

# The new East Wing gallery people surely believe the little things mean a lot

By Boris Weintraub  
Washington Star Staff Writer

It's not the big things that cause the last-minute problems when you put up an architectural masterpiece like I. M. Pei's East Building of the National Gallery of Art that takes seven years and \$95 million to build. Those things sort themselves out as time goes by.

No, it's the little things that cause the nail-biting and the grabbing for the Maalox. Like the carpeting that arrives late, which means the pictures have to be hung late, which means that the lights to light the pictures have to be installed late, which means that crews have to work overtime, 12 and 15 hours a day, seven days a week for eight to 10 weeks to get it all together.

The little things, like the motor that turns out on the lift which enables gallery workers to go to the roof of the massive atrium to fix things. Or the light fixture in the auditorium that is installed upside down. Or the several tons of Mexican beach stones that are being poured, bag by bag from a wheelbarrow, at the base of a delightful Dubuffet sculptural parade, and which will turn black when covered by water — because they will be part of a reflecting pool on the Constitution Avenue side of the building.

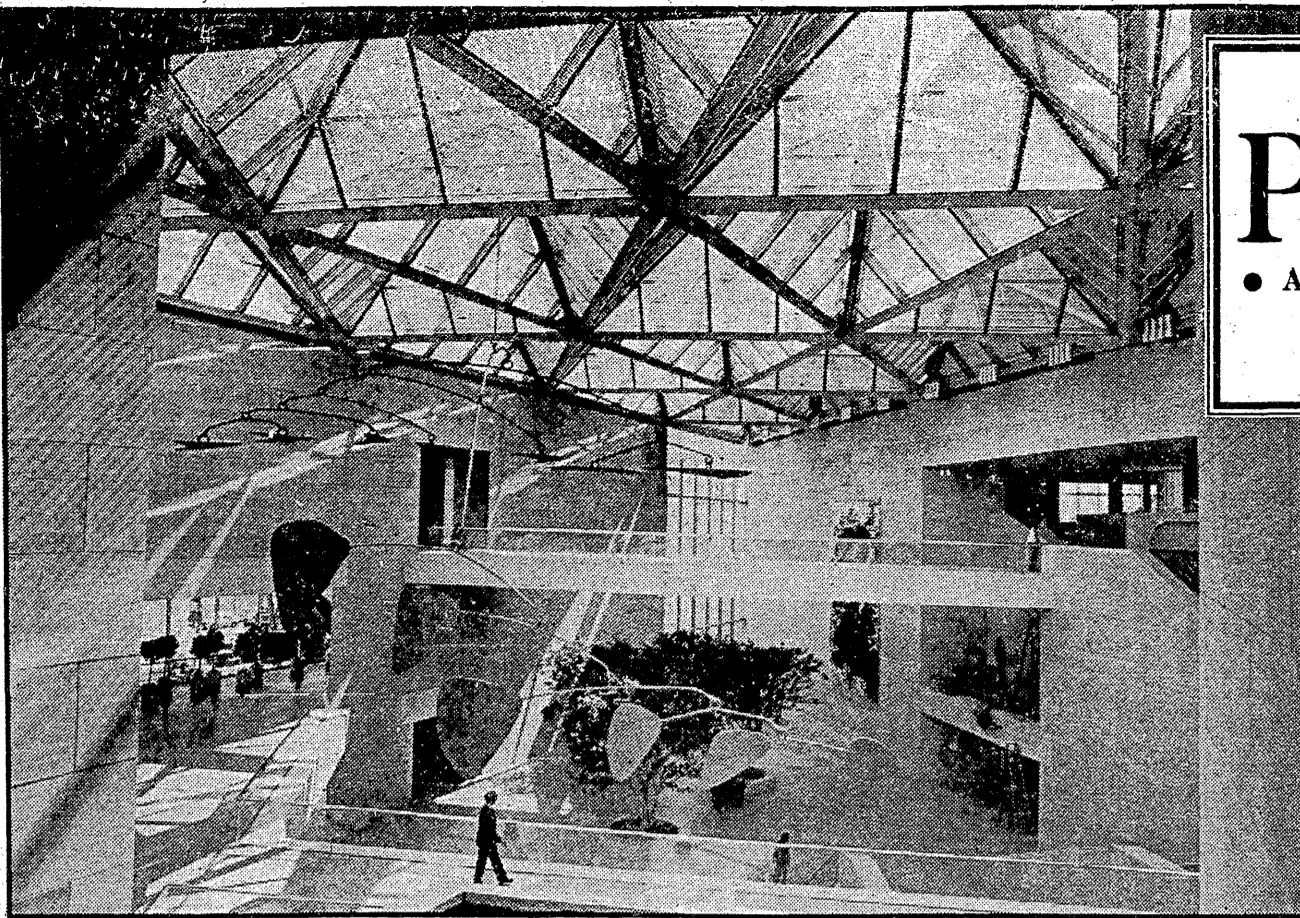
"I unloaded 14,000 pounds of this stuff one weekend," says one gallery staffer.

