FRIDAY - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24 - 26, 2008

WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

# Making magic with star ensembles

The power of movies when Hollywood greats are team players

Confessions from Teitur | Golf's lessons in humility

# Contents


**3 | Fashion**

Men's style goes 'extreme banker'

Collecting: Avant-garde fashion

**4 | Music**

Confessions of Teitur

**5 | Games**

LittleBigPlanet's dreamworld

**6-7 | Food & Drink**

Wine: Australia's bright spot

Making a bad cocktail better ▸

**8-11 | Cover story Film**

## Ensemble power

How movie stars make magic when working as a team

Plus: Indie films on the Web, and Morgenstern reviews 'W.'


Ensemble performances and star turns: **Top row** (from left to right): Russell Crowe of "American Gangster" and "L.A. Confidential," Tom Cruise in "Magnolia" and Cameron Diaz in "Being John Malkovich." **Middle row** (from left to right): Jeff Bridges in "The Big Lebowski," Julia Roberts and George Clooney of "Ocean's Eleven" and Cate Blanchett in "I'm Not There." **Front row** (from left to right): Meryl Streep in "A Prairie Home Companion," Daniel Day-Lewis in "There Will Be Blood" and Jack Nicholson in "Chinatown."

Cover illustration: Drew Friedman


**12 | Books**

Updike on aging friends ▸

Cat lady Doris Lessing

**13 | Sports**

Golf's lesson in humility

Literary trio's fish story

**14 | Taste**

Jan who?

**15 | Top Picks**

Events in Berlin, Paris and Linz

**16 | Time Off**

Our arts and culture calendar


**WSJ.com**

### World's horse race

This weekend's Breeders' Cup is inaugurating a new track surface. How will it play?

WSJ.com/Sports

### Raw power

Top sushi chefs are autocrats in their domain, and fans love it.

WSJ.com/Food

### New Chandigarh?

Population growth is pressuring Le Corbusier's Indian city.

WSJ.com/Asia


WEEKEND JOURNAL.
EUROPE

Elizabeth Blackshire EDITOR
Craig Winneker DEPUTY EDITOR
Fahire Kurt ART DIRECTOR
Kathleen Van Den Broeck ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR
Matthew Kaminski TASTE PAGE EDITOR

Questions or comments? Write to wsje.weekend@wsj.com. Please include your full name and address.


## THE JOURNAL CROSSWORD / Edited by Mike Shenk

### Male Bonding / by Pancho Harrison

**Across**

1 Finito
5 Destroy by degrees
10 Crockett's "Miami Vice" partner
15 Mexicali setting
19 Dos minus dos
20 Dark Lord of the Sith
21 Destroyer destroyer
22 Gabon's president Bongo
23 Winner of several O. Henry Awards
25 Carnegie Hall headliner of January 16, 1938
27 Observation
28 Lineups
30 Didn't guzzle
31 Vaccine target
33 Chief Ouray, for one
34 Forever, seemingly
36 Author of 2001's "Fury"
40 Risk-reducing position
45 Struck like a water balloon
49 Celestial Seasonings offering
50 Huey Lewis's band
52 Do
53 Perfect places
56 "The Spanish Singer" painter
58 Vermont-based mail-order retailer
60 Crest rival
62 Some 39-Down works
63 Crime writer Buchanan
64 Lacking range
66 Singer Corinne Bailey ___
67 Home of Sharp
69 Ring leader?
70 Founder and keyboardist of the Earth Band
73 Mess up messages
77 Equip anew
79 Harbor sight
80 Dorm duo
81 "Amscray!"
84 Not worth ___
86 Southern city in 1965 headlines
88 Western lilies
89 Author who wrote "Demian" under the pen name Emil Sinclair
92 Clear out
94 Fourth little piggy's share
95 Zola's declaration
96 Friday, for one
98 Shell games?
100 Leigh Hunt poem "Abou Ben ___"
101 "Winter Light" director
105 Reduce in force
107 Calico cat, usually
108 Many a nametag
113 Furthermore
117 "That's great!"
121 Home of Odysseus
122 Writer of the "I am stuck on Band-Aid" jingle
124 Writer who appeared in a 2004 "Gilmore Girls" episode
126 Under any circumstances
127 Treasure
128 "La Vita Nuova" writer
129 Reach a maximum price
130 You see right through it
131 Beans
132 Close by, poetically
133 IDs first issued in 1936

**Down**

1 2003 Peter Martins ballet
2 Chorus preceder
3 Go ballistic
4 Brancusi's homeland
5 Size up
6 Chamillionaire's field
7 Old sneaker feature
8 Roundabout route
9 1974 hit from Spain
10 Spot for some surfers
11 Above, in Austria
12 It has little foliage
13 Outlaw
14 "Everything's Coming Up Roses" composer
15 Yahoo
16 Cookie entrepreneur Wally
17 35th anniversary gift
18 Title character in Anne Rice's sixth Vampire Chronicles book
24 "What services ___ thou do?": Lear
26 Wildcatter's dream
29 It might make pupils shrink
32 Tool used when the stakes are high?
35 Outfits
37 "Deal or No Deal" star
38 TV's "___ Haw"
39 Anti-art art
41 Affectionate word
42 More than just ask
43 Singer Stefani
44 This, in Toledo
45 "Amscray!"
46 Profitable Internet business
47 Largest human gland
48 Song sung by Fred and Ginger in "Swing Time"
51 Tries
54 Foam toy brand
55 Brown quickly
57 "___ in heaven above, ___ earth beneath": 1 Kings
59 Teed off
61 Satisfies
65 Sacred scrolls
68 CONTROL foe
70 Chutney maker's supply
71 Where seconds are important
72 Make a mess of
74 Bunker, for one
75 First name among hoteliers
76 Slalom makeup
78 Response to a pointer
80 Dance party attendees
81 LaBeouf of "Eagle Eye"
82 Stock unit
83 Pit group: Abbr.
85 Mil. branch in the Dept. of Homeland Security
87 Stable mother
90 Without feeling
91 Around the 30th: Abbr.
93 Miniature hourglass
97 Go by
99 Deadly mushroom
102 Kevin of "Weeds"
103 Girl in a Beach Boys song
104 Deplore
106 Reference section staple
109 Cash on hand?
110 Curly-leafed cabbages
111 Current setting
112 Stilton stoolies
113 Second son
114 Bullpen stat
115 Small singer
116 Gets it wrong
118 Résumé sender's goal
119 Lamb tenders
120 Fish-loving eagle
123 Answer to the chaplain
125 Large ray

**WSJ.com**

**Crossword online**
For an interactive version of The Wall Street Journal Crossword, WSJ.com subscribers can go to **WSJ.com/WeekendJournal**

### Last week's solution

| A | B | B | A | D | O | | | | B | A | S | I | C | | R | A | N | L | O | W |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | E | A | V | E | R | S | | T | E | X | A | C | O | | A | R | C | A | N | E |
| O | N | T | O | P | I | C | | W | H | I | T | E | H | A | T | M | O | U | S | E |
| A | D | M | I | T | | H | A | Y | E | S | | C | E | D | E | S | | P | A | K |
| R | E | A | D | | H | E | L | L | S | | B | A | R | D | S | | T | E | L | L |
| D | R | K | | C | O | M | B | A | T | M | O | V | E | R | | M | O | R | E | Y |
| | | E | R | A | S | E | S | | | I | R | E | S | | J | A | M | | | |
| C | A | R | A | F | E | S | | A | N | D | I | | | Q | U | I | B | B | L | E |
| O | U | S | T | E | D | | | C | O | A | C | H | F | A | T | M | A | R | E | S |
| M | S | D | O | S | | L | O | C | U | S | | B | O | N | E | S | | A | C | T |
| I | T | O | N | | R | U | N | O | N | | T | O | A | D | S | | E | T | T | A |
| N | E | Z | | S | E | M | I | S | | C | O | M | M | A | | G | A | M | U | T |
| G | R | E | A | T | M | E | N | T | H | U | M | B | | | R | E | T | I | R | E |
| S | E | N | T | O | U | T | | | O | R | E | S | | M | E | N | A | G | E | S |
| | | | H | P | S | | P | O | L | L | | | H | E | A | R | T | H | | |
| S | O | L | O | S | | H | O | N | E | Y | B | E | A | T | M | E | | T | M | S |
| U | R | A | L | | O | A | S | E | S | | I | D | L | E | S | | I | C | O | N |
| F | E | M | | S | P | R | A | T | | A | L | I | T | O | | E | N | O | L | A |
| F | L | A | T | M | A | P | D | O | O | D | L | E | | R | A | T | T | L | E | R |
| I | S | R | A | E | L | | A | G | R | E | E | S | | S | U | C | R | O | S | E |
| X | E | R | X | E | S | | S | O | B | E | R | | | | S | H | O | R | T | S |

# Men's style: Extreme banker

By Ray A. Smith

GORDON GEKKO is on the move again. Even though turmoil on Wall Street has wiped out some of today's Masters of the Universe, the character played by Michael Douglas in the 1987 movie "Wall Street" is looming large—in men's fashion. Not since he said that greed was good have so many double-breasted jackets, three-piece suits and colored shirts with white collars shown up in stores, in magazines and on runways.

Modern takes on these and other iconic looks of the 1980s—think suspenders and paisley power ties—have popped up in a wide range of collections for this fall and next spring. The designers embracing the look range from avant-garde Prada to preppy J. Crew, which is featuring five shirt styles with contrasting white collars. Designers pushing double-breasted looks include Thom Browne, Tom Ford, Bottega Veneta, Canali, Dunhill, Lanvin, Phillip Lim, Ralph Lauren and Valentino. Tom James, a custom-clothing company that visits men's offices, says orders for double-breasted suits rose more than 50% to 1,753 in the year ended Oct. 14.

The clothes, of course, were all designed before the events of the past few weeks. But some designers say they became fascinated months ago with the unbridled ambition and decadence of the early 1980s. The fact that that era came just before the 1987 stock market crash isn't lost on them either.

"It was a peacock moment, when America was really brash," menswear designer Patrik Ervell says. At his runway show last month, he had models sport 1980s-style pompadours, trying to evoke the cockiness of stockbrokers and other corporate players in that era.

Retailers hope the bolder looks will inspire consumers to go shopping again. The styles also have the advantage of looking fresh to men under 30, who missed the extreme-banker look the first time around.

Some designers and retailers say formal, double-breasted or three-piece suits and contrast-collared shirts make sense even in an economic slump. These styles, they say, can help men appear serious and competitive at the office and on job interviews. Chicago attorney Francis Kowalik, for one, doesn't think that's far-fetched. A double-breasted suit "has a little more authority to it, a little bit of weight," says the 44-year-old, who owns a number of double-breasted suits and plans to buy more. "It says you're not messing around."

But other designers say the bold 1980s looks may be too much for today's austere times. Some men are turned off by the extra fabric and all the buttons on a double-breasted jacket. And a generally accepted rule of thumb is that men who are overweight or short look wider in double-breasted jackets.

Designer Scott Sternberg, whose Band of Outsiders label is sold at Barneys New York and other stores, acknowledges that his double-breasted looks haven't been a top seller. The 34-year-old Mr. Sternberg, who says he sought inspiration for his spring collection from looks of the late 1970s and early 1980s, nevertheless included more double-breasted jackets in his spring 2009 collection. He says he admires men who can pull off such a big, showy style.

Still, Mr. Sternberg and other designers, including Michael Bastian and Antonio Azzuolo, are tweaking the look, making their double-breasted jackets slimmer and shorter than the 1980s versions. In addition, they advocate wearing the jackets in more informal ways—without ties, for instance, or with jeans.

Some retailers are also showing three-piece suits, another formal look that gained currency in the 1980s. Brooks Brothers is carrying two more three-piece-suit styles than usual and making sure all of its stores have at least one of the styles this fall. And Bloomingdale's put three-piece suits in the windows of its New York flagship store in early October. The look, combined with contrast-collared shirts, "is very masculine and about power and luxury, which is what the '80s started out all about," says Kevin Harter, Bloomingdale's men's fashion director.

Also emerging this fall is a very different but equally in-your-face 1980s look. For casual clothes, designers are channeling punk. Bergdorf Goodman is gearing up for what men's fashion director Tommy Fazio calls a "British version of the '80s"—characterized by skinny pencil jeans, pants with zigzags of zippers, suspenders, fingerless gloves, bulky black boots and studs on everything from belts to leather vests and leather jackets.

"England in the '80s was a rough time for the working class, so it is interesting that that look is coming back when we're going through our economic crisis right now," says Tim Bess, men's fashion analyst with retail and fashion consultancy Doneger Group. "Both styles were about being very aggressive."

20th Century Fox Film Corp./Everett Collection; Michael Bastian; Tom Ford

Above, the character Gordon Gekko in **'Wall Street'**; left, three-piece suit and contrast-collar shirt by **Michael Bastian;** right, double-breasted suit by **Tom Ford.**

# Avant-garde at auction

THE CATWALK MOVES to Christie's South Kensington Thursday when the auction house sells a private collection of 20th century avant-garde fashion.

The 250 pieces of vintage fashion garments, headwear and jewelry in a sale covers design from a 1960s influenced by the Space Age and pop art through the revival of architectural couture in the 1990s. It includes designers such as André Courèges, Emilio Pucci, Yves Saint Laurent, Ossie Clark, Issey Miyake and other pivotal designers.

## Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

The collection comes from Resurrection, a leading U.S. vintage fashion retailer with stores in New York and Los Angeles, owned by designer Katy Rodriguez and Mark Haddaway.

"This sale is about moments in time that changed fashion," says Christie's textiles specialist Pat Frost. Bidding is expected from museums, fashion collectors who often view pieces as sculpture for display, contemporary designers seeking inspiration and shoppers looking to make a strong statement at their next party.

Striking items from the 1960s include Pierre Cardin's Space-Age inspired voluminous red plastic satellite cape (estimate: £4,000-£6,000); Paco Rabanne's futuristic tunic dress made from linked aluminum panels (estimate: £5,000-£8,000); and Harry Gordon's disposable paper shift adorned with an outsize cat on the bodice (estimate: £600-£800).

The 1970s and 1980s produced such contrasting fashion as revolutionary T-shirts and softly feminine evening wear. Vivienne Westwood's knitted jumper made from black and red wool with a skull appliqué printed with "No Future" (estimate: £2,000-£4,000) will be offered alongside Zandra Rhodes's elegant, silk mauve-and-blue "shrug" jacket, with an estimate of £500-£700. From the 1990s, a black leather, low-cut bondage dress with gilt-buckled straps by Gianni Versace is estimated at £1,000-£2,000.

Men also come into their own with a number of jazzy jackets, including two from Alkasura to be sold together, one with red cherries on yellow satin and the other covered in frogs (estimate: £500-£600).

