

every decade



'30s TRAVEL

THIS SIDE OF PARADISE

frequented by Henry Miller and the Durrells in the 1930s, Corfu recaptures its alluring heyday with the **Rou Estate**, a 200-year-old hill town restored by British architect Dominic Skinner and his wife, Claire. Twelve stone villas boast plunge or lap pools and terraces with enough views to inspire your next novel. Peak rates are \$3,320 per week for a two-bedroom cottage; call London's CV Travel, 011-44-207-401-1026.

—RICHARD ALLEMAN

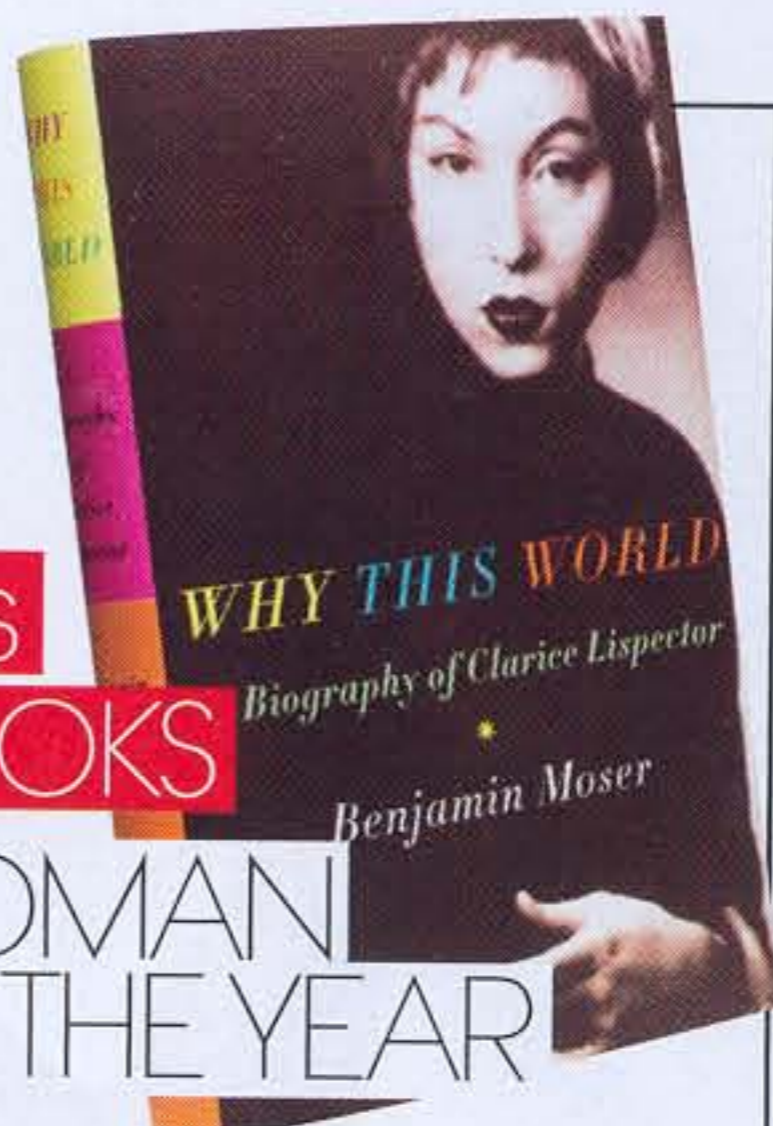
TIME TO BLOOM

A VILLA ON THE SEVENTEEN-ACRE PROPERTY IN CORFU.

'40s BOOKS

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

In 1943, the Brazilian novelist Clarice Lispector published her modernist tour de force, *Near to the Wild Heart*, becoming a literary legend at 23. As one American translator put it, "I was flabbergasted to meet that rare person who looked like Marlene Dietrich and wrote like Virginia Woolf." Benjamin Moser's **Why This World: A Biography of Clarice Lispector** (Oxford University Press) uncovers the iconic author's double life: the diplomat's wife in war-shattered Europe and the elusive genius who dramatized a fractured interior world in rich, synesthetic prose. "When I am no longer writing, I am dead," she said in 1977. She was buried that year in Rio, but her work lives on, still striking near to the wild heart.—MEGAN O'GRADY



