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EUROPE



Federer's demons

How the new No. 2 of tennis plans to get his game back

Twins take on the Olympics | Busting art crime

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Federer's demons

How the new No. 2 of tennis plans to get his game back



Above, Roger Federer. On cover, Federer (left) playing Rafael Nadal, now ranked No. 1, at Wimbledon this summer. Cover photo: AFP

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Winding down the Games

See coverage of the final events and the closing ceremony in Beijing. Men's basketball will be contested this weekend; Spain is a semi-finalist. Right, Spanish player Pau Gasol playing Germany last week.

WSJ.com/Olympics



Associated Press

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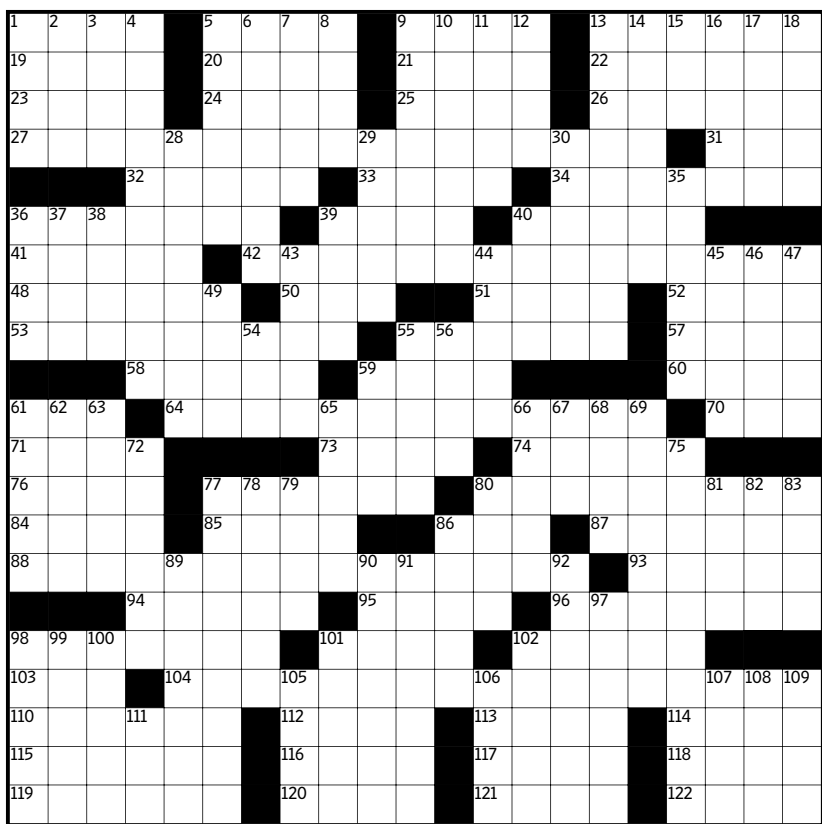
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Last week's solution



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 WSJ.com/WeekendJournal

A charming roundelay from Allen

A MERICAN GIRLS abroad—it's a subject that has provided rich material for writers from Henry James to Edith Wharton, from Louisa May Alcott to Cornelia Otis Skinner to Laurie Colwin. Now, in the beautiful if insubstantial pastel "Vicky Cristina Barcelona," it's Woody Allen's turn as he chronicles the sentimental education of two young women on a summer idyll in Barcelona.

The gravely beautiful Vicky (Rebecca Hall with Mia Farrow's in-

Film

JOANNE KAUFMAN

tonations down pat) is doing graduate work in Catalan identity—it's a measure of her touching earnestness that she sees nothing even faintly amusing about this recon-dite academic pursuit—and taking a breather before her imminent marriage to a solid, dependable (read: dull) corporate attorney (Chris Messina). Her friend Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) who looks like a police sketch of a blonde, is far less directed but also far more adventuresome when it comes to sampling the goods of life. Vicky is all caution, Cristina, all nerve endings.

The voice-over by Christopher Evan Welch that sets up the movie—Mr. Allen's most endearing in years—and sketches in the characters is slightly off-putting, doing work that by rights should be handled by the dialogue and action. Still, the narration, aided by a terrific score, does streamline the storytelling, and adds to it a faintly sardonic top note.

At an art opening that the two young women attend with Vicky's cousin, their host for the summer (the indispensable Patricia Clarkson), Cristina gets a load of a gorgeous painter and recent divorcé, Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem). She is immediately captivated, more so when she learns the deliciously sordid details of his marriage to a tempestuous fellow artist (Penélope Cruz in full flush), all the more so, when, later in the evening, Juan Antonio baldly invites her and Vicky on a weekend jaunt to picturesque Oviedo to see the sights, drink good wine and make love—just the three of them.

Vicky's reaction: What a boor. Cristina's reaction: What time do we leave? For the record, Mr. Bardem makes the latter response completely understandable. A psychopathic killer in "No Country for Old Men," he's all killer charm here.

What happens in Oviedo doesn't exactly stay in Oviedo. The consequences of that lost weekend reverberate through Mr. Allen's film, a sexual roundelay, and a bittersweet meditation on art and passion and on love in its many guises.

'Tropic Thunder'

The word is out: war is hell. Tugg Speedman (Ben Stiller) is praying that war is hell-o, Academy Award. The star (if you can believe it) of a series of highly successful Rambo-style action movies, Tugg has high hopes for his current project: a prestige Vietnam epic based on the memoir—wholly unreliable—of a legendary 'Nam vet (Nick Nolte).

Here's hoping it will help Tugg regain the status he lost in his most recent cinematic outing, a brazen Os-



car bid: the title role in "Simple Jack," the tale of a mentally impaired lad with a desperate need for orthodontic intervention and the ability to talk to animals. This blot on Tugg's résumé is a frequently recycled joke in "Tropic Thunder," a gleeful, bumptious send-up of big-budget movies, big Hollywood egos—and those who enable them.

Tugg isn't the only one with a lot riding on the movie, also called "Tropic Thunder." Consider his costars and comrades-in-battle: Brandon T. Jackson's Alpa Chino (get it?), a hip-hop star looking for crossover fame; Jeff Portnoy (Jack Black), king of the gross-out comedies, who wants to show he's more than the sum of his belches. Then of course, there's Kirk Lazarus (Robert Downey Jr. in a knockout performance), a pompous multi-Oscar winner who is always eager to show audiences just how far he'll go for the sake of art. With the movie within the movie wildly behind schedule and hemorrhaging money, the beleaguered director (Steve Coogan) orders the actors into the jungle of Southeast Asia to improvise. They're poorly armed in every possible way. Soon, unwittingly, they're trading fire with real life bad guys—thus the true meaning of shooting without a script.

"Tropic Thunder," which was co-written and directed by Mr. Stiller, is like a dinner whose hors d'oeuvres are far more satisfying and well-composed than the slightly warmed-over main course. Among them are the inspired mock movie trailers and the fake ad that precede "Thunder's" opening credits.

They also include Matthew McConaughey, who in the small role of a talent agent obsessed with providing TiVo to his client, all but walks off with the picture, and an uncredited, wholly unrecognizable Tom Cruise, playing a large, bald, obscenity-spewing studio head who in the privacy of his very large office shows himself to be lord of the funk. Politicians intent on repairing their image have a sit-down with Larry King or Matt Lauer. In Hollywood, there is no shorter road to career or personal redemption or reconsideration than a willingness to appear on screen looking foolish.

Advocacy groups have urged a boycott of "Tropic Thunder" because of the repeated use of the



Above, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem and Penélope Cruz in 'Vicky Cristina Barcelona'; left, Ben Stiller in 'Tropic Thunder.' Top right, 'Star Wars: The Clone Wars.'

table, with a less than engaging story line, and characters who look like anime figures and move like the denizens of Geppetto's workshop, "Clone Wars" will appeal only to the most tolerant, galactically minded children and their parents.

Centering on Anakin Skywalker (the voice of Matt Lanter) and his importunate protege Ahsoka Tano (Ashley Eckstein)—he calls her Snips; she calls him Sky Guy—"The Clone Wars" is a welter of repetitive combat scenes, images of droids on the move, and double-dealing.

'Frozen River'

Courtney Hunt's "Frozen River" takes place in rural upstate New York on the Canadian border, in the dead of winter. At crucial junctures in the plot, the heroine, Ray Eddy, drives her battered old Dodge Spirit across the ice-bound St. Lawrence with illegal immigrants hidden in the trunk. The Spirit is willing, if the engine is weak, but Ray's spirit is indomitable.

This is a debut feature, though you'd never know it from the filmmaker's commandingly confident style, or from the heartbreaking beauty of Melissa Leo's performance as a poor single mother who's living her whole life on thin ice.

Ray looks like a descendant of the gaunt, weary woman in Dorothea Lange's iconic photograph from the Great Depression. Her husband has vanished after gambling away the money they'd saved for the balloon payment on a new mobile home, leaving her to care for their two sons in a moldering trailer. As Christmas approaches, she works at a Yankee One Dollar store, but money is so tight that the boys must dine on popcorn and Tang. Yet Ray is a gambler, too, determined to do whatever she must for her family, and her odyssey is anything but depressing. In a setting full of strangeness and danger, the strangest thing is how surprising "Frozen River" manages to be.

Much of that is due to Ms. Hunt's fondness for striking details, and her gift for dramatizing them in a



tale of two equally, if differently, devoted mothers. Ray lives near a Mohawk Indian reservation, where a laconic young Mohawk smuggler, Lila Littlewolf (Misty Upham), becomes her tutor, and her partner, in crime. ("There's no border here," Lila says with smoldering scorn, "this is free trade between nations.") Ray is no angel, either. She's willing to use the pistol she packs, and is quick to suspect a couple of terrified Pakistani immigrants of being terrorists. Her older son, T.J. (Charlie McDermott), may be considered trailer trash by his peers, but he's so bright and well-spoken that he's able to work a credit-card scam over the phone. Nothing fits neatly in the lives of these characters. That's a governing principle of Ms. Hunt's script, and a source of its singular energy.

The main source, though, is the critical mass of tenderness and ferocity in Melissa Leo's portrayal. The actress pulls everything and everyone along with her, even when grimness or spiritual darkness slow the pace. There's nothing trashy about Ray, as Ms. Leo plays her, not even at her lowest ebb. Longing for a better life, she makes the most of the one she has.

'The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor'

In "The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor," the climactic battle pits dead good guys and dead bad guys against a dead script that contains the deathless line: "There's something incredibly romantic about vanquishing the undead." No, there isn't, at least not on the evidence offered here, but there's something incredibly perverse about a third "Mummy" installment that lacks a standard mummy, and something incredibly turgid about the bonhomie-cum-rivalry between Rick O'Connell, the mummy-hunter played by Brendan Fraser, and his twerpy archaeologist son.

This "Mummy," which was directed by Rob Cohen, starts pleasantly enough with a preface set in ancient China, where good contends with evil under bright skies not yet laden with particulate matter, and a good witch played by Michelle Yeoh casts a Sanskrit spell on the evil emperor. (Why Sanskrit? Because he'd know he was in trouble if her spell were in Chinese.) The problems begin once the action moves to the 20th century—1946, right after World War II—and the writers, Alfred Gough and Miles Millar, must construct an actual story. They construct one, all right, but from parts recycled as frequently as aluminum cans: an archaeological find that's the greatest since King Tut; a legendary jewel, abominable snowmen, an arduous journey to Shangri-La, and yet another encounter with the evil emperor, who shifts shapes whenever the script runs out of ideas.

The production looks lavish, unless you look too closely, and the action ranges from spirited (the undead outdoing the living) to clumsy (chopped-up battle sequences, rusty kung fu wire work). The best news about this clangorous clunker is that it may well have vanquished the "Mummy" franchise.

—Joe Morgenstern contributed to this article.