On Dec. 4, Kerry Taylor Auctions' "Passion for Fashion" sale in London will offer a contrasting assembly of 20th-century items, from a 1930s luxurious pink coat dress with turquoise stone buttons by Schiaparelli (estimate: £4,000-£6,000), to a gold and silver velvet suit for men designed by Mr. Fish (estimate: £1,000-£1,500). The Mr. Fish label was founded by Michael Fish, a U.K. designer who pushed flamboyant men's fashion in the 1960s.

Christie's

Satellite cape, circa 1965, by **Pierre Cardin**.

# Singer-songwriter, in a confessional mood

By Craig Winneker

ON THE FOUR ALBUMS he's released since landing a record deal in 2003, the Scandinavian singer-songwriter Teitur has used an impressive array of instruments behind his very personal lyrics—everything from amplified and heavily reverberated acoustic guitar to a brass ensemble to the horror-movie drone of the Theremin.

But for the title track to his new record, "The Singer"—released earlier this year in the U.S. and continental Europe and out next month in the U.K.—he relies on his vocal cords. "I always had the voice, and now I am a singer," he declares, with no musical accompaniment until a lightly struck marimba joins in for the second verse. In live performances, Teitur sings the song—an artist's slightly tongue-in-cheek confession that he doesn't always understand what an adoring audience sees in him—a cappella and alone on the stage.

Born Teitur Lassen in 1977 in the remote Faroe Islands (an autonomous province of Denmark located halfway between the Danish mainland and Iceland), he left home for Copenhagen as a teenager and quickly made a name for himself as a talented musician and songwriter. By 2003 Teitur had signed with Universal Records, which released his well-regarded debut, "Poetry & Airplanes." He now records for his own label, Arlo and Betty, named after two of his guitars.

Teitur's music combines elements of folk, classical, jazz, pop and even cabaret. But the common thread running through the various styles—apart from his lilting, plaintive vocals—is his ability to tell a story. His confessional songs often spin out an idea from one crystalline image: musing on a lasting bond with a ex-girlfriend; sharing a six-pack with a rock star bent on self-destruction; falling instantly in love with a waitress.

Confession is a theme that turns up in a lot of his work, including a project with American composer Nico Muhly to create music for randomly selected YouTube videos. The "Confessions" song cycle, commissioned this year for the Holland Baroque Society, is a kind of soundtrack to an instant society. Its lyrics even incorporate comments from YouTube viewers.

When he's not touring, Teitur divides his time between an apartment in Copenhagen and a house he's just bought back home in the Faroe Islands. Before his concert last Monday night at the Botanique club in Brussels, we sat for a chat with the singer as his bandmates prepared for a soundcheck—and worked half-frantically to replace a bass amp's blown fuse.

Pierre Björk

The singer-songwriter **Teitur,** from the Faroe Islands; right, his new album, **'The Singer.'**

**Q: You've been writing your own songs for a long time. How did you get started?**

I can always remember writing music and being interested in instruments. Especially song forms. I remember singing and playing along to all the songs that people sing when they get together. It's very typical in the Faroe Islands that when you have a party, there's a catalog of songs that you sing all over again. They're usually folk songs or even just songs with Faroese lyrics to famous, evergreen melodies, Beatles songs. I became very interested in them, and very close to them. So I learned how to play music that way, and I always wrote many songs, from an early age.

**Q: Some of the music you make has a very other-worldly quality ot it. Did the remoteness of the Faroe Islands inspire that?**

I think it's a different angle to things—to metropolitan life, to other cultures. The mentality there is quite different. It's very dramatic, the weather determines everything. It's very inspiring to be there. You're just more used to hearing silence. If you're in your house and it starts raining, everything can suddenly start shaking, and then it's gone again. I think it really affects people who are from places like that.

**Q: The title track of your new album, "The Singer," is very personal, almost narcissistic. What's behind a lyric like, "I sing about my loneliness and in return they thank me."**

Well, it was also with a sense of humor. I've toured around, playing 200 shows a year for the last few years, being in front of an audience and coming to terms with what it means to perform when you are the writer, and when are you the artist. I've learned that, when you sing something, it has to be something that you know something about. It has to be something that you've experienced—people that you've met, or things that you feel—or you're not really singing. I think there's something very existential in that. You can only sing the things that happen to you and that you are. What better than for me to write a song about what it's like to be a singer and sing in front of an audience.

**Q: It took you seven years to write the songs for the album. Why so long?**

They just sort of came together that way. I write constantly. I write a lot of things, and sometimes they take shape fast and sometimes they take shape slow. It just depends on what you're trying to do. I write things down and then rework them and get them into shape. Some of the songs just weren't ready yet, that kind of thing, but I kept them around. Then they started to take shape. Then I wrote "The Singer," which sort of defines the other ones, and it all came together.

**Q: Scandinavian artists have a long history of recording songs in English—some more successfully than others. How difficult is it for someone to write songs in a different language?**

For me, it's been a case of speaking English for many years. I used to read books in English when I was small. I'm very good at languages, I speak many different ones. For me it comes quite naturally. I also lived in England, just to get closer to the language. At the beginning, it's because music that you're listening to and things you're trying to communicate, they are in English. It's the language of rock music. Then after that you think, "What am I saying here? What am I trying to do here?" And you realize you have to learn a couple of things and get acquainted with the language and with what you're saying.

**Q: Do you ever think, maybe this song would be better in one language than another? Just because of how the lyrics might sound?**

Sure. It depends on who you're talking to. I did an album in the Faroese language, and my initial reaction was, "OK this is going to come out in the Faroes and Iceland, because no one else understands it." But then you discover that people can enjoy it even though they don't understand the words. It's still music; it still creates pictures in them.

**Q: Your songs weave in a lot of styles, from folk to pop to classical to electronic. Who are your musical influences?**

I listen to lots of orchestral music. I read a lot of books and stories and articles. You sort of combine all the things that surround you. I listen of course to a lot of music on iPod, traveling, and hundreds of bands and individuals. It's very hard to narrow it down. I think it's many different things; it's either the songwriting aspect, the instrumentation, the orchestration—different things you find in different places.

**Q: What was the soundscape you were trying to create with the new album? It's got very unusual instrumentation and you recorded it in a remote location.**

That was mainly looking into what the songs are saying. They sort of had a Victorian feel. We recorded the album in a place that was built in the 1860s, it looks like a dollhouse. It's on the coast of Gotland [a Swedish island in the Baltic sea], an old princess's residence. That also played into the music. The choice to use brass was very obvious. Of course, I also wanted to use my band. Then things just sort of find their own way. For the electronic elements, we wanted to make our own synthesizer sounds. We recorded clarinets and saxophones and then processed them with computer programs to get these overtones and change the sound. You can decide: Should this material be driven by acoustic guitar and voice, or should it be strings, or should it be piano? There are so many options. But when you look inside the material, and who you are, and who you're dealing with, then you make those choices based on what surrounds you and what's possible.

**Q: You did a cover version of "Great Balls of Fire." It must be one of the most unusual versions of that song ever recorded.**

I'm very interested in how, when you read lyrics, they take you somewhere, and when you hear the song, you think, "Oh my god this is so different than what I read." It works the other way around. You listen to a song and then you read the lyrics and it's completely different. That happens to me a lot. So I thought if you play a song like this, for example, with minor chords, it can go into the music and tell it differently. With "Great Balls of Fire," I was writing all these dark things, minor things, and I wanted to write something about schizophrenia, and then the words to "Great Balls of Fire" popped up—"You shake my nerves and you rattle my brain"—and it just made sense.

**Q: For your "Confessions" project, you are writing music to YouTube videos. You must have had to watch a lot of strange stuff.**

We actually got kind of hooked on them. The idea at first was to find all these really mundane videos, that are confessional in some way. It's a really new concept, people posting home videos for everyone else to see: putting a camera on their fridge, filming their dog sleeping, someone going for a drive and putting their camera in the car. A lot of it has beautiful aesthetics and it's very interesting and it tells about the person. I think it's a human need: you want to share something that you see. It's very beautiful.

The idea of putting music to it is also very interesting, because there's stuff happening in it. Even a washing machine going around, the colors falling in, you can orchestrate those things. The main idea is to nail the fact that people are confessing things. It was also fun to make lyrics out of the comments. There was one video where a guy was showing how to make cappuccinos, and the amount of reactions to it was stunning—someone's aggressive, someone is emotional, someone is funny. It says a lot about the times we live in.

**WSJ.com**

**On stage**
See video of an interview with Teitur and part of a performance at **WSJ.com/Lifestyle**

# Community gaming

By Jamin Brophy-Warren

UNLIKE SOME videogame companies that have flashy offices in Los Angeles or San Francisco, developer Media Molecule has a studio located in the modest British town of Guildford above a bathroom-products showroom. And the company's mascot, in contrast to tough guys like Grand Theft Auto IV's Niko Bellic, is an obsidian-eyed ragdoll named Sackboy.

Sony has high hopes for the 30-person company's new game, LittleBigPlanet. Due out next week for the PS3 console, the videogame follows Sackboy's adventures through a dream world. Sony has launched a multicity advertising campaign, placing hundreds of tiny billboards in lawns and on buildings. The company also used Sackboy in its presentation to deliver financial data at this year's E3, the videogame industry's annual conference.

Under the mantra "Play. Create. Share," LittleBigPlanet brings the type of user-generated content tools found on sites like YouTube to the videogame console. That means in addition to allowing players to revamp levels or stages of the game or come up with new ones, Media Molecule has also introduced ways to find and share what other users of the game have created.

To do that, the studio has taken a page from the Web world by adding features like user recommendations (similar to what one might find on Amazon) and "tagging" features, which group items according to their characteristics. When the PS3 is linked to the Internet, these features allow players to find user-designed levels or objects that directly appeal to them just as they would search for a new pair of shoes online. "It's like a cross between Facebook and Flickr," says Alex Evans, technical director and co-founder of the company.

Media Molecule views LittleBigPlanet as something that will be a work in progress long after its release date. Traditionally, when customers purchase a videogame, the product is considered finished and "patches," or downloadable additions, are usually limited to fixing any gameplay problems that crop up. Instead, the studio plans to keep adding new community features, such as uploading gameplay footage to YouTube, just as an Internet company would. (Sony said it delayed the original release date by a week to remove a background song that it discovered featured lyrics from the Quran, after buzz had built online from concerned Muslims.)

Mr. Evans and his partners Mark Healey, Dave Smith and Kareem Ettouney started at Lionhead Studios in the 1990s. In their spare time in 2005, they developed "Ragdoll Kung-Fu," a goofy fighting game. The success of the game gave them the chance to launch their own studio right down the road, Media Molecule, and to develop LittleBigPlanet.

In the game, players guide Sackboy through about 50 different levels and collect orbs to score points while gathering stickers and costumes. There are mini-missions throughout such as riding a mechanical bull or a skateboard. Navigating the worlds is surreal (evoking the spirit of "Alice in Wonderland" author Lewis Carroll, who's buried only a few kilometers from the studio's offices), with everyday objects becoming building blocks for each level.

The family-friendly gameplay masks the studio's data-driven approach. Media Molecule mines dozens of aspects about player behavior, such as what user-generated outfits are most popular and how many items someone has collected. That data will then be analyzed and incorporated into the game's interface. The approach is similar to the research that sites like Facebook do on their users.

Allowing user-generated content in LittleBigPlanet creates the same risks that sites like YouTube face with profane or scandalous material. Users may create things that aren't appropriate for all ages. Media Molecule plans to ban any material that's not kid-friendly.

Media Molecule sees the risk as part of the process. "Google didn't become popular by hiding bad search results," says Mr. Evans. "If you can build the right features to find content you like, it'll float to the top."

The community approach may work against LittleBigPlanet if more PlayStation 3s aren't sold. Fewer PS3s may mean fewer LittleBigPlanet players online and less content and interaction. So far, the console has lagged behind the latest generation of rivals like the Nintendo Wii and the Microsoft Xbox 360. The PS3 has only sold 3.5 million copies over the last year, half as many as the Wii and more than a million less than the older Xbox 360, according to research firm NPD Group.

"Due to its high price point and the strong demand on the Wii, I don't think this will be the PS3's season," says Edward Woo, research analyst for Wedbush Morgan Securities. Mr. Woo says LittleBigPlanet should be a "good game," but doesn't think it will drive PS3 sales like Grand Theft Auto IV or Metal Gear Solid 4, two of the PS3's top titles this year.

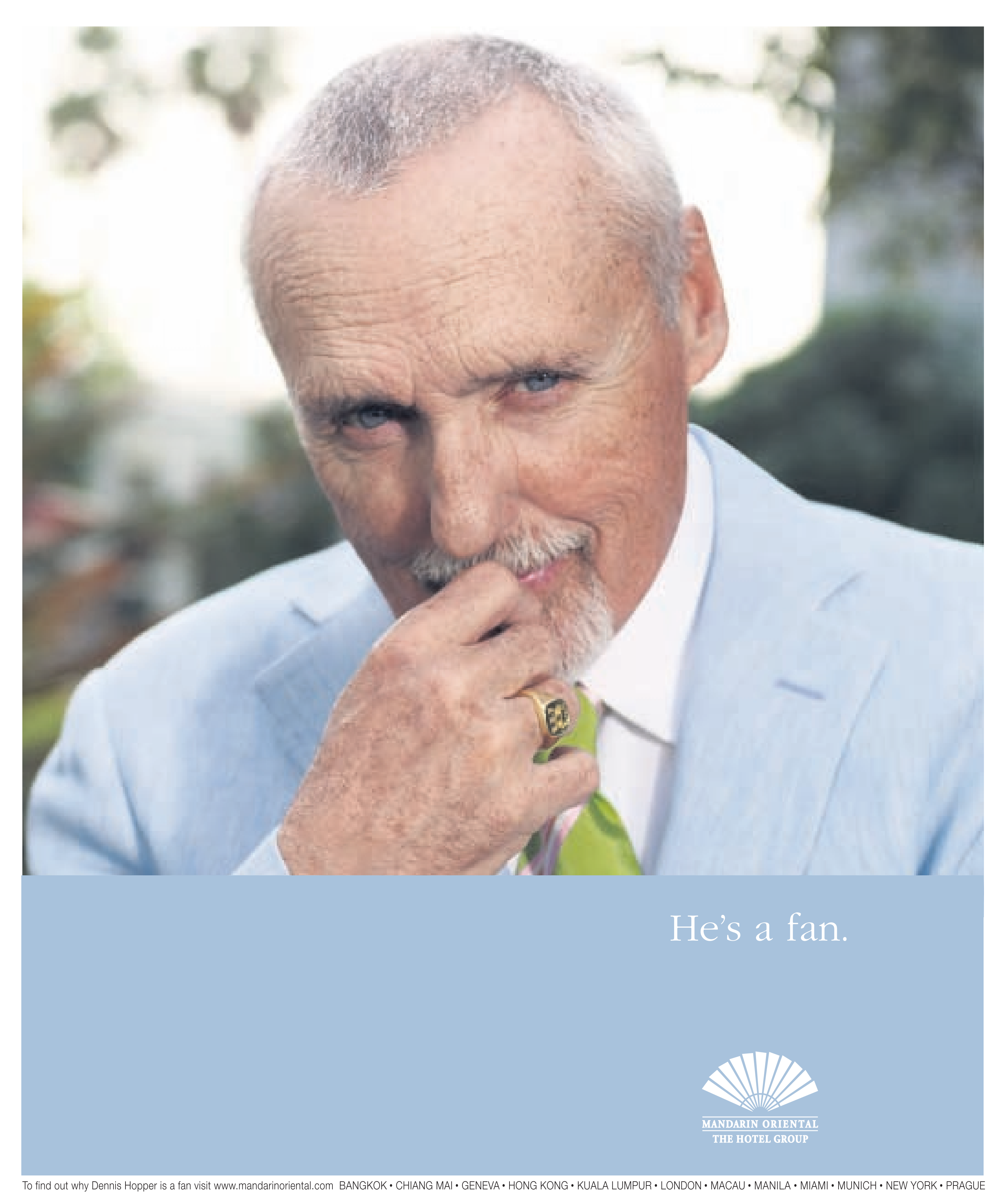
Mr. Ettouney, the art director and co-founder, is unfazed. "If the people connect to [the game], they'll reach others. All we need is a starting point."

