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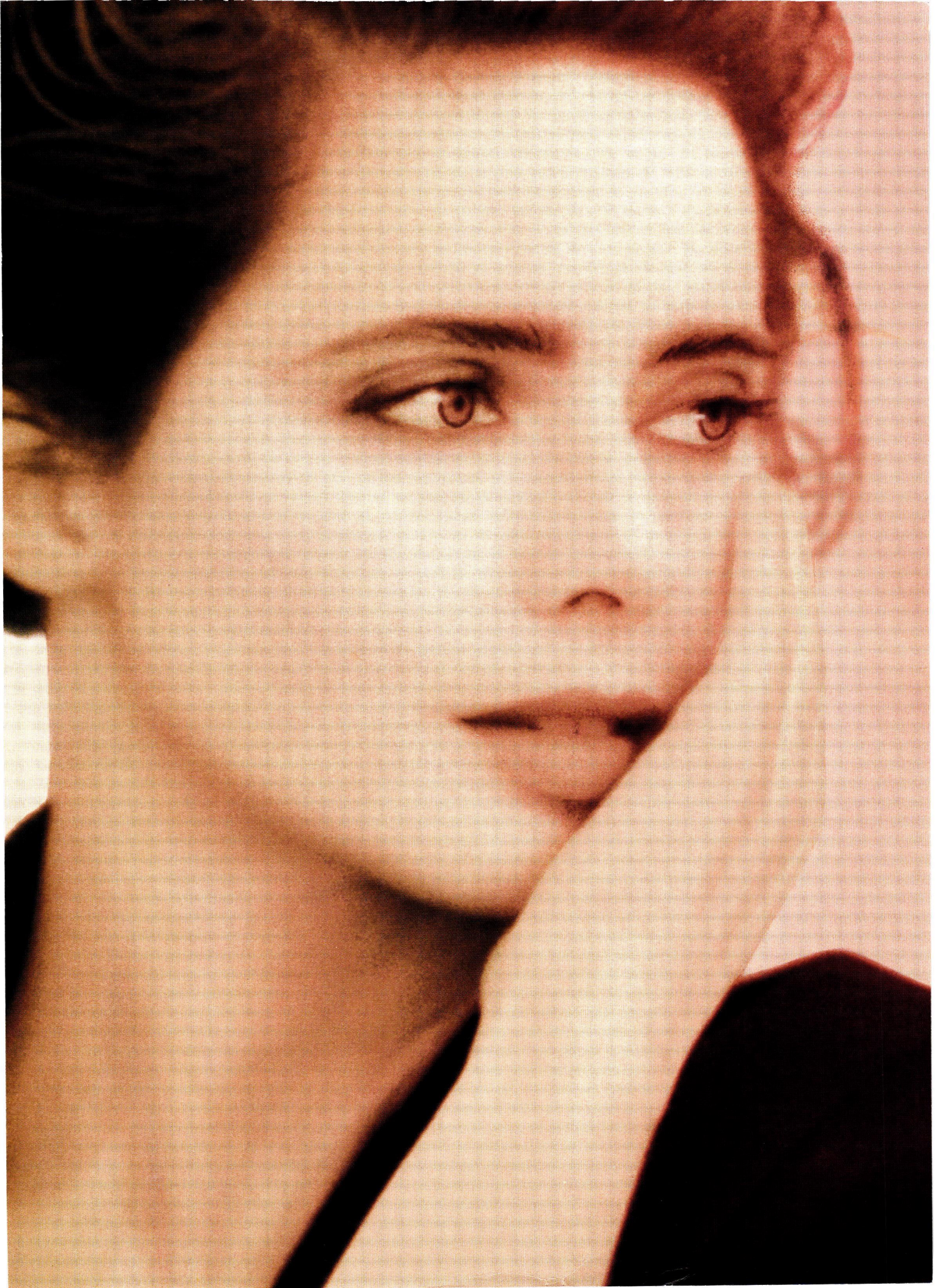

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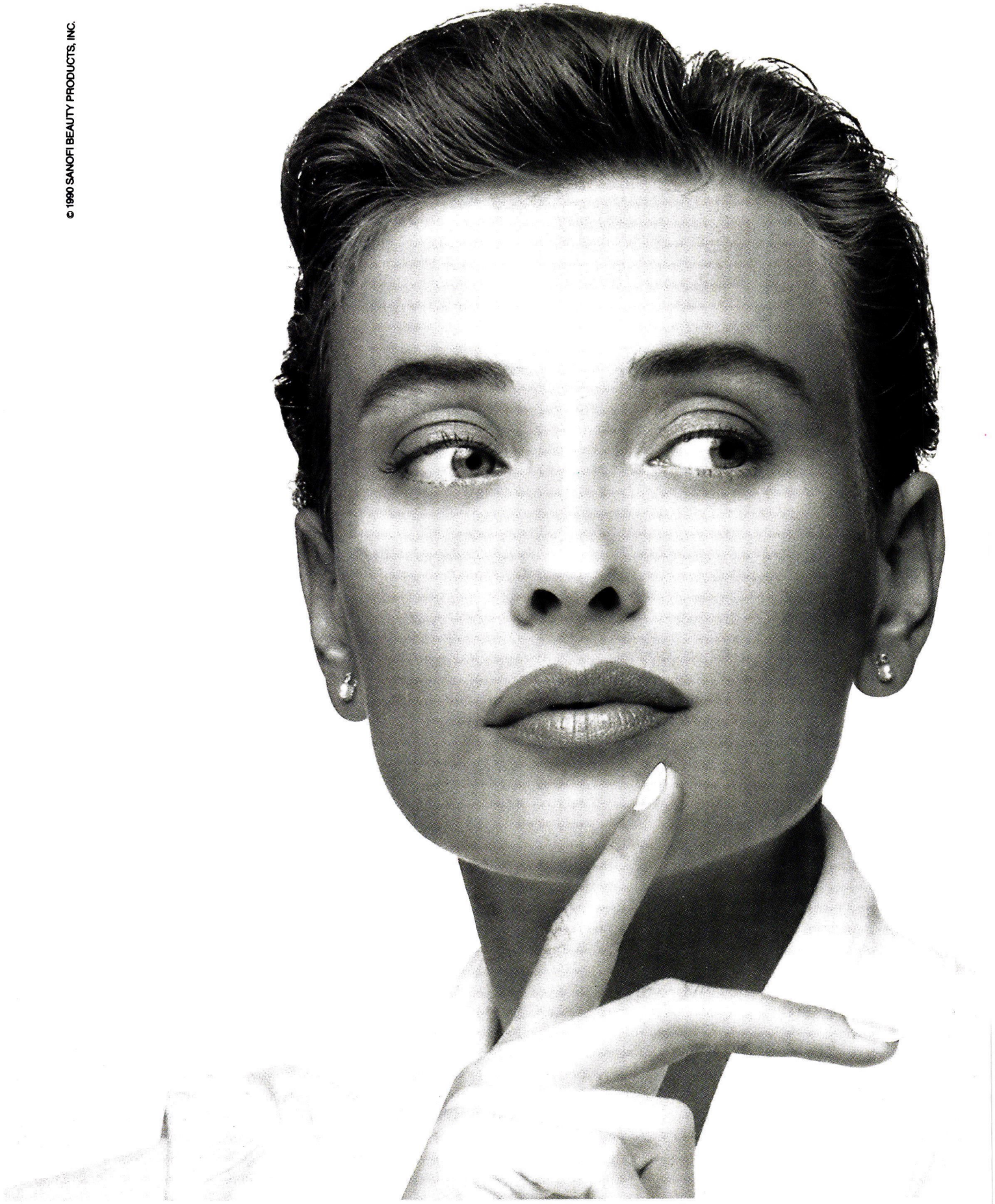

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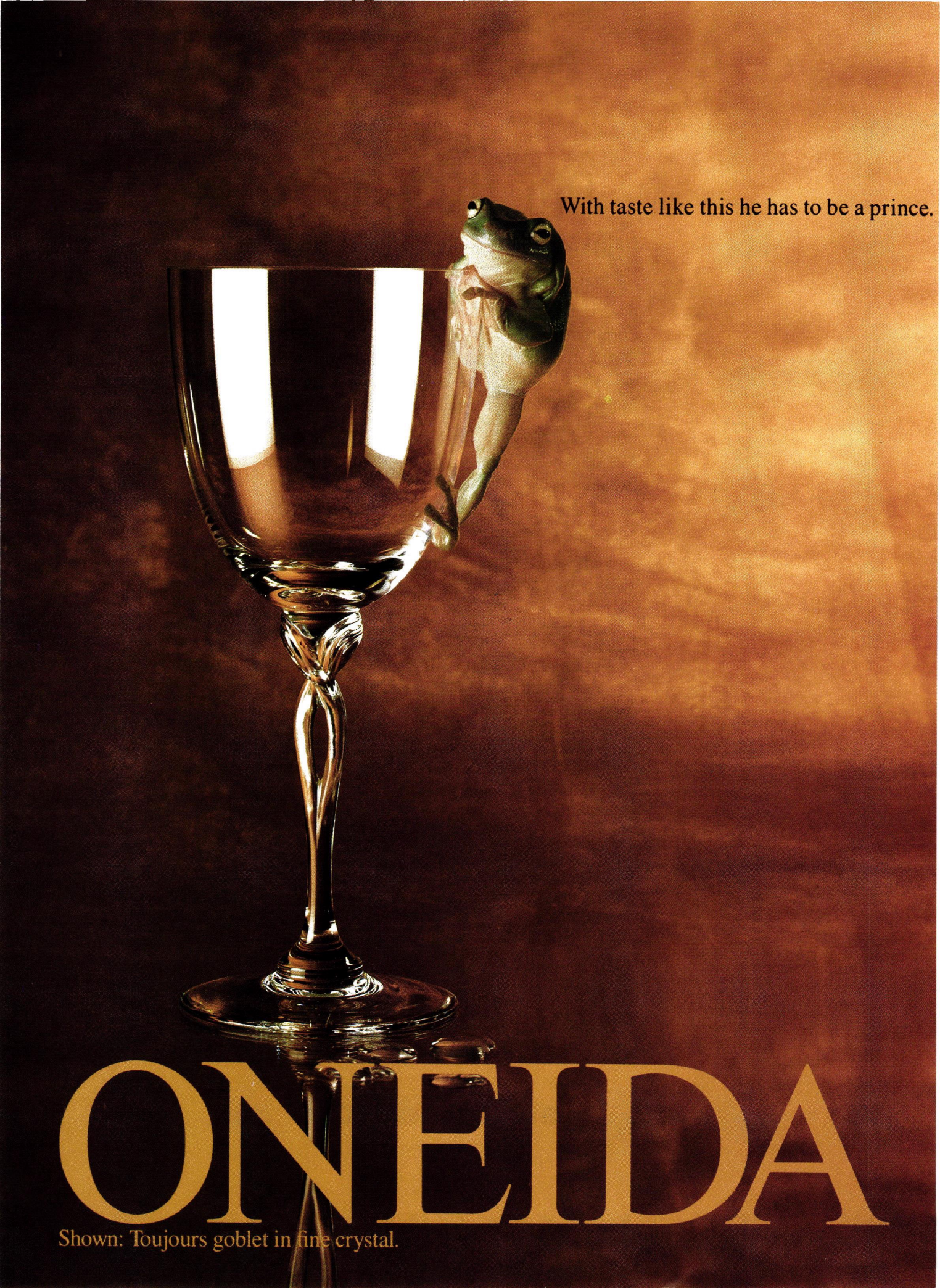
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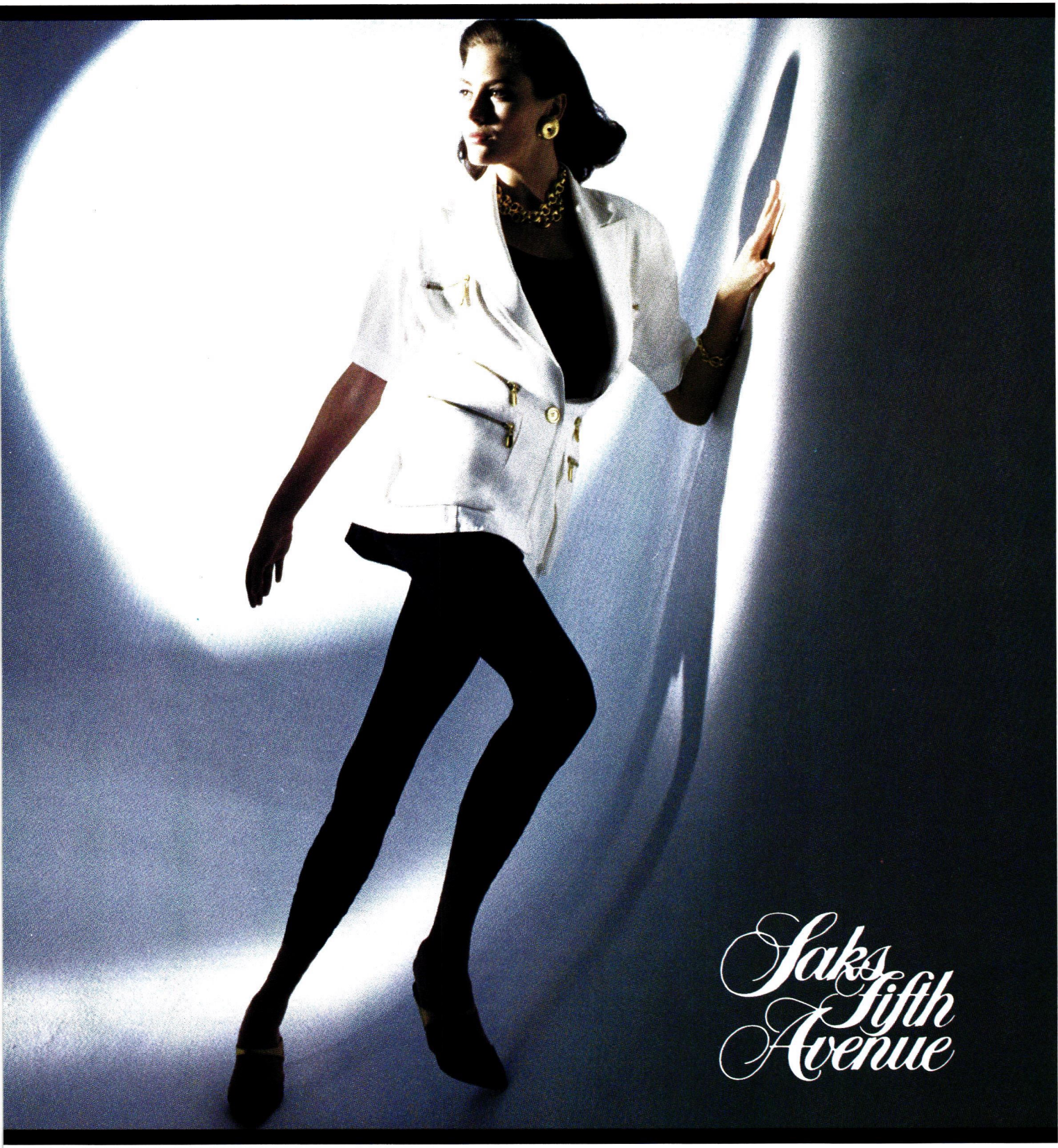

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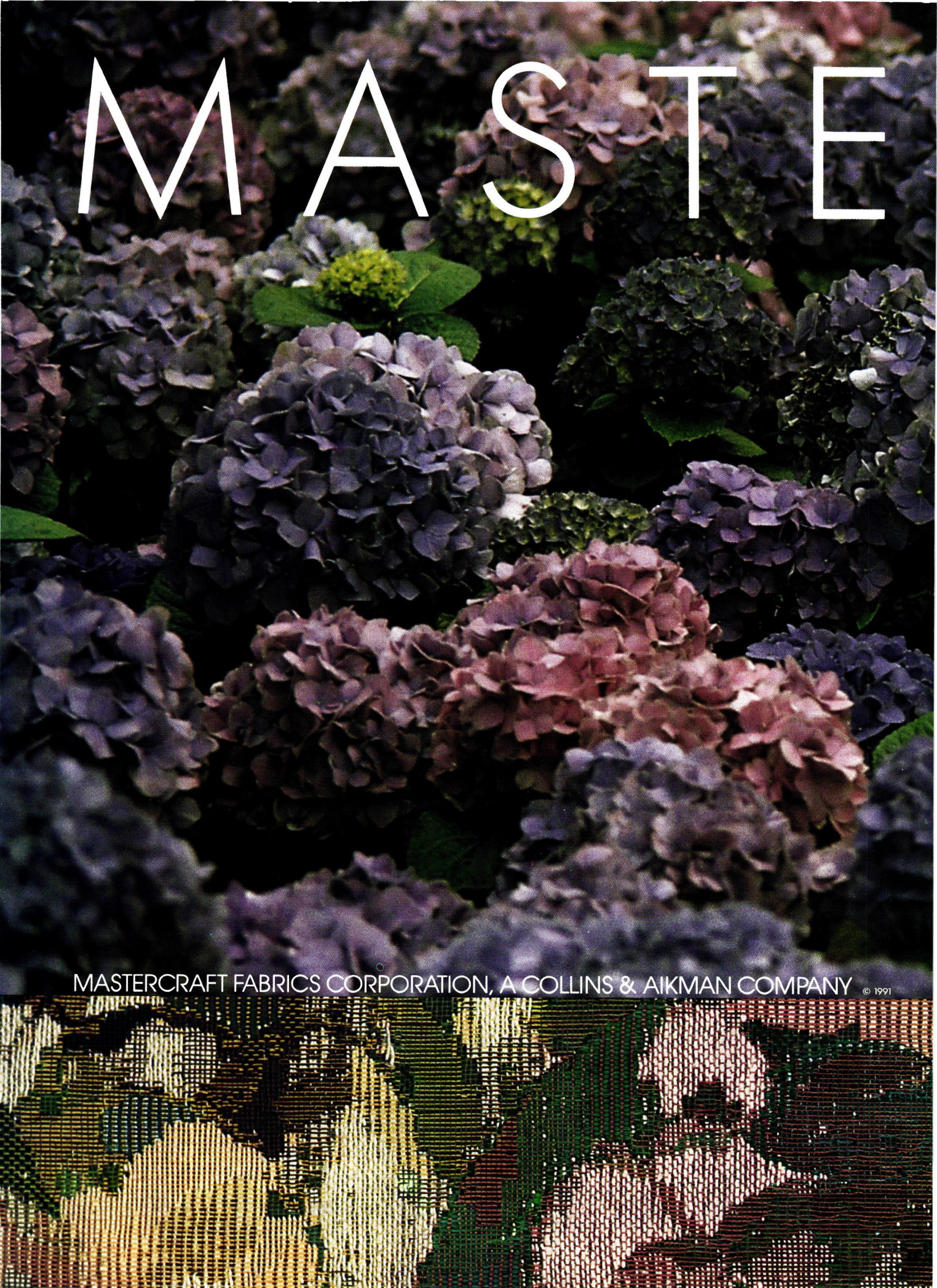
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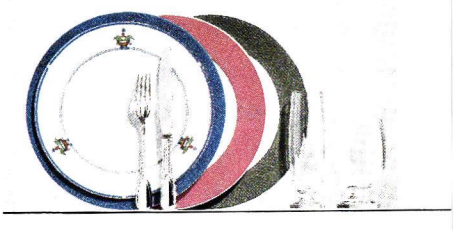

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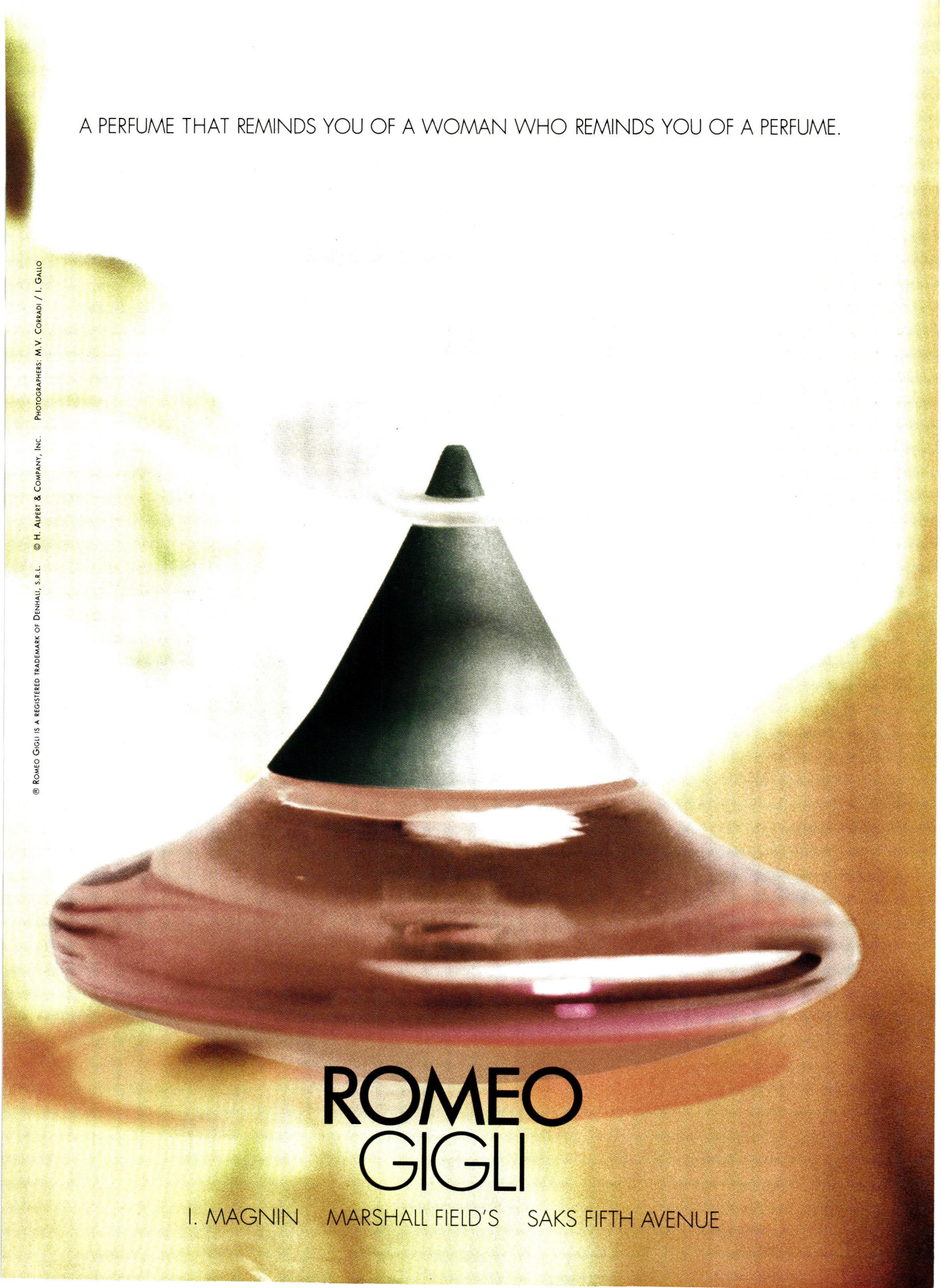

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I. MAGNIN MARSHALL FIELD'S SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

To many, automotive performance is best measured in miles per hour. But as usual, BMW's engineers have a different point of view. Though the 535i sedan is capable of rapid acceleration, it's equally capable of reaching a rapid standstill. Its antilock braking system combines BMW's advanced technology with a larger brake surface, giving even greater control to the driver. Road & Track,

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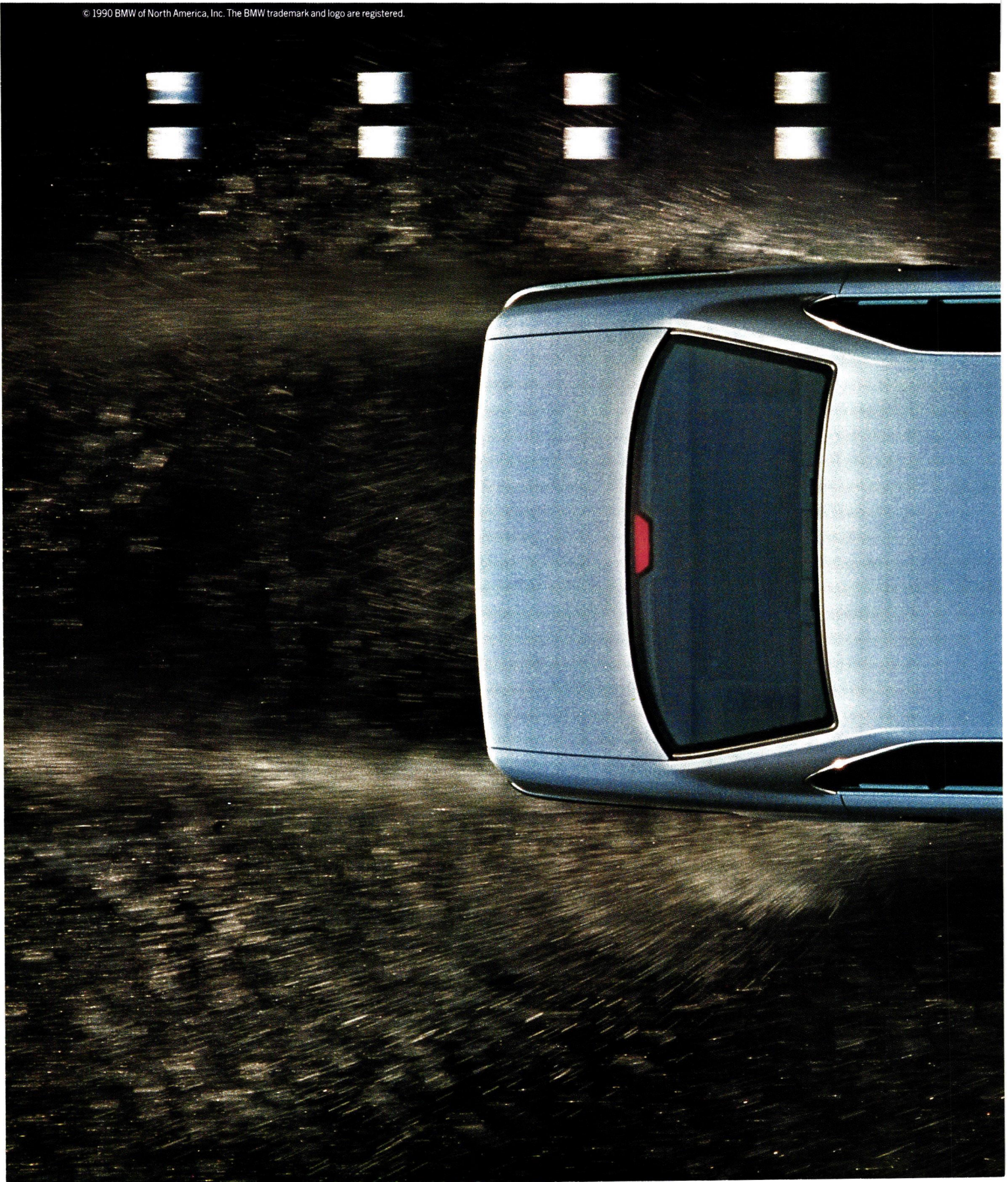
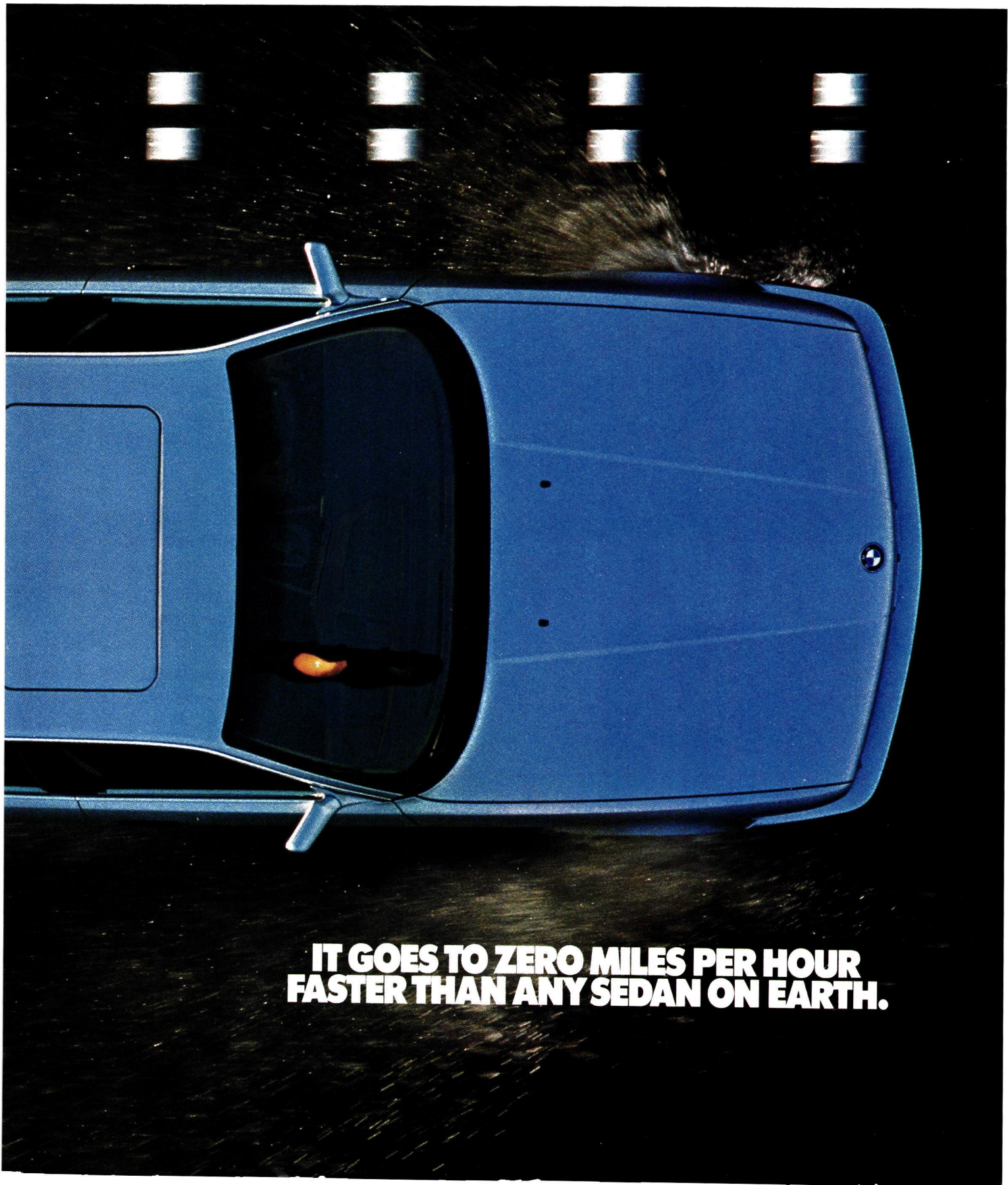


in fact, found that at 80 mph, the 535i stopped 10 to 40 feet shorter than any other sedan in the world–which can easily be the difference between a serious accident and no accident at all. Call 800-334-4BMW for information on the 535i sedan. Or apply your brakes at a nearby BMW dealer, and see how it performs at every speed. Including zero. THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE.®



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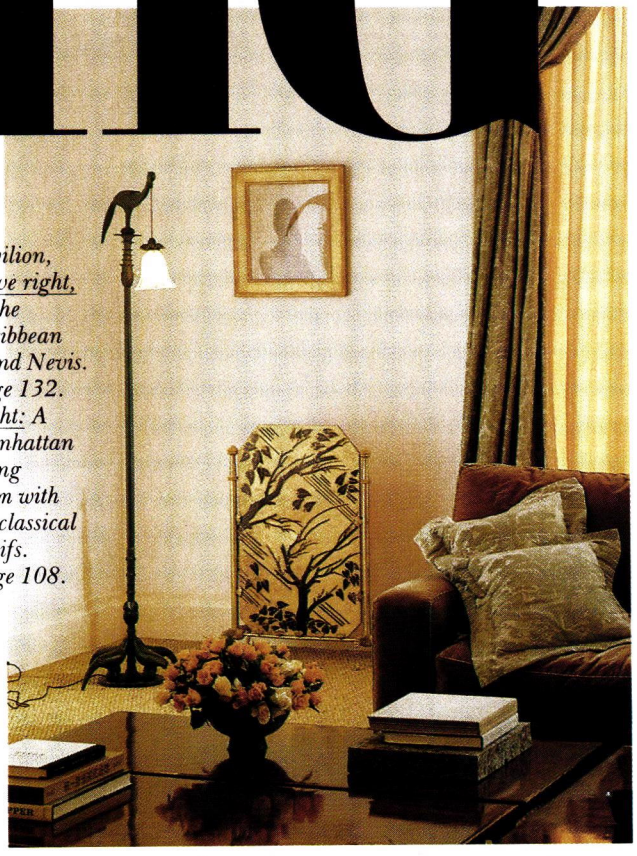
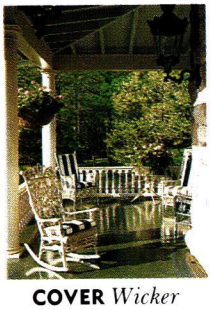


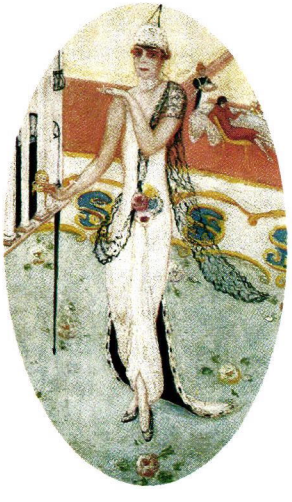
Pavilion, above right, on the Caribbean island Nevis. Page 132. Right: A Manhattan living room with neoclassical motifs. Page 108.

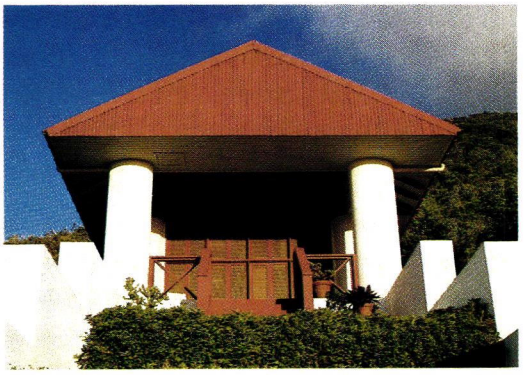
MAY

Snow geese, left, with Mount Hood in background. Page 166. Below: Florine Stettheimer's portrait of her sister Carrie. Page 138.



COVER *Wicker furniture in a bright awning stripe fills the porch of a Victorian house. Photograph by Oberto Gili. Page 124.*





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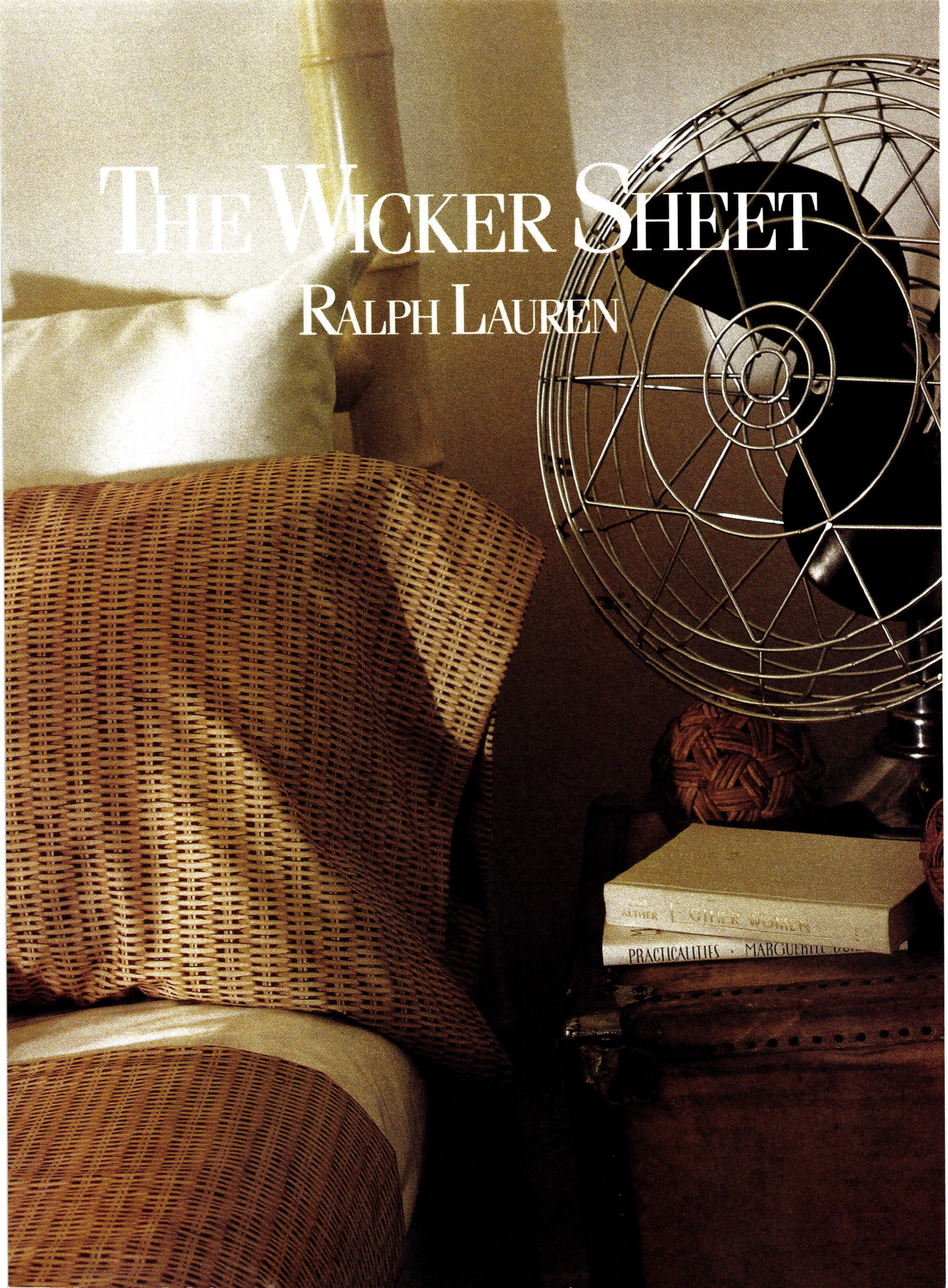
BOTTOM RIGHT: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY; GIFT OF THE ESTATE OF ETTIE STETTHEIMER


THE WICKER SHEET
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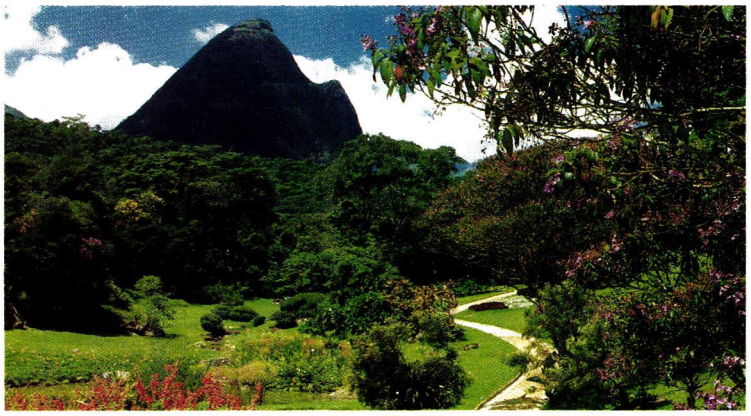
PRACTICALITIES

ESPRIT

Esprit de Corps: a common spirit of camaraderie, enthusiasm and devotion to a cause among the members of a group.
Esprit, 939 Minnesota Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

Photography: Peggy Sirota



A garden in Brazil designed by Roberto Burle Marx. Page 50.

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Pearl-sheathed vase, left, by Dish-Ta-Henge. Page 100.
Below: Battina shares the Manhattan loft of artist William Wegman. Page 88.

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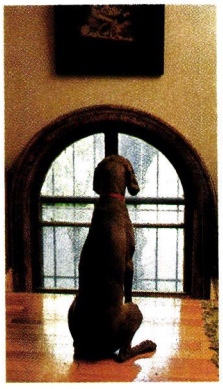

Left: Architect Stanley Tigerman at Parrinello in Chicago. Page 84.

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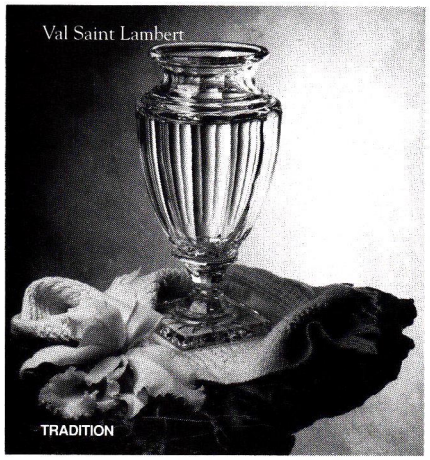
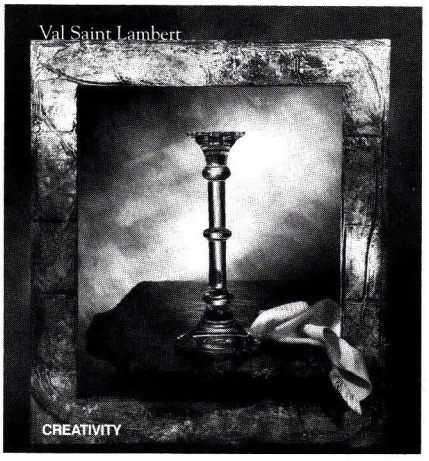
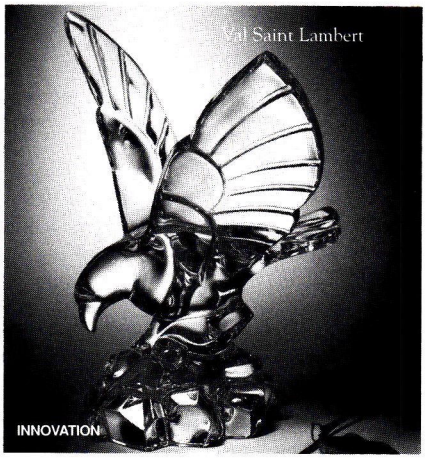
The timeless elegance of fine crystal by Val.







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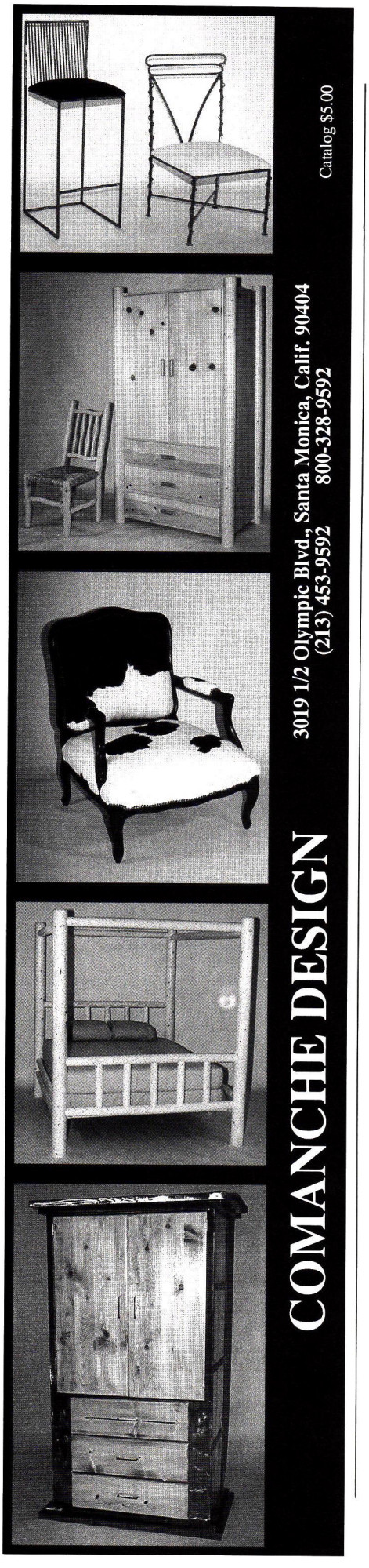

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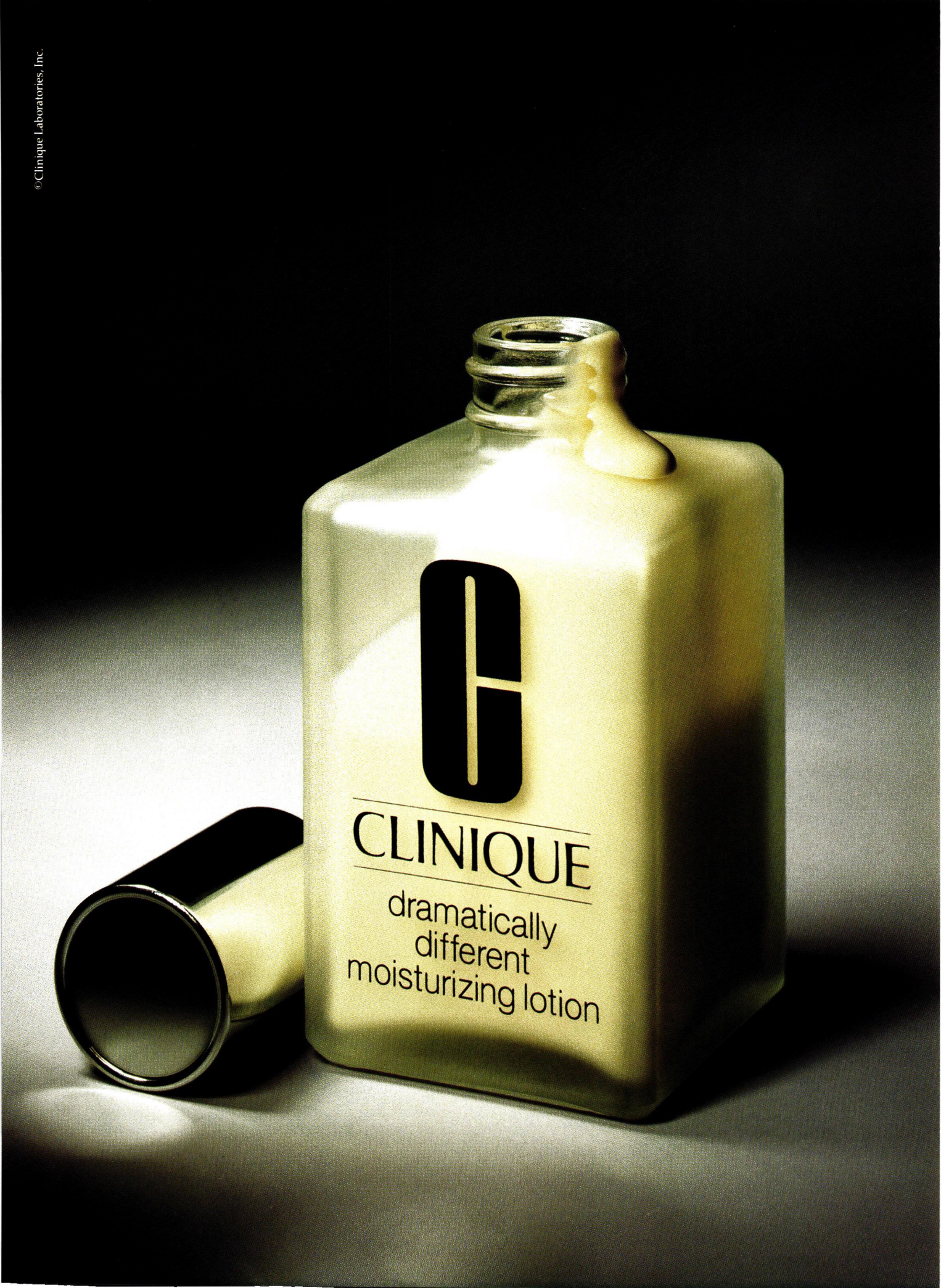
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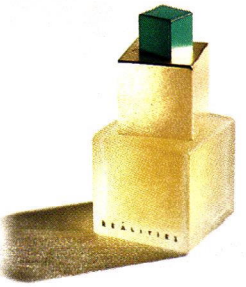

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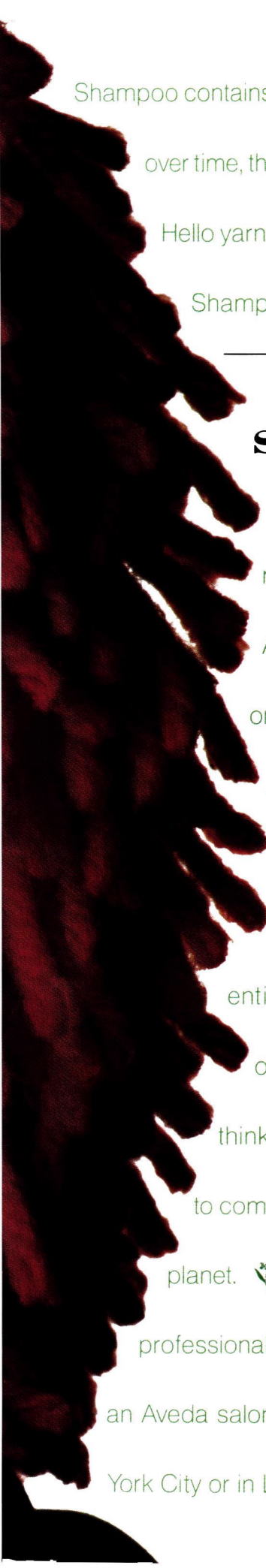

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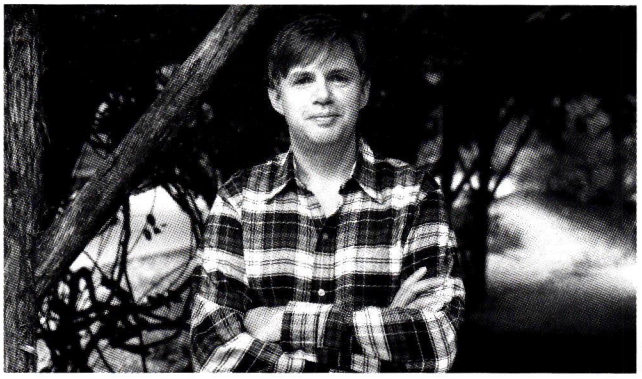
JOSEPH GIOVANNINI

Christine Pittel, a New York–based freelance writer whose articles have appeared in *The New York Times, Forbes,* and *Graphis,* began her career in New York theater and then moved to Hollywood where she developed film projects and shaped scripts. "But I prefer the pace of journalism," she says. "You don't have to persuade a studio to give you $20 million to get started." For May, she reports on an updated Victorian mansion—"a place where you feel as if you should be sitting down to a pot of tea and a plate of lemon squares."



