

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

The Fluxus Reader, edited by Ken Friedman (London, Academy Editions, 1998, \$29.95 paper) is a most welcome addition to the growing Fluxus literature, one which puts Fluxus into the scholarly pursuits of present and future scholars. It took three decades to fulfill the request of George Maciunas to do a "history" of Fluxus. But this book is more than a history; it gives a theoretical basis for the study of Fluxus, amplifies the known sources and expands upon the ideas and theories of artists, scholars and theoreticians. The influx of new Fluxus scholars, the younger scholars, has given new insights into a movement that over the more than 30 years has become part of the history of art.

The book is divided into History, Theory, Critical perspectives, a transcript of the videotaped Interview with George Maciunas, Two Fluxus theories: one by Ken Friedman and one by Dick Higgins, and a chronology, a list of selected Fluxus art works and related primary source materials, and a list of selected Fluxus sources and related secondary sources. There is much in this volume compacted so the lists are fine for my eyes, but might require a magnifying glass. But the book is indeed the first comprehensive overview on this challenging and controversial group.

Imagining Language: An Anthology, edited by Jed Rasula and Steve McCaffery (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1998, \$55) would be the book I would love to be with on a desert island. Continually revelatory, this compendium of astonishing "deviant" literary texts shows the multiple ways in which language has been used or has been conceptualized in relation to reality. But this is not concrete or visual poetry, or European avant-garde contributions. This basically is a compendium of works appealing to the "circus" of a John Cage, with antiphonal reverberations of voices and texts in freedom and joy. Culling from linguistics, literature, philosophy, art, religion, occultism, and psychoanalysis, this diversity makes the anthology reflect its own wildness. The book remains a kind of "laboratory" from which the reader can divine unexpected congruities between seemingly discordant materials. For example, we get Marcel Duchamp juxtaposed with Jonathan Swift, or Victor Hugo and Easter Island "rongo-rongo."

The book is divided into five parts, starting with "Revolution of the Word". Part Two, "Oralities, Rituals and Colloquies," extends sound poetry into a broader field of orality ranging from community idiolects to mystical glossolalia. Part Three, "Los and Found in Translation," addresses linguistic boundaries, including those between translation theory and practice, speech and writing, and sanity and psychosis. Part Four, "Letters to Words,"

charts language's from script to scripture, and Part Five, "Matter and Atom" supports a tradition attentive to linguistic microparticles that originates in Lucretius's analogy of letter to atom.

In the 618 pages with 169 illustrations, this book becomes endless joy to the ear, to the eye and to the mind. A 24-page bibliography and suggestions for further reading, an index and strong arms to carry this book wherever you go make this a joyful gift for anyone interested in the endless joys of language, of certainty and wonder, of perplexity and security, and more wonder. Rasula is Associate Professor of English at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and Steve McCaffery is a legend at York University teaching poetics and contemporary literature.

Letters to My Son on the Love of Books by Roberto Cotroneo who writes to his son, Francesco, in four letters each emphasizing a book that had great influence on him which have taught him great lessons about the world. In these charming letters, Cotroneo uses *Treasure Island* to illustrate anxiety, while tenderness is illustrated in Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. Passion is demonstrated in "The Wasteland" by T. S. Eliot, and other lessons are taught through other books. These lessons the father wants to share passionately with his young son. The value of reading is indeed the lesson he so engagingly demonstrates.

(Hopewell, NJ, Ecco Press, 1998, \$23.00 hardcover)

The End of the Art World by Robert C. Morgan (New York, Allworth Press, co-published with School of Visual Arts, 1998) is a frank and sincere collection of art criticism emphasizing that the most significant change in the art world over the past two decades has not involved a change in style or movement but in the ways in which art is promoted and marketed. Morgan feels that art has followed popular culture in fashion, media and entertainment. He calls for a return to aesthetics and to an inner-directedness in art as distinct from a market-driven art world.

The book includes Manifestos, History, Artists including Nancy Grossman, Gilbert & George, Carolee Schneemann, Bruce Conner, Nancy Graves, Bill Viola and Philip Glass, among others, as well as several art issues culled from previously published essays. Part of the Aesthetics Today series. \$18.95 paper

MONOGRAPHS

Francis Bacon, a Retrospective (New York, Abrams, \$65.00) is a revelatory book featuring essays by three major Bacon authorities who have been given uninhibited voice, shedding light on Bacon's private and life and moreover on his working methods about which he was particularly secretive. 101 color and 80 black and white images are included as well as documentary photographs

and later works in private collections never before reproduced. Includes two-sided gatefolds, each representing two of the major triptychs that were such an important feature of Bacon's work. This is a major catalog coming shortly after the artist's death, revealing many secrets.

