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by Philip Gourevitch

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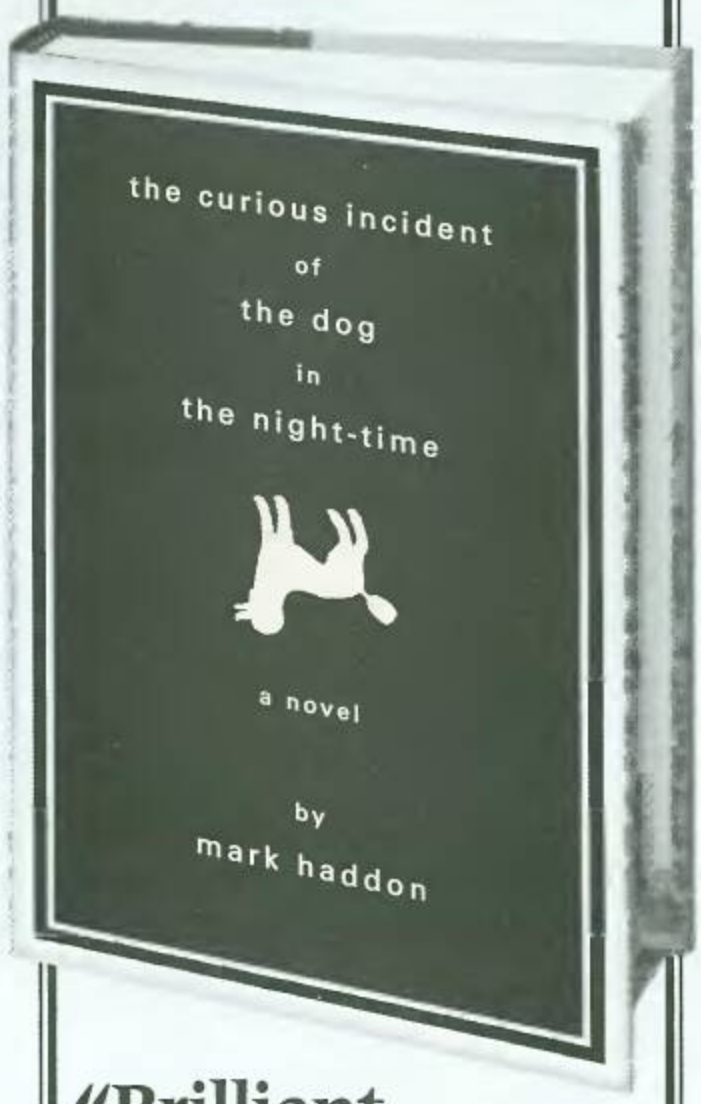
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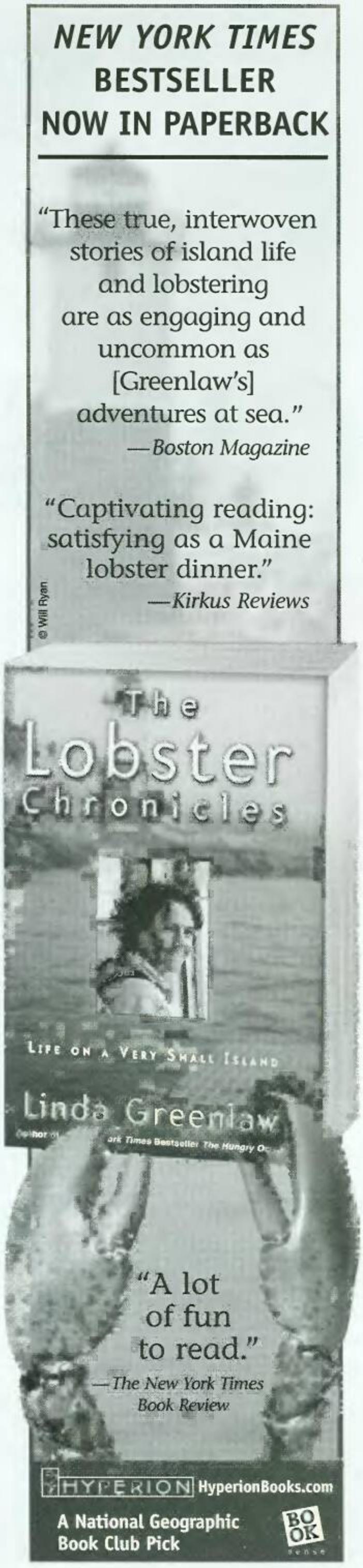
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# CONTRIBUTORS

John Cassidy ("Beneath the Sand," p. 64), a staff writer, is the author of "Dot.Con," which is now available in paperback.

Jeffrey Toobin ("Fajita Justice," p. 46) has published four books, including "A Vast Conspiracy" and "Too Close to Call: The Thirty-Six-Day Battle to Decide the 2000 Election."

Ben McGrath ("The Professor of Baseball," p. 38) is a staff writer.

Philip Levine (Poem, p. 56) has published twenty collections of poetry, including "The Mercy."

Tobias Wolff (Fiction, p. 76) teaches English at Stanford University. His novel "Old School" comes out in the fall.

Claudia Roth Pierpont ("Born for the Part," p. 52) is the author of "Passionate Minds," a collection of essays about women writers.

Alex Ross (Musical Events, p. 87), the magazine's music critic, is writing a book about the history of twentieth-century music.

Walter Isaacson (Books, p. 94) is president of the Aspen Institute. He is the author of "Kissinger: A Biography" and "Benjamin Franklin," which has just been published.

Simon Schama (The Art World, p. 100) is a professor of art history and history at Columbia. His latest book is "A History of Britain: Volume III." ♦




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# THE MAIL

## STEIN AND THE OCCUPATION

Janet Malcolm notes that a tale in Gertrude Stein's "Wars I Have Seen," about a Jewish woman who is protected by a helpful "French official," may be based on Stein's own relationship with a Vichy collaborator, Bernard Faÿ ("Gertrude Stein's War," June 2nd). She then quotes a passage that has long baffled readers: "He can read acasias, hands and faces. Acasias are for the goat, and the goat gives milk, very necessary these days . . . and all this has this to do with anti-semitism." Malcolm took the problem of this paragraph to a Stein scholar, who identified "the acacia tree as the Old Testament burning bush and the goat as a sacrificial animal"—and this is so. But the crucial point is that Faÿ was sentenced to life in prison for his crimes against Freemasons—he was found to be responsible for the deaths of five hundred and forty—not Jews. And the acacia is a frequent motif in Freemasonic symbolism, where it is used to evoke life after death. Such Old Testament imagery has long prompted insinuations that Freemasonry is crypto-Judaism. As for the goat, an entire book could be written about its symbolic role. For example, the Freemasonic term for God, "the Great Architect of the Universe," or "GAOTU," was pronounced "goat"; initiation was jokingly referred to as "riding the goat." Then, in late-nineteenth-century France, an expelled Freemason sparked hysteria by accusing Freemasons of molesting women and worshipping the Devil in the form of a goat. This was soon exposed as a hoax, but to this day anti-Freemasonic polemics contain the paired charges that Freemasons worship a goat and are secretly Jews. Faÿ clearly had room in his heart for Stein. But, just as evidently, Stein seems to be alluding to anti-Freemasonic fantasies, embodied in the acacia and the goat, that he may have harbored there as well.

*Catherine Yronwode*
*Forestville, Calif.*

Malcolm might have looked more closely at how the war unfolded in the region of France where Stein and Alice B. Toklas lived. Early on, much of the area was under Italian jurisdiction, and thus relatively safe, which may explain, if not forgive, the two women's complacency. But then, in 1943, the Germans took over, and Klaus Barbie and his forces actively rounded up Jews in the region. On April 6th, they raided a children's home not far from Stein and Toklas's house in Culoz. More than forty Jewish children had been brought there from other parts of France for protection. Almost all of them were sent to concentration camps, where most of them died. In the light of this history, Stein's comment in "Wars I Have Seen" about becoming frightened only after the American soldiers arrived and she began "hearing what had been happening to others" is somewhat hard to believe.

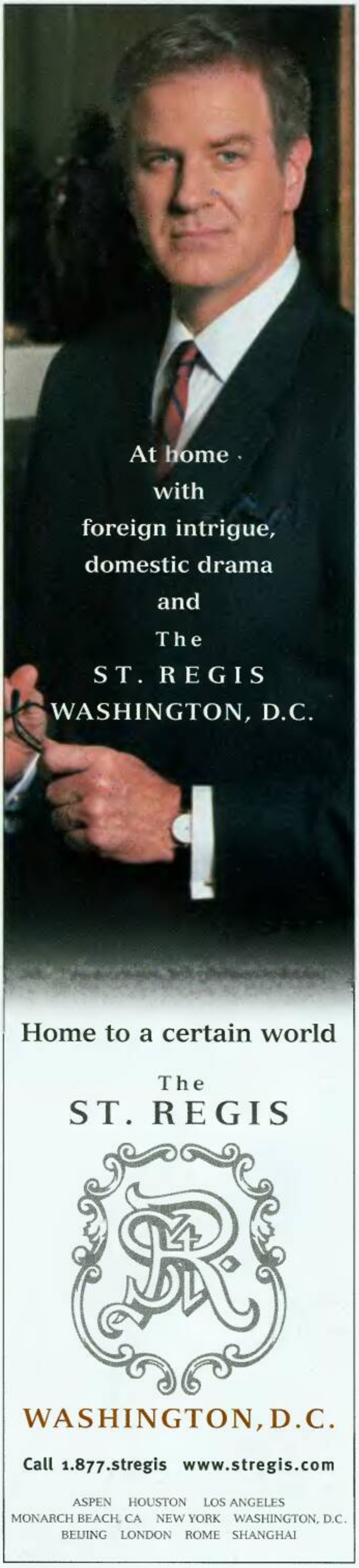
*William Lawyer*
*Rye, N.Y.*

Malcolm's article raises questions not only about Gertrude Stein's decision to remain in occupied France but also about how her writings were implicated in that choice. Stein's modernism is expressed in a paralyzing and troubling preoccupation with daily routines (cooking, gardening, house hunting, and visiting with local farmers), to the exclusion of the horrors and realities of the actual war that was taking place all around her. Her naïveté was clear enough early on, as evidenced by a note from Bennet Cerf, then the head of Random House, commenting on the manuscript of an introduction that Stein had written to the speeches of Marshal Philippe Pétain, the Vichy premier, in which she portrayed the Marshal as a noble figure. Cerf writes, "For the records. This disgusting piece was mailed from Belley on Jan. 19, 1942."

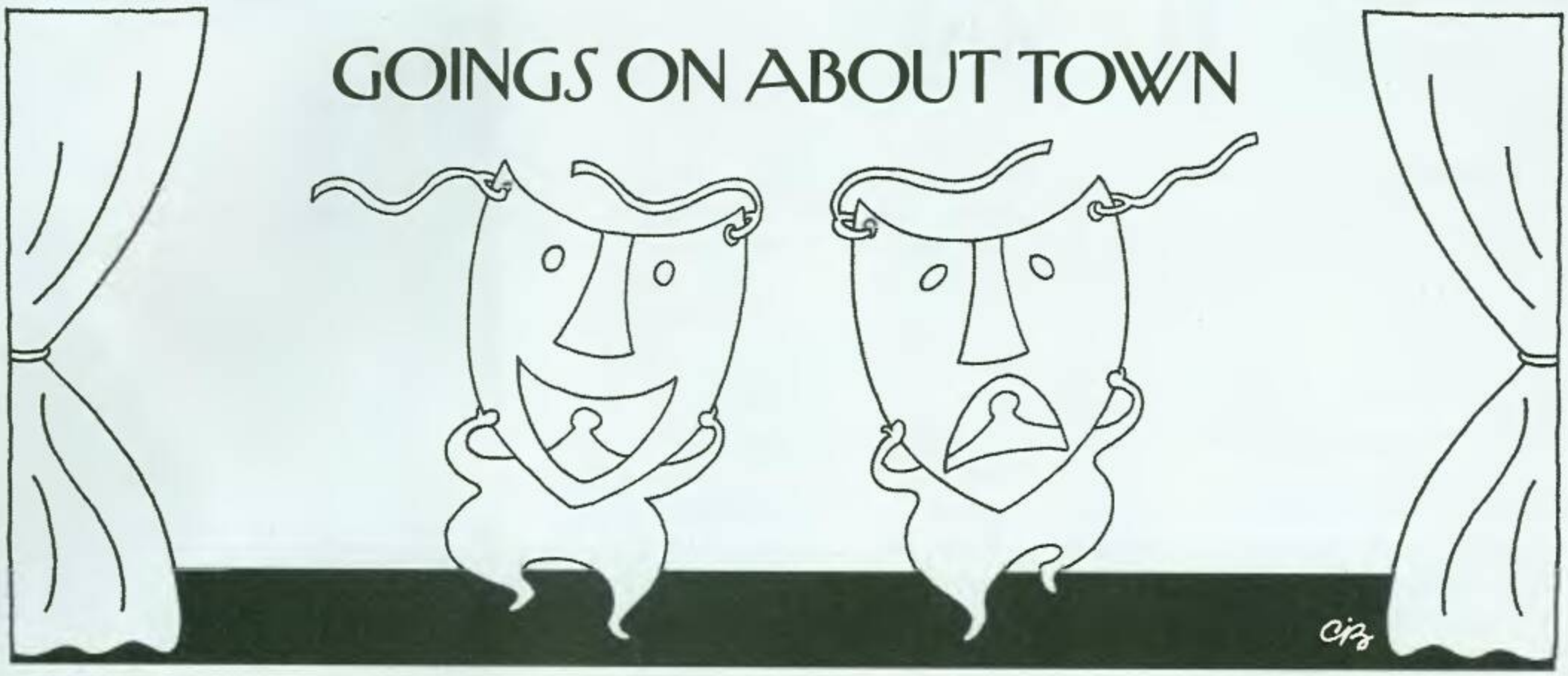
*Liesl M. Olson*
*New York City*

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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



## THE THEATRE
## OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

*Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.*

**AVENUE Q**
The joyful and jaundiced hit musical—a teasing update of "Sesame Street" for adults—comes to Broadway. Previews begin July 11. Directed by Jason Moore. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

**BIG RIVER**
Deaf West Theatre and Roundabout Theatre Company present an adaptation of the musical based on Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," which includes deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing actors, performing in spoken English and American Sign Language. Directed by Jeff Calhoun. In previews. (American Airlines, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300.)

**CAFÉ A GO GO**
The Heather Brothers' musical tribute to swinging London arrives in New York after a decade-long run at London's Strand. In previews. Opens July 13 at 3. (221 W. 46th St. 212-352-3101.)

**THE CAPITOL STEPS**
The satirical Washington, D.C.-based musical group brings its newest show, "Between Iraq and a Hard Place," to the John Houseman Theatre. Previews begin July 15. Opens July 19 at 8. (450 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.)

**EDGE**
Angelica Torn is Sylvia Plath in a new play about the poet, set on the last day of her life. Written and directed by Paul Alexander. In previews. Opens July 21 at 8. (DR2 Theatre, 103 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200.)

**FLESH AND BLOOD**
Cherry Jones and Martha Plimpton lead the cast in a New York Theatre Workshop production of a new play by Peter Gaitens, adapted from the novel by Michael Cunningham and directed by Doug Hughes. In previews. Opens July 16 at 7. (79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200.)

**HENRY V**
The Public Theatre's Shakespeare in the Park offering this summer stars Liev Schreiber and is directed by Mark Wing-Davey. In previews. Opens July 15 at 8. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-539-8750.)

**ICE FACTORY '03**
SoHo Think Tank's tenth annual downtown summer theatre festival begins July 9 and includes six new plays, among them "Mother's Little Helper," by Lenora Champagne; "Conquest of the Universe," by Charles Ludlam, of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company; "The Myopia," by David Greenspan; and "Deception," by Jeremy Dobrish. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 212-966-2844. For complete festival schedule, please call box office.)

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**MACBETH**
The Classical Theatre of Harlem opens its fifth season with a new production of Shakespeare's tragedy, starring Ty Jones. Directed by Alfred Preisser. Previews begin July 9. Opens July 11 at 7:30. (C.T.H. Courtyard Theatre, 645 St. Nicholas Ave., near 141st St. 212-868-4444.)

**PRESIDENT HARDING IS A ROCK STAR**
Les Frères Corbusier present a rock musical about the foibles of Warren G. Harding—the President who gambled away the White House china and died in office after eating bad crabs. With text and original rock music by Kyle Jarrow. Directed by Alex Timbers. Opens July 11 at 7. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444.)

**TRAGEDY IN 9 LIVES**
Karen Houppert reinvents a Warhol "happening" in a new pop-rock musical, presented by Sightlines Theatre Company, which stars Juliana Francis as Valerie Solanis and T. Ryder Smith as Warhol. Directed by Stephen Nunns. Previews begin July 9. Opens July 13 at 8:30. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 212-868-4444.)

## OPENED RECENTLY

**ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL**
At the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, the comedy is performed under a tent, with views of the river. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. 845-265-9575.)

**THE ANGEL PROJECT**
The British director Deborah Warner ("Medea") brings a site-specific performance to the Lincoln Center Festival that takes viewers on a journey to several locations across Manhattan. Tickets are sold one by one (not to couples or groups); viewers discover their itineraries upon buying a ticket and enter the drama at five-minute increments. (212-721-6500. Closes July 27.)

**DREAM A LITTLE DREAM**
In a play that blends the reverential gusto of a "Loser's Lounge" covers show with a rambling dramatic structure that is part Elaine Stritch and part twelve-step confession, "Papa" Denny Doherty, a founding member of the Mamas and the Papas, reminisces about his group's heyday in Greenwich Village and California and sings their hits in his sweet tenor—backed by a band that includes young doubles for Mama Cass, John Phillips, and the red-hot hippie Mama Michelle. With a video montage of sixties moments by Jan Hartley. Directed by Randal Myler. (Village, 158 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.)

**FLOW**
Will Power meshes the concrete poetics of the old school with the freestyle charge of the new in his solo portrayal of an urban neighborhood where storytelling, in the griot tradition, is the only thing that can't be killed off. Moving like a balletic yoga instructor with a beat-box sensibility, Power tackles each of his characters with verve. He is as mesmerizing as Jacoba, a loose-lipped female schoolteacher, as he is as Ole Cheesy, a pimped-out street prophet. Power's entirely rapped delivery brings out a chord of soulful inner-city wit, and DJ Reborn's live mix provides umbilical backbeats and bass. Directed by Danny Hoch. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 212-477-5288. Closes July 20.)

**FROM MY HOMETOWN**
Three out-of-towners hit New York and bond over their dream of singing at the Apollo, in an Amas Musical Theatre production directed by Kevin Ramsey. The men sing a jukeboxful of R. & B. standards, with musical direction and arrangements by Jo Lynn Burks, and also perform half a dozen new songs. (Kirk, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

**GETTING INTO HEAVEN**
Cat Venita (Polly Draper) is a fortysomething, multiply pierced, liberally tattooed rock goddess, who's just successful enough to gripe about never having won a Grammy. She's also a lesbian whose lover has just left her, following the death of their son. From the play's opening moments, in which Draper's slow-burn cover of "What the World Needs Now" is piped in, it's obvious that her character knows suffering. In song and in action, she expertly portrays what it is to be a woman perpetually on the edge. She plays it tender and funny, even sensual, but with an underlying dread that "the only thing that there's just too little of" might forever elude her. Written by Draper, with an MTV-inspired, multimedia set by Junghyun Georgia Lee and an edgy score by Draper's husband, Michael Wolff. Claire Lundberg directs. (Flea, 41 White St. 212-352-3101. Closes Aug. 2.)

**THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST**
The Aquila Theatre Company is known for innovative interpretations of classic plays (last summer they staged "The Comedy of Errors" in a Turkish Casbah setting), and a press release for this production of Oscar Wilde's 1895 play asks us to think of it as "Oscar Wilde meets 'Absolutely Fabulous.'" Edina

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and Patsy—with their complaining banter, camp humor, and zest for alternate personas—already resemble modern versions of Algernon Moncrieff and Jack Worthing, and Robert Richmond's direction elicits redundant mugging from nearly all the actors, who give obvious, over-enunciated line readings accentuated with enormous hand gestures. When they play around outside of the text—as when they sing David Soul's "Don't Give Up On Us Baby" and bop around like Austin Powers—they have a sort of manic, incoherent spontaneity. But, on the whole, the production could be a little less zany . . . and a little more earnest. (Baruch Performing Arts Center, 150 E. 25th St. 212-239-6200.)

Ovid's stories such engaging theatre. Still, the production does as much as possible to bring the artist's observations into three dimensions. Scott Bradley's ingenious set flanks the stage with two walls of giant library drawers that slide open and shut to reveal or conceal two tiny finches in a cage, a woman laid out on her bier, a pool of water. Dancer-actors dressed in lush velvet, brocade, and Renaissance tunics illustrate Leonardo's precepts with athleticism and artistry, and Anjali Bhimani's lovely singing voice adds yet another dimension. The result is a series of haunting tableaux that are as potent and as loosely connected as events in a dream. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422. Closes Aug. 3.)

**42ND STREET**
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
**GOLDA'S BALCONY**
Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. (Closes July 13.)
**GYPSY**
Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
**HAIRSPRAY**
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100.
**HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY**
Little Shubert, 422 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
**I AM MY OWN WIFE**
Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. (Closes July 20.)



SOMETHING FISHY *At the Coral Room fashionable partygoers share the evening with the piscine set (see Night Life—Clubs).*

**LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT**
In a stately and compelling production at the Plymouth, Eugene O'Neill's masterpiece has been superbly revived, bringing O'Neill's own spectral, heartbroken family—"the four haunted Tyrones," he called them—to the stage. Vanessa Redgrave and Brian Dennehy play Mary and James Tyrone, and Philip Seymour Hoffman and Robert Sean Leonard are their sons, Jamie and Edmund. Redgrave, lyrical and feral, moves like a trapped animal in a cage of her own choosing. And Hoffman's toxic sorrow in his fight with his brother kicks the play onto a completely new emotional level. Directed by Robert Falls. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/03.) (Brooks Atkinson, 236 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

**NINE**
In this elegant revival of Arthur Kopit and Maury Yeston's 1982 musical—an adaptation of Fellini's "8½"—Antonio Banderas plays Guido Contini, a film director whose genius is inextricable from his childlike narcissism. Good-looking, confident, and amusing, Banderas has a European restraint that only magnifies his passionate nature. He also has a fine voice. The other characters are satellites around Planet Guido: his put-upon wife (Mary Stuart Masterson), his battle-axe producer (Chita Rivera), and his tenacious and lubricious mistress, Carla (Jane Krakowski), who descends semi-nude from the rafters. Directed by David Leveaux. (4/21 & 28/03) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.)

**THE NOTEBOOKS OF LEONARDO DA VINCI**
Director Mary Zimmerman embraces the visionary jottings and sketches of the great painter with the same passion she brought to her adaptation of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," but Leonardo's insights, intellectually stirring though they may be ("Without force nothing moves"; "There can be no voice where there is no motion or percussion of the air"), lack the dramatic resonance and the narrative arc that made

**TERRITORY**
At first glance Ben and Maya (John B. Good and Amanda Gruss) look placid enough. Both are clean and pretty and probably watch "Felicity" reruns for relationship tips. It seems that a shake-up and make-up story is in the works until a surprise visitor in a gas mask barges in on them at two in the morning. The toxic intruder is James, the couple's onetime friend and third wheel, who cranks up the music, slam dances to Iggy Pop, exposes old wounds, and uncovers Ben and Maya's discontent, which is engagingly ugly. Grant Varjas, as James, evinces an Andy Kaufman-like gift for rapid cycling. Sharply written and well directed by Lawrence Levine. (Bottle Factory, 195 E. 3rd St. 212-868-4444. Closes July 13.)

## LONG RUNS

**AIDA**
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-307-4747.
**A BAD FRIEND**
Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200. (Closes July 27.)
**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST**
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 212-307-4747.
**BLUE MAN GROUP**
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 212-254-4370.
**CABARET**
Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 212-239-6200.
**CHICAGO**
Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.
**DE LA GUARDA**
Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 212-239-6200.
**ENCHANTED APRIL**
Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

**KIKI AND HERB: COUP DE THÉÂTRE**
Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St., between Bedford and Hudson Sts. 212-239-6200.
**THE LION KING**
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
**MAMMA MIA!**
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544.
**MAN OF LA MANCHA**
Al Hirschfeld Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
**"MASTER HAROLD" . . . AND THE BOYS**
Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. (Closes July 15.)
**MOVIN' OUT**
Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100.
**OUR LADY OF 121ST ST.**
Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 212-307-4100. (Closes July 27.)
**THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
**THE PRODUCERS**
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
**RENT**
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 212-921-8000.
**STOMP**
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 212-477-2477.
**TAKE ME OUT**
Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200.
**TEA AT FIVE**
Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 212-239-6200. (Closes July 13.)
**THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE**
Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 212-307-4100.
**URINETOWN**
Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. 212-239-6200.

ZOHAR LAZAR









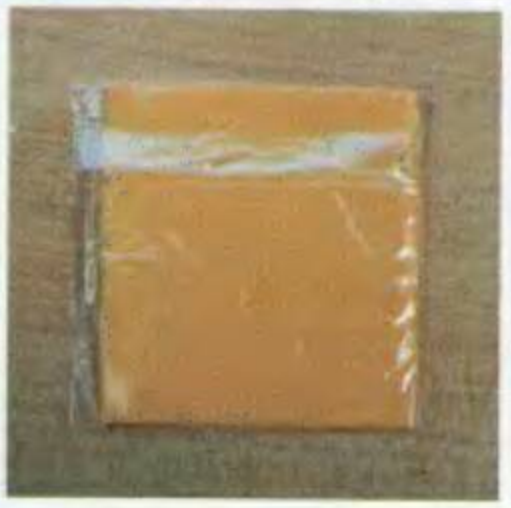












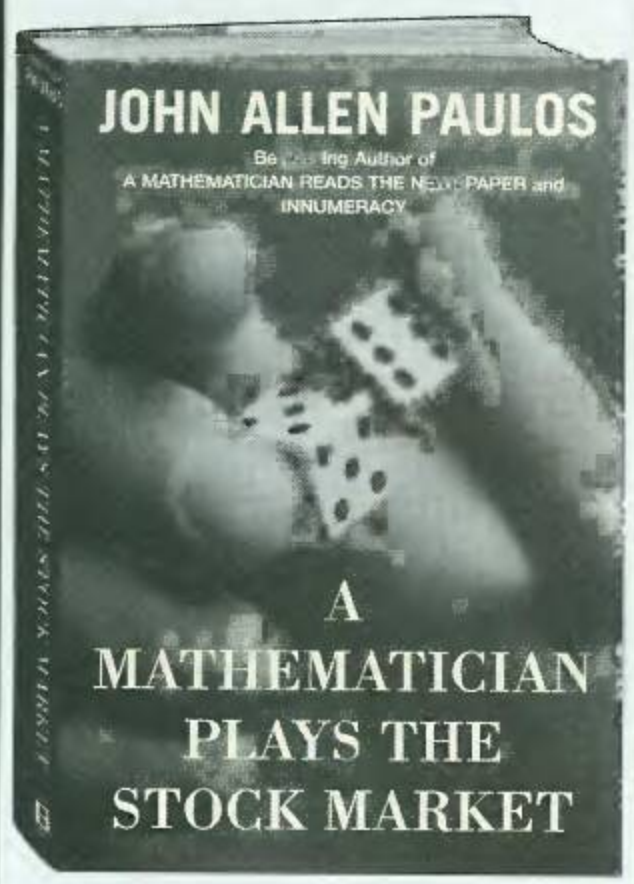


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## DANCE

**DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM**
The group, directed by its co-founder Arthur Mitchell, makes its first appearance in the Lincoln Center Festival with two programs. Program A includes both repertory work and the première of "St. Louis Woman: A Blues Ballet"—a lavish entertainment that is matched in scale in the company's repertoire only by the landmark "Creole Giselle." Taking its story of romantic rivalry at the racetrack from the original 1946 musical, the ballet retains the classic songs by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer (performed onstage by singers who parallel the dancing leads), in a newly orchestrated score by Joseph E. Field. The more important holdover, though, is showmanship. The entire cast radiates warmth. Michael Smuin's choreography is thick with clichés, but it takes advantage of these dancers' remarkable ability to shift—without embarrassment—from crystalline classical technique to gritty, get-down vernacular. Oddly, the production fizzles after a climax in the second act, and not even the tap-dancing Williams Brothers can quite redeem a big, dull finish. With Balanchine's "Four Temperaments." Program B includes Balanchine's "Serenade," Ashton's "Meditation," and Robbins' "Fancy Free." ♦ Program B: July 9-11 at 8. ♦ Program A: July 12 at 2 and 8 and July 13 at 3. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-721-5570.)

**PILOBOLUS**
The group's season at the Joyce continues. (175 Eighth Ave. 212-242-0800. July 9-11 and July 14-18 at 8 and July 12 and July 19 at 2 and 8.)

**TAP CITY 2003**
New York is the historical center of tap dancing, but the opportunities for tappers to share their art here are few. The New York City Tap Festival, now in its third year, valiantly tries to make up for this in one tap-stuffed week with a lineup of performers who are stunning both in variety and in numbers. This year, the director, Tony Waag, abandons the themed evenings of prior festivals in favor of evenly spread eclecticism: each night mixes soloists and ensembles, the promising and the proven. Along with star turns by Gregory Hines and Savion Glover, highlights include the appearance of the beloved knockabout comedian Ernest (Brownie) Brown, tireless at eighty-eight, who joins a stageful of students in the famed Copasetics chair dance. (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200. Opening-night gala on July 16 at 7; July 17-19 at 7 and 9:30.)

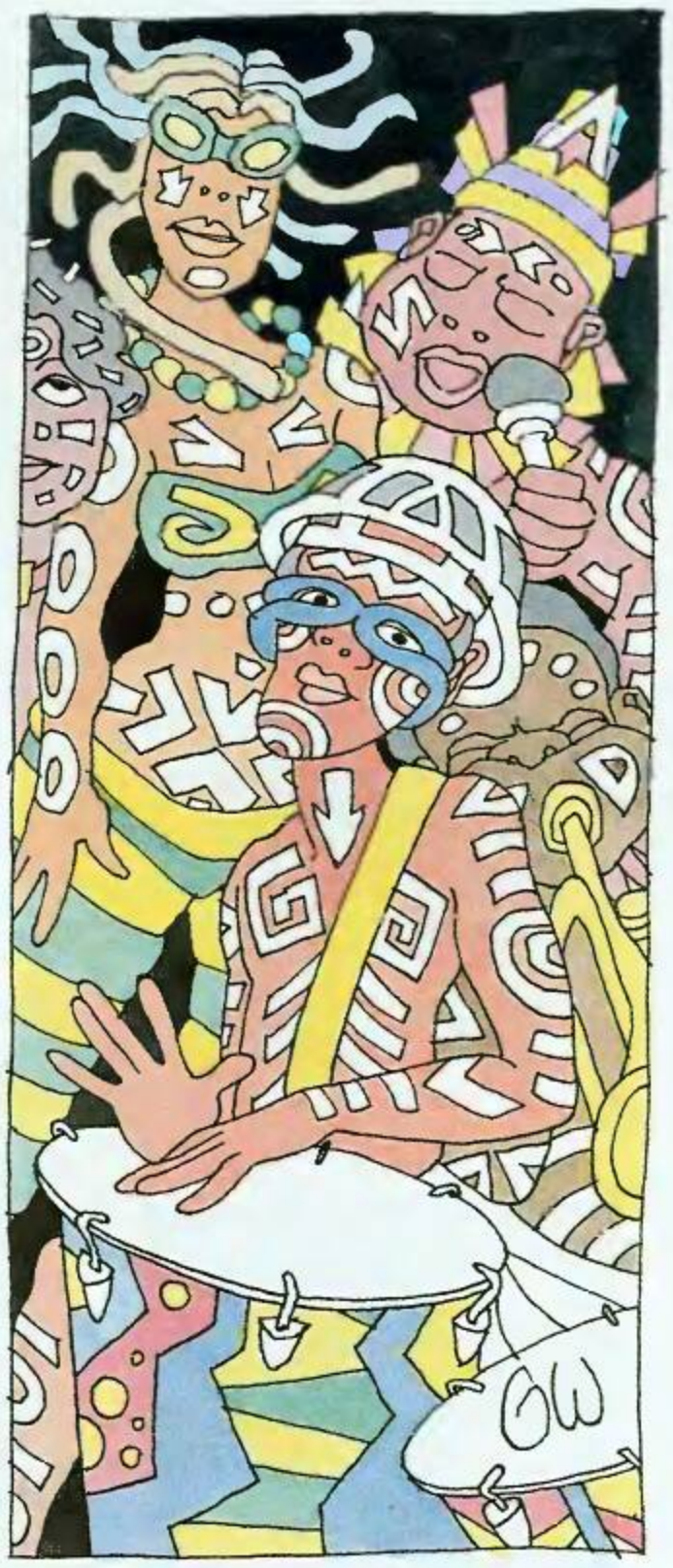
**"KOCHUTEN: PARADISE IN A JAR"**
Dairakudakan (literally, "Great Camel Battleship"), Akaji Maro's trailblazing, thirty-year-old Butoh company, brings two new works from his "Kochuten" series to the Japan Society's second summer Butoh festival. Young men from the troupe perform "Universe of Darah" on the first two nights of the season, and young women perform "Su Ru Re," ("A Woman Who Grabs Happiness") later in the week. Choreographed by Atsuko Imai and Kumotaro Mukai. (333 E. 47th St. 212-752-3015. July 15-16 and July 18-19 at 8.)

**"THE DIALECT OF OUTSIDE IN"**
Anna Sperber presents two quartets about momentum and interconnection: "Unraveling" and "Within Earshot." (Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St. 212-334-7479. July 10-13 at 8.)

**ADRIENNE CELESTE FADJO DANCE**
In her New York début concert, "Right of Way," Fadjo presents the première "Two for Two," in which two women battle for control as they dance to the skittering notes of Beethoven's "Six Écossaises," and "Split Down the Middle," a solo set to Moby that explores the duality of human nature. (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 718-748-1282. July 11-12 at 9.)

## OUT OF TOWN

**JACOB'S PILLOW**
During Robert Battle's tenure with Parsons Dance Company, his focussed energy and elastic limbs made him a standout. As a choreographer, Battle creates displays for such full-throttle dancing, and the young performers in his own two-year-old troupe, Battleworks Dance Company, follow his example. The program for the group's Berkshires début concentrates on duets, including "Mood Indigo," a triptych in contrasting tempos, "Two," a farce set to Donna Summer and Vivaldi, and "Strange Humors," in which two bare-chested men spar, their bodies snapping and springing to Middle Eastern percussion. "The Hunt," also drum-driven but with double the shirtless men and with the addition of skirts, is even more intense. Battle submits his dancers to a gruelling, relentless ritual—a test of endurance for them, a thrill for us. ♦ Ted Shawn Theatre. July 9-11 at 8, July 12 at 2 and 8, and July 13 at 2: Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. ♦ July 16-18 at 8, July 19 at 2 and 8, and July 20 at 2: Rennie Harris. ♦ Doris Duke Theatre. July 10-11 at 8:15, July 12 at 2:15 and 8:15, and July 13 at 5: Battleworks Dance Company. ♦ July 17-18 at 8:15, July 19 at 2:15 and 8:15, and July 20 at 5: Kitt Johnson and Vincent Mansoe. (Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745.)



*Timbalada, part of the Lincoln Center Festival's "Brazil: Beyond Bossa" program.*

GAHAN WILSON

## NIGHT LIFE
## CONCERTS

**MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING**
July 9: Jump swing meets R. & B. with **Ron Sunshine and Full Swing.** July 10: The **Cab Calloway Orchestra** takes dancers back to the days of the zoot suit. July 11: Irish reels and jigs with the **John Whelan Band.** July 12: **Hank Thompson & the Brazos Valley Boys** offer a night of Western swing. July 16: David Ostwald's **Gully Low Jazz Band** keeps fresh the music of the twenties and thirties. July 17: The

Café Accordion Orchestra gets help from the accordionists **Charlie Giordano** and **Will Holshouser.** July 18: **Brave Combo** turns out polkas and more. July 19: **Sugar Ray and the Bluetones,** featuring the guitarist **Monster Mike Welch,** specialize in the blues and West Coast swing. (Fountain Plaza, Lincoln Center. For more information, call 212-875-5766. Shows are at 7:30, with dance lessons starting an hour earlier.)

**RIVER ROCKS**

Despite their maudlin name, **Pretty Girls Make Graves** aren't black-clad, clove-smoking miserablists. They're a rather energetic outfit that owes more to the punky, angular, fragmented sonic attack of Fugazi than to the Smiths song from which they cribbed their name (the Smiths took that line from Jack Kerouac's "Dharma Bums"). The opening acts include **Broken Social Scene.** With some ten members assembled from the shards of other indie-rock bands, this Canadian collective has an appealing eclecticism (its second album, "You Forgot It in People," is laced with everything from airy abstract melodies to driving dance rock) that recently earned it a Juno, Canada's version of the Grammy. (Pier 54, Hudson River Park, West Side Highway at 14th St. 212-533-7275. July 10 at 7.)

## POP NOTES



**LIFE AND DEATH**

The Beatles played together as a band for fewer than ten years; Cheap Trick is on the verge of thirty. The last two studio records by the chief export of Rockford, Illinois, were lost in the shuffle, but "Special One" (Big3) delivers enough tuneful hard rock to shame most younger bands. As always, Cheap Trick are magpies who pick up the threads of the Beatles, the Stones, and the Who, as well as anything else that shines: the title track uses Japanese instrumentation, and "Too Much" borrows the start of its melody from the Three Degrees' soft-soul hit "When Will I See You Again." Somehow it all manages to sound like Cheap Trick, thanks to Rick Nielsen's kaleidoscopic guitars and Robin Zander's distinctive vocals; "Words" and "My Obsession," one keening, the other chiming, rank with the finest pop the band has ever made. One minor complaint: "Best Friend," a dark, swirling showpiece in which Zander moves from an untypical low register into a frenetic shriek that rivals that of Axl Rose, should have been the final song on the record. Everything else sounds like an afterthought.

When Warren Zevon announced last September that he had mesothelioma, the rare form of lung cancer that killed Steve McQueen, he didn't think he'd make it until New Year's. "The Wind" (Artemis), Zevon's new solo record, proves him wrong. Because it's a valedictory record, Zevon's friends turn up in force. Ry Cooder's guitar makes the most of "Dirty Life & Times," another of Zevon's trademark rake's-progress tales; Bruce Springsteen turns in spirited backing vocals and a guitar solo on "Disorder in the House"; and "Prison Grove," sung with Jackson Browne, Billy Bob Thornton, T-Bone Burnett, and others, is a spooky, evocative blues. While many of the songs seem to allude to Zevon's grave circumstance, it's important to remember that he has always written about mortality: one of his early hits was "I'll Sleep When I'm Dead." Most of "The Wind" is vintage Zevon: self-hating and sardonic, with pockets of surprising lyricism, especially on ballads like "Please Stay" and "Keep Me in Your Heart." The album's sole cover, a version of Bob Dylan's "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," is also its sole misstep; it re-creates the original with such soggy reverence that it barely registers, and only Zevon's fadeout call of "open up, open up" seems to matter.

*—Ben Greenman*


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Hendrick Goltzius, *Seated Monkey on a Chain* (detail), ca. 1595-1600, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam.



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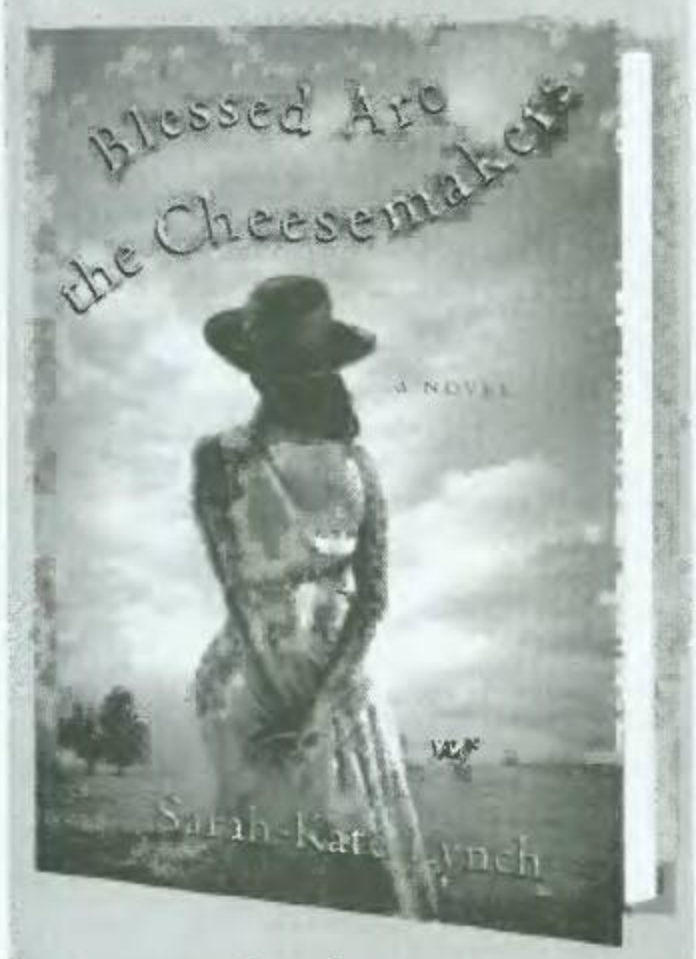
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**CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE**
July 10 at 7: The French outfit **Gotan Project** takes tango music into the twenty-first century and beyond. July 11 at 6:30: The pop troubadour **Elvis Costello** and his band the Impostors perform a benefit show. July 12 at 3: The seminal hip-hop trio **De La Soul.** July 13 at 3: An afternoon of New Zealand rock with **King Kapisi** and others. July 16 at 7: The whip-smart acoustic warrior **Ani DiFranco,** in a benefit show. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 212-360-2777.)

**CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!**
July 12: The veteran Israeli singer **Chava Alberstein.** July 17: A screening of the 1954 film "Creature from the Black Lagoon" in 3-D, with musical and vocal accompaniment provided by the **Jazz Passengers.** The accordionist **Guy Klucevsek** and the saxophonist **Phillip Johnston** warm things up. July 18: The indie-rock antihero **Stephen Malkmus** and his band the Jicks. (All shows at 7:30. Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. 718-855-7882, ext. 45.)

**LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL**
The music portion of this year's festival, titled "Brazil: Beyond Bossa," is a five-night exploration of the music of the northeastern states of Bahia and Pernambuco, where such genres as the accordion-driven *forró* mix and mingle with the rhyme-heavy *coco* and many other styles of music. On opening night, July 16, the sixty-three-year-old singer **Selma do Coco** splits the bill with **Mundo Livre S/A,** a group of *mangue beat* pioneers. July 17: Thundering drums from Bahia with **Lacomia** (mostly teen-agers, some playing found objects) and **Timbalada,** an enormous ensemble of body-paint-adorned percussionists. July 18: *Forró* and its permutations with **Vanildo de Pombos** and **Mestre Ambrósio.** July 19: The singer and entertainer **Carlinos Brown,** one of the region's biggest names. July 20: The festival winds down with **Mestre Salustiano,** a master of the *rabeca* (violin), and **DJ Dolores and the Orchestra Santa Masse,** which mates the *rabeca* with electronica. Jobim has definitely left the building. (All shows at 8. LaGuardia Concert Hall, 100 Amsterdam Ave., between 64th and 65th Sts. 212-721-6500.)

## CLUBS

*Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.*

**B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL**
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—July 10: The **Dirty Dozen Brass Band,** Crescent City revisionists one and all. July 12: A night of reggae with **Maxi Priest.** July 17: As renowned for his inventive hair styles as he was for his sparkling synth pop, the eighties prototype **Howard Jones** returns. His once peacockesque shock of blond hair may be long absent, but the big pop hooks of tracks like "What Is Love?," "New Song," and the lilting "No One Is to Blame" remain as sharp as ever.

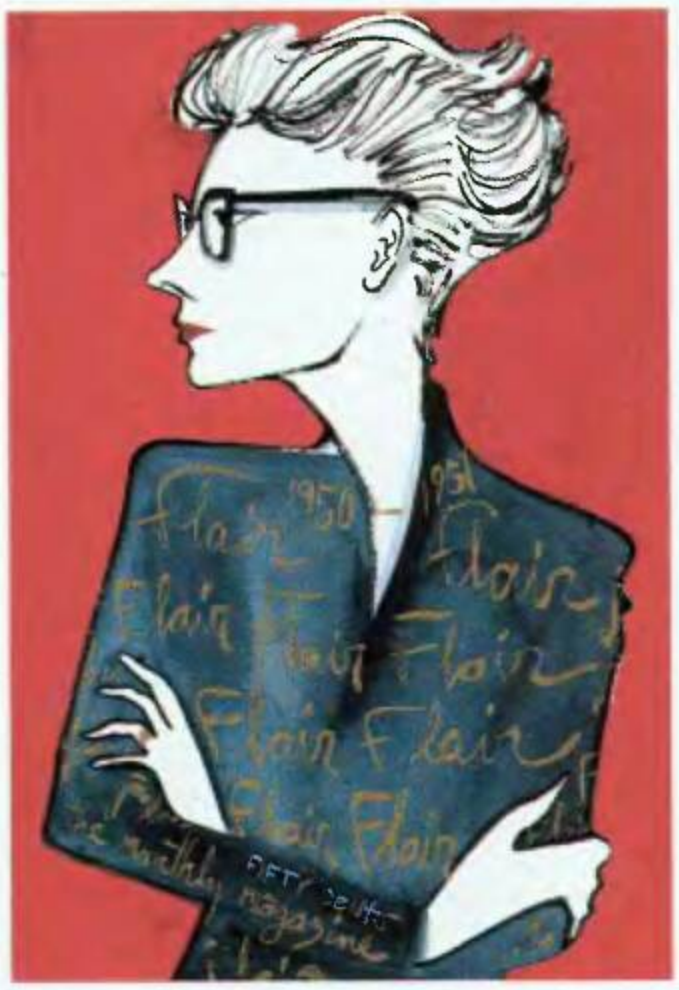
**BOTTOM LINE**
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (212-228-6300)—July 10: **Jerry Jeff Walker,** Mr. Bojangles. July 13: The folky Canadian rocker **Bruce Cockburn.** July 16: **Brave Combo** (see Midsummer Night Swing).

**CORAL ROOM**
512 W. 29th St. (212-244-1965)—Just in time for the summer heat, this new West Side night spot offers a chance to stay cool. A coral-walled dance floor gives revellers that Jacques Cousteau feeling, while big shots and high rollers can watch the action from portholes in the V.I.P. room. But the centerpiece is a bar as long as a small oceangoing yacht, backed by a three-panel, nine-thousand-gallon aquarium. And as in any decent club the lower lifeforms (fish in this case) are always assured of scantily clad women to chase—bikinied models swim in the tank nightly.

**FEZ**
380 Lafayette St. (212-533-7000)—July 11-12 and July 14: The **Loser's Lounge** celebrates Bastille Day with a tribute to Serge Gainsbourg. The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

**GALAPAGOS**
70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-782-5188)—July 17: The inspired vocal improviser **Shelley Hirsch** splits the bill with Brooklyn's own Eurocentric ensemble **Barbez,** featuring the theremin work of **Pamelia Kurstin,** who will also perform a solo set.

**IRVING PLAZA**
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—July 16: Veterans of a lost age when moshing was quaintly referred to as slam dancing, the American hardcore luminaries the **Circle Jerks** and their jagged-scalped British counterparts in GBH revisit blistering Reagan/Thatcher-era punk rock with nostalgic, stage-diving revelry.


Flair
Flair
Flair

long as this smooth-jazz pioneer has without another major hit (save for the theme song to the 1980 Winter Olympics) so would you. July 15-20: The **Abdullah Ibrahim** trio. Much like his onetime mentor Duke Ellington, the South African-born pianist and composer Abdullah Ibrahim loves to create moods. His rolling vamps and slowly undulating grooves conjure up expansive musical vistas that spotlight the easy interplay between this considerate and soulful improviser and his rhythm section.

**IRIDIUM**
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through July 10: Everyone loves a back-from-the-dead show-biz tale, and **Henry Grimes** has a fine one. This inventive and daring bassist, an accomplished mainstreamer who dove deep into the waters of the sixties avant-garde, dropped out of sight in the late sixties, at the height of his powers. Silence for more than three decades, and then, boom, he's back. Grimes, who reportedly sounds focussed and recharged, leads a quintet opposite the rock-'em-sock-'em **David S. Ware** quartet, which features, alongside its saxophonist leader and scene-stealing pianist **Matthew Shipp,** the bassist **William Parker,** a linchpin in Grimes's resurgence (late last year he gave him a bass to play). July 11-13: The **Carla Cook** quartet. The very definition of an open-eared mainstream jazz vocalist, Cook extracts the bounce and depth in works by a host of composers from Duke Ellington and Herbie Hancock to Neil Young and Bobbie Gentry, as in her revamped versions of "Heart of Gold" and "Ode to Billie Joe." Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

**KNITTING FACTORY**
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (212-219-3055)—The **Cecil Taylor** trio has the stage July 12-13. Popular taste usually catches up with jazz innovators; the cases of Thelonious Monk and Ornette Coleman spring to mind. But Taylor still sounds as visionary and disruptive, as poetic and discursive, as he must have back in 1957, when he first startled a staid jazz scene with his outright rejection of standard rhythms and formalized improvisatory ploys, not to mention his liberal—and terrifying—use of tonal clusters and other outré devices adapted from modern classical music. July 18-21: **Charlie Hunter** plays an eight-string guitar; **Bobby Previte,** the drums (conventional and electronic forms), and together they make music that both fulfills and (just as vigorously) skews any expectations of what their union might bring. Funky abstraction never sounded so good.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD**
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Through July 13: **Renee Rosnes's** latest recording finds her fronting the massive Danish Radio Big Band, but for her Vanguard début as a leader the sprightly pianist necessarily scales back to a quartet, featuring the drummer **Al Foster,** the bassist **Buster Williams,** and the vibraphonist **Joe Locke.** July 15-20: Take the pianist, composer, and arranger **Cedar Walton** for granted at your own risk. Few jazz musicians understand the byways of small-group dynamics quite as well as this deft stylist, a rock of indefatigable swing since his days as an early-sixties Jazz Messenger with Art Blakey. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

## ART
## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—Viewers who didn't get enough Manet with their Velázquez can take solace in several seascapes inspired by an American Civil War battle waged off the coast of France. (Before becoming a painter, Manet sailed to Brazil on a cargo ship; he enrolled in art school after twice failing the Naval Academy entrance exam.) On June 19, 1864, the Confederacy's most successful raider, the C.S.S. Alabama, was sunk two hours after it launched a sneak attack on the U.S.S. Kearsarge. Manet painted the battle from imagination (abetted by news reports), then travelled to Boulogne-sur-Mer to paint a portrait of the victorious ship anchored there. Also on view are works by Whistler, Courbet, and Monet (all inspired by Manet), not to mention the captain's log and an elaborate model of the Kearsarge. Through Aug. 17. ♦ Charles Sheeler's photographs, on display in an elegant survey, found Precisionist geometry in the flying buttresses of Chartres Cathedral and the blast furnaces of the Ford Motor Company's River Rouge plant. Through Aug. 17. ♦ **"Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus."** Through Aug. 17. ♦ After witnessing the atrocities of the First World War as a medic, the German painter Max Beckmann took up Expressionism to "reproach God for his errors." The museum recently acquired the famous "Hell" portfolio, eleven black-and-white lithographs that chronicle Beckmann's visit to Berlin in 1919 during the March Rebellion, when twelve hundred people were killed in two days. The original owner of the portfolio, the industrialist Hugo Stinnes, appears in a stinging caricature as a puppeteer dangling a marionette emperor, surrounded by human skulls and sacks of cash. This series' masterly balance between chaotic and carnivalesque is an amuse-bouche for the retrospective of the artist currently at MOMA QNS. Through Aug. 31. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.) ♦ A playful roof-garden sculpture—a painted aluminum cottage with a red roof, white and yellow walls, and a blue chimney—by Roy Lichtenstein, the late Pop artist, sits on its own little lawn with a sign warning viewers to keep off the grass. Through Nov. 2.

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)**
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—This succinct retrospective tests Beckmann's long-pending claim to parity with the


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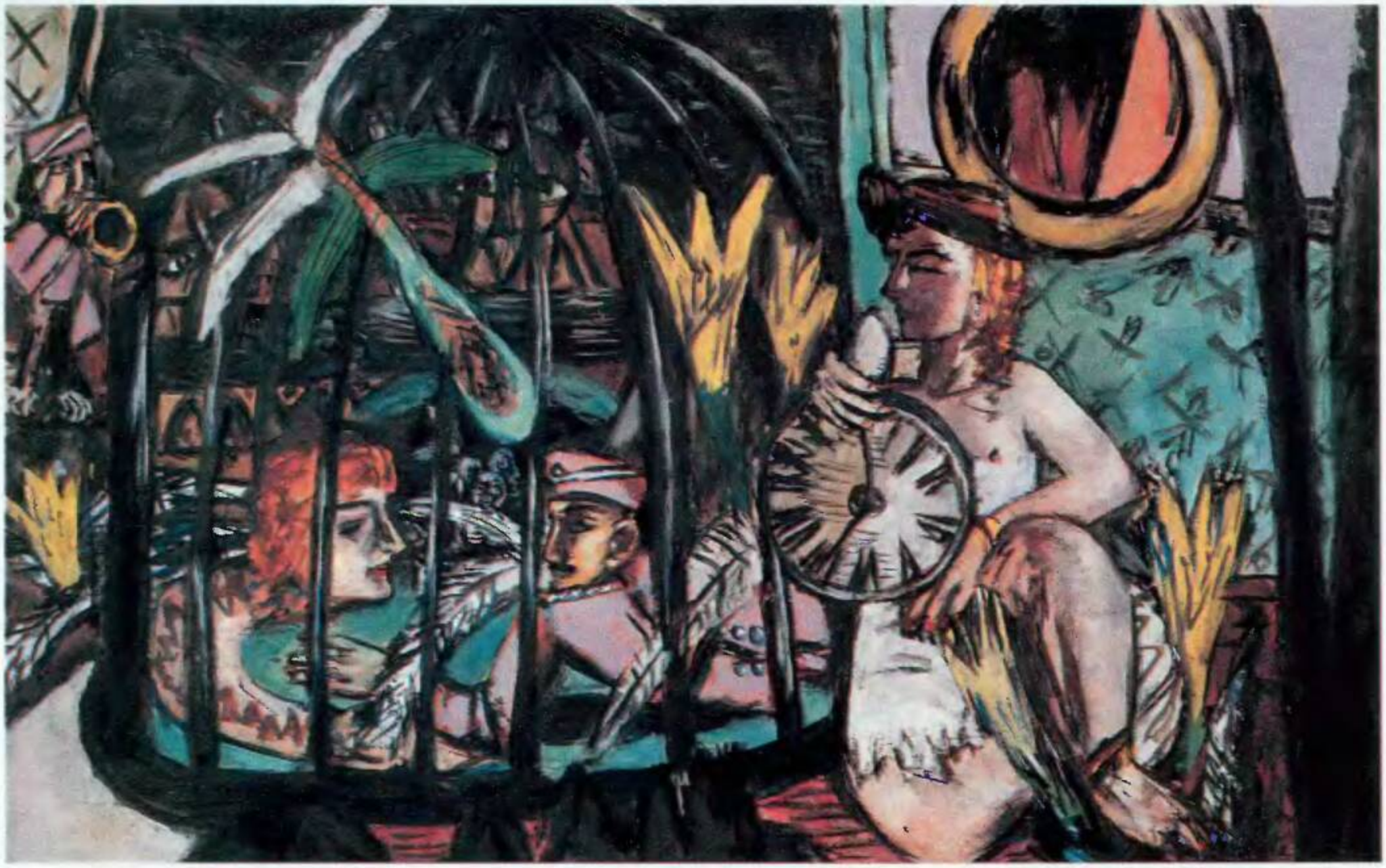
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*"The Soldier's Dream," a forties-era oil painting by Max Beckmann, from the artist's retrospective at MOMA QNS.*

modern masters of Paris. The curator Robert Storr's trenchant selection and airy hanging make a winning case. How does one look at art that is laden with elusive, often quite lugubrious portent? The show's answer: as painting. Beckmann's manipulations of aggressive, theatrical space are dazzlingly supple. The trick, for the viewer, is to receive the pictures passively, letting their organization declare itself. Even, or especially, when its imagery is gnarled and bizarre, a great Beckmann attains startling unity, notably through making light-dark modelling inseparable from warm-cool color. Depth and surface become one. Beckmann does all the work: our role is to be bowled over. Through Sept. 29. ♦ **"Andy Warhol: Screen Tests,"** twenty-eight selections from the artist's series of portraits on film—lingering 16-mm. shots of various subjects. Through Sept. 1. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"Kazimir Malevich: Suprematism"** is a concise, bewitching show of paintings, drawings, and sculptures—many of them making their first trip outside Russia—that vivify the artist's revolutionary art and ideas. Through Sept. 7. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART**

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—In this retrospective devoted to the works of Elie Nadelman, more than two hundred sculptures, arranged chronologically, trace the evolution of Nadelman's concerns: from his early busts to his jazz-era middle works to his final postwar efforts, rows of plaster figurines that look like toy-size gods and monsters. Through July 20. (Open Wednesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

Central Park W. at 79th St. (212-769-5100)—The Irma & Paul Milstein Family Hall of Ocean Life has reopened. The ninety-four-foot blue-whale model is still suspended from the ceiling, where it has invited generations of schoolchildren to crane their necks and gaze up openmouthed. But now, in the newly renovated digs, the muted cerulean light glimmers on scientifically accurate, repainted pelagic bulk. Meanwhile, on the floor, interactive information consoles, refurbished dioramas, and a mesmerizing film of undersea life tell you all you need to know about red tube worms, dolphins, sharks, coral reefs, and the recently discovered Indonesian coelacanth. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45.)

