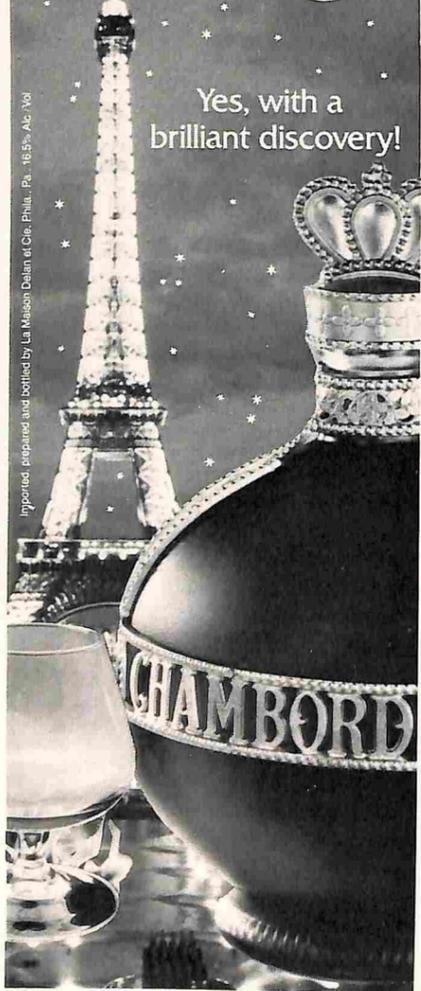


Is Paris Burning?

Yes, with a brilliant discovery!



Chambord & Cognac & Heat!

Sophisticates in the City of Light have made a brilliant discovery: Chambord & Cognac.

When heated together, the delectable taste of Chambord fuses with the spirit of the cognac to penetrate the senses and excite the mind.

Easy to make; simply place one-half oz. of each in a snifter glass and heat in a microwave for 25 seconds. (Or 2 minutes in a saucepan on high.) The steamy blend is extraordinary, Chambord & Cognac.



THE NEW YORKER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECEMBER 19, 1988

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 3

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 27

"RUNNING THROUGH THE WALL" *Frank Gannon* 33

"SNOW" *Charles Baxter* 34

"JEROME" (POEM) *Stephen Mitchell* 36

PERSONAL HISTORY (CALIFORNIA) *Ved Mehta* 40

"HEAVEN AND EARTH HOUSE" (POEM) *Mary Swander* 42

THE SPORTING SCENE (OLYMPICS) *E. J. Kahn, Jr.* 71

THE THEATRE *Edith Oliver, Mimi Kramer* 82

ON AND OFF THE AVENUE (CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR CHILDREN) 84

BOOKS *Terrence Rafferty* 101

COVER: *R. O. Blechman*

DRAWINGS: *Mort Gerberg, Richard Cline, Leo Cullum, James Stevenson, Danny Shanahan, Edward Frascino, Robert Weber, Jack Ziegler, Michael Maslin, Roz Chast, J. B. Handelsman, Joseph Farris, Donald Reilly, Michael Bartalos, Lee Lorenz, Gahan Wilson, Robert Mankoff*

THE NEW YORKER

25 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

(212) 840-3800

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

To inquire about a subscription or to change an address, please write to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80322, or telephone 1-800 525-0643 (in Colorado 303 447-9330). For a change of address, subscribers should give four weeks' notice. If possible, please send the address label from a recent issue.

THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Steven T. Florio, president and chief executive officer; Rebecca Wesson Darwin, vice-president and publisher; Sam R. Spoto, vice-president; Stuart H. Jason, vice-president and treasurer; Ruth A. Diem, vice-president and human resources director; Frank Mustacato, vice-president and circulation director; Virginia L. offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 41 Osgood Place, San Francisco, Calif. 94133; Suite 1460, London, W1Y 5DN. Metropolitan Publishers Representatives: 3017 Piedmont Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30305; Toronto, Canada. M5E 1M2. Vol. LXIV, No. 44, December 19, 1988. Second-class postage paid at New York, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1988 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, \$32.00; two years, \$52.00. In Canada, one year, \$50.00. Other foreign, one year, \$56.00, payable in advance. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80322.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'—A revival, after ten years, of this celebration of the music and the comic spirit of Fats Waller, in all its beauty and variety, as conceived and directed by Richard Maltby, Jr. The members of the original company are present and just as dynamic as they were the first time around. They are Nell Carter, Andre De Shields, Armelia McQueen, Ken Page, and Charlene Woodard. The invaluable (and protean) Luther Henderson, conductor and arranger, again presides at the piano. Miss Carter, Miss McQueen, Mr. Page, and Miss Woodard leave the cast after Dec. 18; Terri White, Patti Austin, Ken Prymus, and Jackie Lowe will take their places. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/5/88.) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 3.)

