

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

An Artist's Book of Inspiration: A Collection of Thoughts on Art, Artists, and Creativity, compiled and edited by Astrid Fitzgerald (Hudson, NY, Lindisfarne Press, 1996, \$17.95 paper) is a collection of thoughts from artists and thinkers of the past and present lovingly gathered over many years in the personal journals of the artist Astrid Fitzgerald, revealing something of the mystery in which creativity finds its way from the energies of the cosmos into the imagination and faculties of the individual artist, eventually into the solitude of the studio, and finally into a work of art.

The true reader will be a creative artist who connects with the creative beings in all times and in all places. There is inspiration in this anthology to stir the creative juices of any human being who wants to plug into the "reason why". All the arts can be appealed to, for creativity is the key. From Plato and Plotinus to Gabo and Kandinsky, this is an exhilarating gathering which will move the soul and inspire the mind, develop the human heart and stir the brain to make art. Beautifully designed, this will be worn enough to warrant the purchase of two: one to keep, and one to give. (Lindisfarne Press is located at RR4, Box 91 A-1, Hudson, NY 12534, (518)851-9155).

The Book, Spiritual Instrument, edited by Jerome Rothenberg & David Guss (New York, Granary Books, 1996, \$21.95) is a reprint of the *New Wilderness Letter #11* first published in 1982 and now long out-of-print. Completely intact except for a new preface by Jerome Rothenberg includes "Le Livre, Instrument Spirituel" by Stéphane Mallarmé, translated and visually interpreted by Michael Gibbs; "The Book and the Desert/{Wilderness}" an interview with Edmond Jabès, translated by Jack Hirschman; "The Book as an Instrument of Performance" Becky Cohen's fold-out section of photographs of poets reading from their work; Alison Knowles & George Quasha on *The Book of Bean*; "A Book" by Dick Higgins; selections from the Popul Vuh with translation and commentary by Dennis Tedlock; plus works by Karl Young, David Meltzer, Tina Oldknow, J. Stephen Lansing, Eduardo Calderón, David Guss, Jed Rasula, Paul Eluard, Gershom Scholem and Herbert Blau.

The discussion is on form, the extension is that everything in the book exists in order to end up in the world, and what a wonderful springboard to discussion!

Boxer: An Anthology of Writings on Boxing and the Visual Arts, edited by David Chandler, John Gill, Tania Guha, and Gilane Tawadros (Cambridge, MIT Press/Institute of International Visual Arts, London, 1996, \$20 paper) is the outgrowth of an exhibition at the Walsall Museum & Art Gallery in 1995, inspired by Joyce Carol Oates' insightful reflections on the sport in *On Boxing*, her ambivalence and her perspective as a working class woman who is both attracted and repelled by the sport. Boxing elicits issues of race, class and gender, enough to generate a whole book of 10 essays and duotone illustrations, providing a multifaceted look at perceptions of the sport, embracing issues of masculinity, class, eroticism, and race. Writers such as Joyce Carol Oates, Sarah Hyde, David Alan Mellor, Keith Piper, Nick James and Roger Conover examine boxing in a wide variety of contexts—high art and popular culture, painting and sculpture, photography, film and television—all seeing boxing and the visual arts having a relationship that crosses and distorts social and artistic hierarchies. In this age of intermedia, the Art of Boxing is indeed one which has gone from Joe Louis to Glenn Ligon, from Clara Bow to boxerobics, it's all here. Leroy Neiman, move over, or else!

The Bulfinch Guide to Art History, edited by Shearer West (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 1996, \$37.50) is a unique one-volume reference in no way in competition with the new *Dictionary of Art*. The first section of the volume contains 13 incisive essays written by British art historians about Western art from ancient times to the present.

The second section is a substantial dictionary of more than 5,000 art terms and individual artists' biographies selected to complement the essays, including a complete survey of important female artists. 200 color plates and 200 black and white images make this a quick reference tool for anyone's home library.

The Devil: A Visual Guide to the Demonic Evil, Scurrilous and Bad by Genevieve Morgan and Tom Morgan (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1996, \$17.95 cloth) covers Lucifer, Satan Beelzebub, and the Prince of Darkness illustrating the Devil with contemporary imagery of William Wegman to classical engravings and Assyrian demons. The Devil has answers to all your devilish problems, including how to address devils around the world, to the wicked mysteries, the methods of protection, and much more. With vivid language and humor, the authors create an atmosphere that is as close to an unhallowed fireside chat as one will ever come upon. Bibliography and list of sources make this volume an entertaining and yet wise reference tool.

