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“Never trust a man who lavishes expensive gifts upon you,” my Mother always said. “Unless you really like him.”

She told me a lot of things about men, my Mother. And she was almost always right.

But this man was no typical man. This was a man in a million. A man who seemed very fond of me.

It had started only six weeks ago when I was stuck in row 12 on one of those seemingly endless flights that stop in Guam on their way to Tokyo.

In seat 12F, alongside of me, was an elbow that seemed intent on straying across the armrest the entire flight. It was his elbow.

By the time they served lunch I was halfway to falling in love.

Over the next two weeks I saw him just about every day. So when he asked me to join him for a trip out of town, it wasn’t really a surprise.

After a long and leisurely lunch at a remote Country Inn, my man took me for a walk into the garden.

“This is for you, and for our days to come,” he whispered in my ear as he handed me a package about half the size of a shoe box.

I undid the wrapping paper and revealed a beautiful calfskin jewelry box. With bated breath I lifted the lid.

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The curve of the linkages on the bracelet matched my wrist as though it was designed just for me. And it felt solid and substantial.

This was a watch for a lifetime.

Admiring the way the raised gold numerals seemed to shimmer in the reflected sparkle of the diamonds, I suddenly recalled my Mother’s advice.

“There must be strings attached to a gift as beautiful as this?” I asked my man, perhaps a little hopefully.

He let go of me and knelt down on one knee, “I was rather hoping it would help get you to the church on time.”
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France John H. Liesveld Jr.
284 blvd. Saint-Germain, Paris 75007

Corporate Marketing Director Eckart L. Güthe
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French Maison & Jardin 8-10, bd. du Montparnasse, Paris 75724-Cedex 15
Italian Casa Vogue piazza Castello 27, 20121 Milan
Brazilian Casa Vogue Brasil Av. Brasil 1456, C. E.P. 01430-Jardim America, Sao Paulo
Australian Vogue Living 49 Clarence St., Sydney, N. S. W. 2000

House & Garden is published by The Conde Nast Publications Inc.
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JOHN RICHARDSON
Editor-at-Large John Richardson's enthusiasm and passion for art, people, and places—coupled with a mind that hunts for the story behind the story—results, happily, in a steady flow of ideas and articles for HG. This month he wants people to get the story straight on Gauguin. In our lead article he emphasizes "how the National Gallery in Washington has done away with the novelettish old legends about Gauguin and made us see him anew." Art historian Richardson has also been long at work on telling another painter's story—Picasso's—and the first of his four volumes on the artist is due out early next year from Random House.

BROOKE ASTOR
Inarguably the grande dame of the New York philanthropic community, Mrs. Vincent Astor is the president of the Vincent Astor Foundation and a trustee of the New York Public Library. She also contributes to the library in another way, as the author of four books, most recently the 1986 novel The Last Blossom on the Plum Tree.

In the midst of all this and her many charitable and social obligations, Mrs. Astor has also recently rejoined the staff of HG. From 1946-56 she was head of House & Garden's features department, she now serves as a consulting editor. Her piece this month for Homelife is, appropriately, about reading groups.

MAX VADUKUL
"My specialty is eccentric behavior," says photographer Max Vadukul, who photographed our lead feature on Gauguin. "I'm good at making people do what they might not naturally do in front of the camera, and with HG I'm given the flexibility to carry out my point of view." Born in Kenya, Vadukul lives in London and works there and in New York in the fashion and recording worlds. His photographs can also be seen in a new Rizzoli book, All That Glitters: The Glory of Costume Jewelry. Vadukul has directed television commercials and is at work on a feature film, which he describes as "a Western about an Indian rock star."
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Michael Boodro

"I'm not a snob. I'll look at anything, talk to anyone, if it's intriguing and seems somehow different," says Michael Boodro, HG's new features editor. After a decade in the art world and four years in publishing, Boodro has the right stuff to keep on top of trends in art, decorating, and new-wave rock and roll. In his spare moments ("What spare moments?") he has completed a novel.

Oberto Gili

Oberto Gili's photographs of interiors make you feel as if you've just walked into the room. His work appears effortless, neither too precious nor monumental, and is a perfect match for the new HG. For this issue Gili photographed Brian Murphy's house in Santa Monica, a house "full of ideas and taste." When not traveling, Gili is happiest "being a farmer and growing peonies at my farmhouse in Italy."
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Beyond Peter Rabbit

Beatrix Potter’s love of animals was far more than a childhood enchantment. Beatrix Potter’s The Tale of Peter Rabbit is one of the most popular children’s books of all time, having sold 60 million copies in English and been translated into fifteen languages. This and its author’s other little masterpieces—including The Tailor of Gloucester and The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck—led P. L. Travers, creator of the Mary Poppins books, to call Potter “one of the great archangels of literature.”

Potter was also a remarkable naturalist and watercolorist, and 350 of her watercolors, drawings, sketches, studies, and other memorabilia will be on display May 12 through August 21 at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City. These works reveal an extraordinary artist who transformed a life of painful solitariness into a sensibility that discovered its solidarity with the realm of leaves, flowers, and fungi and with creatures like rabbits, pigs, and mice. She painstakingly rendered in word and picture all types of sentient life. As she once said: “What we call the highest and the lowest in nature are both equally perfect. A willow bush is as beautiful as the human form divine.”

Beatrix Potter (1866–1943) spent most of her youth sequestered on the third floor of her parents’ Kensington home in Lon-
don—"my unloved birthplace," as she once called it. Early on, her father and mother, cotton heirs who did not need to work, provided their daughter with a Scottish nanny—a Miss McKenzie about whom Beatrix would later recall, "She had a firm belief in witches, fairies and the creed of the terrible John Calvin (the creed rubbed off but the fairies remained)." Every day Miss McKenzie would present her charge with a clean pique frock and striped cotton stockings. A butler would climb up the back stairs promptly at one o'clock to bring the little girl an unvarying lunch consisting of a cutlet and rice pudding. And in the afternoon Miss McKenzie would take Beatrix out for a brisk walk. She had no neighborhood friends, did not go to school, and was taken downstairs to see her parents only to say goodnight.

Beatrix Potter's salvation lay in her early interest in drawing—an interest that became an obsession and later a vocation that served to connect her to the world outside and, with her indefatigable sense of humor, helped her overcome depressive moods. "I cannot rest, I must draw, however poor the result, and when I have a bad time come over me it is a stronger desire than ever, and settles on the queerest things... Last time... I caught myself in the back yard making a careful and admiring copy of the swill bucket, and the laugh it gave me brought me round." Thanks to her parents' frequent holiday trips to the English, Welsh, and Scottish countrysides, she discovered early on that, like Timmy Willie in her book *The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse* (the mouse that liked to protect its head from the sun with a leaf umbrella while nibbling on a luscious strawberry), she preferred the country to the city.

Her first surviving sketchbook, made when she was nine years old, includes drawings of butterflies, caterpillars, and birds' eggs. Her second, completed a year later, shows rabbits skating on the ice and pushing one another on sleds.

Potter's drawings were always faithful to an animal's character and to nature. Thus, even when Peter Rabbit acts like an irrepressible little boy, he is irrefutably a carefully delineated rabbit; Mr. Jeremy Fisher both a squat Pickwickian bachelor and a perfectly realized frog. Beatrix would take umbrage at a passage in *The Wind in the Willows* in which Kenneth Grahame describes Toad combing his hair. "A mistake to fly in the face of nature," she wrote. "A frog may wear goloshes, but I don't hold with toads having beards or wigs!"

She developed and trained her eye by keeping, with the help of her younger brother, Bertram, an amazingly varied and ever-changing menagerie set up in the schoolroom of the third-floor nursery. At one time there were four black newts, two salamanders, two lizards, a family of snails, a dormouse, a tortoise, and a bat. Beatrix was especially fond of two Belgian rabbits—Benjamin H. Bouncer and Peter Piper—and a score of mice, which she was able to tame and feed out of her hand. When traveling, she carried these creatures with her in rabbit hutches and baskets, and she smuggled them down to the garden for an occasional romp. She recorded their measurements and occasionally boiled them after they died in order to study their skeletons—though some, like Tiggy the hedgehog (the model for Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle), were given aggrieved burials in the back garden.

And, of course, Potter drew these creatures over and over, thereby preserving the memory, specificity, humor, and vitality of these short-lived creatures—the true and dearest companions of her life—whom she loved and portrayed with at least as much devotion as Lewis Carroll loved and photographed his many prepu-

bescant little female friends.

From a Miss Cameron—a drawing teacher provided by her parents—she learned freehand drawing, modeling, geometry, perspective, and watercoloring, but she resented her lessons and her teacher, saying, "I shall paint just as I like when not with her... I am convinced it lies chiefly with oneself... It may just be that one sees [things] because one has an open mind, not in a groove." The painter Sir John Everett Millais, a friend of Beatrix's father, paid her one of her finest compliments when, after seeing a selection of her work, he astutely commented: "Plenty of people can draw, but you... have observation."

Nature was Beatrix Potter's only real teacher. So it was inevitable that she would eventually live permanently in the country. In 1896 her parents rented a house near the Lake District village of Sawrey. "It is as nearly perfect a little place as I ever lived in," Beatrix would write in her journal.

Nine years later, in 1905, Beatrix Potter bought a farm in Near Sawrey called Hill Top, whose interiors—dressers, claret-colored curtains, flagged floors—and exteriors—cottage garden, slate-roofed porches, purple clematis—provided the settings for many of her best books, such as *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*, *The Tale of Tom Kitten*, *The Tale of Pigling Bland*. In and around her cherished Lancashire village she depicted the beauties of north-country life with its surrounding lakes, fells, and whitewashed farms. In 1913 she married a property solicitor named William Heelis and spent the rest of her life cultivating her garden, farming, breeding Herdwick sheep, and working to conserve the land and the animals she had spent her life portraying so often, so accurately and so beautifully because she had loved them so selflessly and so deeply.

Jonathan Cott

Frederick Warne & Company, the original publisher of Beatrix Potter's books, has recently issued new editions of 23 volumes of *Peter Rabbit* books with four-color plates printed from Potter's original watercolors, $4.95 hardcover, $2.95 paper.

"A frog may wear goloshes, but I don't hold with toads having beards"
Sculpture achieves a new dimension in importance

High stakes and sometimes bloody skirmishes on the battlefield of contemporary painting during the past two decades—from Minimalism and Conceptualism to the wild excesses of Neo-Expressionism to the Day-Glo hard edges of Neo-Geo—have made it easy to ignore the quieter if weightier art of sculpture. Indeed, the last time many people paid attention, sculpture seemed mired in a tired formalism. Yet the evidence is mounting that sculpture may be the most vital medium of the moment. Many of the best young artists are choosing to express themselves in three-dimensions. Of the eleven artists the Museum of Modern Art has showcased in its innovative Projects series since it was resumed in 1986, seven have been sculptors.

In Britain a new generation of sculptors—including Barry Flanagan, Richard Long, and Bill Woodrow—are producing what's generally acknowledged to be the most important art in that country, as documented last year in the traveling exhibition "A Quiet Revolution: British Sculpture Since 1965.

One of the easiest ways to get a quick take on the vitality and diversity of the current sculpture scene can be found in Minneapolis at an exhibition celebrating the opening in September of the seven-acre Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. The Walker Art Center's "Sculpture Inside Outside," on view from May 22 through the summer, features seventeen young sculptors, among them Judith Shea, Jene Highstein, Peter Shelton, and Martin Puryear. Their wildly varying styles and techniques—from unique ways of using traditional materials to a willful and playful tampering with icons of popular culture—prove sculpture is able to encompass virtually any artistic impulse from the romantic to the deliberately disturbing.

Any further doubts about this sculptural renaissance should be dispelled by a number of solo exhibitions this month and next. John Duff, 45, has been working for more than two decades, and his latest works will be shown at New York's Blum Helman Gallery May 4–28. Although he shuns publicity, Duff's sensuous colored fiberglass wall pieces and freestanding structures have inspired many.

In April young artist Hanno Ahrens, in his second exhibition at SoHo's Sharpe Gallery, continues his investigation of the properties of dense rough-hewn wood and the pliable smoothness of plaster.

Christy Rupp has always been concerned with the confrontation between urbanized man and nature—her most famous piece was a large cast-stone snail dragging an ear of corn. At P.P.O.W. Gallery in the East Village through April 24, her new work continues her fascination with the underside of biology.

Robert Gober, at the Art Institute of Chicago April 26–June 26, totally upsets expectations about familiar household objects in his work—as in his lovingly handcrafted kitchen sinks and urinals that evoke both drudgery and Duchamp. His X Crib takes the familiar and reassuring form of a cradle and denies it all possibility of shelter.

Gober works in the tradition of Richard Artschwager, one of the first artists to play with the forms of furniture. Artschwager's retrospective, a recent hit at the Whitney, is at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art beginning June 16.

These shows may be the ultimate proof that sculpture now offers possibilities for innovation and idiosyncrasy which the tyranny of the picture plane simply does not allow.

Michael Boodro
Andrée Putman, left, in Le Corbusier’s chaise longue, has redone his Villa Schwob, above, with her modern classics, for left.

Modern Metamorphosis

Andrée Putman gives an early Le Corbusier masterpiece a discreet and sympathetic infusion of her own distinctive style

Many architects are ashamed of their earliest buildings, deleting them from their résumés and hoping those tentative efforts will be forgotten. But the more famous the architect, the less possible that is. Like most of his coprofessionals, Le Corbusier got his start designing houses for his family and friends in his hometown. Born in 1887 in La Chaux-de-Fonds (then the watchmaking capital of Switzerland), Le Corbusier was justly proud of the last of his seven houses there, the Villa Schwob of 1916–17. Built for a rich industrialist, it was unlike any other residence around. Its flat roof, almost-blank street façade, and Byzantine massing won it the nickname of Villa Turque. Less visibly, its concrete structural frame made it one of the most technically advanced houses of its day.

With a fine sense of high-profile, high-style image making, the Ebel watch company recently bought the house for use as a public relations center. Tactfully restored by the architect Pierre Studer, it has been given a fresh and somewhat unexpected interior redesign by Andrée Putman, best known for her personal reinterpretations of the early Modern style. Rather than using Le Corbusier’s own furniture classics, which weren’t introduced until a decade after the Villa Schwob was completed, she relied on the now-familiar pieces produced by her Paris firm, Ecart. Putman’s reeditions, including Eileen Gray’s Transat chair and Mariano Fortuny’s desk lamp, work remarkably well in the imposing double-height salon and avoid the fake historic-house feeling that too literal an approach would have given. Furthermore, she never pushes her personality to the fore at the expense of the master’s. The rooms, and therefore the villa itself, seem much more modern now than when the house was first completed. Furnished then with a heavy haut bourgeois hand, it did not look as architecturally innovative as it actually was. Now Andrée Putman’s deft but discreet touch clarifies the timelessness of this work of youthful genius.

Martin Filler
The Revolution of '88?
Postmodernism is passé, according to
an upcoming exhibition at MOMA

Philip Johnson is excited. He's on to something new. Forget the AT&T Building. Broken pediments were yesterday. "The revolution is against Postmodernism," declares the peripatetic Pied Piper of architecture. "Michael Graves's fifteen minutes are up."

Although this will undoubtedly come as sad news to many, including Graves (who's busier than ever), Johnson does have a point. The bloom has been off the rose of Postmodernism for quite some time now, but it is an open question whether or not "Deconstructivist Architecture," the exhibition Johnson is guest-curating with his new 31-year-old protégé, Mark Wigley, contains the stuff of which the next fifteen minutes will be made. Will architects flock to New York's Museum of Modern Art between June 23 and August 30 and be so moved that they return home to their drawing boards filled with what Johnson calls the new feeling? Maybe. If so, they would do well to read up on Russian Constructivism, the au courant font of architectural inspiration, before putting pen to paper. Certainly Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, Wolf Prix/Helmut Swiczinsky, and Bernard Tschumi—the architects whose drawings and models are included in the MOMA exhibition—have more than a nodding acquaintance with this particular branch of the early Modern movement, although their individual variations on the themes of fracture and fragmentation are wildly idiosyncratic, as a glimpse of their designs, right, confirms.

And as for that nasty rumor about Johnson stealing the idea for "Deconstructivist Architecture" from younger minds? "I'm in a wonderful position," quips the 81-year-old architect. "I'm so old I don't give a damn."

Charles Gandee
Little Nells
Will the English drawing-room look suffocate
post-disco club life in New York?

In the myriad of Manhattan nightclubs—tatty, pretentious, life-threatening, slick, small, sleazy, and just plain dull—there is always one that swells to the surface and reigns supreme over its rivals. How long its heyday lasts is decided at the whim of the notoriously capricious New York night crawlers. At the moment it is Nell's, which has been the leader since it opened in October 1986.

One identifiable reason for its popularity is Nell herself, the eccentric and witty hostess who has long been a cult figure thanks to her bizarre cabarets and appearances in both the theater and movie versions of *The Rocky Horror Show*. Another tangible reason is that the design of the club, brainchild of Keith McNally, and his wife, Lynn Wagenknecht, has turned its back on those ultramodern disco schemes of mirror and chrome with enough bulbs and strobes to illuminate downtown Las Vegas. Nell's went for the comfort of large sofas, wood paneling, and soft lighting: the overall effect is similar to the English drawing room. In the red corner we have Nell's, the reigning champ, and in the blue we have the newcomers: Undochine, Forty Worth, Au Bar, and the newest new boy, MK's.

Undochine, which has been open since October 1987, is the largest of the four. In fact, it has no official title because the co-owners, Frederick Sutherland and Jon Sidel, could not pick a name from the scores they had drafted. It has variously been nicknamed Fred's Place, Place King, and Weird Boat, but the most popular is Undochine, coined because the club is underneath Indochine—the massively successful restaurant on Lafayette Street owned by the massively successful restaurateur and social commentator Brian McNally, Keith McNally's brother.

Undochine roughly divides into three different sections: near the entrance a bar shaped like a ship's prow—the bar of the ship's prow—serves a series of booths, made out

Clockwise, from far left: A marble fireplace at Au Bar; books line the wall, also at Au Bar; at Forty Worth, a customer waits for a shoeshine; a couple in a curtained booth at Forty Worth.
of bird’s-eye maple, and continues through to the woodwork of the bar and deejay’s console in the main room where the walls have been stripped back to the raw brick. There is absolutely nothing decorated about this section other than dim red lights and three mirrored balls which throw specks of light into the dusky atmosphere. Beyond the black wood dance floor a spiral staircase leads to the second section where Undochine’s punk chef produces snacks for the guests. His repertoire consists of processed-cheese sandwiches. Period. Frederick Sutherland, who describes himself as a functional artist and designed many of the club’s fittings, says: ‘‘There was a need for a club, as there was only Nell’s and Madame Rosa’s as far as anyone was concerned. There’s little pretense here. We wanted it to be simple, comfortable, and with no real attitude. This is New York and everyone’s seen everything so there’s no need to try and impress anybody.’’ Here they succeed magnificently. It’s not so much a dancing place as a hangout. ‘‘On Mondays we have local and L.A. rock bands,’’ says Sutherland. ‘‘And Captain Whizzo comes down to do his supersensational light show. He’s been putting them on since 1965.’’ And by the looks of it he hasn’t changed his style since then—swirling globules of orange and pink oil being the order of the day.

The club has a following at the moment—people are frequently turned away, but how long will that last? It lacks style and comfort, which can always be sacrificed for the sake of good music, but, as at so many similar clubs, only plastic Pop is offered. Of course, knowing one is going to see friends can be a big incentive, but facilities for conversation are limited, and it is so dark you might never find them anyway. Frederick Sutherland concludes, ‘‘I don’t know how long it will last; clubs have a short life span. One week you’re riding the crest of cool, the next you’re old news.’’

Forty Worth was conceived by the powerfully built Mitch Perl, a former bouncer and bartender at Danceteria. A nice enough man, he can tell a Bianca-came-down-here-one-night story with the best of them. His club is in a basement on West Broadway which used to house a restaurant called Ira’s, a place where, apparently, politicians fraternized with denizens of the underworld. It is perhaps interesting to note that Forty Worth is next door to the massively successful Odeon, owned by none other than Keith McNally and his wife, part owners of Nell’s.

When Ira’s closed, the space lay empty for twenty years until Perl, who was looking for an ideal place in the west teens, stumbled across it: ‘‘There was no place to go except Nell’s, and I’d grown tired of it. No one enjoys themselves there; they all just look at one another checking out who has what bow in their hair. It’s a real showcase, but they do great business—my hat’s off to them.

‘‘I had a fantasy about owning a house in Manhattan and having a basement for my friends to hang out in. The club came out close to this dream by being open six nights a week and being extremely comfortable.’’ As at Undochine, I was clearly not on the same wavelength when it comes to what they consider comfortable. There is the obvious problem that a lesser-known tributary of the Hudson River is wont to snake through parts of the club when it rains. The seating is designed to make one remain vertical despite aching feet. The centerpiece of the club is a large handsome clock, which formerly resided in the lobby of the original Manhattan Savings Bank. Also bought from the same bank are several olive leather conference chairs. The transition has not been a happy one. Strangely the dated smell of patchouli oil pervades the atmosphere, and one is forced to ask: what am I doing in this dive? The regulars are described as ‘‘a real downtown crowd interested in the arts, people who go out all the time.’’ These people for whom black is de rigueur are no doubt oblivious to the Amtrak seating and are more than happy to prop up the bar until dawn, but for a newcomer the atmosphere is about as appealing as the subway.

Au Bar on 58th Street is owned by Howard Stein, who is older than the other contenders by about fifteen years. Stein has had a long career as an entrepreneur. He started as a concert promoter back in the sixties, when his Uncle Iggy gave him a job touring with Herman’s Hermits. He then moved on to nightclubs and developed a talent for seeing what was the hottest spot in town and then ripping off the idea. First he had Xenon to rival Steve Rubell’s Studio 54. When meta-chic restaurants opened up, Stein followed suit with Prima Donna, although he was less successful with it than with Xenon. Now, of the four newcomers, Stein has attempted the closest copy of Nell’s.

The club has been decorated by three previously unknown English girls em-
ployed because they impressed Stein with their first-hand knowledge of such exclusive London clubs as Annabel’s and Mark’s. Ideas were also stolen from Pratt’s, but as women, they would not have had access to its venerable chambers.

The large basement room has been divided into different sections around its perimeter. There is the “attic” decorated with crossed field-hockey sticks and old trunks. The “salon” is graced by a fake Sargent; next door is the “library” with shelves of dusty encyclopedias and old sepia-toned photographs on the plum-colored walls. There is also a dining area, which serves finger food as well as dinner and breakfast. The deep damask-covered sofas and tapestry armchairs provide a degree of comfort here. A large ventilator in the section known as the men’s club dispels smoke from cigars and pipes, and in the men’s bathrooms the cover stories (changed daily) from leading newspapers are framed on the wall above the urinals. The pseudo-Englishness is Stein’s great joy. “I’ve been wanting to do a club like this for a long time, especially after the six years I spent at Xenon. That was an era dedicated to overproduction—more was better, which is the opposite of the little details we concentrate on here.” Although it mimics all things British, Au Bar’s name has been taken from the title of a Cocteau drawing, which was done at Le Boeuf sur le Toit, a Parisian bar frequented by expatriates. “I was looking for a name from that time. First I thought I’d call it Gertrude’s, after my namesake. Gertrude Stein, but then I thought, my God, they are going to think I’m imitating Nell’s. I like the name Au Bar—it’s simple—although no one can spell it and people who don’t like it call it Au Shit and Au No.”

