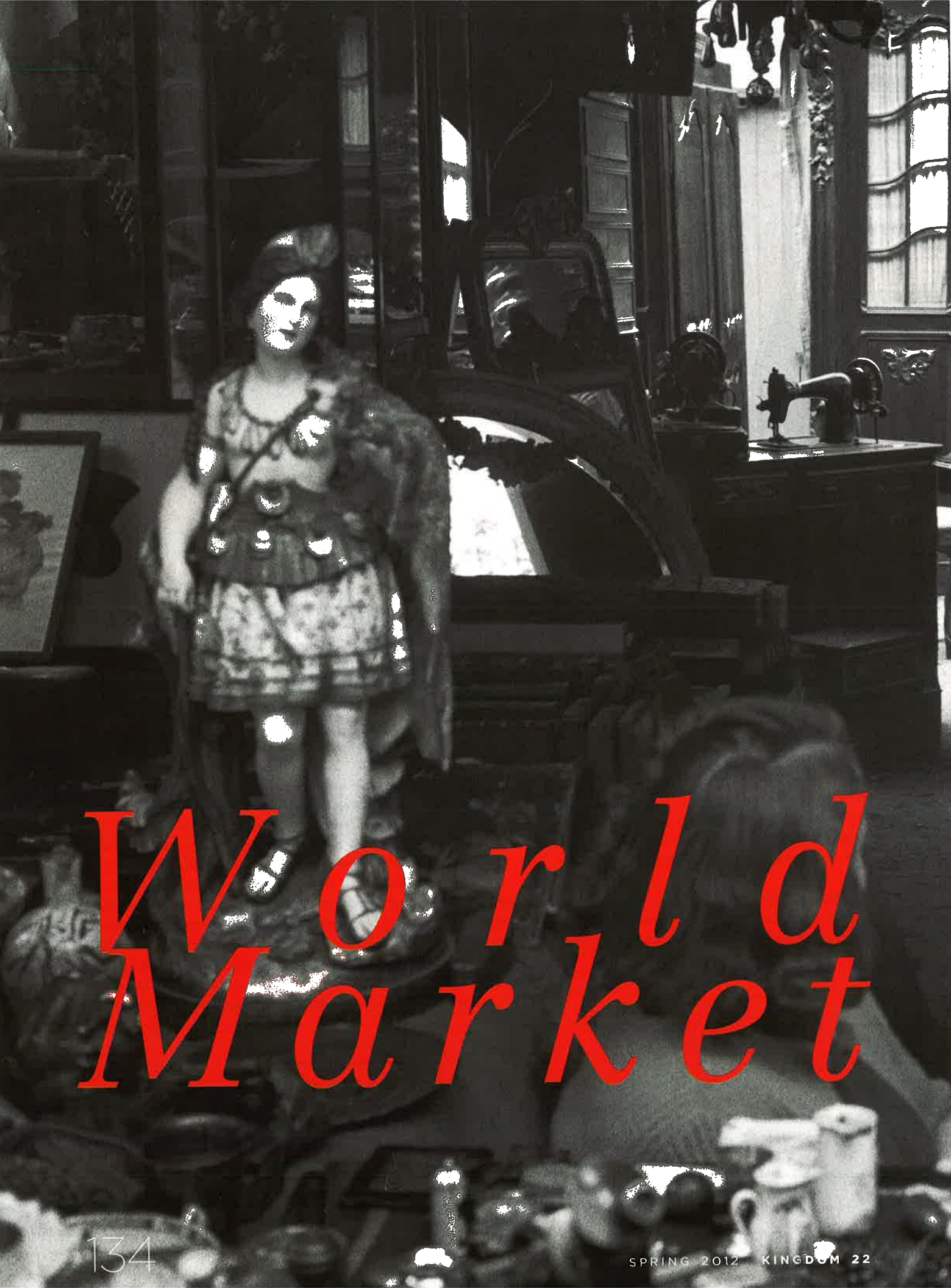


Kingdom



MORGAN FREEMAN *The Big Three*
Olympic London — **WARTIME GOLF**



World Market



Les Puces in Paris—“The Fleas”—is one of the world’s great shopping experiences. Covering more than 17 acres of ground at Porte de Clingancourt, the market’s dealers present a vast selection of antiques, collectibles and furnishings. Approximately 200,000 shoppers peruse the offerings at Clingancourt each weekend, but the market has millions of customers because one need not visit Paris to shop there. In fact, shoppers can visit The Fleas—and similar markets in other top cities around the world—from the comfort of their own beds if they like, thanks to 1stdibs.com.

The website is the brainchild of entrepreneur Michael Bruno, who invested a lot of thought and sweat equity into delivering the world’s best to people’s homes. Bruno and his team have spent years becoming the best resource for antiques and vintage design, building a network of dealers that offer furniture, jewelry, fashion, art and, more recently, fine homes. The result is that decorators, aficionados and novice collectors alike have near-instant access to an unparalleled collection of luxury offerings that otherwise would have remained hidden treasure, buried in galleries and with dealers around the world.



