



ANJELICA HUSTON
Pencil sketch on small note paper

Doodles

Scribbles of the Rich and Famous Will Be Top Draw at Back Alley Theatre Fund-Raiser

By BETH ANN KRIER, Times Staff Writer

Lakers Coach Pat Riley diagrammed the play that beat the Celtics in Game 6 of the 1985 National Basketball Assn. championship series.

Kirk Douglas, who played artist Vincent Van Gogh in "Lust for Life," drew "Van Gogh Minus Ear" after his masseuse asked him to contribute a quick sketch of anything.

Lily Tomlin reportedly sent her secretary out for crayons, transformed herself into Edith Ann, the childlike character she often plays, and then cartooned Edith Ann's rendition of a pregnant lady, complete with a fetus in the womb.

It's all for a cause—a fun cause. An off-the-wall annual auction that started three years ago as a fund-raiser for Back Alley Theatre in Van Nuys. A call went out for doodles of the famous—artwork scribbled or sketched on personal stationery, paper napkins, note pads, playbills or whatever—in any media: pencil, crayon, ballpoint or felt pen—black and white or in color.

A Back Alley Bonanza

Sotheby's might not be interested in these creative works, but the Back Alley has found them a bonanza. Last year's auction brought in \$16,000, and hopes are even higher this year.

Since they created the auction, Back Alley Theatre's producing directors, husband-and-wife team Laura Zucker and Alan Miller, have overlooked few techniques for obtaining the doodles of the rich and famous. And they are forever recruiting anyone who could act as an impromptu doodle agent for the theater.

Kirk Douglas' version of Van Gogh was donated because Zucker and Miller employ the same masseuse as Douglas and asked her to make the request. Stuart Berton, president of the theater's board of directors, approached Coach Riley at a fund-raiser for Los Angeles

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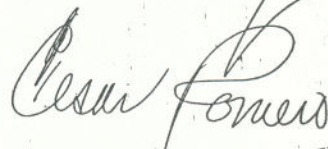
Beverly Wilshire Hotel



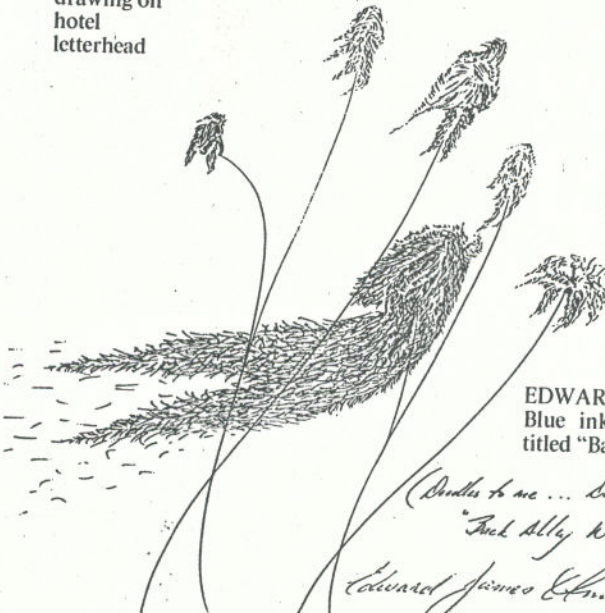
JOAN BAEZ
Ballpoint drawing on hotel letterhead



LILY TOMLIN
Crayon drawing credited to Edith Ann



CESAR ROMERO
Pen-and-ink drawing on yellow legal pad



EDWARD JAMES OLMOS
Blue ink on white bond paper, titled "Back Alley Winds"

(Doodles to me ... Souffles to you)
"Back Alley Winds"

Edward James Olmos

DOODLES

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Councilman Joel Wachs.

Miller himself worked up the courage to introduce himself to Tomlin at a black-tie awards gala. As he recalls it, "I walked over to her table and got down on my knee beside her so she wouldn't have to look up at me. . . . She says, 'Alan Miller! How are you????'"

Although he's an actor who's face is familiar in theatrical circles, Miller had no idea Tomlin would recognize him. As he stood there, dumbfounded, she joked: "You don't know who I am? You don't remember that I studied with you, do you?"

"I always thought you were Barbra Streisand," Miller shot back, finally admitting that he really didn't remember she had been his student in a private acting class he once taught in New York City.

Tomlin, as Edith Ann, interprets her drawing: "In the hospital, the mothers had babies in their stomachs and when they come out they put them in a window and you get to pick the one you like best . . . and that's the truth."

Chamber Music Too

For this year's auction, Miller and Zucker already have collected more than 75 doodles and nearly as many stories. More of both are expected to arrive before the Sept. 13 event (a garden party at a private home, complete with chamber music, free caricatures for guests and both a silent and live auction).

