

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

Primary Documents: A Sourcebook for Eastern and Central European Art since the 1950s, edited by Laura Hoptman and Tomas Pospiszl (Cambridge, MIT Press, 2002, \$29.95 cloth) is the result of years of research by an international team of artists, curators, editors, translators, and scholars working with the Museum of Modern Art, presenting primary documents drawn from the artistic archives of Eastern and Central Europe during the second half of the 20th century. Because the practice of criticism in this region was for many years almost completely suppressed, the writings of the artists themselves often fulfill a critical as well as an aesthetic and ideological function. The manifestoes, photo essays, proposals, scripts, and other writings assembled here comprise the first anthology of this material in any language.

A whole team of consultants assisted the editors and many translators from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The book is introduced by artist Ilya Kabakov. Each chapter is preceded by a brief introduction and is followed by a case study that chronicles an event or the creation or reception of an artwork, illustrating the issues raised in that chapter.

The chapter titles indicated a great deal of the "take" by the editors: *The Secret Life of People's Culture*, *Pioneers and their Manifestoes*, *Conceptual Art and Times of Transition*, *Body Unbound*, *Onward Toward the Retro-Avant-garde!* And *An Empty Pedestal: Between Freedom and Nationalism*.

To be sure, this is not complete, but it's the first to delve deeply into the post-1950 art scene in Eastern and Central Europe. What I find missing is Artpool in Budapest—and its amazing archive of Eastern European avant-garde and samizdat art. Where is Gyorgy Galantai, representative of being a besieged artist by the regime, and yet a keeper of the archives? Selected bibliography and index. A must for all contemporary art libraries and collectors. 90 illustrations. Distributed for the Museum of Modern Art.

Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents, edited by Tom McDonogh (Cambridge, MIT Press, 2002, \$44.95) is a revised and expanded version of a special issue of the journal

October (Winter 1997) that was devoted to the work of the Situationist International (SI). The first section of the issue contained previously unpublished critical texts, and the second section contained translations of primary texts that had previously been unavailable in English. The emphasis was on the SI's profound engagement with the art and cultural politics of their time (1957-1972), with a strong argument for their primarily political and activist stance by two former members of the group, T. J. Clark and Donald Nicholson-Smith.

This doubles the number of translations of primary texts, covering culture and language. The texts were selected for their ability to confront critically the history and legacy of the SI. The translations trace the SI's reflections on the legacy of the avant-garde in art and architecture, particularly on the linguistic and spatial significance of montage aesthetics. 113 illustrations.

Gradiva's Mirror: Reflections on Women, Surrealism and Art History by Betty Ann Brown (New York, Midmarch Arts Press, 2002, \$27.00 softcover) covers the work of Gala Dali, Claude Cahun, Lee Miller, Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Frida Kahlo, and many more via a conceit by the author to have a conversation with this group of Surrealist women artists, remaking them as important artists in their own right in contrast with the frequent denigration or downgrading of them by husbands, biographers and even partners. This is a personal journey for the writer to find traces of these women artists, wanting to reconnect with them. The conversations she has with each of them reveals the author's erudition and research, weaving autobiography and research in a refreshing book.

Includes bibliography, index, color plates, black and white illustrations.

MONOGRAPHS

Lee Miller: Portraits from a Life by Richard Calvocoressi (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2002, \$45.00 hardcover) documents the life of one of twentieth century's most accomplished photographer, but a woman who also lived ahead of her time. Plucked off the sidewalks of New York by Condé Nast, she instantly landed on the cover of *Vogue* and would then go on to be their WWII war correspondent, present at the liberation of Paris and when Dachau was first entered. From fashion model to photographer, Lee's long life and career brought her face-to-face with the Western world's most famous people, the likes of Man Ray, Picasso, Fred

Astaire, Marlene Dietrich, Dora Maar, Max Ernst, Dorothea Carrington, and so many more who became close friends as well. Ah, this wonderful book contains at least 100 photographs that are either unpublished or have not been seen in over 50 years, all shown together for the first time.

