The novel, Pyron notes, rejects the past as a source of authority, and ridicules such alternatives as religion, politics, and learning. What counts in a society fated to struggle with "circumstance" is pure being; energy and determination, or what Mitchell calls "gumption," are essential.

Scarlett had gumption. So, says Pyron, did Mitchell. She deserves equal mention with her Young South contemporaries.

## *Rescuing Liszt*

"The Noble Liszt" by Alfred Brendel, in *The New York Review of Books* (Nov. 20, 1986), 250 West 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10107.

Last year music lovers paid homage to the Hungarian-born Romantic composer Franz Liszt (1811–86) on the centennial of his death.

Unfortunately, says Brendel, a pianist and author, the festivals marking the occasion may have "further obscured" the real virtues of an artist who was attacked by his peers and gloried in personal recklessness. He blithely told his 19th-century biographer, Lina Ramann: "Don't get too entangled in details. My biography has to be made up rather than made out."

Liszt combined precocity (he began composing at age eight) with prolixity, "masculine beauty, social triumphs," and "a love life bordering on scandal." He was resented at the court in Weimar, Germany, where he settled in 1848, but Richard Wagner, Hans von Bülow, and other composers wanted to be his students. He gambled and drank. He was the first important pianist to move from the salon to the concert stage, where he was a ham, eyeing the ladies and tossing his kid gloves. The worst side effect, says Brendel, was careless composition. With some exceptions (e.g., the Sonata in B Minor), his large-scale works suffer from "a lack of economy, direction, thematic distinction, or freshness." His parroting of different styles could yield a smorgasbord effect, as when he used gypsy tunes he mistakenly thought were native to Hungary.

But if Liszt's faults were personal, so were his strengths. Liszt's music, says Brendel, unlike that of the meticulous Mozart, "projects the man." For him the piano was a means of "poetic expression." Ultimately, his best qualities triumphed. Liszt mustered enough self-control in middle age to quit the concert stage and move to Rome, where he developed a "spare and uncompromising" style influenced by Catholicism and *musica sacra*.

Liszt spread his genius thin, agrees Brendel. Yet if his fans focus on the works that balance "originality and finish, generosity and control, dignity and fire," they may end the debate over whether he belongs in the "pantheon" of musical greats or the "bazaar of oddities and monstrosities."

## *Getty's Museum*

"The Getty Goes Global" by Maks Westerman, in *Art and Antiques* (Dec. 1986), 89 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10003.

"If you can count your money, you're not rich enough."

So said the U.S. oil Croesus J. Paul Getty, who died in England in 1976 at age 84. He was easily rich enough to be casual about the place to which he willed the bulk of his estate. He never even saw the California museum

he built to house his smallish collection of old masters, furniture, and Greek and Roman sculpture, a replica in Malibu of the villa owned by Julius Caesar's father-in-law. But Getty Museum officials must count carefully. To comply with federal rules for tax-exempt charitable organizations, they must spend 4.25 percent of the museum's assets annually. At last reckoning the Getty endowment was worth $2.9 billion—nine times that of New York's Metropolitan Museum.

As Westerman, a former *Business Week* editor, observes, this means that the Getty must spend some $123 million each year to comply with IRS regulations. And the art establishment frets about a consequent "Getty factor," inflation in the art market. Indeed, the Getty has paid record prices for a painting ($10.4 million for Italian Renaissance artist Andrea Mantegna's *Adoration of the Magi*) and a document ($123,000 for Paul Gauguin's Tahitian diary, *Noa-Noa*). Critics say that two costly ($7 million apiece) purchases, among them *The Annunciation*, attributed to 15th-century Flemish master Dieric Bouts, may be fakes bought in haste.

The Getty's president, Harold Williams, a former chairman of Norton Simon Inc., dismisses such criticism as mere "background noise." The Getty is transforming itself from a small outfit—the Malibu museum has just 12 parking places as well as a limited collection—to a major enterprise. Pending the 1992 completion of a new "Getty Center" on 740 acres adjacent to the present museum, 500 Getty staffers camp in several Los Angeles–area offices. They oversee various projects—one of the world's best photography collections, a large art history library (500,000 volumes), a program to "overhaul the art-education system" of U.S. elementary schools, a computerized catalogue tracing the provenance of art works from the Middle Ages on, and the restoration of ancient monuments in Egypt and other countries.

Getty officials say that they are as chary of spending as was their benefactor, who kept a pay phone at his English estate. Of the Getty staff, 450 earn under $30,000. Travel budgets are said to be Spartan, paper clips counted, goals kept high. Insists museum director John Walsh: "We don't talk about money here."

## OTHER NATIONS

### *Spain's Gambler*

"Political Pragmatism in Spain" by Meir Serfaty, in *Current History* (Nov. 1986), 4225 Main St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19127.

Last year, Spain finally entered Western Europe. In March, it won Common Market membership. In a June referendum, Spanish voters backed Madrid's 1982 decision to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Ho-hum? Not at all, says Serfaty, a Brandon University political scientist. Spain's 1986 moves firmed up a key part of the Atlantic alliance's southern flank. And this was the doing of Madrid's ruling Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), which once viewed the future of the new post-Franco, democratic Spain as non-NATO and neutral—a southern Sweden.