

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

Cognition and the Visual Arts by Robert L. Solso (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994, \$39.95 cloth) answers the questions such as "Why do we find the Mona Lisa's smile so evocative? or Why do certain geometric designs by Frank Stella inspire feelings of relaxation, while others make us feel slightly dizzy? Ordinarily, it would take a highly complex explanation by those involved in cognitive psychology and physics. But Robert L. Solso, with humor and erudition, guides the reader through a gallery of well-known Western paintings, with additional forays into the realms of Asian, African, and prehistoric art. Although modern cognitive psychology is most complex, Solso takes the reader into the comprehensive area of study centering on the internal structures and processes of our mental lives vis-a-vis the visual arts, including human vision, the brain and vision, figure and form perception, visual cognition, eye movement perception, perspective, and memory. What is complex becomes clear, thanks to 150 line drawings, and reproductions of classic works of art. But the most complex becomes easier thanks to Solso's clarity of language and comprehension, especially at the end of the millennium when so many people know so much more about visual art than ever before.

The informal style of the author allows the reader to grasp complex scientific concepts more easily, in a much more stimulating manner.

As usual, MIT excels in book design and this is wonderful in the hand, beautifully laid out, and supplied with notes, bibliography and index. A must!

Philadelphia: A Guide to Art-related Archival Materials by Marina Pacini (Washington, DC, Archives of American Art, 1994) is an important resource documenting resources available to researchers in the Philadelphia area, which covers resources from the early 19th century through the 1990s.

For anyone doing research, this is truly a wonderful guide of what is available in the cradle of America, including 246 reels of microfilm and 46 oral history interviews, under the direction of Marina Pacini. Available from Archives of American Art, 8th & G Sts., N.W. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560.

American Typeplay by Steven Heller & Gail Anderson (Glen Cove, NY, PBC International, 1994,

\$45.00) is a stunning "showroom" of computer-generated typography and type design, with over 400 images demonstrating an eclectic array of approaches, from hand lettering to custom font design to retro and vernacular appropriation to classical homage. This is not just a demonstration of style, but also examples of annual reports, brochures, posters, book jackets, CD packages, magazine covers, typefaces, invitations, catalogs, logos, stationery, media kits, fonts and more are reproduced in full color. As I opened the book, I could imagine dozens, let alone hundreds, of students opening up this book as a prime example of what they are striving for—excellence in type design using ingenuity and the amazing array of possibilities created by the computer. It is a total experience using the new possibilities, so that what would have been extraordinary ten years ago seems to be just "common" these days, so design must be an added element to make the computer work for the client or product or viewer.

Dedicated to Paul Rand, this volume obviously is beautifully designed by none other than Alexander Isley Design, and reflects the taste and the talent of the authors as well. The book has visual impact, the highest degree of design, and a masterful way of presentation so that chapters such as *The New Classicism*, *Nostalgia*, *Puns*, *Metamorphic*, *Distorted Faces*, *New Faces*, *Street Smart*, etc. describe and entice. An appendix is presented with names and addresses of all designers, and an index helps the reader find the work of type designers. This is a stunning contribution to contemporary type design which will probably be current for a few years, at least.

Over My Dead Body: The Sensational Age of the American Paperback: 1945-1955 by Lee Server (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1994, \$16.95 paper, \$29.95 hardcover) is an illustrated history of the paperback's beginnings. According to Server, the American paperback was born in 1938 with an edition of Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth* and was quickly targeted to the returning GI. In contrast to film, television and radio, paperback houses experienced a relative freedom granted them by laws protecting literature. So taking advantage of this freedom, the publishers packaged their books to move, "flashing their wares like an open-raincoated exhibitionist—voluptuous cover art, sweat-soaked blurbs and titles that had no time for the niceties of evocation or double entendre.

In postwar paperbacks, the "illustrations offered endless variations on recurring motifs, namely

crimson-lipped females in lingerie, granite-jawed tough guys, blazing .45s, rumpled bedsheets, neon-lit hotel rooms" and so forth.

These paperbacks were largely reprints, but some authors, including Mickey Spillane, sold few books in hardcover, but their paperbacks sold into the millions. Fawcett was the first to bring out original works in paperback under their Gold Medal imprint, and then others followed.