Name a name, and Lee Miller had met this astonishing array of painters, sculptors, actors, writers, musicians, fashion designers and socialites. Besides the portraits of these "stars", Lee Miller too amazing photographs of unsung individuals engaged in war work. Of course, the most memorable photos are those of victims and perpetrators of Nazi oppression and then there photos of Miller herself, taken by other photographers.

During her thirty-year career, she always maintained a surrealist eye, viewing the world instinctively as a painter. No wonder she spent her later years with her husband, the painter and writer Roland Penrose in London and at their Sussex home, Farley Farm. Her son, Anthony Penrose, wrote a wonderful book about his mother, "The Lives of Lee Miller," but this book fleshes out visually the intimate life of Miller as well as how she viewed the world. Calvocoressi explores the relationship between the photographs and Miller's fascinating life in his illuminating chapter introductions. 157 duotone illustrations. Notes, index.

Willie Doherty: False Memory by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and Caoimhin Mac Giolla Leith (London, Merrell Publishers, 2002, \$39.95 paper with flaps) documents the up-and-coming artist's photography to explore the fallibility of human memory and our collective need to engage with the stories and images that represent our experiences. He also uses sound and video installations. He is interested in the gaps between places and events, and their recollection, providing the raw material for all of his art.

Having been shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1994 and having represented the UK at the Sao Paulo Bienal in 2002, Doherty in his mid-career creates photographs that suggest a strong potential for narrative development, sometimes even putting text onto the photographs. He asks the viewer to move beyond the surface of the picture to examine its social, political, psychological and economic dimensions. Much of his work is open-ended, while he is always questioning the truth-telling aspects of visual representation. He worked in black and white, but has moved to Cibachromes, slide installations and video work. This volume accompanies an exhibition

at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin.

Two essays, chronology, bibliography complete this well-designed volume.

Richard Long: Walking the Line by Richard Long, Paul Moorhouse, and Denise Hooker (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2002, \$60.00 hardcover) documents the last dozen years of Long's amazing career, demonstrating how he turns any given space, indoors or out, into a world of art unrivaled around the world. This book goes to the Sahara Desert and down the Rio Grande, from coast to coast in France and Spain, to Bolivia and Peru, and to the peaks of Honshu in Japan. By using tons of rocks and juxtaposing dramatic mud paintings and photographs showing the changes in the landscape, this book merits a "long" (pardon the pun) look at this artist's dramatic work. Many of the photographs were taken by the artist himself, and he has included his own notes and writings.

With 248 illustrations in color and duotone, an excerpt of a interview with Denise Hooker, actual photographs of Long making work and the ever-present paths which lead to amazing landscape art, this book is a must for most contemporary collections. Includes a chronology of one-man and group shows and a selective bibliography.

The Invention of Chic: Thérèse Bonney and Paris Moderne by Lisa Schlanskekr Kolosek (New York Thames & Hudson, 2002, \$45.00 hardcover) is the first illustrated biography of a remarkable woman, whom I met in Paris many years ago. I was stunned by her apartment which was in pure Art Deco, and I was introduced to her as the photojournalist, Thérèse Bonney, but what a dynamic woman she was! She was only the tenth American to graduate with a PhD from the Sorbonne in 1921 (and the youngest person to do so) and pursued a prolific career as a photojournalist until the outbreak of World War II. She founded the first illustrated press service in Europe, whose specialty was modern French design. She photographed architecture and interiors, applied arts, and fashion in private residences, annual salons, and public exhibitions. Her own environment was pure Art Deco, one of those French apartments you might put Chanel in, or a movie set, but never "for real", but it was for real. She documented the work of Eileen Gray, René Herbst, Jean Dunand, Paul Poiret, Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann during the glory days of Art Deco and Moderne.

Little known to the world, her archive resides at the

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City, and it comprehensively documents the modern movement in Paris between the wars. Rather than just her career as a war photographer, we finally get an earlier episode in this extraordinary woman's life, because she was an influential player at a key moment in the history of 20th century design. She died in 1978, but her 4000 photographs and now this wonderful, sensitive biography brings her to life again for another generation. 186 duotone photographs, index.

