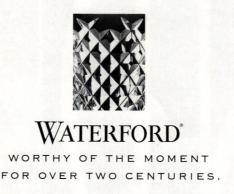


PART OF THE PLEASURE OF OWNING BEAUTIFUL THINGS IS FEELING AT HOME WITH THEM.

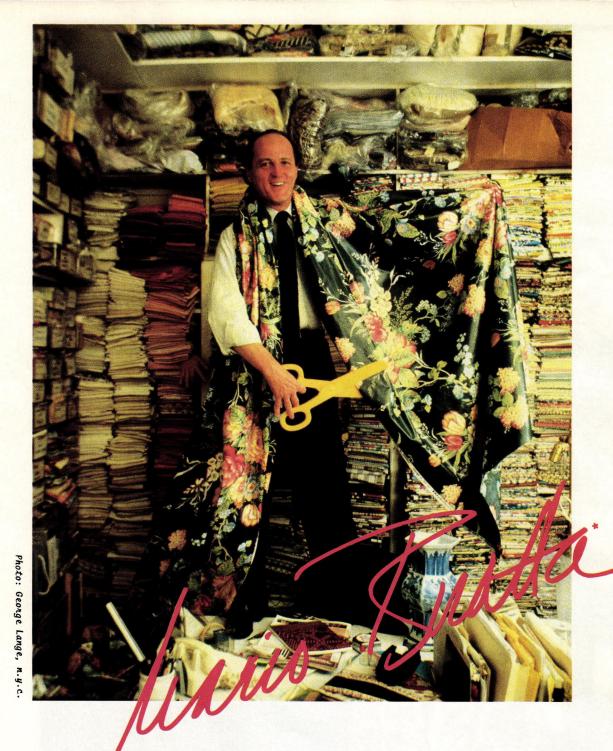
INSOFAR AS WE SEE THINGS IN OURSELVES REFLECTED IN OUR SURROUNDINGS, THERE'S A LOT TO BE SAID FOR LIVING WITH WHAT'S BEAUTIFUL. AND LEARNING ABOUT SUCH THINGS WHEN WE'RE VERY YOUNG. THEREAFTER, WE CAN FEEL COMFORTABLE IN THE MIDST OF THE MOST REMARKABLE THINGS, OBJECTS WHOSE BRILLIANCE AND BALANCE AND GRACE AND CHARM ARE SO PLEASING TO HAVE WITHIN REACH.

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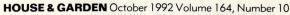
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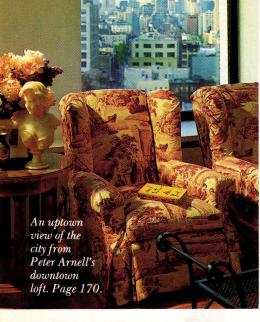
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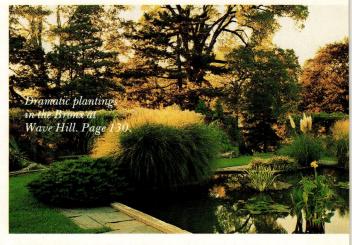






Spacious dining area of the Whittles' kitchen designed by Peter Marino. Photograph by Oberto Gili.

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The View from Wave Hill by Patti Hagan 130 After twenty-five years at the Bronx estate, master gardener Marco Polo Stufano continues to survey the landscape with a fresh eye

Tribeca's Country Air by Wendy Goodman 136 Fashion designer Christian Francis Roth finds room for a house and yard in a downtown loft

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New York's Young Designers by Christine Pittel 148 Whether living in basement hovels or high rises, five decorating experts discover there's no place like home

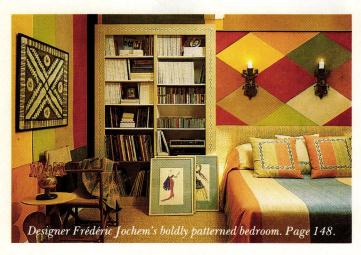
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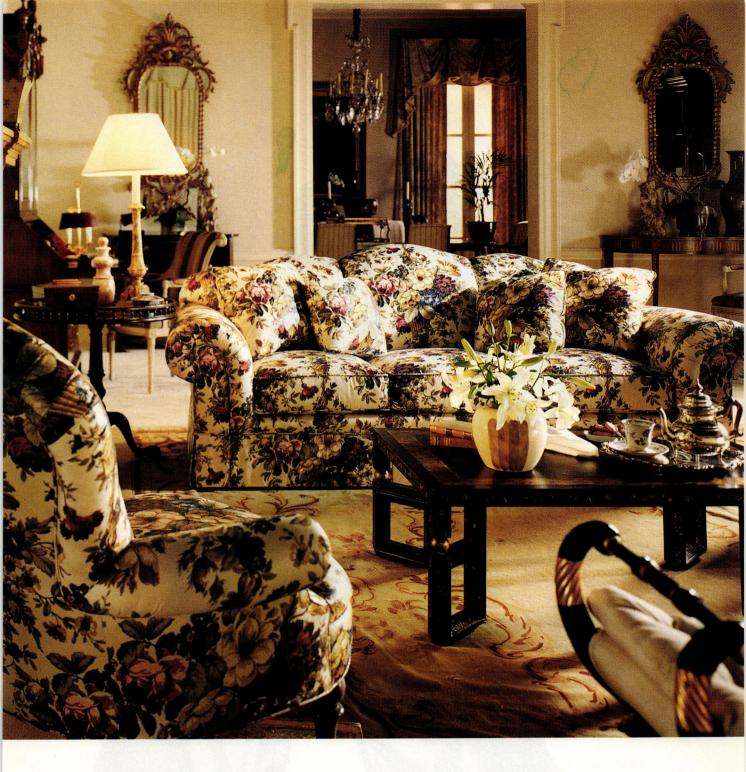
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History and Attitude

by Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne 114 In their New York apartment, two writers "California it up"

Julian Schnabel's Velvet Touch by Zoë Lund 120 Amid bones, paintings, and Napoleonic furniture, the artist makes himself comfortable

Frank and Alex by Frank Rich and Alex Witchel 128 Two characters in search of enough closet space and bookshelves set the scene for a drawing room comedy



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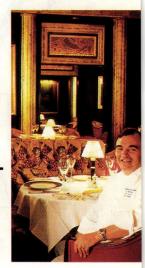


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Farm & Garden
Nursery in
Tribeca,
above.
Page 46.
Left: A
surreal
miniature
painting by
Fanny
Brennan.
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Les Célébrités chef Christian Delouvrier, <u>right</u>. Page 66. <u>Below:</u> Danish 1950s pottery at Latham-Kearns. Page 40.

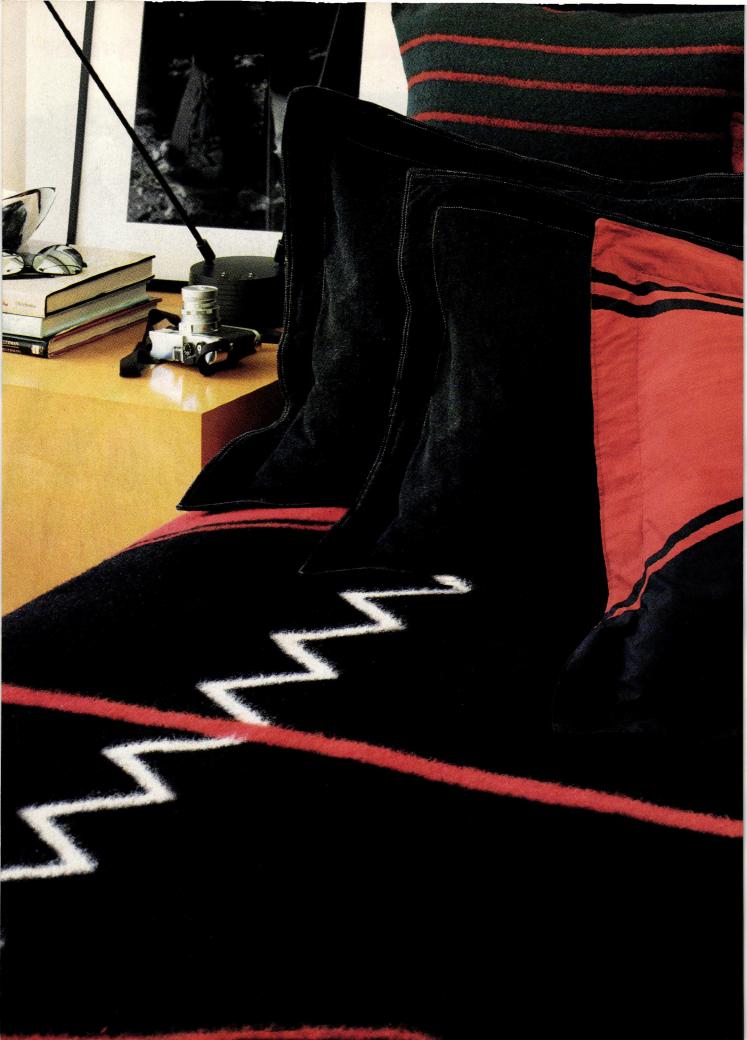




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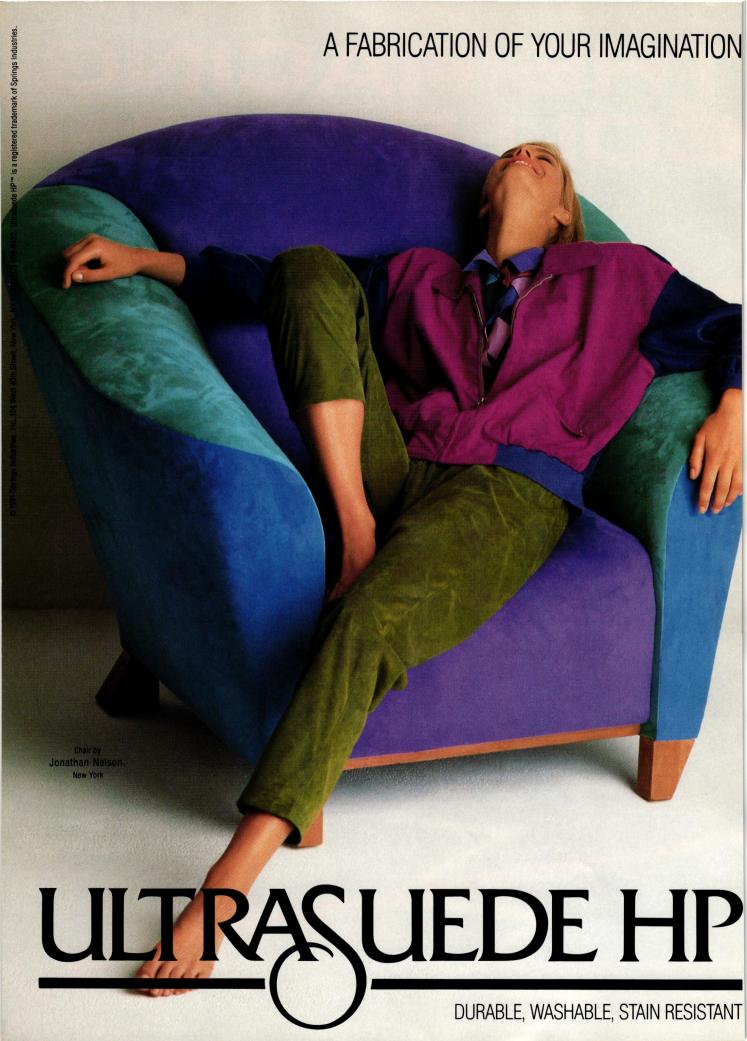
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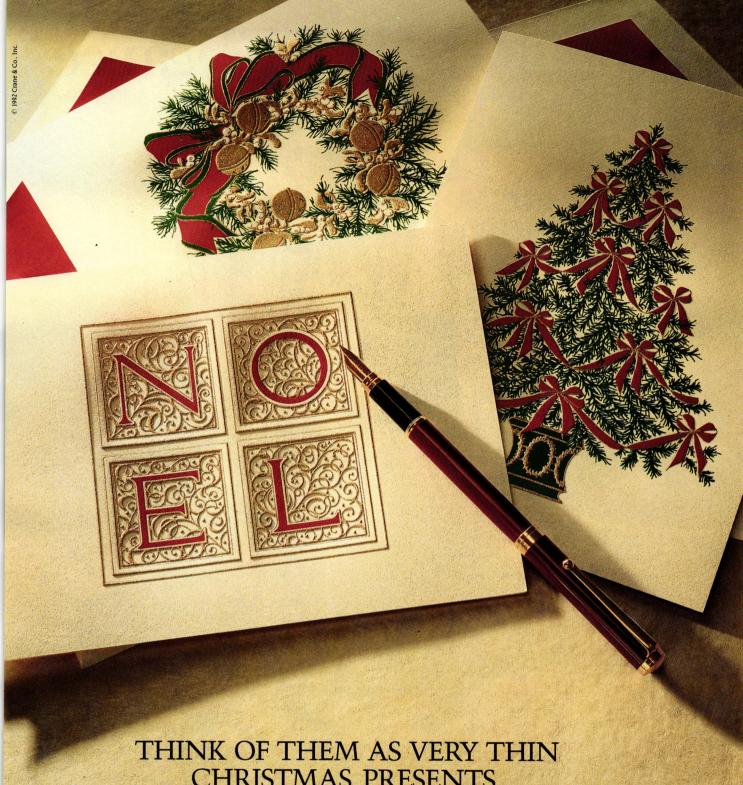


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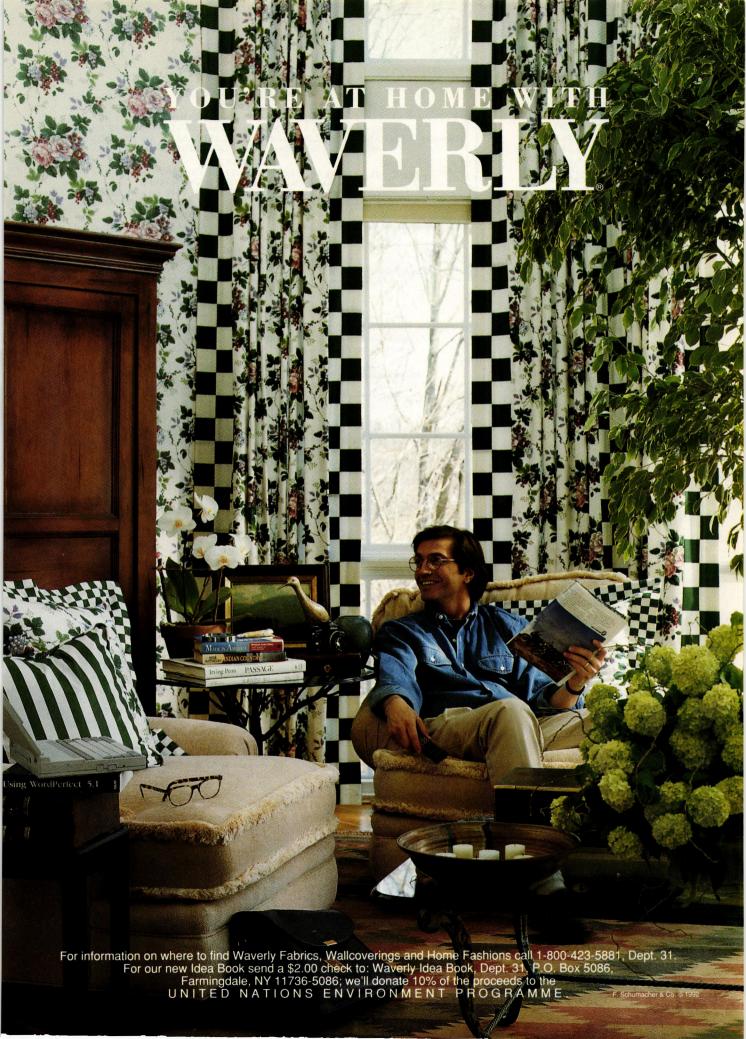
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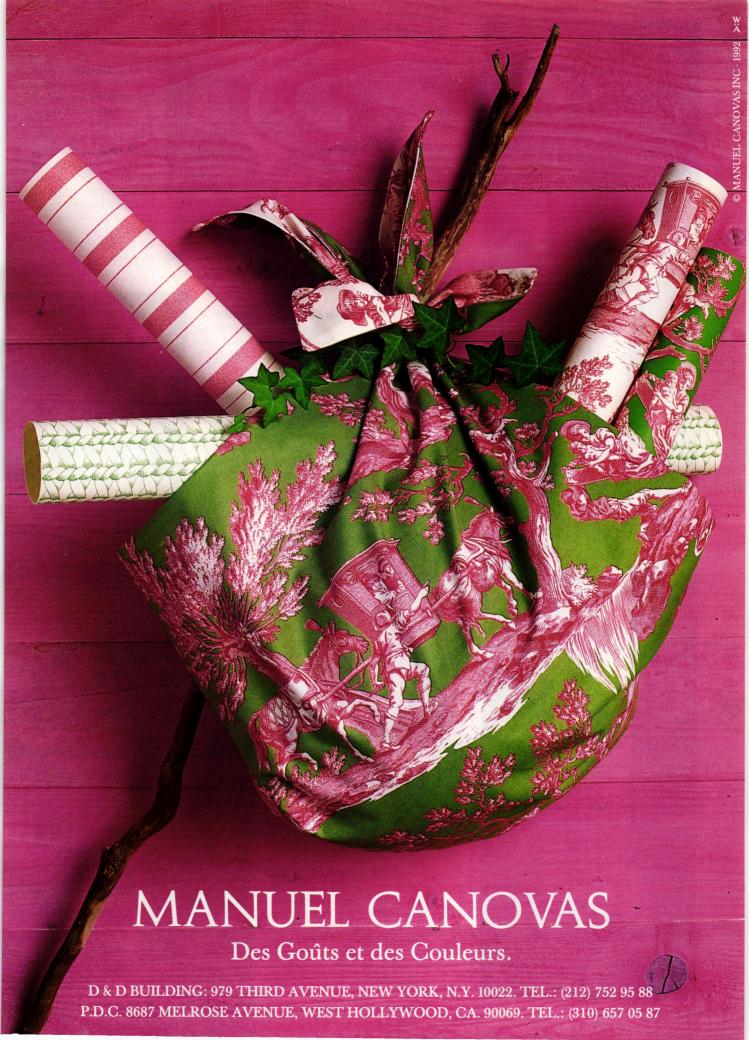
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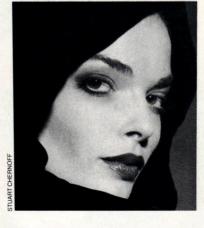
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Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne returned to New York after twenty-four years in L.A. and settled with their thousands of books in an East Side apartment which they write about in this issue. Didion's latest collection of essays is After Henry and Dunne's is Crooning, both published by Simon & Schuster.

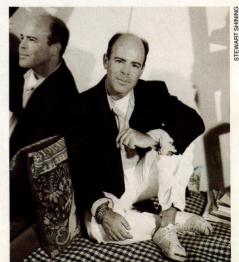
Michelle Green, a senior writer at *People*, has reported on everything from "news, crime, and normal citizens to the travails of England's royals," one of her current beats. For HG, Green visits ABC radio host Deborah Norville in her East Side duplex, where she broadcasts her nightly interview show while her husband, Karl Wellner, gives their baby his bath. *The Dream at the End of the World*, published in July by Harper Collins, is Green's account of Paul Bowles and the 1940s literary scene in Tangiers.

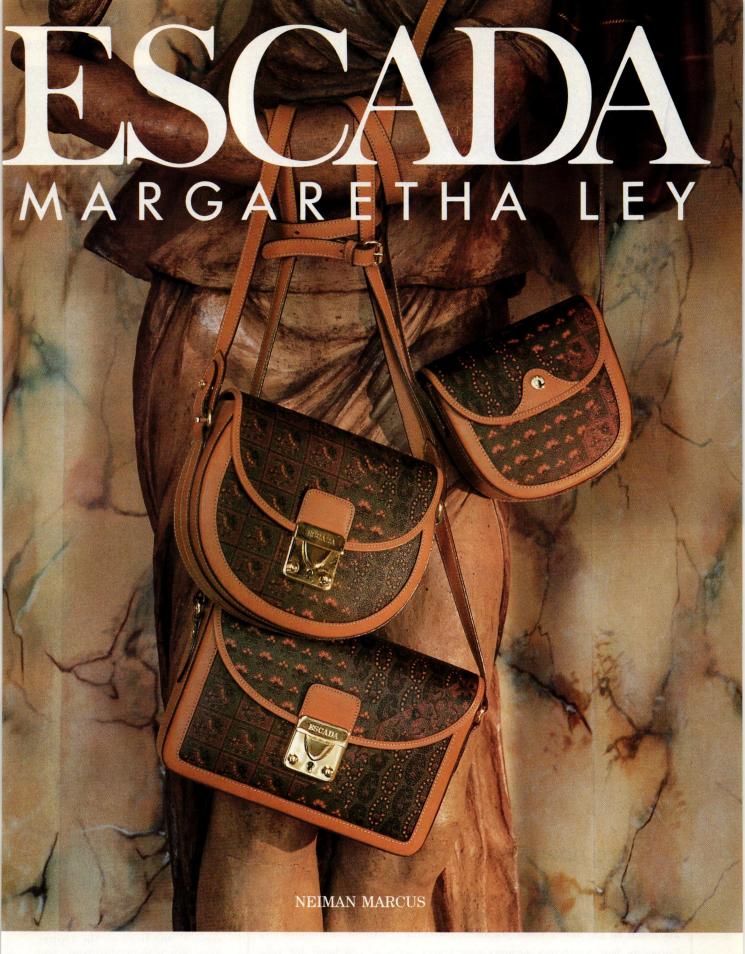




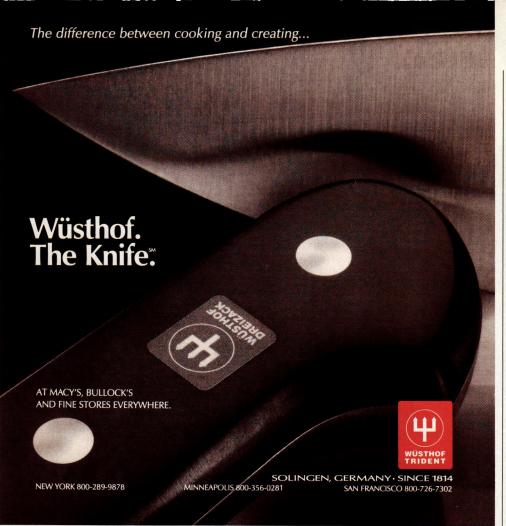
Zoë Lund is an actress and the author of several screenplays, including *Bad Lieutenant*, a movie she also appeared in, which was shown this year at Cannes. It was at a Cannes screening party that Lund was introduced to artist Julian Schnabel, whose "aristocratically dilapidated" quarters she describes in this issue. Lund lives on New York's Lower East Side and has just finished writing a novel.

William Norwich explores the "hip-hop madcap" apartment of rap music impresario Monica Lynch. A columnist of the *New York Post* and an editor at large of *Vogue*, Norwich says that he and Lynch first met on adjoining Stairmasters at the Pumping Iron Gym: "We share the same trainer. We even like the same music." Norwich grew up in Connecticut, where, he claims, he kept a brown paper bag "packed and ready under the bed in the event of an emergency move to New York City."





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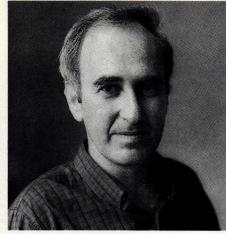


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Phillip Lopate, a New Yorker who "grew up spending every Saturday at the Brooklyn Museum," explores some of the lesser-known but notable museums, gardens, and historic houses outside Manhattan. Lopate is the author of two novels and three collections of essays, including Bachelorhood and Against Joie de Vivre. He is at work on a book about walking in New York City. "Cities are good for people," he says. "My writing defends the urban perspective."



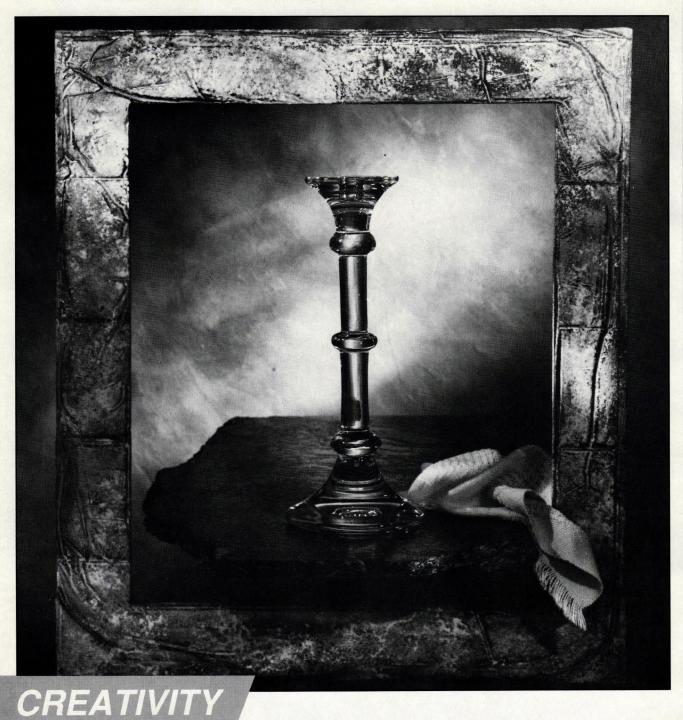
Tama Janowitz is the author of four novels, including The Male Cross-Dresser Support Group, published last month by Crown. As this issue's writer in residence, she muses on the secret lives of inanimate objects, observing that "keeping a curio cabinet is like having your own natural history museum." Janowitz adapted her second book, Slaves of New York, for the screen. She lives on the Upper West Side with her husband, Tim Hunt, and dog, Beep-beep.

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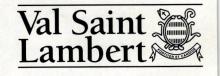
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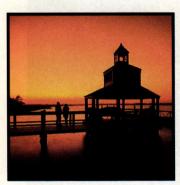
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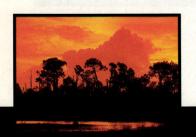
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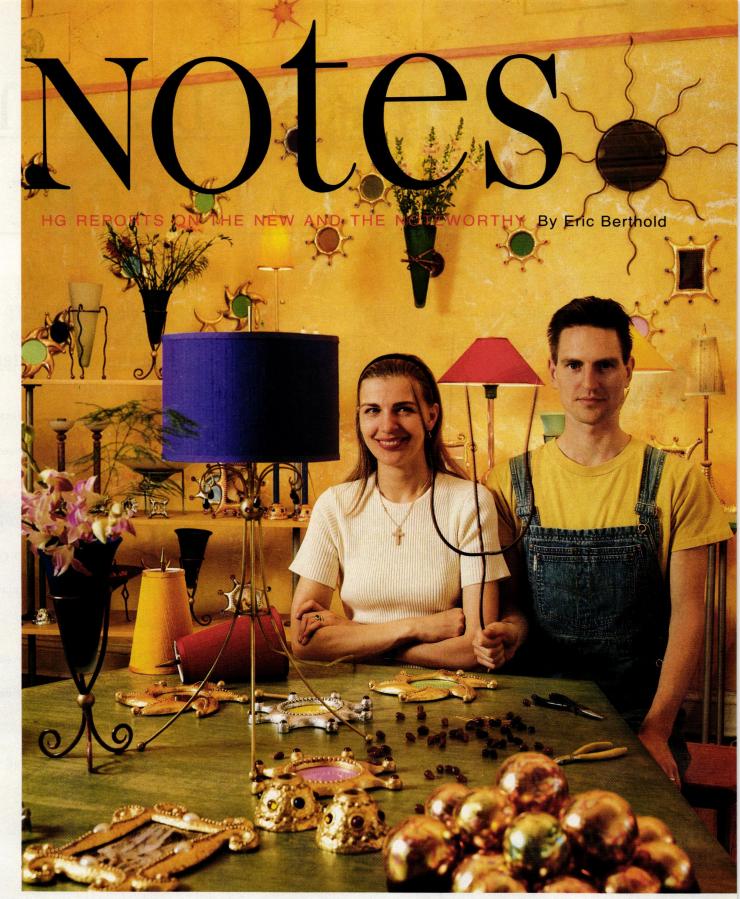
ON THE BACK PORCH, GLOWING FROM HOT SHOWERS AND THE FAINT BLUSH OF FRESH TANS, ANY MINUTE. WE'LL BE NOISILY GOING ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF STARTING DINNER AND DOORS WILL SLAM AND DOGS WILL BARK AND SOMEONE WILL PUT ON MUSIC. BUT FOR THOSE BRIEF MOMENTS, AS THE SUN DROPS BEHIND THE LIVE OAKS, WE ARE TOGETHER AND WE ARE QUIET. I LOOK AROUND AT OUR KIDS WHO ARE GROWING UP SO FAST AND MY HUSBAND WHO WORKS TOO HARD, AND I HAVE THE FEELING I OFTEN HAVE ON KIAWAH, THAT EVERY MINUTE OF LIVING IS SO IMPORTANT AND WE LET IT GO BY TOO FAST, WITHOUT STOPPING TO NOTICE HOW PRICELESS EVERY ORDINARY HOUR CAN BE.



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"Fusing space age, earthly, and aquatic themes" is what she likes best, says New York artist Monica Missio (*above*) with Richard Cleves, her husband and business partner in CX Design. After years of collecting quirky pieces of 1950s and '60s glass and ceramics, Missio found their odd shapes and brilliant colors turning up in her paintings. Now she's taking things a step further, translating her painted images into three-dimensional objects. Among them: the bejeweled Sata-Lite table lamp with its sapphire Indian raw silk shade, the cobalt Neptune urn, the large distressed brass Apollo wall mirror, and an array of smaller resin frames in gold, silver, or copper leaf. (For stores call 212-431-4242)

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Based on registration data for years 1977-1991. ²The Complete Car Cost Guide. IntelliChoice, Inc., San Jose, CA. 190E 2.3 rated best in the under \$40,000 luxury class. 300D 2.5 rated best in the over \$40,000 luxury class. 300D 2.5 luxury class. 300D 2.5 luxury c

en a car company the word "can't"?

dy help to channel impact energy vay from the passenger cabin. The ont crumple zone deforms. The wer steering column collapses. The r bag is deployed (in the case of rtain frontal impacts) to cushion

until the "bugs" are worked out. But
Mercedes is so rigorous in its testing
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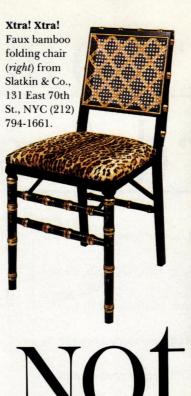
e head and upper body, while the nergency Tensioning Retractors move seat belt slack. Even the ake pedal is designed to swing vay from the driver's foot. All in a action of a second. While the ssengers are cocooned in a rigid eel cabin, pioneered by Mercedes.

You can't build cars that are both innovative and dependable.

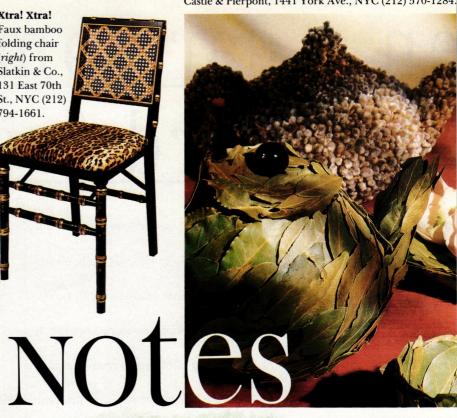
novation often causes aggravation,

ury class (this model not available in California). ³Automobile Magazine, April 1992. ⁴Autoweek, April 1992. ⁵Urban Science Applications, Inc., 1992. Based on analysis of resale data for cars in 992 Mercedes-Benz of North America, Inc. Montvale, N.L., Member of the Daimler-Benz Group.





Tea Leaves Teapots sheathed in bay leaves or pussy willows (below) are available by special order from Castle & Pierpont, 1441 York Ave., NYC (212) 570-1284.





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Potted Print In his Tea Time cotton, Patrick Frey (above) takes a whimsical approach to a favored vessel. To the trade at Fonthill; for showrooms (212) 755-6700.



World Views A Gainsborough (above) from Spink & Son, London, at the International Fine Art and Antique Dealers Show, Oct. 24-29, NYC (212) 382-0969.

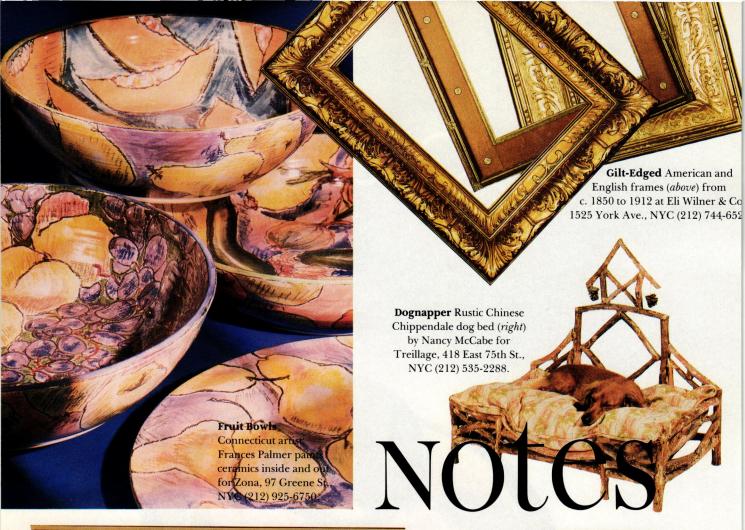
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THE NEW YORK SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS 1936-19

Cypress
Garden china
and topiary
salt and
pepper (below)
by Justin
Terzi for Swid
Powell. For
stores (212)



French Twist Manuel Canovas (*left*) shows off his new vivid toiles, including La Musardière, at top, and Mandarin. For showrooms (212) 752-9588.



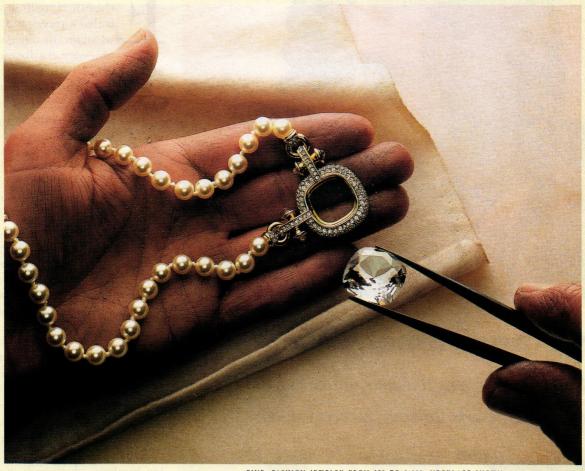




Page Turners Venture into Gotham City with The New York School: Photographs, 1936–1963 (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, \$75); Landmarks, by Barbaralee Diamonstein (Abrams, \$35); New York Style, by Suzanne Slesin, Stafford Cliff, and Daniel Rozensztroch, with photos by Gilles de Chabaneix (Clarkson Potter, \$45); and Legendary Decorators of the Twentieth Century, by Mark Hampton (Doubleday, \$35).

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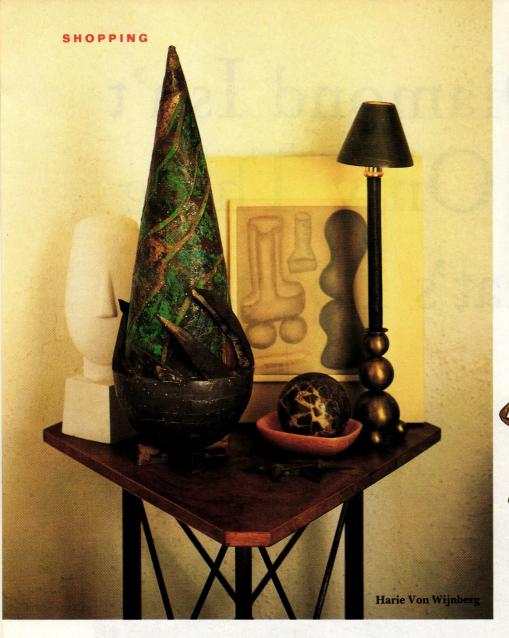
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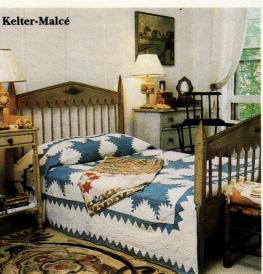
SAKS FIFTH AVENUE



By Appointment Only

Calling ahead opens the door to some of the city's best decorative arts sources By Bob Felner







ven hardened shoppers cherish a few illusions. One is that a recession will help us attain the objects of our obsession at a discount. Another is that dealers who sell from their houses or other private spaces instead of maintaining shops will pass along their savings on commercial rents. Not so. Or not necessarily so.

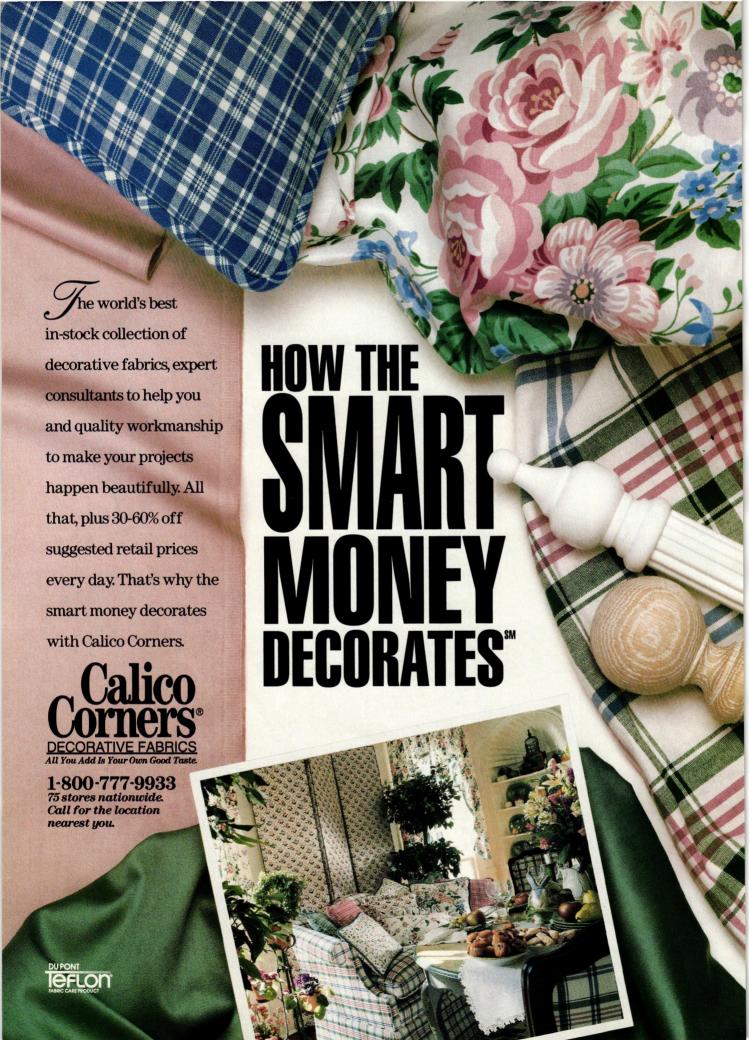
That said, these by-appointment-only Manhattan dealers—many of whom live contentedly in the midst of their merchandise—offer

midst of their merchandise—offer would-be collectors the benefits of their own erudition and taste, as well as glimpses into a private world that is usually off-limits to auction goers and flea market pickers.