Time to browse: Rolex watches are among more than 100,000 items of inventory on offer each year from 1stdibs.com

INFORMATION

While many of the 2 million visits 1stdibs.com receives each month are from connoisseurs, collectors and high-profile design professionals, the site offers a particularly special opportunity for those without any serious knowledge of fine art, jewelry or antiques. Those curious perhaps to pick up a special something or to get involved in serious acquisitions can peruse markets at leisure without the potential stress or intimidation of an intimate showroom with an expert nearby. (Not to mention, exposure to 1stdibs.com's selection would entail a lifetime of traveling the globe.)

Browsers can spend hours (or days) examining what's on offer and researching designers, artisans and companies that heretofore might have been unknown to them. Then, when they're ready, customers can use 1stdibs.com to deal directly with the dealers. The website vets all of the dealers it works with, visiting each dealer's shop before signing them on to ensure the integrity and viability of services.

Consequently, customers can be confident that the items they're seeing are the real deal, whether it's a Louis Comfort Tiffany stained-glass window for \$2.6 million, a Louis XVI chair from the royal collections of Versailles for \$124,000 or a 1980s Ann Klein dress for \$795. It's an absolutely privileged way to access an unparalleled—and constantly changing—selection of the world's finest goods.

SELECTION

Today, with 1,200 dealers in 21 of the largest U.S. markets and more in Canada, Paris, London and Mexico City, 1stdibs.com has more than 100,000 pieces of inventory—valued at more than half-a-billion dollars—flowing through its systems each year. It organizes this formidable array by item type (furniture, fine art, etc.) and then allows consumers to further refine their searches with a number of categories. Fine art can be searched by medium, artist, period, gallery or by any number of sub-categories. Likewise, furnishings, lighting, fine jewelry and fashion are all sorted accordingly, facilitating quick searches for specific items or broad-based browsing of general categories. Once an item of interest is located all relevant info is given, including a full description of the piece and contact information for the dealer, including specific representatives' names and direct contact details where appropriate. The secure and easy-to-use interface is a serious time-eater, captivating even busy celebrities.

"I have spent hours on 1stdibs.com looking at furniture," Jennifer Aniston told *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, in 2008. Noted interior designer Celerie Kemble has said that the website is "a daily search—information, aspiration, inspiration. I can find it every time on 1stdibs." And the list goes on: Diane von Furstenberg, Courtney Cox, Gwyneth Paltrow and numerous other luminaries use the site on a regular basis.



This stylish sailors' cocktail-shaker set features six glasses

HISTORY

When Michael Bruno moved to Paris in 1999, he had a name for an online business, but he didn't know exactly what form the business would take.

"Within minutes of getting out of the taxi and walking through the Clingancourt (Paris Flea Market) stalls I knew that that was it. I was going to put the Paris Flea Market online and make it available to the world, 24/7," Bruno said in the website's magazine, *Introspective*. "Although I didn't speak French, I charged ahead thinking, 'how hard could it be?'"

In fact, it all came together rather quickly. Bruno hired a young French programmer who spoke English, and 1stdibs.com got underway. Initial challenges included convincing the "intensely private—and skeptical" French dealers to allow Bruno to photograph and to list their offerings online. Once he'd overcome that hurdle, Bruno needed to convince them that the website would help their sales—which he did by becoming the first customer. In fact, he purchased a lot of goods through his own site with the dealers none the wiser (or maybe ambivalent) about the fact that he was the only customer for the first six months. A June 2001 story in the *New York Times* changed that, and the site was finally off to the races.

"Thank God," Bruno said, "because my apartment was brimming with all my Flea Market finds."

The site continued to build, even in the wake of 9/11. In fact, with world markets in decline following the attacks, 1stdibs.com was, for many dealers, a salvation. "Bruno changed everything," said legendary antiques dealer Roger Prigent. "Bruno saved the Flea Market."

The site's saving graces didn't stop there. Years later, after a 2002 expansion into the United States, 1stdibs.com was a lifeline for New Orleans dealers suffering in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"If we hadn't been there for them, they would no longer be in business," Bruno said. "Being able to help people has been the greatest reward of building the business."

Visit 1stdibs.com for the best the world has to offer.

FINE HOMES

Along with being the best resource for antiques and vintage design, offering furniture, art, fashion and jewelry, 1stdibs.com recently became the gateway for fine homes as well. Working with The Corcoran Group and Coldwell Banker Previews International, 1stdibs.com is opening the doors on some of the world's finest properties. Perhaps it's not surprising, considering that the website's founder, Michael Bruno, started life as a real estate agent. In fact, real estate's multiple listing service served as the model for 1stdibs.com, and those familiar with real estate searches will find the new Fine Homes section on 1stdibs.com a bit familiar, if not an improvement. Applying the same concise information and ease-of-use employed in navigating the rest of 1stdibs.com, the Fine Homes section of the website reveals stunning properties in the United States, France and Monaco including, as of press time, the most expensive listing Miami has ever seen, an elegant apartment near the Arc de Triumph in Paris, a charming ski chalet near Mont Blanc and a lovely property on New York's Fifth Avenue.

"1stdibs has a big following among the world's most affluent consumers—who buy big ticket items on a regular basis—and among designers and architects, who are all secretly real estate junkies like me," explained Bruno. "This search brings those elements together, giving designers a pipeline to hot new properties on the market and enticing 1stdibs visitors to buy a house they didn't even know they were looking for."

