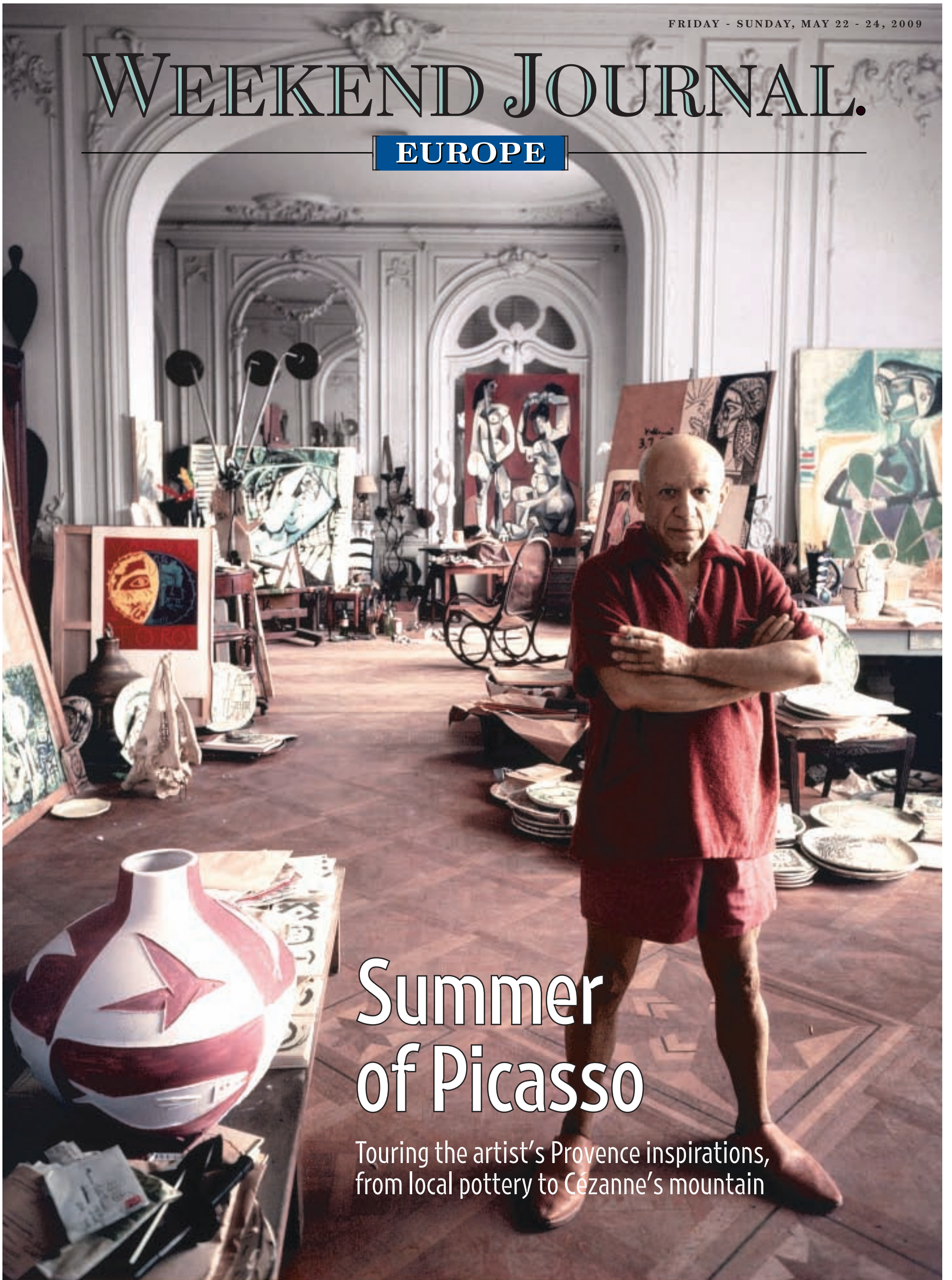


WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE



Summer of Picasso

Touring the artist's Provence inspirations, from local pottery to Cézanne's mountain

Putting tips from a golf master | Zen and the art of the tasting menu

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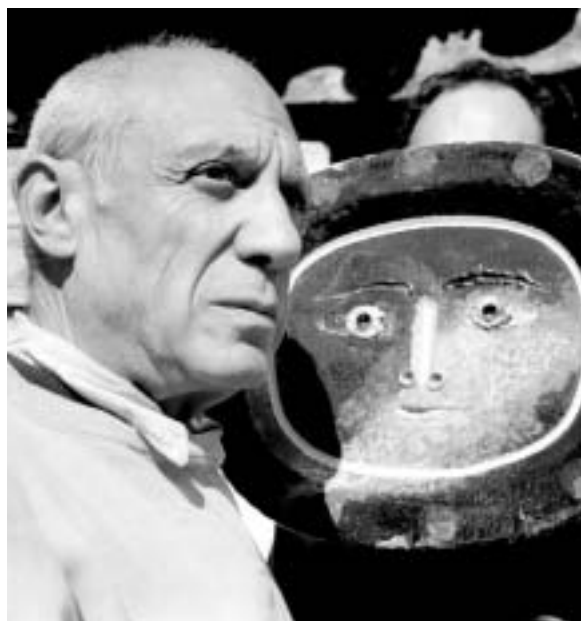
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Touring the artist's Provence inspirations, from local pottery to Cézanne's mountain



On cover, Pablo Picasso in Cannes in 1956. (Photo: Getty Images)

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A smoky aroma

Spring wine tasting events that feature barbecuing in the great outdoors.
WSJ.com/Lifestyle

Too much Gore?

A new television show finds comedy in the pitfalls of a sustainable lifestyle.
WSJ.com/Lifestyle

An artist collects

Chinese contemporary star Ai Weiwei on his life-long hunt for ancient artifacts.
WSJ.com/Asia

WEEKEND JOURNAL

EUROPE

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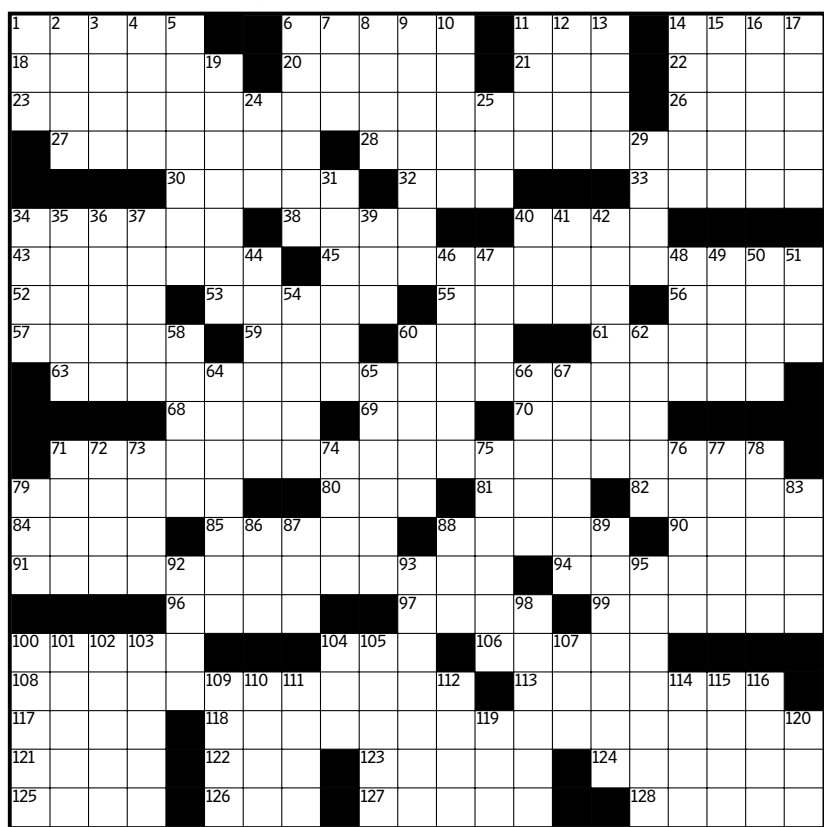
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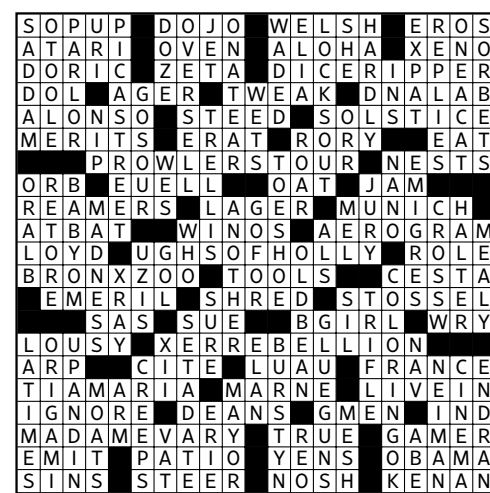
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Last Week's Solution



Contemporary stars at Munich's new museum

BY MARIANA SCHROEDER
Special to *The Wall Street Journal*

MUNICH'S NEW Museum Brandhorst, which opened this week in a striking new building designed by Berlin architects Sauerbruch Hutton—and backed with a €120 million grant to fund future acquisitions—aims to vault this Bavarian city into the contemporary art big leagues.

The museum is the new home of more than 700 works of 20th- and 21st-century art collected by Udo and Anette Brandhorst, who started acquiring art in the 1970s. Ms. Brandhorst, who died in 1999, was an heiress to the Henkel consumer-products fortune; Mr. Brandhorst sits on the board of the Zurich-based Agrippina Insurance Group. The heart of their collection is an extraordinary group of works by American artist Cy Twombly, who like his contemporaries Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, distanced himself from Abstract Expressionism and succeeded in ushering in a new era of American art. The Brandhorst's permanent collection includes the most important Twombly works outside the U.S., including his Lepanto Cycle, now housed in the museum in a gallery constructed especially for it.

Mr. Twombly painted the 12 gigantic canvases of the Lepanto Cycle for the 2001 Venice Biennale. The series evokes the historic battle in which the troops of Venice and the Holy See destroyed the Turkish Fleet at Lepanto in 1571, changing the balance of power in Europe. The new museum also shows Mr. Twombly's most recent works, "Untitled (Roses)," on show for the first time. The artist completed the series of six vibrantly colored works last year.

The collection also includes important works by Andy Warhol. "Brandhorst concentrated on two very prominent artists: Cy Twombly and Andy Warhol. They cover more than half of the collection," says Carla Schulz Hoffman, the acting general director of the Pinakothek and the Museum Brandhorst.

Among the Warhols are his portraits of Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. There are self-portraits of the artist and late works like his Last Supper and the famous Camouflage Series along with two Oxidation Paintings.

The Brandhorsts collected art methodically, acquiring large numbers of works representing the working lives of the artists they loved. British artist Damien Hirst, whose sculptures and installations are preoccupied with medicine, death and anatomy, was among them. In the 2007 installation "In This Terrible Moment We Are Victims Clinging Helplessly to Our Environment that Refuses to Acknowledge the Soul," Mr. Hirst created 27,000 life-like pills and set

them in an eight-meter-long mirrored cabinet. It took six curators a full week to place the numbered tablets of bronze, resin and plaster, in their proper place in the installation.

"Kandor" (2007), by American artist Mike Kelly, is a mixed-media installation and one of nine Kelly works in the Brandhorst collection. Mr. Kelly was influenced by the Superman comics of his childhood and produced a series of works named after the fictional capital city of the planet Krypton. Hoses feeding an unnamed gas into oversized test tubes fill the room with their orange and purple glow. Inside, a crystalline city emerges and an eerie sound fills the gallery.

The museum's opening puts a

new focus on contemporary art in a city formerly better known for kitsch and bonhomie than for high art. After World War II, only six contemporary art works had survived the Nazi purges of Munich's museums. Now with the Pinakothek der Moderne and the Brandhorst, the city has two highly visible palaces devoted to 20th- and 21st-century art.

The collection came to Munich under the condition the Bavarian government build a separate museum to house it. The building, which cost €48 million, features a stunning façade covered with 36,000 ceramic rods attached vertically and glazed in 23 different colors. In addition to their decorative function, the rods are designed to absorb street sound.



Munich's new Museum Brandhorst features important works by Andy Warhol and Cy Twombly; bottom, a painting from Mr. Twombly's 2001 Lepanto Cycle.



She's a fan.



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From left: Pierfrancesco Favino, Ayelet Zurer, Tom Hanks and David Pasquesi in 'Angels & Demons.'

Plot's knots bedevil 'Angels'

ANGELS & DEMONS," which draws a sharp historical distinction between the Illuminati (bad) and the Catholic church's Preferiti (good), may leave you feeling like a member of the Stupefiti—utterly benumbed by info overload, yet willing to sit there and watch the action unfold. And unfold. And unfold.

