



EDITED BY SCOT HALLER

## Michael Caine vs. Dustin Hoffman

When the film version of the Broadway thriller *Deathtrap* opens next month, Michael Caine will play the lead. But if Warner Bros. had gotten its way, Caine would not have the role. According to director Sidney Lumet (*Prince of the City*), the studio "resisted" starring Caine, preferring "someone younger and fresher." The studio's prime candidate? Dustin Hoffman, who sought the part of down-on-his-luck playwright Sidney Bruhl as a follow-up to *Kramer vs. Kramer*.

"The part demands a guy just this side of 50, and someone who might have had seven flops in a row," says Lumet. "We didn't think Hoffman was right for it. He's almost too young for the part."

Warner Bros. also wanted Christopher Reeve in the co-starring role of Bruhl's protégé—a preference Lumet endorsed. As star of the studio's top-grossing *Superman* series, Reeve wields considerable clout. "As soon



The studio wanted Hoffman (right) for *Deathtrap*; the director fought hard for Caine—and won.

as Chris was cast, we were able to use Michael Caine, who was our first choice all along," says Lumet. "We were sure the chemistry between them would be ideal." Lumet's second choice, surprisingly, was director Mike Nichols, who once performed with Elaine May in a popular comedy act. Second runner-up: Jack Lemmon.

The careers of Caine and Bruhl have some uncanny parallels. Like his character, who hasn't written a popular play in 18 years, Caine has lost the wide audience appeal he enjoyed as Alfie and other English bad boys of the late 1960s. His recent movies—among them, *The Swarm* and *The Hand*, both released by Warner Bros.—have sputtered at the box office. It was those cool receptions that alarmed the studio when Lumet wanted to cast Caine. The situation might well amuse Sidney Bruhl. As he observes in *Deathtrap*, "Nothing recedes like success." —S.H.

## Voice of the People

When the curtain rises on New York City Opera's spring season later this month, the star of the show won't be on stage at all—general manager Beverly Sills. Last November, Sills shocked the cultural community by slashing subscription rates for the City Opera's spring season by 20 percent. The top subscription ticket has dropped from \$25 to \$20, the least expensive from \$5 to \$4. Across the plaza at Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera charges as much as \$60 a ticket.



Sills: Switching battles from high C's to high ticket costs.

Sills's mass appeal has won a favorable initial reaction. In the first week following her announcement, City Opera received 2,000 new subscriptions. A month later, renewals from subscribers had climbed from 60 percent to nearly 70 percent. And the percentage of subscribers among City Opera's total audience was on the rise too—after a 10-year decline.

Others are beginning to follow Sills's cue. In December, Sarah Caldwell, artistic director of the Opera Company of Boston, declared a 20 percent across-the-board cut for subscriptions to the 1982 season. (Top price: \$27.) And Edward Murphy, president of the prestigious music publisher G. Schirmer Inc., announced that the company was reducing by 20 percent the rental fees it charges City Opera for scores.

Sills has furthered her reputation as a voice of the people since assuming her managerial role in July 1979. She next plans to tackle another persistent problem at Lincoln Center: the high price of parking. —S.K.R.



HENRY GROSSMAN

Shirley Conran: Simon & Schuster plans a hard sell for her first novel.

## The Making of a Best Seller—Maybe

If you haven't heard of *Lace* yet, you will. Simon & Schuster is about to embark on a massive promotion blitz to turn *Lace* into a blockbuster best seller, like *Jaws* or *Princess Daisy*. "An opportunity like this comes along only once every five or six years," according to Michael Korda, S & S's editor-in-chief. To be published late this spring, *Lace* is a first novel by Shirley Conran, the British author of *Superwoman* (a how-to guide for today's woman). In *Lace*, Conran has spun a multigenerational tale of five women and their searches for identity. The heroines include an actress, a decorator, an English aristocrat, the editor-in-chief of a high-powered women's magazine not unlike *Cosmopoli-*

tan, and a famous writer. There is plenty of sex.

S&S is planning a six-figure promotion budget and an unusually large first printing of 150,000 copies—more than it gives the books of its superseller Harold Robbins. (First novels usually have initial printings of only 6,000 copies.) The massive publicity campaign will kick off with extensive advertising in *Publishers Weekly*, an industry trade journal. That's to get booksellers talking. Then there will be an "immense" printing of prepublication copies for key media people. There has already been one payoff: English publication rights have been sold for more than \$225,000—a record for fiction.

