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William Morris" illustrates the English visionary's many sides—as a writer, printer, book designer, conservationist, and political activist. "Josef Frank, Architect and Designer: An Alternative Vision of the Modern Home," at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts (which is located in Manhattan rather than at the college upstate), is a particularly useful addition to the contemporary discourse on architecture and design. Not only is this Austrian architect and designer too little known, but he represents what the show's organizers have called an "alternative modernism": His swirling shapes and whimsy have little in common with, say, the ascetic geometries of Mies van der Rohe. His work should especially interest postmodernists looking for a past.

DEATH AND MOURNING ARE A FORM OF EXILE. The emotions aroused by death often cannot settle; they require an object—a symbolic home—if they are to find peaceful resolution. At the Research Institute for the Study of Man, located at 162 East 78th Street, InterAmericas is showing a powerful work called *The Book of Mechtilde*.

ART Created by a Jewish-Jamaican artist named Anna Ruth Henriques, who is in her late twenties and now lives in Tokyo, this dense, rich, and loving book is a memorial to—and a kind of visual lamentation for—the artist's mother, who died young of cancer in 1978.

Based on the Book of Job, which tells the story of a virtuous man punished by misfortune, *Mechtilde* is a modern illuminated manuscript, an idiosyncratic but holy work of devotion that depends upon the interwoven traditions of the Caribbean—Christian and Jewish, white and black, European and American. At its center are 40 strong and evocative painted images about the life of the artist's mother. The artist has encircled each image with Job's unstoppable lamentations; the golden calligraphy goes round and round. And beyond that is still more ornamentation, as if the mourning artist could not abide the eternal silence of white space.

Henriques is a sophisticated artist, but her paintings have the aura of the best folk painting; that is, they have a high visual intelligence, are not oversweet, and are too serious (or spiritual) to brag of schoolish know-how. In one image—a radiant seascape—she shows Mechtilde floating in what appears to be a fishing boat, her three daughters watching from shore. She has also included pages of prose and poetry as offerings to her mother's life, identifying Mechtilde with the history of Jamaica as well as with Job. Everything is insistently handmade, and, of course, touch is vital when the subject is death. A handmade book can close like a coffin, and open like a resurrection. ■