



**PIPING IN SPRING.** The U.S. Air Force Bagpipe Band returns to the Mall for one of the nine band performances scheduled for the April 1 Pageant of Transportation, theme of this year's Rite of Spring. Transportation demonstrations and exhibitions, balloon ascensions, puppet show and omnibus rides were also planned for the full day of activity.

## Castle, Intruder on Mall, Was Expected to Disappear

The SI "castle," which has been for millions of tourists through more than a century the "real" Smithsonian, "was expected to disappear, either by the hand of man or that of time," Wilcomb Washburn reveals in the latest edition of the *AIA Journal*.

Dr. Washburn, chairman of SI's Department of American Studies, based the Journal's cover story, "Vision of Life for the Mall," on previously unpublished letters from the Institution's archives.

The Renwick building, Washburn discovered, committed the offense of being within the 400-foot line drawn by Mall planners from either side of the axis running between the Capitol and the Washington Monument. This intrusion into the precision lines of elms chosen as the Mall's landscaping scheme "was

a standing offense to the planners' sense of order."

"When the subject of the Smithsonian Building was brought up at the hearings, the assurance was given that it would be moved back of the line necessary to create the desired vista," the article says. "Yet all the plans, models and maps showing the Mall as it was to be, whether in the first, second, third or fourth decades of the 20th century, are barren of the building we now deem an outstanding

(continued on page 4)

### Partners in Crime

## Enthusiastic Youngsters Compete In NASM-Associates Kite Event

Hundreds of enthusiastic youngsters broke the law last week at the Monument Grounds with the police, NASM, and the Smithsonian Associates as accomplices. With the blessings of the D.C. government and the guidance of Paul Garber, the children ignored an 1891 ordinance and flew kites.

Kiting experts came to town from Milwaukee, Miami and New York to demonstrate their skill to participants in the March 25 Kite Carnival. Even poor ol' Charlie Brown was finally airborne and managed to evade the vicious kite-eating tree stationed on the grounds.

A joint effort of the Associates and the Air Museum, the carnival and flying contest culminated a month of Saturday activity attended by as many as 900 people. Garber, assistant director of NASM for education and information, had lectured on the origin, uses, and technology of kites and had supervised a kite-making workshop. The air around the elephant in the Natural History rotunda was filled with kites made by Mr. and Mrs. Garber for the special display.

Frank Motts, the "kite king of Milwaukee," East Indian kite expert Surhendra Bahadur of New York City, owner of the "Go Fly a Kite" shop; Harry Sauls of Miami, inventor of the barrage kite flown above ocean transports in World War I as an aerial screen; and Will Yolen of New York, president of the International Kite Flyers Association, all demonstrated their techniques before the actual competition began.

## Conference Site Stands Ready

Belmont is open for business.

The sprawling Maryland country estate, which provides comfortable quarters for 22 overnight guests and can accommodate up to 50 people for lectures and discussions, has been spruced up and furnished.

Hugh L. Latham, director of the Smithsonian's new center, told the TORCH that the first meeting is scheduled for a National Academy of Sciences group on April 25. The Rouse Company Institutional meeting is set for two days later.

The 27-room manor house was built in 1738 by Caleb Dorsey, an Annapolis ironmaster, and is situated on 339 acres of rolling Howard County countryside on the outskirts of Baltimore.

With its associated outbuildings, gardens and general air of rural seclusion, Belmont presents wide possibilities as a center for study, conference and research by scientists and scholars.

For this reason, several overnight conferences have already been scheduled. On April 27 the American Academy of Arts and Science will convene for a two-day meeting. This will be followed by the American Historical Association from May 4-7. The United Planning Organization Educational Services will occupy Belmont from June 26 through July 1.

# THE SMITHSONIAN TORCH

Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

No. 21, April, 1967

## Pageant of Transportation Opens SI Summer Hours

SI's summer programs literally get off the ground Saturday, April 1, as a day-long Pageant of Transportation on the Mall marks the beginning of late closing hours and honors the newest U.S. cabinet department.

Much of the outdoor activity for the third annual "Rite of Spring" will actually be going on above the Mall. A Picard balloon, Bell Aerospace Hydro-skimmer, kites, and a rocket-propelled

Some of the oldest and most up-to-date means of conveyance will be displayed and demonstrated in indoor and outdoor exhibitions. The most ancient is the four-legged variety, represented by Pepsi, a live llama from the Zoo. Pepsi's relatives are still a vital means of transportation in the Andes.

Don Picard, famous balloon designer and flyer, delighted crowds at last year's gala with ascensions of his hot-air craft. He has returned with the "Golden Bear," his latest design and first prize winner in the 1967 St. Paul Winter Carnival Race. He will make hourly ascensions beginning at 10:30 a.m.

A horse-drawn omnibus from the MHT vehicle hall will carry tourists on short rides around the Mall from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A trip on the 1880 bus will cost 25 cents.

The HydroSkimmer, an air cushion vehicle able to operate at high speeds over a variety of surfaces, will perform above the Mall and be parked for public inspection. Antique cars will also be stationed for a closer look following their parade at noon.

The Adventures of Astron Puppets, featuring the Porter Family Puppeteers, will provide special entertainment for children. There will be shows every half-hour from 10 to 5 in front of MHN. Youngsters will probably also enjoy the kite demonstration directed by Paul Garber at 11:15. Finalists from the Kite Carnival will show off their skills.