One has to conclude that unless someone arrives on the night scene with a great deal more chutzpah, the status quo will remain. But Nell better hang fire before she goes jitterbugging to the bank because MK’s might just have the right ingredients to scrawl the writing on Nell’s paneling. Eric Goode, the dashing bohemian who used to run Area, has converted an old bank on Fifth and 25th Street into four floors of idiosyncratic adventure. The third floor has a bedroom where neurotics can hyperventilate in the peace of creamy damask. Next door is a powder room, which includes a tub for general use. On the same floor is a pool table in a room decorated like a mad old uncle’s library. A cabinet contains a science-laboratory display of bones: a lion rampant and a Doberman (both stuffed) also lurk about the place—Goode is a taxidermophile. The mezzanine has a restaurant with mosaic tiling and an air of fin de siècle.

Downstairs the lobby features a gold-leaf ceiling, a huge crystal chandelier, a marble floor, and the two bars. Along the whole of one wall the taxidermophile has built a vast fish tank. If you’ve never gotten into the mesmeric effect of these tanks, now is your chance; however, how long the fish will be allowed to dwell in water as opposed to formaldehyde is anyone’s guess. The dance floor is housed in the former bank vault. Little has been altered here, so the effect is similar to Frankenstein’s castle, exaggerated by low and sinister lighting. Bring on the night.

Liza Campbell

Chair of the Month

Dr. Ruth analyzes the possibilities for a new design

Now I wonder what Sigmund Freud would say to a couch like this. Let me tell you what Dr. Ruth Westheimer is going to say. If you need to talk about some problems with your mother-in-law, I can see a couch like this. But for talking about good sex, let me design a different couch. But maybe for talking about some dreams, some horror dreams or some really out-in-space kind of voyage, it might be great. Or as a pièce de conversation when people have very little to talk about, I think it is brilliant.

I have an idea. This is the perfect chair to get a massage on . . .

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I was nineteen and married for two years when I joined my first reading group. It came about in this way. My family had been living in Washington for the last five years when, with their reluctant consent, I took the leap into matrimony and went to live in New Jersey.

It was the time between the wars, and well-off Americans were dedicated to copying English country life. Somerset County, New Jersey, with its rolling hills and lush meadows, was the perfect setting for building their Georgian manor houses and indulging a taste for outdoor sports such as fox hunting, beagling, and cross-country races. These sports were enjoyed along with their attendant hunt balls, hunt breakfasts, hearty beagling teas, and magnificent picnic lunches on hillsides to watch the races. For me, this was quite new—totally different from life in Washington, which had been confined to tea dances with the children of diplomats and riding in Rock Creek Park with a group from school. So here I was in New Jersey, and as I was so young I became quite a pet among the older ladies. At first it was delicious for me. After two years, however, in spite of the beauty of the countryside and all the kindness of these delightful people, I was not happy. My husband was very difficult, and my family was in Haiti, as father had been appointed High Commissioner. At this time I met a woman who asked if I would like to join a reading group. I accepted with alacrity. I had begun to go beyond the bounds of civil conversation. Mrs. Cromwell would call a halt and would then take each of us on. One of our members was later elected to Congress; she became particularly articulate and continued to be so for many years in government service. I was in this group for three years and stopped when my son was born.

The reading-group experience helped to discipline my thinking and, indirectly, my life. Soon after it, I got a divorce and moved to New York with my little boy. I already knew quite a lot of people, as my husband and I had usually rented a house in New York for the winter, and most of the New Jersey people had town houses there. So I had a good time seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Among the new friends was Hermann Oelrichs. I met him through Ernest Boyd, who, among other things, wrote an excellent life of Maupassant. It seems that Hermann, who wished to be au courant about what was going on in the literary world, paid Ernest a small sum to write a résumé each week of what should or should not be read—in other words, to give Hermann a chance to appear to have brilliant opinions. I was told this in secrecy by Ernest and so, of course, longed to meet Hermie.

Although Hermann Oelrichs had a house in Newport and another in New York, he also owned a two-story building on East 52nd Street, which he turned into a sort of club. He received there every Tuesday and Thursday from three o’clock on; one was given a pass to present at the door, then went up to the second floor into a large room filled with comfortable chairs and floor-to-ceiling bookshelves on three walls. Here one could find Deems Taylor, George Jean Nathan, Mencken, Woolcott, Oliver St. John Gogarty (As I Was Going Down Sackville Street), Sean O’Casey, Noël Coward, the Lunts, Emlyn Williams, and occasionally Dumpy Oelrichs (Hermann’s wife) would bring friends Tookie Mortimer, Anita Loos, and Peggy Leech (later Mrs. Ralph Pulitzer).

It was at Hermann Oelrichs’s 52nd Street house that I met Orage. Ernest introduced me and then left me with him. He was a small, dark, furtive-looking person with dead white skin and soft brown eyes. As I talked to him he told me that he was a philosopher, a follower of Gurdjieff and of Ouspensky. I knew nothing of these men. Orage had just finished...
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his book *Consciousness*, concerning human,
animal, and sublime consciousness. Looking
back now, I think he was one of those men
who mask themselves under the guise of phi-
losophers, but are actually part of a cult wish-
ing to attract disciples. At the time, never
having seen his like before (but I have seen
plenty since), I was fascinated and asked if he
would come to my house every two weeks to
instruct us and tell us what to read. We were
all young and extremely curious about our-
selves, and he nurtured in us a sense of supe-
riority toward the rest of mankind. We read
only his own books, starting with *Conscious-
ness*, and were in the middle of *On Love*
when he was called back to Europe, which
was perhaps just as well because his pockets
were full and our heads were quite confused
and empty. I should not call this experience a
reading group. It was closer to a session with
an unlicensed psychiatrist.

After Orage my life became so busy that
not until three years ago did I have the time to
start a real reading group with a married cou-
ple who had excellent ideas on how to orga-
nize it. First, they asked a well-known
British literary critic to be our guide. Then
they assembled a group with an interesting
mix (all with different types of publications):
three publishers; two authors; two musi-
cians, who are also writers; a well-known
prima ballerina; three married ladies, who
are mixed up with everything interesting in
New York; and myself. This time our leader
chose a theme for each year. The first year’s
theme was manners and money. We read Lit-
tle Dorrity by Charles Dickens, *The Custom of
the Country* by Edith Wharton, *The Way We
Live Now* by Anthony Trollope, and *Tono-
Bungay* by H. G. Wells. Last year’s readings
were on the beginnings of revolution: Flau-
bert’s *A Sentimental Education*, Turgenev’s
*First Love* and *On the Eve*, followed by Con-
rad’s *Under Western Eyes*, and Henry
James’s *Princess Casamassima*.

Our topic this year is men and women. The
first book was *Adolphe* by Benjamin Con-
stant. The second *Persuasion* by Jane Aus-
ten, and then *Middlemarch* by George Eliot.
We are presently reading *Anna Karenina*,
which I have read, but not for years. Reading
it for a group discussion will be very different
from reading it for oneself—it will have
much more depth.

We meet once a month. We talk and talk,
which is what one wants in a reading group.
There is no point in reading if you do not form
opinions. The whole idea is to take a look at
life through books and then to have the fun of
discussing them with other people.
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Although it is a very dire way, leaving your marriage is one method of discovering what interior-decorating talent you may have. Denuded of home, you start freshly, if not innocently, to dwell again. This restart, cautioned by disaster, can obtain unexpected aesthetic intensity from the emotional cocktail mixed of guilt, self-justification, and the euphoria of escape. The first apartment of the defunct past are abhorrent. Everything must be new—at least new to the newly single shopper—preferably cheap, and from as close by as possible. These conditions lead to unexpected intensity in such heretofore obviously presumed bazaars as Woolworth and K Mart.

My own first decisions under these conditions produced a mattress, a brown goose-neck lamp, and six prickly rolls of sisal matting in the bare square of my just-leased studio apartment. Sisal carpeted the diving boards of my youth, so it had a symbolic as well as an economic appeal for me as I plunged into postmarital bachelorhood.

After the big things, I began to browse for accessories. Six plain white mugs from Woolworth—so refreshingly opposite to the complex decorative heirlooms I’d fled. Six heavy white restaurant-ware plates. The plainest glasses and some wooden-handled cutlery completed my spartan table setting. I even soaked the labels off my liquor bottles so the bar would also be a display of essential undecorated form and informationless color.

My hair was as pure in shape, form, color, size, scale, proportion, unity, balance, emphasis, pattern, ornament—in short, all of the ingredients charted in John F. Pile’s exhaustive volume Interior Design—as an egg. It did not last, of course. Eggs don’t. I am currently writing this on a pillow cut from an Aubusson rug. The turrets and towers of so much aesthetic period furniture as I’ve been able to lay my hands on cut a Constantine skyline all around me. A new wife has arrived. The Woolworth mugs are gone.

Professor Pile’s book feels like a life’s work. His prose is careful, his information encyclopedic. Interior Design (Harry N. Abrams, $49.50), however, is a lot more fun than an encyclopedia because it is thick with gorgeous photographs of contemporary interiors plotted by the most important designers of our day.

If his prose at times harkens back to earlier days (“It seems that we were best off in an automobile or traveling on an ocean liner”), his information brims up through his absolutely contemporary photographic examples to a glossy and entertaining present with complete and authoritative relevance. He philosophizes with an unshakably patrician perspective: “Living things are invariably of excellent design.” Only an optimistic taste-maker unfamiliar with Times Square and the New York subway system could conclude that “one can find design merit in even the most threatening of life-forms.”

The author marches us through the splendors of rich and grand and simple and brilliant and public and private rooms like a supremely educated and authoritarian nun managing a sixth-grade cultural outing. He has attacked interior decoration with the logic and deliberation of a grammarian. Like the original decliners of Latin, who marked off the parts of their language around a circle, spinning it like lab technicians breaking down a blood sample, Professor Pile declines interior design.

Nothing is presumed to be understood, which is invaluable when he charts and examines such arcane aspects of the field as lighting or textiles. But such pedagogy can be unintentionally amusing when he explains less technical, more philosophical matters like the nature of difference: “It is design differences that make one house different from another, one room different from another, and that allow us to speak of one example as better or worse than another.”

The old boy is also not without his opinions. Plastic imitation makes him furious: “Serious design work of good quality rejects all such imitation as cheap, shoddy, and generally of such poor appearance as to fool no one.” The subject sets him sputtering for hundreds of words until he beholds anathema itself: “Plastic butcher block or knotty pine, linoleum marble or flagstone, simulated brick and tile, fake fireplaces, and plastic plants are among the absurdities that have no place in a well-designed interior.”

Once I chose Saint Patrick’s Day to exchange a pair of gloves at a snooty boutique devoted to horsewear on Madison Avenue. In front of its window stood a pair of cast-iron benches bearing fox-hunting motifs. Saint Patrick’s Day in New York City attracts the youth of New Jersey and other nearby popu-
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lation centers the way Fort Lauderdale does at the spring break. They flow in, pooling together around the parade. The sight of the splendid tallyho benches in front of the tony equine equiper was mistakenly welcome to half a dozen such celebrants. The proprietor grew anxious over the rowdy arrivals outside his window. Past the saddles, hunting horns, velvet hunting caps, and horse-flecked silk scarves he glared at the barbaric teens. When he could bear it no more he excused himself and strode in a fury to the door.

"You're common!" he shouted at the boys. "Common as dirt!"

Pile redresses plastic brick and hand-hewn fiberglass beams with the same revealing vehemence. Was he given artificial flowers at a critical moment in his emotional development? Did he once find himself infatuated with someone whose taste appalled him?

How brutally Freud puts it in his demarcation of id, ego, and superego. Yet it's not impossible to explain Pile's outburst against current imitation technology by imagining him stressed by just such a Freudian triangle: drawn by desire for another to a room of plastic knotty pine, false wormholes, and linoleum bricks, he is at once repelled and enthralled. His id brings him where his ego is appalled by his superego, leaving a scar that will later surface in a rare emotional display in his otherwise minutely objective and profoundly comprehensive Interior Design.

In a section headed "Human Problems," the author warns: "For the designer, any hint that a prospective client is contentious, suspicious, devious, mean, or cranky suggests that it is best to leave the project to someone else." Lest he develop any such unpleasant intimations about this reviewer, I will cancel further speculation to merely laud and preview his extremely thoughtful, careful, and comprehensive examination of interior design. Students or professionals in the field have it in an almanac fated to be sliding out of and neatly back into their undoubtedly handsome bookcases with rush-hour frequency.

In addition to comprehensive assays and charts on such materials as textiles, lighting, walls, doors, bathrooms, and the like, the book contains scientifically thorough information on the color spectrum, architectural structure, and the psychological impact of space and color on the inhabitants and transients experiencing interiors.

From the first adorable bubble diagrams of a baby design project to a mature and serious case study of Pile's own work on an institutional scale, the Alumni Hall of Alfred University, we grow and graduate through the

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Just as collectors are re-discovering Clarice Cliff’s hand-painted Art Deco pottery, three of her biggest fans have put together a detailed—pot by pot—account of her life: from her birth in Britain’s pottery region through her scandalous relationship with mentor Colley Shorter and the production of Cliff’s colorful Bizarre ware. Includes 165 illustrations (85 in color). —*Ellen Silberman*
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Bullocks Wilshire
We’re all subject to changing moods in acquisitive behavior. Martin Filler tracks five fast-moving decades.

What do you collect? is to the eighties as “What’s your sign?” was to the sixties—a kind of basic social litmus test that can instantly reveal more about one’s personality than shilly-shallying about occupation, religion, or sexual preferences. Implicit in this quintessential eighties interrogative is the assumption that everyone today collects something. Given the pandemic rise in unashamedly acquisitive tendencies during the past decade, there seems to be solid evidence to support this. Although some sentimental collectors hang onto the very first thing they ever bought—that Matisse etching if you were lucky, that Steinlen cat litho if you were less so—most of us would be more than a bit embarrassed if confronted with our initial accession or even our third or fourth. But fear not: in the game of keepers, editing is all. As with Vegas high rollers or pre-Crash investors, we hear much about the wins and very little about the losses. Henry Clay Frick, deemed faultless today, bought many ghastly Brown Cow pictures before he lucked out with his Bellini, Rembrandts, and Vermeers. We know sad tales of those who bought a Pollock for $500 and sold it when it reached a preposterous $5,000. Yet the luckless purchasers of Huidahs or Keenes tend to keep their mouths shut as they move on to bigger and better things. Then there are those strange unaccountable lemminglike movements when collectors suddenly begin to off-load one artist (lately, Morris Louis or Kenneth Noland) and simply must have another whose import had previously gone unnoticed (like Philip Guston or Richard Artschwager). In some instances these late-breaking reevaluations are thoroughly justified, but in others they reveal an ill-advised herding instinct. As Gerald Reitlinger’s cautionary classic The Economics of Taste makes abundantly clear, these inexplicable ups and downs have happened throughout history. Only a century ago, Vermeers now in the Met and the Frick went for an incredible £16 apiece. Herewith are the past four decades of collecting fashions summarized, along with predictions as to where the decade to come might take us in this never-ending farandole:

**Tycoons: 50s** Impressionists 60s Post-Impressionists 70s Old master paintings 80s Old master drawings 90s Armor

**Movie Moguls: 50s** School of Paris 60s Abstract Expressionists 70s Henry Moore 80s Late Frank Stella 90s Post-Neo-Geo

**Nouveaux Riches: 50s** Jade 60s Dubuffet 70s Fabergé 80s Art Deco 90s Boule

**Decorators: 50s** Tôle bouillotte lamps 60s Obelisks and eggs 70s Dog paintings 80s 19th-century watercolor interiors 90s George Bullock furniture

**Architects: 50s** Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and Alvar Aalto furniture 60s Geometric Oriental rugs 70s Early Modernist books 80s Wiener Werkstätte 90s Christopher Dresser objects

**Lawyers: 50s** Currier & Ives 60s Maps 70s Ansel Adams 80s Audubon prints 90s Dau- nier lithographs

(Continued on page 72)
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Collecting

(Art Directors: 50s Shaker furniture 60s Thonet bentwood 70s Kilim carpets 80s Fifties furniture 90s Hans Coper ceramics

Aesthetes: 50s Baccarat, Clichy, and St. Louis paperweights 60s Tiffany glass 70s American art pottery 80s Aesthetic Movement silver 90s Anglo-Indian Raj

Investment Bankers: 50s Dorothy Doughty birds 60s Remington bronzes 70s Munnings horse paintings 80s Sargent portraits 90s Hoppner and Romney portraits

Arbitrageurs: 50s Nothing 60s Nothing 70s Nothing 80s Julian Schnabel 90s Nothing

Academics: 50s Dürer prints 60s Goya prints 70s Unattributable drawings 80s Nothing 90s Eighties paintings

Speculators: 50s Stradivarius violins 60s American coins 70s Persian carpets 80s Vintage cars 90s Forties and fifties haute joaillerie

 Clairvoyants: 50s Edvard Munch prints 60s Egon Schiele watercolors 70s 19th-century photography 80s Early Warhol 90s German Romantic painting

The Fearless: 50s Jackson Pollock 60s

Joseph Beuys 70s Gordon Matta-Clark 80s Robert Ryman 90s Richard Long

The Followers: 50s Rouault prints 60s Mucha prints 70s Orientalist paintings 80s Biedermeyer 90s Redouté watercolors

Classic Comebacks: 50s Giambattista Tiepolo 60s Pre-Raphaelites 70s Russian Constructivists 80s Gustav Klimt 90s Antonio Canova

Classic Disappearances: 50s illuminated manuscript pages 60s Barbizon paintings 70s Tapestries 80s Islamic art 90s Sévres

Contemporary Comebacks: 50s Matisse papier collés 60s Picasso prints 70s Georgia O’Keeffe 80s Richard Artschwager 90s Mark Rothko

Contemporary Disappearances: 50s Salvador Dali 60s Bernard Buffet 70s Jules Olitski 80s Earthworks 90s Botero

Good Move/Bad Move: 50s Willem de Kooning/Harold Shapinsky 60s Jasper Johns/Robert Indiana 70s Donald Judd/Larry Bell 80s Eric Fischl/Salomé 90s Jenny Holzer/Ed Schlossberg

(Continued from page 66)

Psychiatrists: 50s African tribal art 60s Käthe Kollwitz prints 70s Adolph Gottlieb prints 80s Escher prints 90s Francis Bacon

Doctors: 50s Toulouse-Lautrec posters 60s Chagall prints 70s Vasarely 80s Will Barnet 90s Jim Dine

Dentists: 50s Norman Rockwell reproductions 60s Calder lithographs 70s Agam multiples 80s Erté bronzes 90s Disney animation cels

Pro Athletes: 50s Varga prints 60s Miguel Berrocal bronzes 70s Ernest Trova multiples 80s LeRoy Neiman lithographs 90s Robert Graham bronzes

Accountants: 50s Calendars 60s Photomurals 70s Bottled sand paintings 80s Late Warhol prints 90s Andrew Wyeth

Clockwise from right: Stradivarius violin, 1723; Julian Schnabel, Notre Dame, 1979; Henry Moore, Reclining Figure, 1945-46; Fabergé Imperial Easter egg, 1900; Tiffany Favrile glass vase, c. 1900.)
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Since the dollar is down, you may be less inclined to spend your time in Europe scooping up incredible buys or gorging night and day on four-star cuisine. Save these indulgences for another day: right now there are healthier, cheaper, and more uplifting alternatives in the many art museums that have sprung up in recent years. Not only are there paintings and sculpture to scrutinize but also the new architecture for you to become enraptured over or get irate about. Just to prepare you for the cheapest European pastime—a heated discussion—here is a sample of key museums considered must-sees by architecture and design professionals. They are rated on their ostensible purpose: the viewing of art in a meaningful, memorable, and comfortable context. Not every one succeeds in this aim, but perhaps that was intended—to fan the flames of controversy.

**Musée d'Orsay, Paris**
Gae Aulenti, Architect, in collaboration with A.C.T. Architecture

In its march toward architectural destiny, the French government has rammed through controversial *projet* in Paris over the past decade or so. Of these the conversion of the Gare d'Orsay on the Left Bank from a railroad station into a museum is arguably the most successful—or maybe the least reprehensible. After all, nothing too drastic was done to the outside. The station, a magnificently vaulted Beaux-Arts extravaganza designed by Victor Laloux in 1900, was overhauled last year by Italian architect-of-the-moment Gae Aulenti (in a standoffish collaboration with A.C.T. Architecture). The drop-dead display structures she designed within the iron-and-glass arched shell virtually scream *formidable*. Installed within Laloux's celestial space are small buildings made of limestone and shaped like Egyptian mastabas where Zoser and kin would no doubt have felt at home. Those housing nineteenth-century French art are arranged along a central axis that organizes the space with a funereal monumentality. This answer to the Babylonian Processional Way is grandiloquently punctuated by tortured nineteenth-century Neoclassical statues that could be equally at home at the cemetery of Pere La Chaise. All of a sudden one is struck by Aulenti's achievement: she has created a cenotaph to art as awe-inspiring as it is moribund. Indeed, the assortment of French nineteenth-century paintings installed within these little temples—including works by Ingres, Courbet, Manet, Degas, Fantin-Latour—are shrouded in a fitting pallor of indirect shadow-free lighting. In many of the rooms where drawings are displayed, the tomblike gloom caused by the low lighting levels (deemed necessary for conservation) further proclaims this homage to Thanatos.

The heavenly reaches of the Orsay's upper spaces—galleries for the Impressionists—are perfunctory, even though they are bathed in natural light. Monet looks a little sick. Aulenti is clearly more at home designing for the art of the grand gesture in the purgatory below.

The inevitable question of whether a train station can be successfully made into a museum goes unanswered here. But the Musée d'Orsay does serve to enshrine and embalm a century of art—only you wish you could remember what the art looked like when you used to see it alive and well at the Jeu de Paume and other former homes.
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MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERN, CENTRE GEORGES POMPIDOU, PARIS
GAE AULENTI, ARCHITECT, RENOVATION

It's not often that a new building is renovated. But vagaries of time and use are not necessarily on the side of experiments in architecture. When the Piano and Rogers's high-tech steel cage opened in 1977 in the Beaubourg section of Paris, it was the ne plus ultra of cultural-center design—adjustable, transparent, neutral. As for the fourth-floor Museum of Modern Art, however, there were a few flaws. The Matisse's and the Braques competed for attention with the mechanistic viscera of ducts and pipes of the ceiling's exposed structure. The gallery spaces, subdivided by flimsy screenlike partitions, were amorphous. So in 1985 Gae Aulenti was brought in to inject the proper intimacy and sense of containment needed for the museum's prized collection of small-scale early-twentieth-century art. Aulenti created courtlike spaces for the galleries: doorways were carved in the center of walls; and small clerestory windows concealing lights were punched along the top. The industrial-strength ceiling wasn't covered up, but awninglike structures mounted above the windows effectively lowered the space and partially hid it from view. Between these courts Aulenti put narrow corridors with vitrines on either side for more intimate exhibition spaces. All of a sudden works that had looked like display ads in a convention hall, such as Matisse's Première Nature morte orange or Braque's Le Billard, became breathtakingly luminous. Now the museumgoer can be aware of Piano and Rogers's original "container" but still be able to savor the various flavors of the contents.

Ambience: Underdone but not raw
Sense of orientation: Always present
Communication with art: Now allowed
Architecture/art interaction: L'art est servi

MUSÉE PICASSO, PARIS
ROLAND SIMOUNET, ARCHITECT

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Royal Viking Line
Museum, now ensconced in the stately Hôtel Salé, does extraordinarily well to settle the matter forever in favor of palaces. Built in 1656 in the Marais section of Paris as a tax collector's house, the Renaissance-style structure has been chastely and imaginatively adapted for its current mission of displaying the incomparable paintings, drawings, and sketches of the twentieth-century master. A richly carved lobby and grand stair set the stage for high-ceilinged rooms in which architect Roland Simounet has introduced stark white walls and partitions as backdrops for Picasso's paintings. The exhibition spaces are manipulated with Minimalist detailing that is as unobtrusive as it is complex. The museumgoer floats through a series of ethereally spare rooms with long French windows that provide much of the lighting for the vibrantly energetic Picassos within.