The story continues with government investigations into "pornographic material" and then the Beat generation with Burroughs and Kerouac, and the juvenile delinquency was also a subgenre.

This is a fascinating tale, and one which incorporates the lives of many of us. This truly is an appreciation of the early years of the American paperback, one which is part of book history as well.

A History of Women Photographers by Naomi Rosenblum (New York, Abbeville, 1994, \$60.00) is a most important volume, documenting 155 years of women's photographic history. From the outset, Dr. Rosenblum exalts the accomplishments that women have made to photography, both as a profession and as an art form, from the very beginning. Comprehensive, eye-opening and illuminating, this volume covers women's contributions in all aspects of the medium--portraiture, social and scientific documentation, advertising, photojournalism, personal expression--setting the record straight. Some 240 women photographers, from Anna Atkins, Julia Cameron, and Geneviève-Elisabeth Francart Disderi to Tina Modotti, Lisette Model, Susan Meiselas, Cindy Sherman and Joyce Neimanas, this groundbreaking work provides a delightful reading experience both of the women's creativity and of the often-challenging contexts within which they worked. Bringing these women up to the standard of all individuals who have reflected the high standard of this art form, Dr. Rosenblum gives scholarly recognition to many of these women for the first time, since many of these women have been stunted in photographic exhibitions, collections, and criticism.

Illustrated with striking photographs (233 black and white and 30 in color), the volume includes densely detailed individual biographies and an extensive annotated bibliography. This will be an invaluable resource for years to come and should be in every photographic collection and in every art history collection.

New York Dada 1915-23 by Francis M. Naumann (New York, Abrams, 1994, \$60) is a fascinating

history of a period not well documented or remembered, but the author has gone to great strides to interview all the known survivors of this great period, when all activities centered around the apartment of Louise and Walter Arensberg, great collectors. This was a period that bridged American art with European art, and the major players such as Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Albert Gleizes, and Jean Crotti, coalesced with composer Edgard Varèse, and the writer Henri-Pierre Roché, along with American artists Man Ray, Charles Sheeler, Joseph Stella, Charles Demuth, Beatrice Wood, among others.

This book is dedicated to three women who were undeniably helpful in his research, Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, Louise Norton Varèse and Beatrice Wood, offering up collections of newspaper and magazine clippings, as well as many photographs. The period was full of parties, discussions, performances, installations, and all of this is documented in this important book.

Beautifully designed with 220 illustrations, 42 in color, a selected bibliography and index complete this amazing contribution to the foundation of modernism.

ART OF THE BOOK

William Blake at the Huntington, an introduction to the William Blake Collection in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California (New York, Abrams and Huntington Library, 1994, \$29.95 paper) describes the largest privately held collection of Blake, developed by Mr. Huntington even before he opened his library and art gallery. With 64 color plates, each full-page and analyzed and explained for greater appreciation, this accompanies a current exhibition of the Blake Collection at the Library. This is a beautifully reproduced volume, one which will enhance the understanding of a much neglected, but now lionized bookmaker, perhaps the first maker of artist books.

GENERAL

Nina's Book of Little Things by Keith Haring (New York, Prestel, 1994, \$19.95) is a facsimile of a unique book by Haring, created for one of his best friends on her seventh birthday, namely Nina Clemente, daughter of artist Francesco Clemente, a unique, handmade book. This facsimile, slightly reduced in format, has been published to share this book with a larger audience.

Haring's characters, whimsical and colorful, dance

from page to page, asking the book's owner to add his or her own drawings, stickers, mementoes, collections, or anything else--just so long as it is small. Haring has written his instructions inside the book in clear, bold handwriting. Yet the book is so beautifully printed that as an adult, one would be lax to add anything to it--yet children will have free rein so long as parents guide them, I am sure. Made for all kinds, young and old, the book can be used as an ongoing scrapbook/sketchbook, or as a collaboration between parent and child.

Haring's friendship with Nina was keen and genuine, but his forte was always art for public spaces--subway billboards, the sides of buildings, hospitals, and even a candy store in New York's Lower East Side, always getting incredible feedback from people, which nourished him. Haring's typical dogs with pointy noses, big blue birds, dancing figures, and grinning clowns are marvelously integrated with Haring's written suggestions for art activities. This book is a legacy by Keith Haring to elicit the child in all of us, big or small. There is a wonderful double page of "Things to do when it rains", which touches Umbrella's heart a great deal. A welcome addition to any bookwork collection.