Music will provide a background for all the day's activities. The U.S. Coast Guard Band and Precision Drill Team will start things off at 9:45 on the MHT Mall Terrace. The Washington Saxhorn Quintet will perform on the north tower of SI at 1:15 p.m., and at 1:45 the kilted Air Force Bagpipe Band will parade.

The U.S. First Army Band takes over the landing steps of MHN at 2. After the Marine Fife and Drum Corps marches on the Mall at 2:45 p.m., the music will move inside. The Coast Guard Band, with their singing group, the Idlers, will perform in the MHT Farm Machinery Hall at 4:30.

The Air Force Band, at 7 in the Flag Hall; the Marine Band, MHN rotunda, 8:15, and the Army Field Band, in the Flag Hall, round out the day.

Among the vehicles on display will be:  
\*\*A turbine-powered Heli-Porter, now in full production by Fairchild Hiller. The short takeoff and landing (STOL) craft can lift a ton of cargo from a strip less than four feet.

\*\*A collection of helicopters.  
\*\*1928 Fairchild FC-2, used by the Pan American Grace Company for the first air passage across the Andes.

\*\*Model of the experimental auto train that will ferry individuals in their cars from Alexandria, Va., to Jacksonville, Fla., beginning next year.

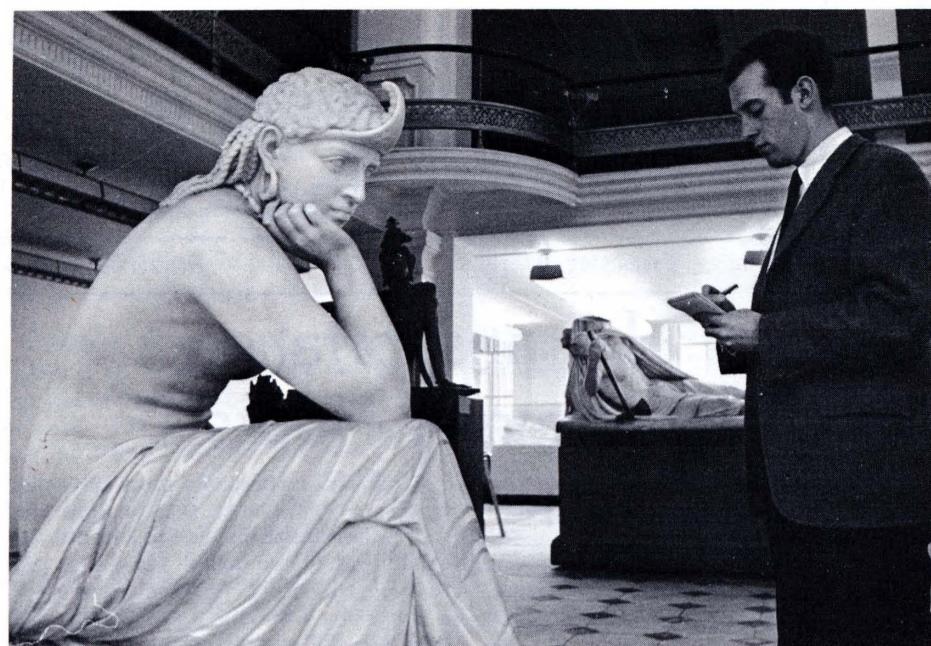
\*\*A five-foot model of the Boeing Aircraft Corporation's "Turbo-Train," which is scheduled to go into regular commercial service between New York and Boston and travels up to speeds over 120 miles per hour.

\*\*Scale reproduction of a Langley Aerodrome.

\*\*A five-foot model of the Boeing Company's Supersonic Transport (SST), being developed to fly at a speed of 1800 mph.

### Steinberg Interview

Saul Steinberg, SI's much-discussed first artist in residence, granted an exclusive interview to the TORCH. The story is on page 3.



**TIRED OF WAITING.** The Libyan Sibyl reflects boredom as William R. Johnston of the NCFA registrar's office checks statues into the newly-renovated Patent Office Building. Offices and collections of both NCFA and the Portrait Gallery were finally moved into the new building last month. Tourists will follow in about a year.

### Letter to Editor Re: Cornerstone

Sir: Re that Missing Corner Stone, could it be that it disappeared in the great fire? Or during the 12 years of rebuilding? Or did it go with the SI library to the Library of Congress? Digging around the *Smithsonian Deposit* might uncover a musty old cracker box with all sorts of goodies; you might even find the MCS—or a free lunch outfit!

George Veith  
SAO's Geodetic Station,  
Greece

### Torchlighters Learn to Talk

Not content with hearing their co-workers' voices eight hours a day, 25 SI staffers gather regularly on lunch hours and after work to listen to each other talk.

The Smithsonian Torchlighters, local chapter of the Toastmasters Clubs, meet every other Tuesday for lunch and oratory. Their stated goals are to improve members' oral expression, develop ability to appear effectively before audiences, provide constructive criticism and comment on all speeches, develop the habit of analytical listening, provide instruction and experience in chairmanship and parliamentary procedure, and increase their usefulness in their professions and social and civic relationships.

Guiding the three-year-old organization to these lofty goals is Edward Kohn, director of the Office of Programming and Budget and 1967 president of the Torchlighters. "The task of reducing the gap between a good thought and the tongue has become a source of true pleasure for the 25 members," says Kohn. "Such activities are natural for the Smithsonian where the communication of ideas is part and parcel of our daily responsibilities."

Club members are putting their practice to use in a new group service project. Torchlighters recently began introducing the narrators for SI's weekly Free Film Theater programs.

