



68 ALICE SACHS ZIMET

arts funder

To the general public, **Alice Sachs Zimet** is unknown, but to art-world insiders, she is a patron saint. As vice president of the Chase Manhattan Bank in charge of cultural affairs, Zimet is responsible for managing the bank's worldwide cultural sponsorship programs. Translation: She arranges for Chase, the nation's largest bank, to give money to groups that support artists, including photographers. Considering the dwindling of government art support, her role has become critical.

"We work in a very serious institution," says Zimet. "It's our function to create a vehicle for risk-averse bankers to support risk-taking artists." In 1996 alone, Chase gave \$6.1 million to arts organizations. Chase has maintained a close relationship with the International Center of Photography since 1979; the bank has sponsored the museum's prestigious Infinity Awards, provided money for exhibitions of William Klein, Horst, and Man Ray's fashion photography, all at ICP, and for a national tour of Helen Levitt's photographs.

Zimet, 48, has a pair of degrees in art history, including a master's from New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. Prior to joining Chase she worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at the ICP. She's a passionate photography collector whose tastes range from Brassai and Man Ray to Robert Mapplethorpe, Bill Jacobson, Luis Gonzalez Palma, and Andres Serrano. "It's my job to match the needs of the art world to those of the commercial world," says Zimet. "Arts institutions have a lot of value to a corporation like Chase; it's just a matter of thinking big to create partnerships. If everyone doesn't win, we haven't done our job." —P.H.H.

69 KEN BURNS filmmaker

After making his first documentary, a 1981 film on the building of the Brooklyn Bridge, the producer, director, and cinematographer Ken Burns encountered a woman who questioned his use of newsreel footage in a film about events that took place before the invention of newsreel. Burns patiently explained that the "newsreel" she thought she'd seen was in fact still photographs from long ago that he had filmed. "The way I shot them, the way I heard them, made the still photographs come alive," says Burns. "These still photos actually moved for her, and that is the whole intention of my work."

No one has done as much as Burns to show the power of the still image to mesmerize. Having worked on 15 films, Burns is best known for his masterpiece 11-hour series on the Civil War and an epic 18-and-a-half-hour series on baseball, both of which aired on PBS. A bio of Frank Lloyd Wright is due out this fall, and the history of jazz, his next major series, is expected for release in 2000.

Burns, 44, graduated from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, with a B.A. in film studies and design, and he traces his use of photographs to the instructors who instilled in him that "the static image is a means" of illustrating a point.

Burns's films are a long time in the making. He's been working on the jazz series for three years already. After scouring archives for photographs, Burns returns to Florentine Films, his production company in Walpole, New Hampshire, sets up an easel, attaches a closeup lens to his camera, and begins filming. As he pans and zooms he tries to "listen to the photographs." During the filming of *Baseball*, he imagined sounds of bats cracking and fans cheering. On the ongoing importance of photographs in his work, he says simply, "I need them." —K.S.



COURTESY ALICE SACHS ZIMET

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