SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

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SF PERUSALS

Museum

by Tina Howe

A Samuel French Acting Edition



New York Hollywood London Toronto
SAMUELFRENCH.COM

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Joseph Papp

Presents

Museum

By
Tina Howe

Directed By
Max Stafford-Clark

Scenery By
Robert Yodice

Costumes By
Patricia McGourty

Lighting By
Jennifer Tipton

With
Gerry Bamman Joel Brooks Larry Bryggman
Steven Gilborn Robyn Goodman Kathryn Grody
Jane Hallaren Dan Hedaya Calvin Jung
Kaiulani Lee Karen Ludwig Bruce McGill
Frederikke Meister Lynn Milgrim
Jeffrey David Pomerantz Jean-Pierre Stewart
Kathleen Tolan Dianne Wiest

Associate Producer
Bernard Gersten

A New York Shakespeare Festival Production

MUSEUM was initially presented at the Los Angeles Actors' Theatre on April 29, 1976 by Ralph Waite, Artistic Director. The production was directed by Dana Elcar and Richard Jordan.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

THE GUARD ..... *Larry Bryggman*
MICHAEL WALL, 1st photographer ..... *Bruce McGill*
JEAN-CLAUDE ..... *Jean-Pierre Stewart*
FRANÇOISE ..... *Frederikke Meister*
ANNETTE FROEBEL, lost woman ..... *Kaiulani Lee*
LIZ ..... *Robyn Goodman*
CAROL ..... *Kathryn Grody*
BLAKEY ..... *Kathleen Tolan*
MR. HOLLINGSFORD, lost man ..... *Gerry Bamman*
ELIZABETH SORROW, silent woman ..... *Dianne Wiest*
PETER ZIFF, silent man ..... *Dan Hedaya*
MR. SALT, man with recorded tour ..... *Steven Gilborn*
MRS. SALT ..... *Jane Hallaren*
MAGGIE SNOW, lost woman ..... *Lynn Milgrim*
BOB LAMB ..... *Jeffrey David Pomerantz*
WILL WILLARD ..... *Joel Brooks*
FRED IZUMI, 2nd photographer ..... *Calvin Jung*
MIRA ZADAL, inquiring woman ..... *Robyn Goodman*
FIRST MAN IN PASSING ..... *Gerry Bamman*
SECOND MAN IN PASSING ..... *Jean-Pierre Stewart*
BARBARA CASTLE ..... *Lynn Milgrim*
BARBARA ZIMMER ..... *Karen Ludwig*
MR. GREGORY, man with loud recorded tour ..... *Jean-Pierre Stewart*
CHLOE TRAPP, curator ..... *Kaiulani Lee*
ADA BILDITSKY, curator's 1st guest ..... *Frederikke Meister*
GILDA NORRIS, sketcher ..... *Kathryn Grody*
TINK SOLHEIM ..... *Dianne Wiest*
KATE SIV, Tink's friend ..... *Robyn Goodman*
BILL PLAID, curator's 2nd guest .... *Jeffrey David Pomerantz*
LILLIAN, 1st laughing lady ..... *Frederikke Meister*
HARRIET, 2nd laughing lady ..... *Lynn Milgrim*
MAY, 3rd laughing lady ..... *Karen Ludwig*
GIORGIO ..... *Gerry Bamman*
ZOE, his wife ..... *Jane Hallaren*
JULIE JENKINS, 3rd photographer ..... *Kathleen Tolan*
FIRST GUARD ..... *Steven Gilborn*
SECOND GUARD ..... *Dan Hedaya*
STEVE WILLIAMS ..... *Joel Brooks*
AN ELDERLY COUPLE ..... *Steven Gilborn, Karen Ludwig*

CHARACTERS

Fixed characters

THE GUARD
MICHAEL WALL
FRED IZUMI

Changing characters in order of appearance

Men	*Women*
JEAN-CLAUDE	FRANÇOISE
MR. HOLLINGSFORD	ANNETTE FROEBEL
MR. SALT	CAROL
PETER ZIFF	LIZ
BOB LAMB	BLAKEY
WILL WILLARD	ELIZABETH SORROW
TWO MEN IN PASSING	MRS. SALT
MR. GREGORY	MAGGIE SNOW
BILL PLAID	MIRA ZADAL
GIORGIO	BARBARA ZIMMER
FIRST GUARD	BARBARA CASTLE
SECOND GUARD	CHLOE TRAPP
STEVE WILLIAMS	ADA BILDITSKY
MR. MOE	GILDA NORRIS
	TINK SOLHEIM
	KATE SIV
	LILLIAN
	HARRIET
	MAY
	ZOE
	JULIE JENKINS
	MRS. MOE

AUTHOR'S NOTE

It is my hope that any group wanting to present *Museum* use the large cast size as a challenge and not as a restriction. The play was written to serve the versatility of actors. It has been performed with a cast of 44, each actor playing one role, and it's been performed by 18 with the actors doubling and tripling in their roles. It would be possible, though strenuous, to stage the play with only a handful of actors. By the same token, an entire school or community could be pressed into action in a production designed to recreate the crush of modern day museum going. Hopefully the staging possibilities are limitless.

This was the breakdown of roles used in the New York Shakespeare Festival production of 1978:

Male

The Guard, a fixed role
Michael Wall, a fixed role
Fred Izumi, a fixed role
Jean-Claude, Second man in passing, Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hollingsford, First man in passing, Giorgio
Peter Ziff, Second Guard
Mr. Salt, First Guard, Mr. Moe
Bob Lamb, Bill Plaid
Will Willard, Steve Williams

Female

Francoise, Ada Bilditsky, Lillian
Annette Froebel, Chloe Trapp
Liz, Mira Zadal, Kate Siv
Carol, Gilda Norris
Blakey, Julie Jenkins
Elizabeth Sorrow, Tink Solheim
Mrs. Salt, Zoe
Maggie Snow, Barbara Castle, Harriet
Barbara Zimmer, May, Mrs. Moe

TIME: The present

SCENE:

A group show of three contemporary artists entitled, "The Broken Silence." It is held in a vast white room on the second floor of a major American museum. There are several benches to sit on and the windows look out on skyscrapers.

A listing of the artists and description of their work:

ZACHERY MOE
Born, 1943, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Four gigantic pure white canvases, all identical
"Landscape I," 197 *
Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas
On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery

"Landscape II," 197
Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas
On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery

"Seascape VII," 197
Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas
On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery

"Starscape 19," 197
Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas
On loan from the artist

Author's Note: In the New York Shakespeare Festival production, the 4th painting, "Starscape 19" was hung on the 4th, invisible wall so that anyone looking at it was in fact looking into the audience.

* The dates of completion for the artworks should correspond to the year of the play's production. As the years pass, the dates of the artists' births will also have to be adjusted.

AGNES VAAG
Born, 1954, St. Cloud, Minnesota

Nine small, decorative and menacing constructions made of animal teeth, feathers, fur, claws, bone, shell, wings, horn, scales, sponge, and antannae.