Wire, the first of a new series called "Everyday Things" edited by Suzanne Slesin and Daniel Rozensztroch, designer Stafford Cliff, and photographer Gilles de Chabaneix, focuses on how this once commonplace thing has now begun to reappear in homes today as collectors' items. This stunning book shows that "plain wire objects" will never be looked at in the same way again. In fact, the Bibliotheque Forney in Paris will be holding an exhibition of wire objects this December.

Traced back to 17th century Slovakia, wire objects have been used residentially and commercially, indoors and out. By the height of the 19th century, a wide range of wire items such as egg baskets, carpet beaters, colanders, toast warmers, potato mashers, garden furniture, display racks, and bird cages, could be found in practically every American or European household, widely available in general stores and mail-order catalogs.

The book is organized into history, masterpieces, the table, the kitchen, the wine cellar, housekeeping, the garden, general store, toys, and has a wire directory and index.

From egg beaters to bird cages, this book is a stunning tribute to the individual craftsmen or small manufacturers who did things in an extraordinary way. Although the audience for this book is

collectors, stylists, and antique dealers, as a beautifully crafted and designed art book, **Wire** is a must!

The New Tattoo by Victoria Lautman, with photography by Vicki Berndt (New York, Abbeville Press, 1994, \$35) is an amazing array of "skin art" in riveting photographs in full-color, created by the most creative and innovative contemporary tattoo artists, divided into five chapters: Tribal, Paintings, Prints & Portraits, Imagination and Fantasy, Neotraditional, and All the Rest. The text is very witty, highly informative, and of course, illustrated by stunning photographs.

For visual art aficionados, the section on Paintings covers Duchamp, Van Gogh, Botticelli and even Munch's scream. Since tattooing is gone beyond biker chic and sailors' biceps to a more universal form of body ornament, this book is timely. An invaluable appendix provides answers to many questions to the laymen and those contemplating tattoo art. 100 color photographs really entice the eye.

Soul in the Stone: Cemetery Art from America's Heartland by John Gary Brown (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 1994, \$39.95) documents the importance of cemeteries, how they have reflected religious, ethnic, and secular interests of those living, as well as taste of a time. The black and white photographs document amazing tombstones which reflect the life, philosophy, vocation, or peculiarities of the deceased. The area portrayed involves Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Colorado, and New Mexico. From Egyptian sphinx to a rolltop desk, the variety of monuments is amazing. Production in duotone would have brought out the images even more, but as a haunting tribute to this neglected art form, Brown has made a significant contribution.

A bibliography is also included.

The Thunderbird Remembered: Maynard Dixon, the Man and the Artist by Dorothea Lange, Edith Hamlin, Daniel and John Dixon (Los Angeles, Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum in assoc. with University of Washington Press, 1994, \$19.95 paper) is a wonderful reminiscence of a giant of an artist and a man, Maynard Dixon, all in conversation with his first wife, Dorothea Lange, his second wife, Edith Hamlin, and his two sons. The narrative flows because each person pipes in another fact about the man. Interspersed with photographs, drawings and reproductions of paintings, this book is an interesting

biography by oral histories, a family album brought to life by hearing the "voices" of the people who knew Dixon better as a husband, father and painter. A delightful reminiscence!

Gertrude Stein in Words and Pictures, a photobiography, edited by Renate Stendhal (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1994, 19.95 paper) covers the entire life of the writer from 1874 through 1946 using quotes from her books, especially *Everybody's Autobiography*, as well as photographs from her entire life. Everybody is there, including Alice B in these 288 pages, which contain photographs by Cecil Beaton, Man Ray and so many more. In her salon at 276 rue de Fleurus, Stein hosted the famous and the non-yet-famous, including Picasso, Braque, Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Ezra Pound. Here in more than 350 images of Stein and friends, a delight, a nostalgic biography of a writer whose influence still has reverberations today. There is no there there--just here.

