

BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by Amy Navratil

Coulson, Anthony J. *A bibliography of design in Britain 1851-1970*. London, Design Council Publications, 1979 (dist. by Nichols Publishing, P.O. Box 96, New York, NY 10024). ISBN 0-85072-091-5 \$28.50

With the great surge of interest in the long neglected history of design in Britain, this carefully wrought, authoritative and "reasonably" comprehensive bibliography of that subject is the basis for further research in years to come.

Compiled by a librarian with professional concern for the need for research and bibliographical control, the book contains full details of some 7000 documentary sources relating to the theory, practice and background of industrial design in Britain from the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851 to the beginnings of the 1970s. The author begins with a chronological table of highlighted events of the years covered in the volume. From the educational developments and official bodies, international exhibitions and museums and collections, a good part of the bibliography deals with design and designers, and then takes various aspects of design, i.e., interior, furniture, costume and fashion, transport, as well as including toys, musical instruments, photography and design for the performing arts.

A select group of journals are listed in a general way in the back of the book, notwithstanding their specific activities and journals which are listed within the bibliography. Coulson has also done an important task of compiling what limited bibliographies, indexes, abstracts and catalogs have been published to date.

With a subject index, the user can deal with British design for the first time from a research point of view. Three cheers for an important contribution which will be of interest to all design collections.

International Directory of Arts. 14th ed. 1979-80. Frankfurt, Art Address Verlag Muller (dist. by Marquis Who's Who), 1978. 2v. ISBN 0-8379-4302-7 \$70.00

This fourteenth edition of the *International Directory of Arts* presents addresses and descriptive information on more than 110,000 museums, schools, galleries, dealers, artists, collectors, experts, and professionals active throughout the world. Compared to the 13th edition, there are about 10,000 new entries.

Certainly in looking at the list of artists, there are countless gaps. In addition, art periodicals are limited in scope and some died 18 months ago. More careful research must be done with people on location to help them. Due to the nature of the beast, the text is interspersed with countless small advertisements which seem to get in the way visually of any aesthetic order. To be sure, this is a necessary but expensive volume, but we think that there should be another way to produce it with the updating which is necessary to make it a better tool and without the heavy advertising.

The *Art Diary* from *Flash Art* must be purchased to keep aware of contemporary trends and artists.

Lachenbruch, David. *Video-Cassette Recorders: The Complete Home Guide*. New York, Everest House, 1979. 235p., illus. ISBN 0-89696-016-1 \$6.95 paper

Written by America's leading authority on consumer electronics, this book serves as an unprecedented guide to acquiring home videocassette recorders, which the author feels makes "all time... prime time." Since people can now select the best showings for viewing, regardless of the time they air, the power has gone to the viewer and **not** to the networks.

The author cites the history, principles and possible impact of the VCR, and discusses the legal aspects. There is advice for purchasing, standards and formats, types of cassettes, installation and testing. The illustrations include all the VCR products available at publication time, and listings of more than 30 models and 15 brands of recorders, color and monochrome cameras and accessories.

Techniques on how to transfer home movies, make home tapes with a camera, and how to do your own duplicating and sound dubbing are also included. An appendix lists 1,319 pre-recorded programs available on cassettes and where to buy them. A handy reference tool for the consumer and the public library.

National Directory of Arts Support by Business Corporations. Edited by Daniel Millsaps and Editors of the Washington International Arts Letter. (Arts Patronage Series 7) 221p. ISBN 0-912972-08-3 \$65.00

This Directory shows some 700 main corporations (with addresses and phone numbers) along with 2812 selected affiliates, divisions and subsidiaries, giving their state locations so that one can look for regional corporations in a specific geographic area. There is also a separate 2900 officer location which shows the list of patrons of the arts on the private as well as on the corporate level.

The book serves as an aid in research of corporate art collections and exhibition programs (corporations given to U.S. Treasury for matching with local money); arts council and association support; community development; restoration; conferences and meeting support; cultural centers; dance; education; library support; exhibition support and activities; festivals; films; museums; opera; symphony and other music; TV; theater; among others. A useful source for funding information.

Cowen, Painton. *Rose Windows*. San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1979. 144p., 103 illus. (60 in color), bibliog., index ISBN 0-87701-121-4 \$18.95 until 1 June (\$22.50 thereafter)

The skillful author, a professional filmmaker who has also been an editor of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, has created a spectacular study of the world's stained glass windows, expounding on the history and iconography of the rose windows, but also mingling eastern and western thought. The angles of the photographs, the schema, drawings and designs, as well as the sensitive placement of the illustrations makes this book an important contribution to the history of stained glass windows in general, and rose windows in particular.

