

# WEEKEND JOURNAL.

FRIDAY - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1 - 3, 2010

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William Daniels for The Wall Street Journal

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Illustration by Jean-Manuel Duvivier

## Berlin's fulfilled dreams and empty spaces

### [ European Life ]

By J. S. MARCUS IN BERLIN



The 20th Day of German Unity this Sunday, commemorating the official unification of East and West Germany back in the fall of 1990, is arguably an event of great historical significance—but of little domestic interest. With a bloody millennium of disunity behind them, Germans have together raised a whole generation that really knows nothing but peace. But still hung over from last year's 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and from two solid decades of national reconciliation, most Germans will probably look on Sunday's celebrations and yawn.

As a longtime Berlin resident, and a fairly impatient one at that, I decided to celebrate locally, and in advance. A few weeks ago, with an itch to measure the distance that Germany has covered in 20 years, I paid a visit to Berlin's central planning office. There, in a gallery behind the lobby, was the object of my quest: an enormous model of the center of Berlin. Used by the city to document the ongoing state of civic construction, the model is at once monumental and poignant. In part a 3D wish list of potential projects, like the quixotic ring of new skyscrapers planned for eastern Berlin's Alexanderplatz, it is also the mind's inner map of the city, mixing up past, present and future. This is a Berlin not seen from the air, but seen in a dream.

The living and the dead meet up in dreams, and, even by Berlin standards, the Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung was well haunted. Peering down from one corner was Karl Friedrich Schinkel, the early 19th-century Prussian architect and city planner, whose own humanist dreams left Berlin many of its greatest build-

ings, but whose legacy was trampled on by late 19th-century Prussian militarism. Peering down from another was Albert Speer, Hitler's court architect, who had his own model, which notoriously turned the city into "Germania," the gigantesque capital of Hitler's 1,000-year Reich. And staring me in the face was living ghost Hans Stimmann, the city's Senatsbaudirektor from 1999 to 2006, and the man largely responsible for the way the city looks now. Scarred by recent architecture of shocking, dulling mediocrity, Berlin fell victim to Mr. Stimmann's strict desire to limit the heights and facades of most new buildings. The hope was to revive the city's 19th-century fabric, but the result has been block after block of plain squat structures, many designed, much to their chagrin, by the world's greatest architects.

After taking in the model, I went upstairs to have a chat with his successor, a Swiss architect named Regula Lüscher, who had been Zürich's city planner before she came here. I chatted about the "cliché," as she called it, that Berlin has attracted first-rate architects, who then build second-rate buildings once they get here. "I can't comment on that," she said. Well, are there any new buildings in the city that you don't like? "I never answer those sorts of questions."

What Ms. Lüscher does not reveal, but what local architects are celebrating, is her openness to many points of view. Discretion is not what I always wish for in a conversation partner, but it might be just what the city needs in a Senatsbaudirektorin.

#### Ethereal no-man's land

Ms. Lüscher did manage to commit herself to one thing—the inevitable demolition of what may be Berlin's most appealing public space. At the beginning of Unterdend Linden, in what counts as the city's very center, a temporary park has arisen over the past few

years. As conceived by two local landscape architects, Gero Heck and Marianne Mommsen, the design is meant to fill in the emptiness created by the postponed reconstruction of the Hohenzollern's city palace, which in turn is meant to replace the now torn-down East German capitol building, the Palast der Republik. In what is ground zero of German history, and a consistent battle ground for architects and city planners, Mr. Heck and Ms. Mommsen, using little but green grass and wooden pathways, have created an ethereal no-man's land, which gives passersby a much-needed break from thinking about Germany's past and Berlin's future.

#### Heroes

A few months ago, the city decided to turn the grounds of Tempelhof Airport, which had served Hitler's and Willy Brandt's Berlin equally well, into Berlin's largest park. It is now awaiting the result of a competition, as landscape architects from across Europe figure out what to do with the runway-crossed emptiness. As a public space, Tempelhof—"Park" is hardly inviting, but its sheer weirdness feels very authentic. Like the sudden empty spaces created by the fall of the Wall 20 years ago, Tempelhof—which is essentially post-industrial wilderness—can summon up strong feelings of hope and longing. It needs to be filled in with something, so why not one person's fantasies? In a few years, this, too, will be redeveloped—will become something, instead of nothing. But for now, there it is, a blank space, waiting for an afternoon's imagination to rescue it. "We can be heroes," goes the David Bowie song, one of Berlin's more durable creations, and a testimony to the feelings of grandeur, delusional or otherwise, that the city consistently provokes, "just for one day."

*Next week,*  
Sam Leith in London.

Barbara Tina Fuhr Editor  
Beth Schepens Deputy Editor  
Brian M. Carney Taste page editor

Carlos Tovar Art director  
Elisabeth Limber Weekend art director

Questions or comments? Write to [wsj.weekend@wsj.com](mailto:wsj.weekend@wsj.com).  
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## PROFILE

# Imagining the Brioni woman

How designer Alessandro Dell'Acqua injected romance into the Italian fashion label's womenswear

By CHRISTINA BINKLEY

**A** Brioni label on a man's suit suggests he has money, power and taste. Here in Italy's fashion capital this week, the storied brand looked to designer Alessandro Dell'Acqua to create the same magic for its womenswear.

Mr. Dell'Acqua's task is to inject his romantic, feminine-but-not-frilly aesthetic into a label whose womenswear has in the past seemed severe. While the label has sold women's clothes since 2001, they have never had the cachet of the Brioni men's suit, worn by moguls, celebrities and figures from Nelson Mandela to James Bond.

The designer is taking a surprising approach for a brand associated with chairmen of the board. His imagined muse is "a middle-class woman, but with a dark side," he said on Saturday, the day before he showed his first collection for Brioni. Dark is hardly the impression one gets of either Brioni or Mr. Dell'Acqua. The 47-year-old designer was sitting in Brioni's clean-as-a-whistle offices, which are tucked beyond a stone courtyard on Milan's Via Gesù in the city's haute shopping district.

But Mr. Dell'Acqua is coming off a volatile stretch that includes quitting his own label last year. The Alessandro Dell'Acqua brand, launched in 1996, had become popular in Italy for its sexy nice-girl clothes. (He also created the gold-seamed pants worn by Michael Jackson at rehearsals for his last tour, chronicled in the film "This Is It.")

The divorce with his label was all too typical in fashion—a designer splitting with his financial backers over creative differences. As often happens, Mr. Dell'Acqua lost the legal rights to work under his own name, which was owned by the label.

Less typical was the way he handled it—sending out a lengthy press release in June 2009 that announced the house's spring collections would be "produced without my approval."

"It was very painful," he said last week. "For six months, I did no work at all." He said he is resigned to the idea that he may never again design as "Alessandro Dell'Acqua." A new manufacturer, Mariella Burani Fashion Group SpA, this month announced it will design, make and sell a line of women's clothes under the Alessandro Dell'Acqua name, starting with a fall 2011 collection.

This week—just days before his Brioni show—Mr. Dell'Acqua rolled out the second collection for a new self-financed line called No. 21. The label, which uses far less luxurious fabrics and fabrications than Brioni, is named for his Dec. 21 birthday and lucky number. It is drawing praise from retailers who once carried Alessandro Dell'Acqua.

"We just received No. 21 the other day," says Karen Daskas, co-owner of Tender Birmingham, a store in a wealthy suburb of Detroit. "Alessandro Dell'Acqua is a talented designer [and] has the ability to do clean sexy, never sleazy."

Joining Brioni last spring gave Mr. Dell'Acqua an opportunity to support himself financially while launching No. 21.

Brioni, which was founded in Rome in 1945 as a menswear maker, has long catered to the sort of men who run things, or aspire to. But its womenswear business has



had a bumpy ride. The line was previously designed by Cristina Ortiz, who got lukewarm reviews. Womenswear now accounts for 10% of the company's sales.

A successful women's label could offer vast possibilities for a brand that is currently typecast as a suit-

**To rise to the lucrative big-brand levels, a brand must supply both homme and femme.**

and-tie maker. With women's collections come the possibility of fragrances, cosmetics, accessories—and the cachet of attention from feminine fashion magazines. To rise to the lucrative big-brand levels of Prada, Gucci and Armani, a brand must supply both *homme* and *femme*.

Mr. Dell'Acqua's appointment marks an aggressive push into the women's market, Andrea Perrone, then-president and chief executive of Brioni Group, said last spring. Mr. Perrone has since resigned for personal reasons, according to a spokeswoman. The company is being run by existing executives, she said.

Despite Mr. Dell'Acqua's imagined muse, Brioni is anything but middle-class, what with the quadruple-ply silks, hand-sewn hems and other decorative details on its men's clothes. The designer said he hopes to use the "workmanship" of the men's line to unlock the magical door to women's closets. He drew less on past women's collections. "I'm starting from scratch," he said.

Mr. Dell'Acqua said he wouldn't be taking the Hollywood route—dressing celebrities for events—that brands like Pucci and

Dolce & Gabbana use with great success. "I don't like red-carpet gowns. They're exaggerated and seem more like costumes," he said. "I don't like big puffy evening dresses." Instead, he said he is aiming for an elegant sportswear look—suitable for a company hoping to press further into the American market.

He showed the Brioni collection on Sunday at Milan's modern-design museum, the Triennale. The gallery's clean white lines evoked a blank-slate effect that seemed appropriate for both the brand and the designer.

As promised, he departed from the menswear look, using many lighter fabrics and fabrications and instilling a far more feminine style.

The collection hit many of the themes that have been recurrent through the spring shows—using lace, offering a caftan silhouette, and making unusual color combinations such as a brown silk blouse tucked into red shorts. But there was none of the electric loudness that was apparent on the runways of Jil Sander and Etro. Rather than hot orange, there was a softer peachy tone.

One Yves Saint Laurent-inspired Le Smoking jacket was made in the same factory and same techniques as the menswear, but with more curvaceous lines it became sleek as well as powerful. That was a classic Brioni moment.

Then there were pure Dell'Acqua moments. Several cotton blouses looked refined from the front, but left the back bare—a trick he used in this season's No. 21 line as well.

The show closed with a long white cotton-poplin gown with deceptively simple folds crisscrossing the chest to create a drape. It was a reference to the wedding gowns that traditionally close an haute couture show. The designer said he initially



Top, fashion designer Alessandro Dell'Acqua; Above, Brioni woman spring/summer 2011 fashion show in Milan.

designed the skirt in a simpler form for his No. 21 collection, then decided to upgrade it for Brioni.

Backless blouses? Cotton gowns? "Brioni needs to be shaken up in terms of image," he said with the merest of smiles.

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## FASHION

# The wrong sort of black?

The color is an important part of any wardrobe—in moderation

## [ Style ]

By Tina Gaudoin



I don't mean to come over all "fashiony" so early on in our relationship, but I hope you will forgive me if I discuss "black" this week. Why? Well, for starters this is the season for black. When I say season I'm not talking about autumn retail, I mean the approximate 28-day mayhem that constitutes the fashion weeks of New York, London, Milan and Paris, beginning in early September (from which, paradoxically, the news has been all about color for spring 2011). "Why do so many people in fashion wear black?" It's a question I have been asked countless times. Depending on my mood, the answers have been variously "Because fashion is such a dark business," "Because they can" and "Because it's chic and easy." The answer, of course, lies somewhere in the middle. Black is an important part of any wardrobe, but like anything else that offers an easy respite, only in moderation.

There has been much commentary about the fact that Alexander McQueen's moving memorial service at St. Paul's Cathedral a couple of weeks ago must have been unnervingly familiar for us fashion folk, seated as we were in tightly packed rows, according to rank, with what could have easily counted for a catwalk running up to the pulpit of this esteemed place of worship. Naturally (and appropriately), most of us were wearing the aforementioned color. Some had clearly put a lot of thought and effort into which particular black outfit we would be wearing for the occasion (also not unlike attending the shows).

McQueen would definitely have approved of the quality of the outfits on display and the historical referencing. Pre Coco Chanel, black was primarily thought of as mourning attire or ecclesiastical garb. McQueen, of course, harnessed the power of both of these concepts in many of his collections, but what he—like Chanel, YSL and Helmut Lang before him—recognized was that to do black well, the fabric needs to be expensive and the cut immaculate. Tortured, brilliant tailoring was McQueen's genius. I know women who are still wearing his broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped black satin trouser suits from 12 years ago or his magical little black dresses, with an inner bodicing that narrowed the waist and emphasized the breasts.

There's a misconception promulgated mainly by those of us who are somewhat lazy about what we wear that any sort of black will do. Not true. Cheap, badly cut High Street black looks worse than almost anything else (bin bags and safety pins included). Well-cut black silk, stretch wool, lace or chiffon (preferably a mix of at least two of these) still has the ability to mesmerize and bestow confidence like no other outfit. That's the real truth of course about why black

has become such a fashion uniform—if you worked in a world where people looked you up and down for a living, you'd probably want to wear something that was beyond reproach too.

When American Vogue pre-viewed Chanel's LBD in 1926 with the caption "Here is a Ford signed Chanel," they were, as Justine Picardie remarks in "Coco Chanel, The Legend and The Life," predicting that the LBD would become "a uniform as widely recognized as a Ford automobile: fast and sleek and discreet." What they perhaps couldn't have foreseen were the other inferences that would accompany black—the S&M undertones, so brilliantly morphed into acceptable modern day fashion by designers like Helmut Lang; the overtly glamorous, sexually promiscuous cues metaphorized by Versace's tight satin pants and Dolce & Gabbana's lacy dresses; the deeply "cool" androgyny of designers like Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo of Commes des Garçons and, more recently, the gothic mixed-media "antifashion" collections of the Rodarte sisters. All of which is to say that black has been part of the fashion lexicon for 80-something years; the trick is to not let it become the dominant player in your wardrobe. How does one know when one has gone too far? I offer my own salutary tale as an example. A nonfashion friend once pleaded with me to show her my wardrobe. After the pressure had been applied a few times, I relented, not wishing to seem standoffish. After she had spent a good 20 minutes poking around in my closet, she turned to me with a grimace. "This is all very nice," she said politely, "but where is the stuff you wear during the day?"