Encyclopedia or Women in Religious Art by Diane Apostolos-Cappadona (New York, Continuum Books, 1997, \$44.50 cloth) is designed to give basic information about the roles and images of women in religious art, which is broadly defined here to include the art of all the major religious traditions of the world, even those whose art is distinguished by the absence of the human figure. From goddesses, celestial beings, demons, metaphorical entities, and legendary women, there are also historical women: leaders, artists, writers, and even women patrons of the arts. With over 2,000 entries and 101 illustrations, this is an indispensable reference guide to the themes, motifs, subject matter, iconography and visual topics related to women in this religious world, with cross-references, appendices, and exhaustive subject index. The book entails cultural anthropology, gender studies, ancient archaeology, contemporary Japanese dance, and much more.

Timelines of the 20th Century by David Brownstone and Irene Franck (Boston, Little, Brown, 1996, \$29.95) is a chronology of 7,500 key events, discoveries, and people that shaped our century. This book captures everything from penicillin to Picasso, from journeys to the moon to unprecedented medical advances. All the events of politics and war; science, technology and medicine; arts and literature; and social, economic, and everyday life are compared in juxtaposed columns. Just think that Louise Nevelson was born the same year as the paper clip! Lord Mountbatten was born the same year as Luis Bunuel, when a Gulf Coast hurricane destroyed much of Galveston, Texas. The index can be the specific key, but browsing in this book gives new insight into history and time passing!

Handwriting in America: A Cultural History by Tamara Plakins Thornton (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, \$30) reminds this reviewer of the time she started to learn how to form letters, in other words, write not print, according to the formal Palmer method, and my teacher, Miss Simmons, played the *Skater's Waltz*, believe it or not! We learned to write to *The Skater's Waltz* in fourth grade, because our last two fingers were the "skaters", according to Ms. Simmons.. Still, I should have been a "doctor" because my handwriting looks like one of those prescription slips. Later, with the trained hand of calligraphy, I improved my own handwriting, largely because I wanted to prove that I could write clearly and neatly. The relation between handwriting and character has been confirmed, denied, and disputed over the past two hundred years. From colonial copybooks to today's computers, Thornton explores the shifting functions and meanings of handwriting in America. In the 1920s, graphological columns were as pervasive in America's newspapers as astrological

columns, and with a similar purpose. In our schools, handwriting means character meant kismet, since report cards all had a box for "Handwriting" with "exceptional" "good" "fair" and "poor" and the teacher's comments on top of that!

The author puts great value to writing by hand, largely because she learned to read and write on a computer (her photograph is included in the book as a child sitting at the keyboard). She learned to hand print later and then handwriting came even later. She tells us how 18th century cursive dealt not with character but with social functions. Victorian reforms put an end to all this because of a teacher, Platt Spencer, whose handwriting theories took America by storm, prescribing curves and angles based on the forms of nature. And good handwriting had a moral purpose too--it would mold character. Then came Austin Palmer, who made us stiffen our wrists and fingers, and by the mere pumping of the elbow, make ovals and verticals--the two basic elements of the alphabet. We learned how to manipulate our muscles, not by sensibility or character.

This book stresses what people said, wrote and taught about handwriting rather than handwriting itself. In fact, it is a "history" of pedagogical and philosophical theories dealing with handwriting. If you are a printer or bookmaker, one who loves calligraphy or pens, then this is the book for you. If you are interested in the act of writing, then this too could appeal. Nostalgia reins supreme.

Glass Art by Peter Layton (Seattle, Univ. of Washington Press, 1996, \$49.95 cloth) is an encyclopedic anthology of the Studio Glass Movement, Materials and Techniques, Architecture from all countries in the world. It is a gallery of 110 color plates as well, but this overview and the design of the book does not necessarily speak of "coffeetables". Instead, this is an historical overview of what has become one of the "hot" materials in the 90s.

Art on the Edge and Over: Searching for Art's Meaning in Contemporary Society 1970s-1990s, by Linda Weintraub, with essays by Arthur Danto and Thomas McEvelley (Litchfield, CT, Art Insights, dist. by D.A.P., 1996, \$47.00 cloth, \$22.50 paper) answers many of the perplexing questions about contemporary art that have consistently been posed over the past 30 years by the public and by the art community. What has confused the public about contemporary art in museums and galleries is eliminated by Weintraub's clear and lucid prose. Some of the themes treated are Nature, The Artist, The Communal Self, as well as Processes, Media, Purposes, Aesthetics. Danto asks "Why does art need to be explained" justifies Weintraub's presentation of a series of serious works of a kind never before

encountered in the history of world art. McEvilley writes of "Value in an Age of Chaos" and how the Avant-Garde is indeed evaluated. Artists highlighted in *Art on the Edge and Over* include: Marina Abramovic, Joseph Beuys, Christian Boltanski, Sophie Calle, Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler, Rimma Gerlovina and Valeriy Gerlovin, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, David Hammons, On Kawara, Mike Kelley, Barbara Kruger, Wolfgang Laib, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Gerhard Richter, Andres Serrano, Laurie Simmons, Haim Steinbach, Paul Thek, Rosemarie Trockel, Meyer Vaisman, and Andrea Zittel, among others. 28 color and 132 black and white reproductions engage the reader and enhance the text. This book fills a gaping hole in art historical texts. It certainly will help to explain some of the questions that have plagued museum and gallery viewers in the 1980s and 1990s.