"Sacred Inquisition, Daylight Savings Time," 197
On loan from the Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts

"When the Archangels Abandon Their Grace," 197
On loan from the Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts

"Prometheus Singed," 197
On loan from the Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts

"Socratic Dialogue," 197
On loan from The Corcoran Gallery of Art

"The Temptation and Corruption of William Blake," 197
On loan from The Whitney Museum of American Art

"Abraxas," 197
On loan from the Whitney Museum of American Art

"Ode to Emily Dickenson," 197
On loan from the Rhode Island School of Design

"Metaphysics Revisited," 197
On loan from the private collection of Igmar Vaag

"The Holy Wars of Babylon Rage Through the Night," 197
On loan from the private collection of Igmar Vaag

Author's Note: The actual number of sculptures displayed can vary according to the style and size of the set. In the New York Shakespeare Festival production, only six were shown.

STEVE WILLIAMS
Born, 1936, Santa Rosa, California

A clothesline runs 25 feet across the room. On it hang five life-sized figures left out to dry with their clothes on. They are spookily realistic and come apart and can be put back together again.

The first figure is a businessman dressed in a pin striped suit. One of his shoes is missing

Second, a bride billowing in satin and veils

Third, a Mexican boy in a tee shirt

Fourth, a self-portrait of the artist wearing blue jeans and a plaid lumber jacket

Fifth, a naked Chinese woman with bound feet

A basket of round headed clothespins sits under the clothesline to one side

"Wet Dream Left Out to Dry," 197

Construction of rope, cloth, paper mache, wire, leather, wood, plaster, and fibre glass

On loan from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art

MUSEUM

The audience should be encouraged to walk through the exhibit before the play begins.

THE CURTAIN RISES: *It's the last day of the show several minutes before the museum opens. The gallery is in darkness, nothing happens, then far away sounds of footsteps, doors opening and closing.*

THE GUARD. (*Walks briskly into the room. Turns on the lights, first the Agnes Vaag's are illuminated with pinpricks of light, then the Moe's are revealed, and finally the Clothesline. As* THE GUARD *brings everything to life, a voice sounding something like a combination of God and a newcaster announces:*)

VOICE. Sandro Botticelli's priceless masterpiece, "The Birth of Venus" was attacked and virtually destroyed yesterday afternoon by a hooded man armed with a hand gun who opened fire on the painting while screaming, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Before he was finally overcome by three guards and numerous bystanders, the heavily built assailant pumped more than 18 bullets into the nude Venus figure, literally shooting her off the face of the canvas. The Acting Director of the Uffizi Gallery which houses the masterpiece, said in an interview last night that it was the most violent attack ever made against a Renaissance painting. Restoration will be impossible.

THE GUARD. (*Stores this information along with everything else he knows and begins his daily process*

of becoming watchful yet as unobtrusive as possible. He rocks on his heels, sucks his breakfast out from between his teeth, picks fuzz off his uniform, hoists up his underwear, and then waits.)

MICHAEL WALL. (*Enters carrying an arsenal of photographic equipment including a camera attached to a tripod. He looks around the room, finds the Zachery Moe's, and sets his gear down in front of "Landscape I." He walks up to it, then backs away, walks up close again and then takes out his light meter for a reading. He adjusts his camera and prepares to shoot, all with enormous concentration, energy, and flair.* THE GUARD *is mesmerized by him. After several moments,* WALL *poises his finger on the shutter release.*)

THE GUARD. It's against museum regulations to photograph the art works.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Whirling around, furious.*) You're kidding!

THE GUARD. It's against museum regulations to photograph the art works.

MICHAEL WALL. Thanks alot for waiting to tell me until I was all set up . . .

THE GUARD. I'm surprised they even let you in with all that stuff . . .

MICHAEL WALL. (*Shaking his head.*) Too much!

THE GUARD. The attendant downstairs is supposed to see that all photographic equipment is left in the check room. . . .

MICHAEL WALL. I don't believe this . . .

THE GUARD. . . . and that includes binoculars, telescopes, folding . . .

MICHAEL WALL. You wait until I'm all set up, tripod locked, camera attached, "f" stop set . . .

THE GUARD. I've seen the attendant downstairs re-

fuse visitors admittance who were just carrying . . . film!

MICHAEL WALL. . . . AND WHEN ALL OF THAT IS DONE, THEN YOU TELL ME IT'S AGAINST MUSEUM REGULATIONS TO PHOTOGRAPH THE ART WORKS!

THE GUARD. And not just film either, but radios, tape-recorders, typewriters and sandwiches. . . .

MICHAEL WALL. Who do I see to get permission?

THE GUARD. I've seen the attendant downstairs stop visitors who had bulging pockets.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Detaching his camera from the tripod.*) The Head of Public Relations? The Administrative Assistant?

THE GUARD. The public has no respect for "place" anymore.

MICHAEL WALL. The Curator? The Chairman of the Board?

THE GUARD. They wear tennis shorts to church. They drink soda at the opera. They bring flash cameras to museums. . . .

MICHAEL WALL. (*His camera in hand, walks up to* THE GUARD *and starts snapping his picture.*) Come on, who do I see for permission to photograph the art works? (*Taking a picture with each guess.*) The Cinematic Representative? The Acting President of the Exhibition? The Liason for Public Information? (*Pause.*) You have an interesting profile.

THE GUARD. I've caught men exposing their genitals in this room!

MICHAEL WALL. (*Getting involved with* THE GUARD *as a model.*) Good cheek bones!

THE GUARD. Certain shows . . . inspire that!

MICHAEL WALL. . . . strong chin . . .

THE GUARD. 19th Century French Academy nudes encourage . . . flashing.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Adjusts* THE GUARD'S *head for a shot.*) Hold it . . .

THE GUARD. (*Voice lowered.*) You'd be surprised, the shortest men have the most swollen genitals . . .

MICHAEL WALL. Nice . . . nice . . .

THE GUARD. (*Flattered, shyly poses for him.*) And there don't even have to be women in the room in order for these . . . shorter men to expose their swollen genitals. . . .

MICHAEL WALL. (*Still snapping.*) Come on, give me a hint. Do I see the curatorial staff or the administrative staff?

THE GUARD. Very few women expose themselves.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Taking closeups.*) Nice, very nice. . . .

THE GUARD. Though I *have* seen a few younger women lift their skirts and drop their panties.

MICHAEL WALL. Please! Who do I see to get permission to photograph the art works? (THE GUARD *and* MICHAEL WALL *are still as.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE and FRANÇOISE. (*Enter, a French couple in their 30's. They are very serious museum goers. They advance to the Moe's.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Looks at "Landscape I", then consults his bilingual catalogue.*) Voici, Zachery Moe!

FRANÇOISE. Ah oui, Zachery Moe!

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Reading from his catalogue.*) "Le publique qui s'intéresse a l'art est tenté de ne voir que chaos dans la profusion des tendances de la peinture contemporaine . . ."