NANCY CRAMPTON

Tony Hiss, author of *The Experience of Place* and a staff writer for *The New Yorker,* journeys to Portland, Oregon, to evaluate Metropolitan Greenspaces' efforts to preserve wildlife and parklands: "The group captured my imagination and is destined to be the model for other cities. They not only develop methods to identify environmentally important areas but also show ways to save and connect them."

BILL BERNSTEIN/OUTLINE

Wendy Wasserstein didn't know what response she'd get when she wrote a valentine to decorator Mario Buatta in a magazine article. Over time, the two became friends. Wasserstein, the Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright whose *The Heidi Chronicles* is on national tour, describes his first visit to her New York apartment in this month's "Taste" column: "Mario was everything I hoped for and more. I always hear from my prince of chintz on the proper days—Christmas, Valentine's Day, my fortieth birthday—and he's even thinking of naming a sheet after me."

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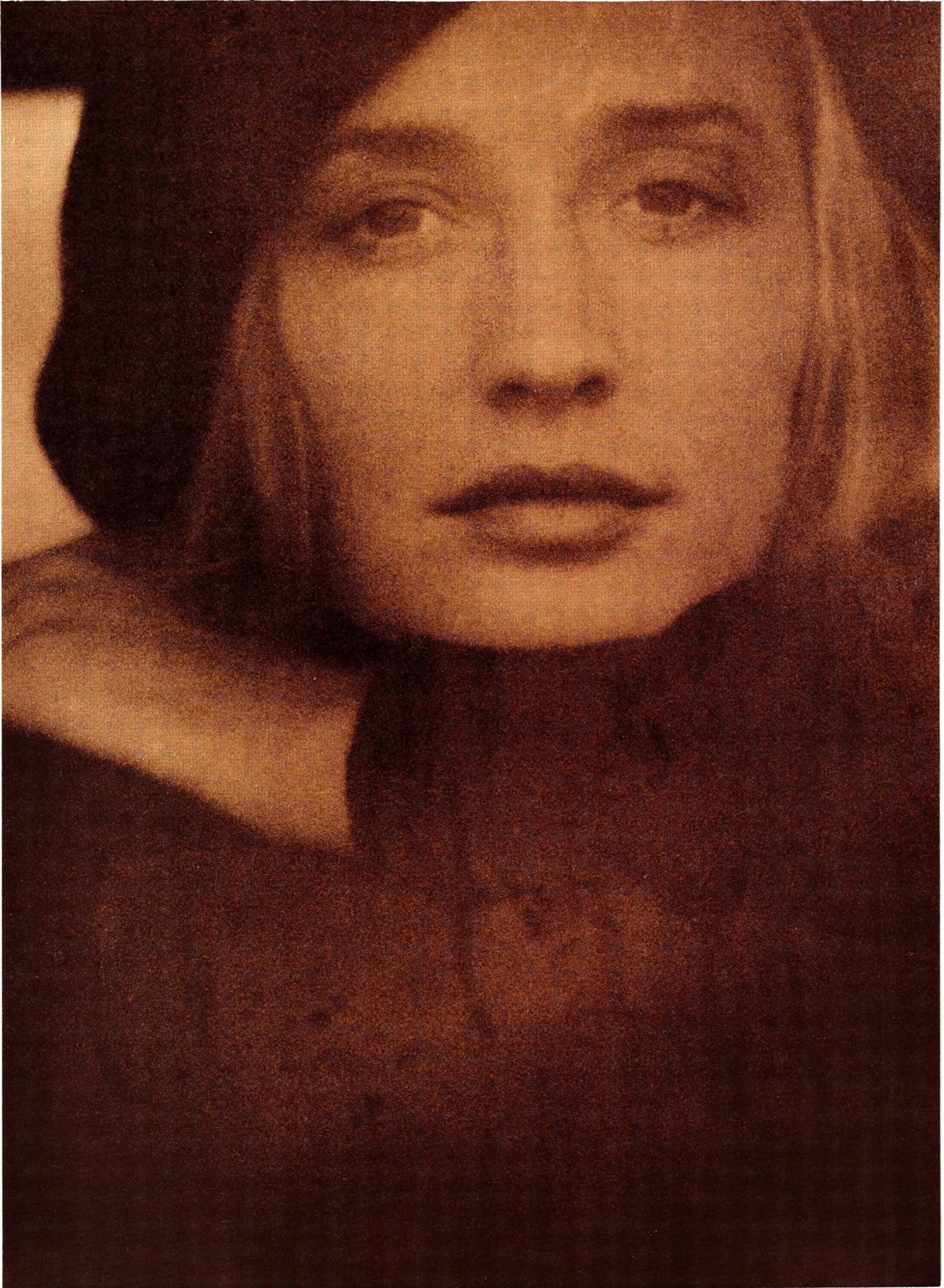

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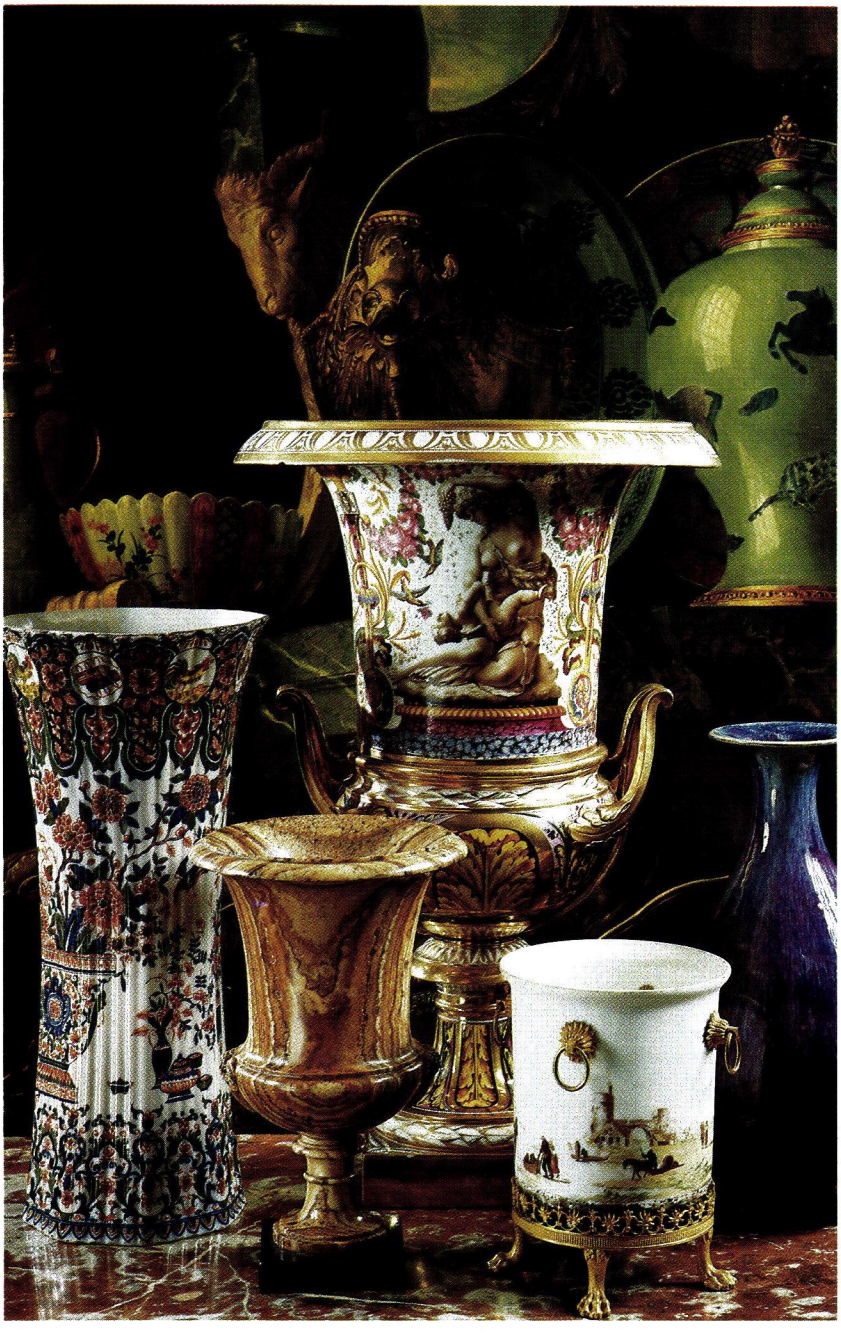

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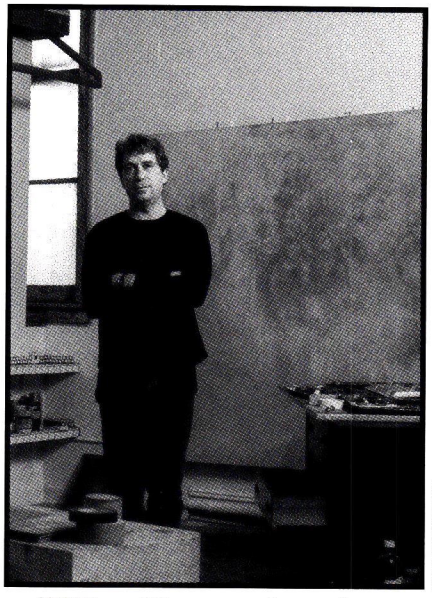

KATLEEN STERCK

William Wegman shows how closely his life and art overlap with photographs of his Manhattan loft, which is also his studio. An artist best known for his witty pictures of Weimaraners, Wegman says his subjects are the perfect roommates: "They adorn the space and behave more like cats than dogs with their agility around objects. Occasionally they'll chew up an old shoe, but they never knock over my equipment or compositions."

JIMM ROBERTS

Alison Lurie explores the wild beauty and mystery of Togo. The author of several novels and a professor of English at Cornell, Lurie was intrigued by the region's animism. "One of the reasons to go there is to see a land where people take it for granted that trees, rivers, and mountains have spirits and voodoo ceremonies are almost as common as church services are here."

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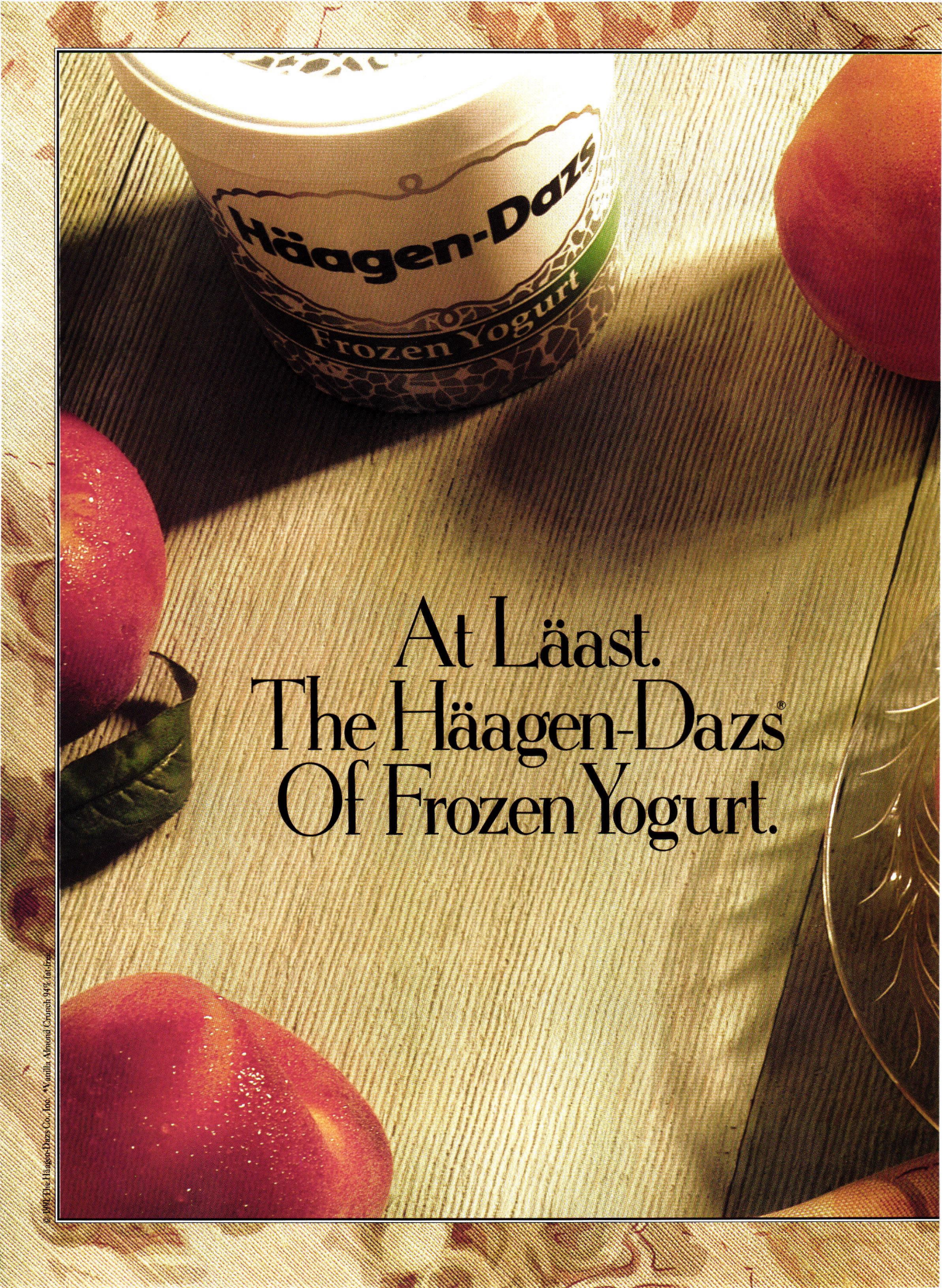
notes

HG REPORTS ON THE NEW AND THE NOTEWORTHY By Eric Berthold

Jean Lowe explores the most flamboyant reaches of decorating history in gallery installations that take the shape of grandiose rooms. But this thirty-one-year-old San Diego–based artist's bravura brushwork fills every cartouche with visual commentaries on an array of contemporary world problems, from environmental hazards to animal rights. Endangered species frolic on her King of Beasts bed (*right*), and the consequences of gem mining unfold in a drawing room ensemble (*above*) with jewelry motifs and a faux Pompeian mosaic floor. "I challenge viewers to confront unpleasant realities," says Lowe, "by biting them with something that appears toothless." (Lowe is represented by Gracie Mansion Gallery, 532 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; 212-941-5580.)

TODD EBERLE



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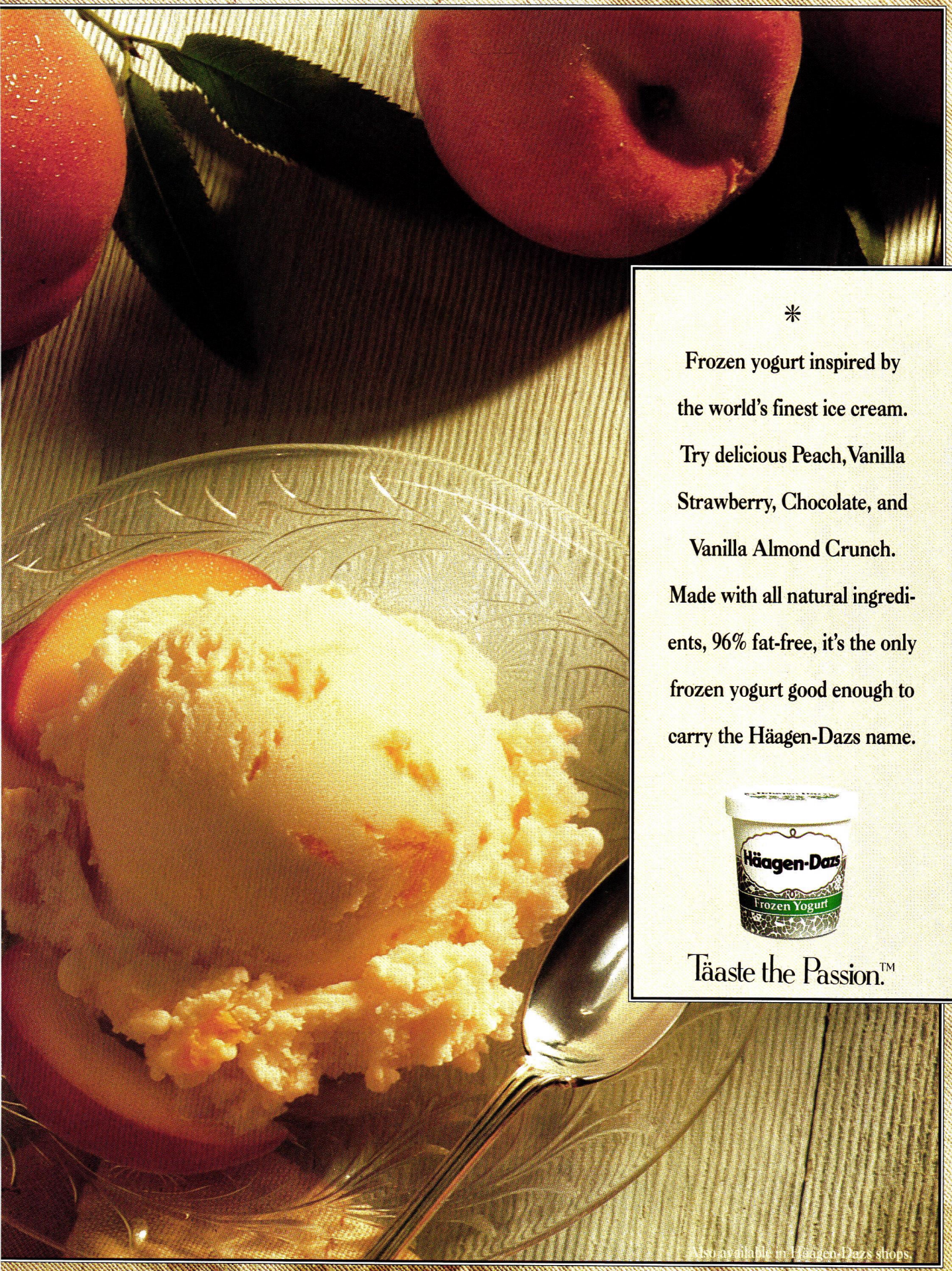

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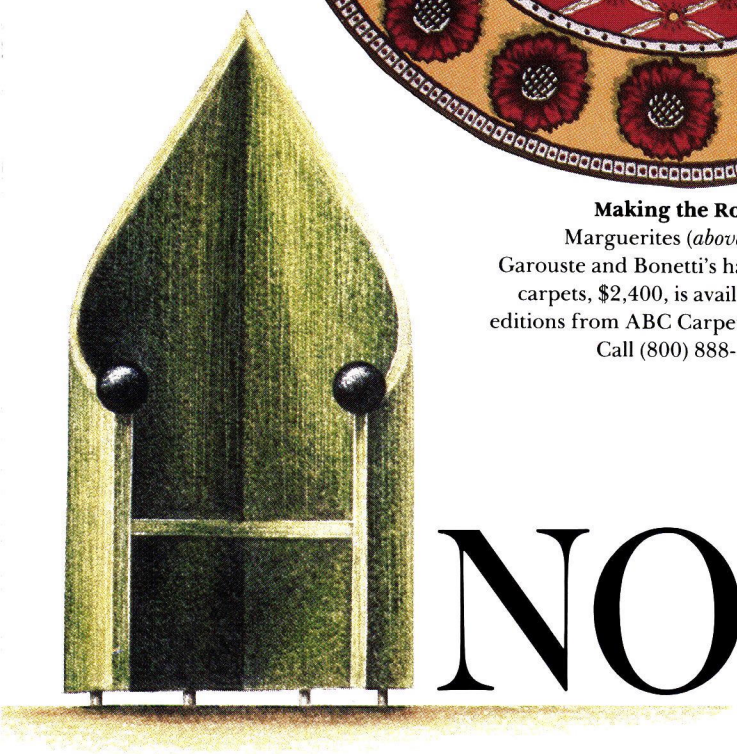
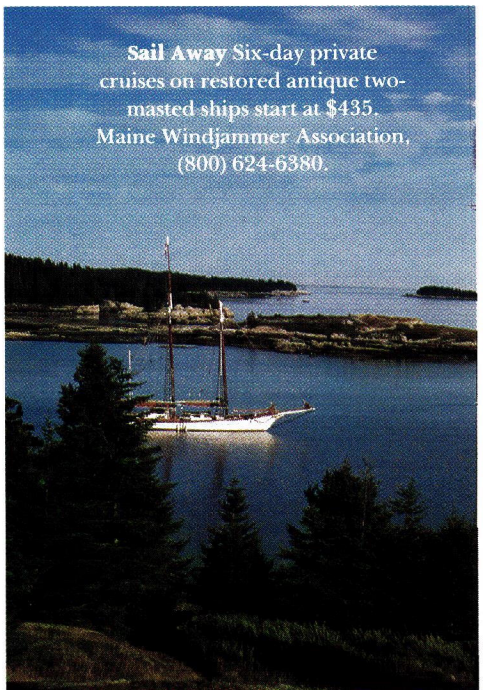
Slip Happy
Shabby Chic, L.A. and NYC, offers sofas, chairs, and pillows (*below*), casually slipcovered in cottons, linens, velvets, and brocades.



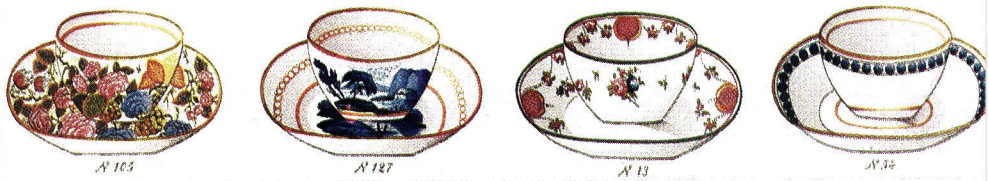
notes

Facing Forward David D'Imperio's Bambusa chair is one of the new designs (*above*) exhibited at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair, May 19–22, Javits Center, NYC (212) 686-6070 ext. 286.

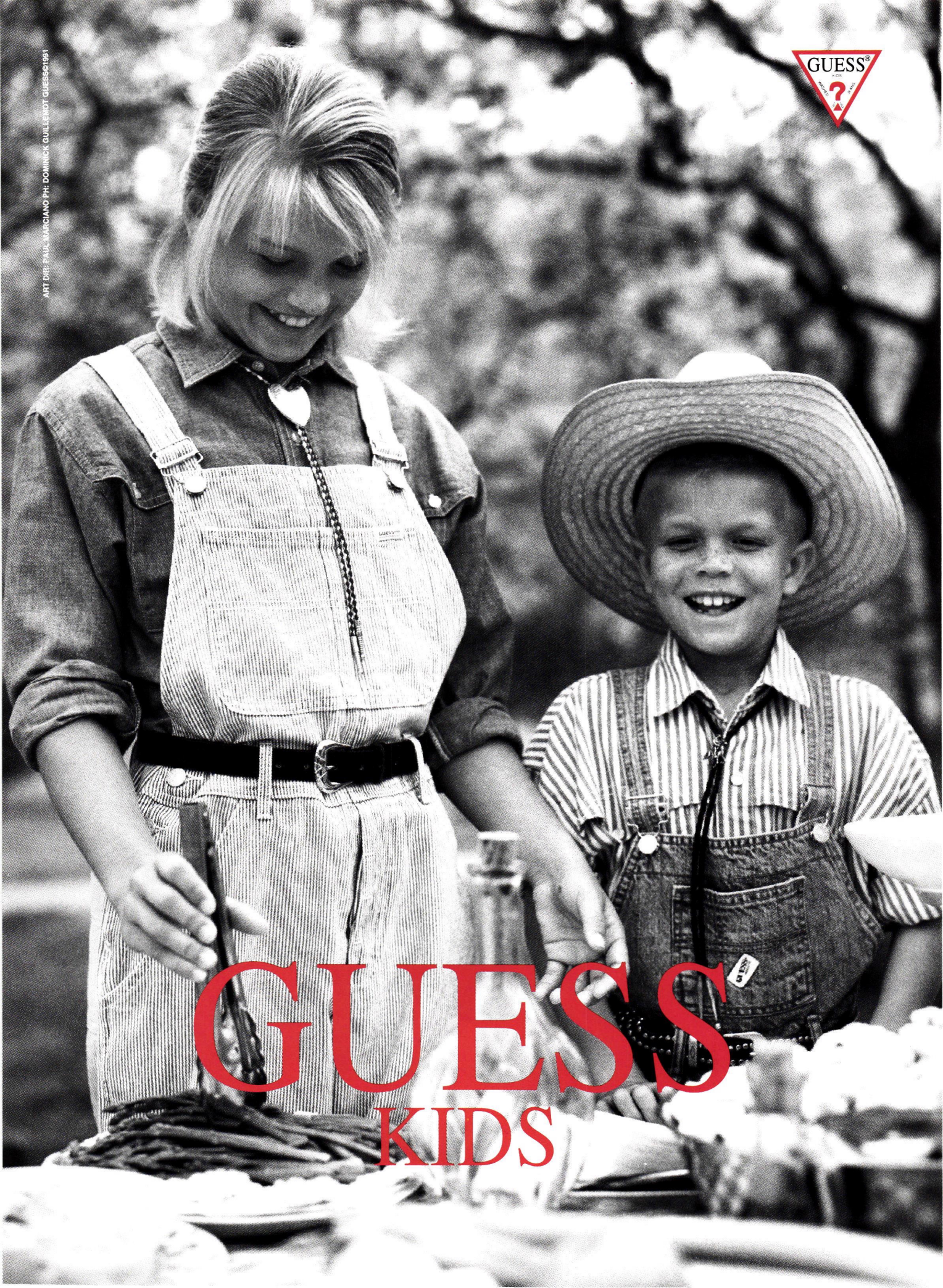
Books of Beasts "Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky: Four Hundred Years of Animal Illustration" is on view at the New York Public Library through Aug. 24. For information (212) 869-8089.



Sail Away Six-day private cruises on restored antique two-masted ships start at $435. Maine Windjammer Association, (800) 624-6380.



Teatime Pierre Frey's all-cotton Minton Teacup fabric (*above*) will be available to the trade this summer at Brunschwig & Fils. For showrooms call (212) 838-7878.



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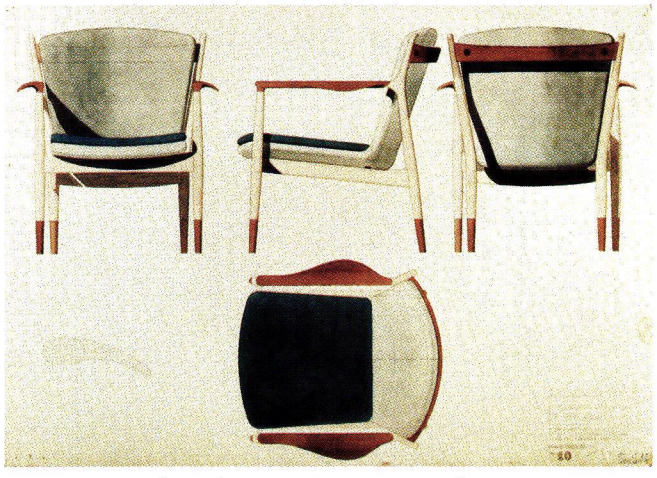
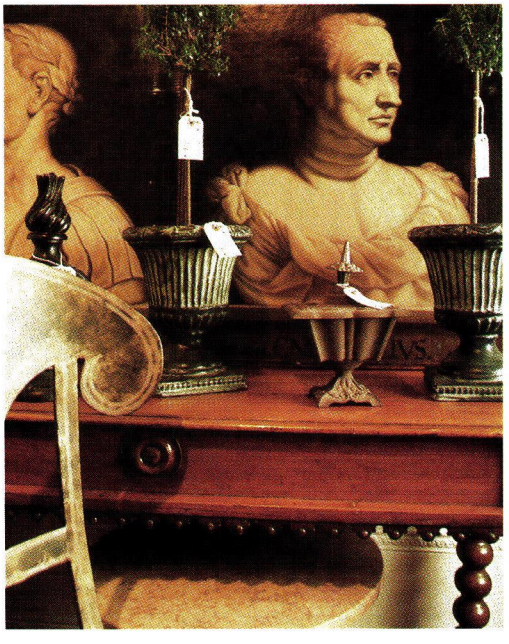
New Yorker Peter Schlesinger's one-of-a-kind stoneware (*below*) is available from the artist. Call (212) 929-1790.

Patches of Glory
The Museum of American Folk Art presents the Great American Quilt Festival, May 1–5, Pier 92 on the Hudson, NYC. For information (212) 977-7170.

Retro Specs The Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum will display eyeglass frames of the 1940s, '50s, and '60s from the L.A. Eyeworks collection, May 18–Aug. 11. For information (213) 937-5544.



Repeating History The 1951 chair (*above*) designed by the Danish architect Finn Juhl is one of more than two hundred examples featured in Sam Burchell's *A History of Furniture: Celebrating Baker Furniture, One Hundred Years of Fine Reproductions* (Abrams, $49.50).



Take a Number
Antiquarians Betsey Ruprecht and Sky Field's biannual tag sale of furniture and decorative objects (*left*) is this month at decorator Bunny Williams's offices, NYC (212) 288-3471.

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Tropical Modern

From rain forest to Rio, Roberto Burle Marx is on the cutting edge of landscape design

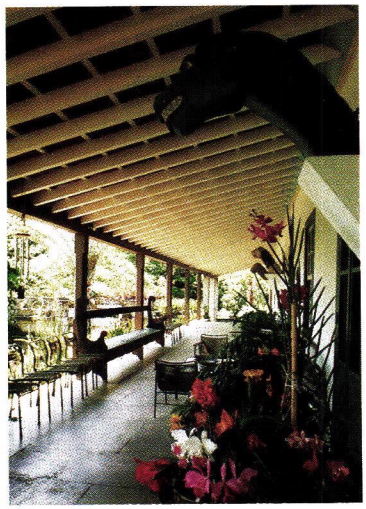
BY DENISE OTIS

Take a profound love and understanding of plants, mix with an equally strong love and study of art, add a wide knowledge of garden history to a thoroughly twentieth-century sensibility, and you begin to catch the likeness of the man who is considered the world's foremost living landscape architect, Roberto Burle Marx. Many critics, among them William Howard Adams, guest curator of "Roberto Burle Marx: The Unnatural Art of the Garden," an exhibition of plans and photographs opening May 23 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, place this Brazilian's powerful modern style on a level with the great national garden styles of England, France, and Italy. *The Gardens of Roberto Burle Marx* by Sima Eliovson, just published by Sagapress/Harry N. Abrams, offers still another look. And if everything goes as planned, two major projects now under way will give this country its first living examples of that style: the $16 million redesign of Biscayne Boulevard in Miami and, scheduled to open this coming fall, a tropical garden under glass at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania.

O estilo Burle Marx is not easy to sum up. Strong graphic patterns in city gardens seem to dominate the plants as skyscrapers dominate urban bustle. But in country estates and suburban gardens the crisply defined lawns and beds of contrasting colors and textures seem to reflect the surrounding environment and merge into it with grace. The plants are native or, if not, ecologically compatible introductions. From the beginning of his career in the 1930s, Burle Marx has been an untiring champion of Brazil's environment and its plants.

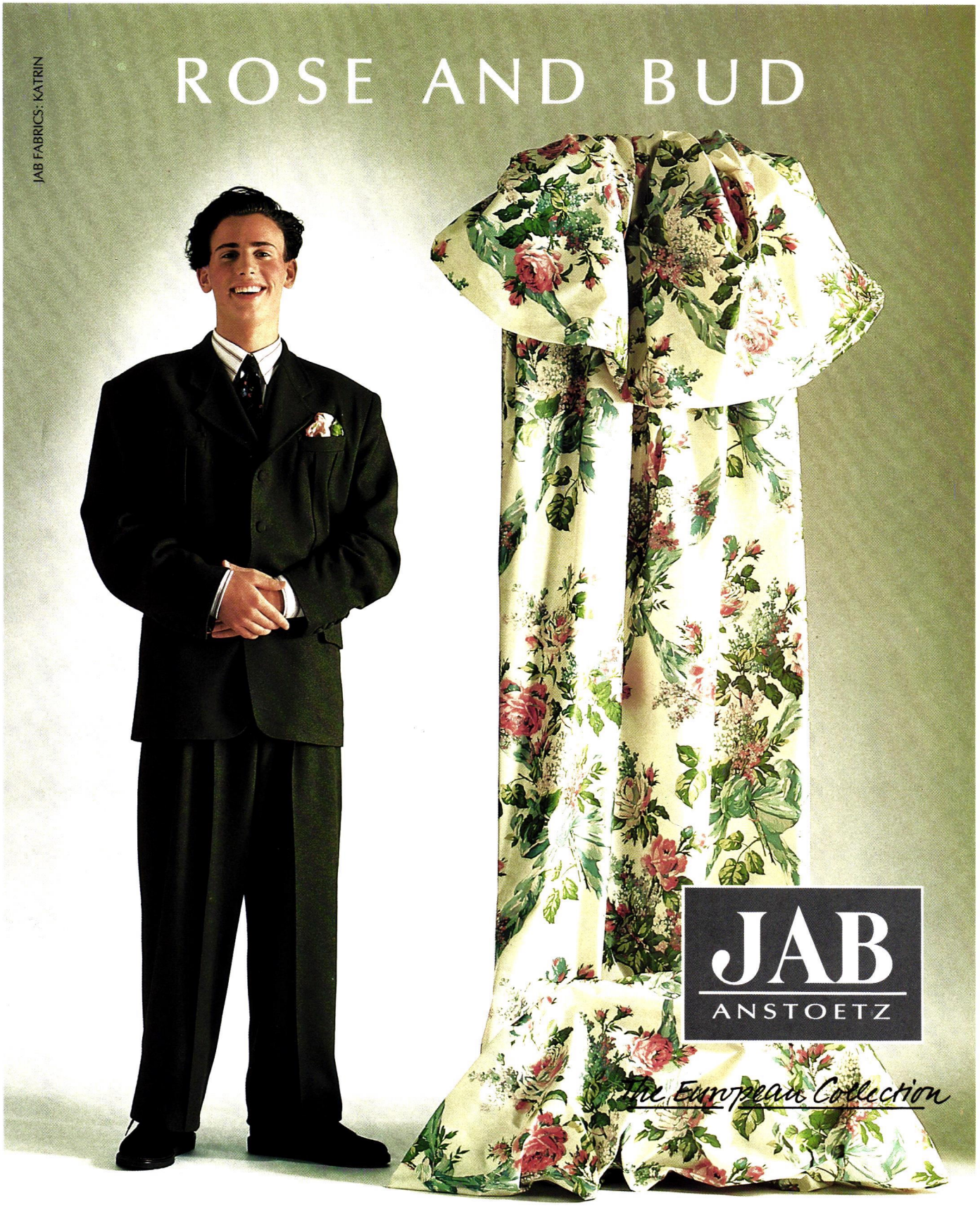
To design with native plants, he soon learned, he had to find them in the wild and grow them himself. With the result that after more than fifty years of collecting expeditions, during which he has discovered many new plants, he has assembled on his estate south of Rio de Janeiro one of the finest collections of tropical plants in the world. The Sítio Santo Antônio da Bica, as it is called, is both his home and his laboratory for experiments architectural and horticultural, perfect for his purposes since it offers a variety of terrains and microclimates from swamps to arid granitic hillsides.

The gardens at the sítio have developed gradually and are primarily organized to serve the needs of different plant communities. If they don't display as much graphic



Roberto Burle Marx, above left. A pool and fountain wall on his estate, above right, where orchids, left, swing from plumerias and, right, figureheads from São Francisco riverboats keep watch.

BOTTOM RIGHT, MICHAEL MORAN; OTHERS, MICK HALES



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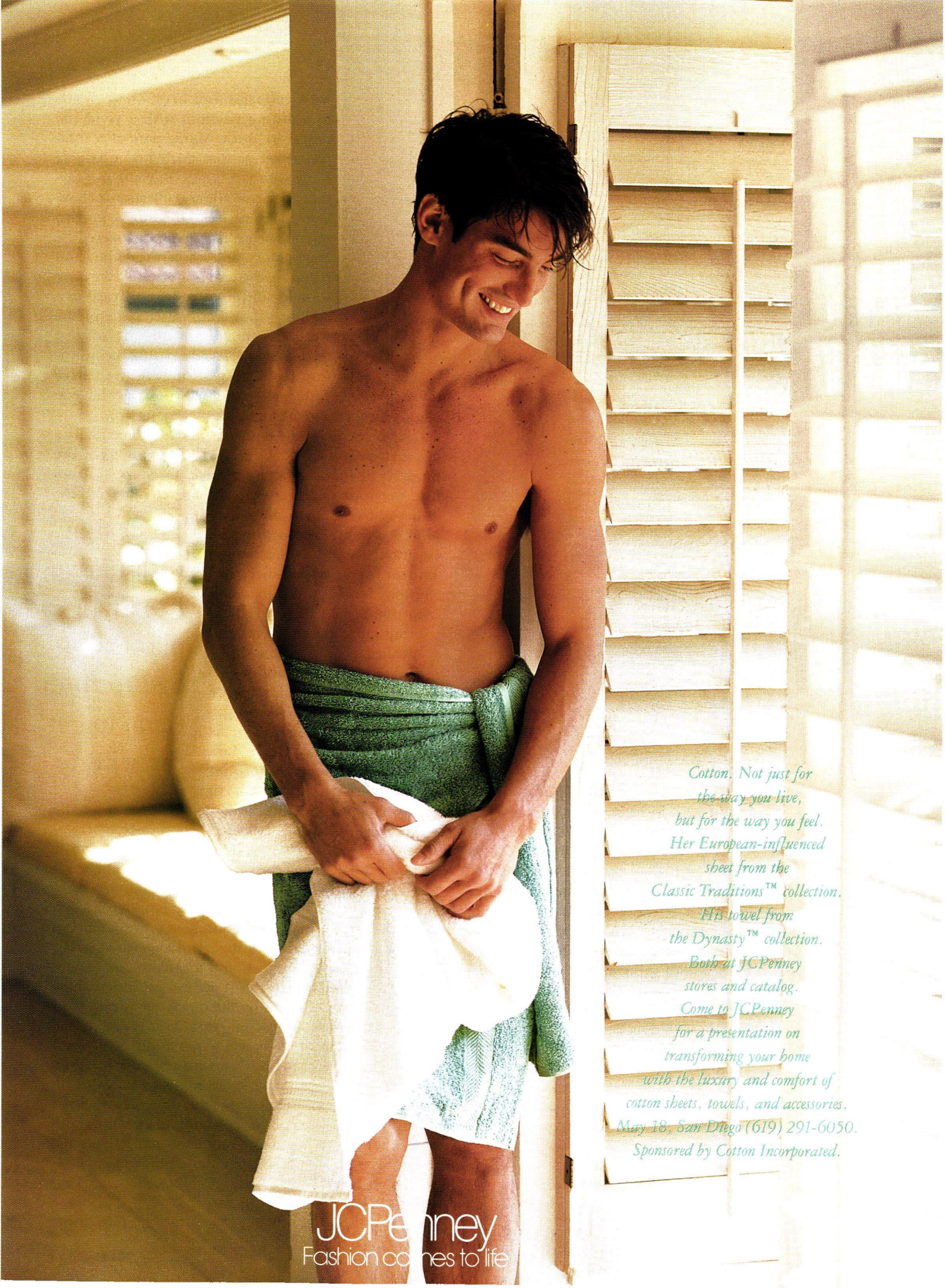
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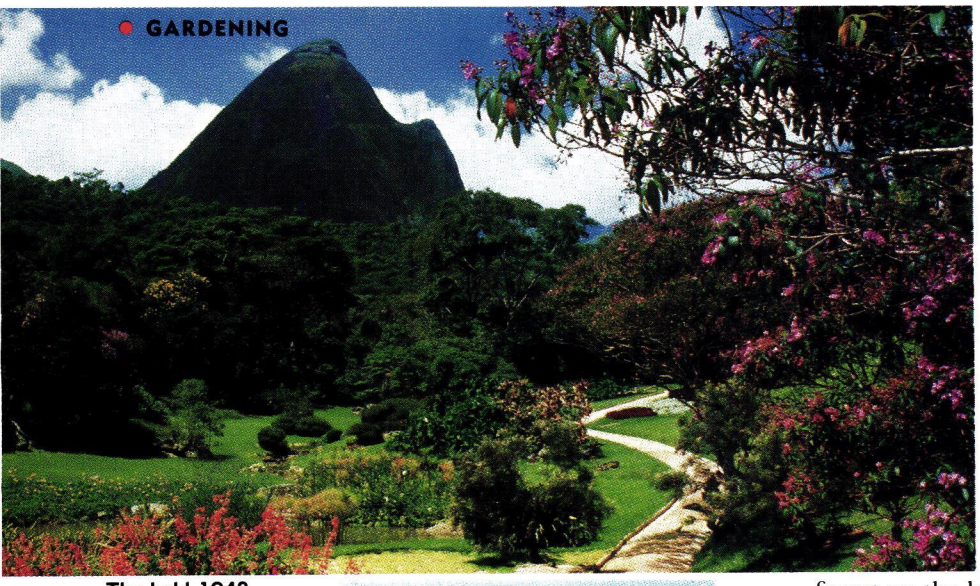

The bold 1948 Odette Monteiro garden, above, is the most famous of Burle Marx's early designs. Right: Water terraces in the just-finished Clemente Gomes garden. Below: Stone mosaics and bromeliad towers on a 1980s Rio de Janeiro rooftop.

drama as most of his commissions do, they show how skillfully he can employ traditional architectural forms when the situation calls for them and integrate spaces for outdoor activities into a design. At the bottom of the hill, lath houses shade understory plants from the Amazonian jungles. Paths wind through a hillside of informally arranged aloes, agaves, and yuccas. A sculptural granite wall composed on the site from fragments of demolished eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings supports a host of epiphytic bromeliads, frames views of the surrounding mountains, and serves both as a fountain and as a screen between the drive and the lower lawn. Overlooked by the veranda, this lawn has a pool at one end and bordering beds of bromeliads, palms, and philodendrons. Another lawn fringed with frangipanis separates the house and the restored seventeenth-century chapel.

Behind the house a terrace of interlocking paving blocks and beds of water-polished boulders planted with vellozias and bromeliads leads to a dining pavilion with a vivid tile mural by Burle Marx, part of a complex water garden shaded by a pergola hung with jade vines. Beyond and farther up the hillside are collections of bougainvilleas, native to the Rio de Janeiro region; heliconias, some discovered by Burle Marx and named for him; and palms, native and imported—"We have so many different palms in Brazil that adding palms from other parts of the world does not destroy the character of the landscape." And in truth, the transition from his plantings to the native forest on the hillside is so subtle that you really have to know your plants to distinguish between the two.

Like the gardens, the house at Santo Antônio da Bica has grown over time. When Burle Marx bought the property he found a "very primitive" three-room structure, the priest's house, next to the chapel. Little by little, he has added rooms in a long L behind a veranda overlooking the Guaratiba valley. The sítio is known for its hospitality, and Sunday lunch parties may end up numbering fifty, as guests bring more guests, clients and politicians drop in, and diplomats bring visiting dignitaries. The food and wine are excellent, the talk ranges widely in one or all of the six languages that Burle Marx speaks, and sometimes there is music as well. His family is musical, he studied singing in his youth, and he is still, at eighty-one, in remarkably good voice.

> To design with native Brazilian plants, he had to find them in the wild

All this is raised to the nth power on the Sunday nearest his birthday when he asks two hundred of his friends and colleagues to celebrate with him. Four hundred usually show up—at least it seems that way. For a week in advance the kitchen hums, the household moves into high gear polishing and decorating. And everyone—staff, houseguests, casual visitors, and journalists on assignment—is pressed into service. You find yourself making mayonnaise at midnight, by the quart. Or wiring blossoms to a chandelier. Or setting up tables. Through it all strolls the master of the house, supervising, twitching a flower into place, changing an arrangement he finds out of scale, encouraging and infecting everyone with his energy. Energy undimmed at eighty-one plus weekday discipline helps explain how this gregarious and enthusiastic man of multiple interests and talents has been able to create nearly three thousand landscape designs—not to mention those for jewelry, ballets, and Carnaval—in his fifty-nine-year career. ♠

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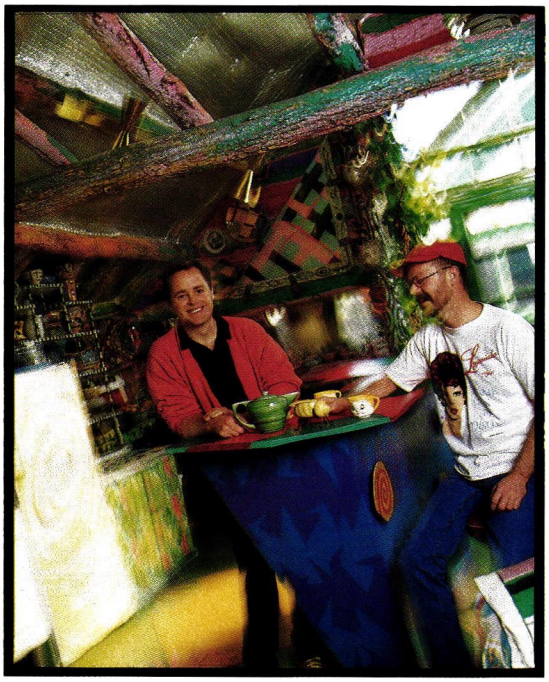
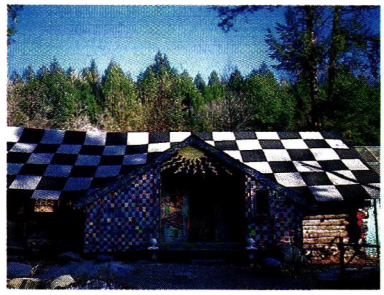
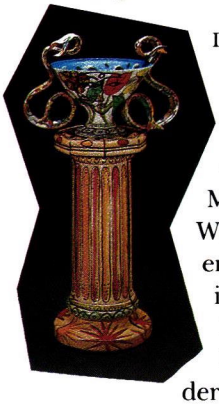


A cabin in the woods becomes a year-round arts and crafts project for two transplanted Manhattanites

BY MARGOT GURALNICK





DRIVING DOWN THE half-mile-long private road that leads through the woods to Phillip Maberry and Scott Walker's house is like entering a cartoonist's rustic fantasy. Past the whale-size boulders that border the fishpond, past the pagoda-shaped arbor covered with kiwi vines and the garden enclosed by a pink and green picket fence, swampland gives way to a pulsating Day-Glo apparition: the Love Shack. This Davy Crockett–style outpost, decked out in Caribbean colors, got its name from a song title—the whole house shimmies, along with a throng of bouffant bewigged singers, dancers, and a duck with rhythm—in a campy rock video by the B-52's. The fact that *Love Shack*, the video, won a 1990 MTV award for art direction is a tribute to Maberry and Walker, two ex-Manhattanites who created the upstate New York folly as their full-time residence and studio.

Maberry, a quiet bespectacled ceramic artist with an anything but understated visual vocabulary, and Walker, his gregarious partner and studio assistant, headed to the country north of the city ten years ago when they purchased an enormous kiln and needed a place to put it. At the invitation of a friend, they rented Dragon Rock, the former house of designer Russel Wright, still completely stocked with his now classic furniture and ceramics from the forties and fifties. "It was like living in a museum," says Maberry, adding that the constraints of having to tiptoe around chairs and tables fueled his impulse to find a place he and Walker could personalize.