Before and after everything else—the pentagram's meaning, the lofty pyramid's significance, the mysterious watermark in English, the ar-

Film

JOE MORGENSTERN

cane hints from Galileo and Bernini—Ron Howard's movie version of the Dan Brown novel is an action thriller, although the action far outweighs the thrills. Symbolism may be a special stroke for certain folks, but anyone can understand a threat to blow up the Vatican with a pulsating blob of antimatter. It doesn't even matter that it's anti; just think terrorist plus nuclear device and you've mastered all the arcana that counts.

Though the movie, unlike the book, is set after the events of "The Da Vinci Code," rest assured that Tom Hanks's Robert Langdon isn't being followed around once again by Audrey Tautou, who seemed painfully at a loss for things to do. This time Langdon is followed around the Vatican and Rome by an Israeli actress, Ayelet Zurer, who plays the Italian scientist Vittoria Vetra; she's seldom at a loss, though the production gains little more from her presence than physicist pulchritude. (A real physicist told me that some of her colleagues had been hoping the movie, which depicts superheated events at CERN's Large Hadron Collider near Geneva, would enhance public understanding of their work. Lots of luck.)

"Angels & Demons" was adapted by David Koepp and Akiva Goldsman. In its form, as well as some of its substance, the film bears an eerie resemblance to "Seven," the David Fincher thriller with Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman, chasing from the ghastly remains of one torture victim to another. By objective measure, this one adds up to four-sevenths of that one, given that four

prominent members of the college of cardinals have disappeared during a conclave to elect a new pope. To find them, and, not incidentally, to do something about all that nasty antimatter, Langdon must find the ancient lair of the Illuminati by following a trail that is maddeningly elusive and abundantly photogenic.

Among the movie's many revelations is the fact—I'm taking the factuality on faith—that the Vatican library's most treasured manuscripts are stored in sealed chambers under a partial vacuum. At certain points during the screening I attended, when the action was interrupted by major eruptions of information, a sealed chamber under partial vacuum might have described the screening room. With a running time of 138 minutes, "Angels & Demons" is a serious slog. Still, it's an odd kind of a slog that manages to keep you partially engaged, even at its most esoteric or absurd, despite an endlessly excitable choir and Hans Zimmer's pitiless score. Tom Hanks is a companionable presence, as always, and he gets to run and jump much more often than he did in "The Da Vinci Code." Stellan Skarsgård is the Swiss Guard's stern big cheese, Ewan McGregor is the quick-witted Camerlengo and Armin Mueller-Stahl's gimlet-eyed cardinal exudes villainy with every whispered syllable.

'Management'

"Management," a debut feature by Stephen Belber, is a sentimental—

and modestly enjoyable—fantasy of mutual need. Jennifer Aniston is Sue, an ostensibly sophisticated woman who stops at a motel in Kingman, Ariz.; she's a sales rep for a company that sells bad art to businesses around the country. Steve Zahn is Mike, a sort of harmless God's fool who works as the night manager of the motel—it's owned by his aging parents—and falls in love with Sue from the moment she walks in the door. In the real world, or somewhere like it, Mike's subsequent sexual overtures would put his guest in mind of Norman Bates and send her hurtling out the door. In the world of this little film, she's sufficiently charmed that she welcomes him—warily—into her life, and continues to do so even after he becomes a bicoastal stalker.

As a specialist in space cadets, Mr. Zahn could have played this role with his eyes shut, but he keeps them wide open and fixed on Sue. With her sharp tongue and ironic style, Ms. Aniston could have riffed on her character's worldliness, but the script makes Sue a loner, much like the inexplicably isolated women often played by Sandra Bullock, so the actress must throttle back. "Management"—that's how Mike refers to himself when he knocks on Sue's door—is one of those slender fables that have nowhere to go after the first half-hour or so but keep going anyway, in this case into such picaresque absurdities as Mike's employment in a Chinese restaurant, his skydiving lessons and his brief fling at being a Buddhist monk.

Woody Harrelson has a small, sour role as Jango, an ex-rocker turned organic-yogurt magnate. James Liao has more fun than you'd expect in the eventually preposterous role of Al, the too-hip son of the Chinese restaurant's owners. Fred Ward is Mike's father, a withdrawn Vietnam vet, and Margo Martindale—she played the poignantly gauche American tourist in "Paris, je t'aime"—is Mike's mother, who says of Sue at one point, "She's logical, in an emotionally annihilating way." The line is too elaborate for the character, but then the plot is too sprawling for the structure.

That's often the way with debut films: so many notions, so little time.

'Night' and day

How the venerable Smithsonian worked with Hollywood on an anarchic kids' movie 'Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian'



When the makers of "Night at the Museum," a 2006 family adventure film, approached the American Museum of Natural History in New York about working with them, museum officials were ambivalent, partly because some pieces in the movie weren't in the actual museum. In the final film, in which artifacts come alive after dark, the museum went by a slightly different name. "Night" grossed more than half a billion dollars in theaters world-wide—and drove a spike in attendance at the AMNH and other museums. The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., didn't hesitate when producers came calling for a sequel and gave them access to key facilities and holdings for "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian," released this week. The production paid the Smithsonian \$550,000 for title placement, according to someone familiar with the agreement. The deal also gave the institution standard location fees and a cut of merchandise sales.

—John Jurgensen



Lincoln Comes Alive

The National Mall, which is a hub for the Smithsonian's museums, was a backdrop for computergenerated effects. One of them, a walking, talking Abraham Lincoln statue, is a comedic device, but director Shawn Levy experienced something more solemn during filming. Mr. Levy, a Canadian who became a U.S. citizen in the same year he shot the film, says, "One of the enduring memories of this whole experience was being in the Lincoln Memorial at 4 a.m. after we finished filming, completely alone in the silence of the monument and feeling something palpable."

Earhart's Flight

A daytime scene with Ben Stiller in the National Air and Space Museum was filmed at the facility, but action scenes were executed on a Vancouver sound stage. Famous pieces in the film include a 1903 Wright Flyer and the red Lockheed Vega flown by Amelia Earhart (played by Amy Adams).

Margaret Weitekamp, a curator in the division of space history who visited the set, was impressed by its verisimilitude, down to the real placards describing fake exhibits. But she didn't save any items for the museum. "The props were done in fiberglass and wood," Ms. Weitekamp says, "and the museum, of course, has the originals."



Photos: Twentieth Century Fox

The Dream Exhibit

As the characters played by Mr. Stiller and Ms. Adams move through galleries, they interact with artworks that become animated. Several pieces, such as "American Gothic" and the kiss depicted in the photograph "V-J Day, Times Square," were written into the script's earliest drafts. But in pre-production, Mr. Shawn Levy added dozens of others "based on my own tastes and a smattering of art history," including tutorials from art buff (and comedian) Steve Martin, whom Mr. Levy worked with on recent "Pink Panther" movies. Many of the featured works, such as Rodin's "The Thinker," are not actually in the Smithsonian. Instead, Mr. Levy made selections, including a candy-red balloon dog by sculptor Jeff Koons, based on their dynamic potential and inclusion in "the dream exhibit in my head."

❖ Books

A (strange) tale of two cities

In his new novel, China Miéville aims to connect fantasy to the real world

BY CHRISTOPHER JOHN FARLEY

CHINA MIÉVILLE LIKES when people call his work weird.

The 36-year-old British writer is the author of the new novel "The City & The City," a murder mystery set in two cities, Ul Qoma and Beszel, one rich and one poor, where residents have been trained to "unsee" each other in order to coexist.

Mr. Miéville specializes in what he bills as "weird fiction"—fantastic tales that draw on horror, science fiction and fantasy, but that don't fit comfortably into any of those genres. Mr. Miéville's 2007 novel for younger readers, "Un Lun Dun," set in an alternate version of London, was a New York Times best seller. "The City & The City," aimed at adults, has a first printing of 35,000 copies.

The term "weird fiction" has its roots in the work of authors such as H.P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith, who wrote for the pulp magazine *Weird Tales* in the 1920s and 1930s. The publication was known for featuring short stories about aliens, warriors and monsters and other fantastic tales. Today, the lines between fantasy, sci-fi and other kinds of fiction are more established. Mr. Miéville says he was drawn to the genre "because it tends to blur the boundaries."

Born in Norwich, England, Mr. Miéville (his first name is pronounced like the country, his last name mee-AY-ville) moved to London as a child after his parents separated. His father owned a "hippy bookshop" and he was raised by his mother, who taught French and Italian in secondary school. He grew up reading science fiction and fantasy books by authors such as Joan Aiken, Norton Juster and Lewis Carroll.

He went on to earn a B.A. from Cambridge in social anthropology, and a Ph.D. in international relations from the London School of Economics. He sold his first book, "King Rat," as he was working on his Ph.D. (His thesis was later published under the title "Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law.")

"The City" may be "weird fiction," but it is rooted in the real world. The story takes the form of a police procedural as the protagonist, Inspector Tyador Borlú of the Extreme Crime Squad, tries to crack the murder case. There are no elves or UFOs.

Instead, the story focuses on the lengths to which people will go to enforce borders and maintain separate cultural identities. Evoking such writers as Franz Kafka and Mikhail Bulgakov, Mr. Miéville asks readers to make conceptual leaps and not to simply take flights of fancy.

"You might call it an existential crime novel, but I worry that the word 'existential' makes it sound too weird or brainy. It's not," said Chris Schluep, Mr. Miéville's editor at Ballantine Books, in an email.

Mr. Miéville says he knows many readers are "put off" by sci-fi and fantasy. The author himself is not a J.R.R. Tolkien fan (he's criticized Tolkien's "Wagnerian pomposity") and finished only two Harry Potter books before he put the series aside ("I didn't massively enjoy them," he says).

But he feels that fantastic tales are a natural part of storytelling. When skeptics ask him, "How did you get into sci-fi and fantasy?" he has a response. "My answer is: How did you get out of it?" says Mr. Miéville. "Because if you look at a roomful of kids, huge numbers of them will love aliens and monsters and witches...and at a certain point, some of them will start to leave that behind and go on to what they think of—wrongly—as more serious stuff."



Kate Estabrook



True 'Blue': a life of Jean Rhys

BY COLIN CHANNER

BORN ON THE Caribbean island of Dominica in 1890, Jean Rhys, the daughter of a Creole-Scotch mother and a Welsh physician, sailed to England in 1907 to be educated at a posh boarding school.

Of course her story wouldn't be as interesting if things had worked out as her family had planned. She soon abandoned the school. On her way to becoming a writer in Paris (where she fell into the literary circle around the writer Ford Madox Ford), she took on various roles and jobs, including stints as a chorus girl and a prostitute. She went on to author the 1966 novel "Wide Sargasso Sea," a book many critics consider a classic of post-colonial literature.

British writer Lilian Pizzichini, the author of the new biography "The Blue Hour: A Life of Jean Rhys," was 12 years old when she first became enchanted with her subject.

In one passage in the book, Ms. Pizzichini writes of Ms. Rhys's childhood in Dominica: "She did not fit in: she was pale where the others were swarthy, she was timid where the others were confident. Nor was she like the black girls who lived on Genever, her family's estate....She would never be accepted as one of them. To make matters worse, her mother was fond of remarking that black babies were prettier than white babies."

Ms. Rhys died in 1979 at the age of 88. Her novel "Wide Sargasso Sea" spawned a big screen movie in 1993,



New Line Cinema/Everett Collection

Karina Lombard (left) and Claudia Robinson in the 1993 film adaptation of Jean Rhys's 'Wide Sargasso Sea.'

and a TV version in 2006. Ms. Pizzichini says that while Ms. Rhys's life was turbulent and contradictory, it was also culturally rich, and always interesting. "She was a devoted reader of Freud, but at the same time she would go on her own into the seediest bar in Montmartre," says Ms. Pizzichini. "People like Ford Madox Ford played at being denizens of the demimonde. Jean was authentic."



Bonhams

First editions of 'The Maltese Falcon' (estimate: \$4,000-\$6,000) and 'The Thin Man' (estimate: \$800-\$1,200).

Watching the detective books

LEGENDARY SLEUTHS—Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, Agatha Christie's Belgian genius Hercule Poirot or P. D. James's Scotland Yard detective-poet Adam Dalgliesh—will provide investigative mystery at London's coming Antiquarian Book Fair. Many of the 160 or so international book dealers gathered at the Olympia exhibition center from June 4-6 will offer crime and spy fiction, one of the most popular areas of the modern first-edition market.

Increasingly, crime fiction by major 20th-

Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

century authors is accepted as significant literature in its pithy prose and its reflection of reality, much as in the 19th-century classics of Charles Dickens. The fair also has 19th-century crime literature; London booksellers Jarndyce will bring the "Moonstone" (1868) by Wilkie Collins, an early edition priced at £1,200.

There will be a large range of prices at the fair—even between different examples of the same book by the same author. Lucius Books will have two first-edition copies of Ian Fleming's first James Bond novel "Casino Royale" (1953), one described as a "very good copy" priced at £12,500 and another as a "better than very good copy" at £17,500. Nigel Williams will have a first edition without a dust cover of Christie's "Death on the Nile" (1937) priced at £1,250. With dust jacket, says Mr. Williams, the book would cost around £8,000. Other factors include an author's inscription or signature.