"Periodically," says Kohn, "evening dinner contests are held so that wives of the members have a temporary relief from the punishment of listening only to their husband's speeches." Paul Garber, assistant director of NASM, won first place in a recent evening speech contest. He will represent the Torchlighters in an upcoming area meet.

The club invites members of any area of the SI staff to attend a luncheon meeting and observe how the group operates. They would like to maintain an active enrollment of 30.

Torchlighter officers, in addition to Kohn, are Garber, first vice president; Richard Farrar, Photo Services Division, second vice president; Gilbert Wright, Office of Exhibits, treasurer; Nicholas Rona, Office of Exhibits, secretary, and Carroll Lusk, Office of Exhibits, sergeant at arms.

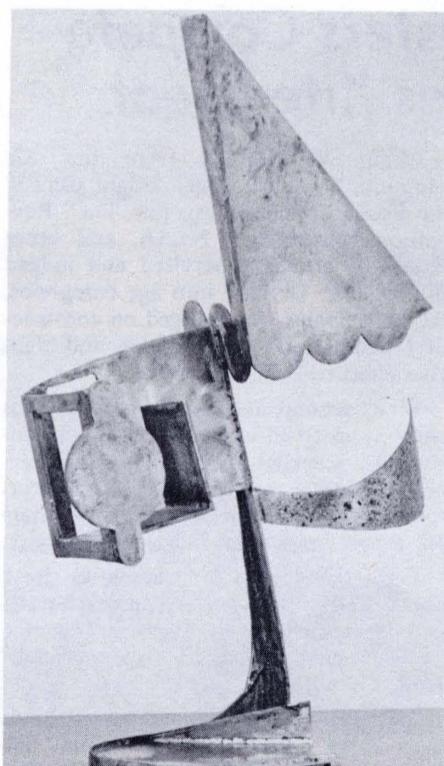
### Fisher Turns Friend's Junk Into Sculpture

Don't invite Jim Fisher to dinner. You might lose your furnace!

That, of course, is more than a slight exaggeration, but what was once the furnace of Harvey Walsh, museum technician in the Mechanical and Civil Engineering Department, turned up in an art show recently as a piece of sculpture by his co-worker, James Fisher. Equipment from the farm of Keith Melder, curator of the Political History Division, was the basis of two other works in the show.

Fisher is a fine arts student at The George Washington University in the evenings. For the last two years his primary interest has been sculpture, and most of it has been made "from pretty wild stuff." He has learned that it can be a pretty expensive hobby otherwise.

Spending \$20 to \$30 a week is easy to do if you buy new equipment, Fisher discovered, so his last work contains the spare tire rim from his own car. "Last summer," he relates, "I went up to Jack Goodwin's house and tore out all the old plumbing." Goodwin is MHT branch librarian.



Would you believe a hay baler?

Dedication to art seems to know no bounds. Fisher even had to buy a truck to haul his materials. He was doing his creating in part of a shop rented from a racing driver, but when the landlord recently decided he needed more space, Fisher was evicted along with 50 tons of scrap metal. Part of it is now in his apartment and part at school.

Anyone having trouble with trash collections might do well to call Fisher. If the sanitation department doesn't want your junk, perhaps he can turn it into a contemporary masterpiece.

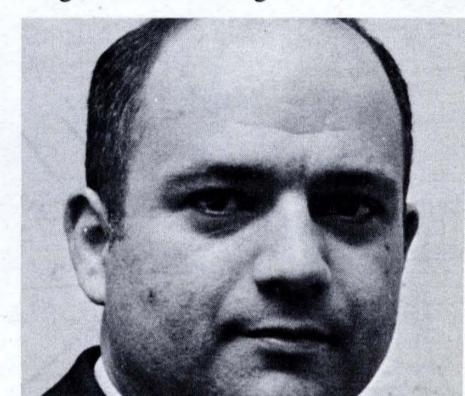
### ABOUT SI PEOPLE

## Reingold Gets NSF Grant; Folk Festival Set for Mall

The National Science Foundation this week awarded a \$60,000 grant to the SI in support of producing a comprehensive edition of the unpublished manuscripts of JOSEPH HENRY, first Secretary of the Smithsonian. The monumental project — 20 volumes are contemplated — will be under the direction of eminent historian NATHAN REINGOLD. Dr. Reingold will concentrate his search in Albany, N.Y., Princeton, N.J., and Washington, D.C., three cities which played the biggest role in Professor Henry's life . . . JAMES MORRIS, the SI's impresario, has planned for this summer what should be the biggest public event held on the Mall in decades: a "Festival of American Folk Life." Scheduled for the July 4th weekend, the Festival will demonstrate traditional techniques in material folk culture during the day, including pottery-making, basket-weaving, carving, quilting, and glass-blowing. In the evening there will be programs of folk tales, ensemble music making and dancing, including the music of Cajun bands, Basque Pipe Players, Bohemian Hammered Dulcimer Bands, Jug Bands, and Chinese orchestras with dragon dancers. And if that isn't enough, Morris plans to hold a three-day conference on the cultural importance of this country's multi-faceted grassroots heritage . . . WILLIAM I. ARON, (see cut), has been named deputy head of MHN's Office of Oceanography and Limnology. Dr. Aron comes to the SI from General Motors Defense Research Laboratories, where he headed the Biological Oceanography Group. He holds the Ph.D. from the University of Washington at Seattle.

. . . CARLTON W. TILLINGHAST, assistant director (administration) of SAO, is the Institution's nominee for the annual William A. Jump Memorial Award for outstanding service in the field of public administration. The winner will be announced in May. . . . A horrifying fate faces American carpenters of the future because of too much leisure, says SI Secretary S. DILLON RIPLEY. Addressing a Washington group recently, Dr. Ripley predicted "the carpenter of the future, working 20 hours a week, will step out of his limousine, don his white overalls, tap a nail into a wall, drive back home, and probably bite his nails in frustration."

