

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

The Art of the Book: From Medieval Manuscript to Graphic Novel, edited by James Bettley (London, Victoria & Albert Museum Publications, 2001 dist. by Harry N. Abrams, \$49.50) celebrates the marriage of word and image on the written and printed page, culling examples from many of the treasures from the National Art Library at the V & A Museum.

A tribute to the vast collections of the venerable V & A Museum in London, this volume features six centuries of illuminated manuscripts, fine bindings, classics of children's literature, comic novels, artist books, advertising, magazines, hip contemporary artists, exploring the way books not only transmit information but become works of art in their own right.

The range is from Leonardo da Vinci to Barry Moser, Aesop to Charles Dickens, Babar the Elephant to Maus by Spiegelman, and so much in-between. The category of "artist book" is really dispersed throughout the whole volume with 100 illustrations in full color and a selected bibliography. A necessity for all collectors, graphic designers, and booklovers.

The Dialogue between Painting and Poetry, edited by Jean Khalfa (London, Black Apollo Press, 2001, £15.99 coincides with the Livres d'Artistes exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England which was held from 24 April - 24 June 2001.

This volume traces the collaboration between the poet and the artist, a typically French phenomenon, which flourished from the end of the 19th century to the present day. We are not talking about just the physical and conceptual links between word and image, but in fact some of the most memorable imagery of the 20th century.

The page became the framework to be used by artists in a poetic way, not an illustrative manner. In this period, the *livre d'artiste* became a medium as distinct from painting, printmaking and sculpture. Featured are Manet's collaboration with Mallarmé in the 1970s through Dada and Surrealism to the end of the 20th century. Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay, André Masson and Robert Desnos, André Breton and George Bataille are all treated in depth. With over 30 black and white illustrations and 16 pages in full color, this volume traces how the movement evolved in the second half of the 20th century with the works of André Du Bouchet and Pierre Tal Coat; Bernard Noël, Olivier Debré and Bertrand Dorny. Special attention is paid to the publishers who pioneered the genre.

Recommended for all serious book collections. This volume is a chapter in the history of the book, the *livre d'artiste*. Only 500 copies available outside the UK.

Send to Orders@BlackApollo.com

Digital Book Design and Publishing by Dr. Douglas Holleley (Clarellen and Cary Graphic Arts Press, 2001, \$39.95) is an essential reference tool for photographers, artists, designers and writers who want to move beyond the manuscript to the page. Based on his years of work as a photographer, bookmakers and teacher, Holleley has developed a clear and considered approach to digital book design.

In clear limpid prose, Holleley shows the process of bookmaking from a consideration of maquette and materials, through printing and bookbinding, as well as a step-by-step guide to page layout and image processing software. A how-to with a difference, this book has a rich and varied selection of full-color reproductions from historical and contemporary illustrated books and artist books which place digital books in a historical continuum.

Where else would you find examples of bookworks from the U.S., Europe and Australia such as William Blake, Helen Brunner, Bill Burke, John Crombie, Johanna Drucker, Durer, Brad Freeman, Gutenberg, Warren Lehrer, Joan Lyons, Clifton Meador, Ohtake Shinro, Keith Smith, John Wood, Phil Zimmermann and Janet Zweig, among many many more. There are 444 illustrations in full color. Softbound and Smythe sewn, this volume will be your reference tool for the now, not just the future. Order from Clarellen, P.O. Box 2177, Elmira Heights, NY 14903. www.clarellen.com

GENERAL

H.C. Westermann: Essays by Dennis Adrian, Michael Rooks, Robert Storr, and Lynne Warren (New York, Abrams, \$49.50) is the first comprehensive study of the art in over 20 years. Published to accompany a major traveling exhibition of Westermann's sculpture, the book looks at how defining themes central to 20th-century America—the horror and disillusionment of war; the mythology of the American utopia, and Hollywood and mass media—shaped his thought and his art.

World War II shaped Westermann as an artist, suspicious of the "normal" life that American had defended. Here was a cigar-chomping character who had an uncanny sense of humor, a belief in making things well, faith in the beauty and integrity of materials, especially wood, and then he tested himself by going to the Korean War. The rest is history, for his art was a way of unleashing the pressure of those memories from both wars. He became a soul catcher.

With more than 200 illustrations in full color on 80 pages, 40 in duotone, the volume evaluates Westermann in the context of 20th-century art, especially due to Robert Storr's incisive essay; Lynne Warren, looking at

Westermann's Chicago years in the 1950s. Dennis Adrian, a longtime friend, surveys the artist's entire oeuvre; and Michael Rooks, who examines his most elaborate achievement, the house and studio in Connecticut that the artist designed and built by hand from 1969 to 1981, becomes a revelation not only to those who knew his work, but to many who never knew what an uncanny genius he was.