Sony Computer Entertainment America

A scene from **LittleBigPlanet**.

**WSJ.com**

**Dream world**
Watch Jamin Brophy-Warren test drive LittleBigPlanet, at WSJ.com/Lifestyle



# Australia's bright spot

RIESLING IS ONE of the world's greatest grapes and its natural home is Germany. It's grown successfully elsewhere, too, from Austria to Michigan to New York. In fact, we happened to see a Riesling from Luxembourg at a store recently and, having rarely seen a wine from Luxembourg, picked it up. It was Clos des Rochers

## Tastings

DOROTHY J. GAITER
AND JOHN BRECHER

Riesling 2005 "Grand Premier Cru" (Moselle Luxembourgeoise), it cost $17.99 and it was one of the best Rieslings we've had in a while, with beautiful, ripe fruit, great minerals, perfect acidity and great mouthfeel. We bought a case to lay down.

Riesling has been a popular grape in Australia for more than a century, but it got shoved aside during the past 15 years or so by popular, easy-to-drink and affordable Chardonnay and Shiraz. Recently, we have been sharply critical of Australia's Chardonnay and Shiraz—too many of them are caricatures of wine—but we have always added that Australian Riesling is generally a good bet if you can find it. That caveat at the end has been important, though, because Australian Riesling has been hard to find—until now. As Australia battles to right its export ship, it is clearly placing a bigger bet on Riesling. We had no trouble picking up 50 examples to find out, overall, how they are.

Heidi Younger

We did not set a price limit, but the vast majority cost less than $20. We also did not include late-harvest Riesling. And while we usually limit our tastings to recent vintages because those are the ones you are most likely to find, we did not in this case because we routinely saw bottles going back to 2002 and there's no reason fine Riesling can't age beautifully for many years.

Fall might seem like an odd season for Riesling, because many people think of it as a light summertime wine, but actually this is the perfect time for Riesling because it pairs beautifully with the somewhat heavier foods of fall, from pork to veal to dishes that involve cream sauces.

We tasted the wines in blind flights over several days and we're thrilled to be able to report this news: With a little bit of care, you can pick up a bottle of Australian Riesling with confidence that you will have a well-made, mouth-watering, friendly wine that will go beautifully with meals. These wines were easy to enjoy. Wine after wine was filled with vibrant lemon-lime fruit, sometimes with some minerals and, in the best, a nice fullness. They were wines that let the fruit do the talking and that was such a great relief. They were generally dry, which would certainly be a surprise to people who avoid Riesling because they think it's sweet.

Here's the irony: These Rieslings tasted drier than most of the reds we tried in our recent, unsuccessful tasting of Australian Shiraz. It's possible that the Shirazes didn't actually have more residual sugar, but sweetness is a sensation that's far more complex than just sugar. Alcohol tastes sweet, for instance, and the level of acidity in a wine affects the impression of sweetness. And there was simply no doubt about it: These Rieslings left a far less sweet taste than the Shirazes. In fact, in a few cases we found the wines so dry they seemed positively stark. We didn't much like those, but bravo for trying.

Again and again, our favorites were from Clare Valley and Eden Valley, which are hot spots for fine Australian Riesling, and we would look for those locations on labels. We also found that it's worth spending a little more: The wines around $15 and above were generally far better than those below $10. One more interesting thing: Very few of the Rieslings had critter labels, unlike so many other Australian wines. It's as if the winemakers respect the grape—and the people who buy Riesling—too much to try to sell them with a cute animal and a silly story on the label.

What is going on here? We asked Louisa Rose. In our tasting, we were impressed with a winery called Pewsey Vale in Eden Valley, where she is the winemaker. Pewsey Vale, which only produces white wines, has been making them for more than 150 years. "The key to good Riesling is, first, make sure you have good fruit, all of the flavors that you want to see in the wine before you pick it," she told us. There is no margin for error, she explained, adding, "There's no oak and no malolactic fermentation." She says her wines are the result of good fruit and terroir, benefitting from the challenging soil, high altitude and cooler temperatures of the Eden Valley, which makes for a longer ripening season and more flavorful grapes.

In our tasting, few of the wines absolutely wowed us, but their consistent charm and the careful winemaking that went into them impressed us. They are a good bet. Forced to make a choice, we would still drink German Riesling. There is an easy complexity and an intensity of flavor in German Riesling that's special. But to our fellow German Riesling lovers out there: Check out what's happening in Australia.

*Melanie Grayce West contributed to this column. Our email address is wine@wsj.com.*

## The Australian Riesling index

In a broad blind tasting of Australian Riesling, these were our favorites. While we included a number of wines below $10 in our tasting, Jacob's Creek 2007 was the only one we liked. Some wines from the 2008 vintage are beginning to arrive and are worth seeking out for their youthful vibrancy.

| VINEYARD | PRICE | RATING | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Kilikanoon Wines "Mort's Block" 2007 (Watervale, Clare Valley)** | $18.99 | Very Good | **Best of tasting.** Crisp and clean, with good minerals and some fullness. A complete wine, very much a proud Riesling. |
| **Pewsey Vale Vineyard "Dry" 2008 (Eden Valley)** | $13.99 | Very Good | **Best value.** Vibrant, with a light, charming, peach-nectar nose and an ephemeral, lovely taste. We also liked three different Pewsey Vale wines from 2007—regular, "Dry" and "Prima." |
| **Henschke "Julius" 2005 (Eden Valley)** | $29.99 | Good/ Very Good | Richer than most, with some roundness and depth. Relaxed and balanced. Grown-up wine, with stature. We also liked the lively 2006. |
| **Ninth Island (Kreglinger Wine Estates) 2005 (Tasmania)** | $14.99 | Good/ Very Good | More luscious than many, with white peaches and pears. Nicely full and calm, so it would be good with elegant dishes. |
| **Stonehaven Vineyards "Winemaker's Selection" 2006 (South Australia)** | $11.50* | Good/ Very Good | Pleasant, with green apple-Key lime tastes and some spiky acidity. |
| **Jacob's Creek 2007 (South Eastern Australia)** | $8 | Good | Clean, crisp, mouth-watering, lemon-lime nose. Fun, gulpable, and a touch sweet, especially on the finish. Good for an aperitif. Drink immediately. |

Note: Wines are rated on a scale that ranges: Yech, OK, Good, Very Good, Delicious and Delicious! *We paid $9.95 for Stonehaven, but this price appears to be more representative. Prices vary widely. These came from California, Connecticut, New York and Texas.

# In search of Italian Grignolino

By Dorothy J. Gaiter
and John Brecher

*WHATEVER HAPPENED to Italian Grignolino? I know Heitz used to produce a Grignolino, but I'm searching Ohio for an Italian Grig, pale red-orange in hue, with a slightly bitter taste. The last Italian Grig I had came from a store in Oakwood, Ohio, about 25 years ago. —M.H. Deal, Akron, Ohio*

Good question. Grignolino is a charming, light and earthy wine from the Piedmont region of Italy. When we were young, Grignolino was such a regular part of our lives that it seemed perfectly normal to order it in 1978 at Mama Leone's restaurant after flying up from Miami for a week-long vacation in New York (it was Scanavino). But until we received this letter, we hadn't realized that we, too, hadn't had a Grignolino in many years.

We contacted one of our favorite Italian wine experts, Charles Scicolone. He said that, because Grignolino needs to be drunk very young and can be delicate, many stores are afraid to carry it since they need to get it out the door so quickly. It's now barely among the top 100 grape varieties in Italy, with only about 1,600 acres planted, according to official figures. We searched for Italian Grignolino and found two. One was a 2005 and the merchant actually apologized for its age and gave us a discount (proving Mr. Scicolone's point). Even with the discount, it was overpriced because it was tired and had lost its charm. The other, a 2007, was fresh and pleasant, but lighter and less earthy than we remember. This is the kind of red that would be good, chilled, with summer foods next August.

By the way, we caught up with David Heitz in the middle of harvest and he said his winery still makes all three Grignolinos, though only about 1,000 cases of the red, 400 cases of the rosé and very little of the Port. The 2005 red is sold out, but the 2006 will be released in a few months, while the 2008 rosé will be released next spring.

*Is it my faltering memory or has the alcohol content of many (most?) wines risen dramatically over the past few decades? When I reached wine-drinking age in the late '70s, 12% seemed to be the top-end for alcohol content in varietal wines (not that I was seeking out the highest!). Now it seems hard to find a wine with lower than 12%.*
*—John Staugaitis,*
*West Sand Lake, N.Y.*

You're right. Alcohol content has been rising steadily for years now—consumer demand for "riper" wines gets most of the blame—and it's something that many wine writers have complained about for some time. Our feeling is that high alcohol per se isn't horrible—some great wines, such as Barolo, have always had pretty high alcohol levels and we just had a very successful tasting of Gigondas, where the level is around 14.5%—but too often these days the wines really taste like alcohol, which makes them out of balance and impossible to pair with foods, not to mention the other effects. All in all, we also wish alcohol were toned down in most wines these days. It seems like alcohol is no longer a byproduct and instead seems to drive too many wines.

*—Melanie Grayce West contributed to this column. Our email address is wine@wsj.com.*

# Making the best of a bad cocktail

**How's Your Drink?**
ERIC FELTEN

I'M OFTEN ASKED to recommend a good bartender's guide for the home mixer, and among the books I always cite is "The Craft of the Cocktail," by Dale DeGroff, a drinks guru to whom I have often turned for expertise. With some 500 recipes, his book is comprehensive enough to cover the basics, the classics, delightful old obscurities and a good number of the less-preposterous drinks of the past few decades. But now Mr. DeGroff has a new book coming out, and it aims to edit out all but the drinks that fit comfortably under the title "The Essential Cocktail." There may have been room for Sex on the Beach in the last book, but no more: Mr. DeGroff has cut his core list of cocktails down to about 100, with another 100 variations on the basic themes. So what the heck, you might wonder, is the Long Island Iced Tea doing in there?

Mr. DeGroff is an indefatigable promoter of good drinks and no slouch in advocating his own role in bringing classic cocktails back into vogue. (Full disclosure: I should note he cites me a few times in his latest work, by way of resolving where one or another cocktail came from.) Mr. DeGroff's campaign to eliminate prefab sour mix in drinks meant to be made with fresh-squeezed citrus would be enough to secure his place as a Defender of the Classic Cocktail. But for all his emphasis on high-end cocktail craft, his approach is practical, born of experience behind the stick. He spent a couple of decades tending bar, first at the very democratic New York saloon Charley O's and later at the somewhat less democratic Rainbow Room. And he learned that a good bartender respects the preferences of his patrons.

Mr. DeGroff quotes Harry Johnson, author of a 19th-century bar manual: "The greatest accomplishment of a bartender lies in his ability to exactly suit his customer." And when it comes to drinks, customers not only have opinions but are wont to express them. In his youth, Mr. DeGroff worked as a waiter, and he writes: "I was never instructed by a customer on how the chef should prepare his hollandaise sauce." By contrast, "with very few exceptions, people have a lot to say about the preparation of their Bloody Mary, Manhattan, old-fashioned, and even the ultimate classic cocktail, a dry martini."

Mr. DeGroff is quite right about this, though I might quibble that people are opinionated especially about their Martinis. And, I would suggest, they are often wrong in their opinions. The challenge for the bartender, as Mr. DeGroff is the first to recognize, isn't just to give the customer what he wants, but to help him discover that he wants something better than what he's had before. Many are the Martini-drinkers adamant that vermouth is an abomination who have never actually tasted the stuff in their Martinis. They just might find they like a proper Dry Martini (a drink of about four parts gin to one part dry vermouth) if only a mixological Sam-I-Am could be found to give them the encouragement to try it.

But what does a good bartender do when he is presented with an order for a drink notorious for being, well, junk? At the Rainbow Room, Mr. DeGroff would get regular requests for Long Island Iced Tea: "For some reason it was particularly popular with the European tourists, especially Germans, who were a large part of our crowd." And so he did his best to figure out how to make the drink worthy of the venue. This involved avoiding, as Mr. DeGroff puts it, "the sure road to disaster—a bad drink and a badly drunk customer."

The standard sort of Long Island Iced Tea is a pretty sure road to disaster. As originally conceived, the drink gets an ounce each of vodka, gin, rum, tequila and triple sec, a dangerous amount alcohol to be camouflaged by sour mix and Coca-Cola. Mr. DeGroff's first strategy to fix the Long Island Iced Tea is to cut the liquor bill in half, using only half an ounce of each of the spirits. And then, in keeping with his commitment to fresh juice at all times, he replaces the canned sour mix with freshly squeezed lemon juice, balanced with a little simple (sugar) syrup. It's not bad at all—though given the drink's boozy baggage, I can't say I could bring myself to order one, even if I could expect it to be made to Mr. DeGroff's specifications.

Is the Long Island Iced Tea, as Mr. DeGroff asserts, a modern classic? I guess so, at least when "classic" doesn't necessarily imply approbation. I don't like brutalist architecture, but that doesn't mean the FBI headquarters in Washington isn't a classic of that particular modern style.