**PRATT INSTITUTE**

144 W. 14th St. (212-647-7778)—The Brooklyn art school presents an exhibition devoted to the lasting influence of *Flair*, one of the most expensive magazines ever assembled, whose twelve issues, published between 1950 and 1951, were filled with unexpected varieties of paper, die cuts, and inserts. Its articles covered fashion, art, travel, literature, décor, and anything else decreed by its stylish editrix, Fleur Cowles. Through July 26. (Pratt Manhattan Gallery, open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Saturdays, noon to 5.)

## GALLERIES–UPTOWN

*Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.*

**BEN SHAHN**

Shahn (1898-1969) survived McCarthyism by exchanging literal political imagery for metaphoric variants. The gallery displays both styles, in all their crabby, funny, socialist glory: standouts include a tattoolike image of Huey Long that reads "boring in life, boring in death" and a cartoon of a diapered Barry Goldwater surrounded by quotations of his Bush-like unintentional punch lines. The small but satisfying selection is accompanied by work from his fellow-travellers among American figurative painters and sculptors from 1930 to 1945, including Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence. Through Aug. 1. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 212-247-0082.)

## GALLERIES–CHELSEA

**WIM DELVOYE**

These delicate, brightly rusted filigree structures resolve into sawhorses, shovels, and signs ("Road Ends") and, at close range, into endless patterns of crosses and coats of arms, with each tip boasting a tiny gargoyle and each gear a rose window. "Chantier" ("Construction Site"), along with "Caterpillar," at Freedman Plaza in Central Park, is part of a series that puts crippling decorative touches on useful items and offers impractical homages to practical stuff. The look of prettified abandonment runs counter to the comic productivity of last year's "Cloaca," the New Museum's elaborate mechanical digestive system that manufactured bowel movements. Through September. (Public Art Fund at Madison Square Park. 212-980-4575.)

**JAMES SIENA**

Paintings confront and impress, but drawings pull you in, and the mind-bendingly intricate line drawings in this show have the pull of a vortex. Some of the labyrinthine abstractions suggest microcosmic details of circuitry (Siena, who collects old typewriters, once told an interviewer he was interested "in the ten fingers extending from the mind to the mechanism"). Others resemble elaborate knots or urban plans. All of them could be mandalas (albeit rectangular ones) for the new millennium. Through July 31. (Gorney, Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St. 212-352-8372.)

**"PERFORATIONS"**

Things punctured and pierced supply the premise for "Perforations," but the secret theme of this group exhibition is the versatility of that most humble medium, paper, whether pin-pricked and hole-punched by Reed Anderson, Jonathan Callan, and Heide Fasnacht; burned by Davide Cantoni and Matt Schwede; cut into patterns and filigree by Arturo Herrera and Lane Twitchell; or piled into sculpture by Noriko Ambe and Siobhan Liddell. Paper plays against weightier materials, as in Lucio Fontana's cast porcelain, for example, or Gordon Matta-Clark's perforation of an entire house in Paris, rep-

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resented in documentary photographs (printed, here, on paper). Through Aug. 1. (McKenzie, 511 W. 25th St. 212-989-5467.)

## GALLERIES–SOHO

**CHARLIE AHEARN**
Ahearn, a documentarist with the heart of a communard, dedicates his exhibition to video interviews with his brother John, his wife, Jane Dickson, and his artist friends Colette, Tom Otterness, Kiki Smith, Leon Golub, and Martin Wong. The interviewees' drawings, paintings, and sculptures line the walls—it all looks terribly haphazard until you realize that the video conversations are all about the origins of the works on display. Still, the best pieces are Ahearn's own photographs of hip-hop d.j.s and m.c.s circa 1980 in the Bronx and a loving video portrait of the eighty-one-year-old painter Golub at work in his studio. Through July 18. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 212-941-8642.)

**ZAHA HADID**
A labyrinth of photo-panels, along with a smattering of drawings and models, coincides with the architect's

## TABLES FOR TWO



**EL PASO TAQUERÍA**
1642 Lexington Ave., at 104th St. (212-831-9831)—Perhaps you've seen the El Paso Taquería truck around town, with the logo of the bull's skull set against a scarlet saguaro sunset. Usually you'll find it parked at the crest of the steep hill on Lexington at 102nd Street, in Spanish Harlem. Guerilla marketing theory holds that once you've seen it seven times you will soon be on the phone ordering tacos—beef, chicken, chorizo—without benefit of a menu or even Pataki-calibre Spanish.

"Anything else besides tacos?"

"Tripe. Beef tongue."

"Hmm. Anything else?"

"Tripe."

"I don't know. There must be something else."

"The tripe, it's good."

All right then, just this once.

The tripe taco turned out to be fine, but a trip to El Paso, next to Sandy's Hair Designs and Tito's Plastic Covers, confirmed suspicions that there is a whole lot more there. The place is snug and tidy: red and white carnations on the tables, Los Tucanes de Tijuana on the jukebox. The salsas are served alongside little bowls of sliced radishes and limes. The guiding principle is "authentic Mexican cuisine" (that's written on the truck), with all the usual food groups (chalupas, tamales, tostadas, and so on) and very few sops to the Señor Swanky's set. (A second El Paso opened on Ninety-seventh Street near Madison Avenue about a year ago; the menu is similar but not identical—you can get *huitlacoche*, a coveted corn fungus, there—and the clientele is a bit more Carnegie Hill.) The dishes can be deceptive. The *sopes*, which consist of homemade corn tortillas topped with beans, sour cream, *queso fresco*, and some form of meat (spicy pork, for instance, but, alas, no *tripas*), have synergy; they're far tastier than the sum of their parts. The flautas, fried tortilla flutes filled with beef and *cotija* cheese, are unaccountably airy. Among the *platos típicos*, the *cecina asada*, or salted beef, looks and fights like jerky but is somehow both softened and fortified by a covering of nopal cactus and onions. There is the usual array of sweet, sweet desserts—flan, rice pudding—but, if you're lucky, as you're soaking up a mole with the last of your tortillas, the neighborhood ice-cream truck will pull up at the hydrant just outside. It's authentic, too. (Open daily for lunch and dinner. Entrées $5.95-$12.95.)

*—Nick Paumgarten*




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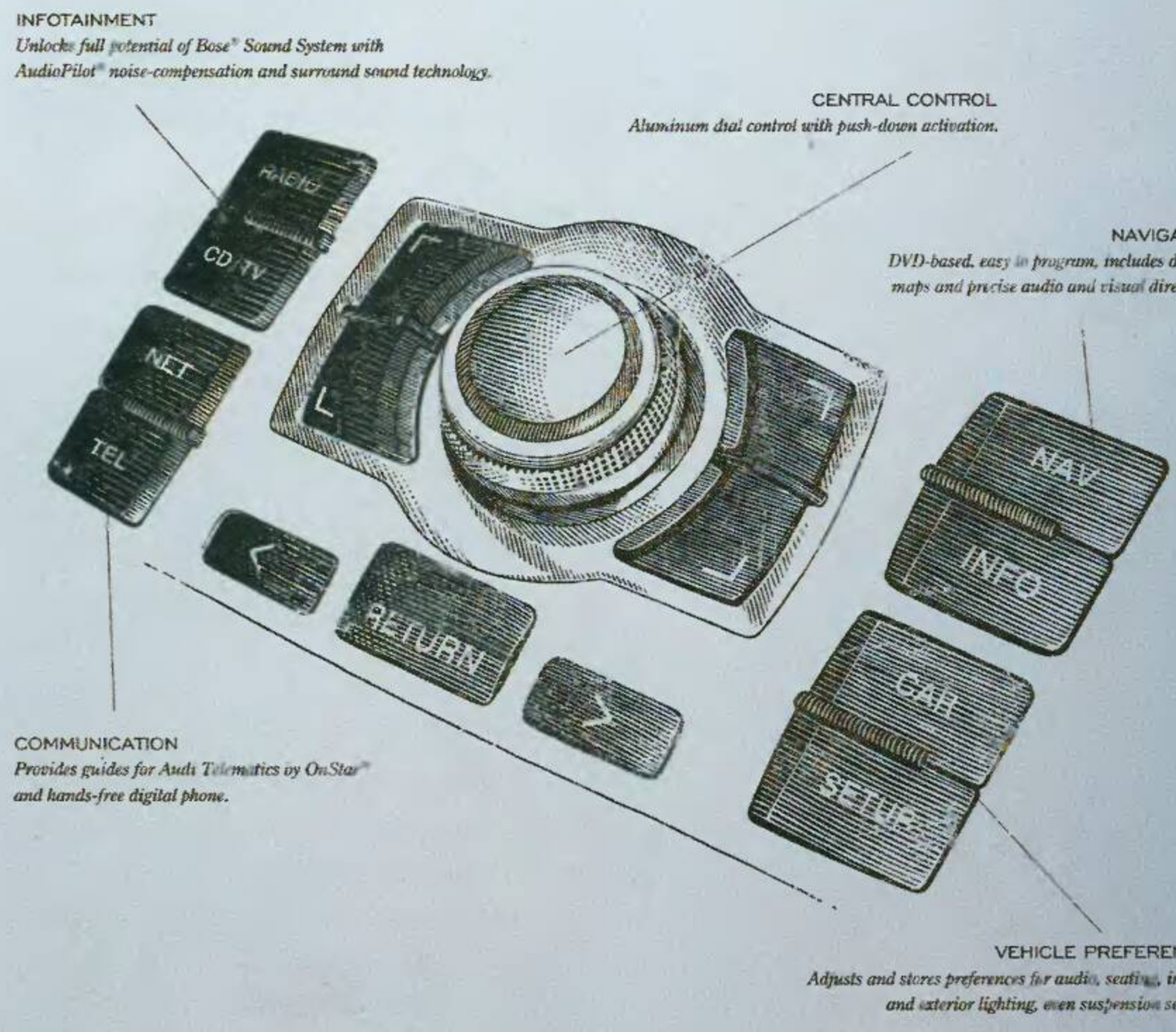



Fig. 26. – MMI,™ *Multi Media Interface*. The Central Nervous System of the A8 L, a highly intuitive, amazingly simple command system controlling virtually every function of the car.

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first project actually built in the United States, an arts center in Cincinnati. (It also unveils the model for her second, another arts center, currently housed in a Frank Lloyd Wright building in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.) Strangely, the installation is poorly designed: the first room is so cramped that viewers nearly have to sidle along like studious crabs, and the second is an open space occupied only by an undulating sofa of Hadid's design. Through July 26. (Artist's Space, 38 Greene St. 212-226-3970.)

**ASSUME VIVID ASTRO FOCUS**

The artist best known as Eli Sudbrack considered calling his art collective Vivid Astro Focus Explode or Astro Focus Kiss Kiss Kiss, but in a characteristically vague touch "Assume" won out. This floor-to-ceiling installation is part teen-age bedroom wall, with delicate scrap-paper self-portraits tacked up over altars of Buddhas and dolls, and part night-club-style sensual overload, with psychedelic wallpaper running over onto the floors and ceilings and a two-story projection of a video made for Yoko Ono's 1981 song "Walking on Thin Ice." It's all as jaded as any club kid, except for one luminous stretch of dark, antique-looking wallpaper, with a single image of clear-glass fountains in a glowing cave. Through Aug. 15. (Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 212-343-7300.)

## PHOTOGRAPHY

**JAMEL SHABAZZ**

Taken over the past decade, Shabazz's affectionate, casual photographs of the participants in New York City's annual gay-pride parade capture all the pageantry and creativity that event inspires. But despite all the outlandish accessorizing and mugging, there's surprisingly little melodrama. The best images may be the black-and-white ones, in which, without being dazzled by color, one is left to concentrate on Shabazz's subjects' expressions and defiant unself-consciousness. In one, a young man in a stretchy plastic necklace, "Eduardo" tattooed on his stomach, stands against a tree, his arms behind his back. In another, two handsome men, one in a choke chain, both in braids, smile for the camera; behind them, the streets are clogged with a soft blur of people. Shabazz seems to have captured his models just before, or just after, the day's festivities, and there's a sort of unexpected stillness and solemnity to some of these images, as if, after the hard-won freedom of a day with no discernible boundaries, life settles back into its old rhythms for another year. Through Aug. 15. (Kravets/Wehby, 521 W. 21st St. 212-352-2238.)

**"BY THE SEA"**

The star of this elegant and wistful show is not, as one would expect, the ocean itself, but rather its enthusiasts, from Lisette Model's great bulk of a laughing woman to Martin Parr's candy-colored crush of Japanese "beachgoers." These photographs don't concentrate on images of the unpredictable, inconquerable ocean—there are no pictures of roiling, angry waves or long expanses of inscrutable dark water—but rather explore how our proximity to such a force can elicit silliness and watchfulness in equal measure. This pull between self-consciousness and guilelessness is keenly expressed in Gillian Laub's tender, heartbreaking portrait of an overweight Arab adolescent with a fragile look and a tentative smile, the gentle menace of Simen Johan's seaside hula-hooper, and Loretta Lux's portrait of an unearthly girl reclining on a rocky stretch of sand. Through July 31. (Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 212-414-0370.)

**"THE NEW WORLD'S OLD WORLD"**

This sprawling and fascinating show nimbly contrasts Aaron Siskind's modernist take on Olmec sculpture with anonymous daguerreotypes of the destruction of an Indian burial site in St. Louis known as Big Mound, and Edward Weston's Cubist studies of pyramids with nineteenth-century shots from the photographic discovery of ancient America. While the historic work tells the story of early archeological adventures in such places as Machu Picchu and Uxmal, Mexico, the more contemporary work, including Steve Fitch's firelit petroglyphs and Marilyn Bridges' aerial shots of the Nazca lines, brings the past squarely into the present. While Timothy H. O'Sullivan's picture of ruins in Canyon de Chelly, New Mexico, taken in 1873, includes two men to provide a sense of scale, Ansel Adams's view of the same without human interference, from 1941, aims for sheer monumentality and succeeds. Through July 19. (AXA, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. 212-554-4818.)



*The Lincoln Center Festival presents the American première of "Eislermaterial," Heiner Goebbels's multimedia tribute to the composer Hanns Eisler, on July 13.*

### *Short List*

**"AFTERNOON DELIGHT"**
Golden, 526 W. 26th St. 212-727-8304. Through July 25.

**"CUBA ON THE VERGE"**
International Center of Photography, 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 212-857-0000. Through Aug. 31.

**"INSIDE OUT"**
Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. 212-727-2752. Through July 25.

## CLASSICAL MUSIC
## CONCERTS IN TOWN

**LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL: KIROV OPERA**

A bracing modern production of Prokofiev's "Semyon Kotko," the composer's brutally dramatic first attempt at satisfying the hungry maw of socialist realism, leads the bill of six operas presented by the renowned company of St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. (All performances, except where noted, are conducted by Valery Gergiev.) The two casts include Tatiana Pavlovskaya, Irina Mataeva, Irina Loskutova, Victor Lutsiuk, and Vladimir Grishko. (July 9 at 7:30 and July 12 at 12:30.) ♦ A reverently traditional production of Mussorgsky's "Khovanshchina" (in Shostakovich's orchestration), a violent tragedy set in the time of Peter the Great and the Old Believers. With Olga Borodina and Gegam Grigorian, among others. (July 10 and July 14 at 7:30.) ♦ With Marianna Tarasova and Alexei Steblianko. (July 11 and July 21 at 7:30.) ♦ Verdi's "Macbeth," the lone Italian opera in the lineup, in a production by David McVicar. Irina Gordei takes the role of Lady Macbeth. (July 12 at 8 and July 18 at 7:30.) ♦ A single concert performance of Anton Rubinstein's "The Demon," featuring Marina Mescheriakova and Yevgeny Nikitin. (July 15 at 7:30.) ♦ Perhaps the most eagerly awaited of the Kirov productions will be "The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh," the most distinctive of Rimsky-Korsakov's fifteen operas, a heady mixture of Russian folklore, patriotic tribute, and Christian myth. (July 16-17 at 7.) ♦ A matinée performance, conducted by Mikhail Agrest. (July 19 at 12:30.) ♦ "Eugene Onegin," with Irina Mataeva and Vladimir Moroz leading the cast. (July 19 at 8 and July 22 at 7:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

Roberto Minczuk, the orchestra's associate conductor, leads an all-Russian program featuring works by Borodin, Tchaikovsky (the Violin Concerto, with James Ehnes), and Mussorgsky. (Cunningham Park, Queens. July 9 at 8.) ♦ Minczuk and the orchestra are joined by the Brazilian chanteuse Luciana Souza, who will show her range in bossa-nova standards by Jobim and in Falla's Gypsy melodrama "El Amor Brujo"; festive works by Ginastera and Bernstein (the Symphonic Dances from "West Side Story") are also featured. (Great Lawn, Central Park. July 10 at 8.) (No tickets required. For further information and a complete listing of concerts, call 212-875-5709.)

**BARGEMUSIC**

The cellist Edward Arron offers two programs blending modern and Romantic repertory. July 10-11 at 7:30: Mendelssohn's complete works for cello and piano (including the two sonatas and the "Variations Concertantes") mingle with music by Webern. Rieko Aizawa accompanies him. ♦ July 12 at 7:30 and July 13 at 4: Music by Debussy (the Sonata for Cello and Piano) and Bartók complements a cache of works by Chinese composers (including Chen Yi and Zhou Long), in a concert that features the pianist Li Wang and the *erhu* player Xu Ke. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

**LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL**

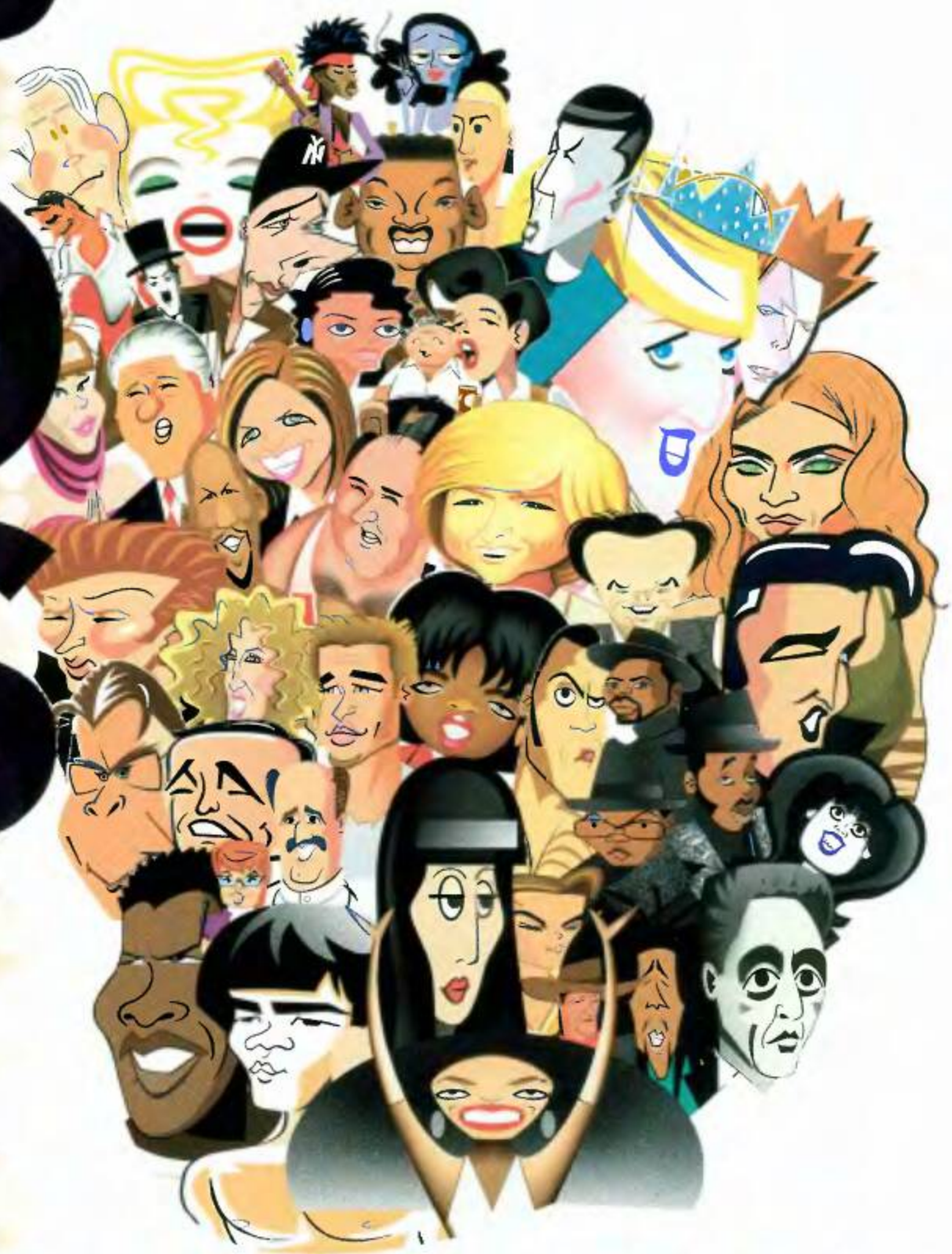
July 9-12 at 8:30: The American première of Salvatore Sciarrino's "Macbeth," three "nameless acts" that transform Shakespeare's tragedy into an exploration of universal suffering. Performed by the singers of the Frankfurt Opera and by Ensemble Modern. (John Jay Theatre, Tenth Ave. at 58th St.) ♦ July 13 at 7: Heiner Goebbels, ostensibly a German composer, is best described as a producer of multimedia events that redefine the worlds of the artists (such as Eliot, Gertrude Stein, or the Beach Boys) whose works he shamelessly appropriates. The virtuosos of Ensemble Modern return to perform the American première of "Eislermaterial," Goebbels's poignant tribute to the music and thought of the perpetually underrated Hanns Eisler, one of his idols. (LaGuardia Concert

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1. "I like company, I just don't like it when they visit."

2. "I'll be a wife and mother first, then first lady."

3. "My name is...my name is..."

4. "I want to be loved by you."

5. "I've got friends in low places."

6. "The people's princess."

7. "The world's most famous intern."

8. "I'm not like other guys."

9. "I never had sexual relations with that woman!"

10. "The art of fighting without fighting."

ANSWERS: 1D; 2F; 3J; 4H; 5B; 6I; 7A; 8E; 9G; 10C

Hall, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St.) ♦ July 19 at 3: The pianist Anne-Marie MacDermott is the star of a two-concert Prokofiev Marathon (concluding July 26) presented by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, which features the composer's complete piano sonatas and major chamber works. (Alice Tully Hall.) (For tickets to all concerts, call 212-721-6500.)

**MUSIC AT THE FRICK COLLECTION**
The young Greek-Russian pianist Katia Skanavi makes her New York début with a program of Rachmaninoff, Schumann ("Carnaval"), and Liszt. (1 E. 70th St. 212-288-0700. July 15 at 5:45.)

**BORROMEO STRING QUARTET**
This still-young group represents the best of the conservative tradition: its balanced voicing, polished tone, and quiet interpretive authority hark back to the style of the Quartetto Italiano. In their latest program, part of New York University's ongoing String Quartet Festival, they perform all six of Bartók's string quartets in a single evening. (Frederick Loewe Theatre, 35 W. 4th St. July 17 at 7. No tickets required.)

## OUT OF TOWN

**TANGLEWOOD**
Some highlights from two very busy weeks at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer compound, where European glamour and Puritan industry are seamlessly conjoined. July 9 at 7: Christian Tetzlaff, one of the new wave of expressive maximalists to follow in the wake of Gidon Kremer, plays Bach's complete Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin. ♦ July 10 at 8:30: Lorraine Hunt Lieberson (with the pianist Peter Serkin) sings songs by Brahms, Debussy, and her husband, Peter Lieberson. ♦ July 11 at 8:30: Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, a colorful Romantic of the old school, shares the podium with Craig Jessop for performances of Brahms's "German Requiem" and Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" with the B.S.O. ♦ July 13 at 2:30: Kurt Masur conducts a concert of Tchaikovsky, Sibelius (the Violin Concerto, with Sarah Chang), and Dvořák. ♦ July 17 at 8:30: Dawn Upshaw is the guest artist in the first concert (with the New Fromm Players) of Tanglewood's Festival of Contemporary Music, a program of Kurtág, Higdon, and Crumb. ♦ July 18 at 8:30: Robert Spano conducts the B.S.O. in music by Stravinsky, Dvořák (the Violin Concerto, with Midori), and George Benjamin. ♦ July 20 at 2:30: Hans Graf's program with the orchestra is cunningly crafted, with Stravinsky's Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra (with Peter Serkin), an homage to Weber's piano sonatas, sandwiched between Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony and Weber's Symphony No. 1. (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200.)

**CARAMOOR FESTIVAL**
July 11 at 8: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble and the conductor-pianist Donald Runnicles offer chamber works by Haydn and Schubert (the "Trout" Quintet). ♦ July 12 at 8: Runnicles conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in an all-Brahms program, including the Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major (with Garrick Ohlsson). ♦ July 13 at 4:30: The Austrian-born pianist Anton Kuerti illustrates his penchant for Beethoven by playing the "Moonlight" Sonata and the Sonata No. 30 in E Major, along with works by Czerny, Schumann, and Mendelssohn. ♦ July 17 at 7:30 and July 19 at 8: Will Crutchfield, the renowned bel-canto maven and Caramoor's director of opera, conducts the world première of Donizetti's **"Élisabeth,"** a work he discovered in a dusty storeroom at Covent Garden in 1984, which he's been researching and editing ever since with the help of the British scholar Roger Parker. In a semi-staged production, the Greek soprano Irini Tzirakidis sings the title role, that of a young woman who undertakes a perilous journey from Siberia to Moscow to beg the tsar to pardon her wrongfully exiled father. ♦ July 20 at 4:30: The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet reinterprets a variety of works by composers from Bach to Liszt to Piazzolla. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

**GLIMMERGLASS OPERA**
July 12 at 8 and July 20 at 2: **"Don Giovanni,"** with Palle Knudsen, Maria Kanyova, Amy Burton, Kyle Ketelsen, and John McVeigh; Stewart Robertson conducts. ♦ July 13 at 2: Offenbach's **"Bluebeard,"** a frothy opéra-bouffe treatment of the immortal tale,

RICHARD McGUIRE

## BOOK CURRENTS

*Matters of Taste*



"It's hard to understand how something that tastes sweet in one person's mouth, in another person's mouth can taste so bitter," a friend tells Abe Opincar, whose memoir, **FRIED BUTTER** (Soho), explores the ways in which memory dictates gustatory preference. For others, it's a matter of social class. In **ROSEMARY AND BITTER ORANGES** (Scribner), Patrizia Chen's grandfather banned onions and garlic for their rusticity; years later, Chen served him a dish laced with the forbidden seasonings. He praised her culinary genius. "But Nonno never found out about my Machiavellian deviousness," she writes. "I loved him too much to show him, at the end of his life, how his inflexibility had deprived him of one of life's great pleasures."

In South India, as Shoba Narayan relates in her memoir **MONSOON DIARY** (Villard), food is enriched by ritual importance, from the *choru-unnal* (the first meal of an infant) to the elaborate feast that commemorates a marriage. When she left Madras to attend school in the United States, Narayan craved bowls of yogurt and rice to ease her homesickness: "While the foreign flavors teased my palate, I needed Indian food to ground me."

Rather than seeking refuge in food from home, Victoria Abbott Riccardi, a New Yorker, learned to refine her taste buds during a year in Kyoto. In **UNTANGLING MY CHOPSTICKS** (Broadway), Riccardi recalls her exploration of *chakaiseki*, a ceremonial meal of simple, seasonal courses that reflect the ritual's monastic origins. "Like a junkie, I initially craved my stimulants," she writes. "But then, ever so slowly, I started tasting—really tasting—the ingredients. It was like entering a dark room on a sunny day."

*—Andrea Thompson*


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Edna O'Brien
V. S. Naipaul
Maira Kalman
and more

AND: A calendar of *New Yorker* events across the country

with Tracey Welborn, Phyllis Pancella, and Anthony Laciura; Gerald Steichen. ♦ July 19 at 8 and July 21 at 2: The first performances of Chas Rader-Shieber's production of Handel's "Orlando"; Bejun Mehta takes the title role (which includes one of the composer's most dramatic mad scenes) in a cast that also features Joyce Guyer and Christine Brandes; Bernard Labadie. (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

**MUSIC FESTIVAL OF THE HAMPTONS**

The composer-conductor Lukas Foss is the longtime director of this East End festival, which comes and goes like a summer breeze. He leads the Atlantic Chamber Orchestra, from the keyboard and the podium, for an opening gala concert of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos 1-5. (Snake Hollow Rd. Bridgehampton, N.Y. 800-644-4418. July 11 at 7:30.)

**NEWPORT MUSIC FESTIVAL**

This busiest of Northeastern festivals—a whirl of concerts given in the yachting town's legendary "cottages"—begins with an opening-night recital by the pianist Dubravka Tomšič, who performs music by Beethoven, Haydn, and Chopin. Poulenc and Prokofiev are this summer's featured composers. (Newport, R.I. 401-849-0700. July 11 at 9.)

**BANG ON A CAN SUMMER INSTITUTE**

The folks at Bang on a Can—the composers Julia Wolfe, Michael Gordon, and David Lang—may style themselves as the leading edge of the avant-garde, but they have always been careful to tend to their roots. One of their heroes, the Dutch iconoclast Louis Andriessen, is the composer-in-residence for the second season of their summer institute for young composers and performers, which opens with an evening with the crazy multi-instrumentalist duo Polygraph Lounge. (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, 87 Marshall St., North Adams, Mass. 413-662-2111. July 12 at 8.)

**NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL**

It's easy to link the name of John O'Conor with that of Beethoven, since the Irish pianist performs that composer's music with such unusual insight and poetry. But in the Tokyo String Quartet's first program at Norfolk (a highlight of the festival's next two weeks) O'Conor will instead apply his talents to Elgar's magnificent Piano Quintet, while the quartet takes on music by Beethoven (the Quartet in G Major, Op. 18, No. 2) and Janáček on its own. (Routes 44 and 272, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000. July 12 at 8.)

**PIANOSUMMER AT NEW PALTZ**

Vladimir Feltsman's festival and institute for young pianists begins with a gala faculty recital, in which the Master will share the stage with such colleagues as Paul Ostrovsky (playing Beethoven) and Alexander Slobodyanik (who will tackle Stravinksy's keyboard arrangement of music from "Petroushka"). (McKenna Theatre, State University of New York at New Paltz. 845-257-3904. July 12 at 8.)

**MAVERICK CONCERTS**

The Peabody Trio visits the woodland festival, performing piano trios by Mozart, Schnittke, and Brahms. (Woodstock, N.Y. 845-679-8217. July 13 at 3.)

**MUSIC MOUNTAIN**

Shostakovich's Quartet No. 9 in E-Flat Major is the enigmatic center of a program by the T'ang String Quartet, from Singapore, which also offers music by Haydn and Dohnányi (the Piano Quintet in C Minor, with Daniel Epstein). (Routes 63 and 126, Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 13 at 3.)

**MARLBORO FESTIVAL**

The festival, chamber music's holiest shrine, begins five weekends of performances by some of the world's leading artists and their very talented students. (Marlboro, Vt. 802-254-2394. July 19 at 8:30 and July 20 at 2:30.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**BIKESUMMER**

This monthlong grassroots cycling festival features a variety of organized rides—from a night-time Dumpster-diving tour on July 11 (riders are advised to bring a small flashlight and plastic bags) to a Broadway Geometry Tour on July 21 (which goes through Columbus Circle, Father Duffy Triangle, and Union Square), as well as film screenings, readings, bike-advocacy events, and an exhibit called "YbikeNY," on display at the Municipal Arts Society. See www.bikesummer.org for a complete schedule.

**READINGS**

July 13 at 7: James Wood, a senior editor at *The New Republic*, reads from his début novel, "The Book Against God," and the National Book Award winner Norman Rush reads from his latest work, "Mortals." (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ July 14 at 8: Erica and Molly Jong read from their latest works, as part of the "Scribblers on the Roof" series of readings by Jewish writers. Ken Kalfus and Gary Shteyngart are slated for July 21 at 8. (Congregation Ansche Chesed, 251 W. 100th St. 212-865-0600.)

**TALKS**

July 18 at 6: The Lincoln Center Festival offers a discussion of the music of northeastern Brazil (see Night Life). (Kaplan Penthouse, 165 W. 65th St. 212-875-5766.) ♦ July 22 at 6:30: The Photo-Realist painter Richard Phillips discusses his work as a part of the Guggenheim's "Conversations with Contemporary Artists" series. (Fifth Ave. at 89th St. For reservations, call 212-423-3587.)

**PADDLE**

July 12 starting at noon: The Great Hudson River Paddle, an event that began more than a week earlier with some thirty kayakers slipping into the water at Albany for the trip to New York City, ends at the Downtown Boathouse, with a day of river-related reveries, including boat rides, kayaking, and live music. A talk and walk titled "A History of the Hudson, Natural and Otherwise" is also planned, along with oar-making and boatbuilding demonstrations. (Pier 26, West Side Highway at N. Moore St., Hudson River Park. For full schedule see www.hrwa.org.)


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# MOVIES
## OPENING

**BAD BOYS II**
In a sequel to the 1995 action comedy, Michael Bay ("Pearl Harbor") returns as director and Will Smith and Martin Lawrence reprise their roles as a pair of mismatched Miami narcotics officers. Opening July 18.

**THE CUCKOO**
A drama set in 1944 about a Finnish sniper, a wounded Russian captain, and a Lapp widow living together during the long northern winter. Alexander Rogozhkin wrote and directed. In Finnish, Russian, and Saami. Opening July 11. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

**DIRTY PRETTY THINGS**
Stephen Frears ("High Fidelity") directed this dramatic thriller about a Nigerian immigrant (Chiwetel Ejiofor) who discovers a black-market operation at the London hotel where he works. Also with Audrey Tautou. Opening July 18.

**THE HOLY LAND**
A young rabbinical student falls in love with a Russian prostitute he meets in Tel Aviv, in a drama written and directed by Eitan Gorlin. In Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, and English. Opening July 11. (Angelika Film Center.)

**THE HOUSEKEEPER**
Abandoned by his wife, a middle-aged Parisian (Jean-Pierre Bacri) becomes enamored of the twenty-year-old girl (Émilie Dequenne) who cleans his apartment. Claude Berri wrote and directed. In French. Opening July 11. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

**HOW TO DEAL**
In a teen drama directed by Clare Kilner, the pop singer Mandy Moore stars as a troubled high-school senior. Opening July 18.

**JOHNNY ENGLISH**
Rowan Atkinson plays a bumbling British agent in this spy-movie spoof. Also with John Malkovich and Natalie Imbruglia. Opening July 18.

**KILOMETER ZERO**
A comedy set in Madrid about fourteen different people with interconnected love lives. In Spanish. Opening July 11. (Sunshine Cinema.)

**THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN**
An adaptation of the comic book by Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill about the world's first superheroes and their defense of the Earth. The cast includes Sean Connery, Shane West, and Peta Wilson. Stephen Norrington ("Blade") directed. Opening July 11.

**MADAME SATÃ**
Karim Aïnouz wrote and directed this dramatization of the life of João Francisco dos Santos, a Brazilian transvestite cabaret performer, cook, ex-convict, and father to seven adopted children. In Portuguese. Opening July 9. (Film Forum.)

**NORTHFORK**
The new film from the Polish brothers is a drama set in 1955 in a small Montana town that's about to be flooded due to the construction of a dam. With James Woods, Daryl Hannah, Nick Nolte, and Anthony Edwards. Opening July 11.

**ON THE RUN**
A thriller in which a leftist revolutionary escapes from prison and decides to settle old scores. It's also the first part of a trilogy of feature-length films that tell three different stories in different genres during the same time period and with the same characters. Written and directed by Lucas Belvaux. In French. Opening July 18.

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
A live-action high-seas adventure with Johnny Depp, Keira Knightley, Orlando Bloom, and Geoffrey Rush. Directed by Gore Verbinski and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer. Opening July 9.

**THE SEA IS WATCHING**
Kei Kumai directed this story of a prostitute who falls in love with a samurai in nineteenth-century Tokyo. The screenplay was written by Akira Kurosawa. In Japanese. Opening July 18.



**SEPTEMBER 11**
Eleven filmmakers, including Sean Penn, Ken Loach, and Danis Tanovic, directed short films about or inspired by the events of 9/11 for this omnibus movie. Opening July 18.

## FILM NOTES

**L'AUBERGE ESPAGNOLE**
The title of Cédric Klapisch's film means, in French slang, a free-for-all. This charming, utterly undramatic sketchbook movie is about a twenty-five-year-old Parisian graduate student, Xavier (Romain Duris), who goes to Spain as part of a European exchange program and lives with a polyglot mix of students in a cramped walkup apartment. The hero is instructed in lovemaking techniques by a lesbian roommate; he then has an affair with a luscious but vacuous married woman (Judith Godrèche). Not much happens, but the characters, searching for romance and good times, wander through Barcelona's handsome ochre streets, across the Gaudi pavilions and the sun-drenched piazzas; the movie is as much a love letter to the slowed-down erotic pleasures of the city as the New Wave films were to the endless social and intellectual enchantments of Paris. In English, French, Danish, Spanish, and Catalan.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/03.) (New York Twin and Union Square.)

**BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM**
A crowd-pleasing British movie devoted to the radical idea that girls can play soccer and sprain their ankles. Jess (Parminder Nagra) is a Sikh who hides her love of the game from her conservative parents, while Jules (Keira Knightley) is a tomboy who defies her English mother. Both have a thing for their Irish coach, Joe (Jonathan Rhys-Meyers)—he of the wounded knee and the watery eyes. The movie is a hodgepodge: nicely barbed scenes with Jess's family bump against weird practice montages that play like sports-bra ads. What it all adds up to is multicultural empowerment for the pre-teen shin-guard crowd.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 16, Cinema Village, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

**BLOODY KIDS**
Stephen Frears and his cinematographer, Chris Menges, collaborate on a nightmare of South End London youths alienated to the point of sociopathy. Stephen Poliakoff's script tells the story of eleven-year-old Mike (Peter Clark), who mock-stabs his best friend, Leo (Richard Thomas), as a stunt outside a football stadium. When Leo suffers a mild wound and decides he likes his hospital room, he prolongs the prank and leaves Mike on the lam. In the South End streets Mike falls under the wing of a punk-hating, disco-hopping car thief; the result is a convulsive visual poem poised between defiance and despair. Originally released in 1979.—*Michael Sragow* (Moving Image; July 13.)

**BONHOEFFER**
A documentary, directed by Martin Doblmeier, about the life, times, and eventual fate of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran minister who was imprisoned by the Nazis and hanged in 1945. Interest in Bonhoeffer shows no sign of abating, not least because his practicality and rootedness—and the struggle, which intensified in his last months, to reforge the role of faith in the world—demand that we engage with his example rather than simply revere it. The film is straightforward, and no less affecting for that; we are led through the chronology of Bonhoeffer's life, including his two trips to America, and even shown the code by which family members smuggled messages into his cell. As far as talking heads go, there are perhaps too many commentators; happily, however, they are outclassed by Bonhoeffer's contemporaries, including his close friend Eberhard Bethge. The voiceover, for the readings from Bonhoeffer's books and letters, is by Klaus Maria Brandauer.—*Anthony Lane* (6/30/03) (Quad Cinema.)

**CAPTURING THE FRIEDMANS**
Andrew Jarecki's startling documentary offers an approach to truth as richly nuanced but ultimately as futile as Kurosawa's great "Rashomon." In 1987, in Great Neck, Long Island, the police arrested a beloved retired schoolteacher, Arnold Friedman, and his son Jesse on the charge of sexually abusing the young boys who regularly gathered at the Friedman home for computer lessons. Jarecki interviews the police, the attorneys, the judge, and the alleged victims in the case, but the heart of the movie is the family's own footage: the layers of Friedman home movies and stills and the voluminous videos shot by David Friedman, the oldest Friedman boy, throughout the crisis. The two accused men were part of a loving family of five, although Mrs. Friedman, emotionally stranded by her husband, was not part of the jokes and the camaraderie. Before our astounded eyes the entire fantastic mess unfolds like a bloody Greek legend—the House of Atreus reincarnated in a middle-class Jewish family. Edited by Richard Hankin.—*D.D.* (6/2/03) (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 3, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

**CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE**
The sensationally long-waisted Cameron Diaz, a goofy beauty with a foot-wide smile, takes the pratfalls; Drew Barrymore, defiantly clinging to baby fat, is moody and unfulfilled, with hidden areas of melancholy; Lucy Liu, flinging her black hair around like a weapon, is the most imperious and beautiful of the three. They spend most of their time flipping over backward in the air in gorgeous slow-mo and then falling down in a heap and having laughing fits. The second installment of the "Charlie's Angels" franchise is immensely pleased with itself in the manner of adorable kids who know they can get away with anything—the movie's commercial opportunism is so self-confident in its silliness that you can't really fight it. Everything goes down easy except the uneasy presence of Demi Moore as an ex-Angel who has gone over to the dark side. The super-tight close-ups of Moore reveal her usual lack of humor and what is normally called talent and also her utter determination to prevail—an unwitting reminder of how much work, in a picture like this, must go into the illusion of frivolous inconsequence. Directed by the former music-video ace McG.—*D.D.* (7/7/03) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and 34th Street Theatre.)

**FINDING NEMO**
The latest flood of wizardry from Pixar, whose productions, from "Toy Story" onward, have lent an indispensable vigor and wit to the sagging art of mainstream animation. Whether the new movie, directed by Andrew Stanton, will add much to that resuscitation is another matter. Albert Brooks provides the voice of Marlin, a non-amusing clown fish who sees his young son, Nemo, borne off in a diver's net. Not to be daunted, and plainly unfazed by the threat of both sharks and sentimentality, Marlin sets off to rescue his only child. You'll never guess how it ends. The technical skill on show is beyond question, but, as yet another computer-generated seascape ripples past, you may be tempted to ask whether that skill is driving the story; Marlin just drifts from one semi-heroic feat to the next, and the characters seldom get their hooks, or their jaws, into you with the pointed, snippy comedy that we have come to associate with Woody and Buzz Lightyear. Also, not to be impolite or anything, but how expressive is a fish, until it hits a grill?

With the voices of Geoffrey Rush, Barry Humphries, Willem Dafoe, Allison Janney, and—the funniest of the shoal—Ellen DeGeneres.—*A.L.* (6/9/03) (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, and Union Square.)

**FRIDAY NIGHT**

A woman (Valérie Lemercier) in Paris preparing to move in with her boyfriend the next morning gets stuck in a traffic jam, allows a strange man (Vincent Lindon) into her car, and goes to bed with him in a hotel without exchanging more than a few words. The movie is about a momentary connection made in the night, but the director Claire Denis's technique, which depends on non-continuous cutting, produces disconnection. In the end, not much happens between these two. The movie is dark-toned and rather furtive, its emotional transactions attenuated to the point of nullity. A perfect one-night stand is no doubt a familiar fantasy, but this movie has been made without fantasy. In French.—*D.D.* (6/16 & 23/03) (Quad Cinema.)

**GOOD NEWS**

One of the best of the lighthearted rah-rah collegiate musicals. The affable young Peter Lawford and goofy, blithe June Allyson are the leads and do the number "The French Lesson," by Comden and Green and Roger Edens, and Joan McCracken, with a gleeful look in her eyes, dances and sings the memorable novelty "Pass the Peace Pipe," by Edens and Ralph Blane and Hugh Martin. The rest of the score, including "The Varsity Drag," "Lucky in Love," and "The Best Things in Life Are Free," is from the original 1927 Broadway show by DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson (which was filmed once before, in 1930). This 1947 picture was the first film directed by the choreographer Charles Walters and the first movie script by Comden and Green.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; July 21.)

**HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE**

Yet another comedy about mismatched cops who learn to love and respect each other. This time, it's a creaky Harrison Ford as the stubbled veteran and a low-wattage Josh Hartnett as the eager rookie. Ron Shelton's script and direction are lacklustre—the agreeable manly banter of some of his previous films is missing. In its place are all of the hallmarks of formula filmmaking: the endless chases, the sophomoric quips, and the myriad urban stereotypes.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 16, Beekman, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**THE HULK**

When angry, the scientist Bruce Banner (Eric Bana) turns into a huge, rampaging monster. But then Bruce—all fifteen feet of him, green, grotesquely muscled, and mostly naked—approaches his lab colleague Betty, played by Jennifer Connelly, the mater dolorosa of the American cinema, and shrinks to his normal self. In brief, this beauty-and-the-beast movie is not a fable of mad passion, it's a fable of detumescence. The director Ang Lee and the writers James Schamus, John Turman, and Michael France can't seem to find the dramatic center of the material. They've made, of all things, a rather earnest and laborious picture about parent-child relationships: both Bruce and Betty struggle against their fathers. But without some sort of pop madness roiling around in the basement, a monster movie has very little reason to exist. Frederick Elmes's cinematography is entrancingly beautiful, but the computer-generated green giant is a dull, soulless beast, in comparison to whom King Kong is a veritable John Keats. Nick Nolte, as Bruce's mad-scientist father, has a couple of baffling rants about going beyond God and taking over the world—or something like that. With Sam Elliott as Jennifer Connelly's tough-as-nails military dad.—*D.D.* (7/7/03) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

**MANITO**

A drama about two brothers—one an ex-con, the other a graduating high-school student—and their troubled Washington Heights family. The writer-director, Eric Eason, working on a credit-card budget, cast his movie with neighborhood people, and his intimate, mobile shooting style (the camera seems to be cradled on his shoulder) is ideal for this kind of vérité filmmaking. The movie is dramatically tense and violent in a style that feels captured, not manufactured.—*B.D.* (The Screening Room.)

**MAN ON THE TRAIN**

The French director Patrice Leconte, having flitted from one genre to the next with movies as different as "Ridicule" and "The Girl on the Bridge," has now settled on his most consoling subject: the comedy of good companionship. Johnny Hallyday (who was, in his time, France's answer to Elvis) plays Milan, a low-level hit man who arrives, at the bluish end of a day, in a small French town and accepts the offer of a room from Manesquier (Jean Rochefort), a retired schoolteacher. For an hour, not much happens, and we are granted the languorous—and, to many filmgoers, increasingly rare—pleasure of watching two people lock gently together. They even trade roles: Rochefort, the most playful melancholic in cinema, learns to fire a gun, while Hallyday takes up pipe and slippers. All of this is delectable: Leconte has a taste for minor, chewed-up lives, and you can't help sighing with regret as he gathers his wits and hurries the plot toward an unnecessary climax. In French.—*A.L.* (5/12/03) (Cinema Village and Sutton 1 and 2.)

**LE SAMOURAÏ**

In Jean-Pierre Melville's coolest, sleekest, and most influential salute to the hardworking professionals of the French underworld, Alain Delon plays a hit man who dodges the minions of a double-crossing employer, as well as the police, after murdering a night-club boss. Until the final melancholy twist, Melville uses Delon's daggerlike pretty-boy looks for ambiguity—with a serrated edge. Although the antihero has a faithful moll (Nathalie Delon) and a thing for the night club's alluring pianist (Cathy Rosier), his attachments are all business, and the writer-director doesn't try to humanize him. He doesn't have to: he banks on our empathizing with Delon's loner as he outsteps an organization man par excellence, the inspector on his case (François Périer). The filmmaker's precision craftsmanship, compelling throughout, triumphs in a chase through the Métro. Cinematography by Henri Decaë. Based on the novel "The Ronin," by Joan McLeod. Released here in 1972 as "The Godson." In French.—*M.S.* (Walter Reade Theatre; July 12-13 and July 15.)

**SPELLBOUND**

Jeffrey Blitz's charming documentary follows eight elementary students competing in the 1999 National Spelling Bee; he rode the bus to school with them, interviewed their teachers, checked out their rooms, and, in one case, listened while a kid talked like a robot. The sample of children is appropriately diverse—in region, in race, in the intensity of their preparations. Some of their parents see the spelling bee as representing the immigrant dream of America in miniature, while others seem amazed at the intensity of their nerdy offspring. The competitions are tense, and Blitz cobbles together a series of heartbreaking reaction shots of errant spellers. His direction shows a clever, occasionally flippant selection of detail—the dog-eared unabridged dictionaries, the congratulatory sign posted outside Hooters, the prodigy who signs his autographs "Trust in Jesus."—*M.A.* (East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Quad Cinema, 62nd & Broadway, and Sutton 1 and 2.)