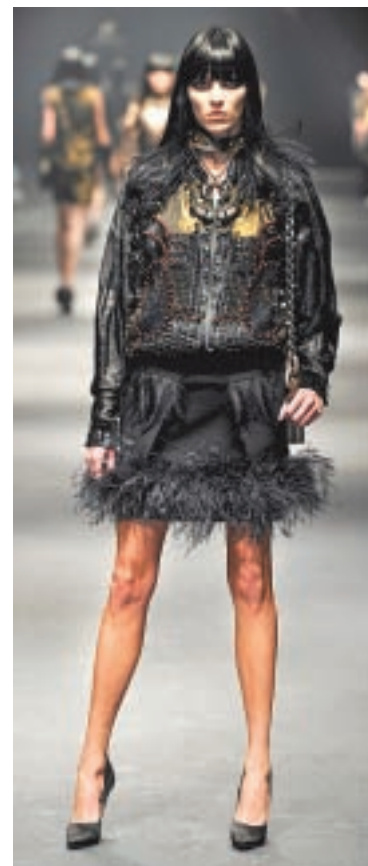
To avoid the "sea of black" scenario, I recommend spending significantly on your black outfit. (The received fashion terminology here is "investing," but really what this means is handing over your credit card, feeling rather queasy for the next 24 hours and then making damn sure no one else sees the receipt or the bill.) Readers, you will thank me. Buy the right piece and you will still be wearing it—as I am with a particular Chanel number—10 years later.

On that note, Chanel's pre-collection and Paris-Shanghai collection offer, as you might expect, the perfect LBD, starting at £1,100. For trouser suits, look to Bottega



Chanel/Karl Lagerfeld; Lanvin; Bottega Veneta

Above, reconstruction of the 'Ford' dress by Chanel, photographed by Karl Lagerfeld; top right, Lanvin black ostrich feather and washed jersey skirt; bottom right, Bottega Veneta Nero matte gabardine jacket and pant.



Veneta's gabardine jacket, £1,260, and trousers, £410. For evening drama and sex appeal, see Lanvin, where Alber Elbaz has created what can only be described as an exuberant ostrich-feather skirt (warning: it does sit above the knee), £1,740. YSL revolutionized the women's market with "Le Smoking" during the '60s; a modern day version will set you back £1,610. (Wear the jacket and pants separately to the office for greater flexibility.) There's a lot of black lace and chiffon around this season, with Dolce & Gabbana leading the charge. Instead of a lacy dress (lots of bad ones on the High

Street), try D&G's timeless chiffon blouse with neck tie, £290; you will be wearing it long after lace has lost its allure.

The key to wearing black it to recognize that it isn't a style panacea. It is best worn sparingly and mostly after the sun goes down. As a maturer (and therefore wiser) sales assistant on the designer floor at Selfridges recently noted: "It's amazing how many women come in here hell-bent on buying black. The moment they put it on, it sucks the light right out of their faces." Readers, we should consider ourselves strongly cautioned.

## Coolhunter

## Quoddy



Quoddy

You might find this hard to believe, but a lot of the coolest trends start with men and are appropriated by women. Not that I'm saying that men are cooler than women, it's just that because men are less fickle sartorially (read more practical), they are naturally drawn toward brands that offer more than a quick fix. Don't write in—Gloria Steinem is my hero too, and I bet she would appreciate that Quoddy is named in part after Maine's Passamaquoddy tribe, where Harry Smith Shorey began making moccasins by hand in 1909. The tradition of hand-sewn

shoes continues today with each pair being made entirely by one person at their workbench. "My growth is limited by the amount of people I have who are trained to make these shoes," says CEO John Andreliunas, who likens the upswing in the brand's fortunes to what happened with vintage trainers a decade ago, when teen and 20-something males began seeking out brands and models with a heritage. Quoddy's take a bit of getting used to aesthetically but their light crepe soles, full-grained sheepskin liners and hand-sewn uppers, which made

them so handy for deer hunting in Maine, also mark them out on the street as boots with integrity and longevity (Quoddy will lovingly repair and resole on request). That women are now clamoring for the "Ring Boot" meets with Mr. Andreliunas's approval. "Eighty percent of the footwear sold in the world is bought by women," he says. "What's not to like about that trend?"

www.quoddy.com; Dover Street Market in London will carry Quoddy for a limited time in January 2011.

—Tina Gaudoin



He's a fan.



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## TRAVEL



Stefano Scatà for The Wall Street Journal (4)

# Inside a Tuscan house of style

Anyone can stay at Massimo Ferragamo's luxe compound—as long as they can pay the €1.1 million fee

BY SHELLY BRANCH

Upon arrival at the Castiglion del Bosco, a smartly suited clerk produces a silver tray with steaming, lavender-scented hand towels. Bags discreetly vanish from the Benz that ferried me here from Florence, nearly 100 kilometers to the north. Before me lies 2,000 hectares of Tuscan countryside, including Sangiovese vineyards, stone ruins and remnants of a 12th-century castle.

My destination is one of Europe's most rarefied new vacation spots. The CdB, as it's known, is a private club where dues-paying members currently have access to nine far-flung villas and a championship golf course; and where interlopers can mingle with the couture class by reserving one of 23 suites in the old town center, or Il Borgo.

The compound is the ambitious creation of Massimo Ferragamo, chairman of the Italian fashion house's U.S. division. He purchased the land, along with its winery and large wild-boar population, in 2003. Over the past four years, he and a group of partners have quietly reimagined the property, undivided since 1100.

My suite, Della Torre, sits in a single structure housing most daily guests. Beyond an ample entry hall and marble half bath, the living

room projects a quiet gentility. Gold taffeta curtains puddle beside a cherry dining table. Wall-to-wall shelves contain rows of casually placed volumes, both in English and Italian. Flanked by ceramic urns and whimsical mushroom bookends, they seem less like props than an invitation to turn a page.

The sum effect, I decide, upon throwing open tall wooden shutters to reveal my *cinematique* view (scenes for "The English Patient" were shot nearby) is akin to staying with a very wealthy, very matter-of-fact acquaintance.

**There is no talk of thread counts or room service, both of which are simply a given at a place like this.**

Hospitality-speak would, at this point, require some mention of the "L" word. But despite his fashion pedigree—and his family's interests in several hotels—Mr. Ferragamo eschews the term "luxury." There is no talk of thread counts or room service, both of which are simply a given at a place like this. True luxury, says Mr. Ferragamo, has more to do with differentiation—"to be able to explore something you won't

find elsewhere."

After weeks away from his New York day job, Mr. Ferragamo is tan and animated. He is dressed in a navy short-sleeve shirt, khaki pants and Ferragamo loafers. Seeming more like host than proprietor, he holds court over a lunch of truffled pizza and gnocchi with mushrooms. Also at the table is Shirin von Wulffen, the willowy blonde wife of hair maestro Frederic Fekkai, who is preparing to depart with her infant daughter following a month-long stay.

Other recent visitors include Saks Inc. CEO Steve Sadove and cosmetics guru Christian Courtin-Clarins.

From our perch, the walled medieval town of Montalcino is within view, and Mr. Ferragamo is careful to note that the CdB is part of a protected nature preserve. This intensely organic vibe is what he sought to retain. "The stone had to look like it had been here for centuries," he says.

An occasional golfer himself, Mr. Ferragamo couldn't accept that the bunkers on his 18-hole course would be filled with a traditional white sand—too stark a contrast against the Tuscan landscape. So tons of beige PGA-approved sand, trucked in from Germany, now "blends in," he says.

The sheer scale here affords a



measure of privacy few properties can claim. The CdB could fit ten Monacos inside its boundaries. In its eminence, around 1208, the estate had the distinction of paying the highest property taxes in the Siennese Republic.

Today, the CdB's charms come with a different sort of tariff. Carefully vetted members (currently numbering 40) keep up with annual dues that cover stays, but not meals. Most, says marketing director Martina Chiarugi, take up residence for between two and six weeks per year. Members have exclusive access to the villas, which will eventually total 20, and the golf course. Non-mem-

ber Borgo suite guests, paying between €540 and €2,940 per night, are welcome almost everywhere else on the premises.

After lunch, Ms. Chiarugi grants me a tour of one of the unoccupied members-only villas. Its five bedrooms, she explains, are well suited for a young family with children and a nanny or two.

The kitchen is stocked with copper pots and dinnerware for 16. In the master suite, an enormous leather steam trunk opens to reveal its true purpose: bedside cocktail service, shakers and vodka included.

Back in my own quarters after dinner, high, thatched ceilings im-

TRAVEL



Clockwise from opposite page, Castiglion del Bosco; Borgo avenue; Massimo Ferragamo at his Italian retreat; chefs pick greens for the next meal at Castiglion del Bosco; and the main bedroom at Villa Biondi.

plore me to look up and I discover a skylight in my bathroom. Easing into a deep marble tub, I feel like I'm bathing in a chapel—with great toiletries.

Breakfast the next morning is served on the Borgo, al fresco. Diving into a plate of scrambled eggs with truffles, I relish the selection of salami and prosciutto, then decide it best to indulge later. With a wine adventure and a cooking class booked for the day, moderation is in order.

Our wine guide Roberto Ruscito, who trudges through the vineyards in a black Dolce & Gabbana suit, is proficient in his knowledge of local growing conditions, soil qualities and the signature Brunello produced here.

But a visit to the CdB's winery, where casks slumber in a marvelous vaulted room, is all too brief. The wine master appears for a five-minute primer. An overhead glassed-in perch, seemingly the natural venue for tastings, Mr. Ruscito says is reserved for members only. The anticlimactic "tasting" comes at lunch—a group of six splendid reds, including a special 2004 vintage. (Ms. Chiarugi says guests can request a more formal tasting with the wine master.)

In Italy, food always seems to beget more food. So onward to the cooking school. A young New York couple rounds out the class and we

don white aprons, agape at the movie-set kitchen before us.

Head chef Moreno Miotto is our talented tutor. The mission, to prepare a dish of fresh pappardelle and chicken stew, sounds simple enough. But after a tour of the CdB's story-book garden—where we snip fresh basil and rosemary for our dishes—I begin to think otherwise. There is an art to hacking apart a fresh chicken, I learn. And another skill set for forming the ribbons of pappardelle (a deft inverted knife maneuver is key).

Our reward comes at dinner where we are first served the dishes prepared in class. Though the choreography of the wait staff seems slightly off tonight—drinks arrive after several requests—I savor the communion with new friends, a best-selling spiritual medium and her daughter.

Heading back to the Borgo, a constellation of soft lights embedded in the steps leading up to the ruins of the castello, or castle, beckon me. It is a secret monument, a Colosseum cousin with no tourist fuss, no traffic sounds. I can't resist its gorgeous humility and set out, on all fours, for the top. I recall my conversation with Mr. Ferragamo the day before—about wanting to put visitors in the "first seat of a show...to see the real life of Tuscany."

Embracing the damp stone, I realize I'm in it.

Planning a visit

Signing up

Regular membership costs €11 million plus €39,000 in annual dues. (castigliondelbosco.it)

Dropping by

Overnight guests can stay April-November. Rates for the Il Borgo suites start from €540 a night, including breakfast, plus 10% tax.

Getting there

The Italian property, situated in Val d'Orcia, about 100 kilometers from Florence, can arrange transportation from either the Florence or Pisa airports, from €255 (one-way) for a chauffeured Mercedes sedan.

Things to do

Include an on-premise cooking school with classes in basic Italian techniques and pizza making (€195) wine tours and tastings (€68 and up) and a full-service spa.

—Shelly Branch

WSJ.com

ONLINE TODAY: For a video and slideshow of the luxe Italian getaway, and Ferragamo's Tuscan tips, go to [wsj.com/lifeandstyle](http://wsj.com/lifeandstyle).

Asheville, North Carolina

[ Off the Beaten Track ]

Reporter Kelly Greene on ways to make the most of this city nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

**What to do:** Visit the 250-room Biltmore House, constructed in the style of a French chateau for George Vanderbilt—an heir of the industrialist millionaire Cornelius Vanderbilt—more than a century ago. The house is surrounded by a 3,200 hectare estate that includes a village, working farm, winery and vineyards. A behind-the-scenes tour points out technology rare at the time the house was built, including indoor plumbing, electrical wiring and refrigeration. (1 Approach Rd.; biltmore.com).

Lace up your hiking boots, or ready your rod and reel. The hills and valleys around Asheville abound in opportunities for hiking, climbing, fishing, rafting. The Nantahala Outdoor Center organizes whitewater rafting expeditions on Section IV of the Chattooga River—made notorious as the fictional Cahulawassee River in John Boorman's 1972 movie "Deliverance." This outfitter will also plan rafting trips suitable for families with small children. Many of the excursions cost less than €75 per person and there are departure points on seven rivers in the area (noc.com). ClimbMax Mountain Guides will lead you on an Appalachian rock-climbing adventure. Full-day, multi-pitch climbs for a party of two cost €200, including equipment (43 Wall St.; climbmaxnc.com).

If you take pleasure in arts and crafts, don't miss the Folk Art Center. It houses the Southern Highland Craft Guild's galleries and shop, where more than 200 craftspeople display their work, including baskets, quilts, pottery and jewelry. The guild also sponsors live craft-making demonstrations (Milepost 382, Blue Ridge Parkway; southernhighlandguild.org). Venture downtown to the arts-and-crafts galleries and shops in the Grove Arcade, which opened in 1929 (1 Page Ave.; grovearcade.com). Then hit Woolworth Walk, a former store turned gallery, which has more than 150 exhibiting artists and a 1950s-style lunch counter (25 Haywood St.; woolworthwalk.com).

