

# COUNTRY LIVING

## ARTS IN THE COUNTRY

Underfunded and ignored?

## CREATURE COMFORTERS



Vets on 24 hour call

## SOMERSET CHAPEL CONVERTED

Jocasta Innes takes a pew

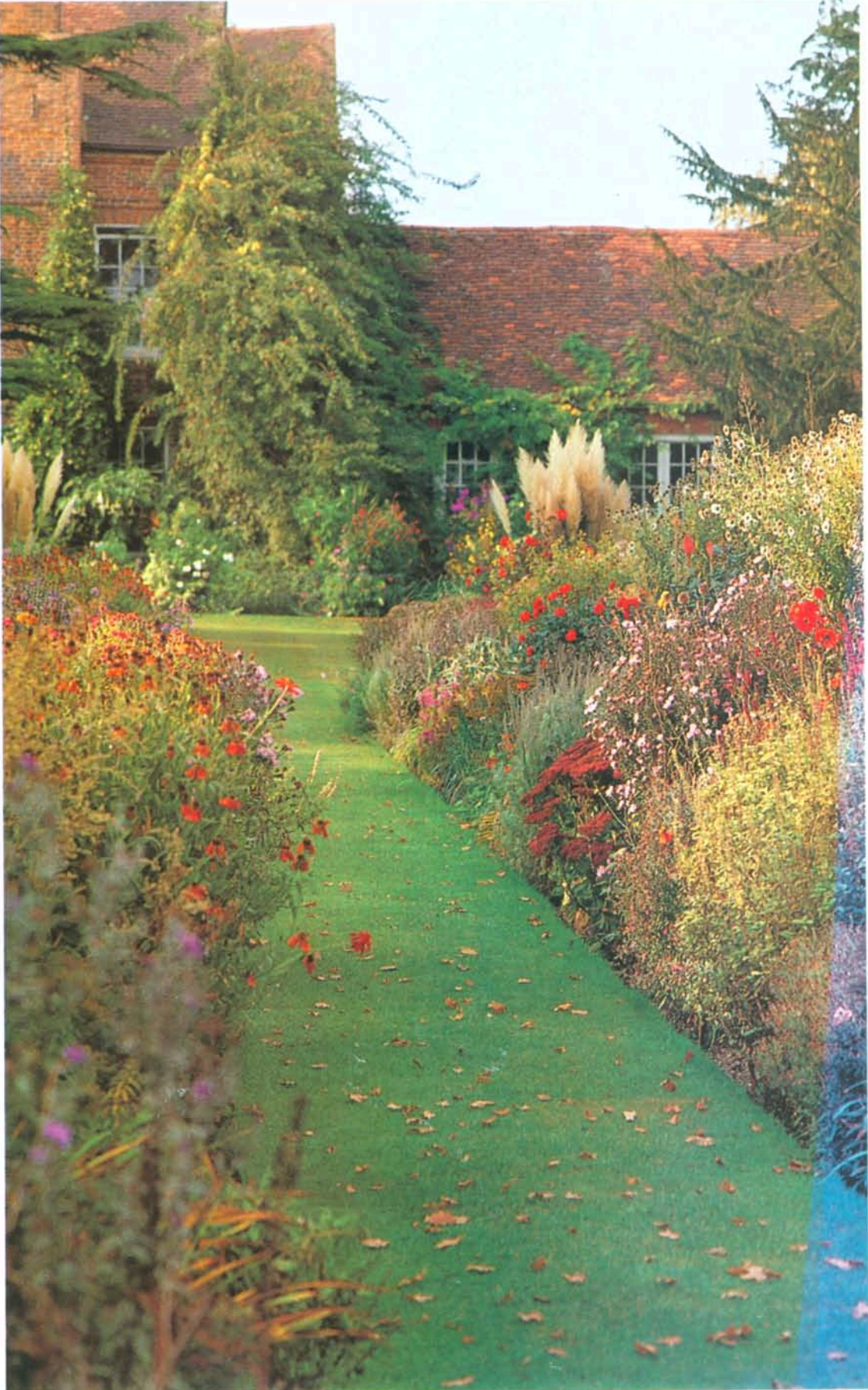
## DONOVAN THE WATER DIVINER

## AUTUMN WARMTH

Cure a smoking chimney

Send for our Scottish wool shawl

Tapestries, tassels, braids and brocades



**BRIAN JOHNSTON • JOANNA TROLLOPE • RICHARD MABEY**

# COUNTRY LIVING

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Cover/Simon McBride. Inset/ARDEA