ALMOST PERFECT—A comedy by Jerry Mayer, directed by Geraldine Fitzgerald. With Ethan Phillips, Mia Dillon, and Cathy Lee Crosby. (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

CHECKMATES—Ron Milner's "domestic comedy," about an older couple who lease the apartment above them to a recently married young couple, should be more entertaining than it is. There are some funny moments, though, and the performances are distinguished. The actors are Ruby Dee and Paul Winfield (downstairs) and Denzel Washington and Marsha Jackson (upstairs). Woodie King, Jr., directed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE COCKTAIL HOUR—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more convincing or engaging. The play is as sensitive as it is funny, and the actors do it full justice, under Jack O'Brien's direction. Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

CORIOLANUS—Irene Worth is magnificent as Volumnia in this highly stylized but simple-minded version of Shakespeare's last tragedy. Steven Berkoff has directed Christopher Walken so as to turn the title character into a heavy-handed comment on Rambo-loving America, but the production is seductive, mostly because the acting is so good almost across the board. (12/12/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE—A tame production of Shaw's dashing melodrama. (11/28/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

EMERALD CITY—A comedy by the Australian writer David Williamson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Dec. 18.)

EQUITY LIBRARY THEATRE—A revival of PEG O' MY HEART, the 1912 comedy by J. Hartley Manners, is the third in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd Street and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinéés Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028. Closes Dec. 18.)

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1988—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard



S • M • T • W • T • F • S

12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21		

Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8:30; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinéés Sundays at 3:30. Special performances Monday, Dec. 19, at 8, and Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 2:30.)

GOODSPELL—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Dec. 31.)

THE HEIDI CHRONICLES—A new play by Wendy Wasserstein, with Joan Allen, Peter Friedman, and Boyd Gaines. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

THE HIRED MAN—A musical import from London that is based on Melvyn Bragg's novel of the same name. The score and lyrics are by Howard Goodall and the book is by Mr. Bragg. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 279-4200. Monday and Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinéés Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Dec. 18.)

ITALIAN AMERICAN RECONCILIATION—The latest off-beat comedy about love and loneliness in Little Italy from John Patrick Shanley, the author of "Moonstruck." The play, which marks Shanley's directorial debut, is not as wise or as psychologically complex as some of his earlier plays have been—or as charmingly ingenious as its set, designed by Santo Loquasto—but it is full of eloquent laughs and provides the occasion for a masterly performance by John Turturro as the girl-shy young man who tries to do good by seducing his best friend's fierce ex-wife. (11/14/88) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Monday, at 7:30. Matinéés Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Dec. 18.)

LAMBS THEATRE COMPANY—The fifth annual presentation of THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI, a musical adapted from two short stories by O. Henry. Randy Courts composed the music and lyrics, and Mark St. Germain provided the book and additional lyrics. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7. Matinéés Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 3. Closes Dec. 31.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Presenting Victor Herbert's BABES IN TOYLAND. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 3:30, and Sundays at noon and 4:30.)

THE MAJESTIC KID—A new play by Mark Medoff. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 307-7171. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE—A musical revue of Randy Newman songs conceived and directed by Tracy Friedman. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinéés Sundays at 3.)

OUR TOWN—Spalding Gray as the Stage Manager in the Thornton Wilder play. Gregory Mosher is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, and Monday, Dec. 19, at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

PHAEDRA BRITANNICA—A play by Tony Harrison, based on Racine's "Phèdre." With Caroline Lagerfelt and Bob Gunton. Previews Dec. 12-13. Opens Dec. 14 at 7. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Tuesdays through Saturdays, and Monday, Dec. 12, at 8. Matinéés Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

THE PROMISE—A play by José Rivera. (Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinéés Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Dec. 18.)

RECKLESS—This new play by Craig Lucas, about a woman whose husband has taken a contract out on her life, has slightly absurdist tendencies and pretensions but nothing to say. Only the sprightly performances, from a cast led by Robin Bartlett, keep it from being unwatchable. (10/10/88) (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinéés Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performances Monday, Dec. 19, at 8, and Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 2. Closes Jan. 1.)

THE RIMERS OF ELDRITCH—Lanford Wilson's 1966 play about the dark underside of small-town America, said to have been written in answer to "Our Town." In truth, Wilson's play, a hodgepodge of Southern-gothic clichés, is far more sentimental than Wilder's. There is some good acting in this revival—most notably from Georgine Hall, Suzy Hunt, and Kaulani Lee—but Mark Brokaw's direction plays into the melodrama's excesses instead of trying to offset them. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinéés Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Dec. 18.)

ROMANCE/ROMANCE—A pair of charming one-act musicals, with Alison Fraser and Barry Williams in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

ROSMERSHOLM—John Shea and Suzanne Bertish in Ibsen's 1866 play. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Wednesdays through Sundays at 7:30. Closes Dec. 23.)

RUMORS—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Ken Howard, Lisa Baner, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

SPEED-THE-PLOW—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glenrory Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. With David Rasche, Bob Balaban, and Felicity Huffman; directed by Gregory Mosher. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays, and Monday, Dec. 19, at 8. Matinéés Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

SWEETHEARTS—Antoinette Mille and Walter Adkins in a musical tribute to Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinéés Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

THE TAFFETAS—Four talented young women, im-

Dec. 19, 1988

THE

Price \$1.75

NEW YORKER



 MereMart.com®
Vintage Magazines for Special People

2 1 2 4 3 2 1