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WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

Cartoon auteurs

Europe's visionary graphic novelists



Dressing for a downturn | Birders flock east

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Cartoon auteurs

Europe's visionary graphic novelists



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Words of wisdom from the late author David Foster Wallace. WSJ.com/Lifestyle

Long shots

What happens when Ryder Cup captains go with their gut? WSJ.com/Sports

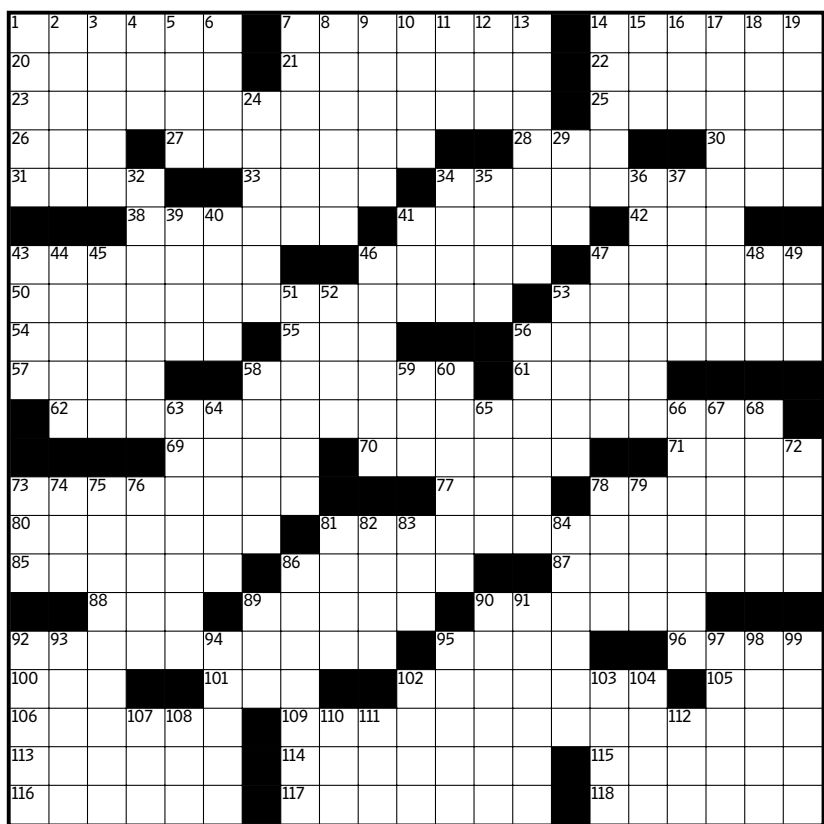
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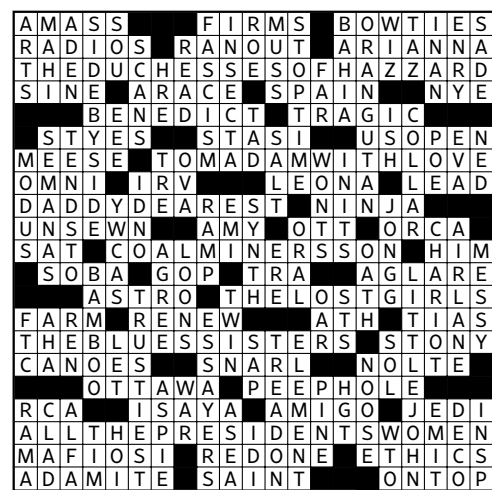
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Last week's solution



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Nanette Lepore (far left) calls her signature look, including the design below, 'enlightened boho.'

Dressing up for a downturn

THE FIRST LOOK that designer Nanette Lepore sent down her runway during the New York fashion shows last week was a floral-print coat made of a very soft burlap. The coat's oversized, notched collar and bold print signaled power, but the elbow-length sleeves and flowers flashed pure femininity.

Ms. Lepore has built her 12-year-old fashion label on a signature look that manages to combine girlish charm with tailored power. Her designs seemed particularly relevant last week, as dozens of designers offered romantic, feminine looks (with varying degrees of success).

Fashion designers must walk a fine line this year as the economy continues its downward spiral. At a time when women are cutting spending on clothing, designers feel they must entice women with something new and special—without coming across as frivolous and impractical.

Over the summer, Ms. Lepore decided—as did a lot of designers showing at fashion week—that the solution was not conservative designs. On the contrary, difficult economic times seemed to call for escape. In the fashion world, that translated to feminine '70s looks and floaty, frilly counterculture clothes.

Ms. Lepore was among the designers taking chances with ruffles and mixing materials and patterns such as plaid and stripes. "I'm not a huge rule breaker," Ms. Lepore said, but "we're breaking more rules."

Indeed, wearing Lepore requires a taste for well-managed risk. For spring, for instance, she will offer tailored jackets—without sleeves. A simple sheath dress has a single ruffle running across the skirt. She calls her look



"enlightened boho."

Yet Ms. Lepore knows how to balance the tension between function and fashion. More-conservative women might have overlooked the floral-print coat as it was shown on the runway. It was paired with green knickers—decidedly not an office look. But worn over a more conservative pair of slacks or pencil skirt, the same coat would add verve to a professional wardrobe.

"I feel like I understand that working women need functioning clothes," said Ms. Lepore in her studio, wearing a transparent leopard-print blouse over a short black skirt. She is a native of Ohio and a working mother herself—her daughter is 10 years old. She attributes her understanding of appropriate dress in part to her sister Michele, who is married to an Ohio state legislator and has to find pitch-perfect outfits for a variety of public and political events.

Whether or not Ms. Lepore gets her designs right, the shifting economy is buffeting her business. Earlier this year, she was on the brink of selling a controlling stake in her company in order to expand. Bill Smith, the former president of investment bank Financo Inc. and founder of Global Reach Capital, a private-equity investment group, had been scouring fashion for labels that could be leveraged into juggernaut brands with the launch of accessories, perfumes and other spin-off products. Mr. Smith approached Ms. Lepore about a stake in her brand, which has seven retail stores, in addition to being sold in department and independent stores, producing about \$140 million in annual sales.

Though intrigued, Ms. Lepore dragged the negotiations out for two years while her husband, who is the company's president, urged her to get to the finish line. "I didn't want to lose control of my company," she says. "And then the economy crashed." The deal fell through. "I come home to 'I told you so' every night," she says, as her husband, Robert Savage, nods with a rueful grin.

These days, with financial havoc on Wall Street, all kinds of stores are feeling pressure to reduce the prices of the clothes—even low-priced Target stores, a Target spokesman told me last week. High-priced designers like Ms. Lepore have found retailers cutting back sharply.

"We're not getting what we're used to in reorders—it's been hard for me to adjust," she said recently. "In a normal environment, we'd be having tons and tons of reorders, but now, stores are not wanting to get loaded with inventory."

Instead, Ms. Lepore is pressing to grow independently. Plans are in the works to open stores in Bal Harbour, Fla., and on Madison Avenue in New York City—and she is looking to raise her profile outside the U.S. She said about 15% of her sales currently are overseas, but she hopes to double that percentage within five years. In the U.S., she will launch her first advertising campaign this fall in magazines and on billboards.

Mr. Smith might manage to help out after all. At her show last week, he made it clear he hasn't given up. He said airily, "We'll do something at some point."

—Cheryl Tan contributed to this article. Email Christina.Binkley@wsj.com

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To frill or not to frill?
Watch a video with
Nanette Lepore and see more of her
spring 2009 runway looks at
WSJ.com/Style

How to 'airbrush' yourself

TELEVISION AND movie stars achieve flawless, apparently bare skin on screen with the help of "airbrushed" makeup, which is actually sprayed on in a fine mist by an airbrush gun.

But increasingly, consumers can achieve that "airbrushed" look at home without investing in costly artillery, says J.P. McCary, vice president of consumer products and artistry for the Temptu makeup line.

Mr. McCary, a makeup artist who worked at five shows during New York fashion week, gets an airbrushed look by using low-tech, manual methods backstage at shows when there's not a working electrical outlet nearby, and he has taught the techniques to clients who don't have a professional makeup artist at their disposal.

He suggests starting by cleansing the face and then using an alcohol-free toner and a lightweight moisturizer suited for your skin type.

Next, apply a silicone-based primer. Silicone-based makeup, which is being sold in more stores, is key to achieving flawless skin, says Mr. McCary. "The silicone will fill in any fine lines and wrinkles and flattens the skin so you get a smooth canvas."

Apply the primer with your fingers, blending in a circular motion. "It breaks the product



Sandy Nichols

down, which helps it absorb into the skin faster," says Mr. McCary.

Concealer comes next, but make sure to use one that contains silicone, Mr. McCary advises. With a small brush, pinpoint the areas needing extra coverage. "Don't forget the inner corner of the eye," he warns. Take particular care under the eye, too. "That's really important for pictures," Mr. McCary says.

Next, apply a silicone-based foundation with a synthetic-hair brush. Finally, brush on a loose, silica-containing powder, but only where you need it. "Don't use a powder puff or a sponge. It gives too much coverage," Mr. McCary says. "The reason why my celebrity clients want to look airbrushed is because you don't see makeup on the skin."

—Ellen Byron

CLAUS RIEDEL'S LEGENDARY DESIGN FROM 1958.
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❖ Film

Coens' not-so-deadly farce

'BURN AFTER READING' could just as well have been called "Forget After Seeing." It's a cheerful trifle tossed off by the Coen brothers in their self-enchanted mode, an approach to comedy that shrugs off comedy's cardinal rule: Don't Act Funny. This is a

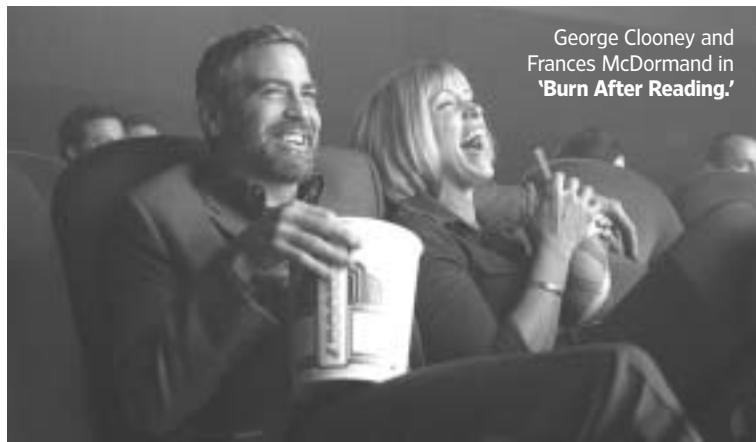
Film

JOE MORGENSTERN

loss, because the actors who've been turned loose on the slight though intricate plot are, to a man and woman, experts at being funny without trying. George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Frances McDormand have the biggest roles, but the best performances are given by John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Richard Jenkins and J.K. Simmons, who play their parts absolutely straight.

The action takes place at the intersection of two disparate cultures—the Central Intelligence Agency and Hardbodies, a District of Columbia gym where body-builders intersect, in their turn, with oddballs, loners and losers. The CIA sets things in motion by dismissing Osborne Cox (Mr. Malkovich), the chief of its Balkans desk, for boozing in, and out, of the line of duty. While Ozzie plots his revenge in high dudgeon—no dudgeon is higher than that of John Malkovich wronged—one of Hardbodies's employees, the hapless Linda Litzke (Ms. McDormand) dreams of transforming her body, and thus her life, through a series of prohibitively expensive cosmetic surgeries.

Thanks to the long but indispensable arm of coincidence, Linda and a dim-bulb co-worker, Chad Feldheimer (Mr. Pitt) stumble on what seems to be an electronic trove of Ozzie's CIA secrets. Then, in a daft riff on "The Falcon and the Snowman," they try to blackmail him and



George Clooney and Frances McDormand in 'Burn After Reading.'

sell their supposed intelligence to the Russian Embassy.

In the course of these events, the filmmaker brothers, Joel Coen and Ethan Coen, concoct a few comedy moments that might have seemed inspired if they weren't so contrived, plus one genuine if gratuitous surprise. Yet "Burn After Reading" feels inconsequential—the running time is only 96 minutes—and looks it, even though the cinematographer, Emmanuel Lubezki, is a fine shooter in his own right. It must be

said, though, that most members of the cast look like they're having a lovely time—especially Brad Pitt, with his David Lynch haircut and fluttery-Narcissus demeanor, and George Clooney as Harry Pfarrer, a doltish, adulterous federal marshal who trolls Internet dating sites when he isn't building the world's most implausible sex toy in his basement. On the other hand, Tilda Swinton, as Osborne's acidic wife, doesn't look like she's enjoying life at all. She's playing a hard case in a soft body, and she's terrific.

'Towelhead'

"Towelhead" was directed by Alan Ball from his adaptation of the novel by Alicia Erian. This bleak coming-of-age comedy takes place in suburban Texas during the first Gulf War and stars Summer Bishil as Jasira, a 13-year-old Arab-American with a Lolita stare and no notion—at least at first—of its consequences. Ms. Bishil gives a performance that's remarkable for its understatement. Yet she's the only reliable source of simplicity, even though she's surrounded by a fine cast. The problem is self-comment, and Mr. Ball, a first-time feature director, seldom lets the material speak for itself.

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Opening this week in Europe

- **Burn After Reading** Greece
- **Hamlet 2** Greece
- **Mad Money** Spain
- **Redbelt** U.K.
- **Swing Vote** U.K.
- **The Bank Job** Netherlands
- **The Love Guru** Greece
- **The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor** Italy
- **Tropic Thunder** Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Spain
- **Wall-E** Austria, Germany, Turkey

Source: IMDb
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Ed Harris takes aim at the Old West

EIGHT YEARS AFTER impressing critics with "Pollock," his feature debut behind the camera, actor Ed Harris returns to the director's chair with the Old West drama "Appaloosa." Adapted from Robert Parker's 2005 novel, the \$20 million film stars Mr. Harris as Virgil Cole, a laconic lawman who, with partner Everett Hitch (Viggo Mortensen), is hired to bring a corrupt rancher (Jeremy Irons) to justice. Mr. Harris, star of such films as "Glengarry Glen Ross" and "A History of Violence," spoke to us about making the new film. —Michelle Kung

Q: The Old West is a pretty far cry from the artistic enclaves of the Hamptons.

I hadn't set out to make a western, but I started reading Parker's novel in the summer of 2005 and fell in love with the relationship between these two guys before I even finished the book. It just happened to take place in 1882.