You could say that the Long Island Iced Tea is a classic of alcohol—brutalized frat-boy style. But there is no doubt that many outside the U.S. regard it as an iconically American quaff. When the Washington Post did an article on the young call-center workers of Gurgaon, India, a few years ago, it found the twenty-somethings liked to relax at the local T.G.I. Friday's, dressed in Levi's and ordering Long Island Iced Teas by calling for "L.I.T."

If something is going to be a symbol of American taste and style, then the only thing to do is to make the best of it. The Germans who ordered Long Island Iced Teas from Mr. DeGroff at the Rainbow Room may have ended up just as shocked as the Spanish cuties in Whit Stillman's movie "Barcelona" who tasted, for the first time, real burgers straight off the Weber. In a strange way, making the Long Island Iced Tea drinkable may be one of Mr. DeGroff's more valuable contributions to the cocktail bar.

*Email eric.felten@wsj.com*

**Long Island Iced Tea**

15 ml vodka
15 ml gin
15 ml rum
15 ml tequila
15 ml triple sec
22 ml fresh lemon juice
15 ml simple (sugar) syrup
90 ml Coca-Cola

Shake all but the Coke with ice and strain into an ice-filled highball glass. Top with the cola, stir and garnish with a lemon wedge.

PhotoLibrary

## Arbitrage

### A roll of Scotch Magic tape

| City | Local currency | € |
|---|---|---|
| Hong Kong | HK$9.50 | €0.91 |
| London | £1.99 | €2.57 |
| New York | $3.90 | €2.91 |
| Brussels | €2.99 | €2.99 |
| Frankfurt | €3.95 | €3.95 |

Note: In a plastic dispenser, 19mm x 25 meters. Prices, including taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.

NFL.COM/GAMEPASS

GAME PASS HD
New and improved Game Pass with higher quality video and more features:
- Regular season games streamed live online in **High Definition**
- Unlimited access to archived games
- Simultaneous viewing of up to 4 games
- DVR controls, live stats, chat, and more

GAME PASS
The original Game Pass powered by Yahoo! Sports:
- Regular season games streamed live online
- Archived games available for 48 hours
- Compatible with low speed broadband connections

* NFL Game Pass is not available in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Bahamas, Bermuda, Antigua, and U.S. Territories. Additional restrictions may apply.

© 2008 NFL PROPERTIES LLC. TEAM NAMES/LOGOS ARE TRADEMARKS OF THE TEAMS INDICATED. ALL OTHER NFL-RELATED TRADEMARKS ARE TRADEMARKS OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

# Ensemble power: Me
# when movie stars wor

By Joe Morgenstern

WHEN INGRID Bergman asks Sam to sing that deathless song in "Casablanca," the lyrics reassure her that the fundamental things still apply. But in the movies, as everywhere else, some of them don't. Traditional superstar power is in steep decline, thanks to salaries that have spiraled out of control, to star vehicles that have become—along with some of their stars—repetitive or grotesque, and most of all to changing tastes.

Movies have changed profoundly since the days of Bergman and Bogart—or Paul Newman. They've changed even more since the days when a film starring Julia Roberts, Tom Hanks, Mel Gibson, Cameron Diaz, Bruce Willis or Tom Cruise was automatically a major event. Will Smith remains a huge draw, the exception to the rule, and Johnny Depp was certainly the animating spirit of three phenomenally profitable pirate extravaganzas. Yet Hollywood glamour is in a lowered state, and young audiences don't much care, even though the full extent of their indifference is still being masked by the white noise of celebrity chatter. Kids are just as likely to turn out for a heavily promoted horror flick, the latest comedy from Judd Apatow's laugh factory or another iteration of the "National Treasure" franchise. (Or adorable doggies: "Beverly Hills Chihuahua" has been tops at the box office, beating Leonardo DiCaprio and Russell Crowe in "Body Of Lies.") Meanwhile, grown-ups—people old enough to sit through a two-hour feature without an uncontrollable urge to text, phone or Twitter—tell me all too often that most new movies leave them so cold they've stopped going out to theaters.

I feel their numbness. If truth be told, some of the new youth comedies are great fun, and prime time for feature films—the fall and winter season that's finally upon us—still brings enjoyment and surprise. But most of the features that fill the multiplex screens during most of the year are pretty dispiriting, whether because of brainless violence and bloodless digital effects, or robotic writing and the sort of acting that the scripts deserve—flashy and full of bombast, yet devoid of genuine feeling. When the going gets grim (the grimmest experience for me so far this year has been watching Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly play 40-year-old infants in "Step Brothers"), I need my own reassurance that some of the fundamental things I've loved about movies still apply—especially the pleasure of watching fine actors working in ensembles on a human scale. And reassurance is exactly what I got, I'm happy to say, from sitting in recently on a cabaret singer's master class.

What does cabaret have to do with movies? Nothing at all, as far as I knew at the outset. The attraction was the singer, the incomparable Barbara Cook. She had been a beguiling musical comedy star on Broadway before her second career in elegant clubs, and now she was working with a few exceptional young students at a new performance space in Santa Monica.

At first the work seemed only about singing. One after another, the students sang their songs—lovely classics from the Gershwins, Irving Berlin, Stephen Sondheim—in big, rich voices, with strong stage presence. As they did, Barbara Cook gently but firmly nailed their lapses, excesses or bad habits.

The **'Ocean's 11'** team: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Elliott Gould and Don Cheadle.

Photofest

Most of the faults she found were those you'd expect in precocious young students—overzealousness, emotional extravagance, a cluster of tropes that come under the gaudy umbrella of hyper-Andrew-Lloyd-Webber-ism (or, in the movie realm, Dreamgirls-ism). An actor's term she invoked more than once was "presentational," meaning you're pushing, you're selling yourself, you're outside the song instead of in it. In a couple of cases, she asked the performer to take the song down half an octave or more, thus reducing the need to draw on false energy, or to sit down with another singer, knees touching knees, and sing quietly to her or him rather than to the audience. In each case, she tried to elicit the qualities that all good teachers value—simplicity, specificity, truth—while assuring these talented young people that their efforts would be rewarded. Audiences eagerly "fall into authenticity," she said.

Clearly this was not just a class about singing, but about good acting as the bedrock of good singing. It was a distillation of fundamentals that do indeed still apply, to motion pictures as well as to musical theater, and a demonstration of how to apply them. And the astonishing thing was how quickly the students got it, as if all they had needed was permission to come back to themselves. Defenses dropped, posturing vanished, real feelings shone through. One singer was able, almost instantly, to turn a palpably false phrase into a piercingly beautiful passage that left people in the audience gasping. I was one of gaspers, and for a while I wondered why I was so deeply moved. Then I realized that the class had brought me back to myself too.

For as long as I can remember I've taken special pleasure in the kind of acting that Barbara Cook was trying to instill in her singers—in actors who serve the material rather than sell it, who search for the truth without being pretentious about it, who subordinate their gifts to the production as a whole. I can thrill just as readily as anyone else to brilliant star performances—to De Niro in "Taxi Driver," Streisand in "Funny Girl," Stallone in the first "Rocky," Nicholson in "Chinatown," Travolta in "Pulp Fiction," Reese Witherspoon in "Legally

Blonde," Forest Whita
Of Scotland," Daniel D
Will Be Blood." But pe
few and far between.
the patchily verdant va
ing, which emphasizes
vidual virtuosity.

Ensemble work is a
with others. It's about
worlds, though that do
worlds must be downs
sions of a theater stag
"Lord Of the Rings" tr
ble piece on an epic sc
mean stars are exclude
of my special pleasure
best of both worlds—w
work in ensemble sett
the full force of their s
the 20/20 hindsight of
they've become names
hold.

After is harder than
star is willing or able
the role of pack leader
ous pack, as Tom Crui
sively in Paul Thomas
lia." And it doesn't rea
my book, when stars m
zarre appearances, as
Downey Jr. did recentl
der" (a comedy which
notion of movie stardo
dulge their penchant f
as Brad Pitt and Georg
"Burn After Reading."

Sometimes the effo
paid dilettantism, as it
Diaz played a pickpoc
York." (Though much l
ing John Malkovich," s
the role of John Cusac
wife.) Sometimes it's a
Morgan Freeman has l
worthy projects get fin
his presence to their c
an honorable failure, a
erts in Mike Nichols's
all the figurative stars
however, a screen icon
hance the right ensem
by it. And be unburden
can dare to reveal new

Picturehouse/Everett Collection; New Line Productions; New Line Cinema/Photofest; Paramount Pictures/Photofest

From top: **'A Prairie Home Companion'** (Lily Tomlin and Meryl Streep); **'Lord of the Rings'** (Orlando Bloom, Ian McKellen and Viggo Mortensen); **'Magnolia'** (Tom Cruise and Jason Robards); **'The Godfather'** (Marlon Brando).

# asuring the magic
# rk together

ker in "The Last King
ay-Lewis in "There
aks such as those are
What sustains me in
alleys is ensemble act-
interplay over indi-

ll about playing well
creating social
oesn't mean the
sized to the dimen-
e. Peter Jackson's
ilogy was an ensem-
cale. And it doesn't
ed. A special subset
brings together the
watching movie stars
ings, either before
stardom has hit (via
f DVDs) or after
s in the global house-

n before. Not every
to take time out from
and join an adventur-
se did so impres-
Anderson's "Magno-
ally count, at least in
make aggressively bi-
Cruise and Robert
ly in "Tropic Thun-
sends up the whole
om), or when they in-
or self-enchantment,
ge Clooney did in

rt smacks of highly
t did when Cameron
ket in "Gangs of New
less so when, in "Be-
she buried herself in
k's disconsolate
an act of generosity:
helped many small,
nancing by lending
asts. Sometimes it's
s it was for Julia Rob-
turgid "Closer." When
are in alignment,
n can not only en-
ble, but be enhanced
ned by it. Movie stars
sides of themselves
when they don't have to dominate every scene.

That's what Brad Pitt did as Jesse James in a movie seen by audiences that must have numbered in the dozens across the nation: "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford." (He was also terrific as a mental patient in "Twelve Monkeys.") Cate Blanchett did it, eerily but intriguingly, when she played a version of Bob Dylan in "I'm Not There." Sandra Bullock did it beautifully as Harper Lee in "Infamous." Paul Newman did it in "Nobody's Fool," in an ensemble cast that included Bruce Willis, Jessica Tandy and Philip Seymour Hoffman. Matt Damon did it in "Good Will Hunting," and Russell Crowe did it, somewhat, in "American Gangster"—sometimes it's hard for a star to throttle back—though before becoming an international star he had done it superbly in "L.A. Confidential," a film that, noir or not, serves as a shining example of the ensemble genre.

The best and brightest British film stars have never hesitated to do ensemble work on screen, and the world is richer for it; they're so damned good at what they do that they can blend in when it's appropriate and stand out when it's demanded.

Their commute between stardom and smaller roles may well be easier than it is in this country because there's less at stake financially: Johnny Depp probably earns more in a single year than Laurence Olivier earned in a lifetime. But it's also because so many stellar Brits—and such of their Irish brethren as Peter O'Toole—started in the theater, where democracy is a way of life. (Even after achieving knighthood, Olivier was always Larry to his fellow actors, Alec Guinness was always Alec and the unquenchable Michael Caine remains Michael.)

American screen idols of an earlier day were pretty much imprisoned by the star system, except for occasional work furloughs in so-called all-star ensembles like "Grand Hotel." Although the concept of an all-star ensemble is oxymoronic, it was a popular one in the 1960s and 1970s—all those household names, lesser names and major has-beens emoting in the endangered staterooms, cockpits and offices of such extravaganzas as "Ship Of Fools," "The Poseidon Adventure," "Airport" and "The Towering Inferno."

Yet the 1970s also gave us two of the greatest ensemble dramas ever made, "The Godfather" and "The Godfather: Part II." They weren't small films. Rather, they were intimate and operatic in equal measure, and their director, Francis Coppola, was able to make them equal-opportunity workplaces for Brando, Pacino, Duvall and De Niro. As for small ensembles, they became the province of Woody Allen and Robert Altman, two filmmakers with a devotion to unusual material (as well as a gift for finding financing, however modest or precarious) and a love of what actors do with it.

Will Ferrell has never been funnier, or more adroit, than he was as a haplessly lovesick Woody surrogate in Woody Allen's "Melinda and Melinda." Josh Brolin does a remarkable evocation of George W. Bush in "W.," but his self-effacing performance in "No Country for Old Men" was remarkable too. Meryl Streep has never been more endearing than she was as Lily Tomlin's country-western singer sister in Altman's final film, "A Prairie Home Companion." (Well, maybe as the former rocker in last summer's surprise hit "Mamma Mia!", though that was a clear case of a star taking on a central character with formidable technique camouflaged by lovely exuberance.)

As every devotee of "The Wire" knows, the most fertile soil for ensemble acting these days is TV. But it's always a source of amazement, as well as an antidote to artistic rigor mortis, when feature filmmakers manage to fold certified movie stars into strong, entertaining features that play like chamber pieces. Some may have relatively small budgets: Steven Soderbergh's "Out Of Sight," with George Clooney, Jennifer Lopez and Don Cheadle, among others; the Coen brothers' "The Big Lebowski," with Jeff Bridges as a stoner to end all stoners; David O. Russell's "Three Kings," a war movie with a soul and a cast that included George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg and Ice Cube.

Budgets aren't the issue, though. Sensibility is, as witnessed by recent ensemble pieces produced on a relatively lavish scale: Soderbergh's very funny and blithely sophisticated "Ocean's Eleven," in which Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Don Cheadle, Elliott Gould and Julia Roberts all managed to shine without acting like stars; or Martin Scorsese's "The Departed," which was not exactly an obscure art film, given the Oscar it won last year, but a singularly unshowy showcase for such platinum-standard actors as Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon, Mark Wahlberg and Jack Nicholson. And an ensemble sensibility can cross genre borders, as "Iron Man" proved last summer. A star vehicle by any reasonable definition, and an action spectacular to boot, "Iron Man" scored the box-office coup that it did because its star, Robert Downey Jr., managed the phenomenal trick of firing up and throttling back at the same time—of creating a singular star presence while staying connected to his fellow actors, as well as to a vast audience.

Unshowiness is in constantly short supply. Yet it's the essence of the ensemble sensibility, which has been thriving against all odds, and will continue to do so as star vehicles take new forms, and new stars—such skilled and subtle actors as Anne Hathaway, Scarlett Johansson, Ryan Gosling and Keira Knightley—take, but also share, the spotlight. One fundamental thing that still applies is star power. Another is that power grows when it's held in reserve.

Paramount Pictures/Everett Collection; Warner Bros./Photofest; Marvel; Photofest

From top: **'Nobody's Fool'** (Jessica Tandy and Paul Newman); **'The Departed'** (Leonardo DiCaprio and Ray Winstone); **'Iron Man'** (Robert Downey Jr. and Jeff Bridges); **'L.A. Confidential'** (Russell Crowe and Guy Pearce).