Dichter und Pilot: Antoine de Saint-Exupery (Poet and Pilot) with photographs by John Phillips, and essays by the photographer and Charles-Henri Favrod (Zurich, Scalo Verlag, 1994, \$35.00 dist. by D.A.P.) documents some of the last weeks of Saint-Exupery's life in photographs taken by his friend John Phillips, a photographer for *Life* magazine. Well-known as the author of the children's classic, *The Little Prince*, Saint-Exupery was also acclaimed in his time as a novelist, a poet, a pioneer of airmail flights in the 1920s, and a heroic pilot during World War II. In a recent exhibition at the Morgan Library in New York City, which commemorated the 50th anniversary of *Le Petit Prince*, visitors could realize what an intensely interesting man Saint-Exupery really was--flying the P-38 Lightning during World War II when his age was against him, but when he really insisted that he was prepared to put out his best for the cause of victory, one could ascertain that this was an extraordinary man--one who could write like a poet, fly like a bird, and live like a total human being.

Phillips, a very close friend and Francophile, persuaded the American General to allow St-Exupery, although officially too old to fly, to rejoin the squadron commanded by Captain Gavoiile in Alghero, Sardinia. From 10 May - 30 May 1944, Phillips took many photographs on the Alghero airbase. These were the last pictures of the writer's last days, for on 31 July, Major Saint-Exupery failed to return from a mission over France.

The German text includes an essay by Phillips of

the last day of the author's life, while Favrod writes about Saint-Exupery as a pilot. There is also a facsimile Letter to an American, which the author wrote on the night of 29-30 May 1944, handing it to Phillips at five in the morning. In 1985, John Phillips presented the manuscript of "Lettre à un Americain" to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. One can never read *Le Petit Prince* (The Little Prince) again in the same manner, without seeing this book and reading the other novels of St-Exupery, *Wind, Sand and Stars*; *Flight to Arras* and *Night Flight*, among others.

Beautifully printed, with 180 duotone photographs, this book reveals a simple man, utterly without pretension, who was always in tune with his environment and himself.

Dreamings - Tjukurrpa: Aboriginal Art from the Western Desert, edited by Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, with contributions by Geoffrey Bardon, Danzker, Vivien Johnson, Andreas Lommel, and Tom Mosby traces the painting movement that would change the face of traditional Aboriginal art forever, beginning in 1971, using acrylics, using traditional Aboriginal designs which became a unifying force in a community made up of seven different tribal groups. Now the painting movement has spread like a bushfire across the length and breadth of the Central Desert of Australia, resulting in other painting communities with their own styles.

All Central Desert paintings depict actual geographical locations, *Tjukurrpa*, and ceremonies associated with these places. The book illustrates 36 paintings by 34 artists, from the Donald Kahn Collection. This book accompanies a traveling show which opened at the Museum Villa Stuck in Munich and will travel to Edinburgh, Scotland; Groningen, The Netherlands; and Klagenfurt, Austria.

With 36 full-color and 15 black and white illustrations, this volume adds a great deal of in-depth analysis of this amazing work. Published by Prestel, 1994, \$55.00. Bibliography and notes.

ANDY WARHOL

If you love cats and angels, you'll love two small gift books--the first of a series--which is being published by Bulfinch Press.

Angels, Angels, Angels by Andy Warhol (New York, Bulfinch, 1994, \$9.95 hardcover) and *Cats, Cats, Cats* (\$9.95) are both collections of Warhol images from the archives of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. All images are

accompanied by playful quotations from Warhol's books and diaries. *Angels* has 11 color and 29 black white illustrations, while *Cats* has 17 color and 20 black and white illustrations. Delightful.

WRITERS ON ART

Transforming Vision: Writers on Art, selected by Edward Hirsch (New York, Bulfinch Press for Art Institute of Chicago, 1994, \$27.95) is a fascinating collection of writings about works of art in the Art Institute of Chicago. Gathering poems, essays, and short fiction suggested by works of art in the Art Institute of Chicago, Hirsch finds new pieces--written expressly for this book and published here for the first time. Of course, there are a few well known works such as Wallace Stevens's poem "Man with the Blue Guitar," inspired by Pablo Picasso's *Old Guitarist* and Joyce Carol Oates's musing on Edward Hopper's famed *Nighthawks*.