**28 DAYS LATER**

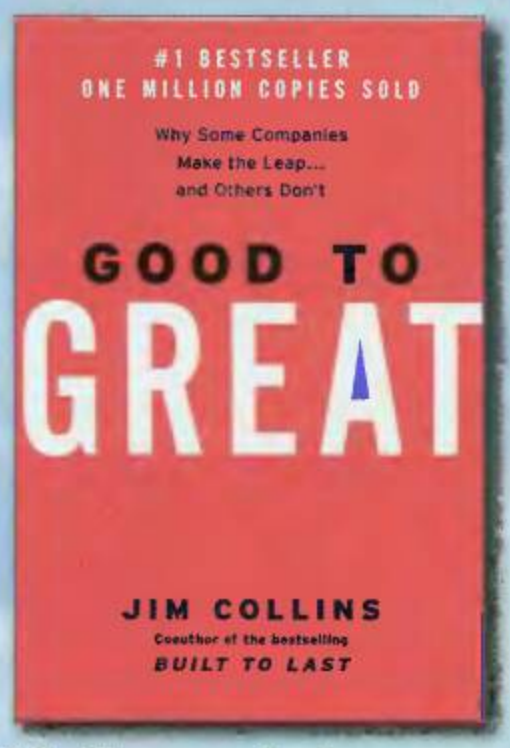
Another helpful development for the British Tourist Board. Danny Boyle's horror film, alternately savage and glum, shows London—and, by implication, most of England—destroyed by a fast-acting plague. Borne in the blood, it passes from one Brit to another with a single bite; soon, the capital is empty save for marauding zombies, leaving the unchewed—such as Jim (Cillian Murphy) and Selena (Naomie Harris)—to drift around, shop without paying, and never quite have sex. Any resemblance to normal teen-age behavior is entirely coincidental. Brendan Gleeson, much the best and cheeriest thing in the movie, plays a taxi-driver who helps them to leave town; from here on, Boyle and his screenwriter, Alex Garland, run out of gas. The picture is twitchy and annoying, flecked with blood and half-digested ideas, and too much is left unexplained. As a scheme for solving central London's



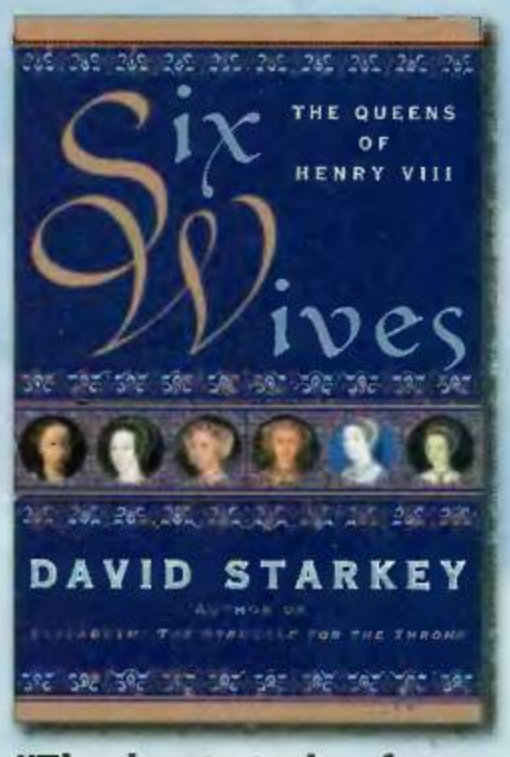
*Opening July 11, Mark Polish and James Woods in "Northfork."*

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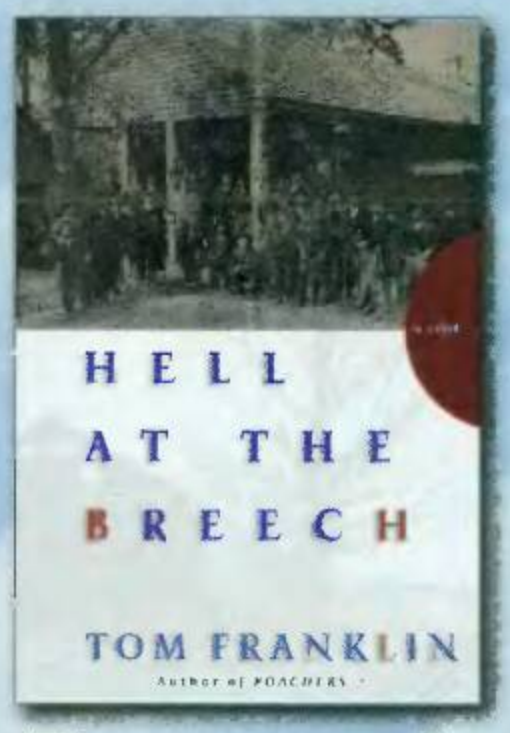
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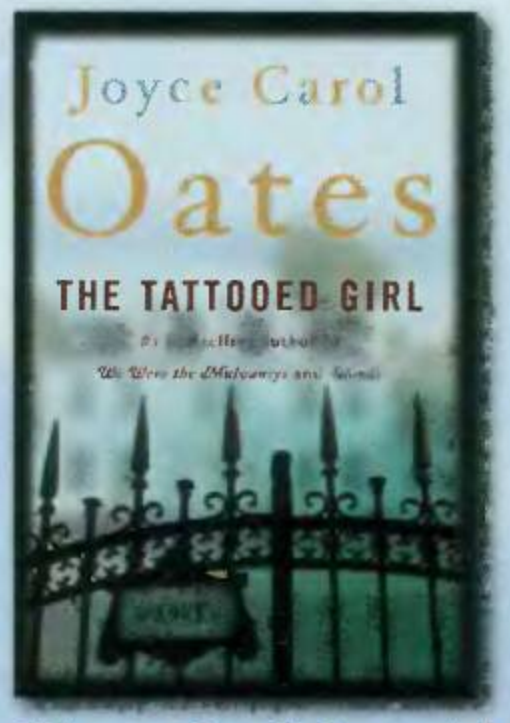

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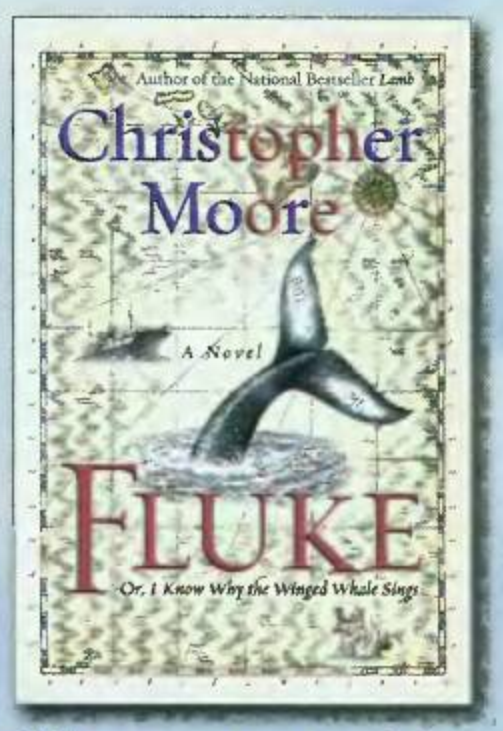

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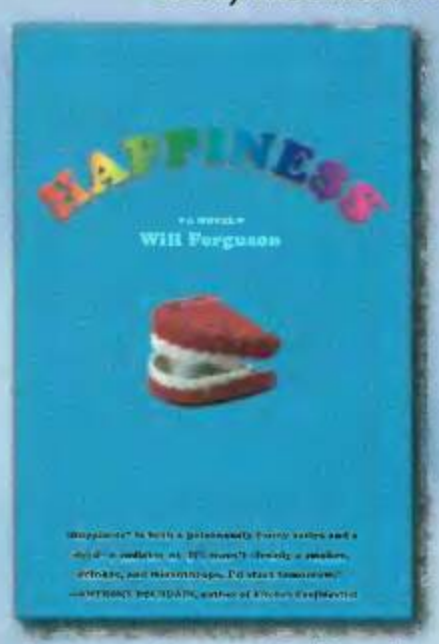

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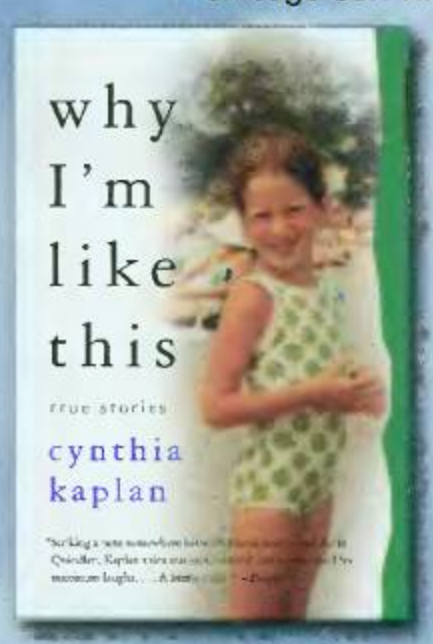

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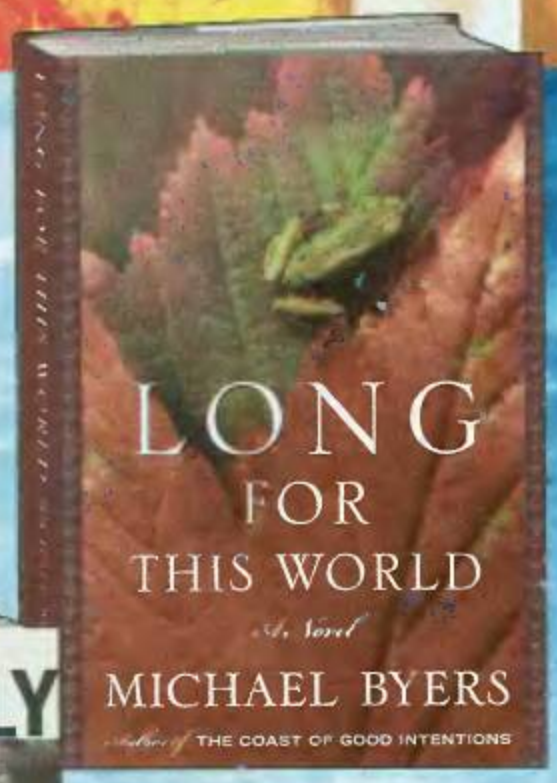
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# Summer pleasures, whatever the weather

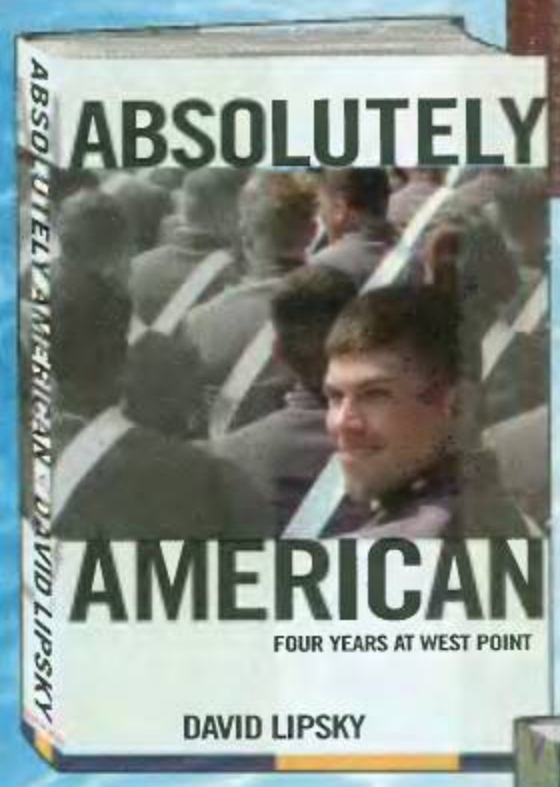



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The illuminating tale of a doctor whose astonishing discovery leads to an ethical minefield. The *New York Times Book Review* calls this, "a piercing scientific and familial romance." Rosellen Brown says it's "the best first novel I've read in years."

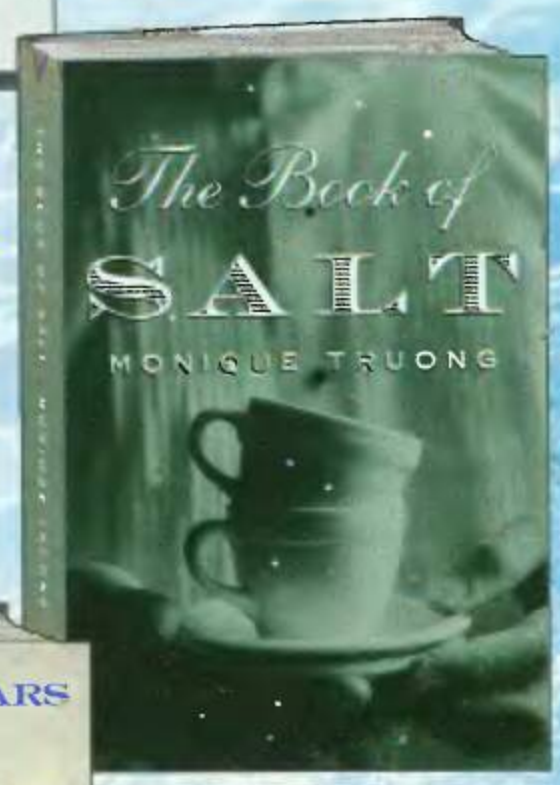



## ABSOLUTELY AMERICAN

*Four Years at West Point*

*David Lipsky*

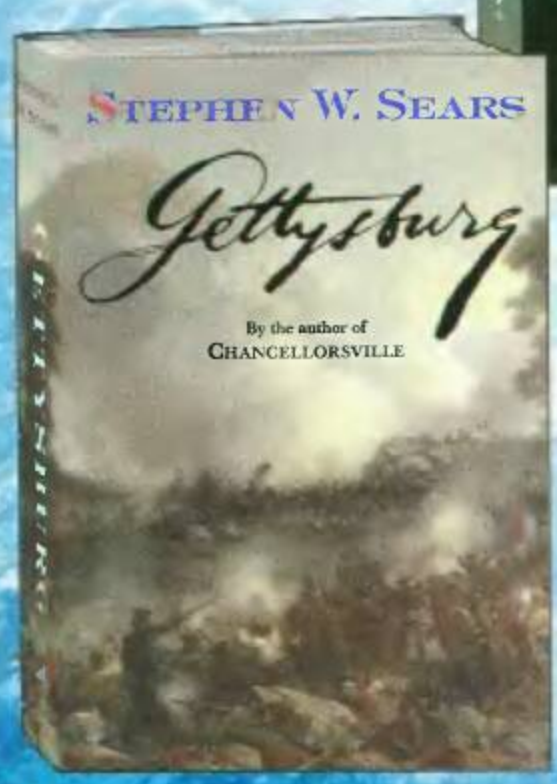
"A superb group portrait of the corps of cadets at West Point" (*Publishers Weekly*) by a *Rolling Stone* reporter with unprecedented access to these future Army officers. "An unqualified page-turner," says Douglas Brinkley




## THE BOOK OF SALT

*Monique Truong*

The *New York Times Book Review* calls this tale of exile in the 1930s Paris of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas "fascinating... tantalizing...thoroughly enjoyable."




## GETTYSBURG

*Stephen W. Sears*

"An absolutely indispensable" (*Publishers Weekly*) study of the events and meaning of the crucial Civil War battle from the author the *Chicago Tribune* calls "the finest and most provocative Civil War historian writing today."

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traffic problem, though, it is unlikely to be surpassed.—*A.L.* (6/30/03) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**WINGED MIGRATION**
The French filmmaker Jacques Perrin shows us things we have never seen before: the alien world of insects in "Microcosmos" and, now, migrating birds in all their airborne glory. Perrin and his team of camera operators employ remote-control gliders and balloons to astonishing effect—the camera literally flies alongside the birds as they wing their way north and south in their search for food. They capture some amazing solo efforts, like the common murre who plunges off a ten-story seaside cliff, as well as the beauty of numbers, as in the scene of an entire flock of white-faced whistling ducks, all turning their heads at once. The images are mostly left alone, with minimal dialogue and endurable New Age music. Bird-lovers will be in heaven, and the less ornithologically inclined will be surprised to learn that some Canada geese don't hang around golf courses all winter. Among the more unforgettable birds on display is the Clark's grebe, which can pull off the cool trick of walking on water.—*M.A.* (BAM Rose Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

## ALSO PLAYING

**BRUCE ALMIGHTY**
Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

**HUMAN WEAPON**
Film Forum.

**THE ITALIAN JOB**
Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East Cinemas, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

**RESPIRO**
59th Street East Cinema, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Quad Cinema, and Village East Cinemas.

**WHALE RIDER**
BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Sunshine Cinema, and Sutton 1 and 2.

## THEATRE ADDRESSES

*Unless noted, call 212-777-FILM for show times.*

**Angelika Film Center,** 18 W. Houston St.
**Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at Broadway.
**BAM Rose Cinemas,** 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
**Battery Park 16,** West St. at Vesey St.
**Beekman,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**Chelsea Cinemas,** 260 W. 23rd St.
**Chelsea West,** 333 W. 23rd St.
**Cinemas 1, 2, and 3,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema Village,** 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
**East 86th Street Cinemas,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**84th Street Sixplex,** Broadway at 84th St.
**Empire 25,** on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
**59th Street East Cinema,** 239 E. 59th St.
**Film Forum,** W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110).
**First & 62nd Cinemas,** 400 E. 62nd St.
**42nd Street E Walk,** 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
**Kew Gardens Cinema,** 81-05 Lefferts Blvd., Queens (718-441-9835).
**Kips Bay Theatre,** Second Ave. at 32nd St.
**Lincoln Plaza Cinemas,** Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
**Lincoln Square,** Broadway at 68th St.
**New York Twin,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**19th Street East 6,** Broadway at 19th St.
**Orpheum VII,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**Paris,** 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th St.
**The Screening Room,** 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100).
**72nd Street East,** Third Ave. at 71st St.
**64th and 2nd,** Second Ave. at 64th St.
**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd St.
**Sunshine Cinema,** 139-143 E. Houston St.
**Sutton 1 and 2,** Third Ave. at 57th St.
**34th Street Theatre,** 312 W. 34th St.
**Union Square,** Broadway at 13th St.
**Village East Cinemas,** Second Ave. at 12th St.
**Village Theatre VII,** Third Ave. at 11th St.
**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th St.

## REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

*Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.*

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through July 14: "Stephen Frear's England," a retrospective of the director's work. July 12 at 2 and July 13 at 4: "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (1987). ♦ July 12 at 4: "Prick Up Your Ears" (1987). ♦ July 13 at 2: "Bloody Kids" (†). ♦ Starting July 19: "Eyes Wide Shut: The Evolution of Widescreen Cinema." July 19 at 2: "Napoleon" (1927, Abel Gance). ♦ July 20 at 2: "The Robe" (1953, Henry Koster). ♦ July 20 at 4:30: "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955, Nicholas Ray). ♦ Repertory nights. July 12-13 at 6:30: "Fellini's Casanova" (1976, Federico Fellini; in Italian). ♦ July 18 at 7:40 and July 19-20 at 6:30: "Contempt" (1963, Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

**BAM ROSE CINEMAS**
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—BAMcinématek favorites. July 9 at 5 and 8: "Le Cercle Rouge" (1970, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French). ♦ Through July 27: "Kaurismäki Goes America." All films are in Finnish. July 10 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Calamari Union" (1985). ♦ July 11 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Crime and Punishment" (1983). ♦ July 12 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Shadows in Paradise" (1986). ♦ July 13 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Leningrad Cowboys Go America" (1989). ♦ July 15 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Total Balalaika Show" (1994). ♦ July 17 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Take Care of Your Scarf, Tatiana" (1994). ♦ July 18 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Ariel" (1985). ♦ July 19 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Hamlet Goes Business" (1987). ♦ July 20 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "I Hired a Contract Killer" (1990). ♦ July 22 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Leningrad Cowboys Meet Moses" (1994). ♦ Billy Wilder films. July 14 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "One, Two, Three!" (1961). ♦ July 21 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Kiss Me, Stupid" (1964).

**FILM FORUM**
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Through July 24: "The Freed Unit and the Golden Age of the M-G-M Musical," a tribute to Arthur Freed's classic productions. July 9-10 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "It's Always Fair Weather" (1955, Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen). ♦ July 11-12 at 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, and 9:50: "Kiss Me Kate in 3-D" (1953, George Sidney). ♦ July 13 at 1, 3:20, 5:40, 7:50, and 10: "An American in Paris" (1951, Vincente Minnelli). ♦ July 14 at 1:30, 5:40, and 9:50: "The Pirate" (1948, Minnelli). ♦ July 14 at 3:30 and 7:40: "Yolanda and the Thief" (1945, Minnelli). ♦ July 15 at 1:10, 5:30, and 9:50: "Easter Parade" (1949, Charles Walters). ♦ July 15 at 3:20 and 7:40: "The Barkleys of Broadway" (1949, Walters). ♦ July 16 at 1:30, 5:30, and 9:30: "Showboat" (1951, Sidney). ♦ July 16 at 3:40 and 7:40: "Summer Holiday" (1948, Rouben Mamoulian). ♦ July 17-19 at 1, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, and 9:40: "Singin' in the Rain" (1952, Kelly and Donen). ♦ July 20 at 1:30, 4, 6:30, and 9: "Gigi" (1958, Minnelli). ♦ July 21 at 1:30, 5:15, and 9:05: "Good News" (†). ♦ July 21 at 3:25 and 7:10: "Royal Wedding" (1951, Donen). ♦ July 22 at 1:30 and 5:25: "On the Town" (1949, Kelly and Donen). ♦ July 22 at 3:30: "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (1949, Busby Berkeley).

**FLORENCE GOULD HALL**
55 E. 59th St. (212-315-6160)—The comedies of Sacha Guitry. July 15 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Mon Père Avait Raison" (1936; in French). ♦ July 22 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Faisons un Rêve" (1936; in French).

**GRAMERCY THEATRE**
127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900)—Through Aug. 31: Summer repertory classics. July 10 at 2 and July 12 at 3: "The House of Mirth" (2000, Terence Davies). ♦ July 10 at 4:45 and July 19 at 6:30: "My Neighbors the Yamadas" (1999, Isao Takahata; in Japanese). ♦ July 10 at 6:45: "Boudu Saved from Drowning" (1932, Jean Renoir, in French) and "A Day in the Country" (1936, Renoir; in French). ♦ July 10 at 9: "The Lower Depths" (1936, Renoir; in French). ♦ July 11 at 2: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Federico Fellini; in Italian). ♦ July 11 at 5: "Croupier" (1998, Mike Hodges). ♦ July 11 at 6:45: "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish). ♦ July 11 at 8:45 and July 20 at 6:45: "Desert Fury" (1947, Lewis Allen). ♦ July 12 at 1 and July 17 at 6:30: "Real Women Have Curves" (2002, Patricia Cardosa). ♦ July 12 and July 14 at 6: "My Hustler" (1965, Andy Warhol and Chuck Wein). ♦ July 12 at 8 and July 17 at 4: "Three Kings" (1999, David O. Russell). ♦ July 13 at 2 and July 18 at 8:30: "Street Angel" (1928, Frank Borzage). ♦ July 13 at 4 and July 17 at 8:30: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor). ♦ July 13 at 6:15 and July 17 at 2: "Laughter" (1930, Harry d'Abbadie d'Arrast). ♦ July 14 at 7:30 and July 19 at 1: "Orphans of the Storm" (1921, D. W. Griffith). ♦ July 18 at 2 and July 20 at 2: "The Negro Soldier" (1955, Stuart Heisler). ♦ July 18 and July 20 at 4: "Let There Be Light" (1946, John Huston). ♦ July 18 and July 20 at 6:45: "Desert Victory" (1943, David MacDonald). ♦ July 19 at 4:15 and July 21 at 6: "The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks" (1924, Lev Kuleshov; in Russian). ♦ July 19 at 8:30 and July 21 at 8: "Near Dark" (1987, Kathryn Bigelow).

**SUNSHINE CINEMA**
139-143 E. Houston St. (212-358-0573)—Midnight movies. July 11-12: "Mommie Dearest" (1981, Frank Perry). ♦ July 18-19: "Tron" (1982, Steven Lisberger).

**THALIA THEATRE**
Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—Through July 13: Sci-Fi Flick Fest. July 12 at 1 and July 13 at 7:15: "Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan" (1982, Nicholas Meyer). ♦ July 12 at 3:15 and July 13 at 9:15: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (1986, Leonard Nimoy). ♦ July 12 at 6 and 9 and July 13 at 1 and 4: "Brazil (Director's Cut)" (1985, Terry Gilliam). ♦ Through Aug. 31: "Classic Thalia from the Kino International Collection." July 18 at 7, July 19 at 3, and July 20 at 6: "The Bicycle Thief" (1949, Vittorio de Sica; in Italian) and "Rome, Open City" (1945, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian). ♦ July 19 at 7:30 and July 20 at 3: "Dersu Uzala" (1974, Akira Kurasowa; in Russian).

**WALTER READE THEATRE**
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through July 10: "Heroic Grace: The Chinese Martial Arts Film." All films are shown in their original language with subtitles. July 10 at 2: "Ashes of Time" (1994, Wong Kar-wai). ♦ July 10 at 4:15 and 8:45: "From the Highway" (1970, Zhang Zengze). ♦ July 10 at 6:30: "Dragon Inn" (1968, King Hu). ♦ Through July 21: "Man in the Shadows: The Films of Alain Delon." All films are in French, unless otherwise noted. July 11 at 1:30 and 6:30, July 12 at 4, and July 13 at 8:20: "Purple Noon" (1961, René Clement). ♦ July 11 at 4 and 9, July 12 at 8:20, and July 13 at 2: "Mr. Klein" (1976, Joseph Losey). ♦ July 12 at 2 and 6:20, July 13 at 4:30, and July 15 at 4: "Le Samouraï" (†). ♦ July 13 at 6:30, July 14 at 3:30, and July 15 at 2 and 8:30: "The Widow Couderc" (1971, Pierre Granier-Deferre). ♦ July 14 at 1, July 15 at 6:15, and July 16 at 2:45 and 6:45: "Any Number Can Win" (1963, Henry Verneuil). ♦ July 16 at 1, 5, and 9:10 and July 17 at 4:15 and 8:30: "Nouvelle Vague" (1990, Jean-Luc Godard). ♦ July 17 at 2 and 6:15, July 19 at 4:15, and July 20 at 6:40: "Our Story" (1984, Bertrand Blier). ♦ July 18 at 1:30, 5:15, and 8:45 and July 20 at 1: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1960, Luchino Visconti; in Italian). ♦ July 19 at 2 and 8:30, July 20 at 4:30, and July 21 at 3: "Dirty Money" (1972, Jean-Pierre Melville). ♦ July 19 at 6:30, July 20 at 9, and July 21 at 1: "The Swimming Pool" (1968, Jacques Deray).




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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT

## AFRICA CALLING



As President Bush ventures into Africa, a passage from the opening pages of V. S. Naipaul's novel "A Bend in the River" comes to mind. It's the moment when the narrator, Salim, after driving for days from the East African coast into the interior of the continent, recalls, with a hint of dread, the counsel of an old friend: "You can always get into those places. What is hard is to get out."

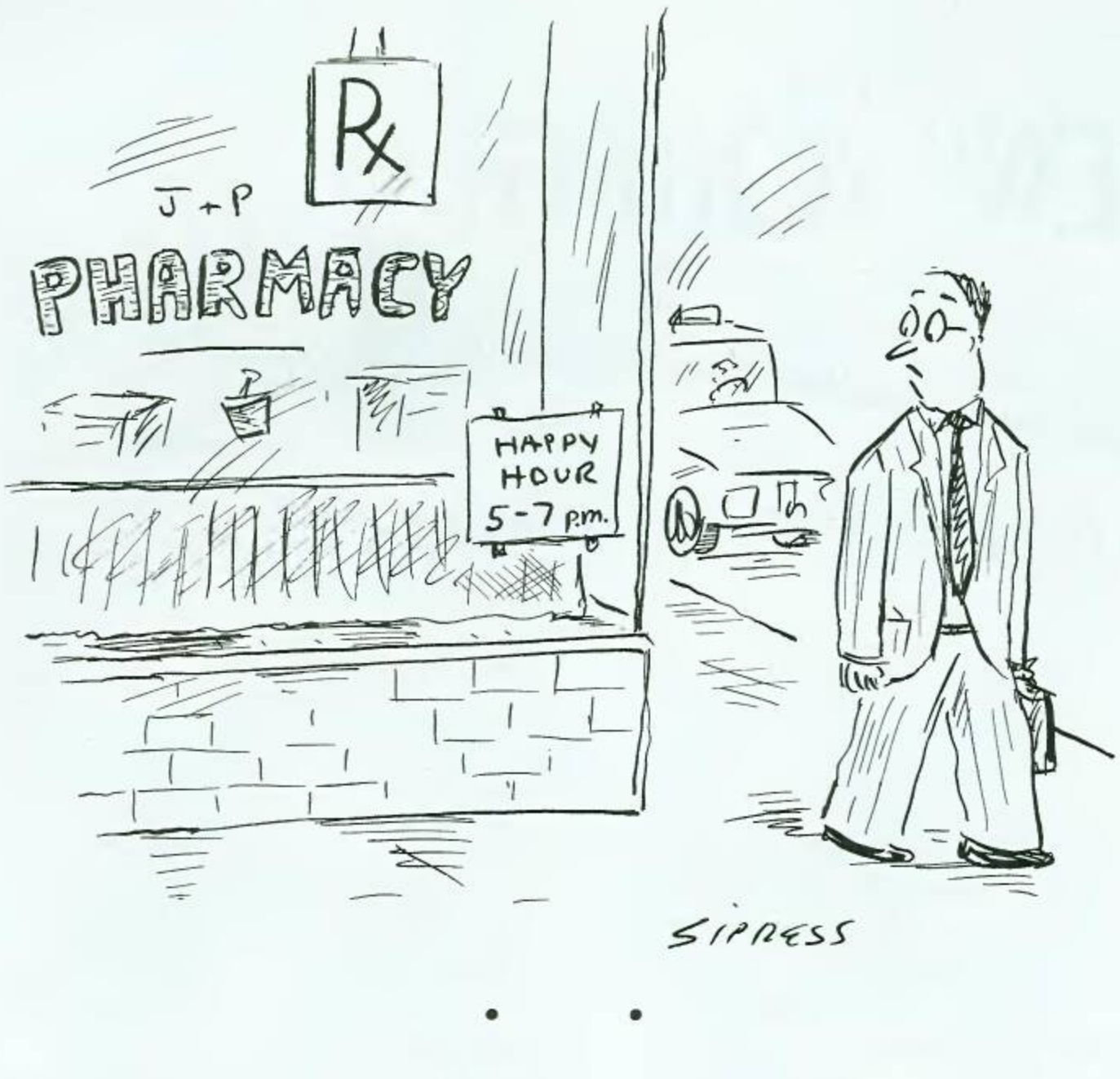
Bush turned to Africa in shoes heavy with the dust of Afghanistan and the sands of Iraq. He has no apparent exit strategy for either of those countries, which he got into, for better or for worse, with a spirit of avenging justice and a conviction that the national interest was at stake. His mission in Africa is different. It appears that he was drawn to the continent, which has figured only marginally in the Administration's strategic considerations (as an occasional battleground in the war on terror and as an alternative source of oil), precisely because he might more easily have continued to ignore its woes and its challenges. No sitting Republican President has made a state visit to sub-Saharan Africa before, and, in laying out his agenda in a speech to the Corporate Council on Africa, on June 26th, Bush made it clear that he saw the continent not as a threat but, rather, as an opportunity to prove himself as a champion of oppressed and abused humanity. He sounded like a missionary, preaching a gospel of African uplift through entrepreneurship, market reforms, and free trade, and at the same time pledging his support for efforts to end the seemingly incessant agony of war, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and corruption endured by vast numbers of Africans. He singled out the desperate plight of Congo and of Sudan; he declared that President Charles Taylor of Liberia "needs to step down so that his country can be spared further bloodshed"; and he expressed a desire to see the Zimbabwean tyrant, Robert Mugabe, relinquish power as well. But Bush was careful not to say what, if anything, America might do to protect Africa's most brutalized people; he merely expressed solidarity in a spirit of noblesse oblige. "We believe that human suffering in Africa creates moral responsibilities for people everywhere," he said. "We recognize a moral duty to bring hope where there is despair, and relief where there's suffering." And he avowed, "Our nation has more than a set of interests; I believe we have a calling."



The President could not have imagined that his words would immediately be put to the test, and that even before he left for Africa he would be forced to consider whether to send American troops into Liberia at the head of a multinational peacekeeping force. Since 1989, when Taylor emerged as one of Africa's most ruthless and relentlessly destructive warlords, the country has been devastated by virtually non-stop civil war. He has ruled by rapaciousness and caprice, preying not only on his own people but also on his West African neighbors, sponsoring campaigns of butchery in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, and Guinea. In recent years, as international sanctions began to sap his strength, Liberian rebel groups pressed their advantage; and in June, when a U.N.-sponsored war-crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone indicted Taylor on charges of crimes against humanity, the scene in Liberia once again turned apocalyptic.

By the time Bush demanded that Taylor step aside, the rebels—themselves a ragtag lot of blood-bathed opportunists—had overrun much of the capital, Monrovia, and close to a thousand civil-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL




ians had been killed in the fighting. About a third of Liberia's three and a half million people had fled their homes, a cholera epidemic had broken out, and crowds were gathering daily in front of the United States Embassy, chanting Bush's name and pleading for American troops to come and save their country. Against this backdrop, Taylor called Bush's bluff, announcing that he would not go unless America intervened, because he refused to abandon his people to his enemies. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan seized the moment and all but ordered Washington to muster a peacekeeping mission, and within days European and African leaders had joined in the chorus.

A purely humanitarian intervention in Liberia—a country where, Donald Rumsfeld grumbled, America has no vital interests—may sound like the fulfillment of the high moral calling that Bush claimed had inspired him to engage with Africa. In fact, the President has a horror of peacekeeping missions. As the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, affirmed last week, Bush stands by the criteria he outlined for such operations in the 2000 campaign: "The mission must be clear. Soldiers must understand why we are going. The force must be strong enough so that the mission can be accomplished. And the exit strategy needs to be well defined." Yet, even as Washington buzzed with reports of prominent officials declaring that as many as two thousand American troops would take the lead in Liberia, none of these conditions had been met. The President did not want to be rushed to commit more troops abroad, but the intensity with which the pressure to do so mounted—coupled with the desirability of reaching a decision before he left for Africa, and the Liberians' seemingly overwhelming belief that America was their only hope for salvation—made it clear that he would be widely damned if he didn't.

In 1998, President Clinton went to Africa and expressed shame for failing to stop the genocide that had engulfed Rwanda four years earlier. Implicit in that statement was a promise that things would be different next time. Apologies are not Bush's style, but the promise should appeal to him. To rid Liberia of Charles Taylor, and, ideally, to deliver him to stand trial in Sierra Leone, is surely as worthwhile a humanitarian undertaking as the ouster of Saddam Hussein. (And wouldn't it be a welcome change to feel wanted by the people of a country we set out to liberate?) Ultimately, of course, Liberia will require much more than a couple of thousand soldiers on a triage mission to stanch the bleeding—and it is just one small country on a huge continent packed with urgent needs that Bush has vowed to do something about. Meanwhile, he had no real choice but to intervene. To abandon Liberia would be to abandon any claim of concern not only for Africa but, more broadly, for the moral underpinnings of his exercise of power.

*—Philip Gourevitch*

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE DEPT.
## THE WAY WE ARE



If, in years to come, an average New Yorker is asked to recall the most newsworthy events of June, 2003, he or she will probably be stumped. The biggest story in town was the record-breaking rainfall, which, though significant in the context of global warming and footwear ruination, was soft news. We were not blighted by terrorism, or by political scandal, or even by any particularly egregious celebrity misbehavior, Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher's hookup notwithstanding.

However, to Simon Song, an intern on the photo desk at the *News,* June provided a parade of extraordinary sights and outlandish events. Song, a thirty-eight-year-old native of the People's Republic of China who is enrolled at the University of Hong Kong, has been keeping an online diary of his activities and impressions, along with examples of his photography, at nydailynews.weblogger.com. There, in slightly off-kilter English, he has chronicled his encounters with the city's justice system ("We went to Court House to cover Martha Stewart. We stood in the chilly wind for nearly 4 hours"); the World Trade Center site ("I was deeply moved by what I saw. It gave me strength and power rather than tears and fear"); and the general cultural richness of the city. On June 4th, he recounted, his assignments included "Policemen issuing tickets, the raining day today and a naked demonstration against the animal leather clothes."

While Song's natural readership consists of his friends and his family, the site provides, for the New Yorkers who have

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stumbled across it, a transformation of our more mundane comings and goings into exotic objects of anthropology. Of the opening night of "Turandot" in Central Park, Song wrote, "It is not a Opera performance. It is more like a after-work big party." And of a subway ride: "This morning, I saw a black girl reading a book 'The Art of War.' I told myself: 'This is a nice book name.' Then I saw the author of the book: Sun Tze. Oh, can you imagine seeing a foreigner, a girl, reading 'The Art of War' on a NY MTA?"

Song, whose résumé reveals that he was working in the Xinhua News Agency in Beijing during the Tiananmen Square crackdown, in 1989, recounts his surprise at attending an anti-police rally at City Hall Park. "It was a scene that seemed strange to me," he wrote. "People shouted loudly against the police and the policemen stood quietly beside to keep the order and safety of the demonstrators." The news judgments of his employer have also been worthy of note. On June 23rd, Song wrote, "I transmitted three *weather pictures* to the Daily News system. They like to have *weather pictures*."

Not every New York moment has been easy for Song, who has been living at the International House, near Columbia University. His wife remained in Beijing, and loneliness has been a problem. After visiting Central Park, Song wrote, "The bad thing is that I don't have a friend with me there," and he has reflected on his incapacity for leisure. "No matter in the HKU or here near Columbia, I wonder why I don't have time to make myself feel easy: sitting in the sunshine, drinking a coke, reading a novel. Or going to a beach, enjoying the breeze. Life is pushing hard for me."

But Song's New York is, over all, a place of enlightenment, amusement, and opportunity. Song attended the gay-pride parade, and declared himself amazed. "Thought I might see a bunch of people on streets. But it turned out to be such a big parade," he wrote. "American people like to find themselves a lot of fun. People standing beside the streets cheered the parade. You don't need to be gays or gay right activists to enjoy a colorful parade and the happy atmosphere." Song's photo of the day showed a parader wearing a rainbow-colored Statue of Liberty outfit, a sight that moved him to remark upon what, even in a slow news month, remains the undercurrent of all our daily affairs: "New York is a city full of surprises and wonders."

*—Rebecca Mead*

## TAOS POSTCARD
## LUNCH WITH AGNES



Agnes Martin, the Saskatchewan-born Abstract Expressionist painter—a contemporary of Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, and Barnett Newman—whose tranquil paintings are in the Whitney, the Guggenheim, MOMA, and other museums, abandoned New York a good three decades ago to live spartanly and to work, somewhat reclusively, in New Mexico. Now residing in Taos at the age of ninety-one, she was due the other day to be called on at the small bungalow she lives in near the big Taos Mountain, by her friend and neighbor Tony Huston, in his white pickup truck. He is a master falconer and a screenwriter (of, among other movies, a film of James Joyce's "The Dead" made by his father, John Huston).

"Every now and then, I get to have lunch with Agnes," Huston said. "There's such solidity in her presence. She's not wobbly. She occupies all the space given to her. In 1997, she was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale. The next year, President Clinton gave her the National Medal of Arts. Her paintings sell for millions, her dealer says. She spends a lot of time just sitting, painting in her head.

"She finds serenity and power in the Taos Mountain, as so many of us here do," he went on, driving bossily over a sun-blinding, narrow dirt road leading to Martin's home. "Either the mountain likes you or it doesn't, and I'm sure the mountain likes Agnes."

He turned off the dirt road into a circular enclave called Plaza de Retiro. A spotless white E320 Mercedes was parked in front of her place. "Her car's here," he said. He knocked on the door and peered into the window. "But she's not home. She probably got a ride to her studio."

Not long after, he found her, in her studio, in a three-hundred-year-old adobe cottage half a mile away. The studio has white walls, a skylight, and a small window with shutters, and inside it was arranged simply: a work table with paintbrushes and three rulers; a couple of chairs. Hanging on a wall was a painting in progress—a five-by-five-foot white canvas with one blue stripe at the top.

Agnes Martin has a full, strong, sun-browned face that looks as if it belonged on Mt. Rushmore. She has gray hair, cut straight with bangs, in what used to be called a Buster Brown style, and she is muscular and full-bodied, with large, strong, thick-fingered hands. She was wearing black sneakers, bluejeans, and a blue tunic of thick Guatemalan cloth, with four engraved silver buttons going down from the neckline. "The silver buttons come from Tony Reyna's shop on the Pueblo reservation—no tax," she said. "I want to get more of these silver buttons.

"Tomorrow, I'll drive *myself* over here," she said. "I have twenty-twenty vision. A policeman just gave me the driver's test. He said I was a good driver."

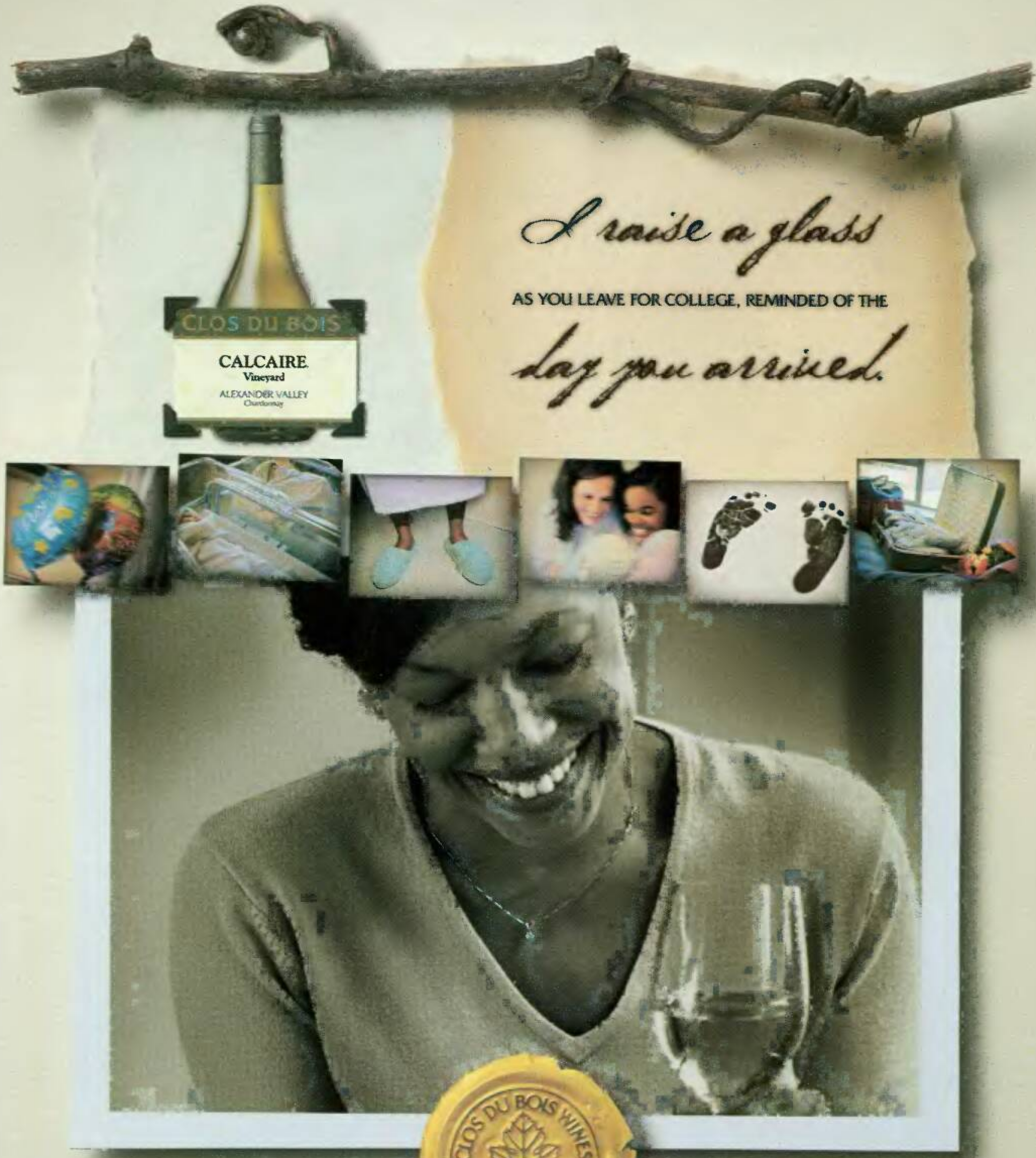
Huston and Martin started talking about painting, and he asked whether



*Agnes Martin*

she allows her dealer's opinions to influence her work.

"No, I paint to myself," she said. "It comes from outside. I don't believe in that inner stuff. You sit and wait. I'm always painting in my imagination. They go so quickly in your imagination. I only work three and a half hours a day. Painting is hard work. It's very hard to paint




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straight. You paint vertically, but the paintings hang horizontally—there are no drips that way."

The happiest part of making paintings, she continued, is "when they go out the door and into the world. They go straight to my dealer, Arne Glimcher, at Pace Wildenstein. It used to be simpler. They used to fly and get there in one day. Now they have to be in fancy crates, and they go by truck to New York. Takes five days."

It was well before noon. She had eaten breakfast, she said, at her routine time, 6:30 A.M., in the communal dining room at her enclave.

"I don't eat supper," she said. "And I never watch television. I have no television. I have no radio. For news, I read the headlines on the local papers. I listen to music. On CDs. Beethoven's Ninth. Beethoven is really *about* something. I go to bed at 7 P.M. I go to sleep when it gets dark, get up when it's light. Like a chicken. Let's go to lunch."

At Huston's truck, she hoisted herself nimbly into the front seat for the drive to a restaurant, close to the Taos Mountain. It had grown cloudy. There was a distant rumble of thunder. At the restaurant, a waitress poured water. Martin drank almost a full glass. "This water is so good," she said. "I'll have the mushroom-filled ravioli. Yesterday, I had bratwurst and sauerkraut." Huston asked whether she ever missed New York.

Without skipping a beat, she said, "They tore down my wonderful studio there. They put a Chemical Bank in its place. I worked for thirteen years in that studio. A sailmaker's loft, on Coenties Slip. It was right on the East River, so close I could see the expressions on the faces of the sailors. That's when I was friends with Barney Newman. We'd talk about Picasso, who was a good painter because he worked hard. But he had a lot of goofy ideas. I liked Andy Warhol, but I was afraid to go visit him because of his friends. Barney would do wonderful talk with me. He'd say about painting, 'It's transcendent.' A lot of people didn't believe him. But I did. It has to be about life. Barney and the other Abstract Expressionists gave up defined space, and they gave up forms. They all liked my paintings. I feel as though I owe them a debt. Barney hung my shows. Too bad about Barney. The doctor told him to stop, to give it up. Because it's hard work. So he gave it up, but he started again, and he died of a heart attack." She drank another glass of water. "This water is so good," she said again.

*—Lillian Ross*

## DEPT. OF ELIGIBILITY
## NINE FEET UNDER



The big perk in being able to trace your ancestry to an owner of the New York Marble Cemetery, the city's oldest nonsectarian public burial place, behind the Provenzano-Lanza Funeral Home, off Second Avenue above Second Street (not to be confused with the New York City Marble Cemetery, across Second Avenue, which has monuments aboveground), is that you are eligible for occupancy, though none of the people at a recent owners' meeting looked ready to descend into the vaults on a permanent basis. Inspired by a yellow-fever epidemic, the developer of the cemetery, one Perkins Nichols, in 1830, encased the dead in marble vaults well belowground, so that their germs could not escape. Eroding plaques are set into the "distinctive rubble walls" surrounding the cemetery, and one of the first orders of business at the meeting was how to raise some funds, in these desperate times, to restore the plaques and keep the walls from crumbling and the owners from being sued.

Who are the owners of the New York Marble Cemetery? They tend to be people with Dutch, English, or French surnames—Abeel, Rowlands, DuBois—who have an interest in genealogy and at least one ancestor who was a prominent New Yorker in the eighteen-thirties. Twenty owners showed up for this year's meeting. They wore nametags that identified them by ancestor and vault number. The meeting was run by Peter Van Cowenhoven Luquer (Bailey, Vault 22), of Vermont, who knows refreshingly little about his Bailey ancestors but says that he had a great-great-great-uncle named Payne, who wrote "Home Sweet Home." He was ably assisted by Anne Wright Brown (Wright, Vault 83; Markoe, Vault 110), of Maryland, who knows everything about everyone's ancestors—she has published a catalogue of the original vault owners—and was the force behind cleaning up the cemetery, locating descendants, and shaking them down for donations.

Ms. Brown is the only owner who has actually been in the vaults. When her time comes, she says, she expects to end up in her husband's family's plot in downtown Baltimore (barring divorce). Deborah Luquer said that her husband might be interested in the Lower East Side in perpetuity, but, as for her, "Over my dead body." (She had practiced that.) Neilson Abeel (Van Nest, Vault 149), a New Yorker transplanted to Oregon, is unusually rich in real-estate holdings of the cinerary sort. In addition to the vault in the Marble Cemetery, he is the custodian of plots in Newark's Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, if he chooses to be planted for eternity under the Garden State Parkway; in Mt. Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts, should he prefer to lie with his Stackpole relations; and in London's Highgate Cemetery, in the neighborhood of Karl Marx. Penelope Rowlands (Hosack, Vault 52), moved by the sight of a field of green in downtown Manhattan, wrote a check for its preservation but declined to be buried there, explaining, "I'm not going to die."

The last burial to take place in the New York Marble Cemetery was in 1937, but the board of trustees is hopeful. In the words of the cemetery's Web site, "Renewed awareness and appreciation could lead to burials." Wilfred J. C. P. (Skip) Keats (Ogilvie, Vault 11), who had stumbled onto the Web site when he was surfing for a source of syrup and misspelled "maple," suggested that they appeal to a genealogical society for a contribution and was deflated to hear that the genealogical society had already appealed to them. Could they sell vaults to outsiders? There is one virgin vault on the premises, ownership of which has apparently been traced to an ailing little old lady in Long Island; she is said to be more interested in the possibility of selling it to defray her expenses in this life than in occupying it in the next. Could they auction it off on eBay? Is there a bidder alive who is the right combination of rich, social-climbing, and resigned to mortality? And how much is it worth? The answer came from Eliot Rowlands (Hosack, Vault 52): "It's priceless."

*—Mary Norris*

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## THE FINANCIAL PAGE
# PATENT BENDING

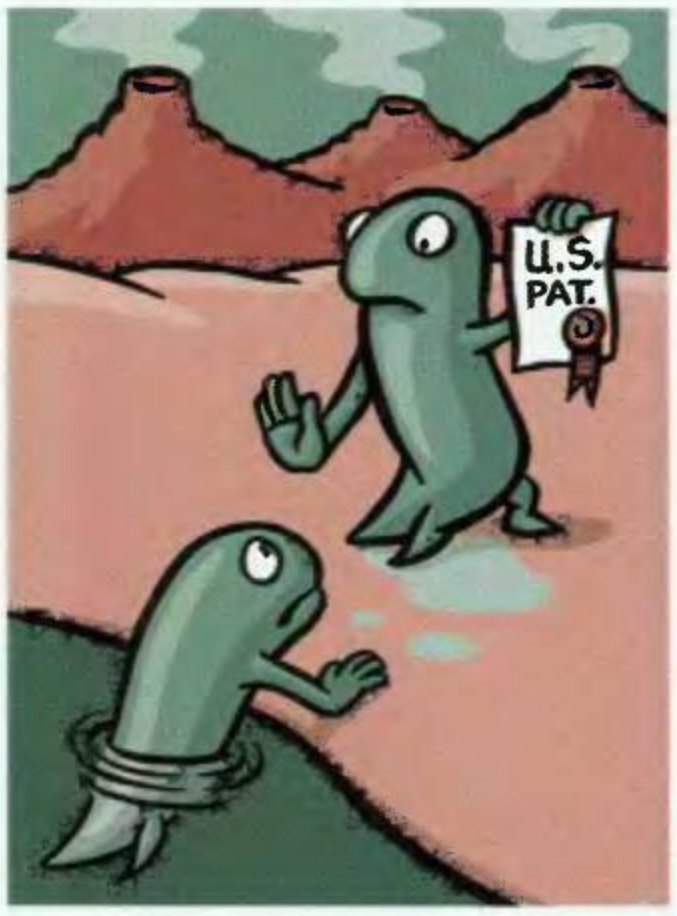
The American newspaper business as we know it was born on September 3, 1833, when a twenty-three-year-old publisher named Benjamin Day put out the first edition of the New York *Sun*. Whereas other papers sold for five or six cents, the *Sun* cost just a penny. For revenue, Day relied on advertising rather than on subscriptions. Above all, he revolutionized the way papers were distributed. He sold them to newsboys in lots of a hundred to hawk in the street. Before long, Day was the most important publisher in New York.

One thing that Day did not do was patent any of these innovations. Soon after the *Sun* appeared, penny papers made their début in Boston and Baltimore; in New York, James Gordon Bennett started the *Herald*, mimicking the *Sun's* price and sales methods. By 1840, the *Sun* and the *Herald* were the country's two most popular dailies.

This is how American business worked until very recently. Innovators came up with new ways of selling products, handling suppliers, running organizations, or managing information. If the ideas were good, the innovators got rich, but they also got imitated, which made them less rich than they might have been. It was great for everyone else, though. The competition lowered prices and increased quality; the new ideas spread and were improved upon. The mail-order catalogue, the moving assembly line, the decentralized corporation, the frequent-flier mile, the category-killer store—none of these radical ideas were patented.

Those were the days. Now the first thing someone with a good notion does is press the government to protect it. Priceline patented its reverse-auction method for selling cut-rate airline tickets. I.B.M. patented a method for keeping track of people waiting in line for the bathroom. Last month, Netflix, a company that runs an online DVD-rental subscription service, got a patent covering, among other things, the way its customers request titles and the way it sends out DVDs. And eBay is now in court appealing a verdict that it infringed on a Virginia man's patent. The crime? Selling auctioned items at a fixed price. What gall.

For most of American history, it was next to impossible to get a patent on what the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office called "a mere method of doing business." A business method was considered to be an idea—selling newspapers in the streets, delivering packages overnight—and ideas of this sort were not patentable. But in July, 1998, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit did away with that principle. The case, State Street v. Signature Financial, involved software that Signature had written to enable it to administer mutual funds more efficiently. But the court's language




was broad enough to embrace any business process (as long as it was new and "nonobvious" and had a "useful, concrete, and tangible result"). The gates opened, and in the past five years thousands of business-method patents have been granted. One inventive soul won a patent for a system of using pictures to train janitors. Another got one for describing a way to cut hair with both hands.

All patents, of course, stifle competition. That's why inventors like them. But business-method patents have an especially chilling effect, in that novel approaches to commerce can be ruled off-limits to others. What eBay was accused of copying was a concept, not a computer code. As James Boyle, a law professor at Duke, put it, "Under this logic, one could get a patent on the idea of fast food—not a different way to broil the burger but the idea of fast food itself."

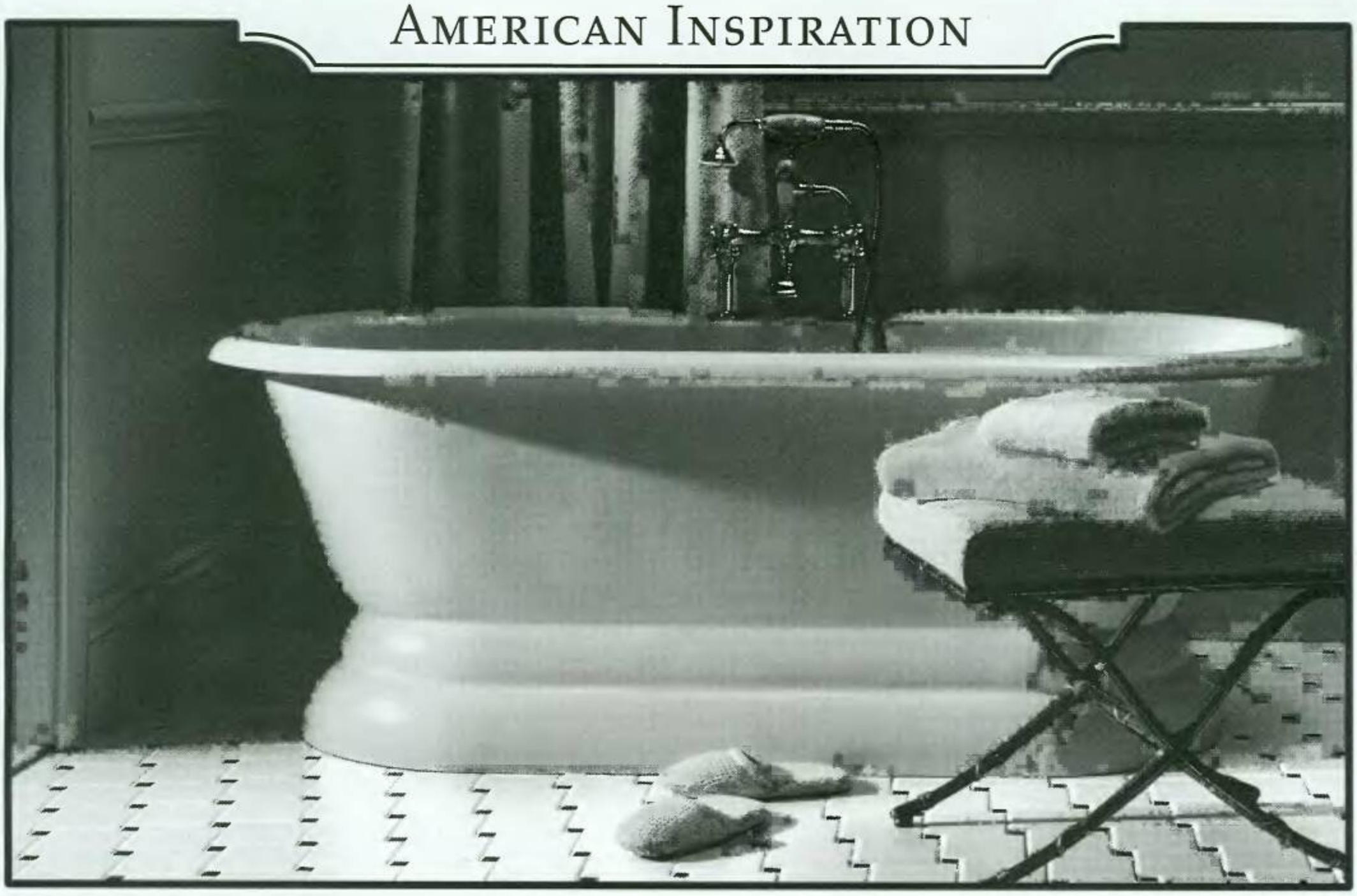
Although intellectual-property experts like Boyle have loudly criticized the State Street decision, Congress has shown little interest in doing anything about it. (In fact, lawmakers have proposed bills that would make things even worse, such as allowing sports "techniques" to be patented. Imagine pitchers paying a royalty every time they threw a forkball.) That has left the matter of business-method patents in the hands of patent judges and the staffers at the Patent Office—people who spend most of their time working with patent-seekers, and who are therefore more sympathetic to their interests than to the public's. (Economists call this phenomenon "regulatory capture.") The office says on its Web site that its role is "to grant patents," but surely its role should be to distinguish between innovations that are worth patenting and those that are not.

Americans have traditionally been chary about intellectual-property rights. Thomas Jefferson, who served on the nation's first patent board, wrote, "If nature has made any one thing less susceptible than all others of exclusive property, it is the action of the thinking power called an idea." Although we have always had a vibrant patent system, we've managed to strike a balance between the need to encourage innovation and the need to foster competition. As Benjamin Day, Henry Ford, and Sam Walton might attest, American corporations have thrived on innovative ideas and new business methods, without owning them, for two centuries. In the past decade, the balance has been upset. The scope of patents has been expanded, copyrights have been extended, trademarks have been subjected to bizarre interpretations. Celebrities are even claiming exclusive ownership of their first names (consider Spike Lee's objection to Viacom's cable channel Spike TV). The new regime's defenders insist that in today's economy such vigilance is necessary: ideas are the source of our competitive strength. Fair enough. But you don't compete by outlawing your competition.

*—James Surowiecki*

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# THE PROFESSOR OF BASEBALL

*Can the master of statistics help the Red Sox beat the Yankees?*

BY BEN McGRATH

The Boston Red Sox really want to beat the Yankees. The team's president and C.E.O., Larry Lucchino, has declared the Yanks an "evil empire," and the principal owner, John Henry, speaks of being "destined to knock off Goliath." Last winter, after a season in which the Sox won ninety-three games—but nonetheless fell short of New York for the seventh straight year—Boston installed a new general manager and replaced more than forty per cent of its roster. Perhaps the club's most significant personnel move was the signing, to a one-year contract, of a big, lumbering fifty-three-year-old right-hander from Kansas (six feet four, and well over two hundred pounds) who spends far more time on the Little League diamond, where he keeps the stats, than at any big-league ballpark. He is Bill James, a former boiler-room attendant who, almost thirty years ago, set out to debunk the conventional wisdom proffered by television and radio commentators—"baseball's Kilimanjaro of repeated legend and legerdemain," as he called it—by using statistical evidence.