Q: What was easier to shoot? "Pollock" was really tough in terms of the logistics. I ended up pumping a whole lot of my own money into "Pollock," but I wouldn't trade the experience for

the world. With "Appaloosa," I was telling a story—I wasn't making a subjective film about this man I had been reading and thinking about for years and years.

Q: Westerns are few and far between these days. How difficult was this to get greenlit?

It was hard to set up. The script was received really well, but the price tag was a little high; it would have been a lot easier if it were \$10 million. It was a constant fight until the end in terms of budget. There was a time we couldn't have a train, so I started



looking into stagecoaches, but it wasn't the same. A western needs a certain scope and production value to look authentic.

Q: You've worked with most of your actors and crew before. When did Viggo Mortensen, your "A History of Violence" costar, come aboard?

I showed him the book [during the Toronto Film Festival in 2005], he really liked it, committed to do it, and God bless him, he's a man of his word and stuck to it, despite being busy to the point of excess. He literally showed up a couple days before filming started last year, and had done all his homework. Also ready was Jeremy Irons, who was excited to do the film because he's never done a western before.

Q: You also croon a tune you wrote, over the ending credits. I didn't know you were a singer.

I didn't either! But it sounds all right. [Composer Jeff Beal and I] knew we wanted some music over the credits, so I wrote a song, and he wrote the music. It's basically [my character] Cole singing to Allie [played by Renée Zellweger], so it's got some humor to it.

Hit List: WILL WRIGHT

The Spore creator's favorite games

The creator of several best-selling computer games, Will Wright hopes to score another coup with *Spore*, released this month. Following a single organism through its various stages of evolution, *Spore* gives players the freedom to guide a civilization from its earliest days. The game's publisher, Electronic Arts, released a *Creature Creator* earlier this summer to allow players to make their own animals from scratch. Those creations are then shared online with all other *Spore* players and populate the game. Retailing for about \$50 and available on both PCs and Macs, the game was eagerly awaited by fans of Mr. Wright's previous games, such as *The Sims*. Here, Mr. Wright's favorite games.

—Jamin Brophy-Warren



Go ▶ First played in ancient China, this game pits players against each other to control the gameboard with black and white tiles. Mr. Wright's mother purchased the game for him when he was 7 and he's been a dedicated fan of the game's "simple rules but deep strategies" ever since.

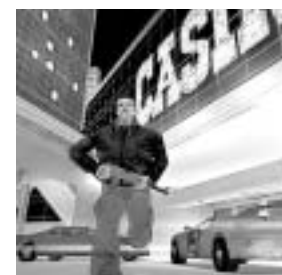


◀ **Civilization**
1991

A popular strategy game that challenges players to build a lasting culture over the ages, *Civilization* featured the kind of open-ended play favored by Mr. Wright. "It was so broad in terms of the things you could do like building and trading," he says. "It wasn't about blowing things up."

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City ▶
2002

While Mr. Wright says the first version of this violent action video game was the most innovative, he liked this follow-up because it featured motorbikes and scooters. "It was a great playground," says Mr. Wright.



◀ **Battlefield 1942**
2002

The first of a long line of war-themed games from Electronic Arts, this game simulated battle conditions from the various theaters of World War II. "It had giant maps and, depending on the context, a jeep could be as useful as an aircraft carrier," he says.

Advance Wars: Days of Ruin ▶
2008

Mr. Wright has followed this military strategy game for Nintendo's DS since the franchise launched in 2001. He says he plays the latest version every morning over breakfast. "I lost my DS for a couple days [this year] and I felt a little bit groggy. It's as much of a wake-up as is my coffee."



Philip Roth returns to a younger voice

BY JEFFREY A. TRACHTENBERG

IN HIS 29TH BOOK, "Indignation," Philip Roth turns back the pages and writes about a college-age protagonist who has left town to get away from his increasingly neurotic father, a kosher butcher in Newark, N.J., only to discover that distance is a state of mind.

It is 1951, and Marcus Messner is attending Winesburg College in Ohio. Marcus is haunted by the possibility that if he fails, he will be drafted and forced to fight in the Korean War.

Like many Rothian characters, Marcus wants to fit in. He's even bought clothes that mirror those that he's seen on the cover of a brochure promoting his school. But his insecurities and inability to trust anyone except a damaged coed assure he will be miserable.

Mr. Roth, 75 years old, often writes about big, weighty subjects: sex, race and death.

In turn, he has won nearly all of the major literary honors, including the 1998 Pulitzer Prize for "American Pastoral." He talked about his new novel, *Hollywood* and Albert Camus.

Q: What lured you back to writing about college-age kids and their world?

I've been writing about old men and their experiences for so long that I wanted a change. I also wanted to use the Korean War period as a backdrop.

Q: "Indignation" could be the title of nearly every book you've written. How do you view the indignant?

I wouldn't say every book, but I get your meaning. I think people are full of indignation. They walk the streets in indignation, ride the subways with indignation. It's a common, human motive. Do you think I'll get complaints from the indignant?

Q: In Kafka's story "The Metamorphosis," a salesman who has been transformed into an insect surely had reason to sound indignant—but he never does. Is indignation inherently a modern quality?

No, not at all. Greek drama is full of it. Homer is full of it. Achilles is indignation walking. So it's hardly modern.

Q: By now you probably know as much about the workings of Hollywood as any novelist. Did you have any voice in "Elegy," which was based on your novel "The Dying Animal" and released in August?

No. I don't do that. I make an agreement with somebody I think is respectable and I let it go. I don't know how to read a film script, and wouldn't know if a script was good or bad.

Q: Which of your books that were made into movies were you most happy with?

I think the first one, "Goodbye, Columbus," was the most successful. It had a spirit, good performances, and it kept to the book more or less. That would be my favorite.

Q: The other day I bought a copy of *Evergreen*, a literary publication from the 1960s filled with

work by authors such as Henry Miller and Jack Kerouac. Do you think American culture will ever take writers as seriously as it did then?

Probably not. It wasn't a golden moment but it was a pretty good moment. I remember that magazine. They published the avant-garde at the time. But too many things have happened to stand between literature and culture for it to be the same. The technological revolution has absorbed the attention of what used to be a readership. Print culture is dying out. To be more specific, readership is dying out. Other things are taking its place. The literary moment has come and half-gone.

Q: Norman Mailer died last year. How do you think he'll be remembered in 50 years, and which of his books, if any, will hold up?

He's a complicated figure. Just his presence had a lot of meaning. He was aggressive, iconoclastic, outspoken, candid, and all of that was good. I can't say I've read his recent fiction, the one on Jesus, or the one about Hitler. But I read his earlier fiction. "Why Are We in Vietnam?" was a strong book. I think his journalistic essays and his reportage will be thought of as his strongest work, such as "The Armies of the Night." His "The Executioner's Song" may be remembered as his best book.

Q: What is your writing day like?

Over the last 30 years, I've done most of my writing in northwest Connecticut. I don't cut myself off from people, not that there are that many people around here. I go to work at about 10 in the morning, work until 4 p.m., and then exercise. I work every day, six or seven days a week, when I have a project. I don't travel very much any longer. It's nice to see people in the evening if they're around, but most nights I read. It's a quiet life devoted to work.

Q: What effect, if any, has aging had on your work habits?

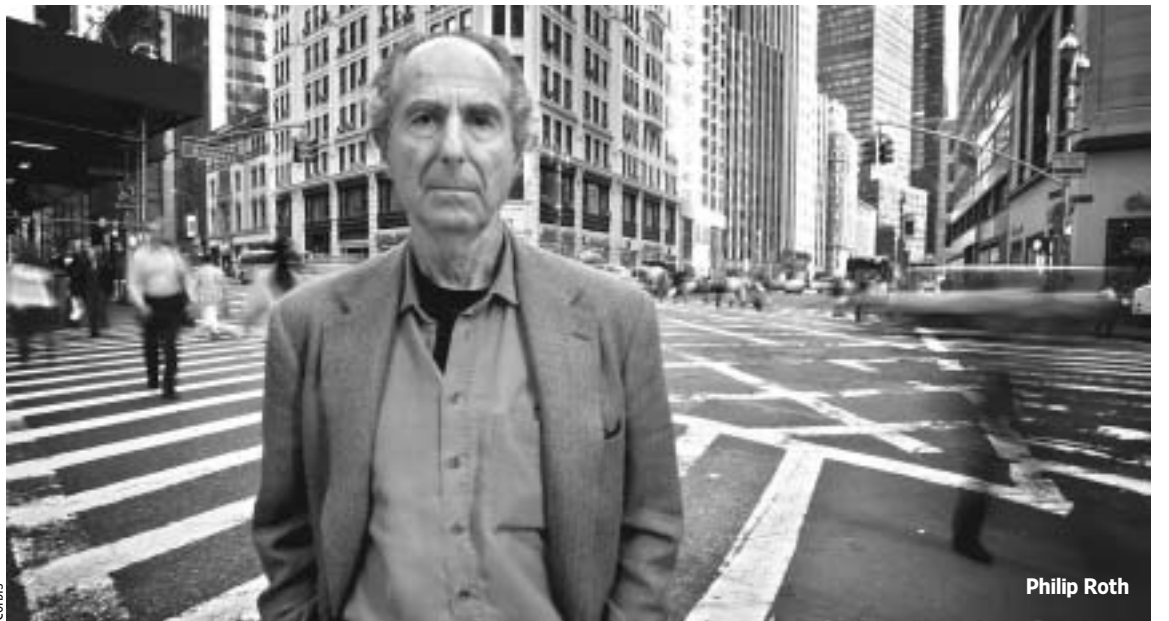
Well, it hasn't affected my energy or my concentration. I work at the same pace and the same rate I always have. What's happened is my subject range has broadened.

Q: Your recent novels have been relatively short. Is that the length at which you feel most comfortable?

I've always liked to read short novels and wondered if I could write one. It's not harder. In some ways it's harder to write longer because you have to keep it in your brain so long. But it's a different process, like driving a truck compared to a sports car.

Q: Whom are you reading today?

I just finished reading Albert Camus's three volumes of notebooks. I'd reread "The Plague," and that led me to the notebooks. They're fascinating. He's a wonderful writer.



Philip Roth



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from "Indignation," at
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Where wine's old world meets new ideas

EMILIO ROTOLO HAS found considerable success as a winemaker—his Volpe Pasini property was recently named one of Italy's top 50 wineries by Gambero Rosso magazine—but he remains something of an industry rebel.

The former physician and real-estate investor came late to the wine business and, at his estate in the hills of the northeastern Italian province of Friuli, has always taken an unconventional approach, combining modern technology with an-

Backstage with EMILIO ROTOLO

cient know-how to make highly regarded wines. Now he's on a mission to help other small and midsize Italian wine producers to challenge what he sees as the dominance of big "new world" producers by combining marketing efforts.

Dr. Rotolo, 50 years old, moved to the region from his native Calabria in the early 1980s to work as a radiologist, but retired from the medical profession after acquiring the Volpe Pasini estate in 1995. He has since dedicated himself to restoring the once famous property and winery, which in its heyday as the home of an aristocratic family played host to the leading personalities of its age, from Luigi Pirandello to Benito Mussolini, before falling on hard times.

When he started in the business, Dr. Rotolo had no formal professional training in winemaking. He hired leading wine consultant Riccardo Cotarella, who oversaw the introduction at Volpe Pasini of a range of new technologies, including the use of dry ice at the point of harvest to maintain the freshness of the grapes and reduce their exposure to oxygen before and during pressing. The practice is more common now but was unusual at the time.

Dr. Rotolo is also committed to preserving and nurturing local grape varieties with white wines like the refreshing Ribollo Gialla and stunning Friuliano and the red Refosco dal Peduncolo.

A skillful businessman with a keen appreciation for the global market, where his wines compete with those of conglomerates in Australia, Chile, the U.S. and elsewhere, Dr. Rotolo has built an international following for his wines. Unusually for such a small-scale producer (the winery makes about 285,000 bottles a year), some 50% of his wines are now sold outside Italy—not only in established markets like the U.S. and Germany but also in growth markets like Russia, Brazil and even Kazakhstan.

After dinner at his splendidly renovated 16th-century villa, Dr. Rotolo talked about how he got into the wine business and the challenges facing small producers in a globalizing marketplace.

—Henry Teitelbaum

Q: You stress the use of new technology. Is this what great wine is about these days?

Please understand that wine has never been a natural product. It is man's intervention through several incredible chemical and enzymatic reactions after pressing the grapes that creates wine instead of vinegar. Today we drink the best wines ever because new technology frees us



The Volpe Pasini estate in Friuli; below right, the winery's 'Zuc di Volpe' vineyard; below left, Emilio Rotolo.



Henry Teitelbaum for The Wall Street Journal

from applying these ancient chemical interventions while better preserving the essence of the grape before it is degraded by temperature and oxygen exposure. Still, to talk about wine in purely scientific terms is insufficient. A wine that is only the product of culture and historical tradition—an oxygenated wine, an old wine—has nothing left to say. But a wine that is only the product of technology, like much of what comes out of the New World, has no soul.

Q: As an outsider both geographically and to the winemaking industry, do you find it difficult to engage with other Friulian producers on projects that can help all of you?

The world of the European farmer is a jealous world. Friuli is one of the greatest terroirs in the world—not just in Italy—for the production of great white wines. And while there are many local producers who make great wine, they communicate too little among themselves. This is a major mistake because if they worked together, they could bring greater recognition to this region. Many persist in going it alone, and this is wrong and completely anachronistic.

Q: What is the biggest challenge Old World wine producers face today?

Today, the most important territories for the production of great quality wine in the world are without a doubt France and Italy. There are other important regions in California, Chile, South Africa and Australia, but the culture and tradition of winemaking really comes from these two countries.

But they have a huge problem, because plots in these two countries are very small and ill-suited to a globalizing industry, where in the race to establish their brands in growing markets they are simply unable to keep pace.

A big brand can be represented in Tokyo, Seattle, Kuala Lumpur, Moscow and Rome. These little producers are fading because in the context of globalization, they don't understand that quality is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for success.

Q: What is your prescription for helping these producers to compete around the world?

Aggregation. A union of these small businesses that allows them to maintain their individuality, their quality, their strategic mission, and their production philosophy, but to

cooperate in communicating their message to the world. Otherwise, the risk is that we will lose biodiversity. For each species lost, it is a blow to the heart of humanity. What do we want in this world?

A world of plastic, of multinationals? We need to organize to meet this challenge.

Q: What have you done to advance this idea of biodiversity?