OR THERE IS the pet peeve of gallery director J. Carter Brown, now happily resolved: the squeak in the "people mover" — what you and I would call a horizontal escalator — in the tunnel which links the old gallery with the new one.

"Well, it's important, because it helps people form their first impression as they enter the building," says Brown somewhat defensively when asked why he focuses on what seems like such a mere trifle.

The squeak used to be loud and continuous. Brown kept calling the company that installed it, and it kept squeaking. Early last week, he was being interviewed about the new building, and the National Public Radio interviewer decided to tape part of the interview on the people mover. Brown had to go to a museum directors' convention in Minneapolis the next day, but he called the company's president from the convention to tell him to listen to the interview, and especially to listen to the squeak. The squeak is now gone.

Some of the gallery's aides, like David Scott, who was the Brown's man in direct charge of construction, take a sanguine view about the problems, at least now that most of them have been solved.



An interior view of the new East Wing Gallery.

—Washington Star Photographer Ken Heinen

"The problems all dissolve and gradually you get them back into perspective," says Scott, sitting in the auditorium under the light fixture installed upside down and in front of the stage, part of which is slightly lighter in color than the rest. "Some things, like the floor, you say you can't open with that, and then you decide you can and you'll fix it a week later, and you live with it."

BUT OTHERS can't be so sanguine. Pete Supple, the gallery's building superintendent, was walking around late last week with a clipboard, on which was a list of things remaining to be done. A long list.

"Clean rear exit to Dresden," the list read in part. "Baby grand to mezz. Top off upupp high lift." And on and on.

The "upupp high lift" is the gizmo which extends up to the atrium ceiling so that its lights can be changed. It is also the gizmo whose motor burned out during a routine D.C. Fire Department inspection last week.

All around the new building, workmen were engaged in a thousand and one different chores to get the last little things in place. There were "wet paint" signs all around. A huge photomural to be mounted outside the "Splendors of Dresden" exhibition was lying on the floor, being pasted together and

touched up. A painter lay on his back in a gallery, touching up the paint on the base of a sculpture. A group of joyous Matisse cutouts stood on the floor of the aerie-like gallery where they will be hung, waiting to be hung. A dozen trees stood around the atrium floor, waiting to be placed somewhere. Paintings which had already been hung were dark, awaiting proper lighting.

ALL OF THIS had to be completed by yesterday's press preview, and by the series of ceremonial events which will precede Thursday's official opening. They didn't make it for the press preview. Workmen were still working, and identifying labels were still

temporarily taped onto some paintings. Festivities begin with a cozy little dinner tonight for about 200 people who have something to do with the building and 20th century art: lenders, artists, the gallery's collectors' committee. A lunch for 150 tomorrow will feature art scholars, lecturers, historians, what gallery spokeswoman Katherine Warwick calls "the brains in our business." Then there will be another dinner for 200 tomorrow night, for people connected with the Dresden exhibition, followed by a 10 p.m. reception for the diplomatic corps and other VIPs. And a luncheon Thursday will honor 100 or so people involved in the building's planning, funding and construction.

AT 2 P.M. Thursday, Chief Justice Warren Burger, chairman of the gallery's board, will introduce Paul Mellon, the shy businessman-horseman-collector whose millions paid for the new building. Mellon will present the building to the nation, and President Carter will accept it. "I wonder what would happen if he turned it down," a staffer mused the other day.

Spokeswoman Warwick, who has had quite a time herself with the little things these last few months escorting a constant parade of reporters, photographers, writers, television crews and other assorted visitors through the building, and even watching TV crews film from a helicopter overhead, points out that all these ceremonies are much smaller than the 1941 ceremony which opened the gallery's original building. President Roosevelt showed up for that one, along with 1,000 honored guests. That's why things are spread out over three days this time.

After accepting the gift, President Carter will go inside, and the public will be able to follow him in and begin using the building as it was intended to be used.

## In which Ear dons a hat and sets tongues wagging among the beautiful people

CANNES — Don't think it was easy. It took courage. More than it takes to keep one's bra on at the Lido beach. More than ordering iced tea with one's lobster souffle. More than cheering for the bad guys in "Coming Home." Ear did it.

