

# Merchant's House Museum

Newsletter

Spring 1998

## Astor Challenge Grant Appeal Goes Over The Top \$1,650,000 Endowment Secures Museum's Future

I admit it—I counted the zeroes. After all, it isn't every day that a messenger delivers a check for \$1 million. But that's what happened here at the Merchant's House one very happy day last December.

The December 15 deadline for The Vincent Astor Foundation's Challenge Grant had been reached, and at the final tally, we had raised \$650,000—far exceeding the \$500,000 required by the terms of the grant. The \$1 million was ours. Now, for the first time since the Museum opened in 1936, an Endowment Fund is in place—assuring the survival of this irreplaceable 19th-century landmark for future generations.

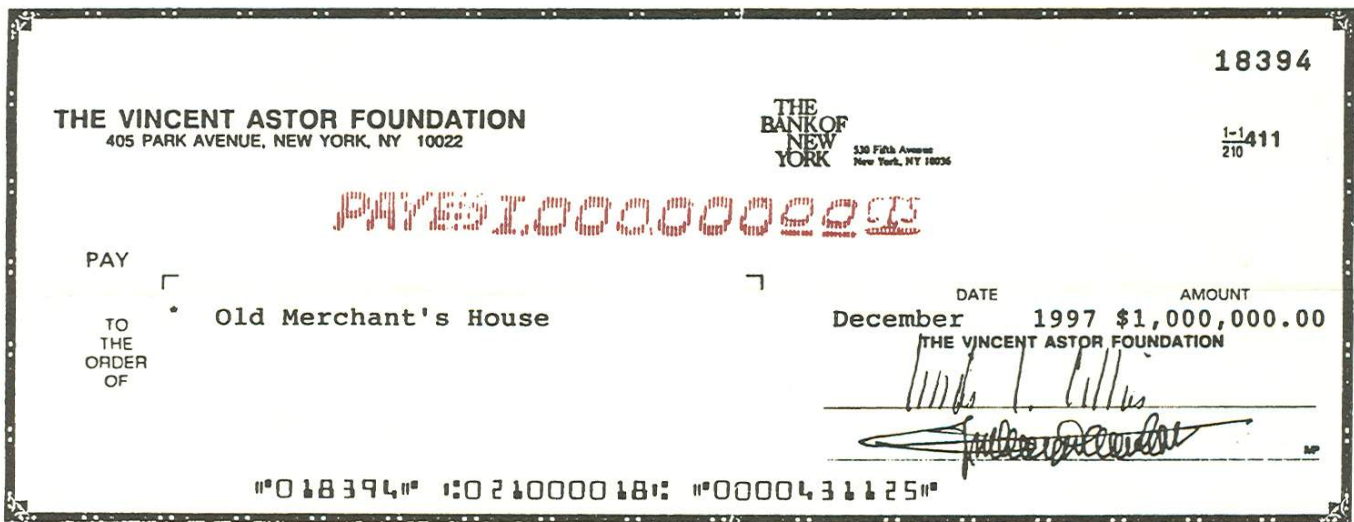
We are grateful beyond measure to the Astor Foundation and to the 627 friends who responded to our appeals. A significant portion of the Museum's annual operating budget for collections

care, educational programs, and restoration will now be provided through income generated by the Endowment Fund.

I personally want to thank all of you who rose to the occasion to help us reach our goal. Owing in large part to you, the Merchant's House will enlighten, educate, and inspire into the 21st century and beyond.

A million thanks,

Margaret Halsey Gardiner  
Executive Director



### Continuing a long-time downtown tradition

Wednesday, June 10  
6 to 9 p.m.

### THE WAR AGAINST THE SQUARES

Our 5th annual Garden Party will

**CELEBRATE THE BEATS**

Be there or be square.  
Like crazy, man.

*The Merchant's House is New York City's only family home preserved intact from the 19th-century and Greenwich Village's only historic house museum. A rowhouse built in 1832, it is among the finest surviving examples of late-Federal and Greek Revival architecture of the period. Home to prosperous merchant Seabury Tredwell and family from 1835 to 1933, the landmark house, which has been a museum open to the public since 1936, reflects in its original textiles, furniture, and decorative arts the lifestyle of the family of a 19th century New York City merchant prince.*  
Open Sunday through Thursday, 1 to 4 p.m. Admission is \$3, members free. Group tours by appointment.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sunday, March 22, 4 p.m.**

***Evolving Technology in the 19th-century New York City Home***

In this Women's History Month salute to 19th-century women, Curator Mimi Sherman will conduct a tour of the Museum, examining period examples of lighting, plumbing, and food preparation and storage. \$10, \$7 members.

