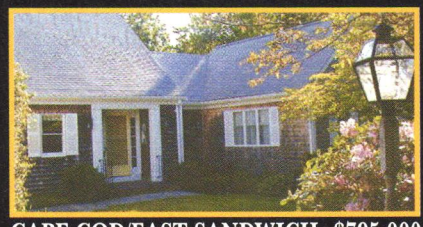

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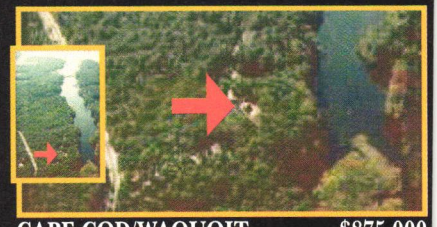

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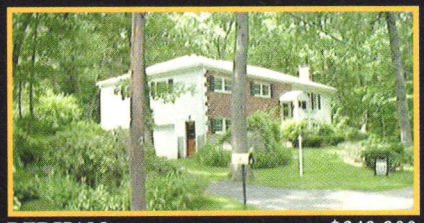

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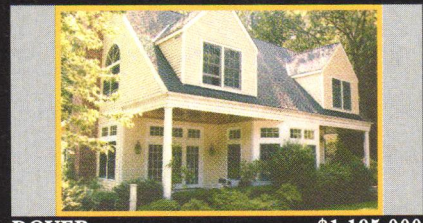

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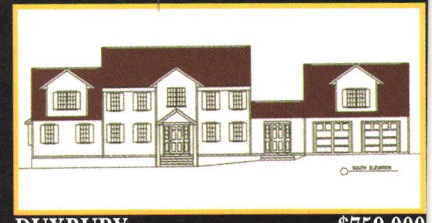

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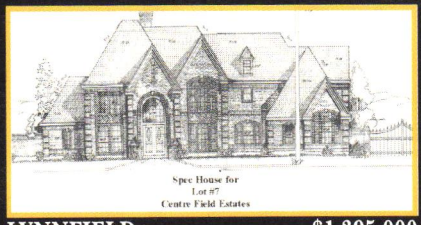

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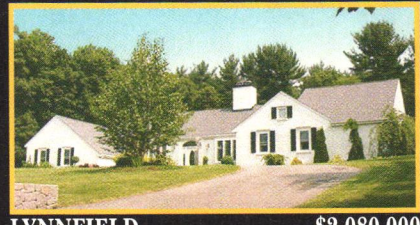

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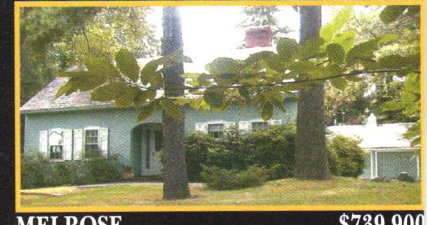

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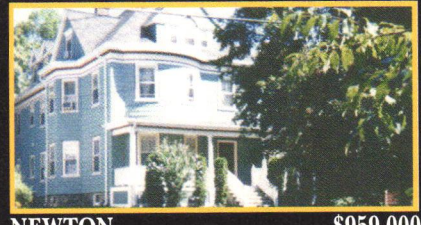

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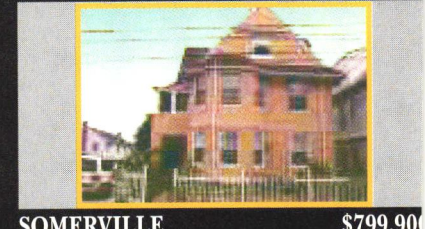

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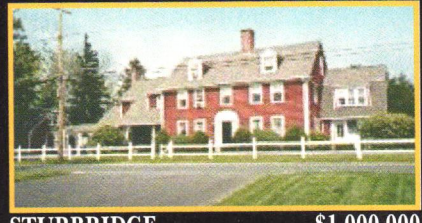

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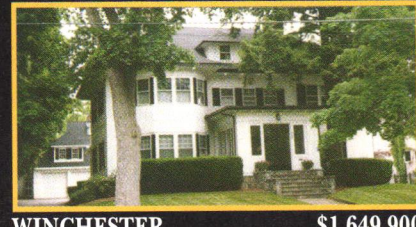

