

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

Speaking of Reading by Nadine Rosenthal (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1995, \$23.95) includes 77 short interviews, shaped into essays, in which the interviewees describe how reading--or not reading--has affected their lives. Poignant, inspiring and imaginative, the readers include everyone from Isabel Allende to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, from Ronnie Gilbert (one of the Weavers) to Linus Pauling, from Gloria Steinem to Maxine Hong-Kingston. And don't forget Robert MacNeil from the MacNeil - Lehrer Report, who has a passion for words.

The narratives are arranged into categories that bring together distinct types of reader: literature readers, frustrated readers, those who have been influenced by childhood reading experiences voracious readers, habitual readers, new adult readers, information readers, and those who are aware of their reading process. The concluding chapter of the book, on reading mentorship, provides information on how to share reading with someone else.

Jacket Required: An Illustrated History of American Book Jacket Design, 1920-1950 by Steven Heller and Seymour Chwast (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1995, \$19.95 paper) is a fascinating and evocatively illustrated volume presenting a superb collection of 270 jackets promoting a wide range of books--biography, history, mystery, romance, humor, journalism, politics, historical fiction, poetry, and adventure, as well as great fiction.

You all remember the saying, "You can't judge a book by its cover", but you really can judge a lot by its jacket. Many libraries have collected interesting book jackets for decades, and now one can see the powerful work of some of the era's most exciting illustrators and designers such as E. McKnight Kauffer's powerful, surrealist jackets for Modern Library editions of *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Don Quixote* and *Ulysses*; Arthur Hawkins Jr.'s linear designs for the jackets of Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, and *Sartoris*, and James M. Cain's novel, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*; Alvin Lustig's abstract designs for New Directions jackets for *The Great Gatsby*, *Selected Poems of D.H. Lawrence*, Kafka's *Amerika*, Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, and Joyce's *Exiles*.

This book is not only interesting for designers and packaging experts, but represents a chronicle of popular and literary culture. Recommended for book lovers everywhere. Designer index and Title index, as well as Selected Bibliography.

The Visual Artist's Business and Legal Guide, compiled and edited by Gregory T. Victoroff (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall, paperback, n.p.) is a presentation of the Beverly Hills Bar Association Committee for the Arts and is a basic handbook for artists with regard to copyright, the Visual Artists' Rights Act, the legal definition of Art, regulation of Fine Art Multiples, Art Destructions, and Photography and Law. In addition, there are contracts, consignment documents, analysis of a control for mural or other public art, the Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement, Analysis of an Artist and Representative Agreement, contracts for Employment, as well as Tools for Selling your Work by Nat Dean, William Turner and others, including packing and shipping artwork, museum deaccession policies and art fraud.

There are chapters on grant writing, when to hire a lawyer, getting the money owed you, mediation for visual artists, artists and insurance, and lots more. There is an appendix for Artists' Resources, selected bibliography, contributors and an index.

Preserving Library Materials: A Manual by Susan G. Swartzburg (2d ed.: Metuchen, NJ, Scarecrow Press, 1995, \$59.50) updates the 1980 edition, completely revised, not only for librarians, but for those who are collectors and non-technical personnel. Swartzburg discusses collection management, ranging from good housekeeping practices to disaster planning and the installation of environmental controls. She covers books, documents, film, photographs, slides, microforms, videotape, sound recordings, magnetic and electronic media. For, Virginia, libraries are more than books and they must be preserved. Long-range planning to preserve library materials for future generations is emphasized. Half the book in the cloth edition provide additional resource material, including a list of organizations with an interest in preservation of library materials, a selective list of useful periodicals, an annotated bibliography, and a glossary of terms that are used by specialists in areas related to library preservation.

Although written for public, special and smaller academic libraries, much of the information can also be applied to research libraries. An abridged paperback edition which includes text and glossary is available for classroom use (\$29.50). A very good reference tool for anyone interested in preservation of library and archival materials.

The realization and suppression of the Situationist International: an annotated

bibliography 1972-1992 by Simon Ford (Edinburgh, San Francisco: AK Press, 1995, £7.95/\$11.95) contains over 600 references that charge the growing reputation of a group of avant-garde artists, their progress from footnote to bibliography. The book, however, is more than just a bibliography; it is the most substantial reference work yet produced on the subject in English. It also provides a gateway to the related worlds of underground publishing, anarchism, and the contemporary avant-garde. Each reference is annotated with a short critical description and a relevant extract. **Realization and Suppression** is a rich source of information on related groups such as Gruppe Spur, Cobra, and Lettrisme, and contains two sections devoted to documenting the little known British and American "pro-situ" scenes. With its extensive index, the bibliography provides countless ways of examining and comprehending one of this century's most misunderstood groups.