FRANÇOISE. (*Looking at the painting.*) Il à un style . . . un style . . . tout à fait. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. "Trop près pour distinguer l'authen-

tique du factice, il est le témoin trop passionné de la frénésie d'être divers qui est le propre des artistes de notre temps. . . ."

FRANÇOISE. Tout à fait. . . . tou à fait . . . FRAGILE!

JEAN-CLAUDE. "Il est troublé par la surproduction de la matière peinte. C'est une des singularités les plus cocasses de notre siècle. . . ."

FRANÇOISE. Mais viens voir, Jean-Claude! Regards la peinture!

JEAN-CLAUDE. . . . "qui abonde pourtant en duperies de toutes sortes . . ."

FRANÇOISE. C'est une fragilité . . . mystique . . . une fragilité . . . religeuse . . . une fragilité. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Finally looks at the painting.*) PLASTIQUE! Une fragilité plastique, Françoise!

FRANÇOISE. (*Disagreeing.*) Une fragilité . . . symboliste!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Une fragilité . . . moderne!

FRANÇOISE. Une fragilité dix-septieme siecle!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Une fragilité psychologique!

FRANÇOISE. Une fragilité . . . fragile!

JEAN-CLAUDE. AH OUI, SURTOUT UNE FRAGILITÉ FRAGILE!

FRANÇOISE. C'est le mot juste. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. Fragile. . . .

FRANÇOISE. Un adjectif exact!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Comme . . . futilité *futile!*

FRANÇOISE. Ou . . . frivolité *frivole!*

JEAN-CLAUDE. Fraternité *fraternelle!*

FRANÇOISE. Ou même de la . . . folie *folle!*

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Kissing her in appreciation.*) Françoise, je t'adore! (*They gaze up at "Landscape I."*)

THE GUARD. (*Softly to* MICHAEL WALL.) The Director!

MICHAEL WALL. What?

THE GUARD. The Director.

MICHAEL WALL. What about the Director?

THE GUARD. It's the Director who gives permission to photograph the art works!

MICHAEL WALL. (*Incredulous.*) THE DIRECTOR?

THE GUARD. The Director!

MICHAEL WALL. It just . . . never occurred to me that . . . the Director. . . .

THE GUARD. (*In unison, smiling.*) . . . the Director.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Amazed, gathers his equipment and hurries out of the room.*) The Director . . . son of a bitch. . . .

THE GUARD. (*Yelling after him.*) Main floor to the left of the Check Room.

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Pointing to his catalogue.*) Regards Françoise, un photo d'artiste . . .

FRANÇOISE. (*Looking at it.*) Tiens. . . .

THE GUARD. (*To himself.*) I still don't understand how he got past the attendant downstairs.

FRANÇOISE. Quelle bouche!

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Looking closely at the picture.*) C'est une bouche. . . . extraordinaire!

THE GUARD. I mean, Raoul is tough on photographers!

FRANÇOISE. Une peu . . . chimpanzé, n'est-ce-pas?

JEAN-CLAUDE. Chimpanzé?

FRANÇOISE. Mais oui, chimpanzé!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Mais voyons Françoise, qu'est-ce que tu veux dire? Que C'est artiste extraordinaire resemble. . . . un chimpanzé? Un bête sauvage? (*Looks at the picture, more and more troubled.*) C'est une erreur, une faute de photographe . . . (*Looks closer.*) C'est . . . *incroyable!*

FRANÇOISE. Eh? Eh?

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Approaches* THE GUARD *with his catalogue opened to the page, in pigeon English.*) Excuse me please. The photograph in my catalogue. Here. This picture of Zachery Moe. There must be some mistake. This is a photo of a chimpanzee!

THE GUARD. Chimpanzee? (*Takes the catalogue and looks.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE. You see, that is not a photograph of the artist. It's a photograph of a chimpanzee!

FRANÇOISE. (*Leaning over* THE GUARD'S *shoulder.*) C'est toute à fait fantastique!

THE GUARD. (*Looking at the picture very closely.*) It sure looks like a chimpanzee.

FRANÇOISE. (*Delighted, breaks into a light giggle, makes a slight monkey chattering noise.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Snatching the catalogue away from* THE GUARD.) Monsieur, I am shocked. I have never seen such a thing before. Such an insult as this! You should be ashamed!

FRANÇOISE. C'est absolument ridicule!

JEAN-CLAUDE. It's a disgrace. . . .

FRANÇOISE. (*Chatters in his ear, teasing, laughing.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Realizes how foolish it all is, succumbs and joins her in an answering chatter. Never for a moment do they abandon their French precision or dignity.*)

ANNETTE FROEBEL. (*Enters. She can be any woman of any age. She looks around, confused.*) Where did the Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes go?

THE GUARD. (*Shaking his head.*) No, that was no chimpanzee. I've seen his picture in the papers, and he doesn't look like no chimp!

ANNETTE FROEBEL. (*Remembering them as clear as day.*) Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes used to be in this room . . . right over there!

THE GUARD. Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes are on the third floor, Miss!

ANNETTE FROEBEL. The *third* floor?

THE GUARD. Third floor.

ANNETTE FROEBEL. Are you sure?

THE GUARD. Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes are on the third floor.

ANNETTE FROEBEL. I could have sworn they were on this floor. (*She exits.*)

LIZ'S VOICE. (*Offstage.*) Did you hear what happened to Botticelli's "Venus" this morning?

CAROL'S VOICE. (*Offstage.*) No, what?

LIZ'S VOICE. Some maniac shot it with a gun.

LIZ, CAROL, and BLAKEY. (*Enter, enthusiastic college girls who are taking an art course together.*)

CAROL. Someone *shot* it? People don't shoot paintings. They slash them!

LIZ. I heard it on the radio this morning. A hooded man pumped 18 bullets into the Venus figure at the Uffizi.

CAROL. I've never heard of anyone . . . shooting a painting.

BLAKEY. You're right! They usually attack them with knives or axes.

CAROL. There's something so . . . alienated . . . about shooting a painting.

BLAKEY. . . . and then there was the guy that wrote slogans all over "Guernica" with a can of spray paint!

LIZ. (*Laughing.*) That's right: spray paint!

BLAKEY. Red spray paint . . . and he misspelled everything, remember?

LIZ. (*Leading them to the Moe's.*) Carol, Blakey, guys, YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE HIM! (*They look at his work with reverence.*)

LIZ. (*Softly.*) You know, his parents are deaf mutes . . . *both* of them . . . profoundly deaf. . . .

BLAKEY and CAROL. (*Gasp.*)

LIZ. Can you imagine what it must have been like growing up with parents who couldn't hear you? I mean, when would you figure out that it was *their* affliction and not yours? How could a baby realize there was anything unusual about his parents? (*Pause.*) Since he never heard them utter a word, he must have assumed he couldn't speak either. He could hear his own little baby sounds of course, but he had no idea what they were. . . .

BLAKEY and CAROL. (*Exhale, impressed with the dilemma.*)

LIZ. When he cried . . . no one heard him. (*Pause.*)

BLAKEY. Maybe he never did cry!