. . . A note from the *National Review*, which should be of interest to National Zoo director TED REED: "Advocates of filthy speech can sate themselves in Washington at the Zoo, where two mynah birds who are suspected of possessing a blue vocabulary have been exiled to a basement cage. Talk about suppression of free speech! This is real macaw." . . . Another news note, this from the *Daily Oklahoman*, should reach the eyes of CHARLES BLITZER, director of SI's Office of Education and Training: "Officials of the Smithsonian Institution plan to add a complete, authentic slum exhibit. Wags soon will label it the Slumsonian." . . . The National Academy of Sciences has awarded its distinguished Mary Clark Thompson Medal to WENDELL P. WOODRING, a Research Associate of MHN. Dr. Woodring was cited for his outstanding service to the fields of geology and paleontology. . . . A random memo from the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, which we refer to JOHN MAGRUDER of SI's National Armed Forces Museum Advisory Board: "When the Smithsonian raises the ironclad vessel in Mobile Bay, perhaps invitations will be issued reading 'You are cordially invited Tecumseh'." . . . Who will get the big prize, SAMI HAMARNEH, MHT's medical sciences curator, or MHN's physical anthropologist LAWRENCE ANGEL? The Prize? Jimmy Durante is making a cast of his famous schnoz for permanent display here. . . . Dr. CLAYTON RAY, MHN paleontologist, spends a great deal of his time searching for fossils, which usually are to be found in the Nation's hinterlands or Washington's Kenilworth Dump. They also can be found in closets, as Dr. Ray recently learned. An archeological study, led by Ray, turned up mastodon bones in a storage room at Emory and Henry College, Va. The partial remains, Ray estimates, are 15,000 years old. . . . The Smithsonian's Science Information Exchange, under the direction of MONROE FREEMAN, has an inexpensive filing cabinet, labeled "Disaster File." The cabinet is part of a \$3,000 annual investment in a system that protects SIE's tapes, discs, and program documentation. Reconstructing the data stored in the cabinet would cost about \$500,000 and require at least 20 man years of effort. . . . The eight-day, twenty-four hour maternity watch of the Zoo's top lioness, Princess, drew a blank. After the long vigil of focusing in on Princess' every move, DONALD R. DIETLEIN, head of the animal department, called off the watch. "She's just a mishapen lion," he said. "She's not pregnant." . . . Dr. DONALD F. SQUIRES, deputy director of MHN, has scheduled a Data Processing Symposium for December 18 through 20 at Mexico City. Its title is Information Problems in the Natural Sciences. . . . Opinion among SI employees on the NBC television series relating to our activities is divided. It is interesting to note that most critics here have not seen the series. Be that as it may, it took a congressman (OGDEN REID of New York), to speak for the program's 4 million viewers. "I salute the Smithsonian series for its worthwhile contribution to the boys and girls of America, in bringing into their homes the facts and the treasures that our great national museum holds, and in opening their eyes to the wonders of the world that we must preserve so that they might enjoy it." (Seems to the TORCH to be justification enough for continuing the series) . . . Four SI scientists were chosen by NASA to join with 106 others throughout the world in conducting experiments with the first samples of the Moon's surface to be returned to Earth by U.S. astronauts. Drs. B. H. MASON, J. A. WOOD, K. FREDERICKSSON, and E. L. FIREMAN were the four SI researchers selected.



## SMITHSONIAN TORCH

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# Enigmatic Steinberg Discusses Residency

Saul Steinberg, the Smithsonian's first artist in residence, has been called by *Vogue* magazine "in the most literal sense, . . . the poet of the American Dream, including the menace of isolation and emptiness which that dream contains."

The *Saturday Review* once said he is "one of the top black-and-white men of our day, good enough to be bracketed with Dali and Picasso." But, according to the *New York Times Magazine*, "There are, however, mixed feelings about him among his colleagues, even among his friends. Some, of course, consider him a major artist; but a few will not concede that he is an artist at all."

The cartoonist-satirist-philosopher-socialite-king of squiggles and fulcrums, non-script and rubber stamps, was an appropriate choice for SI, according to several members of the art world. "If the Smithsonian Institution didn't exist, cartoonist Saul Steinberg would certainly have invented it," said *NY Times* columnist Grace Glueck.

"The idea of Steinberg poking around the old warehouse-bargain-basement collection of the Smithsonian enchants his friends," writes Harold C. Shonberg. "Why, one of them says, 'Steinberg himself could have designed the building and got the collection together. They are made for each other.' Everybody is waiting breathlessly, and with a certain amount of glee, to see what happens when Steinberg is turned loose on innocent, unsuspecting Washington."