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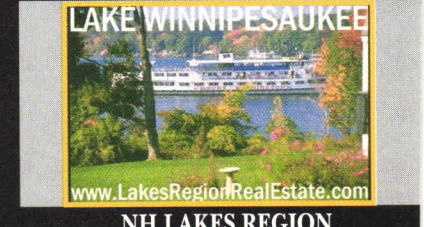

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Stitch, Brooklyn, NY. 718-875-6763. Lalique. 800-214-2738 or 800-669-2580. David Yurman. 877-226-1400. Tiffany & Co. 800-526-0649. Barneys New York Vintage Antiques, San Carlos, CA. 650-591-5884. Lancôme. lancome.com. Parfums Caron, NYC. 212-319-4888. **Background**, Luxor in pink, Kirk-Brummel. **Body cream** by Vera Wang, $85 per 6.7 oz., Saks Fifth Avenue. 877-551-7257. Pink **powder puff,** $60, and Fleur de Lys **hairbrush**, $485, Penhaligon's. 877-736-4254. Vintage **bottles** from The End of History, NYC. 212-647-7598.

DOMESTIC BLISS Pages 25-49

Page 25, Anichini. 800-553-5309. John Salibello Antiques, NYC. 212-838-3767. Oriental Lamp Shade Co., NYC. 212-873-0812 or 212-832-8190. J.C. Landa Antiques, NYC. 212-223-6990. Tiffany & Co. 800-526-0649. **Background**, Medea Taffeta, Lee Jofa. Grosgrain **ribbon** on background, $5.85 per yard, and #4478 **trim** on ottoman, $14.68 per yard, Mokuba New York, NYC. 212-869-8900. Lapis Fabergé **clock**, $500, Saks Fifth Avenue. 800-330-8497. Topaz and sapphire **ring**, $4,000, David Yurman. 877-226-1400. Galuchat **makeup brush**, $350, and **powder box**, $520, Parfums Caron, NYC. 212-319-4888. **Pillow box**, $145, Lorin Marsh. Vintage **bottles** from The End of History, NYC. 212-647-7598. Vintage **perfume bottles** from Barneys New York Vintage Antiques, San Carlos, CA. 650-591-5884. Turquoise **brooch,** $3,570, Bergdorf Goodman. 800-558-1855. Jordan Almond blue Thank You **card**, $18, Nancy Sharon Collins, Stationer, NYC. 212-431-5959. **Pages 26-27**, Kallista. 888-4-KALLISTA. The End of History, NYC. 212-647-7598. Calvin Klein. 877-256-7373. BeComing. 866-423-2663. Ralph Lauren. polo.com. C.O. Bigelow. 800-793-LIFE. Sage. 877-698-SAGE. David Yurman. 877-226-1400. Bergdorf Goodman. 800-558-1855. Di Modolo Milano. 866-DI-MODOLO. Bernardaud. 800-600-1744. **Background**, Turmelin silk, JAB. **Perfume atomizer**, $20, Floris London, NYC. 212-935-9100. Miracle Radiant **body cream**, $50 per 6.8 oz., Lancôme. lancome.com. Very Valentino **perfume**, $75 per 3.3 oz., Saks Fifth Avenue. Larder: **Page 42**, **bowl**, $48, Simon Pearce, NYC. 212-334-2393. **Pot**, Seibert & Rice, Short Hills, NJ. 973-467-8266.

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Page 51, **bowl**, $10, Global Table, NYC. 212-431-5839. **Page 52**, lacquer **trays**, Troy. 888-941-4777.

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Sills Huniford Associates, NYC. 212-988-1636. The Home Depot. homedepot.com. Bridge Landscape Design and Acorn Farm, Laytonsville, MD. 301-452-3192.

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Page 76, Armani Casa, NYC, 212-334-1271, or L.A., 310-248-2440. **Page 80**, Henri Bendel. 800-H-BENDEL. Ralph Lauren Home. 888-475-7674.

ON THE BLOCK
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Sotheby's, NYC. 212-606-7000. Waddington's McLean & Company Ltd., Toronto, Canada. 416-504-9100.

SIMPLE THINGS
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Shears by Wiss, $42.50 per pair, Henry Westpfal Co., Inc., NYC. 212-563-5990.

ART & CRAFT Pages 98-104

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 713-639-7300. The Whitney Museum of American Art. 800-WHITNEY.

