CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 1998 Volume 90 Number 2

HEALTH CARE SPECIAL

Features

52 COVER STORY: Doctors Orders
How can you get the best health care? We prescribe a healthy dose of skepticism so that you can be your own best advocate.
By Joe Bergantino

54 Rating the HMOs
From breast-cancer screening to diabetes treatment, here's how Boston-area health plans stack up. By Fred Bayles

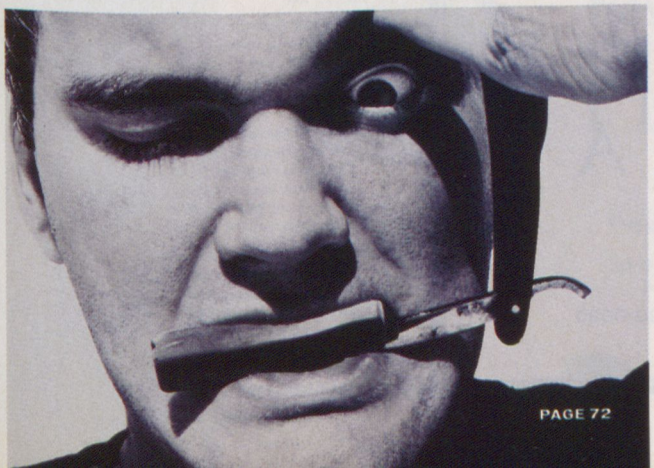
60 Saving Face
To nip and tuck, or not to nip and tuck: That is the question for an increasing number of boomers. A firsthand account by a Boston television newscaster. By Anonymous

62 Retail of Two Cities
Merchant princes Stanley Marcus of Neiman Marcus fame and Murray Pearlstein of Louis Boston expound on expensive wardrobes—and why the customer *isn't* always right. By Lisa Genasci

66 Ginny, Straight Up
Baby-faced Virginia Buckingham may be the most powerful woman in state government. So why are some people saying such nasty things about her? By Sean Flynn

68 King of the Chill
Les Otten is on a shopping spree, buying up mountains across the United States—a good thing for Wall Street and realtors, but what about skiers? By Stephen Jermanok

72 Quentin Tarantino Acts Up
Why is the hottest, most-foul-mouthed movie director in the universe starring in the upcoming production of *Wait Until Dark* at the Wilbur Theatre? Born-again thespian Tarantino says, Why not? By Andrew Goldman



PHOTOGRAPHS, FROM TOP: CYNTHIA HUNTER; ALLEN PENN. HAIR & MAKEUP BY RAE BERTELLOTTI/TEAM; STEPHEN DANIELSON/OUTLINE; TARANTINO INSET: DOMINIQUE CHARRIAU/RETNA

Departments

11 REPORTER The house that Jackie built; More on Szep and that damned cartoon; plus a new feature: Street Talk. Edited by Hayley Kaufman

18 BOSTON INC Thanks to another record year on Wall Street, lots of CEOs, here and elsewhere, raked in millions in stock options in 1997. By Louise K. Green

23 POLITICS How a Republican smear campaign against Al Gore undid a promising Boston-area company. By Jonathan Broder

34 TRENDS Once people could impress the masses by saying, "I am a citizen of Rome." Today we boast, "I am an owner of Nike." By Constantine von Hoffman

76 THE GOODS Convenience and luxury in small packages. By Gabrielle Derrick de Papp and Lisa Gerson

78 SALES OF THE MONTH Hold the mush and heap on the luxe with a day at the spa, a night at the Ritz. Edited by Nichole Bernier

176 CITY JOURNAL "The key," the cop says, "the unmistakable marker, is always the smell." By Lisa Gerson

On the Town ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

125 BOOKS James F. O'Gorman's *Living Architecture: A Biography of H.H. Richardson,* by Richard Smith; Douglass Shand-Tucci's *The Art of Scandal,* by Robert Plunket; William Bratton's *Turnaround: How America's Top Cop Reversed the Crime Epidemic,* by Sean Flynn.

132 THEATER For 150 years, the Hasty Pudding showguys have been getting their kicks by dressing up as women. An inside look at one of Harvard's goofiest traditions. By Theodore Gideonse

135 TELEVISION After surviving the tragic Everest climb in 1996, documentary filmmaker David Breashears returned to shoot the devastating effects on the body of the high-altitude "death zone." By Claudia Kalb

138 WINE Serious French wine lovers will be astonished at the wide selection of Burgundies and Rhônes—many of them great old vintages—at Brookline Liquor Mart. By John Anderson

140 DINING OUT From top to bottom, the Pru has two restaurants where out-of-towners are most likely to get their first taste of Boston cuisine. By Corby Kummer
PLUS: COUNTER INTELLIGENCE Romantic Bars By Lisa Amand

155 EVENTS Silence of the Jams; Singles Scene; Backstage: FleetCenter. Edited by Chuck Kapelke

In Every Issue:

6 Letters / 146 Restaurant Listings / 163 Boston Marketplace

COVER: X-ray photograph for *Boston Magazine*, by Brian Whitney/Urbane

Backstage: FleetCenter

At Boston's sparkling new arena, the action goes well beyond center court.