In French, there is this beautiful term that doesn't exist in Italian called terroir. Terroir is not just the soil; it is the human encoun-

ter with the living environment. I have tried to respect profoundly my own terroir, and I seek to infuse my wines with all of the aromas that come from the soil from where they emerge. When I step out into the vineyards, if I smell mint or smell thyme or other herbs, rocks or the earth I am convinced that I will have succeeded in making great wine when I find those same essences reflected in a glass of my wine. As custodians of this land, its culture, history, and traditions, we must learn to respect the environment.

Q: What drew you to a second full-time career in wine?

Several years after I transferred to Friuli to work as a radiologist, I found this beautiful villa at Volpe Pasini, which came with a little vineyard that dates back to 1596, all of it sorely in need of renovation. For the next 15 years, I worked to transform and continually improve this estate. All this time, my passion and ambitions for our wine have grown.

Q: What in your background do you think has been key to Volpe Pasini's success?

When I bought the estate, I simply fell in love with its wine. No doubt the culture of my family helped me develop a passion for these things. When I was young, my father, a confectioner, would take me with him into the Calabrian mountains to buy the ingredients he needed to make *torrone* [a honey-nougat candy], and he taught me about honey from orange and lemon blossoms and showed me the places where they grow the finest almonds and pistachios. I would also assist with preparing the confection. When I got into wine, all of these experiences came along with me. At Volpe Pasini, there's a strong business culture to manage everything: clients, technology, the buildings, the vineyards, the estate, marketing, packaging. But at the heart of the enterprise are still the values that I took with me from there.



Iconic prints at auction

ICONIC WORKS by Munch, Picasso and Warhol star in coming London print auctions. For these and many other great artists, prints offered the chance to combine creativity and technical innovation. "In their prints, Munch and Picasso were revolutionaries [and] extremely experimental," says Sotheby's print specialist Courtney Booth.

Among the more fascinating works in Sotheby's old master, modern and contemporary print auction on Oct. 2 is Munch's "Vampire II"

Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

(1895-1902). At first glance, it seems to show a woman caressing a man as her hair falls intimately around them; on closer inspection, one sees that she is a vampire, sucking the life out of him. "This image says so much," says Ms. Booth. "Munch's relationship with women was difficult. In the vampire image, there is love, submission, death." The print is estimated at £300,000-£400,000.

In Christie's London print auction on Oct. 1 will be Munch's "Young Couple in a Spruce Forest" (1915), an image of a man and a woman close but yet totally apart (estimate: £200,000-£300,000). Christie's will also offer a Munch poster of a man's head wrapped in a pretty woman's hair, from 1897; it's expected to fetch £60,000-£80,000.

Picasso had better luck with women, and his lovers provided the inspiration for many of his greatest works. A vibrant and colorful "Tête de Femme" (1962) at Christie's is estimated at £100,000-£150,000.

Sotheby's will offer a number of Picasso works from the collection of Norwegian dealer Haaken Christensen (who bequeathed the proceeds in his will to the humanitarian group Médecins Sans Frontières). Included is a powerful print of a woman's face looking like an Egyp-

tian goddess, "Figure au corsage rayé" (1949), estimated at £30,000-£50,000.

Warhol is less of a technical master than either Munch or Picasso, but in expressing what appears to be the soul of contemporary America, he created unforgettable images. He will be well represented at Sotheby's and Christie's, with his famous images of Marilyn Monroe, dollar signs and electric chairs. Full sets of his iconic 10-part Mao series from 1972 will be offered at both houses. Christie's estimates its version at £250,000-£350,000; Sotheby's version is estimated at £350,000-£450,000.

Bonhams on Sept. 30 has a strong contingent of British contemporary artists including pop star Peter Blake with his "Tattooed Lady" (1985), a print with figures such as

Elvis Presley adorning a bikini-clad body (estimate: £400-£600). At Sotheby's, there will be a gorgeously ironic print from 2007 by British street artist Banksy depicting bidders at auction. It is called "Morons" (estimate: £3,000-£4,000).

Meanwhile, in a week of stock-market gloom, star artist Damien Hirst produced a stunningly successful auction result. At "Beautiful Inside My Head Forever," held Monday and Tuesday at Sotheby's in London, the artist sold more than 200 of his new works.

This was the first auction ever dedicated to a single living artist and was viewed ahead of time as somewhat of a risk for both artist and auction house. In the end the auction pulled in around £111 million, way above a presale estimate



'Vampire II' (1895-1902) by Edvard Munch; estimate: £300,000-£400,000.

of £68 million-£98 million.

"The Golden Calf," a calf preserved in formaldehyde and outfitted with 18-karat gold horns and hoofs, topped the auction, selling for £10.35 million (estimate: £8 million-£12 million).

Mr. Hirst also makes prints,

some of which will be on offer in the October auctions. Among them is "The Last Supper" (1999), a complete set of 13 prints with images of pharmaceutical packaging with pill names replaced on the labels by foods. The set at Christie's is estimated at £30,000-£50,000.

Arbitrage



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❖ Top Picks

Wyndham Lewis's unusual angle on art

London ■ art

Born in Nova Scotia, educated in England, Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957) was a pillar of the Modernist movement, said by many to have been as proficient with his pen as with his brush. I confess I've never been able to finish his early novel "Tarr" (1918) or "The Apes of God" (1930) or to read much beyond the striking covers of the several magazines he launched (Blast, The Tyro, The Enemy). But "Wyndham Lewis: Portraits," a show of his works now at the National Portrait Gallery, is a knockout.

Lewis, leader of an early 20th-century British art movement called Vorticism, is known as a painter of angular, severely geometric compositions. This certainly applies to most of the self-portraits that make up the first part of this stunning exhibition.

But by the time the querulous artist painted the iconic portraits of Edith Sitwell (1923-35), with her hidden hands; the one that is widely supposed to be of Virginia Woolf (1921), with her out-of-proportion workingman's hands; Violet Schiff (1923-24), with her hands in her pockets; and T.S. Eliot (1938), with his hands folded across his stomach, Lewis clearly could model and shape cylindrical forms as fluently as he could reduce Ezra Pound's face to curves and angles in 1920.

Indeed, the Eliot portrait was scandalously rejected by the Royal Academy in 1938; the selectors found the elaborate "scrolls" in the background offensively phallic. The section featuring Eliot and the other "Men of 1914" (Pound and James Joyce) should not be missed by anyone interested in the art or literature of the period.

—Paul Levy

Until Oct. 19
☎ 44-20-7306-0055
www.npg.org.uk

Berlin ■ decorative art

Jewelry design has a special place in Italian culture. Many Renaissance masters, like architect Filippo Brunelleschi and sculptor Benvenuto Cellini, were actually trained goldsmiths, and the tradition of treating jewelry as a unique test of an artist's talent continues in Italy. Post-war design gurus, Ettore Sottsass and Gaetano Pesce, created signature jewelry designs, and Italy's large jewelry houses, like Bulgari and Breil, are known for their design innovations.

The very best of Italian jewelry since 1980 is on display at Berlin's Museum of Decorative Arts, in a large exhibition called "Gioielli Italiano: Contemporary Jewelry from Italy between Art and Design." By showing the full range of jewelry-making methods and materials, the curators, who include around 200 pieces from more than 120 designers, also showcase the full spectrum of contemporary Italian design, with its childish humor, love of luxury, and respect for traditional craftsmanship.

Trained as an architect, Mr. Pesce (b. 1939) is the Renaissance man of the Italian design scene, and the curators include several of his pieces made with colored polyurethane resin, a material that Mr. Pesce has also used to make furniture. His "Spaghetti-Ring" (1995), featuring a twisted cord of plastic, combines the elegance of wrought metal filigree with Pop-art outrageousness.

Another piece from the 1990s, the "Endless" necklace, by New York-based Italian designer Massimo Vignelli and his wife Lella, is a large, haunting curlicue made of silver. Though they first designed the piece in the 1970s, the designers had to wait some 15 years before high-tech production methods would allow them to make it.



The Estate of Mrs G A Wyndham Lewis, The Wyndham Lewis Memorial Trust (2)



Wyndham Lewis portraits on show in London: left, 'Edith Sitwell,' 1923-35; above, 'Portrait of the Artist as the Painter Raphael,' 1921.

It's easy to imagine someone wearing Mr. Pesce's ring, or the "Endless" necklace, but many of the more recent pieces cross over into sculpture or installation art. Stefano Marchetti, a young Paduan designer, is known for his experimental forms. His exquisite 2001 brooch, made of intersecting planes of fine gold filament, suggests flapping butterfly wings, as well as a collapsible table. Another young designer, Giovanni Sicuro, known as "Minto," has taken a traditional silver band and mounted it with a jagged hunk of lapis lazuli. More at home in a vitrine, or perhaps on a battlefield, the 2007 ring mocks its inherent luxury with a shock of danger.

—J.S. Marcus

Until Oct. 5
☎ 49-30-266-2951
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

London ■ theater

"...Some Trace of Her," director Katie Mitchell's latest genre-busting event at the small Cottesloe auditorium of the National Theatre, is "inspired by 'The Idiot' by Fyodor Dostoevsky," with some additional words in verse by Emily Dickinson. The audience watches a 90-minute black-and-white film projected onto a large screen, while below it on stage level the film is being made—by eight actors doubling as techies—in real time. The only hidden part of the production is the string quartet playing composer Paul Clark's music.

What we get, simultaneously, is the finished product and the process by which it is produced. We see how Ms. Mitchell has found a visual language to accommodate one strand of the narrative of "The Idiot": the epileptic, "holy fool" Prince Myshkin's selfless but hopeless love for Nastasya Filippovna, culminating in her murder by the anarchic Rogozhin. The director adds to the mixture some of Dostoevsky's own musings about his 1849 arrest and mock execution, following which this utopian socialist spent four years fettered in a Siberian work camp and became, paradoxically, a monarchist and a devout Orthodox Christian.

The audience sees the film being made, using a bit of already-shot film, but mostly live CCTV, edited in front of us, us-

ing the techniques of split-screen, high-definition close-ups, some tricks learned from early still photography (what looks like food being prepared is actually an albumen print being developed before our eyes). Ms. Mitchell, designer Vicki Mortimer, director of photography Leo Warner and lighting designer Paule Constable have even devised a way to create montages live and in real time. There is also a full panoply of sound effects.

You can see why the actors want to do this: the tremendous challenge of speeded-up costume changes, of cinematic close-ups done in live performance, where every quiver of the lip and blink of the eye counts, and of doing only

one take, with no room for error. On top of this, they've had to learn to operate cameras and sound equipment at a professional level.

Britain's current young heartthrob, Ben Whishaw, star of the new remake of "Bridgeshead Revisited," leads the stunningly adept cast.

Still, we're left with the question: What does the balletic process of making the film add to the finished product? I think there is added value, though it's not as significant as that achieved by Ms. Mitchell's 2006 production of "Waves," for which she found a visual equivalent for Virginia Woolf's stream-of-consciousness narration.

—Paul Levy

Until Oct. 21
☎ 44-20-7452-3000
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

London ■ theater

Playwright Joanna Murray-Smith denies that her new comedy, "The Female of the Species," draws on her fellow Australian, writer and feminist icon Germaine Greer, for the chief character—the egotistical Margot Mason, a university teacher and feminist author who revels in her own dodgy celebrity. But she does admit that the central incident in the play stems from Ms. Greer's real-life encounter with an armed intruder.

The play is tidily constructed around the absurd situation, in which Margot's deranged student, Molly (played with winning gawkiness by Anna Maxwell Martin), blames Margot for the suicide of her mother, who jumped under a train, Anna Karenina style, holding a copy of Margot's feminist bible, "The Cerebral Vagina."

Ms. Greer should feel flattered, as Margot is played brilliantly by Dame Eileen Atkins, who is careful not to upstage the rest of the cast. The actress seems content to yield center stage to Margot's fatherless daughter, Tess, who for her part seems all too happy to collude in the revenge killing of her mother. As the unappreciated daughter (Ms. Greer has no children) who is driven barmy by her boring husband (Margot is right about this) and three small children, Sophie Thompson gives the performance of the evening. She keeps the audience in stitches as she demonstrates that her



Emanuele Zamponi



Stephen Cumiskey

Top, 'Spaghetti-Ring,' 1995, by Gaetano Pesce, in Berlin; above, Ben Whishaw (left) and Bradley Taylor in '...Some Trace of Her,' in London.

imagination is actually superior to her mother's.

Not every line is perfect, but Roger Michell's pacy direction helps to make this that rare thing: an intellectually satisfying and genuinely funny farce.

—Paul Levy

Until Oct. 4
☎ 44-844-412-4663
www.vaudeville-theatre.co.uk

London ■ theater

The only thing Berthold Brecht's and Giacomo Puccini's versions of "Turandot" have in common is that the playwright and the composer both died before completing them.

In what was intended to be his only real comedy Brecht replaced Puccini's frigid Chinese princess of the title with a nymphomaniac who can be aroused only by intellectuals and can have an orgasm only when hearing a rigorously logical argument. The play is, of course, a fable about the abuse of the intellect by those who would enforce politically correct class-consciousness but fail to prevent the emergence of fascism—a paradox to whose solution the ambivalent Brecht did not contribute much by deciding to live and work in 1950s communist East Germany.

Workshopped by his Berliner Ensemble in 1954, a production of the play was planned, but Brecht either never got around to revising what he regarded as an unsatisfactory script or simply had put it aside when he died in 1956. Edward Kemp has done a genuinely good job of making a playable English version, which he calls "Turandot or The Congress of Whitewashers," now at the Hampstead Theatre.

Director Anthony Clark does what he can to keep up the pace with a reduced cast of 11 actors playing 15 roles in 15 scenes requiring some breathless costume changes.

There are some wonderful touches, such as the miming by executioners masked like characters from a Goya print as defaced by British artists Jake and Dinno Chapman. This theatrical rarity is worth seeing both for itself, and for outstanding performances by Julie Jupp doubling as a cleaner and the mother of the "hero"; Gerard Murphy as the faintly camp Emperor of China; Mia Soteriou (who is responsible also for the finely sardonic songs that pepper the production) as Hi Weh, the chairman of the intellectual association—the "in-tel-ius"; Chipu Chung as the randy-for-mandarins princess; and Alex Hassell as the snakehipped gangster hero.

Garance Marneur's designs make this big play work on Hampstead's small stage.