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Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C. 202-357-2700.

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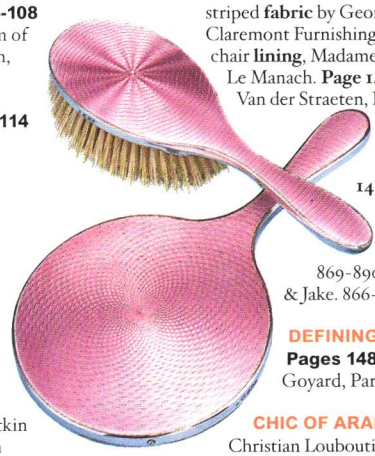

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one gardener's almanac

(Cont. from page 56) of a desert wash, this field may flood ankle deep with the collected runoff from summer monsoons. This moisture, together with the organic matter swept in by the flood, is all the nourishment needed to raise a crop of the Tohono O'odham corn, which goes from seed to harvest in just 60 days. What's more, though corn's critics also charge it (in the form of corn sweeteners) with promoting diabetes, the Tohono O'odham are reviving their varieties for precisely the opposite reason. Theirs were a central element of the traditional diet that medical researchers say protected the tribe from this disease. Today, diabetes afflicts fully 50 percent of the Tohono O'odham population. Yet it was virtually unknown among them prior to the 1960s, when lifestyle changes and federal food distribution programs enticed the tribe away from its ancestral fare of beans, squash, and desert-foraged wild greens and fruits, served with corn tortillas, tamales, soups, and stews.

As I sip my own cup of roasted corn soup, purchased from a vendor outside the TOCA office, I think of John Kyl, Sr., the House representative from Iowa who in 1963 sponsored a bill to make the corn tassel the official floral symbol of the United States. "Corn is America," he argued. After the obligatory nod to the Pilgrims (who fell to their knees, Kyl said, to thank God for helping them to locate and loot a cache of Indian corn), the congressman went on to cite a battery of statistics that proved the central role of corn in our economy.

KYL'S BILL was quickly defeated by a cabal of florists and rose nurserymen. He would have done better, I believe, had he gotten personal. He could have cited a Tohono O'odham youth's dream of self-sufficiency and health. He could have introduced corn mothers and corn children, sung the lullabies of the cornfields. Over a meal of corn bread and corn whiskey, he could have explained how important this plant should be to the pale-faced gardener. Who could have dismissed testimony of that sort? □

The catalog of Native Seeds/Search lists 61 varieties of heirloom corn. Contact nativeseeds.org.

DINNER THEATER Pages 168-175

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Jean-François Lesage Manufacture de Broderie, Paris. 011-33-1-44-50-01-01. **Pages 182-183**, George Sand in Bleu 1 by Georges Le Manach, The Claremont Furnishing Fabrics Co. Inc.

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Fabrics: Beacon Hill. 800-333-3777. Bennison, NYC. 212-223-0373. Braquenié, through Pierre Frey. Christopher Norman, NYC. 212-647-0303. The Claremont Furnishing Fabrics Co. Inc., NYC. 212-486-1252. Clarence House. clarencehouse.com. Colefax and Fowler, through Cowtan & Tout. Coraggio Textiles. 800-624-2420. Cowtan & Tout, NYC. 212-647-6900. Dereham & Culpeper, London. 011-44-208-748-3010. Georges Le Manach, Paris. 011-33-1-47-42-52-94. In U.S., through The Claremont Furnishing Fabrics Co. Inc. JAB, through Stroheim & Romann. Kirk-Brummel, NYC. 212-477-8590. Kravet. 800-648-5728. Larsen, through Cowtan & Tout. Lee Jofa. 800-LEE-JOFA. Maharam. 800-645-3943. Pierre Frey, NYC. 212-213-3099. Robert Allen, through Beacon Hill. Rogers & Goffigon Ltd., Greenwich, CT. 203-532-8068. Scalamandré. 800-932-4361. Stroheim & Romann, Queens, NY. 718-706-7000. Tassinari et Chatel, Paris. 011-33-1-43-16-88-00. Timney Fowler, through Dereham & Culpeper. **Furnishings:** Baker Furniture. 800-592-2537. Baron Upholsterers Inc., NYC. 212-664-0800. Bisazza, Miami, FL. 305-597-4099. Côté France, NYC. 212-684-0707. DelGreco, NYC. 212-688-5310. Donghia Furniture/Textiles Ltd. 800-DONGHIA. Holly Hunt, NYC. 212-755-6555. Larson-Juhl. larsonjuhl.com. Lorin Marsh, NYC. 212-759-8700. Malmaison, NYC. 212-288-7569. Minic. 877-416-4642. Mirror Fair, through Baker Furniture. Mrs. MacDougall, NYC. 212-688-5538. Patterson, Flynn & Martin, NYC. 212-688-7700. Ralph Pucci International, NYC. 212-633-0452. Sentimento Antiques, NYC. 212-750-3111. Todd Hase, NYC. 212-334-3568.

