

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

Encyclopedia of the Book by Geoffrey Ashall Glaister (New Castle, DE, Oak Knoll/British Library, 1996, \$75.00 hardcover, \$49.95 paper, 2d ed.) is an indispensable reference guide to the book for publishers, libraries, book collectors, printers, graphic artists. The Encyclopedia contains almost 4,000 alphabetically arranged definitions of the terms used in bookbinding, printing, papermaking and the book trade. It also includes biographical details of printers, authors, bookbinders, bibliophiles and precise notes on machinery and equipment, famous books, printing societies, book-related organizations, customs of the trade and other related information.

This is the reprint of the 1979 2nd edition, with added entries and four appendices. A must!

Painted Books from Mexico by Gordon Brotherston (London, British Museum Press, dist. by Univ. of Washington Press, 1996, \$60.00) discusses about twenty of the finest of the ancient Mexican painted books and analyzes them in comparison to those held in North America. Prior to the Conquest, these books meticulously recorded wars, conquests, dynastic disputes, biographies of the great rulers and reflected insights into the history, religion and legends of the ancient civilizations of Mesoamerica: the Olmec, Maya, Chichimec and Mexican (Aztec).

Much of this research is published here for the first time, and most of it illustrated in color. Appendices include tables, bibliography and index.

An Ounce of Preservation: A Guide to the Care of Papers and Photographs by Craig A. Tuttle (Highland City, FL, Rainbow Books, 1995, \$12.95) is written for the layman in a clear and concise discussion of the causes of paper and photograph deterioration, teaching the reader to recognize the damage caused by temperature, humidity, fungi, insects and rodents, light exposure, pollutants, water damage, framing, lamination, fasteners and adhesives, and fire and theft.

The author also discusses the care and handling of paper-based items and photographic materials and techniques for the repair and cleaning of mildly damaged items. In addition, there are four appendices which provide a reference guide to damage/cause, a descriptive list of preservation supplies, where these supplies can be purchased and sources to contact for additional information on paper and photographic preservation. As an added bonus, the book includes a chapter on how to arrange paper and photographic collections for easy

storage and retrieval. Also included is a preservation glossary, a bibliography, an index and 14 black and white photographs, which illustrate the different types of damage to paper-based items and photographs. Bibliography, index and glossary. To order, call (800)356-9315, or write to P.O. Box 430, Highland City, FL 33846-0430.

How, When, and Why Modern Art came to New York by Marius de Zayas, ed. by Francis M. Naumann (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, \$35) was originally written in the 1940s, as a fascinating chronicle assembled from de Zayas's personal archive of photographs and from newspaper reviews of the exhibitions he discusses, beginning with those held at the Stieglitz 291 gallery and including important shows mounted in his own galleries: The Modern Gallery (1915-1918) and The de Zayas Gallery (1919-1921).

de Zayas was a Mexican artist and writer whose witty caricatures of New York's theater, dance, and social elite brought him to the attention of Stieglitz. The editor provides detailed information on the various exhibitions, including transcriptions of the de Zayas and Stieglitz correspondence as well as the author's unique relationship with Picasso. Press reviews, some of which are brought to light for the first time since their original publication, are accompanied by the author's photographs which illustrate works that have been lost or destroyed since they were first exhibited. An important chapter in Modern Art.

Expanding Circles: Women, Art, & Community, ed. by Betty Ann Brown (New York, Midmarch, 1996) is an anthology covering women's art communities in contemporary history, including identity, building community and living in community emphasizing the Southern California area with contributions by Arlene Raven, Terry Wolverton, Ruth Weisberg, Joanna Frueh, Suvan Geer, Betsy Damon, Suzanne Lacy, and many more. Although geared to that region, this book has reverberations for all women living in community, especially in the art world. bell hooks writes the introduction.

Design/Writing/Research: Writing on Graphic Design by Ellen Lupton and J. Abbott Miller (New York, Princeton Architectural Press/dist. by Chronicle Books, \$45) examines the history and origins of the written word and the utilization of punctuation, pictograms, photography and illustration. The discussion is punctuated with creative design on each page, making this a visual graphic education.

The second half of the book explores the various changes in technology art, culture and politics that affect

the theory and practice of media. From McLuhan and Warhol to *USA Today*, Push Pin Studio and Benetton's *Colors*--well, you can see this is a cutting edge history. Completing the book is an exciting Timeline that deftly ties together 200 years of design history in America! A great addition to any 20th century graphic collection--meaning books!

