

WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

2009 resolutions

Who's promising what for the coming year



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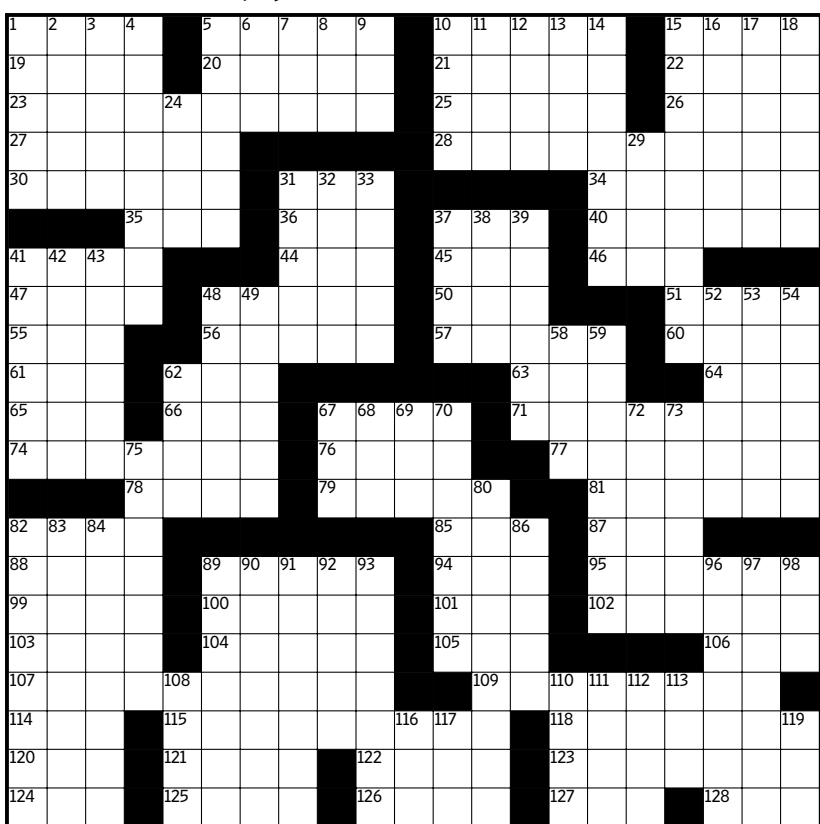
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Solution to Dec. 19 puzzle



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

Mexico defends the monarch

BY STAN SESSER

WHEN FEDERAL POLICE and army soldiers moved into this remote area in a top-secret operation last month, they didn't just put a small dent in Mexico's crime syndicates. They also made an important contribution toward preserving the world's biodiversity.

The targets of their raid were a dozen sawmills that were allegedly processing illegal timber. The fir and pine trees came from forests in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, host to one of nature's most impressive shows.

Each November, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies from the U.S. and Canada arrive in this rugged, mountainous region in Michoacán State, about 100 kilometers west of Mexico City. The phenomenon, often equated with the annual movement of some 1.3 million wildebeests in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park, is considered one of the greatest migrations on earth. The butterflies spend the winter roosting in trees here—in concentrations so dense that the weight of them can snap off branches. Illegal logging in the reserve is threatening the winter habitats of the monarchs, researchers say.

"It's absolutely unique," says Lincoln Brower, research professor of biology at Sweet Briar College in Virginia, who has been studying the monarchs for five decades. "The monarchs settle in the same forests their grandparents or great-grandparents had been in the year before. They'll often stay in the same trees."

The reserve received some badly needed protection last year when it was named a Unesco World Heritage Site. That means more tourists—and more tourist dollars, an added incentive for local communities to step up efforts to protect the area. Between now and mid-March, when they return north once again for the warming spring and summer climates, the monarchs are on display for visitors willing to brave the two-hour hike or horseback ride up steep mountain trails to the winter breeding sites.

The World Heritage designation has also encouraged the Mexican government to begin combating in earnest the logging that has threatened the reserve for several decades. "You're next to the largest city in the world, which has a big appetite for raw materials," explains José Luis Alvarez, whose jobs include conducting tours of the reserve as well as running a nursery to replace trees felled by loggers. "What is more lucrative than cutting wood you didn't grow?"

Homero Aridjis, who grew up in the area, has witnessed the destruction first-hand. In the 1980s, he says, loggers felled trees in the middle of the butterfly mating season, while tree branches and trunks were covered with tens of thousands of monarchs. "It was a brutal spectacle," he recalls.

Now Mr. Aridjis is Mexico's ambassador to Unesco in Paris, and is such a forceful advocate for preservation that he fears he could be a target of the crime syndicates who have taken control of the illegal logging operations.

The raids last month resulted in several arrests and the closing down of 12 sawmills. Ernesto Enkerlin, who heads Mexico's National Commission for Protected Areas, says that all but three of the 38 communities that own the land in the protected areas have agreed to support conservation activities. Moreover, he says, starting this year, the Mexican government will begin paying communities to police and maintain the forests, substantially supplementing the payments currently made by a coalition of foundations. "In the beginning, illegal logging included cooperation by the owners of the forest, who preferred to look the other way," Mr. Enkerlin says. "Now there's a lot of ecotourism that benefits some of the communities."

Even a few dollars at a time—the \$3 entrance fee to the reserve, the \$8 rental cost for a horse for a guide, \$15 for lunch at a private home—has had an impact on this impoverished area. Our 22-year-old guide recently de-



Left, monarch butterflies on a lupine plant in Michoacán; above, police guard the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve.

decided to return home here from his stint as a hairdresser on New York's Long Island, because the economic conditions in the region are improving.

Getting to Angangueo is relatively easy. To avoid the gridlock of Mexico City, visitors can fly direct from several cities in the U.S. to Morelia, which is a three-hour drive west of the reserve and itself a World Heritage Site for its historic colonial buildings. From there, many guided butterfly tours are available, but you can also set out on your own by rental car; the

Reserve doesn't require reservations, and most of the drive from Morelia to Angangueo is on a divided four-lane expressway.

But caution is in order. Michoacán State hasn't escaped the drug wars that have been ravaging Mexico. Morelia, the capital of the state, is the hometown of Mexico's President Felipe Calderón. In September, perhaps as retribution for Mr. Calderón's war against drugs, two grenades were thrown into a crowd celebrating Independence Day outside the cathedral there, killing seven people and injuring

Trip planner: Butterfly tours

THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY Biosphere Reserve is in the state of Michoacán, about a three-hour drive from Mexico City to the east or from Morelia to the west. Direct flights to Morelia are available from several U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston.

The most popular of the three major butterfly sites in Michoacán is **El Rosario**, but it's also the most commercial. **Cerro Pelon** to the south and **Sierra Chincua** to the north provide much more tranquil environments. Rancho San Cayetano, a resort near Cerro Pelon just outside the city of Zitacuaro, offers day tours with an English-speaking guide for \$75 a person. The resort is a 15-minute taxi ride from the Zitacuaro bus station. To get there, take an intercity bus from Morelia or, from Mexico City, the Autovias bus line from the Observatorio bus station. Doubles cost around \$110 (ranchosancayetano.com). The usual starting point to Sierra Chincua is the town of Angangueo, but a much more colorful town a half-hour up the road is Tlalpujahua. The delightful El Mineral Hotel costs about \$50 for a double (hoteldelmineral.com.mx), but on a recent visit no one spoke English.



The Monarch Watch Web site lists package tours to the reserve: monarchwatch.org/forums. Click on "general discussions" and then on "traveling to Mexico to see monarchs." Jose Luis Alvarez, who often accompanies scientists on their research projects, offers tours from Morelia, with two days in the reserve and three days in nearby town and scenic attractions: \$1,400 a person for five nights, including transportation and lodging (spiritofbutterflytours.com).

more than 100.

Visitors to Angangueo will encounter a different sort of challenge: Almost no one in these parts speaks English. Having to thumb your way through a traveler's phrase book won't diminish the beauty of the area, however. The mountains, with pristine air and a temperate year-round climate, offer panoramic views through towering fir trees. Tlalpujahua, a former mining town not far from the reserve, is a classic colonial city, its historic buildings and narrow streets winding up the side of a hill to a cathedral perched on top. At open-air markets in other villages near the reserve, elderly mestizo women make hot-off-the-griddle blue corn tortillas stuffed with fillings that include cactus and wild mushrooms.

The migratory route of the monarchs is believed to be thousands of years old, and legends about the butterflies are rooted in native Mexican culture. Because the monarchs first arrive in November around the Day of the Dead, a big national holiday, many villagers believe that they carry the souls of the departed revisiting the homeland.

But for the rest of the world, the discovery of the monarchs' winter roosts didn't come until 1975. The butterflies have since provided a source of awe and bewilderment for scientists. Monarchs from the midwestern U.S. that are tagged and moved to the East Coast, for example, will still wind up migrating to the same spot in Mexico. No one knows exactly how they manage to redirect themselves.

Many of the monarchs now arriving in Mexico have journeyed some 3,200 kilometers from their summer homes in a region that includes most of the U.S. east of the Rockies. A large portion come from the Great Lakes region extending up into Canada. West Coast monarchs have their own migratory route; they spend the summer in the Sierra Nevada mountains and winter in coastal California.

The monarchs in the Biosphere Reserve spend the coldest winter months huddled together in the trees, which provide just the right amount of humidity and warmth. As the weather warms in February, they become active. With a low-pitched whirl they darken the air as they fly around to mate and rehydrate. Remarkably, although they're concentrated at roughly 20 million per acre, the butterflies somehow manage to avoid bumping into each other. In March they head off to Texas and other Gulf Coast regions to lay their eggs, after which they die; their offspring eventually head north, repeating the cycle of mating, laying eggs and dying. The butterflies that return to Mexico next winter could be three or four generations removed from this year's occupants of the reserve, but somehow they'll know the route and even the precise groves of trees to land in.

