

## FROM THE EDITOR

Now that spring really seems to be coming in, a little late, I must confess that *Umbrella* is a month late because of the publication of the catalog for my show, *Women of the Book: Jewish Artists, Jewish Themes*, and because I had to be away for two weeks installing the show in Minneapolis and gigging in Tulsa, judging a show of graduate and undergraduate students for the Gussman prizes at the University of Tulsa. I might say that it's easier to write an editorial or anything than judging a show of such high calibre students. I sweated it a great deal and eight hours later, I wasn't sure whether I could be King Solomon or not. But the prizes were given after I left, and I am glad I got away.

Of course, I saw winter in Minneapolis and spring in Tulsa (burgeoning spring), and came home to angels in Los Angeles—not cows as in New York and Chicago, not pigs or mermaids or flamingos, or even horses in Lexington, but angels, attempting to give L.A. a bit of "public art" which will be auctioned in May, but wherefore art thou angels?

I also started reading 410 e-mail messages, getting ready for the Edible Book High/Low Tea which was a success all over the world, from Australia to New Zealand, Canada (for the first time in two venues) to London, Amsterdam, Hamburg and France, as well as all parts of the U.S. See it on <http://www.geocities.com/books2eat> with links to the photo albums, which will be completed in the next month. And then I moderated a panel discussion on 2 April for the ARLIS/NA librarians about the acquisition of artist books directly from the source, the artist. And it was good, and then I started writing *Umbrella*.

As I started reading all the resources for this issue, I realized that archives are truly in the air. Ruscha's archive of graphic works (complete) have been sold to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco's Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts with 325+ impressions altogether, as well as trial, color and cancellation proofs, and one of every future Ruscha editioned print, photograph, or other publication will go to the archive as well. An exhibition will open on 26 May and run through the summer for this amazing acquisition—and it didn't even stay in Los Angeles, where Ruscha has been called "Mr. L.A." thriving in the smog of this city.

At the same time, I heard on NPR about the Medici Archive Project, directed by Edward Goldberg, who is working with the Medici Family Archive in Florence, Italy

where every letter sent or received by the Medici Court during their rule from mid-1500s to mid-1700s is in miles of bound volumes and is now being documented, digitized and made available by 2012. What is so amazing is that the Medicis made the Italian art history that we all study and profoundly admire, and they had a sense of the importance of keeping everything.

And how good it was to hear that May Castleberry, formerly with the Whitney Museum of American Art, who did the now famous series of books in the *Artists and Writers* series, is now formulating the Library Council at MOMA, established to create special publications supporting the MOMA Library and Museum Archives. More than likely, collectors will want their hands on Castleberry's new series, and perhaps some artist books too.

Now I would like some feedback from you about putting *Umbrella* online next year—available by payment to download the whole issue, without my having to mail it out (postage probably will be going up a second time this year 2001) or printing it. Just drop me an e-mail or a line telling me what you think. I know librarians like hard copy, but they can get it by downloading it. There are various ways of paying for a subscription, one of them being PayPal—and I now have that facility for international and domestic subscriptions.

Correction: The great bargain mentioned in the December 2000 issue of *Umbrella* was Ed Ruscha's latest book, *Her Name is Styrene*, which cost actually \$19.95 and not the designated \$29.95 as announced in *Umbrella*. (New York, Phaidon, 2000)

Cover: Ed Varney's use of rubberstamps in a print he sent me for Christmas, and now it makes a wonderful cover. Ed is the editor of *Artistamp News* out of Vancouver.

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