In the process, James himself has become part of baseball legend. To some, he's a philosopher-hero who brought baseball out of the Dark Ages; others consider him a calculator-punching pedant with too much time on his hands. The once proud and conservative Red Sox, by hiring James to be their Senior Baseball Operations Adviser, have joined the ranks of those teams—such as the Oakland A's and the Toronto Blue Jays—which are now emphasizing the principles of "sabermetrics" as an alternative to the steadfast reliance on weather-beaten scouts with radar guns, hunches, and cigars. (The term, which James coined two decades ago, echoes the acronym for the Society for American Baseball Research, and denotes "the search for objective knowledge about baseball.") The Red Sox have not merely sided with the brainiacs; they've enlisted the help of the founding nerd.

James is a man of many seeming contradictions. He is an English major who has made a name for himself as a math whiz. He has been called the Sultan of Stats, despite arguing that you should "never use a number when you can avoid it." He is a self-described "scientist," who frequently reveals little concern for precision, a relentless counter who can't be bothered with individual sums. James is a rigorously organized thinker who is hopelessly disorganized when negotiating mundane daily responsibilities. He is, he says, a "completely ethical person," and yet he is obsessed with crime. ("Why the justice system doesn't work better than it does is to me a topic of great fascination.") He has long been revered by rationalists for promoting the virtues of objective analysis, and yet, after an extended hibernation from writing about contemporary baseball—during the nineties, he focussed mainly on the history of the game—he reëmerged on the statistical scene with a new metric to define the over-all contribution of each player, whose formula has a built-in "subjective element," allowing him to adjust the numbers more or less as he pleases. And, after so many years of presenting himself as the consummate outsider, he has now, in middle age, gone inside.

Working for the Red Sox is James's first regular job since the nineteen-seventies, when he kept an eye on the furnaces at the Stokely Van Camp pork-and-beans plant, in Lawrence, Kansas, about fifty miles from his home town. It was a good job, in that it allowed him a lot of time to keep to himself and think—particularly about baseball, a subject that had preoccupied him since early childhood. A natural skeptic, James had de-




*Bill James spends most of his time trying to project the future of the Red Sox.*

BEN KATCHOR

cided never to believe something (that ballplayers peak in their early thirties, say) simply because he'd been told it was so. He was, he said, "a baseball agnostic." He also hated to let questions linger when the answers could so obviously be measured with just a little—O.K., a *lot* of—time and patience. Each day, he lugged his Baseball Encyclopedia and a stack of box scores to his boiler-room post, and compiled evidence—that starting pitchers have no effect on attendance, that catchers have a great effect on base stealing (amazingly, this had not previously been apparent), that ballplayers peak, in fact, in their late twenties.

In 1977, he decided to share some of these findings directly with the public. He placed a one-inch ad in the back of *The Sporting News*, asking three dollars for the "Baseball Abstract: Featuring 18 Categories of Statistical Information That You Just Can't Find Anywhere Else." The Abstract was sixty-eight single-sided pages, photocopied and stapled. Only seventy-five people responded, which—even though Norman Mailer and the screenwriter William Goldman were among them—was not exactly the kind of success you quit your job over. Undeterred, James kept at it, and turned the book into an annual. By 1980, the Baseball Abstract looked almost like a real book, with artwork on the cover: an ape, posed as Rodin's "The Thinker," contemplating a baseball. A couple of years later, it *was* a real book, published each spring thereafter by Ballantine.

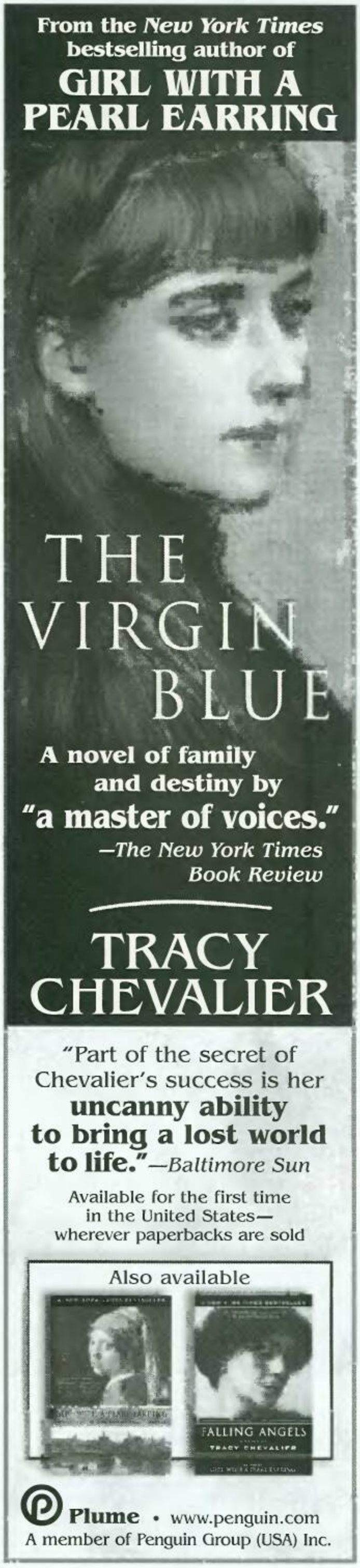
James wrote that he wanted to approach the subject of baseball "with the same kind of intellectual rigor and discipline that is routinely applied, by scientists great and poor, to trying to unravel the mysteries of the universe, of society, of the human mind, or of the price of burlap in Des Moines." His books proceeded simply, directly, empirically. He responded to every new statement or unearthed fact with a dozen questions: If this is true, then what must also be true? What are the conditions under which it might not be true? And, if it is true, so what—why should we care? What does it all mean?

Reading Bill James was like taking an advanced course in extemporaneous-debating technique. The prose was colloquial—"manneristically unmannered," the writer Veronica Geng called it—and full of non-baseball analogies ("The Astros are to baseball what jazz is to music"; "The way that managers have tested the limits of starting pitchers for the last century is quite a bit like the way they used to test for witches, by pond dunking"). Each essay or chapter was clearly outlined, and rife with italics—James's effort to create what he called "a lighted pathway between the question and the answer." He could write descriptively, such as when he addressed Pete Rose's late-career style: "the mad dash to first which has slowed to a furious waddle, the slight, tense quickening of his practice strokes at a key moment of the game, which passes *sotto voce* a sense of urgency to the dugout behind him, a sense of danger to the one across the way." And he was almost always funny, if a little cruel. In 1979, James wrote that Art Howe (the current manager of the Mets) "pivoted on the double play almost as well as Bobby Doerr. Doerr was one of the greatest pivot men ever, but he is now sixty-one years old, and he gave up the game some years ago, when he began to pivot like Art Howe."

But what set the writing apart—and put the Abstract on the *Times*' best-seller list—was the accessibility of the logic, the insistence on eliminating biases and ignoring illusions, the practical tone. James's approach seemed distinctly American, descended from the nineteenth-century pragmatist tradition exemplified by his namesake, the philosopher William James.

Our James brought barstool argument to the page, and enforced a rigid sobriety. He set forth rational, elaborate methods for evaluating greatness, for example, and when he released his "Historical Baseball Abstract," in 1985, he established a new pecking order for the celebrated baseball players of our time. (Sorry, Catfish Hunter. Step on up, Bobby Grich!) More important, however, James treated his readers to an egghead's theory of winning baseball, in which outs—the only finite resource—are to be avoided at all costs, and walks (which are outproof) are considered more than just acceptable. Walks are admirable, and on-base percentage, not batting average, is the bedrock of a productive offense.

Baseball insiders—people who played and coached baseball every day—had a

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tendency to view outs as a necessary by-product of scoring runs. Experience showed them that a sacrifice bunt, properly executed, could lead to a game-tying base hit. They could see it right in front of them. They also remembered instances when the count was three-and-oh and a wanna-be hero, rather than take the walk, delivered a bloop single on a junk pitch, driving the go-ahead run home from second. What they couldn't see from the dugout—but what James tended to "see" without watching at all, from the boiler room, even—were the things that didn't happen, or that might have happened, but for the bunt, or for the lunge at a pitch outside the strike zone: the rallies that could put the game out of reach if you'd let the batters hit away instead of handing your opponents an out in the service of a lone score; the batters who accepted a walk, and then came around themselves to score, without risking the lazy fly out that was perhaps five times as likely as the lucky Texas leaguer.

If James's message was largely ignored by the insiders twenty years ago, a few people who would eventually inhabit the baseball establishment were hooked. John Henry first came across the Abstract in the early eighties, when he was in the process of forming a commodities-trading fund (John W. Henry & Company). He found the analytical, show-me-the-numbers approach compelling, and in keeping with a philosophy he was beginning to apply to the fund, which adhered strictly to historical price-trend analysis. The strategy served Henry well—*Money* has called him "perhaps the world's foremost commodities trader"—and in 2001 he was able to use his considerable earnings to help buy the Red Sox, for seven hundred million dollars, the highest amount ever paid for a baseball franchise.

Theo Epstein, the new Red Sox G.M., was a fourth grader at Brookline Elementary School in Brookline, Massachusetts, when he discovered James, in 1984. "I remember reading the Abstract and thinking, God, after reading one book I've changed the way I look at the game on the field," he said the other day, while watching batting practice at Fenway Park. "I never thought that could happen from reading a book." Epstein was twenty-eight when he was appointed to his post last year, making him the youngest G.M. in baseball history.

Several Jamesians now hold high office in baseball. Billy Beane, a first-round draft pick who began reading back issues of the Abstract after his outfielding career stalled, was named general manager of the Oakland A's in 1997. Beane presented a non-threatening face—a square jaw, with a mouth full of tobacco—to the nerd agenda, which he began, almost immediately, to implement. In 2001, one of his like-minded deputies, J. P. Ricciardi, was hired to run the Blue Jays. The A's—does it need mentioning?—have outperformed the Red Sox for three years running, and "Moneyball," Michael Lewis's best-selling book about the team's success, has recently brought extramural fame to Beane and the sabermetric approach.

Late last summer, Henry and Epstein, who was then the assistant G.M., were sitting in a cramped room on the third floor at Fenway, discussing their wish to assemble a front office staffed by people who "get it" (shorthand, essentially, for those who can remember the moment they first read a Baseball Abstract). Joking, Epstein suggested that they hire Bill James himself. Although James had seemed to position himself deliberately on the margins of the profession, Henry sent him an inquiring e-mail, just in case. James had, as it happened, worked in the past as a consultant for three major-league teams, but was forbidden to acknowledge his employment. The baseball fraternity, even though it was curious about what he had to offer, still regarded him as a stats-obsessed freak, and James bristled at authority. "The ways that decisions were made by baseball executives twenty years ago were phenomenal and borderline bizarre," James told me recently. "And as soon as I began to deal with general-manager-type people I began to realize that I wasn't one of them. I'm just not the type of person who would thrive inside of an organization as a rule. I always felt that if I ever put myself in a position where I had to wait for someone to say, 'Oh, here's a bright young man, why don't we promote him?,' I would be waiting one hell of a long time." And he might well have been, given his tendency to say and write what he thought about the kinds of people who worked inside

organizations—"an assortment of half-wits, nincompoops, and Neanderthals like Don Drysdale and Don Zimmer [who] are not only allowed to pontificate on whatever strikes them, but are actually solicited and employed to do this."

The Red Sox offered James a senior position up front—in effect, a baseball professorship—and, to their surprise, he agreed. James is now responsible for a quarterly report covering various baseball subjects—like a mini-Abstract, with a controlled circulation—and he'll travel to Boston to keep abreast of the baseball climate on Yawkey Way several times during the year. But, in essence, his job is to foster a "culture of ideas which helps guide the team," as he put it. "My role is that I tell them what I think whenever they ask me to, and that I tell them what I think whenever I can't keep my mouth shut." Often enough, they actually listen.

By the time the Red Sox announced the James hire, in November, he had already filed his first report—eighty-six pages, spiral-bound, assessing the team's options for the upcoming free-agent market, and demonstrating a "very striking phenomenon," as he later told me, in which Red Sox teams, thanks to the asymmetries of Fenway Park, have historically tended to succeed in relation to the number of left-handed batters in their lineup. (The more the better—contrary to popular belief, which holds that the Green Monster, an oversized wall barely three hundred feet down the left-field line, makes Fenway a righty's delight.) Epstein and James were in daily contact during the winter months, as the Red Sox restocked their roster.

In one important sense, James has been preparing for this job all his life. Growing up a fan of the hapless Kansas City A's, and then, after the A's moved away, switching to the Royals, he developed a proper hatred of the Yankees. "The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant" (1954), the Faustian tale by Douglass Wallop that inspired the musical "Damn Yankees," was one of James's favorite books when he was a teen-ager. James has three children—Rachel, seventeen; Isaac, fifteen; and Reuben, the Little Leaguer, who is nine—and he reads them Wallop's novel every year. "Kansas City hates New York more than Boston does," he told me.

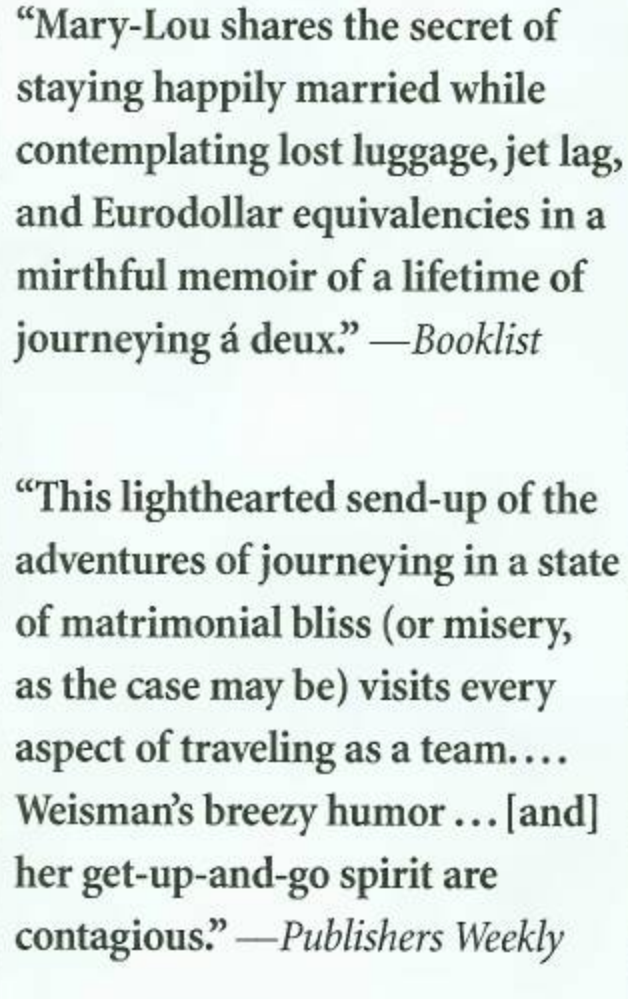
Boston fans, like James, are serious skeptics, but their world view is born of bitterness and a deep-seated pessimism. The residents of Red Sox Nation (roughly, New England, north of New Haven) have seen more than enough to be wary of anything presenting itself as new and better: their team hasn't won the World Series since 1918, despite frequent flirtations (Johnny Pesky, Bucky Dent,




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Bill Buckner—each name a barb with a vivid and painful memory attached). Dan Shaughnessy, the dean of Boston *Globe* sportswriters, told me that he's "dubious" of the James experiment, and that he'd even heard grumbling among the press corps about the possibility of lineups being faxed in daily from Kansas.

In 2001, the year before the Red Sox hired him, James published a revised edition of his Historical Abstract, which included an essay about the evolution of the modern relief pitcher. In it, he questioned the common practice of bringing in an ace "closer" to record just the final two or three outs of a game. Why should managers wait until the ninth inning, and only when they've got a lead, to use their best relief pitcher, if the game may well hinge on a bases-loaded situation in the seventh? With the help of a computer simulation, James showed that this amounted to a waste of resources; a run saved during the seventh inning of a tie game, for instance, was much more valuable than, say, a run saved in the ninth with a lead. "Essentially, using your relief ace to protect a three-run lead is like a business using a top executive to negotiate fire insurance," he wrote.



So when the Red Sox allowed their closer, Ugueth Urbina, to sign with Texas over the winter, and expressed a willingness to try unconventional bullpen assignments—they had a capable committee of relievers who would adapt on the fly—it was not hard to detect James's influence at work. Traditionalists saw in this the classic tension between science and humanity: sure, it looks good on a computer, but there's a psychological component to closing a baseball game which can't be taught. Even before the season started, pundits were griping that the Red Sox were trying to "reinvent the wheel."

On Opening Day, Boston ran up a 4–1 lead against the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, perennial bottom-dwellers. Pedro Martínez, the Sox' all-everything starter, departed for the showers in the eighth inning, and ceded control to the bullpen—which in turn ceded the game, unbelievably, to the Devil Rays. Two innings, three pitchers, five runs. Shaughnessy received a message on his answering machine that night from a local grandmother (such is the intensity of Boston sports culture). "I'm seventy-three years old, and I've never called before, but I'm so disgusted," she said. "What's with this closer-by-committee?"

It was the greatest day in the short history of the Devil Rays franchise ("Nothing else comes close," Tampa's spokesman said), and the beginning of a frustrating spring for the Boston Brain Trust. Over the next several weeks, while the Yankees were off to one of the best starts in history, the Committee, as the relief-pitching crew was soon known throughout Red Sox Nation, choked repeatedly, recording along the way an earned-run average that could win a few football games.

Grady Little, the Sox' manager, began to talk about having visions of his pitchers throwing the ball over the wall. One reliever, Mike Timlin, blamed the full moon for a particularly egregious eighth-inning collapse against the Angels—rational Jamesian stuff. And it certainly didn't help matters that the Red Sox' biggest bullpen bogeyman was turning out to be Ramiro Mendoza, whom Boston had plucked away from the Yankees—yes!—in the off-season. Mendoza's double-digit E.R.A. was being offered as proof that Lucchino was right—the Yankees *were* evil, and had gone so far as to plant a secret agent inside 4 Yawkey Way.

It is commonly believed in pro-baseball circles that the Yankees have, in effect, two competing front offices—one in New York, headed by Brian Cashman, the general manager, and another in Florida, headed by George Steinbrenner. Not to be outdone, the Red Sox can now be said to have two as well, though they work more or less in tandem. The headquarters are at Fenway, on the third floor, and the annex—the think tank—is some fifteen hundred miles away, in a ramshackle four-room house near the train tracks in Lawrence, where James works. From the outside, the structure appears abandoned; the paint is peeling, and the lawn hasn't been mowed in a year. Inside, the place is fittingly professorial—musty, with broken furniture, thousands of books (from "The

Federalist Papers," to "Greatest Detectives," to "Total Baseball"), and boxes of videotapes and old magazines strewn about. An upright piano remains from the previous owner; a Sigmund Freud action figure stands on the mantelpiece, among a dozen or so other statuettes and busts; and a poster offering five hundred dollars for the capture of Jesse James hangs on a wall near the kitchen. (Many of Bill's relatives claim Jesse as an ancestor, but Bill finds the evidence insufficient.)

I visited James at his office in early May. The night before, an hour's drive to the east in Kansas City, the Sox had clawed back from a five-run deficit against the Royals and taken the lead in the top half of the ninth—only to squander it, again, in the bottom half. (Hit, walk, hit, plunk, error.) When I arrived, James, who has a salty gray beard, was pacing in his office, barefoot, with his shirt untucked, engaging in the Socratic method with an assistant, Matthew.

"What's Chen's best pitch? Mmmhmm. A lefty, right? Are you sure? I could swear . . . What about Seanez? Yes, but wouldn't you rather have the guy who gets hurt than the guy who can't get anybody out?"

James stopped pacing and sat down behind his desk, which is next to a small bed—for catnaps and the occasional overnighter. "We're evaluating a couple of available pitchers"—Bruce Chen and Rudy Seanez—"to see whether they're less offensive than the bullpen we have," he explained. "I would say that essentially what I'm doing is trying to visualize a successful career on the end of a career that we've had so far.

"We don't have anything which suggests that one of these pitchers is going to break loose in Fenway," he continued. "However, nonetheless it is true that in every baseball season you can identify forty pitchers who were pitching ineffectively, changed teams, and started pitching effectively." James hopes to identify the conditions that may forecast such improvement in the future, and, for this and other studies, he has compiled a database—"a massive file, which I will send to the Red Sox with my next report, which has everybody in the major leagues, how hard they throw, what pitches they throw, and certain other information about them."

James has long asserted that minor-league statistics are a reliable predictor of major-league performance, like high-school grades for a college career. As we spoke, he stared periodically at a computer screen, where he had pulled up the records of some of the Red Sox' six farm teams. James e-mails frequently, which is how he communicates with Boston ("I don't do telephone," he likes to say), and he relies on the Internet for statistics, but he's not a Web enthusiast. He can't—or won't bother to—find articles that people send him if more than one click is required to read them.

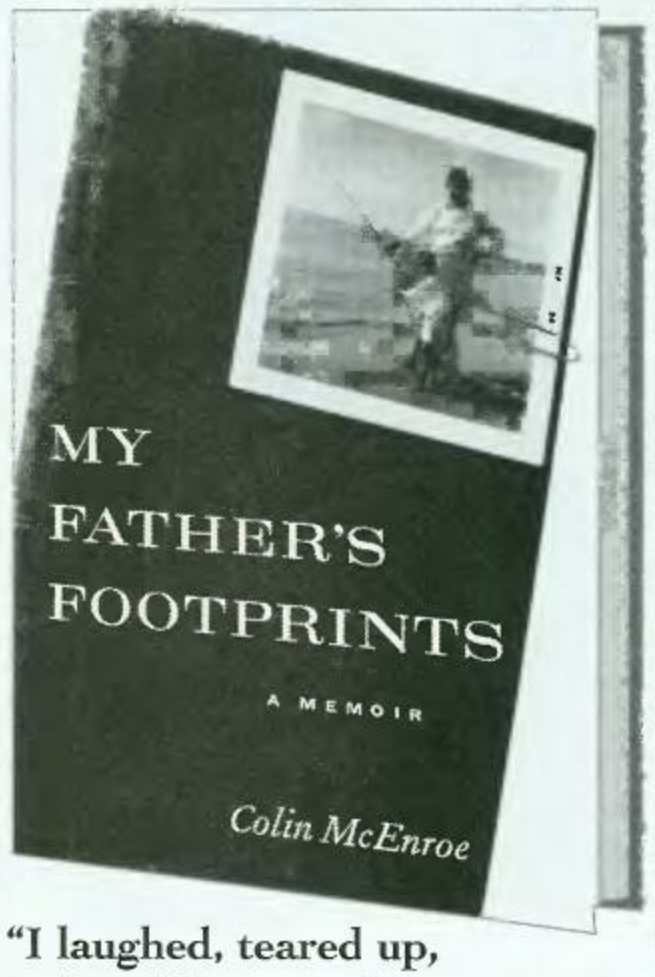
I asked whether pressure from the media and fans was causing the Red Sox to react hastily to the apparent bullpen crisis, given that it was still early in the year, and that bad luck and a small sample size—alarm bells to any good Jamesian—had clearly played a part in making the relief staff seem so inept.

"You presented that as if perception is one thing and reality is another," James said. "Perception *becomes* reality. . . . I'm trying desperately to avoid comparing our bullpen to a festering sore—would you get us a Diet Coke from the refrigerator over there?" (Diet soda is the fuel that drives the think tank; there were two cases on the floor in front of his desk, and another in the fridge.) A horn sounded in the distance, and the desk began to shake as a train passed.

James lives within walking distance of the office, which is probably just as well, since he has been meaning to get a new car to replace his dying Honda for more than a year now. His house—a well-appointed but not overly grand Victorian—is just a few blocks from the one-story cottage he shared with his wife, Susan McCarthy, when the Abstract was in its self-published infancy. James met Susan—or Susie, as Abstract readers know her—at the pork-and-beans plant, where she had taken a summer job as a writer of inventory tickets, to pay for college. She is now a professional artist, and she made several of the busts on James's office mantel.

That evening, James attended the Red Sox-Royals game with his wife and all three kids. He bought cotton candy and peanuts for his daughter, shouted "I got it!" whenever a foul ball came near, and showed Susie how to use the


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*"And now, with apologies to Cole Porter."*

• •

miles-per-hour indicator on the scoreboard to distinguish a fast ball from a change-up. He filled out an All-Star ballot and selected five Red Sox players, prompting Isaac, who is by now well schooled in the merits of eliminating bias, to ask, "Dad, is that because you really believe it or because they're Red Sox?" James replied, "I really believe it *because* they're Red Sox."

Doug Mirabelli led off the top of the third for Boston with a line drive to the gap in left-center. He chugged down the first-base line—Mirabelli has a plumber's build—and rounded the bag widely, as if imagining a double, before retreating safely to first. James saw this play immediately in terms of what could have happened, and was relieved. "You know, if he'd been a little faster, he'd have been thrown out at second," he said. Grady Little evidently wished that Mirabelli had, in fact, been a little faster and gone for the double, and he decided to give up an out to make it so: Johnny Damon laid down a bunt and Mirabelli moved over to second. James winced. The Sox got the one run that Little had been seeking. Fortunately, Boston continued to hit, and in the sixth, after the lead-off man reached base again, they eschewed sacrifices and walked and singled their way through a four-run rally, good enough to provide the cushion they needed. Final score: Red Sox 7, Royals 3.

The following day, the Red Sox acquired Bruce Chen, and the day after that they added Rudy Seanez.

It was the second week of June before James went to Boston for the first time this season, and the Sox had managed, despite erratic play and the dreaded bullpen, briefly to claim first place in the division by half a game. The Yankees were suffering from a mid-season free-fall—Steinbrenner was thought to be contemplating a pink slip for the sainted manager Joe Torre—and, whatever the pitching woes, the off-season additions to the Red Sox lineup had the team set to challenge the franchise record for runs scored.

Interleague play now brought the St. Louis Cardinals to town for the first time since the fall of 1967, when Bob Gibson defeated the Red Sox in the seventh game of the World Series, thereby continuing Boston's championship drought, which, at that point, was already five decades old. Before the game, James showed me around the Fenway front office, which is divided into two wings. One, he explained, was full of "people just a few years out of college, who dress casually, work really hard, and are really smart." Theo Epstein is among these. "Down the hall, there are people who are my age, who dress really well, and are also smart, but they don't work quite as hard," James said. These include holdovers from the pre-John Henry era. When James had arrived at the stadium that morning, dressed, as usual, in a polo shirt and chinos, he'd found a vacant desk in the kids' wing and plugged in his laptop.

By five o'clock, he was on his sixth Diet Coke. He looked up the bullpen's E.R.A.—5.77, or thirtieth out of thirty teams—as he does once a day. "I worry about it more and more," he said, and walked down to the field to watch batting practice. That night, the Red Sox rallied late to tie the Cardinals, 7–7, heading into the ninth. Brandon Lyon, who had become the default closer (Committee be damned), entered the game and promptly yielded two doubles and a base hit. The Cards won, 9–7.

James and his younger colleagues stayed in the office until after 1 A.M. that night, determined, he said the next day, to "work the problem to death." One option was to acquire a particular tall left-handed pitcher who was said to be available. Someone had floated the theory that tall lefties were apt to be unusually effective at Fenway, where a ball being released from high off the right side of the pitcher's mound would be obscured by the backdrop of fans' T-shirts in the right-center-field bleachers, thus delaying batters' reactions for a vital split second. Epstein asked James to check it out, so he did what he does better than anyone else—he devised a quick study. He identified thirty-six lefties, going back to 1987, who had won at least one game in the American League, and who were six feet five or taller. Of those, perhaps twenty-five had pitched in Fenway. He then compared those pitchers' performances in the park and

away from it—and concluded, alas, that there was insufficient evidence to support the theory. Another myth debunked. Oh, well.

The next day, Pedro Martínez, who had been been out with a sore shoulder, returned from the disabled list, and the Red Sox—with a lineup featuring six left-handed batters—knocked out nineteen hits to win by 13–1. The Yankees, meanwhile, were being *no*-hit by the Astros, down in the Bronx. James stuck around to watch the end of that stunner on TV with Epstein and some others and then walked back to his hotel with a smile. "This is just about a perfect baseball day," he said. "I don't know that it gets better than this."

Despite his struggle to help heal the suffering bullpen, James was not hired merely to react to the daily dilemmas that befall a baseball club. The Culture of Ideas is not meant to produce a set of Band-Aids; it is meant to prevent certain kinds of wounds altogether. One goal that James and company are working toward involves identifying worrisome physiological and stylistic traits among pitchers that lead predictably to injury. James also spends a fair amount of time each week trying to project a future without Martínez or the All-Star shortstop Nomar Garciaparra, both of whom have expensive contracts coming up for renegotiation in fifteen months. Each will be in his early thirties, and thus past his peak, according to Jamesian law.

"What I'm trying to do is to create ways to think about the real problems of baseball front offices in an organized way," James had told me earlier in the spring. "I've actually had some really interesting insights into the game and developed some very interesting methods in the few months that I've worked for the Red Sox, and it's very frustrating not to be able to discuss them with the public." Frustrating for the public, too, or at least for the more scholarly fans, who can no longer feel so confident that they are on the cutting edge.

Epstein was grateful to have James in town, to test ideas on him, and to give him a sense of how the team operates. But he reminded me that such familiarity has its drawbacks as well. "That's where Bill being in Kansas and having his theoretical background is an advantage," Epstein said. "He's not bogged down by the day-to-day grind of being with a baseball team and sort of losing the forest for the trees, you know?"

Back in Lawrence, Bill James is keeping to himself, thinking, trying to construct a better understanding of the world outside baseball. He turns on C-SPAN—which he watches more than any other channel—and finds another politician lying, thus presenting the kind of puzzle that he has been trying to solve all his life: "You have to try to reconstruct the organization of their thoughts so that it reaches the point of defending the absurd proposition that they are defending, and then try to reconstruct the organization of your own thought, so that you have a place to put the true fact which is consistent with your underlying belief." He decides to revisit the manuscript of a book about famous crime cases, which he's been working on for years: "I think about writing as much as I think about baseball. The issues of why people believe what they believe and how you persuade them to see things your way are extremely interesting and extremely critical to me." He thinks back to past losses by the Kansas University basketball team that still nettle him (he's taped all their tournament games, and gone back over them, frame by frame, making a log of each possession): "I have this horrible compulsion to understand what happened." Before long, he begins to daydream, and his thoughts return, as always, to baseball, and to the Yankees: "All of the dreams I have in which we are successful are dreams in which we succeed in reducing the Yankees to a more appropriate stature in life." Later, he will resume his nightly routine of reading "The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant" to Reuben—for what he hopes is the last time.

I keep thinking, however, about an e-mail that James sent me after I visited him in Kansas, in which he tried to explain the connection between his obsession with crime stories and baseball. "I feel a need to be reminded, day in and day out, how easy it is for a fantasy to grab hold of your foot like a rope, and dangle your life upside down while brigands go through your pockets," he wrote. "The essential message of crime books is: Deal with the life you've got. Solve the problems you have, rather than fantasizing about a life without them."

Tomorrow, the bullpen awaits. ♦


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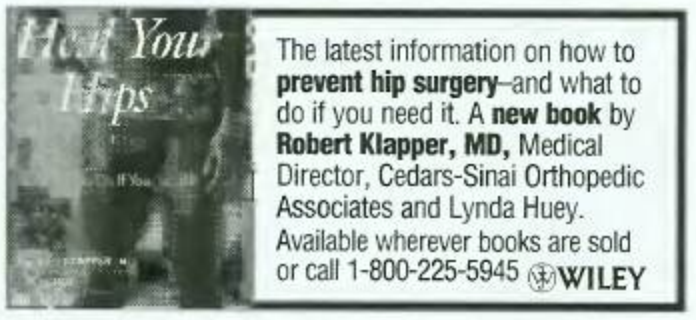
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ANNALS OF LAW

# FAJITA JUSTICE

*How a fight over takeout led to a citywide police scandal.*

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

The Bus Stop Saloon, in San Francisco, has pool tables, a pair of video-golf machines, more than half a dozen televisions, and free popcorn. It also has a prime corner location on Union Street, where its awning boasts of a "place where friendships are formed to last a lifetime." The Bus Stop hardly has the look of a city landmark, like the Golden Gate Bridge or the City Lights Bookstore. Yet, over the past several months, the cheerful bar has become just that. It has entered local lore as the focal point of a peculiar law-enforcement scandal, one that has, in varying degrees, engulfed the city's mayor, Willie Brown, its police chief, and its district attorney. Even by the baroque standards of San Francisco, the scandal has from the start laid oddity upon oddity.

On the night of November 19, 2002, about a hundred police officers gathered at the House of Prime Rib, on the fringes of downtown, to celebrate the promotion of Alex Fagan, Sr., to assistant chief of the department. After the dinner, which ended around midnight, several officers decided to continue the festivities at the Bus Stop, which is about ten blocks away. Some of the cops apparently made the short trip in drag-race-style competitions with one another. Three young officers—Matthew Tonsing, David Lee, and Alex Fagan, Jr., the son of the assistant chief—travelled to the Bus Stop together. The trio remained there until closing time, 2 A.M., and then they lingered on the sidewalk out front.

Meanwhile, about a hundred yards away on Union Street, the Blue Light, a smaller bar once owned by the singer Boz Scaggs, was closing, too. A twenty-five-year-old man named Jade Santoro, who had earlier been drinking at the Bus Stop, had then gone to the Blue Light, where his friend Adam Snyder was the bartender. Unlike the Bus Stop, the Blue Light serves food, and Snyder had just presided over Taco Tuesday. As Snyder later testified before a grand jury, he ordered steak fajitas. The kitchen closed before the bar, so, when Snyder finally got around to leaving, his food had been waiting for some time. "The fajitas were cold, I take it?" Snyder was asked by the prosecutor.

"At that point, yes."

"But they were going home with you?"

"The life of a bartender," Snyder replied.

Santoro helped Snyder shut down the Blue Light, and they walked toward Santoro's car, which took them past the Bus Stop. There they ran into the three cops, who were drinking beer on the sidewalk. One of the officers noticed Snyder's package, and said, "Give me your food." The bartender refused to surrender his fajitas. Santoro stood up for his friend, saying, "It is his food. Just leave him alone." More words were exchanged, and the officers started pummelling the two men, especially Santoro, who emerged with a broken nose, a concussion, and cuts and abrasions on his face, arms, and legs. Snyder called 911. In his testimony, Snyder said, "I went and picked up my fajitas that had slid over to the side of the street, and at that point it was kind of a lost cause, so I threw them away." By then, the police had arrived, and Fajitagate began in earnest.

San Franciscans have dissected these events with great care, and, in this restaurant-obsessed city, it is probably not surprising that the following question arose: Why would someone who had just eaten at the House of Prime Rib, which is known for its large portions, crave more food only a few hours later?

Alex Fagan, Jr., who was twenty-three and a rookie with the department, had missed most of the dinner for his

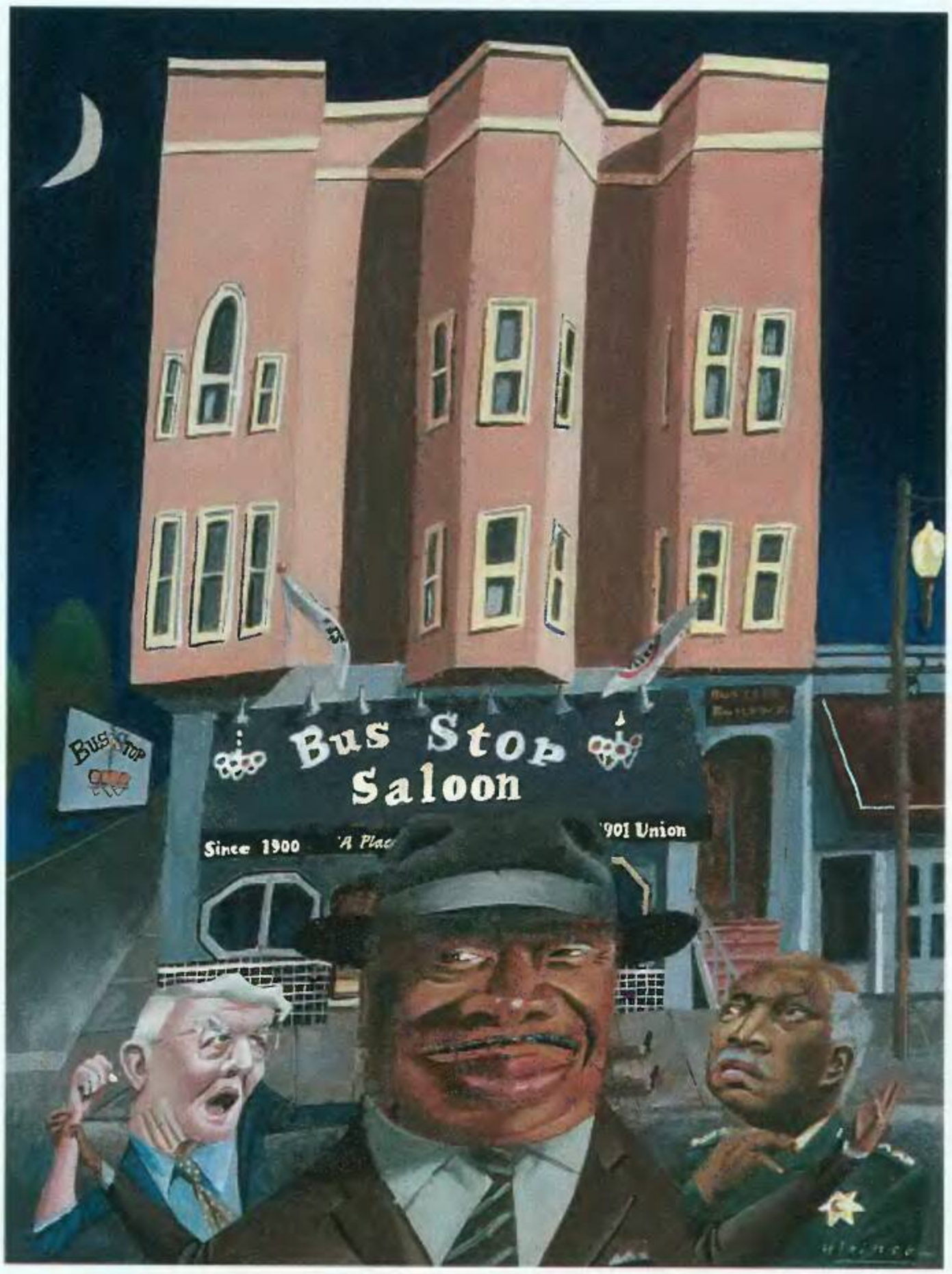
father. When he finally showed up, he wasn't dressed for a celebration—he wore a shirt, Levi's, and "thongs or shower shoes," according to grand-jury testimony. The younger Fagan seems to have spent much of the night drinking instead of eating. Even before the Bus Stop incident, he had a dubious record as a cop. As the San Francisco *Chronicle* reported, over a thirteen-month period Fagan had used force in sixteen encounters with suspects, sending six to the hospital.

In this respect, Fagan, Jr., reflected one part of the history of the San Francisco Police Department. "It's generally a very benign police department," Peter Keane, the dean of the Golden Gate University School of Law, said. "It doesn't have that violent edge to it that the L.A.P.D. has had, going back to the days of their Chief Parker. Our police department is a lot like San Francisco itself. It's kind of a get-along, tolerant, not terribly efficient institution." There was, however, an exception to the norm. "The one rogue factor is, back in the seventies and the eighties there was a coterie of narcotics officers who took pride in being Dirty Harrys," Keane said. (Clint Eastwood's Harry Callahan was a San Francisco detective.) "Fagan, Sr., was a part of that group, but he never got in any particular trouble for it. The central figure was Captain Gregory Corrales. He was the hero of the cowboy faction of the police department."

A swarm of police descended on the Bus Stop in the immediate aftermath of the assaults, and Greg Corrales was one of them. (Corrales was also the commanding officer of two of the policemen involved.) The victims, Santoro and Snyder, quickly identified the three assailants, who were still in the area when the first police arrived, and Fagan, Jr., Lee, and Tonsing were detained by the newly arrived cops. But at the heart of Fajitagate is whether the three alleged assailants received privileged treatment because of their status. They were allowed to speak to one another, change clothes, and avoid a blood-alcohol test for several hours. Also, the police on the scene did not conduct a "cold show"—that is, bring the victims directly to the suspects to make an immediate identification. The next step—the job of determining whether the three officers should be prosecuted and whether others on the force conspired to help them—belonged to the city's district attorney, Terence Hallinan.

The Hall of Justice, where both the district attorney and the police chief of San Francisco work, was completed in 1961; the building mocks its portentous name with dirty floors, peeling paint, and foggy windows. Terence Hallinan operates out of a smallish room with tattered venetian blinds, but the banal space makes an apt showcase for the man who is perhaps the most unusual district attorney in the United States.

Hallinan tells his life story through the photographs on his office walls. His father, Vincent, a legendary defense attorney and leftist activist, poses with a client, Harry Bridges, the combative leader of the longshoreman's union. Neighbors once painted a hammer and sickle on the Hallinan home near San Francisco, and the six boys in the family learned to use their fists to defend themselves. (The boys' mother, Vivian Hallinan, a veteran activist herself, wrote a family memoir called "My Wild Irish Rogues.") None of the brothers fought as much as the future district attorney, who long ago earned the nickname Kayo, by which he is still known. By the time Hallinan graduated from law school, in 1964, he had been arrested in so many brawls—and in so many anti-war and civil-rights demonstrations—




*The district attorney, the mayor, and the police chief all had intertwined histories.*

MARK ULRIKSEN

that the California bar refused to admit him. It took a fight in the California Supreme Court to win Hallinan his law license.

The wall also showcases some of Hallinan's better-known clients—Angela Davis and Patricia Hearst, among them—and his causes. He is shown leading a protest against the first Gulf War, in 1991, and getting arrested in a protest to integrate the city's hotels, in 1964. A campaign poster advertises his pet issue as district attorney, boasting that the "Medical Marijuana Community Endorses Hallinan." In 1988, Hallinan was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and in 1995 he narrowly won his first race for district attorney. He squeaked through his reelection in 1999 by a smaller margin. It is hard to imagine that any other city would elect to the office of district attorney someone whose connections to the criminal-justice system included extensive experience as a defendant and none at all as a prosecutor.

Hallinan's pasty face and ghostly white hair bear witness to a hard-lived sixty-six years. He has lost the intensity of his youth, and today he projects a kind of innocent wonder at the injustices in the world. His tenure as D.A. has been characterized by turmoil, during which top aides have come and gone. Though it's difficult to make precise comparisons among prosecutors' offices, the local press has frequently asserted that the San Francisco office seems to have a lower conviction rate, more lenient bail policies, and weaker enforcement of quality-of-life crimes than those of neighboring counties. Most of all, though, Hallinan has fought constantly with the chief ally of most district attorneys—the police department.



"Our police department is terrible," Hallinan told me recently. "It's a weird town. It's apparently the most liberal town in America, but, at the same time, it's so traditional. The police get promoted through seniority. There's a good-old-boy tradition. They do a poor job of solving murders. They just do a poor job." This hostility toward the police—which many officers on the force richly reciprocate—was the backdrop to the investigation that Hallinan began on the day after Tonsing, Lee, and Fagan, Jr., were detained.

Hallinan asserted that the police had stonewalled his investigation from the beginning. "I went, 'Wow, the police department is refusing to coöperate with the D.A.'s office to prosecute these officers, and one of the officers has a father who is one of the top people in the department. That is not an acceptable situation.' " According to Hallinan, the police had a theory about what happened on November 20th, and they stuck with it, regardless of the evidence. "The cops wanted it to be a barroom fight. That's the case they gave me, and that's what they insisted on." But Hallinan worried that the cops were slanting the evidence to fit their theory, and he decided to take his concerns to the office of the police chief, Earl Sanders, two floors above his own, in the crumbling Hall of Justice.

Born in rural Texas in 1937, Earl Sanders soon moved with his mother to Los Angeles, but she died when her son was just fourteen. So, as Sanders tells the story, he set out with a suitcase and thirty-five dollars to find an uncle in San Francisco, who, it turned out, didn't want him. Sanders got a job washing dishes at night at the Fairmont Hotel, forged a parent's signature to get himself into high school, and made All City as a football player. In 1963, after a stint in the Army, he took the test to join the San Francisco Police Department.

"There was a turn being made around then, a lot of pressure to hire more blacks," Sanders, who is black, told me. "Chief Thomas Cahill pinned the shield on me. This was a time when the Irish ran the department, and the guy never lost his brogue. He told me in this job you have to be careful of the three 'B's—bills, broads, and booze. Then he asked me what I was going to do. I said I'd like to be a homicide detective, and after that I'd like to have his job. He laughed and told me, 'You have a lot of ambition, young man.' "

Sanders first made a name in the vice squad, in the sixties, prosecuting "ten-and-two ho's"—ten dollars for the sex, two for the room. (In these cases, he sometimes tangled with Willie Brown, then a young criminal-defense lawyer, who defended many prostitutes in the early sixties. In the intertwined way of San Francisco politics, Brown was also a character witness for Hallinan during his long struggle to be admitted to the bar.) Sanders made it to the homicide unit in 1971, but he saw that many black cops faced barriers to promotion. Sanders and a group of African-American officers founded Officers for Justice, as an alternative to the official police union. With Sanders as lead organizer, they wound up suing the city to guarantee increased opportunities for minority officers. A five-year legal battle, from 1973 to 1978, ended with a settlement that got Sanders much of what he wanted.

By the time Brown was elected mayor, in 1995 (the first black to win the office), Sanders had become something of a department legend—a pioneer, if an ailing one. (Weakened by a stroke and diabetes, Sanders now walks with a cane.) Brown did not name Sanders as police chief, choosing instead Fred Lau, who became the department's first Asian-American chief. When Lau retired, in 2002, Sanders became the city's first black chief. With Sanders approaching retirement, the appointment had the air of a lifetime-achievement award rather than a mandate for change, but it happened that Earl Sanders was leading the department when the fracas at the Bus Stop took place.

"I heard about it the first thing the next morning," Sanders told me. "Normally, the assistant chief handles discipline, but Alex"—Alex Fagan, Sr.—"told me he recused himself, which I knew was the right thing to do. Everything was set for the investigation to take its normal course." He added, "From the experience of forty years, everything that I'd seen is that this was the happenstance meeting of five young men who got into a fistfight at two-thirty in the morning. I read the police report. There was no indication that there was anything awry with the investigation."

But, from the first days after the incident at the Bus Stop, the *Chronicle* began a stream of stories suggesting that a coverup was in progress. "It keeps showing up in the paper every day, and I can't see what the hell is making this case so different," Sanders said. On December 2nd, Hallinan suggested that he and

Sanders have a talk about the case. "I'll come up to your office," Hallinan said, before venturing up to the fifth floor.

"Why didn't they do a cold show?" Hallinan asked. Exasperated, Sanders replied that there was no need. The three cops had admitted to being involved in the altercation, though there was some confusion about the precise role of each officer. "This isn't a whodunit. It's a 'What happened?' " Sanders told the D.A. Hallinan then proposed a solution. "I'll tell you how we can solve the case," he told Sanders. "You have the officers plead guilty to a misdemeanor, and I'll give them a slap on the wrist. We'll handle it just like what happened to my son."

"Terence," Sanders replied, "what the hell does your son have to do with this case?" Hallinan's son Brendan had been arrested on September 13, 2001, for an assault, apparently a drunken lunge at a passerby in the middle of the night. Hallinan eventually recused himself from that case, in favor of the state attorney general. In the end, Brendan pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor and was sentenced to community service and anger-management classes.

It's easy to see why Sanders was troubled by Hallinan's visit. It was inappropriate for him to invoke his son's experience; Sanders had no way of forcing the cops to plead guilty; and cold shows are notoriously inaccurate forms of securing identifications. ("I probably shouldn't have brought up my son," Hallinan told me. "But my point was that that case was handled in the normal way, and this one should have been, too.") In short order, the police produced a file of almost five hundred pages, making the case one of the most exhaustively investigated brawls in the city's history.

Still, at Hallinan's insistence, Sanders agreed to send his officers out to do more. On January 2nd, Hallinan asked for another meeting with Sanders, this time in secret. They huddled over breakfast in a quiet hotel coffee shop. Hallinan again suggested his son's plea as a model disposition to end the case, and, once more, Sanders rejected it. "Let's not sit here and bullshit each other," Sanders said. "The investigation was complete." By this point, though, Hallinan was so frustrated with the police that he convened a grand jury to investigate the matter. And if that wasn't bad enough news for the police chief, he now had a restless boss in Mayor Brown.




*"Drink plenty of fluids and stay out of the sun."*

One recent morning, Willie Brown stood at the top of a long red carpet that had been draped down the front steps of City Hall, which is surely the most glamorous municipal building in the country—a striking contrast to the Hall of Justice. Early in the Brown administration, the building received a meticulous renovation, complete with fresh gold leaf for the dome, thus earning the nickname the Taj Ma-Willie. Brown stood between a pair of teen-age trumpeters and a tuxedoed man playing a white violin, awaiting the arrival of a black stretch Hummer limousine. When the car arrived, a man and woman in powdered wigs and eighteenth-century dress escorted a woman in white who carried an invitation for the Mayor to attend a charity ball. A pair of enormous harlequin Great Danes, Jester and Abigail, joined the procession up the stairs. The bizarre scene drew almost no second glances from the jaded veterans of Brown's City Hall. To Brown, the ceremony seemed nothing less than his due. Indeed, when it was over, he summoned the trumpeters and booked them to herald the arrivals at another event, later in the week.

Now sixty-nine years old, Willie L. Brown, Jr., has dominated San Francisco politics for a generation. He served for thirty-one years in the California Assembly, almost fifteen as Speaker, a job that was often described as the second most powerful in state government. In his Brioni suits, usually with matching fedoras, and his regal bearing, Brown symbolized the swagger and flash of San Francisco in the late-nineties dot-com boom. Today, like the city itself, he stands somewhat diminished—just another mayor managing budget cuts, and a lame duck at that.

Tough times have not, however, diminished Brown's towering self-confidence, and as he sat beneath the crystal chandelier in his office he insisted that the whole Fajitagate debacle could have been avoided if everyone had listened to him. "I directed my chief of police to turn it over to some other law-enforcement agency, such as the Oakland Police Department or some surrounding police department, so that we would avoid just what occurred," he told me. "The Chief said, 'Oh, no, we can handle it.' He's the Chief. I can't give him orders. I can either fire him or let him run the department. And I frankly was sorry that circumstances proved me to be more right than I ever dreamed."

Certainly, Brown had a point when he said that Hallinan might have moved faster in charging the three officers. "How could a street brawl be a major news story?" he said. "Nobody gets killed. No-

## POEM PARTLY *STOLEN* FROM MONTALE

Insomnia, you say, is good for me. Unloved by sleep, I fly wide-eyed
To wakefulness—into the dark, which isn't so black then, letting enter
Those ghosts from the exiling light. They're not entirely welcome, these
Night visitors, though one of them is no dream at all—maybe, now I
Think of it, the only true one among them. That remembered red dress
On a tall woman in a strange room. Blackboard, desks, a clock on the wall.
We close the door and wait. Nothing doing. There is too much baggage
And I can't find my shoes. Tears then and a change of light that seems
To empty the air of air. Struck suddenly dumb, face flattened against glass:
Out there the world, its wildflash mirages. The room sick with waiting.

*—Eamon Grennan*

body gets shot. No badge is flashed. No guns are used. It's three cops versus two citizens." He continued, "It should have been handled quickly. If the evidence was there after a reasonable period, eight or ten days of investigation, they should have been charged, and it would have been in the process of prosecuting people back in December, rather than conducting sixty days of investigation."

Hallinan was conducting an investigation that was almost comic in its thoroughness. His office called forty-three witnesses to testify before the grand jury, even the chef at the Blue Light, who provided his recipe for fajitas. ("I put meat, and, after two or three minutes, put bell peppers, green peppers, and onions, and then I just took tortillas, flour tortillas, and I put in the white container and that's it.") The evidence before the grand jury turned out to be inconclusive. There were some gaps and contradictions in the senior officers' accounts of the investigation, but proof of actual conspiracy was, by Hallinan's own admission, less than overwhelming. "We can't figure out who told who what," he said. Prosecutors almost always provide clear direction to grand jurors, but Hallinan essentially left the decision about whom to indict in the hands of the jurors themselves, whose term was scheduled to end on the last day of February, 2003.

On February 27th, Hallinan and Albert Murray, an assistant district attorney, asked the grand jury to return indictments against the three officers who were charged with beating up Santoro and Snyder. As for the potential obstruction of justice by the police brass, the prosecutors hedged their bets in a most unusual way. They read the jurors the law on conspiracy to obstruct justice, but then Murray said he believed that there was insufficient evidence to charge anyone with that crime. Still, in case the grand jurors did want to proceed against the higher-ups, the prosecutors gave them a blank indictment form on which they could write the names of the additional officers they wanted to charge.

"It was late in the day, the day before the last day of our term," said Virginia Staab, a law-firm marketing director who served as forewoman of the grand jury. She said the grand jurors were suspicious of the roles of the senior members of the department, and wanted to indict them. According to Staab, "Hallinan said—you know, he was speaking in a little stream-of-consciousness way—if we do any of that, this is the place. The jury wants to do that. He said, 'O.K., we're extremely supportive.' " So Staab took a pen and hand-scrawled on the indictment the names of seven new defendants: Earl Sanders, Alex Fagan, Sr., Greg Corrales, and four other high-ranking San Francisco cops. Late that afternoon, the grand jury voted the indictment. "I saw the names of the chief of police and the two deputy chiefs," Hallinan said. "I felt like the guy who had dropped the bomb on Hiroshima: Oh, God, what have I done?" Then Hallinan paused, and, referring to the jurors, added, "I respected what they did. I still think they were right."

For the first time in American history, the entire command structure of a major police department had been indicted in a single stroke. At the time, San Francisco was facing street protests about the impending war in Iraq, as well as continuing worries about terrorism. "The whole month leading up to the indictment, I heard nothing," Earl Sanders said. "I didn't know what they were doing. They never asked me to testify. Then, at about nine-forty-five on that Friday morning, I got a call that said I'd been indicted, and I had until eleven o'clock to turn myself in." Sanders realized that he had to make sure there was some continuity in the leadership of the department, so he sought out two deputy chiefs, David Robinson and Greg Suhr. "But I found out that they had been indicted," Sanders recalled. "So I looked for Alex Fagan, but he said he'd been indicted, too. I was running out of people." Finally, Sanders reached down in the hierarchy to find Heather Wong, the deputy chief of administration, to run the department. (She was the first woman to lead the S.F.P.D.)

Sanders then had the melancholy duty of reporting to the sheriff's office to have his mug shot and fingerprints taken. Many officers, especially African-Americans, regarded the humbling of such a legendary figure as an outrage. "The sheriff's deputies showed reverence," Sanders recalled. "The sergeant folded his hands when I came to the desk. No one wanted to book the chief of police. So I turned over my collar with the four stars and said, 'Sergeant, do your job.' "

As mayor, Willie Brown had to assure his constituents that someone was looking out for them. "On the day the indictments were announced," Brown told me, "I said I knew that these were cops with a sufficient amount of integrity that they would voluntarily remove themselves." Brown's statement sent a message to his top cops—that they should take voluntary leaves. All of the supervisors charged in the case (except Earl Sanders) showed up in Brown's office to do what the Mayor wanted—take unpaid leaves of absence while the case against them was pending. "They walked in here, led by Alex Fagan, and symbolically put their weapons and badges on my desk right here," Brown told me. In the middle of a meeting with the officers indicted in the case, the Mayor's phone rang. "I knew it was an emergency. Otherwise, they wouldn't have interrupted,"

Brown said. "My secretary said, 'Chief Sanders is in your back office. He'd like to see you when the other cops leave.' Of course, I didn't say anything."

The cops left through one door to Brown's office, and Sanders entered through the other, accompanied by his lawyer, Philip Ryan. For many years, Brown and Ryan shared office space as defense lawyers, but they had since had a bitter falling out. It turned out that the Chief was filing for paid disability leave. "These other guys were suspended, unpaid. From a perception standpoint, that's a big difference," Brown told me.

