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THE READER Brett Ratner and (right) new books from his imprint.

Brett the Bookie?

Popcorn flick director **Brett Ratner** (*Rush Hour*, *X-Men: The Last Stand*) is, as he's quite aware, often derided as a philistine. His volume-inous retort: A thousands-strong book collection—shelved all over his Bev Hills home, the old Ingrid Bergman estate—and a fledgling vanity publishing imprint, **Rat Press** (ratpress.com), which is putting out three new tomes: an experimental memoir by **James Toback**, and two sets of conversations between interviewing Lawrence Grobel and story-quarries **Marlon Brando** and **Robert Evans**. —G.B.

Robert Evans
In Conversation with Lawrence Grobel



Marlon Brando
In Conversation with Lawrence Grobel



Don't The Author's Self-Confessed Memoir
on the Great Sex Shows
James Toback



Brett Ratner, hardcore bookworm: Seriously? Sure. People wouldn't think I'm so cultured, especially in collecting art and photography books—stuff like Richard Prince and Helmut Newton—but I'm very passionate about it. You have to have references; know things in order to create things. **What's on your nightstand right now?** What isn't? *A Brief History of Time*; *Heart of Darkness*; Flaubert's *A Simple Heart*; Tolstoy's *The Devil*; *The Man Who Would Be King*, by Kipling; and the DGA directory of members. **Where do you hunt for new additions to your collection?** This great rare-books store called Lead Apron on Robertson, just north of Beverly. The owner, Jonathan Brown, is a friend from NYU. **Any signed first editions that you especially cherish?** Hugh Hefner gave me a copy of the first issue of *Playboy*. And he wrote on it, "To Brett, who shares the dream." That was very flattering.



WATERS' WORLD John Waters is now sending up the film biz. The provocateur, director and all-around artist debuts a new show of 36 photographs and four sculptures at **Gagosian Gallery** in Bev Hills on April 11. Titled *Rear Projection*—both a cinematography term and a Waters piece in which movies are projected on buttocks—the exhibit takes on a slew of sacred cows. In *Children Who Smoke* (which, as with most of his pieces, re-imagines classic film imagery), he captures characters like Beaver Cleaver and Buckwheat in mid-puff. "It's a reaction to the Motion Picture Association of America trying to rate all pictures R that have teenagers smoking. You can have a child murder somebody in a film and get a PG-13, but if they smoke a cigarette it's an R. I find that absolutely outrageous," says Waters. And—call him cynical—he even dares to take on a children's cause *du jour* with *Hollywood Smile Train*, in which he transposes cleft palates onto the faces of bold-faced names. "Suppose all movie stars had cleft palates? Would people send them money? I'm a little suspicious when I see these billboards everywhere. I'm sure they mean well, but they do spend a lot of money on advertising. These children are stars too—of the charity circuit," says Waters. Offended? Don't be. "All my artwork is trying to do is make you laugh." —Degen Pender



FLAIR SPRAY! From top:
Waters' *Necro*; *Pig Latin*;
the director/artist.