A highlight at Royal Books of Baltimore will be an inscribed copy of hardboiled American writer Jim Thompson's "Heed the Thunder" (1946), priced at \$35,000. An inscribed work by Thompson is exceedingly rare as he shunned publicity and spent much of his life virtually cut off from other people. Also at Royal Books will be a first edition of James M. Cain's "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1934), priced at \$9,500. A first-edition copy of Rex Stout's "Too Many Cooks" (1938), with his New York orchid-loving detective Nero Wolfe, will be priced at \$5,500.

At Nigel Williams, eight letters of correspondence between American crime literature icon Raymond Chandler and his young dress designer friend Sara Perceval from 1957-58 will be priced at £6,600. In one letter, Chandler advises her on designing night-dresses: "I suggest the best improvement would be to make them shorter and shorter."

A letter from Chandler to his agent H.N. Swanson in 1952 thanking him for a Christmas gift—to be offered at auction house Bonhams's literature sale in New York on June 10—also shows the same dry wit: "Many thanks to you for the tie with the Sherlock Holmeses and the bloody footprints on it," however, "a fellow who has worked his way up to a wristwatch, with or without luck, and then has slipped back to a tie is made to realize that he is just about washed up" (estimate: \$1,000-\$1,500).

Bonhams's New York sale includes a first-edition copy of a holy grail of American crime fiction, "The Maltese Falcon" (1930) by Dashiell Hammett (estimate: \$4,000-\$6,000); and Hammett's "The Thin Man" (1934), estimated at \$800-\$1,200.

Putting tips from the master

THE RULES SAY you have to putt the ball with a stick. I'd roll it with my hand if I could." That's the short-and-sweet of Jackie Burke Jr.'s putting philosophy, and it explains the promise he made on the phone when I asked if I could drop by Champions Golf Club here last Monday for a putting lesson. "If it takes me longer than five minutes to show you how to putt, I'd better quit," he said.

Golf Journal

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

In the view of Mr. Burke, whose 16 victories on the PGA Tour include a Masters and a PGA Championship, people's putting problems stem from thinking too much about it. "If you can roll the ball across the green with your hand, you can roll it with a putter. It's the same deal," he said.

Mr. Burke seldom talks about putting the ball, he talks about "rolling" it. He does it mostly with his right hand, the same way he demonstrates standing sideways to the target and swinging the right arm with his hand low to the ground, releasing the ball from the fingers with a follow through that rotates the hand closed, or to the left. The only difference when holding a putter is that the right hand is a couple of feet above the ground, on the shaft. But the palm of the right hand and the putter head work so closely together, and in parallel, that they seem to Mr. Burke like a single unit.

"If I know where the face of my hand is, I know where the face of the putter is, so I don't even have to think about the putter," he said. "I just imagine putting a good roll on the ball with my putter the same way I do with my hand."

As for the left hand, it just sits lightly on the handle, he doesn't much care how. The right hand controls the stroke. Mr. Burke stands about 20 degrees open to the target line (although he doesn't insist that others do) and senses that he controls the putter with what he calls the "muscle" along the crease between his right-hand thumb and forefinger as they grip the handle. The shaft nestles in his right palm with his right fingertips barely involved. He "anchors" his stroke with a gentle connection between



Jackie Burke Jr. putts last week at his club in Houston; right, during his PGA Tour career, he hits his way out of a trap.

Robert Seale for The Wall Street Journal

his torso and right upper arm.

All of this Mr. Burke showed me, as he said he would, in the first five minutes of our visit. He tried to make it sound simple, and it is, fundamentally—simple the way a waltz was for Fred Astaire. But the devil, as always, is in the details.

We spoke, to start with, in Mr. Burke's wood-paneled office at Champions, the club he founded in the late 1950s with his pal and fellow Tour pro, Jimmy Demaret, who died in 1983. Mr. Burke, at 86, is white-haired, blue-eyed and sharp as a tack. He operates Champions, which even these days has a waiting list to get in, like a fief, one quirk being that a handicap of 14 or better is required for new members. The 36-hole club has more single-digit handicappers than any other in the country—about 500 at last count, including 42 players at scratch or bet-

ter—and a fair number of them have taken putting lessons from Mr. Burke. Writer Dan Jenkins, in his new book "Jenkins at the Majors," which spans 60 years of reportage, rates Mr. Burke one of the five best putters of all time, along with Tiger Woods, Ben Crenshaw, Billy Casper and Dave Stockton.

"No, you put a hit on that one. Don't do that," Mr. Burke tells me out on the practice putting green. "Just let the weight of the putter make the swing and you stay the hell out of the way. Whatever speed you go back with, that's the speed you want going forward." After a lifetime of being told to accelerate through the ball when putting, this is hard to grasp, but it's not really acceleration he's worried about here, it's getting quick—or "energizing" the stroke, as he puts it.

He places a hand over my right



Courtesy of USGA Archives

hand on the grip and moves me through a few strokes. "This is what slow feels like. Exaggerate the slowness. You've got to trust the timing. Let the putter have its way," he said.

That evening, on the carpet of my hotel room, I practiced rolling balls with my hand and began to feel what he was getting at. When I got quick, or jerked my hand forward before releasing the ball, I couldn't control distance or direction nearly as well as when I trusted the pendulum motion of my arm swing. "That was Hogan's big problem when his putting went bad," Mr. Burke said about his good friend and fellow Texan. "He started trying to force it. He let me mess with his putting a little, but I couldn't help him."

That ball-rolling session also helped me understand the virtue of letting the palm and fingers rotate closed after releasing the ball, as they are naturally inclined to do. Initially, with a putter in my hand, I resisted. I wanted to push the ball down the line, out toward the target, but that is a fundamental violation. "You can't try to guide the ball. Just focus on letting the putter hit the ball square, on a carpenter's 90-degree angle, and rotate on through," he said. When I objected that this required unrealistically perfect timing, he denied it. "You don't push the ball toward the target with a tennis racquet, you swing through the ball and it goes straight because you know exactly where the face of that racquet is and you rely on timing. Same thing here."

If some of this gets to seeming technical, it's actually the antithesis of the way putting is often taught

these days, sometimes using high-speed photography linked to computer software. "I don't want any systems. I don't want you to have to remember anything," Mr. Burke told me. "Just see your break line, walk up to the ball and put a good roll on it. Don't putt to sink it, putt to make a good stroke." Most golfers worry too much about how others will perceive them if they goof up, Mr. Burke believes. "You've got to play with a certain recklessness. Nothing's a sure shot. I've never seen anybody who was any good try to be sure about anything. You just put the ball out there and hope to the good Lord it's your turn. It goes back to trust."

I haven't had a chance yet to put Mr. Burke's putting philosophy to the test in an actual round. For the pros, who have the time to work hard on every facet of grip, stance, alignment and stroke, maybe it's too haphazard; but for everyday players, who need something simple and intuitive, it seems ideal. And it certainly derives from Mr. Burke's own experiences growing up on hardpan Texas municipal courses in the 1930s and 1940s and playing on Tour primarily in the 1950s, when greens were sketchy and inconsistent. Pragmatically, intuitive putting was what worked, and golf felt more like a game.

"I don't see enough play in the game these days. Everybody's trying to control every little thing," he said. "When you dance, there aren't any systems to it, you just go with the music. That's what I'd like to see people do more, they need to swing to the music of golf."

Echoes of Berlin

Singer Ute Lemper draws on Germany's past as she looks to make her songs more personal

Cabaret singer Ute Lemper has lived in New York for more than a decade, but her music is rooted in her upbringing in a divided Germany. Born in Münster in 1963, Ms. Lemper explored the music of the Weimar Republic, especially that of Jewish composers such as Kurt Weill, to create a dialogue with the past, she says. On her album, "Between Yesterday and Tomorrow," Ms. Lemper uses these influences to experiment with more personal songwriting.

—John Jurgensen

Listen to a song from 'Between Yesterday and Tomorrow,' at WSJ.com/Lifestyle.

'Ghosts of Berlin'

This jazzy lament about the Berlin Wall invokes the number of days it stood: 10,260. Ms. Lemper, who recorded her first album in a studio next to the wall, describes it in feminine terms in her lyrics. "This is the way the East German government spoke of the wall—they called it 'our lady.' They must have been out of their minds to do that," she says.

'Blood and Feathers'

Based on a poem of the same name by Jacques Prévert, the track uses show business as a metaphor for politics, Ms. Lemper says. The song features the accordion-like sound of a bandoneón. "Because the words are rather dark, I needed the blood, the warmth, of that instrument," she says.



'Nomad'

Beginning with an Arabic poem—which Ms. Lemper sang phonetically—the song ends with a poem in Yiddish. She says she intended this collage of languages to deliver a cross-cultural message "that love should mean love about anything. It should be this shelter where all people can find a home."

Arbitrage



The price of greens fees

City	Local currency	€
New York	\$32	€24
Frankfurt	€32	€32
London	£30	€34
Brussels	€50	€50
Paris	€55	€55
Rome	€55	€55
Hong Kong	HK\$1,365	€129
Tokyo	¥23,550	€180

Note: Weekdays as a walk-on at a local course for 18 holes; prices, including taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.

❖ Design

In tough times, designers get crafty

BY HELEN KIRWAN-TAYLOR

Special to *The Wall Street Journal*
THE WEIRD AND OFTEN wonderful objects on show at the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan's annual furniture fair, provoke a lot of discussion and head-scratching but they don't always show up in shop windows. It's only in the weeks following the fair (this year's event ran from April 22-27), as the design companies process orders, that it's possible to gauge the real trends for summer/fall.

"Milan is really an exercise in branding and PR rather than selling," says Carlo Urbinati, co-founder of the Italian lighting company Foscarini, whose new products at the fair included "Tress," a lamp made of interwoven resin threads by Marc Sadler (£874 for a large floor-standing light), due in stores this September.

But even at the fair itself the effect of the economic downturn was clear, as manufacturers sought to tone down their collections—which in past years have included such flights of fancy as 175-centimeter crystal globe chandeliers and giant mosaic airplanes. This year, "utility" is the new watchword. "If something looks cultivated and intellectual it will sell, no problem," says Paolo Moroni, co-founder of the Milan based Sawaya & Moroni. "If it's gimmicky, not at all. Clients are looking for things they can live with for a long time."

British designer Tom Dixon, who showed his aptly named Utility collection in Milan, is at the forefront of a new design emphasis on no-nonsense, eco-friendly products. "I call it back to basics," he says. "I think the delusions of grandeur [of other designers] have passed." His pieces include the Off Cut stool (£145), made from bits of discarded factory timber; and the Slab bar stool (£350), made of oak and cast iron (www.tomdixon.net).

Scrap wood was everywhere in Milan. The Italian lighting company Intrecciodilinea showed its square light "La Singola" (€237) within an actual crate. The L'Altro light (€287) came surrounded in simple timber.



Mooui's 'Brave New World' lamp.



'Quilt' chair by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec for Established and Sons.

Mooui's "Brave New World" lamp (from €2,108) features oak battens and pegs and cast iron counterweights, with all the wires showing; it's almost like a wooden erector set. Established and Sons' collection was displayed within a curved wall of crude, hammered-together wood designed by Alasdair Willis and Sebastian Wrong. It included the (Michelin-man inspired) "Quilt" chair by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec (£1,800-£6,500), and the sober



Patricia Urquiola's 'Crinoline' chair.

Table, Bench, Chair by Sam Hecht/Industrial Facility (£850-£1,650). British manufacturer SCP called its new affordable collection "Boxed." The 16-piece collection includes a simple ash stool (£118) by young designer Alex Hellum and cherry wood-shelving units by Peter Marigold (£215 for three), which will be put into production this summer.

The use of craft techniques in design looks like a trend with staying

power. "From being an unfashionable fringe activity just a couple of years ago, craft has now been embraced by cutting-edge designers and manufacturers as a viable alternative to industrially produced goods," says Marcus Fairs, editor-in-chief of online design magazine Dezeen.com. "Even though craft is in many ways a branch of the luxury industry—as the pieces tend to be expensive—the perceived humility and sustainability of crafted objects



Alex Hellum's Ulrik ash stool for SCP.



Peter Marigold's SUM shelves for SCP.

is appealing in these angst-ridden times."

B&B Italia—a company usually in the technological forefront, with items usually made in factories—uncharacteristically showed off such low-tech items as the Philippines-inspired "Crinoline" woven chairs by Patricia Urquiola in both natural and synthetic materials (from £1,338 in rope; from £1,194 in polyethylene fiber weaving). "I love working using 'old materials' in a new way or new materials using traditional techniques," Ms. Urquiola says.

Other companies are focusing on products made from "sustainable" materials in ways that benefit developing-world economies. The "Shadowy" chairs by Tord Boontje for Moroso (€1,000) are hand-woven by fishermen in Senegal.

