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BOBBY SHORT

Into the mix of jazz, pop and personality that is cabaret, Bobby Short adds a highly stylized blend of ease and elegance. Whether you heard him last at your best friend's wedding reception or while sitting beside an even closer friend at New York's Cafe Carlyle, you probably still have happy memories of the performance. It's the spell Short has been casting for more than five decades—and it's no accident.

"Donald McCray was a songwriter back in the late Thirties and early Forties. He had seen me perform in New York when I was 12 or 13, and he wrote me a letter. Years later, after completing my education in my hometown of Danville, Illinois, I was

performing at the Radio Room in Los Angeles, and one night after my show Don McCray stepped forward and introduced himself. He said, 'I wrote you a letter a long time ago.' And I remembered—it was the only letter I received at the time. We sat down for a drink and immediately became great friends. He was a tall, gentle and unprepossessing person, and he understood what I was about.

"I was trying to pursue my career on a sophisticated and elevated level—and I wasn't getting much support from people around me. But Don knew precisely what I wanted to do. He made great suggestions: how to accentuate certain phrases and words in the songs, what to play down and how to present myself to the public. I always had a keen interest in poetry, but I hadn't always applied it to popular songs. Don made me aware of the lyrical content of popular music, pointing out the great stylizing of Mabel Mercer. Many of the songs I have sung with enormous success in the last twenty-five years were originally introduced to me by Don."

CHRISTOPHER WALLING

Discerning style setters, never mind smart collectors, are not immune to bouts of gushing at the sight of a new Christopher Walling treasure. Widely known for his X-shaped Biwa-pearl designs, Walling fuses nature's best with an instinctive sense of beauty that draws seekers of timeless glamour to his appointment-only shop on Fifth Avenue. As a young man, he was bedazzled by the work of Suzanne Belperron, the French designer remembered for her abstract modernist creations, as well as for her activity in the French Resistance. Her attention to detail (she would spend days getting to know a client) hasn't been lost on Walling, whose settings can be as striking as the twenty-millimeter pearls they often hold.

"Madame Belperron was a 78-year-old force of nature when I met her. I had grown up making jewelry for my mother, and

Madame Belperron was much like her—they were both elegant, lonely French war heroes. I think that dynamic made us bond quickly. In many ways, I think I tried to make both of them happy with my jewelry.

"Much like her Paris studio, which was off the beaten path, Madame Belperron lived on an intellectual tangent far from the rest of the world. Often wearing her fantastic collection of jewels, she would see me in the afternoons and we would go over the 4,000 watercolor sketches she had kept of her designs. She was an unorthodox jeweler—she had a bold, solid sense of color that she used in unusual ways. She would create a design entirely of sapphires or rubies—things that were fantastically modern. In that sense, she was more like a painter than a conventional jeweler. She validated my own upbringing in the world of painting and influenced my palette.

"I wasn't always sure I was on the right path before I met Madame Belperron, but she reestablished my belief in my work and in myself. She taught me never to let commercial constraints—expense, time, materials or convention—affect my work or compromise my designs. Like her, I have always decided what is beautiful and found a way to make it, rather than use just what is available to me. I might never have produced my designs had I not met Madame Belperron."

"MADAME BELPERRON TAUGHT ME NEVER TO LET EXPENSE, TIME, M

DR. MICHAEL E. DEBAKEY

He's one of the best friends a heart could have. Chancellor and former chairman of the Department of Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Dr. Michael E. DeBakey is credited with the first successful use of a mechanical heart-assist device. He also performed the first successful coronary-

artery bypass surgery. But those breakthroughs might not have occurred without the lessons he learned from two often-overlooked mentors.

"My parents, Shaker Morris and Raheeja DeBakey, provided exceptionally well for me—physically, emotionally, intellectually and ethically. By example, they instilled the highest human values: honesty, self-discipline, compassion, pride in performance, service to others. Their industriousness and the gratification I saw them derive from doing the

CHRISTOPHER WALLING

IN THE EYES OF
AN IDOL, SUZANNE
BELPERRON



RIALS OR CONVENTION COMPROMISE MY DESIGNS.”