Make a literary pilgrimage to the Thomas Wolfe Memorial, the Old Kentucky Home boarding house depicted as "Dixieland" in the Asheville native's novel "Look Homeward, Angel" (52 North Market St.; wolfememorial.com). Visit

the Riverside Cemetery in the Montford neighborhood to see Wolfe's grave and that of the short-story writer William Sydney Porter, better known by his pen name, O. Henry (53 Birch St.; nps.gov/nr/travel/asheville/riv.htm).

**What to eat:** For a casual dinner of comfort food, starting with fluffy biscuits and fried green tomatoes, head to Tupelo Honey Café (12 College St.; ☎1-828-255-4863; tupelohoneycafe.com). Another local favorite is Early Girl Eatery, where you can indulge in shrimp and grits, or a vegan tofu scramble (8 Wall St.; ☎1-828-259-9292; earlygirl Eatery.com). Corner Kitchen, in Biltmore Village, has earned a loyal following—and a visit last spring from President Obama, whose party sampled fried-oyster appetizers, corn and crab chowder, mahi mahi, lobster tacos and pork chops, according to the restaurant's blog (3 Boston Way; ☎1-828-274-2439; thecornerkitchen.com). Swing by 12 Bones Smokehouse, which offers two to three flavors of baby back ribs daily (5 Riverside Dr.; ☎1-828-253-4499; 12bones.com).

**Where to stay:** The granddaddy of all hotels in Western North Carolina is Asheville's Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa, which opened in 1913. The hotel has a golf course, a 62,000-square-meter spa with mountain views and a pool built into a grotto with thousands of fiber-optic lights meant to resemble stars twinkling overhead. The hotel even has a legendary ghost—the Pink Lady. If you don't stay here, you still might want to visit the hotel's Great Hall, grab a drink from the bar and pull up a chair by one of the huge stone fireplaces (290 Macon Ave.; ☎1-828-252-2711; groveparkinn.com; rooms start at about €145 a night).

The Inn on Biltmore Estate offers a luxurious way to stay on the grounds overnight (1 Antler Hill Rd.; ☎1-828-225-1600 biltmore.com/stay; rooms begin at €220 a night). The Grand Bohemian Hotel Asheville, nearby in Biltmore Village, is a Tudor-inspired boutique establishment (11 Boston Way; ☎1-828-505-2949; bohemianhotelasheville.com; rooms start at around €185). A comfortable option is the DoubleTree Biltmore Hotel (115 Hendersonville Rd.; 828-274-1800; biltmorefarmshotels.com/doubletree; rooms from around €110 a night). Hotel Indigo Asheville Downtown is a contemporary alternative (151 Haywood St.; ☎1-828-239-0239; hotelindigo.com; rates start at around €110 a night).

Arbitrage

A straight-razor shave at a barber shop

City	Currency	€
New York*	\$35	€25.70
Brussels	€26	€26
Frankfurt	€30	€30
Paris	€30	€30
London	£29	€33.60
Hong Kong	HK\$360	€34

\*includes 20% tip

Prices, including taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.



Getty Images

## FOOD



Relais &amp; Chateaux (2)

# Michel Guérard reinvents his art

The French master chef on his restaurant, hotel and spa at Les Prés d'Eugénie

BY EMMA-KATE SYMONS

If chefs could be heritage listed, 77-year-old Michel Guérard, one of France's most decorated culinary masters, would lead global rankings.

Today, more than three decades after he first received three Michelin stars for his fine-dining restaurant at the thermal bath spa and hotel complex Les Prés d'Eugénie at Eugénie-les-Bains in southwest France, the spry Mr. Guérard is still reinventing his art.

"I never saw myself as a star," he says. "I have chosen a field I

adore and that offers many possibilities. As [the early 20th-century chef/philosopher Auguste] Escoffier explained more than a hundred years ago: cuisine like *couture* is one of these creative fields that involve exaggeration and insolence. But what is important is that cuisine evolves."

Under his guidance, evolve it has. As the inventor of gastronomic slimming cuisine in the 1970s, and a driving force behind *nouvelle cuisine*—the radical break with traditional French cooking techniques that had relied on heavy sauces, co-

pious quantities of butter and large servings—Mr. Guérard became, after his friend Paul Bocuse, among the first global Gallic celebrity chefs, most famous for his simple dishes such as creamed eggs in a scooped-out eggshell with caviar (as a first course at dinner). He is also renowned for his soft pillow or truffle "dumpling" of mousserons and morilles mushrooms with asparagus tips or chicken stuffed with herbs, mushrooms and *fromage blanc*.

By reimagining the principles laid down by Fernand Point, the godfather of modern French cooking, the young provocateur landed the cover of *Time* magazine in 1976 and has since sold more than a million copies of his diet and gourmet cuisine recipe books.

A scientific cook before the age of molecular cuisine, Mr. Guérard selects his ingredients like a painter choosing color tubes. He was the first of the haute cuisine fraternity to devise frozen-food meals for conglomerates such as Nestlé, signing his first contract in 1976 with their mass-market label Findus.

And years before best-sellers such as Mireille Guiliano's "French Women Don't Get Fat" (2004), he was championing the importance of the pleasure of a little chocolate in every low-calorie diet. He is synonymous with the joy of desserts for di-

eters such as his delicious signature Paris-Brest concoction made with egg whites and a smattering of whipped cream ("It is the amount of cream that is the assassin," he says).

"I believe that in the future cuisine, including fine cuisine, will be healthy or it will no longer exist," he says, comparing a chef's creativity to a poet or songwriter. "To invent is a game and it is really fun," he says. "If we can no longer continue to invent and as a result find pleasure in our creativity then we must ask why."

In April he published a new book

**'If we can no longer continue to invent and as a result find pleasure in our creativity, then we must ask why.'**

—Chef Michel Guérard

of recipes (in French) with French TV chef Julie Andrieu called "How To Shine in the Kitchen Without Knowing How to Boil an Egg." (Agnes Viénot Editions.)

Mr. Guérard is also the vice-president of a new Culinary College of France and is launching a national

institute of "healthful cooking" in France to fight obesity and cancer by improving food served in public institutions such as schools.

But perhaps what he is busiest with these days is Les Prés d'Eugénie, the luxury spa, hotel and dining establishment he and his wife, Christine Guérard, opened in 1974. The couple say it offers guests a modern version of the Greco-Roman spa experience at the "Ferme Thermale d'Eugénie" and a constantly evolving slimming menu.

The spa was originally bought by Mrs. Guérard's father, Adrien Barthélémy, in the 1960s. As heiress to the family spa business La Chaîne Thermale du Soleil, Mrs. Guérard, the company's president, today runs more than 20 thermal bath stations throughout France.

The spa is located a 1.5-hour drive from Biarritz in Eugénie-les-Bains, a thermal springs station known for its therapeutic waters since the time of Henry IV in the 16th century. The village is named after Napoleon III's wife, the Empress Eugénie, who made it fashionable when she frequented in the 1860s.

Located on 10 hectares, Les Prés d'Eugénie ([www.michelguerard.com](http://www.michelguerard.com)) offers five different accommodation options decorated in 19th-century French colonial style. There are hotel rooms in the central palace, large





## FOOD



M.Cheneau (T); Relais &amp; Chateaux (2)



Clockwise from left page, chef Michel Guérard; the sitting room at Les Prés d'Eugénie at Eugénie-les-Bains; desserts created by Mr. Guerard; another salon.

apartments in separate mansions, vast suites, three restaurants, two thermal baths, beauty salon, gym, swimming pool and tennis courts, as well as extensive gardens laden with orange and lemon trees and roses.

In the past year, a new section to the hotel called L'Imperatrice, or The Empress, has opened as part of an ongoing expansion. The 120-square-meter Imperial Suite—which overlooks the main gardens and includes a large living room, dining room and white marble bathroom—starts at €770 a night. Cashmere throw rugs, Persian carpets, fresh roses and paintings from the empress's era complement the comfortable French regency armchairs.

As for dining options, guests who come for a luxury-spa experience can choose between the slimming, gastronomic and country cuisine, sampling the fruits of his latest research with a team of scientists, nutritionists and cookery teachers.

The luxury diet spa experience, or "cocoon" slimming regime, starts at €2,180 for a week and includes seven nights accommodation in a standard room at the central hotel complex of Les Prés d'Eugénie, three slimming menu meals a day at 400-600 calories per meal and six days of treatments at La Ferme Thermale, the central spa center, which offers everything from body

scrubs and mud baths to cellulite-reducing wraps. Each day the slimming package includes several 15-minute body-sculpting-treatment sessions using stimulating essential oils such as basil, grapefruit and black pepper. Guests are first assessed by the spa and massage therapist to decide the focus of the body-sculpting sessions—thighs, hips, buttocks or stomach. The weight-loss regime includes a glass of red or white wine daily and a steady variety of dishes such as cumin-perfumed grated carrot salad "à l'orange," soufflé of fresh tomatoes, trout cooked in its jacket with aniseed and lemon, and desserts such as apple clafoutis or almond jelly with fresh fruit.

Swiss-American client Marina Macorig Yaouanc is a regular. "This spa—even if it is one of the most expensive—is in my opinion the best," she said. "It is a very elegant setting and there is such refinement and a sense of detail. You know Christine and Michel so all this because it brings them so much pleasure."

Mr. Guérard says his spa stands out among the plethora of thermal bath establishments in France because it offers "thermal and medicinal water." While Eugénie-les-Bains has been valued for its therapeutic qualities for centuries, even the spa fraternity recognizes it among a

group of hot springs scientifically evaluated for their successful treatment of the worst symptoms of arthritis. Last year, the French Association for Thermal Research commissioned a study that showed that thermal waters had clear clinical benefits for arthritis sufferers, especially those with knee complaints and that these benefits were greater than standard treatment with anti-inflammatory drugs. Additionally, the French health system accepts the spa as a bona fide "cure" for arthritis patients and will reimburse a portion of their treatments at Eugénie-les-Bains.

Whether guests visit for medicinal, slimming or gourmet purposes (or all three), their stay at the Guérard's luxury retreat begins and ends with a gracious personal welcome from Mrs. Guérard, its châtelaine, business manager, and decorator-in-chief.

"Michel Guérard would not be Michel Guérard without his wife obviously," he confesses. "I had the good fortune to meet her completely by chance thanks to my friend [the Michelin-starred chef] Pierre Troisgros. I don't even know how she fell in love with a little cook like me. But voila, that is fate and we don't escape it. And the history of Les Prés d'Eugénie is a story of a life, a life "à deux" (of two).

## Creating a seasonal menu

[ Food ]

By BRUCE PALLING



With the fresh arrival to the top kitchens in Europe of oysters, game, root vegetables and various assortments of fungi, ranging from mushrooms to truffles, this seems to be the right occasion to discover how chefs go about creating a seasonal menu.

The leading seasonal London restaurant is the Square, Philip Howard's two-star Michelin establishment discreetly located in Mayfair's affluent quarter. This is the favored destination for casually attired hedge funders who wish to have the greatest French wines with elegantly produced, harmonious classic cuisine. The 44-year-old Mr. Howard prefers to keep himself in the kitchen and out of the media spotlight; although I have eaten at the Square dozens of times since it opened off St. James's Square nearly 20 years ago, I only met him for the first time for this interview.

Most restaurants offer quarterly tasting menus, but Mr. Howard arranges his five times a year. "I have always been rigorously seasonal for all the years I have been in the kitchen and that enforces change," the chef says. "Very little actually remains in season for even three months, with the exception of root vegetables and game in winter. Tomatoes are also around for three months, but asparagus barely lasts for six weeks."

That is why he breaks the year into two three-month segments for autumn and winter, starting at the end of September, and then divides the rest of the year, from April, into three eight-week segments. Spring lamb may stretch over a four-month period starting in May, but the accompaniments on the plate will alter. For instance, his signature saddle of lamb with a herb crust and a shallot purée first features English spring vegetables and mint but in the hotter months of July and August it turns up with Mediterranean-style vegetables with balsamic vinegar and olive oil.

So how does he actually get the ideas to create new dishes? Is it a flash of inspiration while strolling in the park or something hammered out with his kitchen staff around the stove? Interestingly, it is neither: "I am sure most people imagine that menu changes originate in the heat of

the kitchen, but in reality most changes emerge from your head, which is where it all churns around," Mr. Howard says. "Everything has to be tinkered with and executed, but 95% of it is thought out before you even get into the kitchen." In his cramped office next to the kitchen at the Square, there is a battered exercise book, which was a gift from his father. Along the left-hand side of the page, there is a neat list of ingredients that are being considered for inclusion, while the rest of the page is scrawled with arrows, doodles and assorted thoughts on how to execute them.

The most arresting new dish for autumn is described on the menu as "caramelized roscoff onion with a persillade of Somerset snails, smoked bone marrow and cepes." However, all I saw in the kitchen was a roasting tray with a handful of strange looking onions splayed into what looked like a sunflower with burnt ends. "We still have to tinker a bit more with it but I will get it right, especially as now is the season for superb onions," Mr. Howard says.

A chef cannot afford to merely think about the best fresh ingredients and ignore the rest, including signature dishes. Mr. Howard has perhaps four of these—apart from the herb-crusted lamb, there is lasagne of crab with cappuccino of shell fish and champagne foam, Scottish sautéed langoustine tails with parmesan gnocchi and an emulsion of potato and truffle, plus a roast saddle of hare on a *tarte fine* of celeriac and pear.

He admits, "In the context of a whole menu, I am absolutely meticulous about touching every base. We must remember we are here to please indulgent men who want to tuck into a top Bordeaux plus women—or men too—who are health, weight and calorie conscious." Of course, there is also the ever-changing daily menu which appeals to people who either don't have the time or the money to indulge themselves to the full.

Ironically, for someone who is a graduate in biochemistry, he abhors molecular gastronomy. "I am at completely at the other end of the spectrum because I was born with a good palate that appreciates harmony of flavor," he says. "I have yet to have anybody demonstrate to me that anything entirely inventive can better anything classical. I certainly believe that with classical combinations, you get in every instance something that is more than the sum of its parts. And if it is in season too, it is unbeatable."