Nicholas Bailly A Frenchman who immigrated here in 1984, Bailly sells fine lithographs, prints, and posters from 1880 to the 1940s in a restored row house in central Harlem. His primary focus is on Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, and the Villon brothers, along with posters by Cassandre and Colin and other wonderful advertising posters from the 1920s for food, wine, theater, and opera. (212-749-5049)

Von Wijnberg, top, favors not-quite-antiques, from a copy of a Cycladic head made for the museum shop at the Louvre and a cone-like sculpture by Ellen Driscoll, above left, to a maquette for a 1940s airport figure, above. At Kelter-Malcé, a pine hutch, c. 1850, far left, holds items ranging from a Clarice Cliff tea set to a folk art band, and a 19th-century American quilt, left, covers a Cottage Gothic bed.



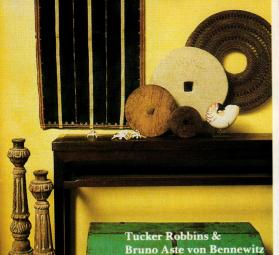




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CLEVELAND



James Hepner A cluttered Upper East Side apartment holds Hepner's inventory of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European furniture, Biedermeier pieces, Russian lamps, bronzes, and many period frames and mirrors. After two years at Christie's East, Hepner went off to France to work at Drouot, Paris's largest auction house. It's there he discovered the key to success: ship to the United States market things like candlesticks, mirrors, and frames, which fetch low prices in France and high ones here. Happily for him and for clients like decorators Stephen Sills and Victoria Hagan, the modest size of his apartment forces him to go to Paris to restock every six to eight weeks. (212-734-9844)

Historical Design Collection Daniel Morris and Denis Gallion are best known for early twentieth century decorative arts-Vienna Secession glass, arts and crafts pottery, and the like-but their showroom in a storage facility on the East Side also houses furniture, paintings, and sculpture from the 1860s to the 1960s. They have especially fine examples of japonisme in silver, metalwork, and ceramics. Among my favorite objects: a heroic sculpture of David and Goliath by Franz Metzner and an astonishingly luminous piece of pottery by William De Morgan. (212-593-4528)

Kelter-Malcé Jolie Kelter and Michael Malcé have given up their shop and moved their extraordinary collection into an 1850 town house in Greenwich Village. New Yorkers of the truest, kindest, smartest, funniest breed, they have an encyclopedic



knowledge of their specialties: American and western art, folk and tramp art, blankets and quilts, found objects of every description, and vintage Christmas ornaments. Their garden, full of garden sculpture and wrought-iron topiary forms, is the perfect place to talk about their pieces. Back inside, a climb to the top floor reveals an extraordinary bass fiddle with a clear glass front, which holds the late West Coast folk art dealer Larry Whitely's "pink stuff."

The remarkable thing is how perfectly every object, from a fine Windsor chair to a malted-milk-shake glass from the 1930s, fits into the couple's aesthetic. (212-675-7380)



Grinding wheels and a painted trunk, above left, and a Philippine table, above right, are among the cultural artifacts collected by von Bennewitz, seated, and Robbins. Sarah Kearns, left, takes a preservationist's tack with her aesthetic movement hall chair, below left, and American and English

arts and crafts pottery

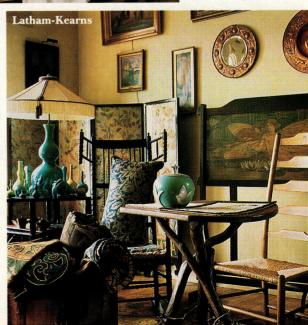
and fabrics, below.



SHOPPING

self-described "card-carrying preservationist" who teaches at the Fashion Institute of Technology, Kearns told me that the appealing glazes on Burmantoft pottery were hideously toxic to many of the workers at the now-defunct English company. She dispensed this information in a charmingly matter-of-fact way as the afternoon sunlight streamed through the leaded-glass windows. It felt like shopping in Bloomsbury. (212-505-9127)





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SHOPPING

Edward R. Lubin

Works of art at Lubin's, above, from a 4thcentury Syrian mosaic to a 17th-century Dutch infant Hercules. Below: Vienna Secession glass by Artur Berger, Josef Hoffmann, and Koloman Moser at Historical Design.

Edward R. Lubin "I start in the fourth century A.D. and die with Canova," says Lubin, whose gallery and apartment in a house off Fifth Avenue are filled with ivories, enamels, mosaics, bronzes, glass, goldsmith's work, and such. This is serious stuff, not the odd trinket: an ivory box, circa 1600, depicting Adam and Eve on one side and the Adoration on the other; an early thirteenth century north German bronze; the silver head of a bishop's staff, circa 1500. Lubin is a source for the Metropolitan Museum's department of medieval art and private clients like



Ronald Lauder and maintains an enormous art library with auction catalogues back to 1850. This courtly and engaging man is great fun to talk to and learn from, but it is not wise to waste his time. (212-288-4145)

Stuart Parr Parr, on the other hand, seems to have plenty of time to chat. A fan of 1920s and 1930s design who once worked the phones at Drexel Burnham, one floor down from Michael Milken, he went into business in 1987 with \$200. On day one he drove to Newark and returned empty-handed. On day two he drove to Philadelphia and found an ancient dry goods store with untouched linoleum from the 1930s in the basement and a mother lode of bicycles, chairs, toys, and advertising display items upstairs. Within a week he had a \$3,500 stake. Today Parr's top-floor loft is full of tubular-aluminum furniture designed and manufactured by Warren McArthur for hotels, department stores, and offices in the 1930s. (212-431-0732)

Tucker Robbins & Bruno Aste von Bennewitz Eight years ago Robbins showed Albert Hadley, a family friend, some of the things he had brought back from Guatemala. Hadley's advice was succinct: "Go back and get more." Now Robbins and Chilean-born von Bennewitz have assembled in an apartment in the East Fifties a collection of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century furniture and objects from Latin America and Southeast Asia. Spanish colonial carvings, a painted cupboard from Bahia, Precolumbian figures from

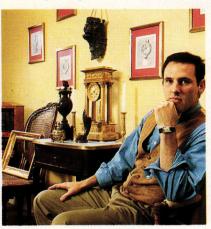
imported from Paris are an Empire clock and, above, a porcelain chocolate service, gilt frames, and a bronze doré candlestick other dealers. "Most of what I have is not antique, but it's not junk either," he told me quite candidly. "They're mostly twentieth-century decorative pieces." A bronze of a windblown woman is a 1940s design for a figural group for LaGuardia Airport. One blond deco chair looks to a friend as if it came from a Queens Boulevard beauty parlor. "I sell so that I can buy more," says Von Wijnberg. "I like finding things, but I'm not too attached to anything. If I wanted to emulate any one dealer it would be Madame Castaing in Paris, although

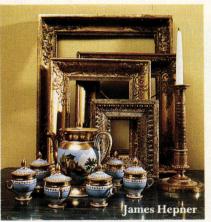
I'm not ready for a black pageboy wig

yet!" (212-674-7365) ▲

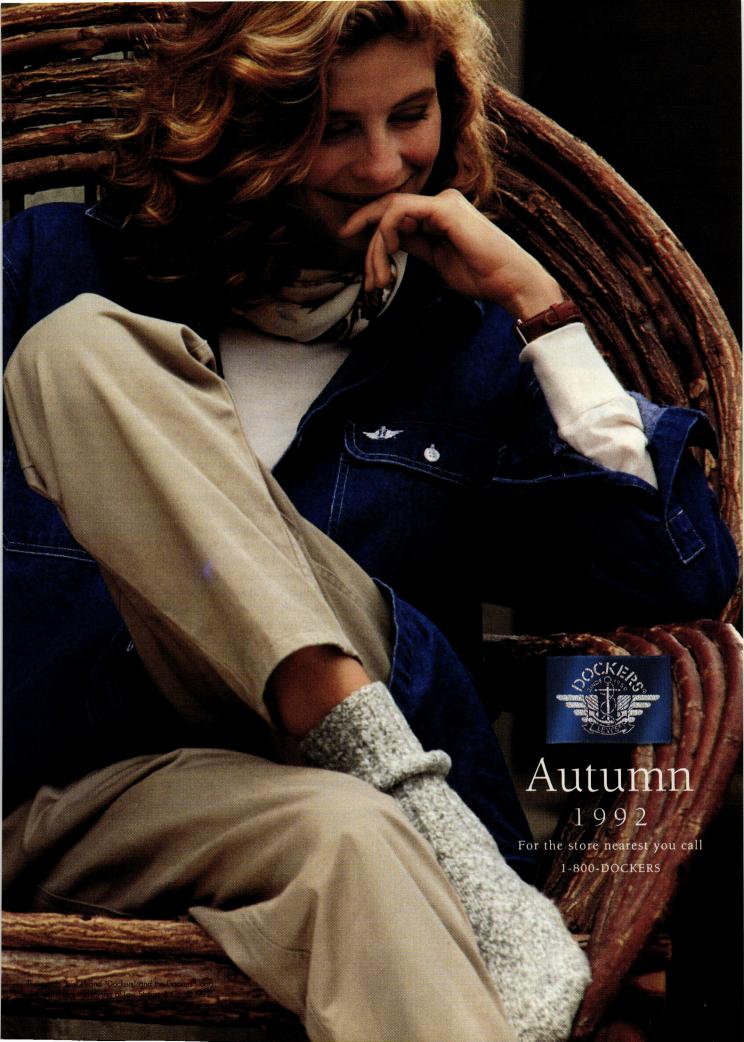
these pieces are not only beautiful but also spiritual, a combination of virtues that has attracted people like Bill Blass, Carolina Herrera, and Mario Buatta. (212-832-3092)

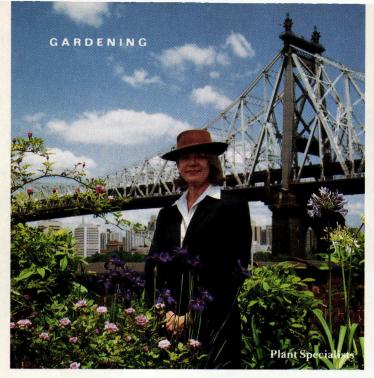
Harie Von Wijnberg From his apartment on lower Fifth Avenue, Von Wijnberg trades his finds with





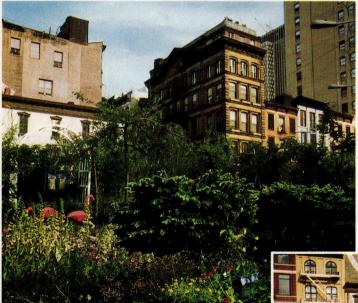
Among the antiques that Hepner, top, has





City Roots

Urban nurseries stock the necessities for Gotham's green thumb By Linda Yang



Perennials surround Dagny Du Val, top left, on Plant Specialists' rooftop in Long Island City. Top right: Many of the tropicals in Du Val's greenhouse move outdoors in summer to terraces and yards. Right: Bob Berg surveys his fertile triangle at Farm & Garden in Tribeca. His parents founded the nursery, Manhattan's oldest, in 1939. Above: Stock ranges from herbs to shrubs and small trees scaled to tight urban plots.

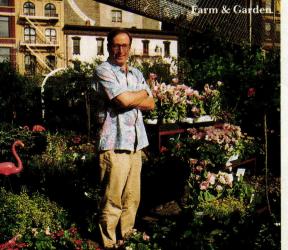


seem to be the only one who notices that the jackhammers pulverizing the street are louder than the honeybees buzzing boxes of Jackson & Perkins roses. Or that the traffic fumes are more intense than the honeysuckle fragrance. It's just a normal day in a New York City nursery. And to New York browsers these are normal sounds and scents. It's not so easy growing flowers in a skyscraper's shadow or finding trees that thrive in a pot. Space is tight and every leaf is cherished. So city gardeners in city nurseries must concentrate on choosing city plants. Florists and supermarkets may have baskets of begonias and grape ivy to hang in a balcony's shade. And at Greenmarkets (farmers' city fairs) there are pots of rosemary and petunias. But the mainstay for the really serious tiller is the handful of specialized stores whose sole interest is making the urban scene green.

I am foraging on a triangular intersection three blocks below Canal Street and just west of Chinatown's unmarked boundary. This is

Manhattan's oldest garden source. Fate's twists have turned this former gas station into the island's largest purveyor of horticultural wares. Here are scaled-down-to-city-size shovels, four-pound bags of cow manure, and the automatic watering systems that are de rigueur for rooftop gardeners with perennially dehydrated plants. Here too are the annuals, herbs, shrubs, trees, and houseplants for Park Avenue penthouses and Greenwich Village backyards. Surely truckers roaring past must wonder at the strangely bucolic view: huge tubs of flowering crab apples and Bradford pear trees, and tiered racks of ageratum and red-leaved basil.

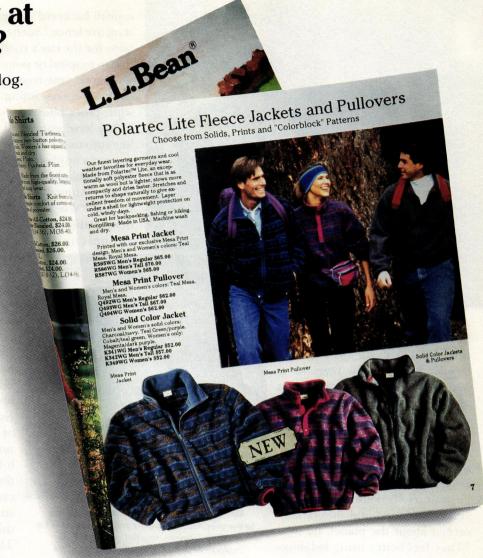
"This is the bestsmelling corner in town," says Bob Berg, Farm & Garden's owner. In 1939 his parents founded the nursery several subway stops south on land that is now the World Trade Center. "It looks like Dahlberg daisies and gerberas are more



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GARDENING

a small backyard"—and espaliered euonymus—"an instant live fence." Such espaliers also mean evergreen curtains for the city's roofless outdoor rooms. "People are drawn to spiral or pom-pom topiary junipers, too. They want good year-round form. I'm fascinated by weeping plants," he says, listing in quick succession his weeping white pines, blue Atlas cedars, mulberries, and cherries. "They have wonderful foliage, and that drooping outline softens the brick and concrete. Each plant's unique, so even a tiny balcony can have a focal point or architectural highlight." His customers also contend with city shade. "Annuals like impatiens lead in terms of volume," he says. "Where there's limited space and time for gardening, they give a full season of bloom. But shade-tolerant perennials—coralbells, astilbe, and bleeding

hearts—are now really in vogue."

As my taxi jostles over the 59th Street Bridge to Long Island City, I spy the converted foundry that is now Plant Specialists. The driver gets lost even though we take the sharp right to the river suggested by Dagny Du Val. Since 1982, Dagny and Tim Du Val have housed their indoor-outdoor city landscaping service in this cluster of medieval-looking brick structures. There's room too for their loft apartment and tenants like the Tom Cat Bakery—wind shifts carry a yeasty aroma through the site. Plants are everywhere. But this is not your classic garden shop. The hardy shrubs and trees distributed helter-skelter in the sunny cloister sport tags identifying the gardens Tim has chosen them for. Visitors may place orders for specimens they like.

But browsers are welcome to any tropical plant they can tote, says Dagny as we tour in the humid filtered shade of her two greenhouses. Interior plantscaping, as she calls her specialty, has been her passion since the late 1960s. Her potted tropicals—for indoor winter rooms and outdoor summer terraces—seem the ultimate in movable landscape design. Shadetolerant dracaenas and lady palms

light up patios where sun is in short supply. Slender Ming aralias and bamboo palms serve as sentinels at doorways. And euphorbias and cactuses are living sculptures. Only one caution: the move from indoors to out requires acclimatizing—a few days shelter from sun and wind. "These plants have to be treated like redheads."

popular than geraniums this year," he muses. "I wonder if people are tired of them, or they're no longer trendy. The past few years we've also sold praying mantis egg cases and ladybugs—\$9.95 for a package of 1,500 bugs, although I don't know who counted them. You keep them in the fridge until you see aphids." The Big Apple may be an artificial environment, but his customers consider themselves "real gardeners" and they're concerned about the planet, he says.

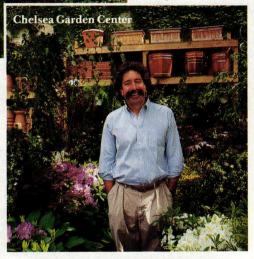
"They feel better using ladybugs

than chemical sprays."

Continuing on about two miles uptown, I stop by Chelsea Garden Center, which colors a corner where Tenth Avenue and West 23rd Street cross. A London plane tree-huge by street-tree standards-casts its shade on the flats of snapdragons and horseradish that brighten the sidewalk all day. A decade or so ago David Protell and his wife, Ruth Lapin, started this nursery "literally under a beach umbrella" on a rubblestrewn lot. The avenue's din fades once I'm inside the chain-link security fence where there's peaceful

strolling on narrow brick paths. "I designed these paths so no one gets muddy," David explains. Wild birds now choose his corner for their home. "You wouldn't believe how we've changed the ecology of this empty lot."

The neat rows of shrubs and trees include balled and burlapped cutleaf Japanese maples—"a fine texture for



David Protell, above, laid brick paths leading to the specimen evergreens and weeping trees he sells in Chelsea, top. Below: Henry Keil, cofounder of the family's firm, sits with his clan at their nursery in Queens.





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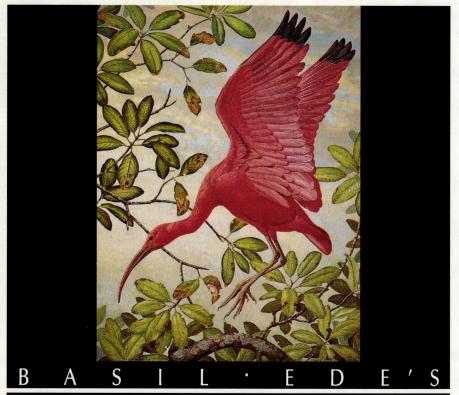
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GARDENING

Walking beneath Dagny's tropical trees is like taking a quick trip to Florida. Which, not coincidentally, is where she's just been. "I love picking plants for my clients," she says with a proud glance at an outlandish sixfoot column of polypody ferns and a weepy *Ficus exotica* with bizarre aerial roots. "There's always some great unexpected find."

Plunging on, a half hour deeper into Queens, I arrive at Keil Bros., where the mood is more like country. Here are a latticed outdoor sales area, cavernous indoor sheds, four greenhouses, and-most amazing of all—parking space for some four dozen cars. Since 1930, from this corner perch overlooking the Long Island Expressway, Keil Bros. has watched the city around it grow. The "Bros." then, Henry and Otto, are father and uncle, respectively, to the "Bros." now: Ronald, Richard, and (brother-in-law) Herbert Ahrens. "Our goal is to be a one-stop garden shop," says Richard. "Everything's here." He must know. He has worked in this store since he was ten years old. "In peak season we have between eighty and a hundred workers, but we never have enough room." Space notwithstanding, this is the city gardener's supermarket and encompassing three quarters of a block, it may well be the largest such store in town. Neatly jammed shelves hold the paraphernalia needed for the generously proportioned city gardens in Queens: small Rototillers, lawn mowers, hedge trimmers, and Weedwackers. And, of course, a sampling of every plant any city gardener could hanker for.

Somehow I find it consoling that this lively jumble of tempting wares is apparently appreciated too by those with no interest in gardening. "A lot of joggers and walkers use the nursery as a destination," Richard says without a hint of disapproval. "It's a good marking point from Flushing or Douglaston. And on dreary days the greenhouse is certainly uplifting. We even have a water fountain."

(For nursery addresses see Resources.)

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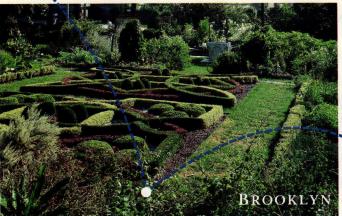


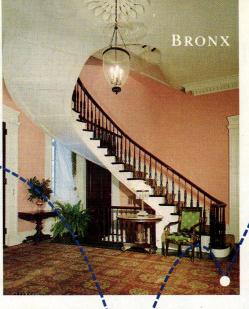
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At the Brooklyn
Botanic Garden, far
left, hedges border
beds of herbs. Left: A
freestanding staircase
winds through the
Bartow-Pell Mansion.

Borough Hopping

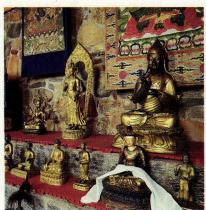
The city beyond

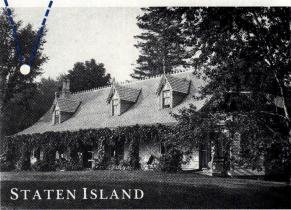
Manhattan offers

lesser-known

sights to see

By Phillip Lopate





f that gilded island Manhattan were ever swallowed by a tidal wave, we would quickly discover how richly endowed the four remaining boroughs are. For one thing, they hold more intact pieces of the distant past than Manhattan, where pressure to develop scarce real estate swept away most remnants of the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries. For another, they have tucked away such magical pockets of serenity and natural beauty that you cannot help exclaiming: "Who would ever believe we are still in New York City!" To experience the charm of these oases you must cast aside both the sordid and grandiose stereotypes of Gotham and appreciate that the genius of New York remains its diversity, its capacity to surprise.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11225; 718-622-4433) Though it tends to be overshadowed touristically by the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx, which has far more acreage and research facilities, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden need bow to no urban vista with respect to its green peaceful powers. Begun in 1910, it has amassed a fifty-two-acre suite of gardens, greenhouses, lily ponds, promenades, and cozy nooks that make it one of the prettiest, most restorative spots in all of New York.

If you enter through the Washington Avenue gates, you soon come across the curious Administration Building by McKim, Mead & White, a lighthearted (compared with the same architects' nearby Brooklyn Museum)

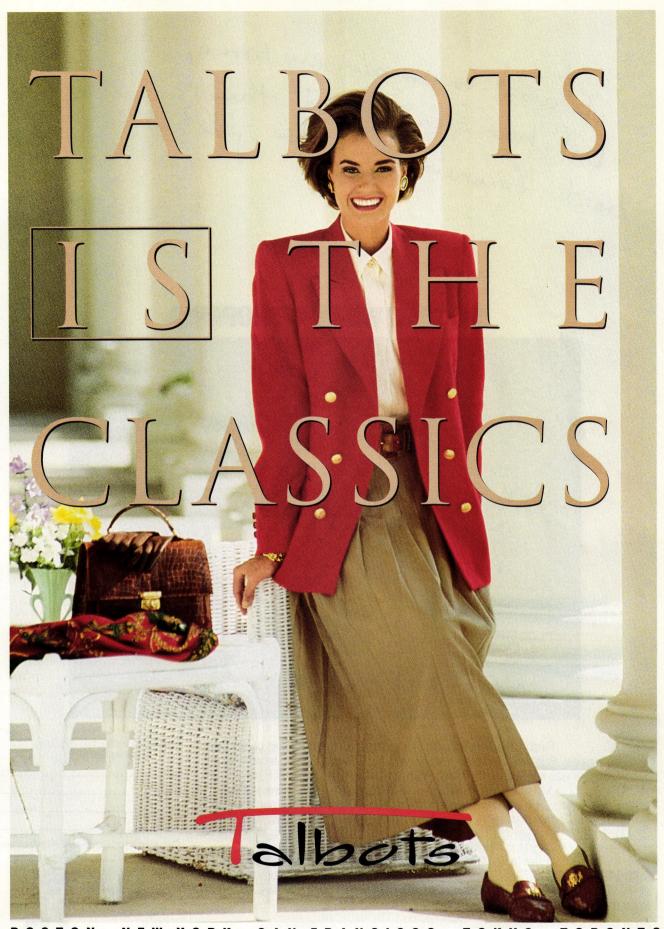
rambling stucco structure like an Italian Renaissance garden casino. Farther along the path lie the greenhouses of the Steinhardt Conservatory: completed in 1988, they house various artificial environments, exhibits, and propagation facilities. The Botanic Garden is justly proud of its bonsai collection, to which it has devoted an entire greenhouse. There are also pavilions dedicated to desert, warm temperate, and tropical vegetation where you are led through a tightly controlled space, past a range of specimens, as in many zoo installations.

The most visually arresting place on the grounds is the famous Japanese Garden. You sit in a wooden Viewing Pavilion and look out at the lake and the red torii, watch plentiful turtles paddling in the water and egrets poaching above them, observe the green foliage cunningly trimmed to suggest an ever so slightly miniaturized but perfected landscape. Stone lanterns have been placed to collect the snow. And indeed, it does not matter if the weather is balmy, rainy, or wintry: the Japanese Garden invariably produces a sense of tranquillity. You cannot hope to be alone, of course; there are always lovers on the

bridges, tourists snapping pictures from the Waiting House, sometimes rowdy schoolchildren. But one of the glories of the Botanic Garden is that it brings together such a polyglot social mix in so benevolent a setting.

In April and May, cherry blossom

Buddhist statues
line the altar, above
left, at the Jacques
Marchais Center
of Tibetan Art.
Above: An Alice
Austen photograph
of her family
house, c. 1880.



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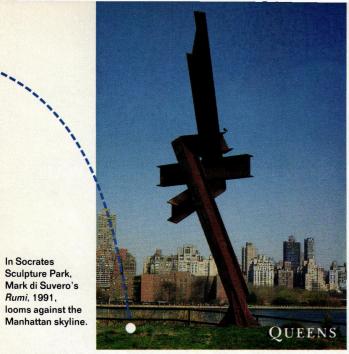
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season draws thousands of devotees to the Cherry Esplanade. The opening of the Cranford Rose Garden in June is always spectacular; the roses come back in fall as well. The lavender-edged Herb Garden may be visited year-round. The Fragrance Garden has been designed with the disabled and vision-impaired in mind: there are plantings at wheelchair level and signs in braille.

On any given day wandering through the grounds you may come across the Systematic Collection—an arrangement of plants which reflects their family groupings and relationships to one another. It is the method of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden to teach visitors about the (endangered) varieties of the natural world and the need for conservation unobtrusively, almost subliminally. This pedagogic tact brings the lesson home all the more forcefully. You want this beauty to last.

Jacques Marchais Center of Tibetan Art (338 Lighthouse Ave., Staten Island, NY 10306; 718-987-3500) Staten Island's version of Shangri-la is nested in a hilly residential neighborhood of modern villas, including a long horizontal Frank Lloyd Wright prefab, overtopped by a venerable functioning lighthouse. You may catch an S74 bus at the ferry terminal, get off at Lighthouse Avenue, and start climbing the hill—a taste of the cleansing exertion demanded by Asian mountain temples. Or you may drive right up. In either case, the discreet doorway gives little hint of the garden lodged within like an esoteric teaching.

The Tibetan museum perches atop the hillside: one level below is a lily pond, beneath that is steep woods. The peaceful, lushly tolerant garden, with its Burmese Buddhas and clay baboons bobbing up amid flower beds, maples, and a Tibetan orange tree, invites meditation, though one is in no way compelled to react spiritually. It is simply a delightful spot.

The center's two fieldstone buildings were erected in the 1940s to house the permanent collections of its founder, Jacques Marchais. As with many small institutes that started with one person's dream, the Jacques

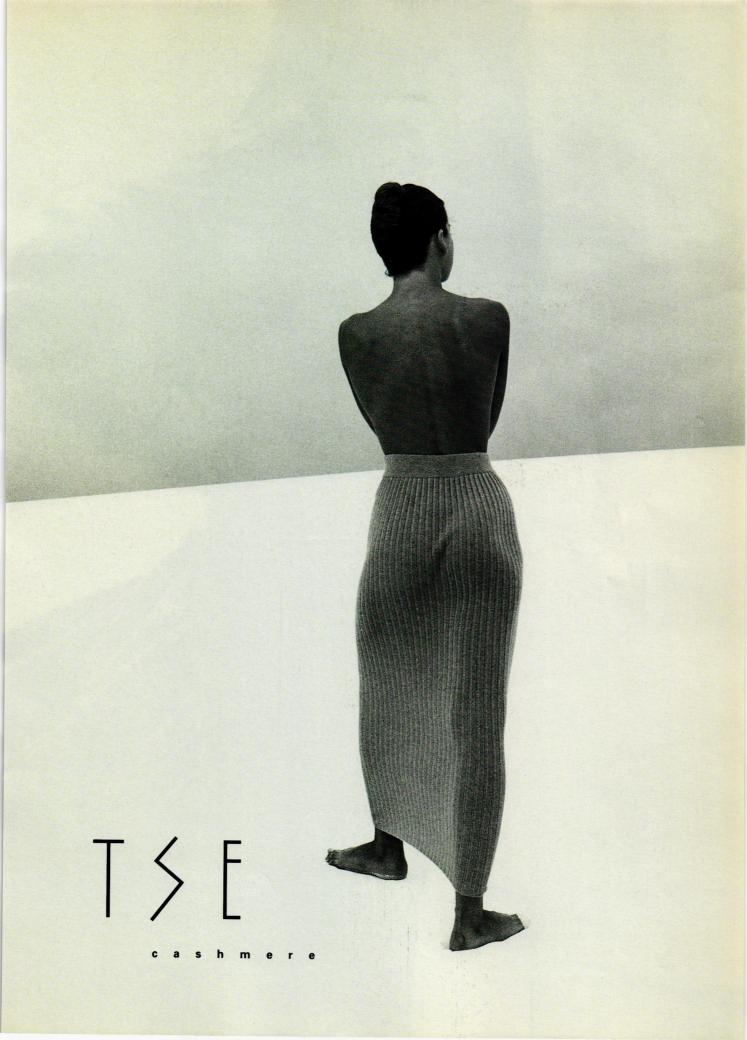
TRAVEL

Marchais Center has a rather dotty, obsessional air. "Jacques Marchais," it turns out, was the professional name of Jacqueline Norman Klauber, an ex-actress who acquired several husbands; the last, a chemical manufacturer named Harry Klauber, helped her realize her vision of creating a Tibetan art museum. Mrs. Klauber, or Jackie, as the present directors fondly call her, had never been to Tibet, but as a child she was given Tibetan figurines to play with as dolls and conceived a lifelong interest in that mystical culture. During the 1930s, when she ran an oriental art gallery on Madison Avenue, upheavals in China led to many Tibetan objects, ransacked from Buddhist temples, appearing on the market. The best she kept for herself.

In the last years of her life, afflicted by serious illness, Jackie designed the center's buildings after photographs in books about Tibet. She must have done a good job: when the Dalai Lama came to bless the center in 1991, he remarked with pleased surprise how Tibetan the buildings looked. The larger of the two structures displays as much of the permanent collection as space will allow. With its ornately painted columns and skylight, it has been modeled on a traditional temple, which underscores a certain ambiguity: is the center an art museum or a religious shrine? The directors try to walk a middle path, fully aware that Tibetan art objects often have a religious function, as a meditational aid, along with an aesthetic one. In front is an altar crammed with statues of Buddha and Chinese cloisonné incense burners. Against the walls are thangka paintings and glass cases displaying ceremonial objects, statuary, and artifacts of Tibetan daily life. The collection is spotty, but there are some wonderful pieces, like the wrathful red-faced six-armed Mahakala, the Green Tara thangka, and a magnificently carved Nepalese home shrine.

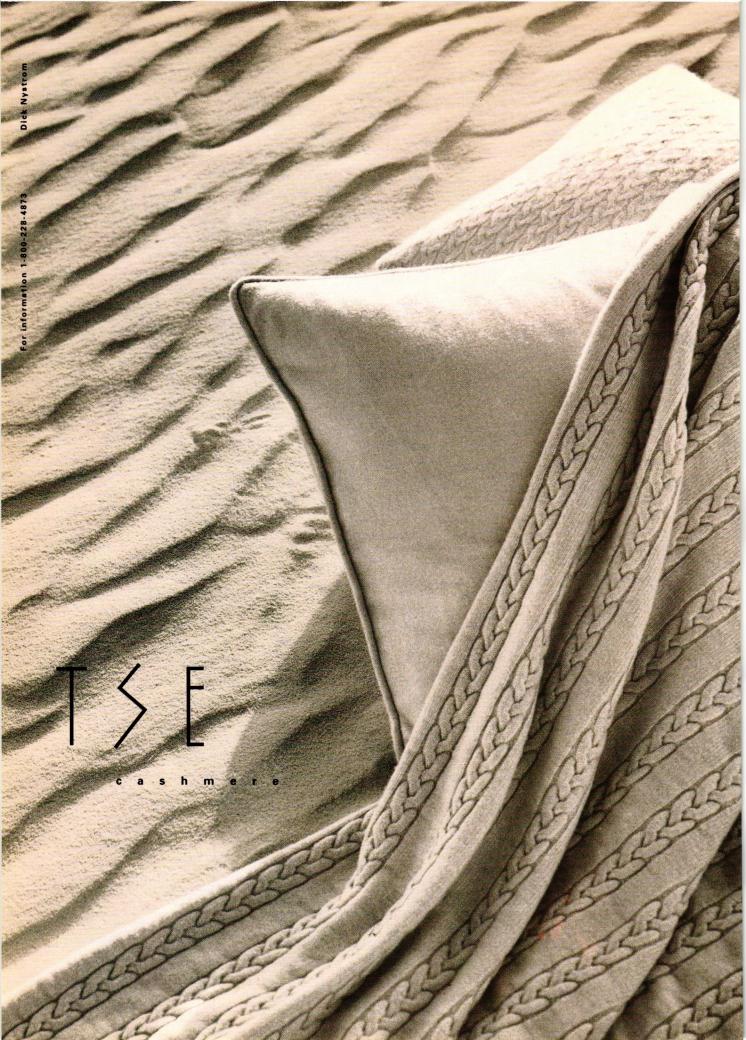
Alice Austen House Museum and Garden (2 Hylan Blvd., Staten Island, NY 10305; 718-816-4506) Partly to protect his family from the insalubrious air of Manhattan, John Austen, a well-to-do textile auctioneer, remodeled a farmhouse into a vine-covered Victorian cottage on the northeastern shore of Staten Island. Called Clear Comfort, his dream house was so evocatively romantic that boat passengers would point it out, envying whoever might live there.

For Austen's granddaughter, Alice, the house she grew up in was a snug enchanted world, and she photographed every inch of it. A passionate camera hobbyist, she caught the life of the smart set of her day: lawn tennis, tea parties, costume antics, and what Thomas Mann called the "disorder and early sorrow" of family life. In her self-portraits one glimpses a wry young woman who, for all her active enjoyment of sport, seems always a bit detached. She never married, choosing to live instead with her companion, Gertrude Tate, a dance instructor. After the stock market crashed, Alice was forced to turn Clear Comfort into a tearoom, though she gave short service to the unmannerly riffraff who would never have

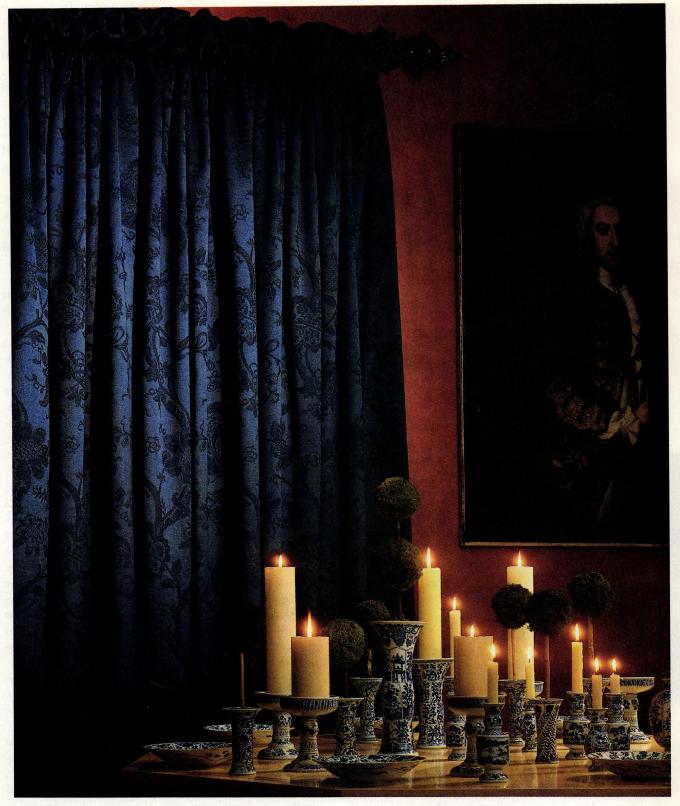




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gained entrance in the old days. The waterfront property remained intact, thanks to Alice's feisty spirit: when surveyors came to mark out a city road that would have severed her lawn from the river's edge, she threw their marking flags into the water until they gave up.

Recently restored, the house looks a bit too spruced up; the removal of old vines for structural reasons may have

cost it some patina. Inside, the parlor gives the strongest sense of what a charming cluttered nest the cottage must have been, filled with oriental gewgaws brought home by a seafaring uncle. Other rooms are used as galleries, which show exhibitions tied to the life of their heroine. There are also organized bicycle trips and walking tours of the neighborhood Alice Austen knew. The aim is to turn a house museum—with its tendency toward the static and musty—into an active community resource.

Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum (Shore Rd., Pelham Bay Park, Bronx, NY 10464; 718-885-1461) Hidden in the woods of Pelham Bay Park is a gem of a nineteenth-century mansion, the only remaining example of a style of gracious country living that once flourished in this neck of the Bronx. A dozen estates dotted the shore of Long Island Sound; the owners could catch a boat and get to their Wall Street offices in an hour.