—Paul Levy

Until Oct. 4
☎ 44-20-7722-9301
www.hampsteadtheatre.com

The LPGA's blunder

THE LPGA, under Commissioner Carolyn Bivens, tried to pull itself out of a public-relations mess this month by rescinding the harsh penalty it had proposed only two weeks before against members who can't demonstrate a "basic level of communication in English." The penalty—suspension of playing privileges until the player brings her English up to

snuff—would have gone in effect after the 2009 season for any Tour member of at least two years' standing, thus giving newcomers time to adjust.

Another disincentive is that many Korean players have rich sponsorship arrangements with companies back home, so their need for English to help them secure contracts with American companies is less than it might be otherwise. In fact, the top Korean LPGA players, such as Ms. Pak and Mi Hyun Kim, are practically national heroes. Here's a fact that helps explain the relationship of Korean players to their homeland: The LPGA's single biggest source of income these days is not U.S. television, but Korean television.

Still another factor is that many of the Korean players are very young and inexperienced. Some bypassed college to turn pro as teenagers and are accompanied on Tour by one or both parents, who often are less interested in having their daughters spend hours learning English than in spending the time practicing golf. Reading between the lines of several statements Ms. Bivens has made on the subject suggests that getting through to the Korean parents was one reason the Tour felt it needed to raise the possibility of yanking a player's Tour card. (The LPGA declined to make Ms. Bivens available for this column.)

To be fair, most Korean players do make a diligent, sometimes heroic effort to master English. When Seon Hwa Lee, now the No. 10 player in the world, realized halfway through the 2006 season that she would probably win the Rookie of the Year award, she crammed for months to be able to deliver her acceptance speech in English, which she did with great emotion, and now speaks the language with ease.

Furthermore, Koreans aren't the only players who struggle. Whereas in some European countries, such as Sweden, English is a de facto second native language, players from countries whose languages aren't Indo-European in origin, such as Japan, Taiwan, China and Thailand, often find learning English extremely difficult.

The Tour's proposed policy didn't demand fluency, merely that players acquit themselves adequately in three specific situations: media interviews, acceptance speeches (so they can thank the sponsors) and pro-ams. And in recent years, the Tour has been aggressively offering players assistance. In 2006, in conjunction with Kolon, an international Korean conglomerate, it launched a cross-cultural training program that supplied all non-U.S. players with tutors, translators, language-learning software and other services.

In backing away from the penalty, the Tour has not abandoned its player communication program, and has said it will announce revisions to the policy by the end of the year. It might, for instance, decide to substitute fines for suspensions.

As lamentably ill-advised as the suspension concept turned out to be, it wasn't an attempt by the Tour to discourage international growth in its ranks, as a few media commentators implied, but rather part of an ongoing effort to manage and accommodate that growth. In the long term, the Tour views this internationalization as overwhelming posi-

tive.

Since 1997, when internationals accounted for only about a quarter of Tour membership, compared with more than half today, total prize money has roughly doubled, to \$64 million from \$29 million. That is modest compared with the PGA Tour's Tiger Woods-fueled rise to \$279 million from \$81 million, but still decent. And some of that increase comes from new international sponsors, such as Grand China Air. Individual tournaments have also adapted their marketing to reflect the new global emphasis. Anheuser-Busch throws a lavish reception for its Asian distributors at the tournament it sponsors each year in Virginia. The Kraft Nabisco Championship in Rancho Mirage, Calif., advertises heavily in Korean-language newspapers in Southern California and draws a big Asian crowd.

Beyond that, there is the less-complicated positive of attracting stronger fields. "The talent level these days is incredible," said Val Skinner, a six-time Tour winner and occasional television commentator.



Photos: Getty Images

Left, British Open champion **Ji-Yai Shin**; right, world No. 10 **Seon Hwa Lee**.

Golf Journal

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

The penalty proposal, which was reported in Golfweek Aug. 25 and defended by the Tour a week later in a memo to members, was part of a broader communication initiative that has been evolving for years. "Unlike athletes in other sports, LPGA players must entertain and engage sponsors and their customers on a weekly basis," Commissioner Bivens wrote in the memo. Mostly here she was talking about the pro-am rounds that precede competitive play, for which participants pay an average of \$15,000 a four-some. That money, on the LPGA, is the main funding source for tournament purses. "It is imperative for the future success of the LPGA as well as the success of each LPGA player that our members effectively communicate in English at tournaments inside the United States with those who provide for the existence of the tournaments."

The communication program itself enjoys broad support, but the penalty proposal was a tone-deaf blunder. Almost immediately it attracted a storm of protest, primarily because it was seen—by the media, by some players and sponsors, by civil-rights groups and even by a couple of California lawmakers who questioned its legality at tournaments taking place in that state—as aimed at the Tour's large South Korean contingent.

At face value, the now-scotched penalty didn't discriminate against one nationality more than any other, since it applied equally to all players, but as a practical matter it certainly would have affected the Koreans disproportionately. Among the Tour's current crop of 120 international players, probably only about a dozen would fail to meet the vaguely defined English-language requirement, and all are Korean.

One reason for this is the sheer size of the Korean contingent, 45 players, by far the largest from any non-U.S. country. (Sweden is second, with 15.) When Se Ri Pak, the first Korean superstar on the LPGA and the woman primarily responsible for inspiring the current generation, was a rookie in 1998, she was one of only three Korean competitors. Learning English, which she quickly did, was almost a matter of survival. These days, with 44 fellow countrywomen following the Tour, plus many parents, coaches and other hangers-on from the homeland, not to mention Tour-supplied translators, a young Korean player has less urgent incentive to master English. And the number of Koreans on Tour is unlikely to fall soon, given the high number of them who

14 rounds spread over eight tournaments will be shown on the major networks. Most but not all of the rest appeared on the Golf Channel, ESPN2 and other cable outlets. Financially, U.S. television (the LPGA buys its TV time rather than sell rights) hasn't been much more than a break-even proposition. Its main benefit, apart from the exposure, has been to create a television product the Tour can sell to Korea and other overseas markets. That is one more reason the Tour needs its global partners as much as they need it.

Also next year, the Tour's television contracts expire. This year only

“For players from my generation it's exciting to see so many women come from all around the world to throw their hat in the ring here.”

In the short term, there are plenty of what Ms. Bivens might call management challenges. This year only three Americans have won on the LPGA Tour: Paula Creamer (three times), Leta Lindley and Cristie Kerr. The Tour lost two events for next year, with other defections possible, and the downer economy won't make replacing them easy.

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Cartoonist as auteur: Europe's visionary graphic novelists

By Brigid Grauman

Special to *The Wall Street Journal*

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL explosion under way in the U.S.—where overall sales were up 10% last year—has had a longer gestation in Europe, where sophisticated comics meant for adults have been popular since the 1960s.

The current crop of European writers and artists marry word and image to express their personal vision of the world. “These are rich and challenging times for the graphic novel,” says Paul Gravett, the founder of the annual Comica festival in London. “For a long time, comic strips were dismissed as sub-literature. Now there’s a great appetite for this sort of book.”

Whether called “comic books” or “graphic novels”—some consider the terms interchangeable, others see differences in form and scope—these works emphasize powerful storytelling, on subjects as broad as those found in any other published works, from autobiography to fantasy to war reportage to humor. Text and art are equal tools to this end.

“Many of these books wouldn’t have worked as well in prose form,” says Mr. Gravett, who is also the author of “Graphic Novels: Stories to Change Your Life.” “The pictures add to the words, acting in complement or counterpoint.”

One of the biggest influences on modern comic books is manga. The Japanese comics form has traditionally covered every subject, and the cheap paper and low printing costs of manga magazines have allowed for experimental storytelling techniques—using design elements rather than text to indicate passing time, for example.

The fast-moving world of the Web is another. “The roots [of graphic novels] are in romantic and Victorian illustrated books, but they have also succeeded in integrating most of the technological revolutions of the audio-visual century,” says Thierry Smolderen, who coordinates a master’s degree in comic art at the European School of Visual Arts in Angoulême, France. “The Internet is such a mix of images and texts that novelists now aspire to mix the two.”

Germany, Spain, Italy and Scandinavia are home to some excellent graphic novelists, but the most fertile terrain in Europe remains France and Belgium. There, *bandes dessinées* like *Astérix* and *Tintin* have since the 1950s been printed in color and bound in large-format books—giving artists a larger canvas. France’s post-’68 fervor celebrated alternative art forms, including adult comics, published in popular magazines like *Pilote* and *A Suivre*.

In the 1990s, independent publishing house L’Association,



A scene from *'Havanna,'* out next month, by Reinhard Kleist (above right).

founded by artists David B., Lewis Trondheim and others, played a pivotal role in supporting the modern bande dessinée. Enamored with Art Spiegelman’s 1992 Pulitzer Prize-winning “Maus”—a groundbreaking work that showed comics could legitimately explore any subject, in this case, the Holocaust—the artists started publishing works in new formats and lengths.

In 2000 the group published one of the most successful recent graphic works, “Persepolis,” Marjane Satrapi’s autobiographical tale of her girlhood in Iran. The story sold 1.5 million copies world-wide; a

2007 animated movie based on the work was nominated for an Academy Award.

Persepolis told a story in sharply contrasted black and white that was at once personal and political. Other works from L’Association that broke boundaries include David B.’s graphically innovative “Epileptic,” a family tale; and “Alan’s War,” by Emmanuel Guibert, the memoirs of a World War II veteran.

In Britain, meanwhile, where the form has been dominated by superhero tales such as “The Watchmen,” a modern sensibility is growing, with vocal fans including writers

Zadie Smith, Ian Rankin and Jonathan Coe. The Edinburgh Book Festival last month for the first time included several events around graphic novels—including a master class by author Bryan Talbot, a talk by the artist of the manga “Macbeth” and a debate on “Heroes vs. Villains.”

Here are some of Europe’s most interesting graphic novelists working today.

Cultural biography

Reinhard Kleist

German artist Reinhard Kleist scored a huge hit in 2006 with his biography of Johnny Cash, “Cash—I See A Darkness,” which sold out its first printing within a few weeks and received Germany’s top comic book award.

Set in the 1950s and ’60s, it tells the story of the country singer through the voice of Glen Sherley, a prison inmate who wrote the song “Greystone Chapel,” which Cash included in his

1968 album “At Folsom Prison.” Mr. Kleist also includes several of Cash’s own songs in the form of brief stories.

“I wanted to show that Johnny Cash was a great storyteller,” he says. “And I wanted this to provide some kind of connection between him and me.”

He takes liberties with the biographical form by introducing psychological insights through fantastic, imaginary elements, placing Cash in entirely invented situations. “The stories he tells us reveal a lot about the human struggle for freedom,” Mr. Kleist says. “The freedom from your own internal bars and the cages other people try to build around you.”

His confident, vigorous drawings use black and white and gray as a way of emphasizing the darkness of Cash’s life. The book was translated and released in France by Dargaud last month; Mr. Kleist says he’s working on finding a publisher for the U.S. version.

Mr. Kleist, who works in a Berlin studio with a handful of other artists, first became known with his 2003 series “Berlin noir,” a futuristic thriller written with German author Tobias O. Meissner.

The look is cinematic. “I created sets like those in the movies I like—Metropolis, Blade Runner, M,” Mr. Kleist says. “And added the work of painters and designers I admire, the German Expressionists, Social Realists from Russia, or Ken Adam, the set designer on the early Bond films.”

The three volumes of “Berlin noir” depict a Berlin of the future, peopled by vampires, with an underground freedom-fighting movement. The allusions to history—Fascism, DDR Socialism—place them several cuts above run-of-the-mill horror fare. “The series’ theme is the use and abuse of power,” he says. “It evokes quite a lot about the current political situation in Berlin and Germany.”

His latest work, “Havanna,” a travelogue of his trip to Havana this spring, will be published next month in Germany by Carlsen Comics.

Reinhard Kleist/Carlsen Verlag, Hamburg 2008

For more graphic novelists, turn the page.

Cities of the imagination
François Schuiten
and Benoît Peeters

Belgian artist François Schuiten and French writer Benoît Peeters anticipated the revolution that brought literary writing to bandes dessinées.

After some 40 years working together (they started out as school friends at 12), they are still going strong on intelligent sci-fi books that look at architectural history (Mr. Schuiten comes from a family of architects) and urbanism with the eyes of Jules Verne.

Their angst-ridden view of the world is intensely contemporary.

“Our stories are always the result of visual ideas and shared literary interests,” Mr. Schuiten says. “It’s very much a dialogue between the two of us.”

The series “Les Cités Obscures” (published in English by NBM as “Cities of the Fantastic”), drawn with Mr. Schuiten’s extraordinarily precise, flowing line and acrylic paints used like watercolors, are a form of the fantastic where reality is always somewhere just beneath the surface. A train station in Brussels will reappear as a big hall in an imaginary city, or a tower will be inspired by Bruegel’s painting of the Tower of Babel.

Each book in this series—17 have been published since 1983—is a tale of intrigue set in a city succumbing to decay, a parallel world where domineering imaginary architecture dwarfs the characters’ lives.

The 2002 “Invisible Frontier” evoked the breakup of Yugoslavia; this spring’s “Brüsel” looked more specifically at Brussels and its cruelly random urbanization. The volume even had introductory pages illustrated with photographs that described some of the city urbanists’ worst crimes. “We look at Brussels to see how the world is changing,” Mr. Schuiten says.

In their latest series, “La Théorie du Grain de Sable,” Mr. Schuiten uses India ink and no color. “I was influenced by American cartoonist Milton Caniff” (who created the black-and-white “Steve Canyon” and “Terry and the Pirates” comics), he says. “I wanted to go back to the roots of comics, to something fundamental.” Volume two will be published by Casterman next month.

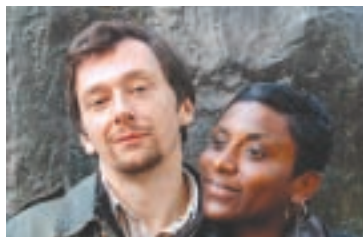
An exhibition about the book and other works by the duo is on at the Centre Wallonie Bruxelles in Paris until Nov. 2.



Patricia Mahieu



Artist **François Schuiten** in his Brussels studio. Lower left, his latest work with the French writer **Benoît Peeters** (left).



Upbeat Africa
Clément Oubrerie
and Marguerite Abouet

Set in 1978 in a neighborhood of the Ivory Coast’s capital Abidjan, “Aya de Yopougon” (in English, “Aya of Yop City”) is the work of two people: experienced French illustrator Clément Oubrerie and his script-writer wife Marguerite Abouet, who left her job as a legal assistant to devote herself full time to the writing of *bandes dessinées*.