Women Bookbinders 1880-1920 by Marianne Tidcombe tells the story of how women awoke during the Victorian era to look for profitable ways to spend their time other than the tired social and ridiculous pastimes used to fill their empty hours. Since bookbinding was considered a trade, not an artistic craft, women worked for a pittance in commercial binderies. Only when they entered newly opened art schools for women did they discover opportunities for becoming designer bookbinders. Inspired by Ruskin and William Morris's advocacy of the handicrafts, women's bookbinding caught on, and many women began to express themselves through what became an artistic medium.

This is the first major work to study Sarah Prideaux, Katherine Adams, Sybil Pye and the Guild of Women Binders, but it also encompasses almost all other women trade binders at the end of the 19th century and those who ran shops in Britain before 1900. Appendices include the tools used by the major bookbinders, a list of women in charge of bookbinding shops in Britain before 1900. There are 32 color plates of bookbindings designed during this period by the artists described and includes over 100 black and white photographs. (New Castle, DE, Oak Knoll Press and British Library, 1996, \$58.00 plus shipping from 414 Delaware St., New Castle, DE 19720.

On the Edge of America: California Modernist Art 1900-1950, edited by Paul J. Karlstrom (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1996, \$45) is a collection of nonacademic essays about the various controversies and reinventions connected to the high art movement in California. Included are paintings, murals, sculpture, film, photography, and architecture. Regionalist in intention, this alternative culture transformed modernism to suit its own imperatives--and that is the theme throughout all these essays.

Politics rears its ugly head in a discussion of the Rincon Annex Post Office murals by Anton Refregier, which were supposedly communist-inspired and subversive. Thanks to a protest on the part of San Francisco's museum directors, the murals were saved from destruction. Essays by Peter Selz (about foreign visitors), Margarita Nieto (Mexican Art and L.A. 1920-40), architecture by the late David Gebhard, Visual Music and Film as Art by William Moritz as well as Modernist Photography by Therese Heyman stand out. The plates, most in black and white, cry out for better reproduction, but the appendix which contains a timeline of institutions, events and individuals is a treasure. This book is published in association with the Archives of America Art, Smithsonian Institution, and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. There are a great many modernist artists missing from this volume, so perhaps another book will have to fill in the gaps and the people too.

GENERAL

French Modern: Art Deco graphic design by Steven Heller and Louise Fili (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1996, \$17.95 paper) reflects this team's survey of Art Deco in this sophisticated celebration of design icons from all aspects of French life in the 1920s and 1930s, from fashion and wine to culture and industry. Fans, packaging, counter cards, soap labels, magazine covers, posters, catalog covers, type fonts and books and so much more are beautifully illustrated in this anthology of great design.

Kid Stuff: Great Toys from our Childhood by David Hoffman (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1996, \$15.95 paper) historicizes 40 favorite toys--from Lego to Silly Putty, from Slinky to Etch-a-Sketch. The stories, creators, changes, and evolution into icons of popular culture are all here in glorious color. Know the history of your favorites, and acknowledge the importance of popular culture on our lives.

Picasso and els 4 Gats: The Early Years in Turn-of-the Century Barcelona under the direction of Maria Teresa Ocaña (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 1996, \$75.00) documents the celebrated bar that served as the main meetingplace for artists and intellectuals in turn-of-the-century Barcelona--an avant-garde hub that became the venue for young Pablo Picasso's first one-man show. Comprising primarily portraits of his friends and acquaintances, the exhibition launched Picasso's career and pushed him toward the forefront of Europe's modernist movement.

This volume represents the catalog of an important show held at the Pablo Picasso Museum in Barcelona in

1995, reproducing many of the Els 4 Gats works for the first time including a large number of stunning pastels. Includes are rarely seen paintings, drawings and illustrated letters from this pivotal and unfamiliar period in Picasso's early artistic life, many reproduced here for the first time in color. With 222 color plates and 12 black and white, this is a sumptuous album and chapter in the history of one of the icons of 20th century art.

Art & Wonder: An Illustrated Anthology of Visionary Poetry, selected and introduced by Kate Farrell (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 1996, \$18.95) is another in the series of giftbook anthologies from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which covers wishes and fantasies to dreams, prophecies, and epiphanies. Poets include Czeslaw Milosz, D.H. Lawrence, Anna Akhmatova, William Butler Yeats, Langston Hughes, Goethe, Tennyson and many more, with art work covering every possibility. This is definitely a picture researcher's dream project.