The array of writers on this astounding art collection is legend: Willa Cather, Saul Bellow, Delmore Schwartz, Richard Howard, Richard Wilbur, Carl Sandburg, Guy Davenport, Rita Dove, John Yau, Blaise Cendrars, Susan Sontag, Mark Strand, Philip Levine, John Updike, Charles Simic, Gary Wills and many more. There is a biographical index of artists and writers, and 59 color illustrations (some of which are close-ups of some of the paintings for your delectation and meditation). This is a beautifully designed book, one which will enlighten and enhance your understanding of paintings from the point of view of writers who see the works not from a purely visual, but from a universal point of view. A lovely gift to those who love literature and those who love art.

Brahaus by Samuele Mazza (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1994, \$16.95 paper) is the result of the famous designer, Mazza, requesting the world's most famous fashion designers to turn their talents toward thematic bra design. The result is this book, packed full of 199 full color photographs of beautiful and humorous, sometimes shocking, and always outrageous works of art. There is a witty sensibility, high style, flights of fancy, and visual puns.

With an introduction by Gillo Dorfles, the book has been divided into Edible & Domestic, Mechanical and Dynamic, Primitive and Natural, Urban and Perverse, and there is also a Picture Gallery of the Bra. With the introduction of the Wonderbra, one would think that this book will generate many fascinating sales. Each work of art is photographed on plain

mannequins against a simple background highlighting the design and individuality of each creation. There are captions identifying the artist and construction of each piece--nade of barbed wire, sunglasses, telephones, fencing oils, leaded glass, to mention a few.

Dutch Moderne: Graphic Design from deStijl to Deco by Steven Heller and Louise Fili (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1994, \$16.95 paper) is a unique view of the commercial design and decorative arts movement that thrived in Holland between the two World Wars. Holland might be small, but its contribution to 20th century design is vast!

In this period, the Dutch created an elegant, streamlined style, called Dutch Moderne, exhibiting a sense of order and proportion. As a style, the design and typography were politically neutral, while remaining artistically expressive. This is the first English-language book to document the elegant typography and imagery representative of art moderne between the two World Wars, much of which was previously unpublished in the U.S. The book has more than 200 full color and black and white illustrations, organized in eight chapters according to the aspect of society for which they were created: Politics, Culture, Industry, Food and Drink, Tobacco, Travel, and Typography. A bibliography completes this stunning volume.

As Seen on TV: The Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s by Karal Ann Marling (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1994, \$24.95) covers Elvis in his pink Cadillac, Mamie in her mink stole, Disneyland, the house in the suburbs, the new TV, which reflects the vibrant life and the decade of design as seen by Karal Ann Marling, an art historian at the University of Minnesota. This volume covers TV dinners, Disneyland, Nixon in Moscow, the new shopping malls and so much more. American life as reflected in design and its dictates as to style, taste, fashion, and music--a good background for what was to explode in the Sixties, and Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, and all the rest. Important book!

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Third Eye: Bela Kalman--A Lifetime in Photography by Sally Eauclaire (Weston, MA, Yearout Editions, 1994, dist. by University of New Mexico Press, \$50.00) is a stunning book of a life's work of a Hungarian-born photography whose 55 years have seen images with an inner eye, an intuitive

inner lens which he calls his "third eye". Bela Kalman travels widely, capturing on film first in black and white and then in color an amazing array of people and places, but with an incredible sense of composition, melding history, art and culture. 132 color plates, with 79 duotones make this book more than an album, but rather an understanding of a major talent, whose **homages** to many well-known photographers is done with great sensitivity and spirit.

The juxtaposition of images is so well conceived that the viewer really understands the talent of this Hungarian refugee o the United States. Rather than calling him a "professional" photographer, this reviewer really claims him as an "artist extraordinaire." Includes biography, which makes this artist believable and human. What a life, what an art!

William Garnett: Aerial Photographs (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994, \$45.00) is the first collection of Garnett's black and white aerial photographs, which he has taken from 1951 - 1984. Already documented in full color are his photographs in **The Extraordinary Landscape** (New York Graphic Society, 1982), but these 63 older, gorgeously printed black and white images from the career of a renowned aerial photography, show us snow geese, plowed fields, cattle trails, sand dunes, cracked ice, salt flats not as documentary photographs, but with the eye of a visual artist. The abstractions, design elements, and keen insight into composition makes these photographs almost aerial paintings! The shifting fields of light, shadow, designs, and shapes make these works of art remarkable, printed in 200-line screen duotone, cover California to the Florida Everglades in his Cessna 170-B, which he has flown since 1956.