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Opening this week in Europe

- **Baby Mama** Romania, Turkey
- **Kung Fu Panda** Italy
- **Get Smart** Croatia, Denmark, Finland
- **Mamma Mia!** Poland
- **Meet Dave** Austria, Germany, Slovenia
- **Redbelt** Belgium
- **Star Wars: The Clone Wars** Iceland, France, Portugal, Spain
- **Step Brothers** U.K.
- **The Bank Job** Croatia
- **The Other Boleyn Girl** Norway
- **Tropic Thunder** Estonia
- **WALL-E** Denmark, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia
- **You Don't Mess with the Zohan** France, Slovakia

Source: IMDb
WSJ.com subscribers can read reviews of these films and others at WSJ.com/FilmReview

The toughest shot in golf

Midlength from a bunker? How about the dreaded downhill lie

THE HARDEST SHOT in golf, Groucho Marx said, is the hole-in-one, and he's got a point. I attempt this shot literally hundreds of times a year but have never once succeeded.

Hitting a 1-iron is also said to be particularly difficult, so much so that Lee Trevino advised hoisting one overhead for protection during lightning storms. "Even God can't hit a 1-iron," he said.

There's also that old joke about the golfer who, not wanting his

Golf Journal

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

wife to learn to play golf, began her instruction with a 1-iron ("The first club first," he explained) from the notoriously difficult downhill lie ("Gravity will help!"). But 1-irons are practically extinct. For most players, they have been replaced in recent years by much-easier-to-hit hybrid clubs.

Other suggestions for the hardest shot in golf include the first drive on the first tee and the shot you hit right after a shank, but by far the nominee one hears most is the 40- to 50-yard bunker shot. Seldom does a pro attempt such a shot on television without a commentator declaring it the hardest shot in golf. So I asked several real-life instructors this week if they thought this was really true.

None denied that 50-yard bunker shots are tough. The difficulty is that they are neither fish nor fowl. The necessary carry is too long for the sand-wedge explosion technique used from greenside bunkers, but the shots are too delicate for most players to feel comfortable picking the ball without taking sand.

"Lack of commitment is usually what creates the biggest problem," said Todd Sones, a Golf Digest top-50 teacher and the author of "Saving Par: How to Hit the 40 Toughest Shots in Golf."

Mr. Sones and other instructors advise using an 8- or 9-iron



Tiger Woods playing a bunker shot prior to the start of the Presidents Cup in Montreal last September.

on midlength bunker shots, rather than a sand wedge, to produce a lower trajectory that will make the ball travel farther. Grip the club with the face open a bit (turned clockwise). That creates more "bounce" on the bottom of the clubhead to help it glide through the sand rather than dig in. Then make much the same swing you would from a greenside bunker, only a bit shallower, hitting the sand a couple of inches behind the ball. The blast of sand, rather than the clubface, will be what propels the ball. With practice, you'll learn how to aim and how far the ball will go.

The toughest shot in golf? Not in Mr. Sones's book. "The truth is it isn't necessarily that hard; it's just that people don't encounter it very much, and they don't know

how to hit it," Mr. Sones said.

If you're like me, you're sick of hearing instructors preaching how easy sand shots are. The margin for error on them is higher than for normal shots, they say, because the sand, which should be all that makes contact with the ball, has a dampening effect. Thus the swing doesn't need to be quite as precise. For those 0.1% of golfers who have spent hundreds of hours in the practice bunker mastering the technique, no doubt this is true. For those of us who still don't get it, however, any shot from the sand remains a stifling challenge, and midlength ones are certainly the toughest type to pull off.

But not nearly as tough as the short pitch from a downhill lie to an elevated green or tight pin, Mr.

Sones contends. This shot makes even well-tutored players shake.

Several of the instructors I talked to brought up the difficulty of downhill lies before they mentioned midlength bunker shots. Hitting off a downslope delofts the club, transforming a 9-iron into, say, a 7-iron, or a 3-iron into a 3-wood. To combat that, most golfers by instinct scoop at the ball, which is exactly wrong.

"The brain says, 'Hey, I've got to get the ball up,' so you shift your weight to the back foot and flip the wrists to try to get under the ball somehow," said Charlie King, director of instruction at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Ga. Since the ground behind the ball on a downslope is higher than the ground beneath the ball, the result is a deep chunk that

goes nowhere or a bladed shot that, on a short shot, may shoot over the green.

The proper technique is to stand with your shoulders parallel to the slanting ground and swing down the slope, using a more-lofted club than you would use from the same distance on flat terrain. "Your goal should be to make solid contact and let the clubhead do the work of getting the ball airborne," Mr. King said.

Mr. King said the single most difficult shot he ever faced was a 190-yard downhill 3-iron to an elevated green that sloped away from him, at the La Paloma Country Club in Tucson, Ariz. "Basically, it was impossible," he said.

Impossible is one thing, tricky is another. And Mr. Sones argues that among feasible downhill shots, the trickiest of all are the short ones. A familiar, albeit not severe, example is a 60-yard approach shot to the 15th green at Augusta National. Players who lay up short of the pond with their second shots on that par-5 hole, or hit into the pond and have to drop a ball behind it, face a delicate half-pitch from a downhill lie to a lightning-fast green.

This lie requires a vertical attack angle on the ball, and the stance forces the player to swing relatively more with the arms than with the torso, ideally while rotating the clubface open on the backswing. Not only is this a specialized skill, but the arms are less reliable engines for a swing than is the turning torso, especially under pressure. And the possibility of blading or chunking the ball creates pressure, even if nothing else does.

Adding to the conundrum is the difficulty of stopping such a shot quickly once the ball hits the green, due to its low trajectory. "The margin of error when you're pitching to a tight pin—say, one that is right behind a bunker—can be practically zero," Mr. Sones said.

It's enough to make you yearn for a 50-yard bunker shot.

Email golfjournal@wsj.com.

Safety first. At Valencia and on the road.



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Twins **Cameron** (left) and **Tyler Winklevoss** power their way into the pairs final.

Twins' shared mettle in quest of a medal

BY JASON DEAN

Beijing

IN OLYMPICS PAIR events, some duos are an almost perfect match: twins.

About 30 of the 302 events in the Beijing Games are contested by teams of two, and a review of the rosters shows there are at least six sets of twins competing in those events this year—more if you count twins competing in team events like gymnastics or basketball.

So far, twin pairs have had an impressive showing. The Hochschorner brothers of Slovakia, Pavol and Peter, won gold last Friday in the slalom canoe double, then New Zealand rowers Georgina and Caroline Evers-Swindell nabbed the top spot Saturday in the women's double scull, followed by Bob and Mike Bryan's bronze that evening for the U.S. in doubles tennis. American twins Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss finished sixth in men's pairs rowing the same day. This week, China's Jiang Tingting and her identical twin, Wenwen, came in fourth in the duet event in synchronized swimming. Competing against them were Dutch twins Bianca and Sonjia van der Velden, who came in ninth.

Twins have a number of advantages in pairs events, experts say. Identical twins, like the Evers-Swindells, the Winklevosses, the Bryans and the Jiangs, share a nearly exact genetic makeup, making them physically complementary. That, and a lifetime of living together, means they tend to have similar reactions when split-second decisions can make the difference.

"In competitions like rowing or [synchronized] diving, the fact that their bodies are put together in exactly the same way gives them an edge," says Nancy Segal, a psychologist who heads the Twins Studies Center at California State University, Fullerton. "Their timing, their



Above, twins Jiang Tingting and Jiang Wenwen of China in last year's **synchronized swimming** world championships; right, American twins Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan won the bronze for **doubles tennis** in Beijing.

perceptions, the way they react is all the same," she says, and "they have had 24-hour practice partners."

Twins often speak of an ability to communicate with exceptional ease—which can come in handy when time and breath are short. "Sometimes maybe I thought I said something but I really didn't, but it was like I did, and the move happened," says Tyler, the bowman in the Winklevoss pair. He generally calls the shots during races, because he can see more than Cameron in the stern. "You can just feel it," Tyler says of their interaction on the water. "It's a little more..." he pauses... "...organic," he and Cameron add in unison.

What it isn't is telepathy. "It's not that they're reading each other's minds," says Ms. Segal. "It's just a knowledge based on experience to-



PHOTOS: ASSOCIATED PRESS

gether, and based on the fact that they are genetically identical."

Past Olympic twins include the Landvoigt twins of East Germany, who won the gold in men's rowing in 1976 and 1980, when silver went to the Pimenov twins of the U.S.S.R. At the Sydney Summer Games in 2000, the synchronized-swimming duets featured three sets of twins—the Alarovas, the Moraeses and the Abdel Gawads—although none managed to medal.

Even when twins compete

against each other, their athletic feats sometimes show an uncanny similarity. In the 1984 Winter Games, American Phil Mahre took the gold in the slalom. His twin, Steve, younger by four minutes, finished just a fifth of a second behind him, winning silver.

Scientists have been researching twins and sports since at least the 1950s. Ms. Segal's book, "Entwined Lives: Twins and What They Tell Us About Human Behavior," says that twins studies have shown that genetic factors tend to influence not just sports performance, but which sports people choose to perform in to begin with.

Nontwin siblings often propel each other's performance out of a fierce sense of rivalry. But with twins—especially identical twins—it is often more about camaraderie, says Ms. Segal.

"If he puts up a good result, that's a victory for me as well," says rower Tyler Winklevoss.

Few sports call for the kind of precise synchronicity that pairs rowing requires. With one man on the port oar, the other on the starboard, even a slight discrepancy in timing or strength can cause a boat to turn disastrously out of its lane, or to move through the water with a wobble.

"It would make sense to row with your clone," says Robert Plomin, a professor of behavioral genetics who studies twins at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London. "Identical twins are more clones than clones because they are born in the same womb and are exactly the same age."

The Winklevosses, who turned 27 on Thursday, fell in love with rowing as adolescents and in high school made the U.S. junior national team.

At Harvard, they were part of an eight-man boat called the "God Squad," so dubbed both because of

the religious inclinations of a few members and because of the crew's almost superhuman accomplishments. Cameron and Tyler sat next to each other, in the five and six seats, which in rowing are called the "engine room" of an eight. The twin-engined God Squad won a national collegiate championship, and went on to row respectably in several international competitions against national crews from other countries—an extraordinary feat for a college boat.

The Winklevosses are exactly the same height—195 centimeters—which helps on the water, because their strokes are the same length. They share almost indistinguishable, angular faces, wear their brown hair in similar cuts, and tend to sport the same outfits.

At Harvard, both studied economics, and they worked together to create ConnectU, a social-networking site at which Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg worked briefly. The Winklevosses have sued Mr. Zuckerberg, claiming he stole ideas and computer code from ConnectU, which Mr. Zuckerberg has denied. The legal battle is ongoing.

The Winklevosses are distinct in some ways. "We're mirror-image twins. Cameron's a lefty and I'm a righty," says Tyler. "We might come to the same conclusions, with different methodologies," says Cameron.

The Winklevosses were a long shot coming into Beijing. Having focused most of their training on rowing eights—the premier event in the U.S.—they had never raced as a pair in an international competition.

In the last 400 meters or so of last week's 2,000-meter semifinals, the twins powered past two other duos to earn a spot in Saturday's medal race.

They finished sixth in the final—well behind Australians Drew Ginn and Duncan Free—showing the limits of the twins advantage.

Designing for women of a certain size

THE AVERAGE WOMAN'S size in the U.S. approximates a 14, but fashion designers generally don't make anything larger than a size 12. It doesn't take an economist to see that supply is out of kilter with demand for large-size designer duds.

This is precisely the opportunity that Tadashi Shoji saw when he be-

On Style

CHRISTINA BINKLEY

gan offering his collections in sizes up to 24. "It's money dangling in front of your eyes," he says.

Mr. Shoji is best known for svelte eveningwear of the sort that he'll show on the runway during New York fashion week next month. Tadashi collection cocktail dresses and gowns tend to be figure-flattering, with gathers called ruching, darts and shutter pleats coyly masking flaws. These designs often show up on celebrities, helping to generate Mr. Shoji's high-end reputation.

He says, grinning, that the queen-size version of his Tadashi collection now accounts for about \$5 million of Tadashi Shoji & Associates Inc.'s \$60 million in annual revenue.

Queen Latifah is a frequent customer. Although her weight fluctuates, she is generally a size 16, he says. Phone calls to the representatives of the singer and actress weren't returned.