Ynez Johnston by Gerald Nordland (Miami, Grassfield Press, 1996, \$40) is the first major monograph on California modernist, which accompanied a full-scale retrospective organized by Kennedy Museum of American Art in Athens, Ohio. Nordland has been able to interweave Johnston's life, her collaborations with her husband, writer John Berry, her involvement in the Los Angeles art world since 1951 and the evolution of her unique style.

From her background in the Bay Area, her youthful excursions into Chinatown and early exposure to Persian and Indian miniatures, the reader sees the logical outgrowth of her iconography, creating a cosmos comprised of intricate architectural, figurative and animal forms and personal symbols all arranged in a flat aerial perspective. Her travels to Mexico, Tibet, India and Barcelona provided additional inspiration and confirmation of her own bent toward minute detail.

56 color plates, 81 illustrations, chronology and a selected bibliography make this monograph a treasure.

Imaginary Parents: A Family Autobiography with text by Sheila Ortiz Taylor and Art by Sandra Ortiz Taylor (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico, 1996, \$35.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper) is the story of two sisters, one who uses words, the other who re-creates her childhood with installations and assemblage boxes. Their heroes, their glamorous and mysterious parents, living in Hollywood during and after World War II. Cigarettes are everywhere, a meal is only a meal with meat or eggs. There are red lips, red toenails, and red fingernails, which match red cotton blouses festooned with yellow sombreros.

Sheila, the writer, talks about her Anglo-vaudevillian-lawyer father and her Chicana movie star manqué mother, stringing together beautiful vignettes that read like film clips. The text reflects the collages of her sister, Sandra, where one visual leads to another visual, fracturing into another until a rich family drama and a remarkably clear child's perspective emerge through the silences and the substance.

The layers of tortillas, horses, books, boats, mirrors, guns are all in the family cabinet of the Ortiz Taylor family. Sandra uses all of these in her collages, which are reproduced in full-color in 14 plates, while readers will begin to recollect their own families, relishing this touching portrait of a more than common American family. What a wonderful read! What a wonderful vision of an artist's family in Sandra's collages. Sandra, by the way, is also a book artist who has been in many exhibitions throughout the U.S.

Off the Deckle Edge: A paper-making journey through India by Neeta Premchand (Bombay, Anku Project, 1996, \$49.95 from Oak Knoll Books) is a prose diary of the artist who is also the photographer for this journey. She visits towns and villages of Kalpi, Sanganer, Junnar, Aurangabad, Warha, Pune, Ahmedabad and Pondicherry. Having discovered while she was on tour in Kalpi that Munnalal Khaddari, the author of a rare 1938 book on papermaking, was still alive though in his nineties at the time, she visited the oldest man she had ever seen in her life, and was struck speechless by the honor of meeting such a figure.

Khaddari revived the traditional crafts, thanks to Ghandi's influence, and employed men and women to make paper. Upon Premchand's visit, he produced the rare book, which the author managed to have photocopied. With no family, no children, and no one interested in his accomplishments and efforts made for the sake of papermaking, Khaddari asks Premchand to "go back and tell people what I have told you. Tell them how we made paper--throw the seeds into the wind which will carry them far; if they fall on stony ground, they will wither and die, but if they fall on fertile soil, they will sprout and bloom again." As a result, Premchand locates people and places that have carried on the tradition and this book bears witness to them.

The papermaking portion describes the process, raw materials, vocabulary and equipment relevant to India. Included is a general history of papermaking, along with 7 bound-in full-page paper specimens and 107 colorful and exotic photographs. This is a beautifully produced book distributed by Oak Knoll Books, 414 Delaware St., New Castle, DE 19720.

William Morris, edited by Linda Parry (New York, Abrams, \$60) includes essays by a distinguished team of scholars, curators, and experts that explore the balance between Morris' many spheres of influence and set his work—including painting, typography, poetry, novels, illuminations, stained glass, tiles, furniture and tapestries—in the context of the Victorian Age.

Morris' methods of design and production, his business acumen, and his early Socialist beliefs, as well as his feeling for church restoration, are all examined in an effort to understand this true Renaissance man, in the year of his centenary. His relationships with fellow artists Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti are also explored. Photographs, reproductions of all kinds of works of art, pages of books, wallpaper designs, interior designs, Kelmscott Press publications, and so much more are included, many from private collections.

There is also a List of Morris Objects in the Victoria and Albert Museum, a bibliography and an index. The exhibition was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London from 9 May to 1 September 1996.