LIZ. Of course he cried! All babies cry. Even deaf babies.

CAROL. (*Lost.*) He assumed he couldn't speak either . . . ?

LIZ. Don't forget, his parents could always *see* him cry. Sooner or later he must have realized that in order to get their attention he didn't really *have to cry,* all he had to do was go through the motions. . . . (*She opens her mouth and cries without making a sound.*)

BLAKEY. (*Musing.*) If a deaf, *mute* baby had hearing parents . . . they couldn't hear *him* cry either. . . . (*Pause.*)

CAROL. (*Still lost.*) . . . go through the motions?

LIZ. (*To* BLAKEY.) The deaf aren't necessarily mute, you know, some of them can make some sort of residual sound. . . .

CAROL. (*She's got it.*) WHEN HE CRIED. . . . NO ONE HEARD HIM!

LIZ. . . . but it's not the case with Zachery Moe's parents. They are consigned to absolute and life long silence.

BLAKEY. (*Her head spinning from it all, turns her back on the Moe's and notices the clothesline.*) OH, MY GOD, WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT?! IT'S INCREDIBLE!

LIZ. (*Reaching for* CAROL.) When Moe finally realized that his meandering attempts at speech fell on deaf ears. . . .

BLAKEY. (*Pulling* CAROL *with her.*) *THIS IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING I'VE EVER SEEN IN MY LIFE!* (*Touching it gently.*)

THE GUARD. (*To* BLAKEY.) Please don't handle the art works.

BLAKEY. It's . . . fantastic!

THE GUARD. DON'T HANDLE THE ART WORKS!

BLAKEY. Oh, I'm sorry. (*To* CAROL.) Imagine thinking of making a clothesline . . . with the bodies left inside the clothes. . . .

CAROL. (*Torn between her two friends.*) Yeah. . . .

BLAKEY. It's a reality grounded in illusion . . . !

CAROL. (*Feeling trapped, detaches herself from* BLAKEY.) You know, this is the first time I've ever been in this museum!

BLAKEY. Oh no! There's even a little kid wearing a tee shirt!

THE GUARD. DON'T TOUCH!

BLAKEY. I'm not touching, for Christsakes, I'm just looking!

CAROL. (*Walking around the room.*) I've lived in this city my whole life, and this is the first time I've ever been to this museum!

BLAKEY. It's our bodies that give our clothes meaning, just as without our clothes we. . . .

CAROL. (*Looking out the window.*) You know, you can always tell the quality of a museum by the view out the windows.

BLAKEY. (*Kneels by the basket of clothespins.*) Do you see this? He even left out the basket of clothespins?!

THE GUARD. (*Walks over to her.*) Please don't handle the basket of clothespins!

BLAKEY. (*Rises.*) If you're not supposed to handle the basket of clothespins, how come the artist put them there?

CAROL. (*To* BLAKEY.) The Tate Gallery has just about the shittiest view of any museum in the world!

BLAKEY. (*To* THE GUARD.) He put them there so we *would* touch them!

CAROL. The view from the Del Prado isn't so hot either.

LIZ. (*Still enthralled with the Moe's.*) He chose painting as his voice! (*Opens her catalogue, stops at a page.*) Look at his early sketches! The drawings he did of his toys when he was only three! Do you believe this technique? Look at his handling of perspective. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE and FRANÇOISE. (*Have worked their way to the Agnes Vaag sculptures.*)

FRANÇOISE. Jean-Claude, elle resemble Tougache, tu sais?

JEAN-CLAUDE. Il est beaucoup imité, tu sais, Tougache!

FRANÇOISE. C'est le même esprit que Tougache!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Tougache est trop admiré!

FRANÇOISE. C'est une style un peu comme Kavitsky aussi. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. Mon chou, tu sais tres bien que je n'aime pas Tougache de tout!

FRANÇOISE. Kavitsky est sombre. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. ECOUTE FRANÇOISE, TOUGACHE EST BÊTE!

FRANÇOISE. Elle choisie les objects simples comme Kimoto. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. (*Flings down his catalogue in a rage and starts storming around the room.*) TOUGACHE EST DE LA SALOPERIE! JE DETESTE TOUGACHE! TOUGACHE EST DE LA MERDE (*He starts raving in French.*)

FRANÇOISE. (*Upset and embarrassed.*) Jean-Claude . . . cheri. . . . (*They stand at opposite ends of the room, sulking.*)

BLAKEY. The image of people being . . . laundered . . . washed . . . soaking wet . . . pinned up on the clothesline of life to dry out. . . .

CAROL. (*Standing next to a window.*) If I designed a museum, there would be no art on display . . . just windows. The public would come *inside* the museum in order to look *outside* the windows. The object of study would be nature itself . . . as seen through many different types of windows. There'd be . . . elevated windows, dropped windows, stained glass windows, broken windows, bricked up windows, open windows . . . all looking out at exactly the same view. . . .

LIZ. (*Still enthralled in front of the Moe's.*) I don't know which I like more, his landscapes or seascapes. . . .

CAROL. And then there'd be windows that weren't really windows at all, but *paintings* of windows. . . .

BLAKEY. (*Starts laughing in delight over The Clothesline.*)

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. (*Enters. He could be anybody, to* THE GUARD.) Where would I find the . . . uh . . . the uh . . . (*He looks at* BLAKEY *and gets more confused.*) . . . Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes?

THE GUARD. Third floor.

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes.

THE GUARD. Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes are on the third floor!

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. I was told they were on this floor. (*He consults his catalogue.*)

BLAKEY. (*Can't contain her delight over The Clothesline and sways her head back and forth laughing and moaning gently.*)

THE GUARD. "The Broken Silence" is on this floor.

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. What?

THE GUARD. I SAID, "THE BROKEN SILENCE" IS ON THIS FLOOR!

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. Broken . . . what? (*Looks through his catalogue with rising alarm.*)

THE GUARD. SILENCE!

EVERYONE. (*Is startled and instantly quiet.*)

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. Broken quilts?

THE GUARD. Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes is on the third floor.

MICHAEL WALL. (*Re-enters with all his photographic equipment minus the tripod, drops it to the floor underneath "Landscape I" and waves a paper in his hand.*) I got permission from The Director!

THE GUARD. COLONIAL QUILTS AND WEATHERVANES IS ON THE THIRD FLOOR!

BLAKEY. (*Still on the floor, sways and croons with renewed feeling.*)

MICHAEL WALL. I just got permission from the Director himself. You can see, he signed it!

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. (*Bewildered.*) The broken silence?

MICHAEL WALL. He was very nice about it. He took my tripod, but he invited me back to the next show.

THE GUARD. (*To* MR. HOLLINGSFORD.) This is the last day of the show.

MR. HOLLINGSFORD. Thank you very much, I will. (*He exits.*)

MICHAEL WALL. I know it's the last day of the show, that's why I'm here!