I've spent months asking people in the fashion industry why large sizes are so rare. Designer Elie Tahari explained last year that it's expensive to offer bigger sizes, which require more fabric, as well as special patterns and a separate "fit" model, a model who has standard proportions.

Mr. Tadashi, however, says large women are willing to pay extra for designer duds. His queen-size dresses retail for roughly \$350 to \$800, about 10% to 15% more than his standard sizes.

Perhaps more important, fashion-industry people are often fixated on their own ideals of beauty.



Many designers just don't want to see their clothes on big people—and many stores are complicit, displaying tiny sizes and keeping larger ones in back. Paige Adams-Geller, a former fit model for many high-end jeans manufacturers, told me in March that she urged designers to consider how their clothes would look on a woman who wore, for instance, a size 10.

"And the designer would say, 'Well, I don't want someone who is that size,'" she said, "They shouldn't be wearing my brand.'" Ms. Adams-Geller turned that into a profitable business, Paige Premium Denim, selling jeans for up to size 28—or "4X." "There's a lot of people out there that size with money to



Far left, Queen Latifah's gown by designer **Tadashi Shoji**, and the regular-size version, below far left. Near left, a **cocktail dress** on model Nancy Kruse is adjusted by Mr. Shoji. Below, the regular-size version has **smaller sleeves** and a plunging neckline.

Shape uses real women as models—in every shape, size, age and color. They had a warehouse rack full of Mr. Shoji's big-size gowns.

Mr. Shoji employs a size-18 fit model named Nancy Kruse to come to his Los Angeles studio several times a week for fittings. Because his "queen-size" garments are based on her proportions, she's careful to keep her measurements—48-39-48—from fluctuating. "You can screw up someone's company if you go up and down all the time," Ms. Kruse says. The model, who drives a shiny, white BMW, says she has a don't-ask-don't-tell deal with her doctor: "If I hear my weight, I'll want to lose weight and then I'll be poor."

Mr. Shoji trained as an artist in Japan before coming to the U.S. to work in fashion. He began making queen-size gowns about five years ago, after buyers from Saks asked if he'd be willing to make certain items from his collections in bigger sizes. Today, they're sold in the plus-size departments of stores that include Saks and Bloomingdale's, along with big-size garments from Anne Klein, Ellen Tracy, Harari, and Magaschoni.

Mr. Shoji adjusts the garments to offer more coverage for wide bra straps, less-plunging necklines and extra coverage for the upper arms. Shoulder pads are often wider to de-emphasize hips. "Certain people have said, 'This is not our image,'" says Mr. Shoji. "But I said, 'We can sell it—why not?...We aren't doing art—this is commerce.'"



spend," she said.

Sometimes, what fashion calls "plus" size seems out of sync with real life. I recently received an email from a "plus-size" model who noted that she wears a size 8 pant. That's my size. Gulp.

When Denise Brodey came on board as editor-in-chief of *Fitness* magazine two years ago, she began demanding that the magazine use real-size models. The magazine, she says, "was not a reflection of what's going on in the world out there."

The first time I came across Mr. Shoji's plus-size gowns, I was visiting myShape.com, an online retailer with an innovative sales approach: They take women's measurements and suggest clothing to fit. My-

WSJ.com
Design for all
See Tadashi Shoji's runway looks, at
WSJ.com/Style

Women authors, famous names drive sales of first editions

FIRST EDITIONS of women authors have sold for high prices recently. More women are collecting books, says Bonhams book specialist Matthew Haley. The majority of book collectors, however, are still men.

At Sotheby's English literature sale in London in July, children's book author and

Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

illustrator Beatrix Potter filled six places on the top 10 list. Taking the No. 1 slot was an original watercolor illustration by Potter for the final scene from "The Rabbits' Christmas Party: The Departure" (1890s), showing human-like rabbits putting on their coats and kissing farewell. It brought the highest price ever at auction for a book illustration at £289,250, compared with its pre-sale estimate of £40,000-£60,000.

In June, a first edition of Jane Austen's "Emma" (1816) sold at Bonhams for an unexpected £180,000, way above its estimate of £50,000-£70,000. This was the highest price



Illustration by **Beatrix Potter** for 'The Rabbits' Christmas Party: The Departure' (1890s), was sold for £289,250.

at auction for a book by the English novelist. Austen had presented the copy to her friend Anne Sharp who inspired the character of Miss Taylor, Emma's governess in the tale of

misconstrued love.

In the same sale, a presentation copy—a signed copy given by the author—of Virginia Woolf's novel "To the Lighthouse" (1927) doubled its high estimate of £6,000 to sell for £12,000. The copy was presented by Woolf to Lady Victoria Sackville, who was the mother of Vita Sackville-West, Woolf's lover through most of the 1920s.

In November at Bonhams, a first edition of English writer Emily Brontë's tragic love story "Wuthering Heights" (1847) sold for £114,000, compared with its estimate of £30,000-£50,000.

All of these examples were purchased by anonymous buyers.

Fine condition usually plays a pivotal role in the value of antiquarian books, but bidders can ignore this criterion. At Bloomsbury auctions in March, a collector paid £18,000 (estimate: £6,000-£8,000) for a torn and weather-damaged first-edition copy of Graham Greene's "Rumour at Nightfall" (1931), breaking previous records of around £12,000 for Greene's books.

It was rarity that counted: Greene repudiated the book and never allowed it to be reprinted after the first edition, and as a re-

sult, few copies remain.

Popular authors draw collectors. Key poetry titles will be the focus of first-edition sales at Christie's South Kensington on Nov. 13. A first edition of Ernest Hemingway's first book "Three Stories & Ten Poems" (1923) will carry an estimate of £7,000-£10,000; a first-edition copy of Irish writer W.B. Yeats's "Poems" (1895), inscribed to his uncle George Pollexfen, an estimate of £2,000-£3,000; Welsh poet Dylan Thomas's first book "18 Poems" (1934), an estimate of £800-£1,200.

Criminal fiction is also popular. At Christie's November sale will be a copy of Arthur Conan Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes story "A Study in Scarlet" (1888), which is expected to fetch £5,000-£8,000.

At Bloomsbury Auctions on Sept. 4, contemporary Scottish star Ian Rankin will be showcased with a complete set of first-edition, mostly signed books, featuring his creation, Edinburgh detective inspector John Rebus. The character, uncompromising in his investigation of corruption in high places, is personally troubled but enormously sympathetic (estimate for the set: £1,200-£1,800).

Fashion's latest comeback attempt

BY CHERYL LU-LIEN TAN

EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO, designer Christian Francis Roth was on top of the fashion world. At age 21, he had won over critics and retailers like Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue with his inventive pieces, such as a suit featuring a fried-egg motif and dresses with sleeves designed to look like giant crayons.

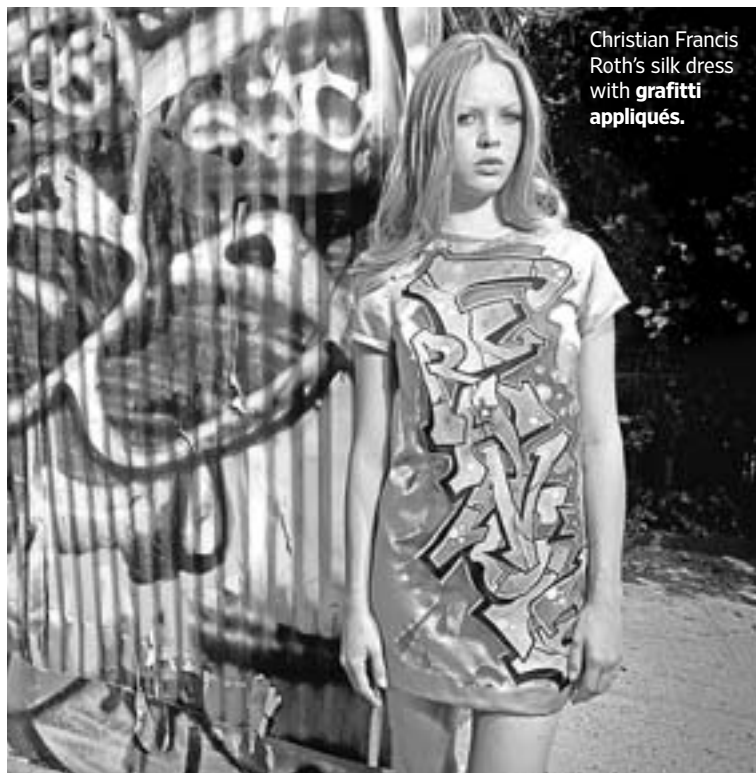
He was among the first designers to introduce grunge-inspired looks on high-end runways. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York acquired more than 20 of his pieces for its permanent collection, and in 1990, the year his first full line made its debut, the Council of Fashion Designers of America gave him its prestigious Perry Ellis award for emerging talent.

"It was astonishing to see so much technical virtuosity in someone so young," says Harold Koda, chief curator for the Met's Costume Institute.

But while Mr. Roth's \$2,000 dresses sold well, his company didn't generate profits. And his focus on design, rather than on running a business, proved to be his downfall. In 1995, he shuttered his high-end label and put out a lower-end line for two more years before finally giving up.

Now, after 11 years of toiling in obscurity as a designer for midtier brands such as Tommy Bahama and Nordstrom's private-label Caslon line, Mr. Roth is hoping to join the ranks of Isaac Mizrahi, Todd Oldham and others whose earlier businesses failed and have since managed a comeback. His new line, called Francis by Christian Francis Roth, is scheduled to be shown at fashion week in New York next month.

The line will be priced well below high-end labels like Versace and Chloe; jackets will cost \$425 to \$675, and dresses, \$350 to \$525. The clothing will be manufactured in China, which Mr. Roth sees as a way to produce well-crafted pieces at more affordable prices. And he has the financial backing of Peonie Ng, owner of Gold Palace Corp., a Hong Kong company that made clothing for middle-market lines such as Bernardo, which is sold at Macy's and Bon Ton, and is trying to break into the high-end business. Mr. Roth and Ms. Ng, equal partners in the venture, also plan to launch a



Christian Francis Roth's silk dress with graffiti appliques.

Photos: Rose Callahan; Christian Francis Roth

lower-priced line in China and Korea in the next few years. The decision to finance that, however, will hinge on how many retailers pick up the Francis line at fashion week.

Starting a designer-apparel business now could be risky. The fashion industry has been hit hard by the economic downturn, as shoppers have scaled back on apparel spending. Retail sales of women's apparel are expected to decline this year, according to NPD Group, a Port Washington, N.Y., market-research firm.

And while many fashion insiders remember Mr. Roth, he's largely unknown to a new generation of shoppers. David Wolfe, creative director for Doneger Group, a retail consultancy based in New York, says retailers may be less likely to try unproven lines or only willing to place small orders. Still, Mr. Wolfe says that Mr. Roth could have the benefit of "being that oxymoron of 'proven newness'—he's brand new, but we've heard of him before."

Mr. Roth acknowledges it's a difficult time to launch a new brand, but he believes he's better equipped to build a successful business now than he was in the 1990s. Before, he says, he thought mostly about his designs. Now he's also focused on addressing the needs of re-

tailors, who want a range of pieces, not just a few, splashy items; his runway show will feature about 30 ensembles. "I think I am a better merchant now, now that I've worked for some of these bigger companies," he says.

Gold Palace, which employs 650 and has two factories, in Hong Kong and Shenzhen, China, had been looking to diversify and was seeking a designer to create a global fashion brand. Billy Chan, a spokesman for Gold Palace, says the company was taken with Mr. Roth—they met while working together on Bernardo. "We were impressed by his designs," Mr. Chan says. "He's very adaptable and he has a network in New York—we felt his product would go on to have big sales."

But having a partner means not having total control. Messrs. Roth and Chan have clashed over how the new line should be unveiled. Gold Palace believes a more modest showroom display is the way to go during fashion week. "At this early stage, I don't think we need a big show—a small one that is very tidy and organized is better," says Mr. Chan. Mr. Roth argues that his clothes will best attract retailers' attention—and orders—if he presents them in a runway show. "I think we need to

see the clothes on models," Mr. Roth says.