Even the groin-vaulted crypts have been dramatically transformed into unexpectedly lively display spaces for the boldly fractured compositions of Picasso's later work. Picasso liked old buildings. You can see why.

Ambience: Austerity meets opulence
Sense of orientation: Manipulated but direct
Communication with art: Didacticism con brio
Architecture/art interaction: Epiphany in high relief

**Clore Gallery at the Tate Gallery, London**

James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates

Everyone carries on about the coruscating yellow and acidic green that James Stirling splashed all over the lobby of his new addition to the Tate. But what about the Clore galleries themselves? Frankly they are too blah-beige. The famous collection of Turners is strangely suffocated by concealed fluorescent lighting that lulls everything into a grainy haze best left to British World War II movies. The beige carpeting is already wearing thin. Not very cheery, dearie. And the axes established by the plan are strangely aligned. To be sure, there are certain redeeming features: Stirling has designed the rooms to have top lighting so that a soft daylight bounces onto the evanescent paintings below. But these deeply configured ceilings are short on oomph, and the soufflé of cornices, moldings, pilasters, and other Classical paraphernalia can't compete with the detailing of the older galleries of the Tate. The architecture doesn't fight with the art: it can't make up its mind whether to back off or stick it out.
LAURA ASHLEY

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The Clere’s exterior, however, is a different matter. Here the 10,495-square-foot L-shaped annex is in overdrive. With an exaggerated glassed-in pediment surrounding the Clere’s entrance, triangular oriel window popping out of the other façade, a grid of Portland stone framing redbrick or yellow stucco walls, the architecture quickly shifts from first to fourth gear and back again.

**Ambience:** Gloomy in galleries; too sparky elsewhere  
**Sense of orientation:** Good in spite of axes to nowhere  
**Communication with art:** Boring  
**Architecture/art interaction:** Inconclusive

**Whitechapel Art Gallery, London**  
*Colquhoun, Miller & Partners, Architects*  
There are just a few simple design elements that make a museum a great place in which to look at art. The Whitechapel Art Gallery, a chunkily idiosyncratic Arts and Crafts–style building designed by C. Harrison Townsend in 1901 and renovated by John Miller and Alan Colquhoun in 1985, has them. Due to an artful expansion of the original plan, all three galleries on its two floors come supplied with skylights. Even on winter days there is little need for artificial light. The gently gabled iron-and-glass roof of the type in the old Tate has been kept upstairs, cleaned up, and revamped with all the technical fittings inserted in its spine. The job was as difficult as a bone marrow transplant, but the surgery is clearly a success.

The path through the museum is circuitous, but the new and elegantly executed toplit stairs cut an impressive swath to the second-floor galleries and to a new café, auditorium, and offices. While the interior colors swing between white and off-white, the spareness, clarity, and linearity of architectural elements heighten the decorative effect.  

**Ambience:** Top drawer  
**Sense of orientation:** First-rate  
**Communication with art:** Spot on  
**Architecture/art interaction:** Rather!

**Saatchi Collection, St. John’s Wood, London**  
*Max Gordon Associates, Architects*  
The way Max Gordon approached a collection of old brick industrial buildings that now house the fabled Saatchi Collection of modern art is deeply instructive. Gordon was lucky in that these buildings came with serrated glass roofs, spreading gable roofs, and gently single-pitched shed roofs. Here the buildings are grafted together by Gordon so that you can move from one gallery to another.
And what better investment than the beautiful shapes and sizes of Marvin windows. They not only hold your attention, they provide lasting beauty and value, because each one is painstakingly crafted by hand and built to fit exactly the way it should. For our free idea book, write Marvin Windows, Warroad, MN 56763; or call 1-800-346-5128. (In Minnesota, call 1-800-552-1167; in Canada, call 1-800-263-6161.) Or see your local Marvin Windows dealer.

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er aware only of a change in level or in the type of exposed ceiling above. The white partitions placed within the brick structures provide the properly understated backdrop for showing art of high impact. Unfortunately much of the Neo-Geo art on display this past winter bounced out at the spectator with more impact than staying power. The quietly crafted setting cries out for art of dynamism and quality—one thinks longingly of the Stella retrospective last year at New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

Ambience: Poetic no-nonsense industrial aesthetic

Sense of orientation: Subtle variation on a Minimalist theme

Communication with art: High impact needs good art

Architecture/art interaction: Punchy

Museum Abteiberg, Monchengladbach, Germany
Hans Hollein, Architect

If you want to take a dizzying plunge into a mélange of Modernist and traditional architecture which contains a riveting collection of contemporary art, this museum is a must-visit. It is not a museum you warm up to easily, however. Outside, a steel-and-glass tower, aluminum-clad cubes, and concrete boxes have been casually chained together on the crest of a steeply terraced hill. Inside, almost every type of gallery design currently in high regard has been captured alive and confined there. You enter a low space browbeaten by a grid of exposed fluorescent lights. But then as you make your way up toward the top skylit galleries where large New York School paintings are displayed, a calm sense of expansiveness takes over.

But in case you might become too relaxed or possibly bored, the architect has supplied curved serpentine galleries, a rotunda with a domed skylight, and a two-story gallery covered by a barrel vault to punch up the Modernist art. But going from one space to another is often as disorienting as Alice’s path in Wonderland. The fluorescent light in some galleries is as oppressively bleak as a parking garage. To be sure, Joseph Beuys’s art, combining the repulsive and the aesthetic—embalmed gobs of animal fat artfully arranged inside wood vitrines—is served well by Hollein’s fluorescent obsession.

Ambience: Imaginatively schizy—calm, but chilling and eerie

Sense of orientation: Artfully disorienting

Communication with art: Always effective

Architecture/art interaction: Excellent, even when perverse

Neue Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Germany
James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, Architects

The sheer meatiness and brawn of Stuttgart’s sandstone-and-travertine block masses cascading down a hill make it one of the most striking additions to a museum built in years. The Stirling-designed gallery adjoining Stuttgart’s nineteenth-century Neoclassical museum confidently announces it is a bold synthesis of Modernist and traditional concepts of space, movement, light, ornament, and structure. By having a huge open-air rotunda gouged out of the center of the museum, Stirling deftly defers to golden oldies of museum design, including the pivotal 1830 Altesmuseum that Karl Friedrich Schinkel built in Berlin. Stirling’s roomlike galleries on the second level for the permanent collection of contemporary art are arranged in enfilade in a U around the rotunda, and the cove-mounted light fixtures successfully bring back the ambience of the great museums of yesteryear.
Yet the ground-floor spaces are out and out Modernist: loftlike galleries, asymmetrical spaces, and now-we-can-save-money materials (rubber flooring and concrete columns) are bold but not often beautiful. The worst part: looking at art under cheap ice-cube baffles of fluorescent lighting.

But the imperfections, including even the overjolly pink tubular handrails outside, serve as important reminders that "Alles ist Architektur."

Ambience: Narrative as eternal return

Sense of orientation: Deft orchestration of old and new

Communication with art: Excellent in upper galleries, blah below

Architecture/art interaction: Highs outnumber the lows

**Museum für Kunsthandwerk, Frankfurt am Main, Germany**

Richard Meier & Partners, Architects

Richard Meier is best known for his refining and honing of the Modernist vocabulary into luminous architectural objects, but the presence here of the museum's traditional Neo-classical villa (and the client's wishes) laid the ground rules for Meier's addition.

The villa's cubiform shape, proportions, and even the size of its windows, not to mention the creamy color of its stucco walls, provided the cues by which Meier would mold his Modernist museum spaces. His loftlike galleries are subdivided by finely proportioned partitions and vitrines in the Meieresque mode. But because white oak vitrines are arranged in the center of the halls to form small courtyards, the visitor's route through the decorative-arts museum is carefully manipulated and guided. The whirring of the automatic blinds (which adjust to every change in the daylight outside) reminds you that a lot of natural light is coming in from the large windows and glassed-in ramps. But that's about it for shocks to the nervous system: unlike Monchengladbach, there is no perversely idiosyncratic edge. Unlike Stuttgart, no major surprises. Meier's achievement here is a well-calibrated and nicely sustained exercise in aesthetic consistency.

Ambience: Serene

Sense of orientation: Intricate but clear

Communication with art: Luminous

Architecture/art interaction: Even keel

---

**Exhibition Schedule**

**PARIS**

Musée d'Orsay

Mar. 7–June 5: "Mary Cassatt."

Centre Georges Pompidou


Musée Picasso

Ongoing: The regular collection.

**LONDON**

Clore Gallery


Whitechapel Art Gallery


Saatchi Collection

Apr. 29–Sept.: Works by Sigmar Polke, Joel Shapiro, Leon Golub, and Philip Guston.

**GERMANY**

Museum Abteiberg


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when Jack and Jamie Davies first bought the Schramsberg vineyards in 1965, the entire Napa Valley estate was a shambles: all of Jacob Schram’s original vines, planted in the nineteenth century, had long since been destroyed by root louse, and by the 1950s the entire property had been abandoned altogether. Today the estate produces what is often considered to be the noblest of all America’s champagnes. This is the home of Schramsberg, whose Blanc de Blancs was selected for Nixon’s Beijing summit with Jou En-lai in 1972 and whose wines have been sealing toasts made by every president since.

The Davies’ first efforts at making champagne were not without problems: a temperamental crushing machine had Jamie treading barefoot on more than one occasion, and Jack once had a narrow escape when an oak cask, thick with brandy fumes, blew up in his face. But making champagne has never been an occupation for the fainthearted: legend has it that when Dom Pérignon made the first champagne centuries ago, well over three quarters of the bottles exploded on him in his cellars. Undeterred, he somehow gingerly approached one of the few that remained intact and downed the contents. “I am drinking the stars,” he said. The méthode champenoise was born.

As any maker of true champagne is at pains to point out, there are many ways to make a wine sparkle, but only one méthode champenoise. Once a number of cuvées have been blended from a selection of base wines, the blend must then be bottled, with a precise mixture of sugar and select yeast, until a second fermentation is completed. The bottles are then riddled—placed neck-down and turned daily—until all the yeast sediment has fallen into the neck. Finally the neck of each bottle is frozen, and the sediment is then disgorged under pressure from within the bottle. The wine, sparkling and clear, is now at last ready to be sealed with cork and wire.

Schramsberg itself—the German translates literally as Schram’s Mountain—is largely volcanic and thus ideally suited for a labyrinth of caves that maintain a damp and naturally controlled temperature of 58 degrees. Here I was witness to the curious skills of a Schramsberg’s riddler, a man named Miguel Moreno. The vast majority of riddling still takes place by hand with each bottle turned an eighth or a quarter a day for six weeks. Miguel’s current record is 50,000 bottles in one day. (If this doesn’t sound like much fun, his lot is at least a bit improved by a substantial grotto blaster; we left him riddling to “La Bamba” in the gathering gloom.) I tried Schramsberg’s 1982 Blanc de Noirs, made in the classic French style with a blend of pinot noir and a little chardonnay and found a full fresh-ness beautifully balanced with a lovely finish. I was also impressed by their Crémant Demi-Sec ’84, whose greatly reduced effervescence allowed the taste of the flora grape full rein.

About a quarter hour to the southeast in the Napa Valley lie the cellars of champagne master Hanns Kornell—a man every bit as remarkable as the considerable reputation of the champagne he makes. The son of a distinguished wine-making family, he was brought up in Germany until, in 1938, after a year in Dachau, he was given 48 hours to leave the fatherland. A year later he was hitchhiking across America with two dollars in his pocket and a small quantity of mother yeast, which he had managed to smuggle out of Germany. Today, 36 years after the production of his first bottle of American champagne, Hanns Kornell is the proud head of his own winery. Kornell does not produce the base wines for the champagnes; he contracts with grape growers who bring the wine to his cellars after the first fermentation. There the wine is left to ferment en tirage an unusually long time, from between two to seven years, after which every bottle is riddled by hand and individually checked for clarity by candlelight. (Incidentally their riddling record is held by ace-riddler Dieter Walkhoff at a staggering 67,000 bottles in one day. Sorry, Miguel. . .)

However it is only in their tasting rooms that Kornell’s remarkable achievement is best appreciated. I began with their Blanc de Blancs ’82 and found its bold dry fruitiness interestingly offset by a complex apple finish. I must confess I was slightly disappointed by Hanns Kornell’s Brut. But certainly the most idiosyncratic of Kornell’s work is his Sehr Trocken. Extremely dry—it is given none of champagne’s usual dosage of sugar and cognac to increase sweetness—I could have sworn I detected the faintest trace of peaches.

I would also thoroughly recommend a visit to the very charming Folie à Deux vineyard, not ten minutes away from Kornell’s door. Its name stems from the principal occupation of its founders, Larry Dizmang, a psychiat-
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You can decorate a wall with a Queen Anne mirror for a fraction of what an English or French painting of similar quality would cost," says dealer Glenn Randall, explaining one reason for the popularity of antique mirrors at this year's New York Winter Antiques Show. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century mirrors from Ireland, Italy, France, and England were on exhibit and priced from $5,000 to $150,000. The frames ranged from simple and classic giltwood to a pair of eels entwined around the mirror plate. Matched pairs of mirrors are especially rare and, according to dealer Raymond B. Knight, are immediately snatched up when they do appear on the market. Certain mirrors were made with a specific purpose in mind. The bull's-eye glass, on this page, is also called the butler's mirror because the deep curve of the glass allows you to see the butler as he enters the room.

Gabrielle Winkel

Clockwise from right: Chippendale mirrors, c. 1760, G. Rondoll Fine Antiques, Washington, D.C.; Swedish, c. 1785-90, Frederick P. Victorio & Son, NYC; Regency bull's-eye, 19th century (recent gilding by Ann Conklin), Raymond B. Knight, Locust Valley, N.Y.; Irish George III, c. 1770-75, Victoria & Son; English, c. 1810, Gene Tyson, NYC.
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To the trade only
The Middle Ages is being heralded by tapestries at the table and fairy-tale settings.

The recent exhibition "Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400" at London’s Royal Academy highlighted the best of this period. And now the influence of the dramatic, heraldic, and allegorical aspects of the Middle Ages is weaving its way into contemporary design. Robert Currie chose the princess and the pea as his theme for Doris Leslie Blau’s display at the New York Winter Antiques Show. In the critically acclaimed production of The Cherry Orchard at Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Majestic Theater, director Peter Brook and set designer Chloë Obolensky layered the stage with Persian carpets—the effect similar to tapestries in a great medieval hall. The Middle Ages is adding richness to the table: a ceramic pitcher recalls its sixteenth-century Italian counterpart, place mats are cut from tapestries, porcelain dishes have botanical borders. Elizabeth Garouste and Mattia Bonetti’s Jardin d’Orient rug combines a medieval branch border and a central motif from Egyptian frescoes.

Laurie Schechter

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Once hidden away in the master bedroom, the chaise now rests easy in any space.

While its beginnings in Europe at the end of the seventeenth century as a sickbed for the wounded were rather unglamorous, today's chaise longue conjures up a more romantic mood. “It expresses the body even when the body is not in it,” says furniture designer Dakota Jackson. Eleonora Triguboff intended her chaise to be like “a woman wrapping herself in something luxurious.” Karl Lagerfeld, who “couldn’t live without chaises,” had one made based on eighteenth-century Venetian boats. Chaises can solve space problems, too. The Newport series by Daniela Puppa has a removable headrest so that it can double as a low table or stack to become shelving. Ross Lovegrove designed his chaise to have the “dynamics of a racehorse.” Marc Newson’s insectlike chaise reflects his background in sculpture and jewelry design.

L.S.


LCI, above, by sculptor Marc Newson. Left: Eleonora Triguboff chaise and an antique marble table.
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It was Antonio Gaudi, the turn-of-the-century Spanish architect, who laid the groundwork for today's mosaicwork. His buildings, with their Baroque quality, were like mosaic sculptures. Now mosaics are giving a Mediterranean feeling to kitchen countertops, ceramic floors, even living-room sofas. New York art gallery owner Holly Solomon enlisted Doreen Gallo to pave her kitchen cabinets and walls in tile. When decorator Jean Paul Beaujard asked Yves Marthelot to create a counter for Barneys New York's Chelsea Passage, Beaujard had in mind the French postman who spent 55 years building his house out of broken plates. Gianfranco Ferrè created a new line of tiles for Ceramica Panaria which form a ceramic Persian rug. New York artist Dan Bleier combined his love of color with his interest in tiles when he hand-painted his apartment in a mosaic pattern. "I made it my ideal, a warm, summer space all year round," says Bleier of the mosaic. "Patterns on top of patterns give an overall feeling—not busy but restful." L.S.

Gianfranco Ferrè "rug" tiles, top, by Ceramica Panaria. Center: Artist Dan Bleier's apartment. Above: Bleier's lamp and table made from mosaics of glass, wire, beads, and jewels on found objects. Above left: Bleier's ceramic vase of broken glass and mirror bits.

Beaujard's display counter, right, and hanging lamp, top, of broken dishes in Chelsea Passage at Barneys New York. Above: Gallery owner Holly Solomon's kitchen by artist Doreen Gallo.
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Surely the most romantic roses are the bare wintry ones that Mary Lennox saw when she slipped through the long-hidden door into the secret garden: "It was the sweetest, most mysterious-looking place anyone could imagine. The high walls which shut it in were covered with the leafless stems of climbing roses. There were other trees in the garden and roses had run all over them and swung down long tendrils and here and there they had caught at each other or at a far-reaching branch and made lovely bridges of themselves," Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret* garden was published in 1911. But in 1902 in *Roses for English Gardens* Gertrude Jekyll had already written that the great virtue of climbing roses is the way they fall down, cascading from tree and bank and wall.

Climbers, ranging in size from 4 to 40 feet, are refreshingly more carefree than other roses, except rugosas, even if it means teetering on a ladder once a year to prune the most vigorous varieties. (Planting them within pruning reach has another benefit: their fragrance will be closer.) Make sure the supports will last longer than the roses will—and if you plant on a fence, as Washington Post garden correspondent Henry Mitchell bitterly recalls, "Don't plant right at the post. It seems so obvious: when the post rots you'll end up replacing the plant and the post."

What Jekyll celebrated about climbers as much as their flowers and fragrance was their graceful habit, the year-round quality and character of the plant in the landscape. English rosé authority Peter Beales writes that climbers were classified as "decorative roses" in English catalogues and were used more imaginatively as part of the framework of the garden. Now the vogue for old roses (roses in cultivation before 1867) has made many old climbers available again.

The dictionary does not differentiate between climbers and ramblers. But the acknowledged king of roses, Graham Stuart Thomas—garden designer, writer, and National Trust consultant—says that ramblers are the small-flowered wild species and their domesticated relatives that bloom once, while climbers are the large-flowered repeat-blooming hybrids.

Repeat blooming should not be the only criterion for choosing a rose, especially a climber. We have come to expect from roses what we would be astonished to find in any other flower—people don't rip out their lilacs because they only bloom once! Many old roses bloom luxuriantly for a month and then sport the odd flower or bright autumn foliage and brilliant hips.

Irish textile and clothes designer Sybil Connolly has a small Dublin town garden smothered in roses, including many old climbers. "There's never a bit of the garden one can hide," she says, wisely growing late-flowering clematis with her climbers to provide color once the roses are gone. "Plant *viticella* hybrids," advises Graham Stuart Thomas. "Everything else gets tangled with the roses, but *viticellas* are cut to a foot every winter, making it easier to prune the climber."

If you have only one rose, most experts would recommend 'New Dawn' (25 feet), whose clusters of medium-size flowers bloom from June till the end of autumn. Fragrant and silvery pink with deepest green foliage, 'New Dawn' is hardy and disease-resistant, and its growing habit is strong and graceful.

But after 'New Dawn', then what? There are climbing roses for every situation. Tiny double ramblers upholster arbor and love seat in white, pink, yellow, blush, or mauve. Screens of roses create secrecy and surprise—try 'May Queen' (25 feet), a flat lilac
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pink rose packed with petals, which makes a thick network of tiny branches. Some are all-purpose. 'Golden Showers' (8-10 feet), a hybrid tea that Henry Mitchell thinks is the best modern yellow climber, flowers continuously, with good foliage and scent. For a clear pink rose he loves 'Blossomtime' (6-8 feet), a 'New Dawn' cross with classically formed flowers. ‘It has a tea scent you can smell ten feet away,” he says. But like most committed rose lovers, he saves his strongest praise for the old roses. ‘Jaune Desprez’ (20 feet), he says, “has apricot petals flushed with pink, shading to soft buff, with the texture of waxed silk. It could be in the running for the most beautiful rose ever produced.” He adds, “It’s hardy as far north as Philadelphia.” So now you know the trouble.

Grow climbers together on a big wall. New Hampshire rosarian Malcolm Lowe recommends the deep plum of hardy thornless ‘Amadis’ (10 feet) with the soft blush-white clusters of tough ‘Baltimore Belle’ (15 feet). ‘Amadis’ will bloom for six to seven weeks and ‘Baltimore Belle’ almost as long. In winter the canes also make a show together—chocolate purple against ice green.

Secret Garden roses that you do not want to plant lightheartedly in a small garden include most of the great species roses, such as Rosa filipes ‘Kiftsgate’, which reaches 40 feet. Slightly less vigorous hybrids look good on a high strong fence—or hide a shed roof you’d rather not see again in a cloud of small white midsummer flowers. ‘Bobbie James’ (30 feet) and ‘Rambling Rector’ (15-20 feet) are tough, highly fragrant R. multiflora crosses. In the south the same effects are achieved with tiny tender Banksia roses, both white and yellow, single and double (20 feet), and the single white Cherokee Rose, R. laevigata (25 feet), which is beautiful in and out of flower. R. eglanteria (8 feet and bushy) is a cold-resistant pink single-flowered American species with perfumed foliage and long-lasting hips.

Shorter climbers can be grown on freestanding trellises in the back of any deep border. ‘Belinda’ (4-6 feet), hardy and fragrant, flowers repeatedly in big clusters of small single bright pink flowers to make a fountain effect. Another good pillar rose is ‘White Cockade’ (8 feet), a pure-white double, ‘Climbing Talisman’ (8 feet) and ‘Pink Pillar’ (7 feet) are, respectively, red gold with a copper cast and pink gold with orange. All bloom repeatedly. The Chatsworth Carpenters, at the estate of the Duke of Devonshire, make the most elegant—and expensive—finial-topped rose trellis pillars according to Edwardian designs.

In Connecticut, Mrs. William Buckley bought old-fashioned rose arches from Burpee to surround her rose garden with a circle of climbers, which she chooses as much for cutting as decoration. Climbers that produce enough flowers continuously for house and garden include the fine single ‘Climbing Dainty Bess’ (7-10 feet), whose four-inch dusky pink flowers open to show maroon stamens, and ‘Climbing Shot Silk’ (10-15 feet), as dramatic as its name, cerise shot with gold.

Roses with petals whose reverse is deeper, roses that have a subtle shading or cast of another color, or roses that change with age have extra charm. One such is fragrant, hardy, repeat-blooming ‘Buff Beauty’ (5 feet) with apricot buds and three-inch old-gold flowers.