Caramelized roscoff onion with a persillade comprising Somerset snails.

## WINE

## Searching

A rare peak inside the world's m

## [ Wine ]

By WILL LYONS



At No. 1, Rue Derrière le Four in Vosne-Romanée, the midafternoon sun catches the courtyard, casting a shadow across its white-washed walls, briefly illuminating a small oval-shaped plaque that sits atop a pair of burgundy-colored gates. Against the light one can just make out the letters "RC"—the one clue as to what lies behind.

It is here, sandwiched between a stone house and an outbuilding, that one finds the home of what many people regard as the world's most sought-after and precious wine—Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Walk past and you would miss it.

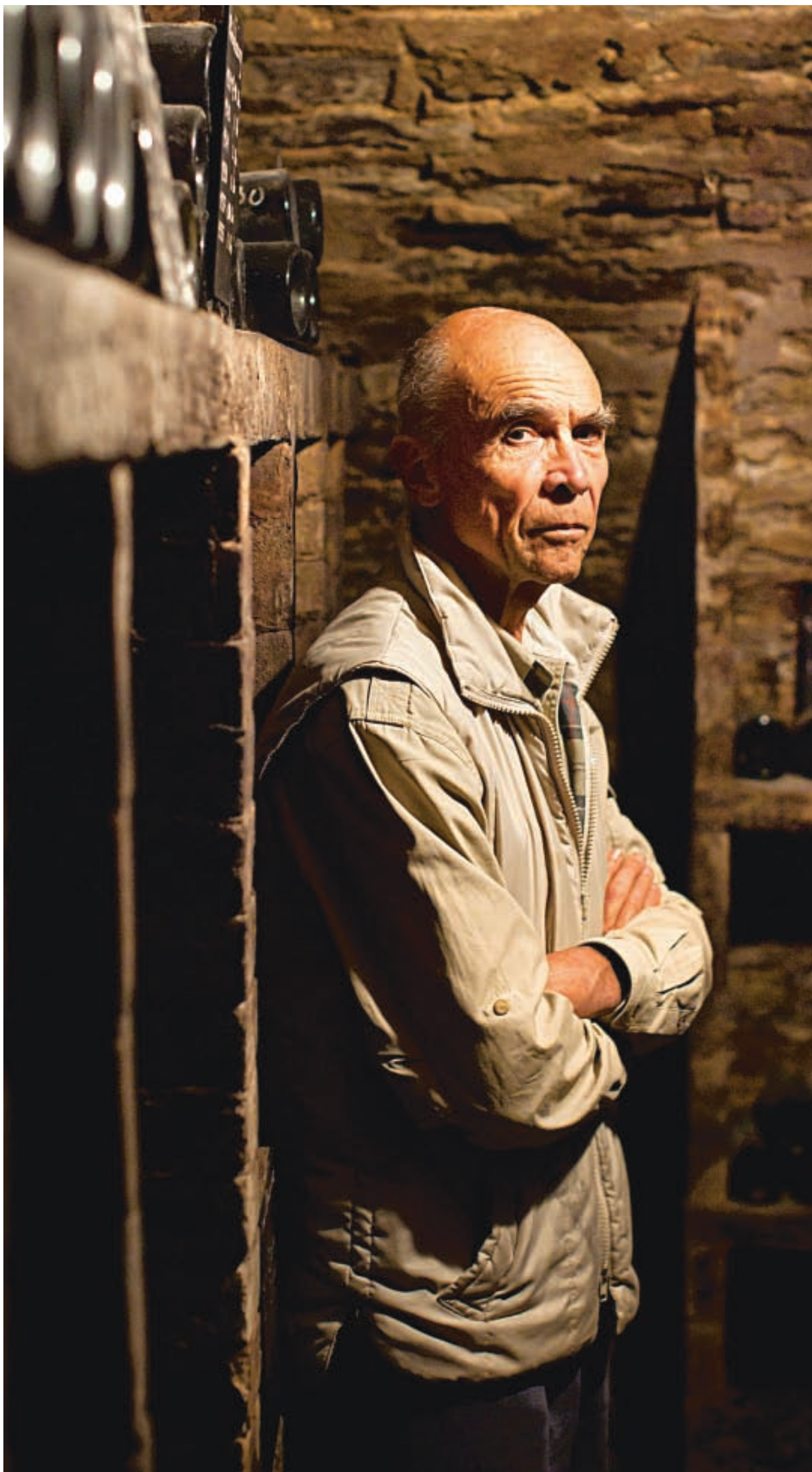
It may not be the world's grandest architectural frontage, but these initials represent two of the most bewitching names in the world of wine. There are many enchanting addresses in the vinuous landscape—Château Petrus in Bordeaux, Champagne Krug in Reims and Château d'Yquem in Sauternes—but few can compete with the mystery and allure of Romanée-Conti.

The name itself is that of a 1.8 hectare vineyard that lies just a short walk behind the village of Vosne-Romanée on a southeastern-facing hillside of the Côte d'Or, a thin, 48-kilometer ribbon of land that starts just south of Dijon and ends in the villages south of Santenay. Split into two sections, the Côte d'Or or "Golden Slope" divides into the Côte de Beaune in the south, known for its white Burgundies and delicate red wines, and the much shorter Côte de Nuits in the north, home to Vosne-Romanée. It is in the latter, on a multilayered soil of limestone, red clay, gravel and pebbles, where the Pinot Noir grape finds its most sophisticated and fascinating expression.

Take a stroll up to the vineyard of Romanée-Conti at any time and you are more than likely to be met by a crowd of wine enthusiasts stopping to get their photograph taken beside the stone cross that stands on the southern perimeter of the vines. But it is neither the cross, nor the vineyard that has given the name Romanée-Conti such resonance. It is the wines.

Not that there are many people who have had the opportunity to taste a glass of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Firstly, there is the hurdle of the price. According to U.K. importers Corney & Barrow, a bottle of 2007 Domaine de la Romanée-Conti will set you back a mere £4,500, which adds up to around £56,000 for a case of 12. If, and it is a very large if, you can source a case. Production of Romanée-Conti is tiny—a better description would be minute—at around 450 cases, or 6,000 bottles a year. Faced with this, it is hardly surprising that some importers only ever sell in mixed cases, in other words, to buy one bottle of Romanée-Conti one has to purchase a case that contains the other wines of the domaine as well: La Tâche, Richebourg, Romanée Saint-Vivant, Grands Echézeaux and Echézeaux. But I doubt anyone who received such a case would be complaining, as all of these wines are characterized by a purity, grace and finesse that puts them in many cases on a par with the domaine's namesake itself.

Given its scarcity and the fact that it will only ever be tasted by a handful of billionaires and connoisseurs, why visit? The answer lies in attempting to understand the philosophy and wine-making practices that have earned the domaine its international reputation. And to do this, one has



## WINE

# for perfection

most exclusive wine domaine in Burgundy

to speak to its winemaker: the thoughtful, donnish 71-year-old Aubert de Villaine, who, along with his co-director Henry-Frédéric Roch has, for more than a quarter of a century, been at the forefront of not only restoring the reputation of the wines of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti but also of the wines of Burgundy itself.

It is with this in mind that I press the tiny button beside the domaine's steel gates to announce my arrival for a tasting of the 2009 vintage, a year that, on present evidence, in Vosne-Romanée has produced fresh, supple wines with an abundance of forward fruit. When I am ushered into a small annexe, it is difficult to equate my surroundings with the domaine's reputation. Unlike châteaux in Bordeaux, there is no grand Palladian mansion, elaborately built cellars or an army of staff. Just a receptionist, a few men working in the winery and, after a short wait, Aubert de Villaine, who, after introducing himself, politely asks if we can go to the cellars straight away as it is vintage time in a few weeks and there is a lot to do.

"What I have learned is that the talent that makes the wines is not with us," says Mr. de Villaine, dipping a pipette into a large oak barrel named Richebourg and drawing out a dark, purple wine. "It takes some years to understand that the talent is in the vineyards. The importance of your work adds influence naturally, but, essentially, what really gives the taste to the wine is the plot of land, the terroir. The more you express the character of the land, the more you are doing your job."

In Burgundy, terroir comes first. Unlike Bordeaux, where classifications are ranked by producer, to understand the wines of Burgundy, one has to first think of the vineyard, then its village, then its producer, often written as a tiny footnote on the bottom of the label. In Domaine de la Romanée-Conti's case, the crus the family has acquired through a process that started with Mr. de Villaine's great-great-grandfather, Jacques-Marie Duvault-

Comte Liger-Belair. Generously, Mr. de Villaine says that we are not obliged to spit, but such is the scarcity of these wines that after the first sip we have to pour back the remainder of our glass into the barrel. We start with Grands Echézeaux, move onto Richebourg, Romanée Saint-Vivant, finishing with La Tâche, and finally Romanée-Conti.

The wines are some of the oldest in the world, dating back to the Romans who first cultivated the vines. The monks of the Priory of St. Vivant had acquired the vineyard, then known as Cros des Clous, from the Dukes of Burgundy in the 13th century. In 1631, ownership passed to the de Croonembourg family who renamed it Romanée. The Conti was added after Louis François de Bourbon, the Prince de Conti and first cousin of Louis XV of France, paid 8000 livres in 1760 for it. After the Revolution, the land was sold to Napoleon's bankers before being bought in 1869 by Duvault-Bloch, who built up most of the holdings.

So how do the wines taste? It is always hard to be completely objective when faced with such iconic wines, especially when tasting from the barrel, as these wines are famously difficult to taste young; with age it becomes easier as they develop more complex, tertiary aromas. Over the years, the adjectives used to describe the taste of the wines have ranged from satin and silk to violets, wild cherries, raspberries and game. To which I add licorice, spice, plums and the forest floor.

But they are special. To describe these wines simply in terms of taste is to miss the point. Without descending into the incomprehensible, when I taste these wines, they evoke a similar intellectual stimulation that I derive from listening to a piece of challenging classical music or viewing a beautiful work of art.

Mr. de Villaine prefers to describe his wines in terms of character, as opposed to taste. "Richebourg is a wine that every year is very masculine and arrogant," he says. "I often describe it as musketeer, the body-

**"What really gives the taste to the wine is the plot of land, the terroir," says Aubert de Villaine. "The more you express the character of the land, the more you are doing your job."**

Bloch, are some of the most sought after in the whole of Burgundy. As well as owning the entirety of Romanée-Conti, they also own the larger La Tâche vineyard; 44% of Richebourg, 55% of Romanée Saint-Vivant, 38% of Grands Echézeaux and 12% of Echézeaux.

Aubert de Villaine has been working at the domaine for more than 40 years, a period during which he has honed a philosophy that is based on respect and humility for the land he farms: What is taken out of the soil is given back, there are no chemical fertilizers, treatments or many of the modern wine-making gadgets available to the contemporary vigneron. An example is the reintroduction, a few years ago, of horses to replace the use of heavy machinery in the vineyard. The gentle action of the horses' hooves, Mr. de Villaine says, "does not compact the soil as much."

"The more we learn, the more we learn to use less technology," he says. "In the '70s and '80s we were tempted by using mechanization, which was bringing a lot of shortcuts. But now we are going back from this, and we are more manual today than we were 20 years ago."

We are tasting in the maturation cellar, which is a short walk away at another famous Vosne-Romanée estate, Domaine du

guard of Romanée-Conti, and a wine that wants to laugh."

"Romanée Saint-Vivant has two faces," he continues. "One face is very elegant and fine, close to Romanée-Conti in finesse; the other side is more abrupt, monastic even. La Tâche is a wine that is always showing tannins that usually have the character of liquorice. In the center, it is very vertical and sharp, but surrounded by a lot of lace and velvet. Romanée-Conti is a wine that doesn't want to show off; it doesn't have lipstick or makeup. It has a hidden elegance."

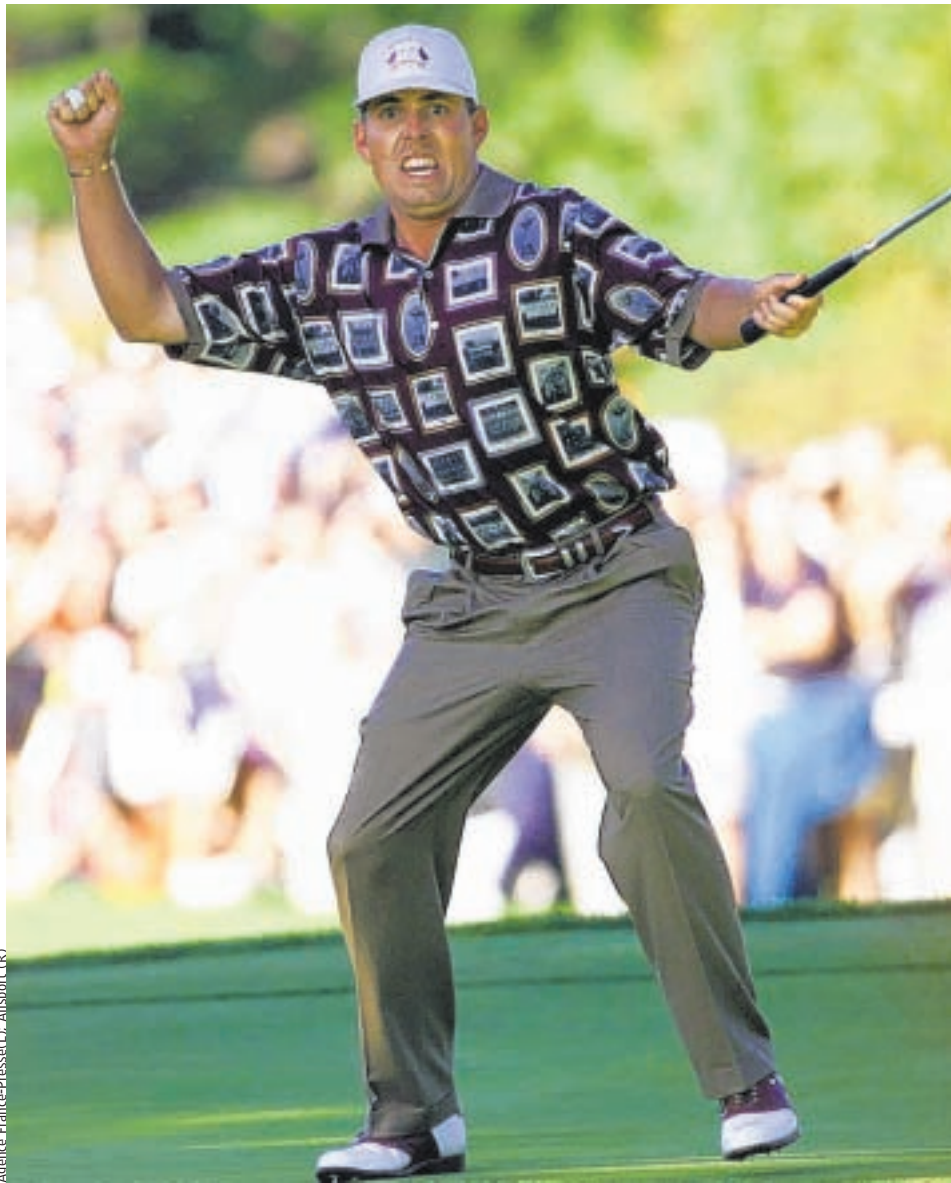
Those who know him well say Aubert de Villaine is slightly aghast at the prices his wines achieve in the marketplace. A modest, deep-thinking intellectual, his world seems a million miles from some of the upscale cities where Romanée-Conti is drunk. "These wines will always need the hand of man and the way they are made today requires patience and a long-term vision," Mr. de Villaine says.