Sanders felt that Brown had not supported him sufficiently during the Bus Stop investigation and, as if to torment the Mayor, had hired Ryan as his lawyer; Brown, in turn, felt betrayed by Sanders's alliance with Ryan. Both men agreed that Hallinan was raging out of control. These three leaders of San Francisco's government now formed a perfect circle of mutual recrimination.

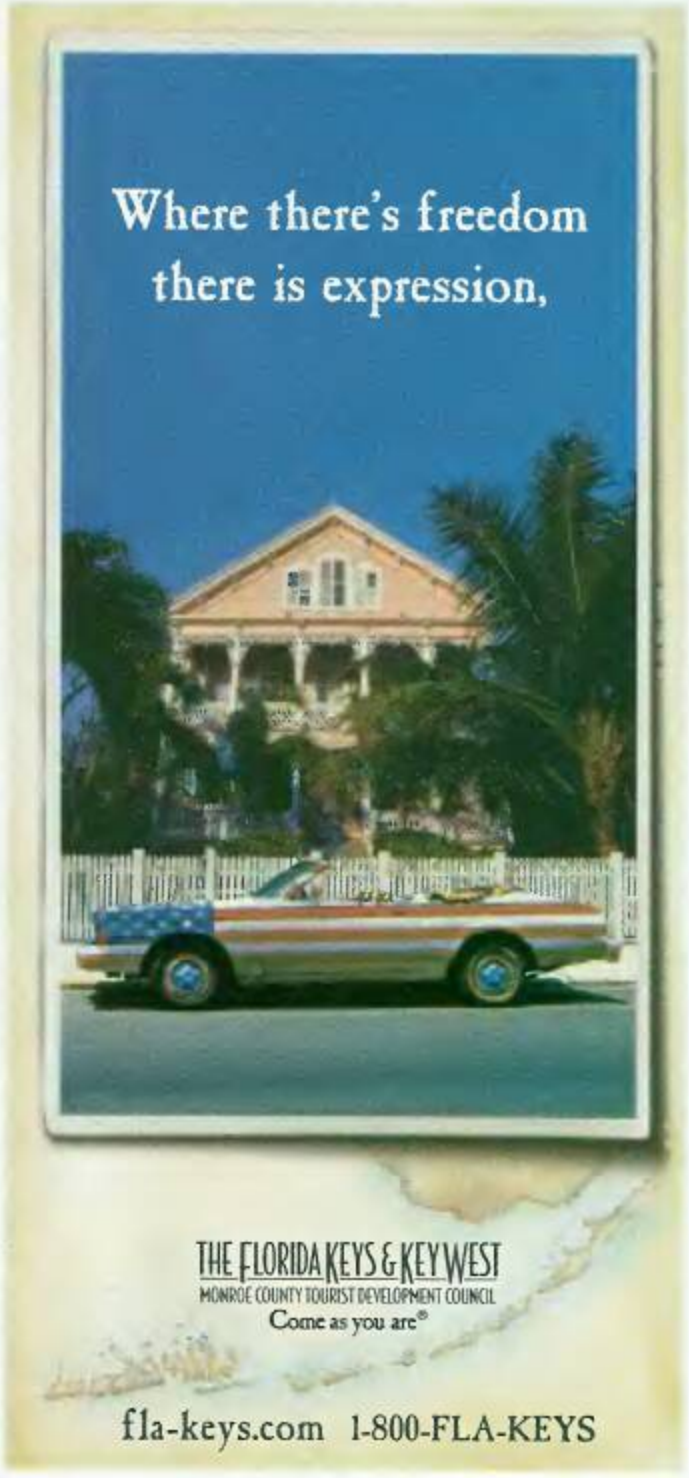
Even though the *Chronicle's* coverage of the case hinted at misconduct by the police brass, the scope of the indictments stunned everyone—and sent Hallinan into semi-retreat. "I decided to take the grand-jury transcript home over the weekend, and really see what the evidence was against them," he told me. He saw that the testimony scarcely mentioned Sanders and Fagan—the top two officials in the department—much less incriminated them in a coverup. Still, it took almost two weeks for the District Attorney to do what many thought he should have done immediately after the grand jury acted. On March 11th, Hallinan went into a San Francisco courtroom and told the judge that he was dropping the indictments of Sanders and Fagan, "in the interest of justice." At the same time, Hallinan insisted that there was still enough evidence to proceed with the conspiracy case against the five other senior officers, as well as with felony-assault charges against Fagan, Jr., Tonsing, and Lee. Mayor Brown promptly installed Alex Fagan, Sr., as the acting chief of the department.



But by then Hallinan's prosecution was clearly collapsing around him, and on April 4th Judge Ksenia Tsenin dropped all the remaining charges against the five top officers, saying that Hallinan had failed to prove the existence of a conspiracy. "Where was the agreement?" she asked prosecutors. "Where was the nod? Where was the wink?" Suddenly, all that remained of Hallinan's case was the prosecution of the three officers who had been detained at the Bus Stop on November 20th. While the case may begin this month, some observers believe that the officers' lawyers will push to delay the case past the November election. That way, the theory goes, a new district attorney might choose to dispose of the whole misbegotten case rather than dredge up the matter again before a jury. (Fagan, Jr., meanwhile, has been let go by the police force.)

Hallinan may still win a third term. He faces a split opposition, and, in the strange alchemy of San Francisco politics, picking a fight with the police (even a losing one) may help him with many voters. After all, as Hallinan told me, "this city is so liberal that we have an elected public defender—someone who runs for office—promising to get more people acquitted than the other guy." As for Chief Sanders, he appears likely to go straight from his disability leave to retirement. Still bitter about Hallinan's behavior, Sanders has filed a motion for the court to declare him legally innocent of the charges. "It's not enough that they dismissed the charges," Ryan, his lawyer, said. "We want the court on record that Earl did nothing wrong."

Only Willie Brown appears to have emerged from the imbroglio more or less unscathed. He can't run for mayor again, but there is speculation that he may run for state senator. The saga even gave Brown, always a champion of diversity, one more accomplishment to tout. "Willie got to appoint the first Asian police chief, the first black chief, then the first woman chief," one local politico told me. "And, finally, he gives the department back to the Irish. Willie gets a four-fer out of the deal." For his part, Brown chose to draw no broad conclusions from these recent events, insisting only that the story was as distinctive as the city where it happened. "The whole thing," he said, "is odd." ♦


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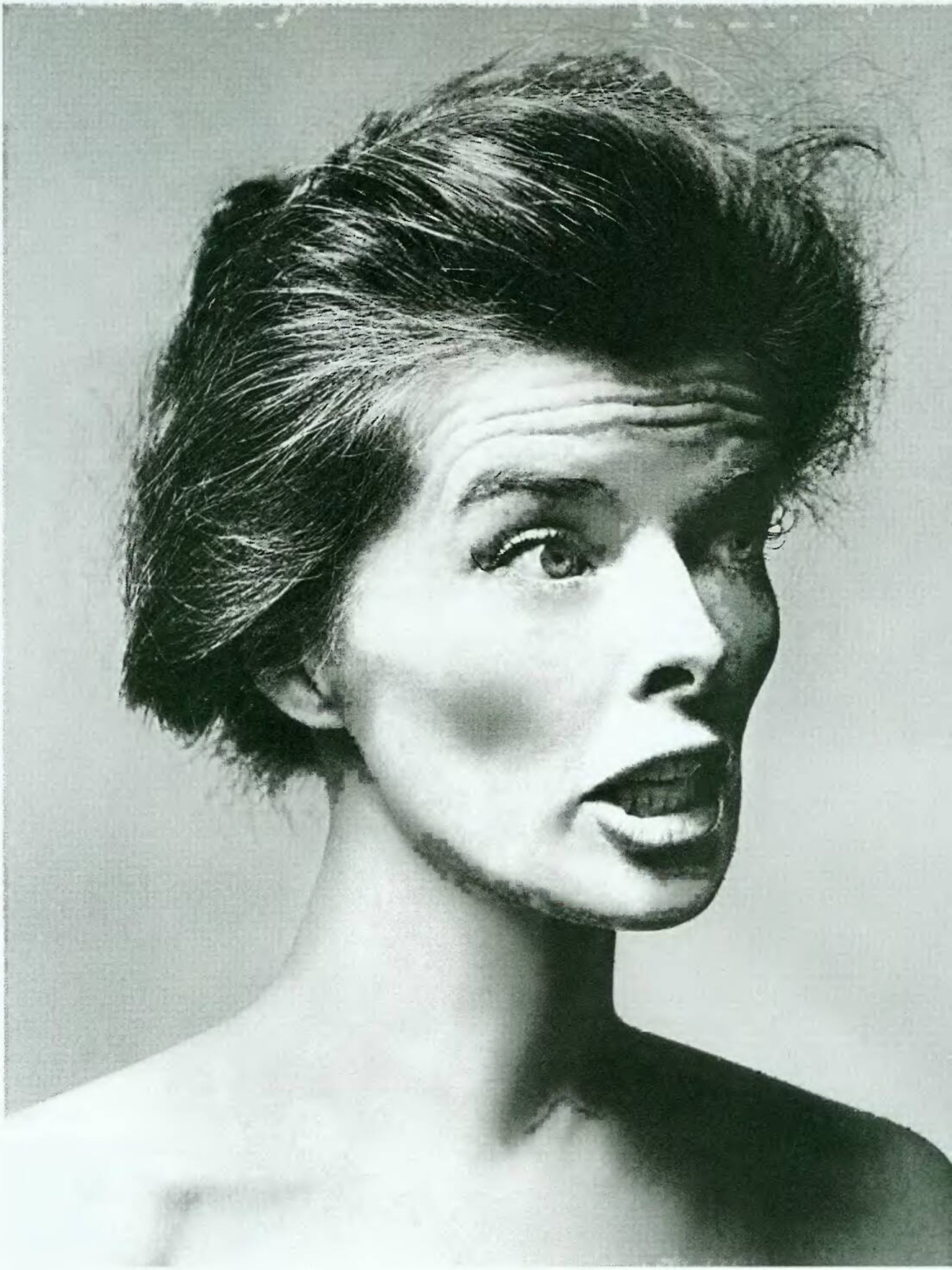


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POSTSCRIPT

# BORN FOR THE PART

*Roles that Katharine Hepburn played.*

BY CLAUDIA ROTH PIERPONT

Jo March chopped off her hair and wrote thundering dramas and moved alone to New York just after the Civil War but found happiness in a last rainy scene under an umbrella with her kindly older suitor; Lady Cynthia Darrington set altitude and distance records on the earliest solo flights but went down in flames for love of a married man; Tess Harding was the New York *Chronicle's* ace political columnist and the second-ranked dame in the country—after Mrs. Roosevelt—but swore to give it all up for life in Spencer Tracy's kitchen. Cutting a path across history, in the guise of more than forty varied screen heroines who shared a singular face and accent, Katharine Hepburn embodied the most sought-after strengths of modern women, and then habitually followed a man into confusion and defeat. The strengths—intelligence, independence, gall—were the memorable part, and formed a dramatic premise in themselves. The dire or merely domestic outcomes of so many of her movies can be easily dismissed as the requirements of a less enlightened age, or as a sign of the ongoing bewilderment about how a truly "modern" woman's story might conclude. Now that Hepburn's own story has ended—she was ninety-six—we may be able to learn how such a woman actually lived out an uncensored and unedited freedom, since we have always somehow known that, despite four Academy Awards and a dramatic range from Louisa May Alcott to Eugene O'Neill, for half a century Katharine Hepburn was really playing herself.

She was ostentatiously modern—"more modern than tomorrow," the filmland magazines declared; "You've never seen anything like her!"—from her first screen appearance, in 1932, in a creaky British melodrama called "A Bill of Divorcement." Yet there was nothing in her impersonation of a British ingénue named Sydney that violated an ensemble acting style still bound to the Victorian stage; at twenty-five, Hepburn was as stilted as John Barrymore, who played to the galleries as her half-mad father. The novelty was not in what she did but in what she was. With her starved, whippetlike grace and overbearing intensity, she herself appeared slightly mad. But the same characteristics also made her seem—as George Cukor, the director, had gambled—a distinctly new type of woman, poised between the nervy and the nervously overwrought.

The quality of a nearly feverish radiance continued to excite audiences even when her character was neither modern nor threatened with hereditary insanity. By the fall of 1933, "Little Women" was breaking box-office records at Radio City, with Hepburn as America's beloved Jo billed alone above the title. *Variety* crowned her the second most popular female star in the country—right behind Mae West. Between them, these two unprecedented creatures neatly divided the possibilities: Brooklyn and Bryn Mawr, vaudeville and the classics, flesh and bone or possibly flesh and the ravenous Puritan spirit that consumed it. Still, even if Hepburn looked like the hanger on which Mae West hung her clothes, and seemed as rigid as her own New England scruples, it was she who outlasted every change in the rules of a country that couldn't quite decide whether such women should exist.

The idea that Hepburn *was* the parts she played quickly became a studio gambit. Publicizing "Little Women," Cukor announced that she'd been "born to play Jo," since she came from just the same sort of large, sternly wholesome New England family that Alcott's fable was about. And, besides, he added, "she's tender and funny, fiercely loyal. . . . Kate and Jo are the same girl." So, too, Kate and Tracy Lord, the imperious "virgin goddess" of "The Philadelphia Story," of 1940, were the same rare girl—part of the lore of the play was that it was written for Hepburn by her old friend Philip Barry, after months of observation of the same large, although now apparently quite wealthy and eccentric, New England family. When, in 1941, *McCall's* named Hepburn its Woman of the Year—borrowing the title of yet another film written for her—the magazine specified that it was honoring her not as an actress but "as a woman" and "a raving individual." Given the indisputable evidence of movie after movie, the country looked to Hepburn as a figure who merged all our contradictory fantasies of aristocratic lineage and republican conviction, of high spirits and high morals: she was a big-screen Eleanor Roosevelt, with the beauty that only Hollywood can grant as a reward.

"I'm just something from New England, that was very American and brought up by two extremely intelligent people who gave us the greatest gift that man can give anyone—freedom from fear," she recalled of her childhood. These words only hint at the lifelong gratitude Hepburn displayed for her parents and the domestic paradise they'd built; as an adult, she returned home often and in all her troubled times. ("That's very unusual, isn't it?") Some twenty Hepburn biographies have given increasing attention to this very unusual family romance. The most prodigiously researched, Barbara Leaming's "Katharine

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

*Hepburn in New York City, March 2, 1955.*

Hepburn," devotes a quarter of its pages to events that occurred before its subject was born.

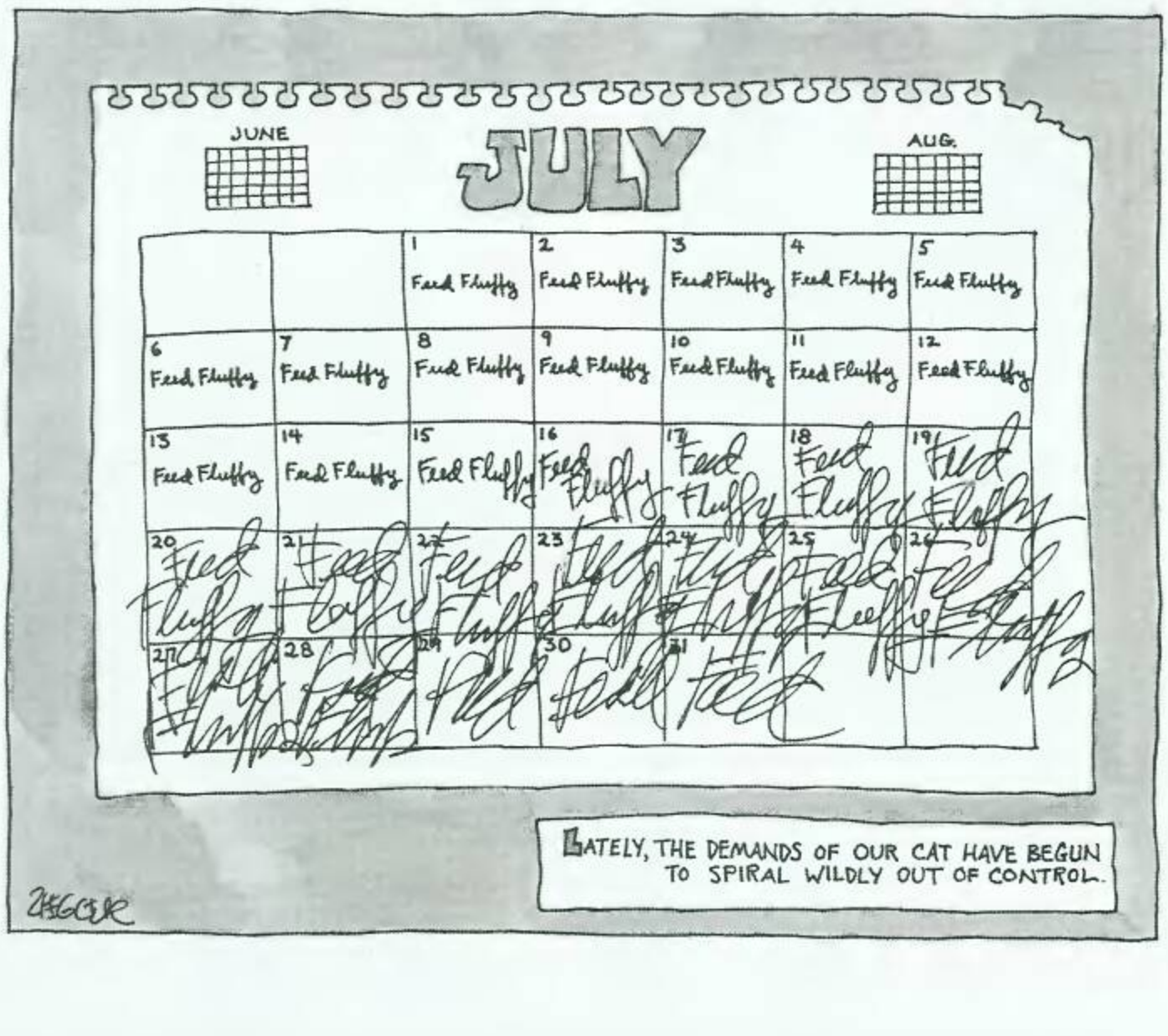
Dr. Thomas Hepburn was a urologist who worked toward the public recognition and treatment of venereal disease; Katharine Houghton, his loving wife, campaigned for legal birth control and led the battle for woman suffrage in Connecticut, but was always home in time for tea. In a sprawling house in Hartford, these high-minded individuals raised six exceptionally bright children who swung on the birch trees in the back yard and won blue ribbons for diving and tennis and anything else that was up for the winning. The family was so immoderately strong and fearless and happy that there was never any need to mention the suicide of Mrs. Hepburn's father or of her father's brother or even of Dr. Hepburn's own oldest brother—Uncle Charlie—since there was nothing to be done about these matters and, as their famous daughter later remarked of her parents, "They simply did not believe in moaning about anything."

The oldest children, Thomas and Katharine, were born one and a half years apart—Tom in 1905, Katharine in 1907—and they formed a little club unto themselves. Early photographs show a pair of nearly identical freckled cherubs, hand in hand. By the age of ten, Kathy is sporting cropped hair and a boy's wardrobe, ready and able to follow her big brother into anything. In March, 1921, the pair, aged thirteen and fifteen, took the train to New York City with their mother and stayed several days in the Greenwich Village house of one of her suffragist friends, their "Aunty Towle." They saw Pavlova dance on a Wednesday and on Thursday their mother went back to Hartford. On Friday, they went to the movies with Aunty—it was "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," and Tom complained that a scene of a hanging in it gave him "the horrors." On Saturday night, after supper, Tom played his banjo to entertain them, and on Sunday morning, when the children were to get the train home, Kathy went upstairs to Tom's attic room and found that he had hanged himself from one of the rafters.

It would seem to require an Electra or an Antigone, not a wholesome American heroine like Jo March, to produce the sentence with which Katharine Hepburn, in her autobiography, describes what happened next: "In a state of numb shock I cut him down and laid him on the bed." This is not quite accurate; the police report contradicts her memory of horrified competence with its account of a young girl clinging hysterically to her brother's body as she attempts to hold it upright. The noose that Tom had fashioned out of a torn bedsheet had proved too long, and when he jumped from a packing case his feet had hit the floor; he'd had to pull hard against the line in order to strangle himself. Tom needed not to be cut down but to be raised up, and his sister was still supporting his body in her arms when the doctor arrived. In "Me," published in 1991, Hepburn was still worrying over the truth of one particularly tormenting part of her story—that is, whether her brother really came to her the night before to say "You're my girl, aren't you? You're my favorite girl in the whole world." She knew that she had repeated these words to others but wondered, seventy years later, if Tom had ever really said them.

Dr. Hepburn insisted that his son's death was the result of a boyish stunt gone awry, and tried to get the newspapers to retract their accounts of suicide. But however he managed to alter the truth for himself, he could not alter it for his daughter—the sole family witness to the will it took for Tom to go on dying once his feet were on the ground. This was a memory she knew to keep to herself. She saw her mother cry for what she swears was the first and only time ("She was stalwart") on the trip to the crematorium, and reported that she herself now acquired the skill of shedding tears when tears were called for: "This was what I thought I should do. People die—you cry—but inside I was frozen."

Are there families in which suicide runs like intelligence or cancer? Two days after Tom's death, news arrived of the death of another of Dr. Hepburn's brothers: he had run his car's engine with the garage door closed. For the family, it was not difficult to annul the existence of an uncle who had lived as far away as Annapolis; it must have exacted more of an effort in the case of Tom, and yet, once the facts of his death were satisfactorily revised, he was not spoken of at home again. When Kathy became too moody to continue at school, the family brought in tutors; she later recalled how she enjoyed playing golf during her free time in the afternoons. She went on to Bryn Mawr, where she received poor grades but a great deal of attention—for the way she dressed, for her snooty manner, and, when all else failed, for jumping into the campus fountain. It was there that she decided to make a career out of expressing emotion in front of as



many people as she could get to watch.

From her first weeks in New York, in the summer of 1928, Hepburn walked straight into leading roles. But she was frequently thrown straight out as soon as she got near the stage. What was so attractive at an audition was precisely what went wrong in performance: electrifying tension and insufficient control. She hired a vocal coach—under pressure, her voice rose to incomprehensible heights and speeds—and took movement classes with Pavlova's former partner, Mikhail Mordkin. Still, she was fired at least four times in the next two years. She was even fired from a play that Philip Barry wrote with her in mind, "The Animal Kingdom," suggesting the remarkable fact that she couldn't yet play herself.

She finally had a hit in a boulevard version of "Lysistrata" called "The Warrior's Husband," playing the Queen of the Amazons—she made her entrance running down a flight of steps with a dead stag over her shoulders—who is happily overcome by a stronger man. It is a success worth noting, for this was a character that she would repeat in some ways for the rest of her life. The capitulating Amazon won her a screen test, reportedly excruciating, but George Cukor saw past the extravagant emoting and the Theda Bara makeup—he said she looked like "a boa constrictor on a fast"—and pushed the reluctant powers at R.K.O. to give her a chance. What he'd loved, he said, was the way she swooped to put down a glass, with her back to the camera, and then turned to do the scene with her eyes suddenly filled with tears.

She got to Hollywood in July, 1932, and was as pointedly outrageous there as she'd been at Bryn Mawr, only now Bryn Mawr was part of the act. She was an East Coast aristocrat, the Mayflower in heels—or, rather, in slacks, since the Mayflower didn't need to dress, which made the biggest impression of all on the folks from steerage who ran the studios. Her publicity stressed how she hated publicity; she didn't pose for pictures, except when caught unawares with a rented pet monkey on her shoulder. She was probably an heiress. She would soon go back to playing Shakespeare, or O'Neill. Her personal life was mysterious, and there were rumors about those slacks and her women companions. In fact, she'd left behind in New York a fairly new and barely used husband—one Ludlow Ogden (Luddy) Smith, a college beau acquired in a moment of professional discouragement, whom she quickly bequeathed to her family as a kind of permanently hovering extra brother. And she was having an affair with her agent, Leland Hayward, who was then married to his first wife for the second time. There were many reasons to maintain a veil of mystery, even aside from its excellence as a tactic.



*"This is what happens when ethical standards are set artificially high."*

In 1934, the magazine *Picturegoer* made a stab at rending the veil with an astrological treatise entitled "What Her Birth Date Means to Katharine Hepburn": born in early November, 1909, she was a Scorpio and therefore "strongly individual, very uncompromising, critical and judicial in a clear, decisive fashion." Exactly right, of course, except that she was born on May 12, 1907. That an aspiring movie star should take two years off her age is less than notable; it's rather meek. That she conscientiously changed the month and the day, however—and for decades biographies listed Hepburn's date of birth as November 8th—is more problematic, since the date she'd taken over, with her parents' knowledge and consent, was her brother Tom's.

"I wasn't afraid. Not for a long time. When I lost a part, I thought it was because I was a genius and geniuses always have a hard time," confides the giddy little starving genius of an actress Hepburn played in "Morning Glory," which won her an Academy Award in 1933. Determined but purehearted Eva Lovelace has come to New York to be very famous, to play Juliet and Lady Macbeth, and to die at her zenith onstage, preferably as Cleopatra grandly ending it all herself. Audiences loved Hepburn best in roles like this, part swan and part odd duck, where her patrician quiverings were framed in awkwardness and aspiration. The most exquisite of these hybrid creatures appeared two years later, in "Alice Adams"—her best early performance, as Booth Tarkington's desperate dreamer trapped in the banality of Main Street, putting on airs and wasting her ambition on the kind of small-town suitor that Eva Lovelace had fled for her life. Given an excuse to

be as flutteringly absurd as she often was anyway, Hepburn is heartbreaking.

But no one concerned with her career seemed to understand the mixture of comedy and pathos that gave these movies their appeal. Her next four films were box-office fiascoes, and none worse than the cross-dressing cult favorite "Sylvia Scarlett" (1936), Cukor's vague Shakespearean reverie on Hepburn as a boyish girl who passes herself off as a girlish boy. On the edge of professional disaster, she took on tragedy queens and Victorian damsels, and toppled right over into the abyss. "Mary of Scotland" (1936), a clanking opera-without-music, survives mainly as fodder for speculation about the star's affair with her director, John Ford. There is something understandably alluring, almost patriotic, in the mating of these two distinctly American birds of prey, and their respective biographers have been at odds over the extent of what went on. (Ford was, and remained, a very married man.) But, for all that her directors fell under her spell, Cukor's Hepburn sent audiences fleeing in confusion and Ford's put them out cold.

When everything fails, you laugh. That was the lesson of Depression movies, and Hepburn learned it very late. While the studio dawdled over whether she should play Empress Josephine or Sarah Bernhardt, she went off in a Theatre Guild touring production of "Jane Eyre"—which she hoped to lure Ford into filming. When neither her performance nor a headlining affair with Howard Hughes made Ford jump at the project, she returned to Hollywood and, in the spring of 1937, took on one more movie tailored just for her. The role of the ambitious actress Terry Randall, in Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman's Broadway hit "Stage Door," was converted into another Hepburn vehicle, reflecting the audience's latest view of the fading star: an heiress, a bit of a pompous ass, a self-conscious tragedienne, whose ghastly "calla lilies are in bloom" speech was lifted from one of her own stage flops—"The Lake," which had earned her Dorothy Parker's famous verdict that her acting "ran the gamut of emotion from A to B." The only difference was that this time it was all meant to be funny.

"Stage Door" may be the warmest ensemble comedy Hollywood ever produced. In the embracing camaraderie of its rooming house filled with aspiring actresses, for most of whom careers and mutual loyalty are crucial and for whom men offer little more than a way to a role or a steak dinner—where getting married is an admission of defeat—it may also be the only truly feminist film Hepburn ever made. Not that anything of the sort was intended: under Gregory La Cava's improvisatory, seat-of-the-pants direction, the script changed from day to day and the movie just sort of happened as it went along. Originally, one of the two leads—Hepburn or Ginger Rogers—was to be married off to the big producer, played by Adolphe Menjou, but somehow that plotline disappeared: what happened between the women was so much more interesting.

The cast was delectable—Lucille Ball and Eve Arden threw in the salt and pepper—but it was Rogers who got things cooking. "She gave him sex and he gave her class" was Hepburn's expert sizing up of Rogers's trade-off with Fred Astaire. But the wisecracking blonde gave Hepburn something equally important: the kind of populist foil that she learned she couldn't do without. Easy banter, teasing jabs, a clear-eyed American common sense that tried Hepburn's mettle and made her unbend—she got all that from Rogers, and not from any actress again. That's a loss, because Rogers challenged Hepburn to be a decent, feeling, regular guy of a human being, while her later replacements—above all, Spencer Tracy—challenged Hepburn only to be a more regular dame.

"Stage Door" was a moderate commercial success, but the two madcap heiress movies that followed—Howard Hawks's now canonized "Bringing Up Baby" (with Cary Grant and the leopard and the dinosaur bones) and Cukor's "Holiday" (Grant and Hepburn fleeing the oppression of wealth)—were box-office flops. However adorable the highly advertised "new Hepburn" was designed to be, and however much the buoyancy and liberal spirit of these films have won them contemporary fans (recent scholarship has found that "Baby" demonstrates the decline of the patriarchy and the collapse of the phallus), audiences at the time were simply irritated. Hepburn seemed more unbearably superior than ever, as—in both films—Grant played up to her (rather than down), her character won every round, and the high speed of screwball comedy turned her voice into a drill. Reviewers blamed her for headaches and exhaustion. In 1938, she made the theatre owners' dreaded list of stars whose very names had become box-office poison.

With R.K.O. fed up and offering her no roles that she was willing to play, she took herself off to Fenwick, her parents' Connecticut seashore home, for the summer and fall of 1938. Philip

## FOR A DURO

*Christmas Eve, 1965*

For a *duro* you got a night out of the wind.
(A *duro* was a five-peseta coin bearing
Franco's profile, the hooked nose tipped
upward as though he alone received
the breath of God. Back in '65
only he did receive the breath of God.)
For a *duro* you could lie down in the hallway
of the Hotel Splendide in your Sunday suit,
sleep under the lights, and rise in time
to bless the Son's first coming. For a *duro*
you could have a coffee and a plain roll
that would shatter like glass. For a *duro*
you could have it all, the cars, the women,
the seven-course meal and a sea view,
with the waitress bending to your cheek
to ask reverently, "More butter?" For a *duro*

I bought a pack of Antillanas and gave one
to the only traveller in the deserted terminal,
a soldier in uniform. When he bowed
to receive a light I saw the milky nape,
unlined. He must still be there, waiting.
The hotel is gone, the building remains,
a pet hospital and animal refectory
overseen by Señor Esteban Ganz arrayed
for work this morning in white coat,
dark tie, and soiled sneakers. Modestly
he shows me three lobo pups, pintos,
saved from slaughter, the striped feral cats
pacing the big cage like tigers, the toucan
levelled by an unknown virus but now
alert and preening. Riotous colors:
reds, greens, and illuminated golds
suitable for banners proclaiming inter-
galactic peace the moment it arrives.

*—Philip Levine*

Barry had spent time there, too, not as a suitor but as a playwright fascinated by the suitor situation, particularly as it involved the constant presence of her far too cheerful ex-husband. (Luddy took photos of her visiting beaux—Hayward, Ford, Hughes—and liked to assure visitors that he was the sanest member of the family.) It was Luddy who came from the Main Line Philadelphia society that Barry gave the Hepburns as a background in "The Philadelphia Story." When Barry showed Kate the play, she thought it good enough to invest in the production and to secure herself the movie rights (with money borrowed from Hughes). She left only one important contractual escape: all bets were off if she landed the role of Scarlett O'Hara.

But Atlanta, of course, was set alight without her—David Selznick insisted that audiences disliked her too intensely, and, in any case, she lacked the "sex qualities" needed for Scarlett. And so "The Philadelphia Story" went ahead and opened on Broadway in March, 1939, to reviews nearly as apologetic for past abuse as they were delighted with the work at hand. The show ran for more than four hundred performances, and Hepburn set her terms for the movie at M-G-M with Louis B. Mayer: a large degree of script control and Cukor to direct. She tried to get Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable for the roles of her ex-husband and an interfering reporter—she'd never met either, but they were the biggest male stars in the country (aside from Mickey Rooney). Mayer managed to persuade her that Cary Grant and James Stewart would be adequate to the tasks. Thus, with some rather more delicately balanced notions of masculinity than she'd intended for her opposition, she made the movie in which the shrew was tamed and finally forgiven, by her men and the country alike.

For Hepburn's real populist foil—whether represented by Rogers or Stewart or Tracy—was, of course, the moviegoing population of the United States, which has always exalted its aristocrats right up to the point of democratic revenge. As Tracy Lord, Hepburn has a cold perfection that is denounced as the source of everyone's troubles, particularly the men's. The actress's social and moral affronts were now firmly tied to her deficit in "sex qualities": Tracy is reprimanded as a "prig," a "perennial spinster," and one of "a special class of the American female, the married maiden." The silent opening battle tells it all: Grant storms out



the door, she throws his golf clubs after him, he storms back to give her a shove—and over she goes, stiff as a poker. It's a slapstick routine, a Punch and Judy show, and it was put in right at the start to make sure no one missed the point: this woman has to learn to bend.

Apart from cinema's eternal little girls—like Lillian Gish or Mary Pickford—Hepburn was probably the least sexual beauty ever to become a movie star. The lack of femme fatality may be ascribed to her uncommon self-possession: the stubborn vertical bracing of that pratfall also kept her from assuming the conventionally vulnerable (or predatory) female sexual postures. This is the Hepburn women still want their daughters to watch. But Hepburn can also appear just too tightly wound and scrubbed—she enthused about taking several cold showers a day—for anything as stickily human as sex. In the entire range of her movies, it is difficult to call up an image of her in a clinch or a kiss or an unembarrassed sexual situation: except for "Woman of the Year," the 1942 film that followed "The Philadelphia Story" and forms nearly a genre in itself.

"Woman of the Year" was her first movie with Spencer Tracy, whom she still hadn't met when she offered Mayer the terrific script that Ring Lardner, Jr., and Michael Kanin had written for her, with her collaboration, and told him she wouldn't let M-G-M make it without giving her Tracy this time. How determined she was to capture the rough-on-smooth sexiness that Ginger gave to Fred was made explicit in her choice of directors: "I had to explain to Cukor"—whose reputation as a "woman's director" was privately attributed to his homosexuality—"that this script had to be directed by a very macho director from the man's point of view and not the woman's. I'm sure that George was very disappointed."

The macho replacement was George Stevens, known for his touch with comedy—he had worked with Laurel and Hardy, and directed "Alice Adams"—and also with his leading ladies, onscreen and off. The first we see of Hepburn in "Woman of the Year" is a fabulous outstretched leg in a silk stocking and a high-heeled shoe—who knew she had legs?—and the rest of her is hardly less alluring. The role is a radically new female fantasy: a political columnist whose fam-

ily is intimate with the Roosevelts and who converses brilliantly in half a dozen languages. (We hear her do Bryn Mawr shades of Spanish and German and Russian, but Mayer vetoed Yiddish; the virgin goddess might lay herself down, but the Connecticut shiksa remained inviolate.)

Hepburn's Tess Harding is everything Jo March and the generations of world-seeking girls who modelled themselves on Jo ever dreamed of becoming, a woman immersed in a life of adventure and achievement and importance. In her relationship with Tracy—he's a sportswriter for the same paper—she's the intellectual force and the big success. Reversing all the clichés, it's he who gets upset when she's preoccupied with her work or fails to notice that he's bought a new hat. And she's the sexual aggressor, too: in one breathtaking scene—considering that it's Hepburn—they neck for a bit, clinging tight, and she shocks him by casually preparing for him to stay the night. Retribution inevitably arrives, with marriage and the familiar accusations: she's heartless, thoughtless, too self-involved to be a mother or wife—in fact, he points out, she isn't really a woman at all.

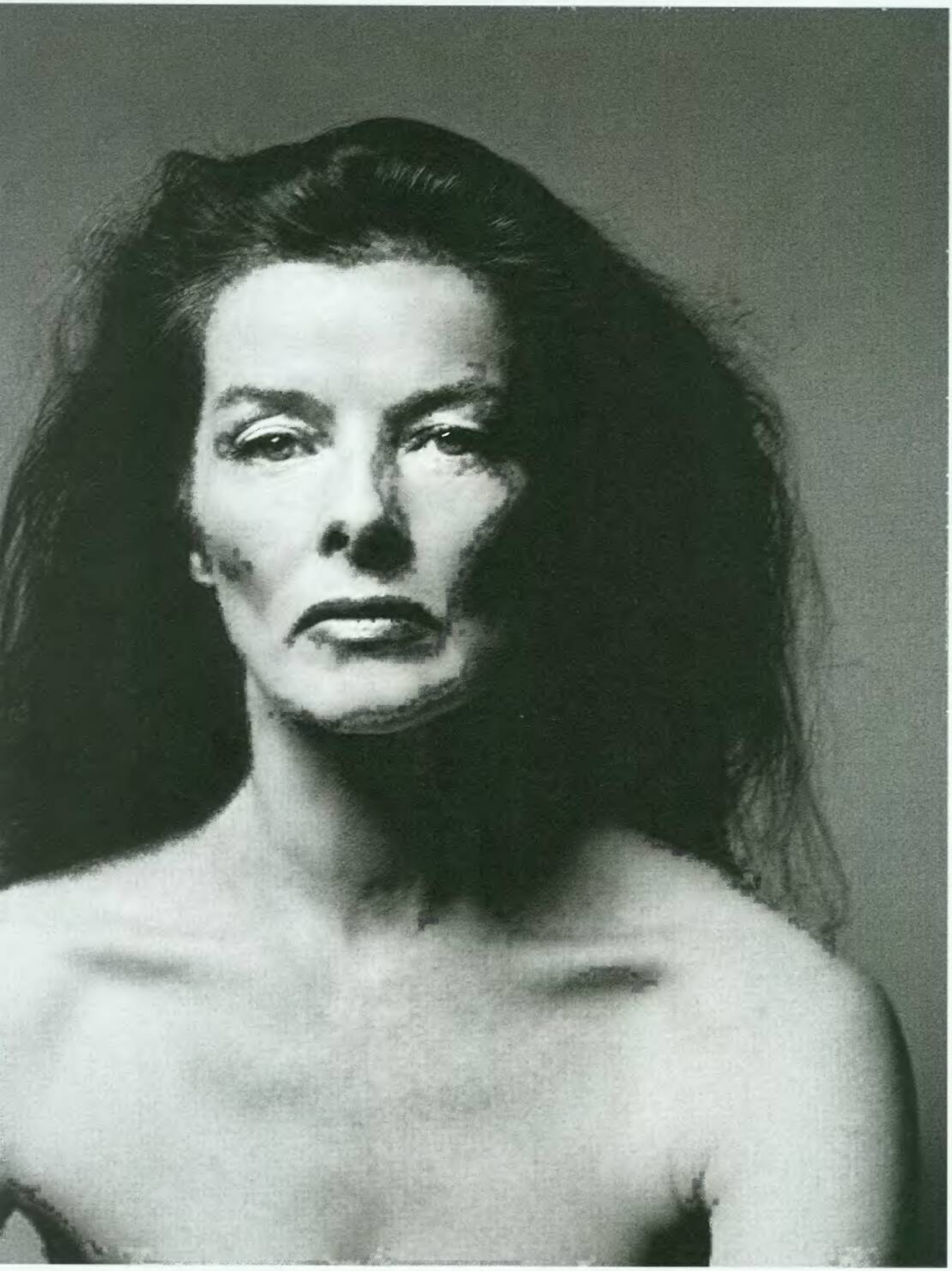
And so, in one of the most lyrically funny and politically reviled episodes in American movies, Hepburn cooks Tracy breakfast in order to win him back. She's scheduled to launch a battleship that morning, but it can wait. In a nearly silent sequence that parallels the opening of "The Philadelphia Story," she sets to work: fielding squares of toast as they sail through the air, gingerly tapping down an obscenely drooling waffle-maker, hitching up a shoulder strap with a colander—she's part Pavlova and part Stan Laurel. Weeping, she tells him she wants to quit her job ("What are ya gonna do, run for President?" he snarls) and be a proper wife. The screenwriters were only the first of many to be outraged by this ending—feminist film criticism hardly has a sorer point—which was tacked on after the film's completion, apparently when women in the preview audience found the star's perfections threatening. (Originally, she ended up outcheering Tracy at a baseball game.) Hepburn, who maintained practical control of the story, of the director, and pretty much of L. B. Mayer, took personal credit for the decision to make the change. But the rub is not that she was willing to compromise her principles for the sake of success. If she hadn't, she would have stopped making movies right along with Mae West. More disturbing is the possibility that Tess Harding's crazed capitulation didn't seem to her to be a compromise at all: that it was love.

At thirty-four, Hepburn was back at the top through her own formidable efforts, and she had also finally "discovered what 'I love you' really means." Her definition of the phrase veers from the unexpected to the alarming. "It means I put you and your interests and your comfort ahead of my own," she wrote. It means "total devotion." In practice, it meant that if "he didn't like this or that I changed this and that. They might be qualities which I personally valued. It did not matter. I changed them." The man she loved, as much of the world is aware, was Spencer Tracy. The life she described after more than two decades of celebrated devotion sounds relatively simple. "Food—we ate what he liked. We did what he liked. We lived a life which he liked. This gave me great pleasure. The thought that this was pleasing him."

The great, secret affair was not much of a secret at the start. While "Woman of the Year" was playing at Radio City, in February, 1942, Sheilah Graham informed readers of her Hollywood column that the two stars "got on like a house afire" and that "the love scenes in the picture are extremely convincing!" There seemed little reason to keep things quiet, since Hepburn was divorced and Tracy's affairs with his co-stars were notorious; by the time they met, he was known to be living more at the Beverly Hills Hotel than with his wife and children. Later legend often portrays Louise Tracy as a Catholic who would not hear of divorce. In fact, Louise was Episcopalian—it was Spencer who was Catholic, if limited in observance to playing priests and racking up guilt. Louise was, however, something of a saint. Although the modest wife and the glamorous movie star may seem polar opposites,



*Audiences loved Hepburn best in roles where she was part swan and part odd duck, where her patrician quiverings were framed with awkwardness and aspiration.*






they were all too alike in their unremitting ideals of love and the sheer blind strength they offered in its service. Louise was someone Hepburn might have played, if Hepburn had ever been able to convince as a mother: when the Tracys' first child, John, was born deaf, in 1924, Louise devoted herself to teaching him to speak and live normally. She succeeded against all odds, and went on to establish the John Tracy Clinic in a small bungalow in Los Angeles, in 1942, just a few months after the Sheilah Graham tidbit appeared. Over the years, the clinic grew into one of the country's largest centers for the education of deaf children, and Louise earned one humanitarian award after another; it was remarked that she even looked a little like Eleanor Roosevelt. She and her husband continued to pose together for pictures, for the clinic, as late as 1962, which was the next time that any significant publicity appeared about Tracy and Hepburn.

For those who know the partnership as a series of sophisticated comedies of sparring, loving equals (in which he got top billing, every time), it may come as a surprise that the next movie to fit the bill—"Adam's Rib"—did not get made for seven years. In between, the pair stumbled together through a number of misfits in various genres. Alone, Tracy had some success in a couple of war movies (he was the only big male star at M-G-M who didn't enlist). Hepburn pushed hard to get the studio to risk making O'Neill's "Mourning Becomes Electra"—even for her, though, Mayer stopped at incest—and then settled into the likes of Pearl Buck's "Dragon Seed," a film all too accurately described as a "Not-So-Good Earth." In any case, her criterion for an acceptable part soon came down to whatever wouldn't keep her away from Tracy for long.

The studio found this a reasonable use of her time, since Tracy, one of the most infamous drinkers in Hollywood, needed constant supervision in order to stay sober. Garson Kanin, scriptwriter and courtier to the royal pair, tells many admiring anecdotes of Hepburn's loyal devotion: Kate kneeling at Spence's feet and leaping up to make fresh coffee when the old was still hot but he said it was cold, Kate scrubbing the floor of Spence's dressing room, Kate sleeping outside his locked hotel-room door as Spence drank himself sick over a period of days, waiting for the chance to get inside to clean him off. And he observes with official, glitter-eyed cheeriness how Kate "never felt bereft or sidetracked" when Spence went off to spend time with his wife at their home, The Hill, since Kate herself so appreciated the value of family, as demonstrated by her own frequent visits to her mother and dad.

Her brother Bob tried to make sense of her behavior by suggesting that Tracy "was sort of a younger edition of her father, in her mind." It's true that she spoke of her father, adoringly, as an "over-male" male—for all his liberal philosophy, Dr. Hepburn was an authoritarian in his domestic demands and in his harsh (some in the family said overharsh) corporal punishment of the children. And she spoke of Tracy, just as adoringly, as "a throwback to an age of rugged heroism." This was, of course, Tracy's stock-in-trade onscreen, part of his image as the all-American, not too threateningly handsome, gruff but decent man. Yet Tracy's actual "small life"—as he himself described it—was anything but rugged, bounded by the studios and The Hill and various Hollywood bars and restaurants. Even his highly cinematic acting style seems to depend on expending the least effort possible. By the time Hepburn published her autobiography, in 1991, she had come to see Tracy in a very different light, but she sustained herself for decades on what appears to have been a set of furiously willed illusions: that fiction could be transformed into fact by the intensity of belief, that her lover's frequent cruelties were a sign of heroic masculinity, and that she could save him.

In the late forties, Tracy was drinking heavily and rumored to be chasing other women. Hepburn was hemmed in and worn out when "Adam's Rib" finally established the intimate, home-movie interplay and beloved status of the partnership—in 1949, the year that Ingrid Bergman was run out of American movies for being an adulteress. The "Tracy and Hepburn" routine was already pat in its mixture of feistiness and comfort, and the pair exemplified what later feminists would gratefully view as "an ideal relationship celebrating the most happily integrated emancipated woman of the era." At the time, however, the woman was in need of emancipation from nothing so much as the relationship itself.

For the next few years, Hepburn took on every job she could. Real life resembled the old movies played backward: the hero disappeared from the frame and the heroine was suddenly brash and striv-

ing again. She spent months coaching her voice in order to play Rosalind in the New York Theatre Guild's "As You Like It," in 1950. The reviews were not encouraging, but it pleased her greatly that her mother got to see her perform Shakespeare (Katharine Houghton Hepburn died a short while after). Her fame secured a four-month Broadway run, and then, after a summer break in California with Tracy, a national tour took her away for another half year—nearly up to the moment she set sail for England and Africa, in April, 1951, on a new adventure.

Rosie Sayer, the "psalm-singing skinny old maid" of "The African Queen," is probably the heroine most responsible for carving Hepburn's chin-up, indomitable image into our cinematic equivalent of Mt. Rushmore. In a breezy little book she wrote years later—"The Making of 'The African Queen' or How I Went to Africa with Bogart, Bacall and Huston and Almost Lost My Mind"—Hepburn tells how after the first few scenes John Huston walked into her hut to say she was approaching the part all wrong, and to offer a suggestion. Play it like Mrs. Roosevelt, he told her: she felt she was ugly, and she always put on a smile to cover the ugliness or the worry about the ugliness, and to keep herself going. Hepburn calls this the most brilliant bit of direction she ever received.

The effect isn't much apparent in her early prim and bothered scenes, which any number of actresses could have played. But when Rosie is freed from her inhibitions by the hazarding of dangers and lets out a hell-for-leather Jo March baritonal "Hip hip hooray!" accompanied by snorts of laughter, then her smile becomes a face-splitting dissolution into radiance, and something in Hepburn (at her most irremediably Hepburn) does evoke Mrs. Roosevelt—something that is clearly not a feint but a great compensatory gift for self-forgetting, for hands-on-the-world exuberance, which the actress in all her first-time Technicolor beauty would seem to bear no right to, and which makes her appear the happiest woman alive.

The movie took five exciting, exhausting, self-forgetful months to complete. When she returned home, she found that her father had remarried and that the entire record of her mother's lifework in the suffrage and birth-control movements had been destroyed. No point in looking back. As for Tracy, he'd been making his softest pictures yet; at fifty, with "Father of the Bride," he'd begun to move into papa-bear roles. Back in Hollywood, Hepburn fulfilled her last M-G-M commitment with him in "Pat and Mike," a sports-division trifle off the old team rack—Cukor directing, Kanin and Ruth Gordon writing—and did not renew her contract. Instead, as Tracy settled down to "The Plymouth Adventure," she went off to prepare for Shaw's "The Millionairess" onstage in London. In the summer of 1952, she was playing there to rave reviews when Tracy arrived for a visit, accompanied by his new co-star and latest paramour, the thirty-one-year-old Gene Tierney.

There were separate hotels and gossip and near-brushes at dinner. Tierney told people that Tracy was in love with her; Tierney's mother told people that he was the most tormented man she'd ever met. Night after night, Hepburn's performances were so overwrought and ranting that close observers worried for her health, while the *Times* admired "her ability to be violent in about twenty-five different ways." The play was scheduled to move to New York, and she wrote to the head of the Theatre Guild, her old friend Lawrence Langner, that she thought she might be "cracking up." It is apparent that by August a full-scale nervous breakdown was passing as a tour de force.

In September, Tracy went back to Hollywood and Hepburn spent several weeks recovering at Fenwick, but severe vocal problems—which she described as a sense of being strangled when she spoke—persisted through the play's disastrous New York run that fall. At her lowest point, she checked into Presbyterian Hospital, whether to regain her voice or her emotional control isn't clear, and the distinction may not be necessary.

After this, she cut a wider arc than ever around Hollywood, although she and Tracy were never out of touch. It was three years—and a different era—before she made another movie. The glorious strength of Rosie Sayer had survived a trip down a crocodile-infested river and a German gunboat attack, but no amount of pluck could see Hepburn through the American fifties with her dignity intact. The lush and rudely punishing "Summertime," made in Venice in 1954, inaugurated a series of films that might be called Hepburn's Spinster Cycle, in all of which an intelligent, middle-aged, and previously independent woman is reduced to desperation by her lack of a man; the old tacked-on endings were now the main event. The domestic reëngineering project of postwar America, shifting millions of women out of factories and offices and back to the kitchen, was still making full use of movies as propaganda. For all the wistfully Jamesian aura of "Summertime," Hepburn's new persona is a coup in the counter-revolution, a clear depiction of what flouting the rules would get you




*"Globally warm enough for you, buddy?"*

now: loneliness, a boring job, a few stolen moments with someone else's husband, public humiliation, and a hairdo with little bows. It is a mark of how fine Hepburn's performance is in "Summertime" that one can hardly bear to watch her.

From Venice she moved on to Australia, where she toured Shakespeare with the Old Vic. She was playing her first real Kate the Shrew when she got word that Tracy had become so drunk and unreasonable on his latest picture that he'd been fired. Clearly, he was unable to manage without her. And so, in late 1955, she returned to his side in Hollywood, and they took up much where they had left off; some say they were never closer. His career was soon flourishing again, and she took on films when his schedule allowed. Approaching fifty, she played two more plaintive spinsters, in "The Rainmaker" (1956) and "Desk Set" (1957)—the latter a near-complete inversion of "Woman of the Year"—and one all-devouring mother ("Suddenly, Last Summer," 1959), after which she reputedly spat in the producer's eye and shut down her movie career. She kept on with Shakespeare at three hundred and fifty dollars a week in Stratford, Connecticut, drawing large crowds and mixed reviews, living alone on the river and hoping Tracy would join her—she cooed to the press over what a great Macbeth he would be, since he was, after all, America's presiding actor of genius. By 1960, her public activities were confined to sitting in on Tracy's sets, calling out his praises and knitting.

She made a single exception when she was offered the role of Mary Tyrone, O'Neill's magnificently tormented portrait of his mother, in Sidney Lumet's film of "Long Day's Journey Into Night." (She tried to persuade Tracy to play opposite her, as the brilliant wreck of a drunken actor James Tyrone, but he said the fee was too small.) In the fall of 1961, she came to New York for three weeks of rehearsal and thirty-seven days of shooting, to make what many consider to be the crowning achievement of her career, and a few dissenting voices call a travesty.

Lumet's film is choppy and strained and the actors rarely mesh, but in the circa-1912, hair-piled-high style of Mary, Hepburn is almost painfully ravishing—she really did become more beautiful as she aged, and her looks and her history here take on a kind of allegorical force. The elegant bones that were once the latest in chic now appear a Gothic cage, a reliquary for the martyred spirit staring out. The overfamiliar voice is harder to accept, but even her most actressy intonations may be taken for Mary's attempt to hide her secrets behind girlish affectation. While it may justly be complained—as always—that Hepburn is too much Hepburn, by now that very fact adds to our emotion. When the sickled curve of her mouth or the lift of her head brings Jo March or Rosie Sayer or Alice Adams flashingly before our eyes, we register with fresh surprise the way that movies capture time. For we can actually see, in a person we have only just met—Mary Tyrone, a trusting girl who fell in love one spring and became a wraith of a wife—shades of bloom and loss not present even in the lines of O'Neill's endlessly encompassing text.

Nothing was important enough to draw her to the screen again for five more years. Both her father and Tracy became ill during the filming of "Long Day's Journey," and when her father died, in November, 1962, she devoted herself to Tracy as a full-time aide, nurse, friend, lover, and nearly a wife—but for the presence of Louise. A tell-all *Look* feature in early 1962 seems not to have altered the situation. When Tracy suffered a pulmonary crisis in 1963, the two women took shifts at his hospital bedside, and Louise told reporters gathered out front that she expected her husband to be coming home any day. What bothered Hepburn most was that she seemed to believe it.

When Tracy returned home, to the cottage on Cukor's estate where he had lived for years, Hepburn threw all her energies into his recovery. She said that she was completely happy then; she was needed, she was keeping him alive. By 1966, when Stanley Kramer came up with "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" as a vehicle for them both, Tracy's health was so poor that he couldn't be insured, and Kramer and Hepburn put their salaries in escrow, to repay costs if Tracy couldn't finish the picture. A trouper, he lasted for fifteen days after the final shoot. He died in the early morning, in his cottage, and although he did not permit Hepburn to sleep in the room with




*"Oh, sorry, wrong cubicle."*




him—she kept herself tethered nearby, with a cord attached to a bedside buzzer—she heard him walk to the kitchen, and then the crash of a cup, and then a thud. She was through the door in a flash, crouching down to take him in her arms, and there is a sense in her telling of this story in which the forty-six years of life between Tom's death and this moment seems no more than a brief and troubling passage between Pietàs.

She moved her possessions out and then—annoyed with herself—back in again, before Louise arrived later that day. Face to face at last, the women bickered over which suit he would wear in the casket. The official fairy tale went into production two days after the funeral, when the Los Angeles *Times* called the Tracy-Hepburn films "a remarkable legacy of an association as beautiful and dignified as any this town has ever known." Later that year, "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" got reviews that excused themselves from being reviews: there was no criticism possible anymore for these two, we were so glad just to be in their presence again. Hepburn won her second Oscar for this film, thirty-four years after her first, and she went on to win two more, the all-time record: for "The Lion in Winter" (1968) and "On Golden Pond" (1981), a final Tracy movie, with Henry Fonda filling in as the old curmudgeon and Hepburn succeeding to the role of the saintly wife.

For the rest of her life, Hepburn spoke of Tracy as reverentially as she did of her mother and father. She frequently recalled their "twenty-seven years together in what was to me absolute bliss." There was no other great love. Highly disconcerting, though, is her account of a flirtation—some time after Tracy's death—with the screenwriter of "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?," William Rose, in which she swiftly elevates this handsome but childish and destructive man (to judge by her own transcribed conversations) to the status of a god among writers, a suffering giant of an artist beside whose talent she is a mere mouse, and thus meant to serve. The thoughts are familiar; only the name of the hero has changed. Hepburn herself came to write about Tracy: "One builds one's own jail." In looking back—and possibly all along, from the part of her that required someone to save—she recognized Tracy as a soul "in misery with life." He was such a natural actor, she wrote in 1991, because he couldn't bear living in himself. And there was "no one able to help him, really." She concluded that she had never known him; she wasn't entirely sure there was anyone to know.