After months of back and forth on the issue, Mr. Chan has given Mr. Roth a budget of \$10,000 to \$20,000 for his show, both parties say. So instead of holding it in an official fashion-week tent in New York's Bryant Park—a format that can cost more than \$100,000—Mr. Roth plans to stage it in a church gymnasium next to his studio.

The 39-year-old designer's preoccupation with fashion began in New York, where he grew up. As a boy, he found himself drawn to the city's stylish women, their clothing and the places they shopped. By age 14, he was putting on his Walkman and heading to Bergdorf Goodman, browsing the windows, wandering through the store and examining how garments were constructed. When he got home, he'd mock up covers of Vogue filled with images of what he'd seen.

In high school, Mr. Roth landed a summer job working for Koos van den Akker, and went to work for the Dutch-born designer full time when he was 17. In 1988, with a loan from his mentor, Mr. Roth struck out on his own: He designed seven jackets and showed them to buyers from Saks and other stores. That first year, Mr. Roth rang up \$45,000 in wholesale sales. Within two years, he says, he was doing \$250,000 in wholesale, a figure that would triple after his first fashion show in 1990.

At the height of his career, Mr. Roth was logging \$2 million a year in wholesale sales—a respectable figure for a small specialty-apparel business—but still wasn't turning a



Designer Christian Francis Roth at his studio in New York; left, a preppy wrap dress from his spring 2009 collection.



profit. His label's high prices—because of manufacturing only in the U.S.—were a hindrance to his expansion. With labor costs for a jacket hovering around \$300, Mr. Roth's retail prices were well over \$1,000. His Hobo jackets, with cartoonish applique patches, retailed for \$1,550. His "scribble" suit, with details that looked like they'd been sketched on with a giant pencil, went for \$2,500.

"Small and special—that's how people saw me," Mr. Roth recalls. "There was no room for growth." Now, he says, he incorporates what he believes merchants and shoppers want into his production process.

In July, for example, Mr. Roth did something he never did in the 1990s—he invited retailers to preview his spring 2009 sketches and offer feedback. After Neiman Marcus fashion director Ken Downing noted during his visit that he liked bright colors and sellable separates, Mr. Roth immediately began stitching together new samples of colorful silk chiffon blouses.

"If [the line] looks as great in person as it does in the [sketches] and his prices are competitive with similar lines, he'll do well," Mr. Downing says. "I'm anxious to see it."

Mr. Downing says he'll decide whether he'll carry the line at Neiman Marcus after he sees Mr. Roth's show at fashion week.

WSJ.com

New strategy

Watch a video chronicling Christian Francis Roth's return to Fashion Week, at WSJ.com/Style

The designer's wunderkind years

The early '90s were good to Christian Francis Roth. Here, some of his fashion hits:



Fall 1989 ▲ Mr. Roth often included pop-culture imagery, like these M&M packages, in his designs.



Spring 1990 His Breakfast Suit featured fried-egg appliques and egg-shell pockets.

Fall 1990 ▶ The Rothola dress was a dud with Crayola. The company sued and won a licensing fee.



Spring 1991 ▲ The \$2,400 Dollar Bill dress was the designer's response to shoppers' complaints about high prices.



Fall 1991 ▲ 'Patched-up' Hobo jackets retailed for \$1,500 to \$1,900.



Spring 1997 ▶ Mr. Roth's less expensive CFR line lasted two years.

Christian Francis Roth

❖ Sports

Federer's demon No. 2 plans to go

By Allen St. John

AT THE U.S. OPEN, which begins Monday, Rafael Nadal, the young, ferocious-hitting Spaniard, is heavily favored to win the men's title. But Roger Federer isn't going away without a fight.

In a sign of the stakes involved, the fiercely independent Mr. Federer has begun a process that may result in a retooling of his tennis game. "I want to move on as a player," Mr. Federer says. "I want to have new ideas."

In meetings with his small circle of advisers, which includes his girlfriend Mirka Vavrinec, his agent Tony Godsick, his long-time fitness coach Pierre Paganini and confidante and hitting partner Reto Staubli, Mr. Federer has been talking through various theories about how to overcome Mr. Nadal, who has beaten him in the last four matches they have played. He also has decided to bring his current coach, the former Spanish pro Jose Higuera, with him to New York. It's the first time he has had anyone in his corner at this event since 2003.

Since losing to Mr. Nadal at the French Open and tournaments in Hamburg and Monte Carlo this year, and after coming up short in their epic five-set, five-hour Wimbledon final in July, the 27-year old Swiss has dropped three of his past seven matches, often looking tentative and hesitant. This week, the 22-year-old Mr. Nadal claimed the No. 1 ranking Mr. Federer had held for a record 237 weeks. The otherworldly quickness of the young Spaniard and the unfathomable topspin he puts on his groundstrokes have blown a hole in Mr. Federer's methodically balanced and cerebral game.

Observers say Mr. Federer's struggles are as much about his temperament as his tennis. To beat Mr. Nadal, they say, the calm and careful champion will have to turn back the clock to a time where he attacked, gambled and sometimes even lost his temper.

The question is whether Mr. Federer wants to follow this ad-

vice and, more importantly, if he can. "Do you want to come to the net against the guy who hits the best passing shots? I don't know," he says. "Maybe."

To understand what made Mr. Federer great, and what makes him vulnerable to Mr. Nadal, is to understand what makes him different. He is the rarest of commodities in pro tennis—an independent thinker. His resistance to hiring a full-time coach (at times he hasn't had one at all) is virtually unheard of in this sport. His game is very much his own invention. As a junior, Mr. Federer was a demonstrative, and even volatile, player. "I was completely crazy," he said. "Smashing rackets, I was always screaming, very down on myself. I was the guy who was commentating every shot."

He also played an impulsive, attacking brand of tennis—trying to hit winners at the earliest opportunity. When he first emerged on the world stage by beating Pete Sampras at Wimbledon in 2001, "he served and volleyed on almost every point," recalls analyst and former pro John McEnroe.

But this turbulent style of play came with an inherent problem: Mr. Federer had an enormous repertoire of shots. Playing the game at a hair-trigger pace often left him with no time to make up his mind. "I had too many possibilities to choose from," he explains. "A one-dimensional player is just going to hit the backhand crosscourt again and again and again. I had the opportunity to slice it, to spin it, to hit it short, to hit it long, to come to the net."

His evolution began in Hamburg in 2001, when Mr. Federer had an emotional meltdown after a loss. Embarrassed, he decided to try to hold his emotions in check. What followed was the worst slump of his career. In 2002, Mr. Federer lost in the opening round of the French and then again at Wimbledon. "I was like 'Oh my God, this doesn't really work,'" Mr. Federer recalled. "I doubted myself a little bit."

With his confidence in tatters, Mr. Federer had an epiphany—he would try to tone down his game as he had damped his emotions. "I decided I'd rather hit 10 great shots on center court than 20 outrageous shots on court 14 where nobody sees them." He focused on making more conser-

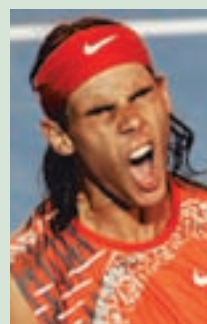


Roger Federer, at play at Wimbledon

Recent contests for Federer and Nadal



U.S. Open 2007: **Federer wins**



Australian Open 2008: **Both lose** in semi-finals



French

ns: How the new et his game back

The Swiss master of defense has fallen behind Nadal. Now, the U.S. Open test

vative, defensive shots that would allow opponents more chances to make mistakes.

"There's a great beauty in defense," he says. "That's my big advantage. When my offense isn't so good on a day, I can rely on my defense. Whatever comes now I'm ready for it."

This change produced a unique fusion of skills. Most modern champions play one-dimensional tennis—Messrs. McEnroe and Sampras were big servers who pressured opponents by charging the net, while Jimmy Connors and Andre Agassi applied pressure from the baseline. Others, like Bjorn Borg and Mats Wilander, played defensively. By mixing caution and aggression and learning to use both at once—often within the same point—Mr. Federer put himself on a higher plane. "One of the things he does better than anyone," says tennis coach Paul Annacone, "is turn defense into offense very, very quickly."

At last year's U.S. Open, during a decisive point against American Andy Roddick, Mr. Federer scrambled wide to blunt an almost perfect forehand then, unshaken, ended the point four shots later with a backhand winner that left Mr. Roddick shaking his head. "He keeps you guessing," says Mr. McEnroe.

If you designed a player to beat Mr. Federer, he would look very much like Mr. Nadal. What makes him so dangerous? He hits the ball better than anyone ever has.

As a youngster, Mr. Nadal's uncle, who is still his coach, taught the natural right-hander how to play lefthanded, giving him a forehand that eats up the backhands of righties like Mr. Federer. It also carries an unprecedented amount of spin. Researcher John Yandell, who has analyzed slow-mo-

tion video of top pros, says the spin on Mr. Nadal's forehand is 3,300 rotations per minute compared with 2,700 RPM for Mr. Federer. "His normal safe forehand is the toughest shot in the world," explains U.S. Davis Cup Captain Patrick McEnroe. "It's got incredible rotation, and he never misses." With his young legs and legendary fitness, Mr. Nadal not only reaches balls most players can't, he turns them into scorching winners. "He makes you feel like you've got to hit the extra shot," Mr. Federer says. "Or the shot closer to the line."

During a crucial service point late in the fifth set in this year's Wimbledon final, Mr. Federer stayed back and traded groundstrokes with Mr. Nadal until he saw an opening. He hit a sharply angled crosscourt forehand that would have been a winner against anyone else. But the cat-quick Mr. Nadal arrived in time to hit a blistering backhand that caught Mr. Federer flat-footed. The Spaniard had turned a defensive predicament into an offensive opportunity.

As the U.S. Open begins, the consensus inside tennis is that Mr. Federer should attack. "Federer gets into trouble against Nadal because he doesn't come out with an aggressive enough game plan," says Patrick McEnroe. "He's not as decisive on the big points. Normally when he sees a ball to attack he's on it like a cat. Now he's just second-guessing his moves."

Mr. Federer won't discuss his plan for the Open. His coach, Mr. Higuera, is known for helping players improve their footwork and shot selection. Fellow coaches say he is probably trying to help Mr. Federer focus on more aggressive shot-making.

Mr. Federer does have a happy memory from this rivalry with Mr. Nadal—his first victory. In that match in Miami in 2005, Mr. Federer fell behind by two sets and a service break but then roared back to demolish the teenager in a lopsided fifth set. "The guy was almost KO'd standing," Mr. Federer recalls. "He didn't know what to do any more. And as the match went on I was getting stronger and stronger and stronger." Mr. Federer's face brightens. "To beat Rafa on that physical level..." he says. He leaves the sentence unfinished.



Rafael Nadal, at the Olympics



Open 2008: Nadal wins



Wimbledon 2008: Nadal wins



Beijing Olympics: Nadal wins men's singles gold medal

Photos: Newscom; AFP

An undercover master builds a force

BY KELLY CROW

SHORTLY AFTER 9 a.m. on June 4, three men drove to a seaside promenade on the outskirts of Marseille, their white van carrying stolen paintings by Brueghel, Sisley and Monet. The men had allegedly taken the art at gunpoint from the Museum of Fine Arts in Nice last August. Now a Frenchman working for an American art dealer was supposed to show up and buy four artworks for \$4.6 million in cash.

Instead, nearly a dozen French police cars pulled up, led by a colonel for the gendarmerie who quickly took a call from the U.S. state of Pennsylvania. "We got them!" Col. Pierre Tabel shouted, in English, into his cellphone.

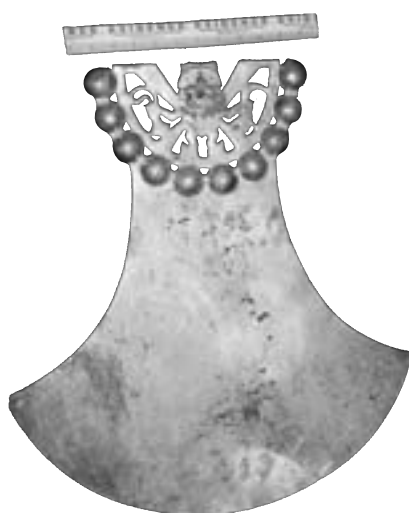
The caller was Robert Wittman, an undercover agent for the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation who had acted as the American "dealer" and orchestrated the sting. Mr. Wittman thanked the colonel and celebrated alone, drinking a mug of coffee on his back porch while his wife slept.