Picasso: Painter and Sculpture in Clay, edited by Marilyn McCully with contributions by Claude Picasso and Bernard Ruiz-Picasso (New York, Abrams, 1999, \$60 hardcover) accompanies a magnificence exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City through 6 June 1999. This is the first survey of Picasso's thousands of works in ceramics. Lavishly designed, this catalog reveals for the first time how painted and sculptured works in clay formed a vital part of Picasso's output during his last decades, and how these joyous works are intimately related to his art in other mediums.

With 310 illustrations, 275 in full color, this chronological catalog is a volume to be treasured, for it explains how from the moment Picasso first visited the Madoura workshop in Vallauris in southern France in 1946, he was attracted to the unusual potential of working in clay. Those color plates show how he transformed ordinary objects such as plates, bowls and vases into art and by his inventiveness created totally new forms. How wonderful to see his amazing drawings and paintings become three-dimensional works of art, and he kept most of them as well.

The volume contains preliminary drawings and wonderful photographs of Picasso at work, expanding the great legacy of Picasso not only in painting and sculpture, but now into clay and photography. There is a glossary of materials, techniques and shapes, as well as a select bibliography.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Take my Picture Gary Leonard (Los Angeles, Really Great Books, 1999, \$17.95 paper) is a different kind of portrait of Los Angeles, for it is of people that Gary Leonard wants to depict in his photographs. He has become an icon in Los Angeles and "Take my Picture Gary Leonard" is a registered trademark of the artist. From Bob Hope and George Burns to OJ (1980) and Rupert Murdoch, he also takes the common people who wait for buses at the corner or strange signs on Skid Row. This is indeed a different picture of Los Angeles, for it is all in black and white. Available at your local bookstore or write to Really Great Books, P.O. Box 292000, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

Shooting Stars: Favorite Photos taken by Classic Celebrities (Santa Monica, General Publishing, 1998, \$40 hardcover) is truly a labor of love. Conceived by and compiled by David Zeitlin, a *Life* correspondence on the

Hollywood beat, the book was never completed until artist Harriet Zeitlin, his wife, found the dusty cardboard boxes after his death and resurrected the black-and white photographs snapped by some of the greatest legends of our time such as Tony Curtis, Yul Brynner, Kirk Douglas, Dean Martin, Grace Kelly, Elvis Presley, Alfred Hitchcock, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jimmy Stewart and Claire Boothe Luce, among others. Each photograph is accompanied by a statement by the photographer citing the context, environment or narrative surrounding the subject matter. **Shooting Stars** gives us a view of how these famous people viewed the world. And thanks to Harriet Zeitlin, the book has come to life with the greatest desire to complete David Zeitlin's dream. Harriet Zeitlin certainly deserves the credit for this wonderful book!

Land, Sky and All that is Within: Visionary Photographers in the Southwest by James L. Enyeart (Santa Fe, Museum of New Mexico Press, 1999, \$45 hardcover, \$24.95 paper) showcases works representing a "who's who" of great American photographers who have photographed the Southwest, its landscape and cultures, over the last century. Among these are Timothy O'Sullivan, Charles F. Lummis, Edward S. Curtis, Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Laura Gilpin and Eliot Porter, among others who were able to transcend ordinary perceptions of the southwest landscape, seeking instead to discover the spirit of its character. The essay by James L. Enyeart shows how during the past 100 years, when photography for the most part was not considered an art form, these photographers pursued their aesthetic ideals finding them socially relevant to their time. 20 color and 82 black and white photographs. To order, write to P.O. Box 2087, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

Picasso and Photography: The Dark Mirror (Paris, Flammarion and Houston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1997, \$55.00 hardcover) is another in the long list of endless studies on this nerve center called Picasso, who generates more scholarship and more in-depth studies on the creative process than from any other artist. It seems that the hunt is fathomless, since Picasso remains an unending source of curiosity and discovery.

This beautifully illustrated book with more than 270 images definitely documents the importance of photography to Picasso's creative process. In his exploration of photography, he had a voracious appetite for experimentation, which made him push the medium both stylistically and technically.

Ann Baldassari has juxtaposed the photograph and the work that has come out of it under the guise of superimposed photographs, cliché-verres, photo-based engravings, photograms and original drawings on photographs, slides, collages, and photographic cutouts. He also experimented in collaborating with Dora Maar,

Brassai, Gjon Mili, and André Villers with playful inventiveness and freshness.

