

Town of Country
July 2000

CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

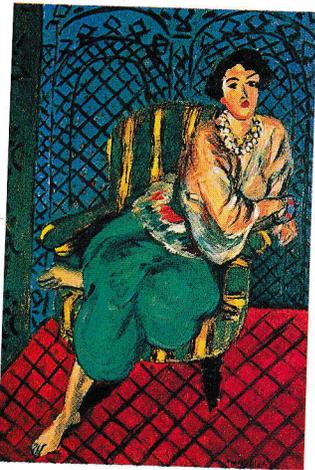
Cultural Calendar

BY MATTHEW GUREWITSCH



LEE, MA July 25–30 To me, fair friend, you never can be old. Paul Taylor celebrates his 70th birthday with exuberant dances new and old at Jacob's Pillow. Tickets: (413) 243-0745.

SEATTLE July 20–October 8 The unknown Andy Warhol—master draftsman in Ingres and Picasso's line—gets his turn in the spotlight at the University of Washington's Henry Art Gallery.

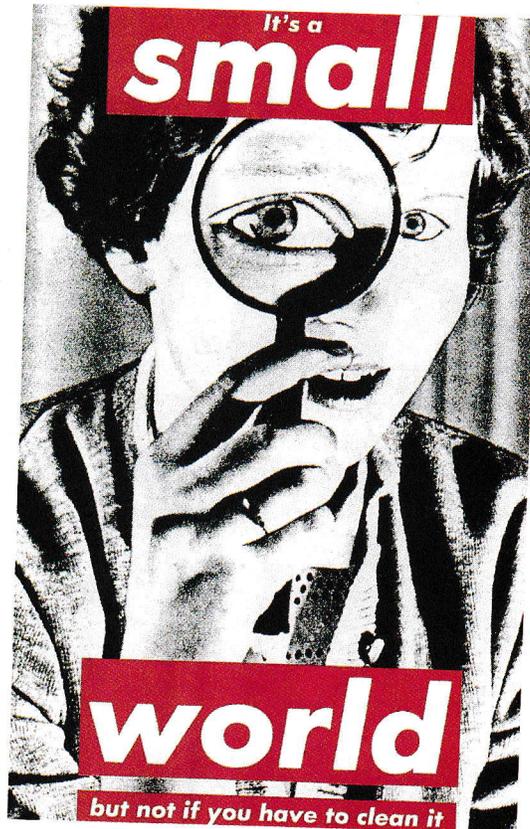


BIRMINGHAM, AL July 16–September 10 The Cone sisters' Matisse—the glory of the Baltimore Museum of Art—pay a visit to the Birmingham Museum of Art, now celebrating its first half-century.



NEW YORK CITY June 29–September 17 In a Whitney Museum retrospective, Alice Neel turns a clinical, unflinching eye on New Yorkers and the New York of the mid-1900s and beyond—and (as here) herself.

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ONTARIO July 5–October 29 Civilization nosedives into chaos in William Golding's classic parable *Lord of the Flies*, staged by the Shaw Festival Theatre. Tickets: (800) 511-SHAW.



At once sad and funny: Barbara Kruger's *Untitled* (1990).

versity but quit to study at the Parsons School of Design. By age 22, she was working at *Mademoiselle*. For about eleven years, she designed magazines, a period she now jokingly calls “graduate school” because it equipped her with unusually sophisticated design skills.

Kruger, 54, was at the forefront of a group of women artists in the '80s who chose photography to gain prominence in an art market then dominated by

The Aphorist

Q: What's black and white and read (as well as red) all over?

A: The Barbara Kruger retrospective at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art (July 13 to October 22).

Barbara Kruger is known for her montages of greatly enlarged black-and-white photographs captioned with crimson-bordered aphorisms. A particular favorite shows a ventriloquist's dummy, tagged with, “When I hear the word culture I take out my checkbook.” Another is the deadpan “I shop, therefore I am.”

“Humor is an important part of the work,” the artist says. “I’m trying to create a collision between the hilarious and the tragic.” A Newark, New Jersey, native and an outspoken feminist, Kruger had a working-class upbringing. “I come from a different class than most of my colleagues,” she says evenly. “I’m sensitized to issues of race and difference.” She won a scholarship to Syracuse Uni-

men. By applying her graphic-design skills to the high ideals but drab visuals of conceptual art, she came up with cinematic images that were seductive and smart, accenting them with red-lacquer frames. “I wasn’t going to stick them on the walls with pushpins,” she explains. “I wanted them to enter the marketplace, because I began to understand that outside the market there is nothing.” Such moxie led to representation by the high-profile Mary Boone Gallery in Manhattan.

The retrospective is full of “Sensurround” galleries wallpapered with giant photographs, super graphics, video projections and recorded speeches. Kruger’s art amplifies her social concerns: “I am a newspaper junkie, and every time I open the paper, it offers more material for what I do,” she says. “It’s about fear of difference and wanting to destroy differences.” Or as she puts it in an artwork: “How dare you not be me?”

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP

APHIS, LEFT COLUMN, FROM TOP: BY LOIS GREENFIELD; WOMAN (1950), BY ANDY WARHOL; COURTESY OF THE