If you must have red. Thomas and Mitchell both sing the praises of ‘Guinee’ (15 feet), whose black-shaded, fragrant, recurrent flowers are the size of a small grapefruit. A
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much castigated though often-grown red rose is 'American Pillar' (15 feet). Old-rose fanciers call its color loud and its foliage coarse. Undeniably it smells like iceberg lettuce, not like a rose. But to me it has the spirit of a Gilded Age pergola rose, erupting in a tremendous garden-partyish display of huge trusses of deep pink single blossoms with little white centers. Henry Mitchell points out that Monet loved 'American Pillar', training it all over the blue green arches of Giverny. So every rose has its own romance. ▲

Rose Sources

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ROSE GARDENS
Arnold Arboretum, Boston
Massachusetts; (617) 524-1717/1718

Good species collection includes Himalayan musk rose R. brunonii, creamy-flowered R. arvensis, and August-blooming R. wichurana. June 21, rose lectures with a field trip; June 22 to the Fuller Gardens in Northampton, New Hampshire.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn
New York; (718) 622-8433

Nearly 1,000 varieties in the Cranford Rose Garden, one of the nation's largest and oldest rose gardens. Climbers and ramblers on picket fences, latticework pavilion and arches, and thirty pillars. A rose symposium, June 18, with Peter Beales, Beverly Dobson, Harmon Saville, Howard Walters. A video on rose history and culture is for sale.

Capehaha Park Rose Display Garden
Cape Girardeau, Missouri; (314) 335-3312

Climbing roses. 50–60 varieties, including some very old ones, planted on the fence surrounding this 1-acre formal rose garden.

Elizabeth Park, Hartford, Connecticut
(203) 722-6490

The 1¼ acres of the oldest (1903) municipal rose garden in the U.S. are laid out in concentric circles around a rustic gazebo. Fences, arches, and pillars are covered with dozens of old and unusual varieties of climbers and ramblers.

Filoli, Woodside, California
(415) 366-4640

The 17 acres of formal gardens include Banksia, China, and noisette roses. Also many good old singles trained on walls, plus a garden of historically important old roses, which features many ramblers.

Hershey Gardens, Hershey, Pennsylvania
(717) 534-3492

A 4-acre rose garden, established in 1937, displays 'New Dawn' on arches, arbors, pillars, and tripods; 850 rose varieties include 'Golden Showers' plus 'Amélie Gravereaux' (8–10 feet), a rare red rugosa that can be trained as a climber.

Michael H. Horvath Garden of Legend and Romance, Wooster, Ohio
(216) 263-3764

Formal rose garden established in 1970 with 500 varieties of old roses suitable for the area, including climbers and species roses such as recurrent white 'Sombreuil' and the Bengal rose, R. chinensis.

Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California; (818) 405-2125

Here is the place in the U.S. to see roses in trees. Older climbers and ramblers are well displayed on a long pergola, arbors, and trellis gazebos, walls, and pillars.

James P. Kelleher Rose Garden
Boston, Massachusetts; (617) 524-0611

Just across from the Museum of Fine Arts is a small enclosed old-fashioned rose garden. Well-maintained climbers and ramblers include 'Summer Snow', covering a circular arbor of arches.

Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania; (215) 388-6741

A magnificent display of 'American Pillar'. A new rose garden will feature 200 feet of arches covered with 'Climbing Iceberg', 'City of York', 'New Dawn', 'Dortmund', 'Handel', and 'America'.

Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Pennsylvania; (215) 242-5399

Marion Rivers Rose Garden has a fine small collection of species roses, including the delicious Persian musk rose, R. moschata nastarana, which blooms well into autumn.

National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.
(202) 475-4815

Old shrub roses and climbers are a major...
part of the design of the herb garden. Also an interesting collection of nearly twenty species roses.

**Old Westbury Gardens**, Old Westbury
New York; (516) 333-0048

About 30 climbers and ramblers include ‘Handel’, ivory white with deep rose edge. A good display of pillars connected by chains in sheltered walled garden includes the fabulous lemon yellow single ‘Mermaid’, also ‘Climbing La France’, a sport of the first hybrid tea.

**Wyck House**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
(215) 848-1690

The 37 old-rose varieties include climbers, ramblers, and species, many of a period consonant with the 1825 house restoration.

**NURSERIES**

**The Combined Rose List**, Beverly
Dobson, 215 Harriman Rd., Irvington, NY 10533; (914) 591-6736

If the catalogues below do not have the roses you want, try Dobson’s annually updated compendium, which includes hard-to-find varieties.

**Antique Rose Emporium**, Rte. 5, Box 143, Brenham, TX 77833; (409) 836-9051

Noisette, tea, and China roses good for the entire South, including about 30 climbers.

**High Country Rosarium**, 1717 Downing St., Denver, CO 80218; (303) 832-4026

Hardy old roses for mountain climates, with seven climbers, including ‘Queen of the Prairies’, fragrant, double, and rose pink with a white stripe on each petal.

**Lowe’s Own-Root Rose Nursery**
6 Sheffield Rd., Nashua, NH 03062
(603) 888-2214

An excellent collection of ramblers and climbers with an additional 50 varieties not listed but available in quantity on request.

**Pickering Nurseries**, 670 Kingston Rd.
Picking, Ontario, Canada L1V 1A6
(416) 839-2111

About 40 climbing roses. A number are cold-resistant, although don’t get your hopes up about all of them since this part of Canada is known as the Banana Belt because of its proximity to Lake Ontario.

**Roses of Yesterday and Today**, 802 Brown’s Valley Rd., Watsonville, CA 95076; (408) 724-3537

The most informative catalogue of all includes 60 climbing roses shipped nationwide.

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Edensor, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE4 1PH
688-2242, ext. 371

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**Smith & Hawken**, 25 Corte Madera Ave.
Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-4050

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Chagall once said: "Braque's colors would be ideal on women's backs." Yves Saint Laurent, the undisputed king of haute couture, looked no further than his Paris living room and Cubist paintings for inspiration. "I have been walking around with Braque and Cubists in my head for a long time," says YSL, who brilliantly mixed fantasy with unparalleled tailoring. Highlights: birds in flight on summer capes, abstract Cubist motifs on shaped suits with short skirts. YSL's longtime associate Loulou Klossowski is another fashion inspiration. Nineteenth-century rooms: Paris-based antiques dealer Bernard Steinitz, who recently opened a town-house shop in New York, sells fine French antiques from his apartment in Paris to clients Susan Gutfreund, Annette Reed, Jayne Wrightsman. At the annual Winter Antiques Show this year his leopard-covered Empire bed belonged to Marie Louise Bonaparte. Pierre Bergé, chairman and co-owner of YSL, had Jacques Grange decorate his bedroom with Indian courtly paintings inlaid with semiprecious stones.

André Leon Talley

For the Klossowski fete at Paris's Bains-Douches, above, spring apples with white flowers. Left inset: Bernard Steinitz's fantasy bedroom. Left: Pierre Berge's bedroom with portraits of rajas.

A YSL couture show tradition: Spring flowers are pruned into extravagant evening floral ball dresses in silk taffeta from Abraham.

HG MAY 1988
All you have to be is you.

Liz Claiborne The Fragrance
Pearls symbolize perfection, femininity. For spring they gleam from head to toe. Manolo Blahnik was inspired by Josephine Baker’s style and Marie Antoinette’s embroidered shoes. “My pearl shoes can be worn with jeans, palazzo pants, a maillot,” he says. English philosopher Francis Bacon used to drink a pearl in lemon juice. Designer Carolyne Roehm likes triple strands, a gift from her husband, Henry Kravis, and dessert cutlery in mother-of-pearl, from Mallett’s, London. “Pearls are wonderful for every occasion, day or evening,” says Roehm. Calvin Klein gave his wife, Kelly, a parure of pearls from the Duchess of Windsor jewelry sale. Paris couture pearls: at Dior, Marc Bohan sprinkles them on a short dress; at Chanel, Karl Lagerfeld likes them down the back of dresses. Pearl objets create a sense of richness. New York antiques dealer Linda Horn specializes in everything from mother-of-pearl boxes to inlaid tables circa 1860. Sotheby’s found a Persian rug encrusted with pearls.
Jewelry enlarged for detail. Prices represent retail quotations for specific diamonds shown. Prices are subject to change.

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escape this month into the wild with fringes, palm trees, and exotic animals! In this issue we show you a thatched pavilion designed by Hugh Newell Jacobsen; designer Brian Murphy's own house in Santa Monica, with grass curtains and palm-fronded garage doors; fringed skirts on Azzedine Alaïa's dresses and on Elizabeth Garouste's furniture; Sue Golden's thatched chair; architect Charles Moore's cutout palm trees; Gérard Rigot's exquisite animal chairs and tables—plus a story on the painter whose life epitomizes escape. Gauguin, celebrated this month at the National Gallery. A far cry from the beachcomber look, Michael Chow's New York apartment is filled with furniture and objects by Ruhlmann and Dunand. Lord McAlpine's follies litter an English landscape, and Diana Freeland's closets overflow with extraordinary shoes. Our food correspondent Jeffrey Steingarten spends a week working in a great restaurant kitchen; Suzanne Stephens comments on architectural disasters; and in Picture Post we show you a dying art, the illustrated letter. —Anna Wintour.
Throw caution and convention to the trade winds. There's a sybaritic side to architecture, design, and fashion that beckons the adventurous to explore the exotic. Succumb to the temptation of unabashed color, to the allure of uninhibited pattern. Let Gauguin be your guide, through July 31 at the National Gallery in Washington.

Tahitian Mythology

The legend of Gauguin is nearly as potent as his art. But only the work, says John Richardson, merits our attention.

Before settling on Tahiti, Gauguin considered Java, Tonkin, and Madagascar as a base for his "studio of the tropics"—a never-to-be-realized commune of modern artists. He was inspired by memories of the thatched native huts he had seen at the World's Fair of 1889, also possibly by Pierre Loti's autobiographical account of a French sailor's romance with a fourteen-year-old Tahitian vahine. Gauguin's first trip to the South Seas lasted from 1891 to 1893; his second from 1895 until his death eight years later. Both turned out to involve much agony besides "ecstasy, calm, and art."

The paintings inspired by Gauguin's Polynesian "paradise" have exerted as mesmerizing an influence on the Modern movement as Cézanne's—and only Van Gogh has proved more popular with gallerygoers, not to speak of art investors. Yet prior to the present eye-opening exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., on view through July 31 (with subsequent stops at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Grand Palais in Paris), Gauguin was always rather a puzzle. He was both original and derivative, bafflingly great and on occasion bafflingly bad. With this show—discerningly chosen and exhaustively catalogued by Charles Stuckey and Richard Brettell—all such conflicts have been resolved. We can now see Gauguin as an artist of immense visionary as well as painterly and decorative powers—both victor and victim of the sacred pool of art which figures in the foreground of the great painting Mahana no Atua.

The exhibition charts Gauguin's gradual metamorphosis from an inept Sunday painter to a charismatic master—part monster, part martyr. First steps were amateurish: bad Pissarro. Gauguin's gifts only began to emerge when he gave up banking and moved his family to Copenhagen, his wife's hometown. Denmark was a disaster. Leaving his family behind, he returned to France and proceeded to quarrel with a succession of well-wishers, notably Degas and Seurat. After dabbling in Divisionism, Gauguin embarked in 1887 on his first trip to the tropics: Panama. Another disaster! First he worked as a laborer on the Panama Canal, then, after moving to Martinique, he succumbed to fever.

On returning to France in 1888, Gauguin opted for the primitivism of Brittany. And there at Pont-Aven, surrounded by a group of progressive young painters, he finally came into his own and blazed a trail that would be followed by the heroes of the Modern movement: Picasso as well as Matisse. Expressionists as well as abstractionists. Drawing on sources as disparate as Cézanne, Japanese woodcuts, Italian primitives, Romanesque sculpture, and art populaire, Gauguin came up with his famous Synthetism: a style that enabled artists to take hitherto unheard-of liberties with appearances. Gauguin's Breton works are as decorative and expressive as medieval stained glass; at the same time, they are deeply rooted in his dark "barbaric heart, which [was] so hard, so loving." After primitive Brittany, Gauguin tried his luck with Van Gogh in primitive Provence. Yet another disaster! Artistic togetherness in Van Gogh's yellow house in Arles came to an abrupt halt when the doomed Dutchman tried to slash Gauguin with a razor. Back north he divided the next two years between Paris and Brittany, making little money but a great name for himself as the leader of Symbolist painters. In April 1891, he took off for the South Seas.

In the light of Stuckey and Brettell's scholarship the old Gauguin legends look decidedly novelettish, especially the notion of the archetypal peintre maudit: the
stockbroker who threw up everything to find redemption through primitivism, priaism, and drink. The prime perpetrator of this poppycock was Somerset Maugham or rather his roman à clef *The Moon and Sixpence*. Thanks to that chance meeting in Paris with one of the artist’s cronies—a rotten painter named Roderick O’Conor—Maugham had developed an obsession with Gauguin’s story shortly after the latter’s death in 1903.

O’Conor must have let out a lot of disparaging facts about his former mentor, for in Maugham’s first bestseller, *Of Human Bondage*, we come across not only a travesty of O’Conor (“a failure and he knows it, and the bitterness has warped his soul”) but a travesty of Gauguin (“he chucked it all to become a painter...”). After the success of *Of Human Bondage*, Maugham decided to base his next novel entirely on Gauguin—a project that necessitated giving up his work as a spy in Switzerland, at the height of World War I, and going to Tahiti in search of local color.

Most of Maugham’s research for *The Moon and Sixpence* was done by his shifty American companion, Gerald Haxton, who would scour the local bars for tall stories about the perfect cad who had died of drink and morphine, had run up bills all over the island, and carried on a hate campaign against the local priests and colonial administrators. Years later, I remember Maugham boasting how he and Haxton had driven to Papeete, where in a flyblown bungalow belonging to the children of Gauguin’s landlord they had discovered a glass door boasting how he and Haxton had driven to Papeete, administrative. Years later, I remember Maugham boasting how he and Haxton had driven to Papeete, where in a flyblown bungalow belonging to the children of Gauguin’s landlord they had discovered a glass door painted by the artist. Six panes depicting a whimsical rabbit and a bare-breasted woman holding a breadfruit were all that remained of an elaborate decorative scheme. Maugham bought it for 200 francs and stuck it in his study at Cap Ferrat; he sold it in 1962 for $37,400. History would have been better served, Stuckey growls, if the writer had photographed his find in situ and not jetisoned the bottom section.

Maugham’s view of Gauguin as the Trader Vic of modern art has inspired many a bored businessman to envision escaping to a never-never land in the South Seas, especially when Kon Tiki added another dimension to the Gauguinesque myth: the swish of surf on the silver strand; topless vahines dispensing dolce fa niente to middle-aged dropouts. How Gauguin, that sardonic Utopian, pia on earth... no less important for having been futile..."

The organizers also made a point of visiting most of the stops on Gauguin’s escape route from bourgeois civilization: Martinique, Brittany, Provence, Tahiti, and finally Hiva-Oa (part of the most remote island group on earth), where the artist busied himself with his last total work of art, the famous House of Pleasure, and where he died in 1903.

Ever since he first kicked over the traces, Gauguin had always had a following, but it was only in the last years of his life that the enormous significance of his instinctive genius began to be recognized—in Belgium, Germany, and Scandinavia as well as in France—by a new generation of painters—above all, Picasso, who at the start of his career filched almost as much from Gauguin as Gauguin had filched from his precursors. Didn’t both artists have an innate ability to digest stylistic borrowings and come up with a synthesis of the utmost originality? If Picasso acknowledged his debts to Cézanne and Van Gogh while he unaccountably...

(Text continued on page 248)
Needlepoint carpet handmade in Portugal from Schumacher; Gauguin scarf of silk chiffon with paillettes and bead embroidery by Giorgio di Sant' Angelo; tubular lace bandeau with bead embroidery, Sant' Angelo; Hair flowers by Isabel Canovas, Paris. Style throughout: Andrea Leonard Taller. Details, page 253.
Decorating and fashion take off from Gauguin in new directions as a striking floral carpet meets a scarf of silk chiffon with large-as-life embroidered roses.
Architect Hugh Newell Jacobsen goes native with a winsome pavilion for alfresco dining under the rustling palm fronds. The mood is relaxed, lighthearted, even playful—design takes a holiday.
Jacobsen's bohio in the Dominican Republic was inspired by both Spanish and local architecture. Opposite: A good-enough-to-eat ceramic apple, flown in from Italy, on a sea-blue Confetti plate from Gordon Foster, New York. Right: On the banquette Jay Spectre's glazed chintz for Robert Allen, batik pillow from China Seas, and a madras plaid from Ralph Lauren. Details, page 253.
Exuberant blossoms, exotic fauna, bold colors—almost as Gauguin painted them. A floral fabric echoes the red sarong in *La Orana Maria*
HEAT WAVE
SUMMER REVERIES, SUMMER TABLES

Bringing the Tahitian spirit to the table—fanciful ceramics that re-create the colors and shapes of the tropics.
HEAT WAVE
FRINGE ON THE MOVE

Dresses and furniture grow fringes—a chair sprouts a thatch tiara, a beach stool turns up in a hula skirt.
Liza Campbell visits the Normandy manor house of the painter and designer and finds it part workshop, part gallery, and entirely idiosyncratic.
High seas in Haute Normandy: A grass-skirted table and stool, a pot, and a three-legged table are among Elizabeth Garouste's exotic designs. The two murals are by Gérard Garouste.
A marriage of styles: Elizabeth, in tailored black velvet visits the pony-tailed artist in his studio. The painting is The Annunciation, one of Gérard's works inspired by The Divine Comedy. Opposite above: The Garouste's 19th-century manor house. Opposite below: Elizabeth's office with a toll cage designed for her son's pet monkey.
fter a painful start to his career (his first exhibition was in 1969, and he wasn’t given another for ten years), Gérard Garouste’s creative urge has swelled in direct proportion to his reputation and success. From dawn, when he gets up for the early morning light, until dusk, when he leaves his studio and returns home, his painting is accompanied by music of unimaginable megawattage blasting out of speakers standing on either side of an enormous fireplace. But the work doesn’t stop when the sun goes down. In the living room the walls, the telephone, even the ceiling are splattered with paint from Gérard’s hyperactive brush. There’s a handsome printing press at the back of the room, so in the odd moment between dinner and coffee and playing with his children he can run off multiple editions. “Painting is not my work, it is my pleasure. My best moments are when I’m working surrounded by my family and friends—a bit like a grandmother who sits in her chair knitting while her family recounts the day’s events.”

Gérard and his wife, Elizabeth, bought their white-shuttered Normandy manor house four years ago so that he could concentrate on his paintings and sculptures in the tranquillity of the countryside. The house was built by a man who trained birds for Louis XIV and rebuilt in the eighteenth century after a fire. Now because of the Garoustes’ prodigious combined output, it has evolved into a series of workshops. Two years ago they converted a stable into a large high-ceilinged studio where Gérard works on as many as forty paintings at once.

For Elizabeth the move to the country has been a compromise, and on most days she makes an hour-long journey through Haute Normandy into Paris to join Mattia Bonetti, her partner in decorating and furniture design. Past triumphs of their collaboration include the restaurant of the Palace nightclub, Christian Lacroix’s boldly colored salon on the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré and Geopoly, Paris’s hippest hangout for the modeling crowd. At the moment, they are working on the installation for an exhibition for the Fondation Cartier, which sponsors contemporary artists. An exhibition of their pieces at Furniture of the Twentieth Century showroom in New York opens on May 15. Elizabeth also runs the Garouste household and oversees the schooling of Olivier, age eight, and Guillaume, thirteen.

“The house was built by a man who trained birds for Louis XIV and has evolved into a series of workshops

The house was built by a man who trained birds for Louis XIV and has evolved into a series of workshops.
What decoration there is could never be described as finished

has built a career out of designing bizarre furniture with mutant shapes and forms that are frequently molded in papier-mâché. "We use a factory in Italy run by old men who normally produce floats for local carnivals and festivals. I think they are a little bemused by us."

Indeed, Elizabeth and Mattia Bonetti were described as New Barbarians after the first exhibition, in 1980, of their consciously "prehistoric" designs, which made use of rough wood and twine and a favorite medium, papier-mâché, to simulate stone. Some of the more humorous pieces were chairs with hula-girl grass skirts and a side table supported by potbellied, saggy-breasted caryatids.

Animals are everywhere in the house. An outsize black dog called Vasco ambles amiably around, and the dining room houses a guinea pig and a hamster. The humans have yet to colonize this extremely cold room, preferring to eat in the simple farmhouse kitchen, which is reached by passing through the rug-strewn library. The library is the domain of the Garouste's cat, which stealthily prowls the shelves stuffed with books. On the walls of this sage-green room hang engravings for a book Gérard did on his printing press. Upstairs in Elizabeth's study lives a striped squirrel in a cage she designed. When asked its name, Olivier replied haughtily, "I do not know its name, as it belongs to my brother."

The stylistic influences in the house are African and Oriental. Elizabeth collects African textiles, which are draped over the chairs and anything else that needs camouflage. Gérard's father deals in Far Eastern goods and (Text continued on page 248)
Art is everywhere:
Top row from left:

The main influences for his monumental landscapes with obscure figures flitting about are Dante’s *Inferno* and the music of the Russian composer Arvo Pärt.
Dramatic positioning: Michael Chow poses beside a black lacquer pedestal by Eileen Gray which holds a vase by Jean Dunand. Opposite: Detail of a tortoiseshell, ivory, and ebony cabinet by Jacques Emile Ruhlmann.
Chow Wow!

As if directing a film noir, Michael Chow fills his restaurants and home with sensuous shapes and polished surfaces, reports Philippe Garner
With the opening last year of his Kyoto restaurant, Michael Chow has built an empire on which the sun never sets. His Mr. Chow restaurants in London, New York, Los Angeles, and now Kyoto have rewritten most of the rules in the business of serving food. But the restaurants are just the most public facet of Chow’s world, and the ideas that have brought them such renown are indivisible from those Chow applies to every aspect of his life.

Chow expresses himself wittily, cryptically, with apt epigrams for complex ideas. Conversation takes on the atmosphere of a chess game or a gentle but rapid interrogation. Film director Billy Wilder calls him “an original, a man with a mind of his own. It is a pleasure to engage in a verbal duel with that guy.” His friend photographer David Bailey explains, “He has tunnel vision when he believes in something. You understand the Long March when you talk to Michael.”

Chow himself has said, “Most businesses are run on the principle that the customer is always right. My philosophy is the opposite.” Another friend, artist Julian Schnabel, confirms this. “I think Michael is a somewhat misanthropic restaurateur. But I say that with affection and respect. He is a critical person, which comes with pros and cons. His standards are high, and he pursues what he believes in to the limit.” Chow simply quotes William Blake: “The more personal, the more universal.”

Michael Chow is of slight build. He sports a distinctive walrus mustache and hair alternately long or short and slicked. His hands are small with fine fingers, his dress discreetly dandified. He would be the first to remind you that Beau Brummell was not flamboyant.

No sooner is the subject of dress broached than Chow reveals his passion for refinement and quality. From collar to shoes, every detail represents an act of choice: “The shirt collar is important. Once the width is determined, the rest follows. Make it an eighth of an inch out, and you destroy the whole thing.” Even his shoelaces represent an ultimate: “Hermès, silk, different widths, different colors, including white. Tina found them for me and bought the entire stock.” Tina, his wife, is a half-American and half-Japanese beauty with a considerable sense of style, which she is currently applying to her new venture in jewelry design.