BLAKEY. (*Emits a peal of delighted laughter.*)

LIZ. Just as sound and speech were irrelevant to him, so line and form became irrelevant. (*Pause.*) It makes you wonder where he'll go from here. . . . (*She dreams in front of the Moe's.*)

THE GUARD. (*Takes the permission slip from* MICHAEL WALL.) It's against museum regulations to photograph the art works without permission from the Director.

BLAKEY. (*Advances on the clothesline, wedges in-between two of the figures as if she's part of the work.*) Do you know what this makes me want to do? It makes me want to grab some of the clothespins and pin myself right up there alongside the others. . . . I want to be laundered . . . hung up to dry . . . all limp and dripping wet with the sun slowly drying me out . . .

THE GUARD. (*Going up to her.*) All right, Miss, that's enough. I'm going to have to ask you to leave. . . .

BLAKEY. They look so at peace, cleansed . . . flapping in the sun. . . .

THE GUARD. (*Guiding her out of the room.*) That's it . . . we've had enough . . . quietly, quietly . . . just move it right along. . . .

BLAKEY'S VOICE. (*From Offstage.*) I want to join them! I want to be cleansed! I want to feel the sun on my face. . . .

CAROL. And then at some point, the structure of the museum would . . . just end . . . and everyone would suddenly be . . . outside . . . *in the view* . . . they'd actually *become the view,* the objects on display. You'll stand in line and pay admission . . . to see . . . *yourself!* And then the guards will be hired to watch the people . . . watching each other . . . GOD! I'VE GOT TO WRITE THIS DOWN! (*She exits.*)

LIZ. (*Seated before the Moe's, falls into a revery.*) They must be so proud of him, his parents . . . so very proud. (*A silence descends. It's finally broken by:*)

ELIZABETH SORROW. (*A highly sensitive woman who enters. She has tremendous difficulty orienting herself to the art works. She doesn't know how long it takes to "see" them. She flits from one to the next like a frantic bee, or a yo-yo bobbing on a string that keeps getting shorter and shorter. When she's through looking at something she doesn't trust her impressions, but rushes back to it for another glance, then on to the next one to compare, then back again. In the midst of her confusion. . . .*)

PETER ZIFF. (*Enters. A silent and nervous man who glitters with a strange menace. His moves are stealthy and ambiguous. He should give the impression of having visited this show many times. Like* ELIZABETH SORROW, *he rarely notices other people.*)

(*Time passes in absolute silence as they alternately explore their hidden worlds. This silence is finally*

broken by the sound of a lively voice intoning on a recorded tour.)

MR. and MRS. SALT. (*Enter, attached to the recorded tour and to each other by the twin wires they have plugged into their ears. They are not experienced museum-goers and are terrified by the erudition of the voice babbling into their ears. Furthermore, they've never worn an accoustaguide before, and keep getting hopelessly tangled up in all the wires. The machine hangs around* MR. SALT'S *neck, and* MRS. SALT *follows him timidly. They are eventually overwhelmed by the difficulty of 1) keeping face, 2) following the instructions of the guide, and 3) maneuvering with all the wires that keep getting in their way . . . and they collapse on the nearest bench.*)

THIS IS THE TEXT OF THE RECORDED TOUR. On behalf of the trustees of the Museum, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our current exhibition, "The Broken Silence." Before we start on our tour, let me say a few words about the operation of the casette you are now wearing around your neck. The small red button on the left allows you to turn me on or off at your own discretion. When you hear this beep sound (*Beep sound.*), it is the signal that my commentary about a specific work is finished and that you may turn the button to the "off" position and enjoy the painting or sculpture at your own leisure. When you wish to rejoin me, simply turn the button back to "on" and our tour will continue. If you inadvertantly miss any of my remarks and would like to hear them again, switch the red button to "off" and then turn the adjacent white button to the "replay" position. My comments will then be repeated until you are caught up and ready to proceed. At that time,

just return the white button to "play" and be sure to remember to flip the red button back to the "on" position. To raise and lower the volume on the earphone element, just turn the large black dial at the center of the casette clockwise or counter-clockwise. If the quality of your recorded tour is defective in any way, simply exchange it for another casette at the front desk, main floor, to the left of the checkroom.

JEAN-CLAUDE and FRANÇOISE. (*Find themselves in front of the clothesline, and are horrified by it.*)

FRANÇOISE. Mon Dieu, Jean-Claude, regards!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Quelle horreur!

FRANÇOISE. C'est affreux!

JEAN-CLAUDE. Un insult!

FRANÇOISE. Dégoutant. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. Déplorable. . . .

FRANÇOISE. Débraillé. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. Décadent. . . .

FRANÇOISE. Déclassé. . . . (*They get angrier and angrier.*)

JEAN-CLAUDE. Décomposé. . . .

FRANÇOISE. Défectif. . . .

JEAN-CLAUDE. Défoncé. . . . (*And faster and faster.*)

FRANÇOISE. DÉFORMÉ!

JEAN-CLAUDE. DÉGÉNERÉ!

FRANÇOISE. DÉGRADANT!

JEAN-CLAUDE. DÉMODÉ!

FRANÇOISE. (*Weepy.*) Je veux partir, Jean-Claude.

JEAN-CLAUDE. Moi aussi, Françoise. (*He takes her arm and with the utmost grace and disdain . . . they exit.*)

(*At this point the following people are in the gallery.* THE GUARD *watching over* LIZ. LIZ *watching the*

Zachery Moe's and thumbing through her catalogue. ELIZABETH SORROW *resting on one of the benches. The* SALTS *at the mercy of their recorded tour,* MICHAEL WALL *taking pictures, and* PETER ZIFF, *moody and restless.*)

MAGGIE SNOW. (*Enters, a woman in a hurry. To* THE GUARD.) Excuse me, where is the Puritan Pewter and Hooked Rugs?

THE GUARD. You mean, Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes.

MAGGIE SNOW. No! Puritan Pewter and Hooked Rugs!

THE GUARD. We don't have Puritan Pewter or Hooked Rugs on exhibit here, only Colonial Quilts and Weathervanes!

MAGGIE SNOW. (*Exits, running.*) Typical! Typical! (*Almost bumping into:*)

BOB LAMB and WILL WILLARD. (*Who glide into the room like elegant swans. They are experienced museum-goers, close friends, and arbiters of good taste.*)

WILL WILLARD. Bruce said the show was shit!

BOB LAMB. Bruce says everything is shit!

WILL WILLARD. Well, Bruce said *this* show was especially shit. *Merde de la merde!*

BOB LAMB. (*Looking around the room.*) Pretentious. . . . ?

WILL WILLARD. This wasn't my idea . . . !

BOB LAMB. (*Looking at the Moe's.*) Ad Reinhardt was doing those in black twenty years ago!

WILL WILLARD. I would never in a million years. . . .

BOB LAMB. And Yves Klein did them in blue before you were even born!

WILL WILLARD. I'm sorry, my taste is more. . . .

BOB LAMB. It's pure Rauschenberg, but without the emotion.

WILL WILLARD. Wait a minute, I love Rauschenberg!

