



S. P. Avery Collection,  
New York Public Library.

tic "sensation," regardless of the tastes of the marketplace; to his devoted family (five of his children became artists); to unpopular anarchist causes; to the nurturing of talent in others. He taught Cézanne and Gauguin, and emboldened his friends Degas, Seurat, Cassatt, and van Gogh. His patience and his ability to reconcile others' feuds kept the impressionists, innovators of diverse temperaments and backgrounds, united against the conservative French Academy, which virtually dictated the market for art. Throughout his life, the gentle impressionist patriarch continued to grow artistically. His landscapes were influenced by Corot and Monet; Degas urged his foray into print-making; and he experimented for a time, with Seurat's pointilism. His last paintings, his most abstract, capture the excitement and agitation of Paris. This volume is illustrated, in color and black-and-white, with 210 of Pissarro's finest paintings, drawings, and etchings, many reproduced for the first time.

**LECTURES ON  
LITERATURE**  
by Vladimir Nabokov  
Harcourt, 1980  
385 pp. \$19.95

Cornell University undergraduates who signed up for Literature 311-312, "Masters of European Fiction," during the 1950s were in for a treat. Their professor was Vladimir Nabokov, a Russian émigré novelist. In the notes for his lectures reprinted here, Nabokov illumines Joyce's *Ulysses*, Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Dickens's *Bleak House*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, and Proust's *Swann's Way*. His classroom method is deceptively simple: retell the book's plot, quoting long passages. But throughout, Nabokov drives home the qualities that set his choices apart. He painstakingly traces Leopold Bloom's Dublin wanderings to show Joyce's elaborate organization and felicity with words, and he makes much of Flaubert's punctuation and syntax. Details count: "There is nothing wrong about the moonshine of generalization when it comes *after* the sunny trifles of the book have been lovingly collected." Marx, Freud, indeed all who

---

attempt historical or biographical interpretations of literature, who ferret out symbols or identify with characters, flunk Nabokov's course. "The wise reader," he explains, reads "not with his heart, not so much with his brain, but with his spine." Nabokov was not just teaching at Cornell, he was also learning. His observations of life in a college town (Ithaca, N.Y.) found their way into the novel he was writing at the time—*Lolita* (1958), the success that freed him from the lecture hall.

**DANCE OF THE TIGER:**  
**A Novel of the Ice Age**  
 by Björn Kurtén  
 Pantheon, 1980  
 255 pp. \$10.95

Forty thousand years ago, a warm spell settled over northern Europe, causing the ice that had covered the Continent for thousands of years to recede. With an occasional mild tremor, the land rose. Forests grew; flowers blossomed. During this "brief" 15,000-year thaw, one subspecies of intelligent human replaced another. Neanderthal man—squat, beetle-browed, big-jawed, yet accomplished (his brain was bigger than our own)—had inhabited Europe for 100,000 years. Cro-Magnon man, the newcomer, lean, skilled in art and weaponry, migrated from the south; it is his descendants who will read this novel. Did the two subspecies meet? Probably, speculates Kurtén, a world-renowned Finnish paleontologist; and therein lies the tale. Drawing on the suggestive remains of the period—"a cave painting here, a footprint there, perhaps a population of skulls (which shows that the aged were well cared for)"—Kurtén has crafted a story of Ice Age adventure and domesticity. In good scientific fashion, he also challenges some myths. Kurtén's Neanderthals, like most Scandinavians, are blue-eyed blondes—not the swarthy "cavemen" of museum exhibits. They compensate for their fierce, bony gaze with exceeding courtesy ("Mister Baywillow, would you have the kindness to check their trail?" asks one Neanderthal chief when she fears that a foe may be near). Hidden in the tale is Kurtén's hypothesis, elucidated in an afterword, concerning why gentle *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* vanished while glib *Homo sapiens sapiens* survived.