“The story offers another image of Africa” than the more-commonly seen stories on AIDS, famine and war, says Ms. Abouet, originally from Ivory Coast, which she left at age 10. This African story, with a quirky eye for character and perky illustrations, is about the daily lives of ordinary people in a working-class neighborhood.

The main character is the spirited 18-year-old Aya, whose coming of age in 1970s Abidjan is typical of most young women. First published in 2005, Mr. Oubrerie is working on volume four, for which he traveled to Abidjan to draw and take photos. “I’ve brought back thousands of photos for inspiration, although I don’t aim for realism in my drawings.”

Mr. Oubrerie says that although Abidjan is much poorer now than in the 1970s, “the people there have lost neither their spirit nor their sense of humor.”

Gallimard publishes much cheaper editions of Aya for sale in Africa, where it is a runaway hit. In the U.S., an English version of volume two was released this week by Drawn & Quarterly. An animated film version is slated for 2011.

Mr. Oubrerie also works on other projects, including collaborating with artist Joann Sfar on the coming film version of “The Rabbi’s Cat.” This summer he turned Raymond Queneau’s anarchistic 1959 novel, “Zazie dans le métro” into a graphic novel.



A scene from volume one of ‘Aya de Yopougon,’ by Clément Oubrerie and Marguerite Abouet (above left).



Oral historian
Emmanuel Guibert

Frenchman Emmanuel Guibert uses the graphic novel format to do real-life reportage. In "The Photographer," he tells the story of the humanitarian journey undertaken by his photographer friend Didier Lefèvre to Afghanistan with Médecins Sans Frontières in the 1980s.

On the mission, traveling with the doctors and mujahedeen soldiers, Mr. Lefèvre photographed the wounded and sick. The story weaves together the photos with illustrations by Mr. Guibert. "I needed a drawing technique that wouldn't compete with the photographs," he says. "I opted for India ink and computer-applied color, which seemed the best way to accompany and to explain Lefèvre's photos."

It is an oral history, and Messrs. Lefèvre and Guibert spent many hours together in taped conversation. Mr. Guibert places the narrative above the images as a running commentary on the events. The final of the three-volume series, finished in 2006, includes a DVD documentary film. The work will be published in English next spring by First Second books.

Another three-volume biographical series is "Alan's War," based on the World War II recollections of Alan Cope, an American in his seventies whom Mr. Guibert befriended. The third volume was released this spring, and an English-language version will be published by First Second next month.

Mr. Guibert taped conversations with Mr. Cope, who has since died, over five years, and fashioned the story from his anecdotes about the war, as well as his memories of childhood and his feelings for France, where he had settled. "Alan and I were friends, and the source of this story is friendship," Mr. Guibert says. "His anecdotes made me think, they taught me things. Any life, even one apparently free of incidents, if it is sincerely and clearly told, evokes something to everyone everywhere."

Using India ink and water ("the chemistry of ink and water is infinite," he says) with a sepia wash, Mr. Guibert's drawing style is neat and nostalgic.

Mr. Guibert also writes comics for children, including the wacky "Sardine in Outer Space" with Joann Sfar. He also worked with Mr. Sfar on "The Professor's Daughter," a sepia-toned tale of a Victorian girl and the 3,000-year-old mummy who loves her.



A scene from "The Professor's Daughter," by Emmanuel Guibert (top).

Cartoon auteurs: Europe's

Chronicles of youth **Gipi**

Italian artist Gipi, born Gian Alfonso Pacinotti in Pisa, has no rival in the depiction of the listlessness and posturing of adolescence. He wrote and drew his 2006 story "S" shortly after the death of his father, inventing as he went along and developing a spontaneous form of storytelling. Plunging back into his childhood and adolescence, Gipi recalls memories of love and conflict, as well as the stories his parents told him about the bombing of Pisa in August 1943 by the Allies.

Illustrated with watercolors and delicate penwork, it is an intensely personal work. "It's a work about a man—my father—who lived in the past, in his memories of the Second World War," he says. "I use watercolor and pen because they're speedy and they give the story flow. This spontaneous kind of work is both very generous and very exciting, and when I'm lucky it creates a strong feeling of freshness and life. That's what I want my stories to do."

In 2006 he won top prizes at the Angoulême Festival for "Notes for a War Story," the harsh tale of three young men making their way across a war-torn country inspired by the Balkans, who fall in with a racketeer and turn to crime. The war is never depicted frontally, which makes the story all the more affecting and the understated black and white and spidery lines all the more bleak. It's a never-facile and always deeply human depiction of war and its effects on society, as well as of social class



conflict.

Gipi also tackled the world of boys in 2005 in "Garage Band," about four boys from troubled homes who play rock music together, and clash over a possible theft. In this book, Gipi plays with scratchy ink drawings and soft watercolors, and uses a technique borrowed from manga in which he hand-scribbles extra commentary on the page, like sound effects. He is cur-

rently finishing "La Mia Vita Disegnate Male," or My Life Badly Drawn.

Although he works regularly for the Italian daily La Repubblica, he now lives in Paris, where he has found an appreciation for graphic novels. "In Italy," he says, "comics are still seen as something for children."

Above, a scene from "Notes for a War Story," by Gipi (right).



Visiting the graphic world: top European festivals

**International Comics Festival
Angoulême, France**
Jan. 29 - Feb. 1, 2009
www.bdangouleme.com

The world's leading international event, where publishing deals are made and about 250,000 visitors check out the exhibits and events such as this year's "24-hour comic book," in which competing authors each completed an original comic book in a day.

The festival was launched in 1974 with a black-and-white poster by Italian master Hugo Pratt. Next year's event will have a particularly fine roster of guests, including Daniel Clowes, Chris Ware, James Kochalka, David Heatley and Posy Simmonds.

**Lucca Comics and Games Festival
Lucca, Italy**
Oct. 30-Nov. 2
www.luccacomicsandgames.com

This event served as the model for Angoulême and is the oldest comics festival in Europe, launched in 1966. It attracts about 85,000 visitors a year and welcomes exhibitors from Italy and farther afield. A boisterous event in a gorgeous city, it has established a reputation for dis-



This spring's **Comic Salon** in Erlangen.

covering new talent. It includes a large gaming space for board and card games. A Japan section includes manga workshops and Japanese games.

**Comica—London International Comics Festival
London**

Nov. 13-26
www.paulgravett.com/comica/comica.htm
Britain's leading comic event, curated by Paul Gravett since

2003. It is aimed at an adult, non-specialist and culturally savvy public. Exhibitions, talks, events and workshops celebrate comics and their connections to other arts.

This year's guests include Americans Art Spiegelman and Gilbert Shelton; Bulgarian Alex Maleev; Posy Simmonds from the U.K.; Ted Benoit and Emmanuel Guibert from France; Lise Myhre from Norway; and Mawil from Germany. Ian Rankin will also attend; the Scottish crime writer's first graphic novel, "Dark Entries," is expected out next summer. There will be an event with Charles Dierick, director of the new Hergé Museum opening in May in Louvain, Belgium, and an all-day conference at the V&A Museum.

**BilBolBul, Festival Internazionale di Fumetto
Bologna, Italy**
March 4-8, 2009
www.bilbolbul.net

Named after a vintage character from a fumetto (the Italian name for comics, meaning "puff of smoke"), it will celebrate its third edition in 2009. It is attuned to young strip artists and to the work of schools.

Much of the city is involved, making it a pleasant way to discover both artists and the place. Bologna is Italy's center for fumetti, with a number of the best artists and publishers based here since the 1960s.

**Fumetto, International Comics Festival of Lucerne
Lucerne, Switzerland**
March 28-April 5, 2009
www.fumetto.ch

In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, a festival with strong exhibitions and a selection that is intelligently put together. Special attention is devoted to young talent. The last festival had special events around French artist Christophe Blain and Swiss artist Mathias Gnehm.

**International Comic Salon
Erlangen, Germany**
May 2010 (held biannually)
www.comic-salon.de

The leading comics festival for Germany and Austria. Over the past 20 years, it has shown a wide selection of artists, from the mainstream to the avant-garde. The last edition, in May, focused on strip artists from China.

visionary graphic novelists

Penetrating autobiography

David B.

In David B.'s autobiographical series "L'Ascension du Haut-Mal," published as "Epileptic" in English, he focuses on his brother's incurable illness and the devastating effect it had on their family.

The French author, who was born Pierre-François Beauchard, chronicles the various alternative cures his parents investigated in the 1970s, including Eastern medicine, acupuncture, macrobiotic diets, gurus and magnetic cures. It is a sparing, backdoor portrayal of the decade, with its New Age ideas, hippies and communes.

The six-volume series, written from 1996-2003, also digs deep into personal history, examining family myths, David B.'s grandparents' and his great-grandparents' wars. The first two volumes were based on conversations with his parents, who are both drawing teachers. For the third volume, he relied on his own recollections, and his parents were surprised to discover how different his views of the past were from theirs. "My mother was sad to realize how very shocked I had been by everything that happened," he says. "And that she hadn't noticed it." Pantheon published the full series in English as one volume in 2005.

The series is a graphic memoir of sorts, in which the author samples styles from around the world, from Surrealism to Eastern woodprints. His style resembles etchings in black and white. "I didn't want to do a realistic reconstruction of my childhood," he says. "I was more interested in representing the strange aspects of our lives after the appearance of my brother's illness, the dreams, the fantasies." He says his drawing style is inspired by comic-strip masters Jacques Tardi and Hugo Pratt, as well as by medieval miniatures and Japanese prints.

His text is clear and limpid, and his drawings are intense. Much of David B.'s originality is that he attempts to break traditional storytelling narrative. In his new book, "Les Complots Nocturnes" (to be

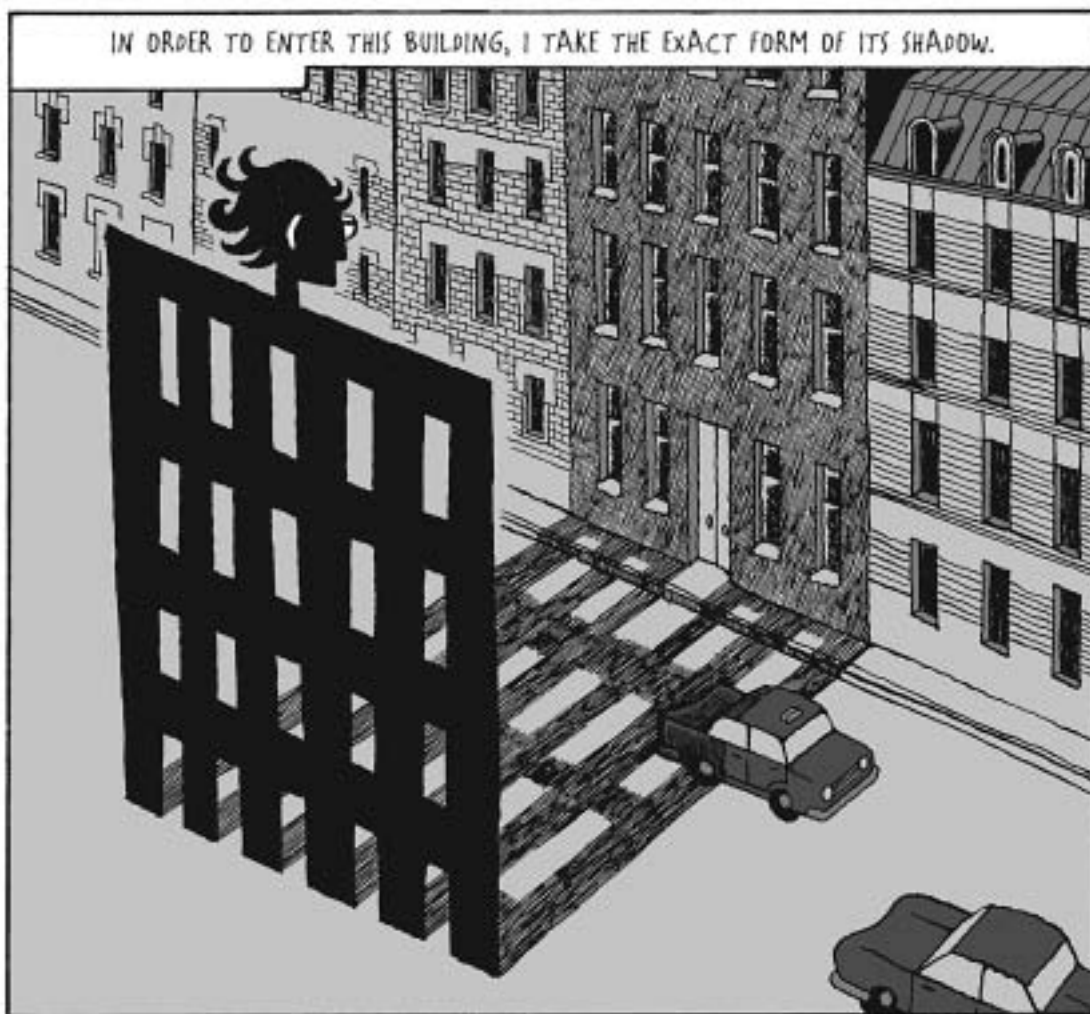


published in English as "Nocturnal Conspiracies" next month by NBM), he relates his dreams as he did in the early 1990s in "Le Cheval Blème." "My dreams are very visual," he says. "So I drew these chaotic stories jumping from one thing to another, just like the dreams, and the layout is very plain to give more power to the images."

In his role as a founder of the L'Association publishing group, David B. has fostered the growth in Europe of innovative comics—it was he who suggested to Marjane Satrapi that she should draw "Persepolis" in the style of Persian miniatures.



Right, a scene from 'Nocturnal Conspiracies,' and the cover, above, by David B. (top).



Above, Posy Simmonds, who wrote and drew 'Gemma Boverly,' right.

Witty eye on society

Posy Simmonds

British graphic artist Posy Simmonds's witty yet affectionate lambasting of the British middle classes has made her a cult figure among those very same middle classes.

Her most famous series is "Gemma Boverly," inspired by Flaubert's classic novel. Taking her cue from Flaubert's tale of frustrated provincialism, its heroine, Gemma, follows Emma Bovary's sorry fate in present-day London and Normandy, depicted with Ms. Simmonds's acute sense of social observation about the quirks of the French and English bourgeoisie.

It was serialized daily in the Guardian and noticeably boosted the newspaper's sales. (The series

was published in full by Pantheon in 2005.)

Ms. Simmonds, who grew up in the 1950s, is "simply one of the world's most sophisticated contemporary cartoonists," says Paul Gravett, founder of London's Comica festival. She has "expanded the scope and the subtlety of the graphic novel."