In Focus: Dorothea Lange (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, \$17.50) is the latest installment in the Getty's series, examining the life and career of Dorothy Lange (1895-1965). Most recognized for her social documentary work during the WPA days of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Getty Museum holds nearly 100 of the artist's pictures, about 50 of which are discussed in this book by Judith Keller, associate curator of photographs.

In addition to the iconic photographs of homeless farm families as well as lesser-known Southwestern views, there are personal photographs Lange made at home in the 1950s as well as late compositions from an extensive trip to Asia and the Middle East.

The book includes an edited transcript of a colloquium on Lange with Keller, Keith Davis, David Featherstone, Therese Heyman, Weston Naef, Sally Stein, and Michael Williamson. Their animated conversation adds greatly to the understanding of the artist's oeuvre. A complete chronology of major events in Lange's life rounds out the book.

Giorgio de Chirico and the Myth of Ariadne (London, Merrell Publishers, 2002, \$60.00) by Michael Taylor with an essay by Matthew Gale and a text by Max Ernst, accompanies an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art that brings together for the first time de Chirico's series of paintings devoted to the Greek myth of Ariadne (through 5 January 2003).

This exhibition includes 180 paintings, drawings, sculpture and documentary photographs as well as a recently discovered text by Max Ernst and an interview with Gerard Tempest, an artist who studied with de Chirico in Rome in the late 1940s.

The enigmatic paintings of de Chirico, who died in 1978, with their dreamlike imagery of deserted city squares filled with mysterious shadows, stopped clocks and sleeping statues, had a profound influence on modern art with a direct impact on such Surrealist

painters as Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, René Magritte and Yves Tanguy. Even Andy Warhol was influenced by De Chirico's serial approach to making art.

Includes 180 illustrations, 55 in color, biography, selected bibliography, checklist and index.

GENERAL

Off Limits: 40 Artangel Projects by James Lingwood and Michael Morris (London, Merrell Publishers, 2002, \$50.00 paperback) with 300 color illustrations documents this unique organization that commissions art that is exhibited and performed most often away from galleries and theaters bringing the artist, the audience, and the art form together to explore new and uncharted territory.

Some of the projects included *House* by Rachel Whiteread, the Turner-Award winning artist, whose concrete cast of a London house stirred intense debate in the world of art and politics, Brian Eno, Laurie Anderson and students at the Royal College of Art's Self Storage where art was displayed amidst a huge self-storage facility in Wembley, London and visitors followed a yellow line along the dim corridors punctuated with Eno's music and Anderson's whispered stories, and Alain Platel's *The Shout Because I Sing*, a theater piece that brought 16 amateur choirs to London's Roundhouse and culminated in 500 voices singing in counterpoint. Then there was *Cremaster 4* by Matthew Barney, Douglas Gordon's *Feature Film* and on and on.

With the color photographs comes an explanation of each project in the back of the book, with biographies and bibliographies. As Rachel Whitehead says, "Artangel...are the alchemists of the commissioning world. They encourage artists to go where others fear to tread." And this documents the journey.

New Hotels for Global Nomads by Donald Albrecht (London, Merrell in assoc. with Cooper-Hewitt, New York, 2002, \$39.95 paperback) combines architecture, interior design, photography, film and works of art to show just how varied and dynamic international hotels can be today.

Using 30 examples of real and conceptual hotels and their services, and complemented by an authoritative text and stunning photography, Albrecht provides a compelling answer to the question, "What is the purpose of the modern hotel?" There are postcards, film stills, computer renderings, blueprints, posters, eco-touristic places, fantasy hotels as well as love hotels, and so much more. With more than 200

photos, from Nouveau to Nouvel, this book send you away to a hotel or wherever in the future, giving you a feeling what tomorrow will be like on the road.