Originally part of a 50,000-acre tract purchased by



Sculpture at the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum was placed by the artist.

Thomas Pell, an English doctor, from the Siwanoy Indians in 1654, the site was taken over eventually by Robert Bartow, a publisher and descendant of Pell, who erected the present neoclassical house. The family sold it to New York City in 1888, when, like its neighbor mansions, it was pressed into institutional service. The others, however, perished through neglect or fire, whereas Bartow-Pell had the good fortune to be rescued by a group of volunteers calling themselves the International Garden Club; in 1914 they restored the house and have kept it in beautiful condition ever since.

The gray stone classical revival façade is somewhat

You cannot
help exclaiming,
"Who would ever
believe we are still
in New York!"

austere; it speaks in dignified tones, it does not dazzle. But grandly proportioned interiors in every sense deserve the name "mansion." On the ground floor there is a majestic double parlor. The denticulated cornices and carved pediments (eagles and cherubs) display an attention to detail that makes every corner worth investigating. A freestanding staircase spirals to the second

story where floor-to-ceiling windows overlook formal gardens, a perfect backdrop for Sunday concerts.

The house serves as a museum of the decorative arts. Pier tables with marble tops, massive carved sideboards, a sumptuous canopied bed, lyre-back chairs attributed to the workshop of Duncan Phyfe—all convey the taste and culture of the original owners. Most of the objects on exhibit have no specific Bartow connection. There is, however, an arrestingly lachrymose needlepoint by Susan Bartow, Robert's cousin, of a woman reclining on a tomb beside a weeping willow.

Socrates Sculpture Park (Broadway at Vernon Blvd., P.O. Box 6259, Long Island City, NY 11106; 718-956-1819) In 1980 sculptor Mark di Suvero had the brainstorm of taking an abandoned dump on the East River near his studio and transforming it into a sculpture park. Six years later, after epic bureaucratic struggles, cleanup, and landscaping, the park hosted its inaugural show. Socrates Park has been going strong ever since, with a series of revolving exhibitions.

Though thousands of flowers are planted each year, Socrates Park retains the pleasantly grungy soul of a once-empty lot. An obvious reason for leaving it relatively bare is that it must accommodate future sculptures of unknown sizes. Whether due to the lingering influence of di Suvero's aesthetic (heroic, massive, abstract) or the practical requirements of outdoor public sculpture, the artworks tend to be nonobjective, minimalist, and large-scaled and to employ industrial materials. They must be able to withstand vandalism, weathering, and a certain amount of touching, lounging, walking on, or wandering through.

The park is leased for a nominal sum from the city, which may someday let it go to high-rise development. All the more reason to visit this vulnerable little miracle of urban regeneration now.

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum (32-37 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11106; 718-721-1932) Noguchi was a protean genius: a consummate sculptor, landscape and set designer, furniture maker, shaper of gardens and environments. His Picasso-like fecundity (which at times bordered on glibness) invites a certain skepticism on the part of those who prefer their geniuses to specialize. Nevertheless, even those who think Noguchi's art is not for them are likely to find themselves converted by seeing it in this uncanny setting, for the garden museum he left us in Long Island City was one of his



CHANEL BOUTIQUES: NEW YORK, BEVERLY HILLS, COSTA MESA, CHICAGO, SAN FRANCISCO, DALLAS, PALM BEACH, HONOLULU, WASHINGTON, D.C.

last and perhaps greatest works.

Noguchi had bought an abandoned photoengraving plant to use as a warehouse for his pieces. Then he conceived the idea of turning it into a permanent museum to house his work and added a wing and a walled garden. In converting the old plant, Noguchi and his architect-partner, Shoji Sadao, preserved as much of its industrial character as

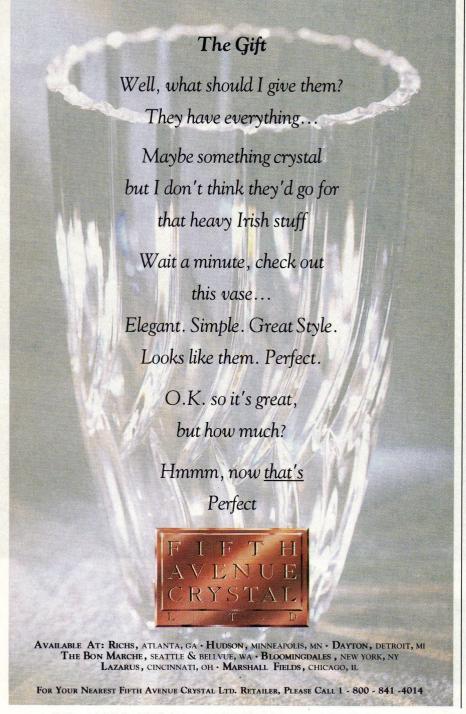
possible: exposed beams, brick walls, thirty-paned windows. The rusted metal ceiling in one room seems to comment on and balance the oxidized surfaces of the stone pieces. As befits a man who lived to eighty-four, Noguchi was fascinated by the processes of weathering.

The concrete-block façade of the new wing blends into the primarily industrial neighborhood like one more workshop. But inside, there are surprises: taking advantage of the triangle-shaped lot, the walls shoot off in oddly angled, secretive directions. High windows have been cut into the walls and left unglazed. When it snows, flakes collect on the gallery floor. This blending of indoor and outdoor is emphasized by the inevitability with which these galleries give out onto the garden.

It is in the garden sanctuary that Noguchi's passion for creating environments feels most concentrated. There is a purity of stone, wood, tree; the materials of man and nature meet with exquisite rectitude. The wooden benches seem like relatives of the ailanthus, birches, juniper, weeping cherry, Japanese black pine, katsura, magnolias, bamboo. Westerners are inclined to think of the garden as peculiarly Japanese, perhaps because the rocks are arranged with ritual-like exactness or because the whole possesses a timeless harmony. But Japanese visitors see it as representative of the best in occidental gardens.

This reconciling of cultures goes straight to the heart of Noguchi's yearning. Born half-Japanese, half-American, he grew up for the most part in the United States and recovered the Japanese side of his nature only through painstaking effort. Confessing to having felt an outsider in both cultures, he was compelled to live out this division, which is what makes his work so rich and tense underneath its apparent composure.

This is not a shrine to Noguchi: there are no private objects, newspaper clippings, or letters, and like many artists' collections of their own work, it has distinct autobiographical gaps. But there are tantalizing collages, and his set designs for Martha Graham, his dangling paper accordion lamp, and his furniture prototypes, like the biomorphic glass coffee table from 1944. And of course, the sculptures. Endless Coupling is the title of one cast-iron sculpture, and it typifies this artist's vision of bringing together wounded fragments to make a calmer whole.





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HG OCTOBER 1992



Check-in Time



Some of Manhattan's hottest chefs have become permanent residents in hotel dining rooms



BY REGINA SCHRAMBLING

ne of the ways I survived a trek through four states in four weeks last spring was by avoiding any restaurant attached to any hotel. Eating is the better part of travel, and I'd walk a mile to miss the usual \$10 toast and steam-table eggs. Safely back home in Manhattan, though, I soon realized that the rule of the road no longer applies here. My first choice for a great meal after all those trips was actually in a hotel. So was my second.

In a revival of a trend that dates at least from the time of Auguste Escoffier's reign at the Savoy and at the Carlton in London, the last year has seen a new wave of taste in New York hotel kitchens. Some of the best food in the city is now accessible through the lobby, past the reception desk. And while it may be pricey, it's still cheaper than flying to France.

Les Célébrités (155 West 58th Street, 212-484-5113), a jewel box hidden away in the beautifully restored Essex House, is the epitome of a hotel restaurant that transcends its home. Chef Christian Delouvrier immediately won three stars from *The New York Times* with combinations like his "burger" of buttery foie gras sandwiched between tart apple slices with a cider sauce and frisée and his Japanese-inspired salad of crisply sautéed sweetbreads with asparagus and meaty morels.

Main courses are weighted toward game, as in quail wrapped in prosciutto and garnished with more foie gras, and desserts are beyond decadent, like candied orange peel on a chocolate crust with bitter chocolate ice cream. Les Célébrités offers two degustation menus at \$82 and \$65, but eating à la carte makes more sense because the food is so rich.

Just a few blocks away the equally refurbished St. Regis Hotel is drawing adventurous eaters to **Lespinasse** (2 East 55th Street, 212-339-6719), a staid room, all starched white linen and gold accents, with an outrageous menu. Chef Gray Kunz makes East and West meet in copious dishes like his timbale of warm oxtail salad, a mound of the rich meat set into a wreath of crunchy fen-

At Lespinasse in the St. Regis, Gray Kunz, top left, and, above left, his superbly simple chilled double tomato soup. At 44 in the Royalton, Geoffrey Zakarian, below, gives salmon new style with a cucumber, walnut, and date salad, bottom left.



The taste that tops everything.

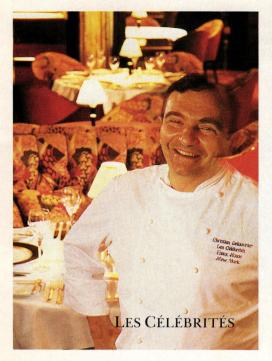


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nel in a nicely acidic dressing. Crispy salmon with shrimp paste showcases two unique ingredients, charoli nuts and calamansi, yet Kunz can also take items as elemental as really ripe tomatoes and transform them into heady soup. (This dish, a triumph of ingredients over ingenuity, depends entirely on the ripeness of the tomatoes and the coldness of everything that touches them.) Desserts, though, seem more cerebral than satisfying. Entrées run from \$22 to

\$29; four- and sixcourse degustations are relative bargains at \$47 and \$60.

Christian Delouvrier, left, of Les Célébrités in the Essex House and his foie gras burger, right.

Lespinasse takes its name from a Parisian woman known for her literary salons in the seventeenth century, while Les Célébrités refers to the likes of Phyllis Diller and Billy Dee Williams whose surprisingly credible paintings cover the walls. But in both rooms, the food's the thing.

At 44 (44 West 44th Street, 212-944-8844) in the Royalton off Times Square, style is more vital, which may be why it has survived the end of 1980s excess. A sleek publishing



A trend that dates back to Auguste Escoffier's reign at the Savoy and the Carlton is being revived

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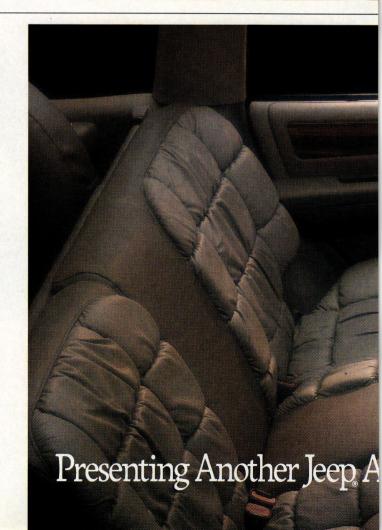
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crowd still fills the Starckly-designed room daily to perch on too-soft chairs around too-small tables and order name-brand water and creative food. With wine the tab for two people can easily hit \$100.

As conceived by chef Geoffrey Zakarian, polenta here is rich and creamy, more a soup than a porridge, with wild mushrooms and fresh thyme to intensify the savory sensations. Sautéed skate is cooked to a crisp and laid over barely crunchy lentils with spinach, all peasant foods elevated to midtown chic. Even something as roadworthy as grilled salmon gets a lift from the addition of a cucumber-walnut salad accented with sweetly chewy dates.

Innovations in hotel food are going beyond lunch and dinner as more and more kitchens add Japanese breakfasts as an alternative to the usual bacon and eggs or stale continentals. Typical is the reverent rendition in the **Jockey Club** (112 Central Park South, 212-664-7700) at the Ritz-Carlton. Grilled Norwe-

gian salmon is accompanied by a bed of dried seaweed; steamed Japanese sticky rice; pickled radishes and eggplant; miso soup; steamed snowpeas and carrots; and sencha tea, brewed from green leaves.

All of this relies on presentation and texture as much as flavor, in true Japanese tradition, and yet it's typical of a whole new approach. At its best, hotel food can take New Yorkers on the road without leaving town.

LES CÉLÉBRITÉS'S BURGER OF FOIE GRAS

- 4 small Granny Smith apples
- 4 teaspoons sugar
- 7–8 tablespoons unsalted butter or duck fat
 - 4 fresh shitake or porcini mushrooms, stems trimmed and caps sliced
 - 4 slices raw fresh foie gras, about 3 ounces each
 - ½ cup plus I tablespoon apple cider vinegar
 - ½ cup rich duck or chicken stock
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 teaspoons chopped fines herbes (parsley, chives, tarragon)
 - 1 bunch frisée or chicory

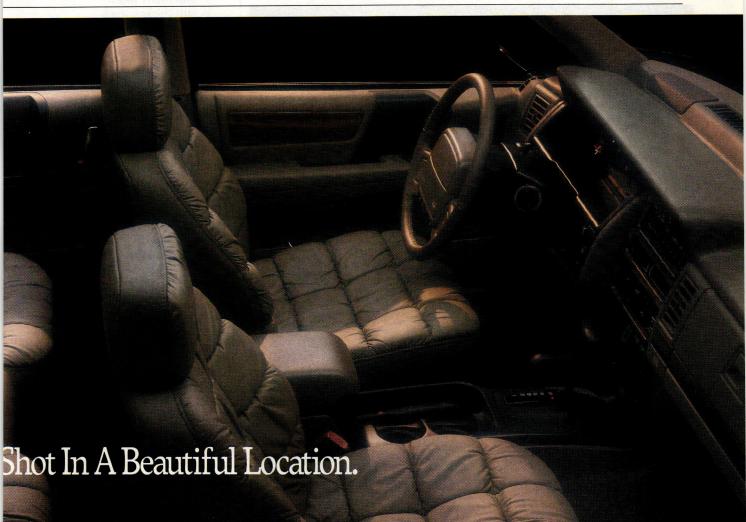
Heat oven to 400 degrees. Peel, core, and halve the apples, then cut into slices no thicker than the foie gras. Reserve the trimmings. Sprinkle the slices with sugar and sauté in 3 tablespoons of the butter until glazed and tender but not soft. Set aside. Add the mushrooms to the pan, using a bit more butter if needed, and sauté until crisp. Arrange a layer of apple slices in a baking dish. Lay the foie gras slices on the apple slices and top with the mushrooms and then the remaining apple slices. Bake 3 minutes.

Add the apple trimmings to the sauté pan along with the remaining butter and cook until soft. Raise the heat; add ½ cup of the vinegar and boil until the liquid is reduced to a glaze. Whisk in the stock until emulsified, then strain.

To serve, blend the remaining vinegar with the olive oil and the herbs and toss with the frisée. Arrange a mound of frisée on each plate and place a burger alongside. Drizzle sauce over and around the burgers. Serves 4.

LESPINASSE'S CHILLED DOUBLE TOMATO SOUP

- 2 large, almost overripe beefsteak tomatoes
- 2 large, almost overripe yellow tomatoes





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FOOD

Salt
Freshly ground pepper
2 pinches sugar
Basil leaves, fennel sprigs,
or chive stems

Everything that touches the tomatoes must be very cold. To start, chill a blender jar, two glass bowls, and four serving bowls until icy. Several hours before serving, place the red tomatoes in the blender and purée until smooth. Transfer to a fine sieve and strain into one of the glass bowls to remove the seeds. Repeat with the yellow tomatoes. Season each purée with salt and pepper to taste and a pinch of sugar. Chill separately until icy.

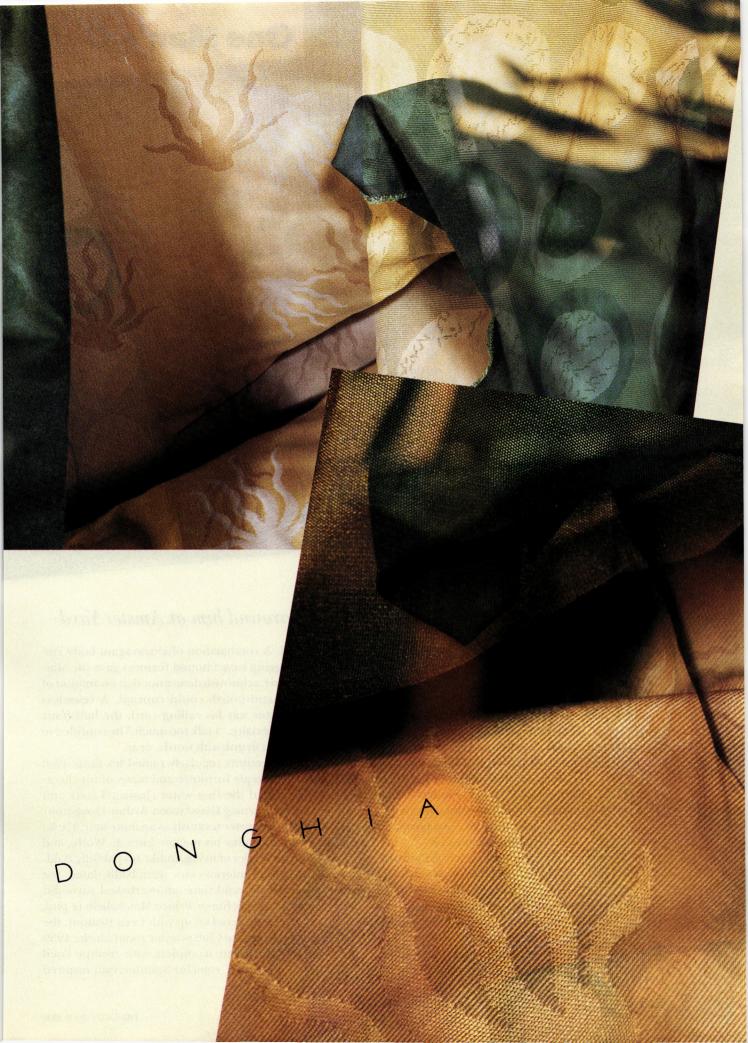
Just before serving, separately run each purée briefly through the blender again. Then pour the red and yellow purées simultaneously into the serving bowls so the colors remain distinct. Garnish with fresh herbs. Serves 4.

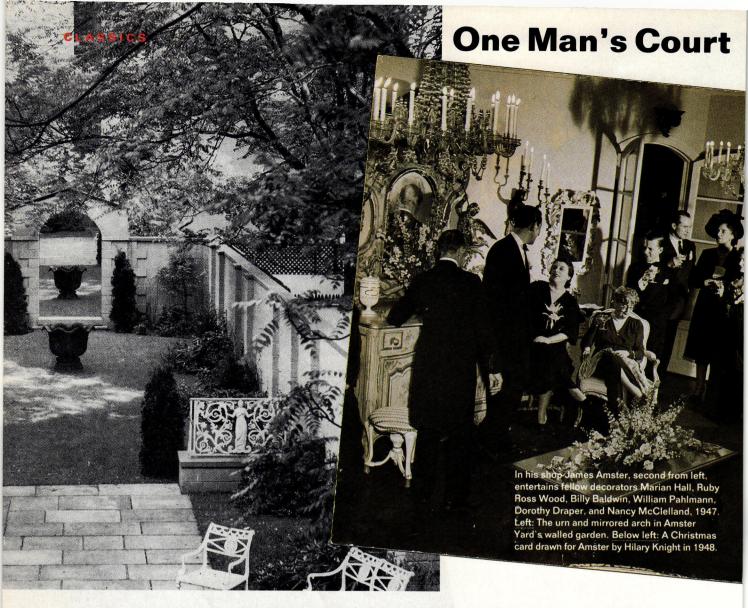
44'S SALMON LEAF ON CUCUMBER, WALNUT, AND DATE SALAD

- 13/4-2 pounds fresh salmon fillet
 - 1 seedless cucumber, peeled
 - 3/4 cup walnut halves, coarsely chopped
 - ½ cup Medjool dates, pitted and thinly sliced
 - 1/3 cup chicken stock
 - 1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
 - 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus small amount for the grill
 - 2 shallots, peeled and minced
 - 1 tablespoon snipped chives 1 teaspoon chopped herbs
 - 1 teaspoon chopped herbs, such as parsley, thyme, or rosemary Salt Freshly ground pepper

Have the salmon cut on a 45-degree angle into 4 thin slices, each with a thin strip of the skin still attached. Heat grill while making the salad. Cut the cucumber in half lengthwise and scrape out the center. Place the 2 halves in a kitchen towel and press down to bruise the flesh a bit, then cut into chunks. Place in a bowl with the walnuts and dates. Whisk together the chicken stock, lemon juice, oil, shallots, and herbs; season to taste with salt and pepper. Pour over the cucumber mixture to coat lightly and toss to blend; reserve the remainder to pass with the fish.

Lightly oil the hot grill. Season the salmon fillets with salt and pepper and lay on the grill. Cook 4–5 minutes, turning once. Divide the cucumber mixture among 4 serving plates and top each portion with a fillet. Serves 4.





A society decorator gathered a charmed circle around him at Amster Yard

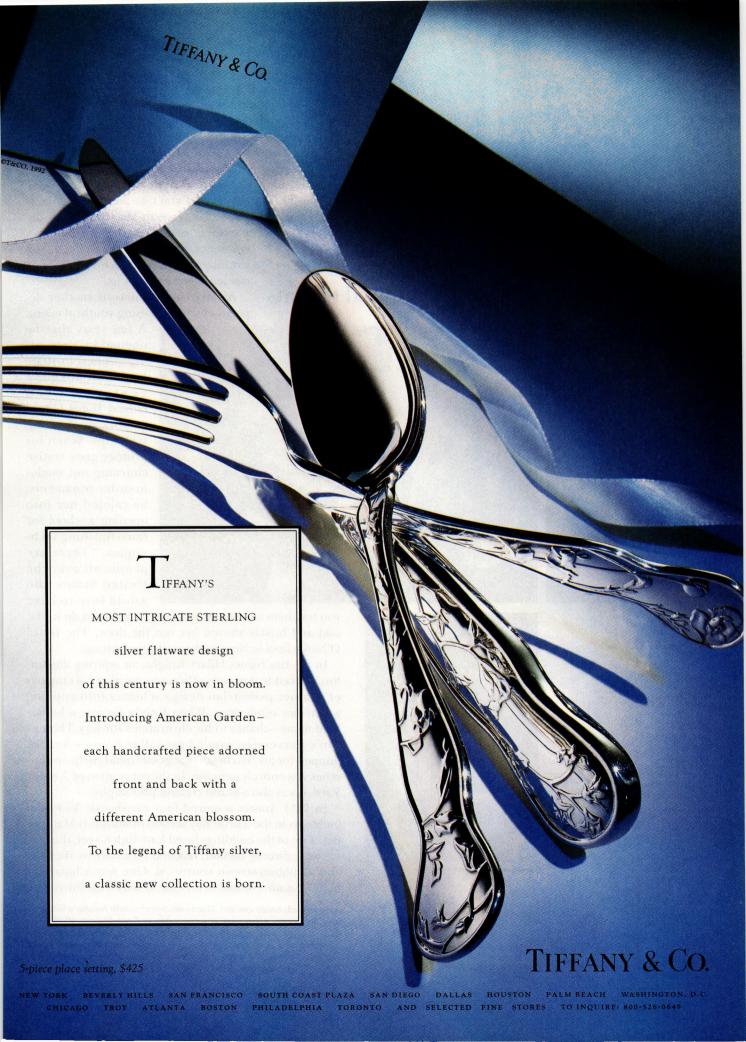
n a city whose architectural landmarks tend to be giants puffed with self-importance, New York's Amster Yard is a gentle, even retiring, monument. For nearly fifty years this pocket-size collection of apartments, offices, and shops on East 49th Street has helped to preserve Manhattan's dwindling supply of intimate scale and calm civility. When Amster Yard was designated an official city landmark in 1966, some critics

found its neo-federal façade less than distinguished. But as architect Philip Johnson, who championed the designation, has observed, "Architecture isn't the point; urbanism is."

A folly in the best sense, the Yard is the masterpiece of Manhattan society decorator James Amster, who died in 1986 at the age of seventy-seven. Tall and bumbling, he was, a former employee remembers, "a charming, lovable fellow" with the proverbial

heart of gold. A combination of extravagant body language and sagging basset hound features gave the Massachusetts native a clownish demeanor that no amount of sartorial spit-and-polish could conceal. A ceaseless stream of chatter was his calling card, the half-hour monologue a specialty. "I talk too much," he confided to a reporter. "I get drunk with words, dear."

Though competitors regularly raided his shop filled with fanciful baroque furniture and many of his clients were celebrities of the first water (Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn, Corning Glass tycoon Arthur Houghton), few people took Amster seriously as an innovator. He set no great trends, unlike his mentor Elsie de Wolfe, and imposed no new styles of living, unlike his pal Billy Baldwin. Many Amster interiors now seem badly dated, but three projects transcend time: an overbaked surrealist showroom for the perfumer Prince Matchabelli (a pink and black confection cooked up with Cecil Beaton); the wacky baroque Terrace Club powder room for the 1939 New York World's Fair (complete with trompe l'oeil chairs); and a series of colorful Scandinavian-inspired





Amster had a genius for spotting talent— and potential tenants

interiors for a Swedish-American cruise liner.

The real reasons for Amster's success were unflappable optimism and an extraordinary knack for making friends in high places, something he'd known how to do since an early stint in his own antiques department at Bergdorf Goodman. One of his chums was the grand duchess Marie of Russia, who also worked at Bergdorf's, as a milliner. "The world is full of all sorts of people," Amster liked to say, "and if you take advantage of your

> particular place in Macy's stocking department or at Bergdorf Goodman's cosmetics counter, let me tell you, you can meet everybody. And everybody can teach you everything."

> Amster had a genius in another department, too: spotting youthful talent.

A few years after he opened his decorating business in 1938, he put an unknown genteel artisan named Isabel O'Neil to work marbleizing tabletops. When his protégé grew restive churning out madeto-order ornaments, he cajoled her into opening a school for faux-finishing techniques. "There are people all over the United States who would love to have



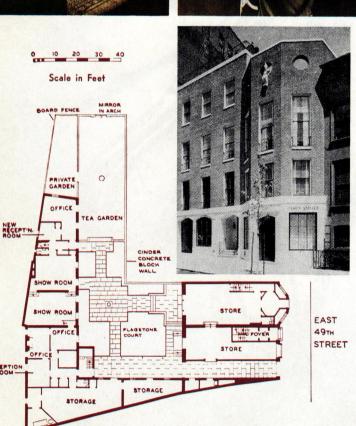
you tell them what to do and how they should do it," he said and briskly shoved her out the door. The Isabel O'Neil school in New York is still going strong.

In the late forties Hilary Knight, an aspiring illustrator, worked in Amster's office, too, turning his employer's rather pedestrian design schemes into enticing watercolor renderings. When Knight became a household name—thanks to his illustrations for Kay Thompson's perversely comic best-seller *Eloise*—Amster jumped for joy. His belief that good friends help one another was entirely genuine. In the conception of Amster Yard, it was also a sound creative philosophy.

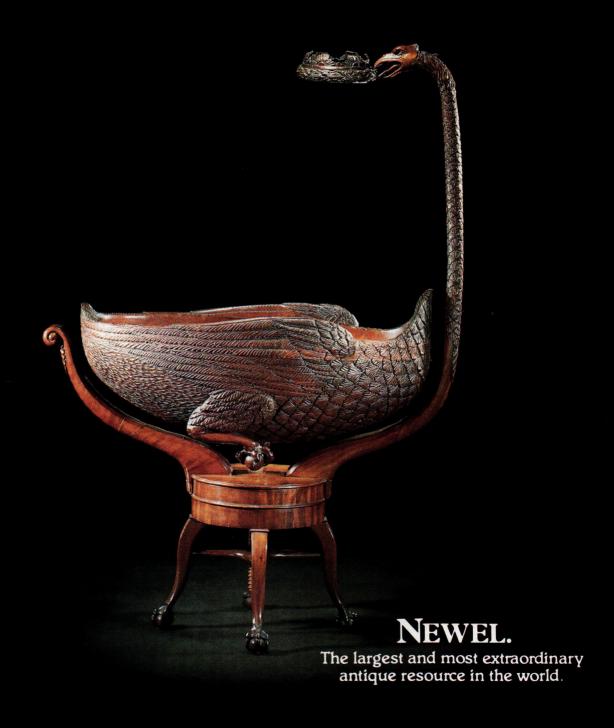
In 1944 Amster acquired four ramshackle Victorian buildings in the Turtle Bay section of midtown Manhattan. Two of the buildings faced East 49th Street, the others were directly behind, reached via a narrow alleyway and a rubbish-strewn courtyard. One was a boarding house, another home to an elderly lady with thirty-five

Amster Yard, inside and out. Clockwise from top left: Amster's living room in summer slipcovers. The decorator-landlord. Elsie de Wolfe, third from left, holding court in his shop. Harold Sterner's crisp neofederal brick façade, which replaced the worn brownstone fronts of two Victorian houses. The orderly plan imposed on a warren of rooms. Billy Baldwin's gardenia-leaf green living room in his Amster Yard apartment.





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cats, another a carpentry workshop. With memories of his elegant child-hood home dancing in his head, Amster convinced two friends—art director Ted Sandler and architect-painter Harold Sterner—to help him transform this vermin-infested warren into a gracious experiment in communal living, with apartments, shops, offices, and showrooms. The entire renovation was so successful

that national radio broadcast news of its grand opening.

Slicing off soot-stained brownstone and lugubrious Victorian details, Sterner (an alumnus of both McKim, Mead & White and Delano & Aldrich) rusticated the ground floor and refaced the remaining stories with red brick and white stone trim. Above an angled bay on the street front rose a classical parapet pierced with oculi and ornamented with a limestone urn. The filthy courtyard became a garden criss-crossed by flagstone walks. Built into the east wall of the garden was a pediment-crowned arch filled with a vast sheet of mirror, which reflected a Japanese iron urn standing at the center of a manicured lawn.

Cramped interiors were reconfigured so that each of the six apartments faced the garden, all but one with its own terrace. Canvassing his vast circle of friends for potential tenants with publicity value, Amster cannily promised to accommodate individual taste and requirements in the painstaking renovation. Billy Baldwin had a weakness for fine French furniture, so Amster installed Versailles parquet flooring in the largest apartment. Entranced, Baldwin moved in and stayed ten years. Midwestern patron of the arts and philanthropist Leonard Hanna, who claimed a family history of weak legs, moved in after Amster agreed to the installation of a private elevator. Harold Sterner and his wife, Broadway actress Paula Trueman, took the duplex apartment at the far end of the garden and Amster claimed the small apartment above his street-front shop. The succession of equally famous residents who signed leases over the years included fashion designer Norman Norell and sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

Today Amster Yard is still a desirable address. Swid Powell, the tabletop-design firm, has offices in Billy Baldwin's old lair. Downstairs is the Glen Gery Corp.'s Brickwork Design Center. Amster's former shop is now an investment counselor's office, but the genial spirit of the house-proud decorator continues to preside over the enclave that bears his name. Outside its walls his civic-minded generosity left a lasting mark on the preservationist Turtle Bay Association, on nearby Peter Detmold Park, and on Prescott Neighborhood House, a public welfare project for needy children. It is Amster Yard, however, that remains his most personal gift to the city.



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HG OCTOBER 1992

would hate to eat dried shrimp, but I think it's cool that other people do and I'm happy I don't have to." Tibor Kalman, kingpin of the progressive New York design firm M&Co—all-purpose visual

consultants and dauntless advocates of what Kalman calls "ideas, ideas, ideas, not empty decoration"—is giving a guided tour of one of his latest projects. As editor in chief of *Colors*, a new multilingual magazine financed by the Italian clothing manufacturer Benetton and geared to teens the world over, Kalman has finally been

given a forum broad enough to encompass his far-flung energies and imagination.

"We want to create a sense of a supercommunity among young people that isn't based on national origins or where people

spirits are," he explains, paging through articles, puffing on a cigarette. "The main thing we're trying to inform our audience about is tolerance for each other's cultures." Toward that end the semian-

nual publication has run features on everything from global snacking—Iranians like watermelon seeds; the Japanese go for a briny treat that both disgusts and delights



Kalman—to unsung humanitarians, ingenious uses of garbage, and why some aphrodisiacs are better than others.

Not many college-dropout self-taught graphic designers wind up directing an awardwinning *Talking Heads* video

and two Subaru television ads and producing their own line of humorously skewed timepieces. Nor do they keep a bagel tacked to their bulletin board and profess an abiding admiration for "really dumb and simple things." Kalman isn't a one-man band, though. His wife, Maira

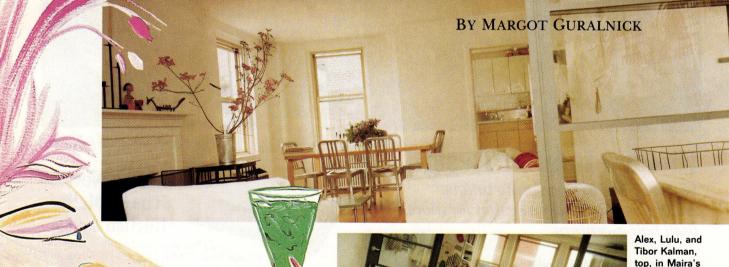
Kalman, writer and illustrator of arguably the wittiest, most original children's books since Ludwig Bemelmans, is the one who erased all but the numbers one, four, and ten from the M&Co watch that wound up in New York's Museum of Modern Art. M&Co, in turn, makes the typography in her books jibe with her endearingly wigged-out charac-

ters. (Max in Hollywood, Baby, the latest adventure of her poet dog and his "dazzling Dalmatian bride," is due this month from Viking.)

The Kalmans' joint history dates back to their NYU days in the late sixties, when Tibor took off to harvest sugarcane in Cuba and Maira wrote "tormented poetry." Now the parents of ten-year-old Lulu (whose middle

Family Act No design role is out of character for the four Kalmans

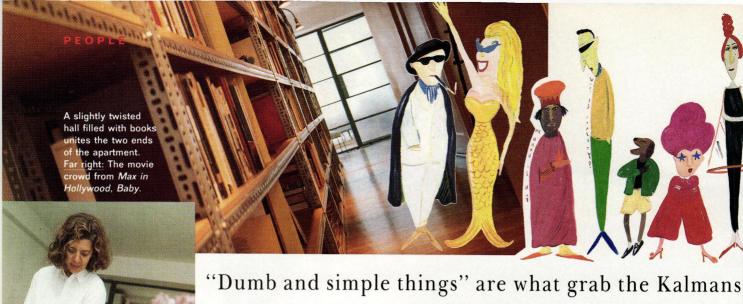
10



Producer Bella Broccoli, left, a character from Maira Kalman's new book, *Max in Hollywood, Baby,* toasts Max with a brussels sprouts and sauerkraut shake.

Alex, Lulu, and Tibor Kalman, top, in Maira's studio. Center: M&Co's Askew clock. Above and left: The living room is outfitted with what Tibor calls "generic furniture." Maira's studio is screened by a steel-frame window wall.





Maira peruses a photography book.

Right: A spread from Tibor's

magazine, Colors





Alex in his narrow bedroom, <u>right</u>, which architect Ross Anderson of the New York firm Anderson/Schwartz modeled after a sleeping car on a train. Details see Resources.

Parlor games, above. Left: The kitchen features a mustard linoleum floor, a table built into a corner, and a foreign soda bottles display. name is Bodoni, after a favorite typeface) and Alex, seven, the couple also share newly enlarged quarters in a 1930s Greenwich Village apartment building with their cockatiel, Barney, and a lot of books. So many books, in fact, that the Kalman reference library became the backbone of architect Ross Anderson's plan when he joined their snug one-bedroom apartment with the not-much-bigger-one next door. What Anderson dubbed the "wall of knowledge," a long angular hall lined with Erector set—style shelves, now serves as a tidy link between the two spaces. Off

the front door there's the living/dining room, which is really the everything room because it includes Maira's narrow studio, set off by a glass and steel window wall. At the opposite end of the hall another window wall encloses—and exposes—the master bedroom, and across the way Alex builds wooden boats, practices flying, and sleeps in a sliver of a room arranged like a train couchette.

The design statement ends there. Walls are uninterrupted expanses of white; no collections are on display, except for a kitchen lineup of soda bottles from recent trips to India and the Caribbean. Most of the furniture falls into Tibor's "so dumb and simple you don't even notice it" category, and even pieces hammered together by Lulu and Alex, the resident table makers, have the spare serviceable look of Bauhaus prototypes. "Pretty much everything we live with is useful either for making art or for making meals," observes Maira, whose mother lives nearby and keeps the family fed. Which means that when friends, such as upstairs neighbor Isaac Mizrahi, drop in, they are likely to find all four Kalmans at work—Tibor on the phone discussing the documentary on world-wide street music he's about to make, Maira sketching the man

she spotter walking his after din dreaming carpentry palex balant back of the his arms flat.

she spotted in Miami walking his black pig after dinner, Lulu dreaming up her next carpentry project, and Alex balanced on the back of the sofa with his arms flapping.

Looks tired.



Takes a jacuzzi.



Then a sauna.



Feels like new.

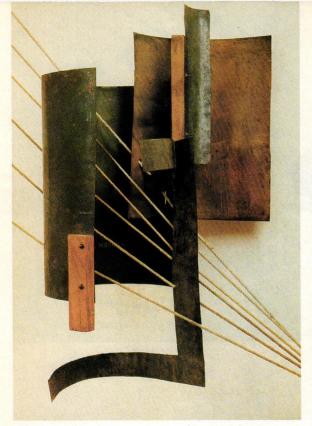


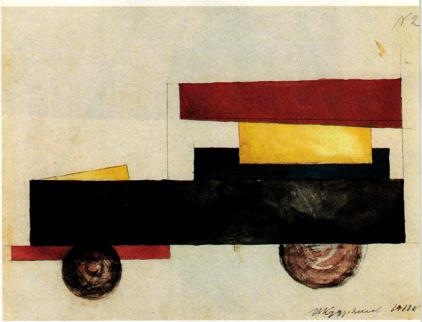
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Constructivism in the Round

No single party line encompasses Vladimir Tatlin's Counter-relief, 1914-15, above, the organic forms of Boris Ender's Colors of Nature, 1924, right, the stylization of Sara Bunzis's The Forge, 1931, below, and Ivan Kudriashev's Automobile, 1918, above right, and the elemental quality of suprematist Ivan Puni's Relief with Hammer, 1915-21, below right.