Among those contributing doodles (or occasionally other memorabilia): Amy Irving, Frank Sinatra, Henry Winkler, Gerald Ford, Glenda Jackson, the late Liberace, Armand Hammer, Dave Brubeck, Jules Feiffer, Neil Simon, James Woods, Jonathan Winters, Beverly Sills, Dudley Moore, Jon Voight and many more.

Some doodles are received from and through actors who have appeared in Back Alley Theatre productions, among them Rue McClanahan, Linda Kelsey and Eileen Heckart.

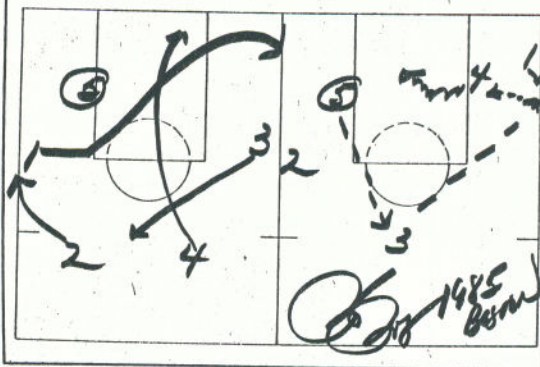
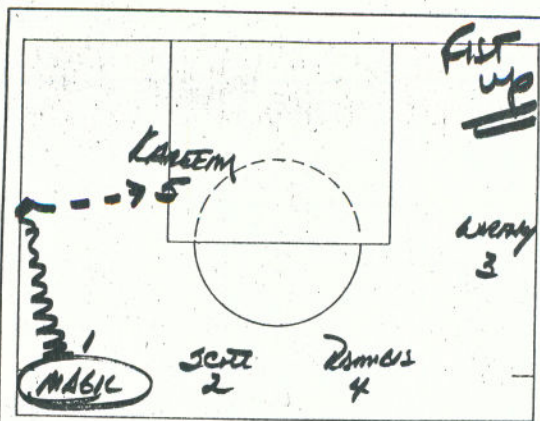
Jane Romney, who has performed Van Nuys-based theater and who is also the daughter of former Michigan Gov. George Romney, was asked to solicit Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Gerald Ford and Barry Goldwater. Bush came through with a drawing titled "Rabbits Watching Rabbits" that arrived too late for last year's auction but will be offered for sale this year.

'Good Luck and Cheers'

Among the standouts in the 1987 collection are a delicately sensuous drawing of grasses blowing in the wind by "Miami Vice's" Edward James Olmos, a sketch the actor says was meant to convey "good luck and cheers to you all."

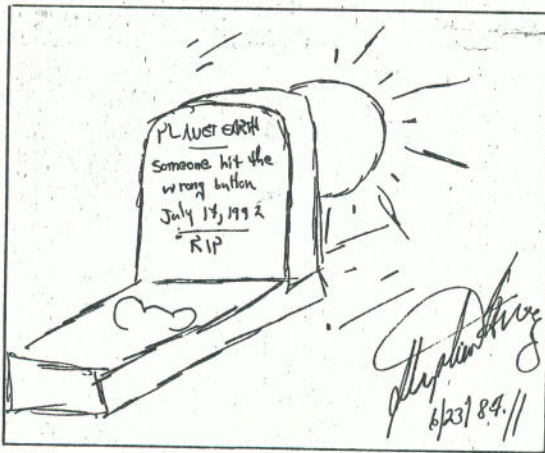
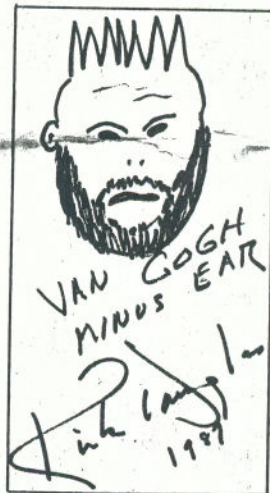
Anjelica Huston, who like many donors was contacted by letter in what Zucker terms a "blind request," sent what appears to be an accomplished self-portrait. Her response led Zucker and Miller to send her father, John Huston, another blind request, which mentioned that his daughter had contributed a doodle. The theater was rewarded with yet another extremely professional piece of art and learned that Huston is an ex-painter.

Actor Dom DeLuise, whose the-



More Doodles of the Rich and Famous

Laker coach Pat Riley's felt pen diagram, above, of play that won 1985 NBA championship. Kirk Douglas's self-portrait, right, of the actor as painter Van Gogh. Author Stephen King's did a pen-and-ink sketch of the fate of Planet Earth, below.



atrical representative is the Back Alley's Berton, annually contributes sketches of fanciful characters, which are quickly snapped up by parents in search of art for their children's rooms, according to Zucker.

"We promise people that if they

doodle something for us two years in a row, we won't bother them again, but sometimes they want to be bothered," she says.

"When we told that to Julie Harris, who sent us an enormous collage last year, she said, 'What do you mean? I've already started.'"