"It's got to involve a capacity to respond to celestial clues, and the ability to follow the sun but correct for the time of day," says Prof. Brower. As the sun moves through the sky, he explains, the butterflies, who navigate by using the sun, have to change their angle of flight. "That's done by a body clock in their brain," he says. "A lot of birds are able to do it; the 24-hour clock is something that evolved very early in the animal kingdom."

A tight race for top movie honors

With the masterpieces 'Slumdog Millionaire' and 'WALL•E' in contention, the winner is . . .

BY JOE MORGENSTERN

WE'VE BEEN HERE before. Not just at the end of a year in which some of the most interesting movies were held back until the last three months—I'm always complaining about that—but at a point where I must, as I did 12 months ago, make an all-but-impossible choice between a brilliant Pixar film and a brilliant non-Pixar film as the year's best film, period. Last time it was "Ratatouille" or "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," and I went for the latter.

This year it's "Slumdog Millionaire" or "WALL•E," a matched pair of masterpieces that deserve each other's company and our gratitude. Can I dodge the bullet by leaving it at that? I'm tempted to, since there's nothing but good to be said about Danny Boyle's spectacular love story, set in Mumbai, or about Andrew Stanton's ineffable love story, set at first on a despoiled planet Earth and then in outer space.

However . . .

I've felt a special affinity to "Slumdog Millionaire" ever since its first public screening, at the Telluride Film Festival, when I went in knowing nothing about it—the best way to see any movie—and came out knowing that I'd seen a cross-cultural landmark that was both genuinely new and immensely entertaining. At a time when we need it, Danny Boyle and his daring colleagues, including the screen writer Simon Beaufoy, have given us a reminder that big-screen motion pictures, at least the best of them, are still a peerless visual medium.

However . . .

There's much about "WALL•E" that can't be pinned down in words, and that's as high a compliment as I know how to bestow on a film, animated or otherwise. "Out there," a voice sings over the opening frames, "there's a world outside of Yonkers." But it isn't Yonkers that we see. The song from "Hello, Dolly" plays over worlds beyond our world, over a gorgeous montage of stars, galaxies and planets, and then plays over our planet, our precious home in the void, except that its sole inhabitant (unless you count a cockroach) is now a little trash-compacting robot that can't stop building skyscrapers of garbage. The tension between that joyous song and that vision of a barren Earth yields a magical 40-minute sequence that's ironic, elegiac and exquisitely poignant, yet essentially indescribable; it can be savored fully only by being heard and seen.

And the rest of the film, a satire of rampant consumerism dressed up as genial comedy, clinches "WALL•E"'s title as the best movie of the year.

Ten-best lists are intrinsically illogical—only one can be best, and I've already made my pick—but here are the other eight choices on my list, in alphabetical order:

"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button." David Fincher is an extraordinarily skillful filmmaker; anyone who's seen "Seven," "Fight Club" or "Zodiac" knows that. Until now, though, his films have



The Weinstein Company



Fox Searchlight

Clockwise from left: Javier Bardem and Penélope Cruz in 'Vicky Cristina Barcelona'; Dev Patel and Freida Pinto in 'Slumdog Millionaire'; Robert Downey Jr. in 'Iron Man'; and a scene from 'Waltz With Bashir.'



Sony Pictures Classics



Paramount Pictures

dared you to enter their world, and put emotional impediments in the way. This time, working from Eric Roth's expansive adaptation of an F. Scott Fitzgerald short story, he pulls you into the surreal saga of a man, played by Brad Pitt, who's born old and youthens as he ages.

Mr. Pitt's performance as Benjamin is elegant, and it's matched by Cate Blanchett's hypnotic portrayal of Daisy, the woman who comes to love him.

"Iron Man." Just as "WALL•E" expands—vastly—the idea of an animated feature, this Marvel Comics production expands the notion of a mainstream summer action adventure. The genre, it tells us, doesn't have to be ritually stupid, pointlessly violent or insistently inane. There's room for sophistication, genuinely dazzling gadgetry and scintillating comedy along with the obligatory action set-pieces.

The film isn't perfect, but Robert Downey Jr. gives it a brain and a big heart as the occupant of the shiny red suit. He's half man, half robot and all star.

"Man on Wire." James Marsh's magnificent documentary towers above most fiction films released this year. Its subject is Philippe Petit, the French wirewalker who, in 1974, spent almost an hour on a cable strung between the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Mr. Petit's aerial ballets are studies in ecstatic relaxation; at certain moments he looks as if he were out for a Sunday stroll. And

they're only part of a film that studies the nature of obsession and provides, at the same time, a graphic history of the vanished buildings.

"Still Life." Before Hollywood began turning the rest of the world into locations for its globalized entertainments, the movies brought news of how people in other countries actually lived. Zhang Ke Jia's beautifully slow, yet vividly mod-

ern Chinese drama has a lyrical soul and a documentary sweep that only seems to be constrained by literal reality. The setting is the Three Gorges dam, at the feverish moment when the cities on the river's banks are being demolished—by the people who lived in them—so the mighty waters can flow. Scenes of titanic construction play against those of comparable destruction, and epic displacement; they're the birth-and-death rhythms of a momentous new age.

"Vicky Cristina Barcelona." After a long string of uncertain or downright disappointing films, Woody Allen has pulled off a sunny, summery romantic comedy with what seems to be perfect poise. He isn't in it. The man in the midst of the femininity is Javier Bardem; he plays a hedonistic Spanish painter who encounters two American friends on vacation in Spain—Rebecca Hall's Vicky, who believes in an orderly life, and Scarlett Johansson's Cristina, whose feelings spin every which way. It's all a charmingly wry put-up job, but the movie manages to say incisive things about the inconstancy of love, as well as the elasticity of personality, and Penélope Cruz is sensational as the painter's loose revolver of an ex-wife.

"The Visitor." Tom McCarthy's fine independent feature found the substantial audience it deserved. And its star, Richard Jenkins, found the role he deserved after decades of distinguished work as a character actor. He is Walter Vale, a blocked and love-

lorn widower sleepwalking through his life until he crosses paths with illegal immigrants who've taken over his Manhattan apartment. Like "Still Life," "The Visitor" opens up a world few of us know, even though New York's immigrant culture, together with its music, is only a stone's throw from familiarity.

"Waltz With Bashir." Two animated features on one 10-best list? Few live-action films wield the armor-piercing artistry that the Israeli filmmaker Ari Folman has brought to bear on his nation's complicity in an infamous massacre, by Christian Falangists, of Palestinian refugees during Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. "Memory takes us where we need to go," someone says in the course of this animated documentary, which gives us much of what we need to understand the nature of memory, and how unreliable it can be.

"The Wrestler." "I'm an old broken-down piece of meat," Mickey Rourke's has-been professional wrestler says of himself in Darren Aronofsky's splendid, sometimes harrowing drama. Broken-down, yes, but still a prime cut when it comes to honor and decency. Some scenes are difficult to watch—the hero's pain is as real as pro wrestling is fake—but the film is substantial and unforgettable. And Marisa Tomei, as a down-at-the-spike-heels stripper, gives a performance that's worthy of Mr. Rourke's phenomenal work in the title role.

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Opening this week in Europe

- Bedtime Stories Finland, Sweden
- Changeling Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Portugal, Sweden
- Flash of Genius Finland
- Frozen River France
- Hamlet 2 Netherlands
- Let the Right One In Italy
- Milk Spain
- Role Models U.K.
- Slumdog Millionaire U.K.
- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas Netherlands
- The Curious Case of Benjamin Button Turkey
- The Duchess Belgium, Poland
- The Rocker France
- Twilight Finland, France, Greece, Norway, Poland, Romania, Switzerland
- Vicky Cristina Barcelona Estonia, Turkey
- W. Finland
- Zack and Miri Make a Porno Estonia

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

The pros' highlights, and yours

THE SUCCESS OF GOLF on television surprised nearly everyone when it began in the 1950s. Who would have thought tracking a tiny white ball on a tiny black-and-white screen would be such a hit? Part of the credit rightly goes to Arnold Palmer and his incandescent personality, but in my view the viewers' relationship with the game was more important. Most of those who watch golf on television are also players.

Golf Journal

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

We scan for tips and swoon with empathy, or secret satisfaction, when the pros screw up.

I mention this because, in assembling the year's top golf stories as enacted by the demigods on television, it struck me that most golfers have their own set of top stories that coexist with those in the public sphere. Last summer, for instance, I was paired with a guy in a charity event who was rhapsodizing about a recent, late-afternoon nine at his club with his son and daughter, joined for the final few holes by his nonplaying wife in a cart. The shadows were long, they had the course to themselves and—these are the words I can still hear him saying—"Everything was perfect, everything was as right with the world as I can ever remember it being."

On his list, I'm sure that afternoon tops anything Tiger Woods or the U.S. Ryder Cup team did in 2008. All of us who play have similar personal highlights, such as—you remember—that miraculous back nine last August, when you scored nothing higher than five on any hole, birdied 12 and chipped in on 18, all witnessed by your best golf buddies, who were just as thrilled as you were.

By virtue of my job, my personal highlights for 2008 intersected with several of the media-certified Top Golf Stories of the Year. One of my standout experiences was closely following, inside the ropes, Mr. Woods's epic playoff victory over Rocco Mediate at the U.S. Open (more about that later). Another was playing Augusta National for the first time, the day after the Masters Tournament, thanks to a lucky draw in the annual media lottery.

But still, without question, my personal top golf story of the year was competing in the member-guest at a friend's nine-hole club in Connecticut. It was a low-key affair, using handicaps, and my host contributed far more than I did. But I pulled off a few key shots when needed, and we won the tournament in a playoff—exactly like Mr. Woods did at the U.S. Open!

Such is the way we golfers look at the world.