MONOGRAPHS

Charles Rennie Mackintosh edited by Wendy Kaplan is a large exhibition catalog with 119 black and white and 122 color plates (New York, Abbeville, 1996, \$60.00) represents a fuller picture of the architect, furniture and interior designer, a graphic artist and painter, who created tea rooms, schools, churches and private houses, lavishing great attention to their exteriors and interiors, and in the process fashioned a distinctive style, or cluster of styles, that made him more famous now than he ever was before his death in 1928. This exhibition, organized by the Glasgow Museums, stops in the U.S. at the Metropolitan Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The catalog is divided into three sections: Mackintosh in Context; Architecture; and Art and Design. Among the writers are Alan Crawford, Mark Girouard, Janice Helland, Juliet Kinchin, Pat Kirkham, John McKean, Pamela Robertson, Daniel Robbins, Gavin Stamp, and David Walker.

The revelations in this catalog and exhibition are Mackintosh as a painter, a landscape painter of great note, unknown to the world because of his prowess in architecture and design. Bibliography, index and buildings and collections. A remarkable contribution!

Louise Bourgeois by Marie-Laure Bernadac (New York, Flammarion, 1996, \$35) documents the creative life of this most remarkable artist, who over the last ten years has obtained international recognition, at the age of 85. With a series of traveling exhibitions and retrospectives, which have been highly successful, Bourgeois, who spent most of her life in the United States, now gets a monograph which covers everything from her early sketches and paintings to her most recent sculptures and installations. Her art and her life are inseparable, and so all of her work is entirely autobiographical. The transfer of her life into inert matter performs a kind of exorcism for the artist, who believes in the magic properties of art, and lends her sculptures an intensity which is sometimes alien but always highly personal.

Cited by most critics as a nexus between Brancusi and Giacometti, her influence has been phenomenal on a whole generation of contemporary artists and sculptors. Most of the influence derives from her interest in the

corporeal--the body whole and in parts--the oppositions of masculine and feminine, and from her insistence on the importance of the subjectivity of the artist. With 150 illustrations, 50 in color, and an acute study of the artist, this monograph remains the definitive work on the artist as of this moment.

Allan McCollum, interview by Thomas Lawson (Los Angeles, A.R.T. Press, 1996, \$29.95) featuring full-color reproductions of McCollum's work is another in an on-going series of artist-to-artists interviews. This series chronicles some of the most important and intriguing artists of recent decades. A.R.T. distributes through Distribution to Underserved Communities (D.U.C.) program these books on art and cultural issues free of charge to libraries nationwide. For more information, contact A.R.T., 5820 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Between Artists: Twelve contemporary American artists interview twelve contemporary American artists (Los Angeles, A.R.T. Press, 1996, \$18.95) features an introduction by Dave Hickey, with interviews of Kim Abeles, Vija Celmins, Jimmy DeSana, Judy Fiskin, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Mike Kelley, Allan McCollum, Anne Scott Plummer, David Reed, Laurie Simmons, Pat Sparkuhl, and Andrew Spence. These interviews are revelatory and will direct any reader to understand the artist of today in a much better way than reading criticism. These artists are articulate and open. What revelations! A new slant on contemporary art.

GENERAL

Newsletters Now: From Classic to New Wave by Steven Heller and Elinor Pettit (New York, PBC, 1996, \$35.00) is a stunning presentation of over 200 superbly designed and smartly produced newsletters which stand out from the mass of most printed material. Although newsletters are as common today as printed business cards, never before has a book been devoted to examining the various forms, designs, and concepts used to produce the thousands that appear each year.

When you have the senior art director of the New York Times design this book, along with Elinor Pettit a professor of graduate communications design at Pratt Institute, you expect a better than ordinary book, but the design here is extraordinary. From the size of the book to its basic design elements, you know the critics and judges are special. They are indeed. After Steven Heller's introduction, the newsletters are presented by category of firm or organization. The appendix consists of the names and addresses of each of the organizations represented, as well as an index. If you are interested in

design of newsletters, great book design, and an aesthetic philosophy which can be made concrete with ease by someone who really knows, then this is the book for you! Don't steal those ideas.

Kant after Duchamp by Thierry de Duve (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, \$39.95) is an intriguing new work by the art historian and critical theorist who turns to what exactly constitutes art in the 20th century. The eight essays build a thesis arguing for a broad and inclusive definition of art. Discussing how modernist art practice itself became the very subject matter of Duchamp's work, De Duve shows how the classical notion of art as beauty has been replaced with something much more radical: "This is art." "Art was a Proper Name" is the title of one of his essays. This is a most important discussion on the centrality of the question of what is art, not only for critics and aestheticians, but also for artists.