For the Zamboni drivers, vendors, and other denizens of the FleetCenter, what is it like to work in those sterile, lemon-scented environs after laboring in the legendary but funky Boston Garden?

Well, to most of those whose lives have been irrevocably chained to the homes of the Celtics and the Bruins, it just isn't the same as it was when they worked in the far grittier Boston Garden. "You could hear what people were shouting at you over there," says Zamboni driver Paul Chambers, who remembers nearly every bottle thrown at him by spectators.

"All the stories they tell you about the drugs, the booze, and the women at the old Garden are true," says an usher just before game time. "But that was the '80s, and now we're in the friendly FleetCenter."

In place of flying bottles, the Fleet offers high-tech spectacles staged from the JumboTron booth, which coordinates the "Bad Dance Hall of Fame" for display on the massive midfloor screen. But even that is in good taste. "Just because we say 'bad' doesn't mean the dances necessarily suck," says one of the producers. "It's a family atmosphere. We try to keep it as tasteful as possible." A case in point is Banners, the restaurant overlooking the arena, where suits and corporate powerbrokers enjoy fine dining far above the rowdy beer-guzzlers below.

Which is not to say that the Fleet is totally bereft of funk. Take, for example, Carl Fennelly, ticket-taker extraordinaire who tears about 1,200 tickets in half each night—all the while fending off fans trying to pass off counterfeit tickets, get in on passes for the wrong event, or otherwise make his life miserable. "What are you going to do," he asks, "tackle everybody that comes through? If you put your hand on someone, you're fired."

A.K.A. DAVE KERPEN
The Crunch 'n Munch Guy has hordes of cultish followers.

And there are vendors like Dave Kerpen, who try to bring their own kind of showtime to the stands, whether or not the home team is cooperating on the ice or parquet floor. Best known as The Crunch 'n Munch Guy, Kerpen bellows repeatedly, "ARE YOU READY TO CRUNCH?!" as he dances in the aisles, flings boxes with flair, and otherwise enlivens dull sporting events. In the process, Kerpen has become a cult figure in his own right, outselling other vendors by a factor of five, and signing scores of Crunch 'n Munch boxes before the game to accommodate autograph requests.

Kerpen, you may recall, is the man who was fired from his job at Fenway Park last year. The reason: A woman in the stands had been hit by loose change that fans were throwing at Kerpen for balancing Cokes on his head. At the FleetCenter, life can be equally tough, says Kerpen. "By the end of the night, I'm totally exhausted. I'm dripping with sweat." Kerpen, who studies education and psychology at BU, consumes four packs of Halls lozenges a night, drinks two cups of tea with honey right after the game, and still regularly loses his voice from screaming such pitches as "Crunch 'n Munch is delicious . . . and . . . nutritious!"

All of which makes for great preparation for what Kerpen hopes will be his next job—politics. "I'm going to do a lot of things in my life," he says, "but I figure City Council's the next step."

—CHUCK KAPELKE

P.M. $10, $8 students, seniors, and Thurs. after 5 P.M.; free 17 years and under when accompanied by an adult. Voluntary contribution Wed. after 4 P.M. *465 Huntington Ave., Boston, 267-9300.*

Museum of Our National Heritage—THROUGH 5/10: "**Altered States: Alcohol and Other Drugs in America**" gives the dope on America's drug habit, from that first cup of coffee to the last cigarette. The exhibit intertwines drugs' historic, physiological, social, and political dimensions in exploring how we engage in cycles of acceptance and rejection, how we react to drug use and regulation, and how we count the costs. Mon.–Sat. 10 A.M.–5 P.M., Sun. NOON–5 P.M. Free. *33 Marrett Rd., Rte. 2A at Massachusetts Ave., Lexington, 861-6559.*

New Bedford Whaling Museum—THROUGH 4/26: Lighten up with "**Shades of Opulence: The Lamps of Pairpoint,**" which, in conjunction with the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, continues the museum's in-depth study of the regional glass industry. Open daily 9 A.M.–5 P.M. $4.50, $3.50 seniors and children ages 6–14. *18 Johnny Cake Hill, New Bedford, 508-997-0046.*

New England Quilt Museum—2/3–4/12: "**Quilted Portraits**" is an exhibition of 35 patchwork pictures that explore the human spirit with fabric and thread. This exhibit will be part of a citywide celebration of portraiture by other art and cultural institutions in Lowell, called "Portraits in the City." Tues.–Sat. 10 A.M.–4 P.M. $4, $3 students/seniors. *18 Shattuck St., Lowell, 508-452-4207.*