Art into Theatre: Performance interviews and documents by Nick Kaye (Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996, \$21) is a book concerned with moves toward performance and practices in performance which effect an intersection between disciplines, namely intermedia. Most of the interviews developed between 1990 and 1994, but some were made in 1983, 1985 and 1988 covering a wide range of exchanges and intermedia events between 1952 and 1994. From John Cage to Forced Entertainment Theatre Cooperative, from Dennis Oppenheim to Richard Schechner, from the Wooster Group to Marina Abramovic, these discussions cover most "performance art" but also explorations of video, cinema, process and site in contemporary performance.

Artists included are John Cage, Carolee Schneemann, Barry Le Va, Dennis Oppenheim Stuart Brisley, Joan Jonas, Richard Foreman, Michael Kirby, Anthony Howell, Ping Chong, Richard Schechner, Linda Montano, Marina Abramovic, Ulay, Julian Maynard Smith, Cliff McLucas, Mike Pearson, Tim Etchells, Richard Lowdon and Elizabeth LeCompte. This is an important book, another in the short list of books which cover the alternative arts at the end of the 20th century. The words of the artists are honored, and that is important. This book can be ordered from International Publishers Distributor, Two Gateway Centre, Newark, NJ 07101 USA.

John Cage's Theatre Pieces: Notations and Performances by William Fetterman (Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996, \$36) begins with a wonderful background of Cage's life and the growth and

development of Cage's performance history through 1992, when he died suddenly. Fetterman had access directly to Cage and in this professional and personal friendship gleaned Cage's confidence and editorial review of this manuscript. Much of the material comes from previously undocumented material discovered among the unpublished scores and notes of Cage and his frequent collaborator, David Tudor, as well as the author's interviews with Cage and with individuals closely associated with his work, including David Tudor, Merce Cunningham, Bonnie Bird, Mary Caroline Richards, and Ellsworth Snyder.

To know Cage's writings is only one half of the coin. To see his influences and his activities in the theater, Fetterman writes clearly and directly about each phase of Cage's career. The use of chance, innovative notations, structure, and use of time make the process much more important than the object. The performance itself is more important than the score.

Appendices include: John Cage on Teaching, John Cage on *Theatre Piece*, David Tudor's 1960 Performance of *Theatre Piece*, *Song Books Solos 9, 61 and 87* in Performance, a *Dialogue Score* by John Cage, and France Ott Allen's Experiences of HPSCHD.

There is a list of references, an index of Cage's work, and a general index. A necessary volume in the growing Cage bibliography.

That's Entertainment: The Graphics of Showbiz by Steven Heller and Anne Fink (Glen Cove, NY, PBC International, 1996, \$42.50) is a gorgeous album of CD packages, theater and film posters, logos, brochures, film opening sequences, books and magazines featured in the entertainment industry, which begs for innovation and graphic experimentation.

Some examples are REM's interactive disc, Madonna's tour book, Dylan's box set, promotionals for MTV, and much more. There are 300 inspiring, beguiling, and amusing entertainment graphics by renowned designers and directors. We live in a visual society, so that these images will probably lead to nostalgic memories for many "readers". One can never expect less than excellent design from Steven Heller, the senior art director of the New York Times and art editor of the NYTimes Book Review.

The address of PBC International is One School St., Glen Cove, NY 11542.

Anywise, edited by Cynthia C. Davidson (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, \$35 paper) is another in a series of volumes published by Anyone Corporation, which investigates the condition of architecture at the end of the millennium. This fifth volume is dedicated to the range of architectural and planning challenges posed by rapid development and urbanization in Asian cities.

Projects by Arata Isozaki, Peter Eisenman, Rem Koolhaas, Tao Ho, William Lim, and others are part of a special section on architecture and urban planning in Seoul. This kind of printed chat room even with interactive (read Letters to Any) makes this a unique kind of publication, one dealing with issues that are vital and important. 150 illustrations

Seven Great Explorations: A Pop-Up Book by Celia King (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1996, \$10.95) tells the story of intrepid explorers from Marco Polo to Neil Armstrong. Although this book is more animated than most, the wheels are hard to manipulate. A child would probably tear the book in a couple of "readings", yet some of the 3-dimensional ships, vehicles, etc. are quite nice. The many wheels really need a tab to allow the reader to interact in a more organized and careful way. Engineering pop-ups is an important element--and this one needs improvement.

The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Round Table, edited by Martha Buskirk and Mignon Nixon (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, \$15 paper) is an expanded edition of the Fall 1994 special issue of *October*, including new essays by Sarat Maharaj and by Molly Nesbit and Naomi Sawelson-Gorse. It also includes the transcript of an exchange between T.J. Clark and Benjamin Buchloh which presents new responses to the problems raised by this out-of-print issue of the journal.