Scott Walker and Phillip Maberry, center left, apply their passion for pattern to every inch of their rustic shack, center right. Above: The kitchen reverberates with fun-house colors. Top: Detail from a Maberry ceramic mural. Top right: Maberry's urn on a pedestal. Details see Resources.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PAUL MORGAN. JOHN WHITE COURTESY GARTH CLARK GALLERY; MARGOT GURALNICK; PAUL MORGAN; DAVID FRAZIER

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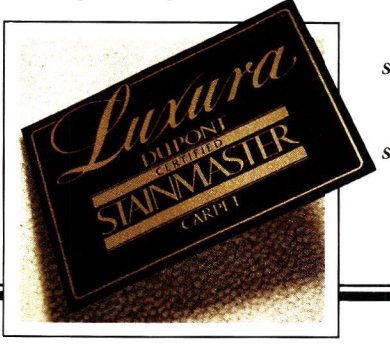

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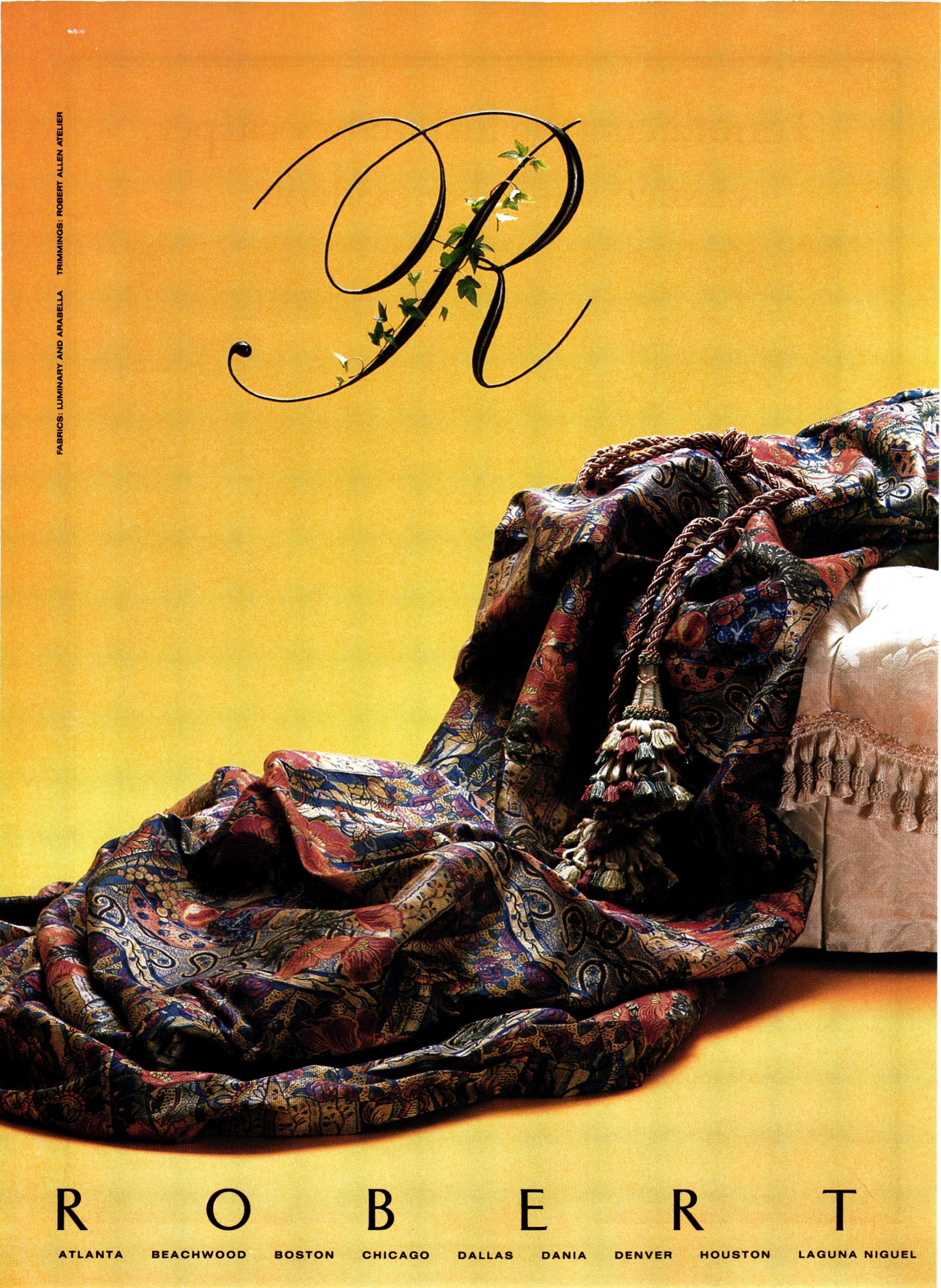
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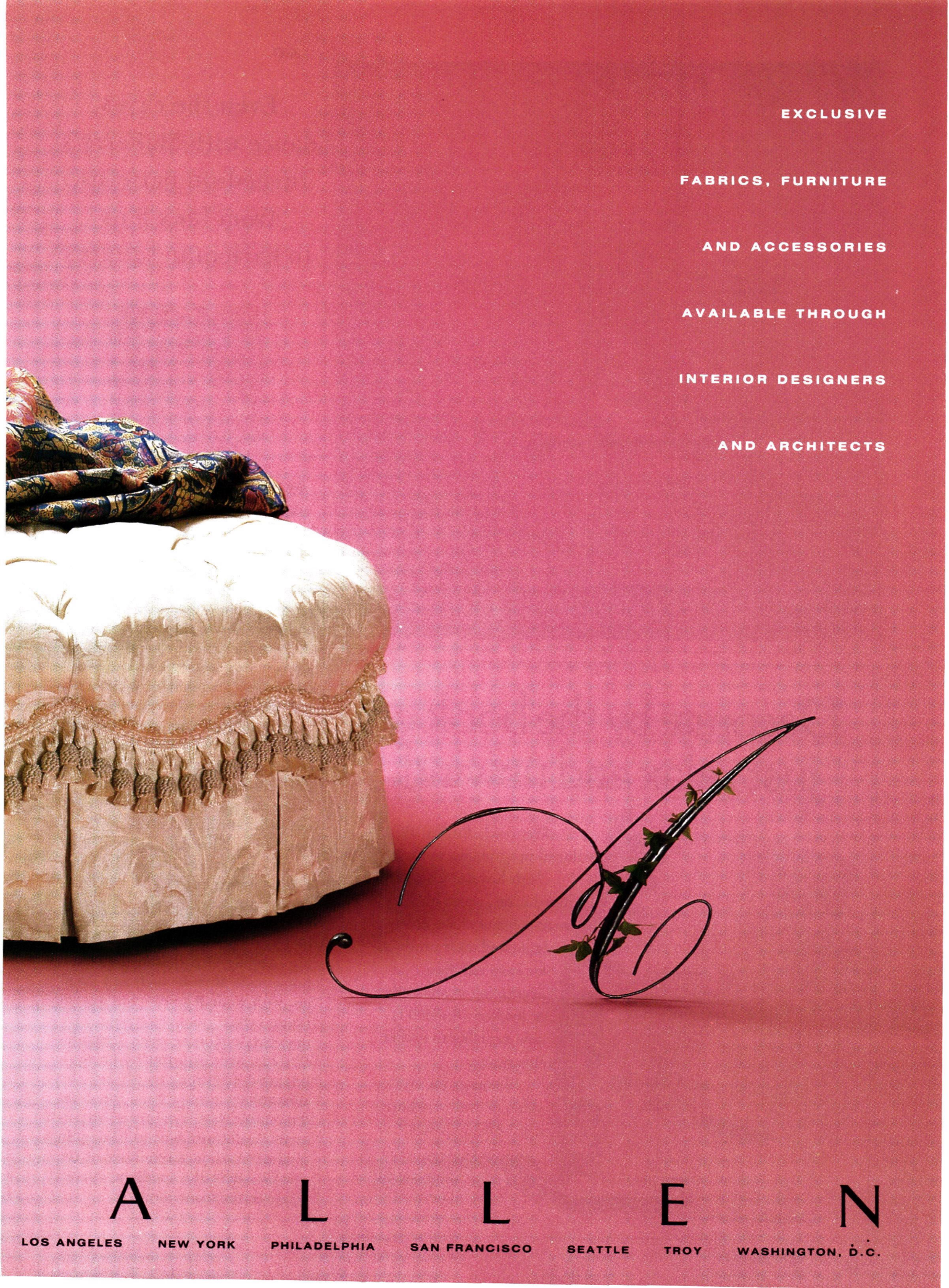
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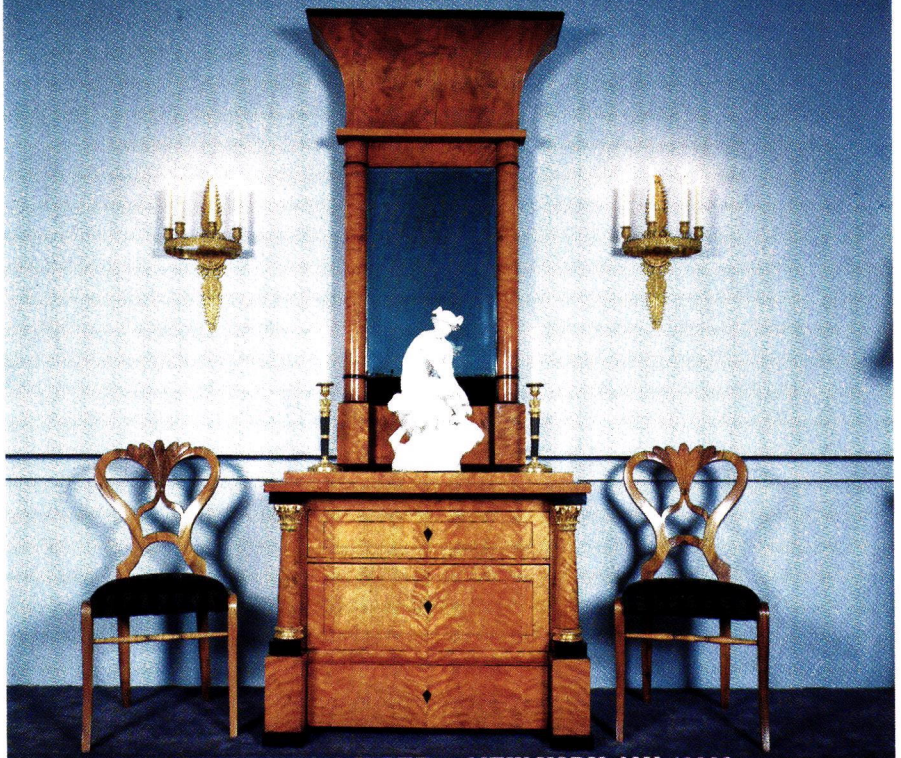

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Even the eaves dance with Maberry's turned-on patterns, from faux bois to harlequin squares

A Maberry ceramic bust and wall mural made at the Love Shack.

Maberry and Walker have been leaving their imprint on the wilderness since 1984 when they purchased thirty-three overgrown acres surrounded by protected wetlands. Camping amid the skunk cabbage and giant ferns, they cleared trees, dug out the pond by hand, and began working wonders on the previous owners' abandoned log cabin. "It was dark and horrible," says Walker. "It was uninsulated, doorless, and nearly windowless," says Maberry.

Ten years later the battle continues for heat in the winter and breezes in the summer. But what the shack lacks in comforts it makes up for in aesthetics. The sagging roof now wears a smart coat of oversize black and white tar paper checks, and a cutout sun hangs over the blazing red door. Inside, a room the length of a bowling alley encompasses a living-sleeping area (furnished with a homemade Murphy bed) and kitchen, with a small studio and greenhouse tacked onto either end. "We undecorated for the video," confides Walker, surrounded by enough painted surfaces to please the Bloomsbury group. Even the eaves dance with Maberry's turned-on patterns, from faux bois to harlequin squares. And, as a reminder of the shack's day in the spotlight, there's glitter on the front porch. ▲

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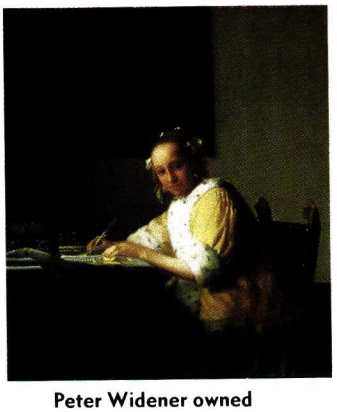
Old Masters in the New World

Dutch art was a prized commodity for nineteenth-century American collectors

BY JEROME TARSHIS

Before the Civil War most American collectors, flushed with national pride and enjoying few opportunities for travel abroad, concentrated on the art of their own country. By the 1870s, however, overseas travel was far more common. The relative decline of cultural insularity together with the rise of great new fortunes encouraged Americans to collect European old masters on a heroic scale. The Dutch seemed especially congenial; their art depicted a society that shared our respect for craftsmanship, hard work, and independent thinking. Between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I, Americans bought an extraordinary number of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. One third of the known output of Jan Vermeer, plus sizable portions of the work of Rembrandt and other Dutch masters, went from European to American collections in a few decades. Many of these works have been brought together in "Great Dutch Paintings in America," an exhibition organized by the Mauritshuis in The Hague and now on view at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco through May 5.



Peter Widener owned Jan Steen's *The Dancing Couple*, 1663, detail, top left, and Pieter de Hooch's *The Bedroom*, c. 1660, top right. Above: Vermeer's *A Lady Writing*, c. 1665, belonged to J. P. Morgan.

With some exceptions, American collectors favored those aspects of Dutch painting that agreed with traditional ideas about the nature of American life. Then, as now, we thought of ourselves as simple straightforward people, mostly middle class, characterized by love of family, home, and nature. Pieter de Hooch's *The Bedroom* and similar paintings of middle-class interiors spoke of orderly houses in which everything was spotless if not luxurious. The mother was clearly not one of those sophisticates who appeared so often in French art and literature or in the novels of Henry James. The child could have

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, WIDENER COLLECTION (2); NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, GIFT OF HARRY WALDRON HAVEMEYER AND HORACE HAVEMEYER JR., IN MEMORY OF THEIR FATHER, HORACE HAVEMEYER

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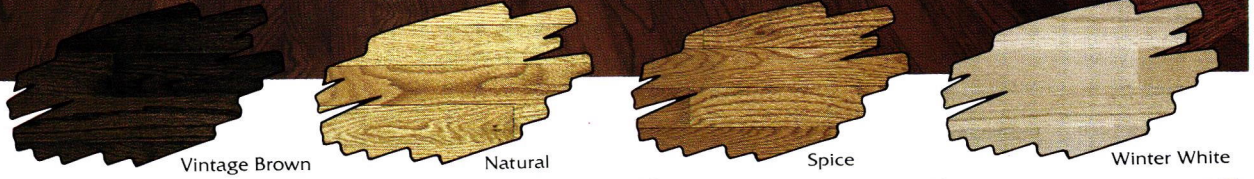

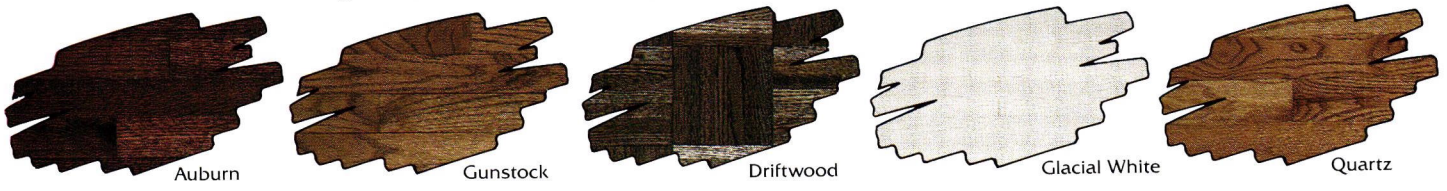

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stepped into an American magazine illustration. A sober Yankee could admire Vermeer's handling of light without needing to confront the overtones of frivolity and decadent living that emanated like the smell of incense from too much European art. Whatever the aesthetic considerations were, the people in Dutch art looked reassuringly ordinary.

The period Mark Twain called the Gilded Age was characterized by luxury hitherto unknown in America, but our conception of ourselves had little room for an aristocracy of birth or manners. Dutch prosperity, like our own, was based on trade; the Dutch were proud of having won their independence from tyrannical rule; and

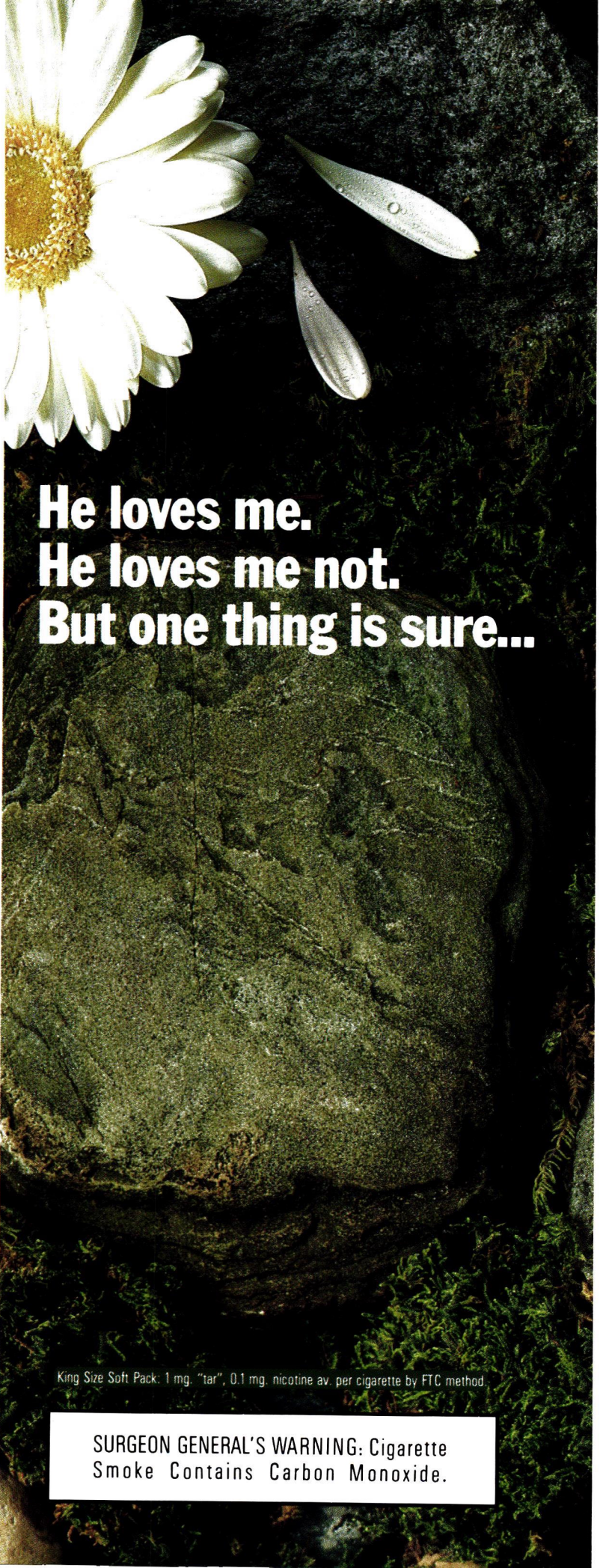
> Americans found the people in Dutch art reassuringly ordinary

their art seemed to reflect the kind of hard work and careful observation that a self-made man could understand. Among the most praiseworthy collectors of the Gilded Age were John G. Johnson and Benjamin Altman. Unlike the ordinary plutocrat in a hurry to acquire cultural legitimacy, they became their own experts, reading widely and supplementing dealers' advice with that of curators and art historians.

Johnson was the most successful corporation lawyer in the English-speaking world. Among his clients were such great collectors as Peter Widener, Henry Clay Frick, and J. P. Morgan. He could not outspend these men, but he could make a different kind of collection. Instead of buying what dealers considered to be the very best, Johnson set out to make a broad survey of European painting. He had a special interest in Dutch and Flemish art, about which he became profoundly knowledgeable.

His willingness to study both art history and the workings of the art market in exhaustive detail earned Johnson the respect of scholars and curators, who helped him find good paintings that seemed not quite splendid enough for multimillionaires. When the British critic Roger Fry was employed at the Metropolitan Museum, he wrote to Johnson about two panels by Quentin Massys: "They are so much your special kind of picture that I can't grudge them to you, though I wish our museum were enlightened enough to want them. They have that peculiar imaginative intensity and intimacy which I find to be the real note of your collection."

Unlike Johnson, Benjamin Altman, who founded the New York department store that bore his name, was a truly rich man. Nevertheless, he lived modestly, seldom traveled abroad, never married, and had few if any close friends. Altman seemed to live for nothing but his business and his art collection. Far from using his collecting as a means of social climbing, as so many other rich men did, Altman tried hard to avoid publicity. His reticence was echoed in the portraits he collected. A more typical



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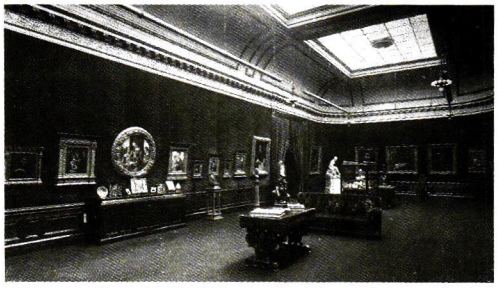
millionaire might have surrounded himself with the likenesses of English aristocrats so that he could imagine himself a duke. Altman, by contrast, favored portraits of austere-looking Northern European merchants, who provided a gallery of spiritual ancestors more like his real self than the usual Gainsboroughs would have been.

After Altman's death, a critic wrote, "His method of proceeding was the despair of dealers. When they thought a picture almost as good as sold to him there would be hesitation, delay, and often what seemed like vacillation. . . . Where it took Mr. Morgan barely five minutes to conclude a purchase of a painting for $750,000, Mr. Altman might have taken weeks and even

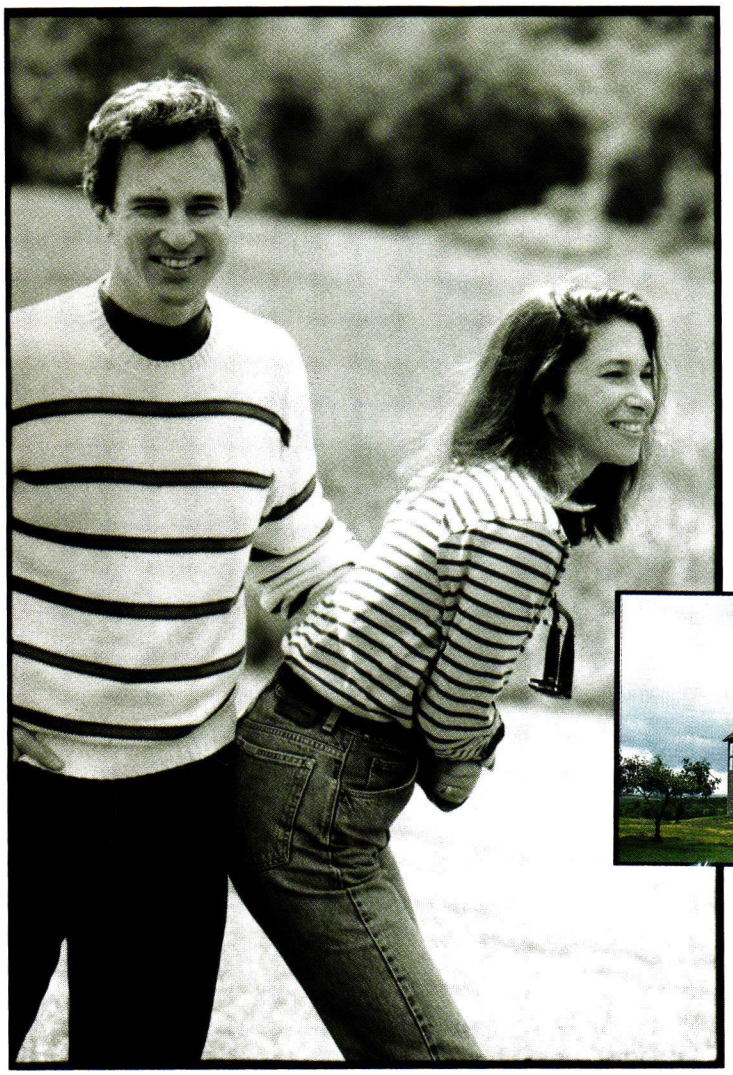


The private gallery behind Benjamin Altman's New York house.

months for reflection and then have decided not to buy." While he was making up his mind about Rembrandt's *Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer,* Mrs. Collis P. Huntington bought it. Whatever an impatient dealer might say against Altman's idiosyncratic, almost scholarly style, it did not prevent him from acting swiftly enough to acquire a superb collection of old-master paintings, most of them Dutch, in little more than a decade.

American collectors of Dutch painting tended to buy portraits, interiors, still lifes, landscapes, and scenes of everyday life. But not all Americans shared this preference for Dutch simplicity. In 1869 the critic James Jackson Jarves, whose own collection favored the early Italian Renaissance, wrote about the Dutch, "There never was a more purely mechanical, commonplace school of painting, combined with so much minute finish and fidelity to the ordinary aspect of things, heedless of *idealisms* of any sort. If it labored for any special end, it was that of ocular deception. . . . They did not want art to teach them ideas, but to represent things."

Jarves's acerbic observations go a long way toward explaining what his countrymen saw in Dutch painting. His descriptions of Dutch taste could apply to many Americans, today as well as yesterday. We tend to admire art that displays mechanical skill and fidelity to the ordinary aspect of things. Those were the virtues of American art from its beginnings at least until the end of the nineteenth century. The realities of the Gilded Age—industrialization, slum housing, and sharp conflict between rich and poor—were at variance with the dream of a middle-class utopia, whether in Holland or in New England. In buying Dutch old-master paintings, collectors were acquiring art of genuine merit, but they were also endorsing the values of an earlier and simpler America. ▲



Elyn Zimmerman, left, with Kirk Varnedoe at their country retreat in Chatham, New York. Below: The artist's studio near the house.

Romancing the Stone

Sculptor Elyn Zimmerman mines a rich vein of inspiration in upstate New York

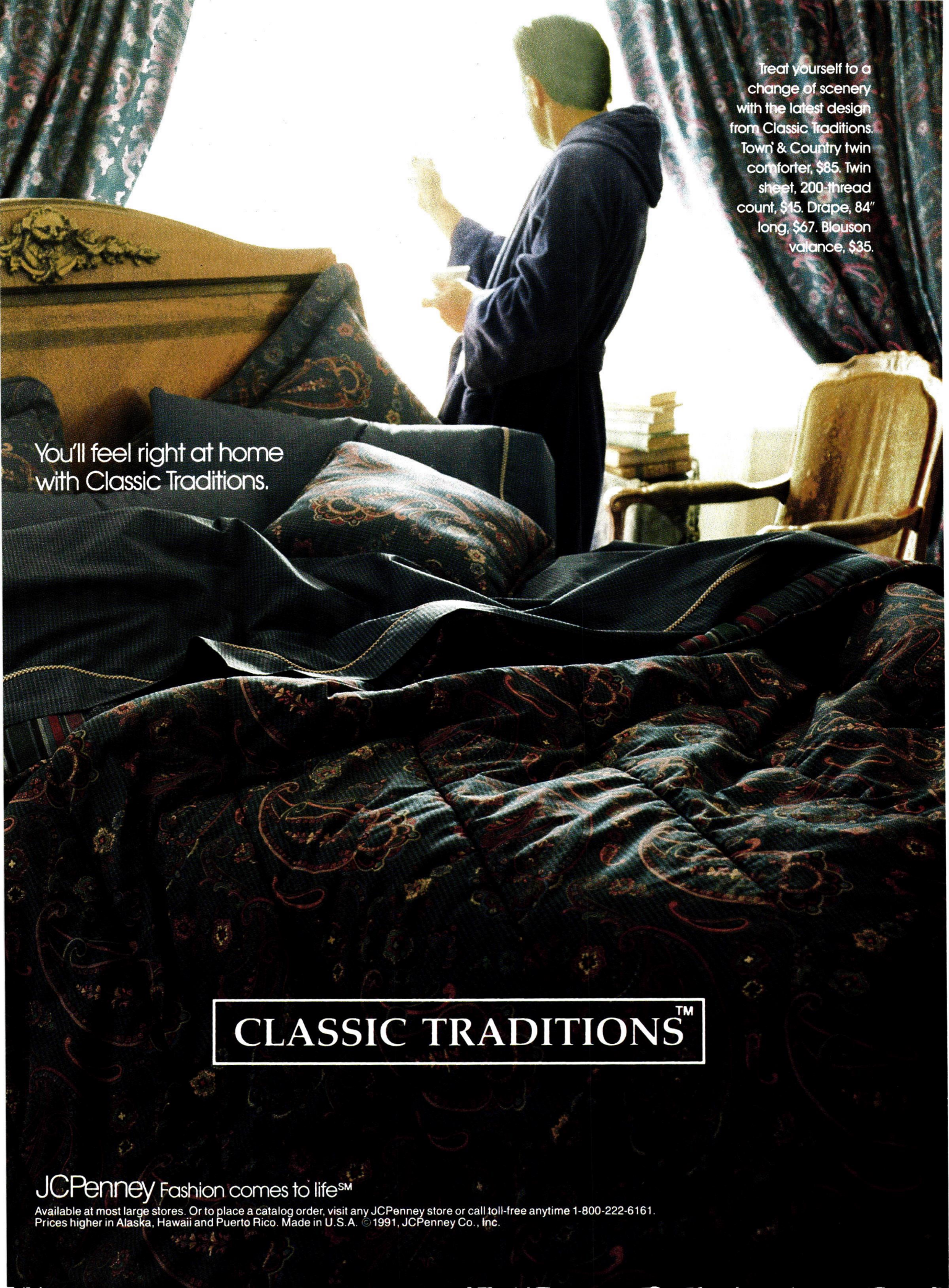
BY DODIE KAZANJIAN

We liked being around the Berkshires and what the Berkshires have to offer, like Tanglewood and Jacob's Pillow," says Elyn Zimmerman, "but we didn't want to be too far away. So we drew a circle around New York City, taking in everything up to two hours away, and Chatham was right on the edge of that circle." Elyn Zimmerman, an artist, is married to Kirk Varnedoe, the director of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art. They live in a loft in Tribeca, but about four years ago they bought a modest ranch house in Chatham, New York, for weekends and summers. It sits on fifteen acres of rolling hills and fields that give them what they wanted—"a place with a sense of space around it" and a place that's only twenty minutes away from Tanglewood and Jacob's Pillow. They also wanted something simple that they could move right into. Elyn explains, "We didn't want to be tied to a house that required lots of attention because we both travel a lot."

Elyn has achieved considerable success in the area of art in public places. Last year she worked on commissions in Los Angeles, Tampa, San Francisco, and Birmingham. Kirk has been in the limelight and the hot seat for his controversial "High and Low" show at MOMA. "Chatham is the one place where we can relax and not worry about the phone ringing," says Elyn."I've been riding horseback. Kirk rides his motorcycle. We take walks. We play tennis. We're sort of anonymous here."

It's a small house with a big room with a big view of the distant Catskills and Berkshires. This room, which includes kitchen, living room, and dining area, is 1,000 square feet overall with an 18-foot-ceiling. One wall is all windows, another is all books. It's a room to be contemplative in. This contemplative quality is felt in Elyn's work—for instance *Marabar,* her visually alluring landscape of cut boulders and running water in front of the National Geographic Society's offices in Washington. The rocks are raw on one side and polished like a mirror on the other. It feels as though the rocks and water

Zimmerman mounded Florida coral rock for *Keystone Island,* 1989, at a Miami courthouse.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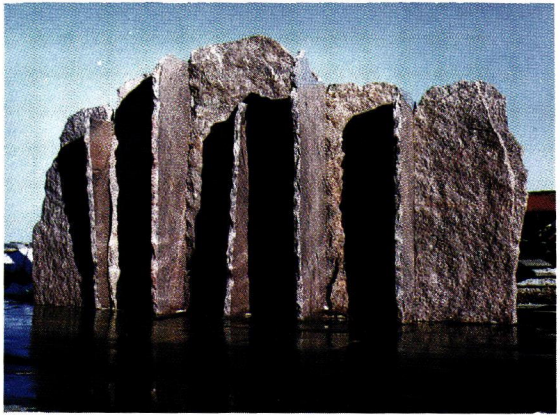

Zimmerman's studio is a barnlike "room of one's own"

had been there long before the plaza was conceived.

The first thing Elyn did when they bought the Chatham house was to build herself a studio. She hired Williamstown architect Andrus Burr (of Burr & McCallum), a friend from Kirk's Williams College days. The studio looks like a barn with a lot of high windows. Inside, it's a spacious version of Virginia Woolf's "room of one's own"—the sense of isolation is both calming and cheering.

Elyn was born in Philadelphia in 1945. She grew up in Los Angeles, went to UCLA, majored in psychology, and ended up taking a master of fine arts degree under the painter Richard Diebenkorn. She started out as a painter herself, but almost immediately her work began to change. "It was the end of the sixties and pluralism was coming on strong. Painting was dead and art was not a commodity. These were the cardinal rules. Art was about experience. It was about changing your perception and about changing consciousness. It was like taking a drug—it let you into another world."

The idea of the great public space overwhelmed her when, as a college student, she visited the Pantheon in Rome. Similar epiphanies came at the Ellora cave temples in India, in the gardens at Katsura Imperial Villa in Kyoto, and among the stone walls and terraces at Machu Picchu. "These were I-don't-ever-want-to-leave, marry-me-to-the-rock experiences, where you want to get down and rub your whole body against the earth."

Becoming a public artist was a long process. When Elyn was starting out in California, she did research for artists Robert Irwin and James Turrell for a project on perception. She also worked for a while as a waitress and later as a teacher at Cal Arts and other schools. In 1974 she had a piece in the Whitney Biennial, and that's how she met Kirk. He was then teaching art history at Columbia University. "I was writing an article on photography, and Elyn's piece involved photographs and drawings," Kirk recalls. "It struck me as having a relation to what I was saying. When Elyn saw the article, she wrote me a letter."

"He wrote back," she says, "and noted that if I was ever going to do something in New York I should contact him." A few months later she was asked to do a piece at P.S. 1 and sent him an announcement. He called her. They had lunch. "He said I would recognize him because he'd be holding an art magazine. I didn't expect him to be young and single and very attractive." She went back to the West Coast. They corresponded. She went to India, via Paris, where they saw one another again. Time passed. Back in L.A., Elyn had a couple of shows at Larry Gagosian's Broxton Gallery. But in 1978 she moved to New York, and her career shifted into a higher gear. Several museums invited her to do installation pieces, and she did a piece at the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid.

The relationship with Kirk Varnedoe also prospered. They got married in 1983. "We had a hard time because we had different religious backgrounds," Elyn says. "We couldn't find anyone to marry us, so we had to get mar-

With their chow, Tasha, above left, the couple face a view of the Catskills. Top: *Stalled Cairn*, 1990, at the Cold Spring, Minnesota, quarry Zimmerman regards as an extension of her studio. Above right: She carves granite for *Lithos*, 1991, in Los Angeles. Below: Light floods through studio windows twelve feet above the floor.

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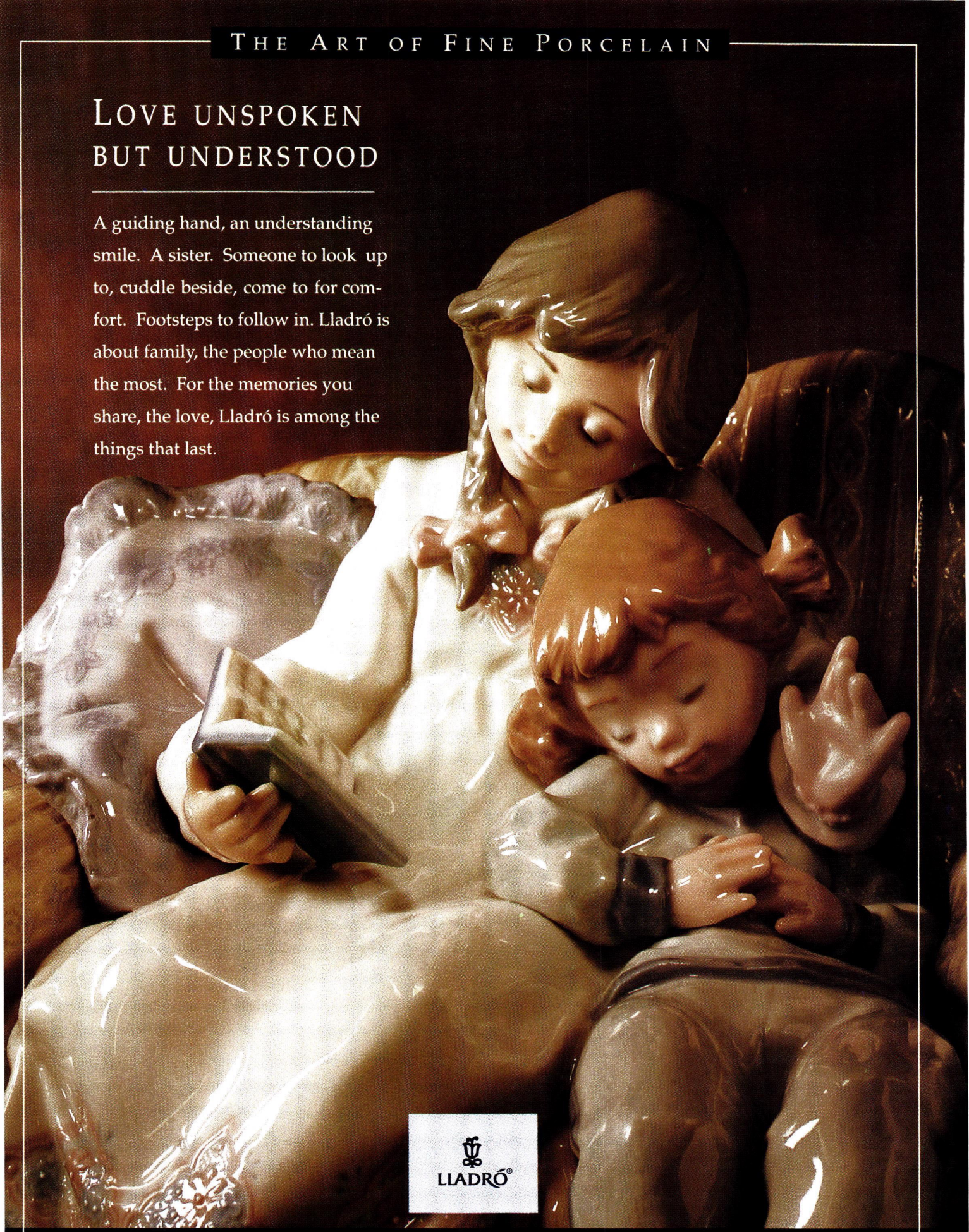

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ried by a judge. Kirk comes from a Wasp family in Savannah—the Society of the Cincinnati, black-tie dinners, quail shooting, and all that. I grew up in a nice upper-middle-class Jewish family in L.A. When I came to New York, I barely owned a dress." (She barely does today; she prefers Levi's and Reeboks.)

Elyn and Kirk don't always agree on aesthetics. "He can argue very convincingly, but I've been able to convince him, too. I've been able to introduce him to art on the West Coast, and he's met a lot of artists through me. But I've met another generation of established artists through Kirk—people like Roy Lichtenstein and Ellsworth Kelly."

When Kirk was installing "High and Low" last fall, Elyn didn't stick around. She went to Spain. "I had a desire to see the caves at Altamira and I got back a few days before the show opened. I've been through Kirk's agonies of installation. He's very involved. The week before a show opens, he likes to be alone. So I thought that would be a good time to get out of his hair."

Being married to the most powerful figure in the modern art world doesn't necessarily help an artist's career. Dealers will always look at Elyn Zimmerman's work, but she can't sell anything to MOMA or be featured in a show there. Her work is growing and changing, nonetheless, quite independently. *Sanctuary*, her project for a cancer hospital in Tampa, was dedicated in March, and she's working on two other public commissions: a sculpture garden for the Birmingham Museum, in collaboration with architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, and an office plaza in San Francisco.

Elyn has turned down a couple of other commissions so that she can spend time in her studio working on drawings and large granite sculptures—a new direction for her. "This is not sited work," she says. "It's something that can exist on its own. Running around in airplanes all the time has been distracting. I'm really looking forward to spending more time in my studio." ▲

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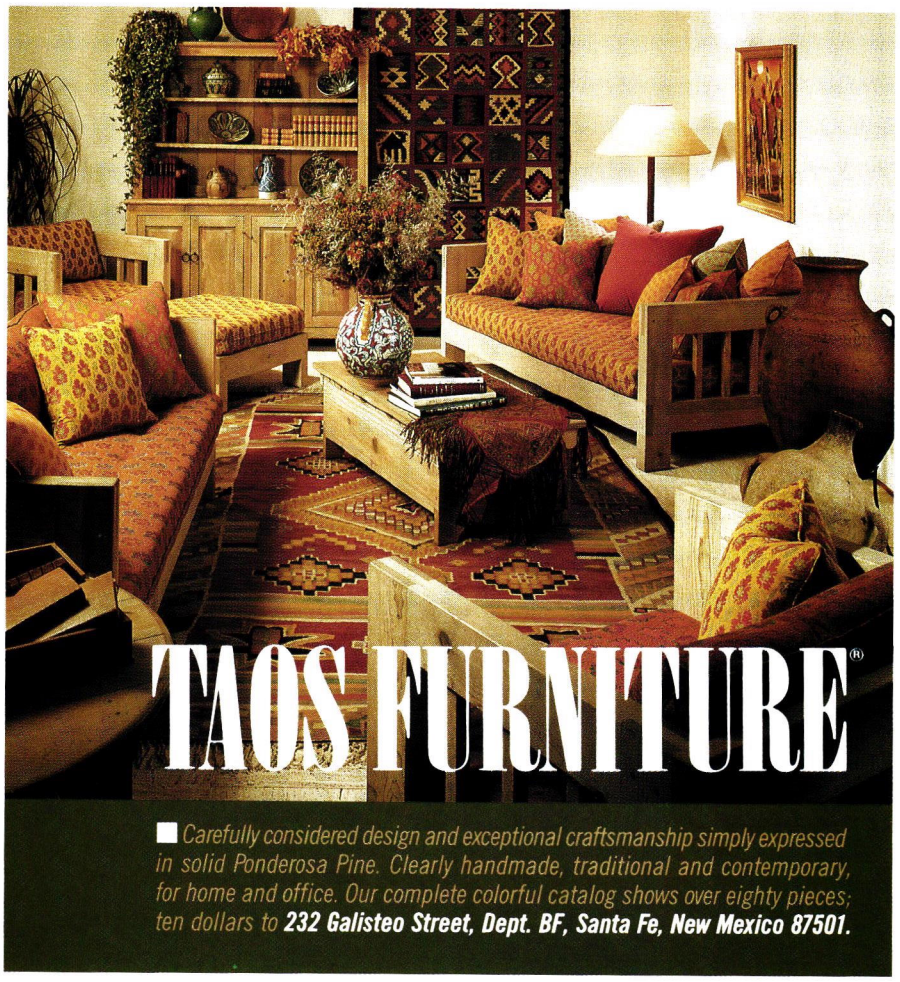

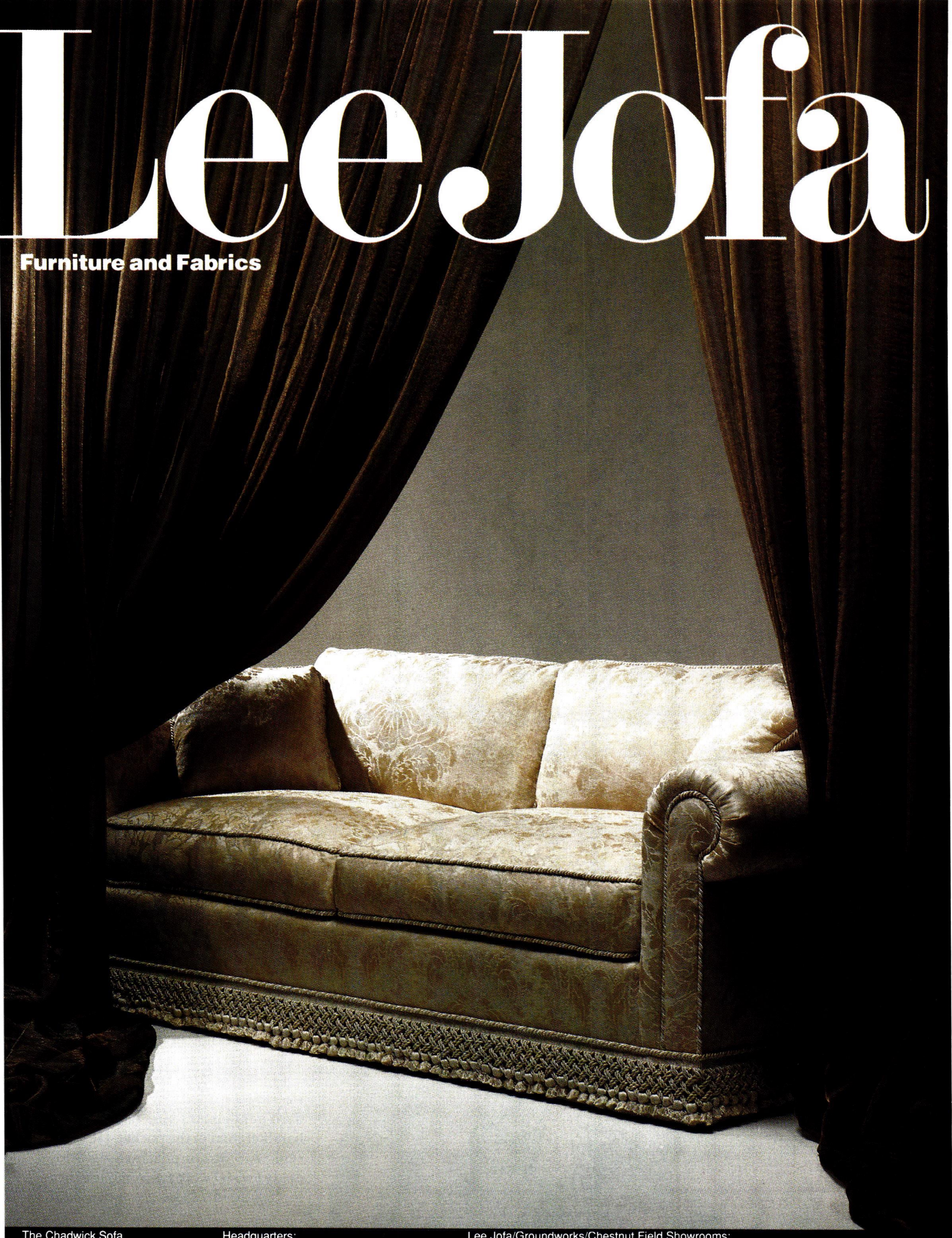

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I wish I could sweep into the room like Lauren Bacall and offer Mario a Manhattan. Instead I take his roses and offer him Diet Coke from a can

could sweep into the living room and offer him a Manhattan. But I'm not, so I take my roses and offer Mario a Diet Coke from a can.

We sit for a while and schmooze. He tells me his licensing ventures are going well and that he's moving beyond potpourri and into tabletops, linens, rugs, and lamps. I'm transported to my childhood when my father, a ribbon manufacturer, would pull out swatches from his pocket and solicit my opinion. In fact, the trauma of my youth was when Wendy Blue, a denim-look velveteen, became a discontinued line. I tell Mario my sad tale, and he vows to name a sheet after me. Wendella Rose, I suggest, has a Victorian feel. Only a true prince can make up for the miseries of early childhood.

Finally, we get around to discussing my apartment.

"So what do you think?" I giggle anxiously.

"Well," I see him gulp his Diet Coke. "I'd call it very early young lady. It certainly doesn't look like you had a decorator here."

"No, I didn't," I laugh. "I'm surprised you could tell."

"I like your paintings. Who did that one?" He points to a colorful still life of envelopes and a pitcher.

"It's by Polly Kraft."

"Sure, Polly Kraft. You know her? She married a terrific guy." Mario knows everybody. Mention a name and Mario can tell you stories.

The prince walks around the apartment. "Your apartment is full of meaningful objects. It's very personal. And I use a stationary bicycle to hang my pajamas, too."

For the first time I become huffy. "Those aren't pajamas. That's the hood of my honorary doctorate from Mount Holyoke."

"Well, that's personal, too," he covers himself. "And I like your grape shade. That's very nice." He is referring to my one shade that has a grape print from Clarence House. I believe it is what the doyennes of the Upper East Side and I have in common.

I'm tempted to ask him for a few hints, like if I moved the talking animals behind the sofa, would it give the room more light, but somehow I can't manage it. Instead we admit we are starving, though we both pledge to start a grapefruit diet tomorrow.

My prince and I stroll arm in arm to the restaurant. Mario always walks curbside to protect his lady friends from splashing carriages. Even on the mean streets of Manhattan he is the perfect gentleman. I remind Mario of the day I witnessed his coronation as king of the canines at a Macy's-sponsored benefit for the Bide-A-Wee Home. It's seldom one goes to dinner with a man who is simultaneously a prince and a king.

As we stroll past University Place antiques shops, Mario stops to inspect the goods. "I work all the time," he confides, and again I'm reminded of my father and his swatches.

"I work all the time, too," I giggle, "when I'm working. But doesn't that make you feel isolated?"

"Of course it makes you feel isolated," he says, taking on an older and wiser stance. "You just have to accept that."

Mario introduces me to the waiter at Il Cantinori as his ex-wife. The waiter is not amused. Mario furthers his confusion by explaining that I haven't been cashing my alimony checks and we're working out a settlement, so he shouldn't get angry if we throw food at each other.

We chatter through dinner about my writing, Mario's childhood in Staten Island, my stage debut as Queen Esther in Brooklyn and his

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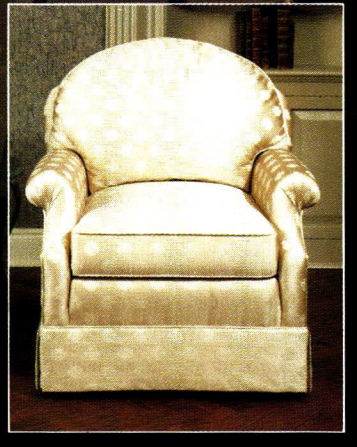

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friendship with the playwright Paul Zindel. In a way we are two kids from New York City boroughs still surprised to be in Manhattan. And for all of Mario's friendships with the silk-stocking set and parties at Mortimer's (during one of which Sister Parish mistook me for the pastry chef), there is something unpretentious and hardworking about him.

"We've decided to reconcile," Mario informs the waiter. "We're taking a second honeymoon."

For the first time that evening the waiter smiles and says, "Mr. Buatta, I believe you're a friend of my in-laws." Sure enough, the waiter is married to the daughter of a very social couple from San Francisco whom Mario just saw in London. This is a prince who knows all his subjects. We both shake the waiter's hand and apologize for giving him a hard time.

As we stroll home, we stop at a newsstand for a quick look at a magazine piece on Mario's latest product line. We compare notes on what it was like to be interviewed by Steve Doocey on NBC's *House Party*. Mario decorated with sheets, and I gave advice on no sex and the single girl.

My date kisses me on the cheek in front of my doorman and says he's glad we've become friends. I remind him that I'm already his ex-wife.