# Indie films opt for release on the

## Coming to a small screen

A survey of some sites that offer feature films on the Web. (Not every service is available in every country.)

◀ **Babelgum.com**
Directors Spike Lee and Michel Gondry are the posterboys for this video outlet's efforts to woo indie filmmakers. Mr. Lee is leading the "jury" for a Babelgum film festival (viewers do the voting) and a music-video contest headed by Mr. Gondry begins next month.

**iTunes** ▶
New Video Digital, which acts a middleman between Apple's iTunes store and filmmakers, says it has several hundred titles in the iTunes library, including **"Purple Violets,"** with Ed Burns and Selma Blair. Last year it became the first film to premiere exclusively on iTunes.

◀ **Jaman.com**
The bulk of Jaman's offerings are for rent. Users pay a dollar or more to download a movie to their computer, where they can watch it for several days. Jaman offers Hollywood fare, but it also specializes in international content. The most-viewed movie on Jaman is the 17-minute **"Migration,"** directed by Mira Nair.

**Joost.com** ▶
Launched last year, Joost offers familiar content such as episodes of "CSI" and "The Daily Show." Its free selections include movies picked up from festivals. **"Charlie"** pivots on a married man's spiral into jealous rage.

◀ **Netflix**
Recently the rental service had an unconventional hit with **"Super High Me,"** which plays off the familiar premise of "Super Size Me." In his version, comedian Doug Benson smoked marijuana daily for a month.

**Snagfilms.com** ▶
Founded by former AOL executive and film investor Ted Leonsis, SnagFilms shows only documentaries, ranging from familiar titles like "Super Size Me" to festival films. **"Haze,"** an exposé on college drinking, recently opened via SnagFilms.

◀ **YouTube.com**
YouTube representatives have been hitting film festivals to find candidates for its Screening Room channel, which launched in June. Most of the offerings are shorts, including **"34 x 25 x 36,"** a seven-minute look at female mannequin parts that has been viewed 1.2 million times.

Photos: Jason Brush; Wild Ocean Films; Mirabai Films; Jesse Epstein; Watt Imagination!; Screen Media Films; From Here to Awesome

A scene from **'The Princess of Nebraska.'**
Magnolia Pictures

By John Jurgensen

LAST WEEK, AS NEW movies like "Sex Drive" and "W." flooded multiplexes, the latest feature from director Wayne Wang was getting a very different premiere. The Hollywood veteran, known for films like "The Joy Luck Club," released his "The Princess of Nebraska" on YouTube, where it can be seen free.

Independent filmmakers are known for taking risks with their art, but many are wary of digital distribution. Now, as perceptions shift, they're going online in growing numbers. "Haze," a film making its debut at the Hamptons International Film Festival in New York, also got a wide release on the Web last week through SnagFilms.com, a service that lets anyone host the movie free on their own Web page. Other full-length films are following a similar path with online-only premieres on iTunes and video hubs such as Hulu. Because of rights issues, not every service is available in every country.

Behind the shift: a glut of movies jockeying for theater screens. Last year 603 feature films were released in the U.S., a 29% increase from 2002, according to the Motion Picture Association of America. Meanwhile, the once-bullish market for movies with budgets under $15 million recently lost some of its core buyers. For instance, Time Warner and Paramount have either closed or scaled back three of their specialty divisions.

In response to all this, filmmakers are starting to come to terms with the idea of releasing their work on the Web. It's a notion musicians grappled with years ago. Offering art online rarely earns a creator much up front, but it boosts the odds of broad exposure. With no need for old-fashioned film prints, going on the Web is cheap and quick. And directors can get instant feedback from online viewers.

Mr. Wang's "Princess" was made with the $200,000 the director had left over after delivering his traditionally released film "A Thousand Years of Good Prayers," under budget. There are no big stars in "Princess," which revolves around a Chinese exchange student adrift in San Francisco and alienated from her culture. Shot with handheld cameras, "Princess" has an edgy look that ties into the story (cellphone videos and text messages are the character's favored communication modes), but the movie wasn't made with YouTube in mind.

On YouTube, which is offering "Princess" on its new Screening Room channel for professional short films and features, the movie will generate revenue from ads on the site. But Mr. Wang says the bigger payoff comes in viewership. Before "Princess" was available, the trailer had been viewed more than 80,000 times. In theaters, the same trailer would have been seen some 5,000 times, the director estimates. "Going to theater has become about making a point," he says. "I like the accidental encounters" that occur on the Web." So far he's noticed that those accidental viewers make more comments about the looks of the main character than the film itself. "I don't see a whole lot of communication about aesthetic. That's fine, too," the director says.

**Filmmakers are coming to terms with the idea of releasing their work online.**

Director David Modigliani spent roughly three years making the documentary "Crawford," a portrait of the people living in the adopted Texas hometown of President George W. Bush. The movie was first screened for the public last spring at the South By Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas. But as "Crawford" went on to get accepted into more than 30 other festivals, no solid offers came in that would land it in theaters or on television.

In late August, the director struck a deal that made "Crawford" the first film to make its debut on Hulu.com. A joint venture of NBC and News Corp. (which owns Dow Jones & Co., publisher of The Wall Street Journal), the seven-month-old Hulu primarily streams familiar TV shows and movies, such as "Saturday Night Live" and "Men In Black," and offers tools that let viewers post these videos directly on their own blogs, Facebook pages and other sites. Since going up on the site earlier this month, "Crawford" has been among the top movies and one of the most-discussed videos on the site, says Hulu, which doesn't release the number of views its videos generate.

Mr. Modigliani, who says he worked hard to avoid a political slant to his film, is thrilled with the direct discussion among viewers. "We're getting a primetime audience, demographically speaking," the director says. "I'm reaching the audience I'd hoped to reach."

His agreement with Hulu was brokered by B-Side, an Austin company that runs the Web sites of some 200 film festivals. Using email addresses and other data gathered from festival goers, B-Side organizes screening events around the U.S. where movies are shown free as a way to drive DVD sales. Now, with films like "Crawford," B-Side is applying that strategy to the Web.

Hulu didn't pay anything up front for "Crawford." Instead, the company shares revenue generated by the six advertisements that run at various points during the 74-minute film. Neither Hulu or B-Side will say how much that amounts to, but B-Side only expects it to cover the company's initial expenses on the film—a few thousand dollars. At a time when interest in politics is running high, B-Side is banking on a return from selling "Crawford" on DVD, offered online for $19.99. The director has no investors to pay back. He used his credit

# Web

card and tax-deductible contributions made through the Austin Film Society for the $100,000 budget.

Back-end revenue sources have long been key to recouping the high costs of producing and promoting films for theaters; in 2007, the specialty divisions of major studios spent an average of $26 million to market a film, up from $18 million the year before, according to the MPAA. By contrast, movies using the emerging online-only model don't have to recoup on that kind of marketing push—but it's still unclear how they'll fare without it.

The team behind "On Broadway," a drama set in the pubs and churches of south Boston, are hoping the movie's niche appeal, which deterred some traditional film buyers, can be used to target potential viewers online. "There's 40 million Irish Americans you can market to," says director Lance Greene.

Shot in 20 days in 2006 for about $1 million, "On Broadway" tells the story of locals who mount a play in an Irish bar. The cast includes Eliza Dushku, a star of TV series such as "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," and Joey McIntyre, the New Kids on the Block singer-turned Broadway actor. Mr. Greene says the film, which screened at 16 film festivals, received three offers from companies proposing a DVD release, which he rejected. Instead, the sales agency negotiating on his behalf brought "On Broadway" into its new company for digital sales, Cinetic Rights Management.

Launched last year, CRM's head of programming is Matt Dentler, the former director of the South By Southwest film festival. "On Broadway" will premiere online next month. "There's this huge gap between the festival circuit and theatrical releases that we're trying to reduce," says Mr. Dentler, who acknowledges that his budding industry has to convince traditionalists who think of a big-screen release as a prerequisite for success. "We're seeing the first generation of filmmakers coming of age when watching things on a pixellated screen is the norm, not a novelty," he says.

A speedy turnaround was vital to the executive producers of "Haze," a documentary about Gordie Bailey, who died of alcohol poisoning during a fraternity ritual in 2004. The producers wanted to reach viewers on college campuses this fall. SnagFilms, which exclusively shows nonfiction films, was deemed the best tool. Like some other video services, SnagFilms streams video through an online tool that users can plug into any number of Web pages, from blogs to MySpace profiles.

The director of "Haze," Pete Schuermann, says he resisted at first and tried to convince the producers to keep trying to find a theatrical buyer. But eventually the director put his longstanding dream in check of getting his movie "in a theater near you," he says. "It's a bittersweet thing. But then I have to weigh that against the educational goals of the film. Now there's the potential of a lot of people seeing it."

**WSJ.com**

**Web watching**
Listen to an interview with John Jurgensen and see a clip from 'The Princess of Nebraska,' at **WSJ.com/Lifestyle**

Josh Brolin, Toby Jones and, below, Thandie Newton in **'W.'**

# A Freudian trip to the Oval Office

**Film**
JOE MORGENSTERN

OLIVER STONE GOES for the juggler vein in "W.," an exuberant account of the life and times of George W. Bush. He juggles genial mockery and moist empathy without venturing any judgments on his hero's presidency. It's exciting to watch what Josh Brolin does with a character who has sometimes seemed to be playing characters on his own. Still, excitement has its limits in a film that tells us lots of things we already know, plus one thing Mr. Stone insists on until his patchwork drama turns into a hapless Oedipal parody of "The Making of the President."

It's the Poppy thing, the notion that W.'s life—and therefore much of America's recent life—has been driven by nothing more or less than a son's desperate search for approval from a father who doesn't approve of him. Maybe that's simplistic nonsense, maybe not, but it's far from an original thought, and the movie, which was written by Stanley Weiser, keeps coming back to it like some psychobabbling brook of revelation. "You disappoint me, Junior, you deeply disappoint me," Bush Senior says sternly at one point. (He's played, by James Cromwell, like the Ghost of President's Day Past.) At another, Poppy administers a patrician tongue-lashing to his ne'er-do-well heir unapparent: "What are you cut out for? Partying? Chasing tail? Driving drunk? You think you're a Kennedy? You're a Bush!" And in one of several singularly inept dream sequences, Bush 41 reclaims his old desk in the Oval Office, taking back the presidency from Bush 43.

Fortunately for the film, Freud's specter can't compete with Oliver Stone's version of reality, which includes W's candle-burning days as a Yalie (drunken revelries at the frat house), his years in Texas (where he went from overprivileged oil-field toiler to chief resident of the governor's mansion) and his ascension to the White House (where, in an unguarded moment, he tells Dick Cheney that a summary of "enhanced" interrogation techniques "kinda reminds me of my fraternity days"). If that last portrays George W. Bush as stupid or abysmally fatuous, "W." paints him at other times as a bright, decent man who's simply unable to cope with the devious schemers around him, or as an all-too-transparent glass that's half-empty until religion fills it. Through it all, Josh Brolin invests him with unflagging energy—not just the energy of a zealot, though there is certainly that, but the zest of a naturally gifted politician who's determined to parlay his gifts into a place of honor in American history.

Mr. Brolin's performance is hugely enjoyable. The script provides him with predictable easy stuff—the ritual mispronunciation of "nuclear," the obligatory "misunderestimate," the random wanderings through rhetorical thickets. But he excels at the hard stuff—abjuring condescension, going beyond mimicry into empathy—and his task must have been all the harder because of W's chameleon proclivities. A model of plainspoken affability in his first presidential campaign, Mr. Bush later seemed to be channeling traces of the speech patterns one sometimes hears in evangelical preachers—particularly a sibilant emphasis at the end of certain words—and then, after September 11th (the events of which are, inexplicably, absent from this film) he added tough-guy tonalities. Josh Brolin doesn't do that slight sibilant, but he's acute on the president's combination of truculence and petulance, and his vocal choices average out to a vivid evocation of his colorful subject.

When it comes to members of the government and the Bush family, the film relies on quick-sketch impressionism, with variable results. The young Laura Bush is lovely, as Elizabeth Banks plays her, but the script makes no more of her in later life than the comely, familiar presence on the TV screen. You sense the processing power of a quick mind in Richard Dreyfuss's laconic Dick Cheney, and the steely will to use it in his role as the president's tutor. The other tutor, Toby Jones's Karl Rove, is a shrink-wrapped policy gnome with a prominent forehead. Condoleezza Rice is all tics and brittle sycophancy in Thandie Newton's smirky stereotype. Colin Powell, as played by Jeffrey Wright, looks like a homesick camper, as well as an unhappy one. Donald Rumsfeld is a cipher, though it isn't Scott Glenn's fault; what's on the screen gives no hint of the defense secretary's power in the run-up to the second Iraq war.

Lionsgate (2)

**WSJ.com**

**Opening this week in Europe**

- **Baby Mama** Sweden
- **Body of Lies** Poland
- **Brideshead Revisited** Norway, Spain
- **Burn After Reading** Netherlands
- **Hellboy II: The Golden Army** France
- **In Bruges** Portugal
- **Lakeview Terrace** Italy, Spain
- **Step Brothers** Austria
- **Swing Vote** Spain
- **The Rocker** Estonia
- **The Visitor** France
- **Vicky Cristina Barcelona** Belgium, Finland
- **W.** Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal
- **War Inc.** Portugal

Source: IMDB

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

Indeed, the most memorable display of power, raw and absolute, comes when Ellen Burstyn's Barbara Bush chases a dog off a chair with a baleful glance and a snap of her finger. Stiletto-voiced beneath a nimbus of white hair, Ms. Burstyn proves to be a brilliant miniaturist in what's basically a cameo role, and her peremptory pooch banishment is precisely the sort of sharp, witty stroke that might have enlivened the movie's more banal scenes.

Of which there are many—a grumpy Poppy springing his raffish son from jail, a Cabinet ramble at the Texas ranch (where General Tommy Franks seems to be hiding a grapefruit in his lower lip), a generic Texas barbecue, a mawkish presidential visit to a veterans hospital. And those are only lesser lapses in a film that does no better with two crucial experiences in W's life—his struggles with alcohol, which make for some loud, loutish scenes but aren't dramatized, and his religious conversion, which is relegated to a glib epiphany in the course of a jog, followed by brief encounters with a thickset preacher played, gracelessly, by Stacy Keach.

When Oliver Stone's bizarre and bloated "Nixon" opened 13 years ago, the 37th president had recently died, after being out of office for two decades. When his screwball tragedy "J.F.K." opened in early 1992, the 35th president had been dead for almost three decades. George W. Bush is very much with us, of course, but it's unlikely that "W." will make many waves, and not just because the 43rd president is an exceedingly lame duck.