BOB LAMB. Willard, I love him too, but . . . *this*. . . .

WILL WILLARD. Rauschenberg is a giant!

BOB LAMB. Rauschenberg is . . . *the* giant!

FRED IZUMI. (*Enters. Another photographer, a second generation Oriental who's been completely Americanized save for a residue of old world politeness. He starts setting up his equipment in front of one of the Moe's.*)

BOB LAMB. (*Looking at the clothesline.*) I like Segal better.

WILL WILLARD. You do?

BOB LAMB. Don't you?

WILL WILLARD. I thought you've said Segal was shallow.

BOB LAMB. I've never said Segal was . . . shallow. Just a bit . . . muted for my taste.

WILL WILLARD. Well, what about Duane Hanson?

BOB LAMB. Hanson . . . (*Laughing with pleasure.*) is divine!

THE GUARD. (*Noticing* FRED IZUMI.) Hey mister, it's against museum regulations to photograph the art works!

WILL WILLARD. Hanson is . . . insane!

FRED IZUMI. (*To* THE GUARD.) Excuse me, but I notice there is another man here taking photographs.

WILL WILLARD. Of course my all-time favorite is . . .

WILL WILLARD. Claes Oldenberg!

BOB LAMB. Claes Oldenberg! I know!

FRED IZUMI. (*Going over to* THE GUARD.) I'm sorry

for troubling you again, but unless I'm very mistaken, that fellow over there is taking photographs.

THE GUARD. He has permission.

FRED IZUMI. Oh . . . he has permission.

BOB LAMB. (*Reads the title of the clothesline.*) "Wet Dream Left Out to Dry, 197 " (*He starts to laugh.*)

WILL WILLARD. (*Laughs with him.*)

BOB LAMB. (*Reading in an affected voice.*) "On loan from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art!"

FRED IZUMI. (*To* THE GUARD.) Would there be some way I might get permission as well?

LIZ. (*Comes out of her revery over the Moe's. Looks around the room for her friends who have disappeared.*) Carol? Blakey? Guys? Hello? CAROL? GUYS? (*She exits in a panic.*)

WILL WILLARD. Isn't it terribly loud in here? I can't see a thing!

BOB LAMB. This has always been a noisy museum.

FRED IZUMI. If there is some procedure to follow to get permission, perhaps you'd tell me what it is.

THE GUARD. If you want permission to photograph the art works, you'll have to see the Director.

FRED IZUMI. Oh, the Director?! That's curious, usually it's the Administrative Assistant who authorizes permission to photograph the art works. (*He exits.*)

BOB LAMB. Oh no, look at that! He put a basket of real clothespins under an imaginary clothesline! Now, that's what I call . . . *panache!*

WILL WILLARD. You mean, *pastiche!*

BOB LAMB. *Pastiche?*

WILL WILLARD. Real clothespins under an imaginary clothesline!

BOB LAMB. Willard, *pastiche* is collage, I mean, *panache* . . . dash!

WILL WILLARD. Robert, the word is . . . *panacea!*

BOB LAMB. *Panacea . . . ?*

WILL WILLARD. No wait, *paradigm!*

BOB LAMB. (*Thinking back, confused.*) *Pastiche . . . ?*

WILL WILLARD. (*Also confused.*) *Placebo . . . ?*

BOB LAMB. PARADIGM . . . ?

FRED IZUMI. (*Reappears, to* THE GUARD, *slightly out of breath.*) Excuse me again, but . . . uh . . . where would I . . . uh . . . find the Director?

THE GUARD. Main floor, to the left of the Checkroom.

FRED IZUMI. Yes of course! The main floor! (*He exits again.*)

BOB LAMB. (*Absent mindedly picks up one of the clothespins to help him find the mot juste.*)

THE GUARD. Please don't handle the clothespins!

BOB LAMB. (*Drops it.*) Oh, sorry. (*To* WILLARD, *but also taunting* THE GUARD.) Did you read that the Metropolitan Museum of Art is only going to be open four days a week?

WILL WILLARD. The Metropolitan?

BOB LAMB. (*To* THE GUARD, *pointedly.*) The museum doesn't have enough money to pay its force of 227 security guards.

WILL WILLARD. The Metropolitan has 227 security guards?

BOB LAMB. (*Eying* THE GUARD.) The Metropolitan *had* 227 security guards. They just let 82 go.

WILL WILLARD. I had no idea the Metropolitan had 227 security guards.

BOB LAMB. They just let 82 go.

WILL WILLARD. I thought they had 50 or 60 guards . . . but *227?!*

BOB LAMB. All the museums are being forced to cut back.

WILL WILLARD. 227 security guards is alot of people!

BOB LAMB. They don't have enough money to meet operating costs anymore.

WILL WILLARD. Robert, 227 security guards is a crowd!

BOB LAMB. They're all closing down a few days during the week.

WILL WILLARD. Jesus!

BOB LAMB. That's right, "Jesus!" Pretty soon there won't be any fucking culture left!

MIRA ZADAL. (*Enters, she's very pretty and flirtatious. She sidles up to* THE GUARD.) Hello. Where are the Museum Engagement calendars sold?

THE GUARD. (*Sweating under her gaze.*) In the Museum Gift Shop. Main floor, to the left of the Check Room.

MIRA ZADAL. (*Starts to exit.*) Thank you so much.

FIRST MAN IN PASSING. (*Rushing through the room on the way to somewhere else.*) Did you hear what happened to Botticelli's Venus this morning?

SECOND MAN IN PASSING. No.

FIRST MAN IN PASSING. Shot and killed with a gun!

SECOND MAN IN PASSING. Shot and . . . *killed?*

FIRST MAN IN PASSING. Shot right off the face of the painting!

SECOND MAN IN PASSING. (*As they both exit.*) Son of a bitch!

MIRA ZADAL. (*Re-enters, sashays up to* THE GUARD.) Do you also have reproductions of ancient Egyptian jewelry in the Museum Gift Shop?

THE GUARD. (*Blushing.*) Books, catalogues, foreign publications, post cards, blown . . . glass. . . .

MIRA ZADAL. (*With a tremulous sigh.*) . . . blown . . . glass?

THE GUARD. (*With rising ardor.*) Pewter figurenes, ceramic reproductions, needlepoint kits, table linens . . . dried flowers. . . .

MIRA ZADAL. (*Groans.*)

THE GUARD. Silver ladels, cloisonné key rings, solid gold cuff links . . . rare spices!

MIRA ZADAL. Oooooooh, you're so . . . helpful! (*She exits.*)

THE GUARD. Main floor, just a little bit left of the Check Room!

ELIZABETH SORROW. (*Exits in her fashion, trying to make doubly sure she has taken everything in.*)

PETER ZIFF. (*Then starts stalking the same art works* ELIZABETH *has just left. He's bothered by them, but for more destructive and obscure reasons.*)

THE GUARD. (*Watches him like a hawk.*)

PETER ZIFF. (*Frustrated by this scrutiny, sits down on one of the benches.*)

(*A silence into which step:*)

BARBARA ZIMMER and BARBARA CASTLE. (*Enormously stylish mirror images of each other. They have come to the show to be seen and display themselves with langorous grace.*)

BARBARA CASTLE. Gloria said the show was wonderful!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Gloria would!