The handcrafted jail—any sort of jail—makes an insupportable setting for scenes from the life of Katharine Hepburn. Her movies seem to tell us something not only different or better but truer. After Tracy's death, she set herself back to work, with the same relentless energy she'd put into keeping him alive. Until well into her seventies, she took on role after role, indefatigable, a pronounced wobble just slipping in among her other fondly noted mannerisms. When movie projects were scarce, there were Broadway shows—she learned to sing, in a manner of speaking, for "Coco"—and gruelling national tours that no other star of her stature would have considered. There is a generation that knows her from a remake of "The Corn Is Green," or as Warren Beatty's aunt in a second remake of "Love Affair"—her last screen appearance, in 1994—or simply as a majestic but suspiciously lonely television talk-show guest, addressing her public just a bit more directly than she ever had in what may qualify as her finest late performances, with no story line and no director and no part left even to pretend to play but Katharine Hepburn.

The old question about whether she could *act* may not only not have an answer; it may not be the right question. "She does not enter into the leading character: she substitutes herself for it," Shaw wrote of Sarah Bernhardt. And, if Hepburn showed us how Jo March and Eleanor of Aquitaine took their turns at playing Katharine Hepburn, the exchange seemed to involve no loss of scale or interest. Hepburn claimed that she was too content with herself as a person to be among the really great actors, too much the strong and happily unreflective product of her parents. There is some truth in this: the engine of the Hepburn machinery seems to have been a survival instinct in permanent overdrive, which is visible in the almost unhinged force that broke through the mediocrity of her early material, and which carried her through her uniquely Lazarus-like career. She overcame every obstacle—horror, failure, love, the endings of most of her movies—to provide us with a continually renewed image of the strength that such overcoming required. We held her close not because she could act but because of the insistent life that hummed through every taut and peremptory inch of her, and that we imagined to be as natural as breathing or winning for someone so easily, imperiously free. It was in making us believe in this that she may have been our greatest actress of all. ♦

LETTER FROM IRAQ

# BENEATH THE SAND

*Can a shattered country be rebuilt with oil?*

BY JOHN CASSIDY

The dead camel was lying in a minefield surrounded by barbed wire. From forty or fifty yards away, which was the closest I could get, it looked like a pile of dirty rags in the desert, but when the wind blew in my direction the odor was unmistakable. A few days earlier, the camel had stepped on one of the many land mines that Saddam Hussein's Army bequeathed to the Rumaila oil fields, which extend south from Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, to the Kuwait border. Alive, the camel had been worth somewhere between five hundred and a thousand dollars, a vast sum to its impoverished Bedouin owner, who was one of the few Iraqis living on this arid and inhospitable plain. Now its rotting corpse was just another problem for the American cleanup crews who are working in the area—a malodorous reminder of the many unexpected difficulties that have plagued the Pentagon's effort to get the Iraqi oil industry up and running.

One of the Americans, Elliott Adler, a stocky fellow with the weather-beaten look of somebody who spends his life outdoors, walked me around the periphery of the minefield, which was just down the road from an oil-processing facility. Adler is an ordnance-removal expert who works for EOD Technology, a firm based in Knoxville, Tennessee, which the Pentagon hired to help clean up the Iraqi oil fields. He said nobody had figured out a safe way to remove the camel, which was why it was still lying in the sand, attracting flies. Like most of the Americans I met in Rumaila, Adler arrived in Iraq at the end of the war, hoping to get the country's oil flowing. Back in March, the Pentagon awarded a controversial no-bid contract to repair the oil fields to Kellogg Brown & Root, a Houston-based engineering firm, which, in turn, hired a number of subcontractors so that it could start work as soon as the fighting ended. KBR, as the company refers to itself, is a subsidiary of Halliburton, the oil-services company formerly run by Vice-President Dick Cheney. The day Baghdad fell, on April 9th, Cheney predicted that by the end of the year Iraq's oil output could reach three million barrels a day, slightly more than its prewar level.

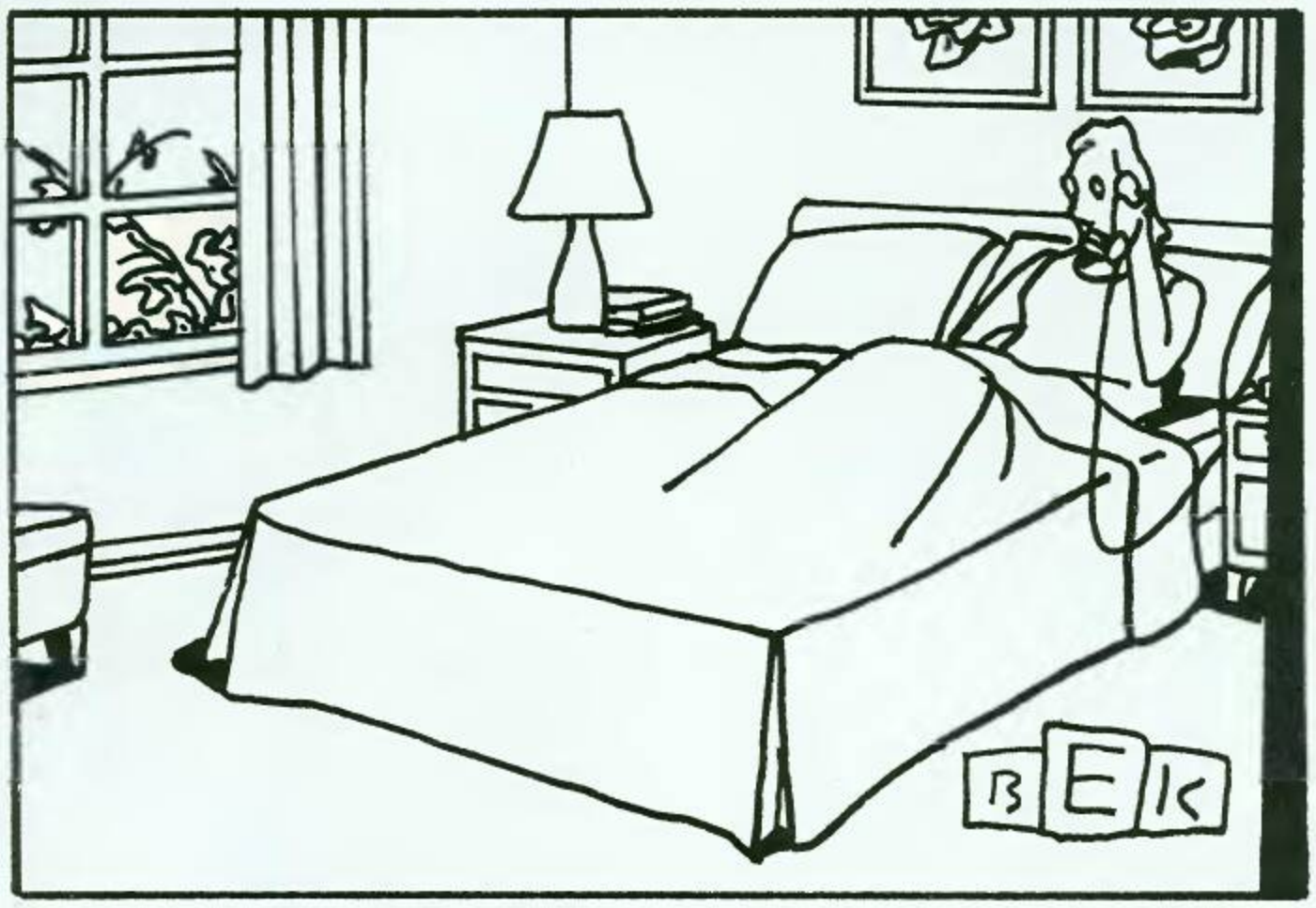
The American crews had begun by extinguishing oil fires set by the retreating Iraqis. By the end of April, nearly all the fires had been put out, raising hopes for a rapid return to normal production. But by the time I reached Rumaila, in early May, the optimism had faded. Amid widespread disorder, Iraq was producing only about a tenth as much oil as it had been before the war, many of its citizens were being forced to line up for gasoline and heating fuel, and the Ministry of Oil had announced emergency plans to import fuel from Kuwait, Jordan, and Turkey. The task of clearing the oil fields of unexploded munitions hadn't received as much publicity as the gasoline shortage and the looting, but to the Americans on the ground it was a major concern. "At this point, I don't have any clear understanding of how long this cleanup operation is going to take," Adler said.

The South Rumaila and North Rumaila fields are what people in the oil world refer to as "elephants" or "supergiants." Before the war, they generated more than a million barrels of crude oil a day. Because of the Rumaila region's strategic importance, it was heavily fortified by Saddam, and it saw fighting in all three of his wars: the Iran-Iraq War of the nineteen-eighties, the Gulf War in 1991, and this year's invasion. The narrow roads through the oil fields were lined with incinerated armor, hunks of rusting metal, and bombed-out barracks buildings. As we drove along, Adler stopped and showed me some abandoned Iraqi trenches, which contained discarded uniforms and empty food cans. A few yards away, there was a firing



RALPH STEADMAN


2005




*"This is one of those days when I would've been better off just getting out of bed and leaving the house."*

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position, with a working rocket launcher and about a dozen Russian-made rocket-propelled grenades.

The fleeing Iraqi soldiers weren't the only ones who had left behind ordnance. After passing an old drilling rig, we came to a working well, a corroded piece of metal sticking about ten feet out of the ground, which four Americans were checking for explosives. "Over there, we found incoming rounds—155-mm. howitzers—bomblets, and 122-mm. mortars," Richard Weaver, a slight man with glasses and a ponytail, said. "The incoming rounds were ours, and the bomblets were ours. The one-twenty-two mortars were Russian." Weaver and his colleagues were military veterans working for a firm called USA Environmental, which is based in Tampa, Florida. They demonstrated their bomb-detecting technique, walking off slowly, four abreast, eyes scanning the ground ahead for signs of danger. The biggest threats, Weaver said, were buried Iraqi mines and unexploded American bomblets—M-42 submunitions that resemble small aerosol cans with a ribbon attached to one end. The American and British forces dispersed tens of thousands of these deadly weapons, which are packed inside large artillery shells. They are supposed to go off on landing, piercing any armor or flesh that gets in their way, but occasionally they don't. Weaver, however, seemed more worried about the mines, which even experts can fail to detect.

A couple of miles farther on, I got my first glimpse of Iraqi oil, at the site of a burst pipeline, which had created a shallow black lake about two hundred yards long and a hundred yards wide. This area, too, was covered with unexploded bomblets—about three hundred of them, according to an American soldier who was guarding it. "The ordnance slows us up," Ben Benson, a civil engineer with a firm called the O'Brien's Group, in New Orleans, said. "You can't rush it. There are explosives out here that are almost impossible to detect." Nonetheless, the contractors had started to drain the lake by pumping the thick crude into tanker trucks and taking it away. It wasn't the most efficient method, but at least some Rumaila crude was making it out of the oil fields.

With the exception of its southern neighbor, Saudi Arabia, Iraq has more oil buried underneath it than any country in the world: a hundred and twelve billion barrels in confirmed reserves, plus an undetermined amount that has yet to be discovered. The Rumaila fields are Iraq's biggest. They contain more than six hundred wells, which produce three streams of crude: Basra Regular, Basra Medium, and Basra Heavy. The oil is trapped at such high pressure that when a well is drilled it gushes out by itself, so there is no need for the "nodding donkeys" that are used to pump oil in Texas and Oklahoma. Along with cheap labor, this accident of nature helps to explain why Iraq has the cheapest production costs in the world, at about a dollar a barrel. (In Texas these days, oil costs about six dollars a barrel to produce.)

Once the crude is extracted from the ground, it is sent by pipeline to a local processing facility known as a GOSP (gas-oil separation plant), which skims off the natural gas. There are thirty-four GOSPs in the Rumaila fields, but only one of them, No. 3R, was operating. Dave Urbon, a friendly fifty-six-year-old electrical engineer from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who is with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' hydraulics-and-hydrology branch, was overseeing the plant. The Corps of Engineers, which dates back to the Revolutionary War, is leading Task Force Rio ("Restore Iraqi Oil"), the military-civilian effort to repair the Iraqi oil fields. Urbon volunteered to go to Iraq because, he said, he "wanted to have an adventure and help out." When he arrived at GOSP 3R on April 4th, it was shut down, and there were no Iraqis to be found. Looters had sacked the offices and storerooms, and there was no electricity or working telephones. Fortunately, the oil-processing equipment was largely intact, and it hadn't been booby-trapped. Along with a couple of engineers from KBR, Urbon did some electrical repairs and got the emergency generators working. After several weeks, and many delays, the plant had started processing crude. Several dozen Iraqis had returned to work, and Urbon said they were highly able technicians.

He took me on a tour, starting at the heads, where the oil comes in from the wells. There were thirty metal pipes, but only four of them were switched on. "The wells are eleven thousand feet deep," Urbon said. "They turn them on, and up it comes." The GOSP's equipment looked old and rickety, but it was functioning. Urbon said it dated from the nineteen-seventies, which is the last time the Iraqi government invested heavily in the oil industry. From the heads, the oil

was being forced through a series of pipes and tanks, which reduced its pressure and siphoned off the natural gas. A turbine with a plaque on its side that said "Mather & Platt, Manchester" was powering the machinery; a meter showed that it was pumping sixty-nine thousand barrels a day—about a quarter of the GOSP's full capacity. Urbon said that he was hoping to turn on another turbine in the next few days and raise the output to a hundred thousand barrels. "They have one well that can produce thirty thousand barrels a day," he said. "I'd like to own that one, for a day, even. At twenty-five dollars a barrel, that's a lot of money."

The land surrounding the Tigris and the Euphrates was known as Mesopotamia until 1920. By the end of the First World War, when it was still part of the Ottoman Empire, the British Army had occupied Baghdad and Basra, but the Turks, who had fought alongside the Germans, remained in control of the northern region around Mosul and Kirkuk. The British generals didn't see any military value in routing the Turks, but the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, and his colleagues were looking ahead. In 1917 and 1918, a gasoline shortage had demonstrated the economic vulnerability of the British Empire, which had no liquid fuel of its own. The area stretching from Baghdad to the Turkish border was well known for its oil and gas, which in some areas seeped to the surface, creating fires that were said to be the "burning fiery furnace" into which Nebuchadnezzar, the ruler of ancient Babylon, dispatched the Jews.

In "Imperial Quest for Oil: Iraq 1910-1918," the German historian Helmut Mejcher detailed the policy debate that took place within the British government. "There is no military advantage in pushing forward in Mesopotamia," Sir Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the War Cabinet, wrote to Lloyd George. However, Hankey went on, "would it not be an advantage, before the end of the war, to secure the valuable oil wells in Mesopotamia?" Arthur Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, derided Hankey's "purely Imperialist War Aim," but Lloyd George followed Hankey's advice, and in the fall of 1918 British troops marched into Mosul.

Under the San Remo Agreement, which was completed in 1920, the northern province became part of Iraq, a League of Nations protectorate under British control. Faisal, the third son of Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca, was installed as king of the new country. The French, who considered Mosul to be within their colonial sphere of influence, demanded compensation for the British démarche, and they obtained a promise that Paris would receive a quarter of any future Iraqi oil revenues. Meanwhile, Walter Teagle, the formidable head of Standard Oil of New Jersey, America's largest oil company (and the precursor of ExxonMobil), headed for London to stake his firm's claim. "It should be borne in mind that the Standard Oil Company is very anxious to take over Iraq," Sir Arthur Hirtzel, a British colonial officer, warned his colleagues.

Before the war, an Armenian entrepreneur named Calouste Gulbenkian had established the Turkish Petroleum Company, with the backing of Royal Dutch/Shell and Anglo-Persian (later renamed British Petroleum), to explore for commercial deposits of oil in Mesopotamia. In 1925, King Faisal granted the Turkish Petroleum Company a monopoly on oil exploration in Iraq for seventy-five years, along with the sole authority to determine how much oil would be pumped and at what price it would be sold. In return, the government in Baghdad would get a small royalty on each barrel produced. This one-sided arrangement became the model for subsequent deals between Western oil companies and Arab governments in the nineteen-thirties and forties.

The Turkish Petroleum Company quickly struck oil. In October, 1927, a team of geologists was drilling near Kirkuk, a hundred and fifty miles north of Baghdad. One morning, a roar was heard in the drilling area, and a great gusher burst from the ground, carrying rocks fifty feet above the derrick. "The countryside was drenched with oil, the hollows filled with poisonous gas," the energy expert Daniel Yergin recounts in "The Prize," his panoramic history of the oil industry. "Whole villages in the area were threatened, and the town of Kirkuk itself was in danger. Some seven hundred tribesmen were quickly recruited to build dikes and walls to try to contain the flood of oil."



Intensive discussions followed about how to restructure the now immensely valuable Turkish Petroleum Company. In July, 1928, the interested parties agreed to divide the business between its founder, Gulbenkian, who got five per cent of the equity, and four Western companies: Royal Dutch/Shell, Anglo-Persian, Compagnie Française des Pétroles, and an American consortium led by Teagle's Standard Oil. In 1929, three years before Iraq gained independence, the Turkish Petroleum Company was renamed the Iraq Petroleum Company, but the Westerners remained in control—a situation that prevailed for decades.

As the twentieth century progressed, the United States gradually usurped Britain's role as the dominant military power in the Middle East. Economic self-interest drove this strategic shift. In 1940, the United States produced two-thirds of the entire world's oil supply. During the Second World War, however, fears arose that American reserves might eventually be depleted, and Harold Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior, published an article entitled "We're Running Out of Oil!" When American officials began to look covetously at Britain's Middle East reserves, Winston Churchill was moved to write to Franklin D. Roosevelt and point out that some people in London feel "that we are being hustled." In one of a series of cables, Roosevelt tried to reassure Churchill: "Please do accept my assurances that we are not making sheep's eyes at your oil fields in Iraq or Iran."

After the Second World War, American oil companies concentrated on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, where new "elephants" were being discovered regularly. But in 1953, after Iran nationalized its oil industry, the C.I.A. helped to organize a coup that ejected the nationalist government of Mohammad Mossadegh and reinstalled the Shah. A few years later, Egypt's President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, was calling on the Arab masses to seize control of their oil, and the unrest spread to Iraq. In 1958, an Iraqi Army officer named Abdul Karim Qasim organized

a coup that overthrew King Faisal II and established a republic. Faisal and his family were assassinated. The Eisenhower Administration seriously considered a military intervention, but decided against it.

In 1961, Qasim's government introduced a law banning the Iraq Petroleum Company from developing new oil fields, while leaving its existing assets in place. Less than two years later, the Baath Party, an alliance of Socialists and disaffected Army officers, seized power and put Qasim to death. The Baathists were quickly dismissed in a countercoup, but they returned to power in 1968 and asserted control over the oil industry. In 1972, they nationalized the Iraq Petroleum Company, folding everything from drilling rigs to refineries and gas stations into the state-owned Iraq National Oil Company. The Iraq Petroleum Company's Western employees were forced to leave. From that point on, anybody who wanted access to Iraq's oil had to deal with the leaders of the Baath Party, the most powerful of whom was Saddam Hussein.



The man in charge of Task Force Rio is Brigadier General Robert Crear, a strapping forty-nine-year-old who attended Jackson State University with the football player Walter Payton. Crear has several hundred people working for him, including the people from KBR and other American firms. In the middle of May, I drove with him in a military convoy from Kuwait City to Basra; there is a big oil refinery a few miles south of the city. He was going to a weekly meeting at which American, British, and Iraqi officials review the progress of the repair effort, which was slowly expanding to northern Iraq. "We already have a field office in Kirkuk, and we are opening one in Baghdad," Crear told me on the way. "It will be working closely with the Iraqis. They are keen to get things coördinated, but they are hampered by lack of communications." In case I hadn't got the message, one of Crear's staff handed me a printed set of discussion points that posed the question "Who will be running the Iraqi oil industry?" The answers included: "Iraqis are responsible for the energy sector" and "Iraqis will make all decisions about how much oil and refined products to produce, when and where to produce for the domestic market and how to distribute the product."

British soldiers from the 12th Regiment of the Royal Artillery were guarding the refinery's entrance. The executive offices were in a handsome two-story brick building fronted by a flower garden. At the top of the stairs was a large picture frame from which somebody had removed Saddam's picture. On a nearby wall, a printed statement in English read, "Economic independence is a central aim of the revolution. It is parallel in importance to political independence and contemporary to it also. For without real economic independence, political independence loses its most important support and context and remains constantly threatened. Economic independence is the Arab revolution movement, and the Third World revolution in general, to which the Arab Baath Socialist Party relates and occupies a leading position."

During the war, the refinery's Iraqi managers set up nightly patrols and welded shut the doors to the storerooms to prevent looting. They managed to keep most of the plant intact until the British arrived. A few Iraqi workers were hanging around the office building. One of them, named Muhammad Jalad, told me how much he liked the British troops, and tried to sell me a document that he claimed proved Saddam's involvement in the 1993 plot to kill the first President Bush. Another Iraqi, Muhammad Hassan, showed me his green Baath Party membership card and complained about how long it was taking to re-start the oil industry. "The decisions belong to the British forces and the American forces, not to us," he said. "They run everything, as you can see."

The refinery was spread out over about ten acres. Some of the turbines and pumps were so old and rusty that they resembled a set from "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," but they were refining the sixty-nine thousand barrels of crude a day that GOSP 3R was providing. At the time, this was the only gasoline being produced in Iraq.

Mark Tilly, a lanky major in the Royal Engineers, the British equivalent of the Army Corps of Engineers, had been running the Basra refinery since March, together with some Iraqi managers, but his progress was hampered by a lack of equipment and raw materials. He had asked Task Force Rio to furnish him with fresh supplies, but nothing happened, and he ended up obtaining thirty-nine thousand pounds from the British government and buying some electrical cables and chemicals himself in Kuwait. "There was a lot of naïveté about the supply chain and how long it would take to get things going," he told me, showing me his receipts. "This is the third country I've been in, and it's always the same. It's always chaotic." Tilly's experience had left him frustrated. "I'm not interested in what KBR does or anything else," he went on. "I'm just trying to get the plant up and running on behalf of the Iraqi people. This is a major petrochemical industry, and it can't be run on a shoestring. I hope people in America realize that."

After the meeting ended, I sat down with some of its participants, including Crear and Jabbar Ali Al Liaibi, the head of the state-owned Southern Oil Company, which was still officially in charge of operating the oil fields in the south of Iraq. Al Liaibi appeared to be in his fifties. Before the war began, he was the Southern Oil Company's director of operations. When his boss fled to Baghdad, Al Liaibi stayed behind, and General Crear appointed him the new director general. Like most senior people in the Iraqi oil industry, he had been educated in Britain, in his case at Cardiff University, and he spoke fluent English in a calm, measured voice. He told me that he and his colleagues were putting together a plan to raise crude-oil production in southern Iraq to five hundred and sixty thousand barrels a day. If this target was achieved, he went on, some oil could be sent via pipeline to Baghdad, and there would be enough to satisfy the country's domestic needs for gasoline, power, and heating oil.

At the moment, Al Liaibi said, production was being hampered mainly by looting and a lack of security. The Southern Oil Company was having great difficulty transporting its thirteen thousand employees, because many of its buses had been stolen, he explained.

Even when transport could be found, workers were reluctant to leave their families at the mercy of the looters. In some cases, thieves were stripping entire oil facilities, such as pumping stations, and shipping their contents across the Shatt al Arab Channel to Iran, where they could be sold as scrap metal for fifty dollars a ton. Given all the damage, Al Liaibi concluded, it would be the end of the year before the industry could raise its output to even half its prewar level.

While Al Liaibi was talking, Crear had been sitting in polite silence. I asked him if, in retrospect, more ought to have been done to prevent the looting. After going to great lengths to occupy the oil fields before Saddam's forces could set them on fire, the coalition forces did nothing to keep the locals from stealing whatever they wanted. "I don't know what could have been done, quite frankly," Crear replied. "There is no way you can secure an entire country. Also, there are some personal-responsibility issues here. When you loot your own country—its hospitals, its infrastructure—that is unforgivable. These people are criminals, the way I see it."

Al Liaibi said that he agreed with Crear, but he also voiced some implied criticism of the British and American occupiers. "I remember in 1972, when I was in Britain, there was looting in London," he said. "It was controlled almost instantly, and it stopped. Here it has been going on for more than a month. We are in month two, and it is still going on." Even middle-class and upper-class people were joining in, Al Liaibi added. "Some people are just greedy, and they want to take stuff," he said. "But there is no law and order. That is the big issue."

As we were leaving the Basra refinery, Crear made a point of clarifying some of Al Liaibi's comments. The production plan that the Iraqi had outlined was optimistic, he told me. Task Force Rio's cleanup crews were still being slowed down by unexploded ordnance. Moreover, the pipeline that the Iraqis were hoping to use to ship oil to Baghdad had yet to be inspected. Other pipelines had suffered extensive damage from saboteurs and bandits, some of whom were breaking into them to steal oil and gas. "We don't know what we will find," Crear said. "Just this week, near Al Kut, four people were burned to death tapping into an L.P.G."—liquid petroleum gas—"pipeline. They just put a hole in the pipeline and put a tap in it. One of them lit a cigarette and—*bang*. They were eviscerated."

If and when the Iraqi oil fields are restored to full capacity, the American and British governments have promised to use the export revenues they generate to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure and help the Iraqi people. Although rarely presented as such, this would represent a return to the policies that the Baath regime followed before Saddam embarked on his disastrous military campaigns. Between 1972 and 1980, Iraq's oil revenues rose from five hundred and seventy-five million dollars to twenty-six billion dollars, when the Iraq National Oil Company doubled Iraq's daily production, to 3.5 million barrels, at the same time as oil prices rose sharply. The Baathists used the oil money to finance a nationwide development program, which included the building of dams, irrigation projects, iron and steel factories, and petrochemical plants, as well as the construction of schools and hospitals. The Middle East scholar Phebe Marr points out in her book, "The Modern History of Iraq," that this experiment in oil-financed socialism resulted in "a brief period of prosperity, unmatched in Iraqi history."

Once the Iran-Iraq War started, in September, 1980, the high hopes that had been created rapidly dissipated. Fighting destroyed much of Iraq's oil infrastructure, including its two major export terminals, at Mina al-Bakr and Khawr al-Amaya, on the Persian Gulf. By 1982, Iraqi oil production had fallen by roughly two-thirds, and much of the remaining export revenue was being diverted to military uses, some of which were hardly essential. (Between 1980 and 1990, Iraq spent an estimated ten billion dollars on nuclear-weapons research.) Oil production gradually recovered, but in order to finance the war Iraq was forced to borrow heavily from its allies and neighbors. By the middle of 1988, when the fighting ended, it had accumulated substantial foreign debts, which it still has. The exact amount that Iraq owes is unknown, but one estimate, from 1991, put it at more than eighty billion dollars: forty billion to other Arab countries, thirty-five billion to Western governments and banks, and eleven billion to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Early in 1990, the price of oil fell sharply, putting further pressure on Iraq's already strained finances. It was in this context that Saddam decided to invade




*"If your mother asks, we crossed at the corner."*




*"Look what I grew."*

Kuwait and seize its oil fields—a decision that had profound consequences for Iraq's own oil industry. Between 1990 and 1991, Iraq's oil output fell by eighty-five per cent, and it didn't rebound by much until the United Nations relaxed the harsh economic sanctions that it had imposed after the Gulf War. Iraq was then unable to export any oil legally until 1996. Under the "oil for food" program, it was allowed to export up to four billion dollars' worth a year in return for humanitarian aid. (The export ceiling was later raised, and then eliminated.)

During all this time, Iraqi oil fields were starved of funds, and the managers were forced to patch things together to keep any oil flowing. In 1998, a team of United Nations oil experts concluded that Iraq's oil industry was in a "lamentable state," with an urgent need for new equipment. Their findings persuaded the Security Council to allow Iraq to import some spare parts, but in December of last year the Council on Foreign Relations and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, at Rice University, reported that the Iraqi oil industry remained "in dire straits, with existing production levels declining at a rate of 100,000 barrels per day annually." The report warned that returning to Iraq's pre-1990 levels of production would require "massive repairs and reconstruction of major export facilities, costing several billions of dollars, and taking months, if not years."

The United States has been dependent on Middle East oil since the early nineteen-seventies. In 1956, M. King Hubbert, a geologist working for Shell Oil in Houston, predicted that American oil production would peak sometime around 1970 and thereafter drop off. Many people in the oil world dismissed Hubbert's gloomy forecast, which was based on the declining rate of discovery of new reserves, but it turned out to be correct, and American oil companies, such as Exxon and Chevron, were forced to step up imports. In 1973, the Nixon Administration abandoned long-standing restrictions on the purchase of overseas oil. A few months later, following Nixon's support of Israel in the Yom Kippur War, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed an embargo on shipments to the United States. Oil prices tripled, and the American economy entered a deep recession.

OPEC's intervention came as a great shock to Americans, who tend to regard cheap gasoline as a birthright. Until the nineteen-sixties, the Western oil companies had set the price of oil unilaterally, even though their decisions affected the revenues of many Arab regimes. In 1959, a group of Arab officials met in Cairo and called on the oil companies to consult with the Arab governments before changing the oil price. A year later, Iraq invited delegates from Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela to meet in Baghdad, where they established OPEC. In the next couple of years, Qatar, Indonesia, and Libya joined the oil producers' club. By 1973, OPEC controlled almost ninety per cent of the world's oil exports, and it had replaced the Western oil companies as the dominant player in the energy markets—a position it retained for the rest of the decade, despite President Gerald Ford's decision to establish a Strategic Petroleum Reserve of up to a million barrels, and despite President Jimmy Carter's declaration that the free flow of gasoline from the Middle East was a vital national-security interest. In 1979, after the overthrow of the Shah disrupted Iranian oil production, OPEC raised the price of crude once again, resulting in longer lines at American gas stations.

Nixon had set self-sufficiency in energy as a national goal, but most Americans weren't ready to commit to conservation or renewable energy. During the nineteen-eighties, however, American families finally switched to more fuel-efficient cars, and American companies adopted more energy-efficient technology. At the same time, non-OPEC countries, such as Mexico and Norway, increased their oil production. In the nineteen-nineties, many members of OPEC breached the cartel's production quotas, and the result was an oil glut. In 1998, the oil price dropped below ten dollars a barrel, bringing gasoline prices down to pre-1973 levels (adjusted for inflation). Many Americans returned to their gas-guzzlers, in the guise of sport-utility vehicles.

But, despite new sources of supply and falling prices at the pump, the dilemma that Ickes and Hubbert had identified remained. Last year, Americans burned twenty million barrels of oil a day, about a quarter of the entire world's consumption. More than half of this oil was imported, and much of it came from the Persian Gulf, including some from Iraq. Saddam didn't like dealing with the Americans directly, so middlemen bought oil from Iraq and shipped it to ports in the United States.

The return of cheap gasoline turned out to be temporary. In 1999, OPEC

members agreed on production cuts, and the oil price subsequently rose to more than thirty dollars a barrel. In some states, gasoline prices topped two dollars a gallon—still low compared with the price of gas in Europe, but high enough to raise the ire of American motorists.

When George W. Bush, a former oilman, took office, he asked his running mate, Dick Cheney, to lead a high-level review of energy policy. The task force that Cheney put together issued a report in May, 2001, which identified a "fundamental imbalance between supply and demand" as the core of "our nation's energy crisis." It went on, "Extraordinary advances in technology have transformed energy exploration and production. Yet we produce 39 percent less oil today than we did in 1970, leaving us ever more reliant on foreign suppliers. On our present course, America twenty years from now will import nearly two out of every three barrels of oil—a condition of increased dependency on foreign powers that do not always have America's interests at heart."

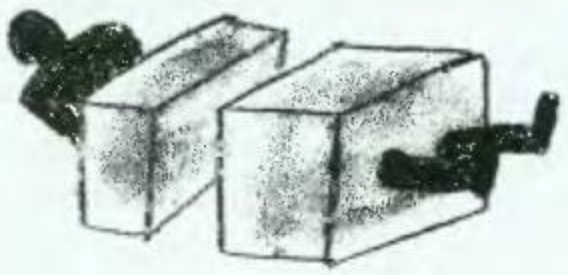
The task force advocated increased spending on renewable energy, and called for a revival in American oil production, partly by drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve. In a less publicized passage, it called on the Bush Administration to make "energy security a priority of our trade and foreign policy," and to encourage Middle Eastern countries to open up their energy sectors to foreign investment. It didn't single out Iraq, but Cheney did when he spoke to a group of veterans in Nashville on August 26, 2002. If Saddam Hussein got his hands on weapons of terror, the Vice-President warned, he would "seek domination of the entire Middle East" and "take control of a great portion of the world's energy supplies."

Cheney's speech was one of the last occasions on which the Bush Administration publicly acknowledged the link between energy policy and national security. Thereafter, it adopted the line that its decision to remove Saddam from power had, in the words of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, "nothing to do with oil, literally nothing to do with oil."

After travelling around the southern oil fields for a week or so, I drove from Umm Qasr, on the Kuwaiti border, to Baghdad, a trip of about three hundred miles. Thanks to the fuel shortage, the road north was almost empty of civilian traffic, but the American troops I encountered were nervous nonetheless. The previous day, a soldier had been shot at a checkpoint near Al Hillah, south of Baghdad, and there was an increasing number of such incidents. In Baghdad, there were plenty of cars on the streets, but many of them were waiting in line for gas. The only people who didn't seem short of fuel were the black-market traders selling gasoline out of plastic containers on street corners and the American troops, who had imported their own diesel fuel.

My arrival in Baghdad coincided with that of L. Paul Bremer III, the replacement head of the interim authority, who immediately declared, "Across most of Iraq, life is already getting better." Maybe that was how things looked from the Republican Palace—an enormous limestone crescent with three great heads of Saddam on its roof—which is where Bremer was based, along with members of the Pentagon's Coalition Provisional Authority. Much of central Baghdad still looked like a war zone, with bombed-out buildings, and dust and debris covering the streets, but not the American-occupied area on the western bank of the Tigris. After passing through a barbed-wire barricade and an X-ray machine, I was in a quiet, leafy enclave, with birds whistling in the trees and off-duty officials jogging in T-shirts and shorts. If it hadn't been for the tanks rumbling by, I could have imagined I was in Foggy Bottom or St. James's Park. The American administrators were living inside this green zone with no proper telephones and only limited access to e-mail. Whenever they ventured outside, which didn't appear to be very often, they were escorted by armed soldiers.

Elsewhere in the city, Bremer's prognosis found little support. "The situation is worsening," Dhia Al Abakkaa, a senior official at the Ministry of Oil, told me. "The security situation dominates everything. You cannot organize anything. You cannot send messages. You cannot insure the safety of the workforce. We cannot improve things until we have a proper government and a proper security force." Until a few days earlier, Al Abakkaa had been employed at the State Organization for Oil Marketing, which oversees Iraq's oil exports, but the American military had failed to secure SOMO headquarters with troops, and it had been looted and set on fire; sales records that went back decades were destroyed. "Myself, I do not understand what is happening," Al Abakkaa said as he offered me a cup of tea in his new office.



The Ministry of Oil is an ugly ten-story concrete building situated a couple of miles outside central Baghdad, near Uday Hussein's beloved soccer stadium. During the war, it was spared bombing, and it was now being guarded by elements of the 3rd Infantry Division's 369th Armored Battalion, whose laundry was hanging outside. Thamir Ghadhban, the interim Iraqi Oil Minister, was sitting in a handsome office decorated with yellow wallpaper and lacquered wood panelling. He was a striking man, about sixty years old, with a luxuriant mustache and a large dome-shaped head. Before the American invasion, he was the Ministry of Oil's director of planning. After Saddam's Oil Minister, Amir Rashid Muhammad, surrendered to the Americans, Jay Garner, the first head of the occupying authority, confirmed Ghadhban as the interim replacement. Ghadhban's big wooden desk had four telephones on it, none of them working. The Americans had given him a satellite phone, which was perched by his elbow, but even that didn't work inside the building. Despite these inconveniences, Ghadhban at least affected an upbeat manner. He said that daily crude production had risen to half a million barrels a day, enough to satisfy most of Iraq's domestic needs. As more of this oil made its way to the refineries, the gasoline crisis would ease. By mid-June, crude output would reach one and a half million barrels a day, and exports would start again. "We are the only oil-producing sector in the world that has survived three wars and sanctions on top of it," Ghadhban declared. "We are still optimistic."

There was no way to verify Ghadhban's figures, but the slow, solemn English in which he recited them was impressive. He has an undergraduate degree in geology from University College London

and a master's in petroleum engineering from Imperial College. After reminding me that Iraq possesses the second-largest proven reserves in the world, he pointed out that it could well be No. 1 in probable undiscovered reserves, an amount he put at two hundred and fifteen billion barrels. "Some people estimate as high as three hundred billion," he went on. "There is a base in Iraq to allow us to enhance our production capacity to a much higher level."

That much is indisputable. Iraq has at least six underdeveloped fields that are potentially capable of producing upward of a quarter of a million barrels a day: West Qurna, Majnoon, Bin Umar, Halfaya, Nasiriya, and East Baghdad. "Nowhere else in the world are there such fields," Ghadhban said. Moreover, large parts of Iraq, particularly the western desert, remain completely untapped. In order to expand production to these areas, "it is only a matter of putting in place a system of contracts to go and explore for gas and oil," Ghadhban insisted.

Under Saddam, the Ministry of Oil opened talks with French, Russian, and Chinese oil companies as part of an ambitious plan to raise daily production to six million barrels by 2010, contingent on the removal of United Nations sanctions. Ghadhban took part in these discussions. He said that only three significant contracts had been signed, and, contrary to some reports, none of them involved the French firm TotalFinaElf. One deal was made with Lukoil, a Russian company, to develop the West Qurna field. Ghadhban said the Iraqi regime had decided to void it late last year because it was unhappy with the slow progress. The Iraqi government had also frozen a contract with a Chinese company to develop the Al Ahdab field, in southern Iraq, he went on to say, and the only remaining arrangement, an exploration contract with Petrovietnam, was in doubt. "I cannot really give an exact opinion as to what will happen, frankly speaking," Ghadhban said. "We have just come out of a war. We are totally concentrating on the gasoline issue. We don't have time now to think about these mega-issues."

Though he wouldn't discuss the fate of specific projects, Ghadhban did outline his over-all vision of the future. The expansion of existing fields, such as Kirkuk and Rumaila, ought to remain under Iraqi control, he said, with foreign oil companies confined to providing equipment and expertise. But the development of new fields, and the expansion of Iraq's refining and distribution capacity, would require foreign capital, and that would provide plentiful openings for Western firms. "We would welcome foreign investment on a basis that benefits Iraq," Ghadhban said. "I am sure we are capable of arriving at a formula that is advantageous to both sides—the foreign investors and ourselves."

The Bush Administration, despite its pledge to let Iraqis decide the fate of Iraq's oil, will surely play a role. At the end of April, the White House appointed Philip J. Carroll, a Houston oilman who used to be a senior executive at Royal Dutch/Shell, as an "adviser" to the Iraqi Ministry of Oil. Carroll arrived in Baghdad in early May, and he quickly disappeared into the green zone. He initially refused to grant me an interview, but I ran into him one day at the Ministry of Oil, where he was arriving to meet Thamir Ghadhban. After his white Chevy Suburban drove in, flanked by two Humvees, he got out and took off his flak jacket, revealing a polo shirt with a Tulane University logo. He is a wiry man, with white hair, blue eyes, and a red nose. He wouldn't say much, but his companion, a broad-shouldered Australian named John Kjar, who was carrying some maps, confirmed that the reconstruction effort was going slowly. Members of Task Force Rio hadn't finished inspecting the pipeline between Basra and Baghdad, he said, and there was much work to be done. "Every little step is a big triumph," he added.

A few weeks later, after I had left Iraq, Carroll did call me from Baghdad. Talking on his satellite phone from outside the Republican Palace, he insisted that Task Force Rio was making progress, as evidenced by the steady increase in oil production since the end of the war, and the recent disappearance, from the streets of Baghdad and other cities, of cars lined up for gas. "We are more than meeting the demand, and we are starting to build a store of gasoline in and around the Baghdad area," Carroll said. He conceded that the postwar looting and sabotage had done serious harm to some oil fields, and that prewar levels of output were unlikely to be restored before the end of the year. "But, when you think about it, all the refineries are running," he added. "The fields are clearly capable of pretty high levels of production. It is only selective facilities that have been damaged. The industry is remarkably resilient, and the people are, too."

M. King Hubbert, the man who predicted that American oil would run out, died in 1989. During the past few years, a number of geologists have revived his method of analysis and applied it at the global level. In the nineteen-seventies, according to one study, annual oil discovery was estimated at thirty-five billion barrels. In the nineteen-nineties, the new discoveries—in places like Angola and Azerbaijan—fell in capacity to an annual fourteen billion barrels. If Hubbert's logic works for all countries together, these figures herald a dramatic fall in oil production during the next few decades, and a severe energy shortage. "It looks as if an unprecedented crisis is just over the horizon," the Princeton geologist Kenneth Deffeyes wrote in his 2001 book, "Hubbert's Peak." "There will be chaos in the oil industry, in governments, and in national economies. Even if governments and industries were to recognize the problems, it is too late to reverse the trend. Oil production is going to shrink."

Some oil experts accuse Deffeyes and his colleagues of exaggerating. Daniel Yergin recently pointed out, in an article in the *Financial Times*, that improvements in drilling technology and further exploration could greatly boost current estimates of how much oil is left. "The point here is that world oil supplies are not some finite constant sum," Yergin wrote. "Rather, the picture is dynamic and changing."

Still, simple arithmetic suggests that within the next two or three decades we may be facing an energy shortage. In 2002, the world consumed about seventy-five million barrels of oil a day. The United States Department of Energy predicts that by 2025 the global demand for oil will have risen by more than half, to about a hundred and twenty million barrels a day. It is far from clear where the oil to meet this additional demand will come from. Fields in the United

States and the North Sea are running down. Many of the biggest producers, such as Iran and Kuwait, are operating at or close to maximum capacity. New production areas, such as those in northern Russia, Kazakhstan, and West Africa, are often remote and inhospitable, which makes them difficult and expensive to exploit.

Iraq remains one of the few countries with large supplies of readily accessible oil, and what happens there will have an enormous impact on the global economy. If Iraq succeeds in raising its oil production to six million barrels a day, it will become one of the world's largest producers, along with Saudi Arabia and Russia, and its extra output will become available just as demand is forecast to outstrip supply. "The biggest hope in the oil world is Iraq," Dr. Ali Samsam Bakhtiari, a senior official at the National Iranian Oil Company, told me recently. "I hope that the people in charge make the right decisions."

For the moment, the Bush Administration is keeping to itself any long-term plans it has. Critics in Europe and the Arab world suspect that its agenda includes encouraging Iraq to leave OPEC, thereby challenging the oil cartel's power to set prices. Attempting to undermine OPEC would be a big snub to Saudi Arabia, America's most important ally in the Arab world, which dominates the organization. But some people close to the Administration seem willing to countenance such a move. One of them is Ahmed Chalabi, the leader of the Iraqi National Congress, whom the Pentagon flew to Iraq during the war. "We have a new ally in the Middle East—one that is secular, modern, and pro free market," Francis Brooke, an American political strategist who has been Chalabi's adviser in Washington for almost a decade, told me. "It's time to replace the Saudis with the Iraqis."

Since the war ended, Iraq has missed two OPEC meetings, raising further questions about its relationship with the oil cartel. However, Philip Carroll emphatically denied that an Iraqi withdrawal from OPEC was on the immediate horizon. "I am quite sure that while there's no democratically elected government you won't see any change in Iraq's status as a member of OPEC," he told me. "For the long term, who knows? That's an Iraqi government decision." Of course, when a representative Iraqi government is eventually formed—and Carroll said he doesn't think that will happen before late 2004—it will be able to draw on the counsel of American advisers. "My personal feeling is that they would probably gain more by being a member of OPEC," Carroll said. "Members of OPEC have historically been very independent in how they pursue their own national interest. I don't expect that to stop. By being a member, you are at least an active participant in the discussion."

In Washington, conservative economists have called for Iraq's oil industry to be split up and sold off to private investors, just as Russia's oil industry was privatized following the collapse of Communism. Without mentioning the oil industry specifically, Paul Bremer has given the right-wingers some hope by calling for extensive privatization in Iraq. Carroll, however, said he didn't think that the Russian example, which led to a small group of oligarchs controlling the entire industry, was one to be emulated; and he added that it would go against Iraqi culture and history. "Oil is central to the Iraqi psyche," he said. "It really goes to the heart of what people think the wealth and well-being of their country is all about. Sometimes it is a little presumptuous for those of us who grew up with a very Western, and, in particular, American, model of how things should be to tell them what to do."

Carroll's strictures may go some way toward reassuring the skeptics about the Bush Administration's intentions, although, as an oil executive who has never worked in Washington, he has a somewhat ambiguous relationship to the ultimate policymakers. Much depends on the Iraqi Ministry of Oil's plans to expand production capacity through a combination of internal and external investment, an agenda that Carroll strongly endorses. He said that talks with foreign oil companies would probably begin before the end of this year, and that all the major Western firms—including ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco, Royal Dutch/Shell, and BP—would probably take part, at least in the early rounds. "They don't like to take on too much political risk, but the economic targets are obviously very rich, and they'll come to the party as soon as they are asked, I am quite sure," he said. However, Carroll added, the negotiations are unlikely to lead to any drilling, or even written agreements, anytime soon. The Western oil companies "will want to see an Iraqi government, and have confidence in it, before sinking down large sums of money," he said. "They will want to know what the world will be like in six or seven years."

If the disorder in Iraq continues, or worsens, there is little prospect of Western oil companies, or any other companies, risking capital there. Should the situation stabilize, the investment climate would improve, but Iraq would still face great challenges, including a foreign-debt crisis. In the past thirteen years, Baghdad has failed to service any of its loans from countries like Russia and Saudi Arabia, while incurring an




*"I'm not so sure anymore where the sofa ends and you begin."*




*"We know them socially—not politically."*

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additional two hundred billion dollars in war-compensation claims from Kuwait. If its financial obligations are not cancelled, or at least sharply reduced, they will swallow up much of the future oil revenues without providing any long-term benefit. Ahmed Chalabi is calling for an international conference to deal with this issue, but so far few people outside Iraq seem to be listening. (Chalabi has also suggested that Iraq could contribute to the United States' Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which is stored underground in salt caverns along the Gulf of Mexico, and then use the oil it contributes as collateral to borrow money from the American government.)

Beyond the debt problem, the harsh fact remains that oil revenues alone cannot transform Iraq into a wealthy Gulf nation, like Kuwait or the United Arab Emirates, both of which have much smaller populations. By 2010, there will be about thirty million Iraqis. Assuming that oil prices hover around twenty-five dollars a barrel, which is in the middle of OPEC's target range (twenty-two to twenty-eight dollars a barrel), a resurgent Iraqi oil industry producing six million barrels of oil a day for export would generate about fifty-five billion dollars a year in revenues. Fifty-five billion dollars divided among thirty million people comes to about five dollars per person per day—enough to place Iraq above the World Bank's global poverty line of two dollars a day, but not by very much. If Iraq is to prosper during the decades ahead, it will have to use its oil revenues to diversify its economy and generate other sources of income, something that will be possible only if Iraq is transformed into a peaceful, stable land with an effective and legitimate leadership.

The scale of the task is enormous. In a new report, "Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy," several World Bank economists, headed by Paul Collier, a professor at Oxford University, point out that, for developing countries with valuable natural resources, violent internal conflicts are often the norm rather than the exception. Angola, Congo, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone all fit the pattern. Raising the prospect of a civil war in Iraq may sound alarmist, but it is another poor, divided country, with a rapidly expanding populace that has been kept together only by a brutal dictatorship. As long as the Americans and the British remain in charge, the bitter rivalry between Arab and Kurd and between Sunni and Shiite may remain in abeyance. But if the coalition forces ever leave, the divisions will surely reëmerge, and one of the areas of dispute is certain to be oil.

The *Times* reported in May that officials in Sulaimaniya, a Kurdish city in northeastern Iraq, were quietly negotiating contracts with Turkish oil companies to explore and develop local oil fields. When I talked with Adel Murad, a spokesman in Baghdad for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which controls Sulaimaniya, he said that his colleagues in the north had merely been showing the Turkish oilmen around. "There are no contracts," Murad insisted. Last week, however, Ayşe Köksal, a vice-president at the Turkish company Petoil, said that her firm already had teams doing geological studies in the region. "We are operating there," Köksal said.

Toward the end of June, two oil tankers left Ceyhan, in Turkey, carrying the first legal shipment of Iraqi oil since the war. Iraq's return to the international market was significant, but the exported oil actually came from storage tanks in Turkey. Almost three months after the end of the war Iraq's domestic production was running at about eight hundred thousand barrels a day, about half the target level that Thamir Ghadhban cited to me in May. Moreover, saboteurs or thieves—nobody was quite sure which—had blown up oil pipelines near Kirkuk and in the western desert, causing fires that raged for days. In a press conference at the Ministry of Oil, Ghadhban was forced to admit that some of his predictions had proved over-optimistic, but he maintained his goal of producing two million barrels a day by year's end.

Ghadhban and Carroll have a vested interest in portraying the situation in a positive light, but their statements shouldn't be totally dismissed. Reports that the entire Iraqi oil industry is in ruins are greatly exaggerated. Despite all of the problems, its output is slowly rising, and it retains some priceless assets: abundant crude that is easy to extract, skilled workers, and experienced managers who care deeply about its future. This was brought home to me when, shortly before leaving Iraq, I travelled to the site of the country's first commercial oil well. Driving through the outskirts of Kirkuk, I came across the Northern Oil Company's research center, which had been sacked. Nearly every window had been broken, most of the scientific equipment had been stolen, and research reports were scattered around the floor, along

with broken furniture and glass. Hashem Muhammad Abdullah, the head of the facility, was trying to clean up the mess. He told me that armed Kurds had looted the laboratory before American troops reached Kirkuk, and since then most of its employees had stayed away. "It has been destroyed completely," he said as he showed me around. "I am very angry about it."

The site of the 1927 oil strike, which was a few miles away, was fenced off next to a working GOSP that was belching toxic fumes. After stopping to look at it, I went on to the headquarters of the Northern Oil Company, where its new director general, Adil Al Qazzaz, another British-trained engineer, told me that daily output in his area was running at about a third of its prewar level. Since northern Iraq didn't see as much fighting as the south, restoring the Kirkuk fields to full capacity was supposed to have been the easy part of rehabilitating Iraq's oil industry, but it didn't turn out that way. "Everything was looted except things that are too heavy to carry," Al Qazzaz said. "Control systems, computers, pumps, chemicals, vehicles—everything. We are starting from scratch." The previous night, fighting between Kurds and Arabs had broken out in Kirkuk, and five locals had been killed. "Some people are still afraid to come to work," Al Qazzaz went on. "It's understandable." Even if the oil workers wanted to report for duty, the Northern Oil Company didn't have any buses to get them there or any money to pay them. "We are hoping that the ministry will provide some cash to pay the workers," Al Qazzaz said with a shrug. "What can you do?"

I went outside and looked around the headquarters, which dates back to the days of the Iraq Petroleum Company. A distinguished-looking Iraqi with a baldish head and glasses came over and asked me, in a perfect English accent, "Are you the gentleman from KBR?" I said that I wasn't. He introduced himself as Jawad Walid, the head of the Northern Oil Company's projects department, which develops new fields, and lit up a cigarette. He said that his wife was from Sunderland, in northeast England. They had met during the early nineteen-sixties, when Walid was doing his university entrance examinations in nearby South Shields.

Walid is fifty-nine. He returned to Iraq in 1969 and started working for the Iraq Petroleum Company, which was then a private company. "We used to get a lot higher wages than the government paid its employees," he said as we sat down on a low wall to talk. "I started on a salary of a hundred and twenty-eight dinars a month. Government employees were only earning forty." Most of the company's senior executives were British expats. "The British were very friendly with the Iraqis, and many of them learned Arabic," Walid recalled. "They would give you a good house, with air-conditioning, and even a maid if you wanted. In every company location, there was a cinema, a swimming pool, and a club. It wasn't White's or the Athenaeum, but it was a real club. It served meals, so people didn't have to cook. You could get a gin-and-tonic."

After the Iraq Petroleum Company was nationalized, things changed rapidly. "The government started taking the oil revenues, and we started losing out," Walid said. "The government officials were getting richer and richer, of course. Then came the first Gulf War and sanctions. Since then, things have been very, very bad. We were eating stuff that was hardly edible. The flour was gray. They put wheat and corn in it, mice and slippers, too—anything to get the weight up. Sugar reached three hundred dinars a kilo, but our wages hadn't increased at all. I could only afford to buy a quarter of a kilogram a month. I could only smoke three cigarettes a day—one in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one at night."

Walid paused to light another cigarette. "Things cannot but improve, because we had hit rock bottom," he continued. "The only way to go is up."

As we were talking, one of Walid's colleagues came over and sat with us. His name was Dr. Basil Ismail, and he was the Northern Oil Company's director of planning. Ismail obtained his Ph.D. in chemical engineering at Newcastle University. He was a heavyset man of fifty-eight, with neatly combed gray hair and glasses. He was wearing a cream shirt, dark trousers, and polished leather shoes. "The people at the top, they were uneducated, illiterate people," he said. "They would demand things that were impossible to achieve. Even scientific principles they wanted to go against. They would come to us and say, 'We need more oil.' We said, 'Here is the reservoir's capacity, unless we do A, B, and C to increase it, but we need money and help to do that.' They said, 'There is no money or help, but increase the oil supply anyway.'"



Walid interrupted his friend. "All they wanted was more oil and more revenue to go in the wrong pockets. We got no benefit. We have a saying in Arabic: 'A camel carries gold but eats thorns.' That's what we were like."

Ismail nodded. "Saddam harvested every weakness in our society to his own selfish ends," he said, but despite his misrule Iraq remained a country of great potential. The Iraqi people were well educated and hardworking, with a long history of trade and commerce. "Four million of them are living abroad. If there is stability, they will come home and bring their expertise, their tolerance, and their understanding of the true meaning of democracy and freedom."

As the two men talked about their country and their own lives, their emotions rose. "The major item is sincerity," Ismail said. "Naturally, there must be mutual interest. The British and Americans must get something out of it, but it must be done sincerely and with good motives. If I were Paul Bremer, I would hire a great social psychologist who knows the mind of the Iraqi people, so he can make his moves in the right direction. He has to remember what this country has suffered during the past thirty-five years."

Ismail was close to tears. "It was a horrible nightmare," he said, his voice breaking. "Those thirty-five years have gone from everybody's life, and they cannot be replaced. I sincerely extend my hand of friendship to every American man and woman, and to every British man and woman, for helping us to get out of this hell. But I hope that they complete the job. It is no use sacrificing more than money—blood—and then letting the country degenerate into chaos." ♦

FICTION

# THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

BY TOBIAS WOLFF



The No. 64 bus stops at St. Peter's, so it's always crammed with pilgrims, or suckers, depending on your point of view—a happy hunting ground for pickpockets. Mallon was not a pilgrim, or by his own reckoning a sucker. His estranged wife was Swiss-Italian, he spoke the language fluently and came often to Rome on agency business, and was on the 64 that day, a thief's hand in his pocket, only because he had an appointment near the Vatican and got caught in a flash summer downpour with no cabs in sight.

The bus was packed with wet steamy people. They swayed into one another at the stops and turns, and it was during one of these mash-ups that Mallon felt the hand casing his rear pockets, both empty: his billfold, passport tucked inside, was buttoned into the breast pocket of his suit jacket. The touch was heavy, crude. Before he could turn and give the thief a warning look, the hand slid into his right front pocket. The blatancy of the move was astonishing—executed with no more finesse than if Mallon himself had done it, diving for some change.