Tiger Beats Rocco. The U.S. Open, in June at Torrey Pines in San Diego, was easily the most exciting event of the year. The world champion, Mr. Woods, battled through the excruciating pain of leg fractures and a torn ligament, and was taken to the final hole twice—once in regulation and once in the 18-hole playoff on Monday—by an obscure but popular everyman, Mr. Mediate. There



LPGA great Annika Sorenstam prepared to bid farewell to her fans.

were many big moments, most involving Mr. Woods's putting. He canned eagle putts of 70 feet and 30 feet on Saturday and then, on the final hole of regulation Sunday, bounced in a 12-footer for birdie across a crusty green to force the playoff.

The atmosphere all week was electric. For the first two rounds the USGA paired the top three players in the world: Mr. Woods, his rival Phil Mickelson, competing before a hometown crowd, and Australian Adam Scott. But what I most remember about the event is the ear-splitting roars during the playoff. The galleries couldn't seem to decide whom to root for, so they rooted alternatively for both, with equal fervor. The cries of "Rocco! Rocco!" as Mr. Mediate walked past morphed seamlessly into "Tiger! Tiger!" as Mr. Woods approached. I've never witnessed anything like it.

After his victory on the 91st hole, Mr. Woods canceled the rest of his season to fix his leg, and is expected to return this spring—stronger and better than ever, in my guess, although nobody can know at this point. Meanwhile he left us with some amusing statistics to ponder: In his six events in 2008, he won four, placed second and fifth in the others, and earned \$5,775,000 total, or just under \$1 million per outing.

Arbitrage

The price of a kilowatt hour of electricity

City	Local currency	€
Brussels	€0.07	€0.07
Paris	€0.08	€0.08
Rome	€0.09	€0.09
London	£0.13	€0.13
Tokyo	¥17.87	€0.14
Frankfurt	€0.16	€0.16
New York	\$0.29	€0.20

Note: For domestic use; average prices include different rates charged for usage as well as time of day; rates provided by utilities in each city, and converted into euros.



Vijay Singh won the FedEx Cup season-ending competition.

USA, USA. The Ryder Cup, too, was electric on the ground. A half hour before the singles matches began on Sunday, the crowds lining the fairways were already at it. The American chants of "USA, USA, USA" were instantly rejoined by "olé, olé, olé, olé" from the Europeans, many dressed like Leprechauns. The Saturday-afternoon fourball matches, which were halved, produced some of the best golf in Ryder Cup history. Three of the four games came down to the 18th hole, and the other ended on the 17th.

Paul Azinger, the U.S. team captain, brilliantly managed his squad with a creative mix of business and military commando-unit tactics. He divided the players into three, four-man pods, whose members practiced and competed together throughout the week and kept each other "on message" amid the hoopla. The result was a grand reversal of U.S. fortunes in the Ryder Cup: a 16½ to 11½ shellacking, after five losses in the previous six events.

The Ryder Cup, without Mr. Woods, also served as a showcase for rising young American stars like Boo Weekley (who memorably galloped his driver hobby-horse style down the first fairway on Sunday) and Hunter Mahan, but particularly Anthony Kim. Such was Mr. Kim's focus that after decisively polishing off Spain's Sergio Garcia on the 14th hole of their singles match, he marched on to the 15th tee, unaware he had won.

Farewell to a Champion. Leaving



Tiger Woods reaffirmed his dominance with a pain-filled U.S. Open playoff win.

wiggle room to return if her passion does, Annika Sorenstam, golf's greatest female player, announced in May that at age 38 she would be "stepping away" from competition at year's end. She dominated the LPGA for most of the decade ending in 2005 by winning 72 times with a flawless, eerily repeatable swing and ironclad focus.

Happily, the LPGA now has more great players than ever, including 27-year-old Lorena Ochoa of Mexico, who already has 24 victories, and the pretty-in-pink American, Paula Creamer, who won four times this year. Watch out, too, for next year's almost certain Rookie of the Year, Ji-Yai Shin of South Korea, who won 11 tournaments world-wide in 2008, including the LPGA's season ending ADT Championship with its \$1 million winner's check.

Unhappily, the LPGA faces difficult sponsorship and television challenges after contracts expire next year, and management issues stemming from Commissioner Carolyn Bivens's ill-fated decision in September, since rescinded, to suspend players (read: Korean play-

ers) who don't learn English.

Still Tweaking. The PGA Tour, by contrast, is in relatively good shape despite the economic troubles afflicting its two main categories of sponsors, finance and automobiles. Many of its contracts, including television, are booked through 2012. The bleakest outlook is for support at the local level—corporate tents and the like—which are the main funding source for the Tour's outstanding charitable donations.

The season-ending FedEx Cup playoffs are also an issue. Vijay Singh won this year's \$10 million prize without having to do more than finish and correctly sign his scorecard in the concluding Tour Championship. A new, version 3.0 strategy for next year will reset the points before the final event. "The goal is create a pinnacle situation where everything is on the line," said Ty Votaw, the Tour's executive vice president. But that's hard to accomplish reliably while also protecting the standings that players acquire by accumulating points throughout the season.

Email me at golfjournal@wsj.com.

2009 resolutions: Who's promising

MANY PEOPLE at year's end reread that most influential man, Charles Dickens. Not only "A Christmas Carol," but also his sweeping books of the human spirit like "Great Expectations" and, especially, "Bleak House." Dickens inflects cold, damp, soot-fogged London with his bright, generous humanity, a reassuring combination that encourages our annual desire to greet January renewed. Dickens's best characters suggest that the story of life is in the striving, the ongoing effort to begin again and become, even for a moment, our very best selves. So that some day, after we are gone, someone may say, as Jo the homeless crossing sweep does of the dead opium addict Nemo, "He was very good to me, he was." Nemo means "nobody" in Latin and that tragic man exists to tell us we can't do it alone.

The first of the year is that rare, earnest moment when we are all thinking this way together, resolving to be benevolent, compassionate, motivated, adventuresome. For the New Year, The Wall Street Journal asked some influential people three questions: What professional project do you plan to complete in 2009? What personal resolution do you finally hope to keep next year? And what problem should your industry or professional community tackle more effectively?

Think of our respondents for a moment as a cheerful cast of Dickensians, men and women who exist here to help us better know ourselves.

—Nicholas Dawidoff

Philippe Petit, 59

Wirewalker in the documentary "Man on Wire," New York City

PROFESSIONAL: Street juggling, high-wire walking, giving lectures and workshops, a new book.

PERSONAL: My personal resolutions do not get triggered by a date printed on the calendar. In the middle of the year, in the middle of the night, a new dream, a new *idée fixe* takes hold of me.

INDUSTRY: Industry...professional community? I live in the clouds, among birds. My problems are the treacherous wind currents, and ah yes, on the ground, the men and women who have been trained to say no to miracles. So let's include in next year's school curriculum classes in daydreaming, in following your intuition, in romantic improvisations.

Frank Wilczek, 57

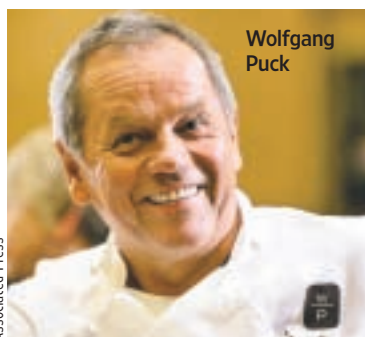
Nobel Prize-winning particle physicist and author, Cambridge, Mass.

PROFESSIONAL: I'm writing a physics murder mystery. The idea is that two men and two women from Harvard and MIT collaborate and discover dark matter. It's clear that they should win a Nobel



Richard Meier

Retna



Wolfgang Puck

Associated Press

Prize, but according to the rules of the prize, only three people at most can share.

PERSONAL: I'm looking forward to getting better acquainted with my Wii. I've been mucking around with Wii Sports. I like the boxing and bowling and tennis.

INDUSTRY: We have the LHC [Large Hadron Collider, a subatomic particle collider in Switzerland], which will explore the frontier of high-energy physics. There's a whole well-known agenda featuring unification, supersymmetry, looking for the Higgs particle, perhaps shedding light on the question of dark matter. The most important work in the area is yet to be done.

Adele, 20

Singer, London

PROFESSIONAL: My main priority is the second record. I'm really looking forward to getting right back into the thick of recording again.

PERSONAL: Keep enjoying everything and avoid crumbling when



Adele

WireImage

stuff goes pear-shaped. Get a better balance between my career and personal life.

INDUSTRY: Stop treating female singers' music as a gender and more like a genre.

Wolfgang Puck, 59

Chef/restaurateur, Los Angeles

PROFESSIONAL: We'll open our newest restaurant, called Five-Sixty, which is at the Reunion Tower in Dallas, and Union Station, where we can do catering for up to 1,000 guests.

PERSONAL: Hopefully, next year I will spend more weekends with my family instead of working. It seems like every year I make the same resolution but since I'm turning 60 next year, I think that will be a good place to start.

INDUSTRY: The industry should lobby to establish a federal law that allows restaurants nationwide to exempt waiters who earn tips from the minimum wage. Waiters would not lose money because they could work overtime, and we could use the savings to provide health care or raise the wages of dishwashers.

Contributing reporters:
Alexandra Alter, Jess Bravin,
Jamin Brophy-Warren, Kelly
Crow, John Jurgensen, Nancy
Keates, Sara Lin, Katy
McLaughlin, Lauren Mechling



Chris Brown

Retna

7-month-old baby, so I think it's time for me to get done with my driving lessons and face the terrors of the DMV.

INDUSTRY: I'd love the publishing industry the world over to accept fully and without further complaint that electronic publishing is here to stay, and to provide innovative, sophisticated and, above all, low-priced competition for the Kindle and Sony Reader.

Dan Barber, 39

Chef, farming advocate and owner of Blue Hill Farm, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: My brother David and I have stepped up Blue Hill Farm into a full-time dairy operation, and we're in the process of doubling the herd with the hope that we'll have grass-fed cheese by summer of 2009.

PERSONAL: I'd like to sit more often. And write a book. And also eat less sugar late into the night. (They are all related.)