Mr. Wittman is the ranking undercover art-crime investigator at the FBI—the Donnie Brasco of the art world. The 52-year-old has spent two decades impersonating shady dealers and befriending thieves in order to track down \$225 million worth of missing objects, from a Rembrandt self-portrait to an original copy of America's Bill of Rights.

Skyrocketing values for art and endemic security flaws at museums are enticing a new generation of thieves and raising the stakes of his job. The U.S. is already the biggest buyer within the \$6 billion black market for art, according to the FBI. Last year alone, 16,117 artworks in the U.S. were listed by the London-based Art Loss Register as missing or stolen, up from 14,981 the year before. At the same time, worsening economies and shifting priorities are forcing governments around the world to slash their budgets to combat art crime. New York City alone cut \$4 million from its museum-security budget earlier this summer.

Meanwhile, an increasing number of thieves have started taking art by force in broad daylight rather than by stealth, according to the International Council of Museums, a nonprofit that represents 1,900 museums and galleries around the world. Jennifer Thevenot, the council's program-activities officer, says, "Previously, it was all 'Pink Panther'—guys in gloves slipping in at night—but now they walk in with weapons."

For years the FBI has relied solely on Mr. Wittman to play the undercover roles of gullible or greedy art lover, but now for the first time the bureau is upending tradition by training a nationwide squad to combat art crime. Prosecutors and law-enforcement officials are hailing the move but wonder whether any of the dozen-odd agents in the FBI Art Crime Team will be ready to take over Mr. Wittman's covert work before he re-



From left: FBI agent **Robert Wittman**, who works undercover; 2,000-year-old gold **Peruvian armor**; **Geronimo's** war bonnet; 'The Lane of Poplars at Moret' by **Alfred Sisley**.

Photos: Chris Christman Photography; FBI Philadelphia

tires later this year.

The recent case in Marseille illustrates Mr. Wittman's forte for undercover work. The operation began after the Nice museum was robbed last August. The FBI's Miami office got a tip that a shaggy-haired career criminal named Bernard Jean Ternus was discreetly shopping masterpieces to art dealers near Fort Lauderdale, about 40 kilometers to the north. Mr. Wittman flew in and introduced himself to Mr. Ternus as a Philadelphia art dealer who liked to buy Impressionists and Dutch Old Masters and didn't care where they came from. The two men held several meetings, including one on a friend's yacht where they drank champagne. In January, the pair met in Barcelona, so the rest of the team could size up Mr. Wittman. By late spring, Mr. Wittman got so chummy with the group—one man ran a motorcycle shop, another rented bulldozers—that he was able to introduce his so-called sidekick, an agent for the French police. That agent promised to bring the money to Marseille on June 4. The sting was set. (Mr. Ternus later pleaded guilty to conspiring to sell stolen art and will be sentenced in Flor-

ida on Sept. 18; the other men arrested with the art in Marseille are awaiting trial in France.)

Mr. Wittman says such work can be "incredibly stressful" because "unlike actors, you only get one shot and you have to remember everything you ever said." Col. Tabel, who investigates art crimes for the French government and followed Mr. Wittman's chess-like maneuvers throughout the 10-month sting, is more effusive: "To me, he is a living legend."



A **Rembrandt self-portrait** recovered in Copenhagen.

Yet within the FBI, Mr. Wittman has always been an anomaly because of his interest in chasing art thieves. Despite the public attention that follows major art thefts and any subsequent recoveries, the FBI has historically treated art crime like a tweedy backwater compared with offenses like terrorism, racketeering and drug smuggling. Cases involving looted artifacts were hardly a priority five years ago. Even now, New York's art cases are handled by a major-theft agent, James Wynne, who doesn't go undercover. But after the massive looting of Baghdad's National Museum five years ago sparked public outrage, Mr. Wittman realized the bureau might be convinced to invest more in protecting U.S. museums.

Mr. Wittman, who had been the FBI's only undercover art agent for about 15 years, began petitioning his superiors to create its own art-crime team. The idea quickly won the support of several other art-crime fighters outside the bureau, including a federal prosecutor, Bob Goldman, and Lynne Richardson, a former museum registrar at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello homestead, who maintained the bureau's art-crime database. Rather than pull agents from other squads, their plan was to train around a dozen agents who could be posted at field offices throughout the country and be allowed to pursue art cases as their regular caseloads permitted. But should a major theft occur, the group could be sent to the scene immediately, their roles already defined, or work with police agencies around the world if invited to help out. The team's annual operational budget, aside from agent salaries, could be around \$100,000.

It helped Mr. Wittman's lobbying efforts to point out that far smaller countries already had art squads, even if some have lately suffered under recent budget cuts:

Scotland Yard in London has four art detectives, down from 14 during their squad's heyday two decades ago; France has 30; and Italy boasts 300 art-hunting carabinieri, including investigators who use helicopters to patrol the country's myriad archaeological dig sites.

The team, assembled in large part by Mr. Wittman, quickly began tackling a variety of art cases. In St. Louis, Frank Brostrom, who joined the group after working as a bomb technician and surveillance expert, caught a man three years ago who tried to peddle a forged Rembrandt for \$2.8 million by masquerading as a Saudi sheikh.

Among the FBI's rank and file, art crime remains a curious tough sell, agents say. Geoffrey Kelly, who works art crimes out of Boston, says he "gets a lot of ribbing" from co-workers for lining his cubicle with books on Renaissance painters as well as crime-scene photos; Mr. Brostrom says agents on his former violent-crimes squad in St. Louis bought him art books as gag gifts when he joined the art team: "I actually use those books," he says.

By and large, the agents signed up for the team either because they are intrigued by art or because they respect the careers of Mr. Wittman and Mr. Wynne, the former banker who investigates art cases in New York. Some members like Christopher Calarco, a former prosecutor in Los Angeles, joined after only having six years' experience at the bureau. None can boast any prior expertise in fine art. After Mr. Calarco was tapped, he says he tried to brush up by digging out his notes from a college art-history course.

To take on major art cases, Mr. Wittman needs the team to have a delicate understanding of the art world—and underworld. That means being able to discern the difference between etchings and

to fight art crime



Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nice / Musée d'Orsay/Reuters

aquatints, palettes and provenance, genuine masterpieces from expert forgeries. (One clue: The varnish on a 300-year-old painting will be laced with tiny cracks, which fakes rarely have.)

Mr. Wittman grew up working weekends at his family's antiques shop in Baltimore, where his father taught him "how to haggle and how to appreciate old things," he says. When he joined the FBI in 1988, he was assigned to Philadelphia's eastern-district field office where he initially investigated crimes like truck hijackings and jewelry-store robberies. He quickly expanded his caseload to take on art crimes, though, and over the years, he built up a reputation for making quirky cultural recoveries. In 1999, for example, he caught an Atlanta lawyer trying to sell Geronimo's feathered headdress for \$1.2 million despite the U.S. ban on selling bald-eagle feathers. Two years earlier, he confiscated a 2,000-year-old piece of gold Peruvian armor that had been smuggled into the U.S. by a Panamanian diplomat.

These days, he works in Philadelphia but tries to call the team members every week or so to keep abreast of their caseloads. Occasionally, he fields their art-related questions. Once he had to politely correct an agent who described Picasso as an Impressionist: "I didn't want to embarrass him, so I just said, 'People usually call him a great modernist.'"

Bonnie Magness-Gardiner, who succeeded Ms. Richardson as the team's program manager, updates their art-crime database and also organizes their training sessions in arty locales. The group has spent time together in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Santa Fe in order to learn the basics of art crime as seen by museum security directors, art dealers and academics.

Brian Brusokas, a cybercrimes expert with the FBI in Chicago,

says he was surprised to learn that about 80% of museum thefts are orchestrated by insiders, not burglars. He and the other art agents have started visiting their regional museums and acquainting themselves with people like custodians and visiting scholars who enjoy extra access to the museum's collections. They've also changed up their crime-scene techniques. Because dusting works for fingerprints can damage their surfaces, they rely on hand-held fluorescent lights to find fingerprints instead.

More than anything, the art agents need experience. Mr. Calarco got his best shot three years ago when the FBI's organized-crime squad in Los Angeles arrested an Eastern European man who kept a stolen Renoir in his safe at a local pawnshop. Mr. Calarco researched the painting and learned it had been taken five years earlier from Stockholm's National Museum of Fine Arts, along with a \$36 million Rembrandt self-portrait.

The man agreed to help the FBI track down the thieves in Sweden in order to "buy" the Rembrandt in a sting. Mr. Calarco called Mr. Wittman, who agreed to step in as middleman for an Old Masters collector willing to pay cash, no questions asked.

That fall, the cops and robbers converged at a Copenhagen hotel. Mr. Wittman met one of the thieves in a room and showed off a satchel containing \$200,000 in hundred-dollar bills. Mr. Calarco, nervous, sat in the hotel room directly overhead and watched the footage from a hidden camera. A short time later, the thief returned carrying the Rembrandt in a duffel bag, still in its museum frame.

When Mr. Wittman signaled that the painting was authentic—by using the phrase "Done deal"—police stormed the room and Mr. Wittman grabbed the painting. Seconds later, he met Mr. Calarco in the stairwell outside. Mr. Calarco saw the artwork and remembers thinking, "This is exactly what I got into this job for."

But Mr. Wittman is having trouble stemming the farm team's high rate of turnover. So far, at least half the original art-crime team has been promoted to positions or offices outside the team's scope, forcing them to drop or reassign their art caseloads.

Mr. Wynne, the New York-based agent, says it may even be unrealistic to train an entire squad to hang out, incognito, with art thieves. "I've just never thought that undercover was the end all, be all," says Mr. Wynne. "I meet the bad guys when I interview them."

Yet without an undercover artist, the team's budget could fizzle in the coming years, says Mr. Goldman, the former prosecutor who championed the team and has now become an art lawyer and close friend of Mr. Wittman's. "I'd love for the team to survive this generation," he says, "but it can die from inertia without someone who can push them to fight."

After a lifetime in pursuit, Mr. Wittman knows his job is more gritty than glamorous. He doesn't mind. In fact, he delights in revealing the real face of art crime. In April, he spoke to a few major donors at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on the condition they avoid taking his photograph. At one point he held up a few images of Hollywood's gentlemen thieves like Cary Grant in "To Catch a Thief" and Pierce Brosnan in "The Thomas Crown Affair," followed by a real-life rogue's gallery of arrested art thieves, their hair sloppy and faces sour. Grinning, he said, "Sorry, ladies."

Art heist

Five important stolen artworks



◀ Odalisque in Red Pants by Henri Matisse

Thieves swapped this lounging beauty from the Sofia Imber Contemporary Art Museum in Caracas with a forged copy (left) sometime after 2000. The real thing, made in 1925, is valued at \$3 million.

Reclining Figure by Henry Moore

One night in 2005, three thieves drove a flatbed truck fitted with a crane onto the artist's estate in Much Hadham in Hertfordshire, England, and hoisted away the two-ton sculpture, made in 1969 and valued at \$5.2 million.



▶ Nativity with St. Francis and St. Lawrence by Caravaggio

In 1969, thieves used razor blades to cut out the almost 3-meter-tall Baroque masterpiece from its gilded frame inside the Oratory of San Lorenzo in Palermo. The 1608 work is worth \$20 million.



◀ The Lion of Nimrud

Once a star of Baghdad's main museum, this 10-centimeter-tall ivory relief from 720 B.C. depicting a lion attacking a Nubian was pocketed by looters in 2003. The work is considered priceless.



▶ Portrait of a Woman by Gustav Klimt

A thief opened a skylight at the Galleria Ricci Oddi in Piacenza, Italy, in 1997 and hooked this jewel-toned portrait off the wall using fishing line. The circa 1916 work is valued at \$4 million.