The hand went in, and damn if it didn't stay in. This pocket was empty, too, but the hand seemed unwilling to accept that fact. Mallon became curious as to just how long this could go on. There was a lulling detachment in observing such ineptitude at work, a safe, dreamy amusement. The air was warm, swampy. The bus stopped to take on still more passengers, and the thief was pressed up against Mallon's back. His hand continued to burrow around like a mouse nosing for crumbs. Then the bus lurched forward and the thief clawed at Mallon's leg as he stumbled back. This shocked Mallon out of his trance. He braced himself, gathered his strength, and drove his right elbow back into a surprising pillowy softness. A hot blast of breath sprayed his neck and the hand vanished. Mallon turned to gloat and saw a man bent double, arms across his belly. He was making little mewing noises. The passengers around him, mostly Filipinos, by the look of them, watched him anxiously—a short round man all in black, black leather jacket creased across his back, baggy black pants, pointy black shoes as small as a child's. His scalp showed through his thin dark hair, long strands dangling toward the floor. Nobody looked at Mallon, and already the bus was slowing down for his stop. But the pickpocket was still making those appalling sounds.

Mallon leaned down and took his arm. He tried to raise him but the pickpocket would not be raised. The bus stopped. Let's go, Mallon said in Italian. Let's go. You're all right. Come on. The pickpocket pulled away and kept fighting for breath in strangled gasps. Mallon rested a hand on the man's back as the door of the bus hissed shut. O.K., he said. Let's go. Come. Come. He took the pickpocket's arm again and coaxed him toward the door, steadying him through the jerky weavings of the bus and then the abrupt shuddering stop. The door opened, and he helped the man down the steps, still bent and gasping, people giving way as if for a leper.

The rain had stopped but the sky was dark and menacing. Mallon led the pickpocket under the awning of a shop and watched him retch dramatically, though without result. Mallon patted his shoulder. He could see the passersby keeping their eyes dead ahead, as he would have done, and saw how their faces stiffened with obscure shame. A poster of the Pietà loomed over Mallon in the shopwindow, above a display of pious plaster statuettes and gaudy rosaries.

You don't want to be seen looking at your watch at such a moment—a man apparently dying at your knees—but the big clock on the sidewalk was completely out of whack, like all the public clocks in Rome, so Mallon really had no choice. It was ten past four. He was ten minutes late, and had at least a five-minute walk back to Dottore Silvestri's office. An important meeting. Yesterday's discussion had gone badly, with Mallon pouncing on several misrepresentations in Il Dottore's proposal. The development agency that Mallon worked for could make all the difference to Silvestri's program, which envisioned several water-purification projects in East Africa. The distortions in the grant application were only to be expected of such a document, and in fact the board of Mallon's agency had already decided to back the program. He was here to walk Dottore Silvestri through the terms of the award, not show off his talent for smelling horse shit. He'd given Il Dottore a taste of the lash yesterday, and probably left him thinking that the whole thing was headed down the drain. Mallon needed to correct that impression before it got back to his superiors in Geneva.

He leaned down to the pickpocket. The heaving and gasping had stopped, but he was still making a show of his breathlessness. That's better, Mallon said. Can you stand up? Try to stand up. Here, he said, and gripped the pickpocket's arm and forced him upright until he saw his face for the first time. It was a round dark face with a small round mouth, lips as full and tender-looking as a girl's. Despite the sheen of sweat on the puffy cheeks, the vanity of the pencil-line mustache, the sparse streaks of hair plastered across the damp forehead, Mallon had an impression of dignity; dignity, and dignity offended. As the pickpocket labored for breath, he gazed up at Mallon with his dark eyes. How could you? they asked.

Mallon might have said, Because you tried to steal from me. But he was still conscious of the flush of joy he'd felt when his blow struck home—when he knew he'd hurt the man. It lingered in the faint tingling of his skin, an edgy sense of buoyancy, vitality. Where that joy came from he couldn't say, but he knew that its roots were deeper than some clumsy failed larceny.

Fat drops of rain began to patter on the awning.

How are you? Mallon said. Can you walk?

The pickpocket turned away as if insulted by the hypocrisy of Mallon's concern. He leaned against the store window with both hands, and his head sank lower as his shoulders rose and fell. A gray-haired woman inside the store rapped on the glass and made a shooing motion. When the pickpocket ignored her, she rapped harder and kept rapping. He really was a little man: she glared down at him like a schoolmarm scolding a guilty child.

I have to go, Mallon said. I'm sorry. He looked up at the sky. He would have liked to call Silvestri, to tell him that he was on his way, but his cell phone was back at the hotel and there was no public telephone in sight. I'm sorry, he said again, and stepped into the rain and walked quickly up the street.

One of the ubiquitous Bangladeshi

YVES LERESCHE / LOOKAT PHOTOS

umbrella hustlers was working the corner, and Mallon had just shelled out seven euros when he heard a woman shouting. He didn't want to look back but did. It was the woman from the shop, pushing and batting the pickpocket away from the window while he hunched and covered his head like a boxer trying to get through the last seconds of a round. Mallon slipped his billfold back into his jacket pocket and took the umbrella that the Bangladeshi had opened for him. He hesitated, then turned back.

The pickpocket was out on the sidewalk now, in the rain. The woman stood just under the awning with her arms crossed over her chest.

Excuse me, signora, Mallon said, coming up to them. This man isn't well. He needs to rest a moment.

I know these people, she said. We don't want them here.

The rain fell in sheets, ran down the pickpocket's shiny scalp and face, down his leather jacket. Strings of water hung like a fringe from the hem of the jacket, dripping onto the sagging pants and dainty shoes.

Here, Mallon said, and offered him the umbrella, but he only looked at Mallon with his hurt dark eyes and then lowered his head again. Mallon bumped him in the shoulder with the handle of the umbrella. Go on—take it! he said. And finally, with a beaten, unwilling look, the pickpocket did. He stood between Mallon and the signora, panting softly, holding the umbrella at a careless angle. He seemed oblivious of the water sliding down it onto his back; he seemed unable to move. So, too, the signora, steadfast in her icy pose. Mallon stepped under the awning, not so much to get out of the rain as to break free of this tableau.

And that was when he saw a taxi round the corner with a light glowing on its roof. It was absurd to hope for an empty cab in rain like this, most likely the driver had simply forgotten to turn it off, but Mallon ran out waving his arm and the cab veered sharply to the curb, sending a comber of water over his shoes. He opened the door but couldn't help looking back. The pickpocket had lowered the umbrella to the ground upside down and was leaning on the shaft, head low, neck bared to the sky. The signora kept her post.

Wait, Mallon said to the driver. He went back and grabbed the pickpocket's sleeve and pulled him to the cab. Get in, Mallon said, and took the umbrella and pushed him into the back seat. He leaned inside. O.K., where do you live?

No Gypsies! the driver said. He was twisted around, glowering at the pickpocket.

Gypsy? Look, he's not well. I'll pay, Mallon added.

The driver shook his head. No Gypsies. He was a thick-shouldered guy with a long blue jaw, a hawkish beak, and heavy black eyebrows. His shaved head was blue with stubble. Get him out, he said. Mallon was thrown by his anger and the dissonant paleness of his eyes, and before he could reply the driver seized the pickpocket's jacket and gave him a shake. Out, you!

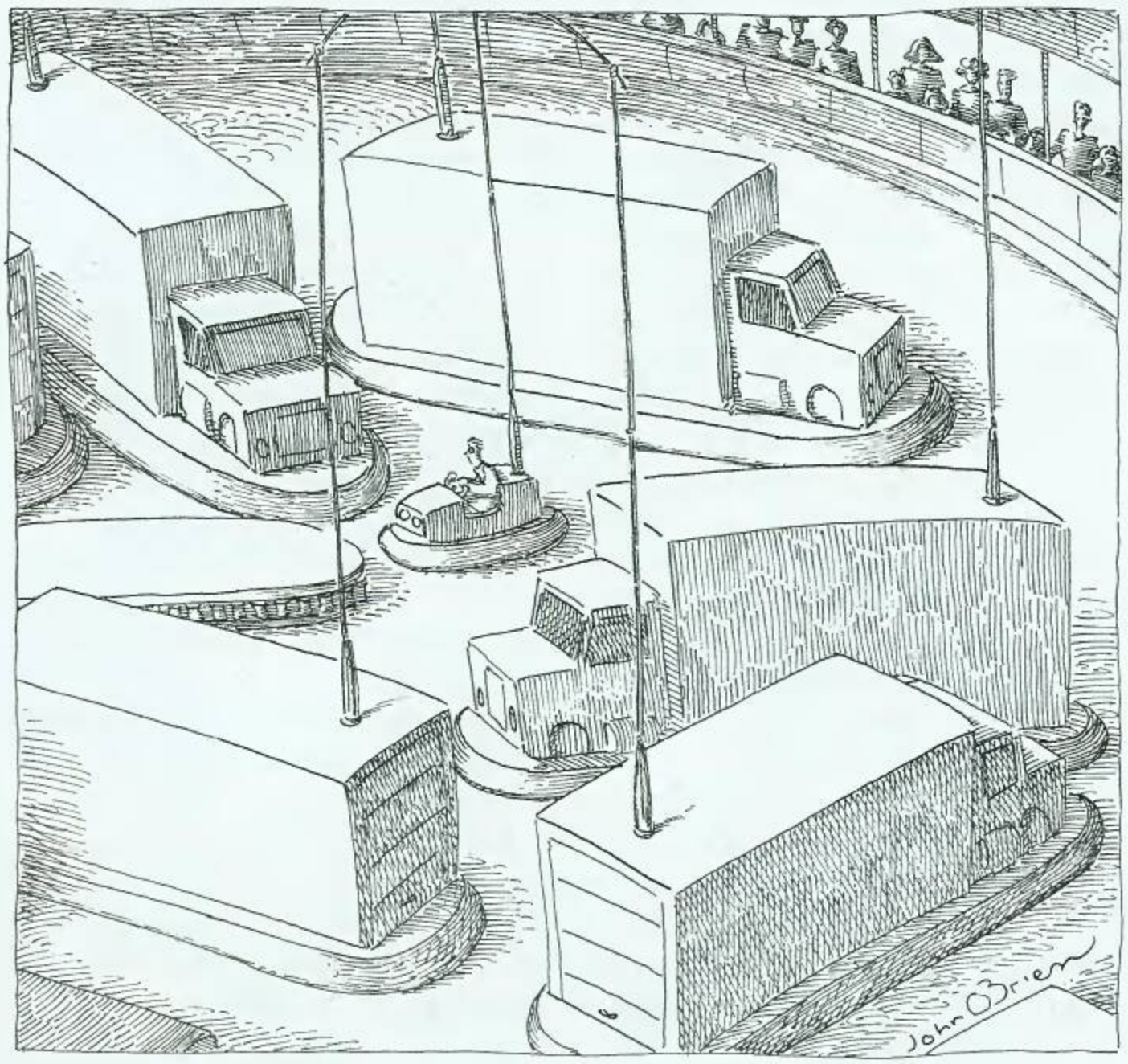
No, Mallon said. He closed the umbrella and slid onto the seat next to the pickpocket. He needs to get home, he said. I'll come along.

The driver stabbed a finger at Mallon. Out.

Mallon looked at the driver's nameplate: Michele Kadare. It's the law, he said, bluffing. If you don't take us, Signor Kadare, I'll report you and you'll lose your license. Believe me—I am quite serious.

The driver fastened those pale eyes on Mallon. The windshield wipers rasped against the glass. The driver turned and put his hands on the steering wheel. His meaty fingers were white and hairless as chalk. He raised his eyes to the rearview mirror and he and Mallon exchanged stares.

O.K., Mr. American, he said. You pay.




The driver proceeded in silence across the river and worked his way through snarls of traffic. The pickpocket had given no address; in halting Italian he'd told the driver to follow Via Tiburtina toward Tivoli, and he would direct him from there. Then he'd leaned back into his corner with his eyes half closed, wheezing raggedly. He might have been hamming it up a bit, but Mallon was a big man and he'd hit the little pickpocket very hard. He saw no choice but to give him the benefit of the doubt.

The rain slackened to drizzle and a sulfurous yellow light suffused the air. Mallon could feel his wet socks turning warm. Now and then the driver looked at him in the mirror. Kadare. Didn't sound Italian. Mallon had once read a book by

an Albanian writer named Kadare—maybe the driver was from Albania. That would make sense, somehow, just as it had made sense when the driver called the pickpocket a Gypsy. It explained the signora's saying "these people," and also Mallon's jittery apprehension about the man, an inkling of some mysterious difference that had both put him on edge and intrigued him. But how did the driver and the signora *know* that the man was a Gypsy? It wasn't as if he had a violin in his hand and a ring in his ear. Mallon could spot Gypsy women, with their kerchiefs and long bright skirts and their bold, flat-footed way of moving down a sidewalk, but the men eluded him. To his eye, the pickpocket might have been Portuguese, or Indian, or even one of those swart little Neapolitans. But the signora and the driver had seen it instantly, jolted by some Old World instinct, an alarm in the blood, of which only a tingle reached Mallon from what his forebears must have brought from Ireland and Poland and Russia.

Generally he felt himself well rid of all that peasant malarkey—salt over the shoulder, garlic hanging from the lintel, the terror of black birds and spilled wine and others' eyes—but sometimes he wondered if, in passing through the American filter, his blood had grown not clear but watery, if some essential agent of character, of self, had been bound up in these old instincts and had leached out along with them.

The pickpocket's wet leather jacket gave off a faint pissy smell. Mallon rolled the window down a few inches and was overcome by the freshness of the air. He closed his eyes, savoring the play of the breeze over his face. When he opened them again he caught the driver watching him in the mirror.

Are you from Albania? Mallon asked.

The driver tapped the meter. It was already up to eighteen euros, and they still hadn't reached Via Tiburtina. Cash only, Mr. American. No magic American credit cards.

How much farther? Mallon asked the pickpocket, who was holding both hands to his chest and rocking back and forth. He stared straight ahead and didn't answer.

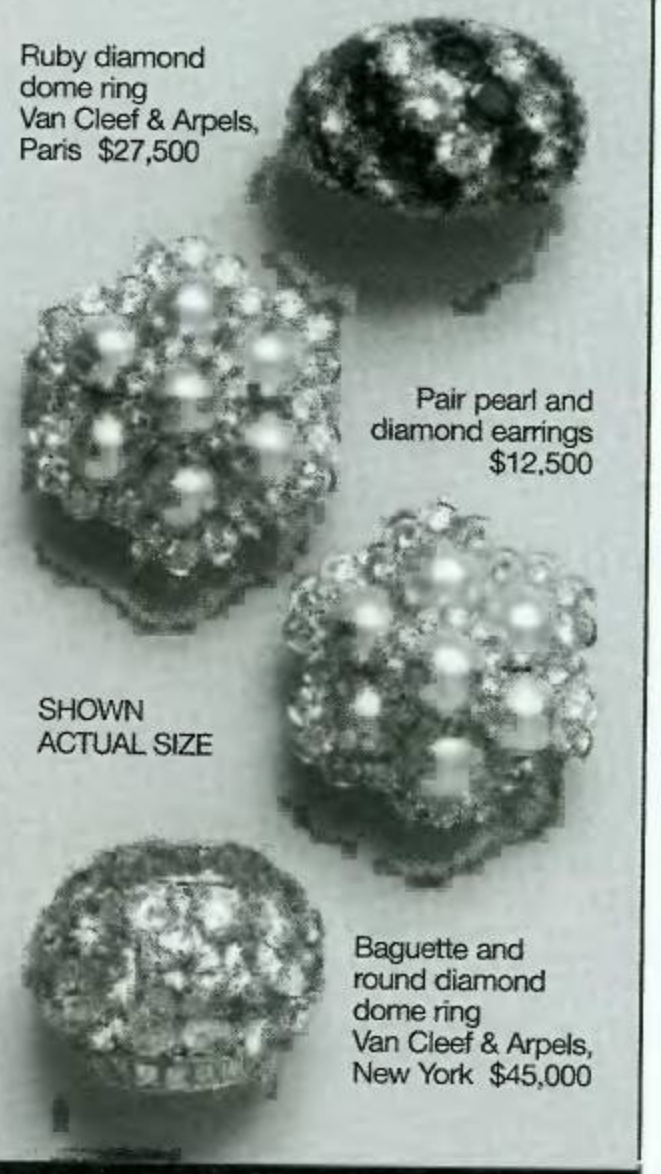
Kadare. Could be Albanian. The book that Mallon had read concerned a boy waiting to be killed by a rival clan after shooting one of its members in revenge for the murder of his brother. The blood feud went back so far that no one could even remember its cause, but men continued to die for it and, more, to live for it. It gave them clear paths of duty and honor, and the power of martyrdom over their women; it imbued mean lives and deaths with a sense of tragic purpose. But what Mallon remembered best was the boy's blooming alertness as the knowledge that he would soon be killed settled ever deeper. The boy quickened to the sun in his face and the smell of lamb's fat dripping on coals, the glow of white boulders on the crags that loomed all around him. He wandered deserted roads and was never alone. Death beside him filled him with life until his cup ran over and he gave up his place to another murdering boy.

Mallon had liked the book, but guiltily. He'd resisted his fascination with this violent backward culture, and disapproved of the idea that having death at your elbow gave meaning and beauty to life. He felt quite sure that most people would prefer safety from assault, not to mention decent shelter and food on the table, to exquisite intimations of mortality—if such sensations even existed. They were a fiction of religious and romantic pathology, that's what Mallon thought, until he started having them himself.

His daughter had begun to complain of headaches not long after her eleventh birthday, and was found to have a brain tumor. She'd survived it, and her tests had been negative for the three years since, but there'd been times during Lucy's long course of radiation and chemotherapy when both Mallon and his wife had been sure that they were going to lose her. Chiara had grown bitter. She'd moved through the days in a cold rage, saying nothing, eating almost nothing, withdrawing into the guest room, where she'd slept since the month after Lucy's diagnosis. She often said that she wished she'd never been born.

Not Mallon. During his daughter's sickness he'd become intensely conscious of life as something good in itself, his own as well as hers. This had taken the form of patience rather than cheer or even hope, and he'd known better than to offer it in answer to Chiara's despair, but he could see that she somehow sensed it anyway and resented it, as she'd come to


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resent so much about him since Lucy got sick—his composure, his ability to keep working, his voice and touch, even his newfound pleasure in food, which he would not be frowned out of and indulged to the point that he got paunchy for the first time in his life.

One leaden January afternoon, walking along a lakeside path after leaving the hospital, Mallon had looked up and watched the dark waves race toward shore and understood that his wife no longer loved him. Would she ever love him again? He supposed not, and time had proved him right. Chiara had tried to include him in her happiness when Lucy came home for good, but she just hadn't liked having him around. Mallon thought that shame was at the root of her unease, for she had treated him badly, but he knew that Chiara wouldn't recognize that; although she was smart and highly educated, a curator of rare manuscripts at the University of Geneva, personal analysis bored her, especially the analysis of her own emotions. She trusted in their essential validity and accepted their rule without question. He had prized this quality in her when she defied her family by throwing over an approved fiancé and marrying him; but now it made his case hopeless.

Mallon and Chiara had been separated for more than a year. She and Lucy kept the apartment. He had a studio nearby, so that he and Lucy could visit back and forth as the spirit moved them. That was the idea. In practice, Chiara's coldness to him became so painful that he rarely went there and had to wait for Lucy to come to him, which she did less often than he wished. He didn't blame her. She was busy with school and friends and boys and her choir—with everything he'd prayed she would live to enjoy.

As a project evaluator for his agency, Mallon had always had to fight for time at home. Lately he'd been less resolute. In the past two months he'd spent only nine days in Geneva, between stints in Zimbabwe and Uganda, where he'd lived in expensive hotels with broken air-conditioning and empty swimming pools and sandbagged machine-gun positions near the entrance, an obvious tap on the phone. The local project managers had worn him out with PowerPoint presentations and meetings with regional government officials. In their new Land Cruisers they'd driven him to sites where great things were just about to happen, and afterward laid on long speechy dinners, and sometimes a tribal spectacle of some kind.

And nothing was going to change—not really. Those struggling, malnourished people he glimpsed through the tinted windows of speeding cars would still be in the same fix when the next evaluator came through, already under pressure to sign off on the projects so as not to mortify those who'd approved them in the first place.

The people would be in the same fix; there would just be more of them. But at least they weren't ridiculous. That condition was reserved for the project managers, with their Benson & Hedges cigarettes and Cartier lighters and gold Rolex watches and Armani cologne and the smooth European liquor they forced on Mallon with watchful, uncertain pride. And in his opinion they were ridiculous precisely because he and others like him, visitors from the greater ridiculousness, had made them so—constructing an entire class of anxious, alienated charlatans out of fat checks and aspirations so stupidly good, so uncomfortable with reality, that only deceit could satisfy them. For this, Mallon had left a good job at Nestlé, embarrassed by his success in a world where the pursuit of money and its blessings now seemed almost virtuously straightforward.

They were on Via Tiburtina. The driver tapped the meter—forty-one euros—and gave Mallon a pale stare in the mirror, but said nothing. The traffic moved at a crawl except for the motorinos whining up the shoulder and daring the narrow gaps between lanes. The road was lined with gas stations and strip malls, discount furniture stores and car dealerships strung with fluttering pennants. Plastic bags and shards of Styrofoam scudded along the road, snagged on cyclone fences. If not for the passing glimpse of a Roman wall, remnant arches of an aqueduct in a distant field, Mallon could have thought himself back in Ohio.

The pickpocket leaned forward and croaked at the driver.

Where? the driver said.

The pickpocket pointed to a supermarket on the other side of the road.

The driver jerked the cab into the left-turn lane and waited for a break in the traffic. None came. He didn't say a word, but Mallon could see the muscles working in his jaw and felt sure that he was nerving himself up to take a chance. *Wait*, he said, but just then an oncoming truck slowed down for them and the driver shot across the road and into the parking lot. The pickpocket directed him around to the rear of the store, where an unpaved road led out of the lot and past a long line of metal storage sheds and then a fenced compound filled with rusting machinery and great wooden spools of cable. The driver was going too fast for the road; the cab floated queasily between deep, jarring potholes.

Farther, the pickpocket said. A little farther.

And then the road gave out. They entered a field of mud. At the far end, several small trailers and campers had been drawn up beside an unfinished apartment block, windows empty of glass, balconies unrailed, water stains streaking the concrete walls. Indifferent to the rain, two boys were bouncing on a mattress in the middle of the field, watched by a bunch of other kids sitting on the shells of two wrecked cars. They jumped down and ran shouting toward the cab as it followed a crunching path through a waste of metal drums and tires and sodden newspapers and weirdly bright plastic bottles. A shaggy sway-backed pony had his muzzle buried in a cardboard box. He shied away as the parade went past, throwing a kick to cover his retreat. One of the boys jumped onto the hood of the cab and grinned at the driver: strong white teeth in a muddy face. The driver stared dead ahead.

The pickpocket ignored them, too. He had the aloof, preoccupied air of a man in the back of a chauffeured limousine. Over there, he said, and gestured languidly toward the apartment block. The cab slowed to a stop, and the boy on the hood slid down and raised his fists like a champion and his friends laughed and bumped him with their hips.

When the pickpocket got out of the cab, one of the boys called out to him—Miri!—and others joined in—Miri! Miri!—but he gave no sign of hearing. Mallon got out, too. He came around to say a last word of some kind, but the pickpocket turned away and took a few steps, then stopped and bent his head like a mourner. Wait a moment, Mallon said to the driver, and took the pickpocket's elbow.

No. Pay now. Forty-eight euros.

Wait. Keep your meter on, you'll be paid.

The entranceway was covered with plastic sheeting. The pickpocket pushed it aside and Mallon half followed, half helped him into the lobby—a raw concrete cave littered with broken tiles that gleamed in the light of a kerosene lamp hanging from the ceiling. An old Gypsy woman was bent over a steaming metal tub set above a camp stove, rubbing a cloth against a washboard. She straightened up and looked at Mallon. Her dark face was webbed with deep wrinkles and folds from which her little eyes gleamed. One shoulder was higher than the other, as if caught in a shrug. In a gravelly voice she said something that Mallon didn't understand. The pickpocket drooped and murmured pathetically. The old woman tossed the cloth into the tub and wiped her hands on the front of her dress, then led them across the lobby and down a dark hallway to a door over which a blanket had been hung. She held back the blanket and Mallon let go of the pickpocket's elbow. O.K., you're home, he said. The pickpocket ducked inside without a word.

The old woman continued to hold the blanket. She jerked her head toward the doorway.

No, I can't, Mallon said.

*Avanti*, she said impatiently, her teeth flashing gold.

Mallon went in.

Mallon went in amazed at his own docility and bilious with dread. Why? What did he expect, his gut knotting up as he passed the threshold? Certainly not this room—the muted light, the neatly made bed in the corner, the glossy yellow sofa and matching chair, the artificial palm tree. Not this room, and not the two beautiful children gaping at him. One was a girl of eight or nine, the other a boy a little older, both of them thin and dark and large-eyed. They stood on either side of the pickpocket, the girl hugging his arm and leaning against him. The children moved back as the old woman brushed past Mallon and took the pickpocket by the shoulders of his leather jacket and stripped it off with a series of rough jerks that made him stagger. Without the jacket he looked even smaller, smaller and rounder. Growling, she nudged him toward the bed and said something to the girl, who helped him lie down and then knelt and slipped off his little shoes.



The old woman looked on, one hand at her hip. Then she turned to Mallon. Sit! she said. Before he could answer, she pointed at the yellow chair and waited until he obeyed. Then she told him, Stay! and left the room.

The pickpocket lay on his back. He sighed deeply. The girl studied Mallon from the foot of the bed, the boy from beside the large window at the end of the room. The window was covered with plastic that diffused a pearly gray light. The girl had long thin arms with big bony elbows and wore a T-shirt with a panda on it. Mallon smiled at her. Your papa? he asked, nodding at the pickpocket.

No answer, but she took a step toward Mallon.

Uncle?

The girl looked at the boy and laughed an outright adult sort of laugh and then pulled the collar of her T-shirt up over her mouth like a veil.

The old woman called out from somewhere. The girl dropped her eyes demurely, joined her hands across her waist, and crossed the room in little mincing steps as if imitating a geisha with bound feet. The boy continued to stare. Mallon thought of stealing away, but the chair was deep and soft, and before he could collect the will to push himself out of it the girl returned and stood right in front of him with a bowl of unwrapped chocolates and a plastic bottle of Coca-Cola. Mallon shook his head no, but the girl kept offering these gifts, holding his eyes with hers and nodding all the while, so that to refuse



*"What say we find another way to say hello?"*

• •

seemed impossible. He took the Coke. Though it was warm and filled his mouth with foam he made a show of appreciation, tipping his head back and closing his eyes before setting the bottle down on the floor.

The pickpocket groaned and rolled toward the wall, mumbling to himself. His voice rose as if in argument, then trailed off. The girl turned and looked at him, then at the boy, who drifted over to the other side of Mallon's chair. The girl leaned back against Mallon's knee, bouncing off him rhythmically, impersonally, as a child will do when caught by some distant thought or object of interest. Out of pure instinct he put his arm around her waist and pulled her onto his lap, then looked at the boy standing there alone and gathered him up, too. This felt entirely natural, apparently to them as well; light and noodly, they settled against him, heads on his chest. From above they looked identical. A pleasant, loamy smell rose up from their hair. The pickpocket rolled onto his back again and started to snore. Miri, the boy whispered, Miri Miri Miri, and began to imitate him, punctuating the nose music with wickedly accurate smacks and snorts. The girl was shaking. She put her hands over her mouth and exploded through her fingers.

Mallon let his head fall back. He was tired and the chair was comfortable and the children were warm and familiar against him. He closed his eyes. The boy grew still and so did the girl. Mallon could feel them breathe, young shallow breaths, oddly synchronous. The idea came to him that maybe they were twins. Dully considering the mystery of twins, of twinness, he remembered for the first time in years a pair of boys he'd grown up with, Jerry and Terry—or Jerry and Larry—then he lost his thread and was content to let it go and be afloat, carried along by the pickpocket's snores until he could almost hear them as his own. Later, he wondered how long this had lasted. Not long, he guessed, but when he felt the children leave him and grudgingly opened his eyes he was as fresh as if he'd slept for hours.

The old woman was standing in front of the chair. That man out there wants you, she said.

They were back on Via Tiburtina, still a good distance from central Rome and Mallon's hotel, the fare up to eighty euros, when Mallon clapped his hand to his chest. The driver caught the motion and raised his eyes to the mirror. Mallon looked out the rain-glazed window, let nothing show. The moment passed. Mallon yawned ostentatiously, then under cover of shifting and stretching he patted himself down and confirmed that his billfold was gone.

They drove on into lashing rain and the glare of headlights. It was just past six, but the sky was black and flickered with distant lightning. Mallon's mouth was dry. He took a breath so deep that the driver glanced up again when he let it out.

I have a problem.

The driver's eyes snapped back and forth between the road and the mirror.

I've lost my wallet.

What?

My wallet is gone.

You are saying you have no money?

Not with me, no. I think I can get some at the hotel. If the clerk will advance it against my bill.

The driver leaned forward, peering into the slant of rain. He flicked on the turn signal.

I may not be able to get it tonight, but I can get it tomorrow for sure. In the morning. I just have to call Geneva. Mallon sounded to himself like a prattling fraud, but he added, I will pay you.

You knew, the driver said.

What? What did you say?




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No answer. The driver eased the cab onto the shoulder of the road and brought it to a stop. There was something terrible in his deliberateness, his silence, the rigid set of his neck. He sat there, hands on the wheel, looking straight ahead. *Mr. American*, he said, and made a noise between his teeth. Cars went by. The rain drummed on the roof. Mallon wanted to say something but was afraid to—as if the driver's hatred were a gas that would blow at the first word. He felt he'd somehow lost the right to speak.

Get out, the driver said.

I'll get the money to you, Signor Kadare, Mallon said.

By the time he'd unfolded himself from the cab and closed the door his pant legs were already wet and clinging. Only as the driver pulled away did he remember the umbrella. He took his suit jacket off and draped it over his head, holding the collar forward like a bill. In this way he trudged along the shoulder for a while, then walked backward when the wind gusted into his face.

What had the driver been getting at, saying, *You knew*? Knew what? And why had he felt himself caught out, laid bare at those words? The driver couldn't have known what Mallon knew. But Mallon knew what Mallon knew. He'd come awake to it only at the driver's accusation, but he knew all right and had known at the very moment back in that room, at rest but not asleep, the hand slipping across his chest, between jacket and shirt, then the discreet caress of the billfold sliding free and the lightness that followed, as if it had weighed pounds. That lightness—the strangest thing!

Thunder rumbled somewhere. The blown rain plastered Mallon's shirt against his back, glittered in the headlights of the cars rushing toward him. On a whim he stuck out his thumb. He hadn't hitchhiked since college, and not much then. Maybe the tie would help. Or maybe it would look wrong on a hitchhiker, too calculated or cunning—a danger sign. And, of course, he was soaking wet, as anyone could see. Would he have offered himself a ride? He soon gave it up and turned around and saw the tail-lights of a car not far ahead, a man hurrying toward him with an open umbrella.

It was the driver. He walked with a dipping limp on short legs. He came up to Mallon and held out the umbrella, which billowed and heaved in the wind.

Too late for that, Mallon said.

No, please. He held it uselessly over Mallon's head. Come, please. Come. He escorted Mallon back to the cab and opened the door for him. Please, he said when Mallon hesitated.

Mallon got in. I will pay you, he said, as the driver pulled back into traffic.

No. No fare. Look! He touched the meter. It was off.

That's ridiculous. Of course I'll pay you.

No—a gift. But please no report, O.K.?

Mallon saw the man's eyes in the mirror. Ah, he said.

No report?

No report. But I'm still going to pay you.

My gift to you. American, right? California?

Mallon took the easy way out and said yes. Ohio just confused people; he hadn't been there in years anyway.

What car do you have? Chevrolet? This taxi, it belongs to my wife's father. Michele. He's sick. No money, you know?

The driver chattered on: his father-in-law's sickness, his sister's sickness, a problem with the taxi license. As he talked he checked the mirror for Mallon's response. He sounded like a project manager making excuses, wheedling for a passing grade. Mallon was bored and disappointed. So much for the fierce mountain clansman, the implacable Albanian avenger he'd imagined and feared.

By the time they pulled up in front of the hotel the storm had passed and the doorman was shielding his eyes against a flare of evening light from the top of the street. The driver beat him to Mallon's door and held it open, offering his hand as if to a woman. Mallon ignored it, emerged wet and blinking.

O.K.? the driver said. Your umbrella, where is your umbrella? He leaned past Mallon into the cab. There! Friends, O.K.?

No report, Mallon said.

Mr. California! the driver said to the doorman. Hollywood, right?

Of course, Mallon said. Hollywood. ♦


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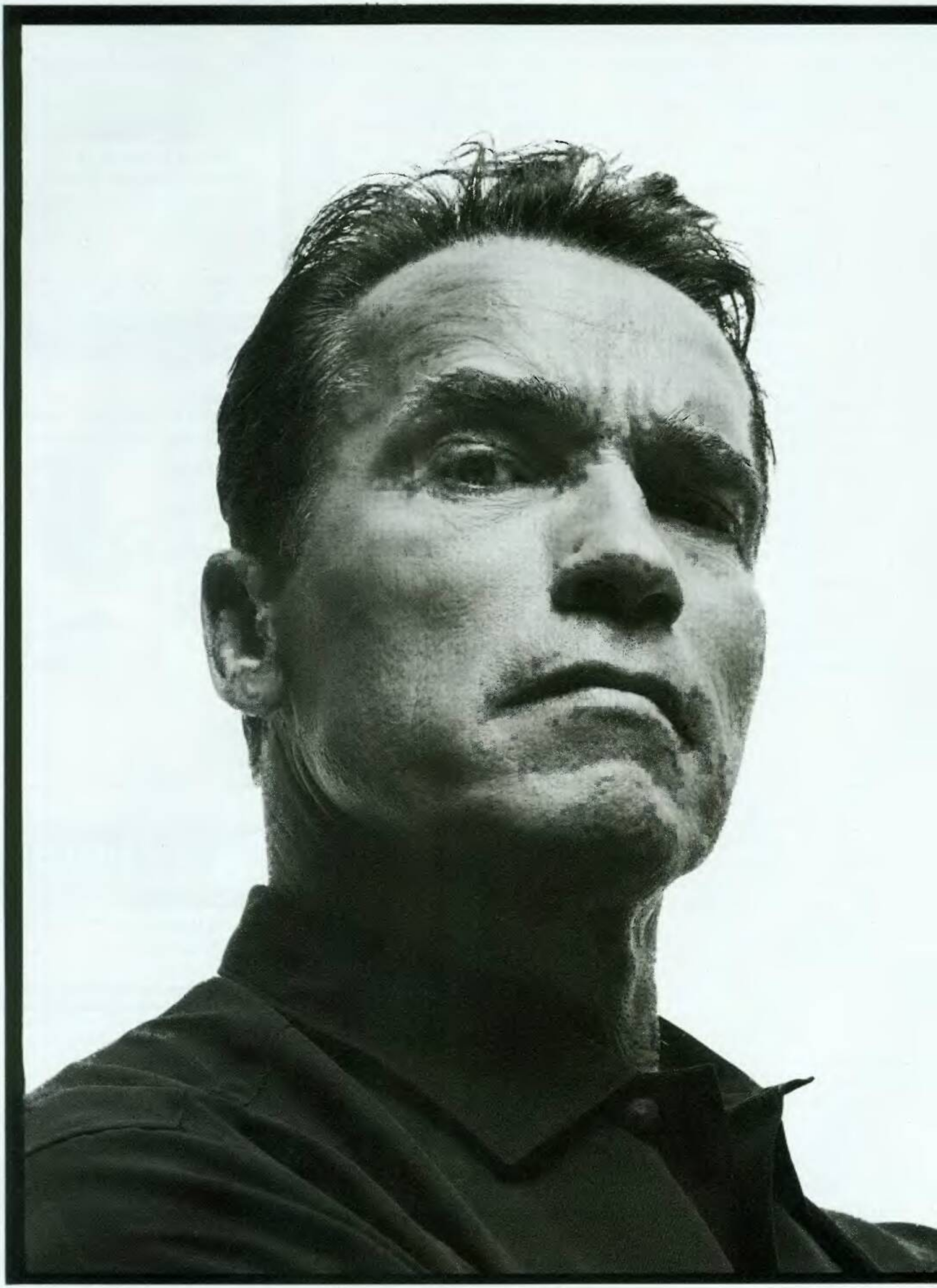
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# THE CRITICS



THE CURRENT CINEMA

## METAL GURU

*"Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."*

BY ANTHONY LANE

Here is the plot of "Terminator 2: Judgment Day," released back in 1991: a Terminator arrives from the future with a mission to protect John Connor, who is fated to grow up and lead the human resistance movement against the onslaught of intelligent machines. The Terminator is nearly, but not utterly, thwarted in his task by the villainous efforts of a superior model, known as a T-1000.

Here is the plot of "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines," now in general release: a Terminator arrives from the future with a mission to protect John Connor, who is fated to grow up and lead the human resistance movement against the onslaught of intelligent machines. The Terminator is nearly, but not utterly, thwarted in his task by the villainous efforts of a superior model, known as a T-X.

Beady-eyed readers will already have spotted a faint mist of similarity between the two films. The governing principle of the latest installment is clearly that, if it ain't broke, don't hesitate to spend a hundred and seventy million dollars making very sure that it remains unfixed. Conspiracy theorists may have a point when they claim that "Terminator 3," directed by Jonathan Mostow, was designed to make the invasion of Iraq seem, on a dollar-per-minute basis, like pretty good value. Terminator groupies, on the other hand, will want to establish the exact ratio of buck to bang, in which case I should gently draw their attention to the opening and closing sequences, both of which feature pretty, almost floral displays of nuclear detonation.

So what's new? Well, John Connor, whom we knew as a kid, is now a young man, played by Nick Stahl as a peaky-looking wastrel with dark circles around his eyes, like a panda with combat skills. Since the end of the previous picture, John has lost not merely his mother but all links with bourgeois existence, stripping his earthly possessions down to a single, kick-ass motorbike. In Los Angeles, he hooks up with a local veterinarian, Kate Brewster (Claire Danes), who realizes that they are former schoolfellows. Their reunion is pure coincidence, although, as the Terminator points out, everything that happens here is predestined, or, to use the theological term, subject to script development.

On the track of John and Kate is the T-X (Kristanna Loken), a blond female cyborg so metallically single-minded, and so impervious to blandishment and punishment alike, that, from where I was sitting, she looked to be our best hope of getting a woman into the Oval Office. If you gene-spliced Hillary Clinton into Inspector Gadget, this would be the result. The T-X can turn her hand, all too literally, to any number of helpful domestic activities, such as flamethrowing and sprouting a circular saw. What is more, if you whack her hard enough in the jaw, as the Terminator does, she simply uses the force of the blow to spin her head around and ends up staring you in the face again, as if in mockery of your abuse. The comedy of the conceit is not lost on the director, who sets up his leading machines for a long, cacophonous, and horribly joyous battle of the sexes, staged in a corporate bathroom. At one point, in a pungent summary of gender rage, the Terminator cracks a urinal over the head of his foe, who brushes it off with the disdain that you and I would reserve for a giant meringue.

Needless to say, some things are not open to change. The Terminator himself is played—as he always has been and always will be played, right up to "Terminator 12: The Machines Skip Dessert, Finish Their Coffee, and Split the Check"—by Arnold Schwarzenegger. We are therefore privileged to savor, once again, the suspicion that the role of Schwarzenegger was itself taken, long ago, by an ambitious android with titanium forearms who wanted to get into acting. Schwarzenegger, merrily installing his self-deprecation software, has never ceased to trade on this rumor, and the screenwriters, John Brancato and Michael Ferris, duly feed him his lines. When Kate, whom the Terminator describes as "a healthy female of breeding age," tells him to drop dead, he answers, "I am unable to comply." By now, the performer is so seamlessly joined to the part that we find it hard to conceive of another arrangement, yet the fact remains that at one point, when James Cameron was devising the original picture, of 1984, the name pencilled in for the Terminator was that of O. J. Simpson. The trouble was, as Cameron told *Esquire*, "People wouldn't have believed a nice guy like O.J. playing the part of a ruthless killer."

So Arnie got the nod. Almost twenty years on, he still enunciates like a man who bought a "Teach Yourself English" kit for home use and then lost half the tapes, yet that shortcoming allows him to find slivers of pathos in his deadpan calm. His precursor is the Boris Karloff of "Frankenstein"; both actors, in their towering, stiff-limbed demeanor, are smart

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

*Arnold Schwarzenegger in New York City, June 23, 2003.*




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enough to see that a monster with full access to regular feelings is no fun at all, but that a monster grasping at emotional fruits that hang beyond his reach will be guaranteed a rueful, clownish grandeur. "My database does not encompass the dynamics of human pair-bonding," the Terminator notes, although he is sufficiently well-programmed to congratulate his young charges on their flirtation in the back of a trailer. "Your levity is good," he says. "It relieves tension and the fear of death." Hey, thanks.

The strangest spectacle comes toward the end, as the Terminator's damaged brain issues contradictory instructions, telling him first to kill John Connor and then to save him. This unique moment requires that Arnold enact a personality split; if you cornered him to ask how he could vote Republican *and* marry a Kennedy, the reaction would be much the same. The truth is that the entire "Terminator" franchise is designed to rebuke psychological nicety. We are told, in the new film, that machines will become "self-aware," but if you think they're about to sign up for group therapy or inspect their bald patches in the mirror, forget it. As for the human characters, all that is required of them is that they shrug off mortal diffidence and take up arms. One could argue that they are simply obeying Aristotle, who proposed that character is revealed through conduct, and who would almost certainly have urged Antigone and Creon to solve their differences with a pump-action shotgun. The real philosopher-in-residence, however, is Schwarzenegger himself; when Claire Danes—a wonderful actress, whose features are a delicate register of shifting sympathies—takes up an automatic weapon and destroys an unmanned robot plane, she is instantly admitted to the company of honorary Terminators. By her side, Nick Stahl raises an eyebrow at her sporting prowess; she has ceased, perhaps, to be interesting, but her survival is assured.

Can the same be said of the "Terminator" project? Has Jonathan Mostow darkened or diluted the brand? Nobody could quibble with his choreographing of chaos, and Schwarzenegger fans will be comforted to see their man swinging from the hook of a crane as it crashes through a dozen storefronts. Watching this picture after "The Matrix Reloaded," I did start to wonder how furiously the major studios have been lobbied of late by the haulage industry. In both films, an apparent devotion to futuristic technology is severely compromised by an old-style reliance, for the chase sequences, on the grinding and shunting of chunky trucks. As Mostow proved in "Breakdown" and "U-571," he can churn out excitement at a steady pace; whether he can handle dread—altogether a more unstable material—is another matter. James Cameron is a master of the ominously lyrical, and his two "Terminator" pictures, like "Aliens" and "The Abyss," employed special effects to destabilize their chosen worlds, leaving us to guess what might happen next to his humans, his humanoids, and the objects that stirred around them, as they exploded, unfurled, or peeled stickily apart. The T-X in "Terminator 3" has a glacial grace, but she is all mechanism, and she lacks the sexiness of Robert Patrick's T-1000 in "Terminator 2," whose mercurial transformations were a perfect, oozing showcase for the Devil in all his guises.

Only occasionally in Mostow's movie do we get that hint of perversity. When the T-X finds a bloody dressing that has fallen from the wounded John Connor, she touches it with her tongue, analyzes the DNA in a second, and lets out a momentary "Aaah" of what, if she were a practicing vampire, one would have to call pleasure. As for the scatterings of visual wit, I would not choose to be the person who tells Arnold Schwarzenegger that the fine details of Terminator style—the leathers, the bike, the boots, and, yes, a pair of shades dusted with spangles—are now within an inch of a gay fetish. By and large, though, we spend two hours knowing full well that something loud is about to occur; the outcome may be spectacular, but it is unquestionably a numbing-down of the overarching fears that Cameron sought to construct. Is it too much to hope that we could take a tip from the Terminator, travel back to the nineteen-eighties, or well beyond, and try to rearrange the future of film? Was it preordained that the measure of a summer hit would be not the wealth of its imaginings but the immensity of its funding? Will Schwarzenegger stay with movies, or beam himself down into the grimy universe of politics? One thing is for sure: he'll be back. ♦

MUSICAL EVENTS

# ROCK 101

*Academia tunes in.*

BY ALEX ROSS

Duke Ellington once had to field a barrage of questions from an Icelandic music student who was determined to penetrate to the heart of the genius of jazz. At one point, Ellington was asked whether he ever felt an affinity for the music of Bach, and, before answering, he made a show of unwrapping a pork chop that he had stowed in his pocket. "Bach and myself," he said, taking a bite from the chop, "both write with individual performers in mind." Richard O. Boyer captured the moment in a Profile entitled "The Hot Bach," which appeared in this magazine in 1944. You can sense in that exquisitely timed pork-chop maneuver Ellington's bemused response to the European notions of genius that were constantly being foisted on him. He said on another occasion, "To attempt to elevate the status of the jazz musician by forcing the level of his best work into comparisons with classical music is to deny him his rightful share of originality." Jazz was a new language, and the critic would have to respond to it with a new poetry of praise.

Now Ellington is himself a classic, the subject of painstaking analytical studies. He occupies a Bachian position in an emergent popular pantheon, which is certain to look different from the marble-faced, bewigged classical pantheons that preceded it. The very idea of a canon of geniuses may be falling by the wayside; it makes more sense to talk about the flickering brilliance of a group, a place, or a people. In the future, it seems, everyone will be a genius for fifteen minutes. The past decade has seen the rise of pop-music studies, which is dedicated to the idea that Ellington, Hank Williams, and the Velvet Underground were created equal and deserve the same sort of scholarly scrutiny that used to be bestowed only on Bach and sons. Pop-music courses draw crowds of students on college campuses, and academic presses are putting out such portentous titles as "Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience," "Rock Over the Edge: Transformations in Popular Music Culture," and "Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music."

Pop-music professors, especially those who specialize in rock, are caught in an obvious paradox, which their students probably point out to them on the first day of class. Namely, it's not very rock and roll to intellectualize rock and roll. When Pink Floyd sang, "We don't need no education," they could not have foreseen the advent of research projects with titles like "Another Book in the Wall?: A Cultural History of Pink Floyd's Stage Performance and the Rise of Audiovisual *Gesamtkunstwerk*, 1965-1994." (That comes from Finland.) Ever since Ellington, Armstrong, and Jelly Roll Morton struck up the soundtrack to the bawdy, boozy twenties, popular music has been the high-speed vehicle for youth rebellion, sexual liberation, and chemical experimentation, none of which yield willingly to the academic mind. The pop scholar is forever doomed to sounding like the square kid at the cool kids' party, killing their buzz with sentences like this: "From the start, hip-hop's samples ran the gamut of genres, defying anyone who would delimit hip-hop's palette."

Then again, maybe it's not a problem that so much pop-music scholarship sounds conspicuously uncool. For decades, jazz rhapsodists and rock poets were so intent on projecting attitude that they never got around to saying much about the music itself. The pioneering rock critics of the sixties, such as Lester Bangs and Greil Marcus, wanted to mimic the music in their prose, and they



*Pop scholars in Seattle invoked Walter Benjamin as often as the Notorious B.I.G.*

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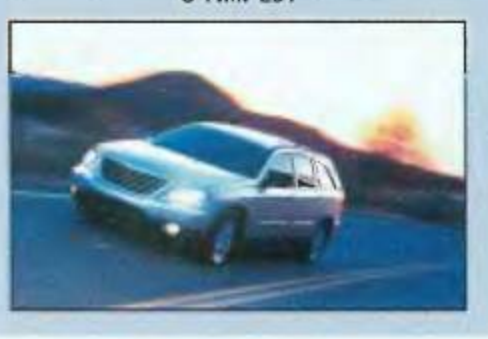
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had enough style to pull it off. Bangs, whose writings have been collected in a new anthology from Anchor Books, lived the life of a rock star, or at least died the death of one. But his writings are a better guide to the mentality of smart people who went to rock shows in the sixties and seventies than they are a reliable record of music and musicians. Discussing the Rolling Stones in 1974, Bangs wrote, "If you think I'm going to review the new 'It's Only Rock 'n' Roll' album right now, you are crazy. But I am going to swim in it." Between prose poetry and academic cant there has to be a middle ground, and pop-music studies is searching it out.

## INTERROGATING BRUCE'S BUTT

One weekend last spring, a few hundred scholars, journalists, musicians, and onlookers arrived in downtown Seattle for Pop Conference 2003, entitled "Skip a Beat: Rewriting the Story of Popular Music." The Pop Conference was created two years ago by Eric Weisbard, a former *Village Voice* rock critic, and Daniel Cavicchi, an assistant professor of American Studies at the Rhode Island School of Design. The decision to bring scholars and journalists together was unusual. It gave the critics an opportunity to drop arcane allusions instead of having to pretend to sound like teen-agers, while the academics could loosen up a little. Weisbard and Cavicchi hope that the two worlds can cross-pollinate each other, breeding a sensibility that is scholarly but not stuffy, stylish but not frivolous.

The conference took place within the wavy-gravy walls of the Experience Music Project, a Frank Gehry culture palace, housing artifacts and bric-a-brac from a century of pop. The dress code was diverse to the point of incoherence: some of the older academics showed up in business attire, while younger ones wore T-shirts and jeans. (The divergence of styles became especially dissonant when sixties-generation scholars espoused radical political agendas while Gen X doctoral students sounded a neo-formalist, let's-just-talk-about-the-music tone.) For three days, participants hawked their wares in a tight twenty-minute format, taking persnickety questions afterward. At any given time, there were three different panels running in the various rooms of the E.M.P., meaning that the curious onlooker had to choose among equally tempting offerings. In order to attend the Bob Dylan panel—entitled The Dylan—you had to skip panels on art music (one paper was "Changing the System: Brian Eno, Sonic Youth, and the Combination of Rock and Experimental Music") and contemporary R. & B. ("Supa Dupa Fly: Styles of Subversion in Black Women's Hip-Hop").

Some of the presentations, a few too many for comfort, lapsed into the familiar contortions of modern pedagogy. Likewise, in the many pop-music books now in circulation, post-structuralist, post-Marxist, post-colonialist, and post-grammatical buzzwords crop up on page after page. There is a whole lot of problematizing, interrogating, and appropriating goin' on. Walter Benjamin's name is dropped at least as often as the Notorious B.I.G.'s. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu gets more props than Dr. Dre. At the Pop Conference, I made it a rule to move to a different room the minute I heard someone use the word "interrogate" in a non-detective context or cite any of the theorists of the Frankfurt School. Thus, I ducked out of a talk on Grace Jones's "Slave to the Rhythm" album when I heard a sentence that began with the phrase "Invoking Walter Benjamin." And I bailed on a lecture entitled "Bruce's Butt"—Bruce Springsteen's butt, as seen on the cover of "Born in the U.S.A."—when the speaker began to interrogate the image of the butt, which, under sharp questioning, wouldn't give anything away.

Scholars of this type always want to see pop music as the emanation of an entity called popular culture, rather than as music that happens to have become popular. As a result, songs and bands become fungible commodities in the intellectual marketplace. In the anthology "Popular Music Studies," the hip-hop scholar Ian Maxwell asks the significant question "How can our analyses avoid reducing the objects of those analyses to desiccated cadavers on a slab?" His solution—a "more rigorous understanding of what an ethnographically informed approach might offer the study of popular music, nuancing that

approach through Bourdieu's reflexive criticality"—gets us only so far.

Roger Beebe, one of the editors of the "Rock Over the Edge" anthology, even looks at music as purely a media phenomenon, inseparable from image and marketing. Analyzing Kurt Cobain's appearances on television, he says that Cobain mattered to his fans mainly as a disembodied entity, not as an individual with a voice, and that he exemplified something called "the postmodern *dispositif*." Such McLuhanesque musings have been rendered obsolete as MTV has more or less stopped showing videos in favor of frat-house documentaries. Meanwhile, the Internet has become the main avenue for the spread of music. The mania for downloading music may be wreaking havoc with artists' careers, but it is interesting to see how the ear trumps the eye when the computer takes over. Music is being consumed with no images attached—no videos, no TV appearances, not even album jackets. In the nineteenth century, the Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick dreamed of a world "purely musical," beyond politics and personality. Such a world now exists in the form of the MP3.

## THE MATHEMATICS OF "SUPERBAD"

Despite minor infestations of Benjaminites, there was no shortage of up-close musical discussion at the Pop Conference. I often had the happy experience of being held hostage by an informed fanatic who convinced me that whatever he or she was discussing was the most important music on earth. The presenters tended to avoid obvious mainstream figures—there was nothing on Elvis, the Beatles, or the Rolling Stones—focusing, instead, on the margins and subtexts of pop history. There were papers on the lo-fi ideology of nineties indie rock, the Filipino d.j. scene in San Francisco, and the trailblazing transsexual punk of Wayne/Jayne County, among a hundred others. You got a sense of music as a world of jostling subcultures, each with its resident inventors and masters, its purists and populists. The conference conjured up the everlasting complexity of how songs are made, heard, and remembered.

Rock and roll has generated more self-serving myths than any other genre, and scholars have been busy dismantling them. Too often, pop history has been written as a march forward to a handful of utopian moments in the late fifties and the sixties: Chuck Berry recording "Maybellene," Elvis appearing on Ed Sullivan, the Beatles appearing on Ed Sullivan, and Bob Dylan plugging in his guitar at the Newport Folk Festival. These events have acquired an exaggerated importance, mostly because they had sentimental value for the baby-boom generation that dominated early pop-music writing. Younger writers are especially impatient with the rock narrative—the "rockist paradigm," they call it—and delight in cataloguing its contradictions and omissions. Consider Dylan's famous rebellion against the folkies. At the Pop Conference, the historian Michael J. Kramer presented a paper in which he defended the folk-music movement from the stereotype that prevails in Dylan studies—the image of humorless fanatics rejecting the visionary in their midst. Kramer pointed out that the singer took a great deal of his mocking, critical voice—"humorous impurity," he called it—from the very movement that he was supposed to have renounced. In a similar vein, Franklin Bruno, a doctoral student in philosophy who writes quirky, literate pop songs, noted that Dylan in his electric period relied heavily on the tricks of Tin Pan Alley songwriting, precisely the sort of mom-and-dad music that the singer was supposed to have left behind. "Blonde on Blonde," Bruno said, was "a head-first dive into pop-song formalism." Everybody must get stoned, but not before the bridge and the modulation.