The Steinberg enigma has been in innocent, unsuspecting Washington since late January. The results? The artist graciously agreed to discuss them in this exclusive *TORCH* interview.

by Mary M. Krug

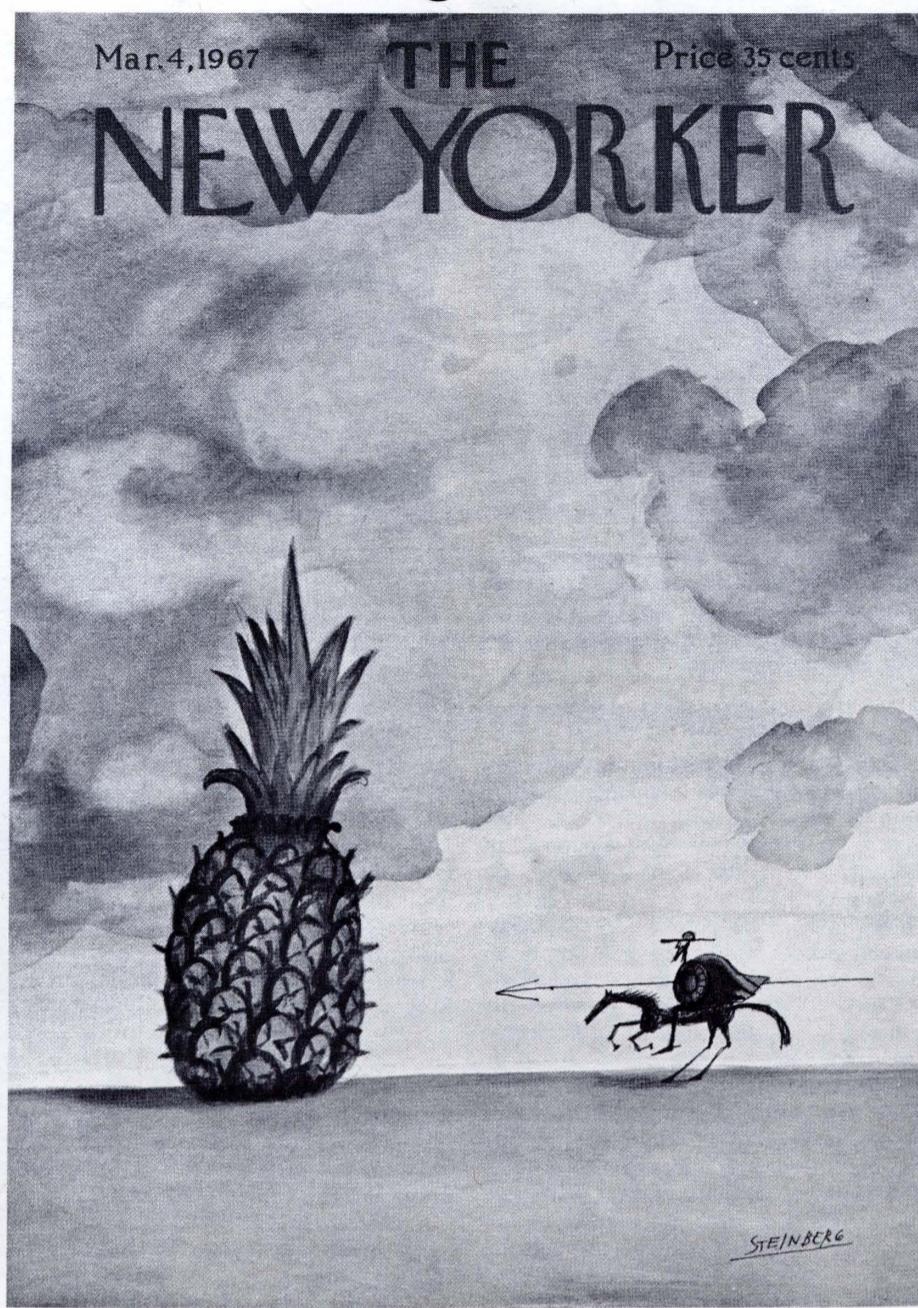
The Harold Coolidge residence in Georgetown is one of the elite of the elite in that high rent district. It has a real yard, and a porch, and doesn't snuggle on each side into genuine, over-priced restored townhouses with real firesigns out front. It stands in elegant independence among all the repetitive elegance on the narrow, old-fashioned streets.

Inside the Coolidge house, in elegant independence, dwells Saul Steinberg, the Smithsonian's first artist in residence.

One of the two Chinese servants that come with the lease admits the visitor into the spacious gold and white foyer, where Steinberg, casually attired, makes his entrance from the curving staircase. "We're ready for coffee," he announces, ushering his guest into a small room where blue and fawn French toile covers walls and tea table and frames French doors to a fountained patio. The setting fits Steinberg's theory that a writer can write anywhere, but an artist must be surrounded by beautiful things.

The interview takes an unexpected tone from the very beginning. Steinberg asks the questions!

"Steinberg knows, of course, that all autobiography is fiction and that those who strive to lay bare 'the facts' of their existence are victims of the delusions of



© 1967 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

"The pineapple," says Saul Steinberg, "is the dragon of fruit." Discussing with the *TORCH* reporter the meanings of his creations, he describes the cover of the March 4 "New Yorker." "There is this Don Quixote-looking fellow attacking a pineapple. The pineapple is the dragon of fruit. It is covered with scales and has a sort of feathered headdress. Have you ever tried to butcher a pineapple? It fights back. It is a vicious fruit; it is natural to fight it."

Realism. Why commit oneself to incidents merely because they have taken place?" says *Vogue*. Having read the *Vogue* article you're surprised by his interrogation.

The most logical assumption would be that he is merely playing the gracious host putting his guest at ease. But one doesn't ascribe such obvious motives to an enigma. Are you being tested, sorted into mental catalogs for later satirization? Or are you inventing meaning where there is none? It occurs to you that his elusive cartoons might also derive their meaning from viewer rather than artist. Would this make his work any less profound?

The subject switches back to the host. Why did he accept the invitation to be the Smithsonian's first artist in residence?

Steinberg quickly points out that he looks on the appointment as an honor—"more like a *Prix de Rome*"—rather than as any sort of working arrangement.