The Other Modernism: F.T. Marinetti's Futurist Fiction of Power by Cinzia Sartini Blum (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1996, \$45.00 cloth, \$17.00 paper) is a new approach from recent feminist and psychoanalytic criticism about Marinetti's rhetoric, politics and psychology of gender in his writings.

Marinetti's futurist textual practices ranging from formal experimentation with "words in freedom" to nationalist manifestos that advocate intervention in World War I, anticipate subsequent fascist rhetoric of power and virility. This is the first full-length study of Marinetti in English and should be of great interest to artists, writers, sociologists and cultural critics.

The Evolution of Allure: Sexual Selection from the Medici Venus to the Incredible Hulk by George Hersey (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996, \$30) brings Darwinian ideas into the history of art for the first time. Hersey contends that by enshrining specific ideals of human beauty, Western art has actually influenced the course of human evolution. From classical sculpture to Renaissance painting to modern film, comic books, and even pornography, the artistic representation of male and female beauty has influenced--and continues to influence--our choice of reproductive partners; and may thus have left its cumulative stamp upon the human form itself. From Miss Americas to Nazism, Hersey examines the movements of interpreting physical beauty in specifically racial terms. Hersey brings it up to date with the emphasis today on hyperdeveloped breasts and pecs--Batman and the Incredible Hulk, beware! Includes bibliography and index.

The Freak Show: Sideshow Banner Art by Carl Hammer and Gideon Bosker (San Francisco, Chronicle

Books, 1996, \$14.95 paper) present a brilliant array of these vernacular paintings used to draw crowds to traveling circuses and carnivals of the last century. Rather than portray what really is behind the curtain, these sideshow banners boasted of an aberrant parallel universe, a real break with the day-to-day. The most renowned banner artists--including Fred Johnson, Jack Cripe, Snap Wyatt and Johnny Meah--painted the banners from the thirties to the nineties.

The authors present a concise and engaging history of this genre, its leading exponents, and the "freak" personalities who comprised the sideshows themselves. Included are painted ladies and tattooed men, freaks of nature, oddities of the animal world, the exotic and erotic, blimps and shrimps, and so on. Included are 90 full-color photographs. A new chapter in popular culture.

Everyday Things: Garden Tools by Suzanne Slesin et al (New York, Abbeville, 1996, \$29.95) is the second in a series of Everyday Things, unearthing the fascinating story behind the basic yet inventively crafted implements that cultivators have used through the years. Illustrated with hundreds of full-color photographs of garden tools, as well as with vintage lithographs, engravings, posters, ads, and even decorative plates depicting garden implements, the book traces the history of those remarkable objects from prehistoric times to the present. The layouts and photographs are delicious, giving a new status to these humble objects, which cover the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of the tools have been made obsolete by mechanization and are sometimes used only for decorative purposes. Directory of resources, bibliography and index included.

Cover Story: the Art of American magazine covers, 1900-1950 by Steven Heller and Louise Fili (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1996, \$18.95 paper) describes the "museum of the street", a veritable gallery for some of the country's leading illustrators, artists, and cartoonists at your corner newsstand. Themes of Uncle Sam, the Gibson Girl, Norman Rockwell, and so much more. According to the authors, the magazine industry's cover art has at various times not only influenced American styles and fashions but also perpetuated the stereotypes and myths of American life.

Yet one can see the influence of El Lissitzky on certain covers, one can see Futurism raising its wild head. Art Deco was warmly received on dance magazines, and Vanity Fair (the old one) handled political caricatures easily and with great aesthetic power. With an album of eye-catching illustrations in color, and an energetic text, **Cover Story** is a compelling collection that offers an entertaining look back at this neglected commercial art

form. You certainly had time to judge the magazine by its cover!

The Amate Tradition/La Tradición del Amate: Innovation and Dissent in Mexican Art, edited by Jonathan D. Amith (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1996, \$29.95 paper) is a handsome oversized book which documents an exhibit in 1990 which arose as a political project--to raise national and international consciousness to prevent the construction of a hydroelectric dam that would forcibly relocate 40,000 indigenous residents of the Balsas River basin in central Guerrero, Mexico. It succeeded--both in stopping the dam, and in resurrecting and developing an art medium: amate. Since pre-Columbian times, amate has been made from tree bark, which is crushed and pounded into flat sheets, and dried. The contemporary artists in this collection use bright color and subtle texture to create artworks that have now become highly collectible as Nahua art. The Prologue is by Felipe Ehrenberg, and other essays are by Jonathan D. Amith, Marion Oettinger, Jr., Louise Iseult Paradis. Ethnographic photos are by Jose Angel Rodriguez and Jonathan D. Amith.

