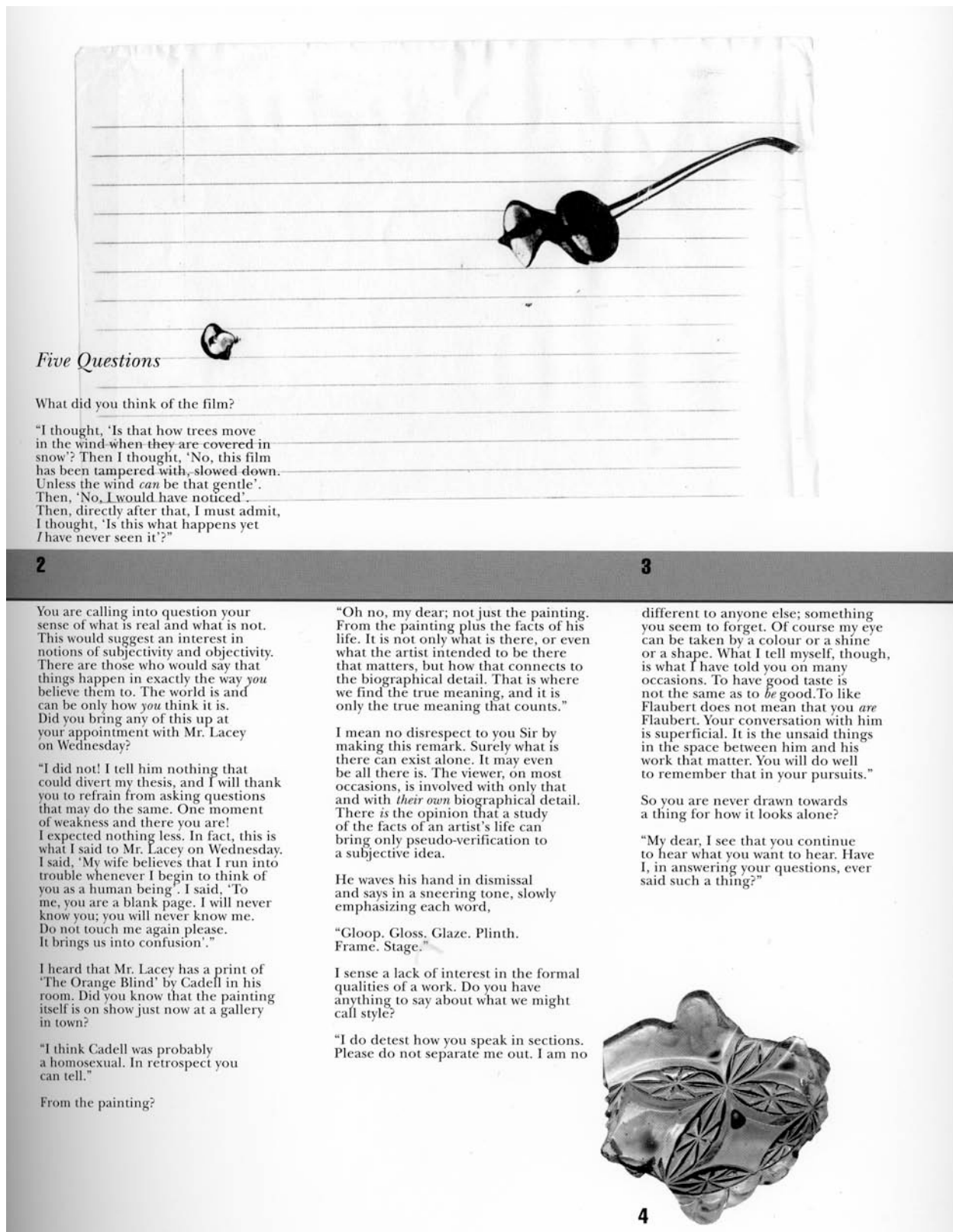


Mary Mary

BLACK, KARLA; PALLAS CATALOGUE, THE CHANGING ROOM, DEC — JAN 2004



Five Questions

What did you think of the film?

"I thought, 'Is that how trees move in the wind when they are covered in snow'? Then I thought, 'No, this film has been tampered with, slowed down. Unless the wind *can* be that gentle'. Then, 'No, I would have noticed'. Then, directly after that, I must admit, I thought, 'Is this what happens yet I have never seen it?'"

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You are calling into question your sense of what is real and what is not. This would suggest an interest in notions of subjectivity and objectivity. There are those who would say that things happen in exactly the way *you* believe them to. The world is and can be only how *you* think it is. Did you bring any of this up at your appointment with Mr. Lacey on Wednesday?

"I did not! I tell him nothing that could divert my thesis, and I will thank you to refrain from asking questions that may do the same. One moment of weakness and there you are! I expected nothing less. In fact, this is what I said to Mr. Lacey on Wednesday. I said, 'My wife believes that I run into trouble whenever I begin to think of you as a human being'. I said, 'To me, you are a blank page. I will never know you; you will never know me. Do not touch me again please. It brings us into confusion'."

I heard that Mr. Lacey has a print of 'The Orange Blind' by Cadell in his room. Did you know that the painting itself is on show just now at a gallery in town?

"I think Cadell was probably a homosexual. In retrospect you can tell."

From the painting?

"Oh no, my dear; not just the painting. From the painting plus the facts of his life. It is not only what is there, or even what the artist intended to be there that matters, but how that connects to the biographical detail. That is where we find the true meaning, and it is only the true meaning that counts."

I mean no disrespect to you Sir by making this remark. Surely what is there can exist alone. It may even be all there is. The viewer, on most occasions, is involved with only that and with *their own* biographical detail. There is the opinion that a study of the facts of an artist's life can bring only pseudo-verification to a subjective idea.

He waves his hand in dismissal and says in a sneering tone, slowly emphasizing each word,

"Gloop. Gloss. Glaze. Plinth. Frame. Stage."

I sense a lack of interest in the formal qualities of a work. Do you have anything to say about what we might call style?

"I do detest how you speak in sections. Please do not separate me out. I am no

different to anyone else; something you seem to forget. Of course my eye can be taken by a colour or a shine or a shape. What I tell myself, though, is what I have told you on many occasions. To have good taste is not the same as to *be* good. To like Flaubert does not mean that you *are* Flaubert. Your conversation with him is superficial. It is the unsaid things in the space between him and his work that matter. You will do well to remember that in your pursuits."

So you are never drawn towards a thing for how it looks alone?

"My dear, I see that you continue to hear what you want to hear. Have I, in answering your questions, ever said such a thing?"

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