"I am a guest of the Smithsonian Institution," says Steinberg. "The only way to offer hospitality is with no obligations attached." The artist is in Washington merely "to beautify the city with my presence." He is working on the same things he would have done at his house in Greenwich Village or his country place in East Hampton.

An early report stated that Steinberg would be expected to "enliven the Washington artistic scene." Has he found an artistic scene to enliven?

The Capital has no real artistic or cultural scene, he states, and little hope of developing one. That takes a big city

to produce, and Washington does not yet qualify. Nor does he think that help from the Smithsonian and other Government agencies can hurry things.

In that case, should the Smithsonian continue its artist in residence program? "The Smithsonian is a philosophical institution," Steinberg feels. "By nature it should have an artist in residence, poet in residence, scholar in residence, scientist in residence."

NCFA director David Scott had hopes that Steinberg would "find many subjects in Washington and especially the Smithsonian to inspire creativity." His stay here has at least given him "a change of coordinates." Is that the same as a fresh perspective? "No, a change of coordinates, whatever that is."

Steinberg has found inspiration in the house he has leased from the Coolidges. "I find inspiration in the library here," he says. "They have a marvelous library. Would you like to see it?"

The library is one of those darkly paneled rooms that belong in stuffy English manors. Buddha sits on a pedestal at the side, canopied by two elephant tusks that arch from the floor to a point above his head. It is both inconceivable and entirely appropriate that those airy, imponderable Steinberg creations should have their beginnings in a place like this.

"Nothing is ever created in Washington, except in a political sense," Steinberg says. "Three weeks ago I designed some stage sets for a Stravinsky opera, which were painted in a car barn in Southeast. So my residency has had that effect—in the short time I've been in Washington something has been created here."

A common reaction to a Steinberg drawing is a self-conscious laugh or an "I don't get it." But the artist works on the assumption that his viewers can think at his level. "It is a wonderful thing when they understand."

Wouldn't it be possible for avant-garde artists, or those with a style like his that demands interpretation, to trick the public into finding meaning where there isn't any?

"Not if an artist has maintained a sustained reputation over a period of years." Much modern painting, music and books, he concedes, are created for artists, musicians, writers. The layman must bring a depth of background to a work—"To understand *Ulysses* you would have had to read 100 books leading up to it"—but efforts to understand are rewarded.

The freedom that SI has given Steinberg has not meant a three-month vacation. The artist works every morning, explaining that "work is amusement. I would get sick if I didn't work."

Two of his biggest current projects are a lengthy scroll and a set of illustrations for a book by late theologian Paul Tillich, a friend of Steinberg. The artist assented to Tillich's request to illustrate his *credo*, "but I hoped to get out of it. Now that he is dead I look on it as an obligation."

Being officially associated with a quasi-Federal institution has not inhibited Steinberg, but he thinks there are dangers involved in government support of the arts. "The disadvantages definitely outweigh the advantages, but that's too deep to go into now." The Smithsonian, however, being a "philosophical institution," has escaped these dangers. "The disadvantages are also present in support from large foundations," adds Steinberg, who likes to be his own man.

Throughout the interview Steinberg's comments have been interlaced with those seemingly insignificant questions ("What was life in Washington like ten years ago? Did people walk here then? I don't like to walk on Constitution Avenue. All those buildings frighten me."), several references to the gloominess of the day, and an interpretation of what the bird on the patio is saying ("A pleasant nag — There, she just blew a kiss.")

In about a month, he will leave Washington to enjoy spring at his country home in East Hampton. What impressions of the city he will take with him probably remain to be seen in future *New Yorkers*. But for at least one person who came in contact with him, the Smithsonian's first artist in residence will always be its most enigmatic.

## Resourceful 'Voice' Greets SI Callers

by Sylvia DeBaun

Much has been said and written about the "new Smithsonian image". Not enough has been said about the ever-present and continuing Smithsonian voice. It is a warm, pleasant and helpful voice. As it should be, for the Smithsonian Institution is dedicated to public service.

However, The Voice, unlike Topsy, didn't just grow. It is the result of constant, motivated effort by Mrs. Estelle Beck, Smithsonian's chief operator, and her staff of PBX operators — four for the long haul, September through March when museum hours are 9:00 to 4:30 p.m., and five from April 1 through August 31.

The telephone room is on the fourth floor of the Museum of History and Technology. Here the two-position 605S board is "manned" by Mrs. Beck and her girls. The girls are really women, typical American wives and mothers, with children in high school or college—and with

the patience, good judgment and reasonable approach to life which maturity gives. As they handle on an average of 450 to 500 calls per day during the peak tourist season, you will realize that these are intrinsic attitudes for a PBX operator at the Smithsonian.

Christmas Day is the only day in the year on which there is a closed switchboard. On all other days, you will be welcomed by a pleasant voice from whom you will receive answers to your questions and/or guidance to the correct source to meet your needs.

Typical of many Smithsonian employees, Mrs. Beck thinks the people at the Smithsonian are the nicest kind of people to do business with and that there is, as she puts it, "a world of difference in working for a museum and working in industry or commerce. One has a sense of public service, always, which makes helpful courtesy a paramount requisite. All my PBX employees have had service with the telephone company—not one has less than 6 or 7 years' experience."

Mrs. Beck worked for the Smithsonian for three years as a young girl, before World War II. Later, having reared her family, she returned in 1959.

No matter how able or experienced, it takes a few months' indoctrination and experience with the various facilities of the Smithsonian and museum departments before an operator can rise to all the occasions with which she is confronted.