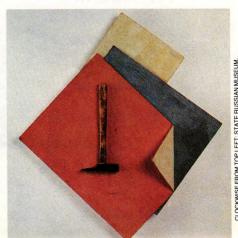
een from a distance of some seventy years, the Russian constructivists seem to be one big happy revolutionary family committed to primary colors and interpenetrating circles, squares, and triangles. But back in 1915, at the Saint Petersburg opening of "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition," leading young artists Kasimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin fell into a fistfight. For them, as for many of their peers, feelings were high and ideologies opposed. Malevich had surprised everyone by hanging canvases of composed, spatially mysterious geometric shapes set in an infinity of white space, which made an ideological case against Tatlin's sculptural constructions of scrap metal and cardboard. The immaterial was confronting the material, and ideology got physical.

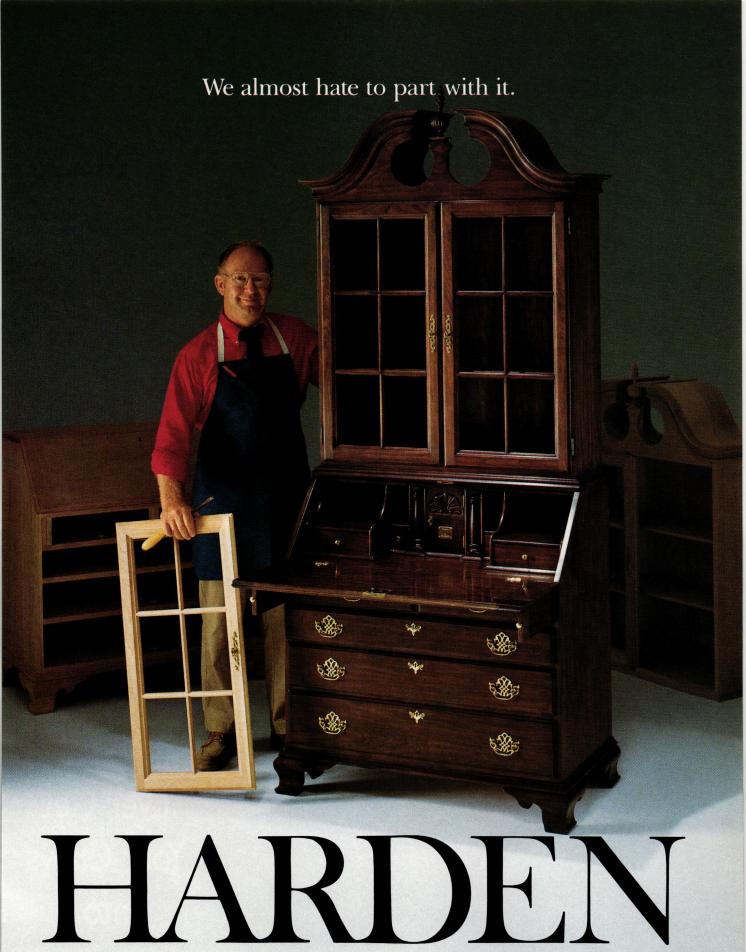
These and other splendid disagreements pulse this fall on the walls of the newly restored and expanded Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in a show called "The Great Utopia" (Sept. 25-Dec. 15). With more than eight hundred objects, its simple critical mass provides evidence that the Russian avant-garde movement was among the most innovative and vital of the century. "The Great Utopia" discounts any single party line of constructivist groupthink. Some of the works are arranged to re-create the original shows, and these suggestive juxtapositions conjure the positions and conflicts that galvanized advanced Russian artists from 1915 to 1932.

By the last curve of the ramp in

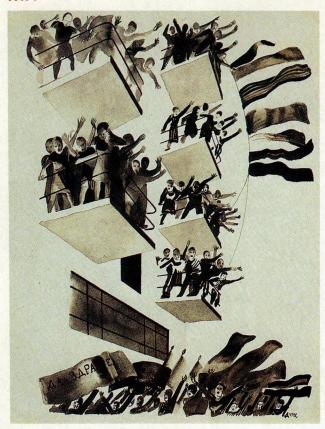


New facets of the Russian avant-garde emerge at the Guggenheim Museum BY JOSEPH GIOVANNINI





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Alexander Deineka's *Demonstration*, 1926, <u>above</u>, and Vladimir and Georgi Stenberg's *Springtime*, 1929, <u>opposite</u>, represent the reemergence of figuration within the avant-garde.

Frank Lloyd Wright's luminous rotunda, it is clear that the avant-garde's experiments were not just abstract, formalist, and nonobjective but also organic and figurative. It is also clear in this survey of an era that the constructivists were moving, in Tatlin's phrase, "into everyday life." But for Stalin, much of the exhibition might have been available in the GUM department store in the 1930s. Suprematist plates and saucers by Malevich, Kandinsky, and Nicholas Suetin swirl with richly colored abstract shapes; textile designs by Sara Bunzis incorporate mechanical patterns; a watercolor by Ivan Kudriashev goes so far as to propose a suprematist truck.

The pieces—many of them new to the West and little known even in Russia-shed light on an incompletely understood period. Scholars of the avant-garde, officially discouraged for decades by the USSR, are still sorting out facts and interpretations as material emerges from attics and archives. The show introduces several new figures-perceptual artist Boris Ender, for example, who favored organic forms—and some brilliant new works: Olga Rozanova's painting of large stunning red squares, soured by a plane of violet, seems to anticipate Rothko by decades. The exhibition also gives greater credit to people who have seemed marginal, such as Ivan Puni, whose sculptural wall reliefs resemble Tatlin's, dematerialized with paint. There are surprises even for enthusiasts who have soaked up all the Russian avant-garde shows since glasnost. Among them: a stark and powerful group of

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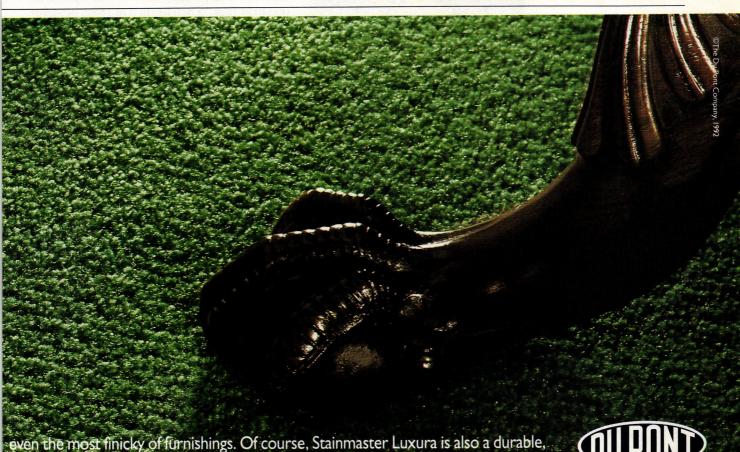
Flooring Systems

black paintings done by Alexander Rodchenko in the late teens and early 1920s reunited for the first time.

The curators' pluralistic approach generates a number of insights. One is a clearer perspective on the perennial tug-of-war between abstract and representational art. Figurative art apparently reappeared earlier than generally thought. In the mid 1920s, well in advance of state-imposed socialist realism, the show suggests, some artists were coming to believe that the language of non-objective art—at first thought to be a universally understood vocabulary of lines, planes, and color—could not say what they wanted to say.

The many abstract works make this a spiritual homecoming for the Guggenheim, which was founded as the Museum of Non-Objective Painting. Solomon Guggenheim himself instructed Wright to design a museum to embody the language of the paintings, and Wright's spiraling rotunda proves an inspired context for these kindred works. Curators have brilliantly placed in the center of the rotunda a model of Tatlin's Monument to the Third International—another model of the spiraling leaning tower was once carted through revolutionary Moscow. At the Guggenheim, Tatlin's material vortex, emphatic in its use of steel, spins within Wright's immaterial one, its painted plaster-coated concrete somehow abstract. Wright and Tatlin, who were nearly contemporaries, seem to be meeting here. We can only speculate whether they would be shaking hands or shaking fists. A





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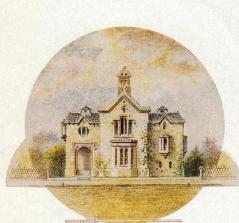
Reviving a Pioneer



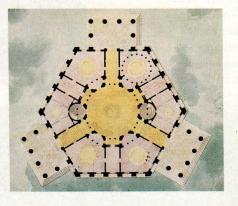
Left: Gothic revival library, 1838. Below: Competition plan for Brooklyn City Hall, 1835. Bottom center: Scrollwork chair.

A man of many
firsts, Alexander
Jackson Davis
finally comes
into his own

BY EVE M. KAHN



A Tudor cottage in New Jersey, c. 1848, above. Right: An 1830s study of an Egyptian temple.





lexander Jackson Davis singlehandedly set more architectural precedents-and near precedents-than just about any architect before or since. During his peak years (1830 to 1860), he was responsible for not only the country's first Gothic revival villa and first house-pattern book but also some of the first broad expanses of glass, first attempts to adapt romantic buildings to their sites and owners, and first full-perspective full-color presentation drawings. When he died in 1892, however, his work was so unfashionable that The New York Times printed no obituary, and he remained forgotten until the 1960s, when historic preservationists and tradition-minded scholars dusted off his memory. Now he is at last receiving his full due: his first retrospective opens at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on October 20, accompanied by the first comprehensive catalogue of his achievements.

Viewing the show and the book can be downright eerie; every post—Civil War architectural trend seems to have at least one root in Davis's work. The shingle style draws on his rambling turreted mansions; turn-of-the-century mania for the Beaux-Arts was predicted by his colonnade-ringed state capitols; modernism echoed the generous windows he not-sohumbly dubbed Davisean; and neo-Victorian follies like Seaside, a planned community in Florida, would have been far less thinkable

without his modest but lavishly ornamented cottages.

"He was a modern architect who worked in traditional styles in a modern way; he



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Every post-Civil War architectural trend seems to have at least one root in Davis



New York City's Astor Hotel, c. 1830.

brought American architecture into the modern era. And he's especially significant to the development of the American suburban house, which has become such a way of thinking people will be amazed to see that someone actually invented it," raves Robert A. M. Stern, a Davis devotee since college. The exhibition's curator, Amelia Peck-who collaborated with consultant curator Jane B. Davies, a Davis scholar for forty yearseven envisions Davis as a harbinger of the future. "They're quirky and wonderful, and I'll be amazed if they don't spark someone's imagination," she says of the show's 100 drawings, four chairs, and one table (Davis was also one of the first American architects to design complete furnishings for his own structures).

In person, apparently, he was a terror: arrogant about his talents, convinced of architecture's supremacy over all other arts, and so driven and self-absorbed that he preferred to live in his New York City office rather than with his wife and two children. He had come to New York in 1823, at age twenty, the self-educated and impoverished son of an upstate New York publisher of religious tracts. Sure that he had "imbibed a portion of that high imaginative spirit so necessary to con-

stitute an artist," as he later wrote, he studied drawing at the National Academy of Design and then found employment and a modicum of fame by rendering existing buildings as illustrations for guidebooks.

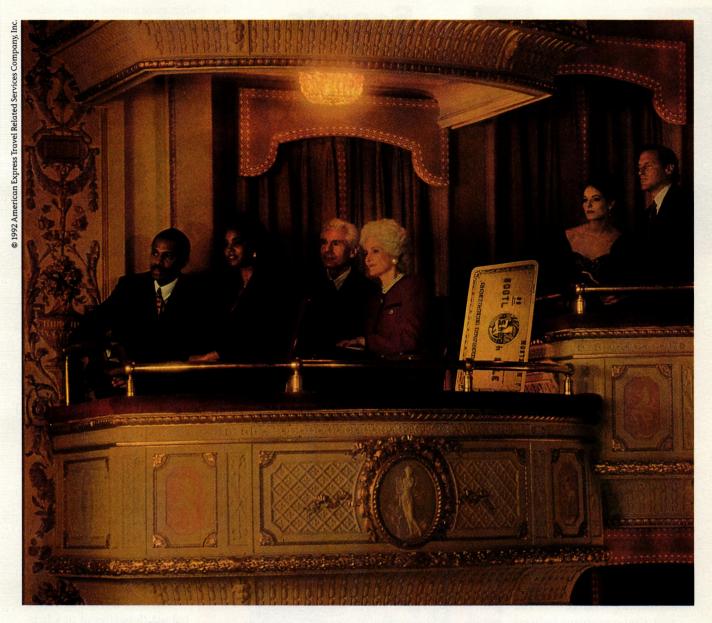
By 1829 he had convinced Ithiel Town, an established architect in the Greek revival style, to make him a partner. Town must have seen a gold mine in the young man's watercolors; architectural drawing at the time was limited to flat black and white outlines, and Davis's "brilliant propaganda," says Peck, "was a fabulous sales tool." Bringing Roman, Tuscan, Egyptian, and Gothic motifs into the firm's repertoire, Davis adapted each to his futuristic visions. "America was defining itself then, and everyone was really open to anything," Peck says. A boxy Manhattan hotel with glass walls caged in by square columns brings to mind the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; the interior of a temple-shaped patent office soars as dramatically as any late nineteenth century train station; rows of town houses facing a broad plaza could pass for recent condos; whimsical Greek scrollwork on skylights seems a direct ancestor of the postmodern joke.

The partners split up in 1835, probably because Davis "was such an independent spirit, a real loner,"

Peck speculates. During the next twenty years, from Maine to the Midwest and Deep South, Davis designed colleges, villas, churches, libraries, banks, hospitals, galleries, and museums and experimented with Romanesque, Elizabethan, Swiss, and oriental modes in addition to the classical and Gothic. American exuberance abounded in everything he touched: Corinthian capitals are made of carved wheat and corn bushels; Italianate roof brackets are as delightfully outsize as an aviator hat's earflaps; rough logs serve as ready-made columns for frontier buildings. Studying his clients thoroughly before designing (even demanding lists of their favorite books), he let floor plans roam into asymmetrical wings and polygonal towers and thus maximized landscape picturesqueness, producing what one critic of the time called a "wilderness of loveliness."

By the end of the Civil War, however, Davis's success had fizzled. His southern client base was in tatters, new millionaires craved more grandeur than he could bear, and the eclecticism he so loved in restrained balanced form had likewise, from his standpoint, gone beyond the pale. He spent the last two decades of his life obsessively organizing his office archive in anticipation of a grand role in architectural history and firing off impassioned letters to newspapers damning new structures for being a "broken pile of costly vulgarity" or a "hideous deformity."

Just before his death, American architecture started its long swing back to simplicity and harmony, and "Davis mellowed a bit; he felt vindicated, knowing that he'd been right all along," says Davies. How pleased he would be now to know that preservationists have saved close to a hundred of his more than two hundred buildings; that new suburban communities look as if he helped design them; that Stern and Michael Graves and Leon Krier and many others have thrived on his legacy; that, a hundred years after his death, he seems more right than ever.



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Secrets **Behind** Glass

A novelist unlocks the hidden past inside her curio cabinet

BY TAMA JANOWITZ

or a number of years I've been mildly obsessed with peering into curio cabinets. At my grandparents' when I was young I could spend a long time studying the contents of their cabinet. It didn't matter that I knew what was inside: a pair of tiny green ceramic frogs, small cordial glasses (these dated from some distant time when people still drank cordial), silver saltcellars, and a wooden couple, dressed in 1920s fashion, that had once topped their wedding cake.

I don't know why anything inside a cabinet is so fascinating to me. Maybe it's the dollhouse quality of the objects as if the cabinet were the apartment of someone or something strange—or the fact that anything behind glass takes on the importance of an exhibit at a museum.

In the 1940s maple cabinet that my husband, Tim Hunt, and I keep in our Upper West Side apartment, there are a number of rare and important finds from our travels as well as various gifts, all of which seem to belong together. The group includes five glow-in-the-dark black plastic Madonnas purchased at the gift shop at the monastery of Montserrat; a desiccated parasitic plant that resembles an alien life-form, found

on a path in a Florida nature preserve; a small brass gear, my first (and only) discovery with my metal detector; a genuine gold nugget, dated 1880, complete with ancient tooth marks; a carved nut of sandalwood, which, when opened, reveals a wrig-

gling cockroach, also made of sandalwood; a bottle of perfume from

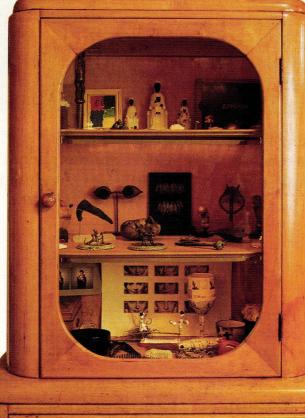
the Sudan guaranteed by the salesman in Cairo to be at least two hundred years old; a pair of driving goggles; a montage of 1940s British movie stars' eyes; and a spun-sugar couple, made for the top of a wedding cake, sent to us by my publisher. Both members of the pair are the same sex, dressed in ballerina tutus. I like to think that, like my grandparents, we have our wedding-cake couple in our cabinet.

True, these treasures aren't as valuable as Fabergé eggs, ormolu clocks, or illuminated manuscripts, but the satisfaction I get from staring at the incongruous assortment is just as great. All objects, however random, diverse, or lacking in value, automatically acquire significance when arranged in a cabinet.

Some of my favorite books growing up were part of a series called The Borrowers. The borrowers were minuscule homunculi who lived in the walls and floors of an old house. Only a few remained of their kind, and everything they owned was "borrowed" from normal-size human beings. Even late at night it was im-

mensely difficult for them to steal a thimble without being caught by a person or a cat. Once painstakingly lugged back to their secret home, the thimble might become a stool or a table or a bucket.

Tim once worked in the tribal art department at Christie's; now he collects things that resemble African art but are actually something else. For example, an iron pipe from a gas stove looks like a standing figure, and a discarded metal slab from the street that once covered a water main looks like a mask. I



Tama Janowitz, above left, looking through the glass of her curio cabinet, left, which is surrounded by found objects that resemble tribal art.

CRYSTAL • LE GRAND INTERPRÈTE

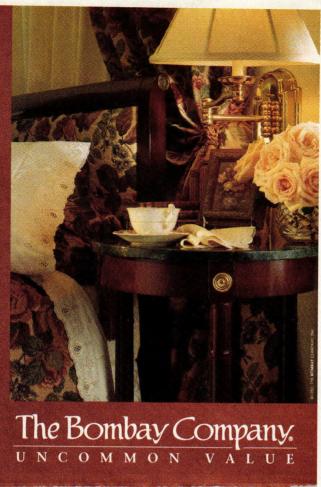


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WRITER IN RESIDENCE

suppose these pieces are found art. An old step from a horse-drawn carriage, tilted on end and mounted on a stand, appears to have a head, a scrawny body, and two pitifully outstretched arms. There may be something a bit deranged in visualizing formal tribal sculpture in bootjacks and obscure parts of broken tractor engines. Life in New York is—to

All objects, however random, diverse, or lacking in value, automatically acquire significance when arranged in a cabinet

me—already overwhelming enough without discovering the secret lives of inanimate objects.

And yet, I feel this ability is something all of us possess. I certainly understood the life of inanimate objects when I was a child. Now, once in a while—when I'm hit with the flu, for example, and am lying in bed like Madeline from the children's stories by Ludwig Bemelmans—I notice that the cracks in the ceiling resemble rabbits and that the cast-iron chair at the end of the bed has a distinctly human personality.

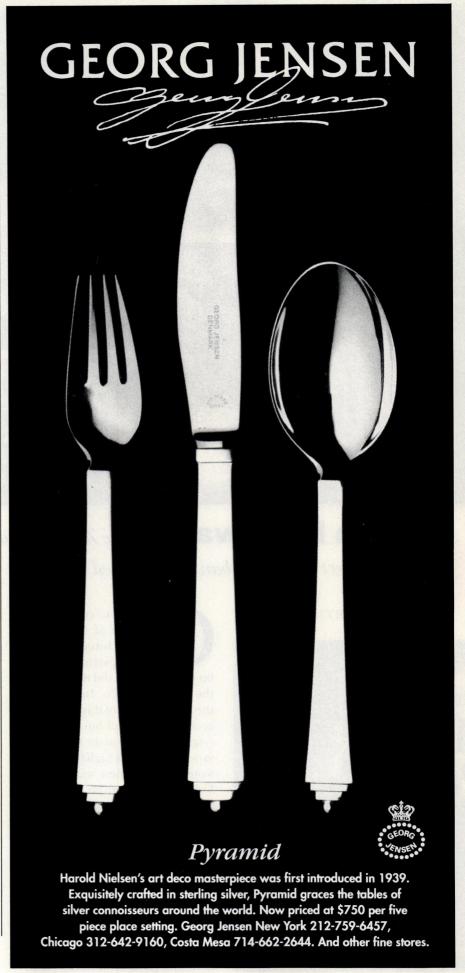
In my new novel, The Male Cross-Dresser Support Group, the main character, Pamela, lives in a vengeful apartment with mysterious firm mushrooms that keep springing up in the damp area around the toilet. It seems the apartment is deliberately out to get her, and even though this is just her own paranoia, I, too, feel that some apartments or houses are good and others malevolent. Perhaps over the years they've absorbed the happiness or unhappiness of the occupants.

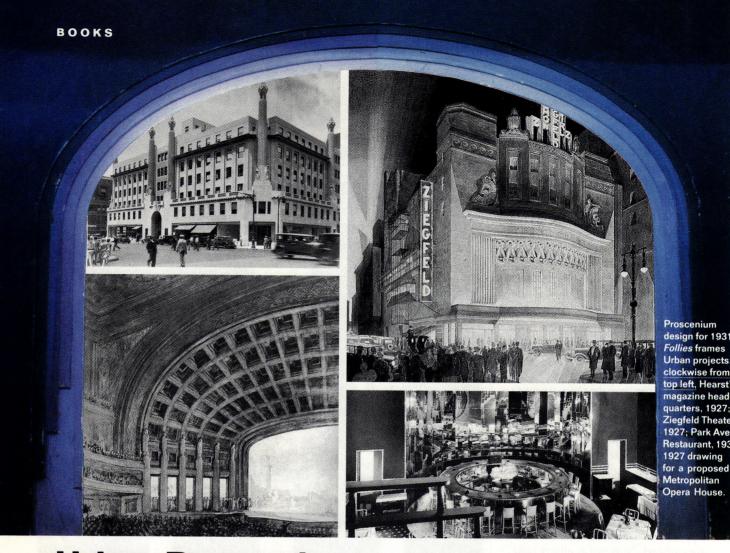
I used to live in a house that was the equivalent of a mixed-breed dog. It had been built by a man determined to save money in any way he could. He bought the end rolls of wallpaper and there was only enough of each pattern to cover one wall, so every room had four patterns. He had done the wiring and plumbing himself, too. It wasn't that the house had a bad aura, it was friendly and goofy like a mutt but decidedly hyperactive. Typically, when I attempted to make toast, the toaster would catch fire and fling flaming missiles of burnt bread everywhere. Or when I put the key in the front doorknob, the entire knob would break off spewing springs and spindles into the air.

My mother lives in a very old house that has had so many additions and structural changes over the years that there are a number of peculiar closets, one two inches deep (so things can only be arranged to hang face front) and three closets with windows (as if clothing might like or need a view). There are odd porches that have no entrance to the house, and a chimney with no fireplace.

As soon as she moved in, my mother felt obliged to decorate with a variety of Victorian furniture which, she announced, "was not at all my taste." Then, she said, the house told her to buy a large leafy plant, which she placed in the stairwell. This plant began to grow like something from the Little Shop of Horrors, even sending out shoots that started to work their way into the floorboards.

Some time later one of the neighbors dropped by and began to tell her about the former elderly occupant of the place. "And the weirdest thing was," the neighbor said, "he had a horrible strange plant right under the stairwell that took over and grew up and up until it was about fifteen or twenty feet tall and very spindly." As the neighbor talked, he walked around the living room and down the hall to the stairs. There was the plant purchased by my mother apparently almost the exact replica of the ghastly plant the neighbor couldn't stop talking about. He said nothing, but grinning nervously, backed up to the front door and let himself out.





Urban Renewal From the Ziegfeld Follies to the New School, architect Joseph Urban transformed the image of metropolitan glamour

BY MARTIN FILLER



ontrary to current belief, the idea of using innovative architects to design fantastic settings for popular entertainment did not begin with the Walt Disney Co. In fact, during the early decades of this century, one architect-now all but forgottenreigned supreme as the visual impresario of New York high life. Now that wonderful Viennese wizard, Joseph Urban, is finally given his due in an informative and beguiling new biography, Joseph Urban: Architecture, Theater, Opera, Film (Abbeville, \$55) by Randolph Carter and Robert Reed Cole, which celebrates his ephemeral but life-enhancing artistry. This stunningly illustrated monograph re-creates a vanished Gotham, a dream city that survives only in song,

Joseph Urban, standing at left, on his set for When Knighthood Was in Flower, 1922.

legend, and the fading memories of a few octogenarian Ziegfeld Girls.

When he settled in New York in 1914, Joseph Urban found it an aesthetically provincial metropolis; less than twenty years later, his embellishments had helped make it a sophisticated international capital. He put his stamp on the city in hundreds of ways, giving it a glittering urbanity that made the naive pretensions of the Gilded Age seem quaintly antiquated within a generation. Slave to no single style, Urban moved with perfect ease between the historical and the contemporary as the occasion demanded. His eagerness to please the public-who wanted indulgence, not instruction-won him a wide and appreciative following.

In 1931, for example, one could

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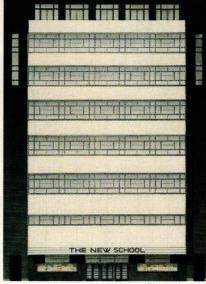


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Early design for the New School façade, right, c. 1928. Above: New School auditorium, 1930.

have spent a very full twenty-four hours in New York among the works of this protean pleasure giver. Waking up in an apartment decorated with Urban's designs for Baker Furniture, a stylish woman might have gone to a morning class at his sleek New School for Social Research on West 12th Street. A bit of shopping at the Bedell store, his art deco women's fashion emporium on West 34th Street, could be followed by a bite at the architect's mirror-faceted Park Avenue Restaurant, and next a stop at Saks Fifth Avenue to order some



of Urban's smart luggage for Hartman. It soon would be time to change for dinner beneath Urban's lush ceiling murals at the St. Regis Hotel roof garden, then on to his Ziegfeld Theater for the latest (and last) Ziegfeld Follies, with sets by Urban. Finally, it was off to the Central Park Casino, remodeled by Urban, for supper and dancing until dawn.

As the authors recount, he was a big, gregarious, fun-loving bear of a man whose limitless appetite for the good life took precedence over the burning sense of mission that consumed his more purposeful coprofessionals. While Urban was expanding and decorating Marjorie Merriweather Post's stupendous Palm Beach mansion Mar-a-Lago in 1926, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was in Stuttgart organizing the boldest exhibition of modern housing. Yet the escapist Urban mastered many of the grace notes—color, ornament, illusion, surprise, and delight—that played too small a role in much orthodox modern architecture.

Urban's neglect of his chosen field in its purest form preyed on his mind at the peak of his acclaim, and he spent the last years of his life trying to rescue his reputation from that of a smoke-and-mirrors sorcerer. The bitterest disappointment of his American career was losing the chance to build a projected Metropolitan Opera House on West 57th Street. But as shown by the many previously unpublished schemes in this sumptuous volume, Urban had no need to shore up his secure place



in history as a genius of enjoyment.

Although he attained his greatest triumphs in New York, Urban was the inimitable product of fin de siècle Vienna, where he was born in 1872 and received his architectural training. There even the most eminent architects did not disdain designing things their sobersided American counterparts considered beneath the dignity of their calling. But to the Jugendstil architects and designers of Urban's generation-which included the better-remembered Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, and Joseph Maria Olbrich—everything was worthy of their attention. That openminded attitude always remained with Urban. And though it left his diverse output without the sharp focus of the leaders of the modern movement, it nevertheless fostered his breadth of visual culture and command of several mediums, making many of his fellow architects seem two-dimensional by contrast.

Urban's career got off to a characteristically exotic start when at the

age of nineteen he was asked by the khedive of Egypt to do an addition to the royal palace in Cairo. But the real impact of that heady trip, Urban later recalled, was the vibrant color he experienced, opening his eyes to possibilities he had never dreamed of in Vienna. Back home, he supported himself by illustrating deluxe calendars and children's books (with his brother-in-law Heinrich Lefler), dreaming up lavish ball themes, decorating public and private interiors, and even designing handsome banknotes and postage stamps for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

His crowning moment came in 1908, when Urban was given the unsurpassably prestigious job of designing the festivities for the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of Emperor Franz Josef. The jealousy that honor stirred in his rivals led to a scandal in which Urban was accused of favoring cronies and accepting kickbacks. He was exonerated, but the sour taste that episode left encouraged him to seek his fortune not in his in-

trigue-ridden hometown but in America. Offered the post of artistic director at the Boston Opera Co. in 1911, Urban gladly accepted.

He never regretted his decision to emigrate, especially after World War I, which ended forever the way of life and patronage he had known in Vi-



A set for Urban's first Follies, 1915.

enna. But neither did he forget his old friends there. He brought a number of them over to the United States and invested heavily to open a New York branch of the Wiener Werkstätte on Fifth Avenue in 1922. There he showcased the highly stylized art, decorative objects, and fur-

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niture of his former colleagues. Urban lost \$150,000 on that rarefied enterprise, and many of the shop's luxurious wares wound up in his spacious house in Yonkers.

His other New York ventures fared much better, however. Urban's opera mountings for Boston caused an immediate sensation and his first Broadway show caught the attention of Florenz Ziegfeld Jr., the legendary producer. Ziegfeld hired him in 1915 to design his fabled revues and musicals featuring stars such as Fred and Adele Astaire, Will Rogers, Eddie Cantor, and W. C. Fields; lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II and P. G. Wodehouse; music by Victor Herbert, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, and George Gershwin.

The Metropolitan Opera soon followed suit, commissioning fifty-four productions by Urban over sixteen years, including such historic events as the U.S. premiere of Giacomo Puccini's *Turandot* in 1926. Synthesizing the most progressive ideas of European stagecraft, he introduced

Urban's dream city is a vanished Gotham that survives only in legend and song

to America new concepts of scenography, lighting, and deployment of players. So familiar became the saturated azure he favored for nighttime skies, which often moved audiences to applause, that the color became known as Urban blue.

The ease with which he could shift between the demands of high art and the allure of pop culture was clear in 1921, when, during the same season, New Yorkers thrilled to Fanny Brice singing her ultimate torch song, "My Man," on an Urban set at the Follies, while his Parsifal and Tristan und Isolde enraptured Wagnerites at the Met. And though the Follies were conceived to be as transient as the

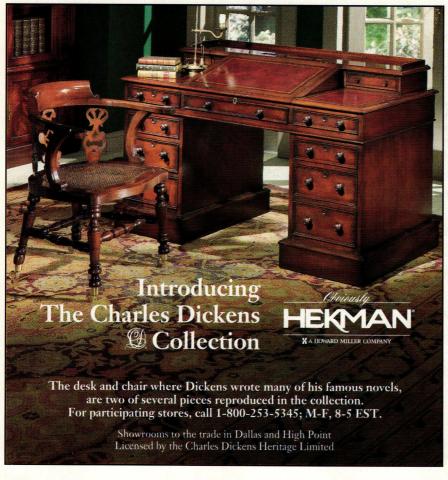
seasons, Urban's opera productions enjoyed very long lives: his *Tristan* continued to be given until 1958, and his monumental *Elektra* of 1932 was kept in the repertoire until 1962.

The third major client of Urban's mature career was William Randolph Hearst, the publishing magnate who used Urban to build his magazine headquarters on West 57th Street. The architect also helped to glorify the delightful (if slender) talents of Hearst's protégé and mistress, Marion Davies, whom the tycoon first eyed in the chorus of Urban's second Follies, in 1916. The twenty-five films Urban designed for Hearst's Cosmopolitan Productions included the most elaborate indoor set ever built up to that time, for the 1922 costume epic When Knighthood Was in Flower, starring Davies.

But such pastiche extravaganzas could never earn the respect of the avant-garde, and Urban's later attempts to rejoin his architectural confreres met with skepticism. The young Philip Johnson dismissed Urban's streamlined New School of 1928-30 as the "illusion of a building in the International Style rather than a building resulting from a genuine application of the new principles." And the literary critic Edmund Wilson cruelly called Urban's most serious structure a "set of fancy Ziegfeld settings which charmingly mimic offices and factories."

The Great Depression spelled the end of Urban's merry harlequinade, although he continued to receive substantial commissions to the very end. Shortly after completing his work as color designer for the 1933 Century of Progress exposition in Chicago, Urban died of cancer at the age of sixty-one.

At his best, Joseph Urban accomplished what few other architects ever manage: he intensified the experience of life for a vast public and hinted at the infinite variety of pleasures that lie beyond the routine of daily existence. More than any other creator of his time, he was able—in the words of a song of the period—to turn Manhattan into an isle of joy.



clarence house





Fanny Brennan captures an enchanted universe in her tiny paintings





WENDY GOODMAN



Fanny Brennan at home, far left, and objects of importance, clockwise from top left, a Poiret dress in which she had her portrait painted as a child next to a photo taken at the time; a bedroom bookshelf stocked with the subjects of her work; and two paintings, Big Horn and Cloud Repair, both actual size. Details see Resources.

dantes Sara and Gerald Murphy. Tucked away in Brennan's black and white bedroom studio in Queens is the Poiret dress she wore when her portrait was painted at the age of four. Fine-tipped brushes and mini drawers packed with supplies top a Parsons table where with a little paint and a lot of precision she turns miniature gessoed panels into masterpieces. Her work is the subject of a recent pocket-size book, Skyshades, and from October 20 to November 14 her newest paintings will be on view at New York's Coe Kerr Gallery. For those not quick enough to snap up the originals, Chalk & Vermilion has limited editions of signed lithographs. "I paint ideas," says Brennan, who juxtaposes everyday objects with vistas of land, sea, and

sky. Scale and function are treated with such lighthearted wit—a giant feather duster sweeps Mount Fuji, a whisk beats cottony clouds—that even Dali might have cracked a smile.



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Raking leaves wasn't exactly the way I wanted to spend Sunday afternoon. But after Linda brought out the Baileys and coffee, I

warmed up to the idea immediately.



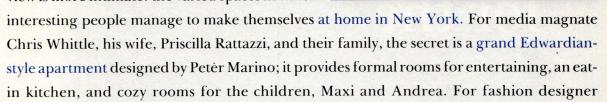


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Editor's Page

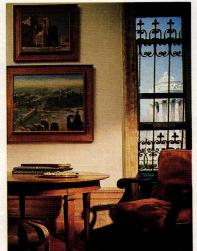
IT'S OCTOBER AGAIN, and time for HG's fourth annual New York issue. The Manhattan that Berenice Abbott captured in the 1930s photograph Nightview is a bird'seye view of the city's glittering public face. Our view is more intimate: the varied spaces in which

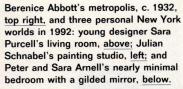


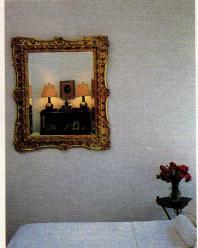
Christian Francis Roth, life at home in the city focuses around a clapboard house-inside-the-loft where his daughter, Emma, sleeps. After twenty-four years in Los Angeles, writers Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne imported what they call "California casual" to their Manhattan apartment, which they set up entirely "for comfort and for work." Painter Julian Schnabel also works at home, in a vast studio fronted by a series of richly evocative rooms full of velvet curtains and old paintings. Advertising prodigy Peter Arnell has transformed a Tribeca loft into a duplex apartment full of neoclassical treasures, with fragments of plaster statuary embedded in the walls of the entry hallway, while Tommy Boy Music's Monica Lynch has given her studio

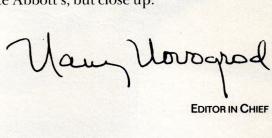
> apartment an energetic streetwise chic that is right in sync with the hip-hop world of rap music. We also visit five young designers who, like their colleagues everywhere, experiment where they live. Together we hope these glimpses of New Yorkers at home create a picture as fascinating as

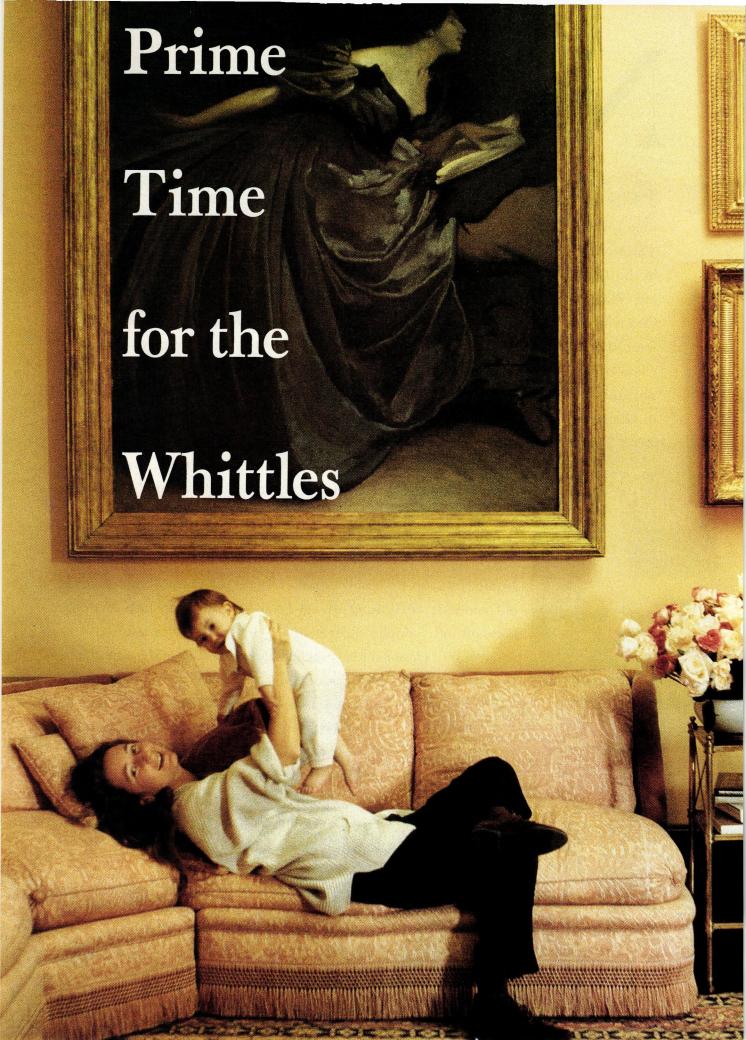
Berenice Abbott's, but close up.



