

Reflections on *SEA CLOUD II*
from John Russell
Chief Art Critic Emeritus, The New York Times
January 2005

The *Sea Cloud II* is a paragon of its kind.

She looks right, she feels right, and in all the ways that matter she is right.
But she never puts on airs.

In fact she often feigns not to be doing anything in particular, other than making us feel at home.

To every one of her manifold duties she brings a sovereign nonchalance.
There is nothing she would not do for us, except to go ashore near Rome and climb up the Spiral Steps.

And she always has something astonishing in reserve. She can gently put us ashore, for instance, to see some of Pushkin's greatest poems in the author's own handwriting, just a few minutes drive from our overnight stop.

But if the *Sea Cloud II* is an ideal point of departure, it can also become a second home to which we shall always be happy to return. Its cushions will become our cushions, and its well-furnished bookshelves will double as our personal (but non-lending) public library.

Life on the *Sea Cloud II* is the epitome of a polite society in which old and young live together and never is heard a disparaging word.

May the New Year bring happiness to us, one and all.

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