

NEWS AND NOTES

LOST AND FOUND

Lost: With the crash of Swissair Flight 111, it was discovered that the Picasso painting, "The Painter" worth an estimated \$1.5 million, as well as diamonds, jewels and millions of dollars in cash, went down on 2 September into the Atlantic Ocean.

Lost: They say that New Yorkese is going, going, gone. That distinctive New York accent seems to have also assimilated into the bland "American" that most U.S. citizens speak, without those distinct vowels and that "r" sound.

Redistributed: Believed by the donor in 1948 that "modern" would no longer apply to works after 50 years, four Impressionist artworks valued at more than \$40 million have been transferred from the Museum of Modern Art (2 to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, being drawings by Van Gogh) and 2 Seurats shipped to the Art Institute of Chicago).

Stolen: Two armed men wearing black masks stole two Impressionist paintings from the Fine Arts Museum of Nice after taking the curator, Jean Fournis, hostage. They accosted the curator at his house and drove him to the museum, where he was bound and gagged, along with caretaker and another employee, and locked in the library. The bandits took an 1897 painting by Monet called "The Cliffs of Dieppe" and an 1890 painting by Alfred Sisley, "The Alley of the Poplars." Both paintings belong to the French government and will be difficult to sell.

Seized: FBI agents seized 3 gold artifacts in October from an exhibition at the Museum of New Mexico's Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, suspecting they may have been looted from an ancient Peruvian tomb and smuggled into the U.S. Museum director said that the pieces will be returned to their rightful owners if they are found to be stolen. Part of "Art of Ancient America, 1500 B.C. to 1500 A.D., all the pieces came from the same collector, who has asked to remain anonymous and is said to be cooperating fully with the FBI.

Lost: Stanley Marcus has decided to lose his mania for Southwestern art. He and his wife are selling their collection at Sotheby's on 2 December. Marcus, 93, has sold his home in Santa Fe, NM that contained his huge collection of early New Mexican carvings of patron saints, textiles and furniture, which he began collecting 50 years ago. He has already donated parts of his Dallas collection to local museums, including a famed series of Japanese prints by Hiroshige that Frank Lloyd Wright had put up as collateral for a loan.

Recycled: Frank Gehry's American Center

in Paris is going to be the Maison du Cinema, housing a library and theaters by the French Ministry of Culture.

Found: 10 paintings by Francis Bacon from the 1950s, one from the 1960s, and 7 from the 1980s and 1990s, including a triptych of abstracted figures. These paintings found two years ago will be on exhibit at the Tony Shafrazi Gallery in Soho, New York from 31 October on. Some experts feel this work was left unfinished by Bacon.

Missing: The new Ronald Reagan Federal Courthouse in Santa Ana, California costs \$123-million, but someone forgot a single picture or statue of Ronald Reagan himself. As a result, the new Treasury appropriations bill instructs the government to find ways to acquire fitting images of the former president without spending another federal dime. Donor, anyone?

Found: A granite sphinx with the head of Cleopatra's father emerged in late October from the choopy waters of Alexandria harbor after 1,600 years underwater. Cleopatra, on in 69 BC, was 17 when her father, Ptolemy XII, died. She was the last in a line of great Egyptian rulers, and when she took her life in 30 BC, Egypt came under direct Roman imperial rule. The sphinx will be returned to its seabed, which will eventually become an underwater museum, possibly involving installation of glass-walled viewing tunnels.

Restored: the glass mosaic of "The Last Judgment" was dedicated by Czech authorities an the J. Paul Getty Trust at Prague's St. Vitus Cathedral in late October. This six-year project to restore the 14th century mosaic, one of the Czech Republic's most significant treasures, culminated in the restoration of the 904-sq.ft. Mural including the central image of Christ in a mandorla surrounded by angels.

Found?: A painting attributed for years to Verrocchio at the National Gallery in London is said to be by the hand of Leonardo da Vinci. Tobias and the Angel is said to be Leonardo's first painting by David Brown, curator of Italian Renaissance painting at the National Gallery in Washington. Leonardo, Verrocchio's most important student, is said to have completed this painting at the age of 14.