Discreet silence greeted the question of "Pet Peeves of PBX?" But Mrs. Beck gaily recounted two of the many "mysteries" she and her girls have been asked, over the years, to help unravel. And unravel, they do!

One such incident was a request to trace down a young man newly come to the Smithsonian about whom the only information given was that he had a German accent and had just married a girl from Texas. He was finally located.

The "Voice of the Smithsonian" is one of the reasons all those connected with SI are happy and at ease in saying, "Call me at the Smithsonian."

## Only 8 in World Can Fill Sugiura's Job

The Oriental atmosphere of the Freer goes deeper than the superb collection of Eastern art on display. A little bit of Japan has been transferred to a studio on the ground floor, where Takashi Sugiura is employed in a job only seven other men in the world are qualified to fill.

According to the SI phone book, Mr. Sugiura is an "Oriental picture mounter." That has to be the epitome of inadequate job titles. He does, indeed, mount antique Oriental pictures, but first they must be restored, and it is a delicate and painstaking process.

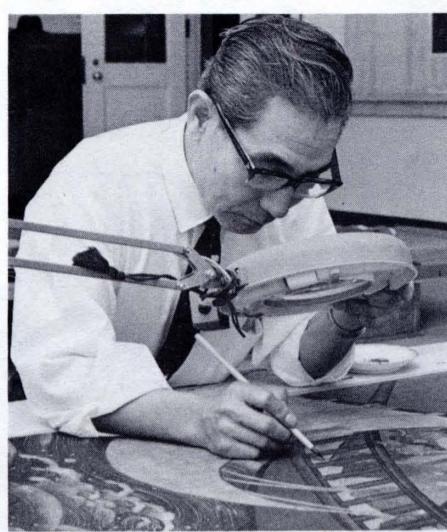
In all of Japan, Sugiura's original home, there are but six men who are members of an association qualified to restore Japanese national art treasures. One other man in Boston and Sugiura complete the world's total membership of eight.

It is small wonder that the association's size is so limited. There are no schools that teach Sugiura's art. Apprenticeship is the only way to learn, and it takes 10 to 15 years of training to become proficient enough to meet the association's rigid standards.

Mr. Sugiura came to the Freer 14 years ago with the understanding that if he did not like Washington he would return to Tokyo. Two years later he brought over his family, including his petite, lively daughter Kuma who serves as his assistant and interpreter.

Visiting the Sugiura studio is like taking a fast trip East. The artist does everything Japanese style, including kneeling on bamboo mats while working at low platforms. His callers remove their shoes at the door and, seated on floor cushions, converse with him across a low table some 300 years old.

Restoring and mounting the ancient paintings, which range from 300 to 1,000 years old, is solely the Sugiuras' responsibility.



Kneeling at a low, Japanese-style platform, Takashi Sugiura peers through a magnifying glass to do the intricate brushwork required in restoring an ancient Oriental painting.

bility. The only other hand in the process is that of the carpenter.

The first step in restoration is to remove the painting from its paper backing. Glue is dissolved with water and the picture, frequently cracked or torn, is carefully lifted off. A new backing of white paper will reveal any tiny holes, which have to be patched by tediously matching both the color and grain of the silk on which the picture is painted.

Fabric used for patching is woven to order in Japan, the source of all Sugiura's supplies. Since it has to be made in lots of at least six bolts, restorers often share the material among themselves. Papers for patching, backing and mounting are exclusively rice paper, a term which makes Sugiura smile. "I don't know how that term got started in the United States," he explained through his

daughter. "Rice paper is made from the fibers of the mulberry tree."

Paintings have to be cleaned—"We didn't even know what this one was of until we cleaned it," Miss Sugiura said of a picture being restored—and this too can cause problems. All pigments used are natural and water soluble. Therefore they must be protected from the "bath" that Sugiura gives with clear water.

After a picture has been patched, cleaned, and retouched, it is ready for mounting on a brocade background. "I think we have the best collection of brocades in the world," Sugiura says as he opens drawer after drawer of richly colored silks that would make Balenciaga drool. All are woven to Sugiura's specifications, and many are patterned with 23 karat gold thread, to echo the gold leaf Japanese landscape artists were fond of using in their works.

Like the ancient Oriental artists, whose techniques he tries to duplicate, Sugiura uses only natural materials, which he mixes, and frequently has to cook, in his studio. Chemical pigments, unlike the natural, do not hold their original color over the years, he says.

The ancients had one technique of which he is not overly fond, however. Japanese lacquer is made from poison ivy, and the last piece of lacquerware he restored kept him home for a week!

Years hence, when Mr. Sugiura is ready to retire, there will probably be a trained successor to take his place. Makoto Souta, grandson of one of the association members, came from Japan last year to serve his apprenticeship at the Freer. In the meantime, allowing about six months a job, Sugiura figures that his backlog is so great he could keep busy for the next 25 years if the gallery never bought another Oriental painting!

cally listed—on our letterhead!—from Air Museum to Zoo.

As Secretary Carmichael said, further along in that same *News* story, "Washington thinks of Dr. Whipple with respect, awe, and admiration . . . if ever there was a place that did what the Smithsonian Institution is supposed to do, that place is the Astrophysical Observatory."

So, Mr. Geoffrey Hellman & *New Yorker*, kindly un-amputate us.

Or rather, since we have never been amputated, spiritually or otherwise, just leave us where we are, and what we are—a part, odd perhaps, but integral, of a whole which is itself not so even—but homogeneous, in the sense that *none* of its parts is ordinary.