Mr. Stone's latest POTUS potshots are scattered at best, and his hopscotch approach to recent history drains context and significance, not to mention shock and awe, from the enormous events that have marked the second Bush presidency.

Feature films are, by their slow-gestating nature, unable to rival the spectacular sizzle of a Tina Fey skewering Sarah Palin, but this one also scants the steak. In spite of Josh Brolin's heroic efforts, "W." is a skin-deep biopic that revels in its antic shallowness.

# A new novel checks in on aging friends

By Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg

IN HIS 23RD NOVEL, "The Widows of Eastwick," John Updike has returned to familiar ground. The trio of witches whose verve and wit helped give 1984's "The Witches of Eastwick" its puckish glee, are back. This time, though, they are more melancholy and creased by doubt. Mr. Updike's best work has addressed the subtext of daily life. He was awarded the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for "Rabbit at Rest," the last novel in the series about a former high school basketball player—and he won the 1982 Pulitzer for the third, "Rabbit is Rich." In his new book, Mr. Updike, 76 years old, imagines the curtains of age beginning to close. At one point, Sukie, the youngest of the witches, finds herself thinking that "both Alexandra and Jane were vaguer than she remembered them—deeper into the engulfing indifference that renders us for death." Mr. Updike was interviewed on the phone from his home in Beverly Farms, Mass.

**Q: Your last book, "Terrorist," had a very contemporary theme and was a national best seller. Why did you decide to return to characters we met 30 years ago?**

Variety. It also occurred to me that maybe the first book was a success of a sort. It had a movie, and I thought we might be able to sell a few more copies. In the wake of "Terrorist" I also thought a return to a comedy would be a relief to my limited public.

**Q: What is the creative process like when you revisit established characters as opposed to creating somebody we haven't met before?**

It gives me a chance to write about the passage of time. It was true of the Rabbit series, and the short stories of Henry Bech. You can see a character affected by time, and undergoing changes that couldn't have always been predicted. And the author is saved the trouble of naming characters afresh and giving them biographies. I also find it rewarding because you are creating another layer onto a fiction as a life is layered in terms of moments of reality. That I've done so many sequels indicates I've got a weakness for them.

A. Richard Allen

**Q: Horace Engdahl, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, which oversees the Nobel Prizes, recently suggested that the United States is too insular to produce great writers. What do you make of this?**

I thought there was something in what he said. This is a non-European country. We're a cultural island and our canon, our masterpieces, are unlike the European masterpieces. "Moby Dick" and "Huckleberry Finn" are the two great 19th-century American novels, and they're about marginal characters drifting around. We're fascinated by heading west, there is a Puritan religiosity that haunts us. European novels want to show you society as it exists or existed, whereas American novels would rather get away and dwell on the inner life of the character—which is another way of being insular. I thought it was interesting that he said we weren't up on things, that there is an accumulation of knowledge about how to create art. I don't think that is true. I don't think European clubbiness helps their art. There has been a falling off of American winners of the Nobel. There was a spate after the Second World War that reflected the importance of the U.S. in the global picture. Now we don't project quite that magnetic image.

**Q: Can you tell us a little about your writing day?**

When I set up shop up here as a freelancer I tried to set a schedule where I'd do three pages. I'd begin in the morning and work until 1 p.m. I've really kept to that and still do. There's no mystery to it. In my case the morning energy is better. John O'Hara worked at night; beginning at midnight when his family went to bed, but that might have been a newspaper man's habit. I've tried to avoid teaching, which for all its charm takes a lot of your energy and makes you doubt yourself.

**Q: Earlier this month, the New York Post cited a coming biography of John Cheever and noted that he resented you for not treating him as an equal. How did you view him, and what accounted for his concerns?**

I thought he was a great writer. I was amazed by him. He had a poetry and speed that were terrific. I was 100% admiring of John Cheever, and he was friendly to me. Still, many of his letters and diaries contained uneasy feelings about me and even some hostile remarks. But I never felt it personally and always had good times with John when I saw him. All that aside, what mattered is that he had a wonderful gift, a wonderful luminous way of writing. He was very impatient; maybe that's an alcoholic's quality. Everything was succinct and quick; even his movements were rapid. And that came through in his prose. He didn't harp on anything. There was no excess of words.

**Q: Is there any chance that you'll return to more contemporary themes in your next novel, say the Wall Street crisis, for example?**

I bet Tom Wolfe is just the man to handle that.

# A Nobel laureate considers the house cat

By Cynthia Crossen

BORN IN PERSIA, raised on a farm in southern Rhodesia and a long-time resident of London, Doris Lessing, 88 years old, has led an unconventional and peripatetic life. But over the decades, she has maintained several passionate, long-term relationships—with cats. She has rescued, harbored and adored them, and when necessary to save the life of a mother cat, she has condemned some kittens to death. Ms. Lessing, who won the Nobel Prize for literature last year, is best known for her novels, including the 1962 feminist classic, "The Golden Notebook," and the Canopus in Argos science-fiction series. But in her book, "On Cats" (first published in 2002 but just released in a new edition), Ms. Lessing applies her formidable powers of observation to the beasts she calls "exotic visitors, household friends."

**Q: Do you have cats now?**

I have a very difficult cat named Yum-Yum. Her previous owner treated her badly and dumped her. When she turned up here she was five years old. She was enormously scared and spent most of a year under my sofa. It took a long time for her to be a reasonably normal cat. Most cats are warm and kind, on the whole. Yum-Yum had none of that.

**Q: I'm guessing none of your cats has ever had a diamond-studded collar.**

No! I've never had a posh cat. But one of the cats that was born here, El Magnifico, never understood that there were cats less privileged than him.

**Q: What about dogs?**

I love dogs. I very much regret not having dogs, but in the city they often have a pretty bad time. Dogs have to have an energetic and physical life. Cats are perfectly happy never doing anything.

**Q: Why do you hate to spay your cats?**

Having kittens makes female cats warm and nice and friendly. Yum-Yum was done early, and she hasn't got any softness. Of course, you can't say this to any cat fancier, they say you're terribly irresponsible bringing all these unloved cats into the world. But I have a very bad moment when I take a cat to be spayed.

Doris Lessing

epa/Corbis

**Q: You wrote about trying to communicate with your cats. How did that work?**

The cat I communicated with best was El Magnifico. He was such a clever cat. We used to have sessions when we tried to be on each other's level. He knew we were trying. When push came to shove, though, the communication was pretty limited.

**Q: You seem to have an open-door policy for neighborhood cats.**

I've got cats who just drop in. But now we've got three foxes in the garden. I wonder if someday I'll walk into my sitting room and there will be a fox.

**Q: What's the story with all those cats running loose around London?**

People are throwing out their lovely pets, sometimes very cruelly. They throw them out without thinking. The life of a semiwild cat is very short. I've had two or three here. They're in a very poor way. When you see a pair of eyes glaring out of a hedgerow, that's probably a male that doesn't have long to live.

**Q: What have cats taught you about life—or death?**

I had a cat who had cancer in his shoulder, and the vet persuaded me it would be perfectly all right for him to take off his leg. He suffered terribly for two years. He thought I had done this to him, and he was right. He would lie on my bed and scream as he came out of his nightmares. What lesson? Never, never do one of those clever things past the right time.

**Q: It's hard to lose a pet.**

Well, as Kipling wrote, "you've given your heart for a dog to tear."

**President William Howard Taft** on the golf course around 1930.

USGA Archives

# Golf's crash course in humility

NOT LONG AFTER he turned over the Oval Office in 1909 to his friend and hand-picked successor, Teddy Roosevelt wrote a letter to U.S. President William Howard Taft, urging him to discontinue his rounds of golf at Chevy Chase Country Club. Photos of America's leader spending afternoons on the links, former President Roosevelt warned, sent the wrong message to the public, especially in the wake of the Panic of 1907, when the government intervened to rescue the banking system.

President Taft, a lifelong golfer who, to put it mildly, needed the exercise, told Teddy to

## Golf Journal
MARK FROST

mind his own damn business. Angrier words were exchanged, spilling over into issues of policy. Three years later, still gnashing his teeth at Taft's betrayal, former President Roosevelt threw his hat into the presidential ring as a last-minute third-party candidate. The Republican vote, effectively split, resulted in the election of an obscure governor from New Jersey, Woodrow Wilson.

President Taft continued to play golf throughout his life, helping to legitimize the sport, although it remained within its firmly etched class lines. (Teddy stuck to tennis.) Forty years later, President Eisenhower's unapologetic embrace of the game dissolved many of its elitist associations and golf completed its journey to middle-class respectability.

Presidents have played the game ever since with varying degrees of skill and obsession, but without fear of backlash or rebuke. Until May of this year, when President George W. Bush—whose family ties to the patrician roots of American golf reach back three generations—announced that he was giving up the game. Photos of the commander in chief on a golf course while our armed forces remain at war overseas, he had determined, were good for neither morale nor image. A few months later, that president's image appears beyond repair, and the U.S., indeed the world, faces a crisis of grave portent and vast uncertainty; May 2008 suddenly seems like the good old days.

Golf's symbolic legacy as an indulgence for the wealthy appears to have come back into play. How it became "their game" to begin with may shed light on where it goes from here.

Golf, in the way it evolved from the Scots' pastoral relationship with their land, and the way they played it, began life as an egalitarian pastime. Their courses were public parks where all could play free of charge. They abstained on the Sabbath, but "the green" availed itself for all to enjoy the pleasures of the open air. Social clubs formed to organize play, and they codified the game's evolving rules. Ideas of privacy and exclusivity, however, wouldn't arrive until the early 19th century, when the English took the game south, conforming it to their more rigid class structure. Instead of using public spaces, club members now chipped in to buy land for their courses as private holdings. Gates and fences followed. With admittance now viewed as a "private" issue, decisions about whom to let in led to restrictions about whom to leave out.

The game reached America in the late 19th century based largely on the English variation; the first clubs in New England established themselves as bastions where the socially prominent could remove themselves from teeming urban centers; these "country" clubs served as their Edenic sanctuaries. Although their courses were designed—and they were taught the game—by generations of working-class Scots immigrants, the upper class paternalistically came to think of it as "their game." The founding of the U.S. Golf Association in 1894 formalized this stewardship.

Amateur championships came first, but the USGA's annual "Open" competitions encouraged golf's emergence as a "professional" sport and, as lower-class caddies like Francis Ouimet and Walter Hagen won championships, it attracted broader public interest. Then Bobby Jones, while upper middle class and an avowed amateur, transcended all social definitions with his genius for the game and became its first international avatar.

A second wave of private clubs appeared to service an expanding white-collar class; they became the business world's locker room. Hundreds of cities built their first public courses, making the game accessible to all; thanks to Jones, the game's exclusive association with affluence had begun to change.

But many of those clubs would not survive the Crash of '29. Coupled with Jones's retirement in 1930, the Depression nearly killed the nascent structure of the game. Jones's own Augusta National, a course built with Wall Street money for princes of industry, barely scraped by, aided by interest in a pro-am tournament that Jones created to sell memberships: The Masters. Through that troubled decade and then World War II, the game's struggling professional tour, gaining traction on the strength of stars Byron Nelson and Ben Hogan, held on by its fingernails.

The Eisenhower era revived every aspect of the sport. Ike joined Augusta before the country called him to the White House in 1952, forever coupling America's most influential club to the corridors of power. When Arnold Palmer captured America's imagination with his televised heroics, he capitalized on those connections to become the game's first player-tycoon. After a half-century of struggle, top pros could look ahead at the merging lanes of the PGA, Madison Avenue and Main Street and see a highway paved with gold. Golf rode the prime of Jack Nicklaus into a broad social acceptance that would have been unthinkable only two decades before.

Then came Tiger, the next avatar. He swept away most of the last vestiges of "restriction." Golf was big business now, and money streamed in from flush and eager corporate partners. High-end daily-fee courses cropped up like weeds, offering amenities that had remained out of most players' reach. The trend culminated in the appearance of a new breed of private club that catered to the super rich—and charged accordingly; membership as conspicuous status symbol—that would have shocked the Old Money aristocrats of the early USGA.

Most of the money for those courses and their membership fees flowed from superheated Wall Street spigots; then greed, hubris and the stubborn human inability to see danger coming from a distance led to September 2008. Amid the economic wreckage of all this steroidal excess, the future of golf's high-flying recent past seems at best uncertain. The grand old clubs, built on sustaining cultures rooted deep in their communities, will weather any storm, but many of those daily-fee courses had already gone under; and the survivors face hard times.

Corporations will no longer have the same discretionary funds to express their affection for golf. The number of amateur golfers has flatlined and with an injured Tiger on the sidelines, so have TV ratings. A path forward can be found in the recent victory of the U.S. Ryder Cup team; a group of untested kids and seasoned veterans putting their egos aside, and playing their guts out for nothing but pride. Captain Paul Azinger borrowed a page from the Scots, who still play golf the way they've always done on their local, minimal masterpiece tracks. Their game, taken to heart, teaches discipline, equilibrium, modesty, moral rectitude and the lesson that any player forgets at their peril: Golf, like life, is a humbling game.

*Mark Frost is the author of "The Greatest Game Ever Played" and "The Match," and co-creator of the TV series "Twin Peaks." His next book, "Game Six," the story of the 1975 baseball World Series, will be published in fall of 2009. Email golfjournal@wsj.com.*

Christian Odasso/UYA Films, Inc

Fishing in Key West, from the newly restored film **'Tarpon.'**

# Literary trio's fish story

By Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg

A RECENTLY RESTORED film featuring a trio of writers fishing for tarpon in Key West in the early 1970s has started to attract attention in literary and fly fishing circles. The movie, "Tarpon," features the late poet Richard Brautigan and the novelists Jim Harrison and Thomas McGuane, and includes original music written and performed by Jimmy Buffett.

The 53-minute documentary opens with a trolley-car ride in Key West and then segues into a narrative that features lots of salt water fly-fishing, and scenes that aim to capture the flavor of life among outsiders in Key West during the period. The movie also offers brief but entertaining views of a trio of writers who would later become well-known. Mr. Harrison, for example, is the author of the novella "Legends of the Fall"; the 1994 film version starred Brad Pitt and Anthony Hopkins.

The producers of "Tarpon" failed to land a commercial distributor, and soon pirated editions began to circulate. "I was a fly fishing guide in Key West in the 1980s and 1990s, and it was something you had to see," says Marshall Cutchin, publisher of MidCurrent.com, a popular Web site for fly fishing. The movie gathered dust for more than 30 years before its co-director, Guy de la Valdene, decided to restore it and then issue it as a DVD. "It's exactly as it was when we made it," says Mr. de la Valdene, who is the author of "For a Handful of Feathers," a hunting book.

