

# The *AFFAIR*

REFLECTING ON THEIR 40-YEAR CREATIVE PARTNERSHIP, DESIGNER GARY HUTTON AND COLLECTOR CHARA SCHREYER DISCUSS DISASTER, BEAUTY AND MUTUAL ADMIRATION



It was love at first sight. On a sunny afternoon in 1978, Chara Schreyer walked into Today's, a new restaurant in San Francisco's Union Square, and found herself immediately smitten. The petite space was thoroughly modern, awash in shades of khaki and set with enameled steel tabletops. The locally sourced French nouveau cuisine was served up on custom paper plates with a pink border, and the waiters were dressed smartly in uniforms by Wilkes Bashford. "I called the manager over and demanded to know who had designed the place," recalls Schreyer. His answer: a young upstart designer named Gary Hutton — the restaurant was his very first project.

Today's may be long gone (the space currently houses Dior Homme) but Schreyer and Hutton endure. They embarked on their first project together in 1982 — building her Healdsburg home from the ground up — and have completed nearly 10 others since, including residences in Los Angeles, Marin and

S.F. "I push her, she pushes back," says Hutton. "We are constantly learning from each other."

The combination of Schreyer's unparalleled art collection with Hutton's design acumen has resulted in homes that have spilled plenty of editorial ink (her L.A. house recently made its debut in *Architectural Digest*), but it's the match of their complementary personalities that has forged a decades-long friendship and inspired a host of new projects.

A new book, "Art House," comes out this fall from Assouline to chronicle Hutton and Schreyer's prolific relationship. It features Schreyer's five existing homes, not to mention her art collection, some of which will be on display when the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art reopens its doors on May 14. (Schreyer, who sits on the board of three major California museums, including SFMOMA, has been named one of the America's top 200 collectors for 15 years running.)

And on May 2, an exhibition of more than

20 works from Schreyer's photography collection will open at Pier 24 Photography in S.F. — a show that was yet another collaboration between her and Hutton. "When they asked me to put together an exhibition, my first call was to Gary," Schreyer recalls. "I told him, 'I can't do this without you.'"

As they discussed it in their customary fashion — one idea inspiring another, each finishing the other's sentences — they landed on "Danger, Disaster and Beauty" as the title of the show (it runs through January). Schreyer explains that, since a portion of her collection is dedicated to peril and tragedy, "we decided to start there."

But mixed in with the grim (Gerhard Richter's portraits of student nurses gruesomely murdered in their Chicago dormitory) are elements of glamour and humor (photographs of vintage porn actors and iconic topless dancers). And, like the creators themselves, the combination is thrilling.

— Erin Feber