And with that, it is time to go. As I emerge from the cellar, the sun is beginning its late-afternoon descent. Leaving the courtyard, I walk to the car, parked casually across the kerb; the silence, punctured by the echo of a distant bell, filling the medieval village with its rhythmic toll.



Left page, Aubert de Villaine contemplates another vintage in the cellar of Romanée-Conti; This page top to bottom, the famous stone cross that stands on the border of Romanée-Conti's vineyard; bunches of Pinot Noir grapes waiting to be harvested at the domaine; six generations of Richebourg lie maturing in the cellar at the domaine in Vosne-Romanée.

## GOLF



Agence France-Presse (L); Allsport (R)



The ecstasy and the agony: Historic Ryder Cup putts from Justin Leonard in 1999, left, and Bernhard Langer in 1991 will live long in the memory.

# The game's most daunting doubleheader

Money or pride: The Tour Championship and the Ryder Cup are back-to-back for the first time

## [ Golf Journal ]

By JOHN PAUL NEWPORT



Autumn has traditionally been a great time to play golf, not watch it—but this year it's both. The PGA Tour has long fretted that it has little of interest to offer fans amid the cacophony of football and baseball. But for the first time this year the Tour Championship, which Jim Furyk won last week, and the Ryder Cup, which begins Friday, are being played back-to-back in that order. Together they constitute the year's most intense two-week concentration of golf. The Masters, the two Opens and the PGA Championship may be bigger individually, but each is preceded by a weaker tournament that many top pros skip and followed by a scattering of players to their home ports.

Not too many years ago the biennial Ryder Cup was the only fall golf event that casual fans paid much attention to. But it was orphaned on the calendar, six weeks or so after the last of golf's four majors, followed only by a few low-profile PGA Tour events and a Tour Championship in November that had grown so anemic that Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson stopped bothering to show up.

The PGA Tour tried to change that starting in 2007, and the resulting FedEx Cup Playoffs, with a \$10 million prize for the overall winner, has made some headway. Most of the world's top players participate, and happily last week's edition at East Lake in Atlanta offered more intrigue than any of the previous three. One plot line was the nifty little revenge drama served up by Paul

Casey of England, who had been passed over for selection to the European Ryder Cup team despite ranking No. 7 in the world. He stayed within shouting distance of victory until late into the final round, eventually finishing fourth.

The playoffs also work as a run-up to the Ryder Cup, by keeping fans engaged with the competitors. Mr. Mickelson, for one, believes that the playoffs, by keeping the pros' games sharp, help the American team's chances at the Ryder Cup and at the alternate-year Presidents Cup competition against non-European international players. "We've won the last three events that we've competed in, and I think a lot is due to having the FedEx Cup the last three years," he said in August.

Nine of the 12 members on this year's American Ryder Cup team were competing at East Lake, versus only one member of the European team, Luke Donald. (The Americans who didn't qualify are Mr. Woods, Stewart Cink and Rickie Fowler.)

Unlike the FedEx Cup Playoffs, which are based on a scoring formula only a mainframe computer could love, the Ryder Cup is a simple idea with timeless appeal: bring together the best players from two continents and send them out in matches. The competitors themselves receive no prize money, and the 17-inch trophy, donated in 1927 by London seed merchant Samuel Ryder, is a trifle. But in terms of honor, prestige and pressure, there is no comparing the events.

What's striking, in reading through historical accounts of the Ryder Cup, is how quickly the matches became a big deal for the players, even if golf fans were slower to catch on.

All the greats—Walter Hagen, Ben Hogan, Byron Nelson, Sam Snead, Arnold

Palmer—eagerly took part and were always nervous and intense about the competition, even in the early days with so little seemingly at stake. Chronically overmatched, the teams from Great Britain won only three matches through 1983 but trotted out desperate new strategies at each meeting. The one that worked for a British victory in 1957, at the Lindrick Golf Club in Yorkshire, was nurturing extra-thick rough behind the greens, to catch the overplayed balls of Americans who weren't used to the bump-and-run shots and the winds.

The 1969 matches at Royal Birkdale in England were particularly acrimonious and featured an altercation between Dave Hill of the U.S. and Bernard Gallacher of Scotland that almost became violent. In the 12 matches since 1983, the Europeans (competitors from continental Europe were added in 1979) have won seven and tied another. The crowds have grown ever-more boisterous and partisan, even though cheering when the opposing side misses a putt dates back to the early days. The 1991 matches at Kiawah Island, nicknamed the "War at the Shore," were particularly hostile—Corey Pavin, this year's Ryder Cup captain, wore a camouflage baseball cap—as was the famous green-storming episode by the Americans at the 1999 matches at Brookline.

Mr. Pavin last week recalled that his hands were shaking so bad on the first hole at Kiawah, his first Ryder Cup, that he could barely tee up the ball. "Hitting the last shot at the U.S. Open in '95 [which he won] seemed like a walk in the park compared to playing in the Ryder Cup," he said.

For athletes whose mental toughness is based on playing as an individual, the broader context can be disconcerting. The recovery strategies after a bad shot or a

bad round—I'll do better next time, it was a learning experience—no longer work, because for their teammates or their country, there might not be a next time. Of the 169 Americans who have played on Ryder Cup teams, about two-thirds have had only one or two chances to make their mark. Only 23 have competed on more than four teams, whereas in the majors the top players usually get four gos a year.

Another, seldom-talked-about source of pressure is that Ryder Cup matches, especially crucial ones, are remembered as narratives. For example, Mr. Mickelson shot 67-71-67-67 to win this year's Masters, but Mark Calcavecchia lost each of the last four holes in 1991 to blow a four-up advantage and halve his match against Colin Montgomerie, this year's European captain.

As fans, we care about the Ryder Cup because we sense how much the players do. Love of country factors in, but the fact the Europeans, coming this year from seven different nations, are every bit as emotionally involved as the Americans suggests that values other than patriotism are in play: pride, friendship, legacy, honor and respect. If the matches on Sunday come down to the final putt on the final green, you can bet that the players involved will feel that a lot more is at stake, and will feel a lot more nervous, than any pro at the Tour Championship standing over a putt worth a mere \$10 million.

Email John Paul at [golfjournal@wsj.com](mailto:golfjournal@wsj.com)

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## HOMES

# Berlin's real-estate transformation

The German city's bohemia is turning into the new bourgeoisie; developers tame the 'Wild East'

By William Boston

**O**LIVER LANGE LOOKS up from a mass of floor plans spread across his dining table at the sun setting behind an expanse of rooftops and the silhouette of the city's iconic Fernsehturm communications tower on the horizon. "This view is what convinced me to buy this apartment," says the 41-year-old former day trader. "I came to Berlin because it's so multicultural and I wanted to live in this neighborhood. Any other city in Germany is just too *German*."

While looking for an apartment in 2003, Mr. Lange says it was hard to find a space that was big enough on the one hand and still in the middle of the *kiez* (the colloquial Berlin expression for neighborhood). But in this building near Kollwitz Square, he was able to buy two apartments and meld them into a spacious seven-bedroom, 245-square-meter penthouse with fantastic views of the city skyline. The design is minimalist and modern, with plenty of windows letting in light. The top floor—redesigned from the original attic—is an open kitchen, living room with fireplace and dining space in a cozy atrium with floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto a small terrace and provide a view over the rooftops toward historic Berlin Mitte.

"It was at the peak of my career as a day trader and I wanted to have something of my own," says Mr. Lange. "Initially I didn't buy the apartment as an investment. I really thought I would grow old here."

Like Greenwich Village in New York, Prenzlauer Berg was once the center of a particular subculture. Before the Berlin Wall fell, it was home to a mix of East German musicians, artists, intellectuals and ordinary working folk. After the Wall fell, former East Berlin neighborhoods like Prenzlauer Berg, Mitte and Friedrichshain were a magnet for creative types looking for the "Wild East." But 20 years after the reunification of Germany, and billions spent on rebuilding the eastern states, the East has been tamed and living in Berlin is being transformed. Hip is a moveable feast and as new wealth arrives, the new residents and professional developers are turning Berlin's bohemia into the new bourgeoisie. Today Prenzlauer Berg (which means Prenzlau Hill) is more well known as "pregnant hill," as young hipsters grow up, get jobs, marry and have kids.

Berlin hasn't always been known



Above, Oliver Lange sits in his penthouse in Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg. Luxury residences are one of the fastest-growing segments of new housing in the city.

for luxury and extravagance, but judging by the growing demand for luxury living quarters, it may be importing wealth and, with it, a demand for high-class living. Location and price are the compelling arguments attracting international buyers, including celebrities like Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, and Sylvester Stallone. Danish artist Olafur Eliasson has renovated an old factory into a combined living and studio complex in Mitte. "On an international scale, Berlin is very inexpensive. London would be three times as high for the same space," says Thomas Wolfensberger, chief executive and a founding investor of Peach Property. "The East is the place where Berlin is reinventing itself, where you can become part of history and build on a historic site."

One of the fastest-growing segments of new housing in the city is luxury residences, according to a new study by property-research group BulwienGesa AG. There are currently 205 luxury apartments under construction in Berlin, of which

half are being built in Berlin Mitte, the central district that is home to Germany's government and Parliament, the Reichstag, Potsdamer Platz and major tourist attractions such as the Brandenburg Gate. It is also the theater district and famous for its edgy bars and nightclubs.

One of the major luxury developments underway is Yoo, a project based on designs by French architect Philippe Starck and being developed by Peach Property Group AG, a Zurich-based real-estate company. Yoo Berlin was designed by Berlin architect Eike Becker. It is a 10-story, glass-covered multiuse building with cafes at street level and luxury apartments and penthouses ranging from 65 square meters to 310 square meters, and priced from €4,100 to €10,000 per square meter. The Yoo project is located at Am Zirkus 1, the site of Berlin's old Friedrichstadtpalast, and overlooks the Spree River that cuts a path through downtown.

Another lavish project is Diplomatpark (diplomat's park), a community of 16 residences in a leafy neighborhood in Tiergarten, a neighborhood that includes a number of foreign embassies, government buildings and the Tiergarten park, a large public estate that is Berlin's equivalent of Central Park. An artist's rendition of Diplomatpark shows a penthouse swimming pool and views from the deck of the Reichstag and Potsdamer Platz.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lange is no longer planning to grow old in his penthouse. He quit day-trading a few years ago after a couple of bad years and is married and plans to spend winters with his family in the Philippines. Although he didn't buy the apartment as an investment, he has listed it for €1.2 million and will likely make a hefty profit. "Over the past few years property values in the neighborhood have risen considerably," he says.

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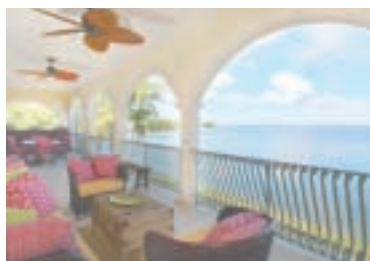
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## BOOKS

# A Literary Revolution

What began as a challenge to hollow pieties ended in foolish experiment and trivial shenanigans

By ERIC ORMSBY

The French poet Paul Valéry (1871-1945) once said that he could never write a novel because sooner or later he would find himself setting down such a sentence as "The marquise went out at five o'clock." Why did the marquise leave at five? he wondered. Why not at six or seven? In fact, why did she go out at all? And why a "marquise"? Why not a duchess or a washerwoman? The arbitrary nature of narrative devices irked Valéry; they pretended to an authority that was, at bottom, a sham. They invited us to treat mere fancy as hard fact.

In "What Ever Happened to Modernism?" Valéry's sample sentence serves the English novelist and critic Gabriel Josipovici as both a chapter title and a running motif. For, as he notes, the problem of our punctual marquise strikes at the heart of conventional fiction. A novel, to be compelling, has to have plot, dramatic incident and narrative momentum, but these are the very elements that are lacking in our daily lives, confused and messy as they are. It is the distinction of Modernism, Mr. Josipovici argues, to acknowledge that the stories we tell ourselves—even as we strive to fill them with coherence, dramatic logic and ultimate meaning—are hopelessly flawed, incomplete and contradictory.