The catalog lists all the works in the exhibit. But the political, archeological, historical, ethnographical aspects of the region dominate this beautiful book. 91 color plates and 23 duotone images with 8 maps complete this important collection.

Tapestries of Hope, Threads of Love: The Arpillera Movement in Chile, 1974-1994 by Marjorie Agosin (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1996, \$70.00 cloth, \$39.95 paper) tells the story of ordinary women living in terror and extreme poverty under General Pinochet's oppressive rule in Chile (1973-1989) and how their lives did and did not change following his reign. These women defied the military dictatorship by embroidering their story on scraps of cloth, using needles and thread as one of the boldest means of popular protest and resistance in Latin America. The *arpilleras* they made--pathwork tapestries with scenes of everyday life and memorials to their disappeared relatives--were smuggled out of Chile and brought to the world the story of their fruitless searches in jails, morgues, government offices, and the tribunals of law for their husbands, brothers, and sons.

The author has spent 20 years interviewing, thinking and writing about the *arpilleristas* of Santiago de Chile, threatened from within and outside the country for this work, but she and the women have come out of this with an even greater conviction and commitment to human rights.

A foreword by Isabel Allende and a long narrative essay by the author describing this twenty-year epic journey through the lives of these courageous women brings us to the main part of the book, the color plates, each *arpillera* explained in detail, and then an epilogue from 1994. This is a moving book, the first of its kind to document this politically charged art form. Included are the testimonies of these women, these *arpilleristas*, documenting their losses of sons, husbands, brothers. Peter Winn writes an afterword of this eloquent, moving and important book. Cry with the women, cry with the author, and rejoice at their courage.

Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art, edited by Arturo Lindsay (Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996, n.p.) includes the history and development of Yoruba-Cuban Culture by several authors, and then a discussion of the aesthetics of Wilfredo Lam, Joan Boza, Ana Mendieta, Raquelín Mendieta, Osvaldo Mesa, ORISHA/SANTOS, Jose Bedia and many more, the influence of African art upon Cuban visual artists, documenting the continuing influence of Santería as a source of power in contemporary art. The only thing that is missing in this book are the chants and the music!

Silence please! Stories after the works of Juan Muñoz by John Berger, William Forsythe, Dave Hickey, Patrick McCabe, Alexandre Melo, Vik Muniz, Quico Rivas, Luc Sante, Adrian Searle, Lynne Tillman and Marina Warner, edited by Louise Neri (Dublin, Irish Museum of Modern Art/Zurich, Scalo, 1996, \$27.50) creates its own category. Since Muñoz is a storyteller, using installation of dolls, dwarfs and gnome figures, ten authors were asked to react to a single work by the artist. As a result, we get true jewels of literature filtered through the realm of the subconscious, playing with issues of mania, fear and suspense. Perhaps the overall feeling of alienation in these stories reflects the disturbing visual aspect of the artist's work.

Localizer 1.0: The techno house book (Berlin, Die Gestalten Verlag and Chromaparke e.v., 1995, \$47.99 softcover) is like nothing you have seen. On the cover is a frenellated disk, seemingly like a bee's eye; it is meant to be the first issue of a series, dealing with different aspects of progressive culture. The bilingual book (German and English) begins with a statement from Jenny Holzer: *Technology will make or break us. Alienation produces eccentrics or revolutionaries. You must remember you have freedom of choice.*

Not only is this movement about technology, but it is also about House Music, Techno Art, Planet Glamour, lots of raves, amazing printing, a kind of Wired gone

unwired--a music culture that is known to Generation X, I guess--but what a trip! If Brian Eno's music could emanate from a chip in the centerfold, I'd be so happy--but you're on your own. Fashion, Girls, Anarchic Adjustment. Art & Music Libraries should buy this volume for the documentation of a moment--it is sensational! The optics represented here are terrifyingly beautiful. There is a list of addresses for Graphics, Photo, Artists, Text, Clubs/Events, Labels, and Fashion. The Future is now! (Order from Consortium Book Sales & Distribution, 1045 Westgate Dr., St. Paul, MN 55114.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

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) represents layers of memories and images of the American detention camps to which 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of them U.S. citizens, were sent during World War II. The artist Joan Myers was stimulated to visit *all* of the 10 camps after visiting just one of them., stretching from the deserts of California to the swamps of Arkansas. The nearest analogy to these photographs are those of the German concentration camps, where 6 million Jews and several million Christians were annihilated. These evocative black-and-white photographs depict the camps as they are today, along with artifacts left behind in them--barracks steps, guard tower footings, cemeteries, dried up ponds and rock work from abandoned gardens, and even children's toys.