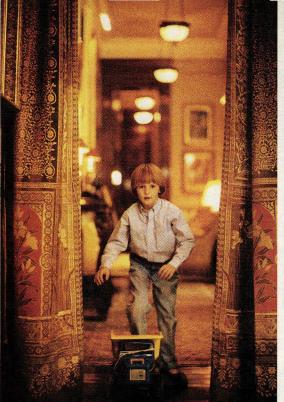






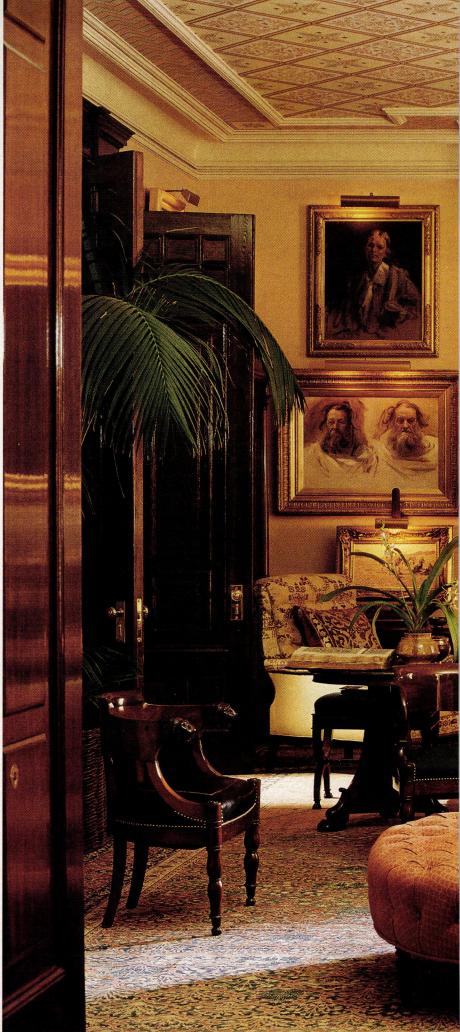






OU ALWAYS START with the rug," says Chris Whittle. "That's one of the first things my mom said to me, and it's not a bad rule-although we have violated it frequently." That's not a royal "we," but it does refer to a powerful triumvirate: Whittle, the enigmatic media tycoon; his wife, photographer Priscilla Rattazzi, the luminous beauty of the Agnelli clan; and Peter Marino, the architect who has described his business as "a couture house" and whose clients tend to exalted lineage, taste, and fortune.

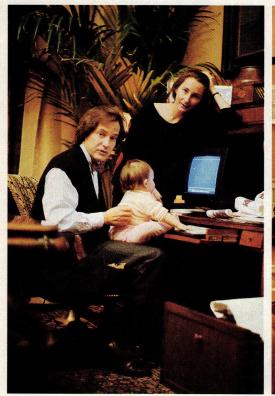
The trio's most recent collaboration is an apartment in the Dakota, the second residence Marino has designed for Whittle in the landmark building. The first, decorated in the spirit of 1885, was too small for the growing Whittle household, which now includes Maxi, Rattazzi's sixyear-old son by her marriage to Klaus Moehlmann, and Andrea, Whittle and Rattazzi's baby daughter. "I loved that apartment," says Whittle. "It was a perfect single guy's house. I like this far better, and that's attributable to Priscilla." Rattazzi allows that while she too loved the first apartment, "it was incredibly masculine and incredibly dark."







"It had to be grand and formal for entertaining, but cozy for me and child-friendly for the kids," says Priscilla Rattazzi





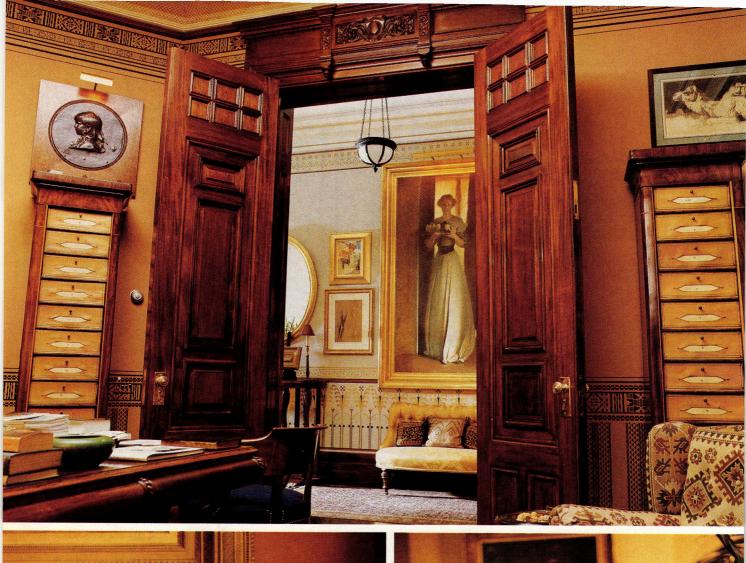


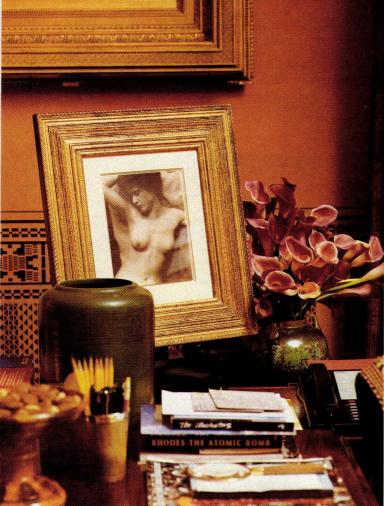
This time the feeling is Edwardian—"about 1905," says Marino. "We skipped a decade." The palette is lighter and the tone more welcoming. "This apartment is about paintings and carpets," he explains, "and then what I call comfy furniture," like the living room piece upholstered in what he blithely describes as "that wacky-color silk velour." Some of the Whittles' favorite rooms and details from the earlier apartment were duplicated, among them the stenciling in the hallway, but everything except the front door is new.

In the massive renovation that transformed two large apartments into a single magnificent one, the masonry bearing walls could not be touched. The result is a long central hallway. "When I first saw it, I thought, 'What are we going to do?' It was intimidating," recalls Rattazzi. "Then I realized a hall is a wonderful place to hang your pictures. Now we call it the train. I stick my head out of my compartment when the kids come home to see what's going on."

The kitchen is the "heart of the house," says Rattazzi, below, with Andrea and Maxi. Above: Rattazzi displays her own photographs and pictures from her collection near the kitchen table where the family often eats. Opposite above: In Maxi's room a built-in unit designed by Marino provides a bed, storage, and child-size play space. Opposite below left: Whittle, Rattazzi, and Andrea at the keyboard in Whittle's study. Opposite below right: Proofs from Rattazzi's book are tacked up on a mahogany-framed linen-covered corkboard over the mahogany campaign-style desk in her office.







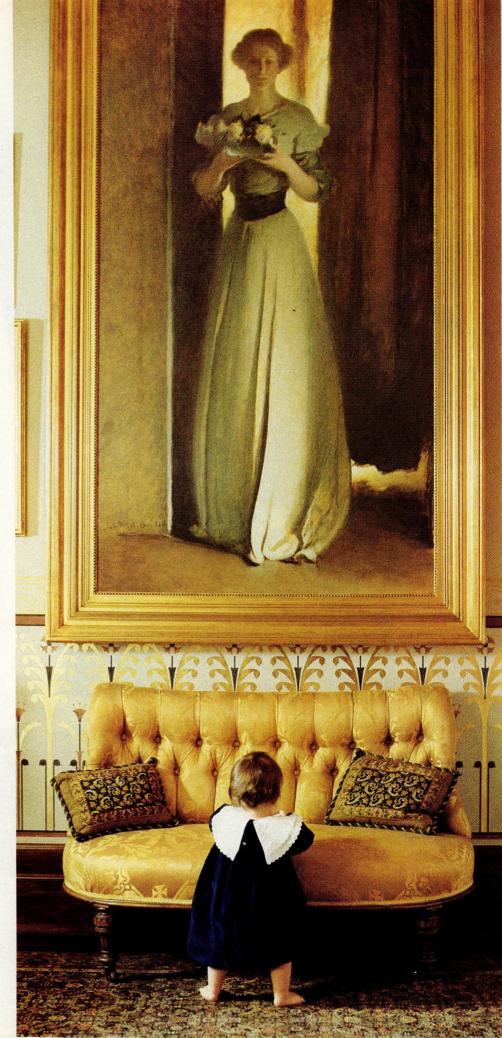


The challenge of taming the vastness of the space boiled down to devising a way to make the apartment satisfy multiple needs. "It had to be grand and formal for entertaining, but cozy for me and child-friendly for the kids," Rattazzi explains. The key proved to be the once-distressing hall, with separate entrances at each end. Along its course the formal rooms give way to the couple's studies—in Rattazzi's, proofs of her book Children are scattered about and a needlepoint pillow reads, "Dull women have immaculate homes"an eat-in kitchen, and, finally, the children's rooms. "It's like two apartments tied together by the kitchen, the heart of the house," she says.

The couple split responsibilities: she focused on the decorating while he supervised the architecture. "I used to build rather extensive log forts when I was six years old," Whittle explains. "I would really get in there and organize the neighborhood, building elaborate playhouses with windows on hinges and trapdoors. But any skill I have is intuitive. Peter brings the real knowledge."

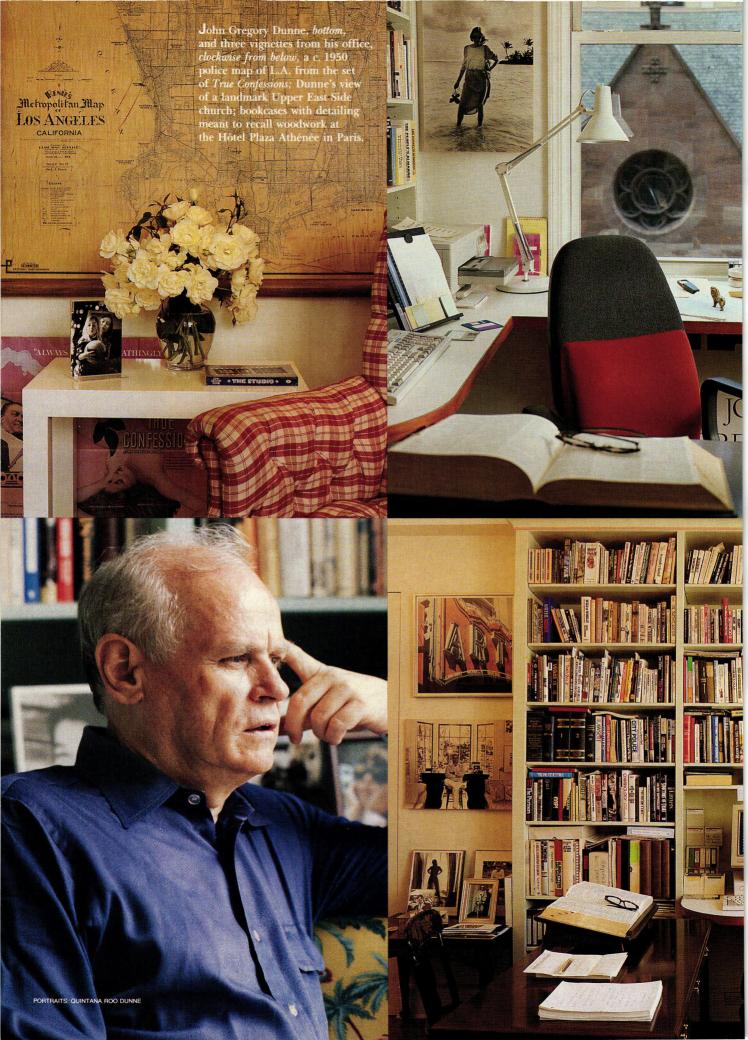
Whittle also credits Marino with educating him about decorative arts and painting while they were working on his first apartment. One day, Whittle recalls, after Marino told him to visit some galleries, "I came back and said, 'This man Chase, Peter, I really like this man Chase." Today Whittle focuses on American paintings from 1875 to 1910. "The collection represents a breaking point in American painting as the effects of French impressionism were taking hold," he says. "There's a quality somewhere between the traditionalist and the revolutionary, which is what (Continued on page 183)

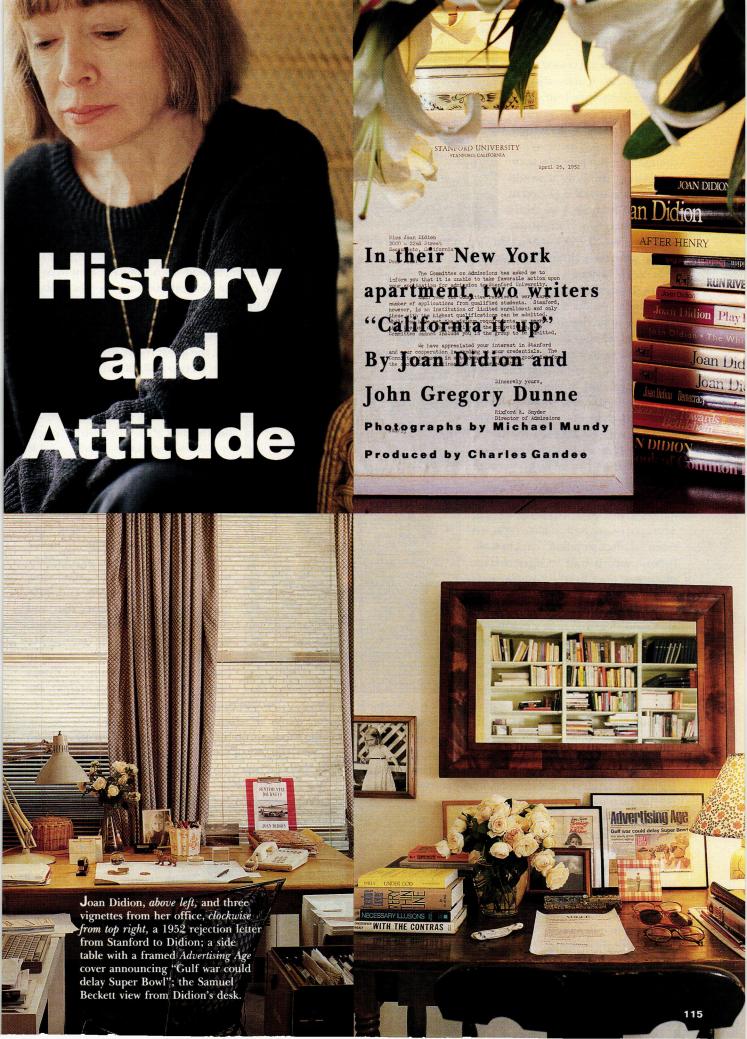
Andrea, right, practices standing on her own two feet under the gaze of John White Alexander's Onteora. Across the hall, double doors open onto Whittle's study, opposite top, where Saint-Gaudens's William E. Beaman in His Fourth Year hangs above a French cabinet, c. 1810, and a nude, The Torso, by Alfred Stieglitz and Clarence White, opposite below left, rests on his desk. Opposite below right: Mother and daughter in the living room.











WE MOVED BACK TO NEW YORK on a whim. We had lived in Los Angeles for twenty-four years, but neither of us was working on a book, we felt stale, settled, restless. It was time for a change. We put our house on the market thinking it would take months to sell, a period of flirting with an idea we could always abandon. The house

sold the first day, for more than we asked, and as the buyer wanted a thirty-day escrow, we had to move. New York, where we had both lived before we were married, was the only place we considered.

We have always done things on the spur of the moment (we once drove over to Earl McGrath's gallery in Los Angeles and traded him our ten-year-old Jaguar for a Peter Alexander pastel, and more recently we set out to buy a winter coat and instead bought a Cy Twombly lithograph), and buying this apartment was no excep-

tion. We had a few prerequisites: since we both work at home, it had to be large, with rooms for two offices, space for files, and a spot for a secretary; it also had to be large because we dislike the logistics of running a weekend or summer house and are happiest when the city empties out. The apartment had to have light, an essential after so many years in California, and it had to have a fireplace—we once lived for seven years in Malibu in a house heated only by a fireplace. We would also have liked an English garden and a swimming pool, but alas, they do not come with New York apartments.

This was the first apartment we looked at after our house was sold:

the owner had moved to Europe, the stock market had crashed, and the price was right. It had a working fire-place and was across from a landmark church, which meant unimpeded light. On the floor plan, the apartment had twelve rooms, but the prior owner had improved the already good dimensions by collapsing these

twelve into ten; what attracted us, as soon as we entered, was the sense of light and air in the foyer, which in the redesign had been so enlarged as to become what many people call "waste space." (A lesson: beware the absence of "waste space," since it usually turns out to be the very space that makes you feel good.)



The spaciousness of all the rooms, and the fact that the previous owner had rewired and replumbed but never lived in the apartment, meant that it was not necessary to do any elaborate construction. We replaced a few hardwood floors and laid ceramic tile in the service area to correspond with the hexagonal kitchen

tiles. Beyond that, for our purposes, the apartment needed only moldings—the twelve-foot ceilings in the front of the apartment had been lowered somewhat to accommodate central air conditioning—a few built-in spaces for computers and laser printers, and many many bookcases. With the help of architect Peter Sachs we built floor-to-ceiling bookcases in the living room, the dining room, both our offices, the guest room, and, when these still proved inadequate, on two walls of our bedroom.

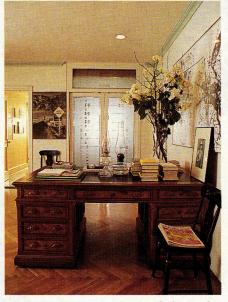
A friend from London walked into this apartment and

said, "I've been in all your houses, and they all look alike." One reason they all look alike is that we have never used a decorator-more acerbic friends have described this as all too apparent-except to get swatches or to find upholsterers and slipcoverers. The only decorating instructions we had came from our daughter, Quintana, who when she first saw it said, "I hope you California it up." By that she meant not only the familiar white walls and bare floors and pale slipcovers that had characterized the houses in which she grew up but also the familiar objects and flowers: the orchids still in their plastic pots from the Zuma Canyon greenhouses in Malibu, the

Canyon greenhouses in Malibu, the several dozen hurricane lamps because southern California winds so often knocked out the power, the enlarged photograph of a "Welcome to California" sign on a road from Nevada to Death Valley Junction, the lacquer box of sequins saved from a party somewhere.

Working with Peter Sachs and his painters—all of

whom were artists who had shown around the country and were willing to spend hours debating shades of white—we finally settled on an "underwater white," a white that at times resembles the palest of greens. On the moldings we asked for a thin stripe, in some rooms coral and in others a watery blue or yellow, an



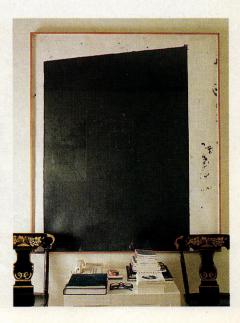


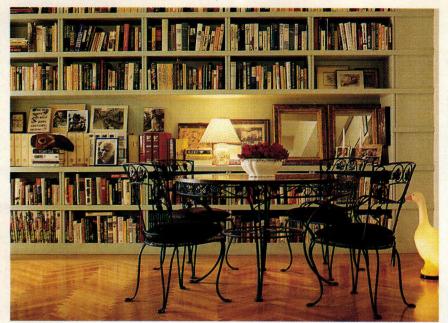


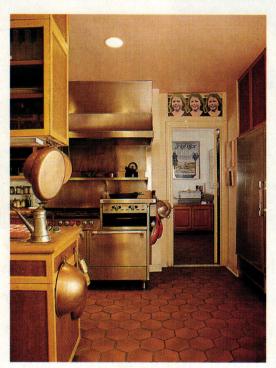
A friend from London walked into this apartment and said, "I've been in all your houses, and they all look alike." One reason they all look alike is that we have never used a decorator—more acerbic friends have described this as all too apparent











effect remembered from a room at the Plaza Athénée in Paris. As far as furniture went, we just moved in what we had: save for appliances and beds and the occasional lamp, we have in all our years together bought no furniture beyond a few tables (one, a marble display table in the entrance hall, off the floor at the kitchen supplier Williams-Sonoma) and a couple of chairs (one because it was half price and could pass without recovering). The rest of the furniture is essentially hand-medown-from our two families-recovered every time we move and mixed in with a few battered pieces left behind in the former Malibu crash pad that was the first house we ever owned. Chintz can mask the most insignificant table, and the absence of living room

curtains can be turned to advantage: maximum daylight, an interesting panorama at night, and, because of the church across the street, no one can look in.

Our dining room is an example of the California casual we decided to export to New York—rather a studied example, since it is decidedly unlike the more traditional room we left behind. When Quintana moved into an apartment of her own, we gave her the "real" dining table we had been given by John's mother; in its place we use a round glass and wrought-iron garden table from when we had a garden and originally the lunch table our sister-in-law used at her swimming pool in Beverly Hills. There are in this dining room many pillows, a writing desk, a chaise longue, a sofa, the obligatory bookcases, and two scratched Lucite boxes, one containing the red and scarlet birettas worn in a picture we wrote, *True Confessions*, the other containing a wreath of dried santolina from our garden in Brentwood.

This room works perfectly for what it is: a comfortable room in which to entertain informally and, if we need to spread out beyond the offices and lay out research, a comfortable room in which to work. The entire apartment is set up for comfort and for work, and its artifacts

have meaning only for us. The paintings and lithographs are largely by friends, the photographs by Quintana or from stories one or the other of us has done. In John's office there is a wall-sized police map of Los Angeles, circa 1950, from the set of True Confessions given him by its producers at the end of production. Our favorite piece is the partners' desk in the foyer that Joan's father bought at auction in 1934 for \$30; it had been in the California state capitol in Sacramento but was burned almost beyond repair in a fire. He had it refinished, gave it to us after we were married, and we had it refinished again when we moved to New York. It has history and it has attitude, and we like to think the same of the apartment. A





DEL BUEN FETIFO

N I P

Iulian Schnabel's

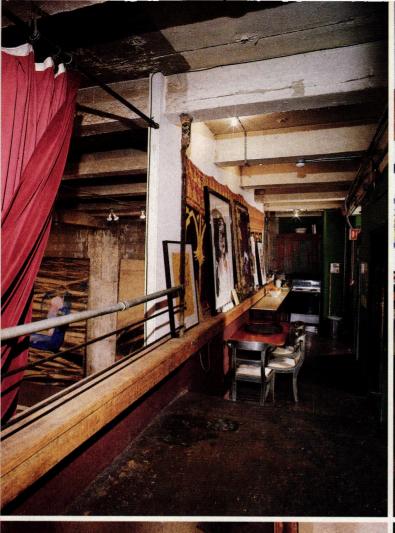
Amid bones, paintings, and Napoleonic furniture, the artist make

Three works on red velvet, painted in Montauk during the summer of 1991, stand in Julian Schnabel's main studio in downtown Manhattan. It is here, says the artist, opposite, that his paintings "congeal."

Pelvet Touch

himself comfortable. By Zoë Lund Photographs by Jean Kallina

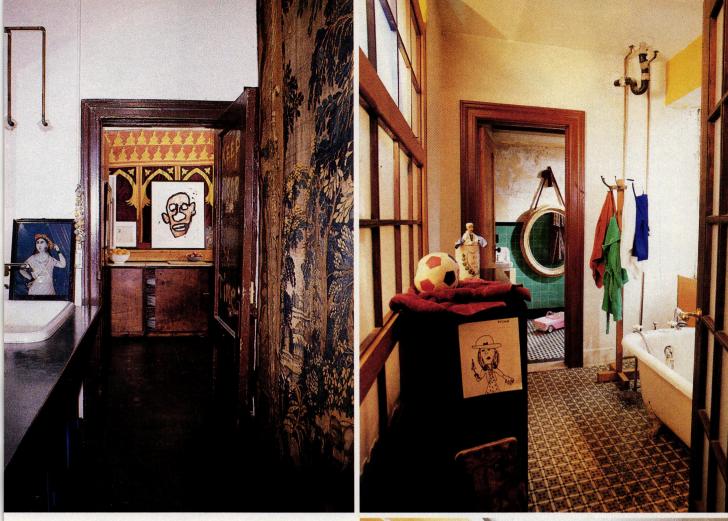
Produced by Beatrice Monti della Corte











ID I EVER TELL YOU THE STORY OF THE twentieth-century man in a third-century church, his hand resting on an eighteenth-century banister?" Julian Schnabel enjoys this notion of displaced time. "Velvet and cobwebs—I'm of the Miss Havisham school of interior decorating," he says. "And I see all the objects around me as utilitarian: they are transformers that get me to another place. Anyway, I feel better in here."

"Here" is a downtown loft building that evokes a secret corner of Venice a couple of centuries ago, or perhaps a set for *Citizen Kane*. On my first visit I see Schnabel sitting at the piano with Gary Oldman; they are combining Tom Waits's version of "Waltzing Matilda" with the Eagles's "Desperado," singing both lyrics at once. As the night goes on, I notice traces of a dozen European cities and past epochs—all far away, yet all at home—and after a few hours I reenter the world refreshed, as if I had returned from travels over land and sea and time.

In the main studio the echoes are of Madrid. "Summer 1978," Schnabel recalls, paraphrasing one of the "excerpts from life" he related in his 1987 book, *CVJ*. "I was staying in the flamenco bar district. I walked to the Prado, saw some great Bosch paintings, left the Prado, walked outside,



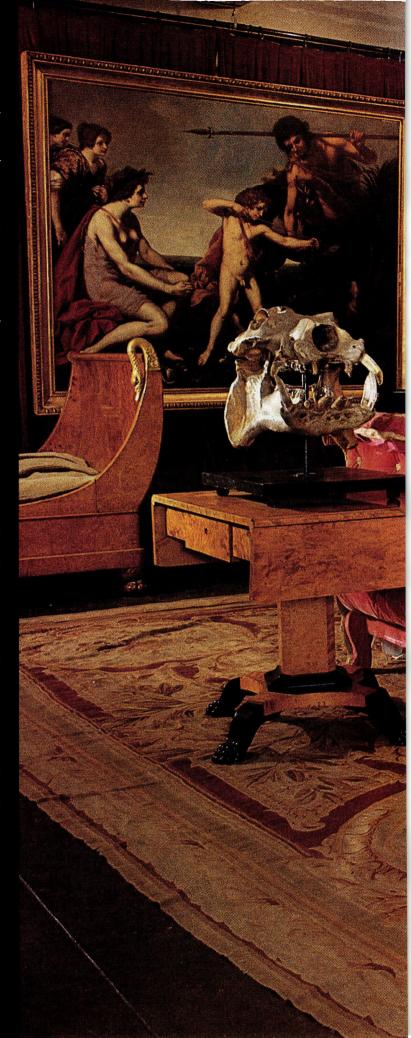
dizzy. Thought I'd go rowing on the lake of the Parque del Buen Retiro, beside the Palacio Velázquez. As I stepped into the boat, it slid out from under me. I watched the opaque green of the lake come between me and my sunglasses. To return to my hotel, I had to walk through downtown Madrid, accompanied only by the sound of water squishing in my shoes."

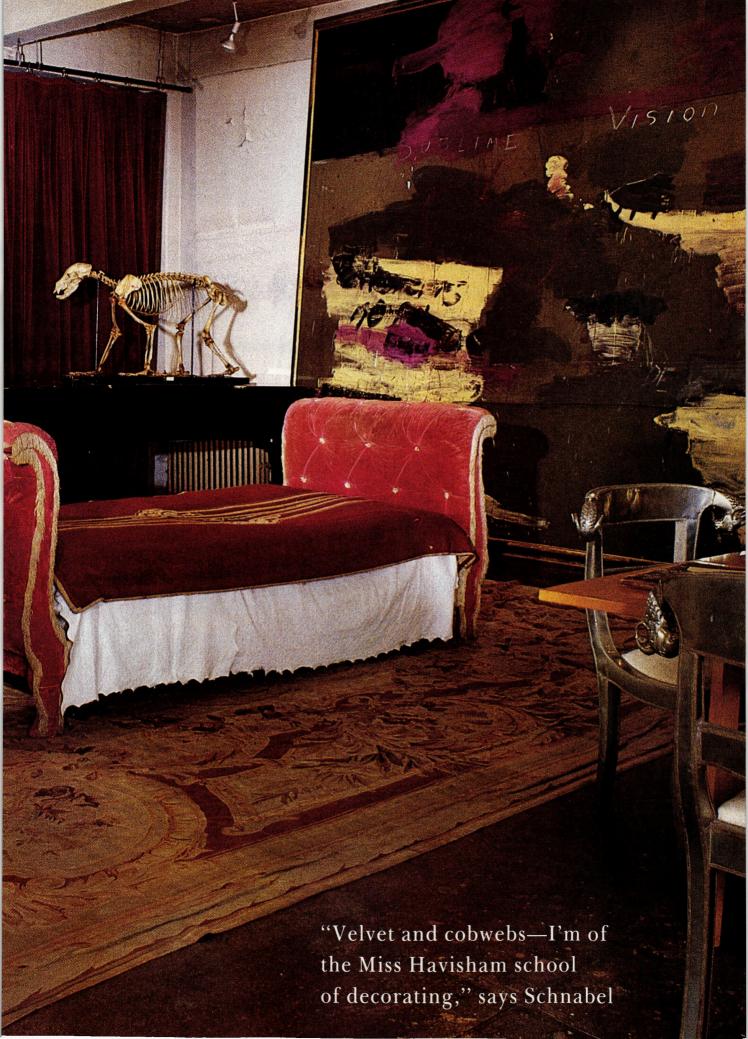
"Twelve years later," he continues, "back in Madrid and a little drunk, I was sitting in the cement courtyard of a friendly bar, surrounded by young painters from the Taller of the Círculo de Bellas Artes. I thought of the ducks in the lake a few blocks away and toasted them in my best Spanish: 'Por los patos del Buen Retiro! To the ducks of the Buen Retiro!' "Now five large redvelvet paintings with references to the ducks of Buen Retiro are leaning against the studio walls.

Dislocations seem to have a special resonance for Schnabel and his art. Besides the conventional spots—the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Tate in London, the Whitney and the Guggenheim in New York—his paintings and sculpture are often found in peculiar overseas locations. Four white paintings in the Los Patos series are in the permanent collection at Madrid's Reina Sofía, Spain's leading museum of modern art, which is housed in a converted hospital building. The Recognitions paintings were installed in 1988 at the Cuartel del Carmen, an abandoned fourteenth-century monastery and military barracks in Seville. From 1990 to 1995 three twenty-two-foot-square paintings are hanging in the Maison Carrée, a first- or second-century Roman temple in Nîmes.

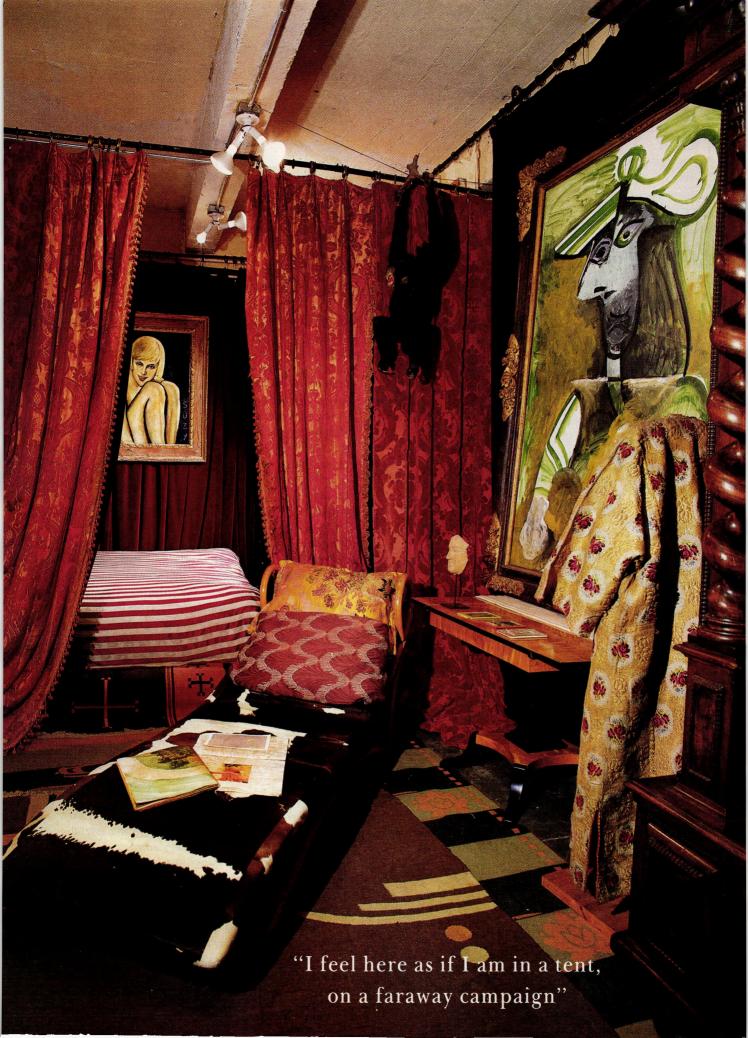
Decades before Schnabel put paintbrush (or hand) to canvas (or velvet or plates), the studio I survey from the balcony was a perfume factory. The looming nineteen-foot pillars and massive patched walls might dwarf another artist's work. Not Schnabel's. Behind his paintings the irregular patina of gray plaster opens up a visual field that suggests the outdoors. "I like to paint outside," he says, in Montauk in summer and Florida in winter. Then he brings paintings into this room "where they congeal." The view from the balcony reminds me of Schnabel's words in a 1985 catalogue: "There exists a tradition of loss and sadness that is epitomized in the perfection of the surviving statues (Continued on page 182)

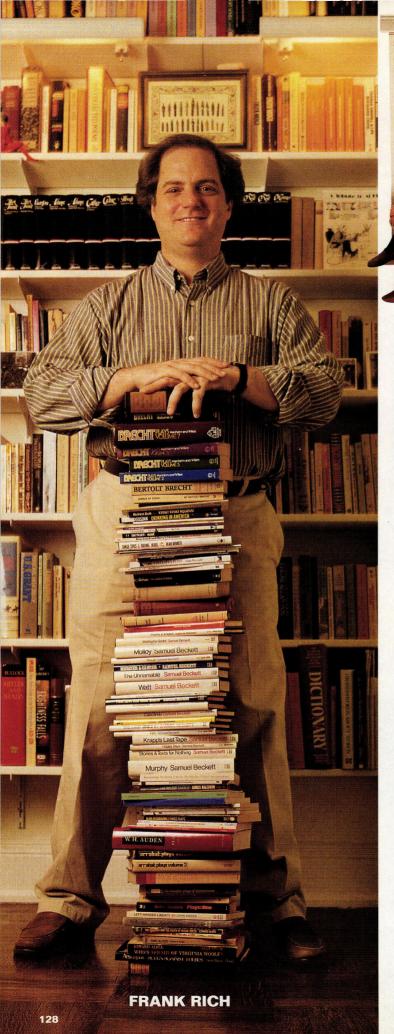
In the music room a mythological scene by Jacopo Vignali, 1695, and Schnabel's Sublime Vision de Merde, 1989, look down on an 18th-century French daybed standing on an antique Aubusson carpet. Adding to the theatrical aura are a bear skeleton on the piano and a hippopotamus skull on a Biedermeier table. The folding table by Antonin Raymond, at right, serves as a dining table, accompanied by handhammered silver Regency-style chairs from India.











ALEX WITCHEL: The most important things to me in an apartment have always been the closets.

FRANK RICH: Before we got married, I think your apartment actually was a closet.

ALEX: How kind of you to point that out.

FRANK: The most important thing to me was always the bookshelves.

ALEX: When it comes to books, you're like Pigpen: dust collects around him, and books collect around you.

FRANK: Well, you have to admit that we've confined the books to one room. Now we can't figure out what to put in the other six rooms.

ALEX: At least we agree that in the kitchen the focal point is the refrigerator.

FRANK: It's the second most important piece of furniture we have collected, after the bed.

ALEX: Ssshhh!

FRANK: A close third, of course, would be the wine racks.

ALEX: When Moishe's movers came to your old apartment, they looked at all the wine and all the books and one of them said, "What do you two spend your time doing? Get drunk, read books, and go to bed?"

FRANK: Not necessarily in that order. I'm glad we gave him a big tip.

ALEX: We had to give everyone a big tip.

FRANK: That's New York. And remember, my books and wine weren't all they had to contend with. There was the little matter of your shoes—not so little a matter, actually.

ALEX: I can't help it. I have bad feet. So I've managed to furnish the closets here without any problem. It's the rest of the apartment I don't understand.

FRANK: The greatest thing about this apartment is that we don't need much in the way of furniture or decoration. Anything too busy would distract from the views.

ALEX: It's a good thing, too—chintz gives me hives.

FRANK: The one consultation we had with a decorator—I don't know what possessed us—resulted in the installation of a light fixture that looked like a spaceship. We removed it from orbit roughly an hour after it was launched.

ALEX: I know what I don't like, but it's harder to pick what I do like. Which is why you're so much better at this.

FRANK: I must say your old place gave me a fright.

ALEX: Why? That was my country motif.

FRANK: But the country was one where the visual scheme seemed to be dictated by Holiday Inn.

ALEX: I liked that wooden painting.

FRANK: You mean the one that had a farm scene painted in different primary colors on blocks of wood? It looked like a family heirloom that Rob and Laura Petrie would try to get rid of on *The Dick Van Dyke Show*.

ALEX: It did not. It went perfectly with the rag rugs.

FRANK: It certainly did. But I think you'll agree that it was a good idea to start from scratch here. It's not as if I had so much furniture to bring into this marriage either.

ALEX: No, just air conditioners. It's a good thing I have enough closet space to store the sweaters I need to brave the arctic winds in July.

FRANK: I believe in the principle that there is no such thing as too much air conditioning.

ALEX: I believe in the principle that blue is not my best color. But at least you knew where to get furniture to match the air conditioners. I thought SoHo was just a place to buy shoes.

FRANK: As I recall, we bought some of those there, too.

ALEX: I needed some reward. Though I did like Portico, where we got our dining room table and the rocking chair in our bedroom and the buffet. It was Shabby Chic that made me insane—terminal chic was more like it.

FRANK: We don't like chic, even when it's shabby. What is nice about the handmade American furniture we got is that it looks old, homey, and lived-in without having any of the pretense of antiques.

ALEX: Anyone who describes anything in this apartment as cunning is automatically invited to leave.

FRANK: The bookshelves are cunning.

ALEX: Don't start with me.

FRANK: You must admit that the lighting of the bookshelves is incredible.

ALEX: That's John Petrocelli.

FRANK: We were lucky enough to find one of the only contractors around who was honest, tasteful, and a nice guy.