Ear wore a hat in Cannes. Only Rudi Nureyev, Harold Robbins, and a huge hairy man on the Carlton Terrace Cannes winners named, D-3.

who wears a black felt sheriff's hat with a silver star on the front dared join Ear in its folly. Hats are not chic this year. Brains may fry in the sun, dye-jobs may turn green, startling spiky nests of new wrinkles may be built upon virgin territory, ugly brown age spots may spring up like a relief map of Indonesia. Hats are not worn.

You do not wear a hat. They are not shown in shop windows along the Croisette. Ergo, they are not worn.

FOR FIVE DAYS HERE, Ear was chic. Bare-headed in the baking sun, Ear poached his brain pan with the best of them, seeking spots of shade and running from one parasol to another on the Carlton Terrace like some wild old hound dog in a Mississippi heat wave.

On the fifth day, crazed with heat to the point where Ear almost didn't care about Fashion, Ear sought out, in the back streets of Cannes where no chic foot ever ventures, a sort of a dime store dealing in the shady merchandise.

Confident it would not be seen — festival people believe that the French who inhabit the world behind the Croisette eat human

flesh, chop off the hands of pickpockets and turn into gorillas at sunset — Ear brazenly marched in, laid out 15 francs for a shiny straw hat (Ear had never seen anything that cost less than 500 francs in its week in Cannes). Ear then placed it upon Ear's head.

With faltering steps, Ear made its way back to the Carlton Terrace, where the Beautiful Ones gather. Along the Croisette as Ear passed, it could hear the murmurs. "... Chapeau. ..." "Chapeau. ..." "Chapeau. ..."

People took Ear's photograph. Children ran a little faster to catch up with Ear and peer into its face. Fear, scorn and, yes, even grudging admiration for Ear's courage could be seen in the faces of the oncoming hordes.

I n the Carlton Terrace, all was as usual.

The girl from "Jubilee," the English punk movie, wore her usual 10-inch spikes of white, black-rooted hair standing straight up like the Statue of Liberty's prongs, and her Kiss-type make-up. The usual actress was taking off her clothes over near the privet hedge. A middle-aged transvestite in white-face and a Spanish dancer's outfit, with giant silk peonies behind his ear, sipped neat gin and popped olives with an obscene glitter in his eye. The young girl in the jeans with the cheeks of the bottom cut out sauntered through the tables. Chatter, chatter, chatter.

Enter The Hat. Deadly silence fell. Ear had done the undoable. Ear had shocked the terrace.

## The Ear in Cannes

WITHIN A DAY OR SO, of course, Ear had become, if you'll pardon the expression, old hat. It happens to even the most sensational scandals here. Even the bits and bobs of silk Ear tied around the crown to match things no longer produced gasps of horror.

The Hat was the mark of Cain, yes. But one sees some strange things here.

A WHISPER WENT AROUND about a party Martin Scorsese was throwing in a far-flung part of the Carlton. Ear was not invited. Neither was Andrew Sarris, who had helped him write his first screenplay; nor the New York woman who had introduced him to the man who gave him the idea for "Taxi Driver," nor the well-known Hollywood writer, now living in London, who had given him what-for in her book.

Should one crash? Could one crash? Could anyone pass the French goons at the gate?

Now, if there's one thing the French love more than love, it is saying "non."

Non, you cannot have your coffee with your dessert. Non, you cannot have cheese sent to your room. Non, c'est impossible, madame. Non, you cannot come. You have not the card. C'est impossible. Non. To reject would-be party-goers is a pleasure they would give up a meal for.

The Hat, 'wigs, was on its best behavior. It had a scarf around it that matched the frock. If you looked quickly and not too closely, the effect was, while not expensive, together.

STRIDING AHEAD of its doubtful companions through the crush of hang-dog party rejectees, Ear adopted the sneer of a Cannes waiter being asked for a cheese sandwich. Ear also picked up a glass from a table. Marching past the bouncer, who held up a hand, Ear turned as though it had been shot when asked for its card. "I am returning to join my husband," Ear said, looking through him with loathing under The Hat's brim, and marched on.

Ear heard his co-bouncer questioning him. Out of the corner of its eye, Ear saw him shrug, and out of the corner of Ear's ear, he was heard to say: "Chapeau."

Ear stepped confidently in for its champagne reward. Ear does not know if the others ever made it.

But now, at last, Ear understands everything. For vampires, you use garlic. For werewolves, you use wolfsbane. For Frenchmen, you use hats.

Tomorrow: The End.