This is an investigation of the historical reception of the work of Duchamp from the 1950s to the present, including interviews by Benjamin Buchloh (with Claes Oldenburg, Andy Warhol, and Robert Morris), Elizabeth Armstrong (with Ed Ruscha and Bruce Conner), and Martha Buskirk (with Louise Lawler, Sherrie Levine, and Fred Wilson) and a round-table discussion of the Duchamp effect on conceptual art.

Walter Benjamin, a Biography by Momme Broderson (New York, Verso, 1997, \$35) is the English translation of Europe's best selling biography by a professor at the University of Palermo, who has compiled two Benjamin bibliographies and has edited a casebook of Benjamin studies.

Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) is now generally recognized as one of the most original and influential thinkers of this century. Literary critic, philosopher, translator and essayist, Benjamin was arguably the most gifted writer of his time, and the enduring popularity of his work speaks for its accessibility and relevance.

Yet the man's life itself bore the deep and often tragic imprint of the epoch in which he lived. From his Berlin childhood to his university years among the great luminaries of the late Weimar era, and finally to his suicide in flight from the Nazis in 1940, Benjamin's life

was riven with conflicts intellectual, political, religious and historical.

And he knew everyone: Hannah Arendt, Theodor Adorno, Herman Hesse, Georges Bataille, Ernst Bloch, Bertolt Brecht, Martin Buber, and Rainer Maria Rilke, among others. In the pages of Broderson's biography, Benjamin's life and work are woven into an organic whole, each feeding into the other its inspirations and complexities. Broderson's biography is not only the most comprehensive and illuminating, it also demonstrates the fallacy of the popular, romanticized notion of his life as the sorrowful progression of a melancholic personality. The only real tragedy was his suicide at Portbou on the Franco-Spanish border in 1940. Broderson provides a fresh and lucid presentation of Benjamin's written work throughout the biography. This is a thoroughly revised and expanded edition, accompanied by more than 100 photographs, documentation, bibliography and index. A most important chapter in understanding Walter Benjamin, a human being and a great intellect.

Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, vol. 1: 1913-1926, edited by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1996, \$35) is the first volume in an ambitious project from Harvard University Press which includes some of Benjamin's most important writings and many that have never been published in English. This volume brings together Benjamin's early essays, reviews, treatises, fragments, and important privately circulated writings. The majority of these works, including several of major significance, have never been translated into English before. Beginning in 1913, when Benjamin was president of a radical youth group in imperial Germany, the first volume takes us through 1926 when he had already begun to emerge as a major critical voice in Weimar Germany's most important journals. There he is, the youthful idealist, the sober moralist, the political theorist, the experimentalist, the translator, and above all, the critic, revealing his masterful exposition of the basic problems of aesthetics.

A fascinating and readable surrealist work, *One-Way Street* is one of the most significant products of the German avant-garde of the 1920s. And so is Benjamin's musings on children's books:

The child seeks his way along the half hidden paths. Reading, he covers his ears; the book is on a table that is far too high, and one hand is always on the page. To him, the hero's adventures can still be read in the swirling letters like figures and messages in drifting snowflakes. His breath is part of the air of the events narrated, and all the participants breathe it. He mingles with the characters far more closely than grown-ups do. He is unspeakably touched by the deeds, by the words that are exchanged; and, when he gets up, he is covered over and over by the snow of his reading.

Two more volumes will be published of *Selected Writings*, and then Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk*, his magnum opus, will be published for the first time in English in 1998 with the title, *The Arcades Project*.

Jerome: After the Pageant by Thomas Avena and Adam Klein (San Francisco, Bastard Books, 1996, \$32.95) deals with the life and work of artist/provocateur Jerome Caja. A well-known figure in the queer circles of San Francisco, Caja left behind an artistic legacy in the form of his self proclaimed "little lovelies"—miniature paintings featuring a cast of priests, clowns, pigs, venuses and penises. Made from nail polish, eyeliner, lipstick and glitter glue, they are painted on discarded plastic ashtrays, stray bits of cloth and used bottle caps. There is a head-on dealing with the fragile balances between sex and violence, pleasure and pain and delight and disgust. Caja mixes Catholic iconography with the debris of drag culture, exploring issues of sexuality, redemption and ultimately death. Some of the titles will belie this: *Bozo Fucks Death*, *The Last Hand Job*, and *Rape of the Altar Boy*.

In the tradition of David Wojanowicz and Nan Goldin, Caja's images confront difficult social issues, but his superb sense of humor and his essential generosity of spirit infuse his work with a playfulness that usually is absent in socially conscious art. They are salacious, sacrilegious and offensive, while at the same time, gentle, generous, loving, and profoundly humane, according to David Bonetti, art critic for the *San Francisco Examiner*.