Lessons from the spring auctions

BY KELLY CROW

THE ART MARKET may have just laid down its new floor. The major spring art auctions that concluded last weekend in New York were the smallest round in terms of total sales in five years, but collectors have begun venturing back into the market in search of art bargains. New York's two chief auction houses—Christie's International and Sotheby's—brought in about \$408.8 million combined from their semiannual sales of Impressionist, modern and contemporary art, a total that inched over its \$382 million low mark but represented a fraction of last spring's \$1.4 billion total. Smaller Phillips de Pury & Co. brought in \$12.3 million in its two-day auction of contemporary art, below its \$17.5 low estimate.

Christie's won this drastically downsized round by selling \$248.8 million, besting Sotheby's \$160 million total. Here are a few les-

sons learned this time around:

Bigger isn't always better

During the recent art boom, auction houses wowed new collectors by attaching eye-popping prices to room-sized works by artists like Jeff Koons and Takashi Murakami. But collectors' wallets and wall spaces aren't as accommodating anymore, so auction houses had to hustle to offload their largest, and priciest, lots. At Sotheby's, Mr. Koons's dealer Larry Gagosian stepped in and bought the artist's van-sized Easter egg sculpture, "Baroque Egg with Bow (Turquoise/Magenta)," for \$5.4 million with fees, below its \$6 million estimate. By contrast, six bidders at Christie's fought over the artist's toaster-sized train engine, "Jim Bean-J.B. Turner Engine," with a telephone bidder eventually winning it for \$2.3 million, twice its high estimate.

Mr. Koons said he is paying at-

tention to the shifting art market but still harbors high hopes for his egg: "It's a symbol of possibility."

Due diligence required

Collectors did their homework for these sales, dissecting artists' individual markets beforehand to see whether their offerings were fresh to the marketplace and represented career highlights. Many fans of Alberto Giacometti's spindly sculptures knew, for example, that his gold-brown bust of a wavy-haired man, "Buste de Diego (Stele III)," had been tucked away in an estate for over three decades. It sold at Christie's for \$7.6 million, over its \$6.5 million high estimate.

Sotheby's, meanwhile, had trouble stamping out rumors that its Giacometti cat sculpture, "Le Chat," had been shopped privately before its auction. That work, priced to sell for at least \$16 million, failed to sell. "The cat had been on the prowl," said New York art adviser Beverly



Tamara de Lempicka's 'Portrait de Madame M' (1932) sold at Christie's for \$6.1 million.

Schreiber Jacoby. Sotheby's says it hasn't shopped the piece.

Safety in the classics

Collectors spent recent seasons

placing bets on unknown artists, but this time they retreated to classic artists like Camille Pissarro and Alexander Calder, whose perches in art history are likely secure. Four mobiles by Calder sold briskly during the sales, sometimes following seven-way bidding wars involving major collectors like Eli Broad. Sotheby's led the way, helping a Chicago collector sell Calder's 1934 mobile, "Ebony Sticks in Semi-Circle," for \$3.4 million, double its high estimate.

Buyers used these sales to flex newfound leverage over sellers, lobbing up bids on artworks with few other takers and slashing bid amounts when they sensed victory. Auctioneers accustomed to fielding bids at \$100,000 found themselves accepting bid increments as little as \$5,000. "People are a little bit scared and confused about the art market," collector Abdallah Chatila says, "but for me that means there are buying opportunities."

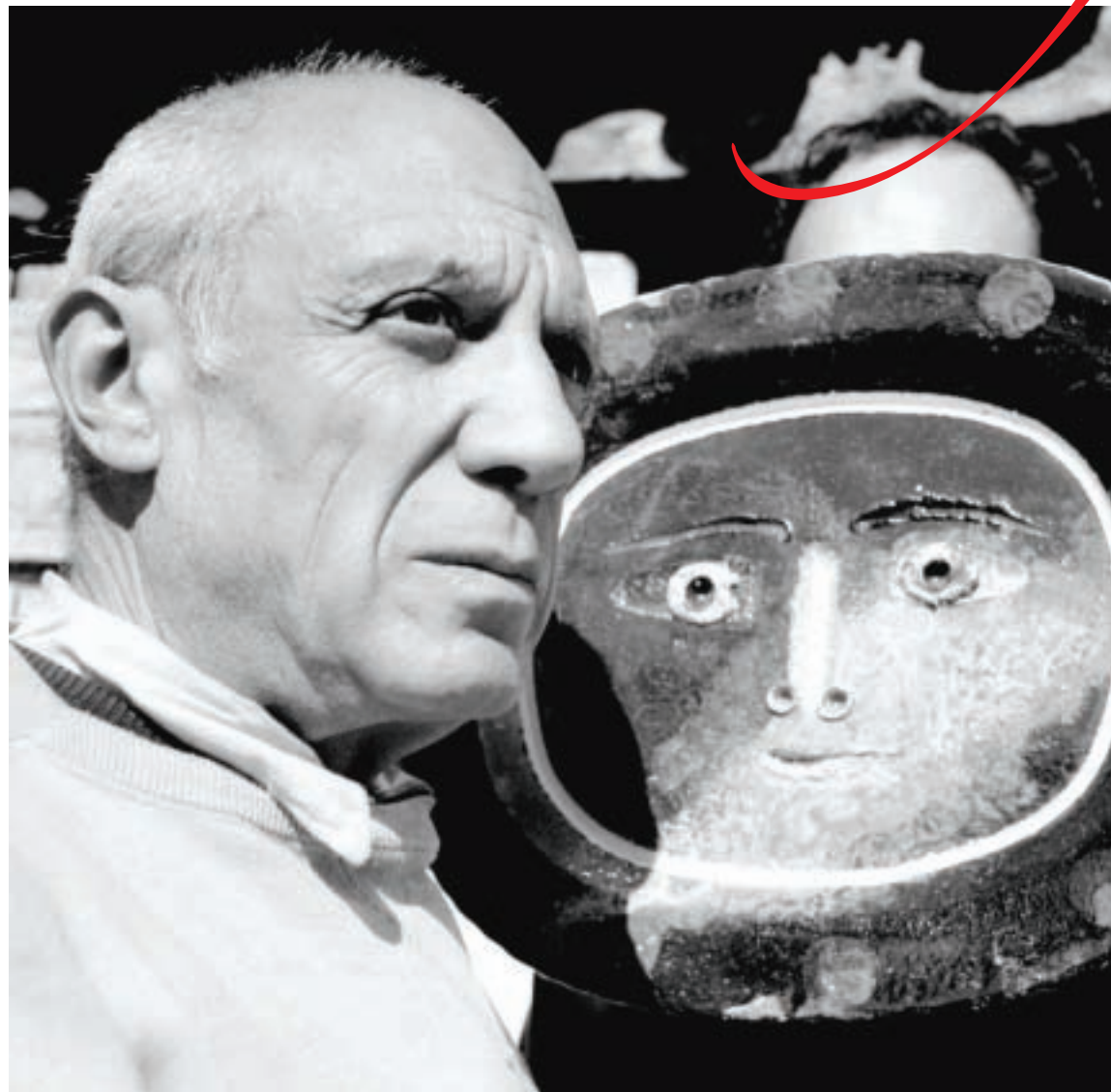
Summer of P

O Vauvenargues, France
 N A WARM September day in 1958, when Pablo Picasso proudly announced to his friends that he'd just bought Cézanne's famed Provence mountain, the Sainte-Victoire, he wasn't talking about a canvas. The Spanish artist, who'd vowed never to return to his native country as long as Franco was in power, bought not only the imposing 17th-century Château de Vauvenargues in this tiny village, but also 1,000 hectares of surrounding pine-covered scrub and red rock that form part of the northern face of Mont Sainte-Victoire, a landscape painted more than 30 times by Cézanne, who was born in nearby Aix-en-Provence.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Picasso's self-imposed exile in the Vauvenargues castle, where the artist lived with his second wife, Jacqueline, from 1959 to 1961, so that he could devote himself entirely to painting. The couple had been living in the Villa Californie, in the lush residential heights of Cannes, since 1955. But the construction of high-rise apartments was ruining the sea view, and Picasso was bothered by tourists with binoculars, hoping to catch a glimpse of the great master. Sleepy Vauvenargues—which, even today, has fewer than 700 residents—seemed the ideal retreat.

To commemorate Picasso's arrival in Cézanne country, the Granet Museum in Aix-en-Provence will on Monday open a major summer exhibition entitled "Picasso-Cézanne," with around 100 paintings, drawings, watercolors, engravings and sculptures of works by both artists as they evolved throughout their lifetimes. But the biggest buzz about the show goes beyond the museum walls. From May 27 to Sept. 27, for the first time, the Château de Vauvenargues (privately owned by Catherine Hutin, Jacqueline's daughter) is opening its doors to small groups of visitors—only 18 people per group, plus the official guide—for a tour of the artist's austere, sprawling retreat.

The exhibition and the castle tour form the core of a Picasso-themed summer extravaganza of exhibits, open-air concerts, theater and street festivities throughout the south of France. Aix-en-Provence, the epicenter of the cultural offerings (www.picasso-aix2009.fr), hosts an exhibit of photographs of Picasso taken by his friend, Lucien Clergue, displayed in Cézanne's studio, and another 50 rarely seen photos taken by Jacqueline Picasso, hung in Aix's Vendôme Pavilion. You can also rediscover Cézanne's country manor, Le Jas de Bouffan, and stroll through the vast park, lined with monumental metal-



Touring the artist's Provence inspirations, from local pottery to Cézanne's mountain

tered into multiple points of view."

One section of the show is devoted to Picasso's mirroring of Cézanne through common objects and forms, from still-lives of fruit, white porcelain and skulls, to harlequins and mythological bathers, along with Picasso's successive muses (from the early Cubist years in Paris with Fernande Olivier to Françoise Gilot and second wife Jacqueline Roque) all seated in an armchair, just as Madame Cézanne had posed for her husband in the late 1880s.

Surprisingly, the two men never actually met face to face, even though they shared the same Parisian art dealer, Ambroise Vollard. Picasso, who also had a sharp eye as a collector, bought four Cézanne oils and one watercolor, three of which are in this show.

Compared to the Granet exhibition, the Château de Vauvenargues tour is a more intimate experience, bringing visitors into the artist's private world (tickets can be purchased on the day of the visit in a booth at 36 Rue Cardinal, near the Place des Dauphins in Aix-en-Provence; ☎ 33-442-16-11-61). Expect to see a mythological pipe-playing faun painted on the bathroom wall, and personal objects strewn about, such as the mandolin the artist bought while waiting for a bullfight in Arles and subsequently painted into his still-lives. His atelier, with enormous bay windows facing west, has been meticulously preserved: easels, pots of Ripolin house paint, splattered terra cotta tiled floors, and two painted chairs covered with Picasso's darkened palette of yellows, somber greens, reds and blacks, as if the artist had gone off for a stroll.

Everything—from the seven-minute film of the artist painting in his atelier to his bedroom, adorned only with a Catalonian flag-inspired, red-and-yellow-striped headboard and blood-red-and-black rug designed by Picasso—feels like a discovery of his rarely seen intimate space.

The tour ends with Picasso's tomb—marked only by a copy of a bronze that Picasso exhibited at the

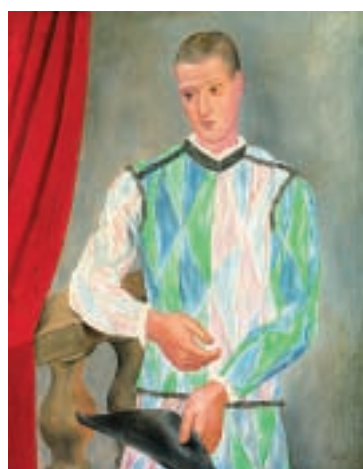
BY LANIE GOODMAN

Special to The Wall Street Journal

lic sculptures by contemporary Southern French artist, Bernard Pagès, or attend a kid-friendly minicircus performance under a tent, where juggling and acrobatic workshops will also be held.

In June and July, the streets of Aix-en-Provence will come alive with outdoor performances by dancers, musicians, open-air documentary films on the artist, as well as costumed parades, inspired by Picasso's predilection for harlequins and his collaboration with Erik Satie in "Parade," performed in 1917 by the Ballets Russes.

Elsewhere, further west in Provence, Picasso will be celebrated in a multimedia open-air show at Les Baux de Provence's Cathedral of Images. There are also several shows featuring Picasso's many friends: the Edgar Mélik Museum in Cabriès, near Aix, is devoting its summer exhibition to poet and painter Max Jacob and his link with



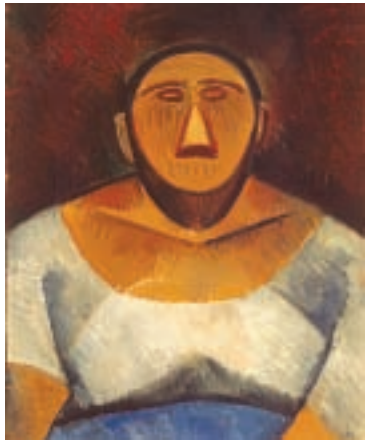
Top, Pablo Picasso in April 1949, with a ceramic work made in his studio in Vallauris; above, the artist's 1917 painting 'Arlequin,' part of the 'Picasso-Cézanne' exhibition in Aix-en-Provence.