Rediscovered for Women Too: Queen Sofia of Spain dedicated a specially built passageway in a 16th century monastery on 11 November that allows women to see nearly a dozen Goya frescos for the first time. The corridor was built at the Aula Dei monastery in Northern Spain because of a centuries-old ban on women aimed at protecting the celibate life of the monks.

Before the passageway was built, visitors had to pass through the monks' living quarters to see the frescos painted by Francisco Goya in the 18th century. The new corridor allows them to enter from outside.

Stolen: A Canaletto painting, "Il fonteghetto della Farina" was taken from one of Venice's oldest noble families, worth \$2.5 million. It was the only Canaletto in private hands in Venice.

Lost and Found: The relatives of two Holocaust victims have reached an agreement with a pharmaceutical company over ownership of a Degas landscape. The Art Institute of Chicago will acquire the work, "Landscape with Smokestacks," jointly from Lili Gutmann and her nephews, the daughter and grandsons of two Holocaust victims, and from Daniel C. Searle, who bought the painting 11 years ago.

Lost:
Rare Copernicus book stolen from Polish library
07:28 a.m. Nov 25, 1998 Eastern

WARSAW, Nov 25 (Reuters) - A rare, first edition of a ground-breaking book by 16th-century astronomer Nicholas Copernicus has been stolen from a scientific library in southern Poland, police said on Wednesday. It was the second theft in eastern Europe this year of a copy of "De Revolutionibus," a 1543 work in which Copernicus presented his revolutionary thesis that it was the Earth which revolved around the Sun. The book disappeared from the Polish Academy of Science's library in the city of Krakow on Tuesday, police spokeswoman Joanna Maciejewska told Reuters. The theft may have been ordered by a private collector, she said. "It is not that easy simply to sell the book or offer it at an auction because it is so rare and well known," she said. Another copy of the book was taken from Ukraine's National Vernadsky Library in August and has still not been traced. The value of the 200-page book, of which only about a dozen copies exist, was estimated by librarians quoted by Polish newspapers at 250,000 to 400,000 German marks (\$147,100 to \$235,000). "But most experts say it is simply priceless," Maciejewska said. The book was probably been stolen by a man in his early 40s who used forged or stolen identification documents to borrow it for research in the reading room, she said. "The man sat at his table for some time examining the book and then told the librarian he was going to the toilet," Maciejewska said. The man, who left behind his coat, never returned. The library has no security guards. "The librarian saw that the book was lying on the table all the time but it later turned out it was only the cardboard cover,"

Maciejewska said. Police were working on a sketch of the man and would publish it shortly, she said. (\$1-1.700 German Mark)

Found: The octagonal room in the center of the complex of Emperor Nero's palace known as the "round dining room" where Nero sang and played the lyre on a revolving circular stage to the sycophantic applause of his guests.

Found: A fuzzy picture showing a thick-set man with unkempt hair found in a Paris flea market has been identified as a daguerreotype showing the face of Nicolas Huet, a painter a naturalist who was a friend of Daguerre. The photo was bought for about \$110 10 years ago by Marc Pagneux, an art dealer. It was only recently he took the picture to be restored and realized what he had found. The 1837 photograph is currently being held in a Paris bank vault.

Moved: The studio of Francis Bacon, where for 30 years Britain's most famous postwar artist created dozens of important paintings, has been secretly dismantled and moved from London to Dublin. Offered to the Tate by John Edwards, Bacon's heir, and getting no response, the transfer was made to the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin, the artist's birthplace. It will take months to reassemble the studio in the gallery for a permanent exhibition. It will mean reconstituting walls as well as repositioning his mirror, piles of books, easels and an unfinished self-portrait left by Bacon, who suffered a fatal heart attack while visiting Madrid.

MUSEUM NEWS

The **Cultural Center for Contemporary Art** shuts its doors in Mexico City, where it had offered 172 exhibitions over 12 years. Because of cost slashing at the leading television network Televisa, whose owner Emilio Azcarraga Milmo, his friend, Robert Littman and Paula Cussi, a Mexican actress, founded the museum.