Modernism, as conventionally understood, was an early 20th-century movement that affected all the arts; it simultaneously broke with tradition and drew self-consciously on tradition. The great modernist figures include Picasso and Francis Bacon in painting and Stravinsky and Schoenberg in music,

**What Ever Happened to Modernism?**  
By Gabriel Josipovici  
Yale University Press, 208 pages, £18.99

all of whom figure in Mr. Josipovici's account. But his main concern is with literature: Proust, Kafka, Beckett, Wallace Stevens and Thomas Mann, among a host of others. Mr. Josipovici, it should be said, is a champion of Modernism. He sees it as a valuable tradition in its own right, one that is not merely endangered but virtually extinct, especially in the smug, ultra-Philistine realm of contemporary British fiction.

In Mr. Josipovici's view, Modernism is something at once vast and intimate, encompassing "nothing less than life itself." Modernism isn't a style, he says, but "the coming into awareness by art of its precarious status and responsibilities." Even more portentously, Modernism is a kind of anguished repudiation—"a response to the simplifications of the self and of life that Protestantism and the Enlightenment brought with them." Its intimacy lies in the stubborn effort, especially on the part of Modernist novelists, to render those little hesitations, those sieges of doubt, those anxious questionings that beset us even as we attempt to construct some credible narrative of our lives. The true Modernist narrative always involves a disrupted momentum.

Mr. Josipovici does not provide a simple, broadly applicable definition



Virginia Woolf

of Modernism—it would be hard to do in any case—but he does something better. He takes Modernism out of its traditionally limited time-frame and sets it within a long historical arc that begins in the 16th century. By the use of apt and often brilliant quotations from a wide range of authors—from Homer to Irène Némirovsky—he allows the contours of his subject to emerge. This approach does more justice to the complexity of Modernism than any capsule account could provide. And because Mr. Josipovici is himself an accomplished novelist, he knows how to craft a strong narrative, not unworthy in fact of those blinkered conventional novelists he finds so outmoded. The story he tells is unexpectedly compelling.

The origins of Modernism lie in disillusion or, more precisely, in what the German poet Friedrich Schiller called "the disenchantment of the world." Unfortunately, Mr. Josipovici, who likes to quote his authors in the original, gets it wrong here, giving Schiller's phrase as "die Entziehung der Welt," or "the withdrawal of the world," instead of the correct "die Entzauberung der Welt." But this slip doesn't impair his argument.

In the mid-16th century, the old certainties, the immemorial rituals, the hierarchies of the heavens and earth seemed to crumble. As Mr. Josipovici explains, Schiller's phrase was taken up early in the 20th century by the sociologist Max Weber, who used it to explain the radical transformation of the world that occurred after the Protestant Reformation, from a divinely appointed cosmos, alive with numinous presences, to a bustling marketplace of enterprise, production and rampant individualism.

In such a disenchanting world, the world we inhabit now, it's not only

pointless but dishonest to write or paint or compose in traditional ways, as though nothing had changed. The old human narrative has been fatally disrupted; it is false to pretend otherwise. Modernism is the anguished response—for Mr. Josipovici, the only valid response—to this irreparable fracture of the world and the self.

He begins his account with some astute observations on two famous engravings by Albrecht Dürer (his "Melancholia I" and "St. Jerome in his Study" from 1514). Dürer intended the engravings to be complementary; but in fact, as Mr. Josipovici argues, "Melancholia," with its shadows and dozing bats, has come to depict our present state, while "St. Jerome" in its sunny serenity reveals all that we—we moderns—have lost. Clearly for Mr. Josipovici the shattering of former certainties, despite the gains it offers in self-knowledge, has left us bereft. For Dürer, the calm, orderly world of the saint was as real, as true, as the dark, jagged realm of melancholy. For the Modernist sensibility, however, serenity is no longer possible; truth, if it can be glimpsed at all, is invariably agitated.

Tracing Modernism's long arc, Mr. Josipovici moves on to Rabelais and Cervantes, two 16th-century artists who "knew in their bones that they were living through a period of decisive change." They, and such disparate 19th-century figures as the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and—perhaps surprisingly—the English poet William Wordsworth, are the true precursors of Modernism, Mr. Josipovici argues. He is particularly good on Wordsworth, showing how the poet in his deepest moments of communion with nature remained "a stranger in the landscape."

With the 20th century and his

most cherished authors and artists, Mr. Josipovici comes into his own. Whether discussing a key passage in Thomas Mann's "Doktor Faustus" or quoting from an interview with the painter Francis Bacon, whether drawing on Rosalind Krauss's studies of Picasso or on Marcel Duchamp's comments on his own work, he is both passionate and lucid. If he is notably perceptive on such authors as Borges and Kafka, he is equally fine on less familiar authors, such as Claude Simon, the Nobel Prize-winning French novelist whom he cites to brilliant effect. Thus, in "The Flanders Road," Simon evokes the German invasion of France in 1940, depicting the "civilians who doggedly went on wandering about in incomprehensible fashion, dragging a battered suitcase after them or pushing one of those children's perambulators filled with vague belongings." In such a scene, the pathos is one with the absurdity, and we feel the force of a difficult truth.

Mr. Josipovici has a gift for sweeping the reader along, but even so, reservations arise. One of the least attractive aspects of literary Modernism has been its penchant for casting what it dislikes into outer darkness. T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound were especially skilled at such excommunicatory tosses. I've known poets who refuse to read Virgil or Milton because of the belittling judgments of the high modernists; and the judgments are always couched as a polarity: Homer but not Virgil, Marvell but not Milton. Mr. Josipovici betrays something of this doctrinaire tendency; he is scornful of Anthony Powell and V.S. Naipaul, both of whom he dismisses with a quip. But Powell's "Dance to the Music of Time" and Naipaul's "A House for Mr. Biswas" are great 20th-century novels.

Mr. Josipovici faults Philip Roth's fiction for lacking "that sense of density of other worlds suggested but lying beyond words, which we experience when reading Proust or James." Then he imagines his reader objecting that "Roth is an experimental writer!" and "Is that not what Modernism is about?" Here Mr. Josipovici displays a peevish side, remarking: "If that is your reaction you have not really been taking in what I have been saying." Well, maybe. He's baffled by intelligent reviewers, "many of whom have studied the poems of Eliot or the novels of Virginia Woolf," who "betray their calling" by praising what he considers second-rate work—not just Roth but Graham Greene, Toni Morrison, John Updike and Salman Rushdie.

Mr. Josipovici does not countenance the possibility that in the works of the Modernist writers, artists and composers he most admires there lay hidden some dimly willed element that led to their supersession. The caustic self-doubt, and doubt of the world, that drove their genius may have proved corrosive over time, diluting the severe standards they applied to art. He quotes Marcel Duchamp, for example, without acknowledging that his wry and cynical playfulness has led, decades later, to the trivial shenanigans of such poseurs as Damien Hirst and Jeff Koons.

Perhaps the true question raised by "What Ever Happened to Modernism?" is about the way in which art grapples with reality. The 19th-century novelists created characters and set them within a narrative; this was an "arbitrary" process: David Copperfield and Père Goriot are as contrived as the marquise who went out at five. Balzac carried a cane inscribed with the motto "I smash all obstacles." Kafka noted that he himself should have a cane inscribed "All obstacles smash me." Kafka knew that, as Mr. Josipovici puts it, "to be modern is to know that some things can no longer be done."

For Mr. Josipovici, Modernism is ultimately an ethical proposition, and a stern one at that. He says that traditional fiction deludes us, encouraging us in the conviction that "we ourselves will never die"; it "actively prevents us from having a realistic attitude to ourselves and the world." This probably isn't Mr. Josipovici's final view—he hedges a bit here—but he does fault the conventional novel for giving the reader "the impression that he or she understands something."

Is it really a false impression when we feel, after reading "War and Peace," that we have a sense of what it must have been like to wander, amid the smoke and cries of the wounded, across the battlefield of Borodino with the baffled Pierre? Mr. Josipovici is harsh on realism in fiction—he thinks it a dangerous illusion—and yet we still respond to fictional replications of the world, not only in its inmost contradictions but in the sheer sensual beauty of its surfaces. We still take pleasure in make-believe and in the telling of tales, even tall ones, if only because they tell us something true about ourselves, a truth that perhaps we can grasp through no other medium.

—Mr. Ormsby is a writer in London.



## ART &amp; AUCTIONS

## Buying Islamic, Indian art

## [ Collecting ]

By MARGARET STUDER



Islamic and Indian art will take center stage at London auctions next week. Christie's (Oct. 5), Sotheby's (Oct. 5-6) and Bonhams (Oct. 7) will offer a trove of precious objects spanning the seventh to the 19th centuries such as intricately decorated weaponry, textiles, manuscripts, ceramics, carvings, paintings and jewelry.

The October sales follow London auctions in April that showed buoyant demand for rare and top quality Islamic and Indian items. At Christie's, a 17th-century Persian carpet fetched £6.2 million, a record for any Islamic work of art sold at auction. "To make a world record, everything has to come together: incredible rarity, incredible beauty and wonderful condition," says William Robinson, Christie's director of Islamic art. At Sotheby's in April, the highest price was paid for a 16th-century, Turkish ivory and turquoise-inlaid box set with rubies that fetched £2.39 million from a pre-sale estimate of £500,000-£700,000.

In the Islamic market it is hard to predict pre-sale where "the strongest excitement will land," Mr. Robinson says. However, there is a strong collector focus at present on calligraphic manuscripts, arms and armor and a "huge increase in demand" for Ottoman works, notes Bonhams specialist Kristina Sanne.

On Tuesday, Sotheby's will showcase "A Princely Collection: Treasures from the Islamic World" in the auctioneer's first evening sale of Islamic art (evening sales are prestigious events, indicating that a sector of the market has moved to higher things).

The 112 lots in the princely, single-owner sale were gathered over 40 years by an anonymous collector. Among the highlights will be a striking leaf with gold script on blue vellum from the celebrated "Blue Qur'an" produced in North Africa or the Near East in the ninth-10th century (estimate: £200,000-£300,000). "The gold and blue contrast is wonderful," says Edward Gibbs, Sotheby's Middle East department head. A very rare pair of 12th-13th-century carved wooden doors decorated with traditional calligraphy and a complex pattern of geometric forms and arabesques is expected to fetch £700,000-£900,000.

Sotheby's main sale Wednesday

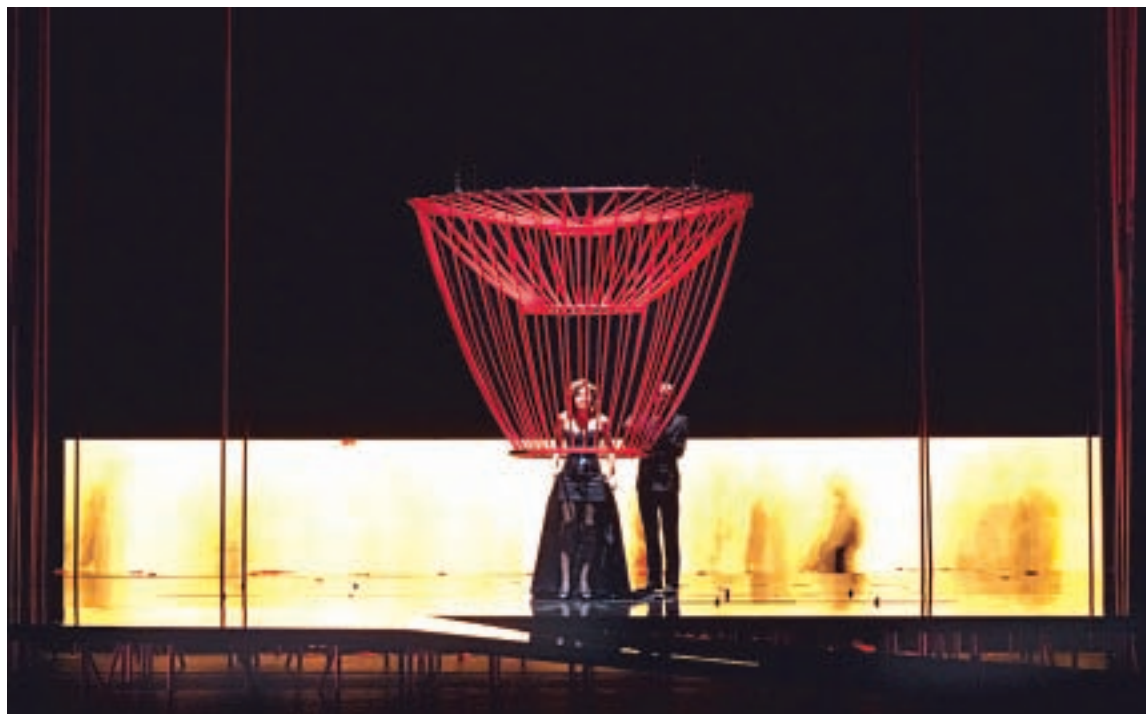
has some interesting highlights. Illustrating the deadly beauty of Islamic weapons, there will be an exquisitely-decorated, 15th-century ear-dagger (estimate: £600,000-£800,000). Daggers of this type were extremely fashionable among the noble gentry of the time. The name derives from the striking design of the hilt pommel that comprises two flattened discs which resemble ears.

Another highlight will be 24 preparatory paintings depicting the famous Battle of Pollilur in India in 1780 at which the British East India Co. army surrendered to Tipu Sultan and his father Hyder Ali. Although the British eventually went on to defeat Tipu at the Battle of Seringapatam in 1799, Pollilur is remembered as one of the worst military defeats in British history, making Tipu, the tiger of Mysore, into a legend. The paintings were preparatory to a mural ordered by Tipu for his court and depict him with his father, magnificently attired, astride their elephants (estimate: £650,000-£800,000).