INDUSTRY: We've all seen the success of the local foods movement.... It's time for chefs to think not just about how to feed our customers sustainably, but how to feed the nation sustainably. For that we need to address institutional changes, like food banks and school lunch programs.

Nico Muhly, 27

Composer, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: In 2009, I am going to finally finish a long series of short works for solo viola and tape [recorded elements]. I'm into this because it's weird and specialized, like taking a year of your life and learning how to make blood sausage.

PERSONAL: I am going to wake up much, much earlier.

INDUSTRY: It would be great to see cities take more pride in their orchestras and small ensembles.



Vikram Chandra

AP

Martha Stewart, 67

Magazine publisher, television personality and entrepreneur, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: I have been working on a new entertaining book/lifestyle journal and hope to complete it in 2009 for publication in 2010. I have an encyclopedia of crafts being published in March and a new cookbook being published in the latter part of the year.

PERSONAL: I rarely make New Year's resolutions because I believe in constant evolution and change. Resolutions and contracts are very similar—they need constant tweaking and editing to work really effectively.

INDUSTRY: The Internet has taken many readers from newspapers and magazines. We as publishers have to individually determine how our publications can make the leap from print to digital so that we can retain both the computer user and the more traditional reader.

Vikram Chandra, 47

Author, Mumbai and Berkeley, Calif.

PROFESSIONAL: I just started a new novel a couple of months ago, and in a magical, perfect world I'd finish it in 2009. But my last novel came in at 900 pages, so I'll settle for slow, steady progress.

PERSONAL: I'm the father of a

Richard Meier, 74

Architect, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: A 15-story apartment building with 102 condos on Prospect Park in Brooklyn.

PERSONAL: To lose weight by walking to work from now on.

INDUSTRY: The creation of sustainable urban open public space.

ing what for the coming year



Martha Stewart



Dan Barber

The state and federal governments should take an active role in protecting the open spaces we have now.

Alain de Botton, 39

Author, London

PROFESSIONAL: In June, I'll be publishing a new book, "The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work," an essay on the highs and lows of the workplace, through the eyes of 10 different companies.

PERSONAL: This coming summer I very much hope to take my family on a driving holiday from Seattle to San Francisco.

INDUSTRY: Academics and university professors in the humanities should remember to produce work that can be understood by, and have an effect on, people outside of a narrow elite circle. High culture shouldn't cease to engage with mass culture but, in a fracturing world, should help to foster widespread compassion, wisdom and consolation.

Philippe Starck, 59

Designer, southwest France

PROFESSIONAL: Produce a series of products using a new concept called Democratic Ecology: affordable, easy-to-use, easy-to-find and easy-to-install products that produce energy with wind, sun and hydrogen. They include a miniature roof-top windmill that will produce up to 80% of a home's energy and is made of transparent plastic (so it isn't ugly).

PERSONAL: To continue to be happy that the U.S. has a new president.

INDUSTRY: Design must come back to its assets of using vision,



Philippe Starck

high technology, engineering and politics to help people have the right evolution.

Katy Perry, 24

Singer, Los Angeles

PROFESSIONAL: I would like to sell out every date on "Hello Katy," my first world tour.

PERSONAL: Stop reading my own press.

INDUSTRY: Find a way to allow artists to find a middle ground with the paparazzi, allowing people to have a public life and a private life.



Nico Muhly

aspects of success in a lot of different areas.

INDUSTRY: The community needs to tackle the paparazzi issue and also the issue of leaks of unreleased music.

Shashi Tharoor, 52

Former under-secretary-general of the United Nations, author, Trivandrum, India

PROFESSIONAL: I have been immersing myself more and more into Indian public life. With the terror attacks having brought the country to a crossroads and national elections due in the spring, I will have to decide whether and how far to involve myself in my country's political future.

PERSONAL: To take a real stab at beginning work on a novel—my last was in 2001. Though there have been three nonfiction books since, I haven't been able to find the time or the space inside my



Philippe Petit



Shashi Tharoor



Katy Perry

head to create my own fictional world.

INDUSTRY: We need in 2009 to tackle the task of reinterpreting America to the world: post-Bush, post-9/11, and post the historic election that has galvanized Washington-watchers on every continent.

Mary Boone, 57

Art dealer, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: To continue with Young at Art, the art initiative with Publiccolor that provides financial aid to art programs in public schools and enhances the curriculum.

PERSONAL: To laugh more.

INDUSTRY: To remember, especially in this difficult economy, that art can be restorative. Art gives our eyes and mind a chance to rest, to muse, to think.

Barry Bergdoll, 53

Chief curator of architecture & design at MoMA, New York City

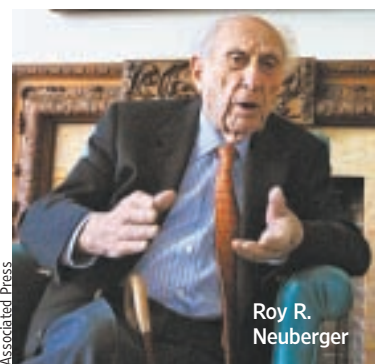
PROFESSIONAL: A very ambitious Bauhaus exhibition I'm working on with a colleague. The challenges: to tackle such a complex topic in the space of galleries and give a new vision on a classic subject. We'd open in November.

PERSONAL: Go to yoga more regularly. Achieve a more healthy balance between mind and body. I go about once a week now.

INDUSTRY: An enormous cohort of architectural talent that's been formed in the last boom is about to be unemployed.... I'm just hoping the silver lining in all of this is that President-elect Obama's call to think about infrastructure means he's able to push through something on a large scale that



Mary Boone



Roy R. Neuberger

could provide immediate opportunities for the talent that's suddenly untapped. It could be transformative for the profession and set themes for the next decades.

Duncan Sheik, 39

Songwriter and composer, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: An adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's "The Nightingale," a collaboration with Steven Sater and James Lapine.

PERSONAL: To create a recording studio/rehearsal space close to New York City, where my coterie of musician friends and collaborators can work on their projects irrespective of financial considerations.

INDUSTRY: The music industry needs to return to a practice of strict quality control and artist development. Particularly, to supporting artists that create unique and progressive work.

Roy R. Neuberger, 105

Art collector and founder of the Neuberger Museum of Art, New York City

PROFESSIONAL: I hope the [museum] encourages the creation of art...and that we recognize creative art.

PERSONAL: Art has survived many generations. Art will persevere.... There are better things than art, but not many!

INDUSTRY: I'm looking forward to the new year. I'm not looking back any more.

WSJ.com

Promises, promises

Read more New Year's resolutions, join a forum and see a video, at

WSJ.com/Lifestyle

They don't all sound familiar

Debut albums are among the year's best in rock and pop

BY JIM FUSILLI

THESE DAYS, so much smart, affecting rock and pop music is coming from so many talented musicians that finding albums to place on a "best of" list for 2008 is a snap. Creating a short list is a bit of a challenge.

Let's start with **"Dig Lazarus Dig!!!"** (Anti) by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. It's the ideal marriage of high-wire rock and literate lyrics with a sharp, snarling point of view. In a bravura performance, Mr. Cave plays a seamy seducer who takes us to a swirling, bewildering landscape. On their 14th album together, he and the band create an ironic masterpiece that delights in knowing it's almost too clever for the room.

Lizz Wright's **"The Orchard"** (Verve) is a deeply satisfying work by a singer equally adept at folk, blues, gospel, jazz and R&B. Craig Street's production, a sympathetic backing band and the companionship of songwriter Toshi Reagon put Ms. Wright in the company of like-minded musicians who find the pocket between technical excellence and inspiration. The album's overarching characteristic is a sense of mature tranquility.

On her self-titled debut, Santogold rejects the concept of category. Power pop, rap, ska, dub, reggae, anger and whimsy flow in **"Santogold"** (Downtown), though not so seamlessly: Each of her songs is a bold statement that stands alone as it announces her arrival. There's no coying up to the listener here; everything lands hard. Santogold is a formidable talent who can do what she wants and knows it.

The SteelDrivers are five accomplished musicians who joined forces in Nashville to form a bluegrass band unlike any other—and not merely because singer Chris Stapleton owes as much to Memphis soul as he does to the high lonesome tradition. Every song on **"The SteelDrivers"** (Rounder) is a gem, which befits a group that sprang from songwriting sessions. The album reminds us how spectacular acoustic country music can be.

With their gypsy guitar, violin, accordion, sousaphone, trumpet and upright bass, DeVotchKa, a multitalented quartet from Denver, mingles Eastern European, Greek, Mexican, Spanish and Roman music while playing expertly with punk-like abandon and a sense of joy. Vocalist Nick Urata delivers their **"A Mad & Faithful Telling"** (Anti) with a bemused theatricality. When they come to your neighborhood, drop everything and go see them. Until then, dance and laugh along with this delightful recording.

Raphael Saadiq has been old school since the mid-1990s, when he led Tony! Toni! Toné! His **"The Way I See It"** (Columbia) pays tribute to Sam Cooke, the Delfonics, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, Smokey Robinson, Stevie Wonder and other great soul artists of the 1970s. A talented musician and producer, Mr. Saadiq creates tracks that are uncanny reproductions of their bygone sound. The idea would wear thin if the songs he wrote weren't close to as great



CAMERA PRESS/James Veysay



ITAR-TASS/Newscom

as the originals they honor.

Deadmau5 is a producer renowned for making electronic dance music, but his **"Random Album Title"** (Ultra) reveals the depth of his vision. It's an 80-minute suite that surprises and delights as it blends trance, disco,



Retna

New Age, Europop and Tangerine Dream-like soundscapes. As if rejecting the notion that his music is only for raves, he lets the tempo sag by adding tender interludes, shifts the mood while keeping up the beat, and alters accent notes on percussion and keyboards so wickedly that you have to stop and listen. Surrender to his wit and surprising musicality and you're transported.