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Into the woods, page 114



**Main picture** Muriel standing in front of her Portrait of a Student. Embroidered wool shawl, £110, from Osprey. Printed viscose shirt, £178, by Betty Jackson from Harrods. Primavera, Mango, Mandala. Painted wooden bracelets, £3-95, from a selection at Accessorise and Monsoon  
**Right** Muriel in her Sussex garden. Silk crêpe shirt, £238, by English Eccentrics from Joseph, Whistles, Workshop. Perspex beaded necklace (worn as bracelet), £9-99, by Easthope. All other clothes are Muriel's own  
**Above** Dressing for comfort in an unstructured jacket made by stitching seven scarves together, worn over a large man's shirt  
**Below** Muriel's Birthday Bouquet



HAIR AND MAKE-UP/RACHEL TURNER AT ARTISTIC LICENCE STOCKISTS/PAGE 160



# life class

A TRIPTYCH OF WOMEN ARTISTS WITH AN INSTINCT FOR COLOUR ON CANVAS AND IN

THEIR CLOTHES. BY ROBERT BURGESS PHOTOGRAPHS/PIA TRYDE

I think people live too much in porridge colours. To me, colour is music." In the 1930s, Muriel Pemberton was the first student to graduate in Fashion from the Royal College of Art in London; since then she has worked to promote greater awareness and use of colour – in her pictures, in fashion and in everyday life. Now 80, she is still painting, usually in watercolours. Her pictures have a strong graphic style which carries over into the way she likes to dress. Floating

unstructured jackets and shirts are built up in layers, with contrasting patterns of spots and stripes to add extra movement. For dramatic simplicity, she frequently sticks to black and white, with the clever addition of one colourful piece like a scarf or a large piece of jewellery. She ran the Fashion and Textiles faculty at St Martin's School of Art for many years, and covered the Paris and London collections for Fleet Street and Vogue in the Forties and Fifties. But, dispelling any

ideas that she may be yet another victim of the whims of the fashion industry, she says: "I can never find anything in the shops that I want to buy. Instead, I run up my own clothes using my own ideas." Thus proving her true creativity in both art and life.

From 3–19 October an exhibition of Muriel Pemberton's recent watercolours is being held at the Chris Beetles Gallery, 8–10 Ryder Street, London SW1Y 6QB. Call 071-839 7429 for more details. ➤➤➤







**Main picture** Freire against a backdrop of her pictures. Grey silk shirt, £238, by Betty Jackson from Selfridges, Bamboo, Top Drawer. Cashmere mix trousers, £151, by Edina Ronay from Image, Judy Graham. Wooden beaded necklace, £8.95, from a selection at Accessorise and Monsoon. Bracelets, Freire's own  
**Above** Soft wool poncho, £200, by Crambie from Selfridges. Viscose leggings, £228, by Jean Muir Studio from Harvey Nichols, Cliché, Little Red. All other clothes and accessories are Freire's own  
**Top left** Freire at work sorting through her paintings  
**Left** Detail from Natalie's Tulips

Artist and illustrator **Freire Wright** has two different facets to her work. On the one hand she has illustrated a number of children's books, including Oscar Wilde's *The Nightingale and the Rose*, portraying giants, ogres and fairies in gloriously magical colours. "Illustration is usually on a small scale and is quite carefully controlled – sometimes even down to the colours I can use." So, when it comes to painting Freire turns her eye to nature, relishing the freedom of working in watercolours with bold, flowing brushstrokes to produce bowls of juicy plump fruit and a profusion of flowers.

Although she is London based, much of her time is spent working on the coast and cliffs of Cornwall. "I love the energy in London and have many friends there, but I can imagine eventually moving out." Freire likes to dress simply with clothes that don't restrict her movements and have a minimum of pattern and frill: plain coloured T-shirts and leggings in black, white and reds are favourites. She often wears a creamy panama to set off her red hair, and owns some strong pieces of ethnic jewellery. For the tentative beginner she has one simple piece of advice: "Get a paintbrush and paper and then paint." ➤ ➤ ➤