Chow recognizes his intense pursuit of style as a part of his search for an identity, which began with a dramatic rupture from his country and his family at the age of thirteen. He was born in 1938 in Shanghai, “the New York of China.” His father was a highly revered classical Peking Opera actor, a stage celebrity from age six, creator of major roles, author of three hundred plays. At thirteen Chow was sent to boarding school in England. It was ultimately for his well-being, for his father was to suffer persecution and death during the Cultural Revolution. “It was tough for me,” he says. “I suffered an identity crisis. But I learned to be a survivor.” He developed a determination to excel, to be “the best in the world” at whatever he did in tribute to the image he has cherished, with some awe, of his father. “I have a professional refugee mentality,” he claims.

“He has tunnel vision,” explains David Bailey. “You understand the Long March when you talk to Michael.”
Deco devotion: A small selection of the eggshell and lacquer pieces by Dunand in Chow’s New York apartment.
with characteristic self-deprecating irony.

Chow spent three years at art college in London, then pursued a spasmodic career as an artist and an actor. His first role, in 1957, was as a Chinese laundry delivery boy. His innate sense of elegance was already in evidence, despite his relatively limited means. Artist Peter Blake recalls “first meeting Michael in the autumn of 1957, when Dick Smith and I shared a flat together in Chiswick. Michael lived nearby in a garage behind a house in which Victor Pasmore had lived. Michael and his friends were extremely elegant. I remember dinner, cushions on the floor, the empty space, a Chinese meal cooked on a burner on the floor. He had style then, even in a garage.” By the late sixties he had a larger apartment, but his aesthetic remained as rigorous.

Grace Coddington, his former wife, now design director of Calvin Klein, recalls, “When I met him, he wanted and had nothing. When we lived together, we had four chopsticks, two plates, two chairs, a bed, a pot, and a frying pan—no pictures, nothing. Only when he started the restaurants did he become a collector.” In an interview in a 1977 international edition of Newsweek Chow described with sharp irony the seeming inevitability of his career: “Being Chinese in the West is very limiting. It’s either a Chinese restaurant or a
The original Mr. Chow opened in London twenty years ago, on Valentine’s Day, 1968. Chow set the tone with his stylish decor, intimate, carefully considered lighting, art on the walls, and an artist clientele. He commissioned artist friends to create works for the restaurant, their fees a credit to be consumed. Jim Dine painted five hearts for Valentine’s Day and, as he was shortly to return to the United States, burned his way through his credit with a quick-fire succession of parties. Peter Blake painted a Pop group portrait, "Frisco and Lorenzo Wong & Wildman Michael Chow," which now hangs in the New York restaurant, and adorned it with the kitsch chinoiserie so notably absent from the decor. Patrick Caulfield painted a big nude. Dick Smith made a metal wall sculpture. Clive Barker created his silvered bronze "Peking Duck." "My restaurant started like a party, every night a party that goes on forever," quipped Chow. The Los Angeles restaurant opened in 1974, New York followed in 1979. "I was trying to build a country for me. I feel secure in my restaurants."

Chow talks passionately of abstract ideals yet remains acutely perceptive to light, sound, color, and texture. "I like the sound of walking on carpet, over fine floorboards," he says, "a certain creak between shoes and floorboards underneath—half movie, half reality.

"My big thing is lighting to create a feeling. The colors, textures, and surfaces are chosen to fit the lighting." For the New York restaurant he selected tiles of white marble, a warm white gloss lacquer for the walls. "I wanted it to be translucent, like a swimming pool at night or a film noir."

In creating interiors Chow follows certain principles but avoids formulas. In his restaurants he devises seductive spaces by applying a principle he explains with reference to an instruction supposedly given by John Ford to John Wayne: "Don’t annoy the audience! Just walk through the picture. I’ll let you know when I want you to do something special." "This is easier said than done," says Chow. "When you design something, make it neutral; let people walk through. Not everything must be a statement. But when you do something special, make it magic."

The new Kyoto restaurant (Text continued on page 252)
Elegant severity:
In a niche in the Neo-Gothic bedroom a 1986 Warhol painting sits atop a Dunand cabinet. The chair is by Ruhlmann, the crocodile shoes from G. S. Cleverley in London.
Family influences: The entrance hall, above, with an antique rocking horse lent by the author's brother and Neo-Gothic furniture purchased from his brother-in-law. Opposite above: The author with part of his pig collection. Opposite below: The Castle seen from the main drive.
Photographer Christopher Simon Sykes explains his family's eccentric Gothic-style "castle" overlooking the Yorkshire Wolds. Once dilapidated and allegedly haunted, this proud inheritance of the third son is now the favored hideaway for relaxing weekends and festive house parties.
When I was in my early twenties and dating a girl of whom my father particularly approved, he would bring me up to the Castle—a place he knew I loved—and say, “If you marry that girl, I will give you the Castle.” I never took him seriously.

The Castle is a farmhouse situated high on the Yorkshire Wolds, a bank of chalk hills. It commands a magnificent view of the surrounding countryside, overlooking Sledmere House, the ancestral seat of the Sykes family. It was built in 1778 by my namesake, Sir Christopher Sykes, from plans by John Carr of York. He designed it as a folly, or eye-catcher, since it occupies a strategic position in the landscaping of Sledmere Park as drawn up by Lancelot “Capability” Brown. The original plans called for pavilions on either side of the main block. But all that was completed was the central portion—two castellated towers in the Gothic style adjoining a great arched doorway. The Castle is often hard to see in the morning when it is in shadow. In the late afternoon and early evening, however, when the dying sun finally hits its twin towers, it is lit up like a beacon, visible for miles around.

The Castle was later offered to me again by my eldest brother who had toyed with the idea of living there himself before deciding it was not for him after all. He then promptly changed his mind and took it back. It was a smart decision. The day came when living on top of my father in the family home became unbearable, and my brother began to make elaborate plans to move. Roofers, plumbers, electricians, and painters moved into the Castle. Architects drew up ambitious plans. A flagpole was all but planted when my father decided to die. The move was abandoned. After a suitable interlude I made a cautious approach, and a few months later, in the summer of 1982, the keys to the Castle were mine. They could not have come into my hands at a more opportune moment, for in September of that year I married.

Belinda and I decided to approach the somewhat daunting problem of the Castle very slowly. My brother had left it in what is known as builder’s order, leaving us to paint, decorate, and furnish—no mean task considering its size and our limited budget. As far as the latter was concerned, the location was very much in our favor. The farther away one is from London, the cheaper things become, with no loss of—and often a rise in—quality. We started with the painting, carried out by a local family firm, Dobson & Son of Driffield, which had just completed the somewhat grander job of gilding the ceiling of the 120-foot library in the big house. Since the northern light is cold we chose to use a series of warm bright colors throughout the house, painted on in a wash in the Italian style. Mr. Dobson understood at once—but no expensive oil-based paints and scumble glazes for him. He used emulsion paints diluted like watercolors, applied wet, finished with a dry brush. The final effect was exactly what we wanted.

The next stage involved much begging and borrowing and a certain amount of ingenuity, often both combined. I was forev-
With the exception of a large community of mice and a short stay by a pop group, the house had not been lived in for twenty years.

Outdoor pleasures: Lily Sykes and a friend, opposite, create a splash in the garden. Top: Guests breakfasting on the terrace on a sunny Sunday. Above left: The terrace table with fresh butter and eggs from the farm. Above right: Babar resting on an 18th-century library steps chair; a Shaker pig standing guard. Left: In the utility room flowers from the garden of the big house await arrangement. The pig was custom-made in New York, the tiles are by artist Jonathan Heale.
er padding about the big house with one eye open for things I considered might be surplus to my brother's requirements. On one occasion, for example, he made the mistake of suggesting I needed a sofa in a particular place. Did I know of one that might be suitable, he asked. "Well, yes, as a matter of fact I do," I replied. "It's in your bedroom, at the end of your bed actually. The one you put your clothes on. You never sit on it." He scarcely had time to nod his assent before I'd enlisted the help of two able-bodied guests and whisked it out of his room and into its new home. He learned to curb his tongue.

When we finally moved into the Castle in the early summer of 1985, it was painted and partly furnished. Mitzi Addison, an elderly Austrian lady who had worked for my mother, moved in with us to make curtains and covers. My brother-in-law, a cabinetmaker by trade, also came along. With the exception of a large community of mice and a short occupation many years previously by a pop group with which my younger brother was then involved, the house had not been lived in for twenty years—since the demise of old Cecil Porritt, the previous tenant, whose ghost was reported by many in the village to haunt the place. (We had dealt with this problem the preceding Christmas when we had solemnly walked around the house with a Catholic priest, chanting and sprinkling holy water in each room.) For the first three days of our occupancy the cold and damp of former years seemed to cling to the house. But as fires blazed in every grate and the human presence began to make itself felt, the Castle gradually began to thaw out and feel inhabited. Suddenly we felt welcome there, and after our first ten days we felt as though we had lived there a lifetime.

Even though we only get to spend up to four months a year at the Castle, every moment of that time is a joy in spite of the rain and fog and howling gales which usually assail us (the east Yorkshire coast is not noted for its climate). It is a time for walks, for reading and cooking, for catching more than a fleeting glimpse of friends, and for our daughter, Lily, to learn about the country.

The Castle surprises everybody who visits it, as well as some who have not. Once when Belinda, a television producer who then worked for the BBC, returned to her office, a colleague asked, "Do you have a title or something?" "No," she replied, "what do you mean?" "Well," he said, "when I rang up the number you left and asked to speak to you, a grand voice said, 'I'm afraid that madam is at the Castle and will not be returning to the big house till later.' How could they ever have guessed that working among them was the chatelaine of a country castle?"
The almost-lost art of the illustrated letter is kept alive by a coterie of correspondents around the world.
Why not draw
your own?

Everybody likes getting letters—even dull ones. A telephone bell is an irritant, but that gentle thump on the doormat is always a heart twister. Sometimes the sight of a familiar, much-loved hand on an envelope is so rewarding it is hardly necessary to open it.

I am of a generation that wrote and received letters as regularly as we brushed our teeth. My parents lived in India, as did many of my relations. We children grew up in England, and before the days of airlines we got together with our families only at intervals of two or more years. Weekly letters—they took six weeks each way—were our only contact. We wrote every Sunday evening at school, where the letters were read before dispatch by the headmaster, and every Sunday afternoon during holidays.

I didn’t drop the habit, nor did my parents, until I left university, and I still handwrite about five letters a day, often on the back of a letter received. Many of them are illustrated with marginal sketches, a popular habit among my parents’ generation, all of whom learned to draw as unselfconsciously as they learned to sing or swim or play simple tunes on the piano. Sometimes the drawing was just a decoration, sometimes a descriptive sketch, sometimes a more elaborate concoction that needed time to decipher.

I adopted the habit as a child, partly because I enjoyed drawing and partly out of laziness. Drawings are the best and most attractively efficient form of shorthand. They can be witty, disarming, pointed, or explicit. They are immediately interpreted and magically personal. The picture is unique to you. However clumsily drawn, it is fresh-minted for the sole enjoyment of you and your recipient. Nobody else has done it exactly the same way or ever will. Words get fatigued (Rose Macaulay said all of them run downhill)—drawings never. Why not have a go? Hugh Casson
When asked how he began his correspondence with Galloway, Henderson, who lives in New York, says that they both share "similar communication styles." They met in California, where their correspondence began in the 1970s. Their tandem works, which look as if they were illustrated by one artist, were recently exhibited in Santa Monica.
DIANA EPSTEIN
She has been sending illustrated letters since childhood. When she’s nervous, she writes the alphabet over and over in various typescripts. As a result, she can write upside down and backward fluently. Founder and co-owner of the shop Tender Buttons, Epstein has written a book and often lectures on the history of buttons.

TENDER BUTTONS
143 East 62 Street New York 10021

Dear [Name],

We are having the best & most beautiful time in your sunny, funny great & wonderful house. Working very hard getting more buttons, waiting for the Button September, so the house is covered in boards of button arrangements and Barker & Ascare & Ma. Green are all really giggle drive all your favorite places and with...
MORE, MORE, MOORE!

Architect Charles Moore describes the eighth house he's built for himself—the crowded center of a crowded life.

Sometimes architects have at hand an extraordinary opportunity to test their most evanescent and unprovable (that is to say, slippery) notions about space or light or color or fit or function. The opportunity comes in their own houses, with minimum penalties if the evanescent notions slither out of hand. This house in Austin is the eighth I have done for myself and presumably one of the last. It is larger than others I have made for myself and considerably more comfortable, more inhabitable, than its predecessors.

Inhabiting, as I claim from lecterns everywhere, is a basic human need, not far behind eating and sleeping, though far less universally achieved. It involves a place of one's own, a center of one's universe, where one has that feeling of well-being dancers call being centered. The architect's task is not to make or purify some abstraction, but rather to design a stage for the centered inhabitant, for him or her or them to act out their lives. "Bah! This is

Charles Moore, opposite, by the pool at his home-and-office compound in Austin, Texas. The plain stucco exterior of Moore's house gives little hint of the richness within, including, left, whimsical cut-outs over the fireplace.
Most of the remodeling was selective erasure, which left the critical act of adding something.

Moore's inspirations for his own house, top, include the pool at architect Geoffrey Bawa's office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, center, and the wagon entrance to the Sherwood Ranch in Salinas, California, above.

"Theater!" snorted angry Harvard architecture students when I first lectured to them twenty years ago, and I would say, "So be it." But by now I have an architect-nephew, David Weingarten, who thinks the architecture-as-theater figure suggests far too loose a fit and that architecture should be more like clothes, fitting snug.

My tall narrow town house in Los Angeles was fitting rather too tightly around me four years ago: I had been ordered to bed for several weeks with a troublesome back, and the walls of my sixteen-foot-wide dwelling were pressing closer and closer while I focused my mind on an offer from the University of Texas at Austin and the spread—in my mind it was always a spread—I would inhabit when I got there.

When I did get there, at the height of Austin's high-priced prosperity, the spreads were elusive: there were ten-acre parcels of rather claustrophobic brush too far from town and big and little houses shoehorned onto inadequate lots. Where was the spread? When suddenly the wife of the dean of the architecture school, who was also my agent, found it—a gently sloping acre of Spanish oak and post oak in a pleasant old neighborhood, fairly close to town, where fancy and modest houses mingle comfortably. The house that shortly became mine was one of the modest ones, but heavy with pretension: it was all too easy to imagine it as something a minor mafioso in, say, New Brunswick, New Jersey, might have established for his paramour in 1936. Actually a nice old lady had lived there, but it had been built in 1936, a two-bedroom, one-bathroom, with an extra two bedrooms, bath, and glass porch added at some architectural nadir in 1949. But the oak trees were beautiful. The property, zoned for two houses, had been bought by developers who meant to make it for seventeen. But within the area alerted to the zoning changes lived something like 44 lawyers, so the developers were in full retreat. I went halves with Arthur Andersson, who had come to Austin to take charge of my office there, and I had my spread.

Then it was time to design something. The process included architect Richard Dodge and Arthur Andersson and went on for many months. We decided that I would remodel the existing house, and we'd add a studio and a smaller house for Arthur. We would try for a courtyard, out of the wind but able to catch the breezes, where we could have a swimming pool. I had an image of it, remembering a long raised tank at Geoffrey Bawa's office in Colombo, Sri Lanka. I had another image, from an old Roger Sturtevant photograph, of an entrance for wagons to the Sherwood Ranch in Salinas, California—big but very simple. And for the living room I kept remembering the lift of wide stairs in Bantry House in the west of Ireland.

Curiously, I felt a kind of archaeologist's morality about the existing house, awful as I thought it was: I didn't want to cover up anything or to change anything unless I had to. Perhaps that qualifies as frugality, or is it only eccentricity? However, I did end up with all the windows left as they were, except two, and I added one big one. A pitched roof was added over the flat one, and the ceilings were removed along with many of the interior partitions.

Most of the remodeling was very selective erasure. That left the critical act of adding something, the dramatized act of inhabitation, the gesture that would settle us in. It had to be a big gesture to include my house, Arthur's house, the studio, and the courtyard. That gesture soon became an ellipse. The plan also provided the best suggestion for a house name: Lazy Oval, or Lazy O in the language of cattle brands.

Once you are inside my front door, which is Viennese and came from a splendid local architectural fragments shop, the curved wall takes over. Its passage is marked by pilasters, with bookshelves between, then openings to the kitchen, an alcove, the fireplace, and then more alcoves before the curve sweeps outdoors again. The pilasters themselves owe much to the airy suits of armor on top of an early Karl Friedrich Schinkel scheme for the Neue Wache in Berlin, except mine are plywood (painted by members of my class at the university), surmounted by masks, over pilasters of galvanized metal with dowel fasces.
The warriors’ chests are open to reveal various wonders, including giant kachinas my sister makes me for Christmas. Long before the armorial pilasters were finished, though, the curved wall was evoking responses. I note a positive one from Hal Box, who is the dean of the architecture school at Austin: “It’s like canoeing along the steep bank of a curving stream toward a point out of sight. I like canoeing, so I like this.” The curved wall swings around past the fireplace to the view out over the oak trees. Up a few steps is a seating corner that looks out through the giant window to the courtyard, where wisteria will soon spread summertime shadow.

The removal of the ceilings revealed the underside of the roof, which is complex, contradictory, and mostly just confused and which I like to think is a suitable foil to the single-minded sweep of the enveloping ellipse. Also, it is painted almost white in restful contrast to the hubbub elsewhere. The floor is the original 1936 wood and 1949 concrete with the handsome patterns of mastic left after the green asphalt tile was peeled off and with a net of colors in a pattern of squares and circles painted over it all to camouflage some of the more serious disasters. On it are kilims. The biggest rug in front of the fireplace, brought home from a London antiques store when the dollar was up, provides the color scheme for the rest of the room.

On the high green wall, facing an area for dining, hang my great-great-grandparents Moore, whom I first remember hanging in my grandfather’s stair hall in Michigan. They have moved to California twice with me and to Connecticut not very far from the town in Vermont where they started, and now they seem to take in Texas with the same equanimity with which they faced the rest.

A fine Baltic plywood is the material for the sofa in the dining area, locally built. The design is the first in a series that owes something to Karl Friedrich Schinkel and a host of Biedermeier designers as well as to really good plywood.

The fireplace in the elliptical wall received no more than several coats of paint and a new tile hearth. Above it is an overmantel meant to house a few objects and to filter light from an upper window. It is presently made of Fome-Cor to simplify the numerous changes we’ll make before we get it just the way we want it, whereupon it will be recut in everlasting plywood.

The kitchen is worth a note: the original was well made, but narrow and tight. We retained the side with sink, dishwasher, refrigerator, and cabinets, and demolished the opposite wall, which included a stove. That became an island counter with a cooking top that extends to the elliptical wall, and additional cabinets were built along the outside wall of what had been the dining room. Everything old and new was then covered with a marbleized laminate, which makes the kitchen an acceptable neighbor to the living room.

Through a door just left of the entrance is my study/dressing room, bedroom, and bath with a giant shower, which is the only addition to the original house. The shower is bright with a translucent roof, walls of metal roofing, and duckboard flooring. A sliding glass door separates the shower and bedroom and lights up the bedroom with a bright and even glow. Adjoining the shower is the remodeled bath, the one place where I allowed myself some fancy surfaces: stainless-steel counter, nickel lavatory, black faucets. And on the walls of bathroom, bedroom, and study, as well as living room, are shelves jammed with books and objects. The books are very tidy, but the whole house is filled with objects—awash with objects—and that is its most notable characteristic.

From earliest youth I have collected things that appealed to me: miniature buildings and figures and objects, puppets and cars and ornaments, kachina dolls and pictures—mostly toys. They are souvenirs of places I’ve been, they form pieces of miniature cities or of little scenes with staggering contrasts of scale. I used to see myself as a pack rat, and only lately has anyone called me a collector. So the next step is to figure out how to insinuate into this house miracles of organization: vitrines, glass-top tables, and new ways to look at little objects made into miniature worlds. If I don’t take charge, they will. Or maybe they have.

Moore’s love of “little objects made into miniature worlds” is reflected in an installation he designed for an exhibition of toys at his Hood Museum at Dartmouth College.
The curving wall of the entry corridor continues into the living room. Totemic plaques contain niches for kachinas, and the ceiling is painted white, topped by primitive masks. Moore's "hubbub" to the walls in the living room kept remembering the light of wide stairs in west Ireland.

in Bantry House at Bantry, House in west Ireland.
TOWERS OF Weakness

Frank Lloyd Wright said every building with a roof leaks. Leaks are the least of it, reports Suzanne Stephens

Buildings have always leaked. But these days you can add problems of heat, cold, glare, and noise to the list of malfunctions that frequently plague new construction. While architects carry on about new advances in design and technology, the drones living and working in and around the new buildings form their own opinions from firsthand experience. Last summer when the new United Airlines terminal designed by architect Helmut Jahn of Murphy/Jahn opened at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, critics salivated over its sensuous curvilinear forms. But the air-traffic controllers in their tower insisted that glare from the terminal's glass roof prevented them from seeing the planes. Although some cynical travelers claimed O'Hare's air controllers had never shown that much concern about air traffic before, it was clear that something needed to be done. United ended up slathering 27,000 square feet of the glass roof with wax. The next step is to scrape off the goo and etch the glass with acid to cut the glare for good.

The problem was fairly minor compared with having a structure collapse (as did Murphy/Jahn's award-winning Kemper Arena in Kansas City in 1979) or with having windows pop out (as happened in the mid 1970s at the John Hancock tower in Boston designed by the much-respected I. M. Pei & Partners). Since the construction process involves so many people, including builders and suppliers of materials, the architect can hardly be blamed as the sole villain if something goes terribly wrong. Nevertheless, when it comes to the mundane matters of temperature, noise, and the like, there is always the lurking suspicion that the architect is more obsessed with innovative design than the comfort of the building's inhabitants. Frank Lloyd Wright provided a favorite role model for the profession: when one of his clients complained that a leak in the roof made dinner guests a little soggy in rainy weather, Wright suggested moving the dining-room table.

Building patch-ups are often linked to some adventurous design feature. Observes Thomas Fisher of Progressive Architecture magazine: "All great architects push their materials to the limit. They have to take risks." But architects are also designing in an age when materials and methods of building are entering the marketplace faster than new wrinkle creams. Like any purchaser of the latest bee pollen or Retin-A cosmetic miracle, architects also want to believe that new building products and techniques will work all the time.

Sometimes the gap between faith and fact is not visible right away. The Faculty of History Building at Cambridge University designed by England's James Stirling is a case in point. The twenty-year-old landmark L-shaped structure of brick and tile wraps around a fan-shaped glass reading room, and over the years it has come to look like a creature from the deep. Water seeping through apparently porous concrete terraces has left a residue of chalky encrustations on the now grotty-looking glass walls. Elsewhere parts of the building tiles crumbled. Inside the building heat loss and leaks have created an atmosphere too dank even for the hardy English. Several years ago Cambridge University was advised that the requisite repairs would cost about £1.4 million. A bit steep. The suggestion that the whole building be torn down.

The employees toiling in the upper reaches of the State of Illinois Center in Chicago found Helmut Jahn's scheme had provided them with a 110-degree sauna in the summer months.
down seemed like a good idea to some. But a hue and cry arose from Modernist architects turned preservationists (once a contradiction in terms). So now a more modified renovation is being undertaken at a cost of £700,000.

Such renovation costs often lead to lawsuits, as another of Murphy/Jahn’s buildings—the three-year-old State of Illinois Center in Chicago—has dramatically demonstrated. Soon after the building’s completion, the employees toiling in the upper reaches of the truncated beehive’s gigantic glass atrium—onto which their offices open—found Helmut Jahn’s scheme had provided them with a 110-degree sauna in the summer months. Good for losing water weight, bad for concentration. It turned out that the air-conditioning ducts and ice-making equipment of the innovative cooling system were not big enough. State-hired engineering consultants charged $10.9 million for the necessary corrections. So the state filed a $20 million suit against the architects, the original engineers, and others involved in the project. Since then Murphy/Jahn has sued the engineers.