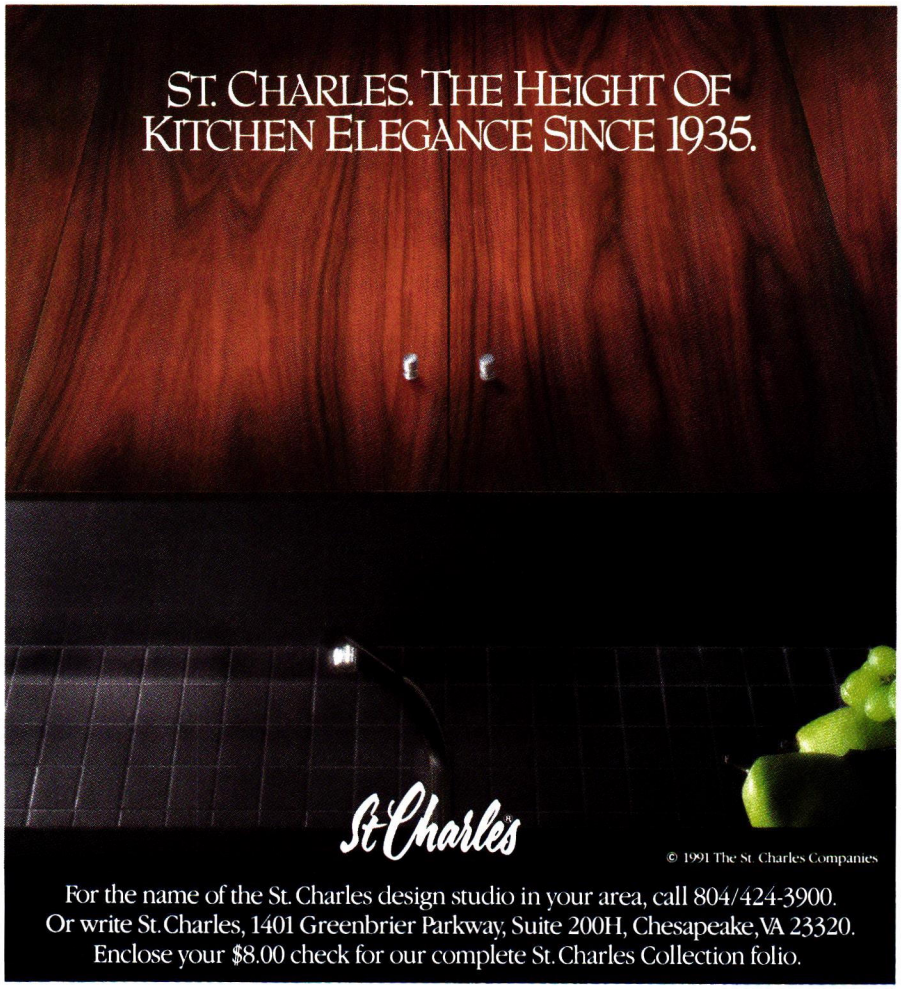
The night after our date I am in John's Pizza in Greenwich Village with two painter friends. As we sit discussing life, art, and pepperoni, who should stride past our table in blue blazer and elegant handkerchief but Mario. We blow kisses and he says he is meeting the editor of *The New York Times* "Home" section.

"Who is that guy?" My friends don't recognize him from our downtown circles.

"That," I say with pride, "is my prince of chintz."

"How well do you know him?"

"Let's just say one of my prize possessions is my Mario Bearatta." Which is, by the way, a chintz teddy bear that has proudly joined my very early young lady decor for very personal and romantic reasons. ▲



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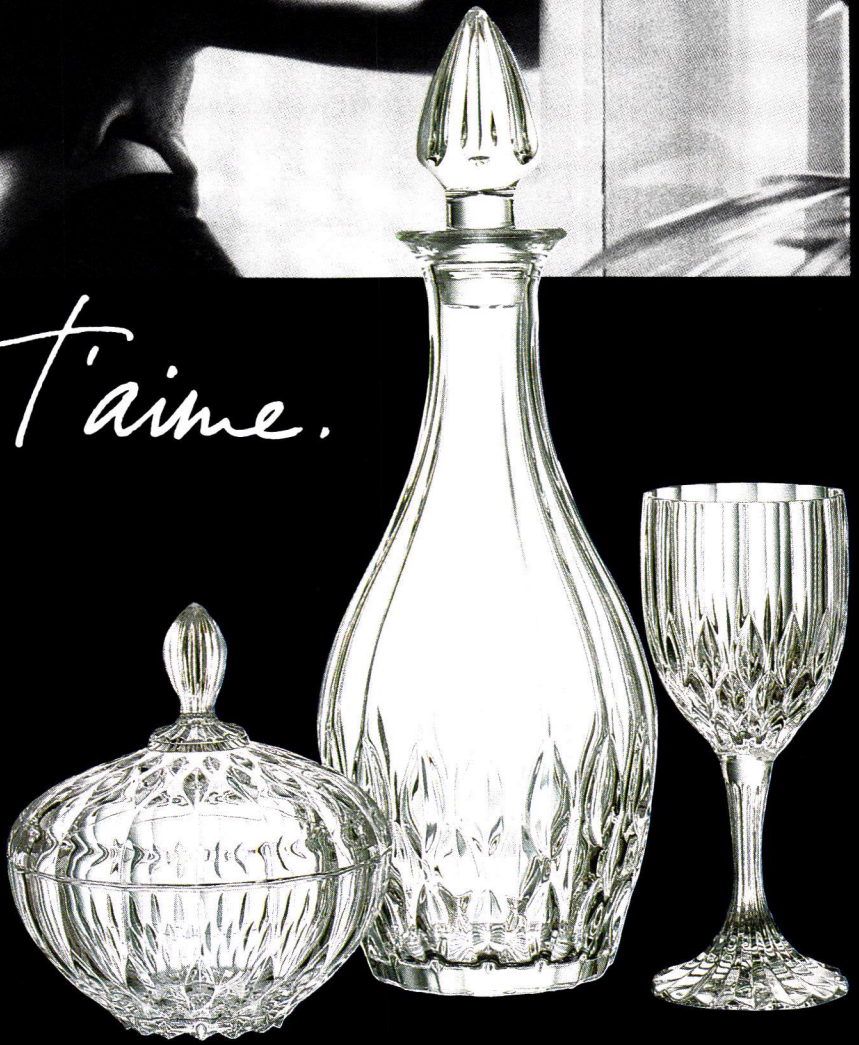

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Salo, above, in his studio with works in progress. Far left: From his Eunuch collection, a bottle contained in metal mesh and two Marius wineglasses. Left: Valley of the Kings covered boxes from Pro Arte's line of limited-edition pieces. Below: Salo's striped version of the classic Greek amphora. Details see Resources.

World Glass Act

Designer Markku Salo expands Finnish traditions for an international market

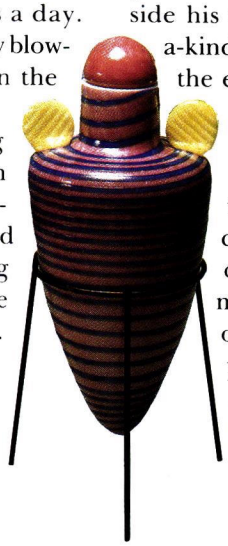
BY SUSAN GOLDBERGER

A five-hundred-pound multicolored glass bird, its belly full of glass sand, hovers above the fragile treasures of the Finnish Glass Museum in Riihimäki. Thirteen feet wide from tip to tip with wings that flap electronically, the bird reflects the unbridled imagination of its creator, thirty-seven-year-old Markku Salo. Not all of Salo's flights of fancy are on so grand a scale. Most of his time is spent designing tabletop glassware for serial production at Nuutajärvi, Finland's oldest glass factory and one of its most respected.

Tucked away in the woods ninety miles northwest of Helsinki in an unimpressive compound of buildings, Nuutajärvi nonetheless manages to turn out as many as 4,000 Luna tumblers or 6,000 Päivikki bowls a day. Eighty percent of the glass is hand-blown by thirty blowers, who year after year earn the top awards in the Scandinavian glassblowing championships.

When Markku Salo isn't in the factory directing a blower, he can be found in a studio crowded with curious glass objects: jewel-colored bottles suspended in wire-mesh netting, boxes with frosted gridlike patterns, and tiny vessels with ballooning bodies and narrow necks perched on delicate wire tripods. Salo, like much of his work, is mysterious. He guardedly dismisses his personal background and possible influences as "irrelevant." After graduating from the University of Industrial Arts in Helsinki in 1979, he spent four years heading the design department of a Finnish electronics company. He worked mostly in plastic and steel, designing everything from lamps to TVs. His current position in the forefront of glass design, it seems, is something of an accident: "I answered an ad in the paper." According to Salo, "It's the thinking, not the material, that's important—if you have the right thinking, then you can handle all materials."

The countless series of bowls, vases, candlesticks, plates, and other glassware he has designed since 1983 have been internationally recognized; his latest honor is the Georg Jensen Prize he received last year. Salo's great passion, however, is the unique pieces he designs alongside his tabletop prototypes. It is with these one-of-a-kind artifacts that he continually reaches beyond the existing boundaries of his craft. The thirteen-foot-high glass tent he created for the 1990 NordForm exhibition in Malmö, Sweden, exemplifies his attempt to transcend the conventional idea of the individual glass object by creating a complete glass environment. The crystalline tent, reinforced by a metal frame, is made of many irregularly shaped pieces of colored glass enveloped by large transparent planes. Asked what's next, he shrugs. "If you know what you will make before you make it, it is very dull." And Salo's work is never dull. ◆



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARKKU LÄHDESMÄKI; SUSAN GOLDBERGER; COURTESY HACKMAN IITTALA, FINLAND (2)

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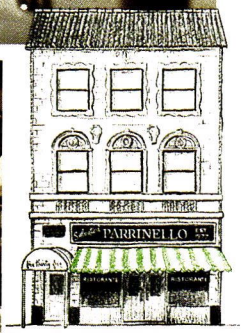
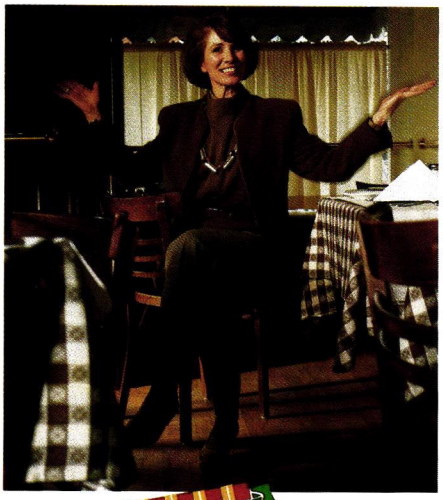
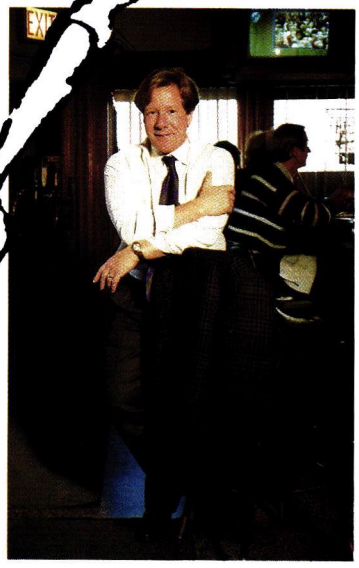
Dining In and Out of the Loop

Chicago architects and designers pick their favorite restaurants

BY STEVEN REDDICLIFFE







Stanley Tigerman, top, toasts the risotto at Parrinello. Above left: Bruce Gregga takes in Kiki's country ambiance. Above: Holly Hunt holds forth at Sole Mio. Left: Club Lago's hearty tavern fare lures John Himmel for lunch.

Pizza. Everybody knows about the deep-dish pizza served in dens with names like Uno and Due. And Italian beef sandwiches. And steaks and chops, from all that hog-butcher-to-the-world, city-of-big-shoulders recitation taught in school. But there's considerably more to Chicago dining, as Chicago diners will be more than happy to tell you. They'll provide all sorts of lists—by cuisine, by price, by neighborhood, by hour of the day. Thai. Moroccan. Peruvian. All kinds of Mexican. Not so plain, not so simple midwestern. A full plate, in other words. And to get a full picture, we talked with a number of Chicago architects and interior designers who have an eye for the telling detail and a taste for just the right flavor. Here's where they go—and why.

Stanley Tigerman

Architect, Tigerman McCurry

I eat at a place right down the street, Parrinello, on Wells Street, owned by a friend of mine. Salvatore Parrinello is one of the best chefs in the city. He makes a great risotto.

I go to Avanzare for the veal cutlet, period. And to Gene & Georgetti, because it represents old Chicago. I order the steak or their garbage salad, which includes everything—shrimp, salami, mozzarella, garlic, oregano, black olives. Whether I get the steak or the salad depends on how serious I am about my diet.

Holly Hunt

Design showroom owner, Holly Hunt, Ltd.

I really want to go to a place where the food makes me hum, and the restaurant called Sole Mio, which Bruce Gregga did, is one of them. As far as the room is concerned, you don't walk in and think "designer." In other words, he did the right amount of nothing. It's in the Lincoln Park–DePaul area, in an old building with a tin ceiling and dark wood. Although Sole Mio is Italian, it's not heavy Italian. I usually get the grilled chicken.

I like Gordon, too. Not only does it have a gorgeous ambiance, but the food changes with the season. Restaurateur Gordon Sinclair keeps a step ahead, but it's not

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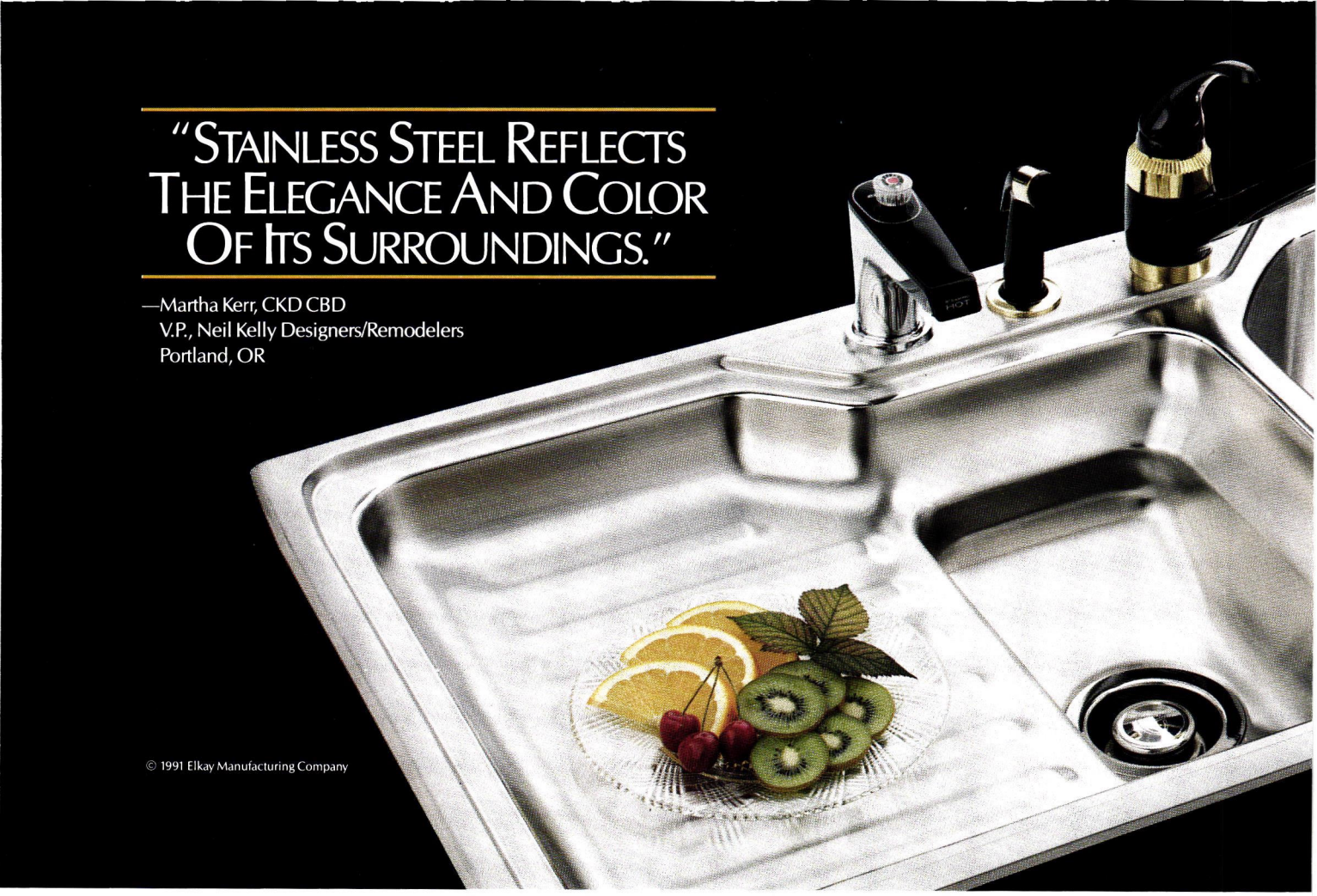

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overdone. One of the best things I ever had there was grilled tuna with black bean and avocado sauce. It tasted so good I was humming.

Agustin Fernandez
Architect, Fernandez & George
In terms of food and decor, I like going to Bice. There are no gimmicks. The design is understated and elegant, and the palette is very soothing—a soft peach that makes everyone look good and goes nicely with the white cotton tablecloths. (No paper, thank you.) The carpaccio is incredible, and so is the special. They also do great lamb chops. It's a marvelous restaurant, conducive to business at lunch and pleasure at dinner.

John Himmel
Director, Richard Himmel Antique & Decorative Furniture
I'm a rare bird. I love going to dives. Chicago has a history of taverns that serve the best food you can find anywhere. They're post-Depression, echo-deco places with great back bars. You don't have to have a shot and a beer to enjoy them either.

One is Club Lago, at Orleans and Superior. It's a downscale survivor in an upscale neighborhood—a wonderful dive. I have the executive salad—plenty of anchovies and Gorgonzola cheese. If I order it at lunch, I don't see customers in the afternoon. There's also Bishop's Chili Parlor on 18th Street. It's an institution. The only question they ask here is, regular bowl or chili mac? It has a counter that's used strictly to dispense chili, and the place has gone through three layers of linoleum.

Bruce Gregga
Decorator, Bruce Gregga Interiors
I go to Kiki's Bistro, a restaurant I designed on the near North Side. It's like a country inn in the city—very relaxing with wood floors, banquettes, and a beamed ceiling. The sound level is not screeching, perfect for conversations. The food is lovely, especially the roasted chicken and the calves liver. They also have a teeny pizza that's particularly tasty.

Joe Meisel
Architect, Meisel Associates
Café Spiaggia is one of my favorites. The menu is small, so the kitchen tends to get extremely creative. Last night I had a calamari steak, but normally I have one of their special calzones. That's a standard treat. The restaurant was positioned in some leftover space, and the way it's been broken up, there are lots of intimate compartmentlike areas to sit.

For a quick and easy meal I go to Rocky's, a fried seafood stand in an old bait shack overlooking Navy Pier open only during the warm months. It's really just a trailer that sits on a turning basin, serving fried clams and shrimp. It's alfresco dining—you sit outside and watch people in sailboats come in from Lake Michigan and pick up their food.

Howard Decker
Architect, Decker & Kemp Architects
Tallgrass in Lockport is fantastic. The restaurant is in a historic canal town about forty minutes outside Chicago, a pilgrimage that's worth

the taking. It's in an old landmark Victorian storefront on State Street. The food is French nouvelle and is as fine as any I've had in Europe. They make a seafood mousse that's sensational. Duck in an incredible sauce. An extensive selection of wines. These guys do their homework.

Laurence Booth
Architect, Booth/Hansen & Associates
The Frontera Grill is spectacular. It's run by a couple who spent a lot of time as anthropologists traveling through Mexico getting to know the agricultural economy. In the process they learned a great deal about the cultural origins of Mexican food. The range of tastes, the subtlety and sophistication of the menu—it's really quite amazing. This is not kitsch; it's authentic. It's like discovering a whole different country.

George Pappageorge
Architect, Pappageorge/Haymes
My favorite restaurant is Thai-aree House, at Addison and Milwaukee. It's a little hole in the wall decorated with travel posters and pictures of fruits and vegetables. Very down-to-earth. The owners have a genuine interest in pleasing their customers—you can see it on their faces. I get the Pa Nang, which is chicken, beef, or pork in a tangy coconut sauce.

For vegetarian, there's the Chicago Diner on Halsted. The sensitivity to detail is in tune with the attitude of a fifties diner. Their bottle cooler is the old reach-in type, and all of the appliances have a vintage look. I have scrambled tofu, or a futureburger made with okra, carrot, celery, and couscous on multigrain bread. It's a cool place with a different attitude about what the right diet should be for this small planet.

Joe Gonzalez
Design Partner,
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
I go to casual spots a lot. One of the main criteria is that my three-year-old is comfortable. Big John's, a pub around the corner, is comfortable. Great burgers. Light things. The people are authentic, the atmosphere is friendly. It's my Cheers.

In the medium-priced category, there's Un Grand Café on Lincoln Park West, Lettuce Entertain You's French brasserie. It has a lively, bistro-like atmosphere, with a terrific crowd for people watching. The steak and pommes frites is excellent.

In terms of fancy places, I prefer Le Ciel Bleu, at the top of the Mayfair Regent. I have an affinity for a classy restaurant in a top-notch hotel, and this one has a lot of old-world charm. The view across the lake is unmatched. I usually choose the veal or the chicken.

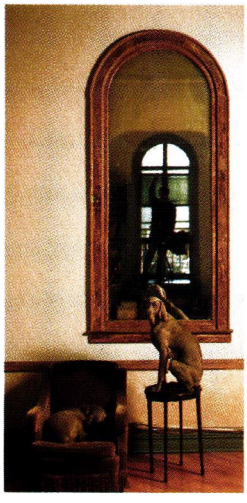
Stuart Cohen
Architect, Stuart Cohen & Associates
I won't order ribs in any restaurant, in any city, except Carson's in Chicago. It's their barbecue sauce—it's truly remarkable. Their coleslaw is sweet and creamy; I never tasted it as good anywhere else. And their potato skins—they must deep-fry them after they bake them because they're so crispy. This is a hearty dinner. ▲
(For a list of the restaurants' addresses see Resources.)

Wegman and His Wags

The artist curls up with Battina and Fay, his canine muses BY MICHAEL J. ROSEN

I am greeted at William Wegman's studio in New York's East Village by Battina, an exuberant young Weimaraner, and a deeper barking somewhere beyond a colonnade of lighting equipment, fabric bolts, and pillars of background paper. I follow a human voice into a vast two-story room where Batty's mother, Fay, reclines on a chaise like an odalisque, encircled by rhinestones, fun fur, reflector umbrellas, and four attentive human beings. Fay tosses another salvo of barks over her shoulder, then resumes work.

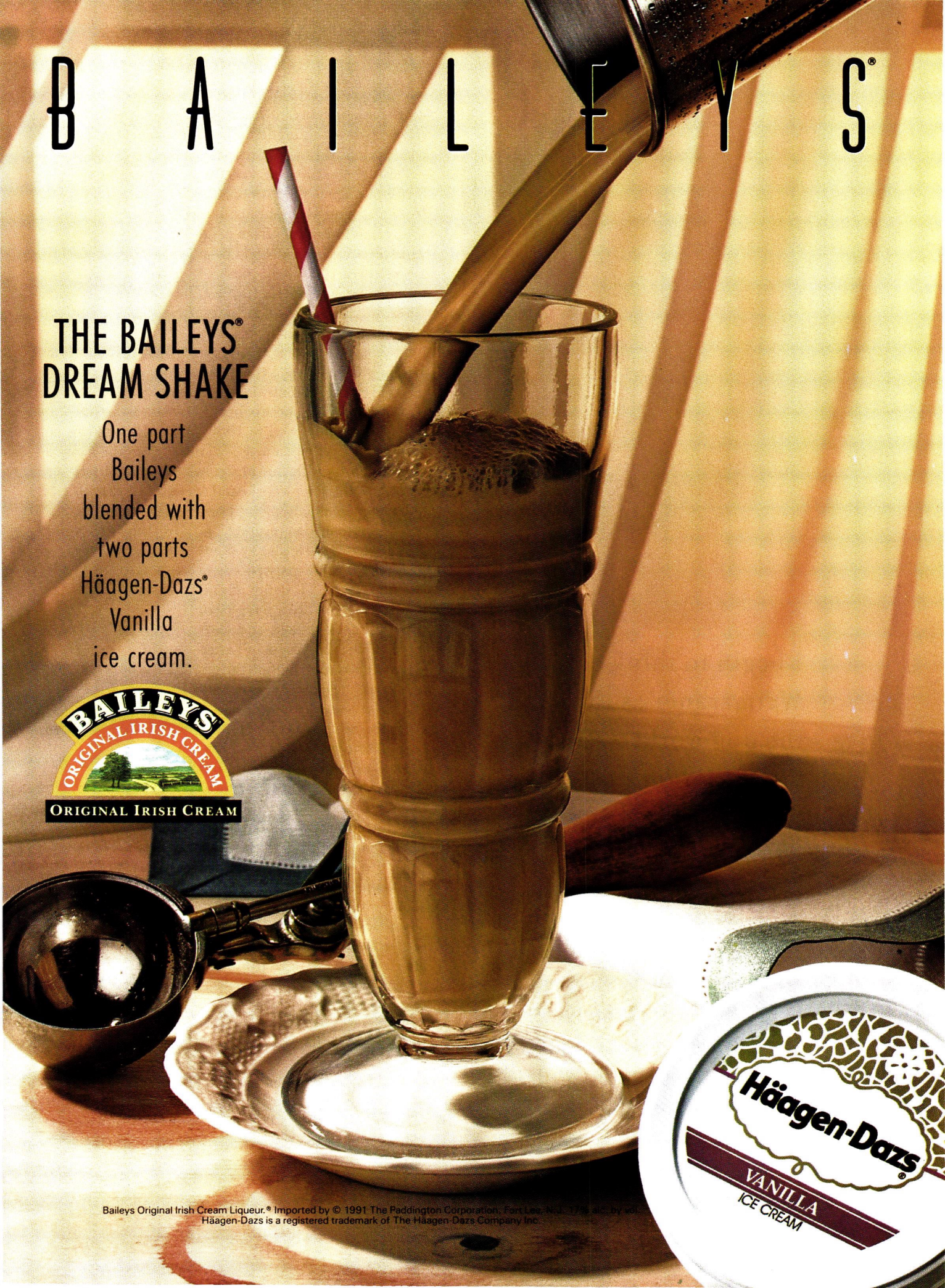
Wegman has enjoyed a prolific few years, with many one-man shows, magazine features, and a major monograph, *William Wegman: Paintings, Drawings, Photographs, Videotapes,* published by Harry N. Abrams, for his retrospective that originated in Europe and will travel to Boston, Houston, and Sarasota. A new show, of Wegman's photographs, is currently at the Neuberger Museum in Purchase, New York, through June. This morning he's shooting at home instead of at the studio where his large-format photographs are created. Today's assignment is for *The Company of Dogs,* an anthology of short stories about companionship whose profits will benefit the welfare of dogs. As the book's editor, I'm in the studio to observe the controlled whirlwind of dogs and props: one idea teasing another in the hope of capturing the right mix of the studied and the spontaneous, the antic and the classic.



William Wegman, top, with his two best friends. Center: The loft is home to man and beast; the refrigerator holds chartreuse tennis balls. Fay and Batty at work, left, and at rest, above.

Fay sports a bonnet supplied by fellow artist Robert Kushner. Batty forms a bridge on a baroque end table. Both dogs balance on a velour chair—now Batty is turned upside down. With each pose, Wegman tugs the dogs' limbs, tilts their heads like flowers in a still life. I'm stunned at the dogs' patience and pliability. "They get Jello-y," Wegman explains. "The hard thing is to trick them back into their muscles, to get their eyes to pay attention." Indeed, gesticulating behind the Hasselblad, Wegman coaxes, "Here, Fay. Look, sweetie. Outside? Where's your ball? Here it is," until her wide topaz eyes greet the camera. His training method? "It's watt training. You say 'stay,' and then nearly 20,000 watt-seconds of light hits, and it's like God almost. And then everyone says, 'Good dog, good dog.' "

Such ingenuousness and good-natured irreverence pervade the rest of Wegman's house. Nothing's off-lim-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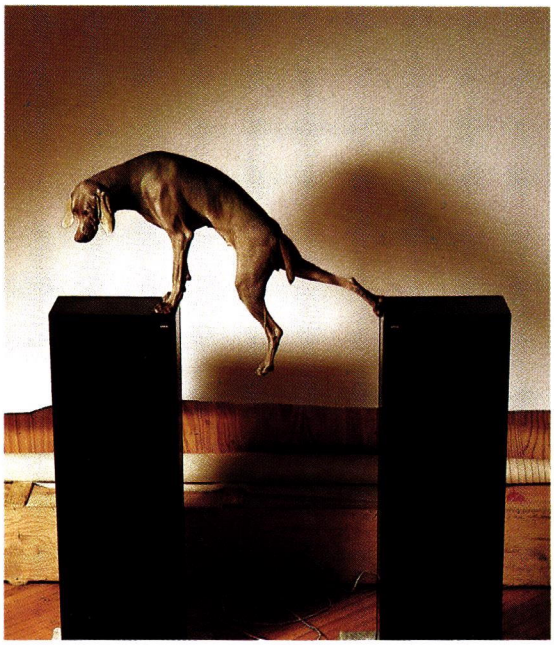
I begin to think of the Weimaraner as the nude of the dog world—sensuous lines, elegant postures

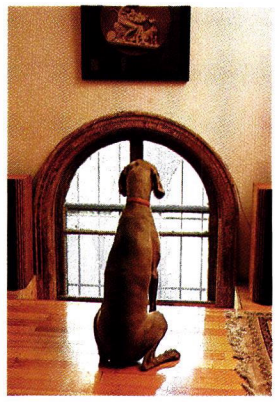


its—not for the art and not for the dogs. Home and studio to both humans and canines for leisure and work, the space possesses a singular look: accessible, curious, reverently childish, and dense with ephemera.

For Wegman, discovery reigns above the designed, the fortuitous above the fashionable. His house is leftovers from shooting assignments, impulse items from thrift shops, and foundlings from neighborly renovations. Beyond an occasional incidental—a yard of fabric, for example, or a Halloween mask—Wegman is disinclined toward purchasing. Half in jest, he confesses to being "miserly." Besides, he concludes, "the dogs are going to ruin whatever it is anyway."

The only constants in Wegman's flux of furnishings are the Weimaraners, the compact discs that are scattered like dust on most flat surfaces, and a few features from the previous occupants: a Jewish Orthodox congregation, established in 1900, and later a Ukrainian social club. "When I moved in, there were the stained-glass windows with missing panes, the chandelier, the yard, and the back door—and a plastic Christmas tree and an upright piano, compliments of the Ukrainians."

The photo session resumes, and so do the distractions: continual phone calls, messengers, the double-parked car, a check for Agfa. Suddenly, a frantic French bulldog barges in through the back door and scurries onto the set. Wegman's assistants steady the Weimaraners and brace the teetery equipment, but before they can apprehend the intruder, it knocks a lighting boom through the paper backdrop, Batty joins in the chase, and Wegman adds, "This would make a pretty good video."



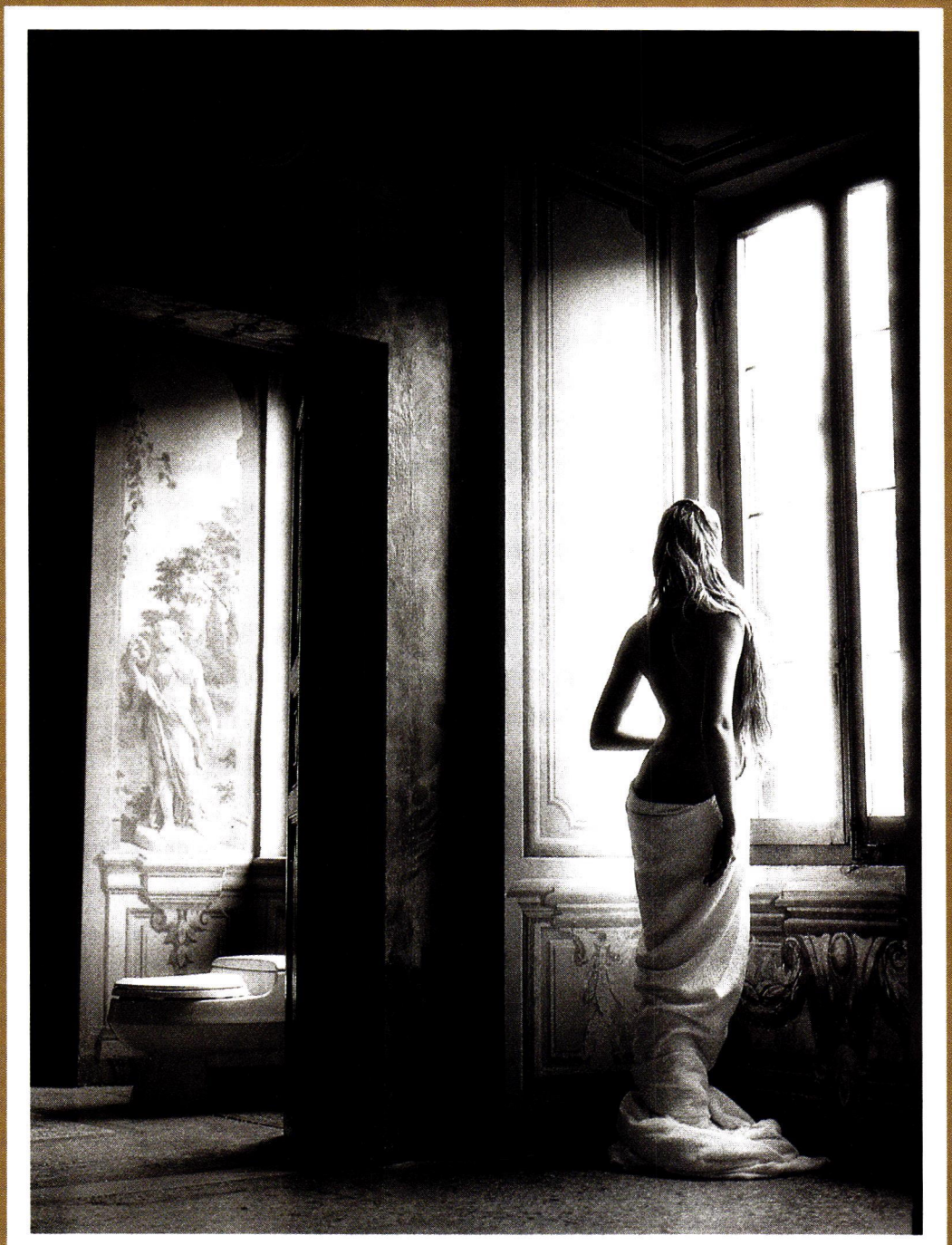
Battina, patient and pliable, responds to Wegman's coaxing. She lies upside down on a favorite chair, above left, executes a difficult balancing act, left, and above, contemplates the great outdoors.

Before we continue, Wegman poses the bulldog for an impromptu portrait, and after a minute of fidgeting, the dog, sensing six pair of eyes on it, actually poses, its pink tongue panting furiously in what is unmistakably a smile. Then, as if on cue, a voice from the courtyard calls, "Tiger, Tiger," and the dog dives from the chair and races out the door. "Not a bad debut," Wegman announces, and I realize that this nonplussed responsiveness is very close to the genius of this man's work.

Dogs have always shared Wegman's life. When he was seven, he found a beaglelike mutt squirming in his Christmas stocking; that dog lived for twenty years. Then came Man Ray, the dog of Wegman's original Polaroids and videos, the dog of *The Tonight Show*, art journal covers, and Wegman's monograph *Man's Best Friend*.

"I didn't really want a dog," says Wegman, but once

As I See It #11 in a series
Dominique Isserman
'Line for Line'
B/W Photography



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Man Ray arrived, Wegman applied his art as well as his affection. He had just moved to California, and, he says, the "new puppy and the new camera and the new town—everything came together." What's more, Wegman continues, "Ray broke the ice and the obnoxiousness of putting yourself on TV—you know, you draw attention to yourself, but you can deflect it with a dog." Although the Weimaraner was only one aspect of Wegman's photography at the time, he was a "gray neutral dog and he lent himself—he could follow any direction I happened to be going."

Ray died in 1982 and Wegman subsequently lost two other Weimaraners. His present dogs have gone beyond Polaroid sessions and gallery exhibits to appearances on *Good Morning America,* MTV, *Sesame Street, Saturday Night Live,* dust jackets, and Gap clothing ads.

Toward the end of a long day of shooting, I begin to think of the Weimaraner as the nude of the dog world—sensuous lines, elegant postures—and I mention this. "Now I understand," Wegman says with mock astonishment. "When I was putting photographs up at Penn Station on these big light boxes, this guy said, 'Hey, is this for *Playboy*?' It was the most abstruse comment, but you're right, they are nudes."

The two nudes join us for a rewarding bit of ball-chasing, and I have a sudden glimpse of all us amateur photographers dressing up our family pets for a snapshot. I leave Wegman's studio thinking of the enormous confidence it requires to walk into the den of the amateur and vanquish the demons of doggy clichés. Yet Wegman's photographs depart from the family snapshot by the same magnitude of difference that distinguishes his 20-by-24-inch Polaroids from the amateur's versions. More than the family pet, Battina and Fay, and Man Ray before them, show us the laughable poses we assume, the ludicrous places we human beings occupy—in short, the elusive stories only a constant companion could tell about us. ▲

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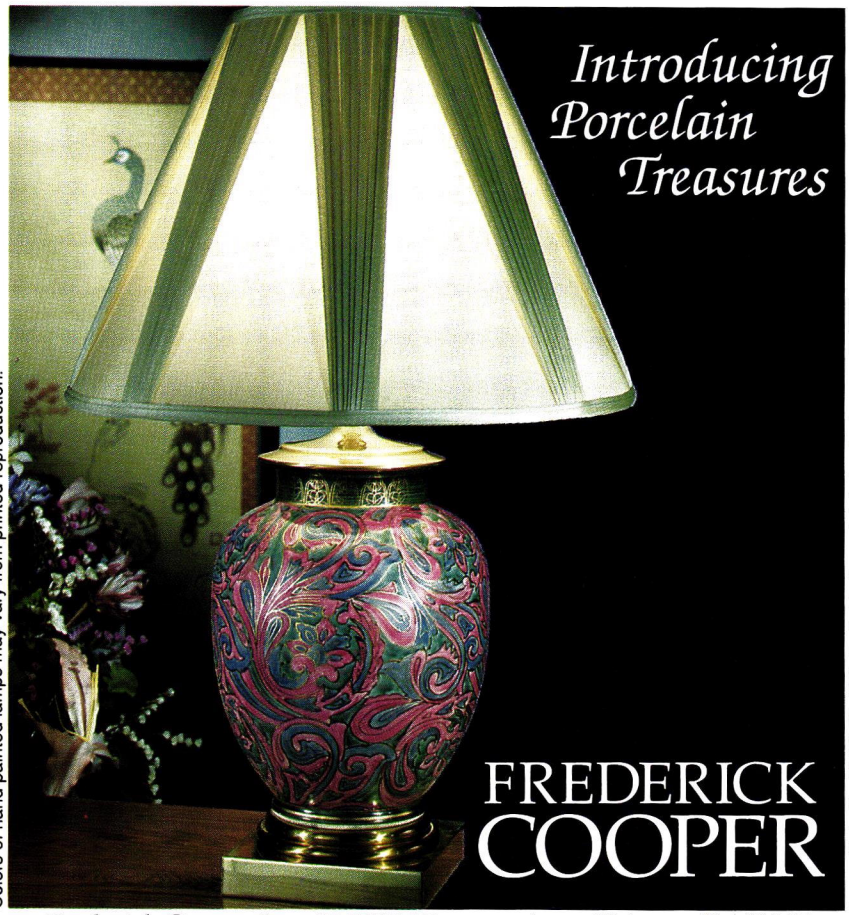

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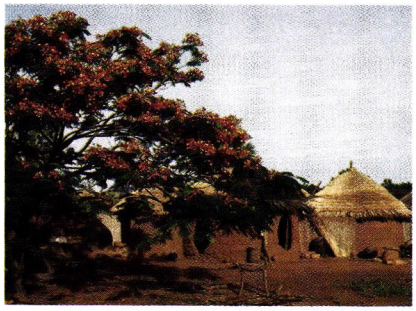
Batik, Bananas, and Beads

Togo's markets entice visitors with the textures of African life

BY ALISON LURIE



Togo's thatched huts, left. Vegetables and cloth, below left, and bananas, bottom left, are sold in Lomé's markets. Bottom right: Fishermen pull in their nets.

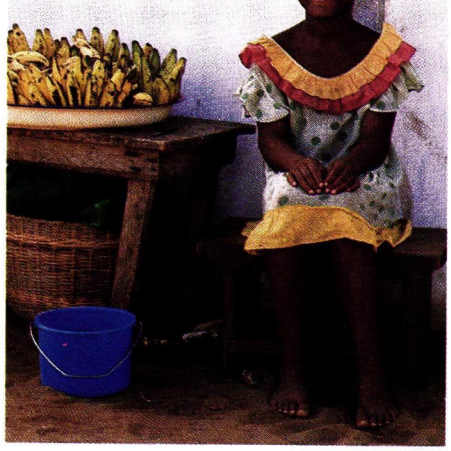
You went to West Africa in July? It must have been frightful." In my friend's expression I saw a comic-book panorama of jungle and swamp, crocodiles, giant snakes, political violence, and hundred-degree malarial heat.

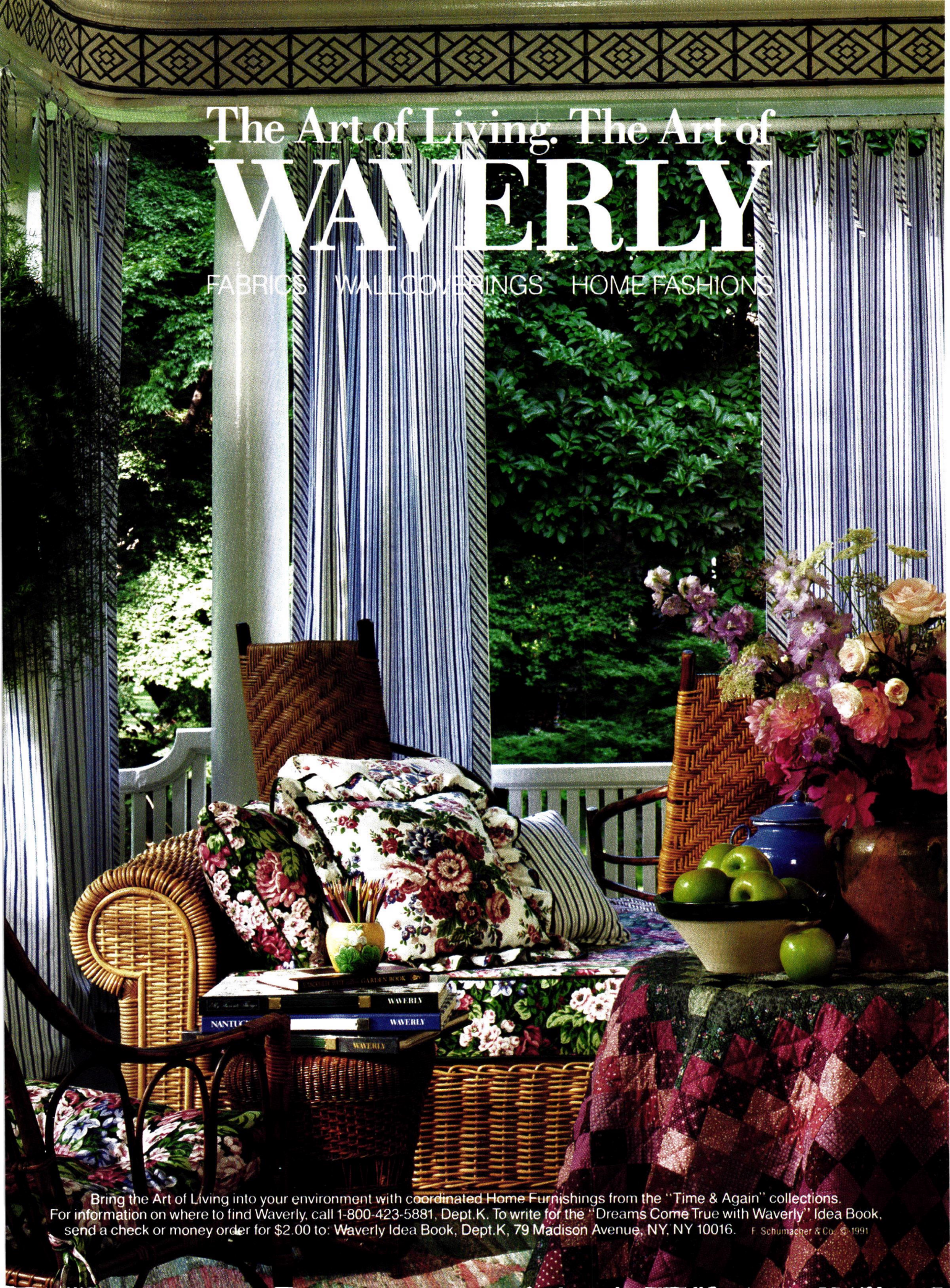
Reluctantly—it was nice to appear as an intrepid explorer, a sort of middle-aged Indiana Jones—I explained that she'd got it wrong. I'd been to Togo, a remote and beautiful country that's been at peace for over twenty years. Togo is a long narrow strip of land between Ghana and Benin, with its feet in the ocean and its head in the dry savannahs. To travel from north to south is to pass through almost every variety of African landscape, from open plains and wildlife reserves, past mountain and rain forest and plateau, coffee and cocoa plantations, rice paddies, cotton fields, and coconut groves. In southern Togo, on the Gulf of Guinea, July and August are the best months; the heavy spring rains have passed and the land is lushly green. Feathery coconut and oil palms line the roads, and the villages are surrounded by mango and banana trees and fields of maize and manioc. Here and there stand solitary kapok trees, some two hundred feet tall, and huge baobabs—known locally as upside-down trees because their gnarled branches resemble roots.

Although the population is only 3.5 million, there are forty-five different ethnic groups, each with its own language or dialect. Almost everyone speaks French and most people who deal with visitors know English reasonably well. The French governed Togo for forty years, and their influence is still visible in its manners, style, and cuisine. It's also evident in the local preference for elegant and fantastic architecture, which often seems to rival the steepled and galleried rust-red termite castles—some ten or fifteen feet tall—that rise among the meadows and fields outside the villages.

The capital, Lomé, is a seaside city of 450,000 people. Low white and ocher and terra-cotta shops and houses, with here and there a shimmering high rise, spread out from the wide palm-bordered beach where the fishermen set out in their long wooden boats. Along the wide boulevards and sandy red alleys, women in brilliant costumes, balancing baskets heaped with oranges or tomatoes or smoked fish or the weekly wash on their heads, gracefully make their way among the children, goats, and chickens. Skewers of spicy barbecued beef, freshly cut pineapples and coconuts, coffee, fried plantains, roasted ears of corn, and long loaves of French bread are for sale on almost every corner.

The stuffed crab and chocolate mousse in the restaurants meet Parisian standards, and the wine lists are remarkable. Le Mandingue has French cooking with a local flavor, Le Maxime is on the ocean, and Le Bar de l'Amitié, near the Columbo nightclub, is a favorite local lunch stop. At Pili-Pili you can dine in a

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thatched hut on such characteristic local dishes as chicken in a spicy peanut sauce, fufu (boiled and pounded yam), gboma-dessi (crabs and smoked fish with mostly unfamiliar but delicious vegetables and herbs), or agouti, an animal that looks like a giant hamster and is a terrible nuisance to Togolese farmers but tender and tasty when cooked. Its flavor suggests rabbit or wild duck.

In the crowded markets, women sell wonderful batik and printed cloth, heaped bananas, mangoes, limes, and guavas, and every household necessity. Some of these women have become so successful that they are known locally as Nana Benz, after the brand of automobile they prefer. There's also a government-sponsored handicraft center where you can find hand-dyed batik, ancient ritual masks, heavy gold, amber, and obsidian jewelry, brass and bronze figurines, lions and hippos and strange birds carved from mahogany and ebony, brilliant patchwork hangings made of striped kente cloth, and elegant handcrafted iguana shoes and bags.

The rough surf and strong undertow on Lomé's beach are dangerous, but the three hotels of note all have pools. Hôtel Sarakawa, a luxury resort on the ocean, has bungalows and a nightclub; Hôtel Le Bénin, run by the hotel school of the University of Togo, is also on the ocean. Hôtel du 2-Février is a midtown skyscraper that caters to business travelers.

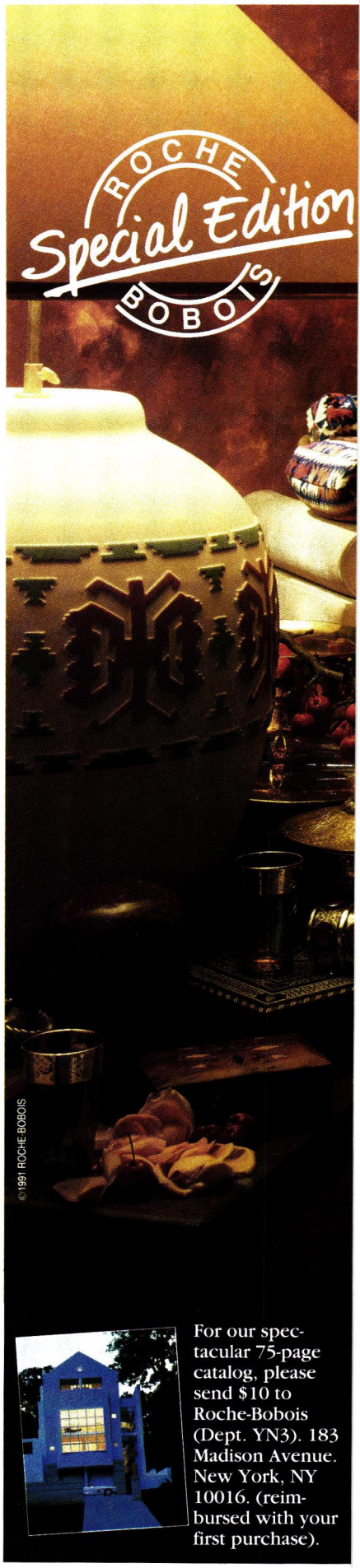
Exploring the countryside, you can drive east along the coast to Lake Togo and the fishing center of Aného. Atakpamé, a charming town with a famous market and the moderately priced, moderately comfortable Roc Hotel, is a two-hour drive north. From there you can continue west to the mountainous coffee- and cocoa-growing country or southwest to Kloto and the craft center in nearby Kpalime, where tourists interested in climbing Mount Agou stay at the Grand Hôtel du 30-Août.