On Portishead's **"Third"** (Mercury), their first studio album in 11 years, the trio expands its palette, adding acoustic instruments to its electronic arsenal and assimilating hip-hop and electro-rock production techniques while keeping Beth Gibbons's evocative voice and unwavering delivery at the center. Dissonance, beauty, intimacy and melodrama coexist; up-tempo rhythms are refuted by dreamy melodies; orchestral sounds and bursts of electronic noise form unified backdrops to disturbing ballads. It's intense and



Getty Images



Corbis

hypnotic modern rock that's boldly experimental yet achingly familiar.

"To Survive" (Cheap Lullaby) is the work of Joan Wasser, who records as Joan As Police Woman, while **"A Thousand Shark's Teeth"** (Asthmatic Kitty) is credited to My Brightest Diamond, the name Shara Worden uses for her projects. "To Survive" is a gentle cycle that reveals Ms. Wasser's pop, soul, blues and country influences, and each song is offered with an affecting earnestness that's charming and heartbreaking. "A Thousand Shark's Teeth" is bold, complex and captivating. The endlessly imaginative and classically trained Ms. Worden lets her voice soar over strings and a deep groove. Each in their own way, the two albums are magical.

Composer and guitarist Shugo Tokumaru balances perfectly pop, Americana and the avant garde on **"Exit"** (Star Time). His music is spry, amusing and dense: melodies knotty, vocal harmonies clean, arrangements wildly inventive with toy piano, melodica and accordion. At its core is a guitar he plays with startling dexterity. Imagine if Brian Wilson worked the guitar like John Fahey and sang in Japanese, and you begin to hear Mr. Tokumaru on this smile-provoking release.

For her album **"An Invitation"** (Everloving), Inara George asked old family friend Van Dyke Parks to write the orchestrations. He did a wonderful job, creating a warm, swirling environment under and around Ms. George's witty tunes that bear the influence of folk, cabaret and Broadway. A young

Clockwise from far left: Nick Cave, Santogold, Inara George, Lizz Wright; below, Nick Urata of DeVotchKa.

singer with tons of personality, she takes an approach to song that matches the charm of her compositions and Mr. Parks's contribution.

On Fleet Foxes' winning self-titled debut, the vocal harmonies are so arresting they can detract from the quality of Robin Pecknold's songs. But the ringing voices on **"Fleet Foxes"** (Sub Pop) are the cherry atop a confection of folk and country-flavored alt-rock with bright guitars, keyboards and unfettered percussion. This one feels like the first of many special works by these newcomers.

Death Cab for Cutie's **"Narrow Stairs"** (Atlantic) is a celebration of their vast talent and sense of adventure. Ben Gibbard's seemingly guileless voice is a fascinating contrast to dark lyrics rich with slice-of-life detail and acute observations. They've tweaked their sound a bit, and their crisp, jagged aggression heightens the impact of the songs.

On **"Pitom"** (Tzadik), guitarist Yoshie Fruchter mixes grunge, jazz, Zappa, noise-rock and a dollop of surf music with Jewish modes and scales to create a loud, raucous album full of noise and virtuosity. The rhythm section can explode with heavy-metal thunder, and when Jeremy Brown enters on viola or violin, you'll hear echoes of the Mahavishnu Orchestra. A dazzling debut.

David Bowie's Oct. 20, 1972, show at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium has long been available as a bootleg, but in 2008 it was released officially as **"David Bowie Live in Santa Monica '72"** (EMI). The album captures an extraordinary performance by Mr. Bowie, deep in his Ziggy Stardust phase, and his band led by the guitarist Mick Ronson (who died in 1993); he couldn't possibly have been better than on this night. It's raw rock Mr. Bowie delivers with characteristic élan. By the time this tour ended, he was a star in the States, and you can hear how he did it—by writing terrific songs and playing them with fire and fury.



Ingeborg and Dr. Wolfgang Henze-Kettner, Wichttrach/Bern



Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

From far left, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's 'Women on the Street,' Titian's 'Danae' and Giorgio Morandi's 'Natura morta.'

A year of dazzling exhibitions

BY KAREN WILKIN

IT MAY BE CHEATING to start a review of 2008 exhibitions with "Late Titian and the Sensuousness of Painting," which opened at the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum in late 2007, but this visually opulent, scholarly study of the Venetian master's "late style" was too dazzling to ignore. Besides, the Accademia, Venice, presented a version of the show through April 2008.

Masterworks, mostly from the last three decades of Titian's life—after the mid-1540s—presented a complex artist at the acme of his powers. Organized into poesie (mythological themes), portraits, and sacred subjects, the show included the public and the private Titian and a good deal in between: paintings commissioned by royalty and self-portraits intended for the artist's family; finished works designed to impress patrons and rougher studies probably retained for studio use. A group of earlier works allowed us to trace the evolution of the superb late works that were the focus of the exhibition, paintings so bold that Titian's contemporaries described them as painted with brushes "as big as brooms."

The gallery devoted to seductive poesie was dominated by the ravishing, chilling "Flaying of Marsyas." In a sense, this startling masterpiece, possibly Titian's last work, summed up the lesson of the show: that for a truly great artist, "late style" implies accomplishment, authority, inventiveness and apparent indifference to conventional values.

"Late Titian" reminded us why he was revered by the giants of Western painting—Rubens, Rembrandt, Poussin, Delacroix, Courbet, Cézanne, and more—a notion we could test from February through May at the Metropolitan Museum's concurrent exhibitions "Poussin and Nature: Arcadian Visions" and "Gustave Courbet" (organized with the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and the Musée Fabre, Montpellier). At the Met, just how much the 17th-century Poussin learned from the 16th-century Titian was demonstrated by the "landscape-poesie" the young painter made soon after his arrival in Rome (where he spent most of his adult life)—pastoral Italianate settings framing mythological figures.

Later, landscape took precedence in carefully constructed visions of an idealized Arcadia, informed by Poussin's studies of the Roman campagna. To read the narratives enacted within these idyllic settings, we explored the paintings' fictive depths, moving past lakes, woods, fields, and hills punctuated by classical buildings, and quickly dis-



Michel Nguyen

Above, Gustave Courbet's 'The Desperate Man'; below, Juan Sánchez Cotán's 'Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon, and Cucumber.'

covered that nature itself had been made a protagonist in the drama.

We traversed zones of changing light and varied terrain that echoed the nominal subject. In "Landscape With Pyramus and Thisbe," for example, a thunderstorm echoes the nymph's despair at finding her lover dead, while sunlit distances imply nature's indifference to human tragedy or suggest hope—or both.

Such provocative subtexts were clearest in pairs of paintings (some reunited after long separation) that contrasted such opposing moods of nature as storm and calm, carefully observed and convincingly depicted. But it was plain that even Poussin's most apparently straightforward investigations of the visual effects of weather were not solely about nature. Instead, they were meditations on larger ideas about the passage of time, morality, mortality, emotion, and more. Transfixed by these complex, compelling landscapes we understood why Poussin was called the "philosopher



Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

painter."

Poussin's elegant, cerebral paintings suggested that he would have insisted on the formal *vous* even after years of acquaintance. The Met's Courbet retrospective made us feel that this bad boy of 19th-century realism might have used the familiar *tu* even before being given permission to do so. We were introduced to him with a series of self-portraits recording the eager young provincial, newly arrived in Paris, as he tested identities, exploring (and admiring) his own appearance in a quest for a public persona worthy of today's most self-absorbed art stars.

The show gave us Courbet whole. Unidealized images of his native Franche-Comté documented how he established himself as a painter of unvarnished truths who claimed he had no teacher but nature. An ample (in every sense) selection of nudes recalled Delacroix's initial revulsion, recorded in his diary, at "a fat woman, back-view, and completely naked except for a carelessly painted rag over the lower part of the buttocks." (He later became an admirer of Courbet.) This beefy nude was countered by the notorious, delicately rendered "Sleep"—an entwined brunette and redhead, painted for a Turkish diplomat with equivocal taste. Period photos of nudes demonstrated how much Courbet and his patron were men of their time.

The strength of the show was arguably its vigorous landscapes—cliffs and ambiguous caverns in which troweled-on paint became an equivalent for rock itself—while hunting scenes reinforced our sense of Courbet as a chest-beating Hemingway type. A group of late works, painted about the time that the aging, ailing painter was imprisoned for his role in the short-lived Commune of 1870, added a poignant note.

Courbet came vividly alive, his forceful, assured personality embodied by his paintings' refusal to be ingratiating; their audacity; and their varied, assertive, almost modern paint-handling—delicate brushmarks, ferocious palette-knife work, suave transitions, abrupt slashes. Courbet famously described himself as "the most arrogant man in France"; the retrospective convinced us that his arrogance was justified.

By contrast, **Giorgio Morandi**, the subject of a much-anticipated retrospective at the Met this fall, was described by colleagues as "humble," a connoisseur of nuance, proportion and modulated surfaces. The Met's exhibition was designed to dispel the conception of Morandi as an isolated painter of bottles, unaware of anything beyond the Bo-

logna street where he lived his entire life. After an introductory section demonstrating his early assimilation of French vanguard ideas, especially Cubism, a selection of his Metaphysical paintings asserted his connections with the most advanced Italian painters of his own generation.

The exhibition included landscapes, flower paintings, and the occasional self-portrait, but still life was obviously Morandi's principal subject. He deployed what he called "my usual things" like repertory actors, directing them in varied dramas, subtly altering the proportions and palette of each canvas with each change in configuration. Yet despite his attachment to specific objects, Morandi's images are abstract, just as they are monumental, no matter how small. "Nothing is more abstract than reality," Morandi said. Nothing, indeed.

Two very different shows, the Museum of Modern Art's "Kirchner and the Berlin Street" and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts' "El Greco to Velázquez: Art During the Reign of Phillip III," were also among the year's standouts.