The **Whitney Museum of American Art's** mammoth overview of 20th century art and culture, scheduled to open next April, will be funded partially by Intel Corporation with \$6 million donation. The show will include more than 1,400 works of paintings, sculptures, photography, architecture and design, and will present related materials in music, dance, literature and film. The show will be presented in two consecutive parts over a period of 9 months: the first part, covering 1900 - 1950 will be from 22 April to 30 August; the second, covering the last half of the century, will run from October 1999 through February 2000. The show will then go to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art from May through September 2000. Intel is working with the museum to create a Web site available outside the museum crystal-

clear 3-D views of the works of art, ways to call up audio and video information and customized programs tailored to a viewer's interests and level of knowledge, as well as developing on-line curriculum for teachers.

The **Frick Collection** now has a very exciting new Web site (<http://www.frick.org>) offering not only practical information but also a virtual-reality tour. This and many other subtle changes are the idea of Samuel Sachs 2d, the new director of the Frick.

The **Corcoran Gallery of Art** in Washington, DC is the recipient of a gift of 227 photographs by Gordon Parks from the artist. It includes Mr. Parks' own print of his well-known photograph, "American Gothic, Washington, D.C.," created in 1942.

The **Metropolitan Museum of Art** has bought its first Jasper Johns painting, White Flag, directly from the artist.

The **Guggenheim Museum** in New York City is quietly developed plans for a large new branch to be designed by Los Angeles architect Frank Gehry to be built at the Hudson River on Pier 40 off Houston Street, believe it or not!

OTHER MUSEUMS

The **Museum of Questionable Medical Devices** is located in Minneapolis, including an array of bogus medical devices spanning two centuries.

In my home state of Connecticut, the Pequots have opened an impressive \$135 million museum on their reservation to tell the tribe's story, one of war, betrayal, near extermination and belated resurrection. They were a part of my early understanding of the diversity of this country, and so I hail them for their amazing accomplishment!

The **Museum of Bad Art**, housed in a dank, concrete basement next to the men's room of the community theater in the Boston suburb of Dedham should be on every tourist's list. Besides bad painting, they are soliciting bad sculpture, bad needlepoint. Yet it accepts only about one of every 10 works it is given; it rejects all reproductions, works on black velvet and other clichéd kitsch, obvious student exercises and bad art that was deliberately made badly rather than just turning out that way. Jerry Reilly is Executive director of the Museum.

The **Tech Museum of Innovation** opened on 31 October in San Jose, California. This Museum is a showcase for the kinds of gizmos that make Silicon Valley famous.

READER'S DIGEST COLLECTION

Reader's Digest is putting 39 works from its renowned art collection - including paintings by Monet, Van Gogh and Chagall - on the auction block as part of a plan to shore up the struggling publisher. Other

pieces will include major works by Diebenkorn, Giacometti, Renoir and Modigliani. There are still about 8,000 pieces of art left in the collection.

DATELINE: Los Angeles

Leroy Neiman, whose paintings reflect what he calls "purchased pleasures", such as sports, entertainment and play, has donated \$1 million to UCLA to establish the LeRoy Neiman Center for the Study of American Society and Culture, a research and graduate training unit that will focus on "the issues that shape and change America." The center, which will study areas including the arts, politics, economics and religion, will be part of UCLA's Department of Sociology.

DATELINE: Los Angeles

The L.A. City Council unanimously rescinded a requirement that writer sand artists pay \$25 for a city permit before working out of their homes. The constitutionality of this requirement was recently called into question. Yet other cities in Southern California such as Burbank, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and others.

DEADLINE: New York

The Gramercy International Art Fair has ended after five years and will be replaced by the International Art Show to be held from 18 February - 22 February at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York City.

CENSORSHIP

In July, the Whitney Museum of American Art canceled an exhibition on the nude in 20th-century art, and next June, the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield, Connecticut plans to present a variation of that exhibition. The excuse was that the Whitney wanted to cut costs to devote more resources to its forthcoming Project of America.