Fans have helped get out the word via the Web. Cathy Ransier, co-owner of The Book Mailer, a catalog retailer of fly fishing books and related gear based in Helena, Mont., says she has sold more than 1,400 copies of "Tarpon" priced at $34.95 since early June. "It's got a cult following," she says. That may change. Mr. de la Valdene says his niece has plans to enter the movie in various film festivals.

**WSJ.com**

**On the boat**
Watch a film clip from 'Tarpon' at
**WSJ.com/Lifestyle**

Houses of Worship / *By Peter L. Berger*

# *Blessed Are the Poor?*

Poverty (of sorts) is suddenly in fashion. Politicians and commentators blame the financial crisis on greed, not only by malefactors on Wall Street, but also by all the denizens of Main Street who live above their means, accumulate useless possessions and despoil the environment. It is not quite clear what a nongreedy Wall Street would look like. But for the rest of us, after due repentance, the solution to the financial woes is held to be a more ascetic life.

If that is voluntary, rather than compelled by circumstance, it has the glow of moral superiority. "Green is good," says a latter-day Gandhi as he goes to work by bicycle. But if you are really poor, asceticism does not mean giving up your SUV—it means you are eating just one meal a day because it is all you can afford.

Far more attractive to poor people, who are a majority of its adherents, is the "prosperity gospel," a version of Christianity asserting that material benefits will come to those who have faith, live a morally upright life and, not so incidentally, give money to the church. Broadly speaking, this is what Max Weber called the Protestant Ethic, but with much less emphasis on self-denial and more on hard work, planning for the future, family loyalty and educating one's children.

The prosperity gospel probably originated among the poorer elements of the U.S. evangelical community. It is now a global phenomenon, especially among the rapidly spreading Pentecostal churches in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Virtually all outside commentary, both by theologians as well as people in the lay media, has been very negative, holding that the prosperity gospel is a distortion of Christianity pushed by rogue preachers who enrich themselves by exploiting the poor. There is some validity to these criticisms. It is certainly true that Christianity is not a recipe for acquiring wealth. But in that respect the prosperity gospel—usually seen as being on the Christian right—closely resembles the "liberation theology" of the Christian left, except that the latter's enrichment program is collective rather than individual. Liberation theology defined Christianity as essentially being a struggle of poor oppressed people against capitalism and imperialism.

Leaving aside theology and moral philosophy, sociology provides a rather different perspective. A few months ago, I visited a Pentecostal megachurch in a suburb of Johannesburg. The congregation of some 7,000 South Africans, black and white, created enough noise to give me a headache for hours. This was hardly a congenial form of worship for me. But I did hear the sermon, delivered by a highly charismatic preacher. There were two simple but powerful messages. One, "God does not want you to be poor!" And, two, "You can do something about it!" The New Testament strongly suggests that Jesus had a particular concern for the poor, but there is no suggestion that he wanted people to *remain* poor. The prosperity preachers, however, refer more often to the Old Testament, which has some passages that do suggest that God will bestow material blessings on those who remain faithful to him.

> The prosperity gospel vs. liberation theology.

As I left the church, I asked myself: Would I really want to quarrel with these messages? There is no sentimentality about poverty in the prosperity gospel. There is an appeal to people not as victims, but as responsible actors. There is also the confidence that generally people know what is best for themselves, better than any well-meaning outsiders. It is no wonder then that research data, from South Africa for instance, show that Pentecostals have an unusual degree of self-confidence and optimism about the future.

In 1968 a conference of Latin American bishops meeting in Medellin, Colombia, proclaimed a "preferential option for the poor," which since then has become an important ingredient of Catholic social teaching, and has influenced many in mainline Protestantism. Liberation theologians interpreted this as an option for socialism. But it is helpful to pay attention to the syntax. The option is *for* the poor. That is, it is an option to be taken by those who are not poor.

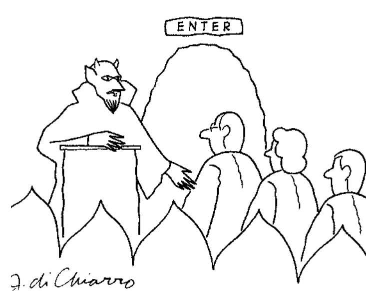
Of course, the proposition is well-intentioned. But it is not surprising that many of the poor are opting for a less patronizing message. They do not think of themselves as victims dependent on the compassion of the rich. I have no idea how the current mess in the financial markets is to be fixed. But I continue to be convinced that capitalism provides the only reliable mechanism for lifting large numbers of people from poverty to a decent level of material life. In other words, if one is concerned for the poor, one will adopt a preferential option for capitalism.

Weber believed that the economic consequences of Protestantism were unintentional. The prosperity gospel *intends* these consequences—material betterment for individuals, economic growth in the aggregate. It promises poor people that these goals are attainable. It is a promise likely to be kept. It seems to me that this empirical reality must be taken into account in any evaluation of the prosperity gospel—even by theologians and moral philosophers.

*Mr. Berger is director of the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs at Boston University.*

## Pepper . . . and Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL




**"Okay people—pagers, beepers and all cellphones on."**

A Cultural Conversation with Arthur Wheelock / *By Ann Landi*

# Lost in Rembrandt's Shadow

*Washington*

Do not feel you are hopelessly out of the cultural loop if your first response to the full-dress exhibition devoted to the 17th-century Dutch master Jan Lievens, opening on Oct. 26 at the National Gallery of Art, is "Jan *who*?" An amazingly gifted and versatile painter, Lievens until recent years had slipped through the cracks of art history.

Many of Lievens's works were long attributed to Rembrandt or inaccurately labeled "student of Rembrandt," but scholarly detective work is producing a more complicated portrait of the relationship between the two artists and a fuller picture of Lievens as a remarkable talent in his own right. From portraiture to history painting, landscape to still life, "he had a range of careers," notes Arthur Wheelock, organizer of the exhibition and curator of northern Baroque painting at the National Gallery of Art. "We're trying to bring all that together because it's so important to get work from all the representative stages of his career and no one has done that."

Lievens was a child prodigy. He studied with one of the foremost painters and teachers of the day, Pieter Lastman, and by the time he returned to his native Leiden—also Rembrandt's hometown—at age 14, he was in demand as an artist. The first gallery of the show gives a notion of the teenage Lievens's extraordinary powers, including tenebrous portraits of the Evangelists, a lusty genre scene of a young man embracing a bare-breasted wench, and biblical staples like "The Feast of Esther," once thought to be by Rembrandt. "When I was a graduate student in the 1960s, this was a very famous Rembrandt," Mr. Wheelock recalls. "It wasn't 'attributed to,' it *was* Rembrandt. Which shows that art history is an ever-evolving phenomenon."

* * *

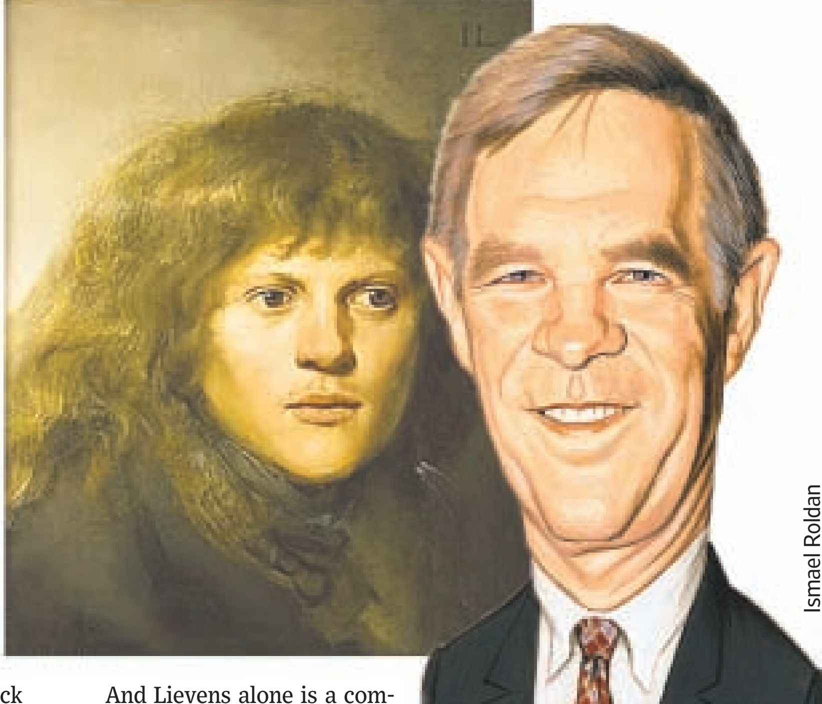
The exhibition proposes that in many respects Lievens was the initiator of stylistic and thematic developments that characterized both artists' work in the late 1620s. "What we're going to show here is evidence that Lievens, even before Rembrandt gets going, is doing these powerful paintings," says Mr. Wheelock. The records also put Rembrandt back in Leiden, after studying with Lastman himself, in 1625, by which time the young Lievens already had a growing audience for his work. "They may have shared a studio," Mr. Wheelock believes, and it seems certain they were close. "In a number of Lievens's works Rembrandt served as the model, and we know that Lievens appears in Rembrandt's paintings as well."

The give-and-take seems to have continued throughout their careers. For example, both "Rembrandt and Lievens were fascinated by old age," Mr. Wheelock notes. A Lievens painting of the nearly naked Job, bearded face cast downward, withered limbs outstretched, may have been inspired by a 1630 Rembrandt portrayal of Jeremiah.

At a certain point, their competitive instincts were likely goaded by the secretary to the prince of Orange, Constantin Huygens, who created challenges for the two painters. "We think, though we're not sure, that Huygens sets up competitions for them, because there are all sorts of similarities in choices of subjects being made at this time," the curator says. Lievens's four-foot-high "Crucifixion," set against a stormy backdrop, is in the show and can be contrasted with Rembrandt's interpretation of the same scene in the exhibition's catalog.

> Restoring the reputation of Jan Lievens.

But the mysterious relationship between the two—was it a friendly rivalry? a bitter contest? a lifelong mutual admiration society?—is only part of the Lievens story. "We purposely did not include comparative Rembrandt works," Mr. Wheelock says. "We wanted Lievens to stand on his own, but we tell the story in the catalog and in the wall text."




Ismael Roldan

And Lievens alone is a complicated trajectory of ambition and wily adaptation. He moved to The Hague to paint for the prince of Orange and for the exiled court of Frederick and Elizabeth, the Protestant rulers of Bohemia. He then traveled to England, where he remained for three years, in pursuit of the patronage of Charles I. It was his bad luck to be followed four months after landing in London by Anthony Van Dyck—a flashier painter and a Catholic like the king—who gained the sort of patronage coveted by Lievens. The artist returned to the Netherlands, working in Amsterdam and Antwerp, moving so many times that even the most dogged of scholars have difficulty tracing his footsteps. (To put this in contemporary terms, it is somewhat as if a hotshot realist like John Currin picked up stakes and tried to adapt to suit several well-heeled collectors—one thing for London's Charles Saatchi, another for Los Angeles's Eli Broad, and yet something else for New York's Leonard Riggio.) With each relocation there are changes in style but seldom a drop-off in quality.

Lievens's ultimate aim was to be a court painter in the esteemed "International Style"—an often operatic meld of themes and influences that range from Titian to Rubens. Several large-scale paintings in the show, such as "Triumph of Peace" and "Mars and Venus," reveal his success in this vein.

* * *

Mr. Wheelock, a lifelong scholar of Dutch art, is the very opposite of the peripatetic Lievens. A sandy-haired, low-key man with a big, engaging smile, he has been with the National Gallery for more than 30 years and first became enthusiastic about the northern Baroque as an undergraduate at Williams College, where he studied with the German émigré Jakob Rosenberg. Because Rosenberg had studied at Harvard, that's where Mr. Wheelock wanted to do his graduate work. He earned his doctorate there and quite incidentally encountered his first Lievens in the dining hall—a painting of an old man inaccurately attributed to (who else?) Rembrandt. "We thought the painting was by a student of Rembrandt, not realizing that Lievens was never his student."

Mr. Wheelock landed a fellowship at the National Gallery in 1972, and then began teaching at the University of Maryland in the fall of '73. The museum asked him to stay on as a part-time research curator, a job that eventually evolved into a full-time position. He has managed to combine teaching and curating ever since (one of his former graduate students, Lloyd DeWitt, did a lot of research on Lievens and contributed an essay to the catalog). In spite of many shows of Dutch art at the NGA in the past decade, Mr. Wheelock may still be best known as the organizer of the blockbuster Vermeer exhibition in 1995. "Thirteen years later people are still talking about it," he says.

Will they be talking about Lievens years down the road? Mr. Wheelock, for one, certainly hopes so. "You can see really great paintings, really powerful bold work in this show," he promises. "Another part of the story is about how an artist works in 17th-century Europe and how all these paintings that were once called Rembrandt attest to changing tastes and the evolution of connoisseurship. And as these pictures become Lievens and not Rembrandt," he adds with a smile, "what does that tell us about the Rembrandts we now have in our collections?"

*Ms. Landi writes on culture and the arts for several publications.*

❖ Top Picks

# A rich culture, fed by oil

**'The Merchant,'** 1932-33, by Azim Azimzad, on view in Berlin.

Staatliches Theatermuseum Cafer Cabbarli, Baku

**Berlin ■ history**

A century ago, half of the world's oil came from one place: Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, located on a stretch of Caspian coastline so rich with petroleum and natural gas deposits that the ground could actually catch on fire. Baku, a traditional meeting point of the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires, was transformed by the oil boom. European and local oil barons reinvented the city, importing European-style luxuries while pioneering the use of the oil tanker. Baku is currently undergoing a second oil boom, with offshore deposits providing profits.

Both oil booms are evident in a lavish exhibition at Berlin's Ethnological Museum, called "Azerbaijan: Land of Fire," which chronicles 5,000 years of history and culture in the Caucasus, with highlights from Baku's major museums. It's all here: Bronze Age relics; medieval Islamic ceramics; 19-century handicrafts; early 20th-century political caricatures; late 20th-century political propaganda; and contemporary Azerbaijani art.

The variety of objects is dazzling, but the carpets are a standout. The most impressive are the Karabakh carpets, marked by dramatic colors and geometric forms, produced in the 19th century, when Azerbaijan's carpet industry reached a highpoint. Around the corner from the carpets, a slideshow documents life in Baku during the first boom with a parade of images featuring medieval-looking barbershops, Dickensian oil derricks and elegant boulevards.

—J.S. Marcus

Until Nov. 16
☎ 49-30-8301-438
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

**Paris ■ art**

"Picasso and the Masters," at the Grand Palais, pulls together more than 200 paintings and a handful of sculptures to document Picasso's admiration, sometimes to the point of obsession, for two dozen major artists, including Cranach, Courbet, Cézanne, Delacroix, Gauguin, Ingres, Manet, Rembrandt, Rousseau, Van Gogh and especially his Spanish predecessors El Greco, Goya, Zurbarán and Velázquez. Since the show offers at least one and often several works by each of them, it earns its blockbuster status for this personal pantheon alone, as well as for its raft of fine Picassos.