BARBARA CASTLE. She came to the opening with Misha.

BARBARA ZIMMER. I saw Misha last week!

BARBARA CASTLE. Really?

BARBARA ZIMMER. He was wearing his fur cape!

BARBARA CASTLE. Oh, I love that cape! Did he have on his linen vest with it?

BARBARA ZIMMER. The linen vest . . . *and* an incredible raw silk shirt!

BARBARA CASTLE. Oooooooh, what color? *What color?*

BARBARA ZIMMER. Bright . . . green!

BARBARA CASTLE. Perfect!

BARBARA ZIMMER. . . . and his tweed cap . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. He was wearing his tweed cap?

BARBARA ZIMMER. Yes!

BARBARA CASTLE. But not his tan boots . . .

BARBARA ZIMMER. . . . not his tan boots. . . .

(*Pause.*)

BARBARA ZIMMER. His black ones! (*A groan.*)

BARBARA CASTLE. His black ones! (*A groan.*)

(*Pause.*)

BARBARA CASTLE. What I wouldn't give for that linen vest of his!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Well, you'd have to give a great deal, believe me!

BARBARA CASTLE. Can you see that vest with my gaberdine slacks?!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Barbara, they don't *make* linen like that anymore!

BARBARA CASTLE. Or, with my Halston skirt. . . .

BARBARA ZIMMER. There's a world-wide shortage of natural fibers. We have quite simply used them all up.

BARBARA CASTLE. And it's reversable too. On the inside, it's a lightweight cream wool!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Drained them. . . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. Reversed, I could wear it with practically anything!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Barbara, within the next few years, all our fabric will be synthetic.

BARBARA CASTLE. *Synthetic?* Did you just say, *"synthetic,"* Barbara?

BARBARA ZIMMER. Yes, Barbara, I just said, *"synthetic,"* Barbara! They hardly grow any cotton in the South anymore, it's just too expensive to harvest.

BARBARA CASTLE. Barbara, I can't wear synthetics!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Who can, Barbara? WHO CAN?!

BARBARA CASTLE. Last week I bought a slip I was told was pure silk, only to read the label two days later and discover it was Cresulon. Do you know what Cresulon does to my skin?

BARBARA ZIMMER. Chinese silk worms are as scarce as hen's teeth!

BARBARA CASTLE. It coats it with a thin layer of petroleum!

BARBARA ZIMMER. . . . and as for wool. Because the cost of feeding sheep has skyrocketed, the sheep farmers are going bankrupt. Soon, there will be no more wool, cashmere, or angora!

BARBARA CASTLE. Barbara, I've got a rash. A white rash all over my body!

BARBARA ZIMMER. From now on, it's the man-made substitutes: Orlon Acrylic, Lycra Spandex, Quiana Nylon, Fortrel Polyester, and Celanese Arnel Triacetate!

BARBARA CASTLE. And it won't go away! I've tried everything. Barbara, I'm desperate!

(*Pause.*)

BOB LAMB. As the costs of running museums keeps rising, the price of admission is bound to go up. Museums officials are now talking about $10 as a fixed single admission fee.

WILL WILLARD. *$10 to get into the Metropolitan?*

BOB LAMB. $10 for admission into the Metropolitan will be a bargain, Willard, it will be 25 before the end of the decade. The only way people will be able to

afford visiting museums in the future will be in chartered groups!

WILL WILLARD. Chartered groups??! Robert, I go to the Met by myself, or I don't go at all!

BOB LAMB. The $50 "Budget" Chartered Tour will include admission into the Metropolitan, the Modern, and the Whitney. . . .

WILL WILLARD. I would *pay* $50 to avoid a "Budget" Chartered Tour. . . .

BOB LAMB. The "Imperial" Chartered Tour will include those three, and for $25 more, admission into the Guggenheim, Cooper-Hewitt, and the Hayden Planetarium!

WILL WILLARD. Stop, stop!

BOB LAMB. And don't think the private galleries aren't hurting either. . . .

WILL WILLARD. I have to be alone with the things I love!

BOB LAMB. The day will come when you'll have to use Master Charge to get into Pace and Castelli!

WILL WILLARD. The Morgan Collection of Renaissance jewels, snuff boxes, and enameled jeweled cups. . . . !

BOB LAMB. Write checks for admittance into second story Soho galleries!

WILL WILLARD. Do you *know* the Morgan Collection at the Met? Have you ever *seen* the Rospigliosi Cup?

BOB LAMB. Pay cash to . . .

WILL WILLARD. Robert, when I stand before that cup, I can't stand two people within 10 feet of me!

(*Pause.*)

BARBARA CASTLE. (*To* BARBARA ZIMMER.) This is the first time I've ever had a . . . *white* rash!

WILL WILLARD. (*To* BOB LAMB.) The last time I

was there, there was a swarm . . . of screaming children.

BARBARA CASTLE. (*Revealing some bare arm.*) Look! (*She blows on it, a fine white powder rises.*) Did you see that?

WILL WILLARD. I broke out in a sweat. . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. I think I'm on fire. . . .

WILL WILLARD. It's called Agoraphobia!

BARBARA CASTLE. It keeps getting worse!

WILL WILLARD. I'm told it's incurable. . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. . . . and Barbara, it's spreading!

(*A pause.*)

BARBARA ZIMMER. (*To* BARBARA CASTLE.) The handwriting is on the wall!

BOB LAMB. (*To* WILL WILLARD.) Our troubles have just begun!

BARBARA ZIMMER. (*Agreeing with* BOB LAMB, *but for her own reasons.*) We could lose everything!

BOB LAMB. (*To* BARBARA ZIMMER.) Exactly!

BARBARA ZIMMER. (*To* BOB LAMB.) We're only beginning to wake up . . .

BOB LAMB. . . . and when we finally do, it will be too late!

BARBARA ZIMMER. Of course, this is not the first time.

BOB LAMB. No, we've been through it before.

BARBARA CASTLE. This is the first time I've ever had a white rash!

WILL WILLARD. I just hope we can retain what's most precious to us.

BARBARA ZIMMER. We've tried so hard!

BOB LAMB. Sacrificed so much. . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. Given our all. . . .

WILL WILLARD. Gone more than halfway. . . .

BARBARA ZIMMER. Stinted on nothing. . . .

BOB LAMB. Held out for the best.

BARBARA CASTLE. Fought a fair fight. . . .

WILL WILLARD. And stuck to our guns!

(*A pause.*)

BARBARA ZIMMER. He's right!

BOB LAMB. You said it!

BARBARA CASTLE. Well put!

WILL WILLARD. Culture, as we know it. . . .

BOB LAMB. Is on the way out!

BARBARA ZIMMER. On the way out. . . .

BARBARA CASTLE. . . . and disappearing round the bend!