What makes Togo remarkable is its polytheism. A little over half the population is officially Christian or Muslim, but many of these nominal converts also worship the old tribal gods and make daily sacrifices to the spirits of their ancestors. The traditional animist faith, too, is part of daily life, especially in the south, where voodoo flourishes in its original form. Almost every Togolese village is guarded by one or more large stone fetishes. These images, which resemble small sphinxes or fat gray fire hydrants hung with colored rags, have an ominous and powerful aura. Wooden fetishes and magical and medicinal herbs are sold in village markets. Certain trees, wells, and springs are inhabited by supernatural forces, and many fields and groves have a protective charm, or gris-gris, a bundle of leaves and herbs given power by spells and wedged in a forked stick or hung from a tree. The gris-gris protects the crop not only against thieves and intruders but also against evil spirits.

In the summertime, Togo is rich in traditional festivals, many of which celebrate the end of the rains and the fertility of the earth. But religious rites occur year-round. The guides who take you up the Mono River in a long wooden canoe to see exotic birds and wallowing hippos will happily show you a voodoo ceremony where musicians and drummers make the air shake and dancers go into a trance.

Once you know Togo, it's not necessary to travel into the countryside to recognize it as an animist culture. Coming in from the airport in Lomé, I passed a giant white statue described in the tourist brochures as the Dove of Peace, commemorating over twenty years of untroubled rule by President Eyadema. On my way home, I saw the monument again, but it didn't look quite the same. Now I realized that the dove not only carried the conventional political message, it could also be seen as an image of the totemic bird of the local tribe, which is a turtledove.

Although I hadn't visited the melodramatic Africa of my friend's imagination, I had been to a country even more unusual and mysterious. ▲



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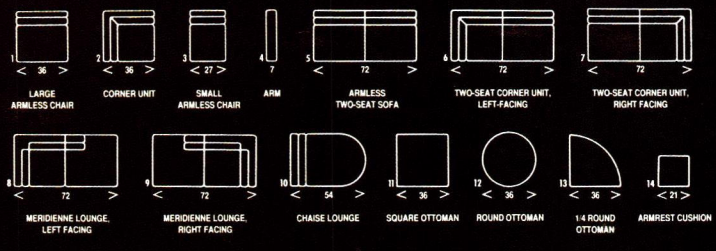

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style

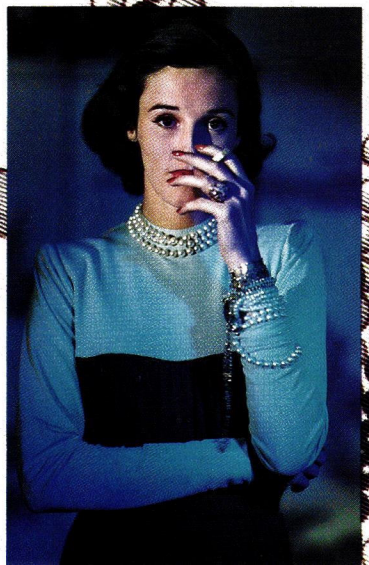
BY WENDY GOODMAN

From teacups to couture, pearls add new luster

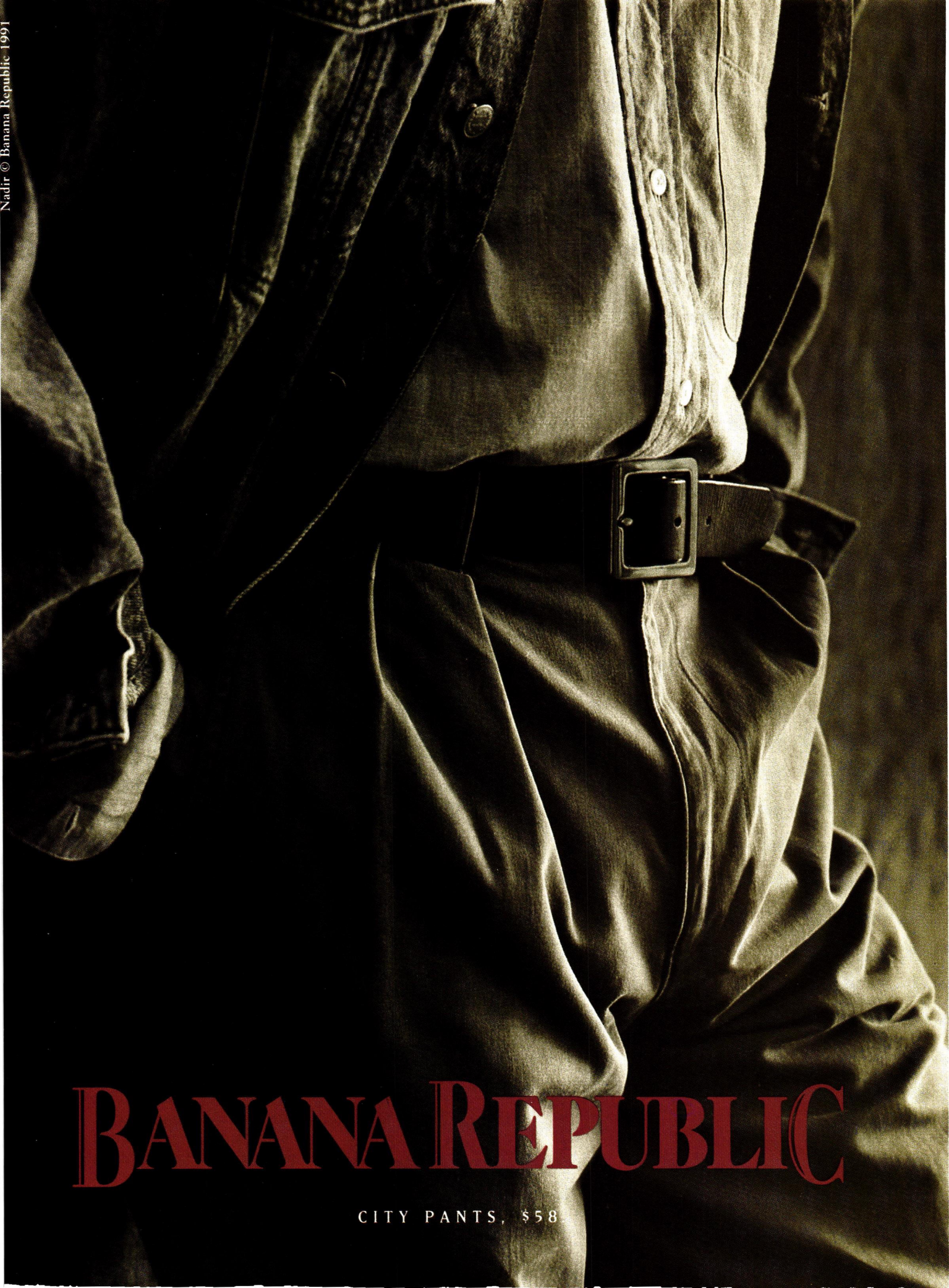
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, PEARLS have dazzled and obsessed mankind, inspiring legendary feats of bravery and spectacular displays of artistry. A product of nature hand-plucked from agitated oysters and the occasional mussel, pearls have always enjoyed a certain luxury status. Unleashed from their role as accessories to the ubiquitous little black dress and given a boost by our current faux-bechoked first lady, pearls have exploded into big-time glamour.

The ancients believed that pearls strengthened the heart—reason enough for Cleopatra to drink her pearl earring in a toast to Antony. In the Renaissance, pearl powder was administered to an ailing Lorenzo de' Medici. The dresses of Elizabeth I were encrusted with pearls, and the Indian maharajas wore them like a second skin. At ninety-four,

A cache of pearls. Clockwise from top: Christopher Hyland's pearl-rich metallic trimming; cultured mouse by Verdura; pearly Dish-Ta-Henge teacup and vase at Charivari, NYC; playful Clarence House moiré. Details see Resources.



Babe Paley, then Mrs. Stanley Mortimer Jr., in pearls, c. 1946.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style

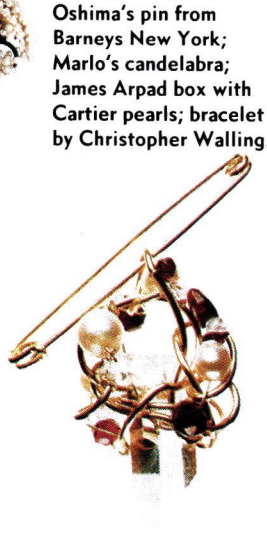
Pearls, the oyster's prize, inspire legendary feats and spectacular artistry

Kokichi Mikimoto, the man behind the cultured pearl, attributed his longevity to the two he ingested daily. In 1917, Pierre Cartier exchanged a pearl necklace, valued at $1.5 million, for the Fifth Avenue mansion that still houses the New York store.

Today Karl Lagerfeld's pearl-embellished Chanel evening gowns are reminiscent of those sixteenth-century Elizabethan extravaganzas, and Norma Kamali's pearl-beaded bedspreads reflect the gaekwar of Baroda's famous carpet, sewn with a fortune of the milky gems. Cartier's latest line, Les Indes Galantes, is based on designs the company created for the maharajas.

The art deco aesthetic resurfaces in Christopher Walling's striking pearl and pavé diamond bracelets, while Verdura's animal pins, each adorned with a baroque pearl, have roots in the postwar era as well as in the Renaissance. In a new twist on the classic circle pin, Kazuko Oshima mixes pearls with crystals and precious stones in sculptural settings.

Pearls have long cast their own spell, igniting the imaginations of artists, jewelers, designers, and collectors alike. This season Stephen Dweck's dishes, passementerie from Christopher Hyland, vases, boxes, and even the candelabras that famed floral designer Marlo dresses up for gala evenings shimmer with a harvest of these glorious jewels. ▲



Clockwise from top left: The maharaja of Patiala in Cartier-designed jewelry; Chanel couture; dishes from Stephen Dweck on Norma Kamali bedspread; Judyth van Amringe lamp; Kazuko Oshima's pin from Barneys New York; Marlo's candelabra; James Arpad box with Cartier pearls; bracelet by Christopher Walling.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY CARTIER; OLIVIER CLAISSE; RICHARD PIERCE (6)

May

SAVING THE AMERICAN landscape is the subject of a series HG introduces with "The Wild Side of Portland." Tony Hiss, the noted *New Yorker* writer and author of the recently published *The Experience of Place,* considers the ambitious project currently under way in Portland, Oregon, to preserve the abundant open lands—from bird sanctuaries and lakes to the fir-covered foothills of Mount Hood—that weave through the city and surrounding communities. I hope that our coverage of America's natural and architectural wonders will at the very least help buttress them against the ongoing assault from private and business sectors. Preservation and continuity are also the theme in our story on Montgomery Place, in upstate New York's Hudson River valley, where the rich legacy of the Livingston family survives in this recently restored early nineteenth century estate. Renny Reynolds's Pennsylvania farmhouse landscape is hardly a restoration, but the plan is a particularly ingenious distillation of classic garden forms. And in Las Vegas—an enduring symbol of American culture of another sort—we visit the compound of America's premier magicians, Siegfried and Roy, who live with a star-studded cast of animals, including white tigers they are helping to save from extinction. We also enter the private world of an early twentieth century eccentric, the painter Florine Stettheimer, a less celebrated friend of Virgil Thomson and Marcel Duchamp. Decorating takes center stage in the tranquil and elegant New York apartment designed by Patrick Naggar and Terese Carpenter and the Victorian fantasy of a house outside the city by William Diamond and Anthony Baratta. And then there's playwright Wendy Wasserstein's hilarious account of her evening with decorator Mario Buatta. Humor, like other natural wonders, is something we need to preserve.

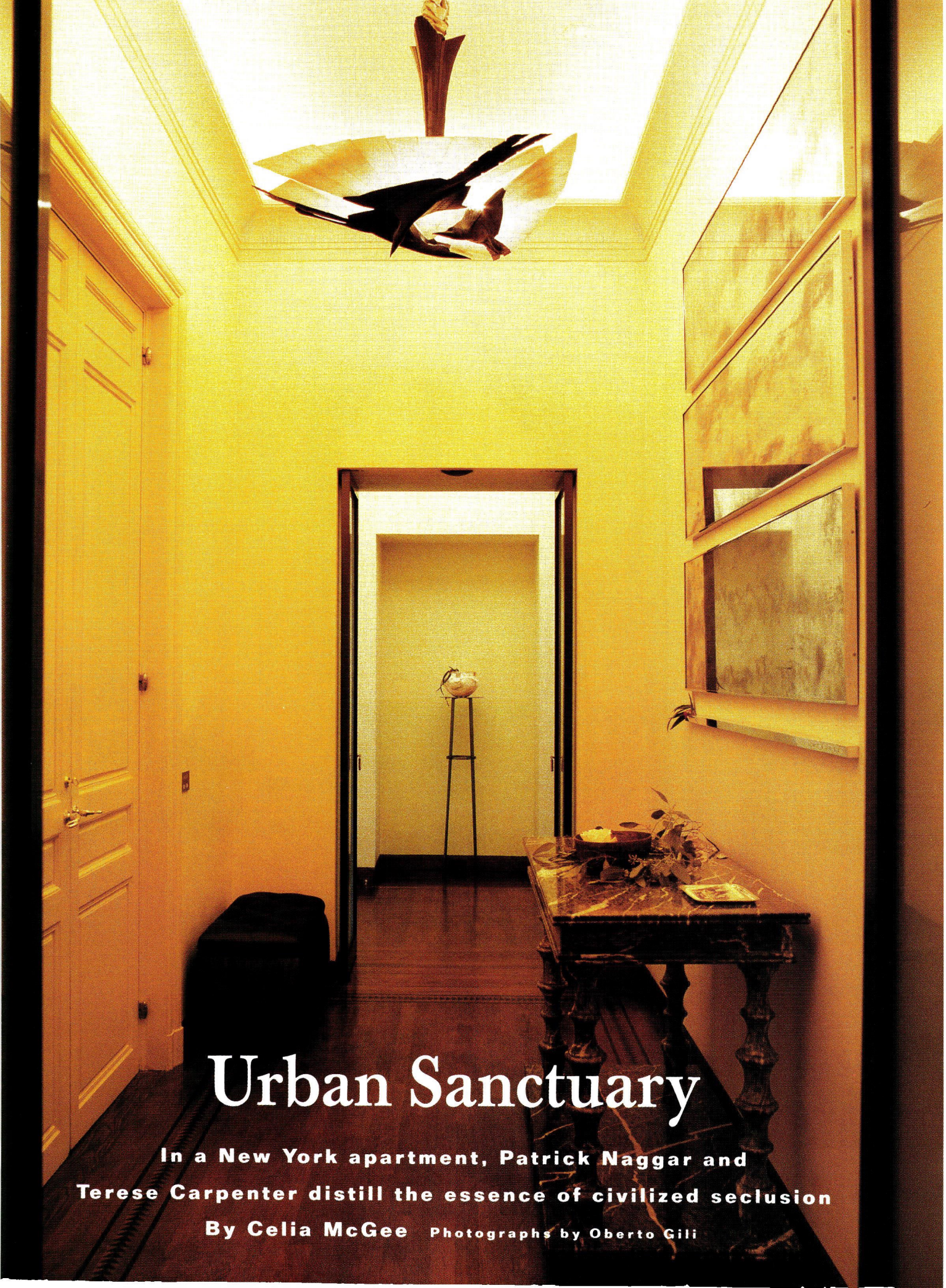
At Montgomery Place, a classical revival veranda overlooks the Hudson River valley.

LANGDON CLAY

Mary Norwood

EDITOR IN CHIEF

In the living room, *below*, French pieces from the 1920s, such as lamps and a side table by Armand-Albert Rateau and sconces by Pierre Chareau, are at home with a Japanese table and a George II mirror. *Opposite:* In the entrance hall, Naggar's three-panel mercury-glass landscape mirror diffuses light from an alabaster chandelier by Albert Cheuret. Details see Resources.



Urban Sanctuary

In a New York apartment, Patrick Naggar and Terese Carpenter distill the essence of civilized seclusion

By Celia McGee Photographs by Oberto Gili

It's as though a Bourbon courtier had been whisked into the

future and set up house in 1920s Paris

SAY YOU WERE AN INDIAN LEAF BIRD OR a black and white Singapore fan bird recently come to live in one of the more beautiful apartments in New York. Your notion of heaven—correction: paradise—might be to have a stand for your cage devised by the designers who did the apartment. They have. Patrick Naggar and Terese Carpenter's plan calls for sparingly silver-plated bronze supports in the form of tree branches attached to the walls of a neoclassical space in which light, whimsy, and sixteen-foot ceilings fleetingly suggest an aviary fit for the ancien régime.

It's the kind of conceit some of Naggar's role models, the great decorative artists of 1920s Paris, could have come up with as they mixed history and modernity, nature and culture, precious and plain into furnishings for the good life. They worked for a clientèle fortunée, patrons adventuresome and discriminating enough to entrust their wealth to design's avant-garde. The clients for this apartment, a financier and his wife—let's call them Monsieur and Madame—are similarly fortunate and daring. They are so private that the flat, chiseled out of one of Stanford White's captain-of-industry palazzos, is off-limits to all but immediate family and close friends: their more public residence is one floor down. They have, as far as Naggar is concerned, imagination in abundance as well. "They told us they wanted to be able to wake up here," says Carpenter, Naggar's partner in the design firm Nile, "and not feel they were in New York."

They got an amalgam of periods and cultures—pharaonic Egypt, classical Greece and Rome, Japan and Anglo-India, eighteenth-century France—seen through the eyes of Sorbonne-bred designers who see through the eyes of Paris between the wars. It's as though a Bourbon courtier had just returned from his world travels and set up house, only to be whisked into a future that has added masterpieces by modernists Rateau, Chareau, Cheuret, and Printz to his collection.

Alongside a David Levine portrait and Japanese bronzes, pottery, and jade from the clients' collection, Naggar and Carpenter furnished the living room with pieces by Rateau (the floor lamp, side table, and fire screen), a 1920s macassar console table by Eugène Printz, and 18th-century armchairs. The curtains are in Brunschwig damask. Carpet by Stark.

If there's a theatrical element to all this, it's intentional. The apartment, says Naggar, is a stage set for Madame, who loves to be able to change her surroundings daily. Even the stainless-steel clothes pegs in her dressing room can be rearranged to create different patterns or assume a new function, such as holding shelves. The reason there's no dining room is that meals are set

up, eighteenth-century fashion, in whatever spot seems most inviting at the time. The bedroom takes its cues from the seasons, with bedcovers and side-table fabrics alternating for spring, summer, fall, and winter, and one antique Spanish carpet switched for another twice a year.

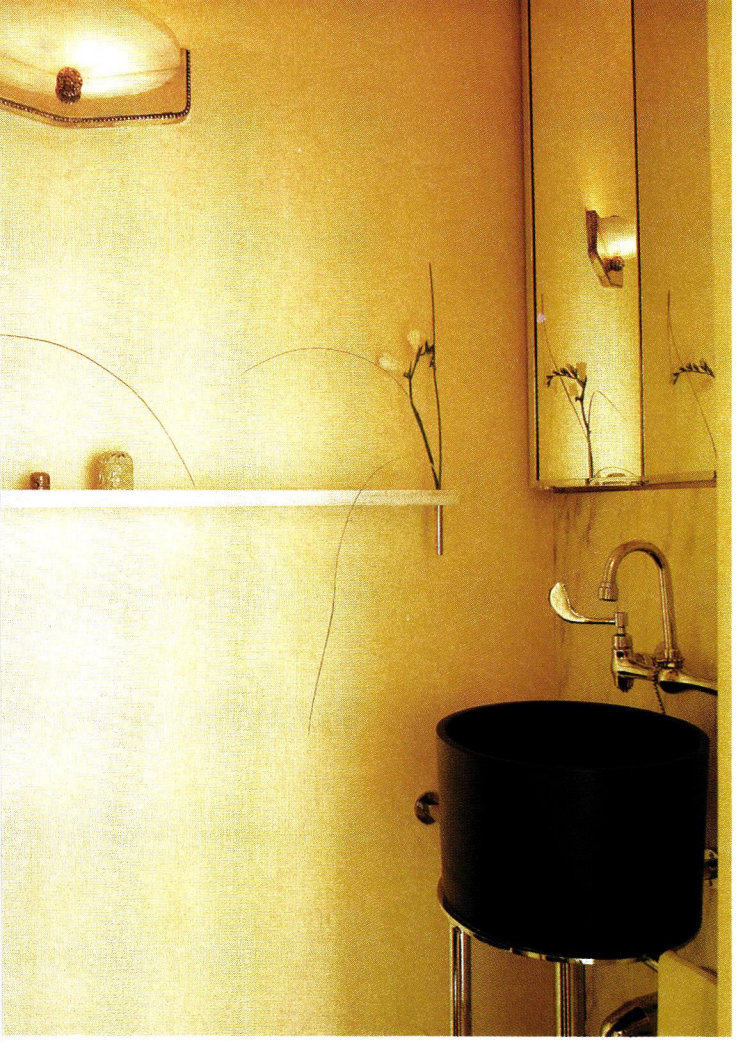
A set of French doors in the bedroom gives onto a Japanese garden. Much taken with the art and customs of the Far East—she and Monsieur have a chef who studied cooking in Japan—Madame had Naggar and Carpenter place holes in a powder room shelf where she can leave strands of ornamental grass or single flowers brought in from her country house. The dressing room is lined with senwood cupboards inspired by Japanese cabinetry (via Eileen Gray); Japanese craftsmen lacquered the row of Negoro storage boxes below. Her meditation room plays out the fantasy, with its mats, jades, bronzes, and tall Naggar candlesticks taking on a rather sacerdotal air. Her sensibility helped Naggar apply what he sees as his own tendency toward Japanese simplicity—a spareness that enhances choice objects—throughout the apartment.

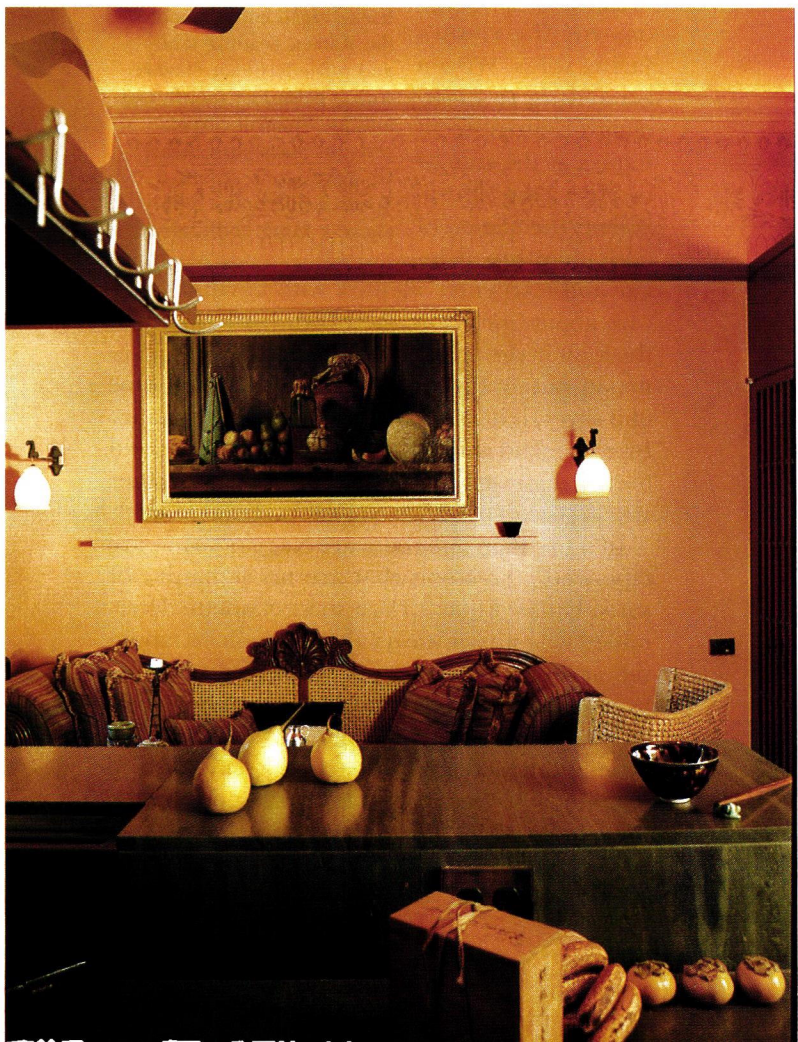
She also appreciated his metaphorical bent in the corridor he calls the mastaba hall, a reference to the grand tombs of Egypt's Memphite dynasties. Struck by the harmony in Madame and Monsieur's marriage, Naggar turned the ceiling of the dusky corridor into a sky map, with the couple's astrological signs at either end of the bronze light fixture that spans its length. The artist in Naggar considers the fixture highly conceptual. "If anything, it resembles a tightrope walker's balancing pole," he says. One thinks of him performing a similar balancing act when he studied a "lot of architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts, some painting, some urban planning, a bit of sociology, a bit of philosophy" as a young man in Paris.

In the living room, even higher than the hallway's celestial chart, are a door pediment and a gold-leaf cornice Naggar refers to as the kind of "little landmarks of classicism" that have been used to respect the aesthetic Stanford White invoked in his original design. The message is brought home as well by two Louis XVI giltwood marquises by Jean-Baptiste Boulard.

Although the hammered mango silk Naggar and Carpenter chose for the chairs is extraordi-

The meditation room, *above*, with a Filipino teak bed and candlesticks by Naggar with Dominique Lachevsky. *Opposite, clockwise from top left:* In the powder room, a Ruhlmann sconce and a lab sink. The dressing room's senwood cabinets and lacquered rolling storage boxes. A Raj sofa beyond the kitchen's English stone counter. One of Naggar's Mercure tabourets near a sink inspired by ritual offering tables.





The bedroom's pale parchment-glazed walls and stenciled palmette frieze, *right,* complement the Rateau reading table and a Biedermeier étagère with a palm-leaf motif. The antique Spanish carpet rests on Stark rush. *Above:* Chareau sconces flank a Scottish mirror, c. 1825, above a Ming bodhisattva.

nary, it barely compares with the silk velvet loomed in Lyons for the room's facing sofas. Woven according to eighteenth-century techniques at the rate of two feet a day, it represents the quality of craftsmanship Naggar and Carpenter identify with anything they care about, including their own work. Many of the walls in the apartment are hand-polished Venetian stucco; the architectural hardware, some of it silver, is hand-cast; the floor in the entrance foyer is inlaid with ebony; sandblasted-glass and bronze doors lead to a Koloman Moser alabaster vase on top of a Patrick Naggar pedestal of steel.

In more than one room are Naggar's Mercure tabourets, the stools that are his signature of sorts. Under Louis XIV, a strict etiquette determined who was or wasn't allowed to sit on tabourets at court. Monsieur and Madame decide that here. A very lucky visitor, on the other hand, might be invited to pull up a chair to the bedroom's Rateau reading table with a sculpted bird nibbling at its base. Or to try the handsome Raj sofa under the Rateau sconces in the kitchen. The leaf and fan birds, of course, will have their silver branches. ◆ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*

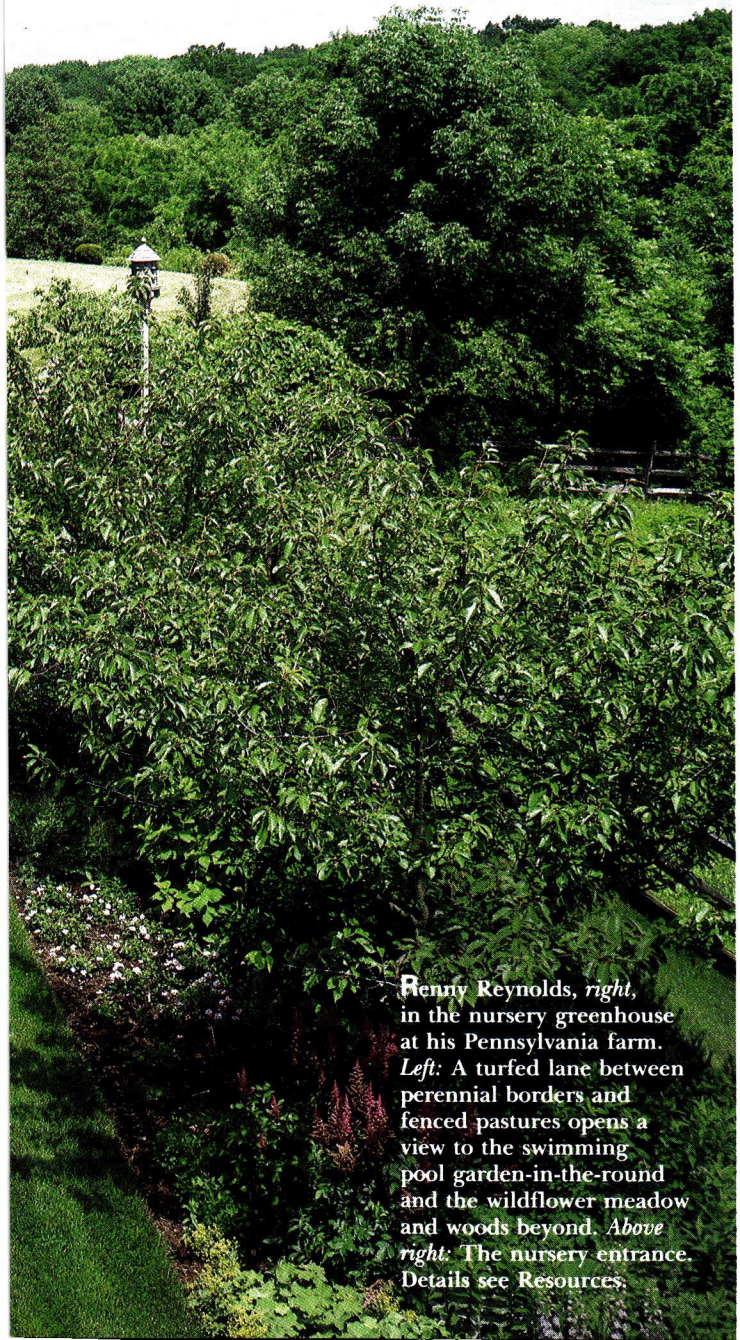
Their "public" residence is downstairs

they wanted to wake up here and not feel they were in New York

A Farm in Flower

A Manhattan floral designer lets the landscape be his guide in a Bucks County garden

By Patti Hagan



Kenny Reynolds, *right*, in the nursery greenhouse at his Pennsylvania farm. *Left:* A turfed lane between perennial borders and fenced pastures opens a view to the swimming pool garden-in-the-round and the wildflower meadow and woods beyond. *Above right:* The nursery entrance. Details see Resources.

"It's not like English walled gardens. The openness feels more American"

RENNY REYNOLDS, THE MANHATTAN PARTY AND floral designer whose firm, Renny—Design for Entertaining, has constructed entire settings for Nixon, Ford, and Reagan White House dinners, the debut of Yves Saint Laurent's Opium fragrance, and benefit galas for ballet and AIDS research is at heart a gentleman farmer. Eleven years ago he fell in love with a farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, that had everything he wanted: water and rolling hills, a rural environment for animals, and an eighteenth-century house "as untouched as possible by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."

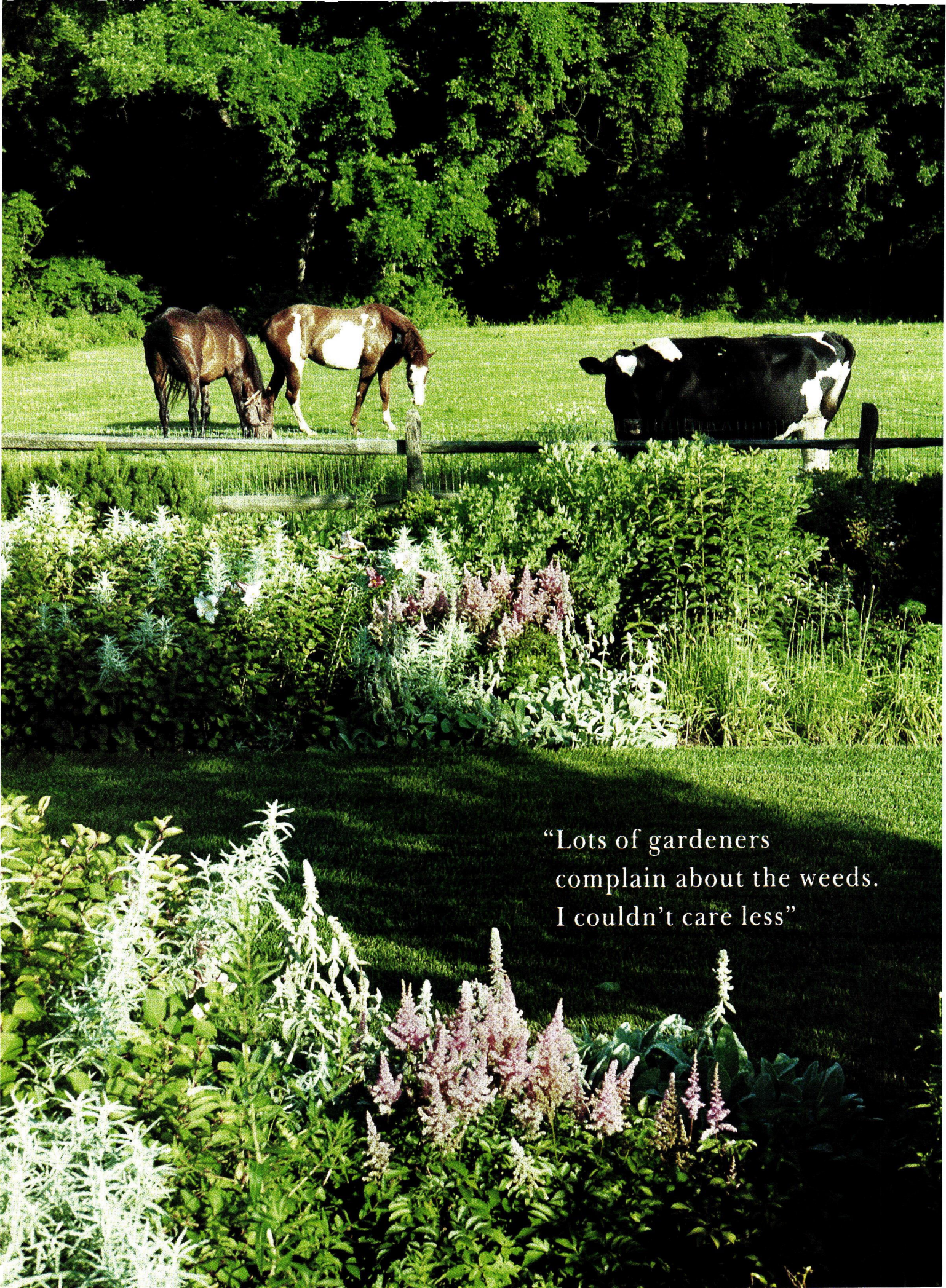
With faux countrification pandemic throughout the New York–Philadelphia conurbation, it had taken Renny almost two years to find the real thing. He found it in a hollow at the end of a quarter-mile drive after dropping through open fields and a screening weald of ash, oak, white pine, black walnut, red cedar, shagbark hickory, beech, and sassafras. Pointing to the 1723–93 stone house and a cluster of outbuildings, he says, "This is like a little enchanted village, the way these buildings were put here on the side of the hills. You know the feeling of comfort you get in the tropics by having everything growing and green and soft and warm and humid? That's the feeling this entire property gives you. It's like a little Garden of Eden."

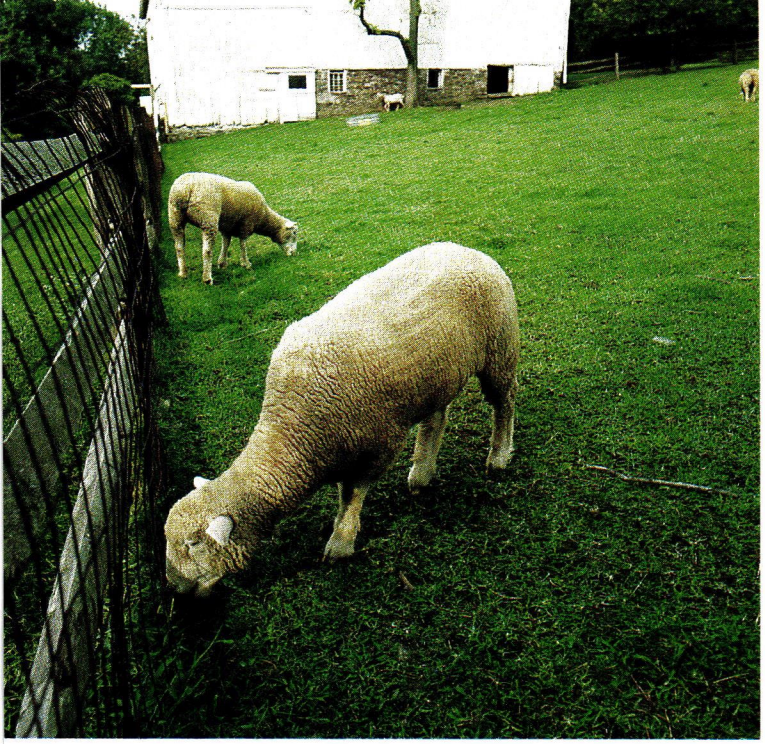
Right away Renny, a trained landscape architect, got in touch with the genius loci. In effect, the land—seventy-two acres—spoke to him: "It told me not to mess around with it too much. It's much more a matter of flowing with the wonderful rolling nature of this land—which puts me somewhere between Capability Brown, William Robinson, and Gertrude Jekyll. I have an aversion to the drafting board; real gardening fascinates me more than landscape architecture."

Renny describes the particulars of his Eden. "There are no views out of the hollow, but there are spectacular views in. I could garden here for several centuries and still be finding the genius of the place." Over the past decade the genius has dictated—and Renny faithfully executed—a birch walk, a woodland walk, a stream walk, a stream garden, an orchard, a large goose pond with white gazebo, a formal round pool/fountain garden downhill from a thoroughly informal wildflower meadow, and two wide, long, and relaxed semiformal perennial borders, all connected by eight acres of lawn and a variety of view lanes.

Renny enjoys a fanciful touch every so often, such as the Italian tazza—"It's not a birdbath and it's not an urn"—which is the focal point of the birch walk, the fountain-bearing putti in the swimming pool, the "cathedralesque" pond gazebo, which resembles a

In front of the 18th-century fieldstone farmhouse, *opposite above*, yuccas and wild sweet peas flower near mounds of clipped box. *Opposite below:* Beside the chicken house, miniature box hedges and Alberta spruce surround sundial in the herb garden and an urn in the tomato and basil garden. *Right:* Phlox blooms in a pink and white border.


"Lots of gardeners
complain about the weeds.
I couldn't care less"



lighthouse, and the Eiffel Tower he found in England, erected on the brow of the slope overlooking the goose pond. "I've been meaning to do a French sort of parterre beneath the tower. I don't like red salvia at all, but it might be amusing to do little squares of it at the base."

The birch walk, a grassy path that curves up and out of the hollow in a southerly direction, will eventually deposit the walker at a glass-roofed stone orangery, the planned display greenhouse for the two-year-old nursery called Renny: The Perennial Farm. There are already 11,000 square feet under glass. The walk, defined by spinneys of white birch, is also a fern walk, a hosta walk, and a phlox walk ("the native phlox, sort of purply"), with random plantations of red-osier dogwood, hardy geranium, hardy cyclamen, dogtooth violet, Virginia bluebells, and giant-leafed petasites, Renny's substitute for gunnera: "I've always been upset we couldn't grow gunnera here the way they do in England."

While at work on the birch walk, Renny made a path along a nearby brook, the stream walk, to which he added more ferns, hostas, petasites, variegated Solomon's-seal, trilliums, Jack-in-the-pulpit, and mayapple. The woodland walk, at the far end of the reexcavated goose pond, has been planted with some 900 azaleas, mostly 'Delaware Valley White' (almost everything around Renny's two ponds is white flowering), viburnums, rhododendrons, and native dogwoods. The eight acres of lawn sequester nearly 53,000 daffodils. "I do most of the digging for the plants," says Renny, "but I don't do the bulbs anymore. I put in 8,000 the first year." Having seriously over-imbulbed once, he has left the several-thousand-yearly bulb increments to *(Continued on page 193)*

Foster horses and a cow, *opposite,* are put out to pasture near caryopteris, astilbe, and lilies. *Clockwise from above left:* Sheep graze near the main barn. A gazebo on concrete base set in the goose pond. Some of Reynolds's 53,000 naturalized daffodils line the drive to the house. Wisteria climbs the chicken house. Brother and sister ASPCA foundlings pose at meadow's edge.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: MICK HALES; ROB GRAY; WILLIAM WALDRON (3); MICK HALES

Terra-cotta pots of tropical *Plumbago auriculata* surround the swimming pool and its putti-borne fountain. *Opposite:* A soft embankment planting of ornamental grasses overhangs the brook downstream from the goose pond.

"I could garden in this hollow for several centuries

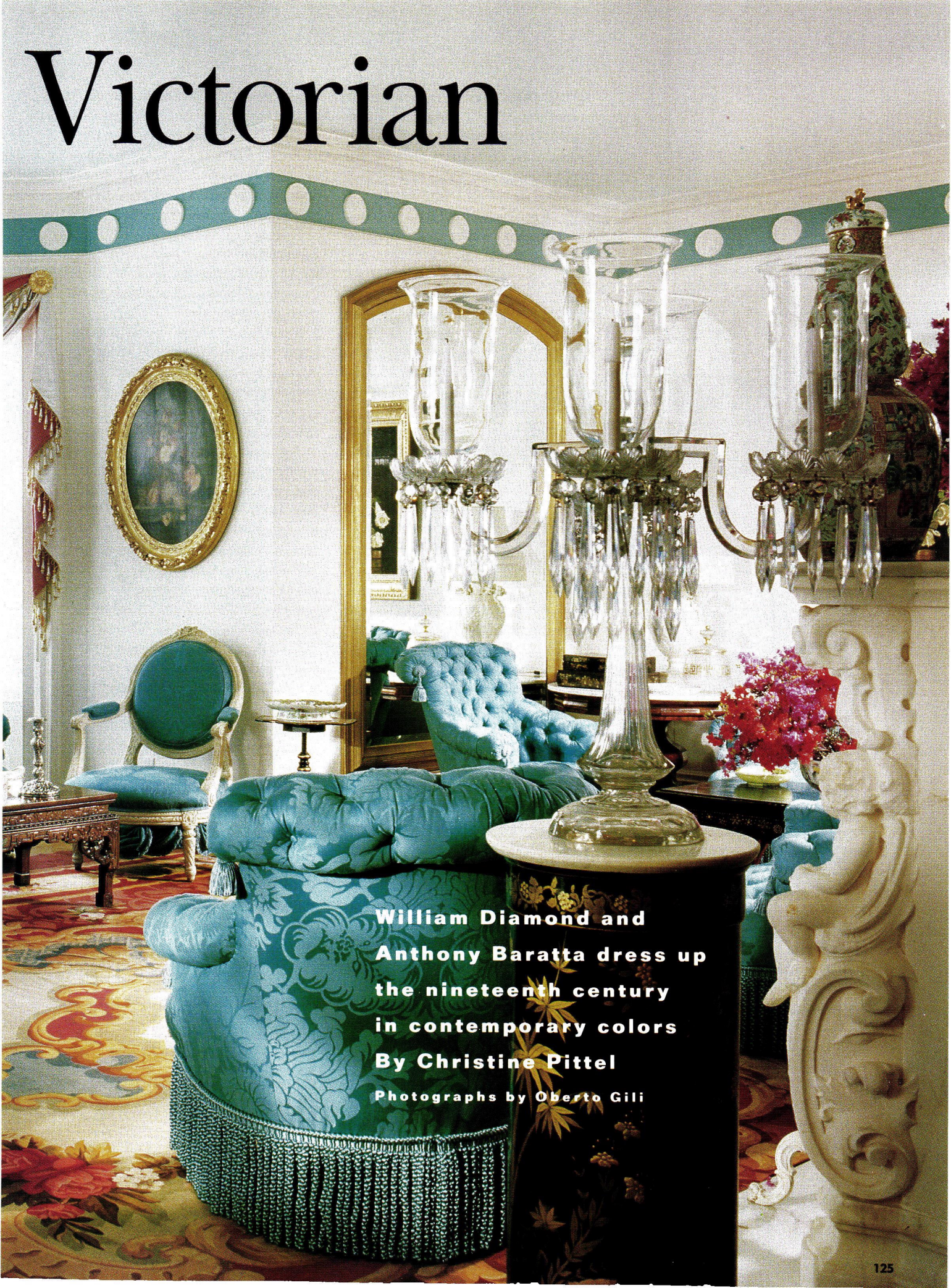
ROB GRAY

and still be finding the genius of the place"

Eminent

In the living room Diamond and Baratta took their color cues from a vibrant Aubusson found at Dildarian, NYC. White walls and turquoise damask lend clarity to 19th-century antiques and tufted furniture of the decorators' own design. Details see Resources.

Victorian



William Diamond and Anthony Baratta dress up the nineteenth century in contemporary colors

By Christine Pittel

Photographs by Oberto Gili

HAD ONE OF EDITH Wharton's heroines inhabited this house instead of the stifling parlors of Victorian New York, her story might have turned out differently. For this eminent Victorian, built not far from Manhattan in 1867, is as fresh as Wharton's free-spirited Lily Bart, and not punishingly proper, thanks to partners-in-design William Diamond and Anthony Baratta. Inside, twentieth-century clarity sweeps aside nineteenth-century clutter. Light streams in through French doors and floor-to-ceiling windows, bandbox-bright colors animate the rooms, and well-bred furniture is arranged in conversational clusters. Diamond and Baratta tried to capture the essence of Victorian style, not its excesses, and through that process of refinement found the elegance of an era when virtue was a matter of decorum and decor.

In ten years of working together, the decorators had never done an interior like this. "How often do you get called in to do a Victorian mansion?" remarks Diamond, remembering their first glimpse of the house through a tangle of overgrown bushes and trees. The new owners, an entrepreneur and his perfectionist wife, were receptive to the idea of a Victorian interior to match the exterior, even though neither had ever considered the period particularly appealing before. The level of grace and formality the clients had in mind seemed to suit a neo-Victorian look, so Diamond and Baratta set out to furnish the three-story, twenty-seven-room house to fit their period fantasies. "They had complete faith and trust in us," marvels Diamond. "I wasn't afraid," explains the mistress of the house, who nonetheless visited the site every day during construction. "I knew that it would be beautiful."

After a year's worth of planning, a six-month construction schedule stretched into sixteen months until everyone was satisfied. Now mahogany French doors open into a well-mannered entrance hall. Carefully chosen antiques, including a pair of burnished console tables and an eleven-foot-tall mirror, probably look better than the day they were made, due to expert French polishing. Above the wainscoting, delicate leaf-patterned wallpaper was tinted to the decorators' specifications by Colefax & Fowler in London. Oddly enough, for a house so imposing on the outside, the inside was "like a blank canvas," says Diamond. "We put in every molding and mantel."

In the living room the mantel (spied in the window of a New Orleans antiques shop) must have belonged to a railroad baron—there's a train puffing across the marble. Huge custom-made gilt-edged mirrors mimic the arch of the entry doors and expand the space. "We love scale," admits Diamond. "The bigger things are the better we like them." The standard Victorian litter of knickknacks is banished in favor of a few distinctive pieces of Chinese export porcelain. The details the design team added are predominantly architectural: classical moldings punctuated with medallions, garlands, and a graphic Greek key motif order the rooms and emphasize proportion and depth.

But most of all, Diamond and Baratta brought color—a startling change from the clients' previous house where white and beige prevailed. Intense pinks, apricots, and jade greens were lifted from a series of Aubusson carpets, all of the same vintage as the house, which the designers selected for what Diamond calls their "cartoon colors." In the living room, they upholstered the furniture in a turquoise damask. "It's very clean, very strong, and very focused," comments Diamond. "You're not assaulted by twenty different patterns and colors at once." The curtains in both the living and dining rooms—swags and jabots in rosy pink silk with handmade passementerie dangling from the edges—are sumptuous yet simple. Again, just the idea of a Victorian window treatment, minus the heavy draperies.

The house is a showplace of American, French, and English Victorian furniture. Mixed in are some pieces of more recent provenance: when Diamond and Baratta couldn't find what they wanted, they designed it themselves "from the ground up," says Diamond, explaining how they built prototypes out of cardboard and horsehair. "We love voluptuous

The 1867 house, *above left*, exhibits a fitting exterior for its newly created library, *opposite above*, in which custom armchairs of Scalamandré damask encircle a Napoleon III borne in an Old World Weavers damask. A Clarence House gaufré velvet lines the walls topped by painted Greek key moldings. *Opposite below:* The original billiard room was enhanced with Zuber et Cie wallpaper, a medallion-patterned Stark carpet, and an 1882 billiard table from Newel Art Galleries, NYC.

Brown Jordan furniture, *left,* fills the terrace. *Below:* From its tin ceiling to its Traulsen refrigerator, the kitchen is a mix of old and new classics. *Opposite:* A Regency chandelier hangs above a c. 1825 dining table. Cowtan & Tout damask covers William IV chairs.

tufted furniture, with all those trims." So did the clients. "There's a sofa upstairs where the tassels have tassels," notes the wife smiling. Her favorite place is the master bedroom suite, which takes up half of the second floor. Like the entrance to a suite in a luxe French hotel, mahogany doors lead to a sitting room, bedroom, his and her bathrooms, and dressing rooms, all set apart as an independent intimate retreat.

"Architectural integrity is very important to us," observes Baratta. "If the proportions of a room were wrong, it was gutted." Originally a rabbit warren, the kitchen was consolidated into one big room made of stalwart old-fashioned materials—tile, tin, mahogany, marble. Although the designers started from scratch, everything looks as though it has been there forever. Counters are solid marble, two inches thick, because Diamond rejected anything thinner: "I want to show that it's stone." He was willing to eliminate a curved wall they designed when they discovered the tin ceiling molding could not be curved. Baratta was not. Diamond relates what happens when compulsive professionals get together: "We sent a piece of the tin with a template of the curved wall off to craftsmen our cabinetmaker knew in China. The whole molding that wraps around was hand-carved in China to look like inexpensive tin."

Diamond and Baratta's clarifying vision extends from architecture and decoration even into the landscape where geometrically planted parterres of flowers bring the decorum outdoors. This is a garden for parasols. On the terrace, lined with furniture in bright awning stripes, the clients can lean against the balustrade and survey their lush roses.