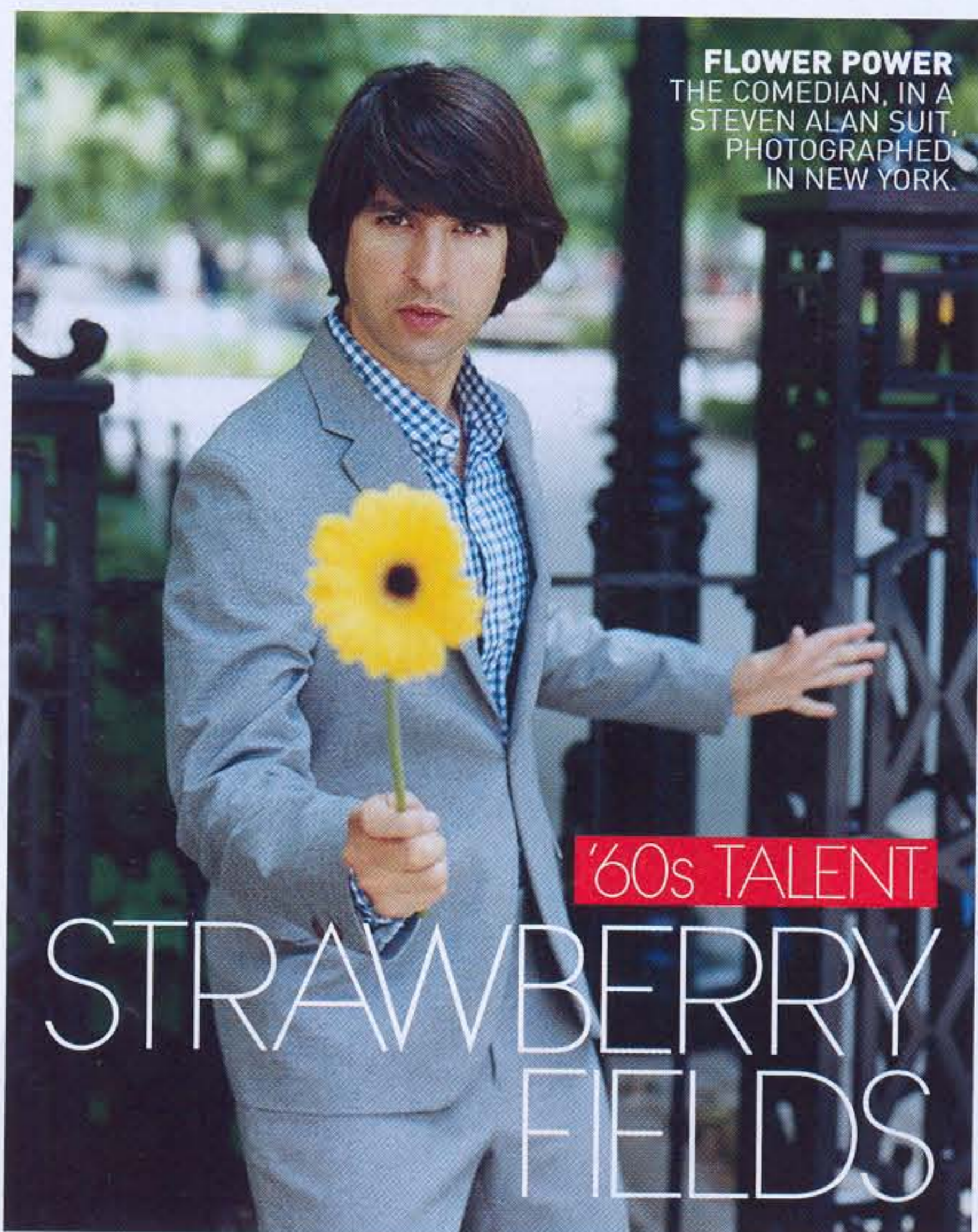
'90s THEATER

REALITY BITES

Unlike lumberjack shirts and grunge music, the **New York International Fringe Festival**, which was born on the Lower East Side in 1997, is still going strong. And though the riot of theater, comedy, and performance art that roars through downtown every August has spawned such commercial successes as *Urinetown: The Musical* and *Krapp, 39*, it still has a rawness that smells like teen spirit. Judging from the titles of this year's more than 200 productions—among them *Abraham Lincoln's Big Gay Dance Party* and *The Most Mediocre Story Never Told!*—the festival continues to rely on the two ingredients that, according to producing artistic director Elena K. Holy, led to its inception: youth and ignorance. In other words, the exact combination needed to even contemplate a career in the theater.

—ADAM GREEN

Referencing Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner or a YouTube video, "Inspired Bicycles," the Beatle-mopped comedian **Demetri Martin** seems more a brainy grad student than a star entertainer. But his brand of conceptual humor has made him the defining comedian of a DIY cultural generation that includes Spike Jonze and Miranda July. On his Comedy Central series, *Important Things with Demetri Martin*, he doesn't so much crack jokes as play with ideas—explaining, say, why it's easier to turn something cool uncool than make something uncool cool. This month, the 36-year-old takes the lead in Ang Lee's amiable, star-studded *Taking Woodstock*, playing a closeted interior designer around whom the whole festival spins. "The big difference between acting and stand-up is that there's no ironic parachute—you can't step back from what you're doing," he notes. "There's comfort in certainty, but what's really fun is to be surprised."—JOHN POWERS



FLOWER POWER
THE COMEDIAN, IN A STEVEN ALAN SUIT, PHOTOGRAPHED IN NEW YORK.

'60s TALENT

STRAWBERRY FIELDS

'20s

DESIGN

A MOVEABLE FEAST

The artisanal-wallpaper house **Adelphi Paper Hangings** is offering Art Deco hand-blocked prints stretched over pine-birch frames. Bring a touch of summer inside with patterns like "Viennese Trees" or "L'Oiseau Moderne" in hues ranging from pale yellow to celadon green.—S.L.C.