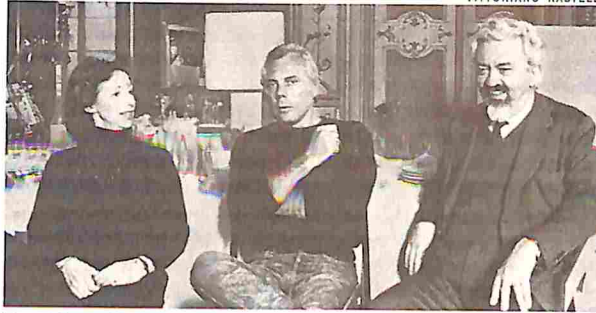


A Letter from the Publisher

The frenzied pace of working on cover stories is nothing new to Simonetta Toraldo, picture researcher and administrative assistant for TIME's Rome bureau. The day after she started work there in 1963, the beloved Pope John XXIII died, necessitating a late-starting cover; last May, Toraldo scored another success, obtaining an exclusive shot, from an amateur photographer, of the gravely wounded John Paul II in the arms of an aide in St. Peter's Square. It became the cover photo.

For this week's far more cheerful cover story—Fashion Designer Giorgio Armani—Toraldo helped TIME to yet another photographic coup. Already acquainted with the Milanese designer, having interviewed him for previous TIME stories, Toraldo reached an understanding with Armani for exclusive pictures of his new fall-winter collection, on condition that their arrangement be kept secret. During her hectic days with Armani's people, organizing the photo coverage, she swore all involved to secrecy, inventing cover stories for her real mission. To no avail; no sooner had she returned to Rome than Milan's prestigious daily, *Corriere della Sera*, reported TIME's plans.

Rome Bureau Chief Wilton Wynn, who interviewed Armani at length for the story, was grateful for Toraldo's help. Says he: "I would never have volunteered to report a fashion cover story if Simo had not been in Milan to help us pull it off." Contributor Jay Cocks, who wrote the cover story after returning from his own trip to Milan, agrees. "She is a very collected person," he says. "She juggled the photographers' schedules,



Toraldo and Wynn with Armani, center, in his Milan office

handled translations and reported in meticulous detail on the new fashions. She even found time to help me buy a pair of sneakers like Armani's." Returning the compliment, Armani tried on Cocks' well-worn, five-year-old Armani sports jacket. "He examined it with total objectivity, as if it were someone else's creation, and he seemed to decide he liked it," reports Cocks.

Reporter-Researcher Georgia Harbison, who reported on the Milan designer's considerable impact on the New York fashion scene, regrets that she owns no Armani originals. Her one "genuine" Armani is a small sample of his soon-to-be released line of perfume. Says Harbison: "I've been wearing it all through my work on this story, to inspire me."

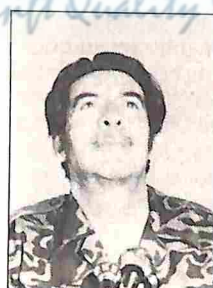
John A. Meyers

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Cover: Photograph by Bob Krieger



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