

THE BEST OF CITY LIFE

channels

faces & places

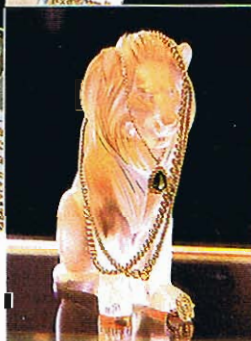
DECEMBER 1999



Jean and Helaine Zimmelman of the Beverly Hills Loan Company with some of their top-rate treasures.

ARND BRONKHORST

Wanna have funds



LOW-PROFILE AND TUCKED AWAY behind smoked-glass doors and security guards, the Beverly Loan Company is the place Angelenos go when they need a buck or two quickly and quietly. Through these doors have waltzed movie stars (in between contracts), hotshot producers (desperate for a quick \$15,000 to apoon that can't-miss script), and the occasional Hollywood almost-ex-wife (needing a few thou to carry her through until her divorce settlement is finalized). There to help them out are Beverly Loan proprietors Jean and Helaine Zimmelman, the poshest pawnbrokers in town. "We've been in business since 1938," says Jean. "My father, Louis, and my Uncle Julius started it. I was in the cookie business, but in 1987 I went from cookies to collateral, and I've loved it ever since. My father asked me to learn the business, and my sister arrived soon after that."

Beverly Hills' loan rangers keep Los Angelenos in the green.

The business of borrowing gives the Zimmelmans a unique outlook on the current dollar value in Hollywood — and on the overall economy. "In the '80s, with a booming economy, people were coming in [to get cash] for a stock tip, real estate, or just to throw a really big party," explains Jean. "In the '90s, they needed money just to make payroll. But people are always in cash crunches. Women pawn a ring to get money for a facelift or to have a fender fixed without telling their husbands. Many of our customers love a line of credit right here at Bank of America. They just don't want to use it."

-Sue Cameron