**Monday, April 13, 6 to 9 p.m.**

***Thomas Jefferson Birthday Celebration***

Lecture by Richard Franklin Sammons, architect, Fairfax & Sammons Architects, P.C., "Jefferson and the Classical Ideal in America" at 6 p.m. Birthday party at 7 p.m. \$10 lecture, \$40 party.

**Tuesday, April 28, 6 to 8 p.m.**

***John Berendt Reads from the Works of Edgar Allan Poe***

First in a year-long series, "Great New York Writers in Great New York Places," sponsored by the Merchant's House Museum, The Historic House Trust, The Library of America, and the City of New York Parks & Recreation. Reception following the reading, which will take place at The House of The Redeemer, 7 East 95th Street. \$75 the series, \$20 each lecture.

**Sunday, May 10, 3 to 5 p.m.**

***Mother's Day Tea***

Celebrate the day in our intimate walled garden. Traditional English tea with scones, tea sandwiches, and desserts. \$20, \$35 for two.

**Monday, May 11, through Thursday, May 14, 8 p.m.**

***Jane Eyre, A One-Woman Show***

Lisa Hayes in her dramatic adaptation of Charlotte Bronte's story of the romance between the brooding Rochester and the spirited governess. Considered scandalous when it was published in 1847, this classic is still a favorite. \$15, \$12 members.

**Sunday, May 17, 2 to 4 p.m.**

***Readings from the Works of James Baldwin***

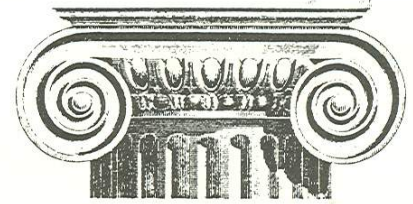
Second in the series, "Great New York Writers in Great New York Places," at the Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Avenue South. Reception follows the reading.

*Reservations (212) 777-1089*

### Brendan Gill

1914-1997

The Board and staff of the Merchant's House Museum were greatly saddened to learn of the death, in late December, of Brendan Gill. The Merchant's House is fortunate to have been among the many places (and causes) championed by Mr. Gill over the years. For decades, no more eloquent voice has spoken in praise and defense of historic structures like the Merchant's House. We will all miss him very much.



### Board of Directors

Merrickay S. Hall, Esq.

*Chair*

Helen Michalis Bonebrake

Joan Bull

Michael Connors

Frances Eberhart

Anne Fairfax

Margaret Halsey Gardiner

Howard D. Monroe, Jr.

John E. Oden

Kate Burns Ottavino

Carolyn Roberto (Emeritus)

Richard Franklin Sammons

Elizabeth Lugar Schafer

Lynne Stair

Karen Treadwell

### Staff

Margaret Halsey Gardiner

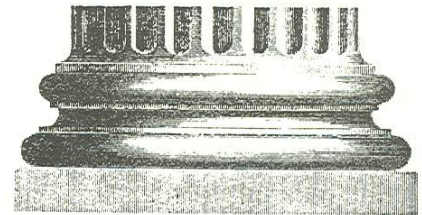
*Executive Director*

Mimi Sherman

*Curator*

Melissa Hiller

*Assistant to the Director*



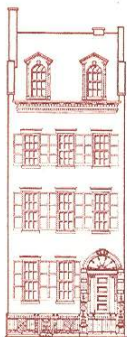
THE HISTORIC HOUSE TRUST OF NEW YORK CITY

*Merchant's House Museum is the quarterly newsletter of the museum. Inquiries may be sent to Mary Knapp, editor, Merchant's House Museum, 29 East Fourth Street, New York, NY 10003. Telephone (212) 777-1089 Fax (212) 777-1104.*



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor  
Henry J. Stern, Commissioner



Merchant's House Museum  
29 East Fourth Street  
New York, NY 10003

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW YORK, N.Y.  
PERMIT NO. 2828