"The Smithsonian Institution," somebody has said, "is organized chaos, autonomous at every level."

And that is true.  
And we, in all of our chaotic autonomy, would not have it any other way . . .

## Henry Active In Mall Plan

(continued from page 1)

product of the genius of James Renwick and an ornament to Washington that must not be destroyed."

Secretary Ripley's interest in enlivening the Mall is in keeping with a tradition begun with the first Secretary, Joseph Henry, Washburn points out. Henry was part of an informal commission that persuaded President Millard Fillmore to assign responsibility for Mall planning to landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing.

Downing was a strong personality who demanded complete control over all phases of the landscape design and execution. Secretary Henry acted as a peacemaker and liaison between him and the President and other government officials.

President Fillmore approved Downing's natural style plantings, which were to include "a collection of all the trees that will grow in the climate of Washington, and, by having these trees plainly labeled with their popular and scientific names, to form a public museum of living trees and shrubs." The architect's supporters pushed a \$50,000 appropriation through strong Congressional opposition, and, had all gone according to plan, President Fillmore would have been remembered as the Chief Executive who gave the country its national ceremonial park.

Fate, however, in the form of a Hudson River steamboat accident, ended Downing's life and the landscape project.

Thus it is that today, instead of Downing's evergreens and pools and "Smithsonian Pleasure Grounds," the Mall has "great phalanxes" of elms that "never edge out of line" on each side of a "vacant greensward."

Only around the SI building, Dr. Washburn says, is there relief from "the monumental dullness of the formal plan sought by the Senators and architects at the turn of the century. . . . The 'defects' of Renwick's Norman castle as seen by the formal eye of 1900 have become assets in the eyes of those forced to live in marble halls."

More than 100 years after the Mall might have become the Capital's center of outdoor activity, efforts are again being made, by the Smithsonian and through the Owings Plan, to bring life to the area. "The grandeur of L'Enfant's conception, the humanity of Downing's vision, the pomp of the McMillan Commission's plan—all are included in Owings' scheme. The political, social and esthetic demands made upon the Mall have been hammered into an architectural consensus which should endure for as long as the elements forming the consensus endure. That should be a long time."

## Observatory Protests Amputation From SI Orbit by Magazine

by John White, SAO

A serious operation has been performed on us. We have been amputated. By *The New Yorker*.

In the last of that magazine's famous trio of articles on the Smithsonian Institution (Dec. 17), Geoffrey Hellman wrote, gloomily enough:

"From its [SAO's] inception, in 1890, it had lived pretty much from hand to mouth, and during the Second World War it hung on by carrying on such *terre-a-terre* chores . . . as determining 'the surface temperatures attained by various samples of military clothing under conditions similar to those of actual use in the field' . . . Dr. Carmichael solved this problem by enticing the Observatory to the Harvard College Observatory, under the directorship of Dr. Fred L. Whipple . . . and there today, known as 'Harvard-Smithsonian,' 'Smithsonian Cambridge,' and 'a Cambridge cousin,' it carries on with satellite-tracking, moon-watching, the analysis of meteorites, spectral measurements of atoms and molecules, and something called exobiology, which is not in any of my dictionaries. What Dr. Carmichael actually enticed to Cambridge was not so much the Observatory as its name and address . . .

"The monthly house organ of the Harvard-Smithsonian's 400 space scientists and secretarial help has made an occasional stab at Mall identification with passages like:

*The strange proud history of 'that great research university . . . that unique organization,' the Smithsonian Institution, was most engagingly told to workers here June 12, by the man best placed to speak thereof—Dr. Leonard Carmichael, Secretary of the Institution . . . his talk was so filled with affection for the Institution and respect for its work and its workers as to make his hearers feel, many for the first time, what a fine warm thing it is to belong to the Smithsonian.* [Quoted from the July, 1961, SAO News.]

"However, the Harvard orientation and NASA financing of this home away from home have removed it, spiritually, from the Smithsonian orbit as far as I

am concerned, letterhead or no letterhead."

Well.

Is it true?

Have we been cut out of—or, as satellite trackers would say, decayed from—the Smithsonian orbit??

This Observatory, this Harvard-Smithsonian Cambridge-cousin, this other Eden, Ian Cambridge-cousin, this other Eden, demi-Paradise, this fortress built by NASA, this little world, this precious stone set by a silver etc., is as much a child of Mother Smithsonian as is the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, the International Exchange Service, the National Portrait Gallery or any of the other two dozen or so siblings alphabeti-

"The Smithsonian Institution," somebody has said, "is organized chaos, autonomous at every level."

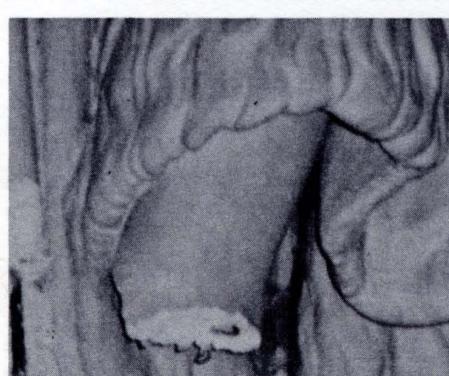
And that is true.

And we, in all of our chaotic autonomy, would not have it any other way . . .

## A Sad Day for Freedom



First she lost her scalp . . .



. . . then a hand,



And even her lower half!



It was enough to make a proud old woman weep, as the 111-year-old Spirit of Freedom left the Arts and Industries Building, her home for 75 years, for mothballs at Silver Hill.