Korda, who edited Jacqueline Susann, insists that books like *Lace* cannot be written or edited to a formula. The key to success, he says, is reader identification: "The book creates a glamorous dream world, but the reader discovers that the characters have led lives more difficult than their own, are unhappier." That kind of recognition, Korda believes, is more crucial to insuring a best seller than "sticking in rape scenes."

Meanwhile, at winter S&S marketing meetings, thoughts are turning to further hype. Among the promotion gimmicks that may emerge are *Lace* underwear, *Lace* perfume, and *Lace* cookies.

—R.R.H.

## And the year's super blockbuster LACE

Already a pre-publication sensation, SHIRLEY CONRAN'S soaring new novel will have its own ad campaign in upcoming issues of *Publishers Weekly*. June, \$16.95 • #44662-2

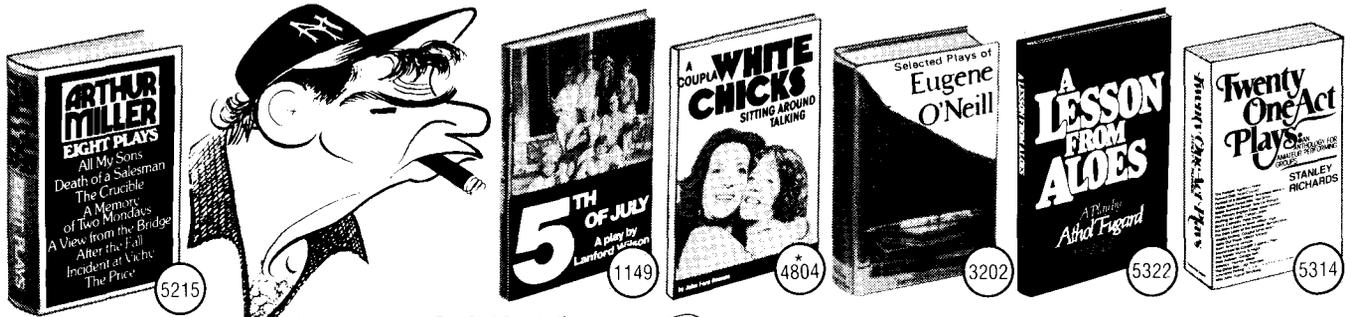
*Lace* won't arrive until June—but this ad arrived last November.

## An Uncensored Story

Book censorship is soaring in the U.S. In recent months, fundamentalist religious groups have pressured public and school libraries to ban such popular books as *Gone With the Wind*, *Native Son*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *Ordinary People*. Since November 1980, says the American Library Association, the number of such censorship cases has increased 500 percent. Alarmed civil libertarians are forming groups such as People for the American Way to counter the influence of groups like Moral Majority.

It won't be easy. Would-be censors are charging ahead: One Indiana high school recently banned *Making It With Mademoiselle* in disgust over its provocative title. When someone actually opened the book, it turned out to be a guide to dressmaking, published by *Mademoiselle* magazine. —R.R.H.

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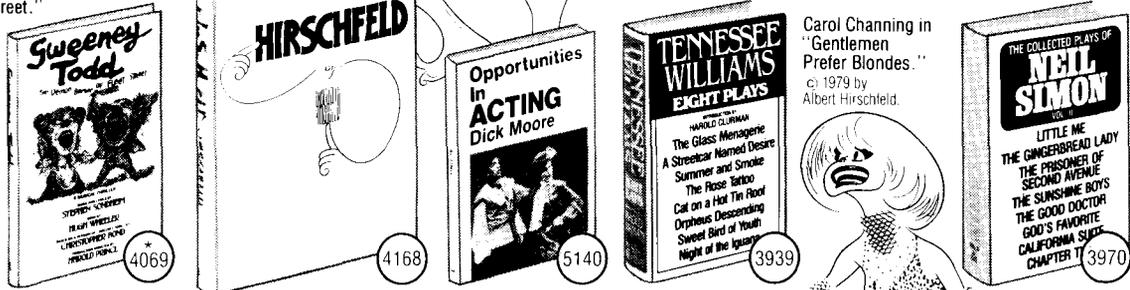


Walter Matthau in "The Odd Couple."  
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Len Cariou in "Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street."  
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\*Warning: Explicit sex, language, or violence.

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# FEBRUARY SPOTLIGHTS

## MUSIC

### Barenboim and Beethoven

As a pianist, Daniel Barenboim is known not only for his interpretive skills, but also for the extraordinary scope of his repertoire. He plays all 32 of the Beethoven piano sonatas, all the Mozart piano sonatas, all the Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms piano con-

▲ Maestro Barenboim will give New Yorkers a complete Beethoven cycle.