Again and again, popular music has been described as a story of youth rebellion, in which each generation breaks free of the oppressive mediocrity of its predecessor. When you place these rebellion narratives end to end, they cancel each other out. Whatever is considered edgy and liberating in one generation is dismissed as bland and confining for the next. An aging genre invariably becomes a straw man against which a new genre defines itself. Dylan "plugged in" and defied the folkies. Chuck Berry sang "Roll Over Beetho-


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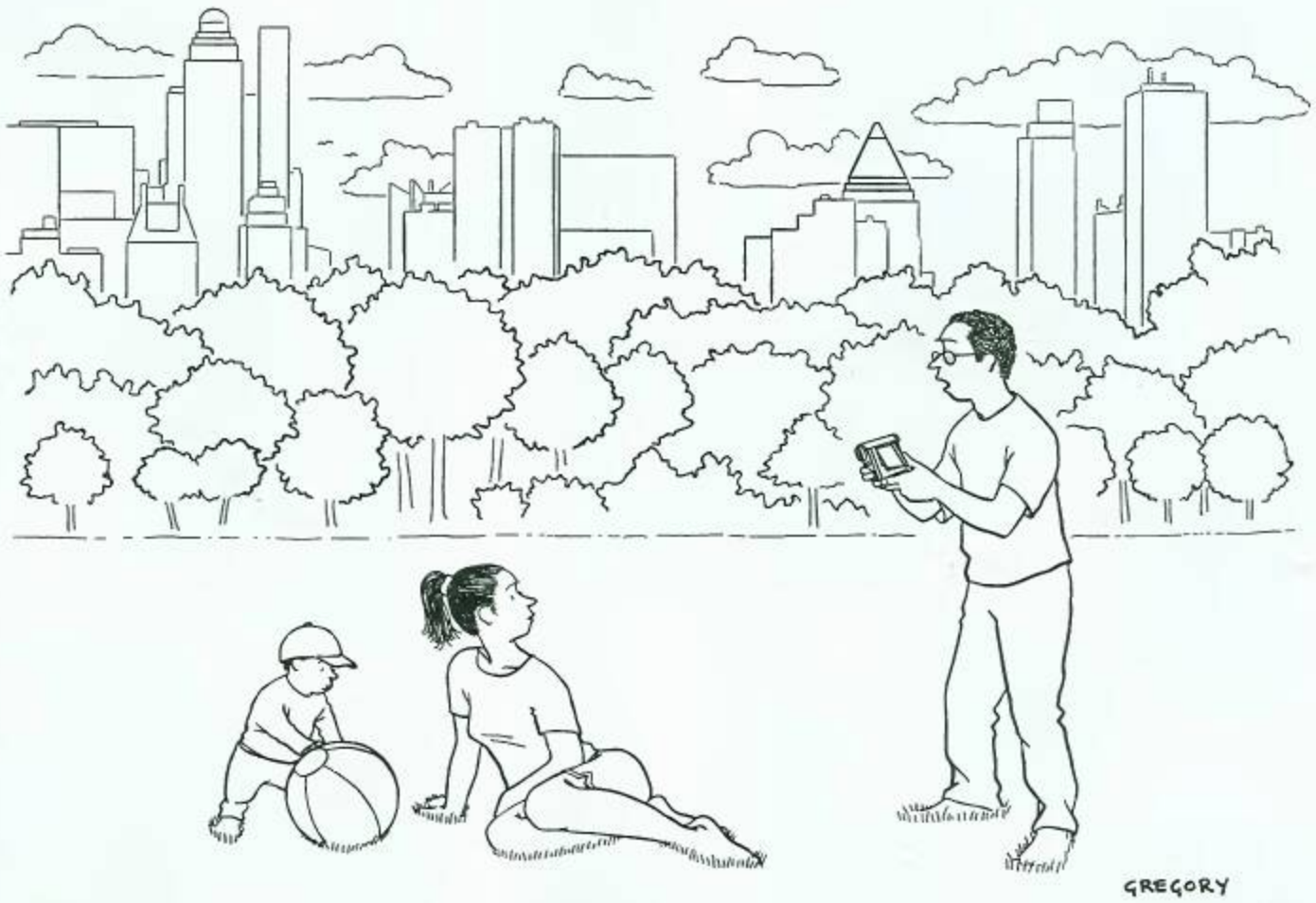
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ven" to get the original rock-and-roll revolution under way, using classical music as a foil. The Beatles were said to have swept aside the prefab pop of the early sixties, which happened to include some of the great early Motown songs. Punk sneered at disco. Why should the love of one kind of music necessitate the knocking down of another? Schopenhauer may have had the answer when he observed that the listener is always fighting battles in his head which he can never win in life. "We like to hear in its language the secret history of our will and of all its stirrings and strivings," the philosopher said. Music at its most potent creates the feeling that the world is about to undergo a vague but tremendous change, which is how political energies become attached to it. When the world fails to change as promised, however, the music becomes an object of ridicule.

The ultimate pop-music myth is the one that scholars file under the rubric "authenticity," according to which only the rudest, rawest music—the primal scream of the outcast—qualifies as "real." African-American music is usually expected to supply the perfume of the primitive. Since the nineteen-twenties, white teen-agers have used black music as the Muzak of their pubescence. Some pop historians still perpetuate this mythology, but others make a point of celebrating all that is rigorous, complex, and exalted in the African-American tradition. One of my favorite passages in pop-music studies appears in "Instruments of Desire," an erudite paean to the electric guitar, by Steve Waksman, of Smith College. It describes how Bo Diddley came to invent his tremolando sound. "Tremolo involved an oscillation of the electronic signal," Waksman writes, "transmitted from the guitar to the amplifier so that the volume level would fluctuate at regular intervals between extreme loudness and virtual silence." I don't really know what this means, but it certainly puts Diddley's "bump-a-bump bump" in a new light. Likewise, David Brackett, the author of "Interpreting Popular Music," lost me when he began to expound on James Brown's "Superbad" by way of the mathematical proportions of the Golden Section, positing that various parts of the song relate to each other by a ratio of 0.618 to 1. Bach has long been subject to this sort of arcane analysis, and there is no reason that the hardest-working man in show business shouldn't get the same treatment.

In a less pedantic vein, a paper by Portia K. Maultsby, who teaches in the department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology at Indiana University, dismantled the clichés attached to Motown's "hit factory," which for a long time was accused of purveying what critics called a "diluted blackness." She stressed Motown's profound connections with the African-American tradition, especially jazz, gospel, and rhythm and blues: James Jamerson's restless, all-over bass lines are electric bebop. Maultsby's paper went hand in




*"Look, I love the city, too, but wouldn't it be cheaper to shoot this in Canada?"*

hand with an essay by John Sheinbaum in the "Rock Over the Edge" anthology—a devastating account of how white rockers are routinely celebrated as enigmatic artists while their African-American counterparts are made out to be simpleminded conduits of energy and fun. "The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll" once described Motown as a "wholly mechanical style and sound." The Beatles, by contrast, were hailed as mop-top Beethovens immediately after releasing "I Want to Hold Your Hand." The Beatles were great, but they did not save music from oblivion when they arrived in America in 1964. In fact, as Keir Keightley notes in "The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock," the blues-besotted British Invasion had the effect of putting a great many African-American session musicians out of work.

## THE CRUCIFIXION MAMBO

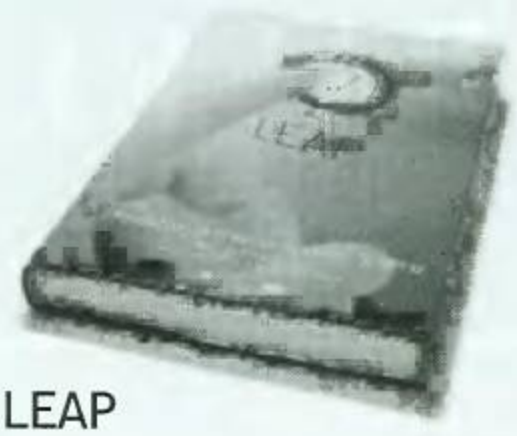
By common consent, the tour de force of the Pop Conference was a lecture by the Cuban music scholar and producer Ned Sublette, which took place at the not very funky hour of 9:30 A.M. In the space of twenty minutes or so, Sublette conjured up the sweeping influence of Cuban music and Caribbean traditions on almost every popular form of the twentieth century. It was not so much a lecture as an all-out performance: Sublette, who also leads a Latin-country fusion band, sang, tapped, and danced the Cuban rhythms that have insinuated themselves into every breakthrough moment in American music, including ragtime (Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer" uses the *danzón* rhythm), New Orleans jazz, bebop, rock and roll (Bo Diddley's "hambone" beat is similar to the Cuban clave), and funk. Sublette called Cuban music "the elephant in the kitchen that pop-music historians have failed to see"; it was, he insisted, the site of the original marriage of African rhythm and European harmony.

By installing Cuban music as "the other great tradition," Sublette did the unthinkable: he questioned the primacy of African-Americans in pop history. There were murmurs of unease when he announced that African-American music was not originally polyrhythmic. Robert Christgau, the fiercely informed critic of the *Village Voice*, said in the question-and-answer period that blues singers implied polyrhythm in the interplay of voice and guitar. In a way, though, Sublette's Cubacentric reading—the book version of which will be published next year—relieves African-Americans of the burden of being the primitives of American music; they become the appropriators rather than the appropriated.

Sublette mentioned, in passing, the fascinating history of two old Spanish-American dances, the *zarabanda* and the *chacona*, which probably stemmed from the Afro-Caribbean melting pot. They spread to Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and helped shape some of the masterpieces of the Baroque. In Seattle, I got to thinking about the tangled history of the *chacona*, or chaconne, which has appeared in so many diverse places in the past five hundred years that it could be considered one of the iconic images of the universal language. It is identifiable by its bass line: a constantly repeating, often downward-plunging figure, over which higher instruments and voices play variations. "A dance in the way of the mulatto's," Cervantes called it. The lyrics were bawdy and irreverent; the music was said to have been invented by the Devil. Once it reached Europe, it slowed down and took on more solemn connotations. In the hands of Monteverdi it led to the "Lamento" bass, which was well suited to the dying utterances of operatic heroines. In its most striking form, the "Lamento" proceeded down a grand, chilly staircase of semitones, or chromatic steps. You can hear this version of it in the heart-stopping final lament of Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas," and in the "Crucifixus" from Bach's Mass in B Minor.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a *chacona*-style figure reappeared in the hands of African-American musicians in New Orleans, Chicago, and, notably, the Mississippi Delta, where the Devil was again said to be active. It sounded obsessively in Skip James's "I'm So Glad," one of the greatest of the Delta blues, and can be heard rumbling beneath Ellington's "Reminiscing in Tempo." Descending chromatic basses gave a slow-marching power to some of the more ambitious rock songs of the sixties and seventies—Dylan's "Ballad of a Thin Man" and "Simple Twist of Fate," Led Zeppelin's "Dazed and Con-


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fused" and "Stairway to Heaven." Somehow, four centuries after the lamenting bass surfaced, its meaning remained the same. It summoned up the dark comfort of heartbreak and depression: the heart descending step by step to the bottom and going back up to repeat the journey.

Universal figures such as the *chacona*—"memes," as musicologists call them, borrowing from sociobiology—reveal the interconnectedness of all musical experience. If you could bring together a few seventeenth-century Afro-Cuban musicians, a continuo section led by the Master Bach, and players from Ellington's 1929 band, and then ask John Paul Jones to start them off with the bass line of "Dazed and Confused," they would, after a minute or two, find common ground. And very interesting music it would be, too. Purists of all genres can never stand the fact that the genealogy of music is one long string of miscegenations and mutations.

## THE TIMBERLAKE PERPLEX

When, in 1943, Ellington presented his symphonic masterpiece "Black, Brown, and Beige" at Carnegie Hall, he spoke of it in the first-person plural, including his band in the creative process. Scholars often point out that African-American genres, like their West African antecedents, resist the European cult of personality: they tend to take the form of a collective ritual, not of a declamation by a charismatic star to a passive crowd. The problem with the "genius" model is that it puts up a wall between performer and audience; this is surely why so many pop musicians reject it, even as they feed on the adulation that creates it. They look warily on the archivists and commentators who crowd around any long-lasting genre. If, as another old German dude said, the owl of Minerva flies at dusk, rock critics are Minerva's vultures: when enough of them take flight, it means that something is dying.

Still, we listeners want to talk about genius. We want a language that articulates and perpetuates our passions. What's bedevilling about pop music is that while we sense greatness in a song we have trouble saying where it comes from. It is often difficult to say who even wrote the thing in the first place. Some performers exert such a powerful presence—Billie Holiday, Sinatra, Elvis—that they seem to become the authors of songs that were actually the work of schlumpy men in the Brill Building. Then there are the rock songs that were written by committee, often in the middle of the night, and under the influence of something other than the muse Euterpe. Composers have the advantage of being shrouded in myth: we can project fantasies of omniscience upon them. Pop stars torment us with their inconvenient humanness—their tax problems, their noisome politics, their pornography collections, their unwanted comebacks. No wonder the greatest legends are the artists who die young.

Call this the Timberlake predicament. In the past year, rock critics found themselves in the faintly embarrassing position of having to hail Justin Timberlake's "Justified" as one of the better records of the year. Timberlake, for those who have let their subscription to *Teen People* lapse, is the blond, curly-haired twenty-two-year-old lead singer of 'N Sync. Encomiums from certifiably heterosexual male critics such as Christgau have demonstrated that Timberlake was not getting praised for his pretty face alone. Granted, cynics may see all this as a rationalization on the part of writers who can't admit that music keeps getting worse; they eat a Hostess Twinkie and call it a gourmet meal. But it shouldn't be forgotten that many of the most imposing achievements in pop history had their origins in ditsy teenybopper fads. The Beatles were once a boy band, too. What happened to them in the middle and late sixties was a mysterious transfer of energy, in which disposable fame was transmuted into artistic power. The band found fame first, then it found greatness. So it would be foolish to write Timberlake off too quickly.

In any case, the songs on "Justified" aren't really Timberlake's. A dozen names appear in the credits, and it's anyone's guess how much of a song like "Cry Me a River," the album's best track, actually came from Timberlake's pen, if he owns one. Every bit of the song shows the fingerprints of the hip-hop producer Tim Mosley, a.k.a. Timbaland, who is the éminence grise behind half of what is great in the Top Forty these days. He has sampled every genre under the sun,

from world music to austere electronica. He likes to leave yawning gaps of silence between his speaker-puncturing beats, which inspire new kinds of vehemence on the dance floor. (As Virgil Thomson observed long ago, we dance to syncopated music because our bodies like to fill in the missing beats.) Modernist ideology accustoms us to think that experimentation can take place on the margins of a culture, but hip-hop production is the site of some of the weirdest, wittiest thinking in pop music today.

"Cry Me a River" has no apparent relation to the 1955 standard made famous by Julie London, although a future analysis of internal structural ratios may show otherwise. The vocals are plaintive to the point of whining, but the inner voices have a cool, contrapuntal flow, creating the sort of muscular melancholy so characteristic of postwar rhythm and blues. There are at least seven layers of simultaneous activity in the song—it's as if Timbaland wanted to see how much he could pile on without creating atonality. First there is an arpeggiated keyboard figure, followed by male voices singing a bit of Gregorian-style chant. Next comes a steady, sombre pattern that sounds a little like the minor-key vamp in Ellington's "East St. Louis Toodle-Oo." Below it are four bass notes, recurring in *chacona* style. Now the angelic Timberlake enters, together with a more nasty-minded rhythm section, a vaguely Indian-sounding synthesized string orchestra, and, finally, sped-up versions of all the above.

In sum, "Cry Me a River" may be the most polyphonically complex teeny-bopper ballad in history. At the very least, it's not something that any idiot could have done. It has the inward delight of a song that is better than it needs to be. Popular music is full of this sort of mad tinkering; in the background of even the most ostentatiously numskulled acts may be a music geek who stays up all night trying to find a single chord. Pop-music scholars spend a lot of time describing the messages that become attached to songs, and this is a necessary part of the history of listening. Yet, when music passes from one generation to another, it leaves most of its social significance peeling off dorm-room walls, and its persistence is best explained with reference to beats, chords, and raw emotion. Which is why pop writers have to find a new way to describe musical events, and not just by offering dopey imitations of classical musicology. No one would give much credence to a style of art criticism that alluded to paintings without mentioning their shapes and colors, or an architecture criticism that refused to say whether buildings were made of stone or metal.

It was disappointing to hear from attendees at the Pop Conference that they are still viewed with intense suspicion by their colleagues in classical musicology. Increasingly, leading colleges and universities have full-time pop specialists; the musicology department at U.C.L.A. is headed by Robert Walser, the author of books on jazz and heavy metal. Given the vast quantities of obscurantism that classical musicologists have churned out in the past fifty years—the impenetrable tautologies of Schenkerian analysis, the higher-math delirium of pitch-class set theory—classical scholars have no right to dismiss their pop counterparts as anything less than serious. They probably picture themselves fighting a last stand against the armies of ignorance, but any mode of teaching that promotes close, historically attuned listening can't be a bad thing. And those of us who write on classical music have a lot to learn from pop studies. It exposes the hard realities of how music is made, how it is paid for, and how it is consumed. To understand music only as art and not as entertainment, as classical scholars tend to do, is to dehumanize the past. For all we know, Bach may well have rolled his eyes and munched on a pork chop whenever someone asked him about his relationship with Palestrina.

Pop music is music stripped bare. It is like the haphazard funeral portrayed in Wallace Stevens's "Emperor of Ice Cream": a woman laid out with all her flaws intact, covered with a sheet from a chest of drawers that is missing three knobs, her horny feet protruding. Boys bring flowers in last month's newspapers, but she is noble to look upon. Twentieth-century music, the empire of ice cream, lies before us in all its damaged majesty. ♦




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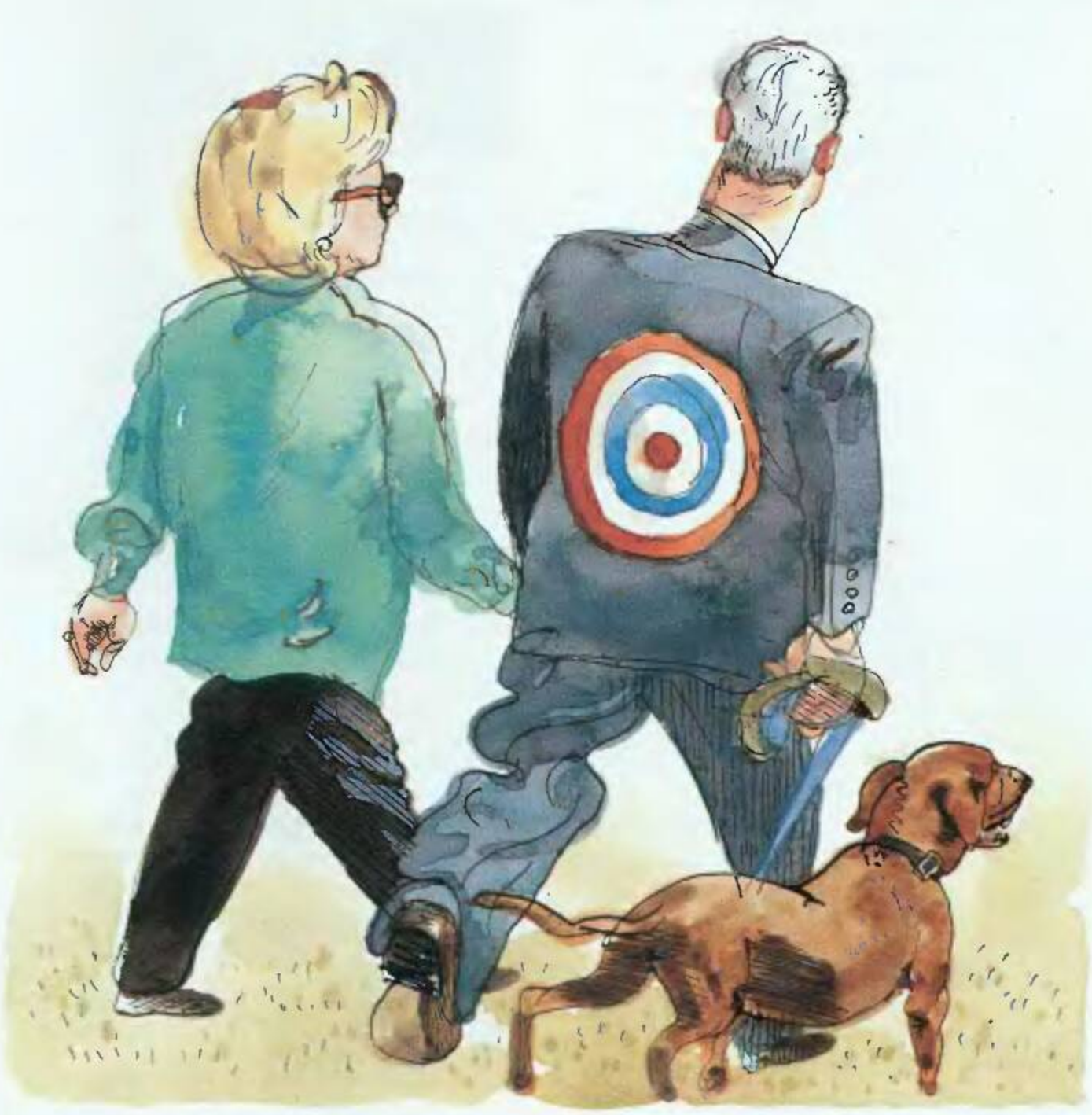
*The White House memoir grows claws.*

BY WALTER ISAACSON

There are two abiding mysteries about Bill Clinton: Why do some people hate him so passionately? And why do some people adore him so loyally? The recent memoirs by his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and by his intense outrider Sidney Blumenthal focus on the former issue while providing textbook studies of the latter.

Both authors were famous for propounding the theory that the Clinton scandals were the result of what Hillary Clinton called "a vast right-wing conspiracy," dedicated to destroying the progressive agenda. In "Living History" (Simon & Schuster; $28), she repeats the charge, conceding only that the coördinated crusade was so brazen that it might not have qualified as a conspiracy. In "The Clinton Wars" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $30), Blumenthal, whose ornate conspiracy theories earned him the nickname Grassy Knoll, launches into a game of Trivial Pursuit that is filled with half-forgotten bit players (remember David Bossie and George Conway III?) linked to a web of rabid Clinton-haters stretching back to Arkansas's hardscrabble racists. Together, the authors amply prove the old maxim that even paranoids have enemies.

Although the books are scored in different keys—Clinton's generally attempts to be gauzy and warm, Blumenthal's is edgy and cold—their underlying refrain is the same. Both repeatedly delve into what Hillary Clinton calls "the mechanics of what was essentially a sting operation to entrap the President" and what Blumenthal declares was the work of "fiercely partisan Republicans who had embarked on a sexual fishing expedition." Like any fishing expedition, which indeed it was, it could be sustained only if there were a lot of fishy things below the surface, which indeed there were. But where most memoirists adopt an air of mellowed self-examination, these authors are not in the mood to make concessions. Instead, they go on the attack. Their aggressiveness marks an evolution, befitting our times, in the tone and style of memoirs by people who have worked in the White House.



*Should Clinton's travails be blamed solely on a vast right-wing conspiracy?*

BARRY BLITT

The venerable tradition of the White House memoir goes back to President James Madison's extraordinary young slave Paul Jennings. Jennings's memoir, which he wrote after Daniel Webster bought his freedom, contained most of what we have come to expect from such books, including thumbnail sketches of important players: "Mr. Robert Smith was then Secretary of State, but as he and Mr. Madison could not agree, he was removed, and Colonel Monroe appointed to his place. Dr. Eustis was Secretary of War—rather a rough, blustering man; Mr. Gallatin, a tip-top man, was Secretary of the Treasury; and Mr. Hamilton of South Carolina, a pleasant gentleman, who thought Mr. Madison could do nothing wrong, and who always concurred in every thing he said, was Secretary of the Navy."

Jennings also provided accounts of the policy battles over the War of 1812 ("Colonel Monroe was always fierce for it") and tried to debunk a few myths. "It has often been stated in print that when Mrs. Madison escaped from the White House, she cut out from the frame the large portrait of Washington . . . and carried it off," Jennings wrote. "This is totally false. She had no time for doing it. It would have required a ladder to get it down." (The Gilbert Stuart painting was actually saved by a doorkeeper and a gardener, he said.) Most important, Jennings's memoir set the genre's standard for Presidential praise. "Mr. Madison, I think, was one of the best men that ever lived," he wrote. "I never saw him in

a passion, and never knew him to strike a slave."

The modern era of such memoirs began with a gusher from the Administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whose insistence that his aides display a "passion for anonymity" had only a temporary restraining effect. The first of the Roosevelt books, "After Seven Years," by the brain-truster Raymond Moley, established the tone: praise for the patron that subtly shades into self-praise, inside accounts of policy struggles in which the author turns out to have been right, a dollop of historical commentary, some gossip that gently settles old scores, and a good index for colleagues who may not want to read the whole thing. Moley was sometimes deft enough to work many of these themes into a single sentence: "I was able to achieve almost the impossible—the maintenance of friendly relations with both Louis Howe and Sam Rosenman—and the rivalry of these two men was the single factor that might have disrupted the logical course of events."

Although most such memoirs ended up in the ash bin, a few helped elevate the genre. Roosevelt's best speechwriter, Robert E. Sherwood, who had won three Pulitzer Prizes as a playwright, won another for a memoir cast as a character study, "Roosevelt and Hopkins." In 1965, two of John Kennedy's speechwriters produced similarly stately tomes. Theodore Sorensen's "Kennedy" is notable for being unflinching, at least in parts. Its assessment of the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, for instance, begins by saying of Kennedy, "His own mistakes were many and serious," and then proceeds to catalogue them. The eminent historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has sometimes been labelled a hagiographer for the Camelot chords he struck, but "A Thousand Days" is an intricate and serious narrative biography with sweeping historical themes and incisive drypoint character sketches. His depiction of Secretary of State Dean Rusk is typical: "As he would talk on and on in his even, low voice, a Georgia drawl sounding distantly under the professional tones of a foundation executive, the world itself seemed to lose reality and dissolve into a montage of platitudes."

The Watergate scandal posed a new challenge to White House memoirists: how to deal with the character flaws that unravelled a Presidency. William Safire, a Nixon speechwriter, set out to produce a book that would be "sympathetic but not sycophantic," and the result, "Before the Fall," succeeds by peeling back the multiple layers of Nixon's tortured personality and offering up candid (and amusing) portraits of Henry Kissinger and other members of the court. Safire defended much of Nixon's record, but recognized that Nixon might be "the only genuinely tragic hero in our history, his ruination caused by the flaws in his own character." In "White House Years," Kissinger, too, was willing to explore the loneliness, paranoia, insecurity, and lack of generosity that infected Nixon and unsettled his tenure. He notices the little things about Nixon—"his pant legs as always a trifle short," his look of defiance mixed with uncertainty—and concludes by ruminating about "what extraordinary vehicles destiny selects to accomplish its design."

It subsequently became part of the tradition for aides to try to establish their credibility and integrity, and make some headlines, by including a few denigrating revelations about their former patrons. James Fallows, a Carter speechwriter, wrote a magazine memoir before Carter even had a chance to run for reëlection, in which he described Carter as "passionless" and revealed that the President micromanaged the sign-up schedule for the White House tennis court. Even more damaging was Donald T. Regan's revelation about "the most closely guarded domestic secret" of Ronald and Nancy Reagan: "Virtually every major move and decision the Reagans made during my time as White House Chief of Staff was cleared in advance with a woman in San Francisco who drew up horoscopes to make certain that the planets were in a favorable alignment." The current Administration has already produced such a memoir, by a former speechwriter, David Frum, in "The Right Man," which is generally as flattering as the title implies but contains a few discomforting little revelations about the tenor of the White House—Frum, who is Jewish, opens the book with the




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line "Missed you at Bible study" spoken by one aide to another—and about Bush's own shortcomings: "He is impatient and quick to anger; sometimes glib, even dogmatic; often uncurious and as a result ill-informed; more conventional in his thinking than a leader probably should be."

Minor score-settling aside, though, previous White House memoirs tried to appear reflective, above the fray, and candid about mistakes that were made. This was true, certainly, of the only other best-selling memoir so far from a Clinton aide, George Stephanopoulos's "All Too Human." Stephanopoulos dealt with the scandals in an admirably honest manner, and revealed his own conflicting emotions in an anguished portrayal of the period. "I didn't think I was a hypocrite, because my defense of Clinton against past bimbo eruptions had been predicated on my belief that he wouldn't create new ones, but maybe I *was* complicit because when I worked for Clinton I had been willing to suspend my disbelief about some of his more suspect denials," he writes. "For several years, I had served as his character witness. Now I felt like a dupe."

Sidney Blumenthal—who spent years covering Washington politics for *The New Republic* and then for *The New Yorker*, before becoming an assistant to President Clinton—has no time for such self-examination. He unabashedly rises to the President's defense in each and every (and every and every) particular, embedding a controlled, seemingly dispassionate, and at times persuasive pro-Clinton polemic within the pages of a high-minded history. In doing so, he has helped to create something like a new genre—the attack memoir.

The result reads like two very different books shuffled together, jostling one another uncomfortably as they alternate turns over nearly eight hundred pages. The first book consists of Blumenthal aspiring to emulate Schlesinger. From the opening scene, in which the new President visits the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, in Hyde Park, the author unblushingly places himself at the center of momentous historical forces. "I could hear my own footsteps as I walked past black-and-white photographs of FDR grandly gesturing to roaring crowds," he writes. When Bill Clinton arrives, "the dust started to be shaken; the pinned exhibits almost seemed to want to move; the past was no longer at rest." And then, in a metaphorical gesture, the President beckons Blumenthal over: "He wanted me to accompany him as he toured FDR's library."

Blumenthal's assessment of Clinton occasionally transcends hagiography and approaches deification. His black students in Arkansas, we are informed, "called him Wonder Boy for his utter absence of racial distinction," and a member of the National Symphony "told me he was the only guest conductor they'd ever had who knew what he was doing." By the end of the book, Clinton has been carved into the progressive pantheon with both Roosevelts. "Just as the presidents of the late twentieth century operated in the shadow of FDR," Blumenthal declares, "those of the first part of the twenty-first century will stand in the shadow of Clinton."

But it would be unfair, albeit easy, to make fun of Blumenthal as a human incarnation of Buddy the dog, tirelessly chasing errant balls and panting with pure affection. When stripped of some of the excesses, his character sketches and his digressions into the roots of great historical themes can be fascinating. He is especially enlightening about the Third Way movement, through which Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair shed the paralyzing dogmas of the old left in order to take up policies of forceful engagement abroad along with fiscal responsibility at home. By this approach, Blumenthal argues, Clinton showed how strong executive leadership could be brought to the cause of progressive social policies. The result was "the greatest prosperity" in America's history, "the greatest reduction in poverty" since Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, "the greatest public health insurance coverage of children, and the greatest budget surplus ever." Despite Blumenthal's efforts, few will be convinced that the Clinton Administration's haphazard policymaking was responsible for all these successes, but he does make the best possible case that it deserves a lot of the credit.



Time and again, unfortunately, Blumenthal's revealing anecdotes and sweeping policy analysis get elbowed aside by his parallel book, the one in which he dives into the murky depth of each successive scandal. Suddenly the tone turns conspiratorial. A legion of enemies small and large, from Arkansas lowlifes to the independent counsel Kenneth Starr, are woven into a tangled web of buffoons who share the same sinister motives and tactics. And many in the press are portrayed either as willing dupes or as craven co-conspirators. (At one point, Blumenthal accuses *Time* of purposefully positioning a photograph of Hillary Clinton on the cover so that the "M" in the logo would look like devil horns. As the managing editor of the magazine then, I can attest that the "M" was in the same place it had been for eighty years, ever since Henry Luce decided against calling his magazine *The Synthetic Review*, and that we had no diabolical designs.) Blumenthal's valid points about the tactics of the probers are thus lost to his lack of subtlety and his unwillingness to reflect on the Clintonian behavior that created the morass in the first place. Once again, it's necessary to strip away Blumenthal's excesses in order to uncover his insights.

The most compelling of these insights flow from his recounting of how he secretly befriended David Brock, an apostate conservative journalist who first published the sex allegations made against Clinton by Arkansas state troopers. On the day that the Monica Lewinsky story broke, Blumenthal called Brock, who had already been expiating his guilt by leaking to Blumenthal the maneuvers of the most ardent Clinton-haters. Brock proceeded to detail the collusion among Kenneth Starr's office, journalists at *Newsweek*, Lewinsky's turncoat confessor Linda

Tripp, the merry mischief-maker Lucianne Goldberg, the Internet gossip Matt Drudge, and a motley if not vast right-wing conspiracy that included a collection of freelance investigators and legal "elves" funded by the conservative millionaire Richard Mellon Scaife.

The machinations of members of this anti-Clinton cabal are interesting enough and, indeed (as many of them will proudly admit), true enough, but Blumenthal and Hillary Clinton were notably unsuccessful at focussing press attention on them rather than on the President's own misdeeds. One reason is that there was an even more interesting personal question, both then and now: could these two aggressive defenders truly have believed the President's slippery denials? Blumenthal's answer is that, on the day the story appeared, he discussed the situation with the President and reached a tacit willingness to suspend disbelief. Both the President and his wife "wanted me to believe the story as he told it," Blumenthal writes, "because he wanted her to believe it and she wanted to believe him."

In Hillary's version, she did believe her husband, right up to the day, seven months later, when he was forced to confess in his deposition. Their lawyer, Bob Barnett, tried to warn her the night before that maybe "there's more to this than you know," but even then, she writes, she stuck with her credulity. " 'Look, Bob,' I said. 'My husband may have his faults, but he has never lied to me.' " When she learns the following morning that he had indeed lied, she writes, "I was dumbfounded, heartbroken and outraged that I'd believed him at all."

Like Blumenthal's, Clinton's book melds together disparate forms. One is a traditionally treacly First Lady memoir, similar to the ghosted efforts that were produced for most of her predecessors, which dutifully describes the pleasures of meeting so many fascinating people in so many far-flung places, all with touching tales and meaningful lessons. In other sections, she has produced a typical campaign biography, the sort designed to lay the ground for a future candidacy, which chronicles the formative events in her life, her evolving philosophy, and the ideals that motivate her.

Not all of it is formulaic. There are passages that read as if she grabbed the keyboard away from her ghostwriters in order to shake free from the perception of phoniness that dogs her. She is particularly affecting when she describes her protective feelings toward her daughter, Chelsea, and even somewhat wry about the empty-nest syndrome that descended when Chelsea left for Stanford. "Sometimes I'd catch Bill just sitting in Chelsea's bedroom, looking around wistfully," she writes. "I had to admit that my husband and I were caught up in a generational cliché, a milestone in life that only members of our self-conscious age group would define as a syndrome."

On policy issues as well, she is often revealing. She provides, for example, a detailed description of her role in the debates over the President's welfare-reform proposals, and says, "I told him and his top staff that I would speak out against any bill" if it did not contain certain liberal safeguards. Unlike previous First Ladies, she is not shy about crediting herself as a full policy partner: "By the time Bill and I left the White House, welfare rolls had dropped 60 percent." She tells how she pushed her husband to barrel ahead with her doomed plan for national health-care coverage, and in a small deviation from the account by Blumenthal, who is not even mentioned until page 422 of her book, she takes a good deal of the credit for organizing the Third Way discussions with Prime Minister Blair.

What's most striking, however, is the way she has interspersed her campaign biography and First Lady memoir with sections in which, like Blumenthal, she wages a Manichaean struggle against the Vast Conspiracy. Despite the drama of the four pages describing her fury at her husband's betrayal, most of her anger in the five hundred and thirty other pages is directed at the enemies she claims sought to destroy his Presidency. This is what motivated her, she says, to reconcile with her husband. "If men like Starr and his allies could ignore the Constitution and abuse power for ideological and malicious ends to topple a


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President, I feared for my country," she explains. "Bill's Presidency, the institutional Presidency and the integrity of the Constitution hung in the balance. I knew what I did and said in the next days and weeks would influence not just Bill's future and mine, but also America's."

She is no less assertive than Blumenthal in her depiction of the enemies they were battling:

> I do believe there was, and still is, an interlocking network of groups and individuals who want to turn the clock back on many of the advances our country has made, from civil rights and women's rights to consumer and environmental regulation, and they use all the tools at their disposal—money, power, influence, media and politics—to achieve their ends. In recent years, they have also mastered the politics of personal destruction. Fueled by extremists who have been fighting progressive politicians and ideas for decades, they are funded by corporations, foundations and individuals like Richard Mellon Scaife.

Although she does not descend to the "politics of personal destruction"—there are no dark intimations of murder or sex scandals—she is not averse to firing a bit of buckshot. When Newt Gingrich's mother let slip that her son, the new House Speaker, often referred to Hillary as a "bitch," she invited them both, along with his "then wife," to the White House. What ensues is a scene in which Gingrich's wife belittles him for babbling about things he does not understand, and his mother retorts, "Newty *always* knows what he's talking about." Similarly, she ridicules Chief Justice William Rehnquist for presiding over her husband's Senate trial wearing a robe he had designed with chevrons of gold braid. "He said he got the idea from the costumes in a production of Gilbert & Sullivan's comic opera *Iolanthe*," she writes. "How fitting that he should wear a theatrical costume to preside over a political farce."

Both Blumenthal and Clinton, with their wrenching lurches from policy discourses to scandal dissections, are able to re-create the vertigo of the era, during which missile attacks on Al Qaeda came in the wake of squirmy testimony about inappropriate behavior, and stories about Moscow summits vied with those about distinguishing genital characteristics. They also present a largely persuasive case that prosecutors and the press (though not the American public) became overly, even weirdly, obsessed with the Whitewater story. Combined with their excesses of loyalty and their unwillingness to reflect on the President's pathological indiscipline, the result is yet another type of vertigo: that which comes from rolling your eyes and nodding your head at the same time.

These books, of course, will not for a moment sway any of the Clintons' ardent adversaries, nor does that seem to be their intention. Like much of the discourse from the period, they appear to be meant to stoke old partisan arguments rather than to quell them. In this they exemplify the very trend—the shrilling of political discourse—that they decry.

Raucous, partisan debate can be healthy, up to a point, and liberals will point out that conservatives have heretofore dominated the best-seller lists, as well as cable television, and have been notably more aggressive in tearing down their opponents. Partly that is because liberals are less cohesive and angry, more timid and easily cowed. Even when liberals have strong beliefs, they act as if they were not quite sure they actually agree with them. They are congenitally more comfortable humming the theme of "All Things Considered" than the theme of "Crossfire."

Until now, the most successful authors on the provocative left have been those who cloaked their jabs with humor, such as Michael Moore, Molly Ivins, and Al Franken. This may be changing. All three will be publishing more pugnacious books this year, and so will the liberal columnists Paul Krugman and Joe Conason. Eventually, they may even be joined by Bill Clinton, if he decides to emulate his wife and his old Knight Templar by producing a memoir that ravages as well as ruminates.

All this best-selling bellicosity is likely to continue the trend away from the old recollected-in-tranquillity manner of White House memoirs. At the very least, it will make for more interesting reading. And we are unlikely to miss, at least for a while, the quaint platitudes of a Raymond Moley, who concluded his memoir by calling for a future politics based on "fine thinking and generous impulse." ♦

# BRIEFLY NOTED

*American Politics*

A Leap in the Dark, *by John Ferling (Oxford; $30).* This deft account of the American struggle for independence dispels the aura of inevitability that usually surrounds such histories by beginning its narrative not on the verge of the Revolution but twenty years earlier. Ferling demonstrates how the thought of independence emerged only gradually out of the fight against unfair taxation and British indifference. The endless clashes with Colonial authorities turned cautious merchants and gentlemen farmers who thought of themselves as loyal British subjects into genuine revolutionaries. Still, a sense of uncertainty persisted well after the British surrender, and Ferling vividly evokes the political turmoil of the post-Revolutionary years. Even as he takes the Founders off their pedestals, their accomplishments only gain in stature.

An Unfinished Life, *by Robert Dallek (Little, Brown; $30).* It's hard to believe that someone could find anything new to say about John F. Kennedy, but Dallek succeeds in this riveting and well-documented biography. Despite plentiful revelations about Kennedy's private life, the book is very much a political biography, which keenly explores Kennedy's grasp of modern political campaigning. (The account of how the Kennedy machine managed the issue of his Catholicism in the 1960 West Virginia primary is particularly telling.) But he wasn't always sure what to do with power once he had it. His ideas on domestic policy were surprisingly conventional, and his foreign policy seems jingoistic. Kennedy, however, had the ability to change his mind—no small accomplishment for a President—and by the time he died he was a considerably more sophisticated leader. One need not accept Dallek's fanciful, if familiar, conclusion—that, had Kennedy lived, he might have pulled the United States out of Vietnam—to think that J.F.K.'s political career was a work in progress that was arrested too soon.



The Unconquerable World, *by Jonathan Schell (Metropolitan; $27.50).* At the outset of this lucid survey of alternatives to warfare, the author disavows the label "pacifist": he is not opposed to the use of force, but he believes that it has become an ineffective tool for achieving political ends. On this pragmatic basis, Schell builds a case for civil noncoöperation, which he argues has long played a crucial role in deciding otherwise bloody conflicts (among them the American, French, and Russian Revolutions). Showing how nonviolent action proved successful in ending apartheid in South Africa and in dismantling the Soviet bloc, Schell writes with discipline and urgency. It's disappointing, then, that, once he has persuaded us of the need for peaceful solutions, those he offers—such as shared sovereignty—seem disconnected from the realities of politics today.

Treason, *by Ann Coulter (Crown Forum; $26.95).* Coulter's thesis has the force of simplicity: liberals detest America and prefer to side with the "Third World savages" who attack it. In her view, American critics of the War on Terror are the intellectual progeny of the Soviet sympathizers rooted out by Senator McCarthy and HUAC. Joe Stalin may have given way to Osama Bin Laden, but the fellow-travelling habit is unchanged. The result is a strangely lopsided book, which spends a lot of time going over ground—the Venona transcripts, Alger Hiss, the Rosenbergs—that has been well covered in recent years and asserting, for the umpteenth time, the guilt of people whom few liberals today would try to defend. Coulter does better when sending up the post-colonial pieties of liberals and "their cheese-tasting friends," and probably owes her widespread popularity more to her skill as a social satirist than to any real acumen as a political commentator.


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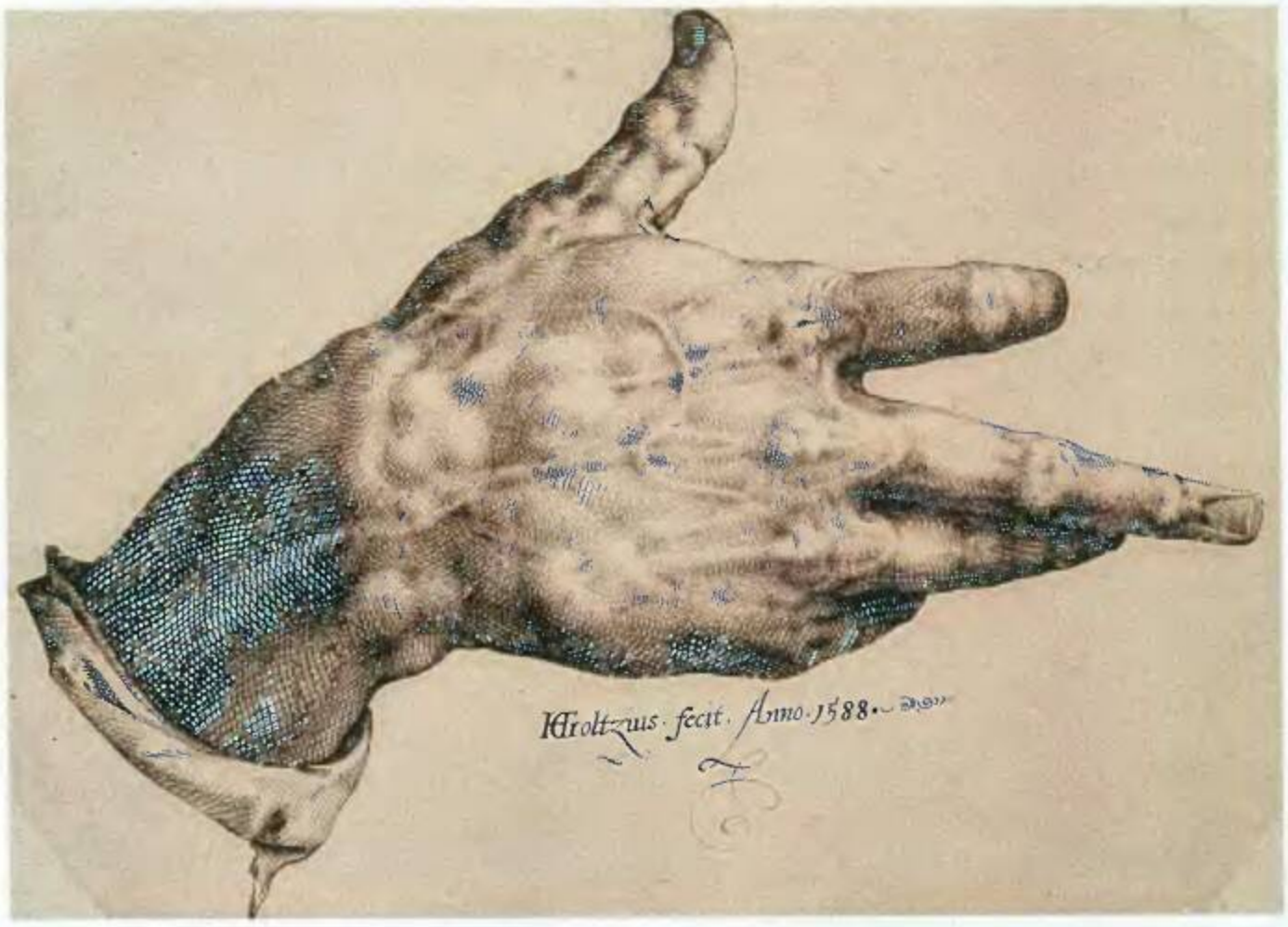
*Two forgotten Dutch masters at the Met and the Frick.*

BY *SIMON SCHAMA*

What is a virtuoso? The answer is provided by a disfigured hand, one of the many spellbinding images that appear in the sleeper show of the summer, the Hendrick Goltzius exhibition at the Met. Who was Goltzius? He was this hand: tendons fused, index finger permanently bent, nail bed of the middle finger caved in—a decided handicap, you would suppose, for an artist whose forte was drawing. When Hendrick was around a year old, his friend and biographer Karel van Mander tells us, he fell face forward into a fire, and clutched at the hot coals. The result was the clawlike right hand, incapable of fully unclenching its fingers, but the result was also this pen-and-ink drawing, which, in its exacting precision, demonstrates the fine motor skills the deformity might have precluded. Beneath the drawing is an autographic inscription: "HGoltzius fecit." And indeed he did.

The Goltzius exhibition, and an equally surprising show, at the Frick, of the bronze sculptures of a forgotten Dutch master, Willem van Tetrode, capture a moment in the history of Western art—after Michelangelo and Dürer but before Rubens and Caravaggio—which has all too often been written off as a hiatus between the classical monumentalism of the High Renaissance and the feverish theatricality of the Baroque. That anachronism is belied by these two exhibitions, charged with whipsaw violence and erotic play.

At the Frick, the normally demure garden court has been invaded by a small army of Tetrode's gesticulating titans, arms thrown out, heads wrenched back, the backs of horses arched and bucking. Multiple Herculeses go about their business, poised to pulverize the giants and centaurs. When not about to deliver the coup de grâce, our hero (modelled on classical statues discovered in Renaissance Rome) rests moodily on a club approximately the size of Mt. Olympus, one hand behind his back toying testily with his golden apples; or he gets into slugging position, brows knitted, expression homicidally cross. In the well of the court, a flayed man exposing his improbably perfect musculature falls backward (and who could blame him), his now empty right hand held aloft, the better to display the drapery of his own skin. In a manner typical of Tetrode's restive reinventions, Christ, flagellated against a column, is anything but resigned to his martyrdom, writhing in an agony of thwarted escape.




*A pen-and-ink drawing by Hendrick Goltzius of his own disfigured right hand.*

None of these bronzes are more than twenty-five inches high—compact masterpieces made for Italian patrons who wanted their own editions of classical statuary. It was the genius of Tetrode to appreciate that, far from depleting energy, the compression of his bronzes magnified it. At a time when cultural elephantiasis seems to be the norm in contemporary art, with ever vaster installations demanding ever more acreage of exhibition—and getting it—it's good to be reminded that high aesthetic voltage can be generated from miniature power packs.

Taking a conventional genre and transforming it into something unexpected was, ultimately, what Hendrick Goltzius also aimed for. Paradoxically, the artist's reputation may have suffered from van Mander's overeagerness to make him the epitome of everything noble about Netherlandish art: the perfect union of northern naturalism and Italianate classicism; the thinker as well as the craftsman. Much of this eulogy was true, but the central place in the Dutch pantheon allotted to Goltzius, analogous to Michelangelo's in Vasari's "Lives," may have obscured the Netherlander's power to shock.

Even the rather workmanlike engravings that begin the show mislead, for they glide smoothly over the surface of a rocky early history. Goltzius was born in 1558, in the middle of a war zone, as Spanish armies arrived to crush the rebel Flemish and Dutch. His struggling artist father and his frail mother were living just on the German side of the southeastern frontier of the Netherlands. Hendrick's first teacher, the engraver, poet, and philosopher Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert, was a relic of an older, learned, relatively tolerant Catholicism about to be smashed between the grindstones of Calvinist iconoclasm and Counter-Reformation image veneration. In search of asylum, Coornhert and Goltzius moved north to Haarlem, a city ravaged by a Spanish siege and occupation. No wonder, then, that when Goltzius came to engrave a "Massacre of

the Innocents," in 1585-86, as the war was going badly, he produced a coiled knot of terrorized figures—distraught mothers, old men pathetically trying to take stabbing blows aimed at infants—with a heroically modelled nude captain calmly surveying the butchery from the foreground.

To make the heroic demonic was unusual, if not unprecedented, but Goltzius had already shown evidence of creative mischief-making. Engraving variations on a workaday series of prints by Maerten van Heemskerck devoted to the "Rewards of Labor, Industry, Practice, and Art," he undercut the homily by making the personifications nude and having them flirt their way through the sequence. Labor and Industry, caught in a sensual embrace, seem to be more committed to producing the fruit of their union than the allegory strictly required. Haarlem, with its memories of summary executions by the Spanish, generated a demand for patriotic prints—images of local worthies and national heroes like the Prince of Orange. But in Goltzius's hands a "Standard Bearer," ostensibly a depiction of an ensign in the Dutch army, becomes an extravagant spectacle, the lissome young officer tripping along on the balls of his feet like a dancer while the immense flag billows through the picture space and out into our own, enfolding us in its jubilation. At the same time, he was producing some of the most exquisite portrait drawings in northern-European art since Dürer and Holbein. A metalpoint drawing of a young boy, perhaps his stepson and student Jacob Matham, unfinished yet miraculously rich with detail, is a perfect marriage of a meticulous and a free hand. The velvety cropped hair and the delicate shadows beneath the eyes are caught with the finesse of a miniaturist, while the lad's forthright gesture with his left arm, rendered much more sketchily, is the exact match for his adolescent bravura.

Prints like "The Standard Bearer" advertised that Goltzius, still in his twenties, was a master of what came to be called Mannerism, that most peculiar of aesthetic fashions, born of an indifference to both classicism and naturalism. Its practitioners made paintings that were self-consciously visionary, histories crowded with loops of ethereally elongated figures, whose tiny heads, aloft giraffe necks, sprout from sinuously elastic torsos clad in strangely shredded garments that resemble a second flaking skin. The bodies turn, twist, bob, and drift along a serpentine line, disrupting the expectations of the beholder and keeping the travelling gaze in thrall. All the prescriptions of classical art, sternly laid down by Renaissance writers since Alberti, were exuberantly junked: fixed-point perspective, hard-line contour, the integrity of narrative coherence within a contained picture space. Art now belonged to the mind, and the mind belonged to the metaphysical Signor Plato.

Not, all things considered, the sort of thing to be expected from the stolid, earthbound Netherlanders, except that they took to it like ducks to a Dutch canal. The effect of Goltzius's prints of the late fifteen-eighties, the works that established his international reputation, was calculatedly sensational. His "Great Hercules," the barely credible hulk of the show, is like no Hercules before it: a superannuated hero, grizzled from his Labors, his club warty with overuse, his stocky body so overstuffed with muscles that they threaten to pop from his skin. The figure provokes both awe and mirth, which just about defines the comic-book hero whose paternity starts here. Likewise, the "Disgracers," wanna-be heroes whose insolence is punished by precipitous descent, are both terrifying and ridiculous in their tumble through space, all foreshortened limbs, jaws, and noses.

Though he was sought after by princely collectors, Goltzius was not content to rest on his laurels. At thirty-two, he made the predictable pilgrimage to Rome. Van Mander says that he went, in part, to be cured of a mysterious wasting disease that triggered fits of bloody vomiting. But at least as important was Goltzius's desire to take instruction from the classics. Travelling incognito, he sketched with students at the feet of the Dioscuri on the Quirinal Hill, and produced a loving drawing of Michelangelo's Moses. Returning home a year later, Goltzius, without renouncing the drama that had infused his best work, abandoned the posturing perversity of Mannerism for the more serene harmonies of religious prints that, in their human completeness (beggars and Africans) and the painstaking construction of their space, look back to Dürer and Raphael. At their best—an all too perfectly detailed Circumcision—the prints are marvels of evangelical tenderness. But Goltzius is plainly also struggling to find a graphic language that is, paradoxically, painterly. And it is just when he comes closest to "painting" with his burin, the candlelight reflected in the faces of the "Adoring Shepherds," that he abruptly leaves off the work, as if defeated by the futility of the translation.

So in 1600 he throws away his burin and takes up history painting, never to make engravings again. These paintings, grandiose and brilliantly colorful, have sometimes been seen as an anticlimax. But the stylish group in the Met's show—a lubricious, avaricious Danaë; a Fall of Man engineered by the weirdest serpent in European art, her Barbie-doll face a snickering study in toxic cuteness; an apple-cheeked, pippin-breasted Pomona seduced by the gardener Vertumnus, disguised as a hag—all demolish the assumption that Goltzius as painter was half the artist he had been as printmaker. Hailed as the Proteus of Netherlandish art, the man who could do anything in any medium, Goltzius finally delivers a characteristically droll rebuttal to those who assumed that draftsmen and painters belonged in different creative worlds.

Two paintings around the erotic theme taken from the Roman dramatist Terence, "Without Bacchus and Ceres (wine and food) Venus Will Grow Cold," are "pen works": monochrome compositions carefully drawn on tinted canvas that pretend to be giant prints in much the same game-playing style as Chuck Close's painted faux photographs. In the bigger version, from the Hermitage, Goltzius himself appears in the background, ever the manipulating magus, standing beside the fire of Cupid's altar and holding in both hands pairs of engravers' burins. The right hand, the famous Goltzius talon, is held in the fire itself, but the master smiles directly at us, unconcerned, knowing that, this time, it's the love of art which is heating up. ♦

"GOLTZIUS'S RIGHT HAND" (1588) / COURTESY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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# The City of New York Notice of Parking Violation

Got list of Mayor's friends? No ☐ Yes ☐ **Revised Version July, 2003** Got list of Mayor's enemies? No ☐ Yes ☐

Use vehicle make, year, original price, options, and country of manufacture to estimate operator's annual income:

| $ | | | | | | | | | Triple amount of fine if income exceeds $100,000 ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Increase fine by 50% if vehicle is a:

| MAKE | 1 BEEMER ☐ | 2 BENZ ☐ | 3 ROLLER ☐ | 4 FERRARI ☐ | 5 LAMBO ☐ | 6 BENTLEY ☐ | 7 PORSCHE ☐ | 8 JAG XJ ☐ | 9 AUDI V8 ☐ | 10 CADDY ☐ | 11 HUMMER ☐ | 12 HUMMER II ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| OWNER IS PROBABLY | 1 SHOW-BIZ JERK ☐ | 2 OLD MONEY ☐ | 3 NOUVEAU RICHE ☐ | 4 SOCCER MOM ☐ | 5 ESCAPED CONVICT ☐ | 6 DEM CLUB HOUSE HACK ☐ | **IF OWNER IS PATAKI FLUNKY, CALL TOW TRUCK** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**THE OPERATOR AND OWNER OF THE ABOVE VEHICLE ARE CHARGED AS FOLLOWS:**

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| FOLD HERE | FINE | SHUT UP WITH THE EXCUSES AND PAY FOR: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ☐ $200 | Too far from hydrant | **$50 BONUS FINES:** ☐ Meter about to expire ☐ Parked in puddle ☐ Bobblehead doll broken |
| | ☐ $250 | Jersey plate | |
| | ☐ $250 | No PBA support decal | |
| | ☐ $250 | Stupid bumper sticker | |
| | ☐ $250 | Shouldn't be out driving this late | |
| | ☐ $250 | Pet in car not leashed | |
| | ☐ $300 | Vehicle parked exactly where driver preferred | |
| | ☐ $300 | Violator asked questions | |
| FOLD HERE | ☐ $300 | Traffic agent's pen out of ink | |
| | ☐ $500 | Vehicle parked within one mile of double-parked city fire truck | |
| | ☐ $500 | Agent had to write ticket during coffee break | |
| | ☐ $500 | End of shift: agent needed to meet daily ticket quota | |
| | ☐ $500 | Limo not double-parked | |

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*If ticket does not fit into mailing envelope provided, add $10 to your fine*

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