Caja uses ephemeral materials such as matchboxes, bottle caps, sandpaper, pistachio nut shells, plastic trays, ashes and bones and so much more. But he had an uncanny way of adding life to everything he touched, including Day of the Dead processions. A foreword by Klaus Kertess, Curator of the 1995 Whitney Biennial, discusses the "terrible beauty" in Caja's works, while Adam Klein talks to us about Caja's thoughts on sex, love and death in personal terms. Thoma Avena examines Caja's work in the context of religious and ritual iconography and the plague of AIDS. With 32 color and 64 black-and-white photographs, **Jerome Before and After the Pageant** seems someone you really wouldn't mind meeting, and what a shame you cannot except through this book. The book is distributed by D.A.P., 155 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10013.

Jasper Johns: Privileged Information by Jill Johnston (New York, Thames & Hudson, 1996, \$27.50) is a great read. Packed into these 256 pages is an amazing life which is linked with the work of Jasper Johns. Hidden in all his work has been intensely intimate elements which he has disguised and denied in the very works that have made him famous.

Johnston went to his roots in South Carolina, and then to the New York art community in the early 1950s, where the "fabulous four" of Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, John Cage, and Merce Cunningham challenged the conventions of modern art, dance, and music. Charting Johns' life, she interviews friends and associates, attending the openings and ceremonies that punctuate Johns's extraordinarily successful career.

Johnston also encounters the artist himself: a downtown luncheon interview, a chance meeting at the Venice Biennale, and a dinner with Johns and a number of his wealthy patrons at Si Newhouse's elegant Manhattan townhouse. But when it came to use Jasper Johns own work as illustrations in this book, Johns refused. Yet the book is strewn with great candid photos, black and white reproductions of the art that influenced Johns, and a narrative that sounds more like a mystery story than a biography. Johnston is meticulous, illuminating, insightful and incisive. A Johns's Genealogy, notes, bibliography and index complete this fine volume.

PHOTOGRAPHY

LIFE: Sixty Years, a 60th Anniversary Celebration, 1936 - 1996 by the Editors of *Life* (New York, Life Books, dist. by Bulfinch Press, 1996, \$24.95) collects more than 200 images by *Life*'s peerless photographers and gives us a panoramic look back at the faces, forces, and fashions that mattered to us the most. *Life*, in my family, was the TV on Friday night—it was our entertainment for the week and gave us a historical view of this-was-the-week-that-was. The famous and the not-so-famous were on the pages of *Life* before the 1960s. It was a weekly, and it was visual news. Today, *Life* may be read by 15 million people, but it does not have the same impact today. Instead of making history, it now records still frames. It really is not the same. But this is a wonderful walk down nostalgia lane.

America in Passing by Henri Cartier-Bresson (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little,Brown, 1996) with a foreword by Arthur Miller and an introduction by Giles Mora, covers photographs by Cartier-Bresson from 1935 - 1975 contains 99 duotone illustrations by one of the most influential and revered photographers of this century. The fruitful relationship and fascination with a country he visited repeatedly and explored thoroughly up to the 1980s is documented by these remarkable and fascinating black and white photographs. Selected by the artist along with Gilles Mora, this volume allows us to admire many of the master's classic photographs. \$35.00 paper.

Henri Cartier-Bresson and the Artless Art by Jean-Pierre Montier (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little,Brown, 1996, \$75.00) is a biographical study of perhaps the greatest photographer of the twentieth century. From his early training as a painter and draftsman right up to the present, when drawing means more to him than any photographic image, Montier proves a detailed analysis of Cartier-Bresson's most famous images and discusses the various philosophies that inform his work, notably Zen and surrealism. Drawing together a remarkable selection of the paintings, sketches, and photographs this book is the first to attempt a serious evaluation not just of his photojournalism but of his oeuvre as a whole.

Originally published in French by Flammarion, this English edition for North American consumption is an amazing biography of a major visual artist. This is **not** a picture book, but a very verbal biography enhanced with gorgeous duotone reproductions of some of the most famous photographic images of our time. In a full size art book, the text is more important in this case than the images--although they both enhance each other. With this book, you get to know the man, the artist, the philosopher. It is a wonderful marriage of text and image as a biography of a visual artist whose medium is photography. There is a bibliography, and an index of names. Except for a videotape with interactive capacity, or a CD-Rom, this is a wonderful way of keeping the record of an artist, Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Chim: The Photographs of David Seymour by Inge Bondi, with an introduction by Henri Cartier-Bresson and a foreword by Cornell Capa (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little,Brown, 1996, \$50.00) documents the work of this legend among great masters of European photography. Born David Seymour, he is best known as one of the founders, along with Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and George Rodger, of Magnum, photojournalism's famous cooperation.

This is the first, long overdue, comprehensive retrospective of Chim's work, featuring over 150 images, many never before published, documenting social events of the turbulent twentieth century--from France's Front Populaire and the Spanish Civil War to the devastating aftermath of World War II and the birth of Israel. From France to Spain to Germany to Italy, Greece and Israel, these photographs are haunting, especially those of refugee children displaced or maimed by war, part of a three-year project for UNICEF that took Chim through Europe. He did portraits of such figures as Ingrid Bergman, Arturo Toscanini, Bernard Berenson, Picasso, Eleanor Roosevelt, and so many more. He died tragically in sniper fire in the Suez in 1956.

Includes bibliography and chronology.

Hot Spots: America's Volcanic Landscape by Diane Cook and Len Jenshel (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little,Brown, 1996, \$50.00) tells the story of the earth creating itself. 84 photos depict active and dormant volcanoes, steaming geysers, and "hot spots" across America. From the drama of red-hot lava exploding into the ocean in Hawaii, to the ethereal wonderland of steam and mist in the geyser basins of Yellowstone, to the surreal lunar landscape of Mount St. Helens, this book shows the many different ways to look at a volcano: geologically, photographically, and metaphorically. Focusing on four regions of the American West--the Hawaiian Islands, the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, California and the Southwest, and Yellowstone and the northern mountain states--*Hot Spots* is an enthralling celebration of nature at its most violent and beautiful. They photograph things differently, but they know in this collaborative effort they are photographing creation and destruction at the same time.

Whispered Silences: Japanese Americans and World War II with essay by Gary Y. Okihiro and photographs by Joan Myers (Seattle, Univ. of Washington Press, 1996, \$60.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper) is the result of Joan Myers' being haunted by a visit to one of the detention camps where Japanese Americans were held during World War II. She then set out to record all ten of the camps as they appear today. The work took four years, 1981 - 1985. She found the perfect writer, a historian of Japanese-American descent whose own life meshed with the project.

The photographs are moving, the shards of memory, people-less but with the stamp of humans on the landscape, both physical and psychological. There is an investigative and anthropological bent to some of the photos, and then there is the eye and the heart of a poet in others.

Okihiro personalizes his viewpoint and makes it poignant and touching. In fact, the history is real, so real that it may bring tears to the readers' eyes. This is not a pleasant commemoration, for it is a scar on the history of the United States, and since Joan Myers is the granddaughter of Henry A. Wallace, vice president under Roosevelt when Executive Order 9066 was signed, there was a personal interest in the project to atone for what her grandfather had to do to the Japanese-Americans. We all atone in reading this book and looking at the photos. This is a moving volume with 65 duotone photos and a text that will make you cry.

Heber Springs Portraits: Continuity and Change in the World Disfarmer Photographed by Toba Pato Tucker with essay by Alan Trachtenberg (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1996, \$60.00 hardcover,

\$29.95 paper) tells the story of Tucker's return to where Mike Disfarmer photographed the people he knew so well. Tucker did her research well, sharing the memories, family history books and albums, who made the material available for use in this book. Tucker made a covenant with the people she depicts, and you know she knows these people. There is something in these portraits that speaks of knowledge, familiarity and insight. Tucker invested these photographs with her own spirit of raw honesty, after living two years in Heber Springs. She found some of the people Disfarmer photographed, but also found their relatives and descendants whom Tucker befriended.

This book is a rephotographic study, where Toba Pato Tucker used Disfarmer's portraits as the starting point for the project, but she brought her own personal vision to the images. In so doing, Tucker found how much Heber Springs and small-town America has changed, and yet so much it has stayed the same. What Disfarmer knew and what Tucker found is that there is strength, individuality and vitality in the people in both sets of portraits. This book is affecting, and the essay by Trachtenberg is as usual the highest degree of eloquence to interpret America's visual history. A must!

REPRINTS

Alfred Stieglitz: Photographer with essay by Doris Bry (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, \$60) is a reprint of the volume originally published in 1965, which draws on the Boston Museum of Fine Arts's Stieglitz Collection acquired from Stieglitz himself in 1924 and supplemented by a gift from Georgia O'Keeffe in the 1950s. \$60.00

Utopia and Dissent: Art, Poetry and Politics in California by Richard Candida-Smith (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1996, \$19.95 paper) the landmark study of California's visual arts and poetry, 1925 to 1975, where this regional culture had a profound influence on American art and thought.

La Belle Captive by Alain Robbe-Grillet and René Magritte (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1996, \$17.95 paper) is Alain Robbe-Grillet's *nouveau roman*, illustrated with 77 paintings by Magritte. Robbe-Grillet uses Magritte's paintings as pretexts for the novel, letting them generate themes for an imaginary discourse. The book includes a critical essay by novelist and translator Ben Stoltzfus on the pictorial and linguistic affinities between Magritte and Robbe-Grillet.

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