Some observers would prefer that “Helmut’s Helmet” be taken to court on aesthetic grounds. In fact, criticisms of a building’s function may really be about its looks, but aesthetic issues are hard to prove. For instance, it is thought that the brouhaha over Lloyd’s of London, the stainless-steel and concrete tube and pipe assemblage designed by Richard Rogers, is based on style rather than function. Underwriters working in the building contend that their open offices overlooking the vast atrium are noisy, drafty in winter, hot in summer, but most important the many levels hinder the flow of business. Many complained they couldn’t find the entrance. One of Lloyd’s spokesmen has conjectured, however, that the gripes actually stem from the underwriters’ preference for the traditional gentlemen’s-club look of the 1928 headquarters building, which had been torn down for the space-age structure. Lloyd’s had a research outfit poll the underwriters. After an overwhelmingly negative response last fall, it decided to bring in Fitch & Company, an architectural firm with experience in the design of airport terminals and shopping malls, to modify the interiors.

One minute the architect of a high-profile structure is a celebrity lauded by critics, and the next a scapegoat blamed for all the building’s glitches. You pay a lot for public life. Indeed, because of their potential liability for structural and technical failures, architects are paying more than ever for insurance. John Loss of the Architecture and Engineering Performance Information Center at the University of Maryland estimates that at least one claim each year is filed against 43 to 47 percent of all insured architectural firms. Now, however, some sort of help is on the way. The Maryland center is compiling data on building failures. With more documented case studies about why certain problems occur, architects should soon be able to learn from others’ mistakes in ways that were not feasible before the computer. They may not be able to do much about grumblings that have aesthetic underpinnings, but knowing in advance what works and what doesn’t should give them an edge on innovation.
Animal farm

Christina de Liagre discovers creatures everywhere in artist Gérard Rigot’s country house
Captive cats: The artist harnessed a team for this fanciful fauteuil chat.
Unlike those you could not keep down on the farm once they had seen Paris, Gérard Rigot decided quite the reverse route was to be his. After a frustrated career as a painter and a marriage that produced eight children and a divorce, Rigot picked himself up and put down roots in the middle of nowhere.

When making arrangements from Paris to visit his farmhouse, I called to suggest I stay nearby. After a pause on the line I was told, "There is no nearby." Indeed. His pastoral paradise in the rolling hills of Gascony, west of Toulouse, is foie gras country where unlucky ducks are force-fed corn kernels by strong-armed peasant women traditionally known as gavèuses. Although these robust women still gather to do the plucking together, this is about the only form of contact from farm to farm. It's a lonely life.

Gérard Rigot has spent twelve years down on his farm, an animal farm if there ever was one. "I came here to lose myself," Rigot says, as I settle into a blue wolf armchair in the storybook living room. "You were lost and then found." I say. "Exactement, ça va ensemble," he replies, easing into an elephant armchair.

Running his hand through a shock of gray hair, he recalls, "I was showing my paintings in Paris, and on the night of the opening I got into an argument with the gallery owner, so I took all my paintings off the walls that instant. Then I came here. I had just been divorced. I was totally lost and thought I'd try to start my life over again, raising sheep, without thinking much about painting." The entire house now looks like illustrations come alive from the pages of Aesop's Fables or The Jungle Book, with Ol' MacDonald thrown in for good measure.

"There was nothing here when I came," he continues, "only a rusted car that dated from 1908—an Ursus—one of the first and proof of how prosperous the farm had been. Vineyards used to cover these hills, but they have long since disappeared. When I arrived, the land was used only for pasture."

While Rigot's sheep grazed, he tackled the farmhouse to make, no doubt, the first improvements in two centuries. A coin found in one of the walls dated the house to 1792. "The king hadn't been guillotined yet," Rigot is quick to specify, the way the French do as though that happened only the day before yesterday. It was customary among peasants to place a coin in the wall to bring prosperity to the house.

Agnés, Elisabeth, Marie, Anne, Alice, Jérôme, Antoine, and Jean Baptiste joined their father during vacations to help fix up the house. "This is the first thing we did together," Rigot says, turning around to look up at a blue hanging cabinet through his no-nonsense granny glasses. "I constructed it out of window frames I found in an abandoned building. Then the children did paintings on each pane of glass." Patchwork art is thumbtacked to the walls, as are some of Rigot's paintings. "Frames create distance."

The point of departure in this effort to see what he could salvage and transform was Algeria, where Rigot and his famille nombreuse spent several years in the 1960s. Directing my attention to a table, which is painted green and decorated with small diamond-shaped mirrors, Rigot says "That piece comes from Mascara, where I did a stint as a schoolteacher to support us all. It's made out of soap crates. I loved the..."
way they would create things out of whatever they could find. It gives such freshness and spontaneity to their decoration. If you don't have any means, you have to find other ways of bringing joie de vivre into your life. Above all, it's the colors they use—the transparent colors you see on the walls of their houses, inside and out. That was my prime source of inspiration because I rely on somewhat the same techniques: I don't use pure color; I use very diluted color on a white background. Not only his furniture but all the walls in the house are painted this way.

As I look about the room, taking in the luminosity of Rigot's Arab palette, like the perfect pastels of Easter eggs, a flaming redhead suddenly introduces herself into this quiet color scheme. I had heard there was a woman on the premises with fatal-attraction hair. Denise Des-sirier, a Parisian poet who for ten years has been mistress to this manor (her handwoven tapestries adorn the walls), muse to the artist, and Jane to the animal kingdom. "Company!" she exclaims, as though I were Dr. Livingstone. "How wonderful. We never see anybody around here. I'll make tea."

Arab fabrications became Rigot's fabulations; his imagination was triggered. "To continue furnishing the house, one day I made a cat chair for my daughter Marie. Then I made a chest that looked like a sheep for my son Jean Baptiste." That was it: Rigot decided the only sheep he wanted to raise would not go to the slaughterhouse but to the museum. He brought the two original pieces to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs for a show in 1980, and before he knew it he was asked to shepherd his flock around the world. ("Americans are very hygienic: the customs people burned the straw I used for packing material." ) Neiman Marcus found their berger de luxe in Gérard Rigot, and le tout Texas turned out to cart off his menagerie in limousines. The Gallery of Applied Arts in New York heralded Rigot as the Douanier Rousseau of French naïf furniture and gave the artist his first comprehensive show in 1986, which was a sellout—even Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall took home one of Rigot's love seats.

Gallery director Patrick Steede, who is planning another show for autumn, says, "Some people are nervous about choosing furniture on the forefront of design, but in this case people make their choice as if they're choosing a pet." Although he has termed Rigot's work naïf, Steede is quick to disassociate it from the more anonymous folk-art traditions of early American and Mexican painted furniture. "Rigot's pieces are so distinctive, clearly identified with one artisan, and much more knowing than pure naïveté."

"What do the farmers around here think of your animal farm?" I query, as Denise returns with a cup of tea on a plateau mai-sen; her fingers are slipped into the open mouths of two tiger heads Rigot has carved as handles on the tray. "They think I'm an oddball who tinkers about," he says.

"Remember when we showed our neighbor Madame Chauvin the toy?" Denise interjects, laughing. She turns to me: "We showed her a chicken Gérard had made out of wood— the wings flap when you roll it along its wire wheels—and Madame Chauvin in asked, 'How much do you sell that for?' When we told her 400 francs, she said, 'My God, some people sure have money to throw out the window!'"

Rigot proposes a tour of his works in progress in the atelier across the courtyard, and Denise goes to the piano room. The Bach Fantasie she plays is illuminated by owl-appliques that Rigot has set into the upright. Denise, sitting erect on her wolf bench, is not alone in her Fantasie. Two identical cats lie on the radiator. One is real. One is not. A bulldog guards the front door: it is in fact a storage chest.

"You can't do just anything with wood, it's not plastic," Rigot continues as we walk across the courtyard, where I swear a real-live rooster set his alarm clock extra early for me the following morning. "There are constraints in working with wood, which is why I like it. It is within constraints that you have to use your imagination. That's the trouble with modern furniture designers who use materials that can be shaped every which way."

Rigot's exuberant imagination and sense of whimsy are in full force in this atelier, which used to be the chicken coop.
Jeffrey Steingarten spends a week at work in the kitchen of Le Bernardin

I have nearly learned to cook the perfect fish. My tutor was Gilbert Le Coze, the celebrated chef-owner of Le Bernardin restaurant in New York and one of the finest fish cooks of them all. For no good reason, Le Coze agreed to let me hang around his kitchen for a week and make away with his most essential secrets.

Unfortunately the first most essential secret is a visit to the Fulton Fish Market at three in the morning on the second-coldest night of the year. For two hours Le Coze and I roam about the market, a vast shed open to the icy air. The catch is late today because of storms off the Florida coast and unusual cold in the northern fishing grounds. Everybody complains that there are no fish to be had, but all I see are several city blocks covered with boxes, sacks, crates, pallets, racks, handcarts, forklifts, and vans crammed with fish.

In one hand Le Coze holds an elaborate shopping list on a metal clipboard, in the other an iron hook with a wooden handle. We pass the crates of salmon—Le Coze can tell from twenty feet away that they are inferior. He takes a live green sea urchin from a box lined with seaweed and snips it in half, and we share the yellow roe inside. In front of one stall tuna are butchered by two Japanese fishmen, who will array the 25-pound fillets on a rack and pin a customer’s number on each one. Le Coze keeps circling back to the tuna men, watching for his number.

Le Coze uses his hook to open a box of perfect Dover sole flown in from Portugal and smiles approvingly. Their stiff bodies, protruding eyes, and the slime that covers them are signs of freshness. He explains the problem of buying fish: some of the boats have been out for ten or fifteen days. While a fish may reach the market only a few hours after the boat docks, it can still have been dead for two weeks. His favorite supplier seems to be the Blue Ribbon Fish Company, whose young president, David Samuels, takes me aside to extol Le Coze’s talent, his willingness to try underused species, his passion for fish.

Born in Brittany 41 years ago to a family of fishermen, Le Coze worked on his father’s boat and in the family’s restaurant from age thirteen. When he and his sister, Maguy, opened their first tiny restaurant in Paris, Le Coze was at the fish market at two every morning. Before deciding to open his restaurant in New York, Le Coze made several trips here to check the quality of the fish and learn about North American species. He uses only sea creatures, ignoring freshwater varieties because, he says, he is a man of the sea. Le Coze has never worked in anyone’s kitchen except his father’s. “I went to school with the mus-sels,” he says. He loves the market and the men who work here.

As we move among the stalls, Le Coze buys a hundred pounds each of black sea bass, grouper, monkfish, red snapper, mahi, and skate; fifty pounds each of pompano, codfish, halibut, squid, fresh shrimp, and tuna; four cartons of salmon flown in from Norway; one bushel bag each of mussels, periwinkles, and bluepoint and chowder oysters; four boxes of live sea urchins and one of Belon oysters. There is no crab today, no tilefish or rouget, no sea trout or blowfish. Finally, at five thirty in the morning, Le Coze’s number appears on two fine tuna fillets. He grunts with satisfaction. Now we can leave.

Two hours later twelve (Continued on page 250)
LORD OF THE FOLLIES

On his Hampshire estate, Alistair McAlpine carries on the noble tradition of English garden fantasies.

Hannah Rothschild tours the grounds
Lord McAlpine's likeness carved in stone, opposite, at the base of a garden wall. This page: One of the follies by architect Quinton Terry is a primitive Doric hut with tree-trunk columns and block capitals based on a 1758 Laugier engraving.
I'm a congenital builder. I can't resist building things. It's just as well, as that's my family's trade.

Alistair McAlpine's curriculum vitae makes very confusing reading. How can one man be involved in so many and such diverse activities? He is treasurer of the Conservative party and owns a herd of camels; he has a seat in the House of Lords but spends as much time championing the causes of aborigines in a remote part of Australia; he donated his remarkable collection of modern sculpture to the Tate Gallery yet really enjoys wheeling and dealing with customers at his London antiques shop; he has been involved with theater, opera, museums and is a committed partner in his family's construction company; he has a list of directorships that would make most businessmen weep with envy; and he still finds time to help his wife, Romilly, devise recipes. If visions of his daily schedule are making you feel rather tired, there is more to come—Alistair McAlpine also manages to travel extensively and maintain several homes in different corners of the world.

One of these is West Green, the Hampshire estate where Lord McAlpine has let his imagination run riot in a garden that is a startling combination of the natural and the artificial. If your idea of a beautiful garden is the well-ordered manicured model, then you should not attempt a visit to West Green. It has as much in common with Sissinghurst as a little black Azzedine Alaïa dress has with a Scaasi ball gown. The general effect of West Green is overblown and rundown—in short, carefully cultivated dilapidation. Weeds creep up through loosely graveled paths, borders explode with a profusion of flowers, bushes and trees fight for space, roses wrap themselves around hedgerows, and great areas have been taken over by single species. This wild unkempt appearance is cleverly contrasted with sharp contours: clumps of flowers are kept at bay in a bed by smartly clipped box hedges, or an elegant piece of topiary stands at attention at the end of a long line of cabbages. Avenues of clipped hornbeams and hollies frame sweeping vistas and provide contrast with a runaway spring garden.

What really distinguishes this garden, however, is the mixture of animate with inanimate: at the edge of a great clump of...
There is an exquisite Classical folly which turns out to be a trompe l'oeil façade hiding a cow shed

giant daisies there is a beautiful wrought-iron folly crowned with a pineapple. Or wander through the kitchen garden, for example, and you will suddenly come across a mass of terracotta urns or some of Oliver Ford's circular fruit cages. Around the swimming pool you will find a strange collection of objets trouvés, and do not be surprised by the odd gargoyle propped against a redbrick wall. "It is a fanciful garden," McAlpine admits. "It doesn't stick to any rules, probably because I didn't know any. When I started it, I wasn't remotely interested in gardens, but I became absolutely passionate."

West Green House, originally a farmhouse, was remodeled in the mid eighteenth century by the infamous General Henry Hawley and today is owned by the National Trust. There was no garden to speak of when McAlpine leased the house in the mid 1970s. "The whole thing is rather whimsical and a bit confused, but I always knew it would sort itself out. I suppose I have tried to maintain it in the eighteenth-century mold, in keeping with the period of the house."

This vision was greatly enhanced by the involvement of the architect Quinlan Terry, who has designed most of the garden's hardware—the columns, gateposts, palisades, huts, seats, and grottoes. Says Terry: "The exciting thing about garden buildings is that they are one of the purest forms of architecture. They are judged on their design and not on their practical considerations." It is certainly rare for one architect to be so closely involved in the evolution of one garden. The obvious parallel is William Kent and Rousham. West Green, however, has more jokes: there is a large stone column with a Latin inscription dated 1976. One would expect this to contain some earnest Capability Brown quotation, but a translation reveals that the column cost a lot of money, which would have fallen sooner or later into the hands of the Inland Revenue. (And this coming from the treasurer of England's ruling party!) In another part of the garden there is an exquisite Classical folly, which turns out to be a trompe l'oeil façade hiding an ordinary cow shed.

By his own admission, McAlpine is not too interested in the details of gardening but has broad ideas about what he wants and leaves their execution to his gardener. "I tend to garden by extraction," he says. "If I don't like something, it is exterminated. But on the... (Text continued on page 248)
Cow trough with trompe l'oeil nymphaeum

Bolted timber bridge leading to the island aviary

West Green House rebuilt by McAlpine after a 1982 fire

An assortment of terra-cotta urns in the mixed-bed garden
The Moon Gate and formal mixed-bed garden. Left: Old watering cans and gardening equipment stand in the path leading through the Moon Gate to the nymphaeum.
“It is a fanciful garden,” McAlpine admits. “It doesn’t stick to any rules.”
James Truman talks with Brian Murphy about the limitless options of ‘found architecture’.

Designer of the moment: Brian Murphy, above, in his newly remodeled Santa Monica bungalow. Left: Found objects and materials serve other uses: hula skirts become a room divider, fencing a table, Astroturf a rug, terra-cotta flowerpot a side table.
he architectural jumble stacked up behind the Venice and Santa Monica oceanfront is a significant achievement—even by the advanced standards of Los Angeles. "Everything is possible," says Brian A. Murphy, of BAM Construction/Design, as he drives past a particularly notable hillside cluster. "You want Tahitian Fiesta, you can have Tahitian Fiesta. Or Fascisti Moderne. Or Santa Fe Baroque. The options are limitless." At the top of the hill, overlooking the ocean, sits a timber cottage with a white stucco wall in front. Except for the garage doors, which have been upholstered with palm fronds, the exterior is bland Seaside Generic. The interior, which Murphy recently remodeled and furnished with Kaye Secomb of BAM as major contributing designer, could be described as Beachcomber Contemporary. Awash with light and planned around a tropical atrium, it is filled with found objects pulled out of context and given new functions: the slate top from an old pool table has been mounted on four automobile jacks to form a dining table; a chair is fashioned from a cut-up surfboard and skateboard wheels; a ceiling fan is made from bicycle gears, fishing rods, and silk; on the deck one bale of straw serves as a table, and a second, topped with a surfboard tail, functions as a bar.

Brian Murphy's work has often incorporated visual puns and pop references—he once decorated a bodybuilder's studio with barbed wire and finished another studio, for himself, with Astroturf and sandbags. If in this new house he occasionally lapses into self-conscious cleverness, he has also proven his belief that original design can be cheap, fast, and, in the literal sense, organic. "Cohesiveness and continuity come from grabbing whatever's around you, putting it together, and making it work," he says. "In third-world countries people use the trash. As Bucky Fuller said, pollution is just an untapped resource."

With more pollution and a better class of trash than most other cities, Los Angeles is Murphy's natural environment. He grew up around the beaches, studied fine art at UCLA, and, after dropping out of architecture school, worked construction locally for ten years. It was here that he learned the economic advantages of using discarded and unconventional materials. But the real signature of his design work has been in response to the city—to L.A.'s unique polyglot architec-
The real signature of Murphy's design work has been its response to L.A.'s pervasive air of impermanence.

**Playful inventions:** Painted yucca rises at left of family room toward ceiling fan, made of bicycle gears, fishing rods, and silk, from Casablanca Fan Company. Movable counter in kitchen has swatches of patterned laminate. Seen behind sofa is a display case for old-fashioned men's collars. Rug was designed by Billy Al Bengston.
Imaginative details: Every corner of Murphy's house shows his idiosyncratic use of the ordinary: here, a hinge is painted in bright colors.

Sports enthusiast: Murphy keeps his bicycle beneath his painting of palm trees, beach, and ocean—a "window" onto the Pacific scenery.

Something old, something new: Murphy left the original window frame of the kitchen as is; black and white tiles are used as accents along floor and elsewhere in the bungalow.

Temporary solutions: Side table in family room was made by Murphy from two beer cartons, covered with Guatemalan fabric and glass top.

Edged for effect: Kitchen drawers and cabinet doors are decorated with strips of colored, striped, checked, and patterned laminate.

Fringe benefits: Near the hula-skirt room divider hangs a pair of palm fronds. Cardboard table with glass top was designed by Frank Gehry.
Patchwork: Floor is a combination of different tiles and stones left over from other projects.
Murphy takes them as an invitation to indulge in playful invention. For Dennis Hopper’s Venice studio this took the form of a giant rolling-wave roof planted on a steel-wrapped Minimalist box. In the house he built for himself in Santa Monica Canyon three bridges connect the building and its entrance across a narrow gulch. The bridge house also reveals a softer side to Murphy’s work: it is unabashedly romantic, restoring freshness and vigor to California’s self-image as a Pacific Mediterranean. Nine months after completing it, Murphy sold the house.

“Right now I have this client who wants to remodel a house, live in it for eighteen months, and then tear it down. To me that’s so stimulating I can’t believe it. That’s pure Hollywood, it’s temporal, it’s almost façade-itecture. It’s what L.A. is best at, yet we can’t acknowledge it as high art. High art is still something that arrives on the boat from Italy.”

As an architect who also operates as contractor on his projects, Murphy has made each building his own. Though he insists that the impetus begins with the client, it is also true that he is his own best client. Currently installed with a mattress and a skeleton staff in a large 1960s shed that he plans to renovate and remodel, he lives a renegade and financially risky life—dependent on a small but rapidly growing coterie of admirers. “I’ve come to realize that my work alienates a lot of the potential market out there,” he says. “But if you alienate 95 percent, then I figure that the 5 percent—once they see it—can’t live without it. And the 95 percent, even if they hate it, come back with their families and children to show them that these possibilities exist. Either it’s that or they figure it’s cheaper than going to Disneyland.”

*Architecture Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*
A studied indifference:
In the bedroom tile squares are laid at a precise angle on wood floor. Pepper-shaped Christmas lights, another Murphy favorite, line the windows. Painting by Ed Ruscha, James Corcoran Gallery.
Vreeland on display.

In the living room among the elegant clutter are a Duffy watercolor of a Venetian canal, DV's pencil portrait by Augustus John; a Zuloaga scene of Seville on Easter Sunday, which sits on the floor, as well as photos of family and friends.
Diana Freeland’s New York apartment is a reflection of an unparalleled life in style. André Leon Talley finds DV around every corner and in every closet.
Now you must not forget that I was not a society woman," says Diana Vreeland in her legendary voice. "I had no time to sit around posing. I was always working, not hunting valued antiques. Couldn't afford them anyway. Frankly antiques bore me to death."

The Park Avenue seraglio of the woman who was Vogue's editor-in-chief from 1962 to 1971, and an editor at Harper's Bazaar for 25 years before that, was created over three decades ago with the assistance of the late Billy Baldwin. Nothing has been changed since then, only replaced, except that her Jansen slipper chairs, which had been spotted in leopard, are now done in scarlet Persian flowers.

She wanted a "garden in hell," which Baldwin translated into the Persian chintz from John Fowler's shop in London covering everything in the living room: chairs, bulletin boards, curtains, and the massive sofa with banks of needlepoint pillows made by Vreeland. Set on the scarlet wall-to-wall carpeting are the Tinkertoy stackable varnished wood cases that Baldwin called Vreeland's shoeboxes. These units, flanking a writing desk, create a proscenium for her valued treasures: pictures of friends such as Marella Agnelli, two Christian Bérard portraits of Vreeland as a working editor, a Dufy watercolor of a Venetian canal, a plaster cast of her mother by Jo Davidson, porcelain leopards given to her by the late jeweler Jean Schlumberger, a school of brass fish, a small kennel of Staffordshire dogs, and a favorite gift her husband, Reed, gave her one Easter Sunday in Biarritz, a Zuloaga scene of Easter Sunday in Seville.

"The desk," says Vreeland, "was entirely me! I drew my living-room arrangement on a piece of brown wrapping paper. Reed and I found this great carpenter on Lexington Avenue who thought he was designing the most incredible kitchen. Had his heart set on it. I just let him think he was installing a kitchen in the living room."

Vreeland recalls time spent with their sons, Frederick and Thomas, in a converted carriage house in Brewster, New York. "I loved that house. It had one pink door, one blue, one yellow. And I had a ball getting each color just right. The painter did samples fourteen times. When he finished, it was perfect. I said to this local painter, 'No one but Picasso could have done this.' He said, 'Mrs. Vreeland, who is Picasso? May I have the spelling of his name? I would like to look him up. Does he work out of Danbury?'

Eventually the Vreelands sold the house and its contents, including some 7,000 books. The treasures in the New York apartment remain intact—the giant seashells, the chorus line of Venetian blackamoors, the Scottish snuff horns with the silver tops and cabbouchons. Most are presents Vreeland collected "one by one" from people who knew what she liked.

