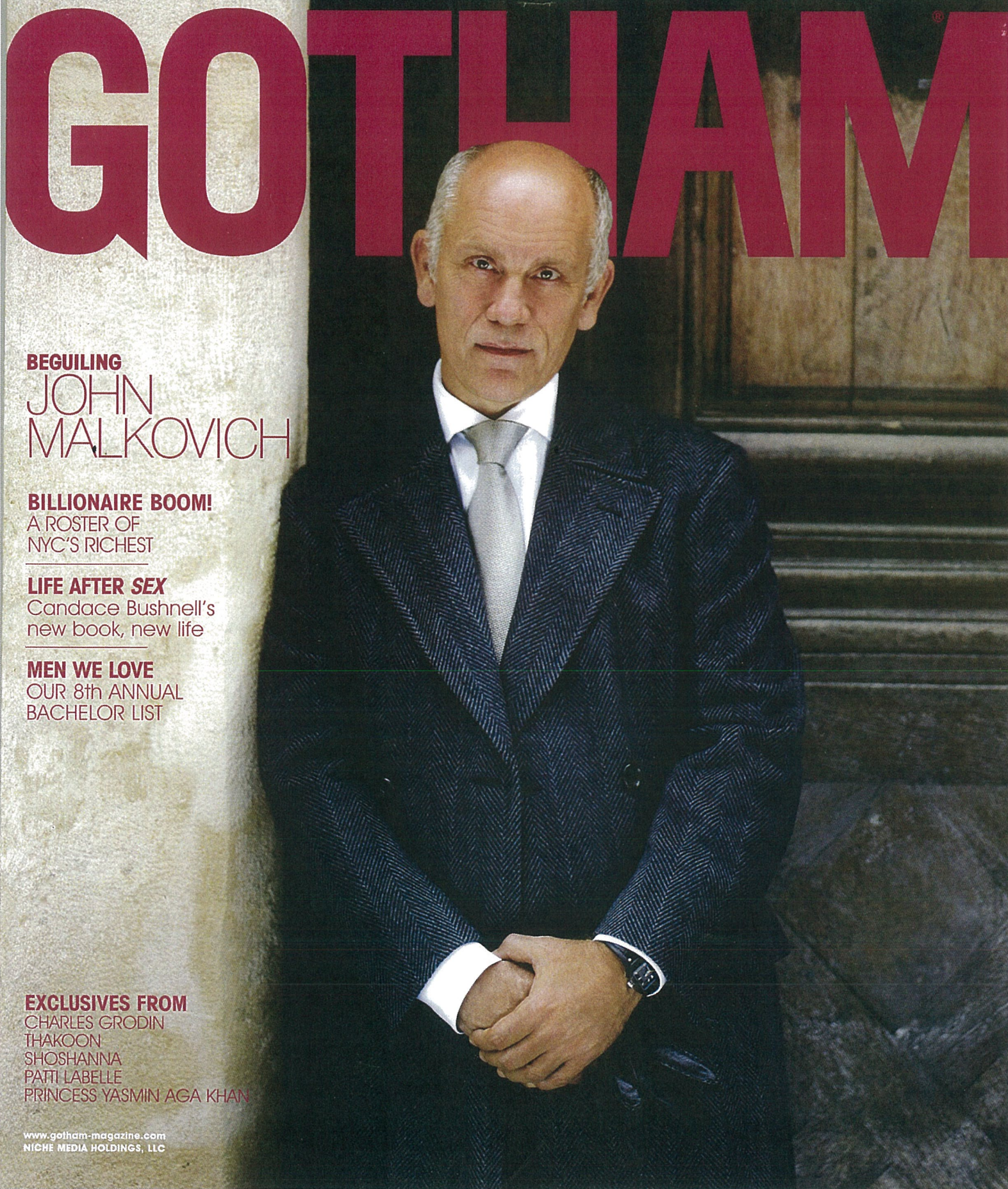


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CONNECTIONS, **CONNECTIONS,** CONNECTIONS

Seven of the city's most well-connected movers and shakers let us in on who they can call at the drop of a hat, how they keep everyone straight, and what it takes to truly be in touch.

by Noah Rothbaum
photographs by Sari Goodfriend

WANT A NEW JOB? Seats on the 50-yard line for next month's Giants/Cowboys game? A table at the Spotted Pig? Well, who do you know? This city is all about having the right connections, and it's no coincidence that some of its most powerful residents have the biggest Rolodexes—and, consequently, the world at their fingertips. New Yorkers have been social networking the old-fashioned way since long before MySpace, Facebook, and LinkedIn came along. Contacts are carefully cultivated for decades, and important numbers and e-mail addresses are closely guarded and backed up religiously.

So who *does* have the most pull in this town? After undertaking an unscientific survey of Gotham, poking our noses into BlackBerrys, phone books, iPhones, and Rolodexes all over the city, we created our first annual list of the most well-connected New Yorkers. (These seven supernetworkers are ranked in no particular order.) Now all you have to do is work on getting their contact info....



DREW NIEPORENT

Owner, Myriad Restaurant Group

Number of years in New York City:

His whole life *

Number of contacts: More than 1,000

BlackBerry or iPhone: BlackBerry

"I'm always fascinated how sometimes I make a huge impression on somebody and then I never see them."

—DREW NIEPORENT

When you own Nobu and Tribeca Grill, it's not a question of who you know but who you *don't* know. "You name 'em and they pretty much show up," says Drew Nieporent, whose Myriad Restaurant Group owns these two stalwarts as well as six other restaurants and a wine-and-spirits store. Nieporent has about 1,000 numbers stored in two cell phones and a BlackBerry. (For the record, he carries only two devices at a time.) His phone book includes contact info for his numerous celebrity business partners, such as Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, Bill Murray, and Russell Simmons, not to mention friends like Keith Hernandez and Tiki Barber.

Nobu may open many doors for him, but Nieporent is also a fixture on the city's party scene. "I turn up at events where nobody wants to go and then I turn up at events where it's almost impossible to be invited," he says. As a result, he's been able to meet all kinds of people outside the restaurant world. His advice? If you're at a party with a bold-faced name, don't pander or patronize. And, most important, "You have to have a little bit of chutzpah, which is a good thing in New York."

* Until he moved to New Jersey in 1991.