

**Lucy's lover-boy
son Desi reforms**

**The 'rich S.O.B.'
who is Carter's
inflation fighter**

**Helping children
cope with divorce**

June 19, 1978. 75¢ ¹⁴²²⁷

People

weekly

CHERYL TIEGS

**Who says there's
no good news?
The \$2,000-a-day
woman has
a millionaire
husband
'I never get
tired of
looking at'**



People weekly

June 19, 1978 Vol. 9 No. 24

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ARTS



Actor Alan Bates, above, who mastered his clothing style in Jenkins' studio, boasts, "I think my first efforts were quite good. I don't have any of Paul's work," he laughs, "but he kept several of my things."

Jenkins manipulates a torrent of colors, and his paintings adorn the world's most prestigious museums. During the shooting of *An Unmarried Woman*, he winced as the crew occasionally "walked and sat on canvases I had just finished."

Photographs by Arthur Schatz



HIS PAINTINGS CO-STARRED, BUT WELL BEFORE 'UNMARRIED WOMAN' PAUL JENKINS MADE HIS SPLASH

In a key scene of the movie *An Unmarried Woman*, a massive painting, supposedly by Alan Bates (who plays a Manhattan artist), is lowered from the window of a fifth-floor loft to the sidewalk below. In the next sequence heroine Jill Clayburgh is seen clutching the 6½-by-7-foot canvas as a strong wind spins it and her in circles. Dangerously, she totters down the traffic-clogged street with her prize. That was rather rough handling for a fragile, not to mention important, work of art worth about \$12,000. But Paul Jenkins, who actually did the painting—a dramatic abstraction entitled *Rain Palace*—felt, or says he felt, no qualms. After all, he explains, “My assistant Mario, who is as strong as Hercules, was doing the lowering, and he was strapped to a steam pipe so he wouldn’t fall out the window.”

If either Bates or Clayburgh had been in jeopardy comparable to *Rain Palace*'s, the producer would have recruited a stand-in. But the artist's bravado in exposing his oeuvre is not unlike the creative risk that made it possible. The movie may be as bullish on Jenkins' talent as it is bearish on

modern marriage, but the 54-year-old master hardly needed Hollywood to become a star. His paintings bring up to \$20,000 and are already in the permanent collections of institutions like the Museum of Modern Art and on the walls of connoisseurs like Abba Eban, James Jones' widow, Gloria, Clare Boothe Luce, Arnold Scaasi and Burgess Meredith.

Unmarried Woman director Paul Mazursky (PEOPLE, May 29) joined the fan club at a party Jenkins gave in his studio in early 1977. Mazursky was particularly intrigued by the artist's technique of pouring streams of vivid acrylics onto huge, loose canvases and then manually tilting them to manipulate the flow of colors, or guiding the dribbles with an ivory knife to create his oozing, swirling shapes. The day after the party Mazursky met Jenkins again and told him he was planning a film set against the background of an artist's life. Jenkins immediately offered the free use of his Greenwich Village studio as a set, his paintings as scenery and his services as an instructor for Bates. The only request the white-bearded artist made, albeit hesitantly, was that he be slipped into a crowd scene. It was done.

CONTINUED

With an ivory knife in what looks like a giant penholder, Jenkins refines his abstract. He also collects Bowle knives.



Arts CONTINUED

Playing Jenkins, Bates turns in one of the most memorable movie vignettes about a painter since Kirk Douglas sliced off his ear in *Lust for Life*. For a month before the film went into production, Jenkins instructed the English actor three afternoons a week. "I made Alan mix the spectrum of colors to get a sense of fluidity and viscosity," Jenkins recalls. "I let him choose his colors—he was strongly drawn to vibrant orange—and made him do throws of acrylic paint and water on the canvas. As we went along, what grew stronger was Bates' concept of painting itself." Says Bates: "We had a lot of fun mucking about. You lose yourself in the technique. The kind of thing Jenkins produces looks so simple, but it comes from a very good mind and a very emotional soul. The man's a genius, of course."

That natural gift was not immediately apparent. Paul was thrown out of his first art class, at the age of 11, for eating a pear that was part of a still life. Raised in Kansas City, Mo., the only child of a real estate man and a newspaper woman, he left home at 17 when he won a fellowship to study acting and set design at the Cleveland Play-

house. After a two-year Navy tour in World War II, Jenkins continued his education at the Art Students League in New York. In 1953 he made a pilgrimage to Europe and settled briefly in Paris, where he still spends three months each year.

In the early 1950s Jenkins began to perfect his style. Chief among the influences on him, he says, were dancer Martha Graham (for her sense of movement), actor Jean Louis Barrault (for his intensity), plus painters Jean Dubuffet, Mark Rothko and, of course, the master dribbler, Jackson Pollock. Over the years Paul has weathered two divorces and fathered a daughter (now a Manhattan layout designer) without so much alimony that he couldn't develop a somewhat sybaritic lifestyle. He owns a handsome Manhattan brownstone and maintains a Paris atelier and two Greenwich Village studios in addition to the one that was the movie centerpiece. He chases Old Grand-Dad bourbon with Coca-Cola, but has the most exquisite, demanding tastes in French restaurants. How does he keep in condition for his strenuous art? Responds Jenkins, with a droll delivery perhaps learned observing Bates: "I burn." **NANNIE COLLINS**

Jenkins replaced the stretcher of *Rain Palace* with a substitute 30 pounds lighter so Clayburgh could heft it in the movie.



With Jenkins' *Waves without Wind*, which was seen in the film, as a backdrop, the artist and collector friend Joanne duPont share a happy hour in her pad.