Picasso. From June 27 to mid-October, the Château-Museum in Vallauris will feature an homage to Picasso's longtime pal, poet Blaise Cendrars.

But the main attraction is the Granet's "Picasso-Cézanne" show. The exhibition is divided thematically, beginning with Cézanne's visionary influence on modern art (Matisse called him "the father of us all"), and in particular, a look at how the painter's geometrical patchwork landscapes of rust, ochre and green served as a catalyst for Picasso's Cubist experimentation and techniques.

"For Cézanne, the break with tradition involves tilted planes and the relationship between objects—the dish of apples on the bunched up tablecloth doesn't have the same perspective as the sugar bowl next to it," says the museum's head curator, Bruno Ely. "For Picasso, it will be the fragmentation of one object, shat-

Picasso



© Succession Picasso 2009, © Musée de l'Ermitage, Saint-Petersbourg



© Yokohama Museum of Art



© Claude Germain

1937 Paris World Exposition—in front of the castle overlooking the countryside. The artist died on April 8, 1973, at age 92 in Mougins, and is buried alongside Jacqueline, who committed suicide in 1986. Despite the 45-year age gap between them, Jacqueline and Picasso were together for the last 20 years of his life, and for 17 of those years she was the only woman he painted.

Mougins, once a charmingly rural village but now a considerably gentrified maze of cobblestone streets lined with art galleries and restaurants, is worth a trip for its Museum of Photography (☎ 33-4-93-75-85-67). The superb permanent collection includes portraits of Picasso by André Villers as well as other famed photographers including Robert Doisneau, David Douglas Duncan, Lucien Clergue and Jacques-Henri Lartigue.

If you're heading south before June 15, don't miss the current show at the Musée Picasso, housed in the 12th-century stone Château Grimaldi in Antibes. "The Era of Renewal, 1945-1949" documents the artist's return from Paris, where he had spent the war, to the shimmering shores of the Mediterranean with drawings, paintings, photos and examples of his newly found passion, ceramics (www.antibes-juanlespins.com/fr/culture/musees/picasso). The collection reflects the painter's exuberance and hope during this postwar period of peace and his unalloyed happiness with his companion at the time, the young painter Françoise Gilot (who would bear him two children, Claude and Paloma), and also marks a crucial creative turning point.

In July 1946, Picasso and Gilot settled in a tiny apartment in Golfe-Juan. Have a walk on the beach where Picasso and Françoise often strolled, then spend the afternoon shopping for ceramics in the nearby hilltop village, Vallauris. It was here, during an annual pottery fair, that the artist met Suzanne and Georges Ramié, who ran the Madoura ceramics workshop. "They took Picasso up to their atelier and gave him a bit of the local red clay,



© Henry Ely - Aix



© Succession Picasso 2009

Above, the interior and exterior of the Château de Vauvenargues. Top left, Picasso's 'Buste de la fermière' (1908); top right, Paul Cézanne's 'Madame Cézanne en robe rayée' (1883-85); left, Picasso's 'Nature morte aux crâne et trois oursins' (1947).

which he modeled into his first three pieces—two tiny bulls and a faun's head," recalls gallery owner and potter, Dominique Sassi, who later apprenticed alongside the artist. "The following summer, Picasso returned to Madoura, delighted to find that they'd fired the pieces and had put them aside. That did it for him, he couldn't wait to learn everything he could from the Ramiés, and ended up making around 4,000 ceramic works during his lifetime."

Single-handedly revitalizing the town's moribund ceramics industry with his whimsical bird-shaped jugs, Picasso was elected an honorary citizen of Vallauris. Don't miss a trip to the village's tiny medieval chapel (in the courtyard of the village castle, which now houses the Magnelli Museum and the Ceramic Museum) where Picasso was given carte blanche to paint a colossal political fresco, "War and Peace."

You'll also want to revisit the per-

manent collection in the Picasso Museum in Antibes, which includes the famed "Ulysses and the Sirens," created in the postwar years while the artist was holed up in his atelier at the Grimaldi castle.

A highlight of the current show are graceful pencil drawings of a dancing Françoise, half woman, half flower, reminiscent of the odalisques of his friend and rival, Matisse, who lived in nearby Nice.

This is hardly a coincidence. During his lifetime of feverish protean production, Picasso found a unique way of creating things never seen before and destroying things as they'd never been destroyed. He moved through the history of art by breaking rules and reinventing the paintings of others: Velázquez, Ingres, Delacroix, Manet and, of course, Cézanne.

For, as Picasso himself once wrote: "Bad artists copy. Good artists steal."

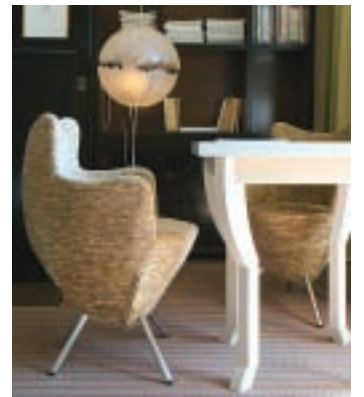
On the Picasso trail

Where to stay

To be closer to his friends, the Murphys, F. Scott Fitzgerald rented the seaside Villa St. Louis in 1926, where he and Zelda would invite the whole gang over for parties. In 1929 the villa was transformed into the 43-room Art-Deco gem, **Hotel Belles Rives**. Today, Marianne Chauvin-Estène (grand-daughter of the original owner) has taken great care to preserve the hotel's original look: 1930s furnishings, cubist paintings and frescoes, and the stylish Bar Fitzgerald. Double rooms from €180-€725 (☎ 33-4-93-61-02-79; www.bellesrives.com).

Located in Aix-en-Provence's historic Mazarin neighborhood, just down the street from the Granet Museum, **28 à Aix** is an exquisitely refurbished 17th-century private home, recently converted into an artsy four-room guest house. Rooms from €240 in summer (☎ 33-4-42-54-82-01; www.28aiaix.com).

Set back in a wooded park on



From top, a room at 28 à Aix; Picasso's 'Laughing-eyed face' vase, from 1969, at Céramiques du Château; the cubist pizza at La Passagère.



fresh grilled fish, served at the water's edge (☎ 33-493-61-33-74; www.plagekeller.com).

Seafood aficionados can find authentic but pricey bouillabaisse at **Chez Nounou** in Golfe-Juan for about €65 a bowl (☎ 33-493-63-71-73; www.nounou.fr).

If you're browsing for ceramics in Vallauris, book a table on the outdoor terrace on the leafy square at the **Café Llorca**, just beside Picasso's bronze, "Man with a Sheep," the perfect spot for lunch after a visit to the artist's "War and Peace" fresco in the chapel just steps away. The menu features authentic Provençal and Italian dishes. A three-course menu without wine is around €30 (☎ 33-493-64-30-42).



the outskirts of Aix, **La Pauline** is a charming five-room bed-and-breakfast, housed in a stately mansion built for Napoleon's sister, Pauline Borghese. Doubles €200 (☎ 33-4-42-17-02-60; www.lapauline.fr).

Where to eat

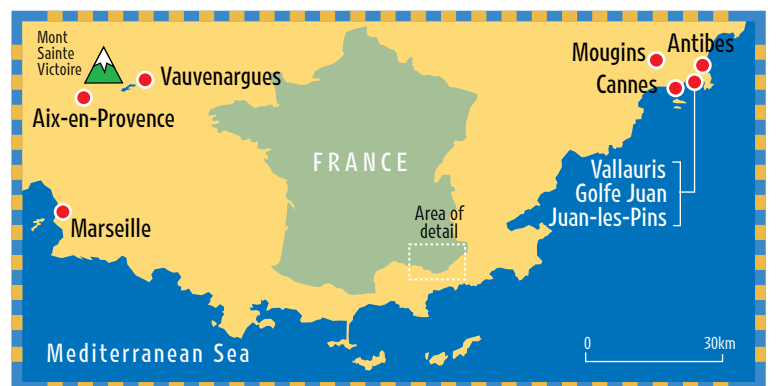
The Hotel Belles Rives's restaurant, **La Passagère**, serves a "Picasso by Llorca" dinner, an edible cubist extravaganza. The menu includes an amuse-bouche of foie gras, a specially designed cubist pizza, sea bass with olives and an egg-shaped chocolate pastry; €90 without wine.

La Garoupe Beach, the small sandy cove on the Cap d'Antibes, bears little resemblance to the tranquil paradise of the 1920s, but the sea has remained the same improbable shade of turquoise and emerald, and it's a great place to dine with your toes in the sand. The **Restaurant César** at the Plage Keller features tasty Provençal fare, salads and

Where to shop

Directly across from the Picasso Museum in Antibes, the tiny gallery **Céramiques du Château** sells a small but stunning collection of signed Picasso ceramics, including unique pieces and numbered limited editions created in Vallauris between 1947-71 (☎ 33-493-33-11-11; www.ceramiquesduchateau.com).

In the midst of Vallauris's touristy main drag, a riot of kitsch water fountains, jugs and birds, is the **Galerie Sassi-Milici**, one of the few serious ceramics workshops and galleries that remain today. Co-owner Dominique Sassi learned his trade in the Madoura atelier (now closed), standing side by side with the great master. The collection features works by Picasso's potter friends, including Roger Capron, and contemporary artists (☎ 33-493-64-65-71; www.sassi-milici.com).



Kaiseki, the art you can eat

BY STAN SESSER

Kyoto, Japan
THE MEAL AT famed Kikunoi restaurant was cutting-edge: 12 courses made up of 60 different items, each fanatically sourced using the freshest and highest-quality ingredients available. And in the trendiest fashion, the entire meal, which stretched to almost three hours, weighed in at less than 1,000 calories.

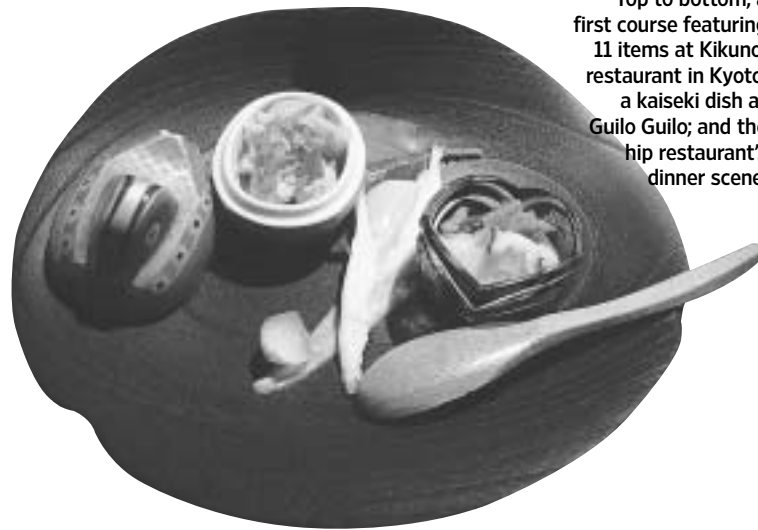
Welcome to *kaiseki* (kye-SEK-ee), the original fixed-price tasting menu, whose roots in Kyoto go back almost 500 years to the Japanese tea ceremony's origins and the practices of meat-shunning Buddhist monks. Today, the tradition is a major inspiration for the multi-course degustation menus now popular in the West, at places like El Bulli in Spain, Joël Robuchon in Las Vegas and the French Laundry in California's Napa Valley. Chefs from world-class restaurants make frequent pilgrimages to Kikunoi to experience the work of the 56-year-old chef, Yoshihiro Murata.

Kyoko Murata, Mr. Murata's wife and Kikunoi's maitre d', says celebrated guests are a fairly regular occurrence there. "Ferran Adrià comes here often and we also eat at El Bulli. They're definitely influenced by kaiseki food," she says. I rattle off the names of a few other Michelin three-star chefs, American and French. "Of course they've eaten here," she replies.

Kikunoi has been serving kaiseki meals since it opened in 1911. Mr. Adrià, whose avant-garde "molecular cuisine" has led many critics to call his restaurant the best in the world, praised Kikunoi in the introduction he wrote for Mr. Murata's cookbook, "Kaiseki: The Exquisite Cuisine of Japan's Kikunoi Restaurant" (Kodansha International, 2006). "While in the West we cook with the senses, the heart, and logic, the Japanese add to this an extra component . . . the soul. Nowhere is this better exemplified than by the work of Yoshiro Murata," he wrote.

After spending three days in Kyoto, where visitors can eat variations of kaiseki for breakfast, lunch and dinner, I began to see why this centuries-old cuisine holds so much fascination for the most inventive chefs of Europe and America. Kaiseki is a tonic to the senses from every direction, and something no Western restaurant I've ever dined in can approach. It demands perfection from the freshness and preparation of the ingredients to the dishes they are served on. The noise in some New York restaurants makes it impossible to concentrate on your meal; kaiseki diners sit in a tranquil, private room and gaze onto a Japanese garden while polite, efficient waitresses in kimonos cater to every need. The cost, at Kikunoi, is \$150 a person—a bargain compared with, say, the \$275 tasting menu at Thomas Keller's Per Se in New York.