At Bonhams sale Thursday, there will be a glittering offering in a fabulous gem-encrusted finial of a tiger's head from the golden throne of Tipu. It is one of only three known surviving tiger heads from his elaborate throne (estimate: £200,000-£300,000). One of the known Tipu tiger finials is in the collection of the British queen.

Christie's sale on Tuesday will begin with 50 lots from the core of prominent visual arts patron Mohammed Said Farsi's classical Islamic art collection. Among them: an 18th-century Indian emerald, ruby and diamond parrot estimated at £400,000-£600,000; It is one of seven jeweled gold objects from the collection. "Drop-dead gorgeous" is how Mr. Robinson describes a rare, Central Asian silk robe decorated with birds from the 11th-12th century (estimate: £400,000-£600,000).

For those interested in modern and contemporary Arab and Iranian art, Sotheby's will hold an 83-lot sale in London Oct. 20. Dalya Islam, deputy director of Sotheby's Middle East department, says the sale's object is to "play a role in further raising global awareness" of the region's talent. Works will range from Egyptian artist Abdel Hadi El-Gazzar's monumental "Beach Dream" (1957), a figurative celebration of life and love (estimate: £200,000-£300,000) to Iranian artist Farhad Moshiri's "Born Yesterday" (2007), an ironic painting of a two-tiered, frothy wedding cake with loads of glitter (£60,000-£80,000).



Oviedo Opera Foundation

## Design with a poetical touch

### Spaniard Patricia Urquiola extends her creations to opera

By J. S. MARCUS

With Milan as her base, Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola has made the world her boudoir.

In less than a decade, Ms. Urquiola, who is a trained architect, has helped reinvigorate Italian furniture design by combining a keen analytical approach with the sensual comforts of home. A typical Urquiola creation, like her h-shaped "Fjord" armchair, designed in 2002 for the Italian firm Moroso and now in the collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art, is like a piece of sculpture you want to plop yourself into.

This fall, Ms. Urquiola has returned to her native terrain of northern Spain in order to try something completely different. Born in Oviedo, the capital of the Asturias region, and also part Basque, Ms. Urquiola has designed the sets for a new interpretation of the Monteverdi opera, "The Coronation of Poppea."

The co-production, mounted by several Spanish opera companies and staged by her fellow Asturian, director Emilio Sagi, had its premier in Oviedo on Sept. 17 and will open tonight, in Bilbao's opera house, the Teatro Arriaga, where Mr. Sagi is artistic director.

An Asturian-Basque production of a 17th-century Venetian opera may seem a long way from the Milan Furniture Fair, where Ms. Urquiola has consistently been one of the leading lights over the past decade, but, as it turns out, the opera is just one of many new paths for the 49-year-old designer.

Last year, Ms. Urquiola designed the complete interior for Barcelona's new Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and this year she completed the interior for a new W Hotel and spa on Vieques Island near Puerto Rico. This weekend, as the curtain comes up in Bilbao, Ms. Urquiola is also launching an innovative new line of ceramic tiles.

The Wall Street Journal caught up with Ms. Urquiola earlier this year at her Milan studio, and later by telephone before the Oviedo premier of "The Coronation of Poppea." A whirlwind of activity, Ms. Urquiola jumps back and forth between Italian, Spanish and English, and she has to be stopped in mid-sentence to be asked an obvious question: How do you manage to

be so prolific?

"I was waiting a long time to be myself," she says, deferring to her many years working behind the scenes in Italian design. For the first half of the 1990s, she was at the Milan label De Padova, working with postwar Italian design legend Vico Magistretti. In 1996, she became manager of design at Milan's Lissoni Associati, the office of architect and designer Piero Lissoni. Finally, in 2001, she opened her own studio.

"I had a lot of energy stored up," she says, looking back on an era when there were almost no independent female designers. "As a woman, I thought for a long time that working for others was enough," she explains.

However, she also admits that her current schedule may have more to do with her nature than her gen-

**'She is able to link the design and the commercial sides,'**  
Patrizia Moroso says.

der. "It's possibly in my character to get involved with a lot things."

Studio Urquiola currently maintains a staff of 30, including architects, designers, graphic designers and prototype makers. Ms. Urquiola co-owns the company along with her companion Alberto Zontone, an Italian economist specializing in architecture and design, who acts as chief executive officer.

Her work on the opera seems to have taken a special hold on her imagination. In a modern updating of the story, which is set in ancient Rome, Ms. Urquiola has created a soaring, distinctly Urquiola-like space, set off by a veil-like latticed platform. She describes her sets as "absolutely contemporary" with "a poetical touch."

The project has involved working closely with the director, the singers and the costume designer. "The studio is saying to me, 'When will you finish the opera? We don't see you anymore!'"

The Oviedo premier received some glowing reviews in the Spanish press. ABC, a daily newspaper published in Madrid, called Ms. Urquiola's sets one of the production's main characters.

"I have collaborated with many fashion designers," says Mr. Sagi, who has also worked with the Paris-based Colombian painter Fernando Botero on a Donizetti opera. "But it is my first time with someone like" Ms. Urquiola.

"I gave freedom to Patricia," says the director, who already had Urquiola furniture in his home prior to the collaboration. "We make a good team."

Since branching out on her own, Ms. Urquiola has worked with Patrizia Moroso, art director and co-owner of the Italian furniture company Moroso SpA. Known for getting the very best work out of Europe's design stars, like Ron Arad and Konstantin Grcic, the company, based in Udine, now gives pride of place to Ms. Urquiola.

"She is our main designer," says Ms. Moroso, speaking by telephone this fall from New York City.

Ms. Moroso believes that Ms. Urquiola has played a crucial role in the company's recent success. Before Ms. Urquiola, she says, "I was working with very extreme designers to make something superfantastic but maybe not so commercial. The new thing with Patricia is that she is able to link the design and the commercial sides."

A more rarified kind of commercialism marks Ms. Urquiola's venture into the luxury-hotel scene. Her work on the Mandarin Palace, located in a former bank building on Barcelona's Passeig de Gràcia boulevard, is a study in continuity, which she sees as a higher kind of luxury—although she herself bristles at the word.

"When you think about luxury you become closed," she says.

In Barcelona, she says, she tried to maintain "a level of comfort" and a "relation between materials and space" which starts on the incandescent catwalk entrance and culminates in the use of transparencies in the rooms themselves.

The Mandarin Oriental chain, she says, "has another kind of language." The company, she recalls, "gave us a lot of freedom in the end," yet in the beginning "they were saying, 'Possibly it's not luxurious enough.' Gradually they trusted us, and finally my idea of quality met their idea of luxury."

Stenography by Patricia Urquiola for opera "L'incoronazione di Poppea".



A rare 11th-century silk robe from Central Asia is estimated at £400,000-£600,000.

Christie's

## REVIEWS

## Beauty of the Ballets Russes

London: You'll want to go more than once to the V&A's big autumn show. Even if you have no interest in ballet or modern dance, "Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes 1909-1929" will enchant you, both because of the Russian Ballet's close connections with Modernism in all the arts, and because its stunning installation makes visiting this exhibition the most fun you can have in London on a damp autumn day.

Spread over three large galleries, this show celebrates the most exciting dance company of the 20th century, and its charismatic impresario. More than 300 objects show how Serge Diaghilev (1872-1929) yoked together dance, music, and art and design to develop what many spectators confirmed (as Lytton Strachey did frequently in his letters to other Bloomsbury Group fans of the Russian Ballet) were exuberant, Wagnerian "total artworks." The only evidence lacking to document the huge injection of energy the Ballets Russes gave to all the arts are contemporary movies. Diaghilev always refused permission to film performances.

Strange, because this Olympian of the imagination commissioned music by Stravinsky and Satie, costumes, designs, props and posters by Chanel, Bakst, Cocteau, Braque

and Matisse, and employed dancers such as Vaslav Nijinsky and Lydia Lopokhova (who married Bloomsbury's John Maynard Keynes.)

Drawn largely from the V&A's own, peerless holdings, this show has several of the giant front cloths (drop curtains), including Natalia Goncharova's fantastic 1926 Russian cityscape for "The Firebird" and the most famous front cloth in history, Picasso's giant image of two women running on the beach for the 1924 "Le Train Bleu."

Curators Jane Pritchard and Geoffrey Marsh have found ingenious solutions to make up for the absence of filmed performances. Television monitors peppered around the galleries show specially commissioned pieces by Howard Goodall, illustrating the connections between the composers, their music and the ballets. Other monitors show Richard Alston illuminating the process of choreography; and there are some historic filmed performances, though of pre-Ballets Russes dancers—plus a few reconstructions.

Still, it's the visual aspect of this history-making show that's most important. The breathtaking, generous displays of costumes allow you to see the evolution of the angular gestural vocabulary of the Ballets Russes—dancers couldn't manage

much more than that in some of these weighty garments. On the other hand, Nijinsky was famous for the height of his soaring leaps. Though some of the tunics he wore probably didn't hinder him, the exquisite, bejeweled embroidery of others makes you wonder how he ever got off the ground.

Much of the pleasure of this great show is getting to know the mind of Diaghilev, a man who really did live for art. Born to a soon-to-be-ruined minor noble family in Perm, on the very edge of Europe, Diaghilev began his career by running an arts magazine. He was also a pioneer of sexuality, in that he was one of the first public figures to be "out," frank about his homosexuality in a remarkably insouciant way. Many of his leading male dancers became his lovers—though Nijinsky was the most celebrated, there were also Léonide Massine and Serge Lifar. Indeed, in his essay "Diaghilev's Boys" in the superb catalog that accompanies the show, Oliver Winchester credits the Ballets Russes with creating an association between the ballet and homosexuality: before it, "male dancers were of secondary importance" to romantically graceful ballerinas.

—Paul Levy

Until Jan. 9  
www.vam.ac.uk



Front cover for "Costume de Chinois du Ballet: 'Parade'" with costume design for a Chinese conjurer by Pablo Picasso (1917).



'Cradle' (about 1695) by Orfèvre Hollandais.

## A sumptuous Medici collection

Paris: Few names in history are as evocative as Medici, instantly conjuring visions of wealth, power, grandeur, Lorenzo the Magnificent, the glory of Florence, several popes and two queens of France. And few historic families have been so closely involved with the arts. For more than 300 years, from the 15th to the 18th century, the Medicis commissioned and collected works of art in every category—ancient Roman statuary, illuminated manuscripts, jewels, musical and scientific instruments, paintings, drawings and objets d'art. They were patrons of Botticelli, Cellini, Donatello, Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Raphael and Verrocchio, as well as writers, poets, philosophers and scientists including Galileo Galilei.

"Treasures of the Medicis, Botticelli to Galileo" at the Musée Maillol offers a fascinating glimpse into their world, with some 150

works—an "infinitesimal part" of their riches, as the show's catalog notes. The first trace of the Medicis dates to the 13th century, with Chiarissimo, a member of a money-changer's guild in Florence. Successive generations founded a bank, invested in textiles and gradually assumed political power in the city. Under Cosimo the Elder (1369-1464), his son Piero and grandson Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-92), the Medici controlled banks throughout Europe.

The show includes some grand works, including a superb ancient Roman bronze horse's head and a 1st century B.C. statue of "The Orator." A big Botticelli painting of "The Adoration of the Magi" offers portraits of Medicis as the three kings. There's an exquisite "Portrait of Eleanor of Toledo," wife of Grand Duke Cosimo I, by Bronzino, and majestic portraits of the French queens, Catherine and

Marie de Medici. Even the vases, pitchers, beer mugs and side tables are sumptuous concoctions of marble, ivory, rock crystal, semiprecious stones and gilded bronze.

But many of the smaller items are the most moving—a small poem signed by Lorenzo; a replica of Galileo's wooden telescope, covered in gold-embossed Florentine leather; and a tiny, delicate gold filigree cradle with a baroque pearl inside, a wedding gift to Anna Maria Louisa de Medici, daughter of Cosimo III, by her husband, in hope of an heir. But Anna Maria Louisa died childless in 1743, the last of the direct Medici descendants, willing the treasure of the Medicis to Florence. Most of it is kept in the Palazzo Vecchio, the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace—all three once owned or built by the Medicis.

—Judy Fayard

Until Jan. 31, 2011  
www.museemailloil.com

## Beuys life: Düsseldorf mounts the German artist's definitive retrospective

Düsseldorf: Kunstmuseum Nordrhein-Westfalen turned 50 this year and celebrated with a renovation of its main building, known as K20, and a reinstallation of its supreme collection of 20th-century art. But a chance to view the Klees, Picassos and Richters in a new light takes second place to the new K20's first major temporary show—a mammoth retrospective of local hero Joseph Beuys, who lived, worked and taught here during crucial periods of his career. Don't be put off by the curators' pedantic subtitle ("Parallel Processes"); the exhibition, which brings together some 300 works from every phase of Beuys's working life, may prove to be the artist's definitive survey to date.

Joseph Beuys (1921-86) developed broad, even mystical ambi-

tions for art in general, and for his own art in particular. By using a specific range of unusual materials—like felt, wood, fat, copper and industrial detritus—he could turn garbage into sculpture. The same eye that fostered, or just detected, the aura of these objects, is also responsible for creating everything from exquisite drawings to chaotic performances. But it is arguably the aura-filled, large-scale installation that is his signature art form.

Incredibly, the show manages to include several of these enormous, site-specific works, some of which have never traveled before, and most of which have never been exhibited together. For Germans, the star of the show is "Stripes from the House of the Shaman," a redemptive room-size environment made up of

long felt strips, coats, animal skins and piles of pigment. Created between 1964-72, and then reaching a final state in 1980 for the opening of London's legendary Anthony d'Offay Gallery, the work is part of the permanent collection of the Australian National Gallery in Canberra and hasn't been exhibited in Europe since. The rest of us can take the opportunity to see Beuys's two great German installations in the same space—the spare and brutal "Show Your Wound" (1974-75), from Munich's Lenbachhaus, and the shimmering "Palazzo Regale" (1985), Beuys's last major work and the jewel in the crown of K20's permanent collection.