CHESTER HIGGINS, JR., THE NEW YORK TIMES

certos, and *all* the major classical and Romantic piano chamber works. "I find it essential to have as wide a knowledge of a composer's output as humanly possible," he says.

As a conductor, Barenboim strives to be similarly comprehensive, and this month he will demonstrate this dedication in New York City's Carnegie Hall. He will conduct his Orchestre de Paris in all nine **Beethoven symphonies**—plus the violin concerto (with Itzhak Perlman as soloist). It's a rare opportunity to hear one man's interpretation of so much Beethoven in such a short period of time (the concerts span less than two weeks), as well as to hear so many Barenboim performances (his stateside visits are generally short and infrequent). Appropriately, the maestro's Orchestre de Paris is a direct descendant of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, which introduced the music of Beethoven to Parisian audiences in the 1800s. (February 8, 15, 17, 18, 19.)

## FILM

### The New Coppola Film—At Last

For his first movie after his Vietnam War epic, *Apocalypse Now*, Francis Coppola has directed and co-written (with B. Arman Bernstein) "a simple love story," **One From the Heart**. A romantic musical with music by Tom Waits and dance numbers overseen by Gene Kelly, the film is about six characters in search of love in glittering Las Vegas. It was filmed on Coppola's Zoetrope Studio sound stages in Hollywood, where he duplicated Las Vegas streets complete with neon-flashing casino fronts, an auto-repair shop, a junkyard, and a motel.

As reported in *SR* last July, Coppola is realizing a long-awaited dream with this production. He is re-creating an old-fashioned movie studio: a group of actors, writers, and technicians under contract in a filmmaking complex governed by a dominant personality—Coppola himself. The five actors of the Zoetrope repertory company all play in *One From the Heart*. They are Teri Garr, Frederic For-

rest, Nastassia Kinski, Raul Julia, and Lainie Kazan. The film's sixth major character is played by Harry Dean Stanton.

The survival of Zoetrope probably depends on the success of this latest Coppola effort, since financial backing for the director's dream house has been shaky from

◀ Nastassia Kinski, a Zoetrope actress, in *One From the Heart*.



the beginning. The project was scheduled for release months ago, but early sneak previews of *One From the Heart* were unenthusiastically received, and Coppola withdrew the film to recut it, desperately hoping to make it a hit. (Premieres February 10.)



▼ Grooms's "Hollywood" (1965): satiric, evocative, and affectionate.

## ART

### A Grooms Retrospective

Artist **Red Grooms** has created paintings, watercolors, films, and "happenings" (as they were called back in the 1950s—nowadays such events are called "performance art"). But the 44-year-old Grooms is best known for his large-scale sculptures that evoke sprawling environments (often inspired by New York or Hollywood) with a caricatured affection that is at once imaginative, funny, evocative, and incisive. Grooms calls his works "a chicken-coop creakiness of a backyard extravaganza."

Six of his rollicking scenes are scheduled to go on exhibit this month at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. They include "Loft on 26th Street" (1965-66), a reconstruction of Grooms's studio, and "Maquette for *Way Down East*" (1978), which depicts director D.W. Griffith, actress Lillian Gish, and cameraman Billy Bitzer making their classic silent movie. Because Grooms began working during the 1950s, and because his art twits traditional sculpture, he was once considered a pop artist. Now it's understood Grooms is one-of-a-kind. (February 25 to May 2.)

### What Tut Didn't Show Us

The traveling King Tut exhibit three years ago gave museumgoers a chance to see how the pharaohs lived (or more precisely, how it was assumed they'd go on living after death). But while Tutankhamen and Ramses II and III were ruling, dying, and being entombed, what was the

average Egyptian up to? The Boston Museum of Fine Arts will attempt to answer that question with its upcoming **Egypt's Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom, 1558-1085 B.C.** This celebration of ancient everyday life boasts 400 objects gathered from 35 American and European museums and private collections, and from the Boston Museum's own holdings.

The early Egyptians took much less care to preserve everyday objects than to preserve the contents of the royal tombs. So the linen garments or wooden statuettes belonging to the humbler classes that have survived over 3,000 years make this exhibit in some ways even more precious than its kingly counterpart. Furniture, tools, alabaster tableware, jewelry, amulets, and musical instruments will all be on display. Like "King Tut," "Everyday Egypt" will travel, but not as royally. It moves to Houston in July, Baltimore in October. (Boston: February 3 through May 2.)



◀ An Egyptian effigy vessel that probably held a cosmetic cream.

HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

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