ALEX: I liked it when John took down the spaceship light and put it on his head and said he was Captain Kirk.

FRANK: Yeah, it was a joke that cut across all the language barriers of the people working on our apartment.

ALEX: Whenever anything went too wrong, we could always look at our view.

FRANK: And contemplate jumping out into it.

ALEX: Seriously, we do have one of the greatest views of the Hudson in the city. Especially from our bedroom.

FRANK: It's a lot like being on the prow of a ship except that you don't have to get dressed and you never have to play shuffleboard.

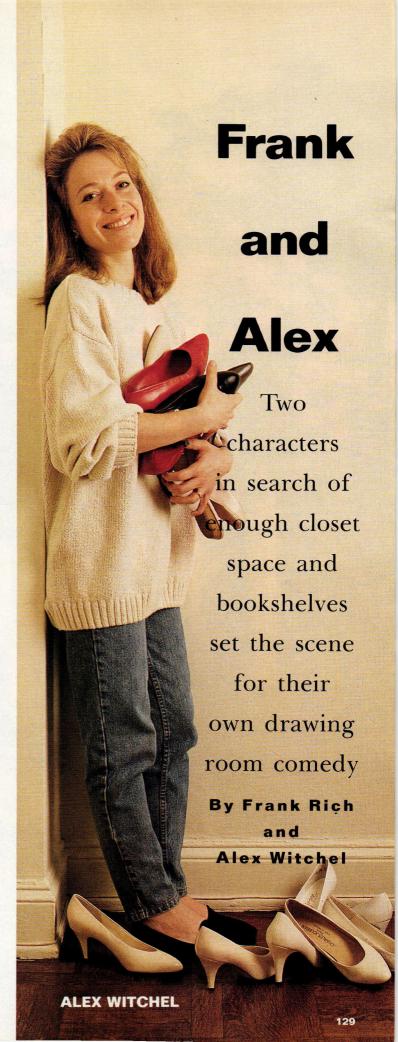
ALEX: We're a major attraction on the Circle Line tour. Which is where the blackout shades come in. I think that's my favorite thing in the apartment, because I love to sleep—until I see my favorite vision, my wonderful husband advancing toward the bed with a cup of his extraordinary coffee as a peace offering for waking me up. **FRANK:** We're so well stocked with coffee beans nothing

FRANK: We're so well stocked with coffee beans nothing else fits in the freezer. What I still don't understand is how someone who sleeps so much needs so many shoes.

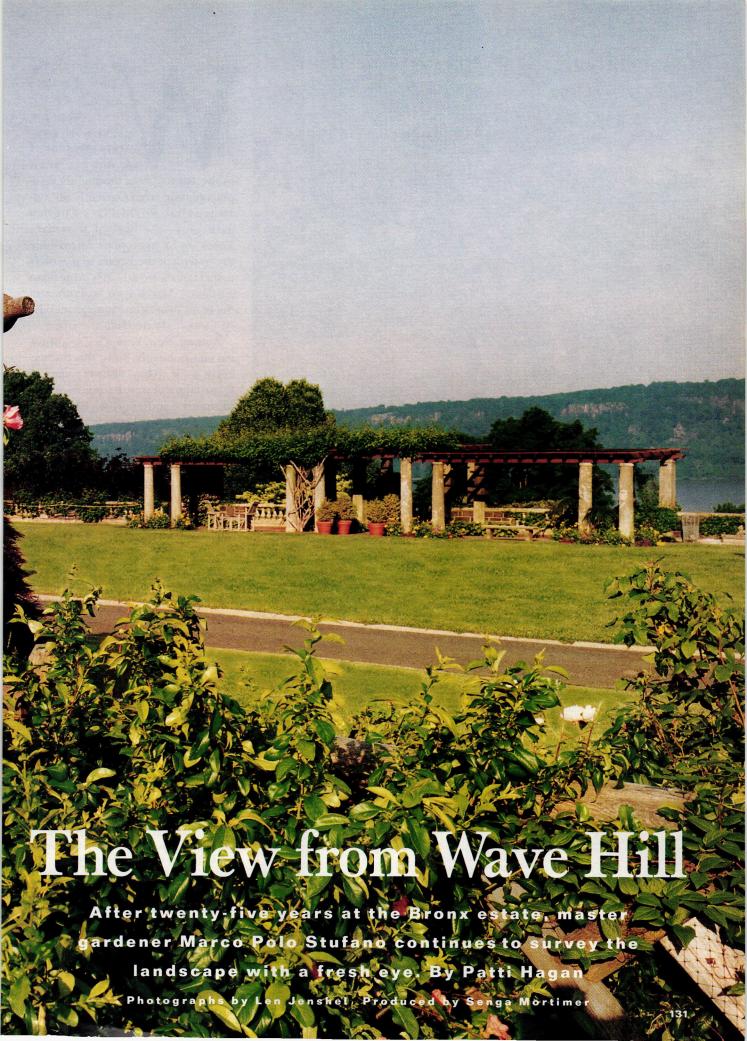
ALEX: It's a long walk to the bathroom. Which, I might add, is directly across from my walk-in cedar closet. I have accomplished both of my goals in life. Living with ample closet space and the man I love. What else is there?

FRANK: An espresso machine?

Frank Rich is the chief drama critic of The New York Times. Alex Witchel is a reporter at The New York Times.







"The art of a garden is in doing it," says
Marco Stufano. "It should never be 'done'"





HEN FELLOW New Yorkers announce they're off to England to see great estate gardens, I ask, why not go off to the Bronx? "No thonx," they reply, cribbing from Ogden Nash, unaware that world-class English gardeners-the likes of Rosemary Verey and Christopher Lloyd-hie themselves to the Bronx to pay their respects to a world-class American gardener, Marco Polo Stufano, and the great American estate garden he cultivates at Wave Hill.

Among New York City's municipal cultural institutions, this twenty-eight-acre urban country seat in Riverdale, the west Bronx, is one of the most exquisitely horticultural. Why more New Yorkers don't take their ease on the Adirondack lawn chairs at Wave Hill is a mystery, for here is the city at its bucolic best. Naturalists can hike through a ten-acre managed forest, and landscape hackers can explore a computer archive, the Catalogue of Landscape Records in the United States.

The environmentally enlightened patricians who owned Wave Hill in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries joined forces with Frederick Law Olmsted to preserve the natural landscape on both sides of the Hudson River. They were the eastern urban John Muirs of their time. In 1960 the last private owners, the Perkins-Freeman family, gave Wave Hill to New York City as a public garden. After five years in limbo as a ward of the Parks Department, the property moved to the Department

Marco Polo Stufano, above left, Wave Hill's director of horticulture, arranges changing displays in the conservatory year-round, left. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Turn-of-the-century photographs show prim beds edging a terrace; Glyndor, a 19th-century villa, overlooking a sundial and lawn atop the underground bowling alley; the walk between upper and lower terraces; a rustic arbor. Today weeping blue atlas cedar curtains the border between the Aquatic Garden and the Wild Garden.













of Cultural Affairs and its management to a nonprofit corporation, which in 1967 created the Wave Hill horticulture program under Stufano's direction.

Since then, by the strength of his plant associations and character, Stufano, with a staff of seven, has made a series of intimate, thoroughly idiosyncratic small-scale gardens amid a nineteenth-century gardenesque landscape that extends across the Hudson to the Palisades. Today, almost any visitor to Wave Hill will easily recognize the gardener-a tonsured silver-haired man of fiftyfour, deadheading or weeding in apron and sabots, looking like Saint Francis of the Bronx. Under questioning, Stufano admits that when Teddy Roosevelt lived at Wave Hill, and Mark Twain and Arturo Toscanini, the gardens were not what they are now. In 1967, when Stufano, a recent graduate of the New York Botanical Garden School of Horticulture (also in the Bronx), was recommended by his teacher, the polymath plantsman T. H. Everett, for the post at Wave Hill, he found

the extant gardens to be "of the period"—but "awful." The formal rose garden that hid the estate's bowling alley "was the silliest thing. It competed with the view of the Hudson," says Stufano. "Why perpetuate the mistakes of the past?"

With his longtime collaborator, the late John Nally, Stufano soon brought his first Wave Hill garden out of a 250-foot-high outcrop of Fordham gneiss bound and gagged in bindweed. The Wild Garden, as Stufano saw it, "had to be done naturalistically." It also had to be done with "wild plants that would make good garden plants, species from all over the world, used as if they could have occurred together naturally." A hike up the Wild Garden paths feels remarkably like a condensed alpine walk. Over two decades the plants have moved about, growing up between stones or throwing themselves into crevices.

Stufano's hortocratic method relies largely on self-sowns—restrained only by "artful, selective thinning." Plantings are allowed to evolve, to surprise, delight, offend.

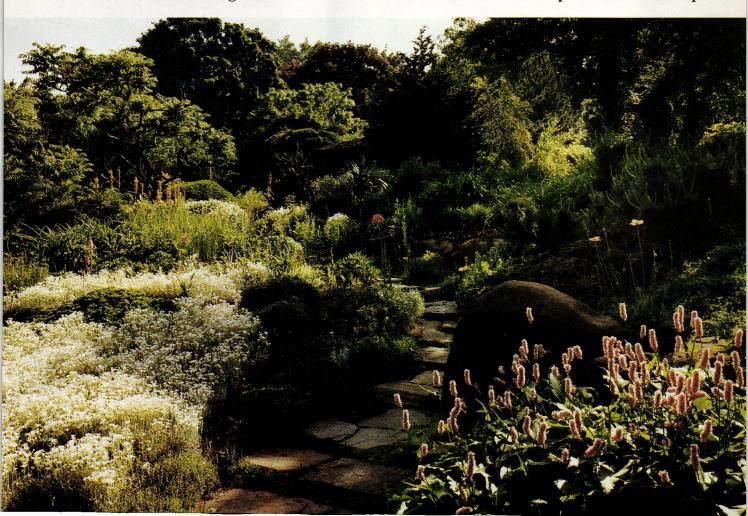
Ask to see the garden plan, and Stufano explodes. "There is no plan! I hate the idea of a plan, the exact same things in the exact same places year after year. Gardens by plan are totally boring and reduce the gardener to some sort of dodo."

Wave Hill is renowned for audacious plant combinations. The hell-fire-and-brimstone Red Garden, for instance, is a standout among the eight beds in the 70-by-90-foot cottage-style Flower Garden, where pastels predominate against silver foliage foils. In the Red Garden, danger-sign oranges and Nancy Reagan reds such as *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' and *Hemerocallis* 'Sparks' shout for attention. But (Continued on page 184)

Waterlilies bloom in the Aquatic Garden, above, against a backdrop of elephant's-ear, Miscanthus sinensis, and other grasses in the Monocot Garden. Opposite above: The Flower Garden combines Crambe cordifolia, bearded iris, white lilac, Cotinus coggygria 'Royal Purple', Rosa moyesii 'Geranium', and tepee-trained clematis. Opposite below: A path in the Wild Garden climbs past Polygonum bistorta 'Superbum', poppies, yucca, and cut-leaved staghorn sumac.



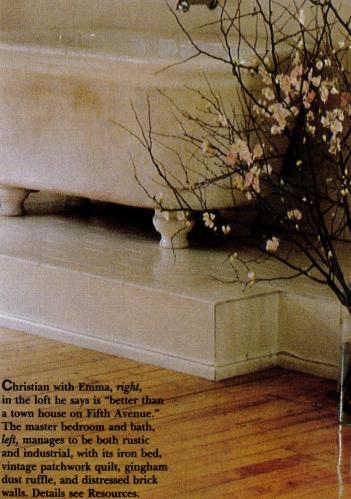
Wave Hill's intimate gardens are famed for audacious plantsmanship







Fashion designer
Christian Francis Roth
finds room for
a house and yard in
a downtown loft
By Wendy Goodman
Photographs by Oberto Gill









HRISTIAN FRANcis Roth used to hate going home. "We lived so far

away from work, in a third-floor walk-up, and you had to pass unspeakable things in the halls! We felt like the complete Cinderella couple when we moved here," he says.

The fashion designer is referring to the Tribeca loft that he and his wife, Hannah, settled into two years ago, before the birth of their daughter, Emma. They first saw the loft without electricity. "It was as dark as a moonless night," recalls Hannah. "You could just see the outline of the

large beams in the middle of the room, and you sensed the texture of the walls. Everything was larger than life."

Even in the light of day the loft is large enough for a house within the house: "Emma's house," complete with a white clapboard wall, windows, a hundred-year-old door, and a window box planted with cyclamen. Hannah was inspired by visiting a friend in Palm Beach

whose office, in an airplane hangar, had a front porch with rocking chairs. "We needed to do something," she says. "It was too loftlike for a baby." Hannah's father, an architect "who builds with his eye," in Christian's phrase, constructed the fairy-tale house in a weekend.

Outside this real-life dollhouse the living room "yard" is furnished with a wicker rocker and a sofa and armchairs upholstered in cotton patchwork. Christian proposed blocks of wool flannel in bright colors, but Hannah exercised her veto—too uncomfortable and too unsympathetic to paw prints and baby mishaps. "All the decorative elements in this apartment are based on being functional," explains Christian.



The loft reflects not only the complementary characters of Hannah and Christian but also the combination of innocence and sophistication that marks Christian's clothes. Since launching his business in 1988, he has had amazing success with crayon sleeve jackets one season, dollar bill print dresses the next, followed by quilt skirts and hobo-inspired suits—apparently simple young clothes done with a master's technique and craftsmanship.

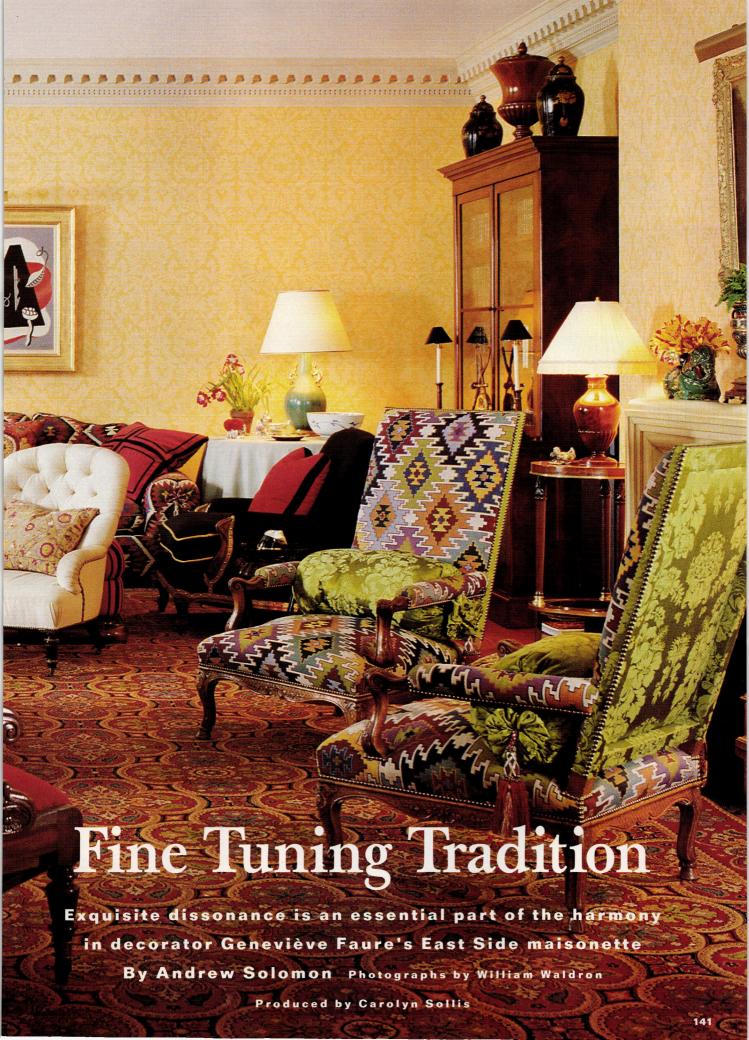
"Living here is an enormous luxury for me," he says. "It's better than a town house on Fifth Avenue. It's exactly my speed."

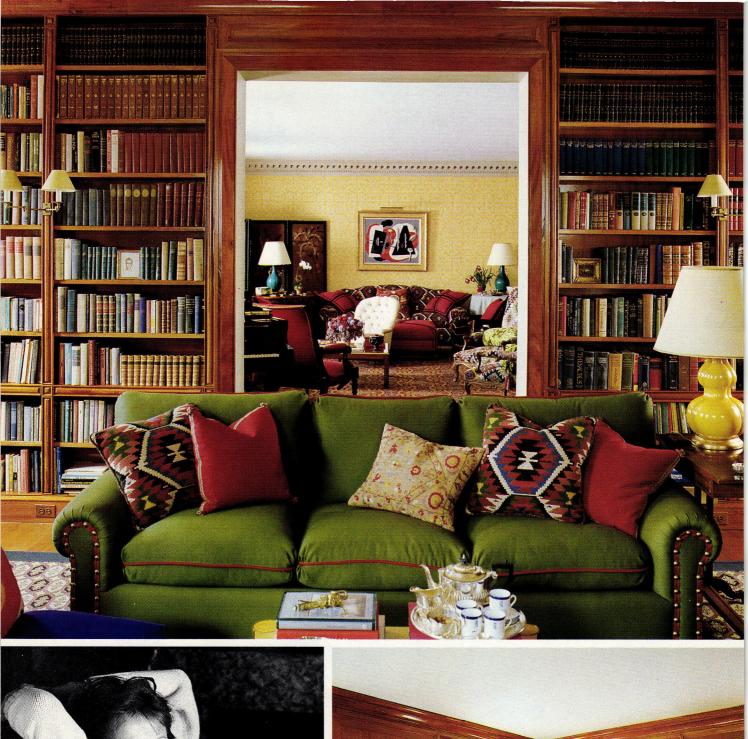


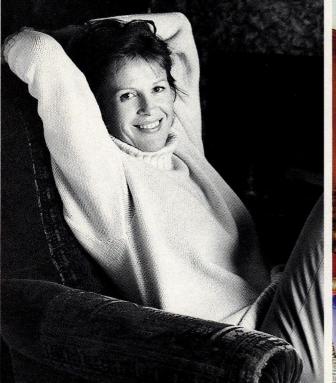
















HEN I FINISH an apartment for a client," confides Geneviève Faure, "I always feel that it is not finished. Sometimes I think I should go and live in the apartments of my clients for a year, to give them that feeling of being inhabited." Geneviève Faure's own apartment does not feel lived-in in the euphemistic English sense of that word: there are no rings on the wooden surfaces, no snags in the upholstery, no month-old stacks of unread newspapers. It feels lived-in in the sense of being balanced; all the little errors and discomforts have been identified and most of them have been dealt with. The chairs are set at the right distance for easy conversation; the curtains are pulled back in what seems a natural way; everything is at a comfortable height. The apartment feels inhabited in that it feels fine-tuned and organic.

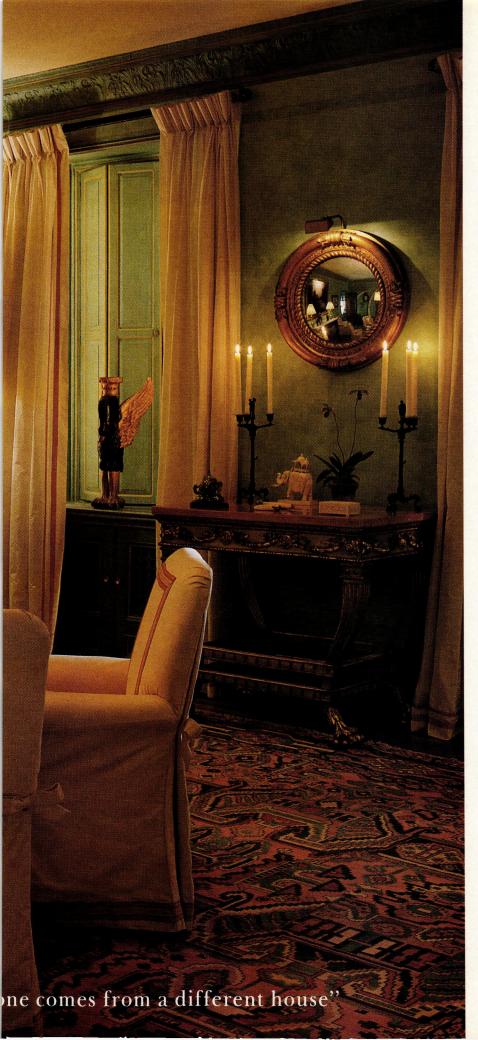
"There are no new ideas here," Faure says. "Perhaps there are some new contrasts, but I am starting nothing radical." The apartment is full of period furniture and has dozens of Upper East Side conventions: a big entrance hall with a black and white marble floor, a paneled library with built-in bookcases and a mirrored bar, and a rather formal living room. But the effect is not traditional. Faure has a no-nonsense unsentimental quality about her. "Nostalgic?" she repeats when I ask her a question. "But no, of course I'm not

nostalgic. I am a working woman, and all in all I am very glad to be living at this precise moment in time."

While her apartment takes account of the past, it does feel very much part of this moment in time. It is not self-indulgently exuberant; it is also not sober. It is a very grand cozy apartment, bright and pleasant and impressive. Everything in it is clearly arranged according to an order—

Faure, opposite below left, had the library, opposite above, paneled in mahogany from Costa Rica, then added upholstery in brilliant colors and a pair of yellow snakeskin coffee tables, opposite below right. Over the fireplace is a painting by Henri Matisse. Carpet of Prince Noir Tapestry from Brunschwig & Fils. Above: An Indian embroidery is draped over the hall table under a 19th-century French chandelier from Reymer-Jourdan, NYC.





but it is an order that includes a measure of chaos. So, too, Faure's conversation: she is careful and tactful in what she says, but not too careful and tactful. When she finishes articulating a definite view—and she has many definite views—she smiles not so much to soften her opinion as to invite you to share it.

Faure is extremely modest and extremely confident. Her interiors share her character: they are unobtrusive, but they have terrific presence. She is matter-of-fact, almost earthy, but she is also one of those French women who make you feel that whatever she is doing is rather chic. She was, for example, a few minutes late for our meeting in a way that made you feel it was rather chic to be a few minutes late. And she had rolled the sleeves of her dress in a way that made you feel how tiresome it was that most people with similar dresses did not roll their sleeves.

"I did the apartment in four months," she says. "I can't bear for these things to go on forever. And it's not necessary." Indeed the apartment is quite straightforward: dining room, living room, library, entrance hall, and master bedroom. The kitchen and a few bedrooms are still unfinished. Because the main rooms are on the ground floor, shutters and shades cover the windows. "One wants only so much intimacy with the people passing on the streets," says Faure. "I myself am a voyeur, and I like to be able to look at them when I choose."

She sustains her offhand tone: "When I am doing someone else's house, I make sure that each room picks up the colors of the other rooms, that they flow into one another. Here I did just what I felt like do-

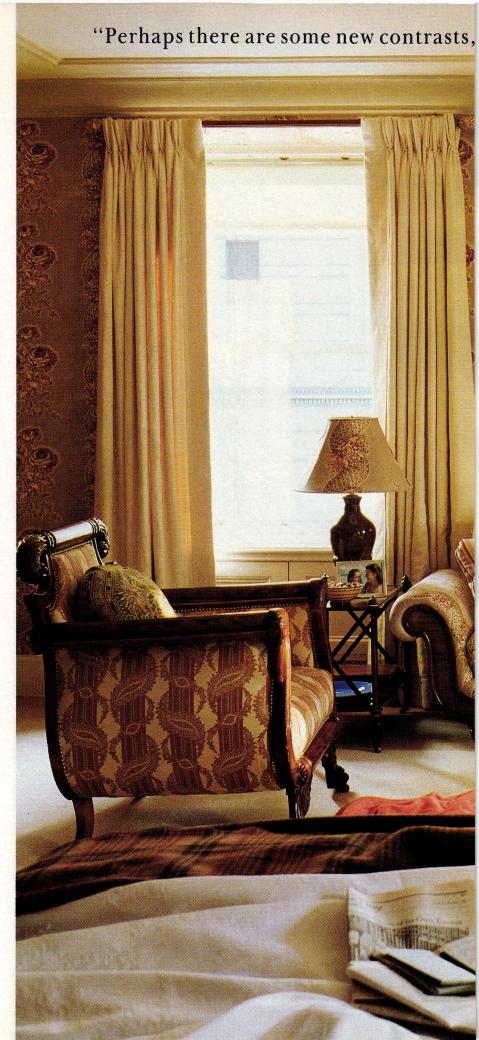
A chandelier of Faure's design hangs over a late 19th century English table, which is set with 1930s Baccarat crystal and ringed with chairs slipcovered in cotton duck from Decorators Walk. A collection of antique elephants is disposed on a mid 19th century English console table from Christopher Hodsoll, London, and an 18th-century Italian gilded side table. The bronze floor lamp is English. Carpet from Reymer-Jourdan.

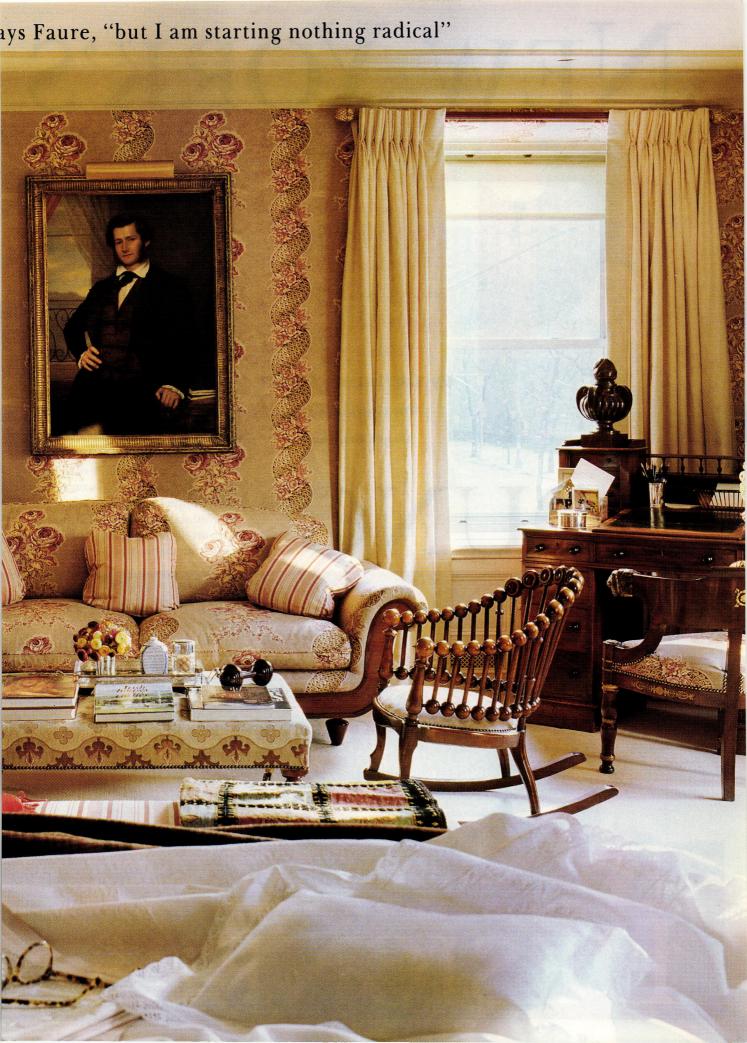
ing in each room; it's as if each one comes from a different house." So it is: the rooms are like the various moods of a single intelligence. The library, the most charming one of all, has tropical mahogany bookcases that glisten in the sunshine. Worn Penguin paperbacks and rare editions are lined up on the shelves. A small Matisse painting hangs over the fireplace, a wonderful Matisse drawing of a nude with a mirror on another wall. The furniture is upholstered in brighter versions of the colors of the rug: two big chairs are a glowing deep violet, and the sofa is bright green with red trim. Pillows of Afghan silk are dotted around, as are bunches of flowers loosely arranged in small vases. The light is like the first day of spring, pure and bright and surprising and inexplicable.

The living room, by contrast, feels more determined. "Look! Two columns! Every decorator has two freestanding columns in his home. These are mine. This room is as much formality as I can stand." In the corner is an embroidered screen—"nineteenth-century junk, but I'm fond of it. Half of what I have is junk. The other half is not. I enjoy finding the junk just as much as the rest of it."

As we walk through the entrance hall—which is disconcertingly conventional, a solid core to the pinwheel variety of the other rooms—Faure explains, "In every room, if you want it to seem like you live there, if you don't want it to seem overdecorated, you must have something that is wrong. It's easiest to do it with color, to have one thing that clashes"—like the yellow snakeskin tables in the (Continued on page 182)

The bedroom walls and sofa, made for Faure by Trade France, are covered with a custom fabric by Fernanda Niven. The Bennison stripe on the pillows, the vintage needlepoint on the ottoman from Valley House Antiques, Locust Valley, and the upholstery on the late 19th century armchair maintain the same subtle tonal range, which sets off the dark woods of the late 19th century English mahogany desk, French Empire desk chair, and 19th-century American rocker.





NEW YORK'S



Whether living
in basement hovels
or modernist
high rises, five
decorating
experts discover
there's no place
like home

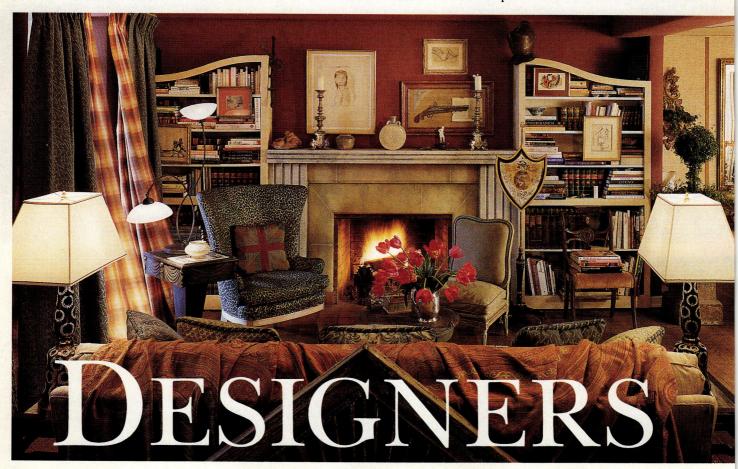
By Christine Pittel

Scott Frances

YOUNG

TAKE FIVE FRESH YOUNG DESIGNERS and settle them into five Manhattan apartments with the proportions of a shoebox. Add a few antiques and swathes of fabric, sprinkle with flea market finds, and pour in color to taste. Blend everything with wit, and you have the basic recipe for contemporary New York style.

Low ceilings didn't stop Frédéric Jochem, an impeccably polite aristocratic Frenchman, from creating his own elegant atelier in a standard slice of a Central Park South high rise. Yet this is tradition with a twist-there's a leopard-spotted wing chair from the East Village shop Jerrystyle next to a Louis XVI slipper chair by the faux stone fireplace. "I like to combine elements and periods into a dynamic mix," he explains with imperturbable charm and a sly sense of humor. Whimsical fifties-inspired sconces light up a painting by Hubert Robert, circa 1780, in the dining room trimmed with art deco gold braid. And bright panels of suede stretched over dia-





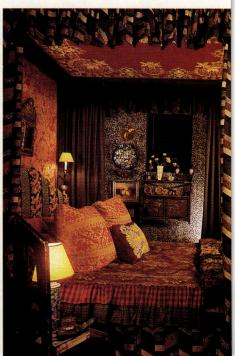


CHARLES RILEY "I wanted to walk into a nineteenth-century fantasy—a totally different world from the street outside"

Riley's living room, above, looks as if it were assembled by a Victorian pack rat. There's a Turkish-style settee, an Italian landscape, slipper chairs in oversize paisley, and faux masonry walls painted by Gail Leddy, who also created the mural à la Fragonard. Below, from left: A club chair in tapestry fabric and a screen in a Clarence House cotton. Riley standing out against the scenery. His canopy bed, made from a patchwork of fabrics. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Purcell reflected in her mantel mirror. A Georgian window tops the loft bedroom. To keep the living room open and airy, chairs are stored overhead and the TV is in the fireplace.



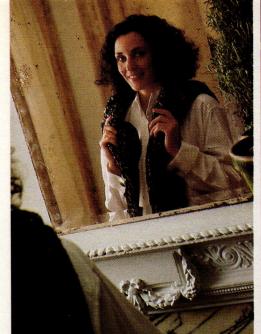




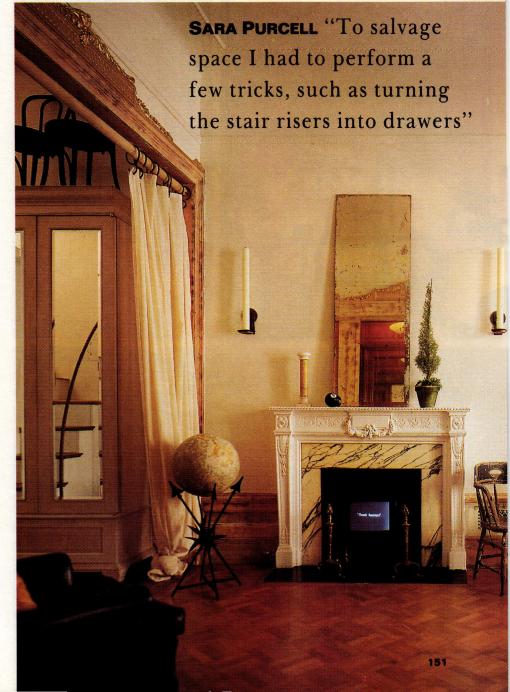
mond-shaped frames adorn the bedroom, which doubles as Jochem's office where he orchestrates plans for clients who include Nicholas Rohatyn and Olaf and Olga Guerrand-Hermès. "Every time I look at a building, I think of a different piece of music," says Jochem. "Why not play a little opera in here?"

There's no hint outside the shabby East Village tenement building of the opulent eccentricity within Charles Riley's tiny basement apartment. The living room is a hodgepodge of pattern and texture with a kilim on the floor, wallpaper on the ceiling, and paisley sheets covering two walls. "The place completely envelops you like a strong perfume," comments Riley, who is fixated on the Napoleon III era. Since there are no windows in the living room, he commissioned muralist Gail Leddy to copy a Fragonard painting, which covers one wall-"a view I can take with me." More sheets stapled to a wood frame on the bedroom ceiling form a luxurious canopy bed, usually cluttered with papers and a Rolodex since Riley makes business calls propped against the pillows. "I have a lot of dreams here, without sleeping."

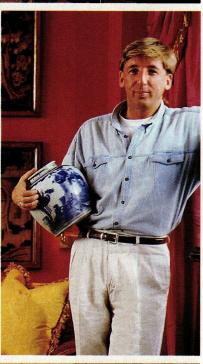
Architect Sara Purcell, part of the team that recently designed Ralph and Ricky Lauren's Westchester, New York, house, was lucky enough to find a prime apartment for herself—the front parlor floor of a West Side brownstone, complete with original moldings and oak paneling under layers of paint. "It was a wreck, but it also had twelve-foot ceilings," she says glancing up. "I think if you tipped this apartment on its side, it would have more square footage." To consolidate the bedroom into a loft above the bathroom, she constructed an airy building within the building and put the stair risers to use as a set of graduated drawers. For dinner parties, Thonet chairs come down from their perch atop an armoire. An architect's T square and a selection of her shoes hang on the wall above her desk. Subtle textures and finishes—unbleached muslin curtains knotted at













JOHN CHRISTENSEN

"Start with the architecture, it's the foundation of all good interior design"

the bottom, plain painter's linen upholstering a minimalist wroughtiron daybed, stippled woodwork establish the simplicity and accentuate the serenity of the space.

John Christensen has been studying floor plans since he was a teenager. Now an associate designer with David Anthony Easton, he has mastered the classical approach to decorating. Miraculously, he transformed a characterless box in a brand-new Upper East Side tower into a stately home some thirty flights up. Crown moldings and baseboards create a sense of scale. Matching columns—"David taught me the importance of symmetry"push the eight-foot ceilings higher. Regency-style swag curtains disguise strip windows. Blue and white porcelain, Empire bronzes, and eighteenth-century French bergères contribute a sense of grandeur. The bedroom walls are covered in a black and white chinoiserie toile accented with yellow-striped curtains and a bell-trimmed valance. Lamps give a soft glow. "I'm crazy about lamps," says Christensen. "I once had eleven of them and a chandelier in a oneroom apartment."

Craig Logan Jackson is catching a plane to Paris (*Continued on page 182*)

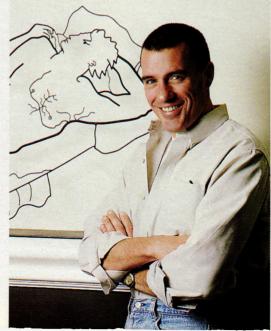
Christensen, center right, supplied his high-rise apartment with columns and striped cerise wallpaper from Clarence House. Top: Swagged curtains of silk taffeta mask the living room's strip windows. Bessarabian from Stark. Center left: Chinese panels adorn a living room niche. Left: The Manhattan skyline meets the English country house look in the bedroom, lined with Old World Weavers toile and valanced Scalamandré silk curtains. Bed linens from Palais Royal.



CRAIG LOGAN JACKSON "Decorating, like life, is an editing process.