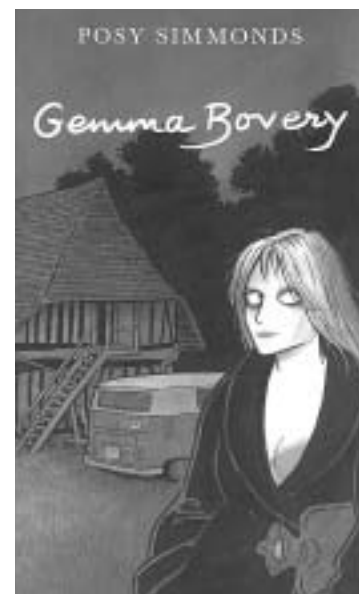
Ms. Simmonds gives as much space to words as to her gray-wash pencil-and-ink drawings, creating a diversity of voices by mixing typeset, hand-written speech bubbles, and extracts from Gemma's diary and letters.

"I had a great structure, the best—Flaubert's structure," she says. The book's very vertical format, imposed by the publisher, she adds, "gave me lots of rows, which could be like paragraphs or even tiny chap-

ters where you could change time and place."

Ms. Simmonds grew up with Punch magazine, the Giles cartoon annual and the drawings of Ronald Searle—all acute and witty observers of British society. Her first strip for the Guardian was the family saga of the Webers, a send-up of the stereotypical Guardian reader—bearded, left-leaning, earnest, goat-cheese eating.

"Tamara Drewe," her latest literary saga, is Thomas Hardy's "Far From the Madding Crowd" transposed to the England of today. The Guardian serialized this one weekly; the dark and sultry heroine inherits a family home in the countryside, turning the village—site of a writers' retreat—into a hotbed of desire. The collected series was published last fall by Jonathan Cape.



Birders flock east for rare species

BY STEVE MOLLMAN

Special to *The Wall Street Journal*

THE SUNBIRD IS ON the nest! Ooh! The sunbird is on the nest!" I heard someone call from up ahead on the trail. At 9 a.m. on a Sunday, I was late for my first bird-watching tour. I'd been jogging for 10 minutes to catch up.

Millions of birders—including extremists who travel the globe with binoculars and a roster of species to spot—would have envied me. Asia is home not only to hundreds of rarely seen birds, from the orange-breasted laughingthrush of Vietnam to the newly discovered Togian white-eye of Indonesia, but also to a booming tourism industry. There are now airports where birders want to go, airlines to carry them there and places to stay when they arrive. The hobby has even spawned a small industry of local bird guides.

There are more than 3,000 bird species in Asia, many of them endemic, meaning they occur naturally nowhere else. Consider the many islands of Southeast Asia. "Due to isolation, unique species could have evolved there," says Navjot S. Sodhi, a professor at the National University of Singapore. The upshot? A high rate of endemics, such as the purple-bearded bee-eater, with green wings and a purple chest, which is found only on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. Some 30% of the species on Sulawesi are endemic, Prof. Sodhi says.

For birding enthusiasts, "Asia truly is a new frontier," says Rick Wright, managing director of Wings, a Tucson, Ariz., organizer of international birding trips. Many Asian birds "were for decades inaccessible to Western tourists," he says. Now, Asia's improving travel infrastructure is bringing birders and other tourists closer to species that were once seldom spotted. But the quality of birding won't be this good forever, experts warn. As civilization encroaches, the bird population will gradually decline, dying or relocating to more remote places.

Until then, birders are seizing upon easy access and plentiful birds. Birders in Asia tend to be Westerners, although the pastime is catching on among Asians. Bird-watching clubs and societies have cropped up in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Hanoi.

In the U.S., birding is big business. A 2001 survey by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimated that 46 million Americans spent \$32 billion a year on bird-watching travel and gear, creating 860,000 U.S. jobs. Taiwan and the Philippines recently began promoting bird-watching to tourists. But birding in Asia still has a way to go before it reaches the mainstream popularity of birding in North America.

With sites to visit from Indonesia to Sri Lanka to Japan, birders in Asia can see a staggering variety of species. James Eaton, a 26-year-old enthusiast who helps run the British company Birdtour Asia, says all of his 2008 trips are fully booked. Most travelers pay \$2,000 to \$5,000 for two to three weeks in places such as Cambodia, the Philippines or Indonesian is-



Purple-bearded bee-eater
(*Meropogon forsteni*)
Endemic on Sulawesi



Great Philippine eagle
(*Pithecophaga jefferyi*)
Critically endangered; eats monkeys



Red-bellied pitta
(*Pitta erythrogaster*)
Found in Indonesia and the Philippines



Green-backed kingfisher
(*Actenoides monachus*)
Endemic on Sulawesi; hard to spot



Black-and-yellow broadbill
(*Eurylaimus ochromalus*)
Coping with destruction of its habitat



Short-tailed frogmouth
(*Batrachostomus poliophilus*)
Nocturnal species endemic on Sumatra

lands such as Sulawesi, Sumatra and Halmahera.

And then there's India. "Everywhere you go, there's birds," Mr. Eaton says. Even in the center of Delhi, he says, he finds species including eagles and wild green parakeets.

Aasheesh Pittie, a 47-year-old businessman in Hyderabad, India, often takes half- or full-day birding trips with family or friends and twice a year goes out of town for up to two weeks. On an excursion to the district of Kadapa, in southeastern India, he scored what would be a high point for almost any birder—a Jerdon's courser, a nocturnal bird found nowhere else in the world. Population estimates for this critically endangered species, which was long considered extinct, currently range as low as a few dozen.

For purists, birding requires more than a fine pair of binoculars and a good field guide. The most extreme birders, or "twitchers," are so obsessed that they think nothing of spending thousands of dollars to pursue one or two exotic species for "the list," the running tally of species they have spotted. A top "lister" may go to more than 50 countries over a lifetime of birding, notching 8,000-plus species out of the roughly 10,000 on earth. Most excursions are tests of devotion: With birds usually most active at sunrise, serious birders will be up and settled into their viewing perch before dawn. After that comes as many as 12 hours in the bush, scanning for plumage and listening for a particular call.

Henk Hendriks calls that a vacation. The 56-year-old professor

from the Netherlands has been bird-watching since walks with his father in his early teens. Today, he spends two to three months a year birding in Africa, the Americas and Asia—excursions that can easily cost \$8,500 each. The payoff: his list is 6,070 species long. "Asia has always been a bit special," he says. The birds there are "colorful, exciting and rare."

In March, during a four-week, \$4,600-plus trip to the Philippines, Mr. Hendriks was often bird-watching from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m., with short breaks for meals. On one leg of the trip, local guides organized tents, food and porters for a five-day hike into Luzon's Sierra Madre mountains in search of the endemic whiskered pitta. Birders consider the tiny, hard-to-spot ground-dweller a jewel of the forest floor. "I had great views of it," Mr. Hendriks says. "I know of birders who visited the area three times without seeing it."

For birders, the thrill is the get. On the same trip, after hours at a viewing point on Mount Kitanglad on Mindanao island, Mr. Hendriks had another thrill: a great Philippine eagle, one of largest and least-spotted birds in the world, with a flying squirrel gripped in its talons.

Subaraj Rajathurai is an Asian bird specialist in Singapore with 15 years of experience as a guide. He often knows exactly where in Southeast Asia to find particular species; clients typically come to him with specific birds in mind. Mr. Rajathurai won't say what he charges, but longtime birders say such "super guides" can cost \$200 or more a day.

I got my first taste of bird-

watching's allure in Bali. My guide, Ni Wayan Sumadi, was a restaurant worker until about 15 years ago, when her cousin's husband asked her to help with his bird tours. Now she is an experienced local guide charging about \$33 a person for a half-day tour. The tour I took with her was a pleasant stroll with bird and butterfly sightings along the way.

I accompanied two couples, including a pair of Australians who were serious birders and another couple who'd just recently started. At one point, while trailing behind, I missed a streaked weaver, a tiny brown bird with light stripes and a funky yellow Mohawk that everyone else saw and cooed over. I felt an unexpected pang of regret.

But I had my moment a week later on Borneo, at the Kota Kinabalu Wetland Centre. Committed birders would probably have headed to Mount Kinabalu. But the Centre, not far from the city center, is suitable for birders with mild obsessions. As I went along the boardwalk in the preserve's 24 hectares of mangrove forest, a large white bird suddenly swept, breathtakingly, across my field of vision in a graceful arc and disappeared behind some trees. Later, I would figure out it was a great egret. Minutes later, following a harsh croak, a dark purplish-grey bird with a wingspan of nearly 1.5 meters lifted itself laboriously out of a stand of ferns about 20 meters ahead of me. It was a large purple heron, a species found in Asia as well as in Africa and Europe. I felt awed by its power, size and elegance and to my surprise, the word "wow" escaped my lips.

Bird trips

TO HIRE A PRIVATE guide in Malaysia, contact Bird Malaysia; rates are \$200 for a day, \$115 for a half-day (☎ 60-12-584-6184; www.tinyurl.com/5hkd8v; irshad@bird-malaysia.com). In Singapore, contact Subaraj Rajathurai; rates vary (☎ 65-9650-5183; www.subaraj.com; serin@swiftech.com.sg). Here are several jaunts to consider, in ascending order of difficulty:

Kota Kinabalu Wetland Centre, on Borneo, offers a taste of birding. Ten minutes by taxi from Kota Kinabalu, it features a 1.5-kilometer wooden walkway winding through mangrove forest, an observatory tower and several huts. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday to Sunday. (☎ 60-88-246-955; www.sabahwetlands.org).

Bali Bird Walk, a half-day tour, runs four times a week. It can be combined with a visit to the artistic village of Ubud in central Bali (☎ 62-361-975-009; www.balibirdwalk.com; su_birdwalk@yahoo.com).

Borneo's Danum Valley features rainforest jungle far from human habitation. Fly from Kota Kinabalu to Lahad Datu (about \$125 on Malaysia Airlines' MASWings); it's a 2.5-hour drive to the Borneo Rainforest Lodge. A three-day package, with bird-watching, night safari and deluxe chalet room, is \$485 a person (☎ 1-618-529-8033; www.borneorainforestlodge.com).

Tmatboey, Cambodia, about four hours northeast of Siem Reap by car, is home to the near-mythical giant ibis. Go in the December-to-March dry season, when birds gather at water sources. The Sam Veasna Center for Wildlife Conservation offers travel packages with English-speaking guides. Three nights for four people, including transport from Siem Reap and guide, is \$450 a person (☎ 855-63-761-597; www.samveasna.org; bookings@samveasna.org).

Winter in Japan, a 15-day tour from U.S. operator Wings, takes birders in pursuit of cranes, eagles and owls. Stops include Kirishima-Yaku National Park and Hokkaido island. The price is about \$7,240 including meals and lodging. (☎ 888-293-6443; www.wingsbirds.com; wings@wingsbirds.com).

Lore Lindu National Park, in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, hosts 75-plus endemic species, including the Sulawesi hanging parrot. Birdtour Asia has 20-day trips from Sulawesi for about \$5,450 (☎ 44-133-251-6254; www.birdtourasia.com). BirdQuest's 20-day trip is \$7,258 from Jakarta (☎ 44-125-482-6317; www.birdquest.co.uk).

—Steve Mollman

Writers on Reading

By Joanne Kaufman

When I was 11, Francie Nolan, the protagonist of Betty Smith's famous children's novel "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," was my hero. Not for her endurance of grinding hardships or her will to surmount them, but because of her stoic determination to read the entire collection in her local library.

Of course, no latter-day Francie would be content merely to read the contents of the public library. Scouting the possibilities, she'd want to parlay the achievement into a contract with a publisher and—who knows?—a movie deal. It could be the jewel in the crown of that ever expanding genre of books about reading books. A partial list: "Reading Lolita in Tehran" (2004) by Azar Nafisi; "The Year of Reading Proust" (1999) by Phyllis Rose; "Ex Libris: Confessions of a Common Reader" (2000) by Anne Fadiman; "Great Books" (1997), whose author, David Denby, enrolled in Columbia University's vaunted course on the core literary canon; and "So Many Books, So Little Time" (2003), wherein Sara Nelson, now the editor of Publishers Weekly, went through a book a week for a year, drawing connections between what she was reading and what was going on in her life. Implicitly, these books are memoirs because in sharing their passions, these authors are revealing themselves.

It's one thing for an author to write about the transformative experience of reading a particular novel. It's quite another matter for an author to take on a reference work that is typically turned to only in moments of ignorance or a Scrabble kerfuffle. Of late, a number of writers have decided to publish their accounts of soldiering through the kind of compendium that the average person would not want to read, let alone drop on his foot. Call it grit-lit.

Such authors include Ammon Shea, who—in a mere 365 days—knocked off all 20 volumes of the last word on words, The Oxford English Dictionary, and lived to tell the tale in "Reading the OED." By comparison his own book, cleverly divided into 26 chapters, one for each letter of the alphabet, runs a modest 223 pages including prologue and bibliography. There is also A.J. Jacobs, who read the Encyclopedia Britannica in something over a year and wrote about the experience in "The Know-It-All: One Man's Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World."

A variation on the theme involves reading the reference work, performing a set of tasks dictated by it, and writing about the whole shebang. Thus, once again here is Mr. Jacobs, this time cycling through the Old and New Testaments and attempting to abide by

their myriad precepts in "The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible." While presumably Mr. Jacobs drew the line at stoning adulterers, he did forswear shaving, eating shellfish and wearing mixed fibers. Here also is "Julie and Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny

Apartment Kitchen," Julie Powell's account of her quixotic yearlong attempt to prepare the entire contents of what some view as the culinary bible: Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking."

Both Mr. Jacobs's and Ms. Powell's books were best sellers. "The Year of Living Biblically" has been optioned by Paramount Pictures; "Julie and Julia," starring Meryl Streep, will be opening next year at a theater near you.

For the authors, the journey from A to Zyx (in Mr. Shea's case), from A-ak to Zywiec (for Mr. Jacobs), is the geek equivalent of extreme sports. "I'm never going to climb Everest or run in a marathon," said Mr. Jacobs.

In some instances, books about reading books have been a goal. My best friend just finished "Reading Lolita in Tehran"; she's now reading "Lolita" in New York.

Mr. Jacobs says that certain readers of "The Know-It-All" have been inspired to follow in his footsteps. "I'd get updates from people as they

worked their way through the A's and B's," he recalled, "but then I didn't hear anymore, so I got the feeling they didn't make it through." Other readers have simply been competitive. "I got responses like 'You read a book a week? Big deal. I read a book a day,'" said Sara Nelson.