Goldberg, RoseLee. *Performance: Live Art 1909 to the present*. New York, Harry N. Abrams, 1979. 128p., 174 illus. bibliog., index ISBN 0-8109-1456-5 cloth; 0-8109-2181-2 paper \$12.50 hardcover; \$6.95 paper

In the most exciting period of artists' performances, from 1909 with the Futurist performances, to the present, RoseLee Goldberg writes the first history of performance with precision and dedication. Formerly the director of the Royal College of Art Gallery in London and a regular contributor to various art journals, she is currently the Curator of the Kitchen Center for Video and Music in New York City.

Since performance "has only recently become accepted as a medium of artistic expression in its own right," research into formulating a history must necessarily be done from scripts, texts, photographs and descriptions from spectators themselves. What the author finds is that artists have always turned to live performance as one means among many of expressing their ideas, but on the other hand, these events have always been omitted from the process of critically evaluating a movement, a development not as a deliberate means of omission but merely because of the difficulty of inserting them into the history of art.

The richness of the history from Futurist to Russian, from Dada to Surrealist Performance from the first art institution to provide a performance workshop, the Bauhaus, and then to the 1940s and the collaboration between artists, musicians and dancers to the total acceptance today of performance as a widely recognized art form is mapped out in this important volume.

The only criticism one can make of the book is the lack of great enthusiasm in the prose. The descriptions seem two-dimensional, lacking the energy and vitality which the events themselves contained and communicated. A "historic restraint" seems to have evolved in the prose analysis. And the history of performance of the 1970s is yet to be written. But one cannot avoid the importance of this first history of performance, a remarkable monument. A must for everyone in the art world.

Mason, Donald L. *The Fine Art of Art Security: Protecting Public and Private Collections Against Theft, Fire, and Vandalism*. New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979. 96p., illus., index ISBN 0-442-25118-1 \$8.95

Written by the former senior investigator of art crimes for the FBI, this tight little volume is packed full of good pointers for the security of art collections not only in private homes and museums, but also in libraries, galleries, etc.

The book is written clearly and succinctly, for the author comes right to the point. Precautions must be taken with perimeter protection devices, interior devices such as infrared systems, ultrasonic systems, silent alarms, etc. In addition, the guard force is explored.

Security against fire, vandalism, as well as a full report on major electronic security systems gives the reader a choice. Suggestions are made to all institutions and private collectors in a point by point manner. In addition, the author discusses the International Guide to Missing Treasures founded by two New York City art dealers, Lynn Epstein and

Ronald Feldman, along with the author, which reports the world's missing art.

A list of Security Equipment Manufacturers completes this step-by-step guide to better art security.

Guerman, Mikhail. *Art of the October Revolution*. New York, Harry N. Abrams, 1979. 240p., 428 illus. (184 in color, 72 in two-color) ISBN 0-8109-0675-9 \$25.00

This is a bargain not only for its price, but because there is so much visual documentation unaccessible until now in this beautifully designed volume. The editorial material was prepared under the supervision of Aurora Art Publishers in Leningrad, representing the latest research and current feeling in the USSR about a subject which has recently aroused strong interest elsewhere in the world.

From 1917 to 1922, artists were polarized, but there was never a place for "middle-of-the-road" art, indifferent art which was basically alienated art. Kandinsky, Malevich, and the Suprematists led to allegorical artists, to the realists, ending in 1922 in the AARR, the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia.

The illustrations are spectacular. Printed beautifully, this book becomes a digest of Russian art for the five-year period, and there are few artists who have been avoided. El Lissitzky, Chagall, Rodchenko, Mayakovsky and Tatlin are some recognizable names, but there are countless others. There is an Index of Artists' Names and works reproduced. An important contribution for any contemporary research collection.

Doerter, Jim. *All the Times (the East-West Chronicles): Historical & Artistic Monuments of the World, How They Got There, When they Fell and Who Pushed Them Over*. Los Altos, California, William Kaufmann, 1979. 80p., illus. ISBN 0-913232-69-6 \$7.00 set of four newspapers

This witty, irreverent visual history of the human race from 3000 B.C. to the present appears in four full-size 20-page newspapers, packaged and shrink-wrapped. To be sure these are not made to last, but what fun they are while they do! A gifted teacher of the history of art at Southern Oregon State College, Doerter has divided "Western Civilization" into four periods: 1) 3000 BC to the time of Christ, 2) Christ to 1000 AD, 3) 1000 AD to 1500, and 4) 1500 to the present. Headlines such as "Big Mike and Pope Ink Contract" or "Mongols on World Tour" jump at you. Each issue also has a chart illustrating a period or history, a movement, or a cultural phase. In addition, there are many photographs, drawings, and small illustrations. The concept is wild, almost staggering as West meets East demonstrating simultaneous events in both continents. There is a beautiful mix of textual facts and humor. A wonderful way to see time charts coincide with the history of taste in a contemporary medium and especially viewpoint.