The MoMA exhibition was a sharply focused examination of a small group of closely related works: Ludwig Kirchner's seven angular, acerbic paintings of Potsdamer Platz streetwalkers and their clients—all executed after his 1912 move from staid Dresden to raucous Berlin—set in an illuminating context of related works on paper, sketches and prints. The Boston show assembled iconic works by the most celebrated Spanish painters of the first two decades of the 17th century—the conversation among the first gallery's stellar group of El Grecos was itself justification for a trip to Boston—but set them among creations of their lesser known colleagues, from specialists in devotional pictures to bodegón painters of meticulously rendered still lifes such as Sánchez Cotán.

Because some of these less-familiar artists were the teachers of the show's more-celebrated figures, we were encouraged to think about the evolution of "Spanishness" in 17th-century painting, but any incipient parochialism was diffused by the presence of the Flemish virtuoso Peter Paul Rubens, included because of his extended stay at Phillip III's court.

Both shows—one deliberately narrow, the other panoramic—made us think freshly about specific periods of time and consider the artists they included in new ways, mainly by presenting us with deeply engaging works of the highest aesthetic quality. That's exactly what we always hope for.

❖ Top Picks

Artists in an L.A. state of mind

Stockholm ■ art

Stockholm's Moderna Museet opened in 1958, and the institution used the occasion of its 50th anniversary to look back critically at the time of its inception, when Paris and New York were the undisputed capitals of the art world. With a series of three remarkable exhibitions, called "Time and Place," the museum has left those cities behind, and instead has sought out the era's hidden art capitals. The first exhibition, staged last winter, was set in the Rio de Janeiro of Oscar Niemeyer, the visionary architect who reinvented modernism in the 1950s. The second exhibition moved to Turin and Milan, where Arte Povera artists, working in the late 1950s and '60s, used threadbare materials to play with modernist tenets of form and content. "Time and Place" now comes to an end with "Los Angeles 1957-1968," which chronicles a substantial, if informal, break with modernism. The work associated with the pioneers of L.A.'s art scene is marked by leisurely transgression and a huge range of influences. It steered American art in a new direction—or rather, in just about every direction—and still manages to look ahead of its time.

The art on view includes early works by major figures like David Hockney, Ed Ruscha and John Baldessari—each born in the 1930s, and still producing new work. Mr. Hockney is represented with a signature acrylic painting from 1966, "Sunbather," which features a nude young man in repose near the edge of a typical suburban swimming pool. If Mr. Hockney remakes the American dream into a homoerotic fantasy, Mr. Ruscha, in his enormous acrylic-like oil painting, "Standard Station, Amarillo, Texas" (1963), takes a humble gas station and turns it into a psychedelic dream.

Starting in mid-February, all three "Time and Place" exhibitions will travel to the Kunsthau Zurich as a single show. —J.S. Marcus



'Standard Station, Amarillo, Texas' (1963), by Ed Ruscha, on show in Stockholm.

Until Jan. 6
☎ 46-8-5195-5200
www.modernamuseet.se
www.kunsthau.ch

Dresden ■ art

The relationship between Europe and China—not just in the past but also today—is the focus of a brilliant exhibition running now in Dresden's Royal Palace and later in the spring in Beijing. "Golden Dragon, White Eagle: Art in Service of Power in the Imperial Court of China and the Saxon-Polish Court (1644-1795)" displays 400 objects of fine, decorative and applied art from the two courts.

The show includes virtually no masterpieces. The paintings on display are hardly famous and only the occasional porcelain vase or piece of jewelry is well-known. Instead, the exhibition is a series of themes built around a central idea:

how the broad concept of art was used to express power in each court. We see how each side viewed the other: Europeans as curiosities to be painted on tobacco snuff bottles (because snuff came via Europe); Chinese as the creators of luxury products.

Comparing Saxony and China might seem unfair given the former kingdom's tiny size and relatively short history. But by the early 18th century Saxony was one of Europe's richest kingdoms, with skilled craftsmen who were the first to reproduce porcelain—long a Chinese secret—in the royal kilns of Meissen. At that time, the two lands also had rulers who made for interesting comparisons: August the Strong of Saxony, a flamboyant, ambitious ruler who turned Dresden into the center of the arts that it is today; and the Chinese emperor Kangxi, long regarded as one of China's great emperors.

If the exhibition lacks something, it is analysis. Although at this period the two sides were roughly equal in arts, technology and the exercise of power, Kangxi represents the beginning of the end for China. While his artisans were able to copy European clocks, for example, they did not explore the scientific principles behind them.

The end of the exhibition only hints at this. The last room has a long scroll depicting barbarians come to pay homage to the Qing—who show no real interest in the outside world except as a superficial reflection of Chinese greatness. The Saxons, meanwhile, were making use of their surveying and cartographic skills to map China, an interest that would culminate just a few decades later with the Westerners' invasion of the country. That marked the beginning of a century of shame and humiliation that China is

just shaking off now.

—Ian Johnson

Until Jan. 11
☎ 49-351-49-14-2000
www.sk-dresden.de

Paris ■ art

The subtitle of the huge Dufy retrospective at the Modern Art Museum of the City of Paris is taken from a remark by Gertrude Stein in 1944: "Raoul Dufy, c'est le plaisir!" Pleasure is the exactly right word for the show, which tracks the artist's career from his early turn-of-the-20th-century attempts to imitate his impressionist predecessors to the arrival of the mysterious "Black Cargo Ship" into his radiant blue seascapes in the years before his death in 1953.

Dufy has often been criticized as lightweight, more decorative than profound. But, as the show makes clear, he swung easily and enthusiastically back and forth between pure painting and the decorative arts, with one medium feeding another.

Superb, dense black and white woodcut illustrations for Guillaume Apollinaire's "Bestiary, or the Cortège of Orpheus" led to fabric designs for couturier Paul Poiret and Lyon silkmaker Bianchini Férier, and the strong hatching derived from the woodcuts later served to structure the flat planes of color in his perspective-free paintings.

When he turned to ceramics, he quickly mastered "all there was to know about glazes," noted his close collaborator, Catalan ceramist Josep Llorens Artigas, and that knowledge brought a new transparency to his oils. "The paintings have spilled over their frames to continue on dresses and walls," he said, and in fact the textiles, the brilliantly colored ceramics and the huge decorative wall panels on show here are alone worth the price of admission.

There is more: fine-line ink drawings and glowing watercolors, and in later years delicate floral still life, as well as the museum's permanent, room-sized treasure, the "Fairy Electricity" murals painted by Dufy for the 1937 Paris World's Fair.

—Judy Fayard

Until Jan. 11
☎ 33-1-53-67-40-00
www.mam.paris.fr

London ■ art

Having taken over the huge premises at Burlington Gardens, the Royal Academy is filling it with "GSK Contemporary," a set of installations it boasts is "cutting-edge visual culture."

When you enter the building (formerly the Museum of Mankind) in the stairwell ahead you see Swiss artist Rémy Markowitsch's "Onion Options," a suspended light sculpture. To your left is a giant abstract "painting" by Berlin painter Maya Roos, who uses computer software to break down and color code the work of an individual (Malcolm McLaren in this case) as taken from the hard disk of his personal computer to create a "portrait" of him.

The multimedia installation "Collision Course" takes over the first floor galleries, with a vast snowscape painting of a post-apocalyptic London, and a show of film and video works curated by Mark Beasley. Upstairs is "Burroughs Live" about the American Beat writer William Burroughs.

A terrific temporary restaurant, "Flash," is open only for the show's run. It's already become one of London's hippest hang-outs, and the smoked mackerel is superb.

—Paul Levy

Until Jan. 19
☎ 44-20-7300-8000
www.royalacademy.org.uk

New strategies for an uncertain art-market climate

THE COLLECTING MARKET may be down, but it's far from out. Gallerists and auction houses say collectors are still buying but are being more selective about price and quality. Still, it's important to make a distinction between

Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

the contemporary art market—which was so recently booming—and more traditional collecting areas.

"In the contemporary sector, the party feeling is gone," says Victor Gisler, director at Zurich gallery Mai 36. "Waiting lists have evaporated. The buyer is now king." Mr. Gisler expects to see a 20% to 30% drop in prices of works sold at auction. Galleries are also discounting, he says; the typical 10% discount a gallery would give its best clients is often now 15% to 20%.

Auction houses are adapting to the new economic climate. Tobias Meyer, Sotheby's world-wide head of contemporary art, says there are still big-money buyers out there, but sellers have to be realistic about meeting their expecta-



From the Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé Collection, 'Les coucous, tapis bleu et rose' (1911), by Matisse; estimate: €12 million-€18 million.

tions with rational estimates. "If the right object comes to market," he says, "there is an enormous amount of cash around to buy that object. But it has to be rare, it has to be great and it has to be fresh."

Other areas of the collecting market did not experience the euphoric growth of the contemporary sector and, so far, have been less affected by the global finan-

cial crisis. "Despite the gloom and doom, there is money out there for beautiful and fine objects and record prices are still being made," says Bonhams communication head Julian Roup.

The numbers bear this out. On Dec. 4, Bonhams set a new record price at auction for a piece of 19th-century furniture when a French cabinet in the shape of a pagoda fetched £2.04 million. At Christie's on Dec. 10, a historic, 17th-century, cushion-shaped, deep grayish-blue diamond brought the highest price ever paid for any jewel at auction when it fetched £16.4 million.

Mr. Roup believes that sectors with specialized followings of collectors—such as classic European ceramics and glass, antique cars, coins and medals, stamps and wine—will stand up the best. James Morton, director at London specialist coin and medal auctioneers Morton & Eden, says of the financial crisis, "We have been here before, in 1974 and 1990, and then coins and medals remained strong." On Dec. 12, his medals' auction did well, achieving a high 89% of the items' estimated value.

Caroline Penman of the U.K.'s Penman Fairs shows no signs of gloom. She closed the traditional Chelsea Antiques Fair in 2005 and

has now decided to reopen it in 2009. "It seems crazy to re-start the fair," she says. "But, in these traumatic times, we all need a little outing to raise the spirits and Chelsea offers just that."