As special consultant to the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Mrs. Vreeland invented a new theatrical way of presenting fashion exhibitions. The inspiration came from her own approach to fashion and life. At home her closets are repositories of essential DV style: her 29 pairs of T-strap shoes, originally designed by the husband of the late Madame Vionnet, and her 11 pairs of rockstar boots from Roger Vivier and Dal Co of Rome. Yvonne, her maid for 38 years, would polish the shoes with rhinoceros horn and lacquer the soles with bootblack after each wearing.

She also polished the Vuitton cases. "The cases would go back after each trip to be restored no matter if I had been to the Argentine or Russia. It pains me today when I hear what things cost. When I think of the luxury so available to a poor young bride like me in those days. Everything was so easily accessible. I mean you could stop in and have Augustus John do your portrait, then sweep off to lunch!"

"I was always working, not hunting valuable antiques. Couldn’t afford them anyway."
She wanted a "garden in hell," which Baldwin translated into scarlet chintz.
The Great Red Room holds DV's treasures: Scottish horn snuffboxes, painted leather screen, Jansen slipper chairs, the one at left with needlepoint cushion designed by Bebe Berard. On the wall at left, Venetian blackamoors parade shells and turtles.
her maid polished the shoes with rhinoceros horn and lacquered the soles with bootblack
Simply New England

From early American furniture to twentieth-century folk art, antiques abound in the region's country shops

The letter A was almost as much a curse for my mother as it was for Hester Prynne, the heroine of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Luckily my mother's compulsion was not for adultery but for old furniture, a passion that led her to stop at every road sign that started with an A—antiques. And by the quirk of inheritance this penchant for wobbly old four-poster beds and blue-and-white spongeware has passed from mother to daughter, leading me, too, down many unmapped country roads and into the homes of strangers.

In my experience there is no place more pleasurable in which to roam than the hills of New England. On a recent trip to southern Vermont, the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, and Litchfield County, Connecticut, I sampled a wide variety of some of the best antiques shops in these areas. My selection, by no means comprehensive, can give you a place to start, but don't take your eyes off the road: if you do, you'll miss many other shops along the way. Another tip: if you
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are driving a long distance, it pays to call ahead. Antiques dealers are independent folk, and as Robert Jones of Mullin-Jones Antiquities in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, says, "It's an unwritten code that you can put up a CLOSED sign on an antiques store at any time."

**SOUTHERN VERMONT**

**Schommer Antiques**, William and Shirley Schommer, Rte. 30, Newfane; (802) 365-7777. Hours: 9:30 A.M.—5:30 P.M. daily; late winter—early spring by chance or appointment. Newfane is the type of town where they play Bingo in the firehouse every Saturday night at seven thirty. It is also home to some of the handsomest white-columned Federal buildings in New England. Just north of the village green is Schommer Antiques, in a white Victorian house, which, like the rest of the village, is a national historic landmark. In the main part of her house and in the woodshed and barn attached she also sells dolls and doll clothes, linens, paintings, china, and furniture from the nineteenth century. "Everything in our shop has come out of a local house," says Shirley Schommer.

**Colt Barn Antiques**, Howard Graff, Peaked Mountain Rd., Townshend (off Rte. 35, 2 mi. north of Townshend toward Grafton); (802) 365-7574. Hours: 8—5 daily. When Howard Graff, a New York photographer, decided to flee city life, he headed to southern Vermont to breed Morgan horses. Somehow an antiques store "just happened." In an old red colt barn he has primitive furniture—including cupboards, tables, and chests—old washboards, spongeware, farm equipment, and a vast, unusual collection of windmill weights. He also specializes in iron tools. Graff, who calls himself a frustrated designer, particularly enjoys finding small pieces of furniture to fit cramped city spaces. "I did so much photography in New York and know the limitations of small spaces that I'm constantly on the lookout for narrow pieces," he says. Last year over nine hundred people found their way off the beaten track to the Colt Barn. It's worth the trip.

**Unique Antiques**, Jonathan Flaccus, Main St. (Rte. 5), Putney (exit 4 off I-91); (802) 367-4488. Hours: 9—6 daily by chance or appointment. What, you might ask, is ephemera? Jonathan Flaccus, who has been dealing in ephemera for eleven years, can explain. It is a variety of paper things, such as old bookplates, autographs, catalogs, letters, postcards, dance programs, political advertising, and broadsides. This shop, in a yellow Victorian house with light blue trim and a black cast-iron fence out front, also carries old and rare books, maps, drawings, prints, and nineteenth-century paintings. Books are arranged by subject, such as cookbooks and children's books, and by state, including an entire room on Vermont. "I wear many hats," says Flaccus, "and I buy basically what interests me and what's unusual."

**Schoolhouse Antiques**, Faith Boone and Sandy Saunders, Rte. 121, Saxtons River (2.2 mi. west of town); (802) 869-2332. Hours: 9—5 daily by chance. When else, except while antiquing, are you invited into strangers' homes, allowed to see how they live and what they wear on a normal day, and sometimes even offered a cup of coffee? A nicer experience cannot be had than in the house of Sandy Saunders, a school principal, and Faith Boone, a music teacher, both of whom retired from the Huntington, Long Island, school system in 1972 (hence the name of their shop). Their stock, displayed in two rooms attached to the house, includes tavern tables, blanket chests, Nantucket baskets, hutch, and Shaker buckets. In a workroom behind the shop, Boone refinishes many of the antiques herself.

**Equinox Antiques**, Mark Reinfurt and Charles Dewey, Historic Rte. 7A, Manchester (opposite Equinox Hotel); (802) 362-3540. Hours: 10—5 daily except Mon. This shop carries museum-quality American furniture and accessories from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. "We're dedicated to quality and to building private collections of merit," says Mark Reinfurt, who often entertains his clients by practicing the harpsichord in his shop. Here you will find highboys, banquette tables, Hepplewhite chairs, a tiger-maple drop-leaf table, a black walnut Chippendale table, brass candlesticks, China service plates. Oriental rugs, portraits, and sterling silver. He offers a written guarantee of authenticity on what he sells and a trade-up policy so
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Le Duvet. From the Simmons Beautyrest collection.
that customers may exchange at full price anything purchased in the shop. He also keeps a file of items his clients are looking for and calls when such pieces have been located.

Four Corners East, Douglas Millay, 307 North St. (Rte. 7), Bennington; (802) 442-2612. Hours: 10-5 daily. In a yellow house with white trim, this small L-shaped shop has large glass windows with green awnings. The opinion of Doug Millay, one of the four owners, on how antiquing has changed in the past few years echoes that of many dealers: "I think people look for better quality than they used to. They buy more for investment now." And he carries many fine pieces to satisfy their rising expectations: a maple drop-leaf table, a cloisonné tureen, china and pewter pieces, prints, brass fireplace accessories, and cut glass.

Western Massachusetts

Hamlet Antiques, Brooks Butler, 116 East St., Lenox; (413) 637-2309. Hours: by appointment. Brooks Butler, an inveterate collector of English Staffordshire, deals in three of the types of china: figures, often historical, such as the Duke of Wellington; cottages and castles, like Shakespeare's house; and a combination of figures and greenery, commonly called bocages. While these delicate porcelain figures may seem obsolete now, Butler reminds us, "You have to remember that back in the Victorian age these things sold like Scotch tape." The reason for their popularity, he explains, is that people either couldn't afford or didn't pay attention to newspapers, "so when something dramatic happened, they created a figure to commemorate it." They cast sports figures, political figures, criminals, nursery-rhyme characters, and theater people, all of which Butler sells from his house in Lenox. The average price is $300-$800.

Henry B. Holt, Inc., Henry Holt, Golden Hill, Lee; (413) 243-3184, (201) 316-8883. Hours: by appointment. Henry Holt's ancestors were among the original settlers of Lee, Massachusetts, in 1777, and his love for paintings began when he inherited twelve castles, like Shakespeare's house; and a combination of figures and greenery, commonly called bocages. While these delicate porcelain figures may seem obsolete now, Butler reminds us, "You have to remember that back in the Victorian age these things sold like Scotch tape." The reason for their popularity, he explains, is that people either couldn't afford or didn't pay attention to newspapers, "so when something dramatic happened, they created a figure to commemorate it." They cast sports figures, political figures, criminals, nursery-rhyme characters, and theater people, all of which Butler sells from his house in Lenox. The average price is $300-$800.

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miss any of the antiques stores in the quaint village of Ashley Falls because of the prominent sign at the only crossroad in town. It reads ANTIQUES IN ASHLEY FALLS with arrows pointing to each of the town’s five shops. Housed in the renovated train station, Lewis & Wilson carries a mélange of English, American, French, and Oriental furniture, paintings, china, ginger jars, and lighting fixtures. Before the building was a train station, it was a general store; look for the old green kerosene pump in front of the green building with yellow trim.

**Elliott and Grace Snyder Antiques, Undermountain Rd. (Rte. 41), South Egremont (1/2 mi. south of Rte. 23); (413) 528-3581.** Hours: by appointment. The Snyders became increasingly obsessed with antiques while they were in graduate school and have been full-time dealers since 1974. The shop consists of two rooms in their meticulously restored 1753 house; other pieces for sale are scattered among the family’s living area. They specialize in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American furniture, textiles, and folk art, but Grace Snyder admits their inventory is quite eclectic. This mixture currently includes some seventeenth-century European pottery, a large hooked rug, a cow weather vane, fireplace tools, assorted chairs, chests and beds, and a recently acquired carved and painted bureau made in Ohio. Ask Mrs. Snyder the story of how she came to live in this historic house; it’ll make you believe in predestination.

**Litchfield County, Connecticut**

**Kenneth Hammitt Antiques, Main St. South, Woodbury; (203) 263-5676.** Hours: 10–5:30 Mon.–Sat. From all accounts, the elegant Kenneth Hammitt is the granddaddy of antiques in Woodbury, a town famous for its antiques. In the business since 1954, he has stocked an entire house, built in 1753, with American antiques from the Colonial and Federal periods. Most of the furniture is formal: highboys, lowboys, chests on chests, dining-room tables and chairs, candlestands, tea tables, and a 1758 pencil-post bed. The accessories, many of which are English, include mirrors, sterling silver, paintings, Persian rugs, samplers, and a vast array of fireplace tools, lined up in front of a wide, open hearth. Hammitt gives a guarantee on everything he sells, including when and where it was made and a description of what alterations have been made on it.

**Steven Calcagni Fine Art and Antiques, Rte. 47, Washington Depot; (203) 868-7667.** Hours: 12–5 Mon.–Sat. “I sell a lot of
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13. Frank Lloyd Wright Decorative Designs Collection: Beautiful, full-color catalogue features over 70 reproductions of FLW designs, authorized by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. From Atelier International/Cassina: art glass windows from oakbrook-Esser Studios; fabrics, wallcoverings and rugs from Schumacher; china, crystal, and silver from Tiffany & Co. $5.00.


15. Hekman Furniture: Obviously, Hekman is a full-color flyer which shows and describes many of the outstanding pieces from the Hekman furniture collections. Available in leading furniture and department stores, Hekman is widely known for its unique use of woods, finishes and quality. Send 50c.

16. Henredon’s Salem Collection: Dining and bedroom furniture of 18th century New England derivation rendered in a warm brown cherry. Finer forms of this era are emphasized: canopies, four-poster beds, and tallboys adapted for TV, Chippendale dining chairs, pedestal and four-legged dining tables. Salem brochure $3.00.

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26. Lilypons Water Gardens: Enjoy tranquil water lilies, darting goldfish, splashing water in your garden this year. Let Lilypons show you pools, aquatic plants, goldfish and the works that make your dream come true. Catalogue $5.00.

27. LouverDrope®: Forty-page Inspirations booke filled with colorful photographs showing the use of vertical blinds to enhance room decor and conserve en- ergy. Offering 800+ shutter choices. $1.00.

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61. British Airways: British Airways participates in four frequent flyer programs. Send for more information.

62. BritRail: The Britrail Pass is a great way to see Great Britain. Send for a full-color brochure: Go Britrail. Free.

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Black Swan Antiques, Hubert and Susan van Asch van Wyck, Main St., New Preston; (203) 868-2788. Hours: 10-5 Wed.-Mon. An unusual pair of four-foot wrought-iron candlesticks ($700 the pair) can be found at this three-year-old shop. Hubert van Asch van Wyck’s passion is early English furniture, what he says the British refer to as English country. He carries a wide array of tables, hutches, and chairs. This old river town also boasts three rare-book dealers and another antiques dealer.

Elizabeth S. Mankin Antiques, Main St., Kent; (203) 927-3288. Hours: 11-5 Mon.-Sat. Follow the red sign on Main Street to the mustard-colored house, circa 1840, and here you’ll find paintings, English pottery, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century formal and country American furniture, and folk art. Of particular interest is the rare Queen Anne maple slant-front desk with nineteen interior drawers and a pair of late-eighteenth-century fiddleback andirons with penny feet. Look as well for the 1797 wedding chest on which the bride’s and groom’s names are inscribed.

Buckley & Buckley, Don and Gloria Buckley, Main St. (Rte. 44), Salisbury (1/2 mi. west of Town Hall); (203) 435-9919. Hours: 11-12, 1:30-5 daily except Tues., 1-5 Sun. Housed in an exquisite white Colonial house behind a long picket fence, this shop carries William and Mary and country Queen Anne furniture and accessories. Three rooms of the house—one with an imposing black and white-checkerboard floor—are devoted to the antiques, which include drop-leaf tables, cupboards, chests, pewter, and a four-poster bed, all surrounded by personal touches. Ask if you can take a look at their kitchen mantelpiece (not for sale) with its inscription, “Old Wood to Burn, Old Wine to Drink, Old Books to Read, Old Friends to Trust.”

Three Ravens Antiques, Harold and Florie Corbin, Main St. (Rte. 44), Salisbury; (203) 824-1112. Hours: by appointment. Last July, Evan Hughes and Peter Ermacora moved from Bleeker Street, Manhattan’s downtown antiques alley, to the sleepy town of East Canaan, Connecticut, where they bought and are restoring a farmhouse built in 1780. Color is the theme of this shop, which features hand-painted American furniture—such as a blue chest of drawers or a reddish yellow Boston rocker—and accessories like a green marbleized mantel, red and black—painted checkerboard, or redware pottery. “One of the things that originally attracted us to the antiques business was color,” says Ermacora. “Color with two hundred years of grime on it.” Painting furniture, he explains, was how people back then gave life to the house. “It was their decoration. They didn’t have fancy wallpapers and those things.” The popularity of painted furniture is a relatively new phenomenon. Until recently, people stripped painted furniture of all its color. “Only in the last five years have people begun to appreciate the paint,” says Ermacora. His antiques are masterfully displayed in a room with no color at all—beige floors and walls, white doors and ceilings—making the pieces shine like colors in the rainbow.

Memorable gifts for men and women. Shown our 14 karat gold filled ball-point pen and pencil. $80 the set. Other models and finishes from $12.50 to $1,000.

Buckley & Buckley Antiques, Evan G. Hughes and Peter Ermacora, Rte. 44 and Canaan Valley Rd., East Canaan; (203) 824-1112. Hours: by appointment. Last July, Evan Hughes and Peter Ermacora moved from Bleeker Street, Manhattan’s downtown antiques alley, to the sleepy town of East Canaan, Connecticut, where they bought and are restoring a farmhouse built in 1780. Color is the theme of this shop, which features hand-painted American furniture—such as a blue chest of drawers or a reddish yellow Boston rocker—and accessories like a green marbleized mantel, red and black—painted checkerboard, or redware pottery. “One of the things that originally attracted us to the antiques business was color,” says Ermacora. “Color with two hundred years of grime on it.” Painting furniture, he explains, was how people back then gave life to the house. “It was their decoration. They didn’t have fancy wallpapers and those things.” The popularity of painted furniture is a relatively new phenomenon. Until recently, people stripped painted furniture of all its color. “Only in the last five years have people begun to appreciate the paint,” says Ermacora. His antiques are masterfully displayed in a room with no color at all—beige floors and walls, white doors and ceilings—making the pieces shine like colors in the rainbow.

Darlyn Brewer
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Tables of Content

Bold colors and handpainted patterns are speaking up at mealtimes

one are the days when freshly starched white damask table napkins in silver rings and place mats decorated with hunting scenes were de rigueur. Here is a varied and imaginative choice of today's table settings, ranging from lily pad mats for botanists to boldly handpainted napkins for the artistic. All would enhance any spring or summer meal, grand or informal.

Amicia de Moubray


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FRANCE, BELGIUM, WEST GERMANY, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND

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*Average cost per minute varies depending on the length of the call. First minute costs more; additional minutes cost less. All prices are for calls dialed direct from anywhere in the continental U.S. during the hours listed. Add 3% federal excise tax and applicable state surcharges. Call for information or if you'd like to receive an AT&T International rates brochure 1 800 874-4000. © 1987 AT&T

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Control Central

The new home systems automatically manage everything from security to watering the lawn.

Houses have always been suspected of having lives of their own, spirits that dwell in the floorboards and fireplaces and either welcome guests or repel them. The methods of repulsion have often been grotesque. Witness the modern security system, which meant sticking foil on each window, attaching the foil to wires, then drilling dozens of holes in walls and snaking the wires down to the basement where the system control box was kept. When the circuit was broken, the house would shriek its alarm. The price was ugly windows, white and brown wire stapled to woodwork, and false alarms whenever an inhabitant unthinkingly opened a window for fresh air.

All that has changed: the house does not now have to look "wired" to respond to intrusion. Small sensors subtly placed on windows and around the house respond to breaking and entering; infrared sensors on baseboards detect motion and changes in heat; radio transmitters send information about a room to a central control without the use of wiring; handsome control panels are now designed to be seen rather than hidden.

AT&T, for example, has just introduced Security Systems 8000; it uses a newly designated radio frequency for wireless transmitters which send signals to the alarm control box. A wireless remote can even set the alarm—or defuse it—from any location in the house.

Some systems use wiring but are just as unobtrusive. For a decade a company named X-10 USA (185A LeGrand Ave., Northvale, NJ 07647) has been making inexpensive control modules that plug into ordinary electrical outlets. Now licensed to other companies and sold in Radio Shack and Sears, X-10 equipment sends digital signals through the power lines, instructing any appliance or electrical apparatus to shut on and off, any light to dim or brighten or flash. When controlled by a computer program, these control modules can operate an intricate schedule of lighting, sound, and activity.

By using digital signals, more sophisticated sensors, and computer programs, the security system of old can now be merged with the other lifelines of the home—the telephone, the electrical system, the heating system, the water supply, the heating system—giving the house the equivalent of an electronic nervous system. The same system can answer the phone and set the alarm, cool the house, turn on the washing machine, and make a cup of coffee. In fact, so much attention is being devoted to home automation that the industry now has its own magazine, Electronic House. And there is already considerable rivalry over just what standards should rule the house. NEC Home Electronics has devel-

The Portable Office

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- Psion Organiser II, $250, a portable computer—compatible with Lotus 1-2-3 and IBM—can do word processing, filing, calculations and be linked to a home or office computer. Expense Recorder, $79, by Seiko, holds up to two months of expenditures, changes currency, and totals by day, week, or type of expense. PortaCopy, $299, hand-held rechargeable copier makes 3-inch strips of copy. Quotrek, $399.95 plus a monthly subscription fee, from Lotus Information Network Corporation, keeps trading information, major-market indexes, and the Dow Jones News Retrieval Service transmitted via FM stations in thirteen cities. All available from Spectra Audio Research, 595 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022.
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Please mail by May 31, 1988.
If you’re looking for an architectural landmark, be prepared to pay a premium

If you called up one of the more eminent architects in the country tomorrow morning, say, Charles Gwathmey or Richard Meier or Robert A. M. Stern, and asked him to build you a house, you would have to wait two or three years before calling the movers. Provided your architect of choice accepts the commission—and frequently they decline—design takes approximately twelve months and construction another eighteen—longer if you’re what’s known as a difficult client. (And who is not?) Don’t want to wait or run the risk of rejection but still want to live in an architecturally distinguished house? Buy one. Gwathmey, Meier, and Stern each have residential works now on the market, as do a host of other high-profile architects from present and past generations.

There is a certain cachet to owning a house by Frank Lloyd Wright or Ward Bennett, just as there is to owning a painting by Mark Rothko or Julian Schnabel—at least among the cognoscenti. In both instances, of course, ownership has its price. “These houses are special properties deserving of a premium,” reports Crosby Doe of the Los Angeles-based real estate firm Mossler, Deasy & Doe. That premium can run from 70 to 200 percent over comparable houses, estimates Doe, who has specialized in this particular segment of the residential market for fifteen years and who, more remarkably, possesses that all-too-rare quality among realtors, a genuine appreciation of architecture. To stay abreast of market activity, Mossler, Deasy & Doe recently went high-tech with a computer system that provides current data on “two thousand architecturally significant houses in greater L.A.” Points of professionalism include linking up film producer Joel Silver with Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1923 Storer house in the Hollywood Hills and art dealer Lou Baskerville with Richard Neutra’s 1960 Loring house in Nichols Canyon. Current listings range from a 1933 International Style four-plex by R. M. Schindler on South Cochran to the 1949 Mediterranean Broughton house by Craig Ellwood in Beverly Glen.

Another Los Angeles firm with an impressive lineup of “world-class residential architecture,” as it is regrettably referred to, is the Jon Douglas Company. Its communications director, Jann Hiller, reports that actor Mark Harmon visited Mandalay, architect Cliff May’s sprawling twenty-acre compound in Brentwood, four times before deciding against the $20 million estate and that farther up the coast Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1940–46 retreat for the late radio dramatist Arch Oboler has also attracted considerable interest, though its 105-acre site in the Santa Monica Mountains might be partly responsible.

Sotheby’s International Realty, as its name implies, does not limit itself to one particular region or to one particular style, notes Stuart Siegel, vice president of marketing. Which means that clients can choose between a 1981 Sol LeWitt–like vacation house overlooking a lake in Wisconsin by Chicago architect Helmut Jahn and a 1929 Mediterranean villa overlooking the ocean in Palm Beach by Addison Mizner. Al-
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Although Sotheby's also offers important houses by H. H. Richardson and, again, Frank Lloyd Wright, the architectural feather in the realtor's cap is surely Les Maisons Jaoul by Le Corbusier. Located in the Paris suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine, fifteen minutes from the Eiffel Tower, the pair of houses included in the 1956 compound occupies a central position in the history of Modern architecture. "We're selling the mystique of living in an architectural monument," concludes Siegel. The current price of mystique is 20 million francs (about $3.5 million).

Despite the allure that living in a landmark holds, a certain reserve is advised. Architect-designed houses, at least the best ones, tend to be highly personalized statements that speak of very particular visions. So if your taste runs to flocked wallpaper, a great International Style house is not for you. On the other hand, some houses are so extraordinary they might be worth giving up the flocked wallpaper.

Charles Gandee

Addison Mizner $9,000,000
This Spanish Mediterranean-style residence in Palm Beach, Fla., sits on 3 acres with 268 feet of ocean frontage. The two-story plus tower house has approximately 16,000 square feet. Included in the nineteen rooms are five bedrooms, seven and a half baths. Three fireplaces, elevator, wine cellar. Tiled pool with pool house, tennis court, four-room apartment over garage.

From Randolph Properties
(914) 238-9001

Richard Meier $995,000
Wooded 10-plus acres on secluded hilltop in Mount Kisco, N.Y. Two-story living room with sculptured fireplace, dining room with curved glass wall, skylit library. Two bedrooms, two baths. Pool and two-story guest/pool house with two bedrooms.