An essay by Martha A. Sandweiss and a selected bibliography, this beautiful volume adds a more complete "picture" of a man, a plane, and a camera--with the added ingredient of consummate art.

Excursions Along the Nile: The Photographic Discovery of Ancient Egypt by Kathleen Stewart Howe (Santa Barbara Museum of Art, dist. by University of New Mexico Press, 1994, \$65.00 hardback, \$32.50 paper) contains the work of Francis Frith, Felix Teynard, Maxime Du Camp, Beato, Bedford, and many more occasional visitors, who visited sites that have since disappeared and reveal the Nile before it was transformed by recent intervention. The palms of Philae, known as the jewel of the Nile, beckon to us from these wonderfully reproduced 19th century photographs, but today the island, stripped of

its temples, lies beneath Lake Nasser.

These photographs are not only documentation, but also serve as mirrors, chronicling attitude at the time. Colonialism determined the photographers' and their customers' insistence that the Egyptians were quaintly costumed **types** who plied outlandish trades, but the photograph, perceived as documenting objective reality, reinforced such assumptions of cultural superiority.

Included are notes, 106 plates, a chronology, principal biographies, notes on selected photographs by Michael G. Wilson, selected bibliography and an index. This represents an exhibition which will be traveling through 1996.

Dorothea Lange: American Photographs with essays by Sandra S. Phillips, John Szarkowski and Therese Thau Heyman (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1994, \$24.95 paper) reveals the life and work of one of the best known women photographers of 20th century American life, Dorothea Lange, long known for the technical skills, aesthetic sense, and humanitarian ideas that enabled her to create unforgettable photographs.

This volume traces the artist's career from her first work through her images from the 1940s and 1950s, covering the relocation of Japanese-Americans, the operation of war industries in Northern California, and the emergence of a postwar urban culture. Lange's commitment to social justice is reflected in her choice of subjects.

There are 100 duotone images, many never before published, including three fully illustrated, interpretive essays by distinguished art historians, citing her relationship with Group f.64, her role in the evolution of American documentary style, and her notion of photography as an art form. This exhibition travels through March 1996. An outstanding contribution to the literature of such an important photographer.

The camera I: Photographic Self-Portraits From the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Collection, by Deborah Irmas and Robert Sobiezek (Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art and New York, Abrams, 1994, \$49.50) offers a fresh look at an art form, the photographic self-portrait. And it is tremendously interesting, from straightforward photobooth portrait of Andy Warhol to the Walker Evans' mysterious shadow on a wall. The Irmas Family has collected with a great eye and aesthetic taste, so that one can see what photographers have brought to their self-portraits: artistry, creativity, and

inventiveness.

The diversity and vivacity of these portraits are demonstrated in a provocative essay by Sobiezek, the curator of photography at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, so that there is a new angle in understanding Delineation and Surface, Distortion and Dreams, Disguise and Otherness. Exhibition Checklist and Selective Bibliography complete this important volume.

American Politicians: Photographs from 1843 to 1993 by Susan Kismaric (New York, Museum of Modern Art, dist. by Abrams, 1994, \$39.95) documents a marvelous collection of 150 duotone illustrations, from Harry Truman playing the piano for Lauren Bacall to the City Fathers of Hoboken, taken by Robert Frank. The essay relates the evolution of the role of photography in politics, as well as how political photographs are disseminated, the growth of wire services, picture agencies, and the control of photography by candidates or office holders, for example, the skillfully managed image of the Kennedy presidency.

Before World War II, most photographs were taken by professional news photographers. Later images are the work of independent artists offering alternative views, such as Robert Frank, Garry Winogrand and Elliott Erwitt, Larry Fink, and Judith Joy Ross. Chronology and bibliography are included.

Uncontrollable Bodies: Testimonies of Identity and Culture, ed. by Rodney Sappington & Tyler Stallings (Seattle, Bay Press, 1994, \$16.95 paper) is a compelling anthology of poetry, photography and prose (fictional and autobiographical) mixing the work of writers (Dennis Cooper), visual artists (Robert Flynt), activists (Greg Bordowitz) performance artists (Luis Alfaro) and sex workers (Carol Leigh), among others.

