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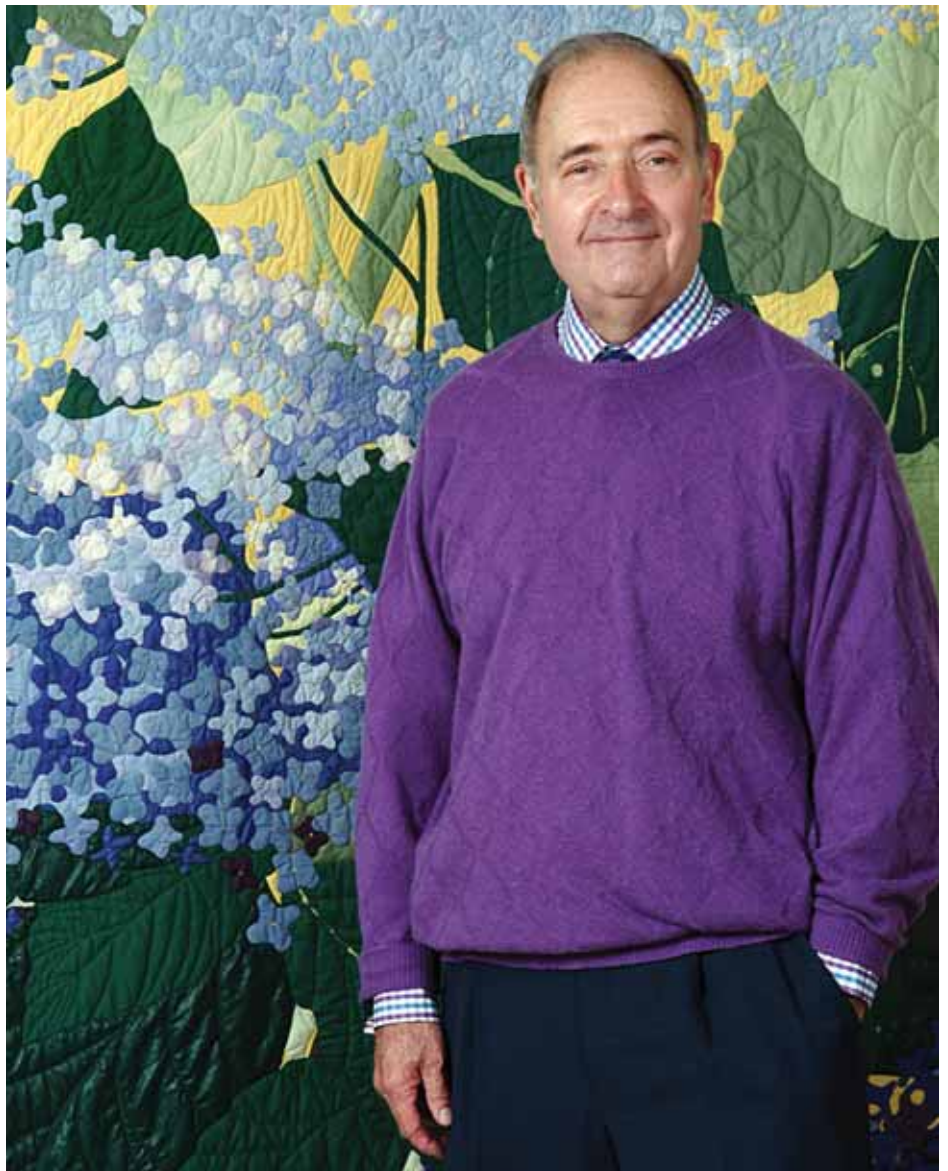
100 TOP COLLECTORS

John M. Walsh III

Bridgewater, N.J.

Contemporary art quilts

I get more credit than I deserve," avows John M. Walsh modestly, declaring that he has been trained, guided and advised by Penny McMorris, a quilt curator, judge and expert. With his expanding collection, Walsh's goal is to document the best of what is current in the art quilt world. Many quilts in his collection could just as easily fall into the category of conceptual art, although quilting arts must play a significant role in the composition. "One of the more exciting quilts I recently acquired is by Arturo Sandoval, an art professor at the University of Kentucky," he says. It is an upside-down American flag with darker camouflage stripes revealing words that relate to the Iraq war while lighter stripes have shredded money encased behind a mesh skim. In the right-hand corner of the quilt are white stars. In their centers are 50 photographs of the most wanted Hussein-era criminals. "Early on I became aware that artists who create quilts do not have the same freedom to innovate as artists working in other media because of the huge time commitment that goes into each piece," says John, explaining why he supports artists through commissions and exhibitions. When commissioning a new quilt, Walsh often asks that water be its subject to provide continuity for his collection, and at the same time, to reflect his prime interest in water quality and conservation, an issue that has become his life's work. —B.L.



John M. Walsh III with Velda Newman's "Hydrangea" quilt, 1989.