## TV TONIGHT: Barbara's guests offer a variety

By Bernie Harrison  
Washington Star Staff Writer

It's been an up and down, in and out season for Barbara Walters in her anchorman role, but one thing that's been working very well for her are her celebrity specials.

I doubt if you'll learn anything about Barbara's trio of guests tonight (WJLA-7 at 10) — Burt Reynolds, Mike Landon and Muhammad Ali — that you didn't know before. But the interviews are breezy, and you'll meet them in their homes, Burt in the largest one-bedroom house in Beverly Hills; Ali in his 22-room Hyde Park home on Chicago's South Side, where he introduces his wife and two babies on network TV for the first time, and the large Landon family on the tennis court and in the gym of their estate.

The sports fans, including Ali's, will wait for the replay — if any. They should be watching game four in the championship NBA series in Seattle between the Sonics and the Bullets. That's at 9 on CBS (WTOP-9).

### Other specials

There's a sprightly list of them — we're still in the May "sweeps" rating period — and viewers will have to make decisions at every age level, including the youngest. The sampling:

"Dan Haggerty Goes To the Circus" (WRC-4 at 8). TV's Grizzly Adams is the host, and the stars are some of the top European circus acts.

"The Yearling," conclusion (WTOP-9 at 8). This grand family film — as moving today as it was 30 years ago — comes to the moment you dread. The boy loves that pet fawn; his father must destroy it. Gregory Peck and Claude Jarman Jr. are perfect.

The National Geographic's "Treasure" (26, 22, 14/53 at 8). If you missed it before, it's a fine one, filmed over a six-year period as the modern day Ahab, Mel Fisher, diligently pursues the treasure of the Spanish ship Atocha, sunk off the Florida Keys in 1622.

"Country Night of Stars," part two (WRC-4 at 9). Back to the Grand Ole Opry, in Nashville, with cohorts Crystal Gayle, and one of the Hall of Famers, Eddy Arnold. In the first half, with Crystal, it's Roger Miller, Ray Price, and Jimmie Davis, former governor of Louisiana, singing his "You Are My Sunshine." With Arnold — who could be on all night singing his hits — are Patti Page, Dottie West, Don Gibson and the Charlie Daniels Band.

"Bartleby, the Scrivener" (26, 22, 14/53 at 9). Here's the rarest special of all — a locally-produced (Maryland TV) drama that made it to the network. Playwright Israel Horowitz faithfully adapted the Herman Melville

short story (about a young copyist hired by a 19th century Wall Street lawyer) and it's splendidly performed by Nicholas Kepros, as the lawyer, who cannot believe his clerk's behavior, and Joel Colodner as the sad scrivener. You'll remember his response to requests from the outside world — "I will prefer not to." What makes it work, simplicity.

"Men of Bronze" (26, 22, 14/53 at 10). Another fascinating rerun, the story of "The Harlem Hellfighters," the 368th Regiment of the New York National Guard that distinguished itself with the French Army during World War I. It's at its best when the veterans reminisce.

### The series

Anthropologist Dr. Carl Cyrus sends Jerry into shock when he traces his ancestry on "America 2Night" (WDCA-20 at 7:30). . . On "Happy Days" (WJLA-7 at 8), Howard joins Fonzie as a holdout against fellow jurors in a purse snatching case. . . "Laverne and Shirley" (WJLA-7 at 8:30) never learn; they try to patch things up between Laverne's dad, Frank, and Edna, after the latter's ex-husband reappears. . . Merv Griffin (WTTG-5 at 8:30) continues his salute to the movie, "Thank God It's Friday" by staging the finals of the First Casablanca National disco Contest, with top dancers from eight cities. Judges include famed disco owner Regine. . . On the "Three's Company" rerun (WJLA-7 at 9), Jack's principles are at stake; he's hired as a male model and learns he is to pose for a centerfold. . . Richard Paul's Mayor Teddy Burnside is always a delight on "Carter Country" (WJLA-7 at 9:30). In this rerun, he's very stingy with his and the town's money. . . Ballerina Natalia Makarova visits Dick Cavett (26, 22 at 11). . . Johnny Carson's guests (WRC-4 at 11:30) include Len Waxdeck, the bird-caller, and Robert Blake. . . Tom Snyder talks to Christopher Lee about his long career in horror films (WRC-4 at 1 a.m.)

### The movies

Steve McQueen's "Nevada Smith" (WDCA-20 at 9) is a Western winner. . . On the late beat, you'll find "The Valachi Papers" (WJLA-7 at 11:30), with Charles Bronson as Joseph Valachi, the real-life Mafia soldier who sang, and another lively Western, Bill Holden's "Arizona" (WTTG-5 at 12:30 a.m.)

