

Shopping

TREASURE CHEST

If you had an attic and it was filled with the kind of things attics are always filled with in romance novels — silk covers, feathered hats, lacy baby clothes — maybe you wouldn't need to visit Jean Claude Mastroianni's new store on W. 25th St. But for those of us who have only rustling Esprit and electric typewriters stashed in mini storage, this is the escape we need.

"In my travels around the world, I've collected a lot of inspiration and now I'm passing it on," says Mastroianni, a designer so whimsical that he's done two Absolut ads, in addition to creating Barbie's "Beauty and the Beast" dress.

And just what would inspire a spirit like this? Lillian Russell's kimono. A collar made of peacock feathers. Vintage capes and hand-pressed Dover stationery. They're all for sale here, alongside the purses, pantsuits and beaded fantasies that he creates.

While a couture hat of shredded silk might set you back \$100 to \$250 (pricey, yes, but perfect for a 1930s Liz Taylor look), a cunning little wire-mesh bag with a plastic dragon-



OLD FASHIONED: Jean Claude Mastroianni.

fly attached is only \$11. A day planner upholstered in AstroTurf with matching pen and plastic alien key chain will run you just \$17. That's not much more than a generic agenda from Staples!

Mastroianni also sells tote bags with clear plastic pockets for you to put pictures in, and a beach bag that unfolds into a reflector mat with blowup pillow.

Clever or classy sums up everything he's got, including his piece de resistance, the burlap suitcase that Jackie Kennedy took on her trip to India in 1962 (\$2,000).

Not to worry, Jackie. It's in good company.

Jean Claude Mastroianni, 218 W. 25th St. Open weekdays, 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. (212) 947-8347.

— Lenore Skanszy

AROUND TOWN

Plant Yourself Here



THE BRONX IS BLOOMING: Fred A. Haupt Conservatory.

sculpted
relief.

Butterfly Conservatory
Museum of Natural History,
Central Park West at 79th St.;
(212) 769-8100.

Tropical butterflies flutter about in this

battery 80-degree rain-forest enclosure. Thick plant life and the calls of howler monkeys and parakeets help complete the experience. Before leaving, be sure to check your clothes for butterfly stowaways. Tickets are \$13 for adults, \$9 for kids; to reserve, call (212) 769-5200.

Brooklyn Children's
Museum Greenhouse
145 Brooklyn Ave.;
(718) 735-4400.

Enjoy 800 square feet of kid-friendly green. Activities include identifying plants and a composting workshop involving worms.

Adjacent to the greenhouse is the "Plants and People" exhibit. Suggested admission: \$3.

— Hugh Son

City Tip

TICKET MASTER

In 1997, New York City issued more than 9 million parking tickets, worth a whopping \$383 million. Louis Camporeale, self-proclaimed Parking Pal and author of "The New York City Motorists' Parking Survival Guide," wants to see both those numbers shrink. His advice on how not to pay a parking ticket:

Rule 1: If the Ticket Doesn't Include All of the Following Information, You (Probably) Don't Have to Pay It:

- Date and time (including a.m. or p.m.) when the violation was observed.
- Date and time (to the exact minute and including a.m. or p.m.) when the ticket was written.
- Exact address where the vehicle was located. If there is no exact street address, "in front of" or "opposite" are acceptable descriptions; "corner of" is not.
- License plate type and number.
- Car make and body type.
- State of registration and expiration date (NYS only).
- Days and hours the relevant parking restrictions are in effect.
- Serial number of the meter (in the case of a meter violation). If the meter is broken, you can park for up to one hour only. If the meter is missing, you can park for the maximum amount of time allowed in that meter zone.
- Number of feet from a fire hydrant, crosswalk, etc.
- Personal service: If you are in the car when the parking summons is issued, the attendant must ask for identification. If you refuse, the attendant must check the "Refused ID" box.
- Signature of issuing agent.

Rule 2: A Disabled Car Invalidates a Parking Summons — as long as you have documentation, such as repair bills from service stations, towing receipts (including the address from where the car was towed, time, date and license plate number), a police report if the vehicle was involved in an accident or fire, a repair bill for a flat tire or a receipt for the purchase of a replacement tire.

Rule 3: Parking Meters Take Precedence Over Fire Hydrants. If a parking meter is within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, you win a bona fide New York City parking spot. If you get a summons anyway, take photographs that show the proximity of the meter to the hydrant and bring it to the Parking Violations Bureau (Camporeale's book includes a section on taking photographs).

Rule 4: The "Double Jeopardy" Defense. If you receive two summonses for the same violation within one hour, most administrative law judges will dismiss the second. But do not make the mistake of thinking that one summons gives you permission to park all day. If a second summons is issued more than one hour after the first, you have to pay.

Camporeale's book (\$11.95), chock-full of info on how to avoid and deal with parking tickets, is available in area bookstores, or online at www.amazon.com and www.parkingpal.com.

— Amanda Gardner

Correction

In last week's City Life page, we printed an incorrect phone number for sales and information on the game Cranium. The correct number is 1-877-CRANIUM.