Cabinets of Curiosities by Patrick Mauriès (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2002, \$65.00 hardcover) is an amazing history of these miniature museums, collections of such things as unicorns' horns, mysterious fossils, seashells, crocodiles, insects in amber, wax effigies, death masks, ivory carvings of incredible virtuosity, automata that imitated living things, jewelry, terrestrial and celestial globes—all knowledge, the whole cosmos organized on shelves, in cupboards, or hanging from the ceiling.

The collectors were archdukes and kings, rich merchants or scholars, and even the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (see the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Culver City, California). Some of their collections were in a single overcrowded room or whole palatial suites. What these collectors wanted to do is “condense a whole library into a single book.” These “*kunstkammer*” are discussed in this amazing history written by Mauriès. Very few of them survive, although there are many pictorial records. The contents, however, remain in many museums all over the world.

This volume itself is beautifully designed, tempting the eye as well as the mind. Rather than flaunt his scholarship, the author shares it with the reader, enticing everyone to enjoy what he has discovered. There are fold-outs, full page etchings, quotations from the scholars about the collectors, and items from collections floating through the pages. One cannot ask for better scholarship nor better book design.

Citing the revival of these cabinets of curiosities as an object of aesthetic pleasure, since the Surrealists, they now have become inspiration for many contemporary artists as well as interior decorators. There are 272 illustrations, 139 in full color and 133 in duotone. Bibliography, sources of illustrations, index.

Robert Irwin Getty Garden by Lawrence Weschler (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2002, \$45) with photos by Becky Cohen includes a longer essay than the one which appeared in the *New Yorker* in 1997 by Weschler and a long, dialectical walk through the grounds with the two men. The intent by Irwin has been a garden which is intelligently designed to be incomparably beautiful. The conversation is illustrated by landscape photographer Cohen's 166

color and 38 black-and-white shots, progressing through the development of the garden at various stages of construction and throughout the seasons (although there are few seasons in Los Angeles). From its outset in 1992, the project has grown to 134,000 square feet by the time the museum opened in late 1997, including 300 varieties of plants.

The book is essential to understanding this artist's garden, contemporary art, and why this garden exists in a unique position as part of the cultural life of Southern California.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Nineteenth Century Art: A Critical History by Stephen F. Eisenman, 2d ed. (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2002, \$65.00 hardcover) has three completely new chapters since 1994 which discuss photography and its crucial role in 19th century art; American and German landscape painting and its effect on the growth of romantic nationalism in each country; and Toulouse-Lautrec, whose popular appeal consists both in his work's novel technique and medium and its exotic sexual perspectives. A new introduction by Eisenman provides a cogent overview of the century.

Paintings in Venice (New York, Bulfinch Press, 2002, \$135.00) with contributions by Augusto Gentili, Giandomenico Romanelli, Philip Rylands and Giovanna Sciré Nepi contains 600 full-color plates and captions, biographies of every featured artist, and is the sixth major museum monograph from bulfinch Press. This is hefty, boxed edition to be treasured as a comprehensive survey.

A Musical Houdini by Muriel Rukeyser (Ashfield, MA, Paris Press, \$22.00 hardcover, \$14.95 soft) brings to life a previously unpublished verse-drama presenting the life of world-renowned escape artists and illusionist, Harry Houdini. Part biography, part fantasy, the musical tells the whole story to his acts under water and his travels abroad, but the book is more in that Rukeyser challenges the locks and constraints that imprison us all, inviting us to claim the freedom that is our birth right.

On Being Ill by Virginia Woolf, with an introduction by Hermione Lee (Ashfield, MA, Paris Press, 2002, \$20.00) was originally published by The Hogarth Press in 1930. Now it is being reprinted, following the original Hogarth Press design very closely and including Vanessa Bell's original cover art. There is also a limited edition with 20 deluxe and 80 regular ones which will be given to individuals and organizations that contribute to the Virginia Woolf Project, printed by Kat Ran Press in Florence, MA and hand bound by Claudia Cohen of Easthampton, MA.

How apt this book is in these days of various “plagues” upon us, such as cancer. Woolf says it is necessary to invent language to describe pain. She also discusses the taboos associated with illness.