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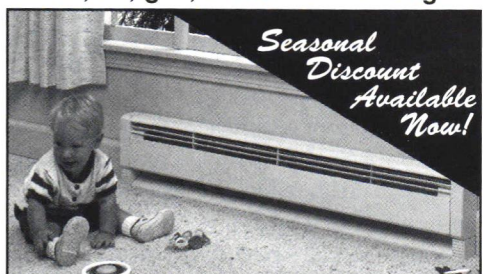

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the testy tastemaker

The judge has ruled: art furniture is a public nuisance, palatial bathrooms are out of order, and Bobby Trendy is surely guilty of something

by mayer rus

WHEN I'M IN the mood for a giggle, I slip my well-worn tape of *Dude, Where's My Car?* into the old VCR. When I have an existential crisis, I consult my rabbi, or my psychopharmacologist. What I do *not* do is shop for furniture.

Please allow me to clarify. In my personal pantheon of peeves, I harbor a special loathing of so-called art furniture. You know the kind of thing I'm talking about: a jokey lounge chair shaped like a high-heeled shoe; a bizarrely angled chest of drawers tarted up with inexplicable decorative excrescences; a hand-hewn coffee table designed as a commentary on the human condition. I'm talking about the mongrel creatures one encounters at local craft fairs, down the aisle from the driftwood clocks and batik ponchos. I'm talking about aspirational stools and cupboards that arrogantly present themselves as "functional art." Oxymoron, anyone?

Now, for the sake of this argument, let's avoid dull semantic squabbling about definitions of "art" and "furniture." The historical elasticity of such categories guarantees the existence of genuinely ambiguous objects. Advocates of functional art might reasonably cite examples from the past century of furniture created by "fine artists": Yves Klein's pigment-filled coffee tables, which are both gorgeous and functional, or Donald Judd's ascetic tables and chairs, which are predictably minimalist and sometimes downright punitive.

My beef isn't with the likes of Klein and Judd. They were serious artists who took occasional detours into furniture making. Their positions in the history of art will not rise or fall based on the quality of their furniture. No, my beef is with those contemporary furniture makers who, in the name of art, commit heinous crimes of patination, sandblasting, and other novelty effects.

Let me break it down: I don't want comic relief from my furniture, and, as for my art, I'll take it without a cup holder and magazine rack.

IN THE RAREFIED world of high-end real estate, bathrooms have apparently become the new living rooms. How else can one account for the increasingly gargantuan scale and extravagant appointments of today's luxury lavatories? In my recent travels, I've encountered all manner of bloated *bains* tricked out with fireplaces, chandeliers, entertainment units, and enough upholstered furniture to fill a small hotel lobby. It seems the spirit of Caracalla is alive and well and bathing in suburbia.

Having chronicled the lifestyles of the rich and fabulous for years, I'm no stranger to excess. I realize that the plague of bathroom elephantiasis is nothing more than a consequence of the current vogue for building preposterously vast houses. Still, I find the lavatory landgrab distasteful. Perhaps I'm just bitter because my own pygmy bathroom has all the charm and comfort of an economy-class latrine on Aeroflot. But even if I were as rich as Croesus, I still couldn't imagine wanting a bathroom large enough to host an ice cream social for the entire neighborhood.