### Commentary

Eddy Arnold, on performers' popularity: "If the people like you as a human being, not merely as a performer, they'll try awfully hard to like and accept your material, they'll give you the benefit of the doubt. If they don't like you, then even good material, well delivered, will have a tough time making it."

## Tuesday...

Being both an inveterate reader and an inveterate theater-goer, I always like to get to my seat a few minutes before the curtain goes up so I can scan the biographies of the cast in the program.

In the program for "Duck Hunting," which is an excellent Soviet play at Arena Stage, I was happy to read about Gale Garnett who, as it turns out, gives a fine performance as a Russian tease named Vera.

Anyway, the program notes reminded me that this was Garnett's second appearance in Washington, following on the heels of her portrayal of Maggie, a washed-out rock star, in "Teeth 'n' Smiles" at the Folger Theater. Garnett, I further learned, originated the role of Bette in the workshop premiere of "A History of the American Film" and, at 17, won a Grammy for writing "We'll Sing in the Sunshine," which is, of course, a very pleasant song.

Then I read that "Ms. Garnett wishes to state that she is no longer living with Nick Mancuso (though they are still Good Friends)."

SINCE I REALLY DON'T know Garnett and couldn't pick Mancuso out of a line-up, the full impact of this announcement may have been lost on me. Nonetheless, I applauded Garnett's openness and secretly wondered if her admission wasn't signaling a revolution in theater programs. There are all sorts of possibilities.

For example: Michaelangelo York (The Boy): A newcomer to the theater, Michelangelo scored his first success as the body in "The Body Politic" and was seen shortly thereafter as the torso in "Anatomy and Other Strangers." A rabid physical fitness buff, Michelangelo attended Santa Monica Junior College for several months, during which he took time off from his studies to appear in the group scenes for the motion picture "Beach Blanket Honey." He insists that his hair is naturally blond, although he sometimes helps it along with lemon juice. Among Michelangelo's many gratifications this season, he is most pleased that the rash cleared up all by itself.

Marge Home (Widow Jones): Familiar to millions of home viewers as the unruffled mother in her long-running television commercials for Minute Beef Stew, Marge is actually a serious and dedicated artist who puts "legitimate theater" first. She has played Mama in "I Remember Mama" more times (8) than any other American actress, was the title

character in "Mother Says No," starred as "Mother Courage" at last year's Altoona Summer Arts Festival and had a cameo in the movie "Where's Papa?" Recently, she broke new ground by appearing as Granny in "The American Dream." Her friends, however, know her for her veal scallopini. Marge has a three-year old Hot Point Range in good working order on which she is willing to take sealed bids after the show.

Deidre Davenport (Spite): A fervent subscriber to The Method school of acting, dark, mercurial Deidre has a distinguished list of credits in some of the world's most challenging plays. Hailed by critics for the gutsy realism she brings to the great heroines of Greek tragedy (Medea, Cassandra, Jocasta), she has proved her versatility by playing with equal success in plays by O'Neill, Racine, Seneca and — in a lighter vein — Gorky. Her one-woman show, "Gloom," is a cabaret favorite from coast to coast. Deidre has broken up with Ken and Oliver and is no longer on speaking terms with Gerald, Esther, Rick or Greta. She would like to take this space to tell Brick he has 24 hours to get his gym shoes out of the apartment.

Joddy Tuttle (Mr. Squiggle): Joddy's unusual physique and his whimsical mannerisms have entertained thousands both at home and abroad and, during World War II, on several Pacific atolls. Joddy started out in vaudeville at the age of 12 with his hilarious stuttering act, which took him all the way to the Palace, and where he appeared on the same bill with Ed Wynn and Dr. Irwin Corey. Joddy has been featured in 14 films for the Walt Disney Corporation, and is still cited for his antics as the college dean whose office is invaded by silly putty in "Dr. Doubietalk and the Coeds." Many theater-goers are surprised to learn that he is also a respected scholar of Hammurabi and early Mesopotamian legal skirmishes. Last Wednesday, Joddy lost his wallet and a pair of tortoise-rim bifocals near 11th and D streets, NW. He says the finder may keep the wallet, but he would appreciate having the glasses returned promptly, as he is having trouble making the comical exits for which he is justly celebrated.

WHETHER OR NOT THIS TREND will catch on right away, I am reluctant to predict. I do think that Garnett has opened one door, so to speak, by pushing Mancuso out another. At any rate, I certainly look forward to reading her biography in future seasons. I would also like to express an interest in locating some white wicker lawn furniture for my garden. Nothing too overdone. Sedate, but flashy, if you know what I mean. And not too expensive.

— David Richards