DATELINE: Paris

It was supposed to be François Mitterrand's final grandiose legacy, a library for the 21st century. But, like its counterpart, the new British Library in London, France's new national library has been plagued by technical problems. Barely a week after its inauguration, the library has been brought to a standstill by a series of hitches that have driven users to despair and prompted normally placid librarians to go on strike.

The **Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF)** is equipped with the latest computer technology and book delivery systems that are designed to make the 10 million works of France's two previous national collections available to readers in one state-of-the-art building. But the £1 billion library was badly designed from the start. The automatic transport system that

delivers books from the 18-storey towers is too small for large-format volumes and is unsuitable for fragile works, since they sometimes fall from the overhead trolleys. Instead, the books have to be delivered manually.

However, the heart of the problem is the library's central computer. The multi-million pound system, designed by the computer giant Cap Gemini, has proved woefully inadequate. Although the library has been designed for almost 4,000 readers, the system begins to malfunction when more than a few hundred people try to use it at once. The computer controls virtually every function in the building, including the function of the catalogue, ordering books, and access for personnel and members to the various library floors.

Marie-France Eymery, who is among staff who have been on strike since Tuesday, said: "Readers were finding themselves stuck in the building at closing time because the computer thought they still had books out in their names. It took some researchers up to six hours to register. The system was overloaded - everything was blocked. Everything that's visible to the public looks great. But everything behind the scenes has been designed with no ergonomic considerations."

Staff say that instead of ironing out the problems before opening, the system is being tested on the paying public. Lack of training has compounded the problems, with some librarians given just two days' instruction on the complex computer terminals. Unions met officials from the culture ministry on Friday, but were not happy with proposals to address the difficulties. They voted to continue the strike until tomorrow.

Mr Mitterrand was dying of cancer when he ordered the construction of the new library, and some regard the four bleak L-shaped towers - designed to resemble open books - as his cenotaph. But one thing the library's staff and readers agree on is that the late president left a costly and inefficient legacy.

November in Paris is the Mois de la Photo, orchestrating 79 photography exhibitions with the trip theme of "Seclusion, Intimacy, Event." There is also a tribute to Johann van der Keuken, a Dutch photographer and video artist, in various places in such as Jeu de Paume. Eugene Smith is being featured, as well as Victor Hugo's days in exile on the island of Jersey with a selection of daguerreotypes by his family and in his own drawings and notes at the Musée d'Orsay through 20 January.

Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* can now be read in a series of a dozen or so 70-page comic strip volumes of "A La Recherche du Temps Perdu. With the first volume in an edition of 12,000 copies for

\$15 for a large-size, hard cover comic book, it sold out in 3 weeks in Paris, with a further 8,000 copies in addition being printed. This is all done by a 41-year-old advertising executive, Stephane Heuet.

Galerie Zabriskie has closed in Paris after 22 years, while they will operate as a private gallery from the same address in Paris.

DATELINE: New York

The **Andre Emmerich Gallery** has closed and its artists will be handled by Deitch Projects, the SoHo gallery, owned 50% by Sotheby's, which also bought the Emmerich Gallery two years ago. One artist who will not be represented by Deitch Projects is Morris Louis, who was handled in his estate by Emmerich for more than 30 years, but is now handled by Diane Upright, a private dealer.

Pauline Oliveros is known for her Deep Listening Band, an ensemble she has headed for 10 years, and it recently gave a concert in the Low Library Rotunda at Columbia University. The Band explores "alternative listening strategies" in "unusual acoustical environments". Instruments included fingers along strings, Oliveros' trademark accordion, conch, a didjeridoo, and an assortment of flutes, rattles and whatnot.

DATELINE: Sydney

Famed Danish architect Joern Utzon, 80, has been asked to help redesign the interior of the Sydney Opera House, more than a quarter of a century after he quit the project in disgust. It is said that he is pleased to be consulted about the changes but is too old to return to Sydney from his home on the Spanish island of Majorca.