After a mountain climber has scaled Everest or K2, the question, inevitably, is how do you top that? For extreme readers, there is a similar problem. Once you've conquered the encyclopedia or OED, Bartlett's and Roget's are mere hillocks.

Mr. Shea, who got in shape by reading Webster's Second International and Webster's Third International, will continue reading dictionaries. "All the elements of great literature are there," he said. "You get them alphabetized, but they're all there." Maybe so, but I'm not convinced that I'm going to be happy looking for "Pride and Prejudice" under "p."

For his part, the endlessly striving Mr. Jacobs is torn between having a go at the Talmud and wending his way through all four editions—average length 900 pages—of the psychotherapy nosology, "The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders."

Perhaps he'll find himself there.

Ms. Kaufman writes about culture and the arts for the Journal.

Authors cash in on their feats of literary strength.



Barbara Kelley

Damien Hirst Skips the Middleman

By Colin Gleadell

LONDON—By the final fall of the gavel at Sotheby's sale of new works by Damien Hirst Tuesday, the world's richest artist (reportedly worth more than \$1 billion) was \$172 million richer. That was the amount left from the \$201 million total after subtracting Sotheby's commission and \$6.2 million of charitable donations. But perhaps more important, Mr. Hirst was also comfortable in the knowledge he had made history.

Not only was it the largest single artist sale ever held, with 287 lots; it was a sale that flouted the time-honored tradition in which galleries have had sole lien on the sale of an artist's latest works.

Mr. Hirst has always been his own man. He bypassed the gallery system with the landmark Freeze warehouse exhibition 20 years ago, and has avoided binding contracts with his galleries, White Cube and Gagosian, since. He is on record as a critic of high gallery commission rates on sales, up to 50% for most artists or as little as 20% for him, but his

purpose here was, as he said, to "democratize" his market by giving buyers who might be sidelined by prestige-conscious gallery sales teams the opportunity to bid on the open market. The sale was also designed to open up his market to potential buyers who might never have thought of buying his work—until, that is, they'd been zapped by the publicity machine.

While some artists may have sold directly at auction before, none have done so in such quantity or in such a blaze of publicity. Mr. Hirst's genius for promotion, well honed from his early association with advertising mogul Charles Saatchi, was never better deployed. The combination with the well-oiled marketing machinery of Sotheby's left no section of the media untouched. Criticism of the commercial style of production only added fuel to the debate that raged around the auction.

There was also no doubting the risks involved, lending an air of drama to the whole occasion. Before this week's two-day sale, more than 25% of Mr. Hirst's works offered at auction this year had failed to sell, and pundits predicted that the growing effects of the credit crunch could take their toll. A damaging though refuted report then appeared in the Art Newspaper that hundreds of his works still lay unsold in his galleries. And when the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy was announced on the opening morning of the sale, and stock markets plunged, it seemed that a humiliating public failure could have been a possibility.

But the art market once again proved that it can thrive, insulated from the turmoil of financial markets, and Mr. Hirst showed that his brand could reach parts of that market that others couldn't.

The pattern for the sale was set on Tuesday evening. Outside the

front entrance, the journalist and broadcaster Ben Lewis was interviewing the ticket-only crowd as they lined up to enter. Mr. Lewis had been banned from attending the sale (a first for Sotheby's) because of a deeply cynical and sometimes naïve article in the Evening Standard about the contemporary art market as a confidence trick.

Most of the well-heeled crowd had come just to watch what promised to be an extraordinary spectacle, a performance artwork in itself. This was an event that was going to sort out the market traditionalists, with their taste

lots but could buy only one—an assemblage of cigarette stubs for £121,250—suggested that the next day's headlines should read "Hirst Up. Lehman Brothers Down."

Amid all the back-slapping, whistling and cheering (mainly from Sotheby's employees) there was little time to ponder that estimates had been set about 30% lower than retail according to the London trader and art-fund manager Micky Tiroche. While half the lots had sold above those estimates, just as many had not. For those who were checking against gallery prices, more than a handful of works had sold at relative bargain levels.

The following morning, the spirit of ebullience continued in the room as every lot was sold. Auctioneer Oliver Barker, who had suggested the whole event to Mr. Hirst two years previously, was awarded a pair of symbolic virgin-white gloves.

Again, a large number of lots sold below estimate. "The Incredible Journey," a zebra in a formaldehyde tank, sold for £1.1 million when at least £2 million

had been expected. "The Broken Dream," another formaldehyde work featuring a calf's head, sold to White Cube for £505,250—well below its £600,000 low estimate. But just as many works took off. "Ascended," a butterfly painting in a new gridlike configuration for Mr. Hirst, tripled its estimate to sell for £2.3 million.

Tobias Meyer, Sotheby's worldwide head of contemporary art, says the achievement of the sale is unique, and places the artist firmly among the postwar greats. "If you compare Hirst with Jeff Koons, for instance, both artists make desirable objects with global appeal," he says. "But Hirst's output is larger, and very controlled. He promised us an astonishing new body of work for this auction and he produced it—on time." Mr. Koons produces less and does not work to time schedules.

Warhol would not have held such a sale because he was not as successful in his lifetime, and because the auction market was not so developed then. But there are similarities, says Mr. Meyer. Both artists produced series of similar works that look repetitive at first. But when you look closer you find there are rarities within those series. "Did you know there are only 12 metal butterfly paintings, three of which were in this sale?" asks Mr. Meyer. "One day that rarity will make them even more sought after, just as we are now seeking out rare Warhol electric-chair or Jackie paintings from a series. I also believe the provenance of this sale will be seen as an important one in the future. It was Damien Hirst at his most ambitious."

Most ambitious as an artist, and most skillful as a market maker.

Mr. Gleadell writes a weekly column on the art markets in the Daily Telegraph.



Damien Hirst

"The Kingdom" (2008), which sold for £9.6 million, was one of 287 lots to go under the hammer at Sotheby's historic auction.

for rarity and the historically significant, from the brash new global billionaires for whom brand status is more important.

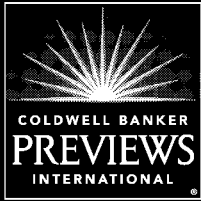
At the sale, though multiple bids were made on most lots, three buyers dominated. Jay Jopling, of London's White Cube gallery, set the pace on the first lot, buying a butterfly painting triptych, "Heaven Can Wait," for £993,250 (\$1.8 million), nearly double the high estimate. He went on to buy three more lots for his clients. For "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow," a glass tank with fish skeletons floating in formaldehyde, he outbid rival London dealer Anthony d'Offay, paying £2.9 million—within the estimate. Altogether he picked up four lots for a total £6.7 million. He wasn't deserting Mr. Hirst in his renegade auction adventure.

Mr. Hirst's other main dealer, the Gagosian Gallery, was less active—bidding sporadically and acquiring just one lot. Rumors that the two dealers were offered an incentive percentage of sale proceeds to support the sale were hotly denied by both Sotheby's and Mr. Hirst's company, Science.

The biggest buyer in terms of lots was Sotheby's Russian-speaking Alina Davey from the private client services department. She bought nine lots for £12.9 million, presumably for Russian clients.

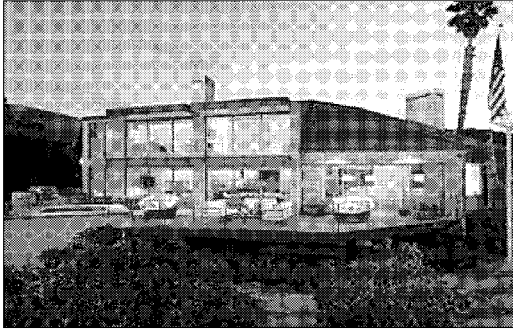
But the biggest spender—bidding over the telephone and said by industry insiders to be Christie's owner, the keen Hirst collector Francois Pinault—paid £13.2 million for three lots. The most expensive, "The Golden Calf," a 20-ton calf with 18-karat-gold hooves and horns in a formaldehyde glass tank, was perhaps the most symbolic work in the sale, representing as it does the idolatrous worship of money.

Afterward, New York dealer Alberto Mugarab, who bid on several



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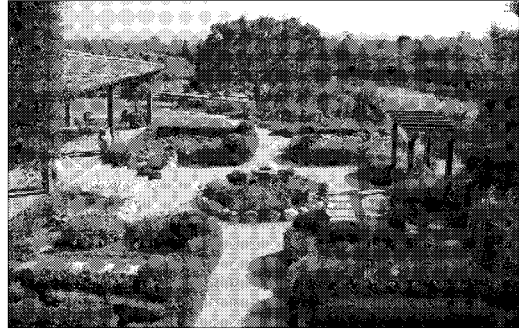
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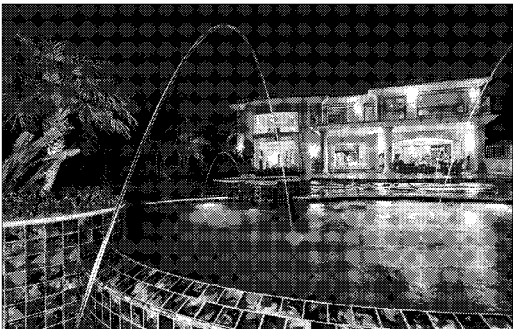
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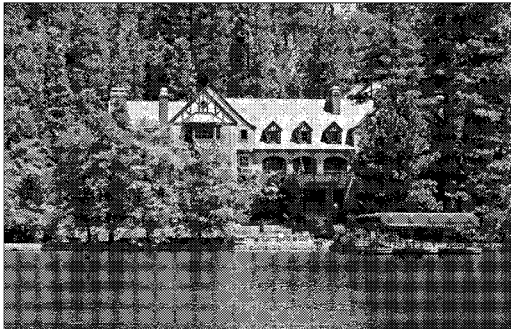
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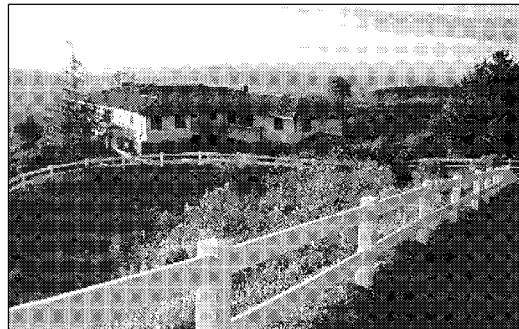
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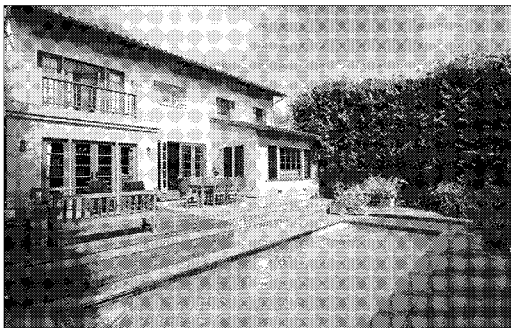
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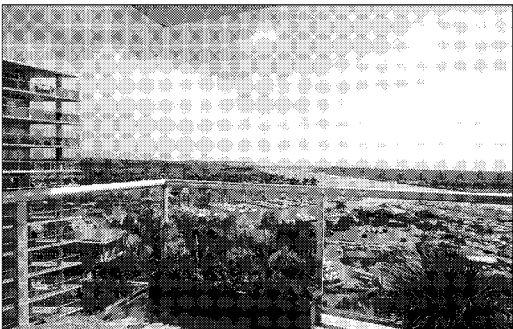
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Downtown Manhattan

BOND STREET

NoHo. Triplex townhouse in boutique condo by Herzog & de Meuron. 3,750 SF+/-, 3 bedroom/4 bath, wood burning fireplace, private gated entrance, private garden, 24 hour concierge. \$10.9M **WEB# 1107006**
Dennis Mangone 917.806.4545

REDUCED TO SELL

E 11th St/5th Ave. 5 story Italianate townhouse on one of the most desirable Gold Coast blocks. 6,300 SF+/-, Parlor floor has 13' ceilings, original details, 9 fireplaces. Needs renovation. \$10.795M **WEB# 1241985**
Joseph Dwyer 212.605.9395
Melinda Ely Dubow 212.605.9243

PRIME VILLAGE TOWNHOUSE

Greenwich Village. 5 story, 1853 Anglo-Italianate townhouse on most prime Village block. Configured as five apartments and delivered vacant. Ask \$9.25M **WEB# 1235781**
Tatiana Cames 212.444.7833

PRIME WEST VILLAGE CONDO

Charles St. 3 bedroom/3 bath. Richard Meier's masterpiece. Glorious Hudson River views. Floor to ceiling windows. Exquisite 2,500 SF+/- loft. Intimate full service building (built 2005). \$6.55M **WEB# 1281668**
Andy Fink 212.937.6711

UNIQUE EAST VILLAGE HOME

E 10th St. Views all around. Keyed elevator opens to a massive living room & open kitchen. Fireplace, 500 SF+/- terrace + private balcony off master bedroom + 3 bedrooms/3 baths. Great closets + additional storage. Doorman. \$6.45M **WEB# 1028669**
Dalia Newman 212.875.2816
Sharone Shatz 212.875.2801

TURN KEY-TURN ON

East Village. Single family. Secluded carriage house. A rare 25' wide private zen oasis. Four story. Garden & roof terrace. Stunning renovation. Media room. Best East Village block. \$4.995M **WEB# 1243416**
Meredith Hatfield 212.360.1660

TRIBECA PENTHOUSE LOFT

Laight St. 3 bedroom/3 bath. Brand new, sun-drenched, full floor penthouse, keyed elevator, 14' ceilings, 900 SF+/- wrap terrace, chef's kitchen, unobstructed city views, south & west exposures. \$4.5M **WEB# 1200592**
Tim Cass 212.500.7025

LUXURY SOHO CONDO

SoHo. Stunning and sprawling 3 bedroom/3.5 bath full service condo. 2,000 SF+/-, Top finishes throughout, gourmet kitchen, luxury baths, river views, washer/dryer. \$3.55M **WEB# 1317285**
Michael A. Jones 212.539.4975

DUANE STREET CONDO LOFT

TriBeCa. Sophisticated, loft apartment, keyed elevator opens into loft. Large modern kitchen, wood burning fireplace, den/study, washer/dryer, small pristine condo, 2,300 SF+/-, Low common cost/real estate tax. \$2.5M **WEB# 1177134**
Jerry Senter 212.444.7811
Haruno Arai 212.941.2532