Here, some auction highlights that will be worth watching in early 2009:

On Jan. 20, Bonhams will auction selected contents from London's famed Café Royale, a haunt since the 19th century of royalty, politicians, film stars and the intelligentsia. The sale will include all sorts of memorabilia: brandy caskets, Venetian chandeliers, furniture and the Café's original boxing ring.

February opens with benchmark impressionist and modern art sales in London. At Christie's, a star lot will be Monet's "Dans la Prairie" (1876), a gorgeous painting of the artist's wife, Camille, reading as she reclines among blooming flowers (estimate: in the region of £15 million).

The Feb. 23-25 sale of the Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé Collection at Christie's Paris promises to be one of the major auction events of 2009. The more than 700 works in the collection are expected to fetch €200 million-€300 million.

Aural Report: When Authors Speak for Themselves

The conceit of The British Library's two-volume, six-CD compilation of "The Spoken Word" is that listening to authors' voices, as opposed to reading what they say between the covers of a book, is appealing in its own right. So recorded interviews, speeches and recitations from many decades ago are dug out, dusted off and presented to modern ears. Does this furious archival activity to bring us the sound of writers signify nothing? I wouldn't go that far.

The aural collection is interesting—and even occasionally fascinating, in a desultory way.

Algernon Blackwood, a rather obscure early 20th-century British author of ghost stories, reads a satisfying piece of short fiction that one would likely never hear otherwise. A young Harold Pinter rails, just three years into his career as a playwright, against the now well-established notion that there is a Pinter style, oblique and pause-filled. Here his words come quickly enough.

John Le Carré speaks in an interview of how witnessing the erection of the Berlin Wall by the Soviets drove him to a kind of political nihilism, a worldview that would inform "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy" and the rest of his espionage writing. The interviewer never bothers to ask why nihilism was the appropriate response to the totalitarian regime's act of brutal desperation, but never mind: In a few short minutes Mr. Le Carré reveals his frame of mind in the telling

and personal fashion that marks these sound-clips at their best. (Most are no more than 10 minutes long; some, considerably less.)

Listening to them, one is struck by the fact that the recordings on these CDs are "chosen," more often than not, simply because they were the ones the compilation's editors were able to reproduce. Thus Rudyard Kipling's high, reedy voice delivers, of all things, a speech to a group of visiting Canadian writers.

Yet there is a strange appeal to this newly released set, at least to an avid reader, simply in hearing the actual voices of those whose literary voices one already knows well.

I recently re-read "The Razor's Edge," and W. Somerset

Maugham's authorial voice in that novel is so prominent that the entire story takes on the feel of a long fireside chat with a skilled raconteur. So to hear the man himself speak held a personal fascination. His voice itself is a curious delight. And while some of the writers come off rather worse than one might hope, Maugham evinces the mischievous playfulness that an admirer of his fiction would expect. He quickly outlines the plots of three novels that he had once planned to write—then explains that, at the age of "70 or over," he no longer has plans to write any of them.

"I am content now to keep these three novels as an amusement for my idle reveries," he teases, and one can nearly see him grin as he says it. "That is how an

author gets the most delight out of his books. When once he has written them, they are his no longer and he can no more entertain himself with the conversations and the actions of the people of his fancy."

G.K. Chesterton, too, comes off well. He starts out with precisely the sort of absurd gambit that one would expect from a writer of his impressive wit: "But while I should resist the suggestion that we must eat beef without mustard," he intones, "I do recognize that there is now a more subtle danger: that men may want to eat mustard without beef." What follows is an amusingly disjointed ramble about the "spices of life."

There is always the danger, with writers one admires, that the person in question will disappoint when he steps out from behind the curtain and reveals a bit of himself. The man who interviews William Golding, the author of "Lord of the Flies," makes the mistake of getting into a hermeneutical dispute with Golding concerning his classic tale of boys set loose on a desert island. Having been routed in the discussion, Golding's interlocutor falls back on what he calls "the famous [D.H.] Lawrence caveat": "Never trust the teller, trust the tale." This, Golding says, is "ab-

solute nonsense. The man who tells the tale, if he knows a tale worth telling, will know exactly what he's about." Golding leaves little doubt that this is true in his

goes on to contrast economic planning with what one might call intellectual planning: "On the other hand, the doctrine of laissez-faire is the only one that seems to work

in the world of the spirit. If you plan and control men's minds, you stunt them. You get the censorship, the secret police, the road to serfdom, the community of slaves." His partial redemption comes, if it does, in a passing remark that "there is some deep connection between planning and sneering that psychologists should explore."

Quite. The thing about advocates of central planning is that they usually want to plan *others'* affairs. They imagine themselves perfectly capable of arranging their own, as Forster does.

And what of the affairs of authors? Aldous Huxley worries in "The Spoken Word" about the future of book writing and speculates about whether writing will migrate entirely to the "gramophone" within a few years. *Mutatis mutandis*, some fears are perennial.

Mr. Carney is a member of the Journal's editorial board and the co-author of "Freedom, Inc.," due out later this year from Crown Business.



Somerset Maugham liked to tease his listeners.

Some writers come off as fools; one is a true delight.

The Creative Harpsichordist

By Benjamin Ivry

Gramophone Award-winning harpsichordist Pierre Hantaï transuses the sometimes anemic early music movement with red-blooded excitement. A lean, somber Frenchman born in 1964, Mr. Hantaï has just released a CD from Mirare of François Couperin's *Pièces de Violes*, which conveys a genuine excitement in baroque dances and mythology, instead of the often vacuously pretty approach of other performers. Although expressivity is almost never inherited across artistic domains, a case can be made linking Pierre Hantaï's achievement with that of his father, the still under-celebrated Hungarian-born French painter Simon Hantaï (1922-2008).

Pierre Hantaï's thrilling Mirare CDs of Bach's "Goldberg Variations," saucy Scarlatti sonatas and graceful pavanés by British composer John Bull establish him as one of today's most exciting and individual harpsichordists, as creative in his own realm as his father was in art. This is one of the exceedingly rare cases in cultural history of a great painter fathering a great musician.

Simon Hantaï's origins were deceptively modest. He was born in Bia, a small village on the outskirts of Budapest, to a family of Roman Catholic Swabian origin. At age 8, Simon Hantaï was temporarily blinded by a bout of diphtheria, an

experience that in 1960 would influence his innovative "folding method," in which he clumped together pieces of unstretched canvas and then applied paint. Simon explained the technique as "putting oneself in the position of someone who has not yet seen anything," and despite its tricky-sounding randomness, it resulted in works of exultant energy. Simon's folded works rely on blank, pristine areas to punctuate colors, much as a musician depends on silence to make effects in phrasing.

His youngest son, Pierre, born in Paris, at first wanted to become a painter like his father. Only at age 12, after Pierre heard a recording of Bach's "English Suites" played by the Dutch harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt, did he decide to become a musician with visual acuity and a willingness to approach music and art in a unified way.

In his notes for a CD of Scarlatti sonatas for Mirare, Pierre writes: "Scarlatti alternates visions, landscapes, over and over again within the same work . . . then moves on to another scene—another color—without any form of transition." He describes Scarlat-

ti's use of repetition as "redolent of Debussy, intended rather to render a color with sufficient substance. From there to regarding Scarlatti as the first of the Impressionists is but a short step . . . which I am quite ready to take!"

Another quality shared by Hantaï père and fils is complete open-mindedness in terms of sources of inspiration. Simon, initially fascinated by the Surrealism of artists like Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst, also found compelling precedent in Abstract Expressionists like Jackson Pollock. Obsessed by the late work of Cézanne and Matisse as colorists, Simon Hantaï created an entirely individual oeuvre that inhabits a con-

tiguous emotional world to these mighty names. To reconcile such apparently contradictory sources, Simon in 1958 created a highly original canvas, now in Paris's Pompidou Center, titled "Ecriture rose" (Pink Writing). Onto the 10-foot-8 by 13-foot-9 work, the artist scrawled in pen and ink a year's worth of reading in theology, philosophy, aesthetics and poetry. Pierre Hantaï, when asked to cite his musical inspirations, will describe a Mulligatwny stew of influ-

ences, ranging from the monumental Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter to Mie Miki, a Japanese musician who plays works by Bach and Grieg on the accordion. From these disparate predecessors, Pierre also derived a uniquely emotional playing style.

Like the violence inherent in Simon's folding method, wild artistic emotion and expressivity occur when Pierre plays a trill, the musical ornament that is usually decorative, elegant and dance-like. No other current harpsichordist holds the secret to such expressive trills, which derive not so much from his relaxed hands and supreme keyboard technique as the inner spirit of the musician, something at least partly inherited.

In 1982, Simon Hantaï withdrew from the art world, ceasing to exhibit his new work. He was disgusted with the growing commercialism of the booming art market, as well as with France's peculiar way of offering state commissions to artists as a form of political favoritism. Hantaï soon became notorious for what Art in America called his "streak of ethical obstinacy virtually unparalleled in contemporary art."

Pierre Hantaï's career has been marked by his own brand of ethical obstinacy, including his intense critical concern for a concert venue's acoustics or the quality of instruments on which he performs. By performing with colleagues

with whom he is familiar, especially his brothers Marc, a flutist, and Jérôme, a gamba player, who make up the Trio Hantaï, Pierre assures further artistic control of performances. Lately he has even embraced conducting, a time-honored way for solo instrumentalists to shift into the driver's seat. Part of the lasting pleasure of his Mirare recordings is the painstaking care with which every aspect of the CD, from engineering to graphics, is produced. The tired old expression "like father, like son" describes, in the case of Simon and Pierre Hantaï, a rare legacy of admirably original artistic achievement.

Mr. Ivry is an author and arts writer living in New York.

Pepper . . . and Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



time off

Amsterdam

art

"Romeyn de Hooghe: The Imagination of the Late Golden Age" shows prints, book illustrations, medals and door panels by the Dutch Baroque engraver, painter, sculptor and caricaturist Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708).