This apartment is a distillation of all I've experienced"

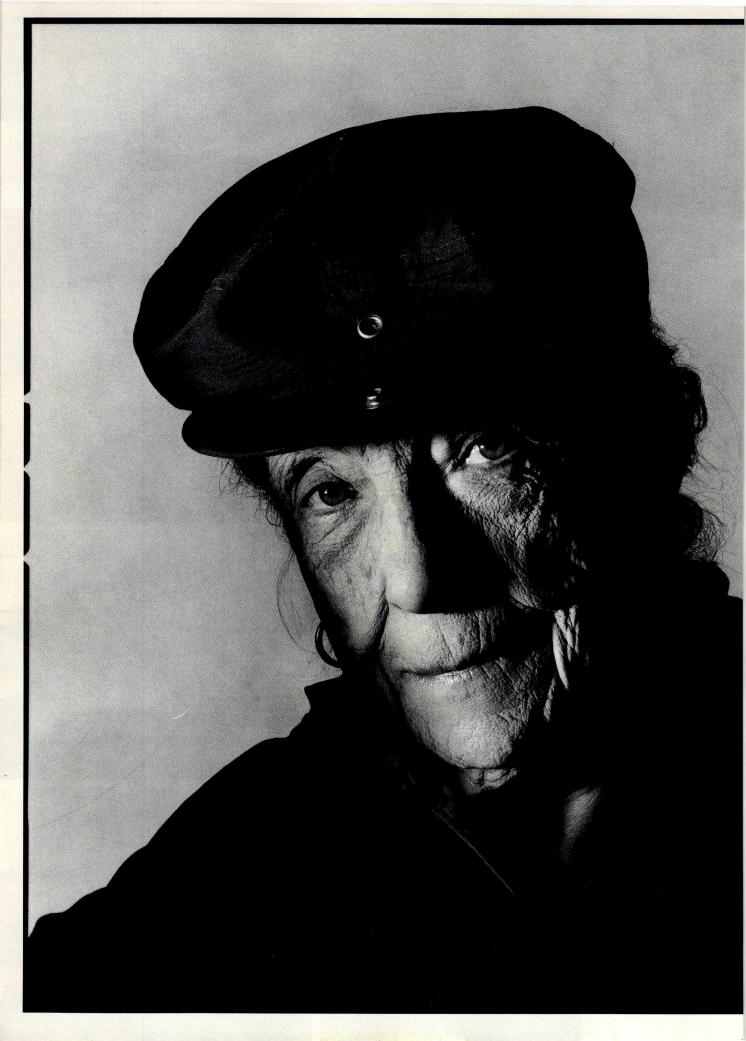
Jackson, right, with a wire sculpture by Jo Shane. Above: The living room's muted palette extends from the pale celadon walls to the striped upholstery and the Stark sea grass carpet. Far right, center: Regency chairs, a 1940s screen, and a Sunnex industrial lamp. Far right, bottom: American night tables, c. 1825, flank the bed, which has a striped headboard and a long skirt of Donghia cotton.







MICHAEL MUNDY (4)

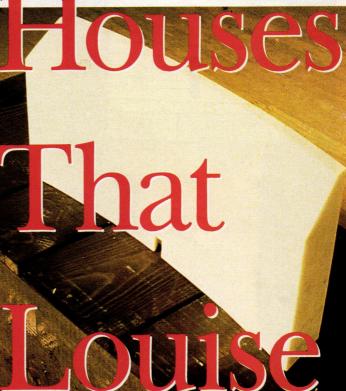


WHEN LOUISE BOURGEOIS WAS AWAKENED around midnight in her third-floor bedroom, she found herself blinking into the flashlights of two New York City police officers. The imperturbable sculptor, who has outlived all surprises, was told that neighbors had spotted a prowler breaking into her Chelsea house and that he had now been captured on the first floor. The police apologized for the disturbance, but would she come downstairs and see if she could identify the intruder? She gave a world-weary sigh, a musical French sigh of amused tolerance, and murmured, "Let me think about it."

Bourgeois has lived in the house, where she raised three sons, for thirty years. "Why should I

have been afraid?" she coolly asked me following the inconvenience. She shrugged her shoulders. "I've always lived in city houses where you depend on your neighbors." She then glanced around the room she calls her salon, which is crammed with photographic archives, stacks of books, a daybed with precarious springs, and a leatherette barstool where she likes to perch. "Besides, there's no money or art here," she added with a wave of her hand. "There's nothing valuable." Except, of course, Bourgeois herself, a fiercely independent woman who waited almost a lifetime for rec-

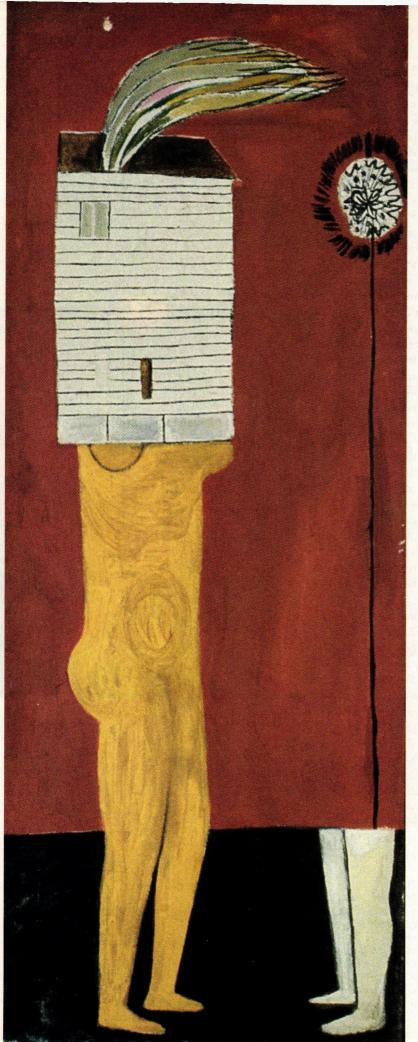
ognition before she finally emerged as a solid "art star" in the eighties. Today she is acclaimed as a major artist-she recently had an installation at Documenta IX in Germany and will represent the United States at the Venice Biennale next year—and museums seek out her sculpture, paintings, drawings, and prints, work that often calls to mind the haunting wit of Ionesco's plays



When I first visited Bourgeois's house some years ago, I was struck by the alarming presence Louise Bourgeois, left, in a A lifetime of symbolism

photograph by Penn for HG. Above right: The versions of houses that appear in many of the artist's sculptures often contain autobiographical references. The Curved House, a 1983 marble in the Bern Kunstmuseum, possesses the formal purity of an icon.

dwells in artist Louise Bourgeois's domestic imagery. By Paul Gardner Produced by Susan Goldberger



of headless women, dismembered limbs, and other body parts—in bronze, wood, latex, and marble—casually clumped together or huddled near walls. Hers is not a glamorous or cuddly art. It's deliberately aggressive. The work I saw on my early visit has since been sold or moved to her studio in Brooklyn. But the house remains much as it was, both a hub of sociability and a sanctum for meditation. Then as now, I might find Bourgeois at the center of a mélange of students and strippers, movie directors and scholars. Or I might find her serenely alone.

Bourgeois, whose sophistication is tempered by discreet curiosity, presides over her habitat like a grave little Alice—polite, indulgent, and sometimes dismissive—in a private world of

her own making. "I use the house," she has often said. "It does not use me." A recurring image in her work, much of which is autobiographical, is of houses—houses with wings, with arms, houses that are part women and house interiors that she calls lairs to hide in or cells where emotional and physical pain can be locked up.

"I've lived in twenty houses," Bourgeois told me, recalling places on the Left Bank in Paris where she grew



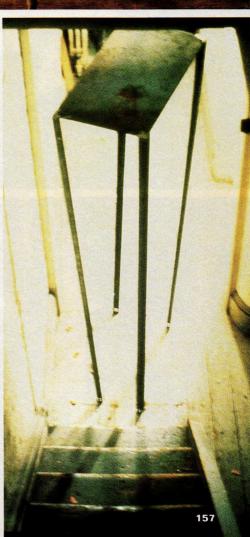
up and in Deauville where she vacationed with her parents, a sister, a brother—and her father's mistress. "My memories of houses are not always pleasant. There is anxiety and fear and a need for privacy." I once followed her as she wandered in and out of rooms, each with doors leading to three staircases. I peered down a spiral stairway, and when I looked up, she had vanished. Suddenly she reappeared, tapping on the outside of a glass-paned salon door. "I know how to keep

Architecture and the human body fuse mysteriously in Femme Maison, india ink and oil on canvas, 1945–47, left, and in a portrait of Bourgeois's son Jean-Louis, painted wood, 1947–49, above. Opposite above: In the bedroom, where she files her prints and drawings, a 19th-century mantel holds an untitled work in painted wood made in the 1970s. Opposite below, from left: The steel house and its plaster inhabitants open to view in Fun Piece, 1986, symbolize a harmonious community. The Quartered One, plaster, 1964–65, suggests flesh as well as a cavelike lair. The attenuated Maison Fragile, 1978, hints at precarious balances in everyday life.



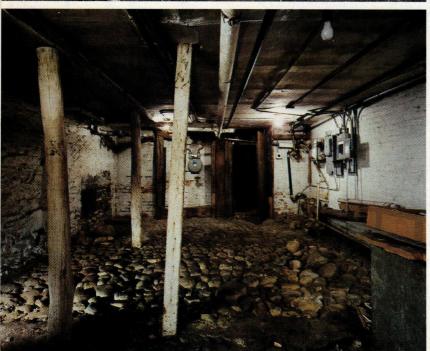












out of sight," she remarked enigmatically. "But you see, I could watch you."

Because it is where she has conjured up artful stories with pencil, paint, charcoal, wood, and marble, the house in Chelsea is a fabled place in her eyes. It's also been a reality in much of Bourgeois's life in New York. She arrived in the city in 1938, a woman in her mid twenties with three roles to fill: artist, wife (of the American art historian Robert Goldwater), and mother. Quite a juggling act, but she carried it off, and the breadth of the work she has produced continues to amaze. It ranges from dramatic totemlike pieces, representing friends she left behind in Europe, to a series of giant marble eyes—"Eyes never lie," she says—and the vivid nature studies, often breastlike or phallic, which she calls divertissements of the body.

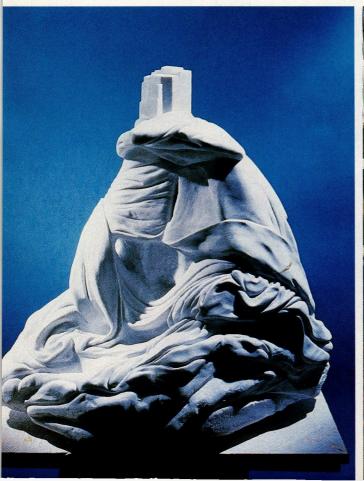
Some of her most evocative house imagery, created in the 1940s before she devoted herself mainly to sculpture, is the Femme Maison series. The "woman house" in these paintings and drawings has no face: she's simply a house from the waist up. "Poor thing doesn't realize she's naked," Bourgeois told me, edging tentatively onto the barstool. "She's inside that house. She's totally passive. I am a house too, so the figures are selfportraits." Her Maison Fragile of the late seventies, merely a "roof" supported by four steel legs, "symbolizes the fragility within the house." A long reflective pause. "My relation to others, not just to my family, is fragile. I'm not very good at relationships." She caressed a long plait of hair, explaining, "Houses represent security. My studio in Brooklyn is not exactly a house, it is a refuge. Women must own something. A woman cannot rent. It's"—she halted, searching for le mot juste-"obscene to rent. So, despite tragedies within a house, or my own fragilities, for me the house is a storage place for memories. You have to acknowledge your memories in order to understand yourself."

She led me down to the cellar, which happens to be her favorite part of the house—the ultimate hideout, dark and primitive. Then she switched on bare light bulbs that illuminated pipes, fuse box, and hot water tank (Continued on page 185)

The young Bourgeois poses outside her parents' house in Choisy, above left. Top left: Pragmatism prevails in the artist's New York kitchen. Left: The basement, her favorite part of the house, appeals to the love of hideaways that inspires much of her work. Opposite, clockwise from above: A youthful impulse toward self-expression emerges in Roof Song, an early painting in oil on linen, 1947. In Cell V, a painted wood, marble, and metal installation, 1991, Bourgeois plays on themes of confinement and refuge. Marble Femme Maison, 1983, is an emblematic self-portrait late in life.

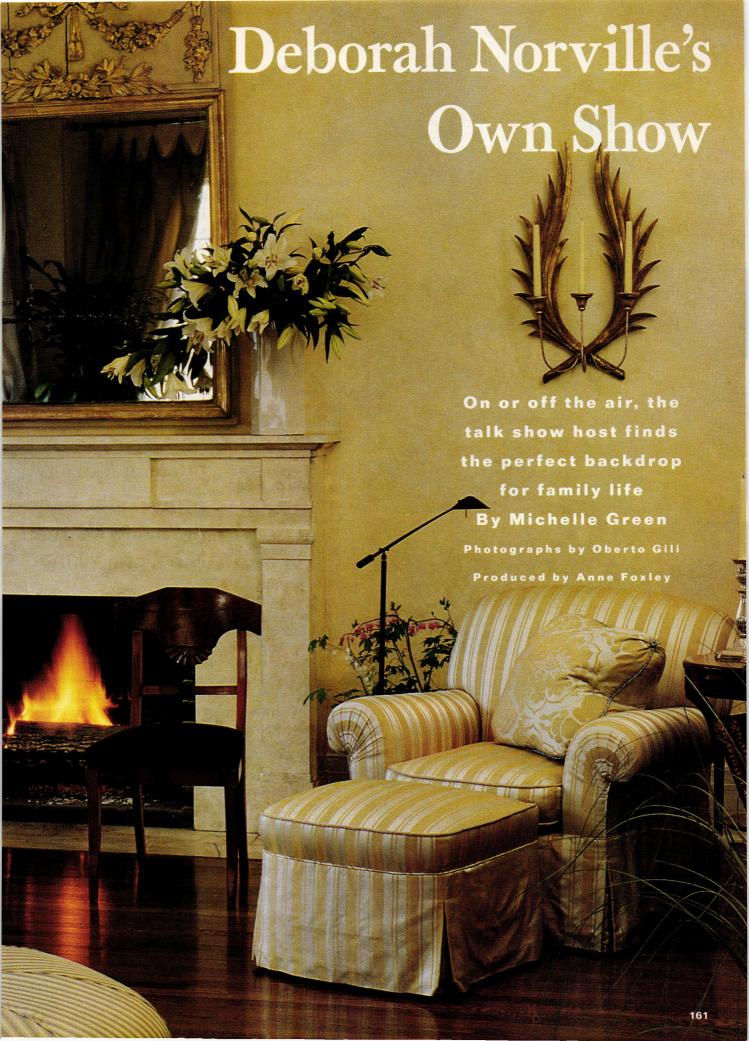


She presides over her world like a grave little Alice in Wonderland

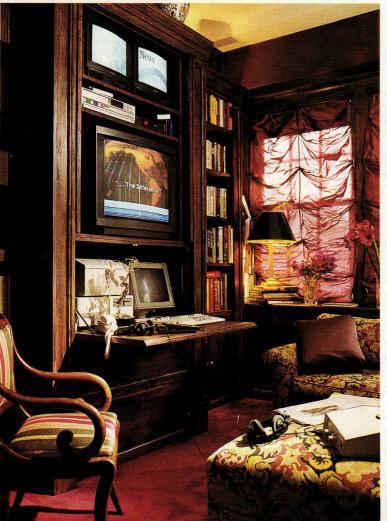












THERS MIGHT ADMIRE THE PLUMP love seat or the raspberry silk curtains; for Deborah Norville, the best thing about the study in her East Side duplex is that it's just steps away from the bear-stocked nursery where her son, Niki, sleeps. Unlike many moth-

ers with high-profile jobs, Norville doesn't have to part from her child at the beginning of each workday: host of an ABC radio talk show that airs for three hours every weekday evening she uses her cleverly designed study—which is equipped with three televisions, a computer, and all of her radio gear, as well as her Emmy—as a broadcast studio. While Norville does research, nineteen-month-old Niki bangs pots in the baby-friendly kitchen. While she interviews guests like Russell Baker, husband Karl Wellner, a Swedish-born businessman, supervises Niki's evening bath. Says Norville, "Being down the hall helps take the edge off the guilt."

Polished but comfortable and, like its owners, decidedly upbeat, the Wellner apartment not only accommodates work and family life but also serves as a convivial setting for cocktail parties and sit-down dinners. "We wanted something light and airy but not stuffy," says

Norville. "We wanted it to be the kind of place where guests aren't afraid to put a glass down."

Married in 1987, the couple bought the duplex in March 1989. "We were get"I'm not Murphy Brown," she told the painter, "and you're not Eldin"

ting on a flight to Europe when we finally made the decision," Norville recalls. "At the very last second Karl ran to call the broker, and I was physically preventing the attendant from closing the door."

Only a pair of optimists would have gotten so excited. Neglected for decades, the apartment had gone to seed; the woodwork was rotting, and the rain-stained carpets had begun to disintegrate. "The plaster had decayed to the point where you could see the wire mesh beneath," Wellner says. With architect Annabelle Selldorf they mapped out a plan that included a new kitchen where a pair of dank maids' rooms had been, two renovated bathrooms, and a thoroughgoing restoration of the original woodwork and the living room fireplace. They then called in New Zealand–born interior designer Sandra Nunnerley. "We probably weren't the easiest people to

A gilded and painted trumeau, c. 1805, opposite, from Karl Kemp, NYC, hangs against faux marble tiles painted by Michael Battaglia. Chair fabric from Christopher Hyland. Patinated bronze and gilt chandelier from Nesle, NYC. Above left: Norville, in a Calvin Klein Collection pantsuit, and Wellner with their son, Niki. Left: Norville broadcasts her radio show from her study, where guests relax in a tapestry-covered love seat. Regency armchair from Trevor Potts, NYC.





In the master bedroom, right, taupe curtains in an Ian Crawford satin and a cashmere throw from Ralph Lauren Home Collection accent the creamy tones of the walls and the Manuel Canovas fabric on the window seat cushion. Doors over the closet open up additional storage space. Left: In the kitchen, photos of Norville with George Bush, Richard Nixon, and Jane Pauley overlook a custom table.

work with," Norville confesses. "We had definite ideas about what we did and didn't want."

They also had definite ideas about the amount of time they wanted to live in medias res. "Six months of construction seemed like six years," says Norville. "There's something that happens when you undergo a renovation," she adds. "Husbands have business out of town, and really clever husbands have business out of the country." Wellner, it seems, was in Tokyo as moving day, December 19, 1989, approached, "at a point when I was doing the Today show and at the same time filling in for Brokaw on Nightly News," says Norville, groaning goodnaturedly. "Our painter, Michael Battaglia, was finishing up just before Christmas when he came to me and said, 'I'll be back on January 3.' I said, 'Michael, you're a very nice guy. But I'm not Murphy Brown, and you're not Eldin.' He realized that he was dealing with a woman on the edge of insanity."

Today the apartment has the feeling of a space whose noble character has been restored. "The whole thing was to make it look as if it had always been like this," says Nunnerley, who designed most of the upholstered pieces downstairs. Painted by Battaglia, a Coloradobased artist, the walls in the entrance hall are glazed in soft yellow and gunmetal; in the dining room, a wash of pale blue and gold; and in the master bedroom, a dappled taupe and cream. Battaglia's friezes lend a sophisticated air to the refurbished bathrooms, and granite countertops give the black and white kitchen—which is hung with photos of Norville with George Bush, Richard Nixon, and Jane Pauley—an unexpected elegance.

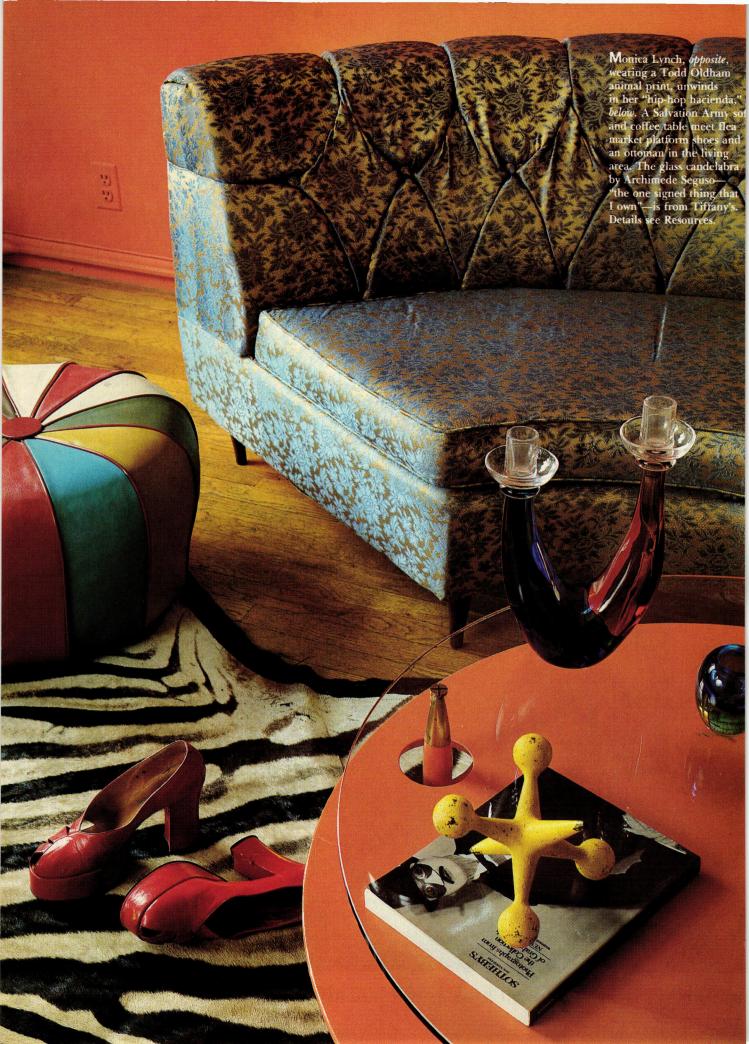
Family heirlooms appear in every corner. Like Wellner, the Georgia-born Norville has Swedish roots; her mother's grandparents emigrated from Sweden to Illinois in the 1880s. Handsome wooden bookshelves in the living room hold her family Bible, in Swedish, along with striking icons inherited from Karl's Russian Orthodox grandmother. The eighteenth-century clock in the same room was passed down (Continued on page 186)



"The whole thing," says Sandr



unnerley, "was to make it look as if it had always been like this"



For music mogul

The

Monica Lynch,

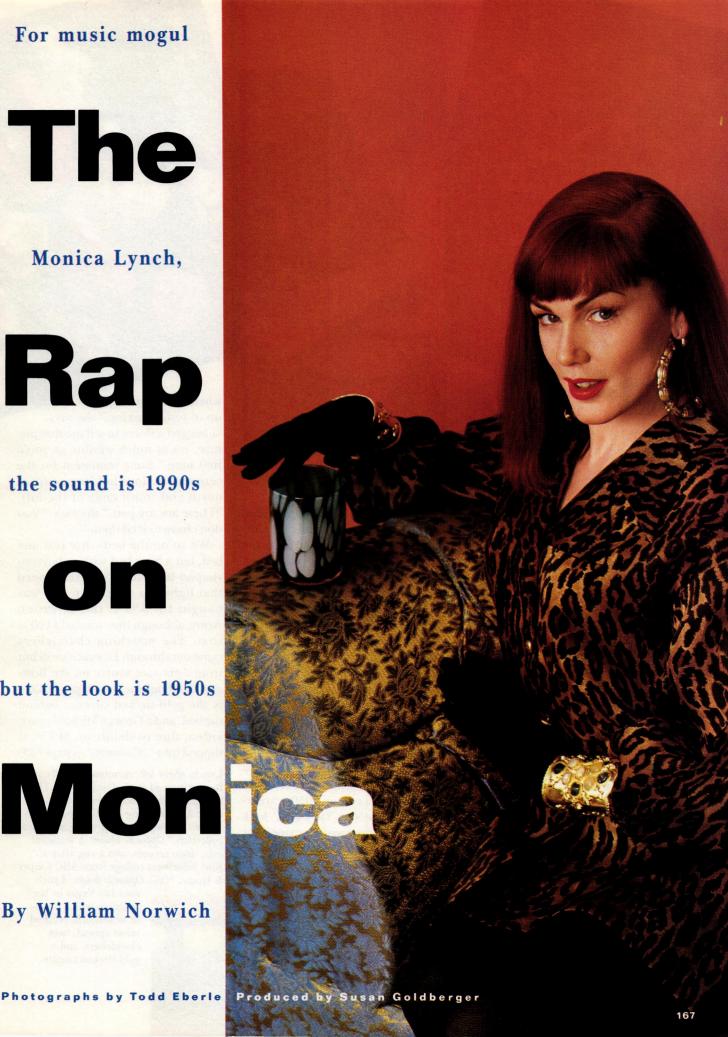
Rap

the sound is 1990s

but the look is 1950s

Mon

By William Norwich





and Naughty by Nature, lives in the Yorkville section of Manhattan. But for anyone who knows her (or who has seen the Gap ad), it's hard to picture this one-woman band of thirty-something cutting-edge glamour and style living on the Upper East Side—even if, and with all due respect, Yorkville is the tony Upper East Side's poor cousin, it's the Upper East Side nonetheless.

Lynch's world, after all, is hip-hop, something she defines as "a kind of urban music, an attitude, and a culture that emanates from the rap community and is definitely now and tomorrow." She arrived at Tommy Boy ten years ago when she responded to an ad in *The Village Voice* and became the company's first, and only, employee. Before that she was an Oak Park, Illinois, immigrant to the city, the oldest of six children whose father owned a chain of laundro-

mats. New to New York in 1978, Lynch worked for something called the Go-Go Agency. They managed her career as a topless dancer—and, yes, her past, dancing by day, clubbing by night, amuses her.

MITTI

"You might say I've lived around the block. This is probably my thirteenth place since I moved here, but I consider this my first real place," she explains. (Her first New York apartment was a roach-infested postpunk era walk-up above a restaurant on down and dirty Saint Mark's Place.) "Sure the Upper East Side isn't my social milieu, but you don't have to be here to live here," she adds. The Tommy Boy offices, it should be noted, are just a half block away.

The apartment is a large L-shaped studio filled to satiety with high-trash treasures that Lynch has rescued from Manhattan's flea markets, discount houses, and the Salvation Army. It has a certain 1950s-careergirl-comes-to-New-York-chic look but with a campy twist. Consider, for instance, a 3-D picture of flowers pinned to a brick wall. "It reminds me of those 3-D pictures we had

when I was growing up of Jesus winking," she says.

"I begged a florist to sell me that picture; it's as much wildlife as you'll find here." Same sentiment for the ceramic Fu dogs holding court at north and south ends of the loft. "These are my pets," she says. "You don't have to feed them."

We sit on the bed—not just any bed, but a busy bed with a chevron-shaped blue and gold headboard that lights up with neon and was bought for \$50 at the Salvation Army, although they wanted \$100 at first. The matching chandeliers came not through Liberace's will but from a cut-rate source on the Bowery. Dazzling blue floor lights electrify the gold-flecked curtains behind the bed, and a George Michael music video, due to debut on MTV, is slipped into (Continued on page 185)

Lynch, above left, surrounded by Tommy Boy artists and staff. Above center: The kitchen counter stacked with hats. Above right: The laughing Buddha display. Below: Lynch's "unpedigreed green glass collection." Opposite above: A sectional sofa, disco records, and a rug after a Kurt Schwitters collage from ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. Opposite below: Lynch

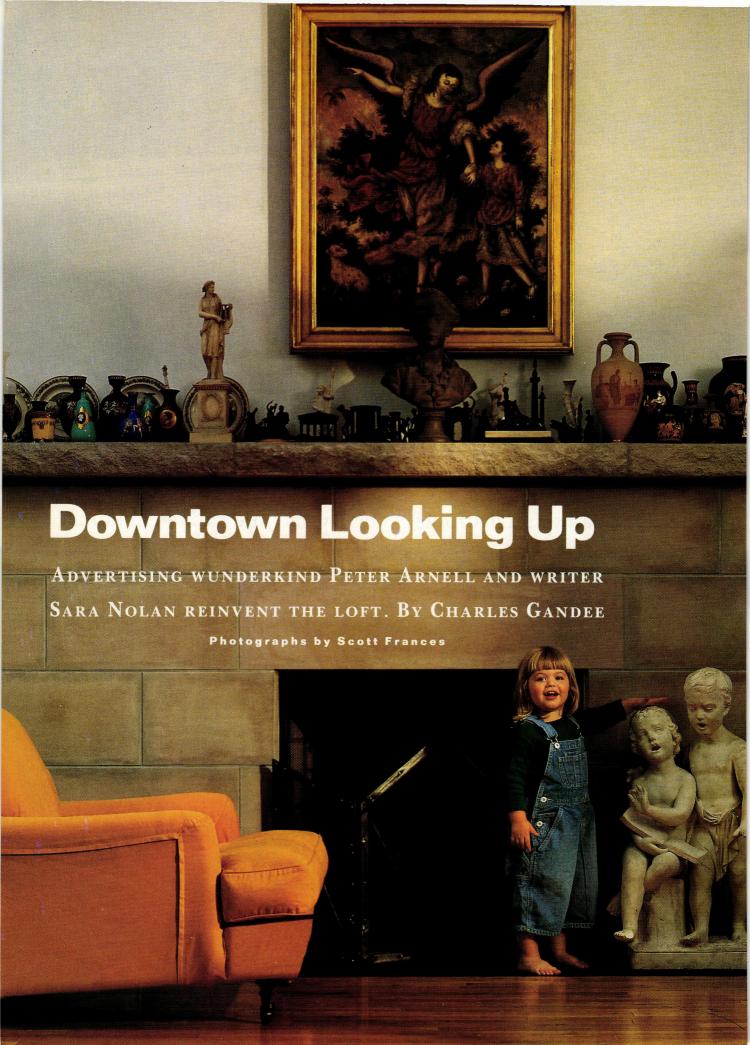
goes Las Vegas in her bedroom with a neonlit headboard, crushed velvet spread, twin chandeliers, and a gold-flecked curtain.





"I wouldn't call this a bedroom," says Lynch. "I'd call it a boudoir"











S A CHILD GROWING UP WITH HIS grandparents in a Brooklyn apartment. Peter Arnell shared a makeshift bedroom off the kitchen with his sister, Susan. He attended PS 225, then IS 43, then Brooklyn Technical High School (where he dropped out late in his senior year), then Columbia University (where he dropped out early in his freshman year). Now thirtythree, Arnell recounts the inauspicious details of his inauspicious beginnings with the haven't-I-come-a-longway-style pride that tends to accrue with distance and success. (Think Woody Allen. Think Neil Simon.) In Arnell's case, that distance and success might best be measured by the 2,750-square-foot Tribeca penthouse, upstairs from Isabella Rossellini, that he shares with writer Sara Nolan, their three-year-old daughter, Lucy, and, as of May 31, Lucy's new brother, Tom. As you might have suspected, Lucy and Tom, unlike Peter and Susan, each have their own room.

"Advertising has been very good to me," reports Arnell with an ironic smile that acknowledges his and partner Ted Bickford's rise to phenomenon status in their accidental career. After Arnell and Bickford met working as assistants in Michael Graves's Princeton office, they took a detour and snared a contract with Rizzoli to edit a series of monographs on contemporary architects. Bolstered by that success, they pitched a promotional book idea to Bergdorf Goodman, which didn't fly but led to a modest commission for graphics. Which led to a full-fledged advertising campaign for

the upscale retailer. Which led to Neiman Marcus, to Christian Lacroix, to Fendi, to Ray-Ban, to Hanes Hosiery, to a host of other coveted clients.

Since 1985, when Arnell/Bickford Associates Marketing first hung out its shingle on a SoHo storefront renovated by architect Steven Holl, Arnell has shown himself to be a savvy and determined salesman: "I'm in a very commercial business, which is to help people make money. I'm very clear on that; everyone in the company is very clear on that." To that end Nolan contributes her copywriting talents and Arnell contributes his photography talents. (Bickford is in charge of the business end of the business, the money.) It's a classic mom-and-popstyle approach, as Arnell tells it, although Arnell's penchant for sensual imagery—most notably demonstrated by his erotic black and white pictures for innumerable Donna Karan and DKNY campaigns—suggests a mom

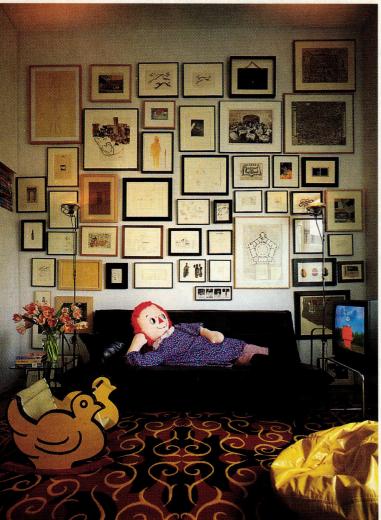
and pop who are more urbane than hometown, more modern than traditional.

"Peter is like a living camera, nothing gets past his eye—nothing," says Karan, whose standing as valued friend and client is confirmed by the DKNY license plate on the 1959 Mercedes Arnell's driver squires him around in. Indeed, Arnell's visual prowess has propelled Arnell/Bickford Associates beyond the \$50 million mark reached in 1990, besides ensuring that his family's new penthouse defies the lean and slightly mean aesthetic of the traditional downtown loft. Whether at-









tributable to the years Arnell spent planning to be an architect—the plan was abandoned when he decided he "couldn't do better than Palladio"—or to his eighteenmonth stint with Graves, Arnell's craving for historically resonant imagery appears insatiable. As does his appetite for the Biedermeier furniture and neoclassical bibelots, the first editions, photographs of famous friends, nineteenth-century lithographs, and 101 other collections that threaten to overwhelm the overscale rooms of the oversize loft. Alongside Arnell's architectural emendations, these collections lend character and dimension—two things conspicuously absent from the neutral space Nolan found when Lucy arrived and the family's 1,000-square-foot SoHo loftette proved inadequate.

The first emphatic sign that Arnell is up to something quite different from the typical loft dweller is in the narrow but high entry corridor where unfinished plaster casts of architectural fragments, busts, and body parts are embedded in the walls in a surreal dual homage to Sir John Soane and Jean Cocteau. Terminating the ghostly entry is a massive fireplace built from "exactly the same limestone I. M.

Pei used at the Louvre," according to Arnell, who adds that he always wanted a fireplace taller than himself. The third ele-

"Nothing gets past his eye—nothing," says friend and client Donna Karan

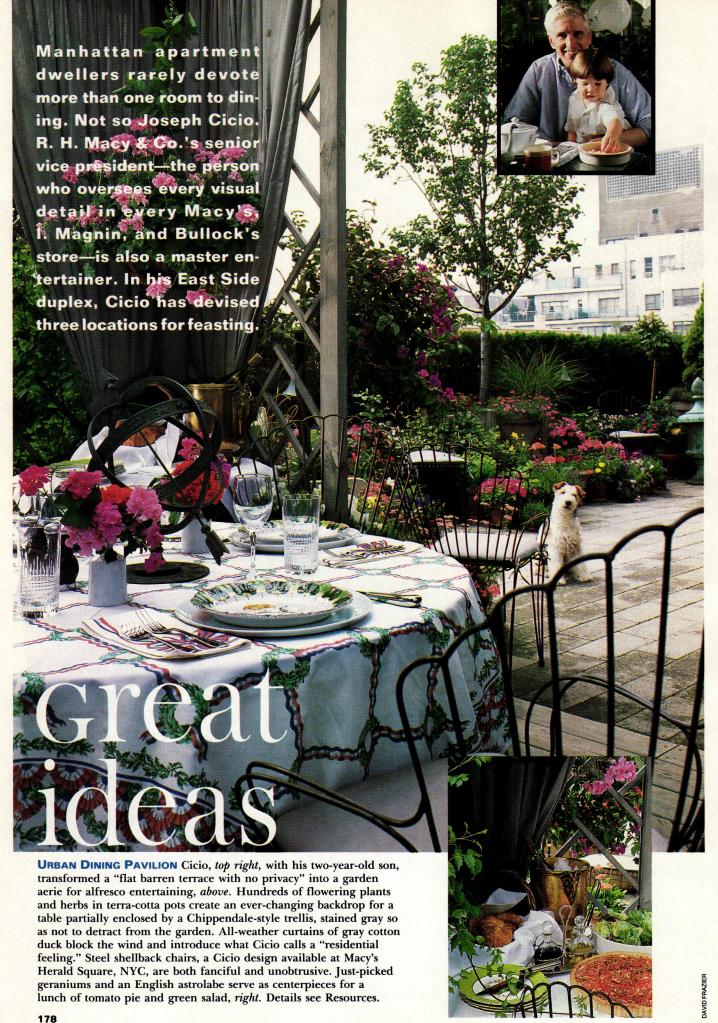
ment in Arnell's renovation is a library arcade that runs the length of the living area. Crowned with busts and drawings, the book-lined wall (complete with rolling ladder) provides density and richness to the unwieldy space. The arcade also supplies a much-needed anchor for the adjoining basketball court—size living/dining/kitchen area that Arnell left essentially open.

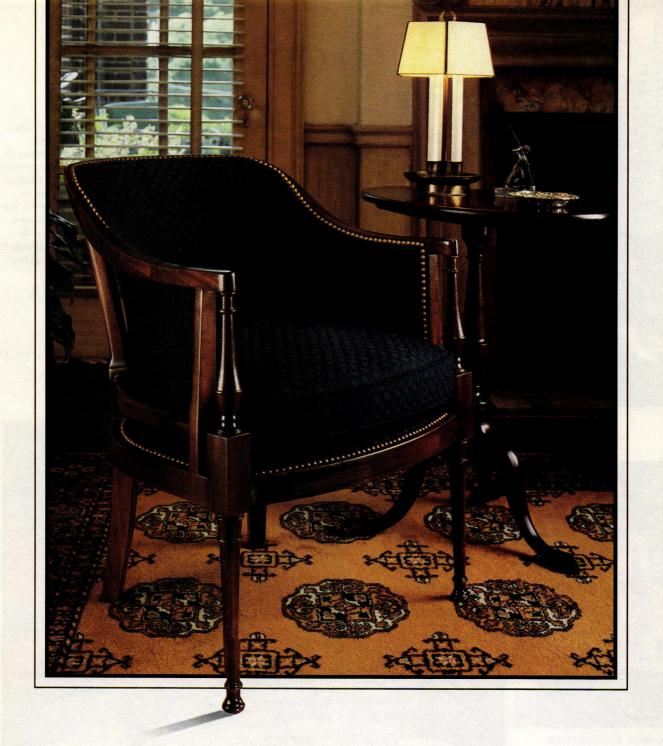
"I know of no one so driven in business, in collecting, in instant decision making, as Mr. Arnell," says Niall Smith, the Greenwich Village antiques dealer without whom Arnell's loft, if we are to believe Arnell, would be almost empty. "It's an intense collection, and it's worth a fortune," says Arnell. "If I ever go out of business, I can open a store." Until that day arrives, however, the collecting, the amassing, the assembling will undoubtedly continue. Especially now that Arnell and Nolan have bought the 2,000-square-foot floor below, which they plan to turn over to Lucy and Tom and, according to Arnell and Nolan, Lucy and Tom's future siblings. •

In the television room, left, Raggedy Ann takes it easy on a black leather sofa flanked by Achille Castiglioni floor lamps from Flos. The Bonetti and Garouste carpet is from En Attendant les Barbares, Paris. The chick rocking chair is from the fifties. Above: Lucy on the library ladder. Opposite: In the almost-minimalist master bedroom, a gilded mirror from Niall Smith reflects a 19th-century English mahogany dinner trolley that holds a pair of 19th-century French ceramic lamps adorned with oriental faces.