Laid out thematically, the exhibit starts with self-portraits—mostly a young Picasso alongside works by mature artists, among them an unforgettable aged Rembrandt who nearly steals the section. Picasso more than holds his own in the next few galleries devoted to classical models and portraits, with superb paintings from his early blue and rose periods and the post-Cubist return to figuration. Sometimes the relationship of a Picasso to an older work is patent, as in the many variations on Velázquez's "Las Meninas" (that painting is here only in a slide projection), and a violently colored reconstruction of Cranach's delicate portrait of a bejeweled woman. Other pairings are wonderfully surprising, including Zurbarán's haunting brown-and-black vision of Saint Francis of Assisi as a hooded monk and Picasso's jagged Cubist "Man with a Guitar"—one of very few Cubist works on show.

Toward the end of the exhibit, though, Picasso starts to pale, with a few too many of the later works he blithely knocked off in a single day. In a gallery of women's portraits, his pulled-taffy, yowling and cartoonish "Big Nude in a Red Chair" is no match for the imposing Ingres "Madame Moitessier," the subtle finesse of Goya's "Marquise de la Solana" and the impertinent immodesty of Manet's blue-corseted courtesan "Nana."

In the show's final gallery of nudes, the stunning and probably once-in-a-lifetime lineup of Titian's "Venus and Cupid with an Organist," Goya's "Naked Maja" and Manet's "Olympia" is interspersed with several garish and crudely near-pornographic late Picassos that look like the secondary splashings of a spoiled child.

A pair of associated exhibits running until Feb. 1 offer Picasso's multiple variations on Delacroix's "Women of Algeria" (at the Louvre) and Manet's "Le Dejeuner sur l'Herbe" (at the Musée d'Orsay.).

—Judy Fayard

Until Feb. 2
☎ 33-1-44-13-17-17
www.grandpalais.fr

**Linz ■ art**

"Political Sculpture," at the Landesgalerie Linz, features works by four sculptors active in Austria during the Nazi era, when Hitler hoped to make the city of Linz, his boyhood home, into a cultural capital.

The most notorious of the four is Josef Thorak (1889-1952), who specialized in illustrating Nazi ideals of art. Between 1934 and 1944 Thorak created the images we now associate with Nazi art: overdeveloped bodies with small heads, heroic men and subservient women. He completed busts of Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, Benito Mussolini and Hitler himself. Thorak also made sculptures for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, the German Pavilion of the World Exposition in Paris in 1937, the party parade grounds in Nuremberg and the Reich Chancellery in Berlin.

At the end of the war many works (including Hitler's bust) were destroyed or disappeared into private collections. Today his images are used to illustrate neo-Nazi propaganda. The show includes the artist's bust of boxer Max Schmeling (1932) and a photograph of his bust of Hitler. His works are interesting not as art but as political and historical artifacts.

The same is true of Ludwig Kasper (1893-1945), who fit his aesthetic ideas to those of the Third Reich. His giant nude figures—the show includes "Little Girl with an Apple" (1933), "Standing Boy" (1933) and "Spear Carrier" (1936)—are all modeled on Hellenic sculptures. They were widely admired by the Nazi leadership.

The other two artists in this show refused to toe the ideological and aesthetic lines of Hitler's Germany. Ernst Barlach (1879-1938) reached the peak of his career during the Weimar Republic with works illustrating the futility of war. Unlike Kasper or Thorak, he created figures that show humanity, suffering and great expressive power. The Nazis condemned his art as degenerate and 400 works were removed from museums and public places in 1937. Among the most famous of his works (shown here in a photograph) was his floating bronze angel in the Cathedral of Güstrow, which was removed and symbolically melted down to make ammunition. The exhibit includes Barlach's bronze works "The Melon Eater" (1907), "Freezing Girl" (1916) and "Wanderer in the Wind" (1927).

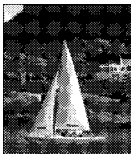
Perhaps the most interesting artist here is Fritz Wotruba (1907-1975), Austria's best known 20th-century sculptor. His block-like figures, carved from hard, rough-surfaced stone, exude a primitive force.

Wotruba already had successful international exhibitions behind him in the early 1930s and enjoyed excellent reviews from Austrian and foreign art critics when Germany's annexation of Austria forced him into exile. He continued working in Switzerland until the end of the war. Included in this show are "Torso" (1930), "Large Lying Youth" (1933) and "Standing Figure" (1946), as well as later abstract works. —Mariana Schroeder

Until Nov. 16
☎ 43-732-774-482-0
www.landesgalerie.at


## Distinctive Properties & Estates

**Presidio Heights in San Francisco**
Amazingly Beautiful Single Family Home with 5 Bedrooms
Priced to sell at $4,600,000
Call or e-mail Malcolm Post
(415) 321-4256
mpost@hill-co.com
HILL & CO. REAL ESTATE
View photos & details - www.3878Jackson.com



IF YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR SAILING, GOLF AND THE ISLAND LIFE, COME LIVE IN COLORFUL CURAÇAO
Come experience our island lifestyle and the luxurious bayfront homes and home sites in historic Santa Barbara Plantation. It's a world class 1500-acre gated resort community featuring a Pete Dye 18-hole championship golf course, a brand new Hyatt Regency Curaçao Resort & Spa, beautiful private beaches and a protected deepwater marina. New Marina Village homes are priced from US $726,000.
Visit us at www.santabarbaraplantation.com
Santa Barbara Plantation / U.S. 1-877-740-0567 / Curaçao 599-9-767-3405

**FLORENCE-TUSCANY**
Panoramic position on the hills
**PRESTIGIOUS ANTIQUE HAMLET**
24000 sf (2230sm) of restored apartments in the Chianti Classico area, luxury pool, gym, cellars - 88 acres (36 hectares) vineyards, olive groves. Prestigious wines with International awards. €10mil.
0039 392 844 0033
gianfranco.trifoglietti@gmail.com

**Seacoast Rye, New Hampshire**
Estate Setting at Wentworth by the Sea Country Club w/Spectacular Marina & Atlantic Ocean Views. CC Membership Golf/Tennis /Fitness.4 Bedrooms,6 Baths All Amenities Tax Free NH.
$3,600,000
www.50heatherdrive.com
Wiechert Realtors PEP (603)430-1003 x 185

www.pggwre.co.nz PGG Wrightson
Aviators And Other High Flyers Must Enquire
NORTHLAND NEW ZEALAND
Aviators Home On 383ha (946 acres) Of Picturesque Farmland
- Situated handy to Auckland City & International Airport
- 870m sealed runway with hangars for up to 8 aircraft
- High quality main homestead and office complex
- A beautiful farm or lifestyle with development potential

Expressions of Interest are invited by 21 Nov 2008
Max Lyver PGW International
+646 879 5123
www.pggwre.co.nz ID# WEL919221
Andrew Hiskens Colliers International
+649 488 4777 www.colliers.com ID# 7370
PGG WRIGHTSON LIMITED MREINZ

T
TRUMP TOWERS MIAMI FLORIDA
Luxury Oceanfront Property Direct from Developer
Call +1-305-213-3606
Elena@MiamiTrumpTowers.com

**Prime Farm Land**
S.E. Oklahoma
200 Acres Red River Bottom
Government Base, Good Renter in Place with 5% return.
$2600 per acre.
903-701-7248 or 7247

Luxurious resort-style vacation retreats in Southwest Florida on the Gulf of Mexico. Enjoy the beautiful tropical beaches of Marco Island, Naples and Bonita Springs.

MAKE GREAT CONNECTIONS IN EUROPE. THE WALL STREET JOURNAL EUROPE.
To advertise
Emma Balogun
The Wall Street Journal Europe
+44 207 842 9608
emma.balogun@dowjones.com
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. EUROPE

**St. Croix, USVI**
LAND OF PARADISE ESTATE SALE
Spectacular view—Beautiful Setting 11½ac. overlooking Turquoise Bay & Buck Island. Home, guest house, garages, gen. room & servant's quarters. Lge mahogany trees, 18th Century sugar mill—mint condition. 46 ac. beautiful green valley for agricultural or commercial land dvlpmnt.
Call Dallas, TX—Bus. 214-747-1000
haroldoconnor29@yahoo.com

# time off

## Amsterdam

**art**
"Vodou: Art & Mysticism from Haiti" exhibits unique objects of vodou worship and art.
Tropenmuseum
Oct. 31-May 10
☎ 31-20-5688-200
www.tropenmuseum.nl

## Berlin

**art**
"High Fidelity—Artist's Records in the Marzona Collection" displays 300 vinyl albums alongside posters, photography, musical scores and books.
Kunstbibliothek
Until Feb. 1
☎ 49-30-2662-951
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

## Brussels

**art**
"Brussels Biennial" presents contemporary art in various locations by international artists including Abdellah Karroum, Charles Esche and Anselm Franke.
Until Jan. 4
☎ 32-2-5078-345
www.brusselsbiennial.org

**art**
"Corpus Delicti: Contemporary Art in the Brussels Law Courts" exhibits art adressing ideas of justice and crime.
Brussels Law Courts
Until Nov. 21
☎ 32-2519-8677
www.corpus-delicti.be

## Cologne

**art**
"Gerhard Richter" exhibits 40 paintings by the German artist (born 1932) with a focus on abstract works produced between 1986 and 2006.
Museum Ludwig
Until Feb. 1
☎ 49-221-2212-6165
www.museenkoeln.de

## Düsseldorf

**art**
"As Far as the Eye Can See—Lawrence Weiner" is a retrospective of conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner (born 1942).
K21 Kunstsammlung im Ständehaus
Until Jan. 11
☎ 49-211-8381-600
www.kunstsammlung.de

## Frankfurt

**photography**
"Jim Rakete: 1/8 sec." shows black and white portraits of celebrities by German photographer Jim Rakete (born 1951).
Deutsches Filmmuseum
Until Jan. 4
☎ 49-69-9612-2022-0
www.deutsches-filmmuseum.de

## Göteborg

**photography**
"Graciela Iturbide" showcases the work of the photographer and Hasselblad 2008 award winner, who focuses on the interactions between nature and culture, identity and landscape.
Hasselblad Foundation
Until Jan. 11
☎ 46-3136-8350-0
www.hasselbladfoundation.org

## Hamburg

**art**
"From Leonardo to Piranesi: Italian Drawings from 1450 to 1800" exhibits 100 drawings by Italian Masters.
Hamburger Kunsthalle
Until Jan. 18
☎ 49-4042-8131-200
www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de

Illustration from 'The Peacock Party,' 1979, by **Alan Aldridge,** on view in London.

## Helsinki

**photography**
"Beneath the Waves of the Archipelago Sea" presents underwater photography of the Baltic Sea taken by Finnish diver and photographer Jukka Nurminen.
Amos Anderson Art Museum
Until Nov. 16
☎ 358-9-6844-460
www.amosanderson.fi

## London

**art**
"Alan Aldridge—the Man with the Kaleidoscope Eyes" features the artwork, sketches, letters and films of the British illustrator and graphic designer Alan Aldridge (born 1943).
Design Museum
Until Jan. 25
☎ 44-2074-0369-33
www.designmuseum.org

## Madrid

**art**
"Total Enlightenment: Conceptual Art in Moscow, 1960-1990" shows works by 25 contemporary conceptual artists from Russia.
Fundación Juan March
Until Jan. 11
☎ 34-91-4354-240
www.march.es

## Milan

**art**
"Seurat, Signac and Neo-Impressionism" is a retrospective dedicated to the founding fathers of the Neo-Impressionist movement.
Palazzo Reale
Until Jan. 25
☎ 39-0287-5672
www.comune.milano.it

Archivio Storico della Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz e Bruno Danese

'Multiplo Ora X,' 1963, by **Bruno Munari,** on view in Rome.

## Munich

**art**
"Kandinsky—Absolute, Abstract" is a major retrospective of paintings and graphic art by Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), one of the first modern abstract artists.
Kunstbau Lenbachhaus
Oct. 25-Feb. 22
☎ 49-89-2333-2000
www.lenbachhaus.de

**photography**
"Still Lives—When Things are Dreaming: Photographs from the Collection" presents still life photographs from the past 100 years.
Münchner Stadtmuseum
Until Feb. 1
☎ 49-89-2332-2370
www.stadtmuseum-online.de

## Paris

**art**
"From Miró to Warhol: The Berardo Collection in Paris" presents works covering five major art movements in the 20th century.
Musée du Luxembourg
Until Feb. 22
☎ 33-1454-4129-0
www.museeduluxembourg.fr

**art**
"Monet: L'Oeil Impressioniste" shows works by the French painter Claude Monet (1840-1926) and analyzes the effect his partial loss of vision had on his paintings.
Musée Marmottan Monet
Until Feb. 15
☎ 33-1-4496-5033
www.marmottan.com

## Rome

**art**
"Bruno Munari" exhibits more than 150 objects, including sculptures, artworks and graphics by Milanese artist and industrial designer Bruno Munari (1907-1998).
Museo dell'Ara Pacis
Until Feb. 22
☎ 39-06-0606-08
www.arapacis.it

**photography**
"Lisette Model and School: Photographs from 1937-2002" presents 21 photographs by Lisette Model (1901-1983) and over 100 works by artists she inspired, including Diane Arbus, Elaine Ellman, Larry Fink, Peter Hujar, Gary Schneider, Rosalind Solomon, Bruce Weber and others.
Museo di Roma in Trastevere
Until Nov. 2, 2009
☎ 39-06-5816-563
www.museodiromaintrastevere.it

## Stockholm

**photography**
"Nuevas Historias—A New View of Spanish Contemporary Photography" shows work by Spanish artists Jordi Bernadó, Isidro Blasco, Bleda y Rosa, Alicia Martin, Mireya Masó and others.
Kulturhuset Stockholm
Until Jan. 25
☎ 46-8-5083-1508
www.kulturhuset.stockholm.se

## Tours

**art**
"The Pleasure of Taste—French Painting at the Time of Madame de Pompadour" exhibits 60 paintings by the French masters Boucher, Greuze, Chardin and Fragonard, all influenced in style by the patronage of the French courtesan Madame de Pompadour.
Musée des Beaux-Arts
Until Jan. 12
☎ 33-2-4705-6873
www.tours.fr

## Vienna

**music**
"Festival Wien Modern 2008" is a contemporary music festival featuring the works of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Enno Poppe and Peter Ablinger alongside works by Tony Conrad, Chaya Czernowin and others.
Oct. 26-Nov. 16
☎ 43-1-2420-0
www.wienmodern.at

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.

**WSJ.com**

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