From Jon Douglas, Company
(213) 859-7007

Frank Lloyd Wright $3,500,000
The redwood-and-stone fifteen-room house on 105 acres of Malibu, Calif., mountainside with panoramic ocean/canyon views includes built-in Wright-designed furniture. Four bedrooms plus staff quarters, three fireplaces, pool. Guesthouse nearby.

Richard Neutra $1,475,000
Secluded one-story house on wooded 2 1/2 acres in Montecito, Calif., features soaring 21-foot windows in gallery-entry, 27-foot windows in library. Four bedrooms, four and a half baths. Library room has brick-and-marble fireplace. Comes with pool, guest/pool house, four-car garage.

From Mossler, Deasy & Doe
(213) 275-2222

R. M. Schindler $335,000
The Mackey apartment building in Los Angeles, built in 1939, consists of three units, plus a large penthouse with rooftop garden. There are nine bedrooms and five baths. The two-story detached five-car garage includes a loft and roof garden.

From Housing Solutions (213) 665-4145

Greene & Greene $310,000
Pasadena, Calif., bungalow built in 1911 has shingle siding, arroyo rock foundation, and wide porches. Three bedrooms, two and a half baths, living room with fireplace, sleeping porch, and six-car garage.

From George Elkins Company
(213) 826-4521

Richard Neutra $2,400,000
Once the residence of Mae West, this estate on a beach lot in Santa Monica, Calif., was refurbished by Charles Gwathmey. Its 5,400 square feet include four bedrooms, six baths. Formal living and dining rooms, three fireplaces, pool, Jacuzzi.
In what sounds like an enterprising response, Chrysler will shortly unveil a two-seater convertible, built in Italy in conjunction with Maserati. Meanwhile, they have redesigned their own LeBaron. As a coupe, the new LeBaron has been positioned against the Ford Thunderbird which it closely resembles. As a soft-top, its smooth elegant lines make Ford's Mustang look increasingly dated and boxy. The LeBaron's principal attraction is value for money: loaded with extras, including the optional 2.2-liter turbo engine, the price is still under $20,000. The interior, finished in billowy vinyl and noticeably fake-wood trim, boasts more gadgets per dollar than any car I've seen. The digital speedo sits between a fluorescent RPM graph and fuel and temperature gauges; at the press of a button these become oil and battery gauges, rather more bright than seems necessary. The central console houses the standard radio and cassette player, optional CD player and graphic equalizer, a trip computer, digital temperature control, and something called a message center, which alerts the driver to any one of sixteen potential problems. Opening the glove compartment, I was unhappy not to find a courtesy phone; I would have liked Lee Lacocca to explain these to me personally.

Driving the car through downtown L.A., I was disappointed to find that even with the turbocharged engine the new LeBaron felt as sluggish as the old LeBaron, which is to say that on the freeway it cruised comfortably at 60 mph but couldn't summon enough power to get me out of the fast lane in time for my exit. Traveling at high speeds with the roof down, taller drivers are likely to find their foreheads unprotected from headwinds and spray from the washer jets. If I owned this car, I'd experiment with hair gel in the fluid bottle. The LeBaron might not win any drag races, but I'd accept Don Johnson's hairstyle as compensation.

The Saab 900 Turbo convertible looks like a gondola, which is not how a motorcar should look. Even stranger is the fact that the soft-top has breathed new life into a body shape that was overdue for retirement. With the top down, the car's reduced height and accentuated concave body lines give it a sprightly, even jaunty appearance. That's also how it feels on the road. A slow starter—at least with automatic transmission (the standard model is five-speed manual)—it accelerates nicely when the turbocharger kicks in and maintains reserves of power way past the legal speed limit. The four-wheel disc brakes engage smoothly and ease the car around tight corners with surprising agility; the distance between the driver's seat and steering wheel encourages a racing posture, so one tends to hit curves hard.

The Saab's principal drawback is visibility. The electronic roof is blissfully easy to operate, but once it is up, one has to rely on wing mirrors for rear vision. The back window, which is real glass, is also real narrow; three-quarter visibility is nonexistent. Another annoyance is the built-in alarm system, which starts to squeal unless the key is put into the ignition within twenty seconds. Since the ignition is unconventionally positioned between the two front seats, this takes some practice. It also caused three valet parkers in Los Angeles to feel insecure about their professional skills.

The BMW325i convertible quietly arrived on the market last year in the shadow of BMW's new top-of-the-line 7-series models. Perhaps this was for the best: shortly after its debut the car's prospective clientele was pronounced an extinct species. Can the BMW survive the disgrace of the yuppie? As a preliminary measure, to test its potential for...
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downward mobility, I packed the car with date, popcorn, and Mexican takeout and drove to the Valley, where Chuck Norris's latest was playing at a drive-in. Chuck Norris once explained to me that although America was the greatest nation in the history of the world, he personally drove a Mercedes, so the film didn't make me feel unwelcome. The BMW’s heated seats proved useful, the interior acoustics excellent, and the engine idled so noiselessly that we could enjoy the advantages of trilevel heat without missing the finer points of the dialogue. As in many foreign cars, there turned out to be inadequate facilities for the storage and display of foodstuffs. Looking over at the 1966 Mustang parked next to us and the drama unfold-

The BMW’s heated seats proved useful, and the engine idled noiselessly.

ing therein, I was reminded of another criticism of the BMW: they’re simply not sexy. Even with a drop-top—a modification that the BMW hasn’t accommodated all that comfortably—the 325 doesn’t inflame the senses with thoughts of derring-do. The payback for this conservatism is nonetheless considerable and familiar to anyone who has driven a BMW: superb engineering, smooth acceleration, flawless braking, and a design that values the functional over the cosmetic.

There’s something undignified in hearing an Aston Martin wheeze with emission-control asthma. Down-tuned for the American market, the new Vantage Volante is still an awesome machine. Billed as the fastest four-seater convertible, it is also one of the few high-performance sports that doesn’t force the driver into dental-surgery posture. Driving the car is almost relaxing; its responsiveness is acute but unaggressive and shows few signs of rebellion at dawdling speeds. Apart from a couple of shameful lapses into plasticity, the interior preserves the classic gentility of the old DB series, just as the sawn-off rear end revives the styling of the DB6, the successor to the James Bond car. The only misgiving one could have is the woefully inappropriate addition of side and front spoilers. But fear not: a new Vantage Volante will be unveiled later this year. In the meantime—and for just $12,000 more—$179,500 will buy the 1988 Aston Martin Lagonda, which happens to be the most handsome and distinctive car in the world.
Tahitian Mythology

(Continued from page 145) (Continued from page 160) has given them various objects from his travels. Two enormous gold and terra-cotta lacquered screens dominate the living room, and there are small chairs with backs carved like Balinese masks of gods with protruding tongues.

Elisabeth cuts an altogether more unexpected figure than Gérard, who wanders around with his hair caught up in a metal clip and a sack tied round his waist in a vague attempt to protect his paint-caked overalls—though for some mysterious reason he likes to wear a tie. Elisabeth is neat and smart in a black sweater set, her dark hair elegantly smoothed by a velvet headband. Her appearance is a surprising contrast to the strange malformed furniture she creates.

Art critics have a tough time trying to pigeonhole Gérard’s paintings and spend pages describing what category he’s in, only to dismiss it. He’s been called everything from Trans-Avant-garde to a Pittura Colta, but he is not only has he had major one-man shows in Bordeaux and at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Belgium, but in April he also has a show at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York and in September another one-man show at the Beaubourg. His work is on permanent display in more and more museums around the world from Germany to Australia. Gérard, however, has steadfastly refused to join the international art-party circuit so tempting to other artists of equally lofty reputations; he prefers to live quietly at home, with the occasional foray into Paris. “Of course I stop working sometimes and have dinner with my friends. If a stranger is there with the preconceived notion that I am a mad artist, then I will play the businessman to fool him.”

Gérard and Elisabeth get along with local villagers, although some of them are rather taken aback by the interior of the house. “Once a woman came to see us,” says Elisabeth with a laugh. “She wandered around looking at all our things, then finally said, ‘Oh, I do like that,’ pointing at an extremely rably rich collection than ever before. Even if Stuckey and Brettell were unable to re-create, as they had hoped, the artist’s dream—a total decorative ensemble, consisting of his huge masterpiece Where Do We Come From? (the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) and the eight replicas and studies for it—they have assembled more than enough masterpieces to convey the mythic, the monumental and, yes, the ornamental impact of the late work as never before.

Lest, however, we succumb too easily to the paradisical charm of these Polynesian idylls, we should not forget that Gauguin was spiritually in league with the dark gods: the ubiquitous fox is a symbol of perversity, the androgynous figure in some of the late paintings might well be a native priest or a mahu (an effeminate man raised from childhood as a woman), and it is no accident that Tehaman, the artist’s mistress, is depicted as polydactyl—seven-toed.

Lord of the Follies

(Continued from page 202) Oh, I do like that,’ pointing at an extremely dirty inset panel showing a herd of cows. She had picked the only thing that hadn’t been painted by me or Gérard.

“We haven’t really done anything to the house other than repaint the rooms,” Elisabeth went on. “It is certainly not decorated. If we find we are short a chair, I’ll go out and buy one—otherwise the house just contains the overspill from our studios.”

What decoration there is could never be described as finished because Elisabeth and Gérard are both constantly adding things to each room. Their bedroom has a mysterious, dreamy atmosphere, created in part by an immense amount of smoke that finds its way from the fire burning in the living-room fireplace below. A chandelier, which looks like a cross between some strange creature from outer space and a plant picked from the depths of the ocean, lights the room; in a corner is a whimsical glass-top table containing sand and a few bright pebbles, which she calls her Zen table. Oddly, the children of such overtly creative parents show little interest in drawing or sculpture.

The walled garden, which stands a couple of hundred yards from the house, remains the only un conquered territory in the intensely personal world the Garoustes have concocted over four years. But Elisabeth has plans for it, and, of course, given the energy they put into their projects, the garden will be as weird and wonderful as the rest of the place.

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Four Stars

(Continued from page 196) Cooks arrive at Le Bernardin to prepare for lunch. All young and mostly American, they change into white jackets and black and white checks and trousers. I button a long white smock over my street clothes. Soon they are working quietly and intently. Every cook does his own chopping, his own mise en place. All have brought their own knives.

At the cold-appetizer station Bonnie uses a tall-standing food mill with a huge hand crank to make fresh tomato puree for the scallops with sorrel. Severo pounds twenty slices of raw tuna paper-thin between two sheets of plastic wrap stretching down the counter from one side of the kitchen to the other. I am gratified to discover that cold poached salmon—the shrimp cocktail with ketchup sauce of the 1980s—appears nowhere on the menu. Across from Severo and Bonnie, at the hot-appetizer station, Bennie makes croutons for soup. His partner Vinnie is off at the oyster station cleaning squid, washing them in salt water. Fresh water would drain their flavor.

Nearby Vincent pulls on pink rubber gloves to dismember twenty live lobsters, twisting off their flailing claws and tails. Then with the little feelers still wriggling he slides a dinner knife between the underside of the tail meat and the shells to keep them from curling in the poaching liquid. That’s how the French do it. I remember trying a recipe of Michel Guérard’s that demanded the same treatment. I handed over the challenge to the sous chef at Le Coze when he was in New York. Diane forms œufs à la neige with one hand by scraping and rolling a handful of meringue against the rim of the bowl. She encourages me to try it. The result is a puffy white smear on the palm of my hand. I accuse her of having omitted some crucial instruction. Jun mollifies me with a sablé.

Alain Thomas, the head pastry chef, is busy making a dark chocolate sorbet, and he gives me a taste. Here is the sorbet that has eluded me for a full decade of active ice cream making. The next day I try the recipe out of Alain and try it at home. I think I may have burned the cocoa a little and possibly neglected to beat the mixture to an ideal silems smoothness before freezing. The result falls slightly short of perfection. My wife says that it tasted like dirt.

At the entree station John and Bobby prepare the sweet fish fumet and the acidic vegetable nage that will find their way into half the items on the menu. Then they turn their attention to a red wine sauce, a lobster cream for the pasta, and a translucent sauce Américaine unlike any I’ve ever tasted. A pound of basil has been put to steep in tepid olive oil in the hope that after several days the basil will yield up its perfume for the sautéed red snapper. In another pot lobster shells are warmed in oil for several hours to flavor a vinaigrette. The chef de cuisine, Eberhard Mueller, arrives. Thirty-four years old and a cook since the age of fifteen, sous chef at Arches &at in Paris and executive chef at Windows on the World, he signed on with Le Coze before Le Bernardin opened. From noon until midnight the intense and knowledgeable Eberhard supervises the kitchen. There will be 110 lunches served today and 220 dinners. Power brokers eat at lunch, celebrities at dinner, food-world luminaries at both. The average order to the appetizer stations. The words “broiled shrimp for table three” have hardly been uttered when Bennie ladles fish fumet, cream and parsley-shallot butter over four butterflyed shrimp standing with their tails up in a casserole. He pops them under the salamander broiler until their shells redded, heats the casserole on a burner until the sauce boils, slides it into the oven to finish the shrimp, and puts it back on the burner to reduce the sauce as he removes the shrimp to a warm plate. When the sauce is thick and emulsified, he pours it around the shrimp and brings the plate to Dominick, who wipes a stray sauce molecule from the rim.

Soon the main course orders start coming and the frenzy moves to the entree station. The fillets of grouper and red snapper have already been skinned and sliced on a bias into three pieces to a uniform quarter-inch thickness. Now they are sprinkled with salt and white pepper, dredged in flour on one side, and sautéed in separate pans only on that side until they are golden brown underneath and still pink on top. Then the sauces are quickly prepared—basil vinaigrette for the snapper and a butter sauce densely dotted with chopped chives, like a Pointillist painting, for the grouper. When the sauces are almost ready, the fillets are put briefly in an oven at 500 degrees Fahrenheit to finish cooking (all the ovens are run at full tilt except those at the pastry station), transferred to a serving plate, sauced, and decorated. They must be served immediately. If reheating is attempted, the butter sauce will break and the vinaigrette will release acid fumes.

Throughout it all Le Coze walks about watching and sampling. “We can never sleep,” Le Coze tells me. “We constantly have to be extremely concentrated.” The action shifts to the pastry station and I watch. Diane is making a cloud of cheveux d’ange—stiff filaments of caramelized sugar.
flipped off the tines of a fork—which she will set atop a circle of four caramel desserts. Fortune smiles when somebody mistakenly prepares an unwanted hot passion-fruit mousse. As the error is not discovered until the dish emerges from under the salamander, there is nothing to do but feed it to me. Stoically enduring the third-degree burn I receive from touching the fiery plate, I plunge a fork into the glazed golden circle of mousse.

I cannot believe my tongue. This is the very creation I’ve been pursuing for three years, ever since a meal at Jacques Maximin’s Chantecler restaurant at the Hôtel Negresco in Nice. As somebody sprays antiseptic on my injured hand, I polish off the mousse. No, Maximin popularized the hot fruit mousse, but he probably didn’t invent it, and the secrets are cooking tricks that one would likely pick up at any serious restaurant, but I am continually delighted to learn them nonetheless. If you add vinegar before caramelizing sugar, humidity will not make it sticky and soft. Wipe the inside of a stockpot frequently, or the splashes of liquid will burn and turn your sauce bitter. When you puree garlic in advance, add some oil to keep the paste moist and preserve the flavor. Toast bread for canapes in a hot oven between two baking sheets, and it will emerge flat and evenly browned. Use very hot olive oil to fry thin slices of day-old bread for croutons, and they will brown almost instantly: rub them with a cut clove of garlic when they cool off a little. Maintain the court bouillon for poaching fish below the simmer—about 190 to 200 degrees—and the fish will be cooked through and intact, not torn apart in swirling liquid.

But these are, after all, merely little secrets. Le Coze’s Big Secret is more elusive: trapping in a saucepan the pure elemental tastes of the sea. He and Eberhard stress that to develop the essential flavor of a fish, its broth or sauce must have the proper degree of acidity—just as we use lemon juice in a fruit dessert. But part of the trick is having the right attitude. Think of fish as the one truly wild creature we eat—free, brave, and primordial. Make fun of chickens and cows and the other idiotic barnyard vassals of human-kind the way Le Coze does. Eat and cook mainly fish for a month or two, and sample every variety you can find. Do not overcook it or asphyxiate it in sauce or tart it up with grapes or currants or kiwi fruit. Fish is done in the millisecond between translucence and opacity, long before it flakes (the common cookbook test); it should still be a little chewy. Do not steam fish: Le Coze refers to

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the pungent stock that seeps uselessly out of a steamed fish as the "blood of God."

Every evening at home I try to replicate one of the recipes I learned that day. When I think I understand the sautéed red snapper, I telephone ahead to my local fish store and am told that there were no reds at the market last night, a bald-faced lie. Next time they have no bones for fumet. (Do they buy their fish already filleted?) Forget about grouper till next week, forget about monkfish till next month. Forget about whitebait forever, we don't get much call for it. Now I know why Le Coze still goes to the Fulton Fish Market himself twice a week in the dead of night.

I am forced to make hasty substitutions. The first results are better than any fish I have ever cooked but embarrassing compared with what I have tasted in Le Coze's kitchen. My sauces do not mount properly. I used to think I was pretty good at chopping, but my finely shredded basil looks like garbage compared with theirs. With a little practice though, the technique of sautéing one side of a thin fillet over high heat and finishing it in the oven works perfectly. After a few tries the butter sauce for grouper with melted leeks holds together just fine.

One night Le Coze invites me to dinner at ten in the private dining room on the second floor of the restaurant. We begin with two appetizers made with our catch from the market that morning: raw tuna painted with olive oil and thin slices of black bass barely poached in an acidic coriander-scented broth. Next comes a project in research and development—four warm Belon oysters in their shells topped with a light smoky cream sauce and a little caviar. Coming after the fresh chaste sea flavors of the first two courses, they are opulent and astonishing. The recipe is simplicity itself except for the indispensable sauce: open the shells, remove the oysters and their liquor to a strainer in a bowl (you will need the liquor from one oyster for the sauce), discard half the shells, and wash the other half in salt water and dry them in the oven (you don’t want them leaking into the sauce). When the sauce is ready, strain the oysters and sauté them briefly without oil in a very hot nonstick pan until their outsides are sealed and their insides barely cooked (about a half minute on each side), spoon a half teaspoon of sauce over each shell, and place them in a pool of lobster sauce uncapsed and their insides barely cooked (about a half minute on each side), spoon a half teaspoon of sauce over each shell, and place them in a pool of lobster sauce; open the shells, remove the oysters, and add a half teaspoon of sauce and an equal amount of fresh osetra caviar, eat. How to make the sauce? First set aside two or three hours. Then read the provisional recipe at the end of this article. It is based on a talk with Eberhard, two attempts at home, and a fading recollection of the real thing.

By now Le Coze and I are into the second bottle of white wine. He smokes a cigarette between each course. The waiter brings us the sautéed red snapper I had cooked at home, and then a crispy fillet of black sea bass in a pool of lobster sauce with a puree of fennel and potatoes. I'm filling up now, and I refrain from mopping up the rich sauce with another crisp roll because I must leave room for dessert.

As a setting, the apartment is neutral, everything discreet, top quality. Every piece is placed with care. "Some things I haven't got, yet their places are waiting. A true collector wills certain pieces to become his," says Helmut Newton. The grand living room with two tall windows is a harmony of creams, black lacquer, and ébène de Macassar. The apartment is the most beautiful I have ever seen—such a movie idea." Paloma Picasso describes her impression, "The apartment is organized, very beautiful to the eye, and adds, "it is almost too perfect."

Chow, who will next apply his rigorous sensibility to the design of a new 13,000-square-foot shop for Giorgio Armani in Beverly Hills, recognizes that the shrinelike atmosphere of his apartment is extremely demanding. "Everything is so perfect. I wouldn’t advise anyone to live in an environment like that."
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**Duka's DIARY**

**Impolite Company**

So few people are doing good manners these days, reports John Duka

The wonder of social New York, according to its most virulent hostesses, is that there are any manners left to speak of. Worse, either through discretion or desuetude, the doyennes and demilunes of social grace find it nearly impossible to discuss the situation.

Mrs. John Barry ("Nin") Ryan, daughter of Otto Kahn, charm incarnate and known for the prettiness of her tables, said, "Mercy! I can't possibly talk about that! Ask me another question!"

After some coaxing, Mrs. R. Thornton Wilson, who once invited a skating simian to mingle with Manhattan’s more upright primates at her annual Christmas party, said, "The stories I could tell you! But I just can't! All I can say is that when I was growing up there were things you never did but do now!"

Mrs. Douglas MacArthur, from the dizzyingly nostalgic heights of the Waldorf Towers, said, "I haven't given an interview since I married the General, heavens, no!"

And Mrs. Donald Trump, Ivana to anyone with a camera, wouldn't even come to the phone unless it was for a cover story.

"Ah, the weeds that among New York's social orchids do grow!"

To be sure, the subject of manners is not a pretty one. Yet there are a few intrepid members of society who do not shrink from discussing it even if they may not remember: Roman punch served at dinner demanded either canvasback or terrapin, two soups, a hot and a cold dinner, and money once counted for less than manners.

Suzy, Manhattan's in-house voluptuary, whose Belle Époque bosom (visible beyond a barrier of lace and lâme) graces every important New York event and whose gossip column is devoured daily in the ten major markets, explains the Big Apple's manners thus: "So few people have good manners that I absolutely swoon when I find someone who does! Gallantry is comatose. And to sit next to one of society's rough-edged captains of industry, well! It's to die of boredom. These days, a girl's got to protect herself and find out where she's sitting before dinner. It may be a big charm school out there, but the graduates haven't learned their lessons well."

Still, she admits that a few have—among them, Judy Peabody, Drue Heinz, Carroll Petrie, Nan Kempner, Brooke Astor, Carolyne Roehm, New York's girl of the moment who has a Sargent in her dining room, and Pat Buckley, a comet among New York's lesser meteors. Buckley, says Suzy, is "always looking to see if everyone's OK."

And according to Buckley, everyone is definitely not OK. "I think about manners daily," she said. "The number of people who talk with their mouths full chills the soul. I know Mexican peasants with better manners! I'm totally perplexed by the sight of guests sawing their food into pieces, then chasing the food around their plates. And I'm frankly shattered by the number of women who don't stand when someone enters a room. I stand for everyone."

So does Nan Kempner. "I'm so thrilled to see everyone," she says, "that I can't wait to jump up and kiss them. But the fact is, nobody does good old-fashioned manners today. Everyone puts his elbows on the table. People bring their mistresses to dinner, especially lately. I remember when you wore plus fours when you golfed, you were decent at all hours on the train, and you never interrupted. Of course, I interrupt all the time. When you hang out with Jerry Zipkin, you have to."

But how is it we have forgotten not to talk to our dinner partners during cocktails so that we'll have something to say over the carré d'agneau? That no one knows the proper abbreviation of Répondez, s'il vous plaît is R.s.v.p. and not R.S.V.P.? And that if a woman waited for the man she's with to come around to her side of the car to open the door, she'd wait forever?

Fortunately Letitia Baldrige, the Amy Vanderbilt of the eighties and the only woman who manages to look like George Washington without sacrificing a shred of her femininity, has the answer.

"VCRs!" she cries. "Manners are so bad because people look at computer screens all day and VCRs all night. Except for the wealthy few, people don't get together at night. They're afraid to entertain because they think their apartments are too small and don't reflect where they are in their careers. At the same time, there's great upward mobility, and more of a chance for people to enter the higher social strata. But no one is teaching those people what to do. You go to their homes as a guest, and you end up asking: Where are the hangers? Where are the tissues? Where are the guest towels? And where, where are those pretty little soaps?"

My question exactly. —