

Since I knew PETER MAX socially from my Life in the Hamptons he generously created the cover art for this issue which also included a special feature on the upcoming production of Cirque du Soleil.

## Feature Story

do something for his inauguration. I thought, "Wow! Wouldn't it be wild if there were a hundred Clintons and he got to see them." On the night of the inauguration, they let Clinton in through the basement of the building. And the secret service guys put the paintings out so he could see them. He flipped! Since then, I've done over 30 projects with the Clintons. [From the half-dozen paintings of Hillary Clinton I could see, and the four fresh ones on the easels, I figure the First Lady series is next. -RWC]

To many people, you are New York's ambassador to art. Tell me about the Statue of Liberty and how you were involved in its restoration? I wanted the Statue of Liberty to get renovated. I had painted Liberty for years. And one day a young man came to my building and told my doorman he loves Peter Max, loves the Statue of Liberty, that he was a patriot, and wanted to see me.

© Peter Max 1995



The lady love of Peter Max

in awful shape. He said, if there was anybody who should ignite interest in getting it renovated, it would be me. When he left, I felt this surge of responsibility to this country that I love. So I called Nancy Reagan, because in 1983 I had spent three days at the White House painting Statues of Liberty. I told her that I would like to get the Statue renovated and start an advertising poster promotion called Save The Lady. She thought it was a great idea. The White House doesn't finance anything like the sale of posters or the raising of money. To do

something like that I had to go to the private sector. So I called up my friend Bob Eddleson and asked, "Who's got the Chrysler account?" He told me K&E Advertising. Then I called up the president, who I know, and presented the idea to him. He in turn introduced the idea to Lee Iacocca, who actually took the project on and became the chairman of the Statue of Liberty Renovation Committee. That's how it got done.

I love New York. The city is an amazing palette. The creative hub of Earth. I live on Riverside Drive so I look over the Hudson River, but when I turn and look out over the city, I see the greatest city on the planet. Every time I leave it, I miss it. I love being home. This studio is my favorite place in the world. I love to go places in my mind.

**How has the Internet influenced or affected you?**

The Internet is a whole new canvas to work with. The fact that you can sit there with this hand-held machine and play space invaders with a kid in Zaire that you've never met or can communicate globally with strangers, that's fantastic! The planet was once very, very large. That is making it smaller. Last night a friend

gave me this Internet address that I dialed up on my computer and could view the world from satellites from wherever I wanted to. If I wanted to see Russia or China, I could; and it was all real time. Live! Full color. If you wanted to, you could see it photographically or in gamma alpha ray, four or five different levels. The whole planet Earth. I was up till four in the morning.

**You're really into modern technology yet you, like so many people, seem to be turning spiritually back to the ancient religions.**

That is because they were the most modern and they were the most civilized of cultures. For a monk to sit on a hill and meditate and get into his inner ecstasy



Quintessential Max

and inner calmness is about as close to perfection as anyone will ever get in the next hundred years.

**In so many movies today the major characters are artists. Leonardo DiCaprio in Titanic, Greg Kinnear in As Good as It Gets, Ethan Hawke in Great Expectations. Have you ever thought about being a character in a movie?**

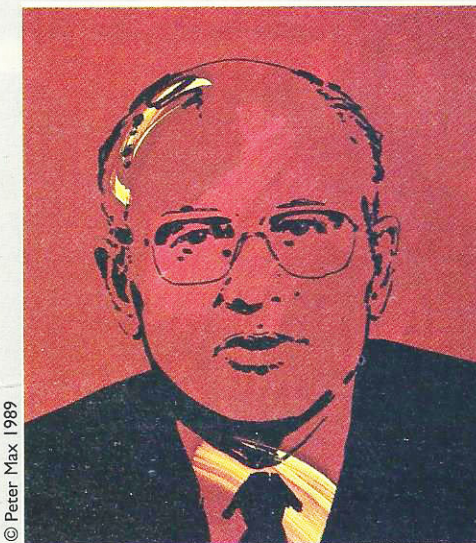
I wrote the story of my life, which I'm going to do in a surreal way. I was born in Berlin, raised in China, lived in Tibet, India, Africa, Paris, Israel, and then I came here. It gave me a very unusual view because as a child I traveled through all those lands. Maybe they could make a movie about me, but I would like someone like Spielberg to direct the film.

**Sounds good to me. ■**

© Peter Max 1990



Angel of the Internet



Red, hot, and Gorbys

When my doorman called and told me that I said, "Send him up." He sits down and presents me with this book with plastic pages, like the kind models carry, with pictures of all the bad aspects of the Statue of Liberty: how it was rusted, scratched, and carved, with bolts missing, paint dripping, people urinating on her, just

