

The Discreet Charm of Bourgeois

"This desire to be likable, it is really a pain in the neck," Louise Bourgeois tells filmmakers Amei Wallach and Marion Cajori in *Louise Bourgeois: The Spider, the Mistress and the Tangerine*, a new documentary on the artist. "How are you going to be likable and be yourself? There are doubts there. I am full of doubts."

It's this combination of "charm, irritability, and vulnerability," Wallach says, that makes Bourgeois so compelling. *The Spider, the Mistress and the Tangerine*, which premieres at Film Forum in New York on the 25th of this month, follows

Bourgeois through her Brooklyn studio, her Manhattan apartment, and her work. Draped in a hot-pink fur and wearing a sequined cap, she takes the filmmakers into her 1994 installation *Red Room (Child)*, a dark cell packed with red hourglasses and various trinkets. She picks up a sculpture of a small arm, noting that the room obviously belongs to a child. "My answer as a parent is,



Louise Bourgeois walks filmmakers Amei Wallach and Marion Cajori through her work in a new documentary.

I do what I can," she says. "I never promised you a rose garden."

"Louise performed for us," says Wallach, an art critic as well, who finished the film with editor Ken Kobland after Cajori died, in 2006. "She came to trust us." That trust is apparent as Bourgeois shares memories from her childhood. Growing up during World War I and shaken by her father's infidelity, Bourgeois admired her mother's resilience. While the camera crawls around Bourgeois's giant metal spider sculptures, she states, "I inherited my mother's intellect and my father's sick heart."

While much of the film rests on Bourgeois's fuzzy pink shoulders, occasional outside interviews add snippets to her biography. Her longtime assistant Jerry Gorovoy recalls a dinner party when, after doing a rare bit of cooking, Bourgeois hurled a leg of lamb out the window. Gorovoy retrieved the meat, washed it off, and everyone ate it in silence.

—William Bostwick

That's the Way the Tanguy Crumbles

We might order a **Bellini** cocktail or buy a tube of **Rembrandt** toothpaste without ever thinking twice about the names those brands bear. But for the German art historian, photographer, and journal-

ist **Michael Klant**, products named after famous artists have a certain resonance. Klant has collected

show, "ArtBrands," and the catalogue, subtitled "When Dogs Eat Beuys," brings together both the mundane and the far-fetched: a **Manet** scooter, **Kiefer** bread, **Fragonard** rose soap, **Leonardo** tape, a **Kandinsky** key chain, **Tanguy** cookies, and a **Duchamp** wine bottle.

Aside from exploring the ludicrous nature of these associations, the exhibition asks some searching questions about art and advertising.

"The use of the name **Vermeer** in connection with a gasoline-powered brush chipper might

be a disadvantage," brand-name specialist **Manfred Gotta** points out in a catalogue essay, adding that such



A brush chipper by Vermeer—as in Gary, founder of Iowa's Vermeer Corporation.

incongruous pairings make the company's "intention transparent, the product exposed to ridicule." Citing the philosopher **Walter Benjamin**, catalogue essayist and University of Hamburg art historian **Angelika Epple** suggests that "mass consumption will ultimately diminish the significance of art and

artists." She raises the question "Did the artful means that were used in the service of marketing products at the beginning of the 20th century invest these products with the aura that had been lost by traditional works of art?" That's something to chew on the next time you buy a can of **Goya** beans. —Ann Landi



Highlights from Michael Klant's collection.

some 70 such objects and recently lent them for display at the Museum für Neue Kunst in Freiburg, Germany. The