Photos: Associated Press; Scala / Art Resource, NY; The Granger Collection

WSJ.com

To catch a thief
See an interactive graphic on
major art crimes at
WSJ.com/Lifestyle

Five Best: Reading on the Olympics

JEREMY SCHAAP SAYS these books on the Olympics win golds. The ESPN sportscaster is the author of "Triumph: The Untold Story of Jesse Owens and Hitler's Olympics" and "Cinderella Man: James J. Braddock, Max Baer, and the Greatest Upset in Boxing History."

1 The Complete Book of the Olympics
By David Wallechinsky
Viking, 1984

Unlike baseball, football and boxing, the Olympics has generated only a small catalog of books—and good ones are even rarer. Perhaps the most indispensable book about the Games, David Wallechinsky's "The Complete Book of the Olympics," is as relentlessly skimmable as his epic best-seller, "The Book of Lists." Updated every four years, "The Complete Book of the Olympics" is the only single volume in English in which you can find the results of every Olympic competition since 1896, plus interesting anecdotes (at least to Olympic freaks like me) about hundreds of Olympians and the events in which they participated. Reginald Harris, a British Olympic cyclist at the 1948 Games, is the subject of a typical entry. It begins with his World War II service in the 10th Royal Hussars in North Africa, ends with his death in 1992 and in between tells, in a few hundred words, the story of a life dedicated to sport. And Harris wasn't even a gold medalist.

2 All That Glitters Is Not Gold
By William Oscar Johnson Jr.
Putnam, 1972

A longtime Sports Illustrated writer, William Oscar Johnson Jr. chisels away at some of the legends of the Olympic Games, not least at Avery Brundage, the almost comically autocratic president of the International Olympic Committee



Bob Beamon making his record long jump in the 1968 Mexico City Games.

from 1952 to 1972. Johnson concentrates on controversies that have marred the Games and he challenges the conventional wisdom. For instance, he debunks the cherished myth that Johnny Hayes, the American who won the controversial 1908 Olympic marathon in London (the Italian who crossed the finish line first was disqualified for receiving assistance from British officials eager to see the U.S. fail), trained by running around the roof of the Bloomingdale's department store. For decades, Hayes was un-

failingly described as a Bloomingdale's clerk, a true amateur who had to train on his lunch breaks. This, Johnson informs us, was hokum: Hayes was a pro, paid by Bloomingdale's to do nothing but train.

3 You Can't Go Home Again
By Thomas Wolfe
Harper, 1940

"You Can't Go Home Again" isn't really about the Olympics, but its protagonist, George Webber, spends the summer of 1936 in Berlin, where he cheers for Jesse

Owens and bears witness to the passion of the German masses as they embrace their Führer. The Games of the 11th Olympiad were the most significant Olympics of the modern era, and Thomas Wolfe—who was himself there—captures the atmosphere with a novelist's eye. Here he describes the scene when Hitler approached the Olympic stadium: "At last he came, and something like a wind across a field of grass was shaken through that crowd, and from afar the tide rolled up with him, and in it was the voice, the hope, the prayer of the land." Published posthumously (Wolfe died of tuberculosis in 1938, at age 37), after the German invasion of Poland but before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, "You Can't Go Home Again" makes it clear that Americans, and everyone else, could ignore Hitler's Germany only at their peril. "There seemed to be something ominous about it," Wolfe writes about the prevailing mood in Berlin as the opening ceremony approaches. "One sensed a stupendous concentration of effort, a tremendous drawing together and ordering in the vast collective power of the whole land. And the thing that made it seem ominous was that it so evidently went beyond what the games themselves demanded."

4 The Perfect Jump
By Dick Schaap
New American Library, 1976

I may be biased, but I wouldn't hesitate to include on my top-five list a slim volume called "The Perfect Jump," by Dick Schaap, to whom I was related by paternity. "The Perfect Jump" tells the story of Bob Beamon, who in October 1968 in Mexico City soared 29 feet, 2½ inches, breaking the world record in the long jump—previously known as the broad jump—by nearly 22 inches. For centuries, the long-jump record had progressed by inches

and centimeters; in an instant, Beamon put the record out of reach, where it remained for 23 years. "The Perfect Jump" is so compelling because its subject had been so imperfect. Growing up in Brooklyn in the early 1960s, Beamon was deemed incorrigible by his teachers and hauled off to a school for those from whom nothing was expected. More than anything, the book is about a life touched for an instant by perfection. Beamon never again jumped 29 feet, or 28 feet. He never again jumped even 27 feet.

5 The Amateurs
By David Halberstam
Morrow, 1985

In "The Amateurs," David Halberstam makes rowers as interesting as he had previously made cabinet secretaries and point guards. His account of the competition to represent the U.S. in rowing at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics is brilliantly realized; he ponders why anyone would punish himself the way rowers do. That they often come from comfortable Ivy League backgrounds yet choose an uncelebrated sport defined by suffering fascinates Halberstam. "One could understand the son of a ghetto family playing in the schoolyard for six hours a day hoping that basketball was a ticket out of the slum," he writes. "It was hard to understand the son of Beacon Hill spending so much time and subjecting himself to so much pain to attain an honor that no one even understood. Perhaps in our society the true madness in the search for excellence is left for the amateur." If you read the book, you will probably learn to appreciate rowing—or at least respect those who suffer for it. You might even find yourself watching the Olympic rowing competition. From there, it's just a hop, step and jump—now called the triple jump—to official Olympic junkiedom.

Evelyn Waugh revisited

BY ALLEN BARRA
Special to The Wall Street Journal

IT WOULD BE WRONG to say that Evelyn Waugh is once again in fashion, if only because he was never fashionable in the first place. But for an English novelist who died in 1966 at age 62 as an unrepentant Tory and apologist for the English class system—simply put, a snob—Waugh, in the era of graphic novels and Kindles, is doing splendidly.

A feature-film version of his most popular novel, "Brideshead Revisited," with Emma Thompson and Michael Gambon, will soon be released in Europe; the first filmed version of "Brideshead," a 1981 11-part miniseries that established Jeremy Irons as a major star, is available in a DVD boxed set. David Lebedoff's "The Same Man: George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh in Love and War" has just been published by Random House, and early next year British author D.J. Taylor's "Bright Young People: The Lost Generation of London's Jazz Age," a study of the sybaritic socialites Waugh wrote about in early novels such as "Vile Bodies," will be released by Farrar, Straus &

Giroux. As for his novels, nearly all are available in paperback.

Arthur Evelyn St. John Waugh would have been appalled to find that he was ever something so vulgar as trendy. In the words of one of his greatest admirers, William F. Buckley Jr., he was "a great satirist, a conservative, a traditionalist, a passionately convinced and convincing Christian, a master stylist routinely acknowledged...as the most finished writer of English prose." Such sentiments might be expected from Mr. Buckley, who in his life was a conservative and a passionately convinced Christian, too.

From the opposite end of the political spectrum, there was America's most prestigious critic, Edmund Wilson, whose famous evaluation of Waugh (written in 1944) was that he is "the only first-rate comic genius that has appeared in English since Bernard Shaw." (Waugh's ungracious reply when asked what he thought of Mr. Wilson was "Is he American?")

Mr. Wilson's judgment seems to have held up over the past several decades; last year, in his imposing survey of 20th-century in-

tellectuals, "Cultural Amnesia," Clive James went even further, writing that Waugh "was the supreme writer of English prose in the 20th century, even though so many of the wrong people said so." By "the wrong people," Mr. James meant cultural conservatives, a definite minority in the 20th-century literary establishment. His devotees have argued passionately that his politics kept Waugh from winning the Nobel Prize, but his work has endured while that of many a Nobel Prize winner has faded into the twilight realm of the praised but unread.

The anti-Waugh argument is summed up by Gore Vidal. In his memoir "Palimpsest," he called Waugh "a drunken social climber who wrote small funny novels of no great appeal" and who now, after the TV miniseries brought him posthumous fame, is "to English literature what Winston Churchill is to politics." Waugh would not have seen this comparison as an insult. As for his belated popularity, this year marks the 80th anniversary of his first novel, "Decline and Fall," and virtually all have been in print since they were first published.

Evelyn Waugh has even served as a curious cult figure for those with no interest in his religion or politics. (Anna Faris's airheaded starlet

in the 2003 film "Lost in Translation" checks into a Tokyo hotel under the name "Evelyn Waugh," pronouncing the first name like a woman's, with a short E.)

The irony of his popularity, such as it is, is that he is best known for "The Loved One" and "Brideshead Revisited," works he regarded as atypical of his oeuvre. "The Loved One" is a short, savagely funny satire of Hollywood, where Waugh spent several months in the late 1940s. ("The Loved One" became a movie itself in 1965, directed by Tony Richardson with a screenplay by Terry Southern and Christopher Isherwood.)

Published in 1944 but set in the 1930s, "Brideshead Revisited" is the story of Charles Ryder, an Oxford student enamored with the wealthy, eccentric and very Catholic Flyte family. Three generations have loved the book for its loving evocation of Oxford as well as its story of a spiritual awakening.

There are those who insist that Waugh idealized not only Oxford but the aristocratic classes he aspired to—Wilfrid Sheed, for instance, wrote in 1973 that he "admired the aristocrats he couldn't reach, a class that is really too good for him—even if he had to invent it, as he did in 'Brideshead Revisited.'" And as he idealized the

upper classes, he understood them, writing of a character in "Scoop": "He was gifted with the sly, sharp instinct for self-preservation that passes for wisdom among the rich."

A rereading of Waugh's other titles reveals that no wittier lampooning of the British upper classes has ever been written than "Vile Bodies," "Decline and Fall" and "A Handful of Dust." And more than 70 years after their publication, "Scoop" and "Black Mischief," set in Africa, seem less like they are mocking Third World peoples than greedy, hypocritical Western powers. Waugh's contempt is not for African civilization but for African leaders who slavishly imitate and often misinterpret European pieties. In "Black Mischief," an African official welcomes a "Cruelty to Animals" mission from England by proclaiming, "We Azanians...have much to learn from the white people of the West and North...We must be refined in our Cruelty to Animals."

The paradox of Evelyn Waugh is that in seeking to present the point of view of a small class of people at a specific point in time he struck a chord of empathy in so many. Waugh, predictably, never cared to explain his own art. As he once told an interviewer, "I put the words down and push them a bit."

❖ Top Picks

Hammershoi's charged interiors

London ■ art

Vilhelm Hammershoi (1864-1916) is now little known except in his native Denmark. In his lifetime, however, he was recognized, especially in London and New York, as a radical artist whose work could stand comparison with that of James McNeill Whistler. Both painters used a limited palette and a drastic lack of embellishment, using a tonal range of grays, browns and blacks, and simplified their forms and compositions.

You are struck by this immediately on entering the Sackler Galleries at the Royal Academy. Coming to them from the raucously gaudy annual Summer Exhibition in the main galleries, these gently lyrical paintings justify the show's title, "Vilhelm Hammershoi: The Poetry of Silence." It isn't just Whistler who springs to mind on first seeing this work, but artists as disparate as Caspar David Friedrich, Giorgio Morandi and Gwen John, partly because of the confined color range, but also because of the stillness and the strange, melancholic vision they share of sparsely furnished rooms or of women viewed from the back. Indeed, Friedrich's 1822 "Woman at the Window" seems to have inspired at least a dozen of the pictures in this show. The women are almost always modeled on Hammershoi's wife, Ida, looking out a window or posed in a doorway, or in a room with a picture, table or piano giving some forward movement to an otherwise static composition.

Hammershoi was claimed by the Symbolists as one of their own, and it's easy to see why, as he seems to share their taste for magical introspection and emotionally charged spaces. But his sensibility, though pared down to the minimum, is really much more personal and individual. In five or six of the interior scenes exhibited at the RA, a porcelain punch bowl features strongly, and in two or three of them, it is painted with such attention to detail (experts can tell you its date and the factory that made it) that your eye is drawn to it—in one case, before you even notice Ida in the foreground, in the "Young Woman seen from Behind" (circa 1904).