Accompanying these memorable photographs is a history of the camps told almost exclusively from the reminiscences of former internees, giving voice to the stark images of the photographer. Historical and personal are interwoven, while the historian reveals his own family's experience, moving between Japan, Hawaii, and mainland United States. This story will be told many times by many different people. This version is poetic and moving, and most important for all to read.

Library: The Drama Within by Diane Asséo Griliches with an essay by Daniel J. Boorstin (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico Press, \$35) shows a keen eye and a reader's sensitivity toward other readers in library buildings. Traveling throughout the world, Ms. Griliches has photographed not only Michelangelo's Biblioteca Marucelliana in Florence and the lost library of Sarajevo before it has been destroyed, but also the homeless seeking shelter, children using their library cards for the first time, patient librarians, lovers in the stacks, and much more. Each black and white photograph is accompanied by a quotation from an author or philosopher or librarian, great man or book

reviewer. A celebration of the manifold services of libraries such as the relaxed, inviting environment of browsing, the quiet hush of scholars bent over rare manuscripts, the engaged gazes of children listening to a story, and so much more in black and white. Boorstin argues for the book as still a book, in face of all the new technologies.

Imogen Cunningham: Flora (Boston, Little, Brown, 1996, \$45) spans a whole career in which Cunningham had always explored natural phenomena with a keen intelligence and an aesthetic eloquence. This collection covers from 1913 through the 1970s, with more than half from the 1920s and 1930s. More than half of these images have never been published.

Richard Lorenz's essay covers Cunningham's enduring interest in botanical aspects and traces the evolution of her photographic imagery, which closely parallels the technological innovations of the 20th century.

Botanical notes on plants illustrations in the plats, a chronology of Cunningham's life, and a selected bibliography are included.

Glimpses Toward Infinity by Gordon Parks (Boston, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 1996, \$45.00) presents the most innovative and artistically dynamic collection of works to date--ordinary objects arranged in imaginary landscapes painted by the artist himself--alongside many of his most recent poems, including a moving homage to the Oklahoma City bombing. Parks incorporates fragile portraits of flowers, leaves, shells set in timeless environments. Parks will be having a retrospective beginning in September 1997 which will be touring throughout the U.S. This book is a joy to behold. The words match the exciting imagery in majesty and grace.

At the Water's Edge by Joel Meyerowitz (Boston, Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown, 1996, \$11.95 paperback) is the "bonsai" version of the large project Meyerowitz created by photographing Cape Cod Bay in Provincetown during all hours of the day, capturing the contemplative mood created by light, air, and water. This small-format gift book gathers the best of these photographs, which were previously published in *Cape Light*, *A Summer's Day*, and *Bay/Sky*. In Maggie Barrett's beautiful essay, a day in the summer is documented poetically and evocatively. A wonderful gift for anyone who delights in sky, sea and light.



Ohio's Railway Age in Postcards by H. Roger Grant (Akron, Univ. of Akron Press, 1996) joins America's love of trains with the craze for the picture postcard, and this combination created a new form of commercial illustration. Many of these postcards come from private collections and have been largely unpublished, including rare "real-photo" cards. The 150 images reflect the railway age in Ohio with steam trains, electric interurban lines, railroad workers and depots and travelers, focusing on the period 1900 to 1915. The introduction tells the fascinating story of Ohio's relations with the railroad from the 1830s to the present and traces the popularity of the picture postcard, particularly those that still charmingly evoke the images of an era long past. Notes and index.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Alphabet Soup by Scott Gustafson (New York, Greenwich Workshop Press, 1996, \$19.95) is a joyful alphabet banquet with Otter as host, who invites all his animal friends (26 of them) who bring potluck ingredients for the alphabet stew. If you can imagine, this reviewer went to "U" right away to find that "Unicorn upon his unicycle carried unusual (yet useful) utensils in an upside-down umbrella." And the illustrations are dynamic, exciting, full-blown and complete with a whimsy and fantasy one could never have imagined but Gustafson does. A wonderful children's book for the child in all of us--and a great housewarming gift too!