Simon Ford has a Fine Arts degree from the University of Plymouth and an Library science MA from the University of Northumbria at Newcastle. Since 1990, he has been a curator at the National Art Library at the Victoria & Albert Museum. To order, send £7.95 including postage & handling from Simon Ford, 17 Pavilion Mansions, Brighton Terrace, Brixton, SW9 8DG, or \$11.95 from AK Press, P.O. Box 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Edna's Nudes: Photographs by Edna Bullock, with text by Barbara Bullock-Wilson and an afterword by Karen Sinsheimer (Santa Barbara, CA, Capra Press, 1995, \$28.95 paper) is a revelation, since Edna Bullock, widow of Wynn Bullock, world-famed photographer, obviously has absorbed, learned, and now executed these masterful black and white images of nudes which are lyrical, classical and delicate. Many of them appear to be capturing the nude in movement, others make the nude subject another part of the landscape. Throughout the book are anecdotes and quotes from friends and associates who have watched this remarkable woman emerge from her cocoon late in life to become a photographer in her own right!

Feels Like Home: Fond Remembrances in Words & Pictures edited by Cheryl Moch (Chapel Hill, NC, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1995, \$19.95 hardcover) is a nostalgic look at photos of homes we grew up in and the longing for the homes of our dreams. Quotes from Le Corbusier, Judy Garland, Adrienne Rich, Garrison Keillor, Henry James, John Updike and so many more make this book a wonderful

anthology of what "home" means to a great many people, enhanced with more than 100 black and white photographs, accompanied by literary excerpts.

GENERAL

Howard Kottler: Face to Face by Patricia Failing (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1995, \$39.95 cloth) documented the career of one of the West Coast ceramicists who helped to redefine the entire field of contemporary American ceramic art. Failing's comprehensive and richly illustrated study is the first survey and summation of his work and is based on a series of interviews Kottler initiated after learning of his terminal illness (he died in 1989). Part performance artist, part humorist, part conceptual artist, this off-the-wall artist could do portraits of Robert Arneson as well as a set of dishes called the American Supperware Series, including the Peace March, the Capitol Walk (all literal), Made in U.S.A., Flag Kit, Exhausted Glory and many more, including a series of Pope dishes (one called Bar Mitzvah Boy) and American Gothicware, among others. In the end, he started approaching his materials as vehicles for art historical commentary and physical eroticism, as well as metaphors for probing the unbridgeable gap between the Self and the Other. Collections, Bibliography, Index.

Whistler and Montesquiou: The Butterfly and the Bat by Edgar Munhall (Paris, Flammarion, 1995, \$45, dist. by Abbeville Press) documents the friendship between James Abbot McNeill Whistler and his friend, poet and dandy Robert de Montesquiou, whose friendship began in 1885 and culminated in the first public exhibition of the portrait Whistler did of his friend at the Salon of 1894. Montesquiou called Whistler his "dear butterfly"--the creature which the artist drew next to his signature on his works--while for Whistler Montesquiou was "Bat! dear bat!" after the characteristic black bat insignia which appeared on all of the poet's correspondence and writings.

The resulting portrait, *Arrangement in Black and Gold: Comte Robert de Montesquiou*, housed today in the Frick Collection, represents Whistler's unique symbolist-inspired style which earned him the admiration of such contemporaries as Courbet, Fantin-Latour, Baudelaire, Manet, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Oscar Wilde.

Drawing upon a wealth of previously unpublished archival material and correspondence, accompanied by a vast arrange of paintings, drawings and engravings, Edgar Munhall uses this remarkable work as a catalyst for exploring the development of Whistler's art, and in the process paints a delightful and fascinating portrait

of the extraordinarily creative and sometimes bizarre avant-garde world of fin-de siècle Paris and London. The exhibition is now at the National Gallery in Washington, DC and will be in New York City at the Frick Collection from November 1995 through January 1996. Bibliography and index.

The Ribbon: A Gift of Remembrance by Hugh Shurley (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1995, \$12.95) is a boxed edition of a poem for comfort in times of loss--visual poetry which illustrates the flight of a kite, its escape and the small red ribbon which fell to the ground. Reminiscent of a handmade letterpress book, **The Ribbon** is an accordion-style book meant to be hung up to showcase an evocative poem in the shape of a kite. In this time of plague, in this season of loss, this is a remarkable gift to give to one who has lost a loved one. The proceeds of the sale of this book will be donated to AIDS-related organizations.

The Letters of Frida Kahlo: Cartas Apasionadas, selected by Martha Zamora (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1995, \$17.95 hardcover) is definitely a selection of writings by an impassioned, intelligent, sensitive and literate woman who is, on the one hand, flirtatious, coy and energetic with the men in her life, and on the other hand, pervasive, thoughtful, and vibrant with her other friends, involving herself with the lives of her friends and her men, and her art. Her 80 letters are long conversations, revealing a life of letters in letters, because obviously from her bed she could write these letters and share her life with the life of her friends. An epistolary biography in a small way. The texts retain the underlining and quotation marks which Kahlo used. There is also definitions of Kahlo's words provided by her editor.