Apart from some empty urban spaces in Copenhagen and London (which he visited often), most of the pictures in this marvelous show depict the living or dining room of the apartments in which he and his wife lived. Despite the domesticity, there is only a single painting in his entire oeuvre that shows food—the 1901 "Interior with Woman at Piano, Strandgade 30," in which the lump of butter on the table in the foreground is painted with such prominence that it is shockingly sensual. —Paul Levy
Until Sept. 7
☎ 44-20-7300-8000
www.royalacademy.org.uk

Wolfsburg ■ photography

In preparation for its 25th anniversary in 1963, the city of Wolfsburg, Germany, asked photographer Heinrich Heidersberger to document the construction of a new cultural center being built by Alvar

Arbitrage

The price of 500 sheets of paper



City	Local currency	€
Hong Kong	HK\$33	€2.88
Frankfurt	€2.99	€2.99
New York	\$6.20	€4.22
Tokyo	¥793	€4.91
Brussels	€5.12	€5.12
Rome	€5.37	€5.37
Paris	€5.65	€5.65
London	£4.92	€6.23

Note: A4 or 8.5"x11"-size paper; the lowest-priced package from an office supply store. Prices, including taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.



'Interior with Woman at Piano, Strandgade 30,' 1901, by Vilhelm Hammershoi.

Aalto. Heidersberger went much further, and his photographs are an artistic work of the first order: a moving panorama of a midcentury European city, and a specific account of post-war German life in all its oddity and variety. These shots are the centerpiece of a Heidersberger retrospective at the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, called "Return to the Point of Departure: Photographs 1949-1973."

Born in Bavaria, Heidersberger (1906-2006) came of age in Paris, where he went in the 1920s to study painting and where he took his first photographs. He returned to Germany in the 1930s and spent the Nazi period working as a commercial and industrial photographer, for example providing photographs for a 1938 book about a German airplane factory belonging to a firm that made bombers for the Luftwaffe. The exhibition doesn't include work from the Nazi years—a discussion that would have been interesting and is a flaw in the show.

Wolfsburg, home of Volkswagen, was built in 1938 by the Nazis as a workers' city. Heidersberger presents perfectly composed black-and-white images of brand-new buildings, crowds of new cars and scenes of everyday life. Each is marked by the implied struggle just outside the frame to overcome the Nazi past and what was then the Cold War present—the East German border, which never appears, is biking distance from the Volkswagen factory.

Heidersberger captures the many medieval echoes in industrial Europe, like his astonishing sledding scene from 1963—a Brueghel-like vision of winter amusement, with the Volkswagen factory looming in the distance like a castle. The factory itself appears again in a surreal 1971 photograph titled "Kraftwerk," with smoke stacks shooting out what looks like streams of cloth. —J.S. Marcus
Until Sept. 21
☎ 49-5361-26690
www.kunstmuseum-wolfsburg.de

London ■ theater

The world premiere of Rebecca Lenkiewicz's new play "Her Naked Skin" at the National Theatre was a historic occasion of sorts: the first play by a living woman playwright performed on one of the main

stages ever since the Southbank buildings opened in 1976. This suitably lavish production, by veteran director Howard Davies, has live music featuring the Elysian string quartet, and an elaborate set by Rob Howell that uses all the technical bells and whistles in the Olivier auditorium's amply stocked locker. The revolving stage even briefly features the green benches of the House of Commons, and populates them with actors impersonating historic politicians, including Keir Hardie, the first socialist MP.

A cast of more than 30 tells of the extreme wing of the Suffragette movement, the Women's Social Political Union, founded in 1903 by the Pankhurst family, determined to win the vote for women even at the cost of some violence and martyrdom. Both the strength and weakness of Ms. Lenkiewicz's drama is that she puts at its center a love affair between an aristocratic lady, Celia Cain, played with thoroughbred high spirits by Lesley Manville, and a factory girl, Eve Douglas, the smolderingly sensual Jemima Rooper, both of whom, having smashed windows in the course of demonstrations, elect to go to prison.

A strong theme, because it allows room both for the minor strands of man-hating and same-sex-preference that developed in later feminism, and so appears brave, with the power (though not much of it) still to startle. Weak, because it is ultimately just another love story cutting across class boundaries, unremarkable except for the lesbianism.

The play succeeds best as docu-drama, well worth seeing as a history of the movement to gain women the vote. The single most notable scene is that of the painful, distressing force-feeding by a decent prison doctor, who is himself brutalized by it and forfeits our sympathy. Men do not come out well—the lawyer husband of Celia Cain (played by Adrian Rawlins) cajoles and threatens her to try to keep her from getting arrested yet again. Even though we at first have some feeling for him—because her castrating behavior is obvious—in the end he really is inadequate and unable to help her. —Paul Levy

Until Sept. 24
☎ 44-20-7452-3000
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk



Lykke Li's novel take on songs

BY JOHN JURGENSEN

WHILE THE MOVIE "Mamma Mia!" has put the familiar songs of ABBA high on the Billboard charts, another Swedish export named Lykke Li Timotei Zachrisson is making her debut. The 22-year-old singer, who uses only the first half of her name professionally, has been building buzz since



last year when she released a small batch of songs and began popping up on the international festival circuit. On her first full-length album, "Youth Novels," which came out this year, simple musical combinations—piano, brittle drums, restrained bursts of guitar—serve as a scaffolding for her airy, girlish voice. On stage, she turns into more of a belter, and occasionally sings into a megaphone. "I totally float away in a way I can't in the studio," she says. By contrast, getting in the mindset to record "is like method acting," she says.

Here, she discusses three songs from her debut album.

'Dance, Dance, Dance'

This song about a shy courtship on the dance floor builds from muted percussion and sliding guitar notes to include something rarely heard in indie pop—a saxophone solo. Lykke Li conceived the song on piano, but it was gradually transformed by her producer, Björn Yttling, a member of the Swedish act Peter, Dinklage and John, which enjoyed breakout success last year.

'I'm Good, I'm Gone'

Stuck in Stockholm and working in a nursing home, Lykke Li wrote this "revenge" song about her imagined escape. "Stepping a stone and I'm all gone. Give me a tone and I'm all gone," she sings to an angular dance beat. She later checked the term "stepping stone" on the Internet and realized the English lyrics that came to her were slightly skewed. "It's OK," she says, "I'm Swedish."

'Little Bit'

Naming the ways she's fallen "a little bit in love," Lykke Li sings along with ukulele flourishes and a ticking drum machine. The synthetic beats first functioned as a loop that she listened to on her iPod as she practiced her singing.

But later she decided to substitute the loop for live drums and horns. "This is so much cooler," she says. "It's more stripped down and sensual."

Julia Child: The OSS Years

By Noël Riley Fitch

"Julia Child a Spy!" exulted last week's headlines after the release by the National Archives of hitherto redacted names from Office of Strategic Services (OSS) personnel files.

One can only imagine the fictional narrative fantasies this declassification might inspire: *Parachuted behind the lines during the German Occupation of France, the 6-foot-2 Smith College graduate met her future husband, multilingual sophisticate Paul Child, a liaison to the Resistance in the Maquis. In the clandestine world of safe houses, the daughter of the safely Republican Pasadena McWilliams clan acquired the fundamentals of French cuisine.*

Would that it were true. The facts are infinitely more prosaic, but fascinating nonetheless.

Though Julia Child, with characteristic Yankee modesty, was to disparage, in numerous interviews, her wartime career as "a clerk," Paul revealed otherwise. In a letter to his twin brother, he declared her "privy to all messages both incoming from the field or Washington, etc., and outgoing to our agents and operatives all over China-Burma-India."

Seen from a view of posterity, her "boring" job was to provide Julia Child with the discipline, the autonomous organizational skill, the patience to devise, test and perfect the recipes in her encyclopedic chef-d'oeuvre: "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" (1961, 1970), on which her immortality can be said to rest.

Julia McWilliams's "undercover" career began, one might say, in April 1942 with her declin-

ing a marriage proposal from Harrison Chandler—an L.A. (Times) Chandler, no less. Soon after, she decided to leave Pasadena (where the 1942 Rose Bowl had been canceled as part of the war effort). She quit her Red Cross volunteer work as head of "Stenographic Services, typing, and mimeographing" (to which, after Pearl Harbor, she had already added Aircraft Warning Services).

She took the Civil Service Exam, applied to the Waves (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Services) and the WAC (Women's Army Corps). She was, at 6-foot-2, however, apparently considered too tall for the service. Nonetheless, she moved to Washington, where, she told a friend, "the action" was. "The war was the change in my life," she wrote.

First as senior typist in the Office of War Information (August 1942), then as junior research assistant in the office of OSS Director "Wild" Bill Donovan, Julia joined America's novice intelligence team: the Ivy Leaguers, the Martini-drinking best and brightest, many of whose names have only recently been revealed, including Allen Dulles, later head of the CIA, and future Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg. The OSS members were disparaged as fly-by-nighters, "Oh So Social" or "Oh Such Snobs."

Julia "rose through the ranks" from senior clerk to administra-

tive assistant, organizing a large office. She lived in the Brighton Hotel, cooked (badly) on a hot plate that splattered the wallpaper with chicken fat, she admitted.

When she heard in 1943 that the OSS wanted volunteers for service in India, she applied; bored and in search of adventure, she was "free, white, and thirty-one," ready and eager to go.

And it was in Asia, not France—

tor into those fine tastes available even in war-torn China and Ceylon.

The move to HQ in the Shangri-La setting of Kandy had a serious purpose: guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. Though Julia knew more of golf clubs than international cables and spies, she had high security clearance to file and process classified dispatches for the SEAC (South East Asia Command) under Lord Mountbatten.

While she came to hate the routine of office work, Julia thrilled at the secrets and at the proximity of danger and of her new-found colleague, Paul Child, who worked in graphics and photography designing war rooms. With Paul she came to share passion, but also a passion for the Rijstafel curry table with "as many condiments as the human imagination can devise." She brought to the table her keen sense of humor and her propensity for practical jokes.

After 10 months in Kandy, Julia flew, via Calcutta, to Kunming, China, to set up and run the OSS Registry. It was March 1945 (Germany was to surrender in May), and Asia was now the focus of the war.

Paul designed Gen. Albert Wedemeyer's China War Room, and Julia, with a staff of 10 assistants, opened, numbered and directed all forms, devising new systems for code names and filing secret papers. The conflict between Chiang

Kai-shek and Mao Zedong was already in the offing, and Americans were divided in their loyalties.

Meanwhile, Chinese cuisine beckoned: "American food in China was terrible; we thought it was cooked by grease monkeys. The Chinese food was wonderful, and we ate out as often as we could. That is when I became interested in food. I just loved Chinese food."

More than that, her sophisticated Ivy League colleagues talked so much about the food they ate. Julia, Paul would later say, was always hungry: "She's a wolf by nature."

The war against Japan ended in August 1945; Julia's career in espionage, almost as soon. For a brief two years Julia became the consummate Georgetown housewife with a newly jobless husband, Paul, to feed, depleting his OSS savings and her family inheritance. Julia studied "The Joy of Cooking." Eager to please her new husband, she struggled with recipes, relying on Paul's savvy.

A move to France, where Paul joined the U.S. Information Agency, came none too soon in October 1948.

On Nov. 3 of that year, Julia was to "master the joy of devouring French cooking," having her personal gastronomic epiphany when she sat down to a feast of oysters, sole meunière, Pouilly-Fuissé and tarte tatin at Restaurant La Couronne on the Place du Vieux-Marché in Rouen. "The whole experience was an opening up of the soul and spirit for me. I was hooked, and for life, as it turned out."

Ms. Fitch is the author of "Appetite for Life: The Biography of Julia Child" (1997).



The palate of the host of 'The French Chef' was first awakened while she was on wartime assignments in Ceylon and China, not France.

especially on assignment in China and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)—that the palate of the star of the future "French Chef" TV series would first be awakened, weaned from the golden age of canned, frozen and other processed food, the world of Pasadena home cooking.