SUN FILLED VILLAGE LOFT

W 13th St/5th Ave. 6 rooms. 3 bedrooms/2 baths. 11' ceilings/14 windows/garden views. Open kitchen/living/dining. Washer/dryer. Pet friendly. Live/work opportunity. Prime location. \$1.95M **WEB# 1290621**
Sharon E. Baum 212.836.1036

STUNNING PARK VIEWS

5th Ave/Flatiron. Architecturally magnificent open loft. Prewar 2 bath with 2 bedroom flexible layout. Open chef's kitchen. Madison Square Park views. \$1,585 maintenance. Ask \$1,995M **WEB# 1331768**
Susanne Steward 212.941.2572

FOLIO HOUSE LOFT

5th Ave/W 18th St. 2 bedroom/2 bath loft. Best location. Triple mint, top-of-line kitchen & baths, central air, washer/dryer, amazing closets, 13.5' ceilings, virtual doorman, full time super in top Co-op. \$1,685 maintenance. \$1.895M **WEB# 1182261**
Beth Lowy 212.875.2863

WORTHY OF ENVY

TriBeCa. New luxury 1 bedroom. Impeccable layout, custom features throughout & finest amenities. Great closet space. 10' ceilings. North and east exposures. Asking \$1.795M **WEB# 1321815**
Samantha Brown 212.941.2649

LOFT LIVING

Financial District. Boutique 14 unit cast iron building. 2 bedroom/2 bath, 10' ceilings, large living dining and top-of-the-line kitchen. North and south exposures. tax: \$200/month. \$1,549,999M **WEB# 1303597**
Sharon Katzoff 212.941.2573

ONE BEDROOM IN THE VILLAGE

Greenwich Village. 1 bedroom/1 bath open loft with almost 14' ceilings located in a full service bldg with spectacular roof deck. Great opportunity to own in The Greenwich Condo. \$1.495M **WEB# 1269066**
Ric Swezey 212.500.7011

TERRACE WITH CITY VIEW

E 18th St/Irving Pl. 3.5 rooms. Corner 1 bedroom with setback terrace, renovated windowed kitchen and great closets - all in a full service building. North and east exposures. \$890K **WEB# 1330266**
Carolyn Edwards Berger 212.875.2997

RETAILER'S DREAM

SoHo. Lease waiting with 3,100 usable SF+/-, 13' ceilings with windows ripe to be expanded fronting Mulberry Street. \$38,750/month. **WEB# 929367**
Emilie O'Sullivan 212.836.1028

RIVER VIEWS

Chelsea. Amazing high floor corner one bedroom/one bath brand new condo with balcony & city & river views from all rooms, spacious living room & bedroom lots of closets, washer/dryer, available immediately. \$4,995/month. **WEB# 1328043**
Roseann Barber 212.444.7807

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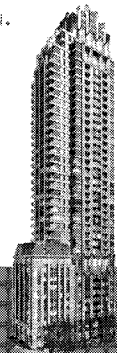


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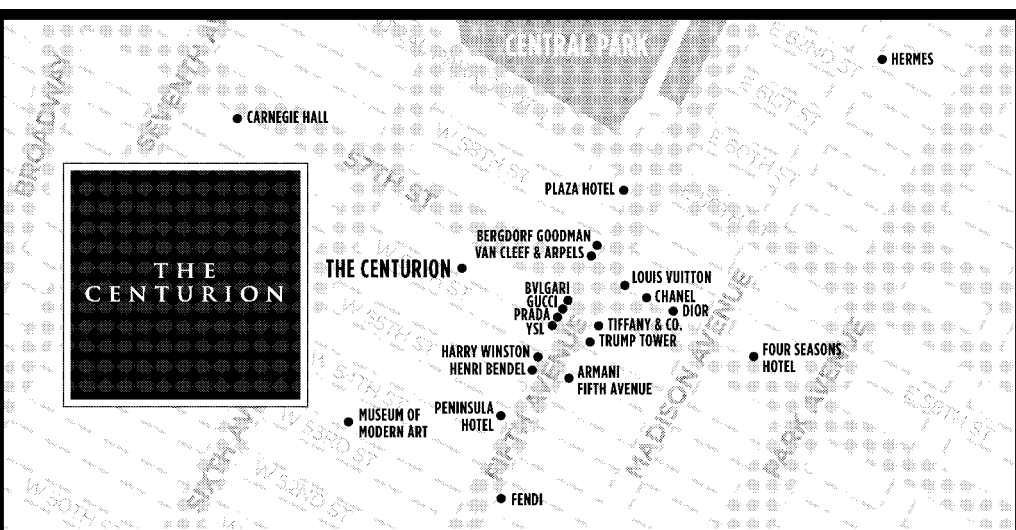


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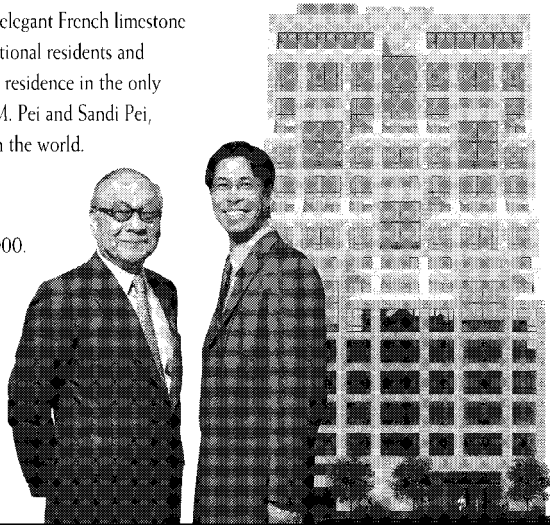
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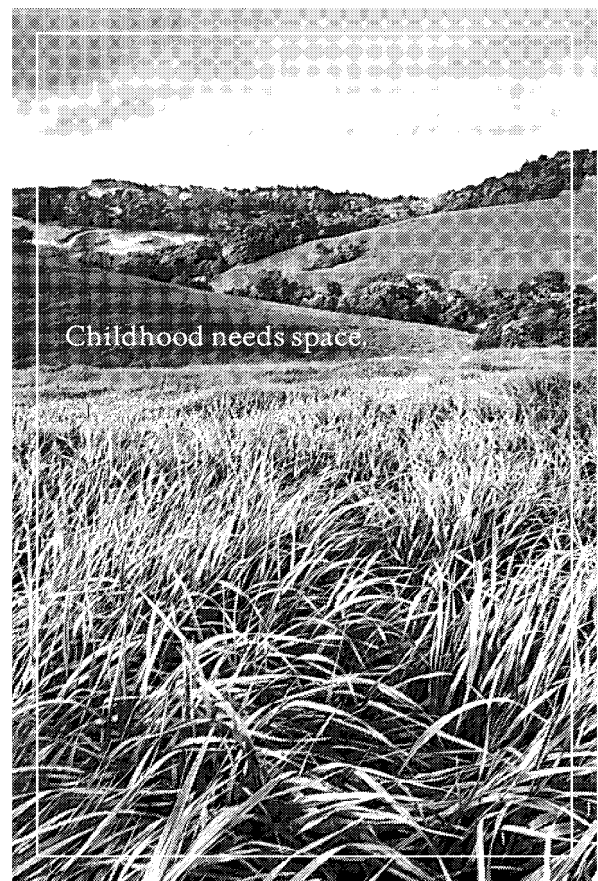
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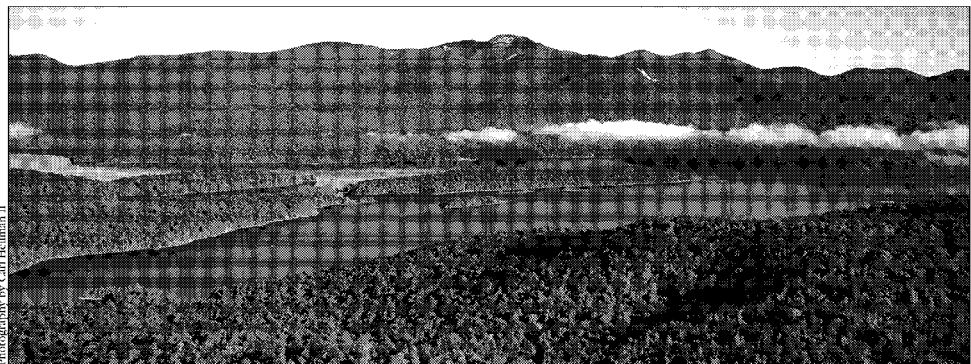
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time off



Above, 'Mannequin of a Child on a Bike' (from the play 'The Dead Class'), 1975, by Tadeusz Kantor, in Zurich; left, 'White Hood 1, Alek Wek, Long Island,' 1997, by Greg Delves, in Hamburg.

Amsterdam

art

"Caspar David Friedrich and the German Romantic Landscape" presents paintings and drawings by the German artist (1774-1840) alongside works by his contemporaries.

Hermitage Amsterdam
Sept. 20-Jan. 18
☎ 31-20-5308-755
www.hermitage.nl

design

"ExperimentaDesign Amsterdam 2008" offers exhibitions, lectures and debates under the theme "Space and Place—Design for the Urban Landscape," featuring international designers Rem Koolhaas, Gunjan Gupta, Mark Jenkins and others.

City of Amsterdam
Until Nov. 2
☎ 31-20-2052-35058
www.experimentadesign.nl

Barcelona

art

"Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939): Seduction, Modernity and Utopia" exhibits the paintings and posters of the Czech-born artist, a creator of the Art Nouveau style and one of the founding fathers of modern graphic design.

Caixaforum
Until Jan. 4
☎ 34-93-4768-600
www.fundacio.lacaixa.es

literature

"J. G. Ballard: Autopsy of the New Millennium" explores the author's influences and references with photography, video and text tracing the themes of his works.

Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona
Until Nov. 2
☎ 34-93-3064-100
www.cccb.org

Berlin

art

"5000 Years Africa—Egypt—Africa" juxtaposes works of traditional African art with objects from Egyptian antiquity, exploring formal and aesthetic similarities and origins.

Kunstforum der Berliner Volksbank
Until Nov. 30
☎ 49-30-63-1744
www.smb.spk-berlin.de

Cologne

art

"Nam June Paik Award 2008" shows the five international nominees for Germany's most prestigious award for media art.

Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud
Sept. 26-Nov. 16
☎ 49-221-2212-1119
www.namjunepaikaward.de

Copenhagen

art

"Yang Fudong: China in Transition" displays the work of contemporary Chinese photographer and video artist Yang Fudong (born 1971).

Kunstforeningen Gl Strand
Until Oct. 26
☎ 45-3336-0260
www.glstrand.dk

Dublin

theater

"Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival



Photos: Greg Delves; Crotteko, Krakow

2008" presents 27 performances in 16 venues, including Mozart's "The Magic Flute" set in contemporary South Africa, Joan Didion's "The Year of Magical Thinking" starring Vanessa Redgrave, and a new version of "Hedda Gabler" by Brian Friel.

Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival
Sept. 25-Oct. 12
☎ 353-1-677-8899
www.dublintheatrefestival.com

Düsseldorf

art

"Heavenly—Stately—Courtly" shows 150 works by Peter Paul Rubens, Antonio Bellucci, Gabriel Grupello, Gian Antonio Pellegrini and others.

Museum Kunst Palast
Sept. 20-Jan. 11
☎ 49-211-8992-460
www.museum-kunst-palast.de

Hamburg

photography

"Dream Women: Beauty in the 21st

Century" displays work by 50 leading international fashion photographers, including Peter Lindbergh, Sheila Metzner, Bettina Rheims and Albert Watson.

Deichtorhallen Hamburg
Sept. 20-Nov. 9
☎ 49-40-3210-30
www.deichtorhallen.de

Helsinki

art

"Kivi & Gallén" showcases sketches and illustrations by Finnish artist Akseli Gallen-Kallela for the publication of Aleksis Kivi's 1908 novel "The Seven Brothers."

Gallen-Kallela Museum
Until Jan. 25
☎ 358-9-8492-340
www.gallen-kallela.fi

Liverpool

art

"MADE UP—International 08 Exhibition" is a series of contemporary art installations in several galleries and public spaces throughout Liverpool.

Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art

Sept. 20-Nov. 30
☎ 44-151-7097-444
www.biennial.com

London

art

"Rothko" exhibits works by abstract expressionist painter Mark Rothko (1903-1970). The Tate Modern's iconic "Rothko Room" is united for the first time with works from Japan. The show includes black-and-gray paintings the artist made at the end of his life.

Tate Modern
Sept. 26-Feb. 1
☎ 44-20-7887-8888
www.tate.org.uk

art

"DRIFT 08" is a series of art installations along the banks of the Thames. Lasers recreate the structure of the old Blackfriars Railway Bridge while the Millennium Bridge echoes the sounds of a phantom beach and mythical creatures "swim" in the river.

City of London
Sept. 26-Oct. 19
☎ 44-20-7357-9003
www.illuminateproductions.co.uk

Paris

history

President Nicolas Sarkozy will open the Elysée—home to French heads of state since 1874—and his own office to visitors on Saturday and Sunday as part of the national heritage days in France, when many public and private buildings are open.

The Elysée Palace
Sept. 20-21
www.culture.fr

art

"Ingres—Permanent Shadows" features more than 100 preparatory sketches and drawings by French artist Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867).

Musée de la Vie Romantique
Until Jan. 4
☎ 33-1-5531-9567
www.vie-romantique.paris.fr

Rotterdam

design

"Limited/Unlimited—One Hundred Years of Dutch Design" shows everyday objects by Dutch designers, such as chairs, irons, radios, vases, textiles and packaging from every decade of the 20th century.

Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen
Until Oct. 12
☎ 31-10-4419-400
www.boijmans.rotterdam.nl

Turin

art

"Delleani and his Contemporaries" displays works by Piedmontese artist Lorenzo Delleani (1840-1908) alongside creations by 27 of his contemporaries.

Palazzo Bricherasio
Sept. 26-Jan. 18
☎ 39-011-571-1811
www.palazzobrigherasio.it

Zurich

art

"Tadeusz Kantor" shows films, drawings, paintings and theater sculptures by Polish visual artist Tadeusz Kantor (1915-1990) alongside the "happening photography" of Eustachy Kossakowski (1925-2001), documenting the work of Kantor.

Migros Museum
Until Nov. 16
☎ 41-1-2772-050
www.migrosmuseum.ch

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