Edith Wharton's *The Decoration of Houses,* written with Ogden Codman Jr., concludes: "A great draughtsman represents with a few strokes what lesser artists can express only by a multiplicity of lines. The supreme excellence is simplicity." One has the feeling Wharton would approve of Diamond and Baratta's enlightened version of Victorian. "We reworked the house so it works for our clients," says Diamond. "It's really a modern house that doesn't look modern at all." ▲ *Editor: Carolyn Sollis*

The expansive master bedroom suite includes his bathroom, *above*, lined in mahogany, and her bathroom, *below*, which features a Louis XVI–style dressing table and chairs in Clarence House chintz. *Right:* Hand-painted wallpaper from Charles R. Gracie is offset by blue and white silk window treatments and a cream carpet from Stark. A Lee Jofa chintz covers the Victorian chaise longue. The lampshades are made of Ralph Lauren silk. The mother-of-pearl-inlaid dressing table is from Newel Art Galleries.

Diamond and Baratta furnished all twenty-seven

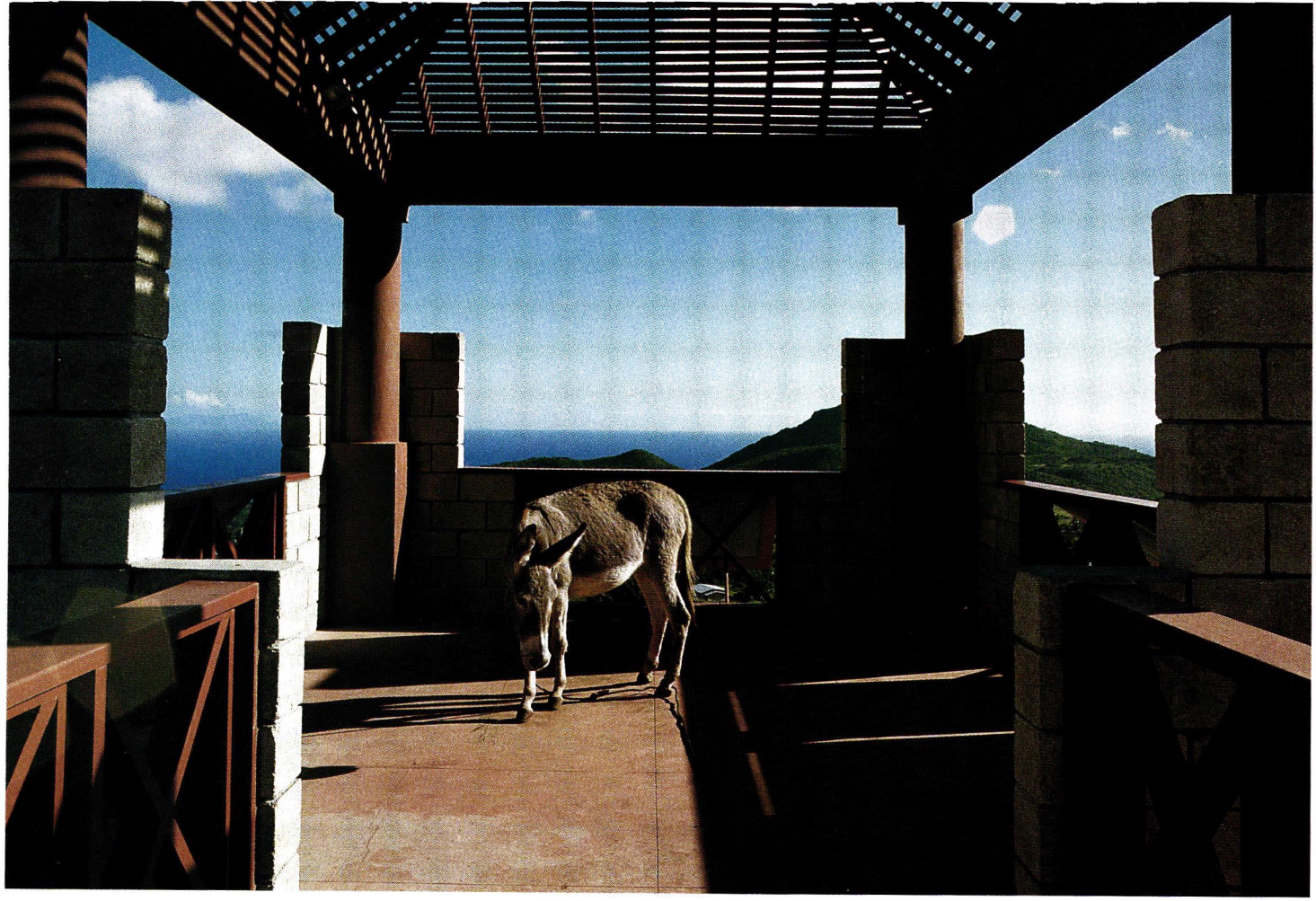
rooms of the 1867 house to fit their period fantasies

In the foothills of Nevis Peak, Taft Architects paired a classical pavilion supported by robust columns with a four-story tower crowned with a latticework pyramid. *Left:* Red concrete stairs lead to the tower's open-air roof deck.

Next Stop Nevis

A Caribbean house by Taft Architects draws its inspiration

from local sources. By Charles Gandee Photographs by Michael Mundy



"WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE the big plane," said the charter pilot who met Pan Am's Flight 225 from JFK to Princess Juliana International Airport in Saint Martin when he saw that there were four of us, not three, heading for Nevis. Which was reassuring news. But only for a moment. The big plane, as it turned out, was a five-passenger single-engine masking-taped-together relic that sneezed, sputtered, and gasped its way down the runway before taking off in one last tubercular cough for the claustrophobes-beware ride to the island Columbus wisely sailed into in 1493.

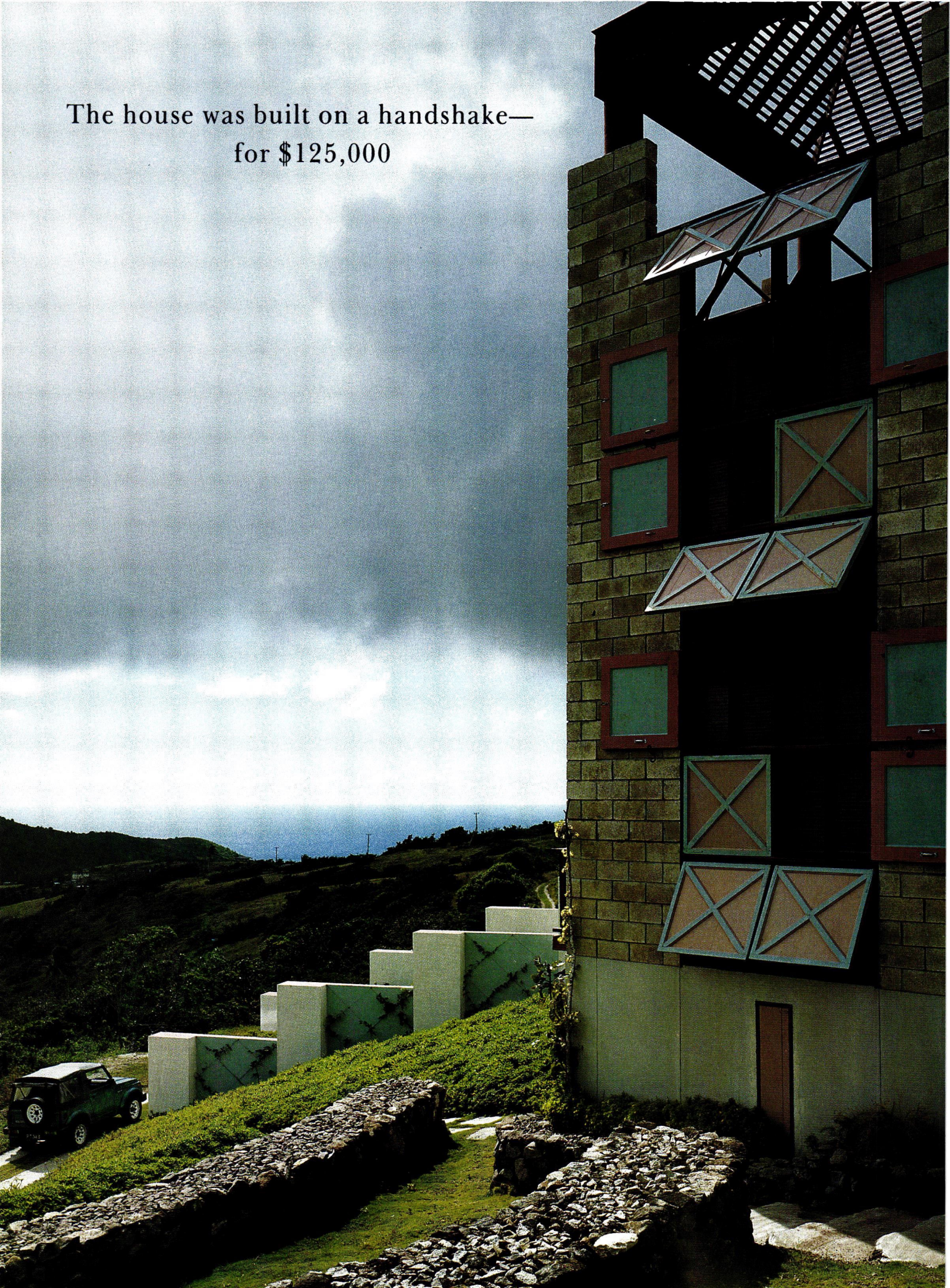
Although the size of the runway at the end of the harrowing forty-two-minute journey partially explains why Nevis has never been regarded as the jewel in the crown of the Caribbean, the tarmac isn't the real reason. Unlike Saint Barts, its trendy neighbor, Nevis seems to look on tourists with a slightly puzzled, what-are-you-doing-here expression. There are, in other words, no Hermès shops specializing in $430 beach towels, no dance-until-dawn discotheques dispensing $5 Coca-Colas, no fancy French restaurants with surly French waiters serving up lobster mayonnaise on the terrace, no hard-to-resist bargains on Rolex watches or Gucci loafers. Nor, on the downside, are there countless white sandy beaches dotted with Paris-bred beauties in the buff. Nevis's beaches range from borderline beige to volcanic gray, and the island's British rulers—from 1628 until 1983—long ago established a tradition of "proper" bathing attire.

What Nevis has to offer instead of the commercial Caribbean clichés is packs of wild monkeys, herds of wild donkeys, a sleeping volcano, a bona fide rain forest, and a police force that, in a reassuring show of confidence, doesn't carry guns. No cruise ships dock here for the day. No seven-nights-under-the-swaying-palms tour packages are offered. While a recently opened Four Seasons may alter Nevis's complexion, one suspects it will take more than one 196-room resort—eighteen-hole golf course and all—to spoil the island's primitive allure.

John Casbarian, Danny Samuels, and Robert Timme first arrived in Nevis ten years ago. The three principals of the Houston-based firm Taft Architects were summoned to the island by Tom and Debbie Talbot, a young couple in search of a balmy winter escape from their Vermont maple syrup farm. Taft obliged with a *(Continued on page 195)*

A terraced garden steps up to the overscale temple on the hill, *left,* which contains the house's public spaces—living/dining/kitchen—in one open-plan room, *opposite*. *Above:* On a clear day, and most are, the view from the three-bedroom tower is of Montserrat.

The house was built on a handshake—
for $125,000



The concrete-block tower, *left,* houses storage space on the ground floor, the master bedroom on the second floor, *above,* two guest bedrooms on the third floor, and a belvedere on the fourth floor. Since the tower, like the pavilion, has many windows but no glass, the architects devised an elaborate system of interior and exterior shutters. *Right:* The open-air terrace between the tower and the pavilion.

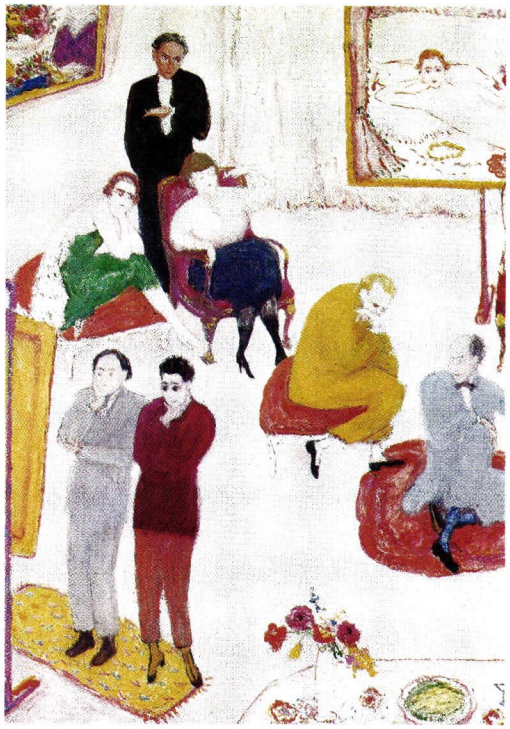
Florine Stettheimer, *opposite*, c. 1915. *Above:* The artist's signature cellophane curtains adorn the living room of her Manhattan studio. She designed lacy frames for her paintings, displayed on easels.

Drawing Room Drama

FLORINE STETTHEIMER PAPERS, RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY (2)

Whether designing for the stage or her own rooms, artist Florine Stettheimer remained true to her eccentric fantasies

By Jody Shields



IF FLORINE STETTHEIMER'S life were to become a movie, the brothers Grimm should do the script and David Lynch should direct. The screenplay could begin something like this: once upon a time in New York City, there lived three wealthy spinster sisters. Ettie wrote genteelly bad novels. Carrie built a masterpiece dollhouse. Florine created paintings, stage sets, and interiors that were lyrical, sugary, and goofy all at the same time. In her own way, Florine Stettheimer integrated life, death, and art, requesting space in her mausoleum for every one of her paintings, moving a replica of her bed canopy into a gallery for her exhibition, taking French lessons from Marcel Duchamp.

Florine's personal style was just as peculiarly her own. She sported voluminous harem skirts, exotic dresses by Paul Poiret, a bohemian beret, and bobbed hair. Despite her love of fashion, she was too vain to be captured on film. Florine refused to let Carl Van Vechten photograph her because he didn't retouch. Cecil Beaton nixed a portrait of Florine, which was probably just as well since he described her as "powdery" and looking like a moth that has eaten a gold scarf. Another male acquaintance had a fantasy along the same lines: "She was crushable. You felt like hugging her...or pressing her between the pages of a book."

Fortunately, something of Florine has been preserved in a less violent way. She was thwarted in her attempt to have her paintings entombed with her, an unfulfilled wish that has enabled the Whitney Museum to plan a retrospective for 1993. Last year,

TOP: FLORINE STETTHEIMER PAPERS, RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. BOTTOM: COLLECTION OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, YALE UNIVERSITY, NEW HAVEN

Today Florine's ephemeral interiors could pass for the work of

TOP: PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, PHILADELPHIA, GIFT OF MISS ETTIE STETTHEIMER
BOTTOM: FLORINE STETTHEIMER PAPERS, RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

nearly thirty of her works were exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum and at Columbia University, and Sotheby's sold her portrait of Marcel Duchamp for $110,000. These are the first major tributes to Florine since her last show, held posthumously at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946. This attention would not have sat well with the artist, who cultivated a refined obscurity. Critics acquainted with Florine compared her light-under-a-bushel modus operandi to Emily Dickinson's. Carl Van Vechten once observed, "Florine was a completely self-centered and dedicated person: she did not inspire love, or affection, or even warm friendship, but she did elicit interest, respect, admiration, and enthusiasm for her work in art."

Florine and her sisters lived with their aged mother until her death in 1935. This didn't cramp the style of the well-heeled conservative Stettheimer females: their salons—both joint and individual—were a hotbed of hobnobbing artists, including Duchamp, Virgil Thomson, Georgia O'Keeffe, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen, Elie Nadelman, and Sherwood Anderson. Even in the steamy presence of the avant-garde, the Stetties (as they were nicknamed) stuck to an old-fashioned code. They were not, however, prudes. "We may be virgins, but we know the facts of life," deadpanned Ettie when she felt the conversation was being censored for old maids' ears.

Although Florine was dedicated to her bachelor state, she was no shrinking violet as far as her work was concerned. She attended art school and traveled in Europe before World War I. When pressed, she claimed to admire Frans Hals, perhaps because of the way he painted lace. Still, Florine's work was redolent of the self-taught artist. She painted what she knew: family, friends, studio parties, country picnics, Broadway and Fifth Avenue, crazed lady shoppers at a Bendel's sale—tiny figures set in edgy elfin dreamscapes. She painted herself with a wraithlike body lounging à la Venus on a clamshell, standing at an easel, giving George Washington a heroic bouquet.

Her powdery pastel colors, straight from the paint tube, were troweled with a palette knife into a thick itchy-looking surface. Gold leaf covered lumpy patches of putty stuck to the canvas. In 1932 a review in *The Nation* classified her as a kind of birthday party–theme painter: "These brilliant canvases of hers do resemble gay decorations in colored paper, and lacquered red and blue glass balls, and gilt-foil stars, and crêpe streamers, and angels of cotton wadding, and tinted wax tapers." Only one of the titles of her paintings, *Love Flight of a Pink Candy Heart,* was as fanciful as her giddy poetry, which she kept hidden. Regardless of her fragile image, Florine single-handedly lugged her not-so-fragile (four-by-five-foot) canvases around the studio. She wasn't shy about her signature either. Unre-

The gilded bouquet is classic Stettheimer, *opposite above.* Her 1923 portrait of sister Carrie with her dollhouse hangs above the buffet. *Opposite below: Studio Party,* painted after 1915. *Above: Picnic at Bedford Hills,* 1918, portrays, clockwise from left, Florine, sister Ettie, Elie Nadelman, Carrie, and Marcel Duchamp. *Below:* Fortune-telling cards made by Florine as a young girl.

a radical decorator or an environmental artist

stricted to a modest corner, her name was often worked into the paintings, spelled out on the keys of a typewriter or inscribed on the license plate of a limousine.

Florine's work mode was more in keeping with her ladylike demeanor. When she'd built up an appetite in the studio, lunch would be ordered from the restaurant downstairs: a tray of delicate pastel-tinted pastries. Her art, like her diet, was unencumbered by a sense of physical bulk. The same will-o'-the-wisp sensibility distinguished Florine's decorating. Today, her ephemeral interiors could pass for the work of a radical decorator, an environmental artist, or a benefit-party impresario.

She moved part of her boudoir into the gallery for her one-woman show

Evidence of Florine's talent in that direction was her Manhattan studio in the Beaux-Arts Studios overlooking Bryant Park, which she grandly referred to as "my garden." Inside the studio, where she worked and ultimately lived, cellophane and lace were the primary materials. Bouffant floor-to-ceiling cellophane curtains ornamented the living room. Bouquets of monstrous homemade cellophane flowers loomed in glass vases. A Paul Bunyan–size glossy ribbon, bow-tied, coyly blocked the bedroom stairs. Paintings in progress posted around the room were often veiled. The paintings on the walls boasted the elaborate scalloped and zigzag frames Florine designed. Her homage to a favorite subject, a bust of George Washington, was enshrined in a corner against red, white, and blue drapery. Florine had such a thing for the father of this country that she virtually gave Van Vechten a standing order to photograph any Washingtoniana he encountered for her collection.

Her bedroom was a faerie bower chastely swathed in lace—strictly let's-pretend. The bed was covered and canopied with the stuff. More lace graced the windows, a sofa, a table and screen, the knickknack shelves, and her painting *Flowers with Snake*. Cherub statuettes gamboled next to the bed, which she apparently always occupied solo.

Nest-conscious Florine must have believed that her canvases shared her feelings: she re-created part of her boudoir in the Knoedler Gallery for her one-woman show in 1916. She cushioned the gallery walls with white muslin and erected a gold-fringed bed canopy over a painting. The one favorable newspaper review was written by a friend. Her diary tersely remarked, "Only one person asked to see the price list. . . . Sold nothing." No surprise, considering she priced her work so high it was impossible to sell. (The sour grapes lingered: her will decreed that her paintings could be sold but not be given away.) According to Van Vechten, Florine couldn't bear to relinquish a painting to a stranger. "Suppose it were to hang in the bedroom of some man," she wailed.

Florine had no qualms about putting her work onstage before a wider

Cupid pedestals and lace hangings, *above left,* were essential to the romantic fantasy of Florine's bedroom. *Top left: Portrait of Myself,* 1923. *Opposite:* In the garden of the Stettheimers' family estate, depicted in *Sunday Afternoon in the Country,* 1917, Ettie stands with outstretched arms behind Marcel Duchamp.

TOP: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, GIFT OF THE ESTATE OF ETTIE STETTHEIMER. BOTTOM: FLORINE STETTHEIMER PAPERS, RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

audience. The opera *Four Saints in Three Acts,* for which she made her only stage design, had no plot, an all-black cast, a libretto by Gertrude Stein, and music by Virgil Thomson. Pegged by *The New York Sun* as a "pink cellophane opera," it epitomized Florine's unearthly frail-and-fantastical school of design.

"Miss Stettheimer's sets are of a beauty incredible, with trees made out of feathers and a sea-wall at Barcelona made out of shells and for the procession a baldachino of black chiffon and bunches of black ostrich plumes just like a Spanish funeral," Thomson bubbled in a letter to Stein. (Stein is said to have found the production "pretty." Art critic Henry McBride reported that the audience wept in the lobby during intermission.) The spectacle also featured wads of cellophane strung into heavenly arches, canopies shivering with beaded fringe, actors costumed in lace smocks, silver-studded gloves, and halos. An immense sheet of crinkled cellophane was the backdrop. The sets for *Four Saints* could have doubled as Florine's own rooms.

While her radical designs triumphed before an avant-garde audience, the artist was brought to heel by a lapse in decorum. Hustled onto the stage to bravos at the opera's premiere, Florine forgot her long white gloves. Her bare-armed curtsy drew a scathing rebuke from sister Ettie: "It was inelegant!" Nevertheless, Florine was so enamored of *Four Saints* that she reportedly missed few performances once it opened on Broadway. There was no sequel to the glory of that production, and she led a fairly cloistered existence until she passed away in 1944.

Even after her death, events took a David Lynch–style twist. Ettie waited four years to scatter Florine's ashes, on the anniversary of her opening at Knoedler. She would probably have approved the dramatic understatement of this grim little ceremony—a kind of extended, second life. One of Florine's diary entries announces, "I finished a history of my life that takes five minutes to read." ♠

CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF ETTIE STETTHEIMER

Preening canvasbacks, *below,* **by Ted Vandenboesch share space with a black duck by Ferdinand Bach.** *Opposite above:* **Milton Avery's** *The Last Round,* **1931, a 19th-century weather vane, and Patrick V. Farrow's sculpture** *Letting Go* **punctuate the living room.** *Opposite below:* **Fish decoys from the Minnesota lakes.**

Midwestern Folk

A sports-loving Chicago family reassembles its treasures of decoys and Americana

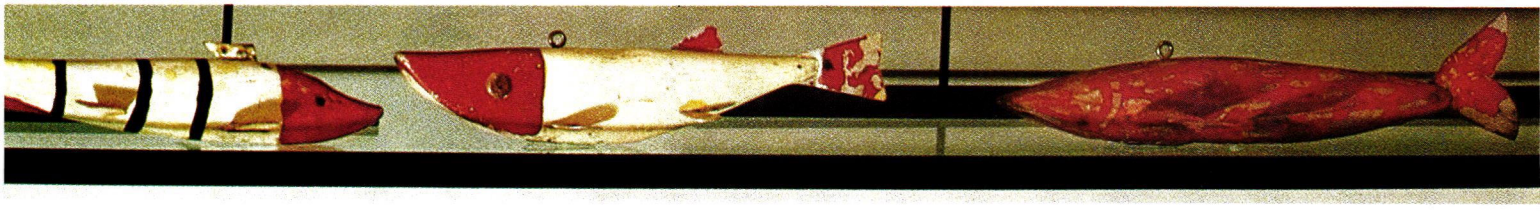
By James Reginato

Photographs by Lizzie Himmel

ELMER CROWELL AND ED ("ONE ARM") KELLIE MAY NOT BE names that easily roll off the tongues of art collectors, but among a certain set they command major-league respect. Crowell and Kellie, both decoy carvers, are practically the Brancusi and Rodin of their world. For many collectors, bagging a decoy carved by Cape Cod native Crowell—whose preening pintail holds the auction record, $319,000 in 1986—or an Eskimo curlew by Kellie, a western Lake Erie whittler, can be as competitive and pricey an undertaking as any hunt to capture a fresh Anselm Kiefer or Julian Schnabel.

One of today's successful decoy collectors is a businessman who, with his wife and son and two lively Labradors, relocated to Chicago's North Shore several years ago. Moving from the East Coast, with not only his family and his wildfowl decoys but also a sizable collection of fish decoys, Navajo rugs and pottery, and antiques, mostly from New England, his intent was simple. "I wanted to provide a nice home for them," he recalls.

Recommendations led him to San Francisco's Jehu &



Custom-made brass lights dominate the billiard room, *top left. Top right:* The sunroom harbors decoys and early New England furniture. In the dining room, *above*, a 1930s sturgeon decoy, a 1760 Windsor chair, and, *right*, a Santa Clara Pueblo pot. *Opposite:* Native American pottery and photographs are in the bedroom.

"It's a very straightforward place,"

Heerdt and Ron Jehu, recently returned to the business. The Canadian-born, Boston-raised Pratt Institute graduate recognized immediately what had to be done to the roomy Georgian-style house. The "parameters were established by the beautiful objects and furniture. Hardly anything had to be bought. So I acted more or less as a stylist."

That's not to say that Jehu's job was elementary. His parameters were broad. Both country and high-style American antiques, ranging from the Queen Anne to the federal period, exist together here. Native American and Western art—including several brooding canvases by Fritz Scholder, the eminent New Mexican painter—share the walls with impressive works by Milton Avery and sporting and pastoral pictures from France, England, and Scotland. The varied clock collection has simple banjo and shelf models as well as an imposing tall case—regal with its elegant silver

mounts—made around 1810 by Simon Willard, the celebrated Massachusetts clockmaker.

Under Jehu's direction, only the kitchen, master bathroom, and billiard room (formerly a garage) were actually restructured. Crown moldings and wainscoting were added to the resurfaced walls, and the interior was painted in a neutral warm gray. The overall effect is exactly the sort of relaxed look that Jehu prefers. The style, the decorator notes, is really that of the residents, which is always his goal. "I don't try to put my own stamp on anything," he insists. "I always try to pull the ideas and inspiration from the clients."

On this particular yearlong project, that wasn't so difficult. Whenever Jehu was in Chicago, he resided with the family, a standard procedure for most of his out-of-town assignments. "That's how we get to know each other," he explains. "It tunes me into the client. I see the way they live, how they relate to each other, what time of day each room is used, the interaction with children, dogs. By the end, I know who gets out of what side of the bed."

This "artist in residence" program, Jehu says, "takes some guts on the part of the client," but clearly it's paid off here. His description of the family—"warm, honest, no-nonsense but with a good sense of quality"—could be applied just as well to their house. Indeed, he says, "it's not a fancy-pants house, it's a very straightforward place with a very natural presence."

One quickly deduces that the things that most delight this collector trace their origins to the outdoors—something of which, he explains, he knew little while growing up on Chicago's West Side ("It's like Brooklyn," he says).

says Jehu, "with a natural presence"

Now, thanks to considerable success—as an advertising executive, and later as the president of a consumer products company—he can afford to indulge his wishes.

An unusual collection of Scottish crooks, used for herding sheep and cattle, is on display in the billiard room. Seizing one of them—a long twisted piece of hazelwood with a head of fired and polished horn—the collector demonstrates the proper technique for poking or pulling an animal. "The crooks become extensions of the arm," he notes, lunging ever so slightly. "I've always been fascinated by the stick makers of Scotland."

The outdoors is most obvious in his collection of wildfowl decoys. Most of the birds date from 1880 to 1940, the golden age of decoy carving. "The craftsmanship and creativity that went into each of these pieces is incredible," says the gentleman, whose important examples include two by Crowell—a black duck and a Canada goose, both circa 1910 and in mint condition—and a pair of exquisite canvasbacks by Kellie. His decoys are admired particularly for their graceful delicate heads.

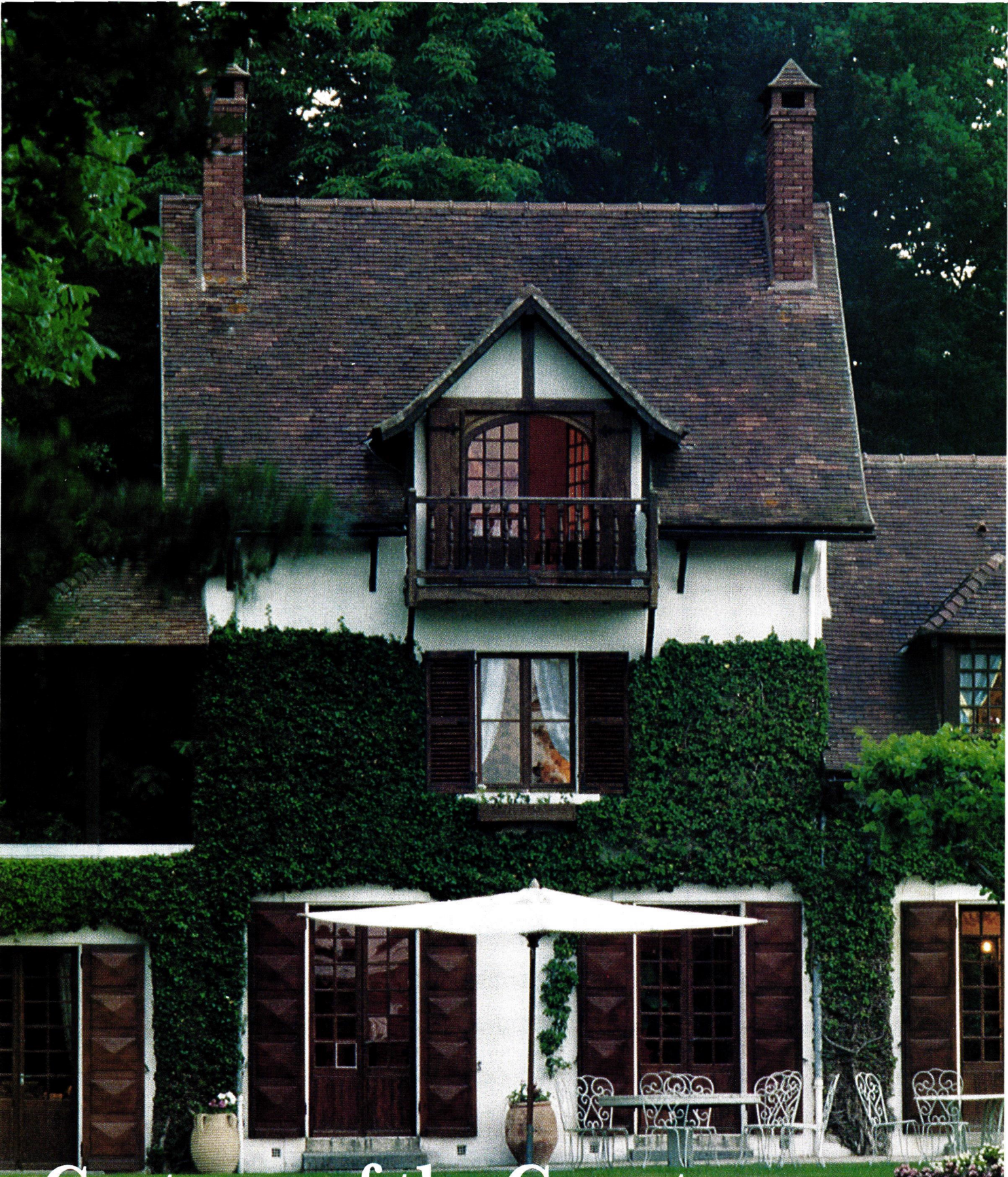
Navajo rugs and pots, with their dynamic colors and designs, also have long appealed to this collector. Some of them were purchased on New Mexico's San Ildefonso Pueblo, an adobe settlement in the high mesas above the Rio Grande. There, too, he discovered the work of Maria Martinez, whose black-on-black pots are prized for their perfect shapes and well-executed designs. "I've always loved things that were made extremely well, that reflect individual creativity," says the collector.

Despite all this, the family regularly escapes to its 450-acre farm in New England, home to a herd of sixty-five Belted Galloway cattle. The enormous beasts, distinguished by a white belt around their middles, come from the rugged mountains of southwestern Scotland and are perfectly suited for the rough northeastern terrain.

Whether in Chicago or on the farm, Jehu observes, these are essentially private people, for whom "home is the center of their universe." The businessman, collector, and sometime farmer doesn't disagree. Although he and his wife have been known to attend a few dazzling parties, that circuit just isn't for them. "When you're into cows," he explains, "there's no time for socializing."

Things worked out well for this relocated family on the North Shore of Chicago. "Ron took what was us and organized it in a way that looks great," says the collector. "It's not that any one of our collections is world-class," he adds modestly, "it's the composition." ♠

Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

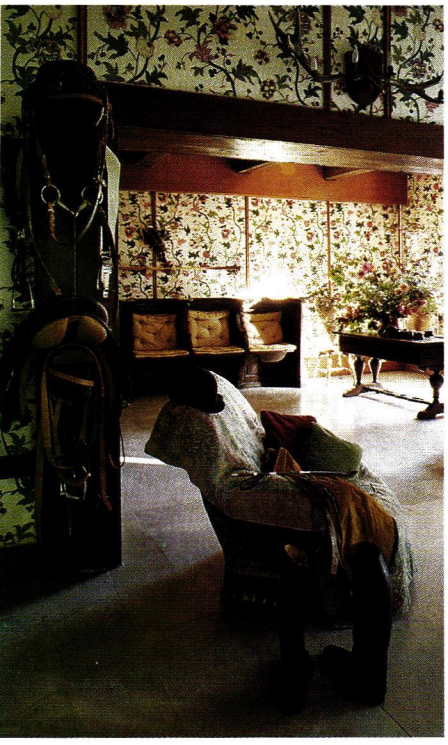


Customs of the Country

Three generations of Porthaults tuck themselves into their country estate outside Paris. By Christopher Petkanas

Photographs by Alexandre Bailhache

The main house at Les Éolides, *opposite*, the country estate of Marc and Françoise Porthault, once belonged to Marc's great-grandfather. *Below:* Marc and his granddaughter, Albane. Details see Resources.



When the radar is down on the autoroute de l'ouest, it is possible to leave your flat in the center of Paris at twelve thirty and arrive at Les Éolides, the 600-acre estate of Marc and Françoise Porthault southwest of the capital, in time for lunch at one. Thirty seconds into the first course and it is heart-eningly clear that the first family of French luxury bed, table, and bath linens are voluptuaries on the same order as their boldfaced clients. The Porthaults have supplied parures—two sheets, two pillowcases, and a duvet cover—to such people as European diplomats, East Asian sultans, African potentates, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis when she was first lady, and Aristotle Onassis when he launched the *Christina*.

"The story of our family and firm is like a novel," says Marc Porthault. At the turn of the century, while most French girls stayed well at home practicing the piano and laying papier de soie between the items of their eventual trousseaux, his mother, Madeleine, undertook studies and exams. At eighteen she began working for the Parisian couturière Maggy Rouff and immediately was sent to the United States. There she criss-crossed the country by train, seeing to the French dress needs—designing, selling, taking measurements—of private American clients.

Back in Paris, Madeleine fell in love with Daniel Porthault, a supplier to Rouff who had his own silk lingerie company. "We're both going to stop what we're doing," she told him, "and go into the business of household linen. I know a lot of people in America." Among their first clients were the Fords and the Mellons. Madeleine took their custom orders on twice-yearly selling trips and, when they visited Paris, in their suites at the Plaza-Athénée and the Ritz.

Louis XV boiserie, cotton and silk curtains, and silk cushions in the salon, *top*. The coffee table holds Porthault's printing blocks from the 1930s. *Center left:* Porthault's design for wall fabric was inspired by an 18th-century motif. *Center right:* The Porthaults' grandson, Hugues, in the game room. *Left:* The farm table is set for a hunt dinner with a cotton batiste cloth designed in 1985 by Marc Porthault. *Opposite:* A 1965 four-leaf clover design covers the Louis XIII breakfast table.

Everyone comes together for meals, then scatters to walk, ride, run

The house records the history of Porthault from its founding in 1925

Marc Porthault designed the tulip print in the bedroom, *above*, of their daughter, Edwige, in 1986; the oak desk and chair are Louis XV. Porthault fabric on Albane's Louis XV–style chair and the wall behind her, *left*, and in the bathroom, *opposite below*, was introduced in the 1930s. *Opposite above:* The blue and white crystal sconce in Diane's bedroom complements the carnation print created by Madeleine Porthault for the duchess of Windsor.

"If my family had been couturiers, they would have been much better known—the Cardins, Diors, and Riccis of their day," says Marc. "Inspired by the impressionists, my parents made the first printed sheets in the world. Before they introduced bed linens and tablecloths with color and pattern, no one had ever thought beyond white embroidered with their own initials."

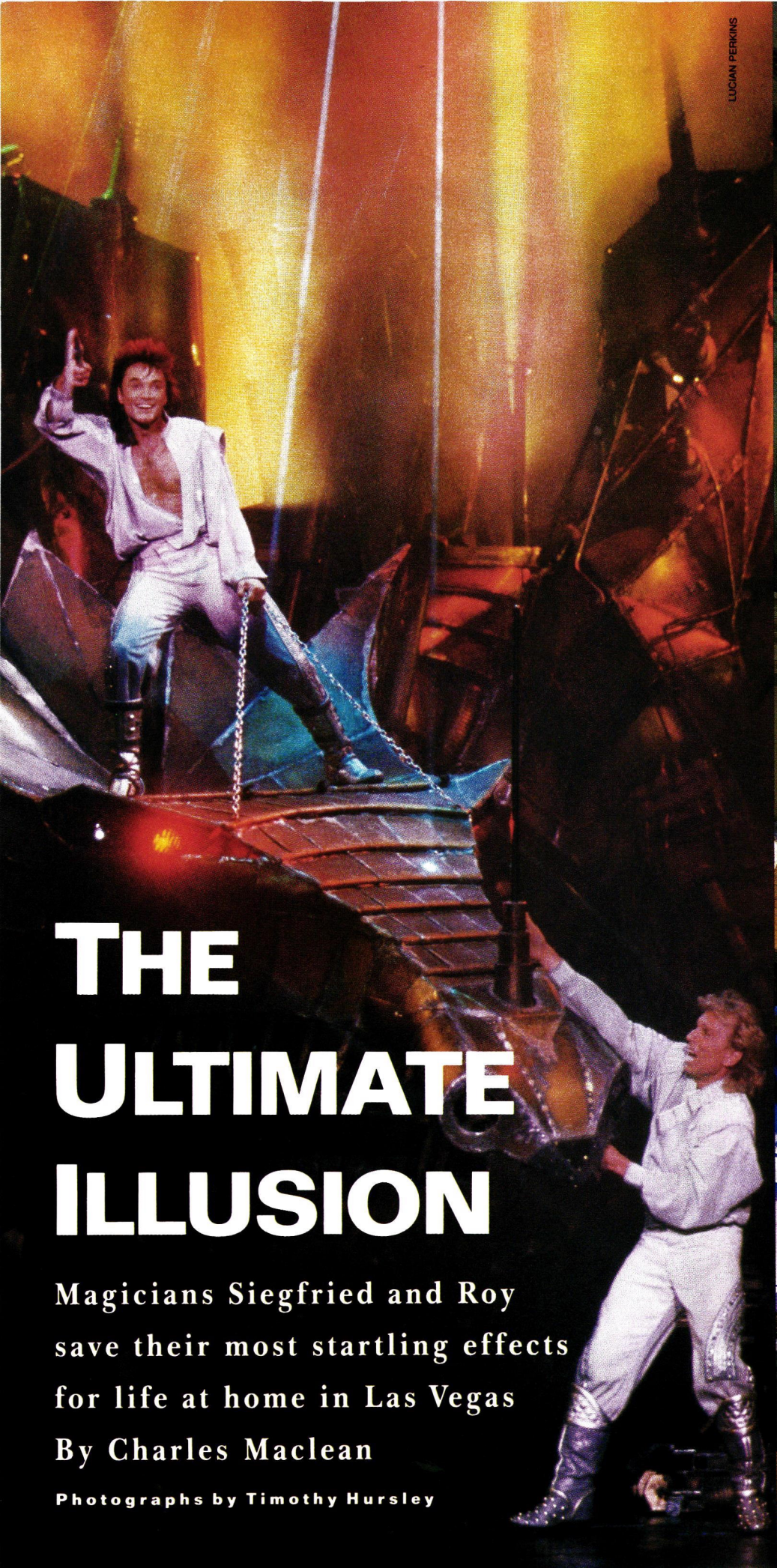
Les Éolides is situated on the rim of the Rambouillet Forest where, emulating the French kings, government ministers still hunt stag on horseback. While wheat and oats are cultivated on the estate, the Porthaults also raise sheep and small game. Ringed by huddled stands of beech, poplar, and hornbeam, Les Éolides is a flat sprawling compound of four houses belonging to an assortment of Porthault children and relations. Marc and Françoise occupy a winsome two-story medieval stone house. Down the drive and up the road their daughter Diane and her young brood claim the principal residence, begun in 1780. This is the buzzing hub around which all the other houses—satellites, they call them—orbit. Everyone comes together for meals, then scatters to walk, ride, run, garden, bicycle, read,

draw, nap, pick currants, muck out the stables, do odd jobs, go antiquing, cut the grass, swim, play tennis, make jam, hunt, or fly. (In the summertime, Marc pilots a Cessna six-seater on day trips to Deauville and Le Touquet, landing on the same improvised airfield that was used by General Patton's troops during the expulsion of one of Bismarck's grandsons from Les Éolides at the time of the liberation.)

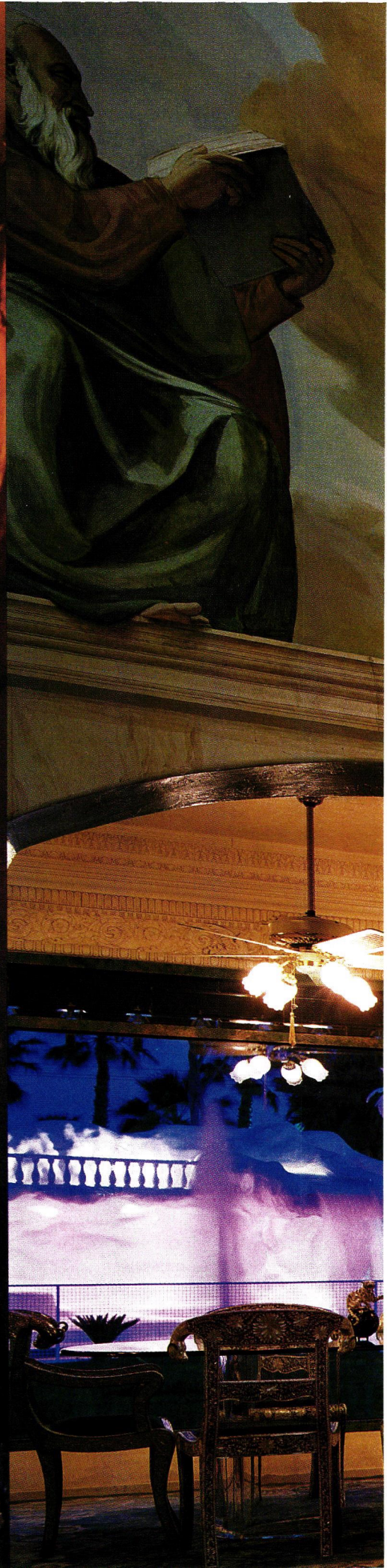
"There have been Porthaults in this part of France since the fourteenth century," says Marc. "The main house, which was nothing more than a small farm at the start, belonged to my great-grandfather. Our life at Les Éolides is very rustic, very campagnard. When I greeted you this morning, I wasn't wearing a tie—you weren't put out were you? I plant rapeseed, shoot pheasant, keep horses. The lambs we nurse ourselves are so devoted they follow us around like dogs." Those lambs are a part of the Porthaults' daily life. Marc is never surprised to discover Françoise giving a young one its bottle in the backseat of the car as they rush toward Paris on Monday morning.

Much of the decoration in the main house has an accumulated, unselfconscious, almost accidental quality typical of French country retreats to which every generation—for better or worse, says Françoise—bequeaths a souvenir of its taste. The Porthaults, in any case, aren't the sort of people to spend much time worrying whether their handsome Louis XV boiserie and pier glasses belong under the same roof as their richly upholstered Napoleon III armchairs and Louis XIII church stalls. With riding tack spilling into every room, boar's feet fashioned into candlesticks, and antlers transformed into lighting fixtures and even table bases, the most powerful impression is one of people who are keen on horses and the hunt. Filling the bathrooms with matching wastebaskets, curtains, sinks, hand towels, floor mats, toilet seat covers, tiles, bidet covers, cotton-ball holders, and tissue boxes is something that only the makers of these amazing accoutrements could attempt with impunity.

The house records the history of D. Porthault & Co. from its founding in 1925 by Marc's parents. Carved wooden blocks from the firm's early years, when all the printing was done by hand, hang over the hob in the kitchen and fill the modern glass-topped oak coffee table in the salon. One bedroom is covered entirely in the graceful long-stemmed carnation print Marc's mother created especially for her friend the duchess of Windsor in 1955 for the nearby Moulin de la Tuilerie. The breakfast table, beneath a fluttering cotton frieze of ferns in the dining room, is laid with a cloth and matching *(Continued on page 192)*



LUCIAN PERKINS

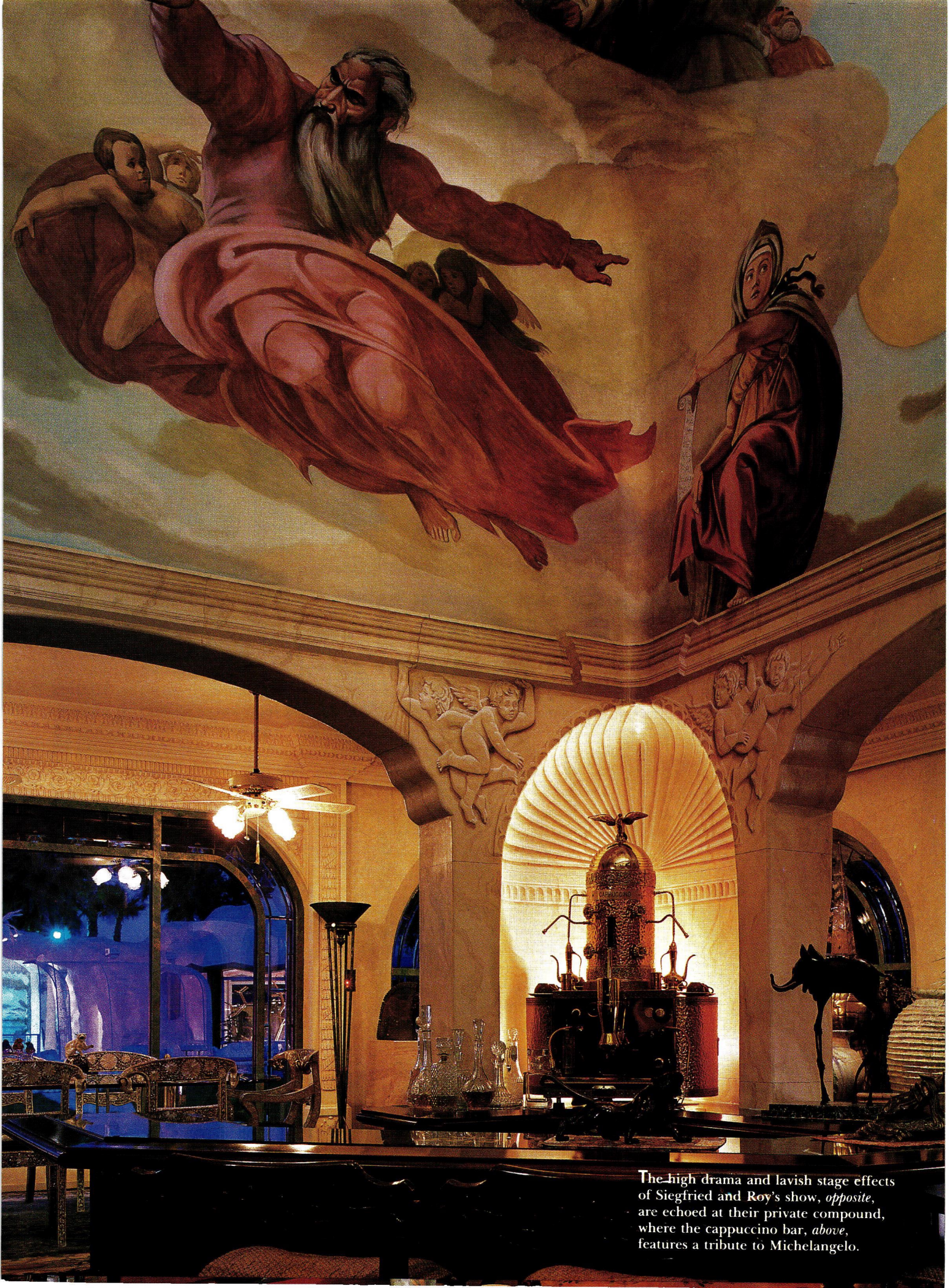


THE ULTIMATE ILLUSION

Magicians Siegfried and Roy save their most startling effects for life at home in Las Vegas

By Charles Maclean

Photographs by Timothy Hursley



The high drama and lavish stage effects of Siegfried and Roy's show, *opposite*, are echoed at their private compound, where the cappuccino bar, *above*, features a tribute to Michelangelo.

which species enjoys the greater luxury. There are three swimming pools: one for humans, one for the commoner animals, and one for the royal white tigers—though a certain amount of mixed bathing goes on. Siegfried and Roy swim with the cats most days as a way of conditioning younger animals and of staying close with old friends like Mombasa, a black-maned Nubian lion, the undisputed king of the compound.