—J. S. Marcus

Until Jan. 16  
www.kunstsammlung.de



'Before the departure from camp I' (1970/80) by Joseph Beuys.

FRIDAY NIGHT, SATURDAY MORNING

# It's a modern tale of two cities for H el ene Darroze

**The chef talks to The Wall Street Journal Europe about how she starts her weekend.**

The creative regional cuisine of H el ene Darroze has won the French chef Michelin stars and international recognition. She now divides her time between Paris, the location of her eponymous restaurant, and London, where she has run the restaurant at the Connaught hotel for the last two years. With a demanding schedule, Ms. Darroze savors time off with her daughters, Charlotte and Quitterie, and friends.

**Describe your weekend.**

Spending time with my children at the weekend gives me the most peace and really recharges me. I find it inspiring to be with them and it is so different from my life during the week, which is very hectic and busy.

**How do you start the weekend?**

It starts when I come home from work around 11 p.m. on a Saturday, so my weekend is Sunday and Monday. Depending on the time I come back, I like to have a rest or I don't come back home straight away. It depends if I am tired or not. If I do come back home, I always take a bath. I can't go to sleep immediately after work. If I am not too tired, I can watch TV or read a book.

**Do you go out on a Saturday night?**

I never go out because by the time I finish work it's too late. It can happen if I am invited with friends, but I don't go out as a rule.

**How do you spend your Sundays?**

I usually spend Sundays with my little girls. I have two daughters, one and three years old. Since they are very little, we spend a lot of time at home. If there is sunshine, we go to the park during the summer or spring. In Paris or London, we always go to the market. We generally spend one weekend in London and one weekend in Paris, and my daughters travel with me all the time.

**Do you prefer London or Paris?**

They are very different. I like to be in London during the weekend. I spend 100% of the time with the girls. We are very quiet and we are the three together. In Paris, I am very lucky because I live in front of the Luxembourg Gardens. Sunday there is a day when I can meet friends. I like to have brunch with my friends.

**Do you have a favorite spot to eat out?**

In London, I like to go to the Electric Brasserie in Notting Hill. The brunch is very nice and there is a nanny to take care of the children. I like the ambiance of the place. It's very familiar: all the guests know each other and for the children [it] is nice, because there is a space for them to play, watch TV or draw.

**Do you eat any special food?**

No. It's the weekend, so I am cool. I don't go there to eat gastronomic food. In Paris, I have brunch more at home than outside. I go to the market on Sunday morning. I like the fact I can buy vegetables; I love to do that. It's

easier to buy organic food in Paris since the Boulevard Raspail market is five minutes from home. In London, it is more difficult because the market I like, Borough Market, is closed on Mondays.

**What are your weekend routines?**

When we are in London, the girls and I love to spend time in the parks—all that green space and fresh air is very restorative! If I have friends over from Paris, we'll pop over to the Connaught for Saturday brunch, which is a nice way to start the weekend for us all. There are always lots of children there and it's very informal. Otherwise, I will take the girls over to the hotel for afternoon tea. Of course, I like to cook at home and now that Charlotte is old enough to be interested in cooking with me, that makes it extra special. I might cook her favorite roast chicken, but she also loves spicy Asian food and I've learned to make Vietnamese soup with noodles for her. In Paris, my life is less spontaneous at weekends, much more organized around seeing friends and family. Whether I'm in Paris or London, though, I love to read and I can only do that at weekends. At the moment, I'm reading a novel by Eric Emmanuel Schmitt, a French novelist and playwright.

**If you could change something about your weekend, what would it be?**  
I wished it could be three days long and not just two.

—Ms. Darroze was speaking with Javier Espinoza.

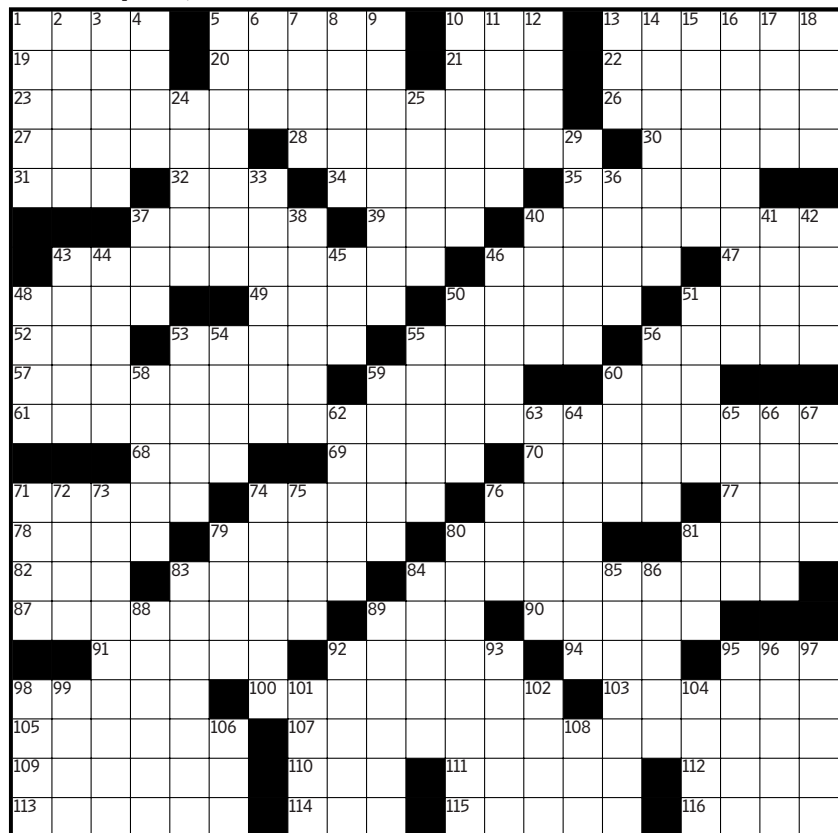


Andrew Testa for The Wall Street Journal

## THE JOURNAL CROSSWORD / Edited by Mike Shenk

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**Small Caps / by Dan Fisher**



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| 50 They have all the anthers | 51 Hitch | 52 Ballpark fig. | 53 Apartment window sign | 55 Thicket | 56 Dash array | 57 Any of the Greek Potamoi | 59 In fine fettle | 60 Backing | 61 Rogers catchphrase | 62 Steelers cornerback Taylor | 68 Zealous | 70 Calmly confident | 71 Canyonlands National Park sights | 74 Frasier's brother | 76 Buccaneer bud | 77 United | 78 Azerbaijan neighbor | 79 Like percale | 80 Arabian mother | 81 Like cucumber plants | 82 "Little Birds" writer | 83 Black-and-white mammals | 84 Easternmost state capital | 87 "Stop dawdling!" | 89 CPO's superior | 90 Well past the sell-by date | 91 Bids "one club" | 92 Cluster | 94 Indian honorific | 95 "The Closer" network | 98 Son of Lucifer Ornamental Yokum | 100 1995 bestseller in which #23 is "Don't Date a Married Man" | 103 Battle cry | 105 Capital on the Mediterranean | 107 With little or no warning | 109 To be safe | 110 Day break | 111 "That's all ___!" | 112 Masseur's target | 113 Razzed | 114 Unilever brand aimed at young men | 115 Mulletts hide them | 116 Modernists |
|------------------------------|----------|------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|

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| 1 "In Custody" author Desai | 2 Sweat units | 3 Trunk attachments | 4 Island in the Tuscan Archipelago | 5 Suit supplement | 6 Yodeler's perch | 7 Bucks, e.g. | 8 Film composer Morricone | 9 2009 National Medal of Arts recipient | 10 Benefactor | 11 Provinces | 12 Big influence on Rosie | 13 Collar | 14 Beneficial | 15 Largest moon of Neptune | 16 Mirage | 17 Infamous Ugandan | 18 Painter Magritte | 24 Like krypton | 25 "Your Movie Sucks" writer | 29 Pump rating | 33 David's rebellious son | 36 Hockey's Bobby and Colton | 37 S&L offerings | 38 Stock split? | 40 Hall & Oates song "___ Gone" | 41 Magnitogorsk's river | 42 "Animal Farm" leaders | 43 Hatch in the Capitol | 44 Set off | 45 Ballpark fig. | 46 Ready for posting | 48 Co-star of Felicity, Eva and Marcia | 50 Dependable | 51 Move crabwise |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------|--|---------------|------------------|

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| 53 Taxing trips | 54 Dungeons & Dragons creature | 55 Dalmatian, to Domitian | 56 Simple number | 58 Brand whose logo features three peaks | 59 Safe setting | 60 Sister of Charles, Andrew and Edward | 62 They're cooked in corn husks | 63 Ill-fated flier | 64 Execrates | 65 "Crocodile Hunter" Steve | 66 City of southwest New Hampshire | 67 Swirl | 71 Flash's foe | 72 Niagara's source | 73 "Baywatch" setting | 74 Free | 75 Middle of the brothers Karamazov | 76 Zine | 79 Small singer | 80 Take control forcibly | 81 Jockey | 83 Make hackneyed | 84 Year in Caesar's reign | 85 Their fruit is used in Worcestershire sauce | 86 O'Connor's successor | 88 Met offerings | 89 Atlas section | 92 Sony introduction of 1975 | 93 Temporary tattoo medium | 95 Once and again | 96 Cheese-covered snack | 97 "Poems are made by fools like me" poem | 98 Slightly | 99 Nota ___ | 101 Tennis star Mandlikova | 102 Flight feature | 104 Baseball Hall of Famer Musial | 106 Baseball Hall of Famer Williams | 108 "What did I tell you?" |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|

**Last Week's Solution**



► For an interactive version of The Wall Street Journal Crossword, WSJ.com subscribers can go to [WSJ.com/Puzzles](http://WSJ.com/Puzzles)

## CULTURAL CALENDAR

## Berlin

## ■ ART

"Pierre Soulages" is a traveling exhibition from the Centre Pompidou in Paris, offering 70 pictures by the French painter and sculptor. Martin-Gropius-Bau  
Oct. 2-Jan. 9  
☎ 49-3025-4860  
www.berlinerfestspiele.de

## ■ PHOTOGRAPHY

"Microphotography: Beauty Beyond the Visible" exhibits a series of works from the microcosmic universe. Museum für Fotografie  
Until Jan. 9  
☎ 49-3026-6218-8  
www.smb.museum

## Brussels

## ■ ART

"Lucas Cranach and His Time" displays 150 paintings, drawings, and rarely seen engravings by the German Renaissance painter and printmaker. Palais des Beaux-Arts  
Oct. 20-Jan. 23  
☎ 32-2-5078-444  
www.bozar.be

## Budapest

## ■ ART

"Fernando Botero's paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts" showcases 60 works by the Colombian artist, mostly paintings and sculptures depicting his trademark colorful figures and objects. Szépművészeti Múzeum  
Until Jan. 2  
☎ 36-1-4697-100  
www.szepmuveszeti.hu

## Istanbul

## ■ PHOTOGRAPHY

"Nothing Is What it Seems: Ani Çelik Areyan" presents a new series of images by the Turkish photographer, inspired by buildings and landscapes. Istanbul Modern  
Until Jan. 23  
☎ 90-212-3347-300  
www.istanbulmodern.org

## London

## ■ DANCE

"Onegin" is the Royal Ballet's production of the John Cranko ballet based on music by Tchaikovsky, retelling the story of Pushkin's "Yvgeny Onegin." Royal Opera House  
Until Oct. 25  
☎ 44-20-7304-4000  
www.roh.org.uk

## ■ ECOLOGY

"London Futures" explores the impact of global warming and rising sea levels on London through digitally manipulated photography and film screenings. Museum of London  
Until March 6  
☎ 44-20-7001-9844  
www.museumoflondon.org.uk

## ■ MUSIC

Blues-rock ensemble Grinderman is touring with new music from their album, "Grinderman 2." Oct. 1 Hammersmith Apollo  
Oct. 4 Les Docks, Lausanne  
Oct. 5 Volkshaus, Zurich  
Oct. 6 Live, Milan  
Oct. 7 Atlantico, Rome  
More information at  
www.grinderman.com

## Le Havre

## ■ ART

"Signac: Ports of France" presents watercolors by the French artist created for his series depicting 100 ports. Musée Malraux  
Until Jan. 31  
☎ 33-2351-9626-2  
www.musees-haute-normandie.fr



Courtesy: Wilkinson Gallery, London

"The Case is Open II" (2007) by Anna Parkina is on show in Turin.

## Luxembourg

## ■ MUSIC

"Gideon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica" is a tour by the Latvian violinist and conductor featuring a chamber orchestra of 27 young Baltic musicians. Oct. 4 Philharmonie de Luxembourg  
Oct. 10 Forum Usedom, Usedom  
Oct. 15 Laeiszhalle, Hamburg  
Oct. 16 NDR Landesfunkhaus, Hanover  
Oct. 17 Konzerthaus am Gendarmenmarkt, Berlin  
Oct. 19 Great Hall, Uppsala  
More information at  
www.nonesuch.com

## Paris

## ■ ART

"Arman" exhibits 120 objects by the French conceptual artist, a co-founder of the New Realism movement. Centre Pompidou  
Until Jan. 10  
☎ 33-1-4478-1233  
www.centrepompidou.fr

## Turin

## ■ ART

"Modernikon, Contemporary Art from Russia" showcases work by 20 Russian artists such as Andrey Kuzkin and Elena Kovylyna, presenting paintings, sculptures and installation art. Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo  
Until Feb. 27  
☎ 39-11-3797-600  
www.fsrr.org

## Vienna

## ■ ART

"Rodin and Vienna" displays a number of iconic works by the French sculptor, including "The Burghers of Calais," alongside photographs documenting the creation of some of the art. Unteres Belvedere  
Until Feb. 6  
☎ 43-1795-5713-4  
www.belvedere.at

—Source: WSJ research

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