Derek Wilcox, a 32-year-old American, has worked in Kikunoi's kitchen for two years at no pay to learn how kaiseki is properly done. His hours—7 a.m. to 11 p.m. six days a week—are grueling. He plans to open a kaiseki restaurant in the U.S. in seven to 10 years—the amount of time he figures he'll need to learn all the principles and techniques.



Top to bottom, a first course featuring 11 items at Kikunoi restaurant in Kyoto; a kaiseki dish at Guilo Guilo; and the hip restaurant's dinner scene.

tea ceremony was too intense to be sipped on an empty stomach. He started serving small plates of food to make drinking the tea more enjoyable. With Kyoto home to Japan's great tea masters, kaiseki flowered here, too—one of the ways food, art and religion have converged to make Kyoto the spiritual and culinary center of Japan.

A visitor could be happily occupied for a month visiting the city's more than 1,000 Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, many with extensive grounds and gardens. Dozens of ryokans—traditional Japanese inns, some serving kaiseki meals—are an alternative to traditional hotels. Many of Kyoto's old buildings have been demolished and replaced with ugly concrete boxes, but there are still enough old wooden houses around to turn a walk into a discovery. A day of visiting Kyoto's tem-

ples ending with a kaiseki dinner at Kikunoi is an experience visitors won't quickly forget.

The simplicity of a kaiseki dinner masks its complexity. In contrast to Western cuisines, there are no fancy sauces, except for an occasional dipping sauce. Presentations might be elegant, but they're always uncomplicated. Food doesn't arrive in towering stacks; the waiter never says that the "Chef" wants you to eat a particular dish by starting with a certain ingredient. And there's no fuss about wine; while a wine list is usually available, the house sake complements the meal perfectly.

The evening at Kikunoi begins on a note some might find jarring. A young, kimono-clad woman greets you at the door on her knees; as you remove your shoes, she touches her head to the floor. Then she escorts you through the blond-wood corri-

dors to your dining room, which is spacious, carpeted with tatami mats and empty, except for a low, black-lacquer table in the center. You sit on a pillow leaning against a leather backrest, with a view through a glass wall of the illuminated garden. Your legs rest under the table in a pit, heated to keep your feet warm.

The meal of seafood and vegetables doesn't disappoint. With minimal cooking and seasoning so as not to mask the quality of the ingredients, every bite is a revelation. In one course, nine items are arranged on a plate like a rock garden. Some stand alone (fava beans, salt-pickled squid, lily bulb petals), others in combination (grilled squid with seaweed and egg yolk, a skewer of abalone, shrimp and avocado).

During my visit, much of the meaning of this sophisticated meal would have passed over my head had I not been dining with Yoshiko Isshiki, a curator of modern art who spends a lot of time in Kyoto and has made food her passion. In our first course, as an example, a piece of the grilled squid was coated with finely chopped seaweed and cut to resemble the curled stem of a flower. Several courses later, steamed tilefish was accompanied by a warabi fernhead—which, Ms. Isshiki pointed out, looked like that piece of squid.

Since the essence of kaiseki is seasonality, Kikunoi's menu changes completely every month. "The Japanese really want to get the idea of being part of the season," Mr. Wilcox, the aspiring chef, explained after my dinner in mid-April. "Now they want cherry blossoms on their plate. Two weeks ago, it was buds from the cherry tree, and a week from now they won't want them at all."

There are some variations. The restaurant Hyotei serves a kaiseki breakfast, including chicken meatballs covered in chopped seaweed, sushi wrapped in a cherry leaf and the best hard-cooked egg I've ever had. The kaiseki at Guilo Guilo, meanwhile, is positively radical. In an old house with timbered ceilings, the place hops as waiters bound up steep steps with dishes on their arms. Sea bass roe with coffee-flavored potato sauce, a rice ball topped with foie gras sauce and tofu skin, and a panna cotta of green peas with honey ice cream and deep-fried lily roots—this is 21st-century kaiseki, and at \$37 it's both inexpensive and fabulous.



Kyoto travel tips

Getting there

The Shinkansen, Japan's high-speed train system, whisks you to Kyoto from Tokyo in just over two hours for about \$130 each way. It leaves from Tokyo Station and Shinagawa Station.

Where to stay

Kyoto is filled with tiny hotels and Japanese inns (*ryokans*). They needn't be expensive. On my last night, I paid less than \$100 at a downtown business hotel for a cramped room and an airliner-size bathroom. On the upscale side, two Kyoto hotels combine luxury with an authentic feeling of being in Japan. They are the Hyatt Regency Kyoto, 644-2 Sanjyusan-gendo Mawari-cho, Higashiyama-ku (☎ 81-75-541-1234; about \$350) and Brighton Hotel Kyoto, Nakadachiuri, Shimamachi-dori, Kamigyo-ku (☎ 81-75-441-4411; about \$280). If price is no object and you want a private kaiseki dinner in your own room at a luxurious ryokan where English is spoken, Hiragiya Ryokan fills the bill. Nakahakusancho, Fuyacho Aneerji-Agaru, Nakagyo-ku (☎ 81-75-221-1136; \$300 to \$900 a person, including kaiseki dinner).

Where to eat

Kikunoi is the most famous of the kaiseki restaurants, and the dinner is a good value. Gion Maruyama, Makuzugahara, Higashiyama-ku (☎ 81-75-561-0015; \$150). For a hip, informal kaiseki, try Guilo Guilo, located in an old wooden house. Nishikiyamachi-dori, Matsubara Sagaru, Shimogyo-ku (☎ 81-75-343-7070, \$37). The well-known Hyotei offers a kaiseki breakfast. Kusakawa-cho 35, Nanzenji, Sakyo-ku (☎ 81-75-771-4116, \$45). The bento box lunch at Yasuku Gozen is a generous preview of the kaiseki dinner. Yasaka-dori, Gion Miyugawa Cho, Kyogaki (☎ 81-75-531-6600).



A chilling effect on Scotch purists' hearts

RICHARD PATERSON—renowned whisky blender with Scotland's Whyte & Mackay Ltd., home of such single malts as the Dalmore and Isle of Jura—has come to dread ordering whisky in America. "Ask for Scotch in the U.S. and before you know it you hear that horrible clink, clink, clink of ice going in the glass," he says in a voice that's two parts exasperation and one part burr. "As far as I'm concerned, if you've got a nice 12-year-old Scotch

How's Your Drink?

ERIC FELTEN

whisky, there's nothing more ridiculous than putting ice in it."

Mr. Paterson is hardly the only whisky purist to rail against the pernicious effects of ice in Scotch. Kevin Erskine, who writes about whisky at theScotchBlog.com, says that when drinking Scotch neat "I may add varying amounts of water depending on the whisky, the weather and my mood—but never an ice cube." But it is Mr. Paterson who, in the Scotch tasting seminars he hosts around the world, expresses his aversion to the practice by flinging a bucket of ice across the room.

The purists' complaint is that whereas a small splash of spring water seems to open up a whisky, releasing its full bouquet and flavor, ice tends to do the opposite. The tongue is anesthetized by the cold, and the whisky itself acquires a smoothness that glosses over the deeper complexities of the dram.

But that particular sort of frigid gloss is just what many, perhaps most, Americans are looking for in their whisky. And it's worth noting that, in the U.S., the taste for drinking Scotch on the rocks was itself a move toward a more pure whisky experience. In the first half of the 20th century the standard way to drink



Jupiter Images

Scotch in the States was in a Highball—a tall glass of whisky, ice and soda water. It was toward the end of the 1940s that the phrase "on the rocks" emerged to describe doing without the fizzy dilution of seltzer. By 1950 Whitney Bolton, a New York Morning Telegraph columnist, wrote that "in the last six months sales of sparkling water in all brands have dropped alarmingly."

Before long, Scotch brands such as the Famous Grouse were promoting their whiskies as being well

sued for drinking with ice. Even now, after a couple of decades of emphasis on single-malt connoisseurship, Scotch ads in the U.S. still tend to feature ice in the glass.

But that doesn't mean Scotch professionals are happy about the way Americans drink their product. The Islay single-malt distillery Bruichladdich nods to the durable U.S. preference by offering a "Rocks" version of its whisky specially selected to hold up to the icy onslaught. But Bruichladdich exec

Mark Reynier still complains: "We go to all the lengths to provide hand-selected, natural whisky, unadulterated by additives, sweeteners or colorings," he says, "only for the drinker to go and add chlorine and fluoride," chemicals commonly found in frozen tap water.

So there is a move to elevate Scotch on the rocks by improving the rocks. Most ice at home suffers from chlorine and/or the smelly taint of frozen foods. Ice at bars and restaurants tends to be in little chips or discs that melt too fast. The best bars have machines that produce big, square-sided cubes. The Macallan distillery is taking it one step further by encouraging bars to acquire its "ice ball" machine, which crafts a crystalline sphere of frozen water slightly smaller than a baseball, served one to a glass. At home, the best bet is to make fresh ice using spring water in a tray that makes big cubes.

Less persnickety about ice is Heather Greene, who has made an unlikely name for herself in whisky circles. It's rare for an American to gain credibility in the world of Scotch, and rarer still for a woman to do so. She earned a reputation for having a smart palate while working in Scotland on the Scotch Malt Whisky Society's tasting panel. Now she's back in the U.S. as a "brand ambassador" for Glenfiddich, and her return home has challenged some of the notions she acquired in her apprenticeship.

"When I first came back from Scotland, I was in a traditionalist mind-set, steadfast and stubborn against the idea of ice in whisky," she says. But that changed after she hosted a promotional tasting last summer at a New York bar where the AC was on the blink. In the sweltering summer heat, the guests were fading—until she got a bucket of ice and started serving 12-year-old Glenfiddich on the rocks. "You

lose richness and depth of flavor," she says, "but you gain refreshment and smoothness."

American culture's emphasis on refreshment has something to do with the climate. "That's what we do in America," says Ms. Greene, embracing her patrimony. "We put ice in our drinks."

Even Mr. Paterson grudgingly acknowledges that people should, at the end of the day, drink their whisky the way they like it. He just asks that, before you decide that you prefer Scotch on the rocks, you try it his way as well.

Start with a decent room-temperature dram: "You should hold the whisky in your mouth, first on your tongue, then under your tongue, then around your mouth," and only then let it slip down your throat. As an exercise in tasting, it's not a bad routine, though I suspect most of us would rather relax and enjoy the whisky than make the experience an exercise in sensory analysis.

Still, I think the ice-dependent drinkers among us will find it illuminating to do their own side-by-side tasting. Take a good, straightforward single malt. Pour two glasses: one without ice, and another embellished with a large cube or two of ice made from spring water. Take a taste of the tepid malt. It will seem at first sip rather fiery.

Then taste the iced whisky. It will seem soothing, a respite from the spirit's alcohol burn. But then go back to the neat Scotch. You'll find that it blossoms with flavor in your mouth. If you keep going back and forth, I suspect you will perceive the taste of the Scotch on the rocks as narrower and perhaps even thinner with each sip.

Which isn't to say you won't want to drink your whisky that way. For me, Scotch on the rocks tastes more like a whisky cocktail than like whisky per se. And I just happen to like whisky cocktails.

Wine Notes: Making the most of a journey through Napa Valley

BY DOROTHY J. GAITER
AND JOHN BRECHER

WE ARE GOING with the girls to San Francisco this summer. We would love to have a couple of recommendations for wineries to visit. We have never been there.

Our neighbors sent us this note a couple of weeks ago. We have written extensive columns and book chapters about visiting Napa and Sonoma—and, of course, others have written entire books—but many people, like our neighbors, have never visited the area and are more interested in a quick day trip just to get a feel of the place. So this is what we sent our neighbors:

Dear Dara and Evan,

We'd head to Napa, which is close and easy to visit. (There is a good map here: www.napavintners.com/wineries) Go on a weekday if you can because traffic on weekends is particularly ugly. Plan to travel right up Highway 29, the main road. On your way in, past Mondavi and Rubicon Estate (Coppola), stop at Milat Vineyards, a charming little tasting room on



AFP

your left. There is often a Milat behind the counter, which is a throwback to the days when tasting rooms were staffed by winemakers and family members. Then just travel right up Highway 29. You will see so many familiar names, from Louis Martini to Beringer. While many of these now are owned by giant corporations, they are still classic names that bring back great memories. The drive

will be beautiful—the vines will be green and lush when you are there—and there are all sorts of other interesting sights.

About nine miles from Milat you will see Sterling Vineyards on your right (don't stop there because it will take too long during a one-day trip, but it's fun to see from the road). Exactly where Sterling is located, at Dunaweal Lane, make a right. Go just about a mile

to the Silverado Trail and make another right, which will take you back toward where you started. It's amazing how much calmer this route is, far less crowded, but you will once again pass all sorts of wineries whose names will bring a smile. When you are almost all the way back—it will take maybe 45 minutes or so—drop into Regusci Vineyards, which has excellent wines and a lovely view. From there, head right back to San Francisco.