And it was Asia that changed her life, for it was there, in May 1944, in Kandy (Ceylon) that Julia McWilliams met Paul Child, 10 years her senior, a connoisseur of wine, women and cuisine, who became her lover, mentor and initia-

Atlantic's Jerry Wexler Showed Aretha R-E-S-P-E-C-T

By Jim Fusilli

Anyone who claims that talents as singular as Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin would have prospered even without the intervention of Jerry Wexler may be right. But it is irrefutable that Wexler, who died last Friday of congestive heart failure at age 91, was president of Atlantic Records when it and its subsidiaries were the most significant labels in rhythm and blues—the ones for which Mr. Charles, Ms. Franklin, Otis Redding and many other notable artists did their best work.

As a producer, Wexler made records to capture moments born of preparation and spontaneity. "Jerry would say, 'We all feel good about it tonight, but let's see how we feel in the morning,'" Aretha Franklin told me when we spoke on Saturday afternoon. He coaxed Ms. Franklin to join Atlantic and helped liberate her from Columbia Records, where her career had faltered. In his autobiography, "Rhythm and the Blues," Wexler wrote, "My idea was to make good tracks, use the best players, put Aretha back on piano and let the lady wail."

"He provided the vehicle to allow me to perform and express myself," Ms. Franklin told me. She

also said she knew that the 14 albums they made together recorded music for the ages. "Without sounding egotistical—yes, I knew. I always knew. I'm a musician as well as a singer, and I listened. I've always listened."

The producer helped R&B singers find their voice.

Wexler's philosophy as a producer was to ensure that Atlantic's artists could maximize their talents. "I thought, No. 1, is it any good? No. 2, will it sell?" he once said. In Ray Charles's case, he stayed out of the way. Wexler wrote, "Our main job was to make certain the studio was ready when he was available . . . and present him to as large a public as possible."

In his own autobiography, "Brother Ray," Mr. Charles said that Wexler; Ahmet Ertegun, Atlantic's co-founder; and the invaluable engineer Tom Dowd "let me make my own mistakes, let me produce my own small triumphs." Those "small triumphs" include a series of unforgettable R&B hits and "The Genius of Ray Charles," an album Wexler co-produced with Nesuhi Ertegun (Ahmet's older brother) that featured Mr. Charles stepping into big-band jazz, jump blues and ballads underscored by strings.

When Wexler joined Atlantic as a partner in 1953, six years after Ahmet Ertegun and Herb

Abramson launched it, Wexler's primary credentials were his passion for music by African-Americans and an impeccable ear that served him as a correspondent for Billboard magazine. For 22 years, Messrs. Wexler and Ertegun, who died in December 2006, produced and promoted R&B, soul and rock music that, for the most part, required their personal stamp of approval. The little independent that could, Atlantic in its first decade recorded and distributed music that was sophisticated and drenched in sweat. Among Atlantic's artists were Ruth Brown, LaVern Baker, Solomon Burke and Big Joe Turner—Wexler is a member of the choir shouting "Shake, Rattle and Roll" under the Turner vocal on that hit.

As the '60s rolled around, Mr. Ertegun supervised the recording career of Bobby Darin, who brought Atlantic its first hit by a white artist. It's simplifying a complex history to say that Mr. Ertegun developed and nurtured Atlantic's rock roster while Wexler stuck to R&B and soul. Mr. Ertegun did bring Cream, Crosby Stills and Nash, and the Rolling Stones to the label, among many others. But Dusty Springfield sold Wexler on Led Zeppelin while Wexler was co-producing "Dusty in Memphis." He bought out Duane Allman's

contract and brought him into Atlantic's sphere. Wexler found a nest of extraordinary musicians, and many of them played on Ms. Franklin's first recording for Atlantic, the 1967 masterpiece "I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You." Wexler left Atlantic after new



The 14 albums Wexler and Franklin made together resulted in music for the ages.


ownership decreed that he would, in effect, report to Mr. Ertegun. Though he had little patience for rock, he joined the Warner Music Group as head talent scout on the U.S. East Coast and signed Dire Straits, the B-52s and others. In 1979, Bob Dylan asked Wexler to produce his album "Slow Train Coming." Wexler played rough at

contract time, had an incendiary temper, and made the payoffs for Atlantic to disc jockeys demanding payola. In his autobiography, he said that Mr. Ertegun told him that people considered him "abrasive, derisive and cynical." But for most of his career, he eschewed the fast lane and enjoyed hosting musicians, disc jockeys and other industry people at his home in Great Neck, N.Y., grilling steaks while he and his guests talked about, and listened to, R&B, blues and soul music. "He knew how to mix business and fun," Ms. Franklin told me, mentioning how Wexler and his first wife, Shirley, welcomed her to their home. With a tug in her voice, she said: "What a good time we had. What a gentleman he was."


In 1971, Ms. Franklin was performing at the Fillmore East with a band led by King Curtis. Ray Charles came from the wings and joined them onstage for a version of "Spirit in the Dark." In his autobiography, Wexler said he witnessed "two geniuses from two distinct periods in my life, merging so easily, so naturally, so inevitably." He added, "All I could do was sit there and weep."

Mr. Fusilli is the Journal's rock and pop music critic. Email him at jfusilli@wsj.com.

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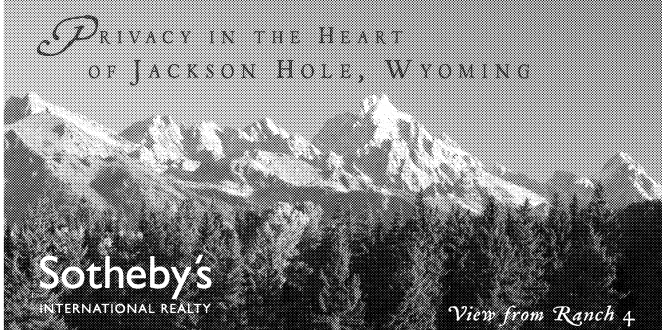


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Left, 'Woman's Island 5,' 1942, by Hendrik Nicolaas Werkman, in Amsterdam. Above, woman's jacket from Azerbaijan, 19th century, in Berlin.

Amsterdam

photography
"Kors van Bennekom—Kors's Choice" celebrates the 75th birthday of Dutch photographer Kors van Bennekom with a selection of his street, theater and family photography.
FOAM Fotografiemuseum
Amsterdam
Until Sept. 14
☎ 31-20-5516-500
www.foam.nl

art
"Welcoming the Stedelijk Museum: 'Druksel prints' by Werkman" shows selected prints by Hendrik Nicolaas Werkman (1882-1945) that evolve from typographical, abstract compositions to increasingly figurative images.
Van Gogh Museum
Until Oct. 12
☎ 31-20-5705-200
www.vangoghmuseum.nl

Antwerp

art
"Affiches" exhibits posters from the 1920s to today that were used to promote the museum.
Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen
Until Oct. 12
☎ 32-3-2387-809
museum.antwerpen.be/kmska

music festival

"Laus Polyphoniae 2008" presents the classical music repertoire of the Hanseatic League, a trading association in more than two hundred cities. This year's ensemble in residence is the baroque group Concerto Palatino.
Festival van Vlaanderen
Antwerpen
Aug. 23-31
☎ 32-320-24669
www.festivalvanvlaanderen.be

Athens

art
"Toulouse-Lautrec and the Belle Epoque in Paris and Athens" shows a rare collection of 100 original posters, prints and drawings on paper by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), including portraits of famous actors and singers, sketches and caricatures.
Herakleidon
Until Oct. 5
☎ 30-210-3461-981
www.herakleidon-art.gr

Berlin

ethnology
"Azerbaijan—Land of Fire" displays objects from 5,000 years of Azerbaijani culture, including Islamic décor and European and Soviet-era art.
Ethnologisches Museum
Aug. 27-Nov. 16
☎ 49-30-8301-438
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

art
"Hiroshige: Landscape Woodcut Prints" displays prints by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858), known for his atmospheric images from Japanese literature and culture.
Museum für Asiatische Kunst
Until Oct. 5
☎ 49-30-8301-438
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

Bonn

history
"Rome and the Barbarians—Europe during the Migration Period" displays



Photos: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; Museum für Teppiche und angewandte Volkskunst

about 1,000 pieces of jewellery, weapons, coins and other archaeological objects illustrating Europe's transition from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages, known as the Migration Period.
Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Until Dec. 7
☎ 49-228-9171-0
www.kah-bonn.de

Cologne

art
"Hitler Blind and Stalin Lame—Marinus and Heartfield" shows about 200 works of political photomontage from the 1930s by Jacob Keldgaard (1884-1964), known as "Marinus" and his inspiration, John Heartfield. The images mocked Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini with wit and artistic precision.
Museum Ludwig
Until Oct. 19
☎ 49-221-2212-6165
www.museenkoel.de/museum-ludwig

Copenhagen

history
"Topf & Söhne—Builders of the Aus-

chwitz Ovens" uses photography and documents to illustrate how management, engineers and fitters from Topf & Söhne, an ordinary German industrial enterprise, developed into builders for Nazi concentration camps.
Worker's Museum
Until Dec. 31
☎ 45-3393-2575
www.arbejdermuseet.dk

Hamburg

art
"Travelling in Historical Japan" exhibits 40 woodcuts and paintings on the theme of travel in Japan in the 19th century, including landscape prints.
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe
Until Oct. 26
☎ 49-40-4281-3427-32
www.mkg-hamburg.de

WSJ.com

What's on
WSJ.com subscribers can see an expanded version of the European arts-and-culture calendar at
WSJ.com/Europe

London

art
"Painting Family" exhibits works by the De Bray family, a dominant 17th-century Dutch artistic dynasty.
Dulwich Picture Gallery
Until Oct. 5
☎ 44-20-8693-5254
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

art
"Turmoil and Tranquillity" shows 16th- and 17th-century Dutch and Flemish maritime paintings.
National Maritime Museum
Until Jan 11
☎ 44-20-8858-4422
www.nmm.ac.uk

Madrid

art
"Máquinas & Almas—Digital Art and New Media" features art by David Byrne, David Hanson, Paul Friedlander, Sachiko Kodama and others.
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia
Until Oct. 13
☎ 34-91-7741-000
www.museoreinasofia.es

Munich

art
"Francis Alÿs" exhibits over 20 works by Belgian abstract artist Francis Alÿs (born 1959), including photographs, collages, paintings, drawings, audiovisual installations and sculptures.
Goetz Collection
Until Oct. 11
☎ 49-89-9593-9690
www.sammlung-goetz.de

Paris

music
"Oum Kalsoum, The Fourth Pyramid" shows photographs, audiovisuals, documents and personal objects of legendary Egyptian singer Oum Kalsoum, known as "The Fourth Pyramid."
Institut du Monde Arabe
Until Nov. 2
☎ 33-1-4051-3838
www.imarabe.org

Rotterdam

cartography
"In Search of Eldorado" displays maps of Surinam, Eastern and Western Guyana from the 16th to 19th centuries, charting the lives of pioneers who tried to build a new life in the region.
Maritime Museum Rotterdam
Until Oct. 5
☎ 31-10-4132-680
www.mmph.nl

Stockholm

music
"The Baltic Sea Festival 2008" features classical music by the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra and others.
Berwaldhallen
Until Aug. 30
☎ 46-8-7841-800
www.sr.se/berwaldhallen

Venice

film
"Venice Film Festival 2008" presents the world premiere of "Burn After Reading" by the Coen brothers as well as Kathryn Bigelow's Iraq war drama "Hurt Locker" and others.
Venice Film Festival
Aug. 27-Sept. 6
☎ 39-041-2726-501
www.labiennale.org

Vienna

art
"Bad Painting—Good Art" exhibits 21 paintings considered by the curators to represent bad, ugly or malicious works with elements of irony, protest, trash and shock.
MUMOK
Until Oct. 12
☎ 43-1-5250-0
www.mumok.at

Zurich

art
"Saul Steinberg: Illuminations" shows drawings, collages and sculptural assemblages by American artist Saul Steinberg (1914-1999), known for the wit and satire in his work.
Kunsthau Zürich
Until Nov. 2
☎ 41-44-2538-497
www.kunsthau.ch

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.