HOW COULD ANYONE resist a decorator who goes by the name Bobby Trendy? I owe my acquaintance with Mr. Trendy to Anna Nicole Smith, the Rubenesque model/actress whose daily life is currently the subject of a gawking "reality TV" series. Trendy first appears during an episode filmed in his West Hollywood showroom, a bedizened bunker of crushed-velvet poufs and other gilded atrocities; the place looks like a stage set for a drag production of *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Trendy practices the art of extreme decorating, which is to say decorating that is extremely vulgar. On his Web site bobbytrendy.com, the sequined sorcerer boasts, "I do not believe anyone makes sofas and drapes any faster!" Anna Nicole Smith is clearly a woman in a hurry, and Lord knows she's never been afraid to flout conventional standards of good taste. All of which confirms my long held belief that for every decorator there is a perfect client. □

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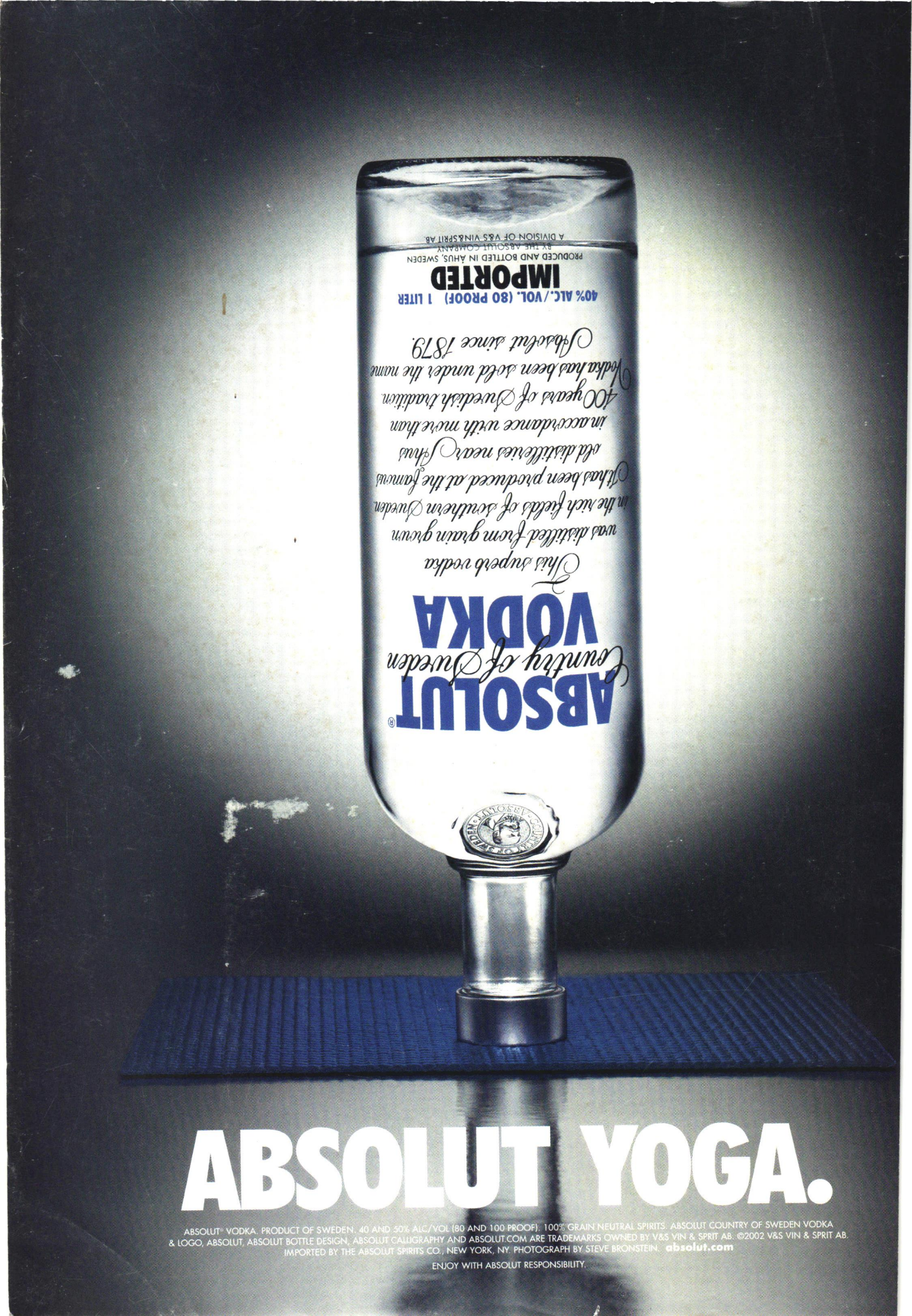

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