Why is it that those great red wines that we were drinking this past winter, based on your recommendations, don't taste nearly as good now that summer approaches?

—Henry and Kathy Hagan,
Atlanta

Assuming proper storage, there are many reasons, among them: Perhaps the wines were made to drink young and they're simply not as good as they were; or if they are fine wines, they are going through a "dumb period," between their phases of youthful


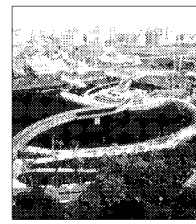
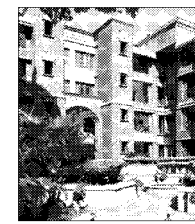


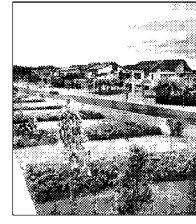
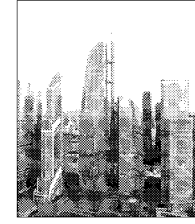

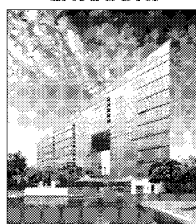
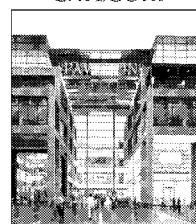
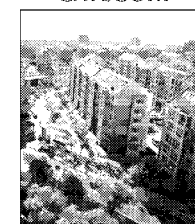
fruitiness and complex maturity. Maybe, with different weather, you are drinking the wines with different foods and they don't pair as well. And there's always the possibility that they're just not as exciting to you as they were when you first tasted them.

This is such an interesting question that we called up Cornell Prof. Brian Wansink, an expert on food psychology and author of "Mindless Eating." He said it could be two things: temperature and companion foods. "The temperature of the room seems to tell us how much we like wines and how high we rate them," he told us. In a study he conducted at the University of Illinois, the temperature of a room was raised from 20 degrees to 28 degrees Celsius and participants were asked to rate a heavy Cabernet, a light Chardonnay and a rosé. "People's evaluation of the Cabernet dropped dramatically as the temperature of the room went from [20 to 28] degrees and increased for the white wine," he said.

—Melanie Grayce West
contributed to this column.

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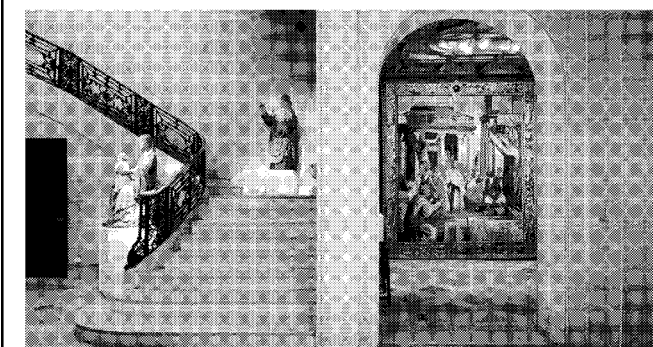


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❖ Top Picks



Johan Persson

Anastasia Hille in the title role of 'Dido, Queen of Carthage,' in London.

National Theatre's 'Dido': a fresh take on early Marlowe

LONDON: Christopher Marlowe's rarely staged first play, "Dido, Queen of Carthage," shows the playwright, spy, atheist and self-confessed lover of "tobacco and boys" at his most provocative. The first scene shows Jupiter "dandling Ganymede upon his knee"—"ganymede" was Elizabethan slang for a male prostitute.

In James Macdonald's production for the National Theatre's small Cottesloe auditorium, the opening scene with the gods takes place on a level above the stage, in Tobias Hoheisel's minimal set. Costume designer Moritz Junge dresses Jupiter and Ganymede in what appeared to me to be bikers' gear, a strange contrast with the simple gown worn by Dido, Anastasia Hille, who gives a convincing performance of an otherwise imperious woman tortured by her lover's threat to leave her.

Though Marlowe was only 20 years old when this adaptation of Virgil's "Aeneid" was first performed, you hear echoes of the language of the mature plays, especially in Dido's speeches. "Dido" is easier to read than to stage, though, and there are moments of languor in Mr. Macdonald's leisurely, 2½-hour production.

This slowness is redeemed, though, by the acute respect shown to the text by his cast, who speak their lines clearly, making the Elizabethan verse as accessible as today's standard English—no mean feat, as the script is jam-packed with classical allusions.

Apart from the title role, which demands a diva, this is ensemble playing of a high order, and mostly a pleasure to watch, partly owing to the movement direction by Steven Hoggett and Imogen Knight, of the troupe Frantic Assembly.

—Paul Levy

Until June 2
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk



'Old Lady with Masks' (1889), by James Ensor, in Antwerp.

Antwerp's 'Goya, Redon, Ensor' shows visionary works of horror

ANTWERP: In 1886, a Belgian exhibition changed the direction of modern art. The occasion was a display of prints, called "Homage to Goya," by the French artist Odilon Redon, attended by Belgium's most accomplished young painter, James Ensor. After having seen the exhibition, Ensor (1860-1949) turned away from the well-wrought realism of his early years and began to produce wildly imaginative works that proved decades ahead of their time, influencing everything from Expressionism to Surrealism. Now, Antwerp's Royal Museum of Fine Arts has placed all three artists alongside each other and created a curatorial occasion all its own. "Goya, Redon, Ensor: Grotesque Paintings and Drawings" has a once-in-a-generation feel, providing rare and unforgettable insights into the sustained moment that gave birth to modernism.

Spanish artist Francisco Goya (1746-1828) is often considered the last old master and the first modern artist. Firmly rooted in the 18th century, his

idyllic tapestry designs, completed in the 1770s, drew the attention of Spain's royal family. He was made court painter in 1786 and embarked on a series of life-size analytical portraits, which make up the best-known chapter of his career. In 1792, Goya went deaf after a high fever, and he conceived of a new kind of series—80 visionary prints of horror and despair that seemed like willful perversions of his colorful tapestry cartoons. Known as the Caprichos, the prints are among the first examples of modern social criticism in art, and they lay the groundwork for the Antwerp show. In the series' signature work, "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters," a slumbering man seems to be dreaming of bat-like demons, which are like ancient furies, or harbingers of a world about to go mad.

The rediscovery of Goya's grotesque works, which began in Paris a generation after his death, influenced the young Redon (1840-1916), whose prints and drawings investigate the irrational side of man's nature

with a graphic genius that can match Goya's. He is represented here by the rather un-Goya-like print series "Homage to Goya," and by important paintings like "Silence" (1911), from New York's Museum of Modern Art, which shows a ghostly figure inside a disembodied eye.

All roads of this show lead to James Ensor, Flanders's greatest painter since Van Dyck. Though he produced graphic works of disturbing vitality, Ensor used oil paints to update the Goya of the Caprichos. Along the way, he progressed from Redon's graphic ghostliness to something on the order of fully rendered morbidity. With the world's leading collection of Ensor paintings already at its disposal, the Royal Museum has managed to assemble other major paintings from around the world. The highlight of the show is the chance to see key works, like MoMA's horrifying and hilarious "Masks Confronting Death" (1888), brought home to Flanders.

—J.S. Marcus

Until June 14
www.kmska.be



'Sickert in Venice' explores an artist's identity crisis

LONDON: Walter Sickert (1860-1942) has a good claim to being the father of modern British art. A student of Whistler, he was a friend of Degas, knew Manet, and through his own work transmitted Impressionism and Post-Impressionism to a younger generation. Indeed, a case can be made that there's a direct line linking Sickert with Francis Bacon. The Dulwich Picture Gallery's exhibition "Sickert in Venice" shows how and where Sickert found his identity as an artist, in the repeated visits the painter made to the city beginning in 1895.

The illustrations and cover in the exhibition's catalog are somehow bright and colorful. Yet the pictures themselves are, for the most part, somber and dark. The exception is the 1901 painting, "Santa Maria della Salute," in which the red squared-up lines on the panel show through the oil paint, conferring a geometrical discipline upon the freely rendered image. Similarly, in "The Ghetto, Venice" (1897-98), the repeated rectangular shapes of the six- and seven-story buildings give an underlying order to what looks like rapidly made strokes of a paint-loaded brush.

But it was not the picturesque views, waterways and buildings of Venice that stimulated Sickert to reinvent himself. Rather, as the second, and better, half of this show makes evident, it was in Venice that Sickert began painting ambiguous figures in interiors—not so much narratives as puzzles, inviting the viewer to work out what he is looking at. The most interesting pictures in this show are the female figures, sometimes paired, of the Venetian prostitutes La Giuseppina and La Carolina. Their postures, and the easily read expressions of their faces, though sometimes featureless, capture a chilly night of the soul that will be seen again and again in Sickert's later, better-known Camden Town pictures.

—Paul Levy

Until June 7
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk



Walter Sickert's 'The Women on a Sofa—Le Tose' (circa 1903-04), top, and 'La Giuseppina Against a Map of Venice' (1903), above, in London.

Arab Humor . . . No Joke

By Melik Kaylan

NEW YORK—In the end, what mars the Arab-American Comedy Festival is the danger to your health: The laughs come so thick and fast that there's no chance to breathe for minutes at a time. One shows up wondering, will it be an extended political rant? Will there be too much phoney applause for bad jokes, endless ethnic boosterism or straining for sympathy, a long bemoaning of injustices, all dressed up as humor? Not a bit of it. Instead, the audience gets a splendid, merciless anatomy of the Arab-American experience, so unsparingly self-critical that it goes beyond the politically incorrect to a species of comedy that often shucks off all conventions and nears pure anarchy.

This is a notable achievement considering the political freight the festival implicitly carries. Last week's was the sixth annual event: this time at Comix, a club in Manhattan. The producers had dreamed up the idea in response to post-9/11 pressures on the Arab-American community. "In 2003," says Dean Obeidallah, the co-founder, a 30-something from New Jersey of Italian-Arab parents, "you couldn't mention the Arab

thing until the last minute or the venue wouldn't book you—now they're all delighted to have us. But, of course, attitudes have changed so much. These days, people are more terrified of sneezing Mexicans than Arabs."

If Mr. Obeidallah, an affable Ken-doll look-alike and the festival's MC, sounds a mite provocative, he pales in comparison to female co-founder and fellow stand-up comedian Maysoun Zayid. Also from New Jersey, Ms.

“Turns out we practically invented hygiene: perfume, soap, deodorant . . . what happened?”

Maysoun has cerebral palsy and grinds out her remarks through gnashing jaws. "I found my husband in Gaza—the best place for me. They have nowhere to run." Both producers have numerous major showbiz credits to their name—Mr. Obeidallah starred in Comedy Central's "Axis of Evil" show and took it all over the Mideast. Ms. Zayid has appeared in several movies—as have many of the 50 or so performers. The third producer, Walid Zouaiter, of Lebanese extraction, has just acted in a George Clooney film.

The festival week began with a series of shows devoted to sketches written specifically for this year, and then, midweek, shifted to stand-up comedy only—all performed in a packed club

seating some 300 people at tables. Thursday, the final evening, offered a selection of the best performances. It was on that evening that breathing between laughs seemed impossible, especially during the stand-up acts, which were on the whole superior to the sketches. Mr. Obeidallah explained that while the sketches were new, and thus unpolished, the stand-ups offered material the comics had practiced over many independent occasions.

The first stand-up, an Egyptian-American named Eman Morgan, complained that even after 30 years his father's English was barely comprehensible. "You know your English is bad," he said, "when your gardener makes fun of you." He was followed by Ronnie Khalil, who has appeared on Showtime Arabia, a Viacom subsidiary in the Arab world, and has headlined around the Middle East. He talked about how Muslim feasts are all about suffering. "Our holiday Ramadan," he said, "is 30 days of self-deprivation. There's a reason why the Grinch never stole Ramadan."

Mr. Obeidallah came back on and chatted away, saying that it was great to see all the chain stores opening up in the Middle East—except for one. He noticed that Target was absent. He introduced Ahmed Ahmed, an Egyptian-born, California-raised comic who has appeared on "Roseanne" and "The View" and was profiled on

The Wall Street Journal's front page. He talked about performing around the Middle East—in Kuwait, he was told "sir, you may not talk about sex, drugs, religion, and no bad language." He illustrated his reaction with a frozen grimace. "What the f— was I supposed to talk about?" He went on to praise Arab civilization. "Turns out we practically invented hygiene: perfume, soap, deodorant, the toothbrush . . . what happened?" He was followed by Joe DeRosa, part-Egyptian part-Italian, who had a coveted half-hour special on Comedy Central in February. "There's too much racism against foreigners," he said. "Foreigners welcome, I say—come one, come all. Just don't smell like your country."