Allard Pierson Museum
Until March 8
☎ 31-20-5252-556
www.uba.uva.nl/apm

photography

"Bert Nienhuis, a Retrospective" exhibits portraits and documentary images by Dutch photographer Bert Nienhuis (born 1944).

Joods Historisch Museum
Until May 5
☎ 31-20-5310-310
www.jhm.nl

Athens

theater

"Dimitris Horn" shows personal items, photographs, costumes and audio-visual material capturing the life and work of Greek actor Dimitris Horn (1921-1998).

Museum of Cycladic Art
Until Feb. 1
☎ 30-1-7228-3213
www.cycladic-m.gr

Barcelona

art

"Julio González: Retrospective" presents more than 200 works, including iron sculptures, forged bronzes, paintings, drawings and decorative art objects by Spanish artist Julio González Pellicer (1876-1942).

Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya
Until Jan. 25
☎ 34-93-6220-376
www.mnac.es

Berlin

art

"Anish Kapoor: Memory" is a site-specific installation by Indian sculptor Anish Kapoor (born 1945) consisting of a 24-ton Cor-Ten steel tank positioned tightly within the gallery space.

Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin
Until Jan. 25
☎ 49-30-2020-930
www.deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de

Budapest

art

"In the Wake of Jesus: El Greco's Saint John" exhibits works by the Cretan-born Renaissance painter known as El Greco (1541-1614) alongside Spanish and Italian masters who inspired his art.

Museum of Fine Arts
Until Feb. 5
☎ Tel: 36-1469-7100
www.mfab.hu

Cologne

art

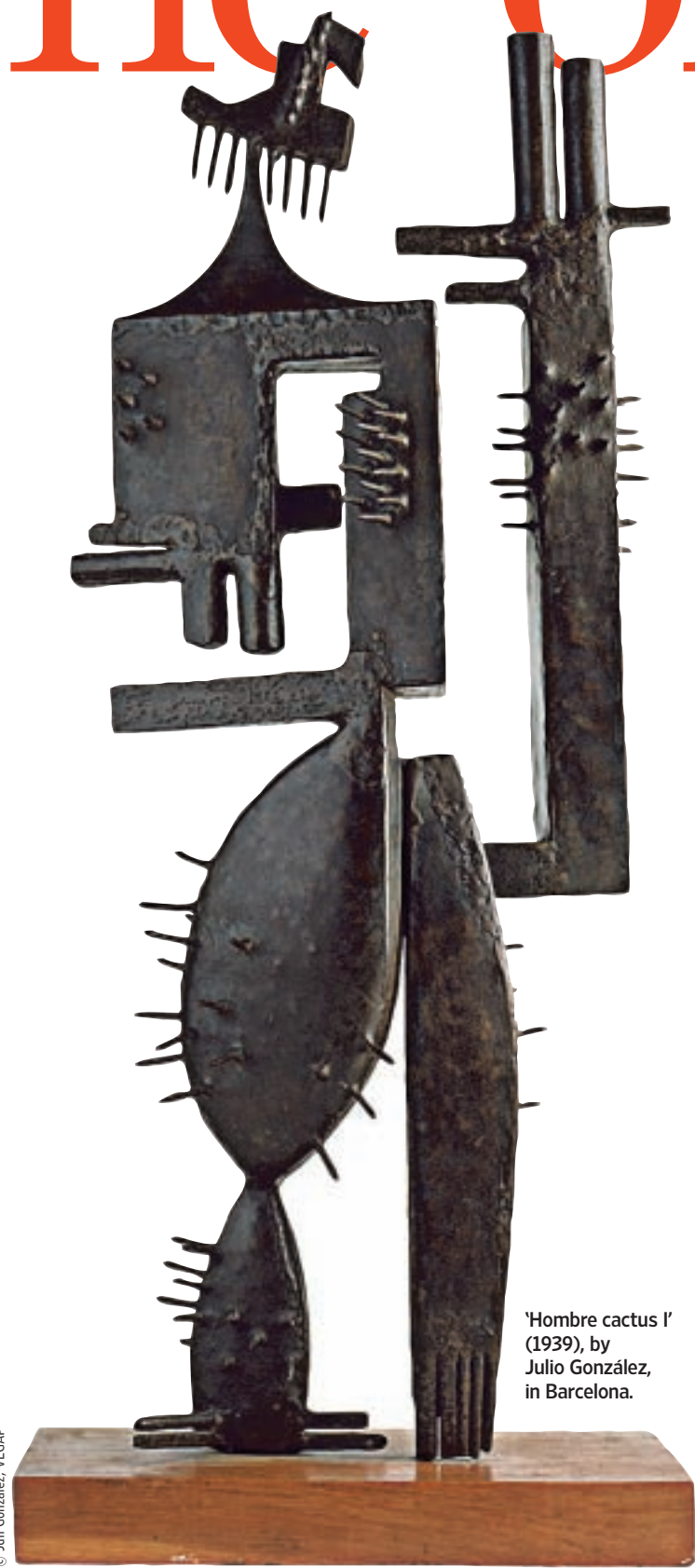
"Gerhard Richter" presents 40 paintings by the German artist (born 1932), with a focus on abstract paintings produced between 1986 and 2006, such as "Courbet" (1986), "Blau" (1988) and the "Bach" series (1992).

Museum Ludwig
Until Feb. 1
☎ 49-221-2212-6165
www.museenkoeln.de

Düsseldorf

art

"Otto Dix—Time of Insanity: Prints



'Hombre cactus I' (1939), by Julio González, in Barcelona.

© Julio González, VEGAP

from the 1920s" juxtaposes 50 etchings of a World War I series entitled "Der Krieg (War)" by German artist Otto Dix (1891-1960) with works of his from the early 1920s.

Museum Kunst Palast
Until Jan. 25
☎ 49-211-8992-460
www.museum-kunst-palast.de

Geneva

art

"Russian Painters and Travelers in the



'Summer Night. Inger at the Beach' (1889), by Edvard Munch, in Oslo.

19th Century" exhibits 30 works by Russian artists illustrating travel.

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire
Until Feb. 15
☎ 41-22-4182-600
mah.ville-ge.ch

Liverpool

art

"The Fifth Floor: Ideas Taking Space" includes works by contemporary artists Dan Perjovschi, Nina Edge, Rineke Dijkstra, Tino Sehgal and Paul Rooney.

Tate Gallery Liverpool
Until Feb. 1
☎ 44-1517-0274-00
www.tate.org.uk

London

design

"Choosing the Chintz: Men, women and furnishing the home, from 1850 to the present" explores the development of home furnishing preferences.

Geffrye Museum
Until Feb. 22
☎ 44-20-7739-9893
www.geffrye-museum.org.uk



'Naad Swaram ... Ganeshayem' (2004), by M.F. Husain, in London.

Courtesy Yogesh Mehta © M.F. Husain

art

"Indian Highway" presents a selection of contemporary Indian artists, including Sheela Gowda, Subodh Gupta, Bharti Kher and Tejal Shah, working across a wide range of media. New paintings were created especially for the show by M. F. Husain (born 1915).

Serpentine Gallery
Until Feb. 22
☎ 44-20-7402-6075
www.serpentinegallery.org

theater

"Twelfth Night": The romantic comedy by William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is directed by Michael Grandage, starring Derek Jacobi as Malvolio.

Wyndham's Theatre
Until March 7
☎ 44-870-0606-624
www.donmarwarehouse.com

Madrid

cinema

"Star Wars: The Exhibition" shows 250 original pieces that were used in the six Star Wars films by George Lucas, including space ships, vehicles, costumes, sets, designs and models.

Arte Canal Exhibition Centre
Until March 15
☎ 34-91-5451-500
www.fundacioncanal.com

Munich

art

"Mike Kelley" exhibits 40 works by the American artist (born 1954) ranging from early 1970s paintings to elaborate video projections complemented by a series of drawings, an audio installation, numerous videos and the sculptures from his Kandor series of 2007.

Goetz Collection
Until April 25
☎ 49-89-9593-9690
www.sammlung-goetz.de

Oslo

art

"Munch Becoming 'Munch'" shows more than 200 paintings by Norwegian expressionist artist Edvard Munch (1863-1944), displaying early works from the 1880s until his recognition as an established artist in the 1890s.

The Munch Museum
Until Jan. 11
☎ 47-2349-3500
www.munch.museum.no

Paris

photography

"McDermott & McGough—An Experience of Amusing Chemistry: Photographs 1990-1890" presents 120 photographic works by American-born artists McDermott & McGough, covering two decades of their work.

Maison Européenne de la Photographie
Until Jan. 25
☎ 33-1-4478-7500
www.mep-fr.org

fashion

"Under the Influence of Crinolines, 1852-1870" examines fashion tastes during the French second empire (1852-1870).

Musée Galliera
Until April 26
☎ 33-1-5652-8600
www.galliera.paris.fr

Rome

art

"The Roman School: Artists in Rome between the two World Wars" includes art by Gino Bonichi (1904-1933), Renato Guttuso (1911-1987), Cipriano Efisio Oppo (1891-1962) and others.

Musei di Villa Torlonia
Until Feb. 15
☎ 39-0606-08
www.museivillatorlonia.it

Stuttgart

art

"Max Beckmann: Apocalypse" exhibits a series of lithographs depicting the Revelation of Saint John the Divine entitled "Apocalypse," by German artist Max Beckmann (1884-1950).

Staatsgalerie Stuttgart
Until March 8
☎ 49-711-4704-00
www.staatsgalerie.de

Vienna

art

"On Gold Ground: Italian Painting between Gothic and the Dawn of the Renaissance" shows about 50 works of early Italian gold-ground painting, created between 1325 and 1520.

Liechtenstein Museum
Until April 14
☎ 43-1319-5767-251
www.liechtensteinmuseum.at

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.