DATELINE: Palermo

Dumpsters in Palermo have been decorated either with a seascape and beached boats, tribal masks, rows of stylized boats or abstract arabesques by four different artists. The festa to celebrate the launching of these garbage bins was accompanied by a brass band of Carabinieri.

DATELINE: Oporto

The first contemporary art museum in Portugal is scheduled to open in June in Oporto, about 200 miles from Lisbon. To be designed by the Portugese architect Alvaro Siza, it holdings will concentrate on the 1960s through the present. Owned by the Serralves Foundation, the museum will have its first director, Vicente Todoli, recently the chief curator and artistic director of the Valencia Institute of Modern Art in Spain.

DATELINE: Madrid

Rafael Moneo has been named the architect

for the long-delayed expansion of the Prado Museum. It will involve the neighboring Palacio del Buen Retiro, now home to the Army Museum. When completed, it wants to exhibit at least 2,600 of its most valuable 4,500 paintings.

DATELINE: Bilbao

A year after opening, Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao has chalked up attendance of 1.36 million people for the first 12 months, 3 times the forecast figure. The Getty Center, slated to post its first year attendance, will probably go over 2 million!

DATELINE: Lawrence, KS

The **Esquire collection** at University of Kansas, Lawrence has attracted a great deal of attention from feminists to tattoo parlor owners. The whole archive involved 38,000 pieces of "editorial art" given to the university because of its strong journalism school's first-issue magazine collection and its designation as official repository for the Magazine Publishers Association, as well as 2,000 or so pieces, including pinup art, turned over to the Spencer Museum of Art on the campus. The Varga girl lives in Lawrence, Kansas!

DATELINE: Amsterdam

Victory Boogie Woogie by Mondrian was acquired by the Dutch government with private National Art Collection Funds and part donation of \$55 million from the 1998 profits of the Dutch Central Bank. The painting, having belonged to American magazine publishing magnate S.I. Newhouse Jr. and had hung in his apartment in New York, is added to the permanent collection of the Hague Municipal Museum, home of the largest Mondrian collection in the world. Painted in New York between 1942 and his death in 1944, this adds to missing works from the final years of Mondrian's career at The Hague.

DATELINE: Sapporo, Japan

Isamu Noguchi's ambition was to see the entire earth as a sculpture. Now, some 10 years after his death, Noguchi's magnum opus of the Moere Numa Park in Sapporo has been realized, the largest project by Noguchi and half the size of New York City's Central Park. This is the culmination of ideas for monumental sculptures and public spaces that Noguchi developed over his long career. Included are Play Mountain, a mound of earth which is a mixture of sharp angles and rounded curves, flat surfaces and organic forms. It is a sculpture. The Larch Forest, made up of larch trees of identical height arranged in a giant circle, is another example of a magical textured circle of greenery, a living sculpture. You see the forest, not the trees. And there is Tetra Mound, an enormous stainless steel tripod that straddles a grassy

hemisphere. It shows the artful blending of smooth and rough surfaces, as well as forming a backdrop for one of the outdoor stages. The ideas Noguchi put on paper over a period of 8 months were the culmination of all his vision throughout his long career.

WILD ART

Salvatore DeFazio has painted an artwork that can be appreciated only by those who soar the skies. Larger than a football field, spray painted onto grass, this ephemeral work of art will last only a month in Hazelton, Pennsylvania. The paint is donated, but the rest is up to him. It takes 3 weeks to lay out the painting, and just a week to paint it.

WEB ART

Digital art has come a long way, with pieces ranging from cartoon strips to "digital minimal operas" to "Jodi" (http://www.archimuse.com/nw98/beyondinterface/hi_fr.html) which apparently is software code solely for its aesthetic value. Although much of Web art is little more than multimedia wizardry, some Web art is being collected by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Of course, displaying the works of art remains a problem because the computers crash a lot, according to Aaron Betsy, the SFMOMA's curator of architecture and design. But things are getting better. The Museum has collected copies of commercial sites such as <http://www.word.com> and the work of San Francisco design firm Razorfish (<http://www.rsub.com>).