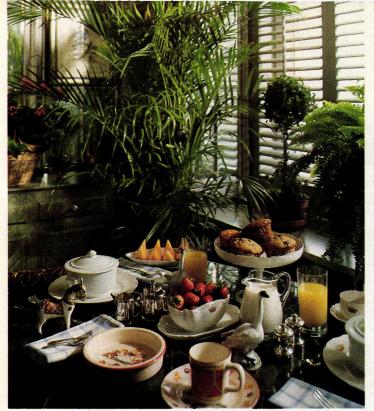






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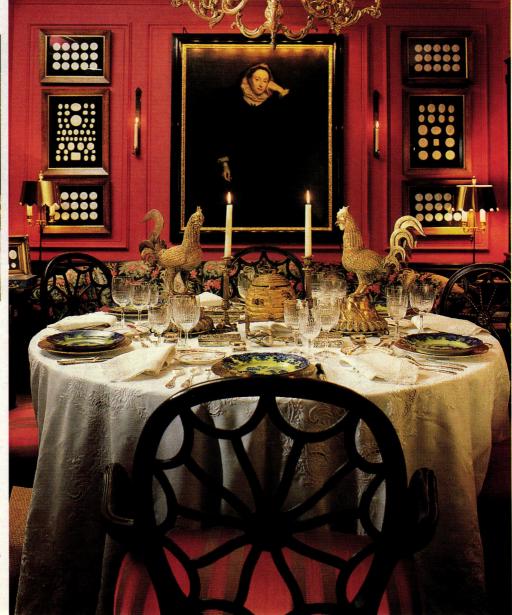
great ideas

BREAKFAST GARDEN ROOM Cicio salvaged a corner of the former master bedroom for use as a breakfast room, left, located near the kitchen but not adjoining it. The addition of gray shutters to the windows, weathered antique mirror panels to the walls, and greenery all around lend the space a tranquil tropical feel that reminds Cicio of winter garden rooms in Italy. (During the cold months the room becomes a haven for terrace plants.) On the table formal antique china—Limoges pieces bearing the Austrian royal crest, a Meissen swan—is playfully mixed with children's ironstone ware from Tiffany & Co., a Mexican toy horse, and dish towels posing as napkins.

"Whether I'm entertaining formally or informally,
I always rely on a few well-placed antiques to set the mood"



GOURMET COLLECTOR'S **CABINET** To create a dining area with a sense of history, right, Cicio lined a room with Regency-style shelves and paneling and then followed advice given years ago by his friend Slim Keith and painted the walls a warm red for vitality. Framed intaglios and an English portrait hang in front of the table on which Cicio arranges bronze and silver objects, including cockerels and a beehive-shaped sewing box that belonged to Keith. Above: Baccarat glasses and Buccellati flatware surround Chinese export plates in blue and green, the only bright colors in the vicinity other than red.





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Fine Tuning

(Continued from page 146) library—"but it is best to have a piece of furniture that absolutely doesn't belong. It's the hardest thing to convince clients that they should get this one wrong thing. And to find the right wrong thing, the thing that is not so wrong as to be ridiculous, that's the greatest task of all."

At the dining room windows are shutters of a moody blue green with traces of gold, reminiscent of shutters in an old villa in the Italian lake region. "The table opens up to seat twelve—about three times a year."

As we enter the bedroom, she shrugs. "You see? Four main rooms, some old things, some bright colors. I can't imagine what you can write an article about." But a minute later she

adds, "Every time I come home, I remember how much I like it here." The bedroom has a touch more chaos than the rooms downstairs. There are boxes half unpacked, and shopping bags dropped on a chair. By the bedside are Proust, Edith Wharton, and *The Satanic Verses*. Geneviève Faure apologizes politely for the mess. But in fact it isn't a mess and she isn't sorry about it—and neither are you.

Julian Schnabel

(Continued from page 124) around the pool at Hadrian's Villa....They are joined together in the fraternity of something missed."

The balcony leads me to the music room where a Jacopo Vignali painting from 1695 hangs near a Steinway grand piano from 1930. Nearby, an eighteenth-century French daybed bears tattered upholstery of silk velvet in brilliant pink. A French Empire sleigh bed is neighbor to a painted metal field marshal's chaise with its original Napoleonic bees upholstery. An Aubusson carpet contrasts with the bare concrete floor, and Schnabel's Sublime Vision de Merde, 1989, fills a side wall. In a corner two matador's trajes de luces from Seville in the 1950s glitter on T-shaped steel crosses made by Schnabel, while tables by Frank Lloyd Wright and Antonin Raymond are ready for everyday use. "These juxtapositions are about creating an illusion of memory," says Schnabel.

A bear skeleton strides across the piano top; a perfect swan skeleton and massive hippopotamus skull are placed on furniture like vases of flowers. Their source, says Schnabel, is the "mysterious London attic" of Alistair McAlpine, a man of "amazing enthusiasm" who runs a West End shop, Erasmus & Co., and has a zoo in Australia. "He has all these rare objects—neolithic stone axes, Celtic and Byzantine rings, feathers from the Amazon."

Disparate objects conspire to create a sense of ludic luxury. As a first-time visitor, I am gifted with the birthright of kings: I am at utter ease amid timeless treasures. The disarray reminds me of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Thomas McEvilley wrote of Schnabel's paintings, "In their layering of different ages they present human history also as a kind of long communal walk down the streets of everyday life where clumsily scrawled names and phrases on stained swatches of cloth are like bits of paper flying by in the wind." He might as well have been talking about Schnabel's house.

A labyrinth of smaller spaces are clustered on the upper floors. The nursery is furnished with 1920s pieces from upstate New York, an Alvar Aalto sideboard, a table made by Schnabel, and a large 1985 canvas by Don Van Vliet, also known as Captain Beefheart, as well as work by George Condo and James Nares and paintings by Schnabel's children. A seventeenth-century Belgian tapestry hangs, non-chalant, behind a bathroom door. In the kitchen, drawings by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Joseph Beuys rest against

a shimmering orange and yellow silk brocade appliqué on silk velvet, a panel from a Moroccan tent.

The artist's own bedroom used to be a bathroom; it still has a sink. "I feel here as if I am in a tent," he says, "on a faraway campaign." The windows are covered. "It's all about having your eyes open. You can look into a corner of a room and see the world. Instead of a window there is a great painting." Here are Dürer and Picasso, Piranesi and Picabia and Man Ray. "The artist's humanity and the decisions he took—that's my river view."

In a catalogue, Schnabel is quoted as saying, "All paintings, in fact, are metaphoric....It reminds you of something that you might have seen, a key to your imagination...A painting can't help but allude to a world of associations that may have a completely other face than that of the image you are looking at." Perhaps that is why the defiantly diverse mosaic of the artist's house is harmonious, even soothing. Objects are not merely their distinct selves but are poignant, carefully chosen clues-keys to the imagination. Crossing the threshold, the visitor enters a unified landscape of references, inspirations, recognitions. To these we add our own and are welcomed into that warm conspiracy of metaphoric association called home.

Young Designers

(Continued from page 152) in an hour—after an all-night birthday party—but you'd never know it. He's as cool, calm, and collected as his apartment in a 1925 Greenwich Village building. Hard to believe this once looked "as if a Winnebago had parked here." The

previous owners sheathed everything in ersatz pecan paneling. "It just spoke and said, 'Rip me out,' " says Jackson, who painted the walls pale celadon and stained the floors warm black "so things could float on an ebony ground." Sea grass matting, charcoal drawings, and Regency chairs are all part of the monochromatic effect. Tall adjustable industrial lamps curve over

an 1820 American desk and a Formicatopped Noguchi table, their long thin necks animating the space. "Things used to be more rigid, with furniture perpendicular to the walls, but people don't live on grids." Jackson deliberately kept a low horizon line, which he finds restful. "I like the apartment best in the late afternoon. I love watching the dance of shadow and light." •

Prime Time

(Continued from page 111) I think about a lot of what I do. It isn't really too far out on the edge, but it's not the Old World either."

What is old-world is the extraordinary craftsmanship that Marino and his team lavished upon this apartment. "The touch of the human hand," to use the designer's phrase, is everywhere, from the undercurtains in the master bedroom which took artisans in Italy a year to make to the mahogany woodwork that was installed unfinished, then hand-waxed and polished.

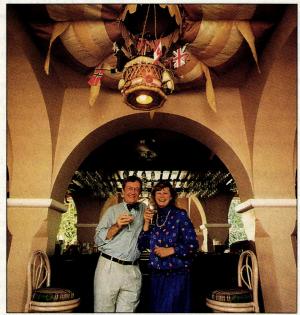
No two sections of wallpaper are exactly the same; each is hand-printed from woodblocks. "Metal rollers produce very hard-edged patterns," Marino says. "And the things in the closets are as fine as the things outside." Like the lining of a great couture dress? "Right! That literally is true if you look at the textiles we used to line all the cupboards and the hand-blocked papers to line the drawers."

All this makes Marino's next statement all the more remarkable: "I don't find this a formal apartment. There is too much comfortable seating, too many squishy banquettes. Formality to me is six Louis XVI chairs in a big salon. And I find that certain modern work is horribly formal." Indeed, it's clear that the more casual parts of the house appeal to him as much as the majestic dining and living rooms. "There was the fun of designing the kids' rooms," he reminisces. "And Priscilla's study is divine."

In the end, the three distinct personalities collaborated in harmony. Which is not to say that the three years it took to plan and finish the apartment were without stress. "I was going nuts—I have no patience for the process," confesses Rattazzi. "I want to move right in, put my roots down, and never move out again." Her husband, on the other hand, was patient. "I understand you have to take time," he explains. "You don't get a place that you're really going to love in six months."

The reward is in the living. "I love it that you float through this building," Whittle says. "It's fun walking around the place. Getting up and going to the kitchen is fun. It's uplifting."

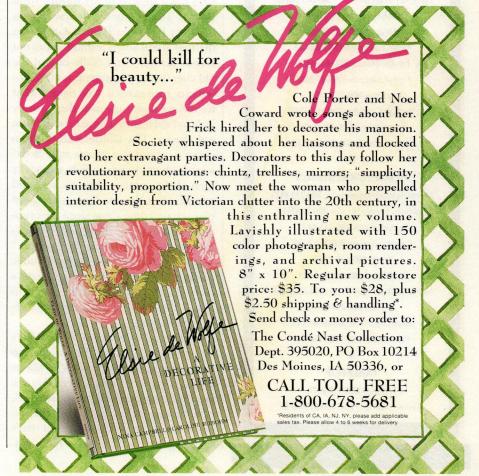
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View from Wave Hill

(Continued from page 134) asking Stufano for successful plant combinations elicits a short sermon. "I'm sick and tired of everybody talking about plant combinations, copying everyone else, making gardens that are too thought out. We do much more gardening by informed guesses than by formula." Stufano seems to live by the maxim "Show, don't tell." All the same, he did divulge to the Wave Hill Members' News last spring that one novel combo, an orange dahlia with a pink aster, produced the "Barbra Streisand effect-a jarring combination of plants that initially sets your teeth on edge, but that you learn to appreciate...for its strength of character, its gutsiness."

Stufano has no plans to commit his changeful gardens to paper. "The art of a garden is in doing it. It should never be 'done.' There's a great tendency in the U.S., fostered by the media, to raise everything to a level of great art, and that doesn't make sense for a garden, because it becomes precious and static. It won't happen here," vows Stufano, who has a degree in art history from Brown. The Flower Garden, which has a homey heirloom charm, dates from the mid 1980s when Stufano ("I'm not a rose person") and Nally ousted the old chemically dependent, high-maintenance rose garden. "No matter what we did we'd end up with those funny little hybrid teas that have to be in those ugly beds." The Cinderellas Stufano chose to transform "those ugly beds" were herbaceous perennials, especially turn-of-the-century clematis, iris, and peonies. But because "too many good plants have come along since the original gardens were designed," he explains, "we're not tied to that period." Any more than he feels tied to a public garden mentality. "Public gardeners can't always plant with the public in mind. That leads to very safe, predictable gardening."

Stufano also believes Wave Hill's mission is to educate the public, "to raise people's consciousness of plants they can grow. Public gardens that are largely for display will grow the usual, often to perfection, in vast numbers—the Rockettes type of thing, and that's cheating the public." Wave Hill's visi-

tors actually take notes on the clematis tepees, the border "brush-up" sticks (rough twigs used as natural stakes), the mix of perennials, biennials, and annuals with an occasional potted greenhouse habitué.

If not every Wave Hill plant is labeled yet, the one hundred varieties in the Herb Garden are-and entertainingly. Take costmary: "In colonial America...known as 'Bible Leaf' because churchgoers used its long fragrant leaves as bookmarks. If one became bored or drowsy during a sermon, the leaf might be nibbled or the nose would be treated to its minty scent." The herbal folklore shows a wide-angle view of plants that ranges beyond the standard institutional focus. When Stufano began gardening in the Bronx-after growing up in Queens, the son of Italian immigrants who farmed the railroad tracks that bordered their yard—he began traveling abroad in search of perennials then unavailable in this country. "That has changed entirely in the past several years," he remarks. "We now have many nurseries here producing terrific plants that before you could only get in England." If he remains an egalitarian plantsman, it is thanks to T. H. Everett's emphasis on "not being a plant snob. Petunias and sunflowers are wonderful. And rare is not necessarily wonderful." Stufano is partial to succulents ("all structure"), half-hardy Mediterranean plants, salvias, all things gray, and species roses. Egalitarianism has its limits, though. Rhododendrons and azaleas are "formless blobs."

His generalism stood him in good stead during the metamorphosis of the rose garden. Stufano grew "temp" flowers: his "\$16.30 Garden," all annuals whose seed packet price came to \$16.30. These borders allowed him to "play with the soft and undulating style of planting" that has become a Stufano signature-but not a formula. After a quarter-century of cultivating the Bronx, he is nowhere close to running out of ideas for Wave Hill. "If you're curious there's always something new," he says. "There's all the old stuff to grow in new combinations. And those curve balls that nature throws you."

For information: Wave Hill, 675 West 252 St., Bronx, NY 10471; (718) 549-3200.

Houses Louise Built

(Continued from page 158) with surgical brilliance. "Everything that makes the house function starts here," she announced. "If there is a water shortage, if the electricity goes wrong, it takes place here. The basement is the foundation of everything, just as the unconscious is the foundation of your personality." The light was turned off as she sought another staircase up.

Ducking beneath a low arch, we arrived in the kitchen, which is the most idiosyncratic room in the house. Bourgeois scorns the concept of an enormous American kitchen. Her galley is no larger than an apartment foyer: just as her art tools are kept close at hand, so are her culinary ones. Something seems to be missing, though, and is. There's no stove, just a two-burner hot plate and a toaster oven. "Now, the story of the stove," Bourgeois began solemnly, like Alice addressing the March Hare. "When my husband passed away in the seventies, I did away with the stove. It was a symbolic action. For if the master of the house isn't here, what is the need of a stove? So I only use a pressure cooker. I once had a big dining table. I chopped it up, and it's part desk, part table." Her reasoning is perfectly rational, very Louise Bourgeois.

One morning I visited her studio, two floors of a former warehouse in Brooklyn where she was working on large marble pieces. When it was time for me to leave, she realized we were locked in. Her assistant, who had the keys, would not arrive until that afternoon. The question was how to get me out from behind the looking glass of Bourgeois's world before then. The windows in the street-level cavern where she carves metaphors for isolation, violence, and sexual fantasy all had bars. We trudged up and down corridors to a forbidding metal door, which she deftly unbolted. It creaked open a few inches onto a debris-strewn lot and wouldn't budge any farther. In the gloom of the hallway we looked at each other in silent understanding. "I knew we'd find a way," she assured me as I wedged myself through the opening. Outside I turned to say good-bye. The door was bolted. Louise Bourgeois had disappeared.

Rap on Monica

(Continued from page 168) the VCR for review. "Great sound," I say. "Oh, yeah, well, you've got to have good audio on the TV for the work thing," says Lynch as she continues to explain her studio. "I really wouldn't call this a bedroom, I'd call it a boudoir. There's a sort of Las Vegas thing going. It's meant to be a mantrap," she laughs, "designed like a Chevy. I never got to make out in the backseats of cars, so I'm making up for it now."

Across the way in the living room area, there's a table laden with Buddhas—not the sober Tibetan type but the fat jolly ones that symbolize prosperity. There are also bowls of beaded fruit, popular in the 1940s. "They're gaudy and they pick up light, which is why I'm attracted to them," says Lynch. Against the walls there are stacks of old albums with a heavy emphasis on disco. Vinyl, says Lynch, is "going the way of the dodo, which is sad—album covers are miniature pieces of art." There are

about 1,000 more albums in a nearby closet, and there are chests of drawers filled with vintage Kenneth Jay Lane jewelry, shelf displays of "unpedigreed green glass," and a kitchen counter sagging with floppy reggae-inspired bonnets and baseball caps, including examples from the Tommy Boy clothing line Lynch oversees. And there's more, much more.

"Every few months I figure out something new I want to collect, then I start collecting it with a vengeance," explains Lynch. "I don't think a person should allow their possessions to possess them but every Sunday morning there I am, off at eight to the flea market on 26th Street. I'm committed to clutter in a major way. It's hard for me to focus on the big things, the furniture and getting the paint job done, but the goofy accessories—they procreate."

"I could accessorize until the day I die," says Monica Lynch, "chillin' " in her "hip-hop hacienda," or, to translate, kicking back with a Diet Coke in her Day-Glo neo-Doris Day bachelorette castle.

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Norville's Own Show

(Continued from page 164) from Norville's maternal grandmother, as was a pastoral landscape by an American painter named Hunter Thompson. A sterling christening cup sits near a silver box engraved with a picture of the chocolate factory in Estonia that belonged to Wellner's grandfather; both were packed hastily when the family fled during World War II, "one step ahead of the Soviets."

Aesthetics aside, all of this hominess provides a distinct advantage for a

working journalist. Norville confesses that interview subjects are often thoroughly disarmed by the time they climb the stairs and settle into the tapestrycovered love seat in her raspberry-colored study. "They're so relaxed," she says sweetly, "that they sometimes talk as though we're by ourselves."

ceiling, to the trade at Clarence House (see

Resources

GARDENING

Pages 46, 48, 50 Farm & Garden Nursery, 2 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10013; (212) 431-3577. Chelsea Garden Center, 501 West 23 St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 929-2477. Plant Specialists, 42–25 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101; (718) 392-9404. Keil Bros., 220–15 Horace Harding Blvd., Bayside, NY 11364; (718) 224-2020

PEOPLE

Pages 78, 80 Architecture, by Ross Anderson of Anderson/Schwartz Architects, NYC (212) 608-0185; San Francisco (415) 495-5878. Aluminum chairs (#1006), by Emeco, for dealers (800) 366-5951. 78 Askew wall clock, by M&Co, \$120, for stores (212) 243-0082.

STYLE

Page 100 Coe Kerr Gallery, 49 East 82 St., New York, NY 10028; (212) 628-1340. Limited-edition signed and numbered lithographs of selected Brennan work, from Chalk & Vermilion, 200 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, CT 06830; (203) 869-9500, fax (203) 869-9520. Skyshades, by Fanny Brennan, \$17.50, to order from Panache Press/Clarkson N. Potter (800) 733-3000

PRIME TIME FOR THE WHITTLES

Pages 104-13 Architecture, design, by Peter Marino Architect, 150 East 58 St., New York, NY 10022; (212) 752-5444, fax (212) 759-3727.

JULIAN SCHNABEL'S VELVET TOUCH Page 122 Plum Velour cotton for curtain, at Rose

Brand Theatrical Fabrics, NYC (800) 223-1624. Skeleton, similar at Erasmus & Co., London (71) 437-4760 by appt. Napoleon I chaise, similar at Christopher Gibbs, London (71) 439-4557. 123 1929 linoleum, arts and crafts maple chair and sofa, similar at Secondhand Rose, NYC (212) 431-7673. 124-25 Skeleton, skull, similar at Erasmus (see above). 126-27 Wool carpet, c. 1930, similar at Secondhand Rose (see above).

TRIBECA'S COUNTRY AIR

Page 138 Christian Francis Roth, 336 West 37 St., New York, NY 10018; (212) 239-0130. Upholstery, by Marc Tash Interiors, NYC (212) 385-2243.

FINE TUNING TRADITION

Pages 140–47 Decoration, by Geneviève Faure, 880 Lexington Ave., #3A, New York, NY 10021; (212) 734-7742. 140–41 Belvoir cotton/viscose on sofa at left, Anatole cotton on far sofa, Caravan cotton on armchairs at right, to the trade at Quadrille, for showrooms (212) 753-2995. Versailles wallpaper, to the trade at Christopher Hyland, for showrooms (212) 688-6121. English giltwood convex mirror, c. 1815, similar at Philippe Farley, NYC (212) 472-1622. Late 19th century embroidered screen, similar at Juan Portella Antiques, NYC (212) 650-0085. Custom pillow fabrication, to the trade to order at Le Decor Français, NYC (212) 734-0032. Custom curtain fabrication, giltwood finials, to order at Design for Creative Living, NYC (212) 563-0597. Decorative painting, to the trade by David Robertson, Livingston (518) 537-5116. 142 Custom cabinetry, designed by Geneviève Faure, fabricated by Laszlo Sallay, NYC (212) 866-0112. Custom upholstered sofa, to the trade to order at Furniture Masters, Brooklyn (718) 599-0771.

Prince Noir Tapestry cotton/wool (color shown not available) for carpet, to the trade at Brunschwig & Fils, for showrooms (212) 838-7878. 143 Late 19th century French chandelier, French Empire sofa, similar at Reymer-Jourdan Antiques, NYC (212) 674-4470. Green Damask Barbizon 02 cotton/silk for table skirt, to the trade at Trade France, NYC (212) 758-8330. 144-45 Mac Donald Duck cotton for slipcovers, to the trade at Decorators Walk, for showrooms (516) 249-3100. English mahogany console table, c. 1850, similar at Christopher Hodsoll, London (71) 730-3370. Late 19th century carpet, similar at Reymer-Jourdan (see above). Custom curtain and slipcover fabrication, to the trade to order at Trade France (see above). Decorative painting, by Pierre Finkelstein, NYC (212) 285-0542. 146-47 Custom mahogany upholstered sofa, to the trade to order at Trade France (see above). Plain Stripe linen/cotton on pillows and bench, at Bennison Fabrics, NYC (212) 941-1212. Needlepoint-covered ottoman, similar at Valley House Antiques, Locust Valley (516) 671-2847. Late 19th century English mahogany desk similar at Lubin Galleries, NYC (212) 924-3777. French Empire mahogany desk chair with bronze mounts, similar at Hubert des Forges, NYC (212) 744-1857. Bed linens, similar at Schweitzer Linen, NYC (212) 249-8361, outside NY (800) 554-6367, catalogue available. Cotton Duck Bisque (#RL1481-8) for curtains, to the trade at Decorators Walk (see above). Custom curtain fabrication, to order at Design for Creative Living (see above).

NEW YORK'S YOUNG DESIGNERS
Pages 148–49 Decoration, by Frédéric Jochem Architectural Design, 240 Central Park South, New York, NY 10019; (212) 956-1840. Contracting, by Sibony Contracting Corp., NYC (212) 744-5510. Painting, by Silverlining Interiors, NYC (212) 243-6133. Furniture upholstery and curtain, tablecloth, and bedspread fabrication, by Upholstery Unlimited, NYC (212) 924-1230. 148 Whorled patinatedbrass halogen table lamp with sandblasted acrylic shade in portrait, \$375, to order from Jeff Brown of Amtkoviak, NYC (212) 580-8253 by appt. Faux stone painted fire surround, by Arthur Fowler and Pascale Patris, Brooklyn (718) 935-0822. One-ofa-kind wing chair, by Jerry Van Deelen, similar at Jerrystyle, NYC (212) 353-9480. Custom Fauve cotton on wing chair, to the trade at Tressard, for showrooms (201) 365-2001. Louis XVI painted beechwood slipper chair, 17th-century bronze doré candlesticks, similar at Revillon D'Apreval, Paris (1) 42-61-27-36, fax (1) 42-61-43-70. Velours Gascogne cotton/linen on side chair, Arabesque fibranne/silk for undercurtains, Ottoman cotton/viscose for walls, Pullman Cloth linen/cotton/ polyester on sofa, to the trade at Clarence House, for showrooms (212) 752-2890. Dimorphic patinated-brass halogen table lamp with sandblasted acrylic shade in living room, \$450, to order from Jeff Brown of Amtkoviak (see above). 149 Coconut Weave sisal/coir for walls, Chinese sea grass for carpet and headboard, to the trade at Stark Carpet, for showrooms (212) 752-9000. Antique metallic gold trim for wall, ceiling, and pillow on bed, similar at M & J Trimming, NYC (212) 391-8731. Bellini silk damask for tablecloth, to the trade at Christopher Hyland, for showrooms (212) 688-6121. Renna Suede on dining room chairs and bedroom walls, Moire Ombria cotton/linen for bedspread, Shantung Marinella silk on dining room

above). Dining room wall upholstery, by Custom Interiors, NYC (212) 737-8824. One-of-a-kind iron/ bronze sconce in bedroom, similar from Doug Mayhew, NYC (212) 769-9436 by appt. 150 Decoration, by Charles Riley, 323 East 8 St., New York, NY 10009, (212) 473-4173; 402 South Alexandria Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020, (213) 383-5838. Custom murals, by Gail Leddy, NYC (212) 247-0915. Turkish-influenced settee, c. 1890, in Art Nouveau velvet, similar at Martin Cohen Antiques, Water Mill (516) 726-6501 by appt. Edwardian slipper chairs, similar at the Business in the Barn, Hadlyme (203) 526-3770. Paisley Park cotton/linen/ rayon damask on slipper chairs, to the trade at Hawver, for showrooms (212) 477-4217. Antique kilim, similar at ABC Carpet & Home, NYC (212) 473-3000. Antique giltwood floor lamps and 19thcentury camel tabouret, similar at P. A. Burke Antiques, Salem (508) 745-9478. Gunmetal folding campaign table, at Heart of the Lion, San Francisco (415) 567-1712. 17th-century Portugese giltwood mirrors, similar at Cobweb, NYC (212) 505-1558. American Victorian carved walnut brackets, similar at John Koch Antiques, NYC (212) 243-8625. 1920s Egyptian Revival fabric panel on wall, similar at Maison Gerard, NYC (212) 674-7611. Mondrian cotton bouclé on screen, to the trade at Clarence House (see above). Augusta chintz on club chair pillow, to the trade at Quadrille, for showrooms (212) 753-2995. Custom-color Willow handblocked wallpaper in bedroom, to the trade to order at Sanderson, for showrooms (212) 319-7220. 151 Architecture, by Sara Purcell, Architect, NYC (212) 787-3185. Custom bleached mahogany armoire and cast-iron arrow stand, similar to order from Sara Purcell (see above). Stairs, armoire, executed by cabinetmakers Amberg & Hinzman, Brooklyn (718) 858-1500. 142-inch wide unbleached muslin for curtain, at Rose Brand, NYC (800) 223-1624. 152 Decoration, by John Christensen of David Anthony Easton, 323 East 58 St., New York, NY 10022; (212) 486-6704. Three-Over-Stripe wallpaper, to the trade at Clarence House (see above). Faille Lamballe silk taffeta for curtains, Frange Moulinée with Jasmins fringe on curtains, to the trade at Tassels & Trims, NYC (212) 754-6000 by appt. One-of-a-kind handmade Bessarabian, c. 1950, similar at Stark (see above). Empire bronze on center table, similar to the trade at John Rosselli, NYC (212) 772-2137. Damas Orion cotton/silk (used on reverse side) on Régence armchair, to the trade at Clarence House (see above). English Regency papier-mâché tray-on-stand cocktail table, similar at Kentshire Galleries, NYC (212) 673-6644. Claudene Chinoiserie Toile cotton for walls, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Decatur Stripe Taffeta silk for curtains and dust ruffle, to the trade at Scalamandré, for showrooms (212) 980-3888. Egyptian cotton 200-thread count sheets and pillow shams, from Palais Royal, for stores (800) 322-3911. Leopard wool carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above). 153 Decoration, by Craig Logan Jackson, 50 East 10 St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 477-5692. Chinese sea grass carpet, to the trade at Stark (see above). Noguchi Formica-topped table with wire/iron base, c. 1955, 1950s Robsjohn-Gibbings brass lamp, similar at 280 Modern, NYC (212) 941-5825. English regency fruitwood armchair, similar at Kensington Place Antiques, NYC

(212) 533-7652. Bertoia steel ottoman, at KnollStudio, division of the Knoll Group, for dealers (800) 445-5045. Fidelio chintz (#4301-08) on sofa pillow, to the trade at Manuel Canovas, for showrooms (212) 752-9588. Enameled-metal wall sconce, to order from Craig Logan Jackson (see above). English regency mahogany chairs, similar at Frederick P. Victoria & Son, NYC (212) 755-2549. Sunnex metal halogen gooseneck floor lamp (#708-55), by Sunnex, for information (800) 445-7869. Flasher patinated-lead sculpture on table, by Rosemarie Castoro, similar at Hal Bromm Gallery, NYC (212) 732-6196. Jo Shane wrought-iron sculpture, similar from Jo Shane, NYC (212) 679-0925. Borghese cotton for bed and curtains, to the trade at Donghia Textiles, for showrooms (800) 366-4442

DEBORAH NORVILLE'S OWN SHOW

Pages 160-65 Architecture, by Annabelle Selldorf of Selldorf & Van Campen, 25 Mercer St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-9571. Design, by Sandra Nunnerley of Sandra Nunnerley Interior Design, 112 East 71 St., New York, NY 10021; (212) 472-9341. Decorative painting, by Michael Paul Battaglia, Littleton (303) 979-3009. Curtain and bedspread fabrication, by Garance Aufaure, NYC (212) 517-7273. 160-61 Taffeta Stripe silk on chaise pillow and ottoman, to the trade at Clarence House, for showrooms (212) 752-2890. Silk stripe (#WTTSTP1) on armchair and ottoman, Bellini silk damask for chair pillow, to the trade at Christopher Hyland, for showrooms (212) 688-6181. Empire giltwood sconces, similar at Malmaison Antiques, NYC (212) 288-7569. Babylon Solid chenille throw, at Jeffrey Aronoff, NYC (212) 645-3155. 162 English mahogany armchair, c. 1815, similar at Trevor Potts, NYC (212) 980-7830. 163 French gilded/ painted trumeau, c. 1805, similar at Karl Kemp Antiques, NYC (212) 254-1877. Mid 19th century patinated-bronze/gilt chandelier, similar at Nesle, NYC (212) 755-0515. Cotton/silk stripe (#BLRRIGA5C) on chairs, to the trade at Christopher Hyland (see above). 164-65 Olympic Satin trevira for curtains, bedspread, and pillows, to the trade at Ian Crawford, for showrooms (212) 243-6250. Cashmere cable throw (color shown not available), from Ralph Lauren Home Collection, for stores (212) 642-8700. Merindol viscose/cotton on window seat cushion, to the trade at Manuel Canovas, for showrooms (212) 752-9588. Silk organza (#BH132) for Roman shades, to the trade at Christopher Hyland (see above). French painted chest of drawers, to the trade at Julia Gray, NYC (212) 223-4454. English silver plate candlestick lamps, at Karen Warshaw, NYC (212) 439-7870.

THE RAP ON MONICA

Page 166 Archimede Seguso crystal candelabra, at Tiffany & Co., for information (800) 526-0649. 167 Leopard Float silk blouse, by Todd Oldham, at Carol Rollo/Riding High, NYC; Martha International, NYC; Nan Duskin, Baltimore, Philadelphia; Stanley Korshak, Dallas; Madeleine Gallay, West Hollywood. 169 Farbige Quadrate wool rug, replica of a Kurt Schwitters 1921 collage, at ABC Carpet & Home, NYC (212) 473-3000.

DOWNTOWN LOOKING UP

Page 170 Raffles armchair with removable cotton slipcovers, by Vico Magistretti for De Padova, Milan (2) 7600-8413. Assorted 19th-century neoclassical vases, Creil pottery plates, c. 1830, 19thcentury neoclassical marble statue, 17th-century terra-cotta bust, 19th-century bronze models behind bust, similar at Niall Smith Antiques & Decorations, NYC (212) 255-0660. 171 Anaïs armchairs, by Michèle Halard, at Yves Halard, Paris (1) 42-22-60-50; Bergdorf Goodman, NYC (212) 753-7300. Dame du Lac cotton toile on armchairs, to the trade at Old World Weavers, for showrooms (212) 355-7186. Biedermeier table, neoclassical vase, 1920s iron stool, similar at Niall Smith (see above). 172 Mahogany étagère with bronze mounts, 19th-century bronze obelisks, columns, and globe, English amboyna adjustable reading table, c. 1860, simi-

lar at Niall Smith (see above). Ladder #1, to order at Putnam Rolling Ladder Co., NYC (212) 226-5147. 173 Guy sofa, by Michèle Halard, at Yves Halard (see above); Bergdorf Goodman (see above). Luci Fair glass sconces, by Philippe Starck for Flos, for dealers (516) 549-2745. Elvire glass/metal table, by Michèle Halard, at Yves Halard (see above). 19th-century bronze statues, similar at Niall Smith (see above). 175 Anna wrought-iron étagère, by Michèle Halard, at Yves Halard (see above); Bergdorf Goodman (see above). 19thcentury German burlwood beer flasks, neoclassical iron/wire chair, similar at Niall Smith (see above). 176 Manhattan Sleeper leather sofa, at See, NYC (212) 228-3600. Toio nickel-plated/ brass/enameled-steel floor lamps, by Achille and Piergiacomo Castiglioni, from Flos (see above). Jalousie wool carpet, by Bonetti & Garouste, at En Attendant les Barbares, Paris (1) 42-33-37-87. Wrought-iron chair with cowhide upholstery, by Paul Mathieu and Michael Ray, to special order at Neotu, NYC (212) 982-0210; Modern Living, Los Angeles (213) 655-3898. 177 Mirror, English mahogany trolley, French ceramic lamps, bronze bedside table, all 19th century, bronze urn, marble bust, similar at Niall Smith (see above).

Page 178 Cotton duck (#51264) for curtain, to the trade at Dazian, for showrooms (212) 307-7800. English polished steel shell-back chairs, at Macy's Herald Square, NYC. Nancy crystal tumblers, by Baccarat, for stores (212) 826-4100, Italian handwrought sterling cruet, at Buccellati, NYC (212) 308-2900. 180 Tiffany Toys English ironstone children's set, at Tiffany & Co., for stores (800) 526-0649. Nancy crystal water and wine glasses, by Baccarat (see above). Villa d'Este sterling flatware, at Buccellati (see above). Iron floor lamps with scalloped brass shades, at Macy's Herald Square, NYC; Macy's West, San Francisco. ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE

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Gande AT LARGE

Little round tables are the secret to Alice Mason's success

Among those for whom such things matter at all, an invitation to dinner at the Manhattan apartment of realtor-to-the-richor-famous (or, ideally,

To hostess

Mason, placement

everything.

both) Alice Mason matters a lot. It matters because, if we are to accept the accepted wisdom, it acknowledges that the recipient has arrived at a certain state of socioprofessional grace: that the recipient is somehow deemed worthy to rub shoulders with Alice's loyal coterie—a group that tends to include Diane Sawyer, Norman Mailer, Barbara Walters, Tom Brokaw, Helen Gurley Brown, Walter Cronkite, Gloria Steinem, and whoever else might be circling in the firmament of political and media stars.

Dutifully chronicled in the pages of W and the New York Post by Alice's absolutely-most-frequent guest, Iwas-there-and-it-was-fabulous society columnist Aileen Mehle (a.k.a. "Suzy"), these always-black-tie, always-

for-precisely-sixty dinners-which Alice deducts from her taxes—have achieved something approaching cult status over the years and garnered Alice a prominent niche in the hall of fame of hostesses. And in terms of networking, if one can apply the parlance of mid-level management to upscale Alice, they are the sine qua non-as Dominick Dunne made clear when he immortalized Alice and her dinner parties in People Like Us.

No accident.

Alice, who celebrates her sixtieth birthday this month, has been giving dinner parties since the late fifties

"The main responsibility

of the hostess is not to bore your guests"

when as a young real estate agent about town she thought it might be worthwhile to introduce her "society type" friends to her "movie type" clients at eat-on-your-lapstyle dinners in her one-bedroom apartment. Though Alice had not yet made her name "integrating," as she says, those limestone fortresses along Park and Fifth that once separated "them" from "us," she nonetheless managed to choreograph the kind of coups that every hostess dreams about: "Marilyn, I'd like you to meet Alfred Vanderbilt; Alfred, I'd like you to meet Marilyn Monroe."

Alice upped the social ante in 1962 when she moved into her current apartment, a pleasant enough place on—where else?—the Upper East Side. Here Alice has transformed the gentle art of entertaining at home into a

science. And as with any science, there are rules.

"The main responsibility of the hostess is not to bore your guests," claimed Alice recently. "The most boring thing is those big round tables where you talk to your right and you talk to your left and a half hour later you think, 'Why can't I go home?' "To preclude such a possibility, Alice deploys through three rooms of her apartment forty-two-inch and thirty-six-inch round tables around which she crowds eight and six people, respectively. Being cramped is key, said Alice, who has plate service from the kitchen, as opposed to waiter service at the table, because "if a waiter can come between guests to serve, the table is too big." Besides, she continued, waiters are a distraction to conversation, and according to Alice, conversation is everything.

To keep conversation lively, Alice designates a host at each table, as well as a "monitor" charged with making sure that there is but one conversation per table. "I am very strict about only one person talking at a time. No one talks to their right or left here." I asked Alice if she

was also very strict about the traditional boy-girl seating rule. "Always," she replied. "I think if a woman is seated next to a woman, she feels she didn't get the best seat."

bands and wives. "You know," said Alice, who has been married three times but who has been single for a long time, "there are not a lot of couples in which both husband and wife are interesting." That being the case, at least to Al-

More tricky are hus-

ice's mind, she limits the number of couples to fifteen, and those she separates

not merely by table but by room. No wives, no husbands complain? "I wouldn't have people like that," said Alice, who used to be even more unforgiving on the subject. Back in the seventies, when she was "really naughty," Alice would routinely invite a husband without his wife. "Tell her it's a working dinner," Alice recalled telling Ivor Richard, then British ambassador to the UN. When he protested, Alice begrudgingly acquiesced: the wife could come—"but she can't have a good seat because who is she except married to you?" Though she laughed as she told the story—which meant, I suppose, it wouldn't happen quite the same way today—I had the sense that in this hostess's mind, now as then, New York dinner parties are no place for sissies. **Charles Gandee**