The theme of the book, the body considered as noteworthy of attention and reflection, as well as "a site of vulnerability" according to Sappington's introduction. Instead of being an apology, this book is a courageous, personal affirmative artistic discourse. This interdisciplinary array of talented people attest to the courage and determination of Bay Press to continue to present commentaries on contemporary culture in a dignified, stimulating and exciting manner. The determination and affirmative attitude of all these talented people attest to the reflective discussion of the body in the 1990s, which happens to be considered in such a fearful and anxious manner.

The quality of writing is so good here, the photographs and drawings so strong. This is a book for this time to provoke and to elicit more discussion by all of us who possess a body too.

LEFT HAND BOOKS

This innovative press has two new titles:

Wolf's Clothing by Rillo (Barrytown, NY, Left Hand Books, 1994, \$9.00 paper) includes word play, hard-edge riddling and the loony, cartoon-like lyricism used to render the coyote of the American deserts, the insignia of the first three books of Rillo. **Wolf's Clothing** mixes episodes from the Homeric "Hymn to Hermes" with lines taken from Raoul Walsh's film **White Heat**, starring James Cagney as the train robber Cody Jarret. In **Wolf's Clothing**, the coyote takes on shape-shifting attributes, now manifesting as the charming cattle-rustler, now as the psychopathic train robber: "I though you said/cleanest in the west? That mirror's so dirty/you can see double."

Of course, seeing a wolf in sheep's clothing is turned on its head in this book. There are riddles on identity, on disguise and disclosure, running through these rhyming quatrains, which possess an aura of mystical ferocity. Susan Smith Nash has an intensely interesting essay analyzing **Coyote** in all its aspects, which is illuminating.

Buster Keaton Enters into Paradise by Dick Higgins (Barrytown, NY, Left Hand Books, 1994, \$12.00) shows Higgins at his very best, turning language into metaphysics, a turning of language against itself. To make **Buster Keaton Enters into Paradise**, Higgins played eleven scoreless games of **Scrabble** with Alison Knowles and Bryan McHugh, using the lists of words formed to write the lay's eleven scenes. The players began each game with "Buster Keaton" spelled out in the center of the board. So "Buster Keaton" served as a kind of free radical, to be portrayed on stage by a dancer. During each scene, Buster Keaton film clips are projected to allow the dancer's steps to relate to these film excerpts.

Each scene has a quartet of speakers which serves as a chorus--commenting on both the dancer's and the projected action. A different chorus is used in each scene. Actually, only two choruses are needed to perform the play. The dancer represents Keaton's impact on 20th century art forms, since Higgins believes that "Keaton's film work has, over time, outstripped Charlie Chaplin's. His comic everyman figure and deadpan mask have become a modern icon. His film plots show an outsider passing through

phases of rejection and desire. Yet those qualities which make him an outsider allow him to triumph in the end." Deliriously entertaining.

For more information, write to Left Hand Books, Station Hill Road, Barrytown, NY 12507. (914)758-6478. Fax: (914)758-4416.

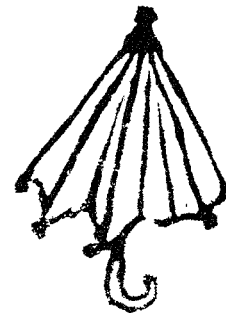
MAIL ART

Railroad Postcards in the Age of Steam (Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 1994, \$29.95) documents a treasure trove selected from John Vander Maas' renowned collection at the University of Iowa's Libraries. After an introductory essay by Grant, there is an album of cards which demonstrates why images of American railroads played such an important part in the postcard craze. The book is important not only for the brilliance of the images on the postcards, but also conveys a sense of how important railroads once were to the American people. Of interest to both collectors of postcards as well as photographic historians.

Greetings from Kentucky: A Post Card Tour, 1900-1950 by Wade Hall (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1994, \$39.95) gives a great view of Kentucky through time and place via a collection of 500 vintage picture postcards. Covering all regions of Kentucky, from the mountains in the east to the flatlands of the Jackson Purchase as well as Kentuckians at work and play, this finely printed book of mostly black and white prints, but with a small selection of color postcards, is a gem. The organization of the images is by alphabet--F for Farming, etc.

NEW GENRE PUBLIC ART

Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art, a book by Suzanne Lacy (Seattle, Bay Press, 1995, \$18.95) is a remarkable contribution to the body of theoretical work on contemporary art and social issues.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Handcarved by Hans Waanders