

# object lesson

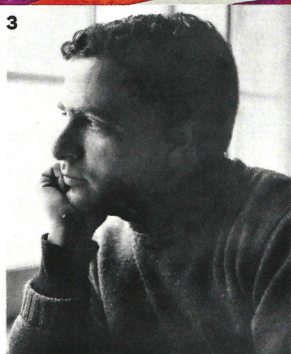
1. DECORATOR MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD USED SERPENTINE SOFAS IN TOMMY HILFIGER'S HOME JUST OUTSIDE MIAMI.  
2. KAGAN'S NIECE, CATHY JOSEFOWITZ, RESTORED AN ORIGINAL SERPENTINE FOR HER GENEVA APARTMENT. 3. KAGAN IN 1964.



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**A**s Vladimir Kagan's clients began buying Abstract Expressionist paintings in the 1950s, the Manhattan furniture designer saw a gap in

the market: sofas for viewing art. He envisioned free-floating seats that would avoid the linear norm. "We don't all have to sit like birds on a telephone wire," he once quipped.

Thanks to material innovations such as rubber strapping and foam, Kagan came up with undulating solutions. An instant favorite with New York's glitterati was the stunning Serpentine sofa, which provided a 360-degree viewpoint and casters that made it easy to move.

"It's perfect set right in the middle of an all-glass apartment or in a gallery for looking at paintings," says interior designer Tony Ingrao, who recently bought at auction a small Serpentine model that had belonged to actress Grace Kelly. He changed out her pale-blue leather upholstery for a snuggly chenille before deploying it in a Fifth Avenue apartment.

Though the standard Serpentine—available at Holly Hunt showrooms—measures about 11 feet, Kagan's custom-loving clients rarely want stock proportions: A 23-footer was just installed in Miami Beach. As designer Amy Lau, who has commissioned several riffs on Kagan's original, enthuses, "There's nothing more couture." —HANNAH MARTIN

KAGAN'S  
SERPENTINE  
SOFA, AVAILABLE  
THROUGH  
HOLLY HUNT.