If you love photography and appreciate the creative genius called Picasso, then this book and its insightful essay is for you! More than a picture book, this is a carefully wrought scholarly study.

Self Portrait by Man Ray (New York, Little Brown/Bulfinch, 1998, \$29.95 paper) is a reprint of the original published in 1988 with new photographs and an afterword by Juliet Man Ray. A wonderful story by a wonderful human being who happened to be a great artist.

Scenes in a Library: Reading the Photograph in the Book, 1843-1875 (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1998, \$45 cloth) is a revelatory exploration of the experimental moment when photography was first invented and was bonded with text, roughly from 1840s to the 1880s, during which the photographic image alternately resisted and became assimilated by the printed page, which we take for granted, but which was indeed a revolution. Taking one book about photography, one "scientific" book; two travel narratives, one fictional and one factual, and one book of poetry, as well as some miscellaneous books from the 1870s, Armstrong weaves an amazing discussion of Victorian positivism, a complex reading of Victorian British photographic culture, and a profound meditation on photography and text itself. According to Armstrong and in fact according to this reviewer, art history has given short shrift to the historic photograph, removing it from its printed and published context. Because of her close reading, she reinserts the photograph into the book from which it was taken. No one who reads, no one who understands the photograph, and no one who wants to know more about the 19th century and the beginnings of photography will want to miss this extraordinary book.

Hans Namuth: Portraits by Carolyn Kinder Carr (Washington, National Portrait Gallery/Smithsonian Institute Press, 1999, \$39.95) is the first extended account of Hans Namuth's life to be published. His subjects were always more famous than he, for he photographed from the 1950's on all the artists who made history, such as the Abstract Expressionists including Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Josef and Anni Albers, Constantino Nivola, Saul Steinberg, as well as dealer Leo Castelli, those born outside the U.S. such as Namuth himself. But Namuth also photographed critics, architects, and others living in the New York art world such as Robert Motherwell, Larry Rivers, Frank O'Hara, Gropius, Breuer, Saarinen, Bucky Fuller, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn, Jerome Robbins, John Cage, John Steinbeck, Edward Albee, Leonard Baskin, Jasper Johns, Tony Smith and even Julia Childs, among hundreds of others. It is a veritable *Who's Who*.

There is a complete chronology which opens the book, and a selected bibliography and index.

The Tibetans: A Struggle to Survive by Steve Lehman, with an introduction by Robert Coles and essay by Robbie Barnett (New York, Umbrage Editions, dist. by Twin Palms, Santa Fe, 1998, \$45.00 hardcover) is not another coffee table book. It is beautiful, but portrays a disturbing portrait of both the splendor and the ruin that mark contemporary Tibet under the Chinese regime. This is not the Tibet of temples and mountain views, but instead it is a Tibet of Chinese People's Armed Police watching and waiting and taking pictures, of portraits of Tibetans harmed by trying to escape to India, "former political prisoners" including nuns and monks, an oral history by a monk who led the demonstration that revised Tibet's claim to independence, who spent 5 years in Drapchi Prison, and then escaped to India. There are photos of the degradation of the land by the Chinese, the poaching of animals. Smog has emerged due to the cement factories, the land is being defaced by over harvesting of lumber. The Chinese have imposed new techniques of farming, logging, laying waste to the land. And then there are the monks in the monastery whose smiles belie the tragedy of the different Tibet. Between photos of prostitutes and discos, burned-out police stations and political demonstrations, there still is the quiet beauty of a culture which is being destroyed. Tibetan ephemera, maps, propaganda, and religious iconography add new insights into this 10-year survey of a culture being transformed by outside influences. A moving book.

GETTY PUBLICATIONS

Introduction to Archival Organization and Description: Access to Cultural Heritage by Michael J. Fox and Peter L. Wilkerson, ed. by Suzanne R. Warren (Los Angeles, Getty Trust, 1999, \$14.95 paper) is an introduction to the common organizational and descriptive practices that have developed in response to the particular requirements of archival collections. It serves as an orientation to fundamental archival principles for beginning and novice archivists, including such topics as the characteristics of archival materials and how these shape practices, the gathering and analyses of information that goes into descriptions, types of finding aids, and deployment of information systems. Includes glossary of terms and a list of Web resources.