(*A pause.*)

THE GUARD. (*Suddenly launches into a tap dance of private protest. It rises in spirit and magnificence. Everyone watches him in amazement. The* SALTS *start to applaud and then check the gauche impulse. The dance suddenly stops and* THE GUARD *returns to his post as if nothing happened. To himself.*) It's the last day of the show. (*Everyone resumes their former activities and the room falls into silence.*)

MR. GREGORY. (*Enters, a shy man with a recorded tour that's playing much too loud.*)

THE RECORDED TOUR. ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE MUSEUM, IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR CURRENT EXHIBITION, 'THE BROKEN SILENCE.' FIRST, LET ME SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE OPERATION OF. . . .

EVERYONE. (*Eyes him with hostility, their hands over their ears.*)

THE GUARD. WILL YOU PLEASE TURN THAT DOWN?

WILL WILLARD. WHAT'S GOING ON IN HERE?

BOB LAMB. I TOLD YOU THIS WAS A NOISY MUSEUM!

MICHAEL WALL. HEY MISTER. . . .

THE BARBARAS. (*Shake their heads and cluck.*)

FRED IZUMI. (*Re-enters, goes up to* THE GUARD, *hands him a slip.*) My permission slip from The Director! (*He sets his gear down by the Moe's.*)

THE GUARD. *WHAT?*

FRED IZUMI. PERMISSION SLIP FROM THE DIRECTOR!

THE GUARD. I SAID, IT'S AGAINST MUSEUM REGULATIONS TO PHOTOGRAPH THE ART WORKS!

FRED IZUMI. MAIN FLOOR TO THE LEFT OF THE CHECK ROOM!

THE GUARD. THE GUARD DOWNSTAIRS. . . .

FRED IZUMI. YES, I SAW THE DIRECTOR. . . .

THE RECORDED TOUR. (*Mysteriously regulates itself on, "Yes, I saw the Director,"*)

THE GUARD. IT'S AGAINST. . . .

MR. GREGORY. (*Somehow manages to turn the sound completely off.*)

FRED IZUMI. (*Hands* THE GUARD *his slip.*) My permission slip from the Director.

THE GUARD. (*Taking it.*) Wonderful!

FRED IZUMI. Main floor, to the left of the check room!

THE GUARD. . . . terrific!

MR. and MRS. SALT. (*Their recorded tour suddenly goes beserk in sympathy with* MR. GREGORY'S. *It plays insanely loud and then very very fast.*)

EVERYONE. (*Groans and mutters in angry disbelief.*)

THE GUARD. LOOK. . . . WOULD YOU PLEASE TURN DOWN THE VOLUME. . . .

MR. GREGORY. (*Cowering in a corner.*) THE SAME

THING HAPPENED TO MINE, JUST SHAKE IT . . . (*Etc.*)

MR. and MRS. SALT. (*Terrified and frantic with embarrassment bang on the controls.*)

MRS. SALT. TURN THE RED BUTTON, NOT THE WHITE BUTTON. . . . NO, NO . . . *THIS* ONE. . . . NOT SO FAR. . . .

MR. SALT. SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG SOMEWHERE!! I'M TURNING THE WHITE BUTTON, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS. . . . GOD DAMNED MACHINE. . . !

THE GUARD. LOOK, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE! (*Strong arms* MR. SALT *out of the room.*)

MRS. SALT. (*Is pulled helplessly after him on her attached wire.*)

PETER ZIFF. (*Seizes the moment and quickly rushes over to one of the Moe's, takes out a small pencil and scribbles intensely on one small corner. With sweat pouring down his face, he looks to see if anyone saw him, and then quietly sneaks out of the room.*)

FRED IZUMI. (*To* THE GUARD.) Both he and his assistant were very courteous. It turns out we have mutual friends in Cincinnati. (*He then paces down the length of all the Moe's, reading their titles out loud to himself.*) "Landscape I, 197 . Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas. On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery."

BOB LAMB. (*To* WILL WILLARD.) Not only will it cost $10 to get into the Metropolitan, but because of the shortage of guards, certain galleries will be roped off on odd and even days of the month.

FRED IZUMI. "Landscape II, 197 . Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas. On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery."

BOB LAMB. Medieval helmets will only be on view even days, from noon til one. Renaissance stringed instruments, odd days, from two to three.

FRED IZUMI. "Seascape VII, 197 . Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas. On loan from the Sidney Rubin Gallery."

BOB LAMB. Sooner or later, the less popular exhibits will close altogether: Etruscan bronzes, Mid-Eastern glazed bricks. . . .

FRED IZUMI. "Starscape 19, 197 . Acrylic emulsion and wax on canvas, on loan from the artist."

BOB LAMB. Eventually, entire periods and forms of art will be lost completely as the public is denied access!

FRED IZUMI. (*Amazed.*) "On loan from the . . . *artist?!*"

BOB LAMB. One by one, all the treasures of Western civilization will be dismanteled, put into storage . . . lowered into fibre glass crates and buried under ground . . . to be grouped and catalogued by art historians wearing thick, lint-free, asbestos gloves. (*Pause.*) We will never again stand face to face with an original painting or sculpture. And if there is no place where that painting or sculpture can be shown, the artist is bound to ask: *Who am I doing it for . . . And why am I doing it?* The impulse to create will be shattered. Willard, this may be our last day in the presence of live art!

WILL WILLARD. Wait a minute! Yesterday I was standing one foot away from probably *the* most live and stunning object of art made by man in the last 400 years! Robert, have you ever studied the Rospig-

liosi Cup? It's a fucking dazzler! (*Pause.*) It's this . . . incredible scalloped sea shell which rests on the back of an enameled dragon . . . which in turn rests on the back of an enameled turtle. It's carved out of solid gold and is no more than 10 inches high and 8 inches across. Instead of a handle, a winged sphinx perches on the rim of the cup, a gigantic baroque pearl hanging between her golden breasts. I mean, the workmanship, the detail . . . the fantasy! Tiny seed pearl earrings dangle from her ears . . . and instead of having the traditional legs and paws of a lion . . . she has flippers! Indigo blue flippers etched in enamel. You can *count* each irredescent scale!

BOB LAMB. Well, you'd better get ready to kiss it goodbye . . . it won't be there in two weeks. All the museums are closing.

WILL WILLARD. Robert, what on earth are you talking about?

BOB LAMB. The museums . . . are . . . shutting . . . down!

WILL WILLARD. Robert, no museums are shutting down.

BOB LAMB. Willard, we've got to do something!

(*As* BOB LAMB *is tensed for some sort of desperate act, there's a gradual slowing down of movement and speech. As a group, the visitors in the museum become languid art works themselves.* THE GUARD *paces,* MICHAEL WALL *keeps taking pictures,* FRED IZUMI *prepares to take his,* MR. GREGORY *doggedly follows his tour, the* BARBARAS *pluck at each other's beautiful clothes, and* WILL WILLARD *stares straight ahead. This moment of serenity is broken as:*)

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