The Masculine Masquerade: Masculinity and Representation, edited by Andrew Perchuk and Helaine Posner (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1995, \$25.00) explores often-ignored issues of masculinity in the visual arts as well as models and concepts of masculinity in literature, film, and the mass media. Deriving analysis and definition from gay and feminist studies and the work being done in areas of psychology, sociology, and gender studies, the essays expand on the conventional definitions of masculinity as a social and cultural construct. Instead, the definition is expanded to include multiple masculinities and factors such as race, class and ethnicity. Essays are by Andrew Perchuk, Helaine Posner, Steven Cohan, Harry Brod, Simon Watney, bell hooks, and Glenn Ligon, who employs stereotypic images of black men constructed for white

pleasure, drawn from 1970s pornographic magazines in an album in this book, which explores the possibility of recovering and transforming these images into non-racist expressions of pleasure and desire. Selected works from the exhibition including Matthew Barney, Tina Barney, Clegg & Guttmann, Graham Durward, Lyle Ashton Harris, Dale Kistemaker, Mary Kelly, Donald Moffett, Keith Piper, Charles Ray and Michael Yue Tong are included. A checklist of the exhibition, artists' biographies, and bibliography complete this volume.

Gardens of Revelation: Environments by Visionary Artists by John Beardsley (New York, Abbeville Press, 1995, \$60) tells the story of about 25 "visionary environments" and the fiercely independent individuals who have created them in the course of the last century. including Simon Rodia and his Watts Towers, Howard Finster's Paradise Garden near Summerville, Georgia and the Owl House and Camel Yard in New Bethesda, South Africa.

This is a wonderfully researched book written not in a totally academic tenor, but in fact insightfully with an unusual appreciation of the psychological and moral overtones of these amazingly built three-dimensional environments. These visionaries used their imagination and their natural curiosity to build and channel their inspiration into these gardens of heavenly delight. It has taken this wonderful writer to unlock their messages and give us insights and appreciations. The photographs by James Pierce are priceless. This is a treasure book, with wonderful additional information such as *Locations of Selected Environments, Organizations dedicated to Environments by Visionary Artists*, as well as selected bibliography and index. A must for all contemporary collections, including outsider art.

Scream Against the Sky: Japanese Art after 1945 (New York, Abrams, 1995, \$ 65 hardcover) is the first book ever published in English on the development, identity, and expression of Japanese avant-garde art after 1945, in the social and political context of postwar and contemporary culture in Japan. What remains the catalyst for this amazing feat has been the passion for spiritual freedom and individual self-expression, informed by the international tenets of modernist art, yet stimulated by its own original, cultural identity. Alexandra Munroe, an art historian based in New York and in Tokyo, has done an amazing feat, creating not only this exhibition but the documentation for it, which is a hefty 400+ pages, including 445 illustrations, among which are 200 in full color.

Besides Ms. Monroe's many essays, there are major tomes by architect Isozaki Arata; literary critic Karatani Kojin; video artist Nam June Paik; art historians John Clark of Australia and Bert Winther of the U.S.; and Barbara London, curator of video at The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The title comes from a *voice piece for soprano* by Yoko Ono, done in Autumn 1961, when she was active as a Fluxus artist. The period included in this formidable exhibition and catalog includes the development of Yoshihara Jiro and his influence on Postwar Japanese Art, followed by the Gutai, Gutai performance and painting, the Yomiuri Independent artists and social protest tendencies in the 1960s, Butoh and Obsessional art, Tokyo Fluxus, Conceptual art and the School of Metaphysics, experimental film and video, Japanese art of the 1990s, and so much more. There is a glossary, a major bibliography, a critical anthology of readings in Japanese Art after 1945, including artists' statements. A major contribution to art history of Japan for English-speaking viewers and aficionados. A must for those who believe that Conceptual Art, Performance Art and Body Art are Western concepts. In fact, the Japanese incorporated these into their non-Western art forms well before the West. It is transformation based on distinctly idiosyncratic philosophies. This book certainly will remain the basic reference tool for quite a while.

Neoism, Plagiarism & Praxis by Stewart Home, one of the most exciting and excitable British

avant-gardists practicing today is an indispensable collection of articles, manifestos, lectures, and essays written by Home for the over-and under-ground press from 1986 to the present. It also contains unpublished correspondence on the organization of the 1990-1993 art strike and other related events. Home's range of interests is legendary--from obscure occult goings-on with the Royal Family to lectures on art strikes in the hallowed halls of the V & A Museum. Find out where the KLF stole all their ideas, find out why it's OK to hate Stockhausen, found out what Stewart wrote in the introduction to the Polish edition of *Assault on culture*. Home states: "Belief is the enemy, it provides the means by which we can articulate our thoughts while simultaneously robbing them of vitality and vigor. I have always been fascinated by deceit and the texts collected here are a direct reflection of this interest." (Simon Ford)

Reprints

Matisse on Art, rev. ed., edited by Jack Flam (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1995. \$15.00 paper, \$25.00 hardback) is a must for anyone's library, especially if you do not have any of the editions. This is a portrait of a great artist through his own words. With 44 of Matisse's "writings" on art, this volume is one of the most useful and popular additions to the growing documentary literature of the 20th century. Part of Documents of Twentieth-Century Art series.