Hill and Adamson is part of the In Focus series of books published by the J. Paul Getty Museum, discussing the first professional collaboration in the history of photography, David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson. These two Scotsmen, joined in partnership in 1843, just four years after the invention of photography, creates some of the earliest examples of fine art photography and thus

established Scotland as an important third center of early photography along with England and France. They created hundreds of cityscapes, landscapes, portraits, and staged dramatic photographs all using the process, "calotype", which have a painterly quality. The partnership ended with the tragic death of Robert Adamson in 1848 at the age of 26. Includes 55 duotone illustrations, 1 foldout. \$16.95 paper published by the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum:

Photographs (Los Angeles, Getty Museum, 1999, 34.95 cloth, \$22.50 paper) includes 61 color illustrations, 1 foldout and delves deeply into the rich collection of photography which the Museum owns. Included are works by Frederick Sommer, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Walker Evans, Julia Margaret Cameron, Stieglitz, Watkins, Kertesz, Man Ray, Lisette Model and many more. A beautiful album.

Mortality Immortality?: The Legacy of 20th-Century Art (Los Angeles, Getty Conservation Institute, \$39.95 paperback), edited by Miguel Angel Corzo and based on a conference on the preservation of contemporary art held recently at the Getty Center in Los Angeles, poses many questions such as "Which objects or events will define the art of our time? Who will decide what is to be preserved for posterity and how that will be done? If an artist chooses ephemeral materials, should the work be allowed to deteriorate? While groping to find answers to these and many more questions generated from the way artists are working with unlikely materials and in ways never before explored, artists, museum directors, curators, art historians, dealers, collectors and conservators met in March 1998 to share diverse perspectives on the survival of contemporary art. 34 essays are illustrated with more than 100 color plates Biographies and index. A spirited and timely contribution.

GENERAL

Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage 1870-1997 by Sergiusz Michalski (London, Reaktion Books, 1999, \$24.95 paper) discusses the notions behind public monuments, tracing the history from the 1870's when erecting them became an artistic, political and social domain in its own right. Today, the debates about World War II, the Holocaust and those monuments after the fall of communism via the destruction of countless statues of Lenin, Stalin and other leaders make this study timely. The emphasis is on European monuments, and Eastern despots continue to construct public monuments, while North American monuments tend to be contentious.

Julien Levy: Portrait of an Art Gallery, edited by Ingrid Schaffner and Lisa Jacobs (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1998, \$25 cloth) played a most influential part in the 20th century

from the opening of the gallery in 1931 and the closing in 1959 in the transfer of the avant-garde from Paris to New York. First to show Surrealism in America and to champion Neoromanticism, Magic Realism, and Machine Abstraction, first to show Bunuel's *Un Chien Andalou* and Joseph Cornell's *Rose Hobart* in the gallery, first to have cocktail openings, and he showed Atget, Brancusi, Cartier-Bresson, Cornell, Dali, Walt Disney, Duchamp, Ernst, Walker Evans, Leonor Fini, Naum Gabo, Giacometti, Gorky, Frida Kahlo, Leger, Magritte, Lee Miller, Man Ray, Ben Shahn, and Dorothea Tanning.

This book, which accompanied a great exhibition at the Equitable Building in New York City, includes reproductions of paintings, photographs, and film stills from museums and private collections, as well as art and ephemera from Levy's own collection. The book offers views from various perspectives, such as Dorothea Tanning's reminiscences about her lasting friendship with her first dealer. Schaffner surveys the evolution of Levy's enterprise from combination curiosity shop, exhibition space, and performance site into a model for the contemporary art gallery.

Carolyn Burke explores Levy's complex relationship with his mother-in-law, the poet and painter Mina Loy, who acted as his agent and mentor in Paris, while Steve Watson writes about Levy's personal and professional affiliations with the "Harvard Moderns"—Alfred Barr, Jr., Lincoln Kirstein, Philip Johnson, Edward Warburg and A. Everett Austin, among others. There is a chronology of events in the gallery and of Levy's life. Many illustrations.

The Four Immigrants Manga by Henry (Yoshitaka) Kiyama (Berkeley, Stone Bridge Press, 1998, \$12.95 paper) is a visual chronicle by the author of his immigrant experiences in the United States. Originally published in Japanese in San Francisco in 1931, the book is drawn in a class gag-strip comic-book style which demonstrates the wonderful sense of humor mingled with satirical irony that Japanese immigrants retained in the midst of the anti-Japanese exclusion movement which bathed them in a very sinister light. Written well before *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, it still captures a period of immigrant culture in this country which is more candid and outspoken in the graphic novel style than if it had been written in prose. The story documents the Japanese experience in San Francisco from 1904-1924, translated by Frederick L. Schodt. Includes Foreword, Afterword, a selected bibliography

My Way: Speeches and Poems by Charles Bernstein (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1999, \$18 paper) explores the place of poetry in American culture and in the university by interlinked forms of speeches and poems, interviews and essays. The (in)famous language poet and critic, Bernstein uses humor, sometimes dark writing to question what language is, why we use it as we

do, and how we value our choices in that linguistic endeavor. His "The Book as Architecture" is indeed one of the highlights of the book for readers of *Umbrella*, but there is so much more such as "Thelonious Monk and the Performance of Poetry" and "An Autobiographical Interview."