Then there are 10 exhibits at Hotwired's R G B Gallery at <http://www.hotwired.com/rgb> which opened last year. Artists are paid about \$1,000 for their submissions. Exhibits change about every six weeks.

Another favorite Web art site is called Remedi Project, a compilation of works from digital designers that can be found at <http://www.theremediproject.com>. One exhibit is like an endless postcard, with images of San Francisco rooftops scrolling across the screen under words from the artist. Another site is <http://www.adaweb.com>, which is not being updated. But this site has been acquired by the Walker Art Center and will be "cryogenically preserved". (Excerpted from Greg Miller's *Cyberspace* column in the Los Angeles Times).

The Shock of the View: Artists, audiences and museums in the Digital Age is sponsored by the Walker Art Center, in association with the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, the San Jose Museum of

Art, the Wexner Center for the Arts, the Ohio State University, and Rhizome. This project is a six-month online project that explores the similarities and differences between old art practices and new digital work.

Shock of the View

<http://www.walkerart.org/salons/shockoftheview/> begins with object lessons that pair works of art or performances from a music collection with digital works of art. Every three weeks new work will be added, organized around the broad themes of object, space, performance, and the hybrid. Participants include: Mark Amerika, Simon Biggs, Kathy Brew, Ken Goldberg, Diane Gromala, Sandy Stone, and many others.

A fascinating Internet-based interactive installation is Nancy Paterson's *Stock Market Skirt* (<http://www.becc.com/nancy/skirt.html>) shows a blue taffeta and black velvet party dress displayed on a dressmaker's mannequin or "Judy," located next to a computer and several monitors of varying sizes. In large type, the stock ticker symbol and price which is being tracked, marches from right to left across the monitor screens as the stock price is continuously updated. Large white numbers and letters on a blue background (matching the blue of the taffeta skirt) scroll in simulation of the pixel board displays used to track stock values on traditional exchange room floor.

PERL scripts (running under Linux) extract and analyze stock prices from online stock market quote pages on the Internet. These values are sent to a program which determines whether to raise or lower the hemline via a stepper motor and a system of cables, weights and pulleys attached to the underside of the skirt. When the stock price rises, the hemline is raised; when the stock price falls, the hemline is lowered.

FAMOUS QUOTES

Ed Ruscha: Generally, I just feel like there's a log jam of exhibits. There's too much art. It makes me yearn for a show of miniature steam engines. Why not? There are too many preproven exhibitions, too much legitimate art. There's too much information out there.

CLASSIFIED

Wanted: TV sets, souvenirs, toys, etc. for an exhibition. In exchange for your contribution, Rabascall will send you a color photograph signed by him on the same theme. Send to Rabascall, 67 rue Vergniaud, F 75013 Paris. Wanted for a 1999/2000 exhibition, Rabascall is seeking small Television sets in replica or functioning ones. He already has a collection of more than 100 pieces, from which he has taken an amazing photograph, but which is also visible on the Internet at <http://www.fnac.fr/galleries/Ma> collection. He needs to show his own collection amplified by many more pieces and he is appealing to any or all who have small plastic or actual TV sets.

Available: Exhibitions, lectures on artist books anywhere in the world. Contact Umbrella Associates, Judith A. Hoffberg, P.O. Box 3640, Santa Monica, CA 90408. Tel: (310)399-1146, fax: (310)399-5070, e-mail: umbrella@ix.netcom.com

Contributions to Umbrella Museum

Carol Pulitzer, Anna Banana, Elzas-Bellin family, Beth Bachenheimer, Claire Isaacs, Luc Fierens

UMBRELLA NEWS

Cherbourg is a city in France well known for the movie, "Les Parapluies de Cherbourg" or *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* with Catherine DeNeuve. Jean-Pierre Yvon, an umbrella manufacturer, has been selling umbrellas in Cherbourg as souvenirs. More than 55,000 have been sold, made of cotton and polyester. Even the Mayor gives them as presents. Some people, however, in Cherbourg are not happy because they think tourists will not come because of the rain.