With an illustrated chronology that not only documents the events in Westermann's life but also those events which impinged on the artist's life, a comprehensive bibliography and a complete exhibition history, this is the book we all have been waiting for.

Woven Worlds: Basketry from the Clark Field Collection at the Philbrook Museum of Art, edited by Lydia L. Wyckoff (Tulsa, Philbrook Museum of Art, 2001, \$75 hardcover, \$39.95 paper) documents one of the most stunning exhibitions I have ever seen. This collection of Clark Field is a stunning contribution to the understanding of Native American cultures, a dedicated passion of one man to create an exhaustive collection, and the first time the Philbrook Museum of Art has published information on the collection in its entirety. From a hobby, Clark Field's collecting of Native American baskets turned into an obsession and this collection of well over 1000 baskets shows how a culture can be flexible and adaptable, and how all cultures use baskets to continue traditions and values. With the knowledge of transforming twigs, grasses, roots, ferns, and bark into works of art that are unsurpassed for beauty and technological skill, Clark has added so much to the understanding of both weavers and their cultures from eight separate cultural areas: the Southwest, California, the Intermontane West, the Northwest Coast, Arctic and Subarctic, Prairie and Plains, the Eastern Woodlands, and the Southeast. At the end of each chapter is a map with a description of the area and its indigenous cultures, historical information (re: basketry and technology), and a discussion of basket weavers (including some interviews with basket weavers and their families). The last basket Mr. Field bought cost \$1,000,000. Now that is an obsession!

The catalog helps to understand the diversity and resiliency of Native American peoples and how their basketry traditions respond to social, cultural, and environmental factors. The interface with collectors created a dialogue between Native American and Euro-American worlds. There is a complete catalog at the end of the book, a glossary of terms, an extensive bibliography and an index. There are 102 color plates, 24 halftones.

Editor's note: The exhibition is so exquisite that no catalog could serve to allow a 3-dimensional view of each basket, except for a CD or perhaps a DVD. But this is a monumental contribution.

7 Reece Mews: Francis Bacon's Studio with foreword by John Edwards and photographs by Perry Ogden (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2001, \$24.95 hardcover) documents the modest and unpretentious building which was the principal home and studio of Francis Bacon for the last 30 years of his life. When he died in 1992, the studio was left intact. Prior to the removal of the studio to the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art in Dublin in 1998, total access was granted to award-winning photographer Perry Ogden in order to produce this riveting record of the house and its contents.

Now almost iconic in its record, the studio was left unchecked with slashed, discarded canvases scattered across the floor; the brushes, rags and tins encrusted with paint; the doors and walls used as impromptu palettes; the piles of photographs of friends and models; the crumpled and torn pages of magazines and books that served as visual stimulus for his work, notes, sketches and ideas jotted down and then thrown aside and even the last unfinished painting on the easel.

This book has 60 color photos and no text. The studio speaks for itself. And now you can see it in Dublin. And there is a film about the studio as well.

A Poke in the I, a collection of concrete poems, selected by Paul A. Janeczko and illustrated by Chris Raschka (Cambridge, MA, Candlewick Press, 2001, \$15.99 hardback) is a whimsical, remarkable collection of works with crisp black words on clean backgrounds serving as concepts and physical objects by such poets as Allen Jones, John Hollander, Emmett Williams, Aram Saroyan, Mary Ellen Solt, Ian Hamilton Finlay, the author and the illustrator, Richard Meltzer, Ronald Johnson, Robert Froman and many more. Although this is a collection for young people, it is definitely a visual treat as well. The illustrations are outstanding, especially since the cover shows a man with an umbrella poking the "I" of the title. It's good to start young people on a road toward concrete and visual poetry and this is a gem!

Experimental Sound and Radio, edited by Allen S. Weiss, as a special issue of *TDR/The Drama Review*, explores the myriad aesthetic, cultural, and experimental possibilities of radiophony and sound art.

Starting with the premise that there is no single entity that constitutes "radio," but rather a multitude of radios, the essays explore various aspects of its apparatus, practice, forms, and utopias.

The authors take historical, political, popular, cultural, archeological, semiotic, and feminist approaches. Weiss writes on the origins of sound recording, Brandon LaBelle writes on contemporary Japanese noise music, and Fred Moten on the ideology and aesthetics of jazz, among so

many other essays. Published by MIT Press, 2001, \$19.95 paper.

Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer by Therese Lichtenstein (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 2001, \$45.00) treats the German artist from a psychological viewpoint of his dismembered and reconstructed doll-bodies to their formal and expressive qualities all against the rich psychosexual and historical context. Lichtenstein treats his complex eroticism as a protest against the Nazis as well as his father.

Lichtenstein in several narratives deals with Bellmer from a psychoanalytical, visual, biological and gender point of view, showing how Bellmer's desire, subsequent confusion, and then return to a kind of adolescence and then all the misfortunes that continued to plague him make for a fascinating read. Includes chronology, appendix of selected writings by Bellmer, bibliography and index. 16 color plates, black and white illus.

Leonardo's Incessant Last Supper by Leo Steinberg (New York, Zone Books (dist. by MIT Press), 2001, \$43) is as much about the idea of Leonardo's *Last Supper* as the actual near-ruined *Last Supper*. Steinberg, the University Pennsylvania professor emeritus has been thinking about this for quite a long time. Revered by his peers, Steinberg's take is not on a moment captured in paint, but in fact the table scene portrays "successiveness and duration." Not only is it Christ's announcement of the forthcoming betrayal, it is, in fact, the institution of the eucharist. Though the perspective is perfect, it responds as well to Christ's action at the center, as if here were the prime mover. So not only is the painting narrative, but it is also sacramental. It involves human submission and divine dispensation, a duplicity involving a sublime pun.

Because the painting has generated raging disputes throughout the centuries, it all boils down to a single mistaken assumption, i.e. that Leonard intended throughout to be unambiguous and clear, and that any one meaning necessarily rules out every other. His argument includes a magazine cartoon of Christ telling a waiter, "Separate checks" much to the astonishment of the disciplines to the ballet *Agon* by Balanchine and Stravinsky, which also contains infinite groupings that up to 12. With 201 black and white illustrations and a four-color gatefold insert, the documentation is there to support the professor's arguments.

And the professor gives you an iconographical visual databank of last suppers to fill out the rest of your life. Appendices abound with original texts, copies and adaptations, bibliographical references, list of illustrations and index of names.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jim Dine: Birds (Gottingen, Steidl, 2001, \$50) is probably one of the most beautiful photographic books of this year and any year. Jim Dine had a childhood encounter with a crow at a zoo which led to a lifetime fascination with avian life out of fear, fascination, and a deeper understanding of the unconscious world.

Printed by heliogravure and with a Japanese binding, this spectacular volume with 36 images is a beautiful object in itself. But it also reveals a Jim Dine that is different from the iconic American artist who began with happenings in the 1950s and 1960s and became the consummate American artist. Many of the photos are laden with symbolism and meaning, the crow appearing as a court jester, the owl and the crow as yin and yang, the conscious and unconscious coalescing, and yet Dine is also in a performative stance with the bird in some of the photos. These darkly detailed images are charged with interpretation. There is one triptych which becomes the keystone for the book, but all images are full of light and shadow, full of identity and the unconscious spirit of a creative soul. Jimmy meets Jimmy. Buy this volume, because you will be buying a deeply personal work of art by an artist who has used another medium to fathom his own spirit.

Still Life by Irving Penn (New York, Bulfinch Press, 2001, \$85) is the first book devoted solely to the famed photographer's still life work of the past sixty years. IN the tradition of Chardin and other great still life painters, Penn has been casting his austere and astute eye on the pleasures, and lately the harsher items of life, seemingly looking at the "mortality" of things and their decay, whereas the wit, edginess and found structures of everyday life show an edginess. Progressing from fashion photos for *Vogue* to the sheer pleasure of photographing even in black and white the still lifes of found objects, cigarette butts, decaying fruit and much more.

The introduction by John Szarkowski is perceptive, penetrating and right on. And Penn has overseen every detail of the book's design and production. Every attempt has been made to create accurate reproduction that are faithful to the brilliance of the color images and nuances and subtlety of the platinum prints.

Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography after the Revolution (London, Merrell and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2001, \$39.95 hardcover) by Tim B. Wride and Cristina Vivre is a survey of 40 years of Cuban photography and the shifting social, political and personal concerns of Cuban artists following the Revolution. With 120 illustrations, this volume with a poetic preface by Wim Wenders documents the legacy of a country and its people. It also documents the history of 16 Cuban photographers from Korda's heroic

photographs of an impassioned Fidel or a noble Che Guevara gazing into a glorious revolutionary future to a story around a swimming pool with text by Michael Ende and photos by Rogelio Lopez Marin (Gory). This book is far different from the exhibition, for the texts are so important to the history of photographic Cuba from the 1960s and 1970s, when the common man was emphasized, while the 1980s and 1990s dealt with personal histories, until today when conceptual investigations dominate photographic process, including digitization. Wride serves not only as a curator but as an interpreter of the picture of Cuban photography in general and each artist's personal vision in particular.