Ms. Zayid, subtly swaying with palsy but wenchy withal, came on clothed in a long Arab dress. "My father thinks I'm the world's biggest prostitute," she said, "because I do stand-up comedy in public." She went on to add that she had worked proudly for candidate Obama's election. "They told me, 'we were looking for a black lesbian in a wheelchair but we found you. You're perfect.'" For this reporter, the evening hit its peak with Aron Kader, a Palestinian-Mormon Gary Cooper look-alike. "Any Palestinian-Mormons in the audience?" he asked, sighing knowingly at the ensuing silence. He went on to relate, with brilliant impersonations of Arab elders, how he was sitting with his

extended family in the West Bank and happened to ask, "what would you do if there was peace?" Conveying their reaction, his face went dumbstruck.

"Huhhh?"
"What would you do?"
"No, no. We will fight and fight and fight and . . ."

Successful as the show is state-side, according to Mr. Obeidallah, "they love what we do in the Middle East." Though the festival doesn't travel, many of its stars do, and Mr. Obeidallah has recently performed in Beirut, Cairo and Amman to audiences of thousands, always in English. "They didn't have stand-up as a genre until we turned up," he says. "We're comedy missionaries. They export religion; we export comedy back at them. They can't get enough. We're like superstars—they know all about us, especially the young, and it's all through YouTube."

As part of his self-appointed mission, Mr. Obeidallah teaches seminars in stand-up comedy with colleagues, sometimes selecting one or two local wannabes to include in the night's show. "We're missionaries both ways," he says. "We like teaching Americans about Arabs through comedy. In the early days, reporters would cover us and you'd get headlines like, 'Arab Comedy: Oxmoron?' We're converting people, one laugh at a time."

Mr. Kaylan writes about culture and the arts for the Journal.

Masterpiece / By Jeremy Hildreth

Before the Trees Disappeared

EASTER ISLAND, South Pacific—That you can now fly here in five hours, several days a week from Santiago, Chile, belies the truth that Easter Island is the most isolated of inhabited places on Earth. The nearest neighbor, Pitcairn—where the Bounty mutineers settled—with a population of 48 people, is 1,240 miles to the west.

Significantly, it is this preternatural lonesomeness that suggests the answers to two of archaeology's greatest riddles: the giant and eerie stone carvings for which the island is renowned, and the ecological disaster that caused a 99% population decline and made Easter Island a poster child for the fate many believe awaits the whole of humanity if we're not careful.

But first, the heads. Archaeologists have inventoried 887 carved figures made between about A.D. 1000 and 1600. These big busts, called *moai*, are an average of 13 feet tall and are known to islanders as the "living faces." They represent ancestors and elders. "For us, they are people," one descendant of the natives told me.

Perhaps. But for me they are just ancient and alien statues. Their meaning isn't intrinsic at all—it is abstract, intense and interrogative: I want to sit at their feet and ask questions. I feel these guys know something, and I want to know it too. Gigantic and primitive, the moai provoke not reverence or awe but pure wonder, registered as a definite physical sensation, a kind of cosmic "Huh?"

Such ethereal queries are accompanied by terrestrial ones, such as: How did the moai get

from the single quarry where they all were carved to their erect positions—mostly dotted around the coastal perimeter with their backs to the sea—up to 12 miles away? Several theories have been demonstrated as feasible, including dragging the statues on wooden sleds. "There are lots of ways they could have been moved," says Sergio Rapu, the only born Easter Islander who is also a trained archaeologist. "How was it actually done?" is the question.

Oral history claims that the statues walked, and Mr. Rapu believes he has found examples of the "shoes" they wore for the journey: stones, flat on the topside, used by the islanders to pivot a trussed-up statue back and forth and forward—like moving a refrigerator—while synchronizing their exertions with chanting. Some experiments show a convincing way the moai, if lashed upright into a wooden frame, could have marched themselves along practically under their own power, as though hobbling on crutches. In truth, islanders may have used a combination of techniques.

And why did they make so many? Well, why not? Easter Island, in the relative far east of the Pacific Ocean, 2,360 miles from South America, was one of the very last places to be settled by Polynesians. People arrived around

the year 500, and after several generations the population was sufficient to get into the labor-intensive monument business. Polynesians were carvers anyway; here they had the perfect volcanic rock for it and little else to occupy their time. So statue building became the central activity of Easter's society. Unsurprisingly, the maximum

trees; fires; El Niño-induced droughts; salt spray; and human consumption of wood.

Mr. Rapu, who was also governor of the island for six years, says that the deforestation was undoubtedly a mixture of human and natural forces. By the time Dutch Admiral Jacob Roggeveen spotted the island on Easter Sunday in 1722 (there's one secret revealed for you), he found no trees taller than 10 feet.

The major obvious fallout from Easter's deforestation was diminution of the food supply. Birds were hunted to extinction; and cannibalism became rife. Jared Diamond, who uses Easter as a case study in his book "Collapse," reports that "Your mother's flesh sticks in my teeth" became a common insult.

For the Easter Islanders, there was no escape. "They were trapped," says Mr. Rapu. In or around 1680, we know, civil

war broke out. People began tearing down the statues, possibly in deliberate effrontery to leaders they believed had failed them. (A 33-foot tall statue named Paro, dating from about 1620, was one of the last erected and one of the last felled.) The year 1838 offers the last European mention of a standing statue, and in 1868 every moai on Easter Island was either toppled in the dirt or rest-



Isolated Easter Island is the site of a monumental achievement.

population of 15,000 to 20,000, reached in the 15th or 16th century, corresponds to the peak of moai-making.

Unluckily, the native Rapa Nui were living in one of the most fragile ecosystems imaginable: a windy, cool climate, very dry by tropical standards. Deforestation set in almost from the outset, caused by a combination of factors: animals eating the seeds of

ing stillborn in the quarry. Captain Cook, arriving in 1774, described the islanders as "small, lean, timid and miserable." European diseases arrived soon after, killing more people, and slave raids in 1862-63 carried off 1,500 Rapa Nui—half the remaining population—to the Peruvian guano mines. A handful managed to struggle home a few years later—and brought the plague with them. By 1872 there were just 111 people on the island.

Today, the 3,800 residents in Rapa Nui are citizens of Chile, the islanders having accepted Chilean annexation in 1888. It's been for the most part a happy relationship. Spanish is the island's lingua franca (though Rapa Nui is being revived), and you can have a mean plate of *ceviche con coco* while you contemplate the fate of the island and its lessons.

Due to the massive population drop-off, vast swaths of cultural knowledge have been lost forever, contributing to the sense of insolubility that surrounds Easter's puzzling past. Says Mr. Rapu: "Our ethnography is one of the poorest in the Pacific. But we still know how to fish. We still know how to track the moon for guidance in planting. We still have some things to call ourselves Rapa Nui." Above all—and for all of us—they have the moai, about which no matter how much archaeologists surmise, we shall always be left wondering.

Mr. Hildreth (jeremyhildreth.com) is a traveler, a writer, and an image consultant for companies and countries.

time off

Amsterdam

photography

"NY Perspectives" shows images of Amsterdam as seen through the eyes of four New York photographers: Gus Powell, Carl Wooley, Richard Rothman and Joshua Lutz.

Foam Fotografiemuseum in De Bazel Building
Until Aug. 23
☎ 31-20-5516-500
www.nyperspectives.com

art

"The Art of Flying: Bird Pieces by Melchior d'Hondecoeter" exhibits paintings by Melchior d'Hondecoeter (1636-95).

Rijksmuseum—
Amsterdam Schiphol
May 27-Oct. 26
☎ 31-20-6747-172
www.rijksmuseum.nl

Barcelona

music

"Estrella Damm Primavera Sound" is an international music festival featuring performances by Neil Young, Sonic Youth, Yo La Tengo, Ghostface Killah, Bloc Party and many others.

Parc del Forum
May 28-30
☎ 34-93-3010-090
www.primaverasound.es

art

"The Ideal Beauty—Antoni Solà presents the work of Spanish neo-classical sculptor Antoni Solà (1780-1861).

Museu Frederic Marès
Until Sept. 27
☎ 34-93-2563-500
www.museumares.bcn.cat

Berlin

art

"Imi Knoebel: Help, help..." is an exhibition created by the German abstract artist Imi Knoebel (born 1940), presenting a retrospective of his layered art.

Neue Nationalgalerie
May 23-Aug. 9
☎ 49-30-266-4245-10
www.smb.museum

Brussels

music

"Brussels Jazz Marathon 2009" features about 140 performances by more than 400 musicians, including Jennifer Scavuzzo, Jef Neve & Groove Thing and Phil Robinsson.

Brussels Jazz Marathon
May 29-31
☎ 32-2-4560-484
www.brusselsjazzmarathon.be

art

"Opening" is the official opening of a new museum dedicated to the Belgian Surrealist painter René Magritte (1898-1967).

René Magritte Museum
May 30-June 2
☎ 32-2-5086-3211
www.musee-magritte-museum.be

Cologne

art

"From Picasso to Warhol—Avant-Garde Artists' Jewelry" showcases 140 works of jewelry and decorative miniatures by artists such as Alexander Calder (1898-1976) and Max Ernst (1891-1976).

Museum für Angewandte Kunst
Until July 19



'Living Room Nr. 3 (spinning),' from 2002, by Eric Fischl, in Munich; below, shoe by Andrea Pfister, from 1990, in Madrid.

☎ 49-221-2212-3860
www.museenkoeln.de

Frankfurt

art

"Looting and Restitution—Jewish-Owned Cultural Artifacts from 1933 to the Present" illustrates the historical events and consequences of looting by Nazis throughout Europe.

Jewish Museum Frankfurt
Until Aug. 8
☎ 49-69-212-35000
www.jewishmuseum.de

Hamburg

art

"Modern Life: Edward Hopper and His Time" displays six major works by American realist artist Edward Hopper (1882-1967) alongside 65 masterpieces by his contemporaries, including Man Ray (1890-1976) and Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986).

Bucerius Kunst Forum
Until Aug. 30
☎ 49-40-3609-960
www.buceriuskunstforum.de



© Andrea Pfister

Lausanne

sports

"Heroes" explores the history and iconography of sporting figures in four periods of history: antiquity, the rebirth of the Olympic Games in 1896, the era after World War I, and today.

Olympic Museum
Until Sept. 13
☎ 41-21-6216-511
www.olympic.org/uk/passion/museum/index-uk.asp

London

design

"French Porcelain for English Palaces: Sèvres from the Royal Collection" brings together around 300 pieces created by the Sèvres factory in France, including a set of three vases once owned by Marie Antoinette.

The Queen's Gallery
May 23-Oct. 11
☎ 44-20-7766-7300
www.royalcollection.org.uk

Lyon

opera

"Death in Venice" is the last opera written by English composer Benjamin Britten (1913-76). Conducted by Martyn Brabbins and performed by the Choir and Orchestra of the Lyon Opera.

Opera de Lyon
May 24-June 1
☎ 33-826-3053-25
www.opera-lyon.com

Maastricht

art

"Exile on Main St." shows 200 works

by nine American artists who took a stand against mainstream art from the 1960s onward, including William Copley (1919-96), Peter Saul (born 1934) and H.C. Westerman (1921-81).

Bonnefantenmuseum
Until Aug. 16
☎ 31-43-3290-190
www.bonnefanten.nl

Madrid

art

"Artaud" presents drawings, notes, several photographs and a selection of manuscripts alongside films highlighting the acting and screenwriting talents of the French playwright and poet Antonin Artaud (1896-1948).

La Casa Encendida
Until June 7
☎ 34-902-4303-22
www.lacasaencendida.es

fashion

"Stiletto Heels—Fascination and Seduction" illustrates the history of stiletto heels from the initial invention by Christian Dior in 1940 to the present day, with footwear by Prada, Manolo Blahnik, Christian Louboutin and Jimmy Choo.

Museo del Traje
Until Aug. 30
☎ 34-91-550-4700
museodeltraje.mcu.es

Munich

art

"Opening" introduces the Udo and Anette Brandhorst Collection, housing works by Cy Twombly (born 1928), Andy Warhol (1928-87), Damien Hirst

(born 1965) and others.

Museum Brandhorst
Until May 24
☎ 49-89-2380-5104
www.museum-brandhorst.de

Paris

art

"One image may hide another: Arcimboldo-Dalí-Raetz" shows works exploring embedded or double meanings in works by M.C. Escher (1898-1972), Salvador Dalí (1904-89) and others.

Galleries nationales du Grand Palais
Until July 6
☎ 33-1-4013-4800
www.rmn.fr

history

"The Bath and the Mirror" shows toilet kits from antiquity and the Middle Ages, containing powder boxes, perfume bottles and grooming objects, alongside bath sculptures, painted vases and paintings on wood from the 15th century.

Musée National du Moyen Âge
Until Sept. 21
☎ 33-1-5373-7800
www.musee-moyenage.fr

Zurich

history

"Rajasthan—King and Warriors" exhibits 16th-century religious paintings and artifacts from Rajasthan, India.

Museum Rietberg Park
Until Jan. 10, 2010
☎ 41-44-2063-131
www.stadt-zuerich.ch

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.