Peabody Essex Museum—THROUGH 5/31: "**A Tribute to Mother Teresa: Paintings and Prints by M.F. Husain,**" a series of depictions by the topnotch Indian artist. Black History Month programs this year include: 2/5, 8 P.M.: "**North Pole Legacy: Black, White, and Eskimo.**" A presentation about the secret legacy of North Pole explorers Robert Peary and Matthew Henson: two children fathered with Inuit women! $10. 2/22, 2 P.M.: "**Black Jacks: African-American Seamen in the Age of Sail,**" a presentation about sailors in the 18th and 19th centuries. Other adult and family programs run throughout the month. Mon.–Thurs., Sat.: 10 A.M.–5 P.M.; Fri., 10 A.M.–8 P.M.; Sun. NOON–5 P.M. $7.50, $6.50 seniors/students, $4 children ages 6–16. *East India Sq., Salem, 508-745-1876.*

The Norman Rockwell Museum—THROUGH 5/25: "**J.C. Leyendecker: A Retrospective**" features more than 100 paintings and drawings from the creator of the "Arrow Collar Man," several commercial art pieces, and covers for national magazines. Daily 10 A.M.–5 P.M. $9, $2 children ages 6–18. *Rte. 102, Stockbridge, 413-298-4100.*

Springfield Museum of Fine Arts—THROUGH 3/1: "**Gilded Age Watercolors and Pastels from the National Museum of American Art,**" an exhibition of 48 rarely seen works that capture the feel of America a century ago, including pieces by Winslow Homer, William Merritt Chase, John LaFarge, and others. Wed.–Sun. NOON–4 P.M. $4, $1 kids 6–18. *State and Chestnut sts., Springfield, 413-263-6800.*

Worcester Art Museum—2/7–3/15: "**1890s: The World of Printmaking,**" with works by such masters as Whistler, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, and Kobayashi Kyochika. Through 3/22: Expressions of the favorite themes of one of the most beloved painters of the 19th century are displayed in "**Winslow Homer: By Land and by Sea.**" Through 5/31: "**My Favorite Work of Art,**" highlighting 100 museum treasures handpicked by big-hitter Mo Vaughn, big-cooker Julia Child, and other local celebrities, writers, politicians, and folks like you and me. Wed.–Fri., Sun. 11 A.M.–5 P.M.; Sat. 10 A.M.–5 P.M. $6, $4 seniors, students, and ages 13–18; free ages 12 and under and Sat. 10 A.M.–NOON. *55 Salisbury St., Worcester, 508-799-4406.*

Galleries

Boston Center for the Arts—THROUGH 2/8: The BCA continues its "**Drawing Show,**" a popular biannual exhibition that was juried this year by **Carl Belz,** director of Brandeis's Rose Art Museum. Dozens of artists are featured. *Mills Gallery, 549 Tremont St., Boston, 426-8835.*

Boston University Art Gallery—THROUGH 3/1: "**Marianna Pineda: A Retrospective**" encompasses 50 years of the late artist's work, featuring the "Oracle Series" and "Eve Celebrant Series," both of which explore mythology and the concept of a powerful and generous female deity. *855 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, 353-3329.*

Brush Art Gallery—2/1–3/22: "**SELF-aMUSEd II: The Contemporary Artist as Observer and Observed.**" Works reflecting how contemporary artists have redefined the nature of self-portraiture. *256 Market St., Lowell. Call 978-459-7819.*

First Expressions Gallery—This unique gallery serves as a venue for the otherwise undervalued talents of students; First Expressions generously donates 50 percent of sales proceeds to pediatric AIDS programs. Through 2/28: An exhibit of work by students from the Art Institute of Boston, Massachusetts College of Art, New England School of Art and Design, the School of the Museum of Fine Art, and UMass Boston. *81 Arlington St., Boston, 695-2808.*

Gallery One—2/2–3/13: **The American Society of Media Photographers** presents an exhibition of some of the finest works in its collection. *537 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, 437-1868.*

Light Sources Photographic Gallery—THROUGH 2/28: Eight of Boston's top commercial photographic talents are presented in "**The VanX Show,**" so named because all the artists presented are ex-assistants of Boston photo industry leader John VanS. *23 Drydock Ave., Boston, 261-0344.*

McMullen Museum of Art—THROUGH 5/17: "**Visionary States: Surrealist Prints from the Gilbert Kaplan Collection**" includes works by Jean Arp, Salvador Dalí, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, René Magritte, Joan Miró, and other artists who liked to mess with viewers' heads. *Devlin Hall, Boston College, 50 College Rd., Chestnut Hill, 552-3350.*

M.I.T. List Visual Arts Center—THROUGH 3/22: "**Francesc Torres: The Repository of Absent Flesh**" allows the artist, fresh off his run at the Whitney Museum, to stretch the narrative aspect of installation to its furthest extreme. Shipping crates, partially pried open to reveal a variety of objects, are arrayed throughout the dimly lit space; movements trigger lighting and a recorded voice-narration. The work will be accompanied by Tor-

PHOTOGRAPH, *Tracey Powell*