A Journey of the Imagination: The Art of James Christensen (New York, Greenwich Workshop Press, 1994, \$39.95) is a sumptuous journey into the world of imagination with whimsical, beautiful and thought-provoking images and energetic prose, which tells more than a story--it tells of a life as an artist who loves what he is doing and wants the art process to be completed by the reader. His use of symbols and metaphors is abundant--and it takes a long time to see everything in a page of illustration--it is dense, full, heavy with meaning. This illustrator is an artist who wants to leave the viewer with questions--much like Duchamp, the artist knows that the viewer completes the work. He connects so many minds and imaginations in his work, making it unforgettable. It is magic. There is little this artist cannot do--paint, draw, write and do calligraphy too. He is a consummate artist--one who should be admired not just by people interested in illustration, but especially those who understand the quality of this magnificent artist.

Heinemann has created a series called Creative Sparks from Heinemann, where readers young and old learn about the creative process of authors and illustrators leading to the most treasured books for children. Beautifully illustrated, content-rich books speak directly, respectfully, and encouragingly to readers, writers, and illustrators of all ages. The first of this series is:

On the Bus with Joanna Cole, a Creative Autobiography by Joanna Cole (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1996, \$16.95 cloth) which tells about Cole's first book, a science book about cockroaches, to the adventures of the wildly popular Magic School Bus series. Photographs, layouts of some of the books, ephemeral material, illustrators' sketches and layouts all with personal texts lead to an understanding of the process of making illustrated books.

In Flight with David McPhail: A Creative Autobiography by David McPhail (Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1996, \$15.95) deals with the authors' childhood memories, meetings with his publishers, and many stages of creating finished drawings for his books. A real catalyst for understanding the great books this author creates.

MEDIA REVIEWS

Escher Interactive: Exploring the Art of the Infinite: CD-ROM (Windows) (New York, Abrams/Byron Preiss Multimedia, \$55) seems to be the perfect initial presentation of Abrams into the field of interactive media. Escher is a natural! Even the menu is presented as if Escher were drawing his famous geometric intricate forms to create a cube-like menu for the 9 nodules that are part of this fascinating CD-Rom. Escher is there, in the flesh, wishing he could have drawn "a bit better".

Escher explains in the half-hour documentary on the disk how he was an failure in school, and even when mature, he never made money from his art until 1951, when Life and Time published spreads presenting Escher to the millions, and he became a "hot" item. But this film is not a Ken Burns documentary--it's superficial--but enough for "entertainment".

The best aspect of this CD-Rom is the gallery of 600 images supplemented with audio and an occasional video interview with Escher's son, George. One can examine Escher's work using a zoom feature to scrutinize Escher's obsession with the infinite in a finite space--such as fishes or birds. Is it education or entertainment? That's up to you.

Graffiti Verité is a new video release produced and released for distribution by Bryan World Productions, written and directed by Bob Bryan (1995, \$21.00) This is a tightly-edited documentary of 45 minutes which gets under the skin of the "graffiti artist", allowing 24 Los Angeles artists to do all the talking, showing some of them "doing it". There is a great energy in this video--which has recently been seen on PBS in various locales, especially in Los Angeles. This is not "underground" art, but this film focuses on explosively colorful work, some even created for gallery shows. Chax, the old man of the graffiti world from the Seventies, really explains the place of this art both on the streets and in the institutions, and traces Los Angeles graffiti art from Chicano roots. Many younger artists are featured, comparing technical skills with their peers, discussing how graffiti art relates to rap and break dancing and even to hiphop. Bryan obviously has won the admiration and confidence of these artists, and he gives them the podium at all times. Oftentimes the film is extremely moving, provocative, and allows the audience to really understand this art form. Buy it, it really tells the whole story! Order from Bryan World Productions, 125 S. Wilton Pl. Los Angeles, CA 90004. Fax: (213)856-0855; phone: (213)856-9256.

Icon on Silver, a CD-ROM presentation of an exhibition which opened on 16 March 1996 in Skopje, Macedonia at the Duplo Gallery. The Soros Center for Contemporary Arts in Skopje feels that the "pages" in these 9 artist's books are interactive projects, reflecting the current fine art approaches toward this technology. Nine artists, nine installations. You can obtain the CD-Rom from the Soros Center, Ruzveltova 34 91000 Skopje, Macedonia. email: SCCA@Soros.org.mk or tel/fax: 389.91.36.18.55. Their home page is: <http://www.soros.org.mk> and then point your browser to SCCA.

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