The dramatic changes in Cuban culture are documented through the photographic art of so many re-discovered photographs of Cuba from Korda to the youngest photographer in the exhibition, Carlos Garaicoa. Cristina Vivre also tells her own photographic story, also featuring other women photographers such as Marucha (Maria Eugenia Haya), Abigail Gonzalez, Marta Maria Perez Bravo and others. The design of this volume is remarkable, thanks to Tracey Shiffman's talents.

Aaron Rose: Photographs is the first book of this unknown photographer, who was discovered at the Whitney Biennial in 1997, in his late fifties. For more than 30 years, Rose has created traditional chemical-based photographs, making completely original portraits of trees and plants, stars and clouds, shells, and the New York skyline. Published by Abrams, 2001, \$49.50, this volume contains miracles of light and chemistry. A magician who builds his own cameras and mixes complex developing emulsions incorporating exotic metals, Rose has spent virtually all of the last 30 years taking and printing more than 25,000 photographs, most of them superb prints from negatives that he printed once or twice and then put away forever.

Accompanied by an essay by poet Alfred Corn and a vital conversation between the two men, in which Rose speaks directly about photography, science, art, and commitment, this volume shows how this artist had a wonderful life. And what a discovery!

Stranger Passing by Joel Sternfield (New York, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 2001, \$50) is a stunning view of America in the spirit of August Sanders but Sternfield denies the validity of standard portraiture as documentary practice. There is an edge in each oversize color portrait in which the viewer gazes once, turns away and then has to return. The question is who are these people and what have they brought to this particular landscape at this particular time? What about the clothes? What can be decoded from a close reading of what they are carrying? Are aspect and identity interrelated? We who live in a visual society keep

looking at these images and keep viewing more and more of the details. Who are these people that we really care about, even though we live in a *laissez faire* kind of attitude about people. But this is America and there is endless, quirky potential in each of the subjects. There is a story to tell and it's there if we care to examine it more than with a glance. Douglas Nickle, the curator of photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, writes an incisive essay and Ian Frazier, an essayist and writer of non-fiction, completes this long-awaited volume which represents an exhibition at the San Francisco Museum. Includes 60 color plates.

Sacred Places by Kenro Izu (Santa Fe, Arena Editions, 2001, \$65) is one of the most beautiful photographic books I have ever seen. This photographer, one of the last doing exquisite paper-based photographs in this digital world, has been living in New York for more than 30 years, a keen friend of Hiroshi Sugimoto, and has been photographing monuments throughout the world, not like the 19th century "exotic" photographers who captured Asia, but in fact reshaping, recasting, and borrowing those 19th century incentives for his own imagery. These photographs haunt you, take you to new spiritual insights, change your definition of photography, travel or otherwise. These tritone plates simulate the painstaking platinum prints of the originals, creating an aura of spirit around Easter Island, Angkor Wat, Stonehenge, the monuments of the Chinese Silk Road, Lhasa, and so much more. This book is unforgettable, showing us how Sugimoto's friend is worthy of great renown, a photographer whose consummate art must be seen by everyone. It almost takes your breath and sends it within your soul to breathe out in a refreshed, renewed state of being.

James Fee (Los Angeles, St. Ann's Press, dist. by DAP, 2001, \$75.00) represents a body of work especially the America Series, which is permeated with a nostalgia, the residue of death, with erosion, decay, memory, redemption. Although these photographs are deeply haunted with sadness, there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Fee, a sensitive artist, master of chiaroscuro, tones and stains landscapes to create a lingering melancholy. In the Peleliu Series, Fee returns to the photographs taken by his father, a veteran of Peleliu, site of one of the bloodiest and most intense battles in World War II which affected his father so much that he eventually committed suicide in 1972. Returning to Peleliu in 1998, James Fee, the son, photographed the many remnants of the war: sunken ships, buildings, gunneries, continuing the long term interest in interpreting American civilization and its systems of belief through an examination of its cultural remains. But this was a personal journey of coming to terms with his father's life

and his vision of America. The before's (his father's photos) and the after's (James Fee's rephotographing) show how similar their pictures are.

