

The background of the magazine cover is a photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there are rolling sand dunes with distinct ripples. In the middle ground, a small town or village is visible, consisting of several low-rise buildings with flat roofs. In the background, there are dark, rugged mountains under a hazy sky. The overall color palette is dominated by the warm tones of the sand and the muted colors of the buildings and mountains.

LIFE

A New Vista in the American West
**OPENING UP
THE DESERT
FOR LIVING**

Nixon's Own Story

How It Felt to Face
the Dangerous Mobs
in Latin America

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and Their Models

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A Military Man
to Watch

'We're Still Buying
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by Robert Kennedy

MARCH 23 • 1962 • 20¢



Believe It or Not, That's Me!

HUG FOR RODIN

Spellbound by rapturous image of his youth, Antonio Nardonne stares at a bronze cast of *The Kiss* in garden of Rodin Museum in Paris. He boasted that he posed for it for six months.

Though honored by time and countless masterpieces, the role of artist's model has never been a popular one. The low pay, drafty studios, monotony and, for women, the stigma of posing nude, have discouraged many would-be models. But some who persisted in the chilly trade, like Antonio Nardonne (above), have wound up in the warm glow of fame.

Nardonne fell into modeling soon after he arrived in Paris from Italy. As the old model (who died last summer) remembered it, the great Auguste Rodin chose him to pose for the

now-famous sculpture, *The Kiss*. This was a pleasurable job, said Nardonne, for he had a beautiful compatriot named Carmen to hold in his arms until absinthe-drinking got the better of her and called a halt to the daily posing session.

For want of a professional model, or because they prefer nonprofessionals, artists have pressed relatives, mistresses, friends and passers-by into service. The role of these models becomes enviable when the results are as successful and celebrated as those that are shown on the following pages.



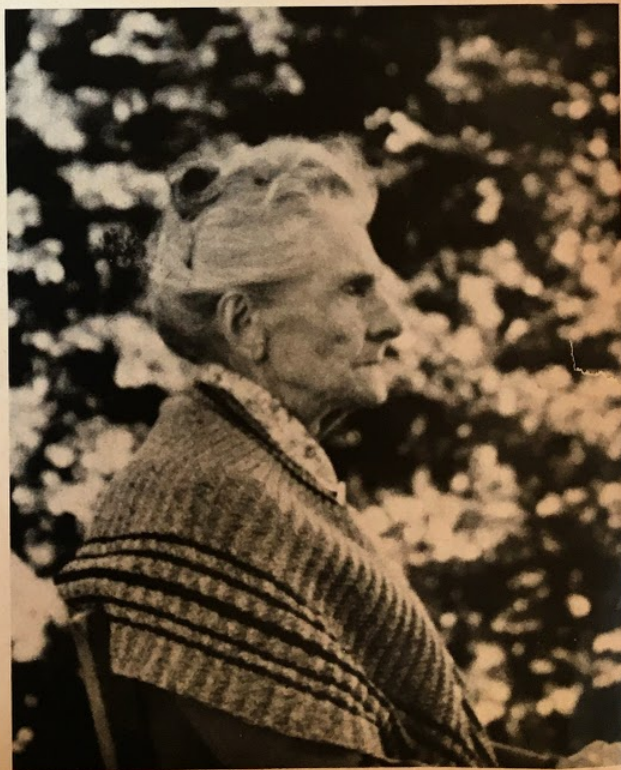
WOODEN LOOKS FOR WOOD

A famous face belongs to Grant Wood's sister Nan, who in 1930 posed for *American Gothic* (above) with the artist's dentist, Dr. B. H. McKeeby (now dead). To inject a prim look, Wood made Nan slick back her hair and wear an old-fashioned brooch. Afterward, to make amends for the grim image, he painted her again with her hair curled. Nan today (at right with her husband Emmett E. Graham) lacks the stern look Wood gave her but still has the brooch.



BARGAIN POSE FOR VAN GOGH

In 1890, Vincent van Gogh settled in Auvers near Paris where he stayed with the Ravoux family. He was charged a modest fee of 3½ francs a day (70¢) for room and board. Into the bargain he got a youthful model, his landlord's 16-year-old daughter, now (right) an aging lady in Dieppe. He painted her in a demure profile pose and gave the portrait to her. Then he painted another version (above) for his devoted brother Théo. Six weeks later he committed suicide.





A MAILLOL TYPE FOR MAILLOL

In 1935 the famous French sculptor Aristide Maillol, then 74, wrote to a 16-year-old Parisian student named Dina Vierny because he had heard she looked just like a Maillol statue. She came to see him and was immediately prevailed upon to pose. Maillol "started with heads," Dina recalls, "and progressively undressed me." Dina, who is now a Paris art dealer (*abore*), placed a chemistry book on a music stand and read it while she posed. The result was a serene sculpture called *Harmony* (shown in plaster at left), one of Maillol's last works.



A PATIENT PARENT FOR GIACOMETTI

For Alberto Giacometti, the Swiss-born artist who works in Paris, the best models are the members of his family. In Paris he uses his brother and his wife. When he goes back to visit his native village of Stampa, he enlists his 90-year-old mother. Accustomed to posing for Giacometti's father who was also a painter, the white-haired widow (right) has always looked forward to these sessions with her son. She sits motionless for hours while he wrestles with her portrait (one of which is shown in detail above), sketching in lines, rubbing them out, constantly altering and eating away at the form with grayed colors. After working painstakingly with his model, Giacometti often starts all over again, trying to build up the image of his sitter from memory. "It should be possible," he says, "to merge the two versions so that what I do from memory is the same as what I do from nature. That's what I really aim for." Giacometti's search for this synthesis in his paintings and sculptures results in images which seem both real and phantom. But the search is taxing for the artist as well as his model. Even his mother has begun to complain because, says Alberto, "I myself complain all the time. I'm never content with what I do."



Double Poses for Toulouse-Lautrec



TOP-HATTED FRIEND

The models of the post-impressionist, Toulouse-Lautrec, sometimes did double duty, posing not only for the artist but the camera. An earnest realist who "tried to paint what is true and not ideal," Lautrec had friends take photographs of his models as they posed for his painting so that he would have accurate records to work with when the model was absent. In 1888 François Gauzi posed for a painting in Lautrec's studio wearing a top hat (*far left*). During one session his picture (*left*) was taken from the opposite side by René Grenier. On the floor at the right appears another portrait of Gauzi which Lautrec began in 1887 but left unfinished because Gauzi lost the vest he had been wearing while posing.

TIDY GIRL IN UNTIDY POSE

On a walk with Gauzi one day in 1885, Lautrec caught sight of a working girl with copper hair. "Isn't she stunning, a real slut," exclaimed Lautrec and forthwith hired her as a model. For four years Carmen Gaudin was one of Lautrec's favorite models, posing for some of his most famous works, including *Rosa la Rouge* (*right*), now in the Barnes collection. The photograph (*far right*) suggests the pose of this painting but reveals that Carmen was actually tidy and modest in appearance. Lautrec abandoned Carmen in 1890 when she turned up one day with brown hair.