Across the lawn from the breakfast room stands the White Tiger Habitat, a gleaming all-white environment intended to remind the tigers of their Himalayan home. "Snow cover is the natural surrounding for the white tiger," explains Roy, who designed the Habitat with a view to perpetuating this rare and endangered species. "The moment they went in there, they relaxed, they became different animals," says Siegfried, "as if the camouflage made them feel more secure." "For me," adds Roy, "nature is the greatest magician of them all." Under the palm trees, the Habitat looks like a giant block of melting ice cream. But the tigers seem contented enough, and whether it's the camouflage or the pope's holy water, they have produced record numbers of cubs with their distinctive pink noses and extraordinary ice-blue eyes.

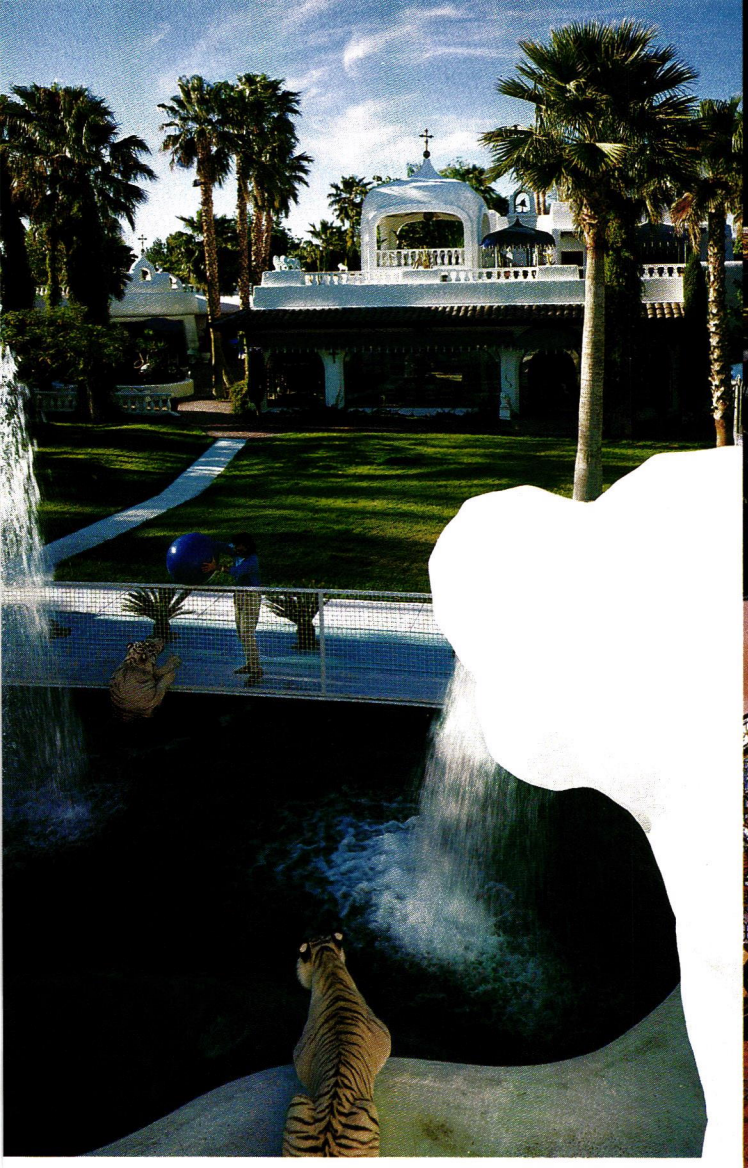
Once a gimmick, the animals are now an integral part of the magicians' lives; they, along with an unrelenting schedule of appearances, leave Siegfried and Roy little time to themselves. "You have to be round-the-clock dedicated or it doesn't work," says Roy. "Our lives are really an extension of the show and vice versa. Everything we do—the people we see, the food we eat, the house we live in—relates to our performance onstage." On the rare occasions that they entertain at the Jungle Palace, their guests tend to be other celebrities or family. The day before my visit, Michael Jackson, a devoted fan of Siegfried and Roy's since he was a kid, had been there looking at the white tigers. The next day they were expecting Siegfried's sister, a Franciscan nun who looks after disturbed children in Germany. When they need time out, the illusionists escape to their Bavarian-style chalet in the desert just outside Las Vegas to ride horses and meditate.

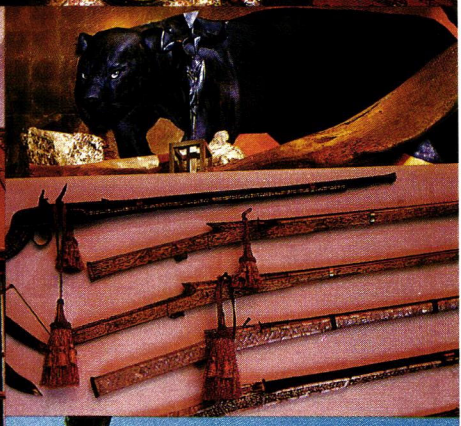
The interior of the Jungle Palace is a wildly eclectic farrago of styles. Decorators have been kept at bay. "A house doesn't mean anything unless it's a reflection of the people who live in it," declares Roy, who inherited much of the furniture from his parents in Germany. His father has never become reconciled to Roy's giving up a career in the family bank for show business. The more outrageous, eccentric half of the magic partnership, he still enjoys breaking the rules of magic and decorating. The theme of the place hovers between gemütlich and oriental. While

Roy's flamboyant taste dominates—he has a magpie instinct for collecting that makes his partner despair—Siegfried, more ascetically inclined, acts as a brake. But judging from the lavish Buddhist shrine, the bathroom full of *(Continued on page 194)*

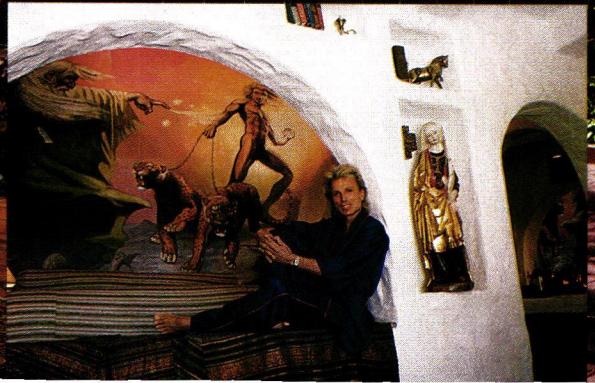
"Our lives are an extension

Roy and Siegfried, *above*, with their Great Danes. *Opposite, clockwise from bottom left:* A living room fit for a maharaja. Chairs from India. Siegfried mans the sofa while Roy and a tiger spar. The white tigers' habitat overlooking the complex. The embellished conference room. Roy's display of Indian arms. Entrance gates with the Siegfried and Roy logo. Siegfried next to his bedroom mural of Merlin. Roy and two cats in his bedroom. The birdcage of a nightingale given by the Japanese imperial family.





of the show and vice versa"



Casa Callaway

Actor-cum-decorator Thomas Callaway creates a hacienda in Brentwood

By Betsy Israel

Photographs by Oberto Gili

WHEN THOMAS CALLAWAY AND HIS wife, Claire, moved to Los Angeles from New York, "the West," he says, "the expansiveness, the style—just knocked me over."

The style especially. Callaway, a former art student who is now an actor, decorator, and furniture designer, had done the "occasional renovation-design thing" in New York. ("You're an actor," he says laughing, "you have time. Your friends have imperfect apartments.") But once in Hollywood he became entranced by the local courtyard architecture, and the "design thing" became more than occasional. These days, between callbacks, Callaway is busy "reconceptualizing" as many as five houses at once—for a celebrity clientele inspired by the Spanish colonial hacienda he carved from an unpromising 1920s vintage bungalow in Brentwood.

"The house fantasy," as actress Claire Callaway calls it, began in 1986 with the birth of their son, Catlin, "and the scramble," she says, "for

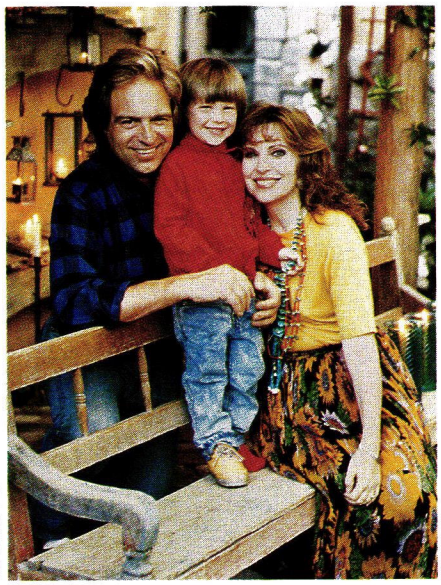
Sunlight streams through 18th-century Argentine windows in the kitchen/dining area of the Callaways' antique-filled hacienda. A converted gas lantern from New England hangs above the Mexican worktable and chairs; the painting over the adobe-style fireplace is a Spanish colonial wedding portrait. The French doors to the courtyard are from Taos, New Mexico. Details see Resources.

better everything—better space and better air." Her husband had already spent long hours—at the Ensemble Studio Theater, on the set of *Falcon Crest*—envisioning the particulars: "Old, very old Santa Barbara or Monterey, an inner court, perimeter-walled square—that's what I was seeing. But it was impossible to find something in so pure, so untouched a state on L.A.'s west side."

One day, "stomping, terribly misunderstood," from a house in Brentwood, Callaway pointed to a tiny shingle-roofed house and said, "*That* is what I want. I walked into the living room and felt something wonderfully pure and unchanging about it. I said, 'I could live in this house.'"

The owner, thrilled that someone wanted the house itself, gave the couple first shot. "We were ecstatic," says Claire. "Then I realized, my God, we've bought a dark one-bedroom house where the floors aren't even level—and with all our stuff! We'd been collecting English and American antiques for years, and I had this vision of a Spanish Victorian closet."

Tom Callaway had a slightly different vision. He pulled together a crew of twelve, including a stonemason to cut the limestone counters for the kitchen and bathrooms and a Guatemalan experienced in making authentic adobe brick. (Callaway



"I walked into the living room and felt something pure and unchanging"

needed replacements for a nineteenth-century wall still out back, a remnant of the huge Spanish colonial ranch that once comprised many neighborhood lots.) Their first task: to enlarge the 1,000-square-foot house, "keeping it," says Callaway, "in scale with the block. I didn't want one of those Santa Monica mausoleums—the huge unwieldy house crammed onto the tiny lot." He added a second floor to an old studio at the rear, a basement laundry area/nanny's quarters, and, at the front, a low-lying kitchen/dining area that opens onto an entry courtyard.

"With the courtyard," he says, "we wanted immediately to establish that sense of enclosure. You enter it and you should feel a slight surprise." Indeed, to step inside is to step, roughly, into Oaxaca: viga posts wrapped with trumpet vines shade weathered Saltillo tile and rough Spanish colonial benches. Bougainvillea snakes up the adobe walls, and the only sound is from an antique Puebla tile fountain. "The fountain is the showcase," says Callaway. "I had brought a lot of tile back from New Mexico,

In the living room, *opposite*, Callaway combines a Spanish colonial santos case from Nonesuch Antiques, Santa Monica, with a 19th-century English piecrust table and an early 19th century American portrait. The club chair is a Callaway design. *Above:* Tom, Catlin, and Claire Callaway. *Above left:* The patio fountain, with antique Mexican tiles and French spouts. *Left:* Chinese export porcelain on a Spanish colonial sideboard; the Mexican primitive is painted on grain sacks.

and one night I discovered that certain pieces seemed to form a pattern. I made the spouts from old ridge ornaments—the whole thing very much in the spirit of the house. You try to make the disparate pieces work in some larger scheme."

For the kitchen windows, Callaway used eighteenth-century Argentine frames and grilles he had dragged around for years. "At one point the pieces—*heavy* pieces—were piled up in my parking space and my new car sat on the street. Here they were among the first things to go up"—establishing a curving motif around the front and side of the house. "But finding doors with similarly rounded tops in the right period required some searching," he says. "The French doors that lead from courtyard to kitchen? Those I found, kind of buried, at a Taos garage sale."

Callaway's puzzle approach—making the beloved if unlikely piece fit—is perhaps best illustrated in the living room. At the far end, forming a sort of snapshot of the style, is a rough Spanish colonial sideboard set with demure blue and white china. It is flanked by Chippendale chairs and English tea tables, with a Mexican naive painting on grain sacks above. "When we brought out the china and the other New York stuff, I assumed very little of it would work," says Callaway. "Then we saw it in place and experienced a minor epiphany: when the Europeans came here, via Mexico, they brought European things, mixing these with primitive, more ethnic things. So what we were doing, inadvertently, was establishing true period authenticity."

It's surprisingly easy to forget that West Los Angeles is just outside

The bungalow had ended in a dark and tiny bedroom off the living area. Callaway knocked through it, adding a long skylit hallway with additional rooms and a row of French windows and doors. Now everyone, says Claire, tends to wander back along its shiny oak floors. Dinners some nights are served on the rear patio, and more than a few evenings are spent in what Callaway calls his

Trumpet vines on the patio frame the master bedroom, *above*, where Navajo rugs and pottery mingle with an English pine chest and a family quilt. *Above left:* Callaway upholstered the wing chair with an old Pendleton blanket; Navajo weavings continue the Western theme. *Left:* His grandmother's quilt covers the brass bed in the guest room; the painting is English, c. 1825. *Opposite:* Limestone counters were cut for the bathroom.

"grown-up cowboy's dream room," a den that is filled, wall to wall, with Native American and Western artifacts. The cowboy theme—"the purely fun stuff," as Callaway says—continues into the master bedroom where English pine night tables and Victorian brass lamps are juxtaposed with sheepskin throws, saddlebags, Indian dolls, an apple-picking ladder, and Navajo weavings.

The bedroom view, through a set of French doors, is considerable: a turquoise blue pool and, beyond the restored adobe wall, a neighbor's floral overflow. But from the old studio, now a guest room/office—what Callaway calls an "authentic room of my own"—it's surprisingly easy to forget that West Los Angeles is just outside. "He really built us a world within a world," says Claire, "so upstairs, to show it off, we kept putting in more windows. We really had no more room for windows. But Tom always managed. He may be a cowboy at heart. But he's a very clever cowboy." ▲ *Editor: Joyce MacRae*

The Wild Side of

Preservationists join hands with local government to save a region's precious wilderness

By Tony Hiss

Photographs by Kristin Finnegan

FLYING IN TO PORTLAND, OREGON, ON A GOLDEN afternoon a few months ago to meet with Mike Houck, the urban naturalist with the Portland Audubon Society, so much of what I could first see of the city and the region around it during the airplane's slow wide gliding turn down toward the airport seemed so breathtaking and so beckoning that for just a moment I wished we could spend the rest of the afternoon at eagle altitude—not so much for the soaring but to stay in touch with the specialness of the place spread out below us. We were looking down at two river cities (Portland and Vancouver, Washington, facing each other across a wide and mighty river—the Columbia, sometimes called the River of the West), at the confluence of two great rivers (the Columbia and the Willamette, the organizing river of Oregon's west side, connecting the state capital and the state's two biggest cities), at two huge snow-covered volcanoes (the jagged Mount Saint Helens in Washington and the smoothly symmetrical cone of Mount Hood in Oregon), and even at two shades of green—the dark green of the Douglas fir forests on the hills west of Portland and the lighter green of the tilled fields and meadows in the Willamette Valley to the south.

It's a spectacular setting for human settlements, one in which rugged grandeur and easy living are both givens—as if Alaska had the climate of England. Lieutenant William R. Broughton of the British Royal Navy, who in 1792 set down the first written description of Oregon, called it the "most beautiful landscape that can be imagined." David Douglas, the Scottish botanist who inventoried Oregon plant life on an 1825 trip to the Northwest (the Douglas fir is named for him), walked among firs that were five hundred years old and three hundred feet high. There were man-made landscapes, too: the oak savannas, wide meadows dotted with clumps of oaks that looked like an English park. These were clearings in the wildwood that had been created and kept open by Native Americans, who set periodic fires to hold back regrowth of the forest. And there was an almost overwhelming profusion of wildlife. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, who camped out in 1805 along the Columbia Slough, the slow-flowing wetlands-bordered backwaters of the Columbia River in what's now North Portland, complained that they couldn't sleep at night because of the "horrid noise" made by thousands upon thousands of cranes, swans, geese, and other waterfowl.

One of the greatest and most heart-wrenching gaps between what American cities have become and what they need to be—and will be again—has to do with the shortfall between the interrelated excellences promised by an area when you circle around it overhead and the disconnectedness and forlorn, repetitive, degraded landscapes that so often assault you when you descend and move around at ground level. "It seems to happen everywhere," said a front-page article last fall in *The Oregonian,* Portland's newspaper. "Why has Portland started to feel a lot like someplace else?" "What should be done," asked an editorial that ran less than a week later in *The Columbian,* Vancouver's newspaper, "to protect this land, its people, and the lifestyle they cherish?"

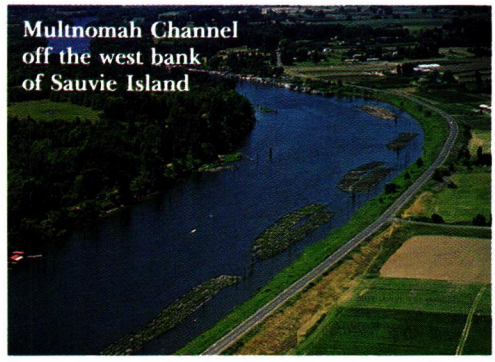
Similar questions can be found these days in newspapers all over North America, but Portlanders and Vancouverites are perhaps more fortunate than many of the rest of us because a new approach to city building is now being pioneered in their own area. Mike Houck and a gifted group of

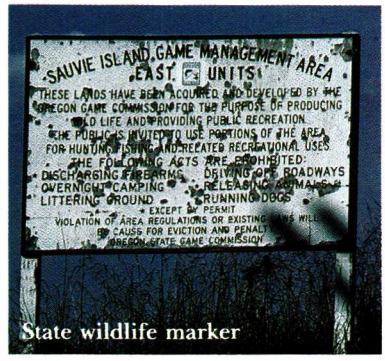
Trout thrive in Fanno Creek, five miles west of downtown Portland

Portland

A creek near Sandy River

dozens of practical visionaries from the Portland-Vancouver region—planners, geographers, biologists, parks commissioners, citizen activists, businessmen, developers, teenagers, and elected leaders—are working together to bring into being over the next five to ten years or so a major new bistate, four-county 1,000-square-mile open-space initiative, the Metropolitan Greenspaces program. Metropolitan Greenspaces amplifies the traditional nineteenth-century urban idea of parkland and recreational space by adding on a late twentieth century idea: parks where people and wildlife and native vegetation are equally at home. The region's existing park systems will be more than doubled in size by creating, as an adjunct, the country's first coordinated urban system of natural areas and wildlife refuges and reserves—linked together by hiking and biking trails and by rivers, streams, and woodland corridors that permit the migration of wildlife throughout areas already urbanized and those about to become urbanized. (Both Portland and Vancouver expect huge population increases in the next fifteen to twenty years, with Greater Portland growing from 1,470,000 to 2,000,000 people and Vancouver from 220,000 to between 400,000 and 600,000.)


Multnomah Channel off the west bank of Sauvie Island



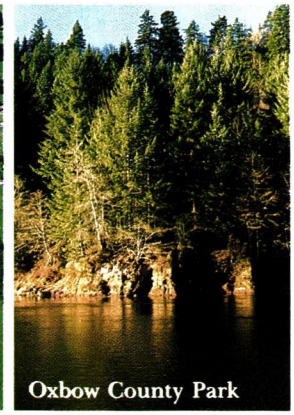
State wildlife marker

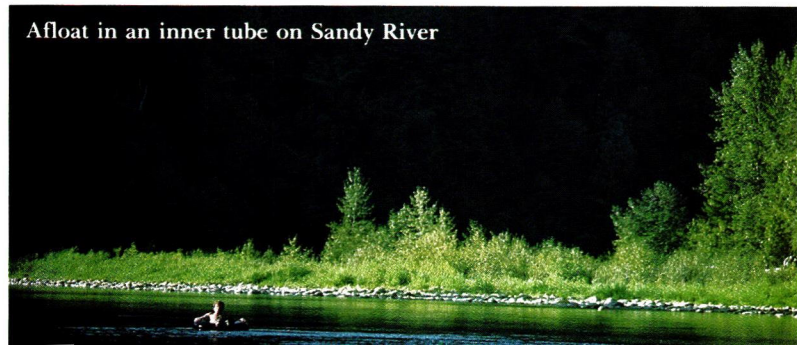
Bybee-Howell Marsh on Sauvie Island

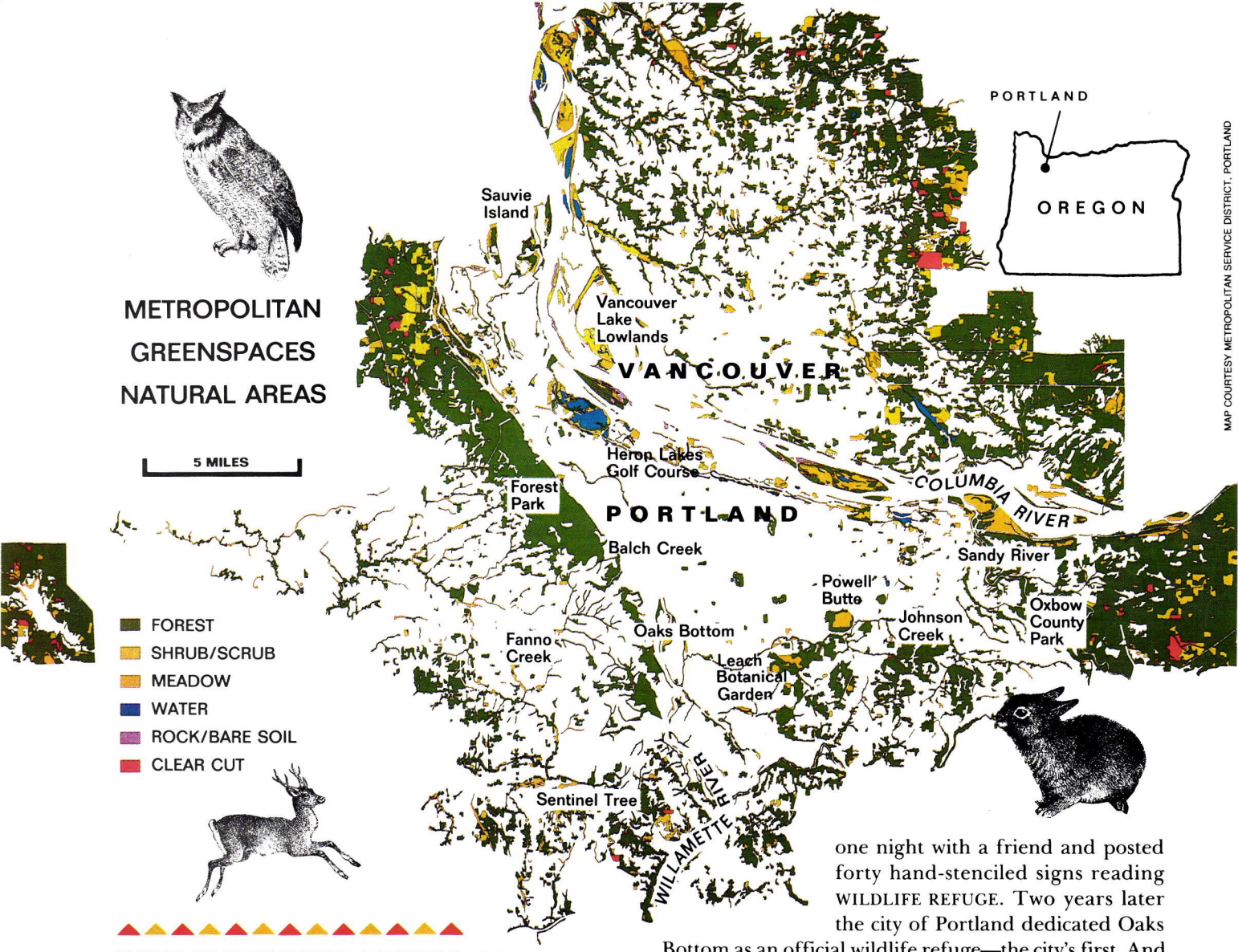
Snow geese over Sauvie Island

Metropolitan Greenspaces holds out the promise of changing the faces of Portland and Vancouver and their suburbs as well as the way that people who live there think of themselves—by reinventing the whole idea of civic cooperation. Mike Houck, the man who more than any other has helped get the whole process rolling, suddenly realized ten years ago that the sense of Greater Portland you have from a plane holds true on the ground. The original grandeur is still there, even if it has been diminished: it's just that down on the ground it's often become hard to get at or hard to see, so it *feels* lost forever. There may be an auto graveyard next to a marsh teeming with ducks and mink, or maybe access to a still free-flowing stream is blocked by an abandoned railroad line. Or another marsh, a feeding site for great blue herons in the heart of Portland, may be overlooked simply because no one has ever posted a sign saying what a treasure it is. Houck, who has a remarkable talent for nudging reality along, walked through this particular marsh

Heron Lakes Golf Course

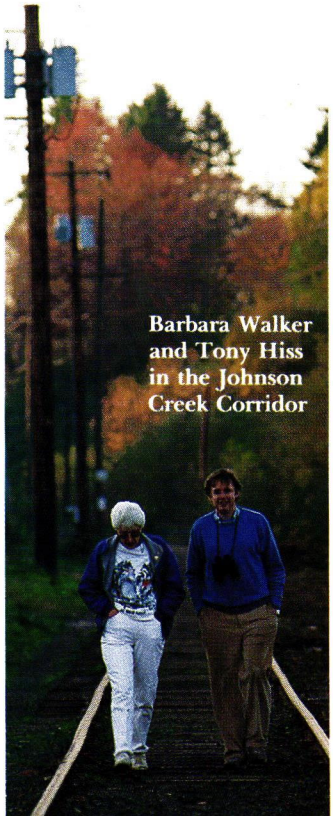

Oxbow County Park


Afloat in an inner tube on Sandy River



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

Sauvie Island As many as thirty-five bald eagles roost in a 12,000-acre wildlife area.
Vancouver Lake Lowlands Otters and beavers flourish in shallow waters.
Heron Lakes Golf Course A major heron rookery is preserved close to the seventh hole of the public links.
Forest Park Bear and elk migrate through 4,800 acres.
Oaks Bottom Great blue herons feed in Portland's first official wildlife refuge.
Leach Botanical Garden Pathways lead visitors through a variety of Northwest regional environments planted with many indigenous species.
Powell Butte Wildflower meadows, old orchards, and black-tailed deer are attractions along the nine miles of trails in Portland's newest park.
Oxbow County Park Crowds come for the October salmon festival to watch the fish spawn in the Sandy River.


Barbara Walker and Tony Hiss in the Johnson Creek Corridor

one night with a friend and posted forty hand-stenciled signs reading WILDLIFE REFUGE. Two years later the city of Portland dedicated Oaks Bottom as an official wildlife refuge—the city's first. And just east of Portland, Multnomah County has now designated the marsh next to the auto graveyard as that county's first official wildlife refuge, Beggars Tick Marsh.

One of the first efforts of Metropolitan Greenspaces has been to inventory all of its existing assets. A year-long aerial photographic mapping of the region by Joseph Poracsky and his geography students at Portland State University turned up a total of 6,480 natural sites on both sides of the Columbia River. Esther Lev and Lynn Sharp, two urban wildlife ecologists who've been conducting field surveys of a random sample of the sites on the new map, triumphantly led Houck and me on a misty morning to a forested ravine in Clackamas County, almost due south of Portland—a quiet hobbitlike landscape with trilliums, sword ferns, and lady ferns underfoot and, just above us, gray green moss drooping from gnarled tree boughs. And there, dominating all the younger trees, was a giant Douglas fir at least three hundred years old. "Sentinel Tree Nature Park!" exclaimed Houck, giving reality another nudge forward.

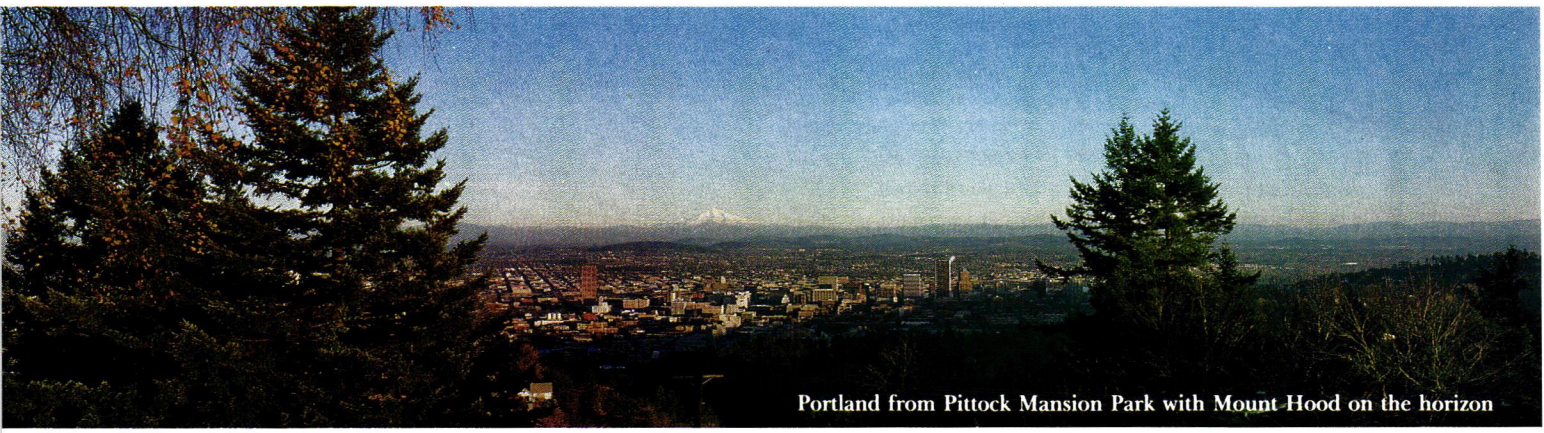
Early on, Houck also made common cause with Barbara Walker, a leader in the group finding ways to put together the Forty-Mile Loop, an early twentieth century plan to connect Portland's major parks with a trail sys-

tem, when the two of them realized that the city's remaining natural corridors and its potential trail connections were virtually the same pieces of land. Houck and Walker are still working in tandem: the city of Portland acquired the old railroad line next to free-flowing Johnson Creek for Walker's team, the Forty-Mile Loop Land Trust. As a result, the roadbed will be converted into an easily accessible trail beside a stream that's home to beaver, muskrat, pileated woodpeckers, and the belted kingfisher, which has just become the official symbol of the Metropolitan Greenspaces program.

The train-line purchase will also give new prominence to special natural areas in southeast Portland that have yet to gain a regional reputation. The railroad right-of-way, for instance, skirts the southern edge of Powell Butte Nature Park, an ex-dairy farm that's now Portland's newest city park. Powell Butte is a spectacular place—a meadow-topped and wildflower-strewn extinct volcano 620 feet high that's a hawk heaven: it has red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, and northern harriers. Habitat protection plans here include restoration of the farm's old apple, pear, and walnut orchards.

work together with their counterparts in Washington to create the full-scale regional protection program. That kind of ongoing partnership has never before been achieved in the Portland-Vancouver area, but to Mike Houck the best sign is that even people who aren't officially part of the project have already started to work toward its goal. He drove me to a new housing subdivision in Beaverton, southwest of Portland, where the developer has taken what used to be a narrow, straight farmyard ditch and turned it into a gentle, meandering wooded stream corridor three hundred yards across.

Later on Houck showed me a new corporate headquarters in Wilsonville, just south of Portland, that is surrounded by six acres of wetlands. Two thirds are man-made—because the corporation, Mentor Graphics, wants its employees to have beautiful places where they can step outside on their lunch hours. And while we looked at this infant wetland, a great blue heron flew by overhead on its way back to its rookery—serenely and effortlessly crossing most of the jurisdictions bound together in the new and experimental Metropolitan Greenspaces program in one single, arcing flight. ▲

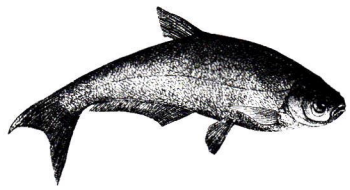


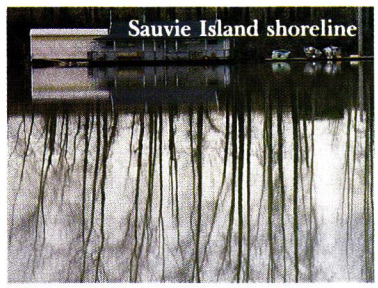
Portland from Pittock Mansion Park with Mount Hood on the horizon

Another locally treasured open space along the Johnson Creek corridor is the Leach Botanical Garden, a cool shady Hansel and Gretel–like spot, much favored by southeast Portlanders for wedding receptions, that has become a haven for indigenous plant life. A principal feature of the botanical garden is its labeled collection of native Northwest plants, many of them eminently suitable for home gardening. There's *Linnaea borealis,* for example, a diminutive ground-hugging vine with tiny pink twin tubular flowers as fragrant as violets. And the Oregon grape, *Mahonia aquifolium,* the state flower, which is not a vine but a holly-leafed shrub related to the barberry. It bears a cluster of yellow blossoms that give way to a purplish fruit that, when you add a *lot* of sugar, can be made into a delicious wine-colored jelly.

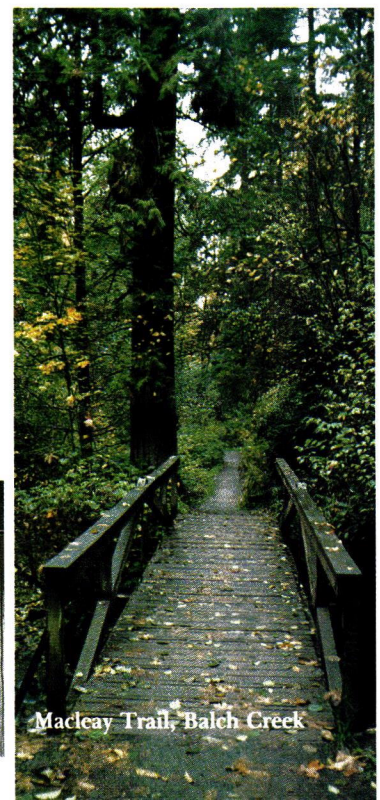
The next challenge for Metropolitan Greenspaces is to take the cooperation that has already been forged to a new level—because twenty-seven cities and counties, under the leadership of the Metropolitan Service District, an Oregon regional coordinating agency, will have to

The marsh next to a junkyard now teems with ducks and mink

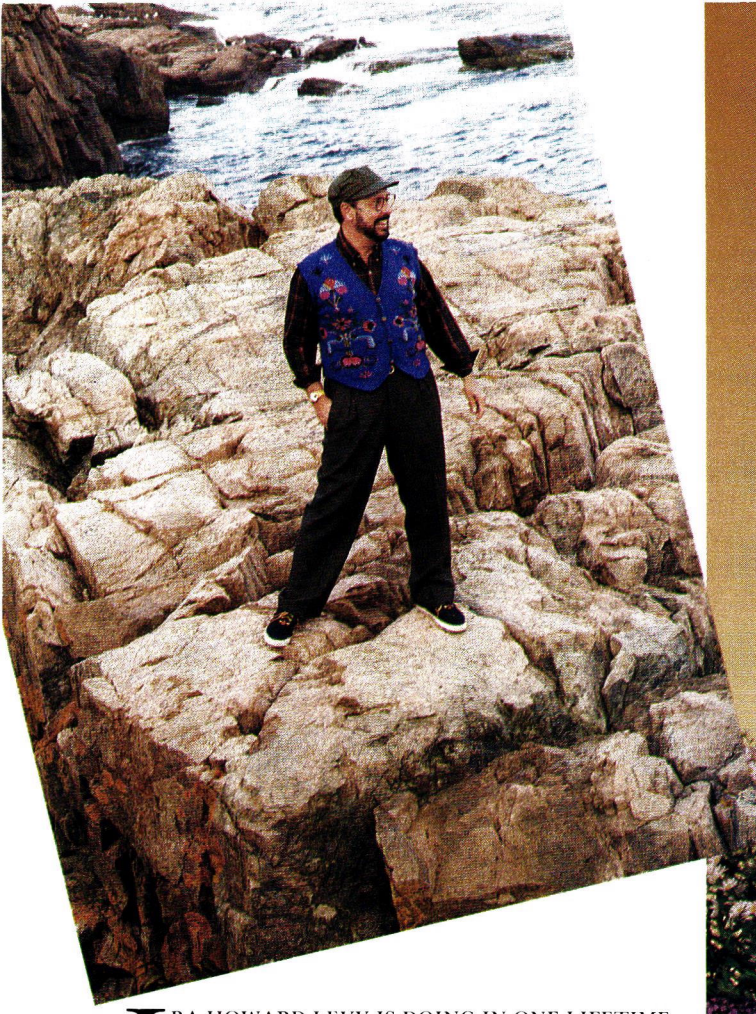




Sauvie Island shoreline



Macleay Trail, Balch Creek



IRA HOWARD LEVY IS DOING IN ONE LIFETIME what most people might accomplish in three. Not only is he in the midst of a twenty-seven-year megawatt career as senior vice president of Estée Lauder, in charge of corporate marketing and design, he also maintains a quartet of houses—one in Connecticut, a second in Arizona, another in New York, and his latest, Ocean House, on one of Maine's rocky islands. "This house in Maine is part of the satellite lives I've organized," he says. "Each life gives me a different outlook. It enriches me as a private person, but it also benefits what I do professionally. It gives me exposure to different ways of life." Levy says his contributions to Origins, Lauder's newest company, emanate from his Maine experience.

Energetic, articulate, and knowledgeable, Levy never makes a commitment to build or buy a house until he has spent some time visiting its environment. His decision to settle permanently is neither arbitrary nor whimsical. Each house, he insists, has evolved from his desire to become part of that place he has visited and fallen in love with. "In other words," he explains, "I never choose to build a house. I love the place first, and gradually I become immersed in the life there, the vernacular of the place—the vegetation, the gardens. Then, I feel I want to be a part of it." Here, it seems, is

Ira Howard Levy, *opposite top*, near Ocean House, *opposite bottom. Below:* In the living room, a Mies Barcelona table and a sofa upholstered with rag rugs. Guatemalan awning fabric is on the cushions. Details see Resources.

Dacha in Maine

Ira Howard Levy reaffirms his Russian roots on a rugged island off the coast. By Wendy Goodman Photographs by Oberto Gili

The design of the house is inspired by cottages of northern Russia

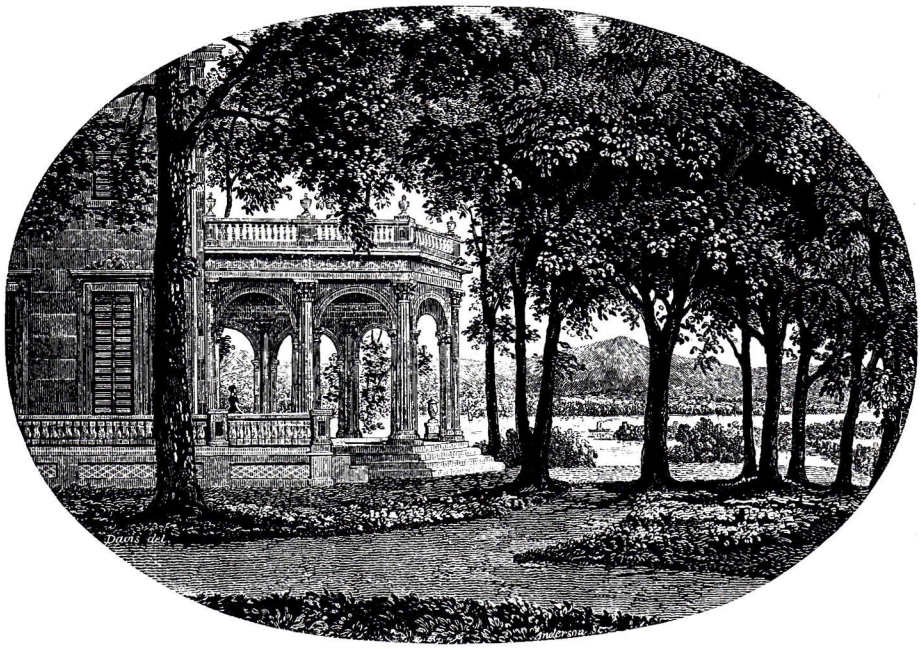
The Teddy Roosevelt Room, *opposite,* with antique tartans and needlework and a Buffalo plaid cashmere lap rug, a gift from Estée Lauder. *Top:* Irish chairs and a Maine pie safe in the dining room. *Above:* A first-class deck chair from the Cunard Line's *Queen Mary*; the Abercrombie & Fitch touring canoe is from the 1920s.

the point of no return for Levy, and the fail-safe cue that another house is on the horizon.

Building from the vernacular of a particular setting is a passion for Levy. "I'm a frustrated nonarchitect. Had I to do it all over again I would be an architect, there's no question. So the houses are my way of expressing myself on a big scale." Although not the architect—Ocean House was designed by Roc Caivano—Levy becomes involved on all levels of their design. "As a client, I'm both a blessing and a curse," he adds. Perhaps so, but one senses here a perfectionist whose visions of the look and function of a house are cultivated by an enthusiasm fueled by research.

Ocean House is most unusual, its design inspired not only by Levy's Russian roots but also by his firsthand knowledge of the simple wooden eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cottages of northern Russia. "I wanted to build a house that was like a Russian shingle-style dacha. If they were still building them today, perhaps they would look something like this. It's not post or neo anything—nor is it a reproduction of a McKim, Mead & White cottage. The light in Maine is very much the same as the light north of Leningrad, and so are the *(Continued on page 192)*

In the guest bedroom, an antique kayak paddle, an American federal mahogany chest, and a photograph of Levy and Raisa Gorbachev during her visit to the Estée Lauder office in New York in 1988.



Hudson River Manor

A LONG LINE OF LIVINGSTONS LEFT THEIR MARK ON A FEDERAL HOUSE AND ITS GARDENS

BY MARTIN FILLER Photographs by Langdon Clay

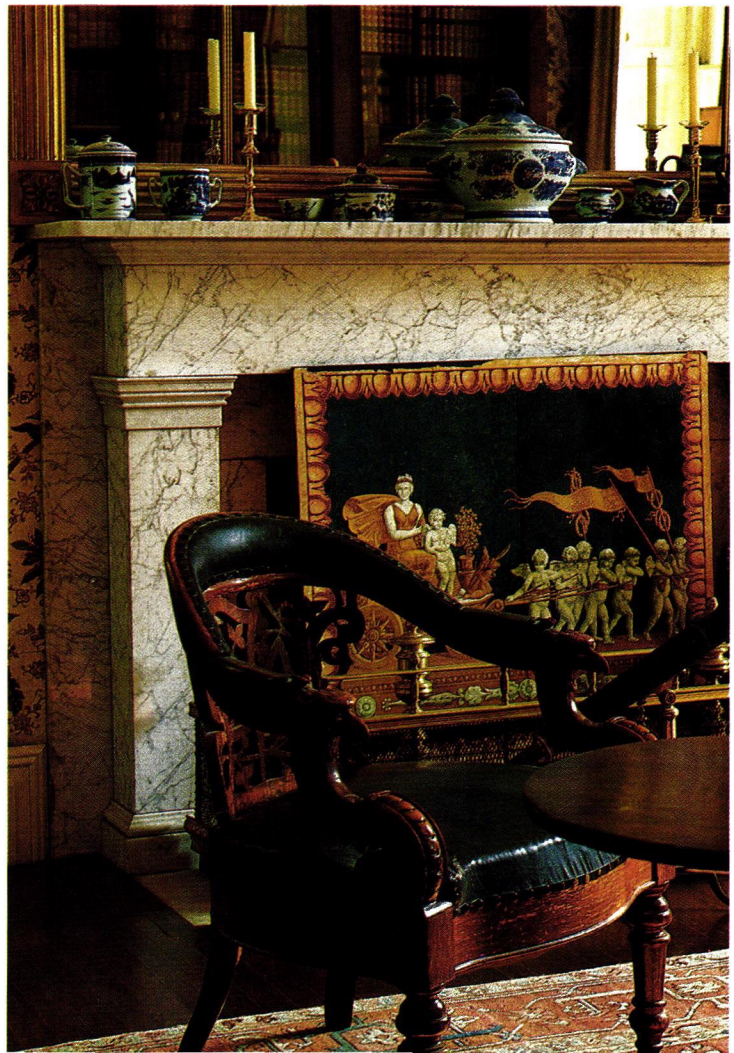
Montgomery Place, built 1804–05. East portico, *above*, added 1863. *Opposite below:* East entry façade. *Opposite above:* Alexander Jackson Davis woodcut of his north pavilion, added 1842–44.

WHEN THE UNITED STATES WAS YOUNG, ITS dearth of historic monuments and architectural grandeur mattered little to most travelers because the land itself possessed such astonishing beauty. No region of America excited more admiration than the Hudson River valley, the natural wonders of which surpassed even the fabled Rhine. By the early nineteenth century, New York State's majestic waterroad was lined with the nation's most splendid country seats, which proliferated as New York City's commerce grew and its population prospered. Thus the houses of the Hudson underwent an essential transformation. More and more farming estates became leisure retreats from the metropolis, and with that shift came a very different way of viewing nature and man's place in it.

No evidence better illustrates that change than Montgomery Place, one of the most fascinating and yet least known of great American houses. Built at what today is Annandale-on-Hudson, a hundred miles north of New York City, it remained home to the Livingston family and its descendants from the time Thomas Jefferson was president until only five years ago, when it was bought intact (albeit run-down) by Historic Hudson Valley, the preservation organization that owns four other landmarks. Opened to the public in 1988, Montgomery Place is a vivid record of continuity in which the presence of the past was always honored. Its dense accretions of architectural, interior, and landscape design commissioned by successive generations never completely obscured earlier stages, making it possible for us to see the house and its grounds as tracing a privileged and cultivated way of life across almost two centuries.

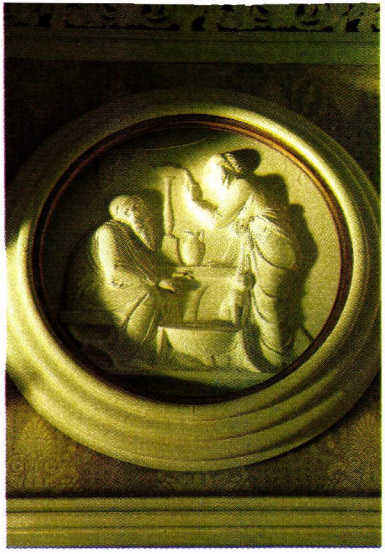
The Livingston dynasty's sense of destiny came from control of land. At its peak it owned 160,000 acres of the Hudson River valley. At its heart was Clermont, the fam-

At Montgomery Place, the presence of the past was always honored



In the parlor, *opposite*, a French Empire porphyry urn, original wallpaper, c. 1850. *Above right:* Portraits of Chancellor Robert Livingston, by Gilbert Stuart, and Coralie Livingston Barton in the dining room. *Right:* Chair, c. 1876, of oak from New York house where Washington lived. *Above:* Overlooking the Hudson River valley, a romantic rustic gazebo in a watercolor vignette by Alexander Jackson Davis, 1847.

CENTER LEFT: FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY, HYDE PARK, NEW YORK



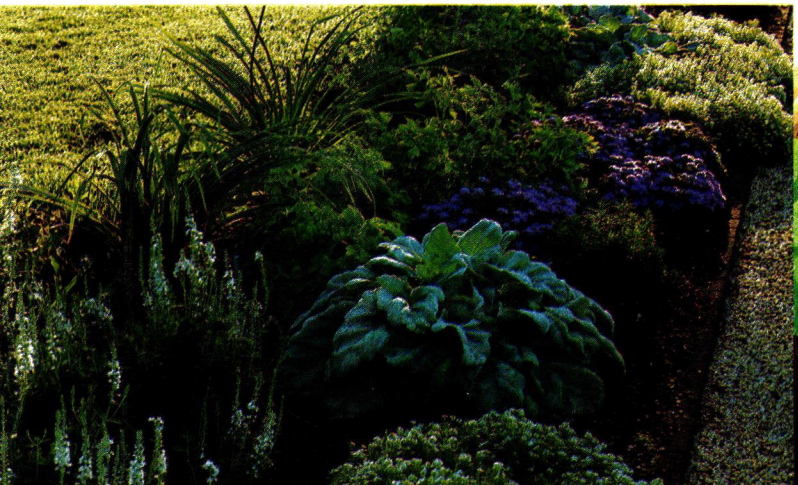
Details of Montgomery Place. *Clockwise from top left:* Empire console, Gothic revival chairs in the entry hall; overdoor roundel; a marble caryatid console; Vieux Paris vases; west terrace facing Hudson; Argand lamp on New York Empire sideboard; A. J. Davis watercolor of the west façade, 1847; peaches in orchard; 19th-century wallpaper border; garden border.