Bernstein plays many roles, as critic, public intellectual, lyric poet, lecturer, cultural critic, and much. If you know his Poetics List on the Internet, this will reveal the master at his own game. But he really is not the "intellectual" because he really is a mensch, personable and accessible, funny and conversational. Cover illustration by Susan Bee!

Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing, and Archiving in Art at P.S. 1 during Summer of 1998 and at Henry Art Gallery through 21 January 1999 included boxes, tubing, cabinets, diagrams, suitcases, and stacks of paper—and in great quantities. But so much more. Created by the Haus der Kunst in Munich and the Siemens Cultural Program, the "initiator" Ingrid Schaffner with a whole crew of other curators, developed links between the older American and European artists of the 1960s with the younger artists of today. In alphabetical order, the "archive" uses the theme of the exhibition to create a multitude of cross-references in the information it provides, forming a multi-layered structure of the exhibited works and according to Schaffner, includes things beyond the exhibition. She looks from Magritte to Warhol, from Atget to Bickerton, seeking the genealogy of "storage and archiving as imagery, metaphor or process in contemporary art." Likewise, a co-curator Matthias Winzen concludes, "The dematerialization of concrete entities and of all things human that has been so frequently prophesied in media theory, the disappearance of place, body and desire for personal identity—so far, none of these can be observed in practical terms to speak of." Since "archives" is so much in the vocabulary almost like a buzzword at the end of the millennium, we see that living archives are works which are open-ended, unfinished and fodder for so much more.

The ramification of documentation leads to preservation and the "crate" in this exhibition serves as a figurative presence, a kind of imagery as identification. One brings to mind Duchamp, Broodthaers, Kosuth, Man Ray, Jason Rhoads, and even Andy Warhol, and so many more. To be sure, Geoffrey Batchen's essay on "The Art of Archiving" does not say it all, but certainly poses the issues and some of the solutions, citing Vera Frenkel's *Body Missing* and Bill Gates's Corbis Corporation. More contributions by Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Sheryl Conkelton, Susan Buck-Morss, Trevor Fairbrother, and so many more make this just the tip of the iceberg for continued studies, but this is a great beginning. Ingrid Schaffner began thinking about this in an essay in 1995 and it has taken many months and years to put such a show together.

Artists such as Blau, Cornell, Lawler, Messager, Spoerri, Cranston and so many more receive enough attention to make the viewer realize how vast this field is and how archives and archiving are as diverse as the world it attempts to organize. This is a primer for the next phase of the use of archives in museums and in the art world. It is a tribute to Prestel to have published this large 304-page volume with 400 illustrations, 154 in color. The price is \$75.00 and is well worth it. List of illustrations, selected bibliography.

NEW PERIODICALS

Art Visionary, an Australian and International Journal of Fantastique & Visionary Art, features HR Giger, Brigid Marlin, Tom McKee, Malcolm McKesson, De Es Schwertberger, Felix Tuszynski and Wayne Viney. Volume 1, no. 1 is dated November 1998 - June 1999 and is edited by an artist himself, Damian Michaels. This magazine comes out of Melbourne and costs \$15 for a two-issue subscription. Black and white illustrations, subscriptions from Art Visionary, GPO Box 1536-N, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, Australia.

Object: contemporary craft + design + 3D art is a stunning periodical from Australia which covers just what it says—the crafts of Australia and the world, great design, and three-dimensional art. Edited by Ian Were, the articles so well written are laced with black and white and stunning color illustrations. There is news of museum exhibitions, auctions, etc., but also articles about New Zealand artists such as Ann Robinson (glass) and John Edgar (stone sculptures). An article about a Hawaiian sculptor also is highlighted. US \$35.00 for four issues airmailed anywhere in the US, Canada or Europe. It's a bargain! Write to Centre for Contemporary Craft, 3d flr., Customs House, 31 Alfred St., Circular Quay NSW 2000, Australia.

