

DESIGN & DECORATING



THE ARRANGEMENT

FLOWER SCHOOL

# Blush of Youth

A portrait of a budding girl inspires floral designer Lindsey Taylor's May bouquet

**JUST BEFORE** the world shut down, an exquisite show opened at New York's Met Breuer, "Gerhard Richter: Painting After All," a retrospective (now on hold) of the German artist's work. Mr. Richter (b. 1932) often paints from photographs, his approach bridging photorealism and abstraction. His love of blurring an image, which he says makes everything equally important and unimportant, echoes our experience during this

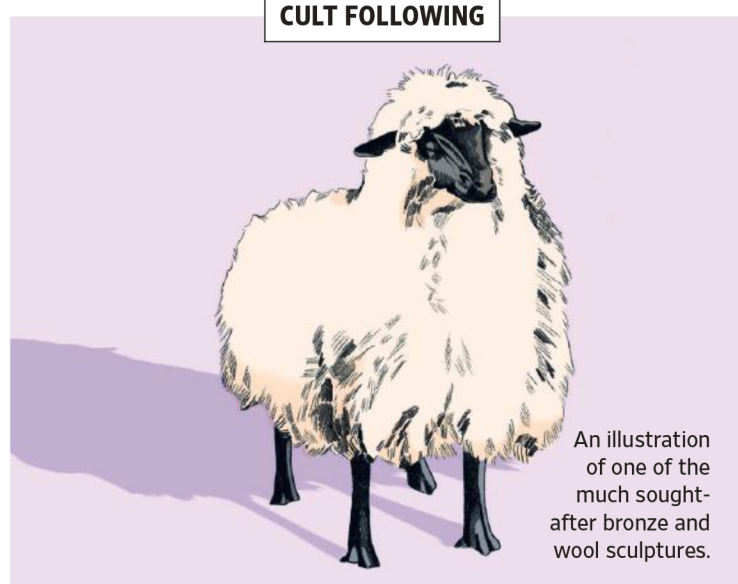
pandemic, with days blending together and much in question. As the inspiration for my May arrangement, I selected a small, intimate oil painting, "Ella" (2007), which depicts Mr. Richter's 12-year-old daughter reading. I found calm in her quiet solitude and comfort in the nurturing care he has taken to capture it. To establish a simpatico mood, I paired a matte gray ceramic tumbler by Tracie Hervy with a tall pitcher from Bloomist, whose brown glaze picked up the painting's deep chocolate background and the amber wisps of Ella's hair. To evoke Mr. Richter's blurry effect, I popped in amply petaled, blousy Japanese ranunculus, using the biggest to suggest the pink-and-white foreground of her face and shirt, while relying on smaller maroon and umber ranunculus to sketch in the backdrop and her hair. At the last moment I tucked in delicate light blue larkspur to



THE INSPIRATION

Japanese ranunculus and a bit of larkspur capture the colors of 'Ella' (2007), by Gerhard Richter. reference her collar's contrasting trim. Squinting, you can see the similarities and differences between the bouquet and painting. I can't help but stray a little when I make these, using the artist's work to hold my hand but not boss me.

CULT FOLLOWING



An illustration of one of the much sought-after bronze and wool sculptures.

## Mutton to See Here

How François-Xavier Lalanne's decorative sheep corralled high-end collectors

**History** For his 1965 entry to the Salon de la Jeune Peinture, an iconoclastic Parisian art fair, sculptor and installation artist François-Xavier Lalanne wanted to introduce "something immodest and slightly embarrassing." The result: his first flock of 24 large bronze and wool sheep, known as Moutons de Laine ("Wool Sheep"). Inspired by a passage in Homer's epic poem in which Odysseus and his men escape the Cyclops by clinging to the bellies of his gargantuan beasts, the sheep became Lalanne's trademark, and he crafted iterations in various materials for decades.

**Allure** Meant to be sat and leaned upon, the sheep straddle sculpture and furniture, and the fun they inject into any room or outdoor setting has reliably charmed interior designers and collectors. At auction, a Lalanne ewe can sell for 10 times its catalog estimate. Jeremy Morrison, Christie's international director and head of design in Europe, said the animals speak a universal language, requiring "no deep understanding of art history or technique, yet subverting their environment with impact and whimsy."

**Fans** Ellen DeGeneres, architect Peter Marino and fashion designers Marc Jacobs and Yves Saint Laurent, who once confessed that he stretched out on the sheep in his library, fantasizing about farm life.

**Cult Moment** At John Legend and Chrissy Teigen's 2018 baby shower, hosted by Kardashian family matriarch and Lalanne collector Kris Jenner, Ms. Teigen casually sat astride a pricey sheep while Kim Kardashian fed a video to tens of millions of Snapchat fans. "You art collectors will be mortified," Ms. Kardashian narrated.

—Lexi Mainland



A herd of Moutons de Laine sculptures at a 1967 Parisian party.

# I DIDN'T TALK for a VERY LONG TIME

**Jacob Sanchez**  
Diagnosed with autism

Lack of speech is a sign of autism. Learn the others at [autismspeaks.org/signs](https://autismspeaks.org/signs).