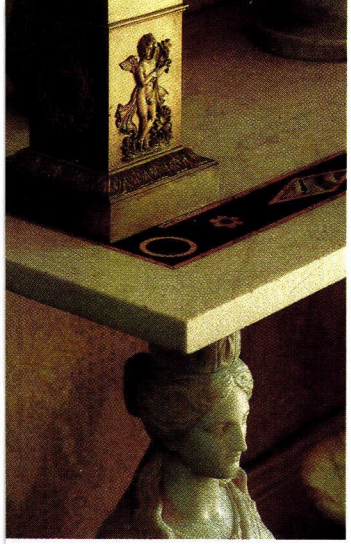
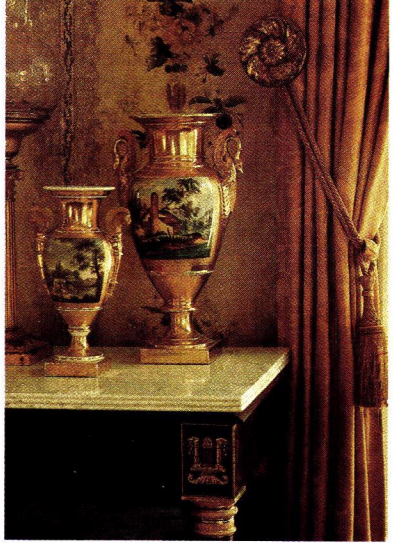
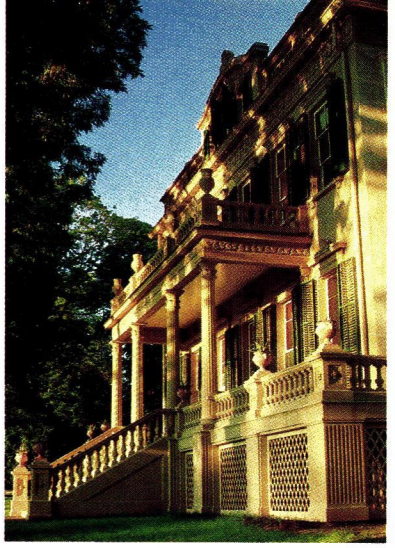
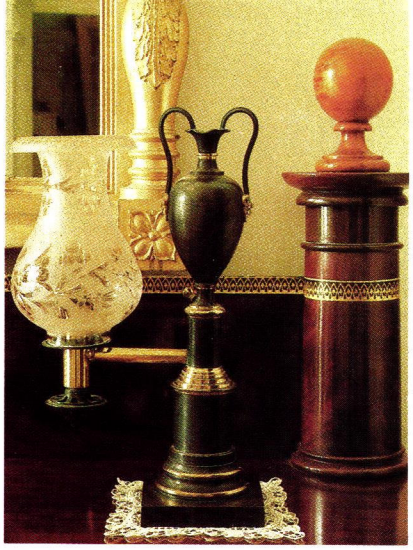
ily manor house where Janet Livingston was born in 1743. Married to and widowed by General Richard Montgomery, a revolutionary war hero, she was nearly sixty when she decided to establish a riverside estate for a favorite nephew. She bought a 242-acre farm on the eastern bank south of Clermont and in 1804–05 erected a fine house that she grandly called Château de Montgomery. Alas, her nephew died before she did, and upon her demise in 1828 the property passed to her much younger brother, the politician and diplomat Edward Livingston.

Secretary of state and later U.S. minister to France under Andrew Jackson, Edward Livingston loaded up on luxury items for his country house during his posting in Paris. Among the elegant treasures he brought home were a monogrammed porcelain dinner service and cut-glass stemware engraved EL; other French embellishments include a set of Empire mahogany dining chairs and settee, crystal and ormolu chandeliers, ormolu-mounted porphyry urns, gilded Vieux Paris vases, and hand-blocked wallpapers. Although he changed its name to the more democratic Montgomery Place, he nonetheless made the erstwhile château more French than ever. After Livingston's death his widow, Louise, and their only child, Coralie Livingston Barton, turned their attention to improving the extensive surroundings of the house. In the 1840s both mother and daughter came under the spell of the new romantic movement in landscape design that had begun to flourish in the Hudson River valley, and soon they became patrons of its leading exponent, Andrew Jackson Downing of Newburgh, New York.

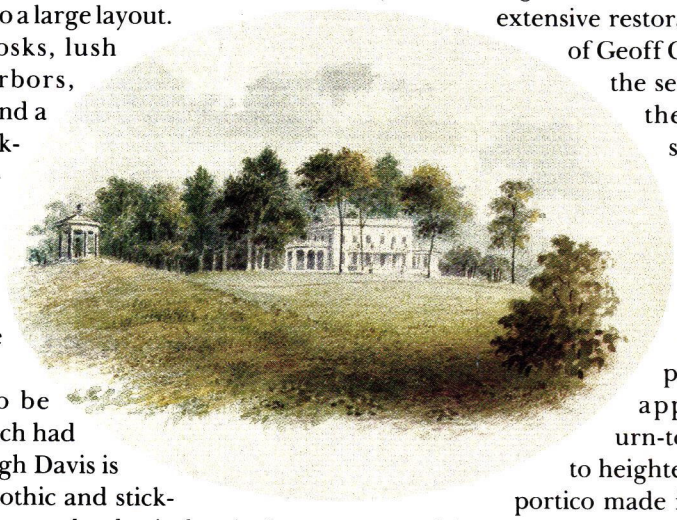
A young nursery owner and garden designer, Downing was introduced by a neighbor of the Livingstons' to a like-minded New York City architect, Alexander Jackson Davis, author of the 1838 country house pattern book, *Rural Residences*. Those two kindred spirits immediately took to one another, and thereby one of the most memorable collaborations in nineteenth-century design was formed. Though full of ideas, Downing (who wrote the first important American text on landscaping in 1841 and the immensely popular pattern book *The Architecture of Country Houses* in 1850) was neither a draftsman nor a builder. With Davis, however, he was able to bring his most ambitious concepts to fruition. At Montgomery Place, Downing and Davis had ideal conditions for their work. First, Janet Livingston Montgomery had chosen the land very well indeed, with its spectacular views across the Hudson to the Catskill range. Its handsome plantings—especially a grove of towering black locusts that acts like an arboreal colonnade facing the river to the west—and breathtaking panoramas make it still possible to experience, as Downing wrote, "a profound feeling of completeness and perfection in foregrounds of old trees, and distances of calm serene mountains."

> The architect and landscaper joined forces to create one of the most memorable collaborations in nineteenth-century design



Downing advised on ways to bring the estate, by then almost forty years old, more into accord with the emerging taste for drama, surprise, and sentiment in landscaping. But as with the English picturesque school of garden design that so captivated the Americans, nature needed a certain degree of coaxing to attain the seemingly spontaneous vistas, glimpses, and punctuation points that impart both variety and unity to a large layout. Downing's undulating bosks, lush flowerbeds, secluded arbors, stands of shaggy conifers, and a twiggy "rustic seat" overlooking the river were tied together with his judicious cuts made through the woods to incorporate distant scenery into the inviting ambit of his intimate garden closeups.



Something also had to be done with the mansion, which had come to look dated. Although Davis is best remembered for his Gothic and stick-style cottages, he also did noteworthy classical revival designs, and it was in that mode that he remodeled Montgomery Place. The proportions of the old federal-style house were classical, but it lacked sufficient ornament by prevailing mid-century standards. Davis thus gave the structure a veritable frosting of florid detail—aswirl with scrolls and shells, robust rosettes, bold balusters, generous garlands, and sturdy urns—that bore the swelling outlines of classicism edging into early Victorian design.

Davis also made an extension to each of the house's four exposures. Between 1842 and 1844 he built the north pavilion, a graceful veranda offering cool outdoor shelter in summer months; the canopied west terrace, opening from the parlor and the dining room onto a sublime prospect of river and mountains; and the single-story half-octagonal south wing (today undergoing extensive restoration under the supervision of Geoff Carter). In 1863 Davis added the semicircular east portico over the front door, a scheme inspired by the so-called Temple of Vesta at Tivoli and enhanced by his buff-colored sand-painted finish imitating the look of stone. But the proportions of the facade then appeared displeasing, and the architect appended a balustrade and urn-topped panel on the parapet to heighten the composition after the portico made it seem too squat. Through trial and error Davis created a very personal contribution to America's continuing classical tradition.

The Livingstons always had a sense of their importance and through the years rarely discarded anything that might illuminate some bit of family history. There were 60,000 documents found in the basement when the last inheritors moved out in 1985, and the attic is still filled with everything from antique clothing to mint-condition remnants of nineteenth- *(Continued on page 194)*

CENTER: FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY, HYDE PARK, NEW YORK

The north pavilion of Montgomery Place is rich with classical ornament, including a cast of Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen's bas relief *Day*.

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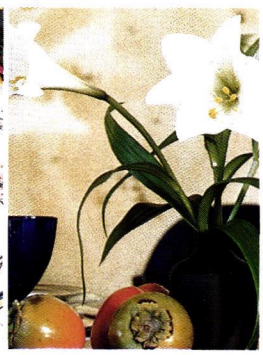
CLASSIC DESIGN

Ever since tastemaker Constance Spry revolutionized floral chic in the 1930s by tossing out wired stems in favor of a loosely handled natural arrangement, possibilities in flower design have been as limitless as patterns of chintz. Here, a range of bouquets plucked from HG photo shoots displays some fresh ways flowers are showing their colors. The exuberant mop-headed sunflower, a farm staple now widely cultivated in California and Holland to satisfy urban demand, is the bloom of the moment—lending cheer to both rustic and sophisticated settings. The latest rose fashions call for abundant short-stemmed clusters that show off the buds to full advantage. (Rose petals have also been spotted strewn on

HG picks the best crop of flower arrangements

BY AMY TARAN

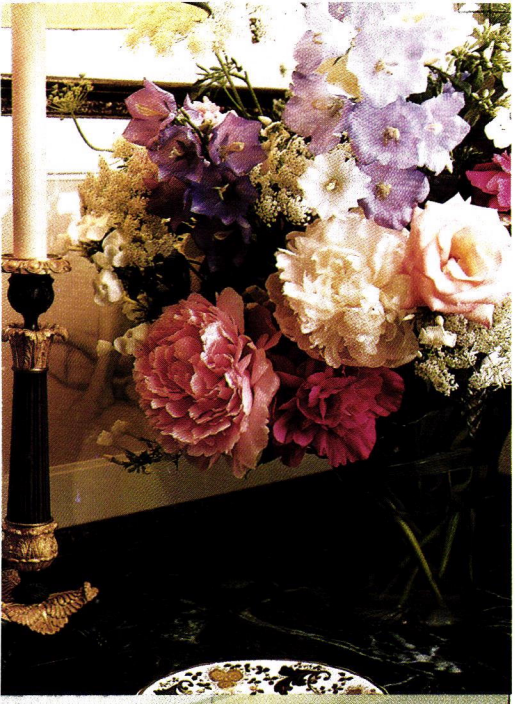


Yellow daffodils add spark to a bouquet of lilacs, *above*, by Very Special Flowers, NYC, in a crystal bud vase by Hoya. *Far left:* A basket brimming with wildflowers colors a warm-weather table. *Center left:* A cobalt glass vase anchors two long-stemmed lilies. *Left:* Against a découpage screen, a trio of full-blown cabbage roses cluster in a turn-of-the-century silver overlay vase. Details see Resources.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: DAVID FRAZIER; OBERTO GILI (3). BACKDROP: MONICA STEVENSON

great ideas

great ideas



tables in lieu of formal arrangements.)

And the lily, a symbol of purity said to have sprung from the tears of Eve, is the modernist's perennial favorite.

Pairing these flowers with the right vases is simply a matter of making innovative use of objects at hand. Current containers of choice range from stone garden urns bearing weathered patinas to classic crystal goblets. And figural mugs have recently been discovered as the perfect forms for creating floral coifs. ▲

Editor: Carolyn Sollis

On the bright side. ***Clockwise from top left:*** **A vase full of peonies, campanulas, roses, and wildflowers lights up a console; French tulips, snowballs, and a lily create a heady mix in a Toby jug; sunflowers radiate in a kitchen corner; fragrant lily of the valley spills over the edges of a goblet; a posy of miniature roses is punctuated with grape hyacinths; a tole pot on a library table contains billowing hydrangea; poppies and sweet peas burst out of an urn against faux stone.**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DAVID FRAZIER; MONICA STEVENSON; DAVID FRAZIER; TIM STREET-PORTER; WILLIAM WALDRON; DAVID FRAZIER; WILLIAM WALDRON; JOSHUA GREENE

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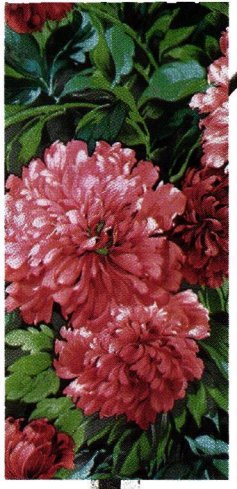

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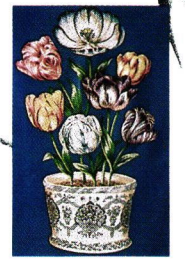

10

Fresh picked florals. **1** Pont Aven from André Bon. **2** Ophelia from Fonthill. **3** Serendip from Manuel Canovas. **4** Vendôme from Yves Gonnet. **5** Katmandu Ribbons from Summer Hill. **6** Mafalda from Brunschwig & Fils. **7** Les Bouquets from Brunschwig & Fils. **8** Le Mans from Coraggio Textiles. **9** Camilla from Zumsteg. **10** Tulip Bowl from Clarence House. Details see Resources.

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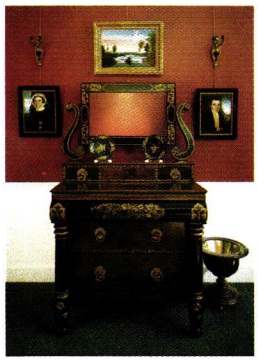

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Dacha in Maine

(Continued from page 172) gardens and vegetation. The look of the house and its green and gold palette are very much influenced by that. The walls, the color of deep parchment, are important because in Russia you never have white walls. Long winters are warmer with softer colors.

"The rooms are decorated with contemporary and folk furnishings, the kinds of things I like," Levy continues. "The only place I have bowed to tradition is in what we call the Teddy Roosevelt Room where both the colors and the furnishings are typical of Maine's cottage era."

The area has a long and successful history of boatbuilding, and the available carpentry and craftsmanship, both of which incorporate local traditions and aesthetics, are outstanding. Levy's master craftsman, Joe James, executed his tasks with precision. The gold leaf on the columns of Ocean House was applied by Alice Smith, who also does gilding on yachts.

Levy and his landscape architect, Patrick Chassé, agreed that the grounds, too, should be reminiscent of nineteenth-century rural Russia. To accomplish this, Chassé, using only materials indigenous to the rugged Maine island, created a birch grove that surrounds the house. The Russian influence is clear in the pine-needle paths and the numerous birches, which form a strong contrast to the rich colors of the house. The lowbush blueberry, a plant that is virtually synonymous with Mount Desert's famous Acadia National Park, together with cinnamon ferns, moss, and local pink granite boulders complete the overall natural effect. The landscape, although painstakingly designed, achieves the look of an unspoiled forest clearing for a cozy, elegant house.

Never one to rest on his extensive laurels, Ira Howard Levy is obviously attached to his ever-expanding satellite lives. "Next I'd like to build a house in the Sonoran Desert," he muses, a certain gleam in his eye. The blueprint seems to appear, miragelike, before he has even finished speaking. ▲

Country Customs

(Continued from page 153) Limoges porcelain decorated with the dancing four-leaf clover motif launched ten years later in honor of another of Madeleine's friends, the society novelist Louise de Vilmorin.

Marc recalls how all his early attempts to draw the clover for the projected print were rejected by his mother. "Finally," he says, "she instructed me to study Madame de Vilmorin's signature and to take inspiration from it. It was the loops I borrowed that in the end gave our design its soul, its tenderness. The clover has been copied, of course, and so have our hearts, though no one ever gets it quite right. What they miss," he concludes, "is the romance."

At the table, which is dressed for a hunt dinner with a swirling pastiche of ducks and rabbits and brass horns that Marc devised in 1985, the Porthaults are never fewer than twenty. Energetic conversation is considered more important than the observance of such rules as serving from the left and clearing from the right, and even a few raucous jokes are admitted from the restless young adults. This dining room—or salle de chasse, as the Porthaults call it—is located in a former chicken house that is now devoted especially to family and hunt meals. There's no majordomo, just a cheerful young local woman in jeans who draws the curtains and feeds the fire and cooks simple food in a kitchen recently escorted into the twentieth century. This being France, if the meal is Sunday lunch, then the roast is a leg of lamb direct from the farm and garnished with salsify and young green kidney beans napped with sweet butter.

Right now Marc and Françoise Porthault are busy selling $40,000 reeditions of Barbara Hutton's silk-satin sheets edged with Grecian maidens portrayed in antique lace. They aren't so world-weary, though, that they see their extraordinary dual lives as anything but charmed. Having earned it through a combination of inherited privilege and a wildly marketable vision of the domestic arts, the Porthaults work very hard to keep it. ▲

Farm in Flower

(Continued from page 121) his caretaker.

In moist areas and close to the house Renny is encouraging ad hoc moss gardens: "I'm going to be fertilizing with buttermilk this year." Elsewhere there is a rock garden, a kitchen cutting garden within a white picket fence, a boxwood-edged herb garden, raspberry and blueberry patches on either side of a designer chicken coop, barn-espaliered apples with their feet in pink lily of the valley, a lily garden, and a downstream garden between the goose pond and a lower pond, exuberantly banked in nepeta, yellow iris clumps, yellow-to-peach daylilies, and the showy *Miscanthus sinensis* along with other ornamental grasses.

The definitive Anglo-American features of this gentle farm garden are the two long six-foot-wide perennial borders that run between two barns and two pastures and frame the fountain pool like a distant illusion. From afar you exclaim, "Aha! Classic Anglophile herbaceous borders. Very post-Jekyll." And sure enough, their creator adds, "They're all in pinks, lavenders, grays, and whites. There's no orange, yellow, shocking red. It's all relaxing colors, including the foliage. Lots of silvery foliage—artemisia, santolina, caryopteris, lamb's ears, thyme."

But while Renny concedes that English themes run through his garden, he stresses its Americanness. "It's not like English walled gardens. I didn't want hedges. It's not a sequence of different rooms like Sissinghurst. I don't have anything you can't see over. The openness tends to feel more American. And," he says proudly, "I have weeds in my perennial borders. I've had lots of noted gardeners complain about the weedy things—boltonia, baptisia, lythrum. I couldn't care less. I have flowers throughout the season and that's what really matters to me, because those borders lead to the pool, which is used all summer long."

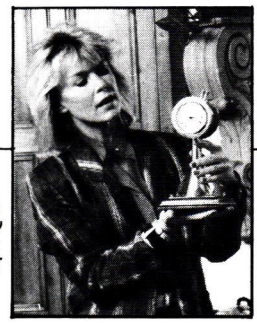
Another major part of the landscape are the animal pastures where Renny runs a foster-farm for ASPCA foundlings. Horses, dogs, geese, ducks, chickens, sheep, goats, cats, and rabbits are all, as he puts it, "an integral part of the whole setting, not merely livestock seen beyond some distant ha-ha."

The pool-fountain garden is Renny's most formal artifice, punctuated at regular intervals by tall American hollies and nearly two dozen great boxwoods, not originally intended for the farm. Renny stocked them for his new nursery, but nobody bought them. "With the houses that are being built out here in traditional styles, these boxwoods would be fabulous. But people don't get it. So they do a foundation planting of three pyramidal yews and four low ones and it looks like hell." Pale blue tropical plumbago summers in large earthenware pots at the edge of the black-bottomed swimming pool. All this formality plays off the wildflower meadow uphill from the pool—"all oranges, yellows, reds, and other bright summertime colors."

One has the sense at Renny's farm of visiting an inland island garden, a fragile rural relic at an insecure fifteen-minute remove from the interstate. Worrying about this, Renny decided in 1984 that "it would be nice to have the property live on in perpetuity, eventually going to the University of Pennsylvania Department of Landscape Architecture as a study ground." Ian McHarg, inspired ecologist, author of the environmental classic *Design with Nature,* and professor of landscape architecture at Penn, came up to the farm and for two years had his graduate classes study the property. Students variously characterized it as an "English park garden," a "gentleman's farm," and a potential center for ecological research into poison ivy and "honeysuckle eradication."

For the moment, the role of the university or other guardians in the farm's future remains undefined, though Ian McHarg has come back to visit and comment. "He's the ultimate purist," says Renny. "You can't have a straight line anywhere, and he doesn't approve of any plant if it's not native. I too want this to look as if God put everything here. But I think there are extremes." The managing genius of the place has spoken. ◆ *Editors: Senga Mortimer and Kathleen Vuillet Augustine*

For nursery hours—Renny: The Perennial Farm, 60 Thompson Mill Rd., Wrightstown, PA 18940 (215) 598-0550.



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Hudson River Manor

(Continued from page 181) century wallpapers. The interiors are in such a remarkable state of preservation largely because the house was used primarily as a summer place after Janet Livingston Montgomery's death. Shuttered and shrouded for most of the year, it was spared the dessicating effects of heating and fading from the sun. The richly decorated settings were thus able to retain period wallcoverings, curtains, and upholstery fabrics, which almost never survive in situ.

The Livingstons' appreciation of their heritage also encouraged them to keep furniture and objects long after they had gone out of fashion but well before people were aware of the value of American antiques. The rooms at Montgomery Place are therefore a marvelous mixture of historical styles, from colonial times to the early years of this century. Imposing Chinese porcelain jars and chic Parisian showpieces stand next to homely Victorian oddities and the tacky travel souvenirs of yesteryear. But all combine with an authenticity that the most perfectly coordinated restoration cannot hope to match. As the dedicated team of curators, researchers, craftsmen, and horticulturists who have taken Montgomery Place through its initial stages of conservation carry on their work, they continue to reveal an important chapter of the American past that still has much to tell the present. ♠ *Editor: Senga Mortimer*

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Ultimate Illusion

(Continued from page 158) ticking clocks and stained glass, the cappuccino bar under a copy of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, it's clear that Roy sometimes gets his way. Apart from a confessional that turns into a toilet, the Jungle Palace is free of prankish artifice. There are none of the fun-house tricks and booby traps that make magicians' houses hazardous for the unsuspecting.

In Siegfried's suite, a mural over the bed depicts Merlin handing on the "power" to a younger magician, a Marvel Comics superhero vision of Siegfried Fischbacher. His leonine, sternly Teutonic alter ego dominates the room as it does his audiences. Onstage, he's everyone's idea of what a magician should be, with a hypnotic presence that can create an air of menace. In a corner of the bedroom, Siegfried points out a wooden chest, which he slept in as a boy: "I was a strange kid, you know." A lonely introverted child growing up poor in Bavaria, he considered taking holy orders before he discovered that magic was a better way of getting the attention he craved.

In 1960, working his passage around the world as a bartender on a cruise liner, Siegfried met steward Roy Horn. Together they put on an amateur conjuring show for the passengers and, instead of the statutory rabbit, pulled a cheetah out of the hat. It was the unexpected start to a rare partnership in magic. While Siegfried concentrated on the conjuring, Roy took on training wild animals to appear (and disappear) in large-scale illusions. Although they now share each other's skills, Roy maintains "Siegfried is the mind, the power behind the magic. I just color the world." Neither magician pretends that working together has been easy. After thirty years they still see themselves as elementally opposed characters brought together by destiny. "I don't believe in coincidence," says Siegfried. "It seems it was meant to be."

Magicians have always exploited the ancient link between the desire to be entertained and the mystery-seeking side of human nature. Siegfried and Roy have never claimed to be anything more than Las Vegas entertainers, but without the audience's need to suspend disbelief, they would be as powerless to vanish a white tiger in midair as to transmute base metal into gold. If our nostalgia for a lost sense of wonder about the world has made them masters of the impossible, it has also helped a couple of former cruise ship attendants to realize the American dream, build a glittering ark, and conjure a plan to save the royal white tiger by breeding animals for release into the wild—the magicians' way of reversing the disappointment of lost illusions. ♠

Editor: John Ryman

Next Stop Nevis

(Continued from page 134) winsome "plantation house" that marries classical allusions with vernacular charm. Because in the early eighties Taft was a rising young star of a firm, well deserving of the fanfare it received as an exemplar of postmodernism, the Talbot house put Nevis on the map—at least for the architectural cognoscenti. Not incidentally, the Talbot house also put Taft Architects in the July 1982 issue of *House & Garden*, which is where Helen Olson, a reference librarian from Katonah, New York, uncovered the firm four years later while looking through back issues for inspiration. She and her husband, Lee, a retired chemical engineer, were planning to build a retreat on their vacation island of choice—Nevis. The Olsons' theory was that if Taft could do it once, Taft could do it twice.

Their second time around in Nevis, Casbarian, Samuels, and Timme (who always travel and work as a trio) were presented with a spectacular site in the foothills of Nevis Peak (altitude, 3,232 feet) and a straightforward program. As is their professional custom, the architects responded with a variety of solutions, one of which called for separating public and private accommodations in two discrete buildings: a templelike pavilion for living and dining and a tower for sleeping. The Olsons were captivated by the temple and the tower concept. So the temple and the tower it would be.

Seen in isolation, the Olson house has a somewhat flashy, look-at-me quality. Perhaps it's the red corrugated metal roof. Perhaps it's the pink and aqua X-marks-the-spot shutters. But within the context of the Caribbean in general, and Nevis in particular, Taft played comfortably inside the aesthetic boundaries of established taste. A quick drive around the island will tell you that red corrugated metal roofs are as common here as gray cedar shingles on Cape Cod, and a pink and aqua palette verges on the timid.

Taft's enthusiasm for adopting the local colors may endear the firm to proponents of the when-in-Rome school of design, but such surface embellishments are merely that. More impressive is the fact that the house's link to its locale extends beyond the eye-catching pastels and primaries. Taft's temple and tower concept is an especially fitting architectural gesture, considering this particular sweep of property situated midway between mountain and sea. The temple acknowledges the sloping land with terraced gardens, and the tower gestures up to the rising mountain with its pyramidal crown. The tie that visually binds the two structures, an open-air concrete terrace with a "Greetings from Nevis!" view, also takes advantage of the island's benign (save for the occasional hurricane) climate.

Although Taft chose humble materials with rough finishes and rudimentary—at times even primitive—details, there is nonetheless a hint of grandeur, perhaps even nobility to the house. The scale is large, the elements are big, emphatic, confident, ensuring a sense of stability and permanence. Which, considering that the house was built on a handshake for $125,000, is nothing less than remarkable. ▲

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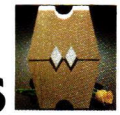

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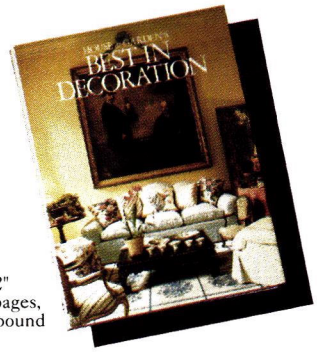

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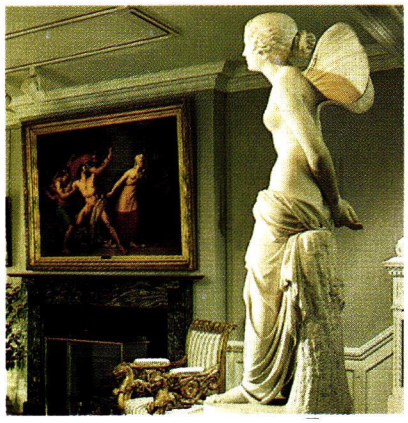

Photo: Feliciano

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Resources

ART
Pages 58, 62 For Phillip Maberry's work: Garth Clark Gallery, 24 West 57 St., NYC (212) 246-2205; 170 South La Brea Ave., L.A. (213) 939-2189.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE
Pages 70, 72 Architecture, by Burr & McCallum Architects, Williamstown (413) 458-2121.

DESIGN
Page 82 For information on Marius glasses, Valley of the Kings boxes, catalogue, and stores, call Iittala, Mahopac (914) 628-1616.

FOOD
Pages 84, 86–87 Avanzare, 161 E. Huron St., (312) 337-8056; Bice, 158 E. Ontario St., (312) 664-1474; Big John's, 1147 W. Armitage Ave., (312) 477-4400; Bishop's Chili Parlor, 1958 W. 18th St., (312) 829-6345; Café Spiaggia, 980 N. Michigan Ave., (312) 280-2764; Carson's, A Place for Ribs, 612 N. Wells St., (312) 280-9200; Carson's, A Place for Ribs, 5970 N. Ridge Ave., (312) 271-4000; Chicago Diner, 3411 N. Halsted St., (312) 935-6696; Club Lago, 331 W. Superior St., (312) 337-9444; Frontera Grill, 445 N. Clark St., (312) 661-1434; Gene & Georgetti, 500 N. Franklin St., (312) 527-3718; Gordon Restaurant, 500 N. Clark St., (312) 467-9780; Kiki's Bistro, 900 N. Franklin St., (312) 335-5454; Le Ciel Bleu, 181 E. Lake Shore Dr., (312) 951-2864; Salvatore Parrinello Ristorante, 535 N. Wells St., (312) 527-2782; Rocky's Bait Shop, 138 N. Streeter Dr., (312) 664-2792; Sole Mio, 917 W. Armitage Ave., (312) 477-5858; Tallgrass, 1006 S. State St., Lockport, (815) 838-5566; Thai-aree House, 4323 West Addison St., (312) 725-6751; Un Grand Café, 2300 N. Lincoln Park West, (312) 348-8886.

STYLE
Page 100 Silver metallic trim with pearls (JM Pearl 1), 2½" wide, to the trade at Christopher Hyland, NYC; Ainsworth-Noah, Atlanta; Fortune, Boston; Betterman's, Chicago; Dick Penny Showroom, Cincinnati; R & G, Dallas; Bill Nessen, Dania; Bob Collins, Philadelphia; Shears & Window, San Francisco. Mouse brooch with baroque-pearl face, diamond in platinum body, and emerald bead necklace with ruby pendant, remake of Fulco di Verdura design, at Verdura, NYC (212) 265-3227. Pearl and Austrian crystal-wound teacup (with saucer), $265 set, vase, $395, by Dish-Ta-Henge, at Showroom Seven, similar at Charivari 57th, NYC (to order); Coda, Great Neck; Madeleine Gallay, West Hollywood. Bimbeloterie cotton/viscose moiré, to the trade at Clarence House, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Troy. **102** Lace evening dress wrapped in faux pearls, by Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel, made to order by Chanel Haute Couture, Paris (1) 42-86-28-00 contact Véronique de Pardieu. One-of-a-kind sterling-rimmed oyster shell dishes with blister pearl and bronze beetle, 6"x4" ea, by Stephen Dweck Home Collection, at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC (to order); 24 Collection, Bal Harbour; Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills, San Francisco, Westchester; Village Drummer, Gulfport; Janice Rudy, Houston; Etc, Mountain Brook. Seed pearl-beaded bedspread, $7,500 king, at OMO Norma Kamali, NYC (212) 957-9797. One-of-a-kind crystal base lamp and silk shade hand-beaded with pearls, $750, similar to order at Judyth vanAmringe, NYC (212) 925-4749. One-of-a-kind crystal/garnet/14-kt gold-filled wire pin, by Kazuko Oshima, $370, from a collection at Barneys New York, NYC, Chestnut Hill, Cleveland, Costa Mesa, Dallas, Manhasset, Seattle, Short Hills. Cast-iron candelabra glued with antique pearl necklaces, made to order at Marlo Flowers, NYC (212) 628-2246. Hand-jeweled pearl cabochon/crystal box, 5" wide, 4" high, $610, made to order at James Arpad Showroom, NYC (212) 944-9406 by appt. South Seas pearl necklace with diamond clasp, at Cartier, NYC, Bal Harbour, Beverly Hills, Boston, Chicago, Costa Mesa, Dallas, Fort Lauderdale, Houston, Palm Beach, San Francisco. Custom art deco design bracelet of freshwater baroque X pearls/pavé diamonds/bullet-shaped cabochon sapphires, approx $40,000, made to order by Christopher Walling, NYC (212) 581-7700 by appt.

URBAN SANCTUARY
Pages 108–13 Chinese sea grass sisal, to the trade at Stark Carpet, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Troy, Washington, D.C.; Gregory Alonso, Cleveland; Dean-Warren, Phoenix. **110–11** San Marco silk damask for curtains, to the trade at Brunschwig & Fils, NYC, Atlanta, Beachwood, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Denver, Houston, Laguna Niguel, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, Troy, Washington, D.C. **113** Patrick Naggar Mercure tabouret, $575, to the trade at ARC International, for showrooms (212) 727-3340. Contemporary Tibetan tiger rug, similar at Doris Leslie Blau, NYC (212) 759-3715. **114–15** Apple rush matting, to the trade at Stark (see above). Farnese Frieze cotton for tableskirt and bed undercover, 54" wide, $248 yd, at Fortuny, NYC, for showrooms (212) 753-7153.

A FARM IN FLOWER
Pages 116–23 Flower shop: Renny, 159 East 64 St., NYC (212) 288-7000.

EMINENT VICTORIAN
Pages 124–31 Decoration, by William Diamond Design, NYC (212) 966-8892. Contracting, by Tony Predovan Contractors, New Rochelle (914) 235-8430. Flowers, supplied by Ron Viteritto of Wildflowers (201) 592-8875. Fabrication and installation of curtains, by Jules Edlin, NYC (212) 243-4145. Custom-plated brass curtain tiebacks throughout, to order from P. E. Guerin, NYC, for showrooms (212) 243-5270. Marble throughout, from Marble Modes, College Point (718) 539-1334. **124–25** Louis Philippe Aubusson, similar at Dildarian, NYC (212) 288-4948. English papier-mâché table with lacquer and mother-of-pearl inlay, c. 1850, English crystal candelabra, c. 1835, similar to the trade at Marvin Alexander, NYC (212) 838-2320. Rose Medallion bowl on piano, Rose Mandarin double-gourd covered vase on mantel, similar at Flying Cranes Antiques, NYC (212) 223-4600. 19th-century marble mantel, similar at Rothschild's Antiques, New Orleans (504) 523-5816. Turquoise trimmings, to the trade to special order from Scalamandré, NYC, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Laguna Niguel, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; Fee-McLaran, Honolulu; Gene Smiley, Minneapolis; Designers Showroom, Seattle. Francesco Taffeta silk in two colors for curtains, to the trade at Scalamandré (see above). Custom-colored mold silk fringe (#FX4037), to the trade to special order from Scalamandré (see above). **127** Georgian Damask silk for chairs, to the trade at Scalamandré (see above). Crepe Cord rayon (#11027) on chairs, to the trade at Standard Trimming, NYC (212) 755-3034. Val Dizere damask for borne, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Velours Vercors cotton/mohair velvet gaufré stripe for walls, Taffetas Kaleidoscope silk for outside of curtains, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 100). Satin Stripe nylon/cotton for curtain linings, to the trade at Decorators Walk, for showrooms (212) 319-7100. Famille Rose tea jars, c. 1840, on bookcases, similar at Kentshire Galleries, NYC (212) 673-6644. English Regency patinated bronze chandelier, similar at Nesle, NYC (212) 755-0515. Louis Philippe Aubusson, similar at Dildarian (see above). Fleur de Lis custom-colored wallpaper, at Zuber et Cie, for showrooms (212) 486-9226. Large Medallion custom-colored wool carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above for pgs 108–13). Brunswick Monarch inlaid billiard table, c. 1882, Victorian billiard ceiling fixture, similar at Newel Art Galleries, NYC (212) 758-1970. Custom-colored mold silk fringe (#FX4189) for curtains, to the trade to special order from Scalamandré (see above). Haircloth horsehair/cotton on chairs, to the trade at Stroheim & Romann, for showrooms (718) 706-7000. Antique urn prints, similar at Lucy B.

Campbell Gallery, London (71) 727-2205. **128** English Regency crystal chandelier, similar at Nesle (see above). Classical American Empire mahogany table, similar at Didier, New Orleans (504) 899-7749. Cecile Damask cotton/silk on chairs, to the trade at Cowtan & Tout, NYC; Travis-Irvin, Atlanta; Shecter-Martin, Boston; Rozmallin, Chicago; Rozmallin at Baker, Knapp & Tubbs, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Troy; John Edward Hughes, Dallas, Houston; Bill Nessen, Dania; JEH/Denver, Denver; Kneedler-Fauchère, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco; Croce, Philadelphia; Wayne Martin, Portland, Seattle; Primavera, Toronto. Rosengarden cotton lace for panels, to the trade at Randolph & Hein, for showrooms (212) 826-9898. 19th-century Aubusson, similar at Dildarian (see above). **129** Elegance cast-aluminum furniture, to the trade at Brown Jordan, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Dania, Los Angeles, NYC, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; for retail dealers (501) 523-4546. English balustrades, piers, urns, and other garden ornaments and architectural stonework, to order from Haddonstone (USA), Bellmawr (609) 931-7011. Ultra refrigerator-freezer (#URS48DT), from Traulsen & Co., for dealers and information (718) 463-9000, outside NY state (800) 542-4022. Garland range, for dealers (717) 636-1000. Antique schoolhouse globes on nickel stems for lighting, at Urban Archaeology, NYC (212) 431-6969. **130** French art deco alabaster ceiling fixture, similar to the trade at Marvin Alexander (see above). Garden Party chintz on chairs, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 100). Brass deck-mount tub filler with hand shower (#4300), bath rack with mirror (#8000), by Czech & Speake, to order from P. E. Guerin (see above). **130–31** Custom hand-painted Chinese design wallpaper (#SY-120), to the trade to special order from Charles R. Gracie & Sons, for showrooms (212) 753-5350. Calypso wool carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above for pgs 108–13). Rosedale Print chintz on chaise, to the trade at Lee Jofa, for showrooms (201) 438-8444. French chaise, c. 1870, similar at Bardith, NYC (212) 737-8660. Gracie silk, 54" wide, $200 yd, at Polo/Ralph Lauren, NYC, Austin, Beverly Hills, Boca Raton, Boston, Chicago, Costa Mesa, Dallas, Denver, Edina, Georgetown, Honolulu, Kansas City, La Jolla, Little Rock, Manhasset, Miami, Minneapolis, North Palm Beach, Palo Alto, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Princeton, San Antonio, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Short Hills, Tulsa, Winter Park. Victorian dressing table with mother-of-pearl inlay and gilt decoration, similar at Newel (see above). 19th-century English bamboo gilt stool, similar at Trevor Potts Antiques, NYC (212) 737-0909. English Regency mahogany screen, similar to the trade at Ann-Morris Antiques, NYC (212) 755-3308. Lavallière cotton moiré on screen, to the trade at Old World Weavers (see above). Soie Ancienne ground fabric with Fleur de Lis silk appliqué for outside of curtain, to the trade at Decorators Walk (see above). Satin La Tour cotton/silk for curtain lining, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pgs 110–11). Upholstery by J. M. Upholstery, Long Island City (718) 786-0104. Sienna cotton matelassé coverlet with custom monogram and trim, to order from Harris Levy, NYC (212) 226-3102.

NEXT STOP NEVIS
Pages 132–37 Architecture, by Taft Architects, Houston (713) 522-2988.

MIDWESTERN FOLK
Pages 144–47 Decoration, by Jehu & Heerdt, San Francisco (415) 921-1515 by appt. **146** Brass game lights with rolled edges (#96) (without sleeves covering ceiling chains), from Hart Assocs., for dealers (800) 592-3500. Brunswick Medalist inlaid billiard table, c. 1917, similar at Blatt, NYC (212) 674-8855, outside NY state (800) 252-8855. Reproduction spectator chairs, billiard cloth on walls, from Blatt (see above).

CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY
Page 149 Cerises cotton smocked dress, sizes 2–6, $425, to special order from D. Porthault & Co., NYC, for other stores (212) 688-1660. **150** Hunt cotton cretonne on ottomans and cushion, 92" wide, $153 yd, to special order from Porthault (see above). Émancé cotton cretonne for walls, 92" wide, $153 yd, to special order from Porthault (see above). Hunt cotton batiste custom tablecloth, $1,084, 72"x144" size, napkins, $32 ea, to special order from Porthault (see above). **151** Clovers cotton batiste custom tablecloth, $906 72"x112" size, Clovers Limoges porcelain breakfast set for two, $445 set, to special order from Porthault (see above). **152** Tulips & Smiles cotton batiste, 92" wide, $175 yd, to special order from Porthault (see above). Cotton decorative pillows, $95–$125 ea, cotton shams, $275 ea continental, at Porthault (see above). Needlepoint Roses cotton batiste, 92" wide, $175 yd, to special order from Porthault (see above). **153** Carnations cotton sheets, top, $667 queen, bottom, $475 queen, embroidered cotton shams, $525 ea continental, at Porthault (see above). Carnations cotton batiste, 92" wide, $175 yd, to special order from Porthault (see above).

CASA CALLAWAY
Pages 160–65 Decoration, by Thomas Callaway & Assocs., Los Angeles (213) 447-2889; fax (213) 447-0112. **160–61** Spanish colonial turn-of-the-century wedding portrait, similar at Federico, Santa Monica (213) 458-4134. Mexican primitive landscape paintings, c. 1910, similar at Nonesuch Antiques, Santa Monica (213) 393-1245. **162** 19th-century handmade Mexican Puebla tiles, similar at Claiborne Gallery, Santa Fe (505) 982-8019. Hand-carved gold-leaf frame, by Richard Tobey, Los Angeles (213) 652-8023. **163** 17th-century Spanish colonial nicho or santos case, 18th- and 19th-century santos and retablos, Mexican tin candleholders, similar at Nonesuch Antiques (see above). Spanish colonial santos on top of nicho, similar at Spirit Arts, Sante Fe (505) 983-1104. Niña club chair, $2,500 COM, to order from Thomas Callaway Bench Works, Los Angeles (213) 447-2889; fax (213) 447-0112. **165** Limestone, from La France Imports, Los Angeles (213) 478-6009.

DACHA IN MAINE
Pages 170–75 Architecture, by Roc Caivano, Architect, Bar Harbor (207) 288-2333. Landscape architecture, by Patrick Chassé of Landscape Design Assocs., Northeast Harbor (207) 276-5674. Carpentry and general contracting, by A. J. James, Bar Harbor (207) 288-5479. **170–71** Mies van der Rohe Barcelona table, from KnollStudio, division of Knoll Group, for showrooms (800) 253-4255. Rag rug sofa with handwoven Guatemalan cotton on cushions, to order from Qué Pasa, Scottsdale (602) 990-7528. Superlative wool carpet, from Lees Carpets, for dealers (800) 523-5647. **172** York County pie safe, c. 1840, similar at Rose W. Olstead, Bar Harbor (207) 288-5494, June 1–Nov. 1, otherwise by appt. Cowboy folk art mirror, by L. D. Burke, similar from Yippie-ei-o, Scottsdale, Santa Monica. Borea metal hanging light, by Lucien Gau, from Lee's Studio, NYC (212) 581-4400. Antique kilim box, to order from Wiseman & Gale, Scottsdale (602) 945-8447. Gilding on column, by Alice Smith of Signsmith, Mt. Desert (207) 244-5041. **173** Folk art chair, painted by Libby Mitchell, Otter Creek (207) 288-4548. **174–75** Nuance nylon carpet, from Lees (see above).

GREAT IDEAS
Page 187 Adagio crystal bud vase, by Fumio Sasa, 5⅛" high, $525, from Hoya Crystal Gallery, NYC (212) 223-6335, for other stores (800) 654-0016.

SAMPLES
Page 190 1. Pont Aven chintz, to the trade at André Bon, NYC; Travis-Irvin, Atlanta; Leonard B. Hecker & Assocs., Boston; Nicholas P. Karas, Chicago; John Edward Hughes, Dallas, Denver, Houston; Southard, Dania; Shears & Window, Laguna Niguel; Randolph & Hein, Los Angeles; J. W. Showroom, Philadelphia; Thomas Griffith, San Francisco; Elinor & Verve, Seattle; Richard Russell, Washington, D.C. **2.** Ophelia chintz, to the trade at Fonthill, NYC; Marion-Kent, Atlanta, Washington, D.C.; Devon Services, Boston; Nicholas P. Karas, Chicago; Walter Lee Culp, Dallas, Houston; Donghia, Dania; Reynolds-Howard, High Point; Kneedler-Fauchère, Los Angeles, San Diego; Shears & Window, San Francisco; Designers Showroom, Seattle; Primavera, Toronto. **3.** Serendip glazed cotton, to the trade at Manuel Canovas, NYC, Los Angeles; Curran, Atlanta, High Point; Shecter-Martin, Boston; Donghia Showrooms, Chicago, Cleveland, Dania, San Francisco, Washington, D.C.; David Sutherland, Dallas, Houston; Egg & Dart, Denver; Matches, Philadelphia; Designers Showroom, Seattle. **4.** Vendôme chintz, to the trade at Yves Gonnet, NYC; Hugh Cochran, Atlanta; Leonard B. Hecker & Assocs., Boston; Callard & Osgood, Chicago; Rocco DiCioccio, Cincinnati; Boyd Levinson & Co., Dallas, Houston; Todd Wiggins, Dania; Janus et Cie, Los Angeles; J. W. Showroom, Philadelphia; Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco; Trade Wings, Washington, D.C. **5.** Katmandu Ribbons cotton, 54" wide, $136 yd, to the trade at Summer Hill, at Hines & Co., NYC; George & Frances Davison, Boston; Rozmallin, Chicago, Troy; David Sutherland, Dallas, Houston; Design West, Dania; Kneedler-Fauchère, Denver, Los Angeles, San Diego; J. W. Showroom, Philadelphia; C. L. McRae, San Francisco; Puff Corporation, Tokyo; Trade Wings, Washington, D.C. **6.** Mafalda Cotton Print, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pgs 110–11). **7.** Les Bouquets Cotton Print, to the trade at Brunschwig (see above for pgs 110–11). **8.** Le Mans cotton, designed by Valentino, to the trade at Coraggio Textiles, NYC; Culpepper & Osborne, Atlanta; George & Frances Davison, Boston; Callard & Osgood, Chicago; Hargett, Dallas, Houston; Southard, Dania; Bailey Showroom, Kansas City; Shears & Window, Laguna Niguel, San Francisco; Bradbury Collection, Los Angeles; Wayne Martin, Portland; Gene Smiley, St. Louis; The Showroom, Salt Lake City; Jane Piper Reid, Seattle. **9.** Camilla Cotton, to the trade at Zumsteg, at Ian Wall, NYC; Hugh Cochran, Atlanta, Dania; Leonard B. Hecker & Assocs., Boston; Rozmallin, Chicago, Troy; David Sutherland, Dallas, Houston; Kneedler-Fauchère, Denver, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco; Rist Corp., Washington, D.C. **10.** Tulip Bowl chintz, to the trade at Clarence House (see above for pg 100).

GANDEE AT LARGE
Page 202 Massartre, Brooklyn (718) 499-8296.
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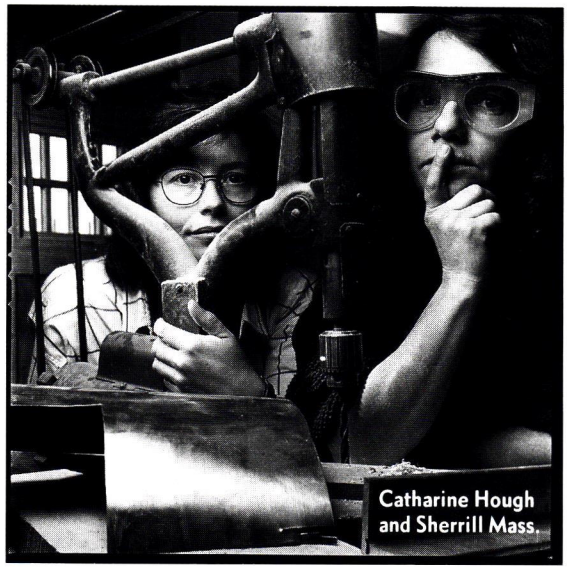
Gandee AT LARGE

A woman's place is on the construction site

There was a time when decorating was considered women's work. That time, as we all know, has passed. Similarly, there was a time when construction was considered men's work. And now that time is passing as well.

"You should meet them," said three different architects, after they had independently offered glowing testimonials to Sherrill Mass and Catharine Hough, founding principals of the ten-year-old Brooklyn-based contracting firm Massartre. And so I did.

Although I like to think of myself as a modern man with progressive views, my first question—sad but true—suggested otherwise: how did two women end up in the tough-guy business of New York City construction? Sherrill, who gamely resisted the temptation to observe that the how-many-times-am-I-going-to-have-to-answer-this question was old-fashioned and sexist, answered that it "was something of an accident." After studying philosophy in Canada she entered art school where she focused on large-scale sculpture. It was then only a matter of time—and the need to earn a living—before hanging out the Massartre shingle in New York City. "I had the tools, the talents, and the interest in materials and building." She also had the chutzpah.



Catharine Hough and Sherrill Mass.

Catharine, who holds a master's degree from Harvard in developmental psychology, is an organization maven. Her specialty is setting up systems serving either the arts or social causes. She considers herself an operational liaison between creativity and bureaucracy. In other words, she is the perfect foil to partner Catharine, whom she met back in Toronto.

"We're as good as they get in terms of quality and craft and organization"

The two women divvy up responsibility according to their respective interests. "If it has to do with doing, I do it," said Sherrill. "I like glass, I like steel, I like concrete, I like electrical, I like plumbing, I like HVAC. I can do everything from footings to picture hooks." Displaying impressive callouses, she added: "These hands don't lie." Catharine's responsibility is to "keep the wheels spinning." She takes care of the business, the budgets, the clients ("My psychology comes in very handy"). In short, Catharine enables Sherrill to do her work.

Although Massartre recently completed the headquarters for the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, designed by the firm 1100 Architect, the company's more typical job is upper-end residential, primarily in Manhattan. "If you truly care about what it's going to look like, then we're for you," boasts Sherrill. "We're as good as they get in terms of quality and craft and organization." While some of their work is subcontracted to licensed tradespeople on an ad hoc basis, Massartre maintains a full-time staff of eleven. No, they're not all women. ("Why would we not have men working for us? We can have anyone working for us as long as they're good.") Which is appreciably fewer than they had twelve months ago. The reason for the cutback was not the recession but rather Sherrill's misery. "We got too big." Which meant that Sherrill had to put down her hammer and start supervising—"and worse, pushing paper." So Massartre restructured, picking and choosing more carefully among potential jobs, limiting itself to four or five projects at a time—one or two large jobs ($300,000 to $500,000), three or four smaller jobs (between $100,000 and $300,000).

I asked if there was a typical Massartre client. "In New York City a husband and wife team is not a typical client," said Catharine. "There is no typical client in New York. It can be a single man or woman, it can be a gay couple, it can be two people living together, it can be a relationship where the woman is working but not the man." There is, however, one type of client Massartre is somewhat leery of: the client intent on working with the firm because its principals are women. "People who want to work with us only because we're women make us very nervous," said Sherrill with a shudder.

Since the gender issue had surfaced again, I asked if being female was an advantage or a disadvantage. "I think we offer more service in the sense of caring for the client," said Sherrill. "But is that a gender issue? Hey, we all grew up in North America, did we not? If you had grown up as a woman, would you be doing what you're doing in the manner that you're doing it? From everything sociologists tell us, probably not." Catharine agreed. "I think we do care more. Is it because we're women? Maybe it's because we're Canadian."

Charles Gandee

MARK SELIGER