Many series are reproduced here such as "Photographs of America", "Road", "Figurative Work", "Four Days in New York" and of course the series mentioned above. There are 65 tri-tone and 65 four-color images. Essays by Salvatore Scalora (Univ. Of Connecticut director of museum) and Craig Krull (dealer and friend) show that this book is a symbiotic relationship between artist, publisher and the viewer. What more can you ask for?

RECEIVED & NOTED

Words of Wisdom, a Curator's *Vade Mecum* on Contemporary Art (New York, Independent Curators International, 2001, \$14.95 paper) is a manual for anyone interested in contemporary art or in the practice of curating with original contributions from Jean-Christophe Ammann, René Block, Francesco Bonami, Saskia Bos, Dan Cameron, Lynne Cooke, Bice Curiger, Donna de Salvo, Robert Fleck, Gary Garrels, Jay Jane Jacob, Vasil Kortun, Charlotta Kotik, Lucy Lippard, Baromeu Mari, France Morin, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Lawrence Rinder, Irving Sandler, Robert Storr, Marcia Tucker and so many more. Distributed by D.A.P.

Interaction: Artistic Practice in the Network, edited by Amy Scholder with Jordan Crandall (New York, Eyebeam Atelier, 2001, \$19.95 paper) is a debate among an international group of artists, scholars, critics, architects, students, technicians, and curators about the new kinds of cultural identifications that are facilitated by the Internet, the relevance of the museum and the new types of institutions, the poetics of online communication. Dist. by D.A.P. in New York.

EXHIBITION CATALOGS

The Birthday Party: An Installation in Celebration of Woodturning and Studio Furniture was an exhibition held from 3 March - 20 May 2001 at the Brand Library and Art Center in Glendale, California, curated by Connie Mississippi and Betty Scarpino. In this fully illustrated catalog, the work of 70 artists is shown in elegant images with installation shots as well. Much of the work was experimental, having been created just for the exhibition. The 40-page catalog is available for \$5.00 per copy plus \$2.00 shipping and handling from Brand Associates, attn: The Birthday Party, 1601 W. Mountain, Glendale, CA 91201.

The Road to Aztlan: Art from a Mythic Homeland, organized by Virginia Fields and Victor Zamudio-Taylor (Los Angeles County Museum of Art dist. by University of New Mexico Press, 2001, \$65.00 hardcover, \$39.95 paper)

explores the art derived from and created about the legendary area that encompasses the American Southwest and portions of Mexico long before they were separated by an international border. Aztlan is viewed by the book and accompanying exhibition as a metaphoric center and allegorical place of origin for the various peoples of the Southwest and Mexico. Cultural interactions between the two areas span two millennia, beginning with maize cultivation, which spread north from Mexico around 1200 BC. But this volume also investigates the relationship between myth and history as expressed in art and material culture of the region's inhabitants over time and the relationship and continuities of cultural practices over the course of the pre-Columbian, colonial, and contemporary eras.

This stunning catalog, printed by Cantz in Germany, with 314 illustrations, includes 19 essays by an international team of scholars and artists who address the issues and concepts that revolve around a sense of place and the dynamic traditions of the past and what that means today. Checklist, bibliography, index.

Drawing Papers 20: Performance Drawings with Milan Grygar, Alison Knowles, Erwin Wurm, Christopher Taggart, and Elena del Rivero in collaboration with Dieu Donn  Papermill at the Drawing Center, New York City from 19 April - 28 July 2001. Catalog contains black and white photos for each artist who had one-person shows for two weeks each. Included are texts, preparation photos, biographies, checklist. Your definition of drawing will indeed be extended and expanded. Available from the Drawing Center, 40 Wooster St., New York, NY 10013.

74th Annual International Competition: Photography from the Print Center in Philadelphia and **75th Annual International Competition: Printmaking** are the first color-illustrated publications of the Center. Prizes up to \$4000 given. Write to The Print Center, 1614 Latimer St., Philadelphia, PA 19103. Or e-mail: info@PrintCenter.org

70's Photographic Book-Works (New York, Roth Horowitz, 2001, ed. 100) is a boxed edition of small catalogs for artists Nobuyoshi Araki, Christian Boltanski, Braco Dimitrijevic, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Paul-Armand Gette, Gilbert & George, Jean Le Gac, Urs L thi and NE Thing (Ian Baxter). Some of the catalogs are only text, others are text and some images, some are small booklets with checklist and images. A beautifully packaged elegant presentation for \$50